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Heritage Statement

The Conservation Area – St.Mary's Park

St.Mary's Park, contains a number of areas of distinct architectural form united by St Mary's Park, incorporating Church Lane in the north and extending to the edge of Butterstile Lane. The whole area forms part of a pleasant wooded landscape. The area is dominated by St Mary's Church parts of which date back to the 12th or 13th century, and the mature treescape within Prestwich Clough.

Some of the properties remaining along Church Lane, built in the Victorian period, numbers 20-30 for instance, with the high sash windows divided up with smaller panes elongated vertically. The alternate arches following the door heads in the solid masonry construction (photo 1). The Conservative Club mentioned below clearly Victorian with some excellent examples of the lavish masonry decorated with terracotta string courses the stone cills and splayed soldier course heads and the gothic stone tracery to high level windows.



Photo 1



photo 2

The residential parts of the Conservation Area are typified by tree lined streets with substantial properties in large grounds mostly dating from the mid-19 century along St.Anns Rd. The combination of large private grounds and public open spaces results in a lush and heavily tree-lined appearance of the Conservation Area. Behind number 37 there are green areas which unfortunately have suffered from lack of maintenance but could once again be attractive if cared for.

The Church Inn had a bowling green and a billiards room across the lane before the present rectory was built in 1923 (photo 2). Between this site and 'Spring Bank' was a group of brick buildings, amongst which was the coach house and stables built for Dame Katharine Egerton in 1757. A forge stood on the site of the present day Pensioners hut (Church Lane Community Centre) with a cobbled trackway leading down to Ramsbottom Row, terraced cottages dating from the mid-18C. 32 to 34 Church Lane, built in 1811 for the then Rector, James Lyon, are of interest in originally having separate dwellings at pavement level. This is a later example of Georgian architecture with the sash windows divided into smaller panes. Clearly the modern window design has been able to incorporate a sash style top opening light and the larger open panes being preferred by some adding clarity of vista and light amenity. (photo 3)



Photo 3

Prestwich Conservative Club was founded in 1874 and, in 1879, moved to purpose built premises on Church Lane, designed by the architect, William Dawes, with a top-lit first floor billiard room. In 1957 the club sold the original premises and moved across the lane to a purpose built premises on the 'Spring Bank' plot, which had previously been purchased in 1928 as a home for their tennis club. A bowling green had been created in 1902 at the bottom of the huge garden that 'Spring Bank' looked down on. Spring Bank now Conservative Club (photo 4)

It is this area which has much interest attached, there were glass houses with various flora and fauna at least in 1889 shown on the map ref Lancashire XCVI(1891-94) 6in to 1mi extract fig 1. One of the glass houses was directly behind the property which was later replaced by number 37 during the 1960's, which is the subject of this statement.

The Conservative Club was not designed in a particularly sensitive way to the area architecturally, it is a typical example of 1950's architecture with pitched and flat roof extensions. Albeit the white render gives a crispness to the imagery.



photo 4



fig 1.

Character.

It is clear why the committee that set up the conservation area included Church Lane, it is full of history and the architecture reflects that in its varied forms. Sadly, in the 60's, housing design whilst some of course were detailed and well thought out, a great many, seemed to follow a simpler, less expensive and more functional approach. This, in itself, is probably worth documenting to highlight the vast difference in economy of design and materials. The current nos. 37 & 39 are bungalows commissioned by St. Mary's as accommodation for visiting Presbyterian ministers or trainees on vocational courses attached to the rectory. No. 37 was designed with a garret in the roof void with stairs access and roof lights to the rear which have in the more recent past circa 1980's been modernised. The garret was to maximise floor space of course and possibly sleeping area the bathroom being shared at ground floor level.

It appears from 1925 ariel photography the property pre-extant at 37, was a double pitched roof building possibly a workshop fronting to the rear of footpath. Clearly the simple bungalow replacement constructed with cavity masonry and traditional cut timber roof with purlins and rafters is very different in character to the earlier Georgian and Victorian buildings. However the rendered façade of 37 does look very fresh and uncomplicated. (photo 5) The modern door design reflects a Georgian style to the property. The proposed will be wider than most domestic entranceways as it will future proof alterations for disabled access, thereby exhibiting a more substantial presence (photo 6) see fig 2.



phot 5



photo 6

Design concept.

Between the original construction and utilization of the property, it was sold circa 2006 and in 2008 a failed planning application was made by others for the then owners. The planning application was to raise the ridge line in, an attempt to form a larger dormer roof on the rear. This clearly contravened the Bury MBC planning policy and was refused. However some alterations took place forming the garret loft room and stair access.

Our client seeks to optimize the available floor space in the garret by removing the chimney as it is redundant and installing an ensuite shower room and wc, without any external alteration of the roof. The room will then be used for physio and yoga to help with health and well being.

The bungalow was purchased principally because of his wife's health issues and the potential need for ramped access level living area which could become a necessity.

The internal layout is to accommodate an additional wc and sink to facilitate work in the garden and our clients garden maintenance work for hygiene purposes. The proposal is to relocate the existing front entrance to the small front outrigger façade with a new disabled access doorway. See fig 1

The storage area will be opened to incorporate a much better kitchen, dining environment. To achieve the most economic and ergonomic use of this area the existing double glazed double doors to the storage area front elevation will be removed and the opening blocked up with masonry and render to match the existing and a small double glazed window will be incorporated to match the other aperture frames.

The impact on the design impact is minimal on the building in terms of the window ribbon however the relocated entrance certainly enhances the building. The impact on the wider conservation area likewise will

be minimal as it is gentle shuffle of the original features with some integration of Georgian design however small.



Proposed Church Lane Elevation

Impact on the Conservation Area

The 1960 design as described above is very simple in comparison to the Georgian and Victorian era however the dark grey door and window frames against the bright white rendered façade is a feature of both periods also, the street scene is a gentle blend of the 1950's, 60's render and facing brickwork and the Georgian Victorian eras. The proposed door flanked by slim window panels absorbs the transfer quite eloquently for a small frontage. The alterations are practical in nature and therefore will be of great benefit to the occupants our client.

Clearly there will be no loss of architectural character. The entrance move will enhance the character.

The development is clearly visible from the roadway as it always has been and it can be said that the new occupants have made a determined attempt to improve the building appearance and usefulness with the practical approach to the internal and external proposals.

Whilst there is little to speak of in terms of historical value in relation to the reasons for the conservation area establishment, in years to come the property will be a good example of 60's design with a reflective sensitivity to the historical surroundings.