

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2021/0786
Valid 01/12/2021

**ALTON STATION,
FARLEY LANE,
FARLEY**

**REPAIRS TO TILED FLOOR IN
WAITING ROOM, RE-ROUTING
OF HEATING PIPES IN
TRENCH IN WAITING ROOM.
TAKE OUT TICKET OFFICE
BARRIER TO FACILITATE
TILING REPAIRS. NEW T&G
BOARDED STUD WALL, PIPE
COVERING AND DOORS IN
PLANT ROOM IN WAITING
ROOM. REMOVE ARCH IN
OPENING IN STATION
MASTER'S HOUSE AND INFIL
OPENING WITH NEW
PLASTERED PARTITION AND
DOOR; MOVE RADIATOR IN
LOUNGE AND ROUTE
PIPEWORK IN TRENCH IN
FLOOR. RELOCATE DOOR
INTO NEW PARTITION WALL.**

**(LISTED BUILDING CONSENT -
ALTERATION)**

MAIN ISSUES

Impact on the character and appearance of the Grade II Listed Buildings.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site comprises the Station Master's House and the Waiting Room; both of which are Grade II Listed Buildings. The buildings are sited on the northern side of the former railway line and are let out as holiday accommodation by The Landmark Trust. The buildings are accessed via the former railway platform, with steps leading up to Farley Lane and a parking area to the east. The application site is located in the Open Countryside and the Alton Conservation Area.

The Station Master's House was constructed circa 1849. It has an L-shaped plan comprising a three-storey section with single storeys attached to the northern and eastern elevations. It is in the Italiante style and is constructed of rock faced ashlar with smooth faced ashlar dressings and gabled and hipped pantile roofs.

The Waiting Room was also constructed circa 1849 and is single storey. It is also Italianate in style. It is constructed of rock faced ashlar with chamfered rustication and smooth faced ashlar dressings and hipped pantile roofs. There is an open-fronted shelter to the southern elevation with wooden piers bracketed to the eaves.

The buildings were used in conjunction with the now disused Churnet Valley Railway, which opened in 1849 and closed in 1965.

PROPOSAL

The holiday accommodation is split between the two buildings, with the sitting room located in the Station Master's House and the kitchen and dining room located in the Waiting Room. Visitors' feedback is that this arrangement of rooms is not practical or sociable, with one or two members of the group cooking in one building, whilst the rest are together in the other. It has therefore been decided to group the three rooms together in the Waiting Room and to change the sitting room in the Station Master's House to a library/second living room.

The sitting room is currently open to the lobby, which also provides access to the main bathroom through an arched opening. It is proposed to remove the plasterboard archway, restore the square-headed opening, insert a new stud wall with a door to give separation between the Library and the bathroom/lobby. The door between the sitting room and the hallway will be redundant and therefore it will be re-hung in the new doorway. The opening created by the removal of the door will be left open.

It is proposed to create a laundry room next to the existing plant room. This will involve the screening off of the existing boilers and electrical equipment with a painted tongue and groove stud wall containing 3 no. doors with Suffolk latches and a removable panel and the relocation of the washing machine.

Other works will be undertaken to the lighting and heating; to repair a sunken tiled floor in the Waiting Room; repainting of interiors; and to repoint a chimney stack and boundary wall to the rear of the Station Master's House.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted Sept 2020)

- SS1 Development Principles
- 1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- DC1 Design Considerations
- DC2 The Historic Environment

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph(s) 1 - 14
Section(s) 4, 12, 16

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2007/1194	Alterations to accommodation within the station master's house and former waiting room (LBC) Approved
SMD/2007/1195	Alterations to accommodation within the station master's house and former waiting room (FULL) Approved

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 04/01/2022
Neighbour consultation period ends: N/A
Press Advert: 29/12/2021

Public Comments: None

Town/Parish Council: Farley Parish Council has no objection.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Policy Context

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004 requires proposals to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan taking into consideration any material considerations relevant to the determination of the application.

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that in assessing planning applications the Local Planning Authority has a duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of architectural or historic interest.

Principle of Development

The principle of development can only be deemed acceptable if the character and appearance of the Listed Building will be preserved or enhanced.

Impact on the Heritage Asset

Policy DC2 states that the Council will safeguard and where possible, enhance the historic environment by resisting development which would harm or be detrimental to the special character and historic heritage of the District's towns and villages and those interests of acknowledged importance; promoting development which sustains, respects or enhances buildings and features which contribute to the character or heritage of an area; and preventing the loss of buildings and features which make a

positive contribution to the character or heritage of an area through appropriate re-use and sensitive development.

Paragraph 199 of the NPPF (2021) states that 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 (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Paragraph 200 of the NPPF (2021) states any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of grade II listed buildings should be exceptional.

Paragraph 202 of the NPPF (2021) states that where a 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, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Listed Building Consent is sought for:

Station Master's House:

- The removal of an existing plasterboard archway between the sitting room and bathroom 1 in the Station Master's House; restoration of the square-headed opening; construction of a new stud wall within the opening; and the hanging of a door. The door will be taken from the existing opening between the sitting room and the entrance hall, which will be left open. The existing door frame and architraves will be left in-situ and the hinge rebates will be made good.
- Repointing of an existing chimney stack to the rear;
- Provide new extractor fans within existing vents. Fan outlets will be covered in roof tiles cut to lengths and using a lime mortar bedding;
- Repair or replace rotten ground floor casement platform window on the southern elevation and repaint;
- Repair roof of canopy by replacing rotten boarding, investigate cause of water ingress, agree further works depending on findings (if required) and re-tile using the same tiles once work has been completed;
- Some replastering to bathroom 1 and en-suite on the ground floor; and
- Redecoration following replastering.

Waiting Room:

- The creation of a laundry room where the existing boilers and electrical equipment are currently located within the Waiting Room. This will involve the screening off of the existing boilers and electrical equipment with a painted tongue and groove stud wall containing 3no. doors with Suffolk latches and a removable panel. The washing machine will be relocated behind the stud wall;
- Replacement of shower tray, shower and enclosure and the re-tiling of the walls;

- Remove existing kitchen units, gain access for a trench for new pipework and reinstate floor and kitchen units upon completion;
- Further trenches dug below tiled floor, pipework laid and floor reinstated upon completion;
- Make good any holes after the existing pipework is removed from the walls and skirtings;
- To repair the tiled floor of the Waiting Room that has sunk in places and to replace any broken tiles;
- Remove the existing ticket barrier to access the tiled floor. Replace ticket barrier on new dowels once works to the floor have been completed; and
- Redecorate whole of building on completion of the heating works.

External:

- Rake out perished mortar from an approximate 2 metre section of wall to the rear of the Station master's House and repoint with hot lime mix proportions approx. 1 lime:3 course aggregate.

Full details of the proposed works are contained within the submitted 'Design Statement for Listed Building Consent Application' document dated 26th November 2021 and the annotations contained on the submitted drawings.

The proposed works to the Listed Buildings will largely comprise repair and maintenance works, or in the case of the heating works, will enhance the appearance of the Listed Building by removing unsightly visible pipework. None of these works will result in harm to the significance of the Listed Buildings

The works to remove a plasterboard archway and the restoration of the square-headed opening will enhance the appearance of the Station Master's House. The insertion of a new stud wall and doorway to this opening will lead to less than substantial harm to the Listed Building. The insertion of a stud wall within the existing boiler room of the Waiting Room to create a laundry room and to hide the boilers and electrical equipment will lead to less than substantial harm to the Listed Building.

In line with paragraph 202 of the NPPF (2021), it is necessary to weigh the harm caused by these works against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

The harm caused to the Listed Buildings from the insertion of the stud walling is temporary as it can be easily removed at a later date, without harm to the historic room layouts or the character or appearance of the Listed Buildings. In addition, the buildings are used as holiday accommodation and the proposed works are considered necessary to improve the layout of the accommodation, which has been negatively commented upon by former guests. The works will ensure that the holiday accommodation continues to attract guests and remain viable. These public benefits are considered to outweigh the less than substantial harm caused to the significance of the Listed Buildings.

For these reasons, the proposed development will comply with policy DC2 of the Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2021), particularly Chapter 16.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The proposed works to the Listed Buildings will largely not harm their significance as they comprise repair and maintenance, or like-for-like replacements. These works will preserve and/or enhance the character and appearance of the Grade II Listed Buildings.

The works involving the construction of stud walls will result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the Listed Buildings. However, the stud walls are required to improve the holiday accommodation for guests, which currently has a haphazard layout with the kitchen located in one building and the living room/dining room located in the other building. The stud walls can be easily removed at a later date without causing harm to the structure or historic room layout of the buildings, and the works will ensure that the holiday accommodation continues to attract guests by providing accommodation that has a much improved layout. The use of the buildings as holiday accommodation is considered to be their optimal viable use and the proposed works will ensure this use continues. These public benefits are considered to outweigh the harm caused by the proposed works.

The proposed development is considered to accord with the relevant policies contained in the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2021) and as such, the application is recommended for approval.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE subject to Conditions

Case Officer: Ailsa Berry

Recommendation Date: 25/01/2022

X 

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council