

Agenda Item A14	Committee Date 19 September 2016	Application Number 16/00942/FUL
Application Site Town Hall Dalton Square Lancaster Lancashire	Proposal Construction of a ramp to provide disabled access and creation of a doorway from an existing window opening on the side elevation	
Name of Applicant Mr Gary Watson	Name of Agent Ms Rachel Grimshaw	
Decision Target Date 16 September 2016	Reason For Delay Committee cycle	
Case Officer	Mr Andrew Clement	
Departure	No	
Summary of Recommendation	Approval subject to conditions	

(i) Procedural Matters

This form of development would normally be dealt with under the Scheme of Delegation. However, Lancaster City Council is the owner of the subject property, and as such the application must be determined by the Planning Committee.

1.0 The Site and its Surroundings

1.1 The application site is the Lancaster Town Hall, situated on Dalton Square in the core of the Lancaster City Centre. The Town Hall is a Grade II* Listed Building and is made up of sandstone ashlar under slate roofing. The site is also within the Lancaster Conservation Area.

2.0 The Proposal

2.1 The application proposes to construction a ramp to provide disabled access and create a doorway from an existing window opening on the east side elevation of Lancaster Town Hall. The proposed ramp and landing areas will measure a total length of 15.8 metres, with a 1.2 metre ramp width. To facilitate access to the proposed development, 1.2 and 1.4 metre wide openings in the existing sandstone baluster wall will be formed immediately to the north and south of the proposal. The access ramp will be constructed of galvanised steel and glass panels beneath a glazed stainless steel handrail, with a moulded grey coloured fibre-reinforced plastic grated floor. The new doorway and frame material is proposed to be European oak.

3.0 Site History

3.1 The Town Hall has an extensive planning history, which largely relates to matters of maintenance and repair. No previous applications materially affect this current submission. A near identical scheme was approved at 4th April 2016 Planning Committee through permissions 16/00160/FUL and 16/00161/LB. An application for Listed Building Consent for the proposed development has been applied for concurrently (Ref: 16/00943/LB).

4.0 Consultation Responses

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

Consultee	Response
English Heritage	This application should be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance and on the basis of the LPA's specialist conservation advice.
Conservation Section	No objections subject to conditions
The Victorian Society	No observation received

5.0 Neighbour Representations

5.1 No observations received, with the site notice consultation period expiring on 25th August and advertisement publication expiring on 26th August 2016.

6.0 Principal National and Development Plan Policies

6.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Paragraph 17 – Core planning principles

Section 7 – Requiring Good Design

Section 12 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

6.2 Listed Building and Conservations Area Act 1990

Section 7 – Restriction on Works Affecting Listed Buildings

Section 17 – Power to Impose Conditions on Grant of Listed Building Consent

Paragraph 72 - General duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions.

Paragraph 73 - Publicity for applications affecting conservation areas.

6.3 Lancaster Conservation Area

Area 4 – Dalton Square

6.4 Development Management DPD

DM20 – Enhancing Accessibility and Transport Linkages

DM30 – Development Affecting Listed Buildings

DM31 – Development affecting Conservation Areas

DM32 – The Setting of Designated Heritage Assets

DM35 – Key Design Principles

6.5 Lancaster District Core Strategy Saved Policies (adopted July 2008)

SC1 – Sustainable Development

SC5 – Achieving Quality in Design

7.0 Comment and Analysis

7.1 The key considerations arising from the proposal are:

- Principle of the development;
- Scale, Design and Landscape Impact on the Character of the Conservation Area and Listed Building;

7.2 Principle of the Development

7.2.1 To enable access to the proposed development, 1.2 and 1.4 metre wide openings in the existing sandstone baluster wall will be created immediately to the north and south of the proposal. The principle of the development - to ensure that Lancaster Town Hall is accessible to the whole community - is considered acceptable and consistent with policies DM20, DM35 and NPPF Paragraph 17 and Section 7.

- 7.3 Scale, Design and Landscape Impact on the Character of the Conservation Area and Listed Building
- 7.3.1 The scale of the proposed access ramp and landing areas is modest in comparison to the scale of the building, measuring 15.8 metres long. The proposed design and materials of the access ramp, which are glazed stainless steel handrails above glazed side panels and a moulded grey coloured fibre-reinforced plastic grated floor, is considered to be sympathetic to both the Grade II* listed building and the wider conservation area.
- 7.3.2 A near identical scheme was approved at 4th April 2016 Planning Committee through permissions 16/00160/FUL and 16/00161/LB. However, due to minor amendments to the scheme requiring listed building consent, this current application is necessary to regularise the altered proposal. The current application proposes additional external lighting and the addition of one extra step to the north of the proposed new doorway, plus the relocation of the proposed ramp position to the centre of the basement void, as opposed to nearer the existing balustrade. Subject to agreeing the specific details of the proposed lighting, in particular the dimensions and materials of light fittings and the location of wiring, the altered proposal raises no concerns beyond those address through the previously approved application. The specifications of the proposed external lighting can be controlled through condition.
- 7.3.3 The proposed European Oak material of the new beaded raised panel door matches the building woodwork of Lancaster Town Hall; however details of the alterations to masonry to form the door opening and details of the decorative finish to the door should be agreed through condition prior to commencement. Additional samples of any new stonework for the creation of the openings for the door and the sandstone baluster wall must be submitted for approval, again through a condition to be discharged prior to commencement. The masonry and stonework of the Lancaster Town Hall and sandstone baluster boundary treatments are characteristic of the Dalton Square Area 4 of the Lancaster Conservation Area, and ensuring the appropriateness of details and materials for this element of the proposal is imperative to confirm that the development will have an acceptable impact on the listed building and conservation area. The Conservation Section concur, and the proposal has the support of the Conservation Section. Historic England raised no objection to the application, whilst no observation was received from the Victorian Society or through the site notice and publication. As neither Historic England nor any of the other National Amenity Societies have maintained an objection, this application does not need to be referred to the National Planning Casework Unit.
- 7.3.4 The proposed works to Lancaster Town Hall are considered to be proportionate and of a sympathetic design and materials to the grade II* listed building and wider conservation area. The proposed development is considered acceptable and is seen to comply with DM30, DM31, DM32 and NPPF Section 12. This view is shared by the Conservation Section.

8.0 Planning Obligations

- 8.1 There are no planning obligations to consider as part of this application.

9.0 Conclusions

- 9.1 In conclusion, it is considered that the proposed works will not adversely affect the character of the listed building or conservation area, and comply with the requirements of policies DM20, DM30, DM31, DM32 and DM35 of the Development Plan Document. Furthermore, the scheme has been assessed against paragraphs 131, 132 and 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework and is considered to be acceptable. As such, the Members are advised that this scheme can be supported subject to conditions regarding the agreement of details of the doorway, lighting and sample of stonework.

Recommendation

That Planning Permission **BE GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. ST01 – Standard 3 year timescale
2. ST08 – Development to be carried out in accordance to approved plans
3. Details to be submitted – door finish and door opening masonry

4. Submissions sample materials – Longridge or Derbyshire sandstone
5. Details of lighting and wiring

Article 35, Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

In accordance with the above legislation, Lancaster City Council has made the recommendation in a positive and proactive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development, working proactively with the applicant to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. The recommendation has been made having had regard to the impact of development, and in particular to the relevant policies contained in the Development Plan, as presented in full in the officer report, and to all relevant material planning considerations, including the National Planning Policy Framework, National Planning Practice Guidance and relevant Supplementary Planning Documents/ Guidance.

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