

HERITAGE & CONSERVATION CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Application Details

Heritage, Conservation & Design team officer

Catherine Fenghour

Date

15 June 2026

Application reference

PL/2026/0219

Address

Rochdale Town Hall, The Esplanade,

Proposal

Replacement of existing external plasterboard ceilings with oak timber 'v' jointed tongue and groove boarding.

Affected Heritage Assets

Designated heritage assets

- Rochdale Town Hall (grade I)
- Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area

Non-designated heritage assets

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Summary

The proposal would preserve the special interest of the grade I listed Rochdale Town Hall. No objections

Assessment

Site description and significance

Rochdale Town Hall is listed at grade I, placing it among the most significant historic buildings in the country. Designed by William Crossland, it is a fine example of a Victorian town hall as well as being an outstanding example of the Gothic Revival. Its original form is little altered except for the later tower, added after the original burned down. Internally original decorative schemes remain,

including in the Great Hall and the Exchange. The Town Hall recently underwent a major restoration.

Relevant legislation and planning policy

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 16(2) - 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.

Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) deals with conserving and enhancing the historic environment. At a local level Places for Everyone (PfE) policy JP-P2 and Rochdale Core Strategy policy P2 apply.

Assessment of proposals

The proposal is for the replacement of plasterboard ceilings which have been applied to the exterior underside of the ceilings at the front of the town hall. Some of these plasterboard ceilings have fallen and there is a need to replace them for safety reasons. They are not original and do not contribute to the significance of the Town Hall. The original covering of these ceilings is not known. However, the use of oak tongue and groove boarding is considered appropriate, given that it is a natural, quality material and is reversible. The appearance would be an improvement over the existing plasterboards.

Given the above, it is considered that the proposals would have a neutral impact on the significance the Town Hall. The proposed works would preserve the building's special architectural and historic interest.

No objections

Re-consultation

No