



18th September 2025

Citylabs 4.0, Hathersage Road, Manchester - Heritage Statement: External Gas Stores

1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Heritage Architecture Ltd. on behalf of Bruntwood SciTech to accompany the Planning application for the proposed construction of external gas store structures as part of the newly completed Citylabs 4.0 development on Hathersage Road, Manchester (The Site) (**Figures 1 & 2**).

The Site does not contain any heritage assets but is located within the setting of one Listed Building (see **Figure 3**) and within the setting of the Victoria Park Conservation Area (see **Figure 4**). The purpose of the following Heritage Statement will therefore be the potential visual impact the proposals may have on the settings of nearby heritage assets and on the character and appearance of the Victoria Park Conservation Area.



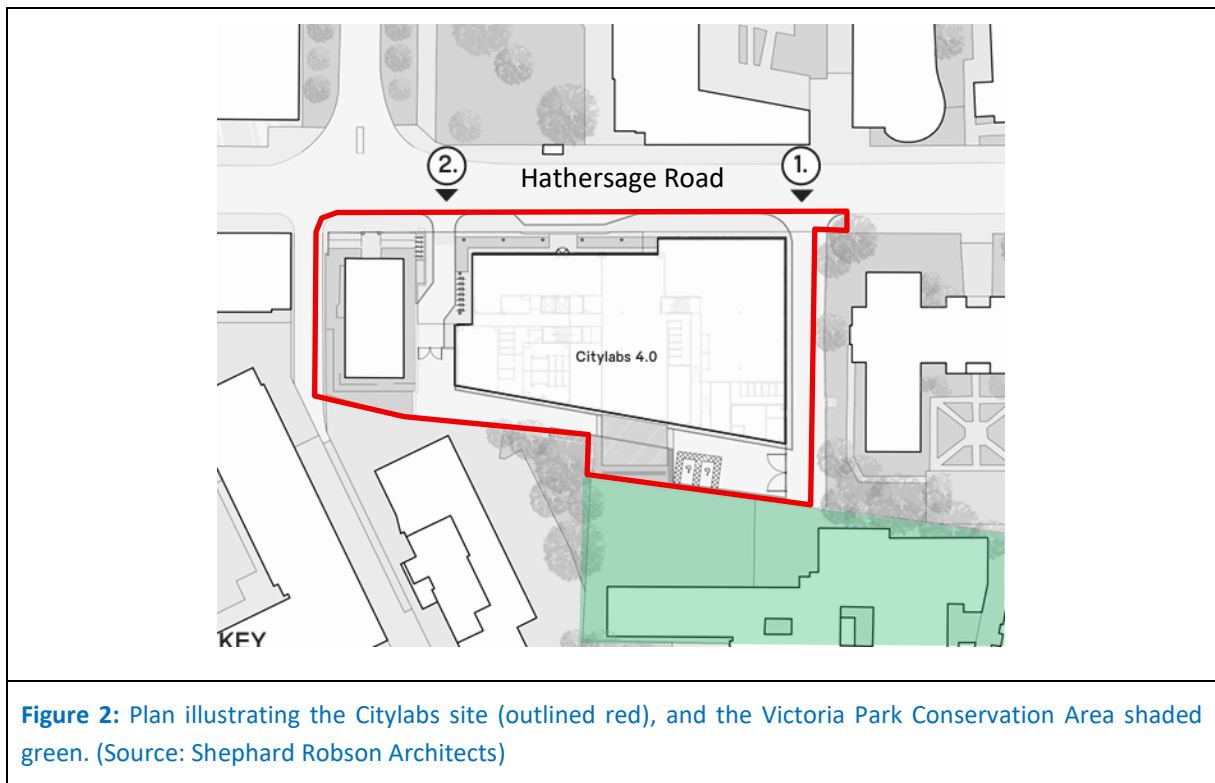
Figure 1: The newly completed Citylabs building as seen looking south-west on Hathersage Road (Source: SLHA 2025)

2. Location & Heritage Context

2.1. Location

The site of the proposed gas stores is located within the boundary of the recently completed Citylabs 4.0 development on Hathersage Road, Manchester, and forms the southern part of the wider Central Manchester Hospital Campus.

The Site is bounded by Hathersage Road to the north, the Melrose Apartments to the east and the Winnicott Centre to the west. To the south is the St Gabriel's development (currently nearing completion), and the northern boundary of the Victoria Park Conservation Area, with which the Site also shares.



2.2. Listed Buildings

The Site does not contain any Listed buildings, however, within a 150m radius of the Site there is one Listed building (the Grade II Listed St Mary's Hospital - List Entry Number: 1246550 – see **Figure 3**).

However, due to the minor external works to the Site and the entirely enclosed nature of the proposed location of the gas stores within the Site, it is considered that the Proposals will not be intervisible with the Grade II Listed St Mary's Hospital and thus its setting will not be affected. Therefore, this building has been scoped-out of the following assessment.

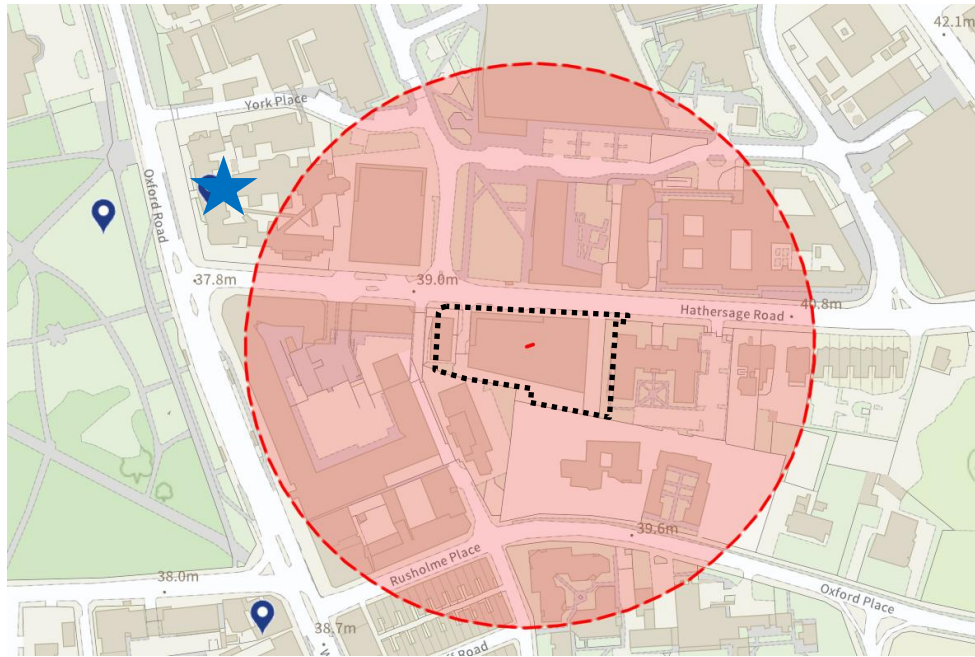


Figure 3: Map illustrating the 150m radius (shaded red) around the Site (dotted line), showing the nearest Listed building denoted by the blue star (Grade II Listed St Mary's Hospital) (Source: Historic England)

2.3 Conservation Areas

Conservation Areas are designated areas that are deemed to have special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

Whilst the Site is not located within a conservation area, its southern boundary shares the northern boundary of the Victoria Park Conservation Area and therefore is within its immediate setting. The Victoria Park Conservation Area was designated in March 1972 and was originally formed as an upper-class, private residential district in the 1830s which still retains a high number of 19th century villas and tree-lined streets (**Figure 4**, below).

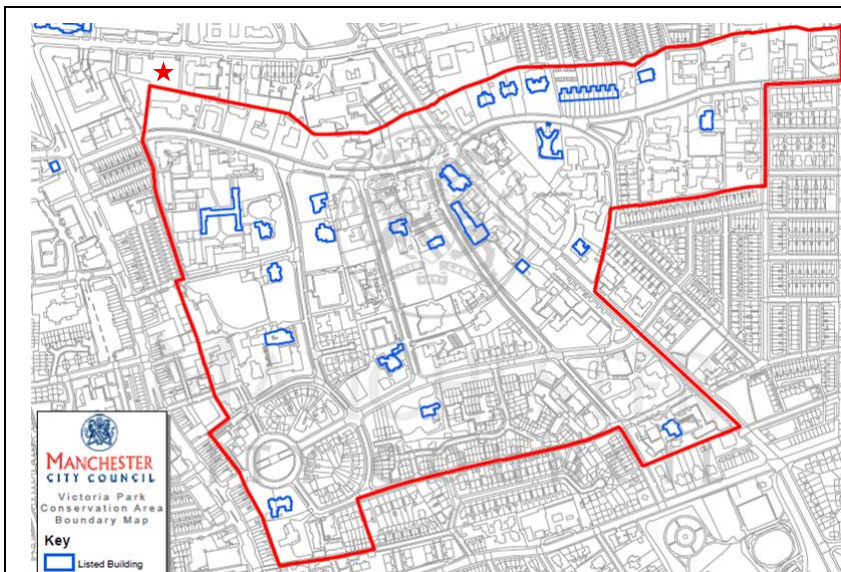


Figure 4: The Victoria Park Conservation Area, showing the location of the Site with red star (Source: Manchester City Council)

3. Planning Policy and Guidance

The key planning policy documents are, respectively, the: Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF), and Manchester City Council's Core Strategy (2012). This report has been prepared in the context of relevant national and local heritage planning policy.

With regards to the 1990 Act, **Section 66** is relevant to the current scheme as it requires the Local Planning Authority to *"have special regard to the desirability of preserving [a listed building] or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses"* when considering whether to grant planning permission.

Section 72 is also of relevance as it requires *"special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area"*.

The policies in the NPPF constitute the Government's view of what sustainable development means in practice. Of particular relevance is paragraph 207 (NPPF, 2024), which 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 following Heritage Statement is written in this context.

This Heritage Statement accords with the guidance set out in Historic England's Advice Note 12: Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets (October 2019). The recent guidance calls for a staged approach, which provides relevant and proportionate information sufficient to inform decision-making by the LPA.

4. Brief historical development of the Site and surrounding context

The location of the Site originally formed part of a field network within this district of Rusholme. Following the formation of the Victoria Park Company in 1836, with renowned local architect, Richard Lane, being one of the founding members, the area immediately south of the Site, which covered a large swathe of open fields and pastureland across the boundaries of Rusholme, Moss Side and Chorlton-on-Medlock, became a new and exclusive residential district called "Victoria Park".

The new residential suburb was named after Princess Victoria in anticipation of her future crowning to become Queen Victoria in 1837. The objective of the Victoria Park Company was to build a number of dwellings of respectable appearance and condition, with gardens and pleasure grounds attached, with proper rules and regulations for the management thereof.

When the Park opened on the 31st July 1837, the majority of plots contained no buildings, and could be bought as a plot ready for construction. Architect Richard Lane was directed to complete contracts for the construction of roads, for the building of a perimeter wall around the park, and to construct classical stone lodges at the entrances. Lane was also responsible for the design of the majority of the earliest houses within the development, which originally focused around Oxford Road Crescent and the eastern end of Oxford Place.

By the c1850s the plot to the south of the Site was developed to form a large detached villa called "The Lodge", located on Oxford Place, which was soon followed by a number of other large villas.



Figure 5 - Richard Lane's plan for the laying out of The Victoria Park in 1836; the red star illustrating the future location of the Site. (Source: Manchester University Archive)

By the early 1880s the location of the Site had been developed with a row of six terraced houses fronting Hathersage Road, along with a number of semi-detached houses leading eastwards along the street, with a further ten houses being built to the western side of the Site by 1908.

During the 1920s the adjacent site containing The Lodge was developed to form the new St Gabriel's Convent, including a large new dormitory extension attached to the western side of the villa in the 1920s.

During the Second World War, the six houses that were located on the present site of Citylabs 4.0 were destroyed by a direct high explosive enemy bomb in December 1940, resulting in all six being demolished. Following the war (by 1951) a further seven houses were demolished to the eastern side of the Site (now the location of Melrose Apartments).

The two plots remade cleared until the adjacent plot to the east was developed to form the current Melrose Apartments building in the c1990s, whilst the location of the Site itself remained in use as a surface car park until the recently completed Citylabs 4.0 development was started in 2023.

The University of Manchester's former St Gabriel's Hall student halls of residence site to the south of the Citylabs 4.0 development closed in c2021 and is currently undergoing redevelopment. The 1920s

dormitory extension to The Lodge was demolished and has been replaced by a new four-storey residential block, which screens the Site from view from the wider conservation area.

Table 1: Historic mapping



Figure 6 - 1883 Slater's New Plan of Manchester and Salford – This indicative map shows that by 1883 the Site had been partially developed with the construction of six terraced houses. Just south of the southern boundary can be seen the large villa called “The Lodge” located on Oxford Place.

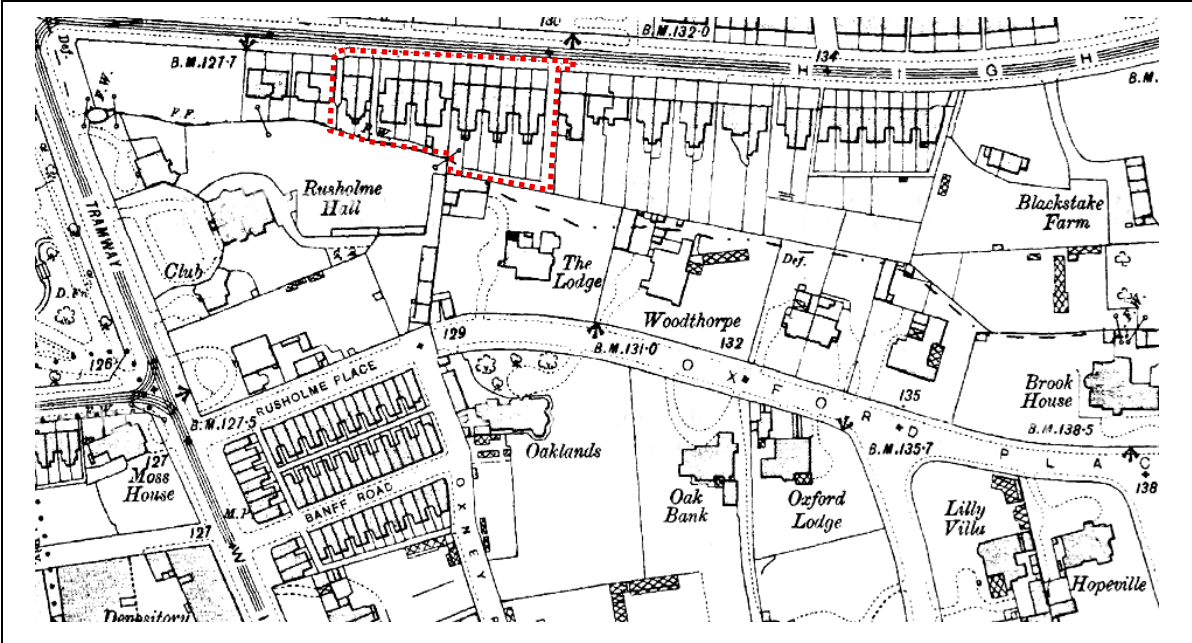


Figure 7 - 1908 OS – By 1908 the Site can be seen to have now been fully developed with the constructip of a further six houses to its western side.



Figure 8 - 1932 OS (revised in 1941 to show wartime bomb damage) – This map illustrates the Site as it appeared in 1932 and shows that the six terraced houses to the eastern side of the Site were completely destroyed by a direct high explosive enemy bomb in December 1940 (shaded red).

The Lodge is shown to have now been renamed “St Gabriel’s Hall” following its change of use during the early 1920s, and contains a large new residential block constructed to its north-western corner.

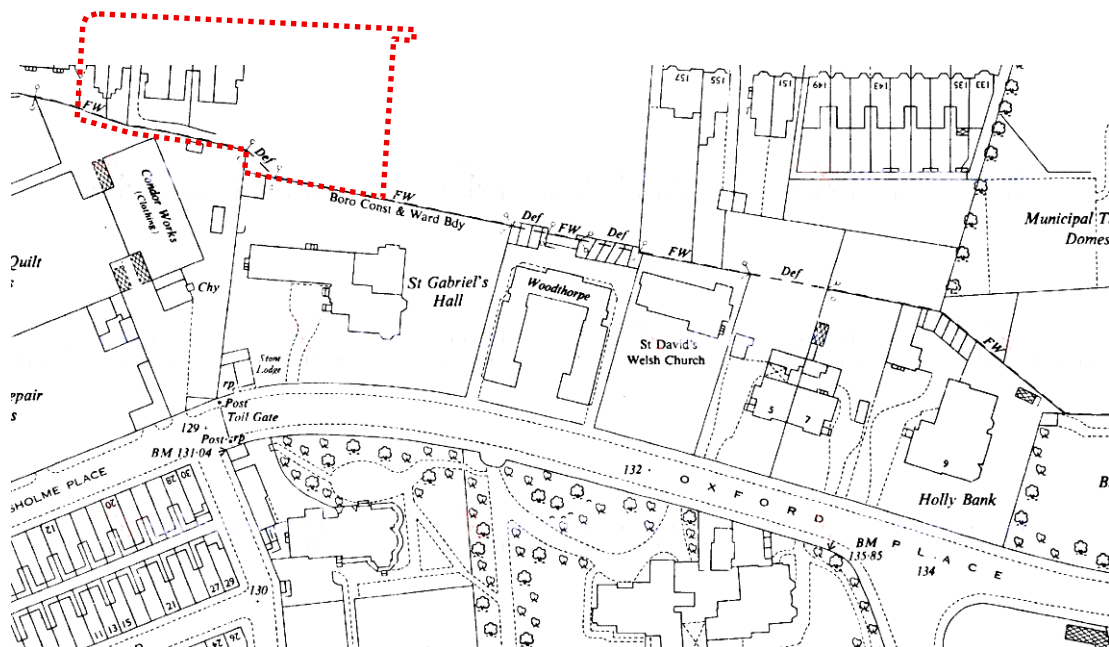


Figure 9 - 1951 OS – By 1951 the site of the destroyed terraced houses still forms an empty, cleared site, which now includes a number of other 19th century houses to the east which have also now also been demolished.

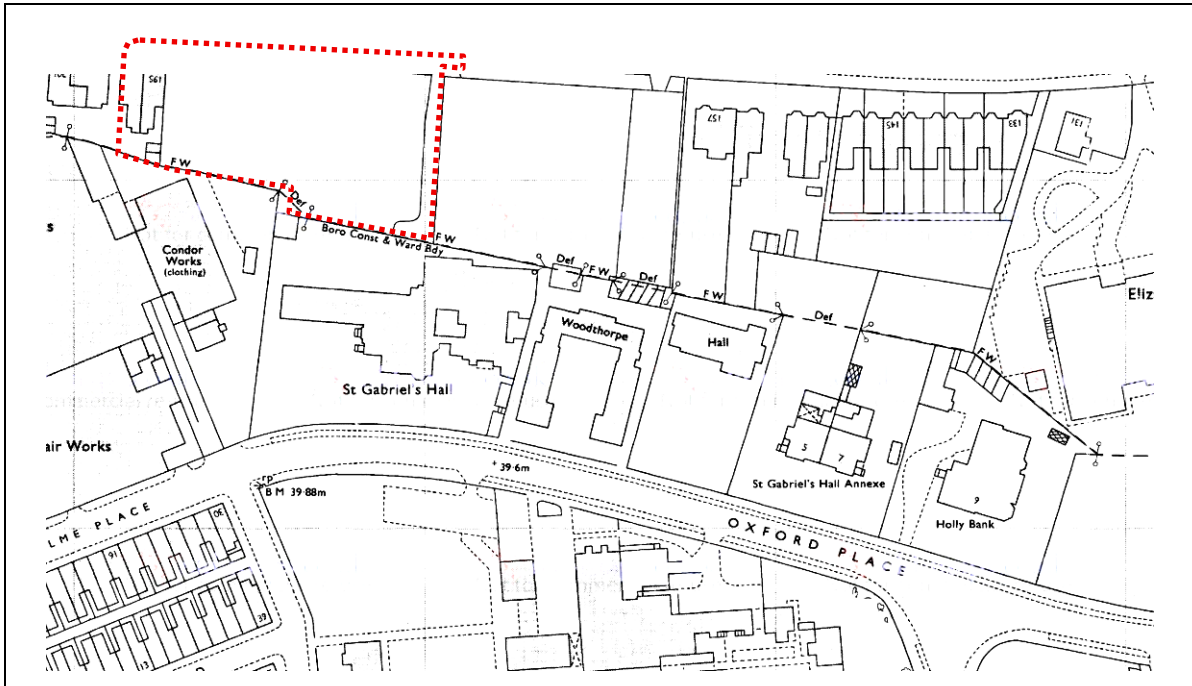


Figure 10 - 1970 OS – By 1970 a further 4 houses to the western end of the Site have also been demolished leaving the remaining part of the Site a cleared plot used as surface car parking. St Gabriel's Hall can be seen to have been extended to the east by the construction of a large new chapel and kitchen in 1962-3, which further conceals the Site from Oxford Place.

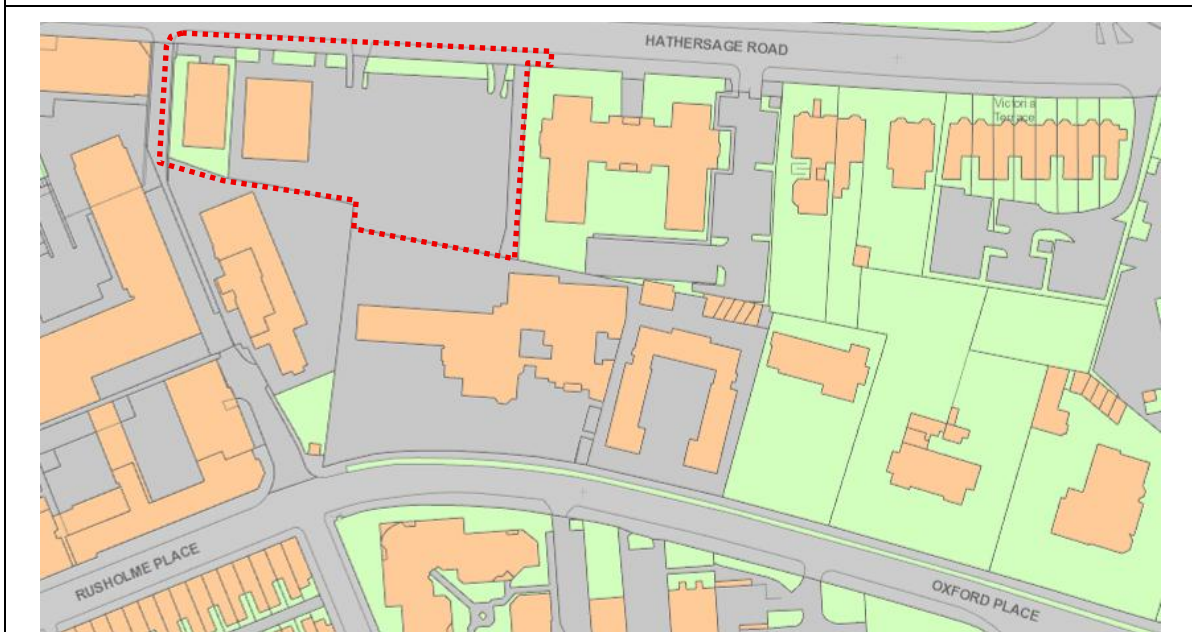


Figure 11 - 2021 OS – This map shows the Site as it appears recently, before the current Citylabs 4.0 was constructed and before the redevelopment of the former St Gabriel's site had commenced. The Site can be seen to continue to be used as a surface car park.

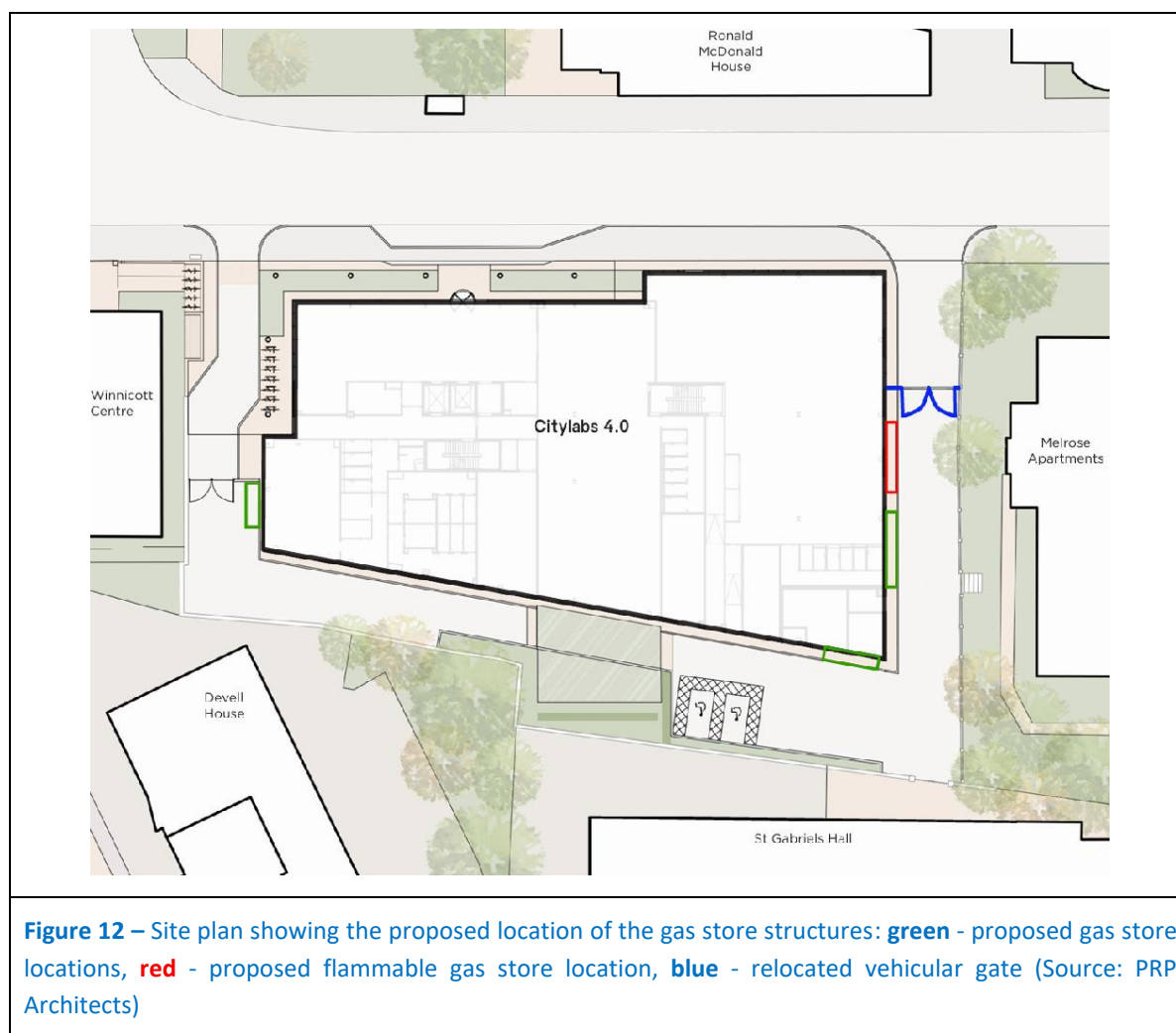
5. Proposals

The Proposals focus on the construction of four, small, approximately 2m tall enclosures designed to safely store gas bottles for piped and liquid gases in cylinders and tanks within the recently completed Citylabs 4.0 development, in order to support a tenant requiring specialist gases for operations.

The Proposed structures will be positioned externally at ground level to the eastern and western sides of the new Citylabs building, adjacent to the existing building façade.

The height of the structures will align with the height of the existing vehicular barriers on site, and the use of a steel frame with dark grey mesh finishes will assist in the structure's being able to visually blend into the existing boundary treatments of the Citylabs building.

Please refer to the DAS prepared by PRP Architects for details of Proposals.



6. Assessment of Significance

The purpose of this Assessment of Significance is to use recognised criteria to assess the heritage significance and interest of the Site; and of the settings of the identified heritage assets which could be affected by the Proposals.

The Assessment will inform the subsequent Heritage Impact Assessment (Section 7), which considers the effects of the Proposals in heritage terms upon the settings of the identified heritage assets (listed buildings and conservation areas) surrounding the Site. This in turn allows, in a planning policy context, the extent of “harm” upon any heritage asset incurred by the Proposals to be established within the terms defined by the NPPF.

6.1. Methodology

Criteria have been established to appraise a building’s significance. Statutory criteria, as set out in the ‘Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings’, DCMS, 2018, provides a list of principles for assessing significance based on architectural and historic interest, age and rarity, aesthetic merits, selectivity and national interest.

The assessment of significance accords with the requirements of the NPPF and uses Historic England’s methodology outlined in its 2019 document, “*Statements of Heritage Significance*”. Historic England’s guidance on “*Setting of Heritage Assets*” (as reissued in Dec. 2017) have also been acknowledged as part of the following assessment.

Consequently, the significance of a designated heritage asset is determined by an analysis of the relevant aspects of the following:

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

The focus is on providing necessary and proportionate amount of information based on the perceived level of heritage significance (refer to **Table 2 Appendix i** for full definitions of heritage significance as defined in this present report).

6.2. The Site

The Site forms the newly completed Citylabs 4.0 building, which is located on the site of a number of 19th century houses that were demolished piecemeal from the 1940s -c1960s and retains no historic built fabric.

The current Citylabs building occupies much of the Site, and contains a private, wrap-around vehicular access road to the east, west and south sides, with the south side being forming the border between the Site and the Victoria Park Conservation Area. The current building upon the site makes no contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area and is therefore a neutral contributor.

The Citylabs building is only visible from within the conservation area when standing in the rear private spaces of the currently ongoing redevelopment of the St Gabriel's site on Oxford Place, and due to the recently completed construction of a residential wing of the development to the western half of the site; the Site is entirely concealed from view from the conservation area.



Figure 13 – A view looking south into the eastern vehicular access road from Hathersage Road, showing the newly completed Citylabs 4.0 building (right) and the ongoing construction of the St Gabriel's development to the southern end of the drive. (Source: Google)



Figure 14 – A view looking east into Hathersage Road from Oxford Road, showing the Grade II Listed St Mary's Hospital holding the corner of the two streets to the left, and the Citylabs 4.0 building (marked by arrow to the right). The sites of the proposed gas stores are located behind the buildings to the right (Source: Google)



Figure 15 - A view looking east along Hathersage Road looking towards the new Citylabs 4.0 building (middle left) (Source: Google)

6.3. Victoria Park Conservation Area

The Victoria Park Conservation Area was designated in March 1972 due to its high historic and architectural interest as an important, early example of a planned residential suburb, the first gated suburban residential park in Manchester, and one of the first in the country.

The Park remained a private estate to which access could be gained only by paying a toll at the Park's entrance gates. The large original gardens in many cases survive with much mature planting and enclosed by stone or brick boundary walls. During the second half of the nineteenth century, the

professional classes moved into the area, and a number of houses came to be associated with prominent politicians and artists. A steady deterioration of the area became noticeable in the 1920s, when changing economic and social circumstances accelerated the decline.

The Site is located adjacent to the northern boundary of the conservation area and is only intervisible from the rear of the former St Gabriel's Campus site, which forms one of the surviving 19th century former villa's that line the northern side of Oxford Place. The recently completed construction of new student residential buildings to the western part of the former St Gabriel's site has resulted in the new Citylabs 4.0 development being screened from view from the wider conservation area.

The immediate setting of the conservation area is distinguished by a number of tall, commercial, residential and medical developments of scale that line the southern side of Hathersage Road immediately adjacent to the boundary of the conservation area, and which afford little to no invisibility through to the conservation area beyond.

6.4. Statement of Significance

- The Site comprises a recently completed modern medical facility called Citylabs 4.0, which is considered to be of no heritage interest.
- The Site does not contain any listed buildings and is not located within a conservation area; however, it is located within the setting of the Victoria Park Conservation Area and located close to the Grade II Listed St Mary's Hospital.
- The Site is considered to make a neutral contribution to the character and appearance of the Upper Victoria Park Conservation Area and makes no contribution to the setting of nearby Grade II Listed St Mary's Hospital.

7. Heritage Impact Assessment & Conclusions

The Site is only intervisible with the Conservation Area when standing in the private, rear spaces of the St Gabriel's residential development, where the upper floors of the new Citylabs building are visible.

Due to the existence of tall, perimeter fencing between the Site and the St Gabriel's development the proposed locations of the new gas store structures at ground floor level are unable to be viewed from the Victoria Park Conservation Area, and therefore will not result in any changes to the character and appearance of the Victoria Park Conservation Area. As discussed in Section 2 above, due to the Proposals not being intervisible with the setting of the Grade II Listed St Mary's Hospital assessment of this building has been scoped-out.

8. Consequently, the proposals are considered to have a **neutral impact** upon the settings of designated heritage assets identified within this report thereby resulting in '**no harm**' as defined within the NPPF (2024, paras.215-216). The proposals are thus considered to comply with relevant national and local planning policy (refer to **Tables 3 & 4**).**Appendices**

8.1. Appendix i: Definition of Significance Terms used in this Heritage Statement

Table 2: The hierarchy and definition of heritage significance relevant to the redevelopment of the Site (tailored from ICOMOS & Historic England guidance)

Heritage status / hierarchy	Description
Very High / Exceptional heritage significance <i>International architectural and historic interest and importance.</i>	<p>This heritage grading relates to the fabric and setting of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Grade-I listed buildings, Grade-I historic parks/gardens, and battlefields, defined by statute, where the particular site is well represented in the impacted historic environment.
High heritage significance <i>National architectural and historic importance and interest.</i>	<p>This heritage grading relates to the fabric and setting of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grade-II* and grade-II listed buildings, Grade-II* and grade-II historic parks/gardens, battlefields, as defined by statute, Conservation Areas containing very Important buildings where the particular site is well represented in the impacted historic environment.
Medium heritage significance <i>Regional architectural and historic importance and interest.</i>	<p>This heritage grading relates to the fabric and setting of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grade-II listed buildings (dependant on character), Grade-II historic parks/gardens and battlefields, designated Conservation Areas, Unscheduled archaeological sites and landscapes of potential national interest where the fabric and character of the site is well represented in the impacted historic environment.
Low heritage significance <i>Local architectural and historic heritage importance and interest.</i>	<p>This heritage grading relates to the fabric and setting of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locally Listed Buildings (as formally identified by the Council and defined by an adopted Local Planning Policy), Site's identified and recorded as being of heritage interest on the Historic Environment Record, which retain a definable heritage interest as a component of the historic environment. unrecorded buildings, structures, or designed landscape features, which demonstrably retain a degree of heritage value due to their: architectural design, historic, communal, or townscape interest.
Negligible heritage significance <i>Buildings or fabric components which have been extensively altered, eroding or compromising their architectural and historic interest</i>	<p>This heritage grading relates to sites which may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recorded on the Historic Environment Record in record form or as 'Find Sites' but retain minimal or no original fabric or definable character. buildings, structures, or designed landscape features, which detract from the architectural design, historic, communal, or townscape interest of the principal heritage asset.

Unknown heritage potential <i>Buildings/sites where the potential importance interest requires determination</i>	This heritage grading relates to sites which may be locally identified as meriting recognition but have not been previously recorded or investigated so that their origins and fabric significance have yet to be objectively defined.
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8.2. Appendix ii: Assessing the Magnitude of Change or Impact

The magnitude of change or impact is assessed based upon a detailed understanding of how and to what extent the proposed development might impact the heritage asset.

The contribution of the setting to the value of the heritage asset is an integral component which also contributes to the overall value or significance of the asset. Which in turn, allows for the magnitude of direct and / or indirect heritage impact to be determined.

Table 3: Criteria for defining the effect and degree of direct and indirect heritage impact

Definition of magnitude and nature of heritage impact	Direct heritage impacts	Indirect heritage impact
Major adverse Impact. <i>Substantial harm of this nature, which results in total loss of significance or fundamentally affects the significance of defined heritage assets, should normally be avoided.</i>	Development resulting in demolition of a significant historic fabric component which results in total loss of significance, or fundamental compromises the setting of a designated heritage asset.	Substantially harmful change to the fabric and character of a designated heritage asset, or the setting of the identified designated heritage assets. Where the development severely erodes the heritage interest of the identified heritage assets in the view, or the ability to understand and appreciate its architectural and historic interest and thus results in total loss of significance.
Moderate Adverse Impact. <i>Less-than-substantial harm will need to be demonstrably mitigated and justified by clear public benefits.</i>	Development resulting in extensive harmful alterations (but not total demolition) of a designated heritage asset or its setting.	Less than substantial harm to the fabric and character of a designated heritage asset, or the setting of the identified designated heritage assets. Where the development erodes to a clearly discernible extent the heritage interest of the heritage assets in the view, or the ability to appreciate its heritage interest.
Minor Adverse Impact. <i>The negative impact on the setting or overall character will</i>	Development resulting in alterations to a designated heritage asset which result in	Minor compromise to the fabric and character of a designated heritage asset, or the setting of the identified

<i>need to be clearly balanced by appropriate mitigation.</i>	minor compromise of its fabric or erosion of its character.	designated heritage assets. Where the development erodes to a minor extent the heritage interest of the heritage asset and its setting, such that it is noticeably changed.
Negligible adverse impact. <i>This does not mean that there will be no physical or visual change, rather that the resultant difference would not diminish the value of the heritage assets' significant physical fabric, their settings or significance to any appreciable degree.</i>	Development resulting in negligible direct impact on a designated heritage asset which results in the removal of a minor, original fabric component, but avoids diminishing its character and its special architectural or historic interest.	Negligible perceptible change to the character of a designated heritage asset, or the experience and understanding of its special interest. The degree of change would alter, but not diminish, the intrinsic heritage interest of the identified heritage assets, or the experience and appreciation of the buildings or the designated area to any appreciable degree.
Neutral Impact. <i>This does not necessarily mean that there will be no physical or visual change, rather that the resultant difference will be imperceptible or appropriately balanced.</i>	Development which comprises an imperceptible physical impact resulting in no apparent change or achieved by removing a component of no heritage value which detracts from the special interest of the building fabric.	Imperceptible change to the fabric and character of a designated heritage asset, or the setting of the identified designated heritage assets. A neutral impact occurs when the development does not affect the architectural, aesthetic and historic interest of the heritage assets in the view, or the ability to appreciate its significance to any measurable degree.
Negligible beneficial impact. <i>The resultant difference will be imperceptible but have a positive impact on the understanding or appreciation of the heritage asset.</i>	Development resulting in a negligible beneficial direct impact on a designated heritage asset which results in the removal of a minor non-original fabric component which detracts from the character and its special architectural or historic interest.	Negligible perceptible change to the character of a designated heritage asset, or the experience and understanding of its special interest. The degree of change would imperceptibly enhance the intrinsic architectural and historic of the identified heritage assets, or the experience and appreciation of the buildings or the designated area.
Minor Beneficial Impact. <i>The proposed change would result in a demonstrable improvement to the overall character or setting of a heritage asset.</i>	Development resulting in alterations to a built heritage asset which deliver a minor beneficial physical impact or enhancement of the site's special interest.	Minor enhancement to the fabric and character of a designated heritage asset, or the setting of the identified designated heritage assets. Where the development enhances to a minor extent the architectural and historic interest of the heritage assets

		in the view, or the ability to appreciate its significance.
<p>Moderate Beneficial Impact.</p> <p><i>The proposed change would result in a considerable improvement to the overall character and appreciation of a heritage asset with clear beneficial enhancement of its heritage interest.</i></p>	Development resulting in alterations to a built heritage asset resulting in moderate beneficial physical impact, or an enhancement of the site's character.	<p>Evident improvement of the fabric and character of a designated heritage asset (or the setting of the identified designated heritage assets) resulting in an enhancement of its cultural heritage interest.</p> <p>Moderate enhancement to the setting of the built heritage asset. Where the development will enhance to a clearly discernible extent the heritage interest of the heritage assets in the view, or the ability to appreciate its significance.</p>
<p>Major beneficial Impact.</p> <p><i>The proposed change would result in substantial improvement to the overall character and appreciation of a heritage asset, revealing and/or enhancing important characteristics of its heritage interest.</i></p>	Development resulting in restoration or alterations to a designated heritage asset which comprises substantial restoration of its fabric and historic character and an enhancement of its cultural heritage interest.	<p>Substantial improvement of the fabric and character of a designated heritage asset (or the setting of the identified designated heritage assets) resulting in a significant enhancement of its cultural heritage interest.</p> <p>Substantial restoration or enhancement of the setting of the built heritage asset where the development will enhance to a fundamental extent the heritage interest of the heritage assets in the view, or the ability to appreciate its significance.</p>

8.3. Appendix iii: Assessing the Significance of Impact

The table below, Assessing the Significance of Impact, uses a matrix to combine the value of the heritage assets with the magnitude of impact. As stated within Historic England's Guidance, this is a general guide and is not intended to be prescriptive.

Scale or severity of impacts or changes can be judged taking into account their direct and indirect effects and whether they are temporary or permanent, reversible or irreversible. The cumulative effect of separate impacts should also be considered. **The scale or severity of impact can be ranked without regard to the value of the asset.** This significance of impact can be either adverse or beneficial.

Table 4: Assessing the Significance of Impact

Value of Heritage Asset	Scale & Severity of Change/Impact				
	No Change	Negligible change	Minor change	Moderate change	Major change
For WH Properties Very High – Attributes which Convey OUV	Significance of Effect or Overall Impact (Either Adverse or Beneficial)				
	Neutral	Slight	Moderate/ Large	Large/Very Large	Very Large
For Other Heritage Assets or Attributes	Significance of Impact (Either Adverse or Beneficial)				
Very High	Neutral	Slight	Slight/ Moderate	Large/very Large	Very Large
High	Neutral	Slight	Slight/ Moderate	Moderate/ Large	Large/Very Large
Medium	Neutral	Neutral/Slight	Slight	Moderate	Moderate/ Large
Low	Neutral	Neutral/Slight	Neutral/Slight	Slight	Slight/ Moderate
Negligible	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral/Slight	Neutral/Slight	Slight