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Heritage Impact Statement



Statement prepared for:

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Statement required for:

Proposed reinstatement of traditional shop frontage.

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Explaining Objectives

The objective of this proposal is to obtain full planning permission for the reinstatement of a traditional frontage following enforcement action.

The application site is located in the Village of Ruabon, within the County Borough of Wrexham. Our site is situated within Ruabon Conservation Area, within this designated area there are several listed buildings present.

It is our intention to reinstate the traditional frontage to the building with sympathy to our surroundings and street appearance to fit and respect the character of the immediate vicinity.

This Heritage Impact Assessment is to accompany a full planning application for the proposal and is to be read in conjunction with the Design and Access Statement.

Understanding Significance

Ruabon conservation area was initially designated back August 1975, with the boundary amended in 1998 and 2010. The Village has documented history dating as far back as 1400 BC during the Bronze Age, due to discoveries of a stone urn containing cremated remains discovered on Cleveland Street, as well as additional evidence of tribes that likely settled in the area.

The focal point of the modern-day village is the church of St. Mary's, records of 1254 indicate the church was dedicated to St. Collen, whose foundation may date back to the 7th century. Prior to this the church was dedicated to a local saint, St. Mabon, the eponym of Ruabon village.

Ruabon was part of the kingdom of Powys in Bromfield. During this time ecclesiastical parishes were established which were defined by a group of townships. These were run on the basis of the communal farming system, comprising of a number of homesteads and communal pasture and meadowlands. After Henry VIII took control over Wales the Welsh gentry were able to acquire landed estates. Buildings of particular impact were the mansion houses of Watstay (now replaced by the Grade II* listed Wynnstay Hall) and Plas Newydd, a Grade II* listed building located at Pont Adam.

The Wynnstay Hall is one of several other estate buildings around the expansive parkland that once served as a principal seat to the Williams-Wynns, a highly influential and wealthy family that made significant contributions to the area including key structures, that still stand as listed buildings. Some examples being the Wynnstay Arms Hotel and the Park Street cottages that were built for estate workers. The death of the 8th Baronet in 1949 brought an end to the families 230-year history at the Wynnstay.

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2.0 Properties surrounding application site

Being within a designated conservation area there are several listed buildings within the village below;

The Church of St. Mary's – Grade I listed – Reason for Designation: Listed grade I as a church with some medieval elements, with furnishings of interest and for the important group of monuments. The church was recorded in 1253 and then dedicated to St. Collen. The church was remodelled by T F Pritchard who was the architect of Shrewsbury in 1769-1770, and then substantially rebuilt in 1870 by Benjamin Ferrey, architect of London for Sir Watkin Williams-Wynn. (Cadw, 2024)

The Wynnstay Arms PH – Grade II – Reason For Designation: Listed grade II as a building of special interest as a prominently sited C18 and C19 coaching inn. The C18 coaching inn was enlarged in 1841 and likely had earlier work. The building is now a public house and hotel. (Cadw, 2024)

Mary's Salon – Grade II – Reason For Designation: Listed grade II as it is included for group value with the Wynnstay Arms and other listed buildings on Church Street. The late C18 building incorporating earlier building of stone rubble, has now been converted at ground floor level to a hairdressing salon C20. (Cadw, 2024)

The Old Grammar School – Grade II – Reason For Designation: Listed as a rare example of this building type. The Grammar school was built in 1618 and likely incorporates parts of earlier buildings. The school was still in use in 1837 when the charity commissioners 32nd report stated it consisted of a school room and a room over it where the masters lived. The school was later converted to a shop likely sometime in the mid C19. Conversion for residential purposes was in progress throughout 1994. (Cadw, 2024)

The Park Street Estate Cottages – Grade II – Reason For Designation: Listed as relatively intact examples of carefully planned estate cottages relating to the Wynnstay Estate. Four block estate cottages that were likely constructed in C1840. The blocks consisted of 1-up 1-down units accessed from the sides and 2-up, 2-down accessed from a pair of doors in the street elevation. The cottages each had an fireplace and shared flues leading to octagonal chimneys. The neighbouring 1-up, 1-down units have later been altered to form one dwelling and the blocks all have later extensions to the rear. (Cadw, 2024)

Identifying proposed changes including assessing the impact and reasoning

Identifying the proposed changes to the site is a simple task, we are proposing alterations to the existing frontage to retain the traditional aesthetic of the street. This will be accomplished by replacing the upvc windows and door with powder coated aluminium in the original style and reintegrating the recessed doorway as it was in the original frontage. The proposed alterations have been designed with sympathy to our surroundings and existing dwellings to fit and respect the character of the immediate vicinity which ensures the building retains its character to minimise impact on the character of the area.

It has previously been documented that some alterations and repairs that have been carried out in the area have been damaging to the character of the conservation area, specifically examples of modern upvc windows in place of original features. Consequently, the current upvc that has been installed could be deemed as detrimental to the character of the area and therefore, this proposal is improving the conservation area by retaining its traditional character, tackling an ongoing issue.

The church of St. Mary's is located to the South-West of the application site and undoubtedly has a significant impact on the character of the area, therefore careful consideration has been made to ensure the proposal does not interfere with the character of the church and surroundings.

The neighbouring property, 1 High Street, has upvc windows very similar to the current windows in the proposed site shop that are not considered to be in line with the character of the conservation area, therefore, we believe there is little reason to refuse this proposal.

Policies

Policy PS2

Policy PS2 Development must not materially detrimentally affect countryside, landscape/townscape character, open space, or the quality of the natural environment.

Policy EC7

Within, and in close proximity to, conservation areas, the priority will be to preserve and/ or enhance those buildings, structures, streets, trees, open spaces, archaeological remains, views, and other elements which contribute to the unique character of the area. New buildings and alterations or additions to existing buildings in conservation areas, whether listed as of special architectural or historic interest or not, must reflect the design and character of the area as a whole and the form, scale, detailing and materials of existing buildings.

Conclusion

Due to the application site's location within the settlement boundary limit of Ruabon the principle of development we don't believe can be questioned, the factors that are important in the application is how the alterations have been designed to retain the existing character and the impact on the wider conservation area.

The intentions are to produce a proposal which adds to the character and respects the conservation area.

The scale, aesthetics, positioning, and layout of the site has all been developed to ensure enhancements to features of the conservation area. It is a vital aspect of the application to ensure we are improving the site and the conservation area.

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On behalf of Blueprint Architectural Services Ltd

References

Cadw. (2024). *Listed Buildings*. Cadw.