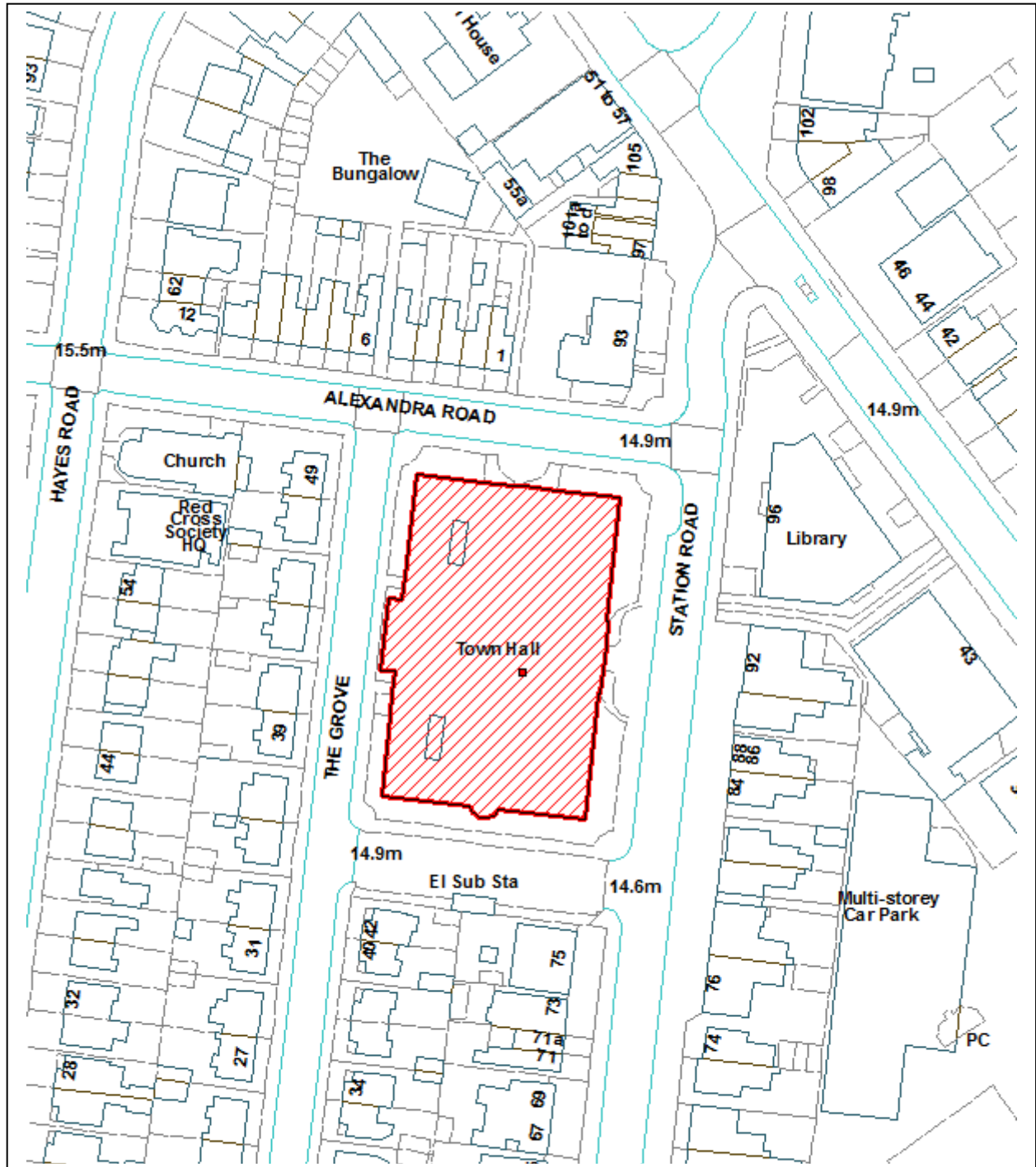


PLANNING COMMITTEE

16th October 2018

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING

A.6 PLANNING APPLICATION - 18/01498/LBC - TENDRING DISTRICT COUNCIL
CLACTON TOWN HALL STATION ROAD CLACTON ON SEA CO15 1SE



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Application:	18/01498/LBC	Town / Parish: Clacton Non Parished
Applicant:	Mr Daniel Mills - Tendring District Council	
Address:	Tendring District Council Clacton Town Hall Station Road CO15 1SE	
Development:	Proposal to remove a number of partition walls to provide open plan offices for each department within the council - this includes widening existing openings in three of the four corner turret towers to include these areas into the open plan. At ground floor level the work will include the removal of false ceilings & restoring the council chambers to near their original layout. The external facades remain unchanged.	

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This listed building consent is referred to the Planning Committee as the applicant is Tendring District Council.
- 1.2 The listed building consent seeks permission for internal changes to Clacton Town Hall including; the removal of modern partitions, widening of existing openings to four of the square tower rooms and the restoration of the original Council Chamber room. The changes are required as part of the Council's Office Transformation Project and in particular the need to adjust and reshape the existing accommodation to relocate departments housed in other buildings.
- 1.3 Having regard to the supporting documents and the submitted heritage statement it is evident that the works do not harm the special character, fabric and appearance of the listed building and in several cases represent an enhancement as original features are to be exposed and restored.
- 1.4 The proposed alterations are therefore considered to meet the requirements of the Council's saved and draft planning policies relating to the protection of listed buildings and the relevant paragraphs of the National Planning Policy Framework (2018).

Recommendation: Approve

Conditions:

- 1). Time Limit – Listed Buildings
- 2). Approved Plans

2. Planning Policy

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework July 2018
National Planning Practice Guidance

Tendring District Local Plan 2007
EN22 Extensions or Alterations to a Listed Building

Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond Publication Draft (June 2017)
PPL9 Listed Buildings

Status of the Local Plan

The 'development plan' for Tendring is the 2007 'adopted' Local Plan. Paragraph 213 of the NPPF (2018) allows local planning authorities to give due weight to adopted albeit outdated policies according to their degree of consistency with the policies in the NPPF. Paragraph 48 of the NPPF also allows weight to be given to policies in emerging plans according to their stage of preparation, the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies and the degree of consistency with national policy. As of 16th June 2017, the emerging Local Plan for Tendring is the Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond Publication Draft.

Section 1 of the Local Plan (which sets out the strategy for growth across North Essex including Tendring, Colchester and Braintree) was examined in January and May 2018 and the Inspector's initial findings were published in June 2018. They raise concerns, very specifically, about the three 'Garden Communities' proposed in north Essex along the A120 designed to deliver longer-term sustainable growth in the latter half of the plan period and beyond 2033. Further work is required to address the Inspector's concerns and the North Essex Authorities are considering how best to proceed.

With more work required to demonstrate the soundness of the Local Plan, its policies cannot yet carry the full weight of adopted policy, however they can carry some weight in the determination of planning applications. The examination of Section 2 of the Local Plan will progress once matters in relation to Section 1 have been resolved. Where emerging policies are particularly relevant to a planning application and can be given some weight in line with the principles set out in paragraph 48 of the NPPF, they will be considered and, where appropriate, referred to in decision notices. In general terms however, more weight will be given to policies in the NPPF and the adopted Local Plan.

In relation to housing supply:

The NPPF requires Councils to boost significantly the supply of housing to meet objectively assessed future housing needs in full. In any one year, Councils must be able to identify five years' worth of deliverable housing land against their projected housing requirements (plus an appropriate buffer to ensure choice and competition in the market for land, account for any fluctuations in the market or to improve the prospect of achieving the planned supply). If this is not possible, or housing delivery over the previous three years has been substantially below (less than 75%) the housing requirement, paragraph 11 d) of the NPPF requires applications for housing development needing to be assessed on their merits, whether sites are allocated for development in the Local Plan or not. At the time of this decision, the Council is able to demonstrate a robust five year supply of deliverable housing sites (as confirmed in recent appeal decisions) and housing delivered over the previous three years has been comfortably above 75% of the requirement. There is consequently no need for the Council to consider an exceptional departure from the Local Plan on housing supply grounds and applications for housing development are to be determined in line with the plan-led approach.

3. Relevant Planning History

00/01532/LBC	Enlargement of existing plant room and associated works	Refused	22.11.2000
00/01533/FUL	Enlargement of existing roof plant room and associated works	Refused	22.11.2000
01/00510/LBC	Proposed alterations to rooms 25	Approved	17.05.2001

and 35/37 at Town hall to provide additional office facilities for new political structure

02/00125/LBC	Internal alterations.	Approved	13.03.2002
97/00769/LBC	Installation of air conditioning units and external condenser units	Approved	21.08.1997
97/00854/LBC	Alterations to ticket office	Approved	15.09.1997
97/01066/LBC	Alterations to existing offices, to create new management board members offices on ground floor	Approved	17.10.1997
97/01069/LBC	Alterations to increase size of existing one person office to two person office	Approved	03.12.1997
97/01096/LBC	Alteration to existing offices, Capital Section, ground floor	Determination	17.10.1997
97/01097/LBC	Alterations to existing Members' suite offices on ground floor	Determination	17.10.1997
97/01419/LBC	Proposed alterations to Leisure Services and Training Facility - Ground Floor	Determination	20.01.1998
97/01420/LBC	Alterations to Technical Services and Financial Services Section Offices (First Floor)	Determination	20.01.1998
97/01421/LBC	Alterations to existing Personnel and Management Services Section Offices (First Floor)	Determination	20.01.1998
97/01422/LBC	Alterations to existing offices to form new interview room to Housing reception (ground floor)	Determination	20.01.1998
97/01471/LBC	Alterations to Technical Services Section Offices - First Floor	Determination	20.01.1998
97/01514/LBC	Proposed alterations to computer suite and Financial Services Section offices (Ground Floor)	Determination	20.01.1998
98/00063/LBC	Proposed installation of new trunking infrastructure for computer services, run at high level through	Determination	05.08.1998

main corridors, in Clacton Town Hall

98/01054/LBC	Erection of insulated partition wall to form new print room adjacent to housing interview rooms. Relocation of existing print room partition wall. Removal of existing partition wall in adjacent office in ground floor	Determination	28.10.1998
03/00399/FUL	Installation of 1 No. 0.6 metre transmission dish and 2 No. 200mm square panel antennas	Approved	11.06.2003
03/00400/LBC	Installation of 1 No. 0.6 metre transmission dishes and 2 No. 200mm square panel antennas	Approved	11.06.2003
03/00689/LBC	Demolition of existing access ramp and construction of new disabled access ramp.	Approved	11.06.2003
03/00833/FUL	Temporary location of a portacabin on part of the Town Hall car park from 9/6/03 until 11/8/03 (9 weeks) for use as a temporary Tourist Information Centre (TIC)	Approved	11.06.2003
03/00868/LBC	Renovations to the Essex Hall - licenced bar/meetings room, to include removal and renewal of a suspended ceiling.	Approved	11.06.2003
03/00925/LBC	Internal alterations for new TIC	Approved	11.06.2003
03/01495/LBC	New plant on flat roof to serve new air conditioning unit.	Approved	03.09.2003
03/01543/FUL	Extension to time limited planning permission given for the temporary location of a portacabin for use as a Tourist information Centre from 31/8/03 to 16/11/03.	Approved	26.09.2003
04/00090/LBC	Demolition of existing access ramp and construction of two new disabled access ramps.	Approved	10.03.2004
04/01001/LBC	Fit 1 No. ceiling fan.		22.07.2004
18/01498/LBC	Proposal to remove a number of partition walls to provide open plan offices for each department within the council - this includes widening	Current	

existing openings in three of the four corner turret towers to include these areas into the open plan. At ground floor level the work will include the removal of false ceilings & restoring the council chambers to near their original layout. The external facades remain unchanged.

4. Consultations

Building Control and Access Officer No comments at this stage.

5. Representations

5.1 No representations received.

6. Assessment

6.1 The main planning considerations are:

- Site Context;
- Proposal; and
- The impact upon the character, fabric and appearance of the listed building.

Site Context

6.2 Clacton Town Hall is situated on the western side of Station Road on the northern edge of Clacton Town Centre. The building accommodates Tendring District Council Offices along with the Princes Theatre and is a Grade II Listed Building. Construction work was completed in the early 1930's in a neo Georgian style. The buildings' listing is as follows;

Town hall with incorporated theatre which originally housed a library as well. Completed in 1931 to the designs of Sir Brumwell Thomas in Neo-Georgian style. Brown brick in English bond with stone dressings and hipped or mansard pantilled roofs. Square on plan with central vestibule, theatre behind, council chamber and committee rooms to the south and originally library to the north, now theatre bar. Pediment has deeply carved stone wreath flanked by swags. Engaged Composite fluted columns and Doric piers at sides. Three round-headed arches with keystones and impost blocks and decoration of carved swags above. Steps to street and three round headed entrances behind with double doors. Flanking wings are of one storey and attics five bays with stone parapet, cornice and plinth. Curved dormers with 12 pane sashes and 18 pane sashes below. These wings terminate in one bay corner pavilions with hipped roofs and 18 pane sashes with Diocletian windows above, set in moulded architraves with brackets flanked by pilasters. South front is similar but with central five-light curved bay. North front similar but with central door case with cornice, moulded architrave, double door and rectangular fanlight with intersecting arches originally the library entrance. West front has central fly tower to theatre with blank square windows opening above roof level of theatre and central tall round headed opening with impost blocks, an architectural feature ingeniously disguising a utilitarian scenery door. The interior has entrance vestibule with coffered barrel-vaulted ceiling, theatre of five bays with coffered barrel-vaulted ceiling, round headed arches to sides and cambered proscenium arch with carved municipal coat of arms, council chamber, committee rooms and mayor's parlour with original joinery and corridors with round headed arches and marble floors.

Proposal

6.3 This listed building consent proposes the following changes;

- Removal of modern suspended ceiling, sections of service pipework and ductwork along with modern partitions within the original Council Chamber.
- Refurbishment and restoration of plaster detailing to wall and ceilings within the original Council Chamber.
- Removal of dividing partitions in the long rooms to the left and right of the entrance hall.
- Plastering/blocking up of inside face of doors to long rooms leaving doors and door frames in place.
- Alterations within toilets to right of entrance hall providing improved access for disabled people.
- Removal of original/modern partitions to rooms off the rear corridors of the ground floor.
- First floor removal of modern partitions to make longer rooms.
- Existing openings to the four square corner tower rooms (one at ground floor and 3 at first floor) are to be increased in width and floor levels raised slightly to be the same level as the open plans area.

6.4 The alterations listed above are part of the Council's Office Transformation Project and are necessary to meet the requirements of other departments moving to the Town Hall. The project aims to streamline the economic running of Council affairs.

Impact upon Listed Building

6.5 Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 includes that in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority shall 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.

6.6 Paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2018 ("the Framework") requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected. This requirement is retained by saved policy EN22 of the Tendring District Local Plan (2007) draft Policy PPL9 of the Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond Publication Draft. Paragraph 196 of the Framework adds 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 securing its optimum viable use.

6.7 Paragraph 194 of the Framework also requires the submission of a Heritage Statement, or any other means of describing the significance of the heritage asset, including any contribution made by their setting. The Heritage Statement should be of a level of detail proportionate to the asset's importance. A Heritage Statement has been submitted with the application. The Heritage Statement, in conjunction with the submitted Design and Access Statement, outlines the history of the Listed Building, the proposed works involved and the impact they would have to the Listed Building.

6.8 As stated above the sole planning issue is whether the proposals have appropriate regard to the preservation or enhancement of the special character, fabric and appearance of the listed building.

6.9 In this regard the first point to note is that no external alteration or repair is proposed. All external elevations of the building are to remain as they are. In respect of the proposed internal alterations the majority of the work concerns the removal of mainly modern partitions and carefully managed alterations to the existing structure.

- 6.10 The supporting documents confirm that the widened openings to the square tower rooms will preserve the existing character by keeping the level of the opening either at the existing door height or slightly higher and by retaining the moulded picture rails and cornicing detailing. This assists in protecting the neo-Georgian styling of these rooms. The openings will be bridged by beams concealed behind plasterwork. As stated above, the floors of the affected square tower rooms are to be raised to provide same level floors throughout these open plan areas. To protect the original floors this work will be carried out using boarded flooring on pedestals so as not to disturb the original fabric of the building.
- 6.11 The proposals to the original Council Chamber (currently Housing Dept. offices) are entirely acceptable as the removal of the modern suspended ceiling, services and partitions will expose the original plaster detailing to the walls and ceiling.

Conclusion

- 6.12 Overall the changes proposed are considered to accord with the requirements of local and national planning policies which seek to safeguard the special nature of listed buildings. In many cases the work proposed enables original features to be enhanced and where alterations are proposed to original fabric matching materials including architraves, skirting and picture rails will be used to maintain the building's neo-Georgian styling.

Background Papers

None