



## Area 3 Planning Committee

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TM/00/02469/LRD Grant 23 November 2000

Details of external colour of footbridge and platform canopy submitted pursuant to condition 4 of consent ref: TM/00/01780/LB (station regeneration works)

TM/88/11526/FUL grant with conditions 7 December 1988

Change of use of first floor to commercial office use.

TM/90/11204/OUT Refuse 1 February 1990

Outline application for mixed residential and light industrial (B1) use.

TM/91/11510/OUT grant with conditions 25 November 1991

Outline Application for light industrial (B1) use. Adj.Snodland Station

TM/93/01044/TEPN planning permission required 1 November 1993

Prior notification application for erection of freestanding tubular 15 metre mast/pole with 2 no. omni-directional antennae and 1 no. dish antenna together with equipment cabinet

TM/98/01429/LB Grant With Conditions 26 January 1999

Listed Building Application: rewire existing electrical system, including renewal of platform lighting

TM/99/00014/LB Refuse 23 March 1999

Listed Building Application: lower existing walls and replace with 1.8m steel railings

TM/05/03107/LB Grant With Conditions 23 June 2006

Listed Building Application for the removal of two semaphore signals from the platforms

TM/09/00216/LB Approved 8 April 2009

Listed Building Consent: Installation of 3 pieces of community art on disused doorways and a disused window on the platform side of Snodland Station building

TM/10/01680/LB Approved 11 August 2010

Listed Building Application: Commemorative plaque

Refurbishment of existing building. Replacement of flat roof. Formation of new internal openings. Restoration of existing historical features. Installation of new sash windows to match historical details. Installation of new skirting's, coving and architraves to match historical details. Installation of new modern ticket office window. Installation of new accessible WC and staff WC areas. Installation of staff mess area

**5. Consultees:**

5.1 TC: Network Rail will be charging for parking in the new car park, pushing commuters into the free spaces opposite where residents would normally park outside their houses. The volume of heavy traffic going to the Paper Mill will cause additional congestion when the buses and lorries are unable to pass, due to the narrowness of the roads which were not built for the volume of traffic. The use of double decker buses which will allow passengers to look directly into the properties opposite causing a lack of privacy.

5.2 Private Reps: 46 + Site and Press Notice 0X/5R/1S.

- Welcome the updating of the station building. Support the application but any new lighting should be angled to not be intrusive to the rear of 87 Church Field. The existing lighting at the crossing should be lowered;
- Concerned that the charging for car parking will force commuters to park on the nearby residential streets. The existing parking problems cause obstruction;
- Network Rail should provide free parking for local residents;
- Adverse impact on road safety from the bus and large number of lorries delivering to the mill;
- Nuisance and loss of privacy to local residents resulting from the bus;
- Existing car park is full of litter and weeds, the station has no upkeep;
- Use West Malling station instead to protect residential amenity. Just for the Holborough development where there is plenty of land for a bus turning circle;
- This is turning a rural station into a mainline station without the infrastructure;
- The improvements will lead to greater use and therefore greater parking problems and nuisance to local residents from bus fumes and the noise of people waiting for the buses;

**6. Determining Issues:**

- 6.1 Members will be aware that the scheme was discussed at the Tonbridge and Malling Joint Transportation Board on 28 September 2015. The scheme is to be funded from the National Stations Improvement Programme (NSIP), developer contributions and the successful West Kent – Tackling Congestion Local Growth Fund (LGF) bid. The objective of the scheme is to boost economic growth by decreasing carbon emissions and reducing congestion.
- 6.2 As presented to Members at the Joint Transportation Board *“the principal scheme aim of the Snodland train station works are to increase sustainable transport journeys in the area, in order to reduce congestion and carbon emissions. There is significant development planned for the surrounding areas, and it is envisaged that providing improved facilities at the station along with the new High Speed service in place since January 2015, will encourage new residents to use rail for the commute or leisure travel.”*
- 6.3 Notwithstanding the strategic importance of the scheme within the Borough it is still necessary to assess the planning application with regard to national and local planning policy.
- 6.4 Section 4 of the NPPF seeks to promote sustainable transport. In particular paragraph 31 places a specific responsibility on local authorities to work with transport providers to develop strategies for the provision of viable infrastructure necessary to support sustainable development. The enhancement of the existing station therefore wholly accords with the aims of the NPPF, and consequently the application is, in principle acceptable.
- 6.5 The development will result in an increase in vehicle parking spaces from 18 plus 1 disabled space to 41 spaces, 2 disabled spaces, 3 taxi spaces, 3 '20 minute waiting' spaces, 4 motorcycle spaces and cycle stands for 16 bikes. KCC (H+T) confirm that no objection is raised to the application and note that the scheme represents a progression in helping to address the increasing demands on this hub from surrounding developments. In addition, saved policy P7/6 of the TMBLP requires the Council to ensure that the needs of buses and taxis are fully taken into account. The application provides improved bus and taxi access and therefore the application accords with the aims of this policy.
- 6.6 The station building is a Listed Building and the site lies in a CA. The application should therefore also be determined with regard to paragraph 131 of the NPPF. This states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of the need to sustain and enhance heritage assets (in this case the Listed Building and Conservation Area) and understand the positive contribution they make, and recognise the need for new development to make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

- 6.7 Furthermore, Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a specific duty on LPAs that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 6.8 Policy CP2 of the TMBCS states that new development should provide for any necessary enhancements to the transport infrastructure whilst avoiding improvements that significantly harm the natural or historic environment or character of the area. The purpose of the development is to carry out these necessary enhancements. With these policies in mind, one key determining issue is therefore whether the proposed works would have any adverse impact on the historic environment, particularly on the setting of the Grade II Listed Station building and the character and appearance of the CA.
- 6.9 As noted Listed Building consent has recently been granted for the refurbishment of the station building. These works are welcomed and will result in an improvement to the fabric and character of the building itself. Similarly the redevelopment of the forecourt will substantially improve the setting of the Listed Building and the appearance of the wider CA. It is acknowledged that the works involve the clearing of vegetation and will introduce increased areas of hardstanding. Nevertheless the alterations will result in much needed visual improvement. The introduction of a specimen tree or other form of landscaping to the new central traffic island may further enhance the area and this can be achieved through the imposition of a planning condition.
- 6.10 More generally, policy CP24 of the TMBCS requires all development to be well designed, respecting the site and its surroundings. This aim is echoed in paragraph 58 of the NPPF which seeks to ensure that development will function well, create attractive, safe places in which to live and work, optimise the potential of the site, respond to the local character of the surroundings and be visually attractive.
- 6.11 I recognise the concerns of some local residents regarding the redevelopment of the station. The aim is to improve the usage of Snodland station, which local residents assert will lead to an increase in general noise and disturbance. It is the role of the planning system to balance the need for the redevelopment of an existing means of sustainable transport, and the clear emphasis placed on this by central government, against any potential adverse impact on the residential amenity of local residents. Given the location of the station and its relationship with the nearest neighbours, I do not consider that increased use of the station would give rise to a harmful impact in this regard.
- 6.12 Additional lighting is proposed by this application but is considered necessary for the safety of rail users. The dwellings to the east (Churchfield) lie beyond the rail tracks and therefore the proposed works will have little impact. It must also be noted that railway undertakers are able to carry out a range of development on

their operational land, including the erection of lighting and CCTV cameras without the need to submit a planning application. Nevertheless it is appropriate to encourage the rail operator to use the minimal lighting necessary to prevent any adverse impact on adjacent residents. This can be achieved by way of an Informative.

- 6.13 The scheme involves the introduction of additional CCTV cameras. Once again these are to be located within the site, overseeing the car parking areas, cycle store and station entrance. It is not envisaged that any CCTV camera will be directed towards any existing residential dwellings but it is important to recognise that the installation of CCTV by organisations, is covered by the Data Protection Act and any concerns should be directed to this legislation rather than the Planning Acts.
- 6.14 Whilst the scheme involves some shrub removal, the existing mature trees to the western site boundary are to be retained. This will ensure a suitable screen is maintained and will mitigate any impact on the residential amenity of the dwellings to the west (Cantium Place). The dwellings to the south already face onto the public highway (High Street) and have a relationship with the public realm as a result.
- 6.15 I also appreciate the concerns of residents regarding a potential increase in the demand for on street parking. However the proposed increase in the station car parking provision can only be beneficial in highway terms, in my view.
- 6.16 With the above in mind, I consider that the improvements to Snodland station should be welcomed as they will enhance existing transport infrastructure, promote sustainable transport and significantly improve the setting of the Listed Building and the appearance of the CA. I therefore recommend that planning permission be granted.

**7. Recommendation:**

- 7.1 **Grant Planning Permission** in accordance with the following submitted details: Letter dated 17.09.2015, Notice dated 17.09.2015, Other BUS SHELTER dated 17.09.2015, Planning, Design And Access Statement dated 17.09.2015, Photograph dated 17.09.2015, Photo montage 1 dated 17.09.2015, Photo montage 2 dated 17.09.2015, Location Plan dated 17.09.2015, Drawing WSS/273463/C/015 A dated 17.09.2015, Drawing WSS/273463/C/004 T1 dated 17.09.2015, Drawing WSS/273463/C/005 T1 dated 17.09.2015, Drawing WSS/273463/C/006 T1 dated 17.09.2015, Drainage Layout WSS/273463/C/007 T1 dated 17.09.2015, Drainage Layout WSS/273463/C/008 T1 dated 17.09.2015, Drawing WSS/273463/C/010 T3 dated 17.09.2015, Drawing WSS/273463/C/012 T2 dated 17.09.2015, subject to the following conditions:

**Conditions:**

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In pursuance of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- 2 No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of landscaping, including specific details for the central traffic island. All planting, seeding and turfing comprised in the approved scheme of landscaping shall be implemented during the first planting season following occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the earlier. Any trees or shrubs removed, dying, being seriously damaged or diseased within 10 years of planting shall be replaced in the next planting season with trees or shrubs of similar size and species, unless the Authority gives written consent to any variation. Any boundary fences or walls or similar structures as may be approved shall be erected before first occupation of the building to which they relate.

Reason: Pursuant to Section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and to protect and enhance the appearance and character of the site and its wider setting.

- 3 All materials used externally shall accord with the approved plans, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development does not harm the character and appearance of the existing building or visual amenity of the locality.

- 4 The areas of hardstanding hereby approved shall be constructed of porous materials or provision made to direct surface water run-off from the hard surface to a permeable or porous area or surface within the site area.

Reason: Development of hardstanding without the suitable disposal of surface water is likely to lead to unacceptable surface water run-off onto land outside the ownership of the applicant.

**Informative:**

1. The applicant is advised that the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act has added light pollution to the list of Statutory Nuisances contained within the Environmental Protection Act 1990. It is therefore in their best interests to ensure that any lighting does not affect any nearby neighbours.

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