

CUMBERLAND COUNCIL
CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Proposal: Discharge of condition 4 of planning application 4/25/2321/0F1

Address: 17 Irish Street, Whitehaven

Reference: 4/26/2144/DOC

Date: 11/06/26

Description: 17 Irish Street is an early 18th century house built originally for Carlisle Spedding, agent and engineer of the Lowther Mining business. It was altered in the 19th century, and in the 20th century, and was latterly used as a doctors' surgery, but has been empty for a number of years and is in poor condition.

Conclusion: Request documentation revision. Design revision suggested.

Assessment:

- This DOC application covers detailing of a single window to the rear of the property.
- It is described as a sash window, and shown in section drawing to be a sash window, but the elevation drawing indicates that both lights are top-hinged, which appears to be a mistake. The diagonal lines forming a triangle indicate top-hinged casements whereas sliding sashes are indicated on elevations as a pair of arrows pointing towards the meeting rail. I request that this detail be updated to clarify.
- The elevation drawing also shows the use of stuck-on horns. I request clarification on this point as it would be unusual for a timber window not to simply have the horns as part of the stiles (the side elements of the window). Stuck-on horns tend to be used with certain uPVC windows, so this may also simply be a detail of the drawing that needs updating for clarity.
- The final point I'd make is that redwood is pine and for external joinery it needs to be carefully selected so as to be the best quality, and meticulously maintained because it is not very dimensionally stable or rot resistant. Poor quality redwood that is not meticulously prepped and maintained can start visible degrading in as little as 5-10 years, particularly where water sits such as at the bottom rail or sill. Though I would not recommend refusing the application with it, I do feel the need to highlight this as specifying a different timber may be desirable on a longevity basis.

Summary:

- Please update the elevation drawing to confirm that the window is a sash not a pair of top-hinged casements.
- Please update the elevation drawing to confirm that the horns are contiguous with the side stiles, not stuck on.
- As a suggestion, consider specifying a different type of timber as the durability of redwood is questionable.

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).

Paragraph 216 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. 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.

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