

**Proposed Extension & Alterations to Property in Conservation Area at  
481-485 Wilmslow Road, Manchester M20 4AN**

**Conservation Area Appraisal  
Rev A**

**1.1 Assessment**

Withington is believed to have previously been an independent manor before expanding following Manchester's industrial growth, in 1904 Withington became incorporated into the City of Manchester. The economic development of Wilmslow Road was in response to the needs of increased housing, consisting of rows of small shops, banks, public houses and public library, Wilmslow Road became part of the shopping centre of Withington.

There is a mix of 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings throughout the town, use of red brick is common with stone or terracotta detailing. Gothic style public houses and banks, a Norman style church and Victorian terraces and houses are present through Withington, many situated along Wilmslow Road. The town is predominantly characterised by the ground floor shops with one or two storey office or residential accommodation above.

There are 8 listed buildings on Wilmslow Road in Withington, the closest and most relevant being the Former White Lion Public House on the junction of Wilmslow and Burton Road. A prominent building for its level of visibility and striking features, it is grade II listed, in an eclectic Gothic style with a clock tower and consoled cornice with moulded terracotta flower motifs. The building is currently in use as a Sainsbury's Local convenience store.

The application site is amidst a terrace run of shops on the eastern side of Wilmslow Road in proximity to the junction of Wilmslow, Parsonage, Palatine and Burton Road. The ground floor street front accommodation is single storey with the second storey recessed from the street shop front, a third storey is present to the rear of the building within the existing outrigger.

There is little consistency between the design of the ground floor shop frontages however the majority of the massing making up the second storeys and external outriggers are red brick with slate roofs. The street facing elevations at first floor have soldier courses over the windows and timber brackets below the gutter and soffit line along the length of the terrace. The properties are in varying conditions of disrepair with significant levels of graffiti present on the street facing brick elevations at first floor.

Future management of the conservation is focused around encouraging development which enhances the prosperity of the area whilst paying attention to the special architectural and visual qualities. It is advised that new works should be designed to respect and relate to the existing buildings and characteristics. General massing and height of proposals should be reflective of the surroundings and not exceed the height of immediate surroundings.

There is concern for accommodation above the stores being left vacant, as is common in suburban shopping centres, this often leads to deterioration so the use of these spaces for storage, offices or residential purposes is to be encouraged.

The applicant is seeking to demolish and rebuild the accommodation to the rear of the shops, retaining only the streetfront elevation and two party walls, to provide 4no. new self-contained apartments/ dwellings. The existing outrigger will be replaced with something

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reminiscent of the existing form accommodating a stairwell to access the new dwellings. Primary access and amenities such as parking will be to the rear of the site accessed off Parsonage Road.

## 1.2 Photographs of Existing Building & Context



**Fig 1: View south-west down Wilmslow Road**



**Fig 2: View north-east up Wilmslow Road at junction of Wilmslow, Parsonage, Palatine and Burton Road.**



**Fig 3: View north-east up Wilmslow Road.**



**Fig 4: Former White Lion Public House, grade II listed, on the corner of Wilmslow and Burton road.**



**Fig 5: View across Wilmslow Road of application site.**



**Fig 6: Street front elevation of application site.**



**Fig 7: 1 Parsonage Road**



**Fig 8: 1 Parsonage Road (left) with rear of application site to right.**



**Fig 9: View of rear of property.**



**Fig 10: View of adjacent property and extension.**

### **1.3 Proposal**

This scheme has previously received full planning approval under application ref. 125673/FO/2019, however, due to the condition of the property it is necessary to undertake more demolition work which requires approval and was not explicitly covered in the original application. The general design and appearance of the proposal is otherwise generally largely unaltered.

The proposal is for the demolition and rebuild of the accommodation to the rear of the shops to provide residential accommodation. There is existing basement accommodation below the shops and accommodation to the rear. The internal ground floor at the rear is significantly raised to the external ground level, a first floor is present at the rear in the main building mass at current. The outrigger contains three storeys which is staggered to the main dwelling.

The existing building is in a poor condition, water ingress is a problem throughout but particularly in rear areas. Areas of timber have decayed and in places partially collapsed. Finishes are in poor condition with many having failed completely and delaminated / fallen away. The rear wall and outrigger have subsidence, and this is ongoing. The main rear elevation has major cracking separating it from the internal and party walls which is a significant issue and requires major investment to demolish and rebuild urgently to avoid structural failure and issues with the adjoining buildings.

A structural survey has been undertaken reviewing the condition of the property and making appropriate recommendations on how to address relevant concerns. Following the surveys undertaken, it is deemed that for structural and safety reasons, everything apart from the front elevation and party walls will need to be demolished and rebuilt.

It is proposed to reorganise the floor levels within the existing volume, incorporating the existing basement and utilising the existing roof space to provide 4 storeys. Some additional excavation at the rear will be required to provide the lower ground floor accommodation with external space and permit natural light to enter the dwelling.

As part of the proposed development, the existing roof finish would need to be lifted to install a new membrane, due to alterations to the outrigger and addition of dormers, replacement of the roof is appropriate as referenced in the structural report.

The existing outrigger is structurally compromised, as also referenced in the structural report, for this reason, it is proposed to remove the existing outrigger and replace it with a new one in its place which has been narrowed and made taller. When considering the design for the proposed new outrigger/stairwell, the existing massing and form was used to inform, but the full rear elevation of the terraces was also considered. The pairing of outriggers is apparent, highlighted in Fig.11 below.



**Fig 11: Aerial view of rear of application site in context highlighting pairing of outriggers.**

Despite being a continuous elevation and consistent in the provision of the outriggers there are inconsistencies between them highlighted in Fig. 12. The most obvious being the significant increase in massing to the middle left which is noticeably out of proportion to the one to the right. The ridge level heights and where they intercept with the main roof pitch varies between the pairs also, the three northern most outriggers do not appear to intercept with the main roof pitch at all, see Fig. 13.



**Fig 12: Aerial view of rear of application site in context highlighting inconsistencies between outriggers.**



**Fig 13: Street view of rear of 467 Wilmslow Road.**

The primary elevation addressing Wilmslow Road is proposed to remain relatively un-altered, though general maintenance such as graffiti being cleaned off is required. The current features such as the timber brackets below the gutter line will be retained though they may need renovation depending on existing conditions. New roof lights are proposed to permit natural daylight however these are intended to be genuine conservation rooflights from the Rooflight Company, the units proposed to be used are 3no. ref. CR10-2 to the rear, and 3no. CR15-3 to the front elevation, more information available from [www.therooflightcompany.co.uk](http://www.therooflightcompany.co.uk). On the front elevation the rooflights are to be located with reference to existing first floor windows.

These measures will aid in retaining the character of the existing streetscape of Wilmslow Road which was identified as important on the Manchester City Council website, whilst balancing need for reasonable standard of accommodation in the apartments. The central front rooflight is to provide daylight to the front parts of the lower ground and upper ground floors. These spaces are 'landlocked' by the retail unit and without the lightwell feature will not be viable for residential use. Retention of retail spaces here has been considered but would seriously jeopardise viability. This is because they would complicate construction matters for example fire and sound compartmentation, and would necessitate either significant further extension to offset volume loss or radical drop in residential volume. These factors are such that the scheme would no longer be viable to generate the funding needed to restore the building.

When undertaking works in the conservation area it is incumbent to *preserve or enhance* the conservation area. It has been identified within the town that a common feature is that windows are vertically proportioned and of a sliding-sash type, this has been taken into consideration with replacement windows on the rear elevation respective of those in proximity on the adjoining terrace properties, for example continuing the window head detail of soldier courses.

As noted by Manchester City Council "Superficial copies of historic buildings... do not make a positive contribution to the character of the area" therefore there are elements of the design that are of a more modern and current design. The new outrigger, external balcony space and associated screening and dormer windows are proposed to make use of modern

materials that will be distinctive from the original building but not detract from the original dwelling.

The proposal is not considered to be incongruous nor impact on the preservation of the conservation area as it does not detract from the setting or street scene. The change in building footprint will be negligible, as although we are proposing that everything be demolished except the front elevation wall and two party walls, the rear elevation and outrigger will be rebuilt and reinstated in 'like for like' construction reclaiming as many bricks as possible for the external material. Likewise, any roof slates that can be reclaimed will be and used on the front elevation with new slates installed to the rear if insufficient numbers can be salvaged. The proposed development means that a once vacant run-down site will now be renewed and in use. The scale of works is minimal compared to other developments such as 479 Wilmslow Road, 1 Parsonage Road and the of the corner or Parsonage and Wilmslow Road.

#### **1.4 Summary**

The proposed works are considered to be in keeping with the area, to have given due consideration to the context and to contribute to the character of the area. It is thought that the development will aid in the overall development of the town by making use of an otherwise vacant dwelling, that in its current condition could be considered a security problem with an overgrown site with minimal observation or use. The proposals will provide a viable use and allow the investment required to correct the significant remedial problems of the existing property and therefore offers genuine public benefit to secure the heritage of the conservation area. The proposed scheme is in keeping with the overall aesthetics, form and bulk of the existing property, which forms part of the terrace that add to the streetscape. The materials used will complement the existing, it is felt that what is proposed meets the design guidelines and does not negatively impact on the character of the conservation area.