

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING and TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD

27 February 2006

Report of the Director of Planning & Transportation

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

1 HISTORIC BUILDINGS GRANTS – EXECPTIONAL CASES

Summary

Grant assistance is sought and recommended for: the replacement roof at 21 Manor Grove, Tonbridge and repairs to the entrance porch and glazed lean-to at 9 Hadlow Road, Tonbridge. A higher level of grant is recommended for the repair of the “Lock-up” at Bow Road, Watringbury

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 I have received three requests for grant assistance towards the cost of repairs/restoration of historic buildings, which do strictly not meet the criteria, under which I am delegated to offer assistance. Two are for non-Listed Buildings and one is for a grant in excess of the normal maximum of £1,200.

1.2 21 Manor Grove, Tonbridge

1.2.1 Assistance with the replacement of the roof at 21 Manor Grove, Tonbridge has been requested. The building, which although not on the statutory list, is situated within the Tonbridge Conservation Area.

1.2.2 Located within a cul-de-sac this is a large and prominent Victorian building, which punctuates the road, and is very visible from Hadlow Road. Preferably, the roof tiles should be reused consistent with the character of the surrounding area. Whilst as a non listed building I am not able to stipulate this through any planning process I consider that grant assistance would only be appropriate where either the original tiles are reused or another acceptable tile is used. It is hoped, therefore, that the provision of grant assistance would in this case encourage the owners to uphold a prominent feature within the Conservation Area.

1.3 9 Hadlow Road, Tonbridge

1.3.1 I have received a request for grant assistance with the repair of the entrance porch and glazed lean-to at 9 Hadlow Road, Tonbridge. The building, which

although not on the statutory list, is likewise situated within the Tonbridge Conservation Area.

- 1.3.2 The building is one of a pair, which define the conservation area and is pivotal to the surroundings. The porch forms an important part of the character of the building and is an original feature which is now in poor condition and in need of being fully restored. Its loss, due to dilapidation, would be detrimental to both the building and the Conservation Area.
- 1.3.3 I therefore consider that grant assistance would be appropriate in this case, subject to the owner submitting joinery details for prior approval, and the detailed design and materials being consistent with the period of the building.

1.4 The Lock-up, Bow Road, Wateringbury

- 1.4.1 The Lock-up is a most unusual Listed Building. It is a 19th century one-man prison cell. It is understood to be one of only two in Kent and is owned by Wateringbury Parish Council. It is in need of repair and the Parish Council has sought grant assistance from the Borough Council. The estimates received so far vary from around £19,000 up to £32,500, but there is an ongoing debate about the most appropriate means of dealing with the repairs that are necessary which could alter, and possibly, reduce the cost of the works.
- 1.4.2 Because of the uniqueness of the building and the cost of repair of a building which has no practical use, the Parish Council has requested a higher than normal level of grant assistance. The Parish Council has also suggested that the Council could use some of its Capital Plan funds allocated for enhancement works in Wateringbury Conservation Area to support the restoration of this building. I do not consider that this would be an appropriate use of this particular Capital Plan budget which is intended to fund a yet-to-be-defined enhancement project in the Conservation Area. It would also be entirely contrary to the Capital Plan process.
- 1.4.3 The Parish Council owns the listed building and, like any other owner of a Listed Building, has the responsibility for its upkeep. The Borough Council offers grants to the owners of historic buildings to assist with repairs to reflect the normally higher costs of materials and craftsmanship and has a specific budget within the Capital Plan set aside for this purpose. Any grant assistance to the Parish Council should therefore come from this fund which is limited but subject to annual review. Because of the special circumstances of this case I am prepared to recommend that the normal grant maximum should be exceeded up to a limit of £2,500 but still based upon the normal sliding scale percentage requirements.

1.5 Legal Implications

- 1.5.1 The Council has powers to make grant assistance in this way by virtue of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation) Act 1990.

1.6 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.6.1 These grant offers can be met from existing budgets. The recommended Wateringbury Grant will effectively be the equivalent of just over twice the normal maximum grant offer.

1.7 Risk Assessment

1.7.1 Grant assistance will help the restoration of important buildings and structures in the Borough and reduce the risk of deterioration.

1.8 Recommendations

1.8.1 The principle **BE AGREED** of offering Historic Building Grant assistance, subject to the Council's normal terms and conditions and to the specific requirements set out in this report for:

- 1) the replacement roof at 21 Manor Grove, Tonbridge; and
- 2) repairs to the entrance porch and glazed lean-to at 9 Hadlow Road, Tonbridge.

1.8.2 The principle **BE AGREED** of offering an Historic Buildings Grant up to a maximum of £2,500 towards the cost of the repairs to the Lock-up at Bow Road Wateringbury subject to the Council's normal terms and conditions and to the Director of Planning & Transportation being satisfied that the repair proposals are appropriate in conservation terms.

The Director of Planning & Transportation confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and policy Framework.

Background papers:

Inspection note by David Duce dated 10 November 2005

Letter from Mrs Gillian Howell dated 15 November 2005

Inspection note by David Duce dated 1 November 2005

Letter from Mrs J McConnell dated 1 February 2006

Grant application and associated correspondence with Wateringbury Parish Council

Contact: David Duce
File ref: 13.21-HB05/8
13.21-HB05/10

Steve Humphrey
Director of Planning & Transportation