

# DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

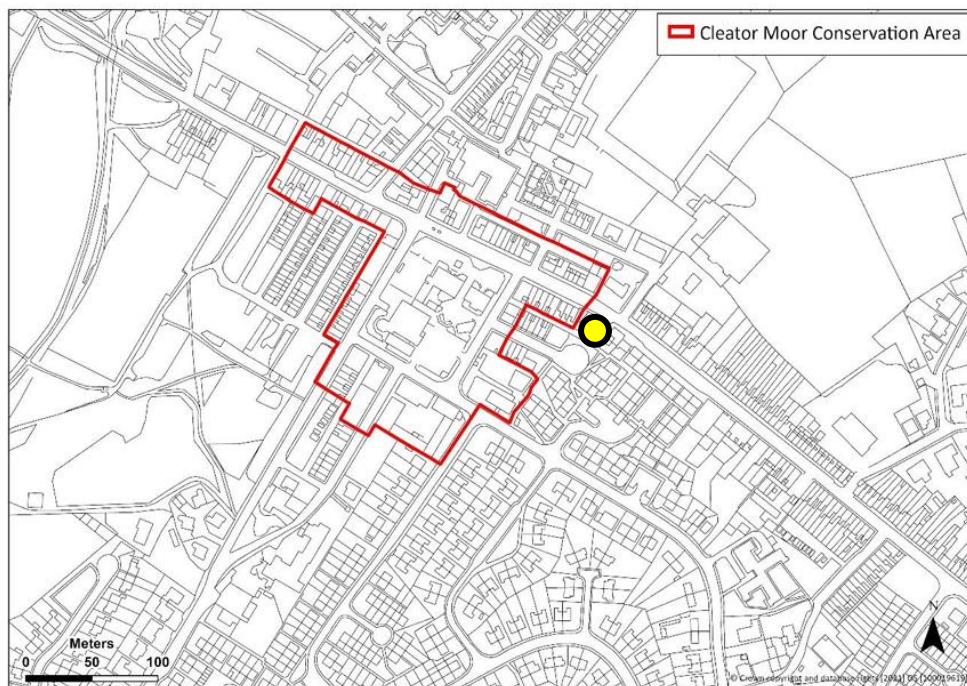
**37 High Street, Cleator Moor**

**Proposed Conversion and Alterations to 37 High Street, Cleator Moor, CA25 5LA**

<b>Project Name</b>	37 High Street
<b>Project No.</b>	349
<b>Document Title</b>	Design & Access Statement
<b>Project Description</b>	Conversion of 37 High Street, Cleator Moor to 4 Self-Contained Flats (Use Class C3)
<b>Local Planning Authority</b>	Cumberland Council (formerly Copeland Borough Council)
<b>Revision</b>	-
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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Design & Access Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the conversion and alteration of the existing property at 37 High Street, Cleator Moor, to provide four self-contained residential flats, together with a modest single-storey rear extension, associated external alterations, refuse storage and cycle provision.
- 1.1 The statement explains the design rationale underpinning the proposals and demonstrates how the development responds positively to its site, surroundings and relevant planning policy. It should be read alongside the submitted drawings (349 – Planning Pack, September 2025) and supporting documentation. The scheme has evolved directly from engagement with the Local Planning Authority through the pre-application process and reflects the matters identified at that stage.



**Fig 1.A**

*Extracted map from Copeland Borough Council's Conservation Area Appraisal with the Cleator Moor Conservation Area in red and the site as the yellow circle.*

## 2.0 Site Context and Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site comprises a three-storey end-terrace building located on the eastern side of High Street within the defined settlement boundary of Cleator Moor. The surrounding area displays a strong and consistent townscape character, comprising

traditional terraced buildings arranged tightly along the street frontage, historically accommodating a mixture of residential and small-scale commercial uses.



**Fig 2.A**

View of external of property

(Photo credit: [www.auctionhouselondon.co.uk](http://www.auctionhouselondon.co.uk))

- 2.2 Although the site lies outside the designated Cleator Moor Conservation Area, it forms part of its immediate setting. This relationship has been carefully considered throughout the design process, with particular regard given to the retention of the building's established form, scale and appearance.







**Fig 2.B**

*View of internal condition of property  
(Photo credit: [www.auctionhouselondon.co.uk](http://www.auctionhouselondon.co.uk))*

- 2.3 The building has remained vacant for a considerable period and is currently in a poor state of repair, having been stripped internally. The proposals therefore represent an opportunity to secure the long-term future of an underused building, contributing positively to the vitality and sustainability of the High Street.

### **3.0 The Proposed Development (Amount)**

- 3.1 The development proposes the creation of four self-contained residential flats, comprising two one-bedroom units at ground floor level and two larger two-bedroom units arranged across the first and second floors. This mix has been carefully selected to respond to local housing needs, providing smaller units suitable for individuals or couples alongside family-sized accommodation.

- 3.2 All units meet or exceed the Nationally Described Space Standards and have been designed to provide functional, well-proportioned internal layouts. A modest single-storey rear extension is proposed at ground floor level only, enabling improved layouts and enhanced amenity for the ground floor flats without resulting in overdevelopment of the site.

Accommodation Schedule					
Level	Unit	Unit Type	Target (sqm)	NIA (sqm)	NIA (sqft)
GF	Flat 1	1B/1P	37	48	516
GF	Flat 2	1B/1P	37	43	463
FF	Flat 3	2B/4P	71	84	904
SF	Flat 4	2B/4P	71	73	785
Total				248	2668

**Fig 3.A**  
*Proposed accommodation schedule*

## 4.0 Layout, Residential Amenity and Internal Arrangement

- 4.1 The internal layout has been developed in direct response to the existing building form, structural constraints and window positions, with a clear focus on delivering high-quality residential environments while respecting neighbouring amenity.
- 4.2 Living areas are positioned to maximise daylight and outlook through existing and proposed openings, with conservation-style rooflights introduced where necessary to supplement natural light at upper floor level. Bedrooms and bathrooms are arranged to protect privacy and ensure an appropriate degree of separation between units, while the internal stair arrangement has been rationalised to provide safe, legible circulation and compliant head heights throughout the building.
- 4.3 The proposal does not introduce new overlooking relationships beyond those already established within the dense High Street context. Existing window positions are largely retained, and any alterations are modest and carefully located. Rear-facing windows and the proposed ground-floor extension have been positioned and scaled to avoid unacceptable loss of privacy, outlook or daylight to neighbouring properties.
- 4.4 At ground floor level, the two flats benefit from access to modest courtyard amenity spaces, providing valuable private or semi-private outdoor space appropriate to a constrained town-centre site. While limited in size, these areas offer functional amenity and represent a qualitative improvement over the existing situation.
- 4.5 Refuse and cycle storage are discreetly located to the side of the building and accessed via a secure gated entrance, ensuring these necessary facilities do not detract from residential amenity or the appearance of the property.

## **5.0 Scale and Massing**

- 5.1 The proposed development has been carefully designed to respect the established scale and massing of the existing building and the surrounding townscape. The principal building envelope remains unchanged, with no increase in overall height, no alteration to the main roof form and no extension to the upper floors. As such, the development continues to read as a traditional three-storey High Street property when viewed from the public realm.
- 5.2 A modest single-storey rear extension is proposed at ground floor level only. The extension is limited in footprint and height and is clearly subordinate to the host building in both scale and massing. Its siting to the rear of the property ensures that it has no impact on the street scene or the character and appearance of High Street and is largely screened from public viewpoints.
- 5.3 The extension has been designed to follow the existing building line at ground floor and to sit comfortably within the established rear building pattern evident along the High Street. Its single-storey form ensures that it does not appear visually dominant, does not compete with the original building, and does not result in overdevelopment of the site. The scale of the extension has been deliberately restrained to protect neighbouring amenity, avoiding any sense of enclosure or overbearing impact.
- 5.4 Roof alterations elsewhere are limited to the introduction of conservation-style rooflights within the existing roof slope. These are modest in scale, set flush with the roof covering and do not alter the overall roof profile. Together, the restrained approach to extensions and roof alterations ensures that the proposal preserves the original hierarchy of the building, with the historic form remaining visually dominant and legible.
- 5.5 Overall, the proposed scale and massing represent a proportionate and sensitive response to the site and its context, allowing for functional improvements to the internal layout while maintaining the established character of the building and its surroundings.

## **6.0 Appearance and Materials**

- 6.1 The design approach is founded on the principle of retention, repair and visual cohesion, ensuring that the building continues to read as a unified and traditional High Street property while addressing its current poor condition.
- 6.2 The front elevation composition is retained, with the rhythm, proportions and alignment of openings preserved. Existing window openings are largely maintained and, where minor alterations are required to support the new internal layout, these are carefully controlled to avoid harm to the building's appearance or character.

- 6.3 The building is finished in render, which is a common and characteristic material within the High Street and wider Cleator Moor context. The existing rendered finish will be retained and repaired, with areas of deterioration made good using a compatible render system. The repaired and renewed render will match the existing in terms of colour, texture and finish, ensuring a consistent and coherent appearance and avoiding a piecemeal or visually fragmented result.



**Fig 6.A**

*Expansive view of High Street showing multiple properties adjacent to the site, finished in coloured render.*

- 6.4 The proposed single-storey rear extension will also be finished in render, matched to the main building. This approach is intended to visually unify the original building and the extension, allowing the addition to read as a natural and integrated part of the property rather than a visually disparate or overly prominent element. While unified in materiality, the extension remains clearly subordinate through its limited height, footprint and rear siting.
- 6.5 Replacement windows are designed to reflect the proportions and detailing of the existing openings, and roof tiles are retained where possible, with new materials carefully matched where replacement is required to preserve the traditional roofscape.



- 6.6 Overall, the proposals result in a clear enhancement of the building's appearance, securing its long-term future and improving its contribution to the character of the High Street and the setting of the nearby Conservation Area.

## **7.0 Landscaping and External Spaces**

- 7.1 External works are modest and functional, reflecting the constrained nature of the site and its town-centre context. The proposed courtyard areas provide usable amenity space for ground floor residents, while refuse and cycle storage are integrated discreetly within the site.
- 7.2 Existing boundary treatments are largely retained, with minor alterations only where required to facilitate access. The approach prioritises safety, usability and visual order, ensuring the external areas function effectively without unnecessary embellishment.

## **8.0 Access and Movement**

- 8.1 No on-site car parking is proposed as part of the development. This approach has been informed by the site's highly sustainable town-centre location, the established pattern of development along High Street and the historic use of the building.
- 8.2 The property lies within convenient walking distance of local shops, services, employment opportunities and public transport facilities, reducing reliance on private car travel. High Street and surrounding roads accommodate established on-street parking, which currently serves a mix of residential and commercial properties. The proposal does not introduce a level of parking demand that would be materially different from, or exceed, that generated by the former lawful use of the building as a guest house, which would have accommodated multiple short-stay occupants and visitors.
- 8.3 The scale of the development, comprising a mix of one- and two-bedroom flats, is such that car ownership levels are likely to be modest and consistent with town-centre living. In this context, the reliance on existing on-street parking is considered reasonable and proportionate, and consistent with both national and local planning policy objectives which seek to prioritise sustainable travel choices in accessible locations and avoid unnecessary provision of parking where it would undermine town-centre character.
- 8.4 The provision of secure on-site cycle storage further supports sustainable modes of travel and offers residents an alternative to car use for short local journeys.

## **9.0 Sustainability**

- 9.1 The proposals represent a sustainable form of development through the re-use and upgrading of an existing building within a defined settlement. Bringing a long-vacant



property back into residential use supports town-centre vitality, reduces pressure on greenfield land and minimises construction waste.

- 9.2 The conversion works will improve the thermal performance of the building through fabric upgrades, contributing to reduced energy demand and improved living conditions for future occupants.

## **10. Pre-Application Engagement and Compliance**

- 10.1 The development has been shaped directly by pre-application advice issued by the Local Planning Authority under reference PAA/25/0020. That advice confirmed that, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, the lawful use of the building should be assumed to be Use Class C1 and that conversion to self-contained residential flats would require full planning permission. The application proceeds on this basis, with no reliance placed on fallback positions.
- 10.2 The principle of market-led housing was supported in principle, given the site's location within the settlement boundary of Cleator Moor and the absence of policies protecting C1 uses in this location. The submitted scheme delivers an appropriate form of windfall housing consistent with this advice.
- 10.3 Policy H13 was identified as the key assessment framework, with matters such as residential amenity, parking, access, refuse storage and cycle provision highlighted for consideration once design details were available. These matters have now been fully addressed through the submitted layout, access strategy and supporting information. The Council's advice regarding the setting of the Conservation Area has also been followed closely, with the proposals retaining the building's form and appearance and avoiding harm to significance.
- 10.4 Overall, the scheme represents a clear and demonstrable response to the pre-application advice, resolving all matters previously identified and materially reducing planning risk.

## **11.0 Planning Policy Compliance**

- 11.1 The development accords with the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework, particularly in relation to the effective use of previously developed land and the delivery of much-needed housing. It also complies with relevant policies of the Copeland (now Cumberland) Local Plan relating to housing delivery, design quality, residential amenity and heritage considerations.
- 11.2 No harm arises to the character or appearance of the surrounding area or the setting of the Conservation Area, and the proposals represent a clear planning benefit through the regeneration of a vacant building.

## **12.0 Conclusion**

- 12.1 The proposed conversion and alteration of 37 High Street represents a well-considered, policy-compliant and sustainable form of development. It has been informed by pre-application engagement, responds sensitively to its context, and delivers high-quality residential accommodation in a highly accessible location.
- 12.2 The scheme secures the long-term future of a vacant building, enhances the appearance of the site and contributes positively to the housing supply of Cleator Moor. It is therefore respectfully submitted that planning permission should be granted.