Historic England

Ms Sue Brooks
Kirklees Council
Planning Services
Market Street
Huddersfield
West Yorkshire
HD1 2EY

Direct Dial: 01904 601957

Our ref: L01584189

13 November 2024

Dear Ms Brooks

Arrangements for Handling Heritage Applications Direction 2021

HUDDERSFIELD LIBRARY AND ART GALLERY, PRINCESS ALEXANDRA WALK, HUDDERSFIELD, WEST YORKSHIRE HD1 2SU
Application No. 2024/92473

Thank you for your letter of 24 October 2024 regarding the above application for listed building consent. On the basis of the information available to date, we offer the following advice to assist your authority in determining the application.

Historic England Advice
Significance

Huddersfield Library and Art Gallery was constructed in 1937 and is constructed using a steel frame and clad with local sandstone.

The main entrance has a projecting section which ogee-curved consoles supporting a cornice. Internally, the entrance hall has a formal, grand staircase, an original coffered ceiling and lights, chequer design floor, and a meeting room completed with panelling on the walls.

Therefore the listed building possesses aesthetic and illustrative significance as an example of library and gallery construction in the 1930s in England.

Impact

The proposal is part of the wider Our Cultural Heart masterplan in Huddersfield's town centre. The proposal looks to renovate and improve access and the offering which can be held in the GII listed building.

The impact of those aspects of the proposal which fall under our remit do not raise any

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concerns and has largely preserved those elements which make the building significant. Only elements of demolition in the GII are within Historic England's remit. The demolition of the rear of the building, which has a lesser degree of significance, would cause a less than substantial amount of harm to the significance of the GII listed building and therefore the local authority should weigh this against the public benefit.

The justification for this demolition is to build a new extension which will house the environmentally controlled rooms for its new use. This takes the pressure for more intrusive interventions away from the historic fabric in the main listed building and this is therefore supported by Historic England.

Overall, this is one part of the broader Our Cultural Heart masterplan which will seek to regenerate the center of Huddersfield which will come with a wealth of heritage, public and economic benefits.

Historic England is comfortable leaving the specific internal details of this proposal to the local authority's conservation advisors.

Recommendation
Historic England supports the application on heritage grounds.

We consider that the application meets the requirements of the NPPF, in particular paragraph numbers 200, 205, 206, and 208.

In determining this application you should bear in mind the statutory duty of section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

And, section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

Your authority should take these representations into account and seek amendments, safeguards or further information as set out in our advice. If there are any material changes to the proposals, or you would like further advice, please contact us.

Yours sincerely

Alexander Harrison
Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas
E-mail: Alexander.Harrison@historicengland.org.uk

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