

PROPOSED WORKS AT 391 BURY NEW ROAD

PRESTWICH, METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF BURY



HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

GARRY MILLER
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SEPTEMBER 2024

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GARRY MILLER HERITAGE CONSULTANCY

Garry Miller is a heritage consultant, architectural historian and published author who has spent more than 40 years studying and working with buildings of town and countryside, in particular those of North West England. His career as a consultant began in the mid-1980s with the Preston-based Nigel Morgan Historic Building Consultancy, of which he became a partner in 1992 upon its rebranding as Datestone. In 1997 he was commissioned by the Heritage Trust for the North West, a buildings preservation trust based at Barrowford, Lancashire, to produce an in-depth regional study of vernacular houses in southwest Lancashire: the result, *Historic Houses in Lancashire: The Douglas Valley, 1300-1770* was published in 2002. The book was described as 'scholarship as its best' by *Country Life* (June 2003), and 'well analysed and presented' in *Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society* (Vol 48, 2004); and was widely cited in the 2006 Buildings of England volume on Liverpool and Southwest Lancashire. Extensive research on the houses of Georgian and Regency Liverpool has also been undertaken, with a view to future publication. Following the success of his Douglas Valley book, Garry Miller established his own consultancy, producing analytical and interpretive reports on historic buildings, in particular the heritage assessments required to support planning applications affecting the historic environment. His area of operation encompasses the North West, Midlands, North Wales and parts of Cumbria and North and West Yorkshire. Several local authorities have cited his assessments as examples of best practice, and reports on more than 150 buildings or sites are produced annually.

THIS REPORT

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1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report supports proposed minor external works at number 391 Bury New Road, Prestwich, in the Metropolitan Borough of Bury, Greater Manchester. The property is part of a late 19th century row of shops which stands on the west side of the busy A56, the main route through Prestwich, and is currently vacant.

The site lies within the St Mary's Conservation Area. The heritage consideration arising is therefore the proposal's impact upon the significance (i.e. heritage interest and value) of the conservation area. The scope and purpose of this report is to identify this significance and evaluate how it will be affected by the proposal.

The significance of the conservation area extends to the borough-wide context and derives from its character and appearance as the historic core of Prestwich village, centred on its 15th century parish church of St Mary and surrounding open space, residential areas and commercial properties. This significance is therefore embodied in its buildings and spaces and how they relate to each other in the public views in which they are experienced. The conservation area contains four zones of specific character, with the application property standing in that which encompasses late 19th and early 20th century commercial properties on Bury New Road.

The application building is significant in the immediate local context only (i.e. to Prestwich and the conservation area) for its collective role as part of an architecturally-diverse row rather than its own individual qualities. While the row is considered to make a positive contribution to the conservation area, this contribution derives solely from its front elevations. That of the application property is notable for its simplicity when compared to its more decorative neighbours; its rear elevation is functional and of no particular interest.

The proposal involves new signage on the front elevation and a flue on the rear elevation, in connection with the building's new use as a restaurant. There will essentially be no change to its appearance or to its contribution to the conservation area. The new signage will simply replace the previous signage in this location. There will therefore be no material alteration to the public appearance of the row to which the property belongs, which will remain that of a diverse collection of late 19th/early 20th century commercial premises. The flue affects the rear elevation only, which is of little interest, and will not be visible in the principal public views from Bury New Road. It will be seen only from a service road at the rear, which is hardly a viewpoint one would choose in order to appreciate the qualities of the conservation area. The proposed flue will therefore have no adverse effect.

In summary, the proposal will preserve the character and appearance, and therefore the significance, of the conservation area and thereby meets the requirements of both national guidance and the local development plan. The application thus merits approval without delay.

2: THE SITE

The application site is located in the town centre of Prestwich in the Metropolitan Borough of Bury, Greater Manchester. The property is part of a late 19th century row of commercial premises which stands on the west side of the busy A56, the main route through the centre, between Church Lane and Hacking Street. The building is currently vacant.



Map 1. Location of the proposal building



1. The application property (indicated)

3: THE PROPOSAL/PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

3.1 The proposal

Proposals are being submitted to Bury Metropolitan Borough Council for minor external alterations to the existing property.

3.2 Designation

The site lies within the St Mary's Conservation Area.

3.3 Heritage impact

The heritage consideration arising is therefore the proposal's impact upon the significance (i.e. heritage interest and value) of the conservation area.

3.4 Scope and purpose of this report

Paragraph 200 of Chapter 16 (*Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment*) of the National Planning Policy Framework (as revised December 2023) states local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of the heritage assets affected, including their setting. The scope and purpose of this report is to identify the significance of the conservation area and the contribution made by the application property, and to assess how this will be affected by the proposal. In accordance with paragraph 200, it is considered the level of detail presented is proportionate to the significance of the heritage asset and no more than is necessary to understand the impact of the proposal.

3.5 Report structure

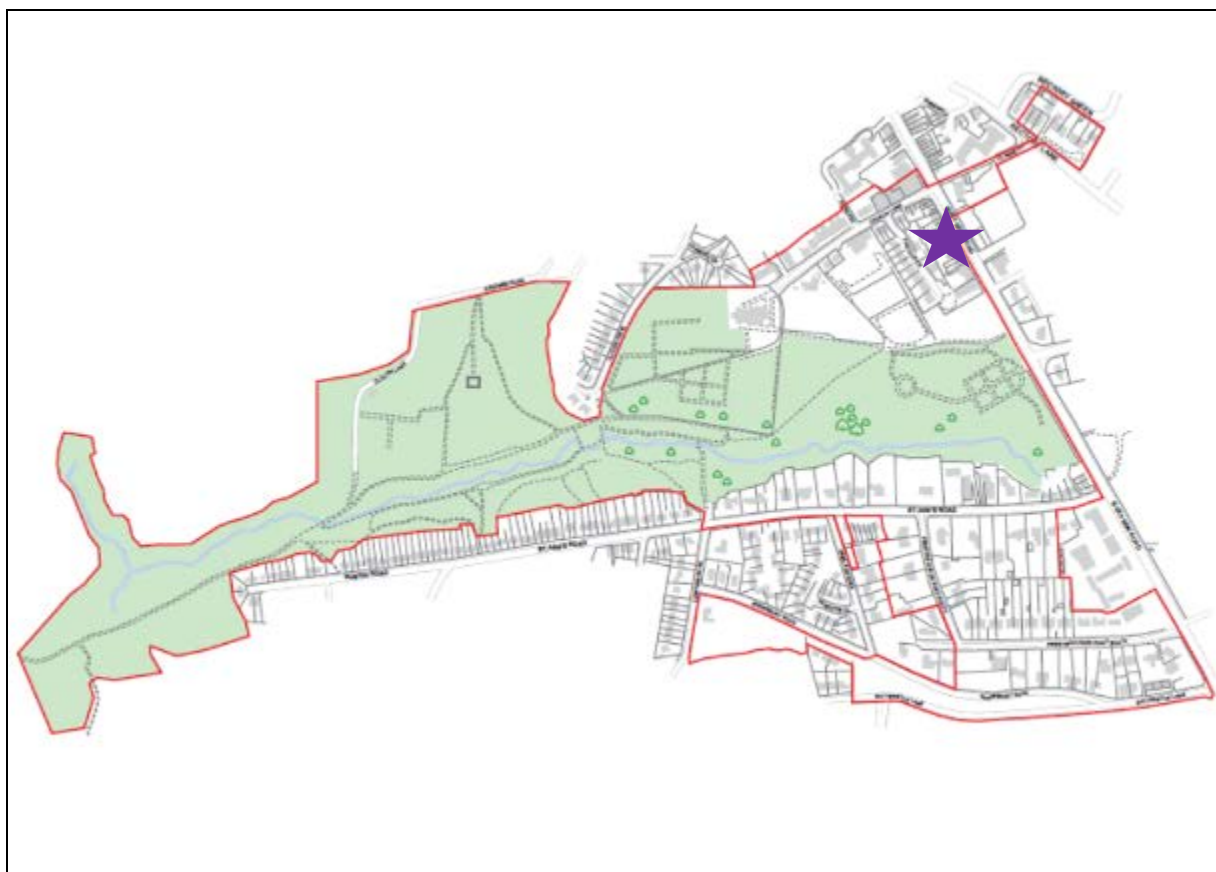
This is as follows:

1. A brief description of the conservation area (Section 4)

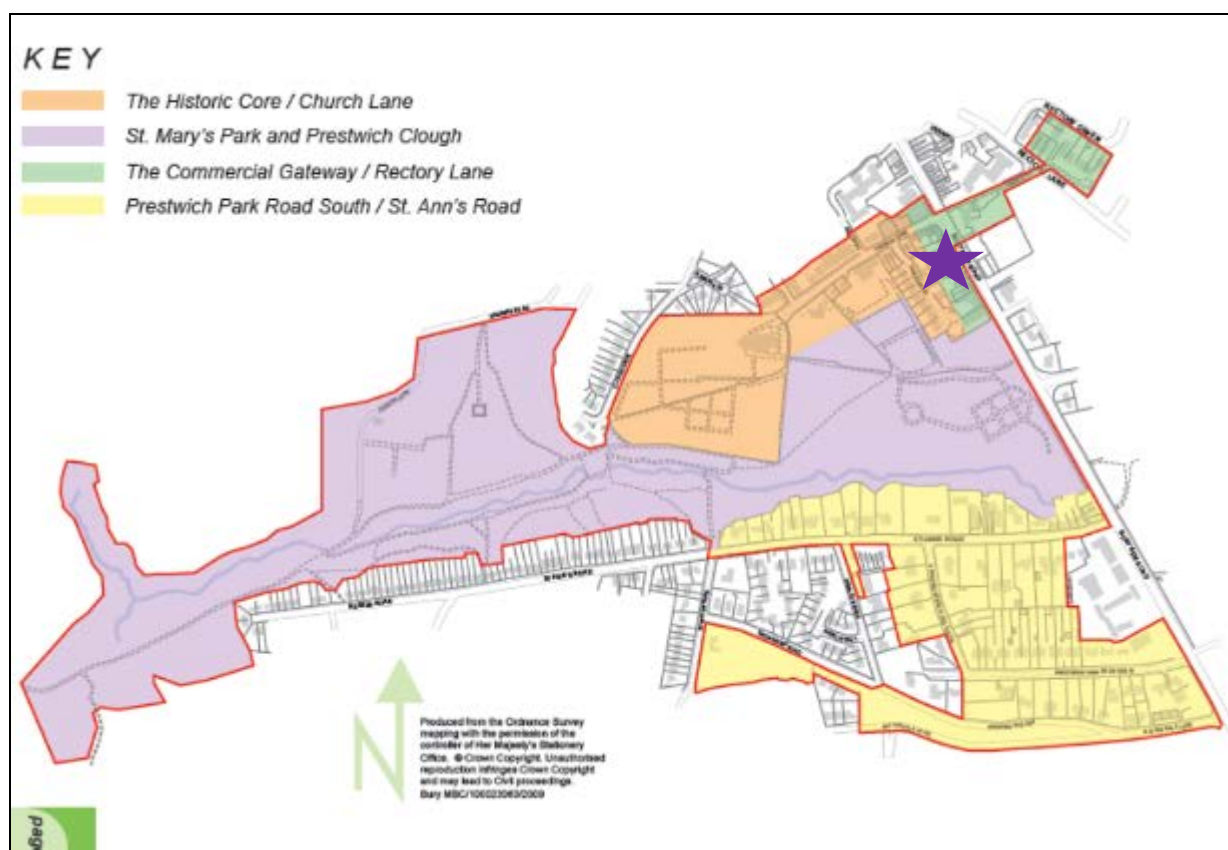
2. Analysis of the contribution made by the application building (Section 5)
3. A summary of their heritage significance (Section 6)
4. A summary of the national guidance and local heritage policies against which the application will be assessed (Section 7)
5. Analysis within this policy context of the proposal's impact upon the significance of the conservation area (Section 8)

4: THE CONSERVATION AREA

St Mary's Conservation Area was first designated in 1993. It is described in Bury MBC's character appraisal (undated) as an area of diverse use and character, centred upon the 15th century parish church of St Mary and what was historically the core of Prestwich village along with the adjoining extensive green swathe of St Mary's Park and Prestwich Clough, the 19th century residential area of Prestwich Park Road South/St Annes Road to the south, and late 19th /early 20th century commercial properties to the northeast. The conservation area is accordingly divided into four character areas, with the application property standing within the *Commercial Gateway and Rectory Lane* area, located at the Church Lane/Bury New Road junction. This incorporates the row of premises along Bury New Road of which the application building is part, along with the 19th century Red Lion public house and residential properties along Rectory Lane.



Map 2. The conservation area, with location of the application property indicated



Map 3. The four character areas, with location of the application property starred



2. View from the Bury New Road/Church Lane junction towards St Mary's and the core of the conservation area

5: THE APPLICATION PROPERTY

The application property belongs to a diverse row of altered late 19th/early 20th century commercial premises numbered 387 to 399 (odd) Bury New Road which are cited in the character appraisal as being significant unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to the conservation area. The row is described as follows in the appraisal:

Two and three storey Victorian and Edwardian brick terrace rising to Church Lane junction. Jumble of roofs, ridge lines, elevations and shop fronts. Much altered but important in scale and grouping to Bury New Road frontage. Some out of character shop fronts and shutters.

The interest of the application property derives not from its own individual qualities but rather from its contribution to the mixed architectural character of the row. This contribution is made by its three-storey front elevation, which is of plain appearance compared to its Tudor Revival style neighbours on either side. It has a modern but not unobtrusive shop front on the ground floor, a shallow bowed oriel window on the first floor and above this a tall roof dormer with deep window. The rear elevation – visible only from a service road off Hacking Street – is, like the remainder of the row, functional and of no particular interest.



3. The property has a modern shop front of unobtrusive appearance



4. The front elevation has a plain appearance compared to the adjoining buildings

5. Rear elevation is functional and of no particular interest



6: SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

6.1 Rationale

Paragraph 201 of the National Planning Policy Framework states local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of a heritage asset, including its setting, and take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal in order to avoid or minimize conflict between the asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal. Significance is defined in the NPPF Glossary as:

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 from its setting.

6.2 The conservation area

The significance of the conservation area extends to the borough-wide context and derives from its character and appearance as the historic core of Prestwich village, centred on its 15th century parish church of St Mary, along with surrounding open space, residential areas and commercial properties. This significance is therefore embodied in its buildings and spaces and how they relate to each other in the public views in which they are experienced. The conservation area contains four zones of individual character, with the application property standing in that which encompasses the late 19th and early 20th century commercial properties on Bury New Road.

6.3 The application property

The application building is significant in the immediate local context only (i.e. to Prestwich and the conservation area) for its collective role as part of an architecturally-diverse row rather than its own individual qualities. While the row is considered to make a positive contribution to the conservation area, this contribution derives solely from its front elevations. That of the application property is notable for its simplicity when compared to its more decorative neighbours. The rear is functional and of no particular interest.

7: PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

7.1 Statutory duty

Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local planning authorities to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

7.2 Relevant policies

Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework provides the guidance on how the statutory duty is to be put into practice. Paragraph 203 states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- *The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation*
- *The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality, and*
- *The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness*

Regarding designated heritage assets, paragraph 205 states that ‘*great weight*’ should be given to their conservation and the more important the asset, the greater that weight should be.

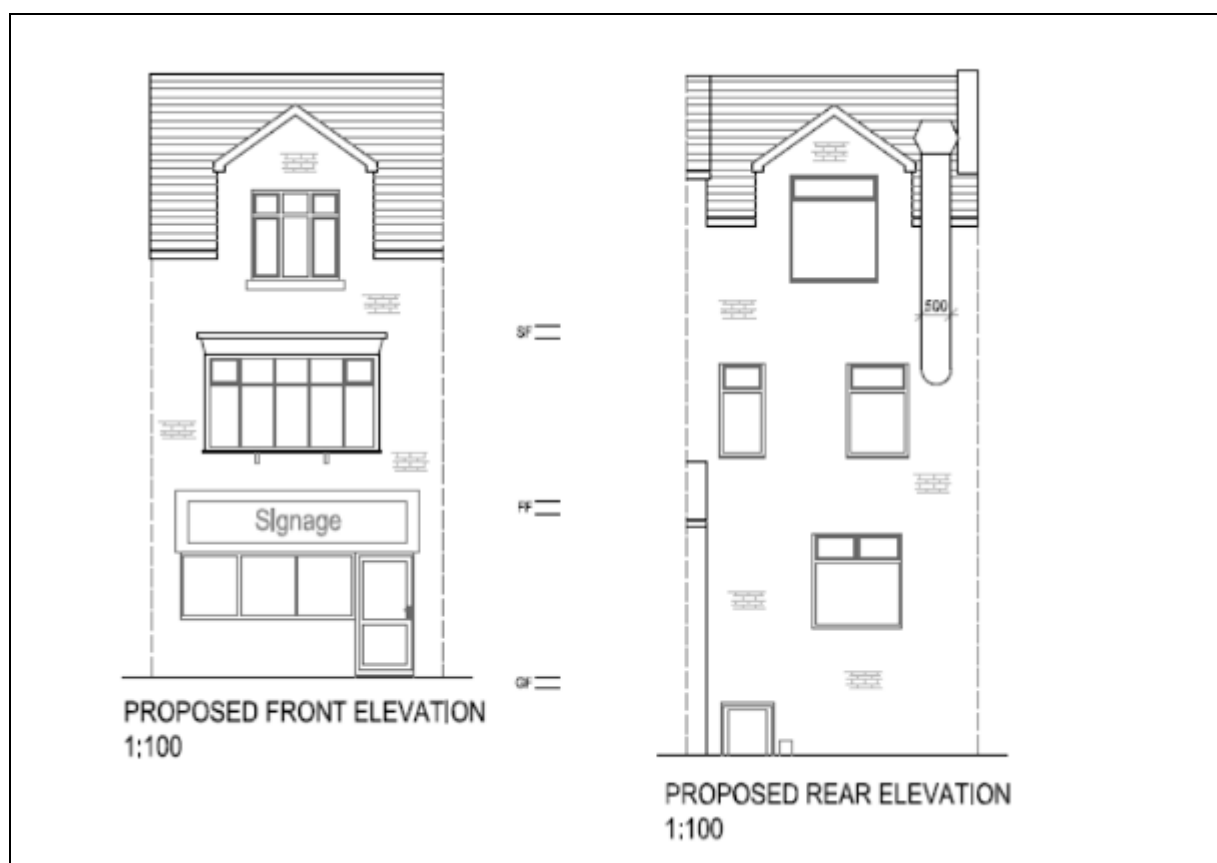
Locally, the relevant heritage policies are those retained by Bury MBC from its Unitary Development Plan, adopted 1997, which remain in force until replaced by policies of the emerging Local Plan. Relevant to this application are:

- Policy EN2 (*Conservation and Listed Buildings*), which aims to preserve the borough's built heritage through the control of development, especially that affecting conservation areas, listed buildings and areas of local historical importance
- Policy EN2/1 (*Character of Conservation Areas*), whose purpose is to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas

8: IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL

8.1 Summary of the works

The proposal involves minor changes to the front and rear elevations of the building in connection with its use as a restaurant. New signage is required on the front elevation and a flue on the rear elevation, as shown in the submitted drawings. The latter should be consulted for the full details of the works.



6. Proposed elevations

8.2 Effect

Essentially there will be no change to the appearance of the building or to its contribution to the conservation area. The new signage will simply replace the previous signage in this location. There will therefore be no material alteration to the appearance of the row to which the property belongs, which will remain that of a diverse collection of late 19th/early 20th century commercial premises. The flue affects the rear elevation

only, which is of little interest, and will not be visible in the principal public views of the row from Bury New Road. It will be seen only from the service road at the rear off Hacking Street, which is hardly a viewpoint one would choose in order to appreciate the qualities of the conservation area. The proposed flue will therefore have no adverse effect.

8.3 Conclusion

In summary, the proposal will preserve the character and appearance, and therefore the significance, of the conservation area and thereby meets the requirements of both national guidance and the local development plan. The application thus merits approval without delay.