



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 September 2022

by Gareth W Thomas BSc (Hons) MSc (Dist) DMS MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 April 2023

Appeal A Ref: APP/X5990/Y/22/3292964

University Of Notre Dame, 1-4 Suffolk Street, London SW1Y 4HG

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by The University of Notre Dame London against the decision of City of Westminster Council.
 - The application Ref 21/08014/LBC, dated 23 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 7 December 2021.
 - The works proposed are installation of secondary glazing to three windows at first floor level on front elevation (and specifically to room No. 1.02 / Undergraduate Director).
-

This decision is issued in accordance with Section 56(2) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and supersedes the decision issued on 1 December 2022.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and listed building consent is granted for the installation of secondary glazing to three windows at first floor level on front elevation (and specifically to room No. 1.02 / Undergraduate Director) at University Of Notre Dame, London SW1Y 4HG in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 21/08014/LBC dated 23 November 2021 and the plans submitted with it subject to the following conditions:
 1. The works hereby approved shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 2. The works hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 9418.03; 4D-116B P04; and 4D01OS.
 3. The secondary windows shall be fixed entirely within the reveal and timber framing of the existing sash windows and there shall be no fixing into or any other alteration of the side/top panelling, window cill or panelled shutters.

Main Issue

2. This is whether the proposed works preserve the listed building known as 1-4 Suffolk Street (Listed as 1266152 – 1-4 Suffolk Street SW1/Former United University Club 3-5 Pall Mall East SW1) or any features of special interest that it possesses.

Reasons

3. In considering works to a listed building, the duty imposed by sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

(the Act) requires that special regard must be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Paragraph 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) says when considering the impact of a proposal on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to that asset's conservation.

4. The former University Club, now part of the University of Notre Dame campus is a very substantial three storey and basement property of Portland stone under a slated mansard roof standing at the corner of Pall Mall and Suffolk Street within the Trafalgar Conservation Area (TCA). Described in the listing as an *'early instance of Blomfield's refined Beaux Arts classicism in the neo-Gabriel French manner but still with certain English neo-Mannerist features (or rather solecisms)'*, the key attributes of the special architectural interest lies in the neo-classical design of the building incorporating a recessed porch entrance to Suffolk Street with two Doric columns under entablature, segmental bows extending from the façade and containing three sets of sash windows at each floor; beyond the entrance are five sets of sash windows over the three floors separated vertically by squared columns. The appeal property and those of the associated terrace hold considerable special architectural interest, most evidently expressed in their lively well-articulated elevations.
5. The Trafalgar Conservation Area is characterised by its mixture of nationally important urban spaces, monumental stone buildings in classical styles and, in the context of the immediate setting, converging street patterns with strong robust architecture providing cornerstones to the square. The appeal building makes a significant and positive contribution to the urban townscape at an important corner to the square.

The proposals

6. The works proposed seek to provide secondary glazing to three sash windows on the first floor facing Suffolk Street. I was able to inspect the inside of the building and the particular cellular offices that would be affected by the appeal proposal. In addition, I was able to view other parts of the building where secondary glazing has already been installed with or without prior listed building consent. I noted the very light intervention that has taken place and I was able to also look at these from street level.
7. The secondary internal glazing containing a central bar which would correspond with the existing sash windows when closed would be fitted in the corner recesses of the window's timberwork. Although the central glazing bar would be seen from outside the building when the existing sashes are open, they would not lead to the loss of historic fabric, including the sash windows or their framing. The existing windows are constructed with traditional sections that give it a robust appearance by comparison with the slender single horizontal bar proposed. This glazing bar would barely be noticeable from street view.
8. It is noted that Historic England¹ advises that energy efficiency within buildings can be achieved through the use of secondary glazing that would not result in the loss of historic windows and preserve the outside appearance of the building. Moreover, the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance suggests

¹ <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/your-home/making-changes-your-property/types-of-work/alter-my-windows/>

that “secondary glazing is more likely to be acceptable, although this too may be damaging to the fabric and appearance of high-quality interiors. Listed building consent for such work will only be granted where these can be carried out without damaging the external appearance of the building or the integrity of historic interiors”. I am satisfied having viewed the internal window reveals that the design would be compatible with existing window panelling and mouldings. The proposed works would be reversible and would not cause irrevocable harm to the heritage asset as would be the case from loss of historic windows and the installation of inappropriate window replacements.

9. Thus, I conclude that the proposed works would not in any way be harmful and would preserve the special architectural and historic significance of the heritage asset. For the reasons set out above, I also consider that the proposals would preserve the character and appearance of the WCA.
10. In so far as local Development Plan policies apply to the development proposed in this context, I find no conflict with Westminster City Plan Policies 38 and 39, which amongst other things, seek to ensure that new developments are of high-quality design befitting Westminster’s unique world-class status and heritage by ensuring that heritage assets are conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance.
11. The appeal being allowed, I attach a condition to the grant of listed building consent requiring adherence to approved plans in order to assure certainty. In addition, a condition is included to prevent any fixing into important joinery work in order to preserve the integrity of the listed building.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should succeed.

Gareth W Thomas

INSPECTOR