

PARTICULARS OF APPLICATION _ APPEAL STATEMENT

APPLICATION NUMBER _ 71319

PROPOSAL _ RETENTION OF INSTALLED FLUE ON NORTH ELEVATION

LOCATION _ CHURCH HOUSE, 254 WHALLEY ROAD, BL0 0EF

GROUND'S FOR APPEAL

1.

There is nothing within the Conservation Officer's comment (issued 16/1/25) which acknowledges that the supporting Heritage Statement (HS) has been assessed by the officer. Usually, a Conservation Officer will refer to a HS before discounting or accepting the appraisal it presents. In this case the HS appears to have been overlooked.

The summary in the HS comments as follows

8.2

The application works form part of a new heating system which will facilitate conversion of the vacant building to residential use and breathe a new lease of life into the property as a family home. The flue installation, aside from some limited stonework fixings does not involve any substantive changes to the building façade which in terms of appearance is preserved largely as it was prior to installation. No major removals were necessary, and no large areas of masonry needed to be modified. The prominence of the bellcote continues to be unchallenged and the view from Whalley Road of the principal west facing façade remains much the same meaning the general appearance of the building is retained largely unaltered.

8.3

The alteration can be regarded to have a small amount of harm to the northern elevation when viewed directly looking toward the gable end although this harm can be regarded to be 'less than substantial' based on the assessment of significance which has found the building to have an overall medium local significance, largely attributed to the historic and architectural characteristics of the building envelope as described at Section 6.

8.4

NPPF Paragraph 209 advises that 'The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be considered in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset'.

8.5

Having regard to the assessment above whilst the works do have a minor negative impact on the significance of the non-designated heritage asset this harm is less than substantial. The flue installation does assist secure the long-term future of the building as a domestic dwelling and approval would acknowledge the investment made in the building by the applicant to date.

On balance the localised negative impact on appearance is judged to be outweighed by the benefit of reuse and retention of the building envelope. The proposal is therefore considered to be compliant with NPPF Paragraph 209 and local planning policy JP-P2 'Heritage', Policy EN1/2 'Townscape and Built Design' and should be supported by the decision maker.

*** Pages 32-32 of HS**

I would request that the inspector digest and consider this document in its entirety as it sets out in further detail the nominal impact of the installation. The HS document has been resent with this submission.

2.

The decision notice suggests that the flue ***'impacts on the wider area beyond my curtilage and is visually damaging to the special character of the green belt and the landscape character of the surrounding area'***

I must dispute this as the flue is only visible, in full, if approaching the building from the north end of Church Road. Church Road is a dirt lane that takes very little traffic, vehicular or pedestrian, thus mitigating any impact. Pictures sent with this submission for context.

I have deliberately located the flue in the least visible position. It is pretty much invisible from Whalley road on the West side, on the very top is visible to my neighbours on the South side and similarly on the West side, which is not overlooked. There are numerous more prominent things in the area surrounding my property that do visually damage the special character of the green belt and the landscape character of the surrounding area... but I contest that this is not one of them. This is a necessary addition to a modern home in an old building.

Please note also that the building has a fireplace that I am trying to make use of. The location of same and the position of the internal floor makes it impossible to locate the flue internally else I would certainly have done so.

3.

The local planning authority have deemed the installation of said flue to be ***'incongruous, discordant, contemporising and an unsympathetic addition to the Non-Designated Heritage Asset (NDHA)'***

Whilst I agree that the flue is indeed contemporary is it without doubt congruent with the overall scheme. This building now has been converted into a contemporary home with 70 sq.mts of contemporary glazing added to the roof alone. If this and the large aluminum clad dormer are congruent, then surely the addition of the flue should be treated the same way. Especially as should someone want to remove it in the future, it can be done with no lasting impact.

Whilst I absolutely understand, appreciate, and am motivated by the value of this building. I have gone to great expense to save it from dilapidation, and it should be afforded the amenities that a modern home requires to facilitate comfortable living. Please note also that the addition of the fire / flue from a critical part of the heating solution for the property. To lose same would have a drastic impact on the functionality of the home.

It is also important to note that whilst the flue is currently shiny it will weather to a dull finish in time. Pictures sent with this submission for context.

4.

Finally, I think it is vitally important to consider what *heritage* actually is in the context of this building.

Heritage can be defined as

'features belonging to the culture of a particular society... such as traditions, languages, or buildings, that were created in the past and still have historical importance...'

Notwithstanding the fact that the Church of England heritage record classes this asset of 'low importance', this installation in no way detracts from the historical importance of the building nor does it have a structural impact on the fabric of the building. It must be argued that the renovation / conversion of the building actually preserves the heritage in this context.

but can also be defined as

'the history, traditions, practices, etc. of a particular country, society, or company that exist from the past and continue to be important'

The neighbours and the local visitors that I have had, have all expressed their delight at the fact that the building has been saved and sympathetically restored. A dozen of the elderly Jubilee Ramblers who I invited in for a look, regaled me with stories of christenings, weddings and funerals held on site when it was still a church. All of the regular visitors to the retained memorial garden are also invested in and excited by the renovation.... this is the true heritage of this place; this is what drew me to it in the first place and this is what will be preserved.

In this case, where I am going to great expense to make redundant building into a home.. I don't think it makes sense to get too hung up on one *necessary* practical element. Instead I think we should focus on the preservation, the restoration and the reinvigoration of and the local community satisfaction with, a building that would have otherwise fallen into complete disrepair.

Please come and have a look at the way the building has been transformed before any decision is made

Many thanks for your time

Dominic Apenteng