

## DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

| APPLICATION NO. | CASE OFFICER    | DATE                          |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| 22/01228/FUL    | Claire Ringwood | 10 <sup>th</sup> October 2023 |

**Address:** Partnership House, Sparrow Hill, Rochdale, OL16 1QT

**Proposal:** Refurbishment of building with internal and external alterations. Internal works include installation of kitchens and bathroom, removal of lift, removal of stud walls and glazed partitions, insertion of new stud walls and removal of walls within the basement. External works include repairs to roof, replacement of all flashing, new hardstanding and railings installed on the top of the existing boundary wall.

|           |                            |   |                       |   |
|-----------|----------------------------|---|-----------------------|---|
| PUBLICITY | Weekly list expired?       | Y | Site notice expired?  | Y |
|           | Neighbour letters expired? | Y | Press Notice expired? | Y |

|            |                                                             |   |                                        |   |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------------|---|
| DELEGATION | Significant departure from local plan?                      | N | Contrary to national policy?           | N |
|            | Applicant a Council Member or officer?                      | N | Contrary to previous decision?         | N |
|            | Major with 10 or more objections and recommending approval? | N | Called in or Planning Panel objection? | N |

|          |                                   |   |
|----------|-----------------------------------|---|
| COMMENTS | Planning Panel comments received? | N |
|          | Neighbour comments received?      | N |

|     |                                                  |     |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------|-----|
| EIA | Screening opinion completed and saved to Onbase? | N/A |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------|-----|

|            |                                                                      |   |
|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| CONDITIONS | Pre-commencement conditions proposed?                                | Y |
|            | Pre-commencement conditions agreed (or notification period expired)? | Y |

|                |                             |
|----------------|-----------------------------|
| RECOMMENDATION | GRANT SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS |
|----------------|-----------------------------|

CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: RG

DATE: 10 November 2023

## **SITE**

Partnership House is a prominent Grade II listed building located on Sparrow Hill in Rochdale. The building was originally constructed as the vicarage for St Chad's Church (Grade II\*), which lies immediately to the north-east. It is within the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area and lies adjacent to the Grade II registered Broadfield Park.

The house was built in 1725 and is a fine example of the Queen Anne period of domestic architecture. It has been extended several times over the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. The building ceased to be used as a vicarage in the 1980s, when the new vicarage was constructed to the south of the site. It was later used as a museum before housing council offices. The building is currently vacant and has been the target of lead theft, resulting in water ingress and the emergence of dry rot and has also been the target of anti-social behaviour.

The building was first listed on 25 October 1951.

## **PROPOSAL**

The application relates to the refurbishment of the building with internal and external alterations to create 7 individual office units as follows:

Unit A – 127sqm (basement)  
Unit B – 113sqm (basement)  
Unit C – 131sqm (ground floor)  
Unit D – 98sqm (ground floor)  
Unit E – 84sqm (first floor)  
Unit F – 81sqm (first floor)  
Unit G – 99sqm (second floor)

Internal works include the installation of kitchens and bathrooms to each unit, the removal of the lift, stud walls and glazed partitions, the insertion of new stud walls and removal of walls within the basement. External works include repairs to the roof, the replacement of all flashing, new hardstanding and railings installed on the top of the existing boundary wall.

The application has been submitted in tandem with an application for listed building consent 22/01229/LBC.

## **PLANS AND INFORMATION SUBMITTED**

The following plans and information was submitted by the agent on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2022:

Drawing No: PL-X-001 Rev P1 – Location Plan  
Drawing No: PL-X-002 Rev P1 – Proposed Site Plan  
Drawing No: PL-001 Rev P1 – As Existing Plans  
Drawing No: PL-002 Rev P1 – As Existing Elevations  
Drawing No: PL-003 Rev P1 – As Proposed Plans  
Drawing No: PL-004 Rev P1 – As Proposed Elevations  
Drawing No: PL-005 Rev P1 – As Proposed Basement Plan  
Drawing No: PL-006 Rev P1 – As Proposed Ground Floor Plan  
Drawing No: PL-007 Rev P1 – As Proposed 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Plan  
Drawing No: PL-008 Rev P1 – As Proposed 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Plan  
Heritage Assessment by Garry Miller Heritage Consultancy, dated September 2022

The following was submitted by the agent on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2022:

Design – Access Statement

The following was submitted by the agent on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2023:

Drawing No: BCHP/0606/SK01 – Structural Requirements Basement Alterations  
Structural Alterations – Guidance Notes for Contractor by Brian Clancy Higby Partnership dated 7 February 2022

Structural Alterations – Guidance Notes for Client by Brian Clancy Higby Partnership  
Structural Calculations for Basement Alterations by Brian Clancy Higby Partnership

The following amended plans were submitted on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2023:

Drawing No: PL-X-002 Rev P3 – Proposed Site Plan

Drawing No: PL-004 Rev P2 – As Proposed Elevations

The following amended plans were submitted on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2023:

Drawing No: PL-X-002 Rev P4 – Proposed Site Plan

The following amended plan was submitted on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2023:

Drawing No: PL-X-002 Rev P5 – Proposed Site Plan

### **RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND LEGISLATION**

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) September 2023  
Chapter 16 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS)

#### **SO3 Improving design, image and quality of place**

P1 Improving image

P2 Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage

DM1 General development requirements

E1 Establishing thriving town, district and local centres

E2 Increasing jobs and prosperity

T2 Improving accessibility

Unitary Development Plan (UDP)

G/D/1 Defined Urban Area

G/R/1 Physical Regeneration

G/BE/9 Conservation of the Built Heritage

Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal

### **RELEVANT SITE HISTORY**

Various planning history but most recent:

01/D39222/FUL - Installation Of 7 Replacement Windows With Enlarged Openings  
To Rear Of Existing Offices. Approved 30/10/2001.

01/D39223/LBC - Installation Of Replacement Windows And Internal Security Windows To Listed Building. Approved 30/10/2001.

04/D44152/FUL - Installation Of 2.4M High Boundary Fence And Gates. Withdrawn 14/10/2004.

04/D44153/LBC - Installation Of 2.4M High Fence And Gates To Boundary Of Existing Building. Withdrawn 14/10/2004.

05/D45062/FUL - Installation Of 1.8M High Railings And Gates (Resubmission-D44152). Refused 27/04/2005.

05/D45063/LBC - Installation Of 1.8M High Railings And Gates To Listed Building (Resubmission - D44153). Refused 27/04/2005.

22/00890/LBC - Essential removal of plasterboard ceilings, concrete plaster to walls and removal of internal wall panelling to expose internal walls to establish the extent of dry rot infestation and spread. Approved 12/09/2022.

22/01229/LBC - Refurbishment of building with internal and external alterations. Internal works include installation of kitchens and bathroom, removal of lift, removal of stud walls and glazed partitions, insertion of new stud walls and removal of walls within the basement. External works include repairs to roof, replacement of all flashing, new hardstanding and railings installed on the top of the existing boundary wall. Pending consideration.

## **CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

### **The Gardens Trust**

Thank you for consulting the Gardens Trust in its role as Statutory Consultee on the above application which affects Broadfield Park, an historic designed landscape of national importance which is included by Historic England on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest at Grade II. We have considered the information provided in support of the application and on the basis of this confirm we do not wish to comment on the proposals at this stage. We would however emphasise that this does not in any way signify either our approval or disapproval of the proposals.

### **Joint Committee of National Amenity Societies**

No comment at the time of writing.

### **Historic England**

No comment at the time of writing.

### **Conservation & Design**

#### *Original comments*

The proposed change of use is supported in principle. The conversion by way of removing some original walls in the basement would result in less than substantial harm – however this is justified as it would bring a vacant property back into use. However further clarification is required to better understand how the applicant proposes to close up existing doorways. Clarification is also required regarding the extent of hardstanding to the front of the site, as it is unclear from the provided plans.

It is considered that the railing to the rear of the site is unjustifiable which would not significantly increase security, but would detract from the significance of the site and historic wall, resulting in less than substantial harm.

- ☐ Clarification on hardstanding
- ☐ Clarification on closing up of doors
- ☐ Removal of railing to the rear

#### *Updated comments*

The most recent plans do not acknowledge the request to remove the railing to the rear of the building. Materially, the proposed powder coated steel does not draw upon elements of the listed building and would contrast with the extant materials found both at the listed building and within its setting. Therefore, this element of the proposed would not conserve or enhance the established setting of the structure. In this respect, the recently amended plans would still result in less than substantial harm. Convincing justification for this harm has not been provided.

However, it is understood that a railing, in principle, was agreed by the previous conservation officer due to security concerns relating to anti-social behaviour. This position is acknowledged and understood. Any railing should be in cast iron and of a style which closely matches other boundary treatments at the property. Details of this should be submitted at a scale of no less than 1:20 and corresponding elevations are to be provided with said details at the scale used presently.

Clarification regarding fixing the doors closed has been provided in email correspondence. This detail can be conditioned for approval. All fixings should be chosen to match those which exist throughout the property with respect to material and appearance. Fixing to any element of timber joinery should be discreet and should result in as few holes as possible. The construction method statement should include details of how exactly the doors will be fixed, including the tools/equipment to be used; all measures to ensure that no undue damage is incurred to surrounding elements of joinery should be detailed as well.

With respect to the tarmac proposed, there needs to be a greater proportion of green area proposed to immediately surround the building as there is presently some level of green space at each elevation of the perimeter. The green strips which are proposed should be surrounding all borders of the hall as complete destruction of all greenspace would result in less than significant harm to the listed asset. Whilst presently the site is overgrown and tidying would result in enhancement of the listed building's setting, complete loss of greenery would materially change the settings of the hall and result in less than significant harm. The tarmac in black is agreeable in principle, as present paving is black tarmac surrounding the hall. The landscaping plan requires amendment to these ends before I can recommend for approval. Any landscaping plans should also be submitted for approval prior to the commencement of works on the site generally.

With respect to the building materials proposed, any repairs to the roof will require a method statement. This should be conditioned for approval prior to the commencement of roofing works. All replacement slates should be natural slate and chosen to match those existing in appearance and geographical origin. Details of the slates should also be conditioned for approval prior to instatement; these should be submitted as a product specification, a series of photographs, or satisfied on a site visit.

Any cleaning of the brickwork will require a method statement to be conditioned for approval.

Any paint to be applied to the roofline will need to be delivered as a sample via post, in person or via a photograph to the conservation officer for approval. This is to be conditioned prior to the commencement of roofing works. This, of course, should be chosen to match the existing with respect to texture, colour and gloss/matte finish. It appears that the present paint finish is matte and not gloss as prescribed in the annotated plans. Any samples to be submitted should be accompanied by photographs/a site visit from the conservation officer of the existing roofline, to confirm that the proposed is indeed the correct finish to be applied.

Any replacement of lead flashing details with zinc/steel is not agreeable and would result in less than substantial/potentially substantial harm to the listed building. Such material is not historically sensitive to the present appearance of the roof and could significantly change a key element of the listed building. Amendments to this end are required prior to my recommendation for approval.

Any referenced window survey will need to be submitted prior to the commencement of any works relating to the windows. Any repairs to windows should seek the advice of suitably qualified practitioner, who should provide a method statement. Any proposed replacements should be chosen to match the existing with respect to materials, appearance and depth of the window reveal. Product specifications, elevations and cross-section detailing should be submitted to the council for approval prior to instatement.

### Highways

#### *Original comments*

The application refers to an increase in parking provision within the site from 30 to 40 spaces however, the application does not include a car park layout plan, which we would need to consider.

The current servicing arrangements would remain unchanged as a result of the development.

We do not expect there would be any detrimental impact on road safety or highway capacity as a result of the proposed development.

Subject to the submission of an acceptable car park layout plan Highways raise no objection to this application or ask for any specific planning conditions.

#### *Updated comments following the submission of an amended Site Plan, received on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2023*

The amended plan appears to provide an acceptable internal access and parking layout.

We would ask that the spaces are marked out as shown on the submitted plan and that any new hard standing or parking areas are SUDs compliant.

### Drainage & Flooding Officer

No comments at the time of writing.

### **REPRESENTATIONS**

Written notification letters were sent to occupiers of properties surrounding the development site and the application was publicised by site notice and in the local newspaper. There have been no representations received.

## **ANALYSIS**

### **Principle of use**

Given that the application proposes works to an existing building, previously used as offices within the Defined Urban Area, the proposed refurbishment of the building to create 7 individual office units is considered acceptable in principle subject to other material planning considerations detailed below.

### **Visual amenity and impact on listed building**

Partnership House is listed at Grade II for its special architectural and historic interest. The building is currently empty and has suffered some issues previously where emergency repairs were carried out and the site has been the target of anti-social behaviour.

An application for Listed Building Consent has been submitted (application ref: 22/01229/LBC) and an assessment of the harm to the significance of the listed building has been carried out. Subject to relevant conditions, the application for Listed Building Consent is recommended for approval.

The application relates to the refurbishment of the building with internal and external alterations to create 7 individual units in the basement and on the ground, first and second floors.

Internal works include the installation of kitchens and bathrooms to each unit, the removal of the lift, stud walls and glazed partitions, the insertion of new stud walls and removal of walls within the basement. External works include repairs to the roof, the replacement of all flashing, new hardstanding and railings installed on the top of the existing boundary wall.

Policy P1 of the Council's adopted Core Strategy seeks to require design which is of a high standard, demonstrating innovation and originality, and maximising the potential for heritage assets to provide a sense of place and image. Policy P2 seeks to conserve, enhance and promote key heritage assets and utilise heritage assets positively and intelligently to strengthen identity and image. Further to this, Policies DM1 and P3 of the Council's adopted Core Strategy require development proposals to adhere to high quality design and enhance the borough's identity and sense of place, by respecting context where it is positive and having regard to the scale, density, massing, height, layout, landscape, materials and access of surrounding buildings and areas in general.

Externally the application proposes the cleaning and repair of the existing roof tiles, repainting of the roofline/eaves and repaired where needed, cleaning of brickwork, repairs to windows and all flashing is to be replaced/repaired. Subject to the materials matching those existing, or by using a suitable alternative on the building, the proposed external works would enhance the building and would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the building or the surrounding area.

To the rear of the site, the application proposes the installation of black railing fencing. The Council's Conservation Officer did raise concerns with the fencing which was considered an incongruous addition to the site, however, it is understood

that a railing, in principle, was agreed by the previous Conservation Officer due to security concerns relating to anti-social behaviour. This position is acknowledged and understood. Details of the proposed railings can be dealt with by way of a suitably worded condition.

The application also proposes to reduce an area of green space to the front of the site to create parking spaces. This area of green-space makes a positive contribution to the setting of the listed building however, a large section of green space will still remain at the front. The parking provision has been reduced as part of the application to allow for additional landscaping to the frontage of the site. However, an additional planting strip could be accommodated to the west side of the building which would provide a greater proportion of green space at each elevation of the building which would enhance its setting and overcome the concern raised by the Council's Conservation Officer. The proposal would bring the building back into use and the tidying of the site would be an enhancement of the listed building's setting and therefore the loss of some green space is considered, in this instance, acceptable subject to the submission of a landscaping plan which can be secured by way of condition.

With the above in mind, and subject to relevant conditions, the proposed development would not result in a detrimental impact on the visual amenity of the building, the character of the area or the setting of the listed building, and is in accordance with Policies P1, P2, P3 and DM1 of the Core Strategy and the NPPF.

#### Residential amenity

Paragraph 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework advises that planning decisions should result in places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. Policy DM1 of the Core Strategy states that proposals should adversely affect the amenity of residents and be compatible with surrounding land uses.

The continued use of the building as offices is not considered to impact neighbouring properties in terms of noise and disturbance and the external works would improve the appearance of the building visually. As such, the proposal is not considered to impact on the living environment of neighbouring properties and is in accordance with policy and guidance.

#### Highways

Paragraph 109 of the NPPF advises that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe. Policy T2 of the adopted Core Strategy concerns improved accessibility.

The submitted application form referred to the site as having 30 car parking spaces with 40 proposed however, a car park layout plan was not initially provided. The agent clarified in an email dated 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2023 that there are 21 existing car parking spaces with 31 proposed. A car parking layout was provided on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2023 (Drawing No: PL-X-002 Rev P3, rev. date 01.05.23) and reviewed by the Council's Highways Officer who advised that some of the proposed parking bays did not meet the required criteria in terms of reversing space to the rear of the bays which must be a minimum of 6m and both the disabled bays should be easily accessible. Highways did advise that these bays could be omitted as the remaining 26 spaces were adequate for the use proposed.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> May 2023 the agent submitted an amended parking layout (Drawing No: PL-X-002 Rev P4, rev. date 08.05.23). The agent advised that the level of hardstanding had been increased to accommodate the 6m to the rear of the parking

bays in question to both maximise the proposed number of parking bays and also to avoid any future parking issues / disputes on the site. The Council's Highways Officer confirmed this amended plan provided acceptable internal access and parking layout and that the spaces are marked out as shown and that any new hard standing or parking areas are SUDs compliant. This matter can be dealt with by way of a condition.

However, officers have considered the impact of the hardstanding on the setting of the listed building and the Council's Conservation Officer's comments that the green space makes a positive contribution to the setting of the listed building. The site is within the town centre and as such maximum parking standards do not need to be met. The Council's Highways Officer has advised that 26 spaces would be adequate. An amended Site Plan was submitted on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023 which reduced the parking provision to 27 however, a planting strip to the west elevation of the building has not been provided. As mentioned above, this matter can be dealt with by way of condition but it will require the relocation of the parking spaces to the west. This matter can be dealt with by way of a suitable condition for an amended parking layout.

The current servicing arrangements would remain unchanged as a result of the development and it is not considered that there would be any detrimental impact on road safety or highway capacity.

With the above in mind, and subject to a relevant condition, the proposed development would not result in a detrimental impact on road safety, and is in accordance with Policy T2 of the Core Strategy and the NPPF.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**GRANT** subject to the following conditions:

1. The development must be begun not later than three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason. Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. This permission relates to the following plans:

Drawing No: PL-X-001 Rev P1 – Location Plan  
Drawing No: PL-003 Rev P1 – As Proposed Plans  
Drawing No: PL-005 Rev P1 – As Proposed Basement Plan  
Drawing No: PL-006 Rev P1 – As Proposed Ground Floor Plan  
Drawing No: PL-007 Rev P1 – As Proposed 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Plan  
Drawing No: PL-008 Rev P1 – As Proposed 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Plan  
Received on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2022

Drawing No: PL-004 Rev P2 – As Proposed Elevations  
Received on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2023

Drawing No: PL-X-002 Rev P5 – Proposed Site Plan  
Received on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2023

and the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved drawings.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure a satisfactory standard of development in accordance with the policies contained within the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, the saved Rochdale Unitary Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. No development shall commence on site (including demolition/removal) until a schedule of all the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces, including boundary treatments, of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out and thereafter maintained in accordance with the details approved unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to ensure a satisfactory appearance in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policies P2, P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Reason for pre-commencement condition: as insufficient information has been submitted with the application.

4. Notwithstanding the plans approved in Condition 2 above, prior to first occupation a plan showing how 26 vehicle parking spaces can satisfactorily be provided on site shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The vehicle parking spaces shall be provided in full accordance with the approved details prior to first occupation and thereafter kept free of obstruction and retained in accordance with the approved details and shall remain available for the parking of vehicles at all times.

Reason: These details are required due to insufficient information being contained within this submission and in order to ensure that the development is provided with adequate parking facilities to meet the needs of future occupiers and to reduce the likelihood of roadside parking which could be a danger to other road users in accordance with Policy TR2 of the Rochdale Core Strategy and the NPPF.

5. Notwithstanding the plans approved in Condition 2 above, prior to first occupation a scheme of hard and soft landscaping shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. This scheme shall include a planting strip to the west elevation of the building and specify means of treatment for hard surfaced areas, means of enclosure including mammal gaps where appropriate, specify species, planting sizes, spacing and numbers of trees/shrubs to be planted (including replacement trees and tree pit specifications where appropriate, and must include a maintenance programme detailing all operations to be carried out in order to allow successful establishment of planting.

Planting shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the building(s) or in accordance with a timetable agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. Any trees or plants which, within a period of 5 years from the date of planting, die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the site is satisfactorily landscaped having regard to its location and the nature of the proposed development and in accordance

with Policies P3, DM1 and G7 of the Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

**Procedure Statement**

The Local Planning Authority worked proactively with the applicant to identify various solutions during the application process to ensure that the proposal comprised sustainable development and would improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area and would accord with the development plan. These were incorporated into the scheme and/or have been secured by planning condition.