

REFERENCE NO - 20/504128/LBC		
APPLICATION PROPOSAL Listed Building Consent for the demolition of rear extensions together with internal and external alterations and erection of rear extensions. Works to the front retaining wall.		
ADDRESS The Somerfield Hospital, 63-79 London Road, Maidstone, Kent		
RECOMMENDATION – APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS		
SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed external alterations, demolition of modern buildings to the rear of the listed building (Somerfield Terrace), and rear extensions would enhance the appearance and significance of the listed building or cause no harm. • There would be a low level of 'less than substantial' harm to the interior of Somerfield Terrace and to the listed wall but the significant public benefits arising from the re-use of a vacant brownfield site with the provision of 73 new homes and the associated social and economic benefits, the enhancement and conservation of the listed building, and the benefits from improvements to pedestrian safety on London Road outweigh this less than substantial harm. 		
REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Purle has requested the application is considered by the Planning Committee for the reasons set out in his comments. 		
WARD Bridge	PARISH COUNCIL N/A	APPLICANT Even Maidstone Ltd AGENT DHA Planning
DECISION DUE DATE: 11/11/20	PUBLICITY EXPIRY DATE: 27/11/20	SITE VISIT DATE: 23/11/20
RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY		
<p>20/504127/FULL: Demolition of rear extensions of Somerfield Terrace and No.79 London Road. Conversion, alteration and rear extensions of Somerfield Terrace for C3 Residential Use consisting of No.60 self-contained apartments. Erection of a replacement residential building on the site of No.79 London Road consisting of No.6 new apartments and No.6 new townhouses. Conversion of ancillary rear building to residential use. Erection of a cycle store and gym and bin store. Associated works to outbuildings, landscaping and parking. Works to the front retaining wall – PENDING</p> <p>Numerous planning and listed building consent applications relating to the former hospital use.</p>		

1.0 DESCRIPTION OF SITE

1.01 The application site relates to the former Somerfield Hospital building (63-77 Somerfield Terrace) which is a Grade II listed building. Somerfield Terrace is three storeys in height and to the front of it is a listed ragstone

wall alongside the pavement which retains a grassed area above with some trees. The rear parts of the site are mainly hard surfaced for car parking and there are some single storey outbuildings.

1.02 The site is bounded by 81 London Road a Grade II listed building to the north used as offices, and the rear gardens of houses on Queens Road. To the west and south is Somerfield Lane and Close and other houses. To the south is 61 London Road another Grade II listed building. There are houses opposite on the east side of London Road.

2.0 PROPOSAL

2.01 Listed building consent is sought for the demolition of rear extensions, internal and external alterations, and erection of rear extensions to Somerfield Terrace in order to create 60 one/two bedroom apartments that are proposed under planning application 20/504127/FULL, which is also on this Committee Agenda.

2.02 Works to the listed wall at the front of the site are also proposed to provide room for a bus shelter and waiting space in connection with application 20/504127/FULL.

3.0 POLICY AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Maidstone Borough Local Plan (2011-2031): SP18, DM1, DM4
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- London Road Character Area Assessment SPD (2008)

4.0 LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

4.01 **Local Residents:** 1 representation received raising the following (summarised) points relevant to listed building consent considerations:

- Proposals will destroy the site's importance and value.
- There should be no new additional buildings or demolition.
- There should be no new higher buildings.
- The 3rd floor rear extensions are not in keeping with the listed building and are modern.
- Rear extensions obscure views of GII building at the rear and is out of character.
- Lack of public benefit.

4.02 **Councillor Purle** requests the application is considered by the Planning Committee, *"if officers are minded to approve the application in view of the obvious local interest & concern."*

5.0 CONSULTATIONS

(Please note that summaries of consultation responses are set out below with the response discussed in more detail in the main report where considered necessary)

5.01 **Historic England:** Do not wish to offer any comments.

5.02 **MBC Conservation Officer: No objections** subject to conditions. *"In summary, the proposed works to the listed building would result in a small degree of less than substantial harm, but this is outweighed by the benefits of bringing the buildings back into an appropriate use and reversing unsympathetic modern interventions. The proposed works to the curtilage listed retaining wall would in my view result in a modest level of harm to the listed building. I consider the harm would be at the lower end of less than substantial and is likely to be outweighed by the public benefits of the works and the wider proposals."*

6.0 **APPRAISAL**

6.01 This is an application for listed building consent where the only considerations are the affect upon the character of Somerfield Terrace and the listed wall as buildings of special architectural or historic interest.

Conversion works, alterations and extensions to the listed building and listed wall

Significance of listed building

6.02 Under Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority must have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. The NPPF requires LPAs to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by development and the impact the development may have on it.

6.03 Somerfield Terrace comprises a row of eight semi-detached former houses dating from the early/mid-19th century, linked and extended to the rear in the 20th century. The original buildings are generally of high significance and retain a number of internal and external features, while the modern alterations in the mid to late 20th century make either a neutral or negative contribution to significance as outlined in the applicant's Heritage Statement (HS). The site as a whole contributes to the setting of grade II listed buildings at 61 and 81 London Road, and the buildings together form a group.

6.04 I agree with the applicant's HS that it is the frontage facing London Road that is the most significant elevation of the building. This part of the building, excluding the two storey linking structures that were constructed in the 20th century, replacement of a small number of windows and loss of two of the original leaded porches, is predominantly intact and of clear architectural and historic interest. The HS outlines, with which I agree, that

"architectural interest stems from the building's repetitive form, Classical influences and high level survival of original and historic fabric. Historic

interest is primarily due to the building being a high quality example of an early to mid 19th century row of dwellings. The rear of the terrace is heavily altered and it is only the rear of nos. 75 and 77 which remain exposed and unaltered to any material degree. All other buildings in the terrace have been built up against and incorporated into later extensions. These later extensions, which severely affect the legibility of the historic building (both internally and externally), significantly detract from the significance, and ability to appreciate the significance, of the grade II listed terrace."

- 6.05 Internally, despite high levels of alteration in connection with the hospital use, the historic plan form remains broadly appreciable and a high number of either original, or well detailed replica decorative features survive which contribute to the significance of the listed building.
- 6.06 In terms of the building's setting, to the rear this has been altered significantly and the former narrow rear gardens which once had stables and coach houses have been lost completely. The frontage remains intact with the tree lined drive and the listed wall and so contributes to the building's significance, and the listed buildings to the north and south contribute to the setting.
- 6.07 Therefore it is considered that the building's heritage significance derives from the front elevation of the terrace and its setting to the front, and the internal plan form and decorative features.

Assessment of proposals

- 6.08 Works proposed are to the outside of the listed building, demolition to the rear, and the proposed rear extensions. The works to the front of the listed terrace are limited to the re-instatement of three metal porches and repair of existing, re-instatement of an original entrance with replacement of a more recent entrance with a new window to the front, and one small roof light on both the side north and south elevations. The proposed porches and repairs, and the original entrance would reinstate original features and therefore improve the frontage and enhance the significance of the listed building and their detail can be secured by condition. The other changes are minor and would not harm the appearance of the listed building on the important front elevation.
- 6.09 The main changes would be on the rear west elevation which has already been significantly altered and for this reason does not represent a positive part of the listed building or contribute to its significance. Here there would be some new windows and doors either to provide light to rooms, access, or connections to new rear balcony areas. All new openings would match existing with timber sash windows and timber doors and match the alignment of existing openings. For these reasons they would not cause any harm to the listed building or its significance. The removal of modern hospital extensions would reveal the historic rear elevations of the houses and result in a clear enhancement to the listed building and its setting.

- 6.10 There are two existing modern two storey projections off the rear of the listed building. These would both be retained but extended upwards with a mansard style roof added to create a second floor. The southern projection would also be extended rearwards. For both projections it is proposed to alter their connection with the listed building by replacing the current unsympathetic two storey link with a single storey section. This would provide a clearer separation from the listed building and opens up part of the rear elevation. The additional second floors are modest in size, recessed and would have a metal standing seam finish. This articulation and change in material would break up the mass of the upward extensions and they would remain below the height of the listed building and so not compete with the main building. The extension rearward on the southern projection would be modest and would not compete with or result in any harm to the listed building. Windows would be more contemporary which reflects the current windows and provides an acceptable contrast with the listed building. Existing single storey buildings connected to the rear projections would be retained with one rendered to match existing buildings and more sympathetic windows provided. Rooftop PV panels are proposed on these rear wings which would provide renewable energy and it is considered that subject to the detail these would not be highly visible and so would not cause any harm to the listed building. For the above reasons the proposals would respect the listed building and would not cause harm to its character, appearance, significance or setting.
- 6.11 Overall, the proposals are sympathetic and would not cause any harm to the listed building, would improve the rear, and in the case of the frontage would enhance the buildings significance. The Conservation Officer considers the works to the listed terrace and removal of modern extensions to the rear would enhance the building and that the rear extensions are suitable. The listed building is also currently vacant and whilst it is not in a poor condition or deteriorating, the works are proposed in order to bring the building back into residential use, its original use, and thus ensure the building is conserved and maintained which is clearly desirable and a positive aspect to the proposals. This is all in accordance with policies SP17 and DM4 of the Local Plan and the NPPF.
- 6.12 To create the new rooms for the proposed apartments various internal changes to the listed building are proposed including the removal of some walls and openings together with the insertion of new walls and openings. The internal works proposed would reinstate the main party walls but also subdivide several historic spaces, primarily to the rear and upper rooms. I agree with the Conservation Officer that the disruption of the historic plan form, particularly the relationship between front entrances and staircase halls to some houses, results in some harm but this is relatively low. It will also be necessary to upgrade the services, acoustic insulation, mechanical ventilation, vertical service risers, and fire separation within the building, and the Conservation Officer is comfortable with the general approach proposed, subject to further detail being submitted but this will introduce modern features and changes, which would inevitably cause some low level harm to the building which is considered to be 'less than substantial'.

Listed wall

6.13 Works to the listed wall fronting London Road are proposed which would create a rectangular space 7m x 1.5m providing an area for people waiting for the bus and a bus shelter. This would avoid the root protection area of trees along the frontage so they would not be harmed. This has been proposed in response to the KCC Highways initial view that the whole wall should be set back to provide a wider pavement for pedestrians/those waiting for buses and a bus shelter, which commonly are school children who congregate in this area waiting for buses, often using the grass bank within the site. As the development would increase some footfall at peak times the proposals are a proportionate response bearing in mind the wall is listed and the increased footfall would not be significant. KCC Highways have reviewed the proposals for the bus shelter/waiting space and raise no objections. The changes would result in harm to the listed wall and some harm to the setting of the main building as they would introduce an inlet on an otherwise straight wall. However, I consider this would be 'less than substantial' harm as it would represent a small part of the wall across the frontage and new street furniture in an area where some street paraphernalia already exists, and the Conservation Officer agrees. Conditions can be attached to ensure the method of deconstructing the wall and rebuilding reusing the existing stone is appropriate.

6.14 It is considered that the internal changes and changes to the listed wall would result in a low level of 'less than substantial harm' to Somerfield Terrace, its setting, and the listed wall and so this needs to be balanced against any public benefits. Public benefits arise from the re-use of a vacant brownfield site including social benefits associated with the provision of 73 new homes. Economic benefits arise from employment connected with the conversion and construction works. There are also clear benefits from the proposed enhancements to the front and rear of the listed building and bringing the building back into its original residential use which would ensure the building is conserved and maintained. These benefits are considered to attract significant weight. The works to the listed wall would provide a wider pavement and bus shelter for waiting passengers which would improve pedestrian safety but as this is partly to mitigate the increased footfall this does not attract as much weight as the other benefits. Nonetheless it is still a clear benefit. Having special regard to the preservation of the listed buildings and their settings and the listed buildings special architectural and historic interest, it is considered that the low level of harm caused is outweighed by these respective public benefits in accordance with Paragraph 196 of the NPPF and policy DM4.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.01 Under Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority must have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

7.02 The proposed external alterations, demolition of modern buildings to the rear of the listed building (Somerfield Terrace), and rear extensions would

enhance the appearance and significance of the listed building or cause no harm.

7.03 There would be a low level of harm to the interior of Somerfield Terrace and to the listed wall but the significant public benefits arising from the re-use of a vacant brownfield site with the provision of 73 new homes and the associated social and economic benefits, the enhancement and conservation of the listed building; and improvements to pedestrian safety on London Road outweigh this less than substantial harm.

7.04 It is concluded that the listed building consent works are acceptable and comply with all relevant policies of the Development Plan and the NPPF.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

GRANT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT subject to the conditions set out below:

Conditions:

Approved Plans

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans:

3152-DEN-A-01-DR-A-2001 Rev J; 3152-DEN-A-02-DR-A-2002 Rev J; 3152-DEN-A-GF-DR-A-2000 Rev K; 3152-DEN-A-RF-DR-A-2003 Rev A; 3152-DEN-A-ZZ-DR-A-4000 Rev C; and 3152-DEN-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-1001 Rev N

Reason: To clarify which plans have been approved and protect the listed buildings.

Time Limit

2. The works to which this consent relates must be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this consent;

Reason: In accordance with the provisions of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Pre-Works

3. No works to Somerfield Terrace shall take place until the following details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority:
 - a) Details of new porches, timber windows, external timber doors, and obscure glazing;
 - b) Details of internal joinery and secondary glazing;
 - c) Details of mechanical ventilation including location of extract points and specification of external covers;

- d) Details of vertical risers including access hatches and works to cornices;
- e) Submission of a schedule of repairs to listed building;
- f) Details of measures to obscure views to and from external bathroom, shower room and toilet windows (other than obscure glazing).
- g) Details of solar panels

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To protect the architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

4. No works in relation to the listed wall fronting London Road shall take place until details of the retaining wall alterations including methodology, materials, construction, joints and mortar specification have been submitted to and agreed in writing with the local planning authority. The submission shall include details for the re-use of the existing stone. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To protect the architectural and historic interest of the listed wall.

5. No works to Somerfield Terrace shall take place until written details and samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the buildings and extensions have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and the development shall be constructed using the approved materials. The materials shall include the following:

- a) Stock bricks matching those used in the listed part of Somerfield Terrace
- a) Stone for the banding, cills, and lintels

Reason: To ensure a high-quality appearance.