

Design and Access Statement

**Fiscal House
2 Havant Road
Emsworth
PO10 7JE**

**ECA Architecture Limited
7 March 2023
12.1089**

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The original building on the site was first used as a Public House, the Sawyers Arms, in the early 19th Century. It is of solid brickwork construction and rendered with pitched, hipped and pantile covered roofs. The single storey rear extensions constructed more recently, in the 20th Century, are rendered and with flat roofs. Only the original part of the property has any architectural merit or historic interest, and it is on the western edge of the Emsworth Conservation Area.

Part of the site has been the subject of a relatively recent Planning Permission for the Change of Use of the existing two storey office building to residential. It is relevant that in a previous Appeal on this site, the Inspector commented:

‘Whilst the area includes a mix of commercial uses, there is a high proportion of residential dwellings in the area, including one which has a garden adjoining the parking area serving the Appeal building.’

Following a recent pre-application enquiry for the conversion and extension of the Office Building adjacent to Warblington Road to form a detached dwelling, plus a further detached new dwelling on the existing car park, the general principle was considered appropriate, subject to a number of considerations.

(i) Principle of Development.

The site is situated in an urban area where further development is considered acceptable subject to the usual development management criteria.

(ii) Loss of employment use.

Whilst a marketing report was prepared for the last Planning Application, this covered an area that was described by the Agents as 10 Offices/Store Rooms with parking for at least 12 cars. At the time of preparing the Report only some of the Office Space was vacant with the remainder with expiring leases. The total of 12 parking spaces relates to the whole site. In a practical sense, the existing Office accommodation was wholly unsuitable for commercial use due to variable floor levels resulting in the space to be unsuitable for wheelchair access. This latter problem is relevant as there are changes in floor level.

Also, during the last marketing exercise, my Client was responsible for showing interested parties around the building which included this existing wing. This attracted no interest whatsoever. Under these circumstances, it seems unreasonable to apply the full weight of Policy DM3. The overall site has now been closed since 31 January 2022.

In summary, the marketing report encompassed the total amount of accommodation on the site inclusive of the 12 parking spaces available. It is acknowledged that the report was not clear over the amount of the commercial floor area on the site.

- (iii) Impact upon the character and appearance of the conservation area and heritage assets. Design drawings for both buildings as proposed form part of this submission. The current single storey building offers very little towards the character of the conservation area.



The proposed alterations and extension at first floor offer an opportunity to introduce a contemporary element both in terms of form and materials. The plan is developed around the use of a Courtyard Garden with a balcony at first floor. The roof is asymmetrical with the edge along Warblington Road being lower and clad with a zinc standing seam roof cover. The same material steps down over the first floor with a rendered floor level below. This pattern continues around the building apart from the inner wall to the courtyard which is clad in Western Red Cedar Cladding. Windows and doors will be powder coated aluminium (colour: anthracite grey). All sleeping accommodation will be at first floor.

The proposed new dwelling contains an entrance lobby at ground floor with a three car integral garage. A first floor over contains living accommodation with all bedrooms allocated at second floor partially within the roof space. Again, the form and materials are the same as the approach to the proposed conversion other than the fact that this building extends over three levels. There is no living or sleeping accommodation at ground floor. This proposal contains bay windows to the front and rear elevations as a reference to other buildings in the local area. (Refer to existing building on roundabout at the top of the High Street). The site will be accessed via an electronically operated metal gate and the car park will be laid out in brick paviors.



In terms of the relationship with other buildings in the locality, the ridge heights can be compared as follows:

(Note: the site datum level is 3.700 metres).

- (a) Converted building – 7.645 above datum.
- (b) New build – 9.40 above datum.
- (c) Existing Fiscal House – 6.100 above datum.
- (d) United Reform Church – 8.700 above datum.



- (e) 1 Bath Road – 7.86 above datum.
- (f) Nos. 1 and 3 Warblington Road – 9.56 above datum.

Furthermore, a significant element forming the context is the BT Exchange which abuts the application site with a building of significant depth with a height in part equivalent to a three storey building.



High quality materials will be used for this site with high standards of energy efficiency to be incorporated in the design. Landscape design can be subject to a Condition but would be an important element in the overall composition.

- (iv) Impact on residential amenity.
This appears to confirm that the conversion and upwards addition to the building is unlikely to give rise to a significant loss of amenity.
- (v) Impact on trees.
The original trees to the southern boundary have been removed by the statutory undertaker and no longer feature on the drawings.
- (vi) Impact on ecology.
As the trees no longer exist, there is little point in producing an Arboricultural Method Statement or Biodiversity/Ecological Assessment.
- (vii) Flood Risk and Drainage.
A Flood Risk Assessment will be submitted separately as part of this submission.
Drainage – a sewer map is included as part of the submission which shows both foul and surface water sewers running outside this site.
- (viii) Highways and Parking/Cycle Matters.
As the number of parking spaces available for the redundant commercial site is greater than the overall parking spaces for the proposed residential site, there is no issue in relation to intensification of use.
Electric charging points are shown on the drawings.

(ix) Developer Contributions(CIL).

An initial CIL Form is included in the submission. The Client accepts the need for a contribution towards the Solent Mitigation Strategy and in respect to nutrient neutral development.

If you have any other queries on this matter would you contact me at this Office.

12:1089/D&AStatement/ECA

18.11.22 (Revised 07.03.23)

EMSWORTH CHARACTER APPRAISAL

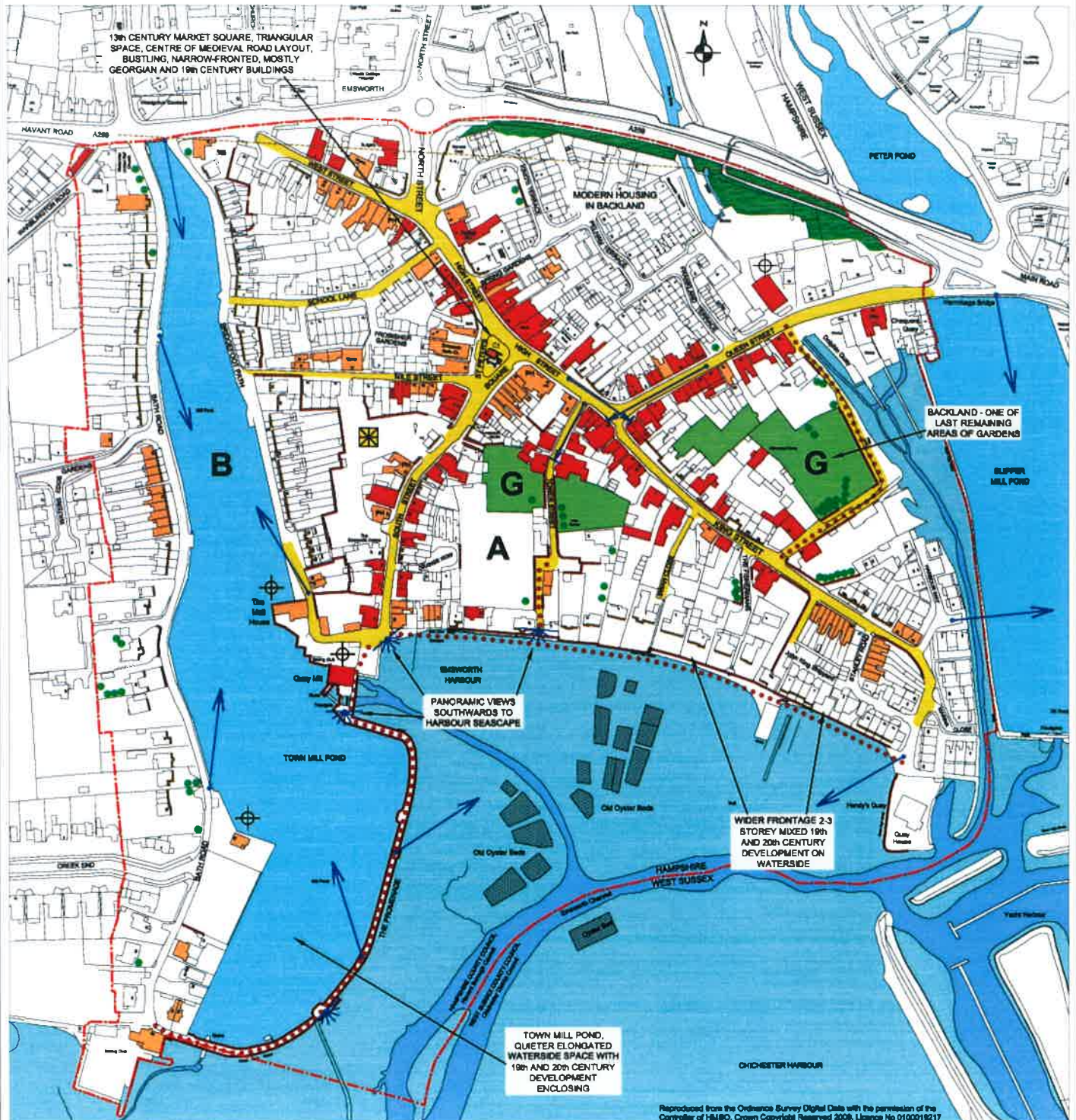
KEY:-



CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY
 COUNTY BOUNDARY
 LISTED BUILDINGS
 BUILDINGS OF LOCAL INTEREST(POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION)
 IMPORTANT WALLS (BUILDINGS)
 IMPORTANT WALLS (OTHER)
 IMPORTANT TREE (SINGLE)
 IMPORTANT TREES (GROUPS)
 IMPORTANT OPEN SPACES
 FOOTPATH
 LANDMARK



IMPORTANT VIEW
 TERMINATED VIEW
 PANORAMIC VIEW
 WATER FEATURE - NON-TIDAL
 WATER FEATURE - INTERTIDAL
 WATER FEATURE - LOW TIDE
 OLD OYSTER BEDS
 CHARACTER SUB-AREA
 ALIGNMENT OF ROMAN ROAD
 MEDIEVAL STREET PATTERN
 AREA WITH DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL
 MARKET SQUARE



Appendix

A Consultees

Landscape Architect – these comments are generally opposed to the proposed development without specific reasoning, concluding that contemporary design per se is inappropriate for the Conservation Area.

The Emsworth Conservation Area: Character Appraisal provides more guidance:

- 5.5 Any alterations or extensions should be sympathetic to the original design and materials of the building. Owners should always use the appropriate professional advice (Registered Architect or Chartered Surveyor) in order to ensure the best benefit from their building proposals.
- 5.6 The design of any new buildings will also need to be sensitive to the scale and character of the site and the area and show imagination – build upon the existing urban form, details and materials. It is important to respect and maintain the building lines.

B Applicant's Response

Fiscal House frontage building – proposed alterations to this building have been dealt with via the previous scheme (APP/21/01120) and as such does not warrant further discussion.

Fiscal House single storey office building – this banal building contains a flat roof and is partially clad in plastic sheeting with an array of glazed additions which have been erected in an ad hoc manner over many years.

Fiscal House existing site – apart from some single storey enclosures used for storage and garages, there is a substantial area of tarmac with minimal planting within the site. The overall impact of the above is to present a black and visually harsh contribution to the Conservation Area. There is currently perimeter security lighting on the site which creates light pollution to neighbouring properties. (Note: this has been raised by a neighbour and not the Landscape Architect). There is also a brutal, three storey BT building nearby.

The comments from the Landscape Architect raise an objection to the proposal from 'a Landscape perspective' which is largely based upon the need to reflect on the relationship to the Conservation and should seek inspiration for the design of proposed buildings.

The Conservation Area and the immediate surrounding area displays a diverse mix of external materials, fenestration design, roof profiles and built form.



Whilst there are many examples of Georgian design there are also buildings of different form using different external materials and roof pitches.





These alternative designs have been inspired from the context otherwise they would not have been granted Planning Permission – these are complementary opposites, different yet respectful.

The most distinctive example is Emsworth Baptist Church which has an organic form with an asymmetric roof covered in zinc cladding.



Another local site at 61 Warblington Road has been granted Planning Permission for a replacement dwelling using zinc cladding for the roof which is described by the architect 'to reflect the proximity to the water'.

Black timber cladding is also specified for the external walls which is both historical and contemporary.

In May 2021 a proposed development at Fowley Cottage (APP/20/00376) was refused Planning Permission. This was a contemporary design which did not feature as a reason for refusal, therefore by implication this design approach was deemed acceptable. There is another example of contemporary design in the heart of the Conservation Area (School Lane) where the roof is clad in zinc, the external walls are rendered and modern aluminium framed windows used again. Presumable inspired by the Conservation Area.



Proposal

As stated above, the design proposal for the frontage building have already been agreed in the last application. The design philosophy for the conversion and extension of the single storey building fronting Warblington Road is driven by site constraints along with aspects of the Conservation Area. The blank elevation facing the road has been restrained in height to reduce the impact on Warblington Road by generating an eccentric roof profile springing from a low point along the road side. (There is a precedent of an eccentric roof in Lumley Gardens).



This building is introspective and features a Courtyard Garden. As much of the ground floor is being retained, the existing brick finish would result in an untidy finish, the external walls therefore have been rendered, which is in keeping with many buildings in and around Emsworth.

The proposed additional detached building contains parking at ground floor in order to satisfy flood requirements, with all living accommodation on two floors over. The architecture follows the approach for the converted/extended building apart from the roof profile which is more traditional in form and clad in zinc.

Site access follows the existing gated entrance leading to a landscaped parking courtyard.

Window positions have been carefully selected to protect the amenity of nearby buildings along Bath Road.

In summary, the design proposals have been inspired from the immediate area including the Conservation Area reflecting architectural form and materials which are sympathetic to this overall context. The scale of the overall development adjusts across the site in relation to Warblington Road and the BT building. The overall intention is to create a unique contribution to the Conservation Area which is both creative and respectful.

Comments raised by the Landscape Architect.

It is wrong to assert that the proposed modern architectural style is not in keeping with the local area. The existing single storey building is, frankly, an eyesore which detracts from the character of the area. Describing it as 'a vernacular building' is misleading and inaccurate. At best this building is incongruous and banal. The comment relating to the roof pitch and materials as being 'not deemed acceptable' fails to acknowledge the presence of these materials already forming part of the local character. The general tone of these comments insinuates that the only way to design buildings within the Conservation Area is to adopt a superficial approach which inevitable results in a poor pastiche. A healthy and progressive Conservation Area requires input from current architectural thinking which has fortunately been recognised by others.

The Conservation Area cannot be as proposed by the Landscape Architect, anchored exclusively in the past.

Edward Caush
ECA Architecture
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