

Agenda Item	Committee Date	Application Number
A10	16 September 2019	19/00634/LB

Application Site	Proposal
St Thomas Centre Marton Street Lancaster Lancashire	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 security gates and fencing adjoining the Penny Street, Marton Street and Peter Street elevations, and alterations to the boundary wall to Victoria Place including the addition of a wrought iron railings

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 Listed Building Consent is sought for a covered canopy to connect the former choir vestry of the church to a new church centre building to replace the existing one at the site. Alterations to the former choir vestry in the church are also proposed to facilitate this, including the removal of an existing timber door to and replacement with a timber framed glazed door and the removal of arched windows to the south elevation and replacement with a fire escape door. The proposed church hall would be larger than the existing one and 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. The proposal also includes the installation of some metal gates and railings to adjoin to the existing boundary walls of the church.

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
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.

5.0 Neighbour Representations

5.1 No public comments have been received.

6.0 Principal National and Development Plan Policies

6.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Paragraphs 193 – 196, 198 – 201 – 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 Development Management Development Plan Document

DM30 – Development affecting Listed Buildings

6.4 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:

- Impact on the Listed Buildings

7.2 Impact on the Listed Buildings

7.2.1 The proposal relates to extensions and alterations to the Grade II Listed St Thomas' Church, and separately listed walls and railings, associated with a replacement church centre adjacent to the Church. 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 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.

7.2.2 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 grp 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. A external staircase is also proposed to the elevation facing peter Street, and varies gates and railing are also proposed in the context of the new development and the listed church.

7.2.3 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.

7.2.4 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.

7.2.5 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.

7.2.6 Whilst the previously approved building was considered to be better relate 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.

7.2.7 As set out above, the building will be linked to the church via a covered walkway, provided by a canopy. The previous application proposed to attach to the listed church via a glazed link. The submission sets out that the underside of the canopy will line through with the existing hoodmould over the arched rear doorway into the grade 2 listed church. The fascia of the canopy will be finished in polyester powder coated aluminium to match that used on the new Church Centre and the structure will be supported by columns at each end of the canopy. This is considered to have a minimal impact both visually and physically upon the listed building and is considered to be an appropriate solution to link the new building to the church. The submission sets out that the present timber doorway into the vestry is rotten and is to be replaced by a new timber framed glazed door. On the south elevation of the vestry are two two-light arched windows, the right one to be replaced by an aluminium framed powder-coated fire escape door to an external terrace area. The vestry is a later addition, added on map evidence between 1938 and 1957. As such, it is considered that the proposal will not be detrimental to the significance of the building.

7.2.8 New railings and gates have also been proposed between the side of the church and Victoria Place, between the church and Marton Street, and between the wall abutting Victoria Place and the new building. The railings and walls around the church are separately Grade II listed and were designated separately for their ornate design and association with Edmund Sharpe. These are similar to those approved by the previous application which were considered acceptable. The post design comprises a circular hollow section with the top of each column finished with a decorative finial. It is considered that the proposal gates and railing will not be detrimental to the significance of the listed buildings.

8.0 Planning Obligations

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

9.0 Conclusions

9.1 The proposed development and works to the listed building are considered to be acceptable in terms of the scale, siting and design and will not a detrimental impact on the significance of the listed church and associated walls and railings.

Recommendation

That Listed Building Consent **BE GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard listed building timescale
2. Approved plans
3. Materials/details including – stone; render; roofing materials; cladding; eaves verge and ridge details; rooflights; flues and vents; solar panels, details of gates and fencing; windows and doors including opaque/coloured glazing; window surrounds; heads and cills; any repairs to the plaque; louvres; details of canopy

Background Papers

None