

20230795 - 196 & 197 Parrock Street, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 1EW

Historic Buildings and Places 23 August 2023

Address: 196 & 197 Parrock Street, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 1EW

Application Ref: 20230795

Proposal: Application for Listed Building consent for the conversion of existing building, currently categorised as office accommodation to a one bedroom flat and nine bedroom House of Multiple Occupation.

Statutory Remit: Historic Buildings & Places (HB&P) is the working name of the Ancient Monuments Society, a registered charity in England and Wales (no. 209605). We are a consultee on all Listed Building Consent applications involving an element of demolition, as required by the *Arrangements for handling heritage applications – notification to Historic England and National Amenity Societies and the Secretary of State (England) Direction 2021*. We are concerned with historic assets of all types and all ages, including conservation areas and undesignated heritage.

Comments: Thank you for consulting HB&P on this application. We have reviewed the documents available on your website and object to the application.

No. 195 and 196 Parrock Street are a grade II listed fine pair of town houses dating from the early 19th century. Despite alterations, the surviving form of the building, both internally and externally, contributes much to the architectural and historic interest and significance.

The proposal would subdivide this building to form a one bedroom flat and a nine bedroom House of Multiple Occupation. This involves subdividing every principal room in the building to create en-suites and other facilities, meaning that no rooms would retain their original dimensions or proportions and that features, such as fireplaces, would be obscured. The complete loss of the historic plan form, which now remains entirely legible, would greatly harm the historic interest of the building.

HB&P therefore consider this proposal to represent an overdevelopment of this heritage asset, as it clearly cannot take this level of alteration without greatly compromising its historic features, fabric and form. While there is clearly an opportunity to return this building to a residential use, any conversion should better utilise the existing features and rooms to minimise the extent of alterations needed to facilitate that change.

The NPPF at paragraph 199 states that great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets through an understanding of the impact of a proposed development on their significance and this is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Recommendation: Submission of amended plans, withdrawal of the application, or Refusal

HB&P recommend that the applicant withdraw the current application and/ or submit amended plans to reduce the intensity of the proposed conversion and therefore the level of harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset through changes to its historic building fabric and form.

If the current application is to be determined rather than withdrawn, it is recommended it be refused. The relevant policies are Policy 199 and 200 of the NPPF (2021).