
From: Thomas Whitfield
Sent: 05 September 2024 09:35
To: Development Control
Cc: Samuel Woodford
Subject: Case 4/24/2268/0L1 - 46 Lowther Street, Whitehaven

CAUTION: External email, think before you click!
Please report any suspicious email to our [IT Helpdesk](#)

Dear Sara Papaleo,

Thank you for notifying The Georgian Group of application 4/24/2268/0L1 to undertake a scheme of works at Grade II listed 46 Lowther Street, Whitehaven. The Group objects to this application on the following grounds.

46 Lowther Street is a handsome and characterful early-eighteenth-century townhouse with strong aesthetic and evidential value. The building is part of a terrace of 3no. contemporary houses by Anthony Borrodale, started c.1715 and divided by 1729 (RCHME 1991). The building was later altered at an unknown date during the nineteenth-century notably with a replacement staircase.

The application is for a scheme of internal and external alterations. Including relocating the main staircase, formation of an internal cellar stair, 'refurbishment' of cellar to 'habitable standard', alterations to planform at 1F, and enlargement of a lightwell to front elevation.

Advice and Recommendations

The Group notes that the LPA Conservation Officer, Historic Buildings and Places, and The SPAB have already offered detailed and expert comments on this application. We advise that we echo and support all of these comments.

We particularly emphasise concerns with the proposed works to the staircase, and cellar.

Staircase

The Group strongly objects to the proposals to relocate the existing staircase. Whilst we acknowledge that the existing is non-original, it is an important part of the building's evolution and history and whilst being of a different form to the original (newel vs. dogleg) it is in an original location. We further emphasise that it is likely that the existing curved section to the cellar wall is likely the remnants of the original newel stair and therefore of high evidential value.

The Group additionally queries a more accurate age of the staircase and advise that offering its date as 'nineteenth century' is too broad to offer much insight into its significance. We recommend that a discussion is offered to try and determine a more precise age for the staircase.

In the interest of brevity we strongly echo and support the concerns registered by the LPA Conservation Officer, Historic Buildings and Places and The SPAB. We particularly echo the advice that the proposed works would cause considerable and irreversible harm to the building's historic

fabric and would erode the legibility of its evolved historic planform. We consequently draw attention to the requirements of NPPF (2023) paragraph 205.

We likewise echo the conclusions that the proposed benefit to provide internal access to the cellar is neither a clear or convincing justification for the harm that the works would cause. We therefore advise that the application fails to meet the requirements of NPPF paragraph 206.

1F Works

The Group echoes the concerns and advice offered by HB&P with the removal of the wall at 1F level between the existing front room and the ensuite. We support the advice that this is likely an original wall, defining the historic planform and room volumes of the 1F rooms, and that it should therefore be understood to be of high significance.

We therefore echo HB&P's advice that the loss of this wall would constitute irreversible loss of historic fabric and cause harm to the legibility of the building's historic planform and thereby to its evidential value and special architectural significance. We therefore again draw attention to the requirements of NPPF paragraphs 205 and 206. We advise that we do not consider that the demolition of the wall is either clearly or convincingly justified.

We recommend that the applicant omits this aspect of the proposals.

Cellar Works

The Group again echoes the advice and recommendations of the LPA Conservation Officer, HB&P and The SPAB regarding the proposed works in the cellar.

Other Works

We defer to the LPA Conservation Officer's advice and recommendations on all other aspects of the application not mentioned above.

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 proposed internal works would cause irreversible harm to the building's historic fabric, evidential value and special architectural significance as a grade II listed heritage asset.

We therefore recommend that the applicant withdraws this application and revises it to address the above advice and recommendations, and those of the LPA Conservation Officer and other consultees. If the applicant is unwilling to do so, listed building consent should be refused.

Yours sincerely,

Thomas Whitfield, PhD, MLitt, BA (hons)
Conservation Adviser, Northern England

Cc'd is Samuel Woodford – Conservation and Design Officer at Cumberland Council.

Support us <https://georgiangroup.org.uk/memberships/>



The Georgian Group is compiling a Heritage at Risk list for 2024 which will highlight the plight of eighteenth-and early nineteenth century buildings and landscapes that could and should have a brighter future.

You can nominate a heritage building or landscape that is at risk via: atrisk@georgiangroup.org.uk The deadline for nominations is 20 September 2024.

*Please include in your email details of when it was created, its location, the reasons why you believe it should be included on the Georgian Group's list, together with one or more photographs. The nominated building or landscape must be in **England** or **Wales** and built between **1700 - 1837**. It can be listed or unlisted but must be in a poor state of repair or condition, be disused or unoccupied or perhaps threatened by demolition or inappropriate alterations or change of use.*

The 2023 Top 10 Heritage at Risk List can be found on our website at <https://georgiangroup.org.uk>.

The information contained in this e-mail and any files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual(s) named. If you are not the named addressee(s) you should not copy, disseminate or distribute this e-mail. Please notify the sender immediately by e-mail if you have received this e-mail by mistake and delete this e-mail from your system. E-mail transmission cannot be guaranteed to be secure or error-free since information can arrive late or contain viruses, or be corrupted, destroyed, incomplete, intercepted, or lost. The sender therefore does not accept liability for any errors or omissions in the contents of this message which arise as a result of e-mail transmission. If verification is required please ask for a hard-copy version.