

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Site Address: 58A Long Street, Middleton, M24 6UQ

Proposal: Change of use from office accommodation (Class E) to 5 no. self-contained apartments (Class C3), enclosed bin store and cycle storage

Applicant: Moorings Investments

Drawing Reference: DS/25/1170

Prepared by: DS Design & Planning

1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of a Full Planning Application at **58A Long Street, Middleton, M24 6UQ** for the:

“Change of use from office accommodation (Class E) to 5 no. self-contained apartments (Class C3), enclosed bin store and cycle storage.”

The purpose of this statement is to consider the heritage significance of the site and its surroundings and to assess the potential impact of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the **Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area**.

The proposed development primarily relates to the reuse and internal conversion of the existing building to provide five self-contained residential apartments. The submitted floor plan also provides an enclosed bin and cycle storage area as part of the development.

2. Site and Existing Building

The application relates to **58A Long Street**, situated within Middleton town centre.

The property forms part of the established built frontage along Long Street and is currently associated with office accommodation falling within **Use Class E**.

The site lies within the **Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area**, and consequently consideration must be given to the effect of the proposed development upon the character, appearance and significance of the conservation area.

The surrounding area has an established urban character comprising a mixture of commercial, residential and other town-centre uses. The significance of the conservation area is derived from the historic development and architectural character of Middleton town centre, including its traditional buildings, established street pattern, building lines, scale and townscape.

The adjoining **58B Long Street** has previously been assessed by Rochdale Council as being within the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area. In determining the adjoining Class MA residential conversion, the Council considered the effect of residential conversion upon the conservation area.

3. Proposed Development

Planning permission is sought for the change of use of the existing office accommodation from **Class E to Class C3 residential use**, providing a total of **five self-contained apartments**.

The proposed drawing identifies five individual flats together with their associated bedrooms, kitchen/living areas and bathroom accommodation.

The proposal also incorporates an **enclosed bin and cycle store**, allowing refuse and cycle storage requirements associated with the residential use to be accommodated in a defined area within the development.

The development principally seeks to secure the beneficial reuse of the existing building rather than redevelopment of the site.

4. Heritage Significance

The principal designated heritage consideration relevant to the application is the site's location within the **Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area**.

The heritage significance of the wider area is associated with its historic town-centre development and the architectural and townscape qualities of its buildings and streets.

The existing building contributes to the established built form of Long Street through its physical presence, scale and relationship with the surrounding frontage.

The proposal does not involve demolition of the existing building. Its continued occupation and reuse therefore allows the established built form of this part of Long Street to be retained.

The proposed residential conversion is considered compatible with the objective of maintaining an active and sustainable use for existing buildings within historic town-centre environments.

5. Impact of the Change of Use

The proposed change from office accommodation to residential apartments is predominantly concerned with the **use and internal arrangement of the building**.

The physical presence of the existing building within the streetscape will therefore be retained.

The conversion to five residential apartments provides an opportunity to secure a viable and sustainable use for the property without requiring wholesale redevelopment.

The residential use itself is not considered to cause harm to the architectural or historic significance of the conservation area. The proposed use would allow the building to remain occupied and maintained while accommodating an appropriate town-centre use.

There is also relevant planning context immediately adjoining the application property. Rochdale Council previously granted prior approval for the conversion of **58B Long Street from Class E offices to five Class C3 apartments**.

In its assessment of that development, the Council concluded that the residential use and internal conversion would not adversely affect the setting or character of the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area.

Although the present application at 58A must be considered on its own merits, this provides relevant context demonstrating that residential reuse of the adjoining building has previously been considered compatible with the conservation-area location.

6. External Appearance

The submitted proposal is principally concerned with the change of use and internal conversion of the existing building.

The submitted apartment floor plan does not identify substantial redevelopment or alteration of the principal building frontage. Accordingly, the established scale and built form of the property and its relationship with the Long Street streetscape are maintained.

Retention and reuse of the existing building limits intervention within the conservation area and avoids unnecessary alteration to the established townscape.

Any detailed works undertaken as part of implementing the conversion should respect the existing character of the building and, where relevant, use materials and detailing appropriate to the existing property and conservation-area context.

7. Bin and Cycle Storage

The proposed development incorporates an **enclosed bin/cycle store** as identified on the submitted floor plan.

Providing a dedicated enclosed area assists in preventing refuse containers and bicycles from being stored indiscriminately around the property.

From a heritage and visual-amenity perspective, the organised and enclosed storage of these items is preferable to uncontrolled external storage that could detract from the appearance of the site.

The provision is therefore considered capable of being accommodated without undermining the character or significance of the conservation area.

8. Heritage Impact

The proposal has been considered in terms of its potential effect upon the significance, character and appearance of the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area.

The development:

- Retains and reuses the existing building.
- Does not involve demolition of the existing property.
- Maintains the established built form of the site.
- Introduces a viable residential use into the existing building.
- Primarily involves internal subdivision to create the proposed apartments.

- Provides dedicated enclosed bin and cycle storage.
- Allows the property to remain in active and sustainable use.
- Does not fundamentally alter the established character of the Long Street frontage.

On this basis, the proposal is considered to **preserve the character and appearance of the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area**.

No material harm to the significance of the conservation area is identified as arising from the proposed change of use.

9. Planning and Heritage Considerations

In considering development affecting a conservation area, particular regard should be given to preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

The proposal adopts a conservation-led approach based upon the **retention and reuse of the existing building**, rather than demolition and redevelopment.

The proposed residential conversion represents an efficient reuse of the existing building while maintaining its established relationship with the surrounding townscape.

The proposal therefore allows the building to continue contributing to the established urban fabric of Long Street while providing new residential accommodation within Middleton town centre.

The development is consequently considered compatible with the objective of conserving the historic environment while allowing appropriate and sustainable adaptation of existing buildings.

10. Conclusion

This Heritage Statement has assessed the proposed development at **58A Long Street, Middleton** and its potential effect upon the **Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area**.

The proposal seeks the change of use of existing Class E office accommodation to provide **five self-contained Class C3 apartments**, together with an enclosed bin and cycle storage area.

The proposal retains and reuses the existing building and principally involves its internal adaptation for residential purposes.

The development provides a viable new use for the property while retaining the established built form and character of the site.

The proposed change of use is not considered to result in harm to the architectural or historic significance of the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area. Rather, the continued use and maintenance of the existing building will support its long-term contribution to the established Long Street townscape.

It is therefore concluded that the proposal **preserves the character and appearance of the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area and does not result in harm to its heritage significance.**

Accordingly, the proposal is considered acceptable in heritage terms.

DS Design & Planning

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