



Vagdia and Holmes

Chartered Architects

Design & Access Statement for Planning Application (ref: TA/2022/646) and Listed Building Consent Application (ref: TA/2022/620) | Copeland Borough Council.

Name and address of proposed development site –

No.17 Irish Street, Whitehaven, Cumbria, CA28 7BU

Grade of the Building and List Description –

The building is currently listed as Grade II (*first listed 13 September 1972*). Details as follows:

1. IRISH STREET 1814 (*South Side*) No 17 NX 9717 NW 4/66

II GV 2. C18, refaced in C19. 3 storeys, with band over ground floor. Panelled door up 3 steps, with broken pediment. 3 sash windows on ground floor with flush pediments and foliated tympana. 4 windows on 1st floor with Venetian-shaped cornice/pediments.

Nos 17 to 20 (*consec*) form a group.

Listing NGR: NX9740417921

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1086757?section=official-list-entry>

Proposed Development –

Conversion & Alteration of the Former Medical Surgery to Create 3 No. Residential Apartments; Demolition of the Existing Garage to the Rear & the Erection of a New Dwelling on Site of Demolished Garage along with Associated Parking Area and Gardens.

Assessment of the surroundings of the proposed development –

Irish Street is located in Whitehaven Town Centre (*in the North-West region of England*), and the High Street Conservation Area. The area is well known for its attractive and colourfully painted Georgian buildings, its gridiron streets, its harbour and its marina.

The aim of the proposed development is to protect and enhance this conservation area by rejuvenating this currently unoccupied / abandoned listed building, restoring it to its original function as a residential building. As the building is historical and is of architectural interest, the works are to be kept to a minimum, maintaining its character and landscape and enhancing its social and economic characteristics.

Consultation –

There has been no consultation with the local community or any special interest groups (*e.g., national amenity groups, such as the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings; the Victorian Society*).

Evaluation –

The existing building and surrounding area contain a high number of residential houses/buildings, and as the existing building was originally a town house, the aim of the project is to conduct a minimal number of changes to the building and the site, so that it can be reinstated as a residential site, serving the town of Whitehaven.

DESIGN COMPONENTS

Proposed Use –

The proposal seeks to renovate an existing empty building (*formerly a doctor's surgery*) into an apartment building. As there are several residential properties on the street, the function of the building is suitable to the area (*and historically, this building was a town house, before it was converted into a doctor's surgery*).

For more information on how the proposed development fits in with the relevant planning policies, please see the Heritage and Planning Statement, Section 8. This section provides information on how the design responds to policies ST1, ST2, SS1, SS3, SS4, ENV4, DM10, DM11, DM13, DM21, DM22, and DM27 from the Copeland Local Plan 2013-2028.

Amount of development –

The existing three storey building will be altered to contain three apartments. Details of the quantity of bedrooms and internal floor areas to each apartment are included in the Heritage and Planning Statement, Section 7 (*the proposed internal floor areas are shown on the table under item 7.4*).

The proposed development has been kept to a small scale, in keeping with the surrounding area.

Layout –

As the existing site layout works well with the existing environment, including the surrounding buildings, roads, paths, landscaping etc, the aim was to maintain this layout, with minimal changes.

Scale –

The scale of the proposed development focuses on maintaining the existing building and site scale and makes minimal changes to the internal layout to accommodate the new residential apartments. The re-developed coach house to the rear has also been designed to be small in scale, to match the existing garage building.

Landscaping –

The proposed landscaping aims to be minimal and complementary to the existing buildings, so the existing landscaped areas will be cleaned up and rejuvenated, including new grass turf and minimal planting. The existing vehicle access, car parking and turning areas will also be improved, removing the existing tarmac and installing new block paving to these areas. All boundaries, including fences and the historical stone wall to the North-East of the site will be retained, and protected during the work where required.

Appearance –

The appearance of this existing building (*no.17 Irish Street*) is very prominent, and as the external appearance is in good condition, the proposal only includes for minor repair (*and redecoration*) works where necessary. The redeveloped coach house to the rear of the property seeks to replicate the materials/finishes and details of the main building, to complement the area.

HISTORIC BUILDING CONSERVATION ISSUES

Historic and special architectural importance of the building –

Regarding the historical significance of this building, please refer to the Heritage and Planning Statement, Section 2 (<i>Building Location and Heritage Status</i>) and 9 (<i>Proposals, Significance, Impact and Potential for Harm</i>).
<p>Setting –</p> <p>The building is located on Irish Street (<i>also known as the B5345</i>) which runs from Newton area of Whitehaven at the end of James Street until it reaches the end of Roper Street, where it then changes into Scotch Street. Irish Street dates back to the time of Sir John Lowther who thought the name might encourage Irish merchants to settle in the town.</p> <p>The building is an existing historical town house, and as the proposed works are mainly contained interior of the building, and to the area to the rear of the building, the impact of the proposed development on the surrounding environment will be minimal.</p>
ACCESS COMPONENTS
<p>Technical advice –</p> <p>No technical advice on access issues has been taken. As this is a listed building, changes have been kept to a minimal.</p>
<p>Relevant Policies –</p> <p>Please see the Heritage and Planning Statement, Section 8 which shows which relevant policies were reviewed, along with their design response. This relates to policies ST1, ST2, SS1, SS3, SS4, ENV4, DM10, DM11, DM13, DM21, and DM27 from the Copeland Local Plan 2013-2028.</p> <p>Regarding ‘Accessible Developments’, please see the design response to policy DM22.</p>
<p>Degree of access –</p> <p>All building users (<i>young, old, disabled, etc.</i>) will be able to access the proposed development site easily and safely.</p> <p>Whilst 4no. steps to the front main entrance will restrict some using this entrance, the side and rear doors allow access for all. Should wheelchair access have difficulties in accessing these doorways, a portable (<i>temporary</i>) ramp can be used to help facilitate their access needs.</p> <p>Due to the historic nature of the building, and the site parameters (<i>parking and access in relation to the position of the side and rear doors</i>) a permanent ramp could not be installed.</p>
<p>Future access requirements –</p> <p>Due to the listed building status of the building, all proposed works are to be carried out have been designed with flexibility in mind, so that they can be easily altered or reversed if required.</p>
<p>Emergency access –</p> <p>The site has a good size parking area and a vehicular turning space located to the rear of the building, with good access to the main street. This can be seen on drawing ref: 1954-SP-002 (<i>existing</i>), 1954-SK-005D (<i>proposed</i>) and 1954-SK-007A (<i>proposed</i>).</p>

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