

**AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET**

**Name of Committee** Regulatory Committee

**Date of Committee** 16th March 2006

**Report Title** **County Museum, Warwick - Provision of an External Ramp and Stepped Entrance Platform to the Main Entrance of the Museum to Comply with The Disability Discrimination Act 2005**

**Summary** This application is for the provision of an external ramp and stepped entrance platform to the entrance of the County Museum located in Warwick town centre and the Warwick Conservation Area, in order to comply with The Disability and Discrimination Act 2005.

**For further information please contact** Lucy Hill  
 Planning Officer  
 Tel. 01925 412643  
 lucyhill@warwickshire.gov.uk

**Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework?** Yes/No

**Background Papers** Planning application registered on 21st December 2005.  
 Letter from The Warwick Society dated 4th January 2006.  
 File note of telephone call from James Mackay (The Warwick Society) dated 12th January 2006.  
 E-mail from James Mealings Chartered Building Surveyors dated 16th January 2006.

**CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-** *Details to be specified*

- Other Committees  .....
- Local Member(s)  .....  
 (With brief comments, if appropriate)
- Other Elected Members  Councillor R Randev – no comments received.

Cabinet Member  .....  
(Reports to The Cabinet, to be cleared with appropriate Cabinet Member)

Chief Executive  .....

Legal  I Marriott – comments incorporated.

Finance  .....

Other Chief Officers  .....

District Councils  Warwick District Council – no comments received.  
Warwick District Council Conservation Officer – no comments received.

Health Authority  .....

Police  Warwick Architectural Liaison Officer for Warwick Police – no objections.

Other Bodies/Individuals  Warwick Town Council – no comments received.

**FINAL DECISION**                      **YES/NO**      (If 'No' complete Suggested Next Steps)

**SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS :**

*Details to be specified*

Further consideration by this Committee  .....

To Council  .....

To Cabinet  .....

To an O & S Committee  .....

To an Area Committee  .....

Further Consultation  .....

**Regulatory Committee – 16th March 2006**

**County Museum, Warwick - Provision of an External Ramp and Stepped Entrance Platform to the Main Entrance of the Museum to Comply with The Disability Discrimination Act 2005**

**Report of the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy**

**Recommendation**

That the Regulatory Committee authorises the grant of planning permission for the provision of an external ramp and stepped entrance platform to comply with The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 at the County Museum, Market Place, Warwick, subject to the conditions and for the reasons detailed in **Appendix B** of the report of the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy.

APPLICATION NO: W818/05CC038

RECEIVED BY COUNTY: 21/12/2005

ADVERTISED DATE: 03/01/2006

APPLICANT (S): Strategic Director of Resources, Warwickshire County Council, PO Box 46, Shire Hall, Warwick, Warwickshire, CV34 4RP.

THE PROPOSAL: Provision of external ramp and stepped entrance platform to the main entrance to comply with The Disability Discrimination Act 2005.

SITE AND LOCATION: 0.0295 ha of land at the County Museum, Market Hall, Market Place, Warwick, CV34 4SA [Grid ref: 428017, 264924].

See plan at **Appendix A**.

## 1. Application Details

- 1.1 Warwickshire County Council seeks planning consent for the provision of an external ramp and stepped entrance platform to the main entrance of the County Museum, Market Hall, Warwick.
- 1.2 The primary aim of the application is to allow the County Museum to comply with the requirements of The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) by improving disabled access into the public building.
- 1.3 The County Museum is located in the Warwick Conservation Area and is a Grade II\* listed building dating from the late 17th Century. The building is a central feature of the Market Place. Listed building consent (reference W2005/0599 LB) was obtained by Warwickshire County Council on 12th October 2005 for the proposed disabled access works from the Secretary of State.
- 1.4 The proposed disabled access ramp would be freestanding, approximately 0.850m in width and 7.05m in length with a 1 in 6 gradient and with a slip resistant surface. Stainless steel/aluminium satin finish handrails with laminated glass infill panels and matching metal infill panels down to paving level would be included with the ramp which would have a maximum height of approximately 1.25m from ground level. The ramp would be secured to the existing paving with no part affixed directly onto the main building. The ramp has been designed as a lightweight, and as far as this is possible, a see through structure in order to minimise its visual impact upon the museum building.
- 1.5 It is proposed that the existing front entrance steps would be retained with the new entrance deck extending over them to allow for a level access to the museum's ground floor.

## 2. Consultations

- 2.1 **Warwick District Council** – No comments received.
- 2.2 **Warwick District Council Conservation Officer** – No comments received.
- 2.3 **Councillor R Randev** – No comments received, as of 2nd March 2006.
- 2.4 **Warwick Architectural Liaison Officer for Warwick Police** – No objections.
- 2.5 **Warwick Town Council** – No comments received.

## 3. Representations

- 3.1 One written representation has been received from The Warwick Society raising objection to the proposal on the following grounds:-
  - (i) The Museum will be obstructed by a ramp that is constructed from materials that are not in keeping with the overall character of the building and its surrounds.

- (ii) A simple adjustment to the paving levels would be perfectly adequate to meet the needs of the disabled access regulations. Doing so will be cheaper and will not obstruct the view of the building.

## **4. Observations**

- 4.1 The County Museum is located in Warwick town centre. The proposed construction of an external ramp and stepped entrance the subject of the application occupies an area of approximately 7 square metres.
- 4.2 The current entrance to the museum comprises a set of two steps approximately 0.2m in height and 2.95m in length consisting of sandstone paving slabs matching the building and adjoining pavement.
- 4.3 An alternative solution to the proposed ramp has been suggested by The Warwick Society. They suggest that the pavement levels are adjusted instead of the erection of a ramp of the specification and appearance proposed. They conclude that this would have a lesser impact upon the proposed museum than the current proposal.
- 4.4 The feasibility of the scheme suggested by the Warwick Society has been considered by the applicant. They advise that the levels difference between the finished floor levels of the museum building and the pavement levels are such that it is physically impossible to adjust the pavement levels to provide acceptable disabled access to the entrance. They conclude that the only means to provide DDA compliant access to this entrance is to provide a ramp.
- 4.5 It is understood that the rear entrance of the building (facing north onto the Market Square) has been considered for disabled access to the building, as has the east elevation of the building and that it is the applicant's long term intention that the main entrance to the museum will eventually move, hence the temporary nature of the proposed ramp the subject of this application.
- 4.6 The Warwick Society also conclude that the materials proposed for the ramp are not in keeping with the general appearance of the listed building. It is considered, however, that although the materials proposed are modern in appearance their transparency and generally lightweight construction means that the overall visual impact of the ramp would be limited and acceptable.
- 4.7 It should also be noted that Listed Building Consent (reference W2005/0599 LB) has already been granted for this feature by the Secretary of State, who granted consent 12th October 2005 concluding that the impact of the ramp upon the character and appearance of the Listed Building was, on balance, acceptable.

## **5. Planning Policies**

### **Warwickshire Structure Plan, 1996 – 2011**

- 5.1 Warwickshire Structure Plan Policy ER1 recognises that the effects of development on Conservation Areas and areas and features of acknowledged

importance for their heritage value including listed buildings, must be considered when determining planning applications. It is considered that the proposed development accords to this Structure Plan Policy.

### **Adopted Warwick District Local Plan April 1995**

- 5.2 Policies ENV3, ENV6, ENV8, ENV10 and ENV11 of the adopted Warwick District Local Plan relate to planning applications in Conservation Areas and those affecting Listed Buildings. It is concluded that his application achieves a quality of design appropriate to the special historic architectural character of the area whilst meeting the needs of people with access difficulties, including wheelchair users, without having a detrimental effect upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Thus this development accords to the above mentioned policies and meets the legal requirement to preserve or enhance the Character and appearance of the designated conservation area.
- 5.3 Furthermore it is considered that this proposal is an appropriate addition to the Listed Building which does not adversely affect its setting. The museum has been constructed as a very symmetrical Georgian building but that symmetry is not strongly apparent on this elevation as views of the southern elevation of the building are restricted by the width of the street. Furthermore lightweight and transparent modern materials of construction are proposed which will mean that the impact of the development upon the museum building will be further reduced.

### **Warwick District Local Plan 1996 to 2011 (Revised Deposit Version) May 2005**

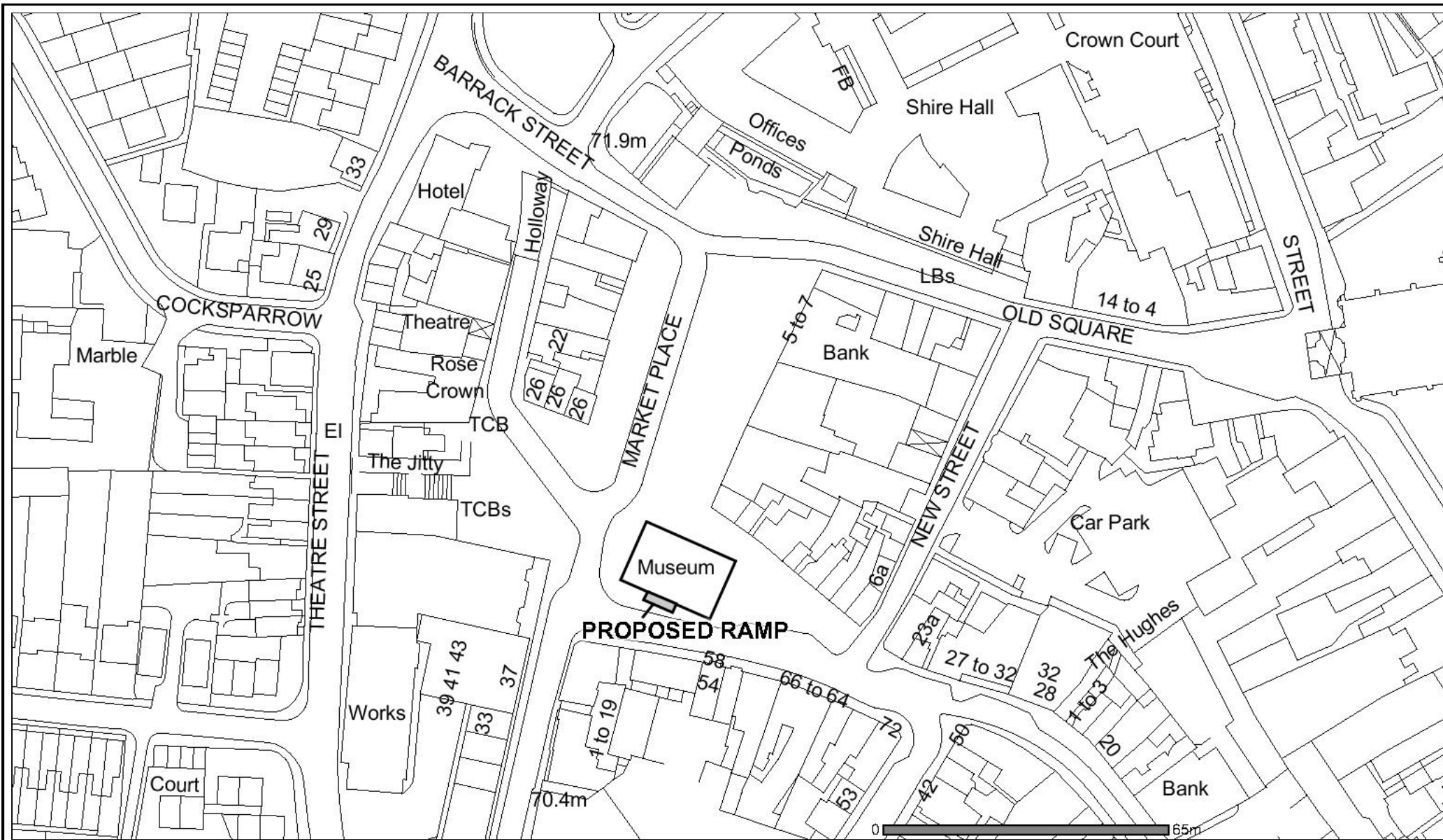
- 5.4 Policies DAP 6 and DAP 10 consider the protection of Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings. It is considered that the proposed development would not have an adverse impact upon the Listed Building or the Conservation Area and therefore accords to these policies.

## **6. Conclusions**

- 6.1 Although the proposal would have an impact upon the setting of the Grade II\* Listed Building and the streetscape of the Conservation Area, it is considered that the transparent form of materials proposed would not result in visual detriment to the character and appearance of the building or the surrounding area as reflected by the existing Listed Building consent. The proposed development adheres to the policies within the development plan and meets the requirement to preserve the character and appearance of the designated conservation area.

JOHN DEEGAN  
Strategic Director of Environment and Economy  
Shire Hall  
Warwick

1st March 2006



Scale 1: 1200

Ref No. W818/05CC038

Drawn J Davies

Regulatory Committee - 16th March 2006

Subject

**External Access Ramp to the County Museum**



John Deegan  
 Director of Planning, Transport  
 and Economic Strategy  
 Shire Hall, Warwick, CV34 4SX

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**Regulatory Committee – 16th March 2006**

**County Museum, Warwick - Provision of an External Ramp and Stepped Entrance Platform to the Main Entrance of the Museum to Comply with The Disability Discrimination Act 2005**

**Application No: W818/05CC038**

1. The development hereby permitted shall commence no later than 3 years from the date of this permission.

**Reason:**

To comply with the provisions of Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. Unless otherwise approved in writing with the County Planning Authority the development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the details contained in the submitted application number W818/05CC038, the site location plan and drawing reference 984-6-37-3 Rev 3.

**Reason:**

To protect the character of the Conservation Area and listed building status of the County Museum.

**Development Plan Policies Relevant to this Decision**

**Warwickshire Structure Plan 1996 – 2011**

- (i) Policy ER1 Natural and Cultural Environmental assets.

**Warwick District Local Plan - Adopted April 1995**

- (i) ENV3 Development Principles.
- (ii) ENV6 Conservation Areas.
- (iii) ENV8 Design in Conservation Areas.
- (iv) ENV10 Submission of Full Plans in Conservation Areas.
- (v) ENV11 Listed Buildings.

**Warwick District Local Plan 1996 – 2011 Revised Deposit Version**

- (i) DAP6 Protection of Listed Buildings.
- (ii) DAP10 Protection of Conservation Areas.



## Reasons for the Decision to Grant Permission

The development hereby permitted is in accordance with the relevant policies of the development plan. Further more there are no other material planning considerations which would, either in their own right or cumulatively, justify withholding planning permission.

**Note:** The policies, proposals and reasons given above are only summaries of the considerations set out more fully in the application report and minutes of the Regulatory Committee.