Heritage Statement

19 - 21 George Street, Manchester, M1 4HE

The use of the ground floor as a restaurant (Class E) and retention of the use of the basement as a mini-market (Use Class E)



Introduction

This heritage statement has been prepared to support a Full Planning Permission Application for the use of the ground floor as a restaurant (Class E) and retention of the use of the basement as a mini-market (Use Class E)

This assessment has been prepared in conjunction with the advice set out in section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which relates to conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states, as a general duty in respect of Conservation Areas and the exercise of planning functions, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

As is set out in Paragraph 184 of the Framework, heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

In line with paragraph 192, local planning authorities should take account of: a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. The property itself is not a listed or locally listed building and is not a designated heritage asset. However, the site is located within the Conservation Area, and this, in itself, seeks to protect and preserve the historic character and appearance of the area.

Impact and Significance of Proposed Development on Identified Heritage Assets Understanding the significance of an historic building complex or area (the ‘asset’) and any possible impact of the proposed scheme on this significance is the key to good conservation practice. If significance based on how the site has changed through time and what survives today has been clearly understood at the outset, then both the applicant and the LPA can grasp, and seek to minimise the impact of proposals on that significance. Therefore, it is important to understand the significance of a heritage asset when considering any proposals to alter, demolish, extend or develop it within its setting. An early understanding of the significance will inform the direction of any application

The purpose of this document is to outline the understanding and significance of the historic nature of the site and the impact that the residential units in both design and site usage will have on the immediate environment and wider community.

The property is located within the George Street Conservation Area, and the proposal has been assessed in line with Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to ensure it is appropriate within its historic context.

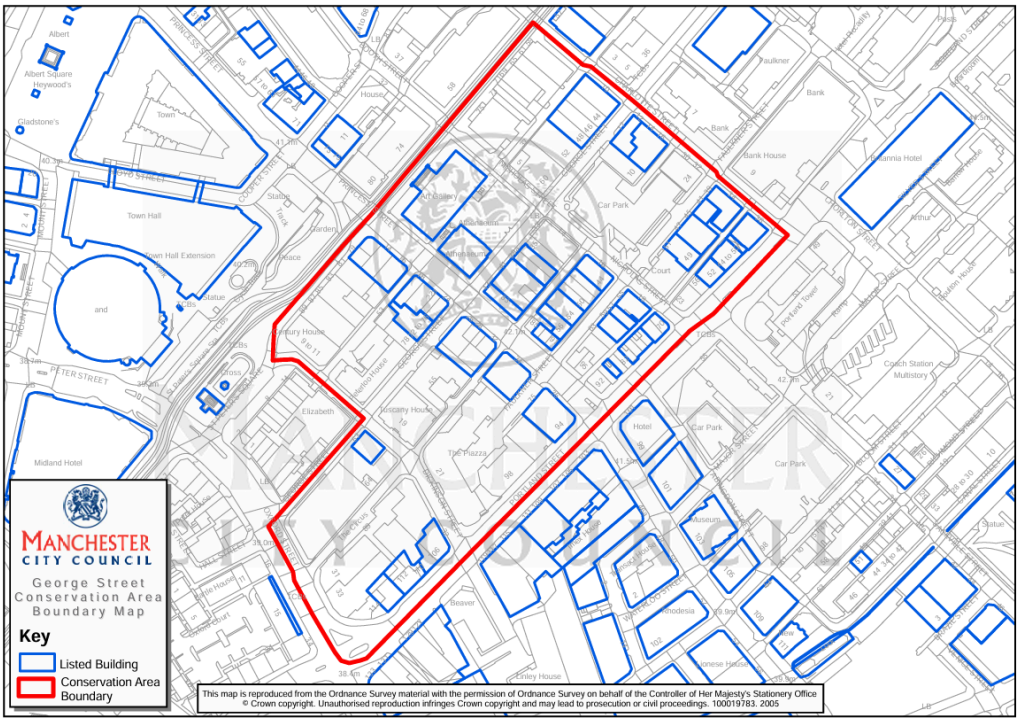
History

The site is situated in Manchester's Chinatown, an area known for its mixed commercial, retail, and residential uses. The building contributes to the historic character of the conservation area with its traditional architectural elements and established urban form. The George Street Conservation Area includes various heritage assets, and any proposed alterations must respect the area's architectural and historical value.

The area's origin dates back 200 years to the Georgian period, when agricultural fields were given to urban uses with new streets laid out in a regular grid pattern. It was a fashionable residential area centred on St. James's Church, established in 1786 on Charlotte Street. Charlotte Street and George Street were both named after the reigning monarchs of the time.

Depopulation of the area was reflected in the redundancy of St. James's Church and by the building of new warehouses from the mid-19th to the turn of the century. However, with the decline of the British cotton industry, particularly during the early to mid-20th century period, warehouses were either left empty or only partially used. Consequently, they fell into disrepair.

The decline reversed when the Chinese community opened restaurants in the area. Although the first restaurant was opened in 1948, it was not until the 1960s that the area became popular with the Chinese community. Chinatown, as it is now commonly known, has grown to become one of the largest provincial Chinese communities in Britain, with a wide range of facilities.



The area of George Street Conservation area

The regular grid pattern of streets established in Georgian times is still in place. Where open spaces are created by the removal of a block of buildings, the character of the area must be retained by maintaining the street pattern. The most significant buildings, such as the Art Gallery, are situated on the wider streets at the periphery of the conservation area.
George Street and its surroundings are an area of great commercial area. The continued use of the existing buildings will ensure that they do not fall into disrepair. Development of businesses will be encouraged and, where appropriate, modern building proposals will be given the freedom to develop as long as they do not detract from the existing quality of the built environment.
In both Georgian and Victorian architecture, there was great emphasis on proportion, not only of the whole facade of the building but also of the openings and the position of the openings. These techniques have been lost in the architecture of the 1960s and 1970s, but when designing new structures adjacent to such buildings, the basic design principles of an over-large ground floor, a middle portion and a top part which creates a varied skyline, must be respected if the harmony of the area is to be retained.

Proposal

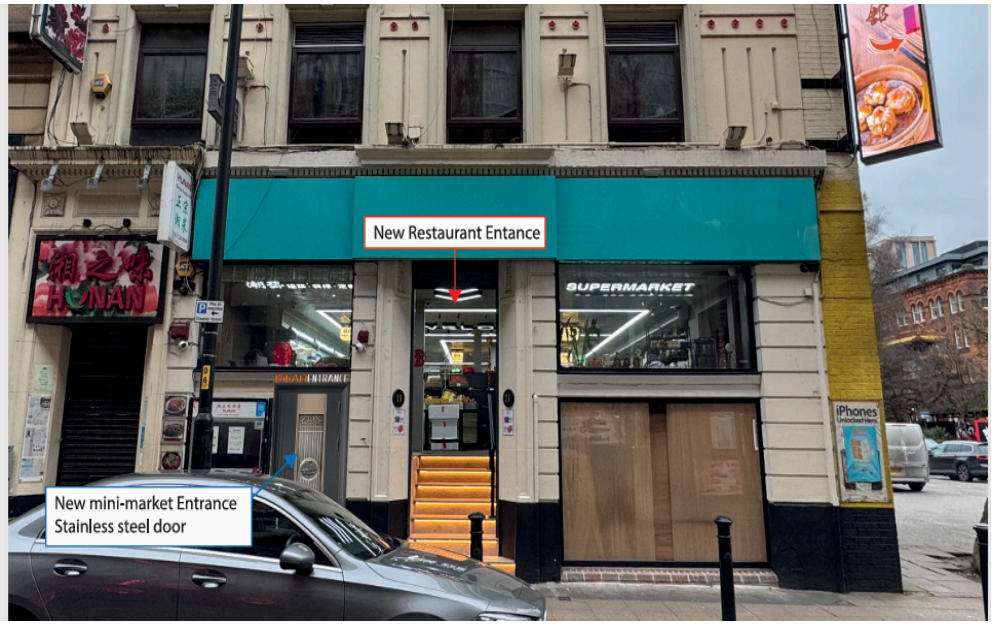
The proposed change of use aligns with the area's commercial character and aims to enhance the building's functionality while preserving its architectural integrity. There will be no external changes to the building as access from the front and back is existing. There is an existing shutter to the proposed mini-market front door which has been in use for over 10 years. The works will bring the underutilised basement space into active use, contributing positively to the vibrancy of the area. The alterations have been carefully designed to maintain the character of the building and surrounding heritage assets.

The proposed works involve internal layout changes and minor external alterations to facilitate the new restaurant use. The impact on the historical and architectural significance of the building is low and has been assessed as follows:

- External Elevational Changes: The proposal includes timber doors and security shutters, ensuring that any new elements are sympathetic to the existing structure. These changes have been designed to complement the building's character while improving security.
- Internal Alterations: The internal layout will be reconfigured using stud partition walls to create a functional restaurant space. These changes are reversible and do not compromise the building's original fabric.
- Preservation of Key Features: The design ensures that any original architectural details, such as historic facades or structural elements, remain unaffected and are appropriately incorporated into the scheme.
- Impact on the Conservation Area: The proposal does not significantly alter the external appearance of the building. The retention of traditional materials and sympathetic design ensures that the development is in keeping with the wider heritage setting.

The proposed alterations will have a minimal impact on the original building fabric. Key considerations include:

- Doors & Windows: The existing door will be replaced with a security-certified timber door, maintaining consistency with the historic character.
- Security Measures: New shutters will be installed for security purposes, but they have been designed to be discreet and in keeping with the area's character.
- Internal Structure: No significant structural changes are proposed that would affect the original form of the building.



Conclusion:

The proposed change of use and associated alterations have been carefully designed to respect the heritage significance of 19-21 George Street. The impact on the building and its surroundings is minimal, and the development will contribute positively to the local economy while maintaining the architectural and historical integrity of the Conservation Area. The design has been informed by heritage considerations and aligns with the principles set out in the NPPF.