

# Heritage Statement

51-51a Great Underbank, Stockport

February 2024



adapt heritage

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# 1. Introduction

1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Adapt Heritage on behalf of Kion Developments Limited in connection with a full planning application for the construction of new extensions and two new townhouses towards the rear together with parking and associated landscaping (the 'Proposed Development') at 51-51a Great Underbank, Stockport (the 'Application Site'). The description of development is as follows:

*"Proposal for a vertical and rear extension to the existing building to provide additional 3no. apartments and erection of 2no. townhouses on land to rear."*

1.2 The Application Site is located within the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area and is adjacent to the St Peter's Conservation Area. It is also proximate to a number of listed and locally listed buildings. The focus of this report is on **Built Heritage** and does not cover Archaeology.

1.3 Under Section 72 of The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Stockport Council has a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of their conservation areas. Similarly, the Council have a duty under Section 66 of the 1990 Act to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their setting or any features of special interest they may possess. The meaning of 'preservation' in this context, as informed by case law, is taken to be the avoidance of harm.

1.4 There is no corresponding statutory duty relating to the setting of conservation areas as s.72 of the 1990 Act relates to '*land or buildings within the conservation area*'.

1.5 The National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') (2023) provides the Government's national planning policy on the conservation of the historic environment. In respect of information requirements for applications, Paragraph 200 states the following:

*"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."*<sup>1</sup>

1.6 The report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 identifies the relevant heritage assets with potential to be affected by the Proposed Development.
- Section 3 provides an overview of the history and development of the Application Site and the surrounding area.
- Section 4 proportionately assesses the significance of relevant heritage assets, their setting (where appropriate) and the contribution made by the Application Site.
- Section 5 provides an assessment of the impact of the Proposed Development in light of the statutory duty of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, national policy contained within the NPPF and local planning policy and guidance (set out in detail at **Appendix I**).
- Section 6 sets out the summary and conclusions.

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<sup>1</sup> DLUHC (2023) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – Annex 2: Glossary



1.7 The assessment has been undertaken on the basis of existing published information, proportionate archival research at Stockport Local Heritage Library, Cheshire Archives and on-site visual survey in October 2023 and January 2024. It has been produced in accordance with guidance set out in Historic England's Advice Notes including:

- Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (2019).
- Advice Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment (2015);
- Advice Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017); and
- Advice Note 12: Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets (2019).

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## 2. The Heritage Assets

### Context

2.1 The NPPF (2023) defines a heritage asset as:

*“A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest.”<sup>2</sup>*

2.2 Site visits were undertaken in June 2023 and January 2024 to consider heritage assets with potential to be affected by the Proposed Development.

### Designated Heritage Assets

2.3 Designated heritage assets are those which possess a level of heritage interest that justifies designation under relevant legislation and are then subject to particular procedures in planning decisions that involve them.

### Conservation Areas

2.4 The Application Site is located within the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area which was first designated by Stockport Council in 1974 and extended in 2005.

2.5 The Market and Underbanks Conservation Area Appraisal (the ‘Council Appraisal’) was adopted by Stockport Council in 2005 and was last updated in 2018. The boundary of the conservation area is illustrated at Figure 2.1.

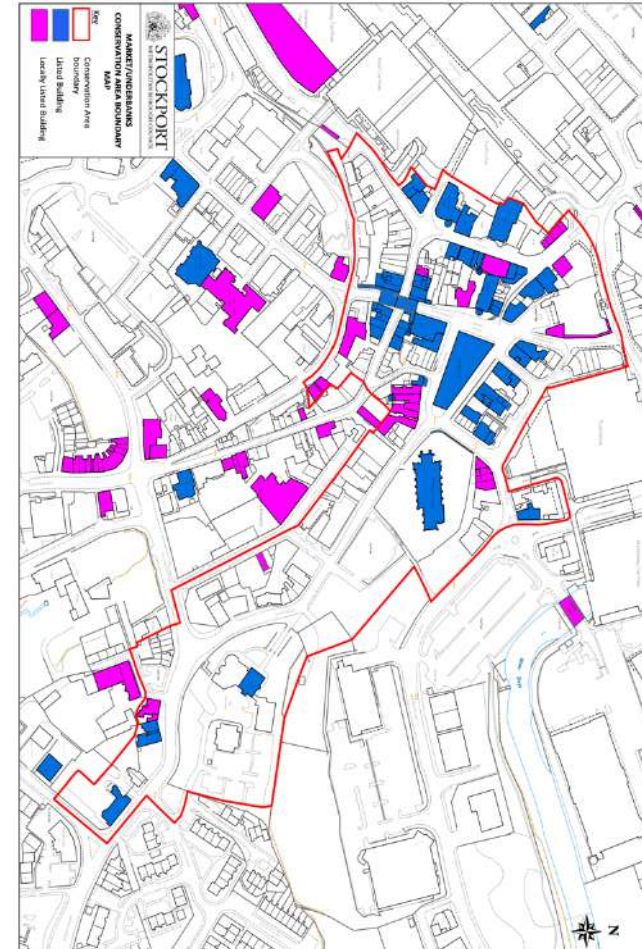


Figure 2.1: Market and Underbanks Conservation Area © Stockport Council

<sup>2</sup>

DLUHC (2023) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – Annex 2: Glossary



2.6 The Application Site is also located outside but close to the boundary of the St Peters Conservation Area which was designated by Stockport Council in 2005 (Figure 2.2). The Conservation Area Appraisal was formally adopted by the Council in 2005 and updated again in 2011.

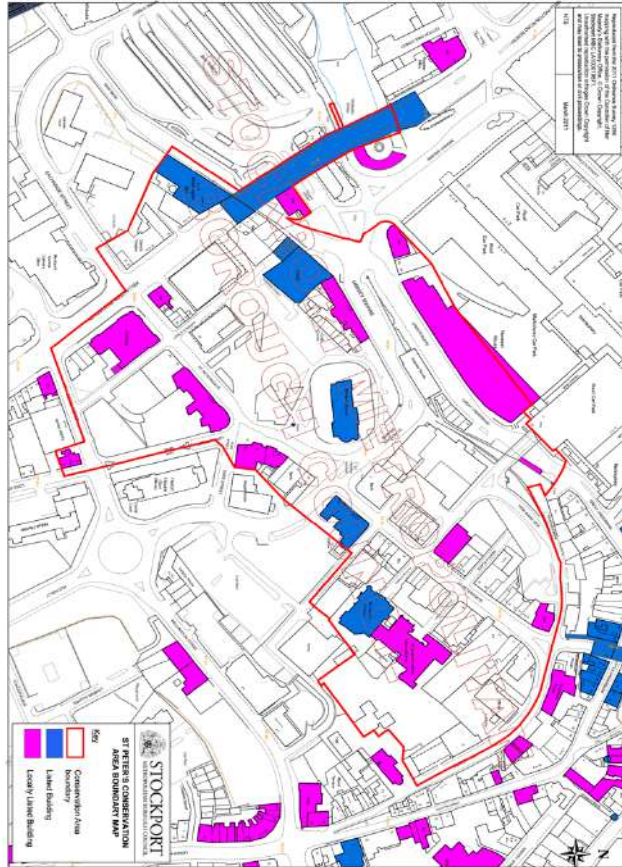


Figure 2.2: St Peters Conservation Area © Stockport Council

### Listed Buildings

2.7 A review of the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) in February 2024 confirms that there are various listed buildings within the immediate vicinity of the Application Site. There are also listed buildings in wider ranging views alongside the site. These generally include:

| Name                           | Grade | Designation Date  | List Entry No |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------------------|---------------|
| No's 30 and 32 Great Underbank | II    | 13 May 1952       | 1356830       |
| No's 24-28 Great Underbank     | II    | 10 March 1975     | 1309628       |
| The White Lion Hotel           | II    | 20 September 1993 | 1240653       |
| No's 10-12 Little Underbank    | II    | 10 March 1975     | 1067179       |
| St Petersgate Bridge           | II    | 10 March 1975     | 1067155       |
| Bank Chambers                  | II    | 10 March 1975     | 1067154       |
| Church of St Mary              | I     | 13 May 1952       | 1309701       |

2.8 The above listed buildings are all located within the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area. They have therefore been proportionately assessed and considered in this report as part of the assessment of the special character and appearance of the conservation area.

2.9 There are several other listed buildings and structures in the wider vicinity but due to the significance of these, distance, topography, and intervening development together with on-site visual survey, they are not considered to be affected by the Proposed Development. These assets are therefore not considered further in this report.



## Non-Designated Heritage Assets

- 2.10 The NPPF identifies that heritage assets include both designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing). Historic England's guidance on 'Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment' (2015) states that:

*"Non-designated heritage assets include those that have been identified in a Historic Environment Record, in a local plan, through local listing or during the process of considering the application."*

### Locally Listed Buildings

- 2.11 Stockport Council currently maintains a list of buildings of local architectural or historic interest. These are buildings identified and designated by the Council and afforded formal recognition in the planning system. As of February 2024, there are 464 buildings on the list. The locally listed building proximate to the Application Site includes:

| Name                             | Designation Date     |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Egerton Arms Public House</i> | <i>23 April 2009</i> |

- 2.12 The above locally listed building is located within the St Peters Conservation Area. It has therefore been proportionately assessed and considered in this report as part of the assessment of the special character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 2.13 There are several locally listed buildings and structures in the wider vicinity but due to the significance of these, distance, topography, and intervening development together with on-site visual survey, they are not considered to be affected by the Proposed Development. These assets are therefore not considered further in this report.



### 3. The Application Site and the Surrounding Area

#### Location and Context

- 3.1 The Application Site (Figures 3.1 and 3.2) is located within Stockport town centre and is situated between the historic core and market square and Merseyway Shopping Centre. The site fronts Great Underbank to the north and Pickford's Brow / High Bank Side to the south. At the front, it is bound by neighbouring modern and traditional buildings. The rear is flanked by vacant plots, currently utilised as car parking.



Figure 3.1: View of the Application Site and Surrounding Area © Google Maps (2024)



Figure 3.2: View of the Application Site and Surrounding Area © Google Maps (2024)

- 3.2 The front section of the Application Site consists of a three storey former commercial property to Great Underbank, constructed in the early 1960s (Figure 3.3). The land then steps up towards Pickford's Brow / High Bank Side where the rear of the site has been cleared and consists of a surfaced car park with modern brick boundary walls and railings (Figure 3.4).







Figures 3.3 & 3.4: The Application Site from Great Underbank and High Bank Side (2023)

## Overview of Historic Development

- 3.3 Below is an overview of the historic development of the Application Site and the surrounding area. A more detailed consideration of the history and development of Stockport can be found within the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2018).
- 3.4 Stockport developed at a strategically important position on a steep sided triangular promontory overlooking the Mersey Valley at the confluence of the Tame and Goyt rivers.<sup>3</sup> The valley was an important communication route and also defined the Cheshire / Lancashire border. The historic core of Stockport, around the market and church, is known to have developed from the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries onwards.
- 3.5 Historic map regression from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries confirms that the Application Site and the surrounding area was entirely developed by this point, with a dense concentration of narrow fronted buildings along street frontages.
- 3.6 Stockport rapidly developed in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century and is one of the region's first centres of the industrial revolution. A number of factories were established in close proximity to the town and provided places of manufactory for cotton spinning, weaving, hat-making and other activities. This influx of industry led to the rapid development and re-building of numerous properties in the town centre to house both the workers and also supporting industries.
- 3.7 The Application and the surrounding area is shown as developed on the 1824 township plan of Stockport (Figure 3.5). There is little detail on the plan to explain the former uses on the site.



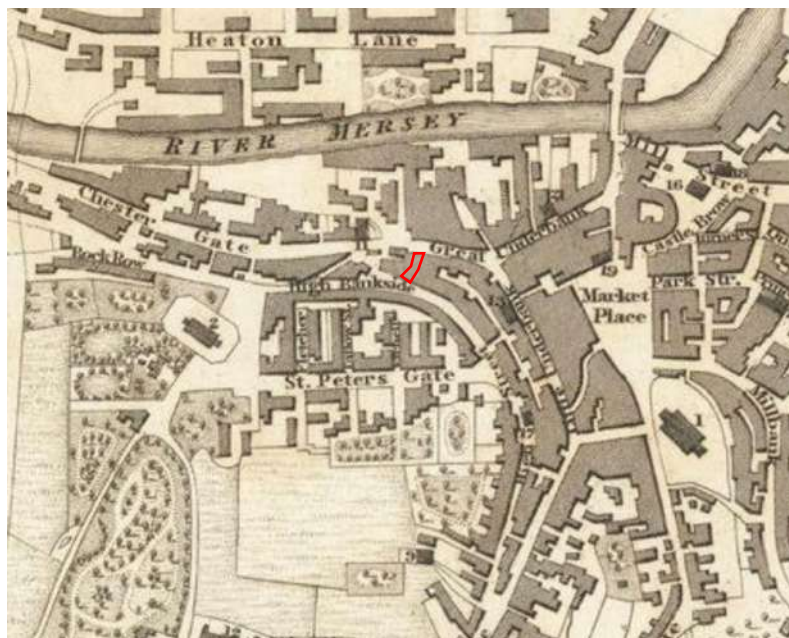


Figure 3.5: Stockport Township Plan c.1824 © Stockport Heritage Centre

3.8 As set out in the Council Appraisal<sup>4</sup>, the pre-eminence of Stockport's historic core was partially eclipsed by the construction of Wellington Road in 1824-5 and later by the construction of the railway in 1840-42, both aligned to the west of the town centre. Further developments in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century included the construction of St Peter's Gate Bridge which provided access from the market square to the west of Stockport. These new routeways became a focus for civic, commercial, and industrial development, which continued throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century.

3.9 The Application Site is illustrated on the 1872 Ordnance Survey (Figure 3.6) which provides further detail. The front of the site appears to have been in commercial use whereas the rear was principally residential with houses fronting onto Pickford's Brow / High Bank Side. The Theatre Royal was also located nearby, illustrating the mixed uses of the area.



Figure 3.6: Ordnance Survey of Stockport surveyed in 1872 and published in 1874 © National Library of Scotland

3.10 The next available map, the 1897 Ordnance Survey (Figure 3.7), shows a similar arrangement on the Application Site. The surrounding area remains densely developed.

4

Stockport Council (2018) Market and Underbanks Conservation Area Appraisal





Figure 3.7: Ordnance Survey of Stockport surveyed in 1897 and published in 1898 © National Library of Scotland

3.11 Historic photographs from c.1901 (Figures 3.8 and 3.9) provides an understanding of the scale and form of the buildings along Pickford's Brow, to the rear of the Application Site. This confirms that it formed a terrace of three houses, each of two storeys. They were built from brick with stone lintels and included three large projecting chimneys. The buildings formed part of a collection of houses which were two to three storeys in height (Figures 3.8 and 3.9).



Figures 3.8 & 3.9: Photograph of Pickford's Brow in c.1901 © Stockport Image Archive (Ref: 22465)





Figure 3.10: Photograph of Pickford's Brow and High Bank Side in c.1902-1905 © Stockport Image Archive (Ref: 22464)

3.12 At some point between 1901 and 1907, the neighbouring buildings to the west of the rear of the Application Site were demolished. Figure 3.10 shows the buildings in the process of being demolished (with slates to the roof and windows partially removed). The other properties, to the east, were also demolished shortly afterwards. These changes are shown on the 1917 Ordnance Survey (Figure 3.11). The front of the Application Site is also noted as a public house by this point.

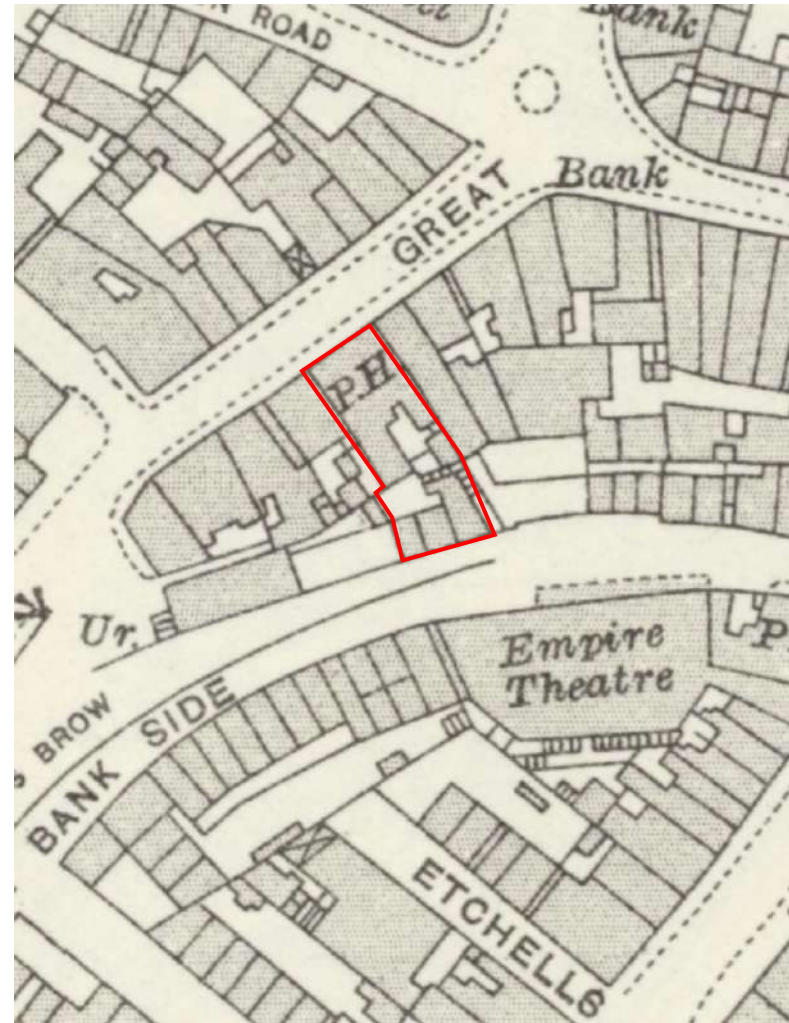


Figure 3.11: Ordnance Survey of Stockport surveyed in 1917 and published in 1922 © National Library of Scotland



3.13 The Application Site is illustrated on an aerial photograph from 1925 (Figure 3.12) which shows the front section for the first time. This shows that it consisted of a three storey building, which was utilised as a public house. The photograph also confirms that the three houses remained on the rear of the site by this time, but the neighbouring sites remained cleared and undeveloped.

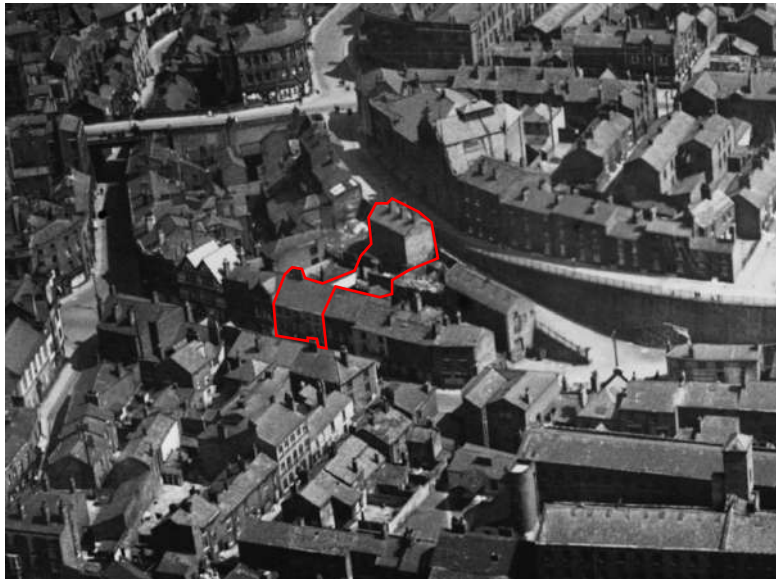


Figure 3.12: Aerial Photograph of Stockport c.1925 © Historic England (Ref: EPW013110)

3.14 The surrounding area remained densely developed with houses opposite the Application Site along High Bank Side ranging from broadly two to four storeys (Figure 3.12). The Empire Theatre is also visible adjacent to the Application Site with a large, pitched gable.

3.15 Historic map regression confirms that there were few changes to the Application Site and the surrounding area by the mid 20th century. It was in the 1960s that the Application Site was entirely cleared of buildings and a new commercial building constructed in c.1963 (Figure 3.13). The immediate area was also cleared of various buildings, particularly along High Bank Side. The Merseyway Shopping Centre was also constructed to the north west of the Application Site.



Figure 3.13: Aerial Photograph of Stockport c.1963 © Stockport Image Archive (Ref: I4906)



3.16 A photograph from 1981 (Figure 3.14) shows the Application Site alongside the buildings on Great Underbank and Pickford's Brow. The site is shown in its present arrangement with a three storey commercial and retail building to Great Underbank and a cleared site to Pickford's Brow / High Bank Side. It also confirms that the building to the west was redeveloped by this point.

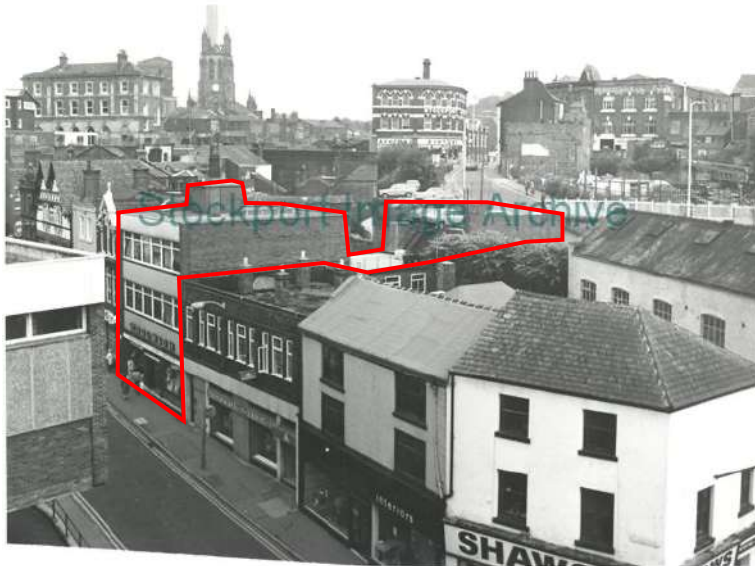


Figure 3.14: Photograph of Stockport c.1981 © Stockport Image Archive (Ref: 17373)

3.17 The neighbouring buildings along Great Underbank, to the west, were redeveloped in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century with buildings of a similar scale and style. The single storey building to the entrance of Pickford's Brow, as shown in the 1981 photograph, was also demolished and replaced in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

3.18 The upper floors of the building to Great Underbank became largely vacant in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. As a result of this, an application for prior approval (Ref: DC/087456) was submitted in December 2022 for the change of use of first and second floors of the existing building on the Application Site from commercial into residential. This was granted by Stockport Council in February 2023. A planning application (Ref: DC/087992) was also submitted in February 2023 for external works and façade upgrades to the Application Site. This was approved in April 2023.

3.19 As found today, the extant planning permissions have not been implemented, and the building and wider Application Site remains vacant and awaits a new use.



## 4. Assessment of Significance

### Significance and Special Interest

4.1 The NPPF (2023) defines the significance of a heritage asset 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.”<sup>5</sup>*

### Conservation Areas

4.2 Conservation areas are designated on the basis of their special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Historic England has revised and republished its guidance in respect of conservation areas which provides a framework for the appraisal and assessment of the special interest and significance of a conservation area.

### Listed Buildings

4.3 Listed buildings are defined as designated heritage assets that hold architectural or historic interest. The principles of selection for listed buildings are published by the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport<sup>6</sup> and supported by Historic England’s Listing Selection Guides for each building typology.

### Locally Listed Buildings

4.4 Non-designated heritage assets (which can include ‘locally listed assets’) are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which are not formally designated heritage assets.

4.5 The ‘Good Practice Advice Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision Taking’ produced by Historic England (2015) states that non-designated heritage assets include those that have been identified in a Historic Environment Record (HER).

### Setting

4.6 The NPPF 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.”<sup>7</sup>*

4.7 Historic England has published guidance in respect of the setting of heritage assets, providing detail on understanding setting and the associated assessment of the impact of any changes. It confirms that setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, rather its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the relevant heritage asset itself.

4.8 Further guidance on the definition of setting and how it should be taken into account is set out in national Planning Practice Guidance.

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<sup>5</sup> DLUHC (2023) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – Annex 2: Glossary  
<sup>6</sup> DDCMS (2018) Principles of Selection for Listed Buildings

<sup>7</sup> Historic England (2017) Good Practice Advice Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets



## Assessment

- 4.9 As set out earlier, this assessment has been informed by published information, proportionate archival research Stockport Local Heritage Library, Cheshire Archives and on-site visual survey in October 2023 and January 2024. It has been produced in accordance with guidance set out in Historic England's Advice Notes including Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (2019), Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment (2015), The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017) and Statements of Heritage Significance (2019).

## Market and Underbanks

- 4.10 The below assessment is principally focussed on the 'Underbanks' section of the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area within which the Application Site is situated. It also briefly considers some of the other heritage asset located within. It has been informed by the adopted Market and Underbanks Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2018). It is followed by a proportionate assessment of the contribution made by the Application Site.

## Special Character and Appearance

- 4.11 Generally, the special character and appearance of the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area is that of an historic market town that retains its original plan form of medieval burgage plots and radiating streets, across a varied topography, interconnected by ginnels and yards. There is a strong historic commercial core and sense of place within the centre of Stockport which includes numerous key buildings including the Grade II Listed Market Hall, Bank Chambers and the Grade I Listed Church of St Mary in the 'Market' area.



Figures 4.1 & 4.2: Little and Great Underbank (2023)

- 4.12 From this area are the streets of Little Underbank and Great Underbank (Figures 4.1 and 4.2) which include a strong urban grain of buildings with a back of pavement line. It is finely grained, a reflection of the area's long history and development and maintains many listed buildings.







Figures 4.3 & 4.4: Great Underbank (2023)

4.13 The overriding character and appearance of Market and Underbanks Conservation Area is associated with the quality of its townscape, with the distinctive Grade II Listed St Petersgate Bridge (Figure 4.1) defining the differing areas. The designated area is characterised by blocks of continuous building frontages that step down or up to follow the slope of the land and creates a strong sense of enclosure (Figures 4.1, 4.3 and 4.4). Each block consists of a mix of shops, commercial units, pubs, public buildings, houses, or industrial workshops. As set out before, this arrangement responds to the medieval arrangement of long and narrow burgage plots fronting the principal streets in the historic core.<sup>8</sup>

4.14 As noted in the Council Appraisal<sup>9</sup>, the architectural character and age of buildings in the Underbanks is principally 19<sup>th</sup> century (Figures 4.3 and 4.4) but some important 16<sup>th</sup> century buildings remain such as the Grade II\* Listed Underbank Hall (Figure 4.2) and the Grade II Listed No's 30-32 Great Underbank.

4.15 The buildings in this part of the conservation area have a variety of architectural styles and details. Many of the 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings are varied and include pediments, gables, overhanging eaves, and slate roofs. The materials are relatively mixed with brick, render, timber detailing. The majority of properties have Welsh blue slates to the roofs. Hard surfaces dominate the public realm and traditional natural materials are evident in many of the brows.

4.16 In terms of scale and massing, the general height of buildings in the conservation area are three storeys, some with attic levels, with taller public or grander commercial buildings generally larger at three to four storeys including the Grade II Listed Former White Lion Hotel. The rooflines are heavily articulated and varied which provides interest along the roads.

8

Stockport Council (2018) Market and Underbanks Conservation Area Appraisal

9

Stockport Council (2018) Market and Underbanks Conservation Area Appraisal





Figure 4.5: Great Underbank (2023)

4.17 The character of the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area dissipates to the south along Great Underbank where it joins with Chestergate and Pickford's Brow (Figure 4.5). This area includes a modern MSCP associated with the Merseyway Shopping Centre and replaced buildings from the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century.

4.18 The Market and Underbanks Conservation Area has a unique topographical setting which has a heavy influence on the character and appearance of the conservation area and creates views and vistas of key buildings and dramatic roofscapes. As noted in the Council Appraisal<sup>10</sup>, the steep hills give rise to a series of brows leading up to Market Place. These provide opportunities for differing views of the buildings within the conservation area and beyond.

#### Summary of Special Interest

4.19 The special character and appearance of the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area is summarised within the Council Appraisal<sup>11</sup> as followed:

*“The Market/Underbanks Conservation Area is strongly urban in character – densely packed with hard edges between public spaces and private buildings. It is finely grained, a reflection of the area’s long history and development. Hard surfaces dominate the public realm and traditional natural materials are evident in many of the streets running to and from the Market Place. The area is notable for its limited number of green spaces or trees which are limited to the Churchgate area.*

*The townscape and group value of surviving historic buildings make a major contribution to the special interest of the area. Aligned at back of pavement, buildings are typically of 3-storeys in height, of a variety of architectural styles and materials, although red brick with sandstone details and Welsh blue slates. These buildings comprise a range of public houses, shops, houses and industrial buildings, which chart the historic development of the thoroughfare and the variety of their architectural styles and details, enhance the visual qualities of the area.”*

<sup>10</sup>

Stockport Council (2018) Market and Underbanks Conservation Area Appraisal



<sup>11</sup>

Stockport Council (2018) Market and Underbanks Conservation Area Appraisal

## St Peters

- 4.20 Below is a summary of the special interest of the St Peters Conservation Area as informed by the Council Appraisal (2011) and other heritage assets located within. It is followed by a proportionate assessment of the contribution made by setting.

### Summary of Special Interest

- 4.21 The special character and appearance of the St Peters Conservation Area is defined within the Council Appraisal as:

*“St. Peter’s Conservation Area is densely urban in character and is defined by three principal historic roads in Stockport town centre: St Petersgate, Chestergate and Wellington Road. The townscape has developed on a grid iron pattern, with back of pavement development, although to a modified form in the vicinity of St Peter’s Church and the steep sides of the Mersey valley with some frontages partially fragmented by the demolition of individual buildings.*

*Its boundary traces the historic routes of High Street and High Bankside around the north of the area, Chestergate to the north-west and Wellington Road to the west and south west. To the south-east, the boundary includes land and buildings fronting St Petersgate, St Peter’s Church and graveyard, and includes land and buildings at the junction of St Petersgate and Wellington Road. To the east, the boundary includes St Joseph’s Church and school buildings and their setting. The Chestergate area includes such prominent buildings as the Plaza cinema, the old Co-operative retail store and the Rock buildings. On Wellington Road the boundary includes the historic group of Wellington Mill and Wellington Road Bridge. Cut into the rock beneath the area are the World War II air raid shelters accessed from Chestergate.*

*The townscape and group value of surviving historic buildings make a major contribution to the special interest of the area. Aligned at back of pavement, buildings are typically of three storeys in height, of a variety of architectural styles and materials, although red brick with sandstone details and Welsh blue slates. These buildings comprise a range of public houses, shops, houses and industrial buildings which chart the historic development of the thoroughfare and the variety of their architectural styles and details enhance the visual qualities of the area.”<sup>12</sup>*

- 4.22 The locally listed Egerton Arms Public House holds an important corner position at the junction of Pickford’s Brow and St Petersgate. It responds to the typical scale and materiality of this part of the conservation area and helps frame views southwards from St Petersgate Bridge.

### Contribution made by Setting

- 4.23 The St Peters Conservation Area is typified by its unique position on a triangular promontory of sandstone which falls away steeply towards the north and west. The setting of the conservation area is largely defined by its valley setting which allows for differing views across the town centre from a number of vantage points. The Council Appraisal notes that:

*“Significant views include those along St Petersgate which provide a sense of entrance into the medieval town centre and form a gateway into the Market Place; close and distant views of St Peter’s Church; and views into out of the area from Mersey Square, and Wellington Road South which takes in the Railway Viaduct towards Wellington Mill to the west and the Plaza Cinema, buildings along Chestergate to the east towards the historic core.*

*Similarly elevated views are afforded from the road bridge connecting St Petersgate to the roof top parking of the Merseyway Shopping Centre.”<sup>13</sup>*

<sup>12</sup>

Stockport Council (2011) St Peters Conservation Area Appraisal



<sup>13</sup>

Stockport Council (2011) St Peters Conservation Area Appraisal



Figures 4.6 & 4.7: Views from Bridge and MSCP (2023)

4.24 The views out of the St Petersgate Conservation Area are characterised by a mix of traditional buildings with modern development visible alongside and beyond the boundary of the conservation area. In addition to these, the Council Appraisal identifies a key view (Figures 4.6 and 4.7) from both the bridge to and upon the MSCP at Merseyway Shopping Centre towards the historic core of Stockport. These views are varied, with some principally showing a modern context in the foreground and landmark buildings in the distance (Figure 4.6). Some others, such as Figure 4.7, allow for an appreciation of the townscape of Great Underbank and key buildings such as Bank Chambers and the Church of St Mary.



Figure 4.8: View along High Bank Side (2023)

4.25 The cleared sites around High Bank Side and Pickford's Brow allows for views out from St Peters Conservation Area towards the wider parts of Stockport including the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area. These views are principally of varied roofscapes and would have originally been screened by buildings along both sides of the roads. The open character deviates from the established dense urban grain (Figure 4.8).



## Contribution made by the Application Site to the Significance of the Heritage Assets

4.26 As set out earlier at Section 3 of this report, the Application Site has been developed since at least the 18<sup>th</sup> century and originally consisted of a public house to the front on Great Underbank and residential dwellings to the rear on Pickford's Brow. Despite redevelopment elsewhere, this arrangement remained until the early 1960s when the buildings were demolished, and the front section was replaced with the present commercial and retail building (Figure 4.9).



Figure 4.9: The Application Site from Great Underbank (2023)

4.27 The existing building (Figure 4.9) is three storeys with a modern shop unit to the ground floor and curtain wall glazing above to the first and second

floors which are divided by bands of differing grey tiles. The building has an overly strong horizontal form which lacks the verticality of other buildings along Great Underbank (Figures 4.9 and 4.10). Similarly, the roofscape is particularly flat and lacks any articulation in views from street level and elsewhere. The materials are also not reflective of those traditionally found within the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area.



Figure 4.10: The Application Site from Great Underbank (2023)

4.28 The building on this part of the Application Site is considered to make a neutral to negative contribution towards the special interest of the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area. This is principally due to its horizontal form and lack of articulation to the roofscape.



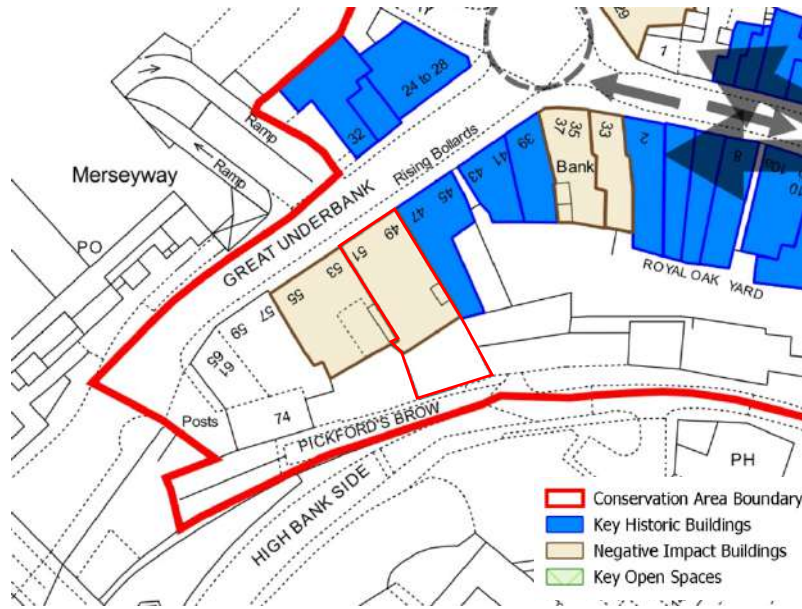


Figure 4.11: Extract from Townscape Appraisal Map of the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area © Stockport Council

4.29 The Council Appraisal<sup>14</sup> also specifically identifies the Application Site as a 'Negative Impact Building' (Figure 4.11). In relation to similar buildings in the conservation area, the Council Appraisal notes the following:

*"Small number of bland and flat roofed modern insertions have reduced the visual interest of the streetscene, have altered the historic street pattern and, most importantly, harmed the character of the roofscape as seen from higher levels."*<sup>15</sup>



Figures 4.12 & 4.13: The Application Site from High Bank Side (2023)

4.30 Following the demolition of the former houses on Pickford's Brow in the 1960s, the land to the rear of the Application Site was laid out as a car park with modern brick walls and railings (Figures 4.12 to 4.15). This, alongside the other cleared sites along Pickford's Brow and High Bank Side, have created a fragmented townscape that deviates from the established urban grain of the conservation area.

<sup>14</sup>

Stockport Council (2018) Market and Underbanks Conservation Area Appraisal



<sup>15</sup>

Stockport Council (2018) Market and Underbanks Conservation Area Appraisal



Figures 4.14 & 4.15: High Bank Side and Pickford's Brow (2023)

4.31 In relation to previously cleared sites in the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area, similar to that found at the rear of the Application Site, the Council Appraisal notes that:

*"The presence of unattractive gap sites and surface level car park and storage areas at certain locations, have a negative impact on the conservation area. ...*

*"The loss of continuous frontages particularly along Churchgate and replacement with surface car parks and compound storage areas has harmed the character of this part of the conservation area".<sup>16</sup>*

4.32 The cleared site to the rear of the Application Site is considered to make a negative contribution towards the special interest of the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area. This is due to the lack of built form which weakens the urban grain and integrity of the wider townscape.

4.33 For the same reasons, the Application Site also has a negative contribution upon the setting and thereby significance of the St Peters Conservation Area and the locally listed Egerton Arms Public House.

4.34 In relation to the other heritage assets in the immediate vicinity including the listed buildings along Great Underbank, the Application Site makes no meaningful contribution towards their significance.

4.35 There are some fortuitous views towards the Grade II Listed Bank Chambers (Figures 4.14 and 4.15) which have been created by the clearance of buildings on Pickford's Brow, but these are not uncommon in Stockport and only serve to reinforce the erosion of the former dense urban grain and enclosure. They make a negligible contribution towards the significance of the listed building.



## 5. Impact Assessment

### Summary of Legislation and National Planning Policy

- 5.1 Under Section 72 of The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Stockport Council has a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of their conservation areas.
- 5.2 Similarly, the Council have a duty under Section 66 of the 1990 Act to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their setting or any features of special interest they may possess. The meaning of 'preservation' in this context, as informed by case law, is taken to be the avoidance of harm.
- 5.3 There is no corresponding statutory duty relating to the setting of conservation areas as s.72 of the 1990 Act relates to '*land or buildings within the conservation area*'.
- 5.4 Paragraph 206 of the NPPF states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, putting them into viable uses consistent with their conservation, as well as the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 5.5 Paragraph 207 requires when considering the impact of development on the significance of a designated heritage asset that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. 'Conservation' is defined by the NPPF as *'the process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.'*<sup>17</sup>
- 5.6 Paragraphs 207 and 208 differentiate between 'substantial' and 'less than substantial harm' and provide a framework for the consideration of harm to the significance of designated heritage assets where it arises, bearing in mind the considerable importance and weight that must be given to the statutory duties of the 1990 Act.
- 5.7 Paragraph 209 of the NPPF states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account 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.
- 5.8 Paragraph 212 requires that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas, to enhance or better reveal their significance.
- 5.9 Paragraph 213 states that not all elements of a Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area should be treated either as substantial harm or less than substantial harm, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area as a whole.
- 5.10 Further details of the heritage legislation, planning policy and guidance for consideration of the Proposed Development is set out in in **Appendix I**.





## Planning Context

5.11 As set out earlier, an application for prior approval (Ref: DC/087456) was submitted in December 2022 for the change of use of first and second floors of the existing building on the Application Site from commercial into residential. This was granted by Stockport Council in February 2023.

5.12 A planning application (Ref: DC/087992) was also submitted in February 2023 for external works and façade upgrades to the Application Site. In relation to the historic environment, the following was noted:

*“The main issue for consideration is the impact of the development upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. As noted by the Conservation Officer the building is of modern construction and is not listed. The proposed development will enhance the appearance of the building and in turn will enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.”*

5.13 The application was subsequently approved in April 2023.

## Initial Heritage Review

5.14 The Proposed Development has been informed by an ‘Initial Heritage Review’ by Adapt Heritage (July 2023) which set out a number of key heritage considerations and design measures to be considered where possible to ensure the significance of heritage assets within and proximate to the Application Site are taken into consideration. These measures included (but were not limited to) the following:

### Rooftop Extension

- The scale and height of any rooftop extension should be carefully considered to ensure it does not appear visually dominant within the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area, principally in key views from Great Underbank and St Petersgate Bridge.

- A new rooftop extension could be setback from the roofline of the existing building to Great Underbank to allow for it to read as a modern and subservient addition. There is an opportunity to pursue a lighter weight structure with large areas of glazing.
- In terms of design, a contemporary approach would be appropriate given the architectural style of the existing building.

### New-Build Townhouses

- The redevelopment of the vacant land to the rear of the Application Site presents a positive opportunity to reinstate built form within this part of Market and Underbanks Conservation Area.
- The height, scale, and mass of any new townhouses should be carefully considered to ensure they respond to the varied townscape and changing topography within this part of Stockport.
- A contemporary or traditional approach could be pursued to the design of the new townhouses. This could look to respond to those found historically.
- Any new build proposals should provide variation to the roofscape and includes contextual materials which respond to the varying layers and topography of the conservation area.
- A number of key views, as identified in the Council Appraisal, should be considered as part of the design development including (but not limited to) views from High Bank Side and the raised bridge to Merseyway Shopping Centre.

5.15 These measures have been explored and incorporated into the Proposed Development, where possible.



## The Proposed Development

- 5.16 The Proposed Development consists of a full planning application for the construction of a new rooftop extension to the existing building on the Application Site. The proposals also involve two new townhouses on the land to the rear of the site.
- 5.17 The description of development is as follows:
- “Proposal for a vertical and rear extension to the existing building to provide additional 3no. apartments and erection of 2no. townhouses on land to rear.”*
- 5.18 In addition, the proposals maintain the principles established by the previously approved scheme (Ref: DC/087992) for external alterations to the existing building and residential conversion (Ref: DC/087456). They also offer improvements to the overall design and layout as part of its future use.
- 5.19 Further information on the design and appearance of the Proposed Development is set out within the Design and Access Statement prepared by Kelsall Architects.

## Impact Assessment

- 5.20 This impact assessment employs national advice provided by Historic England as an appropriate framework for analysis, including Historic Environment Good Practice Advice (GPA) in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment (2015), which sets out the importance of good design and response to local distinctiveness for new development in the historic environment. This advice provides a checklist of factors that may influence what will make the scale, height, massing, alignment, materials, and proposed use of new development successful in its context.

## Proposed External Alterations

- 5.21 The Proposed Development involves a number of external alterations and improvements to the existing building as part of its conversion into residential use. These are consistent with those previously approved and include the following:
- New brickwork façade with brick detailing and recessed panels which provide relief and depth. New stone capping is also proposed to the parapet level.
  - New aluminium casement windows and ground floor shopfront.
- 5.22 These external works involve contextual materials and will improve the overall verticality of the existing building. This is considered to enhance the overall appearance of the Application Site and the contribution it makes towards the special interest of the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area. As set out earlier, this position has been accepted by the Council previously.

## Proposed Rooftop Extension

- 5.23 The proposals also involve the addition of a new rooftop extension to provide additional residential units to help deliver the proposed external improvements to the existing building (and wider scheme). The addition will assist with the wider works to improve the verticality of the existing building on the site.
- 5.24 As illustrated in the supporting Design and Access Statement, the rooftop extension has been setback from the front parapet of the building to reduce its perceived mass from the surrounding area. This ensures that the extension is not visible from immediate views along Great Underbank and is only partially experienced in further views.



- 5.25 The supporting massing views, submitted within the application, show that the rooftop extension will only be experienced in limited views along Great Underbank from the north. It is setback, subservient and also screens the existing modern building from St Petersgate which rises above the Application Site in these views.
- 5.26 In addition to the above, the rooftop extension has also been angled and slopes down towards the centre of the site which assists in providing variation to the roofscape. These works collectively present an opportunity to provide greater visual interest and articulation to the roofscape of the existing building.
- 5.27 The rooftop extension is proposed to be constructed from zinc cladding which provides a modern contextual material which resonates with the dark greys and slates found to other buildings in this Market and Underbanks Conservation Area. This will reduce the prominence of the rooftop extension in views from the surrounding area and will assist it to read as part of a wider townscape and backdrop of built form.
- 5.28 By virtue of the location and positioning of the proposed rooftop extension, it will not be experienced from key areas or significant views in the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area as defined in the Council Appraisal. As set out earlier, there will be filtered and glimpsed views of built form from Great Underbank, but this will not affect the significance of the designated area.
- 5.29 The rooftop extension will be experienced from St Peters Conservation Area, across the bridge to the MSCP, but this will be in the context of other traditional and modern roofscapes. The design and positioning will ensure it is subservient and provides variation and interest to the roofscape of the existing building. It will maintain views towards the historic core and to key buildings such as Bank Chambers and the Church of St Mary.

### Proposed Townhouses

- 5.30 To the rear of the Application Site, it is proposed to construct two residential townhouses which take advantage of the sloping topography of the land and will reinstate built form along Pickford's Brow, as found historically. The proposed buildings present a positive opportunity to regenerate this part of the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area and could act as a catalyst for the regeneration and reinstatement of built form and enclosure along Pickford's Brow and High Bank Side.
- 5.31 The proposed townhouses are three storeys but visually appear as two storeys with a third floor in the attic level. As set out at Section 3, this is consistent with the scale and form of buildings historically found within this part of Stockport and also those which remain within and in the adjacent conservation areas. The scale and mass of the proposals has been carefully considered to contribute towards the varied townscape and changing topography within this part of Stockport.
- 5.32 In terms of design, the proposed townhouses adopt a modern yet contextual approach with two floors of masonry brick and a pitched roof level of zinc with standing seam. They also adopt a strong vertical emphasis with slender, full height windows. As found within the conservation area, it is proposed to include areas of brick patterning which will provide subtle detailing to the proposed townhouses. Collectively, the architectural design, form and materials proposed resonate with those found historically and to other traditional and modern buildings within the conservation area.
- 5.33 By virtue of the location and height of the townhouses, they will not be experienced from key areas in the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area including the Market, Great Underbank and Little Underbank. There will be glimpsed views of built form up Pickford's Brow which will reinstate the sense of enclosure historically found to this part of the conservation area.



- 5.34 The proposed townhouses will also be experienced from St Petersgate Bridge where open and uninterrupted views of Stockport and the wider environs are gained. The ability to experience the houses will not affect the reasons for designation and will largely screen uncharacteristic views out towards the Merseyway Shopping Centre and elsewhere. The proposals involve the positive reinstatement of enclosure and urban grain in these views.
- 5.35 From the neighbouring St Peters Conservation Area, the Proposed Development will be clearly experienced from High Bank Side. As set out earlier, the lack of built form and cleared nature of the land negatively impacts the conservation area and deviates from the strong sense of enclosure gained historically and elsewhere. The proposed townhouses present a positive opportunity to reinstate built form and enclosure within the setting of the designated area.
- 5.36 The proposed townhouses would be experienced in views from the MSCP Bridge but in the context of fragmented and altered townscape. The existing townscape to Great Underbank will remain appreciable as well as views towards Bank Chambers and the Church of St Mary. The proposed townhouses would maintain and enhance the special interest of the St Peters Conservation Area.
- 5.37 Overall, the proposed townhouses provide an important opportunity to improve the general character and appearance of this part of the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area and the wider setting of St Peters Conservation Area and the locally listed Egerton Arms Public House. There will be no effect upon the significance and setting of nearby listed buildings proximate to the Application Site.

## Statutory Duty and National Planning Policy

- 5.38 The Proposed Development presents a positive opportunity to improve and regenerate this part of the Stockport Town Centre including the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area. The proposed external alterations and rooftop extension will improve the overall appearance of the existing building along Great Underbank, improving its design, verticality and providing interest to its roofscape. Similarly, the proposed townhouses present a positive opportunity to regenerate this part of the conservation area and has the potential to act as a catalyst for the wider regeneration and reinstatement of built form and enclosure along Pickford's Brow and High Bank Side.
- 5.39 Overall, the Proposed Development as a whole will contribute towards the rich tapestry of buildings within Stockport and help with the continued vitality of the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area.
- 5.40 Based on the above, supported by on-site visual survey and an assessment of the relevant heritage assets, the conversion, alteration and extension of the existing building on the Application Site together with the new townhouses to the rear have the ability to sustain and enhance the special interest of the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area. This is subject to ensuring a high-quality scheme which includes appropriate contextual materials and detail. Similarly, it would sustain the significance of the nearby St Peters Conservation Area, locally listed Egerton Arms Public House and listed buildings within the immediate vicinity.
- 5.41 On this basis, the Proposed Development could sustain and thereby preserve the special character and appearance of the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area. The requirement of s72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 could therefore be satisfied if Stockport Council grants planning permission.



5.42 With respect to the core planning principle of the NPPF in relation to the historic environment, the Proposed Development can sustain, and thereby conserve, the significance of the identified heritage assets. Accordingly, the Proposed Development could meet the objectives of paragraphs 203, 204 and 212 of the NPPF.

### Local Planning Policy

5.43 In accordance with Core Policy CS8 and Development Management Policy SIE-3 of the Stockport Core Strategy (2011), the Proposed Development preserves the special architectural, artistic and historic significance of the identified heritage assets.



## 6. Summary and Conclusions

- 6.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Adapt Heritage on behalf of Kion Developments Limited in connection with a full planning application for the construction of new extensions and two new townhouses towards the rear together with parking and associated landscaping (the 'Proposed Development') at 51-51a Great Underbank, Stockport (the 'Application Site').
- 6.2 The Application Site is located within the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area and is adjacent to the St Peter's Conservation Area. It is also proximate to a number of listed and locally listed buildings. The focus of this report is on **Built Heritage** and does not cover Archaeology.
- 6.3 Under Section 72 of The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Stockport Council has a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of their conservation areas. Similarly, the Council have a duty under Section 66 of the 1990 Act to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their setting or any features of special interest they may possess. The meaning of 'preservation' in this context, as informed by case law, is taken to be the avoidance of harm.
- 6.4 There is no corresponding statutory duty relating to the setting of conservation areas as s.72 of the 1990 Act relates to '*land or buildings within the conservation area*'.
- 6.5 The Proposed Development presents a positive opportunity to improve and regenerate this part of the Stockport Town Centre including the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area. The proposed external alterations and rooftop extension will improve the overall appearance of the existing building along Great Underbank, improving its design, verticality and providing interest to its roofscape. Similarly, the proposed townhouses present a positive opportunity to regenerate this part of the conservation area and has the potential to act as a catalyst for the wider regeneration and reinstatement of built form and enclosure along Pickford's Brow and High Bank Side.
- 6.6 Overall, the Proposed Development as a whole will contribute towards the rich tapestry of buildings within Stockport and help with the continued vitality of the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area.
- 6.7 Based on the above, supported by on-site visual survey and an assessment of the relevant heritage assets, the conversion, alteration and extension of the existing building on the Application Site together with the new townhouses to the rear have the ability to sustain and enhance the special interest of the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area. This is subject to ensuring a high-quality scheme which includes appropriate contextual materials and detail. Similarly, it would sustain the significance of the nearby St Peters Conservation Area, locally listed Egerton Arms Public House and listed buildings within the immediate vicinity.
- 6.8 On this basis, the Proposed Development could sustain and thereby preserve the special character and appearance of the Market and Underbanks Conservation Area. The requirement of s72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 could therefore be satisfied if Stockport Council grants planning permission.
- 6.9 The Proposed Development can also meet the paragraphs of the NPPF, and the local policies contained in the Stockport Core Strategy (2011).



## Appendix I: Heritage Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance



# Heritage Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance

Below is an overview of the relevant heritage legislation, national and local planning policy and supplementary planning documents and guidance.

## Legislation

### The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Under Section 72 of The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Stockport Council has a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of their conservation areas. The meaning of 'preservation' in this context, as informed by case law, is taken to be the avoidance of harm.

## National Planning Policy

### The National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

The National Planning Policy Framework (2023) requires that great weight is given to the conservation of designated heritage assets and this reflects the statutory duty of the 1990 Act with respect to listed buildings and conservation areas.

Conservation is defined by the NPPF as *"the process of maintaining and managing change to heritage assets in ways that sustain and where appropriate, enhance their significance."*

Paragraph 203 of the NPPF elaborates that local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, putting them into viable uses consistent with their conservation, as well as the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraph 204 requires when considering the impact of a Proposed Development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation and the more important the asset, the greater that weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss requires clear and convincing justification.

Paragraph 207 states that where a Proposed Development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm and or loss is necessary to achieve substantial benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- *"the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
- *no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- *conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- *the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use"*

Paragraph 208 requires that 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 securing its optimum viable use.

Paragraph 212 requires that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas, to enhance or better reveal their significance.





Paragraph 213 states that not all elements of a Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 207 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 208, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area as a whole.

## Local Planning Policy

### Stockport Core Strategy (2011)

The Stockport Core Strategy was adopted by the Council in March 2011 and provides the overall spatial strategy for the Local Development Framework (LDF). It sets out why change is needed; what should be done; and where, when and how it is going to happen, including the provision of supporting infrastructure. The Core Strategy covers the period from its adoption to 2026.

In relation to Heritage Conservation, Core Policy CS8 states the following:

*“The Council recognises the unique place the historic environment holds in Stockport’s cultural heritage and the multiple ways in which it supports and contributes to the economy, society and daily life. The historic environment is a non-renewable resource and its fragile and finite nature will be a particularly important consideration in the allocation of sites in the Allocations DPD and in Development Management decision-making. Conserving and managing this resource for future generations is a key component of the wider principle of sustainable development which forms an overarching principle of the LDF.*

*Development will be expected to make a positive contribution to the protection and/or enhancement of the borough’s heritage assets. Buildings, sites, monuments, places and areas positively identified as having a degree of historic, architectural, artistic or archaeological significance (including canals and other transport infrastructure of historic value) will be safeguarded for the future.*

*Proposals which seek to sustainably manage or promote the borough’s heritage assets as an educational and/or recreational resource will be given positive consideration so long as they are not harmful to the value of the site/area. Opportunities afforded by development for archaeological investigation will be taken advantage of, particularly at sites and within areas where such investigation is likely to reveal material of archaeological importance.”*

In relation to the historic environment, Development Management Policy SIE-3 states that:

### “D) PROTECTING THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

*Development which preserves or enhances the special architectural, artistic, historic or archaeological significance of heritage assets will be welcomed. Heritage assets include buildings, sites, places, areas or landscapes positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions.*

*Loss or harm to the significance of a heritage asset, through alteration, destruction or development within its setting, will require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm or loss to designated heritage assets will only be permitted if:*

- 1) *there is clear evidence that there is no viable means of securing its preservation and that no viable alternative use can be found; or*
- 2) *that the benefits to the community resulting from redevelopment would decisively outweigh the loss resulting from demolition.*

*New uses will be permitted for statutorily or locally listed buildings if:*

- 1) *the use for which the building was designed is no longer viable in economic terms or cannot effectively be carried out without harming the architectural or historic interest of the building;*



- 2) *the proposed use would preserve the architectural or historic interest of the building, its fabric, interior and setting; and*
- 3) *the proposal would not detract from the amenities of the surrounding areas or cause traffic danger.*

*Where a new use is acceptable the Council may relax controls over land use, density, plot ratio and other matters of detail where this facilitates the preservation of the listed building.*

*Development will not be permitted if it would significantly alter, damage or destroy a Scheduled Ancient Monument or other important archaeological site, its setting or amenity value, unless overriding justification is demonstrated commensurate with the importance of the site.*

*Prior to determining applications for development proposals where a site is expected to reveal material of archaeological importance prospective developers will be required to carry out an archaeological field evaluation. Where that evaluation indicates that remains of archaeological importance are likely to be present and where it is not considered essential or feasible to preserve remains in situ developers will be required to excavate and record archaeological evidence prior to the development commencing. Where remains of archaeological or heritage value are preserved in situ opportunities should be sought to provide interpretive information explaining the significance and context of the remains.*

*Innovative regeneration proposals will be welcomed for the reuse and retention of mill buildings which are of historic value. Re-use will be considered acceptable in situations where there is no current use or where retention of an existing use is either no longer viable or cannot continue without causing harm to the historic value of the building.”*

## Guidance

### National Planning Policy Guidance, 2019

Whilst not planning policy the Planning Practice Guidance provides a clear indication of the Government’s approach to the application of national policy contained in the NPPF. Where there is conflict between the guidance in the PPG and earlier documents the PPG will take precedence.

### Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management (2019)

The guidance provides information on conservation area appraisal, designation and management to assist in implementing historic environment legislation, planning policy and guidance. The guidance states that change is inevitable, and often beneficial, and this advice sets out ways to manage change in a way that conserves and enhances the character and appearance of historic areas. Conservation areas can contribute to sustainable development in all its three dimensions as outlined in the NPPF.

### Historic England Advice Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (2015)

This note is not a statement of Government policy but supports the implementation of national government policy. It provides advice on assessing the significance of heritage assets and the impact of proposals on that significance.

### Historic England Advice Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017)

Historic England has revised its guidance relating to setting and views of heritage assets. The guidance advocates a staged approach to assessment involving identification of the affected assets and setting, an assessment of the degree to which setting and views contribute to the significance of the assets, an assessment of the effects of the proposed development, exploration of ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm and the monitoring of outcomes.

The revised guidance clarifies that there is a distinction between views that contribute to heritage significance and views that might be valued for reasons of



landscape character or visual amenity. It states that the extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places.

The guidance makes it clear that setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, rather its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the relevant heritage asset itself. The guidance sets out the need for a systematic and staged approach to assessing the impact of development proposals in the setting of a heritage asset. It confirms that such assessment should be based on an understanding of the significance of the heritage assets affected and then the contribution of setting to that significance.

#### Historic England Advice Note 12: Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets (2019)

The guidance covers the NPPF requirement for applicants for heritage and other consents to describe heritage significance to help local planning authorities to make decisions on the impact of proposals for change to heritage assets. Understanding the significance of heritage assets, in advance of developing proposals for their buildings and sites, enables owners and applicants to receive effective, consistent and timely decisions. The advice note explores the assessment of significance of heritage assets as part of a staged approach to decision-making in which assessing significance precedes designing the proposal(s).





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