

Homewell House, 22 Homewell, Havant, PO9 1EE

Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) relates to conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraph 128 requires an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a development proposal. This heritage statement is in accordance with this guidance.

Site and surroundings

Comprises a three-storey Georgian period property with a frontage to St Faith's Church. Attached to this property are later additions to the east and south. Homewell is a narrow street that leads from West Street at the north down to the Old Parchment Works at the south. The medieval church of St Faith's dominates the area as an attractive landmark.



Figure 1. St Faith's Church and churchyard just north of application site.

History

The place name Havant is derived from the Old English form *Hamanfunta*, first recorded in 935 A.D. meaning 'Hama's spring'. It is almost certain that Homewell derives from Hama's spring, which rises in the centre of the town just south of St Faith's Churchyard. The earliest documentary reference to the Homewell occurs in 1301 when it is *Hamwelle*. Although there is no evidence that the Homewell was the 'Holy Well', its close proximity to the parish church suggests its waters may have been used for liturgical purposes. St Faith's Church was originally built in the twelfth century but, after falling into disrepair in the nineteenth century, it was rebuilt in 1875

using the same materials. The cottages in Homewell date from the mid-nineteenth century. The application property was built in the 1830s as a dwelling in association with the nearby Homewell Brewery. The brewery has long since gone and the buildings re-developed. Residential use continued until about 1960 when the application property was converted into offices for the local Conservative Association. A number of other office uses continued until the property fell vacant in recent years. Many changes have occurred to the application site over the past years. Old maps (Appendices A and B) show substantial buildings attached to the original Georgian dwelling, presumably forming part of the brewery business.

Planning history

On 9th February 2010 planning permission and listed building consent were granted to demolish the later additions, construct a two-storey extension to form a total of five flats and erect a pair of semi-detached cottages. The local authority references are 09/51833/07 and 09/51833/018.

The proposal

To demolish the later additions attached to the original building. In their place a two-storey extension would be constructed attached to the east elevation and, following the demolition of the southern extension, a new linked two-storey addition plus rooms in the roof would be constructed. The existing building would be converted to result in a total of fourteen flats on the site.



Figure 2. Two-storey rear extension to be demolished, including covered walkway and escape staircases. Single storey side extensions also to be demolished. Rear elevation of original building would be improved by inserting matching windows and brickwork where doors exist on the first and second floors.

Heritage assets

The application property is a grade II listed building, first listed in May 1952; English Heritage ID reference 135398. This is a designated heritage asset. The site falls within St Faith's Conservation Area that is also a designated heritage asset.

Significance of heritage assets

The listed building is an attractive, well-proportioned and detailed Georgian property. Externally the later additions have no particular architectural or historic value and their removal was previously agreed as part of the listed building consent granted in 2010. The significance of the building is its value as a surviving piece of Georgian architecture; externally much of the original appearance is still apparent. The overall form and façade provide much of the special interest. Unfortunately the chimney stacks have been removed and the rear and side elevations compromised by later additions and inappropriate windows.

Internally much has changed, but the ground floor plan form is still readable and the staircase is the original.

The conservation area includes parts of old Havant and St Faith's Church is the dominant feature. Homewell is a characterful old street leading from West Street to the north down to the Old Parchment Works at the south. The church, churchyard, cottages in Homewell and the application property together make a pleasing composition that has probably not changed very much for nearly two centuries. Certainly this grouping of buildings and spaces, including the street, are a significant part of the heritage asset that is the St Faith's Conservation Area.



Figure 3. Attractive C19 cottages in Homewell opposite churchyard

Impact on heritage assets

It is considered that the use of this property for residential purposes would be an appropriate use that would secure the future of this listed building for the long term. Clearly any sub-division into smaller units would have some impact on the internal

arrangement of spaces and architectural features; however, the previously permitted scheme has already set a precedent for internal changes.

Externally the proposals would result in significant enhancements as follows.

1. The removal of two inappropriate horizontal-emphasis windows on the west elevation and infilling with matching brickwork.
2. Restoration of a single semi-circular headed window, also on the west elevation following the removal of the two existing unsympathetic windows.
3. The removal of projecting flues on the front elevation.
4. The removal of inappropriate horizontal-emphasis window on south elevation at second floor level and infilling with matching brickwork. Restoration of windows and matching brickwork where two doors exist on upper storey elevations. Removal of two external staircases and covered way at ground level.
5. More appropriate and sympathetic pitched roof in lieu of flat roof on single storey ground floor rear addition.
6. General refurbishment of property both internally and externally.
7. Retention of a single planning unit that would allow the garden space to remain undivided. The scheme permitted in 2010 would result in the sub-division of the space to create separate gardens.
8. The provision of sympathetic subordinate additions to the original listed building that would enhance its setting. In particular timber vertical sliding sash windows would be utilised with gauged brick arches. External brickwork would match the listed building and matching plain clay tiles would be used to clad the roofs.
9. A first floor addition in contrasting cladding that would create a sympathetic way of linking the southern extension to the original building.
10. Boundary walls and railings would be retained, albeit the wall facing Homewell would be modified, to create a more harmonious setting for the original building and linked extension.



Figures 4. Unsympathetic windows and flues that would be removed and brickwork made good to match existing. The rear extension would be demolished and link extension built in its place.

Internally, at ground floor level, the hallway would be sub-divided in a similar method to that already granted listed building consent. Furthermore, the two doors to the front rooms would be removed and a stud wall built to provide a reasonable size living / kitchen area. Clearly one of these doors is not original to the building. The other could be stored away for possible re-use in the future. The new stud wall would be a fully reversible alteration and would not, it is contended, significantly detract from the internal spatial character of the property.

Heritage and planning policy

Policy CS11 in Havant Borough Council's Core Strategy refers to the built heritage. Paragraph 4 states that *planning permission will be granted for development that protects and where appropriate enhances the borough's statutory and non-statutory heritage designations by appropriately managing development in or adjacent to conservation areas, listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens, archaeological sites, buildings of local historic or architectural interest.* Policy CS16 refers to high quality design. It requires development to respond positively to historic and local character and to use characteristics of the locality to

help inform the design of new development. Heights, massing, materials and proportions of windows and doors are referred to in Paragraph 1.

It is considered that the conversion back to residential use and the well-conceived sympathetic additions to the original building would comply with advice in Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework. The proposal is considered consistent with advice in Paragraph 131, as it would result in positive conservation through a carefully considered and suitable use that would sustain the heritage asset that is the listed building. The new development would make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraph 134 suggests that where development would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits, including securing the asset's optimum viable use. Whilst it is not considered that any harm would be caused to the significance of the heritage assets that are the listed building and conservation area, certainly the proposed use and consequential financial investment would secure the future of this listed building that has been vacant, and therefore at risk, for a number of years. Consequently it is considered there would be a public benefit resulting from these proposals.

The *English Heritage Conservation Policies and Guidance* (2008) provides comprehensive guidance on the built heritage. Paragraph 138 advises that *New work or alteration to a significant place should normally be acceptable if:*

- a. there is sufficient information comprehensively to understand the impacts of the proposal on the significance of the place;*
- b. the proposal would not materially harm the values of the place, which, where appropriate, would be reinforced or further revealed;*
- c. the proposals aspire to a quality of design and execution which may be valued now and in the future;*
- d. the long term consequences of the proposals can, from experience, be demonstrated to be benign, or the proposals are designed not to prejudice alternative solutions in the future.*

The Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide gives some advice on alterations and additions. It is considered that the proposed development would be in line with wording in Paragraphs 178, 179, 182, 185 and 186. The proposed development would respect the special architectural interest of the building. In particular, the new work would not dominate, the plan form would not be radically altered and the design and materials would follow the character and appearance of the existing building.

Conclusion

The proposed development would comply with local and national planning/heritage guidance. The use in particular would be compatible with the listed status and would retain the essential character and appearance of the building. The character and appearance of the conservation area would be enhanced as a result of the proposed

development. The proposed use and subsequent investment in the property would secure the future of this listed building.

References

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