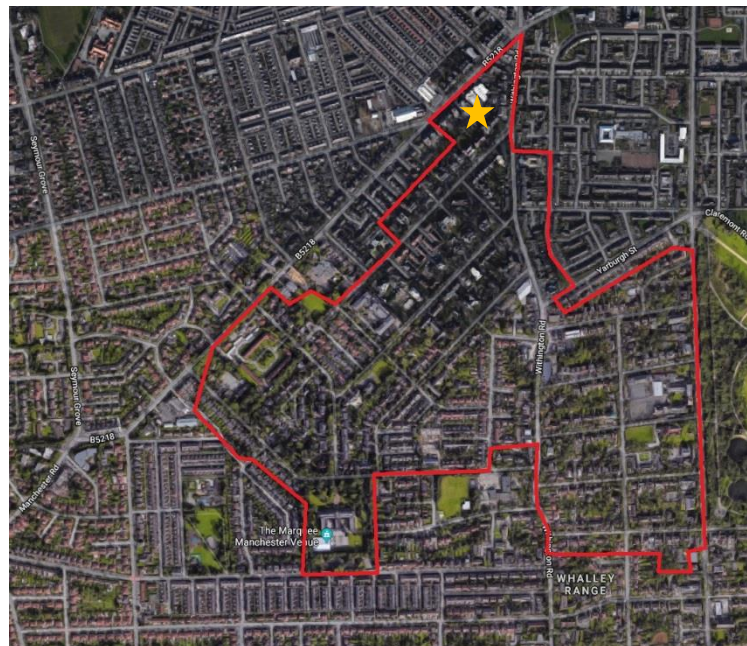


63-65 Upper Chorlton Road, Whalley Range

Heritage Statement

The Site and the Surrounding Area

63-65 Upper Chorlton Road stands within the Whalley Range Conservation Area, which was established to protect a planned mid 19th century residential suburb of Manchester. In particular this status seeks to preserve the street pattern and original built fabric of the area. Typically this consists of a tree-lined street network with large plots containing mid-late Victorian detached houses, or early twentieth century semi-detached properties.



Plan view of Whalley Range Conservation Area with site highlighted

The site stands at the northernmost point of the Conservation Area, adjacent to the boundary between Manchester and Trafford boroughs. It is occupied by what was once a pair of large Victorian semi-detached houses. These have subsequently been converted into a single block of nine apartments, contained wholly within the fabric of the original building. The apartments have now been empty for some years, though the building has housed rough sleepers in this time, which has resulted in some damage to the internal fabric.

The Victorian houses originally formed part of a row of similar dwellings which were constructed to overlook open land on the opposite side of Upper Chorlton Road. The OS map of 1893 shows a series of long narrow plots, apparently containing a mixture of semi-detached and detached properties. Of these, a sequence of five pairs of semi-detached properties are still standing. The two detached dwellings on the northern boundary of the site are also still standing, however the one immediately adjacent has undergone considerable modification and extension to allow conversion to a nursery facility. The remaining semis to the south have also undergone extensive refurbishment, however generally this does not impact on the main front elevations.



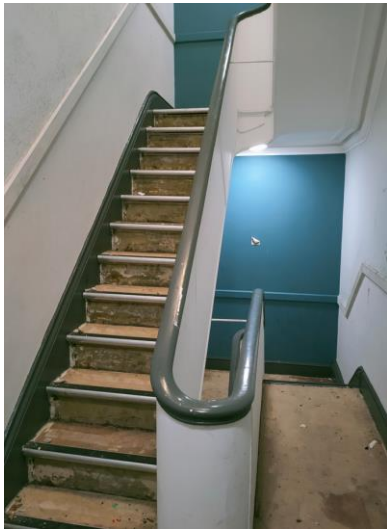
1893 map showing site in row of similar properties



Google Earth image showing row of extant properties – site is adjacent to detached house with flat roof to side

The properties themselves are substantial three storey structures, plus an additional storey containing basement accommodation. The upper floor is primarily located in the roof of the buildings, and is served by two front facing dormers. Construction generally is of brick, with slate roof tiles. Bricks to the front elevation are primarily buff, but contain red brick detailing, and stone headers and cills typical of the late Victorian period. Gable and rear elevations much plainer in style, and are constructed in red brick with stone cills.

Internally the properties have been extensively modified to accommodate their conversion to apartments. Some features such as cornicing and staircases survive in part, however they do not represent features of any note. In the case of the staircases, these are also not compliant with current fire regulations.



Above - typical internal views Below – front and rear external views



The immediate vicinity of the site, and indeed the wider neighbourhood, is somewhat mixed in quality. The bulk of the Conservation Area lies to the south, and this area is characterised by substantial Victorian dwellings set in generous grounds. However the development on the opposite side of Upper Chorlton Road is mainly of a later vintage, for the most part consisting of two storey semi-detached and terraced housing dating from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. While some buildings in the immediate neighbourhood do have architectural merit – for example the Army Reserve Centre at the end of Kings Road – they are all too often countered by lower quality structures – such as the Tesco Express immediately opposite the site.



Google Maps image with site to left and contrasting neighbours opposite

With regards to landscaping, the site benefits from a number of mature trees in the rear garden area, however these are badly overshadowed by a dense 17m high beech hedge which runs along the site's southern boundary. As a result, all but one tree on the site have been given a C or U rating.



Image of beech hedge (left) and trees in remainder of garden (right)

The Proposed Works

The planning application involves the internal remodelling of the existing buildings, together with the formation of a new extension to the rear. This will increase capacity from 9 units to 12, with the flats being intended to provide accommodation for homeless women. As this will be supported accommodation, additional staff space will be provided by converting part of the basement.

Following pre-app discussions with the Local Authority Planning Department the volume of the new rear extension was reduced so as to ensure that it appears subservient to the original structure.

It is not envisaged that there will be any change to the front elevation of the building, other than general repairs and the replacement of windows. The main changes occur to the rear of the building where the existing rear outrigger is extended to provide additional floor space. To ensure that windows are orientated away from neighbouring properties small side 'wings' are to be added onto the existing outrigger to provide enough space on the elevation to accommodate a rear facing window. Similarly a small number of other new window openings are to be formed in the existing outrigger to improve daylight and ventilation.

An additional bin storage structure is also to be formed alongside the south facing gable elevation of the main existing building. This is set back from the front elevation to coincide with the line of the current garden fence. Generally all new construction will be in materials to match the existing, and window designs will be commensurate with Victorian style sash windows.

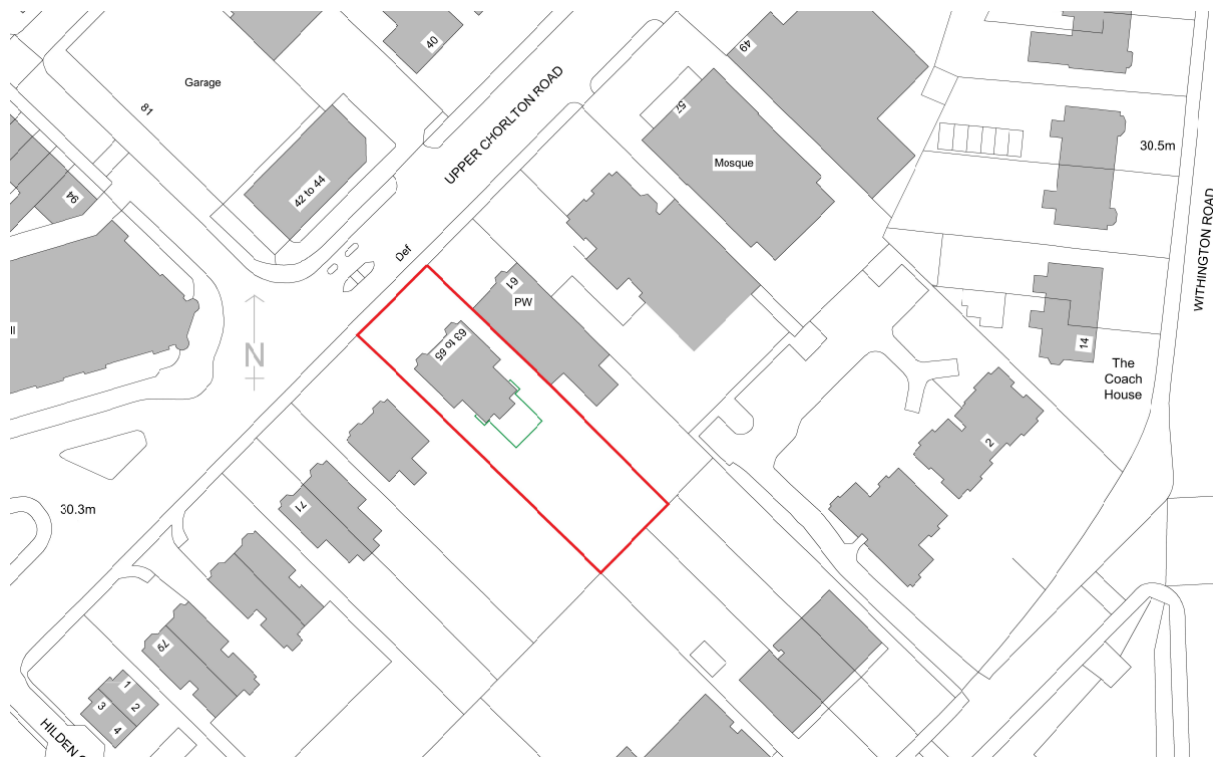


Above – existing rear and side elevations. Below – proposed rear and side elevations, new construction hatched



Some tree loss is proposed in the rear garden area, in order to provide a more viable amenity space, and to increase light levels for new planting below the canopy. Beyond this external areas will be upgraded with new finishes and planting to improve the overall appearance of the site.

The proposed works will therefore improve the appearance of both the site and the buildings, increasing their long term viability and enhancing the Conservation Area. The elements of the original structure that will be lost to the rear of the site, have no architectural merit in themselves, therefore their loss will not constitute harm. The new extension will be visually in keeping with the existing building and the wider area, furthermore it will only be visible from adjacent rear gardens. As these gardens are of substantial size, and frequently screened by extensive tree planting, the proposals will have no negative impact for either public or private users of the Conservation Area.



Plan of local area with development site outlined in red and extent of new extension shown in green