

COMMITTEE REPORT

Date: 14 July 2016 **Ward:** Huntington/New Earswick
Team: Major and Commercial Team **Parish:** New Earswick Parish Council

Reference: 15/00865/LBC
Application at: The Folk Hall Haxby Road York YO32 4AQ
For: Internal and external alterations including installation of lift and alterations to entrances and ramps
By: Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust
Application Type: Listed Building Consent
Target Date: 30 November 2015
Recommendation: Approve

1.0 PROPOSAL

1.1 The Folk Hall New Earswick comprises a Grade II Listed two storey brick and render early 20th Century building centrally located within the New Earswick Conservation Area. Listed Building Consent is sought for a series of internal alterations including the formation of a restaurant and performance space, with first floor activity area together with the reconfiguration of the main entrance exterior. The application has been amended since submission to simplify the internal layout avoiding the removal of internal walls within the former caretaker's flat, alter the fenestration material and alter the plant room location. The details have subsequently been further amended to retain a greater range of the original internal detailing and to return the ground floor to a closer interpretation of its original design layout.

2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Please see paragraphs 4.2 to 4.4 of Appraisal section for national and local policy context.

3.0 CONSULTATIONS

INTERNAL:-

3.1 Planning and Environmental Management raise no objection in principle to the proposal but express concerns in relation to the level of detail expressed within the application and level of loss of original detailing from the ground floor. The application details have subsequently been amended to address these concerns.

EXTERNAL:-

3.2 Historic England raises no objection to the proposal.

3.3 New Earswick Parish Council raises no objection to the proposal.

3.4 The York CAAP panel raises no objection to the proposal.

3.5 One letter of objection has been received in respect of the scheme as originally submitted which envisaged removal of a significant number of walls at first floor level in the area of the former caretaker's flat. This element of the scheme has now been removed.

4.0 APPRAISAL

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:-

4.1 key considerations include:-

- Impact upon the historic character and integrity of the Listed Building.

STATUS OF THE YORK DEVELOPMENT CONTROL LOCAL PLAN (2005 4th Set of Changes).

4.2 The York Development Control Local Plan was approved for Development Control purposes in April 2005; its policies remain material considerations in respect of Development Management decisions although it is considered that their weight is very limited except where in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework. Policy HE4 of that Plan states that consent will only be granted for internal or external alterations; where there is no adverse effect on the character, appearance or setting of the building :

EMERGING LOCAL PLAN POLICY

4.3 The planned consultation on the Publication Draft of the City of York Local Plan, which was approved by the Cabinet of the Council on the 25 September 2014, has been halted pending further analysis of housing projections. The emerging Local Plan policies can only be afforded weight at this stage of its preparation, in accordance with paragraph 216 of the NPPF. Policy D5 of that Local Plan States:-

“Proposals affecting the special architectural or historic interest of listed buildings (designated heritage assets) will be supported where they:

- i. sustain the significance and heritage values of the building; and
- ii. are accompanied by an evidence based heritage statement and justification.”

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

4.4 Section 12 of the NPPF, notably paragraphs 132 to 134. The NPPF classes listed buildings as “designated heritage assets”. The NPPF advises on heritage assets as follows:

4.5 Paragraph 132 advises that “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. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be” ... “As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification.”

4.6 Paragraph 133 advises that “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 loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of four specified criteria apply

4.7 Paragraph 134 advises 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 securing its optimum use.”

STATUTORY TESTS

4.8 Section 16 (2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the Local Planning Authority when determining applications for listed building consent that affect a listed building or its setting to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

4.9 Case law has made clear that when deciding whether harm to a listed building or its setting is outweighed by the advantages of a proposed development, the decision-maker must give particular weight to the desirability of avoiding such harm. There is a “strong presumption” against the grant of planning permission in such cases. The exercise is still one of planning judgment but it must be informed by that need to give special weight to the desirability of preserving the building.

4.10 This means that even where harm is less than substantial, such harm must still be afforded considerable importance and weight, i.e. the fact of harm to the listed building is still to be given more weight than if it were simply a factor to be taken account along with all other material considerations.

IMPACT UPON THE HISTORIC CHARACTER AND INTEGRITY OF THE LISTED BUILDING:-

4.11 BUILDING SIGNIFICANCE:- The Folk Hall was built in 1907 to an "Arts and Crafts" Design as a purpose built community hub for newly created model village erected for the workforce of the Rowntree factory to the south west. The building was subsequently found to be inadequate in terms of size for the demands being placed upon it and was extended in 1935 to the designs of Barry Parker. The building is to a traditional design with the use of low pitched Rosemary tiled roofs and white render. It was focussed around a series of open meeting and performance spaces in the manner of a traditional village hall which have in part been subdivided in recent years to provide meeting rooms, administrative offices and a cafe.

4.12 THE PROPOSAL:- It is proposed to reconfigure the Haxby Road frontage of the site to create a formal reception area as well as to reconfigure the internal spaces to more clearly reflect modern requirements. This includes the formation of a restaurant sharing kitchen facilitates with the existing kitchen, the installation of a lift to access the first floor, the formation of a series of different sized activity spaces on the lower ground and first floors and the formation of a purpose designed local history/reminiscence area on the first floor. Each of the proposed alterations would be geared to the on-going requirements of the site and to secure the future of the building within a key location within the "model village".

4.13 ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT:- The proposed internal alterations which are modest in overall scale and impact would sustain, the historic, communal and aesthetic significance of the building. The evidential significance illustrated by the central hall space would to an extent be enhanced by the removal of a number of unsympathetic recent accretions. The character of much of the internal space including the areas to be converted to activity spaces is quite plain and impact upon their character would be modest in terms of the scheme as amended.

4.14 Alterations to the character of a listed building require justification. In this instance justification for the extent of the alterations required lies in a lack of recent investment and the need to ensure that the building is fit for the purpose of serving the needs of the local community for the foreseeable future. The provision of a more formal approach as envisaged within the original design together with a clearly defined reception area would give rise to significant public benefit in promoting increased usage of the complex. The proposed lift would be centrally located in an area that has previously been the subject of significant alteration in the 1970s any resulting harm and loss of significance would therefore be minimal. The scheme as initially submitted envisaged the replacement of the existing metal framed windows with upvc replacements for maintenance reasons. This element of the scheme has now been withdrawn and the windows would be replaced by conventional metal units. At the same time the scheme as originally submitted envisaged the removal of a significant number of internal walls within the area of the former caretaker's flat at

first floor level. This element of the proposal which would have been highly damaging to the character and significance of the building has now been removed in order to deal with Conservation concerns.

4.15 In terms of the ground floor the metal canopy overhanging the main entrance dating to the early 1980s would be removed and the surround made good. The internal bar area and servery would be refurbished with the internal terracotta skirting and decorative beam brackets retained. The two surviving internal fireplaces would be retained and refurbished and the existing moulded door surrounds would be retained with sympathetic replacements for existing doors where required. The west wing of the Folk Hall which is at present under utilised would be used as the kitchen to supply the new cafe/restaurant and enhanced entertainment use. The interior of the original hall would be opened out to return it as closely as possible to the original design concept with access to the proposed Arts and Crafts garden to the rear. A series of modern partitions would be removed from the interior and a free standing canopy would be erected allowing for all weather access between the re-constructed care home and apartments and the proposed catering facilities. Works to the first floor would be more limited involving the removal of two toilets of modern construction and the removal of a series of recent stud partitions and associated doorways.

4.16 In terms of impact upon the Listed Building the proposed works would only give rise to minimal harm, and in terms of paragraphs 131 to 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework would amount to less than substantial harm. The return of the Folk Hall to something more nearly approximating to its original Arts and Crafts Parker and Unwin design concept with a new role as a central community focus for the proposed care home and apartment complex replacing Red Lodge would provide a suitable degree of public benefit to justify the proposed works, even when attributing considerable importance and weight to the minimal harm caused to the listed building, in accordance with the statutory test set out at s16(2) of the 1990 Act.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The Folk Hall New Earswick comprises a Grade II Listed two storey brick and render early 20th Century building centrally located within the New Earswick Conservation Area. Listed Building Consent is sought for a series of internal alterations including the formation of a restaurant and performance space, with first floor activity area together with the reconfiguration of the main entrance exterior. The proposed works would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the property with a series of modern doors and partitions removed from the ground floor, the removal of an insensitive modern external canopy, the reuse of the west wing as a catering kitchen to underpin the proposed entertainment use and the provision of accessible routes into the building from the site frontage and from the proposed care home and apartment complex to the rear. The re-creation of the

Parker and Unwin design concept together with the establishment of a role for the hall as a community focus for the proposed re-constructed Red Lodge scheme would provide a suitable degree of public benefit to justify the proposed works, even when attributing considerable importance and weight to the minimal harm caused to the listed building and approval is therefore recommended.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION: Approve

1 TIMEL2 Development start within 3 yrs (LBC/CAC)

2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans:-

Drawing Refs:- 2575/1 11 E; AA4761-2060E; AA4761-2068E; AA4761-2062D; AA4761-2066D; AA4761-2061D; AA4761-2063C; AA4761-2067D.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out only as approved by the Local Planning Authority.

3 Large scale details of the items listed below shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the development and the works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

i) Full details including sections at 1:10 of the proposed fenestration units;

ii) Full details including sections at 1:20 of the proposed reception area ;

iii) Full details of all new areas of internal and external glazing including any faceting;

iv) Full details of the proposed treatment of the internal lift shaft and plant area including sections at 1:20;

v) Full details of the proposed external ramp and canopy including finishes and sections at 1:20;

vi) Full details of the treatment of the retained skirting and timber door surrounds;

vii) Full details including sections at 1:20 and finishes for the retained fireplaces.

Reason: So that the Local Planning Authority may be satisfied with these details.

7.0 INFORMATIVES:

Contact details:

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