



FOREFRONT

DEVELOPMENT CONSULTING

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HERITAGE STATEMENT FOR ROSE COTTAGE, SCHOOL ROAD, BAGNALL, STOKE-ON-TRENT

1. THE NEED FOR A HERITAGE STATEMENT

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states at paragraph 128 that:

‘In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance’.

In order to meet this requirement, local authorities normally now require a Heritage Statement to be prepared to inform and accompany proposals affecting heritage assets.

What should a Heritage Statement contain?

There are no mysteries to the process, although specialist advice is often needed. What might be needed depends on the nature of the asset and the level of intervention proposed; as the NPPF states, the statement should be ‘proportionate’, and ‘no more than is sufficient’

In March 2012 the government introduced the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Part 12 of the NPPF deals with the Historic Environment.

Under policy 128 of the NPPF it is stated that Local Planning Authorities “should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage asset affected, including any contribution made by their setting” and that “the level of detail should be proportionate to the asset’s importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance”.

This is addressed by a ‘Heritage Statement’ and should be prepared for any proposals affecting any heritage asset. ‘Heritage Assets’ include:

Listed Buildings
Conservation Areas
Scheduled Monuments
Sites or buildings on the Historic Environment Record

The Heritage Statement should cover:

- Assessment of significance of heritage asset
- Assessment of proposals on significance of heritage asset
- Justification for works
- Assessment of Significance

Consult the Historic Environment Record to find out what heritage assets may be affected by your proposals and set out their basic details

Demonstrate an understanding of the 'significance' of those heritage assets, and the specific parts that would be affected by your proposals

For larger or more detailed schemes for listed buildings, it may be appropriate to appoint a specialist to produce a record and analysis of the historic building before works are planned

Heritage Impact Assessment

An assessment of the impact of the proposals on the heritage asset
Will the proposal harm, enhance or preserve the significance of the heritage asset?

How does the design of the new work take into account the existing character of an area or building, or impact on existing historic or architectural features?
For structural works or works of repair you may need to provide a method statement to show how the works will be carried out to have the minimum impact on historic fabric

If the works are adjacent to a Listed Building or Conservation Area you will need to consider how they impact on the setting of the heritage asset

Justification

Demonstrate why the works are required.

If there is a harmful impact on the heritage asset, this will need to be justified in terms of "public benefit", e.g. securing optimum viable use of heritage asset in interests of its long-term conservation

Have alternatives been considered that would cause less or no harm? If so, why have they been ruled out?

The more the harm, the greater the justification needed.

2. PLANNING POLICY

Works to Rose Cottage have the potential to affect the setting and appearance of heritage assets. Accordingly paragraphs 134 and 135 of the NPPF are relevant and state;

"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 securing its optimum viable use.”

“The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.”

The National Planning Policy Guidance states that:

“The conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance is a core planning principle. Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and effective conservation delivers wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits.

Conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change. It requires a flexible and thoughtful approach to get the best out of assets as diverse as listed buildings in every day use to as yet undiscovered, undesigned buried remains of archaeological interest.

Where changes are proposed, the National Planning Policy Framework sets out a clear framework for both plan-making and decision-taking to ensure that heritage assets are conserved, and where appropriate enhanced, in a manner that is consistent with their significance and thereby achieving sustainable development.

The “setting of a heritage asset” is defined in the Glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework.

A thorough assessment of the impact on setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset under consideration and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.

Setting is the surroundings in which an asset is experienced, and may therefore be more extensive than its curtilage. All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not.

The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places. For example, buildings that are in close proximity but are not visible from each other may have a historic or aesthetic connection that amplifies the experience of the significance of each.

What matters in assessing if a proposal causes substantial harm is the impact on the significance of the heritage asset. As the National Planning Policy

Framework makes clear, significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. English Heritage's guidance on the management of change within the setting of heritage assets (The Setting of Heritage Assets (English Heritage, October 2011) seeks to provide a definition for the term of 'setting' itself, as well as guidance to allow councils and applicants to assess the impact of developments upon the settings of heritage assets.

The document defines setting as 'the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve.' Setting is also described as being a separate term to curtilage, character and context. While it is largely a visual term, setting, and thus the way in which an asset is experienced, can also be affected by noise, vibration, odour and other factors.

It provides guidance on practical and proportionate decision making with regards to the management of proposed developments and the setting of heritage assets. It is stated that the protection of the setting of a heritage asset need not prevent change and that decisions relating to such issues need to be based on the nature, extent and level of the significance of a heritage asset, further weighing up the potential public benefits associated with the proposals.

3. HISTORY AND STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The application site comprises the eastern of a pair of semi detached cottages. The pair of cottages are constructed from natural local stone and exhibit the local vernacular. Neither are listed buildings.

The site lies in a small triangular plot on the northern side of the road. In close proximity are listed buildings, but it is not considered that the site lies within the historical original curtilage of these Listed Building.

It DOES lie within a Conservation Area.

Rose Cottage and the adjoining dwelling are identified as "Significant Buildings" in the Council's Bagnall Conservation Area Appraisal. There are referred to as stone cottages lying to the North West of St Chads House, which is itself a listed building.

Rose Cottage and its neighbours are attractive traditional buildings with a pleasing cottage appearance. Bagnall originally developed as an agricultural hamlet and as such this form of building was once commonplace but has become increasingly rare.

The listed buildings in the vicinity are as follows

- St Chads Parish Church which together with it's separately listed churchyard cross and chest tomb; lie to the east of the site. These date from the 17th century and are all listed Grade 2.

- Stafford Arms PH/St Chads House lies to the South east of the site. These buildings form a group of 3 buildings formerly cottages. These are also 17th Century and Listed Grade 2. The list description refers to the specific detailing of the building and also states that the buildings form the focus of the village green.

The Listed buildings exhibit greater architectural and historic interest and features than Rose Cottage. They also have a more expansive setting which reflects their higher status and importance.

To the north west of the site is the Village Hall which is also identified as an important local building in the Conservation Area. This detached building is also constructed from stone and was originally the village school house.

The site lies within Bagnall Conservation Area, which was designated in 1972 and extended in 1993. The boundaries of the Conservation Area help preserve the rural setting of present and former farmhouses and hamlets.

The Conservation Area has a clear distinction between the artisan's terraces and cottages, and the more substantial buildings of the farmers and professionals.

Bagnall Conservation Area Villagescape Analysis identifies main vantage points and vistas. These include identified viewpoints out from St Chads Churchyard to the North West and North East.

The proposed extension will not affect the nearby listed building, nor affect identified important views within the Conservation Area.

4. ANALYSIS OF PROPOSAL

The plans propose a two story extension to Rose Cottage. This will necessitate removal of an existing single storey extension which is a post war addition. The extension will be larger in mass and floor area.

The extension will be faced in natural stone sourced locally, and laid and coursed in the traditional manner in order to reproduce the external stonework of the existing building. The proportions of the openings in the extension will follow the pattern and style of traditional openings in the existing building.

The roof of the extension will be covered in materials matching the existing cottage. The pitch and detailing of the roof will replicate the original cottage roof.

The original eastern gable wall of the cottage will not be removed, and it will have the minimum internal opening made, in order to connect the existing accommodation to the new extension. This will mean that the original layout and form of the cottage will remain readily discernible.

The existing extension will be removed, and this will have a positive affect on the Conservation Area as the present addition is poorly designed and detrimental to visual amenity. The present extension is flat roofed which forms an unfortunate jarring note, detrimental to the proportions and character of the cottage and the surrounding area. The external materials are also poorly related to the local stone used for the cottage and seen in surrounding buildings.

Whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision taker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the policy in the National Planning Policy Framework. In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed. The harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting. Works that are moderate or minor in scale are likely to cause less than substantial harm or no harm at all

Policy on substantial harm to designated heritage assets is set out in paragraphs 132 and 133 to the National Planning Policy Framework, as follows:

"132 When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional..."

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 securing its optimum viable use."

5. THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan 1998 contains policies B11 and B13.

B11 states

"In a Conservation Area the local Planning Authority will seek to ensure that development preserves or enhances the appearance and character of the Conservation Area, and is in sympathy with it in terms of scale, siting, alignment, mass, design, colour and materials."

Policy B13 states

“Within the Conservation Area development proposals will be expected to:

- a) demonstrate a good quality of design which takes account of scale, character, siting, alignment, mass, design, colour and materials of their surroundings.
- b) provide design and landscaping of the spaces between and around buildings through the whole site which takes into account and enhances the scale and character of their surroundings. Existing features such as trees and walls should be maintained where they contribute to the character and appearance of the site and its surroundings. Where hard landscaping is appropriate, natural materials should be used where possible.”

6. IMPACT OF THE PROPOSALS

The proposals detailed in the planning application drawings and within this document represent a sensitive development which responds positively to the architectural significance of the historic buildings and respects their setting and appearance.

The existing building would benefit from the removal of the present unsympathetic addition, which has poor architectural detailing and an inappropriate appearance. The new larger extension would reproduce the essential proportions and appearance of the original building and on balance have a positive impact on the listed buildings and Conservation Area.

On balance the extension would not have a significant or substantial effect on the appearance of the site or the wider Conservation Area. This reflects the scale and nature of the building works and the design which has been conceived.

7. CONCLUSION

The works proposed will not have a significant or substantial affect on heritage assets. Neither the setting of listed buildings nor the Conservation Area would be harmed by the plans.

Open separating spaces are important attributes of the Conservation Area, but these will not be harmed by the proposals.

Hallwater House does not lie within the curtilage of Listed Building. Nor is it a contemporaneous building to nearby Listed Buildings. Neither is it a building which might represent an ancillary building to the listed Buildings.

The character and appearance of the Conservation Area would not be harmed by the proposals as the elevation treatment would be appropriate and sensitive.