



Heritage and Urban Design Consultation Response

Address 136 St Werburgh's Road

Application Ref.: 143002/LO/2025

Proposal. Listed Building Consent for internal works associated with the change of use from a gym (Class E) to create 3 no. residential apartments together with external elevational change to remove an existing fire exit.

Case officer: Holly Wright

Consultee: Jackie Whelan

Date: 02/07/2025

Introduction

The application relates to a grade II listed farmhouse dating from late C18th. It is a detached two storey building constructed in redbrick with rectangular double depth plan sited at right angles to Werburgh's Road. The building has been altered internally and externally with altered windows in small pane glazing some are horizontal sashes. Central round headed doorway has been blocked on one side, modern porch on the other side is the existing entrance. Has significance as an early surviving farm building and group value with the adjacent barn.

Currently it is in use as small gym, it is proposed to be converted into 3 apartments. The main considerations relate to impact of the proposals on heritage significance and special architectural character of the building.

1. Policy Context

1.1. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024)

Para 202 - Heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

Para 207 - Local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

Para 208 - LPAs should ensure that any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal is avoided or minimised.

Para 210 - In determining applications, LPA's should take account of, the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Para 212 - When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.



Para 215 -Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Para 219 - Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance.

1.2. Manchester City Core Strategy

Policy SP 1 – Spatial Principles

Policy CC9 – Design and Heritage

Policy DM1 – Development Management

Policy EN 1 – Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas

Policy EN3 – Heritage

1.3. Places for Everyone

JP-Strat2 – City Centre

Policy JP-P1 – Sustainable Places

Policy JP-P2 – Heritage

2. Discussion

The heritage significance of the heritage asset has been in part diminished by previous alterations internally but retains some of the plan form and chimney breasts. The exterior has the appearance of a traditional farmhouse and will largely be retained as existing other than the blocking up of a modern side door on the ground floor which relates to modern extension.

The principle of conversion into residential is supported, but preference would be for conversion to original use as a single dwelling which would better conserve the heritage asset. Justification for the subdivision into three units should form part of the submission given that it is a modest dwelling in a prime residential area. The assessment here is based on submitted existing and proposed plans. We would normally expect demolition drawings to show extent of historic fabric to be lost and would request these are submitted.

The proposals involve removal of partition walls and insertion of new partition walls to ground and first floors; the existing staircase will be retained but all the chimney breasts will be removed. More clarity is required as to extent of loss of original internal walling and have concerns over the loss of the remaining chimney breasts. The plan form appears to have been altered more on the ground floor, while the upper floor appears to retain the original partitions for the 4 bedrooms. The plan form changes are relatively modest but further diminish the appreciation of the asset as a former historic farmhouse. We do not support the removal of the existing chimney breasts internally, which will harm heritage significance as well as entail the insertion of modern supporting structure unsympathetic with the traditional historic character of the building. While the interior has lost most of its original character and has low

heritage significance, it does not justify further loss which would further diminish its special interest. We would encourage works that would enhance the heritage and reverse the harm, that would positively conserve the asset in accordance with PfE Policy JP-P2.

Kitchen fittings should be included on the floor plans to show how these will relate to existing window cills and interior features. We support the repair of existing windows and would recommend a timber survey and repair methodology be submitted or can be conditioned.

Reinstatement of railings and gates to the road boundary is supported and will provide a secure boundary to the curtilage. It is noted however that there is no direct access to the amenity garden space from the ground floor units and should be considered. This could be achieved by reinstatement of original arched entrance door on original main front elevation.

3. Position

The proposals to convert the building into 3 apartments would result in loss of historic fabric in particular loss of chimney breasts and thereby harm to heritage significance which cannot be supported. The less than substantial harm is in part offset by the creation of 3 residential units which would contribute to housing supply and thereby form part of the planning balance but is a small gain given the harm and could be mitigated by an altered scheme. Paragraph 212 of the NPPF requires great weight be given to an asset's conservation when considering impact of a proposed development.

It would be preferable given the modest size of the building to be converted into a single dwelling as its former original use (or max 2 units) which would better reveal its significance and positively conserve the heritage asset in accordance with PfE policy JP-P2.

Additional details required:

- Demolition plan showing walls to be removed.
- Chimney breasts to be retained on all floors.
- Kitchen fittings to be included in plans, with sections/ elevations to demonstrate how relate to windows.
- Repair method statement with respect to windows and internal fit out.
- Detail specification all new doors, timber joinery and replacement windows.

Jackie Whelan.

Planning Officer (Heritage and Urban Design)