

CUMBERLAND COUNCIL
CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Proposal: Conversion of a former public house to provide three domestic dwellings

Address: 25 Main Street, Hensingham

Reference: 4/23/2017/0F1

Date: 07/08/23

Description: 25, formerly the King's Arms pub, has uncertain origins, but was used as a pub since at least the 19th century. It possibly dates to then, however could plausibly trace its roots to contemporary with the old church, which was built in 1790.

Conclusion: No objection (condition suggested)

Assessment:

- Details of new windows and external doors should be submitted and approved prior to their installation in the building in order that their impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area can be preserved or enhanced.

Relevant Policies and Guidance:

Section 72 of the 1990 Act states that "special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of [a conservation] area."

Paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) asserts that "Development that is not well designed should be refused".

NPPF para. 197 states that "In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation..."

NPPF para. 199 states, in the case of designated heritage assets, "great weight should be given to the asset's conservation", irrespective of whether potential harm is substantial, less-than-substantial, or total loss. Where harm to a designated heritage asset is less-than-substantial, it should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal (para. 202).

Paragraph 203 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states the effect on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account when making decisions.

Opportunities should be sought for new development within conservation areas and the settings of heritage assets that enhances or better reveals their significance. (para. 206)

Referring to assets in a conservation area, NPPF para. 207 states that loss of an element that makes a positive contribution to a conservation area should be treated as either substantial (under para. 201) or less-than-substantial harm (under paragraph 202).

The former Copeland Borough Council area's Local Plan contains a number of relevant policies:

- Local Plan Policy ST1C(ii) highlights the importance of protecting, enhancing and restoring the Borough's cultural and heritage features and their settings.
- ST1D emphasizes the council's commitment to creating and retaining quality places.
- ENV4A stresses the importance of protecting listed buildings, conservation areas and other features considered to be of historic, archaeological or cultural value.
- ENV4B outlines support for heritage-led regeneration, ensuring assets are put to appropriate, viable and sustainable uses.
- ENV4C aims to strengthen the distinctive character of Copeland's settlements through high quality urban design and architecture that respect character and setting.
- DM10 emphasises the need for high quality design and quality places. Part B requires design to respond to local character at multiple scales, paying attention to plot size and arrangement, massing and scale, interstitial spaces, and materials. Part C requires the incorporation of existing features such as landscape and vernacular style.
- DM13D outlines the need, in converting non-residential buildings within settlement limits, or in subdividing large residential buildings within settlement limits, for conversion works to conserve the character of the building.
- DM27A outlines support in principle for developments that "protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic, cultural and architectural character of the borough's historic sites and their settings".
- DM27C outlines the restriction in principle of development within conservation areas to that which preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the area.

The Conservation Area Design Guide is a supplementary planning document adopted in 2017 that is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications within conservation areas. It is therefore applicable to this application.

Sammy Woodford

Conservation and Design Officer