

Conservation Team Advice

Date: 29th January 2025
Application Ref: SMD/2025/0003
Site Address: 4-6 High Street, Cheadle
Proposal: Replacement windows to front and side elevations

Heritage assets affected:		
Designated Heritage Asset(s):	☒	Cheadle Conservation Area
Non-Designated Heritage Asset(s):	☐	

Conservation Advice

Summary of Significance

Cheadle Conservation Area was designated for its Saxon origins, its rapid expansion in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, historic association with coal mining and metal and textile industries. Predominantly buildings are constructed in red brick walling with Staffordshire blue and Welsh slate roofing. The Conservation Area is characterised by its linear formation, with buildings tightly knit along the highway. There is a high retention of 18th & 19th century buildings along the principal roads and High Street forms the central core of the town. As set out in the Conservation Area Appraisal, no.4-6 makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Assessment and Impact

The proposal would involve the replacement of windows to the front and side elevation.

The majority of the windows are timber sliding sashes, the design and materials of which contribute positively to the historic character and architectural interest of the Conservation Area. To the side elevation there are some modern casement windows, some of which appear to have been installed without planning permission.

The application form outlines the replacement windows would be heritage upvc windows, designed to match the existing, and the proposed elevations indicate these would match the design of the existing.

In general, upvc windows are often discouraged from a conservation perspective as they are not a traditional material, have a shiny appearance and have a bulky frame which is unable to authentically replicate historic joinery detailing. Their appearance can diminish and devalue the heritage significance of a Conservation Area as a result. No specific details of the proposed windows, such as technical and sectional drawings,

have been provided with the application. This does limit the ability to fully assess the impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, but it is likely that the replacement with upvc windows would result in a degree of heritage harm (par.215 of NPPF).

It is acknowledged that examples of upvc windows installed elsewhere in the Conservation Area have been provided in the Heritage Statement. However, these appear to be either modern buildings of no heritage significance or dwellinghouses with permitted development rights. This does not provide clear and convincing justification for any heritage harm arising from this proposal (par.213 of NPPF).

Legislation and Policy

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The local planning authority should have a desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area (s.72).

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024

In determining applications, local authorities should take account of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation, the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality, the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (par.210).

Any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within the setting), should require clear and convincing justification (par.213).

Where a proposed development would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use (par.215).

Local Development Framework

Consideration should also be given to the following documents and local development framework policies:

- Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted 2020) – DC2 The Historic Environment
- Cheadle Conservation Area Appraisal

Conclusions and Recommendations

In summary, it is not fully clear what the impact would be on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as no technical details of the replacement windows have been provided. However, it is likely that the proposed development would result in a degree of harm through the loss of traditional materials and

craftmanship, as well as diminishing the architectural interest of the designated heritage asset. This would be contrary to s.72 of the Act. This would likely be 'less than substantial harm' to the designated heritage asset (par.215 of NPPF). There is no clear and convincing justification for the level of heritage harm (par.213 of NPPF) and no heritage-related public benefits identified which would balance or outweigh this level of harm (par.215 of NPPF).

If technical details can be provided which would demonstrate that the proposed works would have no effect on the appearance of the building and Conservation Area, this may alter the assessment of heritage impact. Otherwise, we would object to the proposal from a conservation perspective and recommend it is refused.

Conservation Officer: Megan Atkinson