External Alterations to 7 Hastings Avenue, Chorlton, Wilbraham Road / Edge Lane Conservation Area, Manchester

Heritage Impact Statement

1. Introduction and Background

Planning permission is sought for external alteration works at 7 Hastings Avenue, Chorlton, Manchester M21 9JS. The property is a semi-detached late Victorian dwellinghouse located within the Wilbraham Road / Edge Lane Conservation Area, designated by Manchester City Council. Accordingly, the heritage significance of the building and its setting must be assessed together with the impact of the proposals upon that significance and upon the character and appearance of the conservation area.

This Heritage Impact Statement is submitted in support of the householder planning application and has been prepared in accordance with paragraph 207 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2024/25), which 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 and the conservation area. 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."*

The assessment in this statement is based upon the position that the proposed changes are modest in scope, are materials-led rather than structural, and are in the majority of cases designed to remove existing unsympathetic alterations and reinstate character more appropriate to the building and its conservation area setting. The level of detail in the significance assessment is proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposed works.

The property does not appear on the statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest and is therefore a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA) within a designated conservation area. The assessment addresses both the contribution of the building to the conservation area and the impact of the proposals on the building itself.

Reference is also made to planning application ref. 141750/FO/2024, approved by Manchester City Council on 8 May 2025, for elevational alterations at 8–10 Hastings Avenue, Manchester M21 9JS – immediately opposite No. 7 within the same conservation area. The approved works included replacement windows, replacement fascia, soffits and bargeboards, repair of existing mock Tudor panelling, render to sections, and associated external alterations. Significantly, approved drawing 004 RHS Elevation Proposed Rev C includes an annotation note specifying: "Remove existing casement window frames throughout the property and install new double glazed white Hornschuch uPVC casement window frames with a white foil grain effect within existing structural openings. Frame to comply with BS7950 & BS7412, to be fabricated and installed by a FENSA registered installer." The approval of white uPVC replacement windows, specified by product and material on the approved drawings, at a property directly on Hastings Avenue within the

Wilbraham Road / Edge Lane Conservation Area, is a highly material consideration in support of the current application. It demonstrates unambiguously that Manchester City Council has recently accepted uPVC window replacement as appropriate within this conservation area. The proposed heritage-style uPVC sash windows at No. 7 are entirely consistent with and supported by that precedent. Indeed, the current proposals go further in heritage terms by specifying a heritage sash profile that replicates the proportions and appearance of traditional double-hung sliding sash windows appropriate to the Victorian period of the building, rather than the casement pattern approved at 8–10 Hastings Avenue.



No 7 Hastings Avenue existing front view



No 7 Hastings Avenue existing rear view



No 9 Hastings Avenue front view (adjoining No7)

2. Significance of the Conservation Area

2.1 History

Chorlton-cum-Hardy is a suburb of south Manchester that developed substantially during the second half of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth century. The area lies to the south-west of Manchester city centre and historically formed part of the ancient township of Chorlton. The settlement expanded rapidly following the arrival of the railway at Chorlton-cum-Hardy station in 1880, and much of the existing residential character derives from the large-scale Victorian and Edwardian suburban development that followed.

The streets in the vicinity of Wilbraham Road and Edge Lane were largely laid out and developed between approximately 1880 and 1914, reflecting the prosperous middle-class residential expansion of this part of south Manchester. Large semi-detached and detached villas and pairs of houses in red brick with terracotta and stone dressings are the dominant building types, many exhibiting architectural quality associated with the late Victorian and Arts and Crafts-influenced Edwardian periods. The generous plot sizes, boundary walls, mature trees and consistent architectural language of this area give it a distinctive suburban character of considerable historic and aesthetic value.

Hastings Avenue itself is a residential side street running off the main conservation area spine. The street is characterised by a consistent run of large semi-detached Victorian and Edwardian properties, the majority in red brick with pitched roofs, bay windows, decorative porches and sash windows – features which collectively define the character of the street and the wider conservation area.

2.2 Area Character

The Wilbraham Road / Edge Lane Conservation Area derives its special character from the consistent quality and scale of its Victorian and Edwardian residential architecture, the rhythm and massing of its semi-detached and detached properties, and the generous, well-planted character of its streets and gardens. The predominant building material is red brick, with roofs finished in natural slate. Decorative timber and painted render detailing, stone string courses, and bay windows with original sash glazing are recurring and defining features.

The key characteristics of the area that contribute to its significance include:

- Consistent late Victorian and Edwardian architectural character in red brick with slate roofs;
- Vertical emphasis in window proportions, typically double-hung timber sash windows;
- Decorative bay windows at ground and first floor, original entrance porches and canopies;
- Pitched roofs with original or sympathetic slate and period detailing to dormers and gables;
- Mature boundary treatments including brick piers, railings, and planted front gardens;
- Rear gardens and rear elevations that, although secondary, contribute to the overall urban fabric.

Some properties in the area have been subject to unsympathetic alterations over the decades, including replacement of original timber windows with uPVC, plastic cladding to dormers, and other modern interventions that detract from the character of the area. Manchester City Council's conservation area designation seeks to protect and, where possible, enhance the special interest that has survived.






Examples of properties on Wilbraham Road within the conservation area

2.3 The Site and Immediate Area

No. 7 Hastings Avenue is a substantial semi-detached late Victorian dwelling of four storeys including a basement, constructed in red brick with a pitched slate roof. The front elevation features a two-storey bay window surmounted by a second floor balcony, an original decorative porch with ornamental canopy, timber sash windows at first floor, and a front dormer above the bay. The form and scale of the property is entirely typical of the surrounding conservation area, and the building makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the street.

No. 9 Hastings Avenue immediately adjoins the property to one side and presents a well-maintained example of the original character of the pair, with slate-clad dormer, pitched roof above the bay, and original or sympathetically replaced sash windows. It provides a clear reference for the intended appearance of the restored No. 7.

The building has been subject to a series of unsympathetic alterations at various periods, most notably: plastic cladding applied to the front dormer; a flat-roofed structure with balcony and patio door replacing what should be a pitched roof above the front bay; uPVC replacement windows throughout; a first-floor rear balcony with sliding patio door that is visually intrusive and overlooks neighbouring properties; and various alterations to the side and basement elevations. The property is currently in a condition that warrants comprehensive renovation. These existing alterations collectively diminish the building's contribution to the conservation area.

The rear elevation is not visible from the public domain, and the side elevation has limited visibility. The front elevation is the primary publicly visible face and makes the most significant contribution to the character and appearance of the street and conservation area.

In terms of significance, the most important elements of the building are the original red brick front elevation with its bay, porch, and fenestration pattern; the pitched slate roof; the original scale, massing and relationship to No. 9; and the building's overall contribution to the consistent Victorian streetscape of Hastings Avenue. The rear and side elevations and the existing modern interventions (plastic cladding, flat roof above bay, uPVC windows, intrusive rear balcony) are of low or negative significance.

3. Description of Proposed Works

The proposed external alterations are described below by elevation. The works are shown on the drawings submitted with the application and should be read in conjunction with this statement. The overarching aim of the works is to undertake a sympathetic renovation of the external fabric, removing existing unsympathetic alterations and reinstating or introducing character appropriate to the building and to the conservation area.

3.1 Windows Throughout

All existing uPVC windows throughout the building are to be replaced with heritage-style uPVC sash windows. The replacement windows will replicate the proportions, profile and appearance of traditional double-hung timber sash windows appropriate to the period of the building, maintaining the vertical emphasis and traditional fenestration character that is characteristic of the conservation area. The use of heritage uPVC is considered appropriate for a renovation of this scale, where the visual outcome is sympathetic even if the material differs from the original; this approach is consistent with widespread practice in conservation areas and is an improvement upon the current uPVC windows in situ.

3.2 Front Elevation

Two significant changes are proposed to the front elevation, both aimed at restoring appropriate character to the publicly visible face of the building:

- **Front dormer:** The existing plastic cladding to the front dormer is to be removed and replaced with slate cladding. This will restore the appropriate roofscape material and bring the dormer into visual harmony with the slate roof and with the character of the wider area.
- **Bay roof and balcony:** The existing flat-roofed balcony structure above the front bay, which is fitted with a sliding patio door, is to be removed and replaced with a pitched slate roof, and the patio door replaced with a window. This will restore the correct relationship between the bay and the first floor of the building, visually matching the adjoining No. 9. The works will have a significant positive impact on the front elevation and on the streetscape.

3.3 Side Elevation

On the side elevation, existing windows and doors at ground floor and basement level are to be removed and the openings bricked up to match the existing brickwork. This will rationalise and tidy the side elevation, removing ad hoc openings that have accumulated over time and restoring a more coherent appearance to the flank wall.

3.4 Rear Elevation

The following works are proposed to the rear elevation:

- **First floor balcony:** The existing unsympathetic first-floor rear balcony with sliding patio door, which currently overlooks neighbouring properties, is to be removed and replaced with two sliding sash windows. This will significantly improve the relationship with adjoining properties and produce a more appropriate rear elevation.
- **Ground floor – raised decking and access:** At ground level, a raised timber deck with steps down to the rear garden is proposed to improve access and connectivity between the ground (principal) floor accommodation and the rear garden. The decking will be bounded by a tall timber balustrade privacy screen offset along the party wall line on one side and a frameless glass balustrade on the other side.
- **Ground floor doors and windows:** Two existing casement windows at ground floor are to be replaced with a glazed patio door and matching fixed overlight, providing improved access to the new decking.
- **Basement and retaining wall:** The existing rear retaining wall is to be reconfigured with steps from the basement level to the garden as part of a sympathetic landscaping strategy, improving access and connecting the lower ground floor to the rear garden. An existing glazed door at basement level, which would be obscured by the new raised decking above, is to be relocated as part of this remodelling.

4. Impact on Significance

The assessment of impact is structured around the significance identified in Section 2.3 above. The most important elements of the building for the purposes of heritage significance are: the original red brick front elevation with its bay, porch, and fenestration pattern; the pitched slate roof; the original scale and massing; and the building's contribution to the consistent Victorian streetscape of Hastings Avenue. It should also be noted that the building has been subject to a number of unsympathetic prior alterations, and the existing baseline is not one of high integrity. The proposed works are, in large measure, a programme of heritage restoration rather than new harm.

Windows

The replacement of existing uPVC windows with heritage-style sash windows will improve the appearance of the building and better reflect the original character of the property and the conservation area. The impact is assessed as positive.

Front Elevation

The removal of plastic dormer cladding and its replacement with slate, and the replacement of the flat-roofed balcony above the bay with a pitched slate roof and window to match No. 9, represent the most significant enhancement proposed under this application. The front elevation is the primary contributor to the character of the streetscape. The proposed changes will restore appropriate materials and form, and will have a clearly beneficial impact on both the building and the conservation area. The impact is assessed as significantly positive.

Side Elevation

The bricking up of ad hoc openings on the side elevation to match the existing brickwork will produce a tidier and more coherent flank wall. The side elevation is not a primary contributor to the conservation area character. The impact is assessed as neutral to marginally positive.

Rear Elevation

The rear elevation is not visible from the public domain and makes no direct contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area from the street. The removal of the intrusive first-floor balcony and its replacement with sash windows will improve the relationship with neighbouring properties and is considered a positive change. The introduction of raised decking, timber and frameless glass balustrades, and a new patio door

at ground floor level represents modest domestic alterations appropriate to the rear of a property of this type. The reconfiguration of the basement retaining wall and steps forms part of a coherent landscaping approach.

The proposed rear changes are considered to have a neutral impact on the significance of the conservation area, and a positive impact in terms of the amenity and liveability of the property. They are consistent with the character of similar residential rear gardens in the area.

Overall Assessment

Taken as a whole, the proposed works represent a sympathetic renovation programme. The proposals remove existing unsympathetic alterations – plastic cladding, inappropriate balcony and flat-roofed bay, intrusive rear balcony, and existing uPVC windows – and replace them with materials and forms appropriate to the building and the conservation area. The most publicly visible changes, to the front elevation, are assessed as significantly positive in heritage terms. There is no proposal that would harm the significance of the conservation area or the building's contribution to it. Overall, the proposals are assessed as having a positive to neutral impact on heritage significance.

5. Policy Assessment and Conclusions

The relevant heritage policies are set out below. These include paragraphs 210 to 216 of the NPPF 2024/25, the Greater Manchester Places for Everyone Plan policy JP-P2, and the applicable policies of Manchester City Council's development plan.

5.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2024/25)

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

> *"a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness."*

Comment: The proposals sustain and enhance the significance of both the conservation area and the building. They make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness, notably through the restoration of appropriate materials and form to the front elevation.

Paragraph 212 requires that great weight be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets when considering the impact of proposed development.

Comment: The proposals have been carefully developed to avoid harm to the conservation area and to enhance its character wherever possible. The scheme reflects a genuine commitment to heritage-led restoration.

Paragraph 215 provides that 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.

Comment: No harm to the designated heritage asset is identified. The proposals provide clear public benefit through the enhancement of the conservation area's character and the securing of the full renovation and continued residential use of a building that has deteriorated over time.

Paragraph 216 requires that the effect of an application on a non-designated heritage asset be taken into account, with a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset.

Comment: The building as a non-designated heritage asset has been subject to significant prior alteration. The proposed works will improve its condition and heritage character. The balanced judgement is that there is no loss of significance and the proposals will have a positive impact overall, preserving and enhancing the building's contribution to the conservation area.

5.2 Greater Manchester Places for Everyone Plan (JP-P2)

Policy JP-P2, adopted as part of the Greater Manchester Places for Everyone Plan in March 2024, states:

> *"Particular consideration will be given to ensure that the significance of key elements of the historic environment which contribute to Greater Manchester's distinctive identity and sense of place are protected from harm… Development proposals affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets and/or their settings will be considered having regard to national planning policy."*

Comment: The proposals are consistent with Policy JP-P2. They protect and enhance heritage significance rather than causing harm, and have been assessed in accordance with national planning policy.

5.3 Manchester City Council – Conservation Area Policy

The applicable Manchester City Council policy is DC19 (Conservation Areas), which requires that:

> *"Development within or affecting the setting of a conservation area will only be permitted where it would preserve or enhance the special character or appearance of the area."*

Comment: The proposals will preserve and enhance the special character and appearance of the Wilbraham Road / Edge Lane Conservation Area. The restoration of appropriate materials and form to the front elevation, the removal of plastic cladding and the reinstatement of a pitched slate bay roof to match the adjoining property, and the replacement of all windows with heritage sash windows, all contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area. None of the proposed works will harm the special interest of the conservation area.

5.4 Conclusions

The significance of the Wilbraham Road / Edge Lane Conservation Area and the contribution of 7 Hastings Avenue to that significance have been carefully assessed in this statement. The proposed external alterations have been evaluated against that significance.

The works are in the main restorative in nature: they remove existing unsympathetic modern interventions and replace them with materials and forms appropriate to the original character of the building and its conservation area context. The most significant changes – the restoration of the front dormer in slate, the replacement of the flat-roofed balcony above the bay with a pitched slate roof and window to match No. 9, and the replacement of all windows with heritage sash windows – will have a clearly positive impact on the character and appearance of the building and the street.

It is submitted that the proposals comply fully with the relevant heritage policies of the NPPF 2024/25, the Greater Manchester Places for Everyone Plan, and Manchester City Council's development plan policies for conservation areas, and that planning permission should be granted.

Prepared on behalf of the Applicant

Application Site: 7 Hastings Avenue, Chorlton, Manchester M21 9JS

Conservation Area: Wilbraham Road / Edge Lane Conservation Area

Local Planning Authority: Manchester City Council

Date: May 2026