

28 July 2022

HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT – 69 CHURCH STREET HORWICH BOLTON

Introduction

This brief report is written to provide a professional heritage opinion for a proposed planning application for alterations to No 69 Church Street Horwich. The proposals are minor works and involve new side outside seating area. The site to which this report relates is currently an restaurant but previously a public house. The building dates from mid 19th century, 2 storey, constructed in stone with both existing timber windows and replacement Upvc. . The property is unlisted but is adjacent to a number of listed buildings:

Horwich Parish Church School GII
Holy Trinity Church GII
54-70 Church Street, GII

As a result of the properties location there are a number of statutory listed buildings within the vicinity, however, as evidenced by the heritage assets plan at fig 1 , there is no direct or indirect impact upon statutory heritage assets as a result of the proposed minor works.



Fig 1 Historic England map extract showing listed buildings in relation to site

Heritage Impact assessment

In relation to the building itself, No 69 Church St, its significance is in its location adjacent to listed buildings. This impact assessment is therefore a professional judgment on the proposal for minor works for a new outdoor seating area and will discuss the impact of the proposals upon the setting of heritage assets.

In assessing the impact of a proposal which entails impact on a heritage asset, this assessment draws on a number of key guiding documents where applicable, such as English Heritage Conservation Principles, 2008 and Historic England Guidance, Historic Environment - Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3, The Setting of Heritage Assets, 2017; where required. I have also considered the impact of the proposal upon the heritage asset by relating directly to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

In this instance, given the minor scope of the works, I do not consider that the proposed works will give rise to any undue impact upon the adjacent listed buildings and that a full setting assessment of the proposal is not required. Indeed, the actual works can all be controlled by planning condition.

In determining applications affecting Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas, local authorities have to have regard for the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act. Policies in the NPPF reinforce the 1990 Planning Act, but use slightly different words and emphasise balancing use, viability and conservation: 'the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation' (paragraph 185). The local authority should 'identify and assess the particular significance of heritage assets' and 'take account of available evidence and necessary expertise'.

The NPPF advises that when considering the impact of a proposal 'great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset the greater the weight should be.' More weight is therefore given to assets of national importance such as listed buildings, than to local heritage, and more weight should be given to features and elements of high significance than those of lower importance. Given the local interest in the building its significance is considered to be low/medium in accordance with the NPPF.

Proposals may enhance, have a neutral impact or cause harm to a heritage asset. The level of harm may be slight, 'less than substantial harm' or substantial. The NPPF states that substantial harm to listed buildings (such as demolition or loss) should be exceptional and it has to be very robustly justified. Where 'less than substantial' harm is likely to be caused, the harm has to be balanced against the public benefits. This level of harm can include removal or covering over of features.

The proposed works will not result in any negative heritage impact upon neighbouring heritage assets.

In addition, the works proposed are to install a ground floor outside seating area only. I do not believe that the works are altering historic fabric to an extent to refuse planning permission. Indeed, the NDHA is and will be still discernible and positively experienced once works are complete.

Conclusion

The proposed works will be of similar size, scale and form to neighbouring properties and that its impact will not cause any harm or undue impact upon the heritage assets. The materials used for the works can be adequately controlled by planning condition and I see no reason why planning consent should be withheld.

This brief heritage impact assessment provides an appropriate level of assessment for this case, when 'considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between development and heritage assets.

I believe the proposals strike a balance between the architectural and historic interest of the heritage asset and that the proposals as set out will not present any detrimental impact or harm upon the designated heritage assets in accordance with local and national planning policy.

Yours sincerely



Jason Kennedy, BSc, Dip TP, MA(UD), MRTPI, IHBC
Townscape