

Signing Off Form

Planning Application Number: LCC/2024/0005

	Cleared By	Date Cleared	Date Forwarded	Notes
Case Officer – Forward to Head of Development Management	HA	14/03/24		
Head of Development Management for signing by other	JMH	15/03/24		
Signing Off			Tick	
Director of Environment & Planning			✓	
<i>A Mullaney</i>				
Date: 15 March 2024				
	Date	By		
Decision Notice Issued	20/03/24	SB		
Notifications completed	20/03/24	SB		



**Development Management
Planning Application Delegated Report**

Electoral Division affected: Preston City

Date app.valid	Dec. due by
24/01/2024	20/03/2024

**Preston City: Application No. LCC/2024/0005
Proposed new passenger lift, including enclosure and access lobby.
County Hall, Pitt Street, Preston**

Contact for further information:
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Executive Summary

Application – Proposed new passenger lift, including enclosure and access lobby.
County Hall, Pitt Street, Preston

Recommendation – Summary

That planning permission be **granted** subject to conditions controlling approved plans and materials.

Applicant's Proposal

This application proposes the erection of an extension to the County Hall buildings to provide a new passenger lift and entrance lobby.

The new passenger lift would replace an existing de-commissioned lift, to provide wheelchair and disabled access to the parts of the existing County Hall Old Building and improve links between the County Hall Old Building and the adjacent 'Lancashire Point' Building. There will also be additional internal alterations to increase provision of accessible toilets.

The proposed extension would effectively infill a recess measuring approximately 8m wide by 3.4m deep between the County Hall Old Building and Lancashire Point building, at lower ground and ground floor level. The extension forming the lift lobby would then continue upwards to the fourth floor adjacent to the County Hall Old Building



The extension would be constructed from a palette of materials comprising fibre cement cladding (in colour Autumn NPP991, which is a light grey brown colour), aluminium curtain walling and ceramic backed glazed panels.

Description and Location of Site

The proposed extension would be located within the internal quadrangle of County Hall where the County Hall old building joins the Lancashire Point building.

The County Hall complex of buildings is bounded by Fishergate to the south, Bow Lane to the west, Arthur Street to the north and Pitt Street to the east. The site is surrounded by commercial development, office blocks, the railway line and station and a number of A-roads. The application site is within the city centre boundary as defined in the Preston Local Plan (2012-2026) and is also located within the Fishergate Hill Conservation Area.

The extension would have a width of approximately 3.3m, and the lift shaft would project from this element of the extension into the courtyard area, with a footprint of approximately 2.4m wide by 2.8m deep. The total height from ground floor level would be approximately 19.7m

Background

Planning permission was granted in December 2023 for the demolition of existing (not original) flat roof dormers on the north and west facing elevations and their replacement with a pitched slate roof to match the existing roof (LCC/2023/0038)

Planning permission was granted in April 2020 for the replacement of existing flagging with an open textured tarmac across the existing main access path from Bow Lane to the entrance to the County Hall building (LCC/2020/0017).

Planning permission was granted in October 2016 for the construction of new five storey stairwell within the inner courtyard of the council offices (LCC/2016/0066).

Planning permission was granted in April 2012 for the replacement of single glazed steel and timber framed windows with double glazed aluminium framed windows. (06/12/0193)

Planning permission was granted in August 2009 for the erection of railings with access gates for vehicles and pedestrians including hedge planting, tree pruning and other soft landscaping (06/09/0418)

Planning permission was granted in September 2008 for the replacement of 12 roof mounted d-x condenser units with 2 air cooled water chillers at the Treasurers Block. (06/08/0716).

Planning permission was granted in October 2006 for an extension to the existing office entrance to improve accessibility at the Treasurers Block. (06/06/0929)



Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

Paragraphs 11 – 14, 131 – 141, 194 and 195 – 214 relevant with regard to the definition of sustainable development, the need for good design and conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Central Lancashire Core Strategy adopted July 2012

Policy 16 – Heritage Assets
 Policy 17 – Design of New Buildings
 Policy 22 – Biodiversity

Preston Local Plan (2012-2026) adopted July 2015

Policy AD1- Development within (or in close proximity to) the Existing Residential Area
 Policy EN8 – Development and Heritage Assets
 Policy EN9 – Design of New Development
 Policy EN10 – Biodiversity and Nature Conservation

Preston City Centre Area Action Plan adopted June 2016

Consultations

Preston City Council: confirm that they have no objections.

Lancashire County Council Archaeology: confirm that they have no objections.

Representations – The application has been advertised by press and site notice, and neighbouring residents informed by individual letter. No representations have been received.

Advice

County Hall is the headquarters of Lancashire County Council and is situated on Fishergate Hill in Preston city centre. It has two entrances, the main entrance on Pitt Street and a further entrance on Bow Lane. Bow Lane is a pedestrian and vehicular entrance.

The main issues for consideration in determining the proposal are design and appearance and impact on heritage assets.

Design and appearance

The National Planning Policy Framework seeks to ensure that new developments achieve a high standard of design.



Policy 17 of the Adopted CeCore Strategy states that the design of new buildings should take into account the character and appearance of the local area including (but not limited to) scale, design, materials, being sympathetic to surrounding land uses and avoiding demonstrable harm to the amenities of the local area.

Policy EN9 of the Preston Local Plan reiterates the need to accord with these policies and that new developments should make a positive contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the area through high quality new design.

There would be very limited views of the proposed development afforded from the street scene outside of the County Hall complex, with limited visibility from Arthur Street to the north. The proposal would largely only be visible when viewed from within the inner courtyard area.

The extension would be located adjacent to two buildings that are very different in appearance and materials. The County Hall Old Building is constructed from red brick with stone detailing and the Lancashire Point Building is a more modern design, with grey rendering and plastic cladding. The proposed extension has been designed to provide a link between the two differing designs of buildings, with the cladding to reflect the more modern building and the curtain walling to allow visibility of the older County Hall Old Building behind. The palette of materials has been sensitively chosen to compliment both, very different adjoining buildings. The size, scale and appearance of the extension is considered to be in keeping with the existing buildings.

Historic Environment

The site is located within the Fishergate Hill conservation area and the adjacent Christ Church Chapel building is recorded as a non-designated heritage asset on the County Historic Environment Record PRN 22713. The chapel is approximately 65 metres from the west facing elevation of County Hall, with the Lancashire Point building intervening between the application site and the chapel. The County Hall building is also recorded in the County Historic Environment Record PRN 19892.

Paragraph 205 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that when considering the impact of proposals on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be applied. This is irrespective of whether any harm is identified as being substantial, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Paragraph 208 of the Framework states that where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the local planning authority can consider the likely level of harm against the public benefits of that proposal.



Policy EN8 of the Preston Local Plan states that proposals affecting a heritage asset, or its setting will be permitted where they make a positive contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of and sustain, conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the significance, appearance, character and setting of the heritage asset itself and the surrounding historic environment. Policy 16 of the Core Strategy also seeks to also protect and enhance the historic environment.

The key heritage issues for consideration are therefore whether the proposal would cause any loss of character to the Conservation Area. It should also be considered whether the proposals would cause any harm to the significance of nearby non-designated heritage assets. County Hall is not a listed building but is a non-designated heritage asset.

The applicant has provided the following information to explain the rationale for the proposals:

- The proposal is to provide a new passenger lift at County Hall to replace an existing decommissioned lift.
- It was originally intended to refurbish/replace an existing cage lift within an existing stairwell. However, due to changes in legislation this existing lift has become obsolete.
- A replacement lift in the same location was considered, but this was problematic logistically and prohibitively expensive.
- Consideration was given to a new lift in various locations, the current proposal was considered to be the optimal location to restore accessibility.
- The proposal would also improve access by providing lift access to the top floor of the County Hall Old Building (which was not available previously) and provide increased connectivity between the County Hall Old Building and the adjacent Lancashire Point Building.

Preston City council have not raised any concerns with regards to heritage matters. They note that the proposal would improve the building's accessibility and as such it is considered to provide benefit to the users of the buildings.

Achieving sustainability is a core principle of the National Planning Policy Framework and defined as the purpose of the planning system. One of the three overarching objectives of the planning system is a social objective, which includes providing well - designed and safe places, with accessible services that meet current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being. Furthermore, the Framework states at paragraph 135 that planning decisions should create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. The Preston Local Plan also states in the supporting text to policy EN9 (Design of New Development) that in order to achieve high quality sustainable design planning proposals must (amongst other things) be integral to creating safe, accessible and inclusive environments.



The proposed development would facilitate significant improvements in disabled access for the County Hall complex and enable internal alterations to take place (which in themselves do not require planning consent) that would further improve facilities within the building. It is considered that these benefits should be afforded considerable weight.

Taking all of these matters into account it is considered that the proposed extension would result in no discernible harm to the setting of the Conservation Area or the significance of County Hall as a non-designated heritage asset. Furthermore, the public benefits of the proposals in terms of the increased accessibility of the County Hall building are significant and weigh heavily in favour of the proposals.

Conclusion

The proposed development would not cause any harm to the character or setting of Fishergate Conservation area, or the County Hall Building. It would not give rise to any adverse visual impacts.

The proposal therefore complies with the relevant policies of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and the Preston Local Plan 2012-26 and is accordingly recommended for approval.

In view of the size, scale and nature of the proposals it is considered that no Convention Rights set out in the Human Rights Act 1998 would be affected.



Recommendation

That planning permission be Granted subject to the following conditions

Time Limits

1. The development shall commence not later than 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: Imposed pursuant to Section 91 (1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Working Programme

2. The development shall be carried out, (except where modified by the conditions to this permission), in accordance with the following documents:
 - a) The Planning Application and supporting statement received by the County Planning Authority on 24 January 2024.

b) Submitted Plans and documents:

DR-A-40_50_63-0001 rev. S3.P01 Site Plan Location
DR-A-40_50_63-0002 rev. S3.P01 Existing Site Plan
DR-A-40_50_63-0003 rev. S3.P01 Proposed Site Plan
DR-A-40_50_63-0004 rev. S3-P02 Existing Lower Ground Plan Existing
Ground floor Plan
DR-A-40_50_63-0005 rev. S3-P02 Existing Floor Plans First Floor Plan Second
floor plan
DR-A-40_50_63-0006 rev. S3-P02 Existing Third Floor Plans Existing Fourth
Floor Plans
DR-A-40_50_63-0007 rev. S3-P02 Existing Elevations
DR-A-40_50_63-0008 rev. S3-P02 Proposed Elevations
DR-A-40_50_63-0009 rev. S3.P02 Proposed Lower Ground floor Proposed
Ground Floor plan
DR-A-40_50_63-0010 rev. S3-P02 Proposed First Floor Proposed Second
Floor
DR-A-40_50_63-0011 rev. S3-P02 Proposed TF FF plan
DR-A-40_50_63-0012 rev. S3-P02 Proposed Roof Plan

Reason: To minimise the impact of the development on the amenities of the area and to conform with Policies AD1(a) and EN9 of the Preston Local Plan.

Building Materials

3. The external elevations of the building shall only use the materials as shown on plan ref. DR-A-40_50_63-0008 rev. S3-P02.

Reason: To ensure the use of appropriate materials, in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality and in order to comply with Policy EN9 of the Preston Local Plan.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Ext
LCC/2024/005 Helen Ashworth Planning and Environment 530083		