

Heritage Impact Assessment

Saltash Library

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

Atlantic building consultants have been engaged by Saltash Town Council, owners and caretakers of Saltash Library. Instructions have been received to prepare a heritage impact assessment which will be used to accompany a planning and listed building consent application. The application relates to the grade II listed Saltash Library and the following works are proposed:

Replacement of existing curtain walling, windows and doors with new aluminium framed units, internal refurbishment to remove existing Reception and Office spaces to provide an open plan multi-use functional space, upgrade of existing WC facilities and provision of an Accessible WC, associated works to replace finishes and renew internal decoration.

The designs and application will be prepared and submitted by Bailey Partnership. This document should therefore be read in conjunction with the associated details and plans submitted with the application.

1.2 Aims & Objectives

The report has been prepared in accordance with *2021 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*. More specifically, section 16 has been closely referenced, which relates to conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Reference has also been made to the document *Historic England: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment*, July 2015.

The aim of this document is to bring together guidance from various sources to deliver a concise and impartial assessment on the potential impact the proposed development has on the heritage asset at Saltash Library. In order to achieve this, the report aims to:

- Investigate and outline the historical and cultural significance of the building and its wider physical context.
- Investigate and outline the physical status of the building and site.
- Outline and describe the proposed development works.
- Assess the impact of the proposed development works on the significance of the heritage asset and seek to justify where necessary.

1.3 Extent

The extent of the report is limited to the extent of the proposed works. This includes replacement of existing curtain walling, windows and doors with new aluminium framed units, internal refurbishment to remove existing Reception and Office spaces to provide an open plan multi-use functional space, upgrade of existing WC facilities and provision of an Accessible WC, associated works to replace finishes and renew internal decoration. The proposals are outlined in more detail within section 4.0.

2.0 Significance

2.1 Grade II Listed

Saltash Library is a grade II listed building and the listing is dated 17th February 2021. The list entry notes the following details:

Summary of Building

Public library, 1961-1963, Royston Summers of Cornwall County Council Architect's Department under FK Hicklin.

Reasons for Designation

Saltash Library, designed in 1961 by Royston Summers of the County Architect's Department under FK Hicklin, and opened in 1963, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

*Architectural interest: * as a striking and well-articulated example of post-war library design; * it is an accomplished early-career design by Royston Summers; * as a significant example within the public buildings designed by the County Architect's Department under FK Hicklin from 1959-1966; * for its place within the architectural styles of the time, particularly its reference to Le Corbusier's Palace of Justice at Chandigarh; * for its use of different-textured concrete, possibly produced using china-clay waste from around St Austell, designed to harmonise with the Cornish landscape.*

*Historic interest: * as one of a group of five new libraries planned by the local authority to enhance public services in the county.*

History

The first library in Saltash under the County Council's free branch library scheme was formed in 1926 and was housed in the YMCA, moving to North Road School in 1931 and then the school room at the Church of St Nicholas and St Faith. In 1949 the library moved to Church House, and had an annual issue of around 5,000 books (significantly less than at Torpoint which had both a smaller library and smaller population). However, aligned with the opening of the Tamar road bridge in October 1961, and with the Saltash population rising as a consequence, local residents began calling out for a new library, stating that not only did the children's library need updating but that the service should offer value for money, reflecting a recent rise in rates.

In 1963 a new Civic Centre scheme for the Longstone area of Saltash was announced, and a new branch of the Cornwall County Library was the first part of the scheme to be progressed. Alongside the library, the scheme was to comprise a new guildhall, police station, county health clinic, council offices and council chamber. The library was to house up to 15,000 books (including 1,000 for children, and a 750-volume student library) and apart from staff rooms and toilets, was designed as one open space with a double-height reading room. An outdoor reading area was also to be provided. The design of the library and the guildhall was intended

to produce buildings of monumental, civic scale and dominate the scheme, forming its principal unifying axis. Access across the scheme was carefully planned, with a 'family feel' around the library, and pedestrian access across a bridge over a pool at the front. The library was eventually the only part of the Civic Centre scheme to be constructed.

The colours and materials used on the exterior of the library were designed to harmonise with the Cornish landscape: pale-grey concrete and white, rough rendering. Inside it was warm and inviting, including richly coloured fabrics for the chairs and Nigerian walnut for shelves, tables and balustrades. The 'butterfly' design of the roof was also a noted feature. Saltash Library was one of a series of five new branch libraries to be built by the council in the 1960s (the others were at St Austell, Newquay, Torpoint, and Helston) all designed by the County Architect's Department under FK Hicklin, who recruited newly-qualified architects as job architects – at Saltash he was joined by Royston Summers. The new library was opened on 10 December 1963 by the Chairman of Cornwall County Council, Alderman KG Foster. It was built by S Carthew & Sons of Downton and on opening had cost £20,000.

A single-storey extension was built on the rear in 1992 (excluded from the listing). Ownership was passed from the County Council to Saltash Town Council in 2019; the library remains in use.

Details

Public library, 1961-1963, Royston Summers of Cornwall County Council Architect's Department under FK Hicklin.

MATERIALS: reinforced-concrete frame construction with shuttered, rendered and rough-cast finishes. Slim-profile aluminium framed windows. Internally some original Nigerian walnut joinery survives.

PLAN: the library is rectangular in plan and orientated facing west, with the north and south elevations slightly cranked inwards. Service rooms lie to the south and there is a mezzanine gallery to the east.

EXTERIOR: the library is designed in a Brutalist style, based on the proportions of the human figure of Le Corbusier's modular system. It references Le Corbusier's Palace of Justice at Chandigarh (completed in 1956). The butterfly (or Y-shaped) roof has deep convex eaves which rise higher at the front. The principal double-height elevation faces west, and has aluminium framed, full-height glazing set back from the building line. The glazing is visually divided by slender shuttered-concrete piers, dividing the elevation into five irregular bays, with fin-like protruding end walls north and south finished with rough-cast concrete. The two piers to the north are oval in section and stand like columns separate from the front elevation. The entrance bay lies off-centre, flanked by flat-section concrete piers and a canopy. To the right again is the staircase bay and the southernmost bay has a high-level horizontal window; the wall here is rendered. The vertical elements rise to the upward-sweeping canopy of the roof, which has a white painted finish underneath. The window glazing system on the front elevation is a regular, alternating pattern of vertical rows of squares and rectangles; the

entrance door and its surround appear to be replacements and a further door has been inserted five bays from the left.

The north and south elevations are cranked inwards and meet slightly off-centre and below the roof valley; a full height canted window marks this meeting point on each elevation – that to the south contains a doorway. On the south elevation there is also an L-shaped window to the first floor and a horizontal window on the ground floor. The rear elevation (east) has a canopy formed by the roof and the end walls again protrude to north and south. The full-height glazing here is largely obscured by a single-storey extension (excluded from the listing), although the gallery glazing survives.

INTERIOR: the library is entered on its west side into the double-height reception area. Opposite the entrance is the mezzanine, which is supported on shuttered-concrete H-frames and cantilevered at the ends. Below the mezzanine is the main reception desk, the children's library and the original main stack area, which has an acoustic-tile ceiling. The mezzanine is accessed to the adjacent to the entrance, via a wide, dog-leg staircase with heavy Nigerian walnut balustrades. On all sides, the mezzanine has railed balustrades of the same timber; slim steel rails have been inserted and a steel railing added on top for further protection. At the far south of the building are the service rooms. All other fixtures and finishes appear to be later-C20 or C21.

Pursuant to s1 (5A) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the Act') it is declared that the extension added to the east of Saltash Library in 1992 is not of special architectural or historic interest and is excluded from the listing.

2.2 Historic Maps

The historic footprint of the buildings and site at Saltash Library can be partially determined by viewing historic maps, using map regression in order to assess the historic developmental phases of the site.



Fig 1: 1841 Tithe Map



Fig 2: 1938 Ordnance Survey Map



Fig 3: 1953 Ordnance Survey Map



Fig 4: Modern Satellite Image

The 1841 tithe map in figure 1 shows the site as an agricultural field. The associated apportionment describes a landowner Thomas Edwards and occupier William Francis Bennett. Various late C19 and early C20 developments followed to the north and south of the site, which are shown in the 1938 ordnance survey map (figure 2). This includes the sports ground to the southwest, which still remains today.

The 1953 ordnance survey map (figure 3) shows the commencement of post war institutional development around the site, with the school building constructed to the south. Saltash Library is known to have followed in 1963, with further buildings having been added during the latter part of the 20th century and all shown in the modern satellite image (figure 4).

2.3 Photographs

Viewing historic photographs also allows an interpretation of the building's history and development. The 1960s photographs in figures 6, 7 and 8 show the principal elevations of the building with the original window configurations. Figure 7 shows the original entrance doors to the west elevation with an asymmetric glazed screen over the principal entrance. The glazed panelling over the majority of the elevation has retained its original configuration, although it appears that the glass has been replaced with double glazing since original construction as discussed in section 3.1. The panelling over the principal entrance has been replaced with a symmetrical glazed screen including a Cornwall Council etched logo. The principal entrance door has also been replaced with a modern glazed fitting within a powder coated aluminium frame. Elsewhere at the southwest corner, steel Crittall windows appear to the office and store areas which are still in place. The full height canted bays dividing the north and south elevations can be seen in their existing configurations, presumably with original single glazing throughout.

Internal photographs in figures 9 and 10 show primarily an open plan arrangement to the library ground floor, with shuttered concrete columns and the staircase leading to the mezzanine gallery. The interview room inserted to the centre of the floor does not appear. The hardwood balustrading also remains in place and again the glazed screens and windows are viewed internally and show matching configurations to those existing. Figure 11 shows the rear extension during construction.



Fig 6: 1960s photograph



Fig 7: 1960s photograph



Fig 8: 1960s photograph



Fig 9: 1960s internal photograph



Fig 10: 1960s internal photograph



Fig 11: 1990 photograph during construction

2.4 Planning History

A previous planning application was approved 15 June 2020 with the following description:

PA20/03062 - Carry out minor alterations and change of use to form coffee / tea bar on ground floor and replace aluminium glazing with uPVC double glazed units

This was submitted and approved prior to the buildings listing and could potentially be considered as an extant planning consent. However, the scheme for inserting a coffee / tea bar has since been reconsidered and the use of uPVC windows is also now considered inappropriate.

Preapplication advice from Cornwall Council has also been received for this proposal following a submission with the following description:

PA22/01121/PREAPP Pre-application advice for replacement of existing curtain walling, windows and doors with new aluminium framed units, Internal refurbishment to remove existing Reception and Office spaces to provide an open plan multi-use functional space, upgrade of existing WC facilities and provision of an Accessible WC, associated works to replace finishes and renew internal decoration.

The advice received generally focussed on the impact of the proposed works on the listed building and has been referenced closely during preparation of this document. The following excerpt includes the specific advice received from the historic environment officer:

Advice

It is proposed to replace all the current curtain walling, windows and doors with new aluminium units along with internal refurbishment to remove existing Reception and interview room space to provide an open plan multi-use functional space, upgrade of existing WC facilities and provision of an Accessible WC, associated works to replace finishes and renew internal decoration.

Replacement curtain walling, windows and doors

As with all listed buildings both older and more modern the original fenestration is often important to the character of the building. In this instance the architecture and design of the building is the most important factor in the listing, and the reasons the building was placed on the list in 2021. This fenestration is specifically mentioned in the listing, and therefore any changes could have a detrimental impact on the building.

Having visited the site and met with the agent and members of the library committee it is understood that there is a desire to increase energy efficiency and reduce heat loss. In any Listed Building Consent application where replacement of original fenestration is proposed, we would expect to see a full condition survey of the current units carried out by an appropriate specialist or Conservation surveyor, detailing the condition of each section (ideally with photographs) with an explanation as to why the windows cannot be repaired and need

to be fully replaced. If this information can be provided and full justification is given that the units are beyond economic repair, then HEP would expect any new units to be detailed on a like for like basis in order to replicate the original characteristics. This would include frame and glazing pattern, thickness of the frames, any door or window openings or locks replicated, and the colour of the frames should be the same (which is believed to be the original grey aluminium colour). HEP would also expect that any new units proposed be single glazed. The only exception to this would be the potential use of double glazed aluminium units for the extension area only. Whilst there is a desire for greater energy efficiency, it should be noted that energy efficiency is not currently a valid justification for replacement within designated assets.

If repair and sympathetic upgrading can be investigated for example; draught- proofing and secondary glazing, and a whole building approach to energy efficiency of the building should be explored - there are likely to be less visually damaging ways of improving the thermal efficiency of the building. Guidance on such measures is provided via the following links;

Cornwall Council guidance on Energy Conservation in Historic Buildings;
<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/conservation-and-planning/technical-conservation-advice-and-guidance/#energy>

Historic England guidance on Traditional windows: their care, repair and upgrading
<https://www.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/traditional-windows-care-repair-upgrading/>

Draft-proofing windows and doors;
<http://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/eehb-draught-proofing-windows-doors/>

Secondary glazing
<http://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/eehb-secondary-glazing-windows/>

This assessment would also need to discuss the impact of the proposed changes on the character and significance of this building.

Internal alterations

The internal area of the library is also included within the listing, and specific features are mentioned. Having visited the library, it does need a bit of light refurbishment internally. It goes without saying that all the original elements, fixtures and fittings should be retained, unless there is clear and convincing justification for their removal.

Having reviewed the proposals, it appears unlikely that any internal alterations would have an adverse impact on the remaining original features of the building such as the staircase and mezzanine. The removal of the modern central reception area and interview room would be welcomed as it would return the library to its original open plan proportions.

The proposal to create a new public toilet area in existing staff toilet and kitchen area is unlikely to harm the building as original openings are to be retained and used for the access to the new toilets. There appears to be some original cupboards within this area and these should be retained.

It is likely to be necessary to update services and it is advised that existing runs of cabling/pipework are utilised. Details of this work should be included in any forthcoming application.

3.0 Pre-Development Description & Analysis

The library is known to have been constructed between 1961 and 1963 following designs prepared by Royston Summers of the county architects department. A detailed description of the architecture and significance are provided within the list entry description in section 2.1. This is considered to provide a thorough and useful assessment of the buildings' existing status. It is therefore not considered necessary to provide an additional general description of the building within this section, although further specific details are provided.

3.1 Full Height Glazed Curtain Walling

The glazed curtain walling to the principal elevations is formed with slender aluminium frames inserted between vertical steel columns and shuttered concrete piers. The glazed screens are primarily double glazed, and it appears that slim line double glazed panels have been inserted to most of the original windows, presumably in the latter part of the 20th century. This has been achieved by removing the L section aluminium beading and either cutting down or replacing with lower profile beading. The reduced beading then accommodates the slightly thicker, slim line double-glazed units, which are held in place with a mixture of putties, mastics, resins and mechanical fixings. The fixtures are heavily degraded and prone to draughts, with many of the double-glazed units misted over.

There are several opening windows including centre pivot casements at high level on the west elevation controlled by a cable winding system. There are also low level top hung casements to the west screen and a single centre hinged casement to the north bay. The hinges, catches and winding systems are all largely defective.

It is noted that the glazed canted bays to the north and south have external beading whereas the principal fenestration to the west has internal beading. This has presumably occurred due to difficulties in inserting the glazing internally within the bay window during construction.

A further description of specific windows and doors is provided in the schedule of condition included with this application.

3.2 Doors

The principal entrance door and screen over were presumably replaced by Cornwall Council during construction of the rear east extension, when the full height glazed fenestration to the entire east elevation was also removed. These are formed in powder coated aluminium with single glazing.

There are further entrance doors to the centre of the west glazed screening and to the south canted bay. These are believed to be original fixtures, although again the original glazing has been replaced with slim line double glazed units, by altering the depth of the beading in the same way as described in section 3.1.

3.3 Steel Crittall

Steel crittall windows are installed within deep external reveals to the office and store areas at the southwest and north west corners of the building. These are painted white and have asymmetrically configured mullions and single glazing. The steel crittall windows appear to have retained their original appearance and painted colour when viewing the 1960s photographs in section 2.3, although sadly have become somewhat degraded with age.

Again, further details are provided in the associated sections of the schedule of condition

3.4 Interior

Internally the surfaces are a mixture of painted shuttered concrete and plastered masonry. A mezzanine floor is supported by the shuttered concrete frame and includes Nigerian oak balustrading providing edge protection. The height of the balustrading has been extended with a horizontal rail placed on top and infills with modern softwood planks to improve safety standards for edge protection.

A meeting room has been added within the principal floor area of the library using stud and plasterboard with modern glazed screens and timber doors. This is understood to have been added in the latter part of the C20 and has simply been inserted within concrete columns and beams without significant disturbance to the original structure.

3.5 Extension

The extension to the rear or east is understood to have been added in 1992 by Cornwall Council and has a mono pitched deep section roof covered in a modern felt. Windows are formed in powder coated aluminium with double glazing and include clerestory lights around the perimeter of the extension with roughcast rendered masonry walls providing a reasonable match to the existing building. Construction of the extension has included replacement of the eastern fenestration at high level powder coated aluminium frames and double-glazed units to match the new windows to the extension. The extension is specifically excluded from the grade II listing.

4.0 Proposed Works Description and Impact Assessment

4.1 Replace existing curtain walling with new aluminium framed units

The remaining original aluminium window frames and doors have been described in detail within the attached schedule of condition. The majority of these have been altered at some point in the latter part of the 20th century, to allow insertion of slim line double glazing.

Opening windows have largely seized which makes ventilation of the building difficult, particularly problematic during hotter summer months. Furthermore, the windows are draughty and many of the double-glazed units have misted over due to breaking down of the edge seals. This would be expected due to the light-weight nature of the original aluminium framing leading to flex in the glass, which in turn will accelerate degradation of the double-glazing seals.

It has been proposed that the windows and doors will be replaced with modern powder coated aluminium double-glazed units to match those to the rear extension. These would be inserted between the existing vertical steel columns which are set into the shuttered concrete structure. The replacement units will provide greater rigidity than the existing fittings and will therefore tolerate wind loading imposed to the building. The proposed double glazing is therefore less likely to prematurely mist, as has been the case with the existing fittings.

It is considered essential that the replacement fenestration exactly matches the existing layouts, with all transoms, mullions and opening units replaced in the same locations. It is also proposed that a winding mechanism to high level windows will be provided to replicate the existing system. This has been achieved to the high-level east gallery windows when the extension was constructed and a similar mechanism would be considered appropriate.

It is suggested that the glazed screen over the principal entrance should be replaced with an off-centre asymmetric mullion to match the original configuration, which was lost when the Cornwall Council screen was added in the 1990s.

Replacement of the original windows could potentially impact on the heritage of the listed building. Pre-application advice has been received which indicates that any replacement windows would need to be single glazed. This is considered contrary to the existing configuration where the majority of the windows have been replaced with double glazed units during the latter part of the 20th century. Replacement with double glazing is considered to be part of the buildings historical development and was presumably undertaken to improve thermal performance and reduce heating bills. To remove existing double glazing and replace with single glazing is considered to go against the grain of the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) and policy 1 of the *Cornwall Local Plan Strategic Policies 2010 – 2030*, which call for a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

The *Cornwall Local Plan Strategic Policies 2010 – 2030*, Policy 24, paragraphs 2.171 also indicated that decisions should be informed by *the positive contribution both conservation and well-informed new design can make to **sustainability** and local character and distinctiveness*.

Whilst it is considered important that replacement fenestration matches the existing as close as practical, it must be remembered that the aim of historic building conservation is not necessarily to restore original fabric which has been lost during the buildings' lifecycle.

The original windows have become damaged and past alterations have rendered them unsuitable for retention, making replacement an essential part of the buildings' cyclical maintenance. Like for like materials are not available and bespoke reproduction would be far beyond be economically viable.

The proposed curtain wall replacement is considered to be an intervention which upgrades the fabric in a way which respects the heritage and allows for enjoyment by future generations. Furthermore, double glazed units were in place at the time when the building was listed in 2021 and therefore should be considered to form part of the listed buildings historic integrity.

Various documents have been referenced in the preapplication advice, although these generally relate to domestic settings and traditional historic timber sash windows. The situation here is considered somewhat unique relating to a post war building, and conventional conservation philosophy does not necessarily apply.

Alterations to fenestration undertaken by Cornwall Council in the 1990s where the principal entrance door and screen above were replaced are considered to negatively impact on the integrity of the heritage asset. It is therefore proposed that the asymmetric vertical mullion arrangement over the principal entrance is restored, and the modern screen replaced as part of the overall project. This is considered to provide a desirable upgrade and will protect the integrity of the original architecture.

4.2 Replace steel crittall windows

Steel Crittall windows to the southwest corner of the building are also beginning to degrade and in many cases are seized shut. Again, it is considered essential that these are replaced as part of cyclical maintenance to the building.

Proposals have been discussed to replace with powder coated aluminium to match the curtain walling specification. However, this is considered inappropriate in this context. Aluminium windows would differ in appearance and finish to the original steel crittall windows and would potentially impact negatively on the heritage asset.

Modern steel crittall windows are still available from the original manufacturer and can be made with modern glazing but retaining the original slender framed appearance. It is recommended that the steel crittall windows at Saltash Library are replaced with modern crittall windows specified with double glazing and in a configuration to match existing.

It should be noted that conventional conservation philosophy would look to protect historic glass, with imperfections in the historic glazing leading to a less uniform reflectance and thus contributing to the significance of historic windows. In this case the single glazing is formed

with modern float glass, which would give a uniform reflectance. The impact of changing from single to double glazed crittall windows is therefore considered minimal in this case.

The existing steel crittall windows are painted white, which appears to match the situation in the 1960s photographs discussed in section 2.3. Pre-application advice has asked that replacement windows are coloured grey to match the main fenestration. However, it is assumed that this would not apply to the steel crittall windows, and white paint would be specified for replacements.

It is noted that the windows are set deep within the reveals and this configuration will be followed in the replacement windows to ensure that the shadows and deep-set appearance is retained. The fenestration layouts and arrangements will also be replicated.

The replacement of existing steel Crittall windows with modern Crittall windows is considered an appropriate maintenance intervention and will have minimal impact of the heritage asset.

4.3 Remove internal partitions

It is proposed that the existing reception and officer area in the centre of the library will be removed. This has become a redundant space and a preference towards the original open plan layout has been put forward by the buildings' caretakers.

Removal of the partitioning is considered straightforward as this has simply been inserted against the original cast concrete structural beams and columns. Taking away these facilities will return the building to its original intended layout and is generally considered to improve the overall integrity of the heritage asset. The impact is therefore considered positive with no further justification necessary.

4.4 Install Accessible WC

It is also proposed that a disabled WC will be added at ground floor level within an existing storeroom. This is considered essential to provide accessible services to all building users as part of the buildings ongoing evolution and development.

Insertion of the WC will have potential to impact the heritage, particularly the external window on the south elevation where an additional mullion will be required. However given the recommendations to replace the window in section 4.2, this is considered achievable. Placement of the mullion could be lined up with that to the window above to give a deliberate legibility to this intervention on the side elevation. An extractor fan will presumably be necessary, and the location of any outlet will require careful consideration.

Internal alterations are generally invited within the pre-application advice and are considered appropriate interventions on the heritage asset.

5.0 Conclusion

This heritage impact assessment has been developed to aid the design process with the aim that minimal intervention is made on the grade II listed building at Saltash Library, whilst upgrading the building to ensure a viable and sustainable ongoing use for the heritage asset. Recommendations have been made within the heritage consultation process, which has included a preapplication enquiry. The purpose of the consultation is to ensure that the listed building is afforded an appropriate degree of protection. Some level of compromise has however been found essential to deliver a viable outcome.

The building at Saltash Library represents high-quality post-war architecture with a brutalist design, inspired by Le Corbusier. The principal features of the design are the iconic concrete butterfly roof and overall layout and design of the fenestration in relation to the rough cast rendered and shuttered concrete walls and columns.

The aluminium and steel Crittall windows made use of materials available at the time. In many cases these aluminium windows have been crudely upgraded during the latter part of the 20th century, to take into account evolution of building materials and improvements in thermal performance. The attempt to thermally upgrade the building in the latter part of the 20th century has damaged the existing fenestration and weakened the frames leaving double glazed units vulnerable to premature misting over.

As part of cyclical maintenance to the building, it is considered essential that the window fittings are renewed. This provides an opportunity to further improve the buildings overall performance. With careful design this is considered possible with minimal disturbance to the integrity of the heritage asset.

Replacement or curtain walling with aluminium framed single glazing has been suggested within preapplication conservation advice. At this stage, this proposal would be considered a downgrade and poorly advised with the current need to reduce carbon emissions and generally upgrade energy efficiency. The provision of double-glazed units within powder coated aluminium frames is therefore considered an appropriate upgrade to ensure the buildings ongoing viability. The use of aluminium is considered a matching material, and a grey colour is recommended to closely match the existing appearance. It is however extremely important that the original fenestration is followed, including all opening configurations and a return to the original asymmetric window layout over the principal entrance.

Replacement of the steel Crittall windows with modern double-glazed crittall windows has also been recommended, and is considered the most appropriate means to cyclically maintain the building, whilst facilitating and upgrade in performance.

An extant planning consent remains for replacement of all windows with uPVC. This would be a highly economically efficient alternative to the proposed powder coated aluminium, and at the same time extremely damaging to the building's heritage. Fortunately, there is currently no intention to proceed with this scheme, which was approved prior to the building becoming a designated heritage asset.

Further internal proposals are generally considered to impact positively on the heritage asset, with removal of clutter and return to an original open plan layout. The addition of accessible facilities will also open the building to a wider range of users.

The proposed schemes are generally considered to provide a desirable improvement on the building as a whole and will ensure the viability and protection of the heritage asset moving forward. Above all these proposals are considered to accord with paragraph 7 of the NPPF. The designs will meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

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