

# Listed Building Consent

## Design Philosophy

46 Lowther Street, Whitehaven



**SOUTH NORTH GROUP**

## DESIGN PHILOSOPHY

The guiding principle behind these design proposals is respond to the character, form and function of the building, rather than the building being made to fit the new layout. The original character of the building and its story of development should remain “legible”. In practice this may mean living with quirks that would not be encountered in a new building, such as retaining the original basement staircase alcove within the basement.

A respect for the building’s scale, proportions, detailing and setting is central to the design philosophy. Alterations should be made within the constraints of the building and its location, working with the building rather than against it.

Before submitting this planning application, dialogue with the Conservation Officer enabled the assessment of the buildings significance, and the contribution the setting makes to its significance. During this preliminary design stage the conservation officer volunteered an extensive historical background to the property, that has been included in full within the accompanying design and access statement.

Unfortunately, as previously noted very little of conservation value remains within the existing interior of the property. This is shown in detail for the basement within the submitted Basement Photograph document.

The existing form, scale and character of the historic building and its site along with historic records of the original building layout have guided the design of scheme. Originally the Basement was an accessible and usable space internally linked to the property with a semi-spiral staircase from the front ground floor room.

The design intention is to reinstate this connection. Due to Building regulations concerning means of escape and layout requirements it is not feasible to reinstate the original basement staircase, however the proposed staircase is to be inserted in such a way as to have minimal impact on the existing building fabric and be sympathetic to the basement and ground floor layout.

Significant lowering or raising of any existing floor level, or internal element, is likely to harm the character of a building. These proposals preserve the existing basement floor level, the proposed works entail minor excavation of the existing basement floor to enable the installation of insulation and perimeter drainage and so that the finished floor can be reinstated preserving the original floor to ceiling height.

Similarly the basement walls are to be tanked with a waterproofing system, as described within the submitted documents. Tanking systems such as this are commonly used on Basement works to both Grade I and II Listed Buildings, such as at Haselour House, Haselour Lane, Harlaston.

Historic England defines conservation as ‘the process of managing change to a significant place in its setting in ways that will best sustain its heritage values, while recognising opportunities to reveal or reinforce those values for present and future generations’\*

*(\* from- Conservation Principles: policies and guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment’. Historic England 2008 (new edition forthcoming). <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-principles-sustainable-management-historic-environment/conservationprinciplespoliciesandguidanceapril08web/>)*



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