



Committee Report

Application no DC/20/0952/FUL

Location

32 Thoroughfare
Woodbridge
IP12 1AQ

Expiry date 26 April 2020

Application type Full Application

Applicant Mr & Mrs Groen

Parish Woodbridge

Proposal Demolition of existing dwelling & Associated garage structure.
Construction of replacement dwelling.

Case Officer Rachel Lambert
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1. Summary

Proposal

- 1.1. Demolition of existing dwelling (including associated garage structure) and the construction of a replacement dwelling.

Reason at Committee

- 1.2. In accordance with the scheme of delegation as the 'minded to' decision of the planning officer, to approve was contrary to the comments received by Woodbridge Town Council, the application was referred to the planning referral panel meeting on Tuesday 12th May. The Referral Panel referred the item to Planning Committee, so that the Planning Committee can consider the impact of the design upon the streetscene and Conservation Area.

Case for development

- 1.3. The site is located within the defined physical limits boundary of Woodbridge, where replacement residential development is supported in principle, subject to accordance with all relevant environmental, heritage and design policies. Having due regard to the to the

scale of harm to and significance of Ropewalk Cottage as a non-designated heritage, asset it is considered that the quality of the design of the proposed new dwelling can be judged to mitigate the loss of the existing dwelling, and would enhance the character and appearance of the Woodbridge Conservation Area.

Recommendation

1.4. Recommended for approval subject to conditions.

2. Site description

- 2.1. The site is located at 'Ropewalk Cottage' 32 Thoroughfare, Woodbridge and comprises a two-storey, detached dwelling located within the physical limits of Woodbridge - with an overall site area of approximately 340 square metres. It is located within Woodbridge Conservation Area on the boundary between Character Area 9 (Thoroughfare) and Character Area 6 (Quay Side).
- 2.2. The host building is a two-storey detached property dating from the mid-19th century. The walls are a pink painted brick with a set of slightly forward protruding window casements, particularly at first floor level, most noticeable from Jacobs Way. There are two non-original extensions at ground floor level including a conservatory and a single storey rear extension with a flat roof, the later this has been constructed sensitively with regards the style and appearance of the host dwelling.
- 2.3. A site visit was conducted on 03 October 2019 in relation to the pre-application application, with the applicant (owner), architect, historic buildings consultant, planning officer and design and conservation officer in attendance. Access was gained to the existing building, its garden curtilage and surroundings.
- 2.4. Recent and relevant planning history on the site includes the following:
 - DC/PREAPP/18/2682: Pre-application advice - Demolish existing cottage and erect a three bed two storey eco house with a larger footprint; and
 - DC/19/1676/FUL: Demolition of existing dwelling & associated garage structure - construction of replacement dwelling - Refused.
 - DC/PREAPP/19/3404: Pre-application advice - Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of new accessible low energy dwelling.

3. Proposal

- 3.1. Demolition of existing dwelling (including associated garage structure) and the construction of replacement two-storey dwelling.
- 3.2. The proposed building is of a low energy and contemporary design, L-shaped in form and aligned against the northern and eastern aspects of the site, allowing for a courtyard style outdoor space in the southwestern quadrant. The inner walls facing garden are rendered with extensive glazing on to the south facing space. A green roof is proposed on a single storey aspect to the front, which serves as an art room and is linked to the main dwelling. The slate roof is of varying angles and comprises photovoltaic panels on the south-western

field. The main east wall is an extension and continuation of the existing brick boundary wall to the rear service yard, for the shops to the north - the wall is stepped at the ownership boundary with a brick installed rotated at 45 degrees to create a feature wall with glazing each side. The northern elevation comprises white render, and overhangs the entrance providing a porch cover. An integral bin store and cycle parking is provided, along with two car parking spaces and soft landscaping to the front.

4. Consultations/comments

4.1. A total of three third party objections were received, raising the following matters:

- Access to garage/parking;
- Overshadowing;
- Overlooking;
- Loss of light;
- Loss of privacy;
- Loss of view;
- Scale of development (footprint) and proximity to neighbouring properties;
- Noise impact from plant machinery;
- Design out of keeping in conservation area;
- Anti-social behaviour/fear of crime;
- Dominating/overbearing;
- Boundary issues;
- Contamination; and
- Material weight of previous refusal.

4.2. Included within one of the objections was a note of support of the plans to build a well-designed, sustainable property on this site, provided it does not cause problems for their neighbours.

Consultees

Parish/Town Council

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Woodbridge Town Council	3 March 2020	30 March 2020
<p>Summary of comments:</p> <p>"We OBJECT to this application as it is contrary to Planning Policies DM21 and SP15. It is also contrary to para 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework. In addition it is contrary to the following Policies in the Final Draft Local Plan:- Policy SCLP4 Development in Town Centres (page 76) Policy SCLP11.1 Design Quality (page 170) Policy CLP11.2 Residential Amenity (page 171) Policy 12.31 Woodbridge (page 282-286) Policy SCLP11.5 Conservation Areas (page 176-178)."</p>		

Statutory consultees

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Suffolk County - Highways Department	3 March 2020	11 March 2020
Summary of comments: No objection subject to condition(s).		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Suffolk County Archaeological Unit	3 March 2020	No response
Summary of comments: No comments received.		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Suffolk Fire And Rescue Service	N/A	7 April 2020
Summary of comments: No objections - informatives noted.		

Non statutory consultees

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Design And Conservation (Internal)	3 March 2020	26 March 2020
Summary of comments: Internal consultee - comments incorporated within reporting.		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Environmental Protection (Internal)	3 March 2020	9 March 2020
Summary of comments: Internal consultee - comments incorporated within reporting.		

Publicity

The application has been the subject of the following press advertisement:

Category	Published	Expiry	Publication
Conservation Area	12 March 2020	2 April 2020	East Anglian Daily Times

Site notices

General Site Notice

Reason for site notice: Conservation Area, Affects Setting of Listed Building, May Affect Archaeological Site
Date posted: 6 March 2020
Expiry date: 27 March 2020

5. Planning policy

- 5.1. On 1 April 2019, East Suffolk Council was created by parliamentary order, covering the former districts of Suffolk Coastal District Council and Waveney District Council. The Local Government (Boundary Changes) Regulations 2018 (part 7) state that any plans, schemes, statements or strategies prepared by the predecessor council should be treated as if it had been prepared and, if so required, published by the successor council - therefore any policy documents listed below referring to "Suffolk Coastal District Council" continue to apply to East Suffolk Council until such time that a new document is published.
- 5.2. In addition to considering applications in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019) and the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG), Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications to be determined in accordance with the Local Planning Authority's 'Development Plan', unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.3. East Suffolk Council's Development Plan, as relevant to this proposal, consists of:
 - East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan – Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (Adopted July 2013);
 - East Suffolk Council – Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan – Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan (Adopted January 2017) and;
 - The 'Saved' Policies of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan incorporating the first and second alterations.
- 5.4. The relevant policies of the Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan – Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (Adopted July 2013) are:
 - SP1 - Sustainable Development (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
 - SP1a - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
 - SP19 - Settlement Hierarchy (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))

- SP26 - Woodbridge (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
- DM19 - Parking Standards (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
- SP15 - Landscape and Townscape (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
- DM21 - Design: Aesthetics (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
- DM22 - Design: Function (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
- DM23 - Residential Amenity (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
- DM28 - Flood Risk (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))

6. Planning considerations

Principle of development

- 6.1. The site is located within the defined physical limits of Woodbridge, on the town centre border, where policy allows for the development of replacement dwellings (Policy SP19: Settlement Policy). As such, the proposed demolition and construction of a replacement dwelling is supportive in principle, subject to meeting all respective environmental, design and heritage policies.
- 6.2. The strategy for Woodbridge is to balance opportunities with the acknowledged physical and environmental constraints in order to maintain and enhance its roles as the principle market town within the district, an employment centre and a tourist destination. In this instance, the policy aim that seeks to consolidate a town that retains the quality of the built environment is of note and will be addressed in relation to respective design policies (Policy SP26: Woodbridge and Policy AP56: Town Centre).

Heritage

- 6.3. In addressing matters relating to heritage and conservation, this section of the report is addressed under the following headings:
 - Listed building status;
 - Non-Designated Heritage Asset status;

- Impact on Woodbridge Conservation Area; and
- Heritage conclusion.

Listed building status

- 6.4. It is acknowledged that the site had previously been considered to comprise a building of heritage value on the basis of its local contribution to that part of the conservation area. Historic England has since clarified that the listing within the vicinity of the site applies only to the property of the same address that sits on the Thoroughfare - as such, Ropewalk Cottage is not a listed building. Furthermore, the adopted Woodbridge Conservation Area Appraisal (July 2011) does not identify the building as a 'significant building' and no important views are identified that include the building. However, an important wall is identified leading to the cottage from the south-east that forms part of its boundary; and the cottage's rear garden is identified as important green/open/tree space.
- 6.5. The Heritage Impact Assessment (dated October 2019), which provides a description and analysis of the building and some research into its likely uses via map, photographic and documentary evidence, is deemed acceptable for the purposes of Paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Should planning permission be granted, the Heritage Impact Assessment will form a record of it and should be submitted to the SCC Historic Environment Record.
- 6.6. The application has been advertised as affecting the setting of listed buildings. The nearest are those on Doric Place and the Thoroughfare and are mapped within the submitted HIA at Figure 6 and in our appraisal summary map (op.cit.). Whilst Ropewalk Cottage falls into their setting by virtue of their physical proximity, I would not argue that the application site in any way contributes to their significance. Therefore, regard has been given to Section 66 of the Planning(Conservation and Listed Buildings) Act 1990 which requires special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
- 6.7. The application proposal replaces built form with built form albeit to a differing design and a somewhat enlarged scale but retaining equivalent or similar townscape attributes in terms of scale subordination, pitched roof blocks and materials choice. On these bases, the application preserves the setting of nearby listed buildings.

Non-Designated Heritage Asset status

- 6.8. As a result of a previous application for a similar proposal (DC/19/1676/FUL), the local planning authority had identified Ropewalk Cottage, using the adopted and published criteria, as a Non-Designated Heritage Asset (NDHA). At that time this was due to:
- The aesthetic value - the building through its intrinsic design, which is derived from its typical local Woodbridge style in terms of materials used and painted brick appearance presents typical local characteristics exhibits a positive external appearance in the streetscene and wider landscape;
 - Group value - the building has a coherent design of the time and era of construction providing a positive historic functional relationship with the nearby listed building to the north and west, and conservation area more widely; and

- Integrity - the building retains a degree of intactness and lack of harmful external alterations and as it is part of a group (neighbouring nearby Listed Buildings to the north and the west) that helps make a contribution to the surviving completeness of that 'group'.

- 6.9. However, in reviewing these criteria under the current application, the Council's Principal Design and Conservation Officer has confirmed that 'integrity' does not apply in this instance, as the building has suffered external alterations in the form of modern additions to the front and rear that have reduced its level of integrity, particularly in comparison with the photograph supplied at Figure 5 in the Heritage Impact Assessment. Although such changes are reversible, they are considered to constitute as 'harmful external alterations'. In conclusion, the Council's identification of the building as an NDHA is correct (the submitted Heritage Impact Assessment disagrees on this point) as it continues to meet two of the criteria and, therefore, passes the threshold for identification.
- 6.10. The Council's Principal Design and Conservation Officer suggests that Ropewalk Cottage is not of very great significance - it is not a designated heritage asset and its conservation does not need to be given great weight. The cottage has met only two of the ten criteria for identification as a non-designated heritage asset, however, it is acknowledged that it is clearly of some local interest. Taking into account the significance of the building, it has been judged that its complete loss would result in a moderate level of harm and loss of the building would not be mitigated by its recording prior to removal. For clarification, there are no statutory duties concerning non-designated heritage assets.
- 6.11. Given consideration to the overall policy in the NPPF to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance because they are irreplaceable. Paragraph 197 states that "The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset." The Local Planning Authority will weigh this loss against the positive planning matters of the proposal through the considerations of paragraph such as the quality of the design of the proposed new dwelling.
- 6.12. Furthermore, Policy SCLP11.6 (Non-Designated Heritage Assets) of the emerging East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan can afford moderate weight in its current status. This states:

"Proposals for the re-use of Non-Designated Heritage Assets will be supported if compatible with the elements of the fabric and setting of the building which contribute to its significance. New uses which result in harm to a Non-Designated Heritage Asset or its setting will be considered based on the wider balance of the scale of any harm or loss. In considering proposals which involve the loss of a non-designated heritage asset, consideration will be given to:

a. Whether the asset is structurally unsound and beyond technically feasible and economically viable repair (for reasons other than deliberate damage or neglect); or

b. Which measures to sustain the existing use, or find an alternative use/user, have been fully investigated.

Neighbourhood Plans can identify Non-Designated Heritage Assets. However, the protection afforded to these should be no more than that provided to Non-Designated Heritage Assets protected by this policy. Heritage assets identified should at least meet the Council's criteria for identifying Non-Designated Heritage Assets."

- 6.13. This policy provides similar considerations to the NPPF and is addressed in the conclusion of this section.

Impact on Woodbridge Conservation Area

- 6.14. The site is located on the boundary of Character Area 6 (Quayside) and Character Area 9 (Thoroughfare) of the Woodbridge Conservation Area, which is a designated heritage asset. The Woodbridge Conservation Area Appraisal (July 2011) provides guidance on the character and appearance of the heritage asset, including the identification of unlisted 'significant buildings', important walls and important views.
- 6.15. The appraisal does not identify Ropewalk Cottage as a significant building, and there are no important views identified that take in the application site or its surroundings. However, the boundary wall that runs along the north-eastern edge of the application site and forms a retaining wall between the cottage's garden and the adjacent service lane is identified as an important wall. The appraisal identifies the area of the cottage's garden to the immediate south-east of the cottage as important open/green/tree space, which is taken to mean that it should be retained in that form (i.e. undeveloped) for its positive contribution to the conservation area. This aligns with the same identification that is made of the linear garden spaces to the rear of the adjacent Doric Place dwellings.
- 6.16. Also, of note is the unlisted houses that line the lower section of Doric Place are all identified as significant buildings and an important view of them is identified along the length of the lane that fronts them. The upper section of Doric Place on approach to the Thoroughfare consists of listed buildings.
- 6.17. In respect of the built context of the application site, the appraisal states that rope making was one of the many industries that could be found within Woodbridge in the Middle Ages. This industry was likely connected to the use of Woodbridge as a port and associated ship building. An 1827 map identifies the area of Doric Place and the land behind it as a rope walk and its form and its location close to the area of quays and jetties suggests that this was the historic site of this industry. The building illustrated on the same map is difficult to tally with the existing building which the Heritage Impact Assessment suggests is of mid-C19th origin and, therefore, later than the map - it may represent its predecessor. The appraisal provides no analysis of the application site, tending to concentrate on the appreciable merits of Doric Place.
- 6.18. It is the view of the Council's Principal Design and Conservation Officer that, as the conservation area appraisal does not identify the building as a significant building, its loss can be acceptable, in principle, as its contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area has been judged in the adopted appraisal to be neutral rather than positive. Any replacement building should, by design, have the same effect in terms of the conservation area's character and appearance and, thereby, preserve it; or enhance it (which is preferable) through the quality of its design.

- 6.19. It is reasonable, if not incumbent, that with the passage of time (since 2011) and the provision of any new historical information, the contribution of the cottage to the conservation area can be re-assessed. The view of the Council's Principal Design and Conservation Officer is that the architectural interest of the cottage is strictly limited in that it is a simple Victorian cottage of hipped roof form. However, it is acknowledged that the cottage does have some modest townscape value, albeit that this is derived principally from the picturesque view that can be gained of it from the adjacent public car park which reveals its hipped roof form and upper floor. As well as some historic interest derived from its position facing the ropewalk, and the unexplained ground floor arched features that face it. However, it is not apparent that this building is anything but a domestic building or a former service building later adapted for residential use. It is thought that its very small scale would not have made it viable for an industrial use, and this potential historic association is discounted.
- 6.20. For conservation areas, the statutory duty under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area. The duty applies when the local planning authority is determining a planning application in respect of "buildings or other land in a conservation area". Moreover, the NPPF identifies protection and enhancement of the historic environment as an important element of sustainable development and establishes a presumption in favour of this in the planning system - with 'great weight' placed on the conservation of designated heritage assets, and the notion that the more important the asset the greater the weight should be (Paragraph 193, NPPF). This paragraph also states that 'any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification' and applies to all designated heritage assets.
- 6.21. As the development proposal would lead to "less than substantial harm" to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal (Paragraph 196, NPPF). The desirability of the proposal making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness is taken into account (Paragraph 192, NPPF), with great weight given to outstanding or innovative designs that promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings (Paragraph 131, NPPF).
- 6.22. Overall, the loss of Ropewalk Cottage will give rise to a small level of less-than-substantial harm to the designated heritage asset that is the Woodbridge Conservation Area. The level of harm is weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, which includes the outstanding design of the replacement dwelling that promotes high levels of sustainability (as detailed at length in the submitted Design and Access Statement), which raises the standard of design in the area, fits into the overall form and layout of its surroundings and makes a positive contribution to character and local distinctiveness. The proposal will enhance the character and appearance of the Woodbridge Conservation Area in respect of the design of the replacement dwelling and shall, thereby, meet the test at Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Heritage conclusion

- 6.23. The demolition of an NDHA in a conservation area should not be regarded in the same way as if it were the designated asset itself, and cannot be treated as harm to a designated heritage asset in isolation, but consideration of the scheme as a whole needs is required.

- 6.24. The demolition of the NDHA within Woodbridge Conservation Area has been assessed in terms of Paragraph 197 of the NPPF, with the summary assessment of the development taking into account the scheme as a whole (including the replacement building) and any public benefits arising from the proposal in terms of the impact on the designated asset (the conservation area). In this case, although the existing building makes a positive contribution to the conservation area and would be completely lost, this does not mean that the conservation area would inevitably be harmed. The outstanding quality of the design of the proposed new dwelling can be judged to mitigate the loss of the existing dwelling. This is a positive factor and there are others that are identified in striking the overall balance, giving due regard to the scale of harm to and significance of the non-designated heritage asset.
- 6.25. In undertaking the required policy, statutory and NPPF tests in respect of heritage the proposal the proposed development would not adversely affect the setting of listed buildings, would enhance the character and appearance of Woodbridge Conservation Area, and would result in moderate harm through the loss of a non-designated heritage asset. On that final point, the merits of the high-quality design (addressed in follow sections) informs a positive weighing in favour of the proposed development against the consideration of Paragraph 192 of the NPPF and against the emerging policy.
- 6.26. Overall, it has been that this application will enhance the character and appearance of the Woodbridge Conservation Area in respect of the design of the replacement dwelling and shall, thereby, meet the test at Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Aesthetics, townscape and landscape

- 6.27. Collectively and amongst other things Policy DM21 (Design: Aesthetics) and Policy SP15 (Townscape and Landscape) require new developments to respect the existing context, character and appearance and to contribute positively to the context of the townscape. New developments should respect aspects of the character and integrity of the original building that contribute to local distinctiveness, such as height, width, depth, footprint, building line, rhythm, symmetry, position, detailed design, important gaps and sense of openness. At the same time proposals should preserve and take the opportunity to enhance the character and appearance of conservation areas.
- 6.28. The context of the cottage is formed of a mix of historic dwellings to the immediate south and west - a mix of listed and unlisted buildings - and modern development to its immediate north, east and south-east. A large public car park (at a lower level) from which a vehicle access leads to the adjacent service yard provides public views of the cottage, which can also be seen in views westward from the top of Brook Street. The scale of surrounding buildings steps down from those that front the Thoroughfare, which are in mixed use, to the smaller, predominantly residential buildings to their rear - an attractive and traditional characteristic. Characteristic of this area in the historic core of Woodbridge is the relatively high density and tight grain of development that features lanes, alleys and narrow rear accesses that lead off the Thoroughfare. This grain or pattern is established and historic but somewhat disrupted where space has been created to provide for modern service yards and large areas of parking - as can be seen adjacent the cottage site. Modern development in the area of the site is a mix of scales, styles and quality.

- 6.29. It is notable that the surrounding built environment comprises a mix of the modern and historic with an eclectic and varied range of architectural styles, forms and scales represented. It is not the case that this is a uniformly historic context which must be preserved free from contemporary intervention. There is ample precedent for modern design surrounding this site, not much of it of any quality at all (particularly the pastiche residential) and this proposal will raise the quality of new design in this part of the conservation area. This is particularly so when it is considered that the design will read more as part of the group of modern buildings to its north, north-east and south-east, rather than the group of buildings on Doric Place, all of which face away from the application site with their main frontages to Doric Place.
- 6.30. In comparing the submitted scheme, which was previously refused, the subsequent changes address prior concerns and improve the quality of the design. The principal changes are the reduction in the scale of the building and an amelioration of its design approach. By virtue of the former, the design is now less over-stated and dominant; and by virtue of the latter, the design is now more respectful of, and responsive to, its context. The proposal replaces one dwelling with another, there is no proposed change of use and there will be no change in effect on the immediate area in this respect. The change of design is going to be a more subjective test about whether the adopted design approach is going to have an adverse or beneficial effect on the immediate area.
- 6.31. Replacement of one dwelling with another would not affect the understanding or significance of this local area for its association with the history of ropemaking. This is because there is no evidence that the existing building arose from that association and the significance of the linear form of rear gardens behind Doric Place (the historic Rope Walk) is unaffected. The building will not dominate or be assertive within its immediate context and this is a result of the successful reduction in scale. In this way, the design is more respectful of its surroundings where they are historic.
- 6.32. The highly bespoke design approach design utilises an unusual backland site in a town centre location to provide for a relatively modest dwelling that provides wide-ranging accommodation and associated garden space - an efficient and effective means of making more than most of the site. The courtyard form conceived here is typical of many such town centre urban sites within Woodbridge for which there is historic precedent. It is, of course, how small sites can be developed - or re-developed, as here - to ensure that dwellings enjoy private space (albeit of a modest area) whilst being very close to very public space, that is, space which is highly used. This contrast effect is powerful (the 'oasis') and would work well here.
- 6.33. The courtyard form of the building generates its most interesting townscape effect, which contrasts the exterior public-facing parts of the building with the interior private-facing parts of the building. The former is solid, enclosed and defensive; the latter are lightweight, light-filled and open - this architectural approach is well-conceived and site appropriate.
- 6.34. The design of the building draws on the vocabulary of surrounding buildings in terms of some aspects of its form - dual-pitched blocks - and materials, predominantly brick, render and slate. In these important ways the design is a contextual response that reflects and respects its surroundings without merely imitating them. The form and aesthetic of the building are striking and distinctive. The design will have its own townscape presence and

character as a result of its unusual play of planes, form and materials and, as such, is a creative response to the site.

- 6.35. Whilst not replicating the existing picturesque view of Ropewalk Cottage from the adjacent car park, a similar view has been provided for in the submission and illustrates the interest of the design which is illustrated in it - that is, the conjunction of solid to void to roof, their interplay and modelling. The view also illustrates how the design reflects the local importance of gabled and pitched roof forms - emphasised by the overhanging roof. Although not all may find the view equally picturesque, it would be of townscape interest. Other important views will be that across the rear service yard from the public lane that connects Brook Street to the Thoroughfare. The presence of the new dwelling will bulk larger longitudinally in this view and this represents a change but not necessarily an adverse one. It will still be possible to see across the site on either side of the new dwelling to the unlisted and listed buildings beyond and appreciate their positive townscape effect, albeit that this will be reduced in extent compared to existing. A glimpsed view of the site is possible from the Thoroughfare, which currently reveals nothing of particular note in respect of the application site. This will be replaced by a glimpsed view of the jettied entrance elevation will be attractive and of interest and, therefore, positive. The submitted 3-D illustration of the entrance elevation reveals the subordination of scale of the new dwelling in respect of the adjacent dwelling and this is reassuring.
- 6.36. The boundary wall that runs along the north-east edge of the application is identified as an important wall in the Conservation Area appraisal, although this identification is made without explanation. The HIA suggests that the wall is a modern feature dating from the late 1980s when the area around the site was extensively remodelled. The current application maintains the effect of the boundary wall and enhances it by emphasising its importance as a local townscape feature through direct incorporation into the design. In this way, the importance of the boundary wall is preserved.
- 6.37. The garden space to the south-east of the cottage is identified as a space to be, in effect, retained in its undeveloped form as an important green space - essentially reading as part of the same linear open space to the rear of the unlisted houses on Doric Place. The current application retains this garden space in the same character and to the same effect and its importance, therefore, will be preserved.
- 6.38. The application proposal replaces built form with built form albeit to a differing design and a somewhat enlarged scale but retaining equivalent or similar townscape attributes in terms of scale subordination, pitched roof blocks and materials choice. As such, it is considered that the application preserves the setting of nearby listed buildings and that their setting would, thereby, be preserved. It is not necessary, therefore, to apply the tests in either Paragraph 195 or Paragraph 196 of the NPPF.
- 6.39. Overall, the design of the replacement dwelling is one that the Council can support, and is judged to be of outstanding quality - a site-responsive contemporary design that will promote high levels of sustainability and that effectively uses the site to provide a distinctive design that will contribute very positively to its immediate locality and the wider area and Conservation Area. The increased size of the replacement design will impart a greater physical presence than the existing cottage, however, the resultant size of dwelling and scale relationships with surrounding dwellings would be complementary and not overly dominant.

- 6.40. The floor plan and site layout are well considered - these have the advantage of utilising a constrained site to provide useful indoor and outdoor space of both a private and semi-public character in a way that is reflective of its tight town centre setting. The proposal is deemed in accordance with Policy SP15 (Landscape and Townscape) and Policy DM21 (Design: Aesthetics) of the East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan Core Strategy & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document 2013, which seek to achieve high quality design that does not detract from the character of the surroundings, and in areas of varied townscape quality, seeks to ensure that new proposals create a new composition and point of interest which will provide a positive improvement in the standard of the built environment. Moreover, the proposal is also inline with policy guidance set out under Policy SCLP11.1 (Design Quality) of the emerging East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, which supports locally distinctive and high quality design that clearly demonstrates an understanding of the key features of local character and seeks to enhance these features through innovative and creative means.

Residential amenity

- 6.41. Policy DM23 (Design: Residential Amenity) sets out the material considerations relating to residential amenity as: privacy/overlooking, outlook, access to daylight and sunlight, noise and disturbance, the resulting physical relationship with other properties, light spillage, air quality and other forms of pollution, and safety and security. New houses should benefit from a satisfactory degree of privacy and daylight and residents of existing houses should also not be unduly affected by the development.
- 6.42. The representations of objections raise concerns in relation to overlooking/loss of privacy, specifically in relation to the dwelling to the west (6 Doric Place) and its windows along the eastern and northern elevations. Whilst it is acknowledged that there are a number of windows on this elevation of the neighbouring property, the kitchen, utility and cloakroom windows are obscurely glazed, and the dining room window is located at a height with limited viewable access. In these instances, there is no concern raised with regard to impact on existing outlook or privacy.
- 6.43. Additionally, concerns raised with regard to overlooking and privacy for both properties, with the bathroom window at first floor level (6 Doric Place) directly facing the proposed sun terrace (approximately 5.8 metre separation distance) have been addressed. In urban areas some overlooking is inevitable, however, every effort should be made to avoid overlooking of rear facing living room windows and garden 'sitting out' areas - this can be achieved through distance and design using potential changes to assist privacy. In dense urban areas where there is already excessive mutual overlooking a lesser standard may be acceptable. In this instance, the variation in height mitigates such effect to a degree. The existing bathroom window is also at a height that is above eye level, which helps provide privacy to the terraced area. Those using the proposed terrace will look down into the private courtyard or across the street, rather than over adjacent residential boundaries. Furthermore, the roofline overhanging the terrace has been set back to allow the retention of outlook from the centre of the window serving the bathroom of the neighbouring property.
- 6.44. The proposed green roof provides a separation distance from the neighbouring property of approximately 4.2 metres. The first-floor window along the side elevation of 5 Doric Place, does not serve a habitable room and there are no proposed windows on this aspect of the

south west elevation that would directly face the aforementioned window, with a small utility window located at further towards the southern corner.

- 6.45. The bedroom window at first floor level on the northern elevation (6 Doric Place), will overlook the green roof area and the corner of the proposed development, but does not directly face any glazed openings - with a setback of approximately 6 metres. The proposed WC at the first-floor level of the proposed development will be conditioned to be obscurely glazed to ensure that any potential for loss of privacy is mitigated for both properties. As such, there is no concerns with regard to overlooking or loss of privacy.
- 6.46. Daylight is defined as being the volume of natural light that enters a building to provide satisfactory illumination of internal accommodation between sun rise and sunset. This can be known as ambient light. design of residential environments to ensure that adequate levels of natural light (based on Building Standards) can be achieved within new dwellings and unacceptable impacts on light to nearby properties are minimised and preferably avoided. Sunlight refers to direct sunshine.
- 6.47. The size and position of the proposal will affect the amount of light available to both the development and neighbouring properties. The impact on the light levels in the living rooms, dining rooms and kitchens of a neighbour's home are considered important, bedrooms should also be considered but are less vital. In terms of access to the daylight and sunlight, the orientation and positioning of the development to the northern aspect of the site results in minimal overshadowing on the adjacent property (6 Doric Place) with the sun moving through the south. Additional shading that occurs is to the front courtyard during winter months, and the shared courtyard to the north. Due to the reduction in ridge height of the scheme from that previously considered, the separation distances and the orientation in relation to neighbouring properties, it is considered that there would be no detrimental effect on access to daylight/sunlight for the principal living areas within the adjacent site. The degree of impact upon daylight and sunlight would be insufficient to warrant the refusal of the scheme.
- 6.48. The 25-degree rule of thumb is applied when a new development directly faces an affected window. Suitable daylight for habitable rooms is achieved when a 25-degree vertical angle taken from the centre of the lowest windows is kept unobstructed, the recommended distance between the buildings is dependent on the opposing property ridge height. In this instance, the proposed development meets this test - with all windows benefitting from and adequate level of daylight (as shown on drawing number 15 Rev. O).
- 6.49. In terms of the amenity of future occupiers, direct views out would be provided from windows serving principal living areas and habitable rooms from many aspects, as well as overlooking the street. Outlook is, therefore, considered acceptable in terms of the amenity of future residents of the development. The terrace edge of the terraced area is approximately 7 metres from the southern boundary, with three tree species proposed along the boundary to provide a suitable level of screening.
- 6.50. Considering the residential nature of the proposal and surrounding environment, there are no concerns in relation to adverse impacts to residential amenity caused by noise/disturbance and other potential sources of pollution.

- 6.51. Due to its siting and design the proposed development would not impact on the spacious relationship with the adjoining properties. Similarly, it would not adversely affect the living conditions of the occupants of the adjoining dwellings due to loss of daylight, sunlight, privacy or visual impact. Overall, the submitted scheme provides quality on-site residential amenity for residents and would not cause unacceptable loss of amenity to adjoining occupiers or future occupiers of the development. As such, the application is considered in accordance with Policy DM23 (Design: Residential Amenity) of the East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan Core Strategy & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document 2013, as well as Policy SCLP11.2 (Residential Amenity) of the emerging East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan.

Sustainability

- 6.52. The proposal has been designed to allow for a lifetime home approach, accessible by all - with the installation of a lift. The house ground floor/ plinth and floor is thermal mass heavy that ensures daytime heat and heat gains are stored by the building and then omitted at night or in cooler periods. This thermal mass design thus prevents overheating during the day and low temperatures at night - the house effectively absorbs the excesses and large temperature changes. As the house is super insulated and incredibly airtight and well-sealed we will be installing an MVHR system to ensure day long pre warmed fresh air for occupants and a positive pressure on the inside. The heat is recovered from the extracted air and fed into the incoming fresh air. Low water appliances, eco-cisterns, aerating taps/showers, permeable drive and hard paving, triple glazed windows, LED lighting, and installation of photovoltaic panels on the roof are some of the sustainable design features incorporated within the scheme. A range of recycled and sustainable materials are to be used during construction - as detailed with the submitted Design and Access Statement.
- 6.53. Furthermore, the inclusion of a green sedum roof to reduce rainwater runoff and absorb carbon, installation of bird and bat boxes, and native species planting are all welcomed features of the proposal that seek to enhance biodiversity within the area.

Highway Safety and Parking Provision

- 6.54. Suffolk County Council as Highways Authority raises no objection to the proposal subject to a condition that ensures sufficient space for the onsite parking of vehicles is provided and maintained in order to ensure the provision of adequate on-site space for the parking and manoeuvring of vehicles where on-street parking and manoeuvring would be detrimental to highway safety to users of the highway.
- 6.55. The proposal increases the number of car parking spaces on site by one, which meets the recommended criteria set out in the Suffolk Guidance for Parking Technical Guidance 2019 for a three-bedroom property. As such, the proposal is deemed in accordance with Policy DM22 (Design: Function) and Policy DM19 (Parking Standards).

Land Contamination

- 6.56. The proposal has been reviewed by the East Suffolk Council environmental protection team, who raise no objection subject to a condition that ensures risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors.

Flood risk

- 6.57. The subject site is located within Flood Risk 1 zone, which the Environment Agency defines as having a low probability of flooding. Due to the associated low risk, no further assessment is required, and the application is considered in accordance with Policy DM28 (Flood Risk).

Community Infrastructure Levy

- 6.58. The proposed development referred to in this planning permission is a chargeable development liable to pay Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) under Part 11 of the Planning Act (2008) and the CIL Regulations (2010) (as amended).

7. Conclusion

- 7.1. The proposal for the demolition of Ropewalk Cottage (a non-designated heritage asset) and the construction of a three-bedroom two storey dwelling, located within the centre of Woodbridge, is deemed acceptable in principle and considered a sustainable form of development.
- 7.2. The site is of a size that would suitably accommodate the scale of development proposed without causing harm to outlook, access to daylight/sunlight and overlooking of neighbouring properties. The overall design result is responsive and distinctive and has the potential to enhance the conservation area, with design aspects well considered - the contrast between the public and private sides of the building (materials, fenestration), where one appears solid and 'closed' and one opens up to the courtyard garden space; and the hierarchy of spaces, efficiency of layout and utility.
- 7.3. Overall, it is considered that the design quality and incorporation of sustainable construction features to provide a sustainable lifetime three-bedroom dwelling outweighs the loss of the existing building as a non-designated heritage asset. The application adequately addresses the refusal reasons on the previous application relating to design, impact on conservation area, and loss of heritage asset.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1. Approve subject to the conditions set out below.

Conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: This condition is imposed in accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) (as amended).

2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out other than in complete accordance with the following drawings:

- Location plan (Drawing number: 01) - received 02 May 2020;
- Proposed site plan (Drawing number: 17 Rev. F) - received 02 May 2020;
- Proposed plans (Drawing number: 13 Rev. K) - received 02 May 2020;
- Proposed plans detailed (Drawing number: 14 Rev. G) - received 02 May 2020; and
- Proposed elevations (Drawing number: 15 Rev. O) - received 04 May 2020.

Reason: For avoidance of doubt as to what has been considered and approved.

3. The materials and finishes shall be as indicated within the submitted application and thereafter retained as such, unless otherwise agreed by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development in the interests of visual amenity.

4. No development shall commence until a detailed method of construction statement has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. This statement shall set out hours of construction/activity on site, the location of parking areas for construction vehicles and delivery hours for materials and equipment to the site before and during construction. Thereafter, the approved construction statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction of the development.

Reason: To reduce the potential impacts of noise pollution and additional vehicular movements in this area of Woodbridge during the construction phase of the development.

5. The use shall not commence until the area(s) within the site shown on drawing number 17 Rev F for the purposes of manoeuvring and parking of vehicles has been provided and thereafter that area(s) shall be retained and used for no other purposes.

Reason: To ensure that sufficient space for the on site parking of vehicles is provided and maintained in order to ensure the provision of adequate on-site space for the parking and manoeuvring of vehicles where on-street parking and manoeuvring would be detrimental to highway safety to users of the highway.

6. In the event that contamination which has not already been identified to the local planning authority is found or suspected on the site it must be reported in writing immediately to the local planning authority. Unless agreed in writing by the local planning authority no further development (including any construction, demolition, site clearance, removal of underground tanks and relic structures) shall take place until this condition has been complied with in its entirety. An investigation and risk assessment must be completed in accordance with a scheme which is subject to the approval in writing of the local planning authority. The investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken by competent persons and conform with prevailing guidance (including BS 10175:2011+A1:2013 and CLR11) and a written report of the findings must be produced. The written report is subject to the approval in writing of the local planning authority. Where remediation is necessary a detailed remediation method statement must be prepared, and is subject to the approval in writing of the local planning authority. The remediation method statement must include detailed methodologies for all works to be undertaken, site management procedures, proposed remediation objectives and remediation criteria. The approved remediation method statement must be carried out in its entirety and the local planning authority must be given two weeks written notification prior to the commencement of the remedial works.

Following completion of the approved remediation scheme a validation report that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation must be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors.

7. The first floor WC window on the south eastern elevation shall be fitted and remain fitted with obscured glass, which shall have an obscurity of level three on the Pilkington Obscured Glazing Range (or equivalent by an alternative manufacturer) and have brackets fitted to prevent the windows from opening more than 45 degrees except in the case of an emergency. These items shall thereafter be retained in their approved form.

Reason: To avoid the possibility of unacceptable loss of privacy to neighbouring properties.

8. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting the said Order), the sedum/green roof of the hereby approved development, shall not be used as a recreational area, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local planning authority.

Reason: To enable the local planning authority to retain control, in the interest of preserving a reasonable level of amenity and prevent possible loss of privacy to the neighbouring properties.

9. Prior to the commencement of the development, details of measures to enhance the biodiversity value of the site, as detailed in the submitted Design and Access Statement, shall be provided to local planning authority for approval in writing. Such measures could include the provision of bat roosting and/or bird nesting boxes on the exterior of the building and the planting of native species.

Reason: To safeguard biodiversity and protected species in accordance with Policy SP14 and Policy DM27 of the East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (2013) and the National Planning Policy Framework (2019).

Informatives:

1. The local planning authority has assessed the proposal against all material considerations including planning policies and any comments that may have been received. The planning application has been approved in accordance with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) and local plan to promote the delivery of sustainable development and to approach decision taking in a positive way.
2. Access to buildings for fire appliances and firefighters must meet with the requirements specified in Building Regulations Approved Document B, (Fire Safety), 2006 Edition, incorporating 2010 and 2013 amendments Volume 1 - Part B5, Section 11 dwelling houses, and, similarly, Volume 2, Part B5, Sections 16 and 17 in the case of buildings other than

dwelling houses. These requirements may be satisfied with other equivalent standards relating to access for fire fighting, in which case those standards should be quoted in correspondence.

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service also requires a minimum carrying capacity for hard standing for pumping/high reach appliances of 15/26 tonnes, not 12.5 tonnes as detailed in the Building Regulations 2000 Approved Document B, 2006 Edition, incorporating 2010 and 2013 amendments.

3. No additional water supply for fire fighting purposes is required in respect of this planning application.

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service recommends that proper consideration be given to the potential life safety, economic, environmental and social benefits derived from the provision of an automatic fire sprinkler system. Consultation should be made with the Water Authorities to determine flow rates in all cases.

4. The applicant is advised that the proposed development will require approval under Building Regulations (2010). Any amendments to the hereby permitted scheme that may be necessary to comply with Building Regulations (2010) must also be approved in writing by the local planning authority in order that any planning implications arising from those amendments may be properly considered.
5. The proposed development referred to in this planning permission is a chargeable development liable to pay Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) under Part 11 of the Planning Act (2008) and the CIL Regulations (2010) (as amended).

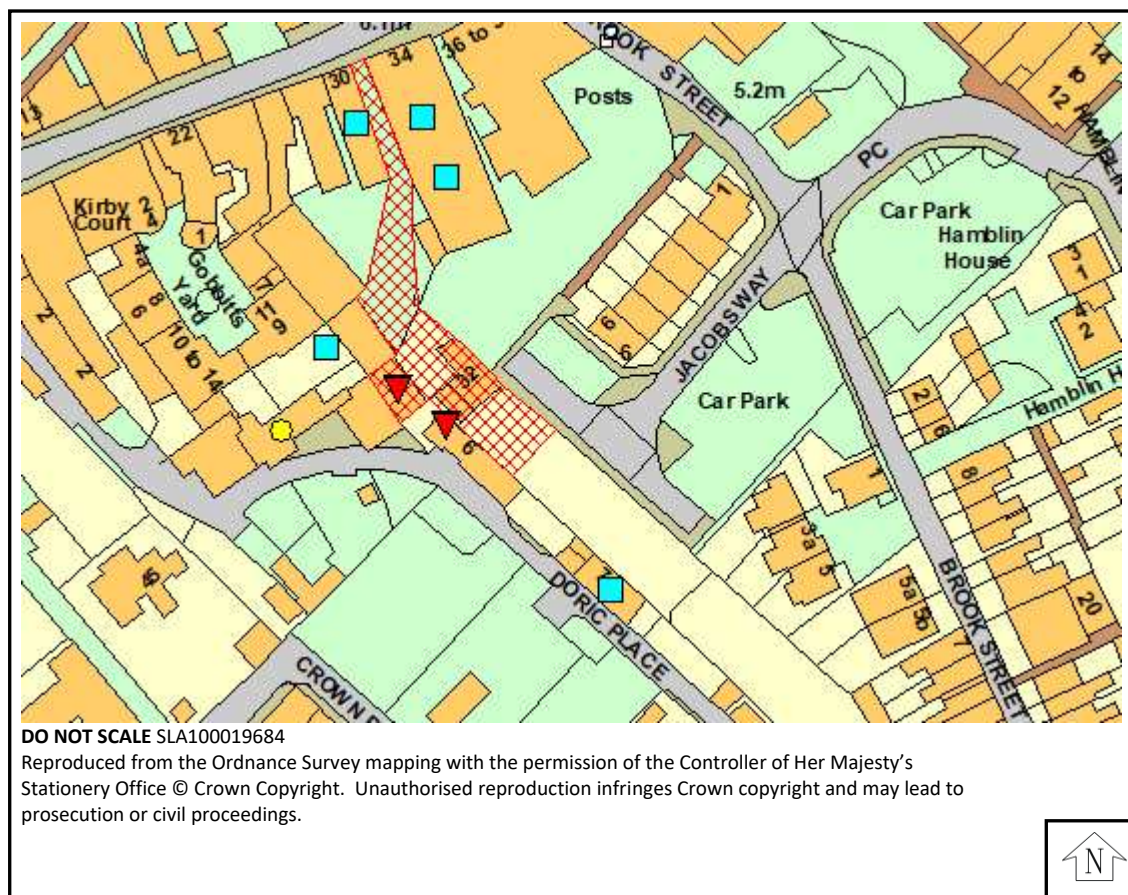
Please note: The Council will issue a Liability Notice for the development once liability has been assumed. Liability must be assumed prior to the commencement of development. Failure to comply with the correct process as detailed in the regulations may result in surcharges and enforcement action and the liable party will lose the right to pay by instalments. Full details of the process for the payment of CIL can be found at <http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/community-infrastructure-levy/>

6. This planning permission contains condition precedent matters that must be discharged before the development approved is commenced, or any activities that are directly associated with it. If development commences without compliance with the relevant condition(s) you will not be able to implement the planning permission and your development will be deemed unauthorised. An application under Section 73 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 will be required to amend the relevant condition(s) before development continues. You are strongly recommended to comply with all conditions that require action before the commencement of development.





Background information

See application reference DC/20/0952/FUL at <https://publicaccess.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=Q6K3C8QXI4E00>

Map



Key

-  Notified, no comments received
-  Objection
-  Representation
-  Support