

Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Laura McMullan ARB RIBA to inform and support proposals for Penman Spicer, Melton Mowbray.

Paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires applicants to *'describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting'... 'proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset... sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance'.*

This statement therefore seeks to describe the historic context of this property and to provide an assessment of the proposed change of use in respect of its surviving character and appearance and overall significance in the context of the relevant local and national planning policies.

Methodology

The following sources of information have been used to identify the designated heritage assets within the locality:

- a. relevant designation records from Historic England's *Heritage List for England*,
- b. information from Melton Borough Council's website on conservation areas and heritage assets, including the Melton Mowbray Conservation Area Appraisal

Summary of the Proposed Development

The proposed development consists of the following:

- a. Conversion of the existing former community hall into residential studios and one and two bedroom apartments.

Site Description and Context

The property is not listed, however is sited adjacent to several properties that are categorized as Grade II listed with Heritage England.

The property is located in the town of Melton Mowbray which currently has a conservation area which incorporates the majority of the town centre (*map shown below*). The location of the property is on Park Lane, which connects the secondary shopping frontage of Leicester Street to New Park to the south. The narrow lane is lined on both sides by red brick buildings and features a distinctive, varied roofscape. The lane features several listed buildings; including a mid-century workshop, and 4 terraced houses dating back to the late 18th or early 19th century. The workshop is set back from the street front and encloses a small courtyard on three sides. It is thought to have been originally built for stocking-frame knitters. The entrance to New Park and Wilton Park resides at the end of the lane, marked by a decorative set of gates built to commemorate the Millennium.

Penman Spicer was built in 1911 and retains its original appearance. The main body of the property is constructed from red brick with slate roof tiles. The windows in the property are a combination of timber casements and single hung windows. The hall to the rear of the property features two high level distinctive arch head casement windows, as well as four large dormer windows.

The front elevation of the property fronting Park Lane features a distinctive parapet profile with an inset stone crest and stone parapet cap.

Conservation Area Map



Figure 1. Melton Conservation Area

Melton Mowbray is a town in Leicestershire England, at the heart of the Melton Borough, around 17 miles from both Leicester, Nottingham, Loughborough and Grantham. The busy market town is situated on the River Eyre and is well known for its culinary produce. Historically a centre for manufacturing and wool production, the town is now home to several leading research and educational institutions.

The conservation area is widely drawn; the historic core of the town being designated as a conservation area in 1975, with the boundary extended to include Sherrard Street and Egerton Park in 1986. The area contains 97 listed buildings, as well as many other historical buildings of architectural quality that are of local interest.

The town centre predominantly consists of Georgian or early Victorian architecture, lending Melton Mowbray a distinctive character. The central area of the town centre has evolved from medieval times, and the layout of the streets combined with the predominantly two-three storey buildings set on narrow plots gives the town centre a strong sense of enclosure. The continuous frontages punctuated by 'Georgian' style windows, and the simple gabled roofscape, creates a notably vertical aesthetic to the street scene. The primary materials in the area are brick and slate roof tiles, with a variety of fenestration details.

The various shop fronts has been added to since the nineteenth century in a mostly sympathetic manner, with some notable exceptions that are inappropriate to the historic buildings, albeit suitable for 21st century use. Many quaint side streets (such as Park Lane) provide routes out of

the primary shopping area of the town, many being narrow with limited vehicle access. These streets are still predominantly populated with commercial premises, however in recent years conversion of some units to residential properties has become more commonplace.

The urban plan of the town centre means that the area is very inward facing, with limited views out into the wider town down narrow side streets. This is the case in South Parade, a former corn market dating back to medieval times; today still the market square of the town. Twice a week the square hosts an extensive market stretching into the surrounding streets, which is popular with both local residents and visitors alike. The square is urban in character, only featuring one tree that marks the entrance to Leicester Street.

Buildings of note in Melton Mowbray town centre include the Swan Inn (rebuilt following fire damage in the 1980s), the eighteenth century Grapes Inn, and the gothic style tower building at 3 Cheapside, which features stained glass windows and a unique parapet roof that makes it unusual in the area. The town centre and Park Lane are bordered on the south and west by large areas of parkland, gardens and sports fields, the vast majority of which are included in the Melton conservation area. Divided by the River Eyre, the various areas of parkland are well maintained and include attractive water features and bridges. A large amount of mature trees cover the area, providing privacy but also allowing for framed views of the Grade I listed St Mary's Church from certain points in Play Close.

Assessment of Significance

The relative importance of this property lies in its setting on Park Lane and its distinctive frontage. This is particularly of note in relation to the adjacent Grade II listed buildings: 12 and 14 Church Street, the Workshop to the rear of 18 Church Street, and 1, 2, 3 and 4 Church Terrace along with a historic wall adjoining number 4. The NPPF recognises that the significance of a listed building can derive from its archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic interest. In this case the listings are primarily concerned with both the external expression and historic value of the properties. Given that the proposals for Penman Spicer Community Hall do not include for any changes to the front elevation of the property, and will in fact entail a certain degree of restoration work to this façade, this should have no affect on the setting of the surrounding listed buildings. Arguably, the proposals will enhance the street scene as well as providing much needed small scale residential units in a sustainable location.

Summary of Local Heritage Assets

The closest entry to Penman Spicer Community Hall is the workshop to the rear of number 18 Church Street. It is Grade II Listed.

Number 18 Church Street

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1235873

Date first listed: 09-Jan-1989

DESCRIPTION: Workshop. Mid C19. Red brick with mostly Welsh slate but partly pantile roof; half-hipped to left. U plan. 2 storeys of almost continuous mainly 9-light windows, the lights being grouped into threes with wider wooden mullions. Within the tall lights the panes are overlapped. Further similar windows on ground floor and to rear, which last faces the garden of No 18 Church Street (qv). Doorways off the small enclosed yard. An unusual survival of a small mid C19 workshop, probably built for stocking-frame knitters. Included for group value only.



Figure 2: Workshop to Rear of Number 18 Church Street

12 and 14 Church Street

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1235398

Date first listed: 12-Oct-1976

DESCRIPTION: Late C18/early C19. Red brick facade with stuccoed plinth and good moulded eaves cornice. Slates. 2 storeys. 3 windows, 1st floor modern casements, ground floor barred casements. Centre round arched door with simple ornamented radial fanlight, 6 panels. Early C19 style doorcase with moulded architrave. Steps. The adjoining No 14 to south is of early C19. Painted brick facade. 2 storeys. 1 early C19 bay shop window with glazing bars cornice and pilasters.

No 6, 8, Nos 12 to 18 (even) with the western workshop and garden wall at No 18 form a group with the rear wing of The Grapes Inn, Market Place and The Parish Church of St Mary. (Nos 6 and 8 are of local interest with the western workshop and garden wall at No 18).



Figure 3. 12 and 14 Church Street

Holmeleigh - No. 1 Church Terrace

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1265097

Date first listed: 12-Oct-1976

DESCRIPTION: Late C18/early C19 and later C19, older door part to south. Red brick with pantiled roof. 2 storeys. 2 windows and centre door. Southern ground floor window canted bay, sashes with glazing bars, rest generally unbarred sashes. Door, 6 panelled with rectangular fanlight, doorcase has pilasters and flat bracketed hood. North side has later gabled 2 storey 1 windowed section, sashes with late C19 glazing.

Nos 1 to 7 (consec) form a group with the small building in the north west angle, the Gregory and Hughs Tomb, the lamps in the churchyard, the building to the east of No 13 Church Street, No 18 Church Street the western workshop and garden wall at No 18 and the Parish Church (the small building in the north west angle and No 2 and the western workshop and garden wall at No 18 are items of local interest).



Figure 4. No. 1, 2, 3 and 4 Church Terrace and Listed Wall adjoining No. 4 (right – left in image)

No. 2 Church Terrace

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1235883

Date first listed: 10-Oct-1990

DESCRIPTION: 5305 MELTON MOWBRAY CHURCH TERRACE (West Side) SK 7519 SW 1/110 No 2 II GV House. Mid to late C19, Red brick. Concrete tile roof with gabled ends and brick

Dentil eaves cornice. Brick stacks at gable ends. Terraced house with entrance on left of front room. 2 storeys. 1 bay front. C19 4-pane sashes with painted stone lintels and cills. Doorcase on left with console brackets, cornice, rectangular overlight and C19 4-panel door., Rear not inspected. Interior not inspected. Included for group value.

No. 3 Church Terrace

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1235400

Date first listed: 12-Oct-1976

DESCRIPTION: Earlier C19, but top storey and roof altered later to give added height. Red brick, slate roof with northern end chimney. 2½ storeys with 1 gabled dormer. 1 window, sashes with cambered arches, boxed frames and late C19 glazing. Southern door has cornice on consoles and pilasters. Rectangular fanlight.

Nos 1 to 7 (consec) form a group with the small building in the north west angle, the Gregory and Hughs Tomb, the lamps in the churchyard, the building to the east of No 13 Church Street, No 18 Church Street the western workshop and garden wall at No 18 and the Parish Church (the small building in the north west angle and No 2 and the western workshop and garden wall at No 18 are items of local interest).

No. 4 Church Terrace and Garden Wall to South Forming Boundary with Church Terrace

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1235401

Date first listed: 12-Oct-1976

DESCRIPTION: Early C19. Painted stucco facade, slate roof, with southern end chimney. 2 storeys. 2 windows. Ground floor canted bay, all windows sashes with Gothic arched glazing bars. 5 panelled door, rectangular fanlight with Gothic tracery. Doorcase has pilasters and flat bracketed hood. C19 red brick coped garden wall, circa 6 ft high, links Nos 4 and 5 along Church Terrace.

Nos 1 to 7 (consec) form a group with the small building in the north west angle, the Gregory and Hughs Tomb, the lamps in the church yard, the building to the east of No 13 Church Street, No 18 Church Street the western workshop and garden wall at No 18 and the Parish Church (the small building in the north west angle and No 2 and the western workshop and garden wall at No 18 are items of local interest).

Historic Parks and Gardens & Scheduled Monuments

Park Lane is bordered to the south and west by New Park and Wilton Park, connecting through to the Town Estate Memorial Gardens, all of which fall within the Melton Borough conservation area. There are no scheduled monuments within 100m of the site.

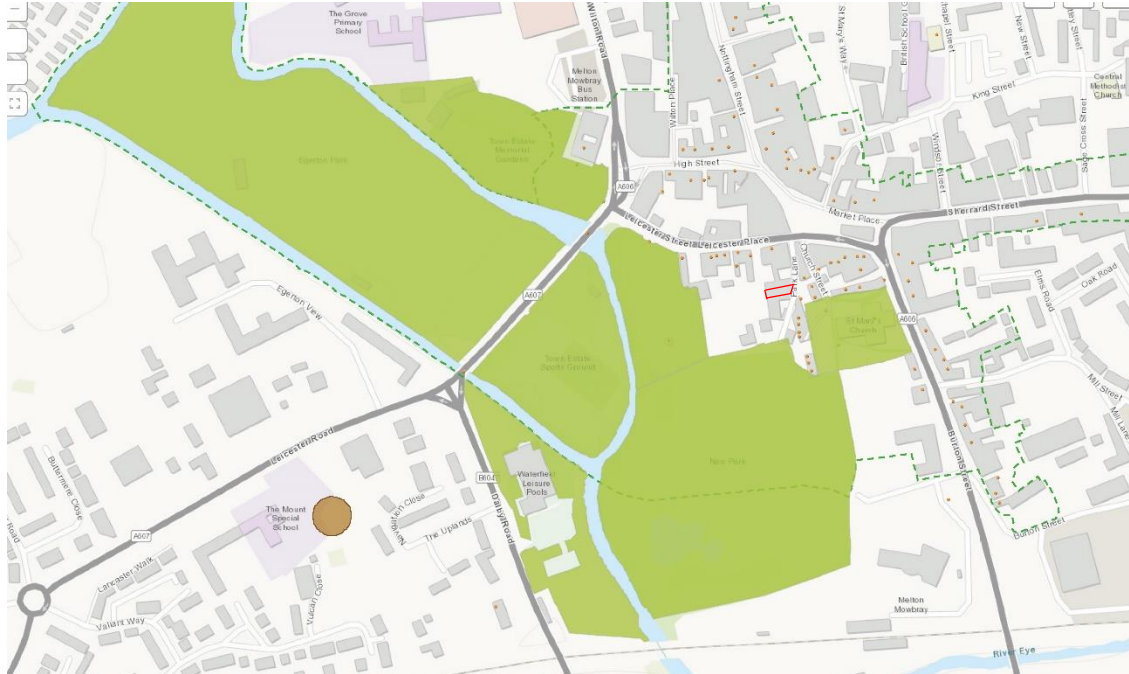


Figure 5. Map demonstrating proximity of historic parks, gardens and scheduled monuments to Penman Spicer

Red Line: denotes indicative site boundary

Green hatch: denotes local green space

Brown dot denotes scheduled monument

Planning Policy Context

The most relevant planning policies relating to the historic environment are considered to be:

National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF is also a material consideration and it identifies the conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance as one of the core land-use planning principles that should underpin decision-taking [paras. 17 & 126], along with the promotion of high quality design, which is also seen as a key aspect of sustainable development [paras. 17 & 56].

The NPPF recognises that the significance of a designated heritage asset can be harmed or lost through the alteration or destruction of the asset [para. 132]. It therefore advises that substantial harm to a Grade II listed building should be exceptional [para. 132], although where it is considered that a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal [para. 134]. The accompanying National Planning Policy Guidance makes clear that the test for 'substantial harm' is a high

one that is not expected to occur in many cases. The NPPF also states that applicants should describe the significance of any heritage asset, including the contribution to their setting in order to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.[para 189]

Melton Local Plan

The new local plan states that all proposals which affect a Listed Building and/or its setting will need to submit a heritage statement.

Impact of the Proposed Development

Raising of Roof Ridge Height in Existing Hall

The existing building is not listed, and so alterations to the roof level of the property will be deemed acceptable if the changes pose a limited impact on the setting of the adjacent listed buildings, and on the character of Park Lane. Due to the plan of the property and the subsequent offset of the hall from Park Lane, the proposed increase in roof height should be barely visible, if not completely invisible from Park Lane. Park Lane is the only street that could potentially be affected by changes to Penman Spicer. The surrounding buildings also feature examples of three storey properties, meaning that there is precedent for the proposed massing.

To the rear of the existing building, a large car park separates Penman Spicer from other buildings in the vicinity, affording the property a good degree of privacy (*see below image*). Therefore the proposals, which include the addition of windows to the rear of the property, should cause little issue with overlooking for the adjacent properties.



Figure 6: Relationship of Existing Penman Spicer Hall to Surrounding Properties

Park Lane Street Scene

The proposals prioritise the preservation of the existing street scene, and thus the front elevation of Penman Spicer is to be retained as existing. The proposed works will inevitably entail some level of restoration work on the front façade, therefore enhancing the lane's aesthetic.



Figure 7: Penman Spicer Front Façade

Access To Proposed Residential Units

Park Lane benefits from relatively low levels of footfall and vehicular traffic, adding to its character as a historic, town centre street. Given the buildings previous use as a Community Hall, hosting exercise classes and children's parties, the conversion of the property to 6 small scale residential units, with no proposed parking or changes to highways, should have little impact on noise or traffic levels.

Works affecting local Heritage Assets

As all the local heritage assets outlined in this document are sited along Park Lane, with more along Leicester Street to the north of the site, the intention to retain the front façade of the building as existing significantly limits the impact of the proposals on the setting of these listed buildings.

Conclusion / Assessment

The proposals seek to utilize an existing building in a sustainable manner, preserving it and ensuring its use for future generations. The character of the existing building along with the setting of the surrounding buildings have been respected within the design, whilst also ensuring high quality residential units are achieved. The units meet a key need for the area, providing studio, one and two bedroom apartments in a desirable location for first time buyers or those looking to down-size. The proposed apartments also benefit from the unique features of the property (existing windows etc.) celebrating the buildings character and history.

In conclusion the change of use seeks to provide much needed small-scale housing for the local area and preserve the existing building for future use, thereby enhancing Park Lane and the settings of the surrounding Listed Buildings