



3 October 2022

Head of Planning,
Folkestone & Hythe District Council
Civic Centre,
Castle Hill Avenue,
Folkestone
CT20 2QY

Dear Sir

Objection: Demolition of existing single storey dwelling and associated outbuilding and erection of a new single storey dwelling, Glenthorne (aka Providence), Dungeness Road, Dungeness, Romney Marsh, TN29 9ND - Ref 22/1261/FH

I note the fact that the footprint of the hardstanding area *appears* to be largely the same as it was. On the matter of hardstanding area I have no objection.

The existing building is admittedly in a dilapidated state. But we are now all becoming wise to this. Purchase a property, allow it to dilapidate, then state that its dilapidation renders it beyond economic repair. This argument 'doesn't wash' anymore.

I note the Design Statement submitted by RX Architects and uploaded to the Council's planning page on 25 July 2022. The Design Statement refers to other properties nearby that have been demolished and replaced with modern structures. The Design Statement, it would seem, is looking for a precedent to be set on this basis. No. RX Architects' examples of nearby modern architecture and alternative materials miss the point completely:

The modern buildings in Dungeness – Pobble House, Shingle House, El Ray, the old Decca station (which are not immediately neighbouring properties) are all well-back from the main road and effectively out of immediate sight. The exception being North Vat (which abuts Dungeness Road but which effectively 'slipped through the net' a few years back yet which continues to cause consternation and horror). Planning applications for properties which abut Dungeness Road – Garden Cottage, East View, rightly met with huge opposition. Due to the fact that it abuts Dungeness Road and is in plain sight, this current application should likewise be vigorously opposed.

That short stretch of Dungeness Road between both lighthouses has a character of its own. Quirky properties where the original underlying railway carriage is immediately apparent. A photogenic character not just beloved of the Dungeness residents, but one that has great appeal to the tourists who flock to that small quirky stretch of road all year round. A demolition and replacement with a new-build property with building materials and style unsympathetic to its famous surrounding character would look as ridiculously improper as a burst pork sausage in a Synagogue.

I acknowledge that the structure property may need to be modernised for the 21st century. As I have said in previous objections, we do acknowledge that Dungeness is a living working village and not something to be preserved in aspic as a museum piece. However, that 'lighthouse to lighthouse' stretch of the road comprises railway carriages densely situated next to each other. An imperative of that density is that the unbroken line of railway carriages cannot be broken by a new-build which is out of keeping. Any new building must inform its immediate surroundings and preserve that famous quirky character of the 'lighthouse to lighthouse' stretch of the road. The current plan most definitely doesn't and must be abandoned.

I now turn to how (were the Council to grant this planning application) the Council would be contravening its own policies:

Folkestone & Hythe policy HB1: Materials should be sympathetic to those predominating locally in type, colour and texture. The proposed design appears to fall well short of this policy.

Folkestone & Hythe Places and Policies Local Plan Para 9.44: Where proposals are to replace dwellings in the countryside, the Council will support proposals that are carefully managed to protect the character of the rural area. *To avoid overbearing dwellings and associated development in isolated locations, the Council will pay particular attention to the design, scale and materials proposed. This is especially important in Romney Marsh, which has a flat, open and exposed character.* Proposals for replacement dwellings will, therefore, be required to justify the design approach and will need to meet the design policies in this plan. The proposed design appears to fall short of this policy.

Folkestone & Hythe policy HB8: Alterations and extensions should *seek to reflect the scale, proportions, materials, roof line and detailing of the original building* and not have a detrimental impact on the street scene, either by themselves or cumulatively. The proposed design appears to fall short of this policy.

Shepway policy BE6 is now covered by **Folkestone & Hythe HB1, HB2, Planning Act, PPG and NPPF**. Specifically the Shepway policy stated that [the Council] will refuse permission for redevelopment which would *harm the character of groups of historic buildings up to and including early 20th century buildings of distinctive or uniform architectural style*. Permission will only be granted for developments which would reflect and contribute to that style. Glenthorne is one of a group of railway cottages located on the 'lighthouse to lighthouse' stretch of the road and follows a very similar architectural form to its close neighbours. Therefore the proposed design falls way short of this policy.

Yours faithfully

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the official.

Giles Usher