



Heritage Statement

Practice: Building Design Services

March 2026



bds

Address:
19–21 Boarshaw Road
Middleton
Manchester
M24 6BR

Proposed:
Change of Use from Former Public House and Car
Park to Hand Car Wash (sui generis) including
associated equipment, with the former public house
building used as ancillary office and storage.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the proposed change of use of land at 19–21 Boarshaw Road, Middleton, Manchester, M24 6BR from an existing car park to a hand car wash facility (sui generis). The application has been submitted on behalf of Mr Sirwan Hama and accompanies the planning application drawings and supporting planning statement prepared by Building Design Services.
- 1.2 The purpose of this Heritage Statement is to assess the potential impact of the proposed development on the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area, within which the site is located. The document has been prepared to assist the Local Planning Authority in understanding the significance of the heritage asset and to consider whether the proposed development would preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 1.3 The protection of the historic environment is an important consideration within the planning system. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas when determining planning applications. This statement therefore provides an assessment of the site and the proposed development in relation to this statutory duty.
- 1.4 National planning policy also places significant weight on the conservation of heritage assets. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Where development is proposed within a conservation area, applicants are expected to provide sufficient information to allow the Local Planning Authority to understand the potential impacts of the development on the historic environment.
- 1.5 The application site comprises an existing hard surfaced car park associated with the former public house known as "The Nook" located on Boarshaw Road. The proposed development seeks to reuse this existing area for a small scale commercial hand car wash operation. The development will utilise the existing site and does not involve the demolition of the existing building or the introduction of significant new built form.
- 1.6 The proposal includes operational features necessary for the functioning of the car wash, including metal canopy wash bays, defined vehicle circulation areas, boundary fencing, and ancillary office and storage space within the existing building. These elements are modest in scale and are typical of service uses operating within established commercial environments.
- 1.7 This Heritage Statement therefore considers the relationship between the site, the conservation area and the proposed development. The assessment examines the character of the surrounding area, the significance of the conservation area designation and the potential effects of the proposed development on that significance.
- 1.8 As will be demonstrated within the following sections, the proposed development represents the reuse of previously developed land. It does not involve the loss of historic fabric or architectural features that contribute to the conservation area's significance. The proposal has been designed to ensure that the character and appearance of the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area are preserved.

2. Site Description and Context

- 2.1 The application site is located at 19–21 Boarshaw Road, Middleton, Manchester, M24 6BR. The site forms part of land associated with the former public house known as “The Nook”, which fronts Boarshaw Road. The area subject to this application comprises an existing hard-surfaced car park located to the side and rear of the building, which has historically served the public house and surrounding commercial activity.
- 2.2 Boarshaw Road is a well-established local route within Middleton and forms part of a wider urban environment characterised by a mixture of commercial, service and employment-related uses. The surrounding built form comprises workshops, commercial units, service yards, and other utilitarian buildings, contributing to the area's mixed-use character. As a result, the immediate townscape is not purely residential and already accommodates a range of active commercial activities.
- 2.3 The site benefits from an existing vehicular access from Boarshaw Road, which has historically served the lawful car park use. This access arrangement remains suitable for the proposed development and provides direct connectivity to the surrounding road network. The site itself is generally level and fully hard surfaced, reflecting its long-standing use as a parking area.
- 2.4 The wider context of the site includes a variety of building types and uses typical of an established urban environment. Buildings within the surrounding area range from traditional brick structures to more modern commercial premises and service buildings. The presence of these mixed building forms contributes to a townscape that is varied and utilitarian in character, particularly along sections of Boarshaw Road where commercial activity is prominent.
- 2.5 The site lies within the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area, which was originally designated in 1978 and later extended in 2009. The conservation area reflects the historic development of Middleton and includes a range of buildings, streets and spaces that contribute to the town centre's historic character. These typically include traditional brick buildings, historic street patterns and established commercial frontages.
- 2.6 Although the conservation area contains several historic buildings and important heritage assets, the character of the area varies across different locations. Some parts of the conservation area retain a strong historic architectural character, while other sections, particularly those closer to commercial corridors and service areas, display a more mixed, functional urban form.
- 2.7 The immediate surroundings of the application site fall within the latter category, where the presence of commercial uses, workshops and service-related activity creates a robust urban environment capable of accommodating small-scale commercial development. The site itself already functions as a vehicle-related environment due to its existing use as a car park.
- 2.8 There are no listed buildings within the application site itself, and the proposal does not involve the demolition or alteration of any historic structures. The former public house building will remain in place and will continue to form part of the streetscape along Boarshaw Road.
- 2.9 Overall, the site represents previously developed land within an established commercial context, where vehicle-related activity and service uses are already present. The surrounding environment is therefore capable of accommodating the proposed development without harming the conservation area's wider character or appearance.

3. Proposed Development

- 3.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the change of use of an existing car park to a hand car wash facility (sui generis) at 19–21 Boarshaw Road, Middleton, Manchester, M24 6BR. The proposal has been designed to utilise the existing hard-surfaced car park area associated with the former public house known as “The Nook”. It does not involve the demolition of the existing building or any significant alteration to the established built form on the site.
- 3.2 The proposed development is primarily operational in nature and focuses on the reuse of the existing car park area for a vehicle cleaning and valeting service. The proposal introduces clearly defined areas for car washing and vehicle valeting while retaining the existing building, thereby supporting the day-to-day operation of the business.
- 3.3 The layout of the proposed development has been designed to ensure that the car wash can operate efficiently while maintaining safe vehicle circulation within the site. Vehicles will enter the site via the existing access point on Boarshaw Road, proceed through the site in a controlled manner, and exit via the designated exit point. The internal arrangement ensures that vehicles can manoeuvre safely within the site and avoids the need for vehicles to reverse onto the public highway.
- 3.4 The proposed development includes designated car wash areas and mini valeting bays where vehicles will be cleaned by hand using appropriate equipment. The car wash operation will be supported by metal canopy wash bay structures, which provide shelter for staff and vehicles during the cleaning process. These canopy structures are lightweight and modest in scale, ensuring they remain visually subordinate within the site.
- 3.5 The former public house building will remain in place and will be used to provide ancillary office and storage space associated with the car wash operation. The use of the existing building allows the development to function without the need for additional permanent buildings or extensions. This approach helps to minimise physical changes to the site and ensures that the development remains proportionate to its surroundings.
- 3.6 To provide security and clearly define the operational area of the site, the proposal includes the installation of a 1.8 metre high metal boundary fence around parts of the site. The fencing will help contain the operational activity within the site boundary and will provide visual screening from the surrounding area. The proposed fencing is typical of commercial premises and is considered appropriate within the context of the surrounding townscape.
- 3.7 The proposal also includes the provision of commercial waste bins and clearly marked parking and circulation areas to ensure the site operates in an orderly and well-managed manner. These elements are necessary for the business's practical operation and have been positioned to ensure they do not dominate the site's appearance.
- 3.8 The development has been designed with the intention of making efficient use of previously developed land while introducing a modest commercial use that is compatible with the surrounding environment. The proposal does not introduce large-scale structures or visually intrusive development and instead relies on lightweight operational features typical of service uses within commercial areas.
- 3.9 Overall, the proposed development represents the reuse of an existing vehicle-related site for a small scale hand car wash operation, supported by modest ancillary features necessary for its operation. The scale and nature of the development are proportionate to the site and its surroundings and have been designed to ensure that the character and appearance of the wider area are respected.

4. Impact on the Conservation Area

- 4.1 The application site is located within the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area, which was designated to recognise the historic character and development of Middleton's town centre. Conservation areas are designated where the historic environment, including buildings, streets and spaces, collectively contributes to the character and appearance of an area considered worthy of preservation or enhancement.
- 4.2 The significance of the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area is derived primarily from the historic street pattern, the presence of traditional buildings constructed using brick and stone, and the role of the town centre as a historic commercial and civic focus within Middleton. Many of the buildings within the conservation area reflect the town's historic development and contribute to the area's overall architectural and historic character.
- 4.3 When assessing development proposals within conservation areas, the key consideration is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. This requires an assessment of the scale, design and visual impact of the proposed development in relation to the surrounding townscape.
- 4.4 The proposed development primarily involves the reuse of an existing hard-surfaced car park associated with the former public house known as "The Nook". The proposal does not involve the demolition of any historic buildings or the removal of architectural features that contribute to the significance of the conservation area. The existing building will remain in place and will continue to form part of the streetscape along Boarshaw Road.
- 4.5 The operational elements of the development, including the metal canopy wash bays, boundary fencing and associated equipment, are modest in scale and are positioned within the existing car park area. These elements are lightweight and functional, and do not introduce prominent new structures that would dominate the surrounding environment.
- 4.6 The section of Boarshaw Road where the site is located already contains a mixture of commercial premises, workshops and service-related uses. As a result, the immediate townscape has a more utilitarian character than some of the more historically sensitive parts of the conservation area. The presence of vehicle-related activity and commercial uses in the surrounding area means that the proposed development is consistent with the established character of this part of the conservation area.
- 4.7 The proposed metal boundary fencing will provide a degree of visual containment for the operational elements of the car wash. This helps ensure that the activity within the site remains visually contained and reduces the potential for the development to appear intrusive within the surrounding environment.
- 4.8 Given that the development primarily involves a change of use of an existing car park, the overall physical changes to the site are limited. The proposal does not introduce large-scale buildings or significant alterations to the established urban form. The scale of development is therefore considered proportionate and appropriate within the context of the surrounding townscape.
- 4.9 In heritage terms, the proposal does not result in the loss of historic fabric, does not alter the appearance of the existing building, and does not introduce visually dominant structures that would detract from the character of the conservation area. The development therefore preserves the key elements that contribute to the significance of the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area.

- 4.10 Overall, the proposed development is considered to have no harmful impact on the character or appearance of the conservation area. The proposal represents a modest reuse of previously developed land within a commercial part of the conservation area and is compatible with the surrounding urban environment.

5. Impact on the Conservation Area

- 5.1 The determination of this application must be made in accordance with the statutory development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance, the proposal must be assessed against national planning policy relating to the historic environment as well as relevant local planning policies adopted by Rochdale Borough Council.
- 5.2 At a national level, the principal planning policy document is the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF places considerable importance on the conservation of heritage assets and sets out the approach to be taken when assessing development proposals affecting designated heritage assets, such as conservation areas.
- 5.3 The NPPF recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities are required to consider the impact of development proposals on the significance of heritage assets and to ensure that development preserves or enhances their character and appearance.
- 5.4 In particular, the NPPF states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. However, the Framework also recognises that heritage assets can continue to evolve over time and that well-designed development can take place within conservation areas provided that it does not harm their significance.
- 5.5 National policy, therefore, does not prevent development within conservation areas. Instead, it seeks to ensure that development proposals are carefully considered and designed to respect the historic environment. Where proposals preserve the character and appearance of a conservation area, they can be considered acceptable in planning terms.
- 5.6 At a local level, Rochdale Borough Council's development plan also contains policies that seek to protect and enhance the historic environment. These policies generally support development proposals that preserve the character of conservation areas and that do not result in the loss of historic buildings or features that contribute to their significance.
- 5.7 The proposed development has been designed with these policy objectives in mind. The proposal primarily involves the reuse of an existing hard-surfaced car park associated with the former public house. The development does not involve the demolition of any historic structures and does not introduce large-scale buildings or visually intrusive development.
- 5.8 The operational features associated with the car wash, including canopy structures and boundary fencing, are modest in scale and typical of commercial environments. These elements are located within the existing site boundary and do not alter the historic form of the surrounding streetscape.
- 5.9 The proposal also supports broader planning objectives relating to the efficient use of previously developed land and the support of small-scale commercial activity within established urban areas. By introducing a modest commercial use on an underutilised site, the development contributes to the local economy while making productive use of land within the existing urban area.
- 5.10 When assessed against both national and local planning policy, the proposed development is considered to be consistent with the objectives of conserving heritage assets while allowing appropriate and sustainable development to take place. The proposal, therefore, aligns with the policy framework for heritage conservation and represents an acceptable form of development within the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared to support the planning application for the proposed change of use of an existing car park to a hand car wash facility at 19–21 Boarshaw Road, Middleton, Manchester, M24 6BR.
- 6.2 The assessment has considered the relationship between the application site and the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area, within which the site is located. The conservation area reflects the historic development of Middleton and includes a range of traditional buildings and historic streets that contribute to its overall character and significance.
- 6.3 The application site itself comprises an existing hard-surfaced car park associated with the former public house known as “The Nook”. The proposal does not involve the demolition of the existing building. It does not result in the loss of any historic fabric or architectural features that contribute to the conservation area’s significance.
- 6.4 The proposed development primarily represents the reuse of previously developed land and introduces a modest commercial use within the existing site. The operational features associated with the car wash, including canopy wash bays, boundary fencing and ancillary facilities, are lightweight and modest in scale. These elements are typical of service uses operating within commercial environments and do not introduce prominent structures that would detract from the surrounding townscape.
- 6.5 The surrounding area along Boarshaw Road already contains a mixture of commercial premises, workshops and service-related uses. As a result, the immediate environment has a robust, utilitarian character that can accommodate small-scale commercial activity without harming the historic environment.
- 6.6 Given that the proposal does not alter the existing building, does not remove historic features and does not introduce visually intrusive development, the proposed change of use is considered to be appropriate within the context of the conservation area.
- 6.7 Overall, the proposed development preserves the character and appearance of the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area and accords with the relevant heritage policies of the planning system. For these reasons, the development is considered acceptable in heritage terms, and there are no heritage-related grounds that would justify the refusal of planning permission.