

APPLICATION: MA/12/0464 Date: 12 March 2012 Received: 12 March 2012

APPLICANT: Mr M Folb

LOCATION: 2 - 3, BEDFORD PLACE, MAIDSTONE, KENT, ME16 8JB

PARISH: Maidstone

PROPOSAL: An application for listed building consent for the demolition of a single storey rear extension and various internal and external works including alterations to the internal layout and arrangement of external openings; the introduction of an exterior staircase and chimney stack; and the removal of existing gate and pillars as shown on drawing numbers 1011\_A(GA)A-001 rev G, 1011\_A(GA)A1-010 rev B, 1011\_A(GA)A1-100 rev B, 1011\_A(GA)A1-101 rev B, 1011\_A(GA)A1-102 rev B, 1011\_A(GA)A1-103 rev C, 1011\_A(GA)A1-200 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)A1-201 rev B, 1011\_A(GA)A1-202 rev B, 1011\_A(GA)A1-203 rev B, 1011\_A(GA)A1-301 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)A2-100 rev C, 1011\_A(GA)A2-101 rev C, 1011\_A(GA)A2-102 rev C, 1011\_A(GA)A2-200 rev C, 1011\_A(GA)A2-202 rev C, 1011\_A(GA)A2-203 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)A2-300 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)A2-301 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)X-001 rev B, 1011\_A(GA)X-010 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)X-100 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)X-101 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)X-102 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)X-103 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)X-200 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)X-201 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)X-202 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)X-203 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)X-300 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)X-301 rev A and 1011\_A(GA)X-DEM-001 rev X, supported by a design and access statement and conservation area assessment, all received 12th March 2012.

AGENDA DATE: 28th June 2012

CASE OFFICER: Catherine Slade

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

- Councillor Ross has called the application in before Planning Committee for the reasons set out in the report.

## **1. POLICIES**

- Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000: None relevant.
- South East Plan 2009: BE6
- Government Policy: National Planning Policy Framework 2012

## **2. HISTORY**

- MA/12/0463 Conversion of building from offices to 7No. flats and erection of 2No. dwellinghouses and associated works to exterior of building and access/parking arrangements – CURRENTLY UNDER CONSIDERATION
- MA/08/2002 An application for Listed Building Consent to replace existing lead lined hoppers and troughs with black UPVC hoppers and down pipe - APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS
- MA/06/2092 An application for listed building consent for the modification of disabled access ramp to the rear of the property for staff and public and the erection of a handrail to the front access - APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS
- MA/06/2091 Retrospective application for modification of disabled access ramp to the rear of the property for staff and public and the proposed erection of a handrail to front access - APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS
- MA/04/0244 An application for listed building consent to form a new door between 2 offices on the ground floor, the removal of a stud partition on the first floor and the moving of another partition over by 600mm - APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS
- MA/95/1049 An application for a Certificate of Lawfulness for use as general offices – APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS
- MA/95/0815 An application for listed building consent for alterations to form ground floor toilets, widen corridors/doorways remove partitions and external landings/steps and fit new rear door and windows floors - APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS
- MA/75/1502 An application for listed building consent for alterations to chimney stack on rear wing - APPROVED
- MA/75/1246 An application for listed building consent for alteration of windows - APPROVED
- MA/75/0012 Conversion of the building to office accommodation – RAISE NO OBJECTION
- MA/74/0211 Offices - APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS
- 71/0490/MK1 An application for listed building consent for demolition – REFUSED, APPEAL DISMISSED (2 Bedford Place)
- 64/0743/MK1 Outline application for the demolition of existing buildings and erection of Office Buildings with vehicular access from Bedford Place - REFUSED
- 63/0634A/MK1 Extension of outline consent for the erection of a three storey block of flats comprising 12 units - APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS

- 63/0634/MK1 Outline application for the erection of a three storey block of flats, comprising 12 units - APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS
- 63/0214A/MK1 Outline application for the demolition of existing premises and erection of new building comprising office - REFUSED
- 63/0214/MK1 Outline application for the demolition of existing premises and erection of new building comprising flats or maisonettes - APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS
- 53/0109/MK1 Internal alterations to form additional bedrooms and bathroom on first floor and relevant drainage work, and provision of two new windows on rear elevation – APPROVED (2 Bedford Place)
- 50/0083/MK1 Change of use from private dwellinghouse to accommodation of residential guests - APPROVED

2.1 The proposal site has an extensive development management history in respect of applications for planning permission and listed building consent, some of which are not directly applicable to the current proposal. The details of the relevant history are summarised above.

2.2 The current proposal is the subject of a concurrent application for planning permission under application reference MA/12/0463, the details of which are set out above.

2.3 The current application has been submitted after extensive pre-application discussions between the developer and the Local Planning Authority under the pre-application advice procedure. Pre-application advice has been issued under the reference PA/11/0339.

### **3. CONSULTATIONS**

3.1 Councillor Ross has requested that applications MA/12/0463 and MA/12/0464 be reported to Planning Committee on the grounds of concerns relating to parking, refuse and the impact of the development on the conservation area.

3.2 Maidstone Borough Council Conservation Officer: raises no objection to the proposed works subject to conditions requiring the submission and written approval of details of materials, joinery, landscaping (including hard surfacing), boundary treatments, the proposed external staircase and the brick arches over new openings; and the removal of permitted development rights. The officer makes the following detailed comments:

*"These proposals have been the subject of extensive pre-application negotiations which have resulted in a scheme which, in my view, ensures the long term use of the currently vacant listed building whilst preserving its historic and*

*architectural interest. The new build element, in my opinion, will not adversely affect the setting of the listed building or the character of the Conservation Area.*

*The conversion of the listed building has been devised in such a way that important internal features and the original floorplan are preserved – indeed, some benefit accrues from the return of one of the original main ground floor reception rooms to its original size by the removal of a 20<sup>th</sup> Century partition wall. The part of the building which it is proposed to demolish is a relatively late addition to the building of low significance and I therefore have no objection to this aspect of the proposals. The reinstatement of a chimneystack on the resulting end gable will be visually beneficial. The proposed refenestration of the rear elevation is appropriate in its design and will tidy up an area which currently suffers from a hotch-potch of alterations.*

*The proposed new houses are small in scale and are located on a part of the site where historic maps show there to have been former outbuildings. They are of unashamedly modern design which I consider to be an entirely valid approach in this location and the quality of the design is acceptable."*

#### **4. REPRESENTATIONS**

- 4.1 Five representations were received as a result of the publicity procedure, from 3 households. The letters make clear that no objection is raised to the alterations proposed to the listed building. The concerns raised mainly relate to the change of use of the building and the erection of the buildings in the rear of the site; these include overdevelopment of the site, harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area, disruption of the established pattern of development through the introduction of backland development, traffic generation, traffic movement and parking, harm to residential amenity by way of loss of privacy and loss of light, and refuse storage: these are discussed in detail under MA/12/0643 which relates to the concurrent application for planning permission.

#### **5. CONSIDERATIONS**

##### **5.1 Site Description**

- 5.1.1 The application site is located to the north of Bedford Place, an unclassified public highway characterised by residential development of mixed ages, scales and appearances. The site is located approximately 48m to the west of the junction of Bedford Place and London Road, the A20, which is a major arterial route into Maidstone. The road junction in this location forms part of a gyratory system to the south of Maidstone Town Centre.

- 5.1.2 The site comprises the buildings and land known collectively as 2-3 Bedford Place. The property (including both buildings and all extensions) was listed as Grade II in its entirety in 1951.
- 5.1.3 Number 2 Bedford Place, which is the easternmost of the two main buildings, is an attractive timber framed two storey building with additional accommodation in the roof space facilitated by three gables to the front (south) elevation. This building is believed to have originally been sited in Pudding Lane, and to have been rebuilt in its current location in the early to mid nineteenth century. The building is of an arresting appearance with various external architectural details of interest including the jettied upper floors to the side (east and west) elevations; a chimneybreast to the west elevation; sash windows to the front elevation; and a later neoclassical porch. Internally some features of interest survive, including the timber frame in its reassembled state and carved bannisters, although much of the original interior fabric has been lost. The building has been the subject of two rear extensions of contrasting appearance to the original building, the first being a two storey red brick structure believed to date from the mid nineteenth century built onto the eastern half of the rear elevation, and the second a single storey rendered extension dating from the late twentieth century which is built onto the rear of the first extension.
- 5.1.4 Number 3 Bedford Place is located to the side (west) and rear (north) of number 2. This building is believed to date from the mid nineteenth century and to post date the re-erection of number 2. This is a simpler two storey hipped building with a rendered façade to the front (south) and yellow brick to the rear. This building has also been the subject of extensions; in this case to the east (taking the side elevation to abut that of the neighbouring property, number 4 Bedford Place) and west elevations (adjoining the rear elevation of number 2 and the side elevation of the two storey rear extension to the same). At some point subsequent to the erection of the extension to the east elevation of number 3, the two properties merged into a single entity, and this is how the building has been utilised since.
- 5.1.5 To the rear (north) and east of the buildings the exterior space is hard surfaced with black top and used for car parking and vehicular access, which is gained from Bedford Place to the east of number 2. The parking areas are enclosed by a relatively recent and utilitarian metal gate and red brick pillars. Pedestrian access to the buildings is via the front door of number 2 or the rear of the building. The areas to the front (south) of the buildings are mainly paved with some limited landscaping in the form of small shrubs to the front of the buildings.
- 5.1.6 The site levels step up from the highway and as a result the ground floor level of the buildings is elevated by between approximately 0.5m in relation to the

pavement. In addition, Bedford Place rises steadily to the west, which is reflected in the stepping up of the yellow brick dwarf wall which forms much of the front boundary to the site. Although the majority of the site is more or less level (with the exception of the vehicular access which rises as it enters the parking areas to the rear), it is bounded by retaining walls which vary in height from 0.4m (east boundary of site with Rock House) to 1.8m (rear (north) boundary of site with allotments, and west boundary of site with number 4 Bedford Place). The need for these stabilising structures reflects the topographic relationship with the adjoining land, the site being set down in relation to number 4 Bedford Place and the allotments to the rear, and set up in relation to Rock House.

- 5.1.7 The property has been in use as offices for a variety of purposes since the 1970s, including during a period in the mid to late twentieth century when it was the offices of the Maidstone Borough Council Planning Department, however the original purpose of the buildings is believed to have been residential.
- 5.1.8 The site is in an edge of town centre location. The site is within the Maidstone (Rocky Hill) Conservation Area, as designated in the Local Plan, and is also within the London Road Character Area, as designated in the relevant SPD. In addition, there are a number of listed buildings within close proximity to the site, including numbers 4 to 7 Bedford Place, which form a terrace of four Georgian townhouses which abut the west of the application site; Rock House, 15 and 17 London Road which adjoin the east boundary of the site; and Rocky Hill Terrace, which is located approximately 15m to the south east of the site, on the opposite side of Bedford Place. There are no trees within the site, but there are a number of trees to the rear of Rock House and numbers 15 and 17 London Road which are located in close proximity to the site boundary, one of which, a mature Lime, is protected under the scope of Tree Preservation Order 9 of 1972.

## **5.2 Proposal**

- 5.2.1 The application seeks listed building consent for works to facilitate the conversion of the existing buildings on site from offices to seven self contained residential properties. The properties would comprise five flats within number 2, two at ground floor level, two at first floor level, and one in the roof space, and two flats within number 3, one at ground floor level and one at first floor level.
- 5.2.2 The works to the exterior of the building include the demolition of the single storey extension to the rear of number 2 and the introduction of a chimney breast to the north elevation of the extension to be retained; the introduction of a metalwork external stairway to the rear elevation of number 3; alterations to the arrangement of the openings to the rear of number 3 including the replacement of a first floor window with a door, the enlargement of two first

floor windows, and the introduction of an additional ground floor window; the removal of the existing vehicular access gate and supporting brick pillars to the east of the building; and the introduction of a satellite dish to the valley located between the extensions to numbers 2 and 3. No external alterations are proposed to the front elevation of the buildings fronting onto Bedford Place.

- 5.2.3 The application also includes internal works to enable the change of use of the property being considered under planning application MA/12/0463. These include the removal of recent stud walls and the introduction of partition walls; alterations to the arrangement of internal openings including the closure of existing doors and the introduction of new openings; and the introduction of fire doors.
- 5.2.4 The works to the exterior of the building require planning permission and are, together with the change of use of the building and the erection of two dwellings in the rear of the site, the subject of a separate application for planning permission (MA/12/0463).

### **5.3 Assessment**

- 5.3.1 The application is for listed building consent, and as such the only matter for consideration under the scope of the current application is the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the Grade II listed building. The concerns raised by Councillor Ross and local residents are therefore addressed fully in the assessment of application MA/12/0463 for full planning permission, and are not for consideration under the scope of the application for listed building consent.
- 5.3.2 The application has been the result of extensive negotiation between the developer and the Council, and the scheme for the conversion has been arrived at as a result of significant investigation of the fabric of the building and the history of the site (as set out in the design and access statement which includes an assessment of the heritage and design aspects of the proposal and a structural report as Appendix 2). The Maidstone Borough Council Conservation Officer raises no objection to the proposal, subject to the conditions set out above, and considers that the proposed works are sympathetic to the original fabric and character and appearance of the listed building.
- 5.3.3 No objection is raised to the loss of the single storey rear extension, which is modern in age and design, and of no particular architectural or historic merit. The works proposed to the rear of the building, although designed in a modern vernacular, would compliment the existing building and, through the design and scale of the extension and choice of materials, pay respect to the character and appearance of the original building. The introduction of a chimney breast to the

rear elevation is considered to be in keeping with the character and appearance of the building, and the external stairway, notwithstanding its modern design, is considered to be acceptable, subject to a condition requiring the submission of details of the structure. The alterations to the openings are restricted to the introduction of a first floor door to allow access to the upper flat in number 3; the introduction of a ground floor window to the gable end which will result from the removal of the existing extension; and the enlargement of two first floor windows which currently are high level providing light to toilets. All alterations are to the rear elevation of the building. The Conservation Officer regards the proposed alterations to be acceptable and appropriate to the appearance of the building, and to be an overall improvement to the existing arrangement. No objection is raised to the removal of the gate, which is considered to represent an inappropriate recent addition, or the introduction of a satellite dish in a discrete position which will not be visible.

- 5.3.4 In respect of the works to the interior, the building has been extensively altered internally to facilitate the historic use of the building as offices, and as such the Conservation Officer supports the alterations to the internal layout, which "preserves the original floor plan" and would result in the restoration of the historic room layout in the case of part of the ground floor of number 2 (kitchen/living area of flat 1). The scheme is considered to be successful in retaining remaining features of architectural interest including the timber frame, the facades, original chimneys and chimney breasts, and the internal staircase.
- 5.3.5 The proposed works to the interior of the building are considered to be appropriate and necessary for the conversion of the building to the use proposed (see MA/12/0463), and to retain the overall character of the original building whilst allowing the retention of original features of interest, and improving elements of the existing building such as the arrangement of the rear openings and the internal ground floor layout. For these reasons the works to the interior of the building are considered to be acceptable.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 For the reasons set out above, it is considered that the design and scale of the proposed works would preserve and enhance the historical integrity and character of the Grade II Listed Building.
- 6.2 It is therefore concluded that Listed Building Consent be granted subject to conditions.

## **7. RECOMMENDATION**

LISTED BUILDING CONSENT BE GRANTED, subject to the following conditions:



1. The works to which this consent relates must be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this consent;

Reason: In accordance with the provisions of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development shall not commence until, written details and samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the development shall be constructed using the approved materials;

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development and that the historic appearance, character and significance of the building are maintained in accordance with policy BE6 of the South East Plan 2009 and central government planning policy and guidance as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.

3. The development shall not commence until full details of the following elements of the proposal have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in the form of large scale drawings;

- Internal joinery
- External joinery
- Proposed external staircase
- Brick arches over new openings

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details;

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development and that the historic appearance, character and significance of the building are maintained in accordance with policy BE6 of the South East Plan 2009 and central government planning policy and guidance as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.

4. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

drawing numbers 1011\_A(GA)A-001 rev G, 1011\_A(GA)A1-010 rev B, 1011\_A(GA)A1-100 rev B, 1011\_A(GA)A1-101 rev B, 1011\_A(GA)A1-102 rev B,

1011\_A(GA)A1-103 rev C, 1011\_A(GA)A1-200 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)A1-201 rev B, 1011\_A(GA)A1-202 rev B, 1011\_A(GA)A1-203 rev B, 1011\_A(GA)A1-301 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)A2-100 rev C, 1011\_A(GA)A2-101 rev C, 1011\_A(GA)A2-102 rev C, 1011\_A(GA)A2-200 rev C, 1011\_A(GA)A2-202 rev C, 1011\_A(GA)A2-203 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)A2-300 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)A2-301 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)X-001 rev B, 1011\_A(GA)X-010 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)X-100 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)X-101 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)X-102 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)X-103 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)X-200 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)X-201 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)X-202 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)X-203 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)X-300 rev A, 1011\_A(GA)X-301 rev A and 1011\_A(GA)X-DEM-001 rev X and design and access statement, all received 12th March 2012;

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development and that the historic appearance, character and significance of the building are maintained in accordance with policy BE6 of the South East Plan 2009 and central government planning policy and guidance as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.

**Informative set out below**

Please note that in the event of further works being necessary for compliance with Building Regulations, a further application for listed building consent may be required.

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 the South East Plan 2009) and there are no overriding material considerations to indicate a refusal of planning consent.