

Conservation Team Advice

Date: 13th April 2026
Application Ref: SMD/2026/0082 & SMD/2026/0083
Site Address: Quiet Woman, St Edward Street, Leek
Proposal:

- Change of use from currently vacant public house to form 4 holiday lets
- Listed Building Consent for the change of use from currently vacant public house to form 4 holiday lets

Heritage assets affected:		
Designated Heritage Asset(s):	☒	• The Quiet Woman Public House – Grade II (listing ref: 1268533) • 69 and 71 St Edward Street – Grade II (listing ref: 1268531) • The Unicorn Public House – Grade II (listing ref: 1268534) • Leek Conservation Area
Non-Designated Heritage Asset(s):	☐	

Conservation Advice

Summary of Significance

The proposal would involve alterations to The Quiet Woman which is a Grade II Listed Building situated in Leek Conservation Area.

The Quiet Woman (Grade II) is a late-19th century public house with earlier remains. The building has a Neo-Tudor frontage with Tudor arched mullioned windows, central door with hoodmould and ogee style Dutch gables with diaper brickwork detailing. Internally, the building has retained historic décor and detailing, such as tiled floor, timber panelling, ceiling roses and fireplaces. The significance of the building relates to its retention of historic fabric and layout, possible earlier remains, illustrative Neo-Tudor detailing which was popular in the Victorian period, association with the growth of public houses in 19th century and retention of architectural detailing.

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. The pub makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Immediately adjacent to The Quiet Woman, are The Unicorn Public House and 69-71 St Edward Street both of which are Grade II Listed Buildings.



Fig. 1 c. 1900 OS map [online] (National Library of Scotland)



Fig. 2 c. 1925 OS map [online] (National Library of Scotland)

Assessment and Impact

The proposal seeks the conversion of the public house to 4 holiday lets. There have been previous approvals for similar schemes (application refs: SMD/2020/0689, SMD/2020/0690, SMD/2024/0357 & SMD/2024/0358). The 2020 approvals sought to retain the ground floor frontage as a public house, but subsequent 2024 permission sought to alter the scheme so the whole building was converted to holiday-lets.

The current proposal seeks the following amendments to the 2024 permission:

- Unit 1 – creation of ensembles to bedroom 1, 2 & 4
- Unit 2 – widening an opening to the kitchen, relocation of shower room and new door and window to the rear elevation
- Unit 4 – new partition around the staircase to create protected means of escape

Internal alterations

Overall, the proposal seeks to maintain much of the internal layout which would help retain the building's character. However, it was noted on site, there is historic detailing such as fireplaces, tiled flooring, exposed beams and timber posts, panelling to the ground floor, ceiling roses to first floor and balustrading to the staircase which appear

to be of historic significance. It is not overly clear from the submission if these features are proposed to be retained. For example, the proposed amendments to the ensuite layout of bedroom 2 & 4 of Unit 1 appear to have partitions either side of the fireplace shown in Fig.3 below. The updated heritage impact assessment recommends this fireplace is retained, but it is not overly clear how this would be achieved and we would suggest a more technical detail drawing is provided for this element to ensure that the proposed amendments would not cause further harm.



Fig.3 – fireplace to first floor (proposed bedroom 4 ensuite)

Is the attic space and basement for Unit 1 to be used for accommodation or are the stairwells to be blocked off to prevent use?

The proposed alterations to the ground floor of Unit 1 to create an ensuite and the proposed widening of the opening to the kitchen and relocation of the shower room for Unit 2 would likely have a neutral impact on the building's significance as these areas of the building have been greatly altered. There is clear and convincing justification for the proposed enclosure of the stairwell to Unit 4 in terms of complying with safe means of escape.

External alterations

It was noted on site (27/03/26) that works to remove the courtyard canopy and ground floor courtyard windows had commenced. These were modern additions and alterations and, as noted in the previous permissions, their removal would better reveal the historic layout and significance of the Listed Building.

The courtyard elevations are of lower significance as there were modern upvc and stormproof timber windows in situ prior to works commencing. The ground floor walls had been plastered (which appeared to have been removed on site) and the upper floors were painted brickwork. The proposal seeks to replace the modern courtyard elevation windows with timber replacements, which would be double-glazed. Usually, double glazing is discouraged in a Listed Building as it is not a historic feature and can detract from the architectural interest of the building. However, in this instance, the existing were modern inappropriate alternatives and the replacement with timber

would be an enhancement. It is noted on the sectional details that a projecting trickle vent appears to be shown on the window details and it would be recommended that this is removed to create a more sympathetic and authentic finish to the window detailing.

A courtyard stairwell is no longer proposed, which would have a neutral impact on the building's significance.

There is a proposed window and door now proposed to the rear elevation (Elevation 6) and these alterations appear to have been designed sensitively to the ancillary function of these outbuildings.

No alterations are proposed to the principal elevation of the building, which is supported from a conservation perspective. However, it was noted on site, that the window frames, bay windows and central door appear to be in a deteriorated state and it would be suggested that further clarification on the proposed repairs to these features are provided to ensure that the historic fabric and detailing of the building is best preserved and also secure some heritage benefits to the scheme.

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 substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, permission should be refused unless it can be demonstrated that the level of harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm or all of the criteria in par.214 of the NPPF are met.

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

Overall, there would be a minor-moderate degree of harm to the significance of the Listed Building through loss of its historic use, alterations to the plan form and to the elevations. The works would not harm the setting of the adjacent Listed Buildings nor the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. This would fail to satisfy the provisions of s.16 of the Act, but would satisfy s.66 and 72 of the Act.

With reference to the planning policies, this would be ‘less than substantial harm’ to the designated heritage asset (par.215 of the NPPF and policy DC2 of the local development framework). There is clear and convincing justification for this level of harm (par.213 of NPPF) and the proposal seeks to secure a new optimum viable use for the building (par.215 of NPPF). In general, the proposed internal layout has been sensitively designed to retain as much of the historic layout as possible. Overall, there are no objections to the principle of the proposal from a conservation perspective.

As noted above, however, we would require some clarification on the following to ensure the detailing of the interior is secured and minor alteration to new window design:

- Retention and reuse of historic features in the interior of the building, for example:
 - ➔ Fireplaces and surrounds on ground and first floor of Unit 1
 - ➔ Timber flooring and panelling to Unit 1
 - ➔ Details of any boxing-in of timber beams and posts in Unit 4
- Clarification of blocking-up/securing access to the attic and basement of Unit 1
- Proposed repair works to principal elevation (i.e. any re-pointing to masonry, repairs/upgrades to existing windows and repairs to central door)
- Technical detail of the proposed partitions and possible alterations to fireplace for ensuite to bedroom 4 of Unit 1 (first floor)
- Removal of projecting trickle vents from window details
- Clarification of colour for windows and door replacements

Subject to the above, we would suggest the following conditions for any consent granted:

- No works shall be commenced until a methodology for undertaking repair works has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall include a full schedule of works which addresses repairs to front elevation windows (inc. bay windows) and door, internal panelling to ground floor, tiled floors, any roof repairs, any external cleaning of masonry to courtyard elevations and any external masonry repairs (such as re-painting and/or re-pointing). The works shall thereafter be carried out only in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the Listed Building.

- No works shall be commenced in respect of the features identified below, until details of their design, fixing and finish in the form of manufacturer's specification or drawings and sections at a scale of not less than 1:10 have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall thereafter be undertaken and retained for the lifetime of the development in accordance with the approved details.
 - i. Rooflight details
 - ii. Upgrades or alterations to the internal lining of floor, walls and ceilings
 - iii. Details of new rainwater goods and soil vent pipes
 - iv. Details of any new external flues, vents or cowls
 - v. Details of any external lighting

Reason: To safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the Listed Building.

Conservation Officer: Megan Atkinson