

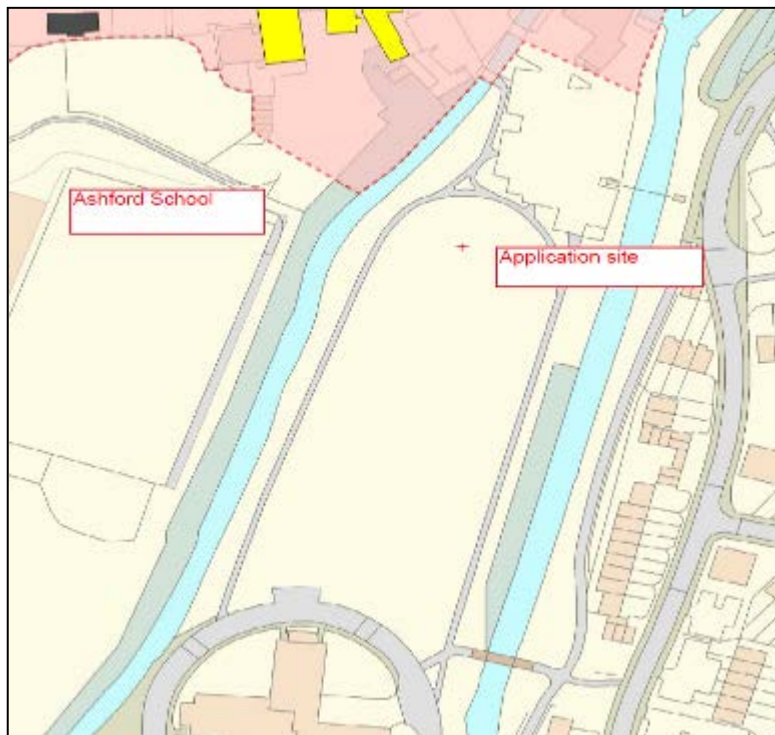
<b>Application Number</b>	17/00281/AS	
<b>Location</b>	North Park, Tannery Lane, Ashford	
<b>Grid Reference</b>	01476/42633	
<b>Ward</b>	Victoria (Ashford)	
<b>Application Description</b>	New gas powered beacon	
<b>Applicant</b>	Mrs S Barber, Ashford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Ashford, Kent TN23 1PL	
<b>Agent</b>	Mr C Thomas, Project Delivery Team, Ashford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford TN23 1PL	
<b>Site Area</b>	-	
(a) 10/-	(b) -	(c) -

## Introduction

1. This application is reported to the Planning Committee because it has been submitted by Ashford Borough Council and the land is owned by the Council.

## Site and Surroundings

2. The site is located within the northern part of North Park, an area of public open space between the Great and East Stour rivers in Ashford Town Centre which is owned and maintained by the Council.
3. To the south of the site is the Civic Centre. Ashford School is to the west (across the river) and the residential development of Mill Court to the east (across the river). Beyond the park to the north is a former flour mill building in the ownership of Ashford School. There are a number of trees within the northern part of North Park in close proximity to the site.
4. The park lies within the Green Corridor, a network of green open spaces associated with the flood plains of the Great and East Stour rivers, which pass through the built up area of the town.
5. A site location plan is attached as an annex to this report.



**Figure 1:** Site Location Plan

## Proposal

6. This planning application is for the erection of a gas powered beacon within the park to commemorate both national and regional events, such as the upcoming centenary of the end of WW1, notable royal birthdays etc. and local events.
7. The beacon would stand on a circular wheel metal base. It would have a total height of 4.8m, including the base structure (height 1000mm) which encloses space for three gas bottles and basket. A bracket would be located just below the basket to allow for the hanging of two aluminium banners which, although interchangeable, would generally display the town crests of Ashford and Tenterden.
8. The main body/column would be of a stainless steel dark gunmetal blue/grey finish. The basket would be self-coloured stainless steel. The enclosure to the base structure would be of a slat and tongue timber construction made from rot and movement resistant hardwood. A plan showing the beacon is in figure 2 below.

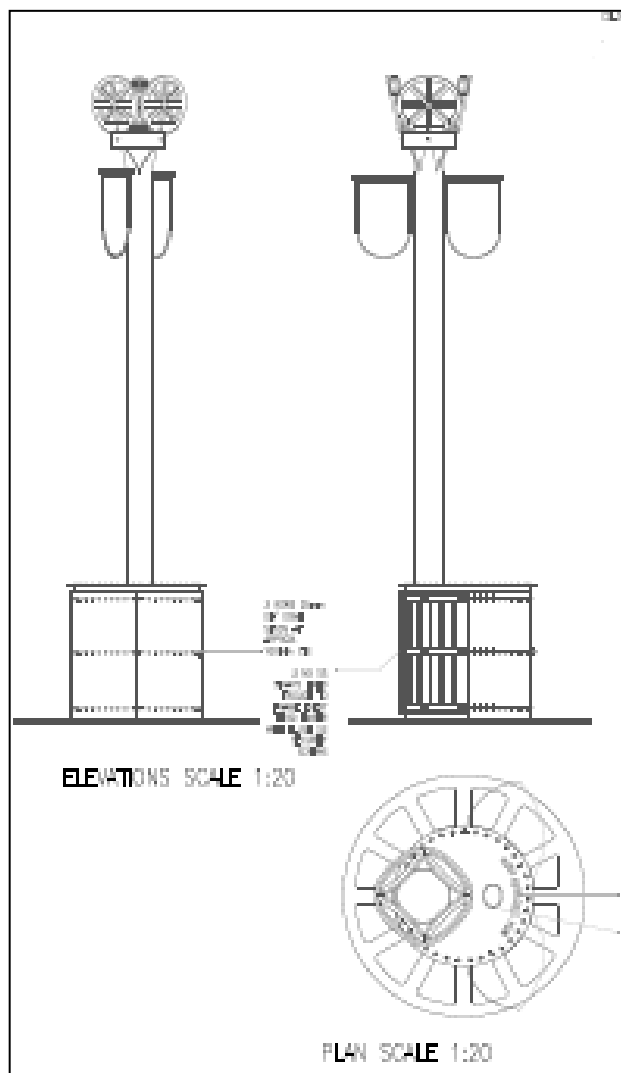


Figure 2: Details of beacon

## Planning History

9. There is no relevant planning history for this site.

## Consultations

10. **Ward Members:** no comments received
11. **Neighbours:** 10 neighbours consulted; No representations received.

## Planning Policy

12. The Development Plan comprises the saved policies in the adopted Ashford Borough Local Plan 2000, the adopted LDF Core Strategy 2008, the adopted Ashford Town Centre Action Area Plan 2010, the Tenterden & Rural Sites DPD 2010, the Urban Sites and Infrastructure DPD 2012, the Chilmington Green AAP 2013 and the Wye Neighbourhood Plan 2015-30. On 9 June

2016 the Council approved a consultation version of the Local Plan to 2030. Consultation commenced on 15 June 2016 and ended on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2016. At present the policies in this emerging plan can be accorded little or no weight.

13. The relevant policies from the Development Plan relating to this application are as follows:-

**Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2008**

CS1 – Guiding Principles

CS3 – Ashford Town Centre

CS9 – Design Quality

CS19 – Development and Flood Risk

CS20 – Sustainable drainage

**Ashford Town Centre Area Action Plan 2010**

TC1 – Guiding principles for Town Centre Development

TC28 – Green Corridors in the Town Centre

**Local Plan to 2030**

SP1 – Strategic Objectives

SP5 – Ashford Town Centre

SP6 Promoting High Quality Design

ENV2 – The Ashford Green Corridor

**Government Advice**

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012

14. Members should note that the determination must be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. A significant material consideration is the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF says that less weight should be given to the policies above if they are in conflict with the NPPF. The following sections of the NPPF are relevant to this application:-

15. Achieving sustainable development – this includes the social role of supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities. It includes the need to create high quality built environment and support the communities' needs, including cultural well-being.

## **Assessment**

### **Principle of development**

16. Policy TC26 of the Town Centre Area Action Plan seeks to protect and enhance the Town Centre's Green Corridors. It states that:  
  
“... development proposals within these identified Corridors will be permitted, providing it would be compatible with, or ancillary to, their principle open space use or other existing uses within them and it can be demonstrated that the proposal would not harm the overall environment, biodiversity, visual amenity of functioning of the Corridor.”
17. The applicant has explained that the purpose of the beacon is to commemorate national, regional and local events. It would be erected in a part of the green corridor that is formal in character – a mown grassy area. The proposed development would therefore be compatible with the principle open space use. It would not harm the overall environment or biodiversity of this part of the Green Corridor. It would introduce a focal point / point of interest within the formal park thereby enhancing the cultural value of this part of the Corridor. I consider the proposal to be acceptable in principle, in accordance with local and national planning policy.

### **Visual Amenity**

18. Policy CS9 of the Core Strategy seeks to achieve a high quality of design in new development. The NPPF also emphasises the importance of good design in new development.
19. The supporting information explains how the form and materials have been chosen to reflect the town's railway heritage. The body and column of the structure borrow heavily from the boiler and smoke stack of early locomotives; the fire basket atop the 'smoke stack' using a combination of train wheels.
20. The proposed materials are high quality and selected for their robustness. The dark gunmetal blue grey colour to the flue and boiler has been selected to mimic the iron used in old locomotives.
21. I consider the proposed development to be acceptable in terms of its visual amenity.

### **Residential Amenity**

22. The closest dwelling to the site is 6 Mill Court approximately 30m away on the other side of the river. I do not consider that the proposed development would have an adverse impact on residential amenity.

### **Trees**

23. The beacon would be bolted to a small area of concrete foundation which would not impact on the Root Protection Area of surrounding trees.
24. The supporting information explains that a gas beacon overcomes the risk of embers damaging the surrounding trees and grass and is much safer in operation than a real flame.
25. I do not consider that the proposed beacon would be harmful to trees within the vicinity.

### **Flooding and Drainage**

26. The site is in the flood plain of the adjacent rivers. However, the development is minor and compliments the use of the park as public open space. The proposal raises no issues in terms of flooding.

### **Human Rights Issues**

27. I have also taken into account the human rights issues relevant to this application. In my view, the "Assessment" section above and the Recommendation below represent an appropriate balance between the interests and rights of the applicant (to enjoy their land subject only to reasonable and proportionate controls by a public authority) and the interests and rights of those potentially affected by the proposal to respect for private life and the home and peaceful enjoyment of their properties.

### **Working with the applicant**

28. In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the NPPF, Ashford Borough Council (ABC) takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. ABC works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner as explained in the note to the applicant included in the recommendation below.

### **Conclusion**

29. This proposal would introduce a cultural landmark into a formal park within the green corridor. I consider the development to be appropriate with the main

open space use. I am satisfied that a development in his part of the green corridor would not be harmful to biodiversity. It would also be acceptable in terms of its visual amenity, providing a high quality, bespoke design. I do not consider that it would be harmful to residential amenity or cause harm to trees.

30. The proposed development provides a sustainable form of development in accordance with local and national planning policy.

## Recommendation

### Permit

#### Subject to the following conditions and note:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this decision.

**Reason:** To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the details of external materials specified in drawing ref.no. NPB/16/1.01B and E-mail from Craig Thomas dated 21<sup>st</sup> April 2017 which shall not be varied without the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority.

**Reason:** In the interests of visual amenity.

3. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the plans listed in the section of this decision notice headed Plans/Documents Approved by this decision, unless otherwise agreed by the Local Planning Authority.

**Reason:** To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approval and to ensure the quality of development indicated on the approved plans is achieved in practice.

4. The development approved shall be made available for inspection, at a reasonable time, by the local planning authority to ascertain whether a breach of planning control may have occurred on the land (as a result of departure from the plans hereby approved and the specific terms of this permission/consent/approval).

**Reason:** In the interests of ensuring the proper planning of the locality, the protection of amenity and the environment, securing high quality development

through adherence to the terms of planning approvals and to ensure community confidence in the operation of the planning system.

### **Note to Applicant**

#### 1. Working with the Applicant

In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the NPPF Ashford Borough Council (ABC) takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. ABC works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by;

- offering a pre-application advice service,
- as appropriate updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application
- where possible suggesting solutions to secure a successful outcome,
- informing applicants/agents of any likely recommendation of refusal prior to a decision and,
- by adhering to the requirements of the Development Management Customer Charter.

In this instance

- the application was acceptable as submitted and no further assistance was required.
- The application was dealt with/approved without delay.
- The application was considered by the Planning Committee where the applicant/agent had the opportunity to speak to the committee and promote the application.

### **Background Papers**

All papers referred to in this report are currently published on the Ashford Borough Council web site ([www.ashford.gov.uk](http://www.ashford.gov.uk)). Those papers relating specifically to this application may be found on the [View applications on line](#) pages under planning application reference 17/00281/AS.

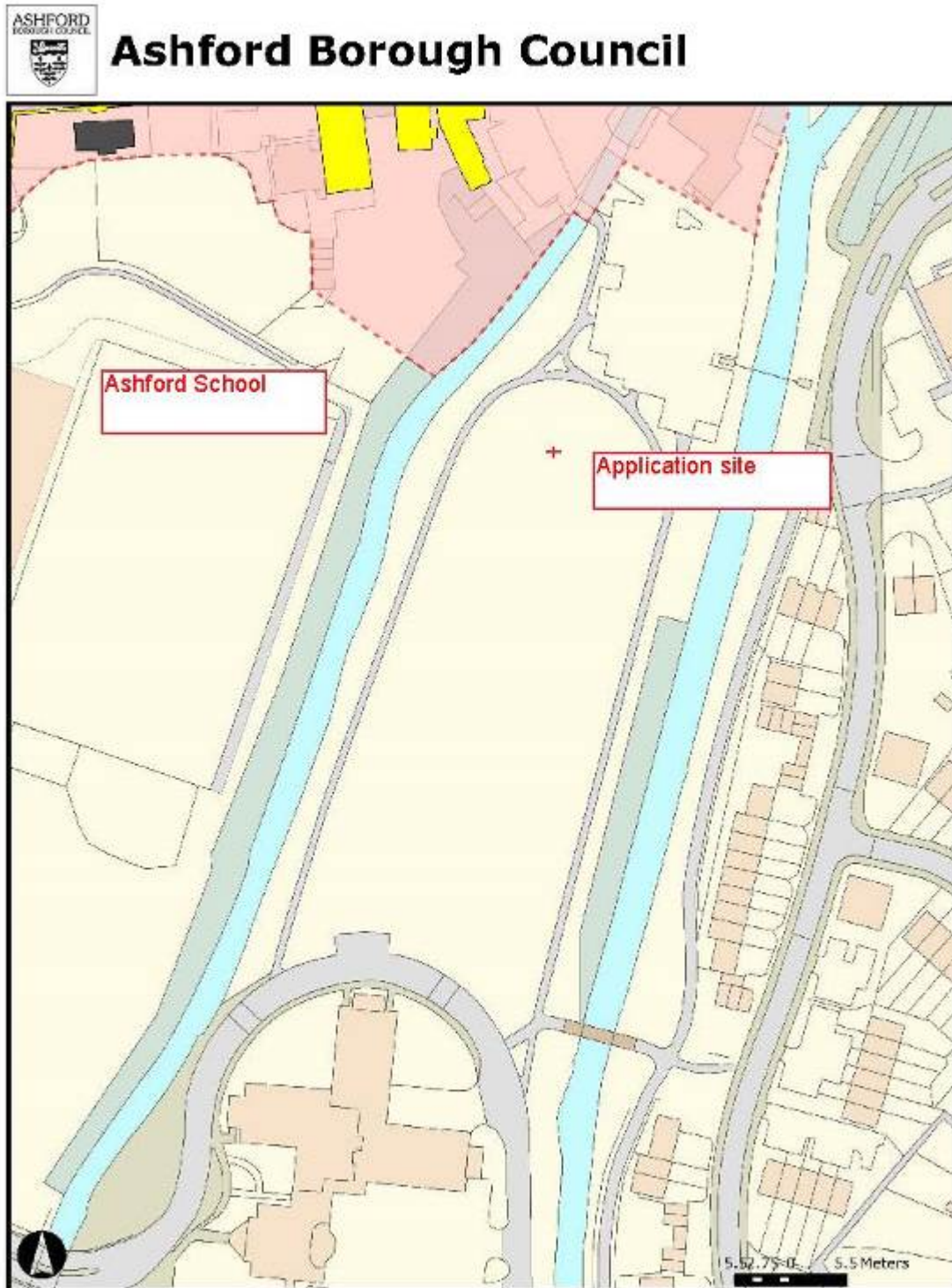
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Annex 1



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