

9A HIGH STREET LENHAM ME17 2QD

**PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE OF PART FROM
OFFICE TO RESIDENTIAL USE, INSULATION TO
ROOF SLOPES, INSERTION OF 2 NO. ROOFLIGHTS
AND MINOR INTERNAL ALTERATIONS**

DESIGN, ACCESS & HERITAGE STATEMENT



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GENERAL

References to front, back, left and right are to be taken as viewed from High Street.

POLICY

The following policy documents have been taken into account in the preparation of this statement:

Paras 189 to 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

National Planning Practice Guidance Note ‘Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment’.

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Notes published by Historic England (previously English Heritage).

Maidstone Local Plan

Lenham Neighbourhood Development Plan

LIST DESCRIPTION

First listed as grade II in 1968 the list description describes the building as

‘10/166 No. 9 (Lenham Computer Services) 26.4.68. GV II House and shop. Early C18 with early C19 addition and late C19 shop front. Red brick with occasional grey brick headers in Flemish bond. Plain tile roof. Right gable end weatherboarded. 2 storeys, attics and cellar, with moulded wood eaves cornice. Half-hipped roof. Rear brick stack to right. 2 hipped dormers. Regular 3- window front of glazing bar sashes. Ground floor has rectangular late C19 bay window to right and late C19 shop front to left. Half-glazed door to centre of shop front, up 4 steps, with iron hand-rail to right. Lower early C19 rear range with access from alley to right, red brick with plain tile roof. 2 storeys with dentilled brick eaves cornice. Door to alley with flat hood and triglyphed frieze and paired modillions. Loading door on first floor. Tripartite window to right of it on ground floor with rubbed brick voussoirs raised in centre. Interior: early C19 detailing to rear range.’

The Heritage England reference ID number is 173901.

PLANNING HISTORY

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| 72/0597 | Change of use of first floor of premises from living accommodation to office. Granted. |
| 90/2000 | Listed building consent for proposed internal fire lobby. Granted |
| 22/503456 | Listed building consent for internal alterations and external roof repairs together with insertion of two new windows and doors to the ground floor rear |

elevation. Demolition of part of the existing outbuildings and installation of rooflights to create a terrace and store. Refused.

22/505650 Conversion of existing offices to a 2 bed flat together with insertion of 2no rooflights and conversion of the existing outbuildings and installation of rooflights to create an amenity storage space. Withdrawn.

22/505651 Listed building consent for internal alterations and external roof repairs together with insertion of 2no rooflights and conversion of the existing outbuildings and installation of rooflights to create an amenity storage space. Withdrawn.

ARCHEAOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

The NPPF requires that archaeological assessments are relevant to the proposals.

The list description appears to be reasonably accurate except that the original build is probably late rather than early C18th. Internally, the timber frame appears to be mostly softwood which also suggests the later date.

The original build was, almost certainly, a house with central front door converted C19th to a shop with living accommodation over. At a later period, assumed to be late C20th, the upper levels appear to have been used as office accommodation.

THE PROPOSALS

The proposals amount to;

1. Change of use of part of ground floor and upper floors to residential
2. insulation to roof slopes
3. removal of a modern partition at first floor level
4. insertion of 2 no. 'conservation' rooflights..

This statement is limited to discussion of these proposed minor changes.

DISCUSSION

Change of use of part of ground floor and upper floors to residential

The use of part of the ground floor and upper floors as office space, effectively ceased some time ago and it has proved difficult to find new tenants. The proposal is to reverse the consent for conversion from residential to office use granted in 1972. Residential use of floors above shops in rural locations such as this accord with all relevant local and national policies and is a positive move to bring the building back into viable use.

Insulation to roof slopes.



Photos of internal ceilings showing poor general condition.

As can be seen from the photographs, the ceilings in the upper rooms are lath & plaster and in generally poor condition, and require extensive repair. The roof, on the other hand, has been retiled in recent years and is in good condition. It is proposed to take the opportunity to renew the lath and plaster ceilings and take the opportunity to insulate the roof space. The proposed method of insulation is shown in the drawings accompanying the application and will provide reasonable levels of insulation whilst maintaining ventilation above and providing space for the keying of the lime plaster to the laths. Given that the lath & plaster is in poor condition and needs to be renewed, it is considered that there is no ‘harm’ in this element.

Removal of a modern partition at first floor level

This partition was inserted as part of the late C20th works to convert the space into office use, and the proposals would simply remove this wall so that the space can revert to the original form. There is no loss of historic fabric in this element

Insertion of 2 no. rooflights to the rear roof slopes.

It is proposed to insert 2no. ‘conservation’ type metal rooflight in this roof into the positions shown and to improve the light into this space. Loss of historic fabric would amount to a few peg tiles and battening. These rooflights are top hinged and so can be installed above rafters requiring no trimming out of rafters. It is suggested that it would be appropriate to condition the finer details of this proposal. The level of ‘harm’ is considered to be at the low end of ‘less than substantial’

Access issues.

There are no access issues relevant to this application.

CONCLUSION

These proposals amount to minor changes and worthwhile improvements to enable the building to function as a family home. There is either no harm (as defined in the NPPF) or at the very low end of 'less than substantial' harm which is clearly offset by the public benefit of bringing the building back into viable use and improving insulation levels. Planning Permission and Listed building consent should be granted for these proposals.