

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

37 High Street, Cleator Moor

Proposed Conversion and Alterations to 37 High Street, Cleator Moor, CA25 5LA

Project Name	37 High Street
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Document Title	Heritage Impact Assessment
Project Description	Conversion of 37 High Street, Cleator Moor to 4 Self-Contained Flats (Use Class C3)
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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the conversion and alteration of the existing building at 37 High Street, Cleator Moor, to provide four self-contained residential flats, together with a modest single-storey rear extension. The purpose of the assessment is to identify the heritage assets potentially affected by the proposals, to assess the significance of those assets, and to evaluate the impact of the proposed development on that significance in accordance with national and local planning policy.
- 1.2 The report also sets out how the proposals have been designed to avoid harm, preserve heritage significance and, where possible, secure enhancement.

2.0 Historic Context and Significance

- 2.1 Cleator Moor developed primarily during the 19th century as a result of the Industrial Revolution, with rapid expansion driven by local iron ore and coal mining, associated foundries and supporting railway infrastructure. The town evolved from dispersed rural moorland into a populated settlement characterised by a strong and legible street hierarchy, with High Street forming the principal commercial and social spine.
- 2.2 Historic mapping demonstrates that by the late 19th century, High Street had already assumed its current alignment and role within the town. An 1888 map shows a well-established linear street pattern, with dense terraces of commercial and residential buildings defining the street edge. This historic pattern remains clearly legible today and underpins the townscape significance of the area.



Fig. 2.A

Historic Map of Cleator Moor, 1888

(Image credit: <https://www.littleireland.co.uk/2019/09/map-of-cleator-moor-1888.html>)

- 2.3 Although 37 High Street lies just outside the designated Cleator Moor Conservation Area, it is firmly embedded within this historic urban fabric and forms part of the wider town-centre streetscape that developed contemporaneously with the Conservation Area core.

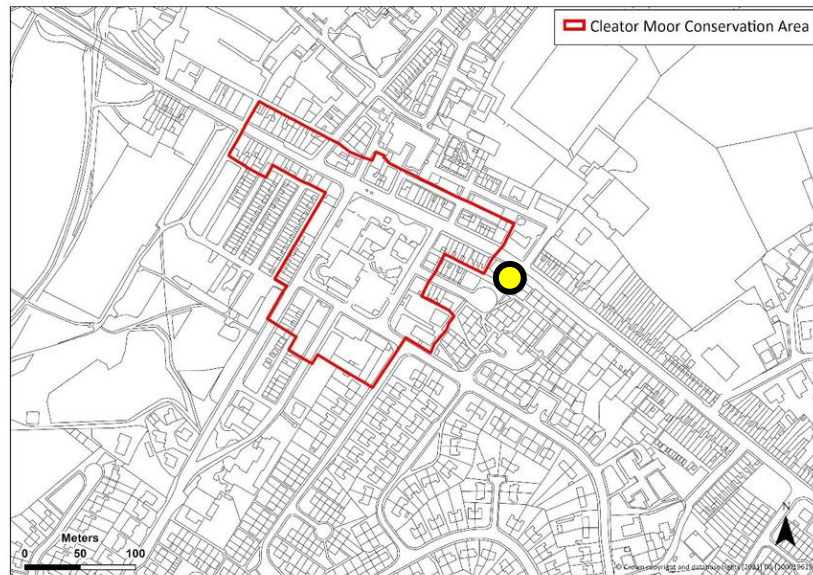


Fig 2.B

Extracted map from Copeland Borough Council's Conservation Area Appraisal with the Cleator Moor Conservation Area in red and the site as the yellow circle.



Fig. 2.C

Historic postcard of High Street, c.1906–1915

(Image credit: <https://www.littleireland.co.uk/2023/02/a-time-to-be-happy.html>)

- 2.4 Historic photographs and postcards from the early 20th century further illustrate the mixed residential and commercial character of High Street, with rendered façades, vertically proportioned windows and consistent building heights contributing to a cohesive streetscape.

3.0 Description of Heritage Assets

3.1 The Host Building – 37 High Street

- 3.1.1 The building at 37 High Street is a three-storey end-terrace property typical of late 19th to early 20th century High Street development in west Cumbria. While not statutorily listed, it forms part of a consistent historic frontage and makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of High Street.



Fig 3.A

View of external of property
(Photo credit: www.auctionhouselondon.co.uk)

- 3.1.2 Its significance lies primarily in its external form, scale, proportions and materials. The building exhibits simple, traditional massing, a vertically emphasised façade and a rendered external finish that reflects common local construction practices. Internally, the building has been heavily altered and stripped during a prolonged period of vacancy, resulting in the loss of most historic fabric and limiting internal heritage value.
- 3.1.3 At present, the poor condition of the building detracts from its potential townscape contribution, particularly when viewed in the context of the adjacent Conservation Area. The preceding photographs are from a recent site visit in August 2025.



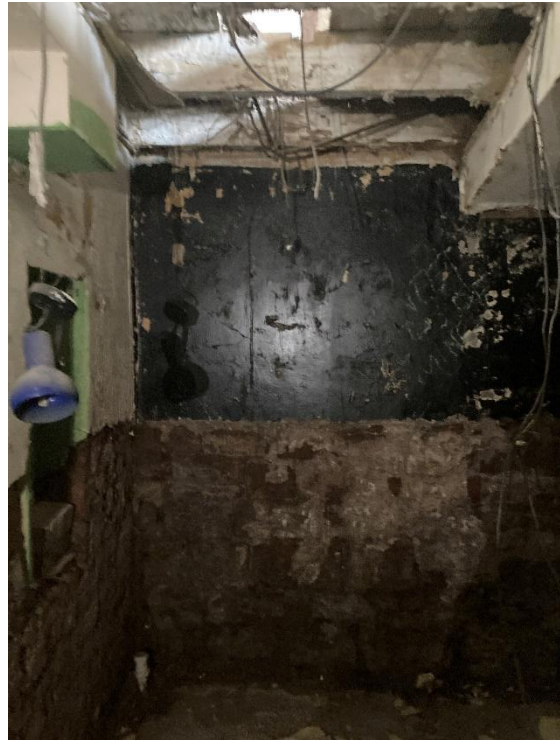


Fig 3.B

A series of internal and external photographs taken during a site visit in August 2025 illustrate the advanced state of disrepair affecting the building.

3.2 Nearby Heritage Assets and Conservation Area Setting

- 3.2.1 The site lies immediately adjacent to the Cleator Moor Conservation Area and forms part of its setting. The Conservation Area encompasses High Street, Market Place and a number of notable civic and institutional buildings, including the Carnegie Library and former Local Government Offices (Grade II listed), which act as focal points within the historic core.
- 3.2.2 The historic streetscape and townscape qualities of the Conservation Area extend beyond the formal boundary, and the continuity of scale, enclosure and building rhythm along High Street is fundamental to its significance. The application site therefore plays a role in reinforcing the historic approach to, and experience of, the Conservation Area.

4.0 Assessment of Significance

- 4.1 The heritage significance of 37 High Street and its immediate context is derived primarily from townscape and contextual value, rather than from architectural or evidential value unique to the individual building. As part of a continuous historic High Street frontage, the building contributes to the legibility of Cleator Moor's historic development and to the collective character of the town centre.
- 4.2 The significance can be summarised as follows. The building contributes to the rhythm, scale and enclosure of High Street and reinforces the historic urban grain that characterises the Conservation Area and its setting. It reflects the social and economic history of Cleator Moor as a mixed-use industrial town, where residential accommodation was commonly provided above shops or commercial premises. The building's presence supports the continuity of historic built form extending southwards from the Conservation Area core.
- 4.3 There is no known archaeological designation associated with the site, and the proposals do not involve ground disturbance of a scale likely to affect buried heritage assets.

5.0 Impact of the Proposal on Heritage Significance

5.1 Impact on Historic Fabric

- 5.1.1 The proposed works are limited in scope and carefully targeted. No increase in building height is proposed, the principal roof form is retained, and no alterations are made to the primary High Street elevation beyond repair and refurbishment. Conservation-style rooflights are introduced within the existing roof slope only, ensuring minimal visual impact.
- 5.1.2 The single-storey rear extension is confined to the rear of the property, is modest in scale, and is clearly subordinate to the host building. Its location ensures that it does

not affect the building's contribution to the High Street or its historic role within the streetscape.

5.2 Impact on Townscape and Conservation Area Setting

- 5.2.1 From public viewpoints along High Street and within the Conservation Area, the proposals preserve the established street rhythm, building line and roofscape. The rear extension is not visible from key public vantage points and therefore has no impact on the experience of the Conservation Area or on significant views.
- 5.2.2 The decision to finish the rear extension in render matching the existing building reinforces visual cohesion and avoids introducing discordant materials. This approach reflects the prevalent use of render across historic High Street buildings in Cleator Moor and supports a unified appearance when viewed obliquely or from rear viewpoints.

5.3 Enhancement and Positive Effects

- 5.3.1 The reoccupation and repair of a long-vacant building represents a clear heritage benefit. The proposals address deterioration, secure the long-term use of the property, and restore its contribution to the townscape. Repair of the rendered façade, careful treatment of openings and the reinstatement of active use will result in a modest but meaningful enhancement to the setting of the Conservation Area.
- 5.3.2 Overall, the development results in no harm to heritage significance and delivers a minor positive impact through regeneration and townscape repair.

6.0 Mitigation and Enhancement Measures

- 6.1 The proposals incorporate a number of measures to ensure heritage interests are protected during implementation. Materials, including render finishes, should be carefully matched in colour, texture and detailing to the existing building. Conservation-style rooflights should remain flush and low-profile to minimise visibility.
- 6.2 These measures ensure that the scheme is executed with appropriate care and in a manner consistent with local heritage guidance.

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 The building at 37 High Street forms part of the historic townscape of Cleator Moor and contributes to the wider setting of the Cleator Moor Conservation Area. While not designated, its scale, form and materiality reinforce the historic character of High Street and the continuity of development extending from the Conservation Area core.

- 7.2 The proposed conversion to four residential flats, together with a modest single-storey rear extension, has been carefully designed to respect this significance. The retention of principal elevations, limited scale of alteration, subordinate rear extension and use of matching render ensure that heritage significance is preserved.
- 7.3 The scheme brings a vacant building back into sustainable use, improves its appearance, and strengthens the historic streetscape. It therefore accords with national and local heritage policy and is considered acceptable from a heritage perspective.