

MARKET HOUSE, PUBLIC CONVENIENCE, NORTH STREET

Internal alterations to the existing public conveniences to reconfigure the facilities to provide a 'Changing Places' compliant accessible WC, 2no. single public WC's and 1no. accessible WC facility. The proposal includes the installation of new access doors into the facilities on the south-west elevation and modifications to the external access.

1. Officer Recommendation:

SUPPORTS and has a RESPONSE:

- Subject to no objections the District Council's Heritage Officer

2. Key Issues:

No changes are proposed to the existing areas/elevations occupied by Citizens Advice. Pre-application advice has been received and this has been supportive in principle.

- Public Benefits

Market House is prominently located within the Conservation Area. The building currently provides 3x unisex WC, 1x male WC with two urinals, and an accessible WC. The proposals will provide 2x unisex WC, 1x accessible WC (with baby-changing facility) and 1x unisex 'Changing Places' WC. A 'Changing Places' toilet provides sanitary accommodation for people with multiple and complex disabilities who have one or two assistants with them.

The intention to remove part of the railings to enable access on the south-west side of the building is noted. The Town Council hires the banner railing space to local organisations, and this will be reviewed by Officers.

- Impact on the Special Architectural and Historic Interest of the Listed Building

Market House is a Grade II Listed Building. The existing facilities and associated internal fabric were formed in 1992 and therefore have no historical significance. All proposed changes should be subject to no objections the District Council's Heritage Officer.

- Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area

The proposed alterations will include some external alterations.

On the north-east elevation, the existing open entrance will be replaced with a door to the new Changing Places WC. On the south-west elevation, the existing 4 windows at ground floor will be replaced with door openings to access the 3 WC facilities and service area on this side of the building. Subject to the proposed door materials having no objection from the District Council's Heritage Officer.

Overall, it is considered that the public benefits would outweigh any harm caused to the Conservation Area and Listed Building.

3. Planning History:

SODC Ref	Description	TTC Decision	SODC Decision
P11/E0306 P11/E0230/LB	Internal alterations to existing public toilets, to include rearrangement of cubicles and services. The provision of a new window to match the existing and two glass block windows to the south elevation. (As amended by Drawing Nos: 6519-01 Rev G and 6519-02 Rev D accompanying agent's e-mail dated 7 April 2011)		Granted
P15/S1285/LB	Installation of a commemorative plaque to the east facing wall.	Approved	Granted

4. Risk Appraisal

Dependent on the Town Council's recommendation to SODC is it likely that there would be a contrary decision by SODC? If so then a councillor should be nominated at the meeting to represent the views of the Town Council at the planning committee.

5. Policies Relevant to the Application

The following policies are of particular relevance when considering this application.

Thame Neighbourhood Plan

- H6 Design new development to be of high quality
- ESDQ15 Developers must demonstrate in a Design and Access Statement how their proposed development reinforces Thame's character
- ESDQ16 Development must relate well to its site and its surroundings
- ESDQ17 Development must make a positive contribution towards the distinctive character of the town as a whole
- ESDQ18 New development must contribute to local character by creating a sense of place appropriate to its location
- ESDQ19 The Design and Access Statement and accompanying drawings must provide sufficient detail for proposals to be properly understood
- ESDQ20 Building style must be appropriate to the historic context
- D1 Provide appropriate new facilities

SODC Local Plan 2035 Policies

- CF2 Provision of community facilities and services
- DES1 Delivering high quality development
- DES2 Enhancing local character
- DES3 Design and access statements
- DES7 Efficient use of resources
- DES8 Promoting sustainable design
- ENV6 Historic environment
- ENV7 Listed buildings
- ENV8 Conservation areas
- TC5 Primary Shopping Areas