

2.3 REFERENCE NO - 18/505192/FULL & 18/505193LBC		
APPLICATION PROPOSAL Alterations to renovate South Forstal Farmhouse and make fit for habitation including new porch, doors, windows, dormer, rooflight and room alterations.		
ADDRESS South Forstal Farm Almshouse Road Throwley Forstal Faversham Kent ME13 0PJ		
RECOMMENDATION - GRANT subject to conditions and to referral to the Government's Planning Casework Unit.		
SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION the proposed works would not materially harm the special interest of this listed building (as its essential farmhouse character would still be retained and apparent) and when weighed against the benefits of being able to bring the building back into a long-term sustainable use whereby that it could be lived in and cared for		
REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE Objection from SPAB		
WARD East Downs	PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL Throwley	APPLICANT Mr Frank Stears AGENT John Burke Associates
DECISION DUE DATE - 04/12/18		PUBLICITY EXPIRY DATE - 16/11/18

Planning History

17/502011/LBC

Listed Building Consent for alterations and renovation of existing dwelling to include new porch and front door, new patio rear doors, new and replacement windows, new dormer and rooflight, plus room alterations including forming new en-suite and bathroom at first floor.
 Withdrawn Decision Date: 13.07.2017

17/502010/FULL

Alterations and renovation of existing dwelling to include new porch and front door, new patio rear doors, new and replacement windows, new dormer and rooflight, plus room alterations including forming new en-suite and bathroom at first floor.
 Refused Decision Date: 06.07.2017

1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE

- 1.1 South Forstal Farm is a grade II listed building which lies within the designated countryside, in the small settlement of Throwley Forstal. The building sits within the Throwley Forstal conservation area and within the designated Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- 1.2 The farm house is currently vacant and has fallen into significant disrepair. Several agricultural outbuildings surround the yard including the adjacent grade II listed barn.
- 1.3 The official listing description states the following:

'House. C16 and refaced C18. Timber framed and clad with painted brick on ground floor and weather boarded on first floor. Plain tiled roof. Two storeys on plinth and hipped roof with stacks to left and projecting at end right. Two wooden casements on each floor and central boarded door with catslide outshot to left.'

2. PROPOSAL

2.1 Following the earlier refused and withdrawn applications for alterations, pre-application advice was sought, and the requested amendments have been made to drawings and an additional Condition Report on external windows and doors has been submitted as part of the planning and listed building consent applications. The current proposal consists of (noting that the elevations are all wrongly labelled on the drawings):

- On the south west facing rear elevation mullions are to be exposed at first floor level beneath the catslide roof where a former window has been tiled over to add a conservation rooflight, and a new dormer to provide headroom above a new primary stairs is proposed, this being fitted to replace the existing awkward C19 staircase.
- On the north west 'front' (end) elevation a new front entrance porch is to be constructed to the new hallway orienting the house front to face Almshouse Road. The former front door on the original main front north east elevation will become a 'faux' door.
- On the south east rear (end) elevation new 'french' doors are to be installed from the kitchen to the rear garden area, and it is proposed to widen the existing window to provide daylight to the kitchen area. The existing side door will be retained and a separate utility room created leading to a ground floor closet/wc.
- "It is intended to retain as many of the external windows and doors as are reasonably capable of being repaired and only replace with like-for-like where absolutely necessary." A full condition report is attached with replacement justification where appropriate.
- The former room layout at both ground and first floor will be re-arranged this includes creating a new 'en-suite' SH/WC to the master bedroom 1 and an adjacent family bathroom/wc which requires the creation of a new hallway to bedroom 2.
- The now defunct and partially already removed C19 'copper' clothes washing tub in the kitchen will be removed together with the defunct former chimney to the long since removed former 'bread oven'.
- All exposed timbers will be retained except where new wall openings are created for fire exit safety all lathe and plaster walls will be retained and repaired where necessary.

3. PLANNING CONSTRAINTS

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty KENT DOWNS

Conservation Area Throwley Forstal

Listed Buildings MBC and SBC Ref Number: 49/SW

Description: G II SOUTH FORSTALL FARM, ALMSHOUSE ROAD, THROWLEY, FAVERSHAM

4. POLICY AND CONSIDERATIONS

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 12, (core planning principles), 124 (good design), 170, 172, (conserving and enhancing the natural environment)

Development Plan: Bearing Fruits 2031: The Swale Borough Local Plan 2017 policies ST1, DM14, DM32 & DM33

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG): Listed Buildings' and 'Conservation Areas

5. LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

- 5.1 The Faversham Society commented that *“the alterations to the listed building appear relatively minor. However, the Heritage Statement does not explain why the alterations are acceptable on the inside and the outside of a Listed Building, including the removal of a staircase between the ground floor and first floors which is not usually acceptable in a listed building. More detail in the Heritage Statement should be requested”*

6. CONSULTATIONS

- 6.1 Throwley Parish Council has considered the applications and fully supports both, saying that *“approval would enhance this corner of the Forstal and enable the farmhouse to be inhabited again”*.
- 6.2 SPAB (The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings) has commented that whilst they were happy the property is to be repaired and hope the general principle of “only repair as necessary” will prevail. They were concerned with the removal of the C19 staircase and would prefer it to remain in situ with perhaps better lighting and/or additional handrails.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PLANS

Application papers and drawings referring to applications 18/505192/FULL & 18/505193LBC.

8. APPRAISAL

- 8.1 This property has been empty for some time, and poorly maintained for some years previously. It is now in a state of disrepair and I am inclined to be supportive of works to bring it back into full use. However, given this is also a listed building particular attention needs to be paid to the detail of the proposals to ensure this special building or its setting is not harmed by the proposals.
- 8.2 I understand the submitted scheme was informed by a historic building report produced by the Canterbury Archaeological Trust (CAT) and by the written officer pre application advice provided following the earlier refused and withdrawn applications here.
- 8.3 It remains the case that a significant concern with the proposals, as it was the case at pre-application stage, is the proposed dormer on the currently uninterrupted catslide roof slope of the south west elevation of the building. In this respect, my view is that whilst ideally the dormer would be removed from the scheme, on balance it is one of the small number of compromises necessary to make the house suitable for sustainable future use as a family dwelling. The dormer shown on the submitted drawings is appropriately scaled, positioned and detailed, and it should be noted that the existing dormer on the south elevation is not original, but added in the C17. I therefore see the proposed new dormer on the already altered southeast elevation as part of the (sensitive) ongoing evolution of the house, responding to its changed context.

- 8.4 The proposed new rooflight on this same elevation is justified in my view as it effectively makes use of a former window opening that has since been tiled over, and would allow the mullions of that former window to be exposed again as an internal feature. The rooflight would provide additional light and ventilation to the proposed bedroom which would otherwise be reliant on the existing small north facing casement window. I see this as an exception to normal policy relating to such rooflights on exposed roofslopes.
- 8.5 The floor plan of the building is recognised and appropriately largely retained with minimal alteration in the proposed internal layout of the building.
- 8.6 The proposal to replace the current larger kitchen window with French doors (using the same size opening) and to add a simple open porch to the north west (street facing) elevation would render the building more usable from a residential amenity perspective without resulting in the loss of any important historic fabric or materially altering the essential special character of this grade II listed (former farmhouse) building and I consider these alterations to be acceptable.
- 8.7 I note the comments provided by SPAB and the Faversham Society Planning Committee and appreciate their concerns regarding the loss of the staircase, as it was one of the issues I raised at the pre-application stage. I can appreciate that it is a shame to lose the existing staircase, but the CAT report suggests that it is actually a C19 insertion; and after inspecting the property I would concur with this view. As such, I consider on balance that it is not of sufficient heritage significance to require it to be retained in its present form e.g. perhaps as a secondary (non Building Regulations compliant) stair. I have sought to ask SPAB to review their comments in the light of my own conclusions, but to no avail. In these circumstances, any approval of the listed building consent application must be referred to the Government's Planning Casework Unit to enable the Secretary of State to determine the application himself, if he wishes to. This referral can be made if Members agree the recommendation to grant listed building consent.
- 8.8 Finally, to address previous concerns regarding the proposed wholesale replacement of all the windows (albeit on a like-for-like basis), the requested condition survey of the windows has now been provided setting out the proposed degree of repair and/or replacement work for each window. Having assessed this I consider it to form a sound basis for works to proceed in relation to the windows, although it will still be necessary for detailed joinery drawings to be provided where replacement windows are specified due to the degree of decay present.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The proposed renovation and associated alteration scheme is perhaps not ideal from a pure building conservation perspective, due to the loss of the existing staircase and the introduction of the dormer for the replacement modern stair on the south west side of the building. However, I do not consider that these changes would materially harm the special interest of this listed building (as its essential farmhouse character would still be retained and apparent) and when weighed against the benefits of being able to bring the building back into a long-term sustainable use whereby that it could be lived in and cared for, it is on balance, a relatively small compromise worth accepting. I consider that the aims of paragraph 197 of the NPPF are met. I therefore consider that

both applications are acceptable in overall terms and from a conservation and design perspective and recommend they be approved.

- 10. RECOMMENDATION: Grant** both planning permission and listed building consent subject to the following conditions:

CONDITIONS - 18/505192/FULL – Planning application

- (1) The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date on which the permission is granted.

Reason: In pursuance of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- (2) The development shall be carried out in accordance with drawings 607-04 Rev A and 607-05 Rev A

Reason: In the interests of proper planning

The Council's approach to the application

In accordance with paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), July 2018 the Council takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. We work with applicants/agents in a positive and creative way by offering a pre-application advice service, where possible, suggesting solutions to secure a successful outcome and as appropriate, updating applicants / agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application.

The application was considered by the Planning Committee where the applicant/agent had the opportunity to speak to the Committee and promote the application.

INFORMATIVES

- (1) The boundary fence noted on drawing 607-01 Rev A is not authorised by this approval and will require a separate grant of planning permission.

CONDITIONS - 18/505193/LBC – Listed Building Consent

- (1) The works to which this consent relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date on which this consent is granted.

Reason: In pursuance of Section 18 of the Listed Building Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- (2) No new or replacement joinery shall be installed in the building unless 1:10 elevation detail and a 1:1 or 1:2 plan and vertical section for each new or replacement window and door (including the new French windows) to be inserted into the building have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interest of the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building.

- (3) Prior to insertion of the new rooflight, manufacturer's brochure and detailed specification details of the specific conservation rooflight product to be used 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.

Reason: In the interest of the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building.

- (4) Prior to insertion of the new staircase a 1:1 or 1:2 part vertical section construction detail of the proposed staircase (and any associated skirting detail and any associated handrail) 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.

Reason: In the interest of the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building.

- (5) No works in connection with construction of the new porch shall begin until a 1:10 elevation detail (front and side elevations) and a 1:5 plan or vertical section (as appropriate) through the ridge, posts, brackets and verge detail of the porch have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The drawings shall be annotated to show the proposed facing and roofing materials to be used. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interest of the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building.

- (6) Prior to construction of the new dormer window a 1:10 elevation detail (of the front and side elevations) and a 1:5 vertical section through the main ridge and hip ridge of the dormer shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The drawings shall be annotated to show the proposed facing and roofing materials to be used. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interest of the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building.

- (7) No new facing or roofing materials shall be used in the construction of the proposed open porch and dormer other than in accordance with samples of materials which have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Authority.

Reason: In the interest of the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building.

- (8) All works shall proceed in accordance with a detailed schedule of, and specification of repairs which shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interest of the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building.

- (9) The works to the existing windows and doors shall not extend beyond the extent of works set out in the approved Condition Report report by the Olson Design Group dated January 2018 unless otherwise previously agreed in writing and specifically set out in a specific section on windows and doors in the schedule of repairs document required to be provided in relation to condition 8 above.

Reason: In the interest of the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building.

- (10) All making good works to be carried out using matching materials and finishes (including colour finish).

Reason: In the interest of the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building.

NB For full details of all papers submitted with this application please refer to the relevant Public Access pages on the council's website. The conditions set out in the report may be subject to such reasonable change as is necessary to ensure accuracy and enforceability.

