



Heritage Assessment

Ref: DA24069 - 69 Crumpsall Lane

Site address: 69 Crumpsall Ln, Crumpsall, Manchester M8 5SR

Date: Oct 25'

Proposal: Creation of new Primary School



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1. Introduction and Scope

This Heritage Assessment has been prepared by Debtal Architecture Ltd to accompany a full planning application for the change of use and conversion of the former Chestnut House (Westwood) Care Home, 69 Crumpsall Lane, Manchester, into an independent primary school. The assessment evaluates the site's heritage context and potential impact on the nearby designated heritage assets, specifically three Conservation Areas: **Crumpsall Lane**, **Hermitage Road**, and **Crumpsall Green**.

The site is not a listed building and does not fall within a designated Conservation Area. However, its location near the edge of these three areas necessitates an informed appraisal of its setting and relationship to the local historic environment.

The purpose of this assessment is to:

- Identify and describe the significance of nearby heritage assets;
- Assess the contribution of the application site to their setting;
- Evaluate whether the proposed development will preserve, enhance, or harm that significance.

The assessment is based on desk-based research, Manchester City Council's adopted Conservation Area Appraisals, Ordnance Survey data, site inspection, and aerial imagery.

2. Legislative and Policy Context

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 72(1) of the Act requires local planning authorities to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. While the application site lies outside any conservation area, development near such areas must ensure their setting is not adversely affected.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024 Revision)

Section 16 of the NPPF provides national policy guidance for conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraphs 205–211 set out the requirement for proposals to sustain and enhance the significance of heritage assets, with great weight given to their conservation. Developments affecting the setting of heritage assets should avoid harm and, where possible, provide enhancement.

Manchester Core Strategy (2012–2027)

Relevant local policies include:

- **EN3 – Conservation:** Requires that development within or adjacent to conservation areas contributes positively to local townscape character.

3. Site Description and Heritage Context

The Site

The application site comprises a large semi-detached property located on the north side of Crumpsall Lane, at the junction with Ansleigh Avenue. The building incorporates a three-storey front block and a two-storey rear extension. Constructed in red brick with a pitched tiled roof, it has previously been extended and adapted for institutional use, most recently as a nursing home (Use Class C2). The adjoining property forms part of the same ownership and is proposed for future ancillary educational use.

The site occupies a prominent position opposite Crumpsall Metrolink Station, with access from both Crumpsall Lane and Ansleigh Avenue. The immediate surroundings consist of interwar and post-war residential streets interspersed with small commercial uses. The area displays a mixed urban character typical of outer Manchester suburbs.

Relationship to Conservation Areas

Although the property lies outside any designated heritage boundary, it is within proximity to three Conservation Areas:

1. **Crumpsall Lane Conservation Area** – located approximately 250m to the west, encompassing the historic core of Crumpsall around Bury Old Road, notable for late Victorian and Edwardian villa development and surviving institutional buildings.
2. **Hermitage Road Conservation Area** – situated around 120m to the south, covering a small group of Victorian villas and tree-lined streets notable for their architectural uniformity and residential garden setting.
3. **Crumpsall Green Conservation Area** – positioned approximately 350m to the east, focused on the historic village green and the surrounding early 19th-century cottages, parish church, and mature townscape.

The site sits between these three historic clusters but is visually and physically separated by intervening modern housing, tree belts, and topographical variation. The surrounding railway cutting and tramline to the south further compartmentalise the landscape, preventing any meaningful intervisibility with the designated areas.

4. Assessment of Significance

Overview of Significance

The nearby Conservation Areas derive their significance primarily from their architectural consistency, townscape quality, and historical association with the early suburban expansion of North Manchester. Each area represents a distinct phase of Crumpsall's urban evolution:

- **Crumpsall Lane Conservation Area** reflects the late-19th-century development of grand villas and institutions along the arterial route linking Cheetham Hill and Heaton Park.
- **Hermitage Road Conservation Area** demonstrates mid-Victorian residential growth typified by detached houses in generous plots, contributing to a leafy suburban character.
- **Crumpsall Green Conservation Area** retains the earlier village nucleus, providing evidence of pre-urban rural settlement and community formation.

Contribution of the Application Site

Chestnut House lies outside the historic cores that define these designations. Its architectural form—functional and altered—does not contribute to their special interest. The site's current appearance is that of a later institutional building in a transitional urban environment dominated by mixed post-war development. It does not possess aesthetic, historical, or evidential value linked to the nearby heritage assets.

5. Assessment of Setting and Impact

Setting

The setting of the three Conservation Areas is defined primarily by their immediate townscape context. None extend to Crumpsall Lane at this section, and there are no significant sightlines or vistas connecting the site to the heritage clusters. The visual experience from within each Conservation Area is inward-looking, framed by mature trees, boundary walls, and established residential streets.



The site is screened from the nearest boundary of Hermitage Road Conservation Area by the Metrolink cutting, a strong landscape and physical barrier.

Impact of the Proposal

The proposed development involves the internal adaptation and modest external alterations of an existing building. The scale, form, and massing remain unchanged. No new construction is proposed that would intrude upon key views or alter the area's skyline. The change of use to a school will be entirely contained within the existing footprint, with limited traffic and daytime-only activity.

Given the separation distance, lack of direct intervisibility, and the modest nature of the proposal, the development will have **no adverse effect on the setting or significance** of any nearby Conservation Area. The scheme represents an enhancement through the active reuse and maintenance of a currently vacant property, improving its long-term condition and appearance.

6. Conclusion and Compliance Statement

This assessment concludes that:

- The site lies outside and is visually separated from all nearby Conservation Areas.
- The proposal will preserve the character and appearance of those heritage assets by maintaining their setting and avoiding visual intrusion.
- The reuse of the existing building secures its long-term conservation and contributes positively to local townscape quality.

Accordingly, the proposed conversion of Chestnut House, 69 Crumpsall Lane, preserves the setting and significance of the Crumpsall Lane, Hermitage Road, and Crumpsall Green Conservation Areas. The development fully accords with Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Section 16 of the NPPF, and Policies EN1–EN3 of the Manchester Core Strategy.

In heritage terms, the proposal is entirely acceptable and should be supported as a sustainable, conservation-led reuse of an existing building that makes a modest but positive contribution to the wider Crumpsall townscape.