

2.2 REFERENCE NO - 21/503916/FULL		
APPLICATION PROPOSAL Full restoration of the clock feature, internal operating equipment and cast-iron structure, including reinstatement of original lanterns with LED lighting.		
ADDRESS The Clocktower High Street Sheerness Kent ME12 1AG		
RECOMMENDATION Grant, subject to conditions		
REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE Council application		
WARD Sheerness	PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL Sheerness Town Council	APPLICANT Swale Borough Council AGENT Capital Projects Team
DECISION DUE DATE 28/09/21		PUBLICITY EXPIRY DATE 16/09/21

Planning History

21/502786/LBC

Listed Building Consent for restoration of clock feature, internal operating equipment and cast-iron structure, including reinstatement of original lanterns with LED lighting.

Approved Decision Date: 23.07.2021

1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE

- 1.1 The Grade II listed coronation memorial clock (clocktower) sits at the junction of Broadway and High Street and is located within Sheerness Mile Town conservation area.
- 1.2 The clocktower dates from 1902 and is currently owned and managed by the Borough Council. A detailed condition survey by a specialist clockmaker and clock repair company undertaken in February this year highlighted significant deterioration of this grade II listed structure to the extent that it has been necessary to provide temporary hoardings around the clocktower to protect against a possible partial collapse of the structure.

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 This application seeks planning permission to restore the cast-iron clocktower to its former glory by a program of extensive works (repair and refurbishment). Members will remember that a listed building consent application for the same works was approved at the July committee. However, given the nature of the works to dismantle and re-erect the building at a later date, planning permission is also required.
- 2.2 These works are estimated to take approximately 5 months and will necessitate the clocktower being dismantled entirely (it is essentially a modular structure with internal workings) and taken to the workshop of the specialist clockmaker and clock repair company, Smith of Derby where the full programme of works (as set out on page 9 of the supporting statement) will be carried out.

2.3 The works are briefly summarised below:

- Full restoration program of the clock feature and internal operating equipment.
- Reinstate original lanterns with LED lights.
- Reinstate original colour scheme of Green, Yellow and Gold
- Upgrade existing clock mechanisms and bell toller.

3. PLANNING CONSTRAINTS

3.1 Conservation Area Sheerness: Mile Town

3.2 Environment Agency Flood Zone 3

3.3 Grade II Listed Clocktower

4. POLICY AND CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 National Planning Policy Framework (Feb. 2019): Chapter 4 (Decision making), Chapter 12 (Achieving well designed places) and Chapter 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment)

4.2 Planning Practice Guidance on each of the above topics including Historic England's Good Practice in Planning Advice Note Series: - Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (Mar. 2015)

4.3 Bearing Fruits 2031: The Swale Borough Local Plan 2017 (the adopted Local Plan): Policy CP4: Requiring good design, Policy CP8: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment, Policy DM14: General development criteria, Policy DM32: Development involving listed buildings and Policy DM33: Development affecting a conservation area

4.4 Supplementary Planning Guidance entitled 'Listed buildings' and 'Conservation Areas'.

5. LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

5.1 I have not received any representations from neighbours either supporting or objecting to the proposal.

5.2 The newspaper consultation is due to expire on 16/09/21 and any comments will be reported to the committee at the meeting.

6. CONSULTATIONS

6.1 Historic England state that they do not require notification.

6.2 The SBC Conservation Officer supports the application.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PLANS

7.1 Application plans and documents for 21/503916/FULL & 21/502786/LBC.

8. APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

- 8.1 As set by the Town and Country Planning (Listed buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, there is a duty placed upon the Council to preserve the building, its setting and its features of architectural and historical interest. The clocktower is noted to have deteriorated to a poor condition and as such the principle of restoring and repairing this important asset is acceptable.

Impact on the listed building

- 8.2 As the building in question is Grade II listed, particular care must be taken to ensure the building is protected or enhanced by any alterations or development. The clocktower functions as a significant and striking local historic landmark at the heart of Sheerness town centre, where it combines with the formal, grade II listed buildings on Broadway (dating from c. 1830) to create an architectural composition of note and one of the most memorable elements of the Sheerness Mile Town Conservation Area.
- 8.3 The submitted heritage statement enables an understanding of the clocktower's significance, and provides details of the advanced state of decay that the clocktower is in. The proposals would result in a full restoration of the tower, which would preserve and enhance its heritage significance and communal value.
- 8.4 The Council's Conservation Officer is in full support of the scheme and considers that the proposed works would secure the conservation of this important landmark and enhance the quality of the wider Conservation Area. The repair and restoration works will be carried out carefully and to an exacting standard which will result in the clock looking and functioning as good as new.

Residential and visual amenity

- 8.5 There will be no increase in scale of the clocktower, it is simply reinstating what is currently in situ, with a small alteration to re-instate lanterns on the tower and a change in the external colour which would revert to the original colours for the tower. There will be no additional impact on residential amenity.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 Taking into account all of the above, I am of the view that the proposal would preserve and enhance the listed building, its setting and its features of architectural and historical interest and is essential to prevent the further damage and potential loss of this heritage asset. I do not consider that there are any other planning issues, and therefore I recommend that planning permission should be granted.

10. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT Subject to the following conditions:

CONDITIONS to include

- (1) The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date on which the permission is granted.

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

- (2) The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the following drawings and details: 9200000230 Dimension Drawing, 9200000229 Rev 2 Proposed Elevations, the Schedule of works contained on Page 9 of the Design, Access and Heritage Statement.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- (3) Details of the paint colour (including RAL code) to be applied to the exterior of the clocktower shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to any repainting of the structure.

Reason: To preserve the character and appearance of the listed structure and wider conservation area.

INFORMATIVES

- (1) It is advised that advice is sought from the specialist company carrying out the works on an appropriate maintenance regime (including cleaning) for the clock.

The Council's approach to the application

In accordance with paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), July 2021 the Council takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. We work with applicants/agents in a positive and creative way by offering a pre-application advice service, where possible, suggesting solutions to secure a successful outcome and as appropriate, updating applicants / agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application.

The application was considered by the Planning Committee where the applicant/agent had the opportunity to speak to the Committee and promote the application.

NB For full details of all papers submitted with this application please refer to the relevant Public Access pages on the council's website.

The conditions set out in the report may be subject to such reasonable change as is necessary to ensure accuracy and enforceability.

