

**A04**

**F/TH/24/0007**

**PROPOSAL:** Installation of external wall insulation, erection of roof screen, alterations to windows , doors and existing balconies, together  
**LOCATION:** with external and internal alterations

Staner Court Manston Road RAMSGATE Kent CT12 6HR

**WARD:** Newington

**AGENT:** Mr Ciaran Gallen

**APPLICANT:** Mr Kieran Cooper, Thanet District Council

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approve

Subject to the following conditions:

1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

**GROUND:**

In accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Purchase Act 2004).

2 The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted drawings numbered 05100 Rev P01, 05101 Rev P01, 05102 Rev P01,, 05200 Rev P01, 05300 Rev P01, and 05301 Rev P01, and 01102 Rev P01 received 03/01/2024.

**GROUND;**

To secure the proper development of the area.

3 Prior to the commencement of the development, a noise impact assessment shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall comply with guidance found in BS5228 -1:2009+A1:2014 Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites. Upon commencement of the development, work shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme.

**GROUND:**

In order to ensure that environmental effects from the proposed construction works are planned for and managed. it is appropriate that a CEMP should be submitted. It is recommended that the following condition is applied.

4 Prior to the commencement of the development a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CEMP shall be in accordance with BS5228-1:2009+A1:2014: Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration on Construction and Open Sites and IAQM Guidance on

the Assessment of dust from demolition and construction 2023; the Plan shall include mitigation measures. The construction works shall thereafter be carried out at all times in accordance with the approved Construction Environmental Management Plan, unless any variations are otherwise first submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

**GROUND:** To protect against harmful environmental impacts and the amenities of residential and nearby occupiers, in accordance with the aims of Policy QD03 of the Thanet Local Plan and the guidance contained in the NPPF.

### SITE, LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

Staner Court is a substantial and irregularly shaped 1960's tower block, currently in use as residential accommodation. It sits on the outskirts of Ramsgate and the edge of the Newington estate. The block is in close proximity to much smaller residential properties in all areas surrounding it, a school, a number of community facilities and commercial spaces, along with a supermarket.

The site can be considered a landmark building, being the only tower block of this kind in the immediate vicinity. It primarily fronts Manston Road but has visual connections with Princess Margaret Avenue to the east. Given its scale and elevated land levels to the south and west, long views of it are possible on entering Thanet from Haine Road.

The current tower block is a light colour finished in render with orange patterns on each elevation. These appear as orange banding with mirrored semi-circles connected by a vertical run between the fourth floor and the fourteenth floors. It contains a number of concrete balconies with a black framed box design and yellow screening on the east and south elevations. External windows and doors appear in white uPVC. To the roof there is metal railings and evidence of some plant and antennas. There is a car park to the front of the site with external bin stores and some soft and hard landscaping intermixed.

### RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

F/TH/19/1675 - Replacement of windows and doors to front and rear elevations. Granted 29/01/2020.

F/TH/01/0869 - Alterations to external elevation comprising installation of overcladding system and renewal of existing balcony balustrading. Granted 27/11/2001.

### PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This application seeks planning permission for retrofit works for fire remediation purposes. It is stated that the existing external materials comprise a polystyrene insulation which is flammable and needs to be addressed. It is also stated that the panels covering the balconies are likely to be constructed of combustible materials.

The proposal seeks new external wall insulation, replacement windows, doors and balcony elements, a replacement roof and fall arrest system, along with a number of internal upgrades to address fire regulations and correct damage or poor condition elements.

The works would see external alterations to the appearance of the building, changing to a cream render finish with a grey fibre cement base. Windows would be replaced with off white aluminium and champagne coloured openings, and champagne screens would be applied to existing balconies. The existing entrance would be upgraded with this colour palette. A new liquid membrane would be applied to the roof and existing redundant equipment would be removed or upgraded here. New screening and anti-fall barriers would be introduced.

The overall appearance has been taken from consultation with residents and the works would be funded through the Building Safety Fund and Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.

### DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

SP11 - Ramsgate  
SP35 - Quality Development  
QD01 - Sustainable Development  
QD02 - General Design Principles  
QD03 - Living Conditions  
SE04 - Groundwater Protection

### NOTIFICATIONS

Letters were sent to neighbouring property occupiers and a site notice posted close to the site. No representations have been received.

### CONSULTATIONS

**TDC Environmental Health:** Staner Court tower is adjacent to a residential area and near Newington Primary School, the proposed works are significant and may occur for an extended period of time. The construction will be occurring at height and will allow for an unrestricted distribution of sound. Consideration should be given to a noise impact assessment being undertaken. The proposed condition is.

Condition: Noise Impact Assessment

Prior to the commencement of the development, a noise impact assessment shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall comply with guidance found in BS5228 -1:2009+A1:2014 Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites. Upon commencement of the development, work shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme.

In order to ensure that environmental effects from the proposed construction works are planned for and managed. it is appropriate that a CEMP should be submitted. It is recommended that the following condition is applied.

Condition: CEMP

Prior to the commencement of the development a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CEMP shall be in accordance with BS5228-1:2009+A1:2014: Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration on Construction and Open Sites and IAQM Guidance on the Assessment of dust from demolition and construction 2023; the Plan shall include mitigation measures. The construction works shall thereafter be carried out at all times in accordance with the approved Construction Environmental Management Plan, unless any variations are otherwise first submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

**Health and Safety Executive:** "It is acknowledged that the proposed remedial works provide enhanced conditions regarding fire safety throughout the building and should not impact fire service access and facilities or the existing fire strategy. It is also noted that consultation with Kent Fire and Rescue Service took place on 15/09/2023 and their observations relating to fire service access and fire hydrant provisions were provided.

The building is served by a single stair core (with two lifts), forming the only means of escape for occupants and the only access for firefighters serving dwellings located on upper floor levels.

Section 6 of the fire statement does not confirm which design standard has been used in the design of the proposed remedial works. For the purposes of this assessment, HSE has assumed the use of Approved Document B volume 1 and/or British Standard 9991 and has assessed this application accordingly.

Following a review of the information provided in the planning application, HSE is content with the fire safety design as set out in the project description, to the extent it affects land use planning considerations."

The response goes on to include comments about firefighting facilities, lifts, stairs, automatic opening vents, sprinkler systems and hydrant provision, and notes that these considerations would largely be subject to consideration at a later regulatory stage.

**Kent Fire and Rescue:** The access statement is limited in its findings and considerations to the proposed project at Staner Court. The open area immediately surrounding Staner Court is also being redeveloped with the provision of additional housing. Both projects will utilise the single access point onto the site. Consideration and suitable measures must be taken into account to ensure that Fire Service access is available up to and around Staner Court and the surrounding development at all times to ensure the safety of the tower's residents/occupants.

The local fire hydrant provisions should be tested to ensure operability. Hydrant provisions both directly on the site and on the nearby network should be kept clear of all vehicles and/or materials associated with the works at all times.

A full building regulations application will need to be submitted for the project which should fully detail all proposed fire safety provisions for assessment. It is recommended that a full

Fire Strategy document is also submitted at this time in support of the application and to allow scrutiny.

**KCC Highways:** This development proposal does not meet the criteria to warrant involvement from the Highway Authority.

## COMMENTS

This application is reported to Planning Committee as a submission made on behalf of Thanet District Council.

### **Principle**

There is no in-principle objection to the alteration of an existing residential building.

The main considerations are the impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, the living conditions of occupiers, and other matters.

### **Character and Appearance**

Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states decisions should ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping, sympathetic to local character and history, establish or maintain a strong sense of place, and optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development and create places that are attractive, welcoming and distinctive, as well as safe, inclusive and accessible. Policy QD02 of the Thanet Local Plan outlines that the primary aim of new development is to promote or reinforce local character and provide high quality and inclusive design that is sustainable in all other respects. Proposals should therefore relate to surrounding development, form and layout, be well designed, pay particular attention to context and identity of location, scale, massing, rhythm, density, layout and materials, and be compatible with neighbouring buildings and spaces. Any external spaces and landscape features should be designed as an integral part of the scheme.

In terms of the external facade changes the Design and Access statement sets out that the design concept has been to create a distinctive darker base to visually link with surrounding low rise buildings, with a lighter colour palette to the upper floors. It is stated that three design options were presented to the residents of the building and wider community consultation has taken place, therefore there is general community support for the current proposal. The colours and materials selected would create a modern appearance. The building is seen in its own context and therefore whilst it would not necessarily assimilate with the surrounding finishes and appearances, the colours chosen and use of lighter finishes would have some integration with the nearby cream renders and yellow brick buildings on Manston Road, but the overall appearance would be self-supporting.

The addition of external wall insulation would see an increase in the overall projection of the outer walls by around 0.3m. This would be a marginal change visually and unlikely to result in any unacceptable impact on the appearance of the area.

The proposed balcony changes will see an increase to the overall width of each, the removal of the box like appearance, the use of champagne metal railings, with solid screening elements to the sides and part of the front. A small section of the front of the balcony would remain open. Again the building would be seen autonomously and although an unusual feature, the design has been informed by the community and those that took part in the public consultation.

Windows and doors would be replaced and the existing uPVC would be upgraded to champagne aluminium frames, which would move closer to the outer edge of the new external wall layer after insulation has been added. These changes are considered to marry with the overall design approach.

A number of upgrades to the entrance would be undertaken and include replacing the existing glazing and entrance doors, the removal of an existing front glazed projection, and the addition of aluminium panels in a champagne finish to the existing walls. A new aluminium soffit would include lighting fixtures and new signage for the building is proposed which would be placed vertically on the same elevation as the existing sign, but larger and of a more modern appearance. These works are not likely to harmfully affect the appearance of the building or wider area and are considered to be acceptable.

The roof alterations would see the erection of a perimeter screen to support working with the plant at this height. Although adding additional built form, the need for this element has been clearly set out and the horizontal emphasis would help to prevent any sense of additional bulk. Some longer distance views across the rooftop here can be gleaned from nearby streets and the proposed works to integrate existing plant and equipment with the new colour palette would help here. The existing roof covering would be upgraded and replaced with a warm roof system. Overall these works are not considered significantly harmful given the current appearance.

On balance the works are considered to be acceptable and comply with the spirit of policies QD02 of the Thanet Local Plan, and the guidance of the NPPF.

## **Living Conditions**

Paragraph 123 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Paragraph 135 states that decisions should create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for future users. Policy QD02 of the Thanet Local Plan outlines that new development should be compatible with neighbouring buildings and spaces, and should be inclusive in its design for all users. It should improve people's quality of life by creating safe and accessible environments and promote public safety and security. Policy QD03 outlines that new development must not lead to unacceptable living conditions through overlooking, noise, vibrations, light pollution,

overshadowing, loss of natural light or a sense of enclosure. Policy QD01 of the Thanet Local Plan sets out that all new buildings and conversions of existing buildings must be designed to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and have resilience to function in a changing climate and will be required to make the best use of solar energy, passive heating and cooling, natural light, natural ventilation and landscaping.

The scheme proposes a number of works to address fire safety. This is a material planning consideration and LPAs are required to consult the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) on any proposals for works to buildings of this scale. A fire statement has been provided by the applicant and reviewed by HSE who agree that the scheme can progress to the next stage.

In terms of the impact on the works on neighbouring property occupiers, most of the works would be minimal and any changes to the thickness of the building or extent of balconies would be modest. The building thickness would increase by 0.3m which would likely be imperceptible to most neighbouring occupiers. The balconies would increase slightly from approximately 2.8m walk out space (length) to around 3m. The building is set back away from nearby properties. All balconies would still be inset from the wall edge and therefore no new harm is expected to occur as a result. The roof alterations and provision of screening would be at a height that would not be expected to be experienced by neighbouring properties.

In terms of any impact on the current occupiers of the building, works are intended to be undertaken while the tower block is occupied. There are 89 units here over 15 floors and the works have the potential to cause significant disruption. There are a number of potential matters that require consideration. These include ensuring the continued ability of occupiers to retain heat and a reasonable standard of living whilst works are undertaken, along with the potential for noise, dust, vibrations and general disturbance to occupiers and nearby occupiers. The Council's Environmental Health Team have raised concerns about the height at which works would be undertaken and the potential for the unrestricted distribution of sound. They have therefore suggested conditions surrounding the submission of a noise impact assessment and a construction management plan. Both of these are considered to be reasonable and have been agreed to by the applicant.

Overall the works would see thermal upgrades and environmental improvements to the building and subject to the above conditions and a satisfactory noise and construction management plan, the works are likely to comply with the aims of policies QD01, QD02 and QD03 of the Thanet Local Plan and the aims of the NPPF.

### **Other Matters**

The site lies within a groundwater protection zone. Policy SE04 relates to groundwater protection and states that in these areas development will only be permitted where there is no risk of contamination.

This is a site in current use as a residential block and the additional built form is not considered, given the small scale proposed overall, to have any additional adverse impact on groundwater.

## **Conclusion**

Overall the proposed works would see the upgrading of a 1960's tower block to create both a more resilient building, and a contemporary appearance. The site is seen in a unique context, and would have some integration with the wider area. There is general community support for the design that has been chosen and the works are not considered likely to be harmful to the character and appearance of the area.

The HSE have considered the design proposal and agree that the scheme can progress to the next stage.

The works have the potential to cause significant noise and disturbance more widely, and to impact the current living conditions of those living in the tower block during construction. As a result a number of safeguarding conditions are recommended and subject to these, the works are considered to be acceptable.

## **Case Officer**

Vicky Kendell-Bryant



TITLE:

F/TH/24/0007

Project

Staner Court Manston Road RAMSGATE Kent CT12 6HR

