

Committee: **PLANNING**

Date of Meeting: **13 January 2010**

Title of Report: **S/2009/1001**
Cambridge Hall, Atkinson Library & Art
Gallery and Bank Buildings Lord Street,
Southport
(Dukes Ward)

Proposal: Creation of an integrated Cultural Centre involving a partial Change of Use of Bus Offices (B1) to Public Library (D1), erection of a three storey extension to the elevation facing Cambridge Arcade, erection of a glazed atrium linking the Art Gallery to Cambridge Hall, construction of a second floor foyer on the existing roof, installation of glazing to form an enclosed entrance foyer, erection of a goods lift at the rear facing Sharrock Street, erection of new plant at roof level and external alterations and refurbishment

Applicant: Mr John Taylor Sefton Council

Executive Summary

This is a full planning application involving alterations and refurbishment of Southport Arts Centre, the Atkinson Art Gallery and Library and the former Bank Buildings to provide a single integrated Cultural Centre. The main issues to consider include the acceptability of the change of use element, the scale, design and visual impact of the external changes, impact on the Conservation Area and on Listed Buildings as well as issues of highway safety.

Recommendation(s) Approval

Justification

The proposals are considered acceptable in terms of their impact on the retail function of Southport Town Centre, in terms of the scale, design and visual impact of the proposed extensions and external alterations, and in terms of the proposals' impact on the Lord Street Conservation Area and on the group of Grade II Listed Buildings. Issues of highway safety are also considered acceptable therefore approval is recommended.

Conditions & Reasons

1. T-1 Full Planning Permission Time Limit
2. X1 Compliance
3. M-2 Materials (sample)

4. H-7 Cycle parking
5. P-5 Plant and machinery
1. RT-1
2. RX1
3. RM-2
4. RH-7
5. RP-5

Notes

Drawing Numbers

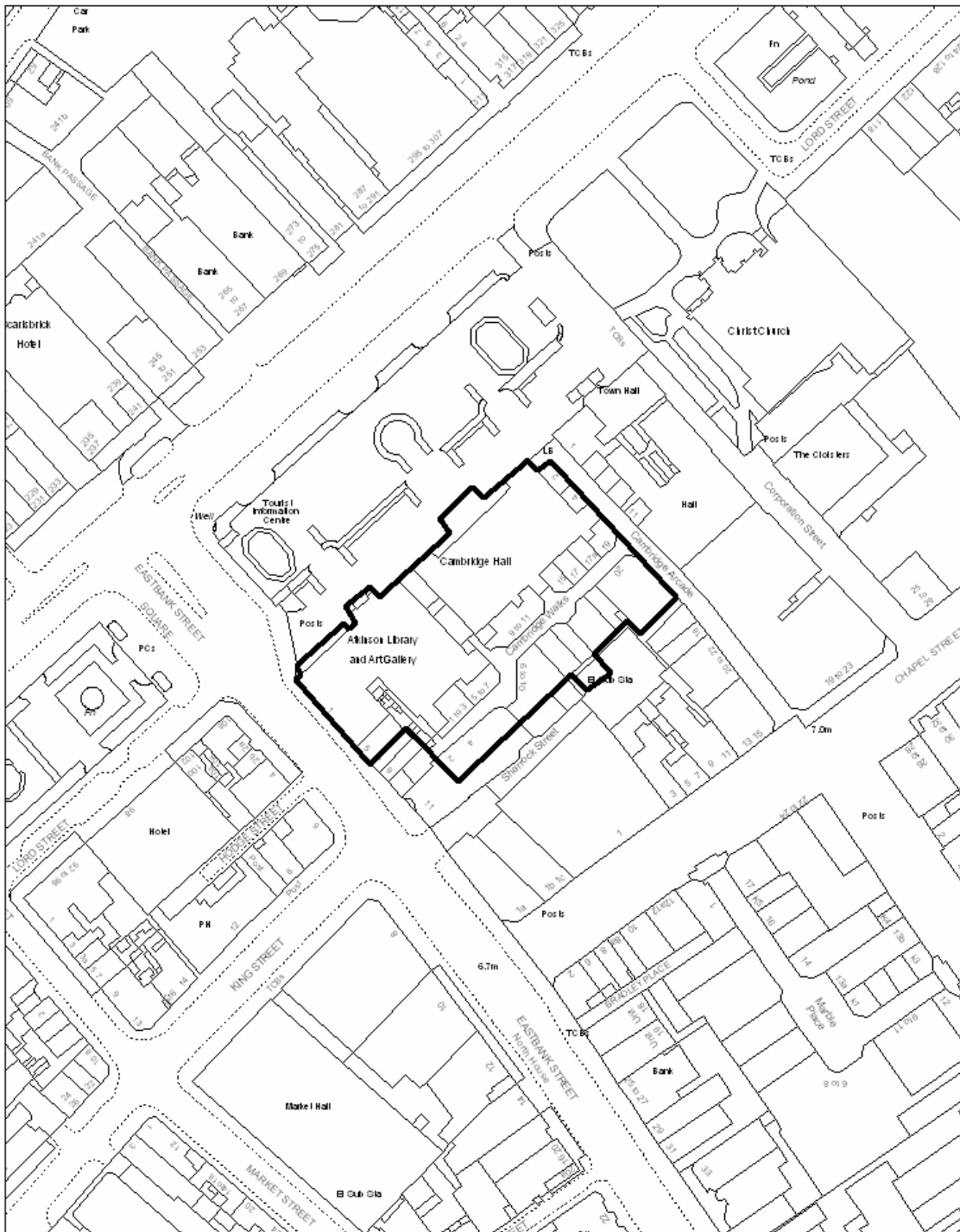
Drawing number L/100/P3, L/101/P3, L/102/P3, L/103/P3, L/104/P4, L/105/P3, L/106/P3, L/107/P3, L/221/P1, L/222/P1, L/223/P1, L/224/P1, L/225/P1, L/226/P1, L/227/P1, L/228/P1, L/229/P1, L/230/P1, L/231/P1, L/241/P1, L/242/P1, L/243/P1, L/244/P1, L/246/P1.

Financial Implications

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	2006/ 2007 £	2007/ 2008 £	2008/ 2009 £	2009/ 2010 £
Gross Increase in Capital Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton Capital Resources				
Specific Capital Resources				
REVENUE IMPLICATIONS				
Gross Increase in Revenue Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton funded Resources				
Funded from External Resources				
Does the External Funding have an expiry date? Y/N	When?			
How will the service be funded post expiry?				

List of Background Papers relied upon in the preparation of this report

History referred to
Policy referred to



Sefton Council
Planning & Economic
Regeneration Department
 Andy Wallis - Director
 Planning & Economic Regeneration is part of the
 Regeneration & Environmental Services Directorate

S/2009/1002
 Cambridge Hall
 Lord Street
 Southport
 OSGR: 333596, 417198 Sheet(s): 489D Area: 3990 sqm

Standard Site Plan
 Scale: 1:1250
 Date: 29/12/2009
 Drawn By: BBERT on

Ward(s): Dukes
 Postcode Sector(s): PR8 1
 Polling District(s): W2
 Parish(es): None Found

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The Site

The site comprises the Southport Arts Centre, the Atkinson Library and Art Gallery together with offices contained in the former Bank Buildings. The site is bordered by Lord Street to the north west, Cambridge Arcade to the north east, Cambridge Walks to the south east, and Eastbank Street to the south west. The upper floors of the subject buildings extend over Cambridge Walks to Sharrock Street.

The site lies within a predominantly retail area within Southport Town Centre.

Proposal

Creation of an integrated Cultural Centre involving a partial Change of Use of Bus Offices (B1) to Public Library (D1), erection of a three storey extension to the elevation facing Cambridge Arcade, erection of a glazed atrium linking the Art Gallery to Cambridge Hall, construction of a second floor foyer on the existing roof, installation of glazing to form an enclosed entrance foyer, erection of a goods lift at the rear facing Sharrock Street, erection of new plant at roof level and external alterations and refurbishment.

History

S/2009/1002 Current. Listed Building Consent for the erection of a three storey extension to the elevation facing Cambridge Arcade, erection of a glazed atrium linking the Art Gallery to Cambridge Hall, construction of a second floor foyer on the existing roof, installation of glazing to form an enclosed entrance foyer, erection of a goods lift at the rear facing Sharrock Street, erection of new plant at roof level and internal and external alterations and refurbishment.

N/2008/0685 Layout of outside seating areas. Ap 20/10/08

N/2008/0497 Listed Building consent for the refurbishment of the Atkinson Art Gallery shop. Ap 12/8/08

N/1987/0324 Listed Building Consent to provide revised offices, booking office/foyer, bar/restaurant, picture gallery, access, toilet and service areas and alterations to Cambridge Arcade. Ap 6/4/88

N/1987/0323 Listed Building Consent for demolition of rear building of Cambridge Hall (known as Victoria Building) and part of the rear of the Atkinson Library and Art Gallery to allow redevelopment of the site. Ap 25/8/87

N/1987/0322 1) Demolition of buildings and alterations to the public library/arts centre; 2) provision of a youth theatre, assembly room, director's suite, booking office, picture gallery, stores, workshop. Ap 9/7/87

Consultations

Environmental Protection Director – no objection subject to condition requiring a scheme of noise control for any plant and equipment.

Lighting Engineer – the lighting proposals will serve to improve and enhance the night time appearance of the Cultural Centre. These luminaries are pointed at the building or certain parts of it to create an effect and are chosen specifically for this. Unlike area floodlighting which throws light from height over a great distance there should be no side effects like light spill or glare with these intended lanterns.

Southport Civic Society – totally unacceptable not to provide an alternative library facility during construction works; all the stained glass windows should be kept; the turnstile should be relocated on site; other historic features within the buildings should be recorded with reference to their future location.

English Heritage – the application concerns alterations to two listed buildings which together represent a significant element of the civic buildings on Lord Street in the heart of a conservation area and the proposals therefore have the potential to deeply influence the character of this important area of Southport. English Heritage is fully supportive of the aspiration to create a single cultural centre in Southport that will make literature and the arts more attractive and accessible to the public. We are grateful to have had the opportunity to have been involved in detailed pre-application discussions. Support the scheme but wish the following points to be taken into account:-

- Full justification is required for the removal of the staircase and art gallery turnstile – consider it should be possible to relocate the turnstile within the building.
- Concerned about reduction of the repairs budget and seek clarification on this matter.
- Current architects should be involved through to completion of the project to ensure a high quality project is delivered successfully.
- The glazing of the porte cochere requires a strict maintenance regime.

Recommend that the application is determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance and it is not necessary to consult us again on the application.

Neighbour Representations

Last date for replies: 8/12/09 (neighbours)
17/12/09 (site notice)
18/12/09 (press notice)

Letter received from 18 Cambridge Arcade concerned about the impact on trading over the two year construction period.

Policy

The application site is situated in an area allocated as Southport Town Centre & Conservation Area (the entrance projections onto Lord Street are within Urban Greenspace) on the Council's Adopted Unitary Development Plan.

AD2	Ensuring Choice of Travel
CS3	Development Principles
DQ1	Design
DQ3	Trees and Development
G1	Protection of Urban Greenspace
HC1	Development in Conservation Areas
HC3	Development or Change of Use Affecting a Listed Building
R2	Southport Town Centre

Comments

This planning application involves alterations and refurbishment of the arts centre, library and art gallery to form a single integrated cultural centre. External alterations include an extension above existing retail units in Cambridge Arcade, a glazed link between the art gallery and Cambridge Hall, construction of a second floor theatre foyer, installation of a glazed entrance foyer to the existing arts centre building, and the provision of new plant on various parts of the buildings' roof. The existing library entrance on Lord Street closest to Eastbank Street is to be closed and relocated to the existing art gallery entrance also on Lord Street and a new goods lift is proposed at the rear of the site onto Sharrock Street. The application also involves a change of use of existing offices on the first floor of bank buildings (on the corner of Lord Street and Eastbank Street) to be used as first floor library accommodation in addition to that on the ground floor.

The main issues to consider include the suitability of the change of use proposal, the scale, design and visual impact of the proposed extensions, the impact of the proposals on the character and appearance of the Lord Street Conservation Area, and their impact on the special features and setting of the three Grade II Listed Buildings, the subject of this application. Issues of highway safety are also relevant.

The proposed change of use of the first floor of Bank Buildings from general offices to a library use is considered appropriate as the site lies within Southport Town Centre as identified in the adopted Sefton UDP and the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on the overall retail function of the area. In addition, the proposal will make a positive contribution to the vitality and viability of the Town Centre and therefore satisfies UDP Policy R2.

The scale of the proposed extensions are minor in relation to the scale of the existing buildings as a whole. The extension above Cambridge Arcade (constructed in patinated copper cladding) and the proposed glazed link between Cambridge Hall and the art gallery have a modern design in contrast to the traditional design of the listed Victorian buildings. The extensions are set back from the main front elevation of the buildings, they will be read as modern additions but will not be seen as dominant features on the group of buildings. The proposed foyer extension and new plant on the roof will generally be screened by the existing buildings and will not be readily visible from public view. The proposals to glaze the main entrance to provide an enclosed entrance foyer and the proposals to alter some of the external window and door openings are considered appropriate. Overall, the scale, design and visual impact of the extensions are not considered to harm the character and appearance of the Lord Street Conservation Area and are considered appropriate in terms of their visual impact in the street scene and on the group of Listed Buildings.

With regards to issues of highway safety, an amended plan has been received showing the provision of 12 Sheffield cycle stands close to the entrance to the art gallery and library on Lord Street. Discussions are ongoing regarding the impact of the proposed goods lift at the rear of the site as concerns have been expressed about a lack of manoeuvring space for delivery vehicles. The results of these discussions will be reported in the Late Representations document.

The Southport Civic Society express concern about the failure to provide an alternative library facility for the duration of the construction works. However, this matter is outside the

scope of this planning application and cannot affect its decision. Likewise, the points raised about internal features will be dealt with in the application for Listed Building Consent (S/2009/1002). Similarly, points raised by English Heritage relate to the application for Listed Building Consent.

One of the local traders has expressed concern about possible disruption to local businesses during the construction phase. The applicant's agent advises that there will be hoardings placed in front of the retail units in Cambridge Arcade close to the Lord Street entrance although access will not be totally restricted. He also advises that this matter will be discussed with local traders prior to the construction works.

The applicant has presented the application to the Access Forum which is concerned with access and mobility issues.

Reasoned Justification

The proposals are considered acceptable in terms of their impact on the retail function of Southport Town Centre, in terms of the scale, design and visual impact of the proposed extensions and external alterations, and in terms of the proposals' impact on the Lord Street Conservation Area and the group of Grade II Listed Buildings. Issues of highway safety are also considered acceptable therefore approval is recommended.

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