

**Application for a Commemorative Plaque at Wren's Corner,
Maidstone**

Final Decision-Maker	ERL
Lead Head of Service	John Foster
Lead Officer and Report Author	Victoria Barlow
Classification	Public
Wards affected	High Street

Executive Summary

Judges House was the first headquarters of the Kent County Constabulary and first Police Station in Kent and therefore is an important part of the social history of Kent and Maidstone. This application to raise a commemorative plaque on the building is submitted under Maidstone Borough Council's Commemorative Plaque Scheme.

Purpose of Report

Decision

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

That the application for permission to erect a Commemorative Plaque at Wren's Cross, Maidstone be approved.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Economic Regeneration and Leisure Committee	19/10/2021

Application for a Commemorative Plaque at Wren's Corner, Maidstone

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	<p>The four Strategic Plan objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure • Safe, Clean and Green • Homes and Communities • A Thriving Place • We do not expect the recommendations will by themselves materially affect achievement of corporate priorities. However, they will support the Council's overall achievement of its aims as set out in section 3 [preferred alternative]. 	Museum Director
Cross Cutting Objectives	<p>The four cross-cutting objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage is Respected • Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced • Deprivation and Social Mobility is Improved • Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected <p>The report recommendation(s) supports the achievement(s) of the Heritage is Respected cross cutting objective by supporting the scheme to mark important parts of our built heritage.</p>	Museum Director
Risk Management	The Commemorative Plaque Scheme Policy lays out how risks are addressed	Museum Director
Financial	All financial costs are apportioned to the applicant and none to Maidstone Borough Council.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team

Staffing	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing.	Museum Director
Legal	No legal implications identified.	Senior Lawyer, Corporate Governance
Privacy and Data Protection	Accepting the recommendations will increase the volume of data held by the Council. We will hold that data in line with our retention schedules.	Policy and Information Team
Equalities	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment	Equalities & Communities Officer
Public Health	We recognise that the recommendations will not negatively impact on population health or that of individuals.	Public Health Officer
Crime and Disorder	The recommendation will have no impact on Crime and Disorder	Museum Director
Procurement	No procurement by MBC is required	Head of Service & Section 151 Officer
Biodiversity and Climate Change	The implications of this report on biodiversity and climate change have been considered and are; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no implications on biodiversity and climate change. 	Biodiversity and Climate Change Officer

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 An application has been made by Golding Homes to erect a plaque on the former Police Headquarters at Wren's Cross, Maidstone under the terms of the MBC Commemorative Plaque Scheme.
- 2.2 Golding Homes, owners of the building, wish to mark the importance of the building as the first headquarters of Kent Police.
- 2.3 The Grade 2 Listed building now known as Judges House is a key venue in the history of crime prevention and management in the county. It was first rented in 1857 by the recently established Kent County Constabulary (the

first county-wide, civilian and professional force.) It was acquired permanently in 1860 for £1,200. It remained in use, although extended, until 1940 when the new Headquarters at Sutton Road was opened.

- 2.4 Eventually the wider site at Wrens Cross comprised offices, Police barracks, stables, a driving school and other related buildings. Recently the site has been redeveloped for housing.
- 2.5 The proposed plaque will read Wrens Cross/First Police Headquarters and Station in Kent/1857-1940/Golding Homes



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3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 Members may approve the application
- 3.2 Members may reject the application

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 It is recommended that the application is approved as it meets the criteria laid out in the Commemorative Plaques Policy with the building representing a key moment in the social history of Maidstone and the county as a whole.
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5. RISK

5.1 The risks have been identified and mitigated as follows:

Financial – Golding Homes have undertaken to bear all costs associated with erecting the plaque from the cost of gaining Listed Building Consent, manufacture and installation to maintenance and after care.

Reputational – There are no identified reputational risks with this building and the associated people.

6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

6.1 Members for High Street Ward have been consulted.

7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

7.1 If approved, the applicant will be notified and is responsible for the further action needed to complete the erection of the plaque.

8. REPORT APPENDICES

None.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.