

CUMBERLAND COUNCIL
CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Proposal: Replace all existing white painted timber framed windows with white uPVC windows; replace currently white painted high level plant room doors with white powder coated steel

Address: Flatt Walks Health Centre, Castle Meadows, Whitehaven

Reference: 4/24/2140/0F1

Date: 20/05/24

Description: Flatt Walks Health centre is a modern building located on the edge of Whitehaven conservation area. It is not a heritage asset.

Conclusion: No objection.

Assessment:

- The health centre forms a part of the setting of Whitehaven Conservation Area and the grade II* listed Catherine Mill.
- Catherine Mill is situated approx. 70m away, and this part of its setting is dominated by the car parking adjacent to Castle Meadows.
- Similarly, this part of the conservation area is dominated by the tarmac car parking.
- In terms of colour and opening style, the new windows will match the existing. The switch from timber to uPVC, I would consider to have a negligible impact on the setting of the conservation area and of Catherine Mill.

Relevant Policies and Guidance:

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 establishes a need “in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works [for the Local Planning Authority to] have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest” [Section 16(2)]. This requirement also applies to the granting of planning permission affecting a listing building or its setting [Section 66(1)].

Section 72 of the 1990 Act states that “special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of [a conservation] area.”

Paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) asserts that “Development that is not well designed should be refused”.

NPPF para. 197 states that “In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation...”

NPPF para. 199 states, in the case of designated heritage assets, “great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation”, irrespective of whether potential harm is substantial, less-than-substantial, or total loss. Where harm to a designated heritage asset is less-than-substantial, it should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal (para. 202).

Opportunities should be sought for new development within conservation areas and the settings of heritage assets that enhances or better reveals their significance. (para. 206)

Referring to assets in a conservation area, NPPF para. 207 states that loss of an element that makes a positive contribution to a conservation area should be treated as either substantial (under para. 201) or less-than-substantial harm (under paragraph 202).

The former Copeland Borough Council's Local Plan contains a number of relevant policies:

- Local Plan Policy ST1C(ii) highlights the importance of protecting, enhancing and restoring the Borough's cultural and heritage features and their settings.
- ST1D emphasises the council's commitment to creating and retaining quality places.
- ENV4A stresses the importance of protecting listed buildings, conservation areas and other features considered to be of historic, archaeological or cultural value.
- DM27A outlines support in principle for developments that "protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic, cultural and architectural character of the borough's historic sites and their settings".
- DM27D highlights the necessity of avoiding disrespectful alterations, substantial demolition, adverse effects on setting or views, or changes of use that harm the conservation or economic viability of a listed building.

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