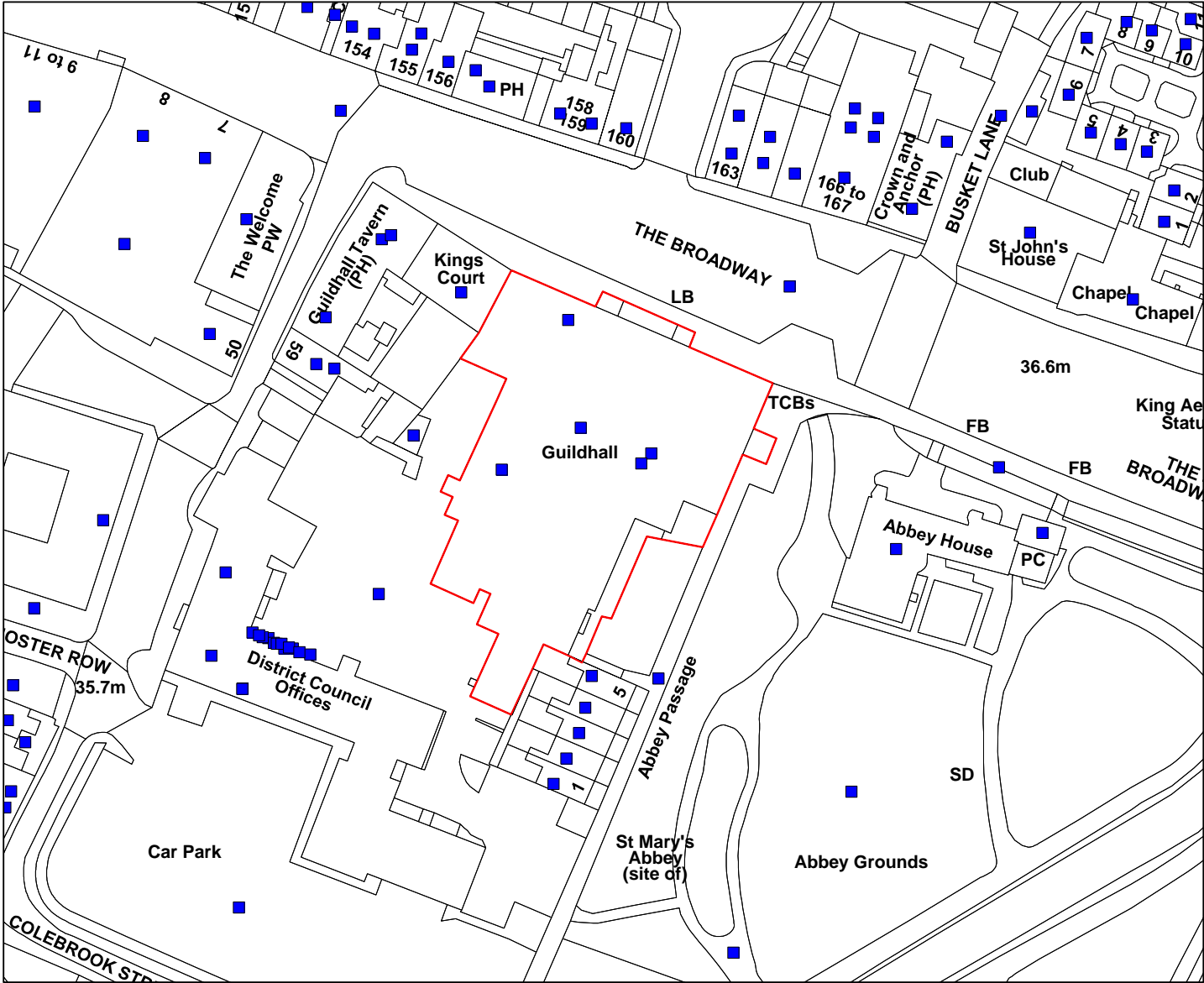


Winchester Guildhall, Winchester

09/02117/FUL



Winchester
City Council



Legend

Scale: 1:1000



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Organisation	Winchester City Council
Department	Development Services
Comments	
Date	25 November 2009
SLA Number	00018301

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE AGENDA

Item No: 4
Case No: 09/02117/FUL / W05074/45
Proposal Description: Refurbishment of Winchester Guildhall, including installation of a lift, alterations to create an additional 78.5 square metres of floorspace inside the existing building, alterations for improvements for disabled access, refurbishment of King Alfred Hall (including replacement of roof material) and relocation of ground floor cafe to north-east corner of building and creation of a new entrance in the front elevation for use by the cafe, and use of existing cafe for functions room. Alterations to rear roof slope.
Address: Winchester Guildhall, High Street, Winchester, Hampshire SO23 9GH
Parish, or Ward if within Winchester City: St Michael
Applicants Name: Winchester City Council
Case Officer: Miss Megan Birkett
Date Valid: 20 October 2009
Site Factors: Winchester Conservation Area
Grade II Listed Building
Within 50m of Listed Building

Recommendation: Application Permitted

General Comments

This application is reported to the Committee because the building is owned by Winchester City Council and the Council is also the applicant.

An application for listed building consent (ref; 09/02118/LIS) has also been submitted to the Local Planning Authority. That application is to be determined by the Secretary of State.

Site Description

Winchester Guildhall is located within central Winchester and is in what is described as Winchester's 'Walled Conservation Area'.

Its imposing stone frontage is an important landmark in the city, and dominates 'The Broadway', which comprises the lower part of the High Street.

This Grade II Listed Building was designed by Jeffrey and Skiller, in Gothic Revival style, and constructed as an entirely new structure from 1871, opening in 1873. It was part of a large complex which originally housed law courts, police station, fire brigade and areas for civic roles, including Council meetings and banquets.

The building has undergone a number of changes over the years, due to fire damage and Council requirements. It now houses a number of Council offices, the Tourist Information Centre, a number of conference rooms, a café and a performance hall.

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Proposal

The general scope of the work encompasses alterations to make the property more accessible and compliant with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). The alterations include the following:

- Alterations to the north elevation to remove three existing windows facing The Broadway, and lower the openings to ground level;
- The removal of the 1980's entrance canopy from the east elevation of the Saxon Suite;
- The removal of existing internal walls in the Saxon Suite;
- A proposed new lift, allowing full access to all floors for visitors to this historic building;
- The removal of the eastern staircase that connects to the Walton Room;
- The extension of the western stairs and corridor, to provide access to the Walton Room;
- The proposed replacement of the felt on the King Alfred Hall roof with a more traditional standing seam metal roof cladding, either in copper, lead or another matt grey metal;
- A proposal to upgrade the existing 20th century heating and ventilation arrangements in the Hall. A new air handling plant is to be located externally on the existing flat roof alongside the Hall;
- Internally, new lightweight insulation and air ducts are proposed to be installed within the existing roof void, above the 20th century ceiling;
- Minor revisions are proposed to the offices behind the King Charles Suite, in respect of the modern internal partitions;
- Proposals to remove modern and unsympathetic linings and fittings, including mineral fibre suspended ceilings, wallboard linings, and lights.

Relevant Planning History

78/00652/OLD: Change of use from Art Gallery facilities to Tourist Information Office - Permitted - 03/03/1978.

81/00680/OLD: Erection of 3 storey extension - Permitted - 30/11/1981.

81/00681/OLD: Internal alterations and 3 storey extension - Permitted - 10/11/1981.

83/00604/OLD: Erection of single storey rear extension for use as extension to printing department and use of part of ground floor as multi-purpose hall and printing department - No objection - 14/04/1983.

83/00605/OLD: Formation of new printing department and multi-purpose hall and erection of single storey rear extension - Permitted 24/02/1983.

83/00606/OLD: Formation of bar cellar at ground floor level and installation of hoist at first floor level - Permitted - 24/02/1983.

83/00607/OLD: Partial demolition of Council chamber, erection of community hall, Council chamber/conference hall and committee room and alterations to East Wing -

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Permitted - 30/08/1983.

83/00608/OLD: Erection of community hall, Council chamber/conference hall and committee room - Permitted - 18/04/1983.

86/00647/OLD: Three storey office extension of 750 square metres - Permitted - 08/08/1986.

03/01002/LIS: Alterations to provide reduction of floor level to include door step to street level and reinstate front door at the souvenir shop in the Tourist Information Centre - Permitted - 10/06/2003.

03/01624/FUL: Change of use of souvenir shop area to take-away coffee bar (A1 to A3) - Permitted - 08/09/2003.

PE15577: Replacement of suspended ceilings in the Guildhall - Preliminary Enquiry - Consent not required - 13/03/2008.

Consultations

Historic Environment Team:

On the principal street façade, the original balanced composition of deeply recessed door openings would be reinstated. The existing entrance arrangements, via the rather forbidding external stairs, would be improved, and public access would be enhanced. Opening up the ground floor as a café and inviting the public inside would accord with the traditional arrangement of English guildhalls.

The new disabled access lift and upper floor corridor would improve internal circulation and provide easy access to all parts of the building for those with disabilities or accompanying children. These are public benefits, and they would also have the desirable aim of improving access within the listed building. The interventions necessary to achieve these aims will not be visible from the exterior, and the loss of original historic fabric would be minimal, and of little significance to the special interest of the listed building.

Many of the other proposed internal alterations would have the effect of improving comfort levels, whilst restoring or revealing existing historic features and reinstating previous historic arrangements.

Highways Engineer:

This proposal does not contain any significant highway issues and is unlikely to impact on highway safety.

English Heritage:

This application should be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance, on the basis of specialist conservation advice.

Building Control:

No objections raised. Some issues have been identified with regard to the means of escape in case of fire, ingress and egress for all and energy considerations, which we have discussed with the architect and which will be addressed when the building

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regulations application has been submitted.

Representations

City of Winchester Trust:

The Trust welcomes the thoughtful approach of these alterations, especially the refurbishment of the King Alfred Hall and the removal of previous alterations. The proposed alterations would improve the access into the building and to the Walton Room and the relocation of the courtyard café into the present Saxon Suite corner plot would also increase the use of the building.

The Trust questions the lack of consideration given to the use of photovoltaic material for the roof covering of the King Alfred Hall, as this would generate electricity for the building and would therefore reduce the costs. Copper has been considered for this roof, but the Trust considers that this would be a mistake because of its large expanse and it would be visually intrusive in the city's roofscape after it has weathered, turning to a bright green colour.

No letters received objecting to the application.

Relevant Planning Policy

South East Plan 2009:

CC6, BE6

Winchester District Local Plan Review

DP3, HE4, HE5, HE14

National Planning Policy Guidance/Statements:

PPS 1 Delivering Sustainable Development

PPS 6 Planning for Town Centres

PPG 15 Planning and the historic environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Winchester Conservation Area Project

Planning Considerations

Principle of development

Impact on character of conservation area and neighbouring property

Highways

Other matters

Principle of development

The building is within Winchester's Conservation Area. New development which would detract from the immediate or wider landscape setting of any part of a conservation area, will not normally be permitted.

The principle of alterations to existing buildings is acceptable, provided that it is in accordance with Development Plan policy.

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Impact on character of conservation area and neighbouring property

The most significant and prominent works are proposed to the café on the principal (north) elevation. The opening of the windows to provide doors is considered acceptable, as the existing steel windows are not original, and one of the three openings is a later insertion. In addition to this, historic photographs reveal that two out of three of these windows were originally constructed as doorways to the former police station. Removing the lower section of stonework and revealing the original openings would be acceptable when viewed from the conservation area, and would not have a detrimental effect on the character of the existing building, as it would reinstate the original features. The new glass doors would be designed to match the existing Tourist Information Centre doors and the opposite side of the northern elevation.

The removal of the 1980's entrance canopy on the eastern elevation of the Saxon Suite is considered acceptable, as it would also help to reinstate the original character of the building.

The extension of the west stair and a new corridor to provide access to the Walton Room are considered acceptable. The proposed position of the external works means that they would be concealed from public views by larger roof structures that surround them and, therefore, would not detract from this part of the conservation area.

The only other external works proposed are to the King Alfred Hall roof area. These are largely concealed by other elements of the building, and visible mainly from elevated and distant viewpoints. It is believed that the original external cladding was lead or copper sheeting and the proposed replacement of the felt with a more traditional standing seam metal roof cladding would therefore enhance the character of the building and its setting in the surrounding area. Further details of the roof material have been made subject to conditions as part of the listed building consent.

The proposed upgrading to the heating and ventilation arrangements of the Hall would not require significant alterations to the existing fabric and the air handling plant would not be seen from any public viewpoint.

The alterations should not present any planning issues to any of the surrounding residential properties.

All other proposed works are to be internal alterations and therefore would have no impact on the character of the surrounding area or neighbouring residential amenities.

Highways/Parking

It is considered that there would be no increased harm to highway safety or parking arrangements.

Other Matters

In relation to the proposed works and their energy or thermal efficiency, it is considered that the proposed works would be an improvement from the existing energy consumption of the Guildhall.

The main part of the building was erected in the early 1870's and was built with no measures to insulate the roof, single glazing and very limited ventilation. The building has been subsequently adapted and altered to include some air conditioning (Saxon Suite and conference chamber) and forced ventilation in the kitchen. The heating is

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provided by gas boilers and radiators and the hot water by gas boilers.

The proposed works will involve a new roof covering for the King Alfred Hall and this will include insulation which will significantly reduce heat loss. Secondary double glazing will also be fitted to the Hall, improving its thermal efficiency. For the first time, the King Alfred Hall will be properly ventilated and the system installed will also provide heating and cooling. The plant will be served by air source heat pumps to be installed on the roof, which are very efficient.

The air handling plant, which serves the air conditioning to the conference chamber, will be replaced by a modern unit with low energy consumption.

The lights in the King Alfred Hall, conference chamber, main corridors, Saxon Suite, Guildhall and Tourist Information Centre offices and the kitchen will be replaced with the latest low energy light unit, including LED's.

In addition to this, the Saxon Suite will be fitted with a VRF heat recovery system. This innovative design allows waste heat produced by cooling operations to be recovered for use in heating operations and vice-versa, giving unmatched energy efficiency which can result in energy savings of up to 20% compared to conventional systems. Under certain conditions, it acts as a balanced heat exchanger, providing heating or cooling with little energy consumption.

The issue of the material proposed to be used on the King Alfred Hall roof has been raised by the City of Winchester Trust. The use of photovoltaic tiles has been investigated by the applicant and it is considered that it would not be financially viable and not produce sufficient levels of energy to make it profitable. Photovoltaic panels should, ideally, be installed on a 30° slope and located on a south to south west pitch of a roof to maximise their electricity output. The barrel-vaulted roof of the King Alfred Hall faces approximately east-west, which is less than ideal and would mean that 50% of the panels would be in shade for much of the day. The curved shape of the roof would also mean that none of the panels would be set at the ideal pitch and therefore the photovoltaic installation would never achieve full output and, at best, would probably only ever achieve 40% of its maximum potential and only then when the ambient conditions are perfect, which, being less than 2% of the year, means a realistic output of nearer 25% of the maximum potential.

In addition to this, photovoltaic tiles do not lend themselves to be installed on a curved barrel-vaulted roof. The installation would be extremely complicated, as it would involve a considerable amount of steel framework, and therefore add further weight to the roof. It is possible to obtain photovoltaic material in a film which, in theory, could be formed to the curved structure of the roof, but this would be a bespoke solution and considerably more expensive.

Environmentally speaking, therefore, the cost of producing a photovoltaic roof would only be offset by the value of the energy generated for a longer period than the expected life of the panels. Given the extreme cost difference, there is no environmental or business justification for installing photovoltaic cells on the roof of the Guildhall.

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Recommendation

Application Permitted, subject to the following conditions:

Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 (1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. No development shall take place until details and samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the development presents a satisfactory appearance, in the interests of the amenities of the area.

Informatives

1. This permission is granted for the following reason:

The development is in accordance with the policies and proposals of the Development Plan set out below, and other material considerations do not have sufficient weight to justify a refusal of the application. In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, planning permission should therefore be granted.

2. The Local Planning Authority has taken account of the following Development Plan policies and proposals:-

Winchester District Local Plan Review 2006:
DP3, HE4, HE5, HE14

South East Plan 2009:
CC6, BE6