Heritage Statement

4A Warwick Avenue,
Didsbury

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1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 **Purpose and Format**

This statement has been prepared in connection with proposed works to a residential property on Warwick Avenue, Didsbury (4A).
The purpose of the appraisal is to assess the significance of the building and how this significance might be affected by the planned changes. The document has been prepared in accordance with the general guidelines set out in the English Heritage publications 'Informed Conservation'1 and 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance'2 and in particular responds to heritage policies outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG, 2012).

1.2 **Methods of Research and Investigation**

Inspections of the site were carried out in September 2023 in order to assess its physical nature. Background research has also been conducted in order to fully ascertain contextual matters appertaining to the site's history. The scope of this research has, in accordance with the NPPF, been proportionate to the nature of the proposed works, with particular emphasis placed upon the special architectural and historic interest of the site and those planning policies that affect/control change.

2.0 **GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

2.1 **Site Location**

4A Warwick Avenue is situated in an Urban/sub-urban location approximately 4.8 miles south of Manchester town centre.

2.2 **Site Description**

The building (mid terrace) is in a mid urban location on the outskirts of Manchester.

The site plan is given below in figure 1.

Figure 1. Site Plan (OS extract)

2.3 **Building Description**

The terraced house was built in the late C19. During the C19 there had been no change to the properties until late C20 when front dormer was added, and the property was split into two accommodations.

See Photo of front elevation of House (Prior to planning Application in 2023)

See Photo of the rear elevation of the House (Prior to planning Application in 2023)

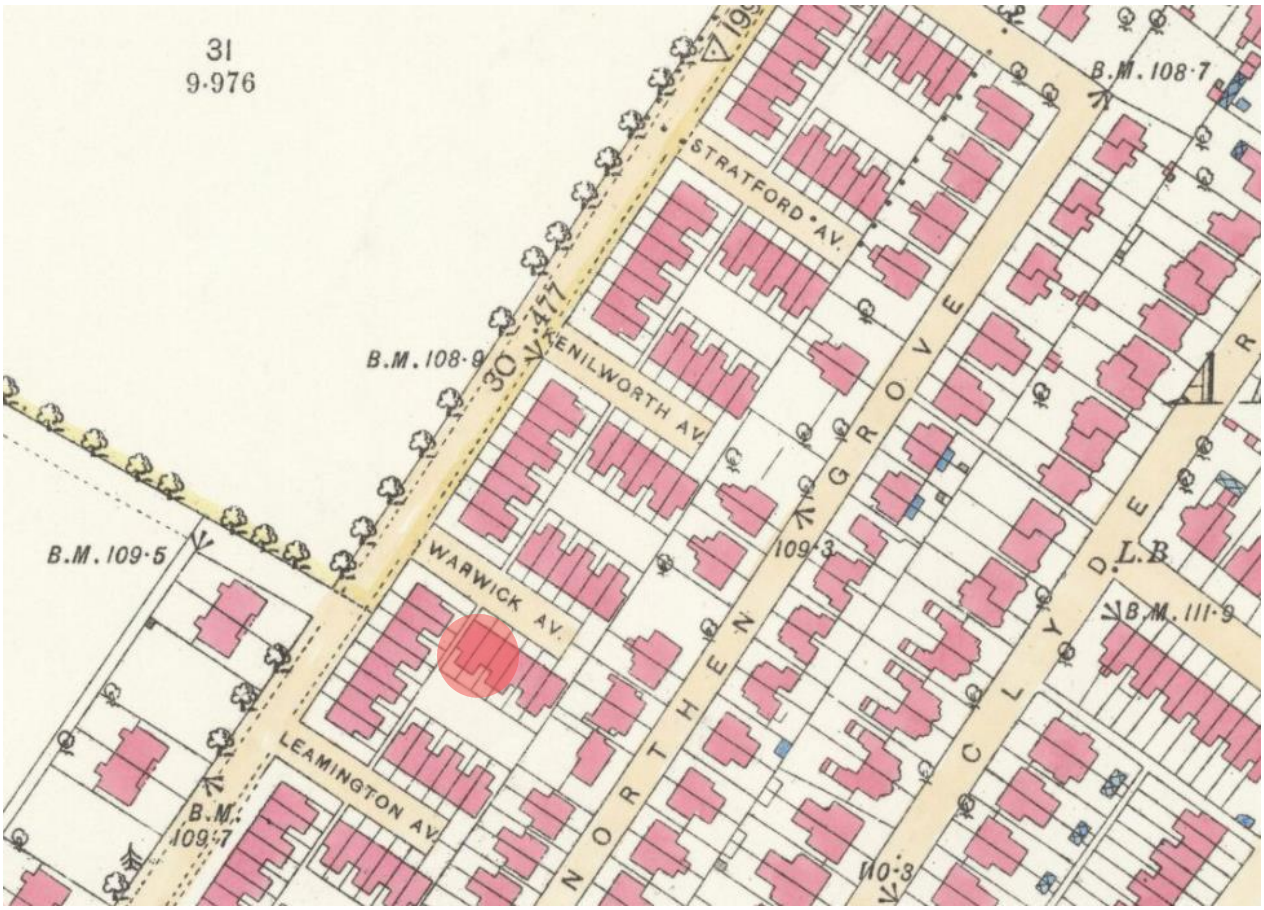
2.4 **Brief Summary of Proposals**

The aim of the proposals is to build a rear dormer onto the existing building to create an en-suite bathroom.

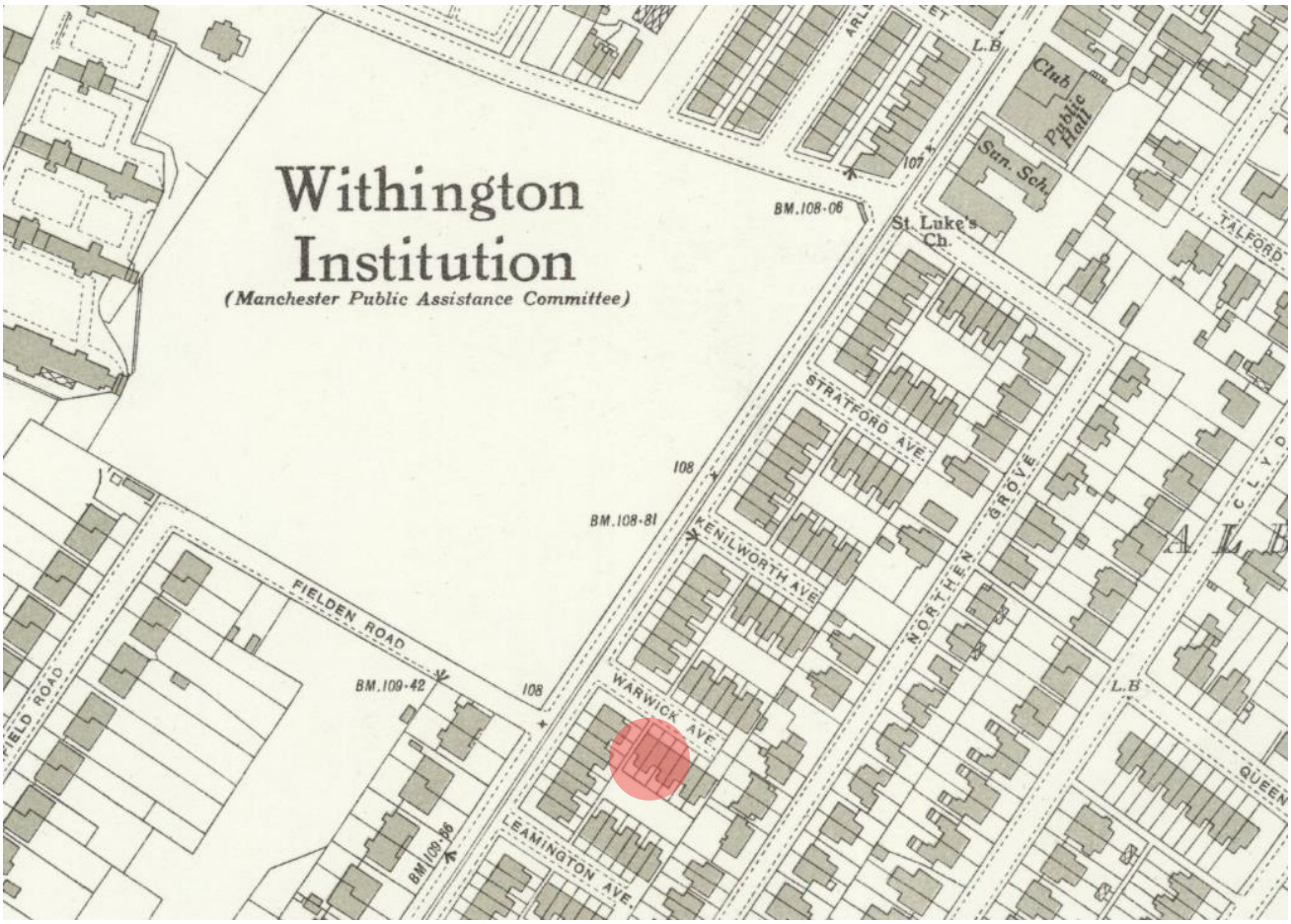
3.0 **HERITAGE APPRAISAL**

3.1 **Brief Historic Background**

The house shown on a detailed old Victorian ordnance survey map (1892).



This is later confirmed on a detailed old Victorian ordnance survey map (1916).



3.2 **Heritage Values**

An appraisal of the heritage values associated with the house has been carried out, with particular interest in how these might be affected by the changes proposed. The appraisal process relates to the range of heritage values as outlined by English Heritage (2008), which are distilled under the following headings: evidential value; historic value; communal value; aesthetic value. The purpose of assessing these values is to develop a clearer understanding of the site's significance – whether physically manifest (e.g. architectural features) or in some other less tangible form (e.g. historical associations) - so as to enhance the objective appraisal of proposals for changing the site. In essence this follows the approach generally advocated by English Heritage, whereby necessary change in the historic environment is intelligently managed.

3.2.1 **Evidential Value**

English Heritage (2008) suggests that - "Evidential value derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity".

The property offers physical evidence that it has been used as a residential property since it has been built as it is currently a family home.

3.2.2 **Historical Value**

English Heritage (2008) suggests that - "Historical value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be illustrative or associative".

The historical value of the house is partly derived though its function and partly through its association with the other properties on the row. Its existence bears testament to the historical development of construction in the area and the growth of the C19th community. The house does not possess unusually high levels of historical value in this regard.

3.2.3 **Communal Value**

English Heritage (2008) suggests that: "Communal value derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory".

No communal value can be attributed to the house. It is a building, with minimal communal purpose as it's a dwelling.

3.2.4 **Aesthetic Value**

English Heritage (2008) suggests that: "Aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place".

The house has a medium aesthetic value as it is and does offer low intellectual stimulation to the surrounding residence.

3.3 **Statement of Significance**

The houses heritage values combine to establish the significance of the building, and conserving this significance is a key aim of this appraisal process.

Evidentially, the house acts as a physical reminder of mid C19th buildings and is representative of the local building methods and tradition. It provides us with a small historical connection to the communities of old and allows us to interpret an aspect of development of the local region. Communally the building possesses little if any heritage value, whereas aesthetically its 2-storey form is a typical feature of housing styles in this time period, this is confirmed by other building styles in close proximity to the property.

4.0 **ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED WORKS**

4.1 **General Principles**

Given the consideration of significance included in section 3.0 above, it is possible to develop a more objective assessment of those proposals which are deemed to have a potential effect on the heritage asset. General guidance on assessing proposed changes to listed buildings is given in chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework, or 'NPPF' (2012). This advocates conserving the significance of listed buildings and the need to understand significance before proposing change, the overall intention being the avoidance of harm. An analysis of the NPPF policies in respect to the proposed scheme is given below in 4.2. Whereas local heritage planning policies also exist, these have in most instances been superseded by the recent NPPF. Otherwise, there exist policies and supplementary guidance in the conversion of rural buildings, but these are not solely concerned with heritage issues and therefore have only been considered in the general context of the current policy drivers.

4.2 **Analysis of the Proposals: National Planning Policy Framework**

As discussed above, section 12 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) of the NPPF (2012) considers heritage planning and identifies the following key drivers in the decision making process:

• *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*

• *the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;*

• *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and*

• *opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.*

These drivers are then contextualised by a range of policies that seek to ensure effective management of development control decisions, placing the conservation of heritage significance at the core of decision making. This premise guides the consideration of change to heritage assets, as legally outlined within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act of 1990.

In order to establish a clearer objective assessment of the proposals in the context of the NPPF, the following commentary relates the completed/proposed changes to the house to the four principle policy drivers listed above. The works to the building is as previously outlined above in section 2.4 above.

4.2.1 The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring.

The building is essentially a private structure situated on a road with other residential properties. Its potential for bestowing the social and cultural benefits referred to in the policy driver are limited, The proposals will not be detrimental to this enjoyment.

4.2.2 The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

The external works will neither make or not make a positive contribution to the local character as there are examples in the local area of similar builds/designs.

5.0 **Summary & Conclusion**

Maintaining active use is a fundamental philosophy of internal and external works to the house. The property is already used as a residential property and as such it is the findings of the heritage statement may be summarised as follows:

- The works are to the rear of the property and there will be no change to the front of the house. All external materials are to complement the existing property style.
- There is no communal loss due to the property having limited communal value.

In the opinion of the author, the proposals represent a well conceived scheme, which acknowledges and responds to the significance of a site. It fulfils policy requirements and, if executed in a careful and high quality manner on site, should prove to help sustain this heritage asset for many years to come.