

Agenda Item	Committee Date	Application Number
A9	16 September 2019	19/00697/FUL

Application Site	Proposal
St Thomas Centre Marton Street Lancaster Lancashire	Relevant demolition of existing 2 storey Church Centre building and erection of a replacement 2.5 storey Church Centre building, including covered canopy link to the adjacent Church and alterations to existing carpark, including creation of steps and resurfacing

Name of Applicant	Name of Agent
Mr Tim Parsons	Mr Dan Brown

Decision Target Date	Reason For Delay
Extension of time agreed until 20 September 2019	Awaiting amended plans

Case Officer	Mrs Eleanor Fawcett
Departure	No
Summary of Recommendation	Approval

1.0 The Site and its Surroundings

- 1.1 The application site is located within the centre of Lancaster and relates to St Thomas' Church Centre, and the associated land surrounding this, in addition to St Thomas's Church and an existing car park to the south. The church centre is two storey, finished in a mix of stone and render, and fronts onto Marton Street, with the building abutting the rear of the pavement. It also adjoins Victoria Place at the rear, which is at a higher level than the ground floor of the building. The boundary wall enclosing the land to the west of the centre lies adjacent to Peter Street. Both Peter Street and Victoria Place are fairly narrow cobbled roads that link from Marton Street to Penny Street and provide access to the carpark. The land rises at the entrance to this and there is a retaining wall adjacent to Victoria Place. Within the carpark is a large modular building which is used as a nursesey.
- 1.2 The church lies to the west of the church centre building and is separated by a paved area and steps which provides access from Marton Street to both buildings and Victoria Place via some steps. St Thomas's Church is Grade II Listed and is set back slightly from Marton Street and fronts onto Penny Street. It is enclosed by walls and railings which are separately Listed (Grade II). To the east of the site, adjacent to Peter Street, is a row of two storey stone properties which front onto Thurnham Street and Marton Street and comprise a mix of commercial and residential uses. To the north is the Police Station and to the south is a garage building between Victoria Place and the carpark. The site is located within the Lancaster Conservation Area and is just outside the Lancaster Air Quality Management Area.

2.0 The Proposal

- 2.1 Planning permission is sought for the demolition of the church centre and the construction of a larger building, partly over three floors. It would be set back slightly from Marton Street, but extend closer to Peter Street. The building would comprise two sections with dual pitched roofs connected by a central flat roofed element. The front section, facing Marton Street, would have three floors with the upper floor in the roof space, and the remainder of the building would be over two floors. It is proposed to be

finished in a mix of stone, render and grey cladding panels and solar panels are proposed on the rear roof slope of both dual pitched section of the building. A covered walkway is also proposed between the new building and the church. The scheme also includes the widening of Peter Street where it adjoins Marton Street, the creation of a footway, installation of metal railings and gates, resurfacing and marking of the carpark, including a slight extension to this, and the installation of some metal gates and railings.

3.0 Site History

3.1 Planning permission was granted, at Planning Committee, in 2018 for the demolition of the church centre building and the erection of a new building. There are similarities between the current scheme and the previous approval, however significant changes have been made to the overall form of the building and its design. The relevant history is listed below.

Application Number	Proposal	Decision
18/00405/FUL	Relevant Demolition of existing 2 storey Church Centre building and erection of a replacement 2.5 storey Church Centre building, including single storey lean-to and single storey link to the adjacent Church and alterations to existing carpark, including creation of steps and resurfacing	Approved
18/00543/LB	Listed building application for a single-storey glazed extension to connect the former choir vestry of the church and the proposed replacement Church Centre building, alterations to the former choir vestry including the removal of an existing timber door and replacement with timber-framed partition and the removal of arched windows to the south elevation and replacement with fire escape door, installation of new perimeter security gates adjoining the Penny Street and Marton Street elevations, and alterations to the boundary wall to Victoria Place including the addition of a wrought iron railings	Approved
16/01486/PRETWO	Pre-application advice in relation to the erection of a replacement 2.5 storey Church centre	

4.0 Consultation Responses

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

Consultee	Response
Environmental Health	No comments received during the statutory consultation period. In relation to the previous application: In relation to air quality, recommend provision of cycle parking, two electric vehicle charging points, and a construction environmental management plan to deal with any dust issues.
Conservation Team	Support , subject to conditions, following the submission of amended plans. It is still felt that a better solution could be achieved with the gated entrance to the forecourt, but this detail could be conditioned. The loss of the Non-Designated Heritage Asset and construction of a new church centre would lead to a level of harm to the significance of the Conservation Area and significance of the Listed Building. The level of harm is considered to be less than substantial.
Tree Protection Officer	Arboricultural report has not been provided with the submission. In relation to the previous application: No objection , subject to conditions requiring: development carried out in accordance with the submitted Arboricultural Impactions Assessment; submission of an Arboricultural Method Statement; and a scheme for new tree planting.
County Highways	No objections subject to conditions requiring: a construction management plan; off-

	site highway works; review of street lighting arrangements on Peter Street; and review of pay and display parking arrangements; reinstatement of footway/highway (if damaged/excavated); and surfacing of carpark (as advised in comments to previous application). Raised some concerns/ queries regarding highway structural integrity & access to carriageway substructure beneath Victoria Place.
Historic England	No comments to make.
National Amenity Societies	No comments received during the statutory consultation period.
Lancaster Civic Society	No comments received during the statutory consultation period.
Lancashire Archaeological Advisory Service	No objection subject to a condition requiring an archaeological watching brief

5.0 Neighbour Representations

- 5.1 1 item of correspondence has been received in support of the proposal, raising the following points:
- Will provide a property which will greatly benefit the local community in a positive way.

6.0 Principal National and Development Plan Policies

6.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Paragraph 85 – Ensuring the vitality of town centres
Paragraph 109 - 110 – Access and Transport
Paragraphs 124 and 127 – Achieving well-designed places
Paragraph 92 – Providing social, recreational and cultural facilities and services
Paragraphs 170, 175 and 176 – Protecting and enhancing biodiversity
Paragraphs 193 – 196, 198 – 201 – Designated Heritage Assets
Paragraph 197 – Non-designated Heritage Assets

6.2 Local Planning Policy Overview – Current Position

On 15 May 2018, and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended), Lancaster City Council submitted the following documents to the Secretary of State (Planning Inspectorate) for examination:

The Strategic Policies and Land Allocations DPD; and,
(A Review of) The Development Management DPD

The Examination Hearing Sessions commenced on 9 April 2019.

The Strategic Policies and Land Allocations DPD will replace the remaining policies of the Lancaster District Core Strategy (2008) and the residual 'saved' land allocation policies from the 2004 District Local Plan.

The Review of the Development Management DPD updates the policies that are contained within the current document, which was adopted in December 2014. As it is part of the development plan the current document is already material in terms of decision-making.

Given the current stage of both DPDs, it is considered that significant weight can be attributed to the policies contained therein subject to the extent to which there are unresolved objections to the relevant policies and their consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework.

6.3 Lancaster District Core Strategy (adopted July 2008)

SC1 – Sustainable Development
SC5 – Achieving Quality in Design

6.4 Development Management Development Plan Document

DM1 – Town Centre Development
DM3 – Public Realm and Civic Space
DM4 – The Creation and Protection of Cultural Assets
DM20 – Enhancing Accessibility and Transport Linkages
DM21 – Walking and Cycling
DM22 – Vehicle Parking Provision
DM27 – The Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity
DM30 – Development affecting Listed Buildings
DM31 – Development Affecting Conservation Areas
DM32 – The Setting of Designated Heritage Assets
DM33 – Development Affecting Non-Designated Heritage Assets or their settings
DM34 – Archaeological Features and Scheduled Monuments
DM35 – Key Design Principles
DM39 – Surface Water run-off and Sustainable Drainage

6.5 Other Material Considerations

Section 66 of The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended states that the local planning authority shall have regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Section 72 sets out that special attention should be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

7.0 Comment and Analysis

7.1 The main issues to be considered in the determination of this application are:

- Demolition of the building
- Scale and design and the impact on the Conservation Area and Listed Buildings
- Impacts on Archaeology
- Highway Implications
- Impacts on Residential Amenity
- Impact on Trees and Ecology
- Air Quality

7.2 Demolition of the building

7.2.1 The building is located within the Lancaster Conservation Area and it sits adjacent to St Thomas' Church, which is a Grade II Listed Building. The church dates from 1840-41 and was designed by Edmund Sharpe with a later chancel and steeple added 1852-53 by Sharpe and Paley. The church centre was built in 1843 as a school and acquired by the vicar of the Church of St Thomas in 1845. Ownership of the building passed to County Council in the 1960s and came back into the church ownership in the 1980s. Although alterations have clearly taken place to the building since then, and not all of the alterations have been sympathetic, given the building's age, architectural features and historic association with the listed church, the building was identified as a positive unlisted building within the Lancaster Conservation Area Appraisal and is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset. The latter has been confirmed through an assessment made by the Conservation Team.

7.2.2 Policy DM31 of the DM DPD sets out that proposals which involve the loss of a building that makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that this is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm. In addition, Policy DM33 sets out that there will be a presumption in favour of the retention of a non-designated heritage asset, and any loss would require clear and convincing justification. In the national context, guidance regarding non-designated heritage assets is clear. Local authorities may identify buildings, monuments, sites, areas or landscapes as a non-designated heritage asset. Where identified, these assets will have "a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions".

- 7.2.3 The application includes a number of reports in relation to the condition of the building and the works required in relation to its maintenance, which were also provided with the previous application. A supporting statement has also been provided which includes justification for the replacement building. This includes a history of the building, including how it has changed over time, the restrictions of the building, aspirations for the new development, condition issues of the building and options for remodelling. The building was originally single storey, with a second floor accessed by external stone steps added in 1845. In the 1980s, major alterations were carried out to bring the building back into use, including the replacement of the roof structure in a different form, alterations to external windows and doors, additions to the east elevation and significant changes to the internal space. Historic photographs have been provided to show how the building has changed over time.
- 7.2.5 The existing centre has a gross internal floor area of 580 sq.m over two floors. The available meeting room space for groups over 8 persons is limited to 2 rooms. A large room of approximately 100 sq.m is available at ground floor level and a further meeting room is located at first floor with the latter accessed via an external staircase. The submission identifies the following issues with the current building: poor accessibility across the site; poor integration between buildings; physical security and ensuring the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults who use the buildings; appearance; limited space for community activities and groups; lack of disabled access to the first floor; poor layout of accommodation; lack of storage; noise egress between spaces; and lack of flexibility.
- 7.2.6 Information has been provided in relation to the groups that currently use the building, with clarification of the particular needs on Sunday mornings, where existing issues with the availability of space for children's groups has been highlighted. The building is also used by a parent and toddler group, which is at capacity and cannot operate on another day due to lack of availability of space. There are also restrictions to the existing holiday club for school age children because of space. The building also caters for summer fun days, week night children's and youth groups and contains offices used in association with the church.
- 7.2.7 In addition to expanding existing activities the aim of a new centre would be offer a variety of services to meet people at their point of need, such as:
- A Family Life Centre, that will support families under pressure, through counselling and family therapies, support groups for those raising children with special needs, and parenting and relationship courses;
 - Parish nursing, which provides a qualified and registered health visitor or nurse who is employed by the church, and who is able to offer medical care and advice but in the context of care for the whole person, body, mind and spirit;
 - CAP (Christians Against Poverty) Life Skills courses, helping people learn how to cook on a budget, and manage their finances; and
 - Lunch Club for the elderly that might sit alongside the regular midweek communion service, to help meet the needs of those who are isolated and lonely in the city.
- 7.2.8 The submission also sets out that the building would be used by the community and they have had to turn down requests for regular use of the building by community, due to lack of space, from community groups including:
- An organisation which carries out community integration work to build bridges with those settling in Lancaster from overseas;
 - A charity providing support to those with mental health issues in Lancaster & Morecambe;
 - An organisation wanting to offer parenting classes to parents of children with learning difficulties and special educational needs;
 - An organisation wanting space for a community parent and toddler group;
 - An organisation co-ordinating support for the homeless and those in need across Lancaster
 - The NHS wishing to offer regular health services.
- 7.2.9 There are a number of structural issues which would need to be addressed, but can be remedied, although they do have associated costs. The feasibility of adapting the existing building has been considered, with layouts prepared to show how it could be remodelled and extended. This would include the addition of internal stairs and a lift and a single storey side extension to create a hall, however they have identified that this would not meet the needs on a Sunday, and still require to use of

the modular building, and would not meet all of their aspirations as highlighted above as it would be difficult to provide a second floor. A cost analysis has been undertaken to understand the potential costs of both the New Build Church Centre Development and the Remodelling Option using the latest cost data available. With the previously approved scheme, the overall construction cost was higher for the new build option, however the VAT for the remodel option would be £465,000 which makes the scheme more expensive. The current application has been submitted to reduce the costs in the overall construction closer to the amount of money that has already been pledged towards the project.

7.2.10 As set out above, the loss of the building requires clear and convincing justification. The submitted statement illustrates that the centre was substantially altered in the 1980s and also considers the existing uses and constraints of the building and looks at the feasibility of reusing the existing building against the proposed new build option. The building is still considered a non-designated heritage asset, but this significance has been considerably diminished through modern alterations. In addition, it has been clearly outlined that there are public benefits arising from the proposals. Therefore, whilst the demolition would still cause a degree of harm to the non-designated heritage asset and associated church (Grade II), the harm is considered to be less than substantial, and there are significant public benefits which could outweigh the harm. There is a stone plaque on the existing building, which relates to the historic use of the building. This will be re-sited on the front of the building facing Marton Street.

7.3 Scale and design and the impact on the Conservation Area and Listed Buildings

7.3.1 The proposed building will be orientated with the roof slope facing Marton Street and will provide accommodation over two and three floors. It will extend closer to Peter Street than the existing building, but be set back from Marton Street, roughly in line with the side elevation of the church. The building would comprise two sections with dual pitched roofs connected by a central flat roofed element. The front section, facing Marton Street, would have three floors with the upper floor in the roof space. The ridge line of this section would only be slightly higher than the ridge of the existing building to be replaced, although the parapet walls at either gable would extend further above this. The rear section would be slightly longer, projecting closer to the church, but would be narrower and lower than the front section. The central flat roofed section would be lower than the eaves of both the front and rear elements but would still provide accommodation over two floors.

7.3.2 The front elevation, and side wall facing the church, are proposed to be finished in stone salvaged from the existing building at ground floor level, with ashlar above. Stone is also proposed at ground floor on the gable of the front section of the building facing Peter Street, however render would be proposed above this, in addition to the rear section of the building. The central section would be a mix of grey cladding and glazing, and grey cladding elements are also proposed on other parts of the building, including around some of the windows on the front and side elevations. The roof slope facing Marton Street would be finished in slate, with the other roof slopes finished in a grey lead roll effect roofing material. The two rear roof slopes would be fitted with solar panels. The agent has confirmed that these would be added to the roof, rather than being integral as they are likely to be owned by a third party. This scheme proposes the main entrance to be located in the front wall of the building, with a ramped access provided to this. Other doors would also be proposed in the side facing the church, and attached to one of these would be a canopy providing covered access to the church. An external staircase is also proposed to the elevation facing Peter Street, and various gates and railings are also proposed in the context of the new development and the listed church.

7.3.3 The proposals, as detailed above, are amendments to the originally submitted scheme as part of the current application. There were concerns regarding the visual bulk and massing of the design and the projection of a two storey flat roofed element close to the church. There were also concerns that the much longer front elevation of the building, than that previously approved, provided a very horizontal emphasis rather than reflecting a more traditional vertical pattern typical to the area including the adjacent church. The proposed footprint has not been significantly altered by the amendments, however the arrangement of the buildings has minimised the amount of the 2-storey flat roof section visible and provided a more cohesive design. The rear pitched roof section has been enlarged but this will be predominantly in line with the front building. Whilst these alterations do not overcome concerns about an increased massing from the approved scheme, they do reduce the visually cluttered appearance of the scheme.

7.3.4 The fenestration of the building has been altered to the front elevation, with a large window along Marton Street broken up, which will help to minimise the elongated perception of this elevation. In

addition, the entrance has been altered so there is access from the principal elevation and the fire escapes have been moved to the side elevations. There are no concerns with the principle of solar panels to the rear elevations of the building, but it would have been preferable to see these designed into the roof. However, as this is unlikely to be achieved, the solar panels should be darker frames and have low-sitting brackets in order to minimise their prominence. There are concerns regarding the use of a grp use to one half of the dual pitched roof to the front section of the building. The building has been designed in three very distinct sections and it is considered poor design to have the two roofslopes of one of these sections finished in different materials. In addition, whilst most of this would likely be covered in solar panels, there is no guarantee that they would always be retained, and there would still be sections of the roofslope visible even when they were present. It would also likely create an awkward junction at the ridge with the use of two different materials. It is considered that allowing a more contemporary material to the rear and central section of the building, whilst retaining a traditional slate which is more reflective of the adjacent listed church, represents a suitable compromise in order to help reduce the costs of the building whilst respecting the historic setting.

- 7.3.5 Changes to the entrance to the side elevation, facing Peter Street, and creation of steps with a stone boundary wall is supported as the previous timber fencing failed to be in keeping with the palette of materials of the Conservation Area. There are some concerns regarding a proposed gate between the building and the church, and how this would impact views and appreciation of the Grade II listed church. A more sensitive solution would be to allow this to fold back to the new building, rather than half of the gate sitting along the side wall of the church when open. The agent has been advised of this concern and has agreed that this can be conditioned in order for a more sensitive solution to be hopefully agreed.
- 7.3.6 Whilst the previously approved building was considered to be better related to the surrounding built form in terms of its massing and scale, the current proposal does still draw influence from the neighbouring church with the use of a pitched roof, oriented with the roofslope facing the highway, with coping stones and verticality of windows, but incorporating a modern approach. It has also been set back from the highway which may open up more views of the church and it would still retain the listed church's prominence in the streetscene. The re-use of the stone from the existing building, with ashlar above in addition to the slate roof is considered to be appropriate within the historic context. It is considered that the more modern materials, including the cladding and the GRP roof, will provide a contemporary appearance whilst not detracting from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area or the adjacent listed church and associated wall and railings. Although, as set out above, it is considered that the whole roof of the front section should be finished in slate, rather than just the roofslope facing the highway. The previous application proposed to attached to the listed church via a glazed link. This proposal just proposes a covered walkway which is considered acceptable, subject to the precise detailing which can be conditioned.
- 7.3.7 The car park to the rear is proposed to be resurfaced with tarmac, with the existing concrete ramp from the highway retained. The carpark is well contained from public viewpoints and, as such, this surfacing is considered to be acceptable. There are some other areas of surfacing around the proposed building, including a courtyard and footway front and a footway. At present the details of these are shown as paving flags, setts and tarmac for the footway. There are some concerns regarding the latter, and there may be a more sympathetic solution. It is acknowledged that this would be easier to maintain, however the footway along Marton Street is currently flags rather than tarmac. The precise details of this can be covered by condition and there may need to be some input from the Highway Authority if they decide to adopt this.
- 7.3.8 Overall, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in terms of its scale, siting and design and will not detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area or the adjacent listed church subject to appropriate conditions in relation to the precise details of the materials.

7.4 Impacts on Archaeology

- 7.4.1 In relation to the previous application, comments were received from the Lancashire Archaeological Advisory Service in relation to the potential for archaeological remains at the application site. These are still relevant to the current proposal. The church fronts onto Penny Street, which is known to represent the line of the main north-south Roman road running into Lancaster and appears to have remained in use from that time to the present day. By the end of the medieval period Lancaster seems to have

extended as far as the south end of Penny Street, where 'The White Cross' stood. This is shown on Speed's map of 1610 as well as maps of 1684 and 1778. The latter two maps also show the plot which was later occupied by the church and school as an undeveloped east-west strip, reminiscent of a medieval burgrave plot or strip field, which appears to have extended east as far as the present Aalborg Square. A map of 1821 again shows it as open ground, with the eastern end being used as gardens.

7.4.2 The above indicates that some areas of undeveloped land, with a potential for the preservation of prehistoric and Roman archaeological remains, may exist on the site. The first of these, between church and church centre, has probably been impacted by the construction of both buildings and by the 1980 works to the building. To the east side of the church centre, only limited landscaping works have been undertaken and this section has more potential for early remains to survive. It is possible that some areas between the existing foundations of the church centre may also retain undisturbed deposits, as may the car park. It is noted, however, that remains of the Roman cemetery have only been recorded up to 25 metres back from the line of the Roman road to date. The west side of St Thomas Church Centre is located some 50 metres from the road line, and the most promising area adjacent to Peter Street is 67-77metres away. The west end of the car park is only some 25 metres from the road, but only limited resurfacing is proposed in that area. Given this, and the uncertainty in the provenance of the prehistoric remains, the Lancashire Archaeological Advisory Service advised that archaeological investigation is not required prior to a planning decision being made. It was also advised that it would also seem unjustified for formal archaeological excavation to be required, but it is considered that an archaeological watching brief during the development is appropriate. This can be covered by condition.

7.5 Highway Implications

7.5.1 The site is easily accessible by a choice of sustainable travel modes including foot, cycle and public transport. The surrounding pedestrian environment is of an acceptable quality, with footways being well lit adding to a sense of personal security. Signage and the built form add to a good level of legibility with adjacent pedestrian footway links providing an acceptable means of access to the site. The site lies adjacent to a designated cycle route which provides access to the city centre and surrounding cycle network. The proposed layout plan shows some cycle hoops to the side of the proposed building, close to its entrance. Parking is restricted on the highway in the vicinity of the site. There is some parking provided by the private carpark with additional parking available in established city centre carparks and other street parking.

7.5.2 The Highway Authority advised that the proposal has the potential to result in greater use of Peter Street and its junction with Marton Street. Peter Street is considered to be sub-standard in terms of the nature of the carriageway, only allowing for singular vehicle movements, with pedestrian movements restricted with a lack of footways. Driver forward visibility at the junction of Peter Street and Marton Street is also restricted due to on-street resident pay and display parking arrangements. The scheme includes the widening of Peter Street, where it adjoins Marton Street, in order to allow two vehicles to pass. A footway has also been shown within the site adjacent to Peter Street in order to aid pedestrian movements. The Highway Authority advised that there should be a review of the on street parking arrangements along the frontage of the site with Marton Street in order to aid visibility. These can all be covered by condition.

7.5.3 It is presumed that the development will increase the frequency of pedestrian/vehicular movements along Marton Street, Peter Street & Victoria Place. In addition to the measures outlined above the Highway Authority have also advised that a short length of centre line, transverse & Stop/Give Way thermoplastic markings should be laid at the junction of Peter Street with Matron Street and that there should be a review of street lighting arrangements on Peter Street, with an upgrade where appropriate. A traffic management plan has also been requested, however, the site is heavily restricted by parking restrictions and any direct impact on the highway (or excavation or works to the highway, and subsequent reinstatement) can be controlled by the Highway Authority. They have also raised some concerns regarding impacts on the structural stability of the highway, however this would be a separate issue with the Highway Authority as works affecting this would require their consent. Overall, subject to the inclusion of conditions as set out above, it is considered that there will not be a detrimental impact to highway safety as a result of the proposal, and there is likely to be some improvement to the existing situation with the road widening and footpath works proposed.

7.6 Impacts on residential amenity

7.6.1 The proposal introduces built elements closer to properties to the east, which appear to be partly residential. The closest property fronts onto Marton Street and has no windows in the gable so there would be no loss of light or privacy to occupants. Those to the rear of this do have windows facing towards to the site and relatively open rear yard areas. The windows are located approximately 13 metres from the side wall of the proposed building. As a result, it is considered that there would not be a significant loss of light to these properties. There is potential for overlooking from the glazing in the flat roof section, however this could be overcome by inserting some form of opaque glazing to a height around 1.8 metres above floor level and the agent has been asked to amend the plans to reflect this.

7.7 Impacts on Trees and Ecology

7.7.1 Trees and shrubs within the site are generally in good overall condition and can be seen from the wider public domain as such they make a positive impact upon the character and appearance of the site and the immediate locality. An arboricultural implications assessment has been submitted which relates to the previous application, although it is sufficient to fully assess the implications as a result of the current proposal. S2 (cotoneaster), T3 weeping birch, G4 (cypress) and T9 (rowan) are proposed for removal in order to accommodate the development. All other trees and shrubs are to be retained. The most important amenity trees, T5 and T6 (lime) are to be retained and appropriately protected. The development will encroach into the root protection area of retained tree T1 (sycamore), which is located at the rear of the car park. However, there are existing areas of hardstanding within the root protection area of this tree which may have constrained root growth, although the presence of roots cannot be excluded. As such, a detailed Arboriculture Method Statement (AMS) will be required for all works proposed within the theoretical root protection area of retained trees. It is recommended that only "root friendly" materials and methods of working are used within this area to ensure the long term sustainability of the tree.

7.7.2 Additional planting is proposed at the entrance to and within the car park at the rear. Scope for additional planting is limited, given that the development occupies much of the space to the side of the existing building. A condition is required to ensure that proposed landscaping is sufficient and appropriate.

7.7.3 As a result of the age and nature of the building and the proximity to the canal, a bat survey has been provided with the application. This involved an inspection of the site and surroundings in addition to a bat activity survey at dusk. No signs of bats were discovered during the external building inspection. The exterior of the building did however contain low potential for roosting sites for bats to access. During the dusk survey, bat activity at the site was exceedingly low. Six soprano pipistrelles passes were detected, none of which emerged from the building and did not appear to be feeding but travelling. The report sets out that the site and surrounding areas provided a lack of ideal bat habitat. There were no signs of bats throughout the survey and it was therefore concluded that no bat roosting was taking place. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal would not adversely impact protected species of bats.

7.8 Air Quality

7.8.1 The site is located outside but in close proximity to the Lancaster Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). As the proposed building is slightly larger than the one it replaces and it will likely be more used it is reasonable to assume that there may be a small increase in traffic and this may impact on the AQMA. The Air Quality Officer advised, in relation to the previously approved application, that there is suitable provision of parking for cyclists in addition to at least two electric vehicle charging points. Cycle stands have been provided to the front of the building, however no charging points are proposed, and this was agreed as part of the previous application. Given the distance of the car park from the building, it is not practical to provide the vehicle charging points, and it was considered that this would not justify the refusal of the scheme, particularly as there are a variety of modes of transport which can be utilised, given the city centre location. The Air Quality Officer also previously recommended that a Construction Environmental Management Plan is provided to deal with dust issues that may arise. However, it is considered that this issue can be adequately controlled by separate legislation.

8.0 Planning Obligations

8.1 There are no planning obligations to consider in relation to this proposal.

9.0 Conclusions

- 9.1 The proposal requires the demolition of the existing church centre leading to the total loss of a Non-Designated Heritage Asset, which would harm the significance of the building, in addition to the significance of Lancaster Conservation Area and the adjacent Listed Building. However it is considered that sufficient justification has been provided for the loss of the building, to satisfy the requirements of Policy DM33 of the DM DPD, and that there are significant public benefits which would outweigh the harm, which is considered to be less than substantial for the purposes of the NPPF. The massing and scale of the proposed building relates well to the surrounding built form and will still retain the listed church's prominence in the streetscene, drawing influence from the adjacent church whilst introducing more contemporary elements. It is considered that the building would preserve this part of the Conservation Area and will not detract from the listed church.
- 9.2 The proposal is also considered acceptable in terms of impacts on residential amenity, highway safety, air quality and ecology. As such, the development is considered to be acceptable.

Recommendation

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

1. Standard three year timescale
2. Approved plans
3. Secure contract for construction prior to demolition
4. Archaeological watching brief
5. Arboricultural Method Statement
6. Contaminated land assessment and remediation
7. Drainage scheme
8. Scheme of highway improvement works: road widening; pedestrian links; road markings; review of street lighting to Peter Street and parking arrangements on Marton Street.
9. Materials/details including – stone; render; roofing materials; cladding; eaves verge and ridge details; rooflights; flues and vents; solar panels, boundary treatments, including gates and fencing; surfacing materials; windows and doors including opaque/coloured glazing; window surrounds; heads and cills; barrier to car park; any repairs to the plaque; louvres; details of canopy
10. Landscaping Scheme
11. Development in accordance with Arboricultural Implications Assessment
12. Surfacing and marking to car park
13. Provision of cycle storage
14. Inclusion of existing plaque, as shown on the drawings
15. Hours of construction

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.

Background Papers

None