

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2022/0594
Valid 14/12/2022

35 ST EDWARD STREET
LEEK

REPLACEMENT OF ROTTEN
WOODEN BAY WINDOWS AT
THE FRONT OF THE BUILDING

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Heritage
- Design

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site comprises a three storey building, amongst a long row of terraced buildings situated in the Leek East ward. The building is within the Leek Conservation Area as well as the Leek development boundary. It is not Listed, despite the fact that a number of nearby buildings amongst the streetscape are. No. 31-33 St Edward Street is situated to the North of the site and No. 37 St Edward Street is located to the South. The St Edward Street highway runs adjacent to the site on the West.

PROPOSAL

The proposed works include the replacement of the three bay windows on the principal elevation of the building. The replacement windows shall be predominantly like for like to the existing windows, in terms of their design, scale, colour and materials. They would be constructed from Accoya white timber frames and black ironmongery. They shall however be slimline double glazed units (12mm), rather than maintaining the existing single glazing.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted 2020)

SS1 Development Principles
1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SS2 Settlement Hierarchy
SS5 Leek Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
DC2 The Historic Environment

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph(s) 1 – 14

Section(s) 4 – Decision making, 12 – Achieving well designed places, 16 -
Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD

Part 5 – Alterations, Extensions and Conversions

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2011/0957 – Change of use from shop (class A1) to Sports Therapy Clinic
(Class D1). Approved.

SMD/2014/0497 – Change of use of first and second floor residential flat to beauty
salon. Approved.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 16/02/2023

Neighbour consultation period ends: 18/01/2023

Press Advert: 28/12/2022

Public Comments

No public comments have been received.

Town / Parish Comments

Leek Town Council considered this application and resolved to have no objection to
the plans. It was noted that the building is in a conservation area.

Conservation Officer

Initially, the Conservation Officer of the Council was unclear of the exact works being
proposed; whether the application is for the repair or replacement of the bay
windows.

Following the submission of further details, the Conservation Officer has confirmed
that she is satisfied with the details submitted.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Policy Context

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

Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) promotes a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. For decision takers this means (c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or (d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are more important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission, unless: i) the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or ii) Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF identifies three dimensions to sustainable development as being economic, social and environmental.

In accordance with Policies SS1 and SS2 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan the Council expects all new development to make a positive contribution towards the sustainability of communities and to protect and where possible enhance the environment. A concentrated focus on future growth is to be directed to larger settlements, including Leek. When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

In compliance with Policy SS5, new development should be directed to the most sustainable locations. The site lies within the market town of Leek, which is one of the main urban areas where the focus of new development will be directed, with the aim of crafting all development to enhance the character and appearance of the town.

The proposed site is within the Leek Development Boundary, so is acceptable in principle subject to conformity with other relevant national and local planning policies. The main issues which need to be considered as part of the assessment of the proposed works include heritage and design.

Heritage

As regards the Conservation Area, Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990 places a statutory duty on the LPA in assessing planning applications in respect to any land or buildings in a Conservation Area to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. In reaching its decision the LPA has to demonstrate that the Section 72 Duty has been applied and discharged. Section 72 (and Footnote 6 of

para.11 of the NPPF) creates a strong presumption in favour of the preservation of Conservation Areas and their setting.

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 reuse and sensitive development.

No. 35 St Edward Street is not a listed building, though it is of pre 1948 construction and within Leek Conservation Area. The building exhibits some interesting and intricate detailing and some classic architectural details, notably the feature bay windows and black stone pillars in front of the windows. It is not considered that the proposed window replacements would have a detrimental impact on the building or surrounding conservation area. Although the window replacements would be on the principal elevation of the building in a visible location, I note that they would be largely like for like with the existing windows, in their scale, materials, colour and design. There would be some minor change to character and appearance of the building following the installation of slimline double glazing, but by using high quality materials to match the existing windows, it is judged that no harm or loss would occur to heritage asset as a result of this proposal. The proposed window replacements are considered to preserve the conservation area, due to their sensitive design and utilisation of timber as opposed to UPVC or aluminium.

Initially, the Conservation Officer of the Council was unclear regarding the exact proposed works and whether the windows would be repaired or replaced based on the information submitted. Following the submission of an additional window section plan and some further details, the Conservation Officer is satisfied that the proposal would be acceptable amongst this historically significant street scene.

Design

Policy DC1 seeks to ensure that all development is well designed and of a high quality, contributing to local distinctiveness and harmonising with sense of place. The Council's Design SPD outlines the Council's expectations in respect of design and states that windows and doors are among the most important features of an elevation. Additionally, it states that all window and door replacements should relate to the age and style of the property as well as to the local context.

The proposed development consists of window alterations on the principal elevation of the building. Due to the rotten state of the existing windows, it is clear that they do need to be replaced. Whilst the site is amongst the Leek conservation area, it is not a Listed building. The proposed window replacements would be positively integrated into the existing building and surrounding area, through their like for like design and choice of material; reflecting the character and appearance of the existing building.

The replacement windows shall be predominantly like for like to the existing windows, constructed from Accoya white timber frames and black ironmongery. The only more significant alteration to the windows is that they would be double glazed; moreover this would not create a hugely different visual impact as slimline double glazed units would be utilised (12mm). Furthermore, they would be a better barrier for heat retention of the building and therefore, be more environmentally sustainable. Thus, the window alterations would not be of any harm to the individual character of the building, or the character of the wider conservation area. As per the Heritage Statement submitted, a number of properties within the immediate vicinity of the site have replaced their windows with UPVC / aluminium. Thus, using painted timber for the window replacements would only enhance the character of the conservation area.

The proposal, by virtue of its size, scale and siting maintains the character of the existing building and area. The proposal would therefore accord with the provisions of local plan policies DC1 and DC2, as well as section 12 of the NPPF in this regard.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

In consideration of all of the above, the application is recommended for approval. Due to the application having a good quality design and no adverse effect upon street scene amenity, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in the context of the surrounding conservation area. Therefore, the proposed replacement windows are recommended for approval, subject to compliance with all conditions.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE

Case Officer: Hannah Hollins

Recommendation Date: 16/02/2023

X 

Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council