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Urban Design Heritage and Planning

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Proposed Scheme at 4 Chorlton Green, Chorlton, Manchester M21 9HS **HERITAGE ASSESSMENT**

INTRODUCTION

1. TheUrbanGlow Design and Heritage Ltd are an IHBC HESPR Registered Practice and a Registered Practice of The Urban Design Group and we specialise in assessing the effect of new development within historic contexts. We were approached by SPACE Architects to provide an independent assessment of proposals for a new rear dormer window and refurbished dormer window to the front of number 4 Chorlton Green.

OUR UNDERSTANDING

2. It is our understanding that this house has previously been granted planning permission for a near identical, development under application reference 133658/FH/2022. This application was not implemented and as such a new planning application has been required. Despite there not being a heritage assessment in 2022 for this prior scheme, this new application has been deemed to require one.
3. The assessing officer at the time of this previous scheme felt that the design was acceptable and stated the following:

"The design of the dormer reflects others on this small terrace. The use of a black timber effect cladding will tone the dormer down and make it less intrusive. The proposed window lines up with those on the lower floors and the dormer sits within the roof in the style of a traditional dormer. It is considered that the design of the proposed dormer is acceptable."

4. The Officer also assessed the effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the Chorlton Green Conservation Area and related the following:

"(The) Chorlton Green Conservation Area contains a wide range of house types and ages. A recurring theme on many of these properties is the use of dormers. Of this terrace of three properties two have dormers on the front elevation and one has a rear dormer. The proposed dormer retains

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the design features of the existing dormers on the terrace. On balance it is considered that the proposed dormer would have a neutral impact on the conservation area."

SIGNIFICANCE

5. The property is a mid terrace house of red brick with existing dormer to the front and fairly typical two storey outshut extensions to the rear. The property faces the upper part of the triangular Chorlton Green open space and is located on the boundary of the adopted Chorlton Green Conservation Area.
6. The Chorlton Green Conservation Area was one of the first designated areas in the vicinity 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 rural 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 extant even though much of this open space was once enclosed.
7. The application property fronts onto the remnants of the historic village green and it appears likely that the main reason this row of houses were brought into the Conservation Area was due to their role in helping define this character and historic street alignment.
8. In terms of Listed Buildings, there are two Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area, these include an early 19th century farmhouse (10 Higginbottom Farm) and the gatehouse and lynch gate of the 18th century Church of St Clement both of which are Grade II Listed. Both of these buildings sit to the lower part of the Green and have no direct physical nor historic relationship to the application property which is of a much later and much more generic character.
9. As such we have considered any potential impact upon the Listed Buildings through our assessment upon the conservation area as a whole and we do not identify any instance of harm to the Listed Buildings or their setting as a result of this scheme.
10. In assessing the significance of the application property it is clear that the row of terraces are fairly typical of the very late 19th Early 20th century expansion of the area of historic Chorlton. Indeed the 1894 map shows only gardens in the location of the terrace and this confirms that the houses were built around the turn of the 20th century.
11. In term of the contribution that the row of houses makes to the Conservation Area, this is principally concerned with the evidence of early suburban expansion and it is largely unrelated to the character that the Conservation Area is endeavouring to protect – namely the lost rural village character that formed the historic nucleus of the place.
12. As such, it is clear that development here significantly altered the Chorlton Green area from one of open gardens and village aesthetic to one of a more tightly bounded urban feel that was typical of the late 19th century. As a result, the style and appearance of the houses is of little significance to the character of the Conservation Area other than through their role in reinforcing the presence of

the remnant of triangular green. Despite this the application building and its associated terrace exhibits the following heritage values:

Evidential Value: The row of houses here provides little in the way of evidential value that predates 1900. The houses were standard house types built upon defined and regular plots of land. They somewhat preserve the historic boundary of the old Chorlton Green but ultimately their evidential value is **Very Low/Negligible**.

Aesthetic Value: The row of houses are of their time and exhibit elements of late 19th/early 20th century urban development. There are hints at an emerging Arts and Crafts aesthetic through the cornice detail but generally the buildings are of generic character of their time. Although this is of value of itself its aesthetic value in relation to the core characteristics of the Conservation Area is **Low**. To the rear there is less value.

Communal Value: Communal value exists through the memory of these houses in their place and is largely confined to private memory of past occupants. As such the communal value is **Negligible/Very Low**.

Historic Value: The buildings represent a contradictory evolution of the settlement here from one of historic village to one of mass, industrial scale urbanisation. The row of houses maintains some historic value in narrating this story as they provide evidence of this stark change in character. However, this is still limited when compared to the value of much of the rest of the area. As such the historical value of this terrace is **Low**.

OVERRIDING POLICY CONTEXT

13. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is relevant to this application and requires the decision maker to give special attention to preserve *or* enhance the character and appearance of a conservation area.
14. The National Planning Policy Framework (12 December 2024) reflects the overriding statutory duty and provides further guidance on the management of the historic environment. Paragraph 207 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.
15. 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

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL UPON THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

16. The proposal seeks permission for a refurbished dormer window to the front with roof light and a new dormer window to the rear, to be clad in dark wood style vertical cladding. The existing dormer

window to the front is partially slate hung and painted white with felt roofing whose colour has noticeably worn. The dormer requires restoring and insulating and the proposals seek to do this in a similar style to the consented scheme next door. The main difference being that the front elevation of the application property will remain red brick. As such the dark grey rendered replacement/repaired dormer, would reflect the local colour tones of the roofscape and would visually improve the aesthetic appearance of what is currently present.

17. In terms of the effect of this replacement there would be an improvement upon the views of this house from the Green where a higher quality, contrasting aesthetic would not only visually link to other dormers nearby, but would also visibly tidy up the existing dormer. As such we find **No Harm** to the Conservation Area and indeed advance the case that there would be a **Positive Enhancement** of the historic environment because of this.
18. In terms of the rear dormer, it is worthy of note that there is an existing dormer to the end terrace property immediately adjacent to this site. This rear roof slope can only be glimpsed when moving along Albemarle Road and the character of this area is very different to that of the Conservation Area.
19. In this case the proposed dormer would match the aesthetics of the adjoining house and utilise similarly coloured vertical cladding. It would be set within the pitched roof of the existing two storey outshut extension and would also be set farther into the terrace row when viewed from Albemarle Road, the chimney stack retaining its dominance and punctuation within the streetscene.
20. In terms of any harm the principal views of this structure would be from without the Conservation Area and even when the area within the Conservation Area is seen from Albemarle Road this roof area would be considerably off to one side and out of view aswell as being filtered by street trees. As such the effect of this proposal would have a **Negligible** effect upon the character and appearance of the area and would, in essence, be barely noticeable. As such we find **No Harm** through this proposal and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area would be **Preserved**.

CONCLUSION

21. As heritage professionals and urban designers whose focus is on new development within historic contexts, we sincerely believe that this scheme is a sound and fair response to this property. Like the Planning case officer before us we find no Harm to the significance of the Conservation Area nor the wider setting of any Listed Buildings that are located within that area. In essence the Conservation Area would have its character preserved and slightly enhanced when seen from the front.
22. In giving great weight to the significance of the surrounding heritage assets we do not believe that harm would occur and we trust this professional assessment is suitable and in depth enough to demonstrate this.

END

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