

PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE AT 8 SOUTH PARADE

ROCHDALE, GREATER MANCHESTER



HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

GARRY MILLER
Heritage Consultancy

PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE AT 8 SOUTH PARADE

ROCHDALE, GREATER MANCHESTER

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

DECEMBER 2023

GARRY MILLER

Heritage Consultancy

Crosby House, 412 Prescott Road, Eccleston Hill, St Helens, Lancashire WA10 3BT

Telephone: 01744 739675

garrymillerhbc@gmail.com

© Garry Miller 2023

GARRY MILLER HERITAGE CONSULTANCY

Garry Miller is a heritage consultant, architectural historian and published author who has spent more than 40 years studying and working with buildings of town and countryside, in particular those of North West England. His career as a consultant began in the mid-1980s with the Preston-based Nigel Morgan Historic Building Consultancy, of which he became a partner in 1992 upon its rebranding as Datestone. In 1997 he was commissioned by the Heritage Trust for the North West, a buildings preservation trust based at Barrowford, Lancashire, to produce an in-depth regional study of vernacular houses in southwest Lancashire: the result, *Historic Houses in Lancashire: The Douglas Valley, 1300-1770* was published in 2002. The book was described as ‘scholarship as its best’ by *Country Life* (June 2003), and ‘well analysed and presented’ in *Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society* (Vol 48, 2004); and was widely cited in the 2006 *Buildings of England* volume on Liverpool and Southwest Lancashire. Extensive research on the houses of Georgian and Regency Liverpool has also been undertaken, with a view to future publication. Following the success of his Douglas Valley book, Garry Miller established his own consultancy, producing analytical and interpretive reports on historic buildings, in particular the heritage assessments required to support planning applications affecting the historic environment. His area of operation encompasses the North West, Midlands, North Wales and parts of Cumbria and North and West Yorkshire. Several local authorities have cited his assessments as examples of best practice, and reports on more than 150 buildings or sites are produced annually.

THIS REPORT

Date of issue: December 2023

Purpose: for planning submission

Text: Garry Miller

Site survey: Peter Miller

CONTENTS

1: Executive Summary	5
2: The Site	6
3: The Proposal/Scope of this Report	8
4: The Application Building	10
5: The Conservation Area	14
6: Summary of Significance	17
7: Planning Policy Context	18
8: Impact of the Proposal	19

1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report supports proposed works at number 8 South Parade, which is located in the town centre of Rochdale, Greater Manchester. Number 8 is a vacant public house – originally the Robin Hood Inn – which forms part of a row of 18th/19th century commercial properties located on the south side of the street. Itself undesignated, the building stands within Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area.

Proposals have been submitted to Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council for change of use of the application property. The heritage issue arising is the impact upon the significance (heritage interest and value) of the conservation area. The scope and purpose of this report is to identify this significance and how the proposal affects it.

The significance of the conservation area derives from its character and appearance as the historic civic and commercial core of Rochdale, which is divided into five distinct character areas and includes the Grade I High Victorian town hall and Grade II* parish church of St Chad, both buildings of the highest national importance. This significance is therefore embodied in its buildings and their relationship to each other along the historic pattern of streets and spaces.

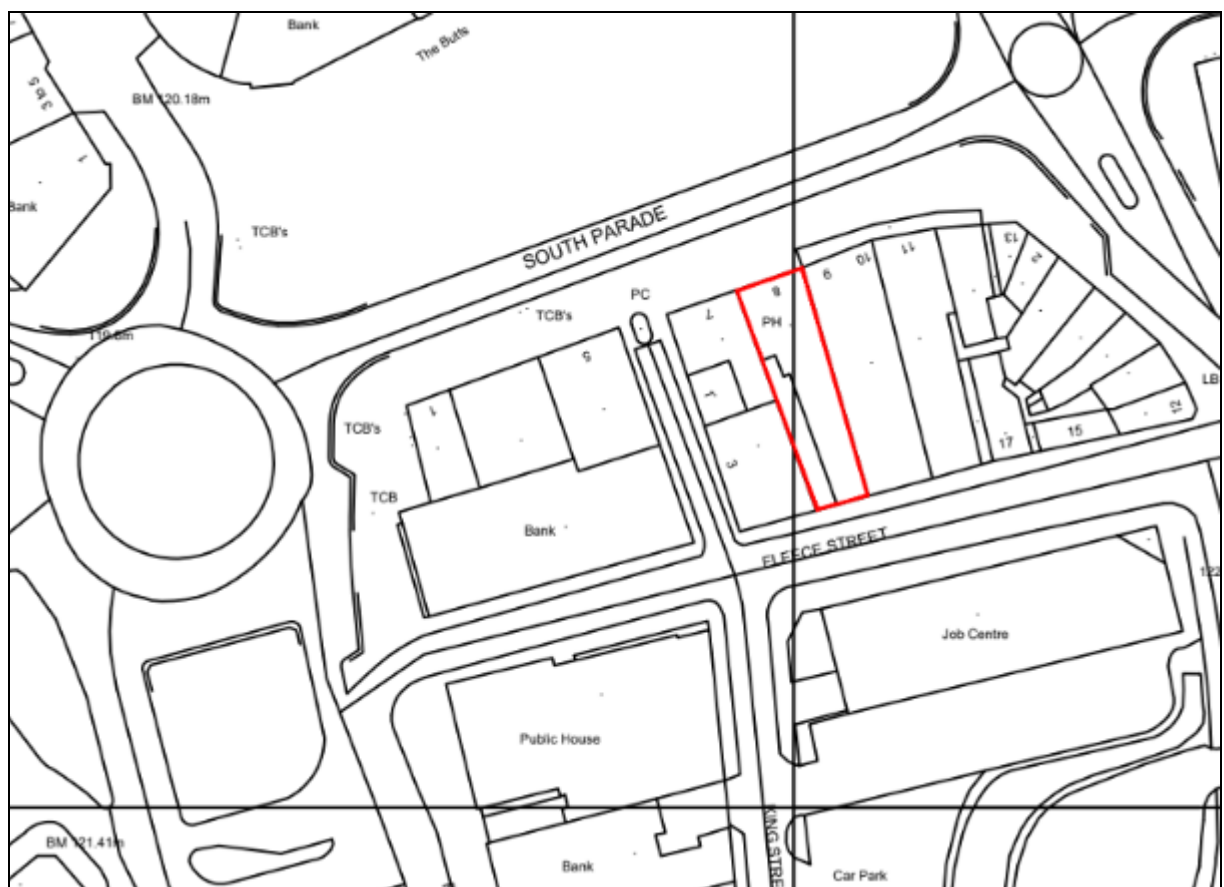
The application building lies in the character area focused on Drake Street, which represents early 19th century suburban expansion east of the town's historic core. Its significance derives primarily from its historical role as the former Robin Hood Inn, which was of at least early 19th century origin, along with its group value with the remainder of the late 18th/early 19th century buildings on South Parade. Its positive contribution to the conservation area is expressed principally by its front elevation, as the rear is of less interest and glimpsed only.

The proposal is for change of use of the vacant pub to a dine-in/takeaway chip shop on the ground floor and residential on the first floor. The second floor contains an existing residential apartment. The works associated with the change of use are minimal. Only those which affect the external envelope of the building have a potential effect upon the conservation area, as any internal changes have no impact because they are unseen. The front elevation that represents the property's principal contribution to the conservation area will remain unchanged. Any subsequent proposals for signage will be the subject of a future application. Minor changes at the rear will occur in the form of a new doorway to the main building along with a small number of new windows in a long outrigger. These elevations are glimpsed only and do not form part of the key views which establish the character and appearance of the conservation area. Owing to this and the minor nature of the works, their effect will not be harmful.

The proposal will put the vacant building to active sustainable use and the associated works will have no adverse effect upon its contribution to the conservation area, whose significance will be sustained. The application therefore accords with both national guidance and local policy and hence merits approval without delay.

2: THE SITE

The application property is number 8 South Parade, which is located in the town centre of Rochdale, Greater Manchester, and is a vacant public house. The property forms part of a row of 18th-19th century commercial properties located on the south side of the street, which runs between the Esplanade and Town Hall Square to the west and Drake Street to the east and faces the culverted River Roch. Its immediate surroundings are a rich townscape of commercial and civic buildings, all of which are dominated by Rochdale's monumental High Victorian town hall to the west.



Map 1. Location of the application property



1. The application property (indicated), part of the 18th-19th century South Parade streetscene



2. More distant view from the west, by the culverted River Roch

3: THE PROPOSAL/SCOPE OF THIS REPORT

3.1 Proposed development

Proposals have been submitted to Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council for a change of use of the ground and first floors of the application property.

.

3.2 Designation

The property is itself undesignated but stands within Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area. The nearest listed building is the former Union Bank of Manchester at 5 South Parade, but owing to the nature of the proposals it is considered its setting is unharmed.

3.3 Heritage impact

The heritage issue arising is the impact upon the significance (heritage interest and value) of the conservation area.

3.4 Scope and purpose of this report

Paragraph 194 of Chapter 16 (*Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment*) the National Planning Policy Framework (as revised, July 2021) states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the particular significance of the heritage asset. The scope and purpose of this report is therefore to identify the significance of the conservation area and the contribution made by the application building, and to assess how this will be affected by the proposal. In accordance with paragraph 194, the level of detail is considered proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset, and no more than necessary to understand the impact of the proposal. The report is to be read in conjunction with other documentation submitted in support of the application.

3.5 Report structure

This is as follows:

1. A concise, proportionate description of the undesignated building (Section 4) and the conservation area (Section 5)
2. A summary of their heritage significance (Section 6)
3. A summary of the planning policy context in which the application will be determined (Section 7)
4. Evaluation within this context of the impact of the proposal upon the significance of the conservation area (Section 8).

4: THE APPLICATION BUILDING

4.1 Overview

Altered three-storey 19th century public house, now vacant.

4.2 Historical context

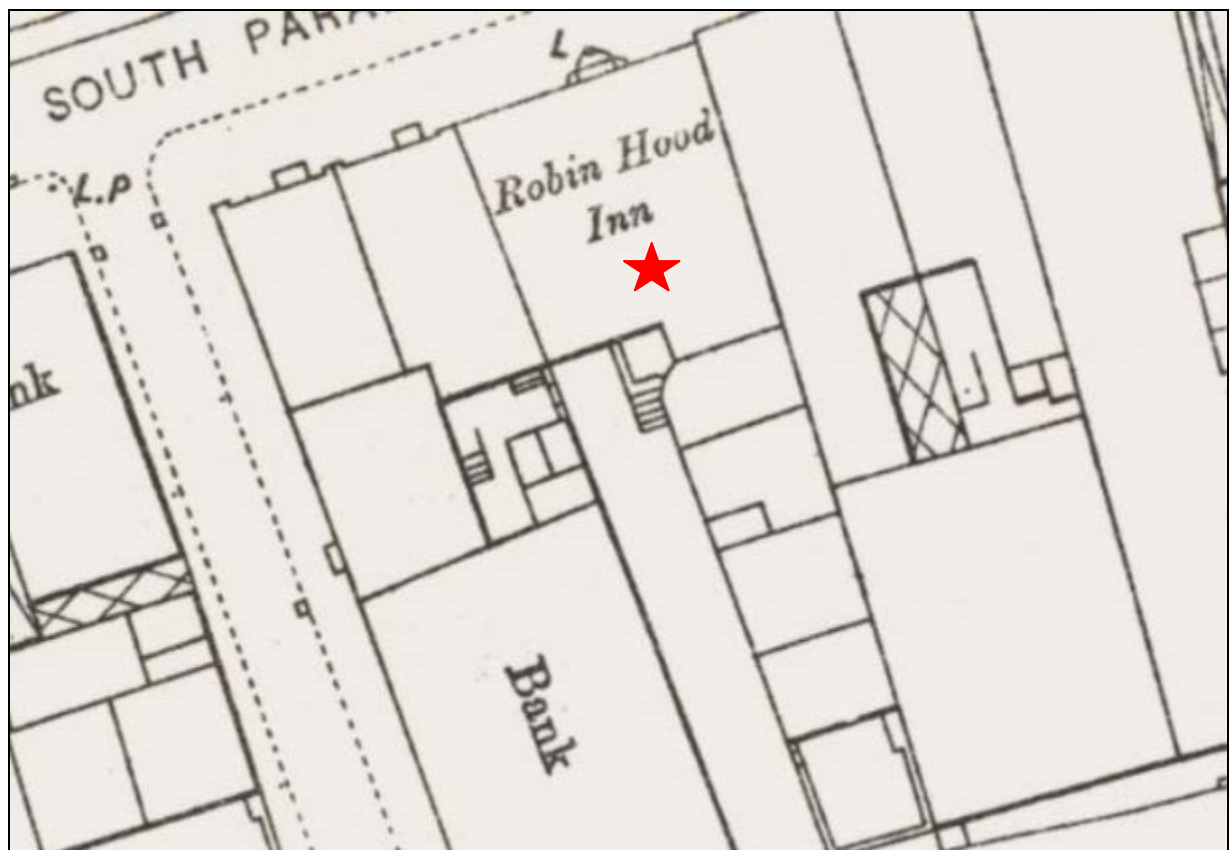
The application property was originally the Robin Hood Inn, and was in existence by the early 19th century. The Robin Hood is depicted on the 1848 Rochdale town plan (Map 2, following page), but at that time appears to have been the property that is now to the left of the present building (which was later rebuilt as a stone Victorian Gothic commercial building at the South Parade/King Street junction). By the time of the 1890 edition the inn had moved to its present location and the front elevation suggests a remodelling had occurred probably in the 1880s (see 4.3 below). The ground floor had been altered by the 1960s (Plate 3, below) and by the early 2000s the property had been renamed the Pacific bar.



3. The building in 1966, when the Robin Hood



Map 2. The Robin Hood Inn occupied the site to the left on the 1848 town plan



Map 3. By the time of the 1890 edition it had moved to its present location next door

4.3 The building itself

As noted above, the Robin Hood moved to the present building from the site next door in the mid-later 19th century. The property probably has a late 18th or early 19th century core, as this appears to be the date of the row to which it belongs, but has been greatly altered. The principal interest of the building resides in its front elevation. As also noted above, the appearance of its first and second floors, with their narrow windows in stone surrounds, suggests the building was refronted probably in the 1880s. The ground floor is occupied by a full-width fascia with entrances at either end whose appearance is traditional but its date is recent. A somewhat different fascia existed during the early 2000s during its role as the Pacific bar (Plate 5, following page). The upper floors now have exposed brick, but were previously painted, as far back as 1966 (Plate 3). A central chimney, shown in the 1966 image, has now been removed. The rear faces Fleece Street and is functional and glimpsed only; dominated by an altered/rebuilt long narrow two-storey outrigger which extends backwards from the rear of the main building and adjoins a narrow yard.



4. Present appearance of the front elevation



5. How the building appeared in the early 2000s

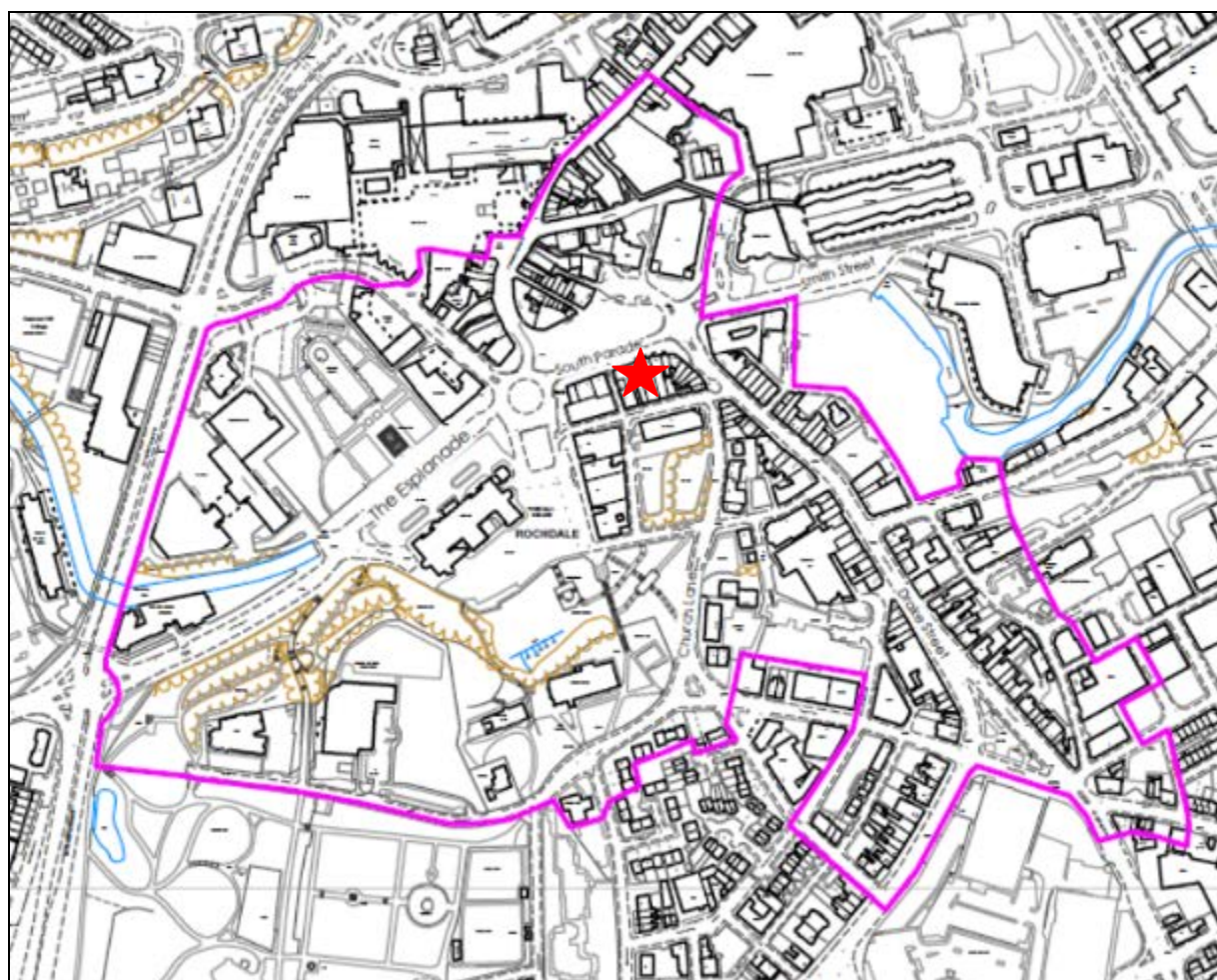


6. Rebuilt outrigger dominates view from Fleece Street

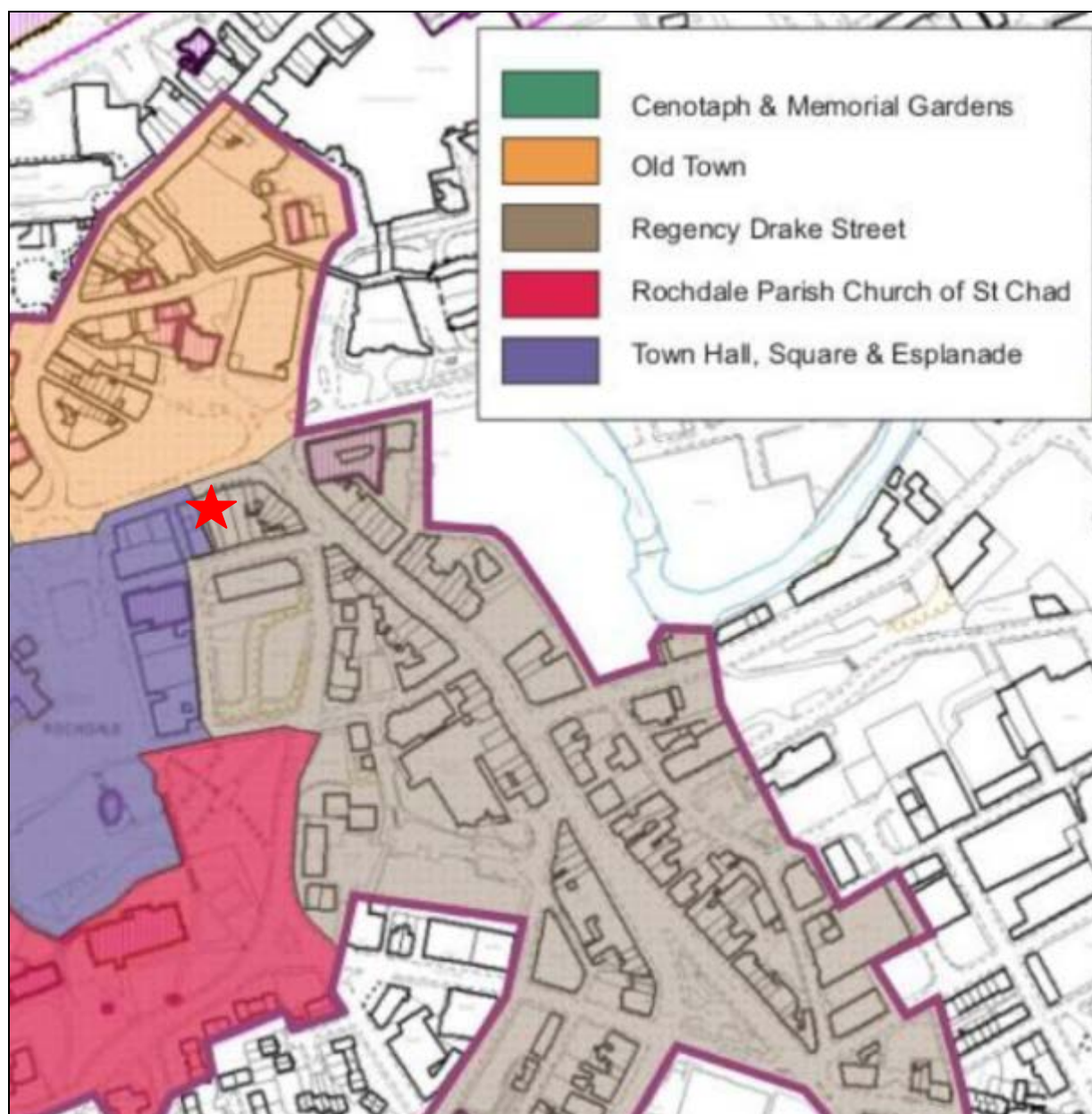
5: THE CONSERVATION AREA

5.1 Overview

Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area was first designated in 1980 and subsequently extended in 2011 to include the Regency outer suburb centred on Drake Street to the east. It encompasses the civic core and commercial core of the town and include the Grade I listed Town Hall of 1866-1871 and Grade II* medieval parish church of St Chad. The conservation area is divided into five character areas, and the application site being in that described as *Regency Drake Street*. The 2011 character appraisal of the extended conservation area cites South Parade as having characteristically plain Georgian three-storey shops of stuccoed brick with stone lintels, which have ‘*suffered some mutilation ... and are not looking their best.*’ It notes how the application property – then the Pacific Club – marks the transition to the western end of the street, which falls within the Town Hall, Square and Esplanade character area.



Map 4. The conservation area, with the application property indicated



Map 5. Detail of map from 2011 character appraisal showing how the building stands at the boundary of the Regency Drake Street character area

5.2 Contribution to the conservation area

The contribution made by the application building is not cited in the 2011 appraisal. While the nature of this contribution is positive, it derives primarily from its historical role as the former Robin Hood Inn along with its group value with the rest of the 18th-19th century South Parade row, rather than its individual architectural merits.



7. The property viewed across the River Roch. Its contribution to the conservation area stems primarily from its group value with the rest of the South Parade row

6: SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

6.1 Rationale

Paragraph 195 of the National Planning Policy Framework states local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of a heritage asset, including its setting, and take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal in order to avoid or minimize conflict between the asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal. Significance is defined in the NPPF Glossary 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.

6.2 The conservation area

The significance of the conservation area derives from its character and appearance as the historic civic and commercial core of Rochdale, which is divided into five distinct character areas and includes the Grade I High Victorian town hall and Grade II* Parish Church of St Chad, both buildings of the highest national importance. This significance is therefore embodied in its buildings and their relationship to each other along the historic pattern of streets and spaces. The application building lies in the character area focused on Drake Street, which represents early 19th century suburban expansion east of the historic core of the town.

6.3 The application property

The significance of the application building derives primarily from its historical role as the former Robin Hood Inn, which was of at least early 19th century origin, along with its group value with the remainder of the late 18th/early 19th century row that forms South Parade. Its positive contribution to the conservation area is expressed principally by its front elevation, as the rear is of less interest and glimpsed only.

7: PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

7.1 Statutory duty

Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local planning authorities to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character of a conservation area.

7.2 Relevant policies

Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework) provides the guidance on how this statutory duty is to be put into practice. Paragraph 197 states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- *The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation*
- *The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality, and*
- *The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness*

Regarding designated heritage assets, paragraph 199 states that ‘great weight’ should be given to their conservation and the more important the asset, the greater that weight should be; that significance can be lost through development within its setting. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Locally, Policy P2a (Protecting and Enhancing Character, Landscape and Heritage) of the Rochdale Core Strategy, formally adopted on October 19, 2016, states that key heritage assets, both statutory and non-statutory, will be conserved, enhanced and promoted, including consideration of their wider settings.

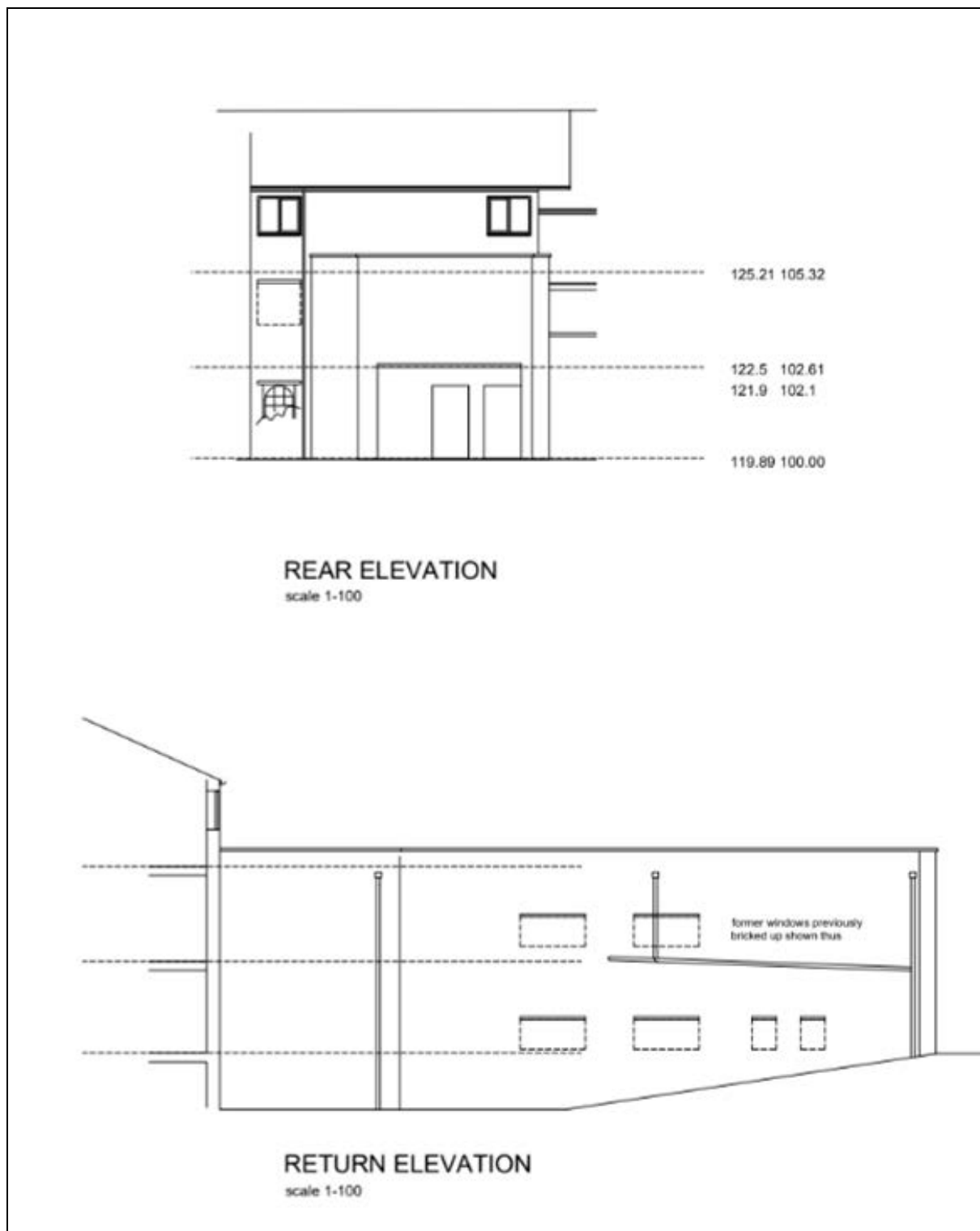
8: IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL

8.1 Summary of the scheme

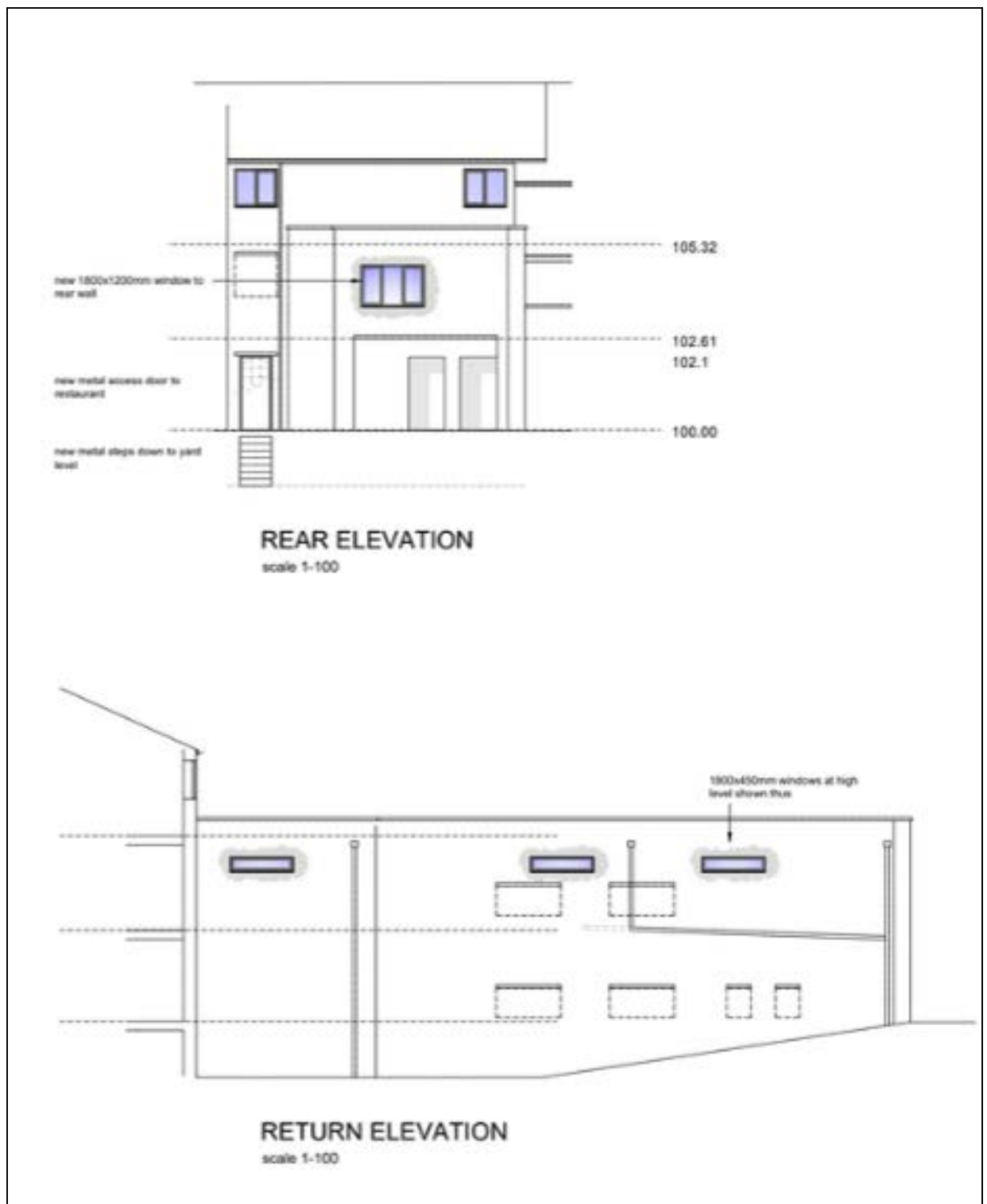
The proposal is for change of use of the vacant pub to a dine-in/takeaway chip shop on the ground floor and residential on the first floor. The second floor contains an existing residential apartment. The principle of the proposal is favourable as it returns the vacant building to active, sustainable use.

8.2 Works and their effect

The works associated with the change of use are minimal. Only those which affect the external envelope of the building have a potential effect upon the conservation area, as any internal changes have no effect upon it because they are unseen. It has been demonstrated in this report that the property's principal contribution to the conservation area is made by its front elevation. This will remain unchanged. Any subsequent proposals for signage will be the subject of a future application. Minor changes at the rear will occur in the form of a new doorway to the main building along with a limited number of new windows in the outrigger. These elevations are glimpsed only and do not form part of the key views which establish the character and appearance of the conservation area. Owing to this and the minor nature of the works, their effect will not be harmful.



8. Rear and outrigger side elevations as existing



9. Proposed rear and outrigger side elevations

8.3 Concluding statement

The proposal will put the vacant building to active sustainable use and the associated works will have no adverse effect upon its contribution to the conservation area, whose significance will be sustained. The application therefore accords with both national guidance and local policy and hence merits approval without delay.