

Consultation Response from KC, Conservation and Design		
2021/94350 & 2021/94351 22-26, Wellington Road, Dewsbury, WF13 1HL		
Alterations to office building to form 19 flats and associated office space and laundry (Listed Building within a Conservation Area)		
Listed Building Consent for alterations to office building to form 19 flats and associated office space and laundry (within a Conservation Area)		
Date Responded:14.01.2022	Responding Officer: Sebastian Pickles	Responding Ref:

Thank you for the consultation of 17th December 2021 requesting Conservation comments on the proposed Planning and Listed Building consent applications. Having reviewed the proposals, I offer the following comments.

No.22 Wellington Road is Listed at Grade II and is also within the Dewsbury Conservation Area and Dewsbury Heritage Action Zone. The site comprises of two main elements. To the north there is a 2-storey block and to the south there is a larger more imposing four storey warehouse. The site is immediate proximity to the Railway Station. This does raise the suggestion that the complex had a close connection to the railway.

Within then submitted documents is a combined Design, Access and Heritage Statement. Having regards for Policy 194 of the NPPF I am not convinced that the submitted statement meets the requirements.

The proposals are seeking to convert the existing buildings in residential use with works to the exterior and interior of both buildings.

Externally the main areas of concerns are the proposed alterations to and in part infilling of existing doorways and openings. There are several existing doorways which are proposed to be infilled, including the main entrance with the deep recessed doorway which rockface semi-circular arch with centre key stone. While appreciating that this is looking to make use of the internal space this would have a negative impact to the character of the building and the external street. The retention of the doorway could still allow for the reuse of the internal space the doorway retained and some form of decorative metal gates instated if there are any security concerns.

The windows and doors the two storey and four storey elements are to be replaced. The existing windows to both sections do appear to be more recent replacements and not of historic merit. The proposed style of window for the four-storey warehouse building appear to fit reasonably with the character of the building. I would however question the use of aluminium over timber. However, the design for the two-storey building appear incongruous. Additionally, the use of aluminium frames for the two-storey building would have a negative impact on the character of the building as it would result in much thicker and heavier frames on section of building which has the feel of more polite architecture. The windows should be two over two sliding sashes and be constructed if timber.

The front door of the two-storey section is shown as being replaced with a highly contemporary style door. This would see the loss of what appears to be a historic door. The provenance of the existing door is unclear however it does appear to be of merit and does clearly fits the character of the building. The loss of the door would have a harmful detrimental impact to the character of the building.

To the western elevation of the 4 storey warehouse, it is intended to insert an additional window opening which would be of a match in size and scale to the existing windows on this elevation. Creation of new openings is not generally supported, however on balance the additional opening will have a nominal impact to overall elevation.

On the southern roof plane, it is proposed to fit a linear run of solar panels. While accepting that the roof is a of a greater height, the roof plane is clearly visible from several views from the south and I would not consider the fitting of panels to be appropriate in this instance, as it would create a visually intrusive feature.

While not being direct works to the building but would impact on its setting and the Conservation Area, it is intended to site the bin store to the northern side of the building. Given the prominence of the building this will create a negative visual impact in the street scene. The bin store needs to be relocated to a less visual intrusive location. The ideal location would be to the side of them building which is less visually obvious.

Within the combined statement it refers to the hoist mechanism to the warehouse and setting out that this is to be removed. It has been set out this is for health and safety reasons however this is not a sufficient justification as the mechanism is not detailed as being unsafe or requiring works. The mechanism forms a part of the historic fabric to the former use of the building and the mechanism should be retained in situ as a feature. Its removal would constitute harm to the historic fabric of the warehouse.

To the interior there are several interventions proposed. Having reviewed the images of the building it is clear that there is a reasonable amount of extant fabric including roof trusses to the third floor, historic stairwells and timber panelling and cast-iron columns. One of the main interventions is for the removal of the existing stairs and instatement of replacement stairs at a differing orientation. This includes historic stairs with decorative cast balusters and carved handrail which are noted in the combined statement. The removal of the existing stairs and stairwell is a significant concern as this would see the loss of extant fabric and substantive alteration to the historic floor plan of the buildings. The proposals would constitute significant harm to the character and significance of the building.

The proposals also set out that the historic trusses may be retained if possible. This detail is insufficient as it does not make the intentions clear. The extant trusses form a part of the historic fabric and detail of the warehouse building, and their loss would constitute a further element of harm. There is no detail to show that the trusses can not be retained and be integrated in the reuse of the space. I would not be able to support the loss of the trusses.

As shown in image 25 of the combined statement there is extant timber panelling to this room. The details seem to indicate the removal of the panelling. The panelling does appear to be of the turn of the century and part of the phased development of the building. Its removal would cause unacceptable harm. The proposals should seek to work with the extant fabric and works it into the scheme opposed to removal and loss.

While appreciating what is trying to be achieved and accepting the principle of the reuse of the buildings is acceptable, the proposals as currently presented are unacceptable and would have a negative impact on the character of the Listed assets and Conservation Area.

The proposals for the reuse of the building would be supported under Policy LP35 of the Local Plan, however the detail and method of doing so can not be supported. As currently presented the proposals would create an unacceptable level of harm which would not be outweighed by the benefit. In current form I do not consider that the proposals would accord with Policy 66 or 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act. Further to this the proposals as presented would not be supported by Policies 199, 200, 202 and 206 of the NPPF.

With further consideration taking note of the comments as set out the proposals could be acceptable.

