

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2025/0054 &
SMD/2025/0055

HIGHFIELD HOUSE 25
HOLLOW LANE
CHEDDLETON

Valid 29/01/2025

RETROSPECTIVE
APPLICATION FOR
REPLACEMENT OF 5
WINDOWS

(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)

MAIN ISSUES

- Development involving a Grade II Listed Building
- Development in a Conservation Area
- Design
- Heritage

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site comprises of a large irregular shaped plot which wraps around the rear of the adjoining terraced properties (27 and 29). It lies within the Cheddleton Conservation Area, and is approximately 3 miles south of Leek. The building is Grade II listed with the listing description stating:

House. C18 with mid-C19 alterations and additions. Coursed dressed stone with top floor built up in brickwork; tiled roof; verge parapets to east side; end stacks. 3-storey, 2-window front; casements; 3 lights to left, 2 to right (except ground floor) first floor with segmental heads and keystones, the ground floor windows possibly enlarged in C20 with painted plain lintels; central entrance with boarded door. Faces the churchyard to the north. Included for group value. Listing NGR: SJ9708852366.

It lies within a predominantly residential area with residential dwellings to the north, east south and west. To the north east of the site lies the Grade II* church of St Edward the Confessor which has its origins in the 13th Century. The site is within the Cheddleton Development Boundary.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks retrospective permission for the replacement of five windows with white PVCu. The replacement windows are located on the side and rear of the property.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan (adopted 9th September 2020)

SS1 Development Principles

SS2 Settlement Hierarchy
SS10 Other Rural Areas Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
DC2 The Historic Environment
DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting
E1 New Employment Development
H1 New Housing Development
NE1 Biodiversity and Geological Resources
NE2 Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph(s) 1 -14, 47, 131, 135, 139, 210, 212, 213, 215.

Section(s) 4 – Decision making, 12 – Achieving well designed and beautiful places,
16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

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

- Design Principles for Development in the Staffordshire Moorlands
- Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD
- Space About Dwellings SPD

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

- None relevant.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: Expired

Neighbour consultation period ends: Expired

Press Advert: Expired

Public Comments

None.

Town / Parish Comments

No Objection provided it meets with conservation legislation.

Staffordshire County Council Highways

No response received.

SMDC Conservation

Object to the proposal from a conservation perspective and recommend it is refused.

Historic England

Historic England provides advice when our engagement can add most value. In this case we are not offering advice. This should not be interpreted as comment on the merits of the application.

Victorian Society

Objection - The proposed changes are inappropriate to a listed building of this nature. The previous windows, timber framed according to the application form, would have been much more suited a heritage property. The current uPVC windows are jarring and disrupt the building's character.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

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. Although the site is within the Development Boundary, it will only be acceptable provided that it meets heritage policies.

Design

SMDC Policy DC1 requires development to be of a high quality and add value to the local area, incorporating creativity, detailing and materials appropriate to the character of the area; and be designed to respect the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, height, density, layout, siting, character and appearance.

Paragraphs 131 and 135 of the NPPF outline what is expected of good design and required for the development of high quality, beautiful places, and provides for a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

The Design Principles for Development in the Staffordshire Moorlands SPG outlines the Council's expectations in respect of design and states that the aim of repairs and alterations should be preserve the character of the fabric of the historic building. The 'Repairs and Alterations to Historic Buildings' subsection on windows of the Principles for Development SPG advises to avoid replacement of windows unless beyond repair or of inappropriate design, and that replacement windows should be of a design, scale, proportions and recess appropriate to the age of the building. Timber should be used for replacement windows in a traditional building; plastic windows are not appropriate.

In contrast to the original windows which were timber, the replacement windows are plastic, and not of a style traditional to the original building which has multi-pane glazing bar fenestration with a traditional vertical emphasis. The upvc windows have bulky chamfered edged frames and are stormproofed with projecting trickle vents,

and are a mixture of 2-over-2 design or a single pane of glazing with a more horizontal emphasis. The proportions and design are not reflective of a traditional or historic window design typically seen in the locality. In addition, modern features such as the bulky stormproof frames and projecting trickle vents are overtly contemporary features which diminish the vernacular architectural interest of the listed building and character and appearance of the conservation area. Paragraph 139 of the NPPF states that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. As such, the windows are not considered acceptable in terms of design.

Amenity

Paragraph 135 f) of the NPPF seeks to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants. Local Plan Policy DC1 requires development to achieve a satisfactory relationship to adjacent development and to not cause unacceptable effects by reason of visual intrusion, overlooking, shadowing, overbearing effect, noise, light pollution or other adverse impacts on local character and amenity. The site is bounded by several properties along Hollow Lane, Ostlers Lane and Fold Court due to the large size and irregular shape of the plot. As the development consists of replacement windows, there would be no change to the residential amenity of the area in terms of overlooking, overshadowing, or being overbearing. In terms of visual amenity, the development presents the same issues as discussed above in the 'Design' section of the report, due to the windows not being in keeping with the Listed Building or surrounding heritage assets within the Conservation Area.

Highway Safety

Paragraph 109 of the NPPF states that patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes and contribute to making high quality places. Policy T1 seeks to provide safe and sustainable access and ensure that development does not lead to an increase in on street parking. Due to the nature of the proposal, the development would have no impact on highway safety.

Heritage

Policy DC2 seeks to preserve and enhance heritage assets and their setting, and ensure that proposals contribute positively to the character of the built and historic environment. All applications likely to affect a heritage asset will need to be accompanied by a heritage statement.

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out the general duty of local planning authorities in respect to determining applications regarding listed buildings. S.66 (1) and (2) states the LPA shall 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. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out the

general duty of local planning authorities in respect to determining applications regarding conservation areas. S.72 (1) states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

Paragraph 210 of the NPPF states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Due to the design of and materials used in the windows, it is not considered that they are appropriate on a Listed Building, and the Conservation Officer has stated that the proposal would result in moderate degree of harm to the special interest and significance of the Listed Building and character and appearance of the Conservation Area. This would be contrary to s.16, 66 and 72 of the Act.

The applicant claims that the proposal would conserve the heritage asset, however local and national policies and design SPGs are clear that development should positively contribute to and enhance the heritage asset and its setting alongside preserving the asset. Repairing historic windows is preferable to replacement, however where replacement is absolutely necessary, this should be done in a sympathetic way utilising traditional methods and materials. In this case, the best way to conserve the heritage asset would be to either repair the existing windows, or a like-for-like replacement with traditional timber windows.

The applicant also claims that the building does not hold much historic or aesthetic interest other than in terms of its siting and physical relationship with the church, and argues that this *"is confirmed by the listing description which confirms that it was included for its 'group value'"*. While the building was included for "group value", this does not diminish the protection afforded to it by being Grade II Listed, as in fact the preservation of this building is directly tied to the preservation of the setting of several other listed buildings, including the Grade II* Church.

With reference to the above and 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) and there is no clear and convincing justification for the level of heritage harm (par.213 of NPPF). As set out in par.212 of the NPPF, great weight should be given to the conservation of a designated heritage asset. As such, the proposal is not considered acceptable in heritage terms.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

Para. 215 of the NPPF 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, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. The application does not set out any public benefit of the proposal, and as a dwellinghouse the optimum viable use has been demonstrated as the heritage asset was always intended to be a house. The Planning Practice Guidance states that the optimum viable use is the one likely to cause the least harm to the significance of the asset, and in this case it is considered to be that of a house as this would not lead to unacceptable alterations which may be required for other uses. The NPPF requires any harm to designated heritage assets to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The PPG clarifies that public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental objectives as described in the NPPF para.8 – economic, social, and environmental objectives for achieving sustainable development. While the application does not specify any public benefit as a result of the development, it is considered that the benefit would be environmental as replacing windows can save energy. However, the PPG states that public benefits should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and not just be a private benefit. In this case, the replacement of the windows does not represent a benefit to the public at large, as the energy saving would be a private benefit that contradicts the public benefit of enhancing the heritage asset.

The application is therefore recommended for refusal.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : REFUSE

Case Officer: Reuben Berriman

Recommendation Date: 26/03/2025

X 

Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council