

Heritage Statement



In respect of Listed Building Consent in relation to proposed conversion of 3 no. viaduct railway arches to create arts, events, workshop and training space together with associated external and internal alterations

Applicant:

Robertson Construction Group Ltd

Application Site:

Arches within the railway viaduct adjacent to 'HOME',
73, Whitworth Street West & Tony Wilson Place,
Manchester, M15 4FN



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1.0 Introduction & Overview

- 1.1 This Statement provides an appropriate heritage impact assessment in relation to an application for planning permission and listed building consent to convert three railway arches associated with the HOME development on Whitworth Street West, Manchester.
- 1.2 The planning and listed building consent applications are submitted by Robertson Construction Group Ltd working closely with HOME Mcr (referred to as "HOME").
- 1.3 The project seeks to convert the three viaduct arches on Whitworth Street West to create arts & events spaces to be used by the HOME arts and theatre organisation. The project is fully funded as part of the Manchester City Council's 'levelling-up' bid, with the project recently being confirmed as successful in receiving the funding to support the conversion of the arches for the HOME arts and theatre organisation group.
- 1.4 HOME (situated adjacent to the railway arches in Tony Wilson Place) is a centre for international contemporary art, theatre and film in Manchester City Centre. The HOME building opened in 2015.
- 1.5 HOME was formed by the merger of two Manchester-based arts organisations, Cornerhouse and the Library Theatre Company. The project was funded by Manchester City Council and the Garfield Weston Foundation and is supported by numerous Manchester based businesses, charities and trusts.
- 1.6 The HOME 'Arches' project is an important extension of the arts and performing space that's in desperate need within the city. In greeting the award of funding through the levelling-up bid, HOME's executive director Jon Gilchrist said the new spaces were vital as *"all too often, the ambition of artists in the city isn't matched with affordable rehearsal and development space"*. The railway arches scheme would *"provide around 5,000 hours of free space for artists to develop their skills and work" annually and "animate the empty railway arches... helping connect them to the wider First Street development"*.
- 1.7 The transformation of three railway arches situated behind the HOME building into a dedicated talent development centre will support the skills and resilience of artists at all ages and stages of their careers; and increase provision offered by HOME's engagement programmes (including work with children and young people).
- 1.8 The Arches project will support HOME's artistic growth, increase HOME's sector support capabilities, and make the charity more financially sustainable and resilient.

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- 1.9 The project will see the three HOME Arches becoming three interconnected and fully accessible spaces and linked to the existing HOME development through direct access from the rear of the arches into the circulation space between the arches and the rear of the HOME building.
- 1.10 The planning application seeks full planning permission for the conversion of the railway arches as shown in the submitted plans and elaborated in the Design Statement provided by the scheme's architects JMA Architects, Manchester.
- 1.11 The railway arches are part of the listed railway viaduct, a statutory listed structure and accordingly a Listed Building Consent application is made for decision contemporaneously with the submitted planning application.
- 1.12 The HOME Arches project is being led by the Robertson Construction Group Ltd who are working closely with HOME and the railway arches company '*Archco Limited*', who are responsible for the business uses of the historic arches under the railway viaduct.
- 1.13 Paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework (updated July 2021) states that in determining applications, LPAs should require an applicant to describe the *significance* of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.
- 1.14 The level of detail provided should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their *significance*. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary.
- 1.15 This Heritage Statement includes a *significance* assessment of the HOME Arches and the site's location close to the listed former Ritz building, which identifies the relative heritage value of the identified heritage asset and an appropriate impact assessment is provided, which considers the potential impact of the proposals on the *significance* of the identified heritage asset (the listed railway arches), including the contribution made by its *setting*.
- 1.16 The information and the heritage impact assessment set out in Section 5 of this Heritage Statement is also provided to demonstrate the proposals are compliant with the statutory provisions of Sections 16(2), 66(1) and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the policy advice set down in paragraphs 189 to 205 of the NPPF.

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1.17 This Heritage Statement is to be read alongside the JMA Architects D&A Statement and the TPS Planning Statement that were submitted to the Council along with a full set of the JMA Architects plans for the proposed conversion works.

1.18 The Heritage Statement is prepared taking account of the Manchester Historic Environment Record, the National Planning Policy Framework, National Planning Policy Guidance, Historic England's guidance for preparing Statement of Significance, the Manchester Core Strategy and saved policies of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan.

2.0 Site Context

Site & Surroundings

2.1 The HOME Arches site is located on Whitworth Street West to the south of the city centre on the edge of the First Street Development.

2.2 The application site comprises three brick arches under the address of 'Arch 73', which are located on Whitworth Street West directly to the north of the HOME building which lies within the First Street Regeneration development area.

2.3 The three arches and the service area/ fire escape route to the north of HOME and to the south of the listed viaduct make up the area that is being considered as the site.

2.4 In terms of construction details, the Whitworth Street West Arches are formed by a brick plinth with a central brick arch with engineering brick above which encloses the sub-base of the railway above.

2.5 The Home Arches are 3 of the 224 arches that form the multi-span brick railway viaduct which carries the South Junction railway line from Manchester Piccadilly railway station through elevated Manchester Oxford Road and Deansgate railway stations to Orsdall Lane.

2.6 The viaduct was constructed between 1846 and 1849 and now forms a key landmark within the southern part of the city centre.

2.7 The brick railway arches are a significant feature of the street and it is under the arches that you pass to get to First Street Development and HOME building.

2.8 A number of the arches between Cambridge Street and First Street are occupied with but around the application site the railway arches generally don't contribute positively to the streetscape. Because of this the arches become a barrier to the First Street regeneration area. There is a real opportunity to create an intervention within

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the arches that brings the quality of HOME and the First Street Development to Whitworth Street West and the wider city.

- 2.9 The HOME building is part of the mix of uses within the successful 'First Street' regeneration area, where the array of office developments, hotel, apartments, restaurants, cafes and a multi-storey car park offer a variety of city centre uses.
- 2.10 To the north east of the site, on the north side of Whitworth Street West beyond the junction with Cambridge Street is the grade II listed former Ritz Nightclub building. Elsewhere beyond the site to the north east is the Grade II listed Manchester Oxford Road railway station and listed buildings situated beyond in Oxford Street to the east and Medlock Street to the west.

Historical Uses

- 2.11 Historically, like the majority of the arches within this part of the viaduct, were probably used to stable horses or as storage yards from the time of its construction until the early to mid-20th century. As these early uses became obsolete, the arches in the area were typically converted for ad hoc car parking or used for vehicle repair workshops or storage.
- 2.12 During the 1980s, British Rail (now Network Rail) as owner of the viaduct worked to bring vacant and underused arches along Whitworth Street West back into active use.
- 2.13 A number of arches within Whitworth Street West have been converted to commercial uses, including bars, restaurants, shops and offices.

Relevant Planning History

- 2.14 A search of the Manchester City Council Public Access Planning records and Interactive Mapping system revealed no relevant applications relating directly to the railway arches subject to the current application (associated with HOME).
- 2.15 The HOME building was granted planning permission (MCC application ref: 098438/VO/2012/C1) in July 2012 and construction started in 2013. The development opened in 2015 and has become a major cultural, creativity and artistic hub.
- 2.16 In the near vicinity of the application site, application ref: 098187/FO/2011/C1, for the 'Dog Bowl' at Arch 57, Whitworth Street West (situated to the north east close to the Oxford Street junction) was granted planning and LBC for change of use to a bowling alley and bar (sui generis) and associated elevational alterations in May 2012 (LBC ref: 098188/LO/2011/C1).

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Image 1: The ground works for the construction of the HOME development in 2013. The three Arches are shown directly to the north of the construction site. Image source: www.home.org)

Development Proposals

- 2.17 The proposal is for full planning consent to undertake conversion of the three arches into mixed use artist space combining space for performance and events, with workshops, displays, training and education in relation to the arts.
- 2.18 The quantity of development is detailed in the submitted floor area plans. Full planning and associated LBC permission is sought to develop the three railway HOME arches with associated internal and external alterations, servicing, plant space and landscaping between the railway viaduct and the rear (north side) of the existing HOME building situated in Tony Wilson Place.
- 2.19 The scheme in total provides additional arts/event space for HOME of circa 258 sqm. This is a key part of the expansion of the artists space within the HOME development, which formed part of the Council's "*Culture in the City*" Levelling-up bid (it is understood the City Council has been awarded the bid funds to expand the HOME's facilities into the arches as part of the Culture in the City bid).
- 2.20 The physical works include external and internal alterations.
- 2.21 External alterations to the Whitworth Street West frontage include a mix of brick and glazing infills with a frameless glazing, display window with back painted glass to conceal structure, showing a back projected digital art installation.

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- 2.22 The approach to the elevation is to work with the mass and volume of the viaduct showing off the beauty in the brick structure and the detail of the steel supporting ties.
- 2.23 The main glazing is pushed back from face of the viaduct and display window, giving the elevation depth and allowing the underside of the brick arch to be exposed externally along with the steel ties. Set within the glazing the display windows sit as stand-alone elements respecting and not touching the brick structure.
- 2.24 The main glazing round the display window separates itself from the arch with a generous shadow gap, concealing a linear lighting detail that can change colour, responding to events such as Manchester Pride or Remembrance Day.
- 2.25 The shadow gap will also accommodate any ventilation requirements, keeping the elevation uncluttered.
- 2.26 The display windows are modern slick elements, flameless glazing and stack-bonded brickwork. Taking its cue from the arches materially but using a modern aesthetic so as not to compete or confuse itself with the brickwork of the viaduct, facade lighting will be integrated in the display window head.
- 2.27 To the rear facing the HOME building, there will be two bespoke brick 'pods' (Arches '1 & 2') which will provide additional space and allow for plant and M&E equipment to be screened within these and reduce the interventions within the historic elements of the arches.
- 2.28 The brick pods containing the rooms and services push out beyond the line of the viaduct, the stack bonded brickwork broken up with glazed brick catching the sun as it tracks round.
- 2.29 The brick pods will be complemented by a brick insert in Arch '3' with an aluminium powder-coated/ anodized glazing system completing the infilling space to the external facing of the rear of the arches (allowing for a generous shadow gap).
- 2.30 In relation to internal alterations to facilitate the conversion, JMA's lead Architect has worked with the users and key stakeholders to design a scheme that works with the volume of the viaduct and create a series of simple, modular components that 'plug into' the spaces, offering activity and interest to the street view outside of the enclosed arches, whilst creating privacy and screening to the internal functions.
- 2.31 The internal fit-out will create usable space using sliding removable panels, fire-doors, concealed storage units and refreshment station.

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- 2.32 A structural frame will be constructed within the arches in either steel or timber to support the lighting rig, possible aerial work and MEP equipment. The frame will be independent such that no significant loading will be applied to the railway arches.
- 2.33 The internal works are all temporary in terms of being removeable objects and comprise of fixtures that do not directly tie into the historic fabric of the arches.

Signage

- 2.34 Signage will be integrated into the stack bonded brick panel set flush with the brick face. The lettering set within a concrete/ reconstituted stone block recessed or inlaid with metal text/ brail.
- 2.35 The display windows are an adaptable space that artists can be commissioned to inhabit. This may take the form of physical pieces of art, digital projections, or adhesive film or similar applied directly to the glazing. It is envisaged therefore that when the windows don't have a commission in HOME will use the windows to advertise upcoming events. As with the artists instillation this could be through range of media.
- 2.36 Through meetings and the dialogue sessions with HOME and the artist groups it was agreed that the main entrance to the new facility would be from the existing HOME building.
- 2.37 The philosophy from the outset when HOME was delivered was that the foyer becomes a focal meeting point of all the users of the building, artists, actors, staff and visitors all converging at one point. This also gives one point of control to HOME for security and safety.
- 2.38 The entrance from Whitworth Street would be more for independent events happening within the arches or when it's not possible to come through HOME building. Having the dual entrances also future proofs the facility should this change.

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3.0 Heritage Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – Revised July 2021

- 3.1 The NPPF sets out the Government's commitment to a planning system that does everything it can do to support sustainable economic and housing growth. LPA's are expected to plan positively for new development, and to take account of impact of development on designated and non-designated heritage assets.
- 3.2 The NPPF sets down detailed policy guidance relating to the assessment and impact of proposed development in relation to heritage assets. The relevant heritage policies are summarised below.
- 3.3 *Paragraph 194* - in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and *no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance*.
- 3.4 *Paragraph 197* - local planning authorities should take account of: a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 3.5 *Paragraph 199* – when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
- 3.6 *Paragraph 202* - where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
- 3.7 *Paragraph 203* - the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

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National Planning Guidance

- 3.8 *'Significance'* in terms of heritage-related planning policy is defined in the Glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework as the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.
- 3.9 Heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. Being able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset, and the contribution of its setting, is very important to understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals.
- 3.10 Applicants are expected to describe in their application the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting (National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 189). In doing so, applicants should include analysis of the significance of the asset and its setting, and, where relevant, how this has informed the development of the proposals.
- 3.11 The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on its significance (Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 18a-009-20190723).
- 3.12 All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not. The setting of a heritage asset and the asset's curtilage may not have the same extent.
- 3.13 The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to the visual relationship between the asset and the proposed development and associated visual/physical considerations
- 3.14 What matters in assessing whether a proposal might cause harm is the impact on the significance of the heritage asset. As the National Planning Policy Framework makes clear, significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.
- 3.15 Proposed development affecting a heritage asset may have no impact on its significance or may enhance its significance and therefore cause no harm to the heritage asset. Where potential harm to designated heritage assets is identified, it needs to be categorised as either less than substantial harm or substantial harm (which includes total loss) in order to identify which policies in the National Planning Policy Framework apply.

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- 3.16 The National Planning Policy Framework requires any harm to designated heritage assets to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
- 3.17 Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental objectives as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 8). Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and not just be a private benefit.

Development Plan Policy

- 3.18 The statutory development plan in force in Manchester comprises the Manchester Core Strategy (MCS, adopted 2012) and the saved policies of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan.
- 3.19 Manchester Core Strategy is the key planning document in Manchester and covers a period of 15 years from 2012 to 2027. It describes Manchester today and outlines the Council's vision for Manchester in the future along with planning policies which will be used to deliver that vision.
- 3.20 The MCS Vision is underpinned by a number of spatial objectives, in particular in relation to heritage impacts, the relevant policy is EN3, which states:
- 3.21 Policy EN3 - The Council will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods. New developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance.

Saved Policies - Manchester Unitary Development Plan (UDP)

- 3.22 The adopted UDP has largely been superseded by policies of the adopted MCS. In relation to heritage matters, policy *DC19.1* deals with listed buildings and states:

Policy DC19.1 - In determining applications for listed building consent or planning applications for development involving or having an impact on buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, the Council will have regard to the desirability of securing the retention, restoration, maintenance and continued use of such buildings and to protecting their general setting.

In giving effect to policy *DC19.1*, the Council will: c) not permit any external or internal alteration or addition to a Listed building were, in its opinion, there would be an adverse effect on its architectural or historic character.

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f) not permit alterations to a listed building which would prevent the future use of any part of the building.

Other Material Policy Documents

- 3.23 English Heritage: '*Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance*' (2008)
- 3.24 Historic England: '*The Setting of Heritage Assets*' - Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (2nd Ed)
- 3.25 Historic England: '*Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets*' Historic England Advice Note 12.

References

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Rosa B., University of Manchester. '*Beneath the Arches: Re-appropriating the Spaces of Infrastructure in Manchester*' (thesis submitted to the University of Manchester for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, 2013).

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4.0 Designated Heritage Assets

4.1 Coinciding with the work of the Central Manchester Development Corporation's vision for the regeneration of the Central Castlefield basin, the Castlefield Viaduct and a large section of the Manchester South Junction (MSJ) viaduct became Grade II listed structures.

4.2 The designated heritage asset to be considered in relation to the proposed conversion of the Whitworth Street West railway arches is defined as:

"Railway viaduct (and associated arches) for the Manchester South Junction & Altrincham Railway Company, 1846-9, constructed by David Bellhouse Jnr. Red brick with some small sections of blue brick, sandstone dressings and cast-iron bridges.

The listed structure runs for 1 & 3/4 mile long urban viaduct incorporating a series of well-detailed bridges, some with highly decorative Gothic-style ironwork with brick arches."

4.3 In addition to consideration of the designated heritage asset, the proposals will be considered in the context of potential impact to the setting of the listed arches and also in relation to the setting of any nearby adjacent listed buildings, the nearest of which is the Grade II listed Ritz nightclub building situated to the north-east of the application site on Whitworth Street West beyond the junction with Cambridge Street.

Historical Context

4.4 Manchester is the archetypical industrial city British city whose character is most influenced by the presence of the railway, which was the influence of the railways, more than any other single agency, which gave the Victorian Manchester city its compact shape, which influenced the topography and character of its central and inner districts, the disposition of its dilapidated and waste areas, and of its suburbs, the direction and character of its growth.

4.5 The arrival of the world's first mainline railway, connecting Liverpool to Manchester in 1830, stoked the flames of ever increasing industrial urbanisation. Manchester had already begun to develop a distinctive factory mode of production, heavily dependent on the increased communications and faster transport associated with the railway's predecessor, the canals in Manchester.

4.6 By the 1840s, there was an established constellation of five railway lines radiating from four termini within the city centre, a figure surpassed only by London.

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- 4.7 While additional railways were built throughout the century, these hastily developed intercity routes formed the framework for today's passenger railway network. In Britain, railway companies were private enterprises set up independently through Acts of Parliament.
- 4.8 The construction of Manchester's railway networks between the 1840s and the 1910s, brought about many technical challenges, chief of which was the need for an exclusive right of way, allowing operation unencumbered by street-level traffic. Industrial urbanisation had already created a network of paths, roads and waterways, so railways in cities were required by Parliament to be elevated, allowing traffic to pass underneath. For this reason, viaducts, a variant of bridge, were constructed for to carry the urban railways.
- 4.9 Since railways needed to pass through cities on viaducts and locomotives could only pull their freight at near-level grades, the entire railway infrastructure of central Manchester was elevated.
- 4.10 The early form of railway development in which disconnected intercity railways radiated from the fringes of the city centre dictated the pattern in which Manchester (and most other Victorian cities) would develop.
- 4.11 In Manchester, as railways approached the city from every direction, the viaducts, goods stations, passenger stations, marshalling yards and termini formed '*a ring of iron, brick and stone*' (Freeman 1999, p.123).



Image 2: The Manchester railway network,1910. Source: Railway Clearing House courtesy of Rosa, PHD Thesis, 2013.

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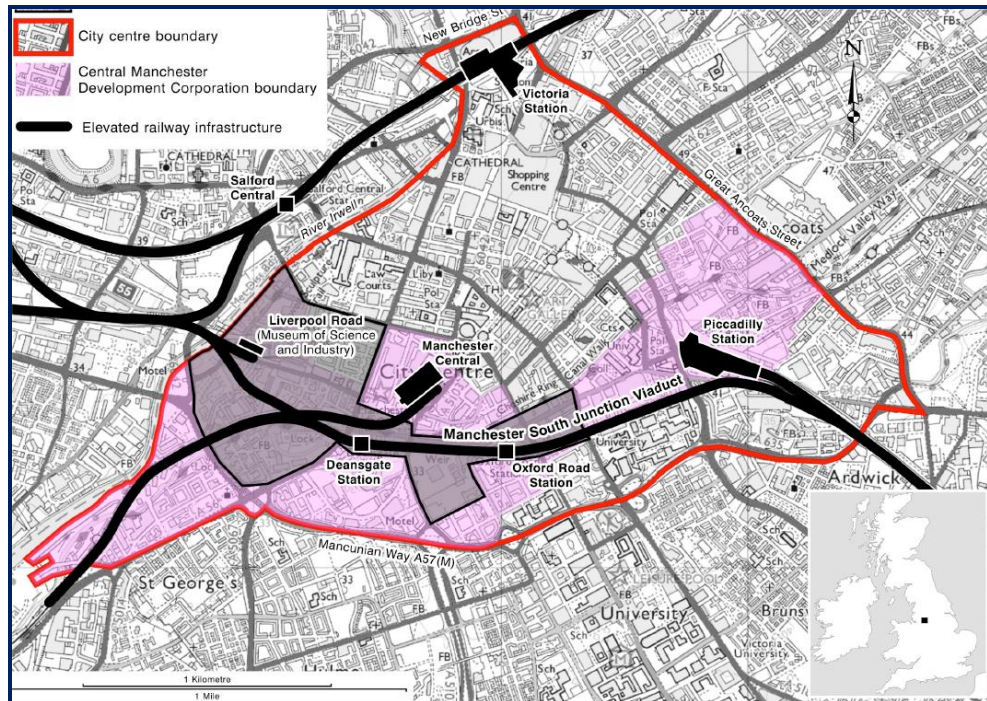


Image 2 – Map of Manchester city centre and its elevated railway infrastructure. Image source: University of Manchester Cartographic Unit, 2013

- 4.12 The methods used in the construction of the Liverpool & Manchester railway provided the model for the construction of early railway infrastructure throughout Britain. Viaducts, goods stations, and termini were built atop brick arches, with the railway passing thirty feet above street level.
- 4.13 The use of brick as the staple building material for the viaduct was based on a calculation of available engineering technology, the costs of material extraction and transportation, and the structural requirements of the railway.



Image 3: Source: Workers constructing railway viaduct, 1903 National Transportation Archive.

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- 4.14 Manchester is no stranger to the role of exemplar, due to its position as one of the 'birthplaces' of the industrial revolution, and later as one of the first post-industrial cities. As *Peck and Ward* (2002, p.1) have put it, "[Manchester] has always been on a hurried path to (some kind of) improvement and has little time for those who would put obstacles in the way. Always on the move, it has been in an almost perpetual state of restructuring."
- 4.15 The late 1960s represented an era witnessed by a national shift from the railway locomotive to the motorised transport as the dominant form of urban transport in the UK and Manchester was at the forefront of the changes in the movement around cities in the UK. This had particularly strong implications for Manchester, not only in terms of the use of railway infrastructures themselves, but on the increased decentralisation of the city and massive changes within its built environment (1967 saw the completion of an inner city elevated ring road: the Mancunian Way).
- 4.16 By 1969, on the recommendation of the *Beeching Report*, entire viaducts and massive railway stations were made redundant. As Manchester was already amidst a process of steady deindustrialisation and industrial decentralisation, coupled with the development of modern office blocks in the city centre, this was a primary point of transition to what would become the post-industrial Manchester city Centre.
- 4.17 The ubiquitous form of the arched brick viaduct created ready-made, individuated sheltered spaces beneath. Over time, many of these spaces were converted to commercial premises, constructed with materials of varying appearance, quality, and durability.
- 4.18 The MSJ viaduct, the first to be built through the southern fringe (1845---1849), has long been held to be an archetype of the negative effects of railway viaducts within Manchester city centre. In his PHD research, Brian Rosa quotes the salient thoughts of Richard Dennis on the impact of the railways viaduct in the city:
- "The most powerful symbol of railway blight was the viaduct, intended to save land and avoid street closures, but in practice creating a belt of unsavoury land uses, underneath the arches and on land in their shadow. Even if roads continued to pass under the arches of the viaduct, an impermeable mental barrier between districts on either side was established. The classic example was the Manchester South Junction viaduct which delimited the southern edge of Manchester's business district and condemned areas to the south to decay".* (Dennis, 1984, pp.130–131, quoted in Rosa B., PHD Thesis, pg.93, 2013).
- 4.19 It was readily apparent that, in the fringes of Manchester city centre's railway arches were among the last visually prominent spaces continuing to be occupied by industry

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and warehousing. Their size, scale and utilitarian materials attracted the eye, and the warehouses and workshops filling the railway arches connected them directly with their city's industrial urban past.

- 4.20 The Manchester South Junction (MSJ) viaduct, had until the last 10 years or so been seen by many (especially in the development industry) to have created a barrier to the expansion of the commercial functions of Manchester city centre.
- 4.21 The viaduct, from the mid-18th century until the late 1960s, was considered to be the southernmost boundary of the commercial functions of the city centre (although in some viewpoints, the 'barrier effect' was more do with a mindset of the developers and land valuers rather than any particular physical barrier to movement).
- 4.22 However, since the 1960's and progressively so since the 1980's, there has been a clear transition occurring with long stretches of the historic railway arches within Manchester were being refurbished and visually standardised with brick or wooden infills, and later through use of modern shop-fronts. Yet, all the while, viaducts continued to serve the purpose for which they were built: to carry railways over the sprawling city below.
- 4.23 The treatment of Manchester's railway viaducts and their surrounding landscapes demonstrates the impact of rapid and coordinated 'commodification' of the cultural value of these historical townscapes. It also reveals the economic multiplier effects these heritage 'assets' could generate if properly refurbished and marketed. Reflecting trends in conservation and archaeology that conceptualised heritage as a feature of landscapes rather than individual structures (English Heritage, 2011),
- 4.24 The process of industrial gentrification of the Whitworth Street West corridor (the Corridor) defined by Manchester City Council (MCC) since the early 1980s as a linear cultural district, as a form of urban landscape characterisation, is defined by the area's cultural, political, and economic factors driving industrial displacement.
- 4.25 As opposed to Castlefield, where heritage was the driving regeneration force, the Whitworth Street West Corridor has a long association with cultural innovation and a different sort of post-industrial regeneration based on a cultural focus, where the area's rich artistic and cultural emergence throughout the 1970's and 1980's as created the destination. The emergence of this cultural destination is the creation of a variety of actors, thespians, music industry folk, clubbing entrepreneurs and property developers.
- 4.26 Alongside the renaissance in the Whitworth Street Corridor the city council has worked with railway property managers to examine how the railway arches along the

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Corridor have gradually been invented as a frontier for entrepreneurial, culture-inspired regeneration.

- 4.27 The Manchester South Junction (MSJ) viaduct, had until the last 10 years or so been seen by many (especially in the development industry) to have created a barrier to the permeability between Whitworth Street West and the southernmost boundary of the commercial functions of the city centre (although in some viewpoints, the 'barrier effect' was more do with a mindset of the developers and land valuers rather than any particular physical barrier to movement).
- 4.28 In heritage value terms, it is fitting to conclude on the historical context by noting that by the late 1980s, viaducts and their arches were being elevated to iconic status: they were no longer called 'structures,' but 'architecture' (CMDC, 1989, p.14).

5.0 Statement of Significance

- 5.1 It is important to note that the proposal relates to a change of use of the listed railway arches with internal alterations to facilitate the new uses. There will be minimal interventions that affects the physical fabric of the arches.
- 5.2 Paragraph 194 of the NPPF requires a proposal that affects heritage assets to be assessed for the impact on the heritage asset and the assessment should start with an understanding of the significance of the heritage asset.
- 5.3 The viaduct and arches are a statutory listed structure, Grade II. This ascribes a level of heritage protection that requires the integrity of the listed structure to be considered as part of any development proposals that affect the arches.
- 5.4 As a matter of law, the listed building by definition is of architectural and/or historical interest that is recognised as being of local or more than local importance.
- 5.5 It is considered that the historic viaduct and its associated arches are of *significance*, the overall significance of the building as a designated heritage asset is to be determined by reference to the Historic England's '*Statement of Significance Assessment Criteria*'.

Statement of Significance – Assessment Criteria

- 5.6 The intrinsic significance unique to each heritage asset can be defined as the sum of tangible and intangible values which make it important to society.
- 5.7 The significance of an asset or place may reflect its age, aesthetic, architectural quality or fabric, as well as intangible qualities such as associations with historic people or events.

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5.8 To assess the heritage significance of the identified heritage assets, this report has drawn guidance from Historic England (*Historic England, 2019. Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets - Historic England Advice Note 12.*) which recommends making assessments under the categories of: *Archaeological interest, Architectural and artistic interest, and Historic interest*. These interests together contribute to the overall significance of a place or site.

5.9 These attributes of significance are described as:

- *Archaeological interest*: There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
- *Architectural and artistic interest*: These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skills, like sculpture, art work etc.
- *Historic Interest*: An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

5.10 Section 4 above identified the heritage assets considered relevant to this assessment. The significance of the identified heritage assets will be assessed using a number of significance ratings to permit a quantifiable assessment:

- *High*: Significant at national or international level. These will tend to have a high cultural value and form an important element of a building or site.
- *Medium*: Significant at a regional or national level. These will tend to have some cultural merit and form a significant part of the building or site.
- *Low*: local or regional significance.
- *Neutral*: Has no cultural significance but is also not considered intrusive to heritage value.
- *Intrusive*: Detracts from heritage significance.

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- 5.11 Further to the above, when considering the significance rating of a particular heritage asset, it is important to acknowledge the various levels of protection granted to heritage assets.
- 5.12 The Manchester Southern Junction railway viaduct is a statutory listed building of regional and national significance, with a historical and cultural connections (as considered in Section 4 above).
- 5.13 On the appraisal of the information set out in Section 4 above (historical context) one can argue the viaduct's importance and its symbolic value to the city places the *significance* of the Manchester Southern Junction railway viaduct in the '**medium significance**' category (*the heritage asset is significant at a regional or national level and is evidenced as having some cultural merit and form a significant part of the urban infrastructure within the southern fringe of the city centre*).

Setting

- 5.14 *Setting* itself is not a heritage asset but can and invariably does contribute to the significance of a heritage asset. The NPPF notes that *setting* is: "*The surroundings in which a heritage asset is 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*".

Archaeological Interest – 'Neutral Significance'

- 5.15 Through reference to archaeological studies of the area, the records confirm that the earliest sites in the vicinity of the viaduct and Whitworth Street West comprised a number of industrial works, mostly used for textile finishing, clustered next to the Medlock and the Tib and established in about the 1780s or early 1790s.
- 5.16 In the early to mid-19th century the area developed through a group of industrial buildings which were also mostly grouped in the south of the current viaduct of the where they included Gaythorn Mill, Medlock Bridge Mill, a tannery, chemical works and the Gaythorn gas works, originally established in the 1820s.
- 5.17 A second area of early industrial activity in the locality lay on Cambridge Street; here mills were established from the 1790s and in the early to mid-19th century. Alongside these industrial sites workers' houses were built in the early to mid-19th century.

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- 5.18 In the mid-to late 19th century the Gaythorn gas works were rebuilt and enlarged, replacing most of the other industrial sites in the north of the study area. In the early 20th century, other housing was replaced by an expansion of the Mackintosh rubber works on Cambridge Street situated to the east of the site.
- 5.19 Much of the remaining housing had been removed by the mid-20th century and their site partly redeveloped with other works and warehouse buildings. The remaining earlier buildings were mostly cleared away in the late 20th century, including Gaythorn Mill, the Cambridge Street Mill, and the Gaythorn gas works, followed in the early 21st century by the rubber works building.
- 5.20 The development of the area around the site has been witness to the dramatic cycles of the rise and decline in industry and transport. The area became defined by the Rochdale Canal in the early 1800s and railway viaducts from the mid-19th century as the city moved through industrialisation and post-industrialisation.
- 5.21 In any event, the existing buildings on the site are to be retained and there are no excavations required to facilitate the proposed conversion of the arches for the proposed uses.

Regression Mapping

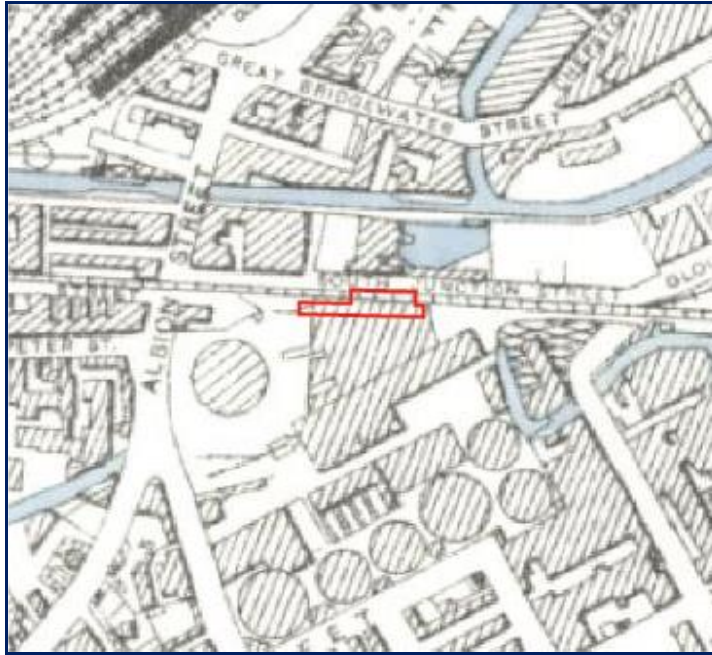


OS Early Series - 1848

The 1848 map shows a recently urbanized 1896 street grid of row houses to the south of the meandering River Medlock. River Street and Medlock Street have already been clearly defined. Rochdale Canal can clearly be seen but the railway has yet to be driven through. To the south of the site is occupied by industrial buildings including cotton mills and dye works.

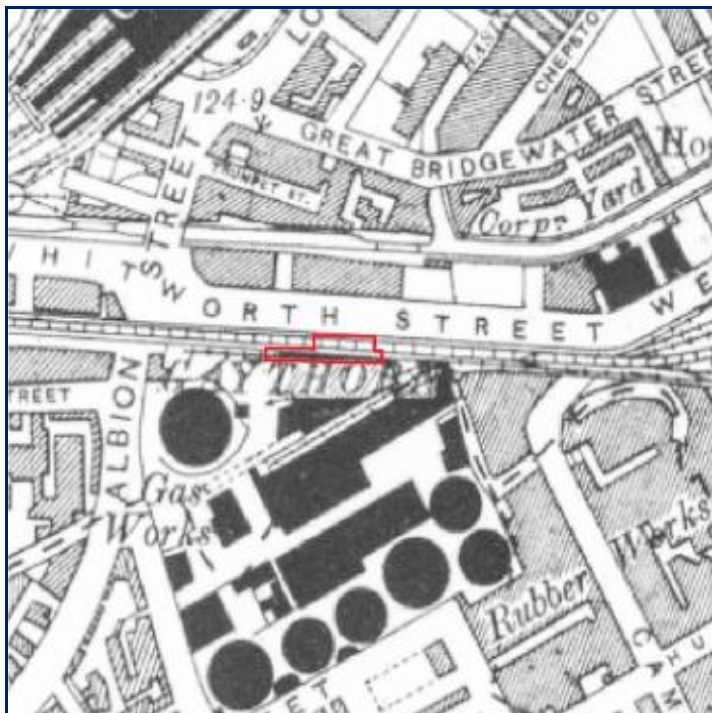
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OS Early Series - 1896

By 1896 the railway line is now clearly visible with the Gas Works expanding up to replace the mills to the east of the Medlock Street. The sites to west of Medlock Street have now been expanded and enveloped to include Gaythorn Mills (finishing), Gum & Starch Works and a Saw Mill. The River Medlock has been culverted and the newly built City Road East with a tramway, leads north to the newly built Manchester Central Station terminal. In the south west a school has been built in place of the terraced housing.



OS Series - 1923

By the mid 1920's the Central and South Manchester's extensive tram network (one of the densest in the country) has by now been nearly completely replaced by the trolley bus. To the north of the site Whitworth Street has now replaced. Junction Street and the building plots between it and the canal are largely as they are today. South of the railway the site is still dominated by the Gas Works. To the east, the Dunlop Rubber Works now occupies a long site directly south of the Gas Works.

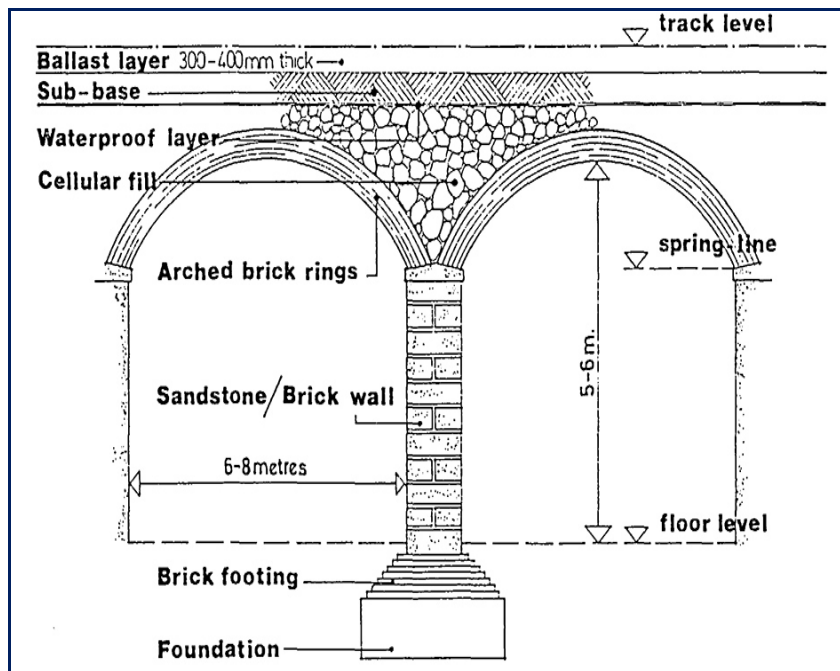
- 5.22 The area changed very little up to the 1980's when the Central Manchester Development Corporation progressed the initial area regeneration and site clearance programmes, which became the precursor to the successful 'First Street' regeneration area with the HOME building created to the north of the Gaythorn site.

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Architectural & Artistic Interest – 'Medium Significance'

- 5.23 The HOME 'Arches' lay within the Whitworth Street West railway viaduct which was built by the Manchester South Junction & Altrincham Railway Company, 1849 through the early 1850's, constructed by David Bellhouse Jnr.
- 5.24 The arches are constructed of red brick with some small sections of blue brick, sandstone dressings and cast-iron bridges.
- 5.25 The listed structure is an impressive 1 3/4 mile long urban viaduct incorporating a series of well-detailed bridges; some with highly decorative Gothic-style ironwork. The viaduct incorporates a series of predominantly arched, cast-iron bridges by Edward Taylor Bellhouse, William Baker and William Cubitt that cross various streets, the Rochdale Canal, and the Bridgewater Canal.



(Image 4: Typical Railway Arch Cross-section. Image source: Hendey, C., 1987, Railway Arches. Structural Survey, 5(1)).

- 5.26 In terms of the significance of the heritage asset, it is acknowledged that the listed viaduct and railway arches of a utilitarian architectural and artistic merit, nonetheless, they are part of a wider feature of industrial architectural infrastructure that is considered to be of '*medium significance*'.

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Historic Interest – 'High Significance'

- 5.27 The Manchester South Junction & Altrincham Railway viaduct was constructed in 1846-9 by David Bellhouse junior for the Manchester South Junction & Altrincham Railway (MSJ&AR) Company; Bellhouse was also responsible for laying the track.
- 5.28 Several of the cast-iron bridges situated along the viaduct were built by his son, the engineer and iron-founder, Edward Taylor Bellhouse, along with others by the line's Chief Engineer, William Baker, and William Cubitt.
- 5.29 The MSJ&AR line is one of the country's earliest suburban railways and was the first in Manchester. It was started as a joint venture between the Manchester & Birmingham Railway (later the London & North Western Railway, LNWR) and the Sheffield, Ashton-under-Lyne & Manchester Railway (later the Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway, MS&LR) which operated London Road Station (known as Manchester Piccadilly Station since 1960).
- 5.30 The aim was to create an extension of their lines, known as the South Junction line, which would be carried along the southern boundary of the city centre on a viaduct and then join the Liverpool and Manchester Railway at Ordsall Lane in Salford, providing access to the lucrative port and city of Liverpool.
- 5.31 A branch line, leaving the South Junction line at Castlefield, would also follow the Bridgewater Canal to Altrincham. The Manchester South Junction & Altrincham Railway Act received Royal Assent on 21 July 1845
- 5.32 In terms of *historic significance*, the evidential the importance of the railways and viaducts cannot be under-estimated to the contribution they made to the industrial growth of the city, its creation of wealth and social capital, and the importance of the railways to the cultural values of the city. This is reflected in the many research and published articles that reference the contribution of the Manchester South Junction railway and viaducts to the historical development of the city.
- 5.33 The historical analysis as noted in Section 4 and the comments set out above present a cogent case for the viaduct and railways arches to be considered as a heritage asset of '**high significance**'.

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6.0 Impact of Proposals on the Designated Heritage Asset

6.1 The impact of the proposals on the individual components of the heritage asset, and the overall integrity and significance of the Manchester South Junction viaduct and arches may be measured as: *adverse; negligible; or beneficial*.

6.2 The key objective has been to minimise any adverse impact, and, where necessary, to ensure that it is outweighed by the overall beneficial impact on the structure.

6.3 The scale of the overall impact of the proposed works on the significance of the fabric of the heritage structure is evaluated as:

a. *None* – works that result in no material change.

b. *Negligible* – alteration works that result in no significant material or visual change;

c. *Minor* - changes that only make a small difference to the public's ability to understand and appreciate the heritage and may be either *adverse* or *beneficial*. Such changes will impact on components which are of modest significance and sensitivity which are exposed to change of a slight to minor magnitude.

d. *Moderate* - a change that makes an appreciable difference to the public's ability to understand the heritage asset and may be either *adverse* or *beneficial*. Such changes will impact on components of moderate significance and sensitivity which are exposed to an alteration of a large magnitude, or highly sensitive receptors exposed to change of a minor magnitude.

e. *Substantial* - these will be changes which have a fundamental impact on our appreciation of the heritage asset and maybe either *adverse* or *beneficial*.

6.4 The NPPF considers heritage policy advice identifies the following key drivers in the decision making process:

The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation:

6.5 The significance of the designated heritage asset has been assessed as noted above and it is acknowledged that the listed viaduct is an important heritage asset that is of significance, from medium to high in value.

6.6 The assessment of the heritage Impact on the identified heritage assets, is intended to support the planning and listed building application for the conversion of the HOME arches for use in association with the HOME building and associated facilities (arts, vents, theatre, performance etc).

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- 6.7 The physical works to be undertaken as part of the development are fully detailed within the submitted JMA Architects plans, drawings and CGI images and elaborated more fully in their Design & Access Statement.
- 6.8 JMA architects have been involved in the project from its inception and are acutely aware of the historic importance of the viaduct and arches, not just in terms of the heritage context, but also as key elements of urban infrastructure that have shaped the southern part of the city throughout the ages.
- 6.9 Overall, the proposals represent an opportunity to preserve the existing character and appearance of the viaduct and the arches and through careful integration of the proposed alterations, which are designed to respect the integrity of the arches with infill elements that will help to improve the existing setting when viewed from Whitworth Street West.
- 6.10 It is considered that as a package of alterations and reuse of the historic arches, the proposed works causes no harm to the arches as designed heritage asset.
- 6.11 The conversion of the three HOME Arches provides the heritage asset with a long term viable optimum use, which is important in the objective to securing a sustainable future for the arches, which is supported by the objectives of the First Street Regeneration Strategy, the Manchester Core Strategy and saved policies of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan.

The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality:

- 6.12 The listed viaduct and railway arches part of the historical and aesthetical features of the Whitworth Street West area, standing out within the streetscene as a significant feature of this area and contributes strongly to the architectural and historic qualities of the sense of place.
- 6.13 The proposed change of use arts, events, performance in association with the HOME project will retain the layout and general character and appearance of the listed viaduct and its brick characteristic arches.
- 6.14 The viaduct with its 224 arches has over many years seen various land uses come and go 'under the arches' and the three HOME Arches are a few remaining arches within the Whitworth Street West corridor that do not have a current active use (save for some temporary storage use ancillary to the HOME's use).
- 6.15 It is considered that the proposals should be seen as an opportunity to deliver an optimum viable use that would provide the basis for the long term conservation of

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the arches with minimal physical interventions into the fabric of the arches. The proposals are designed to respect the history and architectural interest of the arches whilst at the same time will create active uses that will break down the barriers that are well documented to be a negative impact of the arches.

- 6.16 Whilst the conversion of the HOME Arches will consolidate and expand the creative and cultural activities of the HOME development, by creating additional artists, theatre and events space (a key objectives of the Council's 'Levelling-up' bid) the proposals will have wider public benefits linking HOME from Whitworth Street West through the development into the adjacent First Street regeneration area, adding to the facilities that are already established within First Street regeneration development.
- 6.17 The HOME Arches project is driven by the users, stakeholders and supporters of HOME. The proposals have evolved through dialogue throughout the projects conception (see details in the JMA Architects D&A Statement – Part One).
- 6.18 The proposals will deliver a range of significant economic, social and environmental benefits , which will come from the creation of additional creative arts and cultural facility within the arches. This new cultural and artists facility will create a cultural visitor attraction of exceptional quality for residents and visitors to the city, by enhancing HOME's facilities and services helping to consolidate HOME as one of the city's most successful cultural destinations.
- 6.19 The enhanced offer within HOME as a key arts and cultural facility builds on the Library Theatre Company's and Cornerhouse's past success in working with the local communities (including the Manchester LGBT community, disabled community, homeless and young people) by offering significantly enhanced arts, events, and workshop space.
- 6.20 The proposals will create additional education potential through the enhanced level of performance and teaching space, contemporary artistic teaching practice and through its established links with local theatres, festivals, film and TV and other cultural and educational organisations in the city.
- 6.21 The enhanced new facilities created by the conversion of the HOME 'Arches' will protect existing jobs and offer opportunities for growth within the HOME organisation.
- 6.22 The proposals will ensure the HOME development as a key City Council culture and arts project continues its driven focus as one of the region's most accessible and sustainable hub for the creative and cultural arts. This gives a boost to the long term

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future of both the arches as a heritage asset and the successful HOME project, ensure the arches are part of the continuing renaissance of the First Street regeneration area.

The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness:

- 6.23 As stated above, the proposed reuse of the HOME 'Arches' will give a sense of renewal to the historic viaduct arches, bringing forward active uses that will help to create a distinctive interface between Whitworth Street West, HOME and links through to the wider First Street regeneration area.
- 6.24 The proposals will enhance the immediate vicinity through the introduction of an active sustainable use in a way that preserves the character and appearance of the listed viaduct which makes a positive contribution to the designated heritage asset.
- 6.25 The reuse of the application building with minimum intervention will ensure the site continues to contribute aesthetically within Whitworth Street West corridor and improves the setting of the arches within the context of the spaces created within the arches and below the railway line above.
- 6.26 The Whitworth Street West frontage to the arches will retain its strong visual interest, the arch form being accentuated by the deep recessed infills, the retention of the steel ties and the use of brick as a main material alongside frameless glazing system that will sit within the deep recess of the new infills.
- 6.27 The design of the infills to the Whitworth Street West frontage, JMA's sensitivity to the design approach, both to the internal fit-out and to the elevation design was to work with the volume of the viaduct and create a series of simple, modular components that 'plug into' the spaces offering activity and interest to the street whilst creating privacy and screening to the internal functions.
- 6.28 The proposals through the active uses of the arches, sensitive design of the internal space and the recessed infill elevations to Whitworth Street West, are considered to make a positive contribution to the local character of the area.
- 6.29 Paragraph 199 of the NPPF states: *"When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance."*

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- 6.30 As demonstrated through the appraisal of heritage considerations set out above, the conversion of the viaduct railway arches reinvigorates the historic railway infrastructure, helps to break down physical and perceived barriers between Whitworth Street West and First Street, and enhances the HOME arts, cultural and creative facilities with minimal physical changes to the external or internal fabric of the Grade II listed railway arches.

Impact of External Elevational Works

- 6.31 Taking account of the minimal intervention approach as evidenced through the sensitive designs for the conversion of the arches (noted in the submitted JMA Architects plans and D&A Statement) the impact of the proposals in relation to the works to the frontage of the arches facing Whitworth Street West is scored as '**Minor**' being changes that only make a small difference to the public's ability to understand and appreciate the heritage.
- 6.32 The minor impact in relation to the significance of the heritage asset does not cause harm to the asset as one can continue to appreciate the overall form, scale and design of the viaduct and the arches.
- 6.33 It could be argued that in relation to the Whitworth Street West frontage, the proposals will bring forward high quality infill sections that are far superior to most other infilled railway arches within the Whitworth Street West corridor.
- 6.34 Furthermore, by helping to link the HOME facilities into the culturally diverse area of Whitworth Street West, reconnecting the space between First Street and the location of the former Hacienda, and breaking down permeability barriers, the proposals will have a *beneficial minor impact*.



Image 5:

Whitworth Street West – Active frontages retaining the integrity of the historic arch form and use of brick as the main material

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- 6.35 In relation to the works proposed to the rear of the HOME Arches, the 2 no. brick pods are designed to sit as subservient elements to create additional space for use within the facility and provide a location to screen plant.
- 6.36 The use of stack bonded brick and glazed brick as panels and designing the pods as free-standing elements contained within the infill frame to the arches ensures these elements of the proposals have no physical connection to the arches and make no physical change to the listed building.
- 6.37 By maintaining a modest scale and massing of the brick pods (Arches 1 & 2) and the proposed brick panel within Arch no. 3, these elements have been sympathetically integrated to the rear facing of the HOME Arches and are designed to ensure that they do not compete with the grander scale of the viaduct and the arches within the structure.

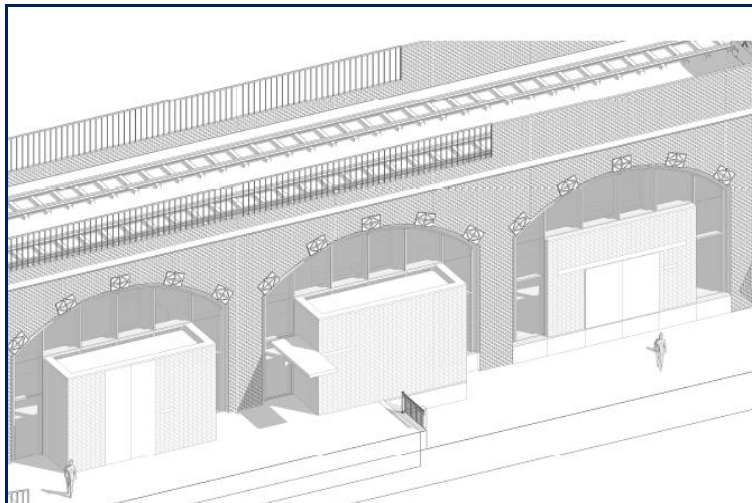


Image 6:

Rear of arches facing HOME – integrated brick pods and cladding set within the infill framework respects the integrity of the historic arch form and use of brick as the main material

- 6.38 The elevational works to the rear facing of the arches (connecting to HOME) are designed to ensure the 'arch form' of the listed building is protected and there is no physical attachment that cannot be removed.
- 6.39 The impact score in relation to the elevational works to the rear of the arches is also considered to be '**Minor - beneficial**' – where the physical changes to the heritage asset only make a small difference to the public's ability to understand and appreciate the heritage value of the historic railway viaduct and the brick arches.
- 6.40 The changes will benefit the overall appearance of the arches when viewed from the public realm between HOME and the rear view of the arches.

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Internal Works

- 6.41 In relation to the internal works, the proposals will result in the three HOME Arches becoming three interconnected and fully accessible double height spaces providing new arts, performance, and events space.
- 6.42 The internal fit-out will create usable space using sliding removable panels, fire-doors, concealed storage units and refreshment station.
- 6.43 A structural frame will be constructed within the arches in either steel or timber to support the lighting rig, possible aerial work and MEP equipment. The frame will be independent such that no significant loading will be applied to the railway arches.
- 6.44 The beam to column connections will be designed to resist horizontal forces, omitting the need for vertical bracing and allowing an open plan space – see image shown below.



Image 6: Internal space within the HOME converted arches:
Image source: JMA Architects

- 6.45 In relation to impact assessment, the proposed internal works are considered to be appropriate to the brief of the client to create a conversion of the arches with minimum interventions and to respect the integrity of the internal spaces of the arches.
- 6.46 The internal works proposed seek to achieve the feel of spaciousness within the arches and whilst the internal fit-out works are necessary and are designed to create a minimal intervention approach, by definition there are alterations that change the current internal character of the heritage asset.

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- 6.47 One can argue that the internal works are all temporary in terms of being removeable objects and comprise of fixtures that do not directly tie into the historic fabric of the arches. This is considered to ensure that there is no material harm to the interior of the arches and the arches are clearly visible within the converted units.
- 6.48 Internal interventions are minimal and overall, it is assessed that the internal works will have a '*minor-negligible*' impact.

Signage Works

- 6.49 proposed signage is to complement the existing signage brand of HOME and at the design stage, as depicted in the submitted D&A Statement, the signage will be single lettering signage, either face-fixed or cut into the brick work panels in the Whitworth Street Elevation.
- 6.50 The signage will take the effect of graphics integrated into the brick panels and keep to a size and modest design to give wayfinding expression to the building from the streetscene, and not appear as fussy, dominant or garish.
- 6.51 The signs can be further controlled through the statutory advertisement regulations whether this be through deemed consent or the express consent procedures.
- 6.52 The proposed signs in the form, style and size and locations shown in the submitted plans and D&A Statement are considered to have a '*Negligible*' visual impact and create no material harm to the heritage asset.

Impact on Setting

- 6.53 The methodology for the appraisal of physical and visual impact on the identified heritage asset and the non-designated heritage asset takes account of the Historic England guidance on "*Conservation Principles*" (2017) and "*The Setting of Heritage Assets*" (2017).
- 6.54 As the National Planning Policy Framework makes clear, significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its *setting*. Important to note that setting itself is not a designated heritage asset, although it can inform the significance of the asset.
- 6.55 The question as to whether proposed physical works will cause harm to the setting of the listed viaduct and brick arches heritage asset is a matter of judgment having regard to the circumstances of the case and considering relevant guidance set down in the Historic England's published guidance.

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- 6.56 The most important consideration would be whether the visual impact of the proposed conversion of the arches and associated external alterations (infilling within the arches and/or proposed signage) would affect a key element of the heritage asset's special architectural or historic interest or harm its visual interpretation by close proximity and by the scale and appearance of the proposed development.
- 6.57 In this assessment, one is assessing whether there is any harm and to what extent the degree of 'harm' affects the heritage asset's significance, rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed.
- 6.58 The proposals are not considered to affect the setting of the historic viaduct arches that is characterised by their physical presence and identity within Whitworth Street West streetscene, the activity associated with the use of the space within the arches, and the utilitarian appearance of the viaduct brick arch built form.
- 6.59 The degree of minor impact from the visual presence of infilling within the frontage of the arches in relation to Whitworth Street West is limited to the appearance of the space within the arches rather than to any aspect of the arches presence within the streetscene. There are numerous examples of arches within the listed viaduct being used for commercial purposes with associated infilling with a diverse range of materials and 'shopfront' type designs.
- 6.60 The proposed infilling of the HOME Arches has been designed in close consultations with relevant stakeholders, the Council, Network Rail and with local users of the HOME facilities. These are the users, as well as general visitors to the area, who would most appreciate the significance of the historic railway viaduct as an important part of the Manchester urban landscape and appreciate the significance of the viaduct and railway in the historical development of Manchester as a major provincial industrialised city.
- 6.61 The railway arches will continue to be experienced as the key feature of the converted structure, and accordingly, the general *setting* of the viaduct and its contribution in the visual amenity of the area, is not considered to be harmed by the proposals.

Summary of Impact on Heritage Assets

- 6.62 The proposals demonstrably aim to avoid the loss or compromise of the significance of the Grade II listed Manchester South Junction railway viaduct and brick arches. This is clearly demonstrated by the fact that there are no proposals to alter or remove any of the original physical fabric that defines the architectural and historical interest of the listed viaduct, and its value as a designated heritage asset.

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- 6.63 The proposals have been carefully prepared with detailed surveys of the site led by JMA Architect's conservation approach to facilitating the proposed conversion, with minimal intervention to ensure physical change caused by the infilling of the arches is of no more than a minor impact.
- 6.64 The listed railway viaduct and brick arches have been assessed as being of '*High Significance*'. The proposals have been informed by the *significance* assessment undertaken alongside the emerging designs and take account of consultations with the Council, HOME, Network Rail and other stakeholders.
- 6.65 In line with the priority aims of heritage protection policies set down in the NPPF and Manchester Core Strategy, the aim throughout the development of the HOME Arches project has been to minimise harm to the listed railway viaduct and brick arches structure and to create usable artistic spaces with minimal interventions within and to the external faces of the heritage asset.
- 6.66 As noted above, the NPPF requires that, when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, that great weight is given to its conservation in order to avoid any 'harm' which might diminish the value of the asset.
- 6.67 Taking into account the full package of the submitted proposals and having undertaken the appropriate significance assessment and heritage impact assessment, as set out above, the proposals for the conversion of the HOME Arches are contended to cause no material harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset as defined by the statutory Grade II listed Manchester South Junction Railway Viaduct and associated brick arches.
- 6.68 In this Heritage Statement and the impact assessment set out above, it is demonstrated that no material harm will accrue to the designated heritage asset (the Grade II listed Manchester South Junction Railway Viaduct) and paragraph 199 of the NPPF is therefore fully satisfied; as are the requirements laid out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and policies EN3 of the Manchester Core Strategy and DC19 of the Unitary Development Plan relating to the need to protect heritage assets, including its setting.