

Conservation Team Advice

Date: 8th October 2025
Application Ref: SMD/2025/0398
Site Address: 14 Market Place, Leek
Proposal: Conversion of first and second floors to create three, one bedroomed flats and two storey side extension

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

Conservation Advice

Summary of Significance

The development site is situated in Leek Conservation Area, which was designated for its medieval origins overlaid with Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian buildings. Typically buildings are 2- and 3-storeys, constructed in red brick walling and Staffordshire blue tiles or slates. One focal point of the town centre is Market Place, with buildings overlaid on the burgage plots overlooking the market area. Although there have been some alterations, no.14 Market Place makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Assessment and Impact

The proposal would involve the conversion of the upper floors to three flats. The proposed development would involve some external alterations to the first floor bay window and installation of a window to a side elevation.

The alterations to the bay would involve installation of two top-hung opening windows to the centre of the bay. From a conservation perspective, it would be recommended that the design of this is slightly altered to be more in keeping with the architectural interest and character of the building and the surrounding built heritage. For example a transom detail could be installed across the whole bay window (see Fig.1) and the windows could be altered to tilt-in openers.

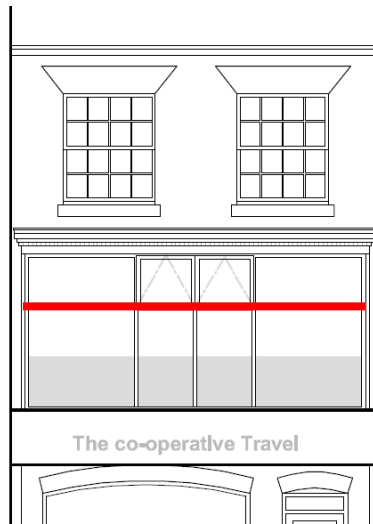


Fig.1 – annotated drawing

There are no concerns with the proposed frosting to the bay window and the new window to the side elevation, although it would be recommended that further detailing is provided.

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
- Leek Conservation Area Appraisal (2017)

Conclusions and Recommendations

In summary, the proposed external alterations would likely have a minor harmful impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as a result of the inappropriate window opening mechanism design and the subdivision of the bay window. This would fail to satisfy s.72 of the Act. With reference to the planning policies, this would likely be 'less than substantial harm to the designated heritage asset (par.215 of NPPF and policy DC2 of the local development framework), but at the lower end of the scale of harm. There are no objections to the principle of the proposal from a conservation perspective, but it would be recommended that the following is altered/provided to remove any heritage harm:

- Subdivision of the bay window with the replacement, to create the illusion of a traditional transom detail
- Alteration to tilt-in opening windows on the front elevation
- Further specific details on the frosted glazing

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