

Agenda Item	A8
Application Number	23/00637/LB
Proposal	Listed building application for the installation of a new rear service door including a roller shutter, replacement windows and door, alterations to courtyard windows and internal alterations including alterations to doors, new partitions, new ramp and freestanding booth
Application site	Palatine Hall Dalton Square Lancaster Lancashire
Applicant	Mr David Hammond
Agent	HPA Architects
Case Officer	Mr Patrick Hopwood
Departure	No
Summary of Recommendation	Approval

(i) **Procedural Matters**

This form of development would normally be dealt with under the Scheme of Delegation. However, as the landowner is Lancaster City Council, the application must be determined by the Planning Regulatory Committee.

1.0 Application Site and Setting

1.1 The site to which this application relates is Palatine Hall, at the north end of Dalton Square in Lancaster city centre. The property is a three-storey sandstone hall building with attached townhouse, originally a church, later becoming a public hall, then a music hall, then a cinema, and most recently council offices.

1.2 The site is Grade II listed, within the setting of numerous other Grade II and II* listed buildings, including the Grade II* Queen Victoria Statue. The site also lies within Lancaster Conservation Area.

2.0 Proposal

2.1 This application seeks listed building consent for the installation of a new rear service door including an internal roller shutter, replacement windows and door, alterations to courtyard-facing windows, and internal alterations including alterations to doors, new partitions, a new ramp and a freestanding booth. The works are detailed on the submitted plans and are required by the new tenant to improve the building's current function as office space and suit the applicant company's operational needs. The applicant engaged with the Council's Conservation Team via the specialist heritage advice service prior to the submission of this application.

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
80/0979	Conversion of premises into offices	Approved
01/01332/DPA	Construction of disabled access ramp and step with railings to fire exit door	Approved
01/01333/LB	Listed Building application to form a new step and ramp from emergency exit door including new railings	Approved
09/00544/LB	Listed building application for the installation of CCTV cameras to the front and rear, and installation of a door entry system to the front entrance door	Approved
22/00481/FUL	Installation of air source heat pumps	Approved

4.0 Consultation Responses

4.1 At the time of writing this report, the following responses have been received from statutory and internal consultees:

Consultee	Response
Conservation Team	No objection, subject to conditions to secure details of replacement windows, details of internal partitions, and final details of courtyard alterations.

4.2 At the time of writing this report, no responses from members of the public have been received.

5.0 Analysis

5.1 The key considerations in the assessment of this application are:

- Heritage

5.2 **Heritage** (NPPF Sections 12 and 16; Policies DM29, DM37, DM38 and DM39 of the Development Management DPD; Policy SP7 of the Strategic Policies and Land Allocations DPD)

5.2.1 In accordance with the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, when considering any application that affects a Listed Building, Conservation Area or their setting the local planning authority must pay special attention to the desirability of persevering or enhancing the character or appearance of the heritage asset or its setting. This is reiterated by the heritage policies of the Local Plan. Section 16 of the NPPF seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment; with Paragraph 199 affording 'great weight' to a designated heritage asset's conservation; Paragraph 200 requiring clear and convincing justification for any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset; and Paragraph 202 requiring decision makers to weigh 'less than substantial' harm against the public benefits of the proposal.

5.2.2 In terms of the external works, the new rear door is required to provide a delivery entrance from the rear yard. Originally, this was to feature an external roller shutter, however amended plans have been sought by the council and the door will now comprise of folding timber doors with the security shutter housed internally. This element will be located on the 1980s extension and partially visible from Friar's Passage. Given the location on the rear of the modern extension, and the improvements made with the amended plans, this is acceptable. Alterations to the courtyard-facing windows on the modern extension are also proposed, to board over sections of the glazing and adjust door positions. This is required as the rooms behind will be used as storage, and window provision is not required by the applicant. The justification here is somewhat lacking, however as the works are reversible and on the 1980s section of the building, and subject to an appropriate external finish, design and method of fixing being agreed, can be accepted in this instance. A 1980s era door with diagonal panelling facing the courtyard is also proposed to be replaced with a glazed alternative. This will have a neutral impact on the significance of the building.

5.2.3 The main doors and a number of windows on the side elevations are proposed to be repaired. This does not require listed building consent so is not considered further. The submitted plans indicate that all of the windows on the front elevation are to be replaced. The Conservation Team are satisfied that the front-facing windows have little significance beyond that they are well detailed and contribute to the aesthetic significance of the building, and likely date to a late 20th century restoration. It is also acknowledged that some of these windows are in a relatively poor condition. As such, replacement of these windows can be supported subject to further details of the replacements to ensure that they are well detailed and acceptable.

5.2.4 Internally, glazed partitions are to be fitted behind the balustrades on the mezzanine levels to improve the acoustics and thermal efficiency of the office space, which are both currently poor. The use of glazed walls will retain the openness of the building and a new bulkhead to house the glazing will be scribed to the existing cornicing to ensure the cornicing is undamaged. Other partitions to form meeting rooms are also considered acceptable and will have a neutral impact on the building's significance. A condition of further details of the internal partitions is not recommended given the satisfactory level of detail already described on the submitted amended plans. The justification in improving acoustic and thermal properties, and creating more usable office space is acceptable and supported. The freestanding booth will not affect any historic fabric, and although marginally impinging on the internal openness is fully reversible and raises no significant concerns. A ramp is proposed on the ground floor to allow wheeled access between the ground and lower ground floors. This will have a low level impact and is justified as there is currently only stepped access between these floors.

6.0 Conclusion and Planning Balance

6.1 Overall, the internal and external works are acceptable, with the less than substantial harm outweighed by the public benefits in improving the thermal, acoustic, and operational properties of the listed building as a large-scale office space, which is seen as the most viable use. Subject to conditions securing further details of replacement windows and works to the courtyard-facing elevations, the scheme complies with the local and national development plan when read as a whole, and as such is recommended for approval.

Recommendation

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

Condition no.	Description	Type
1	Standard Listed Building Consent Timescale	Control
2	Works in Accordance with Approved Plans and Details	Control
3	Details of external works	Prior to relevant works
4	Window condition survey and replacement detail	Prior to relevant works

Background Papers

N/A