

2.3 REFERENCE NO - 14/505542/FULL			
APPLICATION PROPOSAL Renovation and extension of No. 1a Saxon Road; and erection of two 2 bedroom semi-detached dwellings together with associated amenity and parking spaces			
ADDRESS 1A Saxon Road Faversham Kent ME13 8QA			
RECOMMENDATION - Approve			
SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguards amenity • No significant harm to highway safety • Innovative design and modern materials 			
REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE Objection from Faversham Town Council/ three letters of objection from neighbouring residents			
WARD St Ann's	PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL Faversham	APPLICANT Mr Paul Sharma AGENT Mr Ronan Bond	
DECISION DUE DATE 04/03/15	PUBLICITY EXPIRY DATE 04/03/15	OFFICER SITE VISIT DATE 22/1/15	
RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY (including appeals and relevant history on adjoining sites):			
App No	Proposal	Decision	Date
SW/12/0558	Restoration and extension of No. 1A Saxon Road to form one 1-bed and one 2-bed flat. Change of use of commercial premises at rear to residential use and erection of two 2-bed semi-detached dwellings together with associated amenity and parking spaces	Approved by planning committee	20 th August 2012
SW/79/0728	Change of use of the site to a direct mail handling business, warehouse and offices	Approved	

1.0 DESCRIPTION OF SITE

This site is located within the built up area boundary of Faversham and is within Faversham conservation area. It comprises of a long narrow plot, measuring 55 metres by 9 metres, which runs from Saxon Road to the end of the commercial building which abuts gardens of Victorian properties to the north, south and east in Stone Street, Norman Road and Roman respectively. At the front of the site is an existing Victorian detached dwelling.

2.0 PROPOSAL

The application seeks planning permission to extend no 1a Saxon Road, the property at the front of the site, and to erect a pair of semi-detached houses to the rear of the site. Associated amenity works and parking spaces are also proposed.

In terms of the extension to the existing dwelling at the front of the site, it would project sideways to the boundary of the site providing a first floor extension and a gap at ground floor to provide vehicular access to the rear of the site. As part of the proposed works to the existing dwelling the windows in the front elevation would be replaced with traditional box sash windows to match the

proposed window proposed within the extension at first floor and the paint on the front elevation would also be removed. Existing concrete tiles would be replaced with slates. A rear garden would be provided measuring 7 metres in length.

In terms of site layout, to the rear of the garden for no 1a would be three parking spaces, a vehicle turning space and a bike shed. To the rear of this would be the garden for unit 2, then the pair of dwellings and the garden to unit 3 abutting the rear boundary of the site.

In terms of layout, the proposed dwellings would be identical and would feature an open plan kitchen/ diner and living room at ground floor with a WC and utility room with two bedrooms and a bathroom at first floor. In terms of design and construction, the proposal is very modern and designed primarily to meet a brief of low maintenance finishes to minimise the need for access to adjoining properties and reduction of carbon footprint through the use of solar panels.

The front elevation of the pair of semi detached dwellings would feature white rendered walls at ground level with rockpanel cladding in the centre. The windows and doors would be of aluminium construction coloured dark grey. The front roof slope would be completely covered in black solar panels and the highest point of the roof curves rather than meeting a ridge; the curve would be finished with curved roof lights. These roof lights would provide natural light through the centre of the dwellings at both ground and first floor levels. The rear of the property would feature a shorter roof slope with natural ventilation along the whole of the roof slope and a green planted roof. The central section of the dwelling would feature a slate hanging wall and lean to section with a slate roof. The remaining parts of the elevation would be clad in shades of green and grey.

The application is accompanied by a Design and Access statement. Extracts read as follows;

“Our evaluation of the light study indicates that the existing scheme will provide uneven amounts of natural light to the two semi-detached houses with unit 1 being poorly lit. The roof and south elevation receive most light but are little used in the existing design.

The desire to minimise the overall height of the building and the east -west roof configuration have combined to restrict the ceiling heights to an undesirable 2.3m

These observations informed our revised brief for the new houses;

- *The roof should provide a significant portion of the glazing*
- *The South elevation should be made available for both units, i.e split the building North - South*
- *The Roof should include a South facing element, angled at between 30 and 45 degrees. In order to install enough panels to produce 2 systems rated at around 4kW the roof will need to accommodate at least 24 panels of 1.6m x 1m.*
- *The South elevation should be pulled away from the boundary wall to allow pedestrian access from Saxon Road and to enable natural light to reach the ground floor.*
- *Minimum ceiling height should be 2.5m*

The amount of housing suitable for the rest of the site is governed by the other 2 factors. Building a large number of smaller houses or flats would leave the scheme with insufficient parking for the residents. The development has therefore been restricted to 2 additional houses, allowing one parking space each. A further parking space is provided for the Victorian house. This will also limit the traffic through the arched entrance to the site.

The concerns of the local residents with regard to loss of light and being overlooked have informed the height and shape of the new houses which are 1 ½ floors, i.e ground floor with bedrooms in the roof space. The overall height of the new houses will be no greater than the existing building. The roof has been designed to minimise the shadow cast over the gardens to the North, while allowing enough internal volume for the accommodation needed.

The new building has been designed to be as unobtrusive as possible to the residents either side of the scheme while satisfying the need to provide adequate accommodation and solar power. Its surface treatments vary according to their visibility and position in relation to the surrounding gardens.

• Ground floor walls that face the gardens and passageway are white render, to reflect light into the spaces around them. These surfaces are not visible from surrounding gardens.”

3.0 PLANNING CONSTRAINTS

Potential Archaeological Importance

Faversham conservation area

4.0 POLICY AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Development Plan (saved policies of the Swale Borough Local Plan 2008) are material considerations in the determination of this application:

4.2 The national policy position comprises the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which was released in 2012.

4.3 It provides national guidance for Local Planning Authorities on plan making and in determining planning applications. A presumption in favour of sustainable development runs throughout the document and this presumption is an important part of both the plan-making process and in determining planning applications stating;

“2.31 There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:

• an economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;

• a social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community’s needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and

• an environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy. (Para 7 NPPF)”

4.4 One of the core principles of the document is to “encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value”.

4.5 Also of relevance are the saved policies of the Swale Borough Local Plan 2008, in particular; FAV1 (The Faversham and Rest of Swale Planning Area), E1 (General Development Criteria), E15 (Development Affecting a Conservation Area), E19 (Achieving High Quality Design and Distinctiveness), B1 (Supporting & Retaining Existing Employment Land and Businesses), H2 (Providing for New Housing), T1 (Providing Safe Access to New

Development) and T3 (Vehicle Parking for New Development) of the Swale Borough Local Plan 2008.

- 4.6 Policy E1 sets out standards applicable to all development, saying that it should be well sited, appropriate in scale, design and appearance with a high standard of landscaping, and have safe pedestrian and vehicular access whilst avoiding unacceptable consequences in highway terms.
- 4.9 Policy B1 deals with supporting and retaining existing employment land and businesses.
- 4.10 Policy H2 explains that planning permission for new residential development will be granted for sites shown as allocated for such on the Proposals Map, including the Area Action Plans and within the defined built-up areas, as shown on the Proposals Map, in accordance with the other policies of the Local Plan
- 4.11 Policies E15 and E19 are of particular significance given the fact that the site lies within the Faversham conservation area, and because of the need to ensure that this innovative approach to design is acceptable in this context.

5.0 LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

Three letters of objection have been received from neighbouring properties. Their comments can be summarised as follows;

- Loss of privacy from overlooking glazed wall
- Unauthorised access to private land assumed in drawings
- Plans need to be rectified to resolve this problem
- Exit from access between 22 & 23 Stone Street poor sight lines – safety issues pedestrians and cyclists
- Object to this being a route for cyclists
- Supplementary Planning Guidance re conservation areas only allows for development which preserves or enhances – do not consider this does
- Backland development not in keeping with the character
- Policy DM33 (emerging plan) (demolition of unlisted buildings) application should be judged with reference to an open space rather than the factory
- Would result in demonstrable harm to neighbouring amenity (contrary to policy E1)
- Contravenes policies regarding development affecting a conservation area in emerging plan

One letter of comment has been received stating:

- Old warehouse has outlived its useful purpose
- Issue with access to private garden
- Previously was a short fenced off part of the rear garden to no.2 Roman Road which provided an exit from the warehouse. This has resulted in neighbours being unable to reach the back wall of our garage

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

Faversham Town Council raises objection stating:

- 1) The proposed development would cause overlooking to the neighbouring property in Roman Road
- 2) The proposed development would not be deliverable as the applicants do not control the access to the site

The County Archaeological Officer states that no archaeological measures are necessary. He explains that the site lies in the location of a former brickfield where archaeology may once have been present, but would have been lost during its working.

Kent Highway Services do not consider the proposal meets the criteria to warrant their involvement.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PLANS

SW/12/0558 – restoration and extension of no 1A Saxon Road to form one 1-bed and 1-two bed flat. Change of use of commercial premises at rear to residential use and erection of two 2-bed semi-detached dwellings together with associated amenity and parking space

8.0 APPRAISAL

As a similar proposal has recently been approved, the key issues for Members to consider in this case are whether there have been any significant changes in planning policy or circumstances at the site since the previous decision was made, and whether the changes in design, site layout and height of the proposal significantly alter the merits of the scheme in terms of harm to neighbouring amenity, and whether it would impact on the conservation area and/or highway safety.

With regard to the first issue, there has been no significant change in planning policy since the last decision was made. The NPPF was already in place and the development plan comprised of the saved policies of the Swale Borough Local Plan 2008 then as they do now. Neither have there been any significant changes at the site since that time.

I therefore do not consider it necessary to revisit the principle of whether the proposed loss of an employment building and its replacement with dwellings is acceptable in terms of loss of business use.

With regards to neighbouring amenity, the site abuts neighbouring gardens to three boundaries, but the proposed extension and the proposed dwellings would not immediately abut any dwellings themselves. The area is characterised by long, narrow gardens. It is also important to note that the highest point of the proposed dwellings would be lower than the ridge of the building that they would replace. The proposed dwellings have been designed to prevent overlooking by ensuring all first floor windows are located only on the east and west elevations of the buildings – the eastern elevation would overlook the garden to no 2 Roman Road, however, this property has an extremely long garden in excess of 40 metres. Therefore window to window distances would be well in excess of 21 metres usually recommended as acceptable. The extension to the existing dwelling has also been designed to ensure that no windows are proposed on the side elevation. I therefore do not consider either part of the proposal would result in significant harm to neighbouring amenity..

In terms of the impact of the proposal on the character of the conservation area, there are two aspects to consider. Firstly the scheme proposes the extension and improvements to the building at the front of the site and secondly the scheme proposes the removal of the existing commercial aspect and its replacement with modern dwellings. With regard to the design of the rear dwellings, this is highly unusual and designed to meet the specific limitations of this site. I consider the design of the scheme is to be commended, the proposed dwellings are of a modern, innovative design, and the unusual but high quality design is ideal for this site within the conservation area which

does not relate to the street frontage. With regards to the existing dwelling, the proposed improvements will significantly help to enhance the character of the conservation area, in particular the reinstatement of timber sash windows, and the extension has been designed to fit in with the design of the Victorian dwellings in the area. The scheme taken as a whole would not in my view detract from the special character of the conservation area and would meet the statutory test of preserving or enhancing the character of the conservation area.

With regards to highway safety, the site currently benefits from planning permission for use as a storage building. I therefore must conclude that this proposal to use the site for residential purposes would not result in more harm to highway safety than the current lawful commercial use, which could involve several vans per day or HGV's.

I also note the comments raised by neighbouring residents in respect of issues regarding access to and from the site via a gate at the rear of the site. I understand that over the years there have been some informal arrangements in place to allow access to various properties from land at the rear of 2 Roman Road and the underpass to no 22 Stone Street. I note that several nearby residents and the Town Council have raised concern that the proposed plans which assume this arrangement will continue. Whilst I can understand the concern this has caused, the development is not reliant upon this access, the main access would be at the front of the site and is sufficient for the development. As such, I do not consider this impacts on how the application should be determined and is a private legal matter.

9.0 RECOMMENDATION – GRANT Subject to the following conditions:

CONDITIONS

- (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) Prior to the commencement of any works hereby permitted samples of all new facing materials and details of all external finishes shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall then proceed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to preserve or enhance the special character of the conservation area

- (3) Prior to the commencement of any works hereby permitted, 1:10 constructional details of the rear side entrance carriage archway, detailing how the external brickwork will be arranged, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall then proceed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to preserve or enhance the special character of the conservation area

- (4) No development shall take place until constructional details at a scale of 1:5 of the eaves and ridges have 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 interests of visual amenity and to preserve or enhance the special character of the conservation area

- (5) No development shall take place until details have been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, which set out what measures will be taken to ensure that the development incorporates sustainable construction techniques such as rainwater harvesting, water conservation, energy efficiency and, where appropriate, the use of local building materials; and provisions for the production of renewable energy such as wind power, or solar thermal or solar photo voltaic installations. Upon approval, the details shall be incorporated into the development as approved.

Reason: In the interest of promoting energy efficiency and sustainable development

- (6) No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscape works to include native plant species have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and these works shall be carried out as approved. These details shall include existing features, planting schedules of plants, noting species(which should be native species where possible and of a type that will enhance or encourage local biodiversity and wildlife), plant sizes and numbers where appropriate, means of enclosure, hard surfacing materials, and an implementation programme.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to preserve or enhance the special character of the conservation area

- (7) Manufacturers' details of rooflights shall be submitted to, and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the works hereby approved. The development shall then proceed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to preserve or enhance the special character of the conservation area

- (8) Prior to the commencement of any works hereby permitted detailed drawings of all new external joinery work, including windows and doors, together with sections through all members including glazing bars, frames and mouldings and showing the relationship to the face of the wall, at a scale of 1:20 or 1:1 or 1:2; shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall then proceed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason:: In the interests of visual amenity and to preserve or enhance the special character of the conservation area

- (9) No development shall take place until a programme for the suppression of dust during the demolition of existing buildings and construction of the development has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The measures shall be employed throughout the period of demolition and construction unless any variation has been approved by the Local Planning Authority

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity

- (10) No construction work in connection with the development shall take place on any Sunday or Bank Holiday, nor on any other day except between the following times:-

Monday to Friday 0730 – 1900 hours, Saturdays 0730 – 1300 hours unless in association with an emergency or with the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity

- (11) No impact pile driving in connection with the construction of the development shall take place on the site on any Saturday, Sunday or Bank Holiday, nor any other day except between the following times:-

Monday to Friday 0900-1700hours unless in association with an emergency or with the written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity

- (12) Any new rainwater goods to be used as part of the extension of 1a Saxon Road shall be of cast iron.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to preserve or enhance the special character of the conservation area

- (13) No meter cupboards, overhead cables, vents, vent pipes, satellite dishes, trickle vents, flues, ducts, tile vents, extract grilles, external lights, gas cylinders, oil tanks or burglar alarms shall be affixed to the building without written consent of the Local Planning Authority

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to preserve or enhance the special character of the conservation area

- (14) The areas shown on the approved drawings as parking spaces shall be provided, surfaced and drained before the dwellings hereby permitted are first occupied, and shall be retained for the use of the occupiers of, and visitors to, the premises and no development, whether permitted by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 or not, shall be carried out on the land so shown or in such a position as to preclude vehicular access to these reserved parking spaces.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience

- (15) Notwithstanding the provisions of Classes A, B or C of Part 1 of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended), the dwellings hereby permitted shall not be enlarged or altered.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to preserve the special character of the conservation area

- (16) All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with the programme agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to preserve or enhance the special character of the conservation area

- (17) Upon completion of the approved landscaping scheme, any trees or shrubs removed, dying, being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased within five years of planting shall be replaced with trees or shrubs of such size and species as may be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority, and within whatever planting season is agreed.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to preserve the special character of the conservation area

- (18) As an initial operation on site, adequate precautions shall be taken during the progress of the works to prevent the deposit of mud and similar substances on the public highway.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience

- (19) No dwelling hereby approved shall be occupied until space has been laid out within the site for cycles to be securely stored, providing for two cycles per semi-detached dwelling.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience

The Council's approach to this application:

In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Council takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. We work with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by:

Offering pre-application advice, 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.

In this instance:

The application was acceptable as submitted and no further assistance was required.

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.