

Heritage Statement

**The Morgue, Birchtree Drive, St Edward's Park,
Cheddleton, Leek, ST13 7FE**

**Change of use of the derelict Morgue
to a single holiday let**



*The Morgue is shown on the image above as the red brick building to the left of the chapel.
adjacent to the parking area*

Introduction

This heritage statement is submitted in support of an application which seeks full planning permission (and listed building consent) for the conversion of a curtilage listed building (a derelict Morgue) into a single holiday let (the proposal) at The Morgue, Birchtree Drive, St Edward's Park, Cheddleton, Leek, ST3 7FE (the application site) The application site stands within the site of the former St Edward's Hospital, a county Asylum in Staffordshire which, as outlined, now stands within a major redeveloped site..

Background

The Morgue was part of the original Psychiatric Hospital, built as the North Staffordshire Asylum. c1895-1899, lies to the rear northwest of the site and adjacent to the Grade II Listed Chapel.

Historic Development

The Asylum was planned as early as 1892 when the existing county asylums at Stafford and Burntwood expanded to accommodate numbers following the surrounding areas becoming more industrialised. It was acknowledged that a further institution to serve the developing northern belt was required, thus the site at Bank Farm, Cheddleton, was chosen for its development.

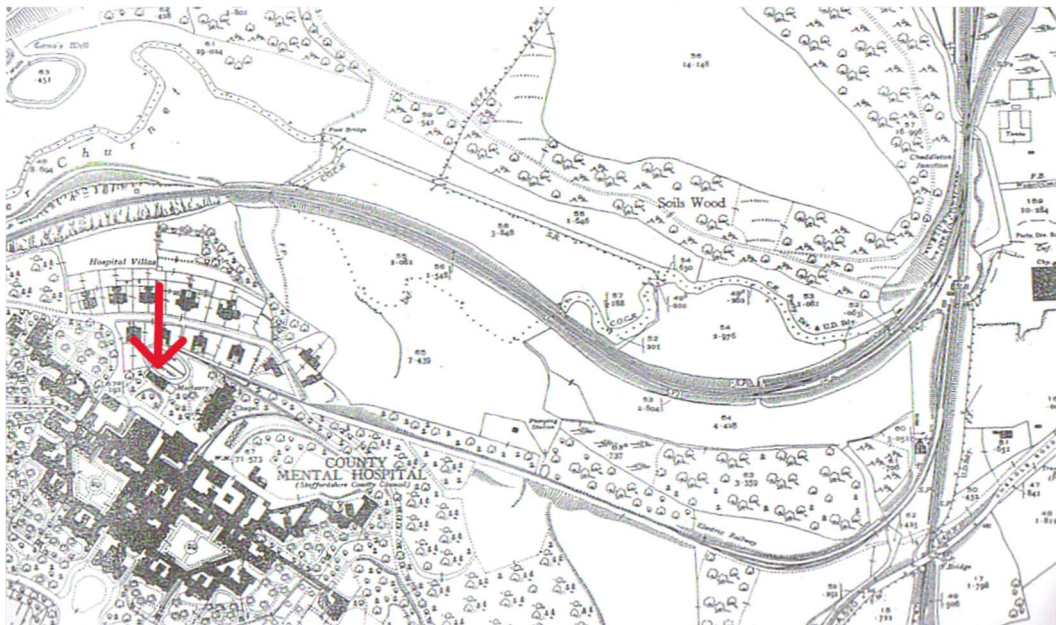
The site consisting of 175 acres (71 ha) was purchased for £12,750 in February 1892 on the edge of the village of Cheddleton, located on a spur of land overlooking the River Churnet and the Caldon Canal at Cheddleton Heath, just north of the town of Cheddleton. It was considered convenient for the town of Leek and within reasonable distance of Newcastle under Lyme and Stoke on Trent.

Designed by London-based architects Giles, Gough and Trollope, with construction beginning in 1895 as a result of a competition which was held to choose an appropriate design, the layout plan followed the echelon layout (Compact Arrow Plan) becoming popular in asylum design at this time. The design saw the main building approached from a sweeping drive accessed from the south, with the administrative block forming the central focus of the main south facade with individual ward blocks radiating out to either side.

Each ward block was designed for a particular management class of patient with internal arrangements varying from building to building, with capacity for up to 600 in total. Each of the blocks gave access into a secure garden area or airing court where patients could exercise in the open with shelters provided against the weather. The main focal point of the asylum (other than the clock tower on the administration block) was the 135ft water tower, with its unusual octagonal plan. Supplying its tanks, a well was sunk down 100ft into the ground below. To the rear of the complex was located the asylums Chapel and mortuary (The Morgue), with a road of cottages, Villa Road, also provided for married attendants and senior staff.

The asylum opened to its first patients in August 1899, receiving those already boarded out at other Counties' institutions, and soon required plans to be put in place for a further extension for an additional 200 patients, soon revised and expanded for capacity for 400. The new

extensions were developed between 1904 and 1908. In addition, an isolation hospital giving space for 12 patients with infectious diseases was also provided, later known as Garden Villa. The improvement of conditions for female nurses was also considered, with the aim to attract and retain suitable staff and a Nurses' residence was constructed adjacent to Villa Road and built between 1912 and 1920.



*1925 Ordnance Survey map showing the Staffordshire County Mental Asylum at Cheddleton
The Morgue is shown by the red arrow on the plan*

The inter-war period saw Staffordshire revise the naming of their institutions, following a national trend to abolish the term asylum. In common with its neighbours at Stafford and Burntwood, the site became the Cheddleton Mental Hospital, or officially the Staffordshire County Mental Hospital, Cheddleton. The period also saw the creation of the Staffordshire Asylums Board, soon renamed the Mental Hospitals Board which took over direct management of each of the asylums from the County Council.

Plans to expand the hospital were submitted in 1936 with a scheme for a new admissions hospital, a pair of convalescent villas and occupational therapy pavilions. However, the Second World War intervened, and the new complex was passed over to the Emergency Medical Service scheme to deal with casualties and not utilised for its intended purpose until peace had returned. The advent of the NHS in 1948 saw the hospital renamed St. Edward's, after the local Patron Saint of Cheddleton Parish Church. The post-war period saw the hospital move with the times, with a new patients' social centre, significant upgrades to wards, and the start of new drug treatments, the last of which saw numbers of residential patients drop over the years. St. Edward's outlived both Burntwood and Stafford, only finally closing in 2002.

After closure, the site was purchased for housing development by Taylor Woodrow with the site of the admission hospital, female convalescent villa and OT pavilions comprehensively redeveloped for a residential complex, which extended onto the drive approaching the main building. The nurses' home and later ward blocks were also similarly demolished for housing

development, as were many of the main buildings, utilitarian areas and recreation hall. The listed Water Tower survives having been imaginatively converted into a private residence. The original wards, Malloy House (formerly the Superintendent's residence) and the administration block have also been refurbished and subdivided for residential use.

Staff housing survives on Villa Road and Wall Lane Terrace and is now largely in private ownership. The former Isolation Hospital, Garden Villa, has been converted to use as a children's nursery whilst the nearby male convalescent villa, later Wall Lane House, remained in mental health service use for children and adolescent inpatients until 2010. The building was sold in 2012 and has since become Hopedale House Children's School. The two remaining buildings of this once self-contained village which remain undeveloped and stand vacant since the closure of the hospital are the Chapel and the Morgue.

Location, Area and Setting

The village of Cheddleton lies circa 5.3 km to the south of Leek, itself on the western edge of The Peak District National Park. St Edwards Park is to the north of the village of Cheddleton and 1.77 km from the Parish Church of St Edwards dating back to the 13th century. St Edward's Park is set in 122 acres of grounds and woodland bounded by open countryside to the north along with the Trent and Mersey Canal, with the first major road being the A53 Buxton to Shrewsbury Road and to the south the A520 Stone (Staffordshire) to Leek.

There are two main approaches to St Edwards Park. The first is from the north on the A520 Compton Road via East Drive. The second approach is from the south via the A520 turning right onto Wall Lane Terrace and onto West Drive.

St Edwards Hospital complex was converted into apartments along with new residential dwellings as a result of planning being approved in 2002 making a total of in the region 78 addresses, 8 of which are apartments sites (based upon land registry data) – St Edwards Hall (Listed Grade II), Martin House, Denmark House, Amsden Lodge, Wilkins House, Menzies House, Giles House, Malloy House (Grade II Listed) and the Water Tower (Grade II Listed) being a single residential dwelling.

Listings

St Edwards Hospital Cheddleton (including Water Tower) - Official List Entry

Heritage Category: **Listed Building**

Grade: **II**

List Entry Number: **1271999**

Date first listed: **14-Jul-1997**

List Entry Name: **St Edward's Hospital**

Statutory Address 1: **St Edward's Hospital, Cheddleton**

Location

Statutory Address: St Edward's Hospital, **Cheddleton**

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County: **Staffordshire**

District: **Staffordshire Moorlands (District Authority)**

Parish: **Cheddleton**

National Grid Reference: **SJ9732053485**

Details

This list entry was subject to a Minor Amendment on 1 July 2025 to amend the language in the description and to reformat the text to current standards

SJ95SE 1798-/5/10009

CHEDDLETON CHEDDLETON St Edward's Hospital

II

Psychiatric hospital, built as the North Staffordshire Asylum. c1895-1899 to 1893 competition winning designs by Giles, Gough and Trollope. Wall Grange faced bricks with red sandstone dressings and cill and floor bands. Slated gabled roofs with tall brick chimney stacks; central bay tower has an ogee cupola with weathervane. Echelon plan of four pavilions stepped back each side and linked by corridors to a central service core including the administration block, recreation hall and water tower. Jacobean style. Mostly two storeys. Symmetrical administration block of two storeys and attics: five windows. Projecting outer bays and slightly projecting central bay. Entrance, in central five-storey tower bay, with projecting sandstone portico having a central round-arched doorway with radial fanlight and two-leaf panelled timber doors. Portico surmounted by a balustrade to two storeys of canted bay windows, the uppermost with carved and patterned aprons; above, two stories of two-light windows, the upper with enriched aprons. Each facade of the tower terminates with a brick pediment set with a clock face. Flanking bays of paired sashes to each floor, the attic under small gables. Outer bays have canted sash bay windows to ground and first floors and paired sashes attic ashes under large gables. Pavilions in a similar but simplified style. Water tower, set in central courtyard, of seven storeys on a two-storey square plinth, boldly chamfered to octagonal. Extensively corbelled out on two stages on top two storeys and finished by gablets to broader sides; two-light mullioned windows inset into broader sides and smaller two-light windows to final stages. Faceted conical slated roof.

Interior: Board Room has shallow moulded panels and cornice; stone chimneypiece.

Recreation hall has a hammerbeam roof, mostly now with a false ceiling, and a stage. History: St Edward's was the 3rd Staffordshire Asylum and is a good example of a medium size mature echelon plan by the architects who were the first to build an asylum of this sort in 1880. G T Hine, Consulting Architect to the Commissioners in Lunacy, described St Edward's in a 1901 RIBA Journal article as "the best, in my opinion, of Messrs. Giles, Gough and Trollope's designs". It was built to house 800 patients, the western half housing females, the eastern male and divided into Infirm, Recent and Active sections with male and female blocks running across the back to the south of workshops and a laundry.

The water tower was first included in the statutory list on 15 December 1986.

Listing NGR: SJ9732053485

Legacy

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number: **468788**

Legacy System: **LBS**

St Edwards Hospital Chapel – Official List Entry

Heritage Category: **Listed Building**

Grade: **II**

List Entry Number: **1272022**

Date first listed: **14-Jul-1997**

List Entry Name: **ST EDWARD'S HOSPITAL CHAPEL**

Statutory Address 1: **ST EDWARD'S HOSPITAL CHAPEL, CHEDDLETON**

Location

Statutory Address: **ST EDWARD'S HOSPITAL CHAPEL, CHEDDLETON**

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County: **Staffordshire**

District: **Staffordshire Moorlands (District Authority)**

Parish: **Cheddleton**

National Grid Reference: **SJ 97423 53638**

Details

SJ95SE 1798-/5/10010

CHEDDLETON CHEDDLETON St Edward's Hospital Chapel

GV II

Chapel to the former North Staffordshire Asylum, now St Edward's Hospital, qv. c1895-99 by Giles, Gough and Trollope. Wall Grange faced red bricks with sandstone dressings. Slated pitched roofs, chancel lower, with pinnaced bellcote to south (liturgical west) end. 7-bay aisleless nave and 4-bay chancel. Decorated style. 4-light window to east end, 5-light to west end; nave with alternating 2-light windows in narrower bays and 3-light windows in wider bays, separated by buttresses. Single storey entrance vestibule under west window with square-headed, traceried windows having a continuous hoodmould. Flanking angle buttresses terminate with conical roofed pinnacles. Interior: Nave has a hammer-beam king post roof, the chancel a king post roof. Plain rendered walls with stone dressings. Patterned tile floor. Fixtures and fittings removed.

Listing NGR: SJ9742353638

Legacy

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number: **468790**

Legacy System: **LBS**

Malloy House – Official List Entry

Heritage Category: **Listed Building**

Grade: **II**

List Entry Number: **1272021**

Date first listed: **14-Jul-1997**

List Entry Name: **ST EDWARD'S HOSPITAL, MALLOY HOUSE**

Statutory Address 1: **ST EDWARD'S HOSPITAL, MALLOY HOUSE, CHEDDLETON**

Location

Statutory Address: **ST EDWARD'S HOSPITAL, MALLOY HOUSE, CHEDDLETON**

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County: **Staffordshire**

District: **Staffordshire Moorlands (District Authority)**

Parish: **Cheddleton**

National Grid Reference: **SJ 97536 53446**

Details

SJ95SE 1798-/5/10017

CHEDDLETON CHEDDLETON St Edward's Hospital, Malloy House

GV II

Detached house, being the former Medical Superintendent's residence at St Edward's Hospital, qv. c1895-1900 by Giles, Gough and Trollope. Wall Grange faced bricks with red sandstone dressings. Pitched slated roof with tall brick chimney stacks and gabled dormers. 2 storeys and attics. Entrance front with 4 windows. Slightly projecting entrance bay has sandstone round-arched entrance with keystone flanked by pilasters supporting an entablature; to right, a corresponding bay with window. 3-light window above and 3-light attic window in large gable. Right hand outer bay has canted bay windows to double height; other windows mostly 2-light. Left hand return has a similar canted bay to double height.

Listing NGR: SJ9753653446

Legacy

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number:

468789

Legacy System:

LBS

Evolution of the Site

It can be seen from Staffordshire Moorlands Public Access, for Planning Applications that the following planning applications relate to the site.

SMD/2009/1095 – Proposed new Hollington stone boundary wall and retaining walls – invalid application.

SMD/2009/1094 – Proposed new Hollington stone boundary wall and retaining walls – invalid application.

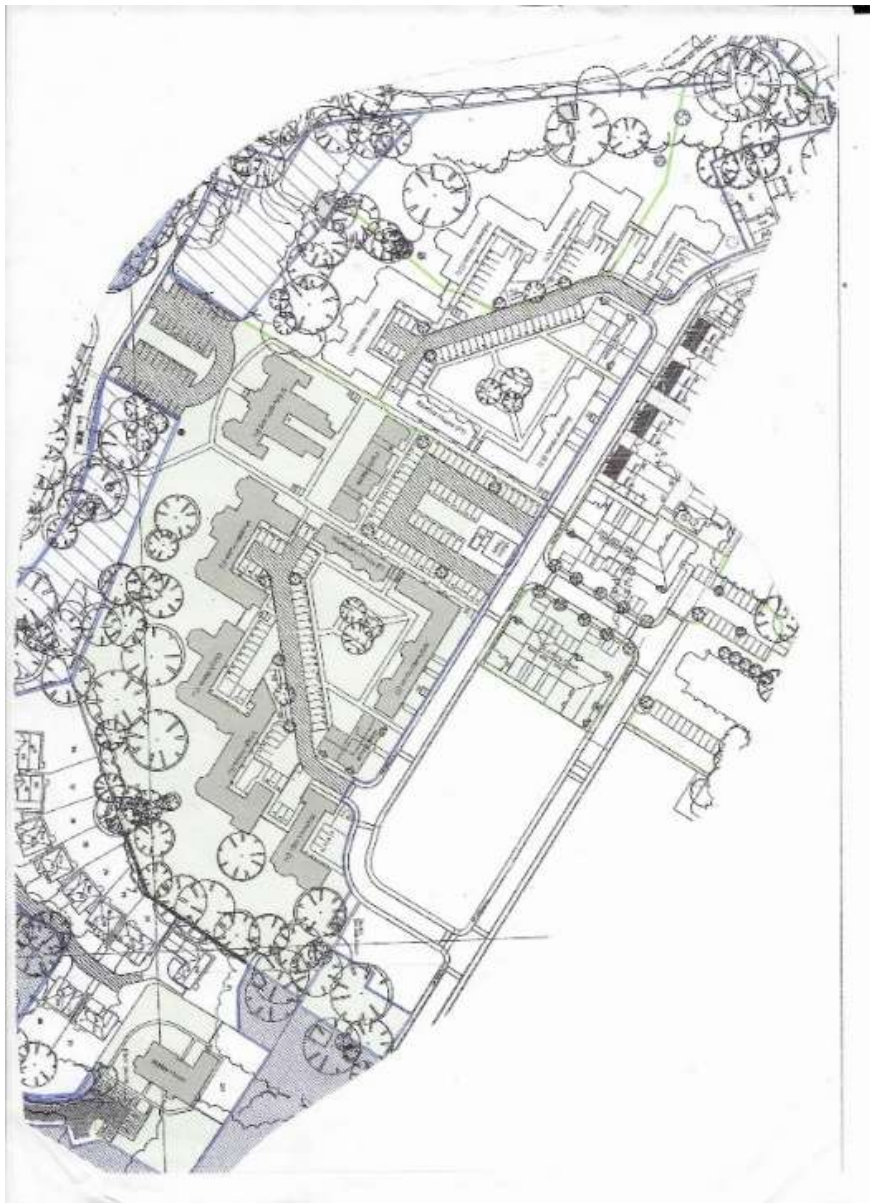
SMD/2006/0526 – Conversion of Morgue to dwelling – refused – June 2006.

SMD/2006/0525 - Conversion of Morgue to dwelling – refused – June 2006.

Appeal reference APP/B3438/A/06/2021789/NWF – appeal dismissed December 2006 (appeal to SMD/2006/0525)

SMD/2006/04272 – Conversion of a Morgue into a dwelling – invalid application.

SMD/2005/1332 – Conversion of Morgue into 3-bedroom residential units – application withdrawn October 2005.



Plan to show the existing buildings along with the new residential dwellings at St Edwards Park

As noted above, this planning application is for conversion of a curtilage listed building (the proposal) into a commercial/business use as a holiday let. It is important to understand The Morgue in the context of its surroundings. The Morgue lies within the boundaries of the original hospital complex, in a small area of woodland, adjacent to The Chapel with properties on Villa Road (the original accommodation for senior staff and attendants) to its northern boundary.

Despite the development of the housing on site taking place from 2002, some 23 years ago, both The Morgue and The Chapel remain the only two structures from the original hospital complex that have not been converted into alternative use. The Chapel has a lapsed planning permission (SMD/2013/0855) to convert to a single residential dwelling with detached 3 bay garage) and The Morgue never having received a positive planning decision despite four attempts. The building has been abandoned for many years and is now becoming a location utilised for anti-social behaviour, including drug use, despite multiple attempts to secure the building as required. Officers will see, from any site visit, that the building is subject to break-ins which, combined with the historic significance of the building, further supports a general requirement for an alternative use for the building in terms of general amenity for the area but also to preserve the designated heritage asset itself.

The proposed development will see the renovation of what is one of the last remaining derelict sites on this sought after residential complex. Protection will be given to designated heritage assets and their settings as set out in the Framework. Paragraph 205 of the Framework confirms that when considering the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. It also notes that, in determining applications that Council's should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation.

It is considered that the proposal is fully consistent with LP Policy DC 2 as it seeks to conserve, and enhance, a designated heritage asset which is in disrepair and has been vacant for decades at the point of application. By finding a viable use the proposal will enable the building to be restored for future generations as a key part of the original St Edward's Hospital Site. Despite the development of the housing on site taking place from 2002, some 23 years ago, both The Morgue and The Chapel remain the only two structures from the original hospital complex that have not been converted into alternative use.

Conditions can be utilised to secure appropriate materials as part of any listed building consent. As confirmed within the structural survey submitted the external brick work is only anticipated to need localised repair and any significantly spalled facing brick will be undertaken with matching bricks. The slate roof covering has held up but the proposal would ensure a roof covering repaired, utilising slate, to allow the building to become weatherproof again and cleared of debris with ongoing maintenance alongside reconstruction of the original vaulted section of the roof. The proposal would also allow for works done to improve structural integrity again conserving and enhancing the building as a designated heritage asset.

The proposed design makes the most of the available space and creates a unique offering as a holiday let. The proposal would offer a different, more niche, form of accommodation being self-catering within an attractive listed historic building creating a unique opportunity to provide visitor accommodation. The proposal would therefore diversify the range and type of accommodation on offer in the area which therefore helps to support the provision and expansion of tourist facilities/accommodation in this part of the Churnet Valley. The main features of the building will be maintained, and the building will be sympathetically renovated

and converted to bring it back to use in a manner appropriate to both its historical interest but also its evolved site setting as outlined.



The Morgue is situated to the rear of the now developed site, to the left of the Water Tower and adjacent to the Chapel, both of which are Grade II Listed

The Morgue is a key part of the historic fabric of the original St Edward's Hospital Site and sits in a small pocket of woodland in the centre of the housing complex adjacent to The Chapel, making it highly visible from public viewpoints and is a significant contribution to the character and appearance of this area of the housing complex.

The proposed development would look to sympathetically renovate the building bringing it back into use and also seeks to preserve the woodland within the curtilage of the building by the careful thinning, pruning and maintenance of the site to allow the former building to be exposed and in keeping with other non-designated heritage assets on the site. The re-use of the Morgue will contribute to the aesthetic nature of the housing complex and its listed buildings. It will allow optimum viable use of a heritage asset, will allow the building to be occupied, although not as a main residence, and the site itself to be cleared of vegetation, landscaped and maintained in keeping with the surrounding area.

Conclusion

The proposal can be seen in the context of the existing residential complex and given the location of the proposal it would not have a greater impact on St Edwards Park and its surrounding 122 acres of land. The impact of the proposal, from a heritage perspective, can only be viewed as positive. The building has been abandoned for many years and is now becoming a location utilised for anti-social behaviour, including drug use, despite multiple attempts to secure the building as required since the applicant purchased the site. Officers will see, from any site visit, that the building is subject to break-ins which, combined with the historic significance of the building, further supports a general requirement for an alternative use for the building in terms of general amenity for the area but also to preserve the designated heritage asset itself.