

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

ITEM NO. 13

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 5 September 2018

Wards: Battle & Caversham

App No: 181412/LBC & 181413/LBC

Address: Battle Library, 420 Oxford Road & Caversham Library, Church Street

Proposal: Listed Building consent to site a bookdrop outside the building to allow return of books and CD.s/DVD.s outside library opening hours

Applicant: Library Services, Reading Borough Council.

Date received: 10 August 2018

Minor Applications 8 week target: 5 October 2018

RECOMMENDATION for both

Delegate to officers to GRANT Listed Building Consent subject to no substantive objections being received during the consultation period.

Conditions for both to include:

- Listed building consent -three year time limit to implement
- Approved plans
- Materials to be as proposed.

With a condition added for 181412 requiring the installation of the drop box to be in accordance with the Borough's Guidance Notes for Activities on the Public Highway.

INFORMATIVES:

1. Terms and conditions

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Battle and Caversham Libraries are Grade II listed buildings owned and run by Reading Borough Council.



Battle Library

Location Plans



Caversham Library

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

2.1 The proposal is for a metal box measuring 1460mm high, 965mm wide and 1,194mm deep. Inside will be a trolley to hold the returned books. The drop box is

proposed to be sited to the right of the main door in both cases. At Battle Library this will be on the public footpath but at Caversham Library this will be within the front yard area.



Battle Library



Caversham Library

2.2 The proposed finishing colour will either be blue or bronze with instructions attached on how to use it. The drop box will allow customers to return borrowed items when the library is closed.

2.3 The drop boxes are being installed at libraries in the Borough with the benefit of permitted development as set out in Part 12 of the GDPO, which describes works that local authorities can do without the need to apply for planning permission. However, as these two libraries are listed buildings Listed Building Consent is required for the proposed structures.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

Battle Library

08/00330/FUL (080678) Works to external area and car park of the Church and neighbouring library. Granted.

08/00595/REG3 (080935) and 08/00596/LBC (080936)-Installation of a "green" roof and rendered external insulation and insertion of a new door in the existing rear extension, and construction of a terrace at the rear of the building. Granted.

171275/LBC & 171279/REG3 Listed Building consent and planning consent for single storey rear extension, internal alterations and external suspended deck. Granted.

Caversham Library

01/00165/REG3 - Alteration to external layout. Removal of concrete steps and block paving, replacing with Yorkstone. New boundary wall, railings and pillars to match original(1907). New tree and shrub planting - Granted

01/00166/LBC - Alteration to external surfaces, steps and boundary walls. Replacement of existing concrete paving and steps with Yorkstone. Restoration of boundary brick walls, pillars and railings to original design (1904). Granted.

10/00457/ADV - Bus shelter advertisement - Refused

12/00986/ADV - Historical information sign fixed to the railings - Granted.

4. CONSULTATIONS

(i) Statutory consultation

Historic England

This application should be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance, and on the basis of your specialist conservation advice.

(ii) Non-statutory consultation

Transport

There are no transport objections subject to the requested condition being attached. The proposed location of the drop box would not present an obstruction to users of the pedestrian path. However in the case of Battle Library it's installation should be in accordance with the Borough's Guidance Notes for Activities on the Public Highway and it is standard practice that this should be covered by condition.

Historic Buildings Consultant

The proposed book drop boxes would be sited close to the front door but given its small size would not result in the loss of any features of special interest.

The proposed works are not considered to harm any features of architectural or historic interest and are considered to aid the continued use of the buildings in their original function as Libraries. There are therefore no objections to the proposed boxes.

(iii) Public/local consultation and comments received

Immediate neighbours were consulted, site notices were displayed and articles appeared in the local paper. The deadline for comments falls after this Committee (10 September 2018) so officers are seeking delegated authority to grant Listed Building Consent following the end of the consultation period subject to no substantive objections being submitted (see para. 5.2 below).

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.1 Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.

5.2 Under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Regulations 1992 the Council was unable to determine its own applications for listed building consent and, if Committee was minded to grant permission, the listed building application was referred to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for permission to make the decision. However, the Notification to Historic England and National Amenities Societies and the Secretary of State (England) Direction 2015, came into force on 15 April, 2015, and it applies to any application submitted on or after 15th April, 2015. The Direction defines that applications should only be referred to the Secretary of State, if an objection has been received from Historic England or a National Amenity Society.

5.3 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2018. The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National

National Planning Policy Framework
National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2008, 2015)

CS7 Design and the public realm
CS33 Protection and enhancement of the historic environment

6. APPRAISAL

6.1 The main issues for these proposals are:

- (i) Effects on the historic values and character of listed building;
- (ii) Appearance and Design

These are considered below in turn:

(i) Effects on the historic values and character of listed building

6.2 The proposed small boxes would result in minimal harm to the character and appearance of the Listed Buildings.

6.3 Subject to the boxes being required by condition to appear as proposed the Listed Buildings should be adequately protected in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS33.

(ii) Appearance and design

6.4 The scale and design of the proposed book drop boxes are considered to be neutral in terms of their appearance as additions to these buildings and therefore there is no conflict with Core Strategy policy CS7.

Other matters

Equality

6.5 In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the current application) that the protected groups would have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 Overall, the proposed book drop boxes are considered to comply with the relevant policies and will not significantly detract from the appearance or character of these listed buildings. The recommendation is to grant Listed Building consent.

Case Officer: Julie Williams & Tom French



