

Application No: 15/0334M

Location: TOWN HALL, MARKET PLACE, MACCLESFIELD, SK10 1EA

Proposal: Listed Building Consent for Alterations, Refurbishment, Repair Work and Extension to Butter Market and Former Borough Police Station parts of the Town Hall

Applicant: Mr Tom Fletcher, Cheshire East Council

Expiry Date: 24-Mar-2015

REASON FOR REPORT:

This application is to be determined by the National Planning Casework Unit on behalf of the Secretary of State due to the application being a local authority application for listed building consent.

The Council is the applicant and land owner and whilst this proposal is a minor development, which accords with planning policy and to which no objection has been made (at the time of report preparation), it is considered necessary to refer this application to the Northern Planning Committee at the discretion of the Head of Strategic and Economic Planning.

CONCLUSION:

The proposal would comply with policies which require the local planning authority to identify and assess the significance of any heritage asset which may be affected by a proposal and in this instance the proposed changes to the building would preserve the special architectural interest of the building and minimise conflicts with conservation aims.

The benefits of securing an economic use for the floorspace within the Town Halls Butter Market and Former Borough Police Station and the contribution it should make to ensuring the long-term conservation of the building as a whole; would preserve the special interest of the listed building and the character of the conservation area. The proposals would comply with national policy, and with Policies BE1, BE3, BE15, and BE18 of the Macclesfield Borough Local Plan, which respectively support alterations to listed buildings that would preserve their character, and represents appropriate development in conservation areas.

Any harm by virtue of the installation of an access ramp to the front of the building would be limited by the public benefit of the proposals in terms of the improved accessibility and very substantial benefit of bringing the listed building back into a fuller use for the senior citizens groups and community.

The scheme represents a sustainable form of development and the planning balance weighs in favour of supporting the development subject to conditions.

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION:

Approve subject to conditions

PROPOSAL:

This application seeks listed building consent for alterations, refurbishment, repair work and extension to the Butter Market and Former Borough Police Station parts of the Town Hall.

SITE DESCRIPTION:

The former Police Station and Butter market site is located in the town centre to the rear of and conjoined with the Town Hall. The site is in use as part of the Town Hall. The site is bounded to the north, east and west by adjacent buildings, with its main façade facing south. Pedestrian front access is via Churchside to the south and from the north east corner to the rear. All of the site is contained within the town centre conservation area. The former Police Station and Butter market buildings are Grade II* listed. The existing buildings form a small enclosed external courtyard at the rear of the site. The main frontage faces St. Michaels and All Angels Church.

The accommodation has been used in recent years for storage purposes associated with the Town Hall. The wing to the rear of the Former Police Station is in a poor state of repair and has not been actively used for many years.

RELEVANT HISTORY:

11/2389M - Alterations, refurbishment and repair works including the following: alterations to the fabric to allow for an 8 person passenger lift to meet DDA legislation; removal of modern interventions and reinstatement of historic floor levels and ceiling levels; improvements to lighting and power; alterations to improve emergency egress including new fire routes; refurbishments and redecorations to historic interiors including changes to flooring materials; external repairs and reordering to windows, doors, roof fabric and stonework – Approved 05-Oct-2011

11/4016M - Platform Lift (Listed Building Consent) – Approved 16-Jan-2012

There have been a number of additional listed building consent/ planning applications submitted for alterations, which include an emergency escape, telecommunications antenna and new office buildings.

NATIONAL & LOCAL POLICY

Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, imposes a statutory duty on the local authority to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. Sections 16 and 66 of the same act, place a similar obligation to have some special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, any features of special architectural interest they possess and their settings.

National Policy:

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

Of particular relevance are paragraphs 14, 17, 126, 128, 129, 131, 132 and 141.

Development Plan:

The Development Plan for this area is the 2004 Macclesfield Local Plan, which allocates the whole site under policy MTC12 (a Mixed Use Area).

The relevant Saved Policies are: -

BE1 (Design Guidance)

BE2 (Preservation of Historic Fabric)

BE3 (Conservation Areas)

BE4 (Design Criteria in Conservation Areas)

BE15 (Listed Buildings)

BE17 (Preservation of Listed Buildings)

BE18 (Design Criteria for Listed Buildings)

The saved Local Plan policies are consistent with the NPPF and should be given full weight.

Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy – Submission Version (CELP)

As the examination of this plan has now been suspended, its policies carry limited weight. The following are considered relevant material considerations as indications of the emerging strategy:

- SE7: The Historic Environment.

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Guidance.

CONSULTATIONS:

Historic England comment that they support the proposals in principle as providing a sustainable and appropriate use for this partly vacant and under-utilised listed building. While there may be harm to the historic and architectural character of the building Historic England believes these are outweighed by the public benefits.

No comments have been received from the Ancient Monuments Society, Council for British Archaeology, Georgian Group, Victorian Society, or the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings.

Macclesfield Civic Society notes the amended proposals and the views expressed by Historic England. The elevations of the Butter Market and Old Police Station, facing onto the Church Yard, appear to retain the prevailing civic character of the building and are well handled in the detailing. The courtyard elevations, which are not generally open to public view, also retain the character of the exterior. In considering the merits of the proposal and application 15/0335M no doubt the views of Historic England will be carefully appraised given the Grade II* of this important Listed Building.

REPRESENTATIONS:

None received at the time of report preparation.

APPLICANTS SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

Design and Access Statement

Archaeological and Heritage Statement

Structure Survey

Justification for Alterations to a Listed Building

Structural Method Statement

APPRAISAL:

The Butter Market and Former Borough Police Station were selected as a replacement facility for the Senior Citizens Hall (on Duke Street car park) following a two stage Feasibility Study undertaken in 2012 and 2013.

This application is solely for the proposed alterations, refurbishment, repairs and extensions to the Butter Market and Former Police Station parts of the Town Hall and does not relate to any change of use. The new communities and arts facilities would be for use by the occupants of the existing senior citizens hall in Macclesfield and the general public. The various factors relating to the replacement facility such as car parking, management and detailed internal use are all to be developed following an ongoing consultation process with the community and end users of the building, which is being undertaken separately by the Council and the Hamilton Project.

The new facilities will include: -

- A central, ground floor café / social space accessed directly off the main entrance and connected to an external courtyard for use by the users and the public.
- Large multi-use hall space with dedicated storage, adjacent to the café. Its uses may include ballroom dancing, yoga, tai-chi, lectures, readings, fitness classes. It can also be served by the adjacent café / kitchens to serve as potential function space e. g. weddings.
- A variety of large and small group rooms at all levels with suitable IT facilities and storage for meetings, community groups and classes.
- A large Arts and Crafts space on the first floor with adjacent storage and wc facilities.
- Easily accessible stairs and lifts, WC's and ancillary spaces to support the main spaces.
- Small kitchens, servery and office to serve the central café.
- External courtyard.

It is the works to internal fabric of the building, as well as those to the frontage to facilitate access and the proposed conservatory and new extension to rear, which are considered the elements that require consideration under this application for Listed Building Consent. The total floor area of new accommodation measures 67m².

The key issues are:

- a) The impact of the proposal on the Grade II* Listed Town Hall.

Impact on the Grade II* Listed Town Hall

At the national level, key requirements of the NPPF are: -

- Para 126: local authorities should recognise heritage assets are an irreplaceable source and should conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance.
- Para 128 requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by their proposal.

- Para 129 requires local planning authorities to identify and assess the significance of any heritage asset which may be affected by a proposal.
- Para 131 reminds local planning authorities of the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- Para 132 states that great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets and any loss of significance must be clearly and convincingly justified.
- Paras 133 and 134 state that where harm would be caused this must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal and that where that harm would be substantial the harm must be demonstrated to be necessary.

When considering impacts on heritage assets, it is impact on *significance* which is to be considered. *Significance* is defined in the NPPF as the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest, whether archaeological, architectural artistic or historic or whether deriving from its physical presence or its setting.

It is necessary to establish the extent of harm to significance and whether that would be substantial or less than substantial. Substantial harm to heritage assets of high significance such as Grade II * listed buildings should be exceptional and only allowed if it has been demonstrated that the harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm, unless other circumstances, which would not be applicable in this case, apply. If harm to significance is considered to be less than substantial, then a less rigorous test applies and LPA's must weigh the harm caused against public benefits, bearing in mind that the aim must be to minimise harm and great weight must be given to the conservation of irreplaceable assets.

As a Grade II* building, Macclesfield Town Hall has a high level of statutory significance as a building of more than special interest.

It is duly acknowledged that Macclesfield Town Hall is an important building within the Conservation Area – it occupies a commanding position on the eastern side of the historic market place in the centre of Macclesfield adjacent to the medieval church. The grounds of St. Michaels and All Angels Church lie immediately to the south opposite the Butter Market and Former Borough Police Station, while businesses and shops both flank and lie opposite to form an attractive pedestrianised square. The lanes and streets that radiate the market place preserve the medieval layout of the town, but are now lined with mainly 18th and 19th century buildings. Glimpses of the Butter Market and Former Borough Police Station are provided from these routes, especially from Market Place and Church Street, with the most impressive view of the building gained from the church yard to the front of St. Michaels and All Angels Church.

Due to the historic nature of the listed building the existing main entrance cannot provide level access from the street. For this reason a new, DDA compliant external ramped access is proposed to the existing south façade. It is considered that the design solution offered which is a steel ramp and steps would have an acceptable impact on the front of the building.

Other alterations to the front of the building (south elevation) include: -

- the refurbishment of timber sash windows (or replacement) to match the existing;
- refurbishment or new glazed fanlight to match existing;
- insertion of glass louvres;

- new double glazed structural glass doors;
- new timber door, painted green with stone lintel to match existing;
- existing rainwater goods re-used following roof refurbishment, or new to match existing; and,
- existing welsh slate roof lifted and re-laid on felt and insulation to match existing.

To the rear of the Former Borough Police Station, it is proposed to remove a limited section of the building which is a more modern addition. This wing is thought to date back to the early to mid 20th century and is of limited historical and aesthetic significance. Consideration can be given to the retention of wall stubs to allow the original layout and plan form to be appreciated. The demolition of the northernmost wall will result in significant loss of historic fabric, however, an appraisal of the building has confirmed that this northernmost bay is a later extension and is of limited historical or aesthetic significance, the walls proposed for demolition are much altered with an apparently inserted window and a blocked door, the demolition and construction of a new extension in keeping with the historic fabric will enhance this part of the building with very little impact on the building as a whole.

To the north, in part of the space between the rear of the Butter Market and the Former Borough Police Station, it is proposed to create a café area which would occupy a new glazed 'conservatory' space which will connect to a new landscaped external courtyard area. The use of glazing will retain the open courtyard appearance and feel as such will only have a limited impact.

As mentioned above, the proposed development is located within the boundary of the Macclesfield (Town Centre) Conservation Area) and the Town Hall is identified as a focal building. The proposed development will have no adverse impact upon the principal elevation of the building, which will remain a focal point. In fact it is considered that the above alterations have been well thought through and should improve the character and appearance of the building and are acceptable in design terms. The refurbishment works to the exterior doors and windows, and roof as well as the proposed alterations to facilitate access and extensions / alterations to the rear should allow the Butter Market and Former Borough Police Station elements of the Town Hall to function far better as a community hub as envisaged.

Undoubtedly, the ramp element of the scheme would result in some harm to the building and there is a balance to be made between a very positive compliance with local plan policy in terms of conservation of a listed building and any harmful aspect of providing DDA compliance. In this instance, the very substantial benefit of bringing the listed building into fuller use, thereby helping to sustain its future, more than outweighs any harm that would be caused by DDA compliance.

INTERNALLY

A number of internal structural alterations are required to assist with the refurbishment of the Butter Market and Former Borough Council Police Station buildings. A full schedule of the works has been submitted for works to be carried out on the basement, ground floor and first floor. The nature of the works and justification for the works is explained below as follows: -

Basement

- Removal of a partition wall (reference b1 on submitted plan), which has been identified as a later insertion, to create a more flexible larger space. The light wells to the front

façade are to be refurbished and brought back into use. Removal of wall facilities borrowed natural daylight to the whole basement.

- 2 additional door openings (reference b2 on submitted plan), to be inserted in a wall which has been identified as being a later insertion. This is to facilitate compliant access via a lift and stairs to the basement.
- Blocking up of a coal chute and removal of the bunker walls (reference b3 on submitted plan). The chute is currently boarded over. Dependent upon the method of how the chute is back filled, these features would still be able to be reinstated and used at a later date. The floor of the proposed rear conservatory extension will cover the chute. The wall lines of the coal bunker are too restrictive for use of the space in the basement. Their removal will facilitate use as wc's and cloaks to support and enable use of the main cellar room.
- Blocking up of the basement stairs (reference b4 on submitted plan). Depending on the method of how the stairs are back filled, these features would still be able to be reinstated and used at a later date. The stairs are not compliant with modern regulations.
- Removal of an unknown steel structure to the front room (reference b5 on submitted plan). This steelwork is badly corroded, is not original and is not load bearing. The column spacing makes the space unusable. The removal of the columns will facilitate a future use for the space.

Ground floor

- Removal of lower section of walls between front rooms (reference g1 on submitted plan). The top section of wall can be retained so the original cornice can be retained. This allows for the installation of a new core containing a compliant staircase and lift to bring the building to modern standards. The removal of the wall at low level creates the openness required for the main entrance into the reception and café meeting area.
- Removal of partition wall (reference g2 on submitted plan). This wall is identified as a later insertion. This would allow for the creation of a back office to the reception to support the planned use of the adjacent space as a reception/servey.
- Removal of lower sections of wall between rooms (reference g6 on submitted plan). The top section of the wall can be retained so that the original cornice can be retained. The cellular room layout is not suited to the intended use as a café/social space. Retention of the original high level details will maintain clarity of the original configuration of spaces.
- New openings in wall between Butter Market and Former Borough Police Station (reference g7 on submitted plan). The new openings would be installed with swept arch heads to match the existing openings. The Butter Market is to be brought back into use as a community space. For this to be viable a connection needs to be made into the former Borough Police Station to be used as further group and meeting spaces and ancillary spaces can be provided such as the café/social, toilets and compliant

access. The new openings proposed are balanced and positioned carefully to maintain the clarity of the original wall line and enclosure of the Butter Market Space.

- Existing opening retained, but extended with new swept arch head (reference g8 on submitted plan). The current window detracts from the external appearance of the Butter Market. Adjustment is needed to the existing opening to accommodate the new layout of the Butter Market. The new wider door is needed for a rear fire escape whilst maintaining a back of house connection to the adjacent café/social space.
- Removal of partition window (reference g9 on submitted plan). This wall is identified as a later insertion and splits the original Butter Markey space. The removal of the wall would largely reinstate the original volume of the Butter Market space and enable its use as a community hall space.
- New opening in wall (reference g10 on submitted plan). The new opening would be installed with swept arch heads to match the existing openings. This new larger opening would connect through into the new conservatory extension so that the public spaces can extend right back into the site and use all of the existing Police Station space that extends to the rear.
- New opening in wall (reference g11 on submitted plan). This new opening would be installed with a stone lintel to match existing openings. A new door facilitates access into an enlarged room created in the Police Station rear wing. The rooms in this wing are small and not adequate for community use by larger groups. New configuration of partitions brings the whole space into viable use.
- Removal of staircase (reference g12 on submitted plan). The staircase is a later addition, which was added at the time of the insertion of the mezzanine. The current stair is not DDA compliant and serves the mezzanine level and does not have adequate headroom.
- Removal of internal walls to police station extension (reference g13 on submitted plan). The walls are part of the 20th Century extension to the Police Station. The construction consists of a simple brick built extension with a pitched slate roof, internally open to the ridge with exposed composite iron trusses that are largely hidden by recently installed stud partitions. Headroom here is currently limited. Part of a wider refurbishment of this later addition to the Police Station the internal walls are to be removed and repositioned to create a large group room and WCs/lobby. The current layout consists of limiting small cellular rooms not suited to the intended, more flexible use. The wider refurbishment proposal is to reinstate the original trusses, lower the floor to resolve the headroom issues and install new partitions that will allow the original volume of the space to be appreciated.
- New opening in wall (reference g14 on submitted plan). A new opening would be installed with a stone lintel to match existing openings. Part of a wider refurbishment of this later addition to the Police Station the new internal door will facilitate access into this part of the building from the new conservatory link. This will remove excessive

circulation from this wing and enables use of the full width of the plan for a new larger group room.

- Alterations to existing doors: extend one door opening to provide a side glazed screen and replace door with a window (reference g15 on submitted plan). The existing western facade of the Police Station wing has two adjacent doors. It is proposed to widen one opening and replace with a window to provide additional natural light into the ground floor plan.
- Demolish end bay of Police Station rear wing (reference g16 on submitted plan). This has been identified as a later addition due to its awkward saw tooth plan and inconsistent roof plane. The proposal is to re-build this part of the building in keeping with the pitched roofed Police Station wing. This is required to facilitate a fire escape from the upper floor that will allow its use by the community. The additional space created by the more 'regular' layout will also be utilised for additional community space and ancillary support

First Floor

- Removal of lower section of wall (reference f1 on submitted plan). The top section of wall would be retained so the original deep cornice can be retained. Allows installation of new core containing compliant staircase and lift to bring building to modern standards. Retention of original high level details will maintain clarity of the
- Reinstate and widen opening in wall (reference f2 on submitted plan). This was previously the position of a connecting door through to the Police Station rear wing. Reinstating a glazed opening in this location will allow the rear of the building to be visually connected to the new circulation core and facilitate the reading of the original
- New opening in wall (reference f3 on submitted plan). The top section of wall would be retained, so the original deep cornice can be retained. Allows access to the new rooms to be created in the Police Station wing from the new core containing compliant staircase and lift to bring building to modern standards. Retention of original high level details will maintain clarity of the original configuration of spaces.
- New opening in wall (reference f4 on submitted plan). This allows access to the re-built northern part of the wing that contains the fire escape and WC's store.

The proposed works will have an impact upon the historic fabric of the building. This impact however will be less than substantial and will be largely limited to the removal of later partitions and the conservation of the historic fabric. The building appraisal confirmed that the wall within the Butter Market is a later insertion and its removal will enhance the Butter Market by restoring the original open plan of the space. Replacing the glazing in the easternmost flanking door will also enhance the Butter Market and restore the symmetry of the principal elevation; consideration can also be given to retention of the existing double doors and glazing the lower panels to further re-create the open market feel of the space, while retaining security.

There is significantly more work proposed within the former County Police Station, but again the majority of this will be limited to the removal of later, inappropriate alterations and the conservation of historic fabric. However, there will be some removal of historic fabric, but again this will be less than substantial and the benefits of the scheme, conserving and enhancing a heritage asset outweigh these impacts. The Police Station has, according to cartographic sources already undergone significant alterations during its history so the

original plan form of the building has long been lost. The most significant element of the building is its principal elevation fronting Churchside, this will not be affected by the proposed works and the replacement of the inappropriate door will actually enhance this elevation. Internally, the removal of the two walls on the ground floor will alter the current, although not original plan form; consideration can be given to the retention of the upper parts of these walls and the cornice to allow the original layout and plan form to be appreciated.

The opening of a number of openings between the County Police Station and the Butter Market will result in the loss of historic fabric and will have an impact upon the original plan form of the buildings; however the wall line will be retained, preserving the original plan form of both buildings and as such this impact will be less than substantial and again the benefits of the scheme, conserving and enhancing a heritage asset outweigh these impacts. With the two rearmost openings, which will provide access to the covered courtyard, consideration can be given to constructing the new openings in the same style as the existing brick arches in order to continue the aesthetic of the current elevation, brick salvaged during demolition can be retained for this use. Consideration could be given to making it apparent that the new internal openings are modern in order to preserve the appreciation of the historic wall line.

The works affecting the rear wing of the County Police Station will again be largely limited to the removal of modern alterations and the conservation of original fabric. The removal of some original walls will result in the loss of some historic fabric and the loss of some of the historic plan form. The wing is a later extension, probably early to mid 20th century in date and is of limited historical and aesthetic significance, there is no indication of the original use of the wing. Consideration can be given to the retention of wall stubs to allow the original layout and plan form to be appreciated.

The demolition of the northernmost wall will result in significant loss of historic fabric, however the building appraisal has confirmed that this northernmost bay is a later extension and is of limited historical or aesthetic significance, the walls proposed for demolition are much altered with an apparently inserted window and a blocked door, the demolition and construction of a new extension in keeping with the historic fabric will enhance this part of the building with very little impact on the building as a whole.

It is proposed that the yard also be glazed creating additional covered floor space. The yard is already surrounded on three sides and the use of glazing will retain the open courtyard appearance and feel and as such will only have a limited impact.

Given the external alterations to the frontage and proposed extensions to the rear are limited, the special architectural interest will be preserved. The benefits of securing an economic use for the floorspace and the contribution it should make to ensuring the long-term conservation of the building as a whole; and preserve the special interest of the listed building and the character of the conservation area is welcomed. The Conservation Officer considers that the proposals will be of benefit to the building and supports the proposals. The proposals would comply with national policy, and with Policies BE1, BE3, BE15, and BE18 of the Macclesfield Borough Local Plan, which respectively support alterations to listed buildings that would preserve their character, and appropriate development in conservation areas.

There are details which will require further detailed consideration relating to the refurbishment works to windows, doors and stonework and all new fenestration, and it is considered appropriate to provide details of these via condition. In addition, it will be necessary to condition for details of the handrails, rainwater goods and roof lights to be submitted to ensure that their appearance is acceptable.

PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSIONS

Overall, this building is a 'significant' heritage asset which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the conservation area. The NPPF strongly supports the conservation of such "heritage assets". The proposed works will facilitate the further community use of the building which would provide an example of the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to the establishment of sustainable communities.

It is considered that the proposed alterations and extensions to the building would preserve the special architectural interest of the building and scope of any harm in respect of installation of the ramp to the front of the building would clearly be outweighed by the public benefit of the proposals in terms of accessibility and facilitation of extended use of the building.

The sympathetic nature of the development proposed development will conserve and enhance a know heritage asset which is currently under utilised and under threat of neglect.

The proposals comply with the relevant development plan policies and the NPPF and therefore is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

In order to give proper effect to the Board`s/Committee`s intentions and without changing the substance of the decision, authority is delegated to the Planning and Enforcement Manager, in consultation with the Chair (or in his absence the Vice Chair) of the Northern Planning Committee, to correct any technical slip or omission in the wording of the resolution, between approval of the minutes and issue of the decision notice.

Application for Listed Building Consent

RECOMMENDATION: Approve subject to following conditions

1. A07LB - Standard Time Limit
2. A04EX - Materials to match existing
3. A09EX - Rainwater goods
4. A21EX - Roof lights set flush
5. A04LB - Additional fixtures requiring approval
6. A05LB - Protection of features
7. Details of handrails and fenestration details to be submitted and approved.

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