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Architecture + Building Surveying + Town Planning

6-8 Nant Hall Road, Prestatyn

Heritage Statement

14th May 2024

CASSIDY + ASHTON

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Statement has been prepared on behalf of Nant Hall Developments Ltd ('the applicant') in support of a full planning application for:

Proposed change of use / conversion / part extension / part demolition to create mixed use development, comprising 18no apartments (Use Class C3), 5no holiday lets (Use Class C6), Office Hub, Commercial, car parking, landscaping and all associated works.

- 1.2 The application site is 6-8 Nant Hall Road, Prestatyn, LL19 9LH.
- 1.3 The site is located within the Prestatyn High Street Conservation Area.
- 1.4 Considerable evaluation of the site, through identifying constraints and opportunities, has informed the development proposals. These have been through a series of design changes to reach a point where the submitted design proposals would sit comfortably within the existing street scene in consideration of the local authority's wider aspirations for the area.
- 1.5 The report includes analysis of the context of the site, including the setting of the nearby listed buildings, in order to demonstrate the positive contribution that the development will make to the evolution and conservation of the town centre.
- 1.6 This statement sets out the heritage context to the site and the significance of relevant assets, proceeding to assess the proposal in its historic context. It is concluded that the scheme is sympathetic to the Conservation Area within which it is sited and will not negatively impact that or nearby listed buildings.

METHODOLOGY

- 1.7 Review of the site and its setting was conducted prior to and throughout the design development, with particular attention to the views surrounding the site. The aim has been to consider how the development of the site would sit within the fabric of the town centre and reveal any sensitivities which would influence the significance of the site that could be affected by the proposals. Consideration has also been given to the historical development of the site and associated heritage assets which could potentially contribute to the appreciation of the site when redeveloped.

2.0 SITE CONTEXT

2.1 This application site is not a listed building, however, is situated within the Prestatyn High Street Conservation Area, as shown below.



Fig. 1 Conservation Area Map [Denbighshire County Council]

2.2 There are a number of listed buildings in the wider vicinity of the site - Grade II listed Christ Church Vicarage is located circa 50m to the south. The application site is visible from the Vicarage and is therefore part of its wider setting.



Fig. 2 Historic Protections [Source: CADW]

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

2.3 The below includes a review of the historic development of the site and surrounding area.



Fig. 3 Historic Mapping, 1871 [Source: NLS, Ordnance Survey]

2.4 As shown in figure 3 above, the building is not present in 1871 and Prestatyn Town Centre is comprised of limited development, yet with a number of key buildings and features. The Vicarage is present, along with Christ Church, Methodist Chapel, Post Office and Railway Station.



Fig. 4 Historic Mapping, 1910 [Source: NLS, Ordnance Survey]

2.5 As shown in figure 4 above, the building on site is present in 1910, aligned with the 1903 date stamp on the original building, shown below. Prestatyn is clearly developing to 1910 centred around the High Street and Marine Road.



Fig. 5 Elevation fronting Nant Hall Road, 1903 Date Stamp

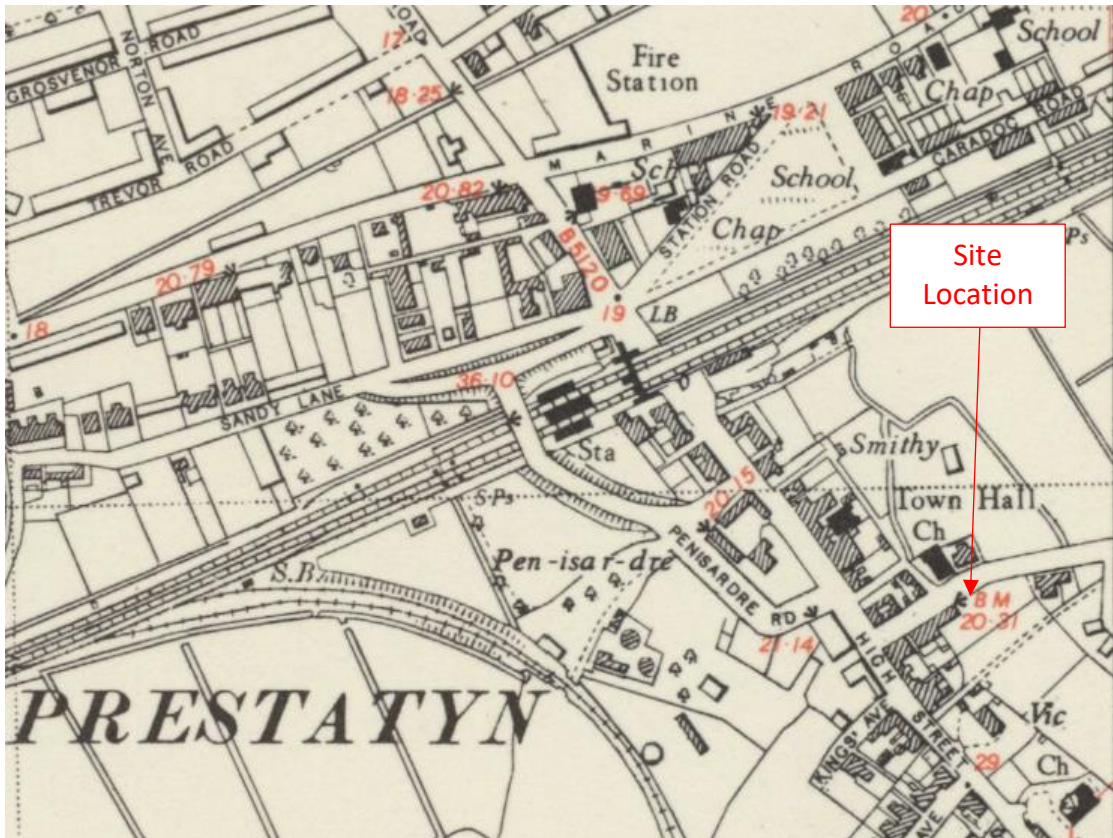


Fig. 6 Historic Mapping, 1949 [Source: NLS, Ordnance Survey]

2.6 As shown in figure 6 above, the town is progressing development with residential development extending to the North.

3.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Introduction

- 3.1 The adopted development plan for Denbigh currently comprises the Denbighshire County Council Local Development Plan (2013).
- 3.2 An emerging local development plan is currently under development, however due to ongoing delays the adoption of the replacement LDP is not anticipated before 2026.
- 3.3 Relevant material planning considerations include Planning Policy Wales (2021), the Technical Advice Notes (TAN) and Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Local Planning Policy

- 3.1 **Policy RD1** states that development proposals will be supported that protects and where possible enhances the local natural and historic environment.
- 3.2 Denbighshire County Council's 'Conservation Areas' Supplementary Planning Guidance Note sets out the role and priorities for Conservation Areas.

"Planning applications should be assessed on how development proposals impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. The character and appearance of these areas can be retained and enhanced in a positive way. Development proposals should be of high quality and designed in context within the building and area to which it relates. Well-designed new buildings will enhance the appearance and character of the Conservation Areas."

- 3.3 The SPG proceeds to state that new build in Conservation Areas should be designed to a high standard, as well as be sited, designed and appear externally in sympathy with their location and the overall appearance of the area.

Planning Policy Wales

- 3.4 **Paragraph 6.1.1** sets out that:

"The historic environment is made up of individual historic features which are collectively known as historic assets. Examples of what can constitute an historic asset include:

- *Listed buildings;*
- *Conservation areas;*
- *Historic assets of special local interest;*
- *Historic parks and gardens;*
- *Townscapes;*
- *Historic Landscapes;*
- *World Heritage Sites; and*
- *Archaeological remains (including scheduled monuments)."*

3.5 **Paragraph 6.1.7** states:

"It is important that the planning system looks to protect, conserve and enhance the significance of historic assets. This will include consideration of the setting of an historic asset which might extend beyond its curtilage. Any change that impacts on an historic asset or its setting should be managed in a sensitive and sustainable way."

3.6 **Paragraph 6.1.14** details the approach toward Conservation Areas:

"There should be a general presumption in favour of the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of conservation areas or their settings. Positive management of conservation areas is necessary if their character or appearance are to be preserved or enhanced and their heritage value is to be fully realised."

Technical Advice Note 24 – The Historic Environment

3.1 **TAN 24** provides guidance on how the planning system considers the historic environment.

"The setting of an historic asset includes the surroundings in which it is understood, experienced, and appreciated embracing present and past relationships to the surrounding landscape. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.²⁴ Setting is not a historic asset in its own right but has value derived from how different elements may contribute to the significance of a historic asset."

4.0 EXISTING CONTRIBUTION TO HERITAGE ASSETS

- 4.1 All heritage assets have significance, some of which have particular importance recognised by statutory designation. While the legislation requires that the impact on 'setting' is appropriately considered in the planning process, the sensitivity of the setting and the contribution to the appreciation of the heritage asset will vary.
- 4.2 Given the fact that the application site is not physically connected to any listed building an assessment has been made as to buildings which have the potential to be impacted by way of setting as a result of the proposed development, as well as the wider Conservation Area.

HERITAGE VALUES

- 4.3 In assessing the heritage value of assets relevant to the application site, the Welsh Government Conservation Principles have been considered and applied. These are summarised as follows:
- **Evidential value:** every historic asset has a unique story to tell. The surviving historic fabric and detail — whether above or below ground — helps us to understand when and how each historic asset was made, how it was used and how it has changed over time. Pictorial and documentary sources may also increase our understanding.
 - **Historical value:** historic assets may illuminate particular aspects of the past. They can help us to understand how people lived and worked, and the beliefs and values they cherished. They may be associated with notable people or events. Through evocation and association, historic assets can connect past people, aspects of life and events with the present.
 - **Aesthetic value:** we may value historic assets for their visual qualities, whether they result from conscious design and craftsmanship, or from the fortuitous effect of change over time. Tastes alter and so do historic assets: earlier records and careful analysis of what survives may help in appreciating aesthetic value.
 - **Communal value:** historic assets may be cherished by the people and communities who relate to them, and they may play an important part in collective experience or memory. Historic assets can have economic as well as social value with the capacity to provide a valuable source of income or employment.

- 4.4 **Evidential value:** The proposed development retains the historic element of the application site, being the original old fire station. The extensions which are to be demolished and replaced are post war, granted planning permission in 1987. The evidential heritage value of the application site is considered to be negligible.
- 4.5 **Historical value:** Municipal Offices have been a central point to the town, until recent years following their closure having laid vacant. The original old fire station building is to be retained with the later extensions demolished and replaced. The extensions as post war additions with low architectural merit have little significance. The historical heritage value of the application site to be impacted is thus considered to be negligible.
- 4.6 **Aesthetic value:** Key attributes relate to the original building, which is to be retained and extended. The existing extensions on site to be demolished are of poor aesthetic value and do not benefit the site, nearby listed buildings or wider Conservation Area. The aesthetic heritage value of the application site to be impacted is thus considered to be negligible. The good quality principal elevation to Nant Hall Road is of value and is to be retained.
- 4.7 **Communal value:** Historically, the site would have been prominent to the town when operational as a fire station. For a considerable period of time the building was used as municipal offices and has since been vacant. The building is not currently contributing to communal value, however the redevelopment to include an office hub and commercial unit/café/bar will provide an asset to the community.

CONTRIBUTION OF THE SITE TO HERITAGE ASSETS

- 4.8 The principal elevation of the building onto Nant Hall Road is an original red brick high quality with articulate window detailing. This elevation has some significance to the Conservation Area and in the most part will therefore be retained. This is with the addition of opening up the corner of the elevation to facilitate a frontage for the commercial unit (likely to be a café/bar). The elevation will also see reinstating original doors to the side of bay windows. This elevation contributes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and is therefore being retained with modest changes to facilitate the development.



Fig. 7 Site Image, Nant Hall Road elevation

- 4.9 The existing extension to the rear was implemented in line with planning permission ref. 2/PRE/0216/87/D for an office extension to the Municipal Offices.
- 4.10 As can be seen from the below site images, the existing rear element of the building is of no merit to the Conservation Area and wider setting of the Grade II listed Christ Church Vicarage.



Fig. 8 Site Image, rear elevation



Fig. 9 Site Image, rear elevation

- 4.11 The rear elevation, is in some way related to the Christ Church Vicarage from which it is partially visible and detracts from its significance and that of the wider Conservation Area.
- 4.12 The 2no trees to the rear of the application building do benefit as they to a small degree screen view of the poor-quality rear elevation associated with the existing extension. That being said, as demonstrated through the updated tree survey, the trees are in an inhospitable environment for their type and have a potentially limited future life.

5.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND HERITAGE ASSETS

- 5.1 This application seeks conversion of existing 6-8 Nant Hall Road, along with part demolition / re-build.
- 5.2 The development involves the following:
- Demolition of rear extension
 - New build extension (5 storeys)
 - Landscaping works including car park re-structuring, removal of 1no tree
- 5.3 The proposed development is set out in detail in the Planning, Design and Access Statement.

Demolition of rear extension

- 5.4 As detailed in Chapter 4, the existing extension provides no merit to the Conservation Area and setting of the Grade II listed Christ Church Vicarage.
- 5.5 Its demolition would improve the appearance of the site and its contribution to the above heritage assets.
- 5.6 The Council's own Nant Hall Development Brief details the in-principle support for demolition of this element at 5.16 as follows:

"Demolition of the former library, Tŷ Nant and the modern extension to the Council Offices on Nant Hall Road is considered acceptable. Conservation Area consent would be required for those buildings to be demolished within the Conservation Area."

New build extension

- 5.7 The existing architectural palette of the original building has been considered and is applied in part for the proposed new build extension. The red brick has been continued across the building, notably to the East elevation where the gable detail is mirrored, as an important view from Nant Hall Road looking West toward the High Street.
- 5.8 The rear elevation view from the vicarage uses soft materials which better align with the colour and form of materials used in the vicarage, a buff/grey stone.

Landscaping works

- 5.9 The 2no trees within the rear car parking court are proposed to be removed to facilitate the development, required levels and car parking.
- 5.10 Proposed removal of the 2no trees is to be mitigated through introducing new trees/planting within the landscape area, which will provide established trees as replacement. The trees will benefit the Conservation Area and setting of the Vicarage, suitably mitigating loss of the existing trees on site and delivered in a means which secures their ongoing prosperity.
- 5.11 This strategy is considered an acceptable form of mitigation as detailed within the Tree Survey / AIA. Further to this, the priority to redevelop the site is detailed within the Council’s own Nant Hall Development Brief. It is noted as below T17 (Sycamore) is to be retained ‘if possible’. In order to deliver the scheme including demolition of the previous extensions, replacement with new and landscaping/car park works, works within the roof protection area are unavoidable. As a result, removal is necessary, mitigated through the above.

Figure 2a

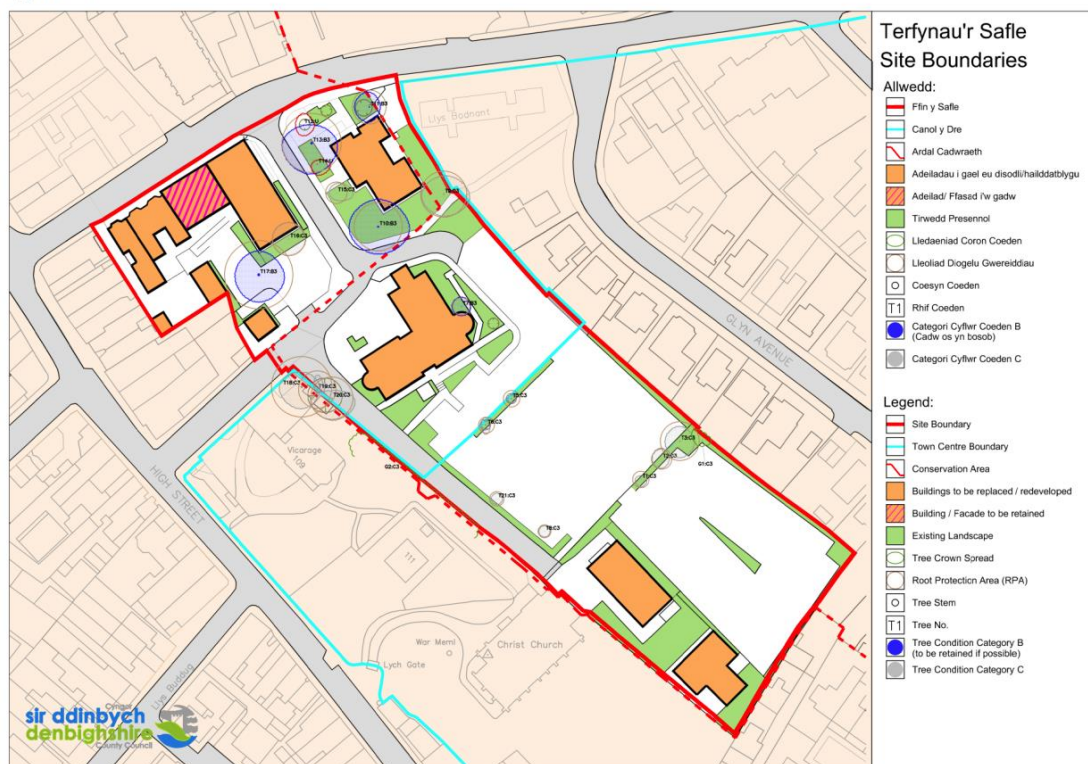


Fig.10 Extract from Nant Hall Development Brief [Denbighshire County Council]

- 5.12 The proposed development, when assessed overall will have a positive impact on the Conservation Area and the wider setting of the nearby Vicarage, due to its high quality sensitive yet modern design. The development will result in an improved situation on site in

regard to character, appearance and contribution towards the historic environment. Coupled with this, the scheme will act as precedent for regeneration within the town centre and facilitate a positive use of the building for the community.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 It has been demonstrated that the existing rear extension to the original building actively detracts from the Prestatyn High Street Conservation Area and the wider area, through design, materials and state of repair.
- 6.2 The proposed development will have only a positive material / visual impact on the nearby listed buildings or other heritage assets. The development will facilitate the redevelopment of the building as a component of the wider historic environment.
- 6.3 The proposed development will have a positive physical and visual impact on the Conservation Area at the heart of the town centre, providing a sustainable development.
- 6.4 The design of the proposed development has been carefully informed by analysis of both the relative significance of the site and its context. The scale and mass of the development has also been influenced by its visual impact on views, as well as locally experienced vistas. The result is a carefully articulated statement design which is contemporary in appearance, whilst providing a clear link back to the buildings past form and particularly that of the original building which is retained. The proposed scale complements the significant urban components which enclose the surrounding area, without affecting local amenity and that of the proposed development.
- 6.5 The development of the site, has therefore been demonstrated as making a positive impact on this part of Prestatyn, aligned with local and national planning policy.
- 6.6 The cumulative impact of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the Prestatyn High Street Conservation Areas is thus clearly positive and should, therefore, be granted planning permission.

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