

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no. 134081/LO/2022

Date registered valid: 16 June 2022

Proposal: Listed Building Consent for internal alterations including works to bedroom, relocation of door opening to living room and conversion of loft to form bedroom and ensuite including installation of skylights. External works include replacement of existing rear door, alteration of existing courtyard wall to form private area to the side of the property, replacement of existing security gate to private gardens and extension of existing boundary wall at front of property.

Address: 809 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 2QR

Ward(s): Didsbury East Ward

Applicant: Mr Peter Hill, 809 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 2QR

Agent (if any): Mr Curtis Martyn, Eohma Limited, 16 Beever Street, Manchester, M16 9JR

Case officer: Linda Marciniak
Tel: 0161 234 4636
Email: linda.marciniak@manchester.gov.uk

Recommendation: Approve

Date of recommendation: 30 March 2023



Application details

Type of application: Listed Building Consent
Development type: Listed building alteration
Date of site visit: 1 August 2022
Standard consultations: Printed: 29 June 2022 Expired: 20 July 2022
Neighbour notifications: Printed: 29 June 2022 Expired: 20 July 2022
Site notice: Posted: 4 July 2022 Expired: 25 July 2022
Press advert: Published: 5 July 2022 Expired: 26 July 2022
Departure from Development Plan: No
Environmental Statement: Not required
Listed building: Grade II (6 June 1994)
Conservation area: Didsbury St James Conservation Area 1970
Tree Preservation Order: N/A

Description of site/building

The application site relates to a Grade II listed brown brick semi-detached dwelling situated on the north side of Wilmslow Road, facing Kingston Road, in the Didsbury St. James conservation area. It is thought to have been one dwelling originally which was sub-divided from No.807 to the left with which it shares the statutory listing designation.

The property is distinctive in the street scene and forms a group of listed buildings with 12no. houses within The Grove to the north and west and Nos.803-805. All were built between circa 1870 and the early C20 and are listed on the basis of being rare surviving examples of domestic C19 North German vernacular style.

The front elevation has a steeply pitched slate roof, half-timbering, stone dressings, and recessed canted bay window flanked on either side by robust carved columns which support a projecting first floor. There is a stone balcony to the left-hand window at first floor surrounded by decorative cast iron railings.



The front boundary treatment comprises of a dwarf brick wall with capping stones and decorative gate piers.

The side elevation of the dwelling is painted black. This extends to part of the brick wall enclosing the rear yard which runs parallel to an unmade maintenance strip secured off Wilmslow Road by an access-controlled gate.

At the rear of the site is a small, flagged yard bounded by brick walls with a single gated access onto the maintenance strip.

Internally, the property has a relatively small footprint with a hallway, front living room and a rear dining kitchen that gives access into the rear yard. There is a modern lean-to coming off the kitchen.

The first floor is accessed by a steep narrow staircase with some original balustrading and skylight. This leads to a landing with two bedrooms and a bathroom.

There is evidence of internal alterations at various points within the property associated with its division from No.807 including installation of modern cornicing and ceiling rose above the landing.

Description of area

The surrounding area is largely residential, the exceptions being 2no. public houses and a restaurant at the junction with Stenner Lane, the Towers Business Park to the south and Parsonage Gardens and Fletcher Moss Park to the south-west. The eastern boundary of the site is shared with a modern development of residential dwellings and historic buildings converted to flats from the former MMU campus. The maintenance strip in this application was transferred to residents on the eastern side of The Grove from this development.

Description of development

Originally, Listed Building Consent was sought for internal alterations including works to bedroom, relocation of door opening to living room and conversion of loft to form bedroom and ensuite including installation of skylights. External works include replacement of existing rear door, alteration of existing courtyard wall to form private area to the side of the property, replacement of existing security gate to private gardens and extension of existing boundary wall at front of property.

Comments from UDC team following a site visit indicated that some elements of the proposal would require revisions; these have now been incorporated into the revised plans and Heritage Statement which accompany the application.

The revised plans also include insulation of the first-floor party wall shared with No.807 Wilmslow Road.

Consultations & Notification Responses

The application was advertised by way of letters to 34no. neighbouring occupiers, display of a site notice and advertisement in the Manchester Evening News. One comment was received as follows on the original submission:

Neighbour notification

RE: Alteration of existing courtyard wall to form private area to the side of the property (New Garden Boundary)

The management company of St James Park has advised that the new garden boundary in the proposal "encroaches on land with PJ Livesey's boundary". PJ Livesey is St James Park's developer, and its site boundary can be found in the "Photographs and Photomontages" document Pages 28 and 29 Item 15 Appendix 1. Therefore, an objection will be raised against the part of the proposal regarding new garden boundary.

(MCC Note: The agent responded by providing details of the Land Registry transfer of the portion of maintenance strip from PJ Livesey to the applicant).

Urban Design and Conservation

Original comments:

The application is for external and internal alterations to the Grade II listed building located in Didsbury St James Conservation Area. The works would impact on both designated heritage asset, with some impact on the setting and group value of the 19th century Grade II listed residential settlement centred on The Grove.

External Works

The proposed overhaul of the front boundary wall, as suggested on the drawings, cannot be supported. This feature is replicated elsewhere across the residential settlement and contributes positively to the listed building's special significance and the character of the conservation area. The proposed new boundary would not match the existing one in quality and detailing, being charming to the designated assets' historic and architectural interest. Consequently, the existing boundary should be retained.

The proposed side extension of the existing front boundary wall would create a double gated entrance. Although there is scope for improvements to the current situation to the front/side of the property, it is my view that the double gated entrance would not offer an improvement to the current situation in heritage and urban design terms. Neither am I convinced that the solution would offer a level of security that would justify the additional clutter in the curtilage of the listed building.

Consequently, I recommend that the existing gate to the side of the listed building is either retained, considered a neutral addition in its current form, or alternatively removed altogether and 'replaced' with a new entrance in line with the existing front boundary. The latter would need to be complimentary to the existing boundary in form, design, and appearance. In height it should not be in excess of the existing boundary, constructed in matching materials. Detailed drawings of the proposed extension to boundary would be expected as part of the LBC/covered by a condition (including a 1:10/1:20 cross-section as appropriate). Installation of a cast iron gate to match existing would be supported.

I have concerns regarding the proposed hard landscaping in the curtilage of the listed building, with proposed areas of porcelain tiles, feature tiles and flagstones throughout. Inherent variety of hard landscaping in such a small space has the potential to create undue clutter in the setting of a listed building and in the context of a conservation area, undermining the visual integrity and group value of the designated settlement.

I recommend that the hard standing is rationalised to offer a more consistent approach throughout. Hard standing should be laid in natural stone slabs/flagstones/tiles appropriate to the listed building in design, texture, and finish. It is my view that natural York stone flagstones or similar may be most appropriate in its context. Product specifications/samples would be expected as part of the LBC/covered by a condition.

To the rear, the intention of the applicant is to open the existing courtyard wall to increase amenity space available to residents. Although partial removal of brick wall to the side/rear could be acceptable, a section should be retained in-situ, inclusive of the existing ridge tiles/capping stones. That said, following our previous advice (130681/LO/2021), I strongly recommend that the proposed opening is reduced in width, as a minimum to the total width of gate no.1 & 2 as illustrated on the proposed plans.

Although I am not opposed to the replacement of the deteriorated timber door to existing opening to the north section of the wall, additional details of the “bespoke shelving to support planting feature” would be expected as part of the LBC/covered by a condition, as would details/product specifications of the proposed screen/gate to new opening. Alternatively, the installation of a new timber doorway with ironmongery, to match existing in design and appearance, would be supported.

New rooflights should be conservation grade and limited in size to provide the minimal natural light necessary. I recommend that maximum two rooflights are allowed to the eastern roof slope of the listed building, which should be aligned horizontally and matching in size.

Under no circumstance should the existing slates be replaced with tiles, as suggested on drawing No.008.

I have no objection to the replacement of the glazed door to the rear of the property, being a modern replacement. Any new replacement should be timber framed and of a matching design/appearance (unless otherwise agreed), with joinery details expected as part of the LBC/covered by a condition (including a 1:10/1:15 cross-section as appropriate).

Internal Works

The new opening to be created to allow central access to living room on ground floor is proposed simply to improve the functionality of this space, as access to this room from the lobby already exist and could be retained. The impact on historic planform and loss of load bearing historic fabric are thus considered unwarranted and unnecessary, failing to comply with para 202 of the NPPF.

On the first floor, it is the intention of the applicant to alter the existing staircase and overhaul an existing doorway to accommodate the new access to the loft. The existing staircase is historic and of interest, but elements of the balustrade are modern and could be removed without harming the special significance of the listed building. The corner landing newel post should be retained, likely to be historic/original to the building. The alterations to existing doorway/modern partitions are unproblematic.

The loft conversion, however, would also require the removal of considerable section of existing ceiling above the first floor, which would lead to the erosion of the existing floorplan and loss of historic fabric. The structural survey also concludes that the ceiling members are not of sufficient size (and strength) to support residential floor loadings at second floor to British Standards. Considerable new structural interventions, in the form of new timbers and steelwork, would thus be necessary to enable the conversion. These have not been detailed on the proposed sections, and consequently the full impact of the works on the Grade II listed building is unclear. I would request that this information is submitted as part of the application, at least indicating the level of intervention required to the historic fabric and whether the alterations will impact on the exterior of the building (e.g., steel tie beams) or lower levels (below the loft space).

The accumulative harm to the listed building that would result from the loft conversion would be material, albeit less than substantial in NPPF terms. There is however a clear benefit in converting the loft space into habitable accommodation, which should be balanced against the disbenefits of the proposal. If minded to support the principle of this aspect of the proposal, harm to the special significance of the listed building should be reduced/mitigated through the retention of the dado railing.

Position

It is my position that the proposal should be amended to preserve or enhance the special significance of the listed building. Whilst most works would have a limited impact on the architectural and historic interest of the designated asset, aspects of the proposal would fail to give great weight to its conservation.

Amendments, safeguards, and further information, as outlined in this advice, are necessary to consider the proposal acceptable on heritage and urban design grounds, and to ensure the application complies with paragraphs 130, 189, 200 and 206 of the NPPF.

Didsbury Civic Society – No comments received.

Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

The revised NPPF continues to place emphasis on the three strands of sustainable development encompassing a social, environmental, and economic role.

Chapter 16 (paragraphs 194-208) of the NPPF sets out the government's priorities for conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

In relation to decision-making, paragraph 194 of the Framework requires that local planning authorities receive a description of the significance of heritage assets in sufficient detail to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

Paragraph 197 requires that in determining application, local authorities should assess applications taking account of the following:

- 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.

It is considered that the proposed works as revised would meet these objectives.

Unitary Development Plan

DC19.1 – Listed buildings

DC18.1 – Conservation Areas

Manchester Core Strategy

EN3 – Heritage

DM1 – Development Management

SP1 – Spatial Principles

Issues

Impact on Listed Building and conservation area

Paragraph 199 of the NPPF (2021) requires that Local Planning Authorities give great weight to the conservation of heritage assets irrespective of the level of potential harm to its significance, be it substantial, amount to a total loss or is less than substantial. Saved UDP policy DC19.1, requires that development proposals affecting listed buildings contribute towards their preservation and enhancement, aims that are further reflected in the guidance within saved UDP policy DC18.1 'Conservation Areas'.

The proposals as amended involve works to allow redundant areas of the dwelling to become functional whilst retaining significant areas of historic fabric and character of the dwelling over the original proposals.

Each of these areas of work is considered below in view of the comments of the UDC team.

External boundary wall to front elevation

No loss of wall fabric or increase in height is proposed. The wall retains its characteristic form which is more or less intact across the settlement; thus, this element of the proposal maintains the character and appearance of the conservation area.

External surface treatment on maintenance strip

The revised proposal has amended and simplified the external surface treatment from a Moroccan tile to York stone flags. This is a more appropriate solution that responds to the character and palette of materials found in the conservation area.

External gate to maintenance strip

The existing gate to the maintenance strip is proposed to be retained in its present form and position. Privacy will be enhanced by introducing portable planters. There are no concerns with this element of the proposal.

Door access in yard wall

A section of the yard wall is proposed to be replaced with a screen to enable direct access into the maintenance strip. Conservation of the wall fabric is recommended for future repairs.

Rear door from kitchen

There are no objections to the proposed replacement of the glazed door to the rear of the property as the door in situ is a modern replacement. Any new replacement should be timber framed and of a matching design/appearance (unless otherwise agreed), with joinery details expected as part of the LBC/covered by a condition (including a 1:10/1:15 cross-section as appropriate).

Roof covering

Any works to the roof in association with the loft conversion and insertion of roof lights, should reinstate any areas of disturbance with slates to match. Samples will be required to ensure an appropriate material and match is achieved.

Internal alteration – Living room door

The amended proposal has retained the original opening into the living room off the hallway. This is a positive step which retains historic fabric and the original plan form. There are also benefits in terms of maintaining existing levels of load-bearing wall in this corner of the room which is of overall benefit to the structural integrity of the building.

Internal alteration – Creation of stairs to roof space

A new feature stair which comes off the existing on the first-floor landing is proposed; this is to enable access into the loft space which can presently only be accessed via a small hatch in the office. The new stair will involve the loss of a large section of ceiling fabric and joists, disrupting the historic floorplan in this part of the building. This amounts to less than substantial harm in NPPF terms, the harm being outweighed on balance by the use of the loft which will bring the benefits of insulation, heating, and ventilation that will extend the life of the roof space.

The first-floor landing around the stairs, office and master bedroom all demonstrate later partitioning of internal walls with modern stud wall constructions. Applied decorations, including cornicing, a ceiling rose, and a dado rail were all confirmed as modern DIY additions by the applicant on a site visit. There is an opportunity therefore to reverse the harm from these unoriginal interventions in this section of the building.

A new intervention in this area is the introduction of an acoustic partition wall on the Party Wall with No.807. This entails fixing a 10mm depth timber batten frame lined with 35mm max deep mineral wool in the cavity, enclosed with 2 layers of plasterboard and finished with a plaster skim. The intervention offers additional thermal benefits in an area where there is no heating installed.

An original newel post is in situ in the existing stair rail; this is proposed to be retained and incorporated into the new stairway, the details of which are required to be submitted on condition of any approval to ensure the impacts on the listed building are acceptable.

Internal alteration – Loft conversion

A loft conversion is proposed to form a flexible office/bedroom with en-suite. The Structural Survey notes that the existing ceiling members are of insufficient size and strength to support the required residential floor loadings to British Standards; it therefore recommends steel beams to support the floor joists, as well as new timber floor joists.

The revised plans now include the detail of the steelworks required to enable the loft conversion. This entails 150mm depth steelwork matched with similar depth new joists running the depth of the building and sited on concrete padstones built into the walls, supporting the new floor and roof insulation. There would be no protrusion externally nor below the level of the new floor, with all of the work entirely contained within the roof space. As such, there would be no material change to the external appearance of the building arising from this intervention, and although there would be an internal material change, the intervention would be clearly read as a new addition.

The loft conversion entails replacement of the single pane wire mesh safety glazing roof light which is to be replaced with a top-hung conservation-grade roof light, 1180mm H x 1140mm W x 80mm D. The roof light will have slightly more prominence on the east-facing roof slope on account of it not being flush as the existing pane; however, the replacement will not be so significantly distinguished from the existing and offers benefits of a better insulated and ventilated loft space which mitigates the less than substantial harm.

The level of harm overall is assessed as less than substantial in NPPF terms, with the overall benefits of the proposal, enabling the roof space to be insulated, heated, and ventilated securing its long-term future.

Conclusion

On the basis that the detailing and quality of the new interventions are satisfactorily met through the submission of additional information as set out in conditions 3 and 4 below, the works comply with Section 16(2) of Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Policy EN3 of the Manchester City Core Strategy and paragraphs 189, 197, 199 and 206 of the NPPF.

Human Rights Act 1998 considerations

This application needs to be considered against the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. Under Article 6, the applicants (and those third parties, including local residents, who have made representations) have a right to a fair hearing and to this end the local planning authority must give full consideration to their comments.

Protocol 1 Article 1, and Article 8 where appropriate, confer(s) a right of respect for a person's home, other land and business assets. In taking account of all material considerations, including Council policy as set out in the Core Strategy and saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan, the Director of Planning, Building Control & Licensing has concluded that some rights conferred by these articles on the applicant(s)/objector(s)/resident(s) and other occupiers and owners of nearby land that might be affected may be interfered with but that that interference is in accordance with the law and justified by being in the public interest and on the basis of the planning merits of the development proposal. She believes that any restriction on these rights posed by the recommendation given is proportionate to the wider benefits of and that such a decision falls within the margin of discretion afforded to the Council under the Town and Country Planning Acts.

Recommendation: Approve

Article 35 Declaration

The local planning authority in making its decision has had due regard to paragraph 47 of the National Planning Policy Framework as well as the development plan, national planning policy and other material considerations and has approved the application subject to appropriate conditions and for the reasons outlined in the delegated report. The proposal raised no objections on notification however representation was made regarding the garden boundary wall. The application was also subject to a delay whilst amendments were made to the scheme to ensure preservation and enhancement of the heritage asset.

Condition(s) to be attached to decision for approval OR Reasons for recommendation to refuse

1) The development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason - Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings and documents received on the 16th June 2022 or as stated:

Application Form

Location Plan Ref: 001

Site Plan Ref: 002

Existing Plans & Elevations Ref: 003

Proposed External Works Ref: 004

Proposed Internal Works Ref: 005

Structural Survey provided by Shear Chartered Structural Engineer Ref: 9989 Rev P1, dated 1st November 2020

Proposed Loft Section EE Ref: 008 received on the 30th March 2023

Design, Access & Heritage Impact Statement dated March 2023 (Ref: 1926HILL), provided by Curtis Martyn received on the 30th March 2023

Reason - To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans pursuant to policy DM1 of the adopted Core Strategy for the City of Manchester.

3) Notwithstanding the details provided in the application as detailed in Condition 2 of this Notice, details, to include physical samples of the materials to be used in the development including but not limited to:

a) Mortar samples, new slates and bricks, plaster and leadwork

b) A 1:10/1:15 cross-section as appropriate showing joinery details of the replacement rear timber door.

c) Specification of the conservation rooflight

d) 1:100 elevations of the feature stair, annotated to include materials

shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of building works. The agreed details shall be incorporated into the development and thereafter be retained as approved throughout the life of the development.

Reason - Because the proposed works affect a building which is included in the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest and careful attention to building work is required to protect the character, appearance and fabric of this building in accordance with policies EN1, EN3, SP1 and DM1 and saved policies DC19 and DC20 of the Unitary Development Plan.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Urban Design & Conservation
Didsbury Civic Society

Ground Floor, Kingston House Towers Business Park, Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 2LX
62 Bloomesbury Avenue, Manchester, M20 2BN
64 Bloomesbury Avenue, Manchester, M20 2BN
66 Bloomesbury Avenue, Manchester, M20 2BN
68 Bloomesbury Avenue, Manchester, M20 2BN
70 Bloomesbury Avenue, Manchester, M20 2BN
Kingston House Part First Floor, Towers Business Park, Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 2LD
72 Bloomesbury Avenue, Manchester, M20 2BN
803 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 2QR
60 Bloomesbury Avenue, Manchester, M20 2BN
58 Bloomesbury Avenue, Manchester, M20 2BN
Second Floor, Kingston House Towers Business Park, Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 2LX
Kingston House, Towers Business Park, Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 2LX
Kingston House Ground Floor, Towers Business Park, Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 2LD
Flat 8, Kingston Court, Kingston Road, Manchester, M20 2RZ
Flat 7, Kingston Court, Kingston Road, Manchester, M20 2RZ
Flat 6, Kingston Court, Kingston Road, Manchester, M20 2RZ
Flat 5, Kingston Court, Kingston Road, Manchester, M20 2RZ
Flat 4, Kingston Court, Kingston Road, Manchester, M20 2RZ
Flat 3, Kingston Court, Kingston Road, Manchester, M20 2RZ
Flat 2, Kingston Court, Kingston Road, Manchester, M20 2RZ
Flat 1, Kingston Court, Kingston Road, Manchester, M20 2RZ
5 The Grove, Manchester, M20 2RG
13 The Grove, Manchester, M20 2RG
Kingston Court, Kingston Road, Manchester, M20 2RZ
807 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 2QR
805 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 2QR
9 The Grove, Manchester, M20 2RG
7 The Grove, Manchester, M20 2RG
3 The Grove, Manchester, M20 2RG
17 The Grove, Manchester, M20 2RG
15 The Grove, Manchester, M20 2RG
11 The Grove, Manchester, M20 2RG
1 The Grove, Manchester, M20 2RG

Appendix 2 – Planning constraints

Article 4 Direction - Removal Of PD Rights Change Of Use From Class C3 To Class C4
Aircraft Safeguarding Zone - Aircraft Safeguarding Zone - All Exceeding 90M
Conservation Area - Didsbury St James Conservation Area 1970
Area Team Boundary - Name: SOUTH AREA