

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2024/0428&
SMD/2024/0564
LBC
Valid 29/01/2025

2-4 TAPE STREET
CHEADLE

ATTACHMENT OF SOLAR
PANELS TO REAR
ELEVATION ROOF SLOPES
AND FLAT ROOFED AREAS
AND REPLACEMENT
EXTERNAL WALL
RENDERING
(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Visual appearance
- Heritage – Listed Building
- Heritage – Cheadle Conservation

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

A prominently sited and distinctive two storey Listed former pub building on the corner of High Street and Tape Street at a key town centre junction within the Cheadle Conservation Area. The frontage and visible side elevations have been rendered and are currently painted a blue-grey. The Listing Description of August 1986 refers to 'painted, rendered brickwork'. Rear elevations remain exposed brick. There are single storey and first floor flat roofed additions at the rear. Visibility of the rear is largely enclosed by neighbouring development.

The premises are currently occupied by Moorlands Home Link described as a charity supporting older people in the Staffordshire Moorlands offering a unique and bespoke approach. "We aim to prevent social isolation, loneliness, and maintain independence in the home for as long as is practicable for each individual who comes into our professional, quality care. We aim to help and support our clients to have a quality of life in their later years which encompasses a holistic approach to care inclusive to all. All services alleviate social isolation and the resulting health issues of loneliness, self-neglect, depression, withdrawal and lack of motivation, and provide support to carers and families."

PROPOSAL

There has initially been some confusion in the submissions as to the scope of the intended works and the respective need for planning and /or Listed Building consents. Through discussion with the applicant the works requiring planning permission are the proposed installation of solar panels and proposed replacement of attached render "re-rendering in a Lime based breathable render as per original

building specification". Reference to internal works including secondary glazing and a serving counter do not require planning consent. The applicant was invited to agree the omission of these items from the planning application description and this was confirmed by e-mail.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan (adopted 9th September 2020)

SS1 Development Principles
SS2 Settlement Hierarchy
SS7 Cheadle Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
DC2 The Historic Environment
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework (Dec 2024)

Paragraph(s) 1 – 14;

Section(s) 4 – Decision making; 6 – Building a strong and competitive economy; 7 – Ensuring the vitality of town centres; 8 Promoting healthy and safe communities; 11 – Making effective use of land; 12 – Achieving well designed places; 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Adopted Supplementary Planning Documents/Guidance (SPD/G):

- Space About Dwellings SPG
- Design Principles SPG
- Design Guide SPD adopted 21st February 2018

Local Plan Supporting Evidence Documents:

- Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (2008)

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

01/00679/FUL Change of use from public house to offices – approved
01/00680/LBC Listed building consent for change of use/conversion to office (ground floor) and two first floor flats – approved
09/00762/LBC Change of Use from A2 (Financial Professional) to D1 (Non Residential Institutions) – approved
09/00737/FUL Change of Use from A2 Financial Professional Services to a Dentist with ancillary storage above – approved
SMD/2022/0446 – Lawful Development Certificate for an Existing use Class E - approved

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 13.03.2025

Neighbour consultation period ends: 21.02.2025

Press Advert: 05.03.2025

Public Comments

None

Town / Parish Comments

Cheadle Town Council – support

Historic England

Defer to in-house specialist conservation and archaeological advisers

SMDC Conservation Officer

The proposal would involve the installation of solar panels to the rear elevation of the 4 Tape Street (Grade II). These would be a mixture of panels attached to the pitched roofs and the flat roof outrigger.

Whilst we are supportive of the principle of improving energy efficiency and reducing carbon emissions in the historic environment, the solar panels would have an engineered appearance which would starkly contrast with the traditional materials and construction of the building. As a result, the proposal would cause a degree of visual harm to the architectural and aesthetic interest of the Listed Building. The panels would, however, be situated in a less visually prominent location and some of the panels would be attached to a modern flat roofed part of the building of no heritage significance. The technical specification also outlines that the panels would be black framed which would minimise some of the visual harm as this would integrate with the appearance of the tiled roof.

It is not fully clear if some of the projecting panels on the 1-storey aspect of the development would be visible from High Street looking down the rear of 4 Tape Street. If clarification can be provided that the projecting panels on the 1-storey outrigger would not project higher than the timber fence at the rear of the site, this would be useful. [Case officer: this has since been clarified and discussed with the CO. An existing upstand at the roof edge is set at c.300mm. The applicant has stated that the top edge height of the panels would be 700mm. As the position is well set back from High Street where there would be a restricted view through an open gateway entrance the limited visibility of the solar panel framework is judged to remain tolerable as assessed above by the CO.]

Other matters:

It was noted on site that vertical timber cladding has been installed to the rear elevation of the Listed Building and this is illustrated on the existing and proposed elevations (dwg no. J3834-03 & J3834-05 Rev A). This cladding does not appear to benefit from listed building consent and should be removed from the existing and

proposed drawings, so as to not inadvertently permit these works through this listed building consent application.

Conclusion

In summary, the proposal would result in a moderate degree of harm to the special interest of the Listed Building. This would be contrary to s.16 of the Act. With reference to the planning policies, this would be 'less than substantial harm' to the designated heritage asset (par.215 of NPPF and policy DC2 of the local development framework). However, there has been clear and convincing justification provided for the level of heritage harm (par.213 of NPPF) and there would likely be public benefits secured through the proposal, in terms of climate change and energy efficiency (Section 14 of NPPF), that would balance or outweigh this level of heritage harm (par.215 of NPPF). Subject to the amendments and clarification mentioned above, there are no objections to the proposal from a conservation perspective. For any consent granted, we would recommend the technical specification of the solar panels are conditioned to ensure that the visual harm is minimised.

In separate e-mail communication the Conservation Officer has advised that the required details for the proposed re-render can be made subject to condition [on file dd 05.02.2025].

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

The location is within the town development boundary and the proposals are therefore acceptable in principle. The main issues to be assessed are the impact on the character and appearance of the Cheadle Conservation Area and on the heritage significance of the Listed Building and also any implications for neighbour amenity.

Design and Heritage

As regards the Listed Building there is a statutory duty placed on the LPA, under section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, to consider the impact of the proposal on the special architectural and historic interest of the Listed Building affected, and its setting and "have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses".

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

An LPA can only discharge its duty if it has carried out a proper assessment of the impact on a Conservation Area and/or a Listed Building, is conscious of the duty and has demonstrably applied it in assessing the proposal. This assessment extends to setting, the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced.

Historic Environment Policy DC2 of the Local Plan is to give protection to designated heritage assets and their settings and non-designated heritage assets as set out in the NPPF.

NPPF paragraph 212 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”.

Paragraph 213 goes on to say that: “any harm or loss [to a heritage asset] should require clear and convincing justification.”

NPPF paragraph 215 states that: “Where a development 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 securing its optimum viable use.”

Based on the CO comments the solar panels would cause ‘less than substantial harm’ to the LB. There is though a clear case of public benefit in that the premises are occupied by the Moorlands Homelink charity. The limited visibility of the solar panels from public locations leads to a conclusion that the impacts on the Conservation Area and on the heritage significance of the LB are balanced or outweighed by the benefits.

Amenity

Whilst there may be some visibility of the roof top panels from adjacent residential windows eg side windows of nos. 1 and 1a High Street these views are unlikely to be found overbearing given the low (700mm) height profile.

Other matters

A note should be added to the decision eg at plans condition 2 making clear that consent is not granted for the board cladding. It is understood from the applicant that the neighbour has attached the boarding as part of their redevelopment of nos 1 and 1a High Street, though not as part of any LPA approval and whether with the applicant’s consent is not clear. File photo DSCF 5160 from 19.07.2019 shows that this area had previously been somewhat ramshackle. It can also be noted that, in part, some of the boarding is attached to the flat-roofed elements. Whilst not proposing at this immediate point in time to take action in respect of this boarding it is considered important to reserve the LPA’s position and specifically refer to its exclusion from any consent here granted.

Solar panels shall be entirely black without silver or chrome effect framing and on the flat roofed areas shall not exceed 700mm in maximum top height.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

That subject to conditions both Listed Building and Full consent be granted.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : **Approve**

Case Officer: Arne Swithenbank

Recommendation Date: 13.03.2025

X 

Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council