

Application Number

P/2016/1231

Site Address

Electric House
Castle Circus
Tormohun
Torquay
Torbay
TQ1 3DR

Case Officer

Mrs Saffron Loasby

Ward

Tormohun

Description

Internal works to remove studwork partitions and portions of suspended ceiling first and second floor.

Description

Listed Building application to remove internal studwork and portions of the suspended ceiling on the first and second floors.

Executive Summary

The scheme proposes the removal of the internal stud work walls that were inserted over 30 years ago.

The stud work does not form part of the original building and its removal will return the space to that of the designed open plan layout of 1935.

The work is part of an ongoing Office Rationalisation Programme (ORP) that looks to make better use of the existing office space. The removal of the internal stud walls will allow more people to use the same space, thus making better use of Electric House.

The site is a Grade 2 Listed Building and is located in the Upton Conservation Area. The proposal is considered to be an appropriate alteration to the original property and would not harm the historic character of the building. It would have no impact on the wider street scene or external appearance of the building. As such the proposal would be consistent with Policies HE1 and SS10 in the Torbay Local Plan.

This application is included on the agenda because it has been submitted by the Council for works to a Council owned building.

Recommendation

Listed Building consent be granted,

Statutory Determination Period

The determination date is 1st February 2017.

Site Details

The site is within the Upton Conservation Area and the Art Deco style Electric House that dates from 1935 is a grade 2 Listed Building. It is attached to the Edwardian Baroque Town Hall and Assembly Room that date from 1906-1911 via a connecting building to the northeast. The internal work cannot be seen from outside of the building.

Detailed Proposals

The proposal is for 7 internal stud walls to be removed from the first floor.

At second floor level 3 walls would be removed. These are all internal walls that are not original.

Summary of Consultation Responses

Historic Officer No objection - The interventions carried out during the 1950-79 are poor quality stud walling that is considered to be deleterious to the building and detracting from the light and airy open plan office environment of the 1930's. The removal of these will return the layout to that envisaged in 1935 and to the advantage of the building.

Community Safety No comment

Building Control Awaiting comments

Summary of Representations

The consultation period for this application expires 4th January and at the time of writing no representations have been received.

Relevant Planning History

Electric House and the adjoining Council buildings have an extensive planning history, none of which is specifically relevant to this application.

Key Issues/Material Considerations

The main issues with the proposal relate to the impact the internal alterations will have upon the historic fabric and the character and appearance of the listed buildings and the wider built environment within the Upton Conservation Area.

Development proposals should have special regard to the desirability of

preserving the listed building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Preservation in this context means not harming the aspects of the building that warrant its listed status, as opposed to keeping the building utterly unchanged.

There will be 7 internal walls removed from the first floor.

At second floor level 3 walls are proposed to be removed. Considering the details submitted the physical alterations would be sensitive to the historic fabric and outward character and appearance of the building. It is considered that the proposals are suitably sensitive in the wider context, whereby the usage is expected to provide long term occupation and maintenance of the building. The removal of the various walls is considered to improve the internal layout of the building without having an adverse impact on its historic fabric. As such the proposed development would accord with Policies SS10 (Conservation and the Historic Environment) and HE1 (Historic Environment) in the Torbay Local Plan 2012-30.

Conclusions

The proposed development is considered to be appropriate for listed building consent to be granted.

Condition(s)/Reason(s)

Where any new works are to link into existing historic features, all significant architectural features shall be appropriately protected during the period of the works, and all repairs shall match the existing fabric where reasonably possible.

Reason: To limit the impact upon the character and appearance of the listed building, in accordance with Policies HE1 of the Torbay Local Plan

Relevant Policies

HE1 Listed Buildings

SS10 Conservation and Historic Environment