

HERITAGE & CONSERVATION CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Application Details

Heritage, Conservation & Design team officer

Catherine Fenghour

Date

19 January 2026

Application reference

25/01085/FUL

Address

136 Drake Street, Rochdale, OL16 1PS

Proposal

Proposed flat roof, tree, and small rear dormer for tuition class use. Erection of a brick wall at the ground floor with a fire escape, balcony area above. Additional fire exit stairwell on the first floor, relocation of previously approved fire escape stairwell. Erection of additional side window to the ground floor, and additional rear windows and door on the first and ground floors

Affected Heritage Assets

Designated heritage assets

- 132 Drake Street (grade II)
- Moore Street Congregation Church (grade II)

Non-designated heritage assets

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Summary

Assessment

Site description and significance

The application building is located on the south side of Moore Street, on the corner with Drake Street. Drake Street was created circa 1800 to connect the canal wharves to the old town centre. Development along this road soon followed. The site is shown to be developed on the first edition OS map from the mid-19th century, along with the wider block.



It has undergone some unsympathetic alterations, including the rendering of the front and side elevations and the installation of a later shopfront. These changes have undermined the architectural and historic interest of the building. Nevertheless, it is characteristic of the development which occurred along Drake Street during the 19th century.

Directly opposite the application site is the Grade II listed 132 Drake Street. This listed building is an example of the late Georgian development of the area. It is an attractive red brick two storey building, originally constructed as a dwelling. It retains many original features, including the door surround. Originally constructed as a private house, it came to be used as the Board of Trade Labour Exchange in the 20th century. The building is listed at grade II for its special architectural and historic interest. The application site forms part of the setting of this designated heritage asset.

To the north of the site is Rochdale Congregation Church. This is built of local coursed watershot stone and opened as a Sunday School in 1829. This building is also listed at grade II for its architectural and historic interest. the site forms part of the wider setting of this asset, with views possible of both from the northwest along Moore Street.

Relevant legislation and planning policy

Section 66(1) states that “in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority [...] shall 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.”

NPPF paragraph 213 states that “any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require 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.”

At a local level, PfE policy JP-P2 and Rochdale CS policy P2 apply. This latter policy seeks to conserve, enhance and promote key heritage assets, which include listed buildings.

Assessment of proposals

The proposal follows on from a previously refused scheme for the conversion of the loft space (25/00412/FUL refers). The revised scheme proposes three smaller box dormer windows rather than the single dormer window originally proposed. The external staircase is still proposed.

While the dormer windows are smaller than the refused scheme, they would still cover much of the existing rear roof slope and would be boxy features, which would appear discordant on the simple pitched roof slope. The dormer windows would not be characteristic of the surrounding area, where box dormers are not a common feature.

The revisions do not overcome the previous concerns. The dormer windows and associated works, including the rear external staircase, would be visually intrusive and discordant elements within the streetscene and within the immediate setting of both the Congregational Church and 132 Drake Street. When approaching from Moore Street, the proposal would be visible in common views with the rear elevation of 132 Drake Street and in longer range views from the Congregational Church.

As a result of their appearance and the extent of the roof covered, the dormer windows would detract from the setting of these assets in particular 132 Drake Street. The proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of these designated heritage assets, through inappropriate development within their setting.

Conclusions

The previous concerns have not been overcome. The proposed dormer windows would be boxy additions which would dominate and detract from the appearance of the existing building. The dormers along with the associated works would be intrusive and discordant features within the streetscene and would detract from the setting of both 132 Drake Street and Moore Street Congregational Church, resulting in less than substantial harm to these designated heritage assets. The proposal would fail to preserve their setting contrary to section 66(1) of the 1990 Act.

Re-consultation

Yes, if plans are substantially amended.