

Aldous, Catherine (Senior Planning Officer)

From: Smith, Laura (Principal Heritage Officer)
Sent: 17 December 2024 17:57
To: Aldous, Catherine (Senior Planning Officer)
Subject: 24/0875 Queens Hotel

Hi Catherine,

Thank you for consulting me on this application. In principle, the conversion of the first floor into accommodation spaces would be acceptable, however there are various gaps within the application and heritage impact assessment which are concerning, and I currently cannot support the applications. From the floor plans, existing and proposed, it is clear that there are significant alterations to layout, with walls and door openings being moved around, new drainage runs to accommodate proposed ensuite bathrooms, and removal of staircases. The plans suggest that some historic walling would be removed, notably between the existing female and male WCs and between several meeting rooms. One of which appears to remove a fireplace, which is likely historic. The application fails to address or document these elements to a suitable degree, nor has it been justified sufficiently within the HIA. The HIA must prove that the features removed were not 'historic', and if they were, that they were not of heritage value. I would consider it fails to do so. Furthermore, several rooms would have ensembles, which would mean significantly more drainage runs within the building. Would these ensembles also require ventilation? Would rooms require additional insulation? These things must be addressed within the submitted LBC documents.

Moreover, the HIA seems to downplay the significance of the building's interior and how this contributes to historic and architectural interest of the building. It states that: *'Considering the nature of the works are to the internal areas of the building which are not referred to within the list description, it has been clearly shown that there will be no harm to the listed building, and as such, for the most part, will preserve the building and the features of importance and significance.'* Cadw's listing description is not intended to be a complete inventory of what is listed: it is principally intended to aid identification. The internals do not appear to have been assessed during the time of listing, therefore one cannot assume the listing principally lies with the externals. As it has been established that historic fabric is proposed to be removed, I would also disagree with the final statement which notes compliance with the '1990 Act' (which is now obsolete and the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023), and that there are 'no specific heritage policies', to which I am uncertain of what this actually means.

Overall, the application lacks detail and information of the proposed scheme and does not contain an appropriate justification for the impact it may cause on the architectural and historic interest of this listed building. Therefore, I cannot support the application as I do not believe a sufficient level of information has been given to guarantee the proposals would preserve the listed building in accordance with section 96 of the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023.

Many thanks,

Laura Smith

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Please note: I may not always be reachable on this telephone number. Should you call and fail to get through, please contact me via email. I will aim to respond to all email enquiries by email unless alternative arrangements, such as a call via Microsoft Teams, are mutually agreed.

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