

P R O S P E T T I

HERITAGE STATEMENT

504 WILMSLOW ROAD, WITHINGTON, M20 4BT

DECEMBER 2022

REVISION 01: JANUARY 2023

APPLICANT:

Mr. Kristian Sparrow

Nests Developments Ltd

AGENT:

PROSPETTI Architecture

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1. Introduction

This heritage statement was prepared to accompany the application submitted seeking planning permission by Nests Development Ltd for the basement conversion of the existing property located at 504 Wilmslow Road, Withington, Manchester M20 4BT.

The document will include a brief history of the site and local area, an investigation into the significance of the site and review of the proposed scheme.

2. Site Location and Context

2.1 The property falls within the Withington Conservation Area, the site is shown with a red icon in the image below.

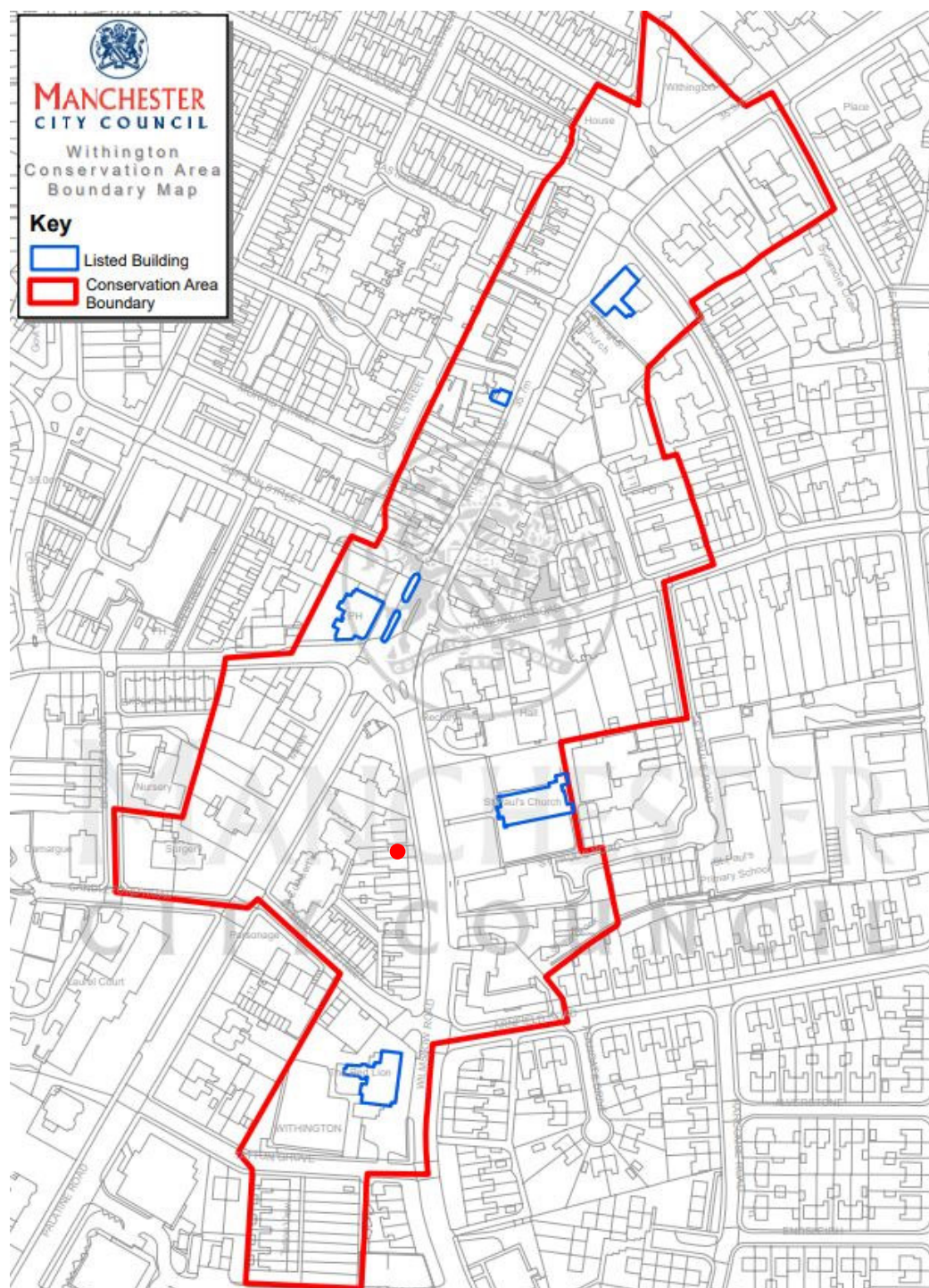


Figure 01. Withington Conservation Area

- 2.2** Withington Conservation Area was designated in 1983. It consists principally of a linear shopping street in the centre with housing to the East and South at a point where one of the main radial routes from the city centre branches at the junction of Wilmslow Road, Palatine Road, Burton Road and Parsonage Road.
- 2.3** The site is directly to the south of the junction of Wilmslow Road, Palatine Road, Burton Road and Parsonage Road and therefore close to the centre of the Conservation Area.
- 2.4** The residential properties within the conservation area are within predominantly linear plots set back from the pavement and demarked with brick boundary walls and gateposts.
- 2.5** The local architectural vernacular is predominantly Victorian properties varying from two storey to four storeys. The centre of the Conservation Area is the arterial vehicle route into Manchester framed by two and three storey properties containing retail at the ground floor. Moving out from the centre of the Conservation Area are tree lined residential streets with terraced and semi detached Victorian properties. Many of the larger properties have been converted into apartments but some of the houses are still single dwellings.
- 2.6** The maps below show the evolution of Withington from 1885 to 1971. The strong fork in the road to the south of Withington village that is within the designated conservation area can clearly be seen. The maps also show the scale of development in South Manchester over the 86 year period.



Figure 02. 1885 Map of Withington



Figure 03. 1913 Map of Withington



Figure 04. 1971 Map of Withington

3. Site Characteristics

3.1 Early maps indicate that the row of houses in which the site sits dates to before 1888.



Figure 05. Map of the Local Area in 1888 (site is shown with red icon)

3.2 The existing building is a semi-detached red brick dwelling of a style typical of Manchester and the Victorian era. The building is not listed but is opposite the grade II listed St Paul's Church.



Figure 06. The Site within the Row of Semi Detached Houses

3.3 The property is accessed via the main front door on Wilmslow Road.

3.4 The property is in keeping with the historical vernacular of the Withington Conservation Area where the majority of the buildings are built in the Manchester red brick. The frontage includes a two storey bay window with stone cills and header brick detailing characteristic of the area. The front door is set within

an arched opening and the replacement white upvc windows reflect the original sash windows typical of the area. The pitched roof is clad in natural slate with a pitched roof. Original brick chimneys can also be seen.

3.5 The front boundary of the site consists of a low brick wall with stone capping, traditional of the area.

3.6 The side and rear boundaries consist of a mid height brick wall. Two protected trees are to the rear of the property which will remain untouched.

4. Planning Policy

The following policies are relevant to the site and the proposed works.

4.1 Manchester Core Strategy (adopted 2012)

Policy CC 9 (Design and Heritage) states that development in Manchester City Centre should preserve or enhance the heritage assets that have been identified, including listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled ancient monuments.

4.2 Policy EN 3 (Heritage) states that throughout the City, the Council will encourage development that compliments and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods, including those of the City Centre. New developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance, including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas and archaeological remains.

4.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012)

Paragraph 128 of the NPPF states that, in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.

Paragraph 132 notes that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation and that significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. Paragraph 134 in the NPPF states 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 securing its optimum viable use.

4.4 In regards to heritage policies, the NPPF provides the following definition of significance (Glossary Annex 2): 'The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also by virtue of its setting'.

4.5 Paragraph 138 confirms that not all elements of a World Heritage Site or Conservation Area will contribute to its significance.

4.6 Taking account of the above information, it is clear that the main policy focus is the protection of the significance of the heritage asset. In addition, it is clear that proposals should seek to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

4.7 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is the legislative basis for decision-making on applications that relate to the historic environment. Sections 72 of the Act impose statutory duties upon local planning authorities which, in respect of conservation areas, that 'special attention shall be paid to the desirability or preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area'.

4.8 In considering applications for planning permission, local authorities are also required to consider the policies on the historic environment set out in the National Planning Policy Framework 2019. At the heart of the Framework is 'a presumption in favour of sustainable development' and there are also specific policies relating to the historic environment. The Framework states that 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'. The Glossary to the National Planning Policy Framework defines a heritage asset as: A building, monument, site, place, area, or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing). The Framework, in paragraph 189, states that: In determining applications, 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 proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

4.9 Concerning conservation areas, in paragraph 201, that: Not all elements of a Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 195 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 196, as appropriate, considering the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area as a whole.

This document will aim to assess the significance of No. 504 Wilmslow Road in sufficient detail to understand the potential impact of the proposals.

5. The Proposal

- 5.1** The proposal is to convert the ground two bedroom floor apartment into a four bedroom apartment by converting the basement.
- 5.2** The existing basement, which is currently a vacant void space, will be converted and upgraded to make comfortable additional bedroom accommodation and bathroom.
- 5.3** By converting this disused space the building quality as a whole will be improved by removing the risk of vermin, damp and improving the energy performance of the building by insulation and heating the currently cold space.
- 5.4** Proposed alterations to the principal elevation are a reinstatement of the original building and therefore respect the heritage of the building and the surrounding Conservation Area. The proposals will reinstate the original basement windows and lightwells to provide essential natural daylighting, ventilation and egress in an emergency to the basement level. These openings were bricked up many years ago, this is evident externally by the different brick used within the openings as seen in figures 6.5 and 6.6. Internally within the basement the original window to the front of the property can also be seen (see figure 6.3).
- 5.5** By undertaking the work to reintroduce the lightwells the external space at the front of the property will also be improved by clearing the weeds and debris with new planting introduced where possible to enhance the heritage of the existing property.
- 5.6** The development will leave the character and appearance of the property unharmed. The proposed reinstatement of the basement windows would return the exterior appearance of the property back to its original design.
- 5.7** The lightwells will be formed with brickwork retaining walls. The only part of the lightwells which will be visible externally are the proposed Victorian style railings which are to be of wrought iron or steel painted black to reflect the traditional style of the area. The proposed windows are also designed to be in keeping with the existing windows.

5.8 Detailed plans of the elevations have been included as part of this application depicting the works to the light well brickwork, railings and windows which will match existing. In keeping with local policy and the Conservation Area, the proposed design will be in keeping with the character of the traditional style with all works are to be carried out sympathetically and in keeping with the property's architectural features and where possible match existing materials and period features

6. Existing Site Photos



Figure 6.1. Existing internal stairs connecting ground floor apartment to basement, currently blocked up

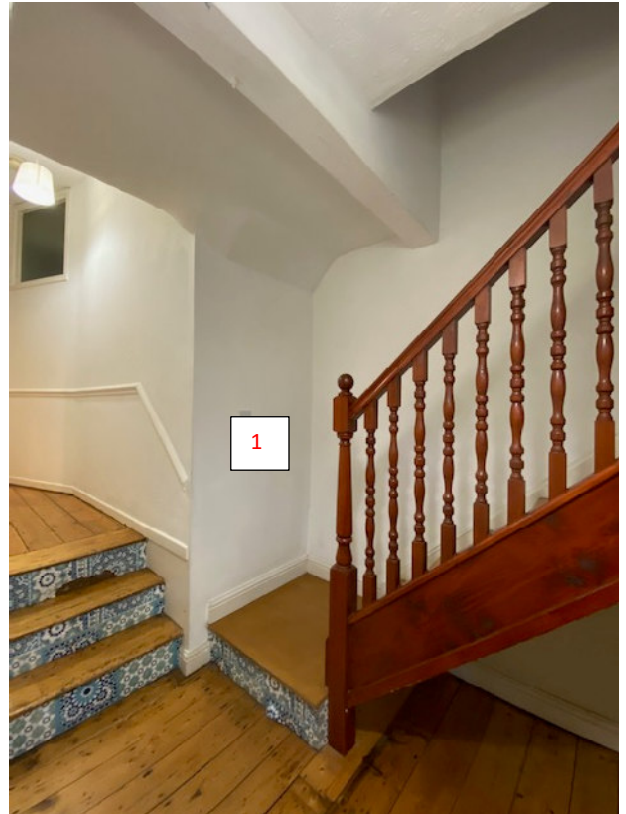


Figure 6.2. Blocked up basement wall marked '1'



Figure 6.3. Existing basement front window (internal view)



Figure 6.4. Existing basement rear window (internal view)



Figure 6.5. Existing basement front window



Figure 6.6. Existing basement rear window

7. Justification and Mitigation

7.1 The proposed scheme seeks to utilise an existing basement, reinstating external windows which had been bricked up in recent history, to create two generous bedrooms. The proposed works will aim to restore

the building to its original appearance by reinstating the basement openings and lightwells with cast iron railings in line with the historic character of the building and the area. In addition to this the external space to the front of the building will be upgraded to improve the kerb appeal of the building and the street scene whilst retaining the original brick and stone boundary wall.

7.2 Similar properties in the immediate area have apartment basement conversions, whilst some of the properties in the vicinity still have blocked up cellar windows. The existing basement is already a generous size, with good structural integrity and therefore external construction works will be minimal to create the light wells.



Figure 7.1 Existing and Proposed Ground and Basement Levels



Figure 7.2 Existing and Proposed Elevations

8. Conclusion

In summary, the positive benefits of reinstating the original cellar openings of 504 Wilmslow Road and upgrading the basement to create additional space which is currently unused far outweigh the impact of construction works on the site.

The proposed scheme has been designed sensitively to improve the external space to the front of the property whilst retaining the original boundary wall to protect the street frontage and appearance of the property, whilst diligently restoring the light wells to the front of the building in materials which match the historic architectural features of the building. There are no above ground extensions proposed which would increase the massing or footprint of the building.

Therefore the proposed alterations to 504 Wilmslow Road will have a positive impact on the Withington Conservation Area by restoring the original street level external elements of the building bringing back the historic character of the building to the area.