

3.2 REFERENCE NO - 19/505886/FULL			
APPLICATION PROPOSAL Replacement of ground floor front door and 2no. first floor French doors (Part Retrospective)			
ADDRESS 2 Millers Cottages Belvedere Road Faversham Kent ME13 7LN			
RECOMMENDATION - Refuse			
REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE Town Council in support			
WARD Abbey	PARISH/TOWN Faversham Town	COUNCIL	APPLICANT Mr Raymond Lindley
DECISION DUE DATE 28/04/20		PUBLICITY EXPIRY DATE 03/04/20	

Relevant planning history

SW/01/0898

Demolition of silos and weigh bridge and the erection of a terrace of six 3 storey town houses, each with two bedrooms and an integral garage

Approved Decision Date 23.07.2002

1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE

- 1.1 2 Millers Cottage is a modern three storey mid-terraced property located within the Faversham conservation area, built on former industrial land. The terrace was granted planning permission in 2002 after substantial design negotiations, as part of the largely residential based redevelopment of Faversham Creekside. Here, the overall design approach was intended to reflect the industrial heritage of the Creekside. To that end the agreed approach employed large industrial scale buildings (subdivided into houses and flats) rather than individual domestic scale structures that would have looked far more like a typical housing estate, and which would have eroded the heritage value of the area.
- 1.2 The aesthetic chosen for Millers Cottages is that of a converted warehouse, or reminiscent of a weaver's workshop, with the top floor windows embedded in vertical timber panelling spanning the entire width of the block. The unity of the design is key to minimising the domesticity of the architecture; and all properties in the block were built with natural slate roofs, timber cladding and timber doors and windows. Until now, they have all retained that unity. Condition (19) of the original planning permission SW/01/0898 prohibits further alterations to the houses as a means of protecting the original design intentions of cohesion and retaining the original aesthetic.
- 1.3 The terrace is also subject to the Council's Article 4(2) Direction dated May 2007 which was issued in order to prevent piecemeal degradation of the town via incremental Permitted Development changes and, ideally, to raise the standard of appearance of properties when changes are being made.

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 This application seeks planning permission for a replacement ground floor front door and two first floor French doors. The front door (already installed) is a GRP composite door with woodgrain finish, again in white but with a larger window in the upper part. The first floor glazed doors would be replaced in aluminium. The applicant has sent photographs of the door and of doors found on various recent developments nearby – some wood, some metal, and has set out on the application for the reasoning behind the proposals as follows:

'Replacement of ground floor front door and first-floor French doors (x2) with replacements. The existing ground floor entrance door and the 1st floor French doors, installed as part of the new build of the property in 2004, are past their workable life with the locks failing, the softwood timber degrading and varnish peeling. The softwood doors and frames provide very poor insulation and the design of the doors, particularly the ground floor entrance door gives very poor security. Light and draughts can be seen and felt around each of the doors due to the degrading of the wood which significantly compromises the thermal efficiency and environmental credentials of the property.

'For the ground floor door: the existing window in the door limits the amount of natural light that enters in the north-west facing door meaning that an electric light needs to be constantly switched on in the hallway. We wish to increase the size of the front door window to allow in further natural light adding considerably to the environmental credentials of the replacement.

'The Ground floor entrance door would be constructed with industry-leading GRP (Glass Reinforced Polyester) noted for its suitability for the marine environment. The composite door in Anglian's Cottage range is designed to create a country feel replicating the natural grain of wood and continuing the modern cottage style architectural design theme of the 2005 build date of the house and to match the existing creme paintwork.

'The 1st-floor French doors would be replaced with Aluminium doors to replicate the existing style and design again suitable for the marine environment of the creek to match the existing grey paintwork.

'All doors frames and cills/thresholds would be professionally installed by the leading installer Anglian windows. The doors are installed with kitemarked 3-star Ultion cylinder locks. The lock system is built with unparalleled inner strength to protect our property from the different forms of attack used by burglars, leaving our door safely 'locked. Our replacement doors would consist of:

- Steel keeper plates and robust hinges for high-performance security*
- Energy-efficiency, keeping the cold out and the warmth in*
- Low maintenance for the marine environment of the creek*
- Anti-drill: Specialised anti-drill pins in the barrel provide resistance.*

- *Anti-pick: The pin stack is designed to make it impossible to pick the lock.*
- *Anti-snap: Special cuts allow a small section of the cylinder to be sacrificed under attack, leaving the remainder intact.*
- *Anti-plug extraction: Special sections snap when attacked, leaving the rest of the plug whole. The anti-snap cuts provide additional resistance.*
- *Anti-bump: The pin stack design prevents even the most advanced bump keys from working.'*

and

'The existing timber doors, frames and sill/threshold's installed as part of the new build of the property in 2005 had passed a workable life with the locks failing, the softwood timber degrading and the paintwork peeling and the cills subject to wear and tear. The existing badly fitted softwood doors on the ground floor and first floor give very poor insulation significantly impacting our energy bills and presenting very poor security. Light and draughts can be seen and felt around each of the doors due to the degrading of the wood which has rotten in places, significantly compromising the thermal efficiency and environmental credentials of the property. Thus, the timber frames, doors and sill/threshold's would thus need to be removed to allow installation of full replacements.'

3. PLANNING CONSTRAINTS

Swale Article 4 directive

Conservation Area Faversham

4. POLICY AND CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 Bearing Fruits 2031: The Swale Borough Local Plan 2017 policies

CP4 (Requiring good design)

CP8 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment)

DM14 (General Development)

DM16 (Alterations and extensions)

DM33 (Development affecting a conservation area)

4.2 Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) 'Designing and Extension' and 'Conservation Areas'. The former contains the following guidance which I consider is also relevant to alterations to houses:

"4.0 On any house, an extension should be well designed to reflect its existing character. The use of matching bricks, other facing materials, and roof tiles with appropriate doors and windows is essential if an extension is not to upset the appearance of the house or the area as a whole."

- 4.3 The Council's SPG advice for conservation areas contains the following statement:

"C Alterations

6.9 The quality and interest of a conservation area is made up from the sum of all its parts. Modest buildings such as terraced house and cottages can contribute to the character of the area. It follows that alterations to these buildings can therefore have a considerable impact upon the appearance and quality of the conservation area. Repairs carried out in like materials using traditional methods will have little or no effect but quite small changes such as replacement of timber sash windows with plastic or metal framed windows, can not only downgrade the appearance of the building and the conservation area, but can also devalue the property itself. The Council, therefore, asks property owners within conservation areas to think carefully before altering their buildings or undertaking repairs...Doing things the right way will be vital to help maintain the attractiveness of an area. It can then continue to be appreciated by residents and visitors alike."

5. LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

- 5.1 None

6. CONSULTATIONS

- 6.1 Faversham Town Council is in support of the application, saying that *"There is already a range of different front doors in the area"*.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PLANS

- 7.1 Application papers for application 19/505886/FULL

8. APPRAISAL

- 8.1 The main issue to consider on this application is the affect of the new GRP composite front door and proposed metal French windows on the character and unity of the overall building and, in turn, the effect on the surrounding Faversham conservation area.

- 8.2 I am mindful of the SPG advice set out above, and that adopted Local Plan policy DM33 states that;

'development (including change of use and the demolition of unlisted buildings or other structures) within, affecting the setting of, or views into and out of a conservation area, will preserve or enhance all features that contribute positively to the area's special or appearance'.

- 8.3 This property lies within the Faversham conservation area and it is one of a number of former industrial sites on the east bank of Faversham Creek. It lies to the east of Belvedere Road and hence its eastern (rear) boundary is also the rear boundary of properties on the western side of Abbey Street, a street of historic properties mainly in residential use.

- 8.4 The application relates to a short terrace of modern properties with a carefully designed and tightly controlled, unified, and consistent appearance. With regard to the proposed

front door which has already been installed without permission, it is clear to me that with its GRP imitation woodgrain appearance does not match the character of the original timber doors on the rest of the terrace of properties. The proposed door is not in keeping and would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the host property, the adjoining properties and that of the surrounding conservation area.

- 8.5 I also find that the proposal to install aluminium French doors would be at odds with the features, forms, materials and treatments of Millers Cottages, which collectively are an important part of the character of the area. Here, the entire terrace of properties is read as one building, with domesticity limited by common standards, and the terrace needs to retain its homogeneous and in-keeping appearance. Any variation which detracts from the homogeneity and is not likely to be acceptable.
- 8.6 In my view the architecture of the entire block relies on a consistency of detailing to appear appropriate to the area. This is not a typical row of houses where individuality can be enjoyed, but a particularly sensitive style of block where the overall impression is greater than a sum of its parts, and where each part has a role to play in maintaining that character. To start tinkering with the inherent unity of the block risks its losing its character altogether.
- 8.7 I note the applicant's referral to other nearby doors, but even though the Town Council echo that comment, those doors are not on this particular block and are each appropriate to their own situation. I do not believe that reference to doors elsewhere is any justification for harming the character of this particular block. Nor do I find the applicant's arguments about energy efficiency convincing. There is no reason why timber joinery is incompatible with high standards of energy efficiency and the proposal here appears to be an inconsiderate and unsustainable way of targeting one objective at the expense of another, rather than a rounded and well thought through solution.
- 8.8 I would wish to see the original door re-instated, (or an updated one to the same external design) and it is important to remember that the Council has a statutory duty to consider the preservation or enhancement of a conservation area, even for smaller proposals. For all development proposals it must clearly be shown that the proposal will preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and I am of the opinion that the newly fitted door and the proposed metal French doors will detract from the traditional character of the entire block, and would be contrary to policy DM33.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 In my view the proposals would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and would be contrary to policy DM33. I therefore recommend that the application be refused.

10. RECOMMENDATION - Refuse for the following reason:

REASON

- (1) The replacement front door, together with the replacement of French doors on this individual; property which site within a well designed and well preserved single homogeneously designed block, would detract from the character of the property

itself, from the block as a whole, and would fail to preserve or enhance the special character and appearance of the conservation area. The proposal is therefore contrary to saved policies CP4, CP8, DM14, DM16 and DM33 Bearing Fruits 2031: The Swale Borough Local Plan 2017, and contrary to the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance relating to householder extensions and conservation areas.

The Council's approach to the application

In accordance with paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), February 2019 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.

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.



Ordnance Survey - data derived from OS Premium

19/505886/FULL - 2 Millers Cottages Belvedere Road Faversham
Scale: 1:1000
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