

2.4 REFERENCE NO - 16/503948/FULL			
APPLICATION PROPOSAL Proposed conversion of former garage to additional accommodation with new link to existing dwelling as amended by drawings PQ/15/176.04 rev A and PQ/15/176.05 rev A.			
ADDRESS The Old School Painters Forstal Road Ospringe ME13 0EG			
RECOMMENDATION – APPROVE SUBJECT TO: outstanding representations (closing date 25 July 2016)			
SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION/REASONS FOR REFUSAL Proposed development would preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area, and would not give rise to unacceptable harm to residential amenity.			
REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE Parish Council objection			
WARD East Downs Ward	PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL Ospringe	APPLICANT Mr & Mrs Potts AGENT Woodstock Associates	
DECISION DUE DATE 28/07/16	PUBLICITY EXPIRY DATE 25/07/16		
RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY (including appeals and relevant history on adjoining sites):			
App No	Proposal	Decision	Date
SW/07/0593	Single storey garage	Granted	16.07.2007

1.0 DESCRIPTION OF SITE

- 1.01 The Old School is a converted Victorian school building located within the Painters Forstal conservation area and the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 1.02 The existing school building was built in 1860 as the village school and was converted to residential use in 1975 when a first floor was added internally, with dormer windows to the east and west elevations.
- 1.03 The building is constructed of red stock brickwork with a plain clay tiled roof and timber sash windows. The east (front) elevation of the building has a cat-slide roof over the entrance door.
- 1.04 Within the curtilage of the site there is an original brick and timber detached outbuilding which was the former school toilet block and is now used as a garden store. In 2007 permission was granted for a new detached garage to the western side of the site with access onto the lane to the south.
- 1.05 The application site is located within the built up boundary of Painters Forstal.
- 1.06 To the north of the site is a modern detached house with two small side windows serving a staircase in the otherwise blank wall that faces towards the site.

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.01 This application seeks permission for the alterations to the former garage in connection with its use as a studio and shower room, together with a largely glazed

room linking the main house to the former garage. This link will run parallel to and just inside the site boundary and beside the side wall of the house to the north, which site some 1.2m away from the proposed link..

- 2.02 The existing garage measures 3.2m wide x 8.5m in length. The external garage door on the south elevation would be removed and replaced with full height timber framed glazing with French doors. Two small timber casement were proposed to be installed in the weatherboarded east elevation.
- 2.03 This building would then be linked to the main former school building by a modern partly glazed structure that would have a blank brick north facing rear wall, with timber sash windows on the fully glazed south side facing the garden. This link would measure 6.5m long, 3.435m (originally 3.645m) in depth, and 3.3m in height. The ridged roof of the link would be covered in plain clay tiles with a ridge height below that of the eaves of the old school. The facing brickwork would be of smooth red stocks laid in a snapped header Flemish bond style to match the existing.
- 2.04 Amended drawings have been received after discussions with the applicant regarding concerns about the size and design of the link, the two side windows to the studio and the gable end infill glazing. The amended drawings PO/15/176.04 rev A and PO/15/176.05 rev A have addressed my concerns over these issues. The depth of the link has been reduced from 3.645m to 3.435m. On the proposed garage conversion, the two side windows on the east elevation have been removed from the plans and the gable end infill glazing has been redesigned to retain the wide bargeboard detail featuring the apex dove cote arrangement and weather vane.
- 2.05 The applicant sought pre-application advice prior to submitting the application and was advised that the width and roof form of the link, together with how it connects to the garage and the Old School would need to be carefully designed.

3.0 PLANNING CONSTRAINTS

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty KENT DOWNS

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Maidstone AONB directive

Potential Archaeological Importance

Conservation Area Painters Forstal

4.0 POLICY AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Swale Borough Local Plan 2008: Saved policies E1 (General Development Criteria) E6 (The Countryside) E9 (Landscape) E15 (Conservation Area) E19 (Design Criteria) E24 (Extensions & Alterations) RC4 (Extensions to, and replacement of, dwellings in the rural area) of the Swale Borough Local Plan 2008.

Supplementary Planning Documents: Supplementary Planning Guidance entitled “*Designing an Extension – A Guide for Householders*” and “*Conservation Areas*”.

5.0 LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

- 5.01 Two letters have been received from local residents. One raises no objection but raises concern over possible impact from delivery of materials during construction to access for a local business along the lane, which is a narrow lane.

5.02 The other letter is an objection. A summary of the comments is as follows:

- The proposed link will block light out of our window because of the height of the building which will cover two thirds of the side of our house
- The size of the link appears excessive and wider than the existing kitchen
- The roof of the link would be visible from the road
- The proposal would be out of character to the existing dwelling which is a former Victorian school in a prominent position within the conservation area
- The former garage is on the boundary and shared drainage arrangements with next door
- How will the shower room be ventilated; what is the purpose of the building; where will drains run; where will the downpipes be; and how will the extension be built without access from next door?
- The applicant has not discussed the application with the neighbour
- Pre-application advice seems to make this a fait accompli

5.03 The amended drawings have, despite reducing the scale and impact of the scheme, been the subject of re-consultations, and the deadline for comments is now 25 July 2016 This report is subject to the receipt of additional comments which will be reported at the meeting.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

6.01 Ospringe Parish Council objects stating “we object due to our concerns at its closeness to the boundary of the adjoining property and the loss of natural light that this would incur for them, exacerbated by the height of the ridge of the proposed ‘link’. Also we are concerned that the extension may well be visible from a public vantage point.”

6.02 The agent has responded to the objections to say that the link is intended as a garden room between the house and garage, not just as a thoroughfare. It has been designed with a matching tiled roof. The neighbour’s windows serve the stair and mainly have the blinds closed. The eaves are low and the roof slopes away from the boundary, meaning that the link will have little effect upon daylight levels. The fact that the link will be visible from the lane should not be a consideration if matching materials are used as is intended. He has also mentioned that until recently there was a magnolia tree that shaded the neighbour’s side windows.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PLANS

7.01 Application papers and drawings referring to application reference 16/503948/FULL.

7.02 Pre application advice was sought by the applicant for a garage conversion with link to the school building and a response sent on 26/11/15 suggesting that the scheme was possible but would need a very careful design solution and one by an experienced designer who has been involved with sensitive sites of historic value.

8.0 APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

8.01 The main considerations in the determination of this planning application are the impact of the garage conversion and link on a building which falls within the Painters

Forstal conservation area and the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and the impact on the amenities of the adjacent property.

Visual Impact/Impact on Conservation Area

- 8.02 I consider the key issues in this case are whether it meets the aims and objectives of saved policy E15 of the SBLP 2008 in preventing development that fails to preserve or enhance the special character and appearance of the conservation area. It is also the statutory duty of the Council to be consider whether the special character and appearance of the conservation area is preserved or enhanced. Although the property is not historically designated in its own right as of special interest and not listed as such, it does have an architectural quality and is of general historic interest in that it represents Victorian school architecture and its setting is within the Painters Forstal conservation area.
- 8.03 The Old School is located facing the village green. The proposed link and conversion of the former garage are located to the rear of the property and the proposed scheme would be visible only from the road to the south of the site. The size of the link will be in scale and proportion to the host building. Moreover, the applicant was provided with the opportunity to amend the width of the link and they agreed. The link is now a little narrower which has lowered the eaves height of the roof. The connection between the eaves of the link and the eaves of the garage building are now sensitively designed.
- 8.04 The two side windows to the studio were considered intrusive in the elevational character of the side wall. The applicant was given the opportunity to amend this and they agreed. The amended proposal has removed the two side windows from the plans.
- 8.05 The 'modern garage' doors will be replaced with gable end infill glazing. I considered that this would be more effective if the French doors were retained in some way as security details but keeping the glazed screen and the feature apex dove cote arrangement plus the weather vane. This would have supported the retention of the wide bargeboard detail with its prominent projecting overhang completing the significance of this important exposed part of the building. The applicant agreed and the amended drawings have addressed this issue.

Residential Amenity

- 8.06 The proposed link will be built along the side boundary between the property and the neighbouring property, School House. The existing side fence is 1.8m high. The neighbouring property has two side staircase windows facing the rear garden to The Old School House, which do not serve a habitable room and therefore the impact of the proposed link on the amenities of the neighbouring property will be limited. The link will be single storey with a low pitched roof and I do not consider there to be any overshadowing issues. The link will have a brick built rear wall facing the side boundary therefore overlooking will not be an issue either.
- 8.07 I do not consider that impact on the amenities of the adjacent property to be sustainable reason for refusal of the application. Nor do I consider their queries about practical issues to be matters which should prevent the Council approving this application.

9.0 CONCLUSION

9.01 This application for the conversion of the former garage to additional accommodation with a new glazed link to the existing dwelling is considered acceptable and I therefore recommend that permission be granted.

10.0 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 permission is granted.

Reasons: 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 facing bricks to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the link hereby permitted shall match those on the existing building in terms of type, colour and texture.

Reasons: In the interests of visual amenity.

(3) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawings:

PO/15/176.04 rev A and PO/15/176.05 rev A received 28 June 2016

Reasons: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning

(4) Prior to the commencement of development, details of roofing materials to be used in the construction of the link shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reasons: In the interests of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area and to ensure that these details are approved before works commence.

(5) Prior to the commencement of development hereby approved, detailed drawings of all new external joinery work and fittings at a scale of 1:20 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, together with sections through glazing bars, frames and mouldings. Works shall proceed in accordance with the approved details.

Reasons: In the interests of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area and to ensure that these details are approved before works commence.

Council's approach to the 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.
As appropriate, updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application.

In this instance:

The application was advised of minor changes required to the application and these were agreed

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.