

5.02 - SE/11/03260/FUL Date expired 8 March 2012

PROPOSAL: Enlargement of existing window to front of building

LOCATION: Bridges Charity Cafe, Bridges, High Street Edenbridge TN8 5AJ

WARD(S): Edenbridge South & West

ITEM FOR DECISION

This application has been referred to the Development Control Committee since the Officer's recommendation is at variance to the view of the Town Council and at the request of Councillors Davison and Orridge who wish to challenge the Conservation Officer's response and to highlight that the minor enlargement of the window is essential in increasing footfall to the building.

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

The proposal is not in accordance with Policy SP1 of the Sevenoaks District Core Strategy as lowering the window would have a detrimental impact on the character of the Listed Building

In the absence of a clear and convincing justification to alter the Listed Building, the proposal does not meet the requirements of Policies HE9.1, HE9.2, HE9.4 and HE6.1 of Planning Policy Statement 5.

The proposal is not compliant with Policy EN23 of the Sevenoaks District Local Plan as in order to assess the development proposal fully, sufficient information needs to be submitted to enable the impact of the proposal to be judged to establish that harm will not arise.

Description of Proposal

- 1 The application proposes to lower the window cill of the existing front window of Bridges Charity Café (now referred to as Bridges) which faces onto Edenbridge High Street. The window will be enlarged by 0.84 metres.

Description of Site

- 2 Bridges is situated in the Town Centre of Edenbridge and is positioned at the northern end of the High Street within the Edenbridge Conservation Area.
- 3 In this area of the High Street there are a number of commercial businesses in the immediate vicinity as well as some residential properties to the rear of the site (Cranbrook Mews). Grade II Listed Bridges is a former non-conformist Ebenezer chapel built in 1808.

Constraints

- 4 Conservation Area: Edenbridge;
- 5 Grade II Listed Building;
- 6 Area of Archaeological Potential;

Policies

Sevenoaks District Local Plan (SDLP)

- 7 Policies - EN1 and EN23

Sevenoaks District Council Core Strategy

- 8 Policy - SP1

Other

- 9 Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5): Planning for the Historic Environment

Planning History

- 10 SE/10/03101/ADV – Double sided hanging sign (granted 7 January 2011).
- 11 SE/10/03102/LBCALT – Double sided projecting sign (granted 10 January 2011).
- 12 SE/07/00068/ADV – Poster Cabinet to advertise community drop in centre.
- 13 SE/07/00425/LBCALT – Display of poster cabinet on front elevation of premises (granted 23 March 2007).
- 14 SE/01/01608/LBCALT – Demolition of existing single storey side/rear extensions to Bridges and demolition of rear outbuildings, and erection of new rear addition as amended by revised plans received with letter dated 15 November 2001 (granted 14 February 2002).
- 15 SE/02652/HIST – Details of door joinery pursuant to condition 2 of listed building consent SE/98/01964 (15 January 1999).
- 16 SE/01964/HIST – Re-hang existing double doors to open outwards and provide new pair of double glazed timber doors (granted 19 November 1998).
- 17 SE/9501972/HIST – Display of non illuminated flat sign, small flat sign and one cabinet for three posters (granted 5 December 1995).
- 18 SE/95/01124/HIST – Display of three non-illuminated advertisement sign (LBC). As per amended plans received with letter dated 3 September 1995 (granted on 31 October 1995).

Consultations

Edenbridge Town Council

19 Members supported the application.

Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) Conservation Officer

20 Made for Listed Building Application SE/11/03261/LBCALT

- 'Bridges' is a former non-conformist Ebenezer chapel built in 1808. No reasoning has been put forward in terms of the Listing or Conservation Area setting as to why this prominent and important feature of the front elevation should be altered. There just seems to be a desire not to be seen as old. PPS 5 contains a presumption against change for its own sake. HE 9.2 states 'loss affecting any designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification' and this is reinforced in Paragraphs 178-180. of the Practice Guide. The building has been in use as a cafe for some years, so there can be no argument that the alteration is needed to facilitate the use. Recommend refusal.
- *The SDC Conservation Officer has also stated verbally that even if further information was submitted, she could not support the alteration of the front window, as this is an original feature to the chapel and important to the character of the Listed Building.*

Georgian Group

21 Made for Listed Building Application SE/11/03261/LBCALT

- As The Group has not been provided with any details regarding the significance and history of the fabric it is proposed to alter The Group must object to the scheme. PPS 5 states that:
- 'An applicant will need to undertake an assessment of significance to an extent necessary to understand the potential impact (positive or negative)' (Para. 58). The applicant has provided no such assessment of the significance of the building or window it is proposed to alter. We would expect to receive at least the listing description.
- We recommend that application SE/11/03261/LBCALT be refused. Should further information regarding the significance of the building be provided will may be able to reassess this position.
- *In response to this the Planning Agent made the following comments on 19 January 2012:*
- Further research has been undertaken on the Chapel and although the original structure was constructed in 1808 (Georgian) the gable end to the High Street was not completed until late Victorian times.

Victorian Society

22 Made for Listed Building Application SE/11/03261/LBCALT

- We object to the application in its present form given the surprising lack of information provided. From the documents supplied I can neither judge the significance of the building in question, nor the impact of the submitted proposals. There is no listing description, or even any mention of the date of the building. Given the applicant's almost total lack of assessment of the significance of the building, I urge the council to refuse consent.

Representations

23 Two letters of representation have been received.

- 'We wanted to express that we have no objections to the proposed work and can see that the changes planned are to be sympathetically added to the building. We are sure that the extension of this window will help add to the success of the café allowing more 'passers-by' to see within the building and then doubt they will be attracted to use the services provided to the local community.'
- 'As the neighbouring business the proposed larger window gets our full support. It will show passers by what a great facility Bridges is and keep business flowing in this part of the High Street.'

Head of Development Services Appraisal

Principal Issues

24 The main issues in this case are whether the proposal will have a detrimental impact on the important and original features of the Listed Building and whether sufficient information has been supplied with the application in order to assess the potential impact of the proposal. Another issue is the potential impact the proposal will have on the setting of the Edenbridge Conservation Area.

Listed Building and Conservation Area

25 Bridges is a Grade II Listed Building situated within Edenbridge Conservation Area and as such the presiding material planning consideration with this application regards the impact that the development would have upon the character of the Listed Building and the impact upon the setting of the Conservation Area. It is considered that the front elevation of Bridges is an important and prominent feature on Edenbridge High Street.

26 PPS5 defines Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas as designated heritage assets.

27 Policy HE9.1 of PPS5 states that there should be a presumption in favour of the conservation of designated heritage assets and the more significant the designated heritage asset, the greater the presumption in favour of its conservation should be. This policy goes on to state that any loss affecting a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification. Therefore, as outlined in the PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide paragraph 85, any harmful impact on the significance of a designated asset needs to be justified on the grounds set out in Policy HE9.2 (substantial harm or total loss) or Policy HE9.4 (less than substantial harm).

- 28 In addition, Policy HE6.1 of PPS5 states that as a minimum, the relevant historic environment record should be consulted and the heritage assets themselves should have been assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary given the application's impact.
- 29 In relation to local policy and Conservation Areas, the SDLP states that in assessing development proposals, the Local Planning Authority will require sufficient information to enable the impact to be judged to establish that harm will not arise and the submission of a detailed planning application will normally be required.
- 30 In terms of this application, the SDC Conservation Officer has been consulted on the accompanying Listed Building application and has recommended refusal, on the grounds that no reasoning has been put forward in terms of the Listed Building or Conservation Area setting as to why this prominent and important feature of the front elevation should be altered. The SDC Conservation Officer has also stated that the front window is an original feature to the chapel and important to the character of the Listed Building and altering it would not be supported. It is therefore considered that the proposal is not in accordance with Policy SP1 of the Sevenoaks District Core Strategy as lowering the window would have a detrimental impact on the Listed Building
- 31 In addition it is considered that the proposal is not compliant with Policy EN23 of the SDLP as in order to assess the development proposal fully, the Local Planning Authority requires sufficient information to be submitted to enable the impact of the proposal to be judged to establish that harm will not arise. Nevertheless as it is considered that lowering the window would have a detrimental impact on the character of the Listed Building, it is also considered that the alteration would have a harmful impact on the setting of the Conservation Area.
- 32 It is considered that the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on residential amenity and is therefore in accordance with Policy EN1 of the SDLP.

Conclusion

- 33 The SDC Conservation Officer has stated that the front window is an original feature to the chapel and important to the character of the Listed Building. It is considered therefore that altering it would have a detrimental impact on the character of the Listed Building.
- 34 In addition, in the absence of a clear and convincing justification to alter the Listed Building, the proposal does not meet the requirements of Policies HE9.1, HE9.2, HE9.4 and HE6.1 of PPS5. In addition it is considered that the proposal will affect the setting of the Edenbridge Conservation Area and is therefore not compliant with Policy EN23 of the SDLP.
- 35 As the accompanying application for Listed Building Consent received two recommendations for refusal from statutory organisations (Georgian Society and Victorian Society) if Members are minded to grant consent, then the listed building application would need to be referred to the Secretary of State.
- 36 With regards to the above reasons, the recommendation is to refuse planning consent.

Background Papers

Site Plan

Contact Officer(s): Neal Thompson Extension: 7463

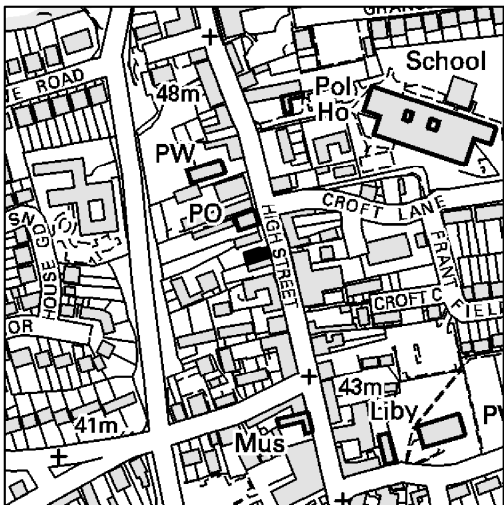
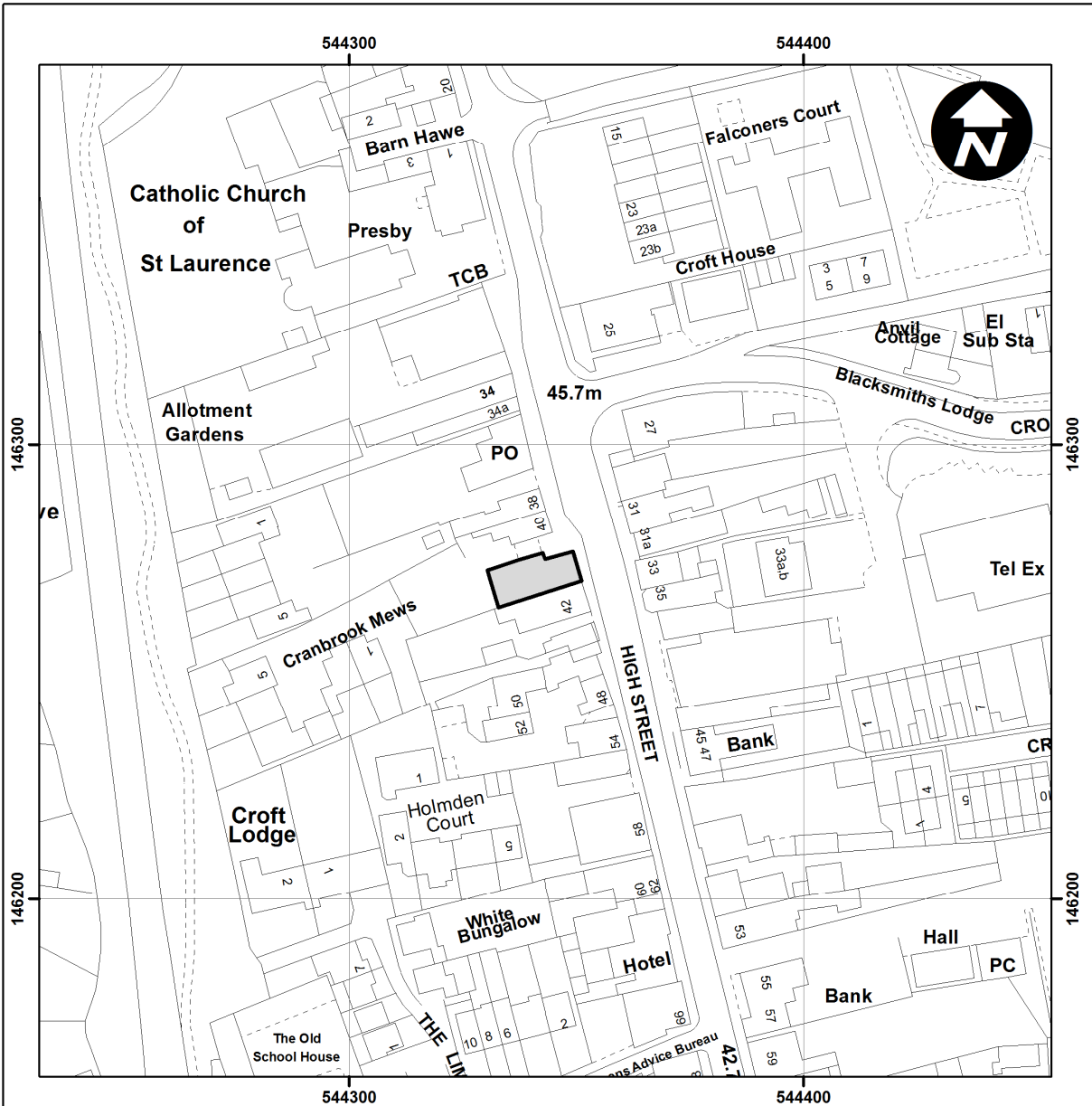
Kristen Paterson
Community and Planning Services Director

Link to application details:

<http://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=LW75NGBKOCR00>

Link to associated documents:

<http://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=LW75NGBKOCR00>



Site Plan

Scale 1:1,250

Date 29.02.2012



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