



Planning Committee Report

Application Number: WNN/2023/0146

Location: The Central Library
76 Abington Street
Northampton
Northamptonshire
NN1 2AP

Development: Listed Building Consent Application for repairs to front elevation stonework, windows, glazing and roof, part dismantling and rebuilding of a chimney stack to allow replacement of an existing embedded steel plate which is corroding and internal localised redecoration to areas affected by water ingress with potentially minor localised plaster work repairs to ceilings and walls

Applicant: West Northamptonshire Council

Agent: MGS Surveying Ltd

Case Officer: Andrew White

Ward: Castle Unitary Ward

Reason for Referral: West Northamptonshire Council is the applicant

Committee Date: 8th June 2023

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT PERMISSION SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS as set out below with delegated authority to the Assistant Director – Planning and Development to approve any amendments to conditions as deemed necessary;

Proposal

Listed Building Consent is sought for repairs to front elevation stonework, windows, glazing and roof, part dismantling and rebuilding of a chimney stack to allow replacement of an existing embedded steel plate which is corroding and internal localised redecoration to areas affected by water ingress with potentially minor localised plaster work repairs to ceilings and walls

Consultations

The following consultee is in support of the application:

- WNC Conservation Team

Conclusion

The application has been assessed against the relevant policies in the NPPF, the adopted Local Plan and other relevant guidance as listed in detail at Section 8 of the report.

The key issues arising from the application details are:

- Principle of the Proposed Works and Heritage Considerations

The report looks into the key planning issues relating to an application for Listed Building Consent and Officers conclude that the proposal is acceptable subject to conditions.

Members are advised that the above is a summary of the proposals and key issues contained in the main report below which provides full details of all consultation responses, planning policies, the Officer's assessment and recommendations, and Members are advised that this summary should be read in conjunction with the detailed report.

MAIN REPORT

1 APPLICATION SITE AND LOCALITY

- 1.1 Central Library is a grade II listed building located on Abington Street. Its list description states '1910 by local architect Herbert Norman. Classical stone front. 2 storeys and basement. Interior: marble staircase, well plan.'
- 1.2 The building was constructed for use as a new public library. The front elevation has a sandstone façade with carved stone statues of historical figures set within alcoves at first floor level and steel, single glazed windows set within three decorative stone porticos at ground floor level. The library has two projections at either end of the front elevation both with entrance doors. Decorative stone bottles with coping stones form the parapet wall along the front elevation, the pitched roof slope has a natural slate covering and there is a decorative timber cupola with louvred side panels positioned centrally to the roof, with a curved, lead dressed roof with a timber flagpole installed.
- 1.3 The side and rear elevations of the original building are all of solid wall construction, in red brickwork in English Bond. To the western elevation, set within the courtyard area is a boiler house and chimney stack which has been constructed in modern brickwork. Windows are all timber single glazed, some have leaded lights, some are sliding sash, some bottom hung casements.
- 1.4 Roof areas are either: timber rafter pitched roofs with natural slate coverings; or concrete decked flat roofed areas with roof coverings of either asphalt or modern single ply membranes installed. Rainwater goods have a mixture of the original cast iron guttering, hoppers and downpipes along with replacement sections in extruded aluminium or uPVC dependent upon location.

2 CONSTRAINTS

- 2.1 Grade II Listed Building

3 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 Listed Building Consent Application for repairs to front elevation stonework, windows, glazing and roof, part dismantling and rebuilding of a chimney stack to allow

replacement of an existing embedded steel plate which is corroding and internal localised redecoration to areas affected by water ingress with potentially minor localised plaster work repairs to ceilings and walls

4 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 Significant history but none relevant to the current proposal

5 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES AND CONSIDERATIONS

Statutory Duty

5.1 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.2 Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities when considering development that affects a listed building or its setting to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

5.3 Development Plan

- West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (Part 1) – Policies S10 Sustainable Development Principles and BN5 The Historic Environment and Landscape
- Northampton Local Plan Part 2 (2011-2029) - Policies Q1 Placemaking and Design and ENV6 Protection and enhancements of designated and non – designated heritage assets

5.4 Material Considerations

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Paragraph 199. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Paragraph 202. 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.

Paragraph 206 Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

6 RESPONSE TO CONSULTATIONS

6.1 Below is a summary of the consultation responses received at the time of writing this report. Responses are available to view in full on the Council's website.

6.2 WNC Conservation Team

Support. The works are intended to safeguard the future of the building. There is therefore no harm and a significant public benefit.

7 RESPONSE TO PUBLICITY

7.1 No responses were received to the display of the Public Notice.

8 APPRAISAL

Principle of The Proposed Works and Heritage Considerations

8.1 The purpose of the application is to undertake repair and maintenance work to the building to ensure that it continues to be able to contribute to the Town Centre and that its status as a Listed Building is respected.

8.2 The proposed works include various aspects of repair, maintenance, redecoration and remedying of defects to the fabric of the listed building. The works are all intended to ensure the long-term maintenance of the building and to restore architectural details.

8.3 The submitted survey of the building has identified a series of defects. 'The roof has suffered partial failure of the flat roof coverings resulting in localised patches of internal water ingress. To pitched roof areas miscellaneous slates have slipped or are missing. Further defects noted to roof areas include; damaged or missing lead flashings to roof lights; eroded joints to coping stones to gable walls, suspected defective guttering linings to the front elevation behind the parapet wall, defective rainwater goods including blocked hoppers and poor or missing connections. The chimney stack to the western elevation boiler house has suffered expansion of an embedded steel plate resulting in a lean to the upper area (above parapet wall height). This has been inspected by a structural engineer as is to be dismantled and rebuilt as part of the proposed works. The front elevation has minor localised area of impact damage to the stonework façade along with erosion to pointing, stonework joints and coping stone joints. Water staining is evident to localised areas of high-level stonework. The timber cupola is decoratively in poor condition. The side elevations have localised areas of eroded pointing particularly at high level, timber windows are all decoratively in very poor condition. Some windows have localised areas of significant timber rot. The rear elevation has areas of slight vertical cracking, localised significant degradation to low-level brickwork and miscellaneous areas of eroded pointing particularly at higher levels. Timber windows to the rear elevation are decoratively in very poor condition, some windows have been boarded over following glass breakage, localised areas of timber rot are evident. Internally, there is evidence

of localised water ingress to ceilings and walls to second floor areas thought to be attributable to the failure of the flat roof coverings.'

8.4 The exterior works proposed are:

Front elevation: Stone repointing, Stone indent / stone mortar repairs

Conditions suggested to identify -

the lime mortar mix

schedule of stone repairs to be identified by stone mason / contractor and sample repairs to be viewed on site.

Rear / side elevation: Brick repointing, brick replacement, brick repairs, repair windows

Conditions suggested lime mortar to be used.

Brick to be agreed together with schedule of replacement bricks to be provided.

Roof: Chimney stack - dismantling and rebuilding of chimney stack, Cupola repair, repairs and maintenance to flat roof areas (not of historic significance); Rooflight and pitched roof areas

Conditions suggested

Brick sample required.

Mechanism for carrying out inspection of Cupola works.

Rainwater goods – schedule to be provided of rainwater goods, identifying repair / replacement works needed. Strategy to be agreed once this has been produced.

8.5 In order to conduct the external repairs scaffolding will be erected, tied to the building during the course of the works for stability and enclosed with white sheeting. The holes created to tie the scaffold to the building will be filled and colour matched to the surrounding stonework.

8.6 A condition is suggested to require more detailed information regarding the method of tying the scaffolding to address concerns about the extent to which the physical structure of the building may be affected. This would need to include the number of potential tie points to minimise the impact on the structure.

8.7 The Internal works will include the installation of L shaped bracket to staircase wall which is required for structural reasons and the redecoration of internal areas due to water ingress.

8.8 The proposed works have been considered in terms of the requirements of Sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the NPPF. The works are considered to be of significant benefit to the Listed Building and (subject to appropriate conditions) not be harmful to the Listed Building. The Conservation Team has stated that it considers the works will not result in harm. This is also the view of Planning Officers. Consequently, no objection is raised to the proposal which is considered to be in accordance with Policies Q1 and ENV6 of the NLPP2 by sustaining, protecting and enhancing a heritage asset and non-designated heritage assets; and Policies S10 and BN5 of the JCS through protecting, conserving and enhancing a heritage asset.

9 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 The proposal is not CIL liable.

10 PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The repairs and maintenance works proposed have emerged from a detailed survey of the building. The works are considered to be essential to the preservation and long-term conservation of the grade II listed building.

11 RECOMMENDATION

- 11.1 Grant permission subject to conditions as set out below with delegated authority to the Assistant Director – Planning and Development to approve any amendments to those conditions as deemed necessary.

Time limit

- 1 The works hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.

Reason: To comply with Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Approved plans

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: LBC-01, LBC-02, LBC-03, LBC-04, LBC-05, LBC-06 and LBC-07

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to accord with the terms of the listed building consent application.

Materials

3. The details of the lime mortar mix to be used in the stone and brick repointing and replacement should be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA prior to the commencement of any works to the building. The works shall then proceed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the works sustain, protect and enhance the heritage asset in accordance Policies Q1 and ENV6 of the NLPP2 and Policies S10 and BN5 of the JCS through protecting, conserving and enhancing a heritage asset.

4. A schedule of stonework and stone repairs shall be produced by the stone mason / contractor, submitted to the LPA and agreed in writing prior to commencement of any works to the front elevation of the building. The schedule shall allow an opportunity for the LPA to inspect sample stone repairs on site during the course of the project.

Samples of stones and bricks to be used as replacement for those that cannot be repaired shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA prior to the commencement of any works to the building. The works shall then proceed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the works sustain, protect and enhance the heritage asset in accordance Policies Q1 and ENV6 of the NLPP2 and Policies S10 and BN5 of the JCS through protecting, conserving and enhancing a heritage asset.

Rainwater goods

5. A schedule of required replacement rainwater good details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA prior to the replacement of any rainwater goods. The approved rainwater goods shall thereafter be installed in accordance with the agreed schedule.

Reason: To ensure that the works sustain, protect and enhance the heritage asset in accordance Policies Q1 and ENV6 of the NLPP2 and Policies S10 and BN5 of the JCS through protecting, conserving and enhancing a heritage asset.

Schedule of works

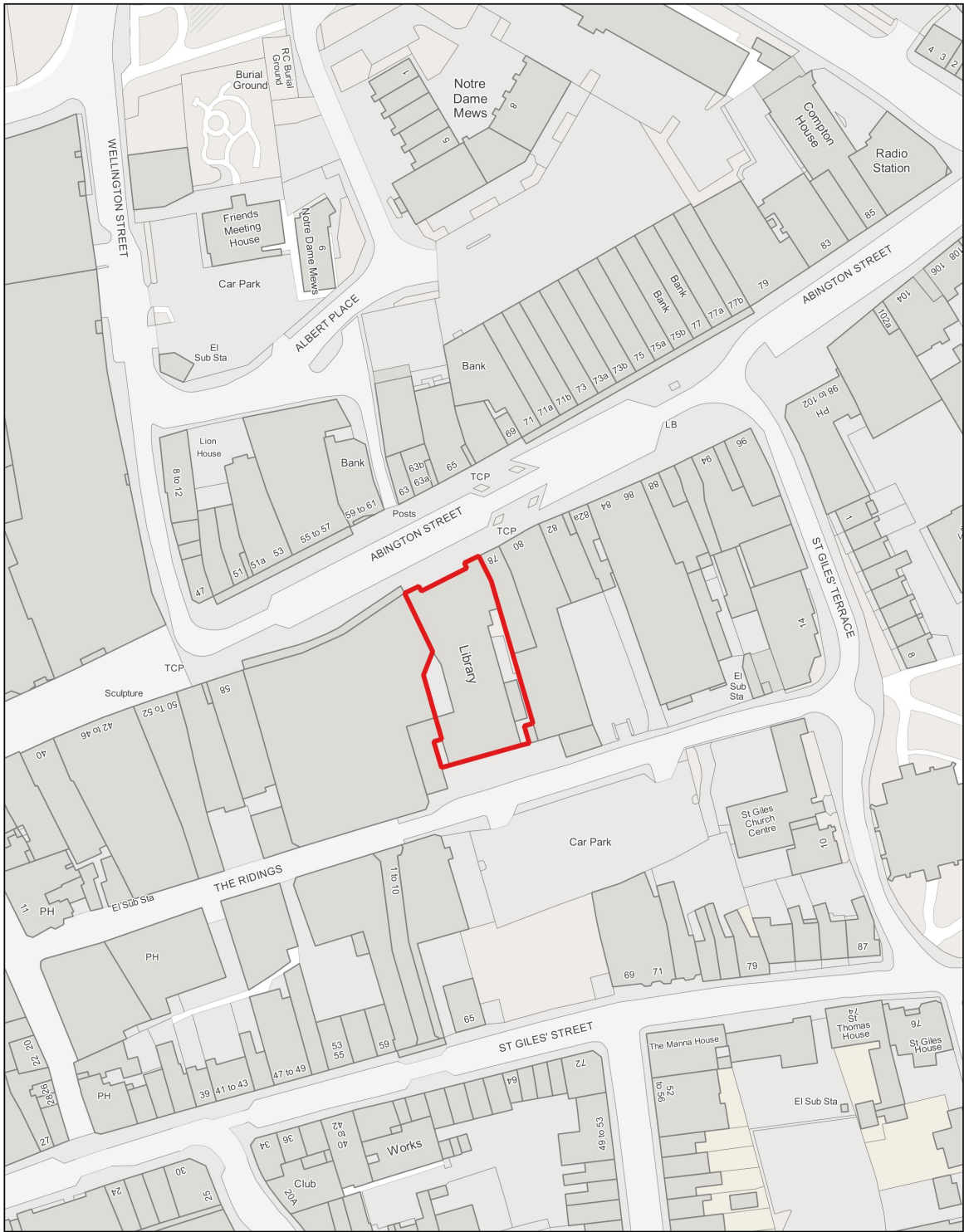
6. The applicant shall provide a programme of works to the cupola to the LPA in writing to enable the agreement of a monitoring schedule to be agreed in writing by the LPA.

Reason: To ensure that the works sustain, protect and enhance the heritage asset in accordance Policies Q1 and ENV6 of the NLPP2 and Policies S10 and BN5 of the JCS through protecting, conserving and enhancing a heritage asset.

Scaffolding management plan

7. Prior to the erection of any scaffolding required for the works hereby approved, the applicant shall submit the details of the method of tying the scaffolding to the Listed Building, identifying how the number of tie points required is justified on health and safety grounds and in order to minimise insertions into the elevations of the building. The scaffolding method statement shall also include details of the method of making good any insertions into the elevations of the building and shall be agreed by the LPA in writing before any scaffolding works commence. The scaffolding shall thereafter be erected in accordance with the method statement and the tie holes made good in accordance with the approved details

Reason: To ensure that the works sustain, protect and enhance the heritage asset in accordance Policies Q1 and ENV6 of the NLPP2 and Policies S10 and BN5 of the JCS through protecting, conserving and enhancing a heritage asset.



**West
Northamptonshire
Council**

Title: 76 Abington St Library, Northampton

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Date: 26-05-2023

Scale: 1:1,250 @A4

Drawn: M Johnson