

SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COUNCIL
10 NOV 2023
COMMUNITY & PLANNING SERVICES

58 High Street, Farningham, Sevenoaks, Kent,
DA4 0DH

Heritage Statement in support of the Planning Application for the residential conversion and extension of the existing building

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**Heritage Statement: 56 High Street, Farningham,
Sevenoaks, Kent, DA4 0DH**

1 Introduction

This statement has been prepared by the Built Heritage Consultant in June 2023 for Sarah Arnold, based on proposal drawings by Peter Thomas Architectural Projects, which forms part of the planning application submission. The statement assesses the impact of the proposed development at 58 High Street, with regard to relevant heritage designations, namely the conservation area, adjacent listed building and the building itself. Number 58 High Street is located in the Farningham conservation area, in the district of Sevenoaks, adjacent to the rear of listed buildings at 56 & 57 The High Street. The Heritage Statement is a supporting document for the planning application.

The development proposal is for the residential conversion of the building, which has been unoccupied for a number of years.



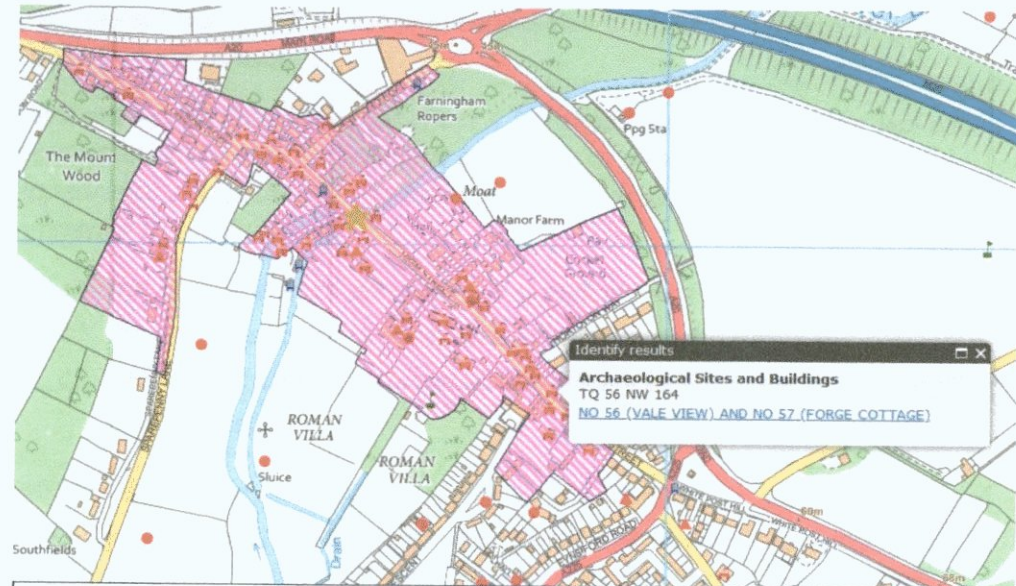
2.2 Statutory & non statutory designations

The proposal site is understood to have been classified by the local planning authority as a non-designated heritage asset. It is located to the rear of 56 and 57 High Street, which are grade II listed (listed 22nd October 1982) The list description describes the buildings as follows:

FARNINGHAM HIGH STREET 1. 5280 (north-east side) No 56 (Vale View) and TQ 5466 10/108 No 57 Forge Cottage) II GV 2.

L-shaped late C17 to early C18 house. Two storeys red brick and grey headers on a stuccoed base. Tiled roof, hipped at the south-east end. Vale View has modern sash windows with glazing bars, Forge Cottage has casement windows. Stringcourse. No 56 now has a doorcase with moulded wooden architrave and a pediment with putto in it, not C18.

The listed buildings form part of the terrace of cottages and front the High Street. Situated diagonally opposite the Old Bull Stores and The Pied Bull Public House, also grade II listed. To the south east and also on the opposite side of the High Street is the grade II listed front block of Farningham Social Club and Institute (listing description name) now converted back to a house. The December 2003 Conservation Area Appraisal notes that there are forty-six listed buildings within its 15 hectare conservation area boundary. The conservation area is currently under review, draft documents have been published for consultation but it is understood that they are yet to be formally adopted.



The proposal site is located behind 56 & 57 High Street and located in the Farningham conservation area, which was first designated in 1969 by Kent County Council and extended in 1990 by Sevenoaks District Council.

The village of Farningham is situated on each side of the above road, in the midst of the valley close to the Darent, over which here is a handsome brick bridge of four arches, built within these few years at the public charge of the county; the former one being found insufficient for so large a thoroughfare. Near it the river turns a corn mill, built on a most expensive mechanical construction; not far from it stands the mansion, now belonging to Mr. Fuller, and a little beyond it the church and vicarage, with other genteel houses interspersed throughout it, and two capital inns, forming altogether a situation remarkably healthy and pleasant, and exceedingly convenient for its accommodations in every respect.

Edward Hasted, 'Parishes: Farningham', in The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent: Volume 2 (Canterbury, 1797), pp. 510-526. British History Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-kent/vol2/pp510-526> [accessed 19 October 2022].

3 Assessment of significance

Significance may be assessed on a scale from very high to none depending on the values society places on a particular historic asset. In Annex 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 'significance' is defined as 'the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic'. Understanding such values can help in deciding the most efficient and effective way of managing the heritage asset so as to sustain its overall value to society.

In assessing significance, the importance of the setting of the heritage asset should also be considered. The NPPF defines a 'heritage asset' as 'a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest'. Heritage assets include designated heritage assets and non-designated assets identified by the local planning authority. The NPPF states that the significance of heritage assets can be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. In the case of 58 High Street the significance of the building is relevant to its contribution to the conservation area and its historic group value as a non-designated heritage asset.

Research of OS maps and title deeds established that the Smithy was not within the curtilage of the adjacent building but owned and rented as a separate concern. (See the attached research at Appendix 1)

EVIDENTIAL VALUE - MODERATE

The building is of 19th century origins, constructed of yellow stock brick and roofed with clay pantiles.

The building has been heavily altered during the 20th century, with a new roof, the insertion of the concrete wall plate, reconstructed front wall and modified window and door openings.

HISTORICAL VALUE - MODERATE

Originally constructed as a smithy or forge, the plan-form of the 19th century building has been altered with no surviving internal features or fittings. Any semblance of a forge or smithy has been removed as a result of both internal and external alterations to windows and doors and the loss of the internal features associated with a forge/smithy.

AESTHETIC VALUE - MODERATE

The external appearance of the building makes some contribution to the surroundings and a glimpsed view of the building can be seen from the High Street, although the front elevation has been heavily altered with no reference to its past use as a forge.

The use of materials, primarily the use of clay pantiles on the roof, contributes to the aesthetic value of the building.

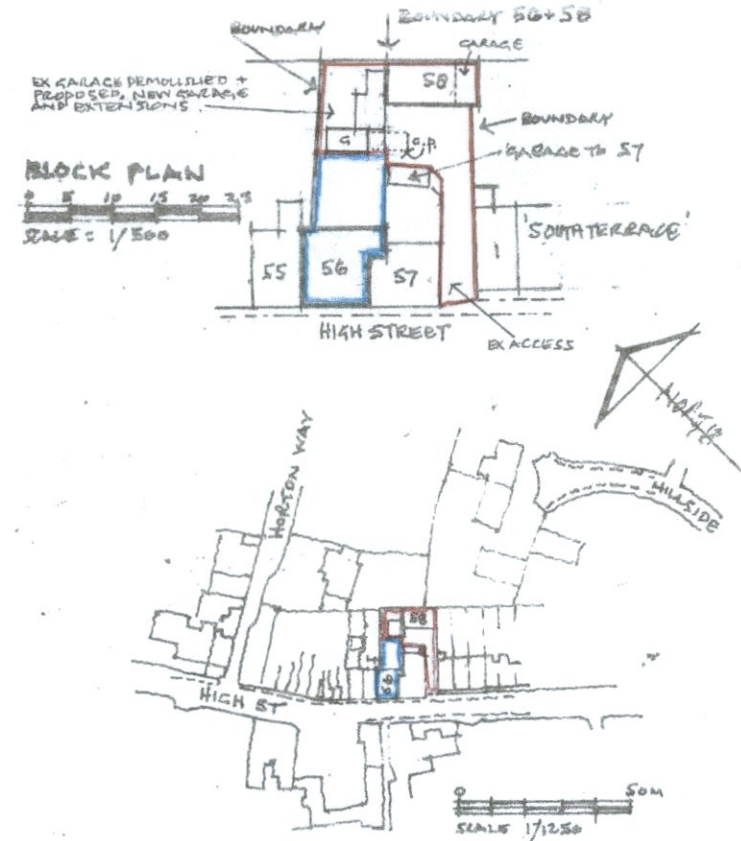
COMMUNAL VALUE MODERATE

The building has been in commercial use as an independent concern since its construction in the mid-19th century and it has been established that it was not ancillary to the adjacent listed buildings and is therefore not curtilage listed. Research has established that number 57 was originally named Newnham Cottage as seen in the 1958 Title Deed Plan, when the building was in used as a builder's yard. (see the attached report at Appendix 1)

4 The proposed development

The appearance of the building and forecourt is dilapidated and in need of enhancement, where a positive contribution can be made to the conservation area and setting of adjacent historic buildings.

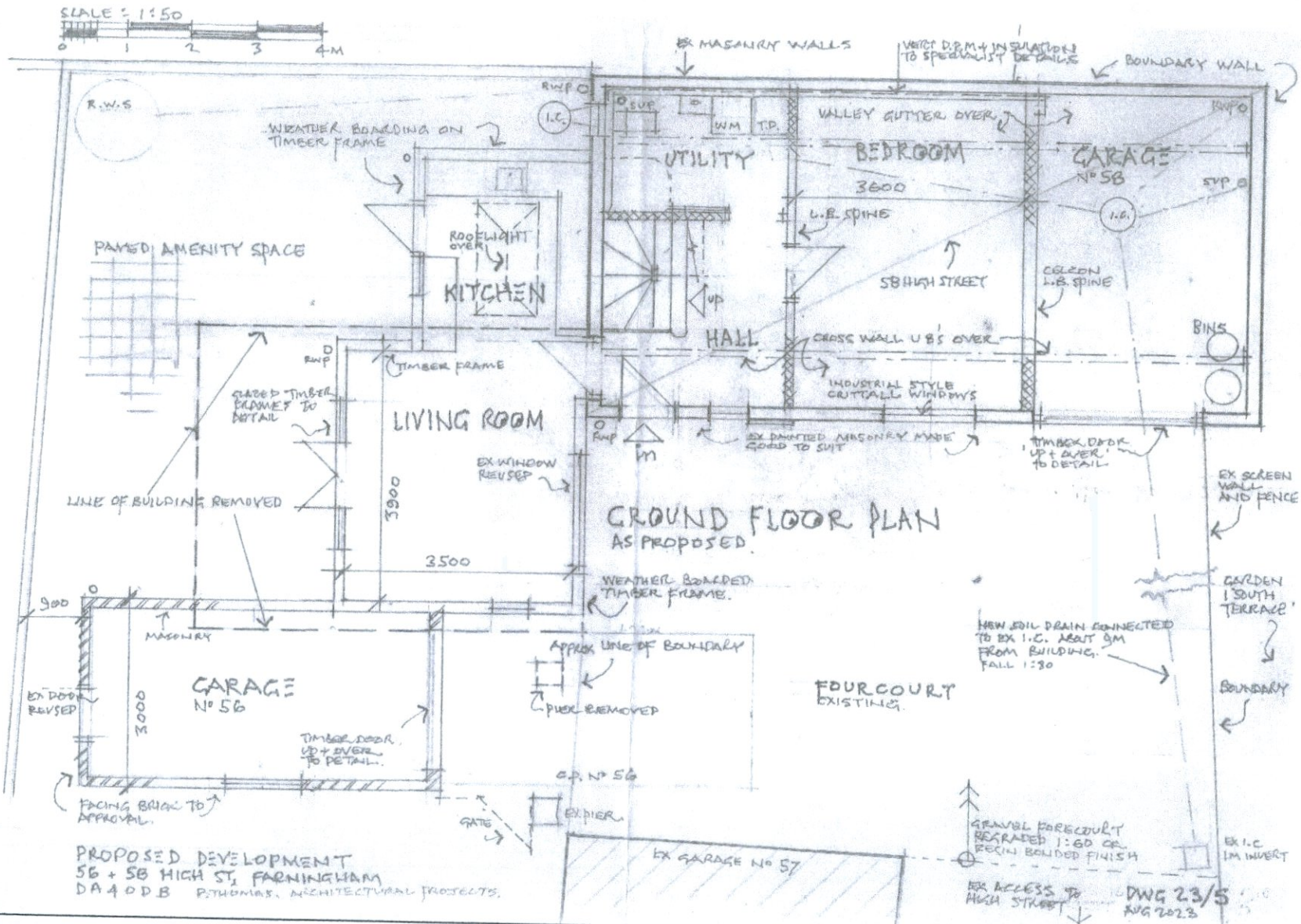
The proposal in this application is to refurbish and convert the building to residential use, including a loft conversion with dormer window, and extending it with a single storey side extension behind a sympathetically rebuilt garage.



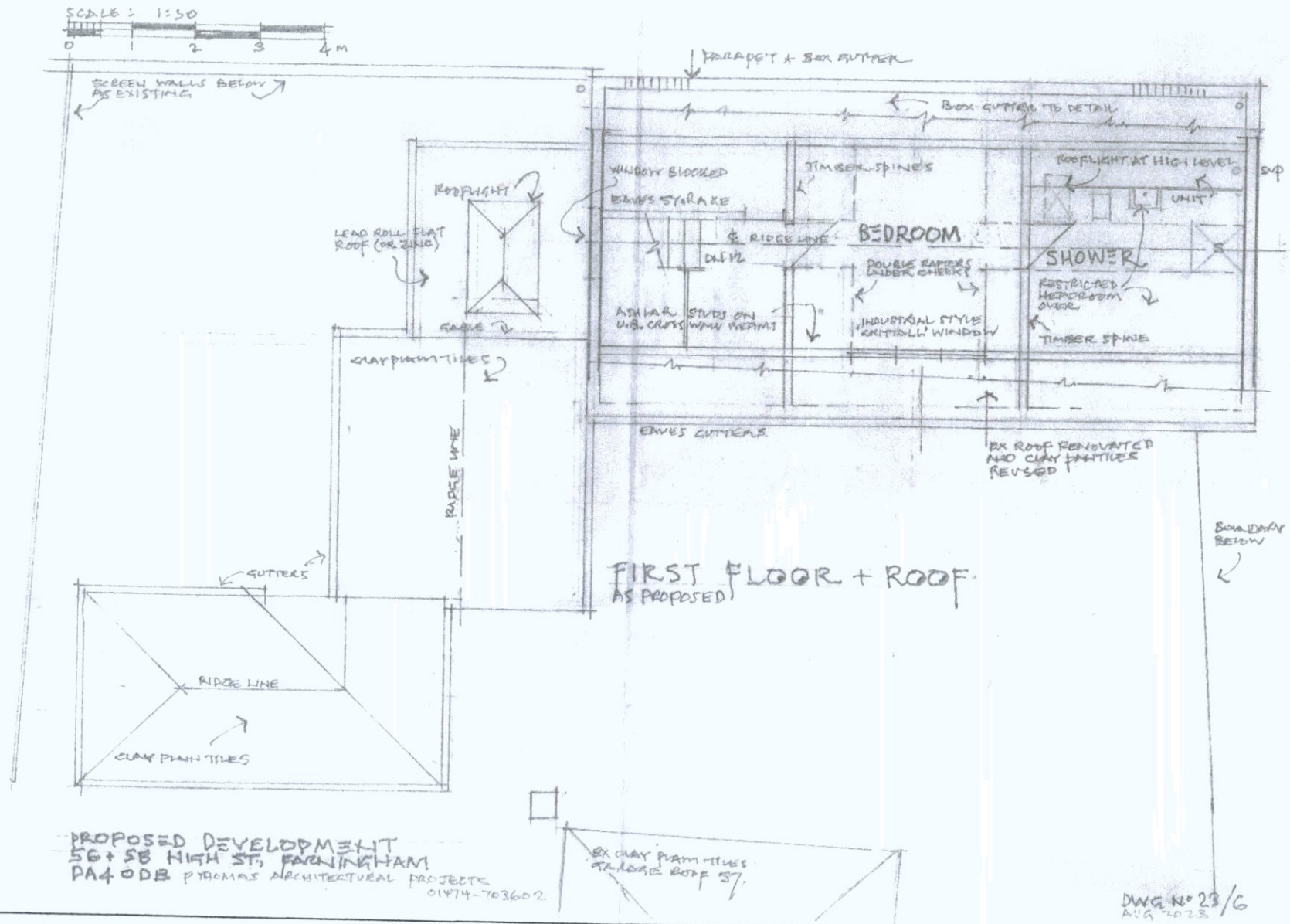
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT
 56 + 58 HIGH ST; FARNINGHAM
 DA4 0DB
 SITE PLAN & BLOCK PLAN.
 P. THOMAS ARCHITECTURAL PROJECTS
 MAY 2023

DWG NO 23/1A

Above Right: Site Plan showing the parking and land configuration.
 Above Left: The front elevation of the old forge has been rebuilt with a complete loss of its original appearance. The adjacent modern garage roof dominates the old forge/smithy and the concrete paved area makes little contribution to the conservation area.



The proposals offer the opportunity to enhance the buildings and forecourt area by refurbishing and repainting the front elevation wall to enhance its appearance. Adopting metal framed windows in hardwood subframes will reflect the cast iron windows used in such buildings of the period and by incorporating timber garage doors and window shutters that will also be appropriate. The replacement of the modern garage with a modest living room extension and garage for number 56 are sympathetically scaled to be subordinate to the smithy/forge and will create a harmonious group that contributes to the setting of the adjacent listed buildings and the conservation area.

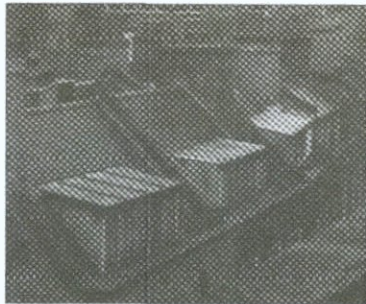


The roofs of the proposed garage and living room are scaled down from the existing modern garage roof to create a harmonious composition that allows the old forge/smithy to be the focus building in the courtyard. The existing modern mezzanine floor inside the building requires replacement and the opportunity is taken to improve the rear boundary rainwater disposal by adopting a parapet gutter that can be maintained without entering the neighbouring garden. The forecourt concrete paving slabs will be replaced with a permeable surface more in keeping with the conservation area. On balance the proposals will make a positive contribution to the conservation area and the setting of adjacent buildings.

Dormer Windows



Segmental headed dormers on a house of the early 1700s. Richmond upon Thames



Five light dormers on houses built in the 1720s. These dormers are probably later alterations and were possibly added to provide well-lit workshop areas. Meard Street, Westminster.

INTRODUCTION

The dormer window has been a feature of European architecture since at least the mid-fifteenth century. As a method of lighting a roof space it is usually aesthetically superior to a rooflight parallel with the roof slope and has the additional advantage of increasing the area of headroom available.

Dormers take several different forms depending on the status of the building, local materials and tradition, date of construction, the use made of the roof space, and whether the dormer is part of the original design or a later addition. There can be a wide variation in quite a small locality.

Where dormers are behind a parapet they may pass almost unnoticed in a terrace of relatively plain houses. However, a wide, modern, heavily detailed dormer with a large area of plain glass can seriously detract from the appearance of an historic building, and indeed may upset the composition of the entire terrace or street in which it is situated. There is a modern tendency to add dormers that are too bold and too high.

It follows, therefore, that the renewal of dormers or the provision of new windows in the roofs of historic buildings are operations requiring very considerable care in design and detailing to ensure an acceptable appearance.

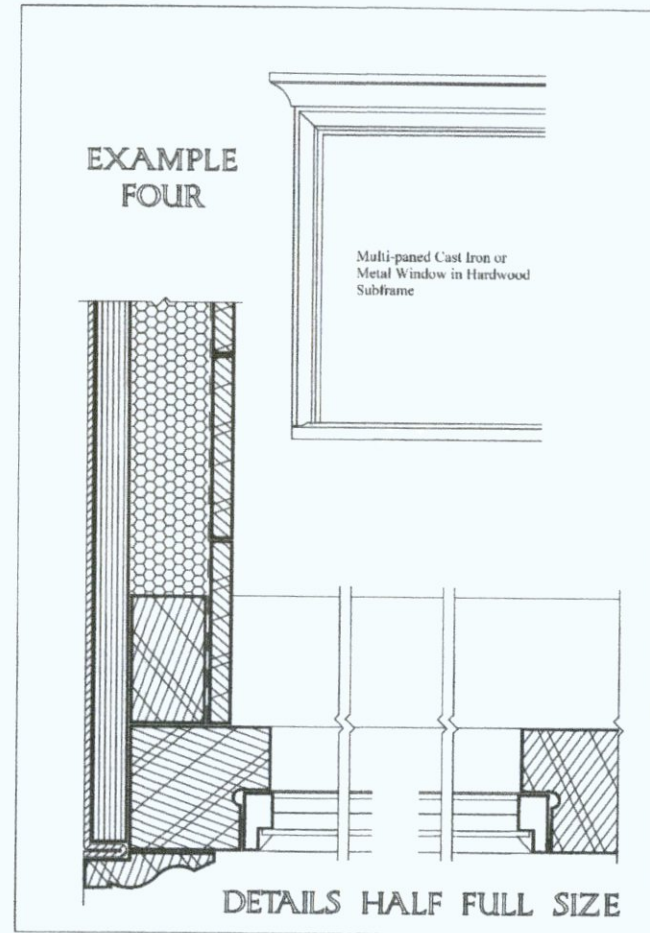
This is particularly important when the building is listed by the Secretary of State for the Environment as being of special architectural or historic interest. It should never be assumed that listed building consent will be granted for the insertion of a dormer window where none has previously existed.

Listed Building Guidance Leaflet

Dormer Windows

English Heritage

sheet 1 of 6



Above Left: English Heritage (now Historic England) Guidance on Dormer windows illustrates the use of five light windows on an 18th century roof in London. These were introduced to provide well-lit workshop areas and would be appropriate to the Old Forge/Smithy when properly detailed.

Above Right: English Heritage Guidance on dormer window detailing. The illustration has been adapted to show how a metal framed window would be inserted into the hardwood subframe, which should sit in front of the dormer cheeks, thus achieving a slender and correctly historic appearance to the dormer cheek.

Farningham Conservation area displays variations on two dormer window types, the gable and the flat roof dormer with flush casement or vertical sliding box sash windows.

It is proposed to add a flat roofed dormer with triple light, which will be similar to the one at the Pied Bull Pub, located diagonally opposite the site. Adopting a hardwood subframe with Crittal style metal windows will reflect the original character of the old forge or smithy, where cast iron window frames would have been a likely window type.

The proposed extensions will adopt timber framed flush casement windows and doors in keeping with the rear of the adjacent listed building at 56 High Street.



5 Impact of the proposed development

The proposal site is located on the edge of the conservation boundary and set back from the High Street, where glimpsed views of the front of the building can be seen from the access way.

Through research it has been established that the building is not curtilage listed, being constructed in the 19th century and rented as an independent forge and then builder yard before being used as an antique shop and workshop.

The existing large roofed garage is proposed to be replaced with a smaller scale garage and a living room extension to the old forge. These will appear more in keeping with the location to the rear of the historic buildings fronting the High Street.

A dormer window is to be located in the front roof slope of the old forge, which has been designed to reflect a historic dormer window similar to the dormer window at the Pied Bull Pub. It is of an appropriate scale to the roof it is located in and detailed correctly to reflect the historic character of the building.

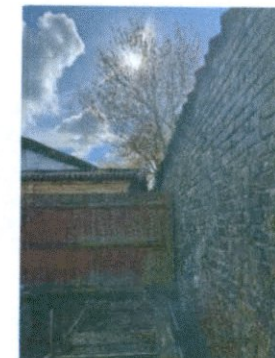
New windows to the forge will be in Crittal style metal windows frames set in hardwood timber frames in the traditional manner to emulate the cast iron window often adopted in such buildings of the 19th century.

The forecourt concrete paving slabs will be replaced with a permeable surface more in keeping with the setting of the surrounding buildings.

On balance it is considered that the proposals offer a sympathetic restoration and adaptation of the building and will enhance the setting of the conservation area and the adjacent historic buildings, offering a sustainable use that is appropriate to the residential context of this part of the conservation area. There will be no adverse impact on the building, or the setting of adjacent historic buildings and the conservation area



Above: The modern front wall will be restored and repainted and the flank wall seen in the images below will be repointed where necessary in lime rich mortar.



6 Conclusion

It is concluded that the range of alterations proposed at 58 High Street, the Old Forge, will result in a sympathetic adaptation of the building that will make a positive contribution to the conservation area and the setting of adjacent historic buildings. The alterations are minimal and relate to the replacement of a modern garage with small scale buildings to accommodate a modest garage and living room extension to the old forge building, and a sympathetically designed dormer window that is in proportion to the roof of the building. The front elevation of the old forge will be repaired and repainted, which will further enhance the appearance of the building and carefully designed windows will reflect the original use of the building.

The proposals are therefore consistent with national and local planning policy. In terms of policy EN4 the historic and architectural significance of the non-designated heritage asset has been preserved.

The development proposals are considered to be minor in scale and will not cause harm to the building, its setting, or the conservation area.



Appendix I

Dear Mr Thomas

58 High Street Farningham Dartford Kent DA4 0DB

Further to your request for my opinion of the curtilage listing status of the above building and the impact of the proposals on the significance of the adjacent listed buildings and the conservation area I set out below a brief report.

Listing Entry for 56 and 57 High Street Farningham:

List entry Number: 1274479

Date first listed: 22-Oct-1982

Statutory Address: NO 56 (VALE VIEW) AND NO 57 (FORGE COTTAGE), 56 AND 57, HIGH STREET

Grade: II

FARNINGHAM HIGH STREET 1. 5280 (north-east side) No 56 (Vale View) and TQ 5466 10/108 No 57 Forge Cottage) II GV 2. L-shaped late C17 to early C18 house. Two storeys red brick and grey headers on a stuccoed base. Tiled roof, hipped at the south-east end. Vale View has modern sash windows with glazing bars, Forge Cottage has casement windows. Stringcourse. No 56 now has a doorcase with moulded wooden architrave and a pediment with putto in it, not C18.

Whilst 56 and 57 High Street are recorded in the official list entry there is no reference to number 58 being listed in its own right. I understand the conservation officer has raised a question as to number 58 being curtilage listed and will refer to Historic England's advice note 10 – Listed Building and Curtilage. The introduction of the advice note states that:

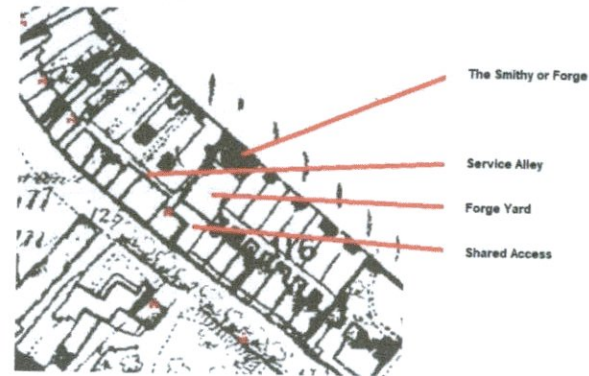
The courts have said that there are three key factors to be taken into account in assessing whether a structure or object is within the curtilage of a listed building:

- the physical layout of the listed building and the structure;
- their ownership, both historically and at the date of listing; and
- the use or function of the relevant buildings, again both historically and at the date of listing (these tests were first proposed in the Attorney-General ex rel. Sutcliffe and Others v. Calderdale BC, 1982, as accepted by Debenhams plc v. Westminster CC, 1987).

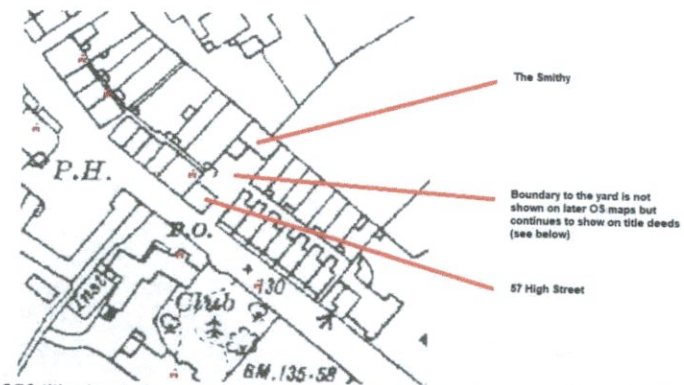
Physical layout

The Forge or Old Smithy is located at the rear of 57 High Street and it is for this reason that the conservation officer has raised the question of curtilage listing. It is notable that the access to the rear yard of the Old Smithy is wider than that for adjacent terrace properties, which allows independent use and operation from the terrace houses fronting the High Street.

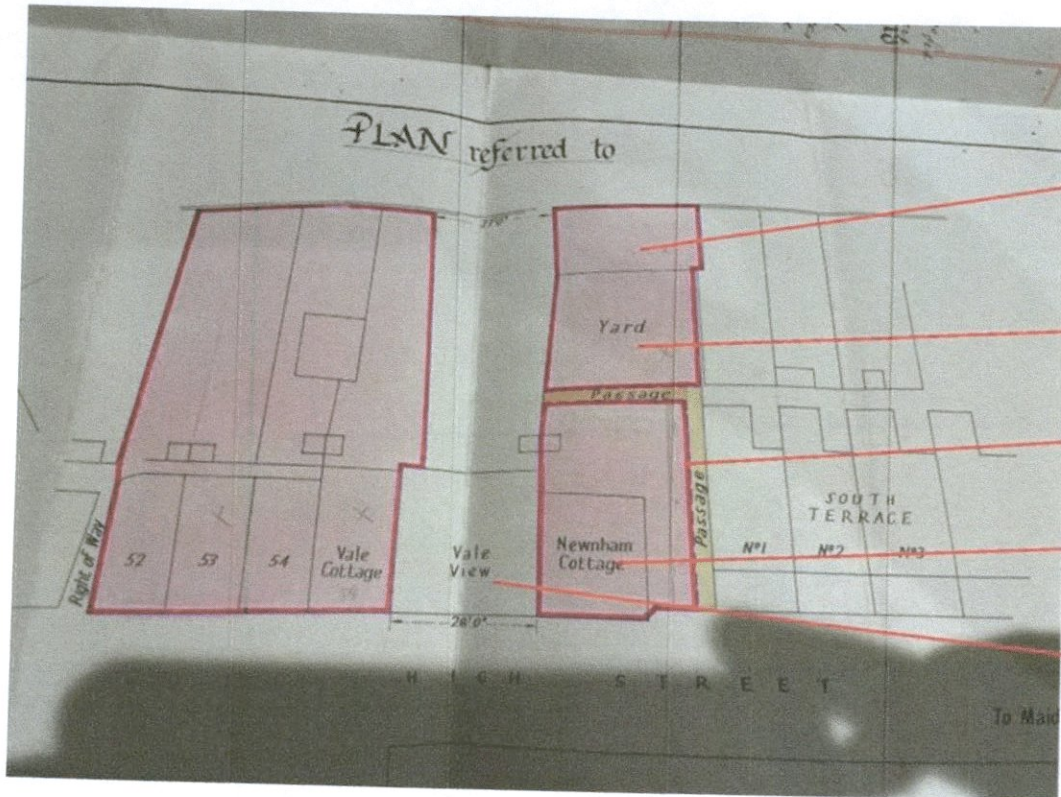
Historically buildings in the vicinity on the north side and fronting the High Street were serviced by a rear alley that separated the dwelling from its gardens or yards. This can be seen in the first series OS map (1871-1890) below where the Smithy had its own yard and a shared access to the rear of 57 High Street.



Boundaries between the Smithy and its yard and the shared access become blurred in subsequent OS maps but continue in title deeds (see below).



The 1958 title deed plan shows a passage to the side and rear of Newnham Cottage (57 High Street), which separates it from the Smithy and yard. There is no ancillary use between the dwellings fronting the High Street and rear Smithy and yard, which were all owned for rental income.



1958 Title Deed Plan

Showing property under the same ownership for rental.

By this time the Smithy is a builders yard where the passage is to be widened to allow access for vehicles (see pencil marks)

The Yard is clearly defined in the title deed but does not show on the OS map of the same period as it is likely that boundary walls were removed to allow access to the yard.

A passage to the rear is clearly marked and separates the Smithy from Newnham Cottage (later to be named Forge Cottage)

Number 57 (Newnham Cottage) has no ancillary physical association with the yard and workshop to the rear as they are clearly separated by a passage. Boundary walls to the passage are subsequently removed to allow vehicular access to the yard and a later garage is built in the early 1970s.

Number 56 (Vale View) is in separate ownership having been sold at auction.

Ownership

From research of known title deed documents, it is clear that number 58 was a separate building as early as 1876, when it was known as the "Smithy". On the 18th June 1898 Edward Moor Esq and others sold a group of houses that included 56, 57 and the Smithy to Mr George Richard Booker. Over the decades the properties were owned, sold and transferred as a group but by 1953, when the Smithy had changed to the Forge or Forge Yard, were separated into various owners when Sidney George Booker sold number 56 to Evelyn Mary Wright who did not own Forge Yard. By the 9th March 1954 Forge Yard (58) is under the ownership of Stanley James Frost, who also owned 53, 55, and 57. By the 10th of January 1958 Forge Yard (number 58) was a builder's yard and workshop with a mortgage from Maud Patience Emms. Stanley James Frost settled the mortgage by 1960 when the builders (Forge) yard was then purchased by Peter Beasley, Jack Tatton Warren and Annette Mary Warren. Peter Beasley then used the builder's (Forge) yard as an antique shop with separate workshop. To this day business rates continue to be paid for under the address "The Old Smithy" 58, High Street, Farningham for the retail zone a, and workshop use. Number 58 existed as an independent property address at the time of the late listing of 56, and 57 High Street in 1982, which offers further evidence that it is not curtilage listed.

In conclusion separate title deeds for 56,57 and 58 have existed since at least 1876, with ownership being transferred and divided over that time. The properties appear to have been owned for rental with number 58 having its own address and business rates since before the late 1982 listing of 56 and 57 High Street.

Use and Function

From the research undertaken on OS maps and title deeds it is clear that the Smithy formed part of the property portfolio owned for rental. Dwellings in the vicinity and fronting the north side of the High Street were serviced by rear alleys that split the buildings from their rear gardens (see 1871-1890 OS map above). The Smithy is on a wider plot and it is important to note that it was separately accessed via a passage. The passage was subsequently widened (see title deed plan above), taking in the side and rear garden of Newnham Cottage (57) sometime in the 1950's when it became a builder's yard requiring vehicular access (see title deed plan above). Number 57 was originally known as Newnham Cottage and only adopted its present name of Forge Cottage in the latter part of the 20th century.

In conclusion the plan form is not conclusive evidence of a relationship between the listed buildings and The Old Smithy (58), by virtue of the original layout with an independent passage access to it. The ownership records indicate a group of buildings originally developed for rental and subsequently divided and sold. The function of The Old Smithy was not ancillary to the buildings fronting the High Street as evidenced by an independent access passage that originally serviced it.

Impact of proposals on the setting of adjacent listed buildings and conservation area.

The present building on the site of number 58 appears to be of 19th century origins, rather than the 18th century referenced by the conservation officer, being constructed of yellow stock brick in Flemish bond rather than the red brick found on 56 & 57 High Street, which are clearly of early 18th century origins. The double pitched gable roof has brick upstands and a pantile roof. The building has been substantially reconstructed with two walls remaining unaltered, the rear and one side gable wall. The front wall has been substantially altered and the remaining gable wall has been reconstructed where an internal in situ concrete beam was formed at wall plate level. The roof timbers also appear to originate from this period of reconstruction which is likely to have occurred at the time of the building of the new garage. The reconstruction work relates to the building of the attached garage in 1974.



The substantially altered building, which is not curtilage listed has little surviving fabric of historic significance. It has a dilapidated appearance that is partly attributed to its past commercial use, now being out of character with the residential character of the conservation area. The proposals will retain the surviving side and rear walls as boundary walls to avoid future maintenance issues, and it will be possible to replicate the external form and appearance to make a positive contribution to the setting of adjacent listed buildings and the conservation area.

The proposals should take their design references from local historic buildings. The pantile roof is an unusual material in an area where Kent Peg tiles predominate. That said the pantile does appear on the Old Bull Stores, understood to have recently been destroyed by fire but seen in the 2019 Google Streetview image below.



The old bull store in 2019 (Google Streetview) with its painted weatherboard and traditional double pitched gable verge pantile roof would appear to be an obvious historic reference for the proposals to follow.



Dormer windows are adopted to gain rooflight and space within the roof. It is important to detail them with narrow dormer cheeks by placing the window frame in front of the dormer cheek. There is an example of a wide dormer window on the side of the adjacent pub. A properly detailed dormer window would not be out of character in this relatively concealed location within the conservation area.



In conclusion, with minor adjustments to the proposed dormer window and adoption of full gables, the proposal to replace the substantially altered non curtilage listed 19th century building, whilst retaining its two surviving boundary walls, will make a positive contribution to the conservation area and setting of adjacent listed buildings, by securing the building with a beneficial use compatible with the adjacent residential uses.

Yours sincerely,

Allan Cox
RIBA, IHBC

Allan Cox is a Built Heritage Consultant based in Kent. He has over 35 years of experience with built heritage in private and public sectors, as a historic buildings architect and a conservation officer for local and county councils in Kent and Medway, as well as a Historic Buildings Architect for English Heritage, now Historic England. He is a consultant architect advisor to the Rochester Diocesan Advisory Committee. He is a corporate member of the Royal Institute of British Architects and an elected member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation.

