

HERITAGE & CONSERVATION CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Heritage, Conservation & Design Team Officer	Catherine Fenghour
Date	18 July 2025
Application Reference	25/00582/LBC
Address	Touchstones Arts and Heritage Centre, The Esplanade, Rochdale, OL16 1AQ
Proposal	Listed Building Consent for alterations and repairs to Grade II Listed Building consisting of; re-slatting of roof, renewal of lead flashings and soakers and upgrade of roof insulation. New lead abutment gutter, replacement of hoppers and downpipes with cast iron fittings, renewal of rainwater goods together with repairs to the associated fleches, masonry and repairs/replacement of rooflights

Heritage Assets Impacted

Designated Heritage Assets	☒	- Touchstones Arts and Heritage Centre (grade II) - Rochdale Town Hall (grade I) - Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area - Broadfield Park (grade II)
Non-Designated Heritage Assets	☐	

Summary

General comments and queries as below

Assessment

Site description and significance

See previous recent consultation responses

Re-roofing works

The proposal is for the re-roofing of the remaining areas of roof not covered by permission 24/01266/LBC. It is understood that many of the existing Westmorland slates have degraded and would not be suitable for reuse. There would be some harm from the loss of historic fabric, but this needs to be weighed against the benefits of providing a new roof which will secure the longevity and condition of the building for the future.

It is not entirely clear whether Westmorland slates are proposed or if an alternative is proposed? Details of the proposed slates are needed prior to determination. If Westmorland slates cannot be sourced, this should be explained and details and samples of the alternative provided prior to determination. Details of any replacement ridge tiles are also required along with a large-scale ridge detail (this does not appear to have been included?)

Subject to appropriate replacements and details, it is considered that the benefits of repairing the roof would outweigh any harm from the loss of degraded fabric.

The insulation is proposed to be fitted from above between the rafters, as such the plaster ceilings would not be affected. The proposed insulation details are acceptable.

Once the extent of likely repairs to the roof structure is known, details of this should be provided and a method statement provided for the repair works. This can be dealt with by condition.

Lead cladding and DPC to copings, stone balustrades and chimneys

These works would constitute a change to the original construction of the building. However, the visual impact would be limited and an appropriate historic material (lead) would be used. While there would be some minor harm to significance, these works would address a previous defect and prevent the deterioration of the stonework in the future.

Rooflights

The existing rooflights are understood to be a later alteration and on this basis, there is no objection to the replacement. The replacement rooflights are shown to be conservation style and flush with the roof. On this basis, the proposed details are considered to be acceptable.

Refitting of leadwork

A method statement should be provided for the proposed dormer works. This can be dealt with by condition. this should cover repairs and any necessary rebuilding works.

Restoration of fleches

The extent of repairs required to the fleches is not known. Once an inspection of the fleches has been carried out, a repair schedule and method statement, including details of any replacement timber work should be submitted. This can be dealt with by condition, requiring submission of details prior to works being undertaken to this element.

Refurbishment and replacement of rainwater goods

The works to replace the UPVC rainwater goods constitute a heritage benefit. The refurbishment of existing metal rainwater goods is also welcomed. New rainwater goods should be cast iron and painted black.

Addition of proprietary metal capped vent to chimney

Details of this, as well as the works to repair/rebuild the chimney should be required by condition. Subject to this, there are no objections to this element.

Conclusions

There are no objections to the proposal. Where elements would result in the loss of historic fabric (i.e. reroofing), this harm would be outweighed by the benefits of the scheme, which would repair the external envelope and secure the longevity of the building.

Re-consultation

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