

DESIGN AND ACCESS HERITAGE STATEMENT IN CONNECTION WITH INSTALLATION OF MECHANICAL EXTRACT FAN TO WHITEHAVEN HOSPITAL OR INFIRMARY (FORMERLY LISTED AS WHITEHAVEN CASTLE)

Introduction

This heritage statement has been prepared by Storm Tempest on behalf of Home Group Housing Association to support an application for listed building consent to install a mechanical extractor fan through the external walls of Whitehaven Infirmary CA28 7RA.

Description of the heritage asset

The property is a Grade II listed building located within the town centre of Whitehaven, built in 1769 by Sir John Lowther as his own residence. The building is 3 storeys tall with solid stone external walls and of symmetrical design, battlemented. Centre block has semi-circular 3 storeyed turret containing centre 3 windows. Each end of facade has projecting rectangular tower. All windows have labels but new glazing. The building was extensively extended and redesigned by Robert Adam between the periods of 1769 and 1776, later becoming a hospital and latterly residential home for the elderly. After this it was abandoned for many years causing the internal features of heritage value to be lost. It has been since restored to current use and is being maintained as government funded social housing containing 33 number shared ownership flats.

Assessment of significance

Although the internal heritage assets have been lost to time, the building still maintains an attractive classical appearance and contributes a grand and stately aesthetic to its surroundings. The large areas of soft landscaping to the castle grounds help to break up the relatively urbanised and commercial area directly opposite presented by the retail park. The building also provides accommodation and living facilities to some of the more vulnerable members of society.

Design concepts for the proposal

This application relates to the installation of a mechanical extractor unit through the solid stone external walls of the property. The mechanical extractor will remove and prevent the build-up of foul smells within the water meter cupboard that are currently causing distress for the existing residents. We believe that the application is justified because of the improvement it will give to the property and the habitable conditions for the residents.

Impact of the proposed development

The impact of the proposal will be relatively minor, the only change to the externals will be a small approximately 100mm x 100mm uPVC vent cover. The proposals are for a brown colour to help blend in with the external stonework and provide a more

natural finish. Internally the mechanical extractor will be wall mounted and wired into the existing electrical system by a Part P registered NICEIC electrician. The vent will be core drilled through the existing walls taking great care not to cause excessive damage to the masonry and all areas of stonework made good upon completion. Overall, we believe the impact of the proposal to be minimal and necessary for the long-term habitation of the property.

Design and Access

The access to Whitehaven Infirmary is maintained and unaltered. This application is solely concerned with the installation of a mechanical extractor and vent. The design is a simple mechanical and electrical installation with essentially no impact on the overall appearance of the property.