Hewitt&CarrArchitects

Heritage Statement

The White Hart, 18 High Street, Alton

Document Reference: 00926 – HS1
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1.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT
Description of the Asset

1.1. Under the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), any design should seek to "conserve and enhance" the historic environment. Section 12 of the NPPF states that LPAs should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, including any contribution made by their setting, with a level of detail proportionate to its importance (P128).

1.2. The White Hart Inn was Grade II listed in 1986 (Ref:1037923). The listing description is as follows:

"House now inn. C18 with later alterations. Ashlar with herringbone tooling painted white; plain tile roof with coped verge to the right; brick integral end stacks. Aligned north-east/south-west facing south-east. 2 storeys, the right hand bay slightly taller and with projecting plinth; 3 bays, casements; door to right of centre." (Historic England)

1.3. The property is also located within Alton and Farley Conservation Area, designated in 1971. There are several listed buildings situated within the conservation area. Many of these are located along the High Street, which represents the medieval core of the village. This is evidenced by the close packed houses and narrow burgage plots still visible to the north of the High Street.

1.4. The White Hart occupies one of these plots, and would originally have functioned as a private dwelling, likely becoming a public house during the 19th century expansion of Alton (due to the increased interest of the 15th and 16th Earls of Shrewsbury at Alton Lodge (now Alton Towers).

1.5. The White Hart Inn was previously owned and run by Marstons brewery. A postcard from the 1900s (StaffsPastTrack) shows the pub painted with the names Marston, Thompson & Evershed Ltd., a brewing company established in Burton by John Marston in 1834. It was previously known as The White Hart Hotel, offering "good stabling," "billiards," and catering for "pic-nic and private parties."

1.6. The pub is now owned and run by the Alton community. Campaigners raised £270 000 to save "the village's oldest pub" when Marston's put it up for sale. It was purchased under the 'Community Right to Bid' (part of the Localism Act), which allowed the sale to be delayed while money was raised.

2.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT
Assessment of its Significance

2.1. The building is of moderate significance when considered within the context of the conservation area. Historic and evidential value is identified as high within the High Street due to the number of legible heritage assets and surviving historic buildings.

2.2. The White Hart makes a positive contribution to the conservation area, being well maintained and occupying a prominent position within the High Street.

2.3. The listing makes no reference to the internal features of the pub, and it's likely to have been afforded this status without an internal inspection. Few original features remain internally, and the pub has been much altered over time.

3.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT
The Design Concept

3.1. The scheme proposes to relocate the bar within the main serving area. The existing bar crosses the room diagonally at the far end of the room, and it is proposed to remove this and construct a new central bar, allowing an improved flow through the space, particularly to the games room at the rear. Further details are provided on drawing 00926 PL(0)02.

3.2. The size, design and location of the proposed bar is similar to a previously approved scheme, under application SMD/2013/0175.

4.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT
The Impact

4.1. It is felt that the new bar will represent a vast improvement on the existing, which is an entirely modern intervention, not reflective of the original layout as a dwelling, nor subsequently as an inn.

4.2. No change to the historic fabric of the building (walls, flooring etc.) is proposed, and any potential intervention will be kept to a minimum, representing no substantial harm.

4.3. No external changes are proposed. Therefore, there will be no effect on the historic setting nor character of the conservation area.

5.0 APPENDIX

www.altonwhitehart.co.uk
www.staffspasttrack.org.uk
www.old-maps.co.uk
http://www.archives.staffordshire.gov.uk
https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk
Alton & Farley Conservation Area Appraisal (SMDC)
Alton Historic Character Assessment (SCC)