

Conservation Team Advice

Date: 7th April 2026
Application Ref: SMD/2026/0100
Site Address: Land adj to Caudon Close, Leek
Proposal: Permission in principle application for the construction of a detached low cost energy efficient house.

Heritage assets affected:		
Designated Heritage Asset(s):	☒	- Ferne-lea and Cranford and attached wall – Grade II (listing ref: 1268594) - Highbarn – Grade II (listing ref: 1268595) - All Saints’ Church – Grade I (listing ref: 1268538) - Leek Conservation Area
Non-Designated Heritage Asset(s):	☐	

Conservation Advice

Summary of Significance

The proposal would be situated immediately adjacent Leek Conservation Area and in the wider setting of several Listed Buildings.

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 the predominantly Georgian and Victorian commercial buildings and Edwardian civic architecture at the core and 19th and early 20th century mills and residential expansion on the fringes of the settlement.

Highbarn (Grade II) is a detached house designed by Reginald Longden for himself in an Arts & Crafts Vernacular Revival style. The building is constructed in brick, with some half-timbering, and pitched tile roof. It has an asymmetrical design with leaded light mullioned windows, large chimney stacks and projecting gables.

Ferne-lea and Cranford (Grade II) form a pair of houses dating c.1912 designed by Reginald Longden in an Arts & Crafts style. The building is constructed in brick with a plain tile roof. The houses have an asymmetrical design with two projecting gables, mullioned windows and leaded lights and large chimney stacks which are all characteristic of the architectural style.

The significance of these listed houses on Fynney Street relate to their retention of historic fabric and plan form, illustrative Arts & Crafts style, association with local architect and association with the development of suburban housing the early-20th century of Leek.

The Parish Church of All Saints (Grade I) is a c.1887 church designed by Norman Shaw, a famous Arts & Crafts architect. It is constructed in coursed squared rubble with a plain tiled roof and has internal décor associated with William Morris. Its significance is associated with the growth of places of worship in the late-Victorian period, integrity in its original designs, connection with nationally significant architects and designers and designed prominence in the street.

Assessment and Impact

The proposal seeks permission in principle for a dwelling on the site and no technical details have been submitted at this stage.

The existing site does not appear to have any historic association with the surrounding Listed Buildings and it makes a relatively neutral contribution to their setting as well as the setting of the adjacent Conservation Area.

There is a modern cul-de-sac development to the south of the site which is low-rise and does not dominate or distract from the setting or significance of the adjacent designated heritage assets. There may be some inter-visibility with the rear elevation of Highbarn (Grade II) which is of medium significance. But as the listed building is at higher topography, a dwelling on the site would not compete with or distract from views and appreciation of the listed building.

In addition, there may be some inter-visibility with the listed church but not with key elevations or experience of the church and it would be at such a distance that it would not distract from the building's architectural interest.

The proposed development would be in proximity to these heritage assets but, subject to materials and detailing, it is considered that development of a single dwelling on the site would unlikely cause harm to the setting of the adjacent Listed Buildings and Conservation Area.

Legislation and Policy

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The local planning authority should have a desirability of preserving the setting of the Listed Buildings (s.66).

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).

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, it is likely that a single dwelling has the potential to not cause harm to the setting of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas and their special interest would be preserved. This would comply with s.66 of the Act, Section 16 of the NPPF and policy DC2 of the local development framework. There are no objections to the proposal from a conservation perspective, but we recommend we are consulted at the technical details stage to ensure design, detailing and materials are appropriate to the context.

Conservation Officer: Megan Atkinson