inspire planning solutions

HERITAGE STATEMENT

271 Burton Road, Manchester, M20 2WA

Proposed installation of five entrance canopies

Europa Business Park, Building 67

Bird Hall Lane

Stockport

SK3 0XA

August 2018

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Inspire Planning Solutions Ltd on behalf of the Applicant, to support a planning application for the installation of five entrance canopies above doorways at Manchester Islamic Centre, Didsbury Central Mosque, which is located at 271 Burton Road, in West Didsbury.

1.2 This statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying plans and information submitted in support of the application.

1.3 The Heritage Statement has been prepared to appraise the character and significance of heritage assets in the vicinity of the proposed development and the effect that the proposal would have on these heritage assets. The site is situated within the Albert Park Conservation Area, a designated heritage asset, and is located adjacent to the Conservation Area's southern boundary. The site premises themselves are not covered by any individual designation.

1.4 This statement will first outline the relevant planning policy context relating to the historic environment in section 2, before providing an overview of the historical context, character and significance of the Albert Park Conservation Area. The statement also provides an assessment of the proposal's effect on heritage assets and their setting, and justification for the works (section 3).

1.5 The statement concludes there would be no more than a negligible impact on the historic environment arising from the development going ahead. There would only be a very small degree of change to the character and significance of the Conservation Area and the setting of heritage assets within it.

2.0 Policy Context

2.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Manchester Core Strategy (2012) is the Core Development Plan Document that proposals must be assessed against, setting out the planning policy framework for the area from 2012 to 2027. The key policies relating to heritage and the built environment are outlined in this section of the statement.

2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's approach to sustainable development and is also an important material consideration in determining the application. Conserving the historic environment is one of a number of important aims that contribute towards sustainable development. The NPPF is underpinned by a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and states that development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved without delay.

National Planning Policy Framework (2018)

2.3 Paragraph 11 of the recently updated NPPF highlights that decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development, in delivering and balancing the economic, social and environmental aims (paragraph 8) of the planning system.

2.4 Chapter 8 sets out policies to promote healthy, safe and inclusive communities. Paragraph 92 highlights the importance of providing the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, including ensuring that planning policies and decisions should ensure that established facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, so that

they can be retained for the benefit of the community. This is an important planning consideration in determining this application.

2.5 Policies relating to conservation of the historic environment are set out in Chapter 16 of the NPPF.

2.6 Paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, whilst making it clear that the level of detail should be proportionate, and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

2.7 Paragraph 190 of NPPF states that the significance of heritage assets should be understood and taken into account when considering the impact of a development proposal on a heritage asset. Paragraph 197 notes that this also includes non-designated assets. Paragraph 193 states that the more important the heritage asset, the greater weight should be given to its conservation.

Manchester Core Strategy (2012 – 2027)

2.8 The following policies relating to the historic environment are relevant to the application proposal:

- Policy SP 1 (Spatial Principles) seeks development in all parts of the City to make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice, including creating well-designed places that enhance or create character.

- Policy DM 1 (Development Management) advises that development should have regard to the character of the surrounding area and that

- Policy EN 1 (Design Principles) expects all development in Manchester to follow good urban design principles and have regard to the strategic character area (South Manchester) in which the development is located.

- Policy EN 3 (Heritage) encourages development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods. New developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance, including conservation areas.

Other

2.9 There are no specific SPDs or character appraisals of the Conservation that form part of the development plan for the area. The Council website provides background information on the development of the Conservation Area, which has been considered, as has the Historic England list.

3.0 Heritage Statement

Overview

3.1 The purpose of this section of the Statement is to identify and assess the significance of the main heritage considerations that may be affected by the application proposals, and the effects of the proposals on these heritage assets and their setting, having regard to the context of relevant national and local planning policy and guidance on development affecting the historic environment.

3.2 The application site is located within the Albert Park Conservation Area, a formally designated area of historic importance, of local significance. Section 69(1)(a) Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 defines a Conservation Area as an area "of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance". The purpose of designating Conservation Areas is to ensure that planning decisions address the quality and character of the historic landscape.

3.3 In order to confirm that development proposals protect the existing character and significance of the Conservation Area, it is important to understand the character and history of the area, and individual heritage assets within it, and why the area is important in terms of its special historical and/or architectural character. This statement will provide the following, to help inform decision-making on the planning application:

- A brief description of the development proposal and site location;
- A description of the historic character and significance of the Conservation Area (including reference to the historical development of the Albert Park Conservation Area) and heritage assets within it;
- Consideration of where/if the proposed development would effect heritage assets and their setting;

- An assessment of any such effects/impacts; and
- Justification for the works.

3.4 As highlighted in the previous section, Paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, whilst making it clear that the level of detail should be proportionate. The amount of detail provided within this statement is proportionate, given the level of significance of the heritage asset, the scale of the development, and the amount of information publicly available on the Albert Park Conservation Area.

Site Location

3.5 Didsbury Central Mosque within West Didsbury, to the north of the A5145 (Barlow Moor Road).



Figure 1: Site location (Source: Google)

3.6 The 3-D aerial image photo below shows the application site, which is situated at the junction of Burton Road and Barlow Moor Road, in its immediate context.



Figure 2: Aerial Image (Source: Google)

3.7 The extract from the Albert Park Conservation Area map, below, shows the location of the application site towards the south-west of the image (marked in yellow), at the periphery of the Conservation Area towards the south-western edge of the Albert Park Conservation Area. Also of note in the vicinity are listed buildings (marked in blue). The closest listed buildings are 139 Barlow Road (Grade II), just outside of the Conservation Area boundary, and Oak Bank (Grade II), within the Conservation Area, but further east.

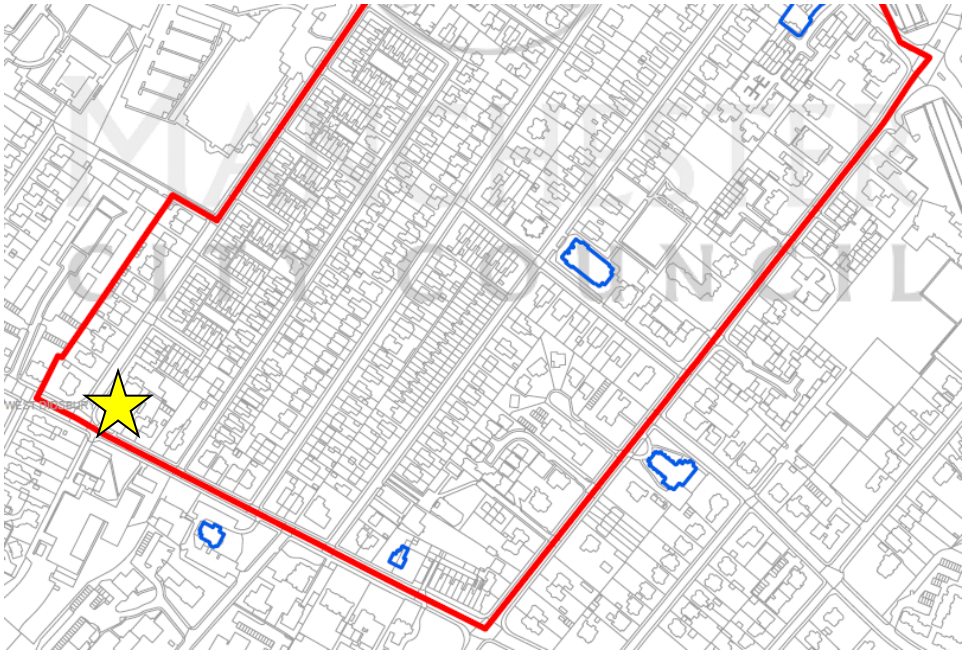

Figure 3: Map extract showing the southern part of the Albert Park Conservation Area, including the Conservation Area boundary and listed buildings (Source: Manchester City Council)

Summary of Proposal

3.8 This application seeks planning permission for the addition of five entrance canopies, to provide shelter to each of these access points to the building, in order to modernise the facility, and to improve accessibility and the user experience for members of the public entering and egressing, and circulating in and around the building.

3.9 The canopies have been designed to provide the necessary enhancements to the user experience for visitors to the Islamic Centre, whilst ensuring that the character and appearance of the building are not harmed, and that the historic character and significance of the Albert Park Conservation Area are not adversely impacted.

3.10 The three canopies over the older entrance doors are smaller and comprise of short projections off the wall. The other two, which are freestanding, are in front of the more recent extensions. They are lightweight structures that have a clean and modern look, and could easily be removed in the future if no longer needed. The plans also show that the building line would not be compromised.

3.11 Extracts from the plans, alongside existing street view imagery are provided below. The full plans submitted with the application provide full detail of the proposals.

3.12 The extract from the site plan below highlights where the canopies would be located. The entrances 1 and 2 (bottom left) are the larger free standing canopies on the more recent part of the extension onto Burton Road. The plan highlights that these would project forward of the entrances by only 2.25 metres and 2.7 metres respectively, and not beyond the existing building line.

Entrance 3 denotes the location where two doors are located, with would see smaller canopies attached over the doors, as would be the case with the single entrance door at Entrance 4.

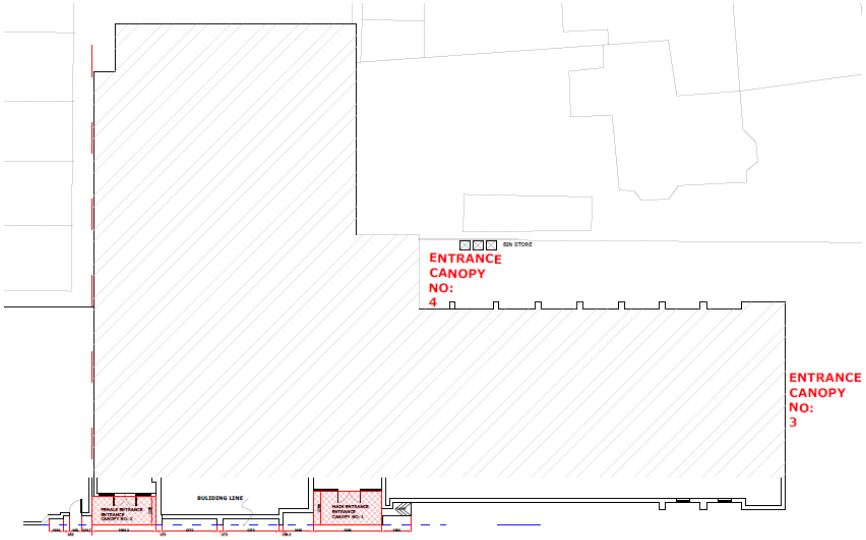

Figure 4: Site Plan extract showing proposed canopy locations – Source: N. Gedal Architect (NTS)

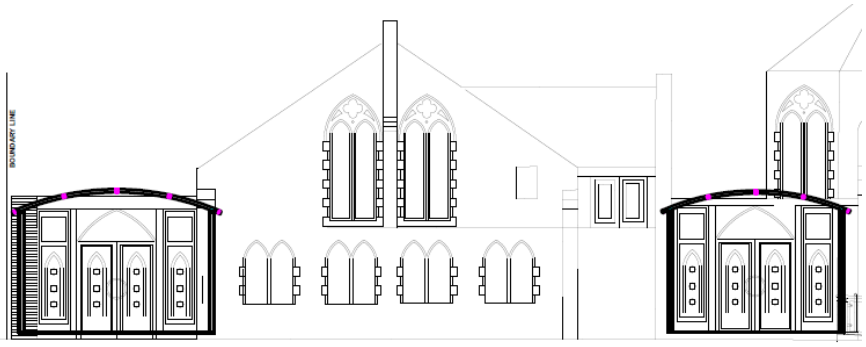

Figure 5: Partial West (Burton Road) Elevation showing proposed development (above) & proposed photomontages (below) – Source: N. Gedal Architect (NTS)





3.12 The two larger free standing structures, would be located in front of the male and female entrances on the more recently constructed extension to the building, pictured to the left of the shot below.



Figure 6: Existing view of the application site from Burton Road (Google)

3.13 The three smaller canopies would all be located above the entrances that face towards Barlow Moor Road, as illustrated on the elevation plan extracts below. Two of these would be located above doors on the main elevation facing Barlow Moor Road, with one of them set back significantly.

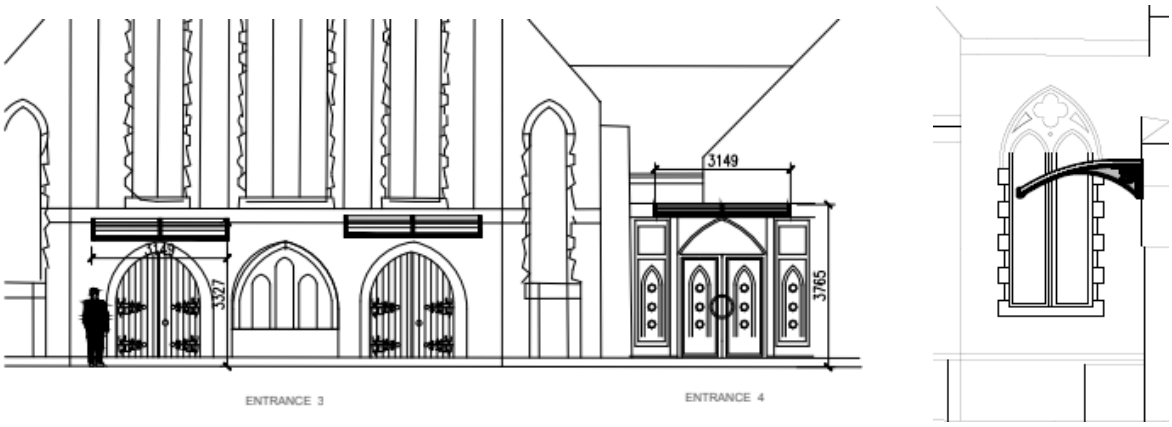

Figure 7: Partial West (Barlow Moor Road) Elevation and Side Elevation extracts, showing proposed development – Source: N. Gedal Architect (NTS)



Figure 8: Existing view of the application site from Barlow Moor Road (Google)

Historical Background, Character & Significance of the Conservation Area

3.14 The Albert Park Conservation Area is situated in West Didsbury, approximately four miles south of Manchester City Centre. It is principally an area of housing but also includes a district shopping centre on Burton Road, a smaller group of shops on Barlow Moor Road, schools, public houses and a number of current or former churches, including the application site. The Conservation Area was designated in 1988, and the application site fronts onto its southern boundary, which runs along Barlow Moor Road to the south.

3.15 One of the main sources of historic information available on the Albert Park Conservation Area is the publicly accessible information available on Manchester City Council's website. This provides a valuable source of material on the historic character and development of the area, along with guidelines for development. The statutory list of buildings, maintained by Historic England also provides a description of and reasons for designation for listed buildings within the Conservation Area. These sources have informed the approach to the development proposal, and this supporting Heritage Statement.

3.16 The early origins of what is now the Albert Park Conservation Area saw the area occupied by fields and farmsteads in the townships of Didsbury and Withington back in the mid-nineteenth century. There was a row of buildings on what is now Barlow Moor Road, which may have been farm workers' cottages, later re-developed into a row of shops now standing on the corner with Palatine Road, towards the south-east of the Conservation Area.

3.17 Oakbank, a pair Grade II listed[1] houses, which are also located some distance to the east of the application site and towards the southern boundary of the Conservation Area is likely to probably the area's oldest building, dating backed to 1851. A homestead on Nell Lane and Lapwing Hall, further north, are also key early properties in this area that remain today.

3.18 During the late Victorian period, the area bounded by Palatine Road, Barlow Moor Road and Lapwing Lane was developed with housing, mainly three-storey pairs of semi-detached properties, and a shopping area on Burton Road was also developed at this time as far as between 210 Burton Road and the Midland Pub, on the corner with Lapwing Lane.

3.19 The Albert Park area continued to develop into the twentieth century, with Withington and Didsbury being incorporated into the City of Manchester in 1904, with additional development continuing through to the post-war period.

3.20 Today, five nearly parallel roads - Burton Road, Northern Grove/Cresswell Grove, Clyde Road, Old Lansdowne Road and Palatine Road - form the basic structure of an area of housing constructed principally during the late Victorian period. Many of the larger, fine residences are now converted into flats and bedsits for students. On Palatine Road, many buildings have either

[1] List entry Number: 1279558

been converted into institutional or hotel uses, or demolished and their sites re-developed for blocks of flats. The shopping centre on Burton Road was created to cater for this housing boom.

3.21 The Grade II listed Oakbank, 112-114 Barlow Moor Road, remains in place. It is similar to a typical Georgian style, built in red brick in Flemish bond with some yellow headers, and a slate roof. It has a distinctive iron lattice porch in the centre of the façade and a projecting bay to the left. The building has been altered over the years.

3.22 Closer to the application site, but lying just outside of the Conservation Area is the Woodstock Arms, a Grade II listed[2] public house at 139 Barlow Moor Road. This is a two-storey red brick building in Queen Anne Style with steeply pitched tiled roofs, dating from the late nineteenth-century. The property was a former large detached house, and was the British Council offices when listed in 1992.



Figure 9: Image of 139 Barlow Moor Road: (Source: Historic England)

[2] List entry Number: 1279558

3.23 While predominantly residential in character, the Conservation Area includes a number of current or former religious buildings, including the application site, which is the former Albert Park Methodist Church, which has remained in use as a religious building as the Didsbury Central Mosque/Islamic Centre. This is a Gothic-style church built in orange-red Manchester brick with yellow stone dressings. It has a bell tower with a modest spire and slate roof. It has been modified and extended over the years, but remains much of its original character. The building is not listed, or worthy of that status, but can be considered as making some positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, and should be considered in that context.

Impact on the Significance of Heritage Assets

3.24 Having regard to the historical background of the area, the context of the site within its historic setting, the guidelines for development within the Conservation Area, and the local and national planning policy context, it is considered that the proposals would conserve the character and significance of the Albert Park Conservation Area and heritage assets within it.

3.25 The Council's guidance on development within the Albert Park Conservation Area recognises that small scale development and refurbishment will take place from time to time. The main aim of designation is to ensure that the character and quality of both the buildings and the spaces between them is retained. It is considered that the simple, small scale and reversible nature of these proposals, which would not materially impact upon the fabric or character of the existing building would ensure that the character and quality of the building would be maintained, as would the spaces between the building and others. The proposals would not extend beyond the existing building line and would not impact on the substantial space that exists between the building and others.

3.26 The proposed canopies have been designed sensitively to fit in harmoniously with the context and design detailing of the existing building, and appearing as very minor and subservient additions. Even the larger two canopies that would be built adjacent to the more recent addition to the building would not extend beyond the existing building line that faces towards Burton Road. The larger canopies are stand-alone structures, whereas the smaller canopies above the remaining doorways require minimal physical attachment, and would not impact on the character or quality of the existing building. One of these is also significantly set back and would not be seen from Barlow Moor Road, whereas the other two would not be overly prominent on this elevation.

3.27 The Council notes that the management of development in Albert Park is aimed at encouraging development which enhances the prosperity of the area (in this case by helping to make positive adjustments to enable more effective use of an important community and religious building), whilst paying attention to its special architectural and visual qualities. The proposals are considered to maintain the existing character of the building, whilst making necessary adjustments to improve the use and functionality of the building. It is considered that the proposals would have a neutral or negligible impact on the character and appearance of this building and its contribution to the Conservation Area as a whole.

3.28 The development proposal is also considered to have a neutral or negligible impact on the character, appearance, and the ability to understand the historic significance of the Albert Park Conservation Area, and would not be materially harmful to this designated heritage asset. It is also considered that the development would not impact upon the setting of other designated heritage assets within the Conservation Area, due to the very minor nature of the proposals, and distance from these properties, which are identified earlier in this statement. The development would also not impact on trees within the Conservation Area.

3.29 It is considered that the very small degree of change proposed to the building would not unacceptably impact on the building or the wider Conservation Area. The application is considered to be acceptable in terms of its effects on the historic environment, in line with Manchester Core Strategy policies SP1, DM1, EN1 and EN3 and national planning policy.

Justification

3.30 As it has been demonstrated that the proposed development would have a negligible effect upon the character and significance of the Albert Park Conservation Area, and its setting, and the character and setting of the individual heritage assets within the conservation area, it is not considered that any additional justification for the development is necessary in this case, as no harm is being caused by development.

3.31 Notwithstanding this, the proposal also has positive public benefits of helping to enhance the legibility, circulation and functionality of an important community and social facility. The NPPF encourages changes that would help established facilities and services to develop and modernise, so that they can be retained for the benefit of the community. This is considered to be a material public benefit that weighs in favour of the proposals.

4.0 Conclusion

4.1 This Heritage Statement has set out an overview of the historic development of the Albert Park Conservation Area, in particular the areas close to the application site, and individual heritage assets within the Conservation Area. The character and significance of relevant heritage assets has been considered. Relevant available historical sources and guidance documents have been referred to, and the level of detail is proportionate, in line with paragraph 189 of the NPPF.

4.2 In summary, it is considered that the proposal would be successful in conserving the overall character and significance of the Albert Park Conservation Area, and the setting of historically significant features within it. The scale, nature and design of the proposal are considered appropriate, and would sustain the character and historic significance of the area.

4.3 There would be no more than a negligible impact on the historic environment. There would only be a very small degree of change to the character and significance of the Conservation Area and the setting of assets within it. This is balanced with the positive impacts of the development in terms of helping to enable an important community facility to modernise and meet the needs of its users, bringing social and cultural benefits, without causing any material harm to the historic environment.

4.4 It is therefore considered that the application is acceptable in terms of its effects on the historic environment and that planning permission can be granted for the proposed development, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.