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Heritage Statement

Octagon Project Energy Centre

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Contents

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Application Site

3.0 Character Area

4.0 Proposed Development

5.0 Impact on Heritage Assets

6.0 Summary



AERIAL PHOTO OF EXISTING SITE

1.0 Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Artform Architects in support of a planning application for a new Energy Centre on part of the existing car park at Octagon House on Carmoor Road in south Manchester.

The application site does not sit within a Conservation Area and is not located adjacent any listed buildings or scheduled monuments. It is located c.150m to the north of Victoria Park Conservation Area and c.120m from the grade II* listed Victoria Baths building which is situated east of Octagon House along Hathersage Road. This Heritage Statement seeks to outline and assess the impact of the proposed development on both these heritage assets.

This Heritage Statement should be read in conjunction with all architectural drawings/documents submitted with the application and all supporting reports and documents.



SITE LOCATION MAP

KEY:

- Grade I Listed building
- Grade II* Listed building
- Grade II Listed building

Note: Listed Buildings are as recorded in the Historic Environment Record and as listed on Historic England website

2.0 Application Site

The application site is located part way down Carmoor Road on the east side of the road and is currently part of the car park for the adjacent Octagon House office building.

Carmoor Road contains a variety of different building typologies. At its southern end where it meets Hathersage Road are located commercial uses such as retail units, Octagon House office and a car garage. To the north of these further down Carmoor Road are a nursery and community centre and beyond these the road turns predominantly residential in nature, with both Georgian terraced housing and more recent 20th Century terraces running along either side.

Directly opposite the application site to the north are a series of sub-station buildings and plant infrastructure that make up the ENW Primary Substation.

Consequently there is no single architectural style or defining characteristic to the street. The buildings have been developed and built during different periods and there is a variety in both form and scale ranging from the 1980's six storey metal-clad office building at Octagon House to the two storey domestic red brick housing further north.

The application site itself is a 2,400sqm tarmac plot that wraps around the north west corner of Octagon House with only the western edge facing the public highway. Along this boundary is an existing c2m high metal fence with overgrown shrubbery and planting. On the western side of Carmoor Road directly opposite is located the Ciara's Tots nursery building.

The closest heritage assets to the site are the grade II* listed Victoria Baths on Hathersage Road to the east and the Victoria Park Conservation Area to the south. The latter also contains a number of listed buildings as shown on the diagram opposite.



2.0 Application Site

1. View from the site facing south towards Octagon House
2. View from the site facing north towards existing car park
3. View of site boundary along Carmoor Road
4. Ciara's Tots nursery opposite the site
5. Substation to the north of the site
6. Substation and Octagon House car park entrance



Images Clockwise from top left

- 01. Octagon House at the corner of Carmoor Road and Hathersage Road
- 02. View looking north along Carmoor Road
- 03. Victoria Baths
- 04. View looking north along Upper Brook Street
- 05. View looking west along Hathersage Road
- 06. View along looking east along Daisy Bank Road

3.0 Character Area

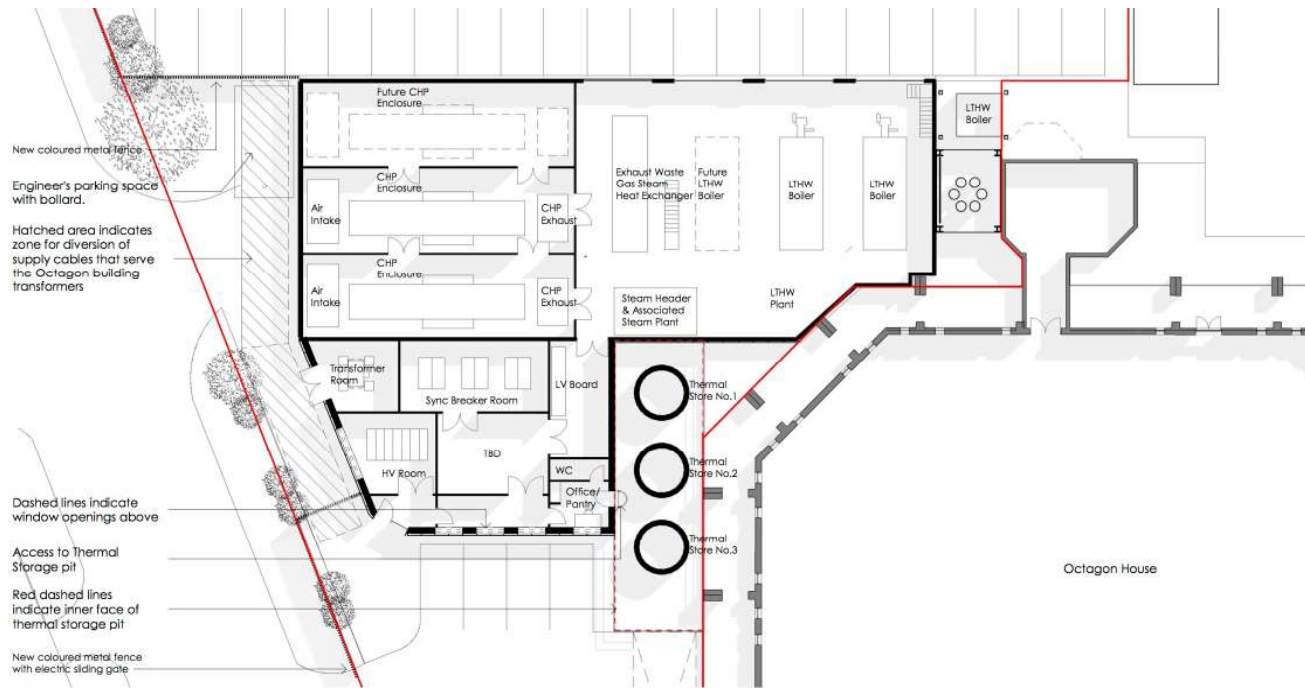
The application site is located on Carmoor Road which is situated c2.5 miles to the south of Manchester city centre. The surrounding area is comprised of a variety of different typologies and land uses including commercial office and retail, light industrial, student accommodation and domestic residential.

Upper Brook Street (A34) runs parallel to Carmoor Road and is one of the main arteries that extends out of Manchester city centre to the south. This is a busy traffic route and the section adjacent Carmoor Road is home to a series different uses including small shops, takeaways, a petrol station, student accommodation, a multi-storey car park, a power plant and Royal Manchester Children's Hospital. The scale of the buildings and architectural character along the road is therefore extremely varied and typical of a heavily developed mixed-use city corridor.

The area to the north of the application site is very different in scale and is predominately residential in use, characterised by two storey red brick terraced housing. Adjacent to this is St Chrysostom's Primary School and Swinton Grove Park. The area has a much quieter, domestic feel compared to the busy commercial character of Upper Brook Street and Hathersage Road.

The area to the south of the application site beyond Hathersage Road is home to Victoria Park Conservation Area. This has a different character again and is an attractive, low density suburb that is characterised by wide, tree-lined streets and large houses in spacious grounds. It was designated a Conservation Area in 1972 however the area of Victoria Park was established as a 70 acre private estate in 1837, as a place for the wealthy professional classes to escape the unpleasant noise and dirt of the industrial city centre.

Over time the area deteriorated as new development took place and the socio-economic circumstances changed. However there still remains a series of original houses and buildings from the mid 19th Century period, many of which are listed and several of which are located along Daisy Bank Road. This includes the First Church of Christ Scientist which is now the Edgar Wood Centre. It was designed in the Arts and Crafts style with Art Nouveau motifs and is a grade I listed building, regarded as one of the most original of it's time.



PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR PLAN



PROPOSED WEST ELEVATION

4.0 Proposed Development

The proposed scheme is for a new Energy Centre that will be located on part of the existing Octagon House car park. The building is a part single storey, part double storey metal clad structure which contains all the necessary plant equipment and ancillary space for the operation of the Energy Centre. It also includes a chimney with supporting steel frame and metal clad enclosure that will be fixed back to the existing stair core of Octagon House.

The Octagon Project Energy Centre (OPEN) will provide locally generated (decentralised) heat and electricity using state of the art, Combined Heat and Power (CHP) engines, initially running on clean, natural gas, which will be replaced over time by other generations' technologies and fuels.

These engines will generate electricity in commercially viable quantities to serve local business and residential communities within a local energy infrastructure network.

The OPEN therefore offers a sustainable, cleaner alternative to mass generation from burning either Coal and Gas or Nuclear Power stations.

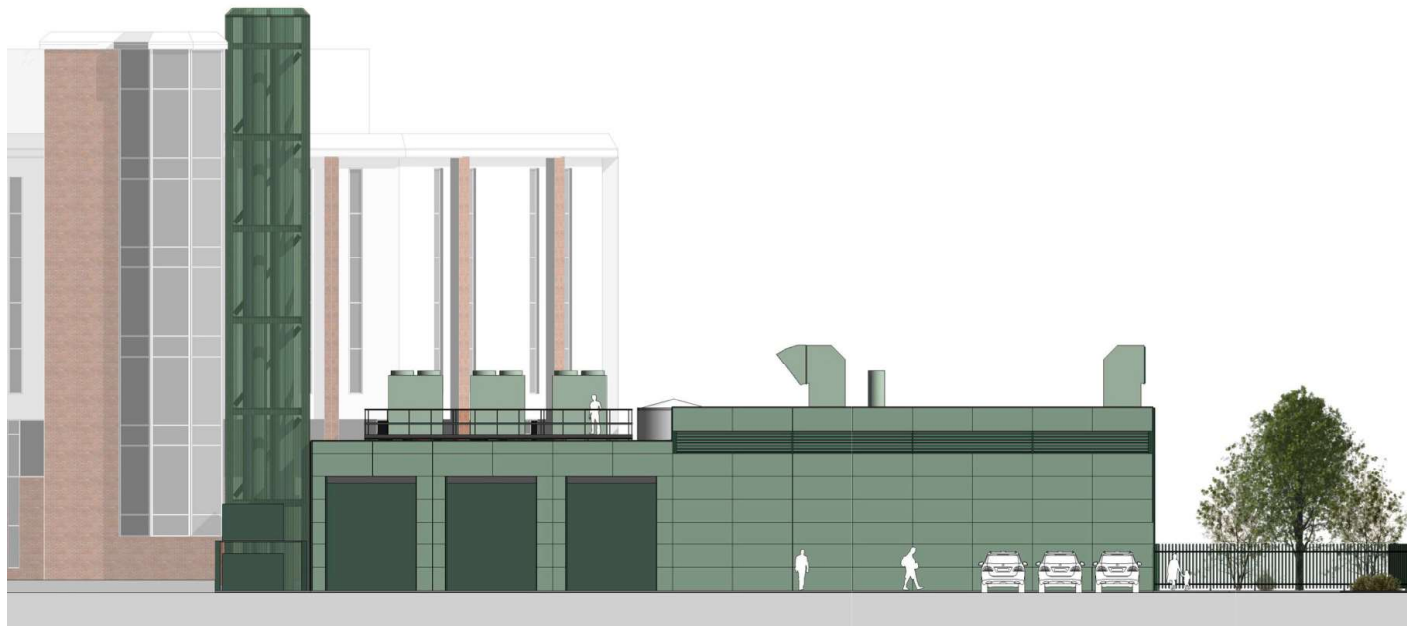
Consequently the building has been designed to reflect it's use and with an honesty and integrity to it's external appearance. The industrial, working nature of the Energy Centre is characterised by the metal cladding which wraps the entire structure, part of which is a perforated metal mesh skin to add visual interest and depth to the facade.

The green cladding colour has been chosen to soften the impact on the streetscene and references the mature trees that are dotted along Carmoor Road. It also is a nod to the 'green' energy that is produced within the building, and helps present the development not as an faceless piece of plant infrastructure, but more as an attractive piece of modern architecture that responds positively to the surrounding context and enhances the setting in which it is placed. The facade treatment creates a strong identity for the building that neither conflicts with, nor negatively impacts upon, the existing streetscape

The site is accessed off Carmoor Road by re-establishing an existing junction that crosses over the pavement. This leads to a gated entry point leading to a new parking area and the main entrance into the building.



PROPOSED STREETVIEW ALONG CARMOOR ROAD



PROPOSED NORTH ELEVATION

5.0 Impact on Heritage Assets

The application site does not sit within a Conservation Area and is not located adjacent any listed buildings or ancient monuments. The nearest heritage asset is the grade II* listed Victoria Baths building located approx. 120m due west of the application site. The building originally opened to the public in 1906 and is a grand example of Edwardian architecture, with a façade of multi-coloured brickwork and terracotta decoration, and has several windows containing decorative stained glass.

Whilst this building has a highly prominent frontage to Hathersage Road, it is not however visible from the application site. This is due to the existing Octagon House building adjacent (the predominant structure on the subject site), as well as four large, 5 storey, modern blocks of student accommodation which sit between the proposed Energy Centre and Victoria Baths.

Consequently there are no street perspectives in which both the new Energy Centre and Victoria Baths are able to be seen jointly in the same perception field or in the same frame by the viewer. The proposed building will not either interfere with or obscure any of the dominant features of the baths, such as the chimney, or the streetscape surrounding the baths.

During the OPEN feasibility study process, the applicant has kept the Victoria Baths Trust fully informed of its intentions for the development of an energy centre at the Octagon site and the OPEN, including the opportunity to assist in delivering the aspirations of the Trust, to once again open the swimming baths to the public, by providing cheaper heat and electricity to the operations there.

In addition, the applicant has discussed with the Trust the potential to reuse the redundant boiler house structure (situated at the rear of the baths) to potentially assist with future upscaling of energy generation, by accommodating an additional CHP unit in this building, to augment power generation for the network. This exciting alternative but resonant use of the premises has been welcomed and is supported by Heritage England. If found to be financially and engineeringly feasible it will be the subject of a future application.

Other than Victoria Baths, the other heritage asset located nearby the site is Victoria Park Conservation Area and the listed buildings contained within. Due to the distance from the proposed Energy Centre (approx. 150m) and the array of development in between, there is no visual connection between the two and therefore no adverse impact.



PROPOSED AERIAL VIEW FACING SOUTH

7.0 Summary

This Heritage Statement has outlined the extent of the proposed development and assessed its impact on the nearby heritage assets.

As a result it can be concluded that the proposals set out in the planning application do not have a negative or detrimental impact on either the Victoria Baths building, or the Victoria Park Conservation Area and the listed buildings contained within.

The proposed development is a small scale scheme that is located well over 100m from either of the heritage assets mentioned. Due to its location and siting, it is not visible from either and in no way detracts from their defining characteristics.

The massing and scale of the proposed Energy Centre is proportionate to the plot and existing streetscape. The main body of the building is two storeys in height and the taller chimney element is positioned against an existing office stair core to minimise its impact and conceal it from view of Victoria Baths.

The building provides a well considered and engaging addition to Carmoor Road that reflects its function of providing decentralised, clean energy to the local community. The design offers a distinctive yet contextual response to the surrounding area that will greatly improve the visual outlook of the existing site.

No key views, green spaces or listed buildings are affected by the proposed development.

With regard to all the above points it is considered appropriate that the planning application for the new building be approved. It preserves the character and appearance of the nearby heritage assets and makes a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.