

**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 listed building consent be REFUSED for the following reasons:-

The proposed works would lead to less than substantial harm to the historic fabric, integrity and character of the listed building. There are no public benefits in this instance, including securing its optimum viable use, to weigh against this harm. The proposal therefore fails to accord with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework, policy SP1 of the Sevenoaks Core Strategy and policy EN4 of the Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan.

#### **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.
- 4 Internally it is proposed to remove infill panels of the original timber framed side wall of the building, and remove a modern fireplace and chimney stack to open up this part of the building to the proposed side extension. It is also proposed to remove the two sets of toilets allowing the opening up of a new rear access into the building to the western corner at ground floor level and the removal of a first floor bathroom.

### **Description of Site**

- 5 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.

- 6 The listing description reads as follows -

‘C16 building altered outside in early C19. 2 storeys, 3 windows. Tiled roof. Tile hung 1<sup>st</sup> floor. Ground floor red brick with diaper of blue headers, dentilled 1<sup>st</sup> 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**

- 7 The building is grade II listed.

### **Policies**

#### *Sevenoaks District Core Strategy*

- 8 Policies - SP1

#### *Sevenoaks District Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP)*

- 9 Policies - EN4

#### *Other*

- 10 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- 11 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

## Planning History

- 12 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/15/03839 Planning 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*

- 13 'Chiddingstone Parish Council supports this application.'

*Conservation Officer - 17.08.16*

- 14 '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.

- 15 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.

- 16 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)

- 17 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)

- 18 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)

- 19 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 outshut should be avoided where possible”

- 20 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.

- 21 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.’

## **Representations**

- 22 Three letters of representation have been received in support of the application.

## Chief Planning Officer's Appraisal

- 23 The main issue in the consideration of this application is the potential impact on the listed building.

### Main Issues

#### *Impact on the listed building -*

- 24 The Listed Buildings and Conservation Area Act 1990 states that proposals should protect the historic character and the setting of the listed building.
- 25 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.
- 26 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).
- 27 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).
- 28 Policy SP1 of the Core Strategy states that the District's heritage assets and their settings, including listed buildings, will be protected and enhanced.
- 29 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.
- 30 The Council's Conservation Officer has carried out a detailed assessment of the proposed works above and concludes that whilst the extensions to the building and the majority of the internal alterations are acceptable, the removal of the infill panels to the timber-framing of the eastern side wall is not justified.
- 31 In my opinion the proposed works comprising the extensions, external alterations and most of the internal alterations 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.
- 32 The removal of the infill panels to the timber framing of the eastern side wall also comprises less than substantial harm to the building. The applicant's own 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 outshut should be avoided where possible". To date the applicant has failed to determine whether this section of wall retains its original infill.

- 33 The Conservation Officer also highlights the content of the latest relevant guidance produced by Historic England. This states that "The historic fabric will always be an important part of the asset's significance" (para. 42) and "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)
- 34 In addition, as noted above by the Conservation Officer the open plan character that would be created through the removal of the infill panels would lead to the loss of the intimate character of the building and is not sympathetic but harmful to the character and integrity of this building.
- 35 The applicant justifies the removal of this section of wall to allow a line of sight from the bar through to the new extension. This is not sufficient reason to accept the loss of this original fabric of the building and I do not believe that any public benefits exist that could justify this element of the works.
- 36 Overall, it is therefore the case that the proposed works would cause harm to the listed building that would fail to conserve the significance of the building. It follows that the proposal would not accord with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the NPPF, policy SP1 of the Core Strategy or policy EN4 of the ADMP.

#### **Other issues**

- 37 None relating to this application.

#### **Access issues**

- 38 None relating to this application.

#### **Conclusion**

- 39 The proposed development would harm the historic fabric, character and integrity of the listed building. 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

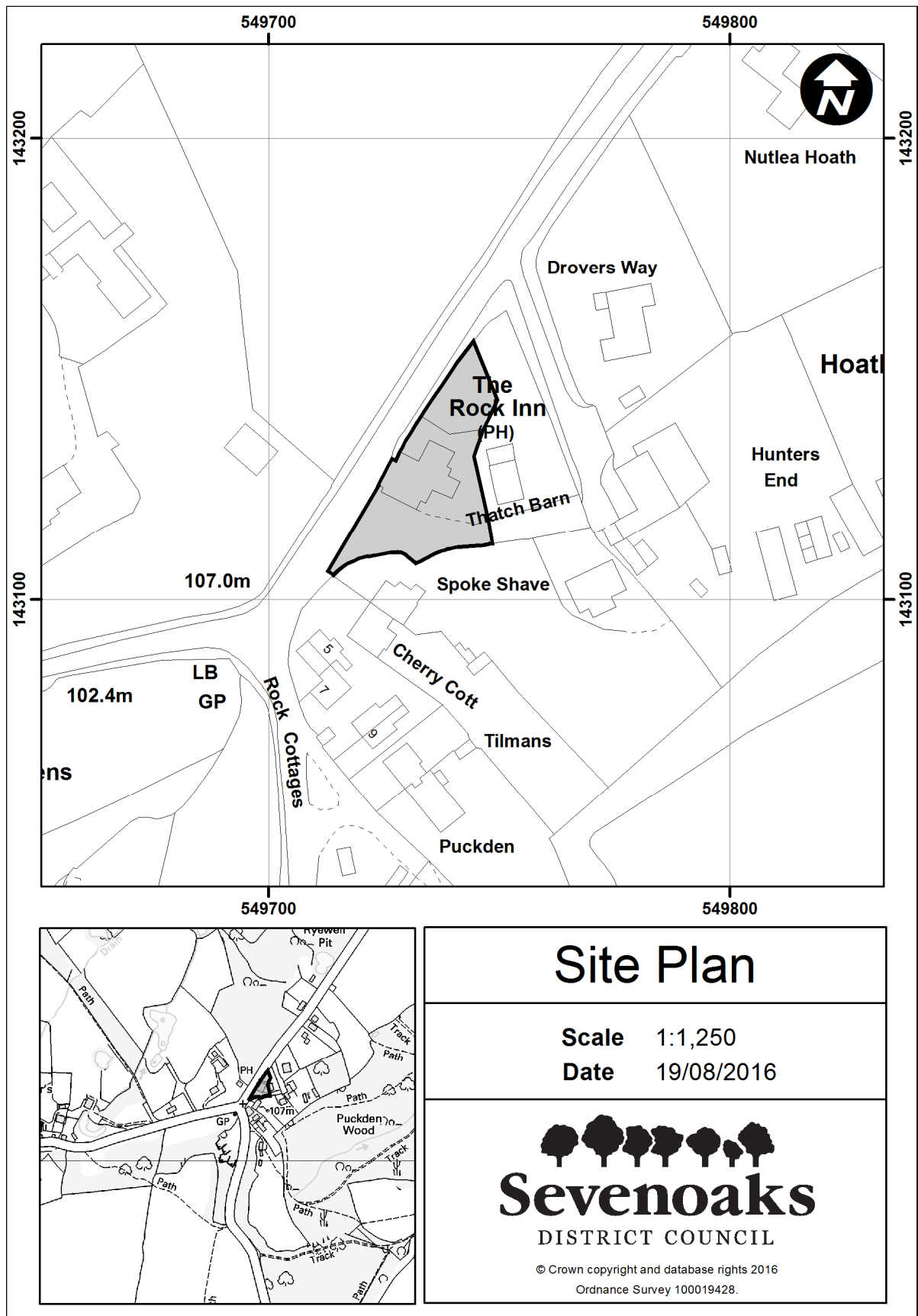
**Richard Morris**  
**Chief Planning Officer**

Link to application details:

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=NYZIM4BK0L000>

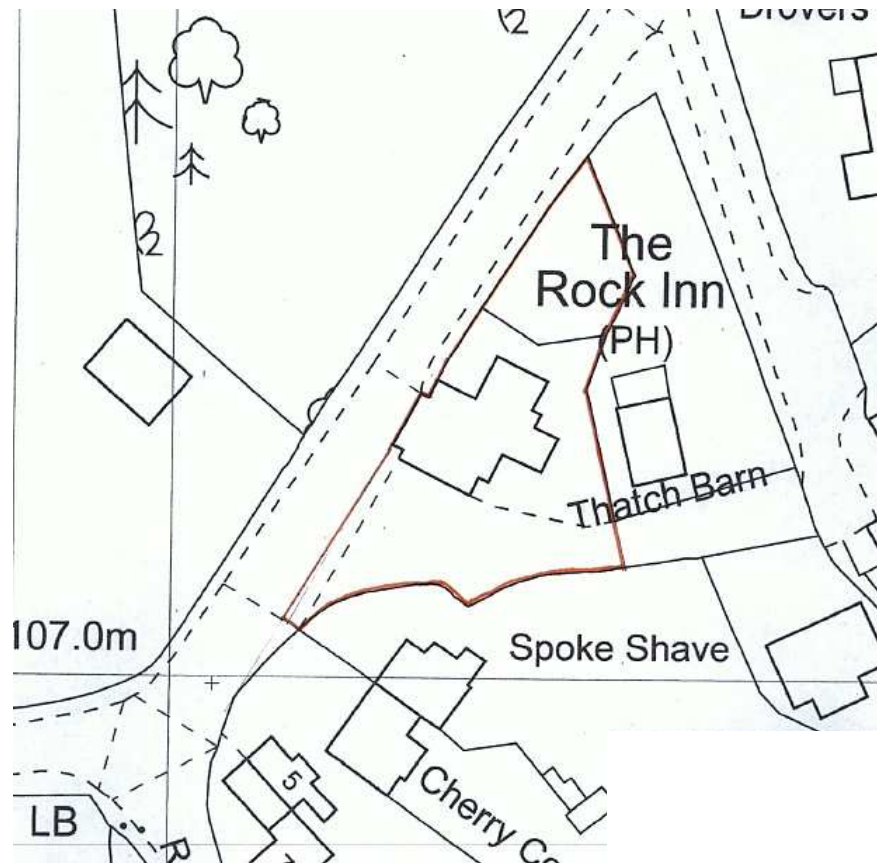
Link to associated documents:

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=NYZIM4BK0L000>





Block Plans  
EXISTING



PROPOSED

