

APPLICATION: MA/10/0070 Date: 18 January 2010 Received: 19 January 2010

APPLICANT: Maidstone Borough Council

LOCATION: CCTV COLUMN, ST FAITHS STREET, MAIDSTONE, KENT, ME14 1LJ

PARISH: Maidstone

PROPOSAL: Planning application for erection of CCTV column with camera equipment (6m in height) on south side of St. Faiths Street, opposite Station Road, to replace existing camera on north side of St. Faiths Street as shown on the 1:500 scale location plan and the photomontage received on 19/01/10 and as described in the Design and Access Statement received on 19/01/10.

AGENDA DATE: 25th February 2010

CASE OFFICER: Angela Welsford

The recommendation for this application is being reported to Committee for decision because:

- the Council is the applicant

1.0 POLICIES

- 1.1 The South East Plan RSS 2009: BE1, BE6.
Government Policy: PPS1, PPG15, PPG16.

2.0 RELEVANT HISTORY

- 2.1 None.

3.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 3.1 CONSERVATION OFFICER:** "Whilst the proposed location is acceptable, and probably better than the existing in terms of its effect on the historic environment, it will result in a degree of street furniture clutter at this point (road sign, street lamp and CCTV camera, all mounted on separate poles). Is there no possibility of co-ordination to minimise the number of separate structures? It is, therefore, recommended that on heritage/design grounds no objection is raised but the developer should be encouraged to achieve a better quality scheme by addressing the above issues."

4.0 CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 The Site

4.1.1 The application site is an area of pavement on the south side of St Faiths Street, opposite the junction with Station Road in Maidstone Town Centre. It is near to the Chillington House Conservation Area, and in fairly close proximity to the Grade II* listed Maidstone Museum as well as a number of Grade II listed buildings. The area is identified as having the potential for discovery of archaeological remains.

4.2 The Proposal

4.2.1 Planning Permission is sought for the erection of a 6m high CCTV column with camera equipment. (This would replace an existing camera on the north side of St. Faiths Street close to the museum, and would provide better coverage of the museum frontage and Station Road). There would be no need for a separate equipment cabinet as the proposed new column would house all of the control equipment required.

5.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 Impact on the Street-scene

5.1.1 In my view, the proposal would have minimal impact on the street-scene. The new column would be located adjacent to an existing lamp post and traffic sign, and would be painted in Maidstone Borough Council's corporate blue to match. As such, it would blend in with the existing street furniture. The Conservation Officer is concerned that, whilst the proposed location is better than the existing in terms of the impact on the historic environment (see below), it may result in a degree of street furniture clutter at this point. However, in my view this proposal would not result in a cluttered appearance to the street due to the relatively low number (only three) of slim-line structures and the widening of the pavement at this point. I therefore do not consider that the proposal would harm the character or appearance of the street-scene.

5.2 Impact on the Historic Environment

5.2.1 As the proposal would blend in with existing street paraphernalia it would not, in my view, look out of place or harm the setting of the adjacent Chillington House Conservation Area, which, incidentally, already contains similar street furniture.

5.2.2 There would be a sufficient degree of separation to avoid any harm to the setting of the Grade II listed almshouses to the south-west (approximately 10m separation), the group of Grade II listed buildings to the north-east on the

corner of St Faiths Street with Station Road (approximately 16m separation), or Maidstone Museum, which is Grade II* listed (approximately 30m separation).

5.2.3 The Conservation Officer has not raised objection in this respect.

5.2.4 I therefore consider the impact on the historic environment to be acceptable.

5.3 Impact on Archaeology

5.3.1 Given the limited amount of groundwork involved, and the fact that this would take place within an existing hard-surfaced (and therefore developed) area, I do not consider that any archaeological measures will be necessary.

5.4 Impact on Residential Amenity

5.4.1 The proposed position of the camera would mean that it would face towards Maidstone Museum and its garden with a partial view up Station Road. The almshouses, which are the closest residential properties, would be behind it to the left, so would not suffer a significant loss of privacy. Indeed, the proposal would actually be an improvement in this respect since the camera that would be replaced is on the north side of St Faith's Street, just opposite the almshouses.

5.4.2 Similarly, it would also be angled away from the residential properties at the St Faith's Street/Station Road junction, so again would not result in a significant loss of privacy.

5.4.3 Furthermore, the camera would clearly have the purpose of providing anti-crime surveillance. Consequently, it is considered reasonable to assume that its key focus would be upon the museum frontage and the street, rather than nearby windows.

5.4.4 There are no loss of light or overbearing impacts to consider.

5.5 Impact on the Highway

5.5.1 The new CCTV column would be grouped with an existing lamp post and road sign at the front edge of the pavement at a point where it widens so would not obstruct pedestrians, including wheelchair users and pushchairs.

5.5.2 It would not impact upon vehicular traffic using St Faiths Street or Station Road.

5.6 Other Matters

5.6.1 The application site is an existing area of pavement in Maidstone Town Centre, and as such there are no ecological or landscaping impacts to consider.

5.7 Conclusion

5.7.1 Taking all of the above into consideration, the proposal is considered to comply with Development Plan Policy and there are no overriding material considerations to indicate a refusal. I therefore recommend approval subject to conditions as set out below.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission;

Reason: In accordance with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The CCTV column hereby permitted shall be painted in Maidstone Borough Council's corporate blue within one month of its installation and thereafter maintained as such unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority;

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development in accordance with Policies BE1 & BE6 of The South East Plan RSS 2009.

The proposed development, subject to the conditions stated, is considered to comply with the policies of the Development Plan (Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000 and South East Plan 2009) and there are no overriding material considerations to indicate a refusal of planning consent.