**Application No:** 2017/0771  
**Application Type:** FULL  
**Case Officer:** Karim Badawi  
**Ward:** Walton Central Ward  
**Location:** Wellington Close Walton-On-Thames Surrey KT12 1BA  
**Proposal:** Replacement of external outer wall coverings with over-cladding of an insulated aluminium rainscreen system and installation of aluminium windows and glazed balustrades to all three buildings  
**Applicant:** ECD Architects  
**Agent:** Mr James Traynor  
ECD Architects  
Studio 3  
Blue Lion Place  
237 Long Lane  
London  
SE1 4PU  
**Decision Level:** If Permit – Sub Committee  
If Refuse – Sub Committee  
**Recommendation:** Permit

**Representations:** Twenty one letters of objections and one letter of observation raising the following concerns:
- Reduction in window size will lead to loss of light and reduced outlook
- Enclosure of refuse chutes
- Enclosure of communal balconies
- Health and safety impact on local residents
- Change of architectural style to iconic buildings
- The financial impact of the proposal onto the occupiers
- Disruption during the construction process and its impact on the occupiers
- Adverse impact on character of area and design has no heritage value
- Changes are not necessary
- Previous scheme was preferable
- Internal plans are not correct in relation to bathroom location

Nine letters of support to the proposal stating that the refurbishments are long over-due, the current state of the flats were dire and dangerous and that the proposal was agreed to by residents.

The application has been promoted by Cllr Woolgar if the recommendation is to permit.

***This application qualifies for public speaking***

**Report**

**Description**

1. The application site, Wellington Close, consists of 132 flats within three ten-storey towers and each have an adjacent two-storey spur block. The site is located on the north side of Hepworth Way to the east of Bridge Street and overlooking the Heart Shopping Centre to the south. The towers have an extensive glass façade across its full height with blue horizontal panelling marking each floor and the adjacent spur blocks have similar design features whilst the ground floor consists of concrete columns around the periphery of car parks.
Constraints

2. The relevant planning constraints for this application are:
   - Town Centre
   - Adjacent to Conservation Area (Walton Bridge Street/Church Street)

Policy

3. In addition to the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Planning Practice Guidance, the following local policies and guidance are relevant to the determination of this application:

   Core Strategy 2011
   CS3 – Walton on Thames
   CS17 – Local Character, Density and Design
   CS27 – Sustainable buildings

   Development Management Plan 2015
   DM1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development
   DM10 – Housing
   DM12 – Heritage
   DM20 – Open Space and views

   Design & Character SPD 2012

Relevant Planning History

4. Several planning application for separate blocks and flats, however, only applications concerned with the whole development are stated below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013/4871</td>
<td>Replacement of external outer wall coverings, installation of aluminium window frames and insulated cladding to brick elevations to all three buildings</td>
<td>Granted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007/2413</td>
<td>Two storey extension to form additional four flats to the top of each tower block (total 12 flats) and replacement of external cladding to the existing tower blocks and link spurs</td>
<td>Granted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Proposal

5. The proposal is for a replacement of external outer wall coverings with over-cladding of an insulated aluminium rain-screen system and installation of aluminium windows and glazed balustrades to all three buildings.

6. As stated within the Design and Access Statement, the aims of the project are to:
   - Carry out remedial works to damaged areas of the buildings and alleviate issues associated with deficiencies in the original design
   - Improved thermal comfort for the residents and a reduction in fuel consumption
   - Elimination of draughts, condensation, damp, water ingress & mould/fungus growth caused by defective and poorly insulated building fabric and lack of adequate waterproofing
   - Visual improvements to the exterior of the blocks
   - Compliance with current building regulations
   - Enhanced quality of life for residents

7. The existing windows appear to be from ceiling to sill. The proposed windows would be reduced in size by 44% in total vertically and horizontally. This would allow for some framing
above and on both sides of each window when viewed internally. The applicant has stated
that modifying the ratio between the walling to glazing, in addition to having a double glazing,
would create additional wall space internally for use by residents and improve the overall
thermal efficiency of the building.

8. The new cladding would achieve modern standards of thermal performance which would
result in typically 60% less energy consumption than existing. The proposed cladding would
have two toned grey colour with primary colour (lighter) at the middle of each façade and
accent colour (darker) between the windows vertically. Two options for clad samples were
submitted at a late stage of the application together with computer generated images, but
have not been subject to further public consultation. Option A is lighter in colour than Option B
as below:

- Option A: Primary Clad – Sunrise Silver Metallic 600
- Option A: Accent Clad – Brilliant Metallic 602
- Option B: Primary Clad – Smoke Silver Metallic 501
- Option B: Accent Clad - Grey Metallic 502

9. As explained by the applicant due to the shape of the buildings the communal balconies are
deeply recessed and therefore dark. Furthermore, as they are open, the recesses are
particularly prone to pigeon infestation. The proposal would replace the balconies with
windows, and the primary cladding externally, incorporating the space within the internal floor
space of the corridor.

10. Other changes to the buildings would include the private balconies, which would have
rendered wall boards behind glass balustrades, and the closing of refuse chutes due to their
small size and because they do not cater for recycling options in accordance with modern
standards.

Consultations

11. Planning Conservation – No adverse comments explaining that The Wellington Towers
buildings were located outside the boundary of the Walton Riverside Conservation Area but
due to their height, they formed part of the setting of both the conservation area and the
nearby Grade II listed buildings at 34 Bridge Street and 45/47 Bridge Street. The officer added
that the existing buildings currently had a rather tired appearance and did not consider that the
proposed over-cladding would have any negative impact on setting and indeed may actually
provide a visual improvement.

12. Heritage and Landscape Manager – The buildings were not identified as local landmark
buildings within the Design and Character SPD Companion Guide for Walton on Thames. The
materials proposed are similar to previous permission for over-cladding. There is a variety of
materials in the locality and the use of aluminium or brushed steel finish is not unusual and is
found on all street furniture within the High Street and The Heart. Recommend condition
relating to material samples.

Positive and Proactive Engagement

13. In assessing this application, officers have worked with the applicant in a positive and
proactive manner consistent with the requirements of 186-187 of the NPPF by making
available pre-application advice to seek to resolve problems before the application was
submitted and to foster the delivery of sustainable development.

14. Pre-application advice was not sought prior to the submission of this application.

Planning Considerations

15. The main planning considerations in the determination of this application are:

- The principle of the development
• The design of the proposal and its impact on the wider surrounding area
• The provision of suitable residential environment

The principle of the development

16. With reference to the above planning history planning application 2013/4871 permission was granted for the ‘Replacement of external outer wall coverings, installation of aluminium window frames and insulated cladding to brick elevations to all three buildings’. This expired in January 2017. The principle of the proposed development has been agreed under previous planning permission 2013/4871. Whilst this planning permission is no longer extant it is a material planning consideration.

17. Since the grant of the previous planning permission the Council has adopted the Elmbridge Development Management Plan. This document provides further guidance on that contained within the Core Strategy (2011). It is considered that the proposal complies with the Development Management Plan, in particular Policy DM2 relating to design and amenity.

18. In addition to the above, the applicant argues that the current buildings are in dire need of repair, the glazing is poor and the existing walls compromised and have un-insulated curtain walling which results in significant heat loss, excessive draughts and condensation. Additionally the upper floor flats are also affected by water penetration through the roofs. Several remedies have been applied to the insulation of the roofs unsuccessfully.

19. Within the Council’s Design and Character SPD Companion Guide for Walton-on-Thames, the site falls just outside the Town Centre sub-area which wraps around its east and part of its north and south edge. The area of The Heart and Wellington Close is described as having a strong urban character with the highest density of housing and mixed uses in the borough. Building heights and masses vary but include multi-story buildings such as the Heart and Thamesview House. The ten-story tower blocks at Wellington Close are not identified as local landmark buildings, as such, the principle of changing their appearance and design would be considered acceptable subject to considerations discussed below.

The design of the proposal and its impact on the wider surrounding area

20. The proposal would result in three identical buildings with two-toned grey panelled buildings. It is noted that the previous approved proposal had more colours (with pastel blue, single grey and slight darkened tint) and maintained the existing window sizes. However, the current proposal of monotone hues and smaller windows would bring the towers to modern/ current manifestation which subsequently would improve the backdrop of the area and adequately respond to the modern architecture of The Heart across the road from the site.

21. In addition to the above, the Heritage and Landscape Manager stated that there are a wide variety of construction materials in the locality, and recognised that the use of aluminium or brushed steel finish is not unusual in the area and is found on all the street furniture within the High Street and The Heart. Additionally, the Conservation Officer considered the existing building to have a rather tired appearance and for the proposal to be a visual improvement. It was suggested that slight variations in the finish could create more depth and variation to relieve the mass of the proposed elevations. Material samples and computer generated images have recently been received by the Council. However, a safeguarding condition is proposed to agree the final materials.

The provision of a suitable residential environment

22. The proposed cladding would result in smaller windows across the buildings. The floor plans show internal walls at the edge of each room compared to existing open glazing across the external walls. However, the retained windows would still be considered large in size, achieving daylight within BRE standards and would not be considered to result in a poor outlook for occupiers that would be detrimental to amenity. The applicant stated that this change was voted on by Wellington Close residents in March 2016 with 67% in favour.
23. The proposal would include bringing the building up to modern standards of building regulation. Representation letters raised concerns in relation to health and safety of the building and existing occupiers, however, this aspect would be checked for compliance under the Building Regulations process which would include means of escape, fire regulations and allocation of dry risers and thermal insulation.

Matters raised in Representations

24. The concerns in relation to the financial burden resulting from the proposal and construction disruption are noted. However, they are not material planning considerations.

25. The concerns raised in relation to construction nuisance and safety to residents and the professionalism of the management company, particularly towards the elderly, are noted however, they are not material planning considerations.

26. Other matters are discussed within the report above.

Conclusion

27. On the basis of the above, and in light of any other material considerations, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the development plan. Accordingly, the recommendation is to grant permission.

Recommendation: Grant Permission

Conditions/Reasons

1. TIME LIMIT (FULL APPLICATION)
The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 51 of Part 4 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. LIST OF APPROVED PLANS
The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in strict accordance with the following list of approved plans: 1000 Rev A; 1100 Rev A; 1400 Rev A; 1401 Rev; 1402 Rev A; 1403 Rev A; 1600 Rev A; 1601 Rev A; 1602 Rev A; 1603 Rev A; 1702 Rev A and SK-002 Rev A received on 08 March 2017.

Reason: To ensure that the development is carried out in a satisfactory manner.

3. MATERIALS SAMPLES
NOTWITHSTANDING THE SUBMITTED MATERIAL DETAILS, NO DEVELOPMENT SHALL TAKE PLACE UNTIL SAMPLES OF THE MATERIALS TO BE USED ON THE EXTERNAL FACES AND ROOF OF THE BUILDING HAVE BEEN SUBMITTED TO AND APPROVED IN WRITING BY THE BOROUGH COUNCIL. DEVELOPMENT SHALL BE CARRIED OUT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE APPROVED DETAILS.

Reason: To ensure that a satisfactory external appearance is achieved of the development in accordance with Policy DM2 of the Elmbridge Development Management Plan 2015. It is considered necessary for this to be a pre-commencement condition because the use of satisfactory external materials goes to the heart of the planning permission.
1. All dimensions to be checked on site.
2. Refer to Structural Engineer's drawings, details and specification for all structural components.
3. Refer to Mechanical & Electrical Engineer's drawings, schedules and specifications for all services.
4. Manufacturers guidance and recommendations to be followed for installation of all construction components.
5. All dimensions to be in millimetres unless otherwise specified.
Note: Telecom installations on roof of Block A only.

1. All dimensions to be checked on site.
2. Refer to Structural Engineer's drawings, details and specification for all structural components.
3. Refer to Mechanical & Electrical Engineer's drawings, schedules and specifications for all services.
4. Follow manufacturers' guidance and recommendations for installation of all construction components.
5. All dimensions to be in millimetres unless otherwise specified.

Existing Elevation - West
Existing Elevation - South
Existing Elevation - East
Existing Elevation - North

Podium/Tower Block Connection Existing Section
Podium/Tower Block Connection Existing Section 3
Wing/Tower Existing Section 2

As indicated @ A1

21.03.16 DH

31.03.16 DH

Wellington Close Management Company
Wellington Close Walton on Thames KT12 1BA

Existing Elevations

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1. All dimensions to be checked on site.
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**NOTES**

ECDA COMPUTER FILE

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**Materials**

1. Aluminium rainscreen cladding
2. Aluminium windows/doors
3. Glazed balustrades
4. Aluminium parapet cap

**Note:**
Glazing and panel arrangement based on internal partition layout from survey information. In the event of differing conditions on site, arrangement to reflect basic principle of glazing throughout with the exception of junctions between internal and external walls.

1. All dimensions to be checked on site.
2. Refer to Structural Engineer's drawings, details and specification for all structural components.
3. Refer to Mechanical & Electrical Engineer's drawings, schedules and specifications for all services.
4. Manufacturers guidance and recommendations to be followed for installation of all construction components.
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Note:
Glazing and panel arrangement based on internal partition layout from survey information. In the event of differing conditions on site, arrangement to reflect basic principle of glazing throughout with the exception of junctions between internal and external walls.
1. All dimensions to be checked on site.

2. Refer to Structural Engineer's drawings, details and specification for all structural components.

3. Refer to Mechanical & Electrical Engineer's drawings, schedules and specifications for all services.

4. Manufacturers' guidance and recommendations to be followed for installation of all construction components.

5. All dimensions to be in millimetres unless otherwise specified.
Materials:

Tower and podium cladding system:
Aluminium composite panel rainscreen on a carrier system.

Windows
Polyester powder coated double glazed aluminium openable/fixed windows.

Tower block roof
Built-up insulated single-ply roof system. Removal of telecom installation to roof of block A. removal of cleaning cradles to all blocks.

Podium roof
Built-up insulated single-ply roof system

Notes:
1. All dimensions to be checked on site.
2. Refer to Structural Engineer's drawings, details and specification for all structural components.
3. Refer to Mechanical & Electrical Engineer's drawings, schedules and specifications for all services.
4. Manufacturers guidance and recommendations to be followed for installation of all construction components.
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As indicated @ A3

Planning
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Wellington Close Walton on Thames KT12 1BA

Proposed Floor Plan - Tower Levels 03-09

1:100

Floor Plan - Tower Levels 03-09

1:100