

Heritage Impact Assessment

Proposal: Erection of 1 no. dwelling

Address: Land near Whitefield Golf Club, corner of Parr Hill/Higher Lane,
Whitefield, Manchester, M45 7EZ

Prepared by Plan:8 Town Planning Ltd
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1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

1.1

This Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared by Plan:8 Town Planning Ltd in response to the Local Planning Authority request for information pursuant to paragraph 200 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

1.2

The purpose of this statement is to describe the significance of the heritage asset affected by the proposed development, assess the contribution made by its setting, and evaluate the impact of the proposal on that significance.

1.3

The level of detail provided is proportionate to the asset importance and sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on its significance, in accordance with paragraph 200 of the NPPF.

2. THE HERITAGE ASSET

2.1 The Listed Building: 71 Higher Lane (Broxups)

The application site lies immediately to the west of No. 71 Higher Lane, known as Broxups, a Grade II Listed Building designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural and historic interest.

2.2 List Description

Historic England list entry (Ref: 1163381) describes Broxups as follows:

Circa 17th Century with later additions and alterations. Brown brick two storeys. 4 nearly flush sash windows. 6 panel door with fielded upper panels. Fanlight with metal radial bars of Gothic pattern. Doorcase of Tuscan half columns and open pediment. Interior has C17 stair, with closed string and shaped, flat balusters. Doors of 6 fielded panels. First floor has C18 mantels (rest are modern). Cellar has wide bevelled beams. License for non-conformist preaching granted to the occupant William Walker in 1672 (origin of Stand Unitarian Chapel).

2.3 Significance of the Heritage Asset

The significance of Broxups derives from several distinct heritage values:

Historical Significance: The building dates originally from the 17th Century and has important historical associations with non-conformist religious practice. The granting of a licence for non-

conformist preaching to William Walker in 1672 represents a significant moment in local religious history, as this led to the establishment of Stand Unitarian Chapel.

Architectural Significance: The building demonstrates architectural evolution from the 17th Century through later periods, with particular interest in:

- The survival of the C17 staircase with closed string and shaped flat balusters
- The 6-panel doors with fielded panels
- The C18 mantels on the first floor
- The doorcase featuring Tuscan half columns and open pediment
- The fanlight with metal radial bars of Gothic pattern
- Cellar construction with wide bevelled beams

Aesthetic Significance: The building brown brick construction, two-storey form, and nearly flush sash windows contribute to the historic character of Higher Lane and represent a surviving example of 17th Century domestic architecture in the area.

2.4 Current Condition and Context

Broxups is currently in residential use as a semi-detached dwelling. The building setting has evolved considerably over time, particularly during the 20th and 21st centuries, with the development of surrounding residential properties, the adjacent golf course, and more recent housing schemes including the Hickory Grange development immediately to the west of the application site.

3. THE SETTING OF THE HERITAGE ASSET

3.1 Definition of Setting

The NPPF Glossary defines the setting of a heritage asset as:

The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

3.2 Current Setting

The current setting of Broxups comprises:

Immediate Context (East): The principal elevation of Broxups faces onto the A665 Higher Lane. The building is experienced primarily from this main road frontage where its historic architectural features are most evident. To the immediate east lies No. 69 Higher Lane, another residential property.

Immediate Context (West): To the immediate west lies the application site, currently vacant land that previously served as a construction compound for the Hickory Grange development. Beyond the application site to the west is the Hickory Grange housing scheme.

Immediate Context (Rear): To the rear (south) of Broxups lies No. 73 Higher Lane, a more modern property that forms the other half of the semi-detached pair, though the buildings are of different periods. The construction of No. 73 Higher Lane has already significantly altered the historic setting of Broxups.

Wider Context: The wider setting includes Whitefield Golf Club to the south and west, residential development along Higher Lane and Parr Hill, and the general suburban residential character of this part of Whitefield.

3.3 Evolution of Setting Over Time

The setting of Broxups has been subject to considerable change, particularly during the 20th and 21st centuries:

- Development of the golf course (20th Century)
- Construction of No. 73 Higher Lane to the rear (20th Century)
- Development of modern residential properties along Higher Lane
- Recent construction of the Hickory Grange housing scheme immediately adjacent to the application site

The extent to which these changes have impacted the setting varies, but it is important to note that the setting has been subject to change from buildings in close proximity to the heritage asset.

3.4 Contribution of the Application Site to the Setting

The application site makes a limited contribution to the significance of Broxups:

- The site is located to the west of the Listed Building, not within the primary viewshed from Higher Lane where the building architectural significance is best appreciated
- Existing mature boundary trees along the eastern boundary of the application site provide substantial visual screening between the site and Broxups
- The site has not been in active use for over 16 years and has served as a construction compound, meaning it does not contribute positively to the aesthetic appreciation of the heritage asset
- The site lies behind the building line and does not form part of the immediate approach or principal views of Broxups from public vantage points

4. LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

4.1 Legislative Framework

Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that:

In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

The courts have established that preserving in this context means doing no harm.

4.2 National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

The relevant paragraphs of the NPPF for this assessment are:

Paragraph 200: 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.

Paragraph 206: Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

Paragraph 207: When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Paragraph 208: 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.

4.3 Development Plan

Bury Unitary Development Plan Policy EN2/3 (Listed Buildings) requires:

Development proposals affecting a listed building or its setting will only be permitted where: (i) The historic fabric and architectural character of the building are not adversely affected; (ii) There would be no adverse effect on the

setting of the building; (iii) Alterations or extensions respect the scale, design and architectural character of the listed building.

5. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Description of Proposal

The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of one detached dwelling, comprising:

- Two-storey, three-bedroom detached dwelling
- Traditional design with red brick and slate materials
- Vehicular access from Parr Hill
- Two on-site parking spaces
- Retention and protection of existing boundary trees to the eastern boundary

5.2 Design Principles

The design has been informed by the following heritage considerations:

Scale and Massing: The dwelling is proportionate to surrounding properties and maintains appropriate separation distances from Broxups. The reduction from the previously refused scheme (two semi-detached dwellings) to a single dwelling significantly reduces both built footprint and visual impact.

Materials: Traditional red brick and slate reflect the historic materials palette of Higher Lane and are appropriate within the setting of the Listed Building.

Siting: The dwelling is positioned to maintain substantial separation from Broxups, with the existing tree belt retained as a visual buffer.

Architectural Treatment: Proportions and solid to void arrangement similar to other buildings locally.

6. ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT ON HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

6.1 Impact on the Fabric of the Listed Building

The proposed development does not involve any physical intervention to the Listed Building itself. There would be no impact on the historic fabric, architectural features, or internal arrangements of Broxups. This aspect of significance would be wholly preserved.

6.2 Impact on the Setting of the Listed Building

Visual Impact: The proposed dwelling would be positioned to the west of Broxups, behind the established building line on Higher Lane. Due to the siting and the retention of mature boundary

trees, the dwelling would be scarcely visible from the principal elevation of Broxups and would not interrupt key views of the heritage asset from public vantage points along Higher Lane.

Separation Distance: The dwelling would maintain appropriate separation from Broxups, with the intervening tree belt providing both physical and visual buffer. The scale and form of the proposal have been designed to respect this relationship.

Architectural Relationship: The traditional design approach, use of appropriate materials, and proportionate scale ensure that the proposed dwelling would not compete with or detract from the architectural significance of Broxups. The design is complementary rather than imitative.

Appreciation of Significance: The key aspects of Broxups significance - its 17th Century origins, architectural features, and historical associations - are best appreciated from the building principal frontage onto Higher Lane. The proposed development would not affect the ability to appreciate these aspects of significance from public viewpoints.

Cumulative Change: The setting of Broxups has already been significantly altered by 20th and 21st Century development, including the construction of No. 73 Higher Lane immediately to the rear, the Hickory Grange development, and other modern residential properties in the vicinity. The proposed single dwelling would represent a continuation of this established pattern of development rather than introducing a new form of change.

6.3 Degree of Harm

Having regard to the definition of setting, the significance of Broxups, and the nature of the proposed development, it is considered that any harm to the significance of the heritage asset would be less than substantial within the meaning of paragraph 208 of the NPPF.

Indeed, given:

- The substantial separation distance
- The retention of the mature tree screen
- The positioning behind the building line and outside key viewsheds
- The appropriate scale, design and materials
- The established pattern of modern development in the vicinity

It is considered that the proposal would preserve the setting of the Listed Building and cause no harm to its significance within the meaning of Section 66(1) of the Listed Buildings Act.

The degree of harm, when assessed against the degree of harm to the asset significance (paragraph 17, Planning Practice Guidance), is not significant.

7. PUBLIC BENEFITS

7.1

Should the Council take a different view and consider that the proposal results in less than substantial harm, paragraph 208 of the NPPF requires this harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

7.2

The public benefits of this scheme include:

Housing Delivery: The proposal would contribute one additional dwelling to Bury housing supply at a time when the Council Housing Delivery Test result remains below 75%, indicating serious under-delivery against housing need.

Sustainable Development: The site lies within the defined urban area of Whitefield, well served by public transport, local services, and infrastructure. Development represents efficient use of previously developed land in a sustainable location.

Visual Enhancement: The site has been vacant and used as a construction compound for over a decade. The proposed development would enhance the visual character of the area by bringing forward a well-designed dwelling on an underused site.

Economic Benefits: Construction activity would support local employment, and future occupants would contribute to the local economy through expenditure on goods and services.

Efficient Use of Land: The proposal represents efficient use of urban land that is no longer fulfilling its designated recreational function and has not done so for over 16 years.

7.3

These public benefits would clearly outweigh any less than substantial harm, were such harm to be identified.

8. DESIGN PRINCIPLES APPLIED

8.1

In accordance with the requirements of paragraph 200 of the NPPF and the Council request, the following design principles have been applied to ensure the proposal respects the setting of Broxups:

Scale and Layout: The reduction to a single dwelling ensures an appropriate relationship with surrounding properties, including the Listed Building. The layout provides substantial separation and respects established plot patterns.

Appearance: Traditional materials and detailing ensure the development is sympathetic to the historic character of Higher Lane without attempting pastiche replication of historic styles.

Landscaping: The retention and protection of existing mature trees maintains the established visual buffer and landscape character that contributes positively to the setting.

Massing: The detailed design and overall proportions reduce the perceived scale of the development when viewed from the direction of the heritage asset.

9. HERITAGE BALANCE AND CONCLUSIONS

9.1

This Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared in accordance with paragraph 200 of the NPPF and describes the significance of the Grade II Listed Building at 71 Higher Lane, the contribution made by its setting, and the potential impact of the proposed development.

9.2

Broxups is a heritage asset of clear significance, deriving value from its 17th Century origins, architectural features, and historical associations with non-conformist religious practice.

9.3

The setting of Broxups has evolved considerably over time, particularly during the 20th and 21st centuries, with significant changes resulting from adjacent development including properties to the rear and the recent Hickory Grange scheme.

9.4

The application site makes a limited contribution to the significance of the heritage asset, lying to the west, behind the building line, screened by mature trees, and outside key viewsheds.

9.5

The proposed development has been carefully designed with regard to heritage considerations, employing appropriate scale, materials, separation distances, and landscaping to respect the setting of the Listed Building.

9.6

It is concluded that the proposal would preserve the setting of the Listed Building and would not harm its significance. In the alternative, were any harm to be identified, it would amount to less than substantial harm that would be clearly outweighed by the public benefits of the scheme.

9.7

The proposal accords with the requirements of Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, paragraphs 200, 206, 207 and 208 of the NPPF, and Policy EN2/3 of the Bury Unitary Development Plan.

9.8

On this basis, there are no heritage grounds that would warrant refusal of planning permission.

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