

Description: Demolition of existing retail unit to the front and existing unit to the rear of the site. Erection of 4 storey building to the front with ground floor A1 retail unit, and three additional floors to provide 3no. residential flats. Erection of new block and single storey link to the rear consisting of 20no. residential flats with associated cycle store, shared public space, hard and soft landscaping.

Application Reference: 23/500728/FULL

Address: 10-11 Market Street Faversham Kent ME13 7AA

General Points:

- There has been no pre-application discussion with the Town Council. This is disappointing as we could have informed the design proposals before the detailed design was prepared. This would have enabled the applicant to address the issues raised in this representation.
- There are no details on affordable housing
- There are two parking spaces for disabled drivers, what are the parking arrangements for the 23 flats
- Support the re-use and redevelopment in principle of vacant building in town centre.
- Support active ground floor uses in the town centre and creation of residential units.
- Support the inclusion of secure cycle storage to promote active travel.
- However, the design of the scheme is poor and takes no account of historic context including the conservation area and adjoining grade II listed building. For clarity we do not suggest stylistic imitation. This is more about the lack of quality and coherence of the design.
- The area is used by delivery vehicles to service the retail unit on site and other retail units in the town centre. This is essential when the Market Street and Market Place are closed. What will the alternative arrangements be.
- The area is presently used for bin storage for residents of neighbouring properties and other retail units. What will the alternative arrangements be.

Heritage and Design:

- Character of the Faversham Conservation Area is based on architectural diversity and a strong townscape character based on conjoined buildings with rear of the pavement frontages.
- The walkway from Central Carpark into the Market Place is an important entrance to the historic town centre. The design of the redevelopment should reflect that.
- The scheme demonstrates a generic “anywhere” heritage style. With neither the elegance of Georgian architecture or sensitive modern design.
- The scheme mimics the mediocrity of the existing buildings but on a much bigger scale.
- The scheme comprises a collection of unrelated elements and lacks coherence. It does little to respond to the specific context. There are no mansard roofs within the surrounding context. The scale and massing is incongruous, especially to the rear of the development. This could be less of a problem if the scheme was of a much higher quality.
- The proposed scheme does not make a positive contribution to the setting of a listed building or the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Conclusion

The Town Council recommends that the application is withdrawn so that the design can be improved. We would be happy to work constructively with the applicant to achieve this.

In its current form the scheme should be refused. Otherwise, it makes nonsense of the conservation area and setting of the listed building.