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Planning, Development & Heritage Consultants

Generation Ltd.

Virgil Street, Trafford

Heritage Statement

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Professional Planning, Development & Heritage Advisors since 1992.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Paul Butler Associates on behalf of Generation Ltd to support a planning application for development along Virgil Street, Trafford [the site]. This Heritage Statement has been prepared to consider the potential impact of the scheme on the significance and setting of any nearby heritage assets.
- 1.2 This Statement should be read in conjunction with the supporting planning drawings prepared by Nick Moss Architects.

Approach and Methodology

- 1.3 This heritage statement has been prepared to comply with the tests and requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF: 2023), specifically paragraphs 200 and 201, under which a description of the significance of a site, including any contribution made by its setting, must be provided to support any planning applications to assess the effect on significance of any proposed changes. There is also a requirement for applicants to make an informed assessment of heritage significance as part of a staged approach to decision-making.
- 1.4 The assessment follows the staged approach to decision-making set out within *Historic England Advice Note 12 - Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets (2019)*:
- *Understand the form, materials and history of the affected heritage asset(s), and/or the nature and extent of archaeological deposits*
 - *Understand the significance of the asset(s)*
 - *Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance*
 - *Avoid, minimise and mitigate negative impact, in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF*
 - *Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance*

- 1.5 The report also draws on other best practice guidance documents such as, *Conservation Principles (2008)* and *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 - The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017)*.
- 1.6 Research has been primarily desk-based, consulting historic mapping and written secondary sources. A visual and photographic survey of the site and its surroundings were undertaken on 29th March and 9th August 2023.

Planning History

- 1.7 A review of the Site's planning history has been undertaken using Trafford Council's online database. The planning history identified is set out below.

Application Ref.	Description of Development	Decision and Date
H07752	Change of use from warehousing to the manufacture, storage and wholesaling of handbags, purses and similar articles.	Approved 14 September 1978
H09186	Demolition of existing buildings and erection of factory and manufacture, storage and wholesaling of leather goods.	Approved 24 May 1979
H12701	Retention of non-illuminated company name sign.	Approved 16 July 1980
79556/COU/2012	Change of use from factory (Use class B2) to Place of Worship (Use Class D1).	Approved 23 January 2012
80882/COND/2013	Application for approval of details reserved by condition of grant of planning permission 79556/COU/2012, conditions 4,5 and 6.	Approved 15 April 2013
102401/COU/20	Change of use of premises from F1 (Place of Worship to Use Class E(g) and B8 (Storage). Temporary 5 year consent.	Approved 27 January 2021
111037/FUL/23	Erection of four houses with ground floor parking and associated amenity space along with the change of use of Palmer House to Class E (g) with associated external alterations and the construction of a new car park and amenity space.	Refused 03 August 2023
37234/FO/2023	Erection of four houses with ground floor parking and associated amenity space. Change of use of Palmer House to Class E (g) with associated external alterations and the construction of a new car park and amenity space.	Approved by MCC 15.09.2023.

The Proposal

- 1.8 The application seeks full planning permission for the construction of four houses with ground floor parking, the conversion of Palmer House to offices, the construction of a new car park and associated amenity space and landscaping.
- 1.9 The design proposals are presented in the supporting application plans and Design and Access Statement prepared by Nick Moss Architects.
- 1.10 The new dwellinghouses will be arranged in a linear manner in the area of the existing courtyard to Palmer House.
- 1.11 The four houses will comprise a terrace set over four storeys of accommodation, with an external roof terrace and rear yard area providing amenity space.
- 1.12 As part of the agreement with Manchester City Council (MCC), the applicant will undertake improvement works to the remaining land adjacent to St. Georges Park (north east of the site) allowing this area to become a fully accessible public open space.



Figure 1.1 The Proposed Virgil Street elevation and its surrounding context

2. The Application Site and its Surroundings

Site location

- 2.1 The application site is located on the eastern side of Virgil Street and comprises Palmer House, a car park area and adjacent land. It sits on the boundary between the local authorities of Manchester and Trafford.

Designations

- 2.2 The site does not contain any listed buildings and is not within a Conservation Area. The Empress Conservation Area lies approximately 75m to the west with the boundary running along the opposite side of Chester Road (not including the road itself). Approximately 50m to the north and rear of the site is the Grade II Listed former Hulme Barracks.

Non-Designated Heritage Assets

- 2.3 Several properties along Chester Road would be considered Non-Designated Heritage Assets (NDHA) but these will be considered as part of the potential impacts on the Conservation Area. There are no other NDHAs potentially impacted by the scheme.

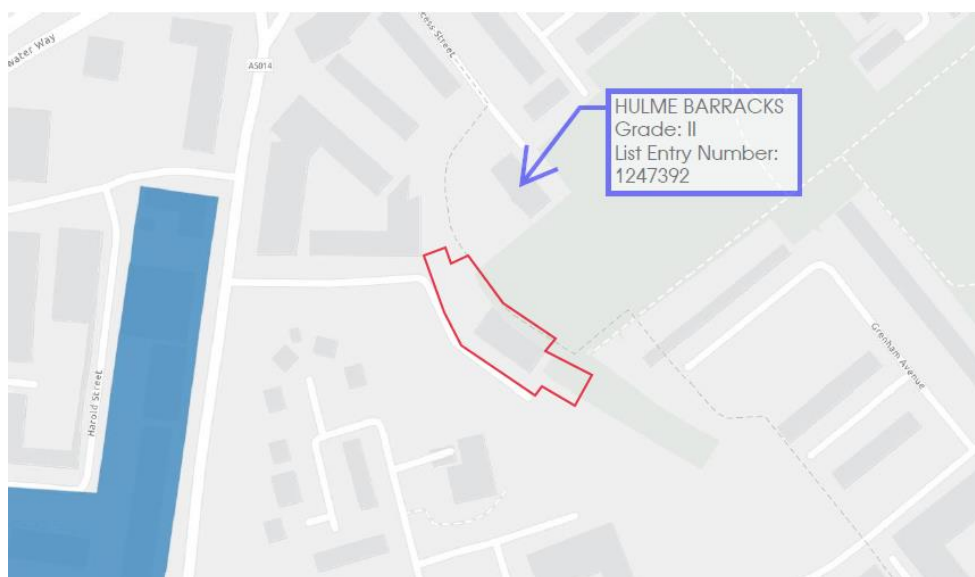


Figure 2.1 The approximate site location (shown in red) along with the Empress Conservation Area to the west (blue) and the Grade II Listed Hulme Barracks.

The site and its setting

- 2.4 The site itself comprises the existing Palmer House building which is a two storey, late-20th century building with a large courtyard to the front which is used for parking. The courtyard is enclosed by a brick wall with railings above (approximately 2 metres in height) which secures the site from the public highway. Access into the courtyard is taken via an existing metal gate which is located centrally within the courtyard frontage. Directly opposite the site is a small green square behind modern fencing.
- 2.5 To the rear (north) of the site is a neglected area of land that is fenced off from St. George's Park and falls within the administrative area of Manchester City Council. The application site takes in a small part of this land between Palmer House and the public park. The land has tree coverage but is overgrown and has visible signs of anti-social behaviour such as littering.



Figure 2.2 The View from Virgil Street looking towards Palmer House.



Figure 2.3 The view along Virgil Street from near the junction with Chester Road with the site in the distance.

- 2.6 Also within the application site is a small area of land to the southeast of Palmer House, this forms the periphery of a connecting route to St. George's Park from City Road to the south. The area is away from the track to St. George's Park and has a somewhat unkempt appearance with overgrown brambles and littering.

- 2.7 Adjacent to the site is a recent 21st century apartment building of six storeys. The rear of the former Hulme Barracks is partially visible from some locations along Virgil Street which is part render, part red brick sat behind a private garden.



Figure 2.4 The overgrown and unmaintained area to the rear of the site.



Figure 2.5 The view across the site area with Hulme Barracks partially visible behind.

3. Historic Development

- 3.1 This section is supported by the historic map regression in Appendix A of this statement.
- 3.2 The list entry describes the former Barracks as an officers' mess, with officers' quarters and quartermaster's house to the former Hulme Barracks of 1817. Although the property would become part of the Barracks it likely pre-dates this, and Pevsner (Hartwell, Hyde, and Pevsner: 2004) suggests they were built as a pair of properties for John Pooley, a local mill owner.
- 3.3 In 1808 John Pooley was advertising for tenants for his property at Cornbrook described as 'a modern well-built house, coach house, excellent gardens, and stables' (Manchester Mercury - 16 February 1808). It appears likely that this refers to one of the pair of properties.
- 3.4 As the site spans municipal boundaries, the Manchester side does not have a tithe map available, but the 1839 Tithe Map for Trafford shows the site area as being undeveloped with the Cornbrook not yet culverted. The land was in the ownership of Sir Thomas Joseph De Trafford Bart and occupied by John Pooley. It is highly likely the current listed building was constructed by this point but is not shown as it was outside the boundary of the map.

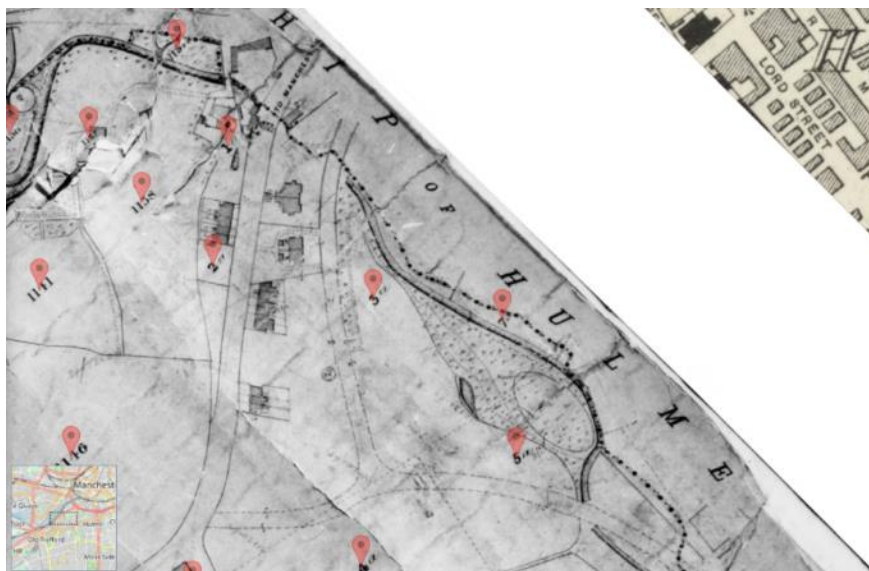
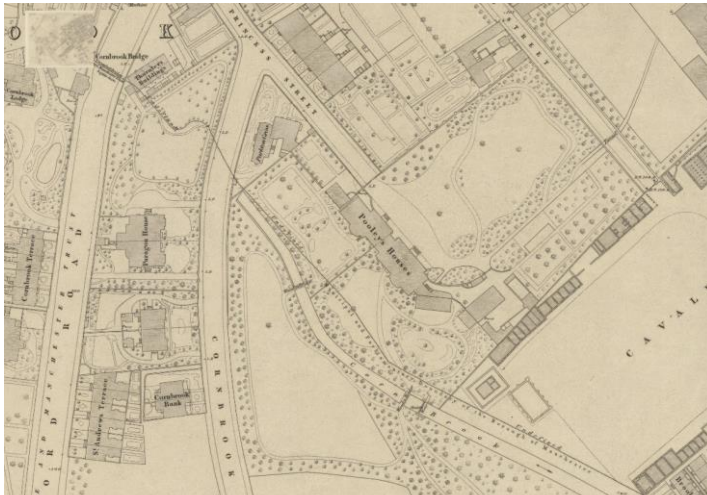


Figure 3.1 Tithe Map of 28th February 1839. The land was owned by Sir Thomas Joseph De Trafford Bart and occupied by John Pooley. The tithe map for the Manchester side of the Cornbrook is not available.

- 3.5 The Hulme Barracks were built in 1817, although they appear to initially have operated separately to Pooley House. 'John Pooley, cotton spinner' declared bankruptcy in 1826 (Manchester Courier - 27 May 1826) although he was still listed as resident at John Pooley House in 1841 (Pigot & Slater's Directory of Manchester & Salford 1841).
- 3.6 It was not until 1853 where *'the announcement of the suspension of the old and respectable house of Mr. John Pooley, cotton spinner, here, has been heard with much regret. The liabilities, which amount to about 17,006l...'* (Morning Post - 22 October 1853). It would therefore appear likely that after this point the property was purchased and subsumed into the nearby military Barracks.
- 3.7 Map regression shows that Pooley House had its principal front elevation facing northeast looking out onto landscaped grounds. This is now the area of the St. George's Park and playground although at that time the grounds extended northeast up to King Street which would have been located just northeast of what is now Manson Avenue. To the north of this is the cotton mill in the ownership of John Pooley.
- 3.8 The landscaped setting was likely laid out for the original Georgian / Regency property and survived into the military ownership of the site. On the Manchester and Salford Town Plan of 1849-51, the Cornbrook (which is now culverted) would have been part of the landscaped gardens that extended across it, with the
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- Figure 3.2** Manchester and Salford Town Plan Sheet 37. Surveyed: 1849, Published: 1851. Scale 1:1056.
- bow windows to the rear of the house once looking out across the landscape. Several high-status villas are also visible along the Chester Road area, most no longer survive. Virgil Street has not yet been laid out.

3.9 The main Cavalry Barracks were located on what is now the remainder of St. Georges Park (east of the playground), this would have extended southwards over the area now occupied by houses on Northdown Avenue and Grenham Avenue (southeast of the site).

3.10 'Pooley Houses' is labelled on the map; it is worth noting the plural suggesting it was divided into more than one property. The building shown is also larger in form than the current building with the eastern section having since been demolished.

3.11 By the 1880s the early 19th century villas around Chester Road have been cleared for lower status terraced housing. Virgil Street is shown and the site area currently comprising the car park has a series of terraced houses on the former landscaped grounds of Pooley House. The Cornbrook has been culverted by this point and the solid boundary is shown between the Pooley Houses and



Figure 3.3 Manchester - Lancashire CIV.10.22. Surveyed: 1888, Published: 1891. 1:500

the site. It is worth noting that the heavily treed area that is currently near the site today was largely open ground with a small number of trees.

3.12 The large complex of the Cavalry Barracks remains largely unchanged. The 1902 insurance map provides detail of these buildings: there is a row of 7 buildings in the northern part of the site – 6 of these are houses, the end building is a timber store. These buildings are on the part of the site which is now proposed to be occupied by houses. On the southern part of the site there are a collection of buildings including a Builders, Timber Yard and Asphaltery, which is now occupied by Palmer House.

- 3.13 The Barracks are said to have housed (amongst others) the 15th Hussars. The 15th Hussars add an historical association to the Peterloo Massacre where on 19th August 1819, the commander of the 15th Hussars charged a peaceful protest for parliamentary representation in St. Peter's Fields becoming known as the Peterloo Massacre.
- 3.14 The list entry notes that men stationed here included Prince Victor Albert, Prince Louis Napoleon, the Prince Imperial, and Winston Churchill; and many royal persons dined in the mess.
- 3.15 By the 1922 OS Map the site is no longer in use as a Barracks, the larger complex of Barracks buildings have been demolished and the area is now a recreation ground. The footprint of the building has also been reduced. By 1934 the recreation ground on the former Barracks complex has become formalised, a bowling green and tennis courts exists to the front of the building. A large factory appears on the map to the southeast of the densely packed buildings in the north of the site.
- 3.16 By 1956 St. George's Park has become partitioned with the construction of post war housing on what is now Northdown Avenue and Grenham Avenue.

4. Assessment of Significance

- 4.1 Significance can be defined as the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be a combination of archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. The understanding of the significance of a place is vital to inform sensitively managed change. In accordance with *Historic England Advice Note 12 – Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets* the following criteria are employed within this report to assess significance:
- 4.2 Archaeological interest – Where the heritage asset holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
- 4.3 Architectural and artistic interest – These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skills, like sculpture.
- 4.4 Historic interest – An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic) which heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history, but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

4.5 The criteria for relative levels of significance of each asset is outlined below –

Significance	Criteria
Very High	Sites, buildings, landscapes and remains of 'exceptional', 'more than special interest' or sometimes considered nationally or internationally important. These include World Heritage Sites; Grade I Listed and Grade II* Listed assets; Scheduled Ancient Monuments or archaeological remains of equivalent significance.
High	Sites, buildings, landscapes and remains of acknowledged 'special interest' and sometimes considered nationally important. These include Conservation Areas; Grade II Listed Assets; and archaeological remains of national importance.
Medium	Sites, buildings, landscapes and remains of 'some interest' and generally considered of local or regional importance. These include Non-Designated Heritage Assets; Locally Listed Assets and archaeological remains of regional interest.
Low	Sites, buildings, landscapes and remains of 'limited interest' sometimes considered of local interest. These include historic sites that through level of alteration or typology are of insufficient significance to be considered Non-Designated Heritage Assets or Locally Listed.
Neutral	Sites, buildings, landscapes and remains of 'no or negligible interest'. These include sites or landscapes of no (or very minor) interest.
Intrusive / Detrimental	Sites, buildings, landscapes and remains of 'no or negligible interest' that harm the setting or significance of wider assets.

4.6 A summary of significance of the assets that may be potentially impacted by the proposal are shown on the following pages using the above criteria. It is not considered that the proposals will impact the Empress Conservation Area and its associated NDHAs so no assessment of significance for these assets is given.

Hulme Barracks: Statement of Significance

- 4.7 The site is known and listed as Hulme Barracks but was likely built in the early 19th or late 18th century as the property of the local entrepreneur and mill owner John Pooley and was known as Pooley House(s). The property was evident from at least 1808 and Pooley's Mill was located nearby (but no longer remains).
- 4.8 The later military use of the site from 1853 adds historical interest and association with various regiments, the 15th Hussars and the Peterloo Massacre is an event of both local and national importance although in 1819 Pooley House would have no association with the Barracks and 15th Hussars. Further interest is gained from associations with various visitors from Winston Churchill to royal dignitaries.
- 4.9 The property has high architectural interest and is a good example of a high-status property from the Georgian / Regency-era, although the loss of half the building leaves a somewhat unsymmetrical arrangement. The interior was not inspected either here or for the list entry.
- 4.10 There is likely to be archaeological interest from the now demolished part of the property and to a lesser extent evidence of the layout of the formal gardens. Both of these elements are of local rather than national importance and make a low contribution to the site's significance. The site appears relatively poorly researched; with no account of the interiors; no record of the architect or date of construction and errors in the list entry. The site warrants further study and this contributes to the evidential value of the site.
- 4.11 The site once had an intrinsic and design setting and landscape likely incorporating vistas, as was common for Georgian landscape design. Pooley House(s) once sat in extensive landscaped grounds that incorporated the Cornbrook watercourse, today this landscape only survives in the current playing fields to the front and the remaining gardens around the property which make a moderate contribution to significance.
- 4.12 Developments from the late-19th century to the present day have eroded the setting of the site and the area around Virgil Street makes little to no contribution.

- 4.13 When considering the military-era of the site, much of this historical setting has also been lost, with the extensive Cavalry Barracks, parade grounds and associated officer housing now demolished.

Relative Importance of Interests to Significance

Interests	Relative Contribution to Significance
Archaeological interest	Low
Architectural and artistic interest	High
Historic interest	High
Setting	Medium
Overall Significance	High

5. The Heritage Planning Context

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning Act states that the determination of planning applications must be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. This establishes the Development Plan as the primary decision-making document when considering planning applications.

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- 5.3 The Planning Act (1990) defines a conservation area as *'an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'*. Paragraph 72 states that *'special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area'*.
- 5.4 In considering development affecting Listed Buildings, special regard will be given to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest (Section 66, Planning [Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas] Act 1990).

National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.5 The Revised NPPF which was published in July 2018 and most recently updated in December 2023, sets out the Government's planning policies regarding the conservation of the historic environment.
- 5.6 Section 16, *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment*, and policies 195-214 of the NPPF sets out the heritage context. The NPPF states that heritage assets are *'an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations'*.
- 5.7 Paragraphs 200 and 201 require applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting; and that 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; local planning authorities should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

5.8 Paragraph 203 sets out three considerations which local planning authorities should consider when determining applications -

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

5.9 Paragraph 205 notes 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. Paragraph 206 follows that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification.

5.10 Paragraph 207 identifies a series of criteria that must be met where substantial harm to or total loss of significance will be caused to a designated heritage asset; it has to be demonstrated that substantial loss or harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss. Paragraph 208 states that where a development 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.

5.11 Paragraph 212 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; and, that proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

5.12 The NPPG was published in March 2014 (updated 2023). The Guidance includes a section on the historic environment. Relevant paragraphs from the Guidance are set out below:

- All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not.
- What matters in assessing whether a proposal might cause harm is the impact on the significance of the heritage asset. As the National Planning Policy Framework makes clear, significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.
- Proposed development affecting a heritage asset may have no impact on its significance or may enhance its significance and therefore cause no harm to the heritage asset. Where potential harm to designated heritage assets is identified, it needs to be categorised as either less than substantial harm or substantial harm (which includes total loss) in order to identify which policies in the National Planning Policy Framework apply.
- An unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to a conservation area is individually of lesser importance than a listed building.
- The National Planning Policy Framework requires any harm to designated heritage assets to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental objectives.
- Non-designated heritage assets are 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.
- It is important that all non-designated heritage assets are clearly identified as such. In this context, it can be helpful if local planning authorities keep a local list of non-designated heritage assets, incorporating any such assets which are identified by neighbourhood planning bodies.

- 5.13 With regard to assessing substantial harm, National Planning Practice Guidance advises:
- 'Whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision taker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the policy in the National Planning Policy Framework. In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed. The harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting.'*
- (Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 18a-018-20190723).

Trafford Council Core Strategy (2012)

- 5.14 Section 38(6) of the Town and Country Planning Act 2004 states that applications for development should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In the case of Trafford Council, the adopted Development Plan consists of the Core Strategy (adopted 2012) and the Greater Manchester Places for Everyone (PfE) Plan (adopted 21 March 2024). The Core Strategy policy in relation to heritage states –

Core Policy R1 'Historic Environment' - the significance, character and appearance of heritage assets are qualities that will be protected, maintained and enhanced.

Places for Everyone (2024)

- 5.15 The Places for Everyone Plan (2024) has been adopted by Trafford in March 2024, the policy relevant to heritage states (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....This knowledge should be used to inform the positive management and integration of our heritage by: Setting out a clear vision that

recognises and embeds the role of heritage in place-making; 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; 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; 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 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 placemaking, 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.

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice 2: 'Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment' (2015)

- 5.15 This document provides advice to local authorities, planning and other consultants, owners, applicants and other interested parties. It sets out practical guidance to assist interested parties in making an assessment of the impact of proposals on the significance of heritage assets.

Historic England Advice Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2nd Edition)

- 5.16 Published in December 2017, this document sets out guidance on managing change within the setting of heritage assets, including historic buildings, sites, areas and landscapes. Building on the historic environment provisions of national planning policy, the document provides advice on the definition of 'setting' before setting out key principles for assessing the implications of development proposals on the settings of heritage assets.

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

- 5.17 This Guidance was published in October 2019 and covers the National Planning Policy Framework requirement for applicants for heritage and other consents to describe heritage significance to help local planning authorities to make decisions on the impact of proposals for changes to heritage assets.

Historic England: Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance

- 5.18 This Guidance was published by Historic England (then English Heritage) in April 2008. The Document is designed to provide a logical approach to making decisions and offering guidance on all aspects of England's historic environment. Guidance is provided on understanding heritage values (evidential, historical, aesthetic, and communal), and assessing heritage significance.

6 Impact Assessment

- 6.1 Heritage impact is defined as the potential level of harm or benefit to the special architectural or historic interest caused by a proposed development. The NPPF stresses that impacts on heritage assets should be avoided and if it cannot be avoided, it should be minimised or mitigated. The NPPF does not prescribe a format for analysis of heritage significance and/or impact.
- 6.2 Scale or severity of impacts or changes can be judged taking into account their direct and indirect effects and whether they are temporary or permanent, reversible or irreversible. The cumulative effect of separate impacts should also be considered. Change can be either harmful or beneficial to heritage significance.
- 6.3 The following methodology is based on the guidance set out by ICOMOS (2011) *Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties*, although intended for World Heritage Sites it provides a sliding scale of impacts that can be applied to assets on all significance levels.

Impact Grading	Criteria
High Beneficial	Comprehensive changes to an asset or its setting resulting in a major enhancement of significance.
Medium Beneficial	Significant changes to an asset or its setting resulting in a notable enhancement of significance.
Low Beneficial	Modest changes to an asset or its setting resulting in a slight enhancement of significance.
Neutral	No or negligible change to an asset or its setting resulting in no or negligible change to significance.
Low Adverse	Modest changes to an asset or its setting resulting in slight harm to significance.
Medium Adverse	Significant changes to an asset or its setting resulting in notable harm to significance.
High Adverse	Comprehensive changes to an asset or its setting resulting in major harm to significance.

Impact upon Heritage Assets

6.4 To consider the impact upon the setting of the asset there must firstly be a consideration of how the setting contributes to significance: ‘An assessment of the contribution to significance of a view does not depend alone on the significance of the heritage assets in the view but on the way the view allows that significance to be appreciated’ – *Historic England, The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition)*.

6.5 The scheme will be visible from the Empress Conservation Area when looking out of the Conservation Area along Virgil Street, but the proposal will sit in the context of other modern developments and there is no visual connection between the Conservation Area and the former Barracks. Previous comments related to the loss of the view of the trees from this viewpoint, however, these trees are largely self-seeded and are



Figure 6.1 The view from the Empress Conservation Area. This view is not considered to make any meaningful contribution to significance and the small change resulting from it will not result in any harm to significance.

some distance from Chester Road, they therefore make a very low to negligible contribution to the setting of the Conservation Area and there is no harm from the disruption of the view of them.

6.6 Pooley House initially sat within a designed landscape to the immediate front and rear. To the rear this allowed views from the property across the Cornbrook watercourse, which has since been culverted under the site area. There would also be views of, and from, the front elevation of the property across the landscaped garden, this form partially survives in the current park.

6.7 By 1888, development had enclosed the site, Virgil Street was laid out and a boundary wall to the Barracks and the properties along Virgil Street is shown demarcating the site

ownership at that point. By this point any views of the rear of the property from along Virgil Street would be blocked and the views from the property across the landscape had been severed. Although much of the Victorian terraces have been cleared, they have been replaced by taller apartment buildings which again limit views from, and to, the building in most locations.

6.8 The contribution of setting to significance was once quite high, with the property sat in a wider open landscape. The park to the front of the property and the land to the rear within the property ownership follows the line of the existing formal gardens and these make a moderate contribution to the setting of the site and significance. These core components of the setting of the site and key views to the main elevation will not be impacted.

6.9 The land along Virgil Street is now comprised of 20th and 21st century developments with a small window of opportunity at the vicinity of the proposal site offering visibility of the rear of the property. The view from the property's rear has lost its long-distance landscape views and looks out onto modern developments that now make no contribution to significance.

6.10 The partial view of the property from Virgil Street is not a designed view and it sits within a context of modern developments either side, has modern railings to the foreground, and tall buildings from the Manchester skyline in the distance. The loss of the Cornbrook and semi-natural landscape; the 19th century Virgil Street layout; and modern developments, all mean the setting of the site has no resemblance to the



Figure 6.2 The view of the rear of the property is not considered a core component of its significance although it does make a low contribution, the resulting loss of this view will result in a low level of harm.

landscape of the original property and this view makes a low contribution to the significance of the asset and therefore the disruption of this view would result in a low level of harm to significance.

Justification and Public Benefits

6.11 There is a low level of less than substantial harm to the designated asset; ‘any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset...requires clear and convincing justification...’ (paragraph 206, NPPF 2023) and ‘this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal’ (paragraph 208, NPPF 2023). There are numerous public benefits of the scheme which significantly outweigh any low levels of harm. Manchester City Council’s Officer Report for the previous submitted scheme agreed with this conclusion stating that ‘the identified harm is considered to be on the lower scale and in this instance is considered to be outweighed by the public benefits of the development...’. The public benefits include:

- The provision of housing in a highly sustainable location, well located in relation to local services and facilities and employment opportunities throughout the Regional Centre and beyond.
- The proposed development would contribute to the supply of housing, which is a significant benefit in support of the proposal to which great weight should be attached.
- Improvement works to the land adjacent to St. George’s Park (to be delivered in partnership with Manchester City Council) which will substantially improve the amenity, safety, accessibility and biodiversity of this public open space. These works will be of significant benefit to the local community within both Trafford and Manchester.
- Improvement to the setting of the listed building via the wider improvement works to St. George’s Park.
- The provision of modern, attractive, high-quality family houses which will diversify the housing offer in the local area.
- The positive re-use of the existing building on site for employment purposes and the upgrading of that employment use from mixed warehouse and office to purely office to create higher quality and density of employment, thereby supporting and strengthening the local economy.
- The redevelopment of a brownfield site in a highly sustainable and accessible urban location, which will relieve pressure to build on Green Belt and greenfield sites.

- The development would increase the Council's income from council tax receipts and the new homes bonus.
- The creation of increased spending in the local area once completed and also during the construction phase.
- Creation of a new vehicle turning head to a cul-de-sac that does not currently have one, improving vehicle access, movement and safety in this location.

6.12 Although these benefits can be shared by the public on both sides of the municipal boundary, the NPPF does not require the public benefits to be solely within Trafford.

6.13 The delivery of the improvements to the public park are the subject of a legal agreement between MCC and the applicant. Condition 3 of the MCC planning permission (137234/FO/2023) also controls the delivery programme for these works.

6.14 Local planning authorities should take the significance of any heritage assets (including by development affecting their setting) 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' (paragraph 201, NPPF 2023). As noted above, the views afforded of the former Barracks from Virgil Street are of low significance. Even with a reduction in units, any development on the site area will result in some very low-level harm to the setting of the site so harm cannot be avoided in this instance and that harm has already been minimised to the point of being low. There is no requirement to cause 'no harm' which would mean the site would be undevelopable. This position is accepted by *Historic England (The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition))* –

For some developments affecting setting, the design of a development may not be capable of sufficient adjustment to avoid or significantly reduce the harm, for example where impacts are caused by fundamental issues such as the proximity, location, scale, prominence or noisiness of a development.

6.15 Whilst great weight should, and has, been given to conservation, 'local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World

Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance' (para 212, NPPF 2023). This would be achieved via the benefit of improving the setting the listed building (via the public improvement works).

Avoiding, Minimising and Mitigating Negative Impacts

6.16 The proposal has been developed with careful consideration of the context of heritage assets and over the course of several pre-application meetings with planning and conservation officers at Trafford Borough Council. There have been various changes to the initial scheme in response to comments raised (although not all relate to heritage), these include:

- Deeper entrance recess /reveal.
- Rationalised window fenestration.
- Elevational differentiation of the living space / bedrooms.
- Red brick, with red/pink concrete detailing.
- Added brick soldier course detailing.
- Reduced parapet height.
- Reduced stair overrun height.
- Landscaping planters to the roof terrace
- Additional back doors added into garages to serve the middle units.

6.17 The proposal was also pulled further away from the adjacent apartment complex and condensed to allow greater visibility of the listed building when passing from Virgil Street.

6.18 All of the above, along with the proposed scale and massing, demonstrate a clear attempt to minimise and avoid harm to heritage assets.

Opportunities to Better Reveal or Enhance Significance

- 6.19 The setting of the listed building has been lost or severely eroded to the rear. The previous landscaped gardens were once largely open and through the 20th century some parts of the land have become overgrown with self-seeded trees. The proposal will provide ecological improvements to the area and thinning of low-quality trees which better reflects the historical landscape as seen on the cartographic sources and will enhance significance to a small degree.

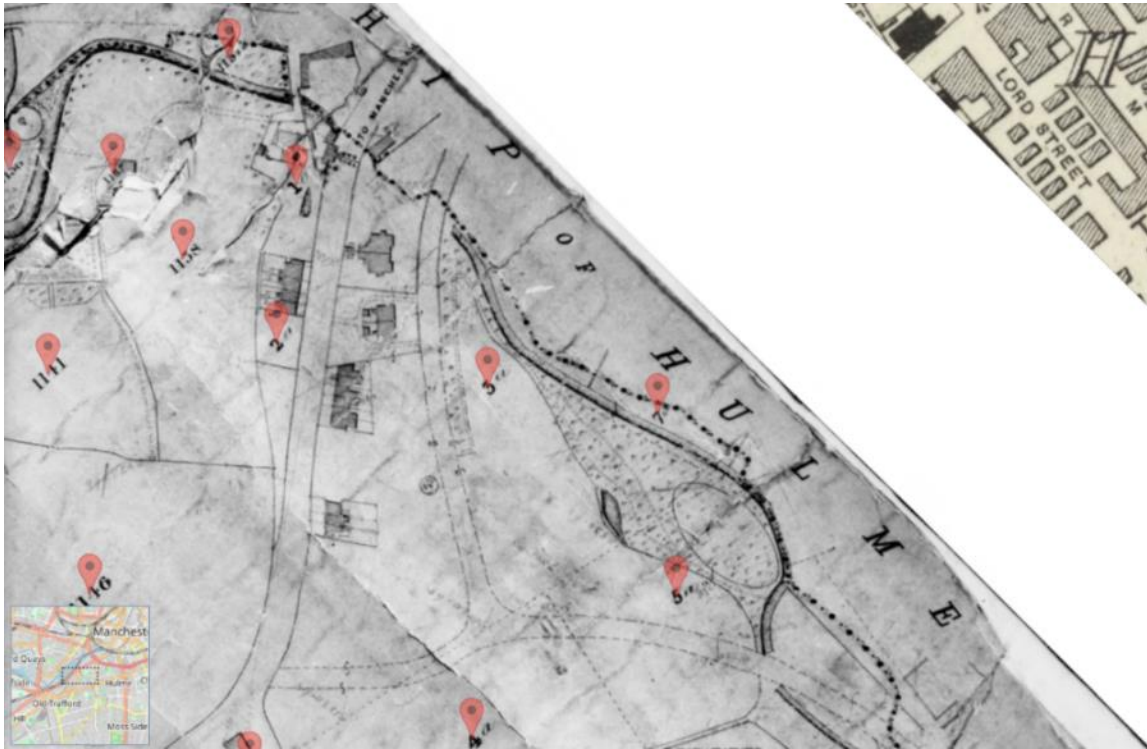
Compliance with Planning Policy

- 6.20 This assessment establishes there will be no harm to the significance of the Empress Conservation Area.
- 6.21 There is a low level of less than substantial harm to the Grade II Listed Hulme Barracks. There are numerous public benefits of the scheme which significantly outweigh any low levels of harm.
- 6.22 There are no areas of conflict with either Trafford's Core Strategy or the NPPF in relation to heritage.

Bibliography

Hartwell, C., Hyde, M., and Pevsner, N. (2004) **The Buildings of England, Lancashire: Manchester and the South-East**. Yale University Press: London.

Appendix A – Historical Sources



Tithe Map of 28th February 1839



Manchester and Salford Town Plan Sheet 37. Surveyed: 1849, Published: 1851. Scale 1:1056.



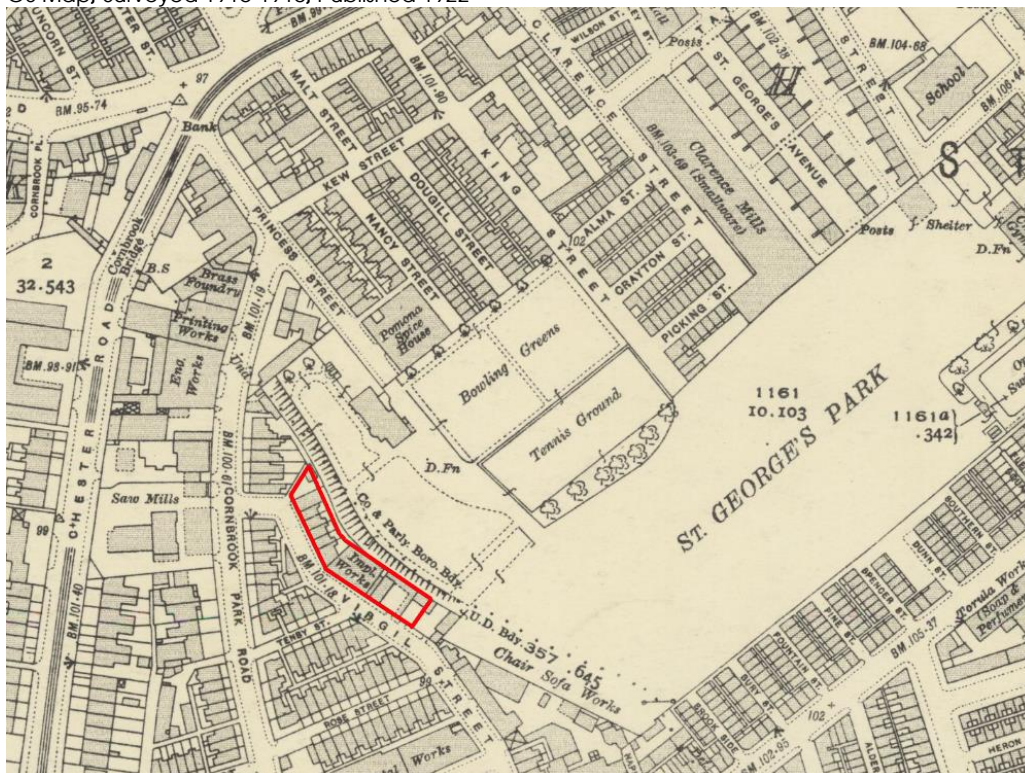
Manchester - Lancashire CIV.10.22. Surveyed: 1888, Published: 1891. 1:500



Goad Plan (1902)



OS Map, Surveyed 1915-1916, Published 1922



OS Map, Revised 1932, Published 1934