



Historic England

Mr Richard Temple
Dorset Council
South Walks House
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Direct Dial: 0117 975 0685

Our ref: P01007836

27 November 2019

Dear Mr Temple

**T&CP (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015
& Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990**

**ST MARTINS, QUEEN STREET, GILLINGHAM, SP8 4DZ
Application No. 2/2018/1437/FUL**

Thank you for your letter of 20 November 2019 regarding further information on the above application for planning permission. On the basis of this information, we offer the following advice to assist your authority in determining the application.

Historic England Advice

Our previous letters in response to development on this site have expressed concerns about the scale, massing and design of the proposed new development. Since our most recent correspondence, a revised design has been submitted.

Historic England maintains our previous stance in that we do not wish to comment further on this scheme, except to reiterate that our previous concerns have not been allayed by the further additional information submitted. Whilst we maintain that development on this site would be acceptable in principle, we remain disappointed by the quality of the design which we consider will be an overbearing, unrelenting and excessively assertive structure of incongruous character in this prominent and sensitive location. We maintain that the construction of this new building, which neither responds to nor reinforces local character and distinctiveness, would result in unjustified harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, which was designated in 1985 but which has been on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register since 2011 and is considered to be deteriorating.

The NPPF states that heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations (para.184 NPPF). When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, **great weight** should be given to the asset's conservation. No other planning concern is



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given a greater sense of importance in the NPPF. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, **any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification** (para.194, NPPF). The onus is therefore on you to rigorously test the necessity of any harmful works.

We conclude, as previously, that a more sensitive architectural solution is required in order to preserve the character and appearance of the adjacent conservation area and we therefore encourage your authority to seek considerable design modifications.

Recommendation

Historic England has concerns regarding the application on heritage grounds. We consider that the issues and safeguards outlined in our advice need to be addressed in order for the application to meet the requirements of paragraphs 189, 190, 192, 193, 194 and 196 of the NPPF.

In determining this application you should bear in mind the statutory duty of section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess, section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to determine planning applications in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Yours sincerely

Eve Van der Steen

Assistant Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas

E-mail:

cc: Jen Nixon, Conservation Officer, Dorset Council

