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26 Church Street, Ribchester Preston, PR3 3XP.



Proposed internal alterations including replacement staircase, and bringing attic room back into use, reinstatement of second floor window and chimney stack, alteration to ground floor window opening and insertion of conservation roof light.

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Planning and listed building statement JDTPL0218

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STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF A HOUSEHOLDER PLANNING APPLICATION AND LISTED BUILDING CONSENT APPLICATION FOR PROPOSED INTERNAL ALTERATIONS INCLUDING REPLACEMENT STAIRCASE, BRINGING ATTIC ROOM BACK INTO USE, REINSTATEMENT OF SECOND FLOOR WINDOW AND CHIMNEY STACK, ALTERATIONS TO GROUND FLOOR WINDOW OPENING, AND INSERTION OF CONSERVATION ROOF LIGHT AT 26 CHURCH STREET RIBCHESTER.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This planning and listed building statement has been prepared by Judith Douglas Town Planning Ltd on behalf of the applicants Mr and Mrs Bennett in support of a householder planning application and a listed building consent application. A householder planning application is required for the reinstatement of the chimney stack. Listed building consent is required for all of the proposed alterations to the building.

1.2 This statement provides a description of the site and the proposed development, its compliance with the development plan and an assessment of other material considerations. It should be read in conjunction with the accompanying information:

1999/1C Plans and elevations as existing including site plan

1999/3C Plans and elevations as proposed

Location plan

Bat survey

Heritage Assessment

2.0 THE APPLICATION SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

2.1 26 Church Street is an end of terrace house in the village of Ribchester. The building along with its neighbour 25 Church Street is listed grade 2 and the list description reads:

"Pair of weavers' houses, part of a row, late C18th. Squared sandstone with slate roof. 3 storeys with plain frieze and stone gutter brackets. Windows have plain reveals. Each house has a door to the left with plain stone surround and triangular moulded hood on shaped stone brackets. The attic to No. 25 retains its sashed window with glazing bars. No. 26 has a tunnel entrance to the left with plain stone surround with semi-circular head, projecting key and imposts. A 1st floor window has been inserted over the tunnel entrance".

2.2 Ribchester Roman Fort (Bremetennacum) is a scheduled ancient monument. The area of the scheduled ancient monument is directly to the rear of the site and covers the whole of the

playing fields as well as other sites in the village. The site is also within the conservation area of Ribchester.

2.3 The site is in flood zone 1 and area least likely to flood.

2.4 The adopted Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan and the soon to be adopted Housing and Economic Development Plan Proposals map show the site to be within the settlement boundary of Ribchester and adjacent to protected open space which includes the playing fields to the south and the commemorative garden to the north.

3.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 The house is in need of refurbishment. The proposal is to create a utility room and ground floor w.c. where the kitchen is presently. This will require internal partition walls, relocating the boiler and flue and the insertion of a single conservation rooflight. The opportunity is being taken to improve the appearance of the existing kitchen window opening. It is also proposed to replace the existing modern staircase from ground to first floor. At first floor, repositioning of partitions and alterations to internal walls to create an office and relocate the bathroom is proposed. A new staircase to give access to the attic is proposed to allow the re-instatement of the attic room including re-opening an existing window in the rear elevation and partitions to create a shower room.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 There appears to be no recent planning history at the site.

5 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (Framework) requires the Council to consider the effect of the proposals on the significance of the designated heritage asset. 26 Church Street is a grade 2 listed building; a designated heritage asset. The Conservation Area and Scheduled Ancient Monument are also Designated Heritage Assets. Paragraph 189 of the Framework requires the applicant to describe the significance of the heritage assets. A Heritage Statement is submitted with the applications which describes the listed building, conservation area and Scheduled Ancient Monument. The Council is required by paragraph 192 when determining applications to take account of:

a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Core Strategy (2014)

5.2 The following policies are of relevance to the proposal:

- Key Statement EN5: Heritage Assets- there is a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of the significance of heritage assets and their settings.
- Policy DMG1: General Considerations – sets out various criteria to be considered in assessing planning applications, including a high standard of building design, proposed development being sympathetic to existing land uses, and not adversely affecting the amenities of the area.
- Policy DMH5: Residential and curtilage extensions –must accord with policy DMG1 and any relevant designations within which the site is located.
- Policy DME2: Landscape and Townscape protection – seeks to protect important landscape and landscape features.
- Policy DME3: Site and species protection and conservation-seeks to prevent harm to species protected by law.
- Policy DME4: Protecting Heritage Assets. In considering development proposals the Council will make a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of the significance of heritage assets and their settings.

6 PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

- 6.1 Pre-application advice was sought from the Council prior to these applications being submitted. Initially the scheme included the replacement or the adaptation of the single storey wing to provide annexe accommodation for a dependant relative. This is now not included in the proposal. It was confirmed that there would be no objection to the removal of the unsympathetic (and what in some cases appear to be unsafe) elements of the more recent interventions in the building. The reinstatement of the second-floor rear window and chimney stack received support in principle¹.

¹ Appendix Pre-application advice RV/2019/ENQ/00062 June 2019

7 EVALUATION

- 7.1 The main issues to be considered relating to the development are the preservation of the historic significance of the listed building, the impact on the character of the conservation area, and the impact on protected species.

Historic Significance

- 7.2 The Heritage Assessment submitted with these applications identifies the heritage assets which are potentially impacted by the development. These are the listed building 26 Church Street, the conservation area and the scheduled ancient monument. The statement of significance identifies the features in the building which are distinctive and contribute particular architectural significance these are:

- the arched passage entrance, heavy stone surround and later stone canopy to the domestic doorway, and eaves band, all in the front elevation
- the general external form of the rear wing, although changes to openings in the south side are to its detriment
- the surviving ground floor fireplace
- the remains of the cross-wall separating front and rear rooms, on the ground and first floor
- surviving original internal timbers, including the floorboards to part of the first floor
- the roof trusses with the rear wing

- 7.3 Those features which are considered to weaken significance, and may offer scope for enhancement include:

- the modern alterations to all front windows
- painted render to two elevations
- the inserted windows and lack of a chimney stack at the north gable
- the incongruous modern staircase
- the lack of access to and redundancy of the once occupied second floor
- the area of modern rebuilding to the front of the second storey
- the infilling to the west window on the second floor
- the entirely modern roof structure.

- 7.4 The Framework requires that when considering the impact of a development on the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to the assets' conservation. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of the designated heritage assets should require clear and convincing justification. The preservation of the assets or the enhancement of the significance of the heritage assets does not require justification.

- 7.5 The findings of the Heritage Assessment were taken into consideration along with the pre-application advice in the revision of the pre-application scheme. It is clear from the Heritage Assessment that the historical use of the building as a weaver's cottage is reflected in the building and contributes to its significance. The evidence suggests that single storey rear wing is likely to have been built as a workshop for cotton weaving and the second floor was once a habitable room.
- 7.6 The historical use of the attic room as part of the house is clear from evidence within the building. The floor was originally boarded with wide pine boards a decayed remnant of which remains around the perimeter and there are square nails remaining in the joists. See photographs 9 and 10 of the Heritage Assessment. The west and south walls are finished in lime plaster. A window opening on the front elevation lights this space and there is clearly a blocked window in the rear elevation. Photograph 12. A number of the properties within the same terraced row as number 26 Church Street have second storey windows in the front and rear elevations in similar position to those in 26 Church Street. Evidence could not be found of the location of the original staircase access to the attic but clearly some form of access must have been used in the past. The re-introduction of the use of this floor of the building and the re-opening of the rear window will lead to an enhancement of the historic significance of the building as identified in the heritage assessment. The introduction of the staircase and internal partitions will have a neutral effect.
- 7.7 It is clear within the interior of the building that the fireplace flues originally lead to a chimney stack. The design of the proposed chimney stack is based on the design of the stack on the neighbouring property and will be finished in render. The re-introduction of the chimney stack will lead to an enhancement to the heritage significance of the property. This accords with policies EN5, DMH5, DME2 and DME4.
- 7.8 The current incongruous modern staircase has been identified as a weakness. It's replacement with an enclosed staircase can be considered to have either neutral effect or be an enhancement to the significance of the building. It partly re-introduces a wall at the ground floor in the position of the original cross wall which is an enhancement. The original staircase of the property was located in the position of the proposed staircase on the south wall see Heritage Assessment. The ground floor of the main part of the house remains unaltered apart from the replacement staircase. Alterations to the position of the internal walls are proposed at the first floor. A partial length of the cross wall exists between the staircase and the front bedroom (but not adjacent to the landing). This is retained. The repositioning of the partition walls at the first floor and the insertion of a staircase to the attic will have a neutral effect on the significance of the building.

- 7.9 The general form of the rear wing of the house has been identified as having particular architectural significance but the changes to opening on the south side have been to its detriment. It is proposed adapt the kitchen area to provide a utility and downstairs W.C. In doing this it is proposed to modify the existing large kitchen window opening to two smaller openings similar in design to the window on the west side of the door. This smaller opening is likely to be unchanged since it's construction except for the application of render according to the heritage assessment. The current boiler flue is to be moved and a conservation rooflight added to the northern roof slope. Overall these changes will have neutral effect on the significance of the building.
- 7.10 The pre-application advice directed us to an appeal decision in 2013 for development at 28 Church Street Ribchester². This states that part of the importance of a listed building lies in the legibility of its original pattern of use-through its plan layout. The Planning Inspector criticised that proposal because the plan form and its origins in relation to 28 Church Street had not been analysed as part of design of that scheme. The scheme proposal completely relocated the position of the staircase. Concern was expressed that this would further distort the original plan form and obscure an appreciation of the historic pattern of use. We have considered the original plan form of 26 Church Street as described in the heritage assessment and we have sought to preserve it.

Impact on the Conservation Area

- 7.11 The majority of the proposed alterations to the house are internal and have no impact on the conservation area. The external alterations are the re-introduction of the chimney stack, the re-opening of the second floor window on the rear elevation, the alterations to the kitchen window opening to style more akin to the surviving original opening on this elevation, the relocation of the boiler flue and the insertion of a single rooflight. These measures overall will add to the historic significance of the building which is one of a number of former weaver's cottages which display historic architectural features particular to this use. The development will preserve and enhance the character of the conservation area. This accords with the requirement of the Framework and policies EN5 and DME4 of the core strategy.

Protected Species

- 7.12 A bat survey accompanies the application which was carried out on the 7th August 2019 and notes that the general area has medium foraging potential for bats. There was a lack of

² Appendix 2 Appeal decision 28 Church Street

evidence that the property has been actively use by bats. The proposed works are unlikely to impact adversely on the bat population. The proposal is in compliance with policy DME3.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 We have demonstrated that overall the proposed scheme will enhance the significance of this listed building and will preserve and enhance the character of the conservation area both of which are designated heritage assets. This fully accords with the requirement of the Framework and policies EN5, DMG1, DME2, DME3 and DME4.

Appendices

- 1.Pre-application advice RV/2019/ENQ/00062 June 2019
2. Appeal decision 28 Church Street Ribchester.