

CUMBERLAND COUNCIL
CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Proposal: Demolition of an existing outbuilding and development of a new residential coach house including associated vehicle parking area and gardens

Address: 17 Irish Street, Whitehaven

Reference: 4/25/2353/0F1 and 4/25/2354/0L1

Date: 13/11/25

Description: The garage in question is not a heritage asset, though is built within the garden of the main house. It appears to date from the early 1990s. In post-dating the listed building, it should not therefore be considered curtilage listed.

Conclusion: No objection (Further detail requested)

Assessment:

- I have no objection to the proposal in principle.
- The proposed replacement building is substantially the same as the one proposed in 4/22/2297/0F1 and 4/22/2298/0L1, which I was supportive of at the time due to it being an attractive piece of design and replacing an existing building that has no heritage value.
- The main difference is the use of what was previously a garage as a bedroom. Upstairs, a snug/study has been replaced with another bedroom, making this a three-bed house compared with the single-bed design previously approved.
- I am glad to note the consideration given to the boundary wall, which is part of the early 18th-century enclosure of Holy Trinity Church, which was demolished in 1947.
- The proposed elevation drawing list a palette of materials that is of good quality, although refers to window detail drawings (1954-DD-009) that don't appear to be with the application docs.
- I do not anticipate that the proposed paving, parking space and gardening will entail any harm to the setting of 17 Irish Street or to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Summary:

- Proposal is largely the same as one approved in 2022.
- The existing garage is not a heritage asset.
- The circumstances remain the same, and I am supportive of this proposal, which will enhance the setting of 17 Irish Street.
- I request details of the proposed windows, which appear to have been missed off the online documents list.

Relevant Policies and Guidance:

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 establishes a need "in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works [for the Local Planning Authority to] have

special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest” [Section 16(2)]. This requirement also applies to the granting of planning permission affecting a listing building or its setting [Section 66(1)].

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 139 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) asserts that “Development that is not well designed should be refused”.

NPPF para. 210 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. 212 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. 215).

Opportunities should be sought for new development within conservation areas and the settings of heritage assets that enhances or better reveals their significance. (para. 219)

Referring to assets in a conservation area, NPPF para. 220 states that loss of an element that makes a positive contribution to a conservation area should be treated as either substantial (under para. 213-14) or less-than-substantial harm (under paragraph 215).

The Copeland area’s Local Plan contains a number of relevant policies:

- BE1 provides for the preservation and enhancement of built heritage assets by:
 - Requiring a heritage impact assessment or heritage statement where the proposal would affect a heritage asset;
 - Giving great weight to the conservation of Copeland’s designated heritage assets when decision making;
 - Ensuring that new development is sympathetic to local character and history;
 - Supporting proposals for the appropriate reuse of vacant historic buildings, recognising that putting buildings into viable uses consistent with their conservation can help sustain and enhance their significance;
 - Supporting proposals that increase the enhancement, promotion and interpretation of Copeland’s architectural and archaeological resources;
 - Strengthening the distinctive character of Copeland’s settlements, through the application of high-quality design and architecture that respects this character and enhances the setting of heritage assets.
- BE2 states that development should preserve or enhance designated heritage assets (or important archaeological sites) and their settings. The more important the asset, the greater weight that will be given to its conservation. Proposals that better reveal the significance of heritage assets will be supported in principle. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset will require clear and convincing justification.
- DS4 outlines the Council’s expectation that all new development will meet high-quality design standards that contribute positively to the health and well-being of residents.
- DS5 refers to the importance of achieving good standards of design in both hard and soft landscaping.

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 in the legacy Copeland area. It is therefore applicable to this application.

Sammy Woodford

Conservation and Design Officer