

Heritage Statement

Withington Library, Wilmslow Road,
Manchester

February 2025

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Client
Manchester City Council

Our reference
01715

February 2025

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Turley Heritage on behalf of Manchester City Council ('the Applicant') in support of a full planning application for alterations, including the installation of Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs) and window upgrades ('the Proposed Works') to Withington Library, Wilmslow Road, Manchester ('the Site').
- 1.2 The Proposed Works form part of a wider Manchester City Council decarbonisation project. Manchester City Council (MCC) has targeted Net Zero Carbon status by 2038. Surveys have been undertaken of MCC's building stock and a number of potential decarbonisation measures were reviewed. This prioritised ways to reduce energy demand and improve efficiency, followed by installing low or zero carbon solutions including renewable energy. Ways to offset any remaining emissions were then reviewed. Various mechanical and electrical upgrades have been proposed for MCC buildings, including Withington Library, which include the installation of roof mounted Air Source Heat Pumps and replacing windows.
- 1.3 Withington Library is located within Withington Conservation Area. In determining the submitted planning application, Manchester City Council (MCC) has a statutory duty under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to 'pay special attention' to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.¹ The meaning of 'preservation' in this context, as informed by case law, is taken to be the avoidance of harm. Case law has determined that these are matters to be given 'considerable importance and weight' in the planning process.
- 1.4 The NPPF provides the Government's national planning policy on the conservation of the historic environment. In respect of information requirements for applications, Paragraph 207 states the following:

"In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance".²
- 1.5 To comply with these requirements, Section 2 of the statement identifies the heritage assets that will be affected by the Proposed Works, including Withington Conservation Area and Withington Library as a non-designated heritage asset. Section 3 provides assessments of the significance, in terms of the character and appearance of Withington Conservation Area and the local architectural and historic interest of Withington Library. This assessments of significance are proportionate to both the importance of the identified heritage assets and the likely impacts of the application proposals. It is undertaken on the basis of published information, archival research and on-site visual survey.

¹ Section 72(1)

² MHCLG (2024) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Paragraph 200

- 1.6 Section 4 provides an assessment of the impact of the Proposed Works, in light of the statutory duties of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, national policy set out in the NPPF, and local planning policy for the historic environment (set out in detail at **Appendix 1**). The Statement concludes with a summary and conclusions at Section 5.
- 1.7 This Heritage Statement has been undertaken on the basis of published information, proportionate archival research and a site visit undertaken during September 2024. It has been prepared in accordance with Historic England Advice Notes on ‘Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets’ (HEAN 12)³, ‘Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency’ (HEAN 18)⁴, ‘Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management’ (HEAN 1)⁵, ‘Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage’ (HEAN 7)⁶ Good Practice Advice on ‘Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment’ (GPA 2)⁷ and ‘The Setting of Heritage Assets’ (GPA 3)⁸.

³ Historic England (2019) Historic England Advice Note 12, Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets

⁴ Historic England (2024) Historic England Advice Note 18, Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency

⁵ Historic England (2019) Historic England Advice Note 1, Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management

⁶ Historic England (2021) Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage

⁷ Historic England (2015) Historic Environment Good Practice in Planning Note 2, Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment

⁸ Historic England (2017) Historic Environment Good Practice in Planning Note 3, The Setting of Heritage Assets (2nd edition)

2. Heritage Assets

2.1 The NPPF defines a heritage asset as:

“A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest.”⁹

Designated Heritage Assets

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



Figure 2.1: Extract from Withington Conservation Area Appraisal showing the boundaries of the conservation area and location of listed buildings and positive contributors.¹⁰ North is approximately towards the left of the image. Withington Library is circled in blue

Conservation Areas

2.3 The Site is located within Withington Conservation Area, designated by Manchester City Council (MCC) in July 1983. MCC published a Conservation Area Appraisal (the

⁹ MHCLG (2024) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – Annex 2: Glossary

¹⁰ Manchester City Council (MCC) (2024) Withington Conservation Area Appraisal. pg. 39.

‘Appraisal’) in 2024.¹¹ Withington Library is identified in the Character Appraisal as a positive contributor to the conservation area.¹²

Listed Buildings

- 2.1 The Site is also close to a number of listed buildings. The disposition of the Proposed Works, the nature of interposing built development, when considered together with the individual significance of approximate listed buildings, ensures that any potential impacts of the Proposed Works would not impact the listed buildings through development within their setting, and have been scoped out of this Statement.

Non-Designated Heritage Assets

- 2.2 The NPPF differentiates between designated and non-designated heritage assets. Non-designated heritage assets are those identified by the local planning authority (including local listing). Historic England’s guidance on ‘Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment’ (2015) clarifies that:

“Non-designated heritage assets include those that have been identified in a Historic Environment Record, in a local plan, through local listing or during the process of considering an application.”¹³

- 2.3 MCC does not have a local list of heritage assets, however Withington Library is identified as a non-designated heritage asset in the Appraisal for Withington Conservation Area.¹⁴ The building has therefore been treated as a non-designated heritage asset within this Statement.

¹¹ MCC (2024) Withington Conservation Area Appraisal

¹² *Ibid.* pg. 39.

¹³ Historic England (2015) Historic Environment Good Practice in Planning Note 2, Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment. pg. 1.

¹⁴ MCC (2024) Withington Conservation Area Character Appraisal. pg. 39 & 47.

3. Assessments of Significance

- 3.1 The NPPF defines the significance of a heritage asset as:

“The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.”¹⁵

- 3.2 Historic England provide guidance on the assessment of significance of heritage assets.¹⁶ This has been used as guidance for describing heritage significance.

Conservation Areas

- 3.3 Conservation areas are designated on the basis of their special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Historic England has published guidance in respect of conservation areas which provides a framework for the appraisal and assessment of the special interest of a conservation area.¹⁷

Non-designated Heritage Assets

- 3.4 The latest National Planning Practice Guidance (‘PPG’) relating to the historic environment defines non-designated heritage assets as:

“... buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets.”¹⁸

- 3.5 Historic England provides a set of criteria for assessing the suitability of assets for inclusion in a local heritage list.¹⁹ This has been used as a guide for assessing the significance of the identified non-designated heritage asset.

Assessment

- 3.6 The following assessment of significance is proportionate to both the significance of the identified heritage assets and sufficient so as to understand the impact of the Proposed Works, given their nature and extent. The assessment has been undertaken on the basis of published information, archival research and on-site visual survey.

¹⁵ MHCLG (2024) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – Annex 2: Glossary

¹⁶ Historic England (2019) Heritage Advice Note 12 Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets

¹⁷ Historic England (2019) Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management

¹⁸ MHCLG & DLUHC (2019) – Paragraph: 039 Reference ID: 18a-039-20190723

¹⁹ Historic England (2021) Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage. pg. 11.

Withington Conservation Area

History and Development

- 3.7 The history and development of Withington is largely associated with 19th and 20th century expansion, driven by the industrialisation and rapid growth of nearby Manchester.
- 3.8 Withington has origins in the medieval period as a small agricultural settlement. By the 18th century, the land was mostly owned by the Egerton family. The settlement was focused along Wilmslow Road, a key route from the south to central Manchester. This road gained further importance in 1753 when it became a turnpike road, improving transportation and communication with Manchester. Despite the industrial growth of Manchester from the 18th century, the distance of Withington meant that it remained a primarily rural area until the 19th century.



Figure 3.1: 1894 Ordnance Survey (OS) map showing the extent of Withington in the late 19th century (© NLS)

- 3.9 The second half of the 19th century saw Withington transform from a rural village to a suburb, driven by the growth of Manchester. Important and transformative development occurred during this period. Withington experienced an influx of middle-class professionals seeking housing away from industrial Manchester. Expansion during this period was accelerated by the construction of a second turnpike road (Palatine Road) in 1862 and the sale of land from the Egerton Estate from 1887. Several individually designed villas were built along Wilmslow Road and adjacent streets. An increased population of Withington in the later 19th century saw the development of purpose-built residential streets consisting of smaller detached houses and terraced

villas. The expansion of Withington continued in the 20th century. These Victorian and Edwardian buildings define much of the character of Withington.



Figure 3.2: 1935 OS map showing the expansion of Withington and urbanisation of its surroundings in the early 20th century (© NLS)

- 3.10 The post-war period saw the clearance of poorer quality terraces and replacement with modern housing. This period also marked the subdivision of larger houses into multiple-occupancy residences.

Character and Appearance

- 3.11 Withington Conservation Area is situated in the south of Manchester, centred along Wilmslow Road, a major thoroughfare that runs north-south through Withington.
- 3.12 Wilmslow Road is the primary road in the area, with smaller residential streets branching off from it. Streets are generally lined with traditional Victorian terraces or semi-detached homes. Buildings are set back from the road in residential areas, creating a more suburban character. By contrast, the commercial part of the Withington along Wilmslow Road consists of a tighter urban grain, with buildings at the back of pavement.



Figure 3.3: View north east along Wilmslow Road showing the commercial part of Withington Conservation Area

- 3.13 The buildings within the conservation area are predominantly Victorian and Edwardian, and comprise a mix of civic and residential buildings (where commercial use is often seen at ground floor level). Buildings which are typically of two to three storeys and the predominant materials used in the conservation area are red and yellow brick, often complemented by decorative stone or terracotta detailing. Roofs are typically slate and pitched, while timber is frequently used for window frames and doors. There is a variety of window types, including sashes, casements and bay windows. Residential buildings are a mix of terraced houses and villas. There is some modern infill developments, though these generally contrast with the historic character.

- 3.14 There are some areas which retain their original cobblestone surfaces. These are primarily close to private properties along driveways. In particular, at 2 and 4 Parsonage Road, the Former White Lion Public House and 1-13 Marriott Street. Street furniture is mixed, with modern bollards and benches painted black.

- 3.15 There is limited open space across the conservation area and the churchyard of St Paul's provides the primary open green space. The southern part of Wilmslow Road, near Palatine Road and St Paul's Church, has notable mature trees and there are several Tree Preservation Orders within the conservation area. Private front gardens off smaller residential streets also contribute to the green spaces.

- 3.16 Key views within the conservation area are mostly along, or in the direction of, Wilmslow Road. These often feature prominent local landmarks, including a view north along Wilmslow Road towards Withington Library. Views north and south along Wilmslow Road best reveal the historic development of the conservation area.

Character Zone

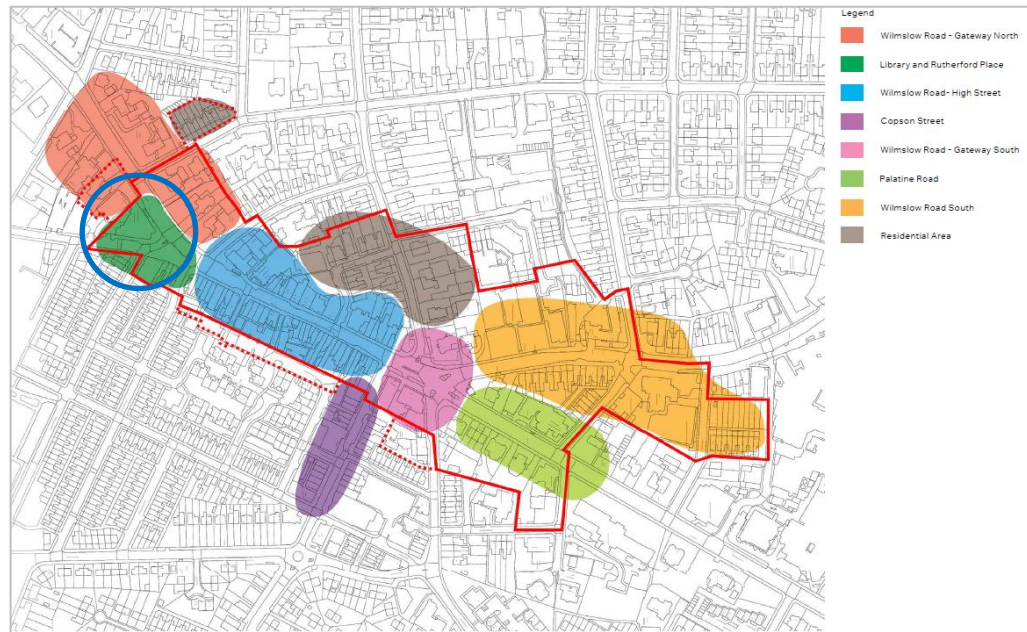


Figure 3.4: Extract from the Appraisal showing the character zones.²⁰ North is approximately towards the left of the image. Withington Library is circled in blue

- 3.17 Withington is divided into eight character zones.²¹ Withington Library is within the Library and Rutherford Place Character Zone located at the head of the conservation area. This Character Zone centres around Withington Library, 160-164 Wellington Road and 412-416 Wilmslow Road.
- 3.18 Buildings are built at back of pavement. The Library has a Neoclassical design. This contrasts with the style of 412-416 Wilmslow Road which have decorative brickwork and bay windows, with modern inserted shopfronts. 160-164 Wellington Road are to the north of nos. 412-416. They are modern have contrasting brickwork and misaligned roof with 412-416 Wilmslow Road. The Library retains its original community use and the other buildings are commercial use at ground floor with residential above.
- 3.19 Open space in front of the library emphasises its localised landmark status and civic function. Change in material from asphalt to concrete paving slabs lined with concrete block pavers defines the public realm in front of the Library. Some street trees soften the urban realm.

Contribution made by Withington Library

- 3.20 Withington Library is identified in the Character Appraisal as a positive contributor to the conservation area.²² Withington Library was built in 1927, which is consistent with the history and development of conservation area. Its continued use as a library

²⁰ Manchester City Council (MCC) (2024) Withington Conservation Area Appraisal. pg. 30.

²¹ MCC (2024) Withington Conservation Area Character Appraisal. pg. 29.

²² *Ibid.* pg. 39.

reflects the civic expansion and later consolidation of Withington in the early 20th century.

- 3.21 Stylistically, Withington Library is distinctive for its stripped Neoclassicism, which contrasts with the prevailing Victorian character and appearance of the conservation area. The contrast in style results in a degree of localised visual prominence. This is accentuated due to its corner positioning at the head of Wilmslow Road and double frontage.
- 3.22 It is built of Portland stone and red brick, and features timber sash windows. The use of Portland stone contrasts with the predominant use of red and yellow brick within Withington. It has a flat roof behind a parapet and is not visible, which contrasts with the prevailing slate pitched roofscape within the conservation area. The materiality of the building contributes to the collective range of materials across the conservation area.

Non-designated Heritage Assets

Withington Library

- 3.23 Withington Library was built by Manchester City Council in 1927 to the designs of Henry Price. It was built to replace a house converted to a library on the same site. The Library has been considered against Historic England criteria for local listing²³, as a guide.



Figure 3.5: View north east of Withington Library from Wilmslow Road

²³ Historic England (2021) Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage



Figure 3.6: View north east of Withington Library from Wilmslow Road, taken 1938 (© GM Lives Ref. GB127.m81509)

Age and Rarity

- 3.24 Withington Library dates to 1927. The building dates to a period when, following the Libraries Act of 1892, libraries were built in large numbers. The presence of buildings dating to the early-20th century is not uncommon in this part of Manchester given the consolidation of Withington during this period following the outward expansion of the city.

Architectural and Artistic Interest

- 3.25 Withington Library is corner-sited and built of red brick and Portland stone. The building retains its original windows, including crittal framed windows and timber sashes.
- 3.26 Withington Library's architectural and artistic interest derives from its stripped back Neoclassical design. The building's plan form has a distinctive fan shape that accommodates a symmetrical 'open book' layout popular at the time (as seen at the Chorlton and Didsbury libraries). It has a large octagonal cupola resting on a flat roof and a geometrical form which is consistent with the stripped Neoclassical style.
- 3.27 It opens out behind a narrow entrance elevation with a distyle portico containing two Doric columns supporting a pediment. An entablature is inscribed with gold lettering reading 'PUBLIC LIBRARY'. These elements take reference from classical architecture and contribute to its Neoclassical style.

Group Value

- 3.28 Withington Library forms one of a range of town libraries built in the early-20th century to the designs of Henry Price across Manchester (including Chorlton Library and

Didsbury Library). Whilst they are not appreciable in a shared context, collectively represent the early-20th century civic expansion of suburban towns in Manchester.

- 3.29 Beyond this, there does not appear to be any discernible/tangible group value between Withington Library and other buildings in its locality, beyond the contribution the building makes to the conservation area and wider streetscene. There are other early 20th century buildings in the surrounding area, that when considered in combination, reflect the consolidation of Withington during this period.

Historic Interest

- 3.30 Withington Library holds some historic interest, given its association with Henry Price, Manchester Corporation Architect and the first city architect. Price designed several notable municipal buildings in Manchester, including Chorlton and Didsbury libraries, as well as Manchester's Victoria Baths and Hydraulic Power Station.
- 3.31 It also has historic interest as an example of one of Manchester's civic buildings built in the inter-war period and reflects the consolidation of Withington in the early 20th century. The building was funded by Andrew Carnegie and derives some historic interest from its association with the donor. Built in 1927, Withington Library is one of the later Carnegie libraries.

Landmark Status

- 3.32 Withington Library is distinctive for its stripped Neoclassical style, which contrasts with the prevailing Victorian townscape. This creates a degree of localised prominence and contributes to its local landmark status. The location of the Library at the head of Wilmslow Road and Rutherford Place emphasises its landmark status.

4. Impact Assessment

Introduction

- 4.1 MCC, in determining the submitted full planning application, has statutory duties under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to ‘pay special attention’ to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.²⁴ The meaning of ‘preservation’ in this context, as informed by case law, is taken to be the avoidance of harm. Case law has determined that these are matters to be given ‘considerable importance and weight’ in the planning process.
- 4.2 Paragraph 210 of the NPPF states that, in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, putting them into viable uses consistent with their conservation, as well as the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 4.3 Paragraph 212 requires, when considering the impact of development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, that great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. ‘Conservation’ is defined by the NPPF as ‘the process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.’
- 4.4 Paragraphs 214 and 215 differentiate between ‘substantial’ and ‘less than substantial harm’ and provide a framework for the consideration of harm to the significance of designated heritage assets, where it arises, bearing in mind the considerable importance and weight that must be given to the statutory duties of the 1990 Act.
- 4.5 Paragraph 216 states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighting 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.
- 4.6 Paragraph 219 requires that local planning authorities look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas and within the setting of heritage assets to better reveal their significance. It states that proposals that preserve those elements of setting that make a positive contribution to, or better reveal the significance of the asset, should be treated favourably.

Planning Context and Pre-Application Discussions

- 4.7 The application proposals have been informed by pre-application discussions with MCC planning and conservation officers. An on-site meeting with the MCC planning and conservation officers, representatives from the client team and Turley Heritage was held on 26th September 2024. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss and review the emerging proposals. Queries were raised by MCC regarding the location of the

²⁴ Section 72(1)

proposed Air Source Heat Pumps and their potential visibility on the streetscene. These discussions have informed the Proposed Works.

The Proposed Works

4.8 The Proposed Works are associated with MCC's decarbonisation of their buildings, and in relation to Withington Library, consist of the following:

- Removal of existing gas boilers and installation of a high temperature Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) to the roof;
- Replacement of the existing timber sash single glazed windows with new heritage timber sash double glazed windows;
- Refurbishment of the existing single glazed Crittall frame windows and installation of secondary glazing;
- Associated works for access and maintenance requirements for the ASHP, including mansafe system to the main roof area, and a fixed ladder to the rear.

4.9 The Proposed Works are discussed and their impact assessed below.

Installation of ASHP

4.10 Historic England have recently published Historic England Advice Note 18 'Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency'²⁵, which this has been used as a guide for best practice. Historic England's Advice Note 18, paragraph 94, states:

"Changing boilers, heating and hot water systems to low carbon alternatives, such as heat pumps, will generally be acceptable.

- *Having an effective low carbon heating system is one of the best ways of enhancing an historic building's energy efficiency. In the majority of cases, replacement of existing systems will not cause harm to special interest.*
- *There may be very rare exceptions where the existing heating system, or components of it, has architectural or historic significance (for example, original cast-iron radiators) and remains functional.*
- *The impact of heat pumps can generally be minimised through careful siting, design and screening. Routing pipework may damage historic fabric, with additional archaeological considerations in some sites.*
- *The opportunity should be taken to remove unsightly plant equipment made redundant by the heat pump, for instance oil tanks. This can sometimes offset any harmful impact of installing a pump."*²⁶

²⁵ Historic England (2024) Historic England Advice Note 18, Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency

²⁶ Historic England (2024) Historic England Advice Note 18, Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency. pg. 28.

4.11 Various options have been explored to identify the most suitable location for the ASHP. Broadly, this has included the following:

- Located to the rear courtyard besides the northern Office room: a noise impact assessment conducted by Red Acoustics concluded that this location would give rise to significant adverse impact from sound levels. Heritage concerns were also raised by MCC during pre-application discussions regarding visibility of the ASHPs on the streetscene, and the impact this could have on Withington Conservation Area. This proposed location would also conceal original windows, and could cause harm to Withington Library as a non-designated heritage asset.
- Located within the rear courtyard besides the southern Staff Room/Kitchen: there are similar considerations in terms of noise as a result of proximity to the adjacent apartment building (an identified noise sensitive receptor). As identified by Crookes Walker Consulting, this location would not practically be possible due to required space for the ASHPs.
- Free standing and located within the rear courtyard, away from Wilmslow Road and Withington Road: there are similar considerations in terms of noise as a result of proximity to the adjacent apartment building (a noise sensitive receptor identified by Red Acoustics).
- Located to the roof, positioned on the western arm of the Library: this is the preferred option.



Figure 4.1: Proposed location for ASHP (produced by Crookes Walker Consulting)

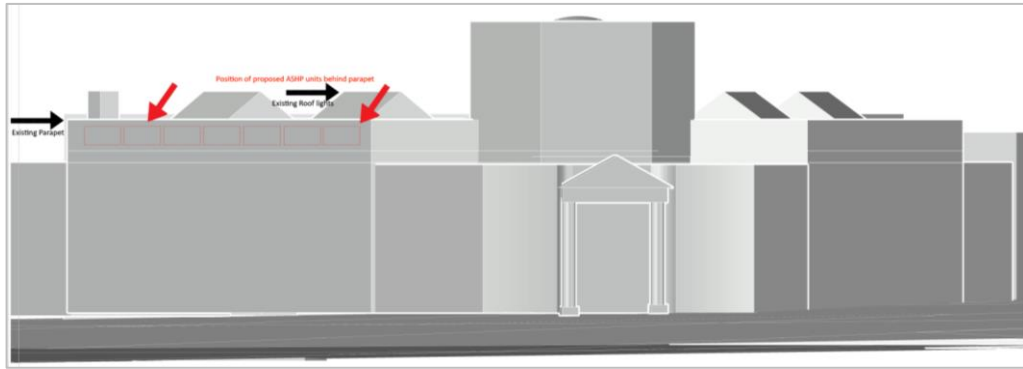


Figure 4.2: 3D model showing the location of ASHPs behind the parapet in views north east towards Withington Library (produced by Drees and Sommer)

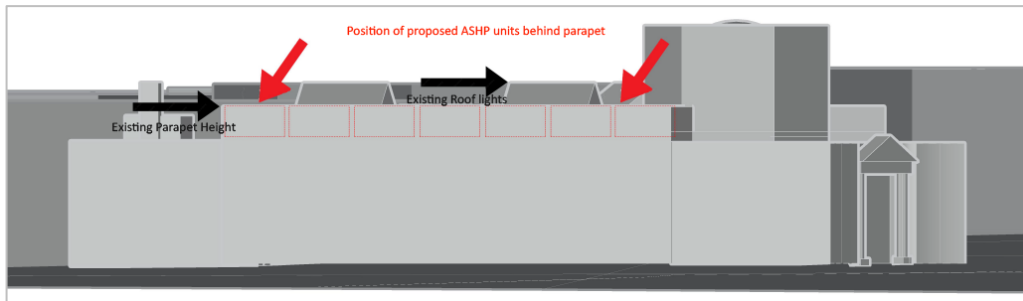


Figure 4.3: 3D model showing the location of ASHPs behind the parapet in views east towards Withington Library (produced by Drees and Sommer)

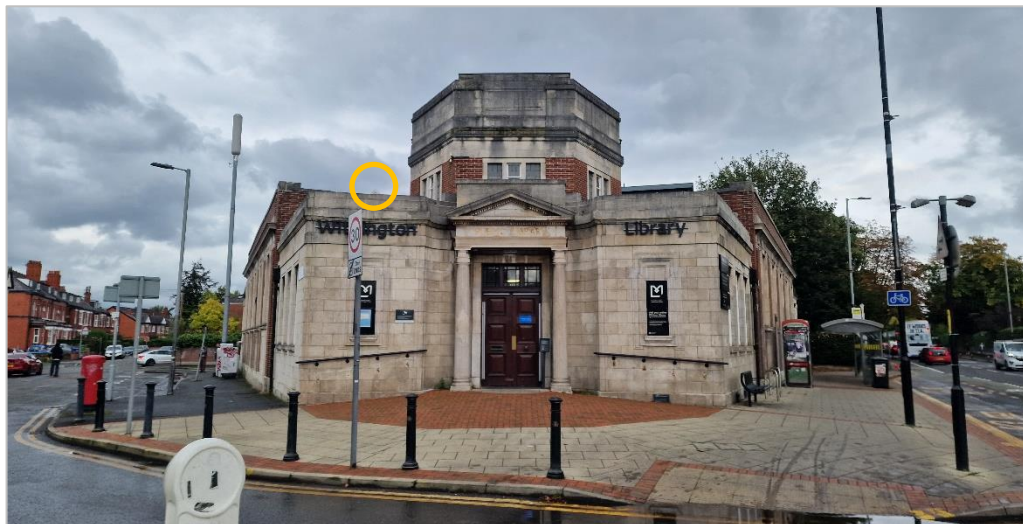


Figure 4.4: View north east of Withington Library from Wilmslow Road showing that the tops of the rooflights are just visible in this view (circled orange). The ASHPs would sit at a lower level than the rooflights and would not be visible

- 4.12 The proposed ASHPs would be installed to the roof of the western arm of the Library, shown on drawing ref: 3388-CWC-XX-EX-DR-M-5004 and at **Figure 4.1**. Their installation is reversible. The proposed location of the ASHPs is discreet and this is the least amount of plant required to achieve decarbonisation targets. Visibility of the ASHPs from the street has been minimised by locating them away from the parapet, behind and at a lower level to existing rooflights, and through the use of domestic-scale ASHP (**Figures 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4**). The units are proposed to be in black, and would therefore be visually recessive. It is considered that the ASHP would not detract from or obscure the appreciation of the Library's symmetrical 'open book' layout or stripped Neoclassical style. As a result, the proposed ASHP would not harm Withington Library as a non-designated heritage asset. The minimised visibility of the ASHP would not detract from the localised prominence of the Library and consequently would sustain the character and appearance of Withington Conservation Area and contribution made by Withington Library.
- 4.13 Structural engineers were instructed to undertake inspection and appraisal of the roof structure and supporting framework to determine additional load associated with installation of the ASHPs would not compromise the weathertightness and structural integrity of the existing building.

Mansafe System

- 4.14 The Library roof is predominantly flat with stepped levels. Some areas of roof feature an existing parapet. Installation of ASHP panels would require safe method of maintenance and fall protection. A constant force type mansafe system would be installed above the Library roofs as to allow access to the ASHP locations, with posts secured to the roof structure with mechanical steel anchor fixings, detailed at **Figure 4.5**. This type of mansafe system would sit at a lower height to the existing parapet, ensuring that the system is not visible.

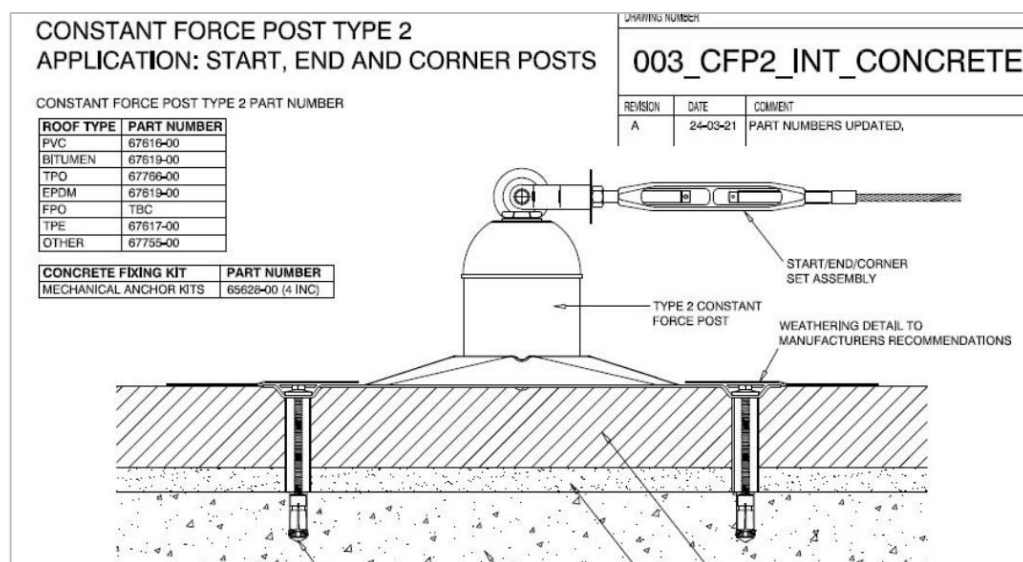


Figure 4.5: Detail of mansafe fixing detail (provided in the Design and Access Statement)

Ladder Access

- 4.15 To maintain the roof mounted ASHP, permanent roof access is required. A vertical fixed ladder would be installed to the north east elevation at the rear of the Library to provide unrestricted access to maintain the ASHP on the Library roof, as detailed on drawing ref: 3388-CWC-XX-EX-DR-M-5004 and at **Figure 4.1**. This location is of low sensitivity at the rear of the building where there would be limited visibility of the ladder.
- 4.16 A retractable vertical ladder system is proposed that can be folded when not in use (**Figure 4.6**). This design ensures that, when the ladder is closed, it has a slim profile which would minimise visibility of the system. Roof areas with a climb height above 3m require fall protection. An overrail system is proposed in combination with the ladder system which would be mounted 1m above the roof parapet for the operative to safely harness on to. This would have a slimline appearance, as shown on **Figure 4.6**, which minimises the visibility of the overrail system.

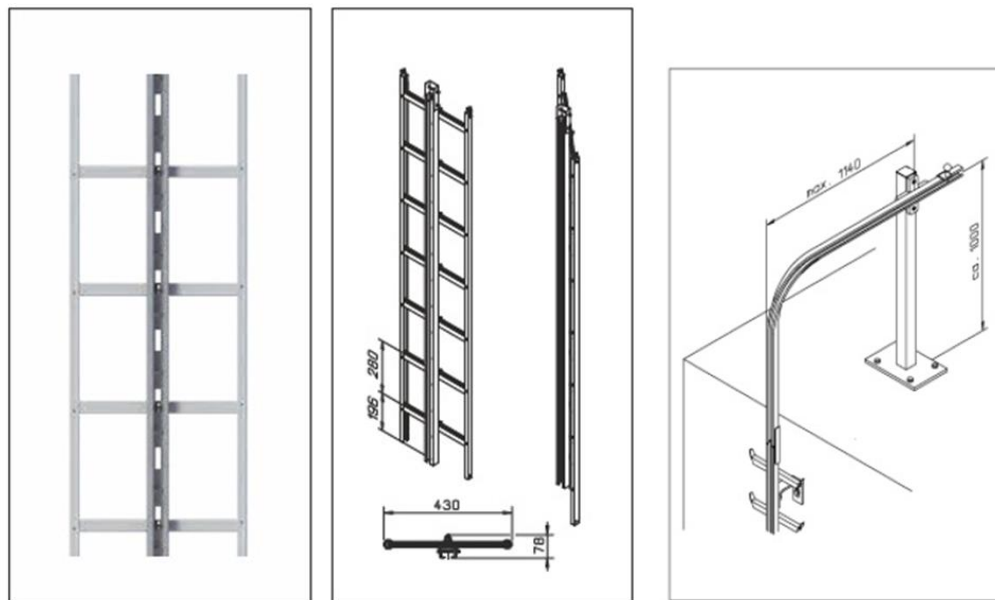


Figure 4.6: Detail of foldable ladder and overrail system proposed for ladder access

Window Replacement and Secondary Glazing

- 4.17 Historic England's Advice Note 18, paragraph 80 states:

"Installation of secondary glazing to the windows will generally be acceptable.

- Secondary glazing will provide considerable improvements to thermal performance and energy conservation. In respect of multipane windows, it often outperforms double-glazing.*
- In most cases, the impact of its installation on significance will only cause minimal harm to historic fabric and architectural interest, which will generally be acceptable in view of the benefits obtained.*

- *Exceptions may include interiors of exceptional architectural quality (such as the finest state rooms of a great house), buildings with historic shutters which would be damaged or rendered inoperative by the installation, and buildings with glazing of exceptional significance which should not be obscured. In many of these cases, temporary secondary glazing used seasonally will generally be acceptable.”²⁷*

4.18 In line with Paragraph 82:

“Replacement of windows which do not contribute to the architectural or historic interest of a building with double-glazed windows of appropriate material and pattern, will generally be acceptable.

- *Many historic buildings have windows which are relatively recent and do not contribute to a building’s special interest. In such cases, their replacement with double-glazed windows of an appropriate material, glazing bar pattern and detailing is likely to either have a neutral impact or to enhance significance.*
- *This will not be so in the case of original or other windows which contribute positively to a building’s special interest through both historic fabric and design. Such windows should not be replaced (although their panes could be replaced with slim-profile or vacuum double-glazing within the existing frames. Stuck-on or applied glazing bars rarely replicate the character of historic windows and are unlikely to be acceptable.”²⁸*

4.19 A number of windows in varying conditions are proposed to be replaced, including original timber sash windows on the west, north east and south east facing elevations (**Figure 4.7 and 4.8**). Lead windows within crittall frames at first floor of the rotunda are to be retained and thermal efficiency enhanced through the introduction of secondary glazing (**Figure 4.9**).

²⁷ *Ibid.* pg. 21.

²⁸ *Ibid.* pg. 21.



Figure 4.7: Sash windows to the south east elevation



Figure 4.8: Sash windows to the north east rear elevation



Figure 4.9: Leaded windows within crittall frames on the rotunda



Figure 4.10: Elevations showing proposed replacement windows (to be viewed in combination with Figure 4.11)

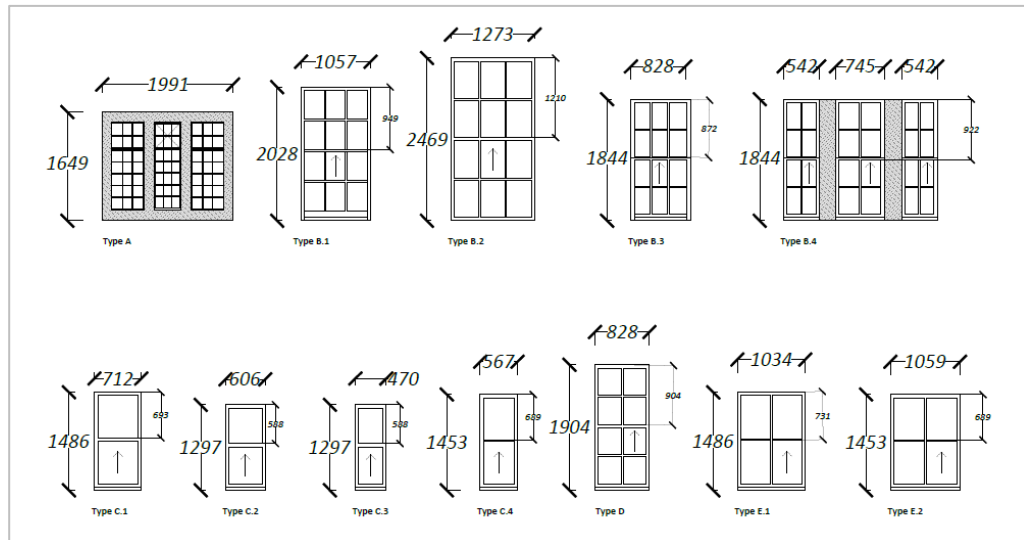


Figure 4.11: Proposed window schedule (to be viewed in combination with Figure 4.10)

Sash Windows

- 4.20 To the ground floor, the Library has 38 no. original timber hardwood sash windows with Georgian window bars and single glazing throughout. Windows are of various sizes throughout the building. The existing windows are in a varied condition with indications of decay to the cills and timber frames throughout.
- 4.21 Existing windows would be removed and replaced with new Ventrolla sapele hardwood timber sash windows with Georgian window bars, draughtproofing and heritage double glazing, as shown on **Figure 4.12**. The locations of the replacement windows are shown on drawing refs: 24615.104 and 24615.105, and at **Figures 4.10** and **4.11**.



Figure 4.12: Example replacement Ventrolla sapele hardwood timber sash windows proposed to the ground floor (further details are provided in the submitted product brochure)

Crittall Frame Windows

- 4.22 To the first floor of the rotunda, the library has 6 no. crittall frame windows. The existing windows are in a varied condition with indications of decay to the cills and timber frames throughout.
- 4.23 Existing windows would undergo a full refurbishment of the leaded glazing and frames. Windows would have Ventrolla aluminium framed secondary glazing (6mm horizontal sliding) installed to the internal reveal of the window. The locations of the refurbished windows are shown on drawing refs: 24615.104 and 24615.105, and at **Figures 4.10** and **4.11**.
- 4.24 Secondary glazing would be installed to the internal reveal to improve the thermal performance of the windows. This would be installed with a horizontal sliding central sash to allow the windows to be opened and closed when required to modulate temperature and humidity.

Impact of Replacement Windows

- 4.25 Restoration and installation of secondary glazing would maintain the current appearance of the crittall framed windows whilst addressing ongoing issues with water ingress and improving thermal performance of the windows.
- 4.26 It is recognised that the removal of original windows would cause a very low level of harm to Withington Library as a non-designated heritage asset. This harm has been minimised through the design of the windows, which have been designed to replicate the design and proportions of the existing windows. As a result, the windows would continue to contribute to the collective range of windows within Withington Conservation Area, and their proposed design would sustain the contribution Withington Library makes to the conservation area.

Summary

- 4.27 The proposed ASHP and associated works are confined to the rear functional areas and roof of Withington Library and would not obscure or detract from any features of local significance. Visibility of this aspect the Proposed Works has been minimised or avoided where possible. The proposed replacement windows have been designed to replicate the design and proportions of the existing windows, and would be sympathetic to the architectural character of the building.

Statutory Duty

- 4.28 The Proposed Works to decarbonise Withington Library have been carefully considered and have also been informed by pre-application discussions with MCC planning and conservation officers. The Proposed Works have been designed to avoid harm to Withington Conservation Area.
- 4.29 The proposed ASHPs at Withington Library are located in an area of limited significance. This aspect of the Proposed Works have been designed to reduce visibility which sustains the contribution made by Withington Library to Withington Conservation Area and avoids harm. Replacement windows have been designed to replicate the design and proportions of the existing windows, and would continue to contribute to the collective range of windows within Withington Conservation Area. This would sustain the contribution made by Withington Library to the Withington Conservation Area.
- 4.30 Overall, there would be no harm to the significance of Withington Conservation Area. The requirements of s.72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 can be satisfied if Manchester City Council grants planning permission. The Proposed Works are also compliant with s.66 as there would be no harm to the setting and significance of nearby listed buildings.

National and Local Planning Policy

- 4.31 With respect to the core planning principle of the NPPF in relation to the historic environment, the Proposed Works would not harm Withington Conservation Area will sustain its significance. The application proposals therefore meets the requirements of paragraph 207 and objectives of paragraphs 210 and 212 of the NPPF.
- 4.32 It is recognised that there would be a very low level of harm to Withington Library as a non-designated heritage asset resulting from the replacement of original windows. Replacement windows have been designed to replicate the design and proportions of the existing windows, and would be sympathetic to the architectural character of the building, minimising harm to the non-designated heritage asset. Accordingly, Paragraph 216 of the NPPF is engaged, which states the following:

“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.”²⁹

- 4.33 In accordance with Core Strategy (CS) Policy EN3 and Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan Policy JP-P2, the Proposed Works sustains the significance of Withington Conservation Area. In relation to Withington Library, development proposals affecting non-designated heritage assets should be considered having regard to national planning policy. The proposals also comply with Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Policy DC18 by preserving the character of Withington Conservation Area.

²⁹ MHCLG (2024) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Paragraph 216

5. Summary and Conclusions

- 5.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Turley Heritage on behalf of Manchester City Council ('the Applicant') in support of a full planning application for alterations ('the Proposed Works') to Withington Library ('the Site').
- 5.2 The Proposed Works form part of a wider Manchester City Council decarbonisation project. Manchester City Council (MCC) has targeted Net Zero Carbon status by 2038. Surveys have been undertaken of MCC's building stock and a number of potential decarbonisation measures were reviewed. This prioritised ways to reduce energy demand and improve efficiency, followed by installing low or zero carbon solutions including renewable energy. Ways to offset any remaining emissions were then reviewed. Various mechanical and electrical upgrades have been proposed for MCC buildings, including Withington Library, which include the installation of roof mounted Air Source Heat Pumps and replacing windows.
- 5.3 Withington Library is located within Withington Conservation Area. In determining the submitted planning application, Manchester City Council (MCC) has a statutory duty under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to 'pay special attention' to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.³⁰ The meaning of 'preservation' in this context, as informed by case law, is taken to be the avoidance of harm. Case law has determined that these are matters to be given 'considerable importance and weight' in the planning process.
- 5.4 The Proposed Works to decarbonise Withington Library have been carefully considered and have also been informed by pre-application discussions with MCC planning and conservation officers. The Proposed Works have been designed to avoid harm to Withington Conservation Area. The proposed ASHPs at Withington Library are located in an area of limited significance. This aspect of the Proposed Works have been designed to reduce visibility which sustains the contribution made by Withington Library to Withington Conservation Area and avoids harm. Replacement windows have been designed to replicate the design and proportions of the existing windows, and would continue to contribute to the collective range of windows within Withington Conservation Area. This would sustain the contribution made by Withington Library to the Withington Conservation Area. Overall, there would be no harm to the significance of Withington Conservation Area. The requirements of s.72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 can be satisfied if Manchester City Council grants planning permission.
- 5.5 With respect to the core planning principle of the NPPF in relation to the historic environment, the Proposed Works would not harm Withington Conservation Area will sustain its significance. The application proposals therefore meets the requirements of paragraph 207 and objectives of paragraphs 210 and 212 of the NPPF.
- 5.6 It is recognised that there would be a very low level of harm to Withington Library as a non-designated heritage asset resulting from the replacement of original windows. Replacement windows have been designed to replicate the design and proportions of

³⁰ Section 72(1)

the existing windows, and would be sympathetic to the architectural character of the building, minimising harm to the non-designated heritage asset. Accordingly, Paragraph 216 of the NPPF is engaged.

- 5.7 In accordance with CS Policy EN3 and PfE Policy JP-P2, the Proposed Works sustains the significance of Withington Conservation Area. In relation to Withington Library, development proposals affecting non-designated heritage assets should be considered having regard to national planning policy. The proposals also comply with UDP Policy DC18 by preserving the character of Withington Conservation Area.

Appendix 1: Legislation, National and Local Planning Policy

Legislation

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

In determining applications for planning permission affecting the setting of statutory listed buildings, the following duty is placed on the decision maker:

“s.66 (1) In considering whether to grant planning 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.”

With regard to applications for planning permission within conservation areas, it is set out that:

“s.72(1) In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any powers under any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.”

Case law has confirmed that Parliament’s intention in enacting section 66(1) was that decision makers should give *“considerable importance and weight”* to the desirability of preserving the special interest and setting of listed buildings, where *“preserve”* means to *“to do no harm”*. The presumption is therefore that development proposals should not give rise to harm to the special interest of a listed building. This duty must be borne in mind strongly when considering cases where harm may be considered to accrue, and then the balancing of such harm against public benefits as required by national planning policy.

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024)

The National Planning Policy Framework provides a statement of Government planning policies with regard to the protection of all heritage assets. One of the core planning principles of the NPPF is that planning should:

“conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.”

Chapter 16 outlines the Government’s guidance regarding conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Paragraph 207 outlines the information required to support planning applications affecting heritage assets, stating that applicants should provide a description of the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset’s importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

Paragraph 210 states that with regard to determining planning applications planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of the heritage assets, and putting them into viable uses consistent with their conservation, as well as the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraph 212 confirms that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. It is also confirmed that significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. Any harm to, or loss, of significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification.

Paragraph 213 confirms 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.

Paragraph 214 states that where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, 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.

Paragraph 215 states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Paragraph 216 states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighting 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.

Paragraph 219 states that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of a heritage asset should be treated favourably.

Local Planning Policy

The Manchester Local Plan, previously known as the Local Development Framework, is formed of Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan, Core Strategy (along with the Addendum to Manchester Core Strategy 2024) 2012-2027 and Proposals Map, the extant Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Policies and Greater Manchester Joint Waste and Minerals Development Plan Documents (DPDs).

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (adopted March 2024)

Policy JP-P2 relates to Heritage and replaces paragraph 2 of Policy EN3 Heritage of the Manchester Core Strategy. It states that:

“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.

...

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.

...

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.”

Manchester's Local Development Framework: Core Strategy Development Plan Document (adopted July 2012)

Policy EN3 Heritage states:

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.

Manchester Unitary Development Plan (saved policies)

Policy DC18.1 (Conservation Areas) states that, the Council will give particularly careful consideration to development proposals within Conservation Areas. The Council will seek to preserve and enhance the character of its designated conservation areas by carefully considering the following issues:

- (i) the relationship of new structures to neighbouring buildings and spaces;
- (ii) the effect of major changes to the appearance of existing buildings;
- (iii) the desirability of retaining existing features, such as boundary walls, gardens, trees, (including street trees);
- (iv) the effect of signs and advertisements;
- (v) any further guidance on specific areas which has been approved by the Council.

Guidance

National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (2023)

Whilst not planning policy, Planning Practice Guidance provides a clear indication of the Government's approach to the application of national policy contained in the NPPF. Where there is conflict between the guidance in the PPG and earlier documents the PPG will take precedence.

This PPG advises on enhancing and conserving the historic environment. It clarifies that significance of the heritage assets is important as it enable authorities to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset, and the contribution of its setting, is very important to understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals (Paragraph 007).

Paragraph 013 describes the extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to the visual relationship between the asset and the proposed development and associated visual/physical considerations. When assessing any application which may affect the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities may need to consider the implications of cumulative change. They may also need to consider the fact that developments which materially detract from the asset's significance may also damage its economic viability now, or in the future, thereby threatening its ongoing conservation.

Principles of Selection for Listed Buildings, Department for Culture, Media and Sport (2019)

This guidance sets out the general principles applied by the Secretary of State when deciding whether a building is of special architectural or historic interest and should be added to the statutory list. It provides a useful framework for assessing and understanding the significance of listed buildings.

Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment (2015)

GPA Note 2 provides information to assist in implementing historic environment policy in the Framework and the related guidance given in the NPPG. These include; assessing the significance of heritage assets, using appropriate expertise, historic environment records, recording and furthering understanding, neglect and unauthorised works, marketing and design and distinctiveness.

Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017)

Historic England has published revised guidance relating to the setting and views of heritage assets. The document gives general advice on understanding setting and how it may contribute

to the significance of heritage assets. It also provides advice on how views play a part in setting. It suggests a staged approach to taking decisions on the level of the contribution which setting and related views make to the significance of heritage assets.

The guidance clarifies that there can be a distinction between views that are valued for reasons other than their contribution to heritage significance such as reasons of landscape character or visual amenity.

It states that the extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places. It also clarifies that the contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public rights or an ability to access or experience that setting.

Paragraph 9 of the guidance states that setting is not itself a heritage asset. Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset or to the ability to appreciate that significance.

The guidance highlights a series of other considerations that can be relevant to the assessing the impact of development such as 'change over time,' 'cumulative change,' 'access and setting,' 'buried assets and setting,' 'designed settings', 'setting and urban design', and 'setting and economic viability'.

It is identified within the guidance that views which contribute more to understanding the significance of a heritage asset include the following:

- Those where the composition within the view was a fundamental aspect of the design or function of the heritage asset.
- Those where town- or village-scape reveals views with unplanned or unintended beauty.
- Those with historical associations.
- Those with cultural associations.
- Those where relationships between the asset and other heritage assets or natural features or phenomena are particularly relevant.

As set out above, a staged approach to assessment is advocated involving identification of the assets that may be affected, assessing the degree to which setting makes a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset or allows significance to be appreciated, assessing the effects of the proposed development and exploring ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm.

In assessing the degree to which these settings and views make a contribution to the significance of the heritage assets or allow significance to be appreciated, the key attributes of the heritage asset should be addressed and then the following considered:

- The physical surroundings of the asset and its relationship with other assets;
- The asset's intangible associations with its surroundings, and patterns of use;
- The contribution made by noise, smells etc to significance; and
- The way views allow the significance of the asset to be appreciated.

The Step 2 Checklist provides a list of potential setting attributes that may help to elucidate its contribution to significance under the headings 'The asset's physical surroundings' and 'Experience of the asset'. The Step 3 Checklist provides a list of potential attributes of a development affecting setting that may help to elucidate its implications for the significance of the heritage asset including the 'Location and siting of development', the 'Form and appearance of development', 'Wider effects of the development' and 'Permanence of the development'.

Historic England Advice Note 18: Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency (2024)

Historic England has produced this Historic England Advice Note (HEAN) to provide clarity - in support of consistent decision making - on approaches to improve the energy efficiency and support carbon reduction of historic buildings, whilst conserving their significance.

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

This document provides guidance on analysing significance in heritage assets. It was released in 2019 by Historic England to support the National Planning Policy Framework's requirement for applicants to describe the 'heritage significance' of their proposals to assist Local Planning Authorities in making decisions on impact.

Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management (2019)

This Historic England Advice note supersedes Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management, first edition (2016). This 2nd edition updates the advice in light of the publication of the 2018 National Planning Policy Framework. It provides guidance on the appraisal of conservation areas.

Historic England Advice Note 7: Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage (2021)

This advice note was produced to support communities and local authorities in introducing a local heritage list in their area or making changes to an existing list. It encourages a consistent and accountable approach to the identification and management of local heritage assets when selected by uniform criteria. The advice note provides a framework and set of criteria for the assessment of heritage assets of local significance.

Turley Office

Level 5, Transmission
6 Atherton Street
Manchester
M3 3GS

T 0161 233 7676