

Heritage Statement

Site Address: St James Place, Yorkshire Street, Rochdale, OL16 2LD

Proposal: Change of use of former offices to twenty-one self-contained apartments

Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared to accompany the planning application for the proposed development at St James Place. The statement assesses the significance of the existing building, its contribution to the Town Head Conservation Area, and the potential impact of the proposed works, in accordance with the requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Assessment of Significance

The application site is situated within the Town Head Conservation Area, designated in the 1980s. The existing building is a detached, three-storey property of brick construction with a slate roof, originally built for office use. The site benefits from a prominent frontage and associated parking to the side and rear.

The property lies adjacent to notable heritage assets, including St Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Church (Grade II listed), and is surrounded by a mix of commercial and residential uses.

In terms of heritage value, the building itself is of limited architectural and historic significance, lacking distinctive features of merit. Its primary contribution to the conservation area arises from its form, scale, and materiality, which ensure a degree of consistency within the surrounding townscape.

Impact of Proposals

The proposed development seeks the conversion of the building into residential accommodation, involving no alteration to the front elevation and minor alterations to the rear elevation. The only external works comprise of the removal of the large shutters to the rear elevation and insertion of new windows and smaller shutters designed in materials and detailing to match the existing building.

These minor alterations are considered sympathetic and proportionate, ensuring the character and appearance of the building remains consistent with the wider conservation area. The proposals will preserve the setting of nearby listed buildings and will not result in harm to the special architectural or historic interest of the Town Head Conservation Area.

Policy Considerations

Paragraphs 197–202 of the NPPF require local planning authorities to give great weight to the conservation of designated heritage assets and to assess the scale of any harm in relation to the public benefits of a proposal. In this case, the proposals are assessed as causing no harm to the significance of the conservation area or to the setting of adjacent listed buildings.

The development will bring a currently underused building into active residential use, contributing to the vitality and viability of the local area and delivering a form of sustainable development consistent with the objectives of both national and local planning policy.

Conclusion

The proposed conversion of St James Place represents a sensitive and appropriate reuse of the building. The works will preserve the character and appearance of the Town Head Conservation Area and safeguard the setting of adjacent listed buildings. The proposals therefore fully accord with the statutory duty under the 1990 Act, the guidance of the NPPF, and relevant local planning policies