

JMS PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT

IN SUPPORT OF A
PLANNING APPLICATION

AT

8, 10 & 12
VAYNOR STREET
ABERYSTWYTH
CEREDIGION
SY23 2EN



Proposal: Residential Redevelopment
Client: Brian Wilkins
Date: January 2025

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APPENDIX 1 – Listed Buildings Cadw Reports



SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared to fully understand the impact of the current proposals on the historic assets in the area. The assessment process follows the approach set out by Cadw in Conservation Principles and within best-practice guidance documents, including Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales (2017) and Managing Conservation Areas in Wales (2017). These documents contain the general principles to consider when planning changes to historic assets.

Designations

- 1.2 The units (8, 10, 12) are not locally or statutory listed, however, the site falls within the Aberystwyth Conservation Area. In addition, a number of listed buildings have been identified within the vicinity of the site.
- 1.3 The Aberystwyth Conservation Area boundary map is detailed below in Figure 1 below. A map plotting the location of listed buildings in the immediate area of the site (red boundary) is detailed below in Figure 2.
- 1.4 The conservation area was designated in 1969 and extended in 1980, 1981 and 1984. It covers the core of the town along the shoreline and north of the railway line.
- 1.5 Local Planning Authorities are required to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of designated conservation areas under The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 1.6 Therefore, management and strict control of development within conservation areas is at the forefront of planning policy and will ensure that the character and appearance are safeguarded and enhanced.

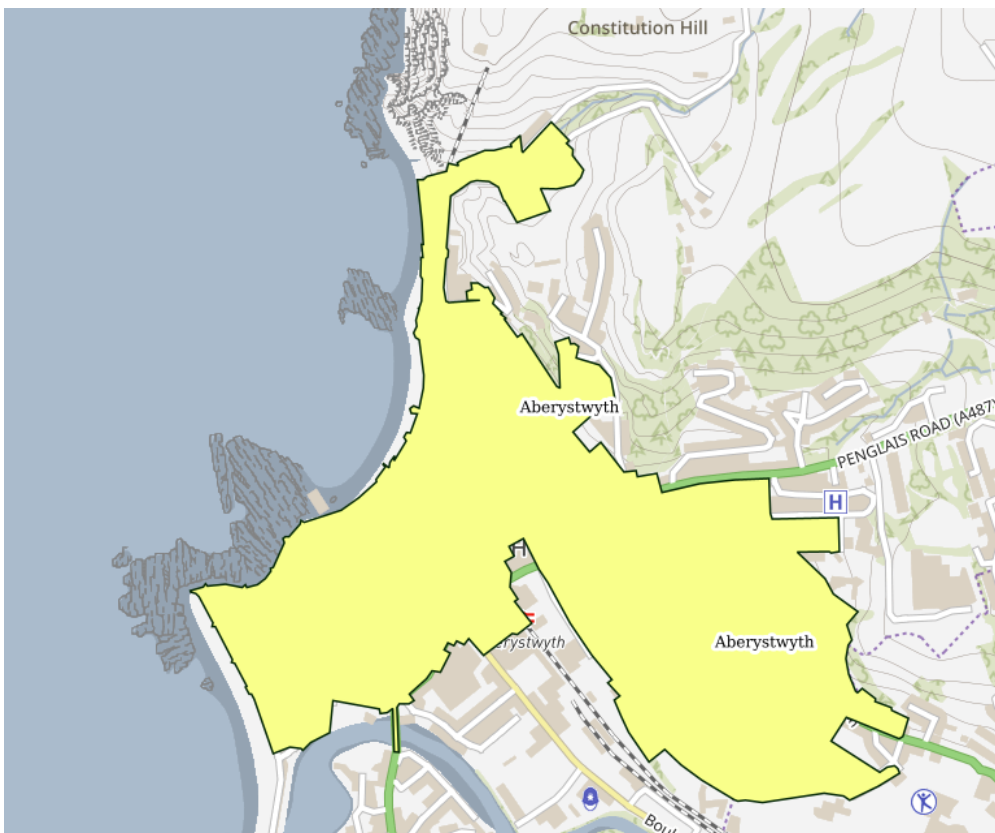


Figure 1 - Aberystwyth Conservation Area Map © DatamapWales

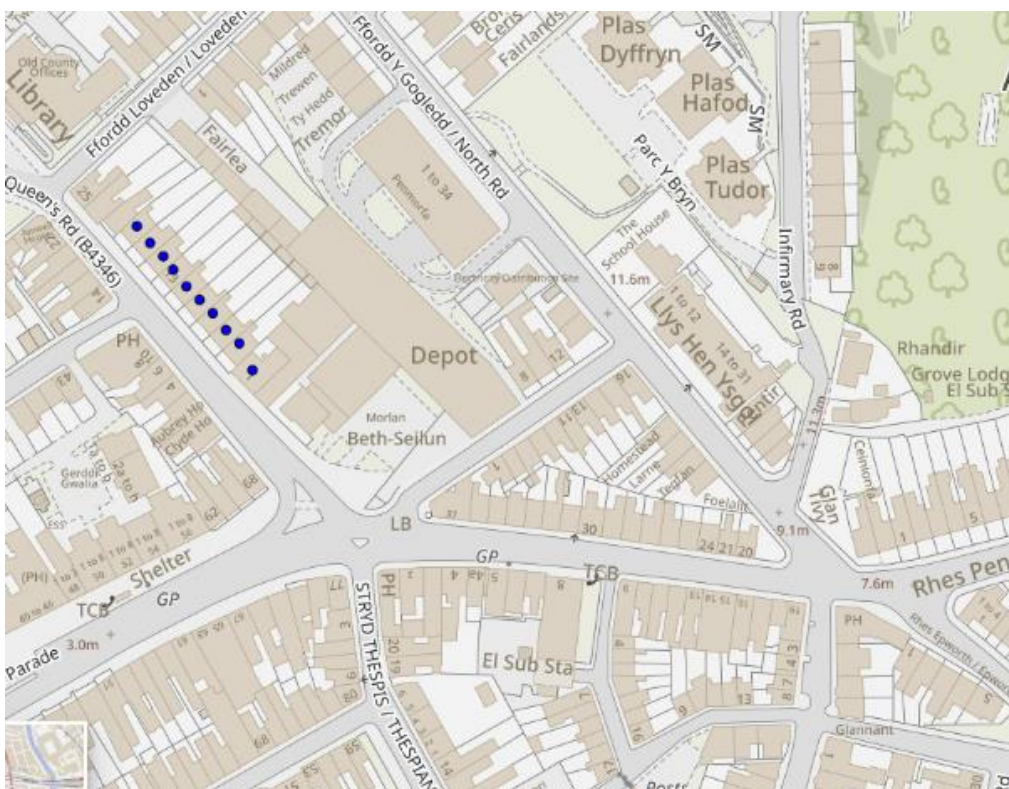


Figure 2 - Listed Buildings Map Cadw © DatamapWales

SECTION 2 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- 2.1 The occupation of the area which is now known as Aberystwyth dates to prehistoric settlements. Iron Age settlers used the hilltop Pen Dinas to build a large fortification which still dominates the skyline when approaching Aberystwyth from the south. The first Norman castle was built in the early 12th century and was later replaced by a castle in a different location. To date, evidence of the medieval castle and town walls dating from 1277 can still be seen.
- 2.2 Aberystwyth became a popular sea-side resort in the 19th and 20th century aided by the railway age. It is during the mid-late eighteenth century that the town which was well-placed to share in the economic prosperity derived from regional industry and a large influx of gentry and visitors to the fashionable seaside resort that the growth of the town and its prosperity grew.
- 2.3 Below are a series of maps which demonstrate the growth of the town throughout the early 19th century to the early 21st century.



Figure 3 - Map of Aberystwyth 1820 by Robert Dawson



Figure 4 - Map of Aberystwyth 1834 @aberystwythguide.org.uk



Figure 5 - Map of Aberystwyth 1887 @maps.nls.uk



Figure 6 - Map of Aberystwyth 1887 @The National Library of Wales (www.viewer.library.wales)

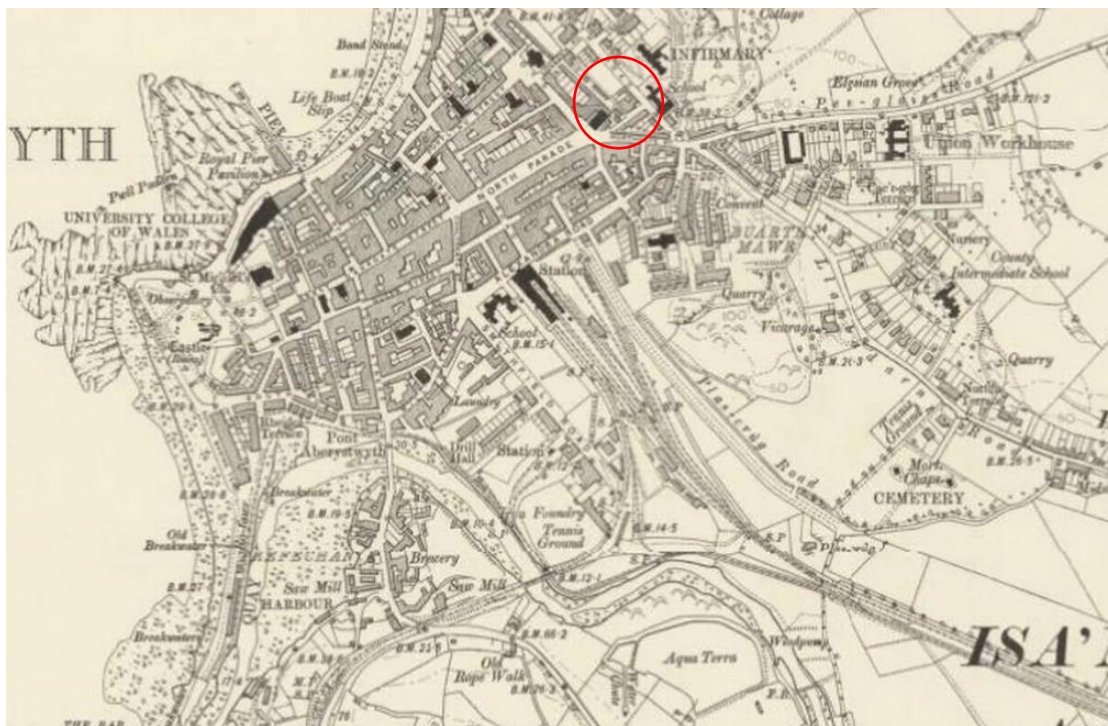


Figure 7 - Map of Aberystwyth 1906 @maps.nls.uk



Figure 8 - Map of Aberystwyth 1953 @maps.nls.uk



Figure 9 - Map of Aberystwyth 1970 @maps.nls.



Architectural Character

- 2.4 The Aberystwyth Conservation Area was first designated on 6 March 1981 and encompasses a large portion of Aberystwyth.
- 2.5 As previously stated, some of the oldest architectural remains in Aberystwyth are part of the medieval past of the town. Although the town walls themselves have long disappeared, their position is still clearly marked in the street pattern. The grid of streets enclosed by the walls also survives in the modern townscape.
- 2.6 In the 1860s and 1870s the town saw growth in the building and rebuilding of housing. The demand for new housing saw the development of the remaining open parcels of land within the medieval street layout.
- 2.7 From the nineteenth century, expansion beyond the medieval town core was carefully controlled by the corporation. It is noted that later suburban developments of The Buarth, North Road and Llanbadarn Road took place later and large aspects of the down were redeveloped during the 1860's and 1870's.
- 2.8 Expansion during this period is considered to be partly in consequence of the provision of the Cambrian Railway in 1864, which brought a significant economic boost to the area, allowing new development and redevelopment of commercial and residential buildings. Most notably, the construction of the Castle Hotel, now known locally as the 'Old College' was one of the most extravagant projects in the area and demonstrated that the town was 'booming' during this period.
- 2.9 The buildings of Aberystwyth display exceptional architectural character throughout the varying building types, whether it be residential, commercial, civic, or religious. A vast array of techniques and material choices are seen throughout, however, typical themes are derived from the changes in social and economic environments.
- 2.10 Overall, the Aberystwyth Conservation Area is characterised by a mix of irregular (medieval) and regular street pattern with denser development concentrated in the old town core and more spacious open character to roads and areas developed later within the 19th century and beyond the medieval city boundary. It possesses a lively architectural character expressed in buildings of different scale, materials and finishes in Georgian, Victorian, and Edwardian styles.



SECTION 3: LISTED BUILDINGS

- 3.1 The Cadw listed buildings map (Fig 2) highlights that there are ten listed buildings in proximity of the site, all of which are located to the Eastern side of Queen's Road, some 90 meters West of the application site.
- 3.2 The Grade II listed properties identified in the area are as follows:
- 10381 – Sandmarsh Cottage
 - 10382 – No.3 Queen's Terrace (Often referred to as Queen's Road)
 - 10383 – No.5 Queen's Terrace
 - 10384 – No.7 Queen's Terrace
 - 10385 – No. 9 Queen's Terrace
 - 10386 – No. 11 Queen's Terrace
 - 10387 – No. 13 Queen's Terrace
 - 10388 – No. 15 Queen's Terrace
 - 10389 - No. 17 Queen's Terrace
- 3.3 The summary reports from Cadw outline that the majority of the properties above were designated in 1987 as rare examples of unspoiled Victorian terrace. The properties have significant group value as each of the properties reflect a uniform design, potentially influenced by J P Seddon and portray some gothic style features.
- 3.4 Queen's Terrace (or most often referred to as Queen's Road) is noted as the dividing boundary between the town centre and the suburb area, whereby the character of dwellings alters slightly.

SECTION 4: 8, 10 & 12 VAYNOR STREET

Architectural Description of 8, 10 & 12 Vaynor Street



Figure 10 - 8, 10, 12 Vaynor Street

- 4.1 8, 10 & 12 Vaynor Street, most likely date to the mid-19 century and comprise of a terrace of 3 properties to the North-West side of the road. The properties have been unsympathetically modified over the years with non-traditional materials and the removal of features, such as the installation of UPVC fenestration and the removal/alterations of chimneys. However, the most prominent feature, the use of stone, has been retained, which is accompanied by brick detail surrounding the fenestration and doorways.
- 4.2 The use of stone in this area is likely to have been derived from the former nearby quarries, such as Constitution Hill, Penglais, amongst other smaller quarries, and plays an important role to the character of this area. Although during the period of construction, (circa mid-19th century) a variety of materials were available, given that the Railway allowed imported materials such as Ruabon brick, and render were the most popular and dominate the townscape today.
- 4.3 The properties feature bay windows to the front elevation on both the ground floor and first floor level. Owing to the town's shift to more of a tourist/seaside destination, the uptake of bay windows was initially utilised to capture sea views, however, they were quickly adopted throughout the town even if the orientation and location of the building did not benefit a sea view.



Figure 11 – Examples of varying bay/bow windows in Aberystwyth. *CADW: Aberystwyth: Understanding Urban Character.*

- 4.4 The roof is finished with natural slate, akin to majority of the properties within the Conservation Area (although there are some examples of clay and more recently, artificial slate such as cement fibre or composites) and also include chimneys to each of the properties, however, the chimney of unit 12 has been removed and slated over. The chimneys are constructed of brick, and evidence exists that the chimney of unit 10 has been modified. The use of brick for the chimneys is synonymous with properties constructed in the mid to late 19th century, whereas one would expect to see stone chimneys prior to this period.
- 4.5 To the front of the properties, a small front courtyard enclosed by a dwarf stone wall, topped by iron railings, make a contribution to the character of this area. Much like some of the varieties in dwellings, in terms of size and detail, there is also variety in the boundary treatment details in the area. The use of iron was likely originally used as a result of the local foundries, which was historically a source of economic development associated with the mining industry.

Setting of Vaynor Street



Figure 12 - Vaynor Street View, looking North-East towards North Road.



Figure 13 Vaynor Street View, looking South-West towards Northgate Street/North Parade.

- 4.6 There is a strong character within this area, and the design is typical of dwellings constructed in the period of the mid-19th century. This area was typically characterised by residential accommodation, however, institutions such as the former school, and infirmary are located further North-East of the site – today, both of these former institutions are utilised at residential accommodation.
- 4.7 Fig.12 and Fig13 above highlight the typical design of terraced, stone properties along this street, however, on-site, the street is dominated by the former depot, known locally as ‘Cambrian Tyres’, which is owned by the council. From the

South-West, the site is not visible and screened by the large-scale depot building. The front elevation of the application site is set back further than the depot, therefore, it is considered that the setting of 8, 10 & 12 Vaynor Street would be primarily that of the immediate context.

Condition of 8, 10 & 12 Vaynor Street

- 4.8 Physically, the units seem in a fair condition externally, however, at close inspection, the property is in need of refurbishment, especially the poor-quality rear extension. It is evident that many non-traditional forms of repair and replacement materials have been used. The image below highlights the use of UPVC for windows and doors, poorly finished cement-based pointing, inclusions of UPVC rainwater goods. The chimney (left side of image) seems to be a more modern replacement, with the unit to the right missing a chimney.



Figure 14 - 8, 10 & 12 Vaynor Street

- 4.9 Internally, the properties are in poor condition, as a result of a lack of maintenance and upkeep. This may be due to neglect from student occupiers and the landowner, nevertheless, the current condition of the dwellings would significantly benefit from refurbishment.
- 4.10 The alterations to the dwellings have negatively impacted the character of the properties and the conservation area. However, there is an opportunity, as a result of the proposed application to remedy the alien additions and enhance the value of the property, thus benefiting the streetscene, the wider area, and the conservation area as a whole.



SECTION 5: ASSESSMENT AND POLICY

- 5.1 Changes within the historic environment are inevitable and conservation is often more about careful management of that change rather than the prevention of it. Any new work or development must respect the setting and significance of the historic assets affected.
- 5.2 Cadw's Conservation Principles as set out within the Conservation Principles for the sustainable management of the historic environment in Wales, March 2011, sets out a logical approach to the management of all aspects of the historic environment. It states that "*the quality of design and execution must add value to that site and its setting.*" The guidance emphasises the importance of '*understanding the significance of heritage assets*'. It explains further that '*the significance of an historic asset embraces all of the cultural heritage values that people associate with it, or which prompt them to respond to it. These values tend to grow in strength and complexity over time, as understanding deepens and people's perceptions evolve*'.
- 5.3 There are four component heritage values in the significance of a historic asset:
- **Evidential value.** This derives from those elements of an historic asset that can provide evidence about past human activity, including its physical remains or historic fabric. These remains provide the primary evidence for when and how an historic asset was made or built, what it was used for and how it has changed over time.
 - **Historical value.** A historic asset might illustrate a particular aspect of past life, or it might be associated with a notable family, person, event or movement. These illustrative or associative values of an historic asset may be less tangible than its evidential value but will often connect past people, events and aspects of life with the present.
 - **Aesthetic value.** This derives from the way in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from an historic asset. This might include the form of an historic asset, its external appearance and how it lies within its setting. It can be the result of conscious design or it might be a seemingly fortuitous outcome of the way in which an historic asset has evolved and been used over time, or it may be a combination of both. Inevitably understanding the aesthetic value of an historic asset will be more subjective than the study of its evidential and historical values. Much of it will involve trying to express the aesthetic qualities or the relative value of different parts of its form or design.
 - **Communal value.** This derives from the meanings that an historic asset has for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. It is closely linked to historical and aesthetic



values but tends to have additional or specific aspects. Communal value might be commemorative or symbolic. For example, people might draw part of their identity or collective memory from an historic asset, or have emotional links to it. Such values often change over time and they may be important for remembering both positive and uncomfortable events, attitudes or periods in Wales's history. Historic assets can also have social value, acting as a source of social interaction, distinctiveness or coherence; economic value, providing a valuable source of income or employment.

Evidential Value

- 5.4 At the application site, the evidential value of the building's origin as a residence can be considered to be moderate as it has been partially lost, particularly within its interior where the layout indicates its more recent use as a HMO and not as a functioning family residence. Notwithstanding the above, the main footprints of the buildings (stone elevations) provide evidential value of the how the dwelling would have been experience prior to alterations. By restoring (and replacing more modern alterations) materials and character of the units, the proposal is likely to increase its Evidential Value within the street and enhance the setting of the conservation area.

Historical Value

- 5.5 Little is known as to whether the site was developed by a singular landowner, however, the construction boom around the mid-19th century is often related to the opening of the Railway. There is no physical or historical evidence at the site to that may shed light on whether there was influence from well-renowned families or architects such as J P Seddon, who undertook architectural projects nearby.
- 5.6 The proposed design and construction of a rear extension is unlikely to have a detrimental effect on the historical value of the properties or on the conservation area.

Aesthetic Value

- 5.7 8, 10 and 12 Vaynor Street, like so many of the similar terraced houses of Aberystwyth rely on simple and solid proportions. The main façade of the building has the greatest aesthetic value, however, the properties currently lack the original features one would have expected to see at a property of this nature. The alien addition and poor-quality finishes detract from the aesthetic value and as a result have a negative impact on the conservation area.
- 5.8 The diminished aesthetic value can be undone with the refurbishment of the property, which would include the replacement of alien additions to more



original features such as timber sash fenestration, lime mortar pointing, cast iron rainwater goods and so on, thus, undoubtedly enhancing its aesthetic value, making a positive contribution to the conservation area and immediate neighbourhood.

Communal Value

- 5.9 8, 10 & 12 Vaynor Street have a low communal value as it has always been used a private property and therefore has not influenced that many local people. Albeit more recently there would have been a larger turnover of occupiers experiencing the dwellings given its use as HMO, the interaction between the occupiers and the dwellings would be more private as the dwellings were not used for public.
- 5.10 Although the properties themselves hold little communal value from a symbolic, spiritual or commemorative standpoint, the buildings have served numerous occupiers and will continue to do so should planning permission and Conservation Area Consent be granted.

Relevant Planning Policy and Guidance

Key Legislation

- 5.11 The heritage-related statutory protection that applies here is under the terms of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as amended by the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016 on account of 8, 10 & 12 Vaynor Street being located within the boundary of the Aberystwyth Conservation Area.
- 5.12 S. 72 of the 1990 Act requires that:
- “special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area”.*
- 5.13 S.74 states that:
- “a building in a conservation area shall not be demolished without the consent of the appropriate authority (in this Act referred to as Conservation Area Consent)”.*
- 5.14 In this case the appropriate authority is Ceredigion County Council.



Local Planning Policy

5.15 The relevant document is Ceredigion County Council's Local Development Plan 2007 – 2022, adopted in April 2013. This sets out a wide range of objectives and policies including those relating to the historic environment.

5.16 The key policy is Policy DM07: Conservation Areas which states:

“Development within Conservation Areas, as designated on the Proposal Map, and any future designated Conservation Areas must demonstrate that regard has been had to Conservation Area Appraisals, where available, and national guidance.”

5.17 Policy DM19: Historic and Cultural Landscape is also relevant, and it states that development affecting landscapes or buildings which are of historical or cultural importance and make an important contribution to the character and interest of the local area, will be permitted where the distinctive appearance, architectural integrity or their settings will not be significantly adversely affected. Where possible development should enhance these qualities and special character.

5.18 There is no published Conservation Area Appraisal for Aberystwyth to inform assessment of the special architectural or historic significance of the designated area. However, an Aberystwyth Conservation Area Appraisal has been undertaken, and brought before the Council's Cabinet, whereby members recommended that the conservation area appraisals be released for public consultation. Notwithstanding the above, the conservation area appraisal and the Aberystwyth: Understanding Urban Character document published by Cadw in 2013 has been reviewed to inform the development proposal.

5.19 National Planning Guidance

5.20 National Policy on the historic environment is set out in Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12 - Chapter 6, Distinctive and Natural Places). This recognises that the historic environment is a finite resource and can only be maintained for future generations if the individual historic assets are protected and conserved.

5.21 Section 6.1.5 states that Cadw's published Conservation Principles highlights the need to base decisions on an understanding of the impact a proposal may have on the significance of an historic asset.

5.22 Section 6.1.6 sets out the Welsh Government's specific objectives for the historic environment as being to:

- protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Sites;



- conserve archaeological remains, both for their own sake and for their role in education, leisure and the economy;
- safeguard the character of historic buildings and manage change so that their special architectural and historic interest is preserved;
- preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas, whilst the same time helping them remain vibrant and prosperous;
- preserve the special interest of sites on the register of historic parks and gardens; and
- protect areas on the register of historic landscapes in Wales.

5.23 Technical Advice Note 24 published in May 2017 sets out general guidance on the management of the historic environment, heritage impact and setting of historic assets.

5.24 Paragraph 1.15 of TAN 24 states that:

“Heritage impact assessment is a structured process that enables the significance of a designated asset to be taken in to account when considering proposals for change. Heritage impact assessments should be proportionate both to the significance of the historic asset and to the degree of change proposed, and should include sufficient information to enable both the significance of the asset and the impact of change to be understood. The results of the heritage impact assessment should be summarised in a heritage impact statement which must form part of any listed building consent, conservation area consent and, when requested, scheduled monument consent applications.”

Cadw’s Published Guidance

5.25 In May 2017 Cadw published a range of relevant guidance documents including one on Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales and one on Managing Conservation Areas in Wales. These explain how vital it is to understand the implications of any proposed change before development is consented. It describes heritage impact assessment as a “*structured process*” to be summarised in the Heritage Impact Statement.

5.26 Cadw’s published guidance sets out why the process of Heritage Impact Assessment can help make positive changes to historic assets. The guidance underlines that “*Understanding the significance of your historic asset is the key to effective heritage impact assessment*” and that “*heritage impact assessment helps you to make changes to your historic asset that are in line with the principles of good design*”.

5.27 It states that the Heritage Impact Statement should include an explanation of why demolition is desirable or necessary and a description of the contribution



the building proposed for demolition makes to the character or appearance of the conservation area. The assessment of the impact of the demolition of the building on the character and appearance of the conservation area should include potential benefits and any harm and a summary of the options that have been considered other than demolition.

Assessment of the Proposed Scheme in the context of the Conservation Principles

- 5.28 The proposed scheme is for conversion and extension of the existing building. The site is unlisted but it is within the Aberystwyth Conservation Area. The proposal is for the creation of 12 self-contained units of accommodation.
- 5.29 The preferred option for the future of the site is to retain and re-install as many features, which characterise the conservation area, to the front elevation. However, to the rear, where the poorer-quality extensions protrude from the rear of the buildings, the proposal sees the demolition of the existing double storey and single storey extensions with a replacement extension to the rear.
- 5.30 The needs of the area for more housing, coupled with the condition of the existing building and the financial outlay of converting/restoring the property explains the decision to create the new extension to the rear, which is nestled away ensuring no adverse effect on the conservation area. Similar examples of extensions to the rear exist throughout Aberystwyth and would follow the form of the adjacent building of the depot.
- 5.31 It is acknowledged that the extension needs to be in keeping with its surroundings with regard to the characterises of the conservation area. The use of render and pitched slate roofs including the dormer windows are typical of the town should be reflected in the design.
- 5.32 The design of the scheme is set out within the accompanying plans submitted with this application. The elevation fronting Vaynor Street is outlined below in Fig. 15. The existing front elevation will remain in the same manner as existing with a three-storey extension to the rear. Albeit that the rear extension would be three-storey the land to the rear is lower than that of the front elevation therefore a minimal difference in height overall. extension set down lower than the main dwelling. Welsh slate roofs and painted timber windows all reflect the character of the buildings in Aberystwyth and therefore are sympathetic to the heritage of the street and of the Conservation Area.
- 5.33 Whilst the proposed scheme introduces a new extension to the rear, the proposal has considered the special quality and character of the conservation area and is considered to have the potential to add value to the area through the regeneration of the site and the creation of an extension which is of a compatible architectural character.



Figure 15 - Proposed front elevation of new building facing Vaynor Street @Byron Jenkins

Principle 1 - Historic Assets will be managed to sustain their values

5.34 Changes in the historic environment are inevitable and conservation of historic buildings is about the careful management of change, having special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. The proposed development is perceived as reversing alien additions and conserving the special character of the Conservation Area by reinstating more original features on site, whilst providing affordable housing that will benefit the local community in the form of a high quality accommodation.

Principle 2 - Understanding the significance of historic assets is vital

5.35 The evidence of the building's origins as an example of a mid-19th century constructed dwelling is primarily documentary and can be recorded to secure this historic evidence. The building itself is not listed as a building of special architectural or historic interest. However, the properties add value to the special quality and character of the surrounding street and conservation area. Its primary significance lies within the evidential and aesthetic value, both of which would be retained. Whilst that does not mean the building is of no communal or historic value, it is a recognised that the more significant aspect of the building would be that of what we deem to be a good example of what would have been a typical design for a property of this period.



Principle 3 – The historic environment is a shared resource

- 5.36 The application site is a privately owned building and does not have, on its own, a strong local association, other than being a terrace of 3 dwellings in a street of similar designed properties. The proposal will assist in restoring a significantly altered building back to a more original design. A more sympathetic, high-quality finish with regard to the local heritage will be experienced by those occupying the units or interacting with other properties along the street. The proposal will allow functional use by creating an efficient development of high-quality apartments that respect the character and history of the location.

Principle 4 – Everyone will be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment

- 5.37 It is hoped that this document will assist in ensuring that decisions about this property are taken in an open and transparent manner, as well as sharing what is known about the house to date, raising people’s awareness and understanding of the value of the site in the context of the wider area. The applicant has a keen interest in restoring and retaining the character and special quality of the surrounding area and through this document, amongst other, has provided a snippet of education which has been utilised to inform the applicant and architect to design a scheme which reflects the surrounding area.

Principle 5 – Decisions about change must be reasonable, transparent and consistent

- 5.38 It is hoped that this document will underpin this principle and provide a clear justification for proposed changes to the site.

Principle 6 – Documenting and learning from decisions is essential

- 5.39 The information and documentation gathered as a result of the proposed scheme will be retained by the owners.



SECTION 6: CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) has assessed the significance of 8, 10 & 12 Vaynor Street and has set this out in a proportionate Heritage Impact Statement.
- 6.2 The HIA has been completed in accordance with Cadw's Conservation Principles document and best practice guidance.
- 6.3 The building is within the Aberystwyth Conservation Area but is not statutory listed nor it is immediately adjacent to other listed buildings. By means of conversion and restoration of the external façade the architectural merit of 8, 10 & 12 Vaynor Steet will be enhanced thus protecting the conservation area.
- 6.4 The proposed development is needed to provide much needed small-scale, affordable housing for the area. The design has drawn its inspiration from the residential buildings of the town and in line with the properties constructed in this time period with features and design proportions which reflect that of Aberystwyth. Accordingly, the Heritage Impact Statement concludes that, subject to careful selection of materials and execution of the works, the proposed development will not have an adverse impact on the setting of any listed buildings in the immediate area or conservation area in general.
- 6.5 The statement has clearly demonstrated an understanding of the Conservation Area and listed properties in the vicinity and provided justification as to why this proposal and its design is deemed appropriate.