Heritage Statement

Proposed demolition of garage, replacing with shed and construction of cheshire brick wall with timber access gates

19 Didsbury Park, Didsbury M20 5LH

St James Conservation Area, Didsbury, Manchester

1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared to accompany a householder planning application for works at 19 Didsbury Park, which lies within the St James Conservation Area in Didsbury, Manchester.

The purpose of this statement is to assess the potential impact of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the conservation area in accordance with national and local planning policy.

The proposed works comprise:
• Demolition of an existing 2.35m high dilapidated flat roofed concrete sectional garage with timber doors
• Construction of a replacement timber shed with maximum pitch height of 2.5m. Apex bespoke garden shed/workshop with tongue and groove wall cladding fully tanalised with felt shingle roof covering
• Construction of a 2.02m high cheshire brick side wall with coping stone
• Installation of timber access gates

The works are modest in scale and relate only to the rear/side area of the residential property.

2. Site and Surroundings

The application property is a residential dwelling located within the St James Conservation Area, an area designated for its historic architectural character and cohesive residential townscape.

The conservation area is characterised by:
• Predominantly Victorian and Edwardian residential properties
• Traditional red brick buildings
• Mature landscaping and enclosed rear gardens
• A mixture of boundary treatments including brick walls, hedges and timber gates

The existing structure to be demolished is a concrete sectional garage located within the curtilage of the property. The structure is a much later addition and is not considered to contribute positively to the character or appearance of the conservation area.

3. Heritage Significance

The significance of the St James Conservation Area derives from:
• The historic development pattern of large suburban villas and associated plots
• The consistent use of traditional materials, particularly red brick
• Strong boundary treatments that define the street scene
• The leafy residential character created by mature gardens and landscaping

The existing garage structure is utilitarian and constructed from prefabricated concrete panels, which are not characteristic of the traditional materials present within the conservation area.

Consequently, the structure has little or no heritage significance and its removal does not harm the significance of the conservation area.

4. Proposed Development

Replacement Shed

The proposed shed will replace the existing concrete sectional garage and will be constructed primarily from timber. The building will be modest in scale and subordinate to the main dwelling, and will be located in a slightly amended position as the existing structure, but further away from the side boundary which allows maintenance of the Victorian boundary wall.

The use of timber cladding provides a softer and more appropriate appearance within a garden setting than the existing concrete structure. The felt shingle pitched roof will provide a more sympathetic roof finish to the current flat felt roof.

The workshop will be partially screened from the public realm by the proposed boundary wall and gates.

Side Wall and Gates

The proposal includes the construction of a 2.02m high brick boundary wall with coping stone along the roadside boundary. This will be accompanied by timber access gates providing access to the rear garden.

The new boundary treatment will:
• Improve the visual quality of the street frontage
• Reflect the traditional use of brick boundary walls within the conservation area

• Provide privacy and security for the rear garden
• Screen much of the roof pitch of the proposed workshop from public view

The wall will therefore create a more coherent and visually appropriate boundary than the current arrangement.

5. Impact on the Conservation Area

The proposed development will have no adverse impact on the character or appearance of the St James Conservation Area.

Key considerations include:
• The removal of a visually poor concrete structure
• Replacement with a modest timber workshop appropriate for a garden setting
• Introduction of a traditional brick boundary wall with coping stone
• Improved visual enclosure and screening of ancillary structures

No trees will be affected by the works.

Overall, the proposals will preserve and modestly enhance the character of the conservation area.

6. Planning Policy Context

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

The National Planning Policy Framework states that proposals affecting heritage assets should be supported by a proportionate level of information sufficient to understand the potential impacts of the proposal.

Given the minor domestic scale of the works and the limited heritage significance of the existing structure, this commensurate heritage statement is considered appropriate.

7. Conclusion

The proposals involve the removal of a dilapidated and visually poor concrete garage and its replacement with a modest timber workshop, together with the construction of a brick boundary wall and timber gates.

The development will:
• Remove a non-traditional structure
• Introduce materials more consistent with the conservation area
• Improve the appearance of the roadside boundary
• Provide appropriate screening and security

The proposals will therefore preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the St James Conservation Area and are considered to comply with the statutory duties of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and relevant national planning policy.