

Conservation Team Advice

Date: 13th May 2025
Application Ref: SMD/2025/0167
Site Address: Land adj to Lakeland Lodges, Rudyard Road, Rudyard
Proposal: Erection of 9 no. dwellings and associated works

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

Conservation Advice

Summary of Significance

The proposal would be situated in Rudyard Conservation Area, which was designated for its origins as a reservoir constructed c.1797-1801 to supply the Caldon Canal. The area became popular for tourism from the mid-19th century through to the early-20th century after the development of Staffordshire Railway. The area's significance derives from its picturesque beauty with the lake as the focal point, large areas of vegetation and landscaping, historic associations with the development of the canal, popularity as a tourist destination in the Victorian and Edwardian period and collection of 19th century villas. Buildings are predominantly constructed in dark pink gritstone which adds to the quaint charm of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Immediately adjacent to the site is Lakeland Lodges, formerly the Station Hotel. The building has early-17th century origins with 18th alterations and late-19th century additions. The building is identified as a positive building in the Conservation Area Appraisal and its positioning on the road makes it's a landmark and bookend feature in the streetscene.

Assessment and Impact

The proposal would involve the construction of 9 dwellings to the site adjacent to Lakeland Lodges. The scheme would consist of 8 semi-detached and terraced properties and 1 detached dwelling. There was a previous refusal for 7 dwellings on the site (application ref: SMD/2019/0375).

As can be seen in Fig.1 in the Appendix, buildings to the south and southwest of Rudyard Lake were historically very loosely arranged, often in quite sporadic and isolated locations amongst the dense woodland on either side of the lake and in a small cluster of buildings around Harper's Gate. As can be seen from the early-20th century

mapping (Fig.2), there was some infill development during this period, particularly along Lake Road. Nevertheless, the area's character is still distinctively typified by the spacious and sporadic development, with buildings typically in separate plots and different architectural styles used as a result of the piecemeal development of the village.

In contrast, the proposed development would be quite an intensive form of development for the size of the plot. The development would be a starkly rigid layout which would not respect the sporadic and fortuitous arrangement of the buildings elsewhere in the Conservation Area.

The proposed elevational treatment appears to be the same for all the dwellings. They would have a simple elevational design, with symmetrical façade, pitched roof central porch, cantilevered roof pitch and flat-roof single storey garden room to the rear. The proposed palette of materials would consist of stone walling and blue slate roof.

Whilst it is recognised that the principle of the proposed palette of materials would respond to the surrounding built heritage, the proposed elevational treatment would be repetitive and uniform. When coupled with the rigid layout and intensive scale of development within the plot, this would create a form of development very at odds with the more incidental, fortuitous and spacious character of the Conservation Area.

It is noted that it is proposed to retain the mature trees to the front of the site, which would help screen some views when looking directly at the development from Rudyard Road. However, the benefits from the screening would be reduced in winter months. In addition, the development would still be seen in key views and appreciation of Lakeland Lodges, which forms a pleasant visual bookend to Lake Road/Camrose Hill.

No sectional drawings have been provided for the site and no elevational drawings have been provided for the proposed boundary treatments. However, it is noted that a gabion wall is proposed to the middle of the site. This would likely have a harsh industrial appearance which would not be in keeping with the rural character of the Conservation Area.

Overall, the proposed intensive scale of development, uniform design of dwellings and rigid layout would diminish and erode the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

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
- Rudyard Conservation Area Appraisal (2016)

Conclusions and Recommendations

In summary, the proposed development would have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. This would be contrary to the provisions set out in s.72 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 local development framework). There would be no heritage-related public benefits arising from the development which would balance or outweigh this level of harm (par.215 of NPPF). We, therefore, object to the proposal from a conservation perspective and recommend it is refused.

Conservation Officer:

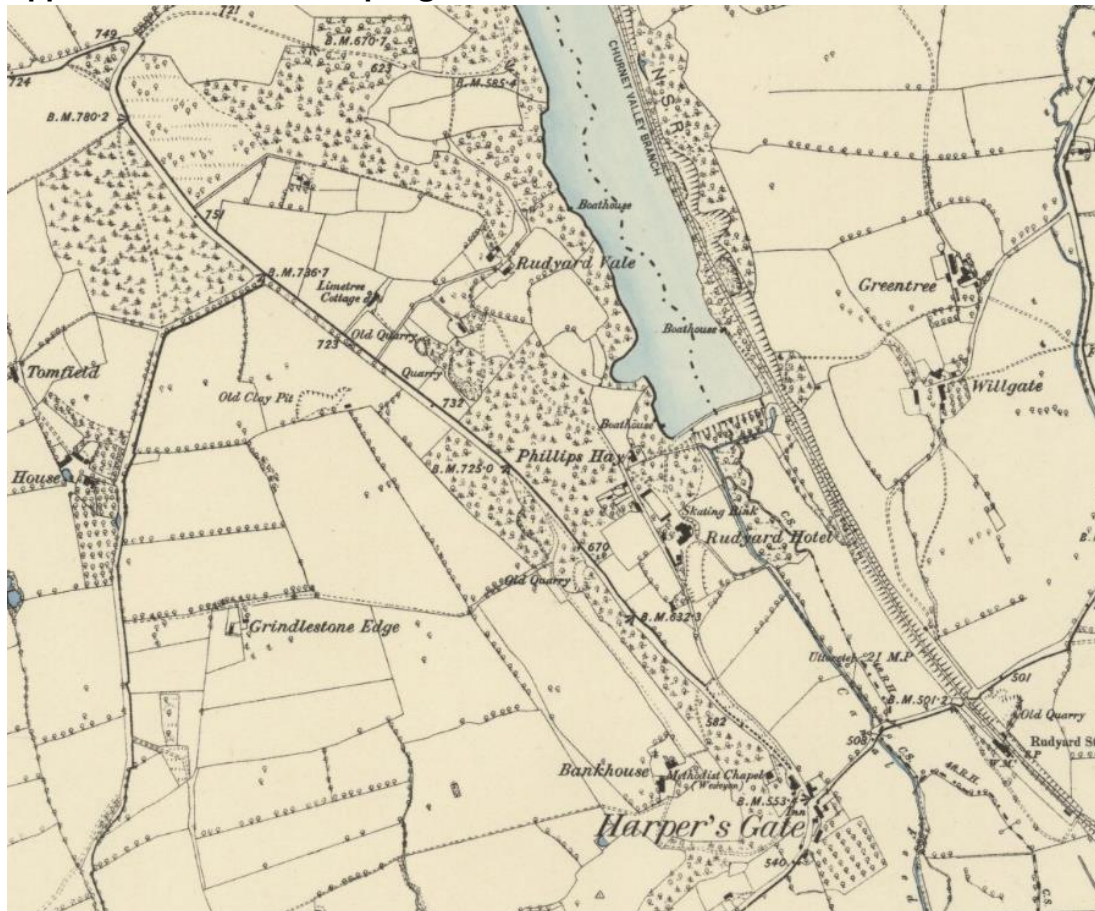


Fig.1 c.1877 OS map [online] (National Library of Scotland)



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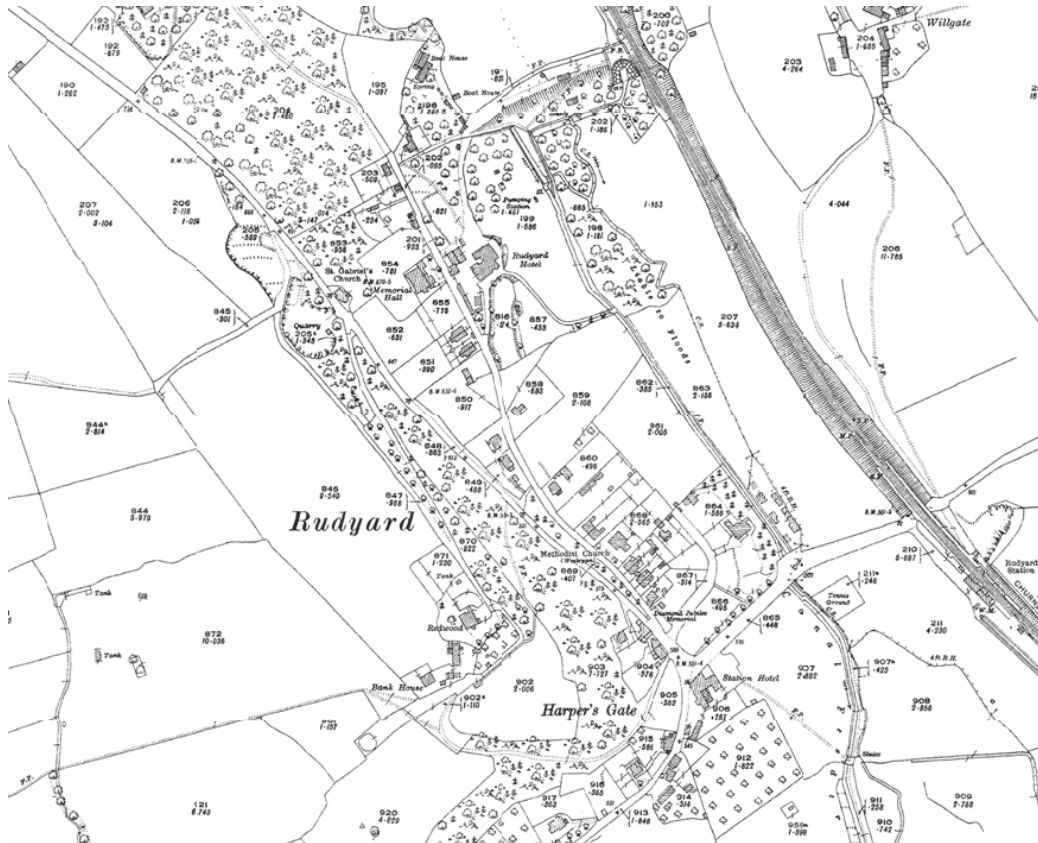


Fig.2 c.1922-25 OS map (Staffordshire Historic Environment Record)