

Conservation Team Advice

Date: 28th February 2025
Application Ref: SMD/2025/0059 & SMD/2025/0060
Site Address: Plough Inn, Leek Road, Endon
Proposal:

- Internal refurbishment and decorative works and external works including the restoration of 'The Plough' mural and associated works
- Listed Building Consent for - Internal refurbishment and decorative works and external works including the restoration of 'The Plough' mural and associated works

Heritage assets affected:		
Designated Heritage Asset(s):	☒	• Plough Inn – Grade II (listing ref: 1038061) • Endon Conservation Area
Non-Designated Heritage Asset(s):	☐	

Conservation Advice

Summary of Significance

The proposal would involve alterations to the Plough Inn, which is a Grade II Listed Building situated in Endon Conservation Area.

The Plough Inn (Grade II) is an early-19th century inn with 20th century alterations and additions. The building is constructed in brick, partially rendered, with a hipped tiled roof. The front elevation has three bow double-height bay windows and to the right is a mural dating from the early-20th century painted by a local artist. The significance of the building derives from its association with the development of rural public houses and inns in the early-19th century, retention of historic fabric, illustrative phases of development, landmark building on the entrance to the historic part of the village and distinctive large mural on the front elevation.

Endon Conservation Area was designated for its medieval origins, sporadic and informal layout of buildings in the historic hamlet, retention of 17th, 18th and 19th century buildings and overriding rural and vernacular character. There are large areas of greenery and mature trees within the designated area which enhance its rural character. The Plough Inn makes a positive contribution to the character and

appearance of the conservation area and is an important gateway building on the entrance to the Conservation Area.

Assessment and Impact

Internal alterations

The proposal would involve the soft-fit out, redecoration and removal of some modern partitions internally. Much of the interior is of lower significance as it is mainly modern fixtures and fittings. The proposed internal works would likely have a negligible impact on the significance of the Listed Building. However, it was noted that the annotations on the floorplan (dwg no. 2628-204) mention a new air conditioning unit for the kitchen – would this involve alterations to the exterior or is it just replacing an existing unit (i.e. would not alter the appearance of the building)?

External alterations

The proposed external works involve repainting the exterior, repairs to the mural and installation/alteration to external lighting.

We support the principle of the proposed repairs to the mural to the front elevation as this would be an enhancement to the special interest of the listed building and conservation area. However, the level of technical detail on how the repairs would be carried out is quite limited. It would be useful for a technical specification or schedule of works to be provided. This could, however, be conditioned prior to the specific works commencing.

The proposed repainting of the windows and architectural features, including window surrounds and quoins, would be an enhancement to the significance of the heritage assets. The annotations on dwg no. 2628-215 mentions Dulux Weathershield products which is a breathable product and would be appropriate for use on the stone and brickwork. However, this product would not be appropriate for use on the mural and, as above, some further technical details on the specification of these repair works would be required from a conservation perspective.

There are no concerns with the proposed alterations to lighting to the rear elevation as this is of low significance. However, some of the proposed details of lighting to the front may result in quite a garish and cluttered appearance to the listed building which would detract from the architectural interest. Whilst we understand the need to provide lighting for customers, it would be recommended that the number of LED up/downlights is reduced to the front elevation notably around the bay windows and on the gable end adjacent the car parking spaces. In addition to floodlights and uplighters, it is also proposed to install festoon lighting around the bay windows and a freestanding festoon lighting to the patio. The festoon lighting would be sited on an architectural feature of the listed building and diminish appreciation of its designed aesthetic.

The proposed freestanding festoon lighting would be 2.7m high and would also awkwardly intersect the principal elevation. Coupled with the other proposed lighting, this would create quite a cluttered appearance in the foreground. It would be recommended that the festoon removed from principal elevation of the building and the freestanding festoon either removed or lowered e.g. height of the hedge/planting or around the railings.

Legislation and Policy

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The local planning authority should have a desirability of preserving the special interest of the Listed Building (s.16 and 66) and 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
- Endon Conservation Area Appraisal (2008)

Conclusions and Recommendations

In summary, there would be a minor harmful impact to the special interest of the Listed Building and character and appearance of the Conservation Area, resulting from some of the proposed alterations to the external lighting. This would be contrary to s.16, 66 and 72 of the Act. With reference to planning policies, this would be 'less than substantial harm' to the designated heritage assets (par.215 of NPPF and policy DC2 of

the local development framework). However, as set out above, it would be suggested that the following amendments are made to remove this level of heritage harm:

- Removal of uplighters to the bay windows on the front and side elevation (facing Leek Road)
- Reduction in the number of up/downlighters on the gable end facing the car parking (southwest elevation)
- Removal of festoon lighting attached to the principal elevation of the building
- Either removal of or amendment to the design of the festoon lighting to the patio area

In addition to the above, we would require some further details on the following:

- Clarification on alterations to the air-conditioning unit
- Specific details of the repairs to the mural, such as a schedule of works (this detail could be conditioned)

Conservation Officer: Megan Atkinson