DELEGATED REPORT / CASE OFFICER'S ASSESSMENT

Ref No: ST/0862/23/LBC
Proposal: Listed Building Consent to replace internal condenser unit and install new air conditioning unit internally (retrospective)
Location: Jarrow Town Hall
Grange Road
Jarrow
NE32 3LE

Site Visit Made: 31/01/2024

Relevant policies/SPDs

1 DM1 - Management of Development

2 DM6 - Heritage Assets and Archaeology

Description of the site and of the proposals

This application for Listed Building Consent relates to Jarrow Town Hall, a Grade II Listed Building in the town centre of Jarrow.

The listing for the building describes the following:

'Council offices. Dated 1902. By Fred Rennoldson of South Shields. Bright red brick and bright red glazed terracotta; roof of Welsh slate. L-plan, mostly baroque style. 2 storeys; 5 bays and corner turret to main elevation. 9 bays to return. Main elevation: entrance, in 3-storey tower in fourth bay, has deep semi-circular hood corbelled out from pilasters, broken pediment on pilasters to first floor window, a later clock projecting from third storey rusticated, aproned window opening. Rusticated ground floor, having wide, elliptical-headed windows, 3-light and transomed, in Gibbs surrounds. All 3-light mullioned and transomed brick windows, with 3-centred arched heads, on first floor; some with blind tracery in lower third. Strings, modillioned eaves cornice; pilasters define bays. Roof has balustrade, baroque dormer left of entrance tower and arches in corner turret. Left return of 9 bays has 2-bay gable with cartouche, scrolled pediment, obelisk finial; 3-storey entrance bay having 'County Court' cartouche in centre of 4 gabled bays of 3 storeys, and corner bay with cornice and turret. Historical note: foundation stone laid by Lady Palmer. Plaque in council chamber commemorates the decision taken there in 1936 to march to London - the Jarrow march.'

Retrospective Listed Building Consent is being sought for the replacement of an internal condenser unit within the lightwell of the building and the installation of an internal air conditioning unit within the CCTV room housed within the building. These works included the removal of a redundant unit within the lightwell and the reuse of the existing brackets to site the new air conditioning unit on. Two small openings in one of the rooms were created to connect the internal air conditioning unit to the unit in the lightwell. The internal unit has been drilled into the wall, avoiding the wood paneling. The works are wholly retrospective.

The works where required due to the Councils CCTV service relocation. As the service would be 24/7, it was considered that Jarrow Town Hall would be the most suitable location for the CCTV service - a statutory function operated by the Council. The equipment produces significant amount of heat and therefore the air conditioning was required to provide modern (and appropriate) working conditions for the CCTV staff.

Publicity / Consultations **(Expiry date including press and site notices 22/01/2024)**

1) **Neighbour responses-** no representations received

2) Other Consultee responses

Historic Environment Officer:

Following a visit to the CCTV room as part of pre-application discussions, it was very clear that there was a need for air conditioning in the CCTV room. The heat given off by the equipment had resulted in unacceptable working conditions and we discussed the least invasive way in which air conditioning could be installed.

Jarrow Town Hall has been the subject of a number of interventions over the last few decades which have seen the introduction of a large amount of ducting and cabling. The lightwell had a large amount of wiring/ducting and a redundant air conditioning unit sitting on brackets attached to the masonry. It was proposed to remove the redundant unit and utilise the existing brackets to sit the new unit on. It has been necessary to make two small openings one of the rooms to connect the internal air conditioning unit to the external unit. The internal unit has been drilled into the wall, avoiding the wood paneling.

In assessing the level of harm to the Listed Building, it is considered that the proposal would result in minimal harm to the significance of the heritage asset, and therefore less than substantial harm.

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.

The Council's CCTV service were obliged to relocate from their previous building due to the relocation of the Marine College. As the Council are proposing to house the majority of its 24/7 services and functions, Jarrow Town Hall posed the most suitable option to relocate the CCTV service – a statutory function operated by the Council.

The overarching aim of heritage policies within NPPF is not to hinder development, but encourage sustainable development and re-use of historic buildings and sites, where appropriate, so that they remain in use and do not fall into disrepair. Indeed this part of Jarrow Town Hall has remained vacant for a number of years.

The concept of public benefits is broad and in the context of heritage assessment is not restricted to heritage benefits. One could argue that public benefits are generated from the CCTV function, and that and the air conditioning units and associated wiring are minor and reversible interventions.

There is no doubt that the internal unit is incongruous, but it is reversible and it plays a critical role in allowing the CCTV function to continue.

On balance, therefore, I am supportive of the proposal.

Assessment

The NPPF states heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. It requires Local Planning Authorities to take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation.

The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 prevents alterations to a Listed Building which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest, unless the works are authorised.

Paragraph 205 of the NPPF states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the assets conservation (and the more important the asst, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Paragraph 206 of the NPPF goes on to state that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage assets, should require clear and convincing justification.

Policy DM1 (Management of Development) of the South Tyneside Local Development Framework requires development, including alterations to existing buildings, to be designed to convey sensitive consideration of its surroundings, and where possible enhance its local setting and reinforce local identity, having particular regard to scale and proportions, alignment, form, use of materials and architectural detailing.

Policy DM6 (Heritage Assets and Archaeology) of the South Tyneside Local Development Framework supports development proposals that protect, preserve and where possible enhance the historic, cultural and architectural character and heritage, visual appearance and contextual importance of our heritage assets and their settings, including listed buildings.

The Council's Historic Environment Officer has considered the application and advised that, prior to the works taking place, a site meeting was undertaken to discuss the proposals and the least invasive way in which the air conditioning could be installed. The also confirmed that the heat given off the CCTV equipment has resulted in unacceptable working conditions.

The Historic Environment Officer confirmed that Jarrow Town Hall has been subject to a number of interventions over the last few decades, which have included a large amount of ducting and cabling. The lightwell also had a large amount of wiring and ducting and a redundant air conditioning unit sitting on brackets. It was proposed to remove the redundant unit and utilise the existing brackets to sit the new unit on. Two small openings were created to one of the rooms to connect the internal air conditioning unit to the unit held within the lightwell. The internal air conditioner unit has been drilled into the wall, avoiding the wood paneling.

The Historic Environment Officer has confirmed that the proposal would result in minimal harm to the significance of the building and therefore results in less than substantial harm.

Paragraph 208 of the NPPF states 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.

The overarching aim of heritage policies within the NPPF is not to hinder development but encourage sustainable development and the re-use of historic buildings and sites, where appropriate, so that they remain in use and do not fall into disrepairs. The Historic Environment officer has confirmed that this part of Jarrow Town Hall has remained vacant for a number of years.

It is considered that the housing of the CCTV service – a statutory function of the council- in Jarrow Town Hall would be appropriate given its 24/7 nature. Turning to the public benefits of the scheme, the concept of public benefits is broad and in the context of heritage assessment is not restricted to heritage benefits. It is considered that the public benefits generated from the CCTV function would be a public benefit to this proposal. Additionally, the works have caused minimal disruption to the historic fabric of the building, making use of existing wiring openings where possible and avoiding the paneling within the CCTV. Additionally, the works to house the wiring are reversible. So, whilst the air conditioning unit is

incongruous, it is a reversible development and plays a critical role in allowing the CCTV service to continue. For these reasons the Historic Environment Officer if supportive of the works.

On balance, it is considered that the less than substantial harm caused by the works are outweighed by the public benefits of allowing a statutory function of the Council to continue. The works are therefore considered to be compliant with the relevant policies of the NPPF and Local Development Plan. No conditions are recommended as the works have already been completed on site.

In assessing this application due regard has been had to the requirement of section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

Recommendation

Grant Permission No Conditions

List of plans for standard note

Plan Reference

Details of outdoor air conditioning unit received 24/01/2024

Details of wall mounted air conditioning unit received 24/01/2024

Photographs showing located of air conditioning unit and wiring received 20/12/2023

First floor AC proposal Option B - drawing number L(5) 02 received 20/12/2023

Case officer: Samantha Gallagher
Signed: S Gallagher
Date: 23/02/2024

Authorised Signatory: Helen Lynch
Date: 01/03/2024

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