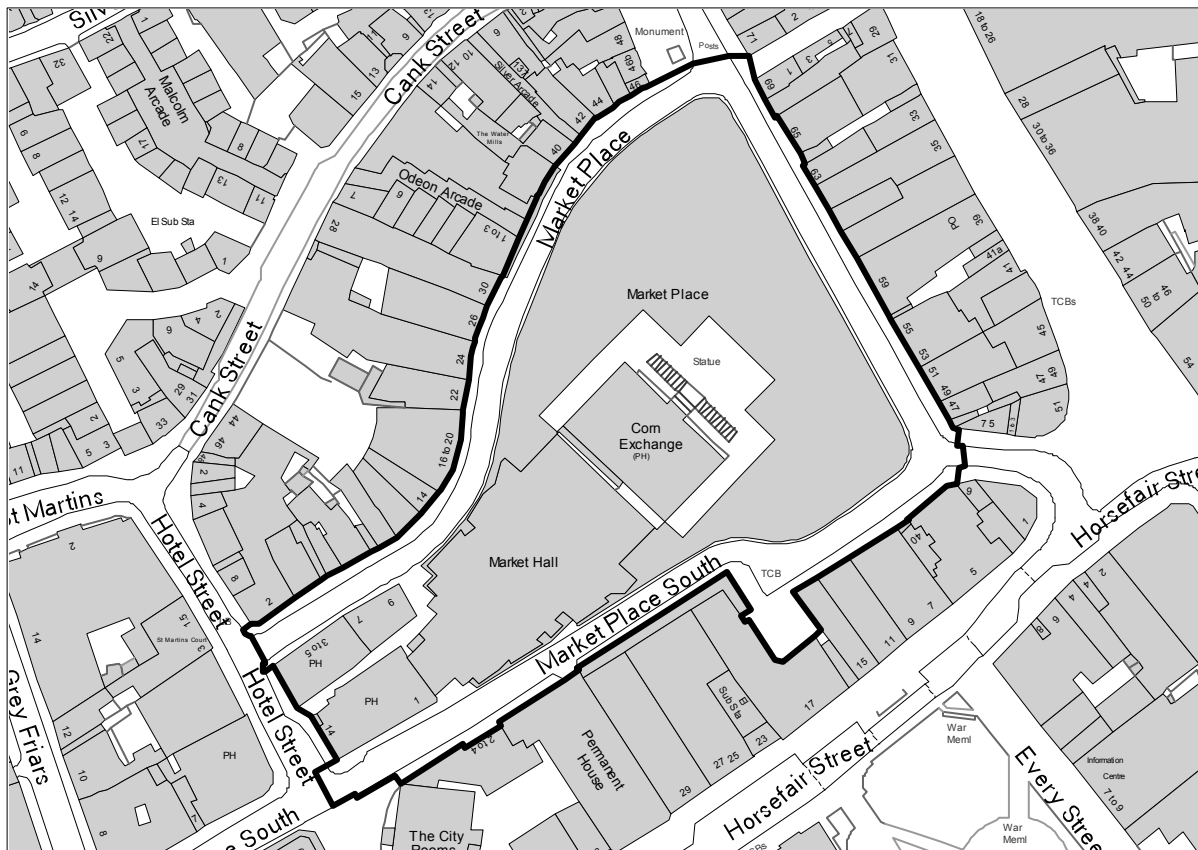


Recommendation: Conditional approval	
20140070	MARKET PLACE, CORN EXCHANGE
Proposal:	REMOVAL OF ANCILLARY CONSTRUCTIONS, REFURBISHMENT OF FACADE AND THREE STOREY EXTENSION AT REAR OF CORN EXCHANGE (CLASS A3); PUBLIC REALM WORKS
Applicant:	LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL
App type:	Operational development - full application
Status:	Smallscale Major Development
Expiry Date:	25 April 2014
AP	WARD: Castle



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SUMMARY

- This is a joint report with application 20140071 for internal and external alterations to the Grade II* Listed Corn Exchange.

- The proposals are part of a wider masterplan for the regeneration of the market area.
- The sites are within the Market Place Conservation Area. Main considerations relate to the effects of the proposals on the character, appearance and setting of the conservation area and the listed buildings.
- The applications are recommended for approval.

Introduction

The Market Masterplan is part of the Connecting Leicester project and aims to reintegrate and invigorate the market place within the city centre connecting the different destinations and routes.

The market place has a strong role to play in removing barriers and making connections. The proposals within the masterplan and the investment into the area will provide new facilities for trading, stands to transform the perception of the area, providing the city with dynamic new public realm and highlighting the importance of the market as an economic and social entity.

The Corn Exchange is a Grade II* Listed Building in the centre of the Market Place Conservation Area. The building is a large two-storey building in stuccoed brick with a slate hipped roof.

Background

Other planning approvals related to the market place regeneration:

20130508 – consent granted June 2013 for the demolition of the indoor market within Market Place conservation area.

20130510 – consent granted May 2013 for new food hall (Class A1).

20130511 – consent granted June 2013 for external alterations to the Grade II* Listed Building the Corn Exchange.

20130929 – consent granted July 2013 for change of use of 16 – 20 Market Place from shop (Class A1) to storage (Class B8) and/or retail (Class A1); first floor extension at rear; alterations to shop front.

20130930 – consent granted July 2013 for change of use of part of ground floor of 2-4 Market Place South from office (Class B1) to public toilets (no use class); ventilation extract on roof at rear; external alterations.

20130931 – consent granted September 2013 for 2-4 Market Place South for internal and external alterations to Grade II Listed Building.

20130932 – consent granted July 2013 for Market Place for lockable trading units; extension to café.

The Proposal

These applications form the second phase of the Market Masterplan.

20140070 – proposes to remove the existing brick walls that bridge between the Corn Exchange and the indoor market and hides the area at the rear of the Corn Exchange that houses flues, air conditioning units, pipework and other unsightly

constructions. These are also to be removed and this elevation of the Corn Exchange will be reinstated and refurbished.

Also proposed is a three storey extension to the rear of the Corn Exchange. The extension will provide a service corridor between the existing building and the new. This will allow the new building to stand approximately 2.5m from the face of the listed building. On the ground floor will be lifts down to the retained basement of the old indoor market, this will be predominantly used for market storage. There will also be a disabled toilet and changing places facility, a café/restaurant and stair/lift access to the upper floors.

The first floor will have a café/restaurant and stair lift access. The second floor will include a large terrace area and a glazed pavilion which will give access back to the upper floor of the Corn Exchange.

Also within this application are the public realm works to reinstate the public square once the indoor market is demolished. The works will include the full length of Market Place and Market Place South and Dolphin Square by Lloyds Bank.

20140071 – proposes the required internal and external alterations required to the Grade II* listed Corn Exchange.

The applications are accompanied by a detailed Design and Access Statement which includes the masterplan for the Market Place and a Heritage Statement.

Policy Considerations

Development plan policies relevant to this application are listed at the end of this report.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Section 12 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment. In particular paragraphs 128 – 138 and 140.

Consultations

English Heritage (EH) – EH have been involved in pre-application discussions on the future of Leicester Market Place, focusing on the proposed extensions and reuse of the Corn Exchange. They support the proposals in principle, the design approach for the new extension and the restrained palette of quality materials. They suggest that the more detailed design be considered by our own in-house specialists in conservation, archaeology and urban design.

Highway Authority – no objections to proposals. Point out that the scheme should include measures to prevent accidental vehicle strikes and enable building maintenance while vehicle access to the market is maintained.

Representations

Conservation Advisory Panel – no objections.

Consideration

20140070 – Three storey extension to rear of corn exchange and public realm works

A key part of the masterplan is to create an extension to the west façade of the Corn Exchange in order to help frame the new public square and also provide the necessary access and means of escape to the top floor of the listed building which has been unused and empty for many years.

Key planning considerations are the effect on the character and setting of the Corn Exchange and other listed buildings and of the conservation area.

Effect on the setting of Listed Buildings and Character of the Conservation Area

The principle of an extension in this location is acceptable. Although the building was designed to be freestanding, historic maps demonstrate that there have always been other buildings built off the back of the Corn Exchange. The extension proposed is the closest the building will have been to the original design intention of a standalone structure.

The rear of the building is visually poor and has never been anything more than a hidden service elevation. The proposed extension will tidy up this elevation along with providing a new front to the new public space.

The design follows a similar tradition to the stair and first floor extension. It is a contemporary interpretation of the classical language used in the building. It is clearly subservient to the principle structure, and whilst allowing this to become an active, visually pleasing elevation, clearly remains a secondary elevation to the east elevation.

The stucco type finish proposed relates to the principle building and retains the clean lines, which is key to the classical character. The proportions are carefully considered to relate to the principle building as well as giving the extension its own language.

The opportunity to bring the first floor of the Corn Exchange back into use without the need to do significant internal works to the listed building to facilitate modern fire escape and access arrangements is welcomed.

The detail of the finishes needs to be carefully considered during construction to ensure that the design intent is fully realised. This includes designing in peripheral equipment such as lighting positions, cctv positions, servicing and related cabling. There is no indication of signage zones on the proposal, these should be incorporated into the design to prevent insensitive signage which disregards the design intent.

The proposed extension will provide activity to the space created by the demolition of the Market Centre. This will give the area context and frame views across the newly created space. This in turn will enhance the setting of the listed buildings creating a better context for them as the enclosure to a clearly defined space, rather than the current situation where their significance is compromised by the jumbled current treatment of the space. The predominant character currently is cluttered views which distract from the historic character of the area.

To ensure that the extension sits comfortably within the space it is essential that the construction methods and materials are of the highest quality, allowing it to complement the high quality architecture around it, particularly the listed Corn Exchange. A condition is proposed requiring agreement of these details.

The creation of a new public square is welcomed. The new public realm will provide the opportunity for the Corn Exchange to have a prominent place and allow events and activities which will help to reinstate the market place as a key destination in the city centre.

The continuation of the pallet of materials being used elsewhere in the city centre is welcomed as it will produce a coherent public realm linking the city centre. The retention and reuse of the historic granite setts when approaching Hotel Street will give a clear entrance to the new space whilst preserving and enhancing the setting of some of the important historic buildings which will form a key part of the new space.

Other considerations

The proposal for a further Class A3 use in this location is in accordance with policies as the preference is to provide these uses within the City Centre or designated district/local centres as the most accessible and sustainable locations.

The proposal will maintain and enhance the market as the heart of the retail centre and encourage the re-use and improvement of designated and other heritage assets.

The improvements to the public realm will add to the creation of the hierarchy and network of pedestrian routes and good quality civic spaces to reconnect parts of the centre.

The proposal will provide a much needed 'changing places' facility within the City Centre. This will provide for people with complex needs who require more facilities and space to accommodate themselves and their carers.

20140071 – Internal and external alterations to the Grade II* Listed Corn Exchange

The Corn Exchange requires refurbishment and the proposals to reinstate the currently disused upper floor, creating new aspects of the building, has the potential to improve the building's significance within the conservation area.

When the indoor market is demolished it will expose the south west façade of the Corn Exchange and the associated neglect that has occurred over many years. In its current condition this elevation would not be suitable to address the new public square or resolve the issues concerning access to the first floor of the Corn Exchange.

It is proposed to reinstate the detail which was continued on this façade but never exposed. The details have been damaged and destroyed over the years by intensive additions of servicing equipment and poorly constructed extensions. Addressing the neglected façade will be of benefit to both the listed building and the conservation area.

The design and access statement notes that the proposed extension has been carefully designed to respect the setting and character of the adjacent listed building. It has been designed to be structurally independent from the listed building with the glazed/louvred connection having minimal impact on the south west façade. The junction between the glazing/louvred panels and the listed building will be the same as implemented for the new food hall currently under construction.

The design is contemporary and as such is a clear modern intervention. However, to ensure that it sits comfortably within the space it is essential that the construction methods and materials are of the highest quality, allowing it to complement the high quality architecture around it.

The proposals are considered acceptable subject to further details of construction methods and materials being submitted before the proposals are commenced on site.

Conclusion

I recommend APPROVAL subject to the following conditions:

CONDITIONS

1. START WITHIN THREE YEARS
2. Before the development is begun, the materials to be used for the external elevations, including but not exclusive to, louvres, timber, stucco, glazing, balustrade, roof and the public realm works shall be submitted to and approved by the City Council as local planning authority. (In the interests of visual amenity, and in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS3.)
3. Before the development is begun, details of the type, numbers and locations of trees and street furniture, including but not exclusive to, seats, litter bins, cycle stands, bollards and lighting shall be submitted to and approved by the City Council as local planning authority. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and maintained thereafter. (In the interests of visual amenity, and in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS3.)
4. Before the development is begun, details shall be submitted to and approved by the City Council as local planning authority demonstrating that it is designed to BS 8300:2009 `Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people`, and Approved Document M of the Building Regulations, including details of suitable lift provision within the new building, design and management of the Changing Places facility and definition and management of the street cafe areas, and that it shall be constructed and maintained to those standards. The development shall be carried out in accordance with those details. (To ensure the development meets the highest standards of access and inclusion in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS3).
5. Before the development is begun details of the levels and falls of the public square shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. (To ensure the development meets the highest standards of access and inclusion in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS3).

6. TEMPORARY ARRANGEMENTS DURING BUILDING OPERATIONS

7. No construction or demolition work, other than unforeseen emergency work, shall be undertaken outside of the hours of 0730 to 1800 Monday to Friday, 0730 to 1300 Saturday or at any time on Sundays or Bank Holidays, unless the methodology has been submitted to the City Council as local planning authority. The methodology must be submitted at least 10 working days before such work commences and agreed in writing by the City Council. The City Council shall be notified of any unforeseen emergency work as soon as practical after the necessity for work has been decided by the developer or by anyone undertaking the works on the developers behalf. (In the interests of residential amenity and in accordance with Policy PS10 of the City of Leicester Local Plan)
8. Before the development is begun a scheme for the provision and implementation of a surface and foul water drainage system shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as local planning authority. The drainage works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved scheme and within the timescale that has been agreed. (To prevent the increased risk of flooding and in accordance Core Strategy policy CS02.)
9. This consent shall relate solely to the submitted plans received by the City Council as local planning authority on 14th January 2014, unless otherwise submitted to and approved by the City Council as local planning authority. (For the avoidance of doubt.)

NOTES FOR APPLICANT

1. It is unlikely that any construction or demolition work will be agreed outside of the hours detailed in condition 7 unless the City Council Noise Team is satisfied that: a) the work will not be detrimental to occupiers of neighbouring properties or; b) the developer is able to demonstrate that there is no practicable alternative to the proposed work taking place outside of these hours.

Policies relating to this recommendation

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|-----------|---|
| 2006_AM01 | Planning permission will only be granted where the needs of pedestrians and people with disabilities are incorporated into the design and routes are as direct as possible to key destinations. |
| 2006_AM02 | Planning permission will only be granted where the needs of cyclists have been incorporated into the design and new or improved cycling routes should link directly and safely to key destinations. |
| 2006_PS10 | Criteria will be used to assess planning applications which concern the amenity of existing or proposed residents. |
| 2006_R05 | Proposals for the use of premises within existing shopping centres for food and drink purposes (Use Classes A3, A4 and A5) will be permitted subject to criteria. |

- 2006_SPA05 Key City Centre uses and facilities will be required to locate on appropriate sites within the City Centre.
- 2010_CS01 The overall objective of the Core Strategy is to ensure that Leicester develops as a sustainable city, with an improved quality of life for all its citizens. The policy includes guidelines for the location of housing and other development.
- 2010_CS02 Development must mitigate and adapt to climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The policy sets out principles which provide the climate change policy context for the City.
- 2010_CS03 The Council will require high quality, well designed developments that contribute positively to the character and appearance of the local natural and built environment. The policy sets out design objectives for urban form, connections and access, public spaces, the historic environment, and 'Building for Life'.
- 2010_CS11 The Council supports a hierarchy of retail centres in Leicester. The policy sets out measures to protect and enhance retail centres as the most sustainable location for retail development.
- 2010_CS12 In recognition of the City Centre's role in the City's economy and wider regeneration, the policy sets out strategies and measures to promote its growth as a sub-regional shopping, leisure, historic and cultural destination, and the most accessible and sustainable location for main town centre uses.
- 2010_CS18 The Council will protect and seek opportunities to enhance the historic environment including the character and setting of designated and other heritage assets.