

Southampton City Planning & Sustainability
 Planning and Rights of Way Panel meeting 16 March 2010
 Planning Application Report of the Head of Division

Application address Chief Executive Southampton City Council Civic Centre, Civic Centre Road			
Proposed development Change of use of the courts and police block of the Civic Centre into a Sea City Museum with associated alterations and extensions at roof level and to the north side of the building.			
Application number	10/00021/LBC	Application type	LBC (Regulation 13)
Case officer	Jenna Turner	Application category	Q23-Listed Building

Recommendation Summary	Referral to the Government Office under Listed Building determination procedures for Local Authorities with a recommendation that Listed Building Consent be granted
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Reason for Panel consideration	Application submitted on behalf of Southampton City Council and which affects a Grade II* Listed Building
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Applicant Southampton City Council Leisure Services	Agent Wilkinson Eyre Architects
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Date of receipt	21.01.2010	City Ward	Bargate
Date of registration	21.01.2010	Ward members	Cllr Bogle
Publicity expiry date	25.02.2010		Cllr Damani
Date to determine	18.03.2010 OVER		Cllr Willacy

Site area		Usable amenity area	N/A
Density - whole site	N/A	Landscaped areas	N/A
Site coverage (developed area)	N/A		
Residential mix	numbers	size sq.m	Other land uses
Studio / 1-bedroom	N/A	N/A	Commercial use
2-bedroom	N/A	N/A	Retail use
3-bedroom	N/A	N/A	Leisure use
			class
			N/A
			N/A
			D2 - Museum

accessibility zone	high	policy parking max	N / A	spaces
parking permit zone	no	existing site parking	50	spaces
cyclist facilities	yes	parking proposed	50	spaces
motor & bicycles	Not determined	disabled parking	0	spaces

Key submitted documents supporting application:			
Design and Access Statement		Ecological Appraisal Report	
Statement of Community Involvement		Transport Assessment	
Sustainability Checklist		Sustainability Statement	
Site Waste Management Plan			
Appendix attached			
1	Local Plan Policy schedule	2	Suggested conditions

Recommendation in full

That the application be referred to the Government Office for the West Midlands with a recommendation that Listed Building Consent be granted subject to:

1. Confirmation from English Heritage that they raise no objection to the application

Procedural Context

Councils Own Development affecting a Listed Building

The proposed scheme is a Regulation 13 application for Listed Building Consent for works to a Listed Building which is within the ownership and control of the City Council. A Regulation 13 application relates to proposals made by the Local Authority (in this case as the Public Leisure Service) for development that it wishes to undertake to a Listed Building as part of its remit as a public sector service provider.

Under the provisions of Regulation 13 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations, such applications should be initially assessed by the Local Planning Authority and if resolved to be approved, be forwarded to the appropriate Government Office for their own appraisal and determination. It is not within the scope of the Local Planning Authority to determine the application.

Background

The Civic Centre is a Grade II* Listed building designed by Berry Webber following a design competition. The complex of buildings was designed in the neo-classical modern style and is a steel framework building clad in Portland Stone. The Law Courts block, which contains the landmark clock tower, was the second section of the Civic Centre complex to be constructed after the Municipal block and was completed in 1933. There have been no significant previous alterations to this section of the building.

The Law Courts front Havelock Road and to the north of the building is West Watts Park which is part of English Heritage's register of parks and gardens of special historic interest. The Magistrates Courts moved from the Law Courts to Rockstone Place in 2001 and since this time has been used as storage and meeting room space in association with the offices within the Municipal Block.

Proposed Development & Surrounding Context

The application proposes the alteration and extension of the existing law courts within the Civic Centre to provide a museum of Southampton's maritime history.

As well as a maritime exhibition, the museum would also incorporate a Titanic exhibition, special exhibition space and educational facilities. It is intended that the museum be open for public use by April 2012 to coincide with the centenary of the sinking of the Titanic.

Phases

The development of the museum would take place in two phases; the current applications (for planning permission and Listed Building consent) relate to Phase 1 works which includes the alterations to the entrance, the pavilion extension to the north of the building

and the rooftop extension. Phase 2 relates to the lower ground floor and the northern end of the ground floor which will continue to be occupied by the police until April 2011.

An application for Listed Building Consent has also been submitted, which will consider the internal alterations to the building including the demolition works.

Pavilion extension setting

The main entrance and exit to the museum would be through the existing grand entrance on Havelock Road. The existing internal ground floor level is higher than pavement level and the existing entrance comprises external and internal flights of steps which link the pavement level with the internal ground floor. As part of this proposal, the existing entrance would be remodelled to create a level access to the lower ground floor of the building. The works to the entrance also include the extension of the existing screen around the entrance downwards and the provision of new entrance doors within a stone portal.

The lower ground floor of the building would contain the ticketing area, cafe and shop. At this level, a glazed link would provide access to the special exhibition space that would be contained within the pavilion extension building.

The pavilion would be a single storey structure, positioned to the north side of the building, occupying the existing irregularly shaped grassed landscaped bounded by a low Portland stone wall and contains 3 young trees. There is a notable change in levels at this point, with the land sloping up from the northern end of the building towards Havelock Road.

The pavilion extension would provide an additional 500sqm of exhibition space. The massing of the extension is shown to be broken into three interlocking bays and attached to the existing building by a subordinate glazed link section. It is proposed that the extension itself be finished in reconstituted stone cladding and semi-translucent glazing. A separate entrance would be provided within the glazed linked structure to enable the special exhibition area to be accessed independently from the rest of the museum. A hard landscaped area would be provided around the perimeter of the pavilion.

Magistrates Court Wing

Works to the lower ground floor would include the removal of partitions within the existing police offices and the partial demolition of the exercise yard wall. The prisoner exercise yard would be enclosed by the proposed roof extension to provide a triple height light-well. The roof extension would be set back approximately 2.5m from the western roof parapet and 8m from the north and south roof parapets. The extension would be just over 3m in height and would be finished in reconstituted stone cladding system and opaque glazing, to match to pavilion extension.

The proposal also involves the insertion of a flight of stairs and a lift within the light-wells to provide access to the ground floor exhibitions. Within the grand entrance hall two new openings would be made within the existing blank doorways to provide links to the new stair and lift to the lower ground floor.

In terms of works to the ground floor, Courts 1 and 3 would be altered to provide exhibition space with the Coroners court excluded from the phase 1 works. The alterations to Court 1 include the removal of a section of the raised dais to provide access to the Retiring Room behind and the door opening would be extended to floor level. The alterations to Court 3 also involve altering the connection to the Retiring Room by removing sections 1200mm in width in the dais. In addition to this, a central section of the judge's bench, dais and wall

panelling would be removed. The benches and dock would be removed from this courtroom and a further opening would be created within the west wall.

Relevant Planning Policy

The Council's usual considerations apply in respect of protecting and enhancing Listed Buildings as required by CS14 of the Core Strategy and HE3 of the Local Plan. The planning policy to be considered as part of this proposal is scheduled in **Appendix 1** to this report. The Conservation Plan and Strategy for the Civic Centre (April 2009) is also of relevance in the consideration of this application, although this document does not have any planning status, it is a useful background document which assesses the relative merit of the different areas of the Civic Centre and sets out a policy framework for managing works within these areas.

Relevant Planning History

No relevant applications

Consultation Responses & Notification Representations

A publicity exercise in line with department procedures was undertaken which included notifying adjoining and nearby landowners, placing a press advertisement and erecting a site notice. At the time of writing the report, **4** representations had been received from interested parties which include, Southampton Commons and Parks Protection Society and the City of Southampton Society.

Summary of Representations made

Impact of the pavilion extension – The design and positioning of the proposed pavilion, forward of the northern building line of the Civic, would be unsympathetic with the existing building. The extension should defer to the Civic in terms of its design, as do many of the buildings built in the vicinity of it. The extension would adversely affect the symmetry of the building and diminish the impact of the clock tower. The loss of the grassed area is also regrettable as this provides an attractive setting to the building.

Impact of the entrance - The works to the entrance would erode its grandeur and have a damaging impact on the building. There is insufficient width to the pavement to accommodate groups that may congregate outside the entrance.

Impact of the roof extension - The height of the roof extension will unbalance the scale of the west elevation of the building and detract from the entrance.

Location of the museum - The location of a maritime museum in a location which does not have strong physical, historical or visual links to the waterfront is philosophically incorrect.

Impact on the Listed Parks - The Civic Centre provides a positive setting and backdrop to the Listed Parks and the proposed pavilion extension would detract from this. In addition to this, the pavilion extension would detract from the library entrance to the building when viewed from the parks.

Summary of Consultation comments

SSC Historic Environment – Supported with the need for some further clarification prior to works starting on site.

There are three major issues that deserve closer scrutiny. These are; the proposed addition to the roof to house the M&E equipment; the proposed removal of the front steps to create a new entrance; and the proposed extension. These three issues form the crux of the application in conservation terms. There are however other issues relating to the level and quality of some of the supporting information that, while not incapable of resolution, nevertheless will require the submission of additional information to support the proposals.

1. Proposed new roof structure.

The justification for the size and location of the proposed structure are set out in the Heritage Statement (3.4.2, but see below), and the Design and Access Statement (1.3.5). The architects propose an elegant solution to the problem of enclosing the air handling units, and clearly considerable thought has gone into the solution proposed. This element is supported, with the caveat that details of materials, with samples, should be subject of a condition.

2. Proposed new front entrance

The proposed new front entrance is clearly a major intervention that will result in a significant impact on the character and setting of the building. The architects make a strong argument that the existing entrance should be retained as the main way into the building, not least in respect of the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), and the need to maintain the symmetry of the building. It should be noted that of the four main entrances to the civic complex, three have DDA-compliant accesses, but only one (the North Block) has maintained the symmetry implicit in Berry-Webbers design. The other two (the Municipal Block and the Guildhall) both have DDA-compliant entrances set some way from the main entrances. It should be accepted that in the case of the Municipal Block this has to do with the difference between the external ground level, and the difficulty and deleterious impact that DDA-compliant ramps would have on the front façade of the building. Equally, the recent re-ordering of the services located within the civic has meant that the main service (Gateway) is equally well accessed from the inserted ramp into the East wing. Therefore, while symmetry has not been maintained, it has been sacrificed for reasons of topography, rather than architectural expediency. The same could also be said of the separate DDA-compliant access to the Guildhall, which has been inserted to the north of the grand portico, without a similar entrance being created to the south.

The need to create a DDA-compliant entrance while maintaining the original symmetry of the building is accepted, and in heritage terms carries more weight than the operational needs of the proposed new museum. However, it is accepted that in order for the former courts to be adapted successfully for new uses, an element of compromise is needed to ensure that operational difficulties are minimised.

It is accepted that the proposed re-modelling of the doorway will change the accepted image of the building from one of stern judicial function to one that is less formal and more inviting.

If this element of the proposal is agreed, it is recommended that the works are recorded by an archaeologist, and that conditions are imposed relating to materials, details of construction, the need for samples to be agreed etc.

3. Proposed pavilion extension

This is potentially the most controversial of the proposals contained in the application. In

essence, once a decision had been taken that additional space is required to support the new museum, and that this space had to be accommodated via a new build, the designers had two choices. Either they should design a high-quality pastiche to better blend in with the existing building, or they had to design a building that is unapologetically modern. The key principle that should lie behind any proposed design solution is that any new build should reference the underlying principles behind Berry-Webbers design. The applicants make a strong case in the Design and Access Statement that they have done so, and therefore the application is supported.

SCC Archaeology – No objection. Suggests the imposition of conditions to secure a written scheme of archaeological investigation, an archaeological work programmes and to carry out a record of the building prior to the commencement of works.

SCC Sustainability - No objection. The development should achieve BREEAM Very Good.

SCC City Design - No objection. The proposed pavilion extension would be an exciting and dynamic contrast to the existing building which would sit well in its context. The interventions to the entrance could work well from a design perspective. Suggest further information is required with respect to the proposed materials and the detailing of the roof enclosure.

Planning Consideration Key Issues

The key issue for consideration in the determination of this application for Listed Building Consent is the impact of the proposed extensions and alterations on the special historic and architectural character of the Civic Centre.

Principle of Development to the Listed Building

Central Government guidance in PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment advises that the best way to secure the upkeep of listed buildings is to ensure that they remain in active use. The Courts will be vacated in autumn 2010 and it important to secure an appropriate use for this substantial Listed Building before this time. The building itself is no longer fit for its intended function and the continuation of the Law Courts as a public building is welcomed.

PPG15 also acknowledges that ensuring listed buildings remain in active use will often necessitate a degree of adaptation. The key aspects of the proposal are hereby assessed in turn in terms of their relative impacts on the building.

The proposed museum would play an important part in the realisation of a 'Cultural Quarter' in this northern Above Bar area. Core Strategy and Local Plan policies support the principle of leisure facilities within city centre locations; the site is within walking distance of the central train station and well served by bus stops. The provision of a museum in this location would provide a valuable cultural facility for the city's residents and visitors.

Character and Design Issues

1. Entrance alterations

Whilst the removal of the entrance steps would erode the sense of grandeur and sense of procession created by the existing entrance, the proposed alterations to the entrance would enable it continue as the primary entrance to the building and facilitate its use by all visitors to the building. This is fundamental to avoid the segregation of people able to use the steps from those who are not able to use the steps. Having regard to the prominence and

importance of the existing entrance, it is crucial that it remains as the principle entrance to the building and its significance is retained.

A number of alternative options for the entrance have been considered by the architects prior to the selection of the chosen approach. These options have included the provision of an entrance ramp, the length of which would have a significant harmful impact on the appearance of the building as well as result in the removal of the lamps either side of the entrance. Other options have resulted in the segregation of stair users from non stair users such as the introduction of an internal lift or the provision of a disabled entrance elsewhere as well also involving inherent listed building issues.

The application therefore proposes the removal of the steps and the extension of the existing door screen downwards by one glazed panel either side of the door and this would be a simple solution which would not detract from the existing detailing. The new glazed doors would be positioned within a new stone portal which reflects the main entrance to the Municipal block. The bases of the lamp stands would be re-dressed in Portland stone and the existing entrance screen and glazing would be restored. The new stone entrance portal would help to reinforce the sense of arrival that would be eroded by the loss of the steps.

In addition to this a new Portland stone paved area will be provided in front of the entrance following the removal of the steps. This would express the pattern of the removed steps and be at a slight gradient to emphasise the threshold of the entrance.

2. Alterations to the Courts

Court 1, which is the principle of the three courtrooms and that which is of the highest architectural quality, would remain relatively intact apart from the intervention to the dais. The intervention to the dais would not significantly impact upon the historic and architectural integrity of this space. Court 1 would accommodate an exhibition relating to the Titanic Inquiry, therefore the existing building's fabric can be utilised as part of this exhibition. Court 3 however would not be used in the same manner and therefore, the proposed interventions are more extensive when compared with Court 1. The building itself is no longer appropriate for its intended law court function and some degree of adaptation will be required to ensure that the Court can be utilised.

3. Roof Extension

Two rooftop additions that would provide plant-room accommodation would be positioned either side of the base of the clock tower. The extensions would appear as symmetrical additions and therefore would not detract from the overall balance of the building. The enclosure would be set back from the roof parapet and being single-storey in scale and would not be unduly prominent when viewed from public vantage points. The additions would be the same height of the lower plinth of the base of the clock tower, which ensures it integrates into the fabric of the building. It is also important to note that the Law Courts section of the Civic Centre is lower in height than the remainder of the complex of the buildings and as such the addition would not detract from the rest of the building.

The enclosure would be finished in materials to match the proposed pavilion extension and would be sympathetic to the Portland stone of the Civic Centre whilst ensuring that the addition appears as a lightweight and modern structure.

4. Pavilion Extension

The proposed pavilion extension has been designed to respond to the varied land levels and irregular shape of the plot. The footprint of the building follows the tapered nature of the plot, whilst the roof apexes of each of the 3 bays ascend slightly towards to northern boundary. The use of the interlocking bays provides articulation to the built form, alleviating the massing whilst acting as a subtle reference to the maritime nature of the museum. The extension defers to the Civic Centre in its height.

The subordinate glazed link between the pavilion and the Civic provides sufficient separation between the original and the new, allowing the extension to read as a neighbour and providing clarity between the two elements. It is because the pavilion would read as a separate entity to the Civic Centre that would allow the symmetry and grace of the original building to prevail.

The façade of the extension would be finished in stone cladding and glazing, separated by a diagonal crease which would provide lightness to its appearance. The upper and lower sections of the façade slope in different directions, giving visual breaks within the elevation.

A hard landscaped finish is proposed to the perimeter of the extension which follows the topography of the land and reflects the elevation treatment of the extension. This will provide an effective setting for the new building.

Overall, it is considered that the addition would appear as an exciting and high quality addition to the building that would enhance the setting of the Civic Centre and help raise the profile of the new museum facility.

5. Other alterations

The application proposes a plethora of associated minor alterations and works to the buildings including the removal of partitions, alterations to a window and existing door openings. The proposed works are considered to be sympathetic to the building and subject to the imposition to secure a method statement and appropriate materials, would not have a harmful impact on the building.

Summary

Subject to the imposition of the suggested planning conditions, the application for Listed Building Consent is considered to be acceptable and should be referred to the Government Office with a favourable recommendation.

CONCLUSION

The proposed museum represents an exciting opportunity for the city that would make good use of the existing fabric of the Civic Centre; retaining and enhancing the role that the building plays within Southampton.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Documents used in the preparation of this report Background Papers

1 (a) (b) (c) (d) 2 (a) (c) (e) 6 (i) (l) 7 (a) (f) (o)

(JT for 16.03.10 PROWP)

Relevant Planning Policy

Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document

CS1	City Centre Approach
CS13	Fundamentals of Design
CS14	Historic Environment

Saved Policies of the City of Southampton Local Plan Review

SDP1	General Principles
SDP7	Context
SDP9	Scale, Massing and Appearance
HE3	Listed Buildings
HE5	Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest
HE6	Archaeological Remains
CLT1	Location of Development
MSA1	City Centre Design
MSA5	Civic Centre and Guildhall Square

RECOMMENDATION: CAP

CONDITIONS for 10/00021/LBC

01. APPROVAL CONDITION - Listed Building Commencement Period Condition

The works to which this Listed Building consent relates must be begun not later than three years beginning with the date on which this consent is granted.

Reason:

To conform to the requirements of Section 17(3) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended).

02. APPROVAL CONDITION - Details of building materials to be used [Pre-Commencement Condition]

Notwithstanding the information shown on the approved drawings and application form no development works shall be carried out unless and until a schedule of materials and finishes (including full details of the manufacturers, types and colours of the external materials) to be used for external walls and the roof of the proposed buildings has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be implemented only in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason:

To enable the Local Planning Authority to control the development in detail in the interests of amenity by endeavouring to achieve a building of visual quality.

03. APPROVAL CONDITION – Details of Hard Landscaping [pre-commencement condition]

Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, full details of the hard landscaping works to be carried out shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing. The details shall include samples of materials to be used, the existing and finished land levels and the design of paving to be laid. The development shall proceed in accordance with the agreed details.

REASON

To ensure a satisfactory setting to the building is provided.

04. APPROVAL CONDITION – Lighting Scheme [pre-commencement condition]

Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, details of lighting scheme shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing. The lighting shall be implemented as approved prior to the development first coming into occupation.

REASON

In the interests of reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and in the interest of the visual amenity of the area

05. APPROVAL CONDITION - Method Statement [pre-commencement condition]

Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, a detailed method statement for the works hereby approved shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing. The development shall proceed in accordance with the agreed details.

REASON

In the interests of the special and historic importance of the Grade II* Listed Building.

06. APPROVAL CONDITION – Details of signage [pre-commencement condition]

Notwithstanding the submitted information, prior to the commencement of development, full details of external signage shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing. The signage shall be implemented in accordance with the agreed details prior to the development first coming into use.

REASON

In the interest of the special historic and architectural character of the Civic Centre.

07. APPROVAL CONDITION - Archaeological investigation [Pre-Commencement Condition]

No development shall take place within the site until the implementation of a programme of archaeological work has been secured in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved by the Local planning Authority.

Reason:

To ensure that the archaeological investigation is initiated at an appropriate point in development procedure.

08. APPROVAL CONDITION - Archaeological work programme [Performance Condition]

The developer will secure the completion of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved by the Local planning Authority.

Reason:

To ensure that the archaeological investigation is completed.

09. APPROVAL CONDITION - Archaeological structure-recording [Pre-Commencement Condition]

No development shall take place within the site until the implementation of a programme of recording has been secured in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved by the Local planning Authority.

Reason:

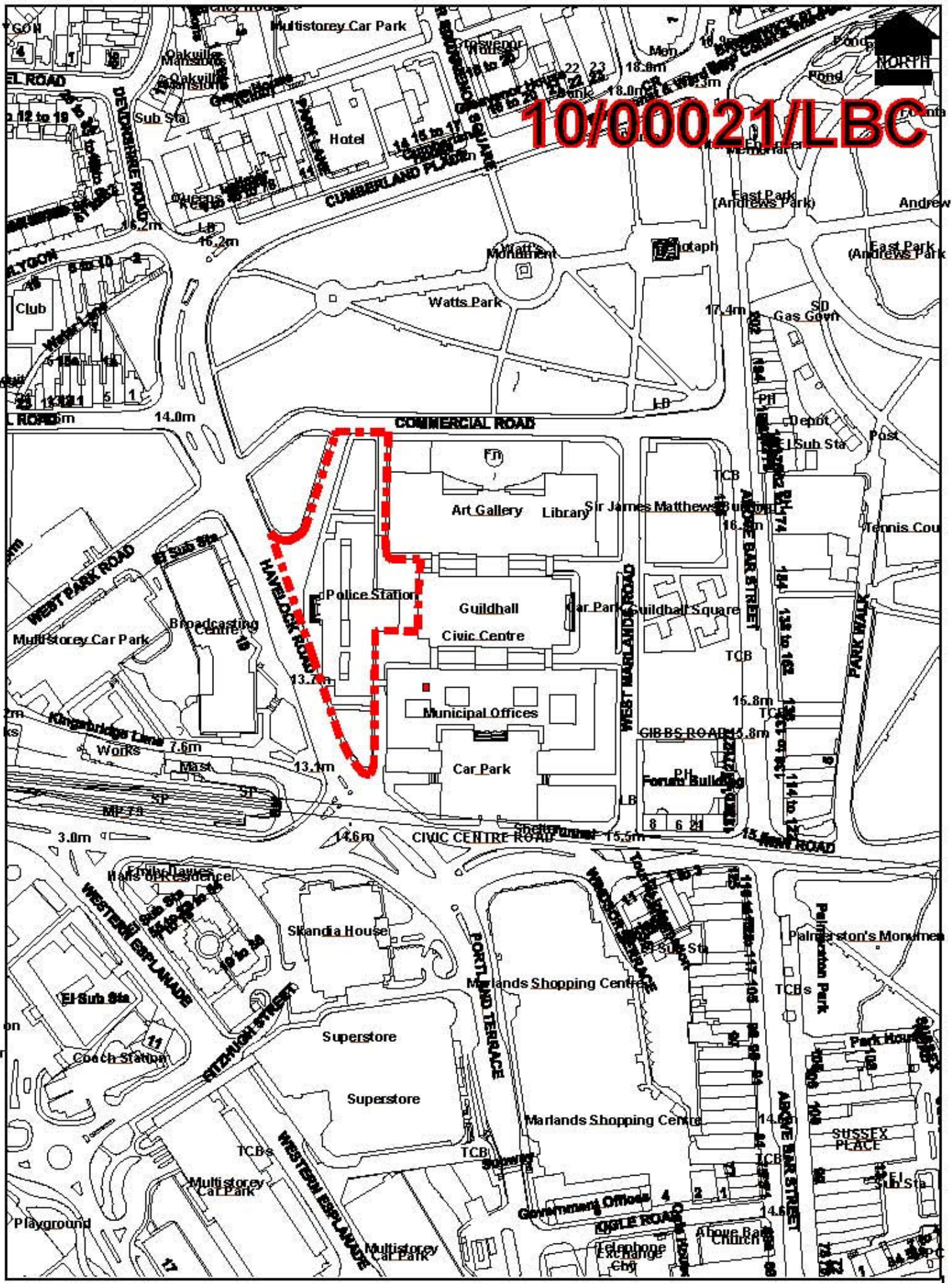
To ensure that the recording of a significant structure is initiated at an appropriate point in development procedure.

10. APPROVAL CONDITION – Entrance screen detailing [pre-commencement condition]

Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved detailed plans at a scale of no less than 1:20 of the new glazing to the entrance scheme shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing. The development shall proceed in accordance with the agreed details.

REASON

In the interest of the special historic and architectural character of the Civic Centre.



10/00021/LBC

Scale : 1:2500

Date : 03 March 2010

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