

Heritage Impact Statement and Justification for works at 10 Stockwell Street, Leek, ST13 6DS

This document has been prepared for a listed building consent application at 10 Stockwell Street, Leek. The property is grade II listed and has been the subject of a previous application to convert the current property into 5 self contained apartments.

Although the entirety of the property is listed, the listing by Historic England concentrates on features, which are on the frontage of the building. This has meant that over time the front elevation has been maintained but is virtually unchanged from its original appearance. In contrast the rear of the property has had several extensions, although in keeping and of a lesser scale and impact than the host building. The current works to the property seek to extend the rear first floor and this scope of works has been granted listed building consent and planning approval.

This application is for necessary works, which have arisen from the current building works.

During the build and the necessary approvals from building control authorities, it has transpired that an automatic opening vent is required to the top of the communal staircase. Because of the change of use to 5 apartments it is clear that such measures for smoke ventilation, in the event of a fire, is a legal requirement. This is especially imperative in light of recent tragic circumstances relating to failures in adequate fire escape measures being in place.

There are several options that are available for an automatic opening vent and these have been looked into in varying degrees in order to assess the best system for use in the listed building. The best and most common means of obtaining adequate smoke ventilation are through either a roof or wall window which is linked to the alarm system and automatically opens in times of fire, a louvered roof or wall vent which works in a similar way or a fan extract system in a wall or roof. The roof or wall windows have to have a minimum vented area of 1m², which dictates the size of window or vent required.

The configuration of the communal staircase and the rear extensions mean that there is not adequate wall area for the use of automatic fans or for an automatic opening window in the rear wall elevation.

Therefore, we have looked at the louvered roof vent system and the roof window and felt that the vented option was too industrial for this building type and so a roof window was felt to be the best option. This has been shown to the building control officer who has given approval in principal that this will satisfy the legal building regulations requirements.

The AOV which has been chosen is a low level conservation type window with slim central glazing bar and a dark frame and flashing which will be the most suitable solution for the listed building.

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Although larger than a typical conservation rooflight, the area required for ventilation has dictated the size and the smallest possible window is 1140mm x 1180mm.

The section of roof where the roof window is positioned is not highly prominent and will not detrimentally affect the character of the listed building. The only place where this addition will be seen is from the Silk Street car park. The photomontage images below show that the roof window AOV does not create an overly adverse or noticeable impact on the setting of the listed building from this view-point.



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The process of building regulations approval has brought this requirement of an AOV to light and therefore, although not initially included in the previous listed building consent application, is needed in some form to comply with the law. We have endeavoured to find the best solution to this problem and the proposed roof window AOV seems to be the most appropriate in terms of conservation and protecting the heritage asset. Although there is some impact on the listed building, it is in a position and of a type, which is not overly conspicuous and will not harm the listed building's character.