

HERITAGE CONSULTATION RESPONSE

22/0490/LLB Library Chambers, 63 High Street, Bagshot, Surrey GU19 5AH

Refurbishment to all windows at first-floor level including casements and sash. Replacement door and window to rear (boiler room). Internal alterations to upgrade existing fire doors with intumescent strips, and raising floor level of ground floor W/Cs and door openings.

Significance of the heritage asset

The Bagshot Library is a statutorily Grade II listed building, a former house, dating from the first quarter of C19. This traditional, two storey red brick building contributes positively to the character and appearance of the Bagshot Conservation Area and the historic village centre. The refurbishment scheme for the 1st floor of this building, currently disused, is strongly commended in principle, from a conservation point of view, and much welcomed.

A thorough historic appraisal of the building was undertaken by Forum Heritage Services in 2017. In the report, the six-by-six windows were identified as original, and therefore considered to be of very high significance. In addition, all the six panelled doors in this historic building were identified as original, and are therefore also of very high significance. These include the external boiler room door, clad in metal externally. The two doors to the restrooms are also six-panelled, and original.

In line with national guidance, Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable management of the historic environment, (2008), Very High Significance is classification that is not negotiable, and there should be a presumption of retaining it in its present form and setting.

Proposed Schedule of works

Due to the lack of detailed survey and drawings of the six-by-six boiler room window, this has recently been inspected. As discussed, the existing part of the window should be retained and repaired, and the missing part should be replaced by a softwood like for like replica (§,3.1 amendment). Locks should be of traditional design (samples presented per condition). Likewise, on inspection the sturdy six panelled timber boiler room door shows no direct sign of rot. The door should be retained as it is, including the external metal panel, cleaned and repainted (§,4.2.1 amendment). Note that demolition and replacement of these two built elements, as proposed, is not permitted. There is no objection to the removal of the robust metal railings around the boiler, but since they are intact, they ought to be retained and reused elsewhere in the borough, for example in another, forthcoming or existing, public building.

There are no objections to the removal of the metal bars in front of windows W4, W5, W6, W7, W9 and W10. The bars are later installations which detract from the original character. The many original window boxes, however, strongly contribute to the authenticity and ambience of the building, as do the original fireplaces.

The raising of the floor levels in the two restrooms will be permitted using a wooden construction only. Currently there is a significant step down when entering these facilities. Raising the existing cement floors using concrete as proposed, (§,6.2), is not permitted, as cement/concrete would have a detrimental impact once it comes in direct contact with the adjacent old timber panels. The two six-panel doors should be kept intact but may be adjusted accordingly (lifted). The glazed panel above the ladies' restroom may be cut from beneath to fit, but should remain in principle.

There are no objections to the proposed upgrade of the non-original internal doors FD 07, FD 08, FD 09, FD 10 and FD 11 to fire-doors FD30S. There are further no objections to the removal of the recent wall-screen with door in FF7. This is a positive approach which will restore the original, more spacious room layout. The removal of the sliding door FF1, whilst retaining the impressive architrave is also

supported. It is not known when the existing division between FF5 and FF6 was introduced. However, the reinstatement of door FF5 is considered acceptable.

The wooden stair case is one of the character features of the building, which due to the location in the central hallway benefits all visitors to the main building. The staircase should be carefully sanded and repainted.

The added panel behind the elegant fanlight above the main entrance door should be removed and proper glass should be reinserted to reveal the original design. As one of the key features of the Library building, this minor additional piece of work should be added to the scheme to celebrate the new chapter of the building.

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