

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2026/0082
Valid 26/02/2026

QUIET WOMAN
73 ST EDWARD STREET
LEEK

CHANGE OF USE FROM
CURRENTLY VACANT PUBLIC
HOUSE TO FORM 4 HOLIDAY
LETS

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Heritage
- Amenity

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

Highly characterful Grade II Listed Building which makes a strong positive contribution to the Leek Conservation Area on the main thoroughfare of Leek's St Edward Street.

Previously approved under SMD/2024/0357 for '*Change of use from currently vacant public house to form 4 Holiday Lets and associated Listing Building Consent*' (04.11.2024). LBC approval ref SMD/2024/0358.

Earlier previous approval under SMD/2020/0689: '*Change of use to provide 4 self-catering units of Holiday Accommodation within part of, and alongside, the Public House; including associated alterations and works*'.

SMD/2020/0690 LBC approval for: *Works and alterations necessary to use part of the Public House as holiday accommodation, as detailed and described in the revised 'Schedule of Works' (to include revision A and B made on the 12th Feb 21 and 24th Feb 21 respectively) submitted on the 25th February 2021; and section 3.2 of the revised 'Heritage Impact Assessment' submitted on the 26th February 2021.*

The loss of the use of the building as a historic pub serving the town (a community facility) was considered in the delegated report for the 2024 approvals and was accepted on the basis of there being other pubs remaining in the town. The report also recognised the growing importance of securing a future use for the vacant building in the hope of preventing its further deterioration which was already being recognised as an adverse impact on the town street scene and a threat to the listed heritage. The building remains vacant and unused.

It appears some work has taken place intermittently in the building both prior to and also during the current ownership. There appears however as yet to be no record of any approved discharge of conditions for these premises in response to any of the previous approvals. However, the 2024 consents meanwhile remain valid to November 2027.

PROPOSAL

The agent's statement sets out a series of revisions relative to the 2024 consents as follows [with no changes itemised for unit 3]:

Unit 1: *Revisions to the first-floor plan to improve the sanitary accommodation of the holiday let through the introduction of ensuites to Bedroom 2, Bedroom 4 and relocation of the shower room for Bedroom 3 to the existing stores. Careful consideration has been given to location of the partitions to reduce the impact on the general plan form and to minimise disruption to the building fabric for services installation. The proposals seek no changes to the external elevations working within the boundaries of existing apertures. The proposals result in no harm to the heritage asset or setting.*

Unit 2: *Revisions to ground floor plan to accommodate relocated shower-room and revised kitchen layout: this is a return to the Unit 2 plan layout as approved in SMD/2020/0689 and 0690 with the minor revision to the kitchen layout to allow light amenity to this room from the rear. The revisions are proposed as enabling works to re-introduce the means of escape from the courtyard to the East elevation and to mitigate the need for external stairwells within the courtyard (courtyard access for Unit 4 now being via the existing principle entrance stairwell). The fire escape route via the Unicorn (as entitled through the deeds) shall be made redundant and the corridor access can be utilised for storage as shown. The design can be achieved with no impact to historic building fabric, with the addition of a single window to the C20 single storey extension to the rear (east) elevation. The proposals result in a benefit to the heritage asset and no harm to the setting.*

Unit 4: *To achieve Building Regulations approval, safe means of egress from the Unit 4 bedrooms is required via a protected landing and stair. As such a new partition wall between the bedrooms and living area is required. The proposals result in no loss of historic building fabric or form (the spaces having already been split and their original layout form unknown). The introduction of the internal partitioning has allowed for the removal of the external fire stair to the courtyard; allowing an unobstructed view of the original courtyard West elevation (following demolition of the canopy). The proposals result in no harm to the heritage asset or setting.*

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan (adopted 9th September 2020)

- SS1 Development Principles
- SS2 Settlement Hierarchy
- SS5 Leek Area Strategy
- SS11 Churnet Valley Strategy
- DC1 Design Considerations
- DC2 The Historic Environment
- E4 Tourism and Cultural Development
- NE1 Biodiversity and Geological Resources
- T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework (Dec 2024)

Paragraph(s) 1 – 14;

Section(s) 4 – Decision making; 6 – Building a strong and competitive economy; 7 – Ensuring the vitality of town centres; 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities; 9 – Promoting sustainable transport; 11 – Making effective use of land; 12 – Achieving well designed places; 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Adopted Supplementary Planning Documents/Guidance (SPD/G):

- Space About Dwellings SPG
- Design Principles SPG
- Design Guide SPD adopted 21st February 2018

Local Plan Supporting Evidence Documents:

- Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (2008)

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

There is a lengthy planning history associated with the building as a pub, the latest being in 2006.

SMD/2020/0137 – Retrospective Listed Building Consent for internal alterations to ground floor layout – withdrawn.

SMD/2020/0689 and SMD/2020/0690 – approved as noted above under ‘Description of site’.

SMD/2024/0357 and SMD/2024/0358 – approved as noted above under ‘Description of site’, subject to LBC condition.

DOC/2025/0005 condition 3 of SMD/2024/0358 (LBC) – REFUSED – *“the details submitted in order to discharge Condition 3 (relating to windows and doors detail) of permission SMD 2024 0358 are not considered to be acceptable.”*

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 17.04.2024

Neighbour consultation period ends: 26.03.2024

Press Advert: 08.04.2024

Public Comments

None

Town / Parish Comments

Leek Town Council - none

SMDC Waste Collection

It is advised that there would be a need for sufficient storage space to be included in the plans for 2 x 1100 litre euro style bins; 1 bin for general waste; and 1 bin for recycling materials. There would also need to be sufficient space for either 4 x 25 litre food waste caddies, or a communal food waste wheelie bin.

The case officer exchanged e-mails with the agent who confirmed by e-mail dd 30th April 2026: waste storage and collection will take place from the Brook Street side, including for Unit 1, as indicated in yellow on the plan (Fig.1 below).



Fig.1

SMDC Environmental Health

Potential Areas Of Environmental Concern:

1. Noise/ Demolition Impacts (Condition)
2. Asbestos (advisory)
3. Fire Safety (Building Regulations & Staffordshire Fire and Rescue)
4. Sound Insulation (Building regulations and advisory)
5. Bin arrangements (Require Confirmation)

General Comment [as per response given to SMD/2024/0357 and 0358]

Asbestos: Any redundant on site that may well have asbestos containing materials (ACM) in their fabric (e.g. asbestos roof) To ensure no future asbestos contamination, as a result of demolition a “Demolition or refurbishment asbestos survey” and risk assessment should be carried out prior to the demolition of these buildings. The enforcing authority for this type of work is the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and it is recommended that you contact them directly to discuss their requirements: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/>. This is included as an advisory.

Nuisance: The proposed development is close to existing properties so care needs to be taken during construction / demolition phase to ensure site related activities do not cause unreasonably disruption to the neighbour’s enjoyment of their properties.

Fire Safety: Fire safety is subject to Building Regulations Document B. Consultation might also be made to Staffordshire Fire and Rescue.

Sound Insulation: As the rooms are being created under a material change of use then compliance with Approved Document E: Section 6 would be required. It would also be advisable to consult BS8233:2014 Guidance on sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings.

Conditions recommended re:

- Hours of working
- Construction and demolition method
- Noise management
- nb EH option specific to guest management also provided for consideration

SMDC Conservation Officer

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.

The architectural interest of the Leek Conservation Area 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.

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(s):

Unit 1 – creation of ensuites 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.2 below [Fig. 3 in the CO original comments]. 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. 2

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 in-appropriate 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.

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 s.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 floors, 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.

Agent responded to the above by e-mail dd 21.04.2026 providing the following accompanying note (responses in bold):

Please find attached the revised drawing and the information below in response to the Conservation Officer's comments.

- 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 **To be retained as existing: annotation to the effect added to drawing 02D**
 - Timber flooring and panelling to Unit 1 **To be retained as existing: annotation to the effect added to drawing 02D**
 - Details of any boxing-in of timber beams and posts in Unit 4 **No alterations/ boxing in proposed: annotation to the effect added to drawing 02D**
- Clarification of blocking-up/securing access to the attic and basement of Unit 1: **Existing doors to be retained with iron with new ironmongery as required to prevent guest access: annotation to the effect added to drawing 02D**
- Proposed repair works to principal elevation (i.e. any re-pointing to masonry, repairs/upgrades to existing windows and repairs to central door): **Not proposed as part of application**
- Technical detail of the proposed partitions and possible alterations to fireplace for ensuite to bedroom 4 of Unit 1 (first floor): **Fireplace to be retained; technical details provided to drawing 02D**
- Removal of projecting trickle vents from window details : **Removed from details on drawings 03A, 04A and 05A**
- Clarification of colour for windows and door replacements : **Waterbased heritage paint in off white (Little Greene 'Stock' or equivalent) - Annotation to the effect added to drawings 03A, 04A, 05A**

The **Conservation Officer's further comments are:**

They have removed the projecting trickle vent detail on new windows and added annotations on retained features, such as fireplaces, which has addressed the queries raised in conservation comments. No objections to these details.

It is noted that no works are proposed to the front elevation as mentioned below, but the principal elevation was noted from the LPA site visits to be in a relatively poor condition. A condition on methodology of repair works is therefore still recommended as it is envisaged some repair works will inevitably be undertaken. Otherwise it would not be a very attractive holiday let listing.

Also, the interior of the front part of the building (proposed as Unit 1) did have historic panelling and tiled flooring which was of interest, and it would be useful to get details of their repair/reuse as part of the permission to ensure works are sympathetic to the

historic interest of the building. Therefore, would still suggest conditions for the LBC application as per previous comments.

Agent responded further in an e-mail dd 30th April questioning pre-commencement conditions and proposing to provide further detail. **Conservation Officer advised as follows 1st May 2026:**

Listed Buildings are protected for their special architectural and historic interest and if a proposed development seeks to alter this then it is our statutory duty as decision makers to ensure that this special interest is best preserved. In determining the application, it is considered reasonable to request further information on some details such as repairs to the principal façade (as it currently appears in a poor/deteriorating state) and also some of the technical details associated with the conversion that may impact the architectural interest of the building.

The suggested methodology condition would only need to be added to the Listed Building Consent and, as has been highlighted, we don't actually need written agreement for this for listed building consent. But it is good practice to make people aware of conditions on decision notices to avoid possible enforcement issues arising later.

For the further technical details to be agreed, this is a '*prior to installation of those features*' condition so I don't foresee how this could be an issue in terms of commencing the works as the details could be agreed as you go along.

The proposed methodology condition could be worded to be prior to those specific works occurring, however I am conscious in determining the listed building consent application I would like to ensure that repairs are carried out to the front as, otherwise, it would undermine the potential heritage benefits of the scheme if the façade is just left to deteriorate further.

In regards to the other items, you can provide these details prior to determination if you are conscious of further delays. But, in the first instance, it might be best to outline what works exactly are envisaged to be carried out first that you consider would be held up by the suggested conditions.

With no further agent response **Conservation Officer advised 14th May 2026:**

The Council's intention is to ensure the decorative finishes are preserved internally and also if there are any proposed repairs externally that the materials/methods are sympathetic to the historic fabric. Alternative revised condition wording offered:

- No external 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, 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.

As previously recommended:

- 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 floors, 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.

Agent confirmed agreement to the revised condition by e-mail dd 14th May 2026.

Staffordshire County Council Highways

Acceptance. Application is for COU from pub to holiday lets. It is an amendment to the previously approved SMD/2021/0357. Site is located in Leek town centre. Site had a former commercial use. No parking is proposed at the site, nor can any be provided. There are public car parks nearby, the closest less than 100m away. Site is in a sustainable location and proposal will not have a severe effect on the highway.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

The acceptability of the development in principle is confirmed by the extant permission(s) from 2024.

Design

In terms of design appearance the scheme achieves acceptability by its compliance with heritage expectations which has been confirmed in detail by the Conservation Officer subject to conditions.

Amenity

As a development of flats around a small c.6m x 6m courtyard the design does not achieve normal standoff distances for principal windows. In essence however, this appears to have been the case with the extant approved scheme as well. There appear to be no existing or neighbouring occupiers that would be affected unduly and the compromises for occupiers of the proposal scheme, given that it is for holiday accommodation rather than main residences, can be accepted.

It should be noted that two else three existing first floor windows, each proposed to serve bedrooms of unit 4, overlook a covered yard area to the rear of The Unicorn (now occupied as a dwelling). These are not new and would have served what is understood to have previously been habitable accommodation. This and the fact they look out over a covered yard at the rear of The Unicorn leads to a conclusion that no new implications would arise in terms of privacy for occupiers of The Unicorn. There is also a first floor window to unit 3 serving an en-suite or bathroom also overlooking the covered yard – as was the case in the previous approved scheme. Serving a bathroom this would need to be obscure glazed but again in any event should not conflict with privacy due to it looking out over a covered area.

Issues were raised by the occupier of The Unicorn at the time of the 2024 applications regarding an access out from the Quiet Woman into the rear yard of the Unicorn and regarding ground floor windows into this same yard area. It was concluded then that the ground floor windows were already blocked up and that they should remain so in the course of the development as subsequently approved. This ground floor arrangement appears to continue into the current scheme.

Condition six of the 2024 consent stipulated that the access through to the Unicorn was to be used only as an emergency fire exit and that it should remain closed at all other times. This latest 2026 scheme meanwhile dispenses with this through-link altogether describing it on the drawing as a “redundant means of escape through the Unicorn boarded up”.

A condition should be used to make clear that the openings at ground floor in the rear Yard of the Unicorn are to be kept blocked up – or, in the case of the through doorway – shall cease to be used and shall be blocked up.

There is pedestrian access to unit 1 via the main front door on St Edward Street. All the units have access to the shared interior courtyard and via that space there is access (shared with other properties) at the rear to / from Brook Street. This latter is the sole access for the other 3 units.

Heritage

Conditions need to be attached in line with the recommendations of the Conservation Officer. The applicant has been given opportunity through their agent to provide clarification on the intended use of both the attic and cellars in the building contained within unit 1 of the proposal. The agent has commented that existing doors are to be retained and guest access will not be provided. They have not clarified whether any work would take place in these areas but as none is proposed it can be assumed not and a condition should be attached to make this clear for the avoidance of doubt. Relevant to this it can be noted from the file photos that the cellar retains physical features of the original pub use such as the barrel stairs. Fig. 3 below shows that the attic comprises original timberwork and a limecrete floor both of obvious historic interest and quality.



Fig.3 – unit 1 attic

Highway Safety

Acceptable in line with HA comments.

Other Matters

As holiday lets there would appear to be nothing to prevent communal bookings. Although a former public house, any impacts from the use such as entertainment noise, would then likely have been contained to ground floor or other function rooms. Under this proposal there is potential for combined lettings of the whole building. This could risk problematic impacts, especially of noise for residential neighbours, as unlike the former pub there would be no on-site resident manager. The issue appears not to have been considered previously but on inquiry with Environmental Health a condition for a management protocol is recommended.

Waste management needs to be conditioned to be in accordance with the agent's proposals by e-mail dd 30th April 2026.

Renovations can raise concerns for protected species. Again this hasn't been picked up previously. The LPA visit inspected the attic to unit 1 which is open to the rafters. See Fig.2 below. There is no particular reason to foresee any adverse impacts for protected species. Nevertheless it would be appropriate to attach the relevant advisory informative.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

On the basis of all of the above the scheme is found acceptable in principle and in the key details of heritage, design and amenity.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : **Approve**

Case Officer: Arne Swithenbank

Recommendation Date: 30.04.2026 up-dated 18.05.2026

X 

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council