

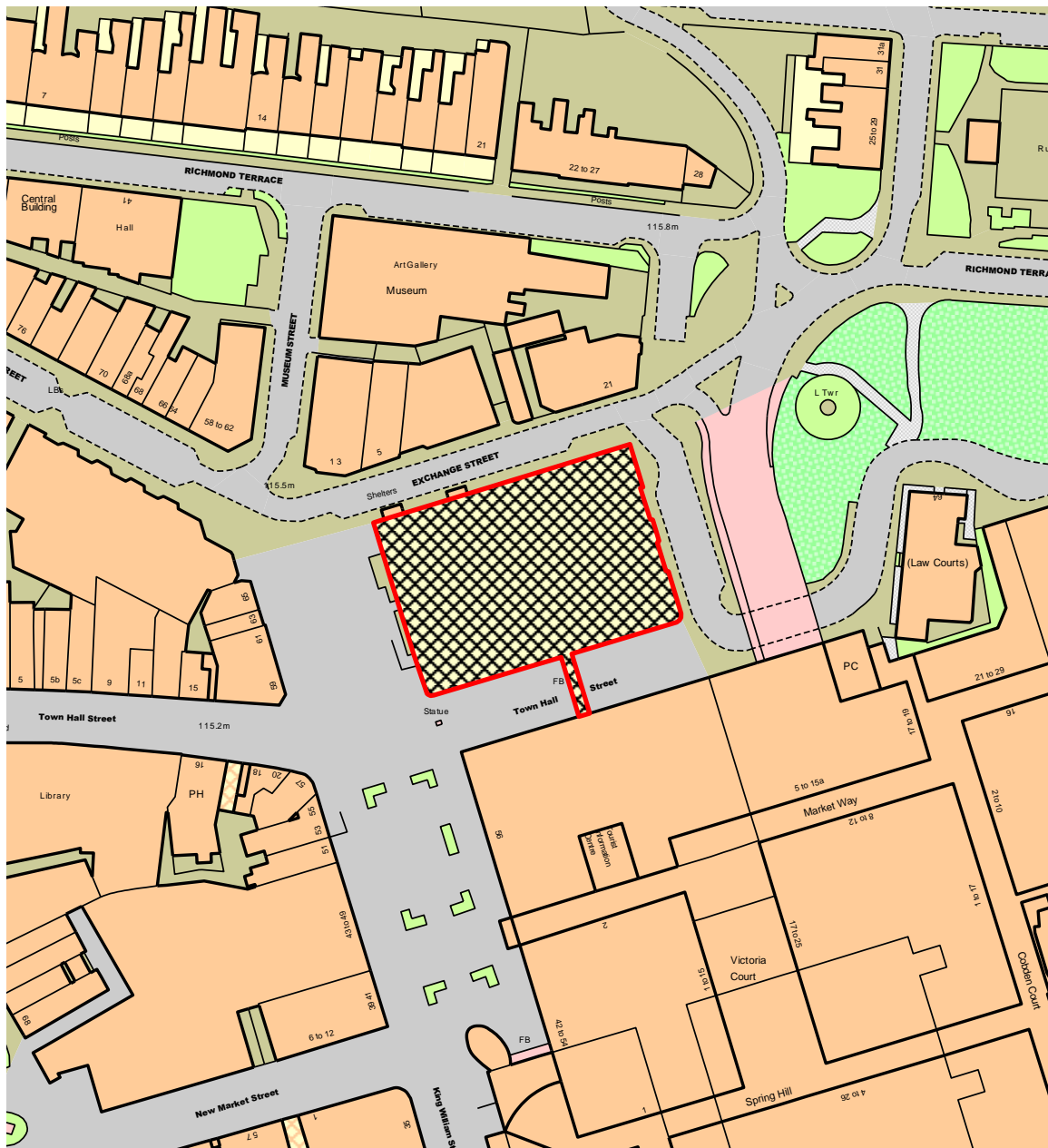
Proposed Development: Proposed creation of entrance hatch and counter following removal of an existing opening and creation of ground floor room with erection of a timber stud wall and installation of double doors

Site Address: Blackburn Town Hall, King William Street, Blackburn, BB1 7DY

Applicant: Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council

Ward: Blackburn Central

Councillor Samim Desai
Councillor Zamir Khan
Councillor Mahfooz Hussain



1.0 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 The proposed development is recommended to be granted planning listed building consent, subject to the conditions detailed in Section 5.

2.0 KEY ISSUES/SUMMARY OF PLANNING BALANCE

- 2.1 This application is presented to the Planning and Highways Committee, in accordance with the Council's Constitution, and given that the application has been made on behalf of the Council.
- 2.2 A site notice was displayed on 21st June 2023. No public comments have been received. Should any be received ahead of the committee meeting they will be presented as part of a committee update report.
- 2.3 The Council's development plan supports new heritage developments and associated works, provided they constitute sustainable development and accord with the development plan when taken as a whole.
- 2.4 The proposals involve internal alterations to the Grade II listed Blackburn Town Hall. On balance, the proposals would be satisfactory from a technical point of view, with all issues having been addressed through the application process or capable of being controlled or mitigated through appropriately worded planning conditions.
- 2.5 The key issues to be addressed in determining this application are limited to assessing impacts on the historical significance of the listed building.

3.0 RATIONALE

3.1 Site and Surroundings

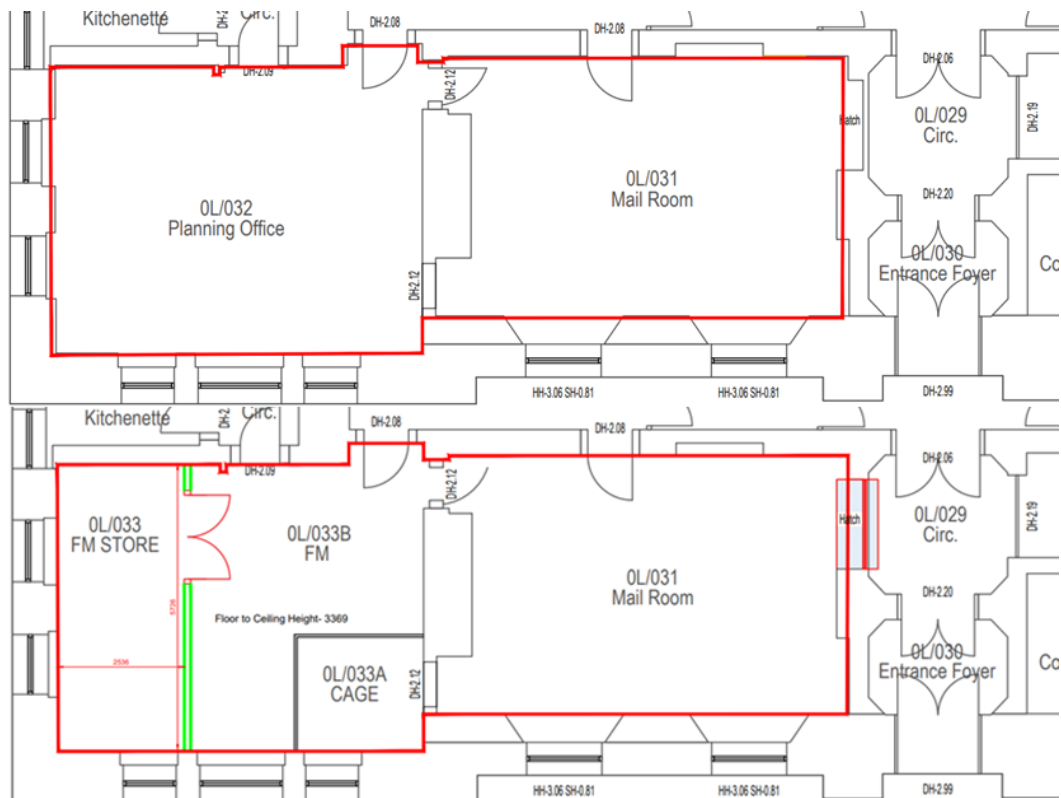
- 3.1.1 The application site is a Grade II listed building which was built in 1852 and designed by James Patterson. It is a large rectangular stone building with a rusticated ground floor, modillion eaves cornice over the first floor, and a pierced balustrade above the attic storey. The building has stone quoins, round-arched Italianate windows, and Corinthian columns to the front at first floor. The building is used as the Town Hall, containing reception areas, council chambers, and offices.

3.2 Proposed Development

- 3.3 As detailed above, this planning application seeks listed building consent for the implementation of various internal works. An entrance hatch and counter would be installed following removal of an existing opening. A ground floor room would also be formed through the erection of a timber stud wall and installation of double doors.
- 3.4 The stud walls would be constructed from plasterboard with a painted plaster finish. The colour schemes to be used would match those used in the renovation of other areas of the town hall. The double doors would be softwood

panelled doors with glazed panels. The hatch would feature a veneer worktop supported by chrome plated metal legs. The works would be conducted to the rear of the building.

Figure Two – Existing and Proposed Floor Plan



3.5 Development Plan

3.5.1 Local Plan Part 2 (2015):

- Policy 39: Heritage

3.5.2 Listed Building Consent Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) (1999)

4.0 **ASSESSMENT**

4.1 Listed Building Impacts

4.1.1 The site is a Grade II building that has been subject to an abundance of internal alterations previously. Its character is largely derived externally with the best preserved internal areas found to the front of the building. Policy 39 states that development with the potential to affect any designated heritage asset, either directly or indirectly including by reference to their setting, will be required to sustain or enhance the significance of the asset. Those requirements are reinforced by the Listed Buildings SPG.

4.1.2 The proposed works form part of wider initiatives to renovate the town hall and restructure staff locations. Such outcomes provide adequate justification

regarding the need for the works. A review of the proposals has been undertaken by the BwD Heritage Advisor and no objections have been raised. The style and finish of the materials to be used would be consistent with works approved under application 10/21/0127.

- 4.1.3 A condition is recommended to ensure the development is implemented in accordance with the submitted details in order to ensure a satisfactory form of development is achieved. Subject to compliance with that condition, the proposed development would be acceptable with reference to listed building impacts, in accordance with Policy 39 together with the guidance of the Listed Buildings SPG.

4.2 Summary

- 4.2.1 This application involves internal alterations to the Grade II listed town hall. Subject to appropriate conditions, the proposed development would be acceptable on all the relevant planning grounds, in accordance with the policy and guidance note detailed in Section 3.4.

- 4.2.2 Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Subject to appropriate conditions, the proposal would be acceptable in terms of listed building impacts.

- 4.2.3 The proposed development therefore complies with the development plan. There is a positive presumption in favour of approving the development and there are no material reasons to object to the application.

5.0 RECOMMENDATION:

Delegated authority is given to the Strategic Director of Growth and Development to approve planning permission, subject to the following conditions;

- 5.1 The works hereby approved shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this consent. No later than three days after works first begin on site, written notice shall be given to the Local Planning Authority of the date on which works are first commenced.

REASON: To comply with Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and to ensure the Local Planning Authority is informed of the commencement of the first works on the site.

- 5.2 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: Location Plan (OTH-LBC01), FMBC001, FMBC002 and FMBC003.

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

- 5.3 All materials and finishes to be used for the development hereby approved shall be as stated on the submitted application form and approved drawings, unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: In order to ensure a satisfactory form of development is achieved, in the interests of preserving the character of the listed building, and to comply with the requirements of Policy 39 of the Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council Local Plan Part 2, Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (Adopted 2015).

6.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 6.1 10/21/0477 – 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 (listed building consent) – Approved, with conditions – June 2021.
- 6.2 10/21/0127 – Internal alterations, refurbishment and restoration of existing office spaces to the first and second floors (listed building consent) – Approved, with conditions – March 2021.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 7.1 BwD Heritage Advisor – Largely the refurbishment works are the same as the other phases and therefore I can't see why the Local Planning Authority would consider this work any differently than those already agreed. Clearly retaining the Town Hall as 'Council' Offices provides significant benefits which outweigh any very minor impact from the refurbishment works themselves.

The biggest intervention is perhaps the subdivision of an existing office space and the provision of the new double door set. The need for this change and the formation of a 'hatch' as shown on the drawings will need to be justified as part of the listed building consent submission. You will need to explain the purpose/need etc. I don't know those particular office spaces and don't know whether any internal features of note are effected by the works i.e. decorative coving etc.

Regardless when considering the whole building as the 'heritage asset' I can't see how these relatively minor alterations will cause any significant level of harm. As with the previous phases of the interior work the main significance of the town Hall lies in its external appearance, built form, materials and grand Council rooms/spaces etc. and its historic association to the town. The internal office spaces are of much less importance and have seen change over the years. I don't see these further changes as being anything different and have no substantive concerns over the work proposed.

- 7.2 Ward Cllrs

- 7.3 No public responses received

8.0 CONTACT OFFICER: Christian Barton – Planning Officer

9.0 DATE PREPARED: 30th June 2023

10.0 SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS – none.