

**CUMBERLAND COUNCIL**  
**CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

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**Proposal:** Internal alterations and repairs

**Address:** 1 Vale View, St Bees

**Reference:** 4/25/2287/OL1

**Date:** 07/10/25

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**Description:** 1 Vale View is a substantial early 19<sup>th</sup> century house at the edge of St Bees. It forms one end of the row of five houses, all of which are grade II listed.

**Conclusion:** Request further information (condition suggested), and suggest design revision

**Assessment of Impact:**

- Basement ceiling lath and plaster removal and replacement with insulation.
  - Method for insulating is not clear. I'm assuming fire-rated insulated plasterboard.
  - There will be some harm in removal of lath and plaster, compensated for by improvement in thermal and fire break.
  - Care should be taken not to induce interstitial condensation in detailing suspended floor insulation, particularly at joist ends.
- Removal of wall between dining room and kitchen.
  - Loss of historic fabric including masonry and skirting board.
  - These elements make a small positive contribution to the building's significance.
  - The arrangement of rooms in a cellular, 2x2 arrangement is the historic layout, and typical of a property of this sort.
  - The 2x2 arrangement contributes to the significance of the building in being historically typical, however the increased connection between the dining room and kitchen would improve the building's functionality and daylight. There would therefore be some compensation for the impact of removing the section of wall.
  - Of note, there is already a serving hatch between the two spaces.
  - The cornice would not be touched by the opening, which would involve insertion of a steel joist 450mm below ceiling height.
  - The reveals of the opening would be panelled in timber to match the door reveal, providing a quality that would contribute to compensating for the impact of removing the section of wall.
    - Of note here, the D&A statement refers to a raised and fielded panelling, but the photo of the panelling into the ground floor living room shows it isn't just a straightforward raised and fielded design, but has some extra details, and the central panel appears to be recessed more than raised. It also has unusual proportions, having thick stiles and rails and relatively small panelling between. I don't have any objection to raised and fielded panelling, but feel this is worth drawing attention to.
  - The removed section of skirting board could be retained for re-use elsewhere in the house, though this would be beyond the scope of planning control.

- In the kitchen, there appears to be nothing in the way of historic surfaces and features that would be impacted so impact is a trade-off between loss of fabric and layout change on the one hand, and increase in connection on the other.
- Removal of infill panel to understairs area and installation of new softwood door and frame.
  - This arguably does not require listed building consent. The impact will be very minimal.
- Removal of suspended kitchen ceiling.
  - This looks rather like a style that was popular around the 1970s or 80s. It makes no contribution to the heritage value of the building, and removing it and reinstating the earlier ceiling above is likely to be an enhancement.
- Removal and replacement of kitchen including opening up chimney breast and installation of lintel and new range cooker.
  - Removal of existing kitchen does not require listed building consent.
  - Opening up chimney and installing concrete lintel and range would benefit from further information about any features that may be concealed in the chimney breast.
  - This will require some opening-up to establish, so could perhaps be handled via a condition.
- First floor bathroom removal of uPVC ceiling cladding and replumb and renew sanitary ware and tiling.
  - This could be done without listed building consent as there is no impact on the building's heritage significance. There is likely a benefit in removing the ceiling panels.
- Second floor loft hatch enlargement.
  - There may be some impact on fabric if this requires removing areas of lath and plaster or cutting a joist, however, any impact is minimal and there is clear benefit in being able to access the attic.
- Ground floor living room 1 fireplace modification and stove install
  - The fireplace appears to be fairly modern, and the proposal is to remove the tiled infill section and open fireback to create space for the stove.
  - I anticipate little to no heritage impact from this.
  - How is the flue to be installed into the chimney? Is it propose to use a flexible flue that is dropped down from the top, and if so, how is it fixed in place and will there need to be any modification to the pots?
- Ground floor dining room fireplace modification and stove install
  - See above
- First floor living room 2 fireplace modification and stove install
  - Again, at least the insert part of the fireplace appears to be fairly modern and suitable for modifying to receive a stove.

### **Summary:**

I am supportive of the general approach but request some further information

- Details of method for insulating suspended ground floor. There is a small risk of introducing interstitial condensation that could damage the building fabric in the case of warm, humid air (e.g. from the kitchen) coming into contact with enclosed colder surfaces (e.g. those behind the insulation) and condensing.

- Confirmation as to whether there is historic fabric of note (e.g. an old kitchen fireplace, stone lintel etc.) covered up in the kitchen chimney breast. Answering this question will require some opening up, so I suggest that either be done before determination or a condition be used to submit and approve detail of the work to the kitchen chimney breast prior to it taking place.

I also wish to suggest the following revision of the design:

- Reduction in width of the archway proposed between the dining room and kitchen to that of a large doorway.
  - Reason: to better preserve the cellular layout of the building and minimise the loss of historic fabric.
  - I have no objection to an opening in principle and think the intention to panel the reveals is a good and interesting one.

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### **Relevant Policies and Guidance:**

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 establishes a need “in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works [for the Local Planning Authority to] have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest” [Section 16(2)]. This requirement also applies to the granting of planning permission affecting a listing building or its setting [Section 66(1)].

Paragraph 139 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) asserts that “Development that is not well designed should be refused”.

NPPF para. 210 states that “In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation...”

NPPF para. 212 states, in the case of designated heritage assets, “great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation”, irrespective of whether potential harm is substantial, less-than-substantial, or total loss. Where harm to a designated heritage asset is less-than-substantial, it should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal (para. 215).

The Copeland area’s Local Plan contains a number of relevant policies:

- BE1 provides for the preservation and enhancement of built heritage assets by:
  - Requiring a heritage impact assessment or heritage statement where the proposal would affect a heritage asset;
  - Giving great weight to the conservation of Copeland’s designated heritage assets when decision making;
  - Ensuring that new development is sympathetic to local character and history;
  - Supporting proposals for the appropriate reuse of vacant historic buildings, recognising that putting buildings into viable uses consistent with their conservation can help sustain and enhance their significance;
  - Supporting proposals that increase the enhancement, promotion and interpretation of Copeland’s architectural and archaeological resources;

- Strengthening the distinctive character of Copeland's settlements, through the application of high-quality design and architecture that respects this character and enhances the setting of heritage assets.
- BE2 states that development should preserve or enhance designated heritage assets (or important archaeological sites) and their settings. The more important the asset, the greater weight that will be given to its conservation. Proposals that better reveal the significance of heritage assets will be supported in principle. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset will require clear and convincing justification.

Sammy Woodford

Conservation and Design Officer