Pant yr Ochain, Old Wrexham Road, Gresford, Wrexham, LL12 8TY
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BIDWELLS

HERITAGE STATEMENT
PROPOSED INSTALLATION OF EXTERNAL FREESTANDING TIMBER BAR STRUCTURE

Heritage Statement

1. This Heritage Statement has been prepared to accompany an application for planning permission for the proposed installation of an external freestanding timber bar structure at the Pant yr Ochain, Old Wrexham Road, Gresford, Wrexham, LL12 8TY.

2. This Heritage Statement describes the general history and heritage significance of the Pant yr Ochain public house/restaurant and assesses the heritage implications of the proposal to install an external freestanding timber bar structure within the grounds of this public house/restaurant.

Site Analysis

3. The application site comprises existing public house/restaurant premises which trade as the Pant yr Ochain, on the Old Wrexham Road, Gresford, Wrexham, LL12 8TY. The application building is a grade II listed building.

4. The application site is located outside of the designated Gresford Conservation Area.

5. The CADW listing entry for this building describes the history of the building as such:

A house known as Pant Iocyn is recorded in 1592 when it was owned by William Almer. Other owners include George Lloyd, Bishop of Chester in 1615. It is in Edward Lhwyd's list of notable houses of the parish of Gresford c1700, then owned by William Robinson. It was bought by Sir Foster Cunliffe in 1785 and remained in the family until at least 1903. A 2-storey timber-framed house was substantially remodelled 1835 incorporating elements of the earlier building. Altered C20.

6. The CADW listing entry for this building describes its exterior as such:

Jacobean style house with painted render elevations, stone dressings, slate roof and rendered chimneys. Applied C19 timber framing and timber framing possibly of C17 date retained to rear. L shaped plan with extensions, 2 storeys. Entrance front has central shaped gable with finial in front of which is a projecting 2-storey porch which has a shaped gable and finial of the same pattern. Entrance with stone surround and shaped pediment, above this are 2-light windows in the form of paired sashes in a stone surround. To the right a semi-octagonal projecting bay window. Upper floor has similar windows. To the right an attached bay is set back and has a gable shaped as before. Right hand return elevation has a slightly projecting central bay with shaped gable containing stone plaques with heraldry and the date 1835. Rear: to left a bay with shaped gablet as before. Main range has a central projecting gabled bay, this and the bay to the left has applied timber framing of later C19 character, to right timber framing of C17 character in the upper floor.

Attached range at right angles also has some C17 timber framing. Left hand return has some C17 timber framing.

7. The CADW listing entry for this building describes its interior as such:

Remodelled C20 retaining some earlier C19 features including panelled doors, reeded door-surrounds and some shutters. Some timber framing of C17 character is visible in walls on the ground floor.

8. The CADW listing entry for this building states that the reasons for designation are as follows:

Listed as an earlier C19 house in Jacobean style which incorporates part of a timber framed building and for historical associations as one of the principal houses in the neighbourhood.

Proposals

9. The applicant is seeking permission for the proposed installation of an external freestanding timber bar structure within the grounds of a public house/restaurant. The application is made retrospectively. The external bar structure was installed on site in September 2024, but this facility has not yet been used by the applicant. The application proposals are detailed in the accompanying application drawings.

10. The external freestanding timber bar structure is to be used as part of the public house/restaurant's operation and is intended to take pressure off the main bar serveries, within the public house/restaurant premises themselves, when the public house/restaurant is especially busy, particularly within the summer months, when the garden area is popular with customers.

Planning Policy

11. Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12 – February 2024) (PPW) states its key planning principles within its Figure 4 (page 17). These include growing the economy in a sustainable manner. PPW elaborates that the planning system should enable development which contributes to long term economic well-being, making the best use of existing infrastructure and planning for new supporting infrastructure and services. Also included within Figure 4 is the key planning principle to maximise environmental protection, stating that historic assets must be protected, promoted, conserved and enhanced.

12. PPW also addresses the historic environment within section 6.1. The planning system must take into account the Welsh Government's objectives to protect, conserve, promote and enhance the historic environment as a resource for the general well-being of present and future generations. The historic environment is a finite, non-renewable and shared resource and a vital and integral part of the historical and cultural identity of Wales. It contributes to economic vitality and culture,

civic pride, local distinctiveness and the quality of Welsh life. The historic environment can only be maintained as a resource for future generations if the individual historic assets are protected and conserved (paragraph 6.1.5). Specifically, regarding listed buildings, PPW seeks to safeguard the character of historic buildings and manage change so that their special architectural and historic interest is preserved. Specifically, regarding conservation areas, PPW seeks to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas, whilst the same time helping them remain vibrant and prosperous (paragraph 6.1.6). The application of planning and listed building controls should recognise the need for flexibility where new uses have to be considered in order to secure a building's survival or provide it with a sound economic future (paragraph 6.1.11). There should be a general presumption in favour of the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of conservation areas or their settings (paragraph 6.1.14).

13. The adopted local plan for the application site is the Wrexham Local Development Plan (LDP), which was adopted on 20/12/2023. Policy SP15 of the LDP concerns the historic and cultural environment. This policy states that development will only be supported where it conserves, protects, preserves or enhances listed buildings.

Methodology

14. The aim of this Heritage Statement is to identify and assess any impacts that the development may cause to the value or significance of the identified heritage asset. Impact on that value or significance is determined by considering the sensitivity of the receptors identified and the magnitude of change.

Assessment

15. The implications of the application proposal upon the setting of the host listed building itself are considered to be acceptable. The application proposal is modest in size, appropriately designed and has traditional materials for such garden structures. The external bar structure is also sympathetically sited to the rear of the main public house/restaurant building, within a well-established and mature landscape setting. Overall, it is considered that the existing character and appearance of the site and the setting of the listed building itself are respected by the external bar structure. Given that the external bar structure is also freestanding, there are no consequential implications for the historic fabric of the host listed building.

16. The heritage implications of the application proposal are considered to be appropriate. It is therefore considered that there are no reasonable grounds, in terms of heritage impacts, to withhold the granting of planning permission in this case. For these reasons, it is considered that any proportionate and reasonable assessment of the application proposal, against the adopted planning policy context, would conclude that there was no material conflict caused, given the modest nature and extent of the application proposal.

17. The implications of the application proposal upon the character, appearance and setting of the host building itself are considered to be acceptable. The application proposal will respect the existing character, appearance and setting of the site, through its modest and appropriate nature. No historic fabric would be directly affected, and the external architectural and historic character and appearance of the host listed premises is respected and is not obscured by the proposed external bar structure.

18. The application proposal is also considered to result in public benefits, which support the proposal. The external freestanding bar structure is simply to provide some modest additional bar servery capacity at the site during busy periods of customer demand for refreshments. The external bar will be an essential element of the applicant's strategy to attract custom to ensure the continued economic viability of this commercial social and leisure facility provided by this public house/restaurant. The external bar structure is necessary in order to allow the applicant's business to continue to attract custom for their established commercial venture at this site; to facilitate the continuing economic health of this alternative beneficial use of these listed premises for an appropriate, publicly accessible, community social use, which ensures their ongoing maintenance and upkeep. The proposed external bar structure will help to facilitate the appropriate continued use of these premises for a use which will continue to add to and enhance the vitality within the local Gresford area. The use of the application premises is also an important commercial food and drink led leisure facility within the Gresford area, providing an appropriate commercial social community venue, which serves the local resident population and visitors to the Gresford area.

19. In conclusion, it is considered that the proposed external bar structure would respect the character, appearance and setting of the host listed building and the local street scene. The application proposal will also help ensure the continued economic use of this site and its continued function as an appropriate commercial food and drink led leisure use, which adds to the vitality and viability of the local Gresford area in general, without compromising the visual amenities of the wider area.

20. The heritage implications of the application proposal are considered to be appropriate and are considered to respect the architectural and historic character, appearance and setting of the host listed building. It is therefore considered that there are no reasonable grounds, in terms of heritage impacts, to withhold the granting of planning permission in this case. For these reasons, it is considered that any proportionate and reasonable assessment of the application proposal, against this adopted planning policy context, would conclude that there was no material conflict caused, given the modest nature and extent of the application proposal. The application proposal is therefore considered to comply with the reasonable requirements of PPW and Policy SP15 of the Wrexham Local Development Plan.

Prepared by

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