Application number
HPK/2024/0299
And
HPK/2024/0302

Site location
GROVE HOTEL, GROVE PARADE, Terrace Road, Buxton

Proposal
Application for Removal or Variation of Condition 6 in relation to application HPK/2022/0376
And
Application for Removal or Variation of a Condition 06 in relation to application HPK/2022/0377

Conservation Advice – Amendments
Date: 24/07/2025

Heritage Asset:
1 2 & 3 Grove Hotel & Parade – Grade II listed
Buxton Central Conservation Area

Assessment and Impact
These comments are based upon the following amended plans received:

- P858 beam flitching and encasement detail with MF Ceiling
- P854A works to existing ceilings - ground floor
- P855A works to existing ceilings - 1st floor
- P856A works to existing ceilings - 2nd floor
- P857A works to existing ceilings - 3rd floor

In addition (received 05/06/2025):
- Ceiling works - method statement
- C860 ceiling cornice proposals

Following previous comments dated 15.04.25 an additional method statement and cornice plan (Ref C860) has been received. The revised method statement provides additional clarity regarding the proposed ceiling works, and rectified previous contradictions with plans P854A; P855A; P856A; and P857A.

In addition, plan Ref C860 demonstrates where new cornicing will be placed to combat the sterilizing effect of the proposed ceiling works. The plan (C860) states that's 'existing ceiling and cornices are to be retained and repairs', however, the plan itself does not indicate where existing cornices are to be repaired. Plan Ref C860 should be amended to indicate where existing cornices are to be repaired in addition to showing where new cornices will be installed. While the original ceiling and beams will be covered the

proposed cornice plan offers a small degree of mitigation to the harm caused through the loss of internal character.

To reiterate previous comments (dated 15.04.25) it is acknowledged that the proposed cornicing does not entirely overcome the harm of boxing in the ceiling. The proposed cornicing only mitigates the harm caused. Following the revised information submitted the proposed ceiling works are considered to result in a middling degree of harm. With reference to planning policies, this would be 'less than substantial harm' to the designated heritage asset (par.215 of NPPF and policy EQ7 of the local development framework).

NPPF para 215 provides provision for less than substantial harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including securing its optimum viable use. Para 15 of the NPPG sets out clear guidance in relation to the optimum viable use. In regards to securing the optimum viable use the NPPG states:

> 'Putting heritage assets to a viable use is likely to lead to the investment in their maintenance necessary for their long-term conservation. … If there is a range of alternative economically viable uses, the optimum viable use is the one likely to cause the least harm to the significance of the asset, not just through necessary initial changes, but also as a result of subsequent wear and tear and likely future changes. … Harmful development may sometimes be justified in the interests of realising the optimum viable use of an asset, notwithstanding the loss of significance caused, and provided the harm is minimised.'
>
> 'Where a heritage asset is capable of having a use, then securing its optimum viable use should be taken into account in assessing the public benefits of a proposed development.'

The proposed boxing in of the ceiling has been justified within the 'Ceiling works - method statement' states that the ceiling works are required to achieve the 60 minute fire resistance requires by Part B of the Building Regulations. The statement also notes alternative options which were explored to try to achieve the 60 minutes fire resistance. This included a charring rate investigation which determined that the timber beams were not sufficient to provide the 60 minute resistance. The statement also states that intumescent paint was considered and discounted for similar reasons. As such the revised 'Ceiling works - method statement' provides sufficient reasoning for alternative and less harmful methods being discounted, therefore providing justification for the proposed boxing method.

Taking into account the guidance of the NPPG, the applicant has demonstrated that the proposed ceiling works are the least harmful solution to successfully meeting fire safety regulations. Furthermore, the applicant has minimised the harm caused through repair of damaged lath and plaster and the introduction of cornices to aid in the retention of internal character. Therefore, the harm caused by the proposed ceiling works has been minimised in line with the NPPG guidance. Bringing the grade II listed building back into use, achieving the required fire safety regulations, through the least harmful approach can be considered as the optimum viable use in regards to the NPPG guidance.

Legislation and Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)
Any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within the setting), should require clear and convincing justification (par.213).

Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. (para 215)

Local Development Framework
Consideration should also be given to the following documents and local development framework policies:
High Peak Local Plan (Adopted 2016) – EQ7 Built and Historic Environment

Conclusions and Recommendations
In summary, revised plans rectify previous inconsistencies within the submission. In accordance with par15 of the NPPG guidance the proposed ceiling works have been justified as the least harmful approach to successfully achieving the 60 minutes fire resistance required by building regulations to bring the Grade II listed building back into use. From a conservation perspective, it is therefore considered that the proposed works achieve the optimum viable use of the heritage asset, despite the less than substantial harm identified in accordance with NPPF par 215 and NPPG par 15.

However, for the purposes of clarity the applicant is requested to indicate on plan ref C860 where existing cornicing is to be retained and repaired in addition to the proposed new cornices. Subject to receipt of updated C860 ceiling cornice proposals plan there are no heritage objections the proposed ceiling works out outlined above.

Conservation Officer: Rachel Robinson
High Peak Borough Council