



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 January 2025

by C McDonagh BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 January 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/B4215/Y/24/3344892

Barracks House, 10 Princess Street, Hulme, Manchester M15 4HA

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Victor Xie (Moda Invest Ltd) against the decision of Manchester City Council.
 - The application Ref is 133525/LO/2022.
 - The works proposed are described as 'External wall repair window replacement roofing improvement drainage improvement.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. On 12 December 2024, the Government released an updated version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). As the changes do not affect the consideration of the main issue of this appeal, I have not sought comments on the revisions.
3. The Council's delegated report and decision notice cites conflict with sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act). However, section 66(1) of the Act concerns 'whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting.' As the application for listed building consent and this appeal concern 'whether to grant listed building consent for any works', the proposal requires to be assessed against section 16(2) of the Act. I have therefore determined the appeal on this basis. Both sections of the Act require 'special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.' As both main parties have addressed this within their respective evidence, I am satisfied that their interests have not been prejudiced by this approach.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve the Grade II listed building or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Reasons

5. The host building is Grade II listed and officially known as 'Hulme Barracks'. The listing description¹ gives the date of origin as 1817 and as the name suggests it has served historically as military accommodation for officers. It is constructed in red brick with a partially rendered rear elevation and a hipped slate roof. The larger, main section of the building includes a projecting loggia, while there is a service wing to the northwest elevation. The building is now evidently split into flats.
6. I have had due regard to the Heritage Assessment² which advises that the building also has links to a local industrialist prior to its use as a barracks. Alongside my own observations, I concur that the special interest and significance of the listed building is derived from its historic and architectural interests. Historic interest is drawn from the links to the industrial heritage of the area and later military use. Architectural interest is drawn from surviving historic fabric, use of traditional construction and materials and pleasing architectural form and design, including key features and detailing such as the fanlights and cornicing.
7. Of particular relevance to this appeal is the listed building's fenestration, which is a key feature of its architectural style and appearance. They are of classic single-glazed, multi-pane, vertical sliding-sash form and proportions and are mostly constructed of traditional materials which are compatible with the age and style of the house, although I understand that there are a few modern and incongruent replacements. In these respects, these details are important components of the property which contribute in a positive way to the listed building's architectural merit.
8. The proposal seeks listed building consent for repairs to windows, the roof, walls and drainage in terms of pipes and gutters. However, there are several other elements which are not mentioned in the description given in the application form. These include replacements of external doors, repairs to the render, loggia and removal of redundant cables.
9. I note that the Council is not opposed to the principle of repairing elements of the listed building, which is preferred to replacements that would involve the loss of historic fabric. Moreover, it agrees that externally the building is showing signs of neglect.
10. However, there is a general lack of detail in any of the submitted plans and drawings. Although the heritage assessment refers to a full schedule of works for the windows, the elevation drawings³ include only brief descriptions of the works. The 'works to doors and windows' drawing⁴ has some further detail, although these are a scale of 1:100. There is reference in the plans to a repair schedule, but I do not have this before me.
11. Furthermore, there is reference to the urgency of the works required to ensure the structural integrity of the building. However, there is no structural assessment before me, nor is there any other substantive evidence that the building is at risk of failure in this regard.

¹ List Entry Number: 1247392

² Garry Miller Heritage Consultancy – April 2022

³ Drawing Numbers: d384/04 Rev E & d384/05 Rev F

⁴ Drawing Number: d393/06 Rev D

12. Although the appellant is happy to follow guidance on these matters, it is for them to apply a commensurate level of expertise from a suitably qualified individual and produce a schedule of works which can be objectively assessed. Moreover, while it is asserted that the repairs would be of public benefit, there is nothing before me to confirm this and if undertaken incorrectly, works could instead be harmful.
13. Section 16(2) of the Act requires that in considering whether to grant listed building consent, special regard shall be had to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. However, in the absence of accurate and detailed drawings of the existing and proposed windows at an appropriate scale, it is difficult to undertake a meaningful assessment of the scheme.
14. It is imperative that proposals are accompanied by supporting information of the requisite detail to illustrate and/or describe the proposed works in order to avoid any uncertainty over the extent of what is proposed, and to allow a robust assessment of any consequent effects. The lack of detailed information is highly undesirable in general terms, but especially given that the property is a Grade II listed building. Based on the limited evidence before me, I cannot be sure that there would not be harm caused to the special interest and significance of the listed building.
15. Therefore, in giving considerable importance and weight to the preservation of the building, I conclude that it has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that the proposed works would meet the requirements of section 16(2) of the Act. Nor can I be sure that it would not harm the significance of this designated heritage asset and thus comply with the provisions within the Framework, which seek to conserve and enhance the historic environment.

Other Matters

16. The appellant mentions that the proposal has support from residents. However, I have no comments to that effect before me, and the Council's officer report states that no supporting comments were received. To the contrary, the only comments received with the appeal were opposed to the scheme. As such this carries no weight in my determination of the proposal.

Conclusion

17. In conclusion, I cannot be certain that the proposal would preserve the special interest of the Grade II listed building, and it would therefore fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act and the Framework. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

C McDonagh

INSPECTOR