

19 SWAKELEYS ROAD, ICKENHAM, UB10 8DF

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

DECEMBER 2020





Townscape: Chartered Town & Heritage Consultant Ltd
Unit 1 Carnforth Station
Carnforth, Lancashire LA5 9TR
01524701537 / 07583152804
info@townscape.org.uk / www.townscape.org.uk

DEC 2020

All rights in this work are reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced, stored or transmitted in any form or by any means (including without limitation by photocopying or placing on a website) without the prior permission in writing of Townscape except in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. Applications for permission to reproduce any part of this work should be addressed to Townscape info@townscape.org.uk.

Undertaking any unauthorised act in relation to this work may result in a civil claim for damages and/or criminal prosecution. Any materials used in this work which are subject to third party copyright have been reproduced under licence from the copyright owner except in the case of works of unknown authorship as defined by the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. Any person wishing to assert rights in relation to works which have been reproduced as works of unknown authorship should contact Townscape info@townscape.org.uk. Townscape asserts its moral rights to be identified as the author of this work under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

contents

1. Introduction
2. Relevant Planning Policy Framework
3. Significance of Heritage assets – Step 1
4. Assess the degree to which the views make a contribution to the significance of a heritage asset – Step 2
5. Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful to the significance or to the ability to appreciate the heritage assets – Step 3
6. Mitigation of Visual Impact on heritage setting – Step 4
7. Conclusion

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report explores the potential impact on the setting of heritage assets of a proposal for development at 19 Swakeleys Road. It involves a rear extension to the property forming a reordering of existing and additional office space resulting in a form of development which could, by virtue of its proposed plan form, give rise to an impact upon the Ickenham conservation area.
- 1.2 This heritage impact assessment has been written to reflect the planning requirements where development proposals may impact upon heritage assets and has been prepared based upon current and existing planning legislation and guidance. There are no statutory listed buildings within the immediate vicinity of the proposed development which would directly be affected by the development. The basis of this report is to assess impact upon the setting and character of the Ickenham conservation area only, otherwise referred to as the heritage asset.
- 1.3 Heritage policies are contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It is important that, when considering site development, attention is given to the potential impact on heritage assets.
- 1.4 This assessment has been carried out by Jason Kennedy, Director of Townscape Chartered Town Planning & Heritage Consultants and follows the methodology set out in 'The Setting of heritage Assets', Historic Environment Good Practice guide (GPA, note 3, second edition 2017, Historic England).

2. Relevant Planning Policy framework

- 2.1 Definition of 'Setting of a heritage asset' within NPPF glossary:

The setting of an historic asset includes the surroundings in which it's experienced, its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. 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 may be neutral.

- Setting is important to the way in which historic assets are understood, appreciated and experienced and contribute to their significance.
- Setting often extends beyond the property boundary or 'curtilage' of an individual historic asset into a broader landscape context. Intangible as well as physical factors can be important in understanding the setting of a historic asset. These may include function, sensory perceptions and historical, artistic, literary and scenic associations.
- When change or development is proposed, it is important to identify the historic assets

that might be affected, define the setting of each historic asset and assess the potential impact of the development on that setting. However, few cases will need extensive analysis and some proposals may not have any impact at all.

- If proposed change or development is likely to have an impact on setting, it is important that the applicant prepares a proportionate and objective written assessment to inform the decision-making process. This should take into account the significance of the asset and its setting and quantify the extent of the impact. The methodology and level of information should be proportionate to the case.
- Development proposals should aim to minimise any harmful impact on the setting of a historic asset.

2.2 The document 'The Setting of Heritage Assets', Historic England, GPA3 2017, sets out guidance on managing change within the setting of heritage assets, including archaeological remains and historic buildings, sites, areas and landscape. The guidance includes a methodological approach to assessing the effect of proposed development on the setting of assets, which has been followed in this study. The methodology has 4 key stages:

- Step 1: Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected
- Step 2: Define and analyse the settings to understand how they contribute to the ways in which the historic assets are understood, appreciated and experienced
- Stage 3: Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful on the significance or on the ability to appreciate it
- Step 4: Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm.

2.3 The impact assessment includes an assessment of the effect of direct and indirect impact, including physical changes, visual impacts on individual heritage attributes, assets and intangible associations. Professional judgment has been used to evaluate the significance of effect.

2.4 It is generally accepted that conservation is about managing sustainable change and that every reasonable effort should be made to avoid, eliminate or minimise adverse impacts on significant places. In accordance with planning policy, however, it may be necessary to balance the public benefit of any proposed changes against the harm to the place. In this regard, an overall assessment of impact on setting has been made balancing any public benefits and dis-benefits within a summary and conclusion.

3. Significance of heritage assets – Step 1

- 3.1 The heritage asset to which this report relates to is the Ickenham Conservation area. The conservation area is a large area based primarily on the historical hall of Swakeleys and land surrounding St Giles Church which form the historical aspects of the conservation area. In addition, the conservation area encompasses most of central Ickenham with a focus on the early 20th century development following post WW1 and inter war housing including mid 20th century development. The buildings provide little architectural concession to their location within the conservation area and are architecturally and historically unremarkable.
- 3.2 The building itself has no heritage designated significance and whilst it is contained within the Conservation Area and close to heritage assets, in particular fronting Swakeleys Road itself, the proposed development site is wholly self-contained to the rear of the property and therefore the impact of the proposal is limited to the immediate neighbours and the conservation area only, no listed buildings are impacted.



Fig 1, OS Map extract 25in 1936 site identified. Subsequent later map regression shows a clear enlargement to the rear of the properties.

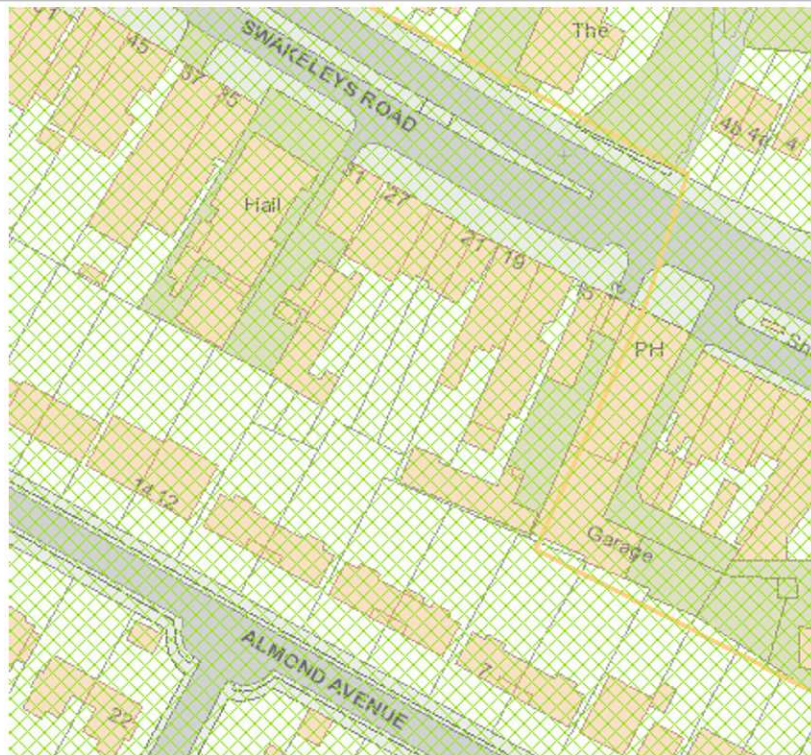


Fig 2 Map extract, Hillingdon Council website 2020, note the gradual intensification to the rear areas of the properties.

3.3 In order to assess the significance of the heritage assets, a brief summary of each heritage asset has been made.

3.4 (A) Significance Assessment of 19 Swakeleys Road

19 Swakeleys Road is early to mid-20th century property constructed in brick with timber detailing to the front and has seen incremental change with later additions and extensions. The building extends over 2 storeys with ground floor as a convenience store with offices above and to the side and rear. The development site doglegs around the convenience store with its own separate entrance, and spaces to the rear within its own rear garden space.

3.5 Whilst the building is of modern construction and features as part of the incremental growth of Ickenham in the early part of the 20th century, the property forms part of a popular shopping parade. The building sits centrally to the conservation area and whilst its architectural and historical significance is limited in relation to adjacent listed building, 19 Swakeleys Road still helps to provide an understanding of the growth of Ickenham and as such the property has a low significance which corresponds with in force heritage planning policy.

- 3.6 **(B) Significance assessment of Ickenham Conservation area** - Ickenham is located within the north-west part of Greater London in the London Borough of Hillingdon. The area is home to a population of approximately 12,000 people. Ickenham's northern and southern boundaries are located some 2km south-east of Ruislip and 3km north-west of Uxbridge. The Valley Regional Park runs north / south along Ickenham's western boundary whilst the RAF Northolt's aerodrome is located immediately to the east of the area.

Within the historic core, the conservation area can be divided into two principle areas: North of Swakeleys Road and south of Swakeleys Road. North of Swakeleys Road and east of High Road which contain development associated within the historical rural character of the village and is characterised by post-medieval to 19th century development. This area of the conservation area is of a loose grain. The character of the historic rural settlement is best preserved east of High Road, focused around the village pond and pump.

South of Swakeleys Road was redeveloped in the early 20th century. This period of architecture dominates the character and appearance of this area, and is typically of a much closer grain of development than earlier phases of the historic core. Further west, buildings are typically one or two storeys in height and are congruent with the 'village' character of the area. The eastern part of the area is defined by three storey neo-Georgian structures which are an important visual components of the historic core and add to the diversity of historic built environment.

The conservation area, in line with the NPPF is awarded high significance.

The statement of significance set out above is a summary of its special interest and character. It is unfortunate that no conservation area appraisal is available.

3.7 **Contribution of setting to the significance of heritage assets**

Given the size and location of the development site, it is clear that the proposed development is unlikely to directly impact upon the setting of adjacent heritage assets, in particular the character and setting of the conservation area and must therefore embrace all of its surroundings, in particular the immediate area from which it can be experienced.

3.8 **Relationship between setting and significance.**

The significance of the heritage assets is set out in para 3.4 above. The way in which that significance can be experienced and understood is influenced by setting. Views both of the heritage assets and from them are important, but environmental factors such as noise, weather conditions, spatial associations and our understanding of the historical relationship between places can also play a part.

There is no Ickenham Conservation area appraisal in which to identify any key views to assess the setting or impact of the proposed development. Views selected for the purpose of this report are local, and from within the self-contained development site which has development on all sides.

3.9 Contribution of setting to significance

There are no key viewpoints from public places that surround the site. All views are internal and extend to immediate neighbouring sites to the development site.

- 3.10 **Views from the development site** – There are no views out from the development site as the site is self-contained. The only views available are to that of immediate neighbours to the side and rear of the development site. Other private views maybe available from other parts of the Swakeleys Road shopping parade but these provide modern 20th and 21st century development and provide little in the way of historical or accomplished townscape context to determine the impact upon the setting of the conservation area.

The development proposal seeks a modest rear extension extending within its plot to accommodate additional office space and will be single storey. The development site is self-contained within the immediate footprint of existing buildings/site. The Design and Access statement provides more details to the nature and extent of the development.

3.11 Spatial association

The development site has a relationship with the wider Ickenham but only to the front elevation. The rear space is private and as such adds little if any spatial association to the setting or indeed the character of the conservation area. The lack of a conservation area appraisal has resulted in no characterisation of the area.

4. Assess the degree to which the views make a contribution to the significance of a heritage asset – Step 2

- 4.1 A number of techniques exist for assessing heritage significance in a view and the impact of development on that view. No perfect technique exists since many views are dynamic and change as the viewer moves along. Views assume different qualities in different light and climatic conditions. A photographic view can be changed dramatically by the width of the subject matter and there is much subjectivity in the relative importance of views.

- 4.2 This assessment makes use of the methodology identified within 'The Setting of Historic Assets'. The following stages are followed to ensure consistency and objectivity in the assessment process, which focuses on the attributes of significance of the heritage

assets:

- The physical surroundings of the heritage asset and relationship with other heritage assets
- The assets intangible associations with its surrounds and patterns of use.
- The contribution made by noise and smell
- The way the view allows for the significance of the asset to be experienced.

4.3 The views have also been selected on the experience and professional judgement of the author as a historic environment 'expert'. It is worth noting that the views selected are private views as no public views are available or identified.

4.4 As an aid to the assessment process, 'The Setting of Heritage Assets', GPA3 2017, provides a list of attributes for consideration. Those which are relevant to the development proposals and their impact on the setting of the heritage assets are as follows:

- Those where the composition within the view was a fundamental aspect of the design and function of the heritage asset.
- Views where town/village/hamlet reveals views with unplanned or unintended beauty.
- Those views with historical associations including viewpoints.
- Those views with cultural associations, including landscapes known historically for their picturesque and landscape beauty, those which became subjects of paintings of landscape tradition and those views which have otherwise become historically cherished and protected.
- Views identified within character area appraisals or in management plans or world heritage sites.
- Important views from and to historic parks and gardens that have been identified as part of the evidence base within development plans.
- Views that have been identified by local planning authorities when assessing development proposals. The visual impact of the proposed change or development relative to the location of the historic asset.

4.5 These issues are considered where relevant, in the context of the views analysis and assessed in terms of impact on the setting of the heritage assets as set out below. The overall impact on significance is a combination of the importance of the view and the magnitude of impact. The viewpoints selected for consideration in assisting in the analysis of the proposed development upon the setting of the heritage asset are self-contained within the plot. Although no viewpoints have been identified within any

conservation area appraisal, for the purpose of completeness I have suggested the following short distance views from the development site to those closest buildings.

4.6 Impact on Key views – general views of the development looking outwards towards neighbouring properties and internal view looking back at development site from rear garden.



Fig 3, From rear boundary looking towards development site. Note disjointed arrangement of existing structures which will be replaced.

Description and Importance of the viewpoint - These views are taken from the development site looking towards the development site. The corresponding views don't have entirely the full view of either the terraced properties or the development site. The view itself is of little importance to the wider conservation area.

Overall Heritage significance of the view – A weak view but does show the whole of the development site in relation to neighbouring properties.



Fig 4, Side view from rear of development boundary. Note proposed development will not extend beyond the yellow brick, this leaves space from the red brindle brick and later Upvc refrigeration unit.

Description and importance of the viewpoint - The view is a short view due to the tight knit nature of the site and the view looks directly to the development site and neighbouring property.

Overall significance of the viewpoint. - This viewpoint is weak. There is no other discerning view in the immediate location that demonstrates any perception of the site being within a conservation area.



Fig 5, Additional side view to neighbours. Note single story extension



Fig 6 Neighbouring view. Note single story extension



Fig 7, View to rear boundary. Note residential garage space to rear to which there is no impact. Timber shed to right of picture to be removed. Note, arrow marks extent of proposed development

5.0 Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful on the significance or on the ability to appreciate the heritage assets – Step 3

- 5.1 The development proposal - The proposed development involves construction of a single storey extended offices.
- 5.2 The scale of the proposed development is in keeping with the scale of adjacent buildings and the reordering of the existing site. The palette of materials to be used is in keeping with the local building materials of brick with flat roof.
- 5.3 The appearance of the proposal is to create a contextual architectural design which responds to its constraints and opportunities. The proposed design will also sit comfortably within the surrounding topography and site context yet respects the setting of neighbours, local residents and heritage asset of the conservation area. The proposal has been designed to provide a sympathetic architectural vision to enhance the existing site, while retaining simple construction techniques.
- 5.4 Views general as identified. - There is no one view of the proposed development site that is available from a public viewpoint, therefore the experience of the site to determine its impact upon the setting of the conservation area is difficult to fully assess.

However, assessment of the selected views indicate that harm to the conservation area and its character and setting will be negligible as the heritage asset cannot be experienced via a publicly available viewpoints.

- 5.5 Previous developments of a similar nature provide for an understanding to the type of development that is generally acceptable due to previous planning consents.
- 5.6 I note in the refusal notice dated 10th July 2020 under ref 5407/APP/2020/863 the reasons for refusal were for the following heritage reason:

The proposed development, by reason of its siting, size, scale, bulk, depth and design, would result in an overdevelopment of the site, which would fail to harmonise with the architectural composition of the original building, would be detrimental to the character, appearance and visual amenities of the area and would fail to either preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the surrounding Ickenham Village Conservation Area

Response Whilst this reason for refusal is in line with both national and local planning policy, in the absence of a publicly available conservation area appraisal, doubt is cast over whether the council has made an informed, objective and considered opinion, as there is no clearly identified characterisation on which to base the decision. Therefore, it is highly unlikely that the proposed modest development by virtue of its scale, siting, size bulk and depth for a single rear extension to a single property within a large conservation area would give rise to a level of harm to warrant a refusal.

In addition, the architectural composition of the existing building is already compromised by a number of later extensions which provide for a non-homogenous design. The proposed development will remove, improve and provide for development that provides sympathetic, design led development resulting in an homogenous appearance thus improving the aesthetic to the rear of the property..

Whilst no conservation area appraisal is available, I have drawn information from the Ickenham Heritage and Character assessment, (Nov 2018 AECOM). This report represents the most up to date publicly available assessment of the conservation area. The report doesn't identify key views to which the proposed development would impact upon, nor does the characterisation of the character area include a detailed assessment to the preferable size and scale or any design parameters to rear development to the site. Whilst the report is silent on such matters this either confirms that such development is generally acceptable or that such development is not considered to be a pressure or issue that could impact the conservation area.

6.0 Mitigation of Visual Impact on heritage setting – Step 4

The assessment of the viewpoints on the significance and impact upon the identified heritage asset has concluded that given the nature and relationship between the identified heritage asset and the development site, there is no one view that will result in an adverse impact upon the heritage asset of the conservation area. Indeed, there are no short, medium or long distance views or any public views whatsoever or experience. All views of the development site are self-contained and therefore there is limited impact to the setting of the Conservation Area.

Other effects of the development

6.1 Change to sky line

The proposal is for a single storey extension and there will not be any changes to the skyline that will impact on any heritage asset. However, the proposal will be of a scale to that of neighbouring properties.

6.2 Lighting effects and light spill

There will be no light spill from the development proposal over and above acceptable requirements commensurate with a rear extension. Light spill will be personal rather than incidental. Those areas deemed to be illuminated will mostly be internal and generally screened. The new development will only have light where it is absolutely necessary and will be in the form of down lighters to minimise light spill.

6.3 Change to general character

There will be no change to the general character of the heritage asset the conservation area identified. Indeed, the proposed development will strengthen the rear elevation of the properties with a form of development that has been accepted elsewhere to immediate neighbours which provides for a general acceptance of this type of development and that responds to the overall spatial form of the conservation area.

7. Conclusions

7.1 This report considers the heritage impact of development on the application site and other heritage assets.

7.2 The way in which significance can be experienced and understood is influenced by its setting. This assessment has been carried out in accordance with 'The Setting of heritage Assets', GPA3 Historic England, 2017. This report has identified elements within the immediate vicinity of the development site that hold heritage value and a significance assessment undertaken.

- 7.3 This heritage impact assessment has concluded that given the self-contained nature of the site, the acceptance of previous development of a similar nature and that there is no public experience of the site in order to demonstrate any harm to the setting of the conservation area, the proposed development will not result in any impact upon the character or setting of the conservation area. Overall, the proposed development will result in no harm and any impact can be assessed as being neutral/benign. The development will have no greater or lesser impact on the heritage asset's significance.
- 7.4 On balance, this assessment finds that the overall impact and consequence of the proposed development would have a neutral/slight positive impact upon identified heritage assets, in particular the Ickenham Conservation Area and its setting and significance by way of improvement to the existing site and proposed development making a more design led approach to that of the existing.

Jason Alexander Kennedy, BSc, Dip TP, MA, MRTPI IHBC

Director

Townscape: Chartered Town Planning & Heritage Consultants Ltd

info@townscape.org.uk

www.townscape.org.uk

December 2020