

HERITAGE & CONSERVATION CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Heritage, Conservation & Design Team Officer	Catherine Fenghour
Date	15 July 2025
Application Reference	25/00363/FUL
Address	6 Church Street and 2 Tordmorden Road, Littleborough, OL15 9AF
Proposal	Change of use to commercial at ground floor level and self-contained flat at first floor level, together with alterations to fenestration and the erection of an external staircase and terrace

Heritage Assets Impacted

Designated Heritage Assets	☒	- Littleborough Town Centre Conservation Area
Non-Designated Heritage Assets	☐	

Summary

While there are no issues with the principle of development, some amendments are required to enable the scheme to be supported.

Assessment

The application site is an end-terrace property within the Littleborough Town Centre Conservation Area. The building had formerly been listed at grade II, as it was erroneously believed to have been an early 19th century toll house. However, the actual toll house had been located 96m from the site and demolished c.1877 to 1878.

Two properties, the cottage was constructed in 1878 and the office in 1885. the office was constructed in the style of a toll house by a local architect. It is believed that this style is likely to have contributed to the later mistake. both were last used as residential properties. The delisting report notes that both have undergone significant alteration and remodelling. It concludes that they are modest and unexceptional and not of special architectural or historic interest in the national context.

Notwithstanding the recent delisting, the site still lies within the Littleborough Town Centre Conservation Area. While Littleborough developed in the 17th and 18th centuries with the

industrial revolution, it continued to grow throughout the 19th century. The application properties fit within this later period of the town's growth, in the second half of the 19th century. They were constructed in local vernacular materials: gritstone and stone slate roofs (although this original roof covering has been lost).

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local authorities to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

Similarly, the provisions of NPPF chapter 16, Places for Everyone policy JP-P2 and Rochdale CS policy P2 apply. Littleborough Town Centre Conservation Area is a key heritage asset for the purposes of policy P2. This policy seeks to conserve enhance and promote these heritage assets. The proposal is for the conversion and alteration of the buildings to create a flood hub at ground floor level with an apartment above. The works include reroofing, replacement windows, doors and rainwater goods and the construction of a new deck to the eastern elevation.

Principle of development

The properties have been vacant for several years and are in poor condition. The proposed uses would provide a viable use for the buildings, preventing their further deterioration, and would increase activity in this part of the Conservation Area. While the method of subdivision would be different (i.e. commercial/community at ground floor with residential above), there was historically a mix of uses (i.e. architect's office and house).

On this basis, there are no heritage objections to the principle of the proposed use.

Re-roofing works

The scheme includes re-roofing both properties in a Welsh slate. This would not have been their original roof covering, which would have been a stone slate. However, this has previously been lost. On this basis, the use of a Welsh slate would be an improvement. There are no objections to this element of the proposal.

Replacement windows and doors

The plans show all windows to be replaced with UPVC. The properties currently have a mix of timber and UPVC windows. The use of UPVC for windows within Conservation Areas is not generally supported. UPVC has a uniform finish and is unable to replicate the slimmer proportions of timber windows. Ideally windows would be fabricated in timber in a style appropriate to the age of the properties. However, given the mix of windows already on the property aluminium windows of an appropriate heritage style may be acceptable.

The use of composite doors is also not supported. Doors should ideally be fabricated in timber.

The design and material for the windows and doors should be revised, with large scale details required by condition.

Rainwater goods

There are no objections to the use of cast aluminium rainwater goods. These should be painted black. This should be required by condition.

New decked area

The proposed plans show a new decking area to the rear of the properties. This would be fabricated in steel with mesh infill panels and a composite deck. There are concerns about the appearance of this deck and that it could look like an overly industrial and utilitarian feature on the rear of the properties. the mesh infills are a particular concern. If a deck is proposed, it should be fabricated in timber with a natural finish so that it appears less stark in contrast to the host building.

With the above amendments, it is likely that a neutral impact on the significance of the Conservation Area could be achieved.

Re-consultation

Yes, once revised plans are received