Stenner Brow

Didsbury

Heritage Assessment to Assess Proposals for Extensions and Alteration to the Non Listed ‘Stenner Brow’.

Undertaken by **TheUrbanGlow Design & Heritage Ltd** 2024

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TheUrbanGlow are HESPR Registered Service Providers for the Historic Environment

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TheUrbanGlow Design & Heritage
www.urbanglowdesign.com

INTRODUCTION

This document is intended to assess the effect of proposals to 'Stenner Brow' which is a mid 20th century house within the Didsbury 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) in 2017 and should be read in conjunction with their previous work that effectively outlines the history and evolution of this site as well as assesses development parameters of the site. This report effectively represents Part 2 of this report which is specifically concerned with the effect of these specific proposals upon both the existing building, upon the setting of nearby Listed Buildings and upon the Didsbury St James Conservation Area.

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 and in order to fully appreciate the building and locality a thorough site visit was undertaken in July 2024 whereby the site and surrounds were visited and high quality images, including panoramic images, were taken so as to illustrate the potential for effect of these proposals. Archive research and map regression were also 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. We also took a judgement with regards whether this building should be considered curtillage Listed with regards the nearby Listed cottages of 18 and 20 Stenner Lane.

All images were taken using a Canon G7 digital camera and Adobe Creative Suite was used to produce this document and create photomerge images.

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 setting of Grade II and Grade II* Listed Buildings and would have a potential impact upon their setting. As such Section 66 of the Act is engaged.
The site is also within the Didsbury St James Conservation Area however 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 withi the historic environment but this will be managed and contextual change. As such no harm has been identified. 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 the recommendations within the Didsbury St James Conservation Area and Management Plan are of particular 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 Didsbury St James Conservation Area was first designated in November 1970 and covers the historic core of Didsbury prior to the arrival of the railways in the later 19th century. The main focus of the historic area is around the junction of Wilmslow Road and Stenner Lane and around the vicinity of the Grade II* Listed Church of St James. The Conservation Area therefore covers the junction of Wilmslow Road and Stenner Lane, and its boundaries include Ford Lane, Didsbury Park and Sandhurst Road to the north. The area also covers much of the Mersey floodplain (now sportsfields) to the west.

LISTED BUILDINGS

There are several Listed Buildings within a reasonably close proximity to the site. The closest of which are the cottages along Stenner Lane at 18-20. There would appear to have been some historic relationship between these cottages and the site of Stenner Brow and the application site was sold as one lot in 1925 to Mr James Hampson[1].

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

Cottages at 18-20 Stenner Brow GV II

Pair of houses, or farmhouse and cottage. Later C18 and mid C19; altered. Red brick in Flemish bond, with some sandstone dressings; slate roof. Rectangular double-depth plan of 3 elements: a later C18 double-fronted house to the right (No.18), an early one-bay addition to the left of this, and a C19 double-fronted house (No.20) added to this. Two storeys, with 2:1:2 windows at 1st floor. The original house, formerly symmetrical with a central doorway (now evident only by patched brickwork), has two 3-light casements on each floor, those at ground floor segmental-headed and multi-paned, those at 1st floor shorter, and all with raised stone sills; to the left, beyond remains of a vertical joint, are one square and one segmental-headed window at ground floor and a 2-light casement above; and this house has a double chimney stack at the junction and a cut-down gable chimney. No.20 to the left has a central doorway with gabled porch of wooden open-work, two 4-pane sashes on each floor, all with raised sills and wedge lintels, a chimney at the junction to the right and a cut-down gable chimney. Rear and interior not inspected. Listing NGR: SJ8458090424

1. See J.W. Conservation heritage report for more.

Phillip Godlee Lodge, Wilmslow Road GVII

House, in use as nursing home at time of listing, converted into apartments in 2000. Early to mid C19, altered. Roughcast render on brick, sandstone dressings (painted white), slate roofs. Square double-depth main block facing east with L-shaped wing on south side. Two storeys, the main block presenting a symmetrical 3-window facade, with emphatic corner pilasters, deep plain frieze and prominent projected eaves; central Ionic porch, up 2 steps, protecting a glazed and panelled door and side windows all under a large overlight with elaborate geometrical glazing bars; windows sashed without glazing bars, with reeded architraves; hipped roof with 2 tall ridge chimneys. Slightly lower wing to left with similar corner pilasters, 1+3 windows, mostly similar but with altered window at ground floor. North side has 2-storey pilastered bay (and C20 additions). Rear: ground floor of main block has fine wrought-iron verandah with delicately latticed standards and frieze incorporating anthemions; glazed doors in centre and segmental bay window to right, otherwise similar to front. Interior: entrance hall with Ionic screen distyle in antis; open-well staircase with cast-iron balusters. Listing NGR: SJ8467490490

Although this site of this building is in close proximity to the application site there is strong boundary division and no inter visibility between the two buildings.

Fletcher Moss Art Gallery/The Parsonage GV II

Formerly known as: Old Parsonage STENNER LANE Didsbury. House, now art gallery. Probably early C19; enlarged and altered. Roughcast on brick, slate roofs on 3 levels. Double-depth linear plan on east-west axis, comprised of long main range with end-bays treated as crosswings within the rectangle, and an addition to the east end. Two storeys and 8 windows (1:4:1+2), the end bays higher. The entrance, offset left of centre, has a wrought-iron porch with swept lead roof, doorway with ex situ C17 oak jambs and door. The ground floor has 3 wooden canted bay windows (all different), that at the left end large and flat-roofed with leaded glazing, the next 5-sided with hipped slate roof and leaded glazing including tracery, and the 3rd (to right of porch) with a hipped roof of red tiles and glazing from ground to eaves (one light hinged), and in the right-hand wing a tripartite casement with hooped glazing bars: all these windows with internal shutters. The 1st floor has sashed windows with Gothic glazing bars, all square except in the right wing and its addition. Hipped roofs to the end bays, with projecting eaves; various tall chimneys. Rear and interior not inspected. History: formerly the home of Alderman Fletcher Moss, JP, local historian and connoisseur, whose collection of water colour paintings (including many by Turner) formed the nucleus of the gallery's collection. Listing NGR: SJ8469790446

Entrance gateway of Fletcher Moss Art Gallery GV II

Entrance archway to grounds of Fletcher Moss Art gallery. Dated 1876 on inner side; renovation (or repair) in progress at time of survey. Sandstone. A modest folly composed of fragments taken from demolished buildings in Manchester, with a moulded round-headed arch including short shafts with foliated caps, and a melange of carved details such as urns, a bird with raised wings, and a gablet with raised lettering on the inner side: "FM 1876". Listing NGR: SJ8473490432

Church of St James GV II*

Parish church. Rebuilt in early C17, further rebuilt and enlarged at various dates in mid to later C19: tower of 1620, nave 1855, chancel 1871, east half of south aisle 1895. Red sandstone, slate roofs. West tower, nave and aisles in one (nave now incorporating former chancel), chancel, parallel south "transept" and vestry. The 2-stage tower, with diagonal buttresses, has a moulded plinth, C19 Perpendicular west doorway with 4-light window above, a drip-band, small 2-centred arched belfry windows of 2 arched lights with stone louvres, moulded cornice, and parapet of large open-work hoops with crocketed corner pinnacles; and on its north side a moulded 2-centred arched doorway, and just below the drip-band some panels with crudely-formed raised lettering: SR EM:K : FOVN EM: ESQ: SR GBK A.MWID : DERS PATRON : BARONET The north aisle, which is divided into 2 portions by a buttress terminating in a crocketed pinnacle, has 2 large C19 segmental-pointed windows and a rounded arched window in the western portion, all with hoodmoulds which have figured stops, 2 large square-headed transomed windows in the eastern portion, and a continuous parapet. The south aisle has an unusual south vestry near the west end, square in plan, with a side-wall chimney, and an embattled parapet with corner pinnacles both heavily decorated with carved heads and masks; to the right of this, two 3-light windows, then the parallel south "transept" and vestry, 2+2 bays, with buttresses, transomed windows to the former (like those on the north side), Perpendicular windows to the latter, and continuous parapet with tall crocketed pinnacles. The chancel has a large transomed 10-light east window and 2 windows on the north side, all in Perpendicular style. Interior: unusual a-stylar 4-bay arcades of tall cylindrical columns with moulded annular caps carrying plain semicircular arches; former chancel arch with Puritan angels at the springing, and beyond this 2-bay arcades of 2-centred arches; chancel arch moulded in 2 orders, with shafts; late C19 pulpit of white marble and alabaster under earlier wooden sounding board; good early C17 wall monument in transept, commemorating Roland Mosley (d.1616), son of Nicholas Mosley, in Renaissance style, composed of a 3-bay Ionic colonnade surmounted by a central Corinthian architrave with cresting, with kneeling figures in each part; and various wall tablets . Listing NGR: SJ8469190378

Sundial approx. 2m from south wall of Church of St James GV II

Sundial. Probably C18. Sandstone. Square base, columnar pedestal with square foot, moulded annular cap; plate and gnomon missing. Listing NGR: SJ8469490367

Didsbury Hotel GV II

Hotel. Mid C19, probably in more than one build (and part perhaps a remodelling of an earlier building); altered. White-painted stucco on brick, slate roof. L-plan. Two and 3 storeys to one height, with irregular fenestration equivalent to approx. 6 windows at 1st floor, in 2 portions: that to the right is 3-storeyed, has porch with round-headed doorway and window and parapet arched over each of these; canted bay window to right, 2 pairs of small round-headed windows at 1st floor, 3 segmental-headed windows at 2nd floor (that to left under shallow gable with ornamental bargeboards), and bracketed eaves; that to left is regular and symmetrical, with 2 pairs of tall round-headed windows at ground floor, a band arched over them, and a round-headed window in the centre of the 1st floor, under a gable (like the other), flanked by pairs of segemental-headed windows. All windows sashed without glazing bars. Gable chimney to left, 2 ridge chimneys to right. Included for group value. Listing NGR: SJ8474690407

Other Listed Buildings include 844-846 Wilmslow Road and the Old Cock Inn. The site is, like the Didsbury Hotel above, technically within the wider setting of these buildings but they have been scoped out due to distance and intervening features and properties, as well as the focus of the proposals being to the rear of Stenner Brow.

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. With regards this we would identify Stenner Brow as such a building that makes a positive contribution to the historic environment.

ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Stenner Brow was constructed around 1927 upon the site of former farm buildings that were likely associated with the cottages at 18-20 Stenner Brow. The house is typical of mid twentieth century suburban expansion of areas like Didsbury but unusual in the fact that it stands in such a large plot. Obviously the house was built as a house of some quality using the architectural designs that were in vogue at the time. This included roughcast render and brick along with leaded lights with diamond motifs.

The house was constructed with a garage with pitched roof and oculus window to its gable. The driveway is accessed along a short stretch of cobble driveway from Stenner Lane and rose up to flanking gateposts that give access into the site whereby a three bay house with two hipped gables flank a central entrance. The plot is very private having walls, hedges and extensive tree and shrub planting creating a garden of both formal grounds, allotment and wild refuge for trees and nature to the lower peripheries of the site.

The house has been modified somewhat during its history and this includes the creation of the existing bow window along with the other extant extensions to the rear of the building. Whether these extensions replaced or modified earlier structures is open to debate as brick quoining is still visible in certain areas which would be suggestive of some historic remodelling. Despite this much of the rear of the house has been very heavily altered albeit in a contextual style.

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 its location upon something of an outcrop may retain some evidence of past habitation. 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 historic past ownership and its relationship to earlier cottages near to the site. Although the house is of interest due to it being a fair example of mid twentieth century design this is generally limited. The historical associative value of the building is therefore considered to be **Low.**

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

As mentioned above the building itself has some modest architectural value through it being very much a building of its time. There are some nice features externally (internal spaces not inspected) but these are few and are to be retained in any proposals presented here. The aesthetic value of the building is therefore **Low.**

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. As such any communal value is **Very Low**.

Site History

Stenner Brow | Didsbury Village

Map Regression as produced by Space Architecture showing the evolution of the site (to be read in conjunction with J.W Conservation Heritage Background Report.

Stenner Brow was built in 1927 on the site of the former Elms Farm. The 1894 map shows an L-shaped set of farm buildings enclosing a courtyard to the south-west. By 1907 the eastern section of the farm had been demolished, opening up a small courtyard to the east. In 1927 the building was replaced with a dwelling and garage to the east. By the 1950s the bay window to the western facade was added. In 2006, a two storey wing was added to the north.

SITE BOUNDARY
ORIGINAL FARM
REPLACEMENT DWELLING

Timeline

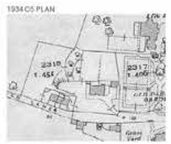
Stenner Brow | Didsbury Village

The full application has a separate detailed heritage statement: significance & impact. This supporting document has been prepared by Jenny Wetton (CONSERVATION ARCHITECTS & HERITAGE CONSULTANTS)

The following heritage section is a preview of the heritage statement.

Cottage and Shippon, c1920

Aerial Photo 1938



1925 PLAN

2006 Extension

1845 — The 1st edition OS map (1845) shows a building on the site of Stenner Brow, owned by John Harding who also occupied the cottages now at 19 and 20 Stenner Lane.

1894 — The 1894 map shows the cottages as being divided into 6 terraced dwellings with a small yard to the west.

1920

1925 — In April 1925, Ernest Darwin Simon sold 3 semi-farm and three cottages (now 19 – 20 Stenner Lane) to Miss Hilda Hampson, of Victoria Park in Didsbury.

1927 — Stenner Brow was built in 1927 on the site of the barn and appears on the 1934 map with a garage to the east. The house is detached, double-fronted and symmetrical after it was built, and is constructed of red brick with stone dressings and a roughcast upper part and is covered with a hipped roof.

1933

1934 — 1934 OS PLAN

1974 — In 1974, Mr. Hanson secured planning permission for the construction of a two-storey block of 8 flats and the conversion of the existing dwelling house to form six flats with 7 basement parking spaces, after demolition of an outbuilding. By this time, there was a stone outbuilding to the west of the house with a single storey element on the west side.

2006 — In 2006, the current owner extended the house to the rear with a two storey addition to provide additional living accommodation. This is the current condition with a new drawing room on the west side.

Timeline as produced by Space Architecture in the associated Design Statement Showing the Architect's attention to detail with regards the historic evolution of this site.

Principal Front Elevation From Driveway

Exterior Side/West Facing Elevation

Exterior Garden Corner

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Exterior Principal Front.

Exterior Image Side With Bow Window

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Exterior Front

Exterior Rear Elevation Showing Extension

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DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSALS

The proposals before us seek to retain Stenner Brow as a private home first and foremost. Through doing so the house will retain its distinctiveness as a single and sizeable dwellinghouse within the area. In order to make such a property work the decision was taken to selectively and sensitively extend the house. Extensive analysis of the plot, the building and the context was undertaken by Space Architecture so as to enable any proposals to extend to be as contextual and sensitive as possible. As the associated Design Statement relates, the plot was assessed in terms of views and areas of opportunity, sensitivity and enhancement.

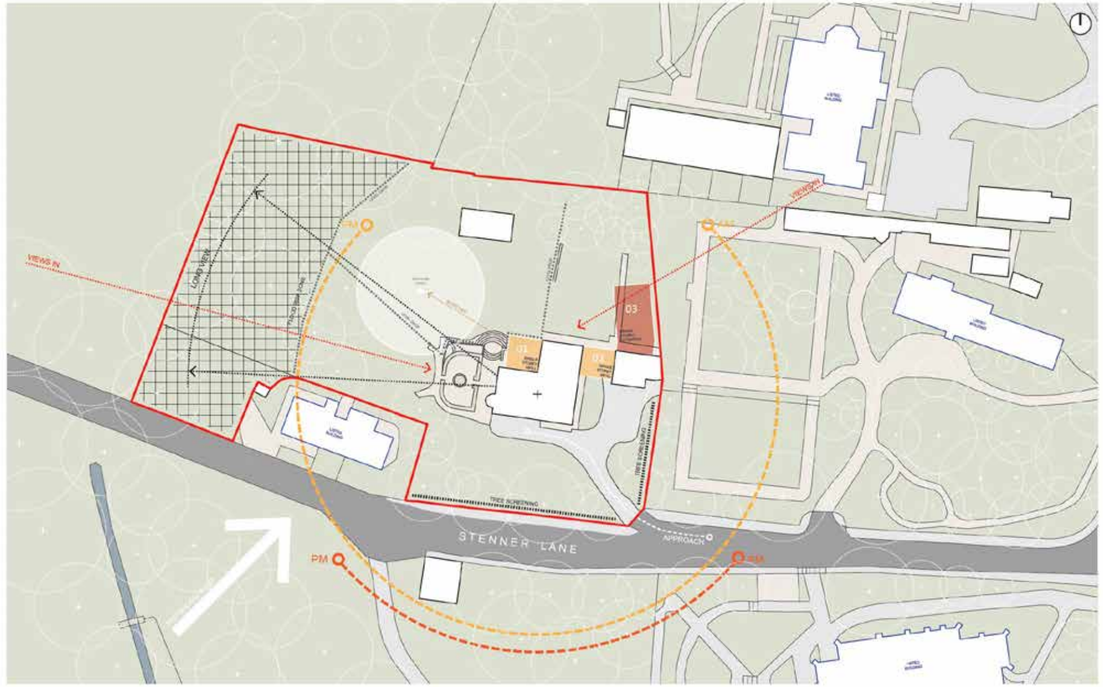
The end result has evolved into something of a ‘natural evolution’ of this site and a series of proposals that would not have been implausible historically. As such, the proposals consist of linear, modest footprint extensions that reflect both the historic farm buildings that once stood here as well as something akin to stable blocks or garages that could feasibly have existed here historically. By using the presence of the existing garage as a key element, the proposals link this to the main house and then extend in a simple linear fashion alongside the boundary wall. These simple, linear extensions are thoroughly contextual in their general form and footprint but they do exhibit several concessions to Modern design in their fenestration and detail. The result is a thoroughly contextual and sensitive series of linear extensions that relate well to the historic context and successfully tread the fine line between traditional and modern design.

To the rear corner of the property is an open L’shape area that has been left rather unloved over recent years. The proposed design ‘loosens’ slightly here to create a curving extension within this corner area that maximises the views of the garden here and provides a modern interpretation of the traditional bow window.

Also to this elevation the proposal seeks permission to alter the existing modern extension to create a gable end that is lit through extensive glazing. This again reflects, echoes and is inspired by the existing traditional forms whilst at the same evolving the architectural language in a completely contextual manner.

The Response

Stenner Brow | Didsbury Village



The Response - Link

Stenner Brow | Didsbury Village

Key View from Proposed Entrance Facing

Key View from Existing Entrance Facing Garden Wall Between House Garage

02. Link

This view from the main entrance shows intervention 2, the link between the main dwelling and the existing garage.

This link utilises the existing brick of the boundary wall and existing opening that previously linked the drive to the rear garden.

This link has high-level a Clerestory Window that sits above the existing wall & a pitched Welsh slate roof to match the pitch of the existing garage with in-line Photovoltaics.

The link accommodates circulation between the main dwelling and the well-being suite and also a playroom to the rear facing onto the garden.

Its form is low level and matches the materials and vernacular of the front portion of the dwelling.

Due to the subtlety of the design, matching of materials and the vernacular, we feel this addition has a neutral impact to the setting of the conservation area.

Historically in 1894 the original Farmhouse on the site was positioned in a L shape on this portion of the site. (See above)

The House_Wellness Suite

Stenner Brow | Didsbury Village

Greenhouse at Parsonage Gardens and its sitting along the Walled Garden

The wellness suite is designed to sit parallel with the existing Walled Garden that borders Fletcher Moss Gardens. It is intended to mimic the scale and positioning of the Greenhouse at Parsonage Gardens.

It is set 1m away from the wall to allow construction without undermining the foundations to the existing Walled garden.

The wellness suite is connected to the existing garage by a lightweight glazed link that touches both elements lightly.

The wellness suite comprises of a small gym and golf simulator. It also houses guest bedrooms & a bathroom. To the rear is an extended open-canopy that houses an outdoor gym. The gym is low level and matches the pitch of the existing garage to not overbear the existing structure.

A consistent material pallet is used between the link and the well-being suite . This comprises of a Welsh slate roof with brick walls with stone banding to the base. The glazing is full height sliding aluminium doors.

The eaves match up with the strong horizontal line we have taken across all interventions.

Internally there is an exposed glu-lam timber frame and ceiling

- Roof projects to accommodate space for an outdoor gym / yoga area
- Contemporary linear strip window added to bedrooms with obscured glazing to hide separating floor
- Exposed glulam timber frame and ceiling to provide warm and natural interior material palette
- Stone plinth added to exterior brick walls where ground slopes away from the structure

Exterior Image of Front Elevation

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSALS

This site is fortunate to have such a contextual and sensitive response proposed for it. We consider that the scheme has all the ingredients to be successful and enhance the character or appearance of the Didsbury St James Conservation Area. However, in order to be thorough we have undertaken a full Heritage Impact Assessment with regards sensitive receptors to this site where we have anticipated any potential harm to the area.

The areas of focus are as follows:

- The effect of the proposals upon the Grade II Listed cottages at 18-20 Stenner Lane.

- The effect of the proposal upon the setting of the Grade II* Church of St James.

- The effect upon the Grade II Listed Parsonage Gardens

- The effect of the proposal upon the overall character and appearance of the St James Conservation Area.

The Effect of the Proposals Upon the Setting and Significance of the Grade II Listed Cottages at 18-20 Stenner Lane

As mentioned above and within J.W. Conservation report, the cottages at 18-20 Stenner Lane likely date from the late 18th century and were modified and extended in the mid 19th century. They stand much lower to that of Stenner Brow and have their primary frontages facing onto the lane as is goes downhill. The significance of this row of cottages is generally obtained through their historic origins as late 18th century vernacular buildings as well as the somewhat more polite later phases into the mid 19th century. Although physically close to the application site any relationship has now been significantly diminished and has been since the split in ownership of the site in the mid twentieth century.

In terms of the effect of the proposal, the majority of proposed development would occur to the rear of Stenner Brow and as such the frontages facing towards the Listed Buildings would remain unaltered, indeed likely enhanced through cosmetic improvements and tidying. The corner side extension however would introduce a modest extension technically into the setting of these buildings. Despite this, the change in topography, intervening foliage and landscaping as well as the fact that these cottages face away from this plot make any impact largely negligible.

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

Assessment of Harm: **Negligible/No Harm**.
Note on Curtilage Listing

18-20 Stenner Lane is a row of Grade II listed buildings. Section 1(5) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 defines a listed building and points out that any object of structure fixed to the building and any object or structure within the curtilage of the building which, although not fixed to the building, forms part of the land and has done so since before 1 July 1948, shall be treated as part of the building.

Although historically there was some relationship between these two sites it is not clear which building was the principal building under who's curtilage the site once belonged. In any case this relationship ceased to exist following the split in ownership of these buildings prior to 1 July 1948 and prior to these cottages being added onto the National Heritage List. On that overall basis, having regard to Section 1(5), this site cannot be treated as part of the listed building or be considered to exist within the curtilage of these buildings. As a consequence, the proposed works do not require listed building consent.

The Effect of the Proposals Upon the Setting and Significance of the Grade II* Listed Church of St James

The church of St James dates from the 17th century and provides an historical and physical landmark to the area. It is significant due to its aesthetic, historic and communal heritage values and the strong role both architecturally and historically that it gives to the area. The church sits within its own churchyard on a slightly lower level than that of the application site. There is some modest cross visibility between the two places through the gateway to Stenner Brow whereby the church tower is framed by the foliage and gateway features as the driveway extends downwards towards Stenner Lane.

The proposals would be located well within the private garden area of Stenner Brow and, although being located towards this end of the plot, the designs would be sensitive, contextual and represent a natural evolution of this site. As such, even though there would be no cross visibility between the site of the extensions and the church, any impact would be negligible.

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 Grade II Listed The Fletcher Moss Art Gallery/The Parsonage and Gardens

Front elevation of Listed Cottages at 18-20 Stenner Lane.

The Fletcher Moss Art Gallery/ The Parsonage was formerly the home of Alderman Fletcher Moss. It is a simple roughcast rendered house of four bays and stands within its own extensive grounds which are populated by a plethora of other ancillary outbuildings and greenhouses. In terms of proximity, although the principal building itself is located some distance away from the application site, the main effect of the proposal would be upon the former Parsonage Gardens, now a public park, which are effectively separate from the primary curtilage of the Listed Building itself. As such the main focus of this assessment should be upon the effect on the Parsonage Gardens themselves.

The area of the Parsonage Gardens nearest Stenner Lane appears from historic maps to have contained a row of, presumably simple, cottages. These were seemingly demolished in the later 20th century and the area made into formal gardens around a quadrangle of lawn and trees with extensive borders around its edges. It is from this area that the proposal would be visible. Despite the site being divided by a brick wall the rear of Stenner Brow is visible over this wall.

In assessing the impact of this proposal the proposed elements would be visible and the proposals would introduce change. However, the introduction of such change should not automatically be seen as being harmful.

The main elements of the proposals to be visible would be the modifications to the modern rear two storey outshut from a hipped roof to a gable and from the erection of a linear rear extension along the boundary between Stenner Brow and the Parsonage Gardens.

In assessing this impact the roof of the proposal would be visible. However this roof would be thoroughly contextual through being simple in form and design and clad in natural materials. As such it would appear synonymous with other such outbuildings that populate the existing gardens currently. The main effect therefore would be the presence of such a roof slightly protruding over this common garden wall. This would introduce a modest amount of perceived extra enclosure but the effect of this would, ultimately be minimal.

In terms of the proposed gable extension. The existing gable is a modern structure of very generic design. This proposal would create a different approach to this elevation that would result in some contextual modern interventions. Overall this would likely introduce an enhancement of this rear elevation to the benefit to the Parsonage Gardens and to Stenner Brow itself.

Overall, although some change will occur here the actual impact would not be harmful to the historic environment as this would simply introduce a highly contextual and simple roof into this location. Furthermore any such impact could be further mitigated by planting even though in winter the structure would be visible it would not cause harm.

Effect Upon the Setting and Significance of the Grade II Listed Building The Fletcher Moss Art Gallery: **Very Low/Negligible**

Assessment of Harm: **No Harm**

The Effect of the Proposals Upon the Didsbury St James Conservation Area

As mentioned above the significance of the Didsbury St James is largely determined by its historic layout as an older settlement focussed around the nearby road junction and the Church of St James. It also has significant associative connections to Fletcher Moss and his wife (who founded the precursor to the RSPB).

Stenner Brow could easily be considered a positive building within the Conservation Area and does reflect a certain point in time architecturally. The gardens of the house are also of (perhaps greater) significance as they take in the distinctive topography and drop in levels here.

In terms of impact, the proposals would be highly contextual, simple in their forms and materials but sensibly stretching the architectural language to offer a solution to this site that is thoroughly 21st century.

In terms of visibility, the extensions would not be visible from the vast majority of the Conservation Area apart from its roof being visible from the Parsonage Gardens. Longer distance views, even in winter (see google image below) would also retain these extensions as being highly recessive.

In terms of impact, the principal of the extension would offer some enhancement to the Conservation Area through it being a high quality piece of architecture that would enable this building to remain as a family home that serve the requirements of any new occupants.

Effect Upon the Setting and Significance of the Didsbury St James Conservation Area: **Low Impact/Positive Enhancement**

Assessment of Harm: **No Harm/Positive Enhancement**

Stenner Brow from the far end of the Conservation Area sports fields showing the view in winter.

Views from the Parsonage Gardens. Mostly the proposed extensions would be shielded by foliage but in some places the roof would be visible..

Garden views of Stenner Brow showing the limited impact of the proposals upon the garden area and the house itself. .

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This proposal represents Best Practice in its contextual modern approach to extending this house within the Didsbury St James Conservation Area. It is based upon a thorough and holistic analysis that has sought to not only understand this site fully, but has also sought to fully and sensitively respond to the historic environment within which the site sits. As such, although this scheme introduces change, the NPPF reminds us that change is not harmful in itself. In this particular case, this scheme epitomises an example of this whereby although change will inevitably happen, this scheme has trod very carefully to ensure that this scheme is thoroughly contextual, sensitive and of very high quality.

In terms the of the potential for this to offer Public Benefits, there are considerable such benefits, not least through the ability to ensure that this proposal enhances the historic environment but also through the fact that this building would allow this house to remain as a single dwelling and also that it would introduce high quality, contextual architecture. When added to this that this scheme has been undertaken by a local business and would employ local people and building skills, then the benefits of giving this site planning permission are significant indeed.

CONCLUSION

The proposal would offer a highly contextual and high quality intervention into this site that represents absolute Best Practice in creating a contextual and sensitive extension to such a house. It not only reflects local vernacular devices, but also evolves the art through modern alterations and architecture. TheUrbanGlow Design & Heritage Ltd, as IHBC recognised practitioners in the historic environment, we have no hesitation in recommending this scheme as worthy of obtaining planning approval.

Undertaken by TheUrbanGlow Design & Heritage Ltd
TheUrbanGlow are HESPR Registered Service Providers for the Historic Environment

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TheUrbanGlow Design & Heritage
www.urbanglowdesign.com