

Agenda Item A20	Committee Date 20 September 2010	Application Number 10/00773/DPA
Application Site Maritime Museum St Georges Quay Lancaster Lancashire		Proposal Strengthening works to the third floor of right hand bay to provide for heavy picture racking used for storage of museum items
Name of Applicant Lancaster City Council		Name of Agent Mr Joe Parkins
Decision Target Date 23 September 2010		Reason For Delay N/A
Case Officer		Mr Andrew Drummond
Departure		No
Summary of Recommendation		Approved subject to deferral to GONW

1.0 The Site and its Surroundings

- 1.1 Lancaster's Maritime Museum is located on St George's Quay, on the south bank of the River Lune.
- 1.2 Buildings along St George's Quay have a number of different uses, including C3 (residential), A3 (restaurants) and A4 (pubs). The road forms the main access from the city centre to the industrial area to the west known as the Lune Industrial Estate. An infrequent bus service runs along the road, though the city's bus station is less than a 5 minute walk away and the train station is within a 10 minute time. The quay also forms part of the Lancaster-Glasson (Lune Estuary Path) cyclepath.
- 1.3 The Maritime Museum is a Grade 2 Listed building within the Castle Conservation Area. The area in which the museum is located is also designated as a Tourism Opportunity Area. The River Lune to the north is a County Biological Heritage Site and the Quay Meadow Sports Ground is allocated as an Urban Greenspace, a Key Urban Landscape and an Outdoor Playing Space.

2.0 The Proposal

- 2.1 This application seeks Listed Building Consent for the installation of steel beams to reinforce the third floor to carry a racking system for the storage of paintings.
- 2.2 It is proposed to crane the steel beams into the building through existing window openings, thereby minimising the alterations required to the Listed building. The only intervention required to the existing fabric of the building would be the bolting of the steel beams into the existing main timber beams. The beams would then be clad to meet Building Regulations.

3.0 Site History

- 3.1 A number of relevant applications relating to this site have previously been received by the Local Planning Authority. These include:

Application Number	Proposal	Decision
83/00072/HST 83/00073/HST	Conversion of theatre/store to maritime museum with various alterations	Permitted
96/00617/DPA 96/00618/LB	Erection of extension to shop area and provide new pedestrian access	Permitted

4.0 Consultation Responses

4.1 The following responses have been received from statutory and internal consultees:

Consultees	Response
English Heritage	This application should be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance and on the basis of the Local Planning Authority's expert conservation advice.
Conservation Officer	No objection to the proposal. The work is necessary to facilitate the use of this floor as a store for the Museum Service. It is considered that the works will not have a detrimental impact on the character of the building (though they will result in minor alterations to the appearance of two floors) and, as has been stated in the Heritage Statement, the works are largely reversible should the building's use change in the future.

5.0 Neighbour Representations

5.1 No correspondence has been received at the time of compiling this report. Any comments subsequently received will be reported verbally.

6.0 Principal Development Plan Policies

6.1 National Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and Guidance Notes (PPG)

PPS5 (Planning for the Historic Environment) - has superseded PPG15 and PPG16. The Government's overarching aim is that the historic environment and its heritage assets should be conserved and enjoyed for the quality of life they bring to this and future generations. In order to deliver sustainable development, PPS5 states that policies and decisions concerning the historic environment should:

- Recognise that heritage assets are a non-renewable resource
- Take account of the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits of heritage conservation
- Recognise that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained in the long term.

6.2 Lancaster District Local Plan - adopted April 2004 (saved policies)

Policy **E33** (Alterations or Extension of Listed buildings) - proposals involving external or internal alterations to Listed buildings which would have an adverse effect on the special architectural or historic character or interest of the buildings or their surroundings will not be permitted.

Policy **E35** (Conservation Areas and their Surroundings) - development proposals that would adversely affect important views into and across a Conservation Area or lead to an unacceptable erosion of its historic form and layout, open spaces and townscape will not be permitted.

Policy **TO2** - St George's Quay is allocated as a tourism opportunity area, where the Council will direct new visitor attractions. Proposals which would prejudice the possibility of achieving new visitor attractions within these areas will not be permitted.

6.3 Lancaster District Core Strategy - adopted July 2008

Policy **ER6** (Developing Tourism) - the Council will promote and enhance tourism development in the District by creating a high quality historic environment in Lancaster city centre.

Policy **E1** (Environmental Capital) - development should protect and enhance Listed Buildings and conservation areas.

7.0 Comment and Analysis

- 7.1 Lancaster Maritime Museum occupies the former Customs House and the two top floors of the adjoining warehouse with a postal address of 26 St Georges Quay. Extensive works were carried out by Lancaster City Council in the mid 1980s to refurbish the Customs House, create side and rear extensions and lift access to the adjoining warehouse to form a Maritime Museum. The buildings remain in the ownership of Lancaster City Council whilst Lancashire County Council occupy and provide the museum service.
- 7.2 During a recent survey of the fabric of Lancaster Maritime Museum (including the three former warehouses) it was found that heavy metal racking had been erected in part of the Museum store providing for vertical storage of paintings on a moveable racking system which allows easy access for retrieval. It was noted that the racking had been retro-fitted as the feet of the columns were sat directly on the carpet floor finish with a notable deflection of the adjacent floor. Structural calculations of the weight of the racking and that of the paintings stored within the system gave light to concern about the long term effects on the historic timber floor, the maximum permitted deflection of the main beams having been found to be overstressed by 44%. It was also noted that the columns of the racking system were positioned within a grid relating to the system and took no account of the position of the joists or main beams of the floor construction.
- 7.3 The paintings and racking system have now been removed and the main beams will in turn have relaxed. The strengthening works proposed are to the main beams to limit deflection and provide for supports to the columns of the racking system. The proposal is to bolt steel channel sections to either side of the main beams, full width, with further steel beams at right angles close to each wall to provide direct support by means of stub columns for the columns of the racking system above. To undertake these works will involve the removal of the modern plasterboard and skim ceiling on the underside of the floor thus enabling full access to the main beams to enable steelwork to be bolted to/through the main beams. Steel seating angles are also proposed either side of the ends of the main beams and connected to the new channel sections to transfer loads into the main supporting walls. The installation of the stub columns will require forming holes in the timber floor boarding sufficiently large to allow passage of the columns.
- 7.4 Building Regulations require that the elements of structure should achieve a fire rating of 1 hour. This will be addressed by the reinstatement of a fire resisting ceiling between the main beams and by overcladding the previously exposed main beams. On completion the only notable difference between 'before and after' will be the beam cladding and consequent loss of ceiling height under the beams. It is also argued that the works are reversible the evidence remaining would be holes through the beams which could be timber plugged thus showing detail of later alterations in association with a usage at that time.
- 7.5 The proposal seeks to preserve a heritage asset (a Listed building within a Conservation Area) with minimal intervention (as set out above), whilst maintaining a visitor attraction in a tourism area. The proposal is therefore acceptable in planning policy terms.

8.0 Planning Obligations

- 8.1 None.

9.0 Conclusions

- 9.1 The proposed work is necessary in order to resolve a storage problem within this Grade 2 Listed Building. The reinforcement works will not be visible, changing the internal appearance of the building minimally. As such, the works are fully supported by the Local Planning Authority's Conservation Officer.

- 9.2 In conclusion, this proposal would not adversely affect the character of the Listed Building. The works are considered sympathetic and it is on this basis that Members are advised that this application can be supported.

Recommendation

That the application be referred to Government Office North West with a recommendation that Listed Building Consent **BE GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard Listed building consent timescale
2. Works to accord with approved plans

Human Rights Act

This recommendation has been reached after consideration of the provisions of The Human Rights Act. Unless otherwise stated in this report, the issues arising do not appear to be of such magnitude to override the responsibility of the City Council to regulate land use for the benefit of the community as a whole, in accordance with national law.

Background Papers

None