



Archery Road St Leonards on Sea, Hastings

Planning Application

Changes to the consented scheme no HS/FA/13/00590

Design and Access Statement

Issue 1 17 February 2015 Draft

Issue 2 19 February 2015 Planning Application

Contents

1. Introduction and Summary
The proposed changes:
2. The pedestrian bridge
3. Roof terraces on the affordable housing.
4. Balconies on the affordable flats
5. The height of building A.
6. Levels, landscape and boundary treatments - building D
7. Use of uPVC windows instead of aluminium for the flats.
8. Omission of green roofs and replacement with access-only flat roofs.
9. Conclusion

Appendices

- | | |
|---|--|
| A | Drawings |
| B | Schedule of Accommodation |
| C | Orbit Letter |
| D | Sussex Police E mail |
| E | Design and Access Statement for HS/FA/13/00590 |

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1. Introduction and Summary.

1.1. In February 2014 planning permission HS/FA/13/00590 was granted for:

'Conversion of grade II Listed buildings to create 24 units... erection of 97 residential units, with ... associated landscaping... works.'

1.2. This application is for some design changes to the development. These are to:

- Remove the pedestrian bridge
- Remove roof terraces from the affordable housing
- Remove or reduce balconies in the affordable flats
- Reduce the height of building A whilst maintaining the number of flats
- Reduce the number of lifts by omitting the lift in the western part of building A
- Revise the design of boundary treatments
- Use uPVC windows instead of aluminium on the affordable flats.

1.3. In the statement that follows, each of these proposed changes is described, together with the reasons for the revision, and an assessment of the impact on the design as a whole.

2. The Pedestrian Bridge.

2.1. Part of the scheme is a proposal to form a new pedestrian bridge linking the new podium to the northern end of the site at the bottom of Highland Gardens. This application is to remove the proposed footbridge altogether. We set out below the reasons for proposing its removal, the effect on the scheme as a whole, and a conclusion.

[A variation of condition application for planning permission HS/FA/13/00590 has been submitted for removing the footbridge.]

2.2. The reasons for removing the bridge.

2.2.1. Its removal would benefit community safety and crime prevention.

We have specifically consulted Sussex Police on the matter of this pedestrian bridge who state:

'Reducing the permeability across the site would benefit community safety and crime prevention. The Safer Places document states that the advantages for crime prevention of a layout with fewer connections include:

- *Better opportunity to create 'defensible space'.*
- *Easier for residents to monitor and exercise control over immediate area.*
- *Fewer routes for criminals to escape along.*
- *Fewer excuses for offenders to be in the area, or less likelihood that they will enter the area by chance.'*

[Sussex Police Crime Prevention Design Adviser, email to MBA dated 28 January 2015.]

2.2.2. The bridge presents a health and safety and management problem for the landlord of the affordable housing. Orbit Homes state:

'The proposed footbridge will pose a management issue for Orbit, particularly in relation to health and safety, maintenance and insurance aspects. The bridge will need to be monitored, insured and maintained regularly at a cost to the residents of the Archery Road scheme. This will add cost to an already expensive service charge with the potential for rental arrears to become apparent and is detrimental to Orbit providing affordable housing.'

[Orbit letter to Gemselect 23 Jan 2015 Appendix C].

2.2.3. The bridge might become a focal gathering point with potential for noise and anti social behaviour. Sussex Police state:

'In addition to the issues raised by Orbit Housing, I also have some concerns that the presence of this bridge link might create a focal gathering point with potential for noise and anti social behaviour, to the detriment of the amenity of residential occupiers.'[Appendix D.]

2.2.4. The bridge and its close proximity to the wildlife reserve would present difficulties in operation, with the potential for litter or other disturbance to the detriment of the wildlife.

This was always going to be a difficult issue to resolve technically, one of the reasons the bridge design was conditioned. By removing the bridge, one removes also the potential disturbance caused by forming the supports to the bridge, and the potential for litter and other disturbance to the wildlife.

2.3. The effect of removing the bridge.

2.3.1. The pedestrian bridge was included in the design for the Archery Road scheme in order to promote pedestrian permeability and integrate the new development into the rest of Burton St Leonards. This is seen as socially beneficial, making it easier for old and new residents to interact, and also as a way to 'give back' the former Archery Ground to the wider public.

2.3.2. Most permeability is across the southern part of the site, with adopted roads in the central Archery Gardens and full public access to Archery Crescent, opposite the listed buildings.

2.3.3. Removing the bridge will reduce pedestrian permeability at the northern part of the site and make the podium which forms the shared amenity space for residents of the flats more private in nature. The podium serves as the main shared amenity space for the residents of buildings A and B. In practice, this is a semi-private space for the residents of the flats, rather than a fully public space. This is in contrast to the adopted roadways and pedestrian routes at the southern part of the site which are more public in nature and will be fully accessible. The removal of the bridge will not affect the public access to the majority of the site including the central Archery Gardens and its links to Archery Road East and Archery Crescent to the south.

2.3.4. There are other routes from Highland Gardens to the seafront, which is the main anticipated pedestrian flow. As Sussex Police point out:

'The inclusion of this bridge is of no real benefit to the residents of the Archery Road scheme, as their main focus of movement would be to the south toward the seafront. The main beneficiaries of the bridge link would be the residents et al from Highlands Gardens and beyond who would utilise this route to and from the seafront area, although routes along Archery Road to the north and south of the site already exist.' [Appendix D.]

2.3.5. There would be no benefit to the community in building the bridge if it causes problems in practice. We must accept the advice of those who will actually manage the development, and those with experience of crime prevention who can anticipate how the development will actually work. Whilst the bridge might be a good idea in theory, it offers little public benefit and has the potential for far greater detriment to the amenity, health and safety of residents and members of the public. On balance, therefore, we believe that its removal will improve the development.

3. Roof terraces on the affordable housing.

3.1.1. The approved scheme showed a number of accessible roof terraces, including flat roofs to the inner circle of housing on Archery Gardens, and some terraces accessed from bedrooms, on the houses at buildings C, D and F [see site plan dwg. 554/006].

3.1.2. All these houses already have adequate amenity space, provided in the rear gardens.

3.1.3. It is proposed to replace the accessible roof terraces on the main roofs of the houses in C, D and F to pitched roofs in slate behind parapets.

3.1.4. At lower levels in these buildings are flat roofs which were proposed to be accessible from bedrooms. It is proposed to make these flat roofs for maintenance only, and to replace the doors leading onto these into normal bedroom windows. The flat roof finish is proposed to be a single ply membrane, grey in colour, behind parapets.

[See drawings 554 /006, 009, 010, 033, 034, 035, 036, 041, 042, 043, 044, 045.]

3.2. The reason for this proposed change is that the terraces are not necessary, since the houses already have private gardens, and will present maintenance and management problems.

3.2.1. Orbit Housing comment that:

'Orbit would prefer for the roof gardens on both the flat blocks and houses to be omitted from the design. The flats have sufficient outside space in the form of balconies/terraces and the houses all have individual private gardens. We therefore feel that the roof gardens do not offer any additional amenity space. Orbit would not want residents to use the roof gardens for amenity purposes due to health and safety implications and possible anti social usage. We therefore require access to these areas to be restricted for our maintenance teams only and inaccessible to our customers. In addition roof gardens require intensive maintenance, irrigation and drainage systems, are limited by climate conditions, and can be costly to maintain and repair. This will increase service charge costs to our customers of the scheme. It is common for roof gardens to quickly lose their appearance which deviates from the original intention and desired outcome.'

[Orbit letter 21 Jan 2015 Appendix C]

3.3. Impact of the proposed changes.

3.3.1. The roof treatment is the same as proposed on buildings G, which were deemed acceptable on the previous application. Like the roofs of G, these roofs will be visible from the upper levels of Archery Road and the Mount.

3.3.2. This roof configuration has the positive effect of giving space for satellite dishes to be positioned in the valleys of these roofs.

3.3.3. It is proposed to keep the vertical 'chimney' elements to these buildings to reflect the chimneys on surrounding buildings. These will, if possible, be operational ventilation flues.

3.3.4. this modification to the design will avoid potential problems and unsightliness referred to by Orbit, at 3.2.1. above.

3.3.5. The changes will have a neutral impact on the aesthetics of the buildings. The use of slate roofs refers to the roof types of the surrounding areas and reflects the character of the area.

4. Balconies on the affordable flats

4.1. It is proposed to reduce the number of balconies on the affordable flats, building B, where flats have more than one terrace. Terraces opening out from living spaces will be retained, those from bedrooms will be removed. The main effect is to remove the outer columns from the south elevation of building B as shown on drawing 047.

4.1.2. There will also be an adjustment to the podium landscape to the north of buildings B, with the private terraces to the north, accessed from bedrooms omitted, and an adjustment to the podium level private amenity space [See dwg. 059]

4.2. The reason is as stated at 3.2.1. above.

4.3. The effect of the changes.

4.3.1. The removal of the outer columns from the south elevation of B has a neutral effect on the architectural quality of the elevation. It makes it, if anything, more strictly classical, since each half will be a '7 bay' elevation, in the rhythm 3,1,3, rather than an unclassical '8 bay' elevation. The corner pilaster will be taken round the corner, with a notched and thickened edge, reflecting the detail at the centre of the elevation.

4.3.2. It has the benefit of allowing better diagonal views from the easternmost flats in building B through to the open space of Archery Gardens, and eases congestion around the bin store in this location.

4.3.3. It will improve inter-visibility between The Mount and Archery Gardens.

4.3.4. The alterations to the landscape at podium level will increase the size and improve the proportions of the communal landscaped courtyard at this level. These adjustments will also allow for water attenuation tanks to be installed. [See dwg.052.]

5. The height of building A.

5.1.1. At present there are storage areas at the levels below the podium in buildings A, west and east.

5.1.2. The landscape levels around the building will allow for a further four flats to be created at these lower levels, all above ground level. Adequate levels of natural light can be provided by having taller windows, taking advantage of the high floor to ceiling heights in this part of the building.

5.1.3. These additional four flats (three one bedroom and one two bedroom) allow for the four flats at the upper levels of building A (west) to be removed (all one bedroom). It is also possible to remove a lift from this location, since the flats in building A west can be accessed from podium and podium-1. [See drawings 554/051, 052, 053, 057, 058.]

5.2. The reason for this change is to make better use of space than in the previous scheme, whilst maintaining the number of flats.

5.3.1. The effect of the change will be to increase inter visibility between Archery Road and the Podium.

5.3.2. It will allow views to and from the decorative Scottish baronial houses in Highland Gardens over the proposed development

5.3.3. It will improve views from the southern end of Highland Gardens to the sea

5.3.4. The balance of the overall composition is maintained because of the scale and location of building J, which counterbalances the height of building A (east).

6. Levels, landscape and boundary treatments - building D.

6.1.1. It is proposed to soften the boundary treatments to the north of buildings D, introducing railings over a low dwarf wall, between white painted stucco piers. The rear of the gardens will be planted with evergreen shrubs.

6.1.2. To the south side of buildings D, Archery Crescent, opposite the listed buildings, it is proposed to introduce a level pavement to allow level access to the principal floors of these buildings, which were previously shown as accessed up steps. The houses on each side, third from the centre, will be lowered in level, by 0.5 and 0.8m, so as to be level with the central houses.

[See drawings 554/ 004, 033, 034.]

6.2. The reasons for these changes are:

- to soften the appearance of the domestic rear gardens whilst preserving the architectural logic
- to increase inter visibility between the rear of buildings D and the central garden space.
- to achieve more inclusive access to the principal floors of buildings D.

6.3.1. The effect of the alterations to the north of buildings D will be to give greater softness to the back of the rear gardens, whilst the piers will maintain the architectural logic of this elevation, which forms the southern boundary of Archery Gardens. This boundary will therefore be similar to the front garden boundary onto Archery Crescent. It gives the central Archery gardens more of the character of a park or garden square, and reflects the railed edges of Archery Crescent and St Leonards gardens to the east of the site.

6.3.2. Lowering the two houses in building D does not materially affect the aesthetics or architectural logic of this elevation, since the buildings at either end of the elevation; the easternmost house of D and building E form the required 'bookends' to the elevation.

6.3.3. The effect of the new pavement at the south, on Archery Crescent, will be to intrude a low retaining wall in front of the houses, giving further privacy and protected space in this location. It has the advantage of improving inclusive access, avoiding the need to access the principal floor from the rear gardens if level access is required. This is a benefit in terms of inclusive accessibility.

6.3.3. The raised pavement at the north of Archery Crescent will be the same width as the consented scheme, so there is no reduction in the amount of planting or the geometry of Archery Crescent.

7. Use of uPVC windows instead of aluminium for the flats.

7.1. This is a technical preference of the developer, due to problems experienced with aluminium windows in the past.

7.2. Since the windows are in most cases recessed behind the walls, very little of the frame will be visible.

7.3. For sliding folding doors, the aesthetic effect will depend on the quality colour, and profiles of the precise window systems being used, which we expect to be conditioned.

7.4. The windows and doors will be selected to appear similar to painted timber, in a simple, modern style.

8. Omission of green roofs and replacement with access-only flat roofs.

8.1. The consented scheme shows green roofs to buildings A, B, E and J. It is proposed to replace these with simple, access only flat roofs. [See dwg. 554/ 006.] At the same time the stair access to the roofs can be removed, since they will require only occasional hatch access for maintenance.

8.2. The reason for this change is to simplify maintenance.

8.3.1. There is no doubt that green roofs:

- perform a useful function for water attenuation,
- can be attractive to look at if well maintained, and
- can help with biodiversity.

8.3.2. Water attenuation can be provided elsewhere in the scheme as required. In particular the adjustments to the design of the podium would allow water attenuation at this level, which could be used for irrigating the communal landscaped area at podium level. Therefore there need be no disbenefit in terms of water and drainage.

8.3.3. The roofs will look attractive if well maintained, but, as social housing Orbit have pointed out, such maintenance presents an additional strain on tenants service charges. A simple single ply membrane roof behind parapets will have a neutral, rather than a minor positive effect.

8.3.4. There are numerous measures already in the scheme to promote wildlife and biodiversity. We suggest this factor is relatively minor in relation to the positive benefits of the scheme overall.

9. Conclusion.

9.1. These changes are designed to make the consented scheme more practical and sustainable in operational.

9.2. Most have a neutral or minor positive impact on the design as a whole, and on the character of the conservation area. A lot of the changes involve a reduction in height and mass of the proposed scheme, and increase inter-visibility between the application site and the surrounding areas.

9.3. The omission of the green roofs might be considered to have a minor negative impact on the design, but this is counterbalanced by the public good in providing affordable housing.

9.4. the overall aim is to refine the design in order to provide sustainable, high quality places for people, taking account of the site's unique location and setting.

Marcus Beale Architects Ltd

February 2015

23 January 2015

Ref: SP/23.01.15

Gordon Ritchie
Gemselect Ltd
50-60 High Street
Battle
East Sussex
TN33 0EN

Sent by Email

Dear Gordon

Archery Road- proposed design changes

Further to recent discussions regarding the design at the Archery Road site in Hastings, I write to highlight Orbit's support in terms of the proposed changes.

Orbit would like to see the following changes made to the design:

1. Removal of the pedestrian footbridge

The proposed footbridge will pose a management issue for Orbit, particularly in relation to health and safety, maintenance and insurance aspects. The bridge will need to be monitored, insured and maintained regularly at a cost to the residents of the Archery Road scheme. This will add cost to an already expensive service charge with the potential for rental arrears to become apparent and is detrimental to Orbit providing affordable housing.

2. Removal of double balconies/terraces

It is Orbit's preference to omit double balconies/terraces from the scheme where these features are accessed off of a bedroom. For Orbit, it is uncommon for balconies accessed off of a bedroom to be used; they also pose a potential security and safety risk. The balconies accessed off of the living areas are satisfactory for residents' open space requirements therefore providing two balconies would be surplus to the scheme's requirements.

3. Removal of roof gardens

Orbit would prefer for the roof gardens on both the flat blocks and houses to be omitted from the design. The flats have sufficient outside space in the form of

balconies/terraces and the houses all have individual private gardens. We therefore feel that the roof gardens do not offer any additional amenity space. Orbit would not want residents to use the roof gardens for amenity purposes due to health and safety implications and possible anti social usage. We therefore require access to these areas to be restricted for our maintenance teams only and inaccessible to our customers.

In addition roof gardens require intensive maintenance, irrigation and drainage systems, are limited by climate conditions, and can be costly to maintain and repair. This will increase service charge costs to our customers of the scheme. It is common for roof gardens to quickly lose their appearance which deviates from the original intention and desired outcome.

I trust the above provides the necessary support for the proposed design changes. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any clarification.

Yours sincerely

Sophie Palmer
Development Manager

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Mobile: 07901510030

Email: Sophie.palmer@orbit.org.uk

From: <dennis.donovan@sussex.pnn.police.uk>
Date: 28 January 2015 14:52:14 GMT
To: <marcus.beale@marcus-beale.co.uk>
Cc: <KPhillips@hastings.gov.uk>, <gordon@gemselect.co.uk>
Subject: RE: Archery Road, St Leonards on Sea - Pedestrian bridge

Hi Marcus

Thank you for consulting me on the proposals for amending the approved layout and design of the above development. Please note that my comments are purely from a crime prevention viewpoint and may not accord with the thoughts of other interested parties.

The inclusion of this bridge is of no real benefit to the residents of the Archery Road scheme, as their main focus of movement would be to the south toward the seafront. The main beneficiaries of the bridge link would be the residents et al from Highlands Gardens and beyond who would utilise this route to and from the seafront area, although routes along Archery Road to the north and south of the site already exists.

Reducing the permeability across the site would benefit community safety and crime prevention. The Safer Places document states that the advantages for crime prevention of a layout with fewer connections include:

- Better opportunity to create 'defensible space'.
- Easier for residents to monitor and exercise control over immediate area.
- Fewer routes for criminals to escape along.
- Fewer excuses for offenders to be in the area, or less likelihood that they will enter the area by chance.

In addition to the issues raised by Orbit Housing, I also have some concerns that the presence of this bridge link might create a focal gathering point with potential for noise and anti social behaviour, to the detriment of the amenity of residential occupiers.

I hope that these comments will assist and be useful. Please contact me again if I can be of further help.

Regards

Dennis Donovan
Crime Prevention Design Adviser

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Sussex Police – Serving Sussex

From: Marcus Beale [mailto:marcus.beale@marcus-beale.co.uk]

Sent: Wednesday 28 January 2015 10:22

To: Donovan Dennis 63293

Cc: Marcus Beale; Karen Phillips; Gordon Ritchie

Subject: Archery Road, St Leonards on Sea - Pedestrian bridge

Dear Mr Donovan,

1. We are architects for the proposed development at Archery Road, St Leonard's on Sea.
2. In February 2014 planning permission was granted [Application no HS/FA/13/00590] for 'Conversion of grade II Listed buildings to create 24 units... erection of 97 residential units, with ... associated landscaping... works.'
3. Part of the scheme is a proposal to form a new pedestrian bridge linking the new podium to the northern end of the site at the bottom of Highland Gardens. I attach drawings showing the location and a sketch showing the design of the bridge. Condition 6 of the permission requires details for the proposed pedestrian bridge to be approved by the planning authority before development takes place.
4. The development is being taken forward by a new developer who has asked us to review the design. One of the things that has changed since the approved scheme is that the proportion of affordable housing has been increased, so that all the flats to the north of the site, and the central courtyard houses will be affordable housing, run by Orbit.
5. Orbit have asked us to remove the proposed bridge. They say:

'The proposed footbridge will pose a management issue for Orbit, particularly in relation to health and safety, maintenance and insurance aspects. The bridge will need to be monitored, insured and maintained regularly at a cost to the residents of the Archery Road scheme. This will

add cost to an already expensive service charge with the potential for rental arrears to become apparent and is detrimental to Orbit providing affordable housing.'

[Orbit letter to Gemselect 23 Jan 2015].

6. We would very much appreciate your views on this. Clearly we do not want to create problem areas for residents.

If it is possible for you to comment by the end of this week it would be greatly appreciated. We have a meeting with the residents on Monday 2 February. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me or my colleague Daniel Shabetai.

Many thanks and we look forward to hearing from you.

Marcus Beale

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Marcus Beale MA RIBA

director

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