

PROPOSED REMOVAL of BRIDGE LINK The COUNCIL HOUSE & CIVIC CENTRE 3 for COVENTRY CITY COUNCIL



Site location – The Council House & Civic Centre 3, Earl Street, Coventry, CV1 5RR



Existing bridge link viewed from the west.

Design Statement

The purpose of this document is to comply with paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework to assess the effects of the proposal to remove the 1970's bridge link between Coventry City Council's Council House and Civic Centre 3 on the fabric of the buildings.

This document should be read in conjunction with the Asset Heritage document entitled 'Heritage Statement – in respect of – Removal of bridge link and reinstatement of window with associated internal works at The Council House, Earl Street, Coventry, CV1 5RR' dated November 2016.

Overview

The aim of the proposal is to remove the copper clad bridge link between the main Council House and Civic Centre 3 and forms part of the wider reorganisation of the Council's facilities across the city.

The proposed scheme includes the removal of the bridge link and the reinstatement of the façade and internal door and screen to the Council House, with the hole in the façade of Civic Centre 3 left by the bridge removal also being infilled. The proposal creates no additional floor area and involves minor external alterations to the Listed Building and its surrounds to reinstate elements removed by the original installation of the bridge.

Approach to the design

The basis of the design for the works to the Council House has been to work to match the historic fabric of the building as much as possible. The southern elevation of the building is roughly symmetrical in appearance around the main entrance doors and the proposal for the external façade is to infill the opening left by the removal of the bridge link with a stone window surround to match that to the west end of this elevation, with string coursing reinstated to match adjacent areas (as shown below).



Existing bridge link and existing window to west end of elevation to be matched

Windows will be formed from fixed, side hung and top hung steel casements with leaded light glazing to match the existing façade.

Internally to the Council House the dropped ceiling, timber steps and associated stair lift will be removed, with the opening to the corridor being infilled with a timber screen and door to match the adjacent room 48 entrance.



Existing steps, stair lift and ceiling to be removed, and door and screen to room 48

With regards to the opening left in Civic Centre 3 by the removal of the bridge link, the proposal is to infill the opening with a lightweight framed construction with Trespa panel facing, coloured to accord with the retained areas of the façade.

Alterations

Specific alterations and removals have been identified on drawing 3359-111, with further details identified on drawing 3359-115.

Design Features

All new and replacement features to the façade and infill screen are proposed to match the existing building fabric as much as possible, with stone profiles for window surrounds, heads, cills, string courses etc modelled on the existing features as identified elsewhere on the façade.

Internally the false ceiling to proposed room 49 will be removed and the perimeter plaster coving and skirtings reinstated to match the existing detailing. As mentioned above the new timber screen and door will be installed to match that to room 48.

Considerations

The proposed removal of the bridge link will allow the façade of the Council House to be returned to something approaching its original appearance and should enhance the overall quality of the Listed Building.

Conclusion

With the removal of the 1970's bridge link and the reinstatement of the original window location to the south façade of the council house, the elevation will be returned to its original design form and allow the building to stand alone from Civic Centre 3.

On that basis, and as set out more fully in Asset Heritage's Heritage Statement, it is considered that the proposals not only fall well within the listed building's '*capacity for change*' but will represent a '*enhancement*' in heritage terms to both the '*character*' of the listed building and the '*character and appearance*' of this part of the Hilltop Conservation Area.