

## Conservation Team Advice

**Date:** 24<sup>th</sup> March 2025  
**Application Ref:** SMD/2025/0079  
**Site Address:** Quaker Meeting House, Overton Bank, Leek  
**Proposal:** Replacement of existing wood twin entrance gate in listed perimeter stone wall of the Grade II listed Quakers Meeting House with iron fabricated twin gate.

| Heritage assets affected:                |                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Designated Heritage Asset(s):</b>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Society of Friends Meeting House – Grade II (listing ref: 1268552)</li> <li>• Boundary wall to Meeting House – Grade II (listing ref: 1268553)</li> <li>• 9-12 Overton Bank – Grade II (listing ref: 1268551)</li> <li>• Leek Conservation Area</li> </ul> |
| <b>Non-Designated Heritage Asset(s):</b> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

## Conservation Advice

### Summary of Significance

The proposal would involve alterations to a listed wall surrounding the Quaker Meeting House. This would be situated immediately next to row of listed cottages along Overton Bank and within Leek Conservation Area.

The Quaker Meeting House (Grade II) is a purpose built meeting house dating c.1694, constructed in rough coursed and squared stone and tiled roof. The significance of the building relates to the development of non-conformist places of worship, vernacular construction and modest architectural design. The boundary wall surrounding the property is separately Grade II listed for its historic association with the meeting house and vernacular construction, creating privacy for the meeting house.

Leek Conservation Area was designated for its medieval origins, which have been overlaid with Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian buildings. The area is associated with the growth of silk, textile and brewing industries from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Typically buildings are constructed in brick, with some stone buildings intermixed, with Staffordshire blue tiles and slate roofs.

### Assessment and Impact

The proposal would involve the removal of the boarded timber gate currently in the entrance to the listed wall, replacement with a metal gate and installation of a letterbox in the stone wall.

The existing gate is not historic and its removal would have a negligible impact on the setting and significance of the listed buildings. The proposed replacement metal gate is not based on any historic precedent or evidence of a similar design. Nevertheless, the proposed design and detailing would not overbear or distract from the architectural interest of the listed wall or meeting house. In addition, the proposed design would not detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The proposed letterbox would result in the removal of some historic fabric from the wall, but this would be very minor in scale and, subject to sympathetic palette of materials being used, would not detract from its special interest. It would be recommended that brass or black finish to the letterbox to minimise the visual impact on the heritage asset i.e. not chrome.

### Legislation and Policy

#### Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The local planning authority should have a desirability of preserving the setting and special interest of the Listed Buildings (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).

#### 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
- Leek Conservation Area Appraisal (2017)

### Conclusions and Recommendations

Overall, the proposal would likely have a negligible impact on the setting and special interest of the Listed Buildings and character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Their special interest would be preserved. This would comply with s.16, 66 and 72 of the

Act, as well as Section 16 of the NPPF and policy DC2 of the local development framework. There are no objections to the proposal from a conservation perspective.

For any consent granted, we would suggest the following condition:

- The installation of the letterbox within the masonry hereby granted consent, shall be finished in brass or coloured black.

Reason: To preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Listed Building.

**Conservation Officer:** Megan Atkinson