

HERITAGE & CONSERVATION CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Heritage, Conservation & Design Team Officer	Catherine Fenghour
Date	17 July 2025
Application Reference	25/00455/LBC and 25/00456/HOUS
Address	244 Harbour Lane, Milnrow, OL16 4EL
Proposal	Listed building consent for internal and external alterations including: re-roofing works, replacement windows, new front door, alteration of door to window and blocking up of opening, repointing, replacement staircase, removal of lobby, removal of stud walls and installation of new walls and creation of new bathroom

Heritage Assets Impacted

Designated Heritage Assets	☒	244 Harbour Lane (grade II)
Non-Designated Heritage Assets	☐	

Summary

Further information and amendments are required before this application can be supported.

Assessment

Site description and significance

The application site is a three-storey end terrace property. It was originally constructed as a weaver's cottage, likely dating from the late 18th or early 19th century. Its original use is still legible in the long runs of mullioned windows and taking in door on the flank elevation. Internally, the second floor is still open plan, as would have been the case when it was in use as a loomshop. Chimney breasts and timber beams remain internally. The building is built from locally sourced materials – stone and a stone slate roof. It is understood that the stone roof slates remain under the felt.

The property has undergone some alterations – some of the mullioned windows have been blocked up, as has the taking in door. Internally, many of the finishes belong to the late 20th century and are in a poor state of repair. The windows while timber are not original. Despite some unsympathetic alterations, the building is still clearly legible as a weaver's cottage both externally and within the former loomshop at second floor level.

The property is of historic and architectural interest, providing a good example of a vernacular weaver's cottage, at an early point in the town's industrial history. It is of special interest in the national context, reflected in its listing at grade II.

Relevant legislation and policy

Sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 apply for works affecting listed buildings, requiring listed building consent and planning permission respectively. These sections require local authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Listed buildings are designated heritage assets and the provisions of NPPF Chapter 16, Places for Everyone policy JP-P2 and Rochdale CS policy P2 apply.

NPPF paragraph 213 states that '*any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset [...] requires clear and convincing justification*'. Paragraph 215 states that '*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, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use*'.

Assessment of proposed works

Re-roofing – the original stone slate roof has been covered in felt although it is understood that the stone slates remain underneath. The relaying of the stone slate roof covering would constitute a heritage benefit. A method statement for the works is required, as are details of any proposed insulation upgrading works (required by building regulations when replacing a thermal element). Sample of new slates and ridge tiles are required and should match the existing precisely.

Replacement windows – the existing windows are fabricated in timber, although they are not original. The original windows would also have been fabricated in timber. The use of aluminium windows is not considered to be appropriate to the age or construction of the property. It is noted that the Georgian Group and Historic England have also raised concerns with this aspect of the proposals. No justification for the replacement of the windows with aluminium windows has been provided. The application also does not include any details of the new windows. This element would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage asset.

The scheme should be revised so that the windows are fabricated in timber. The design of the windows should be confirmed up front, with large scale details required by condition. Given that the windows are not original, slim-profile, double-glazed windows may be accepted.

Internal works:

Removal of chimney breast – these works are not supported as they would result in the loss of historic fabric and reduce the legibility of the internal spaces. This element of the proposal would result in less than substantial harm through the loss of original feature and harm to the legibility of the space. The scheme should be revised so that the chimney breast should be retained.

Staircase – the heritage statement advises that the staircase is unlikely to be original and that it may have been relocated. Have any opening up works been carried out to establish the likely age of the staircase, and its original location if known? Given the condition of the stairs, a case could be made for the new stairs – details of these will be required by condition.

New ensuite - the second floor is currently fully open plan and as such its original use as a workshop is still legible. There would be some harm from the subdivision of the space. However, this would be relatively limited, given that the partition would be restricted to a single corner, retaining the rest of the space open. The new partition is shown to interact with the stone mullions and beams. Further details are required to understand the interaction between these elements and ensure that they are not adversely affected and that historic fabric is not lost. Details of new service runs will also be required (this can be by condition).

Repairs and finishes – the property is in a relatively poor state of repair and will require repairs and replacement of finishes internally. Given the solid wall construction of the property, a lime plaster should be used, as this will enable the building to breathe and address issues of damp. Details of proposed finishes and the repair of existing elements such as flooring, walls, chimney breasts, chimney beams should be clarified. A detailed schedule of repairs and finishes can then be required by condition.

New partition walls (ground and first floor)– as with the second-floor ensuite, details of new partition walls will be required by condition. Given that the ground and first floor have already been altered, it is considered that a neutral impact could be achieved.

Central heating, electrics etc – the property does not currently have any central heating. Is this proposed? New radiators and boilers as well as associated pipes may require listed building consent. Similarly new electrics/wiring also may require consent.

Conclusion: there are concerns with several aspects of the proposal and further information is also required in relation to others. As it stands the proposal would result in less than substantial harm. This harm has not been adequately justified and does not appear to be outweighed by public benefits.

However, with amendment, it is likely that the scheme could be supported.

Re-consultation

Yes, on submission of revised plans. if acceptable, a list of conditions will need to be suggested.