

APPLICATION: MA/09/0997 Date: 8 June 2009 Received: 11 June 2009

APPLICANT: Simon Lace - Museum & Heritage Manager

LOCATION: MAIDSTONE CORPORATION MUSEUM, ST. FAITHS STREET,
MAIDSTONE, ME141LH

PROPOSAL: Amendment to MA/07/1365 (An application for listed building consent for redevelopment of Maidstone Museum east wing comprising of two/three storey extension, glazed atrium cafe and external landscaping) being replacement of proposed glazed atrium cafe with new display gallery and replacement of proposed hard landscape to forecourt with soft landscaping shown on drawing numbers 126/GA-00 Rev P3, 126/GA-01 Rev P3, 126/GA-02 Rev P5, 126/GA-03 Rev P3, 126/GA-05 Rev P3, 126/GA-06 Rev P3, 126/GA-07 Rev P3, 126/GA-08 Rev P3, 126/GA-09 Rev P3 received on 11/06/09 and a letter from the agent dated 10/06/09.

AGENDA DATE: 23rd July 2009

CASE OFFICER: Louise Welsford

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

- The Council is the applicant

POLICIES

South East Regional Plan 2009: BE6.
Government Policy: PPG15, PPG16.

HISTORY

Extensive history, the most recent being:

MA/09/0561 - An application for listed building consent for the excavation alongside existing foundations under the chapel floor for the insertion of a post tension ring beam to tie the failed underpinning together and lime mortar pointing to stonework and redecoration to remove cracks – APPROVED

MA/07/1365 & 1366 - Redevelopment of Maidstone Museum east wing comprising of two/three storey extension, glazed atrium cafe and external landscaping- APPROVED. This application seeks amendments to the formerly approved scheme.

MA/04/1511 An application for listed building consent for the installation of a platform lift in the lobby of the Regimental Gallery to allow disabled access, this includes the fixing of oak posts to the wall - APPROVED

MA/04/1484 An application for listed building consent for the installation of a ramp to provide wheelchair access to the front entrance of the museum, this comprises a blocked paved ramp behind a seat backed by railings carrying the handrail on the west and east sides, and the removal of existing planting beds to provide a circulation, performance and seating area - APPROVED

CONSULTATIONS

ENGLISH HERITAGE: No written response to date.

(Officer comment: I understand from internal sources that English Heritage officer Tom Foxall visited the site in the week commencing 29th June and advised verbally that he had no objections to the proposal).

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL HERITAGE CONSERVATION UNIT: No response to date.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL CONSERVATION OFFICER: No objections to these relatively minor amendments. Condition required re submission of large scale details of the proposed junctions of the new glazed screens with the existing buildings.

REPRESENTATIONS

CPRE have submitted a letter of support for the application, stating that the retention of the cafe in its original location is appropriate, the canoe gallery is exciting and the replacement of the hard steps and retaining wall with soft landscaping is welcome. It would enhance the cultural scene of urban Maidstone.

CONSIDERATIONS

SITE AND SITUATION

The application site is the Grade II* listed Maidstone Museum, located in the Chillington House Conservation Area, close to Maidstone Town Centre. It also falls within an Area of Archaeological Potential. The building occupies a prominent position opposite Fremlins Walk and has Elizabethan origins, although the building was substantially restored and extended in the Victorian era. The front facing St Faith's Street is e-shaped and is constructed of red brick with detailed gables. The east elevation faces Brenchley Gardens, and historically was flanked by a gatehouse, which was destroyed by enemy action in 1940. To the rear of the main façade and adjacent to a footpath through the gardens is a store, of no significant character, which was erected in the 1970s.

The street scene is of varied appearance. To the east, is a timber framed building of much historical character, with flat roofed offices adjacent. Opposite are a row of Listed Almshouses dating from 1700 and constructed of red brick, and the modern Fremlins development, with its curves and imposing canopy feature. The Library, to the west, is housed in a building of typical circa 1960s design.

PROPOSAL

Listed Building Consent was previously granted, under reference MA/07/1365, for the redevelopment of the east wing, including the construction of two / three storey extensions, including a glazed atrium café and internal refurbishment. Two main extensions were proposed – one to the south east corner, between two gables and one to the north of the eastern gable, adjacent to a 20th century store. Both extensions were of modern design and were partially glazed, and partially clad in TECU Gold copper alloy shingles.

Listed Building Consent is now sought for relatively minor changes to the approved scheme. These broadly consist of the following:

- The omission of the new glazed atrium café and its replacement with a smaller exhibition gallery to display a 9 m long Solomon Islands war canoe. The omission of the cafe would create a courtyard in the area between the Great Hall and the Canoe Gallery.
- A new freestanding glazed screen fixed to a small retaining wall towards the north of the complex (between Lower Court Lodge and the Lower Store) to ensure clear views through to Brenchley Gardens, whilst providing security to the courtyard.
- The air handling unit (part of the previous application) above the new gallery will be concealed with a storey high screen clad in TECU Gold copper alloy shingles, to match the other new elevations.

CONSIDERATIONS

The key issues arising from this application relate to the impacts upon the character and appearance of the Grade II* Listed Building, its parkland setting and the Conservation Area.

The principle of the extensions and their design have already been agreed by the previous permission. This application is purely for minor changes to some aspects of the proposals.

The scale and design of the main extensions to the east elevation would remain unaltered from that previously approved. The canoe gallery would occupy an area to the east of the main part of the building, adjacent to a 20th century store. The glazed

design of the ground floor elevation of the canoe gallery would ensure minimal impact upon the historic character and appearance of the surrounding elevations, to which I consider it would relate sympathetically. The 'TECU Gold' copper alloy cladding to be used above the glazing is already to be used upon the main parts of the extensions and this additional section would not be of an excessive scale, being in the region of 4 m x 3 m. It would have a relatively low overall height in relation to the roofs of the Museum and would therefore appear subordinate to it. (The section facing the courtyard is shown to be approximately 5m lower than the ridges of the gabled sections of the Museum and slightly lower than the eaves of the 20th century store).

In my view, the changes and additions to the building would have a satisfactory impact upon its historic fabric, character and appearance.

The Conservation Officer is also of the opinion that the changes are acceptable.

The proposed glazed screen would be small in scale and unobtrusive.

I conclude that there are no significant adverse heritage impacts arising from these minor changes and that the character, appearance and setting of the Grade II* Listed Building, the Chillington House Conservation Area and its parkland surroundings would be preserved.

Other Issues

There are no new archaeological issues and an archaeological condition is proposed.

CONCLUSION

The proposed minor alterations to the approved scheme would preserve the character, appearance and setting of the Grade II* Listed Building and the Chillington House Conservation Area. The proposal is considered to comply with the Development Plan and central Government Guidance and I therefore recommend approval. As this is a Listed Building Consent application made by the Council, it must be referred to the Secretary of State for determination.

RECOMMENDATION

REFER THE APPLICATION TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DETERMINATION, RECOMMENDING THAT 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. No development shall commence until written details and samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the both the external and internal surfaces of the building(s) 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. These details shall also include a large panel of the metal cladding (at least five shingles by five) and details of the internal/external floor surface finishes, including those to the courtyard and around the entrance block;

Reason: To preserve the setting of the Grade II* listed building and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, in accordance with Policy BE6 of the South East Regional Plan 2009 and PPG15.

3. No development shall commence until full details of the following matters have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:-
 - a) Construction detail showing all connections with the existing building, in the form of 1:20 scale plans and sectional drawings.
 - b) Construction detail in the form of 1:50 scale construction working drawings in section of the two extensions, both longitudinal and cross-sectional.
 - c) New joinery in the form of large scale drawings.
 - d) 1:10 scale details of all glazing elements.
 - e) Alterations to staircase behind Great Hall.
 - f) Works to medieval external doorway in room behind the staircase behind the Great Hall, including repairs/stone treatment.
 - g) Openings between new 1st floor gallery and both Upper Bearsted Gallery and Bentliff Art Gallery 2 and the new opening into the new staircase from the Upper Bearsted Gallery.
 - h) Details of ceilings and rooflights.
 - i) Fixings for courtyard glazing and roof into the historic structure.
 - j) Large scale details of the proposed junctions of the new glazed screens with the existing buildings.

The development shall thereafter be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To preserve the setting of the Grade II* listed building and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, in accordance with Policy BE6 of the South East Regional Plan 2009 and PPG15.

4. No development shall commence until full details of the construction detail for the access road and retaining wall, including cross-sections where appropriate, together with a method statement for these works, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details;

Reason: To preserve the setting of the Grade II* listed building and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, in accordance with Policy BE6 of the South East Regional Plan 2009 and PPG15.

5. No development shall commence until details of hard landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details before the first occupation of the building(s) or land;

Reason: To preserve the setting of the Grade II* listed building and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, in accordance with Policy BE6 of the South East Regional Plan 2009 and PPG15.

6. No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of:

(i) archaeological field evaluation works in accordance with a written specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority; and

(ii) following on from the evaluation, any safeguarding measures to ensure preservation in situ of important archaeological remains and/or further investigation and recording in accordance with a written specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority;

Reason: To enable the recording of any items of historical or archaeological interest, in accordance with PPG16.

The reasons for granting this consent are that proposed works are considered to preserve the building/setting of the building and its special architectural and historic features.