

COMMITTEE DATE: 22/02/2017

Application Reference: 16/0809

WARD: Talbot
DATE REGISTERED: 28/11/16
LOCAL PLAN ALLOCATION: Town Centre Boundary
Winter Gardens
Defined Inner Area

APPLICATION TYPE: Full Planning Permission
APPLICANT: Blackpool Council

PROPOSAL: Erection of three storey extension with part basement to existing Winter Gardens complex to form Conference and Exhibition Centre (Class D1) fronting Leopold Grove, erection of link extension to Empress Ballroom with associated demolition works, escape staircase, public realm, landscaping, servicing area/ access arrangements and rooftop plant.

LOCATION: WINTER GARDENS, CHURCH STREET, BLACKPOOL, FY1 1HW

Summary of Recommendation: Grant Permission

CASE OFFICER

Mr M Shaw

BLACKPOOL COUNCIL PLAN 2015 -2020

This application accords with **Priority one of the Plan** - The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

This detailed planning application reference: 16/0815 and application for Listed Building Consent reference: 16/0809 has been the subject of pre-application discussions following on from the granting of outline planning permission in December 2016 under reference 16/0363. This outline approval established the principle and the scale of development. Subject to the agreement of detailed matters including facing materials, servicing arrangements, hard and soft landscaping and public realm works, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with relevant local and national planning policy and will deliver significant regeneration, economic, employment, heritage and environmental benefits for the town and significantly contribute towards securing the long term future of the Winter Gardens.

INTRODUCTION

Government funding in the region of £25 million has now been confirmed to deliver this development with preparatory site work due to begin, subject to the planning permission and listed building consent being granted, in the late Spring and with the aim for the facility to be open in 2019. The delivery of this development is an important part of the town's regeneration ambitions and will have significant benefits on a number of fronts from heritage and environmental to employment and economic and will strengthen the town centre and the town as a whole.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application relates to the Winter Gardens, a Grade II* Listed Building, in a block bounded by Church Street, Leopold Grove, Adelaide Street, Coronation Street, Adelphi Street and Carter Street. The Winter Gardens complex dates back to the 1870s and the site was extended and developed up until 1939. The main areas within the complex are the vestibule, Floral Hall, Ambulatory and Pavilion Theatre, Arena, Opera House, Empress Ballroom, The Olympia and the Spanish Hall suite which comprises the Spanish Hall, Galleon Bar, Renaissance Room and Baronial Hall. This application relates to the recently cleared site on Leopold Grove frontage which is currently used as a surface level car park and fenced off from Leopold Grove. The site drops in level approximately 1.5 metres across the frontage from the Church Street end towards Adelaide Street.

The Winter Gardens complex is within the designated town centre and the Town Centre Conservation Area. Directly across Leopold Grove from the application site is a modern contemporary block of 10 flats at the junction with Church Street. Adjoining this block of flats are four vacant and fire damaged period properties and a surface level car park which has outline planning permission granted on 23 November 2016 for the erection of a five/ six storey 156 bedroom hotel with basement parking reference: 16/0553.

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

This is an application for planning permission and listed building consent for the erection of a three storey building fronting onto Leopold Grove on the site of a 0.6 hectare surface level car park which will sit alongside and between the Empress Ballroom and the Opera House. Some existing structures, which are of no significant heritage value, including the two storey scale flat roof rear extension to the Empress Ballroom, will be removed as part of the development, which will provide a purpose built conference and exhibition space and a gross internal floorspace of 5,860 sqm. The capacity of the building is stated to be 380 people on the ground floor in the form of flexible exhibition space and for 1200 people on the first floor flexible conference space.

The building has a bold and modern contemporary design with a profiled frontage with a number of flat roof elements comprised of glazing, terracotta cladding, brickwork to match the Ballroom and grey panelling at roof level. The proposal will re-create a street frontage into the Winter Gardens from Leopold Grove and link into the existing entrances into the

Winter Gardens from St John's Square and Coronation Street. It will have a two storey glass link into the Empress Ballroom reflecting the lower scale and sensitivity of the Empress Ballroom building. The proposed building will have a maximum height of 19.5 metres which matches the scale of the brick frontage to the Empress Ballroom.

The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement, a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy, Transport Assessment and Travel Plan, Heritage Statement, Noise Impact Assessment and Environmental Noise Survey report, Sustainability Statement, Planning Statement, Public Realm Design and Access Statement and a Bat Survey.

MAIN PLANNING ISSUES

The main planning issues are considered to be:

- Principle of Development
- Design of the building and its impact on the Winter Gardens and the Town Centre Conservation Area
- Access, Parking and Servicing Arrangements
- Economy/ Employment
- Impact on Residential Amenity
- Other Issues

These issues will be discussed in the assessment section of this report.

CONSULTATIONS

The Theatres Trust - The Winter Gardens is the largest, earliest and most complete surviving Winter Gardens complex in the United Kingdom. It has been central to tourism, leisure and entertainment for over 130 years helping make the town England's premier seaside resort. Its outstanding architectural and historic significance is reflected in the Grade II* listing. There has been a history of under investment in the building and since the Council took ownership the Trust has been working closely with the Council to secure a viable future.

The Trust therefore supports the construction of a new state of the art conference, exhibition and convention centre on the site which will be connected to the Opera House, Empress Ballroom and Floral Hall. This type of use will support and complement the existing cultural offer attracting additional and a broader range of users to the Winter Gardens helping the complex to become more economically sustainable in the long term. Expanding the range and quality of spaces available for a wide range of events and activities will not only enhance cultural, leisure and educational events but will also undoubtedly increase opportunities for income generation, thereby improving the overall viability and investment in the upkeep of this unique heritage asset.

As noted in comments on the outline application it is essential the design maintains clear and safe access for articulated delivery vehicles to the Opera House loading dock and that acoustic measures are incorporated to ensure that noise generated from shows and events do not

impact concurrent events in either venue. Having seen the details we are pleased these have largely been considered and suitably addressed. We also support the replacement and upgrade of the technical equipment and the heating and cooling system in the Empress Ballroom. We also welcome the removal of the extension at the Leopold Grove end of the Ballroom and restoration of the west elevation.

However, we are concerned about the proposed route for food deliveries which runs behind the Opera House stage wall and then appears to access the goods lifts via the theatre's loading dock corridor. Due to the potential noise impact of moving food trollies during a performance we urge reconsideration of this route or require assurances that full sound proofing will be provided. We also note the new dressing room for the Ballroom shares access with public wc's and is some distance from the stage on the opposite side of the Ballroom. Further consideration should be given to finding space closer to the stage or provide separate access to the dressing rooms.

We are also concerned about long term storage requirements for tables and chairs from the Ballroom. It is important for the long term operation of the Ballroom that a new storage area is determined and safeguarded as part of this proposal. Once the above issues are addressed The Theatres Trust recommend the granting approval for the two applications to help secure a viable future for the Winter Gardens.

Architects/ Winter Gardens response

It is proposed that a new acoustic door be installed to replace the existing stage scenery door which will improve the acoustic separation between the access corridor and the Opera House and we will also upgrade the acoustic performance of the other link doors between the corridor and the auditorium to provide improved sound proofing. The Winter Gardens also propose to put in place a Management regime to ensure that when performances are occurring in the Opera House the movement of food trolleys does not cause disruption. There are other ways that items can be moved and things can be organised to happen in advance of events to ensure no disturbance, it all depends on what is on at what time, and the Winter Gardens is very experienced in managing multiple events within the centre, without causing disruption.

We have discussed this issue with the Winter Gardens and they are happy with the location that has been proposed. They will be able to clarify the details if necessary, but the new dressing rooms replace those that are currently on the first floor balcony. The existing rooms do not have direct access to the stage so this new provision is the same as the current situation. In fact it is better because it is on the stage and dance floor level. There are other dressing rooms that can be used as necessary for direct access.

There are no proposals to remove the building mentioned above as part of this application. The new proposed Conference Centre building provides a great deal of additional accessible flexible storage space that is far greater than any that it displaces. This application forms no part of the proposals for the Museum and concerns about what another application may involve should be addressed to that proposal. However the Winter Gardens understands very

clearly what its requirements are for storage and will not allow anything which would damage its ability to run the centre effectively.

We just need to be clear on the storage point, the storage in the new centre is only intended for that new space and will not replace the existing area in the Adelaide Street storage spaces. This is the area that we store the equipment for the Empress Ballroom and Arena

Up-dated Theatre Trust comments

I'm generally content that those issues have been considered. I am still concerned about the relationship with museum project, which I know is technically unrelated, thus my ongoing concerns that long term, storage facilities for all of the uses in the complex as a whole.

Historic England - Begun in 1878, the Blackpool Winter Gardens are the paramount example of a seaside entertainment venue. It is the earliest, most complete example of its type, as well as being one of the most ambitious. The initial phases saw the construction of skating rinks, as well as a pavilion, with promenading area and seating for 2,500. The success of the complex saw it progressively increase in size - the first Opera House, Her Majesty's Opera House, opened in 1889 and 1896 the huge Empress Ballroom was constructed, alongside a decorative Italian garden. Almost as notable as the continued expansion and upgrading of the complex, is the consistent use of architects and designers of the highest quality. As a result the Blackpool Winter Gardens retains a number of important examples of individual's works. It has also staged entertainers of international standing over the decades and is of considerable communal value as a result.

The Winter Gardens is an outstanding example of a seaside entertainment facility, altered to meet the changing demands of the holidaying public, whilst maintaining the highest quality of design and architecture. Its significance is recognised in its designation as a grade II* listed building, placing it in the top 5% of England's listed buildings. However, the condition of the Winter Gardens has resulted in it being included on the Historic England's Heritage at Risk list and is undergoing phased restoration.

The site which is the subject of the current planning application has a varied history, originally it functioned as an ice rink, and then an Italian ornamental rock garden linked to the Empress Ballroom. Later it housed an early multi storey car park, the removal of which has left an open space on the eastern elevation of the grade II*, showing the scars of the former buildings and sections of the structure which were not designed to be visible. The gap site has a negative impact on the setting of the heritage asset. We have previously provided comments on an outline application for the construction of a conference centre on the site, where we stated support for the principle of the development, but had concerns regarding the outline nature of the proposal. The current application now seeks full planning for the centre and we have the following comments to make:-

The worked-up scheme shows that the mass of the building is successfully broken up, with the result that the conference centre does not compete with its surroundings and is sensitive to the proportions of the adjacent structures. It considered that the building would integrate successfully into the Leopold Grove elevation of the Winter Gardens and heal the damage

which has been caused by the loss of earlier structures. The use of high quality materials on the elevations is imperative to allow the new build to further sit comfortably adjacent to the Winter Gardens. We feel the contemporary use of a ceramic material, with brick used as an emphasis, is an interesting reference to the Winter Gardens themselves and is appropriate.

We very much welcome the approach to fully integrate the new build into the historic complex, in order that the two function seamlessly together. Not only does this have the potential to further reinvigorate the Winter Gardens as a destination, but the new intervention has utilised the opportunity to address a number of existing issues for the complex such as accessibility and ventilation, which would help to future proof the heritage asset from a commercial view point. This is an approach to be commended.

The manner in which the new build has been integrated is sensitive, as it utilises and enhances former entrances which have fallen out of use, for example the entrance to the Empress Ballroom. The scheme also seeks to improve the Opera House Foyer, once a significant space in the complex, but now sadly altered, with its interest affected accordingly.

Paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that there is a desirability for new development to sustain and enhance the significance of a heritage asset, something which the proposal achieves. The National Planning Policy Framework also places emphasis on schemes recognising the economic viability heritage assets can contribute to creating sustainable communities (NPPF 132). This approach forms the heart of the proposal, with the national significance of the Winter Gardens forming a unique selling point of the Conference Centre, whilst in turn the centre aims to add positively to the financial future of the complex. The new building has been designed to respect its surroundings, resulting in a structure which helps to create a strong sense of place and local character, whilst being appropriately innovative. As such the proposal is considered to be in line with paragraph 58 of the National Planning Policy Framework requiring good design. In conclusion, we consider the proposal to be a sensitive and well considered scheme and are supportive of the application from a heritage perspective. We recommend that the application be determined in line with national planning policy and your own specialist advisors.

County Archaeologist LCC - The Winter Gardens is a grade II* Listed Building recorded as a seaside entertainment complex (Lancashire Historic Environment Record PRN10620) which was built 1875-8, with later alterations and additions. The national significance of this site has been recognised by virtue of its listing. The entire Winter Gardens complex except the car park on Leopold Grove is included in this designation. Lancashire Archaeological Advisory Service (LAAS) has viewed the documents supporting the application and is satisfied the development can go ahead. The 1847 1st Edition Ordnance Survey 1:10560 mapping (Lancashire Sheet 50, surveyed 1844) shows part of the proposed development area that will form the new Conference and Exhibition Centre was occupied by a structure named as a Parsonage, which was probably associated with the nearby church of St John. The Parsonage is renamed as a Vicarage on the more detailed OS mapping of 1893 but was demolished pre-1912 and the site was redeveloped into the Winter Gardens complex (Lancashire Historic Environment Record PRN15437). The nature and extent of the clearance works is however unknown and whilst it is possible some remains could survive, given the previous

development of the site this seems unlikely. LAAS would therefore not recommend any formal archaeological work, but if extensive remains are encountered we would be happy to advise further.

Victorian Society - The case was considered the Society's Northern Buildings Committee at its most recent meeting, and I write now to convey our response. My letter of 3 October 2016 articulated the Society's in-principle acceptance of this scheme. We accept the scale of the proposed development, as we do, broadly, the palette of materials. We also welcome the removal of later accretions from the eastern façade of the Empress Ballroom. A scholarly re-instatement (as far as possible) of this elevation of the listed building should be carried out.

Notwithstanding the above, we maintain certain reservations over the proposed architectural treatment of the new building, particularly its entrance. In light of the Winter Gardens' particular character, its identity, its function and its history, we feel that the new entrance proposed to Leopold Grove, intended to provide access to the new conference facility, is insufficiently legible and puzzlingly low-key. Even from certain angles on Leopold Grove itself it could prove to be almost invisible. A greater sense of grandeur and celebration is required, particularly given those facets of the Winter Gardens' significance noted above and the nature of the buildings' other principal entrances. We therefore recommend that the treatment of this element of the Conference Centre is revised and reworked, and that a design both more attuned to the special interest of the building and more functionally appropriate is devised.

Architects response - We would welcome their support of the proposals scale, palette of materials and the proposals to remove later accretions from the eastern façade of the Empress Ballroom. With regard to their stated reservations we provide the following statement that will hopefully be helpful to you.

The proposed new entrance is not meant to over-power or detract from the existing historic buildings and entrances to the complex. One important element of our brief for the new building is to use the new intervention as a key to resolve level change issues within the existing buildings so that the whole complex can function more efficiently. The large double height entrance foyer and circulation space that has been proposed will do this, and will provide a spacious and impressive volume that will allow for thousands of people to circulate and enjoy new views of the exposed Empress Ballroom flank wall. The detailing of this space will be clean and minimal to heighten the appreciation of the historic buildings details. The new building will be a powerful and modern addition to the Winter Garden's complex that plays a subtle game of responding to the required function and the existing architecture and context while not over powering. The historic principal entrances into the Winter Gardens must not be dominated or overshadowed by the new. We feel that the proposals provide a distinct and legible entrance without dominating the entire elevation, particularly given its proximity to the Empress Ballroom.

Built Heritage Manager- I refer to the application for the proposed new conference centre at the Winter Gardens. I have no objection to the application. Please will you request samples

and technical information for all materials including the fixing and maintenance of the terracotta tiles.

Information should be provided for the methods of making good and cleaning of existing brickwork. I could not find any information regarding rainwater disposal arrangements for the new building. Please will you also request details of how the new building will abut the existing buildings, and whether existing rainwater disposal arrangements will need to be altered to take account of this.

Architects response - We are soon to progress the Technical Design of the project and will be able to give a more detailed/ specific response once this has advanced. You need to be aware that at this point, we can not be specific about the exact materials that we propose to use as they have not been designed, costed or approved. However, we know exactly the types of materials that are proposed and these are as has been indicated on the planning application documents. We would expect these details to be reserved by condition.

In the first instance we would like to expand on the queries:

1. **Samples and Technical Information for all materials including the fixing and maintenance of the Terracotta Tiles** - We would have expected these matters to be reserved by condition, however we have gathered relevant technical information that will hopefully give you a better idea of what is proposed. In addition we have considered also that all metal parts will be suitable to reflect the necessity of protecting them from corrosion in marine environments.
2. **Methods of making good and cleaning of existing brickwork**- General references were included in the Conservation Architect Description of the proposal (P.45) and impact assessment (p.55). Also please refer to the following statement from the Conservation Architect: "While I am surprised that they are asking for it at this stage, our proposal for cleaning the existing masonry to the north and east elevations would be to use a light steam based (DOFF) system initially. If this did not provide the desired level of clean we would enhance the specification to a slightly more aggressive JOS Torq system which is a mild air abrasive based cleaning. This system would most likely be required to clean the plaster and paint from the east elevation to Leopold Grove once the addition is removed. Both systems are conservation sensitive and would be carried out by trained specialists and subject to extensive trials, which could be dealt with for approval by a listed building condition".
3. **Details of how the new building will abut the existing buildings**- The proposal has incorporated the most relevant abutment details. We would however expect this to be reserved by condition as the technical Information is being developed. However the approach that will be taken is that the new building will be self supporting and will stand independently of the existing structure that it abuts. The existing building will be made good before closing up. There will be a movement joint between the existing and the new with a suitable weather flashing to ensure watertightness. If any additional abutment details are required at this point we would be happy to develop

them.

4. **Rainwater Disposal arrangements-** As we are currently developing the Technical Design of the project we would have expected to have this reserved by condition. However, in principle, we have envisaged to not modify any existing conditions but to improve them. The new building will have an individual rainwater disposal strategy.

The Conservation Architect has included the following in the Heritage Statement:-

P.55- The overhaul, repair and extension (where necessary) of the original cast iron rainwater goods to the north elevation of the Empress Ballroom will enhance the character of the heritage asset to the newly internalised elevation and will serve to reveal the history of development within the new conference facilities.

P.54- The abutment of the new building to the north west stair turret of the Empress Ballroom requires a special detail due to the projecting gutter that exists in this location. It is proposed to remove the gutter and form a new parapet gutter in this location to enable a clean liner abutment. The physical impact of this detail on the heritage asset is mitigated by the fact that it is not visible from any significant vantage points and that the detail will be fully reversible if necessary.

Police Architectural Liaison Officer- it is important that the construction site is adequately secured to prevent/ reduce potential for criminal activity including theft and damage. Within the past 12 months the area has been subject to burglary, assault and thefts, including the thefts of number of wallet and phone thefts. Lighting, monitored CCTV and access control systems can help and prevent crimes. The submitted Design and Access Statement includes a Secure by Design section and a number of pre-application comments have been incorporated into the proposal, however some further measures are also recommended.

Blackpool Civic Trust- No comments have been received at the time of preparing this report. Any comments that are received before the Committee meeting will be reported in the Update Note.

Town Centre Forum- No comments have been received at the time of preparing this report. Any comments that are received before the Committee meeting will be reported in the Update Note.

The Twentieth Century Society- No comments have been received at the time of preparing this report. Any comments that are received before the Committee meeting will be reported in the Update Note.

Contaminated Land Officer- No comments

Head of Housing and Environmental Protection Service - a construction management plan is required. I would suggest working times of 8am -6pm Monday to Friday and 9am- 1pm

Saturday with no Sunday or Bank Holiday working. There could be issues with delivery and servicing noise, reversing alarms depending on the time of day. It would be useful to have more details of delivery times. A morning curfew may be required and also a 'quiet system of working' for evening activity.

A scheme for any external flood lighting should be submitted and agreed prior to installation.

Head of Highways and Traffic Management - No comments have been received at the time of preparing this report. Any comments that are received before the Committee meeting will be reported in the Update Note.

Waste -No comments have been received at the time of preparing this report. Any comments that are received before the Committee meeting will be reported in the Update Note.

Drainage Manager- No comments have been received at the time of preparing this report. Any comments that are received before the Committee meeting will be reported in the Update Note.

Blackpool International Airport - No objections

United Utilities- Water - No comments have been received at the time of preparing this report. Any comments that are received before the Committee meeting will be reported in the Update Note.

Electricity North West - No comments have been received at the time of preparing this report. Any comments that are received before the Committee meeting will be reported in the Update Note.

Press notice published: 22 December 2016
5 site notices displayed: 16 December 2016
Neighbours notified: 13 December 2016

No representations have been received at the time of preparing this report. Any comments that are received before the Committee meeting will be reported in the Update Note.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27 March 2012. The National Planning Policy Framework states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute towards sustainable development. There are three strands to sustainable development namely economic, social and environmental. Proposed development that accords with an up-to-date Local Plan should be approved and proposed development that conflicts should be refused unless other material considerations indicate otherwise it contains 12 core planning principles including :-

- 1 - 'building a strong, competitive economy'-ensure the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth

- 2 -'ensuring the vitality of town centres'-recognise town centres as the heart of their communities and pursue policies to support their viability and vitality
- 7 - 'requiring good design'.....good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and is indivisible from good planning and should contribute positively to making places better for people
- 12 -'conserving and enhancing the historic environment'.....the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness

When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss.

The National Planning Practice Guidance - Development should seek to promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, local man-made and natural heritage and culture, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation. The successful integration of all forms of new development with their surrounding context is an important design objective, irrespective of whether a site lies on the urban fringe or at the heart of a town centre.

Natural features and local heritage resources can help give shape to a development and integrate it into the wider area, reinforce and sustain local distinctiveness, reduce its impact on nature and contribute to a sense of place. Views into and out of larger sites should also be carefully considered from the start of the design process. Local building forms and details contribute to the distinctive qualities of a place. These can be successfully interpreted in new development without necessarily restricting the scope of the designer. Standard solutions rarely create a distinctive identity or make best use of a particular site. The use of local materials, building methods and details can be an important factor in enhancing local distinctiveness when used in evolutionary local design, and can also be used in more contemporary design. However, innovative design should not be discouraged.

BLACKPOOL LOCAL PLAN PART 1: CORE STRATEGY

The Blackpool Local Plan: Part 1 - Core Strategy has been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 20 January 2016. In accordance with paragraph 216 of the National Planning Policy Framework significant weight can now be given to the policies of the Core Strategy. Certain policies in the Saved Blackpool Local Plan have now been superseded by policies in the Core Strategy (these are listed in the appendices to the document). Other policies in the Saved Blackpool Local Plan will remain in use until Part 2 of the new Local Plan is produced.

The policies in the Core Strategy that are most relevant to this application are -

- CS1 - Strategic Location for Development
- CS5 - Connectivity
- CS7 - Quality of Design
- CS8- Heritage
- CS9 - Water Management
- CS10 - Sustainable Design
- CS17- Blackpool Town Centre
- CS18- Winter Gardens
- CS21- Leisure and Business Tourism

SAVED POLICIES: BLACKPOOL LOCAL PLAN 2001-2016

The Blackpool Local Plan was adopted in June 2006 and the majority of its policies saved by direction in June 2009. The following policies are most relevant to this application:

- LQ1 Lifting the Quality of Design
- LQ2 Site Context
- LQ3 Layout of Streets and Spaces
- LQ4 Building Design
- LQ7 Strategic Views
- LQ9 Listed Buildings
- LQ10 Conservation Areas
- BH3 Residential and Visitor Amenity
- BH4 Public Health and Safety
- AS1 General Development Requirements
- AS2 New Development With Significant Transport Implications

ASSESSMENT

Principle The proposed extension relates to the site of a surface level car park which also previously included a service ramp and retail premises enclosed by the Empress Ballroom, The Opera House and restaurant premises 'Amaro' and shop fronting Church Street. The proposal includes the demolition of a number of out-dated back of house buildings including the two storey scale box extension built onto the rear (Leopold Grove elevation) of the Empress Ballroom. This proposal has already been granted the benefit of outline planning permission which establishes the principle and scale of development under reference 16/0363. The scale of the development replicates that shown under application 16/0363.

Subject to the subsequent submission of full details, materials and other detailed submissions, the extension will make beneficial use of an neglected and under-used part of the Winter Gardens complex and remove some unsympathetic additions to the complex and re-instate some original features to the Empress Ballroom including re-opening the Leopold Grove elevation and creating an outside seating terrace. The proposal will strengthen the offer, viability and long term future of the Winter Gardens and will significantly assist in the regeneration of the town centre. It is considered therefore that the proposal constitutes

sustainable development meeting the social, economic and environmental requirements as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and should therefore be supported.

Design of the building and its impact on the Winter Gardens and the Town Centre

Conservation Area The application seeks full approval for all details (design, scale, layout, means of access and landscaping) and listed building consent although the scale (height and bulk) of the extension has been previously approved under planning permission 16/0363.

The building has a bold and modern contemporary design with a profiled frontage with a number of flat roof elements comprised of glazing, terracotta cladding, brickwork to match the Ballroom and grey panelling at roof level. The proposal will re-create a street frontage into the Winter Gardens from Leopold Grove and will link into the existing entrances into the Winter Gardens from St John's Square and Coronation Street. It will have a two storey glass link into the Empress Ballroom reflecting the lower scale and sensitivity of this link. The proposed building will have a maximum height of 19.5 metres which matches the scale of the brick frontage to the Empress Ballroom. The proposed building is profiled and set back from the rear elevation of the Empress Ballroom giving a clean visual break between the new and existing buildings and help to reduce the bulk of the proposed building. The submitted plans also indicate a two storey height glazed entrance feature abutting the Empress Ballroom which will lighten the appearance of the building. The eaves level of the proposed building will line through the ledge feature directly above the high level circular detail on the rear gable wall of the Empress Ballroom.

The proposal has the support of Historic England and the Theatres Trust, now that the detailed queries raised concerning impact have been dealt with. The comments of the Built Heritage Manager will largely be addressed via appropriate conditions to be attached to any approvals. The Victorian Society comments are not considered to outweigh those comments given in favour of the scheme. The building has been designed so as not to overpower the two existing main entrances and is considered to respond appropriately to the existing architecture and will link well into the existing complex. In terms of the acceptability of the scale, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with national and local planning policy subject to the submission of suitable quality facing materials and other associated external works and the approval of other relevant design, technical and operational matters which will be dealt with as conditions of approval.

Public Realm/ Landscaping is a key component in terms of the quality and setting of the proposed development and its transformation of the built environment on and around Leopold Grove. As with the facing materials of the building itself the hardsurfacing materials to be used are to be dealt with as a condition of any planning permission and listed building consent to ensure the appropriate level of quality of materials are used so as not to detract from the overall of the scheme. As well as using attractive materials they will also need to be hardwearing given that servicing takes place from Leopold Grove and involves large articulated vehicles. The removal of the extension on the rear of the Empress Ballroom will enable an attractive terraced seating area to be created.

Access, Parking and Servicing Arrangements Servicing, access and back of house facilities are shown on the submitted plans within the building itself and to the rear of Amaro restaurant and retail premises fronting Church Street. No off- street car park facilities are included with the proposal and the proposal will rely on existing town centre parking facilities and public transport facilities. The implementation of a travel plan, cycle parking and a condition relating to the agreement of servicing arrangements will be imposed on any approval for the proposal. However final comments of the Head of Highways and Traffic Management Transportation are still awaited and will be reported via the up-date notes together with any further conditions/ recommendations.

The proposal is important is seeking to integrate the Conference and Exhibition Centre in with the existing complex which will help the viability and connectivity of the development between the different areas and will help secure the future of the Winter Gardens, help maximise its potential and make it fit for 21st century requirements.

Economy/ Employment The construction of a purpose built conference and exhibition facility for a maximum of 1500 conference delegates will add significantly to the economy of the town centre and help make Blackpool a stronger and more vibrant all year round visitor destination. As well as providing employment opportunities at the new Conference Centre the proposal will help strengthen employment opportunities and business in local hotels, bars, shops and restaurants and the contribution to the Blackpool economy and the employment opportunities offered are to be welcomed.

Impact on Residential Amenity- the proposed Conference and Exhibition Centre will undoubtedly introduce increased activity and noise in and around Leopold Grove, as will the new hotel development across the road. Although this is a busy town centre location the activities are not anything over and above what one would expect from a busy town centre location and the existing Winter Gardens complex is already partly serviced from Leopold Grove. Therefore the impact of the proposal on the flat development at the junction of Leopold Grove and Church Street is not considered too significant given the context and the existing situation.

In terms of the physical impact of the proposal on the nearby flats, the existing buildings already form a significant and longstanding backdrop to the application site and the proposal is not expected to increase this impact significantly. There may be some shading of the ground floor of the flats on the opposite side of Leopold Grove as the sun moves to its westerly position but this is not considered so significant an impact to warrant refusal of the application on amenity grounds.

Other Issues

Contaminated land and archaeological matters have already been investigated and it is understood there are no particular issues. Should this subsequently change then the relevant specialist advisors will be further involved to resolve any matters.

Drainage - detailed drainage comments from United Utilities are awaited on the technical submissions and these will be reported via the Update Note. The imposition of conditions

requiring the provision of separate foul and surface water drainage facilities are standard conditions and are included in the list of conditions.

Crime and disorder - The Police Architectural Liaison Officer advises that a number of earlier recommendations have been taken on board. The additional recommendations have been forwarded to the architect for comment and any response will be reported via the Update Note.

CONCLUSION

For the reasons outlined above the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the relevant local and national planning policy and guidance and should therefore be supported.

LEGAL AGREEMENT AND/OR DEVELOPER FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION

None

FINANCIAL BENEFITS

See report

HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

Under Article eight and Article one of the first protocol to the Convention on Human Rights, a person is entitled to the right to respect for private and family life, and the peaceful enjoyment of his/her property. However, these rights are qualified in that they must be set against the general interest and the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. It is not considered that the application raises any human rights issues.

CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998

The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the Council's general duty, in all its functions, to have regard to community safety issues as required by section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Outline planning application File(s) reference: 16/0363 and planning permission for the hotel on Leopold Grove reference: 16/0553 which can be accessed via the link below:

<http://idoxpa.blackpool.gov.uk/online-applications/search.do?action=simple>

Recommended Decision: Grant Permission

Conditions and Reasons

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. The development shall be carried out, except where modified by the conditions attached to this permission, in accordance with the planning application received by the Local Planning Authority including the following plans:

Location Plan stamped as received by the Council on 28th November 2016.

Drawings numbered;

BP003-BA-Z0-B1-PL-A-1202 Rev P1.3

BP003-BA-Z0-00-PL-A-1203 Rev P1.3

BP003-BA-Z0-01-PL-A-1204 Rev P1.3

BP003-BA-Z0-02-PL-A-1205 Rev P1.3

BP003-BA-Z0-04-PL-A-1207 Rev P1.3

BP003-BA-Z0-10-PL-A-1213 Rev P1.3

BP003-BA-Z1-ZZ-EL-A-2100 Rev P1.1

BP003-BA-Z0-ZZ-EL-A-2201 Rev P1.2

BP003-MF-Z1-RF-DR-M-1205 Rev P3

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and so the Local Planning Authority can be satisfied as to the details of the permission.

3. The building/use hereby approved shall not be occupied/first commenced until the servicing arrangements, including manoeuvring areas and delivery times, have been provided in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority; the servicing shall thereafter carried out in accordance with the approved details and such areas shall not be used thereafter for any purpose other than that indicated on the approved plan and all servicing within the site including loading and unloading shall take place from within the servicing area shown.

Reason: In the interests of the appearance of the locality and highway safety, in accordance with Policies LQ4 and AS1 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016 and Policy CS7 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027.

4. Prior to the development hereby approved being first brought into use the secure cycle storage and refuse storage provision shall be provided in accordance with details to be submitted and approved in writing with the Local Planning Authority

and shall thereafter be retained.

Reason: To enable access to and from the property by sustainable transport mode and to ensure safe and adequate refuse storage provision, in accordance with Policies AS1, LQ1 and BH3 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016 and Policies CS5 and CS7 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027

5. Notwithstanding the submitted plans details of external materials to be used, including brick, tiles, mortar, glazing and window/ door frames, metalwork and rain water pipes, on the external elevations shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of works above ground level.

Reason: In the interests of the appearance of the locality, in accordance with Policies LQ1, LQ2, LQ4, LQ9, and LQ10 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016 and Policies CS7, CS8 and CS18 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027.

6. The development shall not be occupied until a travel plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such travel plans shall include the appointment of a travel co-ordinator and a format that consists of surveying, travel audits, a working group, action plans with timescales and target setting for the implementation of each element.

No part of the development shall be occupied prior to the implementation of the Approved Travel Plan (or implementation of those parts identified in the Approved Travel Plan as capable of being implemented prior to occupation). Those parts of the Approved Travel Plan that are identified therein as being capable of implementation after occupation shall be implemented in accordance with the timetable therein and shall continue to be implemented as long as any part of the development is occupied.

Reason: In order to ensure appropriate provision exists for safe and convenient access by public transport, cycle, and on foot as well as by car, in accordance with Policy AS1 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001 - 2016 and Policy CS5 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027.

7. Notwithstanding the submitted plans, details of the surfacing materials to be used shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the development.

Reason: In the interests of the appearance of the locality, in accordance with Policies LQ1, LQ3, LQ9 and LQ10 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016 and

Policies CS7, CS8 and CS18 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027.

8. Notwithstanding the submitted plans, details of the appearance, technical specification and siting of any external ventilation ducting and plant shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority before development commences. The agreed ducting and shall then be provided prior to first use and shall thereafter be retained.

Reason: To safeguard the living conditions of the occupants of nearby premises, in accordance with Policies BH3, BH4 and LQ1 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016 and Policy CS7 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027.

9. No development shall take place until a Construction Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Construction Management Plan shall include and specify the provision to be made for the following:

- dust mitigation measures during the construction period
- control of noise emanating from the site during the construction period
- hours and days of construction work for the development
- contractors' compounds and other storage arrangements
- provision for all site operatives, visitors and construction loading, off-loading, parking and turning within the site during the construction period
- arrangements during the construction period to minimise the deposit of mud and other similar debris on the adjacent highways
- the routing of construction traffic.

The construction of the development shall then proceed in accordance with the approved Construction Management Plan.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of surrounding residents and to safeguard the character and appearance of the area in accordance with Policies LQ1 and BH3 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016 and Policy CS7 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027.

10. Prior to the commencement of any development details of surface water drainage shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be completed prior to the first occupation of the building and maintained and managed in accordance with the approved details thereafter.

Reason: To secure proper drainage and to reduce the risk of flooding & pollution and to improve bathing water quality standards on the Fylde Coast in accordance with Policy NE10 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016.

11. Prior to the commencement of any development, details of the foul drainage scheme to serve the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Foul shall be drained on a separate system. The building shall not be occupied until the approved foul drainage scheme has been completed to serve that building, in accordance with the approved details. This development shall be completed maintained and managed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To secure proper drainage and to reduce the risk of flooding & pollution and to improve bathing water quality standards on the Fylde Coast in accordance with Policy NE10 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016.

12. Details of an external lighting scheme to the building to be incorporated into the development shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of works above ground level and such scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved and retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of the appearance of the development in accordance with Policies LQ1, LQ4 and LQ10 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016 and Policies CS7, CS8 and CS18 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027.

13. Prior to the development hereby approved being first occupied a scheme of off-site highway works shall be carried out in accordance with details to be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and free flow of traffic in accordance with Policies AS1 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016 and Policies CS7, CS8 and CS18 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027.

14. Detailed treatment of the exposed Empress Ballroom elevation to Leopold Grove and the link of the approved building into the Empress Ballroom shall be carried out in accordance with details to be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development.

Reason: In the interests of the appearance of the Empress Ballroom, Winter Gardens and wider locality, in accordance with Policies LQ1, LQ2, LQ4, LQ9, and LQ10 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016 and Policies CS7, CS8 and CS18 of the

Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027.

15. a) No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscaping works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include any proposed changes to existing ground levels, means of enclosure and boundary treatment, areas of soft landscaping, hard surfaced areas and materials, planting plans specifications and schedules (including plant size, species and number/ densities), existing landscaping to be retained, and shall show how account has been taken of any underground services.
- b) The landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details within the first planting season following completion of the development hereby approved or in accordance with a programme agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority (whichever is sooner.)
- c) Any trees or shrubs planted in accordance with this condition which are removed, uprooted, destroyed, die, or become severely damaged or seriously diseased within five years of planting shall be replaced within the next planting season by trees or shrubs of similar size and species to those originally required to be planted, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.

Reason. To ensure the site is satisfactorily landscaped in the interests of visual amenity and to ensure there are adequate areas of soft landscaping to act as a soakaway during times of heavy rainfall with regards to Policy LQ6 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016 and Policies CS7, CS8 and CS18 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027.

Advice Notes to Developer

Not applicable