

Heritage Statement

Withington Community Hospital: Community Diagnostics Centre

June 2023

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Client

Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

Our reference

MANM3015

June 2023

1. Introduction

1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Turley Heritage on behalf of Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust in connection with a full planning application for a new Community Diagnostics Centre (the Proposed Development), providing cardiorespiratory and endoscopy services, at Withington Community Hospital ('WCH') in Manchester (the Site).

1.2 The formal description of development is as follows:

"Development of a two-storey building comprising a Community Diagnostics Centre (use class E(e)), with associated external landscaping, patient and delivery drop off area and 6 no. accessible parking spaces."

1.3 In determining the submitted planning application, Manchester City Council (MCC) has a statutory duty under s66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the special interest and setting of listed buildings.¹ Case law has established that 'considerable importance and weight' should be given to this statutory duty.

1.4 The setting of a conservation area is not protected by primary legislation; the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) does however state that the setting of a designated heritage asset (including conservation areas) can contribute to its significance.

1.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides the Government's national planning policy on the conservation of the historic environment. In respect of information requirements for applications, Paragraph 194 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

1.6 To comply with these requirements, Section 2 of this Statement identifies the Site and describes its context, history and development. Heritage assets with potential to be affected by the Proposed Development are identified in Section 3 and Section 4 provides an assessment of their significance and setting; proportionate to both the importance of the asset and the likely impacts. An assessment of the impact of the Proposed Development is provided at Section 5, in light of the statutory duty of the 1990 Act, national planning policy set out in the NPPF and local planning policy for the historic environment (set out in detail at **Appendix 1**).

1.7 This Heritage Statement has been undertaken on the basis of published information, archival research and a site visit undertaken during May 2023.

1 S.66 (1) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

2 MHCLG (2021) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - para. 194

2. History and Development

Site Context and Description

- 2.1 The Site is situated in West Didsbury, a suburb of Manchester, and south of the city centre. It is rectangular in shape and is currently an undeveloped parcel of land that has naturalised over time with a combination of mature trees, shrubbery and other vegetation. It is located immediately to the south of the current Withington Community Hospital complex.

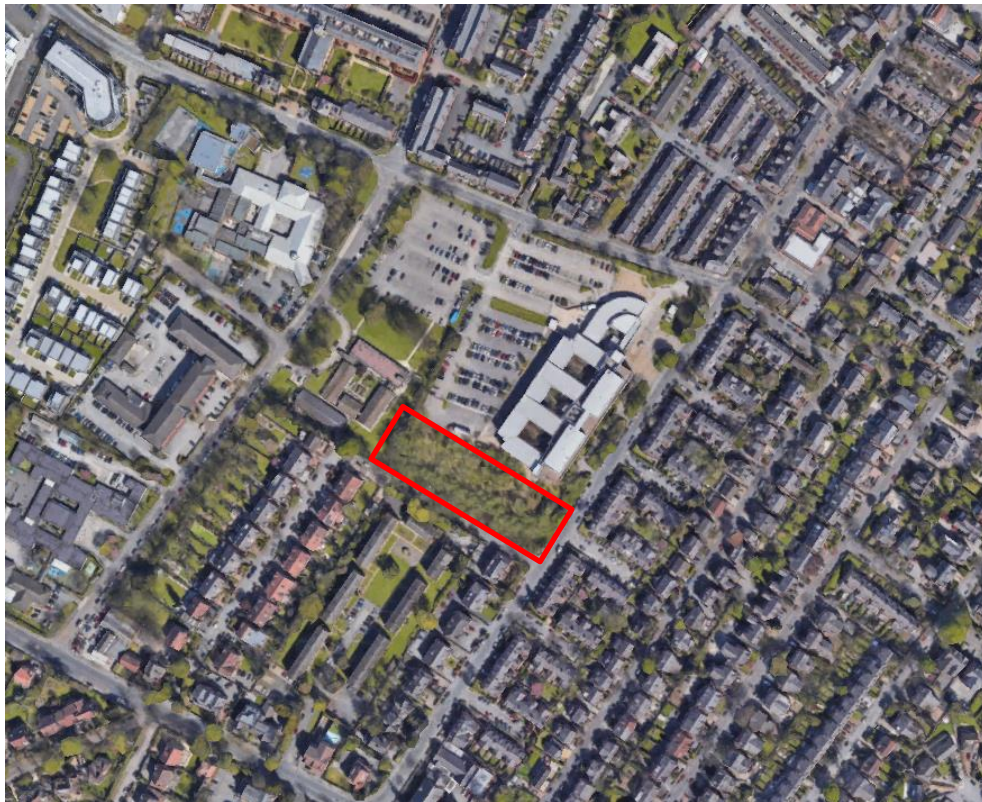


Figure 2.1: Google Earth, 2023, with approximate Site Boundary

- 2.2 There are existing residential properties to the east and south of the Site, lining Burton Road and Fielden Road. To the west is a separate detached hospital unit, accessed from Elizabeth Slinger Road.

Historic development of the Site and the surrounding areas

- 2.3 Historic map regression evidences the development of West Didsbury during the 19th century. Ordnance Survey Maps (OS Maps) included at **Figures 2.2 and 2.3** illustrate the rapid expansion of this area and the southward expansion of Manchester during the late 19th century.

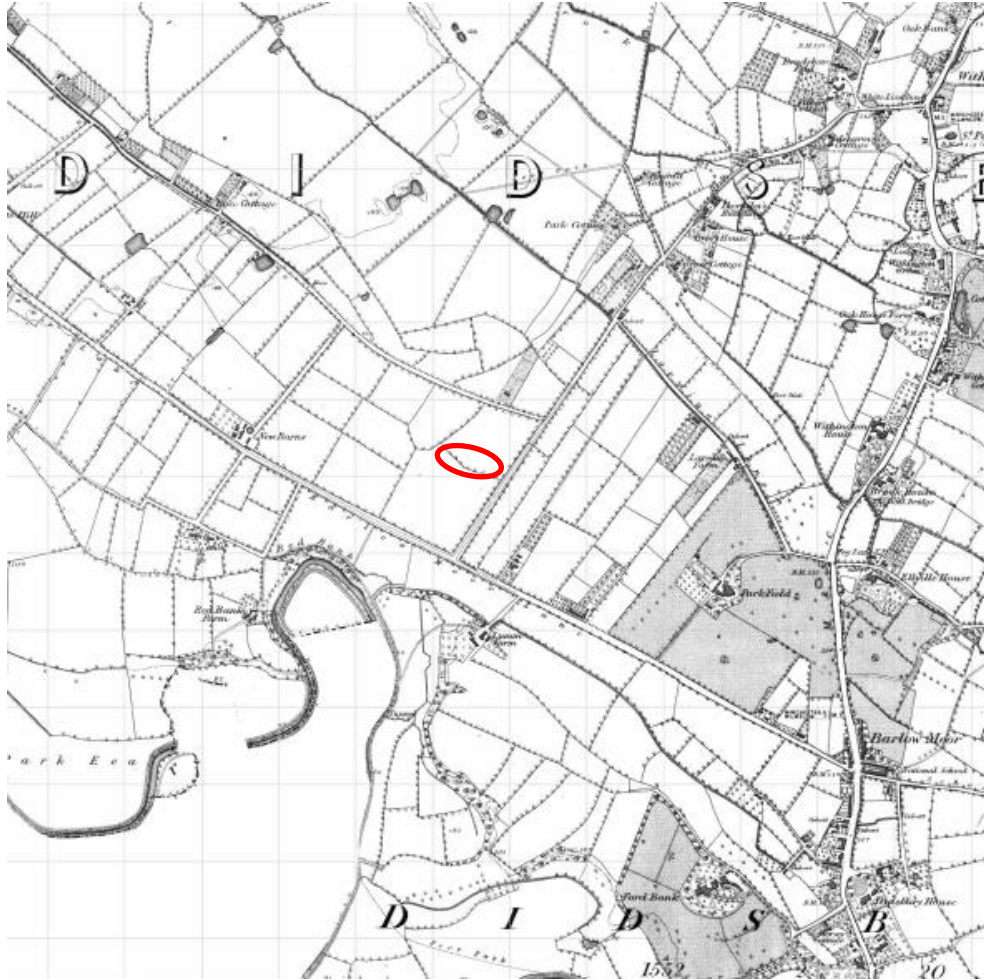


Figure 2.2: 1849 Ordnance Survey (OS) Map

- 2.4 The development of Didsbury is attributed to expansion of Manchester, initially precipitated by the Industrial Revolution and the associated increased population, migration and desire for more wealthy residents to relocate away from the polluted environment of the city. The Jewish community, in particular, were drawn to the area south of the city during this period and, although later in date (1920s), this is manifested by the presence of the grade II listed Synagogue on Old Lansdowne Road. There was also a growing German population in Manchester and the suburbs, predominantly families of merchants and industrialists.
- 2.5 At the beginning of the 20th century (**Figure 2.4**), the area was predominantly residential in character, dominated by both terraced housing and larger semi-detached Victorian villas, lining streets to the south east of Burton Road. There is evidence that the road frontage, that now comprises the commercial centre of Burton Road, was extended southwards towards the Site at this time. Institutions also existed and the former Withington Hospital (now grade II listed) and Chorlton Union Workhouse were a commanding presence in the area, due to their combined footprint and scale, to the north of the Site. The Site itself remained undeveloped until the mid-20th century.

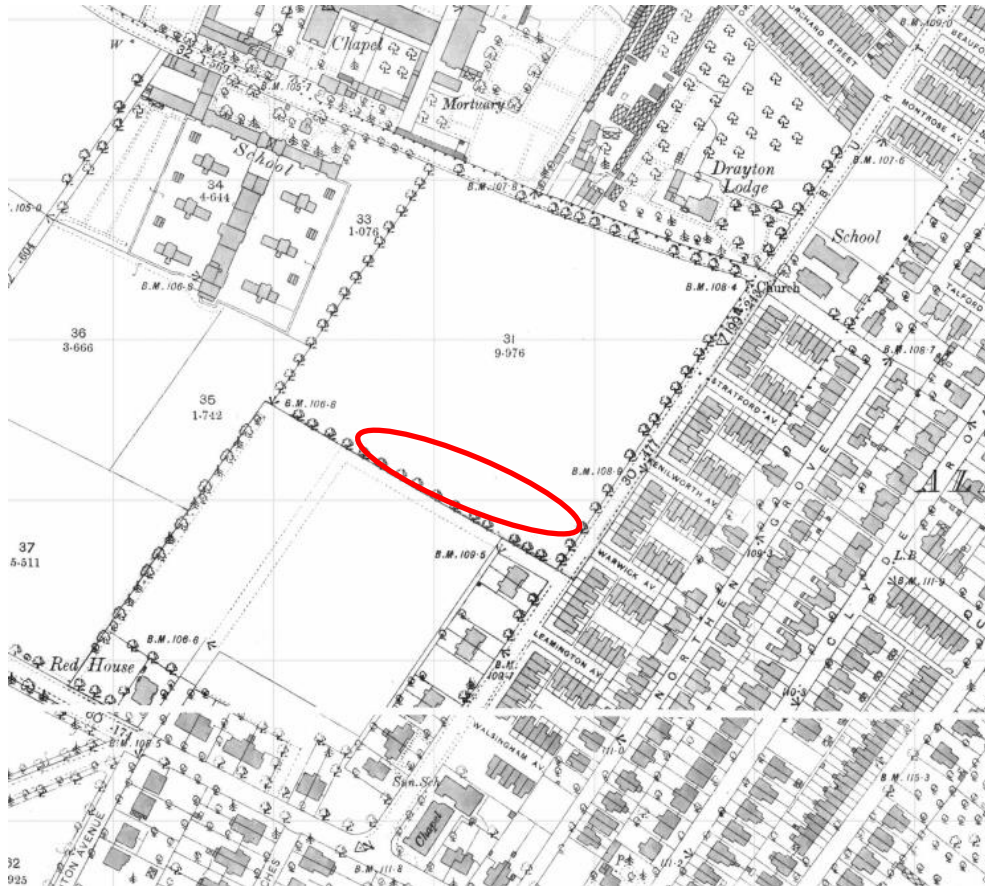


Figure 2.3: 1894 OS map

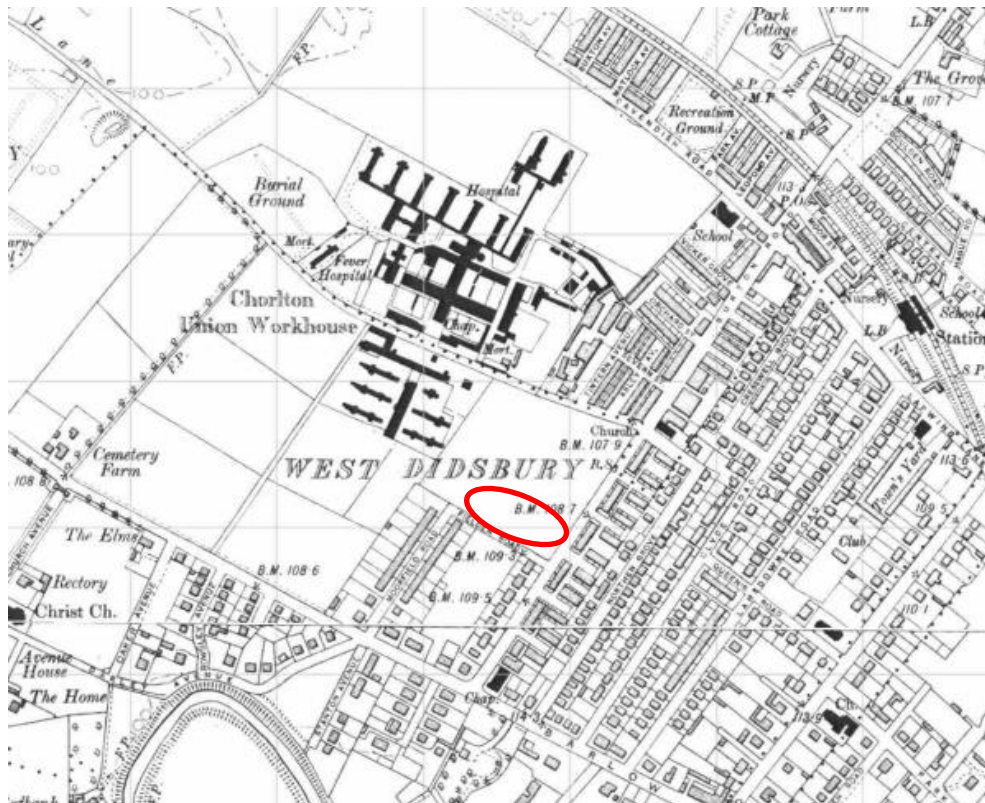


Figure 2.4: 1905 OS map showing Chorlton Union Workhouse



Figure 2.5: 1934-38 OS map



Figure 2.6: 1955 OS map



Figure 2.7: 1971 OS map

- 2.6 By the 1930s inter war residential expansion had taken place within the wider area (**Figure 2.5**) and by 1955 (**Figure 2.6**) the Site and land to the north had been developed for the first time with a large arrangement of government buildings, arranged around a central spine. It is assumed that these were administrative buildings, in office use, and aerial photography at **Figures 2.8 to 2.10** shows their phased construction, form and extent, viewed in the context of the wider area.



Figure 2.8: Historic England Archive, 1948



Figure 2.9: Historic England Archive, 1949



Figure 2.10: Historic England Archive, 1955

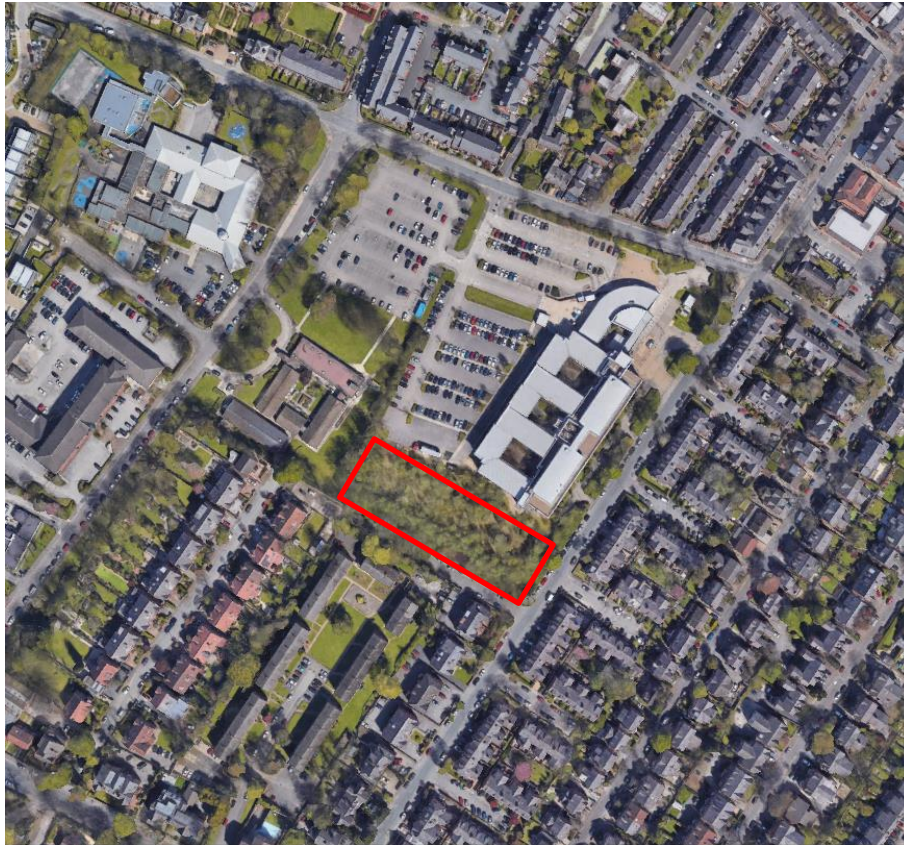


Figure 2.11: Google Earth, 2023

- 2.7 The complex of government buildings was demolished and the current Withington Community Hospital complex and associated car parking was built in 2007. The Site was not redeveloped at this time and has remained vacant since.

3. Heritage Assets

Introduction

- 3.1 The NPPF (2021) 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.”³

- 3.2 The identification of designated and non-designated heritage assets with potential to be affected by the Proposed Development is based on a series of judgements including the nature of their significance and relative contribution of setting, their proximity to and relationship with the Site, potential visibility of the Proposed Development and any known functional or historic associations.
- 3.3 In accordance with the NPPF and Historic England guidance the judgements made are based on the effect of the Proposed Development on the **significance** of the identified assets, rather than whether the development will be visible from them, although this is also a consideration.

Designated Heritage Assets

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

Conservation Areas

- 3.5 The Site is adjacent to the western boundary of the Albert Park Conservation Area. The conservation area was designated by MCC in 1988. There is no formal published character appraisal of the designated area, however MCC has published on its website an overview of its history, a description of its buildings, guidance on the control of development and has identified opportunities for improvement and enhancement. This has been referred to in the preparation of this Heritage Statement, supplemented by our own research and observations from a site visit.
- 3.6 There is potential for the character and appearance (significance) of the conservation area to be affected by the Proposed Development, as a result of development within its setting.

Listed Buildings

- 3.7 There are listed buildings within the area surrounding the Site that have been excluded from assessment. These are as follows:
- **Withington Hospital (Principal Administrative Block) (grade II listed) and the Entrance Lodges, Piers, Screen and Gates of Withington Hospital (grade II listed)** – Both designated heritage assets are located to the north west of the Site and were converted for modern residential use between 2006 and 2008.

3 Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2021) National Planning Policy Framework.

Due to distance, intervening trees, the character of their existing setting, and the orientation of the listed buildings (appreciated in views northwards from Nell Lane), it is not considered that the significance of these assets would be affected by the Proposed Development. An existing view taken from close to the listed building complex at the Junction of Houseman Crescent with Nell Lane (**Figure 3.1**) shows the extent to which the existing Site is screened from the listed buildings. There will be less screening during winter months, but the distance between the listed buildings and the Site and the presence of the existing hospital complex, means that the significance of the listed buildings would not be affected.



Figure 3.1: View towards the Site from the junction of Houseman Crescent with Nell Lane

Non-Designated Heritage Assets

- 3.8 The NPPF identifies that heritage assets include both designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing). Historic England's guidance on 'Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment' (2015) states 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 the application."

- 3.9 A search of the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record (HER) was undertaken in January 2023. There are no non-designated heritage assets with the potential to be affected by the Proposed Development.

4. Assessment of Significance

Introduction

- 4.1 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.”⁴

- 4.2 The following assessment is intended to be proportionate to the importance of the heritage assets and the likely impacts arising from the Proposed Development. They have been informed by a site visit (January 2023), historic map regression and existing published information.

Conservation Areas

- 4.3 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 and significance of a conservation area⁵.

Setting

- 4.4 The NPPF defines the setting of a heritage asset as:

“The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral⁶.”

- 4.5 Historic England has published guidance⁷ in respect of the setting of heritage assets, providing detail on understanding setting and the associated assessment of the impact of any changes. The guidance confirms at Paragraph 9 that:

“setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, rather its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the relevant heritage asset itself”.

- 4.6 The guidance sets out a step-by-step process for proportionate assessment of the significance of a heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal. This approach has informed this assessment of significance.

- 4.7 Further guidance on the definition of setting and how it should be taken into account is set out in NPPG. NPPG Paragraph 013 sets out that:

4 MHCLG (2021) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – Annex 2: Glossary

5 Historic England (2018) Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management

6 MHCLG (2021) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – Annex 2: Glossary

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

“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”.

Assessment of Significance: Albert Park Conservation Area

- 4.8 The Albert Park Conservation Area is extensive and has an irregular boundary, defined to the north by a former railway line, now part of the Metrolink tram network, Palatine Road to the east and Barlow Moor Road to the south. The western boundary is varied and is defined by the rear gardens of dwellings lining Burton Road, Burton Road itself and other plot boundaries to the north west.

History and Development

- 4.9 Consistent with the analysis of the history and development of the Site and surrounding area in Section 2 of this Statement, the conservation area was largely rural and undeveloped until at least the mid to late 19th century.
- 4.10 There are examples of earlier buildings, however the area bounded by Palatine Road, Barlow Moor Road and Lapwing Lane was developed with housing during the late Victorian period and this was comprised mainly of large three storey pairs of semi-detached dwellings. MCC observes that these were ‘....slightly less grand than those fronting Palatine Road’.
- 4.11 The shopping area on Burton Road (which now constitutes the commercial core of West Didsbury), was also developed during this period, culminating in the north with the large Victorian pub, then ‘The Midland’ and now ‘The Metropolitan’ on the corner of Burton Road and Lapwing Lane.
- 4.12 Much of the continued growth of the residential suburb during this period was attributed to the expansion of railway connections and Albert Park had its own dedicated railway station off Lapwing Lane. This was a catalyst to further residential growth as the area became more connected to Manchester and beyond. Withington and Didsbury became incorporated into the City of Manchester in 1904.

Character and Appearance

- 4.13 Although there are pockets of inter war and post war housing and other more recent development, the Albert Park Conservation Area has retained the overwhelming character and appearance of a Victorian residential area, with interspersed facilities (a town hall, churches, a commercial core, schools and a former hospital).
- 4.14 The structure of the area is broadly defined by five parallel roads extending from Barlow Moor Road in the south and Lapwing Lane in the north. These streets are typically characterised by large Victorian semi-detached dwellings, set back from the road frontage and with small front garden areas, defined by formal brick and terracotta walls. However, there is variation and hierarchy to the housing within the conservation area and many of the secondary streets and those closer to Burton Road are characterised by terraced or smaller properties. There is an overall verdancy to the conservation area with streets lined by mature trees.

- 4.15 The predominant building material is red or orange brick, but there are examples of buff brick. There are examples of diaper brickwork and stone detailing is common to lintels and cills. Tall gables and bay windows are common, and although there is variation, most dwellings are two to three storeys in height, some with dormer windows and attic accommodation.
- 4.16 There is consistency and legibility to the Victorian character and common features within the conservation area, but certain buildings are of greater distinction, a number of which are recognised by statutory listing. These include the former Withington Town Hall on Lapwing Lane, the synagogue on Queenston Road, the Metropolitan public house, a pair of earlier Georgian houses on Barlow Moor Road and examples of dwellings that deviate in style from the others, (i.e. two pairs of large Gothic style semi-detached dwellings on Clyde Road).

Setting

- 4.17 The extent of the conservation area means that it also has an expansive setting, comprising the other areas of Withington, Didsbury and Chorlton.
- 4.18 To the north, beyond the Metrolink route is the residential streets of West Didsbury and Withington, in combination with the continuation of commercial uses lining the northern extent of Burton Road. To the east, the setting of the conservation area is less dense and contains a mix of residential development, interspersed with the open space of sports facilities. The area to the south of the conservation area, to the south of Barlow Moor Road, is also less dense and regular and is broadly characterised by larger buildings in more spacious plots. The setting of the conservation area to the west differs again and is defined by a blend of residential development of differing periods and institutional development, including Withington Community Hospital and the Site.
- 4.19 Overall, the setting of the conservation area is highly urban. It is generally characterised by residential development of similar scale to the conservation area itself, but there are variations. Alternative uses and development of differing scale, mass and height exists. Although there is Victorian residential development beyond its boundaries, and the Albert Park Conservation Area is close to the other conservation areas of Withington and Didsbury, its varied setting reinforces the structure and consistency of the character of the designated area and its legibility as a Victorian suburb.
- 4.20 Long ranging views are possible within and from outside the conservation area. These are predominantly north to south (and south to north) along the five principal routes that define the area. Views east to west are shorter and often terminated by the density of built development or changing street orientation.

Contribution made by the Site to the Albert Park Conservation Area

- 4.21 Historic map regression and a review of aerial photography demonstrates that the Site and wider area now occupied by Withington Community Hospital is distinct from the conservation area and its character and appearance. While the conservation area was evolving as a Victorian residential suburb during the 19th century, the Site remained vacant until it was developed as a complex of government buildings during the mid-20th

century. The Site was not redeveloped when the complex was demolished and was excluded when Withington Community Hospital was built to the north. It is currently enclosed by metal fencing and screened from view by mature trees lining the perimeter.

- 4.22 Today, the Site forms part of the mixed setting to the west of the conservation area. Although not contributing itself to the significance or character or appearance of the conservation area, mature trees lining Burton Road are evident on historic mapping and aerial photographs, are reflective of the mature street trees found throughout the conservation area, and add to the verdancy of Burton Road.

5. Assessment of Impact

Summary of Legislation and National Planning Policy Context

- 5.1 In accordance with paragraph 194 of the NPPF, the significance of heritage assets with potential to be affected by the Proposed Development, including the contribution made by their setting and the Site, has been assessed at Section 4 of this report.
- 5.2 In determining the submitted application for full planning permission, MCC has a statutory duty under s66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the special interest and setting of listed buildings. The setting of conservation areas is not protected by primary legislation; the NPPF does however state that the setting of a designated heritage asset (including conservation areas) can contribute to its significance.
- 5.3 Case law has confirmed that Parliament's intention in enacting s66(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 cause no harm'.
- 5.4 Paragraph 197 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.
- 5.5 Paragraph 199 confirms that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Conservation is defined as follows:
- "The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance."*
- 5.6 Paragraphs 200 to 202 advise on the addressing and balancing of 'harm' to designated heritage assets, where it arises, and whether the harm is 'substantial' or 'less than substantial.'
- 5.7 Paragraph 206 requires local planning authorities look for opportunities for new development 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.

The Proposed Development

- 5.8 Full planning permission is sought for a new Community Diagnostics Centre, providing cardiorespiratory and endoscopy services. The new detached building will be located to the south of the existing Community Hospital, with potential for a link to be created in the future.

- 5.9 The proposed building is two storeys in height, with a flat roof. It has a broadly rectangular footprint, with a recess in the western elevation to signify the main entrance and with variation in the plan for circulation cores and bays, to create rhythm. It will be principally of red and buff brick construction, with areas of cladding, louvres and curtain walling.
- 5.10 The proposed building is set back from the site boundaries and the principal pedestrian and vehicular access will be from the west, utilising the existing Community hospital access and car parking. A secondary pedestrian access is also proposed from Burton Road, this will involve the widening of an existing access.
- 5.11 All existing mature trees lining Burton Road and Fielden Road will be retained.

Assessment of Impact on Albert Park Conservation Area

- 5.12 In terms of the **location** and **siting** of the Proposed Development, the new building will occupy previously developed land, left vacant when a former government office complex was demolished and Withington Community Hospital was developed to the north. It will occupy a part of the setting of the conservation area that is already characterised by a blend of residential and institutional uses, experienced in combination.
- 5.13 Consistent with the existing hospital complex to the north, the proposed new building will be set back from the Site boundaries. Existing mature trees lining Burton Road and Fielden Road will be retained and this means that the building will be well screened from the western boundary of the conservation area. An exception is that the building will be visible where the widened pedestrian access is created on Burton Road, however this relationship with the conservation area already exists, where breaks in planting mean that the existing Community Hospital is visible, as illustrated by photographs at **Figures 5.1** and **5.2**.
- 5.14 The building will be more visible during the winter months; however it will still be viewed in the context of the existing hospital complex and the trees will continue to have a filtering effect, even when not in leaf.
- 5.15 Overall, the visual impact of the Proposed Development is limited. The proposed building will be visible from a limited area of the western part of the conservation area and will be well screened. It will occupy part of the setting of the conservation area already influenced and characterised by this type and form of development and the proposed buildings will be read alongside the existing hospital complex.



Figure 5.1: View of existing Withington Community Hospital from Burton Road



Figure 5.2: View of existing Withington Community Hospital from Burton Road

- 5.16 In terms of the **form** and **appearance** of the Proposed Development, the proposed facility is consistent with the height of the existing Hospital to the north, at two storeys, and will be sited within an area characterised by buildings of two to three storeys.
- 5.17 The proposed building is of a larger footprint than the dwellings of the nearby conservation area and will have increased floor to ceiling height, but will be well screened from Burton Road by retained trees. Where visible, the south elevation of the building is simply articulated with a row of tall and narrow vertical windows, providing rhythm.
- 5.18 A warm palette of materials is proposed. The choice of brick as the primary material, in a mix of red and buff colours, is consistent with the prevailing building material of the conservation area and is characteristic of the area.

- 5.19 Retention of existing trees will ensure retained verdancy along the boundary with the conservation area on Burton Road. Trees are present on historic mapping and the aerial images in Section 2 of this report.

NPPF and Local Planning Policy

- 5.20 Overall, due to the presence of the existing Withington Community Hospital complex, the location, siting, form and appearance of the Proposed Development, in combination with the screening and filtering effect of existing retained trees, it is concluded that there would be no harm to the Albert Park Conservation Area. The character, appearance and significance of the conservation area, defined by its origins as a Victorian suburb, would be sustained.
- 5.21 The Proposed Development accords with paragraphs 197, 199 and 206 of the NPPF.
- 5.22 The Proposed Development also complies with Policy EN 3 (Heritage) of Manchester Core Strategy, by preserving the character and setting of Albert Park Conservation Area. In accordance with Policy DC18.1, there will be no harm to the character or appearance of the area and views into and out of the conservation area will be protected.

6. Summary and Conclusions

- 6.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Turley Heritage on behalf of Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust in connection with a full planning application for a new Community Diagnostics Centre (the Proposed Development), providing cardiorespiratory and endoscopy services, at Withington Community Hospital ('WCH') in Manchester (the Site).
- 6.2 The Site is adjacent to the western boundary of the Albert Park Conservation Area. There are listed buildings within the surrounding area, however due to distance, intervening buildings, and other considerations, they would not be affected by the Proposed Development and they have been excluded from assessment.
- 6.3 Overall, due to the presence of the existing Withington Community Hospital complex, the location, siting, form and appearance of the Proposed Development, in combination with the screening and filtering effect of existing retained trees, it is concluded that there would be no harm to the Albert Park Conservation Area. The character, appearance and significance of the conservation area, defined by its origins as a Victorian suburb, would be sustained.
- 6.4 The Proposed Development accords with paragraphs 197, 199 and 206 of the NPPF and complies with Policies EN 3 (Heritage) and DC18.1 of Manchester Core Strategy.

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.”

In relation to conservation areas, the s.72(1) of the Act states that:

“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.

The same principles apply for conservation areas and the application of s72(1) of the 1990 Act. Whilst the setting of conservation areas is not specifically mentioned in primary legislation, the NPPF states that the setting of a designated heritage asset can contribute to its significance.

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework, 2021

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is the full statement of Government planning policies. Chapter 16 outlines the Government’s guidance regarding the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.

Paragraph 194 of the NPPF outlines the information required to support planning applications affecting heritage assets, stating that applicants should 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.

Paragraph 197 of the NPPF states that planning authorities should take account of 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.

Paragraph 199 states 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. Conservation is defined as:

"The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance."

Paragraph 200 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 201 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:

- the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
- no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

Paragraph 202 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 206 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 the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

Local Planning Policy

Manchester Core Strategy (2012-2027)

Manchester Local Plan

The Manchester Local Plan is formed of the Core Strategy 2012-2027 and Proposals Map, the extant Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Policies and relevant Development Plan Documents (DPDs).

Policy EN 3 (Heritage) of the Core Strategy states that:

‘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.

New developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance, including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas and archaeological remains...’

Policy DC18.1 confirms that the Council will give particularly careful consideration to development proposals within Conservation Areas. It states the following:

“a) 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.
- b) The Council will not normally grant outline planning permission for development within Conservation Areas.
- c) Consent to demolish a building in a conservation area will be granted only where it can be shown that it is wholly beyond repair, incapable of reasonably beneficial use, or where its removal or replacement would benefit the appearance or character of the area.
- d) Where demolition is to be followed by redevelopment, demolition will be permitted only where there are approved detailed plans for that redevelopment and where the Council has been furnished with evidence that the development will be undertaken.
- e) Development proposals adjacent to Conservation Areas will be granted only where it can be shown that they will not harm the appearance or character of the area. This will include the protection of views into and out of Conservation Areas.”

Guidance

National Planning Practice Guidance

Whilst not planning policy the 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.

Historic England: Historic Environment 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.

Guidance: Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition) (December 2017) 'The Setting of Heritage Assets'

Historic England has recently 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'.

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