

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT STATEMENT TO SUPPORT THE CONSIDERATION OF A PLANNING APPLICATION THAT PROPOSES THE ERECTION OF A 2 STOREY BUILDING TO FORM OF 4 X 1 BEDROOM SELF CONTAINED FLATS AT WOOLFIELD HOUSE, WASH LANE, BURY, BL9 6BJ



Image 1 – St Paul Court (formerly Church) – The Heritage Asset

APPLICATION SITE:	WOOLFIELD HOUSE, WASH LANE, BURY, BL9 6BJ
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:	THE ERECTION OF A 2 STOREY BUILDING TO FORM OF 4 X 1 BEDROOM SELF CONTAINED FLATS
MAIN AGENT:	NK ARCHITECTURAL
PLANNING AGENT:-	MR MIKE CARR MSc MRTPI DIRECTOR OF MAT DESIGN LIMITED
DATE:	APRIL 2023

1. INTRODUCTION & THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This Heritage Assessment Statement (HAS) has been prepared by MAT Design Limited on behalf of NK Architectural and forms part of the planning application submission to Bury Metropolitan Borough Council that proposes the erection of a 2 storey building to form 4 x 1 bedroomed self-contained flats to the lower floor of the building

Overall, this HAS, when considered in conjunction with the supporting plans and Design & Access Planning Statement, will make an assessment as to the significance of a designated heritage asset, if development proposal would lead to less than substantial harm on to heritage asset, then weight this harm against the public benefits of the proposal.

2. THE APPLICAITON SITE

The application forms part of the curtilage of a flatted development site that is located to the north side of Wash Lane, with access to and from the application site being taken from Wash Lane. This is a through route from Bury town centre to the surrounding motorway network.

Built development on the application site comprises of a 2 storey building in an 'L shape' form, which is centrally located within the site. This building was a former residential care home that has the benefit of planning permission (66090/FUL), to change the use of the building into 9 x one bed apartments and 2no. two bed apartments on 18/6/2021. The site, which is nearing completion, also provides vehicle circulation space is available around the building and this area also provides 11 residential parking spaces, along with a bin store and secure cycle parking areas. These areas would not be compromised by this development.

The immediate surrounding area is mixed in character, with residential terraced properties being located to the east and west, whilst St Paul's Court and its grounds are located directly to the north. St Pauls Court was formerly St Pauls Church (a Grade II listed building, which was converted into apartments in Spring 2005. Opposite the application site is an old mill, which is locally listed and is in use for commercial and business units.

In terms of the setting of the site in the wider area, this site is not isolated and is located close to local services, schools, medical facilities and public transport. As such, the development site can be described as being located in a sustainable location for purposes attached to the consideration of this planning application.

The position of the development site in relation to the heritage asset is shown on image 1 below, with the development site circled red and the heritage asset circled blue.



Image 1 – Source Google Maps

3. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development would include the erection of a rectangular 2 storey building along the eastern boundary of the site, and would provide floor space to allow for the formation of 4 self-contained flats, set over the 2 floors. 2 additional car parking are also proposed within the site, which would not compromise circulation or the car parking layout that was approved via planning permission 66090/FUL. Additional secure cycle spaces can also be accommodated within the site, should this be required by the Local Planning Authority.

Each of flats would which would have a floor space of 37m², so as to meet the minimum standard for this type of development, and would provide 1 bedroom, a shower room and a living/kitchen area. Each habitable room would be served by natural light and the window openings are positioned so as not to compromise existing and proposed residential amenity. The positions and outlook of these windows can be altered if this be required by the Local Planning Authority.

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Planning permission (43630/FUL) - Conversion of former church building into 22 residential apartments including extension; new perimeter fencing & widening of access to provide vehicular access to new carpark; new footpath & lighting in existing landscaped churchyard – The former St Pauls Church & Churchyard, St Pauls Street, Bury and;

Planning permission (66090/FUL) - Approved the change of the building into 9 x one bed apartments and 2no. two bed apartments on 18/6/2021. This development is nearing completion

5. HERITAGE ASSESSMENT PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Act of Parliament, along with the National and Local Planning Policies that directs the consideration of the planning and the Listed Building Consent applications, is made up of the following framework:-

- **Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990**, which requires local planning authorities to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character of a conservation area;
- **Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment)** sets out the most up to date planning guidance in relation to development opportunities that affect heritage assets, with paragraph 184 advising that:-

“Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value.

These 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”.

Further to the above, NPPF paragraphs 189 - 191 provide advice in relation to proposals affecting heritage assets, with paragraph 192 setting out 3 primary considerations in determining applications. Those considerations are:-

- 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.

In addition, NPPF paragraphs 192 - 201 provide advice in relation to the consideration potential impacts, which generally reflect the concept of preservation and/or enhancement of the heritage asset, as identified in The Planning (Listed Building & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, whilst paragraph 202 sets out that Local Planning Authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the dis-benefits of departing from those policies and;

- ***The Bury Unitary Development Plan*** and ***the Bury Local*** provides the adopted local policy framework against which the proposals for this site are to be considered against.

Whilst the wording and some of the provisions that are set out in Section 16 of the 2021 NPPF supersede some elements of the ***Bury UDP and the Bury Local Plan Policy Framework (not adopted)***, the following policies carry considerable weight in the determination of planning and listed building consent applications, along with planning applications that may affect the setting of any heritage asset, such as St Pauls Court (Church).

The relevant policies in this case are identified as:-

Bury UDP Policy EN2 - Conservation and Listed Buildings and;

Bury Local Plan Policy Direction BH2 - Listed Buildings.

In particular, Policy Direction BH2 advises that:-

- The Bury Local Plan should include a policy that seeks to ensure that the character and setting of Listed Buildings will be safeguarded by not permitting works, alterations or changes of use which would have a detrimental effect on their historical or architectural character and features and that proposals for demolition will be opposed and will only be considered where it is demonstrated conclusively that the building(s) cannot be retained”.

This HAS reflects the provision of the Bury UDP, the Bury Local Plan Policy Direction BH2 and the provisions of Section 16 of the NPPF 2021.

6. THE HERITAGE ASSET & ITS HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

St Pauls Court (Church) is a Grade II listed building that is located to the north of the property and the curtilage of St Pauls Church forms the northern boundary of the site. St Pauls is the Heritage asset for the purposes of this HAS, and will be considered later in this statement.

In terms of St Pauls as the heritage asset, the listing describes St Pals as:- St Pauls Church: SD 81 SW ST PAUL'S STREET 6/71 - St Paul's Church - II 1838-42, by John Harper of York, on land given by 13th Earl of Derby, partly through donations from O O Walker and Thomas Openshaw. C13 style.

Detail that formed an essential part of the listing are described as “finely-cut honey and grey sandstone in wide courses. Nearly rectangular in plan, the west tower protruding slightly, the chancel of equal height to the nave. Lean to aisles and clerestory have paired lancet windows. West front has gabled doorway between buttresses, with single lancet in lean to wings; upper stages of tower has tall paired lancets to each face and spiky pinnacles. The interior has flat ceiling above tall slender arcades.

7. HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

7.1 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT/THE AFFECTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development would involve the erection of a 2 storey block to provide 4 self-contained flats that would run adjacent to the site existing building, with the building being no nearer to the Listed Building or the curtilage of the Listed Building to the north. In addition, careful consideration has been given to the design of the proposed building to ensure that the design principles reflect its surrounds, so that there is no harm to the heritage asset or to the surrounding urban character of the site.

Taking these factors into account, the proposals for the site would result in less than substantial harm (in the context of this heritage assessment), and would preserve the setting of St Pauls Court (Church).

7.2 HERITAGE ASSESSMENT CONCLUSIONS

Due to the size and scale of the new development, the design principles that are to be adopted in the construction of the building and its proposed use for residential purposes, it is considered that the proposed development's harm to the significance of the St Pauls Court (Church) and its curtilage as a Grade II Listed Building are minimal, resulting in less than substantial harm.

Taking this into account, paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework advises that any harm that is caused by the development, must then be balanced against the public benefit of the proposal.

In this case, and in terms of the planning balance, the proposed development would allow the construction of a new residential building that would provide a small contribution to the boroughs housing stock, which in turn would contribute to the vitality and viability of this part of Bury. It is considered that these public benefits outweigh the less than substantial harm that is caused by the development.

Overall, and when considering the above mentioned factors, the conclusions of this heritage assessment are that the proposed development complies with the provisions set out in legislation, Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Bury UDP Policy EN2 and Bury Local Plan Direction BH2.

As such, the proposals are considered to be a sustainable form of development, as described in paragraph 8 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.