

progress
in practice

Design & Access Statement

25018 26 Stanley Road, Whalley
Range

17th March 2026

P01

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Introduction

This Design & Access Statement has been prepared by Progress in Practice on behalf of Vasundhara Verma and Thomas Lamb to accompany the Householder Planning Application for the retrofit and alterations to 26 Stanley Road.

This statement should be read in conjunction with the drawings and supporting documentation submitted with the Planning Application.

Executive Summary

The existing site consists of an 1890's three storey semi-detached home with a basement. A Retrofit Assessment of the home has been carried out to determine the suitability of energy saving measures and propose a route for making the home more comfortable and energy efficient. The following measures have been identified as the highest priority for making the home warmer and easier to heat.

- High quality triple glazing with improved airtightness
- External wall insulation to the rear of the property
- Insulation to the recessed porch and a new high quality timber door
- Improved airtightness to the rear of the property
- Internal wall insulation to the front of the property (at a later date)

Local Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework

Sections of the NPPF most relevant to this proposal include:

Section 14 requires that the “planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate.” Specifically Paragraph 167 of the NPPF states:

“In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should give significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings, both domestic and non-domestic...”.

Pg. 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.

The following local policy is set out in Manchester City Council to provide guidance on energy efficiency projects in the borough:

Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan Document 2024

Greater Manchester has set a target to be a zero-carbon city by 2038, the PfE document outlines ways to reach those commitments in para.5.6 with the following emphasised on retrofit:

- *“Initiate a programme of mitigation to reduce emissions including by: Reducing heat demand in homes”*
- *“Significantly upscaling building retrofit*

The document states that *“retrofitting the existing building stock therefore presents a significant opportunity to help meet the 2038 carbon neutrality target. This can also contribute to the reduction of fuel poverty when targeted appropriately.”*

PfE Policy JP-P2: Heritage

The key challenge in retrofitting heritage buildings is preserving the existing character whilst simultaneously improving the thermal performance to minimise carbon emissions. Policy JP-P2 within the PfE states the following:

“We will proactively manage and work with partners to positively conserve, sustain and enhance our historic environment and heritage assets and their settings.”

“Exploring opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that restoration of historic buildings offer.”

The retrofitting of properties within Conservation Areas remains one of the biggest challenges in demand reduction and decarbonisation. This proposal seeks to demonstrate a sensitive and appropriate approach to reducing carbon, whilst offering significant demand reduction. There is a public benefit in projects such as this going ahead, demonstrating how to approach a retrofit sensitively and appropriately, whilst using the principles of Passivhaus Design to apply scientific rigor to the process.

Previous Applications

The only previous applications on the Manchester City Council Planning Portal for 26 Stanley Road are regarding alterations to existing trees.

Access

Whilst it would not be feasible to provide step free access, new doors will include level thresholds. New steps to the existing terrace/balcony would be Part K compliant and easier to use than the existing stairs. The new ground floor WC will be Part M compliant and would include an opening outward door.

Design Proposals

Amount

The quantity of dwellings remains unchanged.

Scale

The scale of the existing dwelling remains unchanged.

Character and Appearance

Refer to the Heritage Statement for further details on proposed alterations to the existing building and its character.

Layout

The proposal improves the circulation and openness of the living and dining spaces to the rear of the house. The proposal restores and repairs the existing veranda and provides a better connection between the living spaces and the garden.

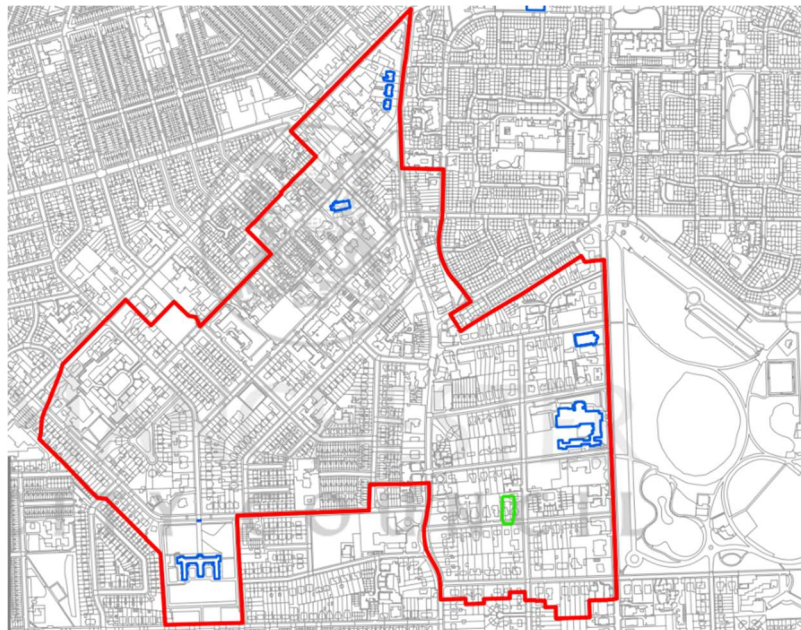
Landscape

No changes to the landscaping are proposed as part of this application.

Heritage Statement

Site and Context

26 Stanley Road is located within Whalley Range Conservation Area. The area is predominately residential and is part of the 63 acres of land which was purchased for building in 1832 by a banker, Samuel Brooks. Whalley Range was one of the first suburbs offering relief from the congestion of the industrial city. Roads were laid out and building plots were sold with certain conditions to ensure that development was appropriate to Samuel Brooks's vision. Today the layout that was established by Samuel Brooks remains the same with large houses on tree-lined avenues with most of the original houses intact. The conservation area contains seven listed buildings, none of which are near the site and are not impacted by the proposal (site shown in green, listed buildings in blue below).



Designation of the conservation area in 1991 was aimed at halting the development pressures to demolish large old houses. The designation “*aims to encourage refurbishment of what is left of the fine quality original housing stock*” and owners are “*encouraged to retain the original character and detail of their houses or premises.*”¹

¹ www.manchester.gov.uk/parks-leisure-and-the-arts/parks-playgrounds-allotments-and-open-spaces/conservation-areas/introduction27/control-of-development

The buildings along Stanley Road are predominantly semi-detached properties. Many of these are the original red brick Victorian houses, featuring bay windows, recessed porches, and decorative detailing. In some areas, there are large detached properties; while a few of these are original Victorian houses, others are replacement dwellings in the form of apartment schemes. Although these later apartment blocks incorporate elements that reference the Victorian character and architectural style of the area (such as projecting eaves, verges, bay windows, brick banding, and arched windows), it is evident that they were built at a later date and are not fully in keeping with the street scene. A few plots on Stanley Road have been redeveloped with post-war semi-detached housing, which does not align with the conservation area and makes no reference to the Victorian detailing or materials.

No. 26 Stanley Road is one of the original Victorian semi-detached properties on the street and retains many of its original features at the front of the house. However, it is not a designated heritage asset and is not listed.

The adjoining property, No. 28, has been subject to significant alteration, including the addition of a front dormer, installation of uPVC window frames, and the removal of key architectural features such as the front gable, arched windows, and original eaves detailing. The impact of these changes is that it has caused significant harm to the architectural heritage of the pair of semis (no. 26 and no.28).



No. 28 on the left and no.26 Stanley Road on the right.

Statement of significance

The list below are architectural features and characteristics of the building that have been identified as contributing positively to the character of the building and the wider conservation area.

- Decorative brick lintels
- Detailed barge board
- Traditional materials palette (red brick and natural slate)
- Projecting eaves with corbels and brick banding
- Timber windows with curved single glazing
- Recessed porch with decorative soffits
- Decorative metal guarding

The principal (front) elevation is the most architecturally significant, displaying a high level of detailing and craftsmanship typical of Victorian suburban development. In contrast, the rear elevation has a reduced level of architectural detailing. Whilst the rear windows have curved brick lintels, they do not incorporate curved glazing; instead, they feature a curved timber fillet at the head. Overall, the rear elevation makes a more limited contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and cannot be seen from the public highway.



No.26 rear elevation

Assessment of proposals

At the time of purchase, the property had no insulation. While improvements have since been made the property remains thermally inefficient and uncomfortable due to uninsulated solid walls and single-glazed windows. The proposed works includes the installation of triple-glazed windows and external wall insulation (EWI) designed to improve thermal performance. These measures have been carefully designed to ensure that the character and appearance of the building and its contribution to the Conservation Area are preserved.

The existing windows will be upgraded to high quality triple glazed timber windows as they are a significant area for heat loss. The windows perform badly in part due to the single glazing, but also because the frames themselves are leaky and poor performing. Replacing the whole unit with a high-performance window, will have a significant impact on the buildings overall airtightness and performance. To retain the character of the existing building the glazing transoms will tie in with the original proportions of the original single glazed sash windows. The replacement windows to the front of the house will retain the curved glazing to respect the character of the existing elevation. To the back and side of the property the windows will have rectangular glazing with curved timber fillets. This is because these windows are less visible from the public right of way and the existing window heads have timber fillets in this location.

External wall insulation (EWI) is proposed only to the rear outrigger of the building only in order to minimise impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. While EWI would provide greater thermal efficiency if applied across all elevations, its use on the principal (front) elevation would result in the unacceptable loss or alteration of important architectural features and detailing and is therefore not considered appropriate. In contrast, the rear elevation is only minimally visible from the public right of way and as such its contribution to the Conservation Area is limited. There is very little architectural detailing to the rear and this does not contribute to the area's character. Therefore, the application of EWI in this location is considered to have a negligible impact. To further reduce visual impact, a muted dark green render finish is proposed. This has been selected to blend in with the surrounding trees and shrubs minimising visual contrast and ensuring that the retrofit measures remain discreet and sympathetic to its context.



View of 26 Stanley Road from public right of way

Statement of justification

The proposed window and insulation retrofit measures are critical to improving the thermal comfort of the home for current and future occupants making the property relevant and fit for purpose for generations to come. The proposals have been carefully designed to mitigate visual impact on the Conservation Area, particularly at the front elevation.

Manchester City Council has set a target of becoming a zero-carbon city by 2038. It was identified in the ‘Housing Retrofit Update and Pathway to a Retrofit Plan for Manchester’ that a quarter of all emissions within the city are from residential properties and that *“improving the carbon footprint of existing homes by retrofitting at scale is therefore fundamental to delivering on our zero carbon objectives in the period to 2038”*, with 79,850 homes needing to be retrofitted by 2030 for Manchester City Council to reach its net zero carbon goals.

With over 32% of the housing stock in Greater Manchester being owner occupied, there is significant demand; however, there is little incentive to retrofit existing homes due to the upfront costs and challenges associated with older housing stock. Therefore, this proposal should be welcomed in accordance with Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Policy JP-S2: *“Promoting the retrofitting of existing buildings with measures to improve energy efficiency and generate renewable and low carbon energy, heating and cooling”*.

Summary

The proposed retrofit of this 1890s property improves internal living conditions and significantly enhances thermal performance by reducing space heating demand. The scheme has been carefully designed to preserve the building's character and its contribution to the Conservation Area. Key features of the principal elevation are retained, with interventions limited to less sensitive and less visible areas. As such, the proposals preserve the character and appearance of the building while supporting its continued use. They demonstrate how historic properties can be sensitively upgraded to improve energy performance. Overall, the scheme represents a balanced approach to heritage and sustainability and supports the wider aim of promoting the sensitive retrofit of existing homes within conservation areas.