

PROPOSED REAR DORMER AT 5 NOR GATE STREET

DIDSBURY, CITY OF MANCHESTER



HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

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GARRY MILLER HERITAGE CONSULTANCY

Garry Miller is a heritage consultant, architectural historian and published author who has spent more than 35 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 works at number 5 Norgate Street, Didsbury, in the City of Manchester. The property is part of a short terrace of late Victorian residential properties located off Wilmslow Road in the centre of Didsbury village. It is itself undesignated but stands within Blackburn Park Conservation Area, and close to two Grade II listed buildings, The Church of Emmanuel of 1858 and Didsbury Library of 1915.

Proposals are being submitted to Manchester City Council for a replacement dormer on the rear roof plane of the property. The heritage consideration arising is therefore the proposal's potential impact upon the significance (i.e. heritage interest and value) of the conservation area and setting of the listed buildings. The scope and purpose of this report is to identify this significance and assess how the proposal will affect it.

The significance of Blackburn Park Conservation Area derives from its character and appearance as a mid-status residential estate developed from the mid-19th to the early 20th century on land originally belonging to Charles Blackburn. It is characterised by detached and semi-detached Victorian and Edwardian houses set in large mature gardens along trees-lined roads. The significance of the conservation area is therefore embodied primarily in these houses and their relationship to each other within the streetscene.

The application building is the middle house in a row of five terraced properties on the south side of the street, dating probably from the 1870s-1880s. Their appearance suggests they were of lower middle class/artisan status and were therefore likely to have been built for Didsbury's indigenous population rather than the commuters who colonised the villas of Blackburn Park. The application property makes a positive contribution to the conservation area as an element of the terrace to which it belongs, rather than for its own intrinsic qualities. Its significance in this respect is displayed principally by its frontage to Norgate Street, where it can be read as part of the row. The rear of the building is for the most part screened from view and therefore makes a much lesser contribution to the interest of the row and of the conservation area.

Full-width, flat roof rear dormers are already a feature of the rear elevation of the terrace, with examples existing at numbers 7 and 9. These dormers have thus become part of the character and appearance of the terrace, and hence its role within the conservation area. The proposed dormer at 5 will therefore be in accordance with what exists already. In the broader picture, the proposal represents a minor change that will not harm the character and appearance of the terrace, its contribution to the conservation area or the setting of the listed buildings that stand nearby. The significance of these heritage assets will accordingly be sustained. The proposal thereby satisfies the requirements of national planning guidance, along with those of the local development plan, and therefore approval should be granted without delay.

2: THE SITE

The application site is located in the heart of Didsbury village, now an outer suburb of the city of Manchester. Number 5 Norgate Street is part of a short terrace of late Victorian residential properties located off Wilmslow Road, close to its junction with Barlow Moor Road and adjoining the commercial centre of the village.



Map 1. The application property



1. The proposal building, 5 Norgate Street



2. The property forms part of a late 19th century terrace

3: THE PROPOSAL/SCOPE OF THIS REPORT

3.1 Proposed development

Proposals are being submitted to Manchester City Council for a replacement rear dormer at the application property.

3.2 Designations

The application property is itself undesignated, but stands within Blackburn Park Conservation Area. It also forms part of the immediate setting of a group of listed buildings, most notably The Church of Emmanuel of 1858 and Didsbury Library of 1915, which stand to the south and southwest respectively.

3.3 Heritage impact

The heritage consideration arising is therefore the proposal's potential impact upon the significance (i.e. heritage interest and value) of the conservation area. As the closest listed buildings, the settings of Emmanuel Church and the Library are also potentially affected.

3.4 Scope and purpose of this report

Paragraph 194 of Chapter 16 (*Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment*) of the National Planning Policy Framework (as revised July 2021) states local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of the heritage assets affected, including the contribution made by their setting. The scope and purpose of this report is to describe the significance of the conservation area and listed buildings and to assess the proposal's impact in the context of relevant heritage planning policies. It is considered the level of detail is, in accordance with paragraph 194, proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset and no more than is necessary to understand the proposal's impact. The report is to be read in conjunction with other documentation supporting the application.

3.5 Report structure

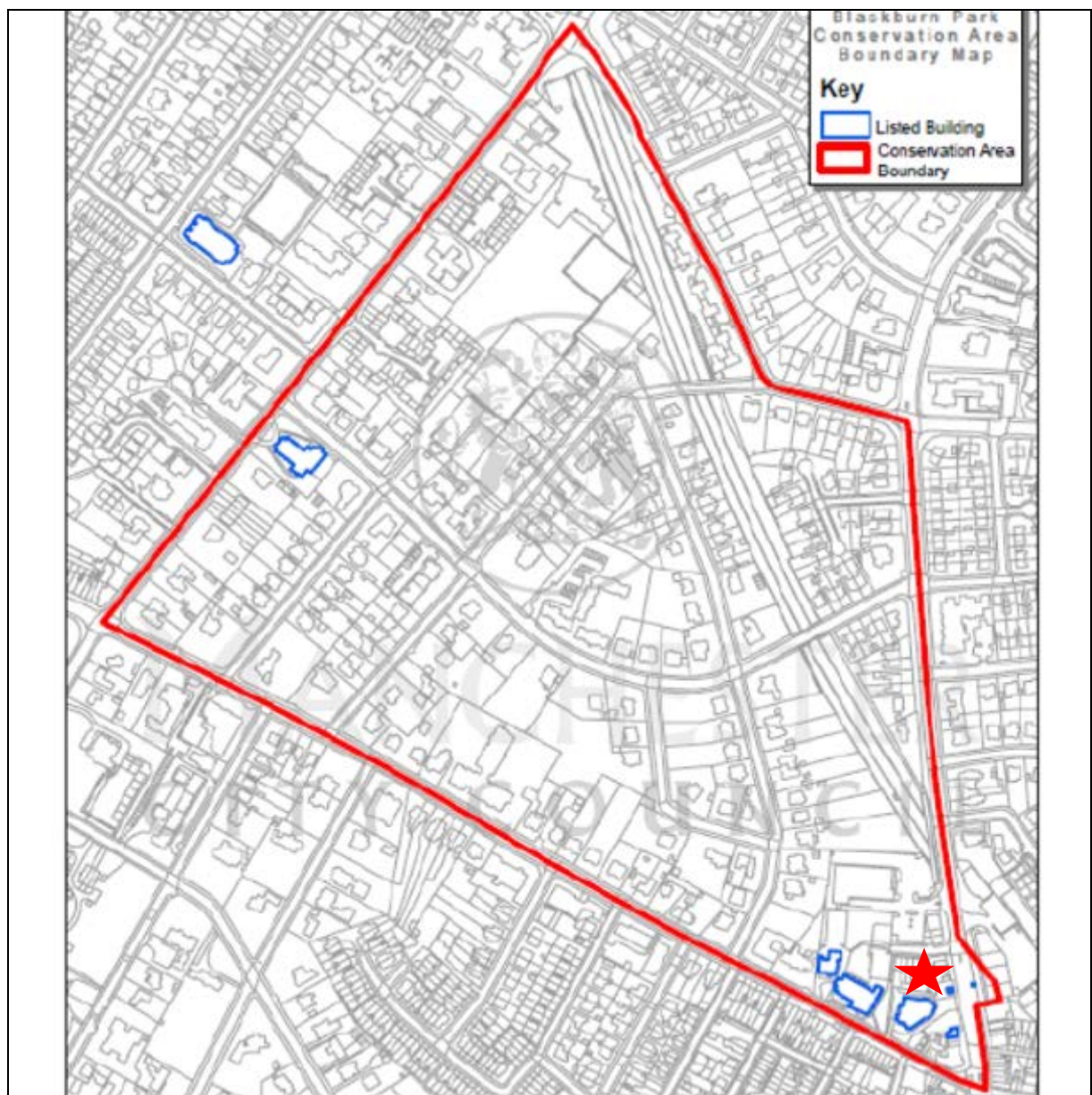
This is as follows:

1. A brief analysis of the conservation area (Section 4) and listed buildings (Section 5) along with the contribution made by the application property (Section 6)
2. Evaluation of the significance of these heritage assets (Section 7)
3. A summary of the relevant planning policies against which the application will be assessed (Section 8)
4. Evaluation within this policy context of the impact of the proposal upon the conservation area and setting of the listed buildings (Section 9).

4: BLACKBURN PARK CONSERVATION AREA

4.1 Overview/boundaries

Blackburn Park Conservation Area was designated by Manchester City Council in December 1979, and is bounded by Barlow Moor Road, Palatine Road, Lapwing Lane and Wilmslow Road. Its boundaries are shown on Map 2 (below). It is principally an area of large mid-19th to early 20th century family houses with spacious gardens built along tree-lined roads.



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

4.2 History

Blackburn Park was developed as a mid-status residential estate from the mid-19th to the early 20th century. It takes its name from landowner Charles Blackburn, who was principally responsible for the development and sold off limited portions of land, each plot large enough to accommodate only three or four houses. The first stage followed the opening of Palatine Road in 1862, and is represented by large villas built along its length during the two subsequent decades. The second phase followed the opening of the Midland Railway's Manchester South District line in 1880, with its nearby stations at Didsbury and Albert Park. Between then and 1905 occurred the largest phase of development, with Blackburn offering two-thirds of his estate for sale. The final phase followed Blackburn's death, when the remainder of his estate was sold.

4.3 Character/townscape/buildings

The qualities of the conservation area townscape are described thus in Manchester City Council's internet pages devoted to Blackburn Park:

- Building materials and styles are very varied. Older houses generally have textured light red or buff brick walls with blue slate roofs, and sometimes brick or stone dressings in contrasting colours. The later houses are predominantly smooth red brick, though render, half-timbering and decorative tile fringing are extensively used. Red tile and occasionally green slate are used for roofs and vertical cladding
- Windows are even more varied, some being subdivided by glazing bars, some leaded and a great many having Art Nouveau stained glass. Bay windows, bow windows and oriel windows are to be found in profusion
- Entrance doors are varied with combinations of fielded timber panels and stained glass panels, and they always open on to a covered porch
- Chimney stacks are a notable feature of some of houses, being tall and decorated with projecting strings and corbelled brickwork
- Walls are mainly of brick with moulded terracotta copings, and occasionally the wall is divided into fielded panels with a plinth below and corbelled brickwork above. Sometimes brickwork is bonded in a darker red or in other colours
- Gardens at both front and rear of houses are large by most standards, and their boundaries to public highways are marked by walls, some of stone, and/or privet hedges. Few garden gates remain intact, but those that do are typically of timber and as carefully detailed as the houses to which they belong, some of which have decorative gateposts

The conservation area also includes a considerable amount of new development, where modern buildings of late 20th century date – and others of very recent construction – sit alongside its Victorian and Edwardian houses.

5: THE LISTED BUILDINGS

5.1 Overview

The site stands close to a group of six listed buildings that stand at the heart of Didsbury village, close to the junction of Barlow Moor Road and Wilmslow Road. All are listed at Grade II:

- 1** The Church of Emmanuel, 1858
- 2** Emmanuel Vicarage, of similar date
- 3** Didsbury Library, 1915 by City Architect Henry Price
- 4** Didsbury War Memorial, 1921
- 5** Rhodes Memorial Clock Tower
- 6** Number 694 Wilmslow Road, an 18th century cottage

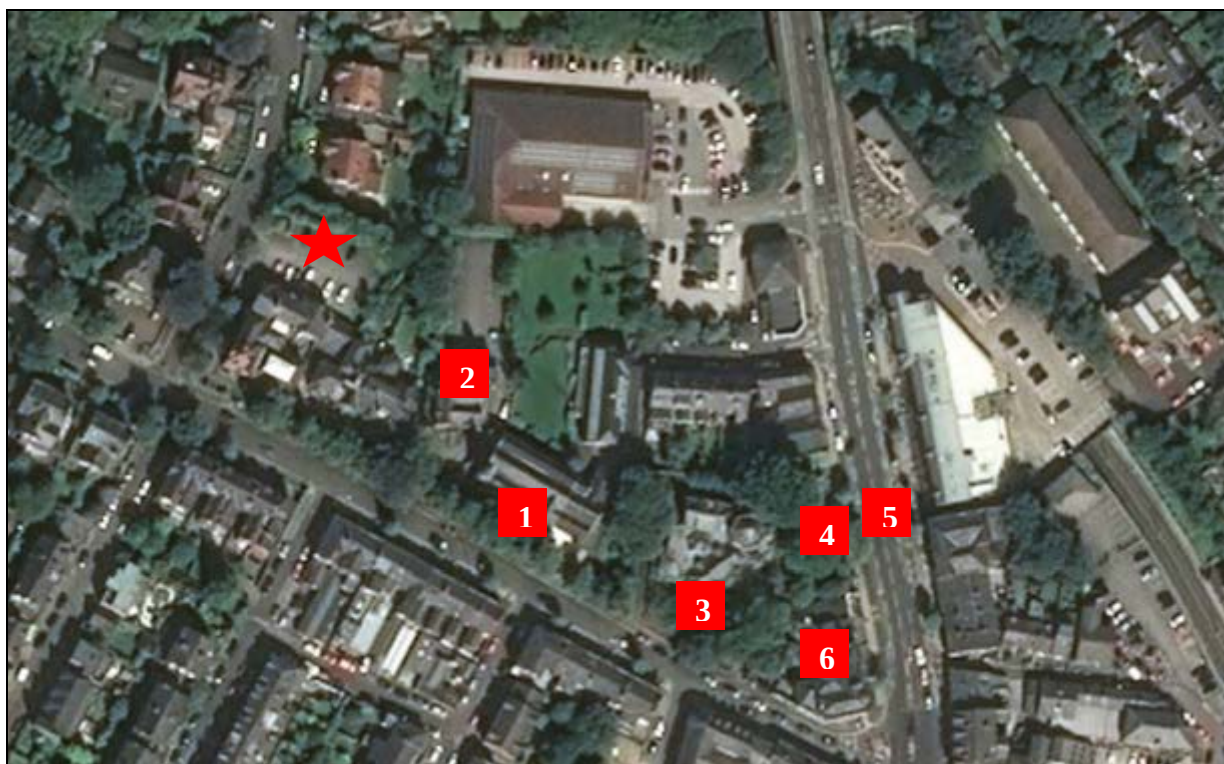


Figure 1. The listed buildings close to the site

Of these, the two nearest the site are the Church of Emmanuel and the Library. Any impact on the setting of the other listed buildings is ruled out by distance separation and intervening townscape.



3. *Didsbury Library, viewed from the rear garden of the application building*

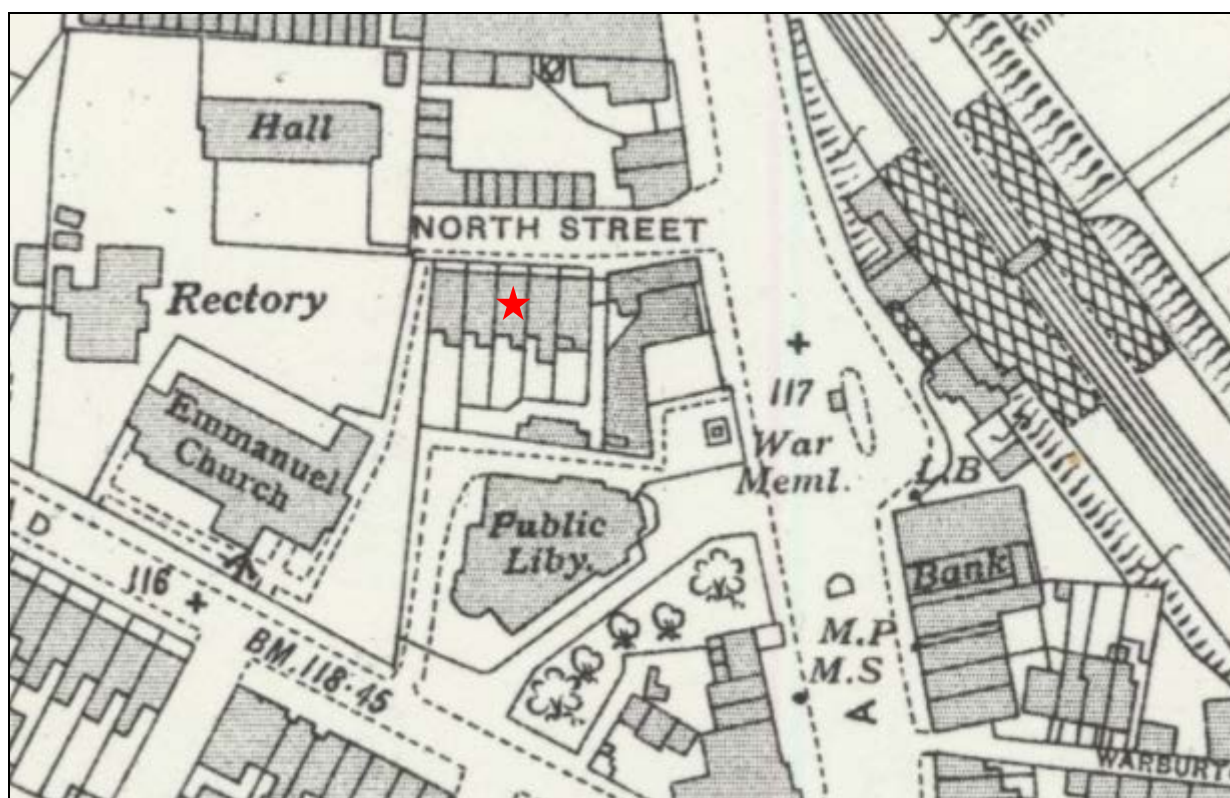


4. *The Church of Emmanuel, from the same viewpoint*

6: THE APPLICATION PROPERTY

6.1 Historical summary

Norgate Street was originally named North Street. The application building is the middle house in a row of five terraced dwellings on the south side of the street. The date of the terrace is probably the 1870s-1880s. The appearance of the properties suggests they were of lower middle class/artisan status and were therefore likely to have been built for Didsbury's indigenous population rather than the commuters who colonised the villas of Blackburn Park.



Map 3. The property, then on North Street, depicted by the 25-inch OS mapping of 1936

6.2 Characteristics

The property belongs to a neat, two-storeyed row characterised by ground floor bay windows and bands of red brick decoration. The principal interest is in the front elevation, where it displays a uniformity of appearance with its neighbours. The rear, as with the rest of the terrace, is largely concealed from view behind its garden wall, apart from minor glimpses at greater distance the Church of Emmanuel and the Library. A small dormer has been installed on the rear roof plane, while large dormers have already been added to three of the other properties in the row.



5. View of the terrace from the entrance to Norgate Street



6. Rear of the application property, showing existing small dormer



7. Glimpse of the roof from adjoining the Library



8. Distant view of the rear of the terrace from between Emmanuel Church and the Library

7: SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

7.1 Rationale

Paragraph 190 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.

7.2 The conservation area

The significance of Blackburn Park Conservation Area derives from its character and appearance as an affluent residential suburb developed from the mid-19th to the early 20th century on land originally belonging to Charles Blackburn. It is characterised by detached and semi-detached Victorian and Edwardian houses set in large mature gardens along trees-lined roads, mostly built of brick but with occasional render or timber-framed decoration. The significance of the conservation area is therefore embodied primarily in these houses and their relationship to each other amid the streetscene. Modern infill and redevelopment has however a notable presence, and hence has become embedded in the character of the conservation area.

7.3 The application property

The application property makes a positive contribution to the conservation area as an element of the late 19th century terrace to which it belongs, rather than for its own intrinsic qualities. Its significance in this respect is displayed principally by its frontage to Norgate Street, where it can be read as part of the row. The rear of the building is for the most part screened from view and therefore makes a much lesser contribution to the interest of the terrace and of the conservation area.

8: PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

8.1 Statutory duties

Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local planning authorities to give special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest. Section 72 (1) requires LPAs to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character of a conservation area.

8.2 Relevant policies

Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework provides the guidance on how the statutory duty is to be put into practice. Paragraph 197 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 199 states that ‘*great weight*’ should be given to their conservation and the more important the asset, the greater that weight should be; and that significance can be lost through development within its setting.

In the local planning context, policy EN3 of the City Council’s Local Development Framework Core Strategy, adopted July 2012, requires new development to preserve or where possible, enhance the historic environment. Saved policy DC18 of the Unitary Development Plan specifically applies to conservation areas, which are to be preserved and enhanced. Saved policy DC19 requires the setting of listed buildings to be protected.

9: IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL

9.1 Summary of the proposal

The proposal seeks consent for replacement of the existing dormer by a larger dormer, which will be slate-clad to match the roof and with timber windows, as detailed in the submitted drawings.



9. Proposed rear elevation

9.2 Its effect

Full-width, flat-roof rear dormers are already a feature of the rear elevation of the terrace, with examples existing at numbers 7 and 9. A smaller dormer with pitched roof also exists at number 1. These dormers have thus become part of the character and appearance of the terrace, and hence its role within the conservation area. The proposed dormer will therefore be in accordance with what exists already. In terms of its effect on the setting of the listed buildings, it will be a minor background feature that will not obscure or detract from appreciation of the buildings in public views.



10. Existing full-width dormers at neighbouring properties

9.3 Conclusion

The terrace to which the property belongs will still be read as a short row of late 19th century two-storey dwellings in the principal public view from Norbury Street that establishes their contribution to the conservation area. In the broader picture, the proposal represents a minor change that will not harm the character and appearance of the terrace, its contribution to the conservation area or the setting of the listed buildings that stand nearby. The significance of these heritage assets will accordingly be sustained. The proposal thereby satisfies the requirements of national planning guidance as established in paragraphs 197 and 199 of the NPPF, along with those of the local development plan, and therefore approval should be granted without delay.