
17/00495/LBC

**COUNCIL OFFICES, SOUTH STREET, ROCHFORD, SS4
1BW**

**CHANGE OF USE OF NO.17 SOUTH STREET TO A MIXED
USE FOR B1 (BUSINESS OFFICE) AND USE FOR
CONFERRING, WEDDINGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS, E.G
SUPERNATURAL EVENINGS AND GARDEN PARTIES**

APPLICANT: ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

ZONING: TOWN CENTRES

PARISH: ROCHFORD PARISH COUNCIL

WARD: ROCHE SOUTH

1 PLANNING APPLICATION DETAILS

- 1.1 This application is to be heard by the Development Committee as the applicant is Rochford District Council. The Council cannot formally grant itself Listed Building consent without first giving the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government the opportunity to call the application in. However, it is first necessary to advise the Secretary of State if Members having considered the application merits, would be minded to grant listed building consent subject to any conditions that might be considered necessary.
- 1.2 The proposal is to maintain the existing use Class B1 (Offices) for hot desking purposes and add a varied leisure use - Use Class D2 (Assembly and leisure). It is envisaged this use would be as a wedding venue and for special events.

2 THE SITE

- 2.1 The site is located with the Rochford Town Centre and Conservation Area. The site is located within the complex of Council buildings on the eastern side of South Street.
- 2.2 The building is Grade II listed and is described as:
- Hall house with right and left crosswings. Circa 1300 with C15/C16 replacement right (south) crosswing and other alterations and additions. Timber framed and plastered. Red plain tiled roofs. Red brick chimney stack to left crosswing with 4 attached diagonal shafts. Off centre right stack to hall

and rear stack to right crosswing. Two storey crosswings, one storey hall, now with a gabled dormer with three leaded casements. H plan. The gabled crosswings are jettied with end brackets. 1:1:1 window range. Small paned vertically sliding sashes to first floor left and ground floor right, C19 2 light casement with centre transom to first floor right. Small paned angled bay ground floor right central C19 shop bay of 5 lights with centre transoms and segmental heads. C19 doors to right and left of hall that to left with 2 vertical lights, to right vertically boarded. Interior 2 bay open hall (now 6.9 metres long). Cambered and arched braced tie beam. Two armed crown post roof. Originally the front and rear walls were braced in herringbone pattern between hall window and cross passage doorways. Original doorhead survives to rear. Originally there were opposing windows, each with central square, 2 diamond mullions either side and a transom. Simple crown posts with braces carried down the shafts as pilasters with broach stops. Roof timbers were heavily sooted. Towards the south end are 2 original additional collars set approx 2 feet below the common collars, use unknown. Radiocarbon dating from the hall and north crosswing gave results 610+70 and 670+70, the resulting calibrated age ad calculated on the mean was 1350+-85 indicating a date of circa 1300 as not unlikely. Nothing survives of the original service end of the hall. The present 4 bay replacement is difficult to date but appears C15/C16. The 3 bay north crosswing is of similar date to the hall, but may be slightly later. An extremely fine and imposing red brick chimney stack was inserted into the hall probably between 1480 and 1530. Mantel beam radiocarbon dating gave the calibrated age AD of 1440+-80. The mantel beam is cambered, there are 3 decorative brick niches over with corbelled trefoiled heads, these flanked by a lower niche on each side with a plain arched head. A floor was inserted late c16 early c17 (now removed). The north (left) crosswing is of structure similar to the hall and originally multi-braced to the road. There is a doorhead in the north wall of the central bay. The tie beam are flatter than in the hall, the westernmost was arch braced, front wall, tie beam was originally moulded externally and cambered. Splayed top plate scarfs with undersquinted abutments and face pegs. Inserted chimney stack with flat stop chamfered mantel beam, possibly contemporary with the hall chimney stack. There were indications of wall paintings, too fragmentary to retain, but said to be a floral motif. A staircase was inserted at a later date. The south crosswing has a simple crown post roof and halved and bridled top plate scarves.

- 2.3 The building following refurbishment in the 1980's, has been used as office space and has a gross internal floorspace of 169m².
- 2.4 To the rear of the building is a small courtyard area leading out to a walled rear garden area. The garden area is laid to lawn with decorative flower beds to the perimeter and a number of mature trees.

3 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 There is no relevant planning history for the building itself; however, there is a tandem application for planning consent – 17/00493/COU.

4 CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

Rochford Parish Council

- 4.1 Members felt that this site would be better used as a Community Facility rather than offices or residential, but queried the availability of parking at or near to the site. They also requested that this building is listed as a Community Asset.

Essex County Council (ECC) Historic Environment

- 4.2 The application affects a listed building, which is an example of a 17th century hall house, listed grade II*, now offices. Elements of the historic fabric of the building may eventually be altered or destroyed during this conversion. It is, therefore, essential that a heritage assessment is carried out to assess the significance of this building, to inform future works and determine if other mitigation work is required, such as historic building survey. Ideally, this assessment should have been submitted with the application, but must be now carried out prior to the commencement of any work.

Recommendation: Heritage Assessment

‘No development or conversion of any kind shall take place until the applicant has produced a heritage assessment, which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Local Planning Authority’.

ECC Highways

- 4.3 From a highway and transportation perspective the impact of the proposal is acceptable to the Highway Authority subject to the following condition:
- (1) Prior to commencement of the development, the areas within the curtilage of the site for the purpose of loading / unloading / reception and storage of building materials and manoeuvring of all vehicles, including construction traffic, shall be provided clear of the highway.

5 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 Applications for listed building consent must be assessed on how the proposal impacts on the character and appearance of the heritage asset. In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the Local Planning Authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest, which it possesses.

- 5.2 17 South Street is the oldest building in Rochford of a residential nature and of significant local historical interest. Paragraph 131 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that, in determining planning applications, Local Planning Authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation.
- 5.3 The development, as proposed, would not make any physical changes to the building and its historic value. The proposal is to allow the continued office usage of the building for office purposes and to enable alternative uses to coexist that would attract visitors to enjoy the heritage asset. As such, it is not considered that there would be any detriment to the significance of the heritage asset.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 It is not considered that the proposed uses of the building would have any adverse impact on the significance of the heritage asset. As it would attract visitors, who may not be familiar with the building and informed about other heritage assets within the District, it is considered to be beneficial to the promotion and enjoyment of the local historic environment.
- 6.2 It is not considered that there would be a justification to refuse listed building consent.

7 RECOMMENDATION

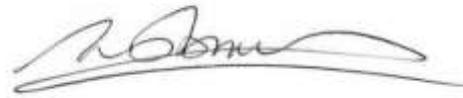
- 7.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

To advise the Secretary of State that it is minded to approve Listed Building Consent subject to the following conditions:

- (1) The development hereby permitted shall begin before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
- (2) No development or conversion of any kind shall take place until the applicant has submitted to the Local Planning Authority a heritage assessment to consider the historic details of the building, any impact of the use proposed upon them and any mitigation that may be required. The use hereby approved shall be implemented in accordance with such details as may be approved.

Reason for Decision and Statement

The proposal is considered not to cause harm to the character and appearance of the Listed Building or to the desirability of preserving the Listed Building or its setting.



Assistant Director, Planning & Regeneration Services

Matthew Thomas

Relevant Development Plan Policies and Proposals

Core Strategy 2011 – CP2, T8, RTC5

Rochford Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan 2007

Rochford Town Centre Area Action Plan 2015

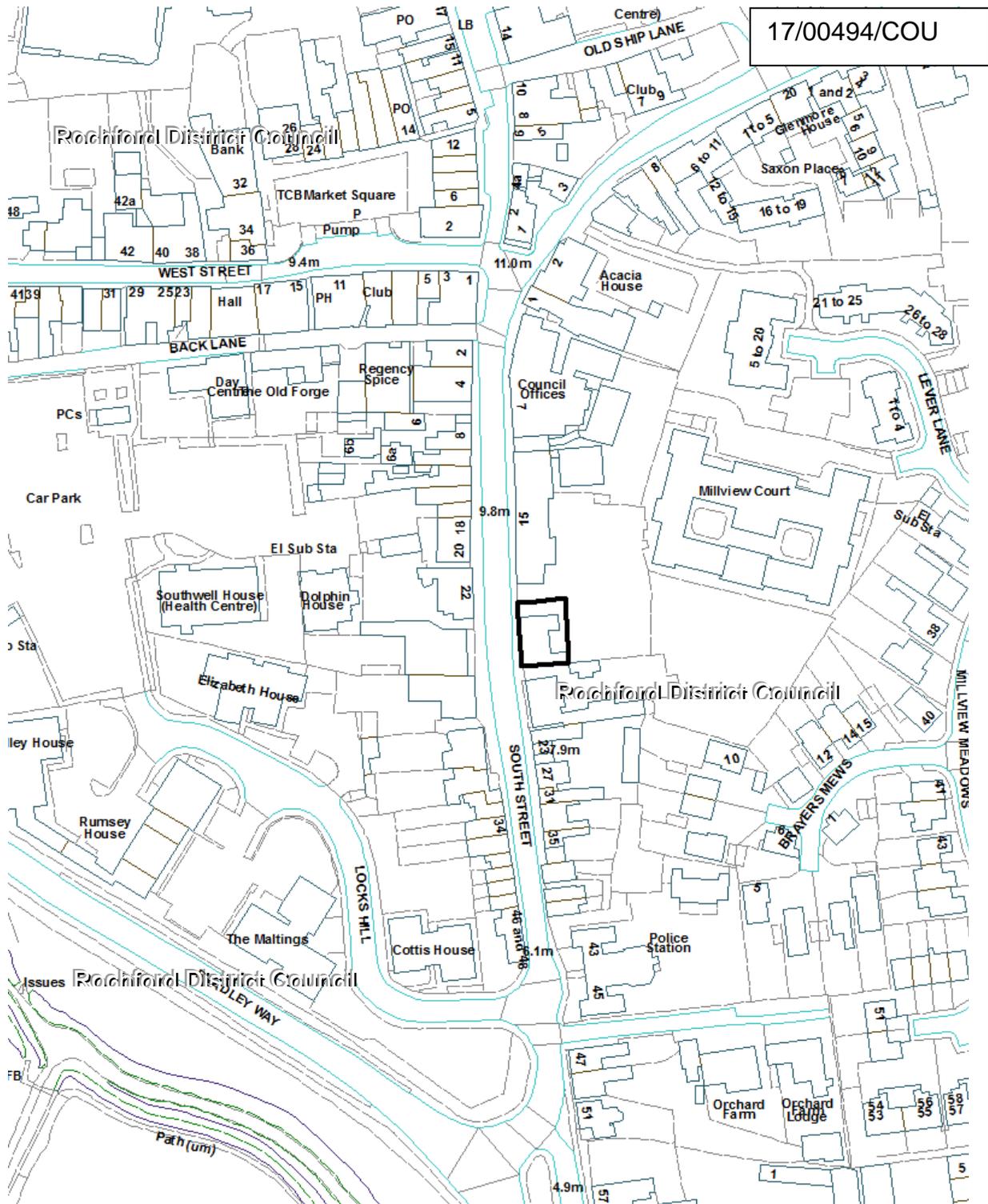
National Planning Policy Framework

For further information please contact Robert Davis (Planning Officer) on:-

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If you would like this report in large print, Braille or another language please contact 01702 318111.



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