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PBSA Development Site, Moss Lane East, Manchester

Heritage and Townscape Impact Assessment

For Cheshire Homes Group



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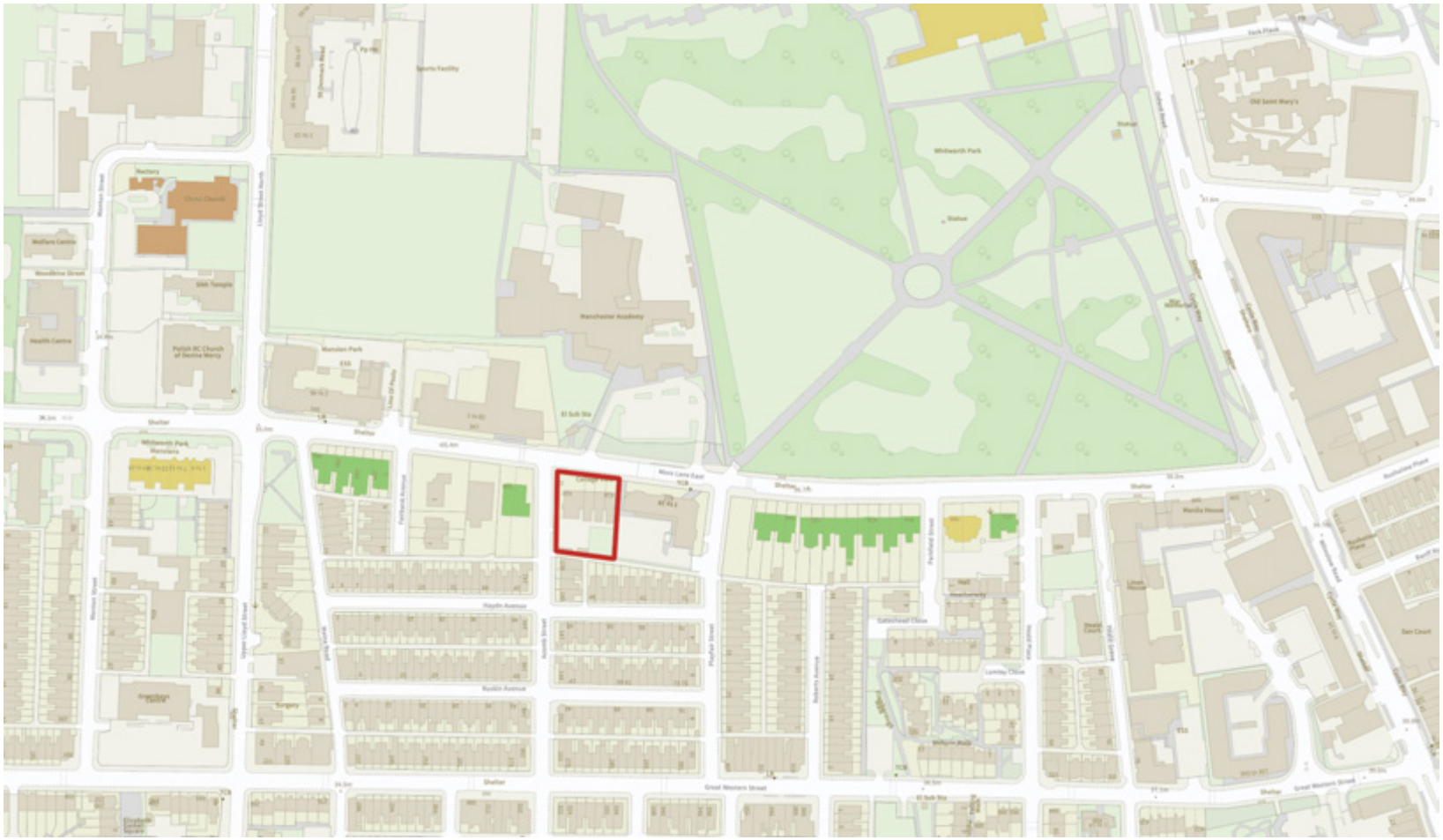
Project reference	MAN.MLE.01
Version:	V3
Issue date:	xx.4.25
Prepared by:	APB, AZM, KXM
Checked by:	KXM
Version description:	3.0

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1.1 *Heritage Assets map*

The Site

Grade II listed building

Grade II* listed building

Potential non-designated heritage asset

1.0 Summary of Heritage and Townscape Impact Assessment

1.1 Introduction and Methodology

This Heritage and Townscape Impact Assessment has been prepared by Donald Insall Associates on behalf of Cheshire Homes Group ("the Applicant") in support of a full planning application for the demolition of the existing building on the Site and the construction of a new purpose-built student accommodation ("PBSA") development at College View, 410-418 Moss Lane East, Manchester, M14 4PQ.

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 by Historic England in 'Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets. Historic England Advice Note 12' (2019); IEMA, IHBC and CIfA, 'Principles of Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment in the UK' (2021); Historic England's Historic Environment Good Practice Advice, Note 3 'The Setting of Heritage Assets' (2017) and The Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA, 2013).

The investigation has comprised historical research, both primary and secondary material and consulting the relevant Historic Environment Record (HER), and a site inspection. A short illustrated history of the site, with sources of reference and bibliography, is in Section 2; the site survey findings are in Section 3. The investigation has established the significance of the site, which is set out in Section 4 and summarised below. The specific constraints for this site are also summarised below 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 Policy Context

410-418 Moss Lane East is located in the City of Manchester. It forms part of the wider setting of the following listed buildings and buildings that could be considered for recognition as non-designated heritage assets **[Plate 1.1]**:

- Whitworth Park Mansions (Grade II)
- 466 and 468 Moss Lane East (Grade II)
- Edward VII Statue in Whitworth Park (Grade II)
- 470 Moss Lane East/2b Heald Place (potential non-designated heritage asset)
- 438-464 Moss Lane East (potential non-designated heritage asset)
- 406-408 Moss Lane East (potential non-designated heritage asset)
- 382-394 Moss Lane East/2 Fairbank Avenue (potential non-designated heritage asset)

Development within the setting of a listed building requires local authorities to assess the implications of proposals for built heritage.

The statutory list description of listed buildings within the wider setting of the building are included in Appendix I, with extracts from the relevant legislation and planning policy documents in Appendix II and summarised below.

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. Section 66 of the Act impose statutory duties upon local planning authorities with the aim of protecting the special interest of listed buildings and their setting.

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

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 detailed assessment of significance is included in Section 4 of this report. The following paragraph is a summary assessing the architectural and historic interest of the site and its building and the contribution they make to the local townscape and setting of heritage assets.

There is little architectural interest to this comparatively plain and heavily altered Victorian building (with the extent of internal survival unknown). There is some limited historic interest in its origins within a specific stage of the evolved history of this area – condensed within a relatively short period – but this evidential value is reduced by the architecturally and aesthetically poor modern alterations that have almost entirely obliterated a sense of the building's historic form and character, with much of the complementary evidence within the wider area also having been eroded. The contribution of the site to the townscape is very limited, now principally founded in the established plot and building lines that continue along Acomb Street and, in particular, Moss Lane East beyond, and in the survival of the majority of the historic gate piers (an important element of the local streetscape).

1.4 Summary of Proposals and Justification

It is proposed to remove the existing principal and ancillary buildings currently on the site and to replace these with a purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA) block of three and five storeys having a principal frontage to Moss Lane East and a secondary frontage to Acomb Street. The site would also be relandscaped, introducing a soft landscaped frontage to Moss Lane East and to the rear, enclosed behind the building, a garden, an ancillary bike and bin store building, and two disabled parking spaces. The existing boundary wall would also be replaced, with the whole site unified by a consistent materiality of red brick and grey-painted aluminium.

Although of Victorian origins, the site as it currently exists has only a very low architectural interest, with its townscape impact adverse and its contribution to the setting of nearby heritage assets overall negative, causing a degree of harm.

The overall townscape effect of the proposals would range from minor adverse to moderate adverse. This would have no impact of note on the setting of Whitworth Park Mansions (Grade II), 466 and 468 Moss Lane East (Grade II), the Edward VII Statue in Whitworth Park (Grade II) and of two potential non-designated heritage assets, the significance of these assets therefore being conserved. The proposed development would, however, result in slight, 'less than substantial' harm to the significance of 382-394 Moss Lane East/2 Fairbank Avenue and low, 'less than substantial', harm to that 406-408 Moss Lane East, these both being potential non-designated heritage assets of low, only local, significance.

On balance, therefore, the overall harm caused to significance would be very low, 'less than substantial' which would be outweighed by the associated public benefits in bringing an unloved and under-utilised site into full use, providing good-quality and accessible purpose-built student housing, and reducing pressure on the local housing stock, preventing the conversion/ loss of higher-quality local single-family dwellings, creating a quality development at a prominent point on a key route into both the city centre and the Oxford Road Corridor, and supporting local regeneration and economic vibrancy.

The proposals would therefore on balance accord with the relevant policies of the NPPF, meet the statutory duties of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act and overall comply with policies outlined in Manchester City Council's Local Plan Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2012, updated 2024) and Greater Manchester Places For Everyone Joint Development Plan Document (March 2024) insofar as they relate to townscape and the historic environment.

2.0 Historical Background

2.1 Summary History of the Surrounding Area

2.1.1 Early Agricultural Use

The early use of the area surrounding Moss Lane East was primarily agricultural, with no major manor holding ownership of the area.[1] Historically comprised of open land, the area remained undeveloped throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods bar the small farmsteads located on what is today Moss Lane East itself. Although the name Rusholme might imply that historically the area was water meadows it was actually probably open arable land, by the end of the medieval period at least.

By the 18th century the Moss Lane East area formed part of the surroundings of **Rusholme House** and, to a lesser extent, of Platt Hall, these large country houses dominating the west side of Wilmslow Road (the toll road into Manchester). The settlement of Manchester, however, remained small, and the development of the town was still contained to the area located around St Ann's Square and the present-day Cathedral. The Moss Lane East area, located between the historic townships of Moss Side, Rusholme and Chorlton, remained agricultural land.

2.1.2 Mid-19th Century Beginnings of a Middle-Class Suburb

Maps dating to the early 19th century show that the area remained agricultural, although **Clock House Lane** now ran along the course of the present-day Moss Lane East, already connecting what are today Oxford Road/Wilmslow Road and Upper Lloyd Street. Representational illustrations shown along this road are likely indicate small farmsteads or cottages, and perhaps some early villas, this area still agricultural in character, the town of Manchester still situated some 2 miles away **[Plate 2.1]**.

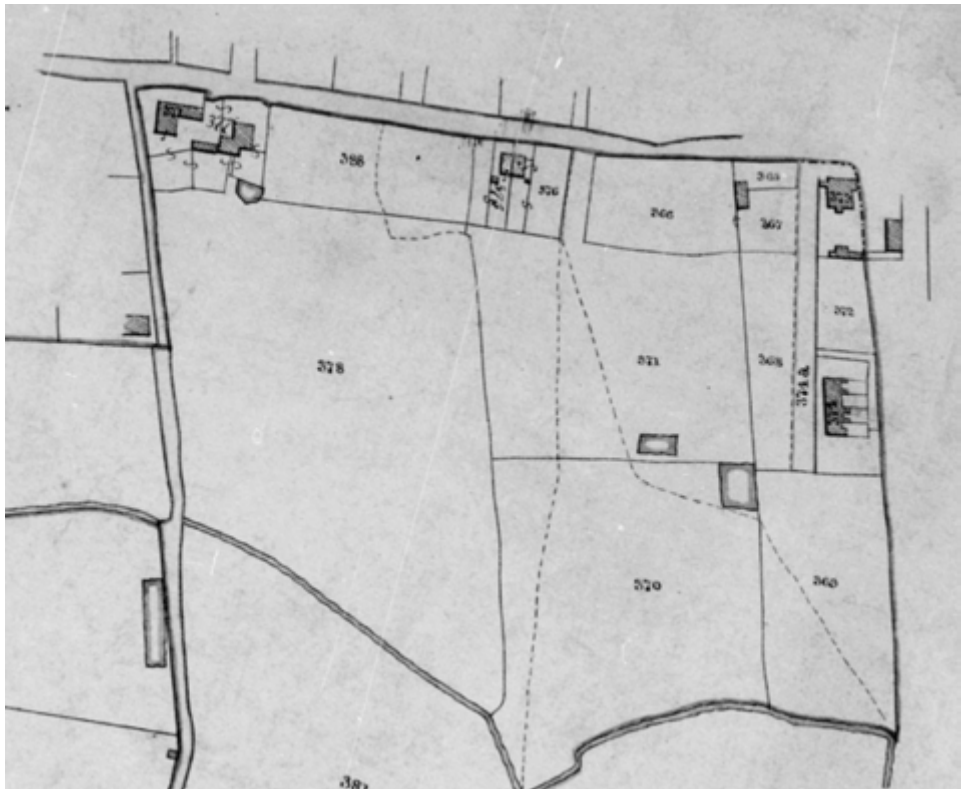
The tithe map indicates that comparatively little had changed by 1845, with the buildings to this section of Moss Lane East described as houses and barns (and the land between the plots and to their south labelled fields and meadows). The site formed part of a comparatively large plot of vacant land, potentially already earmarked for development (no. 388, 'building or waste land'), at this time owned by George Lloyd (a substantial local landowner) and leased to a Mrs Allen **[Plate 2.2]**.

By 1850, when the **first large-scale Ordnance Survey map** was produced, Clock House Lane had been renamed Moss Grove. Streets had been laid out to its south, the area's former agricultural character was now being lost and middle-class villas set in large gardens had been constructed **[Plate 2.3]**. Substantial in size and depicted as being extensively landscaped, these new villas reveal how Moss Lane East and the new connecting streets adjacent were an area of affluence, attracting wealthy professionals fleeing the increasingly urban town centre. **Whitworth Park Mansions** (Grade II) and **466 and 468 Moss Lane East** (Grade II), which survive today, are examples of the high-quality villas and subsequent terraced/semi-detached townhouses that were being constructed in the area for the upper middle classes during the 1840s and 1850s.

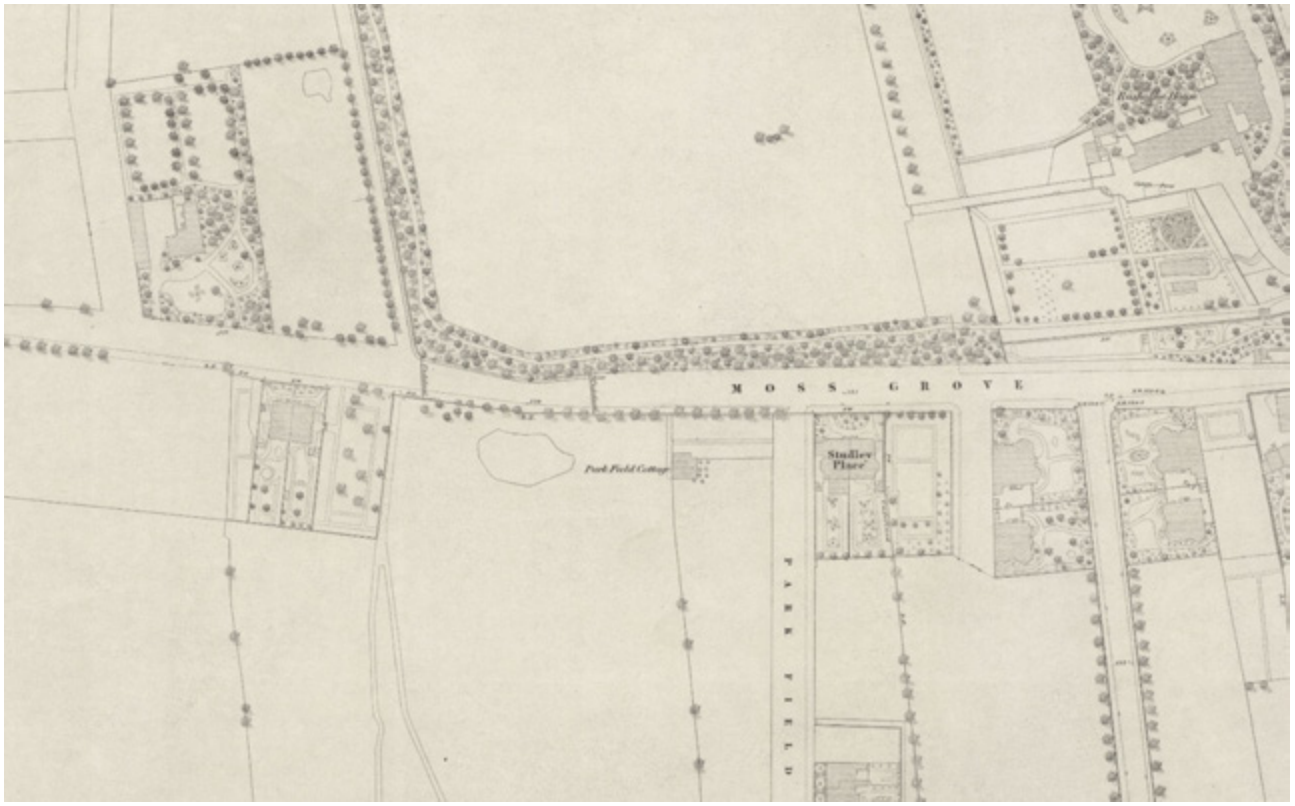
1 Farrer and Brownbill (1911), p. 302.



2.1 *Johnson's Map of Manchester, 1820 (MCC)*



2.2 *Future Moss Lane East (top) Wllmslow Road (R) and Upper Lloyd Street (L), tithe map of 1845 (The Genealogist)*



2.3 *OS Map, surveyed 1850, published 1850 (NLS)*

2.1.3 Late-19th Century Intensification of Development

The character of the area began to change once again towards the end of the 19th century, with higher-density housing now constructed as the city of Manchester expanded into these nascent suburbs. **Bacon's Map of 1878** shows that the area still retained vestiges of its rural character, with Moss Grove Farm surviving on Moss Lane East, with the grid of streets to its south still only partly complete. The pace of development was, however, accelerating, with the villas and new terraced and semi-detached townhouses on Moss Lane East itself now accompanied by streets of much higher-density terraces, laid out to the north of Moss Lane East, adjacent to what is now Lloyd Street North **[Plate 2.4]**. A nascent grid of streets was also now being laid out to the rear of the villas on the southeast of Moss Lane East, although this was yet to be completed and development was here spreading only slowly from Wilmslow Road to the east.

This addition of new higher density development on the former farmland to the rear of the Moss Lane East villas continued into the latter 19th century, filling the southeast side of Moss Lane East with small streets of small-scale, probably speculative, mainly terraced development. Whilst many of these houses were still fairly generous, having substantial gardens, those spreading along the north, away from Lloyd Street North, began to be more densely packed **[Plate 2.5]**.

To the southeast, redevelopment was also occurring adjacent to Wilmslow Road, where the houses were increasingly replaced with large civic and industrial buildings (a trend that continued into the first decades of the 20th century).

By 1905 the last fields to the southwest of Moss Lane East had been developed, the growth of the City of Manchester sparking continued demand for worker housing. This area to the south was now filled with streets of terraced housing constructed in a grid iron street pattern, punctuated by service alleys paved with stone setts, the plots and their gardens becoming increasingly small as land pressures grew **[Plate 2.6]**. The last remaining spaces were infilled over the subsequent decades, creating a high intensity of development in the areas behind either side of Moss Lane East **[Plates 2.7-2.9]**.

The increase in pace and density of development towards the end of the 19th century was accompanied by several major public and civic works projects. In the northeast, **Whitworth Park**, located on the land formerly known as Potter's Field, was opened in 1890 in memory of Sir Joseph Whitworth, with the **Whitworth Gallery** added in 1908 (Grade II). To the west of Lloyd Street North, **Christ Church** (Grade II, designed by Cecil Hardisty) opened to serve the growing local populace in 1896 **[Plates 2.10-2.11]**.



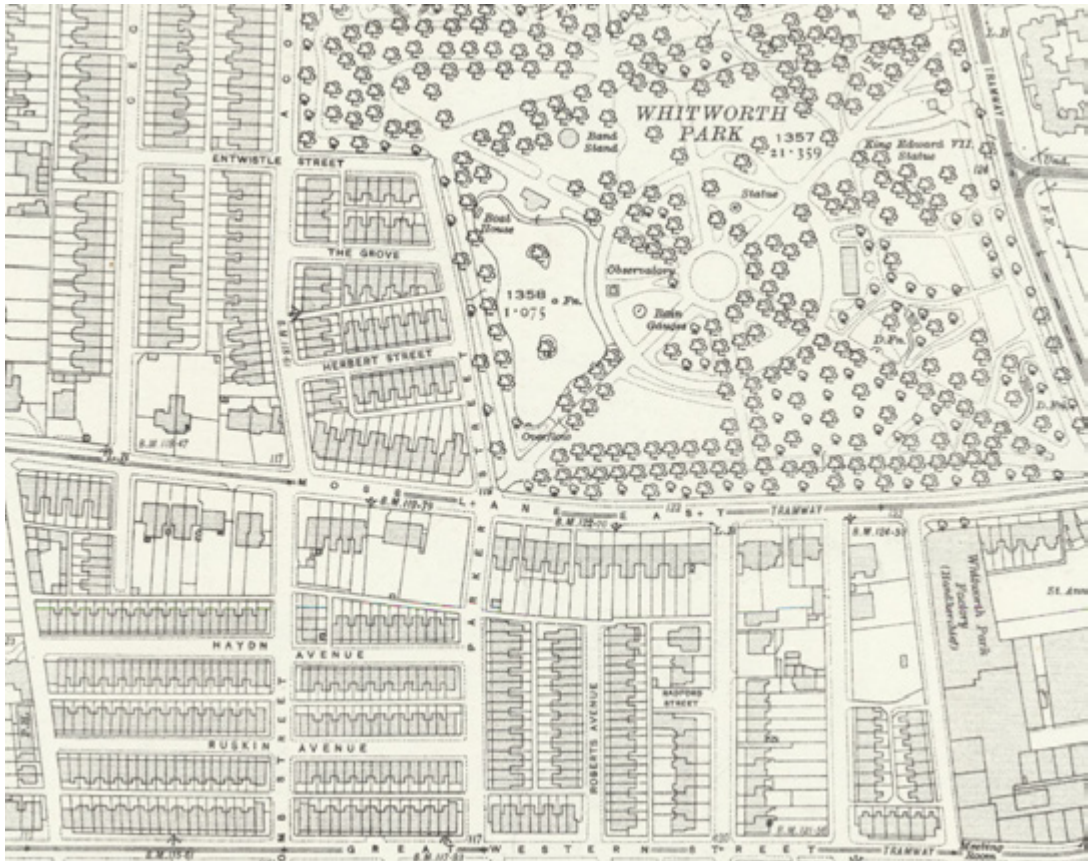
2.4 *Bacon's Map of Manchester, 1878 (UoM)*



2.5 *OS Map, surveyed 1888-89, published 1893 (NLS)*



2.6 *OS Map, surveyed 1905, published 1909 (NLS)*



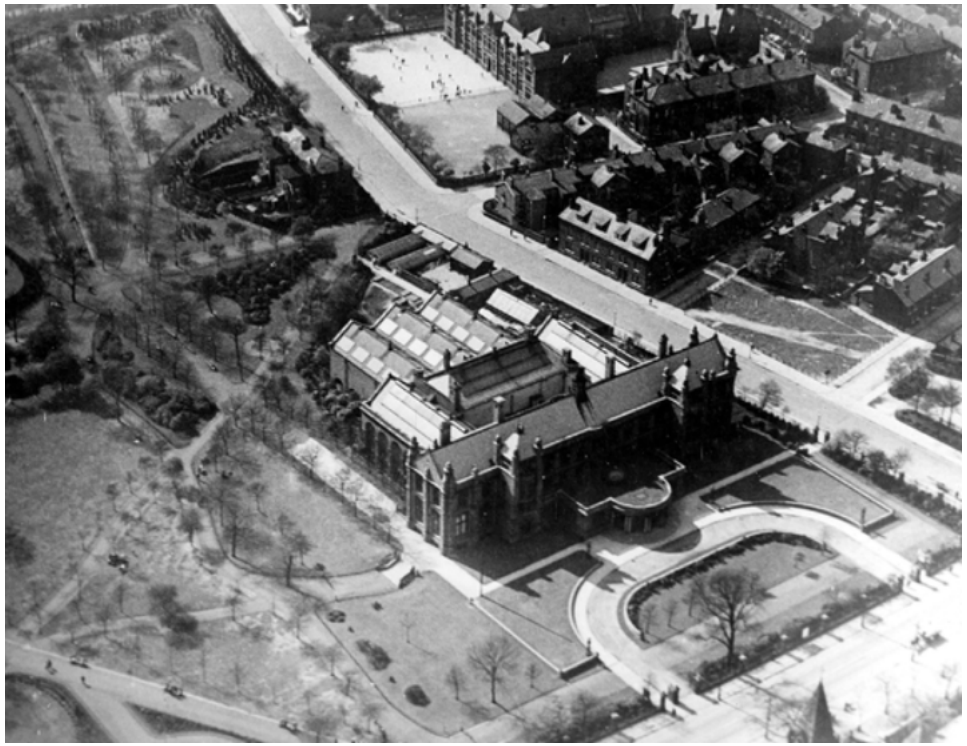
2.7 *OS Map, surveyed 1915-16, published 1922 (NLS)*



2.8 *OS Map, surveyed 1933, published 1935 (NLS)*



2.9 *Haydn Avenue (south of Moss Lane East), 1945 (MLIC)*



2.10 *Whitworth Park and Art Gallery, 1922 (MLIC)*



2.11 *Whitworth Park and surroundings, 1926 (MLIC)*

2.1.4 Later 20th Century Demolitions

The area remained essentially unchanged at the start of the 1950s but by the middle of the decade targeted demolition was underway in the densely packed area to the west of Whitworth Park **[Plate 2.12]**. This continued in subsequent decades, leaving the area between the park and Lloyd Street vacant to the rear of the villas to Moss Lane East (the cleared land to its north and west, by contrast, redeveloped with schools and modern housing). Similar areas had been cleared to the south of Great Western Street by the 1980s, creating a playing field and at least one site under development **[Plates 2.13-2.14]**.

Piecemeal demolition of individual villas and townhouses on Moss Lane East continued into the 1990s and early 2000s, removing the building at 420 Moss Lane (adjacent to the site), which was heavily overgrown by 2000. It was not, however, until the early-21st century that many of these cleared sites were redeveloped **[Plates 2.15-2.16]**.



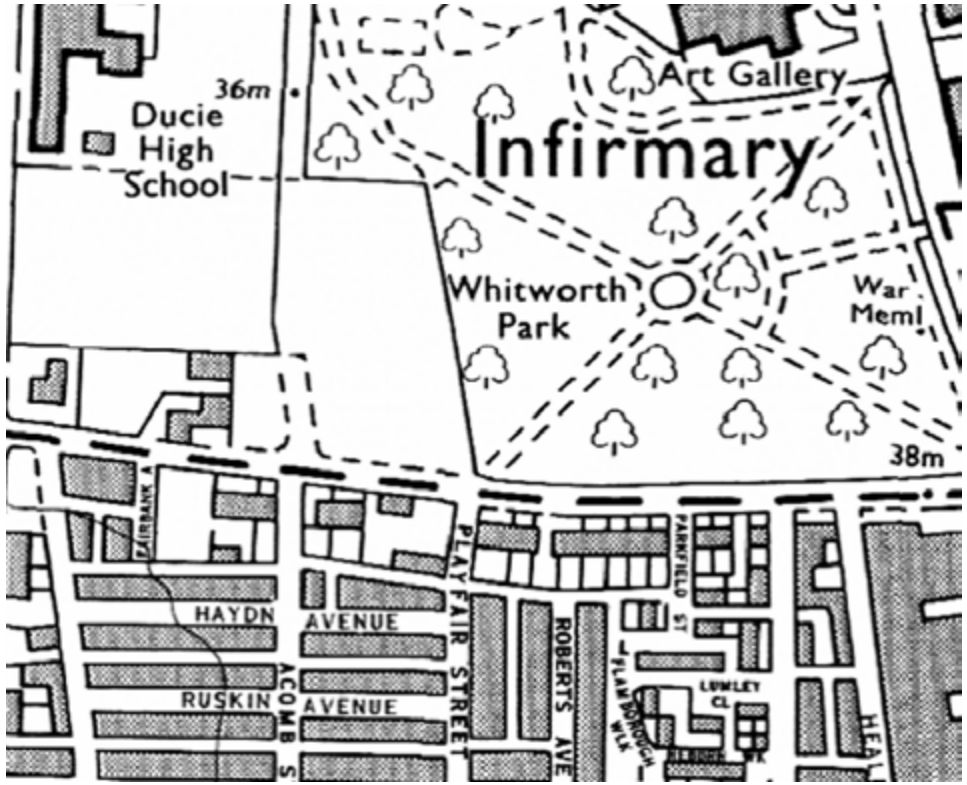
2.12 *OS map, published c.1952 (Landmark)*



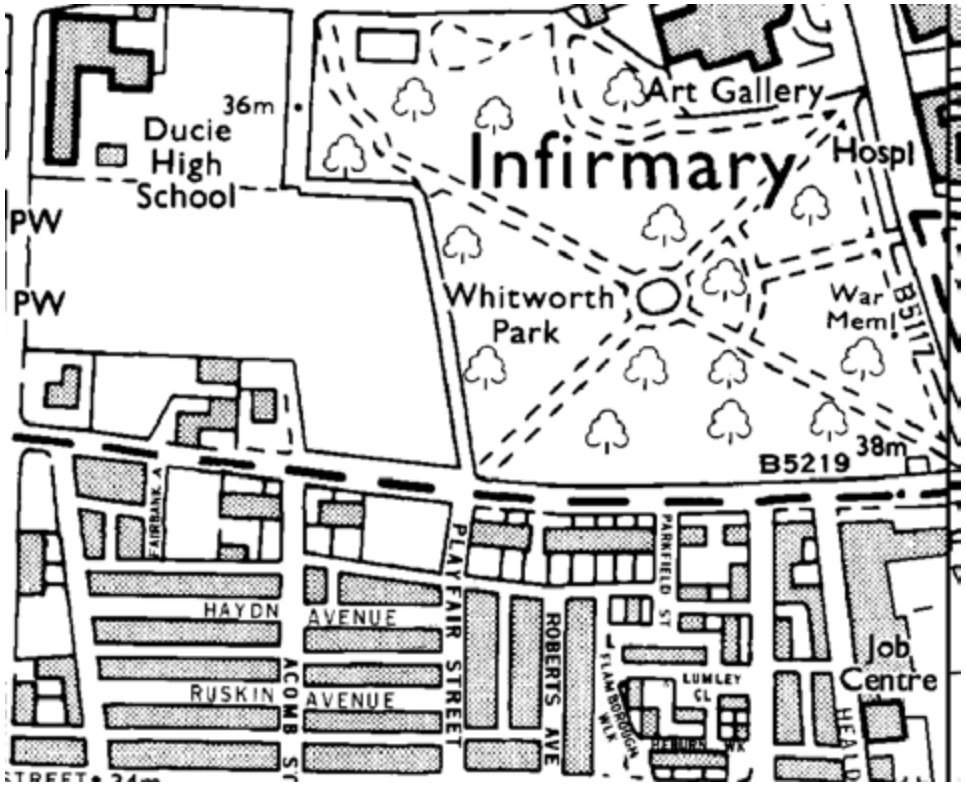
2.13 *Demolition on north side of Moss Lane East, 1972 (MLIC)*



2.14 *OS Map showing cleared sites to the north, revised 1978 (Landmark)*



2.15 *OS map, published c.1987 (Landmark)*



2.16 *OS map, published c.1994 (Landmark)*

2.1.5 21st Century Redevelopment of Moss Lane East

This process of redevelopment continued into the 21st century when the proximity of the area to the University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University (both with campuses on the Oxford Road corridor) prompted a building boom. The density of the area increased dramatically between 2004 and 2009 with the construction of the **Manchester Academy High School** (constructed in 2004) and **The Gallery** and **Park View** purpose-built student accommodation buildings (both constructed between 2008 and 2009) **[Plates 2.17-2.19]**. 420 Moss Lane East was also now redeveloped as student accommodation (today known as **Moss Court**), these early 20th century buildings all being of substantially larger in massing and height than the historic dwellings that they replaced.

This redevelopment has dramatically altered the character and appearance of this section of Moss Lane East, with much of the middle-class Victorian housing that dominated the road during the late 19th and early 20th centuries replaced with mid-rise blocks of housing, which have also subsumed much of their former gardens (where not hard landscaped for parking).

Proposals for a 9-storey block of student housing at 422 and 424 Moss Lane East were approved in 2023. Whilst this scheme will retain the Grade II listed building, it will involve the demolition of a large Victorian villa at 426 and 428 Moss Lane East.



2.17 *420 Moss Lane after clearance, 2000 (Google Earth)*



2.18 *Moss Lane East and surrounding streets, 2000 (Google Earth)*



2.19 *Moss Lane East and surrounding streets, 2009 (Google Earth)*

2.1.6 Relevant Planning Applications: Moss Lane East

Several planning applications on Manchester City Council's online planning portal relate to mid-rise development in the site's setting to Moss Lane East.

058168/FO/SOUTH1/99; 2000; Approved
422-424 Moss Lane East (to the site's immediate east)
Erection of a four storey building to form student accommodation incorporating 107 study bedrooms

061842/FO/SOUTH1/01; 2001; Approved
Land at corner of Moss Lane East and Lloyd Street North (to the site's northwest)
Erection of a 4 and 5 storey development of student flats consisting of 34no.5 bed flats and 12no.4 bed flats, accommodating a total of 218 students, plus car parking and landscaping.

067485/FO/SOUTH1/03; 2003; Approved
Ducie High School, Lloyd Street North (to the site's north/northwest)
Erection of part 4 storey, part two and part single storey school building with associated playing fields and car parking with new main access from Moss Lane East

072423/FO/2004/S1; 2004; Approved
Manchester Academy, Lloyd Street North (to the site's north)
Erection of a 3 storey detached building with 2nd floor link bridge to form 6th floor accommodation and erection of detached building to form gym

071056/FO/2004/S1; 2004; Approved
Site of 353/355 Moss Lane East and The Denmark Hotel (to the site's immediate northwest)
Erection of a part 3 part 4 storey building to form 82 self contained flats with basement parking and landscaping

086612/FO/2008/S1; 2008; Approved
Ducie Court, Burleigh Street (to the site's south/southeast)
Erection of a part 4, part 5 and part 9 storey building comprising 190 student units (C2) incorporating 124 cluster units and 66 self contained flats to accommodate 614 bedrooms in total, together with ground floor commercial units, basement car parking and associated landscaping, following demolition of existing building

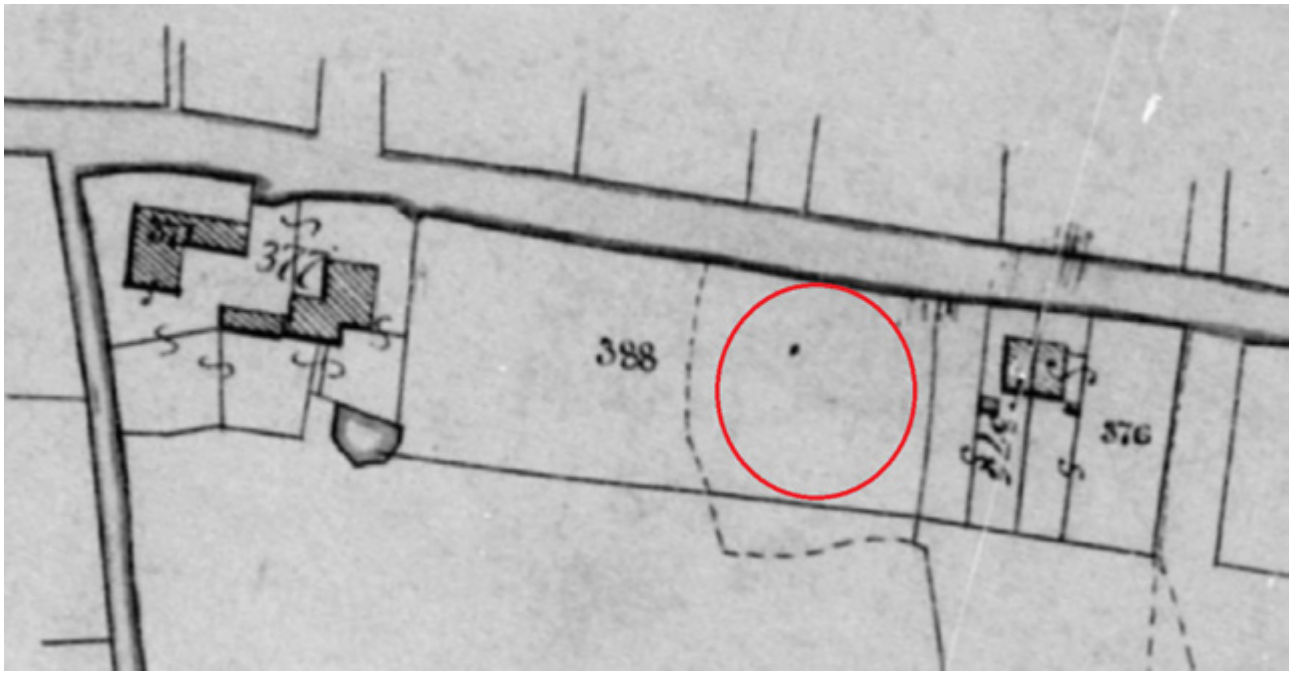
135545/LO/2022; 2022; Approved
466-468 Moss Lane East (to the site's east)
Listed Building Consent application for internal and external alterations and extension, in the form of a link building to 466 to 468 Moss Lane East to facilitate its conversion to purpose-built student accommodation.

2.2 The Development of the PBA Site ('the site')

2.2.1 Early history of the site

Maps dating from the beginning and middle of the 19th century indicate that the site remained undeveloped throughout this period, probably in agricultural use. By the 1840s it was part of George Lloyd's tenanted landholdings in the township of Rusholme, forming part of a larger field cultivated as pasture but also identified (perhaps tellingly) as 'building or waste land' **[Plate 2.20]**.[2]

The site was still shown as undeveloped in the OS map published in the town plan of 1850. Situated adjacent to the pair of semi-detached villas already existing at nos. 420-422, it occupied an attached garden to no. 420 and part of a small field to its west **[Plates 2.21-2.22]**.



2.20 *Site, tithe map of 1845 (The Genealogist)*

2 'Tithe Apportionments, 1836-1929', www.TheGenealogist.co.uk.



2.21 *Site, OS map surveyed 1845, published 1848 (NLS)*



2.22 *Site, OS map surveyed 1850, published 1850 (NLS)*

2.2.2 Construction of the terrace (c.1850s-c.1870s)

The exact date at which the terrace was constructed is unclear, with no original plans or records known to exist. A linear building likely to be the terrace is, however, included on this approximate site in Bacon's map published in 1878, suggesting a construction date of the 1850s-70s **[Plate 2.23]**. Certainly, it seems to have been present by 1876, when the architect John Wynne was recorded living at 5 Oscroft Place (seemingly present-day no. 412/410), this original name for the terrace still recorded in one of its sets of gate piers.[3] The terrace on the site therefore evidently dates to the middle or later decades half of the century, contemporaneous with other similar middle-class terraced developments constructed along Moss Lane East during this period. Indeed, it is likely that Wynne was the designer of the terrace, combining a residence for himself (where he stayed until at least 1911) with properties to let.[4]

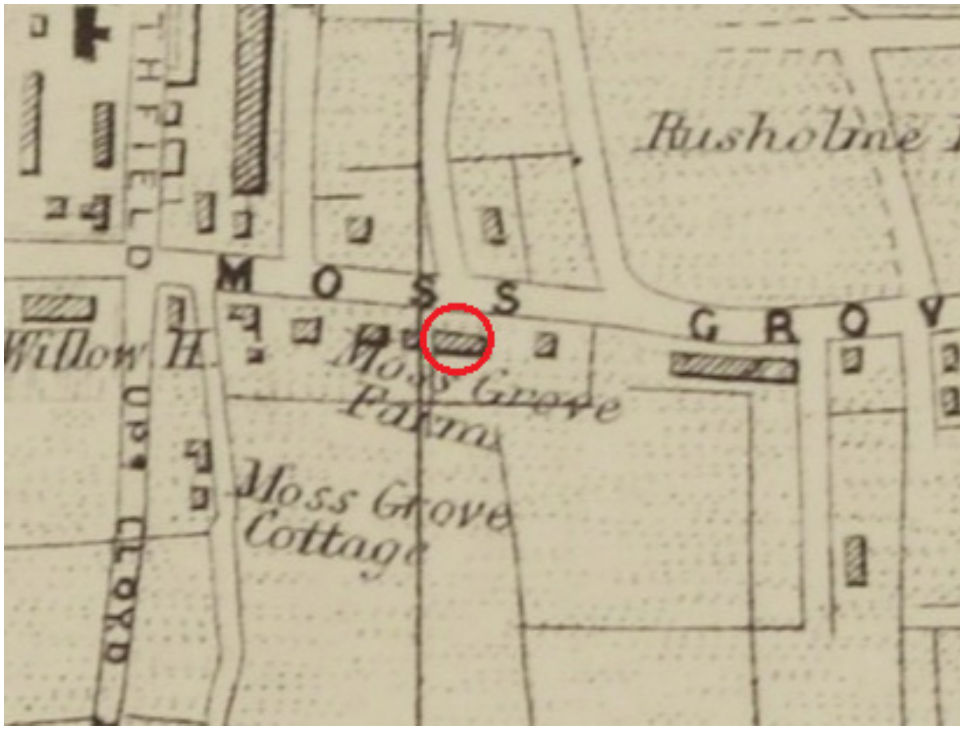
The first detailed depiction of this building is provided in the OS town plan surveyed in 1889 and published in 1891 **[Plate 2.24]**. This shows five dwellings with separate rear and front gardens. Whilst each of the dwellings varied subtly in form and size they were all broadly rectangular structures with canted bays or bay windows to the north, but that in the west (present-day no. 412/410) was distinctive, fronting onto the west, where it had a bay window and a breakforward bay and what may have been a coach house in its side garden. The other four properties ran from north to south and had substantial off-shoot wings to the rear. The principal access to all of the properties was along footpaths from Moss Lane East, whilst an alleyway provided access to the generous rear gardens of the four enclosed properties.

Advertisements for the letting of the properties refer to spacious interiors, designed for 'good' families living within the city, with 1 Oscroft Place (probably no. 412/410) shown to have been a seven-bedroom property in 1892. Other adverts for servants highlight the wealth and standing of the building's early occupants.[5]

3 Anon. 'John Wynne', Architects of Greater Manchester 1800-1940.

4 Wynne is named as the point of contact for lettings. Anon. (1892). 'TO BE LET', *Manchester Evening News*, 21 June 1892.

5 Anon. (1890). 'No. 3 Oscroft Place', *Manchester Evening News,* 10 April 1890.



2.23 *Site, Bacon's map of Manchester, 1878 (Archives Plus)*



2.24 *Site, town plan surveyed 1889, published 1891 (NLS)*

2.2.3 20th century history

The limited scale of the maps from the first half of the 20th century prevents any firm conclusions but it seems likely that the essential footprint of the terrace remained fundamentally unchanged until 1951 at least **[Plates 2.25-2.27]**. This is supported by aerial photographs of 1946, which show the off-shoot extensions to the rear and the gardens to the front and back (with varying outbuildings). A partial image of the westernmost property (412/410), taken in 1968, shows a canted double-storey windowed bay with hipped roof on its west elevation, the off-shoot extension behind (with a double-storey breakforward entrance bay) and small ancillary structures within its garden **[Plates 2.28-2.29]**.

Applications for the demolition of the property were sought in the late 1970s but subsequently withdrawn. Planning applications show that extensive alterations took place in the mid and late 1980s, when the five properties were combined and extended (probably adding the replacement off-shoot wings present today). A new dormer roof was also inserted, suggesting that the high attic storey was added as part of these changes. The date at which the front canted bays were added – seemingly modelled on those still surviving to the off-shoot extensions or west elevation – is not recorded, but it may have coincided with this conversion. It is not recorded when the chimneys were removed, having still been present in 1968.

The hard standing car parking to the rear of the site was added to the building during the early 2000s, with rear gardens still visible in images dating to 2005 but reduced in size by 2009 **[Plates 2.30 and 2.31]**. Photographs of 2008 show the dormer storey shingled to the frontage, with the 'College View' sign below, whilst an ancillary building in the northwest corner of the site was labelled a 'lodge', presumably for a porter overseeing the student accommodation. No. 418 was given new, contrasting, doors and windows in around 2019, which may indicate that it entered separate ownership at this time.



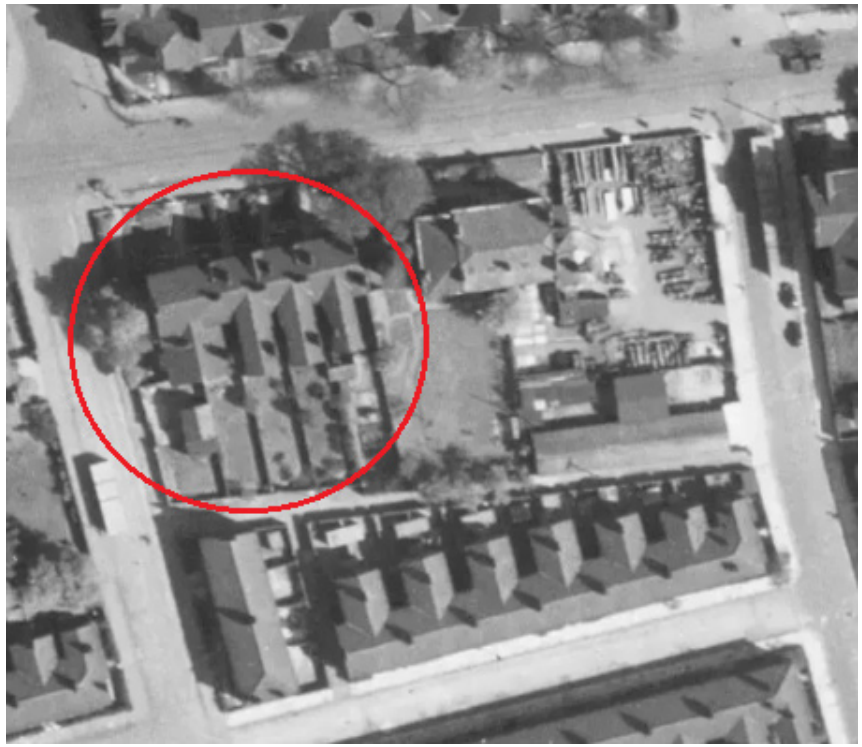
2.25 *Site, OS maps surveyed 1915-16, published 1922 (NLS)*



2.26 *Site, OS map surveyed 1933, published 1935 (NLS)*



2.27 *Site, OS map revised 1951 (Landmark)*



2.28 *Site from above, 1946 (HE Aerial Explorer)*



2.29 *Rear of site visible from Acomb Street, 1968 (MLIC)*



2.30 *Aerial view of site, 2005 (Google Earth)*



2.31 *Aerial view of site, 2009 (Google Earth)*

2.3 Relevant Planning History: The Site

Manchester City Council lists the following relevant planning applications on its online planning portal.

F09771; 1978; Withdrawn
Three-storey flat development for elderly persons and general use after demolition of existing houses.

020704; 1984; Approved
Conversion of five dwellinghouses into 19 self-contained flats with dormer roofs to front elevation and minor extension to rear of No. 418

2.4 Sources and Bibliography

Primary Sources

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The Genealogist, https://www.thegenealogist.co.uk/

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3.0 Site Survey Descriptions

3.1 The Setting of the Site

The site is positioned on, and fronts onto, the southern side of Moss Lane East. This busy road runs from east to west to connect Oxford Road/Wilmslow Road in the east with the A5103 (Princess Road) in the west. Lloyd Street North/Upper Lloyd Street divides it into two, with the site situated in the eastern section. This is deemed to form its setting and is described below **[Plates 3.1-3.2]**.

This section of Moss Lane East is mixed in its built form, although its character is overwhelmingly residential **[Plates 3.3-3.4]**.The northern side is bookended between Whitworth Park in the northeast and a Victorian Methodist chapel of c.1875 in its northwest (on the opposite side of North Lloyd Street) but is otherwise comprised of three modern mid-rise buildings on a large footprint, two being purpose-built student accommodation blocks and the other, set back from the road, a contemporary school. The southern side is more varied, combining surviving historic dwelling buildings of mixed ages, style and character with modern mid-rise redevelopment (also large footprint student accommodation) and gap sites in various stages of redevelopment or reuse. At its eastern end it becomes commercial in character as it joins Wilmslow Road (an area of heavy commercial activity).

The site sits at the corner of Moss Lane East and Acomb Street (a smaller side street), to which it presents what is now a secondary frontage, the interior and rear of the site running behind. Acomb Street, which also comprises the site's setting, forms part of a grid of short side streets of small groups of Victorian residential terraces, all focused around Great Western Street (which lies to the south) **[Plate 3.5]**.



3.1 *The site and its immediate setting to Moss Lane East, looking east*



3.3 *Eastern section of Moss Lane East, looking west towards the site*



3.5 *Acomb Street, looking south from Moss Lane East*



3.2 *The site and its immediate stting to Moss Lane East, looking west*



3.4 *Western section of Moss Lane East, looking east towards the site*

3.1.1 Moss Lane East: southeast

The southern corner of Moss Lane East and Wilmslow Road is occupied by **2 Wilmslow Road**, a Victorian villa (Moss House) now subsumed by poor-quality modern commercial extensions to both frontages. It is abutted to its west by **508 Moss Lane East** – a narrow public house building of 1899, built in red brick and with an angular Flemish gable to its frontage, surmounting an attractive rebuilt shopfront with retained Victorian green bricks. The remainder of the block is then occupied by the newly completed **Ropemaker Court** student accommodation development. Modular in design and clad in coloured panels (although at present mainly encased in scaffolding and meshing), this steps up from four storeys in the east to five in the middle and six in the west, built hard against the pavement in the east but with a narrow setback in the west. It continues along the majority of Heald Grove to the south, its roofline rising and falling but eventually terminating at three storeys high **[Plate 3.6]**.

The frontage to the block between Heald Grove and Heald Place is a gap site, currently in use as **a hand car wash** and occupied by a brick garage building, various temporary shelters and a container. This contrasts heavily in character with the townscape block adjacent, which is occupied by a tall pair of Victorian three-storey red brick residences with prominent subsidiary gables (**470 Moss Lane East / 2b Heald Place, potential non-designated heritage asset**) and a lower pair of stuccoed Georgian-style townhouses of c.1840 (**nos. 466-468, Grade II**), single-fronted but with set-back side wings **[Plate 3.7]**. Both buildings sit set back behind lawned gardens, with a modern dwarf wall and railings to no. 470 and retained historic railings to nos. 466-468, both with historic gate piers **[Plate 3.8]**.

The **block between Parkfield Street and Playfair Street** is occupied by three red brick Victorian terraces, two adjoined (all forming a **potential non-designated heritage asset**). Regular in design, these single-fronted properties are loosely classical in style, with bay windows at ground floor and round fanlight windows to the entrances, all set back between gardens enclosed behind historic brick walls with stone gate piers and copings. **Nos. 452-464** (east) and **438-444** (west) are two storeys high, with paired chimneys above, whilst nos. **446-450** have an attic storey to the two subsidiary gables to its ends and a dormer window in between. To their west, the end of the block has been cleared behind its boundary wall and gate piers, this gap site currently overgrown with vegetation but still affording views of the terrace end to its rear on Playfair Street.

Facing this gap site across Playfair Street is **Moss Court** – a mid-rise purpose-built student accommodation block that fills more than half of the townscape block that runs to Acomb Street **[Plates 3.9-3.10]**. This L-shaped building of four storeys is divided by prominent break-forward bays with subsidiary gabled roofs above, a horizontal emphasis given by its continuous glazing to the top floor. Faced in red brick, metal and cream-painted render, this too is set back from the road behind a matching boundary wall and internal soft landscaping. The remainder of the Moss Lane frontage to this block is then occupied by **the site,** which is abutted to its west by Acomb Street**.**



3.6 *Ropemaker Court (L) and hand car wash (centre)*



3.8 *466-468 Moss Lane East*



3.10 *Moss Court, looking east*



3.7 *470 (L) and 466-468 (R) Moss Lane East*



3.9 *Moss Court, looking southwest*

3.1.2 Moss Lane East: southwest

The block between Acomb Street and Fairbank Avenue is comprised of two halves. In the east are two Victorian gabled buildings with a strong vertical emphasis, both set back within substantial gardens (one now hard landscaped) behind modern walls. The semi-detached **nos. 406-408 (potential non-designated heritage asset)** is two storeys with an additional attic storey in its steep gables above, the roof itself having modern dormers and rooflights. **No. 404**, a detached dwelling now in religious use, is two storeys tall and painted white, a large two-storey extension in modern red brick situated to its rear but visible across the drive at its side **[Plate 3.11]**. A small development of modern two-storey residences sits to its west but fronts onto Fairbank Avenue, a garden running along the Moss Lane East frontage, where the boundary wall and trees provide a degree of visual screening.

A single terrace occupies the **block between Fairbank Avenue and Maine Road** (**382-394 Moss Lane East / 2 Fairbank Avenue, potential non-designated heritage asset**) **[Plate 3.12]**. This single-fronted regular terrace of two storeys with subsidiary gables and paired chimneys has double-height bay windows and rounded fanlight windows with matching windows above. There is a regular building line, the houses set back behind gardens (some now hard landscaped), although some boundary walls have been rebuilt and others removed entirely.

This section of Moss Lane East is terminated by a cleared site (formerly occupied by a pair of semi-detached houses), which forms a pleasant **lawned area with trees**, enclosed between Maine Road and Upper Lloyd Street. At its west this faces **Whitworth Park Mansions** across Upper Lloyd Street, this Georgian-style terrace of four three-storey townhouses (Grade II, c.1840) set within a large enclosed frontage that now combines a lawn with parking areas **[Plate 3.13]**.



3.11 *404 (L) and 406-408 Moss Lane East, looking west*



3.13 *Whitworth Park Mansions, looking southwest*



3.12 *Nos. 382-394 Moss Lane East*

3.1.3 Moss Lane East: northeast

Whitworth Park occupies the northeast corner of Moss Lane East **[Plate 3.14]**. This is a fairly plain unregistered park of grassland and trees, the latter roughly reflecting the original Edwardian planting but now more extensive. A network of radial paths runs across the park, meeting at a point to the south of the centre, the **Edward VII statue** (Grade II) situated to its northeast **[Plate 3.15]**. The principal entrances to the park from the south are situated in its southeast and southwest corners, where there is a greater visibility of open lawns from the street, and of Moss Lane East from the interior, the remainder of the frontage being more heavily screened by trees **[Plates 3.16-3.17]**. The red brick Victorian **Whitworth Gallery** (Grade II) sits in the northeast of the park, at some distance from Moss Lane East, with the tree coverage preventing any intervisibility between the two **[Plate 3.18]**.



3.14 *Whitworth Park, looking north from Moss Lane*



3.16 *Whitworth Park, views towards the site from the southwest path*



3.18 *Whitworth Gallery, looking north*



3.15 *Edward VII statue*



3.17 *Whitworth Park, southwest entrance*

3.1.4 Moss Lane East: northwest [Plate 3.19]

In its west the park wraps around the **Manchester Academy High School** site **[Plate 3.20]**. There are two drives and a small brick substation building to the frontage, the flat-roofed mid-rise buildings behind contemporary in style and combining red brick with glazing and window films, with an irregular external footprint. Set back from Moss Lane East, the school building has only limited visual presence, a line of trees along the frontage, with substantial areas of soft landscaping behind, providing screening and a sense of space.

Adjacent to the school is a mid-rise purpose-built **student accommodation block (The Gallery, 396 Moss Lane East)**, set back slightly from the pavement behind a brick ramp and staircase, a lawn and flower beds **[Plate 3.21]**. Four storeys high in the east, falling to three in the west, this flat-roofed midrise building combines orange brick with glazing, grey metal cladding and cream-painted plasterwork, its variations in height and materials and the introduction of balconies and continuous glazing creating a bayed form with a horizontal emphasis that respects the historic rhythm of the street. The setback, drive to the side and front lawn all maintain a sense of space to the street.

Separated from no. 396 by its own drive is **Mansion Park (394 Moss Lane East)**, another purpose-built student accommodation block of a slightly earlier date. Mainly of four floors, rising to five in the west, this combines a stone-clad ground and top floors with a brick middle, the flat-roofed top floor treated visually as an attic dormer. Vertically aligned bay windows, fully glazed, run up to, variously, third and fifth floor and there are alternating groups of set-back and break-forward bays **[Plate 3.22]**.

Facing this block across Lloyd Street North is a tall neo-Gothic **chapel building** of c.1875, built in stone, its tower and steeple situated in its southeast corner and modern brick additions abutting at its southwest.



3.19 *Moss Lane East, northwest*



3.21 *The Gallery, looking west*



3.20 *Manchester Academy High School*



3.22 *Mansion Park*

3.1.5 Acomb Street

This side street forms part of the grid iron of streets of terraced housing running from the rear of the properties of Moss Lane East in the north to (and beyond) Great Western Street in the south, the latter forming their focal point **[Plates 3.23-3.24]**. It is occupied by short rows of two-storey terraced housing in red brick, some fronting onto Acomb Street. Others present their side elevations, with obtuse views of the terrace rears provided across their enclosed yards and the small alleyways that divide the groups. Smaller in scale and humbler in design and detailing than the terraces to Moss Lane East, these single-fronted residences generally have bay windows at ground floor (often linked by continuous roofs), casement windows above, and shallow pitched and hipped roofs. Changes are mainly limited to painting (in red), dormer windows and rooflights, and the addition of garages to the side.

Facing the site at the top of Acomb Street is the red brick side elevation of **406-408 Moss Lane East**, with a modern extension, its pitched roof (with modern dormers) rising steeply above. This is enclosed within a modern concrete post and panel fence, the hard landscaped car park to its rear and the modern brick extension to **no. 404** visible through the metal gate. Views across the car park include the backs of the Victorian terraces to Haydn Avenue to the southwest and the timber-clad rears of the modern development to Fairbank Avenue to the west **[Plates 3.25-3.26]**.

3.1.6 Immediate Setting

The site has a roughly parallelogram shape, bound by Moss Lane East in the north, Acomb Street in the west, the modern Moss Court mid-rise development to the east and the tarmacked service alley serving the rear of the Haydn Avenue terrace to its south. It fronts onto the pavement to the north (where a bus stop sits at its centre, against the boundary wall) and to the west.



3.23 *Acomb Street, looking south from adjacent to the site*



3.25 *406-408 Moss Lane East, viewed from Acomb Street*



3.24 *Acomb Street to the rear of the site*



3.26 *View across the rears of 406-408 and 404 Moss Lane East*

3.2 The Site [Plate 3.27]

The northern half of the site is occupied by the existing terrace, which runs at an angle to Moss Lane East, the front gardens increasing in length from east to west accordingly. The building itself is enclosed by Moss Court to the east and hardstanding to all other sides.

In the north of the site the formerly separate front gardens have been combined and the internal boundary treatments removed to create a single forecourt. This area retains its historic external boundary wall to the east to the north and south of the building, plus four of the original five pairs of historic stone gate piers to the north (those in the northwest now lost), each pair aligned with the front door of the property behind **[Plate 3.28]**. Painted black and white, one still retains the carved name 'Oscroft Place'. Modern timber gates sit between four of the pairs of piers and the boundary wall is a modern replacement, built in modern brick with coping stones above (some missing), with a substantial area of rebuilding. An opening in the northeast contains a metal vehicular gate and provides access for parking.

Inside the boundary wall, this northern forecourt area is mainly hard landscaped and used for parking, with a small area of lawn and young trees running along the northwest. Situated at the northwest corner of the terrace is a small flat-roofed brick structure, modern and entirely functional in design – possibly a store – and the 'lodge' adjacent. This is a small shed-like structure with pebble dashed walls and a pitched roof with corrugated iron sheeting.

The modern brick boundary wall continues along the west elevation, now taller in height, with a change in brickwork in the south of the site **[Plates 3.29-3.30]**. A second vehicular gate runs into the interior, where the formerly separate rear gardens have also been amalgamated **[Plates 3.31-3.32]**. Here an area of hard landscaping provides further parking, a lawned area situated to its east along the historic brick boundary wall (the latter in part rebuilt using a modern brick). This area also contains two metal storage containers, situated on the inside of the southern boundary **[Plate 3.33]**.

The modern boundary wall continues along the south of the site, its face to the site built in block work **[Plate 3.34]**.



3.27 *The site, frontage to Moss Lane East*



3.29 *West site boundary*



3.28 *East boundary, with Moss Court*



3.30 *West site boundary, south of the site*



3.31 *Car park and lawn in the site's rear*



3.33 *Storage container*



3.32 *Car park and lawn in the site's rear*



3.34 *South site boundary*

3.3 The Building Externally

This altered brick building is comprised of a frontage block to Moss Lane East and off-shoot extensions running to the rear. Its principal frontage is to the north and a frontage originally of similar status to the west has now been relegated to that of a side elevation. The building is of three storeys, the second floor originally a full storey to the off-shoot extensions and only an attic storey to the frontage block but now extended by the addition of an inserted timber-clad dormer floor, which has replaced the north pitch of the original roof. Two of the off-shoot extensions to the rear are also modern replacements.

All external doors and their doorcases are modern, with fanlight windows above, whilst all other windows are modern uPVC casements, most with white frames (those to the front of no. 418 in dark uPVC).

The main decorative features are loosely gothic in style and are limited to the barge boarding to the subsidiary gable, the brick band and ceramic dentil tiling to the principal (north) frontage, and the brick arches to the openings to the principal frontage and side elevations (some painted).

3.3.1 Principal (North) Elevation, to Moss Lane East [Plate 3.35]

This principal elevation is of nine bays arranged over three floors and faced in a brown brick. A continuous brick band runs across the frontage at first-floor cornice level, the brickwork above historic to either end but otherwise seemingly a modern replacement. Above this is the modern dormer floor, clad in painted timber and with a single square window to each bay. The College View signage is retained to the central bay, whilst there are numerous pipes and television aerials to this elevation.

Bays 2, 4, 6 and 8 are the original entrance bays, each with a door set below a brick gothic arch (those to bays 4, 6 and 8 painted red and that to bay 2 painted grey). A thin brick band runs across these bays at ground-floor cornice level, set above a thin line of ceramic dentilled tiling. Above, at first floor, each of these bays has a single narrow window with a brick segmental arch with pointed crest, painted to match the gothic arch below. Below each door is a wide doorstep with a second step below, in brick with slabs above, running the full width of the bay.

Bays 1,3, 5, 7 and 9 are modern two-storey projections or break-forward bays in a contrasting modern red brick **[Plate 3.36]**. These run up to the first-floor cornice and have slightly pitched shallow roofs with a thick black fascia. There are paired windows to each floor, with very simple, inobtrusive, flat gauged brick arches above. Bay 5, the centre bay, retains a subsidiary gable at second-floor level. This has a semicircular brick arch to the window opening (matching that to the west elevation), with a stone sill beneath, the gable adorned with decorative barge boarding.

3.3.2 Rear (South) Elevation [Plate 3.37]

This elevation is comprised mainly of four off-shoot extensions, each with a gable end. Those to nos. 414 and 416 are historic and are three storeys high, the gable ends finished with shallow double-storey projections with shallow roofs of a shallow pitch and windows at ground and first-floor level (presumably the inspiration for the modern additions to the principal frontage). A further window sits above at second-floor level. A number of satellite dishes are attached to the projections **[Plate 3.38]**.

To their east, the off-shoot extension to no. 418 is a modern rebuilding, in a red brick matching the additions to the frontage. This is longer and thinner than the historic off-shoot extensions, and without a projection, although its windows roughly replicate those to its west.

To the west, the combined off-shoot of nos. 410 and 412 has also been rebuilt in modern red brick, again without the shallow projection. Only two storeys high, this has a much squarer external footprint and a lower roof, with a deeper pitch, with three windows at ground floor and two at first floor.

To their rear, the brickwork appears to be older and there is a single window at each floor between each of the off-shoot extensions. The enclosed sides of the outriggers (offshoots) could not be viewed from the public right of way.

3.3.3 Side (East) Elevation

The return from the principal frontage in brown brick is mainly blind, with the exception of a window at second-floor level with a brick segmental arch above. Immediately behind, the wall splays to create a corner, where it has a single window at each floor, all with brick segmental arches (those to the ground and first floors painted cream), before straightening out again. This wall forms the plot boundary and its lower section has been painted to match the boundary wall adjacent.

3.3.4 Side (West) Elevation, to Acomb Street [Plate 3.39]

This three-storey gable end of brown brick is the most characterful elevation as the building survives today but again shows evidence of heavy alteration. The original pitched roof profile is visible in its south (rear) but has been lost in the north, where the dormer floor has been inserted, and the brickwork shows areas of repair and replacement. There is a visually dominant pipe and various grilles and trailing cables.

The north of the elevation contains a built-out projection, which runs up to second-floor level, with a short return to the ground-floor banding and dentillation. Adjacent is a shortened ground-floor opening with a brick segmental arch above and to its south. In the middle of the elevation are three vertically aligned openings. That to the ground floor (also altered) has a brick segmental arch with pointed crest similar to the first floor of the principal elevation (although not painted), whilst that at first floor (also shortened) has a brick segmental arch and that at second floor (the original attic level) a semicircular arch matching that to the east elevation.

To their south is a three-sided, two-storey, canted bay with a hipped roof, which has windows to each side at both floors. These have brick segmental arches with a narrow line of brick banding above.

The remainder of this elevation is a modern rebuilding in red brick and is blind bar a single window at ground floor and first floor (the former with a flat gauged brick arch matching those to the front elevation) **[Plate 3.40]**.

3.3.5 Roofs [Plate 3.41]

The roof to the main frontage block is pitched, with a slate covering, the addition of the flat dormer roof to the north pitch creating a half gambrel. A small historic subsidiary gable has been retained to this north pitch and has a pitched roof with a slate covering. The off-shoot extensions to the rear also have pitched roofs, that to nos. 410 and 412 asymmetrical, but their roof covering may be modern artificial slate.

There are rooflights in the north end of the closet wing to no. 418 and in the southern pitch immediately adjacent, and black-painted fascias across all roofs. There are no chimneys.



3.35 *Principal frontage (L) and west elevation (R)*



3.37 *Rear elevation to the car park*



3.36 *Principal frontage, with modern additions*



3.38 *Original and rebuilt off-shoot wings*



3.39 *West elevation to Acomb Street*



3.40 *West elevation, modern rebuilding*



3.41 *Roofs (Google Earth)*

3.4 The Building Internally

It was not possible to view the interior of the building.

3.5 Townscape Presence and Contribution to Views

The site's immediate townscape setting spans between Playfair Street and the Whitworth Park Mansions and shows a sustained staggered fall in height, mass and scale from east to west. On the south this runs from the four-storey Moss Court (no. 422) student accommodation block adjacent, across the terraced building currently situated on the site (three storeys plus dormers) and the three- and two-storey gabled semi-detached and detached properties to the west (nos. 404 and 406-408), to finish at the small group of lower two-storey adjoined modern houses adjacent (fronting onto Fairbank Avenue). The scale and height then increase again with the two-storey terraced group (with subsidiary gables) to the west of Fairbank Avenue, bookending the group. This is mirrored in the modern development opposite, where the four-storey The Gallery is succeeded by the lower Mansion Park student apartment block (also four storeys), which then rises in height to five storeys to face the taller spire of the former church opposite. Significantly, however, relief is brought to this larger scale urban grain by the soft landscaped setback situated directly facing the site, where the large mass of the Academy is mainly concealed from view.

Whilst the northern side of Moss Lane East now accommodates buildings of a larger mass, the southern side generally retains its more domestic scale, character and grain, which becomes even more pronounced to the side streets (such as Acomb Street) that lead out to its south. The prevalent height to the southern side of Moss Lane East is of two to four fairly low storeys, and to Acomb Street two storeys. At the east, modern development functions as a transitional area linking the larger scale city centre development of Oxford Road and the smaller scale, residential, grain of the mainly low-rise traditional dwellings to the southern side of Moss Lane East.

Overall, the site and existing building make little to no contribution in views along Moss Lane East, where they have only a low visual presence, and due to the distance and lack of intervisibility make no contribution to the setting of the listed buildings to either end of this section of the road. As a result of ill-considered modern alterations to the building, and the poor quality of the boundary wall, they detract to some degree in views along Acomb Street from the south.

4.0 Assessment of Significance

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to provide an assessment of significance of the proposed PBSA development site (410-418 Moss Lane East) and its contribution to the wider townscape and heritage assets in order for the impact of the proposals to 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 Site

The site and the building that currently occupies it are of very limited heritage significance. Externally, there is little architectural interest to the principal building (with the extent of internal survival unknown). There is some limited historic and townscape interest from this building's origins within a specific stage of the evolved history of this area – condensed within a relatively short period – but this evidential value is reduced by the architecturally and aesthetically poor modern alterations that have almost entirely obliterated a sense of the building's historic form and character, with much of the complementary evidence within the wider area also having been eroded. The modern breakforward bays, dormer storey, poor-quality boundary walls and ancillary building to the northwest corner, and the amalgamation of the front gardens, substantially reduce the building's contribution to the townscape of Moss Lane East, with the rebuilt off-shoot wings having a similar, if less impactful, effect on Acomb Street. The external areas add little to the significance of the site, with the gates, large areas of hard landscaping, porter's lodge and storage containers all visually poor.

As such, the site's main townscape value is derived from the retained plot size and its gate piers to Moss Lane East, the ill-considered modern alterations having had such a detrimental impact on the architectural character of the built form that the building no longer possesses any notable heritage significance in its own right. Consequently, neither the site nor its building is regarded as a potential non-designated heritage asset.

4.2.2 Townscape

The local townscape is of variable character and quality, with its historic character fundamentally altered to Moss Lane East by modern redevelopment. Although several groups of historic buildings survive along the southern side of this street a number have detracting extensions, boundary walls and hard landscaping, whilst the intervening modern mid-rise buildings undermine the coherency of the formerly established streetscape and appear out of character with the much lower and smaller scale terrace ends visible to their rears. With the exception of the large undeveloped area occupied by Whitworth Park, the north side is entirely redeveloped and its streetscape entirely modern.

Acomb Street is more intact but has a noticeably humbler, smaller scale and finer grain when compared to the historic buildings and plots to Moss Lane East. This creates a visible contrast in townscape between the small-scale terraces of Acomb Street (and others to both its east and its west) and the typically larger-scale buildings to Moss Lane East. This contrast is of a degree of townscape importance in reflecting and articulating the difference in architectural status and historic activity that differentiates Moss Lane East, as a principal road, from the residential side streets to its south. The site's townscape value, which is limited, lies in its contribution to this contrast, through its much larger scale relative to the terraces to its rear and in the way that it generally respects the continuous plot line and roughly regular building line that has survived along Moss Lane East. As it exists at present, the site has a number of detracting elements.

4.2.3 Heritage Assets

The site's surroundings include a small number of both designated heritage assets and potential non-designated heritage assets. These have historic and architectural interest at a local or national level. To varying degrees, they also make a positive contribution to their streetscape and townscape and, therefore, to the setting of other heritage assets. All have an immediate or wider setting and a more general

context, historically Victorian, that demonstrates areas of fragmentation and erosion. The historic built form is entirely eroded to the north side of this section of Moss Lane East.

Whitworth Park Mansions (Grade II): This terrace has a moderate historic and architectural interest at a national level as a very early Victorian terrace of middle-class townhouses, forming a dispersed group with 466 and 468 Moss Lane East (also Grade II) as the earliest surviving buildings to this section of Moss Lane East. Its distinctively Georgian-style proportions, fenestration pattern, hierarchy of openings, flat frontages and symmetry, and the restrained classical porticos, are all of architectural interest, the linear footprint and solid mass giving the building a presence and prominence in the streetscape that is further enhanced by its setback from the road. The building's scale, evident age and distinctive materials and colour palette contrast with the typically humbler historic dwellings that comprise its immediate setting, the Gothic detailing of the buff ashlar church facing, and the contemporary design of the modern houses adjacent, imbuing it with a degree of townscape importance.

As a result of the distance and the presence of intervening buildings and vegetation, the site has no intervisibility with this building and does not form part of its immediate setting. In addition, it does not make any positive contribution of note to the historic environment surviving within the building's wider context beyond its respect for the traditional brick materiality and continuous setback. It does, however, form part of the dilution of character and general deterioration of condition visible in the surrounding historic environment and the dilution of the townscape by the addition of modern elements of various scales.

466 and 468 Moss Lane East (Grade II): This pair of dwellings has a moderate historic and architectural interest at a national level as a very early Victorian terrace of middle-class townhouses, forming a dispersed group with Whitworth Park Mansions (also Grade II) as the earliest surviving elements of the street's development. Its distinctively Georgian-style scale and proportions, fenestration pattern, symmetry and generally flat frontage, and its restrained portico, pilasters, windowheads and cornice, are all of architectural interest, which is further enhanced by its sash and transom windows and the retained gate piers with railings and hedges to a dwarf wall. Its prominence within the streetscape is further enhanced by its white-painted stucco and the building's setback from the road, which all gives a degree of townscape importance.

As a result of the presence of intervening buildings (particularly Moss Court) and vegetation, there is no intervisibility between this building and the site, which does not form part of its immediate setting. As a result of its detracting changes the site does not make any positive contribution to the historic environment within this heritage asset's wider context beyond its respect for the traditional brick materiality and continuous setback. By contrast, it forms part of the more general deterioration of condition visible in much of the surrounding historic environment and the dilution of the townscape by the addition of modern elements of various scales.

Edward VII Statue in Whitworth Park (Grade II): This statue of 1913 (three years after the King's death) has national historic interest derived from its association with the Manchester-based, Irish-born, sculptor and artist John Cassidy (1860-1939). Although it retains its artistic value its architectural interest has been lessened by the loss of the gates and decorated piers with which it formed a setpiece, whilst the relocation of the park entrance and the growth of perimeter tree coverage has substantially reduced its prominence. The changing character of the park, and the loss of its historic formality, undermining the surrounding setting, further reduces its appreciation.

Due to the distance between the two, and the intervening tree coverage, the site plays no role in the setting of the statue or in the statue's appreciation. It does, however, form part of the dilution of character and general deterioration of condition visible in the statue's historic environment and the dilution of the townscape of its wider context by the addition of modern elements of various scales.

470 Moss Lane East/2b Heald Place (even only) (potential non-designated heritage asset): Although not listed, this attractive pair of dwellings has moderate/high architectural interest at a local level. It also has a low degree of local historic interest as evidence of the evolution of the character of Moss Lane East that occurred in the late Victorian and Edwardian period. In brown brick with painted stone and timber dressings, this building's canted bays, gablets, eaves corbelling and bargeboarding, the retention of many of its sash windows, and the closet wings to its rear, all give architectural interest

and demonstrate a degree of architectural status. Whilst the rear has been hard landscaped for parking, the side return and frontage retain the original stone wall with gate piers, the grassed frontage behind also enhancing. The building's vertical scale, emphasised by its gablets, gives an increased presence to the street.

As a result of the presence of vegetation and intervening buildings (particularly Moss Court), there is no intervisibility between this building and the site, which, therefore, does not form part of its immediate setting. As a result of its detracting features the site also does not make any positive contribution to the historic environment within this heritage asset's wider context beyond its respect for the traditional brick materiality and continuous setback. By contrast, it forms part of the more general deterioration of condition visible in much of the surrounding historic environment and the dilution of the townscape by the addition of modern elements of various scales.

438-444 and 446-464 Moss Lane East (potential non-designated heritage asset): These two brown/red brick terraces represent one of the more intact parts of the historic streetscape to this section of Moss Lane East itself. Their symmetrical paired design, single-storey canted bays, dressings of brick, stone and timber (some now painted), and the gablets to the larger terrace all give a moderate local level of architectural interest, enhanced by fanlight windows, simple detailing such as gauged brick window heads, and some surviving classical doorcases. Whilst some garden areas have hard surfacing there is also a complete survival of the boundary wall (almost entirely the original), which retains its stone copings and gate piers in full and makes an important contribution to the historic streetscape.

As a result of the presence of vegetation and intervening buildings (particularly Moss Court), there is no intervisibility between this building and the site, which, therefore, does not form part of its immediate setting. As a result of its detracting features the site also does not make any positive contribution to the historic environment within this heritage asset's wider context beyond its respect for the traditional brick materiality and continuous setback. By contrast, it forms part of the more general deterioration of condition visible in much of the surrounding historic environment and the dilution of the townscape by the addition of modern elements of various scales.

406-408 Moss Lane East (potential non-designated heritage asset): This mid/later Victorian pair of semi-detached dwellings in brown brick has a low level of local architectural interest in its mirrored arrangement, steep front-facing gables with inverted crow steps, polychromatic detailing in buff and blue engineering bricks, and single-storey bay windows, the whole having a loosely Gothic Revival feel. This is, however, undermined by modern alterations including dormer windows and skylights, concrete roof tiles, a prominent side extension and the hard landscaping of the rear, with the loss of the boundary wall and its replacement with a concrete post and panel fence particularly detracting (although the front and side garden has been retained).

Nos. 406-408 directly face the site across the narrow Acomb Street, both presenting their principal frontages to Moss Lane East and their side elevations to Acomb Street. The site forms, therefore, a prominent and highly visible element within this asset's immediate setting. At present its impact on the setting of nos. 406-408 is harmful, as a result of its detracting elements including poor modern boundary walls, dominant modern rear extensions, the hard landscaped frontage and rear and the unsympathetic dormers and extraneous bays. This detracts from the setting of the heritage asset and the ability to appreciate it, causing harm to the asset's significance.

382-394 Moss Lane East/2 Fairbank Avenue (even only) (potential non-designated heritage asset): This single-phase red brick terrace of the 1890s or very early 1900s represents one of the more intact elements of the historic streetscape to this section of Moss Lane East itself. There is again a degree of historic interest, also at a local level, in its origins within the late Victorian and Edwardian diversification of Moss Lane East. Its symmetrical paired design, two-storey canted bays, dressings of brick, stone, timber and terracotta (some now painted), and gablets, all give a moderate local level of architectural interest, as does detailing including recessed entrances, eaves corbelling, ridge tiles, and rounded headed arches to those openings below the gablets (although the windows are replacements). Although there has been hard landscaping to some of the gardens there is a generally good survival of the historic boundary walls, with most of the gate piers also surviving, which gives a degree of townscape presence.

The principal frontage of the site has some very limited presence in views from the road adjacent and the pavement opposite to the terrace but due to intervening vegetation is not visible from the terrace itself. As a result of its detracting changes the site does not make any positive contribution to the historic environment within this heritage asset's wider context beyond its respect for the traditional brick materiality and continuous setback. By contrast, it forms part of the more general deterioration of condition visible in much of the surrounding historic environment and the dilution of the townscape by the addition of modern elements of various scales.

5.0 Commentary on the Proposals

5.1 Description of the Proposals

The proposals for the demolition of 410-418 Moss Lane East and its replacement by a purpose-built student accommodation block (PBSA) are outlined in the drawings and Design and Access Statement by TODD Architects.

The existing building (subdivided and converted into 19 apartments) is no longer fit-for-purpose. It also has elements that have an adverse effect on the townscape and, therefore, that are detracting to the setting or wider context of the heritage assets nearby. The block proposed ranges from three to five storeys, with a principal frontage to Moss Lane East and a secondary frontage to Acomb Street, with a garden to the rear corner.

The proposals are described in detail below, with the impact on the townscape and, where applicable, nearby heritage assets, set out in italics.

5.1.1 Demolition of the Existing Building

It is proposed to demolish the existing building and its boundary treatments. This was constructed in the mid-Victorian period as a short residential terrace but was converted in the 1980s to create an apartment block on a substantially extended footprint, set within a shared forecourt to the front and a car park and small garden to the rear. These alterations have fundamentally altered the building and its plot, turning five single-family dwellings into a much-extended multi-occupancy block. They have also entailed a series of ill-considered external changes, which have undermined the building's character. As a result, there is little other than the building's surviving gate piers that articulate its original identity as a Victorian terrace, although, more subtly, it does retain its original plot and building lines.

The site's positive contributions to the townscape are limited to its respect for the traditional brick materiality and continuous setback but as a result of its detracting elements the overall townscape contribution is adverse. The building also has a harmful impact on the setting of 406-408 Moss Lane East adjacent and, therefore, harms its significance.

The contribution to townscape made by the site in its present condition is, on balance, negative. Demolition of the existing building and the site's ancillary elements would remove detracting elements that have an adverse effect on the local townscape, are detracting to the wider context of several heritage assets, and cause harm to the setting and significance of 406-408 Moss Lane East. On balance, therefore, there would be a slight enhancement to the setting and significance of 406-408 Moss Lane East, a slight uplift of the wider context of several other heritage assets and a slight benefit to the townscape.

5.1.2 Construction of a New Purpose-Built Student Accommodation Building

It is proposed to redevelop the plot with a new purpose-built student accommodation building with a garden to the rear. This would be comprised of a larger-scale principal frontage block of five storeys fronting onto Moss Lane East, the principal road, where it would run the entire width of the plot, with a narrower secondary block of three storeys behind, which would present its side frontage to Acomb Street (a secondary side street), creating an L-shaped structure, with a garden area in its inner corner. The massing would step down across the building, both within the frontage block and from the frontage block to the block to its rear, the upper floor to both treated as an attic.

The building would have a contemporary architectural style. There would be a loose industrial influence, articulated in its materiality of brick and aluminium, the regular and repeated fenestration patterns (with simple rectangular casements), the sharp geometrical lines of the blocks and their angular canted bays, and the flat roofs to both buildings. The four principal floors of the principal frontage would have a symmetrical arrangement of bays, alternating between two and three faces, the front entrance (framed in grey cast stone cladding) offset from the centre and recessed. Above, there would be an 'attic' storey comprised of narrower bays of two faces, set back behind the main building line, its facing in aluminium cladding articulating its distinction from the principal floors.

Uniting this would be a material palette of brick, offset with detailing in contemporary painted aluminium (extending to cladding, window frames and louvres). A consistent colour palette of red (brick) and grey-painted aluminium would be used across the buildings and the boundary treatment, with a paler brick to the rear block, an expressed shadow gap where the blocks join. The rear (the south elevation) would be plain, in brick and cladding, refencing the traditionally lower architectural status of the area's building rears. All lift overruns, photovoltaic and thermal panels, and air source heat pumps would be set back

from the frontages, behind a louvred grey-painted aluminium plant screen, with a sedum green roof to the principal block.

Internally, the building would be comprised of ensuite studio flats with a lounge/reception to the ground floor and communal facilities and plant to the upper floor of the frontage block.

To the wider plot, the building would be set back behind a continuous wall of red brick with grey-painted steel railings, with a soft landscaped frontage to both roads, a single-storey garage situated in the northwest corner. To the building's rear it is proposed to provide two disabled parking spaces, a combined bike store/ cycle shed and a larger communal garden.

5.2 Townscape and Heritage Impacts

5.2.1 View 1 (looking east from the junction with Upper Lloyd Street/Lloyd Street North) [Plates 5.1a/b]

Existing

Due to Moss Lane East's slightly curving course, it's fairly consistent building line, and the uniform presence of a setback from the street, in views from this junction the site is mostly obscured by the intervening buildings and by the trees of frontage soft landscaping, particularly that to 1 Fairbank Avenue. The site does not, therefore, have a notable townscape presence in views along Moss Lane East from Upper Lloyd Street/Lloyd Street North beyond some glimpsed visibility of its brown brick materiality. To the junction's east it gains slightly more visibility, the soft landscaped frontage to the plot becoming visible at the north of Park View, the gable end and gablets of Moss Court visible behind. The site has very little townscape presence, however, and its built form not legible as a distinct or identifiable building.

The site does not, therefore, at present form any distinctive or recognisable part of the setting of Whitworth Park Mansions (Grade II) or of Christ Church (Grade II*) further to the north. Its contribution to this setting is therefore highly limited, lying only in its continuation of the brick materiality and the setbacks with soft landscaping that characterise the historic townscape of the wider context to Moss Lane East and its connecting streets. The site at present has no effect of note on their townscape setting and makes only a negligible contribution to their setting and, therefore, to their significance.

Due to the curve of the road, and changing levels of frontage tree coverage, slight glimpsed views of the frontage of the building open up on moving further to the east, beyond 382-394 Moss Lane East/2 Fairbank Avenue (potential non-designated heritage asset). This, however, creates only a very slightly higher townscape presence, with the townscape contribution remaining negligible/very low positive, these benefits again derived from its brick materiality and glimpsed soft landscaping. Its presence in the setting of the asset is again low and it makes only a very low contribution to their significance. The site's main contribution is again principally in its continuation of the overall brick materiality and soft landscaping that characterises the historic townscape of the wider context.

Proposed

Townscape: The proposed development would represent a further introduction of contemporary development of mass and scale within an already undermined and fragmented townscape to Moss Lane East in particular. However, there would be almost no visibility of this in this long-range view from the west, reducing its adverse effect.

The proposed building would sit slightly to the front of the building existing at present, parallel to Moss Lane East. This would give a slightly increased townscape presence, although in long-range views this would be limited to the red brick materiality and colour palette of the development and the trees to its frontage. These would continue and consolidate the character and materiality of the wider context, which would have a minor beneficial impact. Again, the plot would not be legible as a distinct or separate built form at this distance. However, some adverse townscape effect would come from the single-storey garage in the plot's northwestern corner, which would break the established building line and introduce built form in what is currently a continuous setback running the full length of this section of Moss Lane East. This would be visible only from the east of the junction, where it would have a minor/moderate adverse effect, the **overall townscape effect in this view being, on balance, negligible/minor adverse** as a result.

Heritage Assets: The development would have no presence in the immediate setting of the two listed buildings of national significance situated at/adjacent to the junction with Upper Lloyd Street/Lloyd Street North – Whitworth Park Mansions (Grade II) and, further

to the north, Christ Church (Grade II*). There would also be no intervisibility with these assets. The primarily impact of the development would, therefore, be in its effect on the townscape of the wider context, where it would introduce further contemporary development of mass and scale within the already undermined and fragmented townscape. Whilst there would be some mitigating elements its **townscape effect within this wider context would, therefore, be minor adverse**.

Due to the distance, the presence of intervening screening and the lack of intervisibility, this would have **no impact on the setting and significance of Whitworth Park Mansions (Grade II) and Christ Church (Grade II*)**, both being buildings of a high, national, level of interest.

The proposed development would have slightly more townscape presence in the setting **of 382-394 Moss Lane East/2 Fairbank Avenue (potential non-designated heritage asset)**, although there would again be no intervisibility. The proposed development would represent a further introduction of contemporary development of mass and scale within the already undermined and fragmented townscape, with some visibility of this from within the setting of this group. This would have, on balance, an overall **minor adverse effect on this building's townscape setting**, with additional harm caused by the visibility of its garage to the frontage. Therefore, the proposals would represent **slight, less than substantial, harm to the setting and significance of this building of low, local, interest.**



5.1a *View 1, looking east from the junction with Lloyd Street North and Upper Lloyd Street*



5.1b *View 1, looking east from the junction with Lloyd Street North and Upper Lloyd Street*

5.2.2 View 2 (looking east/southeast from Moss Lane East) [Plates 5.2a/b]

Existing

In short views from the west, the existing building on the site forms part of the historic building line and is set at an oblique angle to Moss Lane East, reducing its prominence and removing much of the side elevation from view. This allows appreciation of the pitched roofline and ancillary gables of the historic buildings to its west whilst also creating a fairly consistent building line with 406-408 Moss Lane East adjacent.

Viewed from this angle a degree of coherency is given to the streetscape by the gabled roof of 406-408 Moss Lane East, the gable end of the existing building on the site, and the gable end and gablets of the modern Moss Court adjacent. These elements also ensure a human scale and rhythm to these properties to either side of the site.

Proposed

Townscape: The proposed development would represent a further introduction of contemporary development of mass and scale within an already undermined and fragmented townscape to Moss Lane East in particular.

The proposed building would sit slightly to the front of the building existing at present, parallel to Moss Lane East, reducing the consistency of the building line as it relates to 406-408 Moss Lane East to the west but increasing that with Moss Court to the east. In medium- and long-range views from the west the pitched gablets and articulated bays of Moss Court would remain visible above, retaining the human scale and rhythm, which mirrors that of nos. 406-408 to the site's east. There would, however, be an obscuring of the gable end of Moss Court, which at present unites this building with 406-408 Moss Lane East, which would result in some diminishing of the overriding coherency of the streetscape to either side of the site.

Whilst the proposals would introduce development of larger horizontal and vertical scale, and with a greater prominence than the existing building, when viewed from this angle the development would still appear proportionate to and aligned with the buildings to either side, this effect increased by the tall gables of nos. 406-408. Whilst of a greater horizontal scale than nos. 406-408, the development would be complementary in size with Moss Court adjacent, with which it would form a townscape group, the gap in the streetscape introduced by Acomb Street establishing a natural break that would accommodate a step down in mass towards the lower semi-detached and terraced built form to the east. Although of a greater mass than the smaller building to its west, the proposed development would replicate the rhythm and human of the buildings to either side through its use of canted bays and regular fenestration, reintroducing a degree of coherency where this is has at present been lost.

Whilst the development would introduce a more substantial mass of built form to the site this would not automatically have an adverse impact on the townscape; the character of the townscape typically allows for mass and scale to the frontage plots to Moss Lane East, which is here further increased by the site's corner position and the presence of Moss Court adjacent. The proposals would provide a counterbalance to Moss Court, creating greater consistency to this section of altered townscape, and whilst in this view the proposed building would appear to rise substantially higher than Moss Court, adding additional height to the townscape, this would be as part of a perceived staggered drop in height from the seemingly taller gables of nos. 406-408, the townscape height dropping down subsequently, which would somewhat mitigate its effect. The apparent contrast in height between the proposed development and Moss Court, when viewed from this angle, would, however, emphasise the building's vertical scale. Likewise, and as a result of the increased depth of the frontage block, there would be no visibility of the transition to the proposed building's side/rear block until immediate approach, limiting the sense of that drop down in scale and status that is a key characteristic of the townscape, particularly to the corner plots. The building's overall mass and scale are, however, reduced by the articulation of its bays and the treatment of the upper floor as a distinct, subsidiary, attic, although the angular bays are the only reference to the gablets and gables that otherwise unite this section of streetscape.

The introduction of a permanent garage building in the site's frontage, running up to the pavement, would also represent a break with the townscape's established character. This would be partially screened by vegetation – and would give a traditionally more domestic feel and scale to the plot – but would create a break in the otherwise continuous setback.

In addition to the adverse effects of the introduction of further contemporary development of mass and scale, the proposed building would have moderate adverse townscape effects in its perceived increase in both horizontal and vertical scale (although mitigated to some extent by its articulated design), its frontage garage, and the undermining of the unifying gabled form of Moss Lane East. These would be counterbalanced to a slight degree by the positive townscape impacts of the red brick materiality, the general maintenance of the characteristic setback, and the formation of a townscape group with the contemporary Moss Court adjacent, giving a greater legibility to the currently fragmented streetscape and allowing the historic townscape to commence with more clarity at Acomb Street. These would not, however, outbalance these adverse effects and on balance there would be an overall **minor/moderate adverse townscape effect to Moss Lane East within this view.**

Heritage Assets: The proposals would introduce a further contemporary building of greater mass and scale in the immediate setting and backdrop of **406-408 Moss Lane East (potential non-designated heritage asset)** adjacent, a building of more traditional domestic scale and character. Through its townscape impacts, set out above, the proposed development would also cause moderate harm to the setting of this building.

Through the development the relationship of the site and nos. 406-408 would be reversed, the site now appearing more dominant through its greater mass and scale and its closer proximity to Moss Lane East when the two are viewed together, with nos. 406-408 appearing slightly subordinate. This would, however, be counteracted to some degree by the new coherency to the streetscape that would cause nos. 406-408 to now be read as a townscape group with no. 404 adjacent, united by their similar scales and matching gabled elements, their combined horizontal scale appearing in balance with the proposed development and thereby increasing their own relative prominence and presence. This would also cause Moss Lane East to here be read as two separate townscape blocks, divided by Acomb Street, each comprising a group of distinct mass and scale, thereby increasing the legibility of this potential non-designated heritage asset.

Whilst the development would have some adverse impact on the townscape prominence of Nos. 406-408 when viewed from this angle this would be mitigated to some extent. As a result of visual shielding, the proposed building would appear similar to nos. 406-408 in its depth, whilst the distance provided by Acomb Street would also cause it to appear lower in height than the steeply pitched gables to nos. 406-408, which would remain visible in silhouette, as a skyline feature. The massing of the site would also appear clearly separated from nos. 406-408, for the same reasons. The development would, however, introduce modern development of a contrasting style and massing in the immediate background of this potential non-designated heritage asset within the view, although this would be partly mitigated by the shared brick materiality, red/brown colour scheme and aligned vertical scale that would create a degree of cohesion with nos. 406-408.

Overall, the proposals would cause moderate harm to the setting of this potential non-designated heritage asset by the combined effects of the introduction of further contemporary development of mass and scale within its already undermined setting and the slight overall diminishing of its townscape presence that would be caused by the substantial mass of the proposed development relative to this smaller building. This harm would be counterbalanced to some degree by the positive effects of the removal of the detracting elements of the site as it exists at present, which are harmful to no. 406-408's setting, and by no. 406-408's increased legibility as a townscape group with no. 404 to its east. On balance, therefore, there would be **low/moderate less than substantial, harm to the setting and significance of 406-408 Moss Lane East, a potential non-designated heritage** asset of low, local, significance.



5.2a *View 2, looking east from Moss Lane East*



5.2b *View 2, looking east from Moss Lane East*

5.2.3 View 3 (looking northeast from the junction of Acomb Street and Haydn Avenue) [Plates 5.3a/b]

Existing

Viewed from this angle the two- and three-storey building currently occupying the site appears similar in scale to the smaller-scale terraced group situated to its immediate south. The presence of the lower gabled outrigger projection to the rear ensures the legibility of this part of the site as its side/rear and allows a step up in height on approaching its frontage. This step up in height and scale is appropriate and customary at the junction of this side street and the more major Moss Lane East.

Proposed

Townscape: The proposed development would represent a further introduction of contemporary development of mass and scale within an already undermined and fragmented townscape to Moss Lane East in particular. This would be situated at a prominent focal point at the road's end.

Viewed from this angle, the frontage block of the proposed three- and five-storey building would appear notably larger in vertical scale than the terrace to its south and, indeed, than The Gallery to the north, the latter seen across a greater distance. A step up in height, scale and presence is, however, appropriate and customary at the junction of this side street and Moss Lane East and, therefore, is not automatically adverse in its effects; indeed, its retention would ensure the continued legibility of the streetscape / development pattern and the step up in scale and status that accompanies the transition from side street to principal road. As viewed from this angle, the taller frontage block would also appear sufficiently separated from the terraced building to Acomb Street that the scale of the proposed development could be accommodated to the frontage whilst the lower 'outrigger' block to the rear would mitigate the effect of this increased height to some degree by leading down in a staggered way to the smaller-scale buildings of Acomb Street.

The 'outrigger' would also provide mitigation by retaining the legibility of this part of the site as its side/rear, and the taller frontage as its principal front, as appropriate and customary at the junction of this side street and the more major Moss Lane East. It would, however, also have the effect of introducing taller development to the immediate north of the adjacent terrace, without the traditional break in development that is customarily provided by the rear gardens and which would here articulate the end of Moss Lane East and the beginning of this side street. Viewed from this angle, the intervening rear entrance would provide only a minimal break between the two buildings, undermining the distinct identity of the terrace as the beginning of Acomb Street proper.

The development would also introduce a rear block of increased mass and scale, filling the entirety of the plot as visible from this view. With the customary rear garden, which characterises the townscape, lost from view, the resultant development would have a somewhat monolithic feel, only partially mitigated by the breaking up of the rear through detailing and setbacks, whilst its mass would diminish the presence of the smaller building to its south. This would be exacerbated by the advanced building line, which would bring both lower floors in alignment with the terrace's projecting ground-floor bay windows, increasing the development's presence to the street and its prominence relative to the building adjacent. The increased height relative to the terrace would increase this effect further, only partly reduced by the setback of the 'attic' floor above, where the absence of a pitch would increase this storey's mass and resultant visual prominence. The building would also add contemporary form and design to the setting of these buildings of traditional Victorian design and their backdrop in this view, although this would be mitigated to some extent by the brick materiality, the traditional fenestration pattern, and the reference to the area's traditional projecting bay windows.

The proposed development would, therefore, have adverse townscape effects in the introduction of contemporary development of mass and scale to Acomb Street and its junction with Moss Lane East, and the prominence, proximity and scale of the proposed building as it relates to the smaller-scale terraces adjacent. This harm would be counterbalanced to some degree by the positive effects of the removal of the detracting elements of the site as it exists at present, which are harmful to the setting. The residual harm, however, would be only slightly reduced by the mitigating elements of the design and, therefore, would on balance represent a **moderate adverse effect on the townscape to Acomb Street**.

Heritage Assets: The proposals would introduce a further contemporary building of greater mass and scale in the immediate setting and backdrop of 406-408 Moss Lane East (potential non-designated heritage asset), a building of more traditional domestic scale and character. The relationship of the site and nos. 406-408 would also be reversed, the site now appearing more dominant when the two are viewed together, through its greater mass and scale and the filling of the full depth of its plot, whilst nos. 406-408 would appear slightly subordinate, thereby diminishing its townscape presence. Nos. 406-408 at present form the principal feature of interest in views to the north, primarily in the prominent gable end, and the proposed development would introduce a competing focal point by its mass and scale (although this effect would be reduced somewhat by the intentionally subordinate design). The prominence of nos. 406-408's rear-facing gable and steeply pitched roof, which define this building, would also be undermined by the absence of corresponding features facing across Acomb Street, this combining with the reduced legibility of the development pattern to cause it to appear somewhat out of place amongst the humbler terraces to Acomb Street behind.

More broadly, the development would introduce modern built form of a contrasting style and massing in the immediate background of this potential non-designated heritage asset, although this would be partly mitigated by the shared brick materiality, red/brown colour scheme and aligned vertical scale that would create a degree of coherency with nos. 406-408. Through its townscape impacts, set out above, the proposed development would also cause moderate harm to the setting of this building.

The proposals would cause moderate harm to the significance of this potential non-designated heritage asset by the combined effects of the introduction of further contemporary development of mass and scale within its already undermined setting, the diminishing of its townscape presence that would be caused by the substantial mass of the proposed development facing, and, to a lesser extent, the undermining of its legibility. This harm would be counterbalanced to some degree by the positive effects of the removal of the detracting elements of the site as it exists at present, which are harmful to the setting. On balance, therefore, there would be **low/moderate, less than substantial, harm to the setting and significance of 406-408 Moss Lane East, a potential non-designated heritage** asset of low, local, significance.



5.3a *View 3, looking northeast from the junction of Acomb Street and Hadyn Avenue*



5.3b *View 3, looking northeast from the junction of Acomb Street and Hadyn Avenue*

5.2.4 View 4 (looking north up Acomb Street) [Plates 5.4a/b]

Existing

There is a rise in building height at the northern end of this side street, reflecting the higher spatial and (historically) social status of the properties fronting onto the more major road (Moss Lane East). The north end of Acomb Street is thereby bookended by the tall gabled roof of the three-storey 406-408 Moss Lane East, the slightly lower roofs of the existing building on site and, between the two, the eastern end of The Gallery (here four storeys), the latter appearing lower than the historic buildings due to the distance. The roughly similar heights of nos. 406-408 and the existing building on the site as they appear in the view, and their shared pitched profile, gives a sense of balance to the street.

Proposed

Townscape: The proposed development would represent a further introduction of contemporary development of mass and scale within an already undermined and fragmented townscape to Moss Lane East in particular. This would be situated at a prominent focal point at the road's end.

The development would retain the existing rise in height at the northern end of Acomb Street, where the site would continue to form a visual group with 406-408 Moss Lane East facing and The Gallery in between, the three together bookending the street's end as at present. There is capacity to accommodate an increased scale through the site's corner block position at the frontage to the main road, although the introduction of a building of this vertical and horizonal scale would reverse the existing hierarchy at the street's end and alter the balance of the three buildings. From this view, the proposed building would rise high above nos. 406-408, whilst the substantial mass behind its frontage would appear to merge with little distinction into the terrace behind, creating a single mass of built form that would form the predominant feature at this end of the street. The result would be to diminish the townscape presence not only of nos. 406-408 but also of the short terraces that line the road and define its character, whilst undermining the coherency and unity of those along its east. There would be some mitigation in the site's brick materiality and colour scheme, which would complement the existing streetscape, although this would be counteracted by the interruption of the strong unifying gabled from that currently characterises Acomb Street, provides a symmetry across its two sides and bookends the terminus of the view to both east and west.

Overall, the proposed development would introduce further modern built form of scale and mass at a transition between this low-scale side street and the more substantial Moss Lane East. Whilst this frontage corner plot has the capacity to accommodate increased vertical scale this would be at the upper level of acceptability. There would be adverse townscape effects in the introduction of contemporary form and design at a key focal point, the increased dominance of the site, the loss of its visual relationship with nos. 406-408 opposite, the reduced legibility of the development pattern and the introduction of a degree of imbalance, their combined effect being to diminish the townscape presence of the terraces and erode the coherency that is currently provided by the street's consistent gabled form. Despite some slight mitigations, this would have a **moderate adverse townscape effect to Acomb Street within this view**.

Heritage Assets: The proposals would introduce a further contemporary building of greater mass and scale in the immediate setting and backdrop of 406-408 Moss Lane East (potential non-designated heritage asset), a building of more traditional domestic scale and character. The relationship of the site and nos. 406-408 would also be reversed, the site now appearing more dominant when the two are viewed together, through its greater mass and scale and the filling of the full depth of its plot, whilst nos. 406-408 would appear slightly subordinate, thereby diminishing its townscape presence. Nos. 406-408 at present form the principal feature of interest in views to the north, primarily in the prominent gable end, and the proposed development would introduce a competing focal point by its mass and scale (although this effect would be reduced somewhat by the intentionally subordinate design). The prominence of nos. 406-408's rear-facing gable and steeply pitched roof, which define this building, would also be undermined by the absence of corresponding features facing across Acomb Street, this combining with the reduced legibility of the development pattern to cause it to appear somewhat out of place amongst the humbler terraces to Acomb Street behind.

More broadly, the development would introduce modern built form of a contrasting style and massing in the immediate background of this potential non-designated heritage asset, although this would be partly mitigated by the shared brick materiality, red/brown colour scheme and aligned vertical scale that would create a degree of coherency with nos. 406-408. Through its townscape impacts, set out above, the proposed development would also cause moderate harm to the setting of this building.

The proposals would cause moderate harm to the significance of this potential non-designated heritage asset by the combined effects of the introduction of further contemporary development of mass and scale within its already undermined setting, the diminishing of its townscape presence that would be caused by the substantial mass of the proposed development facing, and, to a lesser extent, the undermining of its legibility. This harm would be counterbalanced to some degree by the positive effects of the removal of the detracting elements of the site as it exists at present, which are harmful to the setting. On balance, therefore, there would be **low/moderate, less than substantial, harm to the setting and significance of 406-408 Moss Lane East, a potential non-designated heritage** asset of low, local, significance.



5.4a *View 4, looking north up Acomb Street*



5.4b *View 4, looking north up Acomb Street*

5.2.5 View 5 (looking west along Moss Lane East) [Plates 5.5a/b]

Playfair Street marks a step up in the mass/scale/height of the building line to Moss Lane East, with Moss Court (four storeys) at the corner (south side), the Manchester Academy High School facing it on the north side of the road and The Gallery (four storeys) to the school's west. However, the Academy is set well back from the road, behind substantial tree screening, and has much less presence to the street than its mass and scale might otherwise command.

There is a sustained staggered fall in height, mass and horizontal scale across the southern side of the street, from the wide, four-storey Moss Court apartment block to the site's existing building (originally five units, three storeys plus dormers), the three- and two-storey gabled semi-detached and detached properties to the west of Acomb Street (two and one units), and the small group of lower two-storey adjoined modern houses adjacent, before the vertical and horizontal scale show a slight increase again with the two-storey terraced group (with subsidiary gables) to the west of Fairbank Avenue. This terminates in an open area of soft landscaping at the junction with Upper Lloyd Street, on the opposite side of which is the three-storey Whitworth Park Mansions block (four double-fronted units, Grade II). The prevalent height to this side of Moss Lane East between Playfair Street and the Whitworth Park Mansions (which marks the end of this townscape area) is two to four fairly low storeys, with the specifically historic streetscape two to three storeys high.

A similar staggered height has been allowed for on the north side of the street, where the four-storey The Gallery is succeeded by the lower Mansion Park student apartment block (also four storeys), which then rises in height at the junction to Lloyd Street North to face the tall spire of the former church adjacent.

Proposed

Townscape: The proposed development would represent a further introduction of contemporary development of mass and scale at a point where there has already been substantial redevelopment within the undermined and fragmented townscape to Moss Lane East. It would result in a cluster of three modern buildings of scale, two to the road's south and one to the north, which would be read as a continuation of that large-scale modern development that continues to the west, along the road's north. This would reduce the current contrast between the two sides of Moss Lane East, where the north has been entirely redeveloped, to a much larger scale, but the southern side remains comparatively intact.

The proposed development would, therefore, alter the existing townscape relationships, creating a purely contemporary block to the west of Playfair Street that would give way to the return of the historic townscape at Acomb Street. Whilst this would represent an adverse townscape effect overall it would have some mitigation in the minor benefits that would come from simplifying and increasing the legibility of what is at present a fragmented and incoherent townscape, which is further confused by the existing building on the site. In addition, the gablets to Moss Court and the gable ends to nos. 406-408 and 404 would remain visible to either side of the site, retaining the coherency that this gives to the streetscape, and bridging and bookending the more contemporary form that would be introduced by the development. Improvement to the frontage of the site could also increase the visibility in this view of nos. 406-408 and 404, which are currently partly screened by tree coverage.

The proposed development would introduce built form of larger vertical and horizontal scale to the frontage of that site than that existing at present, increasing the overall vertical scale to this part of Moss Lane East. Viewed from the west, however, the development would rise above the main roofline of Moss Court to its west but would still appear lower than the apex of the latter's gablets, this having the effect of maintaining the existing sustained but staggered fall in height and scale that adds coherency to the southern side of Moss Lane East. The building would, however, rise high above the lower buildings to its west, resulting in a sudden, more extreme, fall in vertical scale at Acomb Street, at the transition from the contemporary streetscape to the historic. This would diminish the townscape presence of the historic buildings visible beyond the site, primarily that of nos. 406-408 and 404. This would be further diminished by the projecting bays of the proposed development, which would sit forward of the site's existing building line, although the bringing forward of the building line, and its closer alignment with that of Moss Court adjacent, would bring some minor townscape effects by introducing a more consistent development line to the frontage of the townscape block bound by Playfair Street and Acomb Street.

The development would introduce increased mass to the southern side of Moss Lane East, which would have greater townscape prominence due to its projecting bays, which would advance forward of the building line of Moss Court adjacent. The increased vertical scale would also increase this sense of mass, although mitigated slightly by the setback of the 'attic' storey and by the canted bays below, the latter without direct precedent but referencing the gable ends and the projecting bays visible in the historic townscape to either side. The garage running to the boundary wall would similarly increase the building's apparent mass, also introducing a new element to the townscape and interrupting the otherwise continuous setback that is characteristic of the townscape and provides coherency. There would be some mitigation to this through the retention of the setback, with soft landscaping, behind, whilst the garage might be said to add a more domestic feel.

Overall, the proposed development would introduce further modern built form of scale and mass to the fragmented and undermined townscape of Moss Lane East. Whilst this corner frontage plot has the capacity to accommodate this increased scale the development would have the adverse townscape effect of diminishing the townscape presence of nos. 406-408 and 404 to its west. There would be further adverse townscape effects in the undermining of the gabled form that currently unites this section of the street and in the introduction of the single-storey garage, which would be partly counteracted by the removal of existing elements that are detracting to the townscape. Further mitigation would come from the development's brick materiality and colour palette and its respect for the established continuous plot line and boundary treatment but, on balance, there would be a **minor/moderate adverse townscape effect to Moss Lane East within this view.**

Heritage Assets: The proposals would introduce a further contemporary building of greater mass and scale in the immediate setting of 406-408 Moss Lane East (potential non-designated heritage asset), a building of more traditional domestic scale and character. The relationship of the site and nos. 406-408 would also be reversed, the visibility and presence in the view of the latter being reduced and the site now appearing more dominant through its greater mass and scale and the stepping forward of its building line. Nos. 406-408, by contrast, would appear slightly subordinate in the view, diminishing its townscape presence. This would also obscure much of the side return of nos. 406-408, reducing its legibility, and undermine its status as a focal point towards the end of the view, although its frontage would remain fully visible, as would its gable ends.

More broadly, the development would introduce modern built form of a contrasting style and massing in the immediate setting of this potential non-designated heritage asset, although this would be partly mitigated by the shared brick materiality, red/brown colour scheme and aligned vertical scale that would create a degree of coherency with nos. 406-408. Through its townscape impacts, set out above, the proposed development would also cause moderate harm to the setting of this building. This harm would be counterbalanced to some degree by the positive effects of the removal of the detracting elements of the site as it exists at present, which are harmful to the setting. However, the building's prominence and townscape presence would both be diminished slightly. On balance, therefore, there would be **low, less than substantial, harm to the setting and significance of 406-408 Moss Lane East, a potential non-designated heritage** asset of low, local, significance.



5.5a *View 5, looking west along Moss Lane East*



5.5b *View 5, looking west along Moss Lane East*

5.3 Summary of Impacts

The proposals have been designed in order to meet a local need and demand for high-quality purpose-built student accommodation, thereby reducing the pressure on family housing in the local area. Although the building currently on the site does have some very limited historic interest this is not of a sufficient level for it to be recognised as a heritage asset, whilst its architectural interest and its townscape contribution have been heavily eroded by ill-considered modern alterations. At present, the site has an overall detracting impact on the local townscape.

The site as it exists at present, therefore, makes only a negligible positive contribution to the setting of the potential non-designated heritage assets to either side, which are of only low heritage significance at a local (rather than national) level of interest. Due to the distance and the lack of intervisibility, the site makes no positive contribution to the setting of the listed buildings of national significance that are situated further to the east and west.

Townscape: the proposed development would have an adverse impact in all views. This would range from negligible/minor to View 1 (affecting Moss Lane East) to minor to moderate for Views 2 and 5 (Moss Lane East) and moderate for Views 3 and 4 (both affecting Acomb Street).

The proposed development would represent a further introduction of contemporary development of mass and scale within an already undermined and fragmented townscape to Moss Lane East in particular, within the setting of several potential non-designated heritage assets and the wider context of a small number of listed buildings.

By undermining the comparative intactness of both Acomb Street and the southern side of Moss Lane East, the proposals would result in a partial change in several key characteristics of townscape character that unite both the historic and the contemporary development. This would include the undermining of the traditional gabled form that provides coherency to both roads (with its removal to the site itself and its undermining to the east and west through a reduction in visibility), and the removal of the rear garden, which traditionally provides a division between development, particularly to the corner plots. Through the garage there would also be an interruption to the continuous setback of Moss Lane East. To the historic townscape, there would be a loss of the traditional character and small scale of development (on the site itself), visible from both streets, the

The proposals would also introduce elements uncharacteristic to the attributes of the townscape. Prominent modern built form of scale and mass would be introduced at a transition between this low-scale side street and the more substantial Moss Lane East, at the upper level of the accommodation afforded by its corner frontage plot: whilst uncharacteristic of the historic townscape this is not, however, uncharacteristic of Moss Lane East itself. A mass and scale uncharacteristic of the townscape of Acomb Street and of the historic elements of the townscape of Moss Lane East would, however, be introduced to both roads, which would have its greatest effects to the smaller side street, comprised of smaller-scale development that steps down in scale from the principal road. These effects would be increased by the introduction of back-plot development of an uncharacteristic scale and mass, which would increase both the size of the development and its proximity to the smaller buildings behind whilst reducing the legibility of the terraced built form and the coherency of its streetscape. These changes would cause a diminishing of prominence and townscape presence, to varying degrees, of 406-408 Moss Lane East and, to a lesser extent, no. 404. It would also result in a reduced legibility to Acomb Street, the loss of the bookended framing to its northern end, and introduction of a degree of imbalance.

There would be some mitigations to these effects in the continuation of key townscape features and elements including the characteristic brick materiality and colour palette, the soft landscaped set back with boundary wall, and the increase in scale and status both from the rear to the front of the plot and from Acomb Street up to Moss Lane East. Viewed in isolation, these would ring about minor townscape benefits, as would the removal of the detracting elements that currently define the site. Further mitigation would be derived from the articulated design, the reference to traditional bays, and that re-stitching of the streetscape that could be brought about by the formation of a single, contemporary, townscape block to the eastern frontage of Acom Street, the historic townscape then more legibly beginning to its west.

Overall, and on balance, there would be a **minor to moderate adverse townscape effect**.

Heritage Assets: Views 1 and 5 demonstrate that the proposed development would have no impact on the setting of Christ Church (Grade II*) and Whitworth Park Mansions (Grade II) to the west or 466-468 Moss Lane East (Grade II) and the Edward VII Statue (Grade II) to the east. Views 2, 3, 4 and 5 demonstrate that the proposed development would have a negative impact on the setting of 406-408 Moss Lane East (potential non-designated heritage asset), whist View 1 raises the possibility of a negative impact on the setting of 382-394 Moss Lane East/2 Fairbank Avenue (potential non-designated heritage asset).

The proposed development would represent a further introduction of contemporary development of mass and scale within the setting of 406-408 Moss Lane East (potential non-designated heritage asset), undermining its townscape setting, lessening its legibility as viewed from Acomb Street and reducing its visibility from the west. In its mass and scale the development would diminish the townscape presence and prominence of this building of smaller scale, to a slight degree of Moss Lane East and a greater degree to Acomb Street. It would also undermine appreciation of the gabled form that unites it with the buildings to its sides and rear as part of a coherent townscape, again in particular to Acomb Street. This would be mitigated to a small degree by the removal of the detracting elements to the site that at present form part of the building's setting and backdrop. Overall, and on balance, there would be **low/moderate, less than substantial, harm to the setting and significance of 406-408 Moss Lane East, a potential non-designated heritage** asset of low, local, significance.

The proposals would also introduce further contemporary development of mass and scale within the setting of 406-408 Moss Lane East, undermining its wider townscape setting. This would cause **slight, less than substantial, harm to the setting and significance of 382-394 Moss Lane East/2 Fairbank Avenue (potential non-designated heritage asset)**, a building of low, local, interest.

Due to the distance, the presence of intervening buildings and soft landscaping, and the lack of intervisibility, the development would have no impact on the settings of the listed buildings or those of 470 Moss Lane East/2b Heald Place (potential non-designated heritage asset) to the east and 438-464 Moss Lane East (potential non-designated heritage asset) to the west.

5.4 Justification

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. This section therefore assesses the proposed development first against the policies of Greater Manchester Places For Everyone Joint Development Plan Document (2024) and then the Manchester Local Plan Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2012, updated in 2024) and finally brings to bear heritage policies in the NPPF and the requirements of the 1990 Planning Act.

Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (1995)

Policy DC19.1 states that 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 their retention and restoration and the protection of their general setting, seeking to preserve and enhance the setting of listed buildings.

The proposed development would preserve the settings of the Whitworth Park Mansions (Grade II), 466 and 468 Moss Lane East (Grade II) and the Edward VII Statue in Whitworth Park (Grade II) as they exist now. As outlined above, this report concludes that whilst the development would alter their wider context it would have no impact on their setting.

Greater Manchester Places For Everyone Joint Development Plan Document (2024)

The Greater Manchester Places For Everyone Plan follows the thrust of the National Planning Policy Framework (for which see below). **Policy JP-P 1**: Sustainable Places specifies that development, wherever appropriate, should conserve and enhance the historic environment and local history, make this history legible, respond to local identity and character in design, sizing, scale and materials, integrate well with its surroundings, and protect key views. Development should also be consistent with the creation of sustainable, attractive and distinctive places that respect and respond to the context

within which they sit and are visually stimulating and imaginative, using quality design. JP-P1 also specifies that buildings should be sustainable and resilient, having a low carbon footprint, making efficient use of land and using recycled materials where possible.

The design responds to its local context and respects its position at the meeting point of Moss Lane East, as a substantial thoroughfare, and the more minor side street to its side. This is articulated in its materiality, canted detailing, setback and boundary treatments and in the treatment and division of its scale and mass, with the designs thereby continuing several key townscape characteristics, elements and features. The modern reinterpretation of the traditional canted bays, the use of aluminium, and the imaginative treatment of the top floor add flair and distinctiveness, using quality design to introduce contemporary readings of the historic features that provide coherency to the townscape to either side. There would be some adverse impact on the historic townscape of Moss Lane East and, in particular, Acomb Street, but this would affect very few heritage assets, of low heritage significance (as explained below).

For environmental sustainability, a living roof is combined with air source heat pumps and facilities for cycle storage, promoting low-carbon travel.

Policy JP-P 2 sets the requirements for heritage assets and their settings to be conserved, sustained and enhanced as a means of contributing to local identity, character, distinctiveness and sense of place. It calls for creative contextual architectural responses that contribute to sense of place and the significance of heritage assets whilst contributing to the social vibrancy, economic viability, accessibility and environmental quality of a place.

The proposals respond to this requirement by conserving the setting of the nearby listed buildings to Moss Lane East, Upper Lloyd Street and Withington Park and that of the majority of the potential non-designated heritage assets to Moss Lane East. Whist it would cause a degree of harm to the setting of two potential non-designated heritage assets this would affect buildings of only very low, local, interest and, therefore, the loss of significance would be comparatively low. The historic environment would, therefore, overall be conserved, and would benefit from the removal of those existing elements of the site that detract from the setting of the potential non-designated heritage assets nearby. It would also benefit from any potential increase in vibrancy and activity that the development could bring, which could support the area's continuing reinvigoration.

As stated above, the designs offer a creative reinterpretation of the area's key townscape characteristics, brought to life using more modern angular forms and a mixture of contemporary and traditional materials.

Manchester Local Plan Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2012, updated in 2024)

These broad strategic principles reinforce the more detailed policies within the Local Plan.

Policy EN 1: Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas states that all development in Manchester will be expected to follow the seven principles of urban design, as identified in national planning guidance (and relating to local character, legibility, differentiation of public and private, high-quality public realm, ease of movement, adaptability and diversity). Opportunities for good design to enhance the overall image of the City should be fully realised, particularly on major radial and orbital road and rail routes. Design and Access Statements submitted with proposals for new development must clearly detail how the proposed development addresses the design principles, reinforces and enhances the local character of that part of the City and supports the achievement of the Core Strategy Strategic Objectives.

As stated above, the proposals would redevelop a site that has some townscape presence, situated on a major route into the city centre and the Oxford Road Corridor. It would articulate local character in its responsive design and would demonstrate good design in its contemporary reading of the local built traditions whilst also responding to the townscape of the modern buildings to its immediate east and to the north. In this, it would bring the established character of the area into the 21st century. Combining a clear contemporary design approach with a respect for the established hierarchies of scale and status, it would also support the continued legibility of this distinction between the two streets of very different character (although with some reduction of the legibility to Acomb Street itself).

Policy EN 3: Heritage states that the Council will encourage development complementing and responding to local heritage features and specifies that new development must preserve (i.e. conserve) or, where possible, enhance the character and setting of designated heritage assets. As stated above, the designs offer a creative response to the established character, to which it gives a contemporary twist, and conserves the setting of the listed buildings to east and west.

Whilst the proposed development would not significantly change the skyline along Moss Lane East when viewed in context with the PBSAs of similar scale it would, however, sit substantially taller than the historic buildings to its side and those to its rear on Acomb Street and adjacent streets. As such, the proposals are also required to comply with **Policy EN 2**: Tall Buildings, which establishes the objective that tall buildings make a positive contribution to the evolution of a unique, attractive and distinctive Manchester, including to its skyline and approach views, and lays out the expectation that their height will relate to the local urban context.

As has been demonstrated both above and in the Design and Access Statement, the proposed development would meet the following key requirements:

- Are of excellent design quality,
- Are appropriately located,
- Contribute positively to sustainability,
- Contribute positively to place making, for example as a landmark, by terminating a view, or by signposting a facility of significance, and
- Will bring significant regeneration benefits.

Located on this heavily trafficked route into the city centre, the proposed development would provide an example of attractive, distinctive and high-quality design on the approach into the city and the Oxford Road Corridor, articulating the City's ambitions in terms of supporting and growing the quality of its city centre neighbourhoods. Whilst the building would be taller than the domestic properties of the historic townscape its site could mainly accommodate this to Moss Lane East, although there would be greater adverse impacts on the townscape of the side street, Acomb Street, where the built form is smaller in scale and there are no recognised heritage assets.

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. Section 66 of the Act imposes a general duty on local planning authorities to consider the impact of proposals upon listed buildings and their settings and states that the decision maker 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*'.

In accordance with the Act, the proposed development would preserve the settings of the Whitworth Park Mansions (Grade II), 466 and 468 Moss Lane East (Grade II) and the Edward VII Statue in Whitworth Park (Grade II) as they exist now. As outlined above, this report concludes that whilst the development would alter their wider context it would have no impact on their setting or special interest.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has crystallised previous policy approaches to the historic environment and
Paragraph 212 makes clear that great weight should given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, irrespective of whether the harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. Paragraph 215 of the NPPF similarly states that any less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Paragraph 216 similarly requires the effect of a proposal on the significance of non-designated heritage assets to be 'taken into account', with 'a balanced judgement... required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset'.

As outlined above, this report concludes that the development would have an adverse impact on the setting of the non-designated heritage assets to this part of Moss Lane East but that owing to the distance and the significant erosion of their wider historic setting the development would cause no notable harm to the setting of 470 Moss Lane East/2b Heald Place (potential non-designated heritage asset) and 438-464 Moss Lane East (potential non-designated heritage asset). There would also be some mitigation of the harm arising from the introduction of buildings of a larger scale and massing, and from the specific design of the proposals. There would, however, be some slight, less than substantial, harm to the setting and significance of 382-394 Moss Lane East/2 Fairbank Avenue (potential non-designated heritage asset), a building of low, local, interest and a low/moderate, less than substantial, harm to the setting and significance of 406-408 Moss Lane East, a potential non-designated heritage asset of low, local, significance.

On balance, the significance of the two non-designated heritage assets affected is very low, whilst the degree of potential harm is low and low to moderate. The resultant overall loss of significance would, therefore, be low. It would, furthermore, be outweighed by the development's public benefits which are as follows:

- Breathing new life into an under-utilised and unloved site with detracting townscape features through a high-quality new development that will contribute to the local sense of place and distinctiveness
- Supporting the objectives of the Oxford Road Corridor's Strategic Vision to 2025 for the area immediately adjacent, which aim to create a cosmopolitan hub and world-class innovation district encouraging talented people from the city and across the world to learn, create, work, socialise, live and do business; contributing to the economic and social growth of the city
- Freeing up under-pressure local housing through the provision of PBSA housing
- Preventing the loss/conversion of buildings of heritage interest for the provision of PBSA housing
- Providing good quality PBSA in Manchester, where there is an identified substantial under supply
- Provision of a mixture of accessible and inclusive student accommodation with supporting amenity spaces internally and externally
- Additional spend in the retail centre to Oxford Road/ Wilmslow Road by future occupants
- Provision of cycle store facilities, promoting active travelling and reducing pressure on the heavily-trafficked Oxford Road

5.5 Conclusion

Whilst bringing several townscape benefits, the overall townscape effect of the proposals would range from minor adverse to moderate adverse. This would have no impact of note on the setting of Whitworth Park Mansions (Grade II), 466 and 468 Moss Lane East (Grade II), the Edward VII Statue in Whitworth Park (Grade II), the significance of which would therefore be conserved. The proposed development would, however, result in slight, 'less than substantial' harm to the significance of 382-394 Moss Lane East/2 Fairbank Avenue and low, 'less than substantial', harm to that 406-408 Moss Lane East, these both being potential non-designated heritage assets of low, only local, significance. The overall harm caused to significance consequently would be very low, 'less than substantial' which would be outweighed by the public benefits that the development would bring.

The proposals would therefore on balance accord with the relevant policies of the NPPF, meet the statutory duties of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act and overall comply with policies outlined in Manchester City Council's Local Plan Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2012, updated 2024) and Greater Manchester Places For Everyone Joint Development Plan Document (2024) insofar as they relate to townscape and the historic environment.

Appendix I – Relevant Statutory List Descriptions

Whitworth Park Mansions
Grade II listed building
List Entry Number: 1220231
Date first listed: 02-Oct-1974
Listing NGR: SJ8439895698

Terrace of 4 town houses, now flats. c.1840, altered. White-painted stucco on brick, hipped slate roof. Double-depth plan, each house double-fronted, with 2 back extensions. Three storeys and cellars, 3+3+3+3 bays, mostly symmetrical, with sill-bands and moulded wood eaves. Each house has slightly projected outer bays and a central recessed porch with Roman Doric columns distyle in antis, entablature with paterae on the frieze, and a panelled inner door with pilastered surround and side lights under a rectangular overlight. At ground floor the 2 houses to the left both have canted bay windows flanking the entrance, the 3rd has a similar bay window to the right and a 15-pane sash to the left with moulded architrave, and the 4th has two similar 15-pane sashes. All have 12-pane sashes at 1st floor and low 6-pane sashes at 2nd floor, all these with moulded architraves. Roof now lacking chimneys. The 4-bay return walls have windows with similar moulded architraves, those in the outer bays all blind. Rear: two 2-storey lean-to back extensions; altered windows. Interior not inspected.

466 and 468, Moss Lane East
Grade II listed building
List Entry Number: 1197931
Date first listed: 02-Oct-1974
Listing NGR: SJ8484895665

Pair of town houses, now flats. c.1840, altered. White-painted stucco on brick, slate roof. Double-depth halls-adjoining plan, each house single-fronted but with a set-back side wing, and back-extension. Two storeys, 2+2 windows arranged 1:2:1, plus lower 1-window side wings; symmetrical; with a plinth, pilasters to slightly-raised outer bays, and prominent wooden eaves; channelled rustication to ground floor; coupled recessed porches with pilastered surrounds including frieze with wreaths, cornice and blocking course, and panelled inner doors with overlights; tripartite windows at ground floor of the outer bays, these and the other windows of the main range all with moulded architraves, and all now furnished with top-hung casements with glazing bars, imitating sashes. Gable chimneys. Skylights inserted in roof. Low side wings with one window to each floor.

Edward VII Statue in Whitworth Park to south of Whitworth Gallery
Grade II listed building
List Entry Number: 1271458
Date first listed: 02-Oct-1974
Listing NGR: SJ8493895889

Statue commemorating King Edward VII (d.1910). c.1912, by J. Cassidy. Granite base, plinth and pedestal, bronze statue. Square plan. Large stepped and moulded plinth, rectangular pedestal; over-life-size statue of monarch in conventional standing pose, with sceptre and orb.

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.

Section 66 of the Act imposes a statutory duty upon local planning authorities to consider the impact of proposals upon listed buildings and their setting and 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.*

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:

b. not permit a change of use of a listed building, where it would have a detrimental effect on the character or appearance of the building;
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;
f. not permit alterations to a listed building which would prevent the future use of any part of the building, in particular upper floors or basements, or where poor maintenance is likely to result.

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

Manchester Local Plan was adopted by Manchester City Council in 2012, though it retains several of the policies set out in the 1995 UDP. The following policies are of relevance.

Policy EN 1 Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas

All development in Manchester will be expected to follow the seven principles of urban design, as identified in national planning guidance and listed above and have regard to the strategic character area in which the development is located. Opportunities for good design to enhance the overall image of the City should be fully realised, particularly on major radial and orbital road and rail routes. Design and Access Statements submitted with proposals for new development must clearly detail how the proposed development addresses the design principles, reinforces and enhances the local character of that part of the City and supports the achievement of the Core Strategy Strategic Objectives.

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 EN 2: Tall Buildings

Tall buildings are defined as buildings which are substantially taller than their neighbourhoods and/or which significantly change the skyline.

Proposals for tall buildings will be supported where it can be demonstrated that they

- Are of excellent design quality,
- Are appropriately located,
- Contribute positively to sustainability,
- Contribute positively to place making, for example as a landmark, by terminating a view, or by signposting a facility of significance, and
- Will bring significant regeneration benefits.

A fundamental design objective will be to ensure that tall buildings complement the City's key existing building assets and make a positive contribution to the evolution of a unique, attractive and distinctive Manchester, including to its skyline and approach views.

Suitable locations will include sites within and immediately adjacent to the City Centre with particular encouragement given to non-conservation areas and sites which can easily be served by public transport nodes.

Elsewhere within Manchester tall building development will only be supported where, in addition to the requirements listed above, it can be shown to play a positive role in a coordinated place-making approach to a wider area. Suitable locations are likely to relate to existing district centres. The height of tall buildings in such locations should relate more to the local, rather than the City Centre, urban context.

By their very size tall buildings can have a significant impact on the local environment and its micro-climate. It is therefore expected that this impact be modelled and that submissions for tall buildings also include appropriate measures to create an attractive, pedestrian friendly local environment.

It will be necessary for the applicant/developer to demonstrate that proposals for tall buildings are viable and deliverable.

Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document (updated 2024)

The Places for Everyone Joint Development 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; and
5. Exploring opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that restoration of historic buildings offer.

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 Planning Policy Framework

Any proposals for consent relating to heritage assets are subject to the policies of the NPPF (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:

201. 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;

b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and

c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness

With regard to potential 'harm' to the significance designated heritage asset, in paragraph 205 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 206 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.

In terms of non-designated heritage assets, the NPPF states:

216. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Other Relevant Policy and Guidance Documents

National Planning Policy Guidance (2019)

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

Historic England: Conservation Principles and Assessment (2008)

Historic England: Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets. Historic England Advice Note 12' (2019)

Historic England's Historic Environment Good Practice Advice, Note 3 'The Setting of Heritage Assets' (2017)

IEMA, IHBC and CIfA, 'Principles of Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment in the UK' (2021)

GLVIA: The Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (2013)

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