

10 Chorlton Green

Manchester

Heritage Assessment to Assess
Proposals for new vehicular access
into the curtilage of the Grade II
Listed 10 Chorlton Green.

Undertaken by TheUrbanGlow
Design & Heritage Ltd 2024



INTRODUCTION

This document is intended to assess the effect of proposals to create a new vehicular access into the front curtilage of the Grade II Listed ‘Higginbottom Farm’, 10 Chorlton Green which is located within the Chorlton Green Conservation Area.

TheUrbanGlow Design & Heritage Ltd were asked to assess the particular impact of proposals upon the historic environment as drawn up by Space Architecture and Planning. Much of this report builds upon the work of Jenny Wetton Conservation (JW Conservation) and should be read in conjunction with their previous work that outlines the history and evolution of this site. This report represents a supplementary addition to this work that is focussed upon the particular impact of the proposal upon the historic environment, including the effect of the proposal upon the Grade II Listed host building itself as well as the setting of the nearby Grade II Listed Lynchgate of the former St Clement’s Church.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in this assessment exercise has been based on the references to significance in the National Planning Policy Framework (as revised 2018), as informed by two non statutory Historic England documents namely; Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment (2015) and Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (2016).

The exercise was carried out by Andrew Graham BA(hons) MAued IHBC. Archive research and map regression were undertaken supplementary to other work by J.W Conservation in order to gain a greater understanding of significance of the Conservation Area and this building within it.



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POLICY AND GUIDANCE FRAMEWORK

This Heritage Assessment is created in reference to relevant UK national policy and guidance. Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that Local Planning Authorities should have “special regard” for the “architectural or historic interest” of a Designated Asset when considering whether to grant permission for development (Planning Act 1990, 91-92). Section 72 of the same Act states that local planning authorities should give ‘special attention’ to the desirability of preserving or enhancing a Conservation Area when considering whether to grant planning permission.

The proposal is within the curtilage of the application property, 10 Chorlton Green which is a Grade II Listed Building and is within the setting of the Grade II Listed Lynchgate to the former St Clement’s Church. As such Section 66 of the Act is engaged. The site is also within the Chorlton Green Conservation Area and as such Section 72 of the Act is also relevant.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) provides guidance on the management of the historic environment. Paragraph 200 of the Framework requires an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, including and contribution made by their setting to this significance. 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. This assessment provides that assessment of significance and will help the Local Planning Authority in its duty to undertake the following:

“In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage asset(s) 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.”

The NPPF goes on to offer the following guidance in paragraphs 205-209; *“205. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.*

Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of: a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional; b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.”*

The proposal within this proposal will represent change within the historic environment but this will be managed and contextual change.. As such this assessment is being undertaken so as to demonstrate a clear and comprehensive understanding of the context of this site and to elaborate upon the historic evolution of this area with a mind to understanding the effect of these proposals.

LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT

Development Plan policies that are relevant to this site are considered to be the following: Policies DC18, DC19 and DC1 of UDP now incorporated in the Manchester Local Plan 2012 along with Policy EN3 of the Core Strategy. Alongside this the outline and guidance within the Chorlton Green Conservation Area online resource are also of relevance in their desire to ensure proposals reflect the history and local distinctive quality of the area as well as ensuring development preserves or enhances the historic environment.

CONSERVATION AREA

The Chorlton Green Conservation Area was one of the first designated conservation areas in the city and its designation dates from July 1970. The area contained within the boundary is relatively small and covers the last remaining character areas of the old settlement of Chorlton cum Hardy that was later subsumed into later development as the focus of the settlement migrated towards newer transport links to the east. This ‘migration’ allowed the area of the green to remain even though much of this open space was once enclosed.

LISTED BUILDINGS

There are two Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area, these include the application property, which is an early 19th century farmhouse and the unique architectural lynch gate of the 18th century known for its central louvred bell turret and unusual design. Both of these structures are recognised as exhibiting special architectural and historic interest.

The list description for the relevant nearby buildings is as follows:

No.10 Higginbottom Farmhouse. Barn to left of No.10 (Higginbottom Farmhouse)

GV II

Farmhouse, now house. Probably early C19; altered. Red brick in Flemish bond, slate roof. Double-depth 4-room plan plus service wing attached to right-hand rear corner and half-sunk dairy in angle. Two storeys and 2 windows, symmetrical; central doorway with pitched wooden canopy and altered door; 2 segmental-headed windows on each floor (all now top-hung casements imitating sashes). Casement windows at rear. Forms group with Gatehouse and bell-turret opposite, and Green’s Farmhouse to right.

Listing NGR: SJ8126193528

Gatehouse and Bell Turret

GV II

Gatehouse to former church of St Clement (built 1779, demolished 1949). Late C18, altered. Brick, with wooden turret and tiled spirelet to this. Small gatehouse with semi-circular entrance arch, ramped flanking side walls (that on west side with small round-headed doorway in south face); octagonal black and white wooden bell turret with tiled spirelet.

Listing NGR: SJ8129693504

NON DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

There is currently no Local List of Non Designated Heritage Assets within or around the Conservation Area. Despite this some buildings would obviously be considered as ‘positive buildings’ within the Conservation Area.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

The following historical background has been somewhat summarised from the work of JW Conservation who’s first hand research summarised the general history of the farm. This previously heritage statement for other works from December 2022 should be referred to for more detail where required.

Higginbottom Farm dates to the early 19th century and is shown on the first edition Ordnance Survey plan of 1845. A more detailed plan from the 1847 Tithe Map shows the extant house set back from the street frontage within a square plot. The building is located to the north of a larger L shaped building that was a large barn (complete with dove roosts and largely rebuilt as a building known as Dovecotes (see JWC assessment for image of this). It is recorded that 10 Chorlton Green was occupied by a James Higginbotham at this time and it was likely this family who’s name the farm took on. In 1851 Higginbotham was a farmer of 37 acres and a widower with two servants. The 1892 Ordnance Survey plan shows the farmhouse extended to the rear and this area behind the building at this time appears to show a farm courtyard with an enclosed area to the front of the farmhouse as would be typical.

The area around Chorlton Green was of agricultural character until later enclosure created an aesthetic of private spaces, not least the green itself which was enclosed prior to being re-gifted back to the community later on.

By the 1950's the yard to the rear was being used as a Builder’s Yard and presumably the farm had ceased to function as such for some years. In the later 20th century this area of land was seen as being underutilised and represented an infill type plot considered suitable for development. The former barn to the south of the site was seemingly rebuilt in a similar style and new development took the form of high density backland development of up to three stories.

The Listed Building itself remains as a precious reminder of the area’s

agricultural past.

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

Evidential value: *the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.*

In general, the archaeological potential of the site is likely to be low due to past disturbance although some elements of the historic farmhouse and its outbuildings to the rear may be of some local interest. Despite this the evidential value of this site is therefore considered to be **Low**.

Historical value: *the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present.*

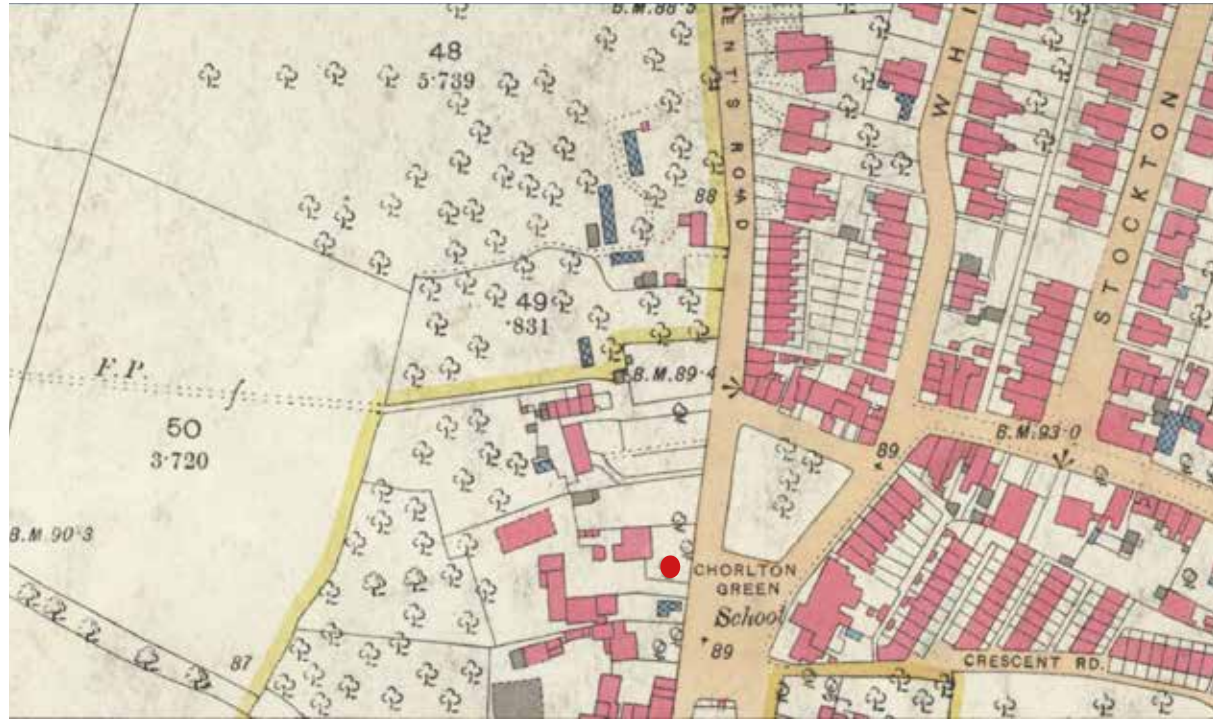
The site has historical value through its contribution to the Chorlton Green Conservation Area and its reminder of the area’s agricultural past. The recording of names associated with the farm also enhance this. The historical associative value of the building is considered to be **Medium**.

Aesthetic value: the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.

The building is of a vernacular type that represents the character of the locality prior to mass urbanisation. As such it reflects the pre industrial aesthetic of the area even though its form is relatively simplistic. The aesthetic value of the building is therefore **Low/Medium**.

Communal value: the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

The house has very limited communal value as it has always been a private home. However the name Higginbotham may still resonate with people living locally and this would be of some significance to them. As such any communal value is **Low**.



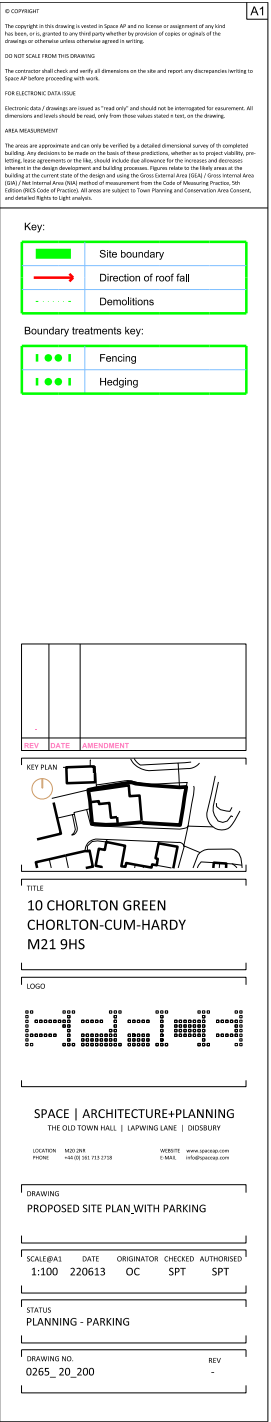
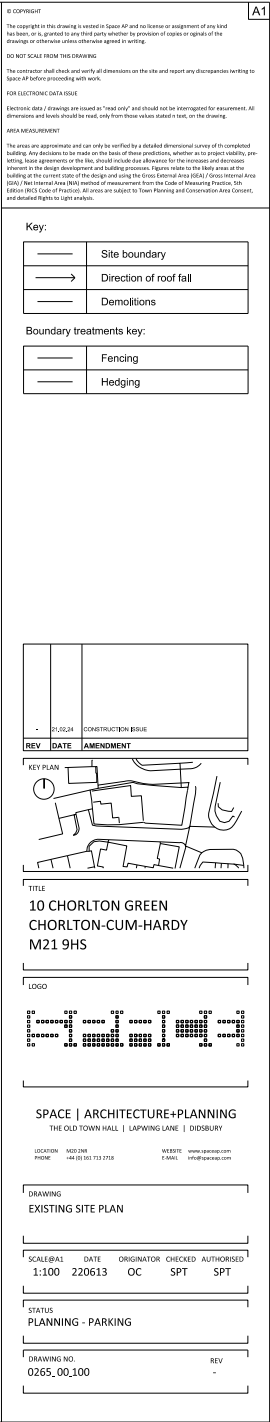
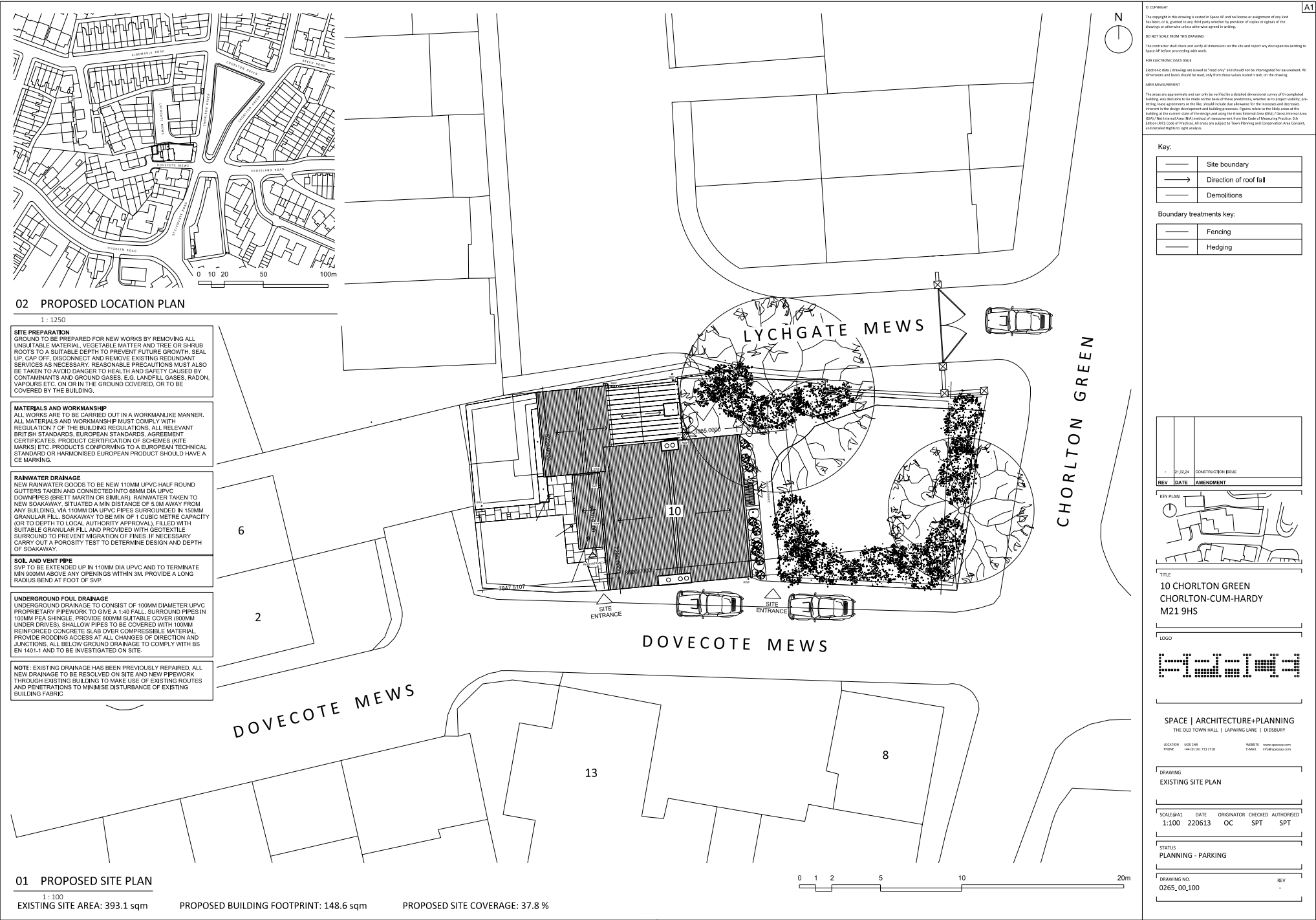
Map Regression showing the evolution of the site from the first edition Ordnance Survey Plan of 1845 (top left) through to a detailed view of 1894 (top right). The lower images show the increasing urbanisation of the site up to the 1930's (1908-1922 left to right).

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSALS

The proposal seeks to insert a single parking bay measuring 3000mm x 6000mm into the front curtilage of the Listed Building. This would involve the select removal of an area of existing hedge that currently bounds the road but would preserve and protect all trees upon the site. The parking space would be laid to bound gravel or resin and would be maintained at minimal dimensions to ensure usability of the space.

Justification

The principal reason for requiring such an intervention is due to the lack of available space to the rear of the building due to the newer development here. As such, in order to minimise conflicts with other road users the application intends to create one off road car parking space for the use of the existing residents. Without such an intervention there is no possibility of off street parking to be associated with this property and, due to the particular circumstances of the applicants, this lack of in curtilage or nearby parking is problematic for their continued occupancy of the building.





Exterior Image of Front Elevation (JW Conservation)



ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSALS

This application has seemingly come about due to the difficulty in safely storing a vehicle in a place that does not cause any detriment to either those using the vehicle or those other road users. However, this proposal must be balanced against the special architectural and historic character of the area in order to minimise harmful change.

As such this assessment has considered the effects of the proposal upon the following sensitive receptors:

- Effect of the proposal upon the significance of 10 Chorlton Green (The application site) within who’s front curtilage this proposal would directly affect.
- The effect of the proposal upon the setting of the Grade II Listed Gatehouse and Bell Turret associated with the former St Clement’s Church.
- The effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the Chorlton Green Conservation Area.

The Effect of the Proposals Upon the Setting and Significance of the Grade II Listed ‘Higginbottom Farmhouse’, 10 Chorlton Lane

The application property is largely significant due to it being a strong reminder of the area’s agricultural and pre industrial history aswell as its vernacular architectural character and appearance. The building appears to have had its main functional area located to the rear of the house whereby the building faced onto yards and other ancillary buildings. It was also likely related to the historic Dovecote barn that was located forward of the house to the south.

Because of this it does appear that the front curtilage of the farm was, since the mid 19th century, always enclosed by hedging and trees. Whether this was functional or domestic in function is not known. Such enclosure is however likely to date to the enclosure of the Green itself and prior to this the area was probably open, un-enclosed land. (see Conservation Area Assessment).

Through opening a gap within the hedge, this proposal would introduce a reduction in the hedgeline along the street aswell as some reduction in garden area. These elements are of some aesthetic significance as are the existing trees on the site. However the effect would be relatively minor and would represent an evolution of the site but would not change the garden’s overall function, nor would it harm any trees which give the plot such natural value.

Nevertheless, there would inevitably be some Minor Harm through this proposal which would need to be balanced against the Public Benefits as outlined below.

As such we consider that the impact of proposals upon the significance of this proposal would be **Low**.

Assessment of Harm: **Minor Harm**.

The Effect of the Proposals Upon the Setting and Significance of the Grade II Listed Gatehouse and Bell Turret associated with the Former St Clement’s Church

This structure is a notable entrance feature to a long lost church. Nevertheless it still marks the gateway into the former churchyard associated with St Clement’s and is of Architectural, Associative and Aesthetic significance.

The gateway is located a short distance from the application site and faces onto the village green. It is however a landmark feature and as such is the dominant feature of the area.

In terms of impact of the proposal, the main effect would be the removal of a short distance of hedge with parking space behind. Such an intervention would remove a small element of greenery from the setting of the structure. In assessing this, the Listed Gatehouse does not rely much upon the landscape features of neighbouring properties and as such this proposal will have a negligible effect.

Effect Upon the Significance of the Grade II Listed Building: **Very Low/**

Negligible

Assessment of Harm: **Negligible/No Harm**

The Effect of the Proposals Upon the Setting and Significance of the Chorlton Green Conservation Area

The Chorlton Green Conservation Area is principally of significance as it protects the remains of a rural, agricultural and pre industrial character of a small area of the former settlement of Chorlton cum Hardy. This was, until the mid 19th century, a rural village sat within relatively recently enclosed fields but survived amongst the encroachment of more mass development associated with the industrial and suburban development of Manchester.

Very little of this earlier character remains however, but the presence of farmsteads, cottages, churchyard and school house, focussed around the clearly identifiable village green, do remain, as do the more vernacular roads and lanes that have since evolved into more suburban roads and streets.



The Conservation Area does not wholly rely upon landscape features other than the Green and surroundings for much of its significance. Even so, the hedgelines, where they remain, do relate to one or two things within the wider area. These are a) older cottages and building sites or b) Victorian or mid century suburban housing. In this case the character is defined by the former but there are examples of later such boundaries present within the area.

In assessing the effect of this proposal, a modest area of fence and hedge would be removed and a new car parking space created. This would, on the one hand remove a small area of hedge, but it would also remove a vehicle from parking on the roadside. As such the balance between the benefits of this proposal and harm is fine. Ultimately there would be some Low impact through this proposal but this harm would be compensated for through high quality detailed design (much of which could be conditioned alongside the submitted plans) and the removal of a vehicle parked on street. As such any Harm would be Neutral when considered as a whole.

The Conservation Area: **Negligible Impact**

Assessment of Harm: **Low/Neutral Harm**

PUBLIC BENEFITS

The proposal would result in some Minor Harm upon the application property through the removal of an area of hedge. However, this harm needs to be considered within the context of the wider Public Benefits.

Although these benefits are for the Planning Authority to weigh up, we see benefits in the form of improving highway safety and through the wider aesthetic improvements of removing a vehicle from the public highway as well as potentially reducing more highway control in the form of visually intrusive signs and lining. This is supplementary to the other benefit of this proposal making the Listed Building more practical for families or older persons to occupy into the future and thereby the desire of this property to be used, and thereby preserved, for years to come will remain.

When all these benefits are considered, the overall impact of this proposal becomes **Neutral**.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This proposal represents a modest yet important alteration to the streetscene and curtilage of a Grade II Listed Building. The proposal would not fundamentally affect the significance of the Listed Buildings apart from in the aesthetic realm. The effect upon this aesthetic significance would be limited to a very small (3m wide) removal of hedge and associated parking and would be so sensitively executed as to represent a natural evolution of this site rather than poor cumulative change. When the Public Benefits of making this house more habitable, ensuring highway safety is improved and removing clutter and parking from the highway, then we advance the case that any harms become Neutral and that the balance tips in favour of this scheme.



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