



Donald Insall Associates
Chartered Architects and Historic Building Consultants

WCs and Other Spaces to the Main Building and Science Building

William Hulme's Grammar School, Spring Bridge Road, Manchester, M16 8PR

Heritage Impact Assessment

For United Learning Trust



Contact Information

Kate Martyn (Practice Director)

E: kate.martyn@insall-architects.co.uk

Alison Montgomery (Assistant Heritage Consultant)

E: alison.montgomery@insall-architects.co.uk

Manchester Studio

T: 0161 359 4326

www.donaldinsallassociates.co.uk

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Contents

1.0	Introduction to Heritage Impact Assessment	4
1.1	Introduction and Methodology	4
1.2	The Buildings, their Legal Status and the Policy Context	4
1.3	Summary Assessment of Significance	6
2.0	Historic Background	7
2.1	Association with William Hulme	7
2.2	Development of the School and Grounds	7
3.0	Site Survey Descriptions	16
3.1	The Setting of the Buildings	16
3.2	The Main Building and Science Building	21
4.0	Assessment of Significance	33
4.1	Introduction	33
4.2	Assessment of Significance	33
5.0	Commentary on the Proposals	35
5.1	Description of the Proposals and their Impact on the Listed Building	35
5.2	Justification of the Proposals and Conclusion	36
	Appendix I - Statutory List Description	37
	Appendix II - Planning Policy and Guidance	38

1.0 Introduction to Heritage Impact Assessment

1.1 Introduction and Methodology

Donald Insall Associates was commissioned by United Learning Trust in April 2025 to assist CoARC Ltd in the development of designs for upgrades to WCs and other ancillary spaces at the Main Building and Science Building of William Hulme's Grammar School, Spring Bridge Road, Manchester, M16 8PR.

This assessment has been prepared in accordance with the requirement of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), paragraph 207, which asks that applicants 'describe the significance of any heritage assets affected' by proposals for change. This assessment takes account of the guidance provided in Historic England: 'Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets'; Historic England: 'Advice Note 12' (2019); and IEMA, IHBC and ClfA: 'Principles of Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment in the UK' (2021).

The investigation has comprised historical research, using both primary and secondary material and consulting the relevant Historic Environment Record (HER), and a site inspection. An illustrated history of the buildings and their wider site, with sources of reference and bibliography, is in Section 2; the site descriptions are in Section 3. The investigation has established the significance of the buildings, which is set out in Section 4 and summarised below.

The specific constraints for these buildings are summarised below. This report has been drafted to inform the design of proposals, by CoARC and Section 5 provides a justification of the scheme according to the relevant legislation, planning policy and guidance.

1.2 The Buildings, their Legal Status and the Policy Context

William Hulme's Grammar School incorporates a Grade II-listed building (the Main Building) and associated Grade II-listed railings. It is situated outside the southeast corner of the Whalley Range Conservation Area, in the City of Manchester **[Plate 1.1]**. Alterations to a listed building generally require listed building consent; development in conservation areas or within the setting of a listed building or conservation area requires local authorities to assess the implications of proposals on built heritage.

The statutory list description of the listed building is included in Appendix I and full relevant extracts of relevant law, policy and guidance for change in the historic environment are contained in Appendix II of this report. In summary, the relevant legal and policy backgrounds is as follows.

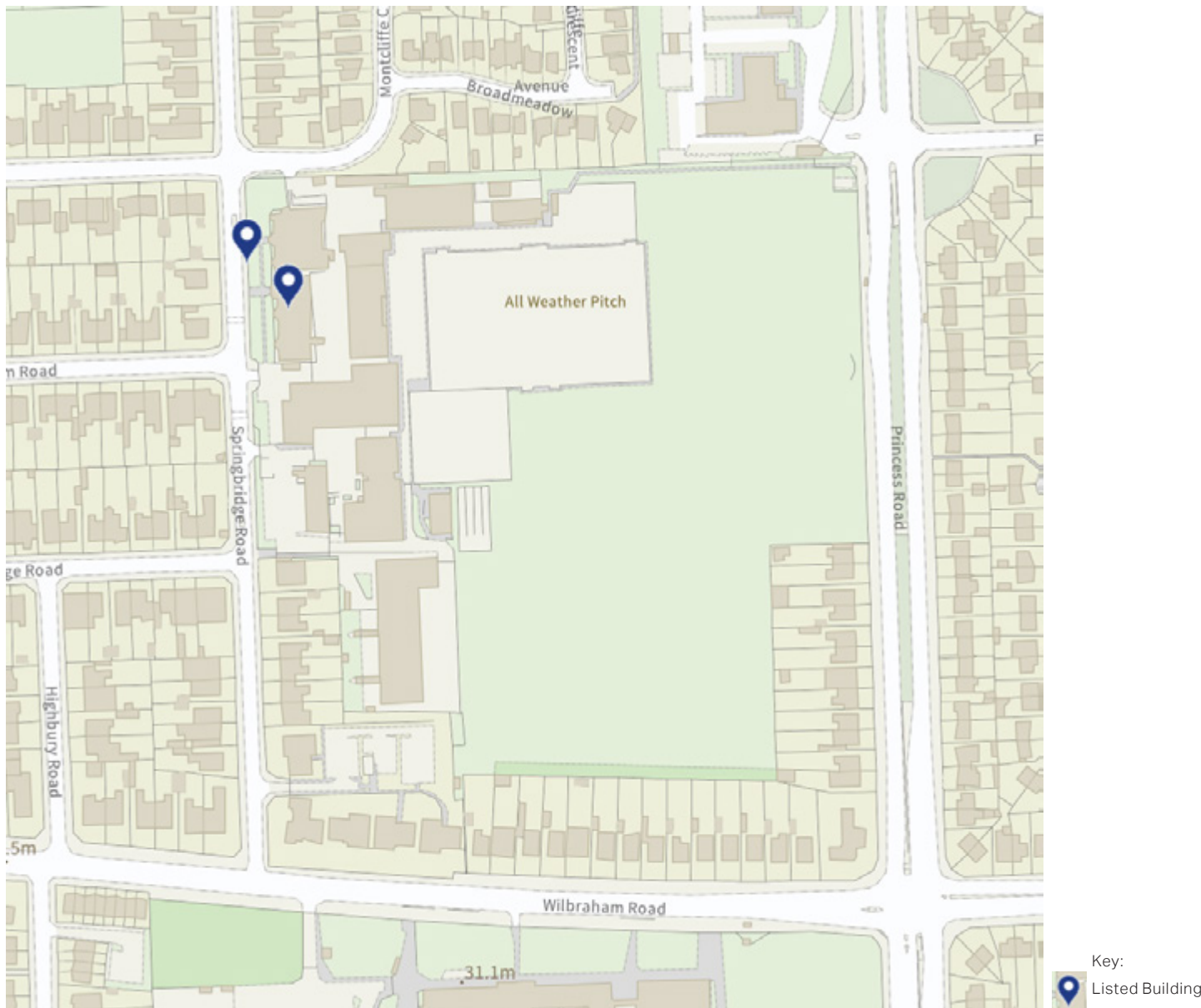
1.2.1 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is the legislative basis for decision-making on applications that relate to the historic environment. Sections 16 and 66 of the Act impose statutory duties upon local authorities 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. Section 72 requires local authorities to pay special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

1.2.2 The Local Plan

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The development plan applicable to the building is the Manchester Core Strategy 2012-2027 (2012) and saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP – 1995) which require that proposed works preserve or enhance the historic environment, avoiding adverse impact on the special interest of listed buildings. Additionally, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Places for Everyone plan 2022-2039 (2024) has policies that require that all development proposals affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets adhere to national planning policy and are informed by appropriate heritage assessments. The policy has partially replaced the policies set out by the Manchester Core Strategy.



1.1 Heritage assets map

1.2.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)

The courts have held that following the approach set out in the policies on the historic environment in the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) will effectively result in a decision-maker complying with its statutory duties. The Framework forms a material consideration for the purposes of section 38(6). At the heart of the Framework is ‘*a presumption in favour of sustainable development*’ and there are also specific policies relating to the historic environment.

The Framework requires that proposals for change give ‘great weight’ to the conservation of heritage assets (paragraph 212), that harm to the significance of heritage assets requires ‘clear and convincing justification’ (213), and that such harm is outweighed by public benefits. Harm is to be categorised as substantial (214) or less than substantial (215).

The Framework requires local planning authorities to look for positive opportunities for new development within conservation areas and within the setting of heritage assets. Proposals that preserve positive elements or enhance/ better reveal their significance, are required to be treated favourably (219).

1.3 Summary Assessment of Significance

A more detailed assessment of significance of the listed building is included in Section 4 of this report; the following is a summary of why the listed building is considered of nationally important architectural and historical interest.

The primary significance of the **Main Building** lies in the architectural quality of its late-Victorian and Edwardian external facades and its resultant townscape value, with the rear and side elevations also of some lower architectural interest. Internally, this architectural interest is likely to have been reduced across the 1886 (first) building by extensive modern alterations and refurbishment, with its central hall and the staircases believed to be of the greatest architectural and historic interest, the original windows and external doors and areas of glazed brickwork also having some limited interest. The internal plan form, appreciable but heavily altered, is of only moderate significance. The Basement is of secondary architectural status and of relatively low architectural interest as a result, with the glazed brick walls to its circulation areas believed to be its primary feature. The Basement WCs, with an entirely modern fit out, make no contribution to the building’s significance other than in the original leaded glazing to the pupil WCs that contributes to the principal elevation. This, however, is undermined by poor-quality window fans. The architectural interest of the interior of the 1910 (second) building is unclear.

The 1920s **Science Building** is curtilage listed but has only very limited significance in its own right. Its architectural interest is derived mainly from the role that it now plays in forming a historic group with the Main Building, where it makes some limited contribution to the listed building’s otherwise entirely modern setting. This, contribution is reduced, however, by its relatively plain exterior and its later additions. There is no interest to the WCs, PE Office and Cleaner’s Store, and other post-1940s additions, which are both modern and utilitarian in character and make no contribution to the heritage significance of the site.

Their setting within the wider campus makes no contribution to the significance of these buildings and is in parts detracting.

2.0 Historic Background

2.1 Association with William Hulme

William Hulme was a Lancashire lawyer and landowner (c.1631-1691) who founded the Hulme's Charity. Whilst little is known of his life, it is believed he attended Manchester Grammar School and then Brasenose College Oxford, joining Gray's Inn in 1650. Hulme owned property at Kearsley, Reddish, Withy Grove and Prestwich. On his death he was buried in Hulme Chapel in what was the collegiate church of Manchester, now Manchester Cathedral.

On his death Hulme left his estate to his wife, it then passed on to her trustees and their heirs for educational purposes. As well as providing scholarships for poor students at Brasenose College the funds were invested in property. In 1881 the Charity Commissioners allowed the trust to use its funds to establish two schools in Manchester – William Hulme's Grammar School and Hulme Grammar School in Oldham – as well as a hall of residence for Anglican students, which now forms part of Manchester University. Later funds were given over to Manchester High School and Manchester Grammar schools; scholarships were also provided from the Hulme Schools to Brasenose College.

2.2 Development of the School and Grounds

William Hulme's Grammar School lies to the southeast of the Whalley Range area of Manchester known, which in turn lies 2 miles southwest of the city centre. Historically Whalley Range was part of Lancashire and in the mid-19th century was a very rural area **[Plate 2.1]**. These large swathes of open Lancashire farm land were acquired in 1834 by the local banker and businessman Samuel Brooks. Brooks then developed the area as a "desirable estate for gentlemen and their families", forming one of the earliest suburbs of the city. Nearby, the 60-acre Victoria Park was laid out by Manchester City Council in 1869, to designs by Alexander Hennell.

2.2.1 The Main Building (1886)

Works began on the school site to the designs of A. H. Davies Colley in 1886; Colley was an architect with a background in ecclesiastical buildings. Another of his buildings, the Congregational Sunday School Bury Old Road (corner of Upper Park Road), Cheetham Hill, still remains.

The Main Building was constructed to the northern end of a large plot of open land close to Alexandra Park. Colley's design followed an eclectic late-gothic manner, with ecclesiastical references **[Plate 2.2]**. The block was built on a rectangular plan with a double height central hall, capped by large timber lantern light, with an open balcony at first floor level. This hall provided access to the ground floor classrooms.

The 1892 surveyed OS map shows the 1886 building set in rectangular grounds (smaller than the present-day campus). This was surrounded by fields to most sides, although a nursery and housing sat to the northeast and the theological college further to the west **[Plate 2.-2.4]**. The development of Whalley Range was well underway by that time, with Alexandra Park taking shape to the north of the school. The infrastructure to serve the area was also in place, its commuter population served by the Cheshire Lines Railway running to the east and Manchester Central Station and the district lines to the south. However, much open farmland still remained around the school at this time.

The Main Building has undergone numerous internal changes over its history. In recent years this has included more substantial works in c.1998 and 2001, and the refurbishment for repurposing approved in 2017.



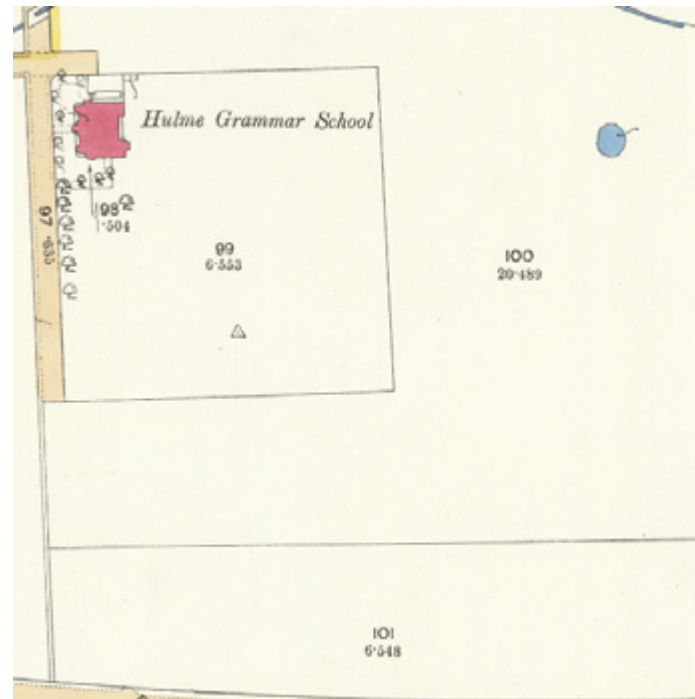
2.1 1845 map showing the approximate site of the future school (marked with a blue triangle) (NLS)



2.2 A. H. Davies Colley's 1886 school building, west (L) and south (R) elevations, shown in 1910 Manchester Libraries, GB127.m66017)



2.3 1892 surveyed OS with the site marked 'Hulme Grammar School' and the 1886 range stood alone amongst fields, south of Whalley Range development (NLS)



2.4 Main Building and grounds, OS map surveyed 1892, published 1894 (NLS)

2.2.2 The c.1910 Addition to the Main Building ('New Hall')

1910 saw the extension of the Main Building with the New Hall, designed by W. C. Hardisty and comprising a new secondary entrance/link block, a large school hall and a basement 'manual work' classroom [Plates 2.5-2.8].¹ This was opened formally in 1911.² It was built in red Ruabon brick to complement the original and stands to the south of the 1886 building.³ Only two-thirds of the intended design was completed, however, and the southern end of New Hall consequently remained 'temporarily' walled with brick until 1926, awaiting the funds to complete the remaining 30%.

As built in 1910, this was a single-storey (over basement) link of three bays, with terracotta buttresses, frieze and pierced parapet, six-light transomed windows in the first two bays and a gabled entrance in the third, with a round-headed doorway in a richly ornamented terracotta surround including a swan-neck pediment. The extension provided a new secondary entrance/link block and large school hall, lined with oak paneling and joinery.

The new secondary entrance lobby was accessed through a timber revolving door, with a flight of steps leading up to the reception, the hall and school corridors. The plaster ceiling to the space took a curved form with shallow coffers, the structure springing from a heavy oak timber cornice. The lobby walls were also

constructed from green glazed brick to dado height with red brickwork above. The deep door reveals were formed in oak panelling. A small multi-paned oak window sat within the wall to the foot of the stairs. The main entrance porch with round-headed doorway, stringcourse, and parapet with lettered panels, lay at the centre of the symmetrical Spring Bridge Road elevation. The elevations were built in red brick with yellow brick and terracotta embellishments. The block was built with a basement, plus two storeys and a full attic storey. The central gable broke forward of the main façade with narrow high bevelled windows and oculus.

Otherwise, however, the present-day school campus remained largely undeveloped, with the land to the school's immediate west already in use as playing fields.

Student numbers rose during the First World War and the 'Peveril Mount', a private house on the junction of Alexandra Road and Wilbraham Road, was acquired for Preparatory School use in 1918. This functioned largely separately, but under the same headmaster.

The 1910 building was finally extended to its original intended length in 1926, with a new room added in 1953.



2.5 1915-16 revised OS map (NLS)

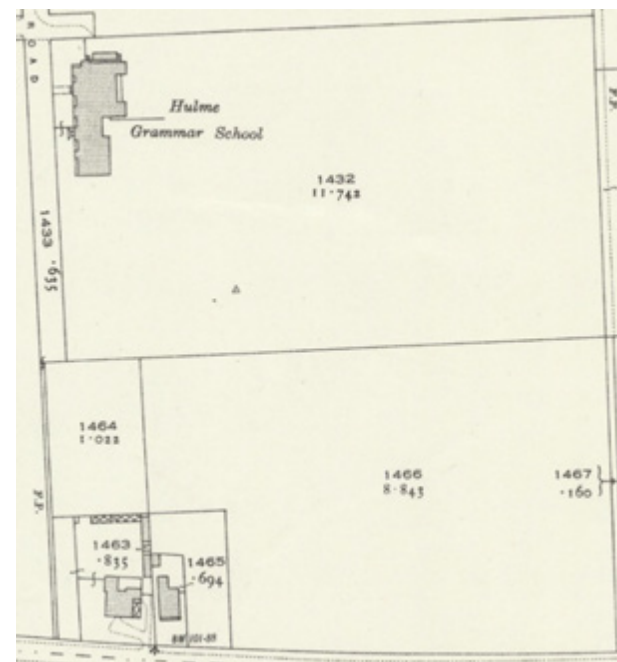
1 K P Thompson, *The History of William Hulme Grammar School, Manchester 1887-1980*, p. 21.

2 Ibid., p. 35.

3 Ibid., p. 34.



2.6 1922 OS showing the 1910 extension to the south of the 1886 building, and the surrounding athletics and sports grounds to north and east (NLS)



2.7 Extended Main Building and grounds, OS map revised 1915-16, published 1922 (NLS)



2.8 1926 aerial showing the Main Building of 1886 and 1910, with football pitches to the east (Imperial Aerial Photo Co, Manchester Libraries, m67839)

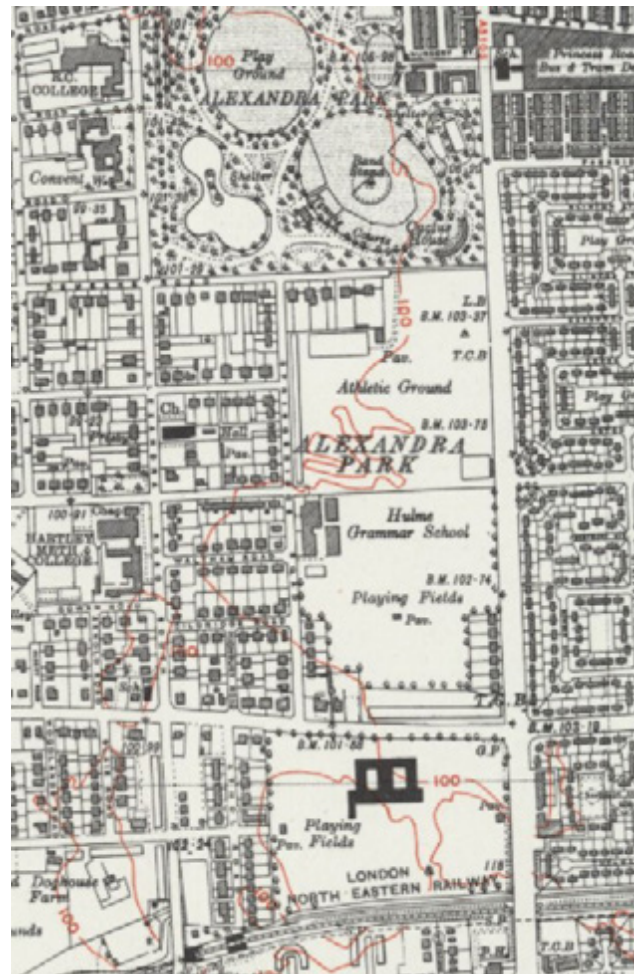
2.2.3 The Science Building

The Science Building was built to the east of the existing school in c.1927. It was extended in 1952 and 1956 and the infill block added in the mid-1980s [Plates 2.9-2.12].⁴

⁴ Ibid., pp. 79, 85.



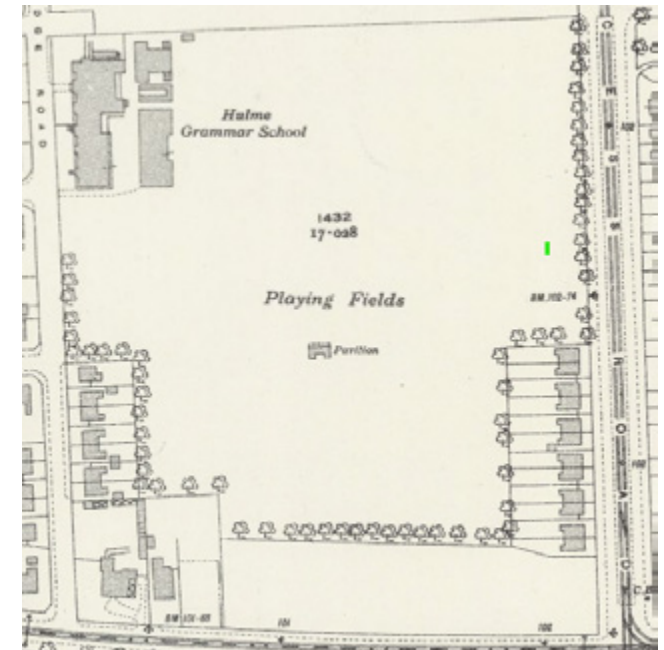
2.10 Detail from 1949 aerial showing the Science Building and other additions (HEA, Raf_58_c_8_vp2_5735)



2.9 1938 surveyed map of the site, showing the Science Building and other additional buildings (NLS)



2.11 1973 photo showing the Science Building, with the Main Block behind, plus other 20th-century blocks, looking west across the playing fields (D Scholes, Manchester Libraries, m38578)



2.12 Main Building, Science Building and Gymnasium, OS map revised 1933, published 1935 (NLS)

2.2.4 Other Early 20th-Century Expansion

The Gymnasium was built to the east of the Main Building and south of the Science Building in c.1927, whilst the Playing Fields were extended at a similar time.⁵ The new Art Building (which actually had much broader uses) followed to the south of New Hall between 1938 and 1945.⁶ The athletics ground to the north (today the site of Montcliffe Crescent) was acquired for the school in the 1930s by Lord Egerton. Initially kept as uneven ground it was converted into a smooth ley between 1945 and 1949 **[Plate 2.13]**.⁷

Outside the campus, the former fields to the east were developed into housing estates between 1922 and 1945, surrounding the school with suburbia.

5 Ibid., pp. 56, 58.

6 Ibid., p. 64.

7 Thompson (p. 58) suggests this was done in 1935, but aerial images suggest it was later.



2.13 1945 aerial photograph showing the later blocks to the east and south of the Main Building (HEA, raf_106g_uk_622_rs_4373)

2.2.5 Mid-20th-Century Additions

A new headmaster – Mr Bird – took up the leadership of the school in 1947, heralding a new phase of construction to the east and south of the Main Building.⁸ The new Dining Hall was built to the south of the Art Building and opened in 1949.⁹, whilst a brick groundsman's storage shed, with a flat above, was added to the south of the new Dining Hall in the same decade.

In the 1960s an appeal was made to raise funds for a Sixth Form Centre (also to include a music room), with part funding provided by the sale of 'Peveril Mount'.¹⁰ As part of the construction process the gates in the front wall were widened and altered to reduce the number of collisions.¹¹ Further additions followed, with a school swimming pool opened on the junction of Wilbraham and Springbridge Roads in 1966 and a Sports Hall added to the site in 1973, adjoining the Gymnasium [Plate 2.14].¹²

8 Ibid., p. 77.

9 Ibid., pp. 79, 85.

10 Ibid., pp. 98, 96.

11 Ibid., p. 102.

12 Ibid., p. 114, 101, 113.



2.14 Detail of 1955-68 OS map showing growth of school buildings to the south and east of the Main Building (NLS)

2.2.6 21st-Century Improvements

Over time, various extensions and new buildings were erected at the school to cope with growing student numbers. These included a new Sixth Form Block (c.1985), changing rooms serving the Sports Hall (c.1989) and new single-storey rear accommodation (c.2004).

Substantial redevelopment followed after 2007. The buildings to the south of the Main Building were demolished when permission was granted to remove the Gymnasium, Technology Block, Dining Hall and Bursar's Office and erect a new three-storey building, create two new play areas and two car parks (all approved 2007).¹³ This resulted in the construction of the Donner Building, Zochonis Building and Performing Arts Centre. Permission was granted retrospectively for two single-storey pre-formed classroom units in 2014.

More recently, a 2-storey replacement 420 place primary school with a day nursery was built in the south of the site (approved in 2015) and subsequently extended (approved in 2016). This was completed by 2017, at which point the primary school vacated the Main Building, which subsequently fell vacant before being repurposed for the sixth form **[Plate 2.15]**.¹⁴

¹³ Manchester City Council Planning, 082021/LO/2007/S1.

¹⁴ Manchester City Council Planning, 108713/FO/2015/S1; 111584/FO/2016/S1.



2.15 School campus, Esri, c.2023

2.3 Relevant Planning History

There have been several applications for planning permission and listed building consent to the Main Building and Science Block. Those of most relevance to the current proposals are listed below.

Main Building

053501/LO/CENTL1/98

Listed building consent for alterations to main building and existing vehicular access and associated works to form separate access to prep school.

Approved 15.07.1998

062380/LO/SOUTH1/01

Listed building consent for alterations to main entrance area of building to form reception area with improved security.

Listed building consent granted 13.09.2001

087936/LO/2008/S1

Listed building consent for the addition of a lift to enable access for wheelchair users and other DDA related improvements.

Approved 19.12.2008

115018/LO/2017

Listed building consent for internal refurbishment of school building.

Approved 24.3.2017

Science Block

021830

Construction of an infill building within existing science block

Approved 22.05.1984

2.4 Sources and Bibliography

Historic Maps

National Library of Scotland, Maps, <https://maps.nls.uk/>
Landmark, Promap, <https://www2.promap.co.uk/#/login>

Historic Photographs

Historic England, Archive, <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/archive/collections/aerial-photos/>
Manchester City Council, Manchester Local Image Collection, <https://images.manchester.gov.uk/>

Heritage Management Resources and Documents

Manchester City Council, 'Whalley Range Conservation Area', https://www.manchester.gov.uk/info/511/conservation_areas/1226/whalley_range_conservation_area

Idem., Building case file and online planning records

Secondary Literature

Thompson, K. P. (undated). *The History of William Hulme Grammar School, Manchester 1887-1980*
Moss, J. (2002). 'Philanthropy, Philosophy and Religion: William Hulme', *Virtual Encyclopaedia of Greater Manchester*, <http://www.manchester2002-uk.com/celebs/philanthropy1.html> (archived copy)
Pevsner, N. (2004). *Lancashire: Manchester and the South East* (Pevsner Architectural Guides: Buildings of England)
Wells, J. F. *The British Architect* (26th February 1876), pp.90-91

3.0 Site Survey Descriptions

This section of the report has been prepared on the basis of site surveys of the Main Building (2017) and the wider school campus (2024) carried out by Insalls and internal photographs and descriptions (all 2020/5) provided by CoARC Ltd in April 2025.

3.1 The Setting of the Buildings

3.1.1 The School Campus and its Setting

The campus is formed of a rectangular area to the north with a more irregular area (its later extension) to the south, the latter enclosed to east, south and west by housing. In the north the campus is bound by Spring Bridge Road to the west, housing and an area of commercial development to the north, and Princess Road to the east. There are public frontages to the east and west, both present in the north of the site only **[Plate 3.1]**.



3.1 1886 (L) and 1910 (R) buildings, west (principal) elevation, to Spring Bridge Road

The school buildings are situated exclusively along its north and west edges, with development having spread out from the northwest corner. Those along its western perimeter front onto Spring Bridge Road.

General access into the campus is from Spring Bridge Road, where there are entrances into the 1886 and 1910 buildings and three points of access into the interior of the site. The southernmost access, situated at the campus's original southern edge, runs past the side of the Primary School to connect with an access road that runs along the east of the modern Zochonis and Donner Buildings to reach the car park situated in the north of the campus before wrapping around the All Weather Pitch. A further access point is situated in the west of the northern perimeter, accessed from Montcliffe Crescent, and leads to a small car park situated between the 1886 building and the Sports Hall.

There is an irregular development line to the interior of the site. The 1886 and 1910 buildings occupy the northwest corner, with the later buildings situated to their east and south, all enclosed to the east by the access road and car park. Sports facilities are focused to the north and east of the access road, with the Sports Hall and changing rooms in the north and the All Weather Pitch, MUGA and cricket nets to their south. The Playing Fields occupy the remainder of this part of the campus, running to the east to the campus boundary on Princess Road.

The southern extension of the campus contains the new Primary School, which sits forward of the access road, positioned behind the housing that runs along Spring Bridge Road. The Playing Fields continue to its east, with housing to their south.

The school's surroundings are primarily residential. Spring Bridge Road and the short connecting streets that run to its west are comprised of interwar semi-detached houses, set back from the road behind domestic gardens **[Plates 3.2-3.3]**. The development to Princess Road is similar, although smaller in scale and more densely packed, whilst in the south the detached houses to the north side of Wilbraham Road are early post-war semi-detached buildings **[Plates 3.4-3.5]**. In the north, Montcliffe Crescent and Broadmeadow Avenue form part of a larger modern development of detached houses, whilst the large-footprint, larger scale, commercial development to their east is also entirely contemporary style **[Plates 3.6-3.8]**.



3.2 Spring Bridge Road, looking north



3.3 *Spring Bridge Road, looking south*



3.4 *Princess Road, viewed from the campus looking east*



3.5 *Rear of housing to Wilbraham Road*



3.6 *Montcliffe Crescent, looking east towards Broadmeadow Avenue*



3.7 *Broadmeadow Avenue, viewed from the campus looking northwest*



3.8 *Commercial development to the campus's north*

3.1.2 The Setting of the Listed Building

The setting of the listed building (1886, 1910) is compromised to the front (west), side (north) and rear (east) elevations. From Spring Bridge Road, the modern Donner Building sits to its immediate south and, whilst of a high-quality design and generally subordinate, is entirely modern in style. Set back between the two, across the access point, are the inter-war, 1950s and 1980s Science Building (also subordinate but in its principal element very much of its period) and a very utilitarian projecting wing to the Donner Building, both visible behind contemporary metal gates and a set of cycle racks. Modern railings run across the entire frontage of the campus, with a wide pair of automatic gates situated to the immediate south of the 1910 building **[Plates 3.9-3.10]**.

To the north of the 1886 building, there are views of the modern substation building and Sports Hall – both very utilitarian in character – across the functional, tarmacked, playground and staff car park **[Plate 3.11]**. From Montcliffe Crescent, at the campus's north, this view opens up to also include the 1980s north elevation of the Science Building, where the heavy geometrical fenestration and pre-cast panels give a utilitarian character **[Plate 3.12]**.

Within the interior of the campus, the listed buildings are enclosed within a courtyard Quad setting, this Quad also including the inter-war/1950s/1980s Science Building to the east and the modern Donner Building to the south **[Plates 3.13-3.14]**. The courtyard itself is hard landscaped, with young trees, picnic benches and rows of metal cycle racks, and is used as a playground.

More generally, the frontage of the campus to Spring Bridge Road is otherwise occupied by the modern Donner Building and Performing Arts Centre, with hard landscaping in front. Inside the campus, the grounds are entirely built up to the south and northeast.

The other buildings on the site show a variety of ages, scales and footprints and are eclectic in their styles and materials.



3.9 Donner Building, north elevation, facing the listed buildings



3.10 Modern setting to the south of the 1910 building



3.11 Modern setting to the south and southeast of the 1910 building



3.12 Substation and Sports Hall visible to the rear of the north frontage



3.13 Sports Hall and 1980s Science Building extension visible to the northeast of the 1886 building



3.14 Quad setting to the listed buildings, with the Science Building (L), Donner Building and 1886 building (R)

3.2 The Main Building and Science Building

3.2.1 The 1886 and 1910 Buildings – the ‘Main Building’ (Grade II listed): Exterior

The **1886 building** has its principal frontage to Spring Bridge Road, where it is set back behind a large lawn, enclosed by a red brick boundary wall with railings (also Grade II) [Plates 3.15-3.16]. Its secondary frontage is to the north, and its rear to the east, the south elevation now mainly obscured from view by the 1910 building [Plate 3.17]. A red brick building with decorative terracotta panels and polychromatic banding, banded parapets and bevelled windows, all in an eclectic late Gothic style, it is of four storeys at its tallest, with a hipped roof with gablets, gable ends and a fleche, dropping down to a single storey in its south. The attic storey is banded, with a steeply pitched hipped roof with lead-clad fleche and green slates.

The main entrance porch with round-headed doorway, stringcourse, and parapet with lettered panels, sits at the centre of the symmetrical Spring Bridge Road elevation to the 1886 building. Here, the central gable breaks forward of the main façade with narrow high bevelled windows and oculus. The polychromy and gablet features are continued on the north frontage, which is complementary but much plainer, the building height here dropping down to three storeys.

Windows follow a 1:2:3:2:1 pattern, repeated across all floors. These take the form of large mullion-and-transom cross-windows, mostly with arched lights, their glazing unleaded and set in painted wooden frames. The lower levels of the basement windows are illuminated by a lightwell.

The **1910 building** (the school hall) abuts this building in the south, set slightly further back and slightly lower in height but echoing the materials and polychromy of its neighbour, and much of its detailing, although here in red Ruabon brick [Plate 3.18]. This too presents its principal frontage to the street (west), where it combines Gothic and Tudor features, including oriel windows, transomed windows (some as bay windows) with leaded glazing, buttresses and terracotta detailing. Four storeys high, its steeply pitched roof is again with gablets, strong gable ends and a fleche. The 1920s south elevation is much plainer, although the polychromatic banding is continued.

Both buildings present their rears to an enclosed courtyard area (used as a playground), where they are faced by the Science Building opposite. The 1886 building is here much plainer and a storey shorter than its principal frontage, replicating its gablets, hipped roof and polychromatic banding but without gable ends, fleche and decorative panels. Similarly, the 1910 building here continues the tall buttresses of its principal elevation but lacks the polychromy, oriel windows and gablets. It also has several low-rise modern additions to this elevation, all very functional in character [Plate 3.19].



3.15 1886 building, north (L) and west (principal, R) elevations



3.16 1886 building, detail of the west elevation



3.17 1886 building (R), south elevation, to the courtyard



3.18 1910 building, west (principal) elevation, to Spring Bridge Road



3.19 1910 building, east (rear) elevation

3.2.2 1886 Building: Interior

Due to works taking place it was not possible to survey the interiors of the 1886 and 1910 buildings at the time of the site survey (2024). However, information provided by the school has confirmed that there have been no substantial alterations to the 1886 building subsequent to the internal survey carried out by Insalls in 2017.

The 1886 building is comprised of a basement, plus two storeys and a full attic storey. It has a rectangular plan with a double height central hall, capped by large timber lantern light, with an open balcony at first floor level. The hall provides access to the ground floor classrooms. Reflecting its continuous use, the building shows evidence of modernisation, with subdivision of rooms, replacement of doors and side panels, introduction of sinks, tongue and groove timber cladding, cabling and surface-mounted wiring, and insertion of partitioning and suspended ceilings. A lift and separate platform lift have also been inserted and the reception area modified. The principal staircase and the central hall – the building's highest status spaces – and the secondary entrance and staircase retain their essential historic character, although the hall shows evidence of modern insertions and additions **[Plate 3.20]**.

This building is currently in use as the Sixth Form, having fallen vacant in 2017 after the construction of the new Primary School. Interventions carried out to facilitate this change of use are believed to have focused on repair and redecoration, the replacement of existing poor-quality suspended/floating ceilings, consolidation of cabling/wiring and the removal of other insensitive modern additions (including lobbies and fire cages).



3.20 1886 building, example first-floor room (2017)

Staircases

The principal staircase is located at the front of the site, running from basement to second floor level. It is lined with green glazed bricks to dado height at basement to ground floor levels, with brown brick lining from ground floor to second floor levels. The open string canted staircase has a decorative metal balustrade with an alternating pattern of balusters, the latter braced towards their top and on the diagonal [Plates 3.21-3.22].

The staircase is accessed from street level by an arch headed doorway with a pair of part-glazed timber doors. Tall, arch headed windows, with bevelled glass lie within the gable wall, providing natural light to the space at each floor level. At second floor level the canted ceiling is lined with timber boarding, supported on large timber and cast iron roof trusses springing from robust console brackets; the whole space reminiscent of a church nave.

The secondary stair to the rear of the building is much more utilitarian, on a narrow plan with no windows to the enclosure.



3.21 1886 building, principal staircase (2017)



3.22 1886 building, principal staircase (2017)

Central Hall and Classrooms

The hall at ground floor level is built from green glazed brick to dado height, with a contrasting coloured brick above. The open balcony at first-floor level is supported on massive cast iron decorative brackets and has a timber clad soffit [Plates 3.23-3.24].

The classrooms at ground and first floor level all have a generous ceiling height, lit by large mullioned windows with bevelled pre-cast concrete surrounds. Timber vertical cladding lines the walls, again to dado height. The walls are finished with a hard cement render. Additional light is borrowed from fanlights above the doors to the central hall area. [Plate 3.25]

At first floor, again the floor to ceiling height is generous, with the classrooms accessed from the open balcony. The balcony edge is protected by a decorative metal balustrade and the timber roof trusses and lantern light above the space are again supported on massive decorative cast iron brackets [Plate 3.26].

The two classrooms at second floor level have high vaulted ceilings capped by timber lantern lights supported on timber trusses [Plate 3.27].



3.23 1886 building, central hall (2017)



3.24 1886 building, central hall, gallery (2017)



3.25 Ground-floor classroom (2017)



3.26 First-floor classroom (2017)



3.27 Second-floor classroom (2017)

Basement Level, including WCs

The basement level was designed as a utilitarian space with low ceilings, serviced by a number of narrow passageways. Cast cylindrical columns remain exposed in a number of the rooms.

The Staff WCs have both modern plasterboard partitions and walls of painted brick (indicating original walls). Their windows are unleaded and the frames plain and simple, with a fan added in each space and the lower panes boarded over for visual screening. The ceilings are modern suspended tiles with fluorescent strip lighting and all fixtures, fittings, features, fit out and sanitaryware appear modern. There is vinyl to the floor and both trunked and exposed piping [Plates 3.28-3.29].



3.28 1886 building Basement, Female Staff WCs (CoARC)



3.29 1886 building, Basement Male Staff WCs (CoARC)

3.2.3 1910 Building: Interior

Information about the interior as a whole was not available, although it is believed to have undergone similar changes to the 1886 building.

The basement was again designed as a utilitarian space, its principal corridors/circulation spaces lined with green and brown glazed brick and tiles **[Plate 3.30]**.

The Boys' and Girls' WCs have glazed leaded casements in wooden frames (with bottom-hung opening panes), a window fan attached to one of the panes in each. The Boys' WCs has a bay window and blue and white glazed tiles to its walls, whilst to the Girls' there is a smaller, less elaborate, window, and painted plasterboard walls **[Plates 3.31-3.34]**.



3.31 1886 building Basement, Boys' WCs (CoARC)



3.32 1886 building Basement, Boys' WCs (CoARC)



3.30 1886 building, glazed brick corridors leading to the Basement WCs (CoARC)



3.33 1886 building Basement, Girls' WCs (CoARC)



3.34 1886 building Basement, Girls' WCs (CoARC)

3.2.4 The Science Building: Exterior

This two-storey rectangular flat-roofed building faces the listed buildings across the courtyard but makes no effort to mimic their form, appearance or character **[Plate 3.35]**.

To the 1920s principal (west) frontage this is a long building of 17 bays in brown brick, its centre bays stepping forwards slightly but with few other architectural features or details. Visually, it is characterised by its two horizontal rows of narrow alternating brick and glazing. The south elevation is similar to the west, whilst the east (rear) elevation is more utilitarian, comprised of two rows of wider windows and a slightly stepped roofline to its 1950s central infill, the latter matching in design but in a contrasting red/brown brick.

The 1980s extension wraps around the north of the building and projects out in the northeast. It is visibly different in style and material, with a large area of blind orange/red brick and the windows divided by a horizontal band of coloured pre-cast panels, the north elevation dominated by the panels and increased glazing **[Plates 3.36-3.37]**.



3.35 Science Building, west elevation, to the Quad



3.36 Science Building, east elevation, showing phased construction (CoARC)



3.37 Science Building 1980s extension, and 1886 building

3.2.5 The Science Building: Interior

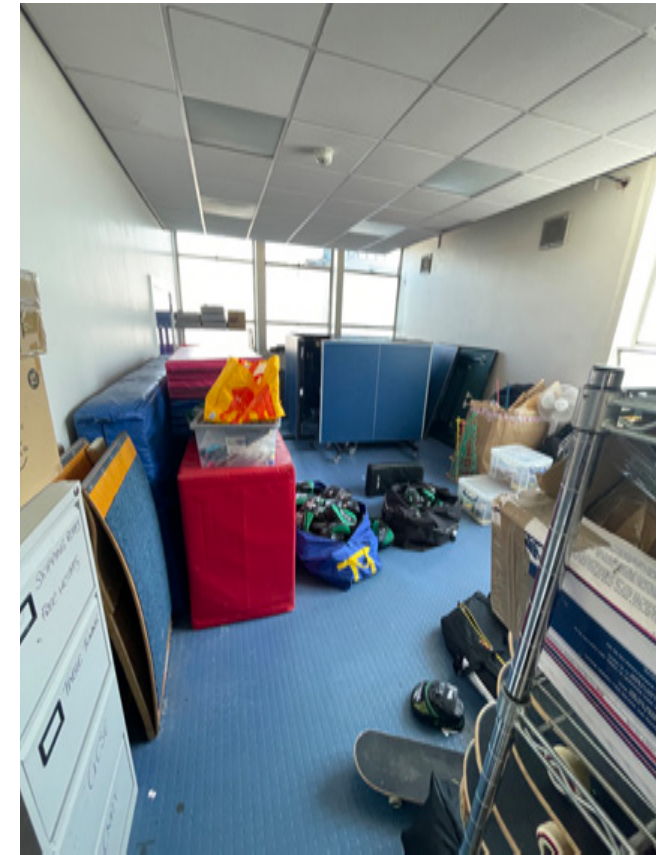
The interior is reported to have fabric or features of interest beyond the hardwood floors that have survived to some of its circulation areas (and which may survive under other modern coverings). Beyond this, the fit out of the 1950s/80s additions is again entirely modern, characterised by plasterboard partition walls, suspended tile ceilings and fluorescent lighting, with modern floor surfaces and decorative schemes, the latter very functional. This includes the **PE Office, Accessible WC and Cleaner's Store**, and the existing pupil WCs (not shown in the photographs) [Plates 3.38-3.44].



3.38 Science Building, entrance area (CoARC)



3.39 Science Building, ground-floor corridor (CoARC)



3.40 Science Building, PE Office (CoARC)



3.41 Science Building, PE Office (CoARC)



3.42 Science Building, Accessible WC (CoARC)



3.43 Science Building, Cleaner's Store (CoARC)



3.44 Science Building, Cleaner's Store (CoARC)

4.0 Assessment of Significance

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to provide an assessment of significance of the buildings so that the proposals for change to are fully informed as to its significance and so that the effect of the proposals on that significance can be evaluated.

This assessment responds to the requirement of the National Planning Policy Framework to 'recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance'. 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 (potential to yield evidence about the past), architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting'.

4.2 Assessment of Significance

4.2.1 The Main Building (Grade II Listed)

The William Hulme Grammar School stands on a corner site, on the east side of Spring Bridge Road and the southern side of Montcliffe Crescent. It lies outside of a conservation area, but within its setting. It remains in active school use, although the character of this use has evolved over time. Having recently housed the primary school, the Main Building was repurposed as the sixth form in works approved in 2017.

The school dates from 1886 and was built to the designs of A H Davies Colley with an extension dating to 1910 (architect unknown), which together comprise the Main Building. The building has an eclectic late-Gothic style. It is constructed largely from red brick with yellow brick bands, stone coping, terracotta dressings and green slate roofs. It could be suggested that the architecture and detailing reflect the ecclesiastical origins of the Anglican Church Trust, who commissioned the building, and the interests of Colley.

As these were the first buildings constructed for the school (and until the 1920s its only buildings) and have remained in use subsequently, the two parts of the Main Building are at the heart of its historic interest. Their architectural interest is greatest in their exteriors, and primarily in their street-facing principal frontages and roofs, where they present eclectic Gothic and Tudor facades with ornate roofs above. The set back from the street allows these to be appreciated in full, their corner plot giving them townscape importance as a local landmark. Their rears and side elevations are of

lower architectural interest but still of value. Internally, the central hall and the staircases believed to be of greatest interest.

During the mid-to-late 20th century internal changes were carried out in the 1886 building which, although largely un-documented, are typical of alterations associated with educational use during this period. A number of these have impacted on the building's internal character, including the addition of fire lobbies and doors, suspended ceilings to improve climate conditions and for lighting, partition walls to provide offices and smaller teaching spaces and a contemporary decorative scheme throughout. Notwithstanding, key features which remain largely unaltered including the windows, external doors, main and secondary staircases and the central hall with its large lantern light and balcony, are of significance. As a whole, however, the primary significance of the Main Building lies in the architectural quality of its late-Victorian external facades.

Sympathetically designed to match the original late-Gothic style, the extension of 1910 is also of high significance externally.

The architectural interest of the interior of the 1910 building is unclear but is presumed to be lower than that of the 1886 building, whilst also showing similar evidence of modern alterations.

The Main Building also has high townscape value; it forms a local landmark due to its scale, architectural quality and use. The Spring Bridge Road and Montcliffe Crescent elevations, along with their boundary treatment, are of particular townscape importance.

However, its setting within the wider campus makes no contribution to the significance of the Main Building and is in parts detracting.

The special interest of the Main Building is, therefore, manifest primarily in its fabric, which has the following hierarchy of significance:

Of the **highest significance** and particularly sensitive to change are:

- Externally, the 1886 A H Davis Colley heavily modelled gothic facades;
- Externally, the 1910 side extension facade, designed to be sympathetic to the original architectural character;
- Internally, the main staircase and its large decorative windows and canted ceiling;
- Internally, the main central double height hall, balcony and lantern light;
- Internally, original fabric and features where they remain.

Of **moderate significance** and therefore broadly adaptable:

- Internally, the plan form which, although appreciable, has had significant modifications.
- Factors that detract from the building's significance and should therefore, wherever possible, be removed are:
- 20th century alterations including fire lobbies, replacement doors and suspended ceilings.

4.2.2 The Science Building (Unlisted)

The 1920s **Science Building** is curtilage listed, being situated within the curtilage of the listed building at the test date of July 1948. However, it has only very limited significance in its own right. Its low architectural interest is derived mainly from the role that it now plays in forming a historic group with the listed building within the otherwise transformed campus, and, to some extent, in providing a degree of enclosure by the formation of the Quad. This makes a small contribution to the setting of the listed building. It is, however, reduced by this building's relatively plain exterior and the addition of later extensions (and also by the impact of later buildings added adjacent). There is no architectural interest to the post-1940s additions.

With an almost entirely modern fit out, the interior of the Science Building is believed to have no internal architectural or historic interest. This includes the WCs, PE store and janitor's store, which are entirely modern and utilitarian in character.

4.2.3 The Wider School Campus

The architectural interest of the campus is derived almost entirely from the two listed buildings – together comprising the Main Building – in its northwest corner. The remainder of the campus creates a heavily altered setting to the listed building, with little consistency of style, scale, mass or material. Development of different eras in the immediate setting of the listed building impacts on the setting of their most significant frontages – the principal frontages to Spring Bridge Road – and whilst they retain their prominence within the campus when viewed from the northwest, the buildings to the immediate south compete for dominance and are visually discordant.

5.0 Commentary on the Proposals

5.1 Description of the Proposals and their Impact on the Listed Building

The proposals for changes to the basement WCs of the listed Main Building are outlined in the drawings and Design and Access Statement by CoARC Ltd. There are also similar proposed changes to WCs in the curtilage listed Science Building.

Three WC spaces are proposed to be changed:

- Staff WCs situated in the basement on the west of the 1886 building
- Pupil WCs in the basement on the west of the 1910 building
- Pupil WCs on the east of the 1950s/80s extensions to the Science Building

All have windows to the exterior, those to the Main Building (1886 and 1910) forming part of the west (principal) elevation. Those to the Science Building front to the east, with no visibility from the Main Building.

In the basement of the Main Building, the staff WC spaces would be refurbished within their existing plan form, whilst the pupil WCs would be reconfigured and refurbished to create a single unisex 'open-plan' facility (with the repositioning of the associated cleaner's cupboard).

The existing WC facilities are of a very utilitarian character and a poor-quality and dated design, in poor condition, and unsuitable for the school's present needs (including the Main Building's current occupation by the Sixth Form). As a result of their inefficient use of the space available the school does not at present meet the minimum number of WCs required under BS 6465 (ref Building Regulations Part G) and DfE Building Bulletin 103. The changes proposed address these issues and provide fit-for-purpose toilet provision, in line with current school design standards.

All changes to the Main Building would be confined to within the existing spaces already allocated to WCs.

To the Science Building it is proposed to extend the existing WCs into the PE office, Cleaner's Store and accessible WC adjacent. These spaces are all entirely modern and utilitarian in plan form, fit out and character and make no contribution to the heritage significance of the curtilage listed building or that of the listed building adjacent.

5.1.1 Main Building, Internal

To the Main Building, the proposals would entail the removal and replacement of the existing decorative schemes, cubicle partitions and sanitaryware and some partition walls, all of which are believed to be entirely modern. All WCs would be stripped out and refurbished, the cubicle layout reconfigured, and services replaced. Lighting would be installed in the suspended ceilings (the latter retained to the staff WCs and replaced in the pupils') whilst drainage would be connected to the existing waste pipe runs and "pop ups", minimising damage to fabric. Redecoration would also be carried out to the WCs and to the adjacent corridor walls (these corridors themselves being modern).

As part of the reconfiguration of the pupil WCs a non-original, modern, blockwork wall that currently divides the space into separate gender facilities would be removed, as would the modern partition walls that form a cleaner's cupboard and a separate self-contained cubicle. An original metal column (currently situated in the cleaner's cupboard) would remain in situ unaltered. Separately, a roller shutter would be added to the inside of the new doorway, as a necessary security/safety provision (and as already implemented elsewhere in the school).

5.1.2 Main Building, External

The existing windows would be retained mainly without change, although the existing window fans (one to each of the four current spaces) would be removed and the housing windowpanes replaced on a like-for-like basis to match the panes adjacent. Replacement fans would be added in the Male and Female Staff WCs, whilst in the pupil WCs the fans would be replaced by two louvres, positioned beneath the windows in the lightwell to the exterior.

5.2 Justification of the Proposals and Conclusion

The proposals are necessary in order to provide fit-for-purpose WC accommodation in line with the buildings' original and continuing use as a school. All areas of proposed change are believed to be entirely modern in plan form, fixtures and fittings, with modern services already installed. The proposals would remove low-quality, dated, fittings and facilities that are no longer fit for purpose, replacing these with an improved layout and decorative scheme whilst removing detracting elements (most notably blockwork walls). There would be no loss of internal historic fabric, with the single column and beam above to the pupil WCs in the basement of the Main Building retained. Indeed, the amalgamation of this area, to create a single larger space, would go some way to reinstating a greater sense of the original plan form to this part of the building. These changes would also allow the addition of a roller shutter, in line with security and safety provisions, and the relocation of the cleaner's cupboard and the electricity cabinet.

To the exterior of the Main Building, the proposals would remove the glazing damaged by the insertion of window fans and replace these with matching glass, reinstating improved fans to the more functional glazing of the staff WCs. To the more ornate, leaded, windows of the pupil WCs the removal of the fans and their replacement by louvres concealed within the lightwell would enhance the aesthetic value of this elaborate principal frontage, bringing a slight enhancement to the

building's significance that would outweigh any minor, less than substantial, harm caused by the small loss of historic fabric.

There would be no heritage impact from the similar proposed changes to the Science Building.

The proposals are relatively minor in nature and have been sensitively designed. It is considered that they would not cause harm to the significance of the listed building, or that of the curtilage listed building, whilst allowing the school to provide fit-for-purpose, WC facilities that make maximum use of the space available and allow it to meet the requirements of the Building Regulations and the DfE.

The proposals would sustain the significance of the listed building in accordance with paragraph 210 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) while offering public benefits in terms of meeting the requirements of the Building Regulations and the DfE which would contribute towards the beneficial long-term and optimum viable use of the campus as a school. The statutory duties set out in Sections 16, 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to preserve the setting and special interest of listed buildings and the character and appearance of the conservation area would also be met alongside Policy DC19.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (1995), Policies EN3 and CC9 of the Manchester Local Plan, Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2012) and Policy JP-P2 of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority's Places for Everyone (2024).

Appendix I - Statutory List Description

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1270699

Date first listed: 19-Jun-1988

Date of most recent amendment: 05-Jun-1994

List Entry Name: WILLIAM HULME GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Statutory Address 1: WILLIAM HULME GRAMMAR SCHOOL, SPRING BRIDGE ROAD

School. Dated 1886. Designed by A. H. Davies Colley; with extension of 1910. Red brick, some yellow brick bands, and stone coping; terracotta dressings; green slate roofs. Two blocks with linking entrance and reception hall. Eclectic late Gothic manner. The 1886 block (to the north) has a basement, 2 tall storeys and a full attic storey, 1:2:3:2:1 windows, with gabled centre breaking forwards; traceried terracotta panels between floors; banded attic storey, steeply-pitched hipped roof with lead-clad fleche. The centre has a porch with round-headed doorway, string-course, and parapet with lettered panels; various narrow transomed windows; and shaped gable with oculus.

Large mullion-and-transom cross-windows, mostly with arched lights, those at the ends in 2-storey canted bays with banded parapets and those to the attic set in round-headed blank arches with banded heads and shaped gables breaking into roof. Attached at south end, a single-storey (over basement) link of 3 bays, with terracotta buttresses, frieze and pierced parapet, 6-light transomed windows in the first 2 bays and a gabled entrance in the third, with a round-headed doorway in a richly ornamented terracotta surround including a swan-neck pediment. The 1910 block, attached and set back to the south of this, is a large school hall over a basement, 6 bays; the 2nd and 5th bays break forwards, with 5-sided oriel windows carried up from the basement (a doorway at ground floor level of that to the right) and banded gables; these and the other bays have tall 6-light windows with low transoms and Tudor-arched lights, and traceried terracotta panels below. Steeply-pitched roof trapped between gables, with lead-clad cupola in the centre. Rear and interior not inspected.

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1254638

Date first listed: 19-Jun-1988

Date of most recent amendment: 05-Jun-1994

List Entry Name: RAILINGS, 2 PAIRS OF GATEPIERS AND GATES TO WILLIAM HULME GRAMMAR SCHOOL
Statutory Address 1: RAILINGS, 2 PAIRS OF GATEPIERS AND GATES TO WILLIAM HULME GRAMMAR SCHOOL, SPRING BRIDGE ROAD

Railings, gates and gate piers in front of north block of William Hulme Grammar School. Probably 1886. Brick with sandstone dressings, cast-iron railings. Two pairs of square banded gate piers with shaped pyramidal caps; low walls with stone coping; gates and railings with fleur-de-lys standards and traceried panels. Included for group value.

Appendix II - Planning Policy and Guidance

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The Act is legislative basis for decision making on applications that relate to the historic environment.

Sections 16, 66 and 72(l) of the Act impose a statutory duty upon local planning authorities to consider the impact of proposals upon listed buildings and conservation areas.

Section 16 states that:

[...] in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall 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.

Similarly, section 66 states that:

In considering whether to grant permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority, or as the case may be the Secretary of State shall 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.

Section 72(l) states that:

[...] with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

Local Policy

Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (1995)

The Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (the UDP) was adopted by the Council in 1995 as the statutory document that set out guidelines for all development in Manchester and provided a framework from which to base decisions about planning applications. Although the UDP has been superseded the following policies were retained and remain extant.

19. Listed Buildings

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

- c. not permit any external or internal alteration or addition to a Listed building where, in its opinion, there would be an adverse effect on its architectural or historic character;
- d. seek to preserve and enhance the settings of listed buildings by appropriate control over the design of new development in their vicinity, control over the use of adjacent land, and where appropriate, by the preservation of trees and landscape features;

Manchester Local Plan. Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2012)

Manchester Local Plan was adopted by Manchester City Council in 2012. The following policies are of relevance.

Policy EN 3: 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, including those of the City Centre. Proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets will be encouraged where they are considered consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.

Policy CC 9: Design and Heritage

Design of new buildings will need to be of the highest standard in terms of appearance and function. The standards and guidance explained in other LDF policies should be the basis for the approach to design, with particular attention to be given to the City Centre context and character.

Development in Manchester City Centre should preserve or enhance the heritage assets that have been identified, including listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled ancient monuments.

[...]

Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Places for Everyone (2024)

The Places for Everyone plan was adopted by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority in March 2024 to direct and set out guidelines for all development in Greater Manchester and provided a framework from which to base decisions about planning applications. Several of the policies have superseded the existing Manchester Core Strategy, including the second paragraph of Policy CC9, which has been replaced by the following heritage policy:

Policy JP-P2: Heritage

We will proactively manage and work with partners to positively conserve, sustain and enhance our historic environment and heritage assets and their settings. Opportunities will be pursued to aid the promotion, enjoyment, understanding and interpretation of heritage assets, as a means of maximising wider public benefits and reinforcing Greater Manchester's distinct character, identity and sense of place.

Local Plans will set out the key elements which contribute to the district's identity, character and distinctiveness and which should be the priority for conserving and enhancing in the future and demonstrate a clear understanding of the historic environment and the heritage values of sites, buildings or areas and their relationship with their surroundings. This knowledge should be used to inform the positive management and integration of our heritage by:

1. Setting out a clear vision that recognises and embeds the role of heritage in place-making;
2. Ensuring that the heritage significance of a site or area is considered in accordance with national planning policy in the planning and design process and opportunities for interpretation and local engagement are optimised;
3. Integrating the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings, with creative contextual architectural responses that contribute to their significance and sense of place;
4. Delivering positive benefits that sustain and enhance the historic environment, as well as contributing to the economic viability, accessibility and environmental quality of a place, and to social wellbeing [...]

Particular consideration will be given to ensure that the significance of key elements of the historic environment which contribute to Greater Manchester's distinctive identity and sense of place are protected from harm. These include historic town centres, places of worship, historic transport routes including the canal network, industrial buildings and structures including textile mills, farmsteads and other sites, buildings, and areas of identified archaeological, architectural, artistic and/or historic value.

Development proposals affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets and/or their settings will be considered having regard to national planning policy.

Where heritage assets have been identified as being at risk, Local Plans should identify specific opportunities for them to contribute to regeneration and place-

making, and they should set out strategies for their repair and re-use. Development proposals which will help safeguard the significance of and secure a sustainable future for Greater Manchester's heritage at risk will be supported in principle, provided they are not contrary to national policy or other policies in the development plan.

Proposals should be informed, as necessary, by the findings and recommendations of the appropriate heritage assessment(s) in the development plan evidence base and/or any updated heritage assessment submitted as part of the planning application process.

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

Any proposals for consent relating to heritage assets are subject to the policies of the NPPF (December 2024). This sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. With regard to 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment', the framework requires proposals relating to heritage assets to be justified and an explanation of their effect on the heritage asset's significance provided.

Paragraph 7 of the Framework states that the purpose of the planning system is to 'contribute to the achievement of sustainable development' and that, at a very high level, 'the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.

At paragraph 8, the document expands on this as follows:

Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives:

a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

and notes at paragraph 10:

10. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).

With regard to the significance of a heritage asset, the framework contains the following policies:

208. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

In determining applications local planning authorities are required to take account of significance, viability, sustainability and local character and distinctiveness. Paragraph 210 of the NPPF identifies the following criteria in relation to this:

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 sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness

With regard to potential 'harm' to the significance designated heritage asset, in paragraph 212 the framework states the following:

...great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

The Framework goes on to state at paragraph 213 that:

Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;

b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.*

Where a proposed development will lead to 'substantial harm' to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset paragraph 214 of the NPPF states that:

...local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and

b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and

c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and

d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use

With regard to 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of a designated heritage asset, paragraph 215 of the NPPF states the following;

215. 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 Framework requires local planning authorities to look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas and world heritage sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Paragraph 219 states that:

... Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

Concerning conservation areas and world heritage sites it states, in paragraph 220, that:

Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 214 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 215, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.

Other Relevant Policy Documents

National Planning Policy Guidance (2024)

Historic England: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning (December 2017)

Historic England: Conservation Principles and Assessment (2008)

Donald Insall Associates