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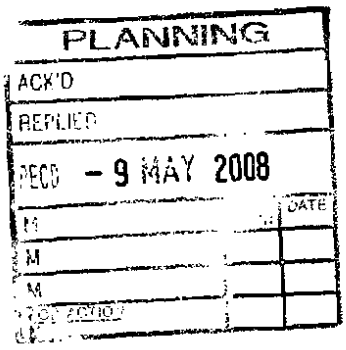


DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT & PPG15 JUSTIFICATION

For proposed

DEVELOPMENT OF SEVEN APARTMENTS WITH ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING & CAR PARKING AT 28 DEMESNE ROAD, WHALLEY RANGE

March 08

FARHAN RAMA

Design & Access Statement

Intro

The proposals are for a new apartment block consisting of seven apartments arranged over four storeys with eight car parking spaces within the Whalley Range conservation area. The land is currently vacant with a unlisted detached garage building to the rear. The area is predominantly residential with a mixture of old Victorian buildings, semi detached houses and new build style apartment blocks. The applicant owns the adjacent site on 26 Demesne Road which consists of flats and bed-sits for private tenants.

Size

The site is 0.087 hectares or 876 sq m of which the building footprint is 157 sq m.

Accommodation

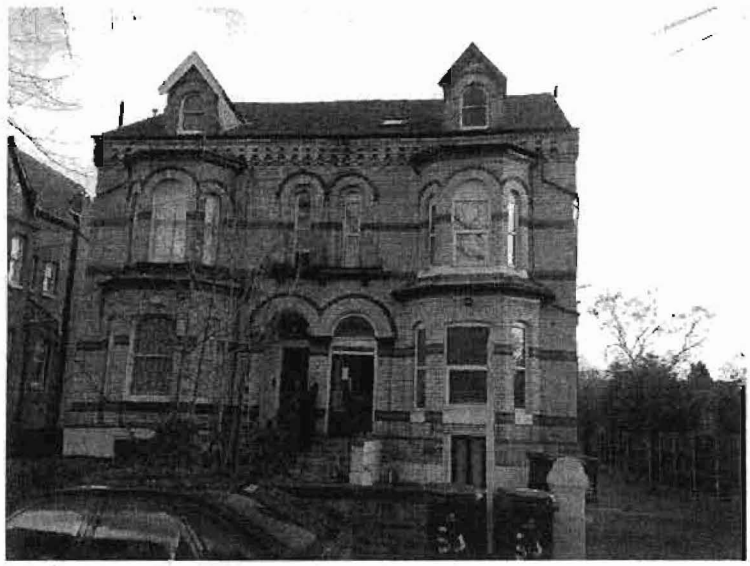
There are a total of seven apartments of which 1 is a three bed duplex of 90 sq m and the remainder are all 2 bed units from 60 – 64 sq m. apartment sizes have been kept larger than usual for a modern new development specifically to attract more permanent families into the area rather than short term tenants and investors.

Siting

The building has been sited using the existing building lines of the adjacent properties. The building is offset slightly to the east to accommodate the drive to the rear car park, beyond which you will find a softly landscaped amenity area.

Appearance

The apartment block has been designed to sit in well with its surroundings. The main facing material will be red / orange bricks, feature engineering brick band coursing, re constituted slates, black painted fascias & rainwater goods and UPVC windows & doors in a colour to be agreed. To add additional character and mimic existing buildings, re constituted stone will be used for the window cills as well as a decorative surround to the front door.



Precedent Study; No.30 & 32 Demesne Road which has materials and vertical proportions typical of many historic buildings in the conservation area

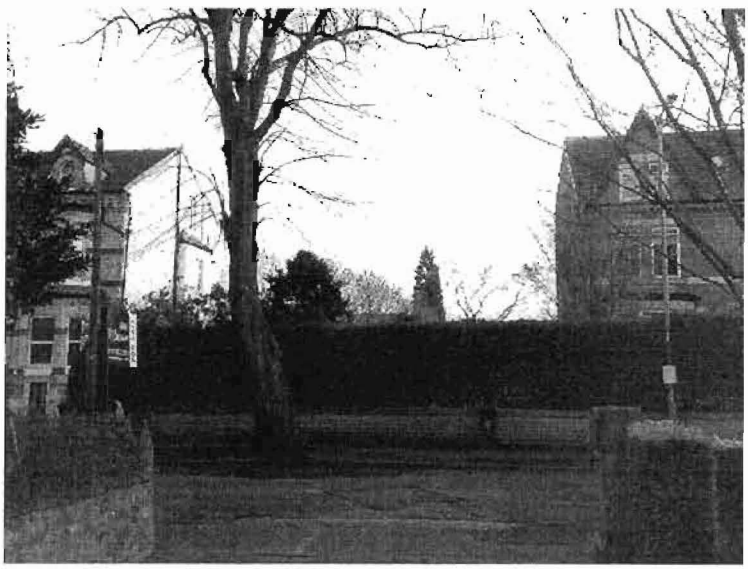
Location & Access

The site is ideally located for transport links. Whalley Range & Chorlton district centres are only a 10 minute walk away where you will find all your usual shops and amenities. There are also several bus routes into Manchester city centre from Alexandra Road South or Withington Road.

The new development will be ideally suited to first time buyers and young families who are looking for a convenient location with added benefits of having great schools and a large open park nearby.

There will be level access into the front of the building for residents and visitors. Once inside due to the split level, there are a few steps & a platform lift leading up to the upper ground level from where you will find stairs & the main lift leading to all four levels.

A new vehicular access will be constructed with minimal disruption to the very strong boundary wall & hedge.



Existing street elevation. The new access will be built with stone gateposts to either side. The mature evergreen shrub & low the stone wall will be retained to the left of the access

Refuse

Refuse bins will be stored in an external store to the rear car park area, screened form public view and will consist of the following; one 1100lt Euro bin for general waste, 240lt bin for Garden waste,140lt bin for glass & a 140lt bin for paper. General waste is to be collected by Manchester City Council operational services once a week.

Summary

We believe the proposals are in keeping with its surroundings and will help improve the street scene and enhance the conservation area. The units are of a larger size providing well proportioned room sizes. Together with the parking provisions and high quality amenity space, this will make it a very desirable and attractive place to live for young professionals & small families.

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL
& PPG15 JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT

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Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This statement accompanies the proposals for full planning permission for a four storey apartment block in a conservation area and justifies the demolition of the existing unlisted garage building. The site is within the Whalley Range Conservation area. There are no listed buildings on or adjacent the site.

1.2 Research

This report has been prepared using material including maps & photographs obtained from Manchester Central Library, Manchester Planning Department & The national Archive. Field reviews were conducted to review the context and characteristics of the area & special interests to assess the merits of the conservation area. The recorded material was then used to form an opinion for the purposes of this report.

2 Site

2.1 History of the Conservation area

Whalley Range conservation area is situated approximately two miles south of Manchester city centre.

Much of the area, which is predominantly residential, is contained within 63 acres of flat land purchased for building in 1832 by a prominent banker, Samuel Brooks, for a sum of £9,600.

The conservation area was designated in October 1991, with boundaries drawn to include some later housing, extending to Alexandra Road to the east and Upper Chorlton Road to the west.

During the Industrial Revolution, Manchester rapidly expanded beyond the confines of what is now known as the city centre. It took in existing townships and established new residential areas some distance out, separated from the town as it was then by fields.

Whalley Range was one of the first suburbs, creating what Samuel Brooks termed "a desirable estate for gentlemen and their families" where people could escape the increasing congestion in the growing industrial city. Roads were laid out and building plots were sold with certain conditions to ensure that development was appropriate to Samuel Brooks's vision.

The estate was laid out between two farm tracks, now Withington Road and Upper Chorlton Road. The tree-lined avenues of Dudley Road, Whalley Road and Chorlton Road form the basis of the estate. Samuel Brooks's own Whalley House (named after the town of Whalley in Lancashire, his place of origin) was built at the south end of Whalley Road.

The house was demolished during the 1930s to make way for the Woodlawn Flats development. The eastern side of the conservation area around Alness Road was built in the latter half of the 19th century on land sold by Lord Egerton of Tatton.

In 1874, an early example of an aquarium was opened to the public on Alexandra Road. Although twice the size of any previous aquarium, it proved to be commercially unsuccessful, and closed down just two years later. Shortly after closure, the building was incorporated into St. Bede's College, which was itself amalgamated with St. Bede's School in All Saints in the City.

The layout of Whalley Range as established by Samuel Brooks survives today as an area of large houses on tree-lined avenues. Many of the original houses remain, with new development taking place on the site of demolished houses and on the site of plots left vacant during the initial stages of the area's development. For example, around the turn of the century, in both Railton Avenue and Whalley Avenue, sixteen terraced houses were constructed on single building plots.

For some years after the Second World War the area went into decline. Families living in the large houses moved away, further from the city centre, leaving some properties to decay. Some redevelopment took place and many houses were converted into bedsits for multiple occupation.

Recently however, there has been further investment in the area, with the upgrading of properties or conversion to self-contained flats or nursing homes and residential institutions. Housing associations have been actively refurbishing buildings and developing vacant sites.

Most vacant sites have now been built upon and development pressure has more recently turned towards applications for demolition of the old large houses and the subsequent redevelopment of their sites.

Designation of the conservation area is aimed at halting this trend and actively encouraging refurbishment of what is left of the fine quality original housing stock. Several buildings in Whalley Range are individually listed by the Department of the Environment.

2.2 Significant buildings

The most prominent building in the Whalley Range conservation area is the former Lancashire Independent College on College Road. It is a gothic-style stone building with octagonal tower and pinnacles, completed in 1843. Recent refurbishment has converted the building into a residential college for the General and Municipal Boilermakers' Union. The entrance gates and octagonal gate piers are in the same style and are also listed buildings.

St Bede's College is an ornate red brick and terracotta building in the Italian renaissance style, which incorporates the redundant aquarium building. The eleven bays of the college form an incomplete facade as construction ceased in 1880. A chapel to the rear was added in 1898, followed by several subsequent additions.

St Edmund's Church is a stone building with a steeply-pitched slate roof. Designed in the geometrical Gothic style, it has paired clerestory windows with tracery. The building typifies the problem of overly large premises for modern use as a church but it is of a quality which justifies an imaginative proposal.

The Church of St Margaret on Whalley Road is a stone building with a slate roof and a tall spire. It was designed in 1843 and consecrated in 1849. The architects were Locker & Newsham with N. T. P. Harrison.

The three pairs of houses on Withington Road that are numbered 4 to 14 form a distinct group of stucco villas. The central pair are Gothic style with matching italianate style on either side.

There are many other fine houses of a high quality which were built according to rules and restrictions set by Samuel Brooks and written into the ground leases.

2.3 Landscape Setting

The application site and the area in general is characterized by hard low walls of brick and stone softened by evergreen hedges, low shrubs & mature trees. Many of the narrow roads are tree lined with large mature trees adding special interest to the street scene and environment.

There are many green spaces that enhance and add interest to the conservation area. In addition all the trees are protected by legislation and most of them have matured to provide a leafy characteristic to the area.

2.4 Contribution of green spaces- Alexandra Park

Alexandra Park although bordering the eastern boundary of the Conservation area, makes a significant contribution to the landscaping of the area.

The park was designed in 1869 by Alexander Hennell and was opened to the public on August 6th 1870, having been purchased by the Manchester Corporation from Lord Egerton for £24,000 in 1864. Hennell's design was experimental in its use of oval shaped and curved pathways, which contrasted with the more rigid geometry seen previously in Victorian landscapes.

The park contained Chorlton Lodge to the East of the main entrance. The Lodge was designed by Alfred Derbyshire in 1868, and was originally intended to be to the West of the entrance.

The original park design was modified over time, and by 1894, propagating houses were constructed between the female gymnasium and the eastern entrance; rows of trees came to define the ovals; the southern oval contained a bandstand, and the northern oval contained a flagstaff. Refreshment rooms and hexagonal shelters were constructed.

The park used to be home to a Cactus House built in 1905/06, and at that time contained one of the finest collections of cacti and succulents in the country.

The park achieved its heyday in 1935, by when the female gymnasium had been converted into a bowling green, and the male gymnasium contained an open-air swimming pool. The southern

oval was lined with tennis courts and a putting green. Princess Road had been extended along the eastern boundary of the park, and contained a central tram line.

The park has retained a number of its most notable heritage features, including the north and south ovals which are still present today in 2008.

2.5 Materials

Walls are generally red or orange-red brick with stone dressings, but some houses are buff brick with yellow stone. Decorative brick patterning is used particularly at eaves or gables, either polychromatic or in the form of corbelled brackets. Stone brackets support projecting balconies with ornate wrought-iron balustrades.

Roofs on Whalley Range houses were originally predominantly blue slate, and this as opposed to other materials, should be used as a replacement. Ridge tiles often have decorative fins, and finials at every gable may be terracotta, timber or wrought iron. Barge boards and eaves boards are moulded and fretted with decoration.

2.6 Negative factors with adverse impact

There are many examples of developments which have a negative affect on the special interest of the area. Listed below are just some of the problems included in these developments which range from individual dwellings to large scale residential blocks.

1 Overdevelopment by way of footprint & height

2 Large areas of car parking to the frontages of the building

3 Poor additions to existing buildings by way of flat roof extensions & dormers to roofs

4 Poorly maintained buildings & gardens

5 Poorly designed boundary treatments especially to front elevations

6 Satellite dishes to front & side elevations

7 Free standing signage ex. For sale & to let signs



An example of a recent development where the front wall has not been constructed from stone to match the remainder of the road. Also present is the car parking to the frontage, satellite dishes to front elevations & free standing signs cluttering the street scene.

2.7 Characteristics / Summary

The area is characterised by predominantly individual family residences on tree lined narrow roads. There built form is broken up with a mixture of larger multiple occupancy homes, apartment blocks, educational institutions, nursing homes and colleges of which many are listed buildings.

There are a number of green spaces which contribute to the character of the area and the tree lined streets provide and an interesting contrast and interaction with the harsher materials of the Victorian buildings in the background.

Although there are incidences of neglect to buildings most of the area and the buildings are generally in good condition and the green spaces have a high amenity value.

3 Statutory Framework

3.1 Legislation

Section 69 of the Act imposes a duty on local planning authorities to designate as conservation areas any 'areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. There are now more than 8,000 conservation areas in England. Whilst listing procedures are focused on the protection of individual buildings, conservation area designation is the main instrument available to authorities to give effect to conservation policies for a particular neighbourhood or area. Designation introduces a general control over the demolition of unlisted buildings and provides the basis for policies designed to preserve or enhance all the aspects of character or appearance that define an area's special interest.

PPG15 ***4.17*** *Many conservation areas include gap sites, or buildings that make no positive contribution to, or indeed detract from, the character or appearance of the area; their replacement should be a stimulus to imaginative, high quality design, and seen as an opportunity to enhance the area. What is important is not that new buildings should directly imitate earlier styles, but that they should be designed with respect for their context, as part of a larger whole which has a well-established character and appearance of its own.*

3.2 Proposed development within the Conservation Area

This assessment has been prepared in response to and taking into account the following policies and documents

Section 2-4 Planning Act 1990 (Listed buildings and conservation areas) new development in Conservation areas

PPG15 Assessment of conservation areas

Manchester City Councils Development Plan, Area 10 Whalley Range

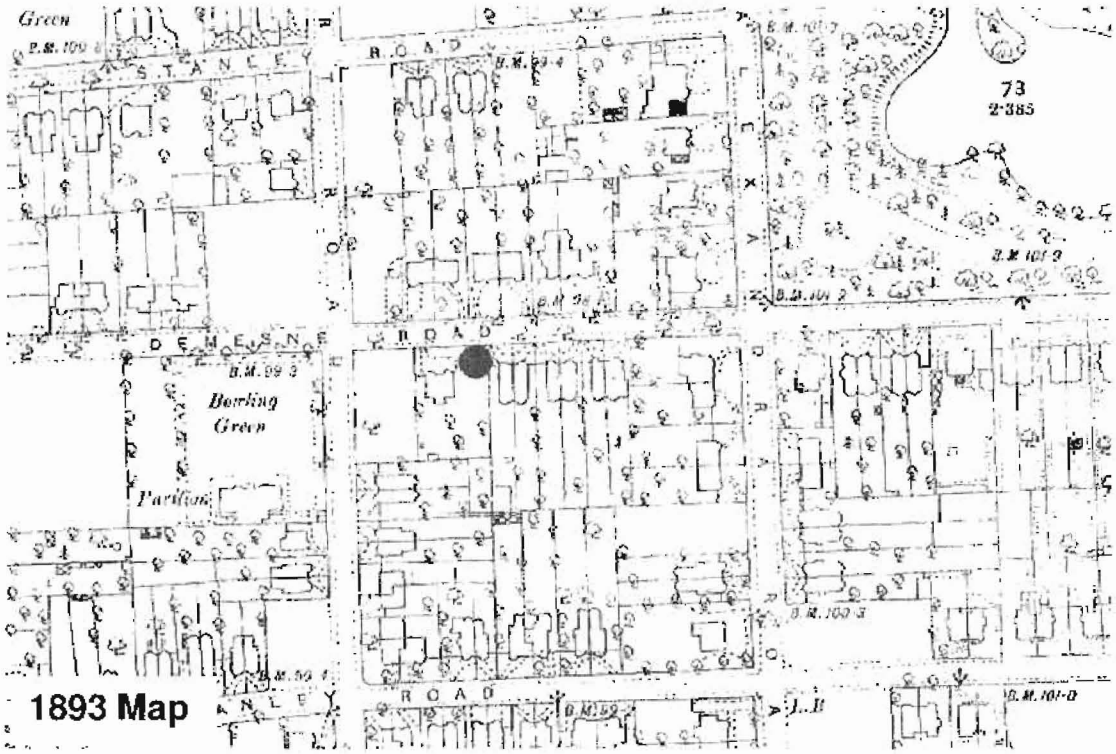
3.3 Site History & analysis

With reference to PPG15 4.17 the current gap at No.28 Demesne Road was not the natural intended grain of development in the area. We can see from the adjacent property number that once upon a time No.28 had a building sited on it. However we have been unable to establish exactly during which era this building stood and was demolished. Two historical maps show No.26 & 28 as one site, but the maps are over a hundred years apart.

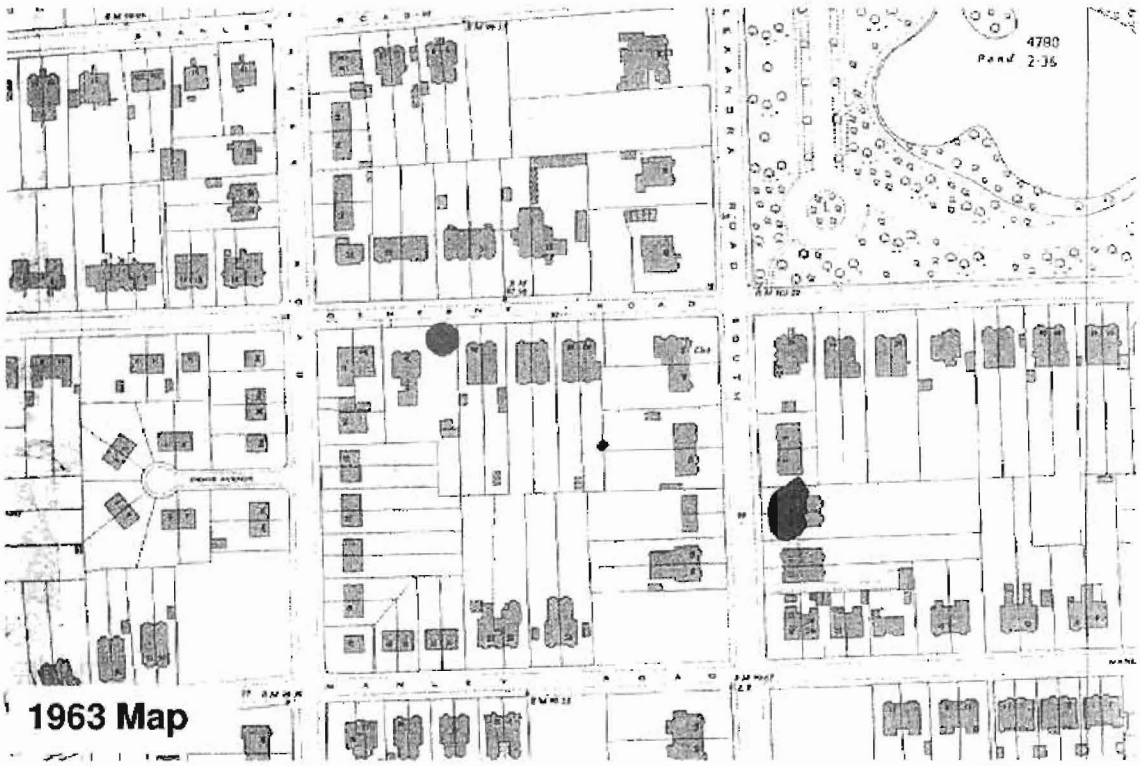
The most likely scenario is that No.28 was built in the mid to late 19th century and was destroyed or

demolished by the end of the century. The owner and applicant of both sites has stated that the previous owners had told him of a building being present in more modern times and was destroyed by a fire but we have been unable to find concrete evidence of this.

As we can see from the original map, the gap site is not a characteristic of Demesne Road where properties are tightly knitted together with very narrow driveways along the sides. This type of large vacant gap is rare and detracts from the character of the area.



1893 Map



1963 Map

3.4 Form & setting

The footprint of the new building follows the general pattern of development on the street. The heights have been derived using existing eaves and ridge levels. By using the existing building lines the car parking can all be set to the back of the building away from the street frontage.

Much of the new building will not be visible from pavement level due to the large evergreen shrub behind the front boundary wall.

3.5 Landscaping

A high quality landscaping scheme will complement the building and its surroundings. As shown in the arborists report, al the trees and shrubs within the site have no merit and afford no special protection. Only two medium quality trees have been identified within the site are proposed to be removed due to poor condition.

The large evergreen hedge to the front boundary wall will be retained at its current height and only be trimmed back to allow for the construction of the new access road. The front gatepost will be replicated in a similar style of those to No.26.



New gateposts will be constructed from yellow stone & replicate those of existing properties

3.6 Design & materiality

The proposed design seeks to enhance the street scene with a traditional design which incorporates many of the local features and characteristics of the neighboring buildings. The block will be rectangular with extruded bays to both front and rear elevation.

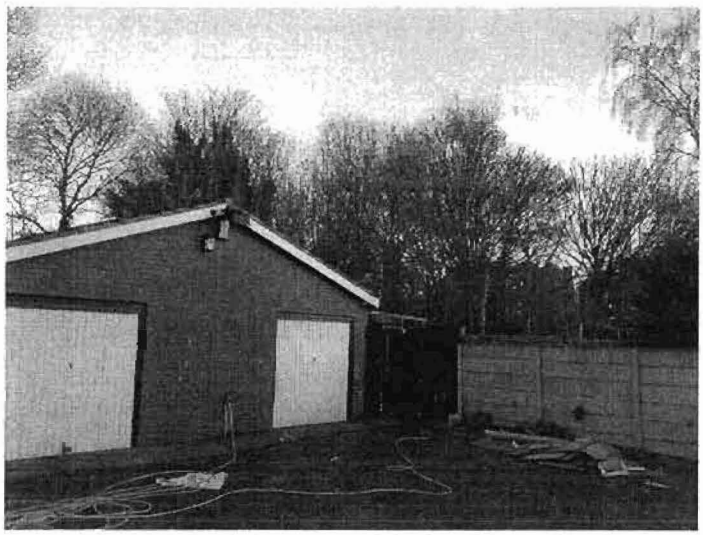
The windows will have at least a one brick deep recess from the front wall. Although UPVC windows are proposed for long life, the colour will be of a dark nature to be agreed with the L.A. Cills will be of reconstituted stone with headers in specially shaped engineering bricks. To add character and interest all headers and banding courses will be in a contrasting colour to be agreed.

The gable walls to both sides will allow for a traditional pitched roof which will be finished in

reconstituted blue / grey slates. All fascia and barge boards will be of timber construction and painted black. All rainwater goods will be made of black UPVC.

4 Demolition of unlisted building

There is a large single storey detached garage building towards the rear of the site which will be demolished to make way for the new building. The building is a modern addition which has no architectural merit and has an adverse impact on the character of the site and its surrounding buildings. It is under the limits for demolition consent within a conservation area.



Existing garage building to be demolished

5 Summary

Our assessment is that the proposed development would only have a minor or negligible impact on the historic setting of the conservation area. The new apartment block respects the existing adjacent historic buildings in terms of height, mass, materials, vertical & opening proportions.

By retaining the existing front hedge & with the large tree in the foreground, the development has little or no adverse impact on its neighbors and the street scene. The development should be welcomed by the L.A as we believe that we have demonstrated that this is an acceptable form of development in a conservation area which will only preserve and enhance the existing setting & characteristics of the area