

COMMITTEE REPORT

Date: 15 November 2012 **Ward:** Guildhall
Team: Major and **Parish:** Guildhall Planning Panel
Commercial Team

Reference: 12/02686/LBC
Application at: Central Library Museum Street York YO1 7DS
For: Internal and external alterations including first floor extension to side/rear elevation, installation of 3 no. roof cowls and internal refurbishments to existing ground and first floors (York Explore Phase II)
By: Mr Charlie Croft
Application Type: Listed Building Consent
Target Date: 24 October 2012
Recommendation: Approve following Sec of State Decision

1.0 PROPOSAL

1.1 The Central Library comprises a two storey brick and Portland stone built Grade II Listed example of the work of local Arts and Crafts architect WH Brierley. It also occupies a prominent location within the Historic Core Conservation Area with the City Centre directly adjacent to the south and east and the City Walls, a Scheduled Ancient Monument to the north and west. Listed Building Consent is presently sought for the erection of a first floor extension with associated internal alterations to facilitate the relocation of the City Archives forming phase 2 of the refurbishment of the building to form York Explore. The proposed extension adopts a Modern Contemporary architectural metaphor and a parallel planning application for the work (ref:-12/02685/FUL) has been submitted and is also for Member's consideration on this agenda.

2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Development Plan Allocation:

Areas of Archaeological Interest GMS Constraints: City Centre Area 0006
Conservation Area GMS Constraints: Central Historic Core CONF
Listed Buildings GMS Constraints: Grade 2; Library Library Square York YO1 2DS
0631

2.2 Policies:

CYHE2 Development in historic locations
CYHE4 Listed Buildings

3.0 CONSULTATIONS

INTERNAL:-

3.1 Design, Conservation and Sustainable Development raise no objection to the proposal subject to further consideration of the proposed flashing material, the proposed treatment of the ventilation system in the interior, the internal relationship of the extension to the existing building, the treatment of the existing parquet flooring, the proposed roof level fall arrest system , the proposed lighting and cctv and the treatment of the rear access to facilitate disabled usage.

EXTERNAL:-

3.2 Guildhall Planning Panel object to the proposal on the grounds that the palette of materials and design of the proposed extension would cause significant material harm to the character and integrity of the Listed Building.

3.3 English Heritage raise no objection in principle to the proposal.

3.4 One letter of objection to the proposal has been received expressing concern in respect of the proposed treatment of the internal foyer and oculus which rather than being empty and uncluttered as originally intended would be busy and over developed.

4.0 APPRAISAL

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 Impact upon the historic character and integrity of the Listed Building.

STATUS OF THE DRAFT LOCAL PLAN

4.2 The City of York Development Control Local Plan was approved for Development Control purposes in April 2005; its policies remain material considerations in terms of determining applications although it is considered that their weight is limited except where in accordance with Central Government Planning Policy outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework

THE CHARACTER OF THE LIBRARY BUILDING

4.3 The Central Library was purpose built as a library in the 1920s with a significant extension in 1938 by the local Arts and Crafts architect WH Brierley and his chief draughtsman John Rutherford. It is a good example of early 20th Century Neo-Georgian Civic Architecture executed in brick with Portland stone detailing with a timber panelled and marble and parquet floored interior, which sits on its own site in a visually prominent location to the north of the City Centre and as such it has been Listed at Grade II as being of particular architectural and historical interest. It has remained in its original use since its construction and the current proposal forms part of a wider programme of refurbishment in order to secure the character and on-going economic viability of the building into the foreseeable future. Central Government planning policy in respect of Listed Building Control outlined in paragraph 131 of the NPPF stresses the importance of safeguarding the economic viability and community significance of important "heritage assets" like the library.

IMPACT UPON THE HISTORIC CHARACTER AND INTEGRITY OF THE LISTED BUILDING

4.4 Policy HE4 of the York Development Control Local Plan sets out a firm policy presumption that Listed Building Consent will only be forthcoming in terms of development involving internal or external alterations where there would be no adverse impact upon the character, appearance or setting of the building. Central Government Planning Guidance in respect of Listed Building Control as outlined in paragraphs 132 and 134 of the NPPF urges Local Planning Authorities to give significant weight to the need to secure the conservation of a Listed Building's significance in assessing the merits of a given development proposal. Any particular harm should be weighed very carefully against the public benefits of the proposal including securing the optimum use of the building which as a first principle should be the use for which it was designed where-ever feasible.

PROPOSED EXTERNAL WORKS

4.5 Two areas of external work are proposed in respect of the development. These comprise a substantial first floor extension in a Modern metaphor to house the City Archives and to provide an ancillary public access area, together with a series of ancillary works which comprise the erection of a roof level fall arrest system, the provision of external ventilation cowls, the erection of cctv cameras and the alteration of an existing ground floor disabled access to facilitate disabled usage.

THE FIRST FLOOR EXTENSION

4.6 The proposal envisages the erection of a first floor extension in order to house the City Archives in a humidity and temperature controlled environment whilst at the same time providing an suitable area where they may be made ready for public

access. The proposed storage extension would be constructed in a copper coloured metal cladding panel which would be coursed so as to resemble the pattern of stone work with a lighter flashing panel beneath to give a transition to the brick work of the existing building below. Whilst giving a sharply contrasting idiom to the existing building the proposed extension would match the pattern of scale and massing of the existing and the proposed palette of materials would closely blend in with the existing brick work below. Furthermore the principal elements of the character of the building within the public realm are the southern elevations to Library Square and the western elevation to the Museum Gardens and the proposed extension would not materially impact upon either.

4.7 The proposed "plug in" or preparation area extension would be constructed in a lighter contrasting cladding panel which in a rear facing location would not materially harm the character of the building. Once again the pattern of scale and massing of the existing structure would be maintained. An escape stair giving access to both elements of the proposal is also proposed, this would be sculptural in form and would give a positive enhancement to an existing under-used and architecturally plain rear elevation.

OTHER EXTERNAL WORKS

4.8 As part of the proposal it is envisaged to create a series of ventilation ducts with associated roof top cowls to give the upper floor of the building a degree of natural ventilation and to build on the existing arrangements. The principal impact would be a series of cowls on the roof top. Any impact would however be modest in view of the nature of the existing roof form and the local topography and they are felt to be acceptable. At the same time a fall arrest system is proposed for the roof top area. This is envisaged to be of a wire and hook design which would have a minimal impact upon the external character of the building and is therefore felt to be acceptable.

4.9 Alterations to the external access to the rear are envisaged to lower an existing step and re-align the existing landscaping to facilitate mobility impaired and wheel chair access. The proposed works are felt to be modest in impact and therefore acceptable. At the same time it is proposed to erect a series of CCTV cameras around the exterior to help deal with an existing issue of anti-social behaviour. These would again be modest in scale and located so as to minimise any impact upon the exterior of the building and are therefore felt to be acceptable.

INTERNAL WORKS

4.10 Two significant areas of internal work are proposed. The provision of a display and "invitation area" associated with the link to the new extensions and focussed on the lobby surrounding the first floor oculus and also the provision of a family history study area incorporating a timber mezzanine within the existing stack area to the

rear of the main first floor reading room. As the contribution of the stack area to the character of the Listed Building is extremely modest the proposed details are felt to be unexceptionable with any harm particularly minimal. The principal reading room itself would be refurbished with the existing fixed furniture largely retained and the parquet flooring restored. Further restoration of the parquet flooring at the ground floor which has become damaged by damp is also envisaged. The detail of this should be reserved by condition as part of any consent in view of its significance for the wider character of the building.

4.11 The principal area of internal works that give some cause for concern is the proposed treatment of the oculus or glazed light well within the front entrance to the building. This forms a central piece of Brierley's overall design concept for the building replicating in miniature the approach to the Georgian Country House. This is characterised by the polished marble flooring, wide open stair case with central oculus and glazed cupola above, all uncluttered in terms of internal paraphernalia. This character has been largely retained in respect of the ground floor area, however the upper level has become cluttered by a series of display cabinets, computers and leaflet racks. It is envisaged that this would be rationalised into a single display area showcasing a particular aspect of the archives on a rotational basis. It is also envisaged that a series of i-pods would be erected around the edge of the oculus to enable users to gain an introduction to the materials held within the archives electronically. Broadly speaking the level of clutter within the upper level of the oculus would be reduced and the character of the building thereby safeguarded however, concern has been expressed in respect of the location of IT equipment around its edge and the potential for disruption of views from below and more fundamentally the introduction of a further source of clutter which would erode the character of the building. The scheme has been amended to address this issue and the proposed IT equipment would be drawn away from the edge. The detail of the internal works are therefore considered to be acceptable.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The Central Library comprises a substantial two storey brick and Portland stone structure of early 20th Century date. It is listed as an example of the work of local Arts and Crafts architect WH Brierley and it occupies a significant location directly north of the City Centre within the Historic Core Conservation Area. Listed Building Consent and a parallel planning permission are presently sought in respect of a first floor extension executed in a Modern architectural metaphor together with a series of internal alterations to facilitate the re-location of the City Archives as part of a wider refurbishment and updating of the Library building. Whilst executed in a Modern contemporary metaphor the proposed extension would have only modest impact upon the character and integrity of the Listed Building and would not materially harm its significance. The ancillary external alterations are modest in scope and would not harm the significance of the building either individually or in combination. In terms of the proposed internal works overall impact upon the

significance of the building is felt to be modest with the revisions to the area surrounding the oculus felt to address the previously highlighted concerns. Overall it is felt that the proposals would secure the long term community significance and economic viability of the building in the use for which it was designed in accordance with Central Government Planning Policy on Listed Building Control outlined in the NPPF as well as policies HE2 and HE4 of the York Development Control Local Plan. Approval is therefore recommended.

COMMITTEE TO VISIT

6.0 RECOMMENDATION: Approve following Sec of State Decision

1 TIMEL2 Development start within 3 yrs (LBC/CAC) -

2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans:-

Drawing Refs:- YO001 4013 P1, YO01 S327-1SEL PDS, YO001 4011, YO001 4004 P2, YO001 1207, YO001 1209 P2, YO001 5011 P1, YO001 5012 P1, YO001 5013 P1, YO001 4012 P1, YO001 4007 P2, YO001 5010 P2, YO001 D1 CCTV INFO, and YO0014007 P2. Date Stamped 2nd November 2012. YO001 4007 P1, YO001 0003 P1, YO001 3004 P1, YO001 3002 P1, YO001 3001 P1, YO001 5001 P1, YO001 5002 P1, YO001 5004 P1, YO001 5007 P1, YO001 5008 P1, YO001 8005 P1, YO001 5009 P1, YO001 5010 P1 and YO001 2002 P1.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out only as approved by the Local Planning Authority.

3 VISQ8 Samples of exterior materials to be app -

4 VISQ7 Sample panel ext materials to be approv -

5 Notwithstanding the application details hereby approved full details of the proposed method of cleaning of the granolithic panel tiles shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to work on site commencing. The development shall thenceforth be undertaken in strict accordance with the details thereby approved.

Reason: To safeguard the character and integrity of the Listed Building and to secure compliance with Policy HE4 of the York Development Control Local Plan.

6 Prior to the commencement of the development hereby authorised full details of the method to be used to remove the paint finish to the joinery mouldings shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

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The development shall thenceforth be undertaken in strict accordance with the details thereby approved.

Reason: To safeguard the historic character and integrity of the Listed Building and to secure compliance with Policy HE4 of the York Development Control Local Plan.

7 Large scale details of the items listed below shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the development and the works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

i) The roof level fall arrest system;

ii) The external works required to facilitate disabled access to the rear entrance.

Reason: So that the Local Planning Authority may be satisfied with these details.

8 Notwithstanding the application details hereby approved full details of the proposed lighting and cctv cameras including number, design and location shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thenceforth be undertaken in strict accordance with the details thereby approved.

Reason: To safeguard the character and integrity of the Listed Building and to secure compliance with Policy HE4 of the York Development Control Local Plan.

9 Prior to the commencement of the development hereby authorised full details of the proposed works to the timber parquet flooring on the ground and first floors of the Library shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thenceforth be undertaken in strict accordance with the details thereby approved.

Reason:- To safeguard the historic character and integrity of the Listed Building and to secure compliance with Policy HE4 of the York Development Control Local Plan.

7.0 INFORMATIVES:

Notes to Applicant

1. REASON FOR APPROVAL

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the proposal, subject to the conditions listed above, would not cause undue harm to interests of acknowledged importance, with particular reference to impact upon the historic character and integrity of the Listed Building .As such the proposal complies with Policies HE 2 and HE 4 of the City of York Development Control Local Plan.

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Contact details:

Author: Erik Matthews Development Management Officer

Tel No: 01904 551416