

Officer Report

Application No.	25/1515/FH
Site Address	12 CHERITON PLACE, FOLKESTONE, CT20 2AZ
Officer Name	Robert Allan
Proposal	Listed Building Consent for full renovation and repair of existing listed building and conversion to 9 bedroom HMO.

Recommendation

Report Number	RD-438558
Recommended Decision	Recommended to be Approve with Conditions
Recommendation Date	14 October 2025

Report

Site Description

The application site is within the settlement boundary of Folkestone, within the defined town centre and part of the secondary shopping frontage. The application property is a Grade II listed, stucco-fronted property forming part of a historic parade from the mid-19th-century. The List Entry identifies the significance of its architectural features, including the front elevation with original timber sash windows, projecting sill and band course details and entrance door surround.

The property extends over four floors which includes a lower ground storey. The building is joined with 8 Cheriton Place by a single storey flat roofed connecting extension. The parking on Cheriton Place and Sandgate Road is restricted to an hour. The building is currently vacant.

The other properties on the east side of Cheriton Place are predominantly commercial (retail use) at ground floor level and the upper floors of these appear to be a mix of residential and commercial uses. The properties on the opposite side of Cheriton Place are single-storey shop units with a pedestrian link (Town Walk) through to the Sainsburys store. To the rear of the site are the telephone exchange, sorting office and old post office buildings.

Relevant site history

Y18/0264/FH - Change of use and conversion of office use (Class B1a) to a live/work unit. Approved with conditions.

Y18/0265/FH - Listed building consent for internal works at first and second floor level in connection with use as a live/work unit. Approved with conditions.

Proposal

This application seeks to convert the premises to a Sui Generis nine-bed HMO, together with the replacement and repair of windows and doors, the creation of an opening in the rear to allow access

to the rear garden area, together with the construction of an external staircase to facilitate this access. The property would be arranged over three floors (ground, first and second floor) with shared kitchen facilities on the ground floor. All proposed rooms would have ensuite bathroom and shower facilities.

Additionally, consent is sought for render repair, lintel replacement following inspection, brickwork re-pointing, additional joists to strengthen roofs, floor joist member strengthening, repair of dry rot / damp.

Consultation responses

Folkestone Town Council: No objection.

Representations

One representation received, neither objecting nor supporting on the following grounds:

- Details of windows should be secured
- Room spaces exceed minimum standards
- Concern regarding refuse storage
- HMO's can have poor standard of living
- Respectful to heritage of building
- Historic building brought back into use
- Replacement of modern windows supported
- Nine bedrooms feels excessive
- Proposal seeks to secure optimum viable use
- Detailing for windows unclear

Publicity

Site notice. Expired 26.09.2025

Press notice. Expired 25.09.2025

Relevant policies

The Development Plan comprises the Places and Policies Local Plan 2020 and the Core Strategy Review 2022.

Places and Policies Local Plan: HB1, HE1

Core Strategy Review 2022: SS1, SS3

NPPF 2025: paragraphs 11, 39, 48, 207, 210, 212, 215

Appraisal

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving the Listed Building or its setting or any special architectural or historic features it possesses. The NPPF identifies that economic, social, and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously, with heritage assets 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.

Within the list entry, the property is stated as being listed for its special architectural or historic interest. Within the street the frontage has a strong presence, and the architecture is shared with the wider grouping of numbers 8-12, with 8 and 12 having a similar, strong form, with clear links via the diminutive form of number 10. The building appears largely unaltered, externally, which contributes to its significance within the wider area.

Externally, the application is generally looking to reinstate and repair lost elements and materials to bring the designated heritage asset into an improved condition, which is supported and is considered to be a positive consideration. This includes render repair, lintel replacement, following inspection, brickwork re-pointing, additional joists to strengthen roofs, floor joist member strengthening, repair of dry rot / damp. For all timber work – windows, doors, doorcases etc - joinery details should be provided via condition

To the rear of the site, it is proposed to install a metal staircase in place of a window (enlarging the opening) to allow garden access of which there is currently none to the site. Whilst it would require a loss of a window to the rear ground floor, the window is not original, and the benefit of access is considered greater than this minor change of form. Although currently unidentified in its location, access would have likely been present to the garden of the site at some point and requires reinstatement. The proposal of a metal design aligns with the use of railings to the front elevation and subject to details, this is considered acceptable. Overall, this is a neutral consideration.

Bins are proposed to be stored to the front elevation of the building behind existing railings. Details of how the railings would be formed, with the proposed opening, should be requested through condition, as well as details of the materials for the surface that is to be raised to provide level access.

Internally changes to the layout of the property are a minimal intervention and are acceptable. The introduction of several ensembles throughout the site is of minor concern, as they can appear cumbersome within the room layouts or with plumbing routes. However, in this instance they ensure the successful conversion of currently an office use to residential units, whilst not interfering with historic details or fabric in each room. As such they are considered acceptable, in this instance. Details of their plumbing courses and ventilation should be requested through condition.

Overall the changes proposed to the building in the form of the opening to facilitate the rear access and staircase, and the bin storage area, cumulatively cause less than substantial harm which is considered to be outweighed by the reinstatement of the building to a more established use as well as its general repair and restoration, both of which are positive.

Bike Storage

Also, to the rear, bike storage is proposed, which raises no concerns in principle. However, as it is not attached to the listed building, listed building consent is not required, and it is not considered here.

Recommendation

Taking the above into account and noting the great weight that should be given to a heritage asset's conservation, the less than substantial harm to the listed building arising from the proposed alterations, is considered to be outweighed by the wider public benefits that would be accrued via the repair and refurbishment of the designated heritage asset, the support for the vitality and viability of the designated town centre through additional footfall, and the bringing back into use of the asset, safeguarding it from further degradation. Consequently, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions, it is considered the proposal is a sustainable development that would comply with development plan policy and the NPPF and is therefore recommended for approval.

Environmental Impact Assessment

In accordance with the EIA Regulations 2017, this development has been considered in light of Schedules 1 & 2 of the Regulations and it is not considered to fall within either category and as such does not require screening for likely significant environmental effects.

Local Finance Considerations

Section 70(2) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) provides that a local planning authority must have regard to a local finance consideration as far as it is material. Section 70(4) of the Act defines local finance considerations as a grant or other financial assistance that has been, that will, or that could be provided to a relevant authority by a Minister of the Crown (such as New Homes Bonus Payments), or sums that a relevant authority has received, or will or could receive, in payment of the Community Infrastructure Levy. The proposal is CIL-liable, which has been considered under the planning application associated with the proposal.

Human Rights

I have also taken into account the human rights issues relevant to this application. In my view, the Assessment section above and the Recommendation represents an appropriate balance between the interests and rights of the applicant (to enjoy his land subject only to reasonable and proportionate controls by a public authority) [and the interests and rights of those potentially affected by the proposal (to respect for private life and the home and peaceful enjoyment of their properties)] and the wider public interest.

Public Sector Equality Duty

In determining this application, regard has been had to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) as set down in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, in particular with regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. It is considered that the application proposals would not undermine objectives of the Duty.

It is considered that the application development does not conflict with objectives of the Duty.

Duty to cooperate

In accordance with paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), February 2019 the Council takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. We work with applicants/agents in a positive and creative way by offering a pre-application advice service and, where possible, suggesting solutions to secure a successful outcome and as appropriate, updating applicants / agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application. In this instance there is no clear solution that could be reached within the statutory timeframe.

Recommended Conditions (5)

1

The works to which this consent relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date on which this consent is granted.

Reason: In pursuance of Section 18 of the Listed Building Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2

The works hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the following approved drawings and documents:

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in order to ensure the satisfactory implementation of the works in accordance with the aims of Places and Policies Local Plan.

3

Detailed drawings at a suggested scale of 1:5 of all new and replacement internal and external joinery work and fittings together with sections through glazing bars, frames and mouldings shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the installation of any such features. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interest of the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building.

4

No works to the exterior of the building shall take place until detailed drawings at a suggested scale of 1:5 (where appropriate) of the proposed rear staircase have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interest of the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building.

5

Prior to commencement of works to form the rear opening to the garden area, full details of the opening, including, but not restricted to, how it is to be made good,

details of any lintels or arches, and the materials to be used in the opening, shall first be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing, with the development carried out in accordance with such details as are approved.

Reason: In the interest of the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building.