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| Application Number | 20/01404/AS | |
| Location | The Stour Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford, TN23 1PL | |
| Grid Reference | 6014/1423 | |
| Parish Council | Central Ashford | |
| Ward | Victoria | |
| Application Description | Replacement of existing curtain walling and windows to West elevation | |
| Applicant | Freedom Leisure | |
| Agent | Arkon Associates, The Old Bank, 162 High Street, Stevenage, SG1 3LL | |
| Site Area | 0.58ha | |
| (a) 12/1+ | (b) - | (c) - |

Introduction

1. This application is reported to the Planning Committee because Ashford Borough Council are the owners of the site.

Site and Surroundings

2. The application site comprises the Stour Centre leisure centre which lies within the designated Green Corridor and is surrounded by landscaped open space and car parking serving the Stour Centre and the adjacent Civic Centre.

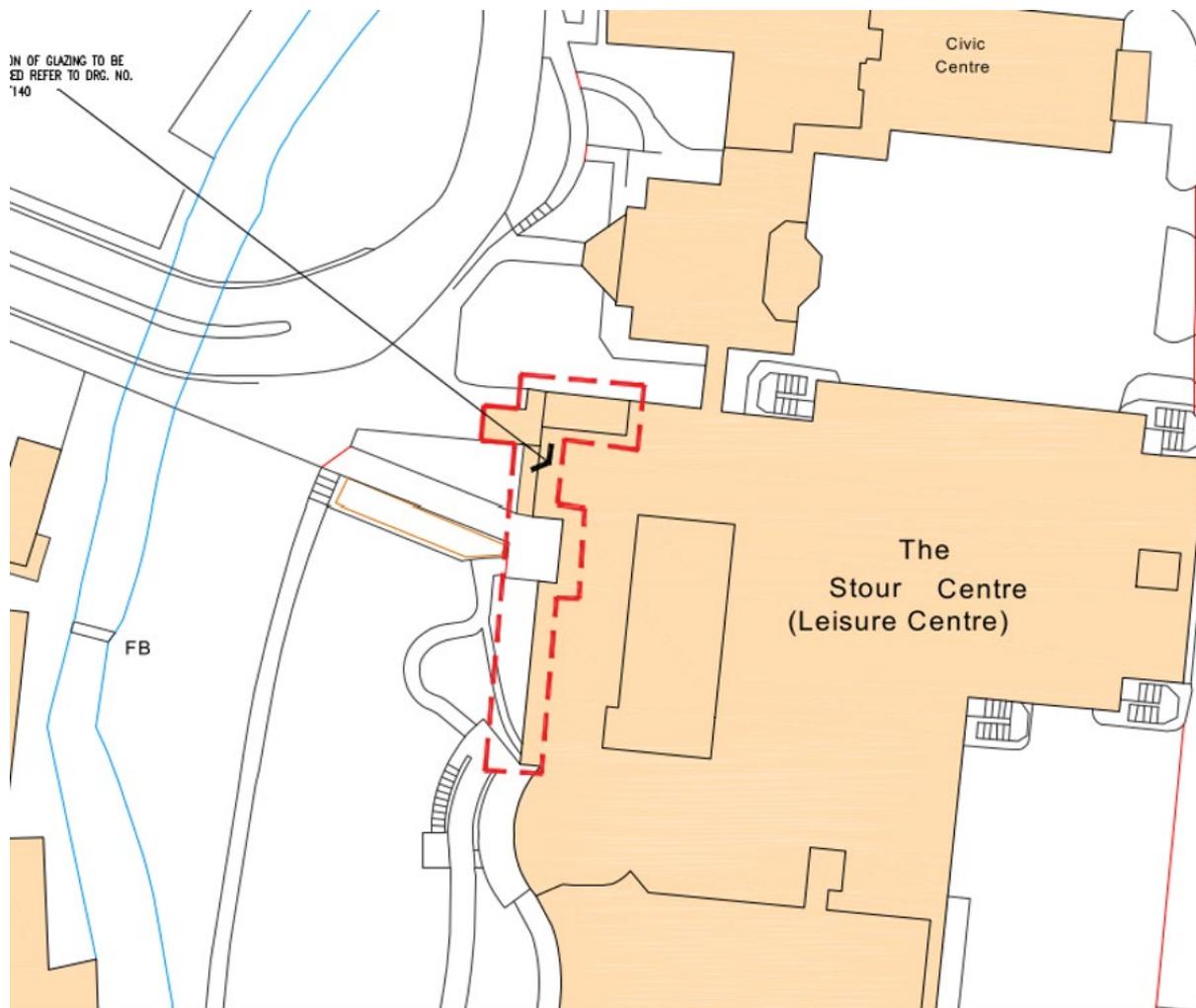


Figure 1 - Site Location Plan



Figure 2 - Existing facade

Proposal

3. Full planning permission is sought to replace the existing timber framed curtain walling and glazing with PCC (polyester powder coated aluminium) and SAA (satin anodised aluminium) curtain walling and double glazed windows on the north and west elevations in a grey colour. The changes to each elevation are detailed below:

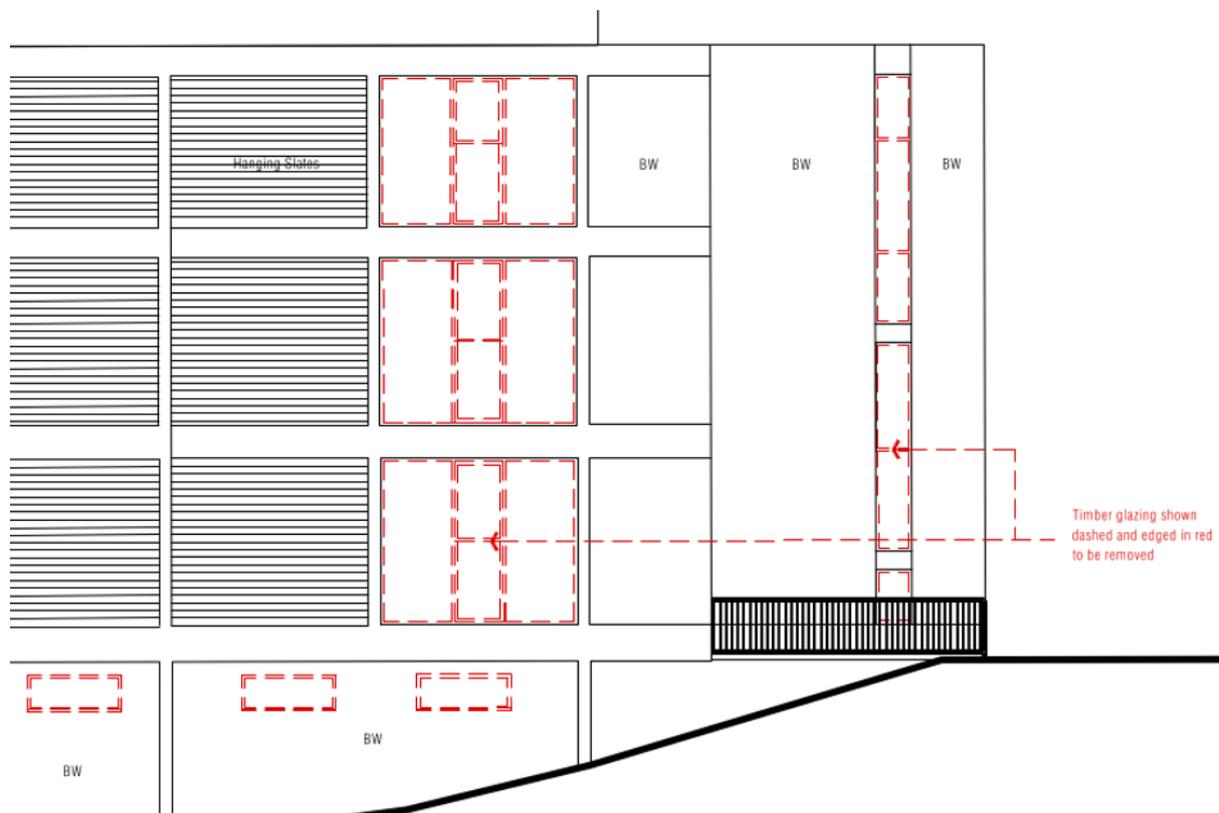


Figure 3 - Proposed north elevation

4. Proposed north elevation
- New SAA curtain walling to replace existing timber glazing
 - Existing balustrade to be repainted to match new glazing system.
 - 3No new double glazed windows to replace existing.

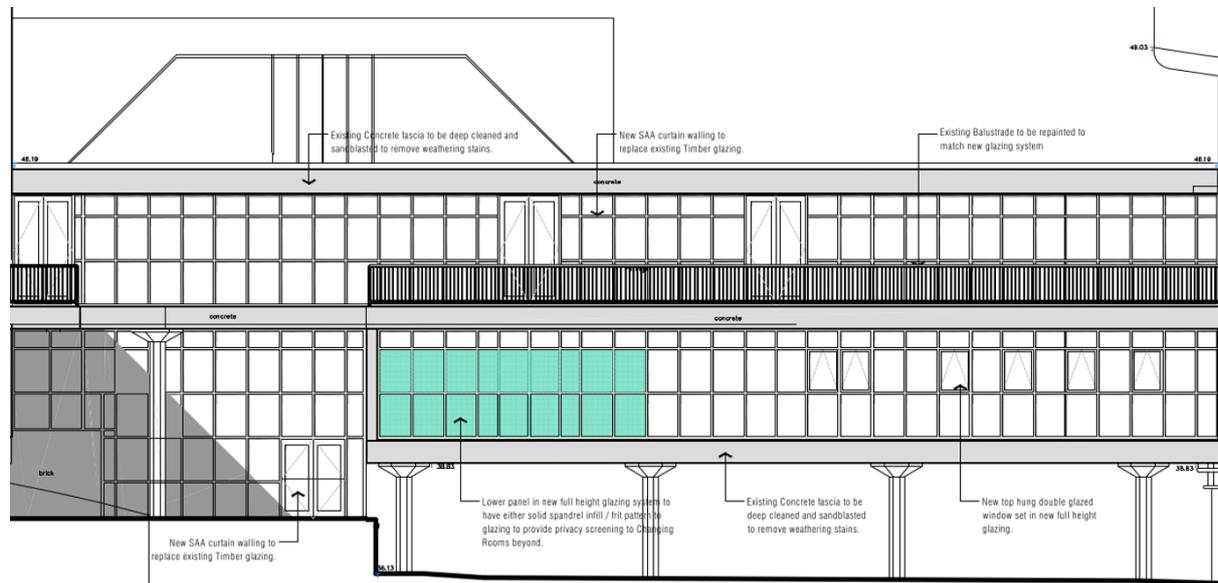


Figure 4 - proposed west elevation

5. Proposed west elevation

- Existing concrete fascia to be deep cleaned and sandblasted to remove weathering stains above 2nd floor windows and below 1st floor windows.
- New SAA curtain walling to replace existing timber glazing first and second floors.
- Existing balustrade 2nd floor to be repainted to match new glazing system.
- Lower panel (coloured turquoise on the plan) in new full height glazing system to have solid infill pattern to the glazing to provide privacy screening to the changing rooms beyond.
- New top hung double glazed windows set in new full height glazing on first floor.

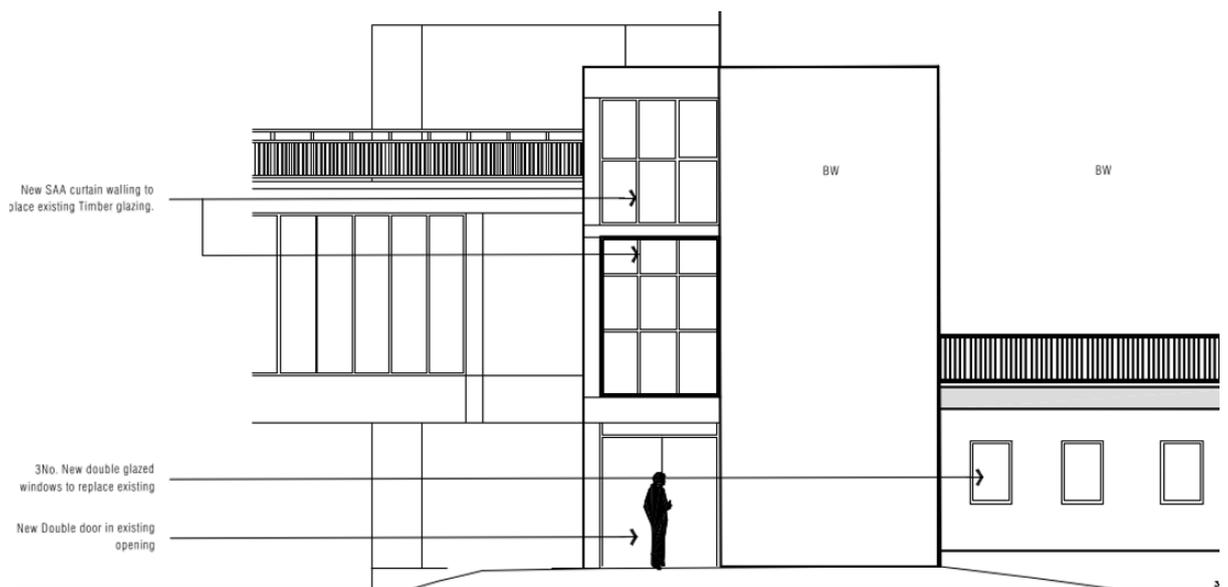


Figure 5 - Proposed left hand side of west elevation

6. Proposed left hand side of west elevation

- New SAA curtain walling to replace existing timber glazing.
- 3no. new double glazed windows to replace existing (first floor).
- New double door in existing opening (first floor).

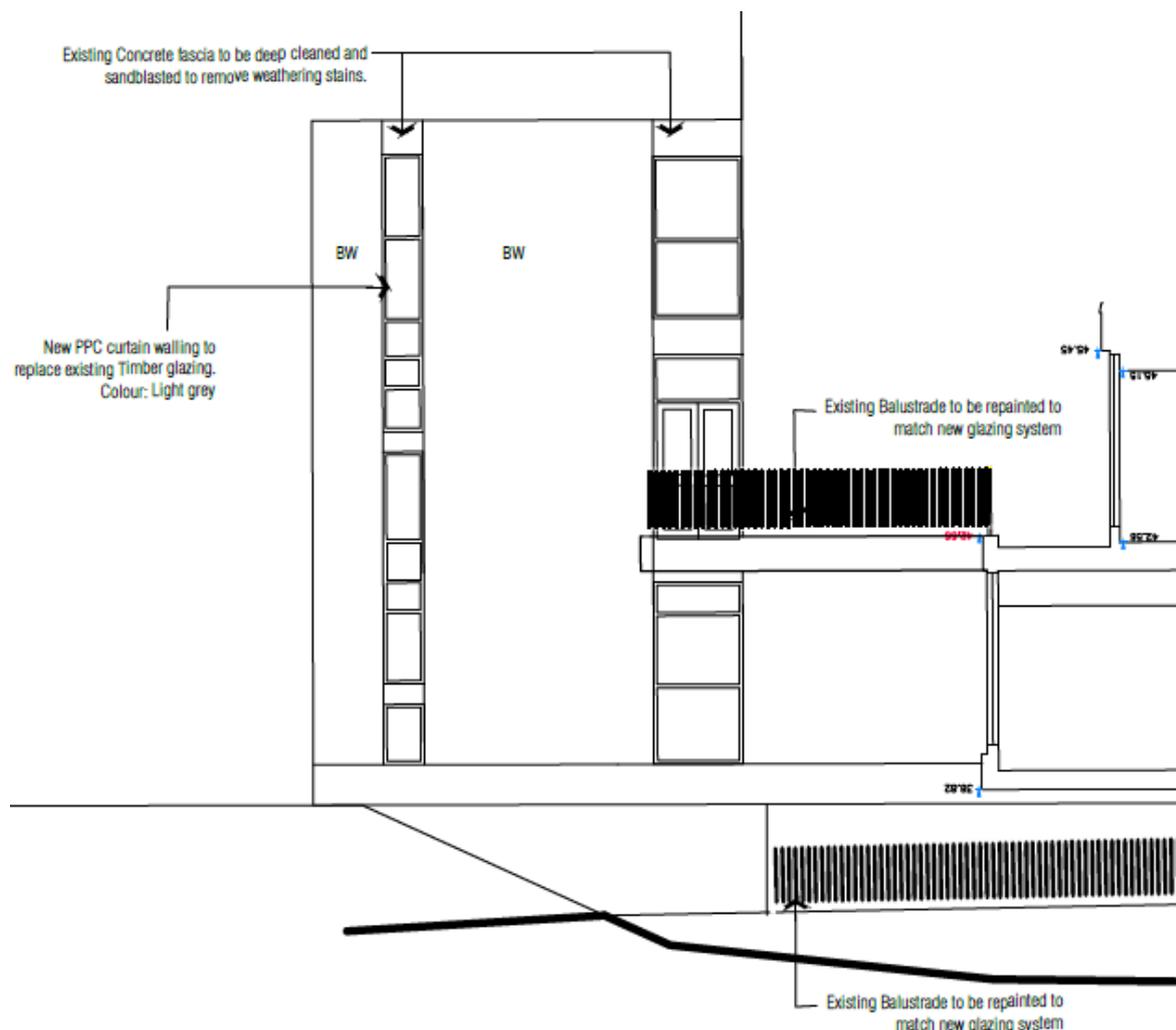


Figure 6 - Proposed side elevation

7. Proposed side elevation

- Existing concrete fascia deep cleaned and sandblasted to remove weather stains.
- New PPC curtain walling to replace existing timber glazing. Colour: light grey.
- Existing balustrade to be repainted to match new glazing system.

8. Other works include removing a shopfront signage panel on the west elevation (first floor) and the glazing made good.

Planning History

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|----|----|-------------|--|------|------------|
| DC | FA | 03/01659/AS | Remodelling of the Stour Centre leisure facility to create new leisure water facilities and reception, a refurbished 25m pool and sports halls, changing | PERM | 25/02/2004 |
|----|----|-------------|--|------|------------|

| | | | | | |
|----|------|----------------------|---|------|------------|
| | | | accommodation and fitness suite, also provided is a new access road off station approach and new car park on South park | | |
| DC | FA | 04/00915/AS | Insertion of new windows and associated works to provide training facilities | PERM | 09/08/2004 |
| DC | AMND | 03/01659/AMN D/AS | Amend proposed glazing in Thomas Hall from one 7m x 4m window at floor level to 4 windows 1.5m wide x 2m high at high level | PERM | 07/09/2011 |
| DC | FA | 11/01172/AS | Proposal to install solar panels on the roof of the Stour Centre | PERM | 23/11/2011 |
| DC | FA | 17/00710/AS | Re-roofing of the Main & Thomas halls and plant room including fitting of roof edge guarding and new parapet capping | PERM | 30/06/2017 |

Consultations

8. **12 neighbours consulted:** 1 general comment received.
- The submission is very light on detail.

Planning Policy

9. The Development Plan for Ashford Borough comprises the Ashford Local Plan 2030 (adopted February 2019), the Chilmington Green AAP (2013), the Wye Neighbourhood Plan (2016), the Pluckley Neighbourhood Plan (2017), the Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan (2019) and the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2016) as well as the Kent Minerals and Waste Early Partial Review (2020).
10. The relevant policies from the Local Plan relating to this application are as follows:-
- SP1 – Strategic Objectives**
SP6 – Promoting High Quality Design

The following are also material considerations to the determination of this application.

Government Advice

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019

11. 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:-

2. Achieving sustainable Development

4. Decision Making

12. Achieving Well Designed Places

Para 96 states that access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities. National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)

Assessment

12. The main issue for consideration is:

- Visual Amenity

Visual Amenity

13. The proposal would result in work required to improve the long-term durability of the building to enable it to continue to function. The replacement of timber with aluminium would be more robust in the long term and easier to maintain.
14. The proposed changes are to modernise the external façade and include the replacement of timber windows and panels with grey aluminium panels and double glazed units, and other associated works to improve the exterior of the building. This would enhance the building with a modern approach, use materials which would not result in a significant change visually from the current appearance, and would unite different elements of the façade more harmoniously.
15. The works would have a positive impact on the overall appearance of the building and would accord with the character of the wider locality. The development would not be harmful to visual amenity.
16. The proposal raises no other issues.

Human Rights Issues

17. 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

18. In accordance with paragraphs 38 of the NPPF, Ashford Borough Council (ABC) takes a positive and creative approach to development proposals focused on solutions. ABC works with applicants/agents in a positive and creative manner as explained in the note to the applicant included in the recommendation below.

Conclusion

19. The proposal would ensure the long-term durability of the building to enable it to continue to function as a facility for the provision of sport and recreation to the benefit of the wider community. There would be no harmful visual impact as a result of the proposal and it would have a positive impact on the overall appearance of the building and the character of the wider locality. I therefore recommend that planning permission is granted.

Recommendation

Permit

Subject to the following Conditions and Notes:

(with delegated authority to the Strategic Development and Delivery Manager or Development Management Manager to make or approve changes to the planning conditions (for the avoidance of doubt including additions, amendments and deletions) as she/he sees fit).

1. Implementation within 3 years
2. Approved plans
3. Available for inspection
4. Materials to be approved

Note to Applicant

1. Working with the Applicant

In accordance with paragraph 38 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 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). Those papers relating specifically to this application may be found on the [View applications on line](#) pages under planning application reference 20/01404/AS)

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