



Heritage Statement

Practice: Building Design Services

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bds

Address:
885 Manchester Road
Castleton, Rochdale
OL11 2ST

Proposed:
Change of use from Office (Use Class E) to House in
Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4)

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application relating to 885 Manchester Road, Castleton, Rochdale, OL11 2ST. The proposal seeks planning permission for the change of use of the existing building from an office (Use Class E) to a House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4). The proposed development primarily comprises internal alterations to facilitate the new residential use, together with limited external alterations to the rear elevation. The front elevation of the building will remain unchanged.

The application site is located within the Castleton (South) Conservation Area, designated by Rochdale Borough Council in 2007 and extended in 2012. As the site lies within a designated heritage asset, this statement has been prepared to assess the significance of the Conservation Area and to consider whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance its character and appearance.

The purpose of this statement is to demonstrate that the proposal has been designed with due regard to the historic environment and that it accords with national and local planning policy relating to the conservation of heritage assets. In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the assessment considers the significance of the heritage asset, the contribution made by the application site to its setting, and the likely effect of the proposed development.

The existing building forms part of a traditional terrace along Manchester Road within an established mixed-use area. The surrounding streets contain a combination of residential properties, local businesses and community facilities, reflecting the historic evolution of Castleton. Whilst the building contributes positively to the streetscape, it is not individually listed and the proposal does not involve the demolition of historic fabric or substantial alteration to its principal elevation.

The proposed change of use represents the reuse of an existing building, allowing it to continue contributing to the vitality of the area whilst retaining its established appearance within the streetscape. Given that the majority of the works are internal in nature and external alterations are limited, it is considered that the proposal will preserve the character and appearance of the Castleton (South) Conservation Area.

This statement therefore provides an assessment of the site's heritage context, the proposed development, and its impact on the significance of the Conservation Area and nearby heritage assets, demonstrating that the proposal is acceptable in heritage terms.

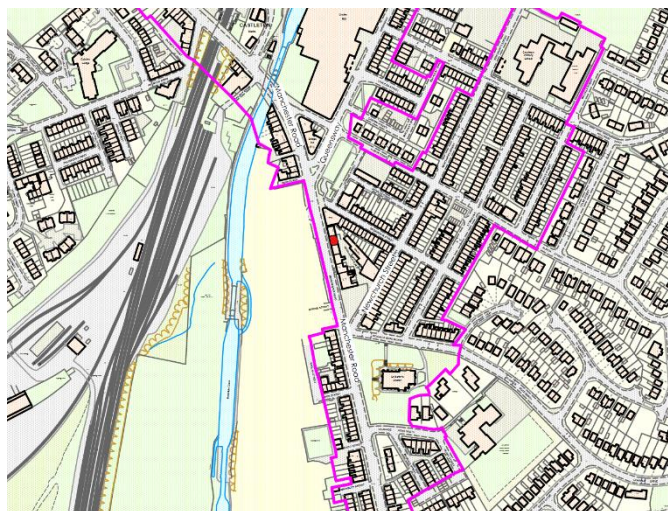


Figure 1 Application site (shown in red) located within the Castleton (South) Conservation Area (purple boundary).
Source: Rochdale Borough Council.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is located at 885 Manchester Road, Castleton, Rochdale, OL11 2ST, occupying a position on the eastern side of Manchester Road within the Castleton (South) Conservation Area. The property forms part of a continuous terrace of traditional two-storey buildings which contribute to the established character of the street. The surrounding area is mixed in nature, comprising residential properties, local businesses, community facilities and commercial premises, reflecting the gradual evolution of the area over time.

The existing building is of traditional brick construction beneath a pitched slate roof and displays architectural characteristics typical of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century development within Castleton. The front elevation addresses Manchester Road and forms an important part of the established streetscape, maintaining a consistent building line and scale with neighbouring properties. The rear of the site comprises a private yard enclosed by surrounding buildings and boundary treatments, limiting public views from the wider Conservation Area.

The property is currently in office use (Use Class E). Internally, it comprises office accommodation arranged over two floors. The proposal seeks to convert the building into a five-bedroom House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4), providing shared kitchen, dining, living and bathroom facilities. The majority of the proposed works are internal alterations, with only limited external changes to the rear elevation. The principal front elevation will remain unaltered, ensuring that the building continues to make the same contribution to the character and appearance of Manchester Road.

The application site is not a listed building. However, it lies within the Castleton (South) Conservation Area, where the significance of the area is derived from the collective character of its historic buildings, traditional street pattern and varied mix of residential, commercial and community uses. The site also lies within the wider setting of a number of listed buildings in Castleton, although it is not directly associated with, nor does it form the immediate setting of, any individual listed heritage asset.

The existing building is considered to make a positive contribution to the townscape through its traditional form, materials and relationship with the surrounding terrace. As the proposal retains the building's overall appearance and introduces only minor alterations that are largely confined to the rear, the existing character of the site will remain substantially unchanged following development.



Figure 2 Aerial view of the application site (red) illustrating its position within the established terrace fronting Manchester Road and its relationship with the surrounding built environment.

3. HERITAGE CONTEXT

The application site lies within the Castleton (South) Conservation Area, which was designated by Rochdale Borough Council in 2007 and extended in 2012 in recognition of its special architectural and historic interest. The Conservation Area encompasses a varied townscape centred around Manchester Road, incorporating traditional residential terraces, commercial premises, places of worship, the Rochdale Canal and a number of historic buildings which together illustrate the historic development of Castleton.

Manchester Road forms one of the principal routes through the Conservation Area and is characterised by a continuous frontage of predominantly two-storey brick buildings dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Whilst individual buildings vary in appearance and use, they collectively create a coherent streetscape through their consistent scale, traditional materials, building line and roof forms. These characteristics make an important contribution to the overall significance and character of the Conservation Area.

The application property forms part of this established terrace and contributes positively to the street scene through its traditional design, red brick construction and pitched roof. Although the building contributes to the character of the Conservation Area, it is not a listed building and is not identified as an individual heritage asset. Its significance is therefore derived primarily from its contribution to the wider townscape rather than from any exceptional architectural or historic interest.

The surrounding area contains a number of designated heritage assets, including listed buildings associated with Castleton's historic development. However, the application site is not immediately adjacent to any listed building and does not form part of the immediate setting of a designated heritage asset. Consequently, the principal heritage consideration is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the Castleton (South) Conservation Area as a whole, rather than on the significance of an individual listed building.

The Conservation Area has continued to evolve over time, with changes in building use reflecting the needs of the local community whilst retaining the area's established historic character. Existing residential properties, local businesses, community facilities and commercial premises coexist along Manchester Road, creating a mixed-use environment that remains active throughout the day. The continued reuse and adaptation of existing buildings, where undertaken sensitively, can help sustain the long-term vitality of the Conservation Area while preserving its architectural character.

Overall, the application property continues to contribute to the historic streetscape through its traditional form, scale and materials. As the proposal retains the principal external appearance of the building and introduces only limited alterations to the rear elevation, its contribution to the significance of the Castleton (South) Conservation Area will remain substantially unchanged following development.

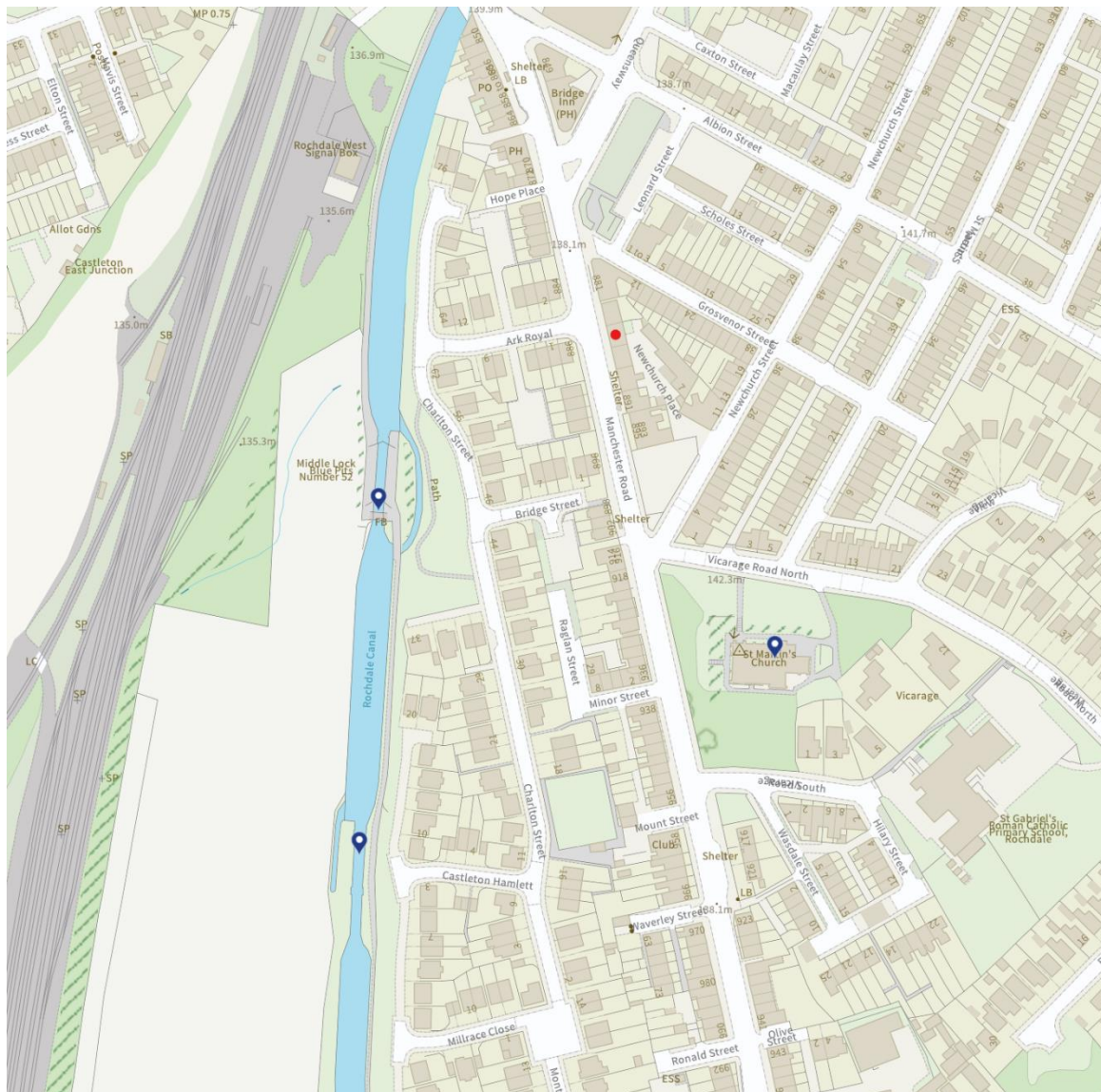


Figure 3 Location of the application site (red) in relation to nearby listed buildings (blue) within the Castleton (South) Conservation Area.

4. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposal seeks planning permission for the change of use of the existing building from an office (Use Class E) to a House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4). The development has been designed to provide five bedrooms together with shared kitchen, dining, living and bathroom facilities, making efficient use of the existing building while requiring only limited alterations to its external appearance.

The majority of the proposed works are internal and involve the reconfiguration of the existing layout to create suitable residential accommodation. These alterations have no impact on the external appearance of the building or its contribution to the surrounding streetscape. As such, the proposal retains the established form, scale and architectural character of the property.

Externally, the proposal introduces only minor alterations to the rear elevation. These changes have been designed to improve the functionality of the building for its proposed residential use and are confined to an area that has limited visibility from the public realm. The principal front elevation facing Manchester Road remains unchanged, ensuring that the appearance of the building within the Conservation Area is preserved.

No extensions, alterations to the roof form, or changes to the overall scale and massing of the building are proposed. The existing building footprint is retained, and the development does not introduce any features that would appear visually intrusive or out of keeping with the surrounding built environment. Traditional materials and the overall architectural composition of the building remain unaffected.

The proposal represents the sensitive reuse of an existing building, ensuring its continued occupation and long-term maintenance. Bringing the property into active residential use supports the efficient use of existing buildings within the urban area whilst avoiding unnecessary new development elsewhere. The scheme has therefore been designed to respond positively to its historic setting by retaining the characteristics that contribute to the significance of the Castleton (South) Conservation Area.

Overall, the proposed development is considered to be modest in scale and sympathetic to the existing building. The limited nature of the external alterations, together with the retention of the principal elevation and overall form of the property, ensures that the proposal respects the historic character and appearance of both the building and the wider Conservation Area.

5. HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The proposed development has been carefully considered in the context of the significance of the Castleton (South) Conservation Area. The principal heritage consideration is whether the change of use and associated works would preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, having regard to the contribution made by the application property to the wider historic streetscape.

The proposal is predominantly a change of use, with the vast majority of works taking place internally. The conversion from an office (Use Class E) to a House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4) does not require alterations to the principal form, scale or architectural character of the building. As a result, the building will continue to appear as an established part of the terrace fronting Manchester Road.

The front elevation, which makes the greatest contribution to the public streetscape and the character of the Conservation Area, will remain unchanged. Existing architectural features, building proportions and traditional materials are retained, ensuring that the visual relationship between the application property and neighbouring buildings is preserved.

The only external alterations are limited to the rear elevation. Due to their location, these changes have minimal visibility from public viewpoints within the Conservation Area and will not alter the established appearance of Manchester Road. The proposal therefore avoids any adverse impact upon the qualities that contribute to the significance of the designated heritage asset.

The continued occupation and reuse of the building also represents a positive outcome from a heritage perspective. The sensitive adaptation of existing buildings allows them to remain in active use, reducing the risk of deterioration whilst supporting the long-term vitality of the Conservation Area. The proposal secures the ongoing use of the property without requiring inappropriate extensions, demolition or substantial external alteration.

Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed works, it is considered that the development will preserve the character and appearance of the Castleton (South) Conservation Area. The proposal will not result in harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset, nor will it adversely affect the setting of nearby listed buildings. Overall, the development is considered to represent a sympathetic and appropriate form of development that responds positively to its historic surroundings.

6. PLANNING POLICY

The conservation of the historic environment is a key objective of both national and local planning policy. The planning system seeks to ensure that development proposals conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance whilst allowing buildings to remain in viable and sustainable use.

National planning policy is set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which recognises heritage assets as an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved for future generations. The NPPF requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of information provided should be proportionate to the significance of the asset and the scale of the proposed development.

Paragraph 212 of the NPPF states that when considering the impact of a proposal on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to its conservation. This applies irrespective of the level of potential harm. The Framework also recognises that heritage assets are capable of accommodating sensitive change where proposals preserve their significance and ensure their continued beneficial use.

At a local level, Rochdale Borough Council's planning policies seek to protect the Borough's historic environment by ensuring that development within Conservation Areas preserves or enhances their character and appearance. Development proposals should respect the scale, form, materials and architectural qualities that contribute to the significance of the area, whilst allowing buildings to adapt to changing social and economic needs.

In this case, the proposal relates primarily to the change of use of an existing building, with only limited external alterations to the rear elevation and no changes to the principal frontage. The proposal retains the building's established appearance and preserves its contribution to the wider streetscape of Manchester Road. As such, the development is consistent with the objectives of both national and local planning policy relating to the conservation of the historic environment.

Overall, the proposal demonstrates that the historic significance of the Castleton (South) Conservation Area has been properly considered throughout the design process. The development represents an appropriate and sustainable reuse of an existing building whilst preserving the character and appearance of the designated heritage asset.

7. CONCLUSION

This Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the change of use of 885 Manchester Road, Castleton, Rochdale, from an office (Use Class E) to a House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4). The statement has assessed the significance of the application site within the context of the Castleton (South) Conservation Area and considered the potential impact of the proposed development upon the historic environment.

The assessment confirms that the application property is not a listed building, although it forms part of the established historic streetscape that contributes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposal has been designed to retain this contribution by preserving the principal front elevation and limiting external alterations to minor works at the rear of the building. The majority of the proposed development comprises internal alterations associated with the change of use.

The proposal does not involve the demolition of historic fabric, significant alterations to the building's external appearance, or development that would detract from the established character of Manchester Road. The existing scale, form, materials and architectural appearance of the building will remain substantially unchanged, ensuring that its contribution to the Conservation Area is preserved.

The continued occupation and reuse of the property represent a sustainable form of development, securing the long-term use of an existing building whilst responding to local housing needs. The proposal demonstrates that the building can successfully accommodate a new use without compromising the qualities that contribute to the significance of the Conservation Area.

Having considered the nature and scale of the proposed works, it is concluded that the development will preserve the character and appearance of the Castleton (South) Conservation Area and will not result in harm to the significance or setting of nearby heritage assets. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework and the heritage objectives of Rochdale Borough Council.

For these reasons, the proposed development is considered acceptable in heritage terms, and overall, the proposal is considered acceptable in heritage terms and is considered to preserve the character and appearance of the Castleton (South) Conservation Area.