



Ashton Canal Bridge
Heritage Statement

August 2021

Figures

Figure 1: Site plan (Hawkins Brown, 2021).....	7
Figure 2 Plan identifying the designated heritage assets with the potential to be impacted by the proposals (Author's own, 2021).....	8
Figure 3: Frontispiece from a Century of Fine Cotton Spinning, 1790-1913. McConnel & Co. Ltd., Ancoats, Manchester. Artist unknown. Watercolour circa 1820. (Manchester Libraries, Information and Archives, 2018)	10
Figure 4: Store Street aqueduct. Photographer: A.Bradburn, 1903. (Manchester Libraries, Information and Archives, 2018)	11
Figure 5: 'Manchester, getting up the steam'. Engraving published in <i>The Builder</i> magazine, October 1853. Artist unknown. ('Rag-picking History', Paul Dobraszczuk 2018).....	12
Figure 6: William Green's 1794 Plan of Manchester & Salford (University of Manchester Library).....	14
Figure 7: Pigot's Map of Manchester and Salford 1813 (University of Manchester Library).....	15
Figure 8: Site superimposed on Swire's map 1824 (University of Manchester Library).	16
Figure 9: Soho Foundry 1814 (Manchester University Library).....	17
Figure 10 Pollard Street Mill, Great Ancoats Street, 1825, with Ashton Canal in foreground.	17
Figure 11: Site imposed on Banks and Co. 1828 map (Manchester University Library)..	18
Figure 12. Slater, 1848 (Manchester University Library)	19
Figure 13 Ordnance Survey 1:2500 county series. Lancashire. 1893 (Manchester University Library)	20
Figure 14. Bomb Damage Map, 1941 (Manchester University Library)	21
Figure 15: View looking south east toward Soho Foundry and Corporation Yard in 1960, with Lock 2 in foreground (Manchester City Council Libraries).....	22
Figure 16: Ashton Canal lock number 2 in the 1960s (Manchester City Council Libraries).....	23
Figure 17. Soho Foundry Wall, 1960, with Lock 2 in foreground (Manchester City Council Libraries).....	24
Figure 18: Looking North east along Great Ancoats Street toward the corner of Pollard Street in 1960 (Manchester City Council),.....	25
Figure 19 The Site in 1962, (Manchester City Council Libraries).....	26
Figure 20; Ashton Canal viewed looking east, 1962, with Lock 3 in the back right of the frame (Manchester Libraries Collection)..	27
Figure 21: New Islington Redevelopment (Urban Splash, 2021).	28
Figure 22: New development, most significantly the 'Chips' Building adjacent to the Site.	29
Figure 23 - Plan identifying the designated heritage assets with the potential to be impacted by the proposals (Author's own, 2021).....	35
Figure 24. Cooperative Warehouse looking across the Site (Author, 2020)	36
Figure 25. Vulcan Mill looking across the Site (Author, 2020)	37
Figure 26: Asset no. 11 – Ardwick and Ancoats Hospital, on Old Mill Street looking south towards the Site (indicated by red arrow) (Authors Own, 2020)	38
Figure 27. Asset no. 8 - Bridge Number 5 Over Ashton Canal looking North West away from the Site (Authors Own, 2020).....	39
Figure 28: Lock Number 3 (Authors Own, 2020).....	41
Figure 29: Lock Number 3 (Authors Own 2020).....	42
Figure 30 Lock Number 3 (Authors Own 2020).....	43

Figure 31. Lock Number 1 (Authors Own, 2020).....	44
Figure 32 Canal Towpath Bridge (Authors Own, 2020)	45
Figure 33: Lock Keepers Cottage (Authors Own, 2020)	46
Figure 34: Lock Keepers Cottage viewed looking toward the Site (Authors Own, 2020)	46
Figure 35: Lock Number 2 (Authors Own, 2020).....	47
Figure 36: Location of Soho Foundry Branch (Indicated in red).....	48
Figure 37. Wall of Soho Foundry with Gatekeeper’s Lodge (Authors Own, 2020)	50
Figure 38: Bridge Number 4 Over Ashton Canal (Authors Own, 2020)	51
Figure 39: Proposed bridge (Hawkins Brown, 2021).....	52
Figure 40: Plan identifying the CGI and image locations assets (Author, 2021).....	54
Figure 41. CGI looking east along Ashton Canal (Our Studio, 2021); with preceding existing ‘view’	55
Figure 42: Sketch-up model looking north west with assets highlighted in red (Hawkins Brown, 2021); with preceding existing ‘view’	57

Contents

1.	Introduction	4
2.	Site Context	7
3.	Policy and Guidance	30
4.	Scoping of Assets	34
5.	Assessment of Significance	41
6.	Assessment of Impact	52
7.	Planning Policy Assessment	60
8.	Summary	62

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Deloitte Real Estate (“Deloitte”) to support an application for a proposed walking and cycling Bridge over Ashton Canal. The Applicant is Manchester City Council.

Background

- 1.2 The Ashton Canal bridge forms part of an ambition by Manchester City Council to improve the quality of walking and cycling routes between different neighbourhoods of the city centre, and the propensity for active travel.
- 1.3 This crossing has been identified by MCC as a ‘missing link’ in the proposed continuous east-west walking and cycling route, linking the neighbourhoods to the north and east of Manchester City Centre.
- 1.4 This need for connection has only been amplified by the high number of recent and planned development on either side of the canal; including a number of residential developments around Islington Marina, and the General Projects ‘Pollard Street’ office scheme which will occupy the brownfield site around the New Islington Metrolink stop.
- 1.5 Furthermore, the construction of a new pedestrian and cycling bridge over the Ashton Canal is part of a larger MCC scheme called the Northeast Gateway. The Northeast Gateway walking and cycle route’s main objective is to encourage more people to walk and cycle. The inclusion of the new route over the Ashton Canal is intended to create access to the southern leg of the proposed route, thereby allowing access for a greater number of local residents.
- 1.6 While there is currently a crossing directly over Ashton Canal in this location, by the gates of Lock 3, this crossing was originally designed to facilitate operation of the lock gates only. It is not suitable to accommodate regular pedestrian and cycling traffic due to its narrow width and is deemed non-compliant with DDA regulations. Furthermore, if the lock gates are open for canal boats, the movement of the arms of the lock gate prevent pedestrians and cyclists from using this bridge.
- 1.7 As part of the design process, different options for the location and design were explored. Several potential locations were examined; key constraints identified included minimising the impact on the heritage of the historical locks along the canal. However this had to be balanced with other important design considerations included the satisfying requirements of the Canal and River Trust, in ensuring the continued operational use of the canal for boats (i.e. not impeding access to locks or towpaths), and allowing for the required length of the western ramp to ensure compliance with current DDA standards and legal obligations; and ensuring the bridge would be inclusive for all.
- 1.8 The selected location, just to the north of the New Islington Marina and beside the ‘Chips’ building, was selected as the only feasible option and is considered to offer the best balance of benefits while limiting any impact on the heritage of the area.
- 1.9 This location is immediately adjacent to Lock 3 on the Ashton Canal, a Grade II listed asset. There are also a number of other identified listed assets in the nearby area. This has triggered the need for a Heritage Statement to be prepared in order to assess the proposals in this context.
- 1.10 The description of development for the Application for Planning Permission is set out below:

“Construction of a new walking and cycling bridge crossing the Ashton Canal and delivery of new ramped access on the Ashton Canal towpath, including earthworks, landscaping and other associated works.”

- 1.11 The new bridge is located next to the current Grade II Listed canal lock, which is listed as Lock 3 and forms a series of locks along the Ashton Canal. The extent of this listing does not form any physical interaction with the new bridge proposed, but the ramping structure leading to the new bridge cross and works to the towpath shares an adjacency to the listed structure.
- 1.12 Therefore, in order to acknowledge and make good any physical interaction and works that may be required to the listed structure, listed building consent is required. The description for the works requiring Listed Building Consent as set out in the enclosed Application form is as follows:
- “Listed Building Consent for interface and abutment works to the Ashton Canal Lock (No. 3) to facilitate the construction of a new walking and cycling bridge.”**
- 1.13 This report should be read in conjunction with the Planning Statement prepared by Deloitte Real Estate and the Design and Access Statement prepared by Hawkins/Brown.

Research Methodology

- 1.14 The assessment has been carried out in accordance with the statutory duties of The Planning (Listed buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 1.15 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides the Government’s national planning policy on the conservation of the historic environment. In respect of the information required for applications, it states that:
- “In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The 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.”.**
- 1.16 The baseline assessment has been undertaken using a combination of desk-based study and fieldwork to identify and assess the heritage significance of the potentially impacted heritage assets and to establish the impact on their significance. The following survey and data sources have been used:
- National Heritage List for England (Historic England (HE));
 - Manchester City Council Archives;
 - Detailed visual Site inspections carried out June 2020, and February 2021; and
 - Other published sources of information which are referenced where relevant.

Report Structure

- 1.17 In light of these requirements this Report is structured as follows:
- Section 2: Site context, including a site history.
 - Section 3: Legislative and policy context for this assessment.
 - Section 4: Scoping of assets
 - Section 5: Assessment of significance.
 - Section 6: Assessment of impact.
 - Section 7: Policy assessment.

- Section 8: Summary and conclusion.

Authorship

- 1.18 The report has been prepared by Deloitte Real Estate; a real estate consultancy comprising planning and surveyors as part of Deloitte LLP.
- 1.19 Authors: Katie Wray (BA (Hons), MPLAN, MSc, MRTPI) and Affiliate IHBC – Heritage Planner; and Eithne FitzGerald (MA (Hons), MSc).

2. Site Context

- 2.1 The Site is located on the Ashton Canal in New Islington, Manchester; adjacent to Great Ancoats Street, Pollard Street and the New Islington Tram Stop. The Site connects the two sides of the Ashton Canal and currently comprises canal infrastructure dating from circa 1792. This area, and its retained former industrial features in particular, exemplify an important part of Manchester's physical heritage through its connection to the industrial history of the city.

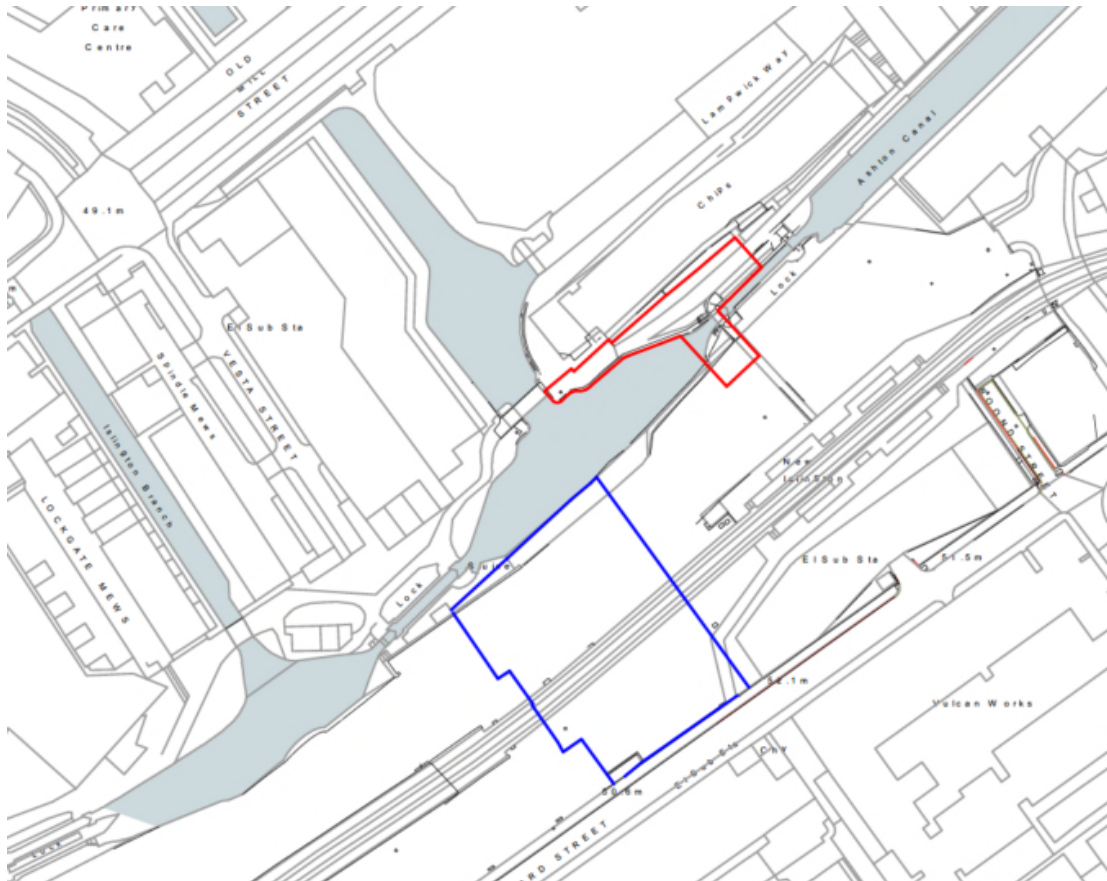


Figure 1: Site plan (Hawkins Brown, 2021)

- 2.2 Whilst the Site itself is occupied only by the canal infrastructure and towpaths, which have had some modern interventions and resurfacing, the surrounding area is relatively densely built up with buildings largely 5 storeys or taller, such as the immediately adjacent Chips building.
- 2.3 The General Project's 'Pollard Street' Development (approved at Planning Committee on 17 December 2020 – 128191/FO/2020) will occupy the area immediately adjacent to the canal near to the New Islington Tram Stop. This will be an office-led scheme and work on this is expected to start before the end of 2021 and will comprise buildings of 5 to 8 storeys and new public realm.
- 2.4 The application for that development notes the aspiration by MCC to deliver a new bridge in this location, which will serve as a sustainable connection between New Islington, Ancoats and East Manchester. The vision for the Pollard Street scheme public realm is to improve the Site's relationship with nearby assets, provide high quality green space and be comprehensively people friendly. The bridge is envisioned to strongly relate to this new public space, and therefore this development will form perhaps the most important element of the future site context.

Heritage Assets

- 2.5 The Site is not located within a Conservation Area and the nearest Conservation Area is Ancoats, which is located 450m to the north west of the Site (see Figure 2).



Figure 2 Plan identifying the designated heritage assets with the potential to be impacted by the proposals (Author's own, 2021)

- 2.6 However, as shown in see Figure 2, in the immediate vicinity of c. 250 m there are a number of heritage assets; the most relevant of which is Grade II listed a Lock 3, due to its immediate proximity to the Site. The full list of identified heritage assets is as follows:

- Ashton Canal Lock Number 1 Immediately East of Great Ancoats Street - Grade: II (List Entry Number: 1197829)
- Ashton Canal Towpath Bridge over Junction with Islington Branch Canal West of Lock Number 2 - Grade: II (List Entry Number: 1197830)
- Ashton Canal Lock Number 2 off south end of Vesta Street - Grade: II (List Entry Number: 1207654)
- Ashton Canal Lock Number 3 on South Side of Ancoats Hospital - Grade: II (List Entry Number: 1283048)
- Bridge Number 4 over Ashton Canal - Grade: II (List Entry Number: 1197777)
- Ashton Canal Lock Keepers Cottage beside Lock Number 2 at Islington Branch Junction Basin - Grade: II (List Entry Number: 1279636).

- 2.7 As discussed in Section 5 of this Assessment, all of the above identified nearby listed assets have been considered in the context of the scheme proposals in order to qualify the visual impact of the Proposed Development.

- 2.8 In addition, there is one non-designated heritage asset immediately adjacent to the Site – a wall from the former Soho Foundry which also forms part of this Heritage Assessment.

Wider Area History¹

- 2.9 The first major settlement of what is now Manchester City Centre was by the Romans in AD 79, who established a fort at Castlefield. By the thirteenth century the Grelley family had established a manor house north of the Roman fort, and likely also a castle, which is recorded in 1184. The medieval town then grew up around the manor house, although nothing earlier than the fifteenth century survives.
- 2.10 By the end of the sixteenth century Manchester's population had more than quadrupled, and the city became notable as a centre for the cloth trade. It was firmly established by the end of the seventeenth century as the centre of a network of south Lancashire towns that specialised in the production of cloth containing cotton.
- 2.11 Increase in trade was accompanied by better communications. The roads to Stockport, Oldham and Ashton-under-Lyne were all turnpikes by the early 1730s, and links to Liverpool and the west improved when the Irwell and Mersey navigation opened in 1736. By the second half of the eighteenth-century, Manchester had become a first rank provincial town. Trade was burgeoning, centred on the cotton industry, although production was mainly in domestic workshops.
- 2.12 Towards the end of the eighteenth century the town experienced rapid expansion facilitated by sales of large parcels of land in and around the centre in response to increasing demand and soaring land values. With the exception of the Ancoats area (which lies adjacent to the north west of the Site), where the predominant activity was the construction of industrial buildings, these land acquisitions related mainly to residential development.

The Industrial Revolution and the Manchester Cotton Industry

- 2.13 By the end of eighteenth century as urban and industrial expansion gathered pace, the scene was set for Manchester to become the first industrial economy and society in the world. The precise reasons it befell to Manchester remain unclear. Long experience of textile production and trade, and the absence of restrictive practices associated with a corporation and craft guilds played a part.
- 2.14 The first cotton mill was built for Richard Arkwright on Miller Street in 1780-3, and the first to be powered by a rotary steam engine was erected for Peter Drinkwater on Auburn Street in 1789. McConnel and Kennedy completed their Old Mill alongside the Ashton Canal in 1797 (Figure 3), the first in a series of mills in this location which now form a group of buildings of national heritage importance with the adjacent Murrays' Mills. The boom followed with the number of cotton-spinning firms doubling from 51 in 1799 to 111 in 1802.

¹ The principal sources for this section are:

Hartwell, Clare, Manchester Pevsner Architectural Guides, Yale University Press, London

Kidd, Alan, Manchester: A History, Carnegie Publishing Ltd, Lancaster

Makepeace, Chris, A Century of Manchester, Sutton Publishing Ltd, Stroud

Mason, Amanda, The Manchester Blitz, Imperial War Museum. Accessed online at <http://www.iwm.org.uk/history/the-manchester-blitz>, 16 August 2018

Schofield, Jonathan, My Guide to Manchester, Manchester Books Ltd, Manchester



Figure 3: Frontispiece from a Century of Fine Cotton Spinning, 1790-1913. McConnel & Co. Ltd., Ancoats, Manchester. Artist unknown. Watercolour circa 1820. (Manchester Libraries, Information and Archives, 2018)

- 2.15 By the early nineteenth century, Ancoats had become one of the most intensely developed industrial centres in the world, with foundries, glass works, and many other types of industrial premises springing up alongside the mills. In 1815 Ancoats was the Manchester rating district with the most cotton mills and the largest number of households.

Development of Transport Infrastructure

- 2.16 The rapid pace of industrial development was facilitated greatly by the introduction of canals, which provided the first efficient means of transporting bulk loads of goods. The country's first canal (1759-65), built by the Third Duke of Bridgewater with its terminus at Castlefield, and significantly assisted the growth of trade.
- 2.17 The Bury-Bolton, Manchester-Ashton-Oldham and Manchester-Rochdale canals followed between 1790 and 1806. The Piccadilly area to the south of the Site became a local focus of the canal network, and particularly for the Ashton Canal and the Rochdale Canal.
- 2.18 The Ashton Canal was proposed in 1791 and was intended to provide a link between Manchester and the collieries in the Ashton and Oldham area. The canal had been completed between Manchester and Ashton by early 1797, which included the construction of an impressive aqueduct over Store Street (Figure 4), although the terminus basin at Piccadilly had yet to be finished.



Figure 4: Store Street aqueduct. Photographer: A.Bradburn, 1903. (Manchester Libraries, Information and Archives, 2018)

- 2.19 The Rochdale Canal, the first of the trans-Pennine waterways, was completed in 1804, and a short cross-city section linked it to the Bridgewater Canal at Castlefield. The Ashton Canal joined the Rochdale Canal near London Road.
- 2.20 The canals turned Manchester into an inland port, with wharves and quays alive with horse-wagons and narrow boats around Castlefield and the Ashton canal basin in the area immediately to the west of the Site.
- 2.21 By 1821 there were three navigable routes from Liverpool to Manchester: the Mersey and Irwell Navigation of 1736; the Bridgewater Canal; and the Leeds and Liverpool Canal (the branch linking it to the Bridgewater at Leigh was completed in 1821).
- 2.22 Railways soon followed, bringing with them another world first: the construction of the world's first passenger railway terminus, at the end of the Liverpool to Manchester line. The original station and warehouse of 1830 still survive on Liverpool Street, preserved as part of the Manchester Museum of Science and Industry.
- 2.23 Store Street Station (later London Road, now Piccadilly) opened in 1842. The construction of new railway lines, stations, goods warehouses and depots led to further redevelopment in central Manchester as acres of land were cleared to accommodate the infrastructure required by the railways. Between 1861 and 1871 600 houses were demolished to clear the Site for the goods station at London Road.

Industrial growth through the Nineteenth Century

- 2.24 The powerful visual effect of the mills (Figure 5), noticed by so many early nineteenth century visitors, was due partly to their unusual height, likely a consequence of high land values, and also because the buildings could be sited right next to one another, since steam power freed them from the need to harness a head of water. Proximity bought economic advantages in shared infrastructure and access to a pool of labour. Around this time the main factory district was focused on Ancoats, but also included New Cross, Beswick and Holt Town.

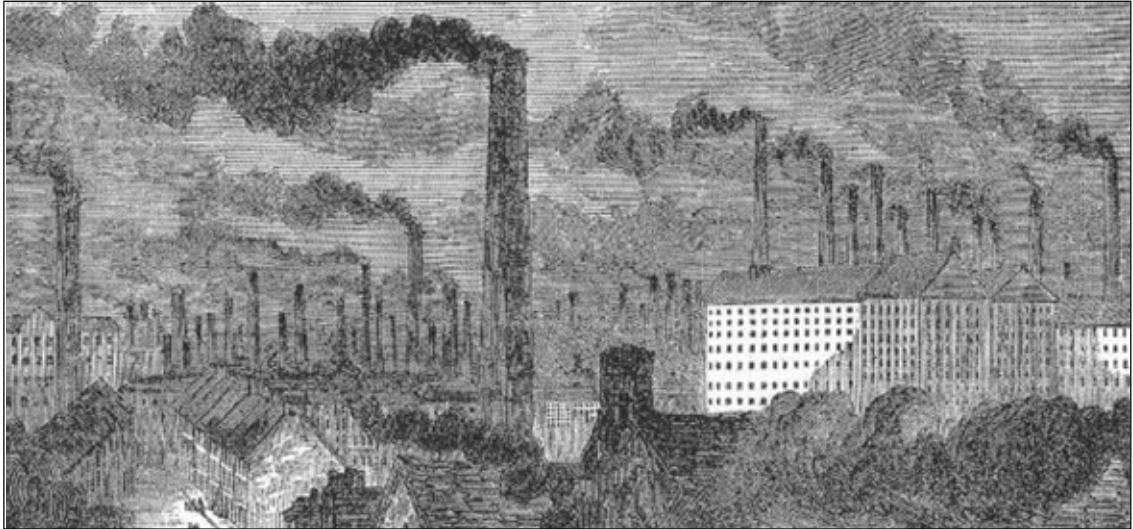


Figure 5: 'Manchester, getting up the steam'. Engraving published in *The Builder* magazine, October 1853. Artist unknown. ('Rag-picking History', Paul Dobraszczyk 2018)

- 2.25 The rapid experimentation and development of technology led to the city becoming a world centre of engineering by the end of the nineteenth century, notably in fireproof construction and iron framing.
- 2.26 By the Victorian era the city was an urban and industrial colossus, with thriving industries such as iron-founding, engineering, bleaching and dying, as well as cotton spinning. In 1844, Benjamin Disraeli called Manchester "the most wonderful city of modern times".
- 2.27 The Manchester Ship Canal opened in 1894 and made Manchester a port of international stature, helping to diversify the economic base of the region. Importantly, it cushioned the city from the worst effects of the interwar recession. Its success is reflected in the proliferation of commercial buildings of the early twentieth century.

Early 20th Century Decline

- 2.28 By 1913, 65% of the world's cotton was processed in Manchester and the surrounding area. The First World War interrupted access to export markets, and the city became a significant centre for aircraft and munitions manufacturing during the war years. Meanwhile, cotton processing in other parts of the world increased, often using machinery produced in Manchester.
- 2.29 The city's economy was impacted significantly by the Great Depression and the underlying structural societal shifts which began to displace earlier industries, including textile manufacture.
- 2.30 On 1 September 1939, Germany invaded Poland, and World War II began. Like other large industrial cities in Britain, Manchester suffered aerial bombardment during the conflict. In late autumn 1940, the Blitz spread beyond London to Britain's other major towns and cities, many of which were the locations of major war industries. However, it was often their compact commercial centres and residential areas that were most badly affected by air raids.
- 2.31 Manchester was hit by two nights of air raids in December 1940. These are often referred to as the 'Christmas Blitz'. As a result of these raids, an estimated 684 people died and more than 2,000 were injured.
- 2.32 Although the heaviest offensive was concentrated on the Trafford Park area where many large firms were located, making it an important target for German bombers, the City Centre also suffered bombardment.

- 2.33 600 fires were started by incendiary bombs over the two nights. Blocks of commercial and warehouse premises were particularly badly hit, with many completely burnt out. The city's infrastructure was badly affected. Both of the city's main railway stations were hit, as was the bus station. Two of the main roads in the city, Deansgate and Oxford Road, were blocked by debris from damaged buildings, bomb craters and unexploded bombs.
- 2.34 A whole section of the City Centre had to be cordoned off. Water supplies were affected, and electricity was rationed. Over 100,000 homes in Manchester and Salford were damaged, along with the Cathedral, the Royal Exchange and the Free Trade Hall.

The Post-War Years

- 2.35 The end of World War II bought a period of decline in manufacturing and the city's economic status. The cotton industry had collapsed by the 1950s and the most dramatic period of industrial decline began in the later 1960s.
- 2.36 The universities and colleges were the only real beneficiary of the optimism of the early 1960s, though the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST) (now University of Manchester) campus is the only one with real cohesion.
- 2.37 In the City Centre the emphasis was at first on rebuilding war-damaged and run-down areas. The proliferation of mid-century, low rise industrial and commercial development which sprang up on bomb sites is evident in the post-war development pattern and resulting urban grain. New building was not generally a success, with buildings lacking any real quality, or failing to interact with the street context.
- 2.38 The later part of the twentieth century in Manchester is notable for the beginning of regeneration, with exemplary conservation schemes and effective re-use of historic buildings, including the opening of the G-Mex Exhibition Centre in 1986 in the old Central Station, and renewal of the Castlefield area from the 1980s.
- 2.39 The terrorist bomb, which exploded near the southern end of Corporation Street in 1996 saw a period of transformation of some of the more unsuccessful architecture of the post-war era, and the Commonwealth Games in 2002 stimulated further redevelopment in the city.

Site History – Industrialisation and the Development of the Canal Network²

- 2.40 The history of the Site and immediate area can be charted through available historic mapping.
- 2.41 The former industrial area of Ancoats is typified by nineteenth century former industrial infrastructure, combined with strong elements of nineteenth and twentieth century transportation and commercial development, which is now interspersed with recent twenty-first century residential and commercial development.
- 2.42 The Site is situated on the Ashton Canal. The historic settlement pattern surrounding the Site comprises elements of eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth century industrial, residential and commercial infrastructure. Historic rail infrastructure is located to the south and south-west of the Site.
- 2.43 As with much of Manchester before the industrial revolution, the Site was largely undeveloped. The earliest reliable source to show the Site area at a sufficient scale is William Green's 1794 Plan of

² Referenced throughout:

Redhead, Norman, *Greater Manchester Historic Landscape Character Assessments* (2006), Archaeology Data Service
 Ian Miller, *Pollard Street Archaeological Assessment*, (2020)

Manchester & Salford (Figure 6), which shows the Site across two fields (prior to the Ashton Canal cutting through this area), and was in the ownership of a nearby Grammar School.

- 2.44 The Site remained undeveloped until the very beginning of the 19th century. The road that is now Pollard Street was laid out and constructed during the late 18th Century, and as shown in Figure 9, this was originally called 'Ashton Street'.



Figure 6: William Green's 1794 Plan of Manchester & Salford (University of Manchester Library). Although still undeveloped at this stage, the intended route of the Ashton Canal has been marked, as has the location of the grid street pattern. This street pattern can still be seen reflected in the area around the Site in the modern day.

- 2.45 Following the success of the Duke of Bridgewater's canal in moving coal from his mines to Manchester and other developing industrial areas, a group of mine owners around Ashton and Oldham saw the potential for doing the same thing themselves. In 1792 a group of shareholders, including these mine owners, put forward a proposal for an Act of Parliament to establish what was originally to be called the Manchester, Ashton under Lyne and Oldham Canal.
- 2.46 Construction of the Ashton Canal officially commenced in 1792 and was finally completed in 1799. and the original scheme was completed in 1796, running from a large basin behind what is now Piccadilly Station in Manchester, climbing gradually eastwards toward Fairfield, Droylsden. When this network opened it was isolated from the other canals then in existence, even the short link between Ashton Canal Basin at Piccadilly and the Rochdale Canal was not opened until 1800. From there one level section continued eastward to Whiteland's Basin, Ashton under Lyne, while another arm headed north through what is now Daisy Nook.

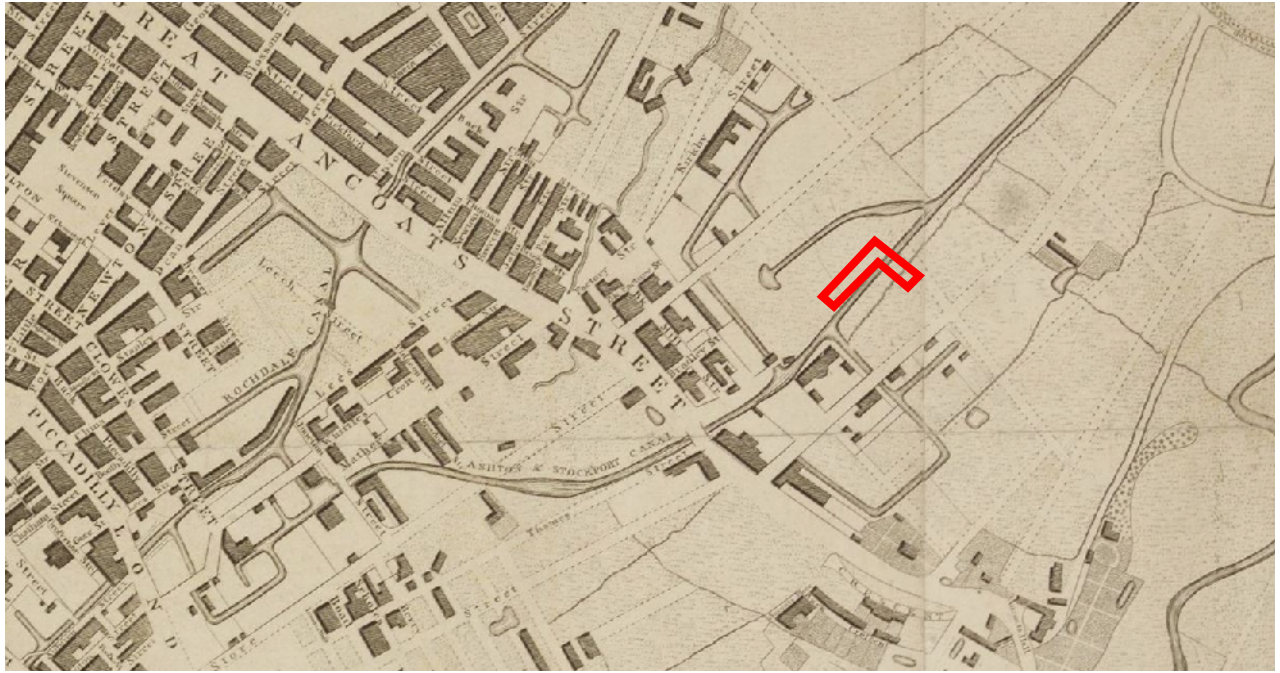


Figure 7: Pigot's Map of Manchester and Salford 1813 (University of Manchester Library). As can be seen, the canal has been constructed by this point, including one of the canal arms which branches into what is now the Pollard Street Site, but the land around the Site is generally undeveloped. A building is located on the south of the Site, likely Pollard Street Mill, which was established in 1804 by Jonathan Pollard. A small building that is likely to be the Lock Keepers Cottage has been built by this stage, with the associated footbridge beside it.

- 2.47 Several warehouses were established at the terminus in Piccadilly Basin. The Ashton Canal contributed to the area's status within the region's transport network, fuelled by the potential of cheap and reliable transport for goods and materials, and provided an impetus for development. The canal corridor, heading north-eastwards out of Ancoats towards Bradford and Clayton, became lined with textile mills.
- 2.48 In the first half of the nineteenth century the Ashton Canal prospered, carrying coal to the mills and coal merchants along the line, bringing in raw materials to the mills and taking out the manufactured products, transporting stone for building and road construction and even carrying passengers. A lucrative side-line was the selling of water to the owners of steam engines.

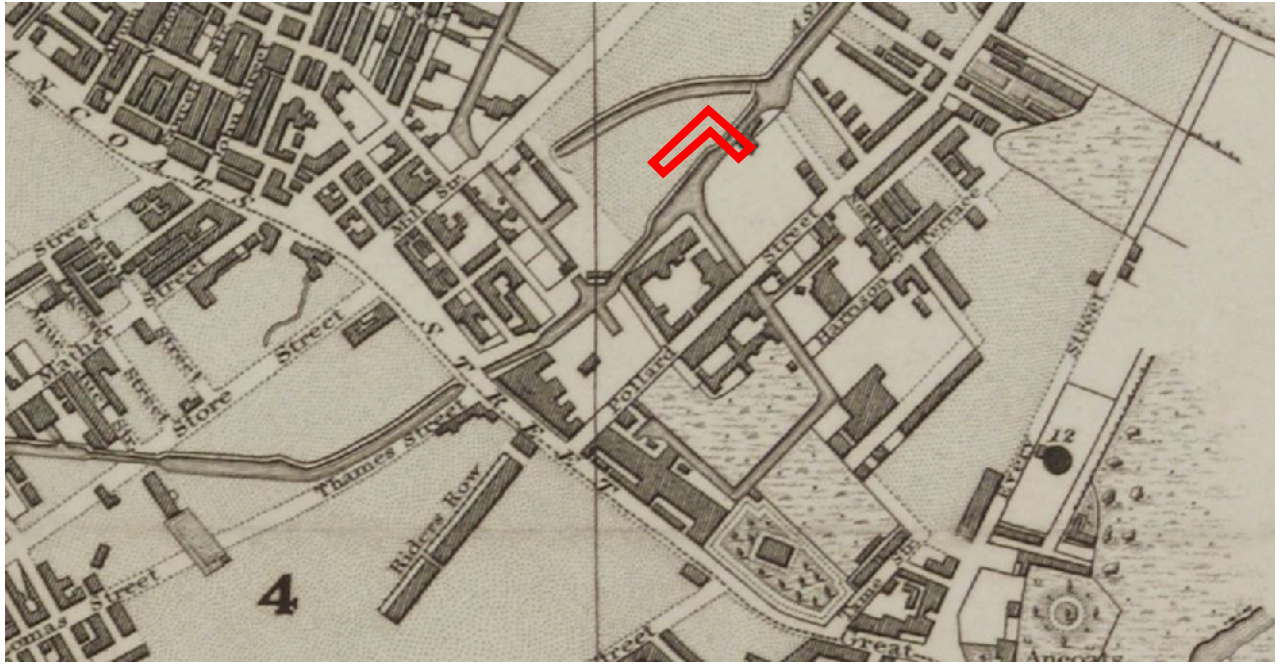


Figure 8: Site superimposed on Swire's map 1824 (University of Manchester Library). This map captures the acceleration of both residential and industrial development in this part of Manchester during the early nineteenth century, with the construction of a number of the streets shown in Green's map now completed. The canal has also been further developed by this point, including a second canal arm which would later serve the Soho Foundry, between Lock 2 and 3; and a lock further north directed west – the Higher Canal Arm – which was the first to be built to serve the warehousing around what is now New Islington Marina. There are some larger buildings now on the south side of Pollard Street, on the Site pre-dating what is now Co-operative Warehouse and Vulcan Works, but significantly smaller in scale.

- 2.49 Swire's 1824 shows further development had taken place around the Site (Figure 8), Pollard Street Mill's canal branch is shown extending toward Pollard Street, which is not shown on previous maps and this is the first to show both Pollard Mill (to the southern part of the Site), and Soho Foundry (central portion). The map also shows that Pollard Street Mill had been extended by this period, with a new extension reaching eastwards along the Ashton Canal.
- 2.50 A commercial boom in 1800-02 saw the number of cotton- spinning firms in the township of Manchester double from 51 in 1799 to 111 in 1802, setting Manchester on its path to becoming the most highly concentrated centre of cotton spinning in the world. The area immediately adjacent to the Site also saw industrial development from this period. The two most prominent developments which defined this area for the majority of the following two centuries were the Pollard Street Mill and the Soho Foundry.
- 2.51 The Pollard Street Mill, established in 1804 by Jonathan Pollard, was an impressive building, standing at eight-storeys tall with additional loft space, and designed with the use of steam power in mind. The Mill was located on a large area of land fronting Great Ancoats Street (Figure 8). Within the first two decades of the nineteenth century, Pollard Street Mill was one of the largest and most profitable mills within Manchester.

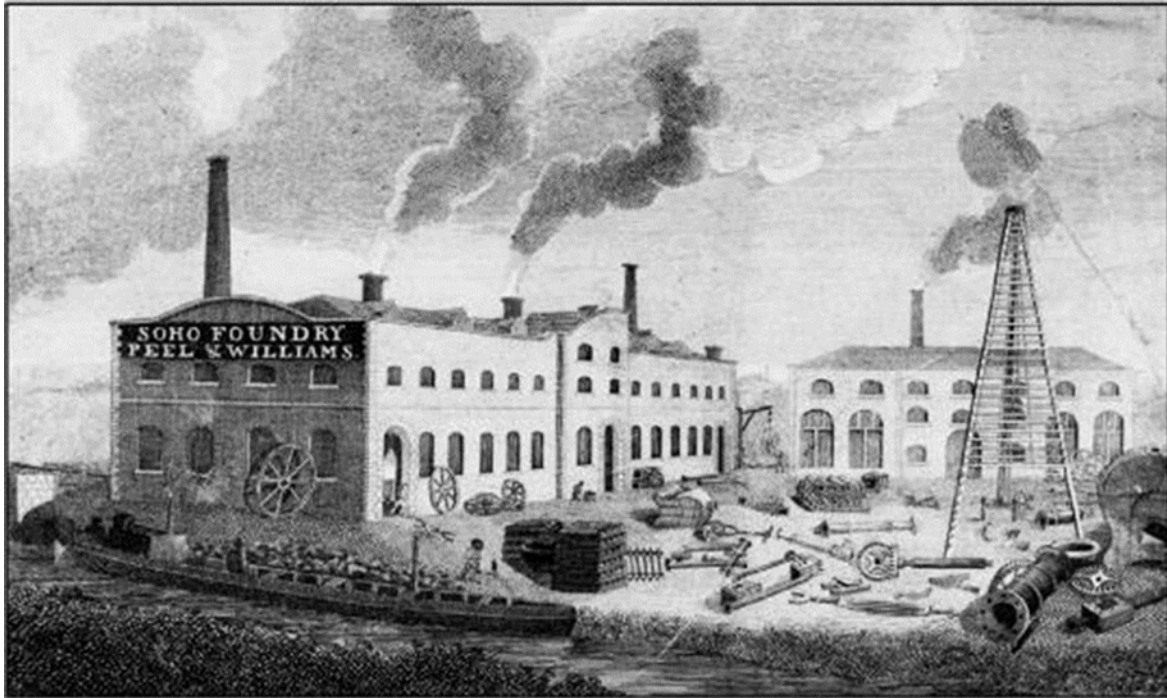


Figure 9: Soho Foundry 1814 (Manchester University Library). A two-storey building can be seen on the far side of Pollard Street, as shown on Swires Map, with Ashton Canal in the foreground.



Figure 10 Pollard Street Mill, Great Ancoats Street, 1825, with Ashton Canal in foreground. The bridge in the foreground is likely to be the same location as the current bridge at Lock 1, carrying what is now Great Ancoats Street; however, both bridge and road have changed significantly since that time.

- 2.52 A second development, the Soho Iron Foundry was established by David Whitehead in the early nineteenth century. The foundry contained air-furnaces, cupolas, stoves, cranes, a smithy, finisher's shop, patternmakers' and turners' shop. By 1829, the size of the foundry had doubled, with the expansion named the New Foundry to the northeast of the Soho foundry.



Figure 11: Site imposed on Banks and Co. 1828 map (Manchester University Library). This shows the now constructed Soho Foundry and Pollard St Mill. This also shows housing constructed along Bound Street by this point. Building labelled now as Grey's Cotton Mill is located between Pollard Street and Harrison Street. The area to the north and west of the Site remains undeveloped.

- 2.53 Pollard Street Mill was demolished in 1877, and the land which had housed the mill was then bought by the Manchester Corporation and later redeveloped as a yard (known as Corporation Yard), which remained well into the 20th century. Buildings associated with the yard were constructed to the southwest of the canal branch. During the 20th Century, the yard was used as a stone yard and the associated buildings as stables and offices.

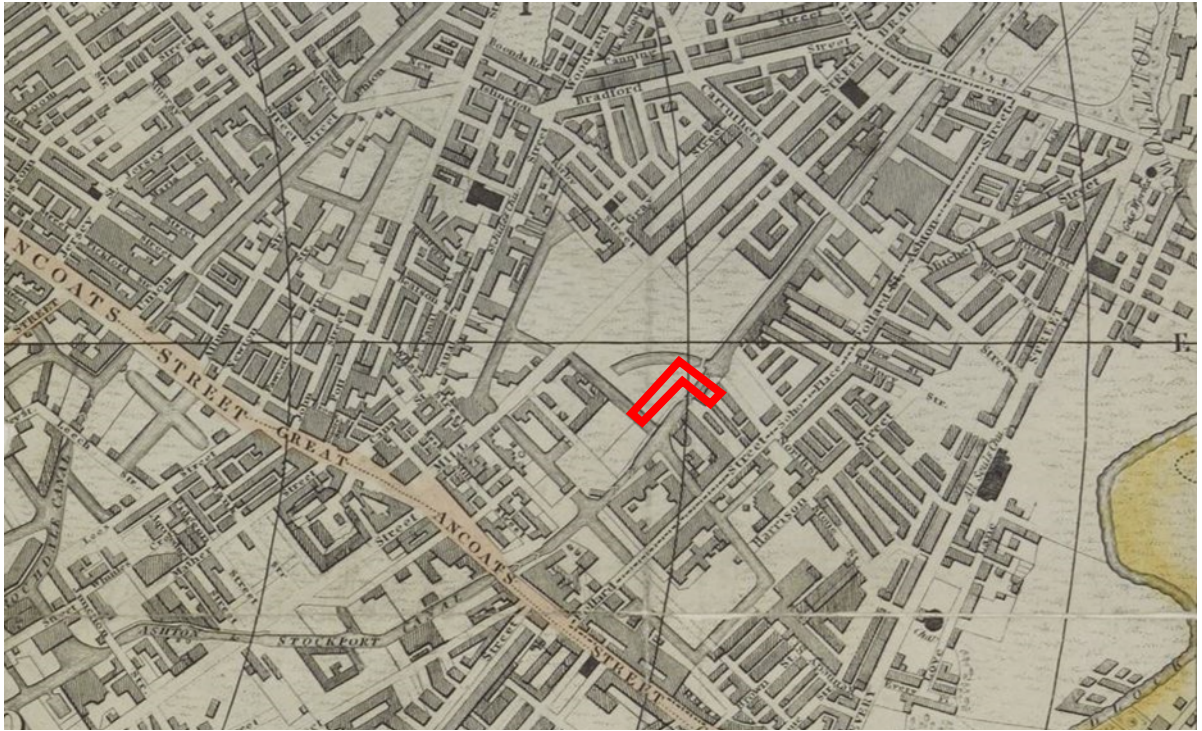


Figure 12. Slater, 1848 (Manchester University Library) As can be seen the area around the Site is now significantly denser. The Lower Ashton Canal Branch to the north has been constructed by this stage, and a mill constructed alongside. However, the area to the north remains undeveloped, and would remain so until the 1860s when it was earmarked for the development of the Ancoats Dispensary.

- 2.54 By 1888, the original Soho Factory had been divided and sold – in use by Union Alkali Co., and the New Foundry was occupied by a cotton waste and rag dealer. The two firms continued to occupy the Soho Works into the twentieth century.

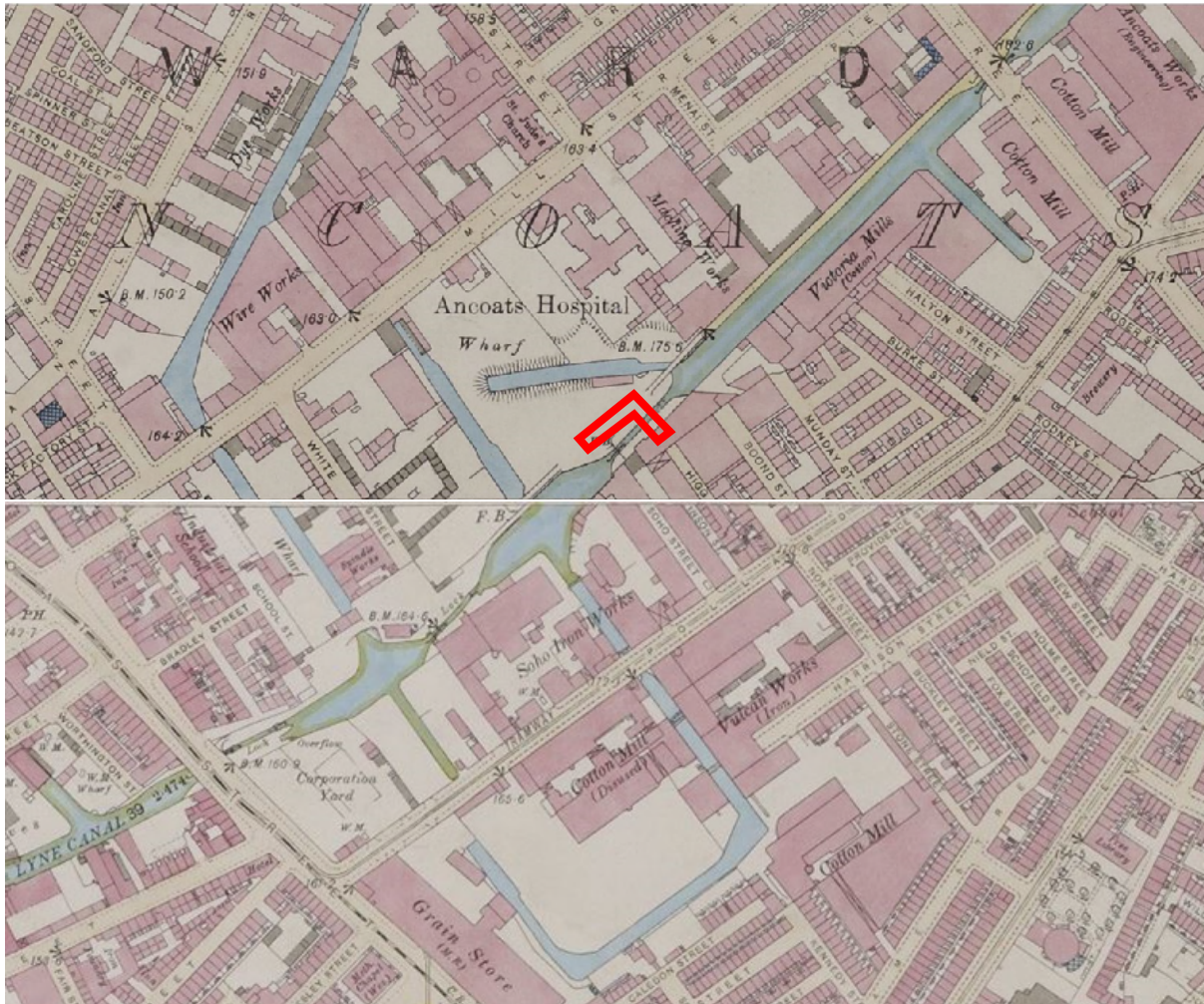


Figure 13 Ordnance Survey 1:2500 county series. Lancashire. 1893 (Manchester University Library) Many of the buildings south of site have been demolished by this stage, replaced by the Corporation Yard. However, the Islington Canal arm is still marked, albeit it has likely been filled in as indicated by the green boundary; the Soho Foundry Canal Arm appears to be partially filled in. To the north of the Site there is now significantly more development, most notably the Ancoats Hospital, which started life as the Ardwick and Ancoats Dispensary (opened in 1828) and moved to Mill Street in 1869. The move to new larger premises in Mill Street in 1873 allowed for the provision of beds and the transition from dispensary to hospital. By this stage the Ancoats area was densely populated: principally comprising Irish labourers and textile workers, and the hospital offered public health services to this very deprived group, demonstrating wider recognition of the importance of public health for even the poorest in society.

- 2.55 The coming of the Railway Age saw a loss of trade for the canals. Large quantities of coal and other goods were still being carried on the canal up until the first decades of the twentieth century, but the smaller mines became unproductive or suffered subsidence and closed. The textile industry was also beginning a decline. The quantity of goods carried on the Ashton Canal fell from 50,000 tons in 1933 to just 7 tons in 1955
- 2.56 Many of the buildings associated with the Soho Works were adapted for other purposes during the first half of the twentieth century, whereas others were demolished. During the 1970s, several of the buildings remained extant, with the final buildings removed during the 1990s.

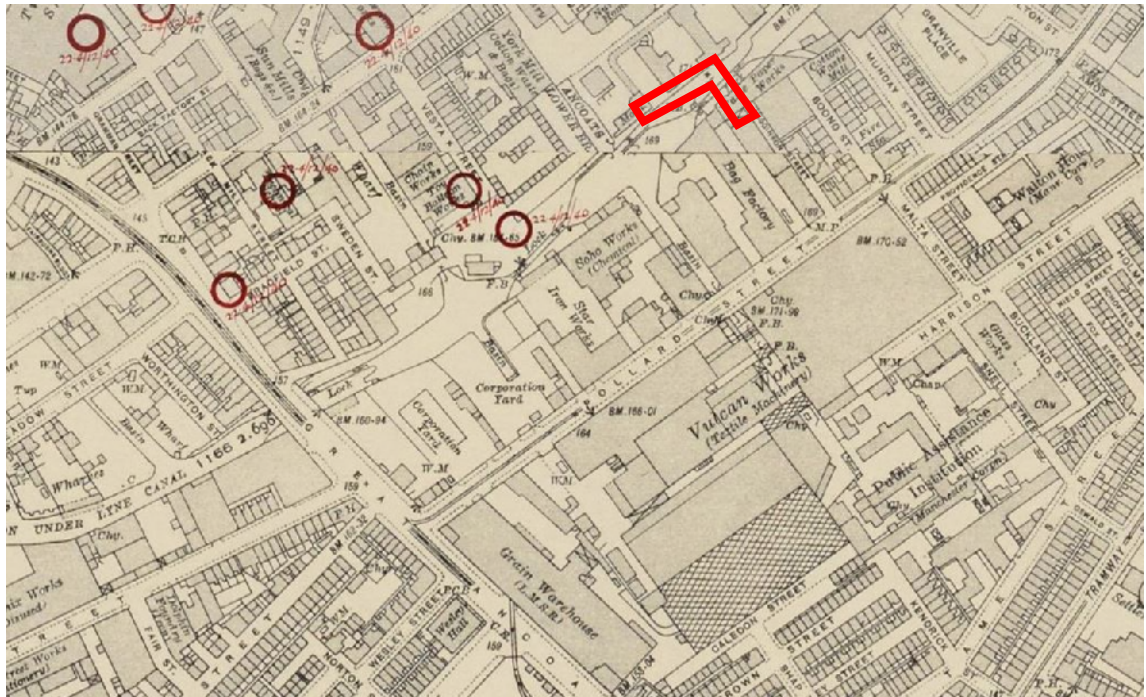


Figure 14. Bomb Damage Map, 1941 (Manchester University Library). As shown, the Site did not suffer bombing during the war, although several nearby buildings on the opposite side of the Ashton Canal were hit. As shown, the area around the Site is significantly less densely built up than it was through the 19th Century. The Upper Ashton Canal arm has been filled in by this stage to allow for the extension to the Ancoats Dispensary building. The Vulcan Works site has expanded further still, to its modern-day scale and it appears that the Co-operative Warehouse has been fully constructed.



Figure 15: View looking south east toward Soho Foundry and Corporation Yard in 1960, with Lock 2 in foreground (Manchester City Council Libraries). Again, the area around site is clearly still dominated by industrial uses, densely packed onto the canal side. The chimney of the New Foundry can be seen in the background, and Vulcan Mills in the back right



Figure 16: Ashton Canal lock number 2 in the 1960s (Manchester City Council Libraries). As shown, the area is still primarily occupied by industrial and ex-industrial buildings. Ancoats Dispensary can be glimpsed back and centre of the frame. However, these buildings are clearly already in decline and underutilised, and the canal side is overgrown, with only a small undefined towpath cleared through.



Figure 17. Soho Foundry Wall, 1960, with Lock 2 in foreground (Manchester City Council Libraries) As can be seen, much of the structure here can still be viewed today, and is one of the few remaining elements of the industrial buildings which previously defined the context of the canal. However, the buildings in the background, likely the remaining elements of Soho Foundry, have since been demolished.



Figure 18: Looking North east along Great Ancoats Street toward the corner of Pollard Street in 1960 (Manchester City Council), showing the wall of Corporation Yard, and the bridge over Ashton Canal in the foreground carrying Great Ancoats Street, which by this point is as it exists in modern day.



Figure 19 The Site in 1962, (Manchester City Council Libraries). Looking east from the Canal towpath toward Lock 3. As shown the area surrounding site is still occupied by industrial uses at this stage, and is densely built along the canal side, however by this stage the canal had become rather unkempt. Many of the industrial buildings would be demolished in the following decade.

- 2.57 By the 1950s, commercial traffic had deserted the canal, which fell derelict in the ensuing decade. Some local people campaigned for its closure on safety grounds, while its owners wanted to be rid of the expense of maintenance. It was threatened with abandonment and infilling in 1961, when a pioneering pleasure cruiser made a passage with great difficulty.
- 2.58 Attempts to save the canal were not helped by a leak in 1964 which rendered it impassable, or the somewhat unsavoury reputation it had gained from bisecting some of the less picturesque elements of a major conurbation.
- 2.59 But volunteers had seen the canal's potential as a crucial link in the 'Cheshire Ring', a boating circuit taking in six canals through beautiful countryside, bustling Manchester, and market towns like Congleton and Macclesfield. In 1964, the Peak Forest Canal Society was formed and, with the Inland Waterways Association, fought to keep the Peak Forest and Ashton Canals open and to restore them.

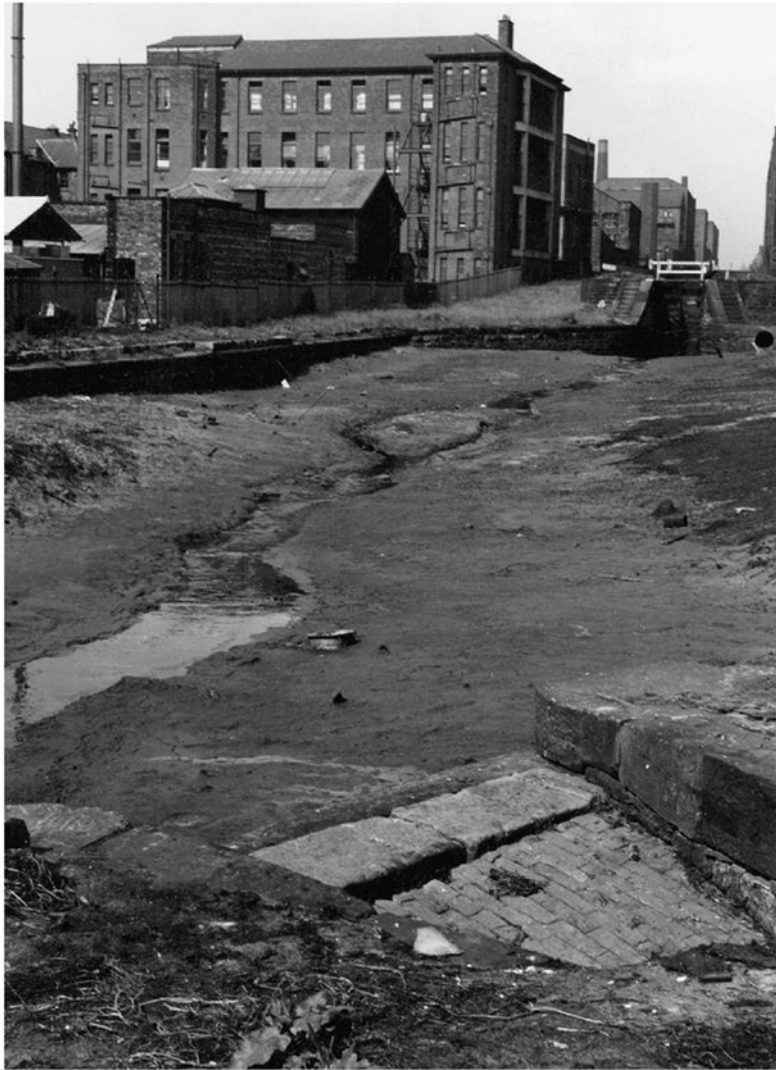


Figure 20; Ashton Canal viewed looking east, 1962, with Lock 3 in the back right of the frame (Manchester Libraries Collection). Ancoats Dispensary can be seen in the background. This image clearly shows the state of disrepair the canal had fallen into, and its impassibility.

- 2.60 In 1968, 600 volunteers cleared 2,000 tons of rubbish from the section of Ashton Canal between Clayton and Droylsden. Unhappily, this action was condemned by the Droylsden Council, who preferred to see the canal closed and culverted.
- 2.61 The Council believed the cost of culverting the 6.75 miles of canal to be £90,000. However, when a 3 mile stretch of the Rochdale Canal was culverted the cost turned out to be £400,000, which would suggest the cost of culverting the Ashton Canal to be nearer a million, prompting the council to abandon the plans and the canal was left open but unimproved.
- 2.62 Having been left to further decline, it wasn't until 1971 that the canal was given a reprieve and restoration was approved. In 1972, a thousand volunteers from all over the country descended on the canal, carting away the decade's worth of rubbish that had collected.
- 2.63 Over the next two years with volunteer help and mechanical plant, the whole canal was cleared and restored. It was re-opened for navigation in April 1978. However, although this specific stretch had been significantly improved, its various branches - such as one to Stockport - remained derelict and were eventually built over.

- 2.64 Since this clear up operation, the use of the canal network for leisure has developed and Canal-side properties are being redeveloped. Piccadilly Village project opened alongside the canal further west, and this has been followed by significant regeneration in New Islington, including Chips Building and Milliners Warf which have transformed the canal side. Other recent development in the immediate Site area is also comprised of mainly residential buildings, most significantly the redevelopment of New Islington Marina. The surrounding area is relatively densely built up, with surrounding buildings generally 5 storeys or taller.



Figure 21: New Islington Redevelopment (Urban Splash, 2021): The high levels of new development to the north of the Site are clear in this image, as is the significant improvement to the appearance and usability of the canal side on the Marina for residents – with new paved paths, planting and bridges creating an enjoyable waterside public space. As demonstrated, while the canal has been retained, the historic nature of the area has changed significantly, dominated now by very modern architecture.



Figure 22: New development, most significantly the 'Chips' Building adjacent to the Site (Authors Own, 2021).

- 2.65 This series of higher-density mixed-use residential neighbourhoods extend east along the canal corridors within the Alan Turing Way intermediate ring road, acting as a natural extension of the city centre and supporting a greater range of households and neighbourhood uses. As such, this has developed the Site surrounds into an area with a mix of converted warehouses mixed with newer, more contemporary style commercial and residential developments.
- 2.66 On the adjacent side of the canal, the brownfield Site, now the General Projects Pollard Street Site, was hoarded up until the tramlines arrived in 2012. Following this the Site was opened to the public and has since been used as a public amenity space over the past 8 years, and as discussed now has planning permission for a new office led, mixed use development.
- 2.67 However, despite the significant levels of new development, the area's industrial past can still be read in the buildings that remain in the area from 18th the 19th centuries. In particular the canal and its infrastructure are relatively untouched, offering a strong visual link to Manchester's industrial roots.

3. Policy and Guidance

The Planning (Listed building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- 3.1 There are 7 listed buildings within a notional 250m radius of the of the Proposed Development as set out in Section 4 of this report. Section 66 of the Act requires the Local Planning Authority to ‘have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses’ when considering whether to grant planning permission.
- 3.2 The Site is not within a Conservation Area, and the nearest Conservation Area – Ancoats Conservation Area - is c.400m away from the Site.

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021)

- 3.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and articulates the priorities of The Plan for Growth within planning policy. It was originally published in 2012 and was most recently updated in February July 2021.
- 3.4 The NPPF introduces a 'presumption' in favour of sustainable development and supports proposals that are in accordance with policies in an up-to-date Development Plan. Sustainable development is about growth which supports economic, environmental, and social progress for existing and future generations.
- 3.5 Section 6 (paragraphs 81 to 85) is titled ‘Building a strong, competitive economy’. It emphasises the Government’s commitment to support economic growth, including that the planning system should help create conditions in which businesses can thrive.
- 3.6 Section 12 (paragraphs 126 to 136) is titled ‘Achieving well-designed places. It states creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Conversely, where the design of a significant weight should be given to:
 - a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or
 - b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.
- 3.7 Section 16 (paragraphs 189 to 208) is titled ‘Conserving and enhancing the historic environment’. Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. When determining a planning application, the local planning authority should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhance the significance of heritage assets and consider if a new development makes a positive contribution to the local character and distinctiveness.
- 3.8 A heritage asset is defined as a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage assets includes designated heritage assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing). A designated heritage asset is defined as a World Heritage Site, Scheduled

Monument, listed building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.

- 3.9 Paragraph 194 states that applicants should describe the significance of any heritage asset affected, including any contribution made by their setting. It goes on to state that 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 the asset's significance.
- 3.10 The NPPF defines significance as "the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting" (NPPF, Annex 2).
- 3.11 Paragraph 197 states that in determining planning applications, local authorities are required to take account of:
 - the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation.
 - the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to the sustainable communities including the economic vitality; and
 - the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 3.12 The NPPF stresses that 'great weight' should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets (NPPF paragraph 199), emphasising the need to avoid substantial harm, in terms of demolition, alteration or the compromise of an asset's setting.
- 3.13 The NPPF requires any harm or loss to have clear and convincing justification, with substantial harm to or loss of a Grade II listed building or registered Park and garden to be the exception and any substantial harm to Grade I or II* listed buildings and registered Parks and gardens to be wholly exceptional.
- 3.14 Less than substantial harm to any designated heritage assets must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing the asset's optimum viable use. The fundamental objective is to ensure that the balance of the impact on the heritage assets is demonstrably beneficial, minimising any negative impact on their significance.
- 3.15 The NPPF defines setting at Annex 2 as:

"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."
- 3.16 Paragraph 203 also requires the effect on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset to be considered during determination, with a balanced judgement required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss of the significance of the asset.
- 3.17 In regard to the setting of heritage assets, the NPPF directs local authorities to look for opportunities for new development which enhance or better reveal their significance. Paragraph 206 states that: "proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to (or better reveal the significance) of the asset should be treated favourably".

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- 3.18 Sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 note that when making a decision on all listed building consent applications or any decision on a planning application for development that affects a listed building or its setting, a local planning authority must have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Preservation in this context means not harming the interest in the building, as opposed to keeping it utterly unchanged.
- 3.19 This is supported by NPPF Paragraphs 183-199; where it is noted that ‘These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.’

National Planning Guidance

National Planning Policy Guidance

- 3.20 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was introduced in March 2014 as a live web-based resource to support the NPPF and is regularly updated. It brings together planning practice guidance for England in an accessible and usable way and is a material consideration in assessing this application.
- 3.21 The PPG recognises that the conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance is a core planning principle, requiring a flexible and thoughtful approach to get the best out of assets. It states that ‘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’.
- 3.22 In considering the setting of a heritage asset, PPG considers that a thorough assessment should be ‘proportionate to the significance of the heritage asset under consideration and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it’.
- 3.23 PPG acknowledges that substantial harm is a high test, and that it is the degree of harm to the significance of an asset, rather than the scale of the development, which is to be assessed.

Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets (2019)

- 3.24 This Historic England advice note covers the National Planning Policy Framework requirement for applicants, where relevant, to describe heritage significance to help local planning authorities to make decisions on the impact of proposals for change to heritage assets.
- 3.25 The guidance suggests a staged approach to decision making in regard to heritage assets would usually embrace the following stages, informed by the scope of the proposal:
- Understand the form, materials and history of the affected heritage asset(s), and/or the nature and extent of archaeological deposits.
 - Understand the significance of the asset(s).
 - These two stages fulfil the requirement in paragraph 189 of the NPPF and are undertaken by the applicant.
 - Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance.
 - This stage fulfils the requirement in paragraph 190 of the NPPF and is undertaken by the LPA. However, the applicant needs to be aware of impacts so that the analysis of significance submitted to the LPA, under paragraph 189, is sufficient in its level of detail.

- Avoid, minimise and mitigate negative impact, in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF.
- Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance.

Local Policy

3.26 The Manchester Core Strategy was adopted in July 2012 and is the key, overarching DPD within the LDF. The Core Strategy has replaced significant elements of the Manchester UDP as the document that sets out the long-term strategic policies for Manchester's future development and forms the framework that planning applications will be assessed against.

3.27 The key policy from a heritage perspective is Policy EN3 - Heritage:

Policy EN3 Heritage - Throughout the City, 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.

3.28 In addition, the following saved UDP policies are relevant to the development proposals for the Site:

Citywide Development Control Policies DC18.1 (Conservation Areas) and DC19.1 (Listed Buildings); and Saved UDP Policy DC18.1 (Conservation Areas) sets out to encourage and help ensure the protection, preservation and enhancement of the City's Conservation Areas, which it recognises as areas of special character representing the rise and development of Manchester as the world's first industrial city. The policy states that the protection of such areas helps stimulate local pride, and encourages both tourism and further investment, and recognises the Local Planning Authority's obligations under statute to give particular attention to the quality of developments within Conservation Areas.

Saved UDP Policy DC19.1 (Listed Buildings) aims to ensure the protection of the City's built character and its heritage. The policy states that retention and protection of this character is important in encouraging local pride, tourism and future investment in the city. It recognises that listed buildings can present particular problems in respect of their continuing use. A flexible approach will be taken in determining applications for uses in listed buildings. The policy gives effect to the obligation placed on the Council by statute to give particular attention to retain, restore, maintain and continue uses in listed buildings in Manchester.

4. Scoping of Assets

Introduction

- 4.1 The first step in scoping the heritage assets that may be impacted by the proposed development is to understand the zone of potential impact. This can be done by undertaking site visits and utilising 'Visual influence' mapping tools. Once the zone is understood, all the heritage assets within this zone can be identified.
- 4.2 The setting of these assets must also be identified and understood. As set out in 'The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition)' by Historic England, "*setting is not itself a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, although land comprising a setting may itself be designated. Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset or to the ability to appreciate that significance*". In this regard an appropriate second step is to identify the setting of the assets and understand whether there is any potential for this to be impacted.
- 4.3 Where there is absolutely no potential for impact (usually because the asset along with its setting, and the Proposed Development, cannot be viewed or understood at the same time, or the scale of the development is unlikely to have even an intangible impact), assets can be discounted from further assessment.
- 4.4 Following the scoping exercise, the next step is to undertake more detailed analysis of the significance of the identified assets, specifically the contribution setting makes to that significance. Following the identification of assets in this Section of the Heritage Assessment, the significance of these assets is set out in Section 5.
- 4.5 The impact that the proposed development has on the setting and ultimately the significance of the assets, based on the details of Section 4 and 5 and this Report, is assessed in Section 6.

Scoping

- 4.6 A desk-based study was initially used to delineate the zone of visual influence. Given the scale of the Proposed Development, topography and existing development, longer range visual impact will be limited, and a 250m zone of visual influence was therefore used as a starting point. The zone is shown in Figure 23.
- 4.7 The 'Search the List – Map Search' by Historic England was utilised in conjunction with the zone of visual influence to understand which identified heritage assets may be visible. The assets that have been identified as having the potential to be impacted by the proposals are set out below:
 1. Ashton Canal Lock Number 3 on South Side of Ancoats Hospital – Grade II
 2. Ashton Canal Lock Number 2 Off South End of Vesta Street – Grade II
 3. Ashton Canal Lock Keepers Cottage beside Lock Number 2 at Islington Branch Junction Basin – Grade II
 4. Ashton Canal Towpath Bridge Over Junction with Islington Branch Canal West of Lock Number 2 – Grade II
 5. Ashton Canal Lock Number 1 Immediately East of Great Ancoats Street – Grade II
 6. Cooperative Warehouse – Grade II

7. Bridge Number 4 over Ashton Canal – Grade II
 8. Ardwick and Ancoats Hospital – Grade II
- 4.8 Based on the search of the Historic Environment Record and a review of the National Heritage List for England, 8 designated heritage assets have been identified: 8 listed buildings, and no conservation areas.
- 4.9 There is one built non-designated heritage adjacent to the Site – a wall from the former Soho Foundry. Another non-designated heritage asset lies c. 50m from the Site, on Pollard Street – Vulcan Mill.



Figure 23 - Plan identifying the designated heritage assets with the potential to be impacted by the proposals (Author's own, 2021)

Assets Immediately Adjacent to the Site

- 4.10 The following heritage assets are immediately adjacent to the Site as can be seen in Figure 23 and will therefore be taken forward for assessment.
1. Ashton Canal Lock Number 3 on South Side of Ancoats Hospital – Grade II
 2. Ashton Canal Lock Number 2 Off South End of Vesta Street – Grade II
 3. Ashton Canal Lock Keepers Cottage beside Lock Number 2 at Islington Branch Junction Basin – Grade II
 4. Ashton Canal Towpath Bridge Over Junction with Islington Branch Canal West of Lock Number 2 – Grade II
 5. Bridge Number 4 over Ashton Canal – Grade II
 6. Soho Foundry Wall – non-designated asset

- 4.11 A site visit was conducted in April 2021 to further understand the relationship of these identified assets with Site and to scope them in or out for further assessment. This exercise is set out in full below, along with a conclusion of which assets will be taken forward for full impact assessment.

Cooperative Warehouse – Grade II (Asset no. 6)



Figure 24. Cooperative Warehouse looking across the Site (Author, 2020)

- 4.12 The primary historic setting of the co-operative Warehouse is Pollard Street, which was formerly lined with numerous industrial buildings served by a series of cuts from the Ashton Canal. The demolition of many of the adjacent industrial buildings has reduced the contribution of local setting to the assets.
- 4.13 The canal's relationship with Pollard Street is now severed by the Piccadilly – Ashton-under-Lyne Metrolink line and associated infrastructure, including the New Islington Station, and consequently the canal is no longer be considered to form part of the immediate setting for these assets.
- 4.14 Particularly once the General Projects Pollard Street Development is completed, this will be non-existent, and the Cooperative Warehouse will not be visible in the same view with the canal and existing lock.
- 4.15 The asset is therefore not read in the context of site and so this asset has been scoped out of further consideration.

Vulcan Mill – Non-designated Heritage Asset



Figure 25. Vulcan Mill looking across the Site (Author, 2020)

- 4.16 The primary historic setting of the Vulcan Mill is Pollard Street, which was formerly lined with numerous industrial buildings served by a series of cuts from the Ashton Canal. The demolition of many of the adjacent industrial buildings has reduced the contribution of local setting to the asset.
- 4.17 The canal's relationship with Pollard Street is now severed by the Piccadilly – Ashton-under-Lyne Metrolink line and associated infrastructure, including the New Islington Station, and consequently the canal is no longer be considered to form part of the immediate setting for these assets. Particularly once the General Projects Pollard Street Development is completed, this will be non-existent, and the Vulcan Mill will not be visible in the same view with the canal.
- 4.18 The Mill is therefore not read in the context of site and so this asset has been scoped out of further consideration.

Ardwick and Ancoats Hospital - Grade II (Asset No. 8)



Figure 26: Asset no. 11 – Ardwick and Ancoats Hospital, on Old Mill Street looking south towards the Site (indicated by red arrow) (Authors Own, 2020)

- 4.19 As shown in Figure 26, the surrounding existing and proposed townscape around Ancoats Dispensary is dense and close. Once construction work is complete, the building will be surrounded by development of part 6 and part 10 storeys (planning application ref. 116190/FO/2017).
- 4.20 It is therefore considered that, due to the tightly packed urban grain, any long-range view of the Site beyond this Grade II asset will be very limited, and for this reason this asset has been scoped out of further consideration.

Bridge Number 5 Over Ashton Canal – Grade II (Asset No. 8)



Figure 27. Asset no. 8 - Bridge Number 5 Over Ashton Canal looking North West away from the Site (Authors Own, 2020)

- 4.21 It is considered that, as seen in Figure 27, the bridge is read only in the context of its immediate surroundings; the canal & road. Although the Site is also located on the Ashton canal, as the asset is c. 450m further along it, dense existing and proposed development will, and does limit the relationship with Site.
- 4.22 The bridge is therefore not read in the context of site and so this asset has been scoped out of further consideration.

Summary

- 4.23 In summary the following heritage assets will be taken forward for assessment:
1. Ashton Canal Lock Number 3 on South Side of Ancoats Hospital – Grade II
 2. Ashton Canal Lock Number 2 Off South End of Vesta Street – Grade II
 3. Ashton Canal Lock Keepers Cottage beside Lock Number 2 at Islington Branch Junction Basin – Grade II
 4. Ashton Canal Towpath Bridge Over Junction with Islington Branch Canal West of Lock Number 2 – Grade II
 5. Ashton Canal Lock Number 1 Immediately East of Great Ancoats Street – Grade II
 6. Bridge Number 4 over Ashton Canal – Grade II
- 4.24 In addition, the following non designated heritage assets will be taken forward for assessment:

- Soho Foundry Wall – non-designated asset

4.25 Assets numbers 1-4 – the locks, the canal keeper’s cottage, and the towpath bridge – will be assessed collectively as a set piece, due to the significance of the group.

5. Assessment of Significance

- 5.1 This Section describes the significance of the heritage assets identified in Section 4, and where relevant, what contribution their setting makes to this significance. This assessment is proportionate to both the significance of the relevant heritage assets and the potential impact on their significance.

Ashton Canal Lock Number 3 on South Side of Ancoats Hospital –Grade II (Asset No. 1)

- 5.2 Ashton Canal Lock Number 3 is a Grade II Listed asset, and the description on the register is as follows:

Canal lock. c.1792-1799, for Manchester and Ashton-under-Lyne Canal Company; renovated. Large blocks of millstone grit, wooden gates. Narrow type (chamber 7 feet wide), with covered overflow channel on south side; stone staircases flanking lower entry at west end, convex curved retaining wall at east end of south side. Third in a series of 13 similar locks, all in working order



Figure 28: Lock Number 3 (Authors Own, 2020)



Figure 29: Lock Number 3 (Authors Own 2020)

Significance

- 5.3 The lock is listed as a part of Ashton Canal's overall infrastructure. It is significant in its own right as representative of this and the canal itself, but it has greater significance as part of the overall group of other canal infrastructure (bridges, tunnels etc).
- 5.4 The steps are particularly visible due to the long stretch of towpath on the western approach and have been retained in their original condition.(Figure 30).
- 5.5 The lock therefore has moderate to high historical significance, but relatively low architectural significance, being of functional construction. Nevertheless, it represents an early example of canal infrastructure.



Figure 30 Lock Number 3 (Authors Own 2020)

Contribution of Setting to the Significance

- 5.6 This asset has moderate to high historical significance in its own right as representative of Ashton Canal's overall infrastructure. The historical significance of the assets are enhanced when they are considered as part of an overall group of other canal infrastructure (bridges, tunnels etc), on this part of the canal, as can be seen in Figure 30
- 5.7 The primary setting of the Grade II listed asset is the canal itself and associated towpath, which contribute highly to its significance when viewed from the canal.
- 5.8 However, the immediate setting of the canal has changed, and it sits adjacent to the new Chips development, and close proximity to Millner's Warf which has detracted from the historic setting. In addition, the General Projects development will notably change the setting on the opposite canal bank once completed.
- 5.9 Overall, whilst the surrounding canal infrastructure adds to the significance, due to the impact of the predominance of modern development, the setting makes only a moderate contribution to the significance of the assets.

Grouped canal infrastructure east of Great Ancoats Street

Ashton Canal Lock Number 1, Immediately East of Great Ancoats Street – Grade II (Asset no. 5)

5.10 Ashton Canal Lock Number 1 is a Grade II Listed asset, and the description on the register is as follows:

Canal lock. c.1792-1799; altered. Large blocks of millstone grit, wooden gates. Narrow type (chamber 7 feet wide), with overflow channel on south side, central island with curved taper at both ends; stone staircases flanking lower entry at west end. First in a series of 13 similar locks, all in working order.



Figure 31. Lock Number 1 (Authors Own, 2020)

Significance

- 5.11 The lock is listed as a part of Ashton Canal's overall infrastructure. It is significant in its own right as representative of this and the canal itself, but it has greater significance as part of the overall group of other canal infrastructure (bridges, tunnels etc.). As discussed in Section 2, the canal infrastructure is at the heart of the industrial heritage of the surrounding area.
- 5.12 The lock therefore has moderate historical significance, being a part of the Ashton Canal, but relatively low architectural significance, being of functional construction. It does represent, however, an early example of canal infrastructure.

Ashton Canal Towpath Bridge Over Junction with Islington Branch Canal West of Lock Number 2 – Grade II (Asset no. 4)

5.13 Ashton Canal Lock Number 2 is a Grade II Listed asset, and the description on the register is as follows:

A Canal lock. c.1792-1799, for Manchester and Ashton-Under-Lyne Canal Company; renovated. Large blocks of millstone grit, wooden gates. Narrow type (chamber 7 feet wide), with covered overflow channel on south side;

stone staircases flanking lower entry at west end. Second in a series of 13 similar locks, all in working order. Forms group with former lock-keeper's cottage (q.v.) and bridge over Islington Branch (q.v.).



Figure 32 Canal Towpath Bridge (Authors Own, 2020)

Significance

- 5.14 The bridge is listed as a part of Ashton Canal's overall infrastructure. It is significant in its own right as representative of this and the canal itself, but it has greater significance as part of the overall group of other canal infrastructure (bridges, tunnels etc.), and as part of the smaller local group comprising the former lock-keeper's cottage nearby locks. The Islington Branch of the canal (shown in maps Figure 7, and Figure 8 in Section 2) is largely infilled now so this is historically even more important in highlighting past history and urban form.
- 5.15 The bridge has moderate to high historical significance, being a part of the Ashton Canal, and moderate architectural significance, being of functional construction, yet with pedestrian charm. It represents an early example of canal infrastructure.

Ashton Canal Lock Keepers Cottage beside Lock Number 2 at Islington Branch Junction Basin – Grade II (Asset No. 3)

- 5.16 Ashton Canal Lock Keepers Cottage is a Grade II Listed asset, and the description on the register is as follows:

Lock-keeper's cottage. c.1800, altered. Brown brick in English garden wall bond, slate roof. Rectangular double-depth plan, plus small extension at right-hand corner. Basement and 2 storeys (on sloped site, 3 storeys at rear), a 3-window range; doorway to left of 3rd window, with altered door and painted lintel; windows with raised stone sills and altered glazing, those at ground floor segmental-headed; single-storey lean-to addition at right-hand end. Ridge chimney between 1st and 2nd windows, gable chimney to the right. Right-hand return wall has segmental-headed basement doorway beside lean-to; lower part of rear corner at this end is slightly chamfered and has stone quoin reinforcement against chafing of tow-ropes (tow-path passing round building from lock to bridge); rear has segmental-headed basement doorway near this corner, and 2 widely-spaced windows on each floor.

Interior not inspected. Forms group with Lock No. [2] to east (q.v.) and Towpath Bridge over Islington Branch to west (q.v.).



Figure 33: Lock Keepers Cottage (Authors Own, 2020)



Figure 34: Lock Keepers Cottage viewed looking toward the Site (Authors Own, 2020)

Significance

- 5.17 The cottage is listed as a part of Ashton Canal's overall infrastructure. It is significant in its own right as representative of both this infrastructure, and the canal itself, but it has greater significance as part of the overall group of other canal infrastructure (bridges, tunnels etc.), and as part of the smaller local group comprising the Ashton Canal Lock Number 2 and the towpath bridge over the Islington Branch.

- 5.18 The cottage has moderate to high historical significance, being a part of the Ashton Canal, and moderate architectural significance, as an early example of residential canal infrastructure.

Ashton Canal Lock Number 2 off South End of Vesta Street – Grade II (Asset No. 2)

- 5.19 Ashton Canal Lock Number 2 is a Grade II Listed asset, and the description on the register is as follows:

Canal lock. c.1792-1799, for Manchester and Ashton-under-Lyne Canal Company; renovated. Large blocks of millstone grit, wooden gates. Narrow type (chamber 7 feet wide), with covered overflow channel on south side; stone staircases flanking lower entry at west end. Second in a series of 13 similar locks, all in working order. Forms group with former lock-keeper's cottage (q.v.) and bridge over Islington Branch (q.v.).



Figure 35: Lock Number 2 (Authors Own, 2020)

Significance

- 5.20 The lock is listed as a part of the Ashton Canal's overall infrastructure. It is significant in its own right as representative of this and the canal itself, but it has greater significance as part of the overall group of other canal infrastructure (bridges, tunnels etc.), and as part of the smaller local group comprising the former lock-keeper's cottage and the towpath bridge over the Islington Branch. As discussed in Section 2, the canal infrastructure was key to the development of the Site and is at the heart of the industrial heritage of the surrounding area.
- 5.21 The lock has moderate to high historical significance, being a part of the Ashton Canal, but relatively low architectural significance, being of functional construction. It does represent, however, an early example of canal infrastructure.

Contribution of Setting to the Significance of the Assets

- 5.22 As noted, these assets have moderate to high historical significance in their own right as representative of Ashton Canal's overall infrastructure. The historical significance of the assets is enhanced when they are considered as part of an overall group of other canal infrastructure (bridges, tunnels etc.), and as part of a smaller local group.

- 5.23 The primary setting of the Grade II listed building and structures is the canal itself and associated towpaths and other infrastructure, which contribute highly to the group's significance when viewed from the canal.
- 5.24 However, the immediate setting of the canal has changed. As can be seen on the historical maps Figure 7, Figure 8, and Figure 11 two canal arms were previously connected to the basin adjacent to the lock keeper's cottage. These have since been infilled and the canal towpath bridge is an important historical remnant of this. The location of the Soho Foundry branch can still also just be discerned in the infilled wall opposite as per Figure 36.



Figure 36: Location of Soho Foundry Branch (Indicated in red)

- 5.25 In the immediate area to the north and north-east of the assets, the setting is dominated by medium rise high density modern residential development, which does not contribute to the assets' historical or architectural significance.

- 5.26 The mid distance to the south is comprised of the medium rise modern development and heritage assets on Pollard Street, which provide a moderate beneficial contribution to the assets' significance in that they form part of the wider former industrial landscape.
- 5.27 Overall, the setting makes a moderate contribution to the significance of the assets.
- 5.28 The Site makes minimal impact on the setting of this asset as there is a drop in level (at the Lock 2 gates) and so the Site and the asset are not fully intervisible, and the distance between them means they are not appreciated together, with little to link them visually beyond being part of the same branch of the canal.

Soho Foundry Wall – Non-designated Heritage Asset

- 5.29 A wall associated with the former Soho Foundry remains, fronting Ashton canal. This is considered a non-designated heritage asset.
- 5.30 A section of the Foundry was excavated during archaeological investigation in 2011, which revealed the courtyard and partially exposed some of the buildings. It is likely that further buried remains associated with the Soho Foundry exist within the Site.
- 5.31 After a site visit undertaken September 2019, Salford Archaeology described the Site as below:

The remains take the form of an L-shaped wall with several arched windows and a blocked central doorway. From the opposite side of the canal, a small building adjoining the remains can be seen, to which the doorway would have given access. From the north side of the canal, several phases of activity can be seen within the canal wall, which may relate to phases associated with the mill and foundry.



Figure 37. Wall of Soho Foundry with Gatekeeper's Lodge (Authors Own, 2020)

Significance

- 5.32 This wall formed a part of the Soho Foundry (full history of this discussed in Section 2) and is now the only remaining above ground element of this structure, and therefore the remaining physical representation to the industrial history of the Site. This significance is magnified when considered alongside the canal infrastructure.
- 5.33 The wall is of moderate historical significance and of low architectural significance.

Contribution of Setting to the Assets Significance

- 5.34 This asset has moderate historical significance, being representative of the industrial heritage of the Site. However much of the historical significance has been lost as the rest of the building has been fully demolished, or buried, as were the immediately adjacent industrial buildings.
- 5.35 In the immediate area to the north and north-east of the assets, the setting is dominated by medium rise high density modern residential development, which make no contribution to the asset's historical or architectural significance.
- 5.36 The mid distance to the south is comprised of the medium rise modern development and heritage assets of Pollard Street, which provide a moderate beneficial contribution to the assets' significance in that they form part of the wider former industrial landscape.
- 5.37 Overall, the setting makes a low positive contribution to the significance of the asset.
- 5.38 Again, the Site makes minimal impact to the setting of this asset as the distance between them means they are not appreciated together - and this is appreciated as part of the Lock 2 Grouping. The high levels of shrub along the canal bank means the asset is not fully intervisible with the Site.

Bridge Number 4 Over Ashton Canal – Grade II (Asset No. 7)

- 5.39 The Bridge is a Grade II Listed asset, and the description on the register is as follows:

Public road bridge over Ashton Canal. Probably c.1800. Red brick in English garden wall bond, cast-iron, and sandstone. Narrow rectangular structure across canal waisted to width of lock. Short horizontal span between vertical end walls of brick abutments, which have rounded sandstone corners with block capitals, carrying cast-iron beams (and probably flagstone flooring); broad pilasters at each end; simple moulded cornice, parapet of 2 courses of massive dressed blocks.



Figure 38: Bridge Number 4 Over Ashton Canal (Authors Own, 2020)

Significance

- 5.40 The bridge is listed as a part of Ashton Canal's overall infrastructure. It is significant in its own right as representative of this and the canal itself, but it has greater significance as part of the overall group of other canal infrastructure (bridges, tunnels etc).
- 5.41 The bridge therefore has moderate to high historical significance, but relatively low architectural significance, being of functional construction. Nevertheless, it represents an early example of canal infrastructure.

Contribution of Setting to the Assets' Significance

- 5.42 The primary setting of the Grade II listed asset is the canal itself and associated towpath, which contribute highly to its significance when viewed from the canal.
- 5.43 However, the immediate setting of the canal has changed, including newer residential developments replacing warehouses overlooking the canal, which has detracted from the historic setting.
- 5.44 Overall, the setting makes a moderate contribution to the significance of the assets.
- 5.45 The Site makes minimal impact on the setting of this asset as there is a drop in level (at the Lock 2 gates) and so the Site and the asset are not fully intervisible, and the distance between them means they are not appreciated together, with little to link them visually beyond being part of the same branch of the canal.

6. Assessment of Impact

- 6.1 This Section assesses the impact that the Proposed Development has on the significance of the identified heritage assets.

The Proposed Development

- 6.2 The Proposed Development comprises the erection of a new walking and cycling bridge to connect both sides of the Ashton Canal in line with guidance on accessibility and transport. It is proposed in order to facilitate better connections needed as a result of recent and planned activity taking place in the area. It is a critical connection for the aspirational Beelines network and Strategic Regeneration Frameworks relevant to the area³.
- 6.3 The bridge design must be fully accessible for all pedestrians and those with mobility requirements in line with both local and national policy. The bridge will enhance connections for pedestrians, cyclists and provide access for all between New Islington and Ancoats, and areas to the north and east such as Holt Town and the Etihad, as well as providing onward connections into the City Centre.

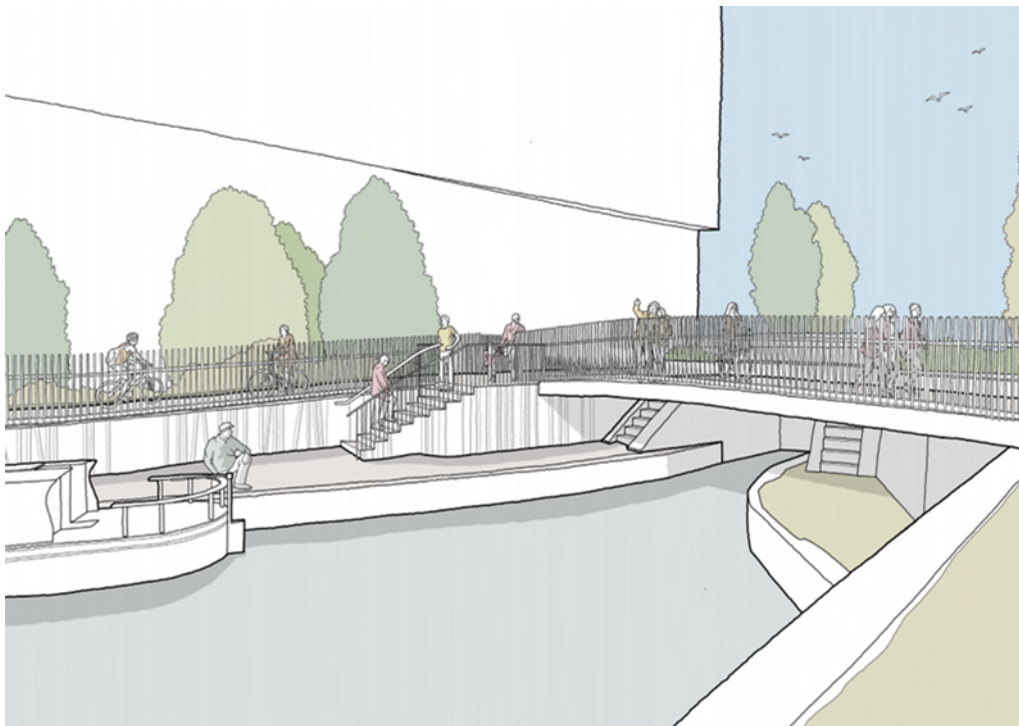


Figure 39: Proposed bridge (Hawkins Brown, 2021)

- 6.4 The Site is very constrained, with a minimal area to ramp up to the required minimum height from the south-west side. The Canal and River Trust advised that there is a minimum requirement of 2.12m clear height from the water level to the soffit to the underside of the bridge.

³ These include the endorsed Eastland Regeneration Framework (1999, 2008, 2011, 2017); the TfGM Beelines Initiative; and the Ancoats and New Islington Regeneration Framework (2016, 2020). Please see the planning Statement submitted with this application for further detail on these.

- 6.5 There are a number of pinch points that require full-time access, with a blind spot on the corner of the nursery outdoor space exacerbating this tight junction, where people will be travelling to and from in multiple directions. This has significantly influenced the design and shape of the bridge.
- 6.6 In addition, there is an existing level difference along the towpath at this location. The towpath rises towards the northeast above the canal, and the lowest point is towards the open space around the entrance to New Islington Marina, which again has required a longer ramp on the Islington Marina side. The proposed bridge aims to utilise this level difference to minimise the impact of the bridge on the surrounding area, as the ramp would follow the same level change as the existing towpath, as shown in Figure 39.
- 6.7 Lock number 3 has been a key consideration in both location and design of the bridge. The proposed bridge seeks to balance any harm to the listed lock whilst maximising the view of the historic structure, particularly the lock steps and gates, and improving the user experience of the lock setting.
- 6.8 The canal edge is emphasised and highlighted by the ramped approach, which follows the canal coping stones up to the mooring area. The proposed steps to the mooring area echo and mirror the lock steps orientation, while the bridge deck has been optimised to be as slender as possible and maximise the view of the lock and gates, especially for canal users (see Figure 39).
- 6.9 Materiality of the proposed bridge was also a key consideration – as part of the materiality study, traditional UK canal bridges were analysed and a number of material strategies were found that are used across canal bridges in the north-west, including ornamental balustrading with contrasting colours; exposure the structural member to accentuate this; and regular, permeable structures with often contextual colour to create a more lightweight appearance. This exploration is detailed in full in the Design and Access Statement submitted with this application. These key features are referenced in the design, to create a link with historic canal crossings, and to make the bridge as unobtrusive as possible.

Design Process

- 6.10 Initial design concept and structural work had been undertaken early in 2021 by Wilde Consultants Ltd to determine the preferred location and trajectory of the crossing, as well as an early proposal for the design. A number of locations and options were considered (see DAS for full details of this process). The chosen location was considered to work best with surrounding public footpaths; and to require the shortest expanse of bridge due to the relatively narrow width of this point on the canal. In addition, locating the bridge at this point will have lesser impact on the overall heritage significance of the canal as this option has moved further from the Lock 2 grouping, which includes the Lockkeepers Cottage, and the towpath bridge, and instead minimises any perceived harm to just one asset.
- 6.11 Hawkins\Brown undertook a review of the previous design work completed by Wilde, alongside the feedback received, to distil the key design criteria from stakeholder feedback, including both TfGM and Canal & River Trust's perspectives, and in order to understand the opportunities and constraints for the Site and project, as well as recognising the sensitive setting and stakeholder ambitions.
- 6.12 One of the key changes from this review was to alter the design to maximise visibility of the lock and emphasise alignment by raising the height of the centre of the bridge, referencing traditional humped canal bridges; and to lift the bridge away from listed lock to ensure adequate clearance from the lock steps and wall without creating 'dead' space, demonstrated in the 'Section analysis' in the DAS. Similarly, refinements have been made to the materiality and balustrade to create a modern and contextually appropriate bridge.

Assessment of Impact

- 6.13 A number of CGIs and illustrative images of the proposed development taken from different points around the Site have been provided (Figure 40). These images are useful in assessing the impact on

the identified heritage assets because they show the Site and relevant heritage assets in relation to their context and wider area.

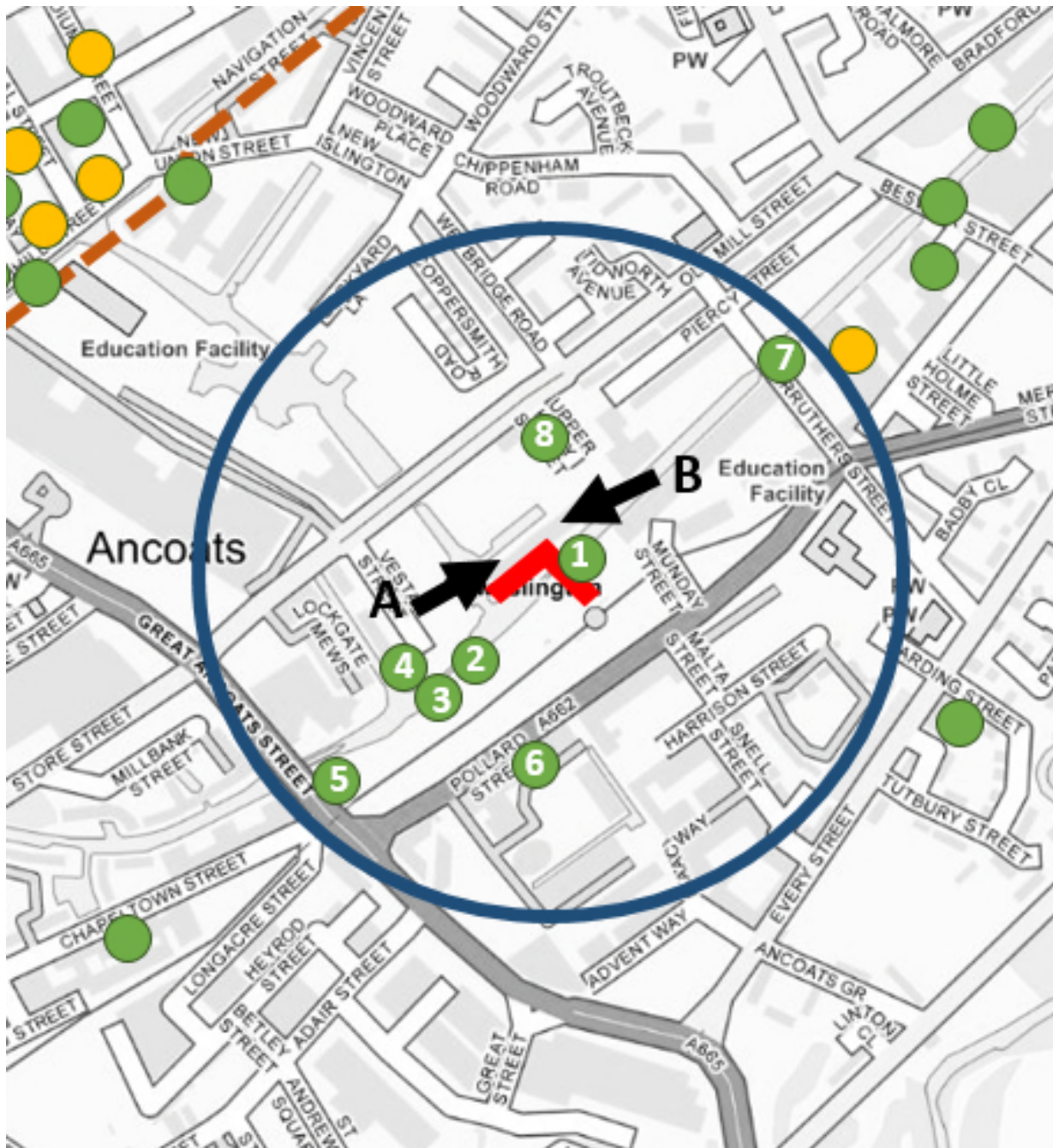


Figure 40: Plan identifying the CGI and image locations assets (Author, 2021)

Looking east along Ashton Canal (Arrow A)

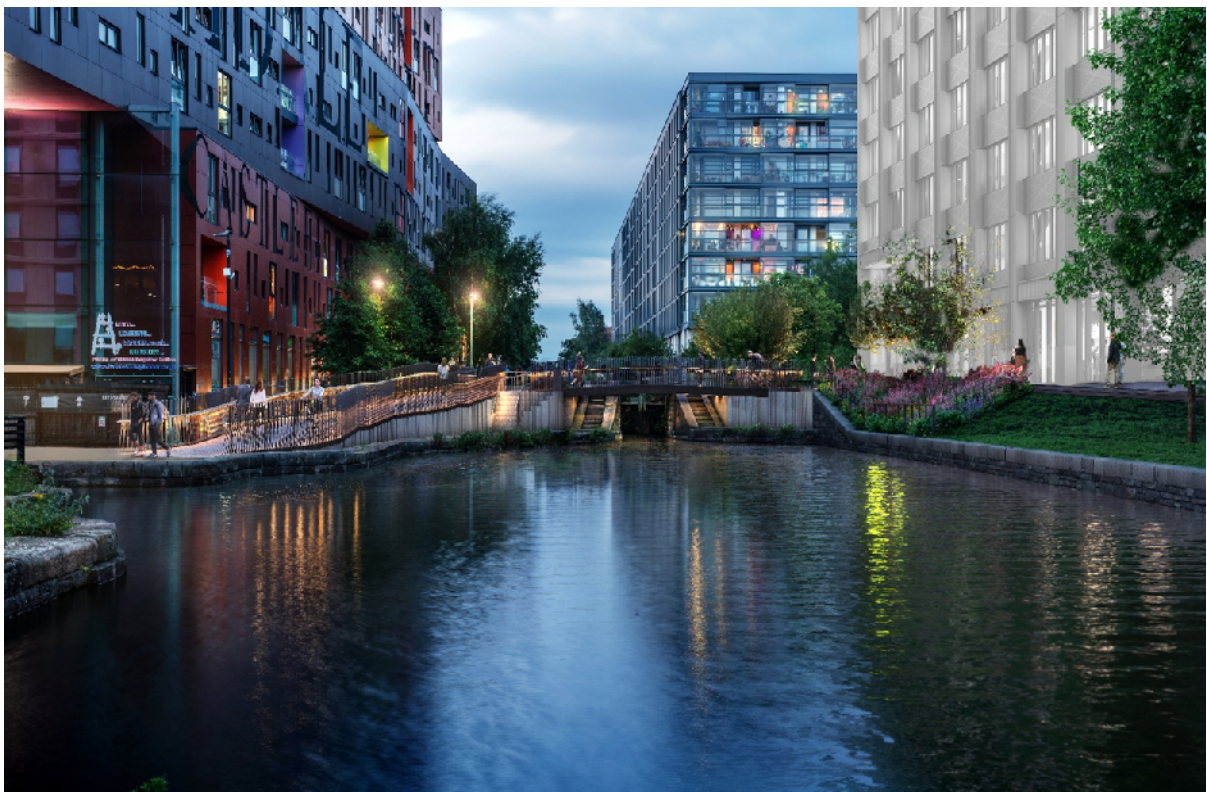


Figure 41. CGI looking east along Ashton Canal (Our Studio, 2021); with preceding existing 'view'

- 6.14 The above image shows the bridge looking north east along the canal, with Lock number 3 in the background.
- 6.15 As can be seen in Figure 41, the Grade II Listed Lock 3 will be partially obscured from this vantage point by the proposed development, albeit the steps and lock gates will still be largely visible. The top lock mechanism will be obscured from view, as it will sit behind the woven steel lightweight balustrade treatment.
- 6.16 The bridge will change the historic setting of this listed asset and section of the canal. However, as noted previously, the modern developments on the canal (and the proposed General Projects Development) have already significantly changed the historic context and significance of this area, and the bridge has been designed to be sympathetic to both the historic and future context.
- 6.17 No other assets will be impacted from this viewpoint.
- 6.18 Overall, the development is considered to have a minor negative impact on the Grade II listed Lock 3.

Looking north west along Ashton Canal (Arrow B)

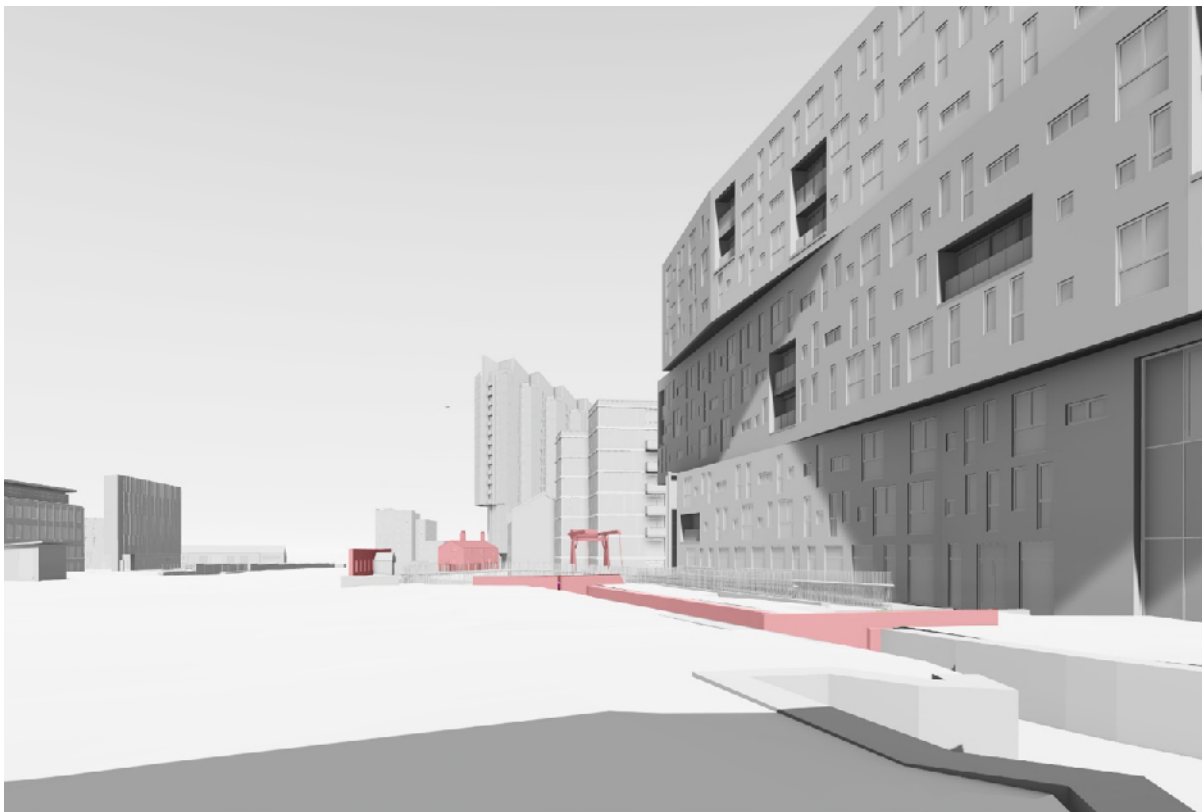


Figure 42: Sketch-up model looking north west with assets highlighted in red (Hawkins Brown, 2021); with preceding existing 'view'

- 6.19 The above image, shows the bridge viewed from the opposite side of the Site, looking north west along the canal, with Lock number 3 in the foreground; and the Lock Number 2 grouping in the background.
- 6.20 As noted, the Site has a neutral relationship on all three assets in the Lock 2 grouping – the Lock itself, the Lockkeepers Cottage, and the towpath bridge. Currently all three are intervisible with the Site; albeit the drop in level means all three assets in grouping are partially obscured, with the towpath barely visible behind the cottage from this angle.
- 6.21 Furthermore, whilst the Ashton Canal infrastructure assets currently benefit from an open setting with high levels of visibility, this was not their historic setting, as detailed in Section 2. The General Projects site previously hosted large-scale industrial buildings which would have obscured the assets entirely from this point due to high walls built flush to the canal edge.
- 6.22 The development will impact on the current view of the grouping; however due to the distance between the locks, and the drop in level, it is considered that the assets in the Lock 2 grouping cannot be fully appreciated from this view currently, and can be better appreciated from locations on the opposite side of the Site. In addition, as demonstrated in the existing photo, there is very thick shrubbery which impedes the view of these assets significantly.
- 6.23 The bridge will alter the setting of Lock Number 3, and impact on its relationship with the canal and Lock 2 asset grouping. However, again, this context has already changed significantly in the last decade, as can be seen by the dominance of Chips and Millners Warf in Figure 39, and the bridge has been designed to be in keeping with this new surrounding context. Furthermore, many of the significant elements of the lock are located to the east of the bridge and will therefore be unimpacted.
- 6.24 Therefore, the development is considered to have a neutral impact on the Lock 2 asset grouping, and a minor negative impact on the Grade II listed Lock 3.
- 6.25 These images can also be used to consider the potential impact on the other identified heritage assets – **Bridge no. 4 and the Soho Foundry Wall**. As shown in Figure 42, particularly with the dense shrubbery in between it is difficult to see either asset in view with the proposed bridge. Therefore, the development is considered to have a neutral impact on both assets.
- 6.26 The impact on identified heritage assets is summarised below

Asset	Significance	Contribution of Setting to Significance	Contribution of Current Site to Setting	Assessment of Impact of Proposed Development on the Significance
Ashton Canal Lock Number 1 Immediately East of Great Ancoats Street (Asset No. 14)	Moderate historical; low architectural	Moderate	Neutral	Neutral
Ashton Canal Towpath Bridge Over Junction with Islington Branch Canal West of Lock Number 2 (Asset no. 28)	Moderate to high historical; moderate architectural	Moderate	Neutral	Neutral

Asset	Significance	Contribution of Setting to Significance	Contribution of Current Site to Setting	Assessment of Impact of Proposed Development on the Significance
Ashton Canal Lock Keepers Cottage Beside Lock Number 2 At Islington Branch Junction Basin (Asset no. 17)	Moderate to high historical; moderate architectural	Moderate	Neutral	Neutral
Ashton Canal Lock Number 2 Off South End of Vesta Street (Asset no. 2)	Moderate to high historical; low architectural significance	Moderate	Neutral	Neutral
Ashton Canal Lock Number 3 On South Side of Ancoats Hospital (Asset no. 16)	Moderate to high historical; low architectural significance	Moderate	Neutral	Minor Negative
Bridge Number 4 Over Ashton Canal (Asset No. 7)	Moderate to high historical; low architectural significance	Moderate	Neutral	Neutral
Soho Foundry Wall – non-designated asset	Moderate historical and low architectural	Low	Negative	Neutral

7. Planning Policy Assessment

- 7.1 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act notes planning authorities should have special regard to the desirability of preserving historic assets or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. The NPPF stresses that ‘great weight’ should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets (NPPF paragraph 199), emphasising the need to avoid substantial harm, in terms of demolition, alteration or the compromise of an asset’s setting.
- 7.2 The Proposed Development will not have a direct impact on a designated heritage asset.
- 7.3 As concluded in Section 6, overall, the proposals will have a minor negative to neutral impact on the significance of the identified heritage assets. NPPF Paragraph 202 is therefore triggered which states that, “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.” The public benefits of the proposal are outlined below, as per the three core tenets of the NPPF.

Economic

- The bridge forms a key part of the proposed Manchester Northern and Eastern Gateway cycle route, which seeks to connect this part of the city centre and significantly improve accessibility, supporting regeneration objectives to connect edge of city neighbourhoods.
- This route ensures the new developments in the area; particularly Chips; Pollard Street and Ancoats Dispensary are easily accessible by walking, cycling and public transport; connecting residents to jobs, centres, health, leisure, open space and educational opportunities.
- The bridge will also provide a direct pedestrian link from residential developments in New Islington and Ancoats to the New Islington Tram stop, providing connections to the rest of the city, and Piccadilly train station, again linking residents with jobs and educational opportunities and supporting the regeneration of this area.

Social

- The current bridge at this location is not fit for purpose – the width is too narrow to allow wheelchair users or those with prams to cross, and the stairs and rough ground leading to the bridge make it inaccessible. The new bridge design has been developed to promote levels of accessibility and maximise participation and is therefore suitable for the needs of all users, including those who require the use of wheelchairs or prams.
- This improved accessibility of the scheme ensures wider access to both historic and environmental assets, allowing members of the public to enjoy and appreciate these more easily;
- Attractive and useable active transport links, such as the proposed bridge, will help to encourage modal shift away from car travel to public transport, cycling and walking, offering health benefits to local residents.

Environmental

- The design of the bridge reflects the unique architectural language of New Islington area, in providing a bridge that will link both heritage features, and new modern blocks such as the Chips building immediately adjacent. The design of the bridge will add to the distinct character of the area, and the high-quality design will create a landmark within the neighbourhood.
- By improving the public access across the canal; the bridge will link the open space network including the Rochdale and Ashton Canals and the General Projects Pollard Street Scheme.

- The proposed bridge is a key element in a wider strategy to facilitate better connections around the edge of the city centre to prepare for carbon free modes of transport, working toward carbon reduction targets both nationwide and locally.

7.4 It is considered that the above benefits outweigh the potential harm caused.

7.5 Paragraph 197 directs local planning authorities to consider three key factors when determining planning applications concerning the historic environment. These are considered below in light of the Proposed Development.

- The Proposed Development will sustain the significance of the identified heritage assets.
- The Proposed Development will not affect the positive contribution that the heritage assets can make to their community.
- The Proposed Development will make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

7.6 Policy EN3 Heritage of the Core Strategy states that:

Throughout the City, 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.

7.7 As discussed in Section 6, overall, the Proposed Development preserves the historic environment, the character and setting of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance; in this instance the 5 identified listed assets and 1 non-designated heritage assets. Furthermore, the accessibility of these assets will be improved due to the improved connectivity offered by the bridge, and the considered design will sustain and enhance the local character and distinctiveness of the New Islington area.

7.8 The proposals are therefore considered to be fully in accordance with national and local planning policy.

8. Summary

- 8.1 In accordance with the requirements of the NPPF, the significance of the designated heritage assets which have the potential to be affected by the application proposals have been described within this Heritage Statement. This included an assessment of the contribution the setting and the Site makes to this significance.
- 8.2 The impact on this significance has been assessed.
- 8.3 It has been concluded that the Proposed Development will cause minor harm (less than substantial) to the Grade II Listed Ashton Canal Lock Number 3 on South Side of Ancoats Hospital, and no harm will be caused to the other identified heritage assets.
- 8.4 However, as described above, and in further detail in the Design and Access Statement, various options have been considered in terms of materiality, design and location of the bridge; with the intent of minimising the impact as far as possible.
- 8.5 It is considered that due to the high historic significance of the entire canal route, and its infrastructural elements, the impact this bridge would have is unavoidable in any location. The chosen location was considered to be the least damaging as it limits the extent of the impact to the lock sitting outside of the main group of assets at this point on the canal (the Lock keepers cottage; Locks 2 and 3 and the Towpath Bridge)
- 8.6 As noted, the bridge will therefore impact just one designated asset (Lock 3) which lies immediately adjacent. The impact is not direct and is limited to the setting of the lock when appreciated it from the western approach due to the bridge blocking the full view of the steps; from all other points the impact on setting is minimal as an unimpeded view is offered of the lock gates and associated elements. This limited impact is also mitigated through the final choice of materials and design of the bridge to reflect its industrial past, whilst also forming a relationship with nearby modern development.
- 8.7 Furthermore, it is considered also that the public benefits provided by significantly improved pedestrian and cyclist accessibility between the rapidly developing New Islington Marina and Pollard Street; and associated improvements for the cycling routes through the city will outweigh any harm caused.

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Real Estate

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