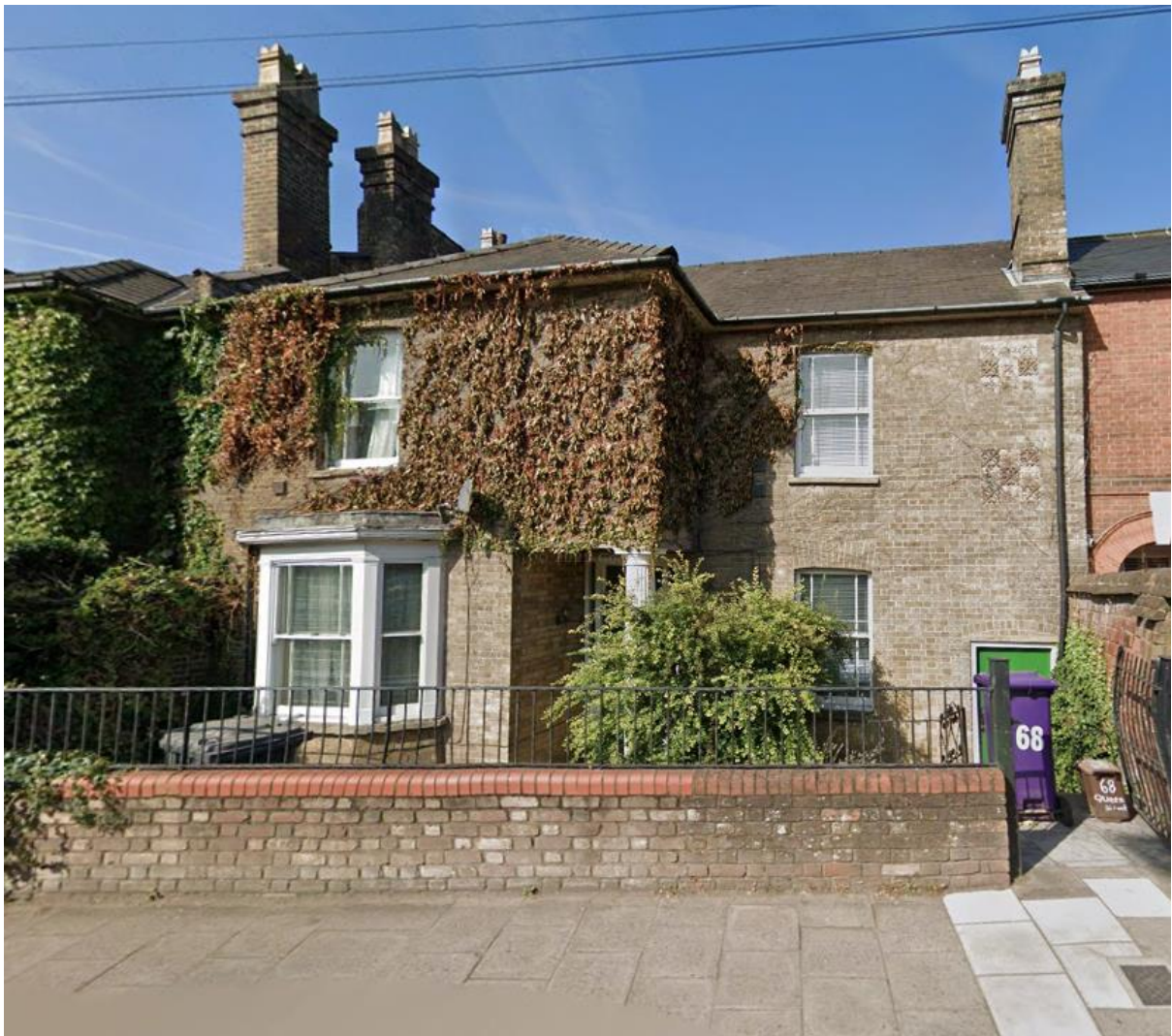


Heritage statement

Retention of rear vehicular access and alterations to boundary wall

68 Queen Street, Hitchin SG4 9TS



The applicant seeks retrospective planning permission and listed building consent for the formation of a vehicular access and erection of timber entrance gates at the rear of the property at 68 Queen Street, Hitchin

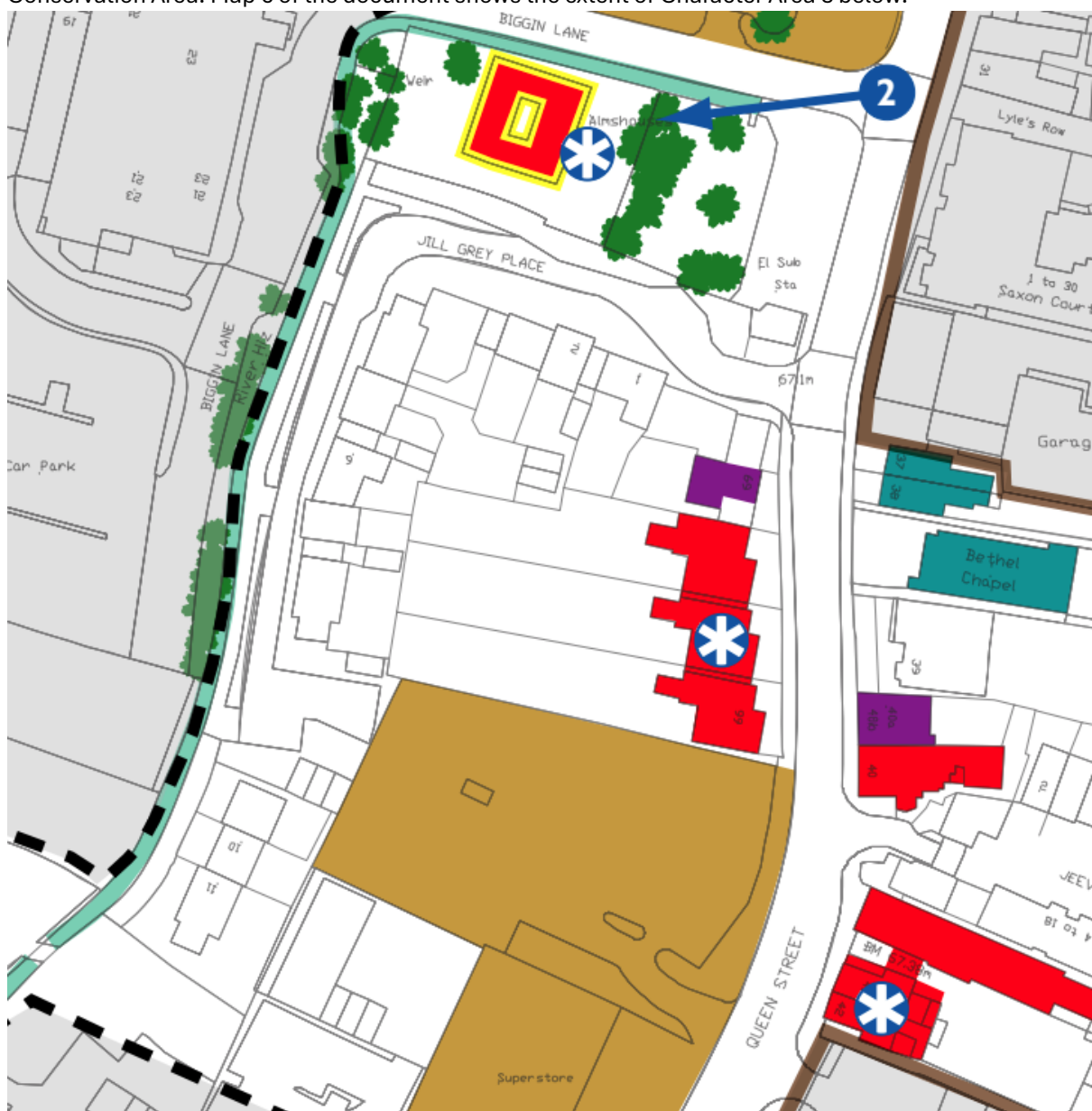
The property fronts Queen Street forming a terrace with two other similar designed dwellings built in 1875. The property has a long rear garden, the northern and western boundary of which adjoins the Jill Grey Place housing development.

Heritage assets

The Heritage assets affected by the development are the Grade II listed building and the Hitchin Conservation Area

Hitchin Conservation Area

The application site is located within Character Area 3 (Queen Street and Hermitage Road) of the Hitchin Conservation Area. Map 6 of the document shows the extent of Character Area 3 below:



The buildings shaded red are Grade II listed including Nos 66, 67 and 68 Queen Street.

The Biggin is Grade II * listed and the purple shaded buildings are designated as 'positive buildings' and non-designated heritage assets.

No 68 Queen Street

No 68 is Grade II listed as part of a group with Nos 66 and 67

List Entry No: 1173621

Date first listed: 17th June 1974

List Entry name: 66 – 68 Queen Street

National Grid ref: TL 18580 28919

Description of Listing:

1. 5255 QUEEN STREET (North-West Side) Nos 66 to 68 (consec) TL 1828 NE 3/286

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2. Circa 1860-70. Stepped terrace of houses with unusual details. 2 storeys, yellow brick, Welsh slated roofs. Angle porches, each with 1 fluted Doric column. First floor decoration of terracotta tiles. Included for group value.

Nos 66 to 68 (consec) form a group.

Listing NGR: TL1858028919

Heritage Significance

The National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') defines heritage 'significance' as "the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

The NPPF does not provide a definition for archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic interest in terms of heritage significance. However, Paragraph 16 of the Principles for Selection of Listed Buildings (DDCM 2018) Provides the following definitions ;

Architectural interest - "to be of special architectural interest a building must be of importance in its design, decoration or craftsmanship. Special interest may also apply to particularly significant plan forms. For more recent buildings in particular, the functioning of the building... will also be a consideration. Artistic distinction can also be a factor relevant to the architectural interest of buildings and objects and structures fixed to them".

Historic interest – “to be able to justify special historic interest a building must illustrate important aspects of the nation’s history and/or have a closely substantiated historical associations with nationally important individuals, groups or events; and the building itself in its current form will afford a strong connection with the valued aspect of history”. Historic England’s Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (2008) also offers useful definitions which underpin a value orientated approach to assessing heritage significance. In this document, heritage values fall into four categories:

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. This can be illustrative or associative.

Aesthetic value – The ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.

Communal value – The meaning of a place for the people who relate to it or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

The impact and appearance of the development

In this case, the general form and character of No. 68 has not changed and the internal and external appearance of the dwelling is not be affected. The only alteration has been the removal of small section of the historic garden wall at the far western end of the curtilage of the property which lies adjacent to the Jill Grey development constructed in late 1989 / early 1990’s.

Apart from the removal of a short section of garden wall, the property retains its historic fabric so that it is still possible to understand the appearance and function of the building and its curtilage throughout its history. The listed elements as described in the official listing description are not affected by the development. The vast majority of the original garden wall remains and with the inserted gates the property maintains its domestic garden and its enclosed, secluded character at its western end.

The inserted timber gates are traditionally constructed with vertical boarding braced on the internal elevation with black painted ironmongery. The design is appropriate for this conservation area setting and in keeping with the boundary treatment in the immediate vicinity which includes brick walls and vertical timber fencing and gates.

The driveway is of block pavers a traditional form of hardsurfacing material appropriate for use in Conservation Areas.

The gates open inwards into the site thus not encroaching onto the shared turning space to the north or obstructing access to adjacent property.

The development is located off a private drive and turning area to the adjacent Jill Grey Place development to which there is no public access or right of way. Accordingly, the development has no impact on the public realm or the wider character and appearance of the Hitchin Conservation Area.

Conclusion

The development, by reason of its small scale, appropriate materials and discreet location is considered to have a neutral impact on the setting of the Grade II listed building and the Hitchin Conservation Area as a whole and does not conflict with the affected heritage asset’s conservation or Policy HE1 (‘Designated heritage assets’) and Policy HE3 (‘Non-designated heritage assets’) of the North Herts Local Plan 2011 – 2031.