

6 North Street, Emsworth Response on Heritage

REF: GS

DATE: 22 February 2021

Introduction

- 1.1 Following the submission of applications 20/01115 and 01116 for the conversion of a doctor's surgery, demolition of a single storey outbuilding and erection of a three storey building and associated works to Havant Borough Council, a response on Historic Buildings and Conservation matters was received from Ms Rachael McMurray dated 10th February 2021.
- 1.2 A response from the Havant Landscape Team, from Mr Harry Mitchell (no date), also comments on heritage matters.
- 1.3 The scheme has now been revised to take account of some of the issues raised by the consultees, as set out below.

Conversion of the Grade II Listed North Street House

- 1.4 Ms McMurray makes no objection to the conversion of the Listed building, with the proposals supported in principle subject to an internal inspection of the structure once she is able to carry out a site visit. No time-frame is given for this. Mr Mitchell makes no objection to this element of the scheme.

Demolition of the Single Storey Link Structure and single Storey Extension

- 1.5 Ms McMurray makes no objection to the demolition of this element, concluding that these elements are of '*no special or architectural interest*'. Mr Mitchell takes no issue with the loss of this structure.

The New Building, extending from Central Buildings

- 1.6 Ms McMurray and Mr Mitchell do not support this element of the proposals. The bases of their objection are bulleted below, with the scheme responses and my commentary following in italics.
 - Ms McMurray considers that the new building sitting forward of North Street House and being of two and a half storeys is contrived and would erode the 'breathing space' between the Listed building and Central Buildings and dwarf the Listed building in the wider street scene context.

The design of the revised proposals is of more traditional form and simply-detailed.

The building line has been pulled back in line with the frontage of the Listed building.

The revised proposals are of two storeys, and has a lower eaves height than the Listed building and Central Buildings.

The Listed building is currently completely overshadowed by the three-storey northern wall of the Central Buildings. This, together with the buildings to the rear of the central buildings (which are visible behind the single storey structure (Figure 1), the single storey structure itself, and the use of the forecourt for parking, provides little perceived beathing space between the Listed building and the Central Buildings.



Figure 1 The three-storey wall of the Central Buildings adjacent to the site

The revised proposals seek to visually soften this blank wall which currently detracts from the heritage assets. The new building of traditional form will screen part of the blank wall and buildings to the rear, and the proposals will visually soften the blank wall with planting and resolve the unattractive area currently in front of the single storey structure (see photomontage, Figure 2).



Figure 2 Photomontage of revised proposals

- Ms McMurray expresses concerns that 'all views of the southern elevation of the listed building would be severely restricted'.

With regards to this, as can be seen from Plate 15 of the Heritage Statement reproduced below as Figure 3, the southern façade of the structure is blank, and currently partially obscured by the outbuilding and extension.



Figure 3 The southern façade of the Listed building

- Ms McMurray considers that any proposed development in this gap between the buildings will need to be limited in scope.

The height of the building has been reduced, and the proposed building has a lower eaves height than the Listed structure.

Conclusion

- 1.7 The revised proposals will benefit the heritage significance of the Listed building through changes in setting and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The blank three-storey north facing façade of the Central Buildings is an unattractive element that detracts from the Listed building and the Conservation Area, and the proposed development softens this with planting and appropriate built form.