

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.	CASE OFFICER	DATE
23/00411/LBC	Christiana Shovlin	19 January 2024

Address: Rochdale Town Hall, The Esplanade, Rochdale, OL16 1AZ

Proposal: Installation of fitted kitchen equipment to the ground and first floor kitchens (following from previous approval of alterations to building fabric in these areas, application ref. 20/00615/FUL). Instatement of a cellar cooling system to the basement and exterior lightwell to allow for creation of a barrel store, associated services to be linked for previously consented service riser; drainage to be using existing drainage runs.

PUBLICITY	Weekly list expired?	Y	Site notice expired?	Y
	Neighbour letters expired?	Y	Press Notice expired?	Y

DELEGATION	Significant departure from local plan?	N	Contrary to national policy?	N
	Applicant a Council Member or officer?	N	Contrary to previous decision?	N
	Major with 10 or more objections and recommending approval?	N	Called in or Planning Panel objection?	N

COMMENTS	Planning Panel comments received?	n/a
	Neighbour comments received?	N

EIA	Screening opinion completed and saved to Onbase?	n/a
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CONDITIONS	Pre-commencement conditions proposed?	n/a
	Pre-commencement conditions agreed (or notification period expired)?	n/a

RECOMMENDATION	Grant subject to conditions
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CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: RG

DATE: 19 January 2024

SITE

The application relates to the Rochdale Town Hall, a Grade I Listed Building, widely regarded as one of the finest Victorian town halls in Britain. The building was completed in 1871 at a cost of £155,000. The frontage and principal entrance of the Town Hall faces The Esplanade and the River Roch, and features a three-arched Porte Cochere intersected by buttresses. The building has a roughly symmetrical 'E-shaped' plan, and is broken down into three self-contained segments: a central Great Hall and transverse wings at each end. The present stone spire and clock tower was built to replace the original tower destroyed in a fire in 1883; it rises from a plinth with four stages including a gable-headed clock stage, and is topped with a small stone spire. The Town Hall is presently closed to the public to allow for Phase II of the restoration works.

The building was first listed at Grade I on 25th October 1951; the listing text reads as follows:

Town hall. 1866 - 71, W.H. Crossland; tower 1883 by A. Waterhouse. Ashlar, Westmorland slate roof. The reception room, Lord Mayor's Parlour, the Small Exchange, members lounge and committee rooms are placed to either side of the entrance hall (or the Exchange). The grand staircase rises to the first floor Great Hall and small staircases terminate the essentially axial plan. To the south-west of the hall on the upper floor is the Council Chamber (formerly Court room) and retiring room. Gothic revival in an elaborate form with Continental antecedents. Facade of 14 bays is asymmetrical but balanced with linking bay and tower added to left. Outer bays have triangular gables and are of 3 storeys, although they differ in treatment. The next 2 on left and 3 on right have an arcade across the ground floor, then tiers of plate glass windows, mostly mullioned with cusped heads, and end above a corbelled balcony in a stepped gable richly panelled with blind tracery. The central seven bays (containing the Hall) are flanked to left by a slim octagonal stair turret with stone spirelet and to right by an octagonal stair tower with tall 2- light pointed windows and a steep pyramidal slate roof with cresting. The central 3 bays have a heavily buttressed porte-cochere supporting heraldic beasts and acting as a balcony to the Hall which is lit by tall 3-light windows with geometrical tracery. Battlements behind which rises an immense slate roof with central wooden fleche. The tower, a version of that at Manchester Town Hall rises sheer from the plinth through 3 stages to the broader clock stage where gables surmount each face flanked by pinnacles. Above this a short octagonal lantern carries a stone spire. The whole facade is richly carved with naturalistic foliage in the style of Southwell Minster. The main feature of each return wall is a tall semi-octagonal stair tower with lead windows and pyramidal slate roofs. The rear is comparatively plain, but the centre is occupied by the great stair hall of 3 bays with weathered buttresses and very tall 3-light windows, roofed separately. The entrance hall is 5 x 3 bays with quadripartite red and white stone vaulting, fine carved capitals of Southwell Minster type carved by Thomas Earp, polished granite columns and Minton floor tiles; it forms an undercroft to the hall and was intended as an Exchange. The reception room has 3 pierced diaphragm arches, 2 Tudor arched fireplaces with castellated mantles and heraldic panels, and wall paintings depicting the various machines used in textiles. The Lord Mayor's Parlour has a similar fireplace, chamfered beams carried on corbels representing the sections of an orchestra, William Morris stained glass depicting the seasons and months of the year, and wall paintings. The members lounge has a vaulted ceiling carried on granite corner columns. The Small Exchange has the industries of Rochdale represented in the stained glass and ceiling paintings. The vaulted stair hall has one flight which returns in two with clustered columns rising between the flights. The heavy marble handrail rests on a stone arcade, the upper landings are supported on flying ribs and the stained glass represents the towns with which Rochdale traded. The Great Hall has a painted timber roof with angelic hammer beams: Henry Holiday's wall painting of 1870 depicts King John signing the Magna Carta, the stained glass is by Bayne of Heaton But and Bayne and includes two rose

windows to the gables. A large organ is housed in three pointed arches. The Council Chamber and Court Room are elaborately decorated with carved timber fittings. Most rooms have original painted wall pattern designs by Best of Rochdale and oak linenfold panelling of varying designs. The design was selected by competition in 1864 and is an important early departure from High Victorian heaviness. The Builder 7:4:66, 7:10:71, and 12.2.76. B.o.E.

The site also lies within close proximity of a number of other Designated Heritage Assets, including:

- Market Cross – Grade II
- St. Chad's Church – Grade II*
- Wall by St. Chad's Church – Grade II
- Former Rochdale Museum – Grade II
- County Court – Grade II
- Rochdale Cenotaph – Grade I
- War memorial lamp-posts – Grade II
- Rochdale Post Office – Grade II
- Broadfield Park (Registered Park & Garden)

A number of non-designated heritage assets are also in close proximity and are locally listed buildings, including:

- Empire Hall
- Flying Horse
- Church Steps
- Natwest Bank
- Former Town Hall Chambers

The Town Hall is situated in the heart of the Town Centre Conservation Area and forms an integral part of the Esplanade and square. Situated to the south of the river, the square was an artistic creation with set-piece buildings in an expansive layout planned according to romantic and picturesque principles. The scheme is completed by romantic gardens created on the valley slopes (registered park grade II) of Broadfield Park.

PROPOSAL

The proposal is for the instatement of new kitchen and kitchen related equipment to the basement, ground and first floors of the west wing. The proposed works entail new kitchen equipment at first floor and ground floor, and a new cellar cooling system to the basement. The new kitchen fit out to the ground floor includes a new hole through the asphalt flat roof to accommodate provisions for mechanical ventilation.

It should be noted that all changes to the fabric of the building in association with the new kitchen were already consented as part of the Phase II building works (20/00615/FUL & 20/00616/LBC).

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act) 1990 (as amended)

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – February 2019
National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

SO1	Delivering a more prosperous economy
E1	Establishing thriving town, district and local centres
E2	Increasing jobs and prosperity
E5	Encouraging the visitor economy
SO3	Improving design, image and quality of place
P1	Improving image
P2	Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage
P3	Improving design of new development
SO4	Promoting a green environment
G7	Increasing the value of biodiversity and geodiversity
G8	Managing water resources and flood risk
G9	Reducing the impact of pollution, contamination and land instability
SO5	Improving accessibility and delivering sustainable transport
T2	Improving accessibility
SD1	Delivering sustainable development
DM1	General development requirements

Unitary Development Plan (UDP):

G/D/1	Defined Urban Area
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RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

20/00576/FUL - Enabling works to Rochdale Town Hall; including internal strip out, asbestos removal, structural works, installation of dry risers and a trial replacement window (Phase 1 of restoration and refurbishment works to facilitate the building's continued use).

20/00577/LBC - Enabling works to Rochdale Town Hall; including internal strip out, asbestos removal, structural works, installation of dry risers and a trial replacement window (Phase 1 of restoration and refurbishment works to facilitate the building's continued use).

20/00615/FUL - Restoration and refurbishment of Rochdale Town Hall incorporating civic spaces together with ancillary functions, including events, exhibition and interpretation spaces, upgraded bar and cafe. Works to include; glazing of Porte Cochere and tower link, new terraced access to building perimeter, external repair works, specialist repair of decorative interiors, restoration of key internal spaces and selective window replacement; new services including lifts, plant and equipment; new facilities including exhibition, toilets and storage; and associated works (Phase 2 of restoration and refurbishment works to facilitate the building's continued use).

20/00616/LBC - Restoration and refurbishment of Rochdale Town Hall incorporating civic spaces together with ancillary functions, including events, exhibition and interpretation spaces, upgraded bar and café. Works to include; glazing of Porte Cochere and tower link, new terraced access to building perimeter, external repair works, specialist repair of decorative interiors, restoration of key internal spaces and selective window replacement; new services including lifts, plant and equipment; new facilities including exhibition, toilets and storage; and associated works (Phase 2 of restoration and refurbishment works to facilitate the building's continued use).

22/01503/LBC - Listed Building Consent for replacement of Westmorland slates to Vermont slates above the Bright Hall.

23/00084/LBC - Replacement and repositioning of 4no' 20th century lighting columns.

23/00288/LBC - Installation of protective netting underneath decorative plaster ceiling panels.

23/00590/FUL - Phase III restoration and refurbishment works to Rochdale Town Hall, continuation of Phase II works (approved 20/00615/FUL & 20/00616/LBC); to include roof repairs and improvements, modification of below ground drainage, installation of an air source heat pump at the rear carpark, internal alterations, replacement of MEP services throughout the building, accessibility improvements throughout the building, addition of a lift to all floors, and conservation works to heritage rooms

23/00591/LBC - Phase III restoration and refurbishment works to Rochdale Town Hall, continuation of Phase II works (approved 20/00615/FUL & 20/00616/LBC); to include roof repairs and improvements, modification of below ground drainage, installation of an air source heat pump at the rear carpark, internal alterations, replacement of MEP services throughout the building, accessibility improvements throughout the building, addition of a lift to all floors, and conservation works to heritage rooms.

23/01071/LBC - Interior design scheme to aid the creation of a café within the West Wing at the Ground floor

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Conservation And Design

N/A

Joint Committee Of National Amenity Societies

No comments received to date

Lead Local Flood Authority/Drainage

The Drainage Repairs and connections from new equipment, as outlined in the submitted plans appear to be reasonably comprehensive and have been developed from site inspections.

The connections are from kitchen appliances and a building ventilation system and not from hard-paved areas nor roofs. I therefore have no comment, nor objection to this aspect of the application.

Historic England

In this case we are not offering advice. This should not be interpreted as comment on the merits of the application.

REPRESENTATIONS

Letters of notification were sent to surrounding neighbours, notices displayed in the vicinity of the site and notices placed in the local press. No representations have been received.

ANALYSIS

The concerned rooms are assessed for their significance within the heritage, design and access statement to be of varying significance ranging from low to high significance. After having visited the affected rooms and attending pre-application meetings, these analyses are agreed.

Most elements of the proposed will have a neutral/beneficial impact on the significance of the listed building. There is some less than substantial harm incurred by the creation of 1 no. access hole through a modern, flat roof, as well as the associated visual impact of the mechanical extract plant to be positioned here. This fabric is, as stated, modern and there is already some plant here which is in need of upgrading. Furthermore, the plant will be somewhat shielded by stone parapet to the roof's borders. Any slight degradation of significance associated with these alterations would be outweighed by achieving the optimum viable use of the building. Instating this plant would allow the kitchen to be fully compliant in line with the Building Regulations.

There is, as well, some potential impact which could be considered in placing some of the first floor kitchen equipment in front of the window. Although, this has been successfully mitigated through pre-application discussions, and carefully chosen to ensure compliance with health and safety regulations. Any less than substantial harm which could be interpreted through the visibility of the kitchen equipment through the window would be outweighed by ensuring the safety of all staff who would be operating in the kitchen. The instatement of the kitchen would ensure the optimum viable use of the building as whole, through creating a working café/restaurant within the town centre.

The discussions at pre-application stage have been exhaustive, the detail present within the submission pack is likewise extremely thorough- specifying specific dimensions, materials and colours of instatements. For this reason, there is no need for additional conditions save for standard conditions requiring compliance with the submitted details.

Principle of Development and Heritage Impacts

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, 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. Similarly, Section 72 requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas.

In accordance with paragraph 189 of the NPPF, the Applicant has submitted detailed evidence which is proportionate to the Grade I listing of the Town Hall, and clearly demonstrates the extent of the works and their strong understanding of the archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic significance of the building. The Application contains a series of plans and documents, including a Heritage Statement (in line with the stipulations of NPPF paragraph 194) and is supported by a Conservation Management Plan, composed in 2019 by lead architect Donald Insall Associates, which is continuously developing and evolving as works progress.

Paragraph 196 of the NPPF states 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. The Court of Appeal decision in the case of *Barnwell vs East Northamptonshire DC* 2014(2) clarified that decision makers should give "considerable importance and weight" to

the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings when carrying out the balancing exercise'.

Paragraph 199 of the NPPF states that 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.

Detailed consultation has been carried out at the pre-application stage with the Council's Conservation and Design Officer(s) who have assessed each element of the kitchen equipment scheme in detail. Much of the work has been assessed as having a neutral/beneficial impact.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve subject to the following conditions:

1. The works must be begun not later than three years beginning with the date of this consent.

Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. This consent relates to the following plans and documents:-

- Location Plan Ref. RTH DIA - D5- XX - DR- A - 4070 Rev. P01
- Phase 2 Site Plans Location of Works Ref. RTH DIA - XX- XX - DR- A - 0056 Rev. P01
- Phase 2- First Floor Kitchen Layout Ref. RTH DIA - XX- XX - DR- A - 0052 Rev. P01
- Phase 2 Basement Floor Barrel Store Ref. RTH DIA - XX- XX - DR- A - 0055 Rev. P02
- First Floor Kitchen Layout as Proposed Inc. Electrical locations Ref. A1/2004833/03/Rev02
- Ground Floor Kitchen Ventilation Layout Ref. A1/2004833/02
- Proposed Basement Drainage Layout Phase 1 Ref. RTH-PAM-XX-00-DR-C-6010
- Wall finishes layout Ref. ROC 0G W1 Rev. A
- Wall finishes layout 2 Ref. ROC 0G W1 Rev. A
- Rochdale Town Hall Concept Design – Dragonfly
- Heritage, Design and access Statement – Restaurant fit-out, September 2023 – Donald Insall Associates

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure a satisfactory standard of development in accordance with the policies contained within the Core Strategy, the Unitary Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.