

Conservation Team Advice

Date: 10th December 2025
Application Ref: SMD/2025/0450
Site Address: Mill House, Oak Street, Cheadle
Proposal: Variation of Condition 2 and Removal of Conditions 4 and 5 relating to SMD/2021/0123

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

Conservation Advice

Summary of Significance

The proposal would involve alterations to Mill House, which is situated in Cheadle Conservation Area. Cheadle Conservation Area was designated for its Saxon origins, its rapid expansion in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, and its historic association with coal mining and metal and textile industries. Predominantly buildings are constructed in red brick walling with Staffordshire blue and Welsh slate roofing. The Conservation Area is characterised by its linear formation, with buildings tightly knit along the highway and linear outbuildings or ranges to the rear. As identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal, Mill House makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Historically, the plot formed a row of terraces (Fig.1) and by the late-19th century the footprint of the existing workshop building is visible (Fig.2). The building is a good example of vernacular industrial building, with a modest scale and influenced by the availability of the local materials.



Fig.1 c.1877-87 OS map [online] (National Library of Scotland)

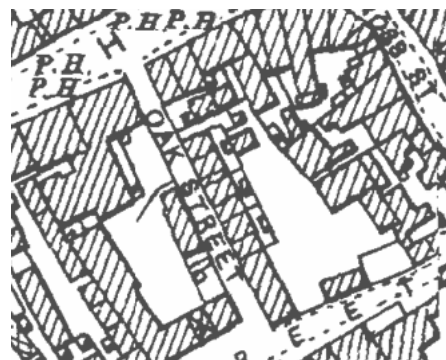


Fig.2 c.1899-1901 OS map [online] (National Library of Scotland)



Fig.3 c.1937-39 OS map [online] (National Library of Scotland)

Assessment and Impact

The proposed details are a variation on the approved details under previous permission SMD/2021/0123 for the conversion of the workshop to residential use.

Although some were later replacements, the existing windows on the workshop building are reflective the vernacular industrial character of the building. Conservation Areas are designated for their preservation or *enhancement*. Previous conservation comments on the 2021 permission sought to encourage the preservation of the building's industrial character by agreeing joinery details for the conversion. The agreed details were a tripartite style with multi-paned top-hung casement and two panes to the lower section (see Fig.4) to reflect the building's modest industrial character.

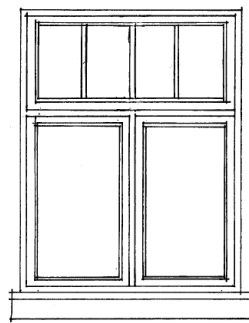


Fig.4 – window details for approved application SMD/2021/0123

The proposed variation seeks to install two-paned side-hung cottage style casement. The change in visual appearance of the window design would affect the character of the building and would likely create a more domestic appearance to the building, particularly as other external works have been approved to facilitate the conversion to residential use in the 2021 permission. From a conservation perspective, it is considered important to retain the modest industrial character of this building as this makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of Cheadle Conservation Area. However, the proposed change in design would diminish this.

In addition to the above, it is proposed to use upvc materials in the proposed windows. These window details were previously agreed to be timber. Upvc is a modern material

which is not sympathetic to the historic character of Cheadle Conservation Area, and, from a conservation perspective, it is usually discouraged as it has a shiny appearance, bulky frames and cannot replicate the intricacy of traditional joinery and craftsmanship details which contribute to the architectural interest of the area. The proposed type of upvc casement would have a outer frame and mullion detail which would create a bulkier appearance to the window frame and, coupled, with the more domestic appearance of the window style would detract from the character and appearance of the building and Conservation Area.

Overall, the change in window design and materials would diminish the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and harm its special interest and significance.

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
- Cheadle Conservation Area Appraisal (2008)

Conclusions and Recommendations

In summary, the proposed alterations would cause minor harm to the overall character and appearance of the Conservation Area. This would fail to satisfy the provisions of

s.72 of the Act. With reference to the planning policies, this would 'less than substantial harm' to the designated heritage asset (par.215 of NPPF and policy DC2 of the local development framework). There does not appear to be clear and convincing justification for this level of harm (par.213 of NPPF) and there would be no heritage-related public benefits which would balance or outweigh this harm (par.215 of NPPF). Therefore, we object to the proposal from a conservation perspective and recommend it is refused.

Conservation Officer: Megan Atkinson