

Conservation Team Advice

Date: 9th January 2026
Application Ref: SMD/2025/0496 & SMD/2025/0497
Site Address: 72 St Edward Street, Leek
Proposal:

- Alterations to the rear outrigger roof, raised head height of rear kitchen window, proposed decked area, rear external door and internal alterations.
- Listed Building Consent - Alterations to the rear outrigger roof, raised head height of rear kitchen window, proposed decked area, rear external door and internal alterations.

Heritage assets affected:		
Designated Heritage Asset(s):	☒	• 70-72 St Edward Street – Grade II (listing ref: 1268532) • Spout Hall – Grade II (listing ref: 1268569) • Victoria Buildings – Grade II (listing ref: 1268535) • Leek Conservation Area
Non-Designated Heritage Asset(s):	☐	

Conservation Advice

Summary of Significance

The proposal would involve alterations to 72 St Edward Street, which is a Grade II Listed Building situated in Leek Conservation Area and the immediate setting of other Grade II Listed Building.

72 St Edward Street (Grade II) was an early-19th century house, constructed in brick with a slate roof. The building is 3-storeys with 5 bays, a stone porch and a ground floor shopfront to the right-hand side. The significance of the building derives from its retention of historic fabric and plan form, association with the development of townhouses in Leek in the late-Georgian period, illustrative Neo-Classical influence and detailing.

Spout Hall (Grade II) is a c.1873 house, constructed in squared stonework to the ground floor and timber frame above with a plain tiled roof. The building has a symmetrical façade with cantilevered projecting gables and large central chimney stack. The significance derives from retention of historic fabric, illustrative revival style which was popular in the Victorian period and prominence on the street.

Victoria Buildings (Grade II) dates c.1897 and was designed by James G Smith for Henry Bermingham, a local silk manufacturer. The building is a purpose-built commercial ground floor units with accommodation above. The building has been constructed in ashlar stone to the ground floor and half-timbering to the upper floor which was popular in the Victorian period.

Leek Conservation Area was designated for its medieval origins as a market town which later expanded as a result of textile and brewing industries. Buildings are typically 2- and 3-storeys, constructed in a mixture of brickwork, render, stone and Staffordshire blue tiled or slate roofs. The architectural interest is an eclectic mix of the different historic phases of development, with St Edward Street being an important commercial street characterised by the mix of Georgian and Victorian buildings. 72 St Edward Street makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.



Fig. 1 c. 1877-1887 OS map

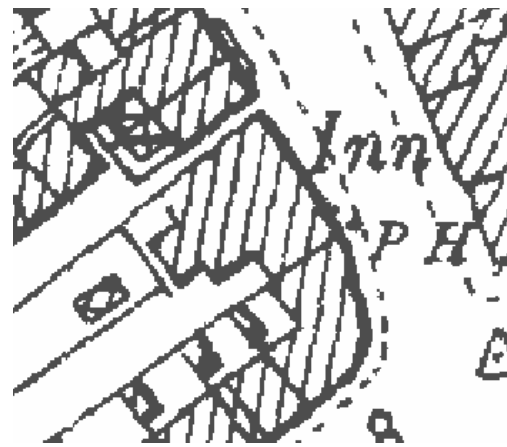


Fig. 2 c. 1899-1901 OS map

Assessment and Impact

The proposal would involve internal and external alterations to 72 St Edward Street.

Internal alterations

The proposal seeks permission to widen an opening between the kitchen and utility room, which would likely have a negligible impact on the overall significance of the building.

The proposed internal works would involve tanking the basement, however it is not clear what form of tanking is proposed as no technical details have been provided.

From a conservation perspective, a slurry system is usually discouraged as it is a cementitious material that would trap moisture within the historic brickwork. Even a membrane system can be non-breathable and result in the same effect. Within the basement, there appear to be features of historic importance and it is not overly clear how the tanking system would affect these features. In addition, it is not clear there are any alterations to the ceiling and floors proposed (i.e. under drawing the beams and installing cement screed?).

The supporting statement also mentions that a ventilation system would be installed, which would force air out of the decking proposed. It would be useful to have this illustrated on a section, i.e. whether this involves ductwork.

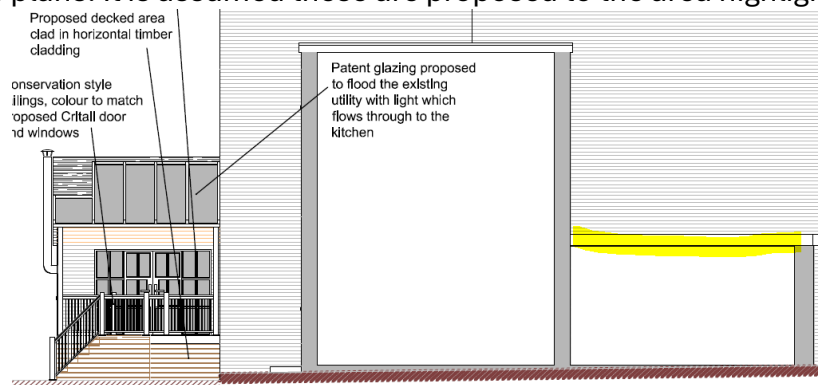
Overall, however, this is likely to have a harmful impact on the special architectural interest of the Listed Building and we are unlikely to be supportive of the tanking if it involves the installation of non-breathable materials and the removal of historic features, such as storage shelves and any historic flooring.

External alterations

The proposed external alterations include, enlarging the kitchen window, replacing a rear door, enlarging a door to create a Crittall window/door feature, installing a large flue, installation of a canopy, decking and external staircase and installation of glazed roof lights.

Overall, the proposed alterations are quite unsympathetic to the character of the building. Whilst it is acknowledged there have been some modern alterations, such as the flat roof storey infill, for the most part the building still retains the historic character with a late-19th century outrigger. The large expanses of glazing on the rear outrigger would starkly contrast with the Georgian and Victorian character of the property. The timber cladding of the staircase would not be sympathetic to the traditional palette of materials and the large flue would be a distracting visual feature.

The supporting statement mentions that flat rooflights are proposed, although not shown on the plans. It is assumed these are proposed to the area highlighted in yellow:



Overall, the alterations would have a harmful impact on the special interest of the Listed Building. At this stage, it is not overly clear what the level of harm would be to the basement, but the proposed works are likely to impact the designed ancillary and subservient character of this space and potentially result in the loss of historic features and result in damage to the historic fabric through non-breathable and inappropriate application of modern materials. In addition, the proposed external works would create a cluttered and discordant appearance to the building which would further distract from the building's architectural interest.

Legislation and Policy

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The local planning authority should have a desirability of preserving the setting and special interest of the Listed Building (s.16 and 66) and 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

Conclusions and Recommendations

In summary, the proposal would have a moderate harmful impact on the special interest of the Listed Building and potential minor impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. This would fail to satisfy the provisions of s.16, 66 and 72 of the Act. With reference to 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). There are no heritage-related public benefits arising from the proposal which would balance or outweigh this level of harm (par.215 of NPPF)

and it is not overly clear whether the proposed level of harm is justified (par.213 of NPPF). At this stage, we cannot support the proposal and would recommend alterations to the design and further technical details on alterations to the basement. Otherwise, we would recommend the proposal is refused.

Conservation Officer: Megan Atkinson