

Heritage Advice

Building 103 Link Trainer Building at Bicester Heritage - Reference 18/02191/LB

Garry Campion, Senior Conservation Officer

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Proposal

The building is Grade II Listed and was used to house Link Trainers for pilot training. Building 103 is also within the Bicester Airfield Conservation Area. The Heritage Statement included with the application includes a description of the building, the Listed Building Description, and details of the proposed works, not repeated in this advice. In sum, the proposed works are to remove the two windows to the south-west elevation, and rework the opening to accommodate two timber doors, with a concrete ramp; remove two cupboards within both main rooms; and remove the internal partition-walling from one room.

Advice

Confirmed in the Listed Building description, this building would originally have operated as two large rooms, housing Link trainers. The later partition-walling is therefore of less historic interest in this context. It is considered that removing this internal walling does not harm the historic significance of this room. Insofar as the two corner cupboards are concerned, these may retain interest and it is recommended that these be left in situ, unless it can be shown that these too are later additions.

During the site-meeting to discuss the proposals, various options were considered for the main doorway into the building, one possibility being to re-work the doorway to the corner of the south-west north-west elevations – e.g. with the external extension. Access from the road to this area was considered problematic, which would be needed for the new building use. For this reason it is considered that the reworking of the double-window to create a doorway with concrete ramp is reasonable, the less than substantial harm to the building outweighed by the public benefit for educational use. The door style, lights and hinges are in accord with those agreed within the HPA for the site.

For the same reasons it is considered that in heritage terms the impact upon the setting of the Conservation Area is outweighed by bringing the building back into educational use. The primary elevation facing to the south-east is not affected, and is the more visible from the adjacent road.

Thank you for asking for my advice.

GC