

COMMITTEE DATE: [11/04/2017](#)

Application Reference: 17/0104

WARD: Talbot
DATE REGISTERED: 17/02/17
LOCAL PLAN ALLOCATION: Town Centre Boundary
Retail Cafe Zone
Defined Inner Area

APPLICATION TYPE: Full Planning Permission
APPLICANT: Mr S Thompson

PROPOSAL: Erection of 4 storey extension to Corporation Street elevation of building to form external lift shaft.

LOCATION: MUNICIPAL BUILDING, CORPORATION STREET, BLACKPOOL, FY1 1EJ

Summary of Recommendation: Grant Permission

CASE OFFICER

Gary Johnston

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 proposal affects a distinctive and prominent Locally Listed Building within the Town Centre Conservation Area. In the absence of an alternative location for the lift shaft the proposal has to be assessed in terms of its impact on the building and the Conservation Area. In its favour the extension would only project 2 metres by 2.6 metres wide, it would not disrupt the frieze on the facade and it would be a pastiche of the host building. Against it would be the fact that it would disrupt the clean lines of the facade. Given the absence of an alternative location for the lift shaft your officers on balance suggest that the balanced judgement required by para 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework weighs marginally in favour of the proposal.

INTRODUCTION

Members may be aware that the Municipal Building is going through a process of internal refurbishment and reconfiguration and that discussions have been held with the Police and the Department for Work and Pensions with a view to them using part of the refurbished floorspace in association with the remaining Council Services. As part of the discussions with the Department for Work and Pensions they have identified a need for a separate lift to serve

their proposed accommodation. Planning officers have asked for justification as to why the lift could not be housed internally or in a less conspicuous location and have received the following comments -

- **using the atrium in the centre of the building**

The atrium in the centre of the building is behind the current customer first accommodation and providing access to it would mean effectively cutting the current counter arrangement in two and incurring additional costs to address the extra alteration works to the counter arrangement, as well as impacting on light and ventilation provision via this atrium area.

- **using the goods area with access off Market Street**

The goods area is totally remote from the customer first entrance, on the diagonally opposite corner of the building and would be somewhat unmanageable to control access to, it also does not serve the first floor as this area of the floor plate is now the new Police office.

- **other internal locations accessed off the public areas**

The physical disturbance to the building given its steel frame configuration, the fact that the current 3rd floor modernisation works are due to be handed over on the 13 April 2017, and an internal lift would impact on the third floor plate would be a bit of a disaster at this stage. The whole Department for Work and Pensions move is time sensitive with a 'drop dead' date in November this year, which we are just about now able to facilitate. The time implication alone for an internal lift installation would almost certainly take the work beyond the DWP's end date.

- **externally in the recess between the Town Hall and the Municipal Building**

This suggestion is answered in a similar way to point 2 above in that there is no physical connection to the public area along this elevation, the police reception is at ground floor and the police office and toilets sit along this elevation, this existing lift is already in this vicinity and was precluded from use by Department for Work and Pensions due to its remote location from their proposed accommodation.

SITE DESCRIPTION

This application relates to the Corporation Street elevation of the Municipal Building. The building is bounded by Corporation Street, West Street and Market Street and has a strong cohesive appearance with brickwork elevations and areas of stonework framing the windows on the elevations. On the Corporation Street elevation of the building there is a glazed canopy which shields the ground floor windows and main entrance. The Municipal Building sits behind the Town Hall and is a Locally Listed Building within the Town Centre Conservation Area. The reason for the Local Listing is because it is a '*striking interwar building with good detailing and a frieze of stone panels depicting 'progress'. It is a strong townscape feature which also forms a group with the earlier town hall.*'

The Listing entry records the following -

1937-8 by J. C. Robinson of the Borough Surveyor's Department as an extension to the earlier town hall.

Four storeys, 11 window bays to each elevation, the building is a square brick block with

splayed corners and stone dressings, linked to the south side of the Town Hall. Flat roof, the elevations are faced in red brick, probably on a steel frame, with a frieze of Darley Dale stone panels on the theme of Progress between the first and second floor around the three sides; these were designed by the Head of the Art Department of Blackpool Technical College, Charles Hayes, and his students, and carved by A. Sherwood Edwards. Each sequence starts with an abstracted elemental motif followed by a progression of scenes culminating with the latest motor coach. Windows are modern replacements, and the ground floor is glazed between sandstone piers, with a modern entrance and canopy on the east side. The building is built up to the back of the footway and is a prominent townscape element on Corporation Street.

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

This application is for a 4 storey extension to the building. The extension would be sited close to the south east corner of the building and would project from the face of the building by 2 metres and would have a width of 2.6 metres. The overall height would be 16 metres. The design of the extension would replicate the design of the Municipal Building - stonework at ground floor level, brickwork and stonework to first, second and third floor levels and stonework parapet forming the cap to the liftshaft. The liftshaft would incorporate 'dummy' windows to match the window positions on the main Corporation Street elevation.

The application is accompanied by a Heritage Statement.

MAIN PLANNING ISSUES

The main planning issues are considered to be:

- impact on the character and appearance of the building
- impact on the character and appearance of the Town Centre Conservation Area
- impact on highway and pedestrian safety

CONSULTATIONS

Built Heritage Manager: I have had some input to the design of the lift in order to limit its impact on the character of the building and, therefore, I have no objection to the application

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.

Head of Highways and Traffic Management: The proposal site is on Corporation Street between Talbot Road and West Street. Two access points are available for pedestrians into the building currently, one to the Customer First Centre and the other to Municipal Building Reception. I am aware that changes are proposed and going forward access points are changing, and how they are used.

There are two bus stops outside the proposal site, serving a number of bus services on a regular frequency which results in bus users waiting in this area. There are other pedestrians who require access into the building and others who walk in a north/south direction. In terms

of physical structure/street furniture along here, there are two bins, cycle hoops, supports for the canopy and bollards are proposed as a security measure for the change in personnel within the building. Whilst the footway, is wider than a standard footway, the existing items of furniture and canopy support, together with bus users waiting in this area requires pedestrians travelling in a north sound direction having to meander and plot a route through in conflict with others. The installation of the lift shaft will result in pedestrians having to negotiate a further hazard in an area which is already congested.

I should also point out that the structure is on/over the public highway, there have been no discussions with Traffic and Highways to seek views and whether this would be acceptable. On this basis, I wish to object to this proposal and would recommend refusal.

PUBLICITY AND REPRESENTATIONS

Site notice displayed : 15 March 2017

Neighbours notified : 17 February 2017

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) came into force in March 2012 and constitutes guidance for local planning authorities and decision-takers as a material consideration in determining applications.

The core planning principles in the NPPF include:

- proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs.
- take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas.
- local authorities should encourage effective use of land by re-using land that has previously been developed provided that it is not of high environmental value.
- local authorities should conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.

Paragraphs 7, 9, 10, 11, 14, 17, 18, 19, 23, 56, 59, 128, 129, 132, 135, 137 and 197 considered to be most relevant to this application.

BLACKPOOL LOCAL PLAN PART 1: CORE STRATEGY

The Blackpool Local Plan Part 1 : Core Strategy was adopted by the Council in January 2016. The policies in the Core Strategy that are most relevant to this application are -

Policy CS1: Strategic Location of Development

Policy CS5: Connectivity
Policy CS7: Quality of Design
Policy CS8: Heritage
Policy CS17: Blackpool Town Centre

SAVED POLICIES: BLACKPOOL LOCAL PLAN 2001-2016

The Blackpool Local Plan was adopted in June 2006. A number of policies in the Blackpool Local Plan (2006) have now been superseded by policies in the Core Strategy (these are listed in Appendix B of the Core Strategy). Other policies in the Blackpool Local Plan are saved until the Local Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies is produced.

The following policies are most relevant to this application:

Policy LQ1: Lifting the Quality of Design
Policy LQ2: Site Context
Policy LQ3: Layout of Streets and Spaces
Policy LQ5: Public Realm Design
Policy LQ10 Conservation Areas
Policy LQ14 Extensions and Alterations
Policy BH3 Residential and Visitor Amenity
Policy BH4 Public Health and Safety
Policy AS1 General Development Requirements

ASSESSMENT

impact on the character and appearance of the building - The building is Locally Listed and has a cohesive appearance to all 3 public elevations. The summary of the reason for listing accurately reflects its status - *'striking interwar building with good detailing and a frieze of stone panels depicting 'progress'. It is a strong townscape feature which also forms a group with the earlier town hall.'* Para 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework states - *'The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.'* This is echoed in Policy CS8 of the Core Strategy. The extension would mimic the original building in terms of its design and care would be needed to ensure that the materials would match as closely as possible the materials on the original building. The location would not disrupt the stone panel frieze on the Corporation Street elevation but would disrupt the clean lines of the building, albeit that the projection would only be 2 metres by 2.6 metres. The facade makes a significant contribution to the Corporation Street townscape by reason of its length, height and detailing. Given the absence of an alternative location for the lift shaft your officers on balance suggest that the balanced judgement weighs marginally in favour of the proposal.

impact on the character and appearance of the Town Centre Conservation Area - As well as being Locally Listed the building is also within the Town Centre Conservation Area where there is a requirement to conserve and enhance the Conservation Area. It is important that the Conservation Area is protected and enhanced to strengthen the existing townscape character. The Municipal Building together with the Grade II Town Hall make a significant and

prominent contribution to the Conservation Area. The extension would be small in scale and would be a pastiche of the host building, so in terms of design it would replicate the host building. It would however disrupt the flat facade, albeit that there is a glass canopy at ground floor level. Your Built Heritage Manager has not raised any objections to the proposal. On balance and in the absence of any other suitable locations for the lift shaft it is felt that the proposal would not have a significantly detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. It is felt that its impact would be neutral i.e. nor would it enhance the Conservation Area.

impact on highway and pedestrian safety - The lift shaft would add to the existing obstructions on this section of the Corporation Street pavement but given its width it is not felt that a 2 metres projection by 2.6 metres width would significantly affect the pedestrian movements in this area nor would it force pedestrians onto the carriageway. Whilst the Head of Highways and Traffic Management's comments are noted it is not felt that a refusal could be sustained on pedestrian safety grounds

CONCLUSION

This proposal affects a distinctive and prominent Locally Listed Building within the Town Centre Conservation Area. In the absence of an alternative location for the lift shaft the proposal has to be assessed in terms of its impact on the building and the Conservation Area. In its favour the extension would only project 2 metres by 2.6 metres wide, it would not disrupt the frieze on the facade and it would be a pastiche of the host building. Against it would be the fact that it would disrupt the clean lines of the facade. Given the absence of an alternative location for the lift shaft your officers on balance suggest that the balanced judgement required by para 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework weighs marginally in favour of the proposal.

LEGAL AGREEMENT AND/OR DEVELOPER FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION

None required

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

Planning Application File(s) 17/0104 which can be accessed via the link below:

<http://idoxpa.blackpool.gov.uk/online-applications/search.doaction=weeklyList>

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 13th February 2017

Drawings numbered JCP 07566 (2-)108, JCP 07566 (2-)109

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

3. Details of materials, including window frames/glazing, to be used on the external elevations shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the development being commenced. The agreed materials shall then be used as part of the development

Reason: In the interests of the appearance of the locality, in accordance with Policies LQ10 and LQ14 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016 and Policies CS7 and CS8 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027.

4. The dummy windows to the elevations of lift shaft shall be recessed (set back in the reveals) in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority before the development commences.

Reason: In the interests of the appearance of the locality, in accordance with Policies LQ10 and LQ14 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016 and Policies CS7 and CS8 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027.

Advice Notes to Developer

1. Please note this approval relates specifically to the details indicated on the approved plans and documents, and to the requirement to satisfy all conditions of the approval. Any variation from this approval needs to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to works commencing and may require the submission of a revised application. Any works carried out without such written agreement or approval would render the development as unauthorised and liable to legal proceedings.