Job Ref: 6511

PLANNING SUPPORT DOCUMENT

Glazed Structure Replacement

at

Northampton Central Library
Abington Street
Northampton
NN1 2BA

for

Northamptonshire County Council

Ref: 6511-010301-150727-MC-MC

July 2015
PLANNING JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT

- The proposal is to replace the existing 2no. glazed structures and repair the existing ceiling glazing.
- The Library was made a grade II listed building in 1975.
- It is assumed that many of the slates on the roof above slipped during the years and landed on the glazed structure, thus causing the roof glazing to smash.
- Therefore at some point in time (say the 1970’s) the roof glazing on both structures was replaced with an aluminium beaded system.
- Both structures are in poor condition / many of the cills are rotten.
- After discussions with the Northampton Borough Council Listed Building Officer – Anna Ross, a single glazed aluminium powder coated option was agreed in principle if the frame sizes could be matched.
- Schuco were consulted on this point and near identical frame sizes are available.
- The internal ceiling glazing is in need of repair. A number of glass panes are broken and the paintwork is in poor order. The proposal would be to replace the broken panes and redecorate.

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL AND ENERGY STATEMENT

The powder coated aluminium solution provides a maintenance free option on a remote section of roof.

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

USE
- No change - County Council Offices

AMOUNT
- 2no. Glazed roof structures to be replaced.

LAYOUT & SCALE
- As existing.

LANDSCAPING
- N / A.

APPEARANCE
- As existing – see attached frame sections / photos / similar photo from another project.
- Please note that the successful Contractor will have to produce production drawings for comments / approval – after an order is placed. These will illustrate all the section frames / details.

ACCESS
- N / A.
Front elevation

Side Elevation:
Note the roof glazing is not the original glazing.
It is estimated as a 1970's replacement

End elevation

Internal view of glazed structure / ceiling glazing.
Montagepfosten
Assembly mullions

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Eckpfosten
Corner mullion

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Einschubprofile zur leichteren Montage stückweise mit Nasslack beschichten (ca. 25 μm - 40 μm).
Stahl Einschubprofile aus S 235. Die Steifigkeitserhöhung durch die Werkstoffkombination ist bei der Bemessung zu berücksichtigen (E-Modulverhältnis Stahl – Aluminium Faktor 3).

To facilitate installation, coat insert profiles individually with wet paint (approx. 25 μm - 40 μm).
S 235 steel insert profiles. The increased rigidity as a result of the combination of materials must be taken into account for the dimensioning (module of elasticity ratio: steel – aluminium, factor 3).

Eckpfosten
Corner mullion

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PLANNING HERITAGE DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Replacement of two existing roof lights and repair work to existing ceiling glazing at Northamptonshire Central Library, Abington Street, Northampton, NN1 2BA

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning and Heritage Statement has been prepared to support a Listed Building Consent application for the replacement of two existing roof lights and repair work to existing ceiling glazing at Northamptonshire Central Library, Abington Street, Northampton.

1.2 This Statement has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which states that special regard must be given by the Authority in the exercise of planning functions to the desirability of preserving or enhancing Listed Buildings and their setting, and Conservation Areas and their setting respectively. Its purpose is to explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the proposed works.

1.3 The purpose of the Statement is to review the prevailing policies and other material considerations that are relevant to the determination of the Listed Building Consent and to present a case for granting permission.

2. THE SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

2.1 The site is located within the Central Area of Northampton as defined on the Proposals Map of the Northampton Local Plan (1997), the Central Area Action Plan Boundary and Town Centre Boundary as defined in the Central Area Action Plan (2013). Further, the Northampton Central Library and adjoining properties fronting Abington Street and St Giles Street, are identified as a ‘Strategic Development Site’ within the Central Area Action Plan (2013).

2.2 Northampton Central Library is located on the south east side of Abington Street, Northampton. Abington Street is one of the main shopping thoroughfares into and out of Northampton Town Centre. The site is located within the Primary Shopping Area, and on the pedestrianised part of Abington Street.

2.3 The building was designed by local architect Herbert Norman and construction was completed in 1910. The building is Grade II Statutory Listed. It has a classical stone front, constructed in a Neo-Georgian style. The building is two storeys in height and also has a basement level. The front façade features two, two storey front projecting bays. Four statues (John Dryden, Thomas Fuller, George Washington and Andrew Carnegie) line the front of the building. The Weldon Stone finish, and ornate cornicing and ledges give the building a grand and important presence on Abington Street. Internal features of special regard include a marble staircase.
2.4 The Listing details for the building state – ‘Classical stone front. 2 storeys and basement. Interior: marble staircase, well plan’. The building was Listed in 1975 (09/01/1975 – List entry ID - 1372156). The site is not located in a Conservation Area.

2.5 Northampton Central Library first opened in Abington Street in 1910. The library was first started in 1876 in the Town Hall, and in 1883, it relocated to Guildhall Road into the present Museum building. By 1904 the Museum needed more space so a site was purchased in Abington Street. The site in Abington Street had previously been used as the depot for the horses that pulled the horse drawn trams in the town.

3. PLANNING POLICY

3.1 The starting point for assessing development proposals is the Development Plan. Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states “if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.” The Development Plan for this proposal consists of the Core Strategy and saved policies from the Local Plan.

3.2 In addition, the Government’s National Planning Policy Framework is an important material consideration for determining planning applications along with supplementary guidance produced by the Local Planning Authority.

West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (Adopted December 2014)

3.3 Policy SA – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development – When considering development proposals the relevant Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals for sustainable development will be approved and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

3.4 Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in other local plans and neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

3.5 Policy N1 – The Regeneration of Northampton: The regeneration of Northampton will be supported by a focus on Northampton’s town centre and central area for office, retail, leisure and service development, providing high quality urban design and public realm and protecting its heritage assets and historic character through managed change.

3.6 Policy S10 – Sustainable Development Principles - Development will:

i) protect, conserve and enhance the natural and built environment and heritage assets and their settings;

3.7 Policy BN5 – The Historic Environment and Landscape – Designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings and landscapes will be conserved and enhanced in recognition of their individual and cumulative significance and contribution to West Northamptonshire’s local distinctiveness and sense of place.
3.8 In environments where valued heritage assets are at risk, the asset and its setting will be appropriately conserved and managed.

3.9 In order to secure and enhance the significance of the area's heritage assets and their settings and landscapes, development in areas of landscape sensitivity and/or known historic or heritage significance will be required to:

1. Sustain and enhance the heritage and landscape features which contribute to the character of the area including:

   a) Conservation Areas;
   b) significant historic landscapes including historic parkland, battlefields and ridge and furrow;
   c) the skyline and landscape settings of towns and villages;
   d) sites of known or potential heritage or historic significance;
   e) locally and nationally important buildings, structures and monuments.

2. Demonstrate an appreciation and understanding of the impact of development on surrounding heritage assets and their setting in order to minimise harm to these assets; where loss of historic features or archaeological remains is unavoidable and justified, provision should be made for recording and the production of a suitable archive and report.

3. Be sympathetic to locally distinctive landscape features, design styles and materials in order to contribute to a sense of place.

   The retention and sensitive re-use of disused or underused heritage assets and structures is encouraged in order to retain and reflect the distinctiveness of the environment, contribute to the sense of place and promote the sustainable and prudent use of natural resources.

   Proposals to sustain and enhance the area's understanding of heritage assets, for tourism and historic interest as part of cultural, leisure and green networks will be supported.

Northampton Local Plan (Saved Policies) (Adopted 1997)

3.10 Local Plan Policy E23 (Historic Buildings) is not a saved Policy and has been replaced by Policy BN5 from the West Northamptonshire Core Strategy and national guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Central Area Action Plan - CAAP (adopted January 2013)

3.11 Policy 1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development - When considering development proposals within the Central Area, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects presumption in favour of sustainable development. The Council will always work positively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that development proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of Northampton Central Area and the wider Borough.
3.12 Policy 18 – Abington Street East - The Northampton Central Library and adjoining properties fronting Abington Street and St Giles Street will be regenerated to:

- Retain, preserve and enhance the character of the Northampton Central Library building, and respect the setting of the Derngate and St Giles Conservation Areas.
- Provide up to 9,000 square metres gross/6,000 square metres net of comparison retail floorspace on land between Abington Street and St Giles Street.
- Provide the opportunity for the continued provision of the library and clinic services either within the regeneration site or elsewhere within the Central Area.
- Contribute to the improvement of the shopping frontages along Abington Street (primary shopping frontage) frontage and St Giles Street (secondary shopping frontage) through incorporating the principles of the Shopfront Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document.

The National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012) (henceforth referred to as ‘The Framework’)

3.13 The Framework was published on 27 March 2012 and replaced a whole range of Government policy. The document sets out the up to date national policy position and must, therefore, be used in the determination of this planning application. The most relevant sections are highlighted below.

3.14 To enable the determination of applications, the significance of any heritage assets affected needs to be described as part of the supporting information. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset’s importance (paragraph 128).

3.15 Paragraph 131 states that Local Planning Authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses, consistent with their conservation. It also identifies the desirability of new development, making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

3.16 When considering the impact of a proposed development or the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. Any harm or loss to heritage assets should require clear and convincing justification (paragraph 132).

3.17 Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal (paragraph 134).


3.18 The guidelines set out in 2008 by English Heritage in The Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment include the following principles:
New work or alteration to a significant place should normally be acceptable if:

a) There is sufficient information comprehensively to understand the impacts of the proposals on the significance of the place;

b) The proposal would not materially harm the values of the place, which, where appropriate, would be reinforced or further revealed;

c) The proposals aspire to a quality of design and execution which may be valued now and in the future;

d) The long-term consequences of the proposals can, from experience, be demonstrated to be benign, or the proposals are designed not prejudice alternative solutions in the future.

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 There is no planning history of relevance to the application site.

5. APPLICATION PROPOSAL

5.1 Listed Building Consent is sought to replace two existing roof lights located on an area of flat roof to the rear of the main pitched roof fronting Abington Street. The existing roof lights have a timber frame and are single glazed. The proposed roof lights would have a powder coated aluminium frame and would be single glazed.

5.2 In addition, the existing ceiling glazing, located beneath each of the roof lights, would be repaired and redecorated.

6. JUSTIFICATION

Principle / Need for the Proposed Works

6.1 It is likely the existing roof lights, which sit proud of the flat roof forming a lantern, were originally installed to protect the ceiling glazing from damage. At some point in time, thought to be the 1970’s (given the form of the glass installed), the original glazing was removed and replaced with the current beaded aluminium system. It is assumed that slates from the pitched roof adjacent to the structures have slipped over time and damaged the roof lights; causing a number of the glass panes to smash. In addition, the frames themselves are in a poor state of repair with many of the cills rotten.

6.2 The proposed works are therefore necessary to not only upgrade and replace the existing roof lights, which are currently an eyesore, but also to provide new structures which will better protect the ceiling glazing beneath. In light of this, it also considered a prudent time to carry out necessary repair and decoration works to the ceiling glazing which is an important historical feature of the building. Any broken panes of glass will be replaced and the paint work retouched.
Heritage & Impact on the Significance of the Building

Impact upon the Setting

6.3 The existing roof lights are located on an area of flat roof concealed from public view points. Existing pitched roofs (slate) to the north and south of the structures are significantly higher than the roof lights and from street level only the tops of the higher slate roofs are discernible. Consequently, the proposal would not impact on the character or setting of the building.

6.4 Further, given the dilapidated nature of the existing roof lights replacement with new structures of an identical form would enhance the character and appearance of the building as well provide a better level of protection for the ceiling glazing beneath.

6.5 Likewise, the restoration works to the ceiling glazing would enhance the existing features to the benefit of the historic integrity and fabric of the building.

Replacement Roof lights

6.6 The proposed works would be carried out in a sensitive manner to ensure the historic and architectural importance of the building is maintained. The physical features that justify the buildings designation as a Listed Building would not be altered and nor would the building’s setting.

6.7 As set out above, the current roof lights are not considered original (aluminium glazing installed sometime during the 1970’s), and therefore careful removal of these structures would not be detrimental to the historic character or fabric of the building. The proposed roof lights would match the current in terms width, length and height, and the existing ceiling openings (beneath) would not need to be enlarged to accommodate the replacement structures. As a result, apart from the restoration works involving the ceiling glazing beneath, no works are required to the historic fabric of the building.

6.8 It is noted that the applicant entered into pre-application discussions with the Council’s Listed Building Officer (Anna Ross) prior to submitting this application, where the principle of replacement aluminium frames was agreed provided similar frame sizes could be matched. In light of this, new powder coated aluminium frames which are near identical in terms of size to the existing frames have been sourced (section details provided in the Planning Support Document). These are considered the best match available and would achieve a near identical finish in terms of scale and appearance.

6.9 The new glass, like the existing would be single glazed (6mm clear), but toughened to provide extra protection for the ceiling glazing beneath.

Ceiling Glazing Restoration Works

6.10 The works proposed to the ceiling glazing are modest and involve replacing the existing panes of glass which have been damaged and repainting the external frame. The existing paintwork would be rubbed down, and one layer of undercoat and then one coat of full gloss would be applied.
6.11 Like the works to the roof lights, the damaged panes of glass would be removed carefully and new “like for like” glass would be installed.

7. CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Listed Building Consent is sought to replace two existing roof lights and repair the existing ceiling glazing at Northamptonshire Central Library, Abington Street, Northampton.

7.2 The existing roof lights are in a bad state of repair and have likely been damaged by falling slates from the adjacent roof. The proposed aluminium structures have been carefully selected, following consultation with the Listed Building Officer at Northampton Borough Council, and would significantly enhance the character and appearance of the existing building as well providing a better level of protection for the ceiling glazing beneath. The works proposed to the ceiling glazing are modest and involve replacing the existing panes of glass which have been damaged and repainting the external frame.

7.3 The proposed works would have no adverse effects on the historic integrity of the Listed Building and it’s setting, nor to any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

7.4 The proposal is considered to comply with the relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework and relevant Core Strategy, Development Plan and Central Area Action Plan policies.