

HERITAGE STATEMENT rev. 00

Heritage Asset and its Setting:

Project Address: 3 New Lane Hill, Tilehurst, RG30 4JE

Conservation Area: Horncastle

Listing Status: N/A List entry no. N/A

Building Use: Ground Floor shop, first floor residential

Project Overview:

The change of use of the redundant ground floor shop to residential allowing 2no flats across the whole of the premise. The building is not Listed either nationally or locally but is within the Conservation Area.



Photo 1 – Front Elevation from Bath Road

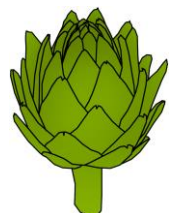




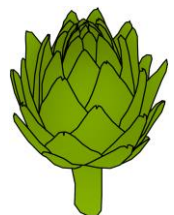
Photo 2 and 3 Photos of the property from within the Conservation Area



Photos 4 and 5 – Rear of the property from the back garden

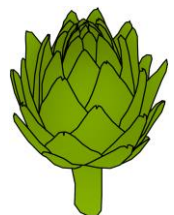


Photo 6 Rear of the property from the Bath Road



In order to achieve the works, the following alterations/ interventions will be required:

- Removal of the existing modern shop frontage at ground floor level.
- Removal of the shop front signage, canopy and metal shutters.
- New brick to match infill and white UPVC casement windows to match existing.
- New 6 panel painted front door to replace shop door.
- New ground floor windows to match those of the adjoining residential properties.
- New external front landscaping and bin store.
- Reinstatement of a rear garden from the current storage yard.
- New rear access stair and balustrading.
- Internal refurbishment and alterations. These are not reviewed as part of the heritage assessment as the building is not Listed.



Setting Overview:

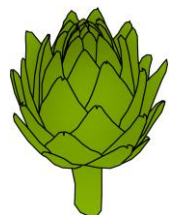
The Horncastle Conservation Area is a small triangle of land off the Bath Road (historically turnpiked) which surrounds a central grassed open space. The area contains a collection of traditional small scale domestic properties and has an informal rural feel to it despite its relationship to the busy A4. The Conservation Area is well screened from the surrounding areas.

The property in question sits at the entrance to the Conservation Area, as the hill rises up, and is one of 2 small shops within the area. It however is unable to survive as a grocery store due to the rather large modern supermarket just opposite it on the other side of the A4. The old Horncastle Inn on the other side of the lane also addressing the Bath Road is now a pet supermarket.

The property is a 2 storey plus loft accommodation property as part of a row of traditional Victorian red brick terrace houses which step up as the hill rises. All have white UPVC casement windows and modern concrete roof tiles. Only the end 2 properties in this row are shops, the rest are residential. The property has been altered significantly over time and is in a very poor state of repair however appears first on the 1899 OS mapping. The shop to its side is a more modern add on and at the time of construction there used to be further terrace houses as a separate block even closer to the road, which are no longer present.



Map taken from Historic England Listing Database. Property shown with a red dot.



Impacted Heritage Assets:

The building sits within the Horncastle Conservation Area.

The building is not Listed either nationally or locally.

The building is not within the context of a Listed Building.

The building is not within an area where there is known below ground archaeology.

Assessment of Significance:

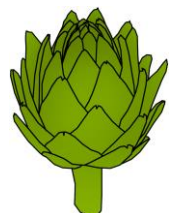
Heritage has cultural, social, economic and environmental values. The attributes that combine to define the significance of a historic building can relate to its physical properties or to its context. – BS 7913:2013..

The building is Victorian in character and forms part of a row of traditional small terrace houses. Its red brick is typical for the local area and probably came from one of the local brick kilns in Tilehurst. Its frontage is visually dominant as a building as you enter the Conservation Area which is why it formally worked well as a shop but is not really visible from the main green which is the heart of the area.

The building however has been very poorly treated over time and its current appearance is of detriment to the Conservation Area appearance both in terms of the building itself and its immediate setting. The rear of the property is very well screened but is in equally poor condition.

In my opinion the building is significant to the Conservation area as it frames its entrance however is historically or architecturally of little or low significance.

There is nothing of known archaeological significance below ground.



Development Impact on the Historical Asset:

Building Elevations and Setting: The building is in a terrible condition and is currently vacant with little prospect of being retained in its current use. The modern poor quality shop front and poor landscaping is hugely detrimental to the character of the Conservation Area. Although the proposals visually alter the front of the building it is hard to see how this would not be an improvement to what is currently in place as long as care was taken to ensure that quality traditional materials are chosen and a good level standard of work undertaken. The proposals are reflective of the properties within the same terrace row. The proposals have no impact upon the scale and massing of the surrounding townscape.

The rear elevation is also in a dreadful state, as is the garden/ yard and investment in enhancing this is a positive contribution to the area.

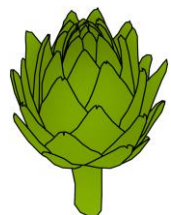
Internally: The building is not Listed either nationally or locally and therefore the internal arrangements have not been reviewed as part of this statement. The proposals however intend to provide the best economic use of the house for the existing occupants without harming the value of place.

Scale and Massing: there is no impact upon the scale and massing of existing architecture. The greatest impact of the proposals is on the secluded rear elevation but these are not visible from any public spaces within the Conservation Area.

Archeaology: There is no below ground archaeology within the Conservation Area.

Use: It is difficult to conclude based on the evidence available if this building was designed to originally serve as a shop however the existing shop frontage is clearly a modern addition. Looking at the historical mapping and the presence of the properties closer to the road however it is presumed however that it was originally a residential premise that was later converted and therefore this scheme simply restores a previous useage. It has no chance of survival as a small shop given the close proximity of the large supermarket and clearly a new purpose needs to be found.

Overall the impact of the development is positive in nature and in our view there is no harm to the material value of the place as long as the work was carried out to a high standard.



Relevant Policy:

The Government has set out its planning policies for the historic environment in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This was published in March 2012 and replaced in 2018 and 2019. It replaced Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment. The PPS5 Practice Guide remains valid for use alongside the NPPF.

In determining applications, the NPPF explains at paragraph 189 that local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.

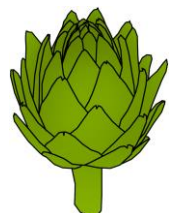
Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

In determining applications, local planning authorities should 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.

Historic England 'Conservation Principles' deem new work or alteration to be normally acceptable where the proposals do not materially harm the value of the place. They consider the setting of the heritage asset to contribute greatly to its significance. They accept that a heritage setting changes over time.

The local authority guidance also includes policies which seek to ensure the protection of the historic environment and that development is of a high quality and seeks to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Heritage Asset. Changes to the setting of historic buildings / Conservation Areas are to be sympathetic in terms of siting, proportion, scale, form, height, materials and detailing.



Conclusion:

Finding new appropriate use to a redundant and neglected building within a Conservation Area should be the principal driver for the approval of proposed works to this building. A change of use is inevitable in this location due to the large scale nearby commercial developments and the proposals seek to find new purpose using a traditional palette of materials and respecting the scale of the existing building.

The proposed works are minor, residential in nature to replicate the neighbouring property and do not result in material harm to the Conservation Area. They have no impact upon the scale and massing of the townscape as a whole.

The internal alterations maximise the use of space, securing their viable use whilst respecting the existing building lines. There is no loss of historic features or loss of historic fabric.

The proposals act in accordance with the requirements of the local authority as well in accordance with Historic England development guidelines and policies and reflective of those previously approved within the Conservation Area.

