

DELEGATED

**AGENDA NO
PLANNING COMMITTEE**

8th November 2023

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF FINANCE,
DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESS SERVICES**

23/1341/LBC

Preston Park, Preston Hall Museum , Yarm Road, Eaglescliffe

Listed Building Consent for proposed extension to museum building and other associated works.

Expiry Date 22 September 2023

SUMMARY

The application seeks listed building consent for an extension to the existing museum building and other associated works at Preston Hall Museum.

The proposed development would enhance the existing offer and experience for visitors to Preston Park Museum by providing new space which allows the museum to display a more significant proportion of its collection and accommodate touring exhibitions. The proposal would enhance the enhance the visitor experience for both local residents and tourists from further afield and, in turn, strengthen the attraction's local distinctiveness and unique history.

It has been demonstrated that the development would generate a range of significant benefits. These include the ability to accommodate national touring exhibitions, creating unique open collection stores, enhancing the overall visitor experience, creating additional opportunities for adult and school learning, and generating new jobs through both the operational and construction phases. The proposed expansion will also give greater opportunities for visitors to explore and understand the importance of Stockton's history and aims to transform the park into a cohesive attraction for visitors to enjoy its rich heritage.

Overall, it is considered that the development comprises sustainable development, when considered in the context of the NPPF when taken as a whole. Furthermore, whilst the development would result in harm to the setting of the existing Grade II listed Preston Hall, this is considered to be less than substantial, which would be outweighed by the public benefits of the scheme.

The application is recommended for approval with conditions as set out in the committee report below.

RECOMMENDATION

That planning application 23/1341/LBC be approved subject to the following conditions and informatives;

Time Limit

- 01 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of Three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: By virtue of the provision of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

Approved Plans

- 02 The development hereby approved shall be in accordance with the following approved plan(s);

Plan Reference Number	Date Received
NE8703-RYD-E-ZZ-DR-A-3711-S2-P1	17 July 2023
NE8703-RYD-E-ZZ-DR-A-3800-P6	17 July 2023
NE8703-RYD-00-XX-DR-L-2111-S2-P5	2 October 2023
NE8703-RYD-00-XX-DR-L-2101-S2-P13	2 October 2023
NE8703-RYD-00-XX-DR-L-2105-S2-P11	2 October 2023
NE8703-RYD-00-XX-DR-L-2110-S2-P9	2 October 2023
NE8703-RYD-00-XX-DR-L-2112-S2-P7	2 October 2023
NE8703-RYD-00-XX-DR-L-2130-S2-P6	2 October 2023
NE8703-RYD-00-ZZ-DR-L-2700-S2-P5	2 October 2023
NE8703-RYD-E-00-DR-A-3010-S2-P4	2 October 2023
NE8703-RYD-E-01-DR-A-3011-S2-P3	2 October 2023
NE8703-RYD-E-ZZ-DR-A-3130-S2-P3	2 October 2023
NE8703-RYD-E-ZZ-DR-A-3600-D2-P9	2 October 2023
NE8703-RYD-E-ZZ-DR-A-3710-S2-P3	2 October 2023
NE8703-RYD-00-ZZ-DR-A-4900-S3-P2	27 October 2023

Reason: To define the consent.

Making good of retained fabric

- 03 All new external works and finishes and works of making good to the retained fabric of the existing building, shall match the existing original work adjacent in respect of methods, detailed execution and finished appearance unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special architectural and historic interest and integrity of the building under Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

INFORMATIVE OF REASON FOR PLANNING APPROVAL

Informative: Working Practices

The Local Planning Authority has worked in a positive and proactive manner and sought solutions to problems arising in dealing with the planning application by seeking a revised scheme to overcome issues and by the identification and imposition of appropriate planning conditions.

BACKGROUND

1. Preston Park is one of the premier visitor attractions in the Tees Valley which attracts around 350,000 visits per annum. The site is operated by Stockton Borough Council and open to the public all year round.

2. However, the scale and nature of the main buildings at the museum are such that they are only able to display a small proportion of the Council's collection of artefacts and are not able to accommodate touring exhibitions. The facilities provided across the park, including the café, toilets and general infrastructure, are also below the standard required by a visitor attraction of this nature. There is therefore significant scope to improve the attraction, in order to enhance the range and quality of the offer and the overall visitor experience. There is also the potential to encourage more repeat visits and encourage those currently only using the wider park to visit the museum as well.
3. The Council has recently secured funding from the Governments Levelling Up Fund (LUF) to help deliver interventions across the site which would meet these objectives. The most significant of these interventions, and those which are subject to this listed building consent application, are the development of an extension to the museum itself to provide new exhibition and storage space.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

4. The application relates to Preston Hall museum, a local authority owned and operated museum situated within extensive parkland grounds. Preston Hall is a grade II listed building with 3 lodges in the grounds of the park in use as residential dwellings. Preston Park is located in the south of the Borough, to the east of the A135 Yarm Road and approximately 3.5 km to the south-west of Stockton-on-Tees Town Centre. The Park is surrounded by residential properties to the north, south and west.
5. The museum has a reconstructed Victorian Street and extensive landscaped gardens which extend to the River Tees to the east. The museum has been operating since 1953 and is owned by Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council. The application sites subject to this planning application comprise land immediately to the north-west of the museum buildings (including an orchard) and open space to the east of the south car park serving the museum.
6. To the west of the museum there is a large open green space which is surrounded by footpaths to the north and west and by an access road that connects to the Hall from the south. Further to the west there is a belt of woodland that separates the site from Yarm Road, as well as a former lodge building, which is located at the main entrance to the site.
7. The original 1825 Stockton and Darlington Railway (S&DR) line once ran along the western edge of the wider museum grounds and, whilst this stretch of the line was abandoned in 1853, the associated earthworks can still be identified. The S&DR has recently been designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument.
8. To the south of the access road there are various late-20th century developments that reflect the use of Preston Hall and its grounds as a museum and visitor attraction since the 1950s. A large surface car park lies adjacent to the road with the Butterfly World glasshouse located further to the south. To the east, there is a former aviary, with a café, children's playground and skateboard park lying between the car park and the aviary, along with a number of mature trees. Further to the south there are further areas of woodland and open space, as well as a second surface carpark.

PROPOSAL

9. Listed building consent is sought for the construction of an extension to the existing museum building.
10. A new modern extension to the existing Preston Park Museum is proposed on its north-western elevation, over two levels. This will include a new main entrance at its south-eastern corner, which leads to an internal street, enclosed by full height glazing at either end. At ground floor level, there

would be space for a number of open collection stores, as well as a new café overlooking the orchard, interactive galleries relating to the collection and toilets. Stairs would lead up to first floor level, where three separate, but inter-connected, exhibition spaces are proposed, along with further collection stores and other ancillary facilities.

11. The extension would use materials including traditional brickwork, contemporary cladding, curtain wall glazing and a single ply membrane roof. Alongside the museum extension, an extension to the existing orchard garden is proposed at the northern end of the site, in order to connect the spaces with the historic walled garden. There would also be new hard and soft landscaping around the new building, including areas of hardstanding and low-level planting, as well as improvements to the staff car parking areas.

CONSULTATIONS

12. Consultees were notified and the following comments were received.

13. **Historic Buildings Officer**

This proposal requests an extension to Preston Park Hall, an extension to the south carpark and other associated ancillary works. Preston Hall is a Grade II listed building with the original route of the Stockton to Darlington Railway running along the western edge of the grounds (recently made a Scheduled Monument).

A Heritage Impact Assessment (including supplementary report), Statement of Significance and Desk Based Assessment have been submitted in support of the application. It is considered that these documents are of sufficient quality to meet the requirements of paragraph 194 of the NPPF and Local Plan Policy HE2 part 2.

Whilst noting the benefits of the proposals to the museum and general offer to the public, it is evident that harm will be caused to the setting of the main Preston Hall and to the fabric of the associated outbuildings, and any harm should be clearly and adequately justified (NPPF 200).

The assessment of harm to the significance of the heritage assets and some justifications have been provided within the submitted documentation and updated heritage document, sufficient to meet NPPF 194. Any harm to a listed building should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal (NPPF 202).

14. **Tees Archaeology**

Response on revised information is currently awaited.

15. **Historic England**

Thank you for your letter of 09 August 2023 regarding the above application. On the basis of the information available to date, in our view you do not need to notify or consult us on this application under the relevant statutory provisions, details of which are enclosed.

If you consider that this application does fall within one of the relevant categories, or you have other reasons for seeking our advice, please contact us to discuss your request.

PUBLICITY

16. Neighbours were notified and no comments were received.

PLANNING POLICY

17. Where an adopted or approved development plan contains relevant policies, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that an application for planning permissions shall be determined in accordance with the Development Plan(s) for the area, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case the relevant Development Plan is the Stockton on Tees Borough Council Local Plan 2019.
18. Section 143 of the Localism Act came into force on the 15 January 2012 and requires the Local Planning Authority to take local finance considerations into account, this section s70(2) Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended requires in dealing with such an application the authority shall have regard to a) the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, b) any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application and c) any other material considerations.

National Planning Policy Framework

19. The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. These are economic social and environmental objectives.
20. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11) which for decision making means;
- approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
 - where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.
21. The following paragraphs of the NPPF are considered relevant to the determination of the application.

189. Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest Significance. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

194. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

195. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

197. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

199. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

200. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.

201. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

202. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

205. Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible

Local Planning Policy

22. The following planning policies are considered to be relevant to the consideration of this application.

Policy HE2 – Conserving and Enhancing Stockton's Heritage Assets

1. In order to promote and enhance local distinctiveness, the Council will support proposals which positively respond to and enhance heritage assets.
2. Where development has the potential to affect heritage asset(s) the Council require applicants to undertake an assessment that describes the significance of the asset(s) affected, including any contribution made by their setting. Appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, field evaluation will also be required where development on a site which includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest. Applicants are required to detail how the proposal has been informed by assessments undertaken.
3. Development proposals should conserve and enhance heritage assets, including their setting, in a manner appropriate to their significance. Where development will lead to harm to or loss of significance of a designated or non-designated heritage asset the proposal will be considered in accordance with Policy SD8, other relevant Development Plan policies and prevailing national planning policy.

4. The loss of a heritage asset, in whole or part, will not be permitted unless the Council are satisfied that reasonable steps to ensure new development will proceed after loss has occurred.
5. Where the significance of a heritage asset is lost (wholly or in part) the Council will require developers to record and advance the understanding of the significance of the heritage asset in a manner proportionate to the importance of the asset and impact of the proposal. Recording will be required before development commences.
6. The following are designated heritage assets:
 - a. Scheduled Monuments - Castle Hill; St. Thomas a Becket's Church, Grindon; Barwick Medieval Village; Round Hill Castle Mound and Bailey; Larberry Pastures Settlement Site; Newsham Deserted Medieval Village; Stockton Market Cross and Yarm Bridge
 - b. Registered Parks and Gardens - Ropner Park and Wynyard Park
 - c. Conservation Areas - Billingham Green; Bute Street; Cowpen Bewley; Eaglescliffe with Preston; Egglecliffe, Hartburn; Norton; Stockton Town Centre; Thornaby Green; Wolviston and Yarm
 - d. Listed Buildings
7. The Council has identified assets on a Local List, which are considered as having local heritage significance.
8. The route of the Stockton & Darlington Railway of 1825, the branch line to Yarm, and associated structures should be considered for their international interest.
9. Where the Council identifies a building, monument, ruin, site, place, area or landscape as having significance because of its heritage interest, it will be considered a heritage asset.
10. Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest that are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to policies for designated heritage assets.
11. Where archaeological remains survive, whether designated or not, there will be a presumption in favour of their preservation in-situ. The more significant the remains, the greater the presumption will be in favour of this. The necessity for preservation in-situ will result from desk-based assessment and, where necessary, field evaluation. Where in-situ preservation is not essential or feasible, a programme of archaeological works aimed at achieving preservation by record will be required.
12. Any reports prepared as part of a development scheme will be submitted for inclusion on the Historic Environment Record

Policy HE3 – Stockton & Darlington Railway

1. The Council will support development which safeguards the route of the historic Stockton & Darlington Railway of 1825, the branch line to Yarm and associated structures, and which preserves and enhances this cultural asset, its archaeological remains and setting.
2. The Council will require any proposal for development on or adjacent to the line(s) to show how the proposal has regard to the preservation of any physical remains along the route(s) and their interpretation on the ground, and otherwise respects and interprets the route(s) where those remains no longer exist.

MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

23. Sections 16, 66 and 72 of the Listed Buildings Act requires the LPA to give special consideration to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or

historic interest which it possesses and to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

24. Paragraph 194 of the framework requires that the significance of a heritage asset should be established to a level of detail proportionate to the asset's importance. A heritage assessment has been submitted with the application and it is considered that this submission meets the requirements of paragraph 194 of the NPPF and policies SD5, HE2 of the local plan enabling the significance of affected heritage assets to be appropriately understood and established to inform the decision making process.
25. The proposed extension is a two-storey structure and although the footprint and overall scale would be significant, it would read as a modern intervention and be situated to the side of Preston Hall. The glass structure proposed to connect the main part of the proposed extension to the existing ancillary buildings would be of a limited height and would allow for some visual separation between the existing buildings and the main part of the extension. The external design of the building is modern and departs from the traditional form, character and appearance of the existing buildings on the site. This is most apparent in the extensive use of glass in the external elevations and the design of the roof structure. The modern design is intended so that the extension can be read as a later addition to the 19th-century and 20th-century phases of development within the site.
26. The extension will be connected to the ancillary structures by a double height glass covered 'street' providing a lightweight adjoining structure that allows the existing façade to be appreciated separately from the proposed extension. This part of the building is the lowest lying part of the structure and sits below the ridge height of the ancillary buildings. The south facing elevation containing the proposed museum entrance will feature large areas of glass to reduce the visual impact of the building.
27. The supporting statements advise that the modern design is intended to provide a clear visual contrast that allows the original buildings and the proposed extension to be clearly read separately. A traditional design approach for an extension of this size is not considered to be appropriate given the proximity to Preston Hall. The simple, modern design of the extension ensures that the imposing exterior of the Hall remains a key focal point and can continue to be appreciated for its historic and architectural value.
28. The proposed extension would be visible in views of Preston Hall from within the grounds and would noticeably increase the amount of development within its setting, particular along the drive towards the main Hall. The supporting information advises that the extension has been located in this location to appear as a prominent feature within Preston Park as it is intended to serve as the new entrance to the museum.
29. Overall, the prominence of the proposed development will have an impact upon the setting of Preston Hall. It is intended that Preston Hall will remain the most imposing structure in views from within the grounds despite the visual impact of the extension. The simple, modern design of the proposed extension and its set back position would also slightly mitigate the impact of the proposed development as it would be clearly interpreted as a later addition when seen alongside the Hall's grand façade. In this regard, the historic and architectural significance of the Hall will continue to be appreciated, albeit in an altered setting.
30. Following consultation, the Historic Buildings Officer has advised that, whilst acknowledging the benefits of the proposals to the museum and general offer to the public, it is evident that harm will be caused to the setting of the main Preston Hall and to the fabric of the associated outbuildings. The assessment of harm to the significance of the heritage assets and some justifications have been provided within the submitted documentation and updated heritage document, sufficient to meet NPPF 194. Any harm to a listed building should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal (NPPF 202).

31. The NPPF advises at paragraph 202 that, where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. In this instance, there would be a number of public benefits.

Economic Benefits

32. The proposed extension to, and expansion of, the existing museum would supporting new employment opportunities, including the creation of temporary construction jobs in developing the museum and car park extensions, as well as new permanent jobs within the museum itself which would be accessible to the local community, which is predicted to be up to five new jobs, opportunities for artists and creative practitioners, apprenticeship schemes, work placement and volunteering by local residents.
33. The extension to the building and enhancement of the existing facility would attract an increased number of visitors to the museum, thereby increasing the spending at Preston Park, as well as the additional spending within the Borough as a result of the addition visitor numbers, including linked trips to other tourist and visitor attractions in the Borough.

Social Benefits

34. The proposed development would result in the creation of new exhibition space to host nationally significant touring exhibitions to the region, which would enhance visitor experience and access to culture. The new exhibition space would also include family-orientated activities and social interaction, which would benefit both residents and visitors to the area from further afield. The provision of open and visible museum stores, which are unique to the region, would provide visitors with the ability to access objects which have not been previously available for public viewing due to the constraints of the existing museum facilities.
35. The proposed expansion of the museum would allow for additional learning opportunities, benefitting children of school age as well as adults; and create opportunities around apprenticeship schemes, work placement and volunteering. It would also enable further growth in opportunities around community engagement and co-production of exhibitions, as well as offering a range of adult learning programmes and school curriculum-based learning.
36. The supporting Heritage Impact Assessment has provided justification for the proposals which would deliver a scheme to improve and enhance the visitor offer and experience at Preston Park. Overall, it is considered that the proposals fully accord with the requirements of Paragraph 202 of the NPPF (having regard to Section 72 of the Planning (Conservation Area and Listed Building) Act 1990 as the public benefits outweigh any potential harm which could be caused to the setting of existing heritage assets as a result of the development proposals.

CONCLUSION

37. It is recommended that the application be Approved with Conditions for the reasons specified above.

Director of Finance, Development and Business Services
Contact Officer Joanne Wood Telephone No

WARD AND WARD COUNCILLORS

Ward	Eaglescliffe East
Ward Councillor	Councillor Stefan Houghton
Ward Councillor	Councillor Jim Taylor

IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications:

Environmental Implications:

Human Rights Implications:

The provisions of the European Convention of Human Rights 1950 have been taken into account in the preparation of this report.

Community Safety Implications:

The provisions of Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 have been taken into account in the preparation of this report

Background Papers

Stockton on Tees Local Plan Adopted 2019

Supplementary Planning Documents

SPD4 – Conservation and Historic Environment Folder - Jan 2006