

Proposed development: Listed Building Application (Regulation 3) for remedial and renewal works to the Bay Roof projecting to the South facing Elevation to include increasing the diameter of the concealed downpipe within the left hand side (front view) Corinthian Column, renewing the outlets, roof finishes including flashing's/soakers and rainwater goods

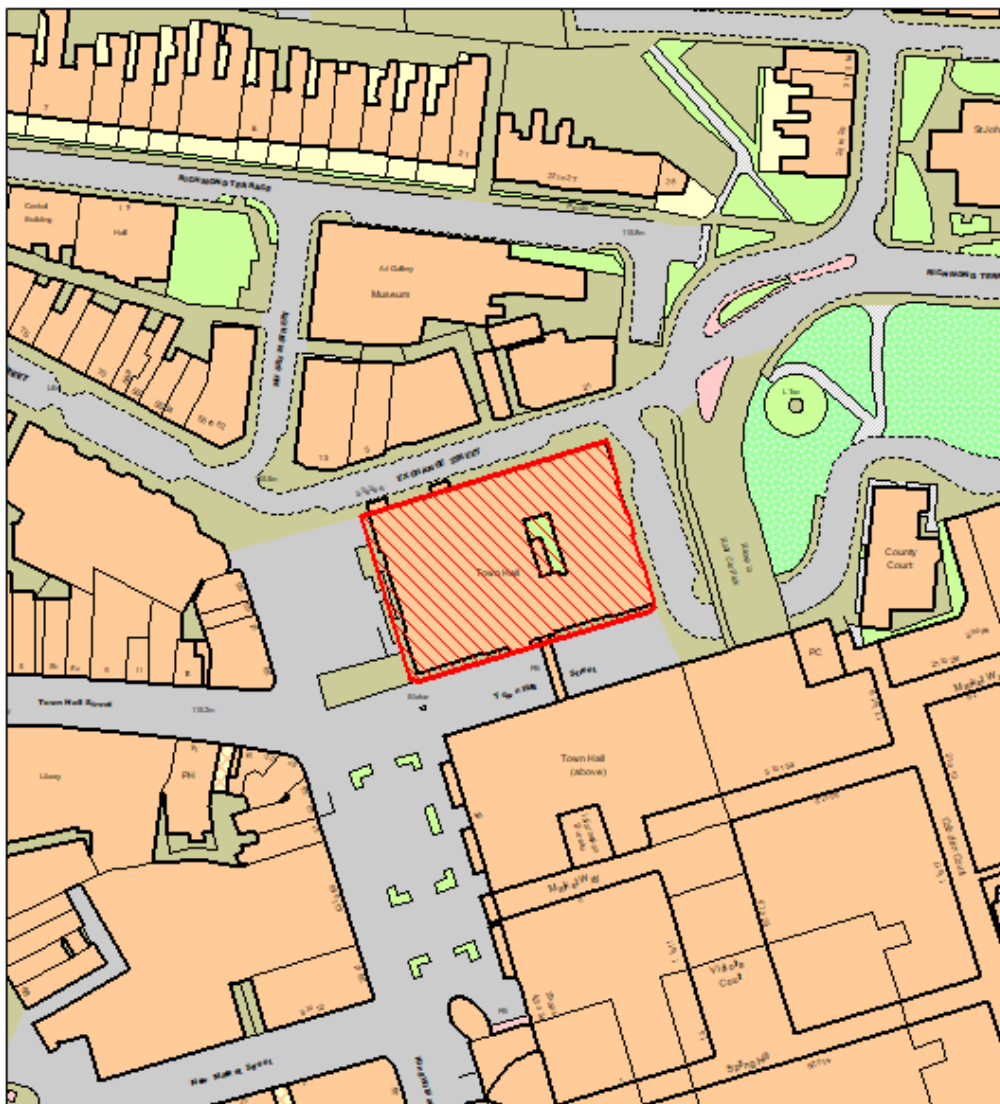
Site address:

**Town Hall
King William Street
Blackburn
BB1 7DY**

Applicant: Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council

Ward: Blackburn Central

Ward Councillors: Zamir Khan, Samim Desai, Mahfooz Hussain



1.0 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

1.0.1 **APPROVE**, subject to the conditions recommended within Paragraph 4.0.

2.0 KEY ISSUES/SUMMARY OF PLANNING BALANCE

- 2.1 The application is before Members as the Old Town Hall is a Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council site and the application has been submitted by the Council's Property Team, in line with Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 (as amended).
- 2.2 The proposal will allow remedial works thus ensuring the historic and special architectural importance of the listed building is preserved. It supports the Borough's planning strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework when dealing with designated heritage assets as it is considered to sustain and enhance the listed building, ensuring the building is maintained for future generations to enjoy. The proposal is also satisfactory from a technical point of view, with all issues having been addressed through the application, or capable of being controlled or mitigated through planning conditions.

3.0 RATIONALE

3.1 Site and Surroundings

- 3.1.1 The application site is a Grade II listed building which was built in 1852 by James Patterson. It is a large rectangular stone building with a rusticated ground floor, modillion eaves cornice over the first floor, and a pierced balustrade above the attic storey. The building has stone quoins, round-arched Italianate windows, and Corinthian columns to the front at first floor. On the south side, where the works are proposed, the building contains a covered staircase. The roof of which is the subject to this application.
- 3.1.2 The building is used as the Town Hall for Blackburn. It contains reception areas, council chambers, and offices.
- 3.1.3 The area where the works are proposed abuts the main staircase leading to the Mayoral Chamber and Committee Rooms. It is clearly evident when travelling up the staircase that the external wall is suffering internally from damp ingress.
- 3.1.4 The Grade II listed building is located within Northgate Conservation Area and is within the setting of other grade II listed buildings, see image below with the listed buildings shown in pink:



3.2 Proposed Development

- 3.2.1 Listed Building Consent is sought for remedial and renewal works to the Bay Roof projecting from the South facing Elevation of the building (facing the side elevation of Wilko's).
- 3.2.2 The proposal relates to solving an existing drainage problem to the roof of the decorative porch feature over the south entrance. The current arrangement is of a poor design and is causing internal damp problems and the decay of the plaster finishes on the Mayors Staircase.
- 3.2.3 The scheme seeks to remedy the issue by either core drilling the existing outfall to increase its size (Option A) or adding a new down pipe and hopper down the east face (Option B). In both respects. The proposals seek to better discharge the water from the small section of flat roof behind the upstand parapet.
- 3.2.4 The proposals include increasing the diameter of the concealed downpipe within the left hand side (front view) Corinthian Column of the porch projection; renewing the water outlets, roof finishes, including flashing's/soakers, and the rainwater goods.

3.3 Development Plan

- 3.3.1 The Development Plan comprises the Core Strategy and adopted Local Plan Part 2 – Site Allocations and Development Management Policies. In determining the current proposal, the following are considered to be the most relevant policies:

3.3.2 Core Strategy

- Policy CS16: Form and Design of New Development
- Policy CS17: Built and Cultural Heritage

3.3.3 Local Plan Part 2

- Policy 8: Development and People
- Policy 11: Design
- Policy 39: Heritage

3.4 **Other Material Planning Considerations**

3.4.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The Framework sets out the government's aims and objectives against which planning policy and decision making should be considered. At its heart is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should proceed without delay, unless impacts which significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of a proposal are identified. The following sections of the Framework are considered relevant to assessment of the proposal:

- Section 6: Building a strong, competitive economy
- Section 7: Ensuring the vitality of town centres
- Section 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

3.4.2 These relevant sections will be discussed during the course of this report.

3.5 **Assessment**

3.5.1 In assessing this application, Sections 16, and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Chapter 16 of the NPPF and Policy 39 of the Blackburn with Darwen Local Plan Part 2 are of relevance.

3.5.2 Sections 16 and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) states that special regard shall be had to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses when considering whether to grant listed building consent or planning permission. Section 66 (2) of the Act states that a local authority shall have regard to the desirability of preserving features of special architectural or historic interest, and in particular listed buildings.

3.5.3 Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that in the exercise of planning functions special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

- 3.5.4 Part 16 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Development Management Policy 39: 'Historic Environment' of the Blackburn with Darwen Local Plan Part 2 requires, development to, or within the curtilage or vicinity of, a listed building or structure, to preserve or enhance both its special interest and setting. In addition, the National Planning Policy Framework states at Paragraph 134 that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Impact on a designated heritage asset

- 3.5.2 Core Strategy Policy CS17: Built and Cultural Heritage, Maximising the Asset, states that proposals for new development should identify and take advantage of opportunities to integrate with and promote the Borough's cultural assets. Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies, Policy 39 states that development affecting a heritage asset will be required to sustain or enhance its significance, taking into account the retention/restoration of historic features and building details and, the detailed design of the work, including scale and proportions, materials and construction details. This underpins the main principles of sustainable development contained in the NPPF alongside the requirement to conserve and enhance the historic environment.
- 3.5.3 A detailed Heritage Statement has been provided which sets out the key the requirements of NPPF 2019 paragraph 189 which states;

"In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected... The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance", reflecting the policy requirements include:

- Purpose of the Heritage Statement
- Development Proposal
- Planning Status of Heritage Asset
- Planning Policy
- Context
- Description
- Significance and Heritage Value
- List Description

- 3.5.1 The scheme involves remedial works to the bay roof projection on the south facing elevation of the listed building, which is creating significant water ingress to the plaster finish of the wall adjacent to the mayoral staircase.
- 3.5.2 The scheme seeks to remedy the issue by either core drilling the existing outfall to increase its size (Option A) or adding a new down pipe and hopper down the east face (Option B). In both respects, the works are proposed to

better discharge the water from the small section of flat roof behind the upstand parapet. The proposed work in this respect is well justified and meets with the requirements of Paragraph 194 of the NPPF, which states:

“Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. ...”

- 3.5.3 In terms of the Listed Building, the works to core drill to widen the current outlet (Option A) will outwardly have little or no impact on the appearance of the bay, with the exception of a revised location for the new short section of cast iron pipe on the side (west) elevation of the porch. Whilst this proposal will result in the internalised loss of fabric (to enlarge the existing outfall), this will have little or no impact on the character of the Listed Building.
- 3.5.4 The fall back option (B), if the outfall cannot be drilled, is simply to add a new downpipe on the eastern side of the porch. Again, whilst this involves a small degree of visual change, when taken as a whole the change would be negligible and would not harm the integrity of the Listed Building.
- 3.5.5 Based on the above, it is considered that the benefits from undertaking the work (both options) and preventing water ingress decaying the listed building outweighs the negligible visual change to the building, ensuring that this building has a healthy future and will be here for future generations to enjoy. Overall, Officers consider the historic and architectural character of the Listed Building would not be harmed by the works proposed.
- 3.5.6 Visually the works appear very minor and have no impact on the character or appearance of the Northgate Conservation Area in which this building is set.
- 3.5.7 To conclude, the proposals cause no discernible harm to either the significance of the Town Hall building (as a Grade II Listed Building) or the character and appearance of Northgate Conservation Area and by preventing water damage to the listed building it secures its future as a public building for the benefit of the boroughs residents. As such, it satisfies the statutory requirement to preserve (Sections 16 and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990) and the objectives contained in Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy 39 of the Blackburn with Darwen Local Plan.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION: GRANT CONSENT, subject to the conditions set out below:

1. The proposed development must be begun not later than three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: Required to be imposed by Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

2. Unless explicitly required by condition within this consent, the development hereby permitted shall be carried out in complete accordance with the proposals as detailed on drawings:

OTH005 Rev. A: Site Location Plan;
BR001 Existing Bay Roof Elevations and Layout, and,
BR002: Proposed Bay Roof Elevations & Layout - Option A & Option B

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to clarify which plans are relevant to the consent.

3. Any detailed amendments to the design, works or materials shall be:
- a) first approved in writing by the local planning authority;
 - b) implemented in accordance with that approval; and,
 - c) retained for the duration of the development.

REASON: To allow for minor changes which might occur during the restoration process, in accordance with Local Plan Part 2 Policy 39 and in the interests of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area.

5.0 PLANNING HISTORY (since 2000):

APPLICATION NUMBER	DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	DECISION	DATE
10/21/0127	Internal alterations, refurbishment and restoration of existing office spaces to the first and second floors	Grant	18/03/2021
10/19/0463	Internal alterations, refurbishment and restoration of existing office spaces to the third and fourth floors	Grant	12/07/2019
10/11/1147	Installation of secondary glazing	Grant	19/03/2012
10/10/0889	Carry out restoration and repairs to external stonework and timber windows	Grant	14/01/2011
10/10/0633	Reinstate two pairs of doors where they have been removed in the past.	Grant	15/10/2010
10/10/0507	New and replacement internal double doors and door closer units to comply with current fire regulations	Withdrawn	13/07/2010
10/10/0019	Re-roofing	Grant	29/07/2010
10/09/0264	Alterations and redecoration to room 104	Grant	20/05/2009

10/09/0249	Modification to existing steps	Grant	12/05/2009
10/08/0880	To renew rotten windows and doors in quadrangle and make good external coatings	Grant	23/12/2008
10/07/1030	Decorative exterior lighting scheme to main facade facing King William Street.	Grant	02/11/2007
10/04/0502	Alteration of public areas - forming 3 new openings to the existing walls to improve customer flow as part of the New Accessible Services programme the Council is adopting	Grant	21/07/2004
10/03/0672	Formation of two new openings through internal walls to link basement rooms B01, B02, B03	Grant	17/09/2003
10/00/0688	Formation of two new openings through internal walls and two openings within window opening onto internal quadrangle, to allow for new extract and intake ducting to re-fitted kitchen on the second floor of the Old Town Hall	Grant	15/11/2000

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

6.1 Conservation Officer

I had a look at this bay today. I have also previously seen the internal damp issue on the staircase caused by the undersized/blocked internal pipework within the projecting porch bay.

The proposal relates to solving an existing drainage problem to the roof of the decorative porch feature over the south entrance. The current arrangement is of a poor design and is causing internal damp problems, and the decay of the plaster finishes on the Mayors Staircase.

The scheme seeks to remedy the issue by either core drilling the existing outfall to increase its size (Option A) or adding a new down pipe and hopper down the east face (Option B). In both respects to better discharge the water from the small section of flat roof behind the upstand parapet. The remedial works are outlined in the submission.

The proposed work in this respect is well justified and meets with the requirements of P.194 of the NPPF.

In terms of the Listed Building the works to core drill to widen the current outlet (Option A) will outwardly have little or no impact on the appearance of

the bay, with the exception of a revised location for the new short section of cast iron pipe on the side (west) elevation of the porch. Whilst this proposal will result in the internalised loss of fabric (to enlarge the existing outfall) this will have little or no impact on the character of the LB.

The fall back option (B) if the outfall can't be drilled is simply to add a new downpipe on the eastern side of the porch. Again, whilst this involves a small degree of visual change, when taken as a whole the change would be negligible and would not harm the integrity of the LB.

In this respect I feel the benefits from undertaking the work (both options) outweigh the negligible visual change to the building and over all feel the historic and architectural character of the LB would not be harmed.

Visually the works appear very minor and have no impact on the character or appearance of the Northgate CA.

In this respect as I feel the proposed causes no discernible harm to either the significance of the Town Hall building (as a Grade 2 Listed Building) or the character/appearance of Northgate Conservation Area and as such it satisfies the statutory requirement to preserve and the objectives contained in Chapter 16 of the NPPF and the Local Plan.

Ian Bond
Lead for Specialist Services
Growth Lancashire

- 6.2 The application was advertised by site and press notices and no representations have been received.

7.0 CONTACT OFFICER: Claire Booth MRTPI, Senior Planning Officer

8.0 DATE PREPARED: 03 June 2021