

Heritage Statement

7A High Street, Cheadle, Stoke-on-Trent
Mars Investments SPV Limited

1.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT

Introduction

- 1.1. This application concerns the proposed conversion to create a residential apartment at first floor with associated alterations to the internal layout and front elevation of 7A High Street, Cheadle.
- 1.2. The production of this Appraisal has been considered as a necessary part of the design development process to ensure that the detailed design actively seeks to respond positively to its specific context in order to enhance and make the best use of the existing building.

2.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT

Description of the Asset

- 2.1. Cheadle stands in a valley, envired by high hills, near the river Tean and the Uttoxeter canal, 3 miles SW of Oakamoor, and 11 miles ESE of Stoke-upon-Trent.
- 2.2. This application concerns a two storey building on Cheadle High Street, which is utilised as an insurance / mortgage broker.
- 2.3. The property is not a nationally nor locally listed building. However, it lies within Cheadle Conservation Area.
- 2.4. There are 21 listed buildings/monuments within the conservation area, including No.s 1-6 The Square, 47, 51, 62 & 64 High Street (adjacent), The Wheatsheaf Hotel and the Market Cross. The HER also contains information relating to non-designated buildings such as the Market Hall.
- 2.5. Cheadle is one of the oldest market towns in the Staffordshire Moorlands, dating back to Anglo-Saxon times. It was granted 'market charter' in 1216. Since then it has grown steadily over the centuries – just 220 households were recorded in 1772, expanding to 696 by 1871.
- 2.6. The town's medieval structure has altered little over the years, and the character appraisal describes the buildings along the High Street as forming the historic central core of the town. This is reflected in the medieval burgage plots still visible to the north side of the High Street.
- 2.7. For this reason, it is believed that many of the properties along the High Street, particularly those to the northern side, might have much earlier origins than their frontages suggest. Some retain medieval footings or later timber framed elements within updated Georgian/Victorian brick facades.
- 2.8. The built form of the High Street, defined as HUCA 1 within the extensive urban survey, is described as primarily 2-3 storey buildings in red brick with tiled roofs, with 14 of the 21 listed buildings being of early 19th century origin. However, there is potential for many of these properties to yield medieval provenance. The town was prospering during this time due to the arrival of the textile industry, and so many of the town centre buildings were remodelled during this period.

3.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT

Assessment of its Significance

- 3.1. Under the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), any alterations 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).
- 3.2. Intervisibility is a major factor in the town due to the nature of being located in a valley. As a result, few parts of the Conservation Area are without impact on others, and ill-considered developments can have a major impact.
- 3.3. It is particularly important that existing contrasts are maintained. Each is the result of its historical development and represents a key characteristic of the Conservation Area.
- 3.4. Although the property is included within Cheadle's conservation area, it does not have national or local listing and is of late twentieth century construction with no elements of the design bearing historic significance.

4.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT

The Design Concept

- 4.1. This application concerns a change of use to convert the first floor of the property into a residential apartment with associated alterations to the internal layout and front elevation.
- 4.2. The existing access to the ground floor unit is to be retained. However, the shop front is to be reconfigured to accommodate a dedicated entrance to the apartment. The existing design concept of the pilasters is to be utilised to ensure that the proposed alterations to the shop front have a minimal impact on the street scene. The cills to the first floor windows fronting the High Street are to be lowered to improve the outlook for the occupants. However, to retain consistency with the similar properties along the High Street, the window heads are to remain at the existing level.
- 4.3. Internally, a new entrance corridor at ground floor leading to the existing staircase will provide private access to the proposed first floor apartment. This hallway will include a bin storage area large enough to house a 180L general rubbish bin, a 140L recycling bin and a 23L food waste caddy. At first floor, the stairs will lead to a hall off which a bathroom, bedroom and open plan kitchen, dining and living area are to be located.
- 4.4. Within the ground floor unit, a staff room / office, WC and store are to be located to the rear.

5.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT

The Impact

- 5.1. The aim of this report is to assess the impact of any proposals on the significance of any heritage assets that might be affected. In line with current NPPF guidance, any proposals should seek to conserve and enhance historic character.
- 5.2. The property lies within the Cheadle Conservation Area, but is unlisted and has no historic significance.
- 5.3. Impact on the significance of the conservation area will be minimal. The front elevation, visible along the High Street, will be reconfigured in the style of the existing shop front and benefit from repair and maintenance where necessary. Furthermore, the amendment to the first floor windows will have little impact on the overall aesthetic of the property. The internal changes will provide the property with a suitable layout for its proposed use.
- 5.4. As the scheme is focused largely on the internal arrangement of the property with only minimal interventions to the façade, the proposed changes are unlikely to affect the heritage assets within the immediate vicinity. Therefore, it is concluded that the application represents no substantial harm to the conservation area or surrounding listed buildings.
- 5.5. According to the conservation area appraisal *"some buildings on the High Street and Cross Street are still being under used on the upper floors. Although the problem has been targeted over recent years, the lack of use of floor space can act as a disincentive to owners to keep their buildings in a good state of repair. It is also a missed opportunity for additional income and helps create a lively area at night."* As such, due to the location of this building on the eastern end of the High Street, it is felt that the conversion of the first floor into residential accommodation represents an opportunity to respond to this problem within the broader context of the conservation area, by ensuring a continued use of the upper floor of this property, which would benefit the area as a whole.

References

Staffordshire HER - <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>
Staffordshire Records Office - <http://www.archives.staffordshire.gov.uk>
Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance – Historic England (2008)
www.staffspasttrack.org.uk
www.old-maps.co.uk
www.historicengland.org.uk
Cheadle Conservation Area Appraisal - SMDC
Cheadle Historic Character Assessment – Staffordshire Extensive Urban Survey (2012)