

APPLICATION REFERRED FROM THE WEEKLY LIST

WEEKLY LIST NO. 1491 – 13 September 2019

19/00012/FUL

22 SOUTH STREET, ROCHFORD

**PROPOSAL TO REINSTATE AND CONVERT AN EXISTING
OUT BUILDING TO PROVIDE 2 NO. 1-BED DWELLING
UNITS WITHIN THE C3 USE CLASS**

1 DETAILS OF REFERRAL

- 1.1 This item was referred from Weekly List No. 1491 requiring notification to the Assistant Director, Place and Environment by 1.00 pm on Wednesday, 18 September 2019 with any applications being referred to this meeting of the Committee.
- 1.2 Cllr C M Stanley referred this item on the grounds of lack of amenity.
- 1.3 The item that was referred is attached at appendix 1 as it appeared in the Weekly List.
- 1.4 A plan showing the application site is attached at appendix 2.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

To determine the application, having considered all the evidence.

If you would like this report in large print, Braille or another language please contact 01702 318111.

Appendix 1

Application No: 19/00012/FUL Zoning: Town Centres

Case Officer: Ms Katie Rodgers

Parish: Rochford Parish Council

Ward: Roche South

Location: 22 South Street Rochford Essex

Proposal: Proposal to Re-instate and Convert an Existing Outbuilding to
Provide 2 No. 1-Bed Dwelling Units within the C3 Use Class.

SITE AND PROPOSAL

1. Planning permission is sought to reinstate and convert an existing outbuilding to provide 2 No. 1-bed (bed-sit) dwelling units within the C3 Use Class. One of the units would be fitted out to provide disabled accommodation.
2. The proposal has been amended in the course of the application following concerns raised relating to the original proposal and its acceptability regarding to the need to preserve the historic context of the building which is curtilage listed and sited within the Rochford Conservation Area. The proposal had included extension of the outbuilding and the creation of 3 No. dwelling units; this has been revised down to the two units now proposed.
3. The outbuilding to which the application relates is fire damaged and dis-used having previously been in use as a garage, store and office.

SITE CONTEXT

4. The application site is comprised of a three-storey Grade II Listed Building, No. 22 South Street which fronts the street and is in use as 12 No. bed-sits. Vehicular access to the site is to the southern side of the main building and accesses a parking area to the rear; this area also contains a cycle and refuse store. The outbuilding to which the proposal relates is sited on the northern boundary.
5. The site is located within Rochford town centre and within the area covered by the Rochford Centre Area Action Plan. The site is also within the Rochford Conservation Area. The site falls within Flood Zone 1 at lowest risk of flooding.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

6. 16/01031/FUL – Change of Use of Vacant Offices and Convert to Building in Multiple Occupation to Provide 12 No. Bedsit Units. APPROVED.

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

7. The proposed development must be assessed against relevant planning policy with regard to any other material planning considerations. In determining this application regard must be had to section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which requires proposals to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The relevant parts of the adopted Development Plan are the Rochford District Core Strategy (2011), the Allocations Plan (2014), the Development Management Plan (2014) and the Rochford Centre Area Action Plan.
8. The site is not subject to any specific use designation within the Rochford Centre Area Action Plan (APP) Proposals Map or Framework Plan. The proposal for use of the building as bed-sits would however accord with Policy 8 of the APP which identifies that residential uses within this part of the town centre would be acceptable. Residential units would increase the population of and support the function of the town centre in accordance with the wider ambitions for town centre redevelopment. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) encourages the effective use of land to provide housing and in principle housing is appropriate at this site.
9. The site falls within Character Area C of the APP which is based on the Rochford Conservation Area Appraisal. Both Policy 8 of the APP and the NPPF require that development preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.
10. The proposal includes a modest increase in height of the northern wall of the outbuilding of some 0.6 metres. The staggered roof heights of the existing building would be maintained, each roof would be sloping. The roof pitch over the main part would increase in pitch compared to existing. New fenestration would be installed to the south facing elevations only. Materials proposed for external use include external brickwork to match the existing, slate in place of the existing sheeting with clay tiles to the lower roofs, and a mix of white painted timber windows and doors and use of aluminium. Brick bond and mortar would be as existing. The agent has confirmed that the proposed windows would be sash in the existing brick arch openings. The height of the ramp and level platform would be within 150mm of the floor so a brick edging to the ramp and level platform should be sufficient for wheelchair access. If a handrail is required, then this would be a timber rail and fixed to the Building by the users; planning conditions are recommended to specify material details.

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11. Specialist advice from the Essex County Council (ECC) Historic Buildings Advisor relating to the initial proposal which involved extension of the building was that the proposed design would be unsympathetic and would detract from the aesthetic and evidential values of the building, detracting from its heritage significance. The revisions to the proposal have now however overcome the objections raised by ECC.
 12. Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy and Policy DM1 of the Development Management Plan both seek to promote high quality design in new developments that would promote the character of the locality and enhance the local identity of the area. Policy DM3 of the Development Management Plan requires that proposals for residential intensification demonstrate that key criteria have been carefully considered and positively addressed. Supplementary Planning Document 2 (SPD2) for housing design states criteria that new housing development should meet.
 13. It is considered that the proposed development would provide a logical use of this currently dis-used building within the town centre. The residential intensification of the site that would result is considered acceptable; the site provides adequate car parking and cycle provision for the town centre location which provides ready access to other public transport alternatives. The refuse provision at the site would adequately cater for 2 additional units. The proposed use would not give rise to concerns relating to direct impacts on other residential units at the site or surrounding by way of causing overlooking, overshadowing or a development which could be considered overbearing.
 14. Although no private amenity space is proposed, the other bed-sit units in the main building at the site also do not benefit from any on-site soft landscaped amenity provision. Although amenity space within the area to the rear of No, 22 was indicated on the approved plans for the conversion of No.22 in 2016 for use as amenity space, no such soft landscaped provision has been made on site. The area to the rear serves as a car parking area and could also be used for informal amenity use in part when the car park is not fully occupied. There is however public open space a relatively short walk away. Given the circumstances at the site and the public open space nearby, in this instance the lack of on-site amenity space is not considered objectionable.
 15. The NPPF sets out the requirement that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption of sustainable development and it is considered that this scheme represents such.
 16. The Ministerial Statement of the 25th March 2015 announced changes to the government's policy relating to technical housing standards such that now planning permissions should not be granted requiring, or subject to conditions requiring, compliance with any technical housing standards other than for those

areas where authorities have existing policies on access, internal space, or water efficiency.

17. The Council has existing policies relating to all the above, namely access (Policy H6 of the Core Strategy), internal space (Policy DM4 of the Development Management Plan) and water efficiency (Policy ENV9 of the Core Strategy) and can therefore require compliance with the new national technical standards. However, the technical housing standard does not contain a minimum Gross Internal Area (GIA) for bedsit accommodation and it is not considered necessary to require the provision of water butts which would usually be the means by which the water efficiency requirement would be achieved on new dwellings given there would be no external amenity space at the site. The smallest 1-bedroom dwellings are identified by the national technical standard as required to have a minimum GIA of 37 square metres. A
18. The residential units proposed would be very modest in size, at some 27.9 and 35 square metres. There is however no policy standard to require larger units given that the units proposed are bed-sits rather than 1-bed flats. The occupants of the proposed bedsits could however have access to the shared laundry within the ground floor of No.22 which the other bedsits at the site have access to. The units would benefit from south facing windows and a layout which would provide for readily useable space internally.
19. In light of the Ministerial Statement which advises that planning permissions should not be granted subject to any technical housing standards other than those relating to internal space, water efficiency and access, the requirement in Policy ENV9 that a specific Code for Sustainable Homes level be achieved and the requirement in Policy H6 that the Lifetime Homes standard be met are now no longer sought.
20. The existing building has suffered substantial fire damage and it is considered unlikely that the proposal would impact adversely on any protected species including bats. There are no trees at or close to the site that would be adversely affected by the proposed development.

CONCLUSION

21. Policies H1, DM1, CP1 and DM3 require that new developments promote good, high quality design and the character of the locality to ensure that development positively contributes to the surrounding natural and built environment and residential amenity. Additionally, policies in the Rochford Centre Area Action Plan require proposals at this site to achieve a high standard of design that protects and enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area. The APP supports residential use of this site and the NPPF supports sustainable development which this proposal is considered to demonstrate. The revised

proposal would be to a high standard of design required particularly in this sensitive location. The proposal would comply with relevant planning policy.

Representations

ROCHFORD PARISH COUNCIL: FIRST RESPONSE: Members object as they do not think this is in keeping with the listed building and they consider the amenity space inadequate

RDC (Strategic Housing): We fully support this application as we have worked with the applicant on developing the other property at 22 South Street.

ECC (Historic Buildings):

First Response

Number 22 South Street is a Grade II Listed building (List Entry ID: 1307085). The range at the rear, the subject of this application, is curtilage listed.

I recommend this application is refused. The proposal will detract from the aesthetic and evidential values of the building, detracting from its heritage significance. This will cause considerable 'less than substantial harm' to a designated heritage asset and as such paragraph 196 of the NPPF is relevant.

I recommend the applicant engages in a pre-application discussion. I consider there is certainly potential to refurbish and use this building, but this will be realised in a more sympathetic design.

Second Response

The building is curtilage listed and located in the Rochford Conservation Area.

I have no objections to this application. I would however prefer to see retention of the existing segmental arch over the new central door.

The proposal drawing is not an accurate survey but it has been assumed that all the openings are largely existing.

No information has been provided to suggest this building will be divided from the host dwelling by hard boundaries. If this were to be the case then I consider there to be less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset. This point should be clarified with the applicant.

Should this application be approved I recommend conditions are attached pertaining to:

- Requirement of a 'Level 2' Scheme of archaeological building recording as outlined in Historic England Guidance *Understanding Heritage Assets*.

- Requirement for details of all new external fixtures including windows, doors, rainwater goods (to be metal).
- Requirement for samples of new external materials such as brick and slate
- A detailed landscaping plan.

ECC (Highways): No objection subject to conditions;

The proposal is not proposing any changes to the existing vehicular access.

As stated in the Parking Standards Design and Good Practice September 2009, a lower provision of vehicle parking may be appropriate in urban areas where there is good access to alternative forms of transport and the proposal site is considered to be in a sustainable location in the immediate vicinity of Rochford Town Centre with good access to public transport and other facilities, therefore;

From a highway and transportation perspective the impact of the proposal is acceptable to the Highway Authority subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to commencement of the development, the areas within the curtilage of the site for the purpose of loading / unloading / reception and storage of building materials and manoeuvring of all vehicles, including construction traffic shall be provided clear of the highway.

APPROVE

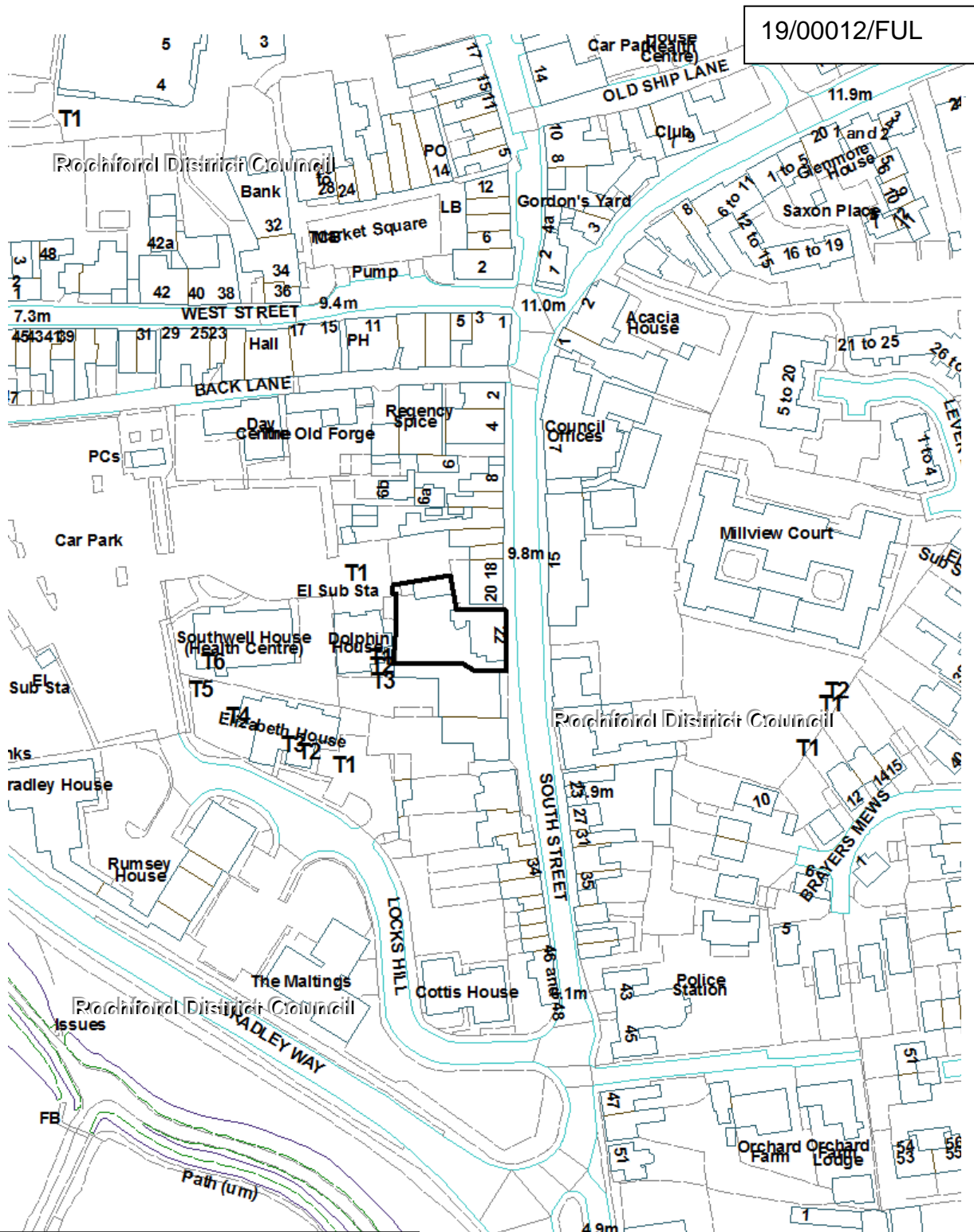
1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved plans listed below:

Drawing number 2091/3, 2091/L1 and 2091/1.

3. Prior to the commencement of development, a 'Level 2' Scheme of archaeological building recording as outlined in Historic England Guidance *Understanding Heritage Assets* shall be completed and shall have been submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.
4. Details of all external facing and roofing materials including windows and doors for use in construction of the development hereby approved shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to first use of the materials. Details to be submitted shall include samples of bricks (and specify brick bond and mortar) and roofing materials including the slate. Rainwater goods shall be metal. Scale 1:20 drawings of the proposed windows shall be

submitted. Such materials as may be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority shall be those used in the development hereby permitted.

5. Prior to the installation of any handrail to the ramp at the site, details of the handrail shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The handrail shall be installed in accordance with the details as agreed and retained in this form in perpetuity.
6. Prior to commencement of the development, the areas within the curtilage of the site for the purpose of loading / unloading / reception and storage of building materials shall be provided clear of the highway.



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