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Heritage Statement

Platt Chapel
186 Wilmslow Road
Rusholme
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1. Introduction

1.1

This heritage statement has been prepared in support of the planning application for the internal and external alterations of the existing Grade II Listed Platt Chapel, together with associated car parking and landscaping.

1.2

The application site is not situated within a conservation area. It is situated in the south of Manchester as defined by the Manchester City LDF plan. The closest area is to the north and is designated as 'Victoria Park Conservation Area.'

1.3

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 provides the Government's national planning policy of the conservation of the historic environment. In respect of information requirements it sets out 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."

To comply with these requirements, Section 2 identifies the relevant heritage assets that may be affected by the Proposed Development.

1.4

Section 3 provides a summary of the significance of the identified listed buildings and conservation areas, proportionate to both the importance of the asset and the likely impact.

1.5

Section 4 provides an overview of the site and outlines the design proposals..

2.0 Conservation Area and LDF Map

Victoria Park conservation area, three kilometres to the south of the city centre, was designated in March 1972. It extends from the backs of properties to the north of Daisy Bank Road and Oxford Place to Kent Road East and West, and Rusholme Grove in the south. The west boundary is Oxney Road and the backs of properties on Wilmslow Road. To the east the boundary is formed by Anson Road, the backs of properties on Langdale Road and Laindon Road, the backs of properties on Daisy Bank Road, Scarsdale Road, the backs of properties on Langdale Road and Anson Road.

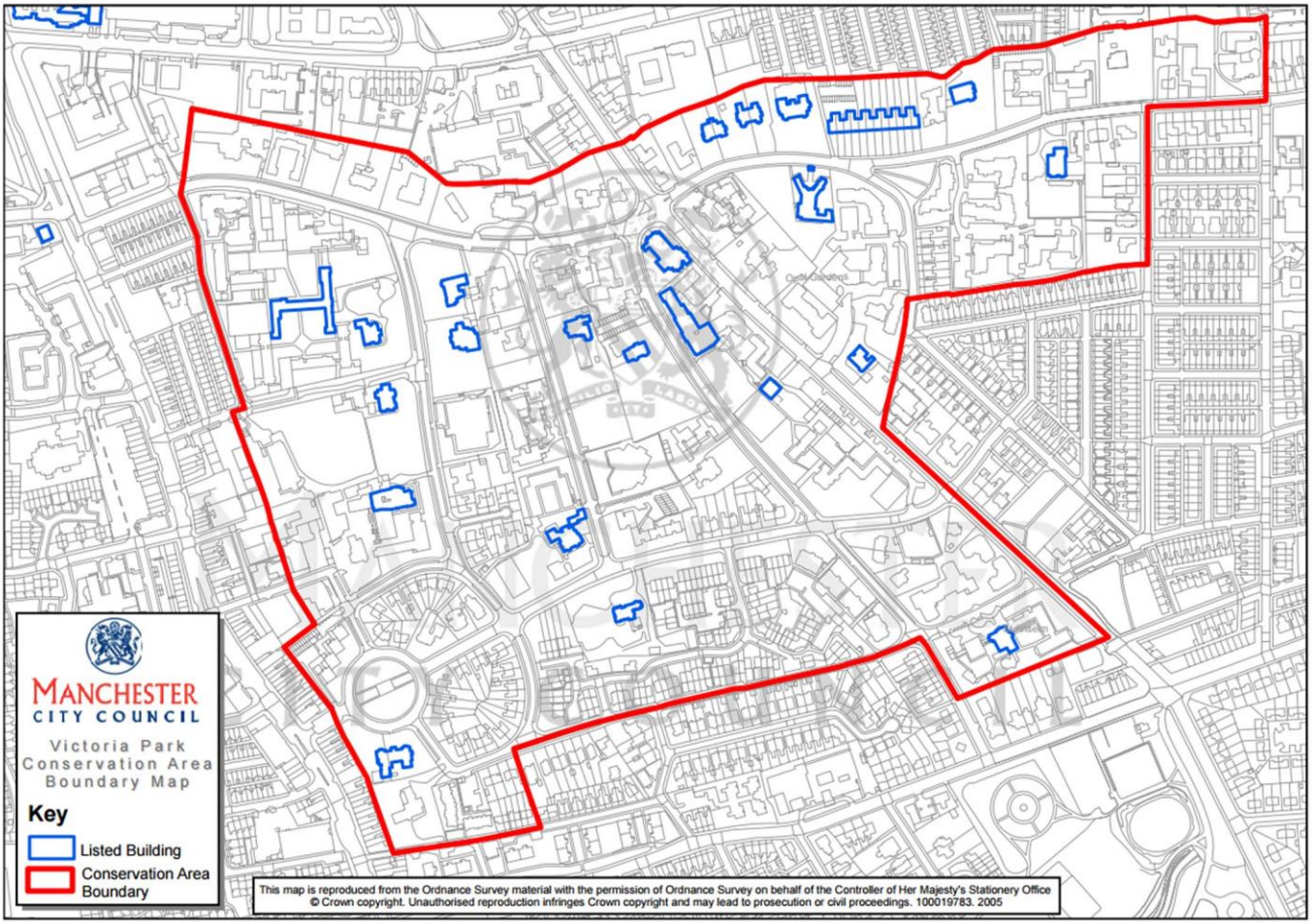


Figure 1: Victoria Park Conservation Area (Manchester City Council)

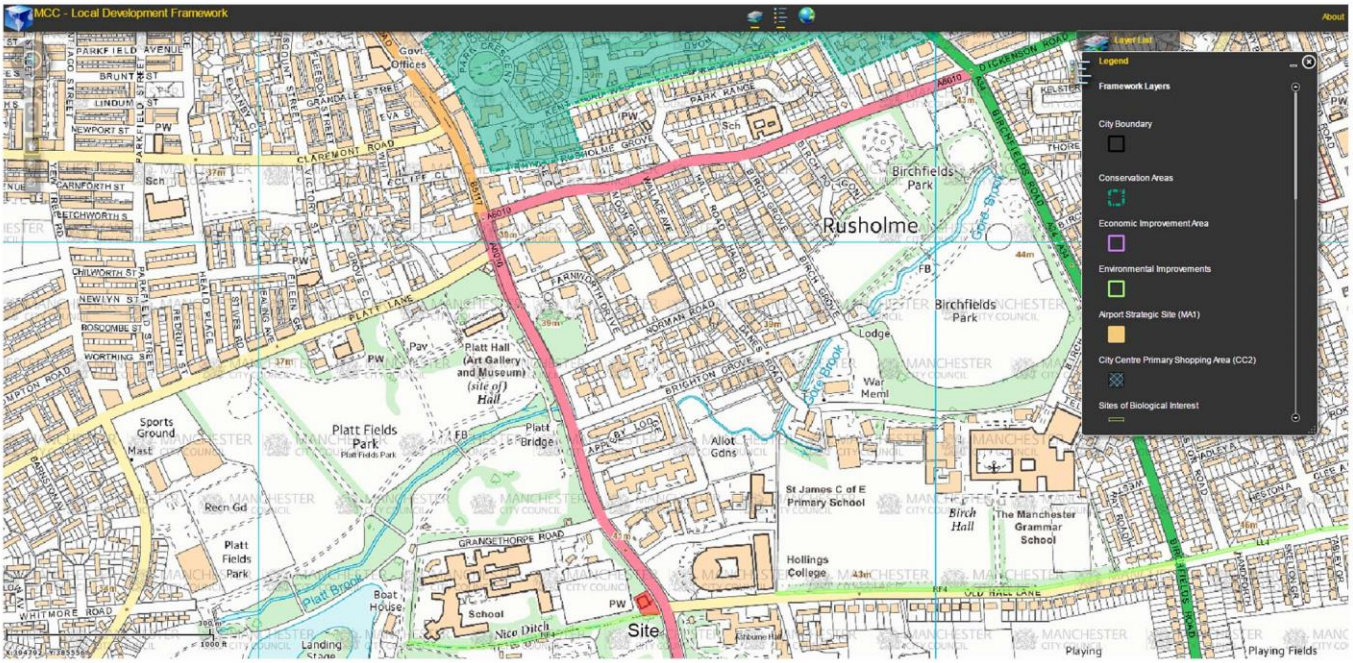


Figure 2: Manchester LDF (Manchester City Council)

3.0 The Heritage Assets

3.1

The NPPF (2012) defines a heritage asset 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”

Designated Heritage Assets

3.2

Designated heritage assets are those which possess a level of heritage interest that justifies designation under relevant legislation and are then subject to particular procedures in planning decisions that involve them.

Listed Buildings

3.3

There are a number of listed buildings located within the vicinity of the site. Those which are considered to be affected by the application proposals are:

1. Platt Hall, Platt Fields Park (Grade II - 1952)

2. Liverpool Victoria Insurance (Grade II - 1974)

3. Behrens & Ashburne Hall (Grade II - 1988)

4. Manchester University Hollings Building (Grade II - 1998)

5. Appleby Lodge (Grade II - 2003)



Clockwise from top left:
Platt Hall (manchesterhistory.net)
Liverpool Victoria Insurance
Hollings Building (geograph.org)
Behrens Hall (alisonuttley.co.uk)

4.0 Platt Chapel

Platt Chapel is a designated Grade II Listed Building. The building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

Name: UNITARIAN CHAPEL (PLATT CHAPEL)

List entry Number: 1270509

Platt Chapel is owned by Astute Estates. The building is constructed using red brick in flemish bond, slate roof with red tiled ridge pieces. The property has a small rectangular plan with canted apse at north end, there is an added wing and 20th century additions to west side. 3 bays of round-headed blank arches with stone imposts, a round-headed multi-paned window with radiating glazing bars in each bay; corbel table to eaves and coped gables (probably of 1874). Gabled entrance front at south end with gabled Romanesque-style doorway (of 1874) flanked by small round-headed windows, a large round-headed blank arch above containing a window of 3 stepped tall round-headed lights and flanked by similar windows, all these windows with radiating glazing bars; and gabled apex bellcote.

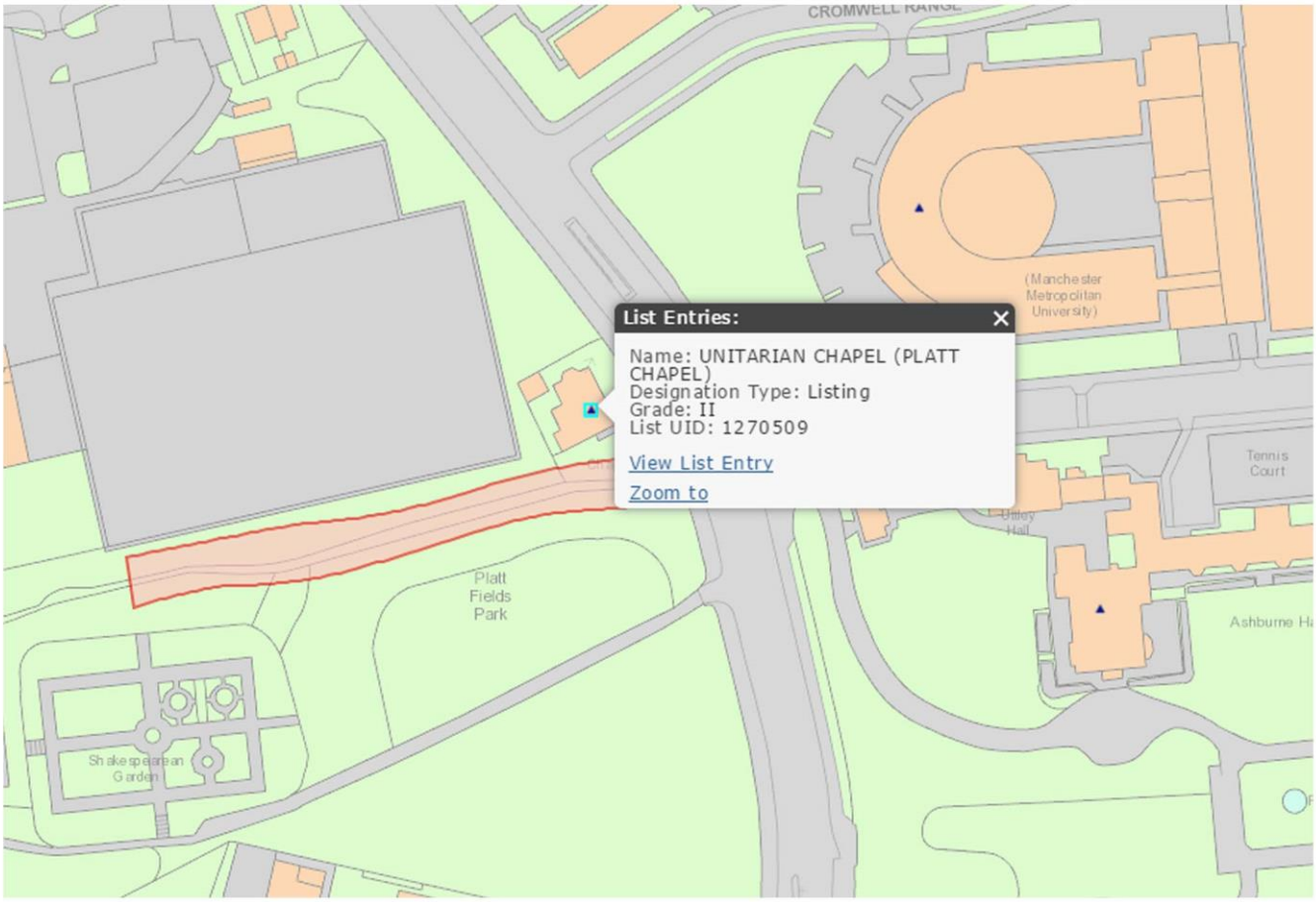


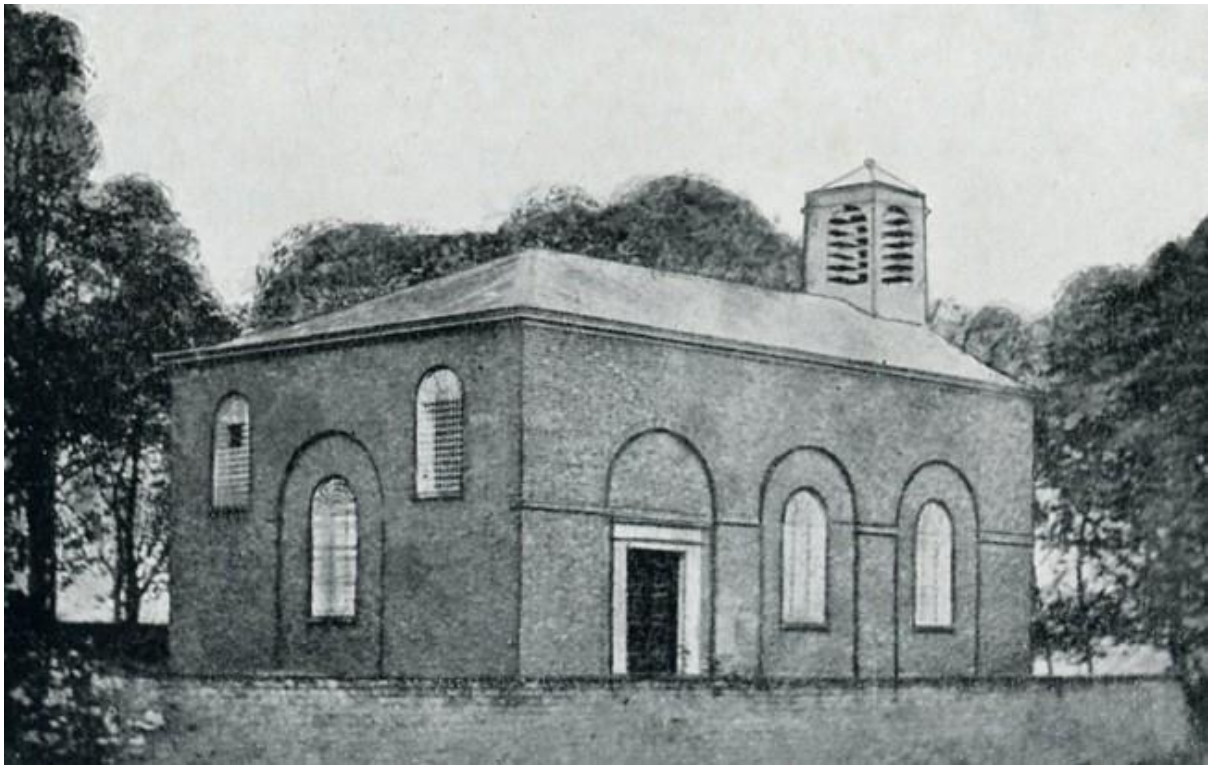
Figure 3: Listed Buildings Map (Historic England)

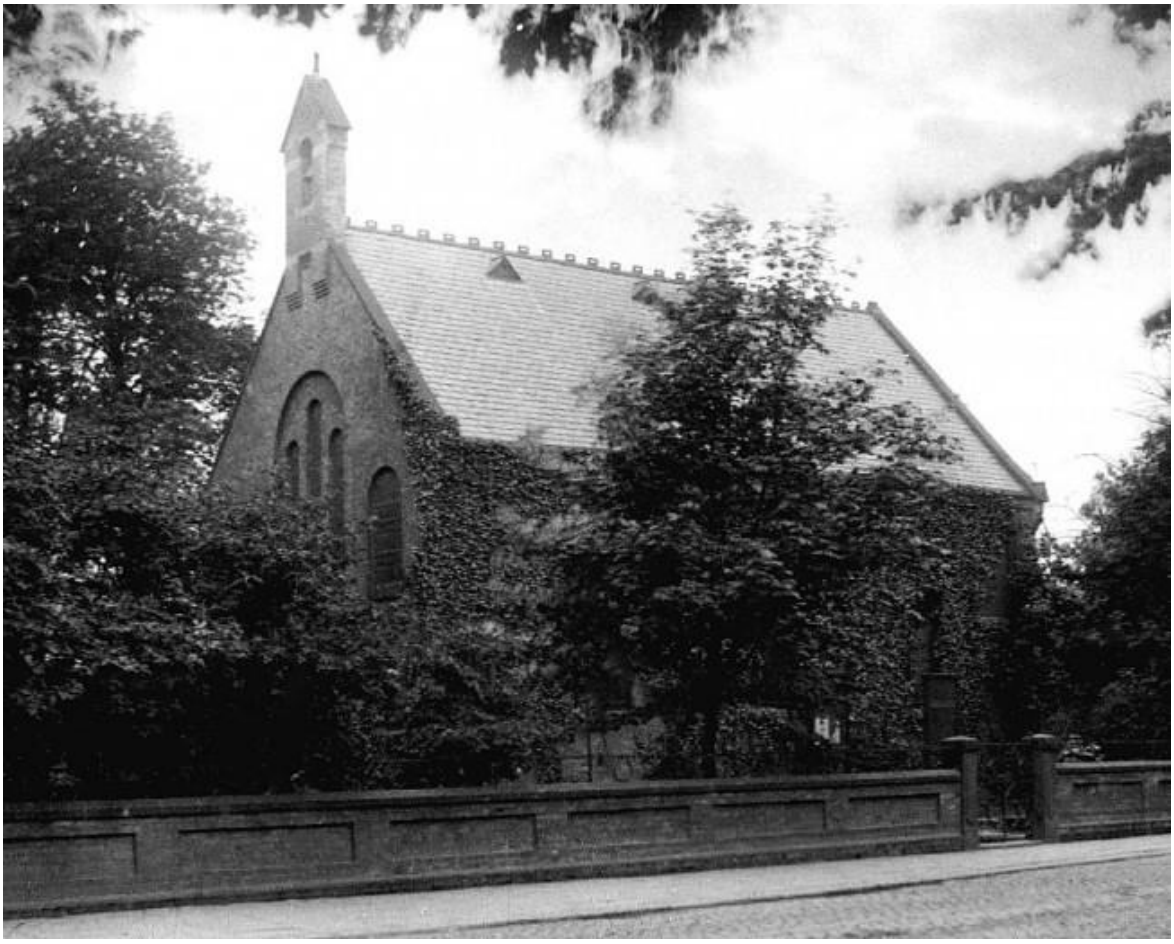
Our proposal is to alter the existing internal layout to sub-divide the property to create two office suites with mezzanine levels. The first office space (GIA 203m2) will be housed by the current property owners, Astute Estates. The main entrance will open into the main office floor, access to a meeting room, manager's office and tea point will be gained from this space. A staff WC and wash-hand basin will be situated just off the tea room. The second office space (GIA 87m2) will be open plan and house a tea area, DPT and a mezzanine floor. Two spiral staircases will be installed to provide access to the mezzanine levels. A new entrance is proposed on the north elevation of the property which will be designed to match the current entrance located on the properties west elevation.

4.1 Heritage Value and proposal

Platt Chapel stands in Rusholme, about three miles south of Manchester, the present building occupying the site of an earlier chapel for a congregation of Independents who had held together under persecutions and difficulties for half a century.
During the sixteenth century, the course of the great religious renaissance known as the Reformation was not uniform, and great changes were not affected with startling completeness. The struggle for liberty of conscience was long and hard, with tyranny ever and again raising its head in new guises. The advent of Queen Elizabeth to the throne soon saw attempts being made to enforce uniformity of worship under Episcopalian government, which from the outset were opposed by the growing number of people who feared compromise with Roman Catholic practices, and were seeking to build a church stripped of all that which they regarded as corrupt in doctrine and ecclesiastical government.
Since the mid 1600's there has been a history of 'dissenters' (nonconformists) in Rusholme and the surrounding district. For some forty to fifty years they had been able to use the small chapel at Birch-in-Rusholme but in 1697 the new patron at Birch Hall, George Birch, would only allow his chapel to be used by the Established church.
After the ejection of the Rev Henry Finch & the congregation from Birch Chapel they continued to meet in private houses in the neighbourhood. In 1700 Platt Chapel was opened for the use of the Nonconformists. The local landed gentry, the Worsleys of Platt Hall, (donors of the site), the Edges and the Siddalls being the principal members of the congregation. The Chapel continued in use until 1970, the teaching becoming Unitarian in the course of the 18th century. During the middle of the 19th century there were alterations to the Chapel and in 1909 Wilmslow Road was widened, thus reducing the size of the surrounding graveyard.
After its closure in 1970 it became the home of the Manchester Amateur Photographic Society, but they left the premises and it has since been used as a live music venue, before its sale in early 2016.

The image below shows the chapel prior to its alteration in the early 19th century.

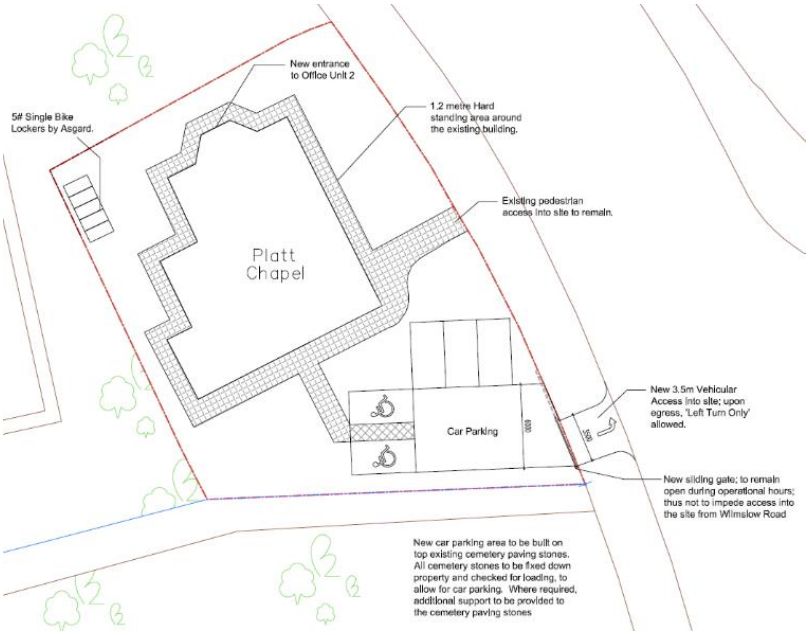




The image above, shows the chapel after its alterations in the 19th century.

In the proposed development, there are no major structural interventions which might jeopardise the building's historic fabric. The new development, proposes a new mezzanine floor, which will be attached to the existing walls via joist hangers internally and additional columns to support the span of the new proposed floor.
As the building will be subdivided internally, there is a requirement to introduce a new entrance on the north elevation of the building. The new entrance will be built to match the existing entrance on the south side of the chapel.

In order to allow access to the proposed car park, part of the boundary wall will be removed to allow for an opening. This is shown on the diagram to the right.
As shown in the photographs of post and pre 19th century alterations to the chapel, the original boundry wall is no longer there. It has been replaced and rebuilt, perhaps after the 19th century. The opening to the wall will be made to a high standard in order to aesthetically match the remainder of the exisitng wall.



The proposed system, for the grave yard parking is to use a “Ground Shield Parking Mats”. This is a heavy-duty interlocking mat used for ground stabilisation, parking areas and walkways at outdoor events and in parks. They are extremely tough yet easy to lay with minimal ground preparation. Each mat clips to the next via a series of discreet interlocks and they have a pimpled surface for extra grip. Made from 100% recycled vinyl PVC they have a hollow honeycomb structure for maximum stability and to allow grass to grow through over time.

The images below, demonstrate how this system is used.





