

Conservation Team Advice

Date: 21st April 2026
Application Ref: SMD/2026/0085
Site Address: Land to rear of Red Lion, Church Lane, Checkley
Proposal: Erection of 2no self-build dwellings

Heritage assets affected:		
Designated Heritage Asset(s):	☒	• Checkley Conservation Area • Church of St Mary – Grade I (listing ref: 1037959) • Manor Farmhouse – Grade II (listing ref: 1204844) • Churchyard wall and gates to west and south of Church of St Mary – Grade II (listing ref: 1374672)
Non-Designated Heritage Asset(s):	☐	

Conservation Advice

Summary of Significance

The proposal is situated in Checkley Conservation Area and the wider setting of several Listed Buildings.

Checkley Conservation Area encompasses the medieval hamlet off the main A522 which centres around the Church of St Mary, the latter of which is a dominating structure in the landscape. The buildings surrounding the church predominantly date from the 18th and 19th century. They are a mixture of cottages, farmhouses, a rectory and public house; 2-storeys and constructed in red brick walling (some limewashed or rendered) and pitched plain clay tiled roof. The buildings are arranged in a sinuous linear formation around the church at the centre, leading down to the river. Typically, buildings are tightly knit either facing immediately onto the road or slightly set back behind a low stone boundary wall. The overriding impression of the Conservation Area is the modest traditional character of many of the buildings. The Conservation Area boundary encompasses some open fields to the west and south which accentuate the rural character of the area.

The Church of St Mary (Grade I) is a parish church with 12th century origins, with 14th and 15th century alterations and rebuilding in the 17th century. The building has a western

tower and is constructed in coursed stone, with lead roofs behind crenellated parapets. The significance of the building derives from its retention of historic fabric and layout, medieval origins, retention of later phases of development, illustrative Gothic intersecting tracery detailing and designed prominence in the landscape. Surrounding the churchyard is a separately Grade II listed wall and gates dating from 18th century, constructed in large coursed stone blocks.

To the northeast of the site is Manor Farmhouse (Grade II) which dates from 18th century with mid-19th century alterations. The building is 2 and 3 storeys constructed in red brick with a tiled roof and coggled eaves. The significance relates to retention of historic fabric and layout, association with agricultural development of the village and illustrative vernacular construction.



Fig.1 c.1887 OS map [online] (National Library of Scotland)

Assessment and Impact

The proposal would involve construction of 2 new dwellings on the site to the rear of the Red Lion pub. There are previous permissions for a single dwelling on the site (application refs: SMD/2019/0460 & SMD/2022/0437), which had a cottage style appearance.

The proposed dwellings for this application would be 2½ storeys, constructed in red/brown bricks and Staffordshire blue tile roofs. The proposed dimensions would be

approx. 8.7m (H) x 9m (L) x 6.6m (W), which would be taller than the previous approval. The dwellings are proposed to be identical in appearance, with a symmetrical façade, timber central canopy, two pitched roof dormers and a rear apex addition to the roof.

Overall, the proposal would be an intensive form of backland development which would be at odds with the historic grain and plan form of the Conservation Area. The proposed scale and form of the dwellings would not relate to the overriding modest appearance of the surrounding built heritage, notably the dormers and rear addition would create quite a bulky and overbearing appearance to the dwellings.

The proposed design would be an incoherent mix of pastiche and contemporary features which would distract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Whilst sympathetic materials – red brick walling and plain tile roofs – are proposed, it is not considered this would overcome or minimise the visual impact from the proposed development on the Conservation Area. Due to the intervening buildings, the proposal is unlikely to have a harmful impact on the visual appreciation of the setting of the surrounding Listed Buildings but would encroach upon their wider rural setting.

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.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

The proposal would have a moderate harmful impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and negligible impact on the wider setting of the Listed Buildings. This would fail to satisfy the provisions of s.72 of the Act, but satisfy provisions of s.66. With reference to the planning policies, the proposal would result in 'less than substantial harm' to the designated heritage asset (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). We object to the proposal from a conservation perspective and recommend it is refused.

Conservation Officer: Megan Atkinson