

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Site: 1 Clyde Rd, West Didsbury, Manchester M20 2NJ

Date: May 2021

1.0 Introduction

At the request of Manchester City Council, this Heritage Statement is submitted in support of the planning application at 1 Clyde Rd, West Didsbury; the site is located in the Albert Park Conservation Area of West Didsbury.

This Statement considers the application proposals against the special architectural and historic interests of the Conservation Area and consideration of the process of conserving any local and special contributing factors of merit.

The Albert Park Conservation Area located in south Manchester across a large part of the suburb of west Didsbury. It is one of 34 Conservation Areas in Manchester. It comprises principally a residential area but also includes the district shopping centre located on Burton Road, further shops on Barlow Moor Road, schools, public houses and various churches. The character comprises both built heritage of which the most common elevational treatment is brick. Natural landscape features with a range of mature, semi-mature and young trees. The Conservation Area was designated in 1988 and it adjoins the Blackburn Park Conservation Area to the east and thus can be viewed more broadly.

The property is not a nationally designated asset (listed), nor a known non-designated asset. The closest listed building some 140m east off Lapwing Lane.

2.0 The Site /Application Proposals

The property currently provides for a 7-person, 7-bedroom house of multiple occupation (Use Class Sui Generis). The property is a substantial semi-detached Victorian building, laid out

across four floors including a (lower ground floor), with dominant front bays facing Clyde Road. A later single storey rear extension added to the property some years ago. The overall existing floor area of the property extends to 271 sq.m. Vehicle access is provided with informal parking to a hard surfaced driveway and a large rear garden. Several existing trees are present to the front and rear of the property. A tree survey will be submitted to support the planning application.

The edge red boundary of the site is substantial for this suburban area and extends to 494 sq.m; of which the existing footprint of the property is only 98 sq.m thus a ratio of built development to amenity and parking is only 19.8%, less than a quarter of the site area is built.

The application seeks the conversion to a 5-bedroom family home (Use Class C3), demolition of the single storey rear extension and construction of a new single storey rear extension, creation of an ancillary leisure building to the rear and delivery of secure gates. The proposed new footprint of the property is only 101sq.m thus an increase of only 3sq.m (3%) and thus arguably a quantitative immaterial increase. Set against the site area the proposed built property floorspace to site area ratio is just still 20.4% (built)/ 79.6% soft/hard landscape. The overall floor space of the proposed property (the subject of the planning application) is just 288 sq.m and thus 17 sq.m increase (just 5.1% increase in floor area) again an immaterial increase.

It is acknowledged the application seeks the delivery of a single storey (at just 2.8m in height) ancillary leisure building, which is 33sq.m. when considered against the overall site built footprint to site area ratio the built development footprint as proposed is still only 27% of the site area, just over a quarter, the remainder of the site will accommodate two car parking spaces, a landscaped front garden and landscaped private rear garden for the family home.

These minor quantitative amendments to the property should be acknowledged and also considered alongside the case and consideration given to the design of the property by the applicants architectural team. The approach to the scale and massing of the proposed and ancillary leisure buildings are single storey, the extension viewed from Clyde Road a far

greater complementary structure to the host property and the Conservation Area that the tired, (modern) aged current extension. Little of the ancillary leisure building will be viewed from Clyde Road, as the extension and new security gates will be delivered in the foreground; the windows to the new extension and leisure building will be white aluminium and white upvc sash style as replacements provided to the host property. Roof lights are to the rear and thus will have no impact on the eyeline nor the Conservation Area.

It is acknowledged the Local Planning Authority's preference is for solid traditional materials to be used for buildings and boundary treatments such as brick and timber, rather than cladding and concrete glass walls. This has been given due consideration in the design; the elevations submitted present both brick and timber features.

3.0 Policy Overview

An industrial City such as Manchester is undeniably rich in history; legislation and policy exist to enable the Local Authority to protect a broad range of heritage assets that are considered to contribute to such historical heritage. Those that have specific merit are protected through designation and nationally listed, others are individually considered to hold some merit and are 'locally listed' or non-designated assets and those that collectively contribute more widely together are designated within a Conservation Area.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides specific protection for buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest. Any decisions relating to Conservation Areas must address the statutory considerations of the Planning and Listed Building and Conservations Areas Act 1990, along with satisfying the relevant policies within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), February 2019 and the Development Plan. The current policy system identifies, through the NPPF, that applications should consider the potential impact of development on heritage assets. This in turn includes both designated heritage assets, which possess a statutory designation (for example listed buildings) but Conservation Areas and Registered Parks and Gardens are also included, as well as

undesigned heritage assets. The case here relates to the setting of the Conservation Area as a designated asset.

This Statement has also considered the guidance set out in the British Standard- Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings and in particular considers the policies set out in the NPPF, in respect of information requirements, paragraph 189 sets out that:

“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 asset’s importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary.”

Protecting the historic environment and enhancing heritage assets is an important component of national planning policy and one which too contributes sustainable development. The appropriate conservation of heritage assets forms one of the key planning principles that underpin the planning system.

Paragraph 192 goes on to state:

“In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

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

The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) Note advocates that conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change. It requires a flexible and thoughtful approach to get the best out of assets.

The PPG also states an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to a Conservation Area is individually of lesser importance than a listed building.

In addition, there is relevant guidance on the implementation and interpretation of the historic environment policy which is provided by Historic England publications: Historic Environment Good Practice in Planning Note 1 and Managing Significance in Decision-taking in the Historic Environment (2) of Heritage Assets.

The setting of a historic asset is often referred to as the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not necessarily fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Setting is also described as being a separate term to 'curtilage' character and context.

Locally, heritage policy aspirations are set out within the Development Plan

- Manchester City Council Core Strategy Development Plan (adopted July 2012);
- Extant remaining Manchester City Council Unitary Development Plan Documents (UDP) (1995);
- Greater Manchester Joint Waste Strategy (adopted July 2012); and
- Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Strategy (April 2013).

This Statement will consider policies within those of most relevance.

In the first instance it should be acknowledged when an area becomes a Conservation Area, the following general rules apply:

- Demolition of most buildings in the area are controlled, whether they are listed or not;

- Trees in the area are protected; and
- Control is strengthened, so that the area can be preserved well and further improvements to its appearance can be made.

The general ethos of the conservation policy context advises that notice should be taken of the general character of existing features, such as garden walls, hedges, gate posts, porches and the styles and colours of window frames and roofing materials, so that new elements may be designed to harmonise with them. The application seeks to wholly aspire to harmonising with the original features.

The Development Plan, Policy 18 Conservation Areas, seeks to preserve and enhance the Conservation Areas by carefully considering a number of issues, those of relevance to the application proposals are:

- Relationship of new structures to neighbouring buildings and spaces;
- The effect of major changes to the appearance of existing buildings; and
- Where it can be shown that there will not be harm to the appearance or character of the Conservation Area.

The applicant and their architectural team have given due care and consideration to all these policy criteria.

4.0 Listing Description

The building is not nationally or known to be locally listed, it is acknowledged it is located within the Conservation Area. The building presents a strong building line to Clyde Road, the materials are representative of the wider asset both in the host building and boundary treatments.

5.0 Review

West Didsbury is an important and popular south Manchester residential suburb. It has extended and grown over time merging with neighbouring Didsbury in particular. The Albert Park Conservation Area as a historic asset seeks to protect the rich areas of the architectural and historic environment.

As identified in the preceding paragraphs the application site is not listed. This submission has therefore established where the closest individual heritage assets are to the site which are some 140m east. This Statement therefore considers that the application proposals are not considered to impact at all any individual heritage assets and therefore there is no requirement to undertake an assessment of site significance.

It is acknowledged that the site and property have an important role to play in the Albert Park Conservation Area as a collective heritage asset. Located amidst many imposing and grand properties, along with substantial new build properties, the very nature and lack of investment, (modern) aged extension thus means, the site and host building if left without investment for many more years arguably would detract from the aesthetic contribution to the Conservation Area. The improvement overall as part of the application, are material to the consideration of the development and thus its contribution to the enhancement of the Conservation Area as a historic asset. The proposals are not anticipated to have an adverse impact on the setting of the Conservation Area.

As identified, the setting of a historic asset or group of assets including a Conservation Area are often referred to as the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. As per the guidance within the PPG, its extent is not necessarily fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. The application proposals are minor in nature when considered in the context of the Conservation Area but in turn will contribute to its constant evolution.

6.0 Conclusion

The application proposals seek the conversion of the property to a 5-bedroom family home (Use Class C3). Demolition of the existing extension is required and the delivery of a modest extension with an ancillary leisure building, the use of complementary materials means the views from Clyde Road and thus the key views from the Conservation Area are not expected to be any adverse impact on the heritage assets of the area.

The sections above consider the relevant Development Plan heritage policies, the NPPF policies and Historic England guidance. Overall, the conversion of the building with minor improvements is considered to be a benefit and positive material consideration to the continued protection and enhancement of the Conservation Area.

The sections above consider the Development Plan heritage policies and the NPPF. Overall the conversion of the building and subsequent enhancement to the grounds, landscaping, and exterior elevations where glimpsed through the break in trees allow compliance with the NPPF and PPG aspirations.

In line with NPPF and Development Plan heritage policy (18) aspirations the Local Planning Authority are encouraged to consider the merits of the proposal:

- Relationship of new structures to neighbouring buildings and spaces;
The removal of a (modern) aged extension and replacement that allows for a minor increase in footprint of development of just 3sq.m (3%), at single storey scale, with an internal outlook, a new built development footprint (including the ancillary leisure building of just 27% of the site compared with the existing at 19.8%, just 7.2% increase, will not impact on neighbouring buildings or spaces.

- The effect of major changes to the appearance existing buildings

The materials palette proposed is consistent with the traditional materials of brick and timber in the area and white sash windows where required.

There will wholeheartedly be a positive contribution through the reuse and reoccupation of the building.

- Where it can be shown that there will not be harm to the appearance or character of the Conservation Area.

The architectural team has given detailed due consideration to the appearance and character of the Conservation Area. The change of use and extension will contribute to the current continued chapter in the evolution of the surrounds of the street scene; inline with the PPG a thoughtful and considered approach is presented.

Justification for the proposed development is considered to be acceptable on the basis that there is no negative impact on a local heritage asset of the conservation area status and it is acknowledged that the extent of the surrounds of a heritage asset are not fixed and may change. The evolution of the building provides positive minor amendments that will enable a positive contribution to the continued evolution of the Conservation Area. The Local Planning Authority's support for the application is welcomed.

End.

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