

Heritage Impact Statement for Alterations to Extractor Fans at 14 Victoria Place, Newport, NP20 4DZ

Introduction

This Heritage Impact Statement is submitted in support of the application for Listed Building Consent (LBC) to make minor alterations to 14 Victoria Place, a Grade II-listed building located within the St Woolos Conservation Area, Newport. The proposed works involve:

Increasing the diameter of an existing extractor vent at the front elevation at basement level.
Adding an external extractor vent to the rear kitchen extension.

This statement outlines the significance of the listed building, assesses the impact of the proposed alterations, and justifies the methodology and choice of materials to ensure compliance with the statutory requirements under the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023 and relevant policy guidance, including Planning Policy Wales (PPW12), Technical Advice Note 24, and CADW guidance documents.

Significance of the Building

14 Victoria Place forms part of a group of Grade II-listed buildings constructed in the early 19th century, where its significance lies in its architecture, materials, and contribution to the streetscape. The building consists of:

External Features:

- Front elevation:
 - Stucco finish with a slate roof and red brick chimneys.
 - Timber-framed 12-pane sash windows to the first floor, 16-pane sash windows to the ground floor, and decorative reeded doorcases with cornice details.
 - Victorian railings to the forecourt.
- Rear elevation:
 - Single-storey rear extension with uPVC windows (installed prior to listing).
- Group Value:
 - The property contributes to the setting of Victoria Place as a historic street and its cohesion with the adjoining buildings, including Victoria Road URC.
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The rear extension has limited architectural significance compared to the front, and modern alterations (e.g., uPVC windows) detract slightly from the historic character.

Proposed Works

Increasing the Diameter of the Front Extractor Vent

- The existing extractor vent, located at basement level on the front elevation, is currently 100mm in diameter and made of cast iron.
- The proposal involves expanding the diameter to 150mm to improve ventilation functionality while retaining the cast iron cover to ensure visual consistency with the building's historic character.

Adding a Rear Kitchen Extractor Vent

- The proposal includes creating an opening to install a louvred grille vent on the rear extension wall to serve the kitchen.
- Initially proposed as a uPVC louvred grille, but following pre-application advice, the revised plan will use cast iron or aluminium, more traditional materials matching the building's historic palette.

Heritage Policy Context

The significance of the proposed works has been assessed against the relevant statutory and policy provisions, including:

Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023:

- Section 96 supports measures preserving the fabric, setting, and historic interest of listed buildings.
- Section 160 applies to preserving or enhancing the character of conservation areas.

Planning Policy Wales Edition 12 (PPW12):

- Highlights a presumption in favor of the preservation and enhancement of listed buildings (6.1.10) and conservation areas (6.1.14).
- Recognizes the need for flexibility where modifications are justified and proportionate.

Technical Advice Note 24 – The Historic Environment:

- Emphasizes the importance of a proportionate Heritage Impact Assessment addressing both the significance of the listed building and the extent of the proposed changes.
- Section 5.13 encourages retaining material features that contribute to the property's significance.

CADW Guidance:

- Encourages managing change in listed buildings using traditional materials for alterations to maintain visual harmony and avoid arbitrary damage to historic assets.

Justification

Impact on the Listed Building:

- Front elevation: The proposed increase in vent diameter at basement level is minor and would involve removing only a small amount of fabric. The character of the building will be preserved as the cast iron cover matches the appearance of the existing vent, ensuring that the visual integrity of the front elevation is maintained.
- Rear extension: While not visible from the conservation area, using traditional materials (cast iron/aluminium) ensures that the material palette of the listed building remains intact. This avoids setting a precedent for the use of uPVC and aligns with conservation principles.

Impact on Conservation Area:

The works are minor and unlikely to affect the character or appearance of the St Woolos Conservation Area, as confirmed during the pre-application consultation. Preservation is achieved

through maintaining traditional materials and architectural details on visible elevations.
Compliance with Policy:

The alterations align with the policy guidance outlined in PPW12 and TAN 24 by preserving the historic character and minimising adverse impact while promoting sustainable use of the property.

Design and Material Selection

To address concerns raised during pre-application advice, the following design choices have been made:

Front Elevation Vent (Basement Level):

Material: Cast iron cover to match the existing.

Dimensions: Enlarged to 150mm diameter for improved functionality without compromising appearance.

Rear Extension Vent (Kitchen):

Material: Cast iron or aluminium louvred grille, avoiding uPVC.

Design: Traditional grill appearance to integrate seamlessly with the listed building's historic character.

Conclusion

The proposed works at 14 Victoria Place are minor, proportionate, and well-designed to preserve the architectural and historic significance of the Grade II-listed building. The use of traditional materials ensures compliance with statutory tests under the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023 and relevant conservation policies. Additionally, the works enhance the sustainable use of the property while preserving its character and contribution to the St Woolos Conservation Area.

The Heritage Impact Assessment demonstrates that the alterations:

- Preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.
- Ensure visual harmony through the use of appropriate materials and design.
- Maintain the character of the conservation area.
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As such, the proposals should be considered acceptable for approval under Listed Building Consent.