7 ALNESS ROAD, WHALLEY RANGE, MANCHESTER



HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT MAY 2026

SPENCER HERITAGE SERVICES

Client	S. Rana
Site name	7, Alness Road, Whalley Range
Designation	Whalley Range Conservation Area
Report type	Heritage Statement
Report reference	SHSMG056
Report date	18th May 2026
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Revision history	Version 1

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Spencer Heritage Services has been commissioned by the client to prepare a Heritage Impact Assessment in support of a planning application relating to proposed works at 7 Alness Road, Whalley Range, Manchester (hereafter referred to as "the Site"). The Site is currently occupied by a residential property arranged across basement, ground, and first floor levels. The Site lies within the Whalley Range Conservation Area, designated by Manchester City Council in 1991 in recognition of its architectural and historic interest as one of Manchester's earliest planned suburban developments.

The proposed works principally relate to the alteration and extension of the existing property. Overall, the proposals have been designed to minimise their impact upon the character and appearance of the Whalley Range Conservation Area through the use of appropriately scaled domestic additions and materials that reflect the existing building and surrounding townscape character. This application has undergone a pre-application process, and the final design proposals have been developed in response to the advice provided by the Council's planning officer.

This Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and relevant national and local planning policy guidance. The purpose of the assessment is to identify the significance of heritage assets within the vicinity of the Site and to assess the potential impact of the proposed works upon that significance. The level of analysis undertaken has been proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposals and to the significance of the heritage assets potentially affected.

A review of the Historic Environment Record and designated heritage assets within the surrounding area has been undertaken. While a number of non-designated heritage assets are present within the wider area, an initial assessment of intervisibility, historic relationships and the contribution of setting has established that the only heritage asset likely to be affected by the proposals is the Whalley Range Conservation Area, within which the Site is located. The assessment therefore focuses primarily on the potential impact of the proposed works upon the character and significance of this designated heritage asset.

The proposed works therefore focus primarily upon the potential impact of the proposed development upon the significance, character, and appearance of the Conservation Area. Overall, the proposals are considered to result in a negligible magnitude of change to the Whalley Range conservation Area. When considered against the moderate heritage significance of the Whalley Range Conservation Area, the proposals are assessed as resulting in a neutral impact, as the proposed works will preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area whilst reinforcing the established residential character of the surrounding area.

INTRODUCTION

Location

7 Alness Road is located in Whalley Range, to the southwest of Manchester City Centre. The building is located to the north of the A6010 and east of Withington Road, which extends along a north-south alignment, eventually intersecting the A6010. To the east of the site is, Alexandra park, a Victorian 'green-lung' of 60 acres which extends to Princess Road. The site is surrounded by a mixture of modern, 19th and 20th century residential and commercial development.

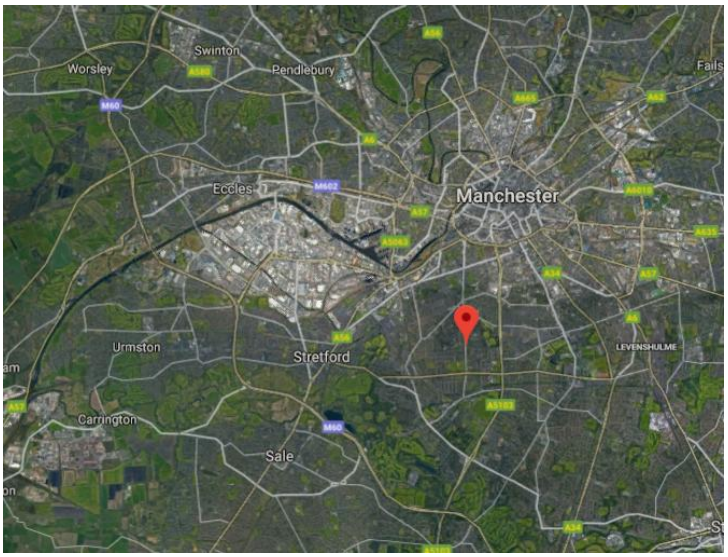


Figure 1: Location of Whalley Range



Figure 2: Location of the Site

Planning Background

The Site is situated within the Whalley Range Conservation Area. The structure is not a listed building or undesignated heritage asset. As the Site is situated within a heritage asset, both national and local planning policies and guidance affect the planning policy context for the Site including the following;

Manchester Unitary Development Plan 1995 (Extant Policies)

One of the objectives of this plan was 'to protect and enhance Manchester's Victorian, Edwardian and Georgian architectural and historic heritage.' Policy DC18 on Conservation Areas and Policy DC19 on Listed Buildings within the citywide Developmental Control Policies remain valid.

DC18. 1: The Council will give particularly careful consideration to development proposals within Conservation Areas. It will seek to preserve and enhance the character of its designated conservation areas by carefully considering the following issues:

i) the relationship of new structures to neighbouring buildings and spaces;
ii) the effect of major changes to the appearance of existing buildings;

iii) the desirability of retaining existing features, such as boundary walls, gardens, trees, (including street trees);
iv) the effect of signs and advertisements;
v) any further guidance on specific areas which has been approved by the Council.

DC19.1: In determining applications for listed building consent or planning applications for development involving or having an impact on buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, the Council will have regard to the desirability of securing the retention, restoration, maintenance and continued use of such buildings and to protecting their general setting. In giving effect to this policy, the Council will not permit any external or internal alteration or addition to a Listed building where, in its opinion, there would be an adverse effect on its architectural or historic character, nor permit alterations to a listed building which would prevent the future use of any part of the building, in particular upper floors or basements, or where poor maintenance is likely to result.

National Planning Policy Framework

Section 16 of the NPPF, 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment', provides the policy framework for the conservation of the historic environment. The following guidance is relevant to the application site (December 2024)

207. 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. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

208. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

212. 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.

213. 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.

Substantial harm to or loss of: a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional; b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

214. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply: a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

215. 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.

219. Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

220. Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 214 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 215, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.

Other National Guidance Documents

Several Historic England documents provide relevant guidance. These include Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance for The Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment (2008) and Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (2015). Guidance relating to Conservation Areas includes Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management: Historic England Advice Note 1 (2016).

Site Planning History

Application Description	Decision date	Outcome
App ref: 031269 Retrospective application for the use of the basement of the dwellinghouse as an alternative therapy centre	07 April 1988	Approved
App ref: 031350 Provision of an access ramp for disabled access to the basement of the existing therapy centre	19 April 1988	Not required
App ref: 075459/TCA/2005/S1 Notification of intent to carry out works to trees within the Whalley Range Conservation Area. Fell 1 Lime Tree.	22 April 2005	Approved

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

7 Alness Road is located to the east of Withington Road and to the west of Alexandra Road, within the residential suburb of Whalley Range. The property occupies the eastern side of Alness Road, a short tree-lined street characterised by large nineteenth-century villas. The principal elevation of No. 7 faces directly onto Alness Road, with its garden frontage set behind a low boundary wall, filled with tall buses and trees. At present, the Site has no entrance gate and the frontage appears untidy and incomplete within the streetscene.

The property is a detached, late Victorian, early Edwardian house of red brick construction under a pitched slate roof. The primary façade has retained some historic architectural detailing. The elevations are of red brick with stone dressings, including lintels and cills. The west elevation is characterised by a projecting gabled ay to its southern side, incorporating bay windows at ground and first-floor level, a feature typical of dwellings in Whalley Range dating from this period. Above, the projecting gabled bay incorporates black-and-white timber detailing within the gable apex, providing a modest decorative feature that contributes positively to the architectural character of the building and reflects the wider Victorian influences present within the Conservation Area. The principal entrance is accessed via a flight of steps and is situated to the north side of the elevation. The doorway is set beneath a segmental arch formed of polychromatic brickwork under a terracotta hoodmould with rose stops. There is little historic detailing to the rear of the property. The rear elevation is formed in red brick beneath a pitched roof with chimney stacks located at either end of the roof ridge, together with an additional chimney stack positioned centrally on the rear roof slope, set lower towards the eaves. The lower ground floor provides access to a self-contained basement flat. The timber decking structure and extension at ground floor level, are modern additions to the original building. The Site is a smaller dwelling than other residences on Alness Road, providing evidence of being built after the primary wave of construction, on a smaller plot size and at a reduced scale. The surrounding context is characterised by a mix of residential buildings and ancillary structures of varying heights, predominantly constructed in red brick. Mature trees and vegetation are present along the site boundaries, providing partial screening and contributing to the established character of the area.



Figure 3: Primary elevation of the Site



Figure 4: Rear elevation of the Site

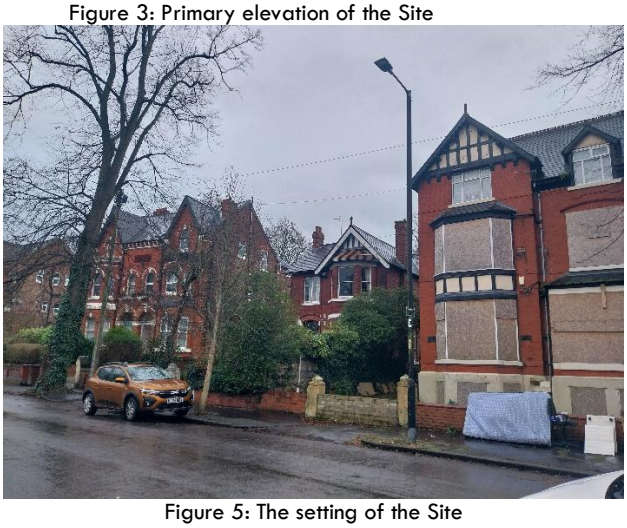


Figure 5: The setting of the Site

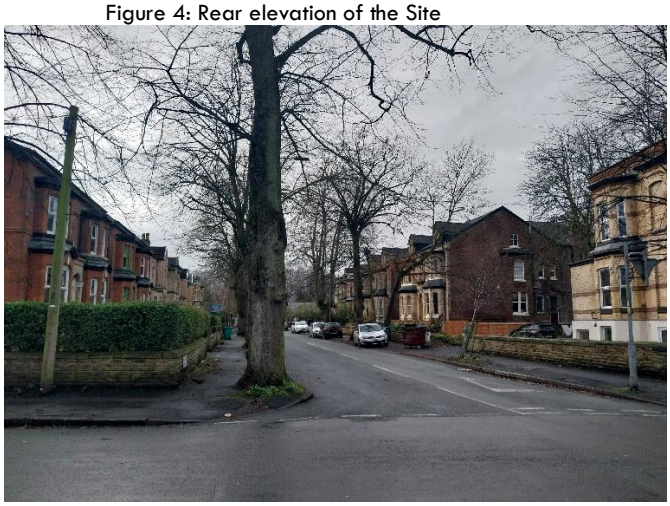


Figure 6: Dormer windows within the wider setting of the Site



Figure 7: Dormer windows within the wider setting of the Site



Figure 8: Example of railings within the Conservation Area

HISTORY OF THE SURROUNDING AREA AND THE SITE

Historic Development of Whalley Range

Although no surviving area of untouched mossland exists within modern Manchester, the city was formerly characterised by several lowland mosses that were enclosed relatively late; Hough Moss was historically one of the principal mosses and lay across the territory now occupied by Moss Side and Whalley Range. During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the landscape surrounding Manchester's urban core remained largely rural. The city's industrial expansion and population growth prompted outward extension, absorbing neighbouring townships and encouraging the creation of planned residential suburbs. Such development exploited available space for low-density housing aimed at middle- and upper-class residents; detached and semi-detached villas in substantial grounds contrasted with the denser urban centre. Whalley Range is among the earliest of Manchester's nineteenth century suburbs and was purposely separated from the industrialised city by intervening fields (Manchester City Council (n.d.) *Whalley Range Conservation Area: History).*

The suburb was initiated and principally developed by Samuel Brooks, a Manchester banker originally from Whalley in Lancashire. In 1834, Brooks purchased 39 acres at Moss Side from Robert Fielden and a further 42 acres from the Egerton estate; these purchases (locally known as Jackson's/Plant's/Woodall's Moss) formed the basis of his planned estate, which he described as "a desirable estate for gentlemen and their families." Roads were laid out between former farm tracks that became Withington Road and Upper Chorlton Road, with later additions such as Whalley Road and Chorlton Road. Brooks's covenants governed plot sales and building forms, restrictive conditions that sought to secure the high-status character of the flourishing neighbourhood. Brooks built his own grand residence at the southern end of Whalley Road, an emblem of the suburb's intended prestige. (Manchester City Council (n.d.) *Whalley Range Conservation Area: History).*

Expansion of the suburb continued through the later nineteenth century, particularly on land acquired from Lord Egerton. Notable, if short-lived, enterprises included an ambitious aquarium opened in 1874; the building subsequently had other institutional uses (it was later incorporated into educational premises). Cartographic and architectural evidence shows that by the mid nineteenth century large villas in extensive grounds dotted the area, with more intensive infill including semi-detached houses and terraces occurring from the 1880s onward as suburban building patterns changed (Hartwell and Hyde 2004). Improvements in transportation and residential preferences in the late 19th and early 20th centuries encouraged wealthier households to relocate further from the city. Contemporary commentary recorded a shift in the social character of Whalley Range as many large houses came to be let or converted for non-domestic uses, and denser occupation by smaller-income households altered the area's social composition. This process of social and morphological change continued through the 20th century; after the Second World War the area experienced decline—vacancy, subdivision, and deterioration of larger houses—although later regeneration efforts, including property rehabilitation and housing-association

activity, have led to the conversion of some houses into self-contained flats, care homes and other institutional uses. The surviving tree-lined streets and larger houses nevertheless retain elements of Brooks' original layout, albeit within a substantially altered urban fabric (Manchester ArchivesPlus 'Whalley Range' 2023).

Historic Development of the Site

In line with the historic development of the suburb of Whalley Range, the site was agricultural land until it was transformed as part of the Victorian suburban development of the area. The Site possesses a well-documented historical background extending from the early twentieth century. The property was known historically as Lowood and later Lowood House. The street was originally named Albert Road and was renamed Alness Road in 1925. Historic OS maps from 1891 to 1896 show that the proposal site was vacant at that time. The structure first appears on the historic Map of 1909. By 1935, documentary evidence indicates that Lowood was the residence of Reverend Herbert Motley, then Northwest Superintendent of the Baptist Church, and his wife Jean (Fleetwood Times, 6 December 1935). This association is corroborated by a subsequent marriage notice describing Jean Motley as the daughter of Rev. Motley of Lowood, Whalley Range (Baptist Times, 15 January 1942). During the 1980s, contemporary reports identified Alness Road as an area affected by social decline and criminal activity (Manchester Evening News, 8 February 1985). In 1988, planning records show approval for the retrospective conversion of the basement into an alternative therapy centre and the installation of a disabled access ramp (Manchester City Council Planning Portal, refs. 031269 and 031350). Later that year, Lowood House was described as a centre for holistic and therapeutic practices (Manchester Evening News, 11 November 1988). The Lowood name persisted into the early twenty-first century, appearing in property sale documentation that continued to reference the house by this title (OnTheMarket property brochure, c. 2000s). Following the closure of the therapy centre, the house returned to purely residential use. The basement of the property was used as separate dwelling from at least 2014 onwards.



Figure 9:Manchester - Lancashire CIV.14.23. Surveyed: 1889, Published: 1891.

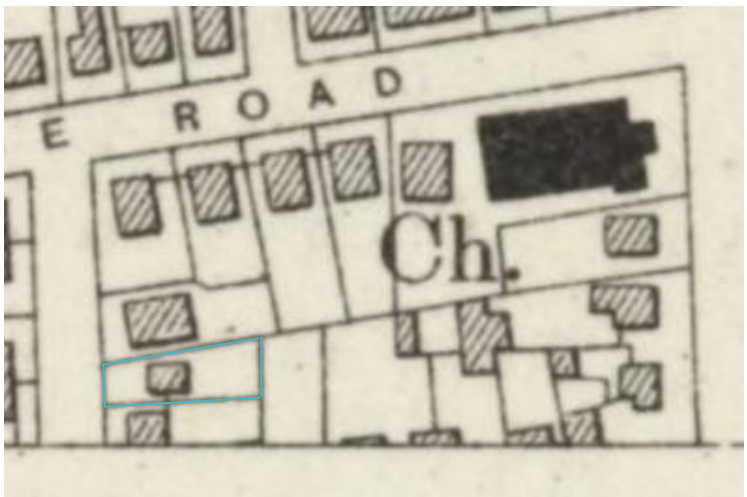


Figure 10:Lancashire Sheet CIV.SW. Revised: 1905, Published: 1909. Six-inch to one mile.

ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE METHODOLOGY

Attributing a Level of Importance

The National Planning Policy Framework emphasizes that decisions about the historic environment should be informed by an understanding of an asset's heritage significance, ensuring that the scale of the assessment is proportionate to the importance of the asset. Ascribing a level of heritage value or importance to heritage assets is beneficial as it offers a clear, consistent, and transparent foundation for assessing how proposed changes may impact their significance, while ensuring the assessment remains proportionate. Each asset's heritage value has been categorised as high, medium, low, or negligible. The definitions of these levels, as they relate specifically to historic buildings and landscapes, are set out below.

High value assets include those with formal designation, as they meet national criteria under relevant legislation. Assets of the highest value, as described within the NPPF, include scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, Grade I and II* listed buildings, Grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, landscapes of international importance inscribed as World Heritage Sites and undesignated landscapes of outstanding interest. These assets display exceptional qualities in their fabric or historical associations. This relatively elevated significance is reflected in the professional judgement applied when determining the level of effect.

Medium value assets include Grade II listed buildings, undesignated buildings that are of recognised regional importance and retain exceptional qualities and associations, either as strong examples of regional archaeology or architecture, or as assets with regionally significant historical interest. Designated special historic landscapes, or those that would justify designation, and landscapes of regional value are considered to be assets of medium value.

Low value assets are those whose interest is limited to the local area such as locally listed buildings or landscapes with importance to local interest groups. These assets are common at the regional or national level, or have reduced significance due to their condition. These structures have modest qualities in their architectural remains and historic associations.

Negligible value assets typically demonstrate poor survival or possess very limited historic, architectural, or archaeological interest.

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE ASSETS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED BY THE PROPOSALS

A review of the data held by Mapping Greater Manchester shows that that there are no listed structures or undesignated heritage assets within the setting of the Site. As the Site itself is not listed, the only identified designated heritage asset that warrants further assessment is the Whalley Range Conservation Area. This assessment of significance is based upon a review of the historic development of the area and information relating to the Conservation Area provided by Manchester City Council.

The Whalley Range Conservation Area

Assessment Methodology

The character and special interest of the Conservation Area have been assessed with reference to information provided by Manchester City Council and the Historic England Guidance, *Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management Second edition, Historic England Advice Note 1*. Elements such as the architectural quality and built form, the layout of the area and key views have been considered.

The Character and Special Interest of the Whalley Range Conservation Area

The character and special interest of the Whalley Range Conservation Area have been assessed with reference to the Historic England Guidance. This guidance states that the special interest and character of a conservation area can be assessed by looking at the following attributes;

- Location and setting
- Historic development
- Architectural quality and built form,
- Positive contributors
- Locally important buildings

Whalley Range Conservation Area was designated in October 1991 in recognition of its architectural and historic interest as one of Manchester's earliest planned suburban developments. Although a full Conservation Area Appraisal is not currently accessible, Manchester City Council provides summary information relating to the historic development and significance of the area. The following assessment draws upon this information together with a brief site survey and wider streetscape analysis.

Location and Setting

The Whalley Range Conservation Area is situated approximately two miles south of Manchester City Centre. The area is predominately residential and extends to 63 acres and is roughly triangular in plan, extending to Alexandra Road to the east and Upper Chorlton Road to the west. Topographically the area is flat and is not within the vicinity of any notable landscape features.

Historic Development

Whalley Range was one of the first suburbs of Manchester. The area of land covered by the Conservation Area was purchased by Samuel Brooks in 1832 for a sum £9,600.00, with the intention of creating , "a desirable estate for gentlemen and their families". The above section on the development of Whalley Range provides further information on the historic development of the area.

Architectural Quality and Built Form

Many of the original houses built when the suburb was being established remain within the Conservation Area. These vary in design and there are examples of large detached and semi-detached Victorian villas with elements of both Gothic and Classical revival design. Larger houses are set back from the street line, along tree lined avenues. A number of the houses have been sub-divided for multiple living arrangements or to support a change of use. Modern infill development has taken place on sites where houses have been demolished. Where land was not developed in the initial phase, there are examples of late 19th century infill development and early 20th century development, such as the terraced housing along Railton Avenue and Whalley Avenue. There is no defined list of positive contributors or locally listed assets within the Conservation Area. The Conservation Area is characterised by a cohesive yet varied architectural form derived principally from Victorian and Edwardian domestic architecture, including influences of the Gothic Revival. Steeply pitched roofscapes, prominent gables, decorative brick detailing, vertically proportioned openings, chimneys, boundary walls, gate piers, railings, and landscaped frontages collectively contribute to the area's architectural quality and visual identity. The survival of these features across the wider streetscape creates a strong sense of consistency and continuity throughout the Conservation Area, despite the gradual evolution of individual properties over time.

The roofscape and boundary treatments form particularly important components of the area's character and significance. Varied roof forms, dormers, gables, and chimneys contribute to the visual richness of the streetscape, whilst brick and stone boundary walls, historic gate piers, railings, and mature planting reinforce the enclosure, rhythm, and suburban quality of the area. Together, these elements contribute to the distinctive townscape character for which the Conservation Area was designated.

Contribution of the Site to the Special Interest of the Conservation Area

The Site makes a positive, albeit relatively modest, contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The Site was not built as part of the original development of the area by Samuel Brookes. The detached property was built between 1894 and 1905, as a more modest residential building between two grander houses. While the structure is not highly decorative, features such as the decorative door surround, detailing beneath the window cills, and the black-and-white timber detailing within the west gable contribute positively to views along Alness Road.

Summary of Significance

The significance of the Whalley Range Conservation Area derives from its survival as a planned nineteenth-century suburban development that retains a strong sense of its historic form, spatial character, and architectural identity.

Developed during Manchester's Victorian expansion as an affluent residential suburb, the area continues to reflect its historic origins through its broad tree-lined streets, mature planting, generous plots, and architecturally distinctive domestic buildings. The historic relationship between buildings, gardens, boundary treatments, and the public realm remains clearly legible, reinforcing the area's established suburban character and sense of architectural prominence.

Collectively, these characteristics contribute to the architectural, historic, and townscape interest of the Conservation Area and demonstrate its importance as a surviving example of a prestigious nineteenth-century Manchester suburb. The Conservation Area is considered to possess a medium level of heritage significance in line with the criteria outlined above.

THE PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO THE SITE

The proposed works are outlined in detail in the plans that accompany this application, which should be viewed in conjunction with this report.

The proposals relate to alterations and extensions to the Site. This report assesses the impact of the external works which have the potential to affect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposed works include the construction of a rear extension, the addition of two dormer windows to the rear roof slope to facilitate the use of the attic as additional accommodation and new metal railings and gate to the front of the property.

The rear extension at basement and ground floor level has been designed with materials to match the existing building. The extension projects from the rear elevation and incorporates a raised external terrace with a timber balustrade and associated external staircase. A 1.8m-high timber privacy screen is also proposed adjacent to the terrace area.

At roof level, the proposals include the insertion of new dormer structures to the rear roof slope. The proposed dormer windows are appropriately scaled in relation to the existing roofscape and are positioned sensitively within the rear roof slope, ensuring that they do not appear overly dominant or disruptive to the character of the building. The dormers are to be constructed in brick to match the existing property, helping them integrate successfully with the established material palette of the host dwelling. The inclusion of gabled detailing reflects the existing gable feature to the west elevation, providing a degree of architectural continuity within the design. Importantly, the placement of the dormers has been carefully considered to avoid harm to the existing roof composition, and the original chimney stacks will be retained unaltered, preserving an important element of the building's historic roofscape character. Additional alterations include the installation of a new fixed window with obscured glazing to the south elevation. The proposed metal railings and entrance gate have been designed to reflect the character and appearance of historic boundary treatments found throughout the Conservation Area, helping the property integrate with the established streetscape.

IMPACT OF THE ALTERATIONS ON THE HERITAGE ASSETS

Impact Assessment Methodology

The following assessment considers the potential level of impact that the proposed alterations may have on the significance of the conservation area by examining how they affect the elements that contribute to its special interest, as outlined in Historic England guidance. This analysis also incorporates a matrix-based approach to ensure consistency and transparency.

The matrix compares the heritage value of each asset with the predicted magnitude of change to determine the overall significance of impact, which may be either adverse or beneficial. Proposals resulting in a high magnitude of change that generates a major adverse impact would equate to substantial harm, as defined in the relevant NPPF paragraphs, while all other adverse impacts would be considered less than substantial harm.

Defining the Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of change has been assessed as negligible, low, medium or high

A negligible or low magnitude change would lead to only slight loss of value through minimal physical impact or a barely perceptible change in setting, such that understanding and appreciation of the asset remain largely unaffected.

A medium magnitude change would cause harm to the asset's value through partial physical loss or a change in setting that diminishes understanding and appreciation.

A high (major) magnitude change would result in a significant or complete loss of heritage value, either through the physical removal of the asset or a substantial alteration to its setting that severely affects the ability to understand and appreciate its significance.

Level of Impact Matrix

Heritage Value	**Magnitude of change**			
	Negligible	**Low**	**Medium**	**High**
High	Negligible	Minor	Major or medium	Major
Medium	Minor or neutral	Minor or neutral	Medium or minor	Major or medium
Low	Neutral	Minor or neutral	Minor or neutral	Medium or minor
Negligible	Neutral	Neutral	Negligible or Neutral	Negligible

Impact Upon the Whalley Range Conservation Area

The Site lies within the Whalley Range Conservation Area, which has been assessed as a heritage asset of medium value due to its historic significance as one of Manchester's earliest planned Victorian suburbs and its surviving examples of substantial detached and semi-detached villas set within spacious plots along tree-lined streets. The character and appearance of the Conservation Area are primarily derived from the architectural quality of the late nineteenth-century residential buildings, the spacious suburban grain, mature planting, and the relationship between large dwellings and their landscaped plots. The Site is a late Victorian/ early Edwardian dwelling that contributes positively to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area through its age, form, material character, and relationship to the established streetscape. The principal elevation and overall architectural composition of the building remain legible and continue to reflect the historic suburban character that defines the Conservation Area.

The proposals comprise the construction of a rear extension at basement and ground floor level together with the insertion of dormer extensions within the rear roof slope. The principal elevation facing Alness Road would remain unaltered. The introduction of the proposed railings and gate would provide a more coherent and defined boundary treatment inspired by others in the area, improving the appearance of the Site and making a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. The proposed external works are confined predominantly to the rear of the building and would not be visible from public viewpoints within the Conservation Area. The rear extension would appear subordinate to the host dwelling in both scale and form and would not disrupt the hierarchy or legibility of the original building. Similarly, the proposed dormers are modestly proportioned and sensitively positioned within the rear roof slope and would not be visible from public viewpoints within the Conservation Area. As such, they would not interrupt or compete with the established roofscape character experienced along Alness Road or within the wider streetscape. Their design incorporates materials intended to match the existing property, whilst the use of gabled detailing reflects architectural features already present within the building, helping the additions integrate successfully with the established character of the dwelling. Whilst the proposals would introduce a degree of change to the rear elevation and roof form, the works are considered proportionate to the scale and character of the host property and reflective of domestic alterations commonly accommodated within the Conservation Area. The proposals would preserve the principal architectural character of the building and would not harm the defining characteristics of the Conservation Area, including its historic suburban form, architectural quality, mature landscaping, and important streetscape views along Alness Road.

Summary of Impact

Overall, the proposals would result in a negligible magnitude of change to the Conservation Area. When considered against the medium heritage value of the asset, the proposals are assessed as having a neutral impact upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposed works would result in only limited and barely perceptible change within the public realm, and the elements that contribute to the special interest and significance of the Conservation Area would remain unaffected.

CONCLUSION

This assessment has established that the Site comprises a late Victorian/early Edwardian dwelling located within the Whalley Range Conservation Area. Although more modest in scale than some surrounding properties, the building contributes positively to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area through its historic form, material character, and relationship to the established streetscape along Alness Road. Features including the projecting bay windows, decorative brick detailing, chimney stacks, and black-and-white timber detailing within the west gable contribute to the architectural interest of the property and reflect the wider Victorian character of the area.

The proposed development comprises a rear extension, rear dormer additions and associated boundary treatments including new railings and gates. The proposals have been designed to remain subordinate to the host dwelling and to reflect the established architectural character of the property and surrounding Conservation Area through the use of matching materials, appropriate scale, and sympathetic detailing. Importantly, the principal elevation facing Alness Road and the key architectural features that contribute to the significance of the building and wider streetscape would remain preserved.

The assessment has found that the proposed works would result in a negligible magnitude of change to the Whalley Range Conservation Area. The rear extension and dormer additions would not be visible from public viewpoints within the Conservation Area and would therefore not interrupt the established roofscape or wider townscape character of the area. The introduction of new railings and gates would provide a more coherent and visually appropriate boundary treatment to the frontage, improving the appearance of the Site within the streetscene and reinforcing the character of surrounding properties.

Overall, when considered against the medium heritage significance of the Whalley Range Conservation Area, the proposals are assessed as resulting in a neutral impact upon the significance, character, and appearance of the designated heritage asset. The proposals would preserve the key elements that contribute to the significance of the Conservation Area, including its historic suburban form, architectural quality, mature landscaping, and established residential character. The proposed development is therefore considered acceptable in heritage terms and compliant with the relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework and the relevant heritage policies of Manchester City Council. The proposed development is therefore considered acceptable in heritage terms.

AUTHORSHIP AND ACKNOWLEDMENTS

This document was written by Spencer Heritage Services Ltd, if you need to contact somebody about this document please email Kate Spencer at kate@spencerheritage.com or call 07947384935. Spencer Heritage Services would like to thank the client and the planning department at Manchester City Council for their time and advice regarding this project.

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