

APPLICATION: MA/09/0959 Date: 2 June 2009 Received: 11 September 2009

APPLICANT: Mr N Whale

LOCATION: THORN COTTAGE, MARDEN THORN, MARDEN, TONBRIDGE, KENT, TN12 9LJ

PROPOSAL: Erection of a timber summerhouse as shown on the 1:1250 scale Ordnance Survey based site location plan and 1:500 scale block plan received on 05/06/09 and drawing number A5068/A3/Rev A received on 11/09/09 and as described in the letter from The Garden Office Company dated 07/09/09.

AGENDA DATE: 15th October 2009

CASE OFFICER: Angela Welsford

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

- it is contrary to views expressed by the Parish Council

POLICIES

Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000: ENV28.
 The South East Plan RSS 2009: C4, BE6.
 Village Design Statement: Marden Design Statement.
 Government Policy: PPS1 - Delivering Sustainable Development;
 PPS7 - Sustainable Development in Rural Areas;
 PPG15 - Planning & the Historic Environment.

HISTORY

09/0734	Listed Building Consent for alterations to fenestration and internal alterations including removal of walls/partitions and raising floor levels	REFUSED
95/1391	Listed Building Consent for a rear extension	APPROVED

CONSULTATIONS

MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL: Councillors "recommended REFUSAL as felt that the building was not in keeping with the locality of a listed building and would have preferred to see a more detailed structure".

MBC CONSERVATION OFFICER: 24/06/09 - The application should be approved with conditions. The summerhouse will not be prominent in views of the listed building. A condition requiring submission of details of the external finishes of the building will be appropriate.

02/10/09 – The application should be approved. Details/samples of materials now received are acceptable.

CONSIDERATIONS

The Site

The application site is located in the hamlet of Marden Thorn, which lies in open countryside in the parish of Marden. It is a fairly large plot situated at the junction of Thorn Road with Pagehurst Road and is enclosed by established hedging. It contains a fairly centrally located, timber-framed, Grade II listed dwelling, together with a white-painted brick outbuilding on the Pagehurst Road side of the plot, and a greenhouse slightly to the side and fore of the dwelling on the Thorn Road side.

The Proposal

Planning permission is sought for the erection of a small timber summerhouse. This would be a freestanding structure positioned close to (approx. 1m set-in) the north western boundary hedge (the greenhouse would be removed). It would have a footprint of approximately 3m x 3.6m and stand 2.2m to the eaves, 3.2m to the ridge. The elevations would be clad with black-stained, feather-edged weatherboarding, and the roof covered with cedar shingle tiles.

Planning Considerations

In my view, the main issue for consideration by Members is the visual impact of the proposal on the setting of the listed building, and on the countryside.

The proposed summerhouse would be a small, subservient structure that, given its intended location and the existing established hedging, would not be prominent in views of the listed building or indeed in the wider countryside. I consider it to be acceptably designed in view of its function – a more detailed structure would be less sympathetic to the listed building, since it would be more likely to vie with it. The listed building itself is of fairly simple form since it is a vernacular building, and thus in order to remain subordinate as an outbuilding should, the summerhouse design should not be overly elaborate or detailed. I consider the proposed design to achieve this.

In terms of the proposed materials, feather-edged weatherboarding is a traditional material, and this would be stained a recessive colour, black, to match that on the dwelling. As such it would blend with the rural surroundings and relate acceptably to the historic host building. Similarly, wood shingle is also a traditional material, and the

applicant has submitted both a material sample and a photograph showing the same in use on a building at the Weald & Downland Open Air Museum of historic buildings.

The Conservation Officer has recommended approval and considers the proposed materials to be acceptable.

Marden Parish Council has recommended refusal of this application on the grounds that the building would not be "in keeping with the locality of a listed building" and that it should be a more detailed structure. These points have been addressed in the preceding paragraphs.

In summary, therefore, I do not consider that the proposal would harm either the setting of the Grade II listed building, or the character or appearance of the countryside within which it is set.

Turning to other matters, the neighbouring dwelling closest to the summerhouse would be "Thorn Farmhouse" (on the opposite side of Thorn Road) which would be over 25m distant so would not be affected in terms of light, privacy or overbearing impact. "Fresian Bungalow", to the south would be over 40m distant and similarly would not be affected.

The proposal would not impact upon any trees that are considered to be of significant amenity value.

Conclusion

Taking all of the above into consideration, the proposal would not harm either the setting of the Grade II listed building or the character or appearance of the countryside within which it is set, and is considered to comply with Development Plan policy. There are no overriding material considerations to indicate a refusal. Consequently, I recommend approval with conditions as set out below.

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 development shall be constructed using the materials described in the letter from The Garden Office Company dated 07/09/09 unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority;

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development and to ensure the setting of the Grade II listed building is maintained, in accordance with Policies C4 & BE6 of The South East Plan RSS 2009 and ENV28 of the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan 2000 and the Central Government policy and guidance contained in PPS7 - Sustainable Development in Rural Areas and PPG15 - Planning & the Historic Environment.

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.