

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no. 135620/LO/2022

Date registered valid: 30 November 2022

Proposal: Listed Building Consent for internal works including repairs to windows, ceilings, floors, lighting and organ

Address: Chethams School Of Music , Long Millgate, Manchester, Manchester, M3 1SB

Ward(s): Deansgate Ward

Applicant: Mr Pat McCartney Chethams School of Music

Agent (if any): Lucy Uren Buttress

Case officer: Tony Mitchell
Tel: 0161 234 4776
Email: anthony.mitchell@manchester.gov.uk

Recommendation: APPROVE

Date of recommendation: 10.11.2023

Application details

Type of application: Listed Building Consent

Development type: Listed building alteration

Date of site visit:

Standard consultations:

Printed: 8 December 2022 Expired: 29 December 2022

Neighbour notifications

No neighbour notifications have been printed and sent.

Site notice

Posted: 13 December 2022 Expired: 3 January 2023

Press advert

Published: 13 December 2022 Expired: 3 January 2023

Departure from Development Plan: No

Environmental Statement: Not required

Description of site/building

Listed building: Grade II

Conservation area: Cathedral Conservation Area 1972

Tree Preservation Order: NA

Description of area

This application relates to Whiteley Hall which is one of the principal spaces within the Millgate Building at the Chetham's School of Music. The Millgate Building is part of the wider school estate.

The grade II listed Millgate Building sits on the east side of the Chetham's site. It was purchased by the school in 1978. This was formerly the Manchester Grammar School building and is formed of three sections – the 1869-70 Barker and Ellis building and the 1911-13 Figgis and Munby building with the 1950s Nicholls Building behind these. Whiteley Hall is located in the older Barker and Ellis structure. The Hall's character has been compromised by 20th century interventions and redecoration but retains a moulded ceiling and double height volume with tall windows overlooking Cathedral Gardens.

The application site lies within the Cathedral Conservation area.

Description of development

In 2021 a significant fire broke out on the upper mezzanine of Whiteley Hall. The upper mezzanine floor has been significantly burnt and damaged and a large portion of the rest of the Hall has been smoke and water damaged. Chetham's School of Music appointed buttress to develop the application for listed building consent based upon a schedule of work devised by Gateley Vinden.

The works proposed include:

Whiteley Hall:

Floor. The existing floor of Whiteley Hall is plywood boarding which has been badly damaged following the recent fire. It is proposed that the 20th century plywood will be removed, and the floor insulated. A higher quality engineered oak board floor will be installed.

Walls. The walls and plaster are significantly smoke damaged from the recent fire. It is proposed that the plaster be removed from the walls back to sound to a straight edge and replaced with a breathable lime plaster with a micro_porous paint finish to match the existing plaster thickness.

Windows. The existing external windows have minimal impact from the fire and will be cleaned and redecorated. Where isolated glass panes have been damaged or removed these will be replaced to match the existing and adjacent panes. It is proposed that the fire damaged 20th century secondary glazing will be removed and replaced with higher quality units designed to respond to the transoms and mullions of the external glazing. Refer to appendix photos. New secondary glazing will be added to the west elevation to provide additional protection to the external glazing. All new work will be recessed back from the reveals so that the historic details remain dominant.

Ceiling. The ceiling is comprised of plaster mouldings with panels above which have been plastered over. At a later stage this has been underdrawn with a fibrous board fixed back on a metal mesh wire and plastered over. It is clear there have been several phases of intervention and repair to the ceiling of Whiteley Hall. It is proposed that the ceiling be removed in its entirety and a line of FireLine plasterboard installed in order to provide a fire secure separation between the Hall and the dormitories above. Given the precedent of fire in the Hall it is essential that the client protects the upper floors as far as possible. The new ceiling will include new mouldings with profiles designed to match the existing exactly in every respect. In this way the works will both protect the Millgate Building long term and retain the visual character of Whiteley Hall.

Lighting. The proposed lighting scheme largely replaces the existing units which were formally in the Hall. However, in some instances additional discrete lighting is proposed to improve the Hall as a performance space. The existing wiring and services will be concealed and rationalised wherever possible.

Seating. The retractable seating is a 20th century addition to the Hall and has no direct contact with the historic fabric. Seating will be removed and replaced with a new system as a result of the damage from the fire.

Organ. The existing organ is not original to the Hall and has been significantly damaged by the recent fire. It is proposed that this is removed and replaced with the new organ as described in the drawing set.

Millgate Gym:

Ceiling. The ceiling of the lower floor gym has been water damaged by the fire event in Whiteley Hall. The ceiling will be upgraded by removing the existing suspended ceiling and plaster board lining to the structural ceiling. New FireLine board will be introduced to improve fire performance to the structural ceiling and a new suspended ceiling grid will be installed.

Lighting. A new scheme of lighting is proposed to the lower floor gym. The lighting will make use of existing electricity runs and all fixings will be either to existing positions or on to the structural grid of the new suspended ceiling.

Consultations & Notification Responses

The application was advertised in the Press and a notice posted on site. No representations have been received.

MCC Urban Design and Heritage Team. Recommended conditions of final details.

Issues

Policy Statutory duty Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local planning authorities to give special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest.

Relevant policies Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework provides the guidance on how the statutory duty is to be put into practice. Paragraph 192 states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should 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 positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality, and • The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness Regarding designated heritage assets, paragraph 193 states that 'great weight' should be given to their conservation and the more important the asset, the greater that weight should be; that significance can be lost through development within its setting. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. Paragraph 196 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 securing its optimum viable use.

Local development plan. Relevant in this case are: • Policy EN3 of the City Council's Local Development Framework Core Strategy, adopted July 2012. This states: Throughout the City, the Council will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods, including those of the City Centre. New developments must be designed so as to support the council in preserving, or where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance, including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas and archaeological remains. Proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets will be encouraged where they are considered consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.

Saved policy DC18 of the Unitary Development Plan (Conservation Areas), which states that the council will seek to preserve and enhance the character of its designated conservation areas

Saved Policy DC19 (Listed Buildings), which states: In determining applications for listed building consent or planning applications for development involving or having an impact on buildings of Special Architectural or historic Interest, the Council will have regard to the desirability of securing the retention, restoration, maintenance and continued use of such buildings and to protecting their general setting. The policy states furthermore that the council will not permit a change of use of a listed building where it would have a detrimental effect on its character or appearance; and not permit any external or internal alteration or addition where there would be an adverse effect on its architectural or historic character.

The impact of the proposed works upon the Character, significance and appearance of this grade II listed building.

The proposed works aim to address the recent fire damage to Whiteley Hall and protect the wider Millgate Building. In some cases, it has been unavoidable that historic fabric will be lost in order to ensure that future fire spread is prevented. However, the proposals will ensure the survival of the historic character of Whiteley Hall through careful attention to replicating the detailing and existing thicknesses of materials and depths of reveals within the Hall. As a result, the proposals represent the opportunity to provide long term protection to the Whiteley Hall and the wider Millgate Building, protecting this historic structure with a continued and prominent use at the centre of Manchester.

It is considered that the benefits of the proposal would outweigh the less than substantial harm caused to the affected heritage asset by the above described works and are consistent with paragraphs 196 and 197 of the NPPF and address sections 66 and 72 of the Planning Act in relation to preservation and enhancement. The benefits of the proposals are that the proposal consists of works that would enhance the efficiency of the building and its character and appearance. The proposal would not have an impact upon the character of the Cathedral Conservation Area.

Other Legislative Requirements

Equality Act 2010

Section 149 (Public Sector Equality Duty) of the Equality Act 2010 requires due regard to the need to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act and; Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The Equality Duty does not impose a legal requirement to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment. Compliance with the Equality Duty involves consciously thinking about the aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making.

Human Rights Act 1998 considerations

This application needs to be considered against the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. Under Article 6, the applicants (and those third parties, including local residents, who have made representations) have a right to a fair hearing and to this end the local planning authority must give full consideration to their comments.

Protocol 1 Article 1, and Article 8 where appropriate, confer(s) a right of respect for a person's home, other land and business assets. In taking account of all material considerations, including Council policy as set out in the Core Strategy and saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan, the Director of Planning, Building Control & Licensing has concluded that some rights conferred by these articles on the applicant(s)/objector(s)/resident(s) and other occupiers and owners of nearby land that might be affected may be interfered with but that that interference is in accordance with the law and justified by being in the public interest and on the basis of the planning merits of the development proposal. She believes that any restriction on these rights posed by the recommendation given is proportionate to the wider benefits of and that such a decision falls within the margin of discretion afforded to the Council under the Town and Country Planning Acts.

Recommendation: Approve

Article 35 Declaration

Officers have worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner to seek solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with the planning application. Concerns were raised during the processing of the application about the need to reduce the impact on the character of

the listed building in terms of the level of intervention. Suggestions were made about ways in which the scheme could be revised such that it would be acceptable.

Condition(s) to be attached to decision for approval

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Heritage & Urban Design

Appendix 2 – Planning constraints

Article 4 Direction - Removal Of PD Rights Change Of Use From Class C3 To Class C4

Article 4 Direction - City Centre PD Restriction - Class B1(a) To C3

Aircraft Safeguarding Zone - Aircraft Safeguarding Zone - All Exceeding 90M

Coal Authority - Development Low Risk - Name: DEVELOPMENT_LOW_RISK_AREA

Conservation Area - Cathedral Conservation Area 1972

Flood Zones Type 2 (low to medium risk) -

Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -

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Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -

Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -

Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -

Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -

Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -

Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -

Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -

Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -

Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -

Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (More) -

Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (More) -

Area Team Boundary - Name: CENTRAL