

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING and TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD

14 June 2007

Report of the Director of Planning, Transport and Leisure

Part 1- Public

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

1 HISTORIC BUILDINGS GRANTS – EXCEPTIONAL CASES

Summary

Grant assistance is sought and recommended for: the repair of three oast cowls at Cockle Oast, Hartlake Road, Golden Green and both refurbishment works and the addition of fourteen names to the War Memorial at the Church of St George, The Square, Wrotham.

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 I have received two requests for grant assistance towards the cost of repairs/restoration of historic buildings, which do not strictly meet the criteria under which I am delegated to offer assistance. Both applications are for non-listed buildings and one application is for a flat rate grant of £1200.00, rather than applying the sliding scale basis.

1.2 Cockle Oast, Hartlake Road, Golden Green

1.2.1 Assistance with the removal, repair and refit of three oast cowls, at Cockle Oast, Hartlake Road, Golden Green has been requested. This building is owned by a Member of the Council.

1.2.2 The Building, which although not on the statutory list, is situated within the vicinity of other listed buildings, including Goldhill House, The Old Farmhouse and Thompsons Oast and Roundels. This building is an important vernacular building, within the countryside, and adds considerably to the setting of the adjacent listed buildings. The cowls are in poor state of repair and their restoration is important to the integrity of the building and its weathering.

1.2.3 Grant assistance has previously been awarded to non-listed buildings in similar situations to this application. For example, a grant was previously offered to 1 to 5 New Barns, Lavenders Road, West Malling which are non-listed buildings within the vicinity of New Barns which is a Grade II listed building.

1.2.4 I therefore consider that grant assistance in accordance with the Council's normal terms and conditions and not exceeding the maximum of £1,200 would be appropriate in this case, subject to the use of traditional timber construction.

1.3 Wrotham War Memorial, Church of St George, The Square, Wrotham

1.3.1 An application has been received from the Wrotham Historical Society for repairs and the addition of names to the Wrotham war memorial. Although not listed in its own right, the war memorial is located within the curtilage of the Grade I listed Church of St George, The Square, Wrotham.

1.3.2 Responsibility for war memorials either falls to the owner or the body in which ownership is vested. In this case, the Church is not the owner of the war memorial.

1.3.3 The War Memorials (Local Authorities' Powers) Act 1923, s.1, (as amended by s133 of the Local Authorities Act 1948) states that "a local authority may incur reasonable expenditure in the maintenance, repair and protection of any war memorial within their district whether vested in them or not". As to expenditure which may be incurred, under Section 1 of the 1923 Act, the 1948 Act states that this "shall include the alteration of any memorial in connection with any war subsequent to that in connection with which it was erected and the correction of any error or omission in the inscription on any such memorial".

1.3.4 The Memorial is in need of cleaning and weather-proofing. Furthermore, through their research, Wrotham Historical Society has discovered that the names of fourteen Wrotham men, who served and died during the 1914-18 War, were omitted from the Memorial. These names have subsequently been checked by Wrotham Historical Society for their authenticity.

1.3.5 The Historical Society has also approached Wrotham Parish Council for funding towards the cost of works, estimated at £2008.78. A grant from English Heritage is not available as the Memorial is not being Grade II listed.

1.3.6 On the basis that the information has been ratified, that the historic record would be incomplete if the names were not added and that the Council has some responsibility toward the maintenance of the Memorial, I would recommend that grant assistance is awarded to Wrotham Historical Society for these works. It is considered that the Historic Buildings Grant scheme is the most appropriate vehicle to assist with the maintenance of the Memorial.

1.3.7 Because of the absence of other resources, I would further recommend that this application is not subjected to a sliding scale assessment of grant award, which would offer a grant of only £601.76 based on the estimated cost of works, but that the maximum amount of grant is awarded at £1200.00.

1.4 Legal Implications

- 1.4.1 The Council has powers to make grant assistance, in this way, by virtue of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation) Act 1990. The War Memorials (Local Authorities' Power) Act 1923, section 1, extended by the Local Government Act 1948, section 133, empowers (but does not oblige) local authorities to maintain, repair, protect and adapt war memorials.

1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.5.1 These grant offers can be met from existing budgets. The recommended grant for Wrotham War Memorial, although not assessed on the sliding scale basis, will not exceed the maximum grant amount of £1200.00.

1.6 Risk Assessment

- 1.6.1 Grant assistance will help the restoration of important buildings of special architectural or historic interest within the Borough and reduce the risk of deterioration.

1.7 Recommendations

- 1.7.1 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 repairs to three cowls at Cockle Oast, Hartlake Road, Golden Green; and
- 2) restoration works and the addition of fourteen names to the War Memorial at St George's Church, Wrotham.

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

Background papers:

Contact: David Duce

Grant application and associated correspondence for
Cockle Oast, Hartlake Road, Golden Green

13.09-HB07/10

Grant application and associated correspondence for
Wrotham War Memorial, St George's Church

13.27-HB07/11

Steve Humphrey
Director of Planning, Transport and Leisure