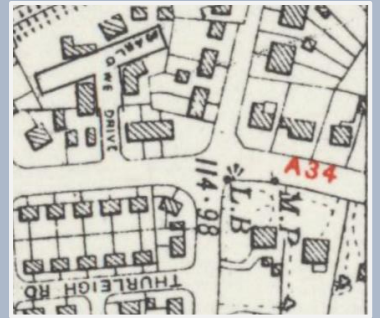
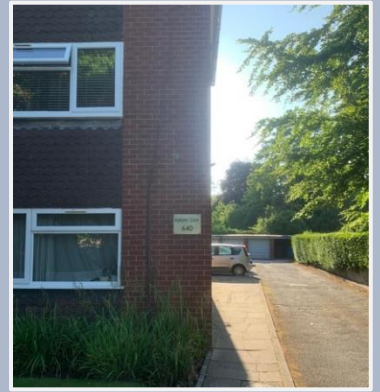


BALHOLM COURT,
640 WILMSLOW RD,
MANCHESTER
M20 6AH

DESIGN & HERITAGE STATEMENT:

PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT



Prepared by:

Hamilton-Grey Heritage Services

Sophie Hamilton-Grey [BA (Hons), M.Arch ARB]



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aim of this Report

The purpose of this report is to assess the heritage significance of Balholm Court, Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 6AH, a building located in the suburb of Didsbury, south of Manchester city centre, to evaluate the impact of proposals to the subject building. The property is not listed but is located within the Ballbrook Conservation area. It is not located in close proximity to any listed buildings.

The proposals have been put together by a multi-disciplinary team, led by architectural practice, ME Architects who have prepared a dedicated statement which explains the design rationale and assesses the site and wider context.

This heritage statement has been prepared by Hamilton Grey Heritage Services Ltd. We specialise in the conservation, reinterpretation and redevelopment of heritage assets and exclusively work within the historic environment. Our company comprises Specialist (Conservation) architects as well as heritage consultants with relevant planning experience. This report has been prepared to cover the heritage issues associated with the site and the new design proposals.

The report therefore includes:

- A historical and characterisation assessment of the site and the area around the site;
- Brief Planning History, planning archives and historic archival findings.
- Summary of design proposals
- Impact Assessment of proposals
- Policy Compliance and Justification Statement

The report is prepared to support the planning application to extend the building.

1.2 Authorship, Methodology

This report has been prepared by Sophie Hamilton-Grey [BA(hons) MArch, ARB, PG Dip], Specialist (Conservation) architect and heritage consultant. Sophie has worked exclusively within the historic environment since qualifying as an architect for some of the industry leaders including Purcell LLP and Heritage Architecture Ltd. She has worked in London on the repair and conservation of some of the city's most significant buildings and landmarks including Liberty Department Store, London Wall Buildings and the Hampton Court Estate. She has extensive experience across different building typologies and designations including Grade I, II* and Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

Sophie was extensively involved with the RICS Project of the Year 2016, Cardigan Castle, a Grade I-listed building and Scheduled Ancient Monument. The site of Wales' first Eisteddfod in 1176, this large-scale regeneration scheme has been heralded as one of the most significant regeneration projects in Wales' history.

1.3 Overarching Conservation Policy Context

Historic England's Conservation Principles and the NPPF define 'conservation' as 'the process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and where appropriate enhances its significance'¹. Some legislation refers to 'preservation' as an alternative concept. Case Law interprets this as 'preservation from harm'. That includes harm to its historic significance, not simply its physical fabric.

Legislation has been developed to offer protection to recognised "heritage assets" within the built environment. This was prompted by, and, continued to evolve against a background of turbulence during the twentieth and twenty first centuries, in part, as a consequence of the widescale building development and re-development prompted by the industrial revolution but then further still following the catastrophic losses of fabric from the second world war bombings. Accordingly, policy has been developed in a piecemeal fashion and to some degree on a needs-be basis.

The notion of 'Significance' uses a variety of criteria to identify the 'essence' of what makes a heritage asset valued and worthy of protection. The law refers to various pre-agreed notions: namely the architectural, historic, artistic, and archaeological interest of heritage assets and the character that derives from those attributes.



In summary, in determining applications, Local Planning Authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any Heritage Assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.

The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of a proposal or its significance (Para. 207).

The duty stipulates that in determining applications, Local Planning Authorities should take into account: : The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to (optimal) viable uses consistent with their conservation; The positive contribution the conservation of Heritage Assets can make to sustainable communities, including their economic vitality; and : The desirability of new development making a contribution to local character and distinctiveness (Para. 210).

Any harm to, or loss of the significance of a Designated Heritage Asset from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting, should require clear and convincing justification (Para 213).

Where development proposals will lead to 'less than substantial harm to the significance of a Designated Heritage Asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use (Para 215).

One of the key principals at the heart of the (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and conservation policy more generally is understanding the difference between 'designated' and 'non-designated Heritage Assets'. 'Designated Assets' qualify for statutory protection and thereby receive 'special consideration' under the National Planning Policy Framework (The NPPF). Any proposals with the potential to affect a 'Designated Asset' must be impartially assessed to ensure that they preserve or enhance that asset²¹¹.

If an asset has *not* been formally designated, it does not necessarily mean that it does not possess any heritage significance but rather, simply, that there is no such onerous burden under the NPPF as for those which are statutorily protected.

It is Historic England and Local authorities who are powered with designating different types of heritage assets. Historic England's Definition of a Designated Heritage Asset is as follows: "*A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.*"

In this case, the building itself is therefore not a dedicated heritage asset and as such does not qualify for any statutory protection under the act in its own right. Accordingly, there is no obligation for the detailed assessment of the building and its environs.

The Conservation Area, however, is however such an asset, placing additional burden and consideration on decision-making within the Council and indeed at national (governmental) level. Section 69 of the Act deals with designation of Conservation Areas specifically and dictates that "When considering any planning application... a local planning authority must pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area".

Critically, however, and often mis-quoted or misapplied, this statutory protection is applicable to the Conservation Area as a whole. Smaller proposals and those that cannot be viewed from the public domain are therefore arguably far less burdened by this holistic obligation than those developments that might be substantially larger or more impactful and therefore creating a more dominating presence. It is considered that the scale of the proposals here would have a limited impact upon the Conservation Area as a whole, however, this is still a material consideration, and an assessment has been made upon the impact of the proposals as dictated by policy.

Simply put (and established by case law), any development that merely maintains the status quo would satisfy the statutory consideration. Thereby, technically speaking, a non-contributing asset could be replaced like-for-like by a similarly non-contributing asset. That said, however, separately from this burden, the policies in the NPPF seek to positively improve conservation areas, not merely preserve the status quo. Most explicitly, paragraph 210(c) requires that local planning authorities take into account "*the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*"



2 GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1 Site Description

Balholm Court is located at 640 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 6AH and comprises a series of 9 flats over three floors. The site is accessed from Wilmslow Road to the north of East Didsbury centre.

The 20th century building is of little architectural merit, built in a t-plan and constructed with red brick and a concrete tile roof. The windows are of PVCu double glazed and there are a number of vertical spandrel panels between windows with a hexagonal tile. The application site consists of ground and 2 upper storeys of flats all of which are of residential use. The building is accessed from an entrance to the north.

Balholm Court is located at the southern boundary of the Ballbrook Conservation Area, characterised as a Victorian and Edwardian suburb of Manchester. The site is located on the southeast boundary of the conservation area, that also directly connects to two other conservation areas and in close proximity to a third., see figures 4 and 5.

The site being located on Wilmslow Road is one of the primary conduits of traffic towards the centre of Manchester.



Figure 1 – East elevation of Balholm Court facing Wilmslow Road, but largely screened by well-established trees to the site boundary



Figure 2 – General Site Location, plot identified in red © Google Maps



Figure 3 – Aerial view showing local context and relationship to the neighbouring buildings

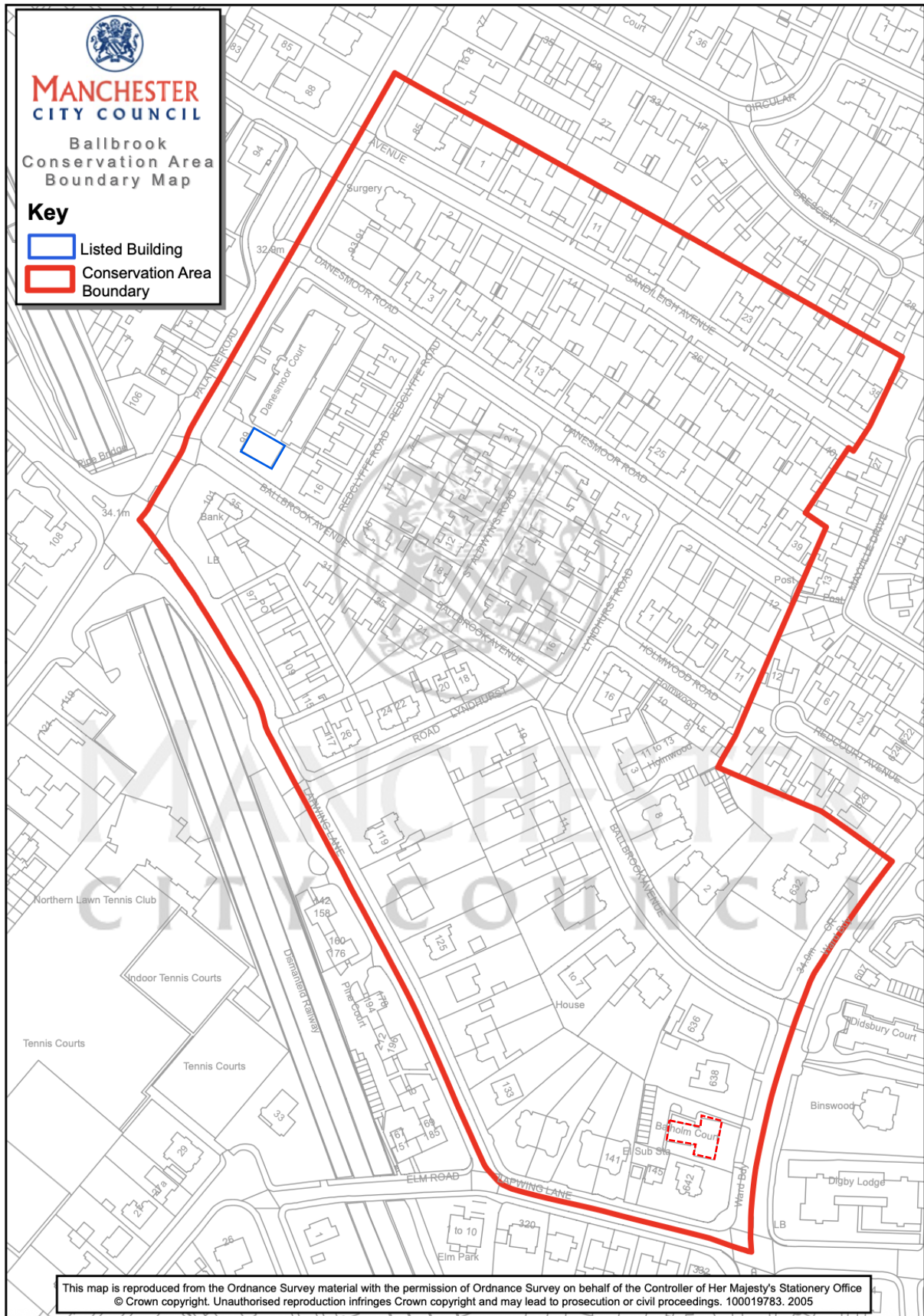


Figure 4 – Ballbrook Conservation Area Map, with Balholm Court identified by the red dashed line © Manchester City Council



2.2 Site Constraints - Relevant policy / Material Heritage Considerations

The site has the following designations:

- Not a designated heritage asset (building is not listed).
- Located within a Conservation Area (Ballbrook Conservation Area) and directly abuts two further conservation areas and is in close proximity to a third. Due to the nature of the proposals there is no potential impact on these surrounding conservation areas and therefore potential impact has not been assessed.
- Is not identified as a non-designated heritage asset by Manchester City Council
- Is not located in close proximity to Listed Buildings.

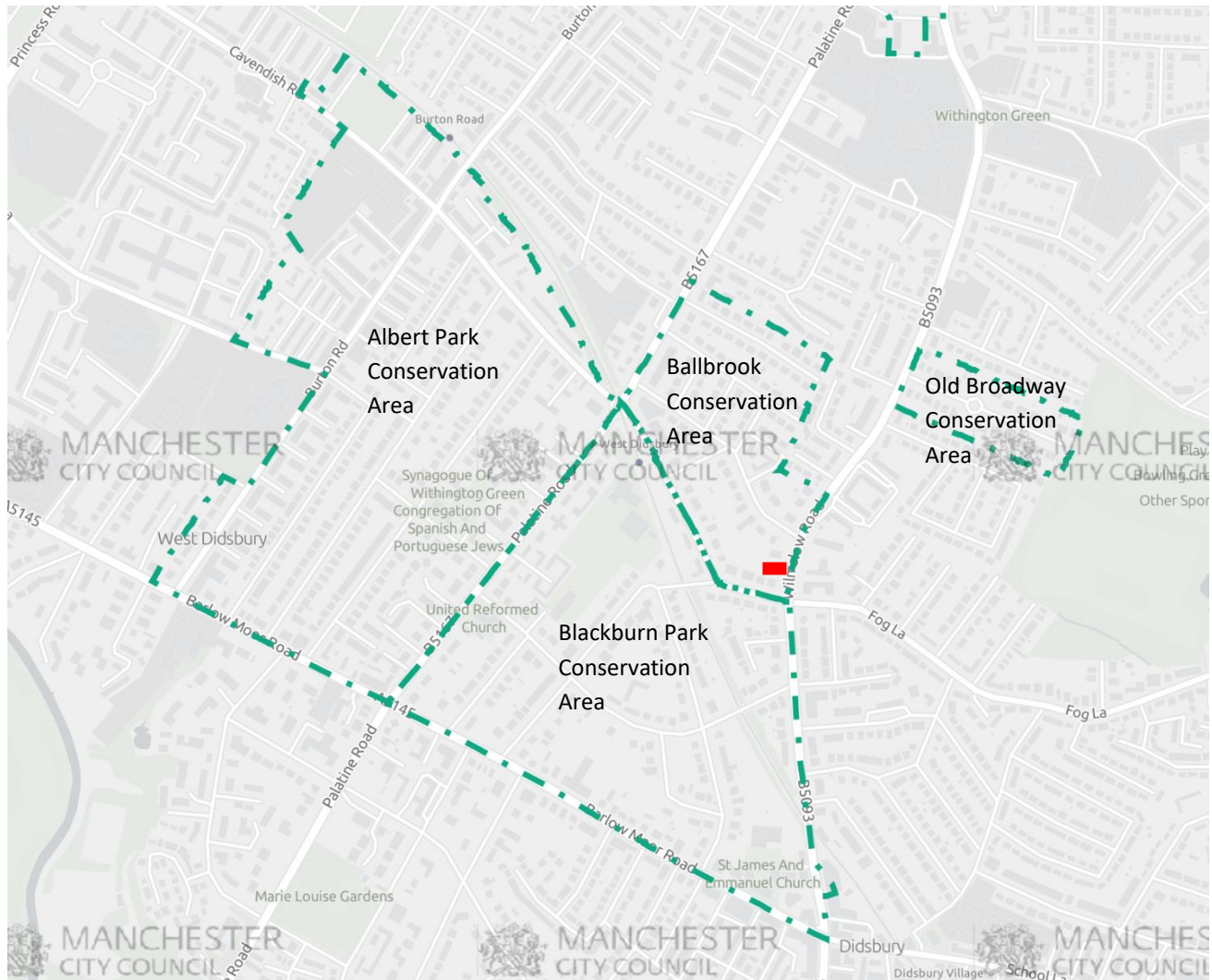


Figure 5 – Map showing the site (red) within the Ballbrook Conservation Area and close proximity to three other conservation areas © Manchester City Council

3 CHARACTERISATION APPRAISAL

3.1 Brief History of the Property and its immediate Surroundings

Prior to the first development of the site, the land was utilised for open field agricultural purposes as can be seen on the 1848 Ordnance Survey map in Figure 5. At this time the primary suburban village centres of Didsbury to the south and Withington



further north had been established, and sporadic development along the primary carriageways including Wilmslow Road had been established.



Figure 6 – 1848 Ordnance Survey Map

It wasn't until later in 19th century when the Didsbury Station and the railway connecting into central Manchester was established and the area began to see more extensive residential development. By 1895 the site of Balholm court still however maintained as undeveloped agricultural land. At the beginning of the 20th century that development extended north of the railway station and by 1911 a detached Edwardian villa was constructed at 640 Wilmslow Road. The house built on the site survived through the war as seen in figure 6.



Figure 7 – 1911 Ordnance Survey Map



Figure 8 – 1945 Aerial Image © Historic England



Figure 9 – The surviving Edwardian Vill at 638 Wilmslow Road, the site to the north of Balholm Court which reflects what the previous house at 640 Wilmslow Road may have looked like.

The exact date of demolition of the Edwardian villa and construction of the current Balholm Court is not precisely known but the below newspaper article suggests that the building was completed and flats being sold in 1973.

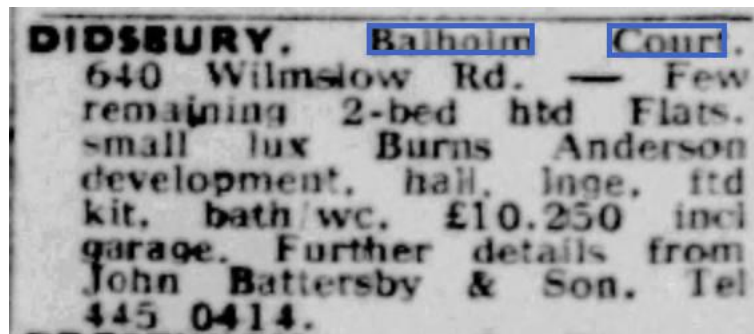


Figure 10 – Manchester Evening Newspaper extract from 5th September 1973 advertising flats for sale at Balholm Court. © The British Newspaper Archive



Figure 11 – View of Balholm Court taken from the northeast.

The current building was built in a single phase to a larger plan form than the previous building. In 1990 a planning permission was granted to install a pitched roof to the building, presuming that it previously had a flat roof. The site has also lost its boundary treatment to Wilmslow Road with the brick wall being rebuilding and entrance piers being removed.

3.2 Ballbrook Conservation Area

The property lies within the Ballbrook Conservation Area which was first designated in 1991. The statutory definition of a conservation area is an “area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. Any proposals on the site therefore have the potential to affect the conservation area. The conservation area takes its name from the Ball Brook, a small watercourse that ran southeast to northwest, as can be seen in figure 5.

The area first consisted of open agricultural fields, with large houses being constructed on Wilmslow Road, Lapwing Lane and Palatine Road. The site sits on Wilmslow Road on the southeast edge of the conservation area.

The area changed significantly 1897 to 1913 when three-storey Victorian and Edwardian detached and semi-detached villas were constructed. During this period Ball Brook was culverted, which had historically demarcated the boundary between



Didsbury and Withington, and due to the annexing of Withington and Didsbury by Manchester in 1904, the boundary lost its significance.

To the west side of the conservation area on Lapwing Lane, survives a terrace with residential accommodation above shops, designed by George Westcott in an Edwardian Arts and Crafts style with cast iron and glass canopy.



Figure 12 – View along Ballbrook Avenue, showing typical two storey Edwardian detached and semi-detached houses.

The conservation area is based upon its character of these large detached and semi-detached residential villas and housing along tree lined roads as an Edwardian suburb of Manchester. The buildings across the conservation area share a common building language and material pallet that reflect the period of Edwardian suburban development.

The dominant materials used across the conservation area includes glazed red brick and red clay tile roofs. The red brick chimneys whilst not overly ornate, are a character feature of the buildings in the conservation area, having projecting courses and red clay chimney pots. Most of the houses are constructed with red clay ridges, terracotta detailing as well as using half-timbered gables with rendered panels.

Rectangular, circular and octagonal window bays were also a feature topped with gables or conical roofs. Not many houses survive with leaded stained-glass panels, but the windows of the houses were a feature that included leaded panels, timber sash and case and timber casement windows.

The houses along Wilmslow Road were taller three storey Victorian houses in comparison to the majority of two storey Edwardian dwellings in the conservation area.



Figure 13 – View of two storey Villa on Lapwing Lane with surviving boundary treatment.



Figure 14 – View of the terrace Edwardian shopping arcade and terrace on Lapwing Lane.

Although not indicated on the Manchester City Council Conservation Area Appraisal. There is just one listed building within the conservation area, being the former district Bank at 99 Palatine Road (updated and indicated on figure 4 above). This building is not in close proximity to the subject site.

Manchester City Council identify that the primary aim of the conservation area is to conserve the character and quality of the buildings and spaces in-between. Whilst attention should be made to “*maintaining harmony to building heights, the type and colour of materials*”.



4 EXISTING BUILDING AND SITE CONTEXT

4.1 Existing Building, Condition, Layout

The existing building is a residential unit consisting of 9 no. flats over three floors. Constructed in the 1970's, the only recorded alteration to the building was the introduction of a pitched roof in 1990.

The buildings floor heights are slightly lower than the traditional Victorian / Edwardian buildings surrounding the site, meaning that the current building doesn't harmonise with the streetscape and is shorter over three floors than its neighbours. The roof pitch is also shallower than the neighbours. Whilst the pitched roof gives the building greater height, it is not utilised for accommodation like many of the neighbouring buildings which have attic rooms.

A typical plan and the east elevation of the building are included below.

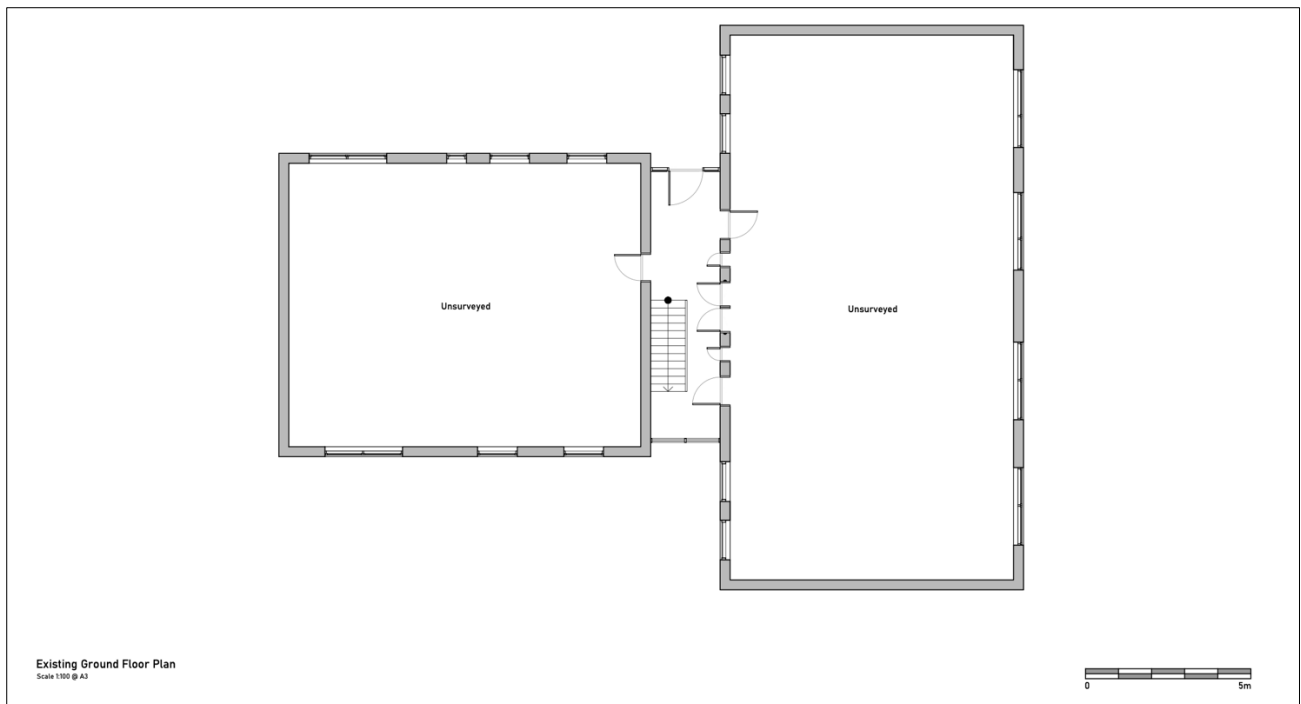


Figure 15 – Ground Floor Plan which is repeated across the three floors.

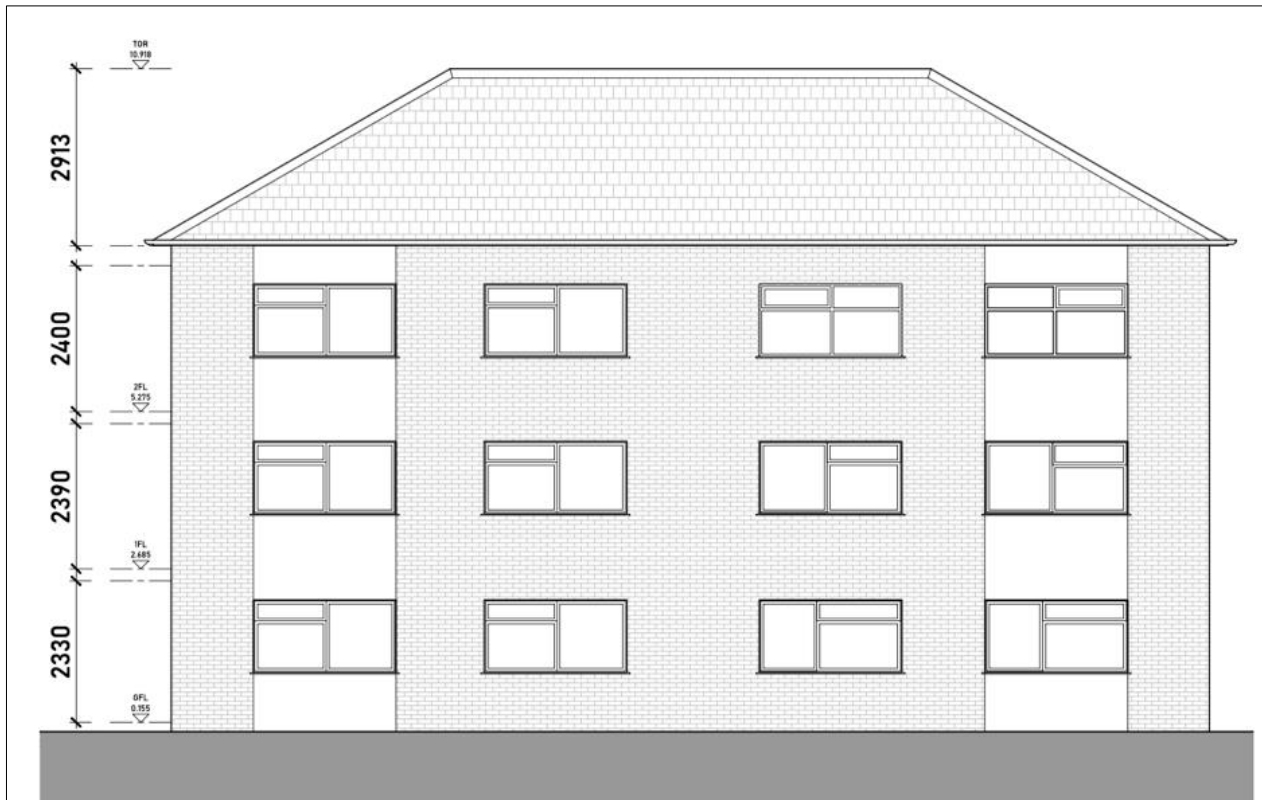


Figure 16 – Existing East elevation

4.2 Existing Townscape Assessment

The townscape assessment has been put together with consideration of the Council's Conservation Area Appraisal Information found on the Manchester City Council's Planning Department section of the website and an analysis of the vicinity of the site.

Local Character and Context, Architectural Style including Key Buildings

The suburbs of Withington and Didsbury whilst having earlier origins, are dominated by the Victorian and Edwardian suburban residential styles that reflect the development of the area between 1850 and 1920. Whilst there are some buildings that are unique in their architectural style, these are predominantly non-residential commercial buildings. This is highlighted in the buildings to the western side of the conservation area on Palatine Road and Lapwing Lane that includes the Grade II listed former district bank at 99 Palatine Road.

As outlined in section 3.2 above, the conservation area has a distinct character in regard to the suburban detached and semi-detached residential houses. The treelined streets and contributing established trees within gardens also add to the "leafy" suburb character.

The area was established around the existing streets of Wilmslow Road to the east, Lapwing Lane to the south / southwest and Palatine Road to the west. The street plan to the south of the conservation area mimics the line of Lapwing Lane but then forms a more regular street plan further north with roads being perpendicular or parallel to Wilmslow Road or Palatine Road.

Whilst partially within the conservation area, the buildings along Wilmslow Road play a key role in providing context to Balholm Court and the streetscape. Balholm Court reflects and relates to the 20th century phase of development within the locality, which includes:

- Digby Lodge – Four storey residential block
- Didsbury Court – three storey residential block



- Balbrook Court – 3no. three storey residential complexes
- Binswood Hall - Modern apartment block to south of hall.

These buildings alongside the historic Victorian and Edwardian houses along Wilmslow Road and Lapwing Lane create the immediate context to the site. Digby Court is utilitarian, whilst Didsbury Court and Balbrook Court make a slight reference to an art-deco style. Whilst the modern development within the grounds of Binswood Hall is a four-storey modern 21st century residential building. The impact of this later development is largely limited due to the well-established trees along Wilmslow Road that largely inhibit views between the modern buildings and character of the conservation area.

Built Density, Key Views and Topography

The site is located within a suburban area of relatively low density of housing with the residential units predominantly being of detached or semi-detached residential units. The Edwardian part of the conservation area was known as the Raddcliffe Estate and follows a planned arrangement of streets. The housing estate hasn't however been attributed to an architect of merit or of any innovative planning design. Each building was laid out with a garden to the perimeter that provides space between each building. There are no parks or other plots that reduce this density. Balholm Court is one of the apartment blocks along Wilmslow Road that increase the density of residents in the area but as each of these has largely conformed to the plot style with surrounding garden and landscaping, means that they have not provided a feeling of increased building density.

No key views are identified by Manchester City Council in their planning documents, and no significant historic buildings are within the vicinity of the site.

Balholm Court and the surrounding area are of flat topography which alongside the established natural barriers of trees means that buildings are seldom seen from a distance. The site is largely screened from Wilmslow Road by the well-established trees to the eastern boundary of the site, however it can be seen from the south from Lapwing Lane.

Townscape Heritage

Whilst the building is located within a conservation, it is not listed or identified as a non-designated heritage asset by Manchester City Council. Although mentioned in the conservation area information by the local authority, it is not due to it being a building of merit, purely as part of the later development within the area.

We have included the Historic England listed buildings map of the area as to confirm the location and the absence of proximity to listed buildings. The proposals are deemed to have no impact on nearby listed buildings on the account of its low bulk and mass.

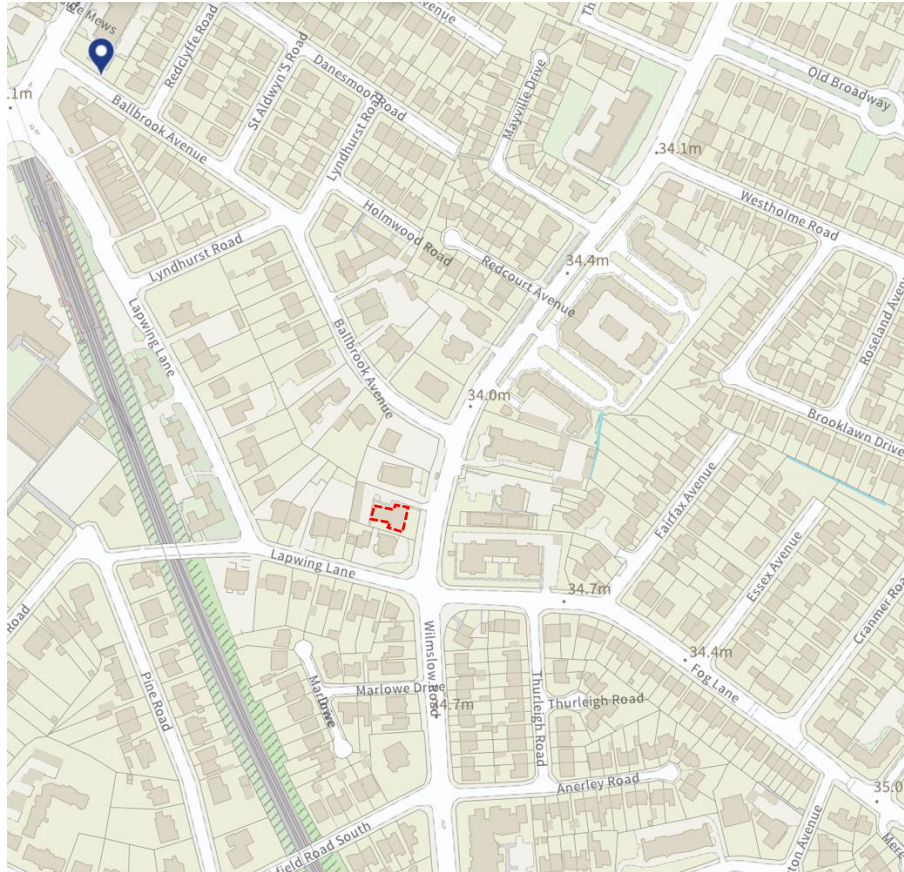


Figure 17 – Historic England Listed Building Map Search showing the subject site with red dashed line and scarceness of listed buildings

Building Types and Spaces

As noted previously, the area surrounding the subject site is dominated by residential buildings of either detached or semi-detached scale. Whilst there are some low-rise apartment blocks that line Wilmslow Road. We have below outlined the different building types as to show the range of buildings in proximity to the site. As can be seen, the majority of buildings are detached and semi-detached Victorian / Edwardian houses, whilst there is a concentration of apartment blocks around Wilmslow Road.

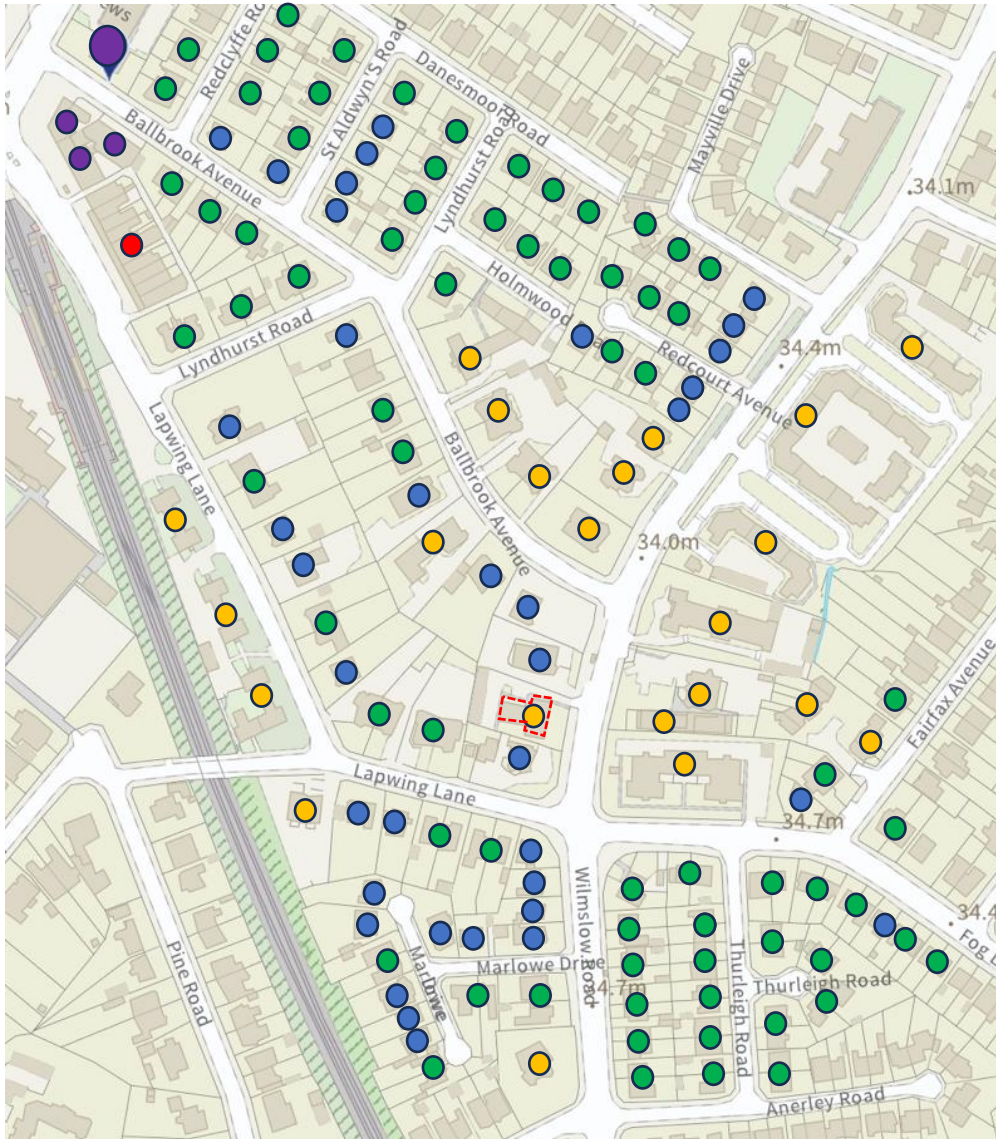


Figure 18 – Map showing the building types within the proximity to the subject site. Blue dots represent Victoria / Edwardian detached houses, green dots the Victorian / Edwardian semi-detached houses, yellow dots represent buildings (converted detached villas or modern apartment blocks) with multiple residential units, the red dot represents the mixed commercial and residential Edwardian terrace and the purple dots are historic commercial properties.

We have below provided a gazetteer of the modern and converted apartment sites along Wilmslow Road to show the typical apartment properties within the vicinity of Balholm Court.



654 Wilmslow Road – Converted detached Edwardian villa.



Digby House – Later 20th century apartment block.



Didsbury Court – Art deco apartment block



630 Wilmslow Road – New apartment block in style of Edwardian / Victorian Villa



630 Wilmslow Road – Converted
apartment block of Edwardian /
Victorian Villa



632 Wilmslow Road – New
apartment block in style of
Edwardian / Victorian Villa

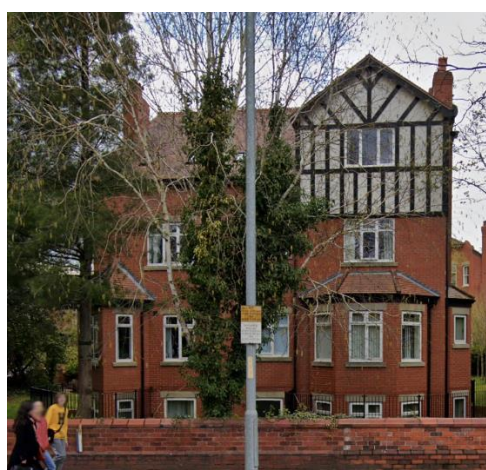


Table 1 – Typical buildings on Wilmslow Road



5 SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT

5.1 Introduction, Methodology

The NPPF 2024 (Para 207) states that "In determining applications local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should also be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on that significance." This assessment appraises the significance of the existing building and its setting, the Conservation Area.

Evaluation of significance (Methodology) The key criteria for assessing the significance of a heritage asset has been recently updated by Historic England in 'Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets', published 21 October 2019. These definitions are in alignment with the NPPF definition of significance and are as follows:

- Archaeological interest – There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
- Architectural and artistic interest – These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skills, like sculpture.
- Historic interest – An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity. In order to determine the significance of a certain component of a heritage asset the sum of its archaeological interest, architectural and artistic interest and historic interest needs to be disaggregated and determined. The grading of values is considered using three categories: low, medium and high.

In this instance, the Heritage Assets which have the potential to be affected is the Ballbrook Conservation Area.

5.2 Significance Assessment: Balholm Court

Archaeological interest:

The site being open field agricultural land followed by the detached Victorian / Edwardian Villa which was subsequently demolished and the current apartment block being constructed on the site. The site is not located close to or near any sites that hold archaeological potential. The site therefore holds little to no archaeological interest with low to no archaeological potential.

Architectural and artistic interest:

Balholm Court was constructed in the 1970s to a utilitarian design with its subsequent pitched roof addition doing little to enhance the buildings architectural interest. Although the building does not have a negative impact on the conservation area, it was constructed to provide residential units with no design, construction, craftsmanship or decorative merit and therefore holds no architectural interest.

The building does not have any artistic interest.

Historic interest:

The building is not associated with any past event or person of historical note and therefore holds no historic interest.

Significance of Balholm Court

Overall, 'Balholm Court has no archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic interest. Although located within the Ballbrook Conservation Area, the building is not a positive contributor and is not identified as a building of merit. The building therefore has negligible to no significance.



6 PLANNING HISTORY

6.1 Planning History, Balholm Court

A summary of the planning history for the site(s) held online is tabulated below (excluding withdrawn applications):

App No	Date	Proposed works	Decision
Case Files Under ref: "Balholm Court, 640 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 6AH"			
037541	16 August 1990	Erection of pitched roof over existing block of flats.	Approved

Table 2: Planning History, Balholm Court, 640 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 6AH

In summary, the only change to the building appears to have been the erection of a pitched roof over the existing block of flats in 1990.

7 PROPOSALS

7.1 Introduction

The proposals are summarised below preceding with the architect's proposed drawings:



Figure 19 – Proposed Site Plan



Figure 20 – Proposed (north) Elevation

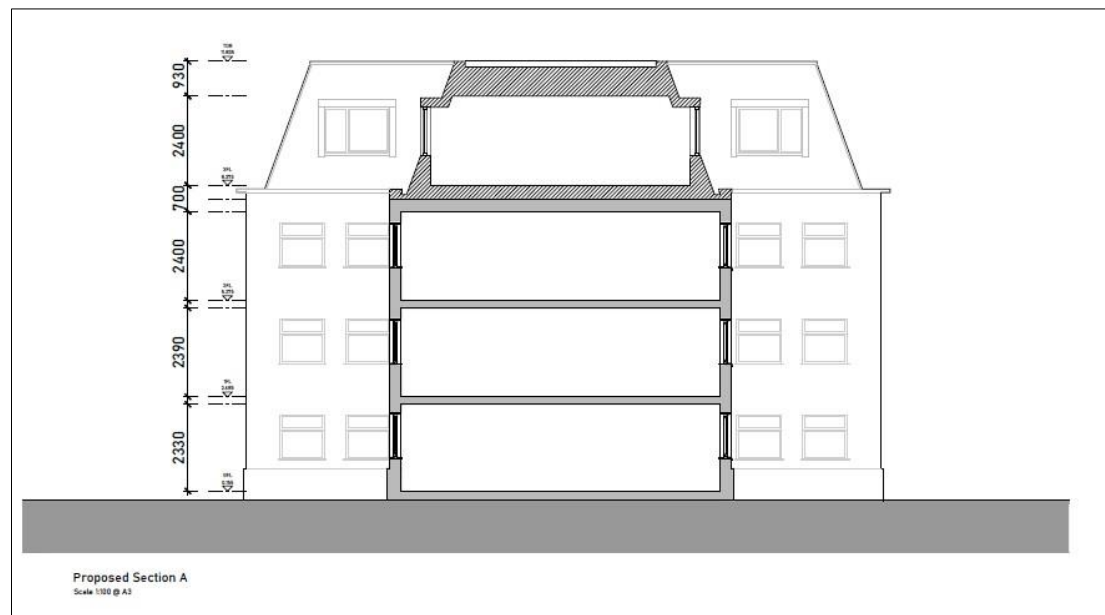


Figure 21 – Proposed Section

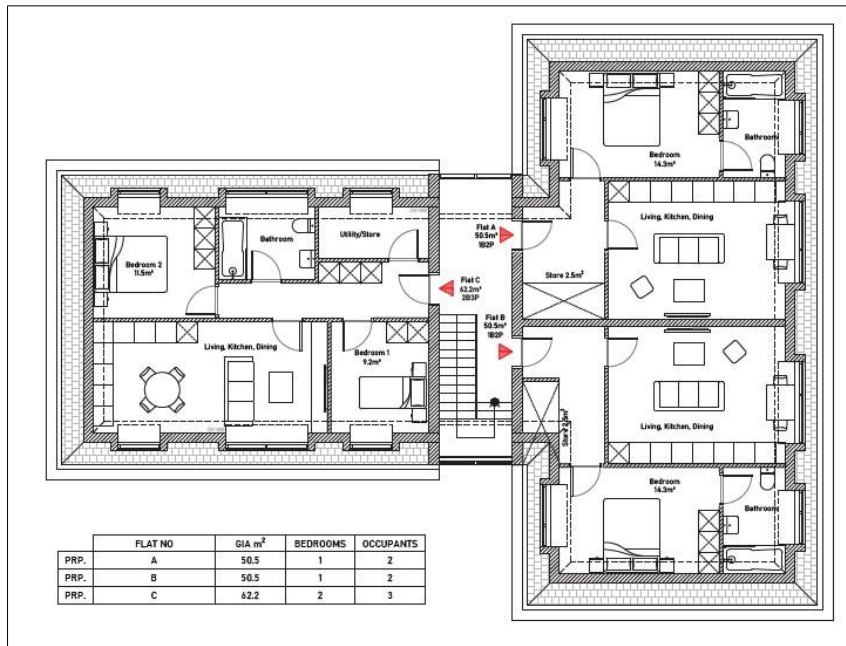


Figure 22 – Proposed Floor Plans

Description of the works are given below

Description of Works
<u>External works:</u>
Replacement of pitched roof with mansard roof with additional residential accommodation.
External refurbishment to all existing elements, such as removal of cladding and introduction of new brick slips to the front elevation, and brick plinth to the ground floor level.
New entry door to the block
Installation of entry intercom system
Upgraded boundary treatment
Renewed pathways
Introduction of additional parking spaces to the north side of the site
New dedicated cycle parking spaces for the existing residents
New bird feeders
<u>Internal works:</u>
Internal corridors repainted on all floors
Internal ceilings repainted on all floors
New flooring to communal areas on all floors
New communal post box



New flat numbers to all units

Table 3 – Description of works

8 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 Introduction

The proposals have been outlined within the previous section.

This section will evaluate the potential impact of the proposals upon:

- Ballbrook Conservation Area

The impact assessment on the special interest of the statutorily Designated Heritage Asset considers whether the proposals cause no harm, substantial harm or less than substantial harm to the heritage asset by altering or eroding the authenticity and of the heritage values identified (these can be aesthetic, historic, communal and evidential).

8.2 Impact Assessment Criteria

The purpose of *assessing the effects likely to result from the proposed development*, (established criteria) have been employed. The impact of the proposals has been assessed against receptor sensitivities, ranging from:

- Substantial (high) adverse: a fundamental change in the appreciation of the resource and its historic context, or setting, involving the degradation of a cultural heritage site of national importance, or the demolition of any grade of statutorily listed building.
- Moderate (medium) adverse: a change that makes an appreciable difference to the ability to understand the historic context, or setting, resulting in extensive long-term change to the setting or structure of listed buildings.
- Minor adverse: effects which create dis-benefits to the historic fabric of the area but may also provide benefits. May involve demolition of an undesignated historic building, or limited encroachment upon a Conservation Area, or historic parkland, where intrusive views are created or slight impacts upon its integrity would result.
- Negligible / Neutral: the development would not materially affect the status quo.
- Minor beneficial: perceptible improvement in the setting of, or structural condition of, or character of listed buildings or Conservation Areas.
- Moderate beneficial: effects which help to explain the significance and history of the site and surrounding area; ensuring the long-term future of Listed Buildings and any other buildings of architectural significance, by providing viable and appropriate uses; resulting in the loss of less significant fabric in the Listed Buildings but enabling a viable long-term use for the buildings.
- Substantial beneficial: effects which ensure the long-term future of the most significant historic fabric by providing viable and appropriate uses and, impacts which improve the setting of a Listed Building or historic parkland and, which repair and conserve the most significant fabric of the Listed Buildings.

8.3 Outline Impact Assessment

The overall proposals have been divided into individual elements in order to undertake a detailed assessment of impact. We have then provided an overall impact rating for the proposals as a whole. We have grouped the proposals scheduled out within the previous chapter for brevity and in line with the impact of the proposals.

The impact assessment considers the proposed alterations on townscape terms considering, (where applicable) the effect on designated heritage assets, in this case, the Conservation Area.

Proposed Changes	Impact
Replacement of pitched roof with mansard roof with additional residential accommodation.	The proposal will change the appearance of the top of the building, meaning that accommodation is introduced within the roof level that is similar to the majority of the historic buildings of this type in the conservation area. The steeper pitched roof is



	more in keeping with the conservation area. The change of roof materials that can be seen, i.e. red clay tile is in keeping with the conservation area. The minor increase in building height will not adversely impact the neighbouring buildings as the current roofline is lower than many of the other buildings of this type. The proposed change will have a <u>neutral impact</u> on the conservation area.
External refurbishment to all existing elements, such as removal of cladding and introduction of new brick slips to the front elevation, and brick plinth to the ground floor level.	The proposal involves external refurbishment of the front elevation, including the removal of existing cladding and the introduction of new red brick slips, with a brick plinth at ground floor level. The use of traditional materials and detailing is more in keeping with the character and material palette of the conservation area. The proposed works are therefore considered to have a <u>minor beneficial impact</u> on the conservation area.
New entry door to the block	The proposal will introduce a new entry door to the site. This is not expected to materially alter its appearance or character. The change would therefore have a <u>neutral impact</u> on the conservation area.
Installation of entry intercom system	The proposal includes the installation of an entry intercom system, which would represent a minor and discreet intervention that has no effect on the character of the building or the wider streetscape, resulting in a <u>neutral impact</u> on the conservation area.
Upgraded boundary treatment	The proposal involves an upgraded boundary treatment, with materials and design sympathetic to the surroundings. The change is therefore considered to have a <u>neutral impact</u> on the conservation area.
Renewed pathways	The proposal includes the renewal of existing pathways. The works would not alter the layout or materials significantly and are therefore considered to have a <u>neutral impact</u> on the conservation area.
Introduction of additional parking spaces to the north side of the site	The proposal will introduce parking to the north side of the site, which reflects many of the residential sites across the conservation area. The proposal will have a <u>neutral impact</u> on the conservation area.
New dedicated cycle parking spaces for the existing residents	The proposal will be introduced to a discreet location to the south of the site that cannot be seen from the street. The proposal will have a <u>neutral impact</u> on the conservation area.
New bird feeders	The proposal includes the installation of bird feeders, which are minor and unobtrusive features within the garden. They would have a <u>neutral impact</u> on the conservation area.

Table 4 - Impact Assessment

Conclusion

The proposals meet the Obligations of section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The proposals cause no harm to any designated heritage asset or its setting and therefore no public balancing benefits are required. The proposals therefore preserve the conservation area as a whole (NPPF chapter 16 Preserving and enhancing the historic environment) and enhance the overall usability of the property.

Overall, the proposals are considered to have a neutral impact on the conservation area, and the building remains a neutral contributor to the conservation area.

9 OUTLINE POLICY COMPLIANCE & JUSTIFICATION

In this section, the proposal is evaluated against the following relevant National policies



The 'Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990', is of relevance to the development proposals as 'the Act' provides specific protection for buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest, over and above that provided by the wider principals of planning / development management. The legislation imposes specific requirements to consider the physical and visual impact of any works proposed which may impact on the special architectural or historic interest of dedicated heritage 'assets'. We have provided full details as to the relevant identified assets within previous sections of this report.

The 'key test', derived from the legislation and subsequent guidance, is whether the proposed changes make any negative difference to these assets' significance and / or an appreciation their special interest(s). Fundamentally, the legislation requires decision-makers to apply proportionate weight to the desirability of preserving the significant fabric, architectural character and historic interest of a designated heritage asset when determining planning proposals, balanced against identifiable public benefits. This requires appropriate analysis of the Site as a whole.

The decision-maker must, therefore, use its judgement (based on relevant material evidence) to understand and objectively define the impact on the affected designated heritage asset(s), noting that change does not necessarily equate to 'harm'. Therefore, the weight to be applied by the decision-maker must be proportionate to the status of the affected heritage asset and the nature of the proposed change.

This Heritage Statement aims to provide the evidence to appropriately balance consideration of the Current Proposals in accordance with the requirements of the 1990 Act. No harm has been found.

In this section, the proposal is evaluated against the following relevant National Policies:

- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- NPPF (Revised December 2024) and NPPG
- Manchester City Council Core Strategy Development Plan Document and Greater Manchester Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan

9.1 NPPF Considerations

The policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) constitute the Government's view of what sustainable development means in practice. The definition requires development to give due weight to the appropriate conservation of heritage assets in order to be defined as sustainable development.

In accordance with the legislation, the NPPF's core principles, which underpins decision-taking, requires that Planning decisions should contribute to conserving Designated Heritage Assets in a manner proportionate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations. In this instance the 'heritage assets' is the named Conservation Area.

The NPPF stresses that "great weight" should be given to the conservation of Designated Heritage Assets, emphasising that the more important the asset, the greater that weight should be. The need to avoid "substantial harm" to such assets is outlined in terms of: demolition, alteration, or the compromise of its setting.

Key Relevant Policy

Part 16 of the NPPF details policies for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. It states that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed by future generations.

Paragraph 207 states that:

"In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance...."

Paragraph 210 says that in determining applications, local authorities should take account of:

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



6.2 the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality;

6.3 the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraph 212 says:

"When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a Designated Heritage Asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance."

Paragraph 213 says that *"any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a Designated Heritage Asset, including from development within its setting, should require clear and convincing justification"*.

Paragraph 215 says *"where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a Designated Heritage Asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use"*.

Response: As recommended by NPPF, an assessment of the significance of the heritage asset has been provided as part of the application. The assessment is proportionate to the importance of the assets being considered.

The assessments and analysis that have been carried out have not only informed the design process but are also in sufficient detail to assess the potential impact of the proposals on the significance of the building and its setting.

To identify the heritage values and character of the site, a thorough analysis was undertaken in the first few sections of this report. The proposals have been carefully designed to be sympathetic to the heritage values of the setting and character of the Conservation Area, a formally designated heritage asset.

The proposals have been developed with careful consideration of the existing context in mind. Alterations are all minor and have a neutral impact on the character of the conservation area.

It is therefore considered that the proposed works cause "no harm"; Nevertheless, a key balancing benefit has been identified, the provision of housing stock.

9.2 Manchester City Council Core Strategy Plan Document and Greater Manchester Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan

Policy EN 3 Heritage of the core strategy states:

"Throughout the City, the Council will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods, including those of the City Centre.

New developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance, including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas and archaeological remains."

Policy EN 3 and Policy JP-P2: Heritage states:

"We will proactively manage and work with partners to positively conserve, sustain and enhance our historic environment and heritage assets and their settings..."

Development proposals affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets and/or their settings will be considered having regard to national planning policy."

Response: The proposals overall neutral impact on the conservation meets the Councils heritage policy in supporting the preservation of the conservation area. Ensuring that a neutral contributor to the conservation area can continue to provide and increase the supply of housing balanced against not impacting the setting of the conservation area. As outlined above the development and this heritage statement has considered the relevant national planning policy.



10 CONCLUSION

In conclusion the Heritage Statement has outlined:

- Balholm Court is a modern, purpose-built block of flats located on the southeast boundary of the Ballbrook Conservation Area located to the north of Didsbury village. The site is located on Wilmslow Road, that runs along the eastern boundary of the conservation area. The Conservation Area is characterised as a Victorian to Edwardian suburb of predominantly detached and semi-detached residential houses.
- The apartment block was constructed in the 1970s and is of negligible significance, making it a neutral contributor to the conservation area. The building is not statutorily listed; however, being within a conservation area, it is subject to the NPPF's heritage and conservation policies. It is also not locally listed or identified as a non-designated heritage asset by Manchester City Council.
- The building is a neutral contributor to the conservation area, being neither of high-quality architectural design and not of age, however the building does not adversely impact the conservation area being of similar height to the surrounding buildings and does not negatively impact the conservation area.
- The proposals to the site have the potential to impact the Ballbrook Conservation Area and this Heritage Statement has completed an impartial assessment as required by the NPPF. The proposals, including construction of additional storey of residential accommodation within the roof level of the property and external alterations to the existing building, have considered and utilise a palette of materials that reflect the historic buildings of the conservation area.
- The impact assessment concluded that the proposals would have a neutral impact on the conservation area and not harm the designated heritage asset. The proposals satisfy the relevant clauses of the NPPF and local policies.