

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Planning Application Ref: **HPK/2018/0031**

Proposal: **Refurbishment works to main building comprising of new entrance porch to front; new walkway link to rear, new plant room to southwest side and revised parking arrangement at Reuben's Retreat, Former Woods Continuation Hospital, Park Crescent, Glossop**

1. Background & Description of Heritage Asset

- 1.1 Following the submission of a planning application for the above proposal, the applicant has been asked to provide a Heritage Impact Assessment to consider the impact of the proposal on the adjacent Grade II Listed Howard Park and on the Howard Park Conservation Area.
- 1.2 Although also contained within its own smaller curtilage, the former hospital and its associated lodge building is situated within the wider boundary of the Grade II Listed Howard Park and within the Howard Park Conservation Area.
- 1.3 Howard Park, including its integral Baths and Hospital, was opened in 1888. The Park itself is laid out with inter-linked serpentine paths screened by landform and planting to present a variety of views and punctuated with a number of formal and informal features. Comparison with the 1898 OS map suggests that the original pattern of paths remains largely intact. A stream runs through the centre of the park, tamed to form a series of cascades with rockworks, pools and runs of varying character. In parts, the stream is culverted over, with the banks levelled down so as to unite the two sides of the site.
- 1.4 The principal buildings within the park are Wood's Baths and the now former Wood's hospital.
- 1.5 Wood's Baths are a dominant feature at the main entrance to the park. The entrance to this building is in natural stone with a greenish slate roof. The main building itself is in an Italianate style with arched clerestory windows and with an imposing 30m high tower designed to remove smoke from the boiler and vapour from the Baths.
- 1.6 The former Wood's hospital building is a low 'E' shaped building on high ground at the north-west corner of the park and provides both a closing and focal point as it comes into view from paths leading up towards it through the park. The stone gables facing into the park, with their decorative tile detailing and greenish slate roofs, have been somewhat infilled and extended with flat-roofed extensions to each end.

- 1.7 Historically, with the inclusion of these principal buildings, the park was intended to serve the dual purpose of public amenity and convalescent ground.

2. Policy Background

- 2.1 When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, national planning policy as set out in paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), states that;

“...great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and grade II* listed buildings, grade I and grade II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.”

- 2.2 At paragraph 134, the NPPF also states;

“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.”

- 2.3 At paragraph 137, the NPPF also states;

“...Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.”

- 2.4 The definition of ‘significance’ is set out in the glossary to the NPPF and is defined as;

“The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.”

- 2.5 The glossary to the NPPF also provides a definition in relation to the ‘setting of a heritage asset’. This is defined as;

“The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. 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.”

- 2.6 For registered parks and gardens that are Grade II Listed, English Heritage advise that this indicates the site is of special interest and warrants every effort to preserve it.

3. Assessment of Potential Impact on Heritage Asset

- 3.1 The planning application that has been submitted is predominantly for modest refurbishment works to the main, former hospital building, comprising of a new entrance porch to the front of the building; a new glazed walkway link to the rear, a new plant room to the southwest side and a revised parking arrangement. These modest works continue to support the primary purpose of Reuben's Retreat to provide respite care and bereavement support for children, and their families, affected by life limiting/ threatening illnesses.
- 3.2 The proposal does not extend into the main park area nor does it involve the Bath's building. The proposal is confined only to the former hospital building and car park and is confined within the defined curtilage of the hospital area.
- 3.3 In general use terms, the proposed works will be no more intensive than the previous hospital use and for the main part will be in association with a less intensive use of the premises. Keeping with the historic dual purpose of Howard Park as a whole, the proposed use of the hospital site serves as a convalescent ground for children and the families of children affected by life limiting/ threatening illness.
- 3.4 The proposed works represent only very modest changes that will not have any implication for the overall significance of Howard Park as a heritage asset, nor for its wider setting.
- 3.5 Given the scale of the proposal and the modest physical changes that are proposed, it is considered that there will be no harm or loss to the heritage asset arising from the application proposal.
- 3.6 It could be argued that in its previously vacant and deteriorating state the hospital building was resulting in harm to both the significance and the setting of the heritage asset, which would only have continued over time. The new use of the site has brought the hospital building and its associated lodge back into a use that is both compatible with the previous use and which inherently conserves one of the fundamental objectives that Howard Park sought to achieve when it was opened in 1888. It is considered that, other than for a continuing hospital use, Reuben's Retreat is as close to the historic operating nature of the site, as any other use could be. It preserves the dual purpose ability of Howard Park to provide a public amenity and convalescent ground.
- 3.7 Insofar as the Howard Park Conservation Area is concerned, it also follows that the modest physical works proposed, will preserve both the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 3.8 Overall, the application proposals will preserve those elements of the setting of this heritage asset that make a positive contribution and will assist in revealing the

significance of the asset. Given this, as is stated in national planning policy, the proposal should be treated favourably.