



Application: Application for Listed Building consent for the conversion of existing building, currently categorised as office accommodation to a one-bedroom flat and nine bedroom House of Multiple Occupation.

LPA ID: 20230794 & 20230795

Address: 196 & 197 Parrock Street, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 1EW

Dear Mr Bonthron,

Thank you for consulting the Georgian Group on the above application for Listed Building Consent and Planning Permission. Based on the information available to date, the Group forwards the following advice to assist your local authority in determining this application.

Significance of Heritage Asset

195 and 196 Parrock Street are grade II listed as a pair of dwellings, constructed in the early 19th century. The architectural and historic interest of the pair relate to their external and internal decorative elements, along with the internal planform which largely survives and remains legible enhancing the interest. The ability to illustrate past development of the area contributes to the historic interest of the buildings.

Proposal

The applications for Listed Building Consent and Planning Permission include the conversion of the building from office use to a house of multiple occupation, requiring the installation of ensembles to the separate floors of the building along with servicing for the proposed flats.

The Georgian Group's Advice

In order to convert the existing building from office use to a HMO the introduction of ensembles is proposed to ground, first, second and third floors where they did not exist before. At present the historic plan form of the building is still legible and the spatial qualities of the rooms can still be appreciated, something that is enhanced by the presence of the chimney breasts within the individual rooms. The survival of the plan forms to the separate floors is something that contributes to the significance of the grade II listed building.

The application proposes ensuite to the front and rear rooms on the ground, first, second and third floors which would have a negative impact on the significance of the building causing an element of harm.

Recommendation

As the application stands, there would be less than substantial harm caused to the significance of the heritage asset.

Paragraph 199 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’. Conservation within the glossary of the NPPF is defined as ‘the process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance’.

Paragraph 200 sets out 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’.

As the proposals cause an element of less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage asset, paragraph 202 of the NPPF is engaged. Paragraph 202 sets out the need to weigh public benefits against the harm caused. Your local authority should ensure that the harm caused is given sufficient weight when undertaking this balance.

In determining this application, you should bear in mind the statutory duty of section 66 (1) and 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990. Within the Act, it states that special regard should be given to the desirability of preserving a building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses; and in reference to conservation areas (section 72), that special attention should be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Your authority should take these representations into account when determining this application.

Yours sincerely,

Edward Waller (Conservation Advisor for South East England and London)