

APP/14/00065 – Land r/o 3 Grove Road, Havant P09 1AR

The provision of a new house plot in the position shown is contrary to the established grain and character of the conservation area in the sense that it eats into a portion of the rear garden. The long gardens to the properties in , Grove Road, otherwise remain largely unaltered. That said the immediate environment framing Twittens Way is quite poor and if other policy considerations allow, I can foresee a situation where a high quality development could help to lift and enhance the area. The proposed building plot sits at the end of, and would close the vista from South Street.

If you are satisfied that a sufficiently convincing case has been made to overcome the planning obstacles highlighted at pre-app (GEN/12/00973) to development of this site; from a conservation point of view. I consider the approach shown could be acceptable with some tweaking, which I will explain below.

1. Apart from the conservation area the primary heritage asset is the historic wall which forms the rear boundary of this site and no's 7 & 9 Grove Road. Any development of this site must ensure retention of the wall and protection throughout the course of development. I am satisfied the scheme provides adequate space for its future maintenance. I would wish to see the application accompanied by a method statement covering the support and protection of the wall throughout the construction works.
2. The c.1974 section of wall into which the new pedestrian entrance is to be placed is extremely poor quality Fletton brickwork. As part of an environmental enhancement to accompany the construction of any new dwelling I wish to see this wall demolished and rebuilt as a solid 225mm boundary wall to the same height in a more suitable quality facing brick. This would benefit the approach to the new dwelling, for which it is the primary focus and potentially ease construction. It is therefore advantageous to the applicant.
3. The inner return wall comprises a rat trap bond garden wall very characteristic of this part of St Faith's Conservation Area. The main structure is sound, but has been raised in height in an incompatible brick, probably when the incongruous parking area was formed. Rat trap bond walls are not a suitable method of construction for a dwelling but serve as perfectly adequate boundary feature. I have no objection to breaching the wall with new construction, but wish to see the link between the new dwelling and historic boundary wall maintained by a heightened rat-trap bond garden wall, utilising salvaged materials from the site and laid in a suitable naturally hydraulic lime mortar. That is dismantling the later brickwork and raising the height with the salvaged materials in rat trap bond.
4. I feel the scale of the proposed building can be accommodated on the site and will form a contemporary punctuation to the vista from South Street.

5. I am generally content with the materials proposed. High quality materials will be required throughout and this includes the painted brickwork. The choice of brickwork (even though painted) will be important in order to achieve the appropriate texture and finish. I can see the benefit of painted elevations within the site, which will help to reflect light into what is otherwise a tight courtyard. I would advise strongly against the use of painted brickwork on the eastern elevation adjoining the parking area. A more durable finish is required which is less prone to graffiti and reliant on regular maintenance. I would advise the use of a good quality facing brick to tie in with that used on the rebuilt section of wall covered in 2 above.

John Townsend
Conservation Consultant
21/02/14

UPDATED COMMENTS -13/03/14

The revised drawings address my concerns. In terms of the reconstructed main boundary wall this could be constructed using reclaimed bricks (of suitable quality) or a good quality new brick. I advise due to the prominence and sensitivity of the site we condition samples of materials and details of finishes and the construction of a sample brick panel, all to be submitted for approval and agreed prior to the commencement of work.