

Taunton Deane Borough Council

**INSTALLATION OF BRICK AND STONE RAMP TO THE WEST FACE OF THE BUILDING TO PROVIDE WHEELCHAIR ACCESS TO THE NEW TAUNTON INFORMATION CENTRE, THE MARKET HOUSE, FORE STREET, TAUNTON.**

Location: MARKET HOUSE, FORE STREET, TAUNTON, TA1 1JD

Grid Reference: 322721.124489

Full Planning Permission

---

**RECOMMENDATION AND REASON(S)**

Recommended Decision: Conditional Approval

**RECOMMENDED CONDITION(S) (if applicable)**

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within three years of the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with the provisions of Section 91 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51(1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

(A1) DrNo 14.2372/01 Plans and Elevations as Existing

(A2) DrNo 14.2372.02 Rev A Plans as Proposed

(A1) DrNo 14.2372/04 Rev A West Elevation & Section B - B1 as Proposed

(A1) DrNo 14.2372/05 Rev A North Elevation as Proposed

(A2) DrNo 14.2372/08 Location and Block Plan

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. Prior to commissioning, specific details of the following shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, with such approved details being strictly adhered to in the implementation of the approved works, unless any variation thereto is first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority: The detailed design of the handrails, at a scale of 1:10; details of the nosing for the steps and detail of how the new brickwork will be differentiated from the historic elements.

Reason: To ensure the use of materials and details appropriate to the character of the Listed Building, in accordance with Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Policy CP8 of the Core Strategy and the relevant guidance in Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

## **PROPOSAL**

The proposal is to provide a ramped access to the western side of the Market House to allow for wheelchair access to the new Tourist Information Centre. The ramp would project almost 2m from the building and be 8m long and it would be constructed in brick and stone.

A separate listed building application has been submitted and sent to the Secretary of State.

## **SITE DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY**

The site of the Market House lies in the centre of town within the pedestrianised area and the three storey building dates from around 1770 by the architect responsible for the laying out of the gardens at Hestercombe House. The main building was flanked by single storey market arcades which were demolished in 1932 and replaced by the existing 2 storey wings to the east and west. The building is listed Grade II\*.

## **CONSULTATION AND REPRESENTATION RESPONSES**

### **Consultees**

*SCC - TRANSPORT DEVELOPMENT* - The proposal relates to amendments to the existing building including the formation of a ramped access.

The Highway Authority has no objection to the principle of this development as it is unlikely to generate any vehicle movements in its own right as most visitors would either be on foot or have visited Taunton for other reasons.

However the formation of the proposed ramp would require see a structure placed on the adopted highway. The Highway Authority has no interest in taking on either the liability or the future maintenance of the structure. As a consequence the applicant would need to stop up this section of the adopted highway. This can be done under Section 247 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Please note that no work is allowed to commence until the order has been granted.

Therefore taking into account the above information the Highway Authority raises no objection to this proposal subject to the successful stopping up of the existing highway.

*HERITAGE* - The amended plans accord with my comments on suggested amendments

*ENGLISH HERITAGE (ALL CONSULTATIONS)* - . We do not wish to comment in detail, but offer the following general observations.

The significance of the Market House, grade II\* listed, is covered in some length within the application. The reason for listing relates primarily to the central core of the building, which dates from the 18th century. The focus of this application is the open arcade to the western end, which was built in the 1930's.

The proposal is to enclose the open arcade, creating additional accommodation for a tourist information office. In order to facilitate disabled access a ramp and steps are provided.

Key to our advice to local authorities is the requirement of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 in Section 66(1) for the local authority to "have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of architectural or historic interest which it possesses". When considering the current proposals, in line with Para 129 of the NPPF, the significance of the asset's setting requires consideration. Para 132 states that in considering the impact of proposed development clear and convincing justification is needed if there is loss or harm.

The open arcades do not make a substantial contribution to the significance to the main building, as they are relatively modern and rather utilitarian in design. On this basis their enclosure is not opposed. What we did discuss during pre application discussions, at some length, was whether access could be provided by new structures that would add to the architectural significance of the building rather than being simple functional accretions. We note the points raised by Building Control and the difficulties raised by Highways that suggest that these options are not achievable. We feel that these issues could be overcome, and would be pleased to discuss this in negotiations continued, however whilst not the best solution the one currently put forward is acceptable. If the council is minded to approve the current application we recommend that conditions be applied to control:

- The detailed design of the handrails, at a scale of 1:10. A timber handrail should be specified.
- Samples of Brick and Pennant stone should be agreed on site prior to commencement .
- A 1 metre section of wall and paving shall be made available on site for agreement, in writing.
- Details of the new internal door are required at an appropriate scale, to be agreed with the conservation officer.
- Colour contrasting nosing's should be omitted in favour of a more sensitive solution, to be agreed.
- A detail should be submitted to illustrate how the new brickwork will be differentiated from the historic elements.

#### Recommendation

We urge you to address the above issues, and recommend that this application be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance, and on the basis of your expert conservation advice. It is not necessary for us to be consulted again.

#### Representations

None received.

#### PLANNING POLICIES

NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework,  
CP8 - CP 8 ENVIRONMENT,  
DM1 - TD CORE STRATEGY - GENERAL REQUIREMENTS,  
EN23 - TDBCLP - Areas of High Archaeological Potential,

## **LOCAL FINANCE CONSIDERATIONS**

There is no CIL liability with the proposal.

The development of this site would not result in payment to the Council of the New Homes Bonus.

## **DETERMINING ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS**

The main issue with the scheme for the ramped access is the impact on the setting of the listed building. Applications for planning permission affecting a listed building or its setting must be determined in accordance with Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This requires that "In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the Local Planning Authority...shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses".

The ramp is proposed to the western side of the building and impacts on the western arcade which dates from the 1930's. English Heritage do not consider that the arcades make a substantial contribution to the significance of the main building and would prefer to see an access that would add to the architectural significance of the building. However they agree that the current proposal is acceptable. The Conservation Officer has also looked at the scheme and considered the revised details to be acceptable. A number of conditions are recommended to ensure the appropriate detailing is secured as part of the works.

The access ramp would lie within the adopted highway and the Highway Authority advise that this will require the stopping up of the highway which should be carried out before works commence. There is no objection to the scheme as such and as there is separate legislation in respect of the highway it is not considered necessary to condition the stopping up.

The proposal is not considered to harm the setting of the listed building and is considered to accord with Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and so the recommendation is for permission.

**In preparing this report the Planning Officer has considered fully the implications and requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998.**

**CONTACT OFFICER: Mr G Clifford Tel: 01823 356398**