

PROPOSAL: Demolition of existing side and rear extension. Erection of a part single part two storey side and rear extension.

LOCATION: The Rock Inn, Hoath Corner, Chiddingstone Hoath
TN8 7BS

WARD(S): Penshurst, Fordcombe & Chiddingstone

ITEM FOR DECISION

This application is currently subject to an appeal under non-determination. This means that the applicant has now requested that the Inspector decide the application and not the District Council.

The application is therefore reported to the Development Control Committee so that the Members can advise Officers what resolution they would have reached for the application had they had the opportunity to decide it. This will then allow Officer's to convey this to the Inspector as part of the appeal process.

A decision has yet to be made on the application due to the lengthy discussions that have taken place over the acceptability of the proposal, requests for further information from the applicant and the consideration of the further information submitted.

RECOMMENDATION: That Members resolve to defend the appeal against non-determination on the basis that if the determination had been within time the application would have been refused for the following reason:-

RECOMMENDATION: That planning permission be REFUSED for the following reasons:-

The land lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt where strict policies of restraint apply. The proposal would be inappropriate development harmful to the maintenance of the character of the Green Belt and to its openness. The Council does not consider that the special circumstances put forward in this case are sufficient to justify overriding policy L01 of the Sevenoaks Core Strategy, policy GB8 of the Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Note to Applicant

In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the NPPF Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals. SDC works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner, by;

- Offering a duty officer service to provide initial planning advice,
- Providing a pre-application advice service,
- When appropriate, updating applicants/agents of any small scale issues that

may arise in the processing of their application,

- Where possible and appropriate suggesting solutions to secure a successful outcome,
- Allowing applicants to keep up to date with their application and viewing all consultees comments on line (www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/environment/planning/planning_services_online/654.asp),
- By providing a regular forum for planning agents,
- Working in line with the NPPF to encourage developments that improve the improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area,
- Providing easy on line access to planning policies and guidance, and
- Encouraging them to seek professional advice whenever appropriate.

In this instance the applicant/agent:

- 1) Working in line with the NPPF, the application was refused as the proposal failed to improve the economic, social or environmental conditions of the area.

Description of Proposal

- 1 The application seeks the approval of the demolition of the existing side and rear projections, comprising and an original outbuilding that has been linked to the pub building, and the erection of a part single, part two storey side and rear extension.
- 2 The single storey element of the side and rear extension would have a maximum height of 5.2m, would project a maximum of 5.35m to the side of the existing building, 10m to the rear of the building, would wrap around the north-east corner of the building slightly and would be set back 2.1m from the front wall of the building.
- 3 The two storey element of the extension would be to the side of the building over part of the single storey addition. The extension would match the maximum width of the ground floor addition, would have a depth of 2.95m and a height of 6.4m, 1.2m lower than the ridge of the main building.

Description of Site

- 4 The application site comprises a two storey detached building that serves as a pub, an area of hard standing to the front of the site that provides a parking area and a garden area to the rear. The building is located just to the north-east of Hoath Corner.
- 5 The listing description reads as follows -

‘C16 building altered outside in early C19. 2 storeys, 3 windows. Tiled roof. Tile hung 1st floor. Ground floor red brick with diaper of blue headers, dentilled 1st floor band. Modern doors and leaded casements. Modern side extensions. Roof sweeps low at back. Inside an inglenook fireplace with

carved beams and ashlar jambs. Some old beams, stout posts, diagonal braces and the remains of an old window. A good deal of restoration.

The Rock Public House, Barn to East of the Rock Public House, Spoke Shave and Cherry Cottage form a group.'

Constraints

- 6 The site lies within the Metropolitan Green, the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the Hoath Corner Conservation Area and the building is grade II listed.

Policies

Sevenoaks District Core Strategy

- 7 Policies - LO1, LO8 and SP1

Sevenoaks District Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP)

- 8 Policies - SC1, EN1, EN2, EN4, EN5, GB8 and T2

Other

- 9 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
10 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
11 Hoath Corner Conservation Area Appraisal
12 Countryside Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
13 Development in the Green Belt Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Planning History

- 14 SW/5/51/126 - Proposed alterations - Granted 05.06.51
SW/5/51/255 - Alterations to form a square bay with window seat in lieu of circular bay - Granted 13.11.51
SW/5/56/402 - Proposed alterations and additions - Granted 04.12.56
SE/15/03840 Listed Building Consent application for demolition of existing side and rear extension. Erection of a part single part two storey side and rear extension - Pending consideration

Consultations

Chiddingstone Parish Council - 06.01.16

- 15 'Chiddingstone Parish Council supports this application.'

Conservation Officer - 17.08.16 (Comments received for SE/15/03840/LBCALT)

- 16 'The Rock Inn is a small timber-framed public house, with the main core dated by dendrochronology as c1520. There have been several phases of subsequent development and externally the building is hung with later tiles and the timber framing encased in brickwork. The timber structure is more evident internally and the first floor rooms are largely intact. The building has been a pub for centuries and may well have been built for this purpose, and this is an important historic value that contributes towards the significance. The sound 'Historic Building Assessment' which accompanies this application identifies five phases of development. They reflect the evolving requirements of a public house which these latest proposals look to do as well.
- 17 The purpose of the development is to provide more sustainable accommodation including disabled access and managers living quarters to the first floor. There is no objection to the rationalisation of the rear single storey development and effort has been made to reduce the bulk of the development by the half-hipped roof which is a traditional form in this area and reflects the vernacular character of this building. The proposal also includes a two storey side extension which replaces the current modern side extension already in situ. Whilst the replacement side extension is larger and more prominent it houses all the services from the upper flat (kitchen and bathroom). Currently the first floor is without a kitchen and the new extension will limit harmful intervention caused by modern services into the impressive and visible timber framed structure to the first floor. There is further benefit to the building by the relocation of the bathroom facilities into the new extension. The skin of this proposed new extension will be treated sympathetically. The materials will need to be conditioned as will doors and windows, including reveals, at 1:20 sections and elevations.
- 18 The internal alterations are largely unproblematic and have been sensitively located to provide minimal impact or within the less significant addition. The greatest area of intervention is the current eastern flank wall where a new connecting doorway is proposed, the removal of the fireplace and chimney stack and the removal of the infill panels to the timber-framing. The new doorway will be located where the current C20 fireplace is and the area to north of this is shown in a visual as open panelling. This wall marks the original eastern flank and the original plan form is an important element of the building. Furthermore in opening up the panels the "intimate character of the existing historic bars", identified in the Historic Building Assessment will be lost. The modern 'open plan' character is not sympathetic to this building. This is considered harmful and there is no supporting justification of this harm as required by the NPPF;
- "Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification." (para. 132)
- 19 Additionally, historic fabric contributes towards the significance, as stated in the latest Historic England guidance 'Making Changes to Heritage Assets - Advice Note 2' (2016);

“The historic fabric will always be an important part of the asset’s significance” (para. 42)

20 This guidance continues;

“Stripping off finishes such as plaster to expose rubble, brick or timber-framed walls never intended to be seen is likely to have an adverse effect on the building’s significance... through the loss of historic materials and original finishes and harm to its aesthetic.” (para. 28)

21 No benefit to the building to justify the loss has been submitted. The applicant’s Heritage Building Assessment states that, “It needs to be determined whether the wall immediately north of the doorway, within the envelope of the Phase 1 building, retains its original infill...The loss of any primary infill to the Phase 1 wall or Phase 3 outshot should be avoided where possible”

22 Whilst there are positives to this scheme that will see this centuries old pub adapt for modern use, including level access, this can be achieved without the loss of the infill to the original flank wall. Not only does this clearly define the historic plan form but provides the characteristic small and intimate nature of an historic public house. Notwithstanding the objection to the principle of the loss of the panels, the applicant has failed to establish the historic significance of these elements or justify their loss.

23 The proposals are considered to have a negative impact on the special interest of the building and to be of less than substantial harm to this designated heritage asset, as defined by the NPPF.’

County Highways Engineer - 16.08.16

24 The Highways Engineer confirmed verbally that subject to the inclusion of a condition requiring confirmation of the proposed parking layout to be provided and retained on site he would raise no objection to the proposed development.

Representations

25 Five letters of representation have been received in support of the application.

Chief Planning Officer’s Appraisal

26 The main issues in the consideration of this application are the potential impact on the Metropolitan Green Belt, the potential impact on the listed building, the potential impact on the AONB, the potential impact on the character and appearance of the area, parking provision and the potential impact on highways safety, and the potential impact on residential amenity.

Main Issues

Impact on the Metropolitan Green Belt -

- 27 Having established that the site is within the Green Belt the Authority must consider both its own Development Plan Policy and edicts of the NPPF.
- 28 As set out in para 87 of the NPPF, where a proposal is inappropriate development in the Green Belt, it is by definition harmful and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.
- 29 Para 88 of the NPPF advises that Local Planning Authorities should give substantial weight to any harm to the Green Belt. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
- 30 Therefore, the harm in principle to the Green Belt remains even if there is no further harm to openness because of the development.
- 31 Openness is an essential characteristic of the Green Belt and is different from visual impact. Openness is about freedom from built form. Even if there is absence of harm to openness, there can be harm in principle to the Green Belt from inappropriate development.
- 32 The NPPF dictates that the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt is inappropriate, with a few exceptions. In this case the proposed development is one of the specified forms of development considered to be an exception. The Council is therefore satisfied that the proposed form of development would be, by definition appropriate development in the Green Belt.
- 33 Policy LO1 of the Core Strategy states that development will only take place where it is compatible with policies protecting the Green Belt.
- 34 Policy GB8 of the ADMP states that proposals to extend an existing non-residential building within the Green Belt which would meet the following criteria will be permitted:
 - a) the existing building is lawful and permanent in nature; and
 - b) the design and volume of the proposed extension, taking into consideration the cumulative impact of any previous extensions, would be proportional and subservient to the 'original' building and would not materially harm the openness of the Green Belt through excessive scale, bulk or visual intrusion.
- 35 From my site visit and from looking up the planning history of the site I am satisfied that the building is lawful and permanent in nature.
- 36 The building as it stands today benefits from a the squaring off of an original ground floor circular bay window, a single storey side extension, which also links an original outbuilding to the rear of the main building, and a small first floor side addition.

- 37 The applicant is of the view that the development is appropriate since it complies with the requirements of Green Belt policy. The applicant has also presented a floor area and volume analysis of the existing building and the proposed extended building, quoting policy GB1 of the ADMP, which relates to residential extensions, and policy H14A of the Local Plan that no longer exists.
- 38 Looking at this analysis I would argue that there are inaccuracies and inconsistencies in how the various areas and volumes have been calculated.
- 39 The main inconsistency is that the measurements referred to on the calculation sheets do not relate to the same measurements taken from the submitted plans. I also believe that some of the ground floor extensions approved planning permission under the three applications referred to above have been included as being original floor area. Finally, the applicant has included an original outbuilding within the original floor area of the building. However, policy GB8 of the ADMP and the Development in the Green Belt SPD make no reference to the inclusion of outbuildings in the original floor area of a building.
- 40 From my own measurements of the submitted plans I have calculated that the original floor area of the building as being 146.51m^2 . This is made up of a ground floor area of 84.76m^2 , a first floor area of 47.5m^2 and an attic area of 14.25m^2 .
- 41 I calculate that the cumulative floor area of the extended building, including those previous retained extensions, as being 255.5m^2 . This is made up of a ground floor area of 192.22m^2 , a first floor area of 63.28m^2 . Attic area remains but is no longer accessed by a permanent set of stairs.
- 42 The difference between the original and proposed floor areas is therefore 108.99m^2 which equates to 74% increase on the original building. In my view, this increase in floor area is disproportionate to the original floor area of the building.
- 43 Turning to the volume calculations, some of the same errors have occurred that also appear in the floor area calculations, with volume in the form of additions that were carried out during the 1950s included as original volume, the volume of outbuildings that are not original included and the cellar, which is wholly subterranean and therefore has no impact on the openness of the area.
- 44 It is difficult to assess the exact volumes since it is unclear as to how the applicant has calculated the volumes and what volume of retained extensions is proposed.
- 45 However, my own assessment of the volume calculations presented is that the original volume of the building appears to have been 407.72m^3 . The total volume of additions appears to be 396.15m^3 . It is again my view that this increase in volume by 97% of the original building is disproportionate to the original volume of the building.

- 46 Overall, it is clear to me through comparing the plans submitted against the original form of the building that the cumulative floor area and volume proposed to be added to the original building would materially harm the openness of the Green Belt through excessive scale, bulk and visual intrusion. This is due to the modest size of the original building and the cumulative large scale and bulk of the existing and proposed extensions to the original building.
- 47 It is therefore the case that the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt that fails to comply with the NPPF, policy LO1 of the Core Strategy and policy GB8 of the ADMP.
- 48 There has been a claim made of very special circumstances. In this case there are material considerations that may amount to or contribute to a case for very special circumstances.
- 49 This issue is considered in more detail in this report, as very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm is clearly outweighed by any other considerations. It is therefore necessary to first identify the extent of harm.

Impact on the listed building -

- 50 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on a local planning authority, in considering development which affects a listed building or its setting, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting, or any features of architectural or historic interest it possesses.
- 51 The NPPF states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (para. 132).
- 52 The NPPF also states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use (para.133).
- 53 Policy EN4 of the ADMP states that proposals that affect a Heritage Asset, or its setting, will be permitted where the development conserves or enhances the character, appearance and setting of the asset.
- 54 The Council's Conservation Officer has carried out a detailed assessment of the proposed works and concludes that the proposed extensions and external works to the building are acceptable.
- 55 In my opinion the proposed extensions and external works comprise less than substantial harm to the listed building. This harm, however, is justified through the provision of a more accessible pub that would serve to preserve public interest in the building and ensure the long term retention of the building as a pub (currently the optimum viable use of the building). The extensions also allow the relocation of more modern interventions to the

building and returning the building to a layout that is more akin to the original layout of the building.

- 56 Overall, it is therefore the case that the proposed external works subject to this planning application would be justified and would conserve the significance of the building. It follows that the proposal would be in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the NPPF, policy SP1 of the Core Strategy or policy EN4 of the ADMP.

Impact on the AONB -

- 57 The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 states that the Local Planning Authority should conserve and enhance Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Designating an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty protects its distinctive character and natural beauty and can include human settlement and development.
- 58 There are therefore two considerations directly related to a site's AONB status when determining a planning application. Firstly does the application conserve the AONB and secondly, if it does conserve the AONB does it result in an enhancement. A failure to achieve both of these points will result in a conflict with the requirements of the Act.
- 59 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 60 Policy LO8 of the Core Strategy states that the distinctive character of the Kent Downs and High Weald Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and their settings, will be conserved and enhanced.
- 61 Policy EN5 of the ADMP states that proposals within the AONB will be permitted where the form, scale, materials and design would conserve and enhance the character of the landscape and have regard to the relevant Management Plan and associated guidance.
- 62 From the main public vantage point of the site, that is from the adjacent lane, the pub building is seen within the context of the cluster of development that surrounds the site. The proposed two storey side extension, which would project away from the lane, would be the most apparent addition to the building. The public would gain an appreciation of the roof of the single storey rear extension from the lane but the extension as a whole would mainly be screened from view by the mature hedge that lies on the western boundary of the site.
- 63 The extensions have been designed to appear sympathetic to the main building and would respect the character and appearance of it through materials that match those used in the exterior of the existing building.
- 64 For these reasons I am satisfied that the proposal would conserve and enhance the character of the landscape character of the area.

Impact on the character and appearance of the area -

- 65 Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a requirement on a local planning authority in relation to development in a Conservation Area, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.
- 66 Interpretation of the 1990 Act in law has concluded that preserving the character of the Conservation Area can not only be accomplished through positive contribution but also through development that leaves the character or appearance of the area unharmed.
- 67 The NPPF states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (para. 132).
- 68 Policy EN4 of the ADMP states that proposals that affect a Heritage Asset, or its setting, will be permitted where the development conserves or enhances the character, appearance and setting of the asset.
- 69 The conservation area appraisal for Hoath Corner states that 'The Public House, the barn behind and the two cottages adjacent to it are listed and dominate the group and are also visible from the western approach. Entering the area from the south and down the hill, this group is hidden until the bend is rounded, and they then present a pleasant visual surprise.'
- 70 The NPPF also states that 'Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.' (para. 56)
- 71 Policy SP1 of the Core Strategy states that all new development should be designed to a high quality and should respond to the distinctive local character of the area in which it is situated.
- 72 Policy EN1 of the ADMP states that the form of proposed development should respond to the scale, height, materials and site coverage of the area. This policy also states that the layout of proposed development should respect the topography and character of the site and the surrounding area.
- 73 Again, from the main public vantage point of the site, that is from the adjacent lane, the pub building is seen within the context of the cluster of development that surrounds the site. The proposed two storey side extension, which would project away from the lane, would be the most apparent addition to the building but would not result in the building being any more dominant as existing.
- 74 The public would gain an appreciation of the roof of the single storey rear extension from the lane but the extension as a whole would mainly be screened from view by the mature hedge that lies on the western boundary of the site.

- 75 The extensions have been designed to appear sympathetic to the main building and would respect the character and appearance of it through materials that match those used in the exterior of the existing building.
- 76 For these reasons I am satisfied that the proposal would not harm the special character of the conservation area and would preserve the character and appearance of the area generally. This is in accordance with the policies referred to above.

Parking provision and highways safety -

- 77 Policy T2 of the ADMP states that vehicle parking provision, including cycle parking, in new non-residential developments should be made in accordance with advice by Kent County Council as Local Highway Authority or until such time as non-residential standards are adopted.
- 78 Policy EN1 of the Core Strategy requires that the proposal would ensure satisfactory means of access for vehicles and pedestrians and provide adequate parking and refuse facilities.
- 79 The proposal would continue to utilise the existing vehicular access on to the site and provide an area of off-street parking. The County Highways Engineer is satisfied with this arrangement subject to a condition requiring further details of vehicle parking layout to be provided and retained for the extended pub building.
- 80 It is therefore the case that the development would provide acceptable vehicle parking and satisfactory means of access for vehicles and pedestrians. This means that the development complies with policies T2 and EN1 of the ADMP.

Impact on residential amenity -

- 81 Paragraph 17 of the NPPF identifies a set of core land-use planning principles that should underpin decision-taking. One of these principles is that planning should always seek to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.
- 82 Policy EN2 of the ADMP states that proposals will be permitted where they would provide adequate residential amenities for existing and future occupiers of the development and would safeguard the amenities of existing and future occupants of nearby properties.
- 83 The closest properties potentially most affected by the proposed development would be Thatch Barn directly to the east of the site and Spokeshave Cottage directly to the south. I believe that all other nearby properties would be sufficient distance away not to be significantly impacted upon.
- 84 Thatch Barn would be sited 10m from the side of the proposed two storey side extension and 4m from the side of the single storey element of the additions. This neighbouring property has windows facing in a northern and western direction.

- 85 I am satisfied that the continued use of the site as a pub would not result in excessive vibration, odour, air pollution or activity on the occupiers of Thatch Barn. I also believe that noise levels would not increase significantly since more covers are proposed to be created internally and any increase in vehicle movements would also not cause a significant disturbance due to the relationship between the site and the neighbouring property.
- 86 No side or rear facing first floor windows are proposed in the side extension and roof lights in the roof of the rear extension would be high level. No overlooking or loss of privacy would therefore occur following the erection of the extensions.
- 87 Due to the distance of separation, and relationship between the proposed extensions and Thatch Barn, I am also satisfied that the extensions would not cause a loss of outlook or visual intrusion on the occupiers of Thatch Barn. The extensions would pass the 45 degree angle test meaning that no detrimental loss of daylight would occur and the siting of Thatch Barn, to the east of the pub building, means that no detrimental loss of sunlight would occur.
- 88 Spokeshave Cottage would be sited a minimum of 15m to the front of the proposed two storey side extension. This neighbouring property has windows facing in a northern direction.
- 89 I am satisfied that the continued use of the site as a pub would not result in excessive vibration, odour, air pollution or activity on the occupiers of Thatch Barn. I also believe that noise levels would not increase significantly since more covers are proposed to be created internally and any increase in vehicle movements would also not cause a significant disturbance due to the relationship between the site and the neighbouring property.
- 90 First floor windows are proposed to the front of the first floor extension that would be located 17m from the side wall of Spokeshave Cottage. This side elevation of the house possesses a number of windows over several floors, some of which are likely to be habitable rooms.
- 91 Although the pub building already has first floor windows in the front elevation, I am of the view that the introduction of the first floor window in the side extension could increase overlooking of the side facing windows of Spokeshave Cottage and the rear amenity area of the property. However, the applicant has proposed that one of these windows would serve a kitchen and the other a bathroom. In this instance it would be possible to control these windows to be obscure glazed, given the accommodation is for employees of the pub, removing any overlooking and loss of privacy of Spokeshave Cottage.
- 92 Due to the distance of separation, and relationship between the proposed extensions and Spokeshave Cottage, I am satisfied that the extensions would not cause a loss of outlook or visual intrusion on the occupiers of the neighbouring property. The extensions would pass the 45 degree angle test meaning that no detrimental loss of daylight would occur and the siting of Thatch Barn, to the east of the pub building, means that no detrimental loss of sunlight would occur.

- 93 Overall, I would conclude that the development would provide adequate residential amenities for existing and future occupiers of the development and would safeguard the amenities of existing and future occupants of nearby properties in accordance with the NPPF and policy EN2 of the ADMP.

Other issues

Very special circumstances -

- 94 The applicant forwards the following arguments;
- The pub is a community asset and so should be retained;
 - It is necessary to provide the extensions to ensure the long term future of the pub;
 - It is necessary to increase accessibility of the building;
 - The proposed extensions mean that further interventions to the listed building are not necessary;
 - The design of the proposed extensions are wholly appropriate;
 - The works would allow the preservation of a living museum;
 - The development would preserve and increase local rural and sustainable employment; and
 - The pub could be converted to a house if this application fails.
- 95 In response to these arguments I would suggest the following -
- The pub may be viewed locally as a community asset. However, it is not formally designated as such. The property would still remain a pub and community asset if the application is refused. The applicant lists a number of local community groups who use the pub currently but it is unclear why they would not continue to use it if this application was refused, as the property would still be a pub as existing;
 - It would be possible to provide additional covers for food through more modest and appropriate extensions to the building;
 - It would also be possible to allow a rationalisation of the accessibility of the building through more modest and appropriate extensions to the building;
 - If the extensions were not to take place then no interventions to the listed building would occur;
 - As noted above the design of the extensions are appropriate in some respects, but not the scale and size of the extension, as they would harm the openness of the Green Belt;
 - The building could be preserved without extending in the manner proposed; and

- The pub would remain if the application were refused meaning that the provision of a local rural and sustainable place of employment would remain; and
- The Council have been asked to consider an application to extend the existing pub building. A proposal to convert the building to a residential dwelling has not been presented to the Council and would have to be considered separately on its own merits. Therefore this is not a material consideration.

96 As such I would afford limited weight to each of the points presented. Cumulatively this weight would not clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt that the development represents. It follows that the development is inappropriate in the Green Belt and the very special circumstances presented are not sufficient to overcome this.

Sustainable development -

97 The NPPF states that at the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision taking (para. 14). For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay and where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies out of date, granting of permission unless:-

- any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole;

- specific policies in this framework indicate development should be restricted; or

- material considerations indicate otherwise.

98 In my opinion, the proposed scheme does not wholly accord with the development plan, and I have explained this in detail above. It follows that the development is not wholly appropriate and there would be adverse impacts in granting planning permission for the development.

Access issues

99 None relating to this application.

Conclusion

100 The proposed development would be inappropriate in the Green Belt, harmful to the open character of the area. The very special circumstances presented are not sufficient to overcome the harm that the development represents. Consequently the proposal is not in accordance with the development plan and therefore the Officer's recommendation is to refuse.

Background Papers

Site and Block plans

Contact Officer(s): Joanna Russell Extension: 7367

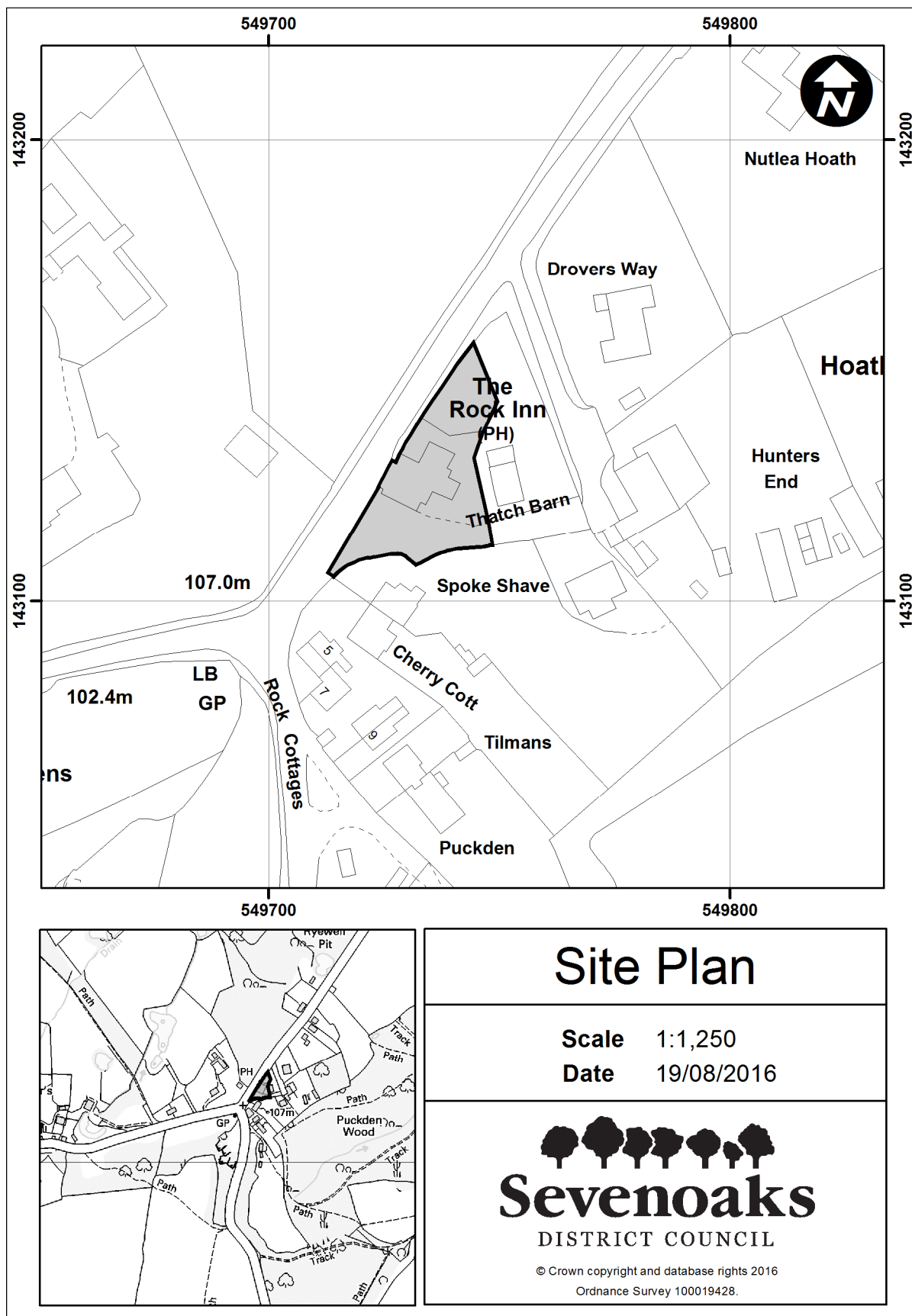
Richard Morris
Chief Planning Officer

Link to application details:

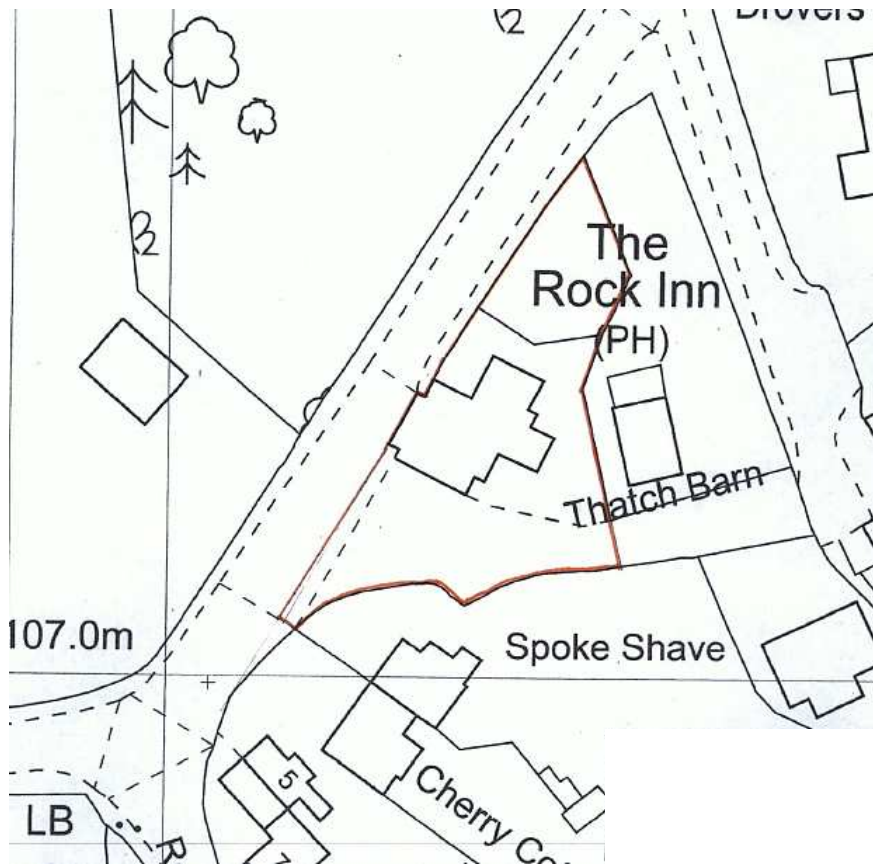
<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=NYZI7FBK0L000>

Link to associated documents:

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=NYZI7FBK0L000>



EXISTING



PROPOSED

