

KIRKLEES METROPOLITAN COUNCIL INVESTMENT & REGENERATION SERVICE

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) – SECTION 16

DELEGATED DECISION TO DETERMINE APPLICATIONS FOR LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

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| Reference No: | 2026/65/90167/W |
| Site Address: | Marsden Mechanics, Peel Street, Marsden, Huddersfield, HD7 6BW |
| Description: | Listed Building Consent for solar PV array to roof (within a Conservation Area) |
| Recommending Officer: | Joshua Merriman |

DECISION – REFUSE LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

I hereby authorise the approval of this application for the reasons set out in the officer's report and recommendation annexed below in respect of the above matter.

Sarah Longbottom

AUTHORISED OFFICER

Date: 16-Mar-2026

Officer Report – 2026/90167

Site Description

The application site refers to Marsden Mechanics Hall, Peel Street, Marsden, Huddersfield, HD7 6BW, a detached three-storey building in the centre of Marsden District Centre, faced in natural stone, with a pitched tiled roof, and timber windows and doors. The application property lies in a slightly varied street scene, surrounded by mostly commercial property of a smaller size and scale, whilst also neighbouring a primary school. Given the application properties size, it is a standout building in Marsden and is well-viewed when entering the district from many locations. The property has the following listed description:

“1860. Mechanics Institute by John Hogg of Halifax. Hammer dressed stone with ashlar dressings. Hipped slate roof with frieze of moulded bracketed eaves cornice. Two storeys with deep ashlar band between floors. 3-bay symmetrical facade to Peel Street: central portico with paired, Corinthian columns with backing pilasters, full entablature of blocking course. Later iron balcony rails. Round arched ground floor windows with voussoirs and impost band. Round arched 1st floor windows with impost capitals, scrolled spandrels, console keystone and bracketed cornice. The centre window is surmounted by carved head with scrolled support. The 5-bay symmetrical facade to Brougham Road is treated the same, except that the portico has only single columns, and the 2 ground floor windows to left are square headed with tall brackets supporting cornice. A dormer with scrolled support surmounts this elevation. The 3-bay elevation has good stack at eaves level. Surmounting the corner is a tall, timber, square clock tower, louvred at the base and with round clock to all four faces, which each have triangular pediment over. Steep pyramidal roof with lucarnes and decorative metalwork railings at top. Important corner site.”

Proposal

The application requests Listed Building Consent for solar PV array to roof (within a Conservation Area).

The proposals would involve the installation of 36 no. JA Solar 450W N-Type bifacial all-black photovoltaic panels. The panels will be mounted on rails positioned approximately 75mm above the existing slate roof covering.

Panels will be fixed using retrofit roof hooks located beneath the panels and secured into existing rafters

The site is allocated within the Marsden Conservation Area within the Kirklees Local Plan (adopted 2019). The site is also located in the Marsden District Centre, within a Strategic Green Infrastructure Network area, bat alert layer, twice buffer, and is a designated Grade II Listed Building.

Relevant Planning History

The most relevant planning history relates to the following applications:

88/02986 - Refurbishment of building and extensions (Listed Building) – Consent Granted.

88/02987 - Listed Building Consent for refurbishment including re-roofing, stone cleaning, new windows and doors, fire escape, staircase and new entrance – No Objections.

2002/93499 - LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR INSTALLATION OF CCTV CAMERAS (WITHIN A CONSERVATION AREA) – Consent Granted.

2003/92654 - ERECTION OF BROADBAND RADIO ANTENNA ON CHIMNEY STACK ADJACENT TO CLOCK TOWER (LISTED BUILDING WITHIN A CONSERVATION AREA) – Granted Under Reg.3 General Regulations.

2003/92655 - LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR ERECTION OF BROADBAND ANTENNA ON CHIMNEY ADJACENT TO CLOCKTOWER (WITHIN A CONSERVATION AREA) – Consent Granted.

2005/91825 - LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR INSTALLATION OF CCTV CAMERAS (WITHIN A CONSERVATION AREA) – Consent Granted.

2006/92531 - LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR RELOCATION OF CONSERVATORY ENTRANCE DOOR (WITHIN A CONSERVATION AREA) – Consent Granted.

2011/91954 - Listed Building Consent for internal alterations to form new office – Consent Granted.

2016/92136 - Listed Building Consent for alterations to two existing window openings and internal alterations to form two separate office units (within a Conservation Area) – Consent Granted.

2017/92185 - Erection of illuminated and non-illuminated signs (Listed Building within a Conservation Area) – Advertisement Consent Granted.

2017/92188 - Listed Building consent for erection of illuminated and non-illuminated signs (within a Conservation Area) – Consent Granted.

2019/93534 - Certificate of Lawfulness for proposed works to a Listed Building to install plaque – Cert of Lawful Opps Granted.

2021/91134 - Listed Building Consent for replacement and repair of external windows and doors and replacement of single glazing with double glazed units (within a Conservation Area) – Consent Granted.

2023/90623 - Erection of 3no. non illuminated poster display cabinets (Listed Building within a Conservation Area) – Advertisement Consent Granted.

2023/90626 - Listed Building Consent for installation of 3 poster display cases: 2 on the west elevation and 1 on the south elevation of the building (within a Conservation Area) – Consent Granted.

2024/92089 - Installation of two high level windows in the east elevation (Listed Building within a Conservation Area) – Conditional Full Permission.

2024/92090 - Listed Building Consent for Installation of two high level windows in the east elevation (Listed Building within a Conservation Area) – Consent Granted.

Climate Change

On 12th November 2019, the Council adopted a target for achieving 'net zero' carbon emissions by 2038, with an accompanying carbon budget set by the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research. National Planning Policy includes a requirement to promote carbon reduction and enhance resilience to climate change through the planning system and these principles have been incorporated into the formulation of Local Plan policies. The Local Plan pre-dates the declaration of a climate emergency and the net zero carbon target, however, it includes a series of policies which are used to assess the suitability of planning applications in the context of climate change. When determining planning applications, the Council will use the relevant Local Plan policies and guidance documents to embed the climate change agenda.

Public/Members Response

The application has been publicised as affecting the setting of a Listed Building and Conservation Area, on the Councils website, by site notice, and by press advertisement.

The publicity period for this application expired on 06/03/2026.

Consultation Responses

KC Conservation & Design (Informal) – The solar PV would be very visible on the Listed Building and within the centre of the Conservation Area, viewed as you enter the Conservation Area from the main road. They would detract from the existing attractive roofscape of this prominent Listed Building. The justification is not convincing regarding harm is not outweighed by public benefit. The other sides might be less visible, less prominent and may cause less harm to the character and appearance of both the Listed Building and Conservation Area.

Following further discussions with the applicant, it was understood that other roof slopes could not be explored as an alternative to the original proposal, therefore, KC Conservation & Design object to the proposal.

Kirklees Local Plan Policy

National Policies and Guidance

The building is Grade II listed and therefore Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) requires the Local Planning Authority to 'have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of a special architectural or historic importance which it possesses'.

National planning policy and guidance are set out in National Policy Statements, primarily the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published 19th December 2024, the Planning Practice Guidance Suite (PPGS) first launched 6th March 2014 together with Circulars, Ministerial Statements and associated technical guidance.

Chapter 16 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

A consultation draft of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published on 16 December 2025. As a consultation, the document is at an early stage and subject to change. Accordingly, for the purposes of this application, no weight is given to the current consultation document.

Assessment

Marsden Mechanics is an example of a property constructed circa 1860 in hammer-dressed stone with ashlar dressings, a hipped slate roof and timber windows and doors. The property showcases symmetrical façade windows ranging from 3-bay to 5-bay, and shows a presence of moulded bracketed eaves cornices, Corinthian columns, iron balcony rails, voussoirs, impost capitals, scrolled spandrels, and console keystones,

Moreover, a square clock tower containing a round clock to each face and triangular pediments, as well as a steep pyramidal roof with lucarnes and decorative metalwork railing is located at the West of the property.

The proposed changes would involve the installation of solar panels of the South facing roof slope of the building, which is considered to be the building's most visible elevation. Following an informal consultation with KC Conservation & Design, the following comments have been received:

"The solar PV would be very visible on the Listed Building and within the centre of the Conservation Area, viewed as you enter the Conservation Area from the main road. They would detract from the existing attractive roofscape of this prominent Listed Building. The justification is not convincing regarding harm is not outweighed by public benefit. The other sides might be less visible, less prominent and may cause less harm to the character and appearance of both the Listed Building and Conservation Area.

Following further discussions with the applicant, it was understood that other roof slopes could not be explored as an alternative to the original proposal, therefore, KC Conservation & Design object to the proposal.”

Considering the above comments, and an objection from KC Conservation & Design, it is concluded that the proposed development to Marsden Mechanics Hall is unacceptable and will significantly impact the character of a Listed heritage asset and surrounding Marsden Conservation Area.

Conclusion

Paragraph 207 of the NPPF states that:

“In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary.”

Paragraph 208 of the NPPF goes on to state that:

“Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal.”

Paragraph 212 of the NPPF states that:

“When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.”

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act requires that the Local Planning Authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. is acceptable, subject to condition.

Paragraph 213 of the NPPF states that:

“Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

(a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;”

Paragraph 215 of the NPPF goes on to state 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, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.”

Considering the above, the solar panels will result in less than substantial harm which, in order to be acceptable, require clear justification and public benefit to be demonstrated in order to outweigh that harm.

It is noted that the building is in use by the public and in general, the proposals would support energy efficiency, and reduce carbon emissions. However, no information has been put forward by the applicant to set out the specific public benefits of the proposals, other than that they would support the long term sustainable use of the building. As such, officers consider that the overall benefits are limited in scale and are not sufficient to outweigh the harm that has been identified.

In conclusion, the proposals are not considered to provide significant public benefit and would be detrimental to the surrounding Conservation Area and Grade II Listed Building. As a result, a clear justification is not provided for the installation of the proposed solar panels, and Listed Building Consent is therefore refused.

Recommendation – Consent Refused

Decision Authorisation – Delegated Powers
Application Number: 2026/90167
Officer Recommendation: Consent Refused

Reasons for Refusal

1. The proposed solar panels, being located on the south facing roof slope and relating to the principal elevation of the Listed Building, would fail to preserve the special historic interest of the Grade II Listed Building and detrimentally impact the character and appearance of the Marsden Conservation Area, contrary to Policy LP35 of the Kirklees Local Plan and guidance contained within Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Plans and specifications schedule:-

| Plan Type | Reference | Version | Date Received |
|---|------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Location Plan | - | - | 19/01/2026 |
| Block Plan | - | - | 19/01/2026 |
| Existing Front Elevation | - | - | 19/01/2026 |
| Marsden Mechanics Proposed Equipment | - | - | 19/01/2026 |
| Application Forms | - | - | 19/01/2026 |
| Proposed Solar Array | - | - | 19/01/2026 |
| Heritage Statement | - | - | 19/01/2026 |

Report Dated: 13/03/2026