



## 43 Park Road, Watford

### Heritage Statement

Client: Suzy Dean

#### **PRECIS:**

Heritage consultancy services have been instructed to assist proposals to make additions to the side and rear of this building on the south side of Park Road, a street sited in the Nascot Conservation Area. Due to its location, an understanding of the historic and architectural significance of the building and its context is required.

The Heritage statement demonstrates how the scheme will, by nature of its location, scale and massing, pay reference to the character of the heritage asset and is in harmony with the setting of the host building. This will be an enhancement to Watford.

Prepared by:



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**ISSUE**

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Context and Proposals**

The intention is to make alterations to the lower levels and to the side and rear of this building on the south side of Park Avenue. The proposal to unify the internal spaces into a family home is a response to the current local and district wide demands for additional housing within a central and accessible commuting zone of Watford.

This Heritage Assessment has been prepared to support the alterations to the building and help influence the design of the new.

As the building is old and locally listed, an understanding of its historic and architectural importance is essential for showing to the Council that the proposed changes will not harm any elements of the building deemed to be significant. At planning, a heritage statement is a vital part of the process, as it shows how the scheme has been informed.

The Subject Building is situated within the Nascot Conservation Area. In conservation areas a much stricter control over development than elsewhere should be exercised with the object of preserving or, where possible, enhancing the qualities in the character or appearance of the area which underlie its designation as a conservation area under section 277 of the Planning Act.

As part of the Council's Urban Conservation Strategy, a register of Locally Listed Buildings was compiled within the Watford District Plan 2000 (2003). The building at 43-45, known as Innage House, has been included due to a mix of its architectural interest, function, historical interest and streetscape quality.

Proposals within or affecting the setting of heritage assets are required by Watford to include a site analysis which demonstrates how the proposal will respect and enhance the asset. No's 43-45 is in Sub- Area C of the Nascot Conservation Area, meaning that it has special attributes which distinguish it from the other areas of the town.

The main character of the Conservation Area is of the first substantial area in Watford to be developed away from the historic High Street. It includes the town's first railway station, which dates from 1837 and was the first significant structure to be built within the area. Following the station, the area was developed in phases and the urban form that we see today was predominantly completed by the 1890s.

The Conservation Area largely retains its Victorian character and through its surviving urban form and architectural detail, it demonstrates the gradual development of the town, including the tight urban grain of Bedford Street and the lower density street scene of detached and semi-detached houses along Langley Road.

The key difference between this area and many of the other areas of Watford that date from the nineteenth century, relates to the notable variety of architectural styles displayed and to the diversity of detailing evident on the buildings.

Walls make up the residential boundaries behind which stand substantial, well designed houses. The townscape is leafy, expansive, prosperous and remains largely residential, although some properties have been converted into hotels and others into flats.

The Sub Area contains a grouping of Victorian houses, many of which are of a high architectural quality. There are several locally listed buildings and many unlisted houses which provide good examples of the use of traditional materials. In addition, long sections of original, early boundary brick walls remain. These form an essential part of the spatial and architectural character

Many buildings are adorned with delicate and detailed decorative architectural features, which greatly enriches the overall character and appearance of the area. The character and form of the area from its original design and the layout is largely unchanged.

The setting of the locally listed building at no's 43-45 is an important factor in the design. Integration of new development, within the distinctive setting of Park Road is an exercise that demands a high level of understanding, observation, ingenuity and sensitivity. The starting point of such an analysis is in defining the qualities of the setting within which the site sits and their relative significance. It is then possible to assess and determine the degree to which the proposals will impact on the visual and physical character of the street.

### **Overall Objectives**

The purpose of the report is to assess the impact on the townscape and the heritage assets. This Heritage Statement identifies the broad principles which encompass the character and sense of the place, describing ways in which development can support these aspects and avoid harming what is of value. The report concludes that the *proposed* alterations to the elements of the rear and elevation do not affect the visibility in which heritage assets are appreciated or have a negative impact on the townscape.

Rather, the proposals will relate well with the existing understanding of the buildings which constitute the character of Park Road. Thereby, preserving and enhancing the asset of the Nascot Conservation Area.

In accordance with paragraph **194 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**, the document provides sufficient information about the heritage significance of the building and its contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area to determine the application. Furthermore, it assists the local authority's duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of a locally listed building and of preserving the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The site is located within the Nascot Conservation Area which, under the terms of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021), is a 'designated' heritage asset. The Conservation Area appraisal describes the historic core and its relationship with the built-up area around the railway station as a whole. It summarises the general function the townscape performs in relation to this part of the built-up area in Watford.

As the site is in the conservation Area, the proposal is considered to be within the setting of a heritage asset. Proposals within or affecting the setting of heritage assets are required to demonstrate how the proposal will respect and enhance the asset.

### **Proposal**

In terms of its relationship to the streetscape, the application has been developed in relation to the value attributed to the frontage of no's 43 – 45 and the group of buildings to its sides. Issues concerning height, scale, bulk and materials have been appraised and the design

ensures the form is congruous and brings a visual enhancement to the front and rear of the building.

At the rear, It is intended to make additions to the building that are appropriate to its architectural character and townscape context. The style of the new elements of the building will be traditional whilst the materials to the rear will include some contemporary work that is of high quality and brings greater elegance to the building. Improvement will be made to the arrangement of the extension on the ground and lower ground floor, so it is more in keeping with the needs of a family.

The alteration to the ground floor at the rear will engender a more contemporary approach, giving the building robustness in build and a finesse in detailing.

To the front, the proposed alterations are relatively modest, including new windows to match the original. The creation of an arched entrance door to the front refers to the existence of doors on the adjacent building at no 45 and so raises the architectural quality of the front.

The scheme will rise to the challenge of integrating new built form within the context, in a way that brings an enhancement to the character of the building and the distinctiveness of the local area.

The proposal for new additions will pay due consideration to matters concerning the scale and appearance. To respect the character of the rear elevation, it is important for the design of the extension to pay attention to the existing building lines and be of a suitable mass.

The principle of the project is to improve on the existing neutral quality of the rear elevation, through improving the existing rear conservatory. By replacing this dated glass structure, the proposal aims to transform its current blank personality to something that is more attractive.

Elsewhere along Park Road, other examples of work to the rear illustrates how improvements have been brought to the rear of buildings and their gardens. Rear additions now contribute to the character of the local area, illustrating how high-quality modern development can be read in parallel with the old.

## **1.2 Methodology**

The site is located within the Nascot Conservation Area which, under the terms of NPPF, is a 'designated' heritage asset. The historical background of no's 43-45 and this part of the Conservation Area is assessed in order to understand its development, with historic photos and morphological maps contained in 2.1. Information is provided on the history and architectural character of the house, and the current condition of the site, including a selection of photographs.

This report is based on information collected from a variety of primary and secondary sources, including historic mapping. The observations made through site photographs have been reviewed in the context of documentary research. The subject building and surrounding buildings have been viewed and studies of key impact views taken from the roadside are provided in **figure 6**.

A collation of existing written and graphic information has been assessed in order to identify the likely character, extent, and significance of the known historic or potential archaeological interest in the resource, including their local, regional or national significance as appropriate. This assessment has relied upon:

- Site visits made by the author of this report on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2022;
- Nascot Conservation Area, Character Appraisal, 2015.
- Watford Character of Area Study, 2015
- Information from Watford Archives & Old maps

An evaluation of buildings and structures in the area helps give definition to the context of the building and its setting. A sample of relevant standing buildings is described, illustrated, and assessed for their potential historic importance and contribution to Park Road. Housing in the built-up area has played a significant role in local social history as well as making their own contribution to the streetscape.

The assessment considers **(in Section 2.0)**, the historic context of this area in the town, including the prevailing characteristics of the Conservation Area context to which it is adjacent. We also examine the architectural influences of the immediate townscape and the visual setting within which the building sits **(Section 3.0)**.

### **1.3 Policy Framework**

The relevant planning policies are contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, Revised 2021) and the Watford Local Plan (2000) . The National Planning Policy Framework puts good urban design at the centre of any strategy for delivering sustainable communities and high quality environments.

#### **National**

In conservation areas a much stricter control over development than elsewhere should be exercised with the object of preserving or, where possible, enhancing the qualities in the character or appearance of the area which underlie its designation as a conservation area (S277, the Planning Act).

43-45 Park Road, therefore, counts as a heritage asset. Proposals within or affecting the setting of heritage assets are required to include an analysis which demonstrates how the proposal will respect and enhance the asset. Hence this report is to be read alongside Architects drawings and plans.

Reference to the Nascot Conservation Area Appraisal is relevant, as this document identifies the cultural heritage values of the settlement. It describes the area's history, fabric and character with an understanding of its origins, how and why it has changed over time and the form and condition of its constituent elements and materials.

The NPPF constitutes the government's current national guidance and policy regarding development within the historic environment. Section 16 of the revised NPPF deals with conserving and enhancing the historic environment in paragraphs **184 to 202**. The NPPF places much emphasis on heritage "significance", defined as:

*"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting."*

At the same time, we note that (para 206) states that local authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance.

### **Local Plan**

The proposals need to be considered against Local Plan Policy's and conservation guidance which is set out in the NPPF. There is also the statutory requirement that the planning authority:

"shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses"<sup>1</sup>.

The NPPF advises of the desirability of any development for,

"sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses "consistent with conservation."

It goes on to say that:

"great weight should be given to the asset's conservation... as heritage assets are irreplaceable"

Conservation Areas are environments which are considered worthy of protection as a result of a combination of factors such as the quality of design and setting of the buildings or their historic significance. In addition to the individual qualities of the buildings themselves, there are other factors such as the relationships of the buildings with each other, the quality of the spaces between them and the vistas and views that unite or disrupt them.

The Local Plan (2000) is currently being updated and the new Local Plan (2020-2036) is currently under review. The documents seek to protect and enhance conservation areas and listed buildings, including their settings, making sure that new development is carefully integrated with the old.

Urban Design and Conservation Objectives (11.3) will promote a high standard of development that integrates principles of best practice sustainability and good design. Proposals will be judged by the positive contribution they make to the character of the area, including the landscape and townscape character.<sup>6</sup> The Council will seek high quality design in all new development to enhance the quality of the built environment of the town

In Design and Layout of Development (U2), the Council will seek to ensure that all new development achieves a high standard of design and layout. All development proposals should: a) seek to integrate with the local character of the area (see Policy U3: Integration of Character).

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<sup>1</sup> Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, 66.1,

New proposals should also seek to enhance the overall quality and character of the area through the size, shape, position and detailing of spaces created within or around the new buildings. Where newbuild is involved, the new buildings should be designed with the objective of a long life for the building.

The Plan applies positive policies to ensure there is protection and preservation of conservation areas, whilst it also recognises the importance of enhancement. The policy promotes vibrant, attractive, legible and accessible public spaces and will support plans to create or add to buildings that are adaptable and promote the best in sustainable design and construction.

With regards Conservation Areas, Development which adversely affects the setting of a Conservation Area needs to be supported (U16) to show it does not have an impact on the appearance or character of an area. Design will need to be appropriate in terms of scale, setting, massing, siting, and detailed appearance in relation to surrounding buildings and the Conservation Area as a whole (U18).

Demolition of buildings or structures that are not statutory listed, but are within a Conservation Area (U20), will only be permitted where its removal or replacement would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area.

Policy 11.50 states that high standards of design are expected in all Conservation Areas whether for new or replacement buildings, extensions, alterations or small scale development requiring planning permission, which may have a detrimental cumulative effect. To ensure the preservation or enhancement of conservation areas the re-use of materials removed through demolition or alteration is encouraged, as well as the use of appropriate new materials sympathetic to existing surrounding buildings.

Development will be expected to make a positive contribution to the setting of the asset/s and its historic significance, and include hard and soft landscape proposals, where appropriate, that respect its character and appearance of the heritage asset.

As the development proposal considered here has the potential to impact on the setting or significance of a heritage asset then a consideration of the effect of the development on that setting is included in this Heritage Statement.



## **2.0 HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT**

### **2.1 Location and description**

The Nascot Conservation Area lies to the north-east of Watford town centre – between St Albans Road and Hempstead Road. The Conservation Area is divided by the West Coast Mainline, with the bulk of the designated land to the south and a smaller parcel of land to the north. It extends as far north as the southern stretch of Leavesden Road and as far south as the junction between The Avenue and St Albans Road. The wide expanse of St Albans Road provides a clear boundary to the eastern side of the Conservation Area.

### **2.2 Summary History of Watford**

#### **18<sup>th</sup> & early 19<sup>th</sup> century**

Before the railway arrived, development in Watford was limited to the town's historic core around the High Street. The agrarian nature of the area in question can be seen on the Dury and Andrews' map from 1766, which shows the Nascot area as farmland between the town and Callowland Farm. The road to St Albans, which marks the eastern boundary of the present day Conservation Area, is the only major feature that existed in the area during this period.

The Tithe Map provides detail on the makeup of land holdings within the area during this period and reveals that land to the west of the railway line was owned by the Earl of Essex, who resided at the nearby Cassiobury House, while farmland to the north-east of the line was owned by Merton College, Oxford.

Much of the land within this area had been in the ownership of Merton College since the Middle Ages; however, during the nineteenth century, the Earl of Essex moved to acquire the assets for his estate. The land was farmed by tenants, principally from the nearby Callowland Farm, and was a mixture of arable farmland and meadows.

As well as the station and railway infrastructure, a new road bridge was built along St Albans Road and there was a hotel with attached stables. Plots along Bedford Street were starting to be developed with housing with some already completed by 1842.

The next detailed map for the area is from 1849 and this shows that development had moved on. The majority of the terraced houses, along what later became Bedford Street, have been built and development has begun to the south-west of the railway line for the first time. Immediately to the south of the bridge over the railway, a small brewery was built by Samuel Roate in 1848.

During the 1840s a new road was created that ran parallel with the railway line, It came to be known as Church Road and by 1849 a number of properties had already been constructed. The earliest of these new buildings was at what is now known as number 1 Church Road, which was built as two cottages between 1847-1848.

During the following decade it appears that new development was largely restricted to Church Road, while larger plans for more extensive development in the area were prepared.

Nevertheless, the 1850s saw the building of a number of the most attractive and important buildings on the street. Between 1853 and 1857 the Church of St Andrews was constructed to designs by the architect Samuel Sanders Teulon, while a number of elaborate houses, (such as 61 and 72-78 Church Road) were constructed. The latter properties were built for a speculative developer called Henry H. Henson, a railway engineer who was responsible for some of the building along Church Road at this time.

### **Mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Railway and the Nascot Area**

A significant development that occurred elsewhere during the 1850s was the opening of a new railway station at the eastern end of Station Road in 1858. The London and Birmingham Railway Company constructed a new line between the aforementioned cities, which passed through the environs of Watford and involved the construction of a new station locally.

One of the earliest ever inter-city railway lines, the route through Watford was significantly complicated by opposition from local landowners – most notably the Earls of Essex and Clarendon. The original route proposed, which followed the valleys of the River Colne and River Gade, had to be abandoned and the route we see today was adopted instead.

Approximately a mile away from the existing centre of Watford, a new station was completed in 1837 to the west of the road to St Albans. The station buildings were modest and were quickly complemented by a cluster of other buildings that related to the railway development. A new road was laid out off the St Albans Road, which was later to be called Bedford Street, and within five years of the station being completed there were a dozen additional properties located nearby.

In the following decade, development within the Nascot area accelerated and a number of new streets were set out. This was the period when the Earl of Essex's landholdings between the railway line and the Hempstead Road were being sold off for urban development. Much of this area was called 'Nascot Park', which was land belonging to the former Nascot Farm on Hempstead Road. New roads like **Park Road** and Nascot Road took their names from this source.

In 1860 a new school (St Andrew's School) was built on Church Road. Two years later, the large site to the west of the school was purchased by 'The Order of Mystery of Salters of London', who built a complex of almshouses on the land.

Although the development of the Salters' Almshouses occurred beyond what is now designated as Nascot Conservation Area, their history is relevant, not least since it is believed the name of Stratford Road comes from a connection with the Salters' Company. Both Stratford Road and **Park Road** are shown as existing on a map from 1857 that shows the boundaries of St Andrew's Parish; however, it appears that building on them did not take place until the 1860s.

Over the course of the decade most of the building plots on the eastern portion of **Park Road** were developed, while gaps in Church Road were built on – including much of the northern side, which had previously been clear. A number of small cul-de-sac streets were established on the western side of St Albans Road at this time, including Terrace Gardens, the northern side of which was completely built during the decade.

The most dramatic changes to take place during the 1860s were on the former farmland west of St Albans Road and south of **Park Road**. It was here that the new streets of Nascot Road, Nascot Place, Stamford Road, Cole Road and Langley Road were created. The latter names were derived from a variety of origins: 'Stamford' came from a property on **Park Road** called 'Stamford Lodge';

By 1870 three large villas had been built on the east side of Nascot Road and most of the plots on the west side of Stamford Road had been developed. The latter included the Nascot Arms Public House, which was built on Stamford Road in 1869. In addition, Nascot Place had largely been built and the south side of Cole Road had been developed.

Many buildings on Langley Road had also been constructed, which included a mixture of terraced properties towards the eastern end and larger detached houses towards the west. The former included 24 Langley Road, which may have originally been a post office, and the Bedford Arms Public House, which was built in 1869 on Langley Road.

The latter included the grand houses at 49-51 and 76-78, which may have been designed by the distinguished architect John Thomas Christopher – who was a director of their developers: the Watford Villa Company.

The 1871 OS Map reveals that an additional network of new streets has been laid out to the south of Langley Road. The lack of new buildings adjacent to these new streets, with the exception of Nascot Street, suggests that they had only very recently been created. As with other new streets, the land for development was sold from the estate of the Earl of Essex and it is from this source that most of the new street names were derived.

During the 1870s and 1880s development progressed, as the new streets became built up and the remaining free plots on the older streets were developed. The newer streets to the south, such as Malden Road, were developed by a large business called the British Land Company. As a result, the terraces of houses are more consistent than the varied architecture of other parts of Nascot, which were developed in a more piecemeal fashion.



By the middle of the 1890s, when the next detailed map of the area was produced, the vast majority of the area had been developed and very few building plots remained empty within the locale that now forms the Conservation Area.

The differences between what is shown of Nascot on the 1896 OS Map and the 1914 edition, which was the next one to be produced, are limited to some infill development on Alexandra Road. Change during this period was therefore less to do with major new building developments and more to do with changes to existing buildings and the land uses that occupied them.

For example, the pictures below of Langley Road show that the row of commercial units at numbers 2 – 8, which had been built in 1888, changed their use during this time. In 1890 number 2 Langley Road was being used by a home decorating firm, but within a few years it was occupied by the 'New Town Post Office'.

Further developments within Nascot during the early part of the twentieth century remained relatively modest in scale. In 1911 a new cinema was opened on the site of the former 'Railway Hotel', immediately to the south of the Leviathan public house on St Albans Road. The cinema was originally known as the 'Coliseum, but by the time it closed in 1954, to be replaced by a petrol station, it was known as 'The Plaza'.

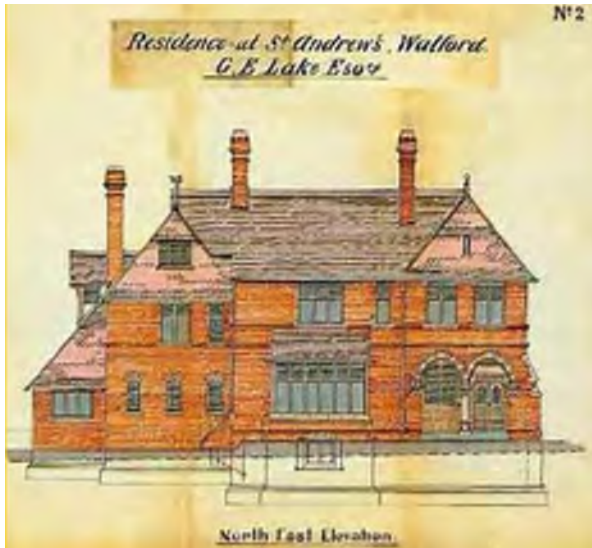
The other major development in the area during the 1920s involved the demolition of the 'Manor House' on the northern side of Church Road, close to the junction with Stratford Road and the redevelopment of the site with new housing.

It was not until the 1960s that the next phases of significant changes within the area were to take place. In 1961, the St Albans Road bridge, which crosses the railway line, was rebuilt as a widened structure to accommodate the increasing demands on the transport infrastructure. In the early 1970s the stretch of St Albans Road south of the railway bridge was also widened.

### **Development of no's 43-45**

It is during the 1870' and 80's period that a number of well-known local architects were involved with the design of new buildings in Nascot. A grand new residence at **43-45 Park Road** was designed by the architectural practice of John Thomas Christopher and Eley Emlyn White in 1881. Also, a new premise on Nascot Street for the 'Steam Mineral Water Company' were designed by William H. Syme.

From 1886 the architect Charles P. Ayres lived in 'Highcroft' House, at 25-27 **Park Road**, which, given the style, is likely to have been designed by Ayres himself. In addition, eight cottages on Church Road, designed by Ayres, were approved by the Local Board of Health in the same year. These are likely to have been 'St Andrew's Terrace' at numbers 36-50.



Original drawing from 1881 of 'Innage House' 43-45 Park Road

### 2.3 Conservation Area Character

The Nascot Conservation Area was designated on 22 January 2001 under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The Conservation Area was subsequently extended on the 28 November 2001. The main aims stated within the original designation report for the Conservation Area (Watford Borough Council, 2001) were:

- to prevent demolition of the original buildings of the then New Town circa 1840-70;
- to protect the old brick boundary walls from demolition;
- to enhance the space at the junction of Church Road and Park Road,
- to enhance the surroundings of Bedford Street and the setting of the former railway station on St Albans Road.

#### Architecture and townscape

This largely residential character area is located to the north-west of the town centre. It is bordered to the north by the railway cutting for the West Coast Mainline and to the east by the larger scale of development along the A412. The southern and western boundaries are marked by the transition to lower density residential areas. This area was developed from farmland between the 1840s and 1890s. Some limited infill development has occurred since, of a similar scale and form, but the area overwhelmingly retains its Victorian character.

As a built up area, the importance of open spaces within Nascot becomes heightened due to their limited scale and frequency. The two modestly sized parks are quite different in historical terms. The playground on Stamford Road is on a rectangular plot of land that was left over from building development in the late nineteenth century.

Although the character of the area is clearly urban – with limited areas of green space, there are subtle variations in the structure of the built form and layout. The northern part of intersection of Church Road and Park Road combines with the diverse building styles to give the area a more informal and distinctive character than the later and more uniform streets to the south. Despite being surrounded by a busy commercial street to the east, the area generally has a more intimate scale - with low levels of pedestrian / vehicular movements.

The key historic space within Nascot is found at the junction of Church Road and Park Road, where feature buildings punctuate the townscape and the most interesting street relationship is found.

There are strong vistas along Church Road and Park Road, with the Church of St Andrew providing a key landmark. The church has a similar landmark function in the vista northwards up Stamford Road.

### **Key views and vistas**

There are a variety of different views into the Conservation Area, some of which are clearer than others. Generally flat and with buildings of similar heights, the topography and built form does not allow for the more dramatic views found in other conservation areas in the town. The view into the Conservation Area from St Albans Road varies between the strong edge of the terraces of buildings between Park Road and Langley Road and the weaker edges elsewhere. Views into the Conservation Area from

### **2.3.1 Character Sub Area C:**

The character area is made up of Church Road, Cole Road, Nascot Place and Stratford Road, as well as the eastern end of Park Road and Langley Road. Dominated by mid to late Victorian buildings, there is a tight urban grain that consists largely of two storey terraced houses. Front gardens are nominal and there are no street trees.

It is largely residential and suburban in character; the area does nevertheless contain a number of other important architectural components. These include a Victorian terrace of shops and various public houses, as well as small scale former industrial buildings. Feature buildings, such as the Church of St Andrews, form key elements of the Conservation Area, while the railway line and related buildings on the eastern side of the area are important components in the development of Watford's transport infrastructure.

The Conservation Area is remarkable for its terraced cottages, including early ones, such as at Bedford Street and Church Road, as well as later ones, such as on Denmark Street; for individual villas, which are often substantial and have become increasingly important as examples outside the Conservation Area gradually disappear; and for the non-residential buildings - many of which are relatively early nineteenth century examples.

As most of the buildings date from the mid to late nineteenth century and therefore have general similarities in terms of materials and features, there is an overall homogeneity in the area but with punctuation.

The dominant urban form comprises terraces of two storey brick buildings with pitched roofs. Nascot also includes a number of detached 'Victorian villas', especially towards its western side, which are larger and have more elaborate detailing.

Three storey buildings are less common within the conservation area and as a result form long established features in the townscape. Notable examples are 103 – 115 and 125 – 135 St Albans Road. Church Road is also punctuated by some three storey buildings.

The earlier buildings have somewhat different characteristics to the later Victorian ones in the Conservation Area and later Victorian extension of the town. They have a simple, hipped roof form with slate covering, rolled lead ridges, and oversailing eaves (often bracketed) together with elevations in old London stock bricks. Examples of this include: 147 Church Road, 39 Park Road, 37 Church Road, 33-35 Church Road and 52 Church Road; although the latter building is much altered. This building form is also reflected in the Bedford Street terraces - where not obliterated by later alterations.

The buildings on Church Road result in a rich streetscape of modest terraces punctuated by one-off or occasional pairs of Victorian buildings, such as 1 Church Road and 61 Church Road. Chimneys are also an important feature here, as well as in other streets.

Several pairs of villas and individual houses on Alexandra Road give a strong, notable streetscape via pairs of steep gables and robust architectural detail. St Albans Road features variation in scale from up to the two - three storey terraces, some of which have been marred by inappropriate dormers. Frontages are fairly narrow and there are still a few good original shopfronts.

Later development is sufficiently scattered to allow the Victorian character of the Conservation Area to still predominate. For example, westwards from number 84 Church Road, has a "garden suburb" flavour but maintains the terraced, two storey theme in the area. The former Vicarage at 27 Stratford Road appears to be of notable quality, while dating from after 1914.

Houses such as 54 – 58 Park Road maintain a characteristic local to that specific character area, i.e.: that of larger detached houses within large plots. Much of the mid twentieth century development, such as 2-12 Malden Road, is of poor visual appearance and does not reflect the qualities of the Conservation Area. However, there are some good small scale examples of very recent infill development or small extensions.

In other parts of the Conservation Area The Essex Road, Malden Road, Denmark Street, Nascot Street group are more homogenous in form and character. While largely residential, the streets also include a number of public houses, shops, workshops, halls and churches. These functions and the architectural features of these buildings give interest to the character and appearance of streets and the buildings often serve as local landmarks and important facilities.

### **(Locally) Listed Buildings**

A number of unlisted buildings in Nascot Conservation Area contribute positively to the character of the area despite not meeting the criteria for statutory or local listing. The following are included:

- 23 Park Road Circa 1880s
- 30 - 32 Park Road 1862
- 39 - 39a Park Road 1865
- Innage House, 43 – 45 Park Road



There are three listed buildings connected with the railway heritage within a 250 metre radius of the building:

- Former booking office to original station. 147A St Albans Road
- Church of St Andrew, Church Road
- The Salters Company Alms-houses, Church Road

### **Park Road townscape**

Park Road consists of large detached and semi-detached houses on the south side of the road, with small, blocked developments on the north side. London stocks are the predominant facing brick with stone dressing used on a number of buildings. There are protruding porches and arched windows headers (no 39) and dentilled canopies to the first floor (no 37) giving the front emphasis.

The dominant roof material is slate or red plain clay tile on the pitched roofs. Most windows are wooden and some sliding sash, but some have been replaced by plastic versions. The materials used for front boundary walls range from brick to stone and flint, many of which are arranged decoratively.

Although there are some green spaces within Nascot, the area does not contain significant areas of public open space. Still the street offers a pleasant balance between the semi enclosure given by the front boundary walls and the general open feel which is strengthened by the linear aspect of the road that. This aspect accentuates the varied rhythm of the elevations resulting from the succession of architectural elements along the street frontage.

Houses are arranged fairly loosely to give the impression of a broken street façade. Houses are 2-storey plus roof and only in exceptional cases (such as no 25-27) does the roof express a large mass. The roof at no 39 is distinguished through its hipped termination. creating an elegant composition to the building.

The key historic space within Nascot is found at the junction of Church Road and Park Road, where feature buildings punctuate the townscape and the most interesting street relationship is found.

### **2.4 Architectural characteristics of Conservation Area (scale and materials)**

An assessment of the quality of the existing buildings within the local streetscape provides an indication of the prevailing scale and massing in which No 43-45 gains reference. It also determines the vernacular and the range of local building characteristics, detailing and materials typical of the local built environment

The stretch of road between Stamford Street and Stratford Road is most relevant to the scheme under assessment, as it is a pleasant and coherent grouping of well-preserved large Victorian properties with attractive original details. Buildings in this part of the Conservation Area are two-storeys with upper floors sometimes contained within the roof space, resulting in the use of dormer windows (at 25-27).

The fine street trees, together with sizable gardens and planted frontages, all add to the open, verdant character of the CA. Front boundaries are usually defined by some well sized brick walling often headed by bush, with some areas left open and hard-surfaced for off-street parking.

Generally, plots are rectangular, and the properties occupy almost the complete width of the plots. The gardens are longer and narrower and the buildings occupy less than one half of the total plot depth.

Roofs are typically moderately pitched but vary in design detail and size. At no 25-27 there are two end perpendicular to the pitched bays in the centre. This contrasts with the changes in the scale and massing seen on the front past of no 39, whose elegant, hipped roof is finished with lead tiles.

No 41 is more picturesque in its character and is a contrast to the buildings on its sides. It is a squat one storey cottage whose catslide roof to the front, arched porch and dormer windows are from the Arts & Craft tradition and suggest a later infill between no 43 and 39. This variety helps give some artistic variation to the overall uniform character of the street.

The streetscape which features the east side of no 43-45 is interesting and it features a gentle change in scale, with the one storey end of no 39, rising up to the modest two storeys plus roof of no 41. This movement is concluded at no 43-45 where the greater mass of its parts and the taller well stacked chimneys provided the conclusion in the visual sphere.



**25-27**



39



41



Angled view across 39, 41 and 43

### **Local Details and materials**

This part of the CA is characterised by some unity in building materials and traditions, often referring to the Victorian idiom. Individuality is expressed through the use of different detailing on each property, although the materials, mainly brick or whitewash/ render, remain consistent.

The upper order of a building is an important architectural feature within this part of the Conservation Area. Such character is expressed through modestly pitched roofs covered in clay tiles with timber bargeboards and rolled lead ridges on older buildings. Common building materials include red brick with neat recessed joints, whilst the decorative effect is enhanced by the selective use of stucco trimmings.

Old London yellow Stocks are seen in combination with a redder brick. Some of the individual, large Victorian villas reflect a Gothic style, including tall gables with elaborate

decorative timber members. Some later Victorian buildings, such as 1 - 3 Stratford Road, have “plum” purple/red facing brick, with soft red feature brickwork. These also show decorative tile-hanging and barge boarded gables. Gault facing bricks are also seen on a number of buildings. Soft red brickwork is also common, such as in The Bedford Arms on Langley Road.

These details and embellishments are invaluable to the area’s special character and reveal a high-quality of craftsmanship displayed in the collection of older houses.

Generally, the buildings represent largely unaltered examples of historic buildings that have architectural quality and form part of the local townscape. In this respect, Park Road has great significance, offering much technical value, and providing context for No’s 43-45.

## **3.0 SITE AND VISUAL ANALYSIS**

### **3.1 Appearance of no 43-45**

The application site is part of Innage House (43-45 Park Road) which is now divided into two separate properties. The site comprises of a semi-detached property comprising of two different front elevations. The east elevation (no 43) is a later glass fronted building comprising red brick and situated on the southern side of Park Road. It is a two storey house with a canopied widow bay on the ground floor.



**Site Location**

The adjacent building (no 45) is distinguished by the double arched front porch. The brick arches are a fine composition which sit on a central brick pilaster. A large front forecourt is given over to car parking spaces and to the rear is a deep garden. The property is accessed via two car wide entrances and the main door is to the side of the front.

The plot of no 43-45 is a rectangular shaped, with the building occupying a space at the northern end of the plot. The garden land extends back to be on the same line as the buildings on its east side.

The rear boundary of the properties on the south side of Park Road have trees of various sizes which flank onto the properties behind.

The design of the properties at no's 27 – 43 & 45 is varied with variations in scale, massing and materials, including brick, stucco and decorations. The main house has two volumes which is flanked on the east side by the long return section which faces the side of no 41 and extends into the garden. This return leg of the building provides access to the garage that is at sited at the rear south east corner of the house. Adjacent to the garage is the glass outbuilding.





**Aerial view from south of no's 43-45**

### **3.2 Built Character assessment**

#### **Elevations**

No's **43-45** falls into the Victorian period, where ideas from the mediaeval and Gothic periods were often adapted and houses often assumed a flamboyant nature.

On the outside, it is ordered and broadly controlled by the line of the roof ridge seen on the left-hand and right-hand side at no 43 and 45 respectively. The building is balanced over two storeys with various sized windows in their respective bays to the right and left of the centre bay. The central bay may be read as the location of the door which is currently in use as the access for no 45. When first built and used as one unified house, this door would have been the main focal point for the house.

On the east side of the main door is the two bays which comprise the front elevation of no 43. The fact that the two bays are protruding at ground floor gives movement to the front elevation and breaks down the symmetry of its parts when comparing the bays. The absence of a chimney of the front elevation detracts a little from the vertical status of the building. However, it is the ridge on the main gable which makes the top proportional to the middle and lower orders of the building.



**Figure 2: Existing front elevation**

It is in gault brick which compares well with the red and stock brick seen along the street. It has a large pair of ground floor windows, set under a tailed canopy, whilst the first floor it has two modestly sized square-headed windows.

On the ground-floor, the tiled canopy roof adds architectural refinement to the composition of the eastern bays. This element over the window is a reference to the Arts and Crafts building tradition that was taking root in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and it makes a contribution to the picturesque appearance of the building. It indicates that this element was added later when such refinements were generally in vogue.

The underside of the eaves on the roof are supported with wooden dentils; There is no apparent bargeboard and the eaves are in effect the lower course of the roof tiles. Other decorative effects are given by the position of herringbone tiles in on the roof gable.



**Three quarter view of the front elevation**



**Dentils to eaves and herringbone tiles on gable**



**Canopy roofs to ground floor**

The subject building is pleasantly attractive and compares well with the other houses on this section of Park Road. The front elevation has similarities with no 39 and 25-27, although the differences are meaningful and add to the nuances of the street as a whole. The narrow windows at no 39 and the sash's at 25-27 are dominant to the front and give these buildings quality. AT no 43-45 the casement windows are of a poorer quality than these fine examples in the street.



The single semi-detached building is of two-storeys plus roof and is a dog-leg shaped plan. The front elevation is stepped back behind the hard surface of the front patio which meets the pavement and expresses a quality which is synonymous with much of Park Road. The extent of the front garden appears proportional to the height of the building and its depth, whilst also referring well to the width of the road itself.

### Side

The eastern flank elevation is largely functional, of which the entrance door to the side is a sign of its former use as the secondary entrance point to the main house when it was unified as two buildings. The entrance door has Victorian quality as seen on the pitch roof above.

Two equally proportioned pitches of the roof are seen defining the front and rear volume of the building. They are adjacent and stacks are seen rising from the top of the ridge in respective front and rear positions. The valley of the roof is created where the front and rear volumes of the building meet. The side elevation has a pair of windows on the ground and first floor.

The side elevation illustrates the seemingly disjointed nature of the parts that have been added at a later time. In particular, the single storey conservatory/ garage is not connected with the scale and massing of the main house



Figure 3: Existing side elevation

### Rear

The rear garden is narrow and enclosed, with a number of temporary structures (shed, toys) seen to have been into the space located at the end of the garden . Against the rear wall is a glass conservatory, adjoining a brick garage/ outbuilding.

There are two bays, with the first being the eastern most elements which has a window on the first floor. It is likely this outer bay is a later addition, being put up at the time when the side of the building was extended outwards. The second bay abuts the wall of no 45 and it is of a comparable width to the first bay, except it has two windows on the first floor. On the ground floor the bay has a large arched patio door which is raised above the floor surface.

A glass conservatory abuts the rear wall of the original building and it effectively overlaps both bays, with more of the first bay being covered than the second bay. The garage element then abuts the conservatory and protrudes further into the garden area. The second (original) bay has greater quality than the first, as given by the herringbone tiles on the gable roof and the arched ground floor window. The pair of first floor windows give a symmetry too.

From the garden, the depth of the conservatory/ garage is witnessed and the southern wall of this elevation is an array of different built form and heights.

The conservatory is characterised through the newer quality of the glazing and its contrasts with the casement windows of the core building. The manifestation of the windows and its constituent glazing amongst the later build appears dated and not reaching a suitable balance of light and void. Consequently, this rear of the building looks completely different from the front.

In viewing the whole building from the end of the garden it is possible to make out a simple configuration of the conservatory and garage sat up against the main building. In this view the upper and bottom building line of the conservatory do not align with those of the existing windows or indeed, of the floor levels of the core building.

When comparing the position of the windows on the conservatory with the main elevation it is possible to see the windows have the unfortunate effect of being disproportionately aligned.

In general, the existing extension is of limited architectural quality, with the transition between the single-storey and two storey elements looking awkward and the roofs having little relationship to the original Victorian house.



Figure 4: Existing rear elevation



### **Commentary**

There is a basic order to the front elevation of no 43, comprising the original gabled bay and the later extension to its side. The windows on the ground floor of the original inner gable bay have changed from the original building, as formerly there were 3 separate narrow windows which have been overlaid by a large window that reflects the bow window seen on no 45 next door.

The outer bay that sits behind the main bay is a later addition that pays some respect to the scale and detail of the original. It replaced an earlier built element to the side with slightly greater massing and a one storey building with a roof above. The ridge on the existing bay is lower than the main roof and the ground floor windows are smaller than the original building, thereby reflecting the status of the earlier part.

The current building has more width than the original one as seen in the historic drawing. The new elements step down in 3 movements from the new outer bay, a linking section and to the garage. In the original building, there was no outer bay and the east end of the building followed a diagonal slope from the gable bay to the roof of the single storey building.

To the rear, the arrangement of windows is rather different, as there is a pair of equally sized casement windows on the first floor of the rear wall to the west side of the conservatory, whilst

the later bay has one window on first floor and the ground floor window is obscured by the conservatory, The rear of the garage building has stock bricks and a window/ door.

As a building from the 1870's, No 43-45 falls into the distinctive first wave of development along Park Road that saw limited coherence in the design of the buildings along the street. It is observed above that there was some interpretations to the general formulae used for the design of the front elevations along Park Street.

To the rear of the buildings, it is seen that there is a recurrence of elements such as lean-tos, irregular window arrangements. Dormers and skylights to the front on some of the buildings is an illustration of a much later trend to utilise roof space accommodation.

No 43 - 45 is quite generous in scale and its massing can be broadly defined as the same as seen along Park Road and also similar to other buildings in the Conservation Area. Its massing and scale has similarities to no 25-27 and no 39, although the difference in this group adds to the variation and individual nature of each building.

The building is oriented flush to the road, with the northern elevation being presented in a north - facing direction. This is synonymous to the general disposition of other buildings in the Conservation Area where the front elevation is usually facing the road.

The front and rear are dominated by the gabled roof that includes the canopy bay fronting Park Road and includes the 3 windows facing the garden. The ridgeline and slope of the main pitched roof that runs parallel to the road appear to do little more than accommodates the gable to the front.

The massing is mainly distributed through the modest expanse of the roof and the amount of area given to the ground and first-floor is proportionate. Yet when assessing the spread of the building mass through the rear elevation then there is a different conclusion. As the one storey conservatory and garage extension jars against the scale of the original rear wall to which they abut.

These later elements are incongruous and are misplaced in scale and materials. As a composition, the rear appears as a mixture of parts with little design reason and no relationship to the older building. It currently compromises the reading of the rear elevation as a unified design.

The building in the 1870's is very apparent when reading its front elevation. As the principal symmetry is in evidence, with the two gabled end bays located on either side of the central range. No 43 was designed differently to no 45 as the latter had the distinctive pair of arched entrance doors on its ground floor, whilst no 43 has a modest set of 3 windows. The striking focal point of the front was presented in the middle through the bow window.

Since the buildings have been divided the reading of these parts has changed. The front door of the house has been relocated to the side of no 43 so it is no longer visible from the front. Whilst the first floor and roof retain the original window openings the ground floor of no 43 has seen a fundamental change in this area. As the original set of 3 windows has been replaced by one large window unit, reflecting that which is seen on the original bay to its side.

When assessing the front, sides and rear of the building as a whole, it appears to have been built at two or three times. As the width of the plot was generous, the ambitions of the developer and his architect could be progressed. It is likely that the vision for the development of the side extensions was influenced by the client noting this rear space being built on elsewhere in the Conservation Area.

As a result of locating a conservatory and garage extension to the garden of the house, the rear extension occupies half the width of the plot. This has had repercussions for owners and occupants as it has generally meant that light coming into the rear reception rooms in the main part of the house has been constrained.

Decorative elements are limited to the herringbone tiles on the gable, the dentilled eaves, bay canopy roof and the bricks. These are examples of idiosyncratic detail that might be said to be representative of the Mid Victorian period and gives the building a picturesque effect.

The property makes light reference to the tradition of the Victorian movement, with the symmetric character given by the roof, walls and windows to the front, offset by the additional side bay and the rear additions.

#### **No 43-45's contribution to the Victorian style**

Victorian design was influenced by other periods and styles, with reference to the symmetry of the Georgian era being most common and often combined with and flourishes towards Gothic and Medieval designs.

When unified with no 45, no 43 follows the overall balanced order of a Victorian building and has well-sized bays and a modestly pitched roof. The presence of chimneys from the front elevation gives greatly to the typical characteristics of the period.

Whilst the building is balanced in scale and form to the front of the main roof, the rear parts have severely compromised its composition. There are different built forms in the conservatory and garage and there is no use of any devices (such as timber beams) in an attempt to make a reference to the style; therefore, the rear makes a poor contribution as a whole towards the front of the building.

On the southern elevation of the building, facing the garden, only the pair of first floor windows are discernible features of any interest. Otherwise, this appears as a functional side of the building designed with little appreciation of the original building it appends and the setting of the Conservation Area.

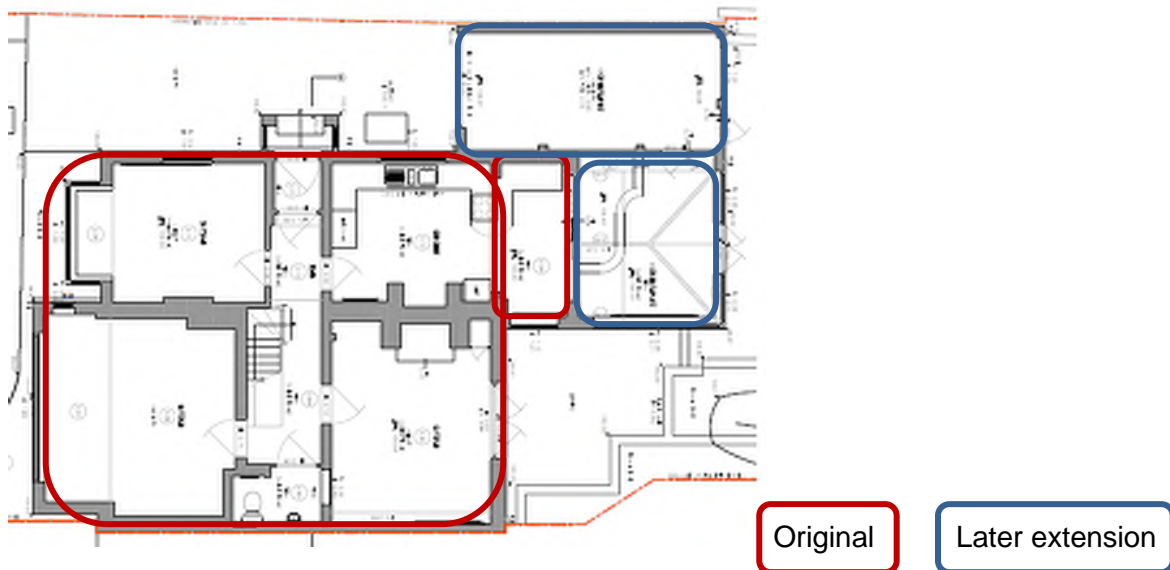
#### **3.2.1 Summary of Internal character**

Internally, the space has been variously adapted to suit living needs. Ceiling heights on the ground floor differ, with the kitchen, play room and lounge having different floor heights. Decorative features are also missed, as the play room has well profiled cornice, window architraves and skirting, whilst the lounge is largely devoid of such devices. The lounges character largely rests on its Patio doors which face the garden and create an attractive point in the room.

The staircase is in its original position, whilst the baluster and spindles have been renewed and are of a sturdy nature. The stack supporting the fireplace has been filled in and a later hearth is seen in the place of the original one.

Upstairs, the bedroom has decorative quality as seen through the cornicing and skirting, whilst the dormer room is very plain and it is angled within the slope of the roof.

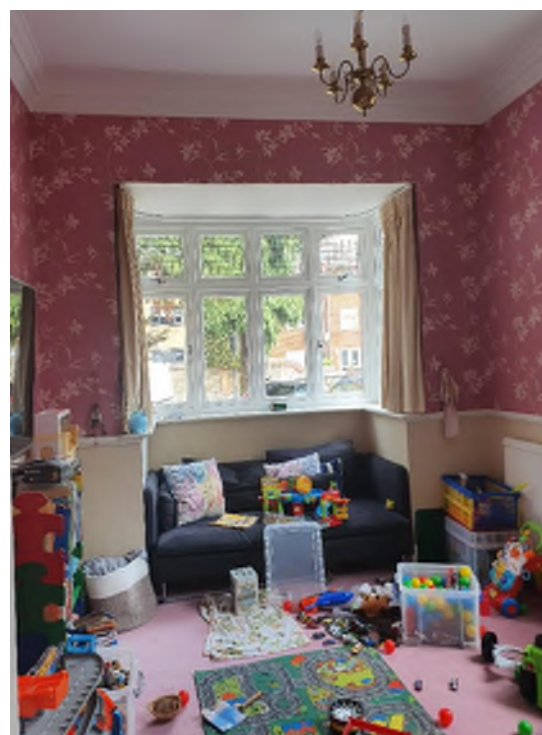
The kitchen has been opened out so it forms a logical connection into the conservatory. The conservatory itself is of painted timber with an arrangement of windows of two different heights. The glazing on the roof is mottled and is supported by metal panes.



**Figure 5: Existing ground floor plan**



**Kitchen**



**Play room**



**Lounge**



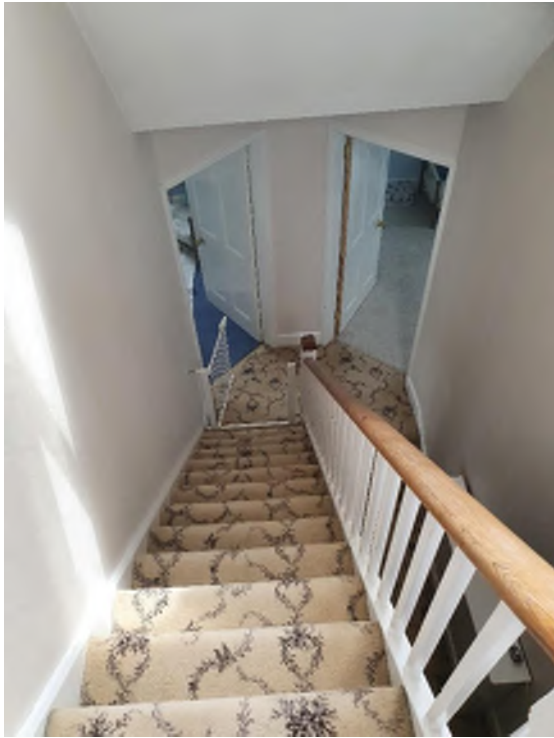
**Arch opening in corridor**



**Bedroom**



**Dormer room**



**Staircase**



**Fireplace**



**Conservatory**





### 3.3 Setting of buildings and View framework

The above assessment shows that the surrounding area is residential, with variously sized buildings formed in rows of detached buildings. The relationship to the east of the site is important as St Andrews Church is a listed building in a 150 metre context. This makes this part of Park Road an important receptor zone.

The area is a relatively busy street close to the railway station. Buildings are sited within well-sized plots and set back from the wide road. There is general uniformity in age, scale and density along Park Road, although the differences in massing are interesting.

There is a range of street trees present in public areas, as well as some additional trees and planting on private land, all of which makes a significant positive contribution to the area's attractive character. A varying degree of enclosure exists due to the reasonably open road and pavements and the low-level of development.

Mature trees and the planting associated with the front gardens of the properties, results in a stronger feeling of nature. The buildings to the east and west of no 43 have brick front walls whilst other buildings on the opposite side of the road benefit from having established bushes on their front boundaries.

Many individual historic buildings along Park Road make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area's special character. Overall, it is the group of buildings which make the biggest contribution, with the established building lines, variation and individual treatment of the frontal elevations and attractive landscaping adding to the special character of the area.

The entire length of this part of De Pary's Avenue and all of the buildings that front it are in the Conservation Area mainly due to the historic, linear alignment of the road, laid out in one stage in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The quality of the setting is given by the buildings and the spaces between them, including some mature planting and trees. This planting combined with the brick walls and hedges creates a strong picturesque identity.

In assessing the suitability of new development, the greenery of the spaces to the rear of the buildings is important. Where re-building or new extensions have occurred, they have been located on the site of the earlier rear wing and are sufficiently well screened by the host building and its borders to the sides. This means that new extensions have no impact on the general character of the area.

Recent granted schemes at no 37, 39A and 41 have seen the addition of new extensions to the side and rear.

- **39A Park Road**, Addition of a new slate pitched roof to the rear flat roof building., Jun 2019
- **37 Park Road**, A single storey side extension incorporating an existing garage, and rear single storey extension with modifications., Oct 2017
- **41 Park Road**, A single storey rear extension and alterations to existing garage.
- 25 Park Road, Erection of single storey rear extension to existing ground floor flat 2009
- 39 Park Road. Demolition of existing garage, erection of new side garage, and alterations to front gate pier 2009

In these cases, discrete additions have been made to buildings in a way that is not visible in views from the street. The new buildings have been scaled and massed so as not to conflict with the retained rear elevation, but to blend in and draw attention to the character of the rear wall.

The building at no 43 – 45 is an attractive Victorian building. The massing to the front is related to its context and its materials give it a common connection with all the other buildings of the road.

To the rear, it is a building of little quality. The scale and form here fail to register any interest in the immediate and wider context of a distinctive townscape. The only feature that survives which is of any interest is the first floor windows and the gable roof.

The location of no 43- 45 and the buildings of Park Road demonstrate a historic context where habitation and social activity occurred around the area in the mid 19th-century. The changes made in the post-war period to spaces at the rear of many of the buildings leave the rear townscape with a small degree of inconsistency and varying quality.

### **View framework**

The townscape qualities and individual views make an important contribution to the character and appearance of the Nascot Conservation Area. Views of buildings along the street provide the setting to the conservation area. The linear nature of Park Road offers views of groups of buildings within their natural setting as the observer moves along the road. Views open up to give focus on individual buildings or groups; the eye moves from one building and its front space to the next, noting patterns and (micro) differences on the way.

### **3.4 Visual Appraisal: Views (Refer to Figure 6)**

Strategic views in and out of the conservation area are linear due to its layout, as Park Road has one overall movement, in an east west direction. The Church on Church Street acts as a focal point for this area and the visual bonding element of these residential streets.

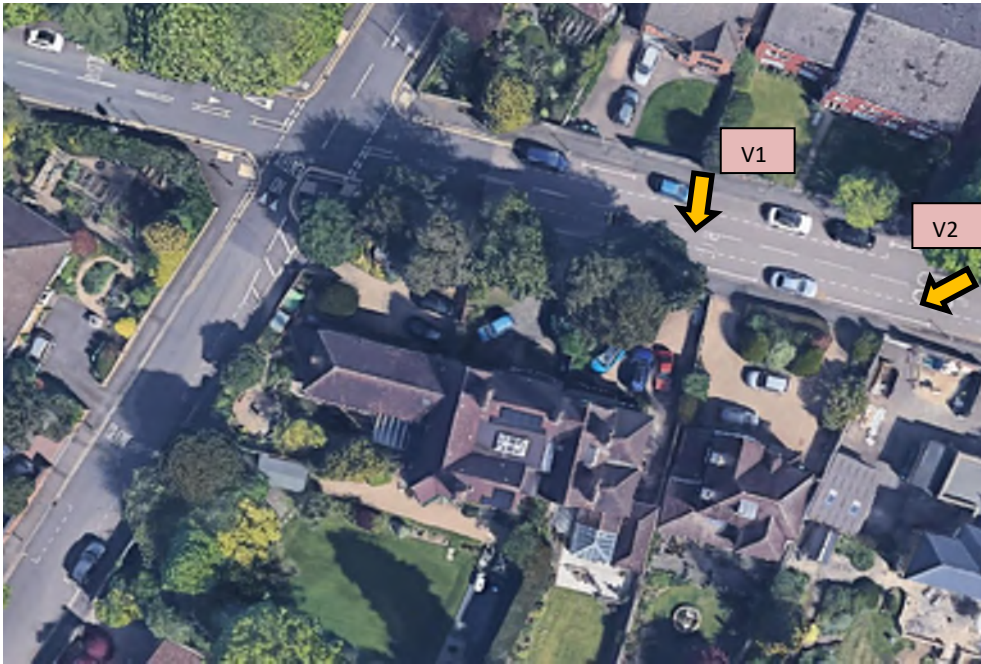
The green and leafy character of this part of the CA is reinforced by the planted frontages, comprising hedges and specimen trees. The open spaces to the front of properties combined with the street trees and the spacious plots and rear gardens of the residential properties give the area an overall sense of the suburban idyll.

Due to the tress at the front of the plot and the two openings in the front boundary the section of land in which the subject site is contained falls outside the direct sightline of Park Avenue. Yet the site is implied and inference is made to the garden to the rear of no 59 through the sight of the hedgerow/ fence along the party wall to no 41 on its east side. This gives the building depth although it is actually impossible to see the garden space directly. The garage however is glimpsed as forming a rear built form to no 43 (V1).

Standing outside no 43 it is impossible to make out the side elevation on the east side of no 43. It is only when standing to the east side of the front plot that it is possible to make out the depth of the building. Here, the windows are noted and the drop in scale of the side wing and garage is observed.

In views taken from the east when standing outside no 39, the street trees obscure any view of the lower orders of no 43. Only the roof is seen in a three quarter perspective (V2).

Only when standing in the grounds is the whole of the front elevation is visible, allowing for comparison of the walls, roof and bays. It is possible to read the ridge height of the roof and the depth of the gable bay in relation to the building at no 45. The reading of the roofs on this section of Park Road is gained and the rhythm of gable bays becomes a visual feast.



**Figure 6: View Assessment; Views identified by author**



V1



V2

## **4.0 PROPOSED IN RELATION TO ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC CHARACTER**

### **4.1 Design Approach and appraisal (To be read in conjunction with the Plans and Drawings)**

The character of historic buildings and their contribution to the context of a listed building can be severely diminished through insensitive alteration, extension or neighbouring development, or through neglect and dilapidation. The applicant has put forward a practical solution to effectively utilise the building, thereby allowing it to be viable in the long-term.

The current building has constraints on the space required to raise a family and since the applicant has been a resident in Watford for many years, then their commitment to the locality should be an important factor in the wider planning objectives for development.

- side and rear extension,
- creating a new basement area,
- altering the front of the house.

Works are proposed to replace the existing conservatory and garage additions in the form of new side and rear extensions. They will be designed in the form of new walls and roof that is more relevant to the line of the original. The side extension would leave the original frontage of the building intact and the doors and windows would integrate well with the existing. The new structure is attached to the existing wall in a way that retains the character of historic features and by being formed of the same material it will allow for the wall that is being added to be seen in context.

The design of the different elements is a response that takes into account the current size, scale and manner of the space to which they relate. The windows on the new south facing wall will match the three that will be lost by the extension.

The proposed changes will result in a satisfactory complex of interlinked units allowing for greater ease of circulation within the context of an old building. The design of the side and rear extension is proportionate to the current size, scale and manner of the space to which it relates.

#### **Specifics**

With respects to the location of the new extension, it will be positioned to the rear and side of the building where it will cover the area which is currently defined by existing built form and rear and front patio.

As this new addition is to the rear of the house it is disguised and hidden from the interpretation of the main front elevation and has no direct relationship to the reading of the building. Yet as the building is locally listed and considered to be of some architectural value, then the design of the rear addition does make reference to 'historic style' and will elevate the status of the rear elevation.

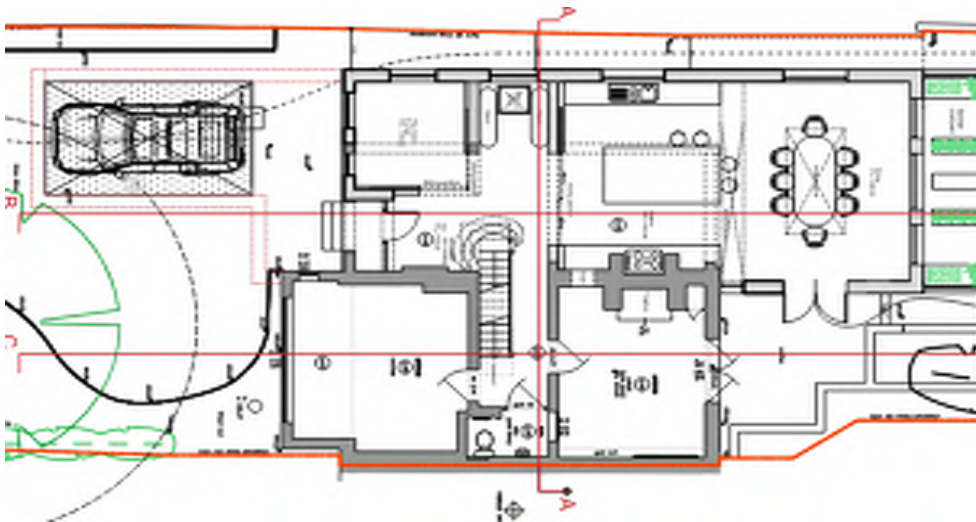
The addition is located to the south end of the building and marks the logical conclusion of the house's depth. The roof of the one storey structure will wrap around from the side to the space at the rear, forming a logical unified structure that connects the new extension with the existing.

**i. The creation of a one storey side extension plus roof**

The new space being created will be expressed through its relationship to the original building on its west side. The additional space will contribute to the open-plan layout and the extension will perform the role of continuing the existing space that flows from the side of the historic plan to the rear. The new space can be incorporated within the immediate context of the old house and new walls can abut the later walls of the later extension without impinging on historic fabric.

The proposed is a sensitive addition that enables more comfortable and habitable accommodation. It is located on the east elevation of the house and faces the gardens and rear patio. It will extend forward to the north end of the plot and fills in the space currently left in the side return to the garage. It will be seen from the main road but is scaled and massed so it relates proportionally to the building it appends.

It does not alter the reading of the material heritage of the house nor disturb its relationship to the Conservation Area.



**Figure 7; Proposed Plan**

The erection of an extension will allow for additional living area at the side/ rear of the house to be configured and aligned in a way which gives further space and circulation in the dining/ kitchen area. It is noted that the overall spaciousness and light aspect is to be enhanced by the addition of four new windows. The location of the door relates well to the position of the staircase which will be retained on the interior.

Essentially, the loss of the garage and the erection of a new wall for the extension will require little change to the existing bay. Existing elements such as the staircase will remain in place and can be utilised by the new format. One external wall to the kitchen/ garage will be removed to make way for the new open space that the new addition will create. The front bay is to be remodelled with the existing canopy window replaced by a new entrance door.



**Figure 8; Proposed Side Elevation**

The depth of the extension is a little less as the depth of the existing garage extension and is of a more fitting height to the retained building, making a rectangular shaped form that is congruous.

The only intervention in the fabric is to the later outer bay where the new connection is made to the kitchen area. The remodelling of the new space incorporates parts of the kitchen wall that were added here later and so there is no impact on historic material. The original fabric of the 1870's building will remain untouched,

Clearly it is important not to cause any interventions into the old structure of the house so the additional building can be done without impacting on the important features of the existing to which it adjoins. Indeed, it will be done so that the central beams are retained and new posts are used to support the structure so that effects of structural distress or damage are minimised.

## **ii. Rear Elevation;**

Visually, the changes being proposed for the fenestration will tie in a greater harmony through the rear elevation creating stronger presence and overall balance. It is proposed to remove the ordinary dated looking conservatory to give space for the new window and wall elements.

The first floor rear windows will be retained and the ground floor patio door enhanced as a focal point. A two storey conservatory structure will align with the existing floor levels and create a new sub surface space in the patio area of the garden.

The fenestration at ground and first floor has a modern approach as given through the use of black metal frames. On the ground floor, red brick arches formed over the new glazing will connect the old and new and give a unity to the garden. The modernity of the new structure is expressed through full height fenestration which effectively addresses the rhythm given by the windows above in the existing elevation.

It is also important to note that the distinctive window in the front gable bay is a strong factor in the dimensions of the new windows, thereby seeing the new fenestration to the rear relate well to the character of the front elevation. This brings an indirect improvement to the quality of the CA.

The glazing will provide a reflective aspect to the building and help break up the areas of brick which characterise the space to the rear. The use of metal is a well-recognised as a suitable conservation material and its place in the fenestration is a welcome introduction. Metal is a high-quality material whose very substance and texture will provide an exceptional balance with the brickwork of the external rear wall. It adds a contemporary detail which works well with the old and helps give clarity to the coherence of the design.



**Figure 9; Proposed Rear Elevation Elevation**



**Figure 10; Proposed Front**

### **iii. Alterations to the front of the house.**

At the front of the property the proposals concern the creation of a new recessed entrance porch and main entrance door to match that of no 45 next door. The new door would be in stone and brick to match the original and be of an appearance which is in keeping with the pair of arches seen on the other end of the house. This helps strengthen the historic identity of the house as a unified whole.

Two new windows will be located in the new front wall created by the side extension. Attention is paid to the use of materials in these windows. Therefore, new white timber frame windows are used to match existing. The front of the extension itself will merge seamlessly with the existing building as the brickwork will match existing and a light coloured stone will be used for the coping.

Where seen, the new door and windows will restore heritage significance and make a contribution to the Conservation Area.



## **4.2 Impact on architectural and historic character**

The main impacts will be the changes to the form and character of the building brought about by the new extensions. The changes to the front elevation will restore some of the architectural integrity to the building brought about by the frontage of no 45 . The existing conservatory to the rear is rather dated and does not compliment the original rear wall of the building. The proposals for the side and rear are a congruous form that is sympathetic to the host building.

The design is sympathetic to the building and regards the new internal spaces there will be no loss of historic floor plan through the removal of existing walls and the insertion of new walls at basement and ground floor. There will be no impact on fabric and the planform of the historic building will continue to evolve.

- **General design**

The building is locally important and contributes to the quality of the built environment in Watford and along this stretch of Park Road. With respect to the proposals, it is important to ensure that the architectural detailing of the building to which the development relates is not eroded or that the quality of the setting is not compromised. Through an understanding of the building and its context, it is possible to evaluate the heritage impacts accruing from the proposals.

Generally, the use for which the house was designed was seen as having the potential for a later extension to the side and the rear. An extension to the rear and side that follows the line and scale of the former extension is a logical means of generating the additional space for a growing family.

The overall intention is to develop the external spaces to the south of the building by erecting a new extension. The extension will be of a linear aspect and blend seamlessly into the walls of the house. The impact of design is sympathetic both in scale, mass and materials.

The desire for additional space for the kitchen provides a viable economic opportunity to regenerate the building and keep it in active use. The proposal creates a better use of the building that is compatible with the current fabric, exterior, interior and setting.

With respects to the proposals for the house it is important to ensure that the architectural detailing of the building to which the development relates is not eroded or that the quality of the setting is compromised. The works to alter the building and improve its use and accessibility do not harm its interest. As the interest is reserved for the front elevation and its relationship with no 45.

It is noted that the house has undergone a degree of alterations on the inside. This ranges from the new extension to the reformed architraves and partition walls. So, it should be welcomed that the proposed retains the existing internal plan form and the roof structure. The former has already been modified with a conservatory extension. The existing internal layout of the original building itself will not be changed and it is only the addition of an external walls linking into the kitchen which will change the plan form, forming an open shaped plan.

The proposal adopts materials that already predominate in the area, as in casements and plain clay tile externally. It will also replicate the colour and grain of the existing brick on the walls. It will then be representative of the patina of age given by this external material.

- **Assessment of the scale, elevation and materials proposed**

The assessment of the design includes the impact on the street scene, on the character and appearance of the adjacent residential area and the setting of no 43, the host building.

### **Rear**

The new glazed elevation presents the chance of having a more attractive presence and creating a distinct form at the rear of the building, in close proximity to a distinctive road in the CA. The detail of the proposed has been arranged so it would not unacceptably impact upon the setting of the host building or the CA. Instead, the design works within the existing context of the building to create alterations which *are conterminous* with the main house and an enhancement to the Conservation Area.

The elevation on the lower orders is comprised of glazed panels. It uses architectural mediums such as metal and glass to convey the design. The height of the panels are organised to express one vertical element, comprising of the lower order of the building at basement level combined with the ground floor level.

The new windows are full height and they pay respect to the existing height of the windows around the building. The rationale for being of a united design allows the coherence of the building form and appearance of the building as seen at the front to be continued in the new. The rear elevation is composed of a series of discrete elements that allow for the conservatory to blend in an improved way with the original. In this way, visual dominance is reduced and the building can be seen as a whole.

the proposed conservatory is kept within the height of the ground floor and is made so as to improve the look of the lower/ middle part of the house. It does not appear unduly obtrusive, so as to respect the character of the dwelling. In addition, the manner in which it utilises the arch motif for the ground floor windows will channel the eye towards the grounds in which the building sits, helping to marry the importance and scale of it in relation to the core building.

### **Front**

In relation to the contribution of the building to the Conservation Area, the focus is on the overall form and symmetry of the building as well as on the arrangement and style of the windows. In this respect the installation of a new door recessed into the elevation will bring great historic quality.

Whilst the opportunity to create a well-designed point on this important elevation has been considered, the imperative is to scale it in a way that does not detract from an appreciation of the surrounding building.

- **Architectural Expression; Materials & Detailing**

The proposed materials respond to the character of the area and combine to create a unique and distinctive development.

The assessment of the local historic vernacular is used to provide visual cues and the context of the area has influenced the choice of materials. The design has worked to achieve a balance where the new allows the heritage of the area to be read and uses new devices such as glass to lighten the impact on the old.

The alterations will be viewed as a sensitive addition to a historic building with the careful contrast of new materials against old as seen in the use of metal frames on the new windows in the conservatory, marking the contemporary. The alterations will not be defined by arbitrary alignments and massing as it is at the moment, but by careful consideration of the context immediately behind the host building and in relation to the garden and its neighbours.

The size of the existing house and its extension is a factor by which the proposal has been formed. The design utilises the scope for making additions to the house so that new openings are created which are entirely in keeping with the main house. The proposal is arranged so the correct proportions, scale and materials come together to make an appropriate form of change to the building.

#### **4.2.1 Impacts on External Significance**

A new extension may be positioned on the south of the building, connected to the eastern side extension. This will mean the loss of some later brick from the existing kitchen wall to form the new opening. The choice of design for the extension may well be best influenced by traditional built qualities, as these will reinstate the setting and also reflect the older qualities of the building.

Therefore, it is correct to select materials which will sit well with the existing building. Timber frames to the front and side are exact details which reflect the older building as well as the building it abuts. The use of replica bricks will see the new blend harmoniously with the existing.

It will sit effectively in harmony to the kitchen bay and offer similarity in character and appearance. A proposed side extension will be justified on the basis that the new scale will improve the reading of the eastern elevation.

The extension reflects the period, style, and regional characteristics of the building, as well as representing technological development. By building an awareness of the significance of the existing building, the design proposed for the extension connects well and so retains as much of the character of the building as possible.

#### **The impact on the Conservation Area**

In relation to the contribution of the building to the Conservation Area, the focus is on the overall form and symmetry of the building's frontage. In addition, it is important that rear alterations are not unsightly or of the wrong scale, as this would be regarded as detrimental to the historic environment of the Conservation Area.

Whilst the opportunity to create new additions to the building has been considered, the imperative to unify it with the existing built elements is essential to the design of the whole. As it will relate to the local context at the front and rear of buildings on the south side of Park Road, where bays are composed of windows, timbers and other decorative effects. The buildings order is defined at the front through the three-dimensional nature of the protruding bay, so it is fitting to alter the existing rear extension to the rear in a way which reflects the quality of the front.

Although not directly in view of the CA, positive benefits can be gained through the remodelling of the rear elevation, so it has more in common with the front elevation than current. The notion of contrasting elements of the building being pulled together in a series of unified caveats will reduce the visual effect of the mass. This will help knit together an improved visual relationship with the Conservation Area.

### **Design in context**

An assessment of the impact of the design and development on the architectural and historic character of the area illustrates how a sensitive design approach offers an appropriate design response for the site.

The proposals consider the street setting and adjacent buildings. By considering existing alignments and appearance of buildings as well as the position of the street, it preserves the integrity of the surrounding buildings and harmonises into the context of the buildings which front the street. This is important in meeting the stipulation that new development must, as a minimum, preserve the character of the CA.

As the rear elevations of the buildings on park Road may be considered to contribute to the character of the Conservation Area, then the recent proliferation for alterations to the rear of other buildings should be seen as adding to this quality. The comparable scale of the new in relation to the retained rear elevation ensures that an appreciation of the original will still be gained. The additions will invite further understanding of the dialogue between old and new.

This contemporary approach reinforces Watford's commitment for encouraging high-quality design that is, sympathetic in context and pays respect towards the host building and/or other neighbouring buildings.

#### **4.2.2 Impact on the setting**

The design carefully ensures that works to the external parts of the building are carried out so as not to impinge on the central part of the building as seen from Park Road. In addition, the character of the wider setting with St Andrews Church in the vicinity means that open views are important to the setting. Therefore, the proposal not to extend upwards and keep within the existing vertical scale is suited to the street scene and minimizes any impact.

The effect on the character and appearance of the setting and host building is likely to be restricted to a very limited perception of additional build at the eastern end. Although this will not really be seen from the road and the only visual note of change is taken from the rear patio and garden. In this respect, the only marker of change will be the prior knowledge that there was once an olden conservatory on this site.

## **Heritage Impact Summary**

External additions at ground-floor and basement level to extend out of the kitchen would not cause any loss of heritage value. It will not compromise the current understanding of the buildings history or be in conflict with the fabric and layout.

The design process for the proposal is to carry out extension work to the external envelope of the property. This will include the addition of one proportionally sized structure at the side of the eastern end, replacing an existing outmoded garage and conservatory. This ensures that the structure retains its character and the property is not altered outside of what is considered acceptable and suitable to the context of the locally listed house.

Given that the significance of No 43 is brought about by the front elevation and its link with no 45, the new design is not considered materially to damage the historic or architectural interest. Indeed, by retaining all primary built elements, the scheme carefully continues the historic narrative to this building.

The existing extension is of a neutral appearance and contributes little towards understanding the significance of the building it abuts. Therefore, its replacement with a better designed extension as part of the new design can make an uplift in this contribution towards significance and enhance this end of the house.

The main body of the house partially screens views from the road towards the rear of the building; a new extension will not interfere with the open land to the south of the site.

Change is often advisable only where the proposal is entirely out of view. It is contended that, in the case of the new structure, demonstrable benefit is to be gained to the public realm by the construction of a well-designed extension that blends well with the existing extension. Indeed, when seen from the street this far outweighs the loss of historic or aesthetic significance.

In addition, the new extension will not intervene or obscure views of windows, doors or walls that are identified as significant to the building. Indeed, a new structure will not actually be detrimental to the visual character of the building. Rather, it will help balance up the proportions and create a harmony at ground floor. This has the advantage of actually making an enhancement to the building and adding further interest to the rear elevation so that it is something that bestows a traditional quality.

The extension end will strengthen the relationship of the built form with the open space and gardens of no 102. The core cottage itself will remain dominant in the hierarchy of built form on the corner of the road, whilst the extension is a more discrete element of built form placed to its rear.

### **4.3 Heritage Assessments**

Policy guidance towards planning indicates the importance of evaluating the historic environment in making development decisions. It states in the NPPF 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 Government's objectives for planning in the historic environment are to deliver sustainable development by ensuring that policies and decisions concerning the historic environment:

- recognise that heritage assets are a non-renewable resource;
- take account of the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits of heritage conservation;
- recognise that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term.

Assessments of significance are recognised as being critical when ascribing value to individual heritage assets, as well as to small groups of buildings to neighbourhoods and places. The idea of 'significance' lies at the core of objectives given by English Heritage, 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance' (2008).

Significance is a collective term for the sum of all the heritage values attached to a place, be it a building, an archaeological site or a larger historic area such as a village or streetscape.

The English Heritage document Conservation Principles (2008) identified four key values ascribed to heritage assets and emphasised the importance of understanding these values to define the significance of a place. This assessment considers these four values:

- Evidential value: the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.
- Historical value: the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present;
- Aesthetic value: the ways in which people draw sensory stimulation from a place.
- Communal value: the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

Recent Historic England Guidance on the Setting of Heritage Assets states that the setting of any heritage asset is likely to include a variety of views of, across, or including that asset, and views of the surroundings from or through the asset. It advises that the protection of the setting of heritage assets need not inhibit change and that change can enhance or reduce the significance and appreciation of an asset or leave it unchanged.

The setting is the surroundings in which an asset is experienced. All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance, or maybe neutral.

In addition, context and setting play an important part in understanding the significance of the place, as often expressed by reference to visual considerations. The protection of views is related to the protection of setting and is often considered to be like a work of art in its own right.

In respects to setting and context, De Pary's Avenue is a part of the setting which contributes to the significance of the Conservation Area. It is also important for how it formed a part of the developing area in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The front of no 59 forms a part of the local view framework as the building is part of a group which is experienced as a part of the built environment.

It is recognised that not all parts of a heritage asset will necessarily be of equal significance. In some cases, certain aspects or elements could accommodate substantial change without affecting the significance of the asset.

This concept is reinforced by the government's objectives, which include "intelligently managed change" and which seek to ensure that decisions are based on the nature, extent and level of significance of heritage assets.

Change is only considered to be harmful if it affects an asset's significance. Understanding the significance of any heritage assets affected and any contribution made by their setting (NPPF, *para. 194*) is therefore fundamental to understanding the scope for and acceptability of change.

Local Plan Policy states that the Council will permit proposals to extend or alter a locally listed building where it would not result in the damage or loss of features of special architectural or historic interest; and the character and appearance or setting of the building would be preserved or enhanced.

#### **4.4 NPPF Assessments**

The NPPF constitutes the government's current national guidance and policy regarding development within the historic environment. The NPPF is a material consideration that must be taken into account in planning decisions and in this respect, it includes a clear policy framework for local planning authorities and decision makers. It reiterates that planning law requires applications to be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Section 16 of the revised NPPF deals with conserving and enhancing the historic environment in paragraphs **189 to 208**. The effects of any development on a heritage asset, therefore, need to be assessed against the four components of its heritage significance: its archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic interest.

Paragraph 189 makes it clear that the level of detail should be i) proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset and ii) no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the significance of the heritage asset.

The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The policies of NPPF, taken as a whole, constitute the Government's view of what sustainable development in England means in practice for the planning system.

According to paragraph 206, local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within settlements and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance.

Of relevance to the proposal Paragraph 207 states:

*'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 195** or less than substantial harm under **paragraph 196**, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected ...'*

Applying this to the site it follows that the greater the degree of change deemed to be significant or contributory to significance, the greater the potential for harm and the need to proportionately justify that harm.

Regarding the policy test set out in NPPF, the significance of the heritage asset (the conservation area) has been assessed and it is noted that the subject property considered to be a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. The alterations to the rear and front are considered a positive step towards the enhancement of the Conservation Area.

In this respect, the development will give rise to less than substantial harm, for which the public benefits of the proposal (**para 196, NPPF**) will be of greater weight.

In respects to NPPF, the following criteria for assessment are also important in establishing the credibility of the proposal:

- Impact on significance (199, 200 and 201)
- Suitable design (110, 124, 127 & 132)
- Conservation of heritage assets (195, 197, 199 and 200)

**IN RELATION TO PARAGRAPH\_199, 200 and 201:** the significance of the heritage assets affected and the contribution of their setting to that significance.

In the immediate setting of No. 43 there is one type of heritage asset; the Conservation Area. The section on Historic Review, Conservation Area and townscape context (2.2 – 2.5) gives information to help understand the significance of this heritage asset. It is also one of many buildings that is thought to make a contribution to the streetscape and Conservation Area.

Due to its siting in the Conservation Area, its conservation as a heritage asset is an objective of the NPPF and a material consideration when determining the outcome of a planning application. No 43 is of historic significance through the information it provides on the development of this plot of land as a place of residential accommodation in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as part of the first wave of development radiating out from the new railway and its associated buildings.

The building of unsuitably sized rear parts tells a story about the pressure on the post-Edwardian developer to fit in as much building as possible into a narrow plot. This cramped nature of the rear elevation is somewhat against the Victorian notion of a refined order in buildings of this period.

The relationship of the space to the surroundings is important and in particular the visual connection it has in relation to the rear of no 43. Currently, the external appearance is of an ordinary rear elevation, with one bay having more importance than the other (conservatory) bay. This leaves a neutral impression to the rear and it falls short of the more respectable frontage seen on the building.

The proposed design in this location has been specifically crafted to cause no detrimental effect on the historic part of the street. The proposed design to the front recognises the opportunity for creating a balance against the heritage elements of the neighbourhood. Details



such as the new door are inimitable in defining the character of many buildings. As this element will be visible the detailing of the elevation has been designed so that it enhances any key heritage viewpoints taken along the road.

The external appearance has been carefully considered and designed to provide a high-quality building with easily accessible open space. The building provides a positive enhancement to the surrounding area, particularly when considering the existing use of the site.

In conclusion, the design will improve the visual quality of this stretch of the street, enhancing the quality of the buildings in its proximity and bolstering its relationship to the neighbourhood. This will have a knock-on effect on the Conservation Area.

**IN RELATION TO PARAGRAPHS 110, 124, 127 and 132:** the consideration of design should include scale, height, massing, alignment, materials and use.

The design will, when done sensitively and to the high-quality proposed in the drawings, respond to the heritage sensitivities in the area and leave a positive impact on the rear elevation.

The proposal seeks to improve the overall setting of no 43, thereby allowing it to be viable for long-term residential objectives whilst realising the spatial and architectural qualities of the host building and the surrounding area. The changes have been designed so as to realise the heritage value of the area in a way that promotes its significance rather than causes harm to it.

The scheme finds a solution to making changes that bring residential benefits whilst not impacting on the character of the site and the surrounding area. Indeed, by referring to the context of the existing building the scheme is highly sympathetic.

The new extensions are fashioned to be an attractive part of the rear and side elevation, with well-scaled dimensions and prominent glazing. The predominant use of metal frames on the conservatory will invite reflection about the setting of a new building within a historic context.

The instalment of new doors and windows creates a distinct presence that emphasises the relationship to no 43 and no 45 to its side. This relationship to its neighbours characterises the historic development of this part of Park Road.

The edge to Park Road can be better expressed to reflect the existence of buildings and their gardens in the immediate vicinity. Improvements to the rear draw an inimitable connection to the front of the building, thereby giving a better understanding of the whole. The basis of the materiality of the proposed doors and windows adheres to the character of the area and of the neighbouring buildings, offering an interpretation of the traditional through its appearance.

The introduction of a timber sash window at the front engenders an understanding of the original house.

In its own right, the proposal will be an expression of the traditional movement which continues the historical narrative of this part of Watford. A proposal of this quality will have a positive contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the historic environment.

**IN RELATION TO PARAGRAPHS (195, 197, 199 and 200):** Weight given to the significance of a designated heritage asset and its conservation

Due to the proposals taking place in the setting of adjacent undesignated heritage assets and the urban area their due impact have been carefully evaluated for the purpose of this application.

Park Roads prime historical significance is mainly gleaned from its role in illustrating the architectural history of Watford from the mid-19th-century to the 21st Century. No 43's purpose as a detached building which was unified with no 45 has survived for over a hundred years, giving the current site a context in the present day. Plans to improve it as a family home are suitable and another chapter in the history of the building.

The surrounding buildings have been retained as historic structures of architectural value or converted to flats. Many have seen rear extensions erected in a response to utilising the space in the garden. The objective in these instances has been to address the prevailing poor design of built form in the constrained plots which mark the spaces to the rear of the buildings along Park Road.

The proposed design to the front will bring significant improvements to the public realm and the benefits to the residents, workers and walkers who regularly use the area. As the street is an important local asset, it is important to note that the scheme engenders improvement to the setting through the new timber windows, giving nuance to the visual quality of the site. This will have positive repercussions for understanding and appreciating the street's role as comprising of many buildings with the same overall scale and mass, but also as having many small individual subtleties.

The proposed will help to unify the visual appearance of rear elevations in this stretch of the road. It highlights the adjacent structures, promoting new aesthetic links to these and the other residential buildings in the short and mid-range zone.

The conservation benefit of the proposal effectively sees imagination in the design process and how the new relates to historic features in the wider area and to the surrounding context. This aims to minimise conflict and bring greater clarity to a space at a focal point that forms a key part of the urban area whilst also in the setting of some locally interesting buildings.

### **NPPF Summary**

In consideration of the policy assessments, the alterations proposed here will contribute positively to the character, distinctiveness and significance of the historic environment. The design takes into account the following characteristics of the building and its surroundings:

- The significance of nearby assets and the contribution of their setting;
- The general character and distinctiveness of the local buildings, spaces and the historic plots of the Conservation Area that hinge around the site;
- The natural elements of the streetscape and their role in making a sense of place to this part of the Conservation Area;
- The scale, materials, detailing, decoration and period of existing buildings and spaces;
- Views into and from the site and its surroundings;
- The current and historic uses in the area and the urban patina.

## **4.5 Heritage Benefits**

The development actively seeks to preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset, such as the street/ pavement alignment, the boundary demarcations on all sides, the trees and the existing buildings near to the site. It does this through helping to enhance the significance of the setting (the heritage asset) through the improvement of the rear elevation, by locating new extension to the side and rear of the building.

The existing garage and conservatory will be removed. The space of the surrounding rear land envelope will be improved and the proposed is a means of improving the built form around the site whilst giving more invaluable accommodation.

At the rear, the scheme will complement the prevailing architectural style found in the neighbourhood, introducing fenestration (in the form of a modern glazed conservatory) that refers to the Victorian preference for large well-ordered window openings. At the front, the new timber windows also reflect the general appearance of such features on buildings from the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The proposals for the front and rear are influenced through their connection with the buildings of the Conservation Area. The scheme, therefore, creates an opportunity that is of public benefit and therefore of heritage value.

In addition, the proposals are functional, robust and attractive by virtue of their simplicity. The materials and shape relate well to the local context, using craftsmanship that is sustainable.

There are many potential heritage benefits that weigh in favour of this scheme, including:

- It enhances the significance of the heritage asset and contributes to the setting.
- It makes a positive contribution to sustainable communities.
- It is an appropriate design for its context and makes a positive contribution to the appearance, character, quality and local distinctiveness of the historic environment.
- It better reveals the significance of the heritage asset and therefore enhances the enjoyment of it and the sense of place.
- The materials, scale and details are carefully arranged, so as to remain relative to the existing building in its immediate context.

In respect of National Policy, the degree of the harm caused to the historic environment is balanced against the wider design, public realm and community benefits. This statement finds that development of the site will upgrade the rear area, whose significance is currently marred by an ill-conceived rear extension that relates poorly to the setting of the host building.

## **4.6 Local Plan Assessments**

The Conservation and Urban section is complemented by a Supplementary Planning Documents (SPG 28) Watford: Historic Environment Character Statement and Guidance Note (Adopted February 2002). They will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Regards the proposed alterations, the applicant has recognised the intrinsic special interest and character of the building which should be retained. Alterations to the later part of the

building which forms a neutral appendage to the rear, gains merit for bringing a positive contribution to the building and the Conservation Area.

The conservatory and garage which stands on the rear wall of the building is not felt to have any architectural merit and does not contribute to the Conservation Area. Special attention has been given to ensure the alterations are compatible with the architectural interest of the building.

Importantly the application would not have any adverse effect on the architectural and historic character or appearance of the interior or exterior of the building or its setting. In addition, the proposal respects the scale, design, materials and finishes of the existing building, and preserves its historic fabric where possible.

### **The Local Plan**

The key policies in the Local Plan are based on promoting high quality, sustainable design and physical works to improve the town's places and streets, whilst preserving and enhancing the unique character of Watford and the distinctiveness of the conservation areas and other historic and valued buildings, spaces and places.

With regard to the materials used for the new extension, they will be sympathetic and appropriate to those used in the original building. With respects to the suitability of new design, the Proposals will preserve the character of no 43-45 whilst also enhancing the significance and appearance of the building which contribute to the character of the Conservation Area.

The scheme proposed for the rear engenders an uplift in design quality that is wrought in a way that works well with the current proportions and materials seen in this space. To the front, subtle additions are made that raise the architectural significance of the building in relation to the street, thereby bringing enhancements to the Conservation Area.

## **5.0 CONCLUSIONS**

The Assessment shows that a proposal can be worked up that represents an imaginative and appropriate response to the setting of no 43-45 in the context of the Nascot Conservation Area and more especially to the subject site. This part of Park Road has seen gradual change and updating of buildings for residential uses with some examples of later rear infill and extensions.

There have been some notable developments to the rear of the buildings on Park Road, with a variety of design seen to the side of the host building at no's 41, 39 and 25-27.

The Heritage Statement has assessed the significance of no 43 to Park Road and how its historical context and the rise of an urban settlement based on the development of residential buildings plotted on streets is a relevant factor in development and design.

Due to its location within the visual framework of the Conservation Area, the impact of the proposals on the setting of adjacent designated assets has been carefully evaluated. A design which is crafted according to the individual merits and dimensions of the host building will allow for well detailed changes that raises the profile of the older parts of the building which will be retained.

Currently, the rear of no 43-45 is a rather innocuous space determining neither a strong physical connection to the built environment or creating part of a view into something.

The rear elevation has been added to with later temporary attachments making it appear as a poorly conceived construction. The high-quality addition in the form of a two storey rear conservatory with well-proportioned glazing can make a vast improvement.

The proposal follows a design that will have an improvement on the setting of no 43-45. The minor changes to the front of the building respond well to the architectural integrity of surrounding buildings whilst the objective for creating an improved elevation at the rear will complement the front elevation of no 43 as well as find a reference to recent extensions on other buildings to its sides.

This part of the Watford has seen gradual refurbishment and updating of buildings for residential uses with changes being made to the built form at the rear. These alterations have, to varying degrees, conformed and maintained the areas historic character. With regards to the proposal for no 43, the alterations reflect the scale of the rear elevation.

They are arranged at the lower order of the host building so that it blends in with the orders above. The conservatory will have 'historic windows' which are stylised to reflect a historic period. They will act to enhance the area's character and be appropriate in size to the important windows at the front of the building. This has a positive knock-on effect for the setting of no 43-45 and how it is experienced in the local townscape.

The historic environment has been considered as part of the planning process, with the contribution made by the setting and context of the place a major factor. Currently, the contribution of the building to the area's character is neutral at the rear and positive at the front.

The new design creates a visually satisfying interpretation of the building typology seen at the front of no 43-45 and so provides an enhancement to assets.

The scheme has been assessed according to the impact on its surroundings, and its role within the wider neighbourhood, as well as how the design responds to the rear garden spaces and the quality of the environment around. It refers positively to the heritage and space constraints and the low-density character of Park Road.

The proposals will see the rear of no 43 connect positively with its surroundings to create a safe and inclusive place through the use of good design principles including form, scale, materials, natural surveillance and orientation, and sustainable construction.

It is positive that new residential capacity can be provided without having to make an increase to densities; at the same time, it is compatible with local character and townscape and preserves the setting of the historic buildings.

The report concludes that the proposed changes to the site would be an appropriate solution to development in this location, particularly because of its design, which is based on a mix of traditional and contemporary architecture, and its use of materials, which sit well within the locality. As the design has followed guidance set down within the conservation area management plan it should therefore be considered acceptable.