



Heritage Impact Assessment

Project Description: Single storey rear extension and internal first floor alterations.

Location: 73 Nightingale Street, Abercanaid, CF48 1EJ

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 The prepared Heritage Impact Assessment is a statutory requirement for Listed Building Consent. An application has been submitted for a single storey rear extension and first floor internal alterations. The HIA is proportionate to the scale of the works proposed

2.0 Site Description

2.1 73 Nightingale Street is within the small village of Abercanaid, a linear settlement which runs north to south, straddled between the River Taff to the east and the A470 highway to the west.

2.2 Abercanaid is formed of early industrial terrace housing for the workers of the Plymouth Iron Company. Nightingale Street is modest terrace housing, the proportions are generous with double fronted frontages. The internal space was one room to the ground and first floor. The houses are stone fronted with painted and rendered finishes to the rear. The rear elevations of the terraces have been much altered with single and double storey extensions in place.

2.3 The houses have been heavily altered with later 20th century changes and additions. Finishing materials have been changed, modern PVC units are in place. Cadw noted modern changes to the terrace in the list description.

3.0 Legislation and Policy

3.1 The primary legislation the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023 (HEWA) have been utilised alongside national policy, Planning Policy Wales (PPW). Secondary guidance has been assessed alongside the primary legislation and policy. Cadw's managing series provides best practice guidance for the historic environment. Relevant to the proposal is Managing Change to Listed Buildings in Wales (2017), Setting of Historic Assets in Wales (2017) and Managing Change to Registered Historic Parks and Gardens in Wales (2017) with signposted references within the guidance to Cadw's Conservation Principles and TAN 24: The Historic Environment.

3.2 In November 2024, the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023 came into force, it consolidates planning legislation involving the historic environment into one uniform Act. The consolidated Act does not specifically affect the way in which historic assets (such as listed buildings) are assessed throughout Wales.

3.3 HEWA is the primary legislative instrument addressing the treatment of listed buildings through the planning process in Wales.

3.4 Schedule 13 Paragraph 90 sets out the statutory duty of the decision-maker, where the proposed development would affect a listed building or its setting:

“314A Wales: duties relating to listed buildings and features of architectural or historic interest

(1)In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the Welsh Ministers or a local planning authority in Wales must have special regard to the desirability of preserving—

(a)the listed building,

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(b)the setting of the building, or

(c)any features of special architectural or historic interest the building possesses.

(Legislation.gov.uk, 2023)

3.5 However, it must be recognised that Schedule 13 para 90 does not identify that the local authority or the Secretary of State (Welsh Ministers) must preserve a listed building or its setting; and neither does it indicate that development that does not preserve them is unacceptable and should therefore be refused. It is for the decision-maker to decide that the proposed change is acceptable.

3.6 Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12) Chapter Six Distinctive and Natural Places contains relevant policies to the historic environment:

3.7 Paragraph 6.1.6 the Welsh Government's specific objectives for the historic environment are outlined. Of these, the following is of relevance to the current assessment. This seeks to 'safeguard the character of historic buildings and manage change so that their special architectural and historic interest is preserved'.

3.8 At Paragraph 6.1.7, it is observed that:

'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.'

3.9 At paragraph 6.1.18 it states:

'Planning authorities should value, protect, conserve and enhance the special interest of parks and gardens and their settings included on the register of historic parks and gardens in Wales. The register should be taken into account in planning authority decision making. Green Infrastructure Assessments should be used to explore the role of historic parks and gardens and the findings of other landscape character assessments should be fed into historical and cultural assessments to ensure consistency of information.'

3.10 Paragraph 6.1.19 goes on to say:

'The effect of a proposed development on a registered park or garden, or its setting, is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.'

3.11 As such, with regard to decision making, it is stated that: 'Any decisions made through the planning system must fully consider the impact on the historic environment and on the significance and heritage values of individual historic assets and their contribution to the character of place'.

3.12 In regard to listed buildings, PPW states, at Paragraph 6.1.10, that: '...there should be a general presumption in favour of the preservation of a listed building and its setting, which might extend beyond its curtilage' and adds that 'For any development proposal affecting a listed building or its setting, the primary material consideration is the statutory requirement to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses'.

3.13 Secondary guidance provides the following advice on the setting of historic assets.

3.14 Relevant to the proposed development TAN 24 provides guidance to the LPA on applications which may affect a designated heritage asset excluding listed buildings and conservation areas. Paragraph 1.24 states:

‘Local planning authorities are required to consult the Welsh Ministers, through Cadw, on certain development proposals which affect scheduled monuments, registered historic parks, gardens and landscapes and the Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage Sites and their settings. It is for the local planning authority to consider the effects of proposed developments within the settings of listed buildings, conservation areas, unscheduled monuments of national importance and other undesignated historic assets.’

3.15 TAN 24 reiterates guidance from the Managing Series document Managing Setting of Historic Assets in Wales (2017) in doing so the paragraphs stated are policy not just best practice. In relation to setting the advisory note states:

1.25 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. 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.

3.16 As such, TAN 24 clearly recognises that setting provides part of the significance of a heritage asset or sense of place to an area. It correctly states that setting is difficult to define and includes many facets:

1.27 Other factors which may affect the setting of a historic asset include; inter-visibility with other historic or natural features, tranquillity, noise or other potentially polluting development though it may have little visual impact.

3.17 The document does make it clear that the LPA are the deciding authority on the suitability of a proposal and potential impact on the setting of a heritage asset.

1.29 The local planning authority will need to make its own assessment of the impact within the setting of a historic asset, having considered the responses received from consultees as part of this process. A judgement has to be made by the consenting authority, on a case-by-case basis, over whether a proposed development may be damaging to the setting of the historic asset, or may enhance or have a neutral impact on the setting by the removal of existing inappropriate development or land use.

3.18 The document highlights that settings do change in lieu of changing times.

1.8 Changes in the historic environment are inevitable. This can be the result of decay caused by natural processes, damage caused by wear and tear of use, and the need to respond to social, cultural, economic and technological changes.

3.19 In Managing Change to Listed Buildings in Wales, the importance of setting is mentioned. The guidance states in Section 1:

‘All aspects of your listed building may be part of its story and contribute to its significance, including its setting, its form and layout, and its materials, construction and detail.’

3.20 The guidance further states in sections 2.0 and 2.1:

‘Changes that are likely to affect the fabric of the building or its setting may affect its significance and character as a building of special architectural or historic interest.

The setting is often an essential part of a building’s character: the relationship between your listed building and other land or buildings may have aesthetic value, or may directly reflect the history of its use.’

3.21 Managing Setting of Historic Assets in Wales provides guidance on assessing and managing the setting of heritage assets. Page one of the guidance provides two key facts:

‘Fact 1 Setting is important to the way in which historic assets are understood, appreciated and experienced, and contributes to their significance.’

‘Fact 6 Development proposals should aim to avoid any harmful impact on a historic asset and its setting.’

3.22 The guidance further states in Section 1 and quotes Cadw’s own Principles of Conservation definition of setting:

‘The setting of a historic asset includes the surroundings in which it is understood, experienced and appreciated, embracing present and past relationships to the surrounding landscape.’

3.23 The managing guidance expands on the former and provides clarification on the interpretation of setting: ‘Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive, negative or neutral contribution to the significance of an asset.’

‘Setting is not itself a historic asset, though land within a setting may contain other historic assets. The importance of setting lies in what it contributes to the significance of a historic asset.’ ‘The setting of a historic asset can include physical elements of its surroundings. These may be boundary walls, adjacent fields or functional and physical relationships with other historic assets or natural features.’ ‘The setting of a historic asset is not fixed and may change through time as the asset and its surroundings evolve’. ‘These changes may have a negative impact on the significance of an asset; for example, the loss of the surrounding physical elements that allow an asset to be understood or the introduction of an adjacent new development that has a major visual impact. But changes can also have a positive impact that may enhance the setting, such as the removal of traffic from part of a historic town or the opening up of views, or the return of a sense of enclosure to sites where it has been lost’.

3.24 Section 2.3.1: ‘Setting can be explained as the surroundings in which your registered historic park or garden is understood, experienced and appreciated. It includes the relationship between spaces and structures, between the designed landscape and the surrounding landscapes, and between aesthetic and utilitarian uses.

‘Setting is often thought of as the aesthetic or visual quality of a place but it also includes tranquillity and other sensory factors, such as sound and smell. Historical, artistic, literary, linguistic, or scenic associations may be important factors too.’

3.25 Importantly highlighted in the above policy is that the LPA are the deciding authority.

4.0 Proposed Works

4.1 The statement should be read in conjunction with the following drawings:

- GA 001 Existing and Proposed Plans

The proposed works to 73 Nightingale Street is for the construction of a single storey lean to rear extension which shall house a new kitchen and adjacent bathroom. At first floor level the previous bathroom shall be decommissioned and the existing modern stud wall partitions removed, and a central vertical stud wall installed to divide the space and maintain two bedrooms.

5.0 Heritage Impact

5.1 Nightingale Street is a row of stone-built houses with slate tile roofs and stone chimneys. Front elevations are double fronted with the central door sets with stone arch voussoirs. Windows are adjacent either side of the door and above at first floor level. The rear elevation has a cement render finish, with singular uPVC window at ground and first floor, the rear back door has a uPVC unit in place. Internally modern finishes are in place, cement slab to the floor. Timber staircase insitu with internal wall finishes have a cement finish with gypsum skim.

5.2 It is acknowledged at the time of listing that modern alterations had been carried out to the listed terraces. 73 Nightingale Street has many modern finishes, internally no historic details have been retained except for window reveals.

5.3 The ground floor single cell plan form has been retained, the location of the existing stair opening has been maintained, a later timber staircase has replaced the historic. Two rear openings have been retained, the rear door central to the front door and the right-hand side window which aligns with the front elevation ground floor window. At first floor level, the single cell space has been subdivided to provide two bedrooms and upstairs bathroom. All stud walls to this area are modern. The building is currently in a poor state and is unoccupied.

5.4 73 Nightingale Street forms part of a long terrace of listed buildings towards the north west. The north east terrace is also statutory protected. This section of Nightingale Street towards the north, holds a high group value of early workers housing still insitu. The scale of the development from the period is still legible as early housing for industrial workers, it is a rare surviving example in the area. The group value contributes to overall heritage significance of 73 Nightingale Street.



Fig.1 Cadw Listed Buildings Nightingale Street.

5.5 The proposed works will not impact the front elevation of the terrace. The single storey rear extension is proposed to house the kitchen and bathroom. The scale and proportion of the extension is modest and remains subservient to the main envelope of the building. Elevational surface finishes proposed will unify the rear elevation with the new extension. The addition of a rear extension will result in the ground floor rear window being blocked in. Whilst the remaining feature is blocked the single cell ground floor plan will remain legible. A standalone structure for cooking and sanitation will ensure future modernisation is localised to the rear extension and not to the historic floorplan of the house. The first-floor plan form shall be altered, the modern partition walls removed, the upstairs space divided solely into two bedroom spaces. The alteration proposed is not considered to have any impact on historic fabric as the existing partition walls are modern.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 The proposed works for a rear single storey extension shall incur a visual change to the rear elevation of the building. The scale proposed is modest and is not considered overbearing or will detract from the understanding of the historic envelope. The setting of the listed building is impacted already by double storey rear extensions in place within the terrace row. The proposed design is subservient to the main envelope and material finishes proposed shall unify and enhance the current appearance of the rear elevation. The internal changes proposed to the first floor is considered a minimal alteration which does not impact historic fabric. Overall, the proposed works shall not have a detrimental impact on the significance of the heritage asset.

Appendix A - Photos







Appendix B – List Entry

Full Report for Listed Buildings						 Cadw 
The list description is not intended to be a complete inventory of what is listed: it is principally intended to aid identification. By law, the definition of a listed building includes the entire building (i) and any structure or object that is fixed to the said building and ancillary to it and (ii) any other structure or object that forms part of the land and has done so since before 1 July 1948, and was within the curtilage of the building, and ancillary to it, on the date on which said building was first included in the list, or on 1 January 1969, whichever was later.						
Summary Description						
Reference Number	Building Number	Grade	Status	Date of Designation	Date of Amendment	
81741	73	II	Designated	22/08/1975		
Name of Property		Address				
73 Nightingale Street		73 Nightingale Street				
Location						
Unitary Authority	Community	Town	Locality	Easting	Northing	
Merthyr Tydfil	Troed-y-Rhiw		Abercanaid	305673	203776	
Street Side		Location				
SW		Situated on the NW side of Abercanaid between the Afon Taf and the former Glamorganshire canal				

Description	
Broad Class Domestic	Period
History	
House in terrace, part of the important early group of industrial housing at Abercarnid that originally included 7 terraces in 4 rows facing E between the river and canal, one in River Row, 2 facing and 2 backing onto Nightingale Street and 2 in Canal Row, and then to the N, 3 longer rows at right angles to river and canal, known as The Squares, a terrace of larger houses backing onto the canal and 2 detached houses for higher grades of employees. The 7 terraces survive, 5 listed though much altered even since listing in 1975, the rear 2 in Canal Row unlisted, but the terraces to the N have all gone with one of the detached houses, the other Llwynreos survives. The houses were built between 1852 and 1861 possibly by the Plymouth Iron Company to house workers employed at the Abercarnid Pit and Pentrebach Forge.	
Exterior	
Though small, the houses are relatively generous for the era, similar to those at the nearby Triangle, Pentrebach (all demolished), being double-fronted, rather than the single-window and door earlier type (seen at the terrace from Rhydyar, nearby, now at St Fagans Museum) but were narrow, with roof-spans of 4-5m, and without rear outshuts, as they had roads or access paths both back and front. As built they had a plan form arranged around a centre passageway and rear staircase and were of rubble stone with small-paned sashes, slate roofs and stone chimneys, with stone voussiors to openings on both floors. The facades are slightly offset to allow for larger kitchen chimneys, the offset side alternated to give mirrored pairs. The gardens in front or behind were accessed across a footpath running down the terrace line. The houses backing onto gardens (Nos 70-81 Nightingale Street) have generally been extended to the rear, the others retain the original depth. The similar houses further S in Nightingale Street appear to be of later date, and are also much altered though contributing to the character of the Abercarnid settlement. House in terraced row originally of square rubble stone with close-eaved slate roof and stone end stacks, 2-storeys, double fronted with small-paned sash windows, 2 each floor and centre door probably with overlight. Stone voussiors to openings and stone sills. Rear walls also of rubble stone originally had one small door and pantry window below to one side and one small upper window. No 73 has C21 uPVC windows and door, and rendered rear wall with one upper window. In 1975 there were 12-pane sashes and 4-panel door, present uPVC replacements being inserted 2003.	
Interior	
Not inspected.	
Reason for designation	
Included as one of the best surviving groups of early industrial workers' housing in the region.	
Group Description	
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