

From: [Thomas Whitfield](#)
To: [Development Control](#)
Subject: Case 4/25/2310/0L1 - 8 Scotch Street, Whitehaven
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Dear David Gibson,

Thank you for notifying The Georgian Group of application 4/25/2310/0L1 to undertake a scheme of works at Grade II listed 8 Scotch Street, Whitehaven. The Group has assessed the application, and we offer the following advice and comments.

8 Scotch Street is a handsome and characterful mid-eighteenth-century townhouse and is characteristic of the local vernacular style. The house was built c.1750 as part of a terrace of 5no. higher status townhouses for affluent personages in Whitehaven. The higher status nature of these houses is exemplified by their larger size, and good quality finishes to window surrounds, and door cases. No.8 has however been altered over the course of its history, notably through the conversion to a pharmacy in the mid-twentieth century and likely through subsequent reversion to residential use, the building however retains a number of historic fixtures and fittings and decorative scheme elements, and also retains a legible historic planform.

The application is for a wide-ranging scheme of repairs, upgrades and alterations to return the building to single residential use.

Advice and Comments

The Group welcomes the intention to repair and return 8 Scotch Street to single residential use, and we advise that we consider this is the optimum viable use for the building. We do, however, register a number of significant concerns with the proposed scheme of works.

The Group notes that your LPA Conservation Officer has submitted detailed and authoritative comments in a letter dated 30th September 2025. In the interest of brevity, we advise that we support and echo all the comments, concerns and recommendations in that letter.

Panelling

The Group particularly wish to register our severe dismay at the stripping-out works which have already taken place, including the removal of probable eighteenth-century panelling from the front rooms at ground floor, first floor and second floor. We understand from subsequent e-mail correspondence with the LPA Conservation Officer that there is some speculation the panelling was plyboard from the 1960s however we consider that the photos of the broken pile stripped panelling suggest that it was of solid timber board construction.

We further highlight that in the photograph on page 18 of the DAS/HS, the panelling is shown the full height of the window reveals. either side of the later inserted radiators, but the back panels have been removed below the height of the later inserted sill. A further photo in the 2024 sales particulars (Savills) indicates that these radiators were boxed in

with a decorative grille. It is unlikely therefore that the panelling postdates the radiators, which are noted to have been installed during the 1960s works.

Likewise in the photographs on pages 22 and 25 of the DAS/HS it is apparent that the panelling extended behind the later fitted radiators suggesting it to be historic.

We additionally recognise that the applicant has subsequently discovered early (probable primary phase, mid-eighteenth century) block printed and coloured wallpaper behind an area of panelling in the ground floor front room. Stratigraphically, this indicates that the front room panelling is likely part of a secondary phase decorative scheme for that room, potentially dating from the mid-late eighteenth-century. The panelling should consequently be considered to be of high significance.

As the front room panelling is likely a secondary phase decorative scheme, it is possible that it is of a different phase to the surviving panelling in the hallway which may be primary phase. This may account for the perceived differences in detailing between the two areas of panelling cited in the applicant's heritage statement.

We accordingly recommend that where panelling has been stripped away, it should be replicated to match the original design.

As an additional point to note, we recommend that the discovered area of potentially mid-eighteenth-century wallpaper should be considered of very high significance and that an appropriate strategy for its conservation should be agreed with the LPA Conservation Officer.

Other Works

The Group are content to defer to and support the advice of the LPA Conservation Officer on other works proposed. We notably echo the objection to the formation of an enlarged opening between the hallway and rear room at GF level. We also welcome the clarification that only a 1960s blanking infill will be removed from the lower flight of GF-1F stair.

Conclusion

When making a decision on all listed building consent applications or any decision on a planning application for development that affects a listed building or its setting, a local planning authority must 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. Preservation in this context means not harming the special interest of the building, as opposed to keeping it utterly unchanged. This obligation, found in sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (1), applies to all decisions concerning listed buildings. Under section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 they also have a duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

The Group advises that the stripping out works already enacted have caused significant and irreversible harm to the special architectural significance of 8 Scotch Street as a Grade II listed building. The works further proposed also have a high potential to exacerbate that level of harm. We therefore echo the concerns, advice and recommendations of the LPA Conservation Officer, notably that the panelling should be reinstated and that harmful elements of the proposed scheme of works should be either deleted from the application or appropriately mitigated.

The Georgian Group must therefore strongly recommend that the applicant revises the application to address the abovementioned concerns and objections, as well as those of the LPA Conservation Officer. If the applicant is unwilling to do so, listed building consent should be refused.

We would be pleased to be notified of any further revisions or amendments to the scheme. We also advise that we would be pleased to meet with the applicant and other stakeholders on site to discuss our concerns further.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Thomas Whitfield

Senior Conservation Adviser (Northern England)



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Georgian Group Heritage at Risk List 2025: Call for nominations.

We are now beginning to compile a new Georgian Group Heritage at Risk list for 2025. You can nominate any Georgian heritage building or landscape (regardless of listed status) which you consider to be 'at risk' by e-mailing atrisk@georgiangroup.org.uk.

The deadline for entries is 26 September 2025.

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