

From: Borough Council
To: Fisher, Adrian
Date: 19/11/08 12:20
Subject: Fwd: FAO Adrian Fisher HPK/2008/0622

Adrian

Please see the attached

Regards

Karen

Customer Services
High Peak Borough Council
Council Offices
Hayfield Road
Chapel-en-le-Frith
High Peak
SK23 0QJ

Tel: 0845 129 77 77

Fax: 01298 28425

E-mail: customer-services@highpeak.gov.uk

Minicom for the hard of hearing: 0845 129 48 76

SMS Text Messaging: 07800 00 22 62

>>> "ALLEN, Tim" <Tim.Allen@english-heritage.org.uk> 18/11/08 16:13 >>>

From English Heritage by email

Mr A Fisher
Head of Planning and Development Services
High Peak Borough Council
Council Offices
Hayfield Rd
Chapel-en-le-Frith
High Peak
SK23 0QJ

Dear Mr Fisher,

Summary

Thank you for consulting English Heritage on this application by Network Rail to substantially demolish the Grade II listed Railway Underbridge 42 at Whaley Bridge, Derbyshire reference HPK/2008/0622.

English Heritage Advice

Planning Policy Guidance 15 lays out statutory guidance to local planning authorities in determining applications for the demolition of listed buildings - PPG15 3.19

3.19 Where proposed works would result in the total or substantial demolition of the listed building, or any significant part of it, the Secretaries of State would expect the authority, in addition to the general considerations set out in paragraph 3.5 above, to address the following considerations:

i. the condition of the building, the cost of repairing and maintaining it in relation to its importance and to the value derived from its continued use. Any such assessment should be based on consistent and long-term assumptions. Less favourable levels of rents and yields cannot automatically be assumed for historic buildings. Also, they may offer proven technical performance, physical attractiveness and functional spaces that, in an age of rapid change, may outlast the short-lived and inflexible technical specifications that have sometimes shaped new developments. Any assessment should also take account of the possibility of tax allowances and exemptions and of grants from public or charitable sources. In the rare cases where it is clear that a building has been deliberately neglected in the hope of obtaining consent for demolition, less weight should be given to the costs of repair;

ii. the adequacy of efforts made to retain the building in use. The Secretaries of State would not expect listed building consent to be granted for demolition unless the authority (or where appropriate the Secretary of State himself) is satisfied that real efforts have been made without

success to continue the present use or to find compatible alternative uses for the building.

This should include the offer of the unrestricted freehold of the building on the open market at a realistic price reflecting the building's condition (the offer of a lease only, or the imposition of restrictive covenants, would normally reduce the chances of finding a new use for the building);

iii. the merits of alternative proposals for the site. Whilst these are a material consideration, the Secretaries of State take the view that subjective claims for the architectural merits of proposed replacement buildings should not in themselves be held to justify the demolition of any listed building. There may very exceptionally be cases where the proposed works would bring substantial benefits for the community which have to be weighed against the arguments in favour of preservation. Even here, it will often be feasible to incorporate listed buildings within new development, and this option should be carefully considered: the challenge presented by retaining listed buildings can be a stimulus to imaginative new design to accommodate them.

We have examined the proposals from Network Rail and our view is that insufficient efforts have been made by the applicant to explore the scope for repair and strengthening of the present bridge structure so it can continue in use. The applicant does not sufficiently explore the feasibility of removing the existing concrete fill to the bridge deck so as to access the cast iron work for repair and the introduction of additional structural elements. The applicant has failed to explore solutions in which realistic loadings might be accommodated through repair and strengthening of the existing fabric. Replacing the bridge deck with an entirely new element in order to carry aspirational loadings much higher than those likely to be required in the foreseeable future should not be the solution. This issue should be explored with reference to the likely load requirements laid out in the Rail User Strategy as opposed to the much higher figure in new deck design brief from Network Rail.

The cast iron arches of Bridge 42 make an important contribution to the local historic environment and we do not feel they should be lost without the exploration of more sophisticated solutions than that proposed.

Recommendation

Your authority should refuse this application in line with the statutory guidance contained in PPG15.

cc Cllr Jon Goldfinch – Whaley Bridge Town Council. – Fernilee ward
cc Lynne Walker – Council for British Archaeology

Tim Allen
Assistant Inspector
English Heritage East Midlands Region
44 Derngate
Northampton
NN1 1UH
01604 735415
07770 610214

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