

Application No: 23/4000N

Location: MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, EARLE STREET, CREWE, CW1 2BJ

Proposal: The proposal is to convert the Municipal Building Annex into flexible workspaces. Works will include the demolition and remodelling of internal walls, reconfiguration of toilet facilities and replacement of ceilings. Externally, 5 windows and 2 doors will be removed to make way for a curtain wall and new frontage to the Annex via the courtyard. The works will also involve remodelling the existing and under-utilised service yard into an outdoor courtyard

Applicant: Tim Allen, Cheshire East Council

Expiry Date: 15-Jan-2024

SUMMARY

The design of the proposed development is considered to be acceptable.

The proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of its design, Impact upon the host Grade II Listed Building (neutral impact). The proposed development would comply with the relevant policies of the development plan.

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE with conditions

PROPOSAL

This proposal is to use the Municipal Buildings Annex as a Technology and Design Innovation Centre (TADIC) to provide flexible, co-working office space for individuals and small start-up companies.

The proposed works are as follows:

- Re-configuration of the internal space (office space, meeting rooms and kitchen facilities)
- Re-configuration of the toilet facilities
- Alterations to the south and west elevations (curtain walling and a new entrance)
- Remodelled fenestration
- Landscaped rear courtyard

- Bin storage/cycle storage to be redesigned and relocated
- Changes to the parking layout
- Minor alterations in the form of roof ventilation terminals, through wall vents and a stainless steel vent.

This application is accompanied by planning application 23/3998N.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The Municipal Buildings is a Grade II listed building which lies within Crewe Town Centre.

The Listing for the property states as follows;

'GV II Council Offices, 1902-1905 by H T Hare in English Baroque style. Yellow sandstone ashlar with stone slate gable roof. 2½ storeys and basement, 5 bays. 3 centre bays recessed for 2 storeys, flanked and separated by giant unfluted Ionic columns. Small Tuscan column mullions to ground floor windows, in outer bays. Deeply recessed semi-circular headed entrance with wrought iron gates and oak screen with double doors. This is flanked by timber mullion and centre-arched transome windows with matching archivolt and cartouche keystones. Pairs of large reclining figures, carved in relief by F.E.E.Schenck, surmount the three centre openings. Cross windows with stone eared architraves at first floor level and segmental bracketted balconies to outer bays. Dentilled and bracketted eaves cornice. Dormer windows to second floor centre bays with small pediments above and fronted by balustraded parapet. End bay windows are bullseyes with egg and dart and festoon treatment. Copings to gables, stone chimneys and cupola with vane and locomotive finial. Interior: Tuscan columns in entrance hall, York stone geometrical staircase, marble Ionic columns and a window in Venetian style in the Council Chamber. Hardwood doors, in elaborate frames, and plasterwork based on festoons and egg and dart moulds'

This application relates to the Municipal Buildings Annex which is a three-storey office block constructed in the 1990s.

RELEVANT HISTORY

23/3998N - The proposal is to convert the Municipal Building Annex into flexible workspaces. Works will include the demolition and remodelling of internal walls, reconfiguration of toilet facilities and replacement of ceilings. Externally, 5 windows and 2 doors will be removed to make way for a curtain wall and new frontage to the Annex via the courtyard. The works will also involve remodelling the existing and under-utilised service yard into an outdoor courtyard – Application Undetermined

23/2368N - Listed building consent for proposals for repair of Crewe Municipal Buildings main facade windows, doors and wrought iron railing and gates including replacement of two existing flag poles and associated temporary works – Application Undetermined

23/2367N - Proposals for repair of Crewe Municipal Buildings main facade windows, doors and wrought iron railing and gates including replacement of two existing flag poles and associated temporary works – Application Undetermined

20/2606N - Listed Building Consent for Installation of new and replacement CCTV cameras within Original Part of Crewe Municipal Buildings. Works consist of installation of new cameras and cable routes – Application Undetermined

12/1730N - Proposals to provide access to the principal elevation of the Municipal Building by re-grading the external path and integrating a Sesame access lift to the internal flight of steps. Refurbishment and minor alterations to the front range of ground floor suite of rooms to incorporate the registrations department. The internal refurbishment work includes redecoration to all the front range of ground floor rooms and reconfiguration to allow access to the suite of rooms to be designated as the registrations department – Approved 16th July 2012

11/1024N - Listed Building Consent to Provide Access to the Principal Elevation of the Municipal Building by Integrating a Sesame Access Lift to the External Flight of Steps and a Second Sesame Lift to the Internal Flight of Steps. Refurbishment and Minor Alterations to the Front Range of Ground Floor Suite of Rooms to Incorporate the Registrations Department. The Internal Refurbishment Work Includes Redecoration to all the Front Range of Ground Floor Rooms and Reconfiguration to Allow Access to the Suite of Rooms to be Designated as the Registrations Department – Approved 24th August 2011

11/1023N - Proposal to Provide Access to the Principal Elevation of the Municipal Building by Integrating a Sesame Access Lift to the External Flight of Steps and a Second Sesame Lift to the Internal Flight of Steps. Refurbishment and Minor Alterations to the Front Range of Ground Floor Suite of Rooms to Incorporate the Registrations Department. The Internal Refurbishment Work includes Redecoration to all the Front Range of Ground Floor Rooms and Reconfiguration to Allow Access to the Suite of Rooms to be Designated as the Registrations Department – Approved 5th September 2011

P06/0069 - Listed Building Consent for Alterations to Front and Rear Entrances and Internal Alterations – Approved 3rd April 2006

P98/0179 - LBC for attaching notice board to front elevation – Approved 27th April 1998

P98/0080 - Removal of condition 6 on advertisement consent for sign boards and addition of extra sign – Approved 5th March 1998

P96/0020 - LBC for handrail to front entrance steps – Approved 29th February 1996

P94/0366 - LBC Brass lettering – Approved 23rd August 1994

P94/0335 - LBC Substation – Approved 30th June 1994

P94/0334 – Substation – Approved 30th June 1994

7/18455 - Three storey office extension to rear and associated car parking – Approved 22nd May 1990

7/18499 - LBC for demolition of corn exchange, three storey office extension to rear and internal alterations. To municipal buildings – Approved 22nd May 1990

NATIONAL & LOCAL POLICY

Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS)

MP1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

SD1 - Sustainable Development in Cheshire East

SD2 - Sustainable Development Principles

SE1 - Design

SE7 – The Historic Environment

Site Allocations and Development Policies Document

GEN1 – Design Principles

HER1 – Heritage Assets

HER4 – Listed Buildings

Neighbourhood Plan

There is no Neighbourhood Plan in Crewe.

National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

CONSULTATIONS

Historic England: Suggest that the Council seek the views of your specialist conservation and archaeological advisers.

Council for British Archaeology: No comments received.

Twentieth Century Society: No comments received.

The Victorian Society: No comments received.

The Georgian Group: No comments received.

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings: No comments received.

Historic Buildings and Places: No comments received.

VIEWS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

Crewe Town Council: No comments received.

REPRESENTATIONS

No representations received.

APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

The site lies within the Crewe Settlement Boundary and is a Grade II Listed Building. This application is to consider the impact of the works upon the Grade II Listed Building.

Design and Impact upon the Grade II Listed Building

The NPPF paragraph 197 identifies that

In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

Para 199 states that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Para 200 goes on to clarify that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset should have clear and convincing justification for the harm.

Policy SE 7 of the CELPS states that *'The character, quality and diversity of the historic environment will be conserved and enhanced. All new development should seek to avoid harm to heritage assets and make a positive contribution to the character of Cheshire East's historic and built environment, including the setting of assets and where appropriate, the wider historic environment'*.

Policy HER4 of the SADPD follows the wording of the NPPF and states that when considering development proposals or works affecting a listed building, including alterations, extensions and changes of use, in line with its statutory duty, the council will have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

The application proposes the following changes to the elevations of the building;

- East facing elevation – Provision of a 'Levelling Up Funding' plaque, and re-positioning of the emergency assembly point signage.
- West facing elevation – Replace three windows, one door and one air conditioning unit with a new glazed curtain wall and a new entrance.
- South facing elevation – Replace two windows with a new glazed curtain wall and the removal of five air conditioning units at ground floor level.
- Provision of new plant to the flat roofed section and a new vent to the south facing roof slope. Roof ventilation terminals would be added to the north and east facing roof slopes.
- Through wall vents would be added to the north, south and west elevations.

In addition to the elevational changes to the building, the courtyard would be redesigned, and this would include:

- A reduction in the number of parking spaces from 8 to 4
- The provision of an external seating area for staff
- New entrance ramp
- Landscaping (planters and one new tree)
- Bin storage
- Cycle storage

The internal works relate to the modern 90s annex and do not raise any heritage implications.

The Conservation Officer has stated that she has no objection to the proposed development. The scheme will open up the building and allow more light to enter, whilst not impacting on the existing character of the building. The details of all new external materials and window and door details will be controlled via the imposition of planning conditions.

The proposal would have a neutral impact upon the Grade II Listed Building and is considered to be acceptable in terms of its design. The proposed development would comply with the relevant policies of the development plan.

PLANNING BALANCE

The design of the proposed development is considered to be acceptable.

The proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of its design, Impact upon the host Grade II Listed Building (neutral impact). The proposed development would comply with the relevant policies of the development plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE subject to the following conditions;

1. **Standard time**
2. **Approved Plans**
3. **Details of material to be submitted and approved**
4. **Details of all new external doors and windows to be submitted and approved**

In order to give proper effect to the Committee`s intent and without changing the substance of its decision, authority is delegated to the Head of Planning (Regulation) in consultation with the Chair (or in their absence the Vice Chair) to correct any technical slip or omission in the resolution, before issue of the decision notice.

