

# Planning Heritage Statement



## Sainsbury's Local, 42-44 Hare Hill Rd, Littleborough OL15 9BA

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### 1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application submitted by Alder King Planning Consultants on behalf of Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd for the replacement and minor relocation of plant equipment at the rear of the Sainsbury's Local store on Hare Hill Road, Littleborough.

The proposal relates to the installation of new refrigeration plant and the repositioning of an existing fan coil unit (FCU) within an existing plant enclosure. The works are required as part of Sainsbury's wider sustainability programme to reduce carbon emissions and modernise outdated equipment. The application site lies within the Littleborough Town Centre Conservation Area, a designated heritage asset.

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### 2. Site and Heritage Context

The Sainsbury's Local store occupies a corner site at the junction of Hare Hill Road and Barehill Street, within the defined town centre boundary and the Littleborough Town Centre Conservation Area. The surrounding area is a mix of commercial and residential properties, with traditional stone buildings forming a key part of the streetscape.

The Littleborough Town Centre Conservation Area was designated to preserve the special architectural and historic character of this Pennine town, shaped by its 19th-century growth around the textile industry and railway expansion. Key characteristics include:

- High-quality stone-built properties with classical proportions and detailing.
- Slate roofs, vertically proportioned windows, and traditional shopfronts.
- A strong building line, tight grain, and a sense of enclosure along Hare Hill Road.
- Views and vistas that draw the eye toward the surrounding hillsides and historic town core.
- Buildings that reflect the town's development as a transport and trade hub, especially around the Rochdale Canal and the railway station.

The application site comprises a retail unit. Although not a heritage asset in its own right, it occupies a sensitive location in the conservation area. The existing plant equipment is situated within a screened service yard to the rear (northwest elevation), set behind the store and largely obscured from public view by the boundary wall and building form.

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## 3. Description of the Proposed Works

The proposed works involve:

- Installation of a new packaged refrigeration plant unit within the existing plant enclosure.
- Minor relocation of the existing FCU to accommodate the new equipment.

The existing plant enclosure, which is gated and fenced, will remain unchanged in size and appearance. The replacement plant is similar in nature, scale, and form to the existing and will not be visible from Hare Hill Road or Barehill Street due to effective screening by the building's envelope and surrounding boundary wall.

This upgrade forms part of Sainsbury's national sustainability strategy to become carbon neutral by 2035, contributing to energy efficiency and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

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## 4. Planning Policy Context

### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024)

- **Paragraph 167:** Local planning authorities should also give significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings... Where the proposals would affect conservation areas, listed buildings or other relevant designated heritage assets, local planning authorities should also apply the policies set out in chapter 16 of the Framework.
- **Paragraph 213:** Great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets
- **Paragraph 223:** Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to significance should be treated favourably.

### Rochdale Core Strategy (2016)

- **Policy P2** seeks to protect and enhance the borough's distinctive character, landscapes, and heritage. The proposal complies by maintaining the site's appearance and function within the conservation area without introducing any visual harm.

### Rochdale Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Saved Policies

- **Policy BE/16: New Development in Conservation Areas**  
This policy requires development to preserve or enhance the character of conservation areas. As the works involve no visual changes beyond what currently exists, they preserve the appearance of the conservation area.
- **Policy BE/17: New Development Affecting Conservation Areas**  
This policy further requires development to be sympathetic to the setting and design of conservation areas. The proposal's neutral visual impact ensures that it remains in keeping with the simple, functional rear elevations of modern commercial units within the area, while being discreet in relation to the traditional street-facing buildings.

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## 5. Assessment of Impact on the Conservation Area

The proposed plant is to be installed within an **existing, well-screened plant enclosure** that sits discreetly within the service yard. Although the new plant unit is slightly larger than the one it

replaces, this minor change is entirely contained and will have no impact on views from key public vantage points.

The conservation area's special interest derives primarily from its stone architecture, historic townscape, and sense of place, all of which remain wholly unaffected by the proposal. No external alterations are proposed to the store itself or the surrounding built environment.

In accordance with paragraph 199 of the NPPF, great weight has been given to the conservation of the designated heritage asset. The proposal is designed to:

- Maintain the established screening and service yard layout
- Avoid visual intrusion or impact on public views
- Preserve the setting and character of the Conservation Area

**Avoidance and Mitigation of Harm:** Following the guidance in Historic England's Advice Note 12:

- The proposal avoids harm by containing works within an existing screened area
- The appearance of the site remains unchanged
- Noise and emissions will be controlled to meet environmental standards

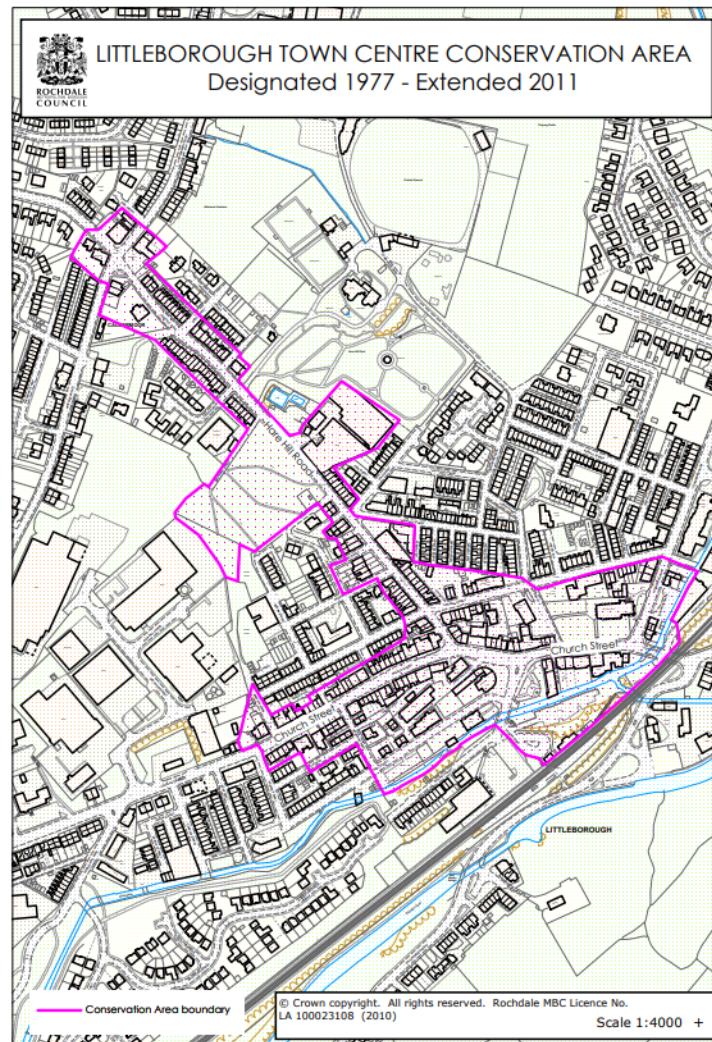
The limited scale, discreet siting, and functional nature of the works ensure no harm is caused to the area's significance. No alterations to historic fabric or publicly visible elevations are proposed.

By maintaining the established screening, siting, and service arrangement, and ensuring acoustic performance meets policy thresholds, the proposal will preserve the conservation area's character and setting, in line with Policy BE/16 and BE/17 and NPPF Chapter 16. The proposal preserves the character and appearance of the conservation area by retaining existing relationships between the building and its surroundings, and maintaining the established visual context. The plant remains screened, with no material increase in visibility or intrusion into the historic townscape.

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**alder  
king**

PLANNING  
CONSULTANTS



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