

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2024/0258
Valid 20/06/2024

THE OLD STONE HOUSE 62
ST EDWARD STREET
LEEK

APPLICATION FOR LISTED
BUILDING CONSENT FOR -
ERECTION OF 2NO. 'BLUE
PLAQUES' COMMEMORATING
PREVIOUS WELL KNOWN
LOCAL BUILDING OWNERS
AND THEIR NATIONALLY
IMPORTANT GUESTS OF
THOSE PERIODS.

(LISTED BUILDING CONSENT -
ALTERATION)

MAIN ISSUES

- Impact on the preservation of the building or its setting or any feature of special architectural or historic interest which the Listed Building possesses, in line with Section 66(1) of the Town & Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site is No. 62 St Edwards Street, Leek; a Grade II Listed Building that sits within a row of characteristic three storey buildings to the West of the public highway, many of which are also listed. The Old House was built in 1724 and was first listed in 1951. It is in the Leek Conservation area and the Leek Article 4 area. The site is enclosed by neighbouring buildings to the North, South-East and West. No. 58, No. 58A, No. 58B and No. 58C St Edward Street are situated to the North of the site and No. 64 St Edward Street is located to the South-East. The rear curtilage of the site adjoins the rear curtilages of No. 21 and No. 26 Eversley Avenue to the West. The site adjoins the St Edward Street highway to the East.

PROPOSAL

The proposed development comprises the affixation of 2no. 'Blue Plaques' commemorating previous well-known local building owners and their nationally important guests of those periods on the principal elevation of a Grade II Listed building. The resin plaques would be 400mm in diameter, 12mm thick, using the bed joint for the screw fixings. The plaques will be wall mounted using two stainless steel fixings.

The wording of the first plaque will be: *'Home of Thomas Wardle, Dyer and Printer for Liberty & Co. and Elizabeth Wardle, who established Leek Embroidery Society here 1879 – visited by William Morris between 1875-1877'.*

The wording of the second plaque will be: *'Home of Joshua Strangman, Quaker and Button Merchant – visited by Preacher John Wesley in 1774'.*

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

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/1999/0219 – Change of use from office to residential. Approved.
SMD/1999/1259 – Change of use from office to day care nursery and residential accommodation. Approved.
SMD/2003/0054 – Change of use to wine bar / restaurant. Refused.
SMD/2009/0987 – Internal alterations. Approved.
SMD/2009/1130 – Retrospective consent to replace window, door and French door at ground floor rear elevation. Withdrawn.
SMD/2010/0228 – Alterations to windows and doors in rear elevation, construction of brick garden store, rear wall, brick outbuilding, front metal railings and provision of two access gates. Approved.
SMD/2010/0354 – Alterations to windows and doors in rear elevation, construction of brick garden store, rear wall, brick outbuilding, front metal railings and provision of two access gates. Approved.
SMD/2023/0024 - Listed Building Consent for proposed Drilling 5mm hole for installation of fibre broadband service. Approved.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 15/08/2024
Neighbour consultation period ends: 31/07/2024
Press Advert: 10/07/2024

Public Comments

No public comments have been received.

Town / Parish Comments

At a meeting of Leek Town Council Planning Committee on 16th July 2024, the committee resolved to support this application. It will encourage tourism to the town and preserves heritage with clear references to the importance the Leek's historic past.

Cllr Matt Swindlehurst

As a ward town and district councillor I fully support the application. It will contribute to the awareness of the historical importance of the building and its connection to such important visitors to the town. The connection between Wm Morris and the town's textile industry is of international importance.

Conservation Officer

No objection, no comments.

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.

Impact on the character and appearance of the Grade II listed building

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.

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 alterations should harmonise with the parent building.

Paragraph 205 of the NPPF (2023) 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 206 of the NPPF (2023) 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.

The site is one of a run of Grade II Listed buildings, built in 1724 and Listed in 1951. The building has a number of characteristic features, notably its date in deeply moulded arched stone with a gilded monogram below.

The proposed development comprises of the affixation of 2no. 'Blue Plaques' commemorating previous well-known local building owners and their nationally

important guests of those periods on the principal elevation of a Grade II Listed building. The resin plaques would be 400mm in diameter, 12mm thick, using the bed joint for the screw fixings. The plaques will be wall mounted using two stainless steel fixings as stated.

As referred to in the heritage statement, the positioning of the plaques has been assessed given the existing openings and down pipes, etc. on the front elevation and it is considered that the fixing of the plaques in these positions will not affect the significance of the listed building. Thus, it is considered to be a sympathetic alteration to ensure that no historic fabric would be lost as a result of the works. The Conservation Officer of the Council has no objections or comments to make regarding the proposed works. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed alteration would safeguard and enhance the special character and historic heritage of the Listed Building, in accordance with Policy DC2.

The proposal, by virtue of its size, scale and siting sustains the character of the Listed dwelling and area. The proposal would therefore accord with the provisions of local plan policies DC1 and DC2 and section 12 of the NPPF in this regard.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

For the reasons outlined above, the proposed development is considered to accord with the relevant policies contained in the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2023). As such the application is recommended for approval.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE

Case Officer: Hannah Varley

Recommendation Date: 15/08/2024

X 

Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council