

A07

F/TH/24/0196

PROPOSAL: Replacement of balcony structures and timber railings to steel metal railings with composite decking together with the removal of canopy roofs and installation of a central privacy screen to Flats 7-12 and 26-30 and 32-36

LOCATION: Loughborough Court Sussex Street RAMSGATE Kent CT11 8QZ

WARD: Eastcliff

AGENT: Mr Matthew Gerlack

APPLICANT: 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 PL 104, PL 205, PL 206 received on 22nd February 2024 and drawings numbered PL 203 and PL 403 received on 4th June 2024.

GROUND;

To secure the proper development of the area.

3 The metal balconies hereby permitted shall be constructed using black metal railings measuring 1.15m in height in accordance with the detailed plans No. PL 203 and PL 403 received on 4th June 2024 unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

GROUND

In the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policy QD02 of the Thanet Local Plan.

4 Prior to the installation of the 2.1m high privacy screens hereby approved, details of the colour and materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

GROUND

In the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policy QD02 of the Thanet Local Plan

5 Prior to the installation of the balcony decking hereby approved, details of the colour and materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

GROUND

In the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policy QD02 of the Thanet Local Plan

SITE, LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

Loughborough Court comprises 6 no. blocks of low level residential flats which are attached which form a U-shape, with elevations facing over Hardres Street to the west, Sussex Street to the north and Belmont Street to the south.

Although not listed, the building is located in close proximity to the Ramsgate Conservation Area.

The residential blocks are constructed from red brick, red hung tiles, and cream / white panels with upvc windows. The main balconies which serve the entrances to the flats, as well as the communal stairwells, benefit from black metal balustrading. However, there are also a number of smaller shared balconies with timber balustrading, flooring and canopies which have now reached the end of their useful life.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This application seeks planning permission for the replacement of the balcony structures and timber railings with steel metal railings and composite decking together with the removal of canopy roofs and installation of a central privacy screen to Flats 7-12 and 26-30 and 32-36.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

Thanet Local Plan 2020

SP11 - Ramsgate

SP35 - Quality Development

HE02 - Development in Conservation Areas

QD01 - Sustainable Development

QD02 - General Design Principles

QD03 - Living Conditions

NOTIFICATIONS

Letters were sent to neighbouring property occupiers, a site notice posted close to the site and an advert was posted in the local paper. No representations have been received.

CONSULTATIONS

None

COMMENTS

This application is reported to the 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, and the living conditions of occupiers.

Character and Appearance

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.

The site lies adjacent to the Ramsgate Conservation Area. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on local planning authorities to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. Policy HE02 sets out that within conservation areas, development proposals which preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area, and accord with other relevant policies of the Plan will be permitted but new development which would detract from the immediate or wider landscape setting of any part of a conservation area will not be permitted.

The proposed plans show that the 10no. existing timber balconies including their balustrading and canopies will be entirely replaced by a steel base frame bolted directly into reinforced concrete, with a upvc / wood deck secured on top and metal balustrading measuring 1.15m in height. The proposed change will see a modest increase to their overall depth from 0.73m to 1.05m and the introduction of a centrally placed privacy screen in either metal or glass (details of which will be conditioned) measuring 2.1m in height. The existing roof canopies will not be replaced.

Given that the existing timber balconies appear visibly dilapidated from public viewpoint along Sussex Street, and black metal balconies are already an established feature

throughout Loughborough Court, their proposed replacement with metal balustrading (albeit with a slightly deeper projection), is considered to blend in well and be an improvement within the wider streetscene and setting of the nearby Ramsgate Conservation Area.

The works are therefore considered to be acceptable and comply with Policies QD02 and HE02 of the Thanet Local Plan and the aims 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.

The 10 no. existing timber balconies are in a state of visible disrepair and in need of replacement for the future safety of the occupants of the flats.

The existing timber balconies provide an open space which is shared by two separate flats, with no division between them. This means that the occupants of either flat could stand directly outside the adjacent flat's balcony door and look directly into their habitable rooms. Given this, rather than replace the balconies to the same design, the alterations to the balconies propose both a modest increase in depth from 0.73m to 1.05m, as well as the introduction of a central privacy screen measuring 2.1m in height. Not only will this allow for the flats to have their own modest walk out space, but have added security, reduced overlooking from the neighbouring occupants and an increased sense of privacy.

As all balconies will remain in the same location as existing no new harm to neighbouring residential properties is expected to occur as a result of the changes.

The works are therefore considered to improve the living conditions of the occupiers and are not considered to create any harm to wider neighbouring properties, complying with the aims of Policy QD03 of the Thanet Local Plan and the aims of the NPPF.

Conclusion

Overall the proposed works would see the upgrading of visibility dilapidated timber balconies with a metal balcony and balustrade to blend in with those already seen across Loughborough Court, and improve the general appearance of the flats which are in close proximity to the Ramsgate Conservation Area.

The proposed works would also improve the safety and living conditions of the residents within the flats by creating a safe space to walk out onto, as well as privacy from other users of the balcony, whilst not creating any additional neighbouring harm than already exists.

It is therefore recommended that members approve the application.

Case Officer

Tanya Carr

TITLE:

F/TH/24/0196

Project

Loughborough Court Sussex Street RAMSGATE Kent CT11 8QZ

