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From: Martyn White <Martyn.White@arun.gov.uk>
Sent: 17 December 2021 11:17
To: Planning.Responses <Planning.Responses@arun.gov.uk>
Subject: LU/305/21/PL

LU/305/21/PL

17 Amstel Court Selborne Road Littlehampton BN17 5NR

Replace windows with double glazed UPVC windows (This application may affect the character and appearance of the Littlehampton Sea Front Conservation Area)

Amstel Court is located within the Littlehampton: Seafront Conservation Area. There are also a number of Listed and locally Listed Building sin the local area, all of which greatly contribute towards the established character of the area.

Amstel Court consists of two blocks of flats, both three storeys in height. They are rendered and, when originally constructed in the mid-1970's, included wooden sliding sash windows. The blocks of flats are situated on a prominent site at the junctions of several roads within the historic core of the conservation area. As a result, all of the elevations are clearly visible in the street scene. It is considered that, on balance, the blocks make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The Conservation area itself contains the older terraced properties along South Terrace either side of Norfolk Road. North of these, smaller properties in short rows along Western Road and along Norfolk Road contrast with the larger properties along the front. The oldest buildings consist of a number of three storey Georgian and Regency properties built in pairs and short rows as part

of a longer terrace. These are domestic in scale and as each pair or group was built individually, there is a variety of detail but without the loss of harmony.

The Proposal

The proposal is to replace the existing timber windows in one of the apartments with double glazed UPVC windows. The window specification identifies that the replacements are to be casement windows.

Unfortunately, some of the original painted timber vertically sliding sash windows have already been replaced in some of the flats in both blocks with UPVC ones. However, these replacements are a mixture of designs or construction/appearance; some appear as sliding sash and others as 'top hung'. The top hung windows are especially considered to detract from both the appearance of the blocks of flats and the conservation area.

The design, detailing and operation of windows constructed from UPVC make them appear different to traditional windows. Standard double-glazing units usually require a bulky frame to accommodate the two panes of glass and wide spacer bars, rather than the slimmer profile of original timber windows. In addition, modern 'storm' windows, which overlap the frame rather than sitting flush, add to the width of the frames which look out of place in a historic context. The visual effect of 'shiny' modern plastic is also out of keeping with more traditional materials.

I should also point out that UPVC windows are also unsustainable; it is tricky to repair them, with often the only viable option being to replace them in their entirety. In addition, they require continuous cleaning to prevent discolouration from dirt and ultra-violet light, and regular maintenance.

I am therefore of the opinion that the design, means of operation and materials are not appropriate for the conservation area. If you are minded to accept the use of UPVC in this particular case based on the presence of existing replacement windows, their impact could be lessened through the use of an improved window design i.e. functioning sliding sash windows. As an alternative white powder coated aluminium vertically sliding sashes could also be considered (in this instance) as an alternative, as they can have slender frame sizes which are more appropriate for a heritage context. However, at the present time, I believe that the introduction of further inappropriate windows is harmful and not capable of support from a heritage perspective.

Conclusion

The proposal is such that the impact can be described as causing less than substantial harm in accordance with paragraph 202 of the NPPF (2021). As such, you will also need to consider the public benefits that the development may achieve as part of your assessment of the application, along with the contents of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended).

Martyn White
Principal Conservation Officer,
Planning Services



Please note: I work on Conservation for half of the working week (all day Monday and Friday and Tuesday Afternoons)

T: 01903 737717

E: Martyn.White@arun.gov.uk or Conservation.officer@arun.gov.uk

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