Paul Butler Associates
Planning, Development & Heritage Consultants

Great Places Housing Association

The Rossett, West Didsbury

Heritage Statement

16 March 2023

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Job Number: 21.1586

Project: The Rossett, West Didsbury

Client: Great Places Housing Association

File Name: 21.1586 Heritage Statement

Document Preparation/Checking Record:

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Document Revision Record:

Issue No.	Date	Details of Revisions
FINAL	15.02.23	
i	16.03.23	Correction to section 3

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1. Introduction

Purpose of this Statement

1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Paul Butler Associates Ltd on behalf of Great Places and Cube Homes. The Statement has been provided in support of a proposal for the demolition of a two storey annex and replacement with a new two storey building in the grounds of The Rossett, 123 Palatine Road. The site is located in the Blackburn Park Conservation Area.

1.2 Due to the development being within the conservation area, a Heritage Statement is required which considers the potential impact of the scheme on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

1.3 This statement has been prepared in accordance with the policies and procedures of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) following a visual and photographic survey of the site, in addition to an examination, analysis and assessment of available historic information. The statement includes:

- A description of the application site's location and setting;
- An overview of the proposed scheme;
- A summary of the heritage planning policy guidance context;
- Identification of heritage assets within the vicinity of the application site and an assessment of their heritage significance and setting; and
- An appraisal of the potential impact of the proposed scheme on identified heritage assets.

1.4 This statement is not intended to be a full or complete record of the site. The proposed scheme is supported by a series of drawings prepared by AEW Architects.

2. Site Location and Setting

2.1 The site is rectangular in shape and approximately 0.165 hectares in size. The existing built form on site consists of a large, detached Victorian Villa and rear linked building. The Victorian property has three floors of accommodation above a basement, whilst the rear building is two storeys in height. The property appears to date from the 1860s / 1870s and would have been constructed as a private residential dwelling known then as 'The Rossetts'.

2.2 It is constructed of red / orange brick with stone sills, arched brick headers and a decorative brick cornice beneath a pitched slate roof with chimneys. Windows are generally painted timber sashes to the front / public facing elevations with more modern UPVC interventions to the side and rear. A double height large stained-glass window exists to the rear elevation. The two storey building to the rear is connected to the main Victorian building via a single storey link which also provides access to the grounds of the property. The rear building is constructed under a flat roof and is a simple t-shaped design constructed from purple brick.

2.3 The Victorian Villa at the front of the site is set back from the front boundary of the property with a parking forecourt immediately in front of the building abutting a landscape strip behind the boundary wall. Access into the site is gained from the front northwest corner of the site directly from Palatine Road. In addition to the forecourt parking a narrow route runs along the side of the building, this opens out to the rear (eastern) corner of the site. The two buildings on site are sited within well-maintained grounds with a shared garden area occupying the eastern side and rear of the extended building.

2.4 Photos of the site and surrounding area are available to view in the Planning Statement (Paul Butler Associates) submitted in support of the application.

2.5 The site lies within the Blackburn Park Conservation Area (see figure 2.1 below). The nearest listed buildings to the application site are the 'Former District Bank (West Didsbury branch)' and the 'Former Withington Town Hall'. Both are over 100 metres distant and separated by

substantial built form. Given the intervening built form and urban grain, the impact on the setting of the listed buildings is scoped out of further assessment.

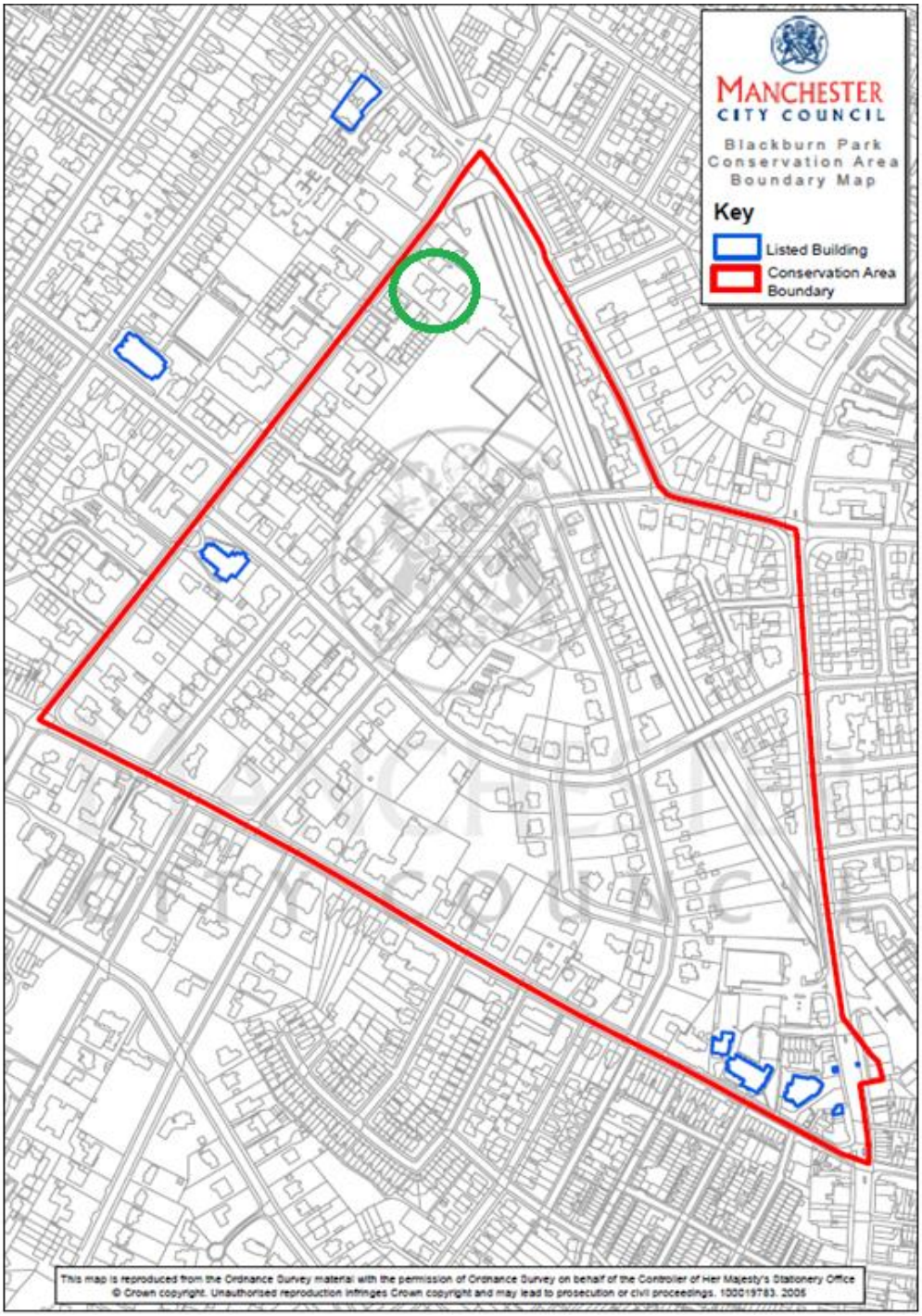

Fig 2.1: Blackburn Park Conservation Area Boundary (site location identified by green circle).

Fig 2.2: Location of nearby listed buildings (circled blue). The area of the proposed building is circled green. 1: 'Former Withington Town Hall' (grade II listed); 2: 'Former District Bank (West Didsbury branch)' (grade II listed).

2.6 The site is located in an area which is characterised by a mix of uses. Residential is the most common use in the area, particularly to the north, south and west. Other uses in the area include offices, sport/leisure uses, retail and cafés.

2.7 The built form / character of the area is diverse. Historic development in the area shares characteristics with the subject property including large detached Victorian Villas and semi-detached properties. The public realm is characterised by mature tree planting and vegetation. Boundary treatments, including brick and stone boundary walls with railings / hedges, also contribute to the character of the area.

3. The Proposed Scheme

3.1 The existing built form that is the subject of this application relates to the rear building only, there are currently 6 units in the rear building (all 1 bed units).

3.2 The rear annex building will be replaced by a new detached apartment building, that will accommodate 8 units for affordable rent. The new rear building will be 2 storeys in height.

3.3 The materials to be used in the construction of the new building are sensitive to the Victorian Villa with red brick the predominant material. A blue grey brick soldier course is proposed to the window surrounds and a blue grey brick course is proposed just below the parapet level. The coping stone to the parapet will be grey. The roof will be flat to keep the height of the development to a minimum and ensure it remains subservient to the main building on the site. UPVC flush casement windows are proposed to match the surrounding context.

3.4 The proposals represent an excellent opportunity to improve the quality and standard of accommodation on site.

3.5 Car parking on site is currently accommodated to the front of the property, informal areas of hardstanding exist to the side and rear. The buildings on site are currently surrounded by an informal landscaped garden to the south and east. The proposals will seek to protect and enhance the garden areas on site. The parking arrangements for the property will remain unchanged with parking for the Victorian Villa retained to the front of the property.

4. The Heritage Planning Policy Context

Introduction

4.1 The heritage planning policy of relevance to the proposal, and which provides the context for its assessment, is set out within national and local planning policy guidance.

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

4.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning Act states that 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. In this instance the development plan currently comprises the Manchester Core Strategy (July 2021) and Saved Policies of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (adopted 1995). Relevant provisions of these documents are discussed later in this section.

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

4.3 The principal legislation which covers the historic environment is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

4.4 Listed Buildings are buildings of special architectural and historic interest which make up England's historic environment. They are protected under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and alterations or demolitions require Listed Building Consent from the local authority before they can proceed.

4.5 A conservation area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance (Section 69 of the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act).

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

4.6 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (published July 2021) is the overarching planning policy document for England and provides guidance about how to implement the legislation which covers the historic environment, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Within Section 16 of the NPPF – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment – are the government's policies for the protection of heritage.

NPPF Chapter 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

4.7 The NPPF builds upon the provisions of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and requires at paragraph 194 that *'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'.*

4.8 'Significance' is defined by Annex 2: 'Glossary of NPPF' 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'. 'Setting of a heritage asset' is also defined by Annex 2 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 neutral.'*

4.9 Paragraph 195 of the NPPF advises that *'Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They 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'.*

4.10 Paragraph 199 of the NPPF advises 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. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of the highest significance (including grade I and II* listed buildings), should be wholly exceptional.'*

4.11 Paragraph 201 advises that *'Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss'.*

4.12 Paragraph 202 advises 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 securing its optimum viable use'.*

4.13 Paragraph 203 states *'The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset'.*

Planning Practice Guidance

4.14 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was published in March 2014 and collates guidance previously published in a number of separate documents. The guidance in the PPG has been taken into consideration in formulating development proposals for the application site.

4.15 With regard to Heritage and assessing substantial harm, 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... 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: 017 Reference ID: 18a-017-20140306).

Historic England Guidance

4.16 Historic England has published guidance to assist with the management of the historic environment. This assessment has been prepared having regard to the following Historic England Guidance.

4.17 Historic England Advice Note 12: Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets: Published in October 2019, this Historic England advice note covers the NPPF requirement for applicants to describe the heritage significance in order to help local planning authorities to make decisions on the impact of proposals for development that affects heritage assets.

4.18 Historic England Historic Environment Good Practice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment: Published in March 2015, this document provides guidance on assessing the significance of heritage assets, using appropriate expertise and heritage recording.

4.19 Historic England Historic Environment Good Practice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Second Edition, 2017): Published in 2017, this document provides guidance for managing change within the setting of heritage assets, including historic sites, areas and landscapes.

4.20 Historic England Technical Advice Note 2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets: Published in February 2016, this advice note illustrates the application of the policies set out in the NPPF in determining applications for planning permission and listed building consent.

Local Planning Policy Guidance

Core Strategy (2012)

4.21 Policy EN 3 'Heritage' which states that proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets will be encouraged where they are considered consistent with the significance of the heritage asset. The policy also requires that new development should preserve or where possible enhance the historic environment, the character, setting, and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance including listed buildings, conservation areas and archaeological remains.

Saved Policies of the Unitary Development Plan for Manchester (1995)

4.22 DC18 'Conservation Areas' states the Council will give careful consideration to development proposals within Conservation Areas. The Council will seek to preserve and enhance the character of its designated conservation areas by carefully considering the following issues: i) the relationship of new structures to neighbouring buildings and spaces; ii) the effect of major changes to the appearance of existing buildings; iii) the desirability of retaining existing features, such as boundary walls, gardens, trees, (including street trees).

4.23 DC19 'Listed Buildings' states that the Council will have regard to the desirability of securing the retention, restoration, maintenance and continued use of such buildings. In giving effect to this policy, the Council will seek to preserve and enhance the settings of listed buildings by appropriate control over the design of new development in their vicinity, control over the use of adjacent land, and where appropriate, by the preservation of trees and landscape features.

Blackburn Park Conservation Area Declaration

4.24 The site is located within the Blackburn Park Conservation Area (see figure 2.1) which was designated by Manchester City Council in 1979. Planning law requires that in assessing development proposals regard should be had to the impact on the impact on the character and appearance of a conservation area. The designation also means that planning permission is generally required for the demolition of a building as well as providing protection for trees. The junction of Palatine Road and Lapwing Lane forms boundaries of the adjacent 'Ballbrook' and 'Albert Park' Conservation Areas.

5. Heritage Assets and their Significance

Introduction

5.1 In accordance with the NPPF and Historic England's Advice Note 12 'Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets' this section assesses the heritage significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. Paragraph 195 of the NPPF, specifically requires:

> *"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. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary."*

5.2 In considering development affecting a listed building, special regard must 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). Similarly, for any development affecting a conservation area, special attention must be given to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area including its setting (Section 72, Planning [Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas] Act 1990).

Heritage Assets that may be affected

5.3 With regards to the application proposals it is necessary to appraise the heritage impact in respect of the following:

1. Relationship and impact on the character and appearance of the Blackburn Park Conservation Area.

2. Impact on the existing Victorian Villa (The Rossett) which forms the principal building on the site.

5.4 Given the minor nature of the proposals to the rear of an existing building, in addition to the separation and intervening built form to the listed buildings to the north, it is not considered necessary to provide an assessment of this impact as part of the proposal. Similarly, as the visual impact of the proposals are limited to the site and immediate streetscene, no further impact of the potential effects on the distant conservation areas beyond are considered necessary.

Assessment of Heritage Significance

5.5 Paragraph 129 of the NPPF states that 'Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset)…'.

5.6 Appraising the indirect impact of development on setting will involve an assessment of whether a designated heritage asset has a setting which contributes to its significance and whether the proposed development impacts upon this setting.

5.7 In making the assessment of significance regard has been had to available documentary information on the history of the buildings, including historic photographs and plans. A historic map regression is included in appendix 1 of this statement.

Heritage Significance of Conservation Area

5.8 The site is located in the Blackburn Park Conservation Area which was designated in December 1979. The Conservation Area comprises the area bounded by Barlow Moor Road, Palatine Road, Lapwing Lane and Wilmslow Road. Saved UDP Policy DC18 'Conservation Areas' states the Council will give careful consideration to development proposals within Conservation Areas. The Council will seek to preserve and enhance the character of its designated conservation areas by carefully considering the following issues: i) the relationship of new structures to neighbouring buildings and spaces; ii) the effect of major changes to the appearance of existing buildings; iii) the desirability of retaining existing features, such as boundary walls, gardens, trees, (including street trees). Before considering whether this objective is met, it is first necessary to define what forms the significance of the Conservation Area.

5.9 A formal character appraisal for the Blackburn Park Conservation Area has not been completed for the area, neither has a Conservation Area Management Plan. There are seven pages of information regarding the Conservation Area online via the Council's webpages. This provides a basis for establishing the significance of the Conservation Area.

5.10 The Council's webpages identify Blackburn Park as principally an area of large family houses with spacious gardens, arranged along tree-lined roads which criss-cross the level ground of the park. The webpages comment that most of the houses in the park remain largely in their original form with the earlier properties larger in size than the later developments. The webpages outline the significant contribution that original architectural detailing and materials makes to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The webpages also identify that buildings can become worn out with age and need to be replaced or refurbished.

5.11 The application site is located towards the north western edge of the Conservation adjacent to Palatine Road which forms a main route through the Blackburn Park (and Albert Park) conservation areas. The existing Victorian Villa dates from the early phases of development

in the conservation area and its architectural form makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Heritage Significance of The Rossett

5.12 The Historic England Publication 'Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets' (HE 2019) suggests three areas of interest for assessing a heritage assets significance. These are to be described, following which the level of the general significance of the heritage asset should be assessed, with the particular contribution of any described features. The three areas of interest are:

5.13 *Archaeological interest* if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

5.14 *Architectural and artistic interest* which 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.

5.15 *Historic Interest* which is an interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. 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.

Archaeological Interest

5.16 The interest is of low significance. It provides evidence of past human activity in terms of the early phase of housing in the Conservation Area. The subdivision of the building and addition of the annex, means the historic plan form of the building has been heavily altered. It is

further noted that the Council's webpages do not attribute any archaeological interest to the site.

Architectural and Artistic Interest

5.17 The architectural and artistic interest is considered to be medium to high. The Victorian Villa possesses value in terms of its design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration, however replacement and new windows have depreciated the original interest. The rear extension which is the subject of this application contains no heritage interest being a late 20th century addition that is built in contrasting materials to the Victorian Villa.

Historic Interest

5.18 The building was erected in the 1860s / 1870s and would have been constructed as a private residential dwelling known then as 'The Rossetts'. The houses built along Palatine Road during this period constitute the first phase of development in Blackburn Park. The building is in a good condition and further renovation and repair works are scheduled to take place by the applicant. The value of the Victorian Villa is of medium to high significance. The rear extension fails to complement the materiality and design of the villa and therefore is of no interest.

Heritage Value and Mitigation

5.19 The heritage value of the Rossett lies mainly in its historic and architectural interests, with the architectural form of the building being largely as originally built and the principal elevation of the building contributes strongly to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Minor alterations in terms of new and replacement windows have take place in the past. The proposed development which is the subject of this application does not propose any changes to the existing building. The existing rear extension which does not contribute to the significance of the existing Villa fails to complement the historic and architectural

interest of the building. The proposals seek to remedy this through a sensitive form of development that is more appropriate in its design and materiality.

6. Heritage Appraisal

Introduction

6.1 The significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets have been considered within the previous sections. As set out above, two types of heritage impact require assessment. These impacts are considered below.

Impact of the Scheme on the Blackburn Park Conservation Area

6.2 As established earlier in this statement, the development site is within the Blackburn Park Conservation and the Villa constitutes one of the first buildings to be built in the Conservation Area.

6.3 In light of the Conservation Area designation, Council policy requires new development to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. Whilst the existing rear extension is not attractive in its aesthetic appearance it is of a clear sub-ordinate scale in relation to the main building and accordingly the effect is a sense of spaciousness retained around the building.

6.4 The scale and form of the new building has been carefully considered to ensure that the impact on spaciousness is not diminished and the new building does not over dominate the existing building. In terms of materiality, the palette of materials proposed is complimentary to the existing Villa and incorporates detailing and features of architectural interest that reference the form of the original building.

6.5 The works proposed would be undertaken in keeping with the existing character of the property and others in the area and thereby will preserve the character of the Conservation Area. The communal value of the collection of properties along Palatine Road will remain unharmed with the extension located to the rear and away from any key views. The

proposed alterations are considered to be relatively minor in context and would not cause any significant harm to the visual amenity of the Conservation Area.

Impact of the Scheme on the Non-Designated Heritage Asset: The Rossett

6.6 The heritage value of the Victorian Villa lies mainly in its historic and architectural interests, with this interest primarily expressed to the front elevation. The proposals do not seek to alter the existing Villa.

6.7 The proposed scale, form and massing of the new building to the rear of the Villa is considered to be respectful of the existing building. The proposals are two storey, as is the case with the existing annex, however the proposed materiality and design is considered to be an improvement on the existing situation. Due to the dominance of the existing Villa within the plot there are only narrow views to the rear part of the site possible from public vantage points.

6.8 The new building when viewed from Palatine Road will not be overly noticeable in comparison to the existing situation and will merely continue the character of backland development that is common with the Conservation Area. The significance of the existing building will therefore be preserved. The presence of modern development in the backdrop of public views means that the high quality palette of materials is considered to be appropriate. The development will therefore preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and is considered to be in accordance with local and national planning policy.

7. Conclusions

7.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared in accordance with national and local heritage policy guidance and provides a description of the heritage significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets within close proximity to the application site. The key characteristics of the Blackburn Park Conservation Area have been considered during the design of the proposed scheme. This Statement confirms that the proposals will not adversely impact upon the significance of the existing Victorian Villa on site and will not detract from the character of the Conservation Area.

7.2 The new building is positioned and designed so as not to adversely impact upon the character of the Conservation Area or the settings of any other designated or non-designated heritage assets, and will incorporate materials which are sensitive to the surrounding heritage context.

7.3 We would not regard there to be any reasons in conservation terms, why the application for Planning Permission could not proceed to approval.

Appendix 1: Historic Maps

Appendix One: Historic Mapping

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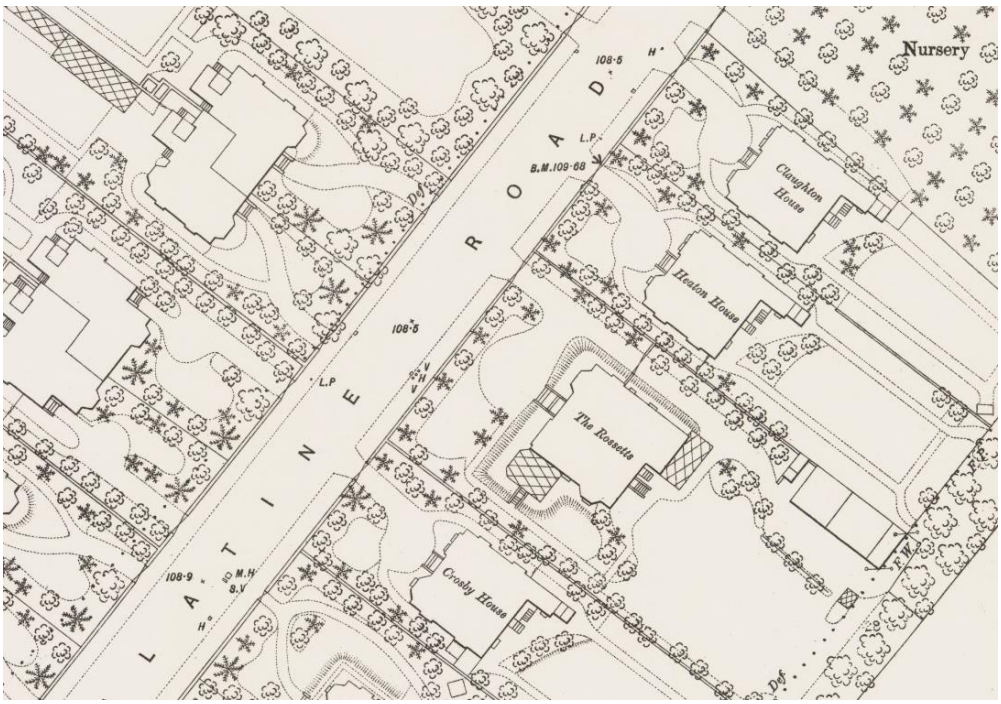

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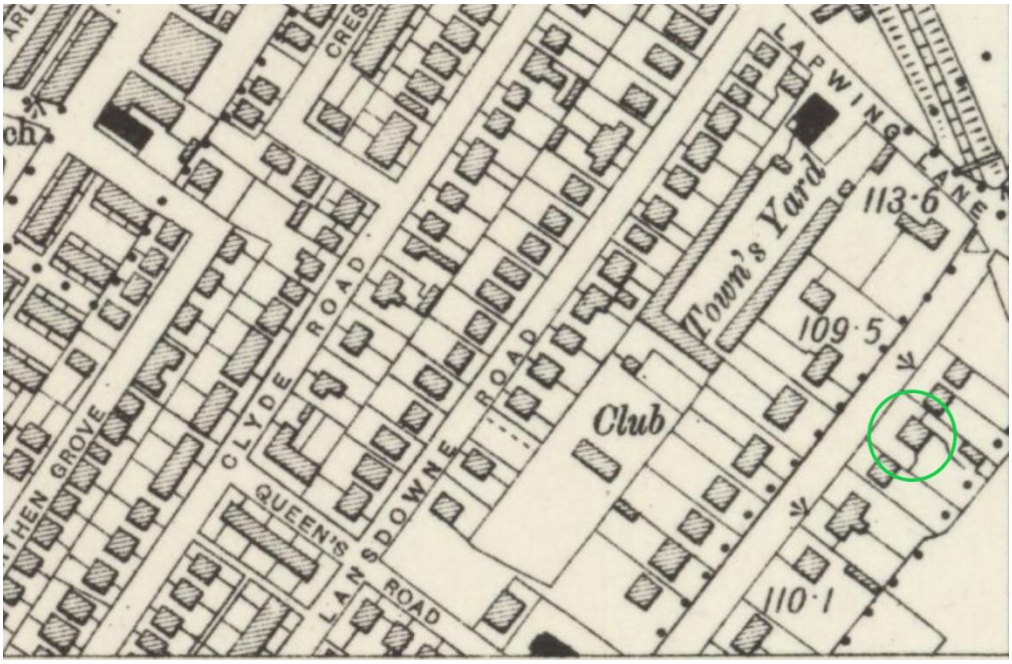
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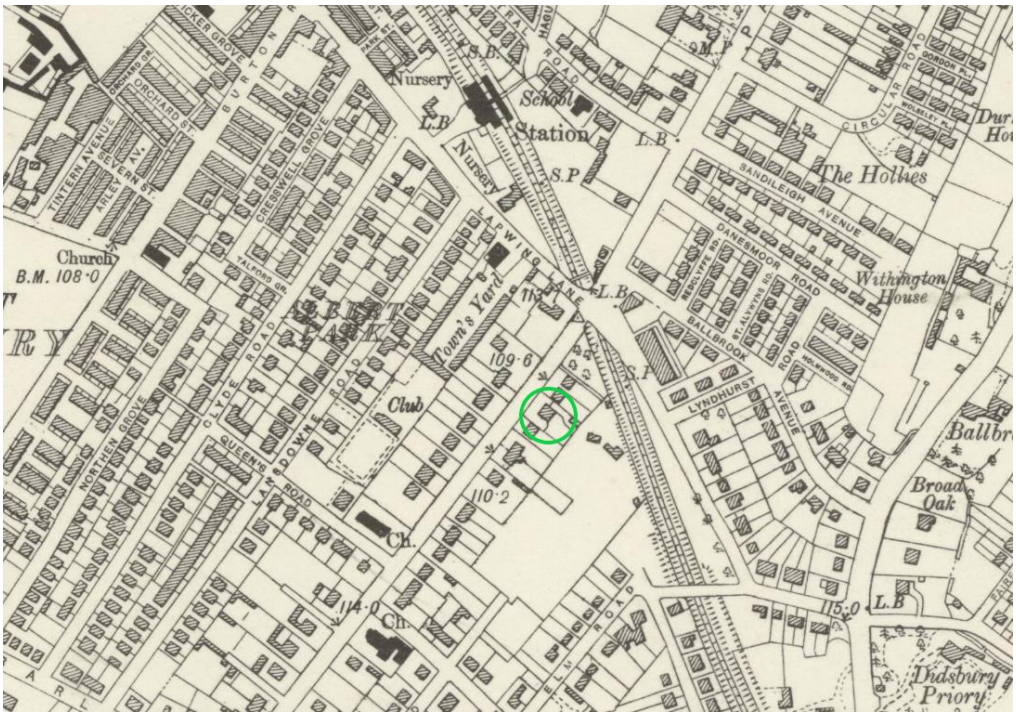
Club
CLYDE ROAD
LANSDOWNE ROAD
QUEEN'S ROAD
110·1

1908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Station
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S.P
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Church
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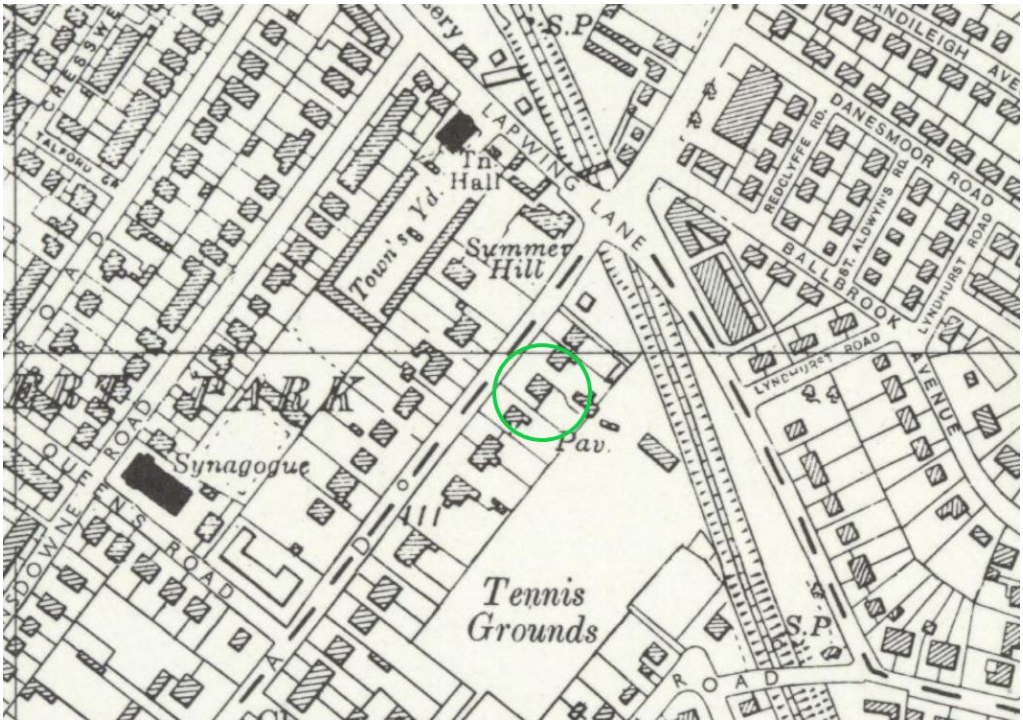
114·0
Withington House
Broad Oak
115·0
Didsbury Priory

1923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Town's Yd.
Summer Hill
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BALLBROOK AVENUE
Pav.
Synagogue
Tennis Grounds
S.P
ROAD

1955