

APPLICATION: MA/10/1445 Date: 18 August 2010 Received: 20 August 2010  
APPLICANT: Mr S Griggs  
LOCATION: THE TANNERY, GODDINGTON LANE, HARRIETSHAM, MAIDSTONE,  
KENT, ME17 1JX  
PARISH: Harrietsham  
PROPOSAL: Erection of part single storey part two storey extension as shown on  
plan numbers 001, 002, design and access statement and  
application form received 20th August 2010.  
AGENDA DATE: 4th November 2010  
CASE OFFICER: Kevin Hope

The recommendation for this application is being reported to Committee for decision because:

- it is contrary to views expressed by the Parish Council

## **1 POLICIES**

Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000: H33, ENV28, ENV34

Village Design Statement: N/A

Government Policy: PPS1, PPS3, PPS5, PPS7

Other: MBC Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document 2009

## **2 HISTORY**

MA/01/1233 - Demolition of two storey extension to Home Lodge and erection of replacement two storey extension and detached double garage, conversion of Tannery to 1No. dwelling including single storey extension and erection of detached double garage, conversion of barn to 1No. dwelling including part demolition and extension and associated access works and landscaping – Approved with conditions

MA/02/1217 - Conversion of barn and tannery into two residential dwellings, erection of double garage and associated access and landscaping works – Approved with conditions

MA/03/0252 - Change of use of Tannery to form a two bedroom dwelling and resiting of double garage (Variation of planning approval MA/02/1217G) – Approved with conditions

### **3 CONSULTATIONS**

**Harrietsham Parish Council** – Wish to see the application approved

**Conservation Officer** – Wishes to see the application refused on the following grounds:-

"We are concerned on conservation grounds that the proposed extension would cause harm to the special character of the building by breaking with the form of the building, thus obscuring its original function. We recognise that a permitted extension has already altered the simple square footprint of this unusual building. On balance, the siting, scale and simplicity of form of that earlier extension have not significantly harmed the character of the building as the building's historic form and character can be "read" when viewed from both side elevations as illustrated on Drawing No. 001.

In our view, by its siting and design, the proposed extension would be contrary to guidance found in the Council's Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document:

5.14 Extensions to dwellings in the countryside which have been converted From buildings originally in non-residential use, such as oast houses, barns and other farm buildings, will not normally be permitted where this would have an unacceptable impact on the original form and character of the building. Many rural buildings have a simple form such as a rectilinear floor plan which fits well with their original function and the character of the countryside. In granting consent for conversions the Council seeks to preserve the original form and character of the building. Proposals for extensions to such buildings should not therefore destroy that form or character.

In our view, an extension in this location would have an unacceptable impact on the rural, vernacular building's special form as visible from both side elevations.

A number of the design elements would also introduce a more domestic appearance to what is believed to have been a tannery. The dormer and porch in particular would compromise the simple character of this former working building".

### **4 REPRESENTATIONS**

No representations received

### **5 CONSIDERATIONS**

#### **5.1 Site Description**

**5.1.1** The application site is located within the parish of Harrietsham and lies to the west of the village boundary in the open countryside. The application site

comprises a converted Tannery which was granted permission for residential use in 2001 under MA/01/1233. This permission also included the conversion of the barn for residential use located 7m to the south west of the Tannery. Following this two further applications were submitted with amendments to the approved scheme which were subsequently permitted under MA/02/1217 and MA/03/0252.

**5.1.2** The site area is designated as a Special Landscape Area and a Site of Nature Conservation Interest and comprises a large area of garden space with the converted Tannery located in the south west corner of the site. To the west of the site is a stream flowing south as well as a number of large trees. The Tannery is a three storey building which is set down from the access drive to the west by approximately 2m. There is also a two storey sloping roofed side extension to the eastern elevation which was permitted under MA/01/1233. The property has a black weatherboarded appearance with slate roof, lead hips and some ragstone detailing on the west and south facing elevations. The ground floor of the front elevation is currently rendered with buff colouring. The property is accessed via the garden area only which is separated from the communal driveway to the west by a 1.8m high close boarded fence.

**5.1.3** The Tannery and the barn were originally working buildings within the curtilage of the neighbouring Holme Lodge and were considered to be of significant historical merit thus residential conversion was permitted. Although at this time an extension to The Tannery was permitted, I consider that a clear distinction can be drawn between the original building and the later side extension. Although some of the original elements of the building have been changed during its conversion, a number of its original external features remain. Most importantly, this includes the original three storey proportion and form of the building. Of course the building has been updated to accommodate a residential conversion with new external materials which accurately match the existing with black weatherboarding and slate roof tiles. The ragstone base has also been retained on the two most prominent elevations together with the original doorway and window position on the west elevation. Where new windows have been inserted, the original style and character of the building is still visible and has not been compromised.

## **5.2 Proposal**

**5.2.1** Planning permission is sought for the erection of a part single storey part two storey extension. This would be positioned on the front north facing elevation of the property and would comprise additional living accommodation at ground floor and an additional bedroom at first floor.

**5.2.2** The extension would have a part pitched roof and part sloping roof, would measure approximately 7.6m in width and would project approximately 3m from

the existing front elevation. The ridge height of the extension would be approximately 5.2m in line with the second floor window and would have an eaves height of approximately 3.8m.

**5.2.3** The extension would be of red brick construction with a black weatherboarded first floor fenestration. It would also have a slate roof with lead hips to match the existing.

### **5.3 Principle of Development**

**5.3.1** In principle, developments which form an extension to a converted building are not usually considered acceptable as they can harm and significantly change the character and appearance of a building.

**5.3.2** This is expressed within paragraph 5.14 of the Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document 2009 which states that:-

- *"Extensions to dwellings in the countryside which have been converted from buildings originally in non-residential use, such as oast houses, barns and other farm buildings, will not normally be permitted where this would have an unacceptable impact on the original form and character of the building".*
- *"In granting consent for conversions the council seeks to preserve the original form and character of the building. Proposals for extensions to such buildings should not therefore destroy that form or character and will not normally be considered acceptable".*

**5.3.3** Policy H33 of the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan is also applicable in this case which states that:-

*"Extensions to dwellings in the countryside will not normally be permitted if they:-*

- (1) Create a separate dwelling or one of a scale and type of accommodation that is capable of being used as a separate dwelling; or*
- (1) Overwhelm or destroy the original form of the existing house; or*
- (2) Are poorly designed or unsympathetically related to the existing house; or*
- (3) Result in a development which individually or cumulatively is visually incongruous in the countryside; or*

*(4)Result in an unacceptable loss of amenity or privacy for adjoining residential property”.*

**5.3.4** Policy ENV34 of the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan 2000 also applies as the site is located within a Special Landscape Area. This policy seeks to protect the distinctive quality and character of an area.

**5.3.5** I will consider these points under sections 5.4 and 5.5 below.

#### **5.4 Visual Impact and Design**

**5.4.1** With regard to the impact upon the existing dwelling, The Tannery has previously been extended as part of the original planning approval for conversion (MA/01/1233). Although this extension forms a significant addition to the building, permission was granted because it is sympathetically designed and positioned so that a clear distinction can be drawn between the original Tannery building and the later subservient addition. Furthermore, the original extension provides the additional living space required to enable the residential conversion of the building and to facilitate the retention of this unusual historic building. In addition, by virtue of its siting, the original extension is not visible from the road and access to the west thus maintaining the visual appearance of the Tannery and this principal elevation.

**5.4.2** I consider that this proposal would form an unsympathetic addition which would upset the balance of the building by virtue of its overwhelming height and width, siting on the original north elevation and design. The proposal would result in an extension which would cause significant harm to the appearance and modest form of a former Tannery. In addition, the extension would result in approximately a 40% increase in the volume of the dwelling excluding the pitched roof which would excessively enlarge the building from its original modest form.

**5.4.3** This proposal includes a number of design features which would appear incongruous within this former working building. This is also the view of the Conservation Officer who states that "A number of the design elements would also introduce a more domestic appearance to what is believed to have been a tannery. The dormer and porch in particular would compromise the simple character of this former working building". This would add further harm to its character and appearance and is therefore contrary to criterion 2 and 3 of policy H33 and the guidance stated within paragraph 5.14 of the MBC Residential Extensions SPD.

**5.4.4** As a result of this proposed development, the depth of the original part of the building would measure approximately 7.4m which would be considerably larger

and would destroy the original square design of the building which should remain a principle element of this building. This would therefore overwhelm the existing form of the building and would cause harm to its character and appearance. Furthermore, by virtue of this siting, the roof would be visible above the existing fence from the west facing principle elevation from the access fronting the road. I consider this would significantly harm the visual appearance and would destroy the unusual historic form of The Tannery. The Conservation Officer also holds this view and states that "In our view, an extension in this location would have an unacceptable impact on the rural, vernacular building's special form as visible from both side elevations.

**5.4.5** I consider that this proposal is not of a scale or design which would be capable of being used as a separate dwelling and therefore I consider that this proposal is not contrary to criterion 1 of policy H33 of the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan 2000.

**5.4.6** Overall, this proposal would significantly harm the character and visual appearance of the existing building and significantly harm its character of a historic former working tannery and is therefore contrary to the guidance stated within paragraph 5.14 of the Residential Extensions SPD 2009 and criterion 2 and 3 of policy H33 of the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan.

## **5.5 Surrounding Area**

**5.5.1** In terms of the impact upon the countryside, although the application site is not significantly visible from the open countryside by virtue of the existing trees to the east and the level of the land, the proposed extension would be partially visible from the public domain via Goddington Lane to the west. Therefore, by virtue of its design and scale, I consider that an extension of this scale would represent an excessive extension in the countryside which would appear incongruous and would cause significant harm to the appearance and character of the Special Landscape Area contrary to criterion 4 of policy H33 of the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan 2000.

## **5.6 Neighbouring Amenity**

**5.6.1** With regard to the possible impact upon neighbouring amenity, the nearest neighbouring property to the application site is The Barn which is located approximately 7m to the south west of The Tannery. There is would not be any significant impact upon the amenity of this property by virtue of the location of the proposed extension of the northern elevation. The nearest neighbouring property adjacent to this elevation is Linfield Dale located approximately 25m to the north of The Tannery. It is also considered that there would not be a significant impact upon the amenity of this property by virtue of this distance and the existing boundary fencing. Overall, I consider that by virtue of its siting

the proposal would not have a significant impact upon the neighbouring amenity of any surrounding property including loss of light, privacy and overshadowing. Therefore, this proposal is not contrary to criterion 5 of the policy H33 of the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan 2000.

## **6 CONCLUSION**

- 6.1** In conclusion, for the reasons stated above, it is considered that the proposal would destroy the historic character and appearance of the Tannery which would significantly harm the appearance and character of the countryside. The proposal is therefore unacceptable with regard to the relevant provisions of the development plan and other material considerations such as are relevant. I therefore recommend refusal of the application on this basis.

## **7 RECOMMENDATION**

REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION for the following reasons:

1. The proposal, by virtue of its unsympathetic design, would result in a significantly incongruous addition which would destroy the simple form of this converted working building and thereby cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the countryside and Special Landscape Area. This proposal is therefore contrary to policies ENV28, ENV34 and H33 of the Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000 and the advice contained in Maidstone Borough Council's Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document 2009.