

Planning Application: Report of Handling



Reference No. 23/0505/PP

Renfrewshire
Council

KEY INFORMATION

Ward: 4 – Paisley Northwest

Applicant: The University of the West of Scotland

Registered: 22/09/2023

Report by Head of Economy & Development

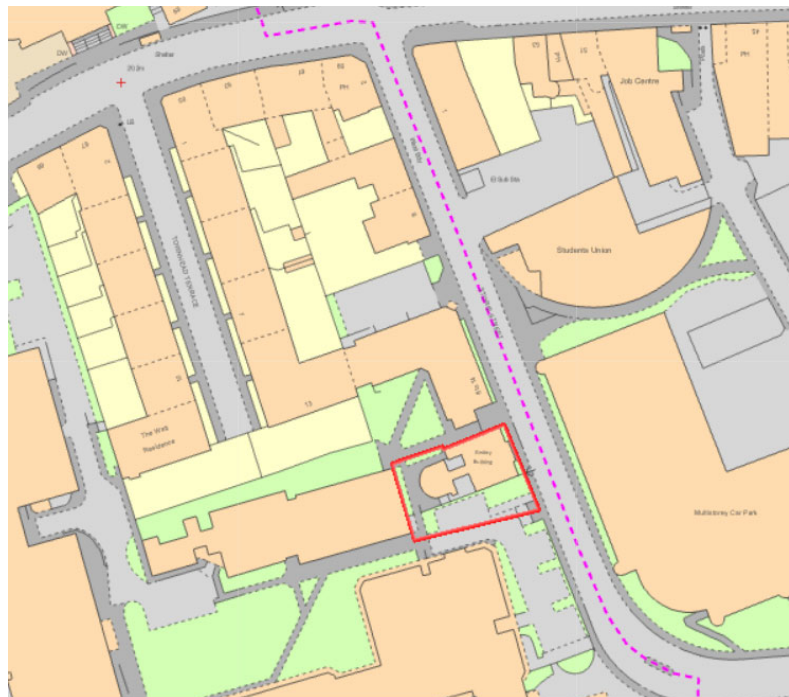
PROSPECTIVE PROPOSAL: Installation of replacement windows and doors, solar panels, two ramps, railings, cladding and a false floor. Erection of extension; formation of window and door openings; renewal of roof; stonework repairs; and landscaping works

LOCATION: University of the West of Scotland, Storie Street, Paisley, PA1 2BX

APPLICATION FOR: Full Planning Permission

RECOMMENDATION

Grant, subject to conditions



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Alasdair Morrison
Head of Economy & Development

IDENTIFIED KEY ISSUES

- The building is B listed and is located within both Paisley Town Centre and its Conservation Area.
- No representations were received.
- The proposal accords with the relevant provisions of both National Planning Framework 4 and the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan.

REPORT OF HANDLING FOR APPLICATION 23/0505/PP

SITE ADDRESS	University of the West of Scotland, Storie Street, Paisley, PA1 2BX
PROPOSAL	Installation of replacement windows and doors, solar panels, two ramps, railings, cladding and a false floor. Erection of extension; formation of window and door openings; renewal of roof; stonework repairs; and landscaping works
RECOMMENDATION	Grant, subject to conditions

PROPOSALS	<p>This application seeks planning permission for the extension of, and alterations to, a detached building on Storie Street, Paisley.</p> <p>The vacant building, which is located within the University of the West of Scotland campus, fronts a road to the east and is bound by a mixture of commercial and residential properties. The building is B listed and sits within both Paisley Town Centre and its Conservation Area.</p> <p>The two storey sandstone property has a dual pitched slate roof and timber framed windows. A single storey red brick rotunda projects from the rear.</p> <p>Several structures that sit between the main two storey building and the rotunda would be removed and a small, flat roofed extension would be constructed. Aluminium cladding would be installed along part of the northern elevation of the rotunda.</p> <p>Replacement windows and doors would be installed across the property while two new window openings (with decorative aluminium shutters) would be formed on the southern elevation of the main building.</p> <p>The ramp that provides access to the rotunda roof from the first floor of the main building would be removed and a new ramp, false floor and railings would be installed on the rotunda roof to create useable outdoor space. In association with the installation of the new ramp, two first floor window openings on the rear elevation of the main building would be converted to a door and an existing door opening would be infilled to create a window.</p> <p>Several sections of stonework would be either cleaned or repaired while the slate roof would be renewed and solar panels would be installed on the rear roof plane.</p> <p>An access ramp would be installed to the south of the property and decorative railings would be installed along the southern site boundary. A tree would be felled to accommodate the access ramp.</p> <p>Finally, areas of both hard and soft landscaping would be formed</p>
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	<p>across the application site.</p> <p>In light of the minimal removal of some of the existing building, and in line with the Scheme of Delegation the application is being referred to Board for consideration and determination.</p>
SITE HISTORY	<p>Application No: 23/0504/LB</p> <p>Description: Installation of replacement windows and doors, solar panels, two ramps, railings, cladding and a false floor. Erection of extension; formation of window and door openings; renewal of roof; stonework repairs; internal alterations and landscaping works</p> <p>Decision: This application is also being presented to Board today for determination.</p>
CONSULTATIONS	<p>Communities & Housing Services (Environmental Protection Team) – has no comments to make on the proposals.</p>
REPRESENTATIONS	<p>None received.</p>
DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES	<p>Policy and Material Considerations</p> <p>Legislation requires planning decisions to be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance, the proposal must be assessed against the following:</p> <p><u>National Planning Framework 4</u></p> <p>Policy 1 - Tackling the climate and nature crises Policy 2 - Climate mitigation and adaptation Policy 7 - Historic assets and places Policy 9 - Brownfield, vacant and derelict land and empty buildings Policy 11 - Energy Policy 27 - City, town, local and commercial centres</p> <p><u>Renfrewshire Local Development Plan</u></p> <p>Policy C1 - Renfrewshire's Network of Centres Policy ENV3 - Built and Cultural Heritage Policy I4 - Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Developments</p> <p><u>New Development Supplementary Guidance</u></p> <p>Delivering the Centres Strategy Delivering the Environment Strategy</p> <p><u>Material Considerations</u></p> <p>A Guide to Development in Conservation Areas 2022 Historic Environment Scotland: Managing Change in the Historic Environment Guidance</p>
PLANNING ASSESSMENT	<p>The main issues that must be assessed in this report are the impact the development would have on Paisley Town Centre and on the Conservation Area. The impact on the building's listed building status will be assessed in the associated listed building consent application (23/0504/LB) which is also being presented to Board today.</p>

In respect of the impact on the Town Centre, **Policy 27** of NPF4 and **Policy C1** of the LDP both support development that will strengthen and enhance Town Centres as long as the proposal is compatible with surrounding land uses. The New Development Supplementary Guidance recognises Paisley Town Centre's role as a learning hub.

The application site sits within the University of the West of Scotland campus, with numerous educational buildings found nearby. The proposal would improve access to, as well as the layout and fabric of, this vacant building, allowing it to be brought back into use for educational related purposes. The proposal therefore complies with **Policy 27** of NPF4 and **Policy C1** of the LDP.

Furthermore, as the proposal would result in the reuse of a vacant listed building it is also considered to comply with **Policy 7** and **Policy 9** of NPF4 in this regard.

In respect of the impact on the Conservation Area, **Policy 7** of NPF4 and **Policy ENV3** of the LDP both support the safeguarding of Conservation Areas. Furthermore, Renfrewshire's New Development Supplementary Guidance, as well as Historic Environment Scotland's guidance notes, require proposals to preserve the character of the Conservation Area. The following matters therefore require further consideration,

Extension and cladding

The construction of the extension would require the removal of several small structures that sit between the main building and the rotunda. These are poor quality, piecemeal additions that contribute little to the Conservation Area. The removal of these structures is therefore considered acceptable.

The extension has been designed to fill the gap between the rear of the main building and rotunda without dominating the space. The extension would not be highly visible from the street and raises no overlooking or overshadowing concerns.

The extension would be finished in aluminium cladding, in contrast with the sandstone main building and red brick rotunda. Such a finish is acceptable as it would allow the extension to be identified as a later addition and would link the structure to the more modern buildings found elsewhere on campus.

The aluminium cladding used on the extension would continue along part of the northern side elevation of the rotunda. This is acceptable as this elevation is not highly visible from elsewhere within the Conservation Area and the original red brick finish has already been removed in this location.

Replacement windows and new window openings

While guidance from Historic Environment Scotland encourages the

retention and repair of existing windows and doors, it also acknowledges that in some circumstances it is necessary to replace them. In this instance, the existing single glazed frames have reached the end of their working life.

The replacement windows and door would be timber framed, double glazed units that closely mirror the style, opening mechanism and colour of the existing frames. This work would therefore have minimal impact on the character of the Conservation Area.

Replacing single glazed windows with double glazed windows would also comply with **Policy 1** and **Policy 2** of NPF4 in that their installation would improve the energy efficiency of the building.

The windows that would be formed on the southern elevation would be of an appropriate size for the location, would help activate what is currently a windowless gable elevation and would add to the character of the area. The aluminium frames and shuttering are also considered acceptable and would not be detrimental to the character of the Conservation Area.

Rotunda roof access

Access arrangements onto the rotunda roof do not comply with current accessibility standards. The existing ramp would therefore be removed and a new ramp installed, emerging from the centre of the rear elevation of the main building at first floor level. A false floor would be formed on the rotunda roof to allow the pitch of the ramp to be reduced while new, taller, railings would be installed to protect those using the roof as an outdoor space.

Repositioning the ramp so that it sits centrally and the associated alterations to first floor window and door openings would improve the symmetry of the rear elevation and would be more in keeping with how the building would have originally looked.

The new ramp and railings would have a negligible impact on the quality of the Conservation Area as they would replace existing structures of a similar design while the false floor would not be highly visible.

No details have been provided on how the external appearance of the building will be made good following the alterations to the window and door openings. To protect the Conservation Area it is therefore considered appropriate to add a condition, should consent be granted, requesting that details of the materials to be used are submitted to, and approved by, the Planning Authority before any work begins.

Access ramp, railings and landscaping

The access ramp to be installed to the south of the building would allow step free access into the building and would be of a standard size and design.

	<p>Initially, it was proposed that 4.3 metre high aluminium curtain walling would be installed along the southern site boundary. However, following discussions between planning and the applicant this was reduced to a 2.5 metre high decorative railing so that the rotunda remains visible to those entering the campus from Storie Street. The railing would be of a similar design to those installed on the ramps and rotunda roof, minimising the material palette used for the development and therefore its impact on the Conservation Area.</p> <p>The areas of hard and soft landscaping to be formed across the application site would complete the development and improve the setting of the building. The landscaping works and railings would also help create a more welcoming environment at the Storie Street campus entrance. A condition can be added to ensure the quality of the landscaping is appropriate for a Conservation Area.</p> <p><u>Roof, solar panels and stonework</u></p> <p>The roof would be stripped back and renewed, with the slate that is in the best condition retained and used on the principal elevation. The use of the original slate on the main elevation, which is of greatest architectural significance, is welcome and a condition can be added to ensure the slate used on the rear elevation is appropriate for the location.</p> <p>The solar panels would be installed on the rear roof plane so they would not affect the principal elevation and would not be highly visible from the Conservation Area. As the panels would generate renewable energy for the property this element of the proposal would also comply with Policy I4 of the LDP as well as Policy 1, Policy 2 and Policy 11 of NPF4.</p> <p>The stonework cleaning and repairs would be carried out in a sensitive, non invasive manner. It would not attempt to make the building look new but would instead address defects such as cracking, decay and areas of water ingress. This work would therefore improve the quality of the building and the contribution it makes to the Conservation Area.</p> <p>Overall, it is therefore considered the proposal complies with Policy 7 of NPF4, Policy ENV3 of the LDP and the associated supplementary guidance as the development would respectfully alter the building to allow it to meet the needs of the applicant while protecting the contribution it makes to the wider Conservation Area.</p> <p>In view of the above, it is considered that the proposal would accord with the relevant provisions of the Development Plan. There are no other material considerations. Planning permission should therefore be granted subject to conditions.</p>
RECOMMENDATION	Grant, subject to conditions

Reason for Decision

1. The proposal accords with the provisions of the Development Plan and there were no material considerations which outweighed the presumption in favour of development according with the Development Plan.

Conditions/Reasons

1. Prior to the commencement of development hereby approved, full details of the finishing materials to be used for the extension shall be submitted to, and approved by, the Planning Authority. Thereafter only the approved materials shall be used.

Reason: To safeguard the character of the Conservation Area.

2. Prior to the commencement of development hereby approved, full details of the design of and finish to the aluminium framed windows and their shutters as well as all ramps, railings and the false floor on the rotunda roof shall be submitted to, and approved by, the Planning Authority. Thereafter only the approved materials shall be used.

Reason: To safeguard the character of the Conservation Area.

3. Prior to the alteration of openings at first floor level necessary for the removal of the existing ramp and installation of the new ramp approved, details of the materials that will be used to repair the external appearance of the property in this location shall be submitted to, and approved by, the Planning Authority. Thereafter only the approved materials shall be used.

Reason: To safeguard the character of the Conservation Area.

4. Prior to the commencement of development hereby approved, full details of any new slate to be used shall be submitted to, and approved by, the Planning Authority. Thereafter only the approved slate shall be used.

Reason: To safeguard the character of the Conservation Area.

5. For the avoidance of doubt, any slate vents shall be installed on the rear elevation only.

Reason: To safeguard the character of the Conservation Area.

6. Prior to the commencement of development hereby approved, a scheme of landscaping shall be submitted for the written approval of the Planning Authority. The scheme shall include (a) details of any earth moulding; (b) full details of the finish to any areas of hard landscaping; (c) a scheme of tree and shrub planting, incorporating details of the number, species, size and spacing of trees and shrubs to be planted; and (d) details of the phasing of all works.

The approved landscaping scheme shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the phasing plan.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 - Background Papers
For further information or to inspect any letters of objection and other background papers,
please contact James McCafferty on 0141 487 1366