

HERITAGE STATEMENT

REF: 21/08/1000 - HS

**Former Magistrates Court, Catherine Street,
Whitehaven, Cumbria CA28 7QT**

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Heritage Statement supports a Conservation Area consent for the full demolition and site clearance of the former Magistrates Court building on Catherine Street, Whitehaven. The statement considers matters in relation to the conservation area location, listed buildings and historic structures. Prior to the Magistrates Court being built, the site had a commercial use being occupied by WCF for the selling/ servicing of agricultural machinery. As the site has been previously developed over an extended period, archaeology is not considered to be relevant to the application and is not dealt with in this statement.

1.2 The Magistrates Court building was built in the 1987 and is modern and non-traditional in style. It was vacated on 31/07/2018 years ago and since then has been significantly stripped internally with the areas in question being no longer habitable. See appendix A for photographs of the existing building.

1.3 The Magistrates' Court building occupies a prominent location fronting the public highway (Catherine Street). Modern buildings such as the telephone exchange and Salvation Army building dominate the immediate vicinity and detract from the Conservation Area setting.

1.4 Somerset House is a Grade II* listed building located approximately 100m to the northeast of the former Magistrates' Court building (List UID

1086776). Somerset House is located on Duke Street but faces southwest directly down Catherine Street. There are numerous other buildings between Somerset House and the former Magistrates Court building including the dominant telephone exchange building which is non-traditional and commercial in design and is unusually high for the conservation area location. It is therefore considered that the demolition and site clearance of the former Magistrates Court building will not affect the setting of Somerset House.

1.5 Nos. 15/ 16 Catherine Street are Grade II listed buildings located almost directly opposite the former Magistrates Court building (List UID 1086807). They are a pair of 3-storey, semi-detached dwellings, Victorian in style and fronting the public highway. The demolition and site clearance of the former Magistrates Court building will offer an opportunity for a re-development more appropriate to the Conservation Area therefore the setting of nos. 15/ 16 Catherine Street will be enhanced.

1.6 There are several other Grade II listed buildings in the nearby vicinity. These are 75-77 Lowther Street (List UID 1207864), 78/ 79 Lowther Street (list UID 1086765), 80 Lowther Street (List UID 1279543), 81-83 Lowther Street (List UID 1335989) and the Methodist Church and Sunday School located on the corner of Lowther Street and Scotch Street (List UID 1263963). The main aspect of all these buildings is onto either Lowther Street or Scotch Street and as such it is considered that their setting will not be affected by the demolition and site clearance of the former Magistrates Court building.

2.0 The Works

2.1 The Conservation Area application requests consent for full demolition and site clearance of the former Magistrates Court building.

- (i) The existing slate roof finish will be salvaged for re-use.
- (ii) Internally, there are certain structural items that will also be salvaged for re-use.
- (iii) Other than salvage items, the remainder of the building will be fully demolished, and the site cleared. Temporary site security fencing will be erected to prevent unauthorised use of the site.

2.2 The nature of the former Magistrates Court building is such that its design and layout mean that it would not successfully convert to another use. This combined with the fact that it has already been significantly stripped internally, means that demolition is the only viable solution and one that which ultimately create a re-development opportunity.

2.3 In addition, the demolition works, and site clearance will remove a building not wholly suited to the Conservation Area location and will serve to enhance the immediate setting and contribute positively to the Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings.

3.0 Conclusion

3.1 The former Magistrates Court building is a non-traditional building in the Whitehaven Town Centre Conservation Area. The full demolition of the building and site clearance will serve to enhance the immediate setting and contribute positively to the Conservation Area and will not affect the setting of nearby listed buildings.

Alpha Design

06/09/2021

APPENDIX A



IMAGE OF THE FRONT ELEVATION OF THE MAGISTRATES COURT BUILDING FRONTING CATHERINE STREET AND LOOKING SOUTHWEST.



**IMAGE TAKEN IN THE REAR YARD LOOKING NORTHEAST
WITH THE TELEPHONE EXCHNAGE BUILDING IN THE
DISTANCE.**