

Committee: Development	Date: 16 th June 2010	Classification: Unrestricted	Agenda Item: 10.1
Report of: Corporate Director of Development and Renewal		Title: Listed Building Application	
Case Officer: Nasser Farooq		Ref No: PA/10/100	
		Ward: Mile End and Globe Town	

1.0 APPLICATION DETAILS

- 1.1 **Location:** Bancroft Local History And Archives Library, 277 Bancroft Road, London, E1 4DQ
- 1.2 **Existing Use:** Local History Library and Archives (Use Class D1)
- 1.3 **Proposal:** Works in connection with the upgrade of fire escape, works to doors & screens, and fire compartmentalisation of basement. Upgrade of mechanical and electrical services and fire alarms with emergency lighting and escape signage. Provision of a new wc for disabled persons. Alterations to front entrance consisting of a new lobby and ramp.
- 1.4 **Drawing Nos:** 194/11A, 194/20, 194/100B 194/101a, 194/102B,194/103B, 194/104B, 194/110, 194/200, 194/300, 194/301D, 194/302C, 194/303E, 194/304B, 194/305, 194/306B, 194/307, 194/308A, 194/400B, 194/401A,194/402B, 194/L/500, 194/AL(2-)100DRAFT 4, 194/AL(2-)101A, 194/AL(2-)102A, 194/AL(2-)103A, 194/AL(2-)104A, 194/AL(2-)105A, and 194/301/SK6
- 1.5 **Applicant:** Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives
- 1.6 **Owner:** LBTH
- 1.7 **Historic Building:** Grade II Listed.
- 1.8 **Conservation Area:** Carlton Square Conservation Area.

2. SUMMARY OF MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 2.1 The local planning authority has considered the particular circumstances of this application against the Council's approved planning policies contained in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Unitary Development Plan, the Council's Interim Planning Guidance (2007), the Core Strategy Development: Development Plan Document 2025, associated supplementary planning guidance, the London Plan and Government Planning Policy Guidance and has found that:
- 2.2 1. The proposed works contribute to the long-term preservation of the building by improving accessibility. The works are appropriate in terms of design and use of materials, and as such accord with the aims of saved policy DEV37 of the adopted Tower Hamlets Unitary Development Plan

1998, policies CP49 and CON1 of the Interim Planning Guidance October 2007 and policies 4B.11 and 4B.12 of the London Plan (Consolidated with Alterations since 2004) February 2008, which seek to ensure works to Listed structures preserve features of special historic and architectural interest.

RECOMMENDATION

3. That the Committee resolve to refer the application to the Government Office for London with the recommendation that the Council would be minded to grant Listed Building Consent subject to conditions as set out below.
 - 3.1
 1. Time Limit.
 2. Completed in accordance with approved drawings.
 3. Samples of materials used for construction of ramp.
 4. Proposed brick to block up doorway to be match existing.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 This application for Listed Building Consent is required for proposed works to the Bancroft Local History Library. The Library is Grade II Listed, and is owned by the Council. The Council's scheme of delegation requires that where the Council is applying for works to a Listed Building that it owns, the application must be brought before Members.
- 4.2 The Council cannot determine applications for Listed Building Consent for works to buildings that it owns. Regulation 13 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990 requires that such applications are referred to the Secretary of State, together with any representations received following statutory publicity.
- 4.3 The purpose of this report is to allow Members to recommend to the Secretary of State that the Council would be minded to grant Listed Building Consent, were it empowered to do so itself.

5. PROPOSAL AND LOCATION DETAILS

Proposal

- 5.1 The proposals are for various internal and external works to Bancroft Library.
- 5.2 The external works include
 - i) removal of the existing ramp and handrails at the front entrance of the library (facing Bancroft Road),
 - ii) the provision of a new side facing ramp with a landing and the widening of the fire escape door in south elevation (between library yard and university campus),
 - iii) Works to the side yard adjacent to Queen Mary University consisting of the blocking up of an existing door and the widening of the existing door for

an emergency exit.

- 5.3 Internal works are in connection with the upgrade of fire escape facilities, works to doors and fire compartmentalisation of basement.
- 5.4 A new WC for disabled persons is also proposed in the Vestry Hall.

Site and Surroundings

- 5.5 The Bancroft Local History and Archives Library was Grade II Listed in 1973. English Heritage state the northern end of the building was built in 1865.
- 5.6 The building itself is two storeys in height and has an elegant front façade with distinctive cornices and fenestration detailing.
- 5.7 The application site and the surrounding area form part of the Carlton Square Conservation Area.
- 5.8 The Bancroft History Library, and the nearby London Hospital are the only Grade II listed buildings within the Carlton Square Conservation Area.
- 5.9 The Conservation Area appraisal describes the Library as follows:

Bancroft Road is the library which was built in two parts, with the northern end built in 1865 and the southern part probably built earlier. Two storeys in scale, the library building is constructed of white stone with heavy eaves cornice. Presented with banding between storeys, the ground floor is rusticated and has central round arched windows and its door flanked by Tuscan pilasters.

- 5.10 Queen Mary University is located to the south of the site. Immediately adjacent to the site is a residential terrace.

Relevant Planning History

- 5.11 An associated application for Planning Permission (reference PA/10/0101) has also been submitted to the Council. Under the Council's scheme of delegation this application does not have to be brought before Member's for a decision. Officer's will make a decision on this application after this committee meeting.

6. POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 6.1 For details of the status of relevant policies see the front sheet for "Planning Applications for Determination" agenda items. The following policies are relevant to the application:

6.2 Unitary Development Plan (UDP)(as saved September 2007)

Policies:

DEV37 Alterations to listed buildings to preserve special architectural or historic interest of the building, repair original features and replace missing items, traditional materials.

6.3 Interim Planning Guidance for the purposes of Development Control (IPG)(Oct 2007)

Core Strategies	CP49	Protect and enhance the historic environment including character and setting of conservation areas
Policies	CON 1	Listed buildings

6.4 Government Planning Policy Guidance/Statements

PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment

6.5 Core Strategy and Development Plan Document 2020

SP10: Protect and enhance heritage assets

6.6 Community Plan 2008/09: The following Community Plan Objectives relate to the application.

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7. CONSULTATION RESPONSE

7.1 The views of the Directorate of Development and Renewal are expressed in the MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS section below. The following were consulted regarding the application:

English Heritage

7.2 English Heritage have made the following comments:-

- The original porch was removed in the 1930's. The existing door, though clearly of some age appears may have been altered following facade alterations; the top of the door appearing almost absurdly low in relation to the cills of the ground floor windows.

7.3 - The existing fan light arrangements over the door are clumsy and inelegant; the two lower panes of the fanlight appear to be a later insertion. It would seem sensible, rather than replicating the alteration, to reconsider the design at this stage.

7.4 - The existing ramp at the main entrance is a crude addition. It is important that the details of any reconfigured ramp are carefully considered. As proposed, the steps would be constructed of stone paving on an exposed concrete base; we would suggest that the steps should appear to be constructed of solid stone i.e. the riser should be stone faced.

7.6 - If the Authority is minded to grant consent comments and relevant documents should be sent to the Government Office for London for consideration on behalf of the Secretary of State.

7.7 *(Officer comment: The fanlight does not form part of these works; and therefore*

cannot be considered as part of this application. However, the applicant has agreed that it should be considered in later phases when further funding is available.)

- 7.8 The proposal to face the ramp edge in stone is fully endorsed by the applicant and this change has been adopted as shown on amended drawing 194 301 Rev D.

8. LOCAL REPRESENTATION

- 8.1 A total of 12 neighbouring addresses were consulted by letter, a site notice was posted on 27th February. Following the submission of amended plans a further site notice was posted on 14 April 2010. A press notice was published on 15th February 2010.

- 8.2 Five objections have been received as a result of the consultation process. The issues raised overlap between the planning and listed building applications. However, for the benefit of members a summary of all the issues raised are given below:-

- 8.3 The issues raised are as follows:

- 8.4 i) Scheme proposes limited access for disabled users (*Officer comment: This matter is considered under the application for planning permission. It is noted that disabled (wheelchair or frail) users currently do not benefit from appropriate access to either floors of the existing building, as the front entrance and lobby are not compliant with Part M of the Building Regulations. The proposed scheme [Part M compliant entrance lobby, accessible toilet and accessible means of escape] makes the ground floor fully accessible to wheelchair users for the first time. This approach is supported by the Councils Access Officer.*)
- 8.5 ii) New WC in G4 - Loss of original Vestry Hall room. (*Officer comment: English Heritage did not object to this element of scheme. In addition to this, the applicant has confirmed that G4 is a small narrow room, which was adapted at the turn of the 20th century to provide access to external lean-to toilets, now disused. The master plan proposed that these lean to toilets be demolished to form a new alternative means of escape from the building - an external pathway running down the side of the building into the front yard. To provide access to this new exit route, it is proposed that G4 be adapted to become a hallway, housing a new staircase from the upper floors. Therefore, using some of its available space for the siting of new public toilets at this stage makes sense and is an investment in the future use of the building.*)
- 8.6 iii) Lack of historical background, research and local context in Listed Building Application (*Officer comment: It is considered that the application has provided all the relevant information required to validate and assess this application.*)
- 8.7 iv) Loss of former Lending Library upstairs for alteration and conversion to hold "events" and to "hire out" - as outlined in Listed Building Application. (*Officer comment: Providing the 'events' and 'hire out' are ancillary to the use of site as a library, planning permission is not required. The management arrangements at the library are not a planning matter*)
- 8.8 v) Proposed new ramp, rails and new entrance are not sympathetic to

the original building. (*Officer comment: This is addressed in part 8 of this report.*)

- 8.9 vi) No involvement in proposed DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) alterations by an Access Officer, a consultant or a community panel representing disabled users (*Officer Comment: This is not material to the determination of this application for Listed Building Consent. However, it is noted that the Council's Access Officer has been consulted and is supportive of the proposals.*)

9.0 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 When determining listed building consent applications, section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, requires that special regard should be paid to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting, or any features of special interest.
- 9.2 The main issue for Members' to consider is whether the proposed restoration works are appropriate in this respect.

Design and Impact on the Listed Building.

- 9.3 London Plan (Consolidated with Alterations since 2004) February 2008 policies 4B.11 and 4B.12 state that Boroughs should seek to enhance and protect the historic environment and promote the beneficial use of built assets.
- 9.4 Saved policy DEV37 of the Unitary Development Plan 1998 (UDP) states that proposals to alter listed buildings or structures will be expected to preserve the special architectural or historic interest of the building. In particular, it requires that alterations retain and repair original architectural features and that any works are undertaken with traditional materials.
- 9.5 Policies CP49 and CON1 of the Interim Planning Guidance October 2007 (IPG) state that any works to listed buildings will only be supported if they do not have an adverse impact on the character, fabric or identity of the building and if they are appropriate in terms of design scale, detailing and materials.
- 9.6 The proposal is to carry out the following works:
- Demolition of existing concrete access ramp and installation of a new access ramp to improve access.
- 9.7 The existing concrete ramp is located perpendicular at the front of the building and provides direct access down from the door to towards Bancroft Road. The proposal is to remove this ramp and construct a new ramp that leads outwards to the side of the building.
- 9.8 The proposed ramp and landing would be constructed from Yorkstone paving with a Portland stone band at the base (samples of which are proposed to be conditioned to ensure appropriate materials are used). The landing measures 2.2 metres by 2.4 metres, with a new ramp measuring 2 metres in length and runs along the side of the building.

- 9.9 The existing ramp is constructed of concrete and detracts from the appearance of the building.
- 9.10 The position of the proposed ramp is a compromise. It is acknowledged that a ramp leading straight onto the highway may be visually more appropriate. However, this is not possible, as it would not comply with the gradient and level-landing requirements of the Building Regulations.
- 9.11 Locating the ramp to the side allows it to conform to building control regulations. Facilitating improved disabled access to the building contributes to the longer term future of the Listed building. The design of the ramp and proposed materials represent a sympathetic addition that preserves the special historic interest of the host building.
- 9.12 It is noted that objections have been raised on this item from local residents in terms of both the design and impact on the listed building, and also its suitability in terms of access for disabled persons. However, Officers consider that the ramp is satisfactory in these regards.

Renewal of the existing timber front doors to open inwards and associated alterations to the entrance lobby to improve access and means of escape.

- 8.14 The existing doors are double swing doors opening both in and out, in order to improve accessibility they are proposed to be powered. This would enable the doors to open with ease at a push of a button.
- 8.15 The initial proposal was to have both doors to the entrance of Bancroft Road to opening outwards. However, in response to the objections received to this element, the applicant, after discussions with the Fire Officer and Building Control, has amended both sets of doors to open inwards rather than outwards.
- 8.16 In terms of the impact on the Listed building it is considered that the doors opening inwards or outwards would have a neutral impact on the building.

Upgrading the existing rear escape door and gate to match the increased width of the frame, within the existing brick opening and the bricking up of adjacent doorway.

- 8.17 A rear courtyard is located to the southern boundary of the site adjoining the Queen Mary Chemistry Building. The courtyard currently has two black painted doors with lay-lights above. These are modern inward opening doors without any significant historic value.
- 8.18 The proposal is to upgrade one of the existing rear escape doors at the rear yard within the existing openings to open outwards and to ensure this door provide suitable emergency access to the rear yard, in an emergency situation. This element of the proposal is not considered to have an adverse impact on the historic fabric of the Listed Building.
- 8.19 The remaining door is currently a redundant door to the yard adjacent to Queen Mary University. The proposal is to block up this entrance, with matching brick. This is considered acceptable subject to a condition that the proposed brick matches the existing brick to ensure it is sympathetic to the historic fabric of the Listed Building.

Construction of new unisex wheelchair accessible toilet on ground floor within G4.

- 9.20 Room G4 as labelled in the submitted drawing is a small narrow room, located at the northern end of the building at ground floor level. As part of the master plan it is envisaged that this room will provide access to a new exit route. Details of this exit route do not form part of this application. In order to facilitate this G4 part of G4 would become a hallway.
- 9.21 The proposal is to utilise the remaining part of this room to provide a fully accessible toilet facility at ground floor level which would be well located close to the reception and accessed off a circulation core.
- 9.22 The Council's Historic Building Officer and English Heritage have been consulted with regards to this application. No objections have resulted to this element of the proposal.
- 9.23 Other works include emergency repairs to the roof fabric to mitigate damage to the interior finishes and fittings, upgrading services including external emergency lighting and the removal of any asbestos required to facilitate the above works.
- 9.24 Given financial constraints the proposed works are minimal at this stage. Any historic features, leaded or tiled areas of the roof would not be altered. Any replacement pipe-work in visible areas would be cast Iron to match existing. The proposed works are envisaged to aid the preservation of this historic building by reducing the likelihood of any water leakages into the building.
- 9.25 The proposed emergency lighting is shown on the submitted drawings in various locations. The purpose of this lighting is to inform patrons of the site of the various exit routes. This is a fire safety requirement and is considered necessary as part of the modernisation works to the building.
- 9.26 These works are considered necessary and supported by the Planning Department, as they do not have an adverse impact on the historic fabric of the Listed Building.
- 9.27 These proposed works contribute to the long-term preservation of the building by improving accessibility. The works are appropriate in terms of design and use of materials, and as such accord with the aims of saved policy DEV37 of the adopted Tower Hamlets Unitary Development Plan 1998, policies CP49 and CON1 of the Interim Planning Guidance October 2007 and policies 4B.11 and 4B.12 of the London Plan (Consolidated with Alterations since 2004) February 2008, which seek to ensure works to Listed structures preserve features of special historic and architectural interest.

10.0 CONCLUSION.

- 10.1 All other relevant policies and considerations have been taken into account. The Secretary of State can be advised that this Council would have been minded to grant Listed Building Consent for the reasons set out in the SUMMARY OF MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS and the details of the decision are set out in the RECOMMENDATION at the beginning of this report.