

Heritage Statement for Redevelopment of land at rear of 7-13 Vincent Avenue, Chorlton



Plate 1. Existing garages at rear of Vincent Avenue

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1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this Heritage Statement is to provide:

- i) a description of the application site and its setting
- ii) an overview of the history and evolution of the application site and its setting
- iii) an assessment of the heritage significance of the application site, its setting and the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area and
- iv) an assessment of the impact of proposal to redevelop the site with a residential development of eight houses.

1.2 This Heritage Statement has been informed by a visit to the site and desk-based research.

1.3 In preparing this Heritage Statement, special regard has been paid to the advice in Para.s 194 and 195 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021:

194. 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....

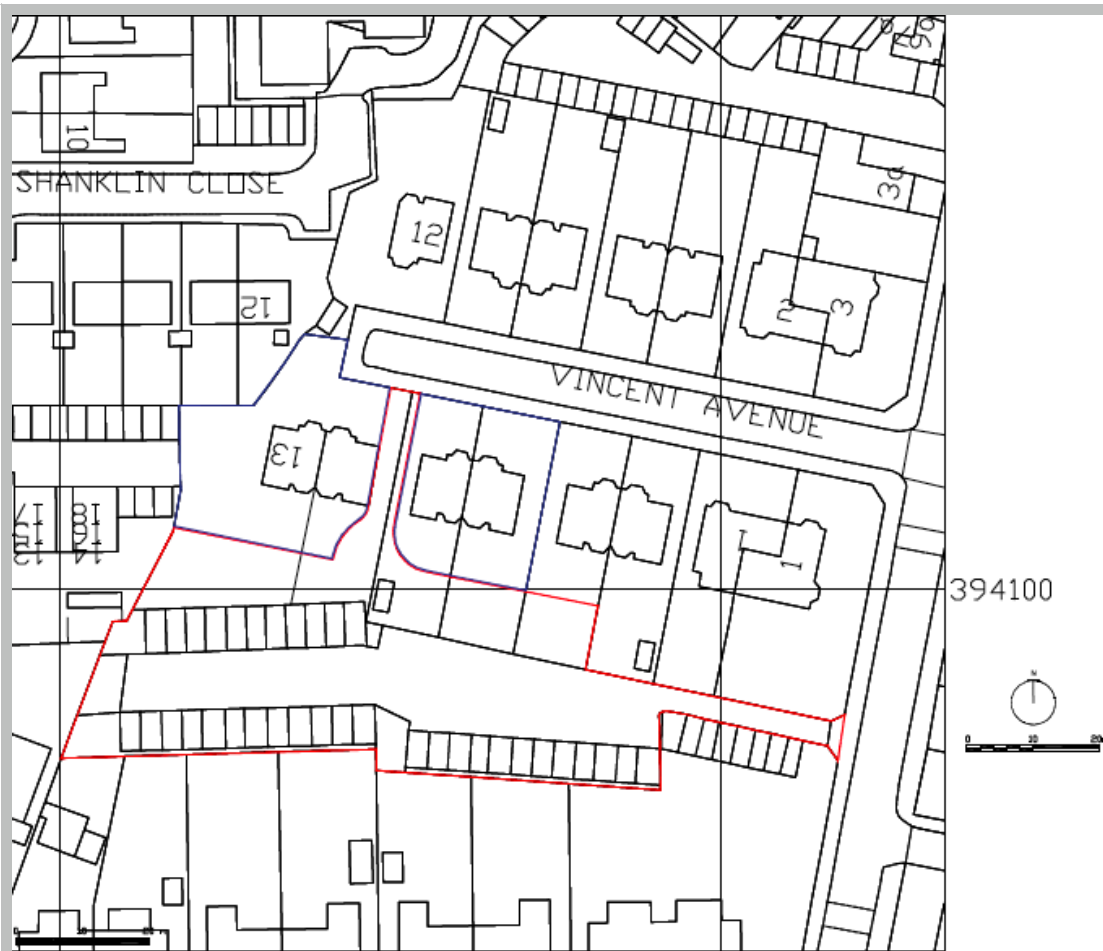
195. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this 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.

1.4 In preparing this Heritage Assessment, regard has also been had to the generic advice of Historic England (HE), including in its *Conservation Principles* (2008), *Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets* Historic England Advice Note 12 (October 2019) and *Making Changes to Heritage Assets* (2016).

1.5 The stands within the extensive Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area. The proposal has the potential to have an impact on the character, appearance and heritage significance of this heritage asset but that change will not necessarily be harmful.

1.6 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by John Hinchliffe BA (Hons), BPI, MSc (Blg Heritage & Conservation), IHBC, RTPI of Hinchliffe Heritage.

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Plan 1. Location Plan



Plate 2. Aerial Photo of site

2. Description

2.1 The Application Site

2.1.1 The application site is a backland site, located at the rear of 1-13 Vincent Avenue, in the urban, wholly residential area of Chorlton, South Manchester.

2.1.2 The main body of the application site is approximately rectangular (approx 30m x 90m) on an E-W axis, although all sides have some irregularities, which correspond to the rear boundaries of surrounding properties. It has an existing vehicular access on Oswald Road and a proposed vehicular accesses on Vincent Avenue (between 7-9 and 11-13). It is a flat site with a rough surface of compacted gravel.

2.1.3 The application site is currently occupied by over 30 single storey lock-up garages, which are laid out in long lines against the E and W boundaries. Most of the garages are brick-built structures with painted timber, side-hung doors and mono-pitch roofs of corrugated sheets but there are also some linked metal containers. Most of the garages are used for storing cars, although some are used for storage of other items.

2.1.4 The existing access on Oswald Road is bounded: on the N side by the rear boundaries of 2-6 Vincent Avenue, which are a low stone wall with hedge and trees behind and; on the S side by the rear wall of a further row of brick-built single storey garages, which are in separate ownership and open on to a yard on the opposite side.

2.1.5 The proposed access on Vincent Avenue is currently: the access to the rear of 11-13 Vincent Avenue, via a hard-surfaced front area, which extends without a separating boundary into the front of 7-9 Vincent Avenue, and a driveway along the side of No. 11 and into a hard-surfaced rear area and; the access to the rear of No.9 which is separated from the access to No.11 by a low, modern fence and a height difference of approx 300mm.



Plate 3. Lock-up garages



Plate 4. Lock-up garages

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Plate 5. Lock-up garages



Plate 6. Lock-up garages



Plate 7. Parking at lock-up garages



Plate 8. Containers



Plate 9. Boundaries



Plate 10 Boundary at side of No.13

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Plate 11. Access on Oswald Road



Plate 12 Accesses to 9 and 11 Vincent Avenue

2.2 Vincent Avenue

Introduction

2.2.1 Vincent Avenue is a short residential street, off Oswald Road, which was developed in the 19th C as a cul-de sac of seven pairs of three storey semi-detached villas and a single detached villa. They are all constructed in red brick, with stone dressings, have slate roofs and are in similar architectural style, characterised by bays, gable, decorative barge boards and porch canopies. They were all set back behind low brick walls with stone copings and stone gate piers and short gardens. Some of the gardens have been paved over and some of the walls and piers have been removed but the surviving walls and piers combine with several mature trees in the gardens and in the pavement create a pleasing historic and sylvan character, especially in the view from Oswald Road.



Plate 13. Vincent Avenue



Plate 14. Vincent Avenue

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Plate 15. Brick-panelled front boundary wall with stone coping



Plate 16. Opposite side of Vincent Avenue

7-9 and 11-13 Vincent Avenue

2.2.2 No.s 7-9 Vincent Avenue are a pair of three storey (plus basement) semi-detached villas, which are examples of large mid-quality late 19th C houses built in the period of Chorlton's rapid growth. They are part of a group of similar buildings which are regularly sited on both sides of Vincent Avenue.

2.2.3 They: are built in red engineering bricks on the front elevation in Flemish bond and red/orange common bricks on the side and rear elevations; have a dentil string course between ground and first floors in the side wings and; have some plain, bevelled stone dressings for window cills and lintels and for a string course at cill level of ground floor windows. They incorporate small panels of terracotta plaques and bands between ground and first floor windows. They have some traditional painted timber vertically sliding sash windows and some replacement UPVC windows. They have two-storey canted bays and painted timber porch hoods supported on brackets and turned spindles.

The building has a natural slate roofs.

2.2.4 The building: is set-back behind front gardens with mature trees and a dwarf wall of panelled bricks with a stone coping, which has been pushed considerably out-of-plumb by trees inside the boundary and; has generous rear gardens with further mature trees. On the rear boundary is a tall non-original brick wall with a doorway through to the lock-up garages.

2.2.5 The building has not been extended or partly demolished and so, externally at least, retain a high degree of integrity.

2.2.6 The two halves of the buildings have each been converted into two apartments and have undergone some interventions which have slightly diluted their authenticity:

- converted from single dwellings to apartments
- some windows replaced with non-authentic styles and materials
- front garden hard-surfaced to create car parks
- loss of decorative barge boards

Permission has been granted to convert the building back into two houses, although it has not yet been implemented

2.2.7 It is understood that the interior is in need of upgrading internally. The building appears to be in reasonable structural and decorative condition externally.

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2.2.8 Despite some interventions in the external fabric, the building retains a medium degree of heritage significance, as an example of a pair of 19th C semi-detached villas. Its original design, materials and role in the wider townscape can still be read and appreciated. The building, its gardens and setting are typical of the area, embody many of the attributes of the CA, which are described in Manchester City Council's description of the CA, and they make a medium contribution to the CA.



Plate 17. Front of No. 9-11



Plate 18. Rear of 9-11

11-13 Vincent Avenue

2.2.9 No. 11-13 Vincent Avenue also has origins as a pair of 19th C villas, which was originally similar in materials and style to 7-9 but it has undergone radical alterations which have diluted its historic character. It still retains the basic form, mass and scale, with front-facing gables and a small area of original brickwork but most of it has been re-clad in new bricks, the proportions of the windows openings have all been changed and the porch canopies have been simplified. Its front garden has been fully hard-surfaced and the front boundary wall to No. 11 has been removed. A vehicular access to a rear car park has also been created on the RH side of No. 13 (as well as the one within the application site to the L of No. 11). Thus, although it retains a reminder of its original design and still has a strong presence within the street, it makes neutral contribution to the character of the area.



Plate 19. Front of 11-13



Plate 20. Rear of 11-13

2.3 The Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area

2.3.1 The Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area covers a substantial part of the settlement of Chorlton. Pevsner describes the settlement (in 1969):

Chorlton-cum-Hardy still has its village centre, Chorlton Green, but how dismal it has been allowed to become. Just trees along the border of what was once grass, and just the arched gateway with a timber-framed turret to the churchyard and the former church of St Clementine, built in 1779. Not a stone remains of this now.

2.3.2 Manchester City Council has produced a description of the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area, which is reproduced in full at Appendix 1. The description summarises the area:

...as possessing buildings and spaces of character and quality dating back to the late 19th century. The buildings continue to be complimented by a substantial and mature tree coverage.

It goes on to state:

Many of the buildings that line the streets within the area are architecturally impressive and most of them can be regarded as making a positive contribution to the conservation area. It is the relationship of these various buildings to each other, to their sites and to the streets that mostly determine the character of the area, rather than individual buildings of high architectural or historic quality.

2.3.3 The Council's description of key unlisted buildings focusses on landmark buildings and says little about the range of houses within the area, other than:

...a combination of substantial individual houses, semi-detached villas, terraces and apartments within either converted older properties or purpose-designed contemporary buildings.

2.3.4 Along Edge Lane and Wilbraham Road are mostly grand residential villas, both detached and semi-detached and in varying architectural detailing. By contrast, in the SE corner of the CA, between Chequers Road and Whitelow Road, the houses are predominantly more modest terraced houses. Further N, around York Road, on Oswald Road and Vincent Avenue, the houses are mid-sized villas, generally of less architectural quality than those further W.

2.3.5 The Council's description makes no specific mention of the properties on Oswald Road or Vincent Avenue.

2.3.6 Other relevant aspects of the CA which are relevant to the site and which are highlighted in the Council's description are:

The spaces within the conservation area are based on the street pattern, so spaces are essentially linear, their width determined by the distance buildings are set back from their road boundaries.

The spaces are characterised by the front gardens to individual properties, sometimes containing mature trees, by the brick or stone boundary walls and their related gateposts, by the pavements, kerbs and highway surfaces.

Bracketed eaves supporting an overhanging pitched roof covered in blue/black Welsh slate are repeated throughout the area.

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Window openings are almost exclusively vertically proportioned, originally with timber vertical sliding sash windows, the frames of which were well set back from the outer face of masonry, creating a modelled façade.

The modelling of the late 19th century buildings was enhanced by projecting bay and oriel windows, corbelling and mouldings around windows. Bays are sometimes single storey high and two storeys in other cases.

The use of timber windows and associated detailing not only helps to establish the architectural character of individual buildings, but also contributes to the character of the wider area. Where other replacement materials have been used it has resulted in a loss of the area's established character.

Rooflines are generally punctuated with gables, pikes, dormers and chimneys. Even ridgelines were occasionally ornamented with crested ridge tiles and finials, although some of these appear to have been removed.

The trees and garden hedges to the front of properties make a significant contribution to the character of the street 'corridor'.

The trees planted within the private gardens make an important contribution to the public realm,...

Spatially, the area behind street fronting properties is often ignored, but this is often a space of great significance, particularly where large properties in large gardens back onto each other.

These gardens and the trees within them are in the public realm by virtue of the fact that they can be viewed from the adjacent streets. This space, and other extensive rear gardens to properties throughout the area are important elements in contributing to the character of the conservation area.

2.3.7 In assessing the negative factors of the CA, the council's description states:

The removal of original boundary walls, gateposts and their replacement with weakly detailed fencing or railings generally throughout the area is a significant loss to the character of the area.

The replacement of original timber windows with flat faced alternatives, especially in older buildings, has resulted in a loss to the character of both the building in question and to the wider area.

2.3.8 Some examples of the historic buildings and recent developments in the Ca are provided at Plates 21-30.

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Plate 21. Well-proportioned and detailed two storey house on York Road



Plate 22. More modest and plainer two storey terraced houses on Hardy Avenue, with 3 storey behind



Plate 23. The listed Loyd's Hotel and recent large apartment block adjacent



Plate 24. Impressive Venetian gothic style semi detached houses on Edge Lane, with development at rear and side inspired by them



Plate 25. Corner of Wilbraham Road and Whitelow Road



Plate 26. Corner of Wilbraham Road and Whitelow Road

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Plate 27. Corner of Beech Road and Acres Road



Plate 28. Corner of Beech Road and Acres Road



Plate 29. Manchester Road



Plate 30. Beech Road

3. History

2.1 Historic Evolution of Chorlton, Vincent Avenue and the Application Site

2.1 The historic evolution of Chorlton and the site is illustrated in Historic Plans 1-6 (below). In 1845, the site of the future settlement of Chorlton was just a small hamlet to the N of Chorlton Brook, consisting of a few cottages, a school and (an earlier) St Clement's Church and was centred around the junction of the current Edge Lane and St Clements Road. At that time that part of Wilbraham Road to the E of St Clements Road was known as High Lane and that part to the W was Edge Lane. The current length of Edge Lane to the W of St Clement's Road had not been connected to the current Wilbraham Road. The surrounding land was almost all open fields but the area immediately around the settlement appears to have been more intensively cultivated as market gardens and orchards. The future site of Vincent Avenue appears to have been such market gardens and orchards and lay between the properties known as *Pits Brow* and *Ash Tree*.

2.2.3 With the growing industrialisation of Manchester in the 2nd half of the 19th C and the arrival of the railway line to the E and trams, Chorlton grew rapidly as a commuter settlement. By 1892 Chorlton had expanded considerably with a wide range of house-types from impressive detached villas to terraced houses, as well as pubs and religious, community and commercial properties but it was still surrounded by open fields. Historic Plan 4 shows that Vincent Avenue had been developed by 1892 with the existing semi-detached villas but that the land beyond to the W had not been developed. The strip of land which is currently occupied by the lock-up garages had not been developed and it separated the villas on Vincent Avenue and from similar villas on Wilbraham Road. It appears as though it was a single plot which was "redundant left-over land" which may have been in the same ownership as the house on the corner of Wilbraham Road and Oswald Road.

2.2.3 By 1946, Chorlton had grown further with a wider range of properties and facilities but little had changed on Vincent Avenue or the site of the lock-up garages. The main body of the application site then appears to have been in three plots: the W plot being attached to the rear of a house on Wilbraham Road; the middle plot being unclear ownership and; the E plot still in the same ownership as the house on the corner of Wilbraham Road and Oswald Road. The land to the W had been developed with a chapel and the dwellings on Sibsden Road.

2.2.4 During the 2nd half of the 20th C and early 21st C: Chorlton continued to expand; most of the large Victorian Villas were converted to flats (including 7-13 Vincent Avenue); some sites have been redeveloped in a variety of building forms; the lock-up garages on the site have been built; the Spread Eagle pub was created out of a pair of semi-detached villas and; the land to the W of the site has been further developed with apartments and houses. The ownership of the application site has been re-amalgamated and it has been developed with the existing lock-up garages and containers., which have their uses but fail to make optimum use of the site and detract from the historic character of the area.

2.2.5 No historic photographs of Oswald Road Vincent Avenue or the application site have been found but Plates 2-5 illustrate the general appearance of the surrounding area, on Manchester Road and Wilbraham Road at the beginning of the 20th C.

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Historic Plan 1. Chorlton 1845



Historic Plan 2. Approx site of Vincent Avenue 1845

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Historic Plan 3. Chorlton 1892

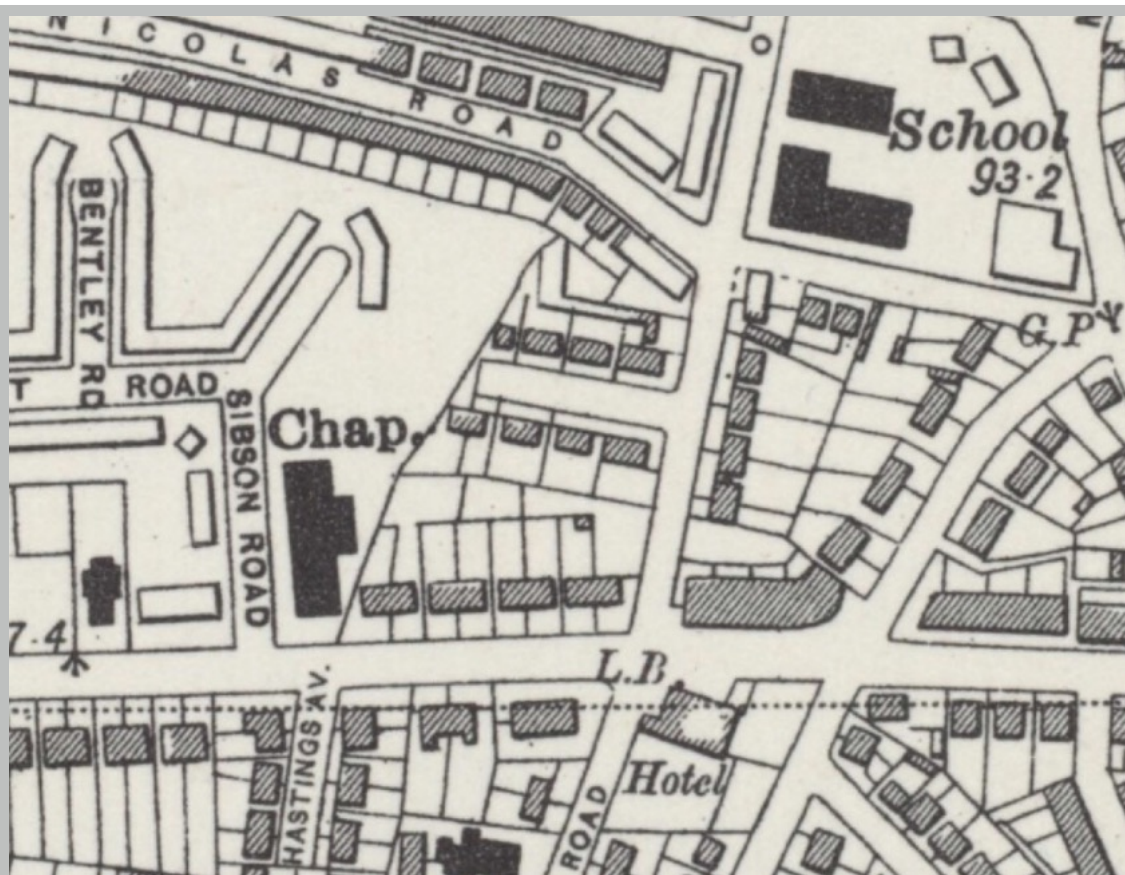


Historic Plan 4. Vincent Avenue 1892

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Historic Plan 5. Chorlton 1946



Historic Plan 6. Vincent Avenue 1946

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Plate 2. Manchester Road c.1900 (with barn in background!)



Plate 3. Wilbraham Road c.1900



Plate 4. Conservative Club and Lloyd's Hotel c.1900

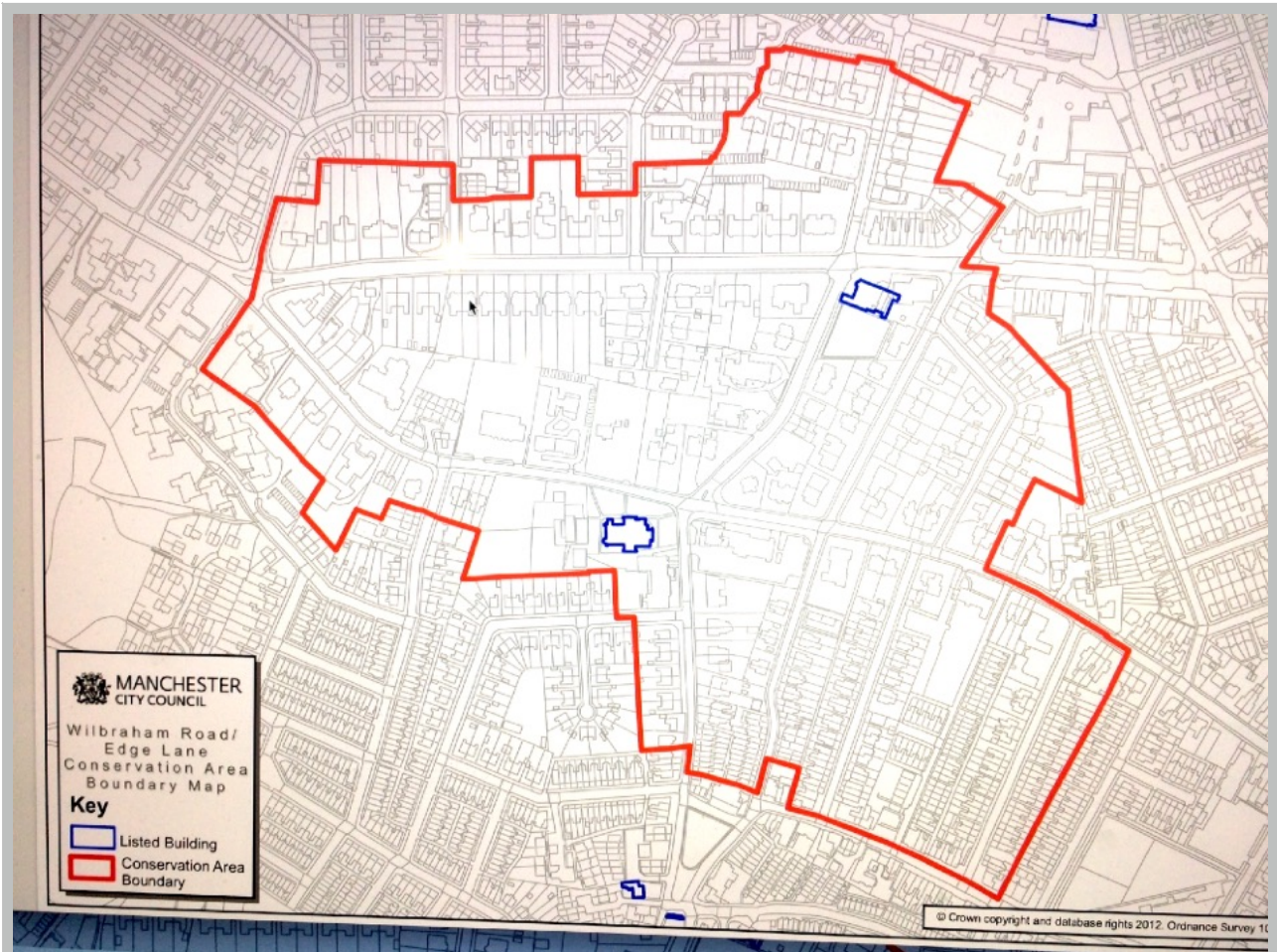


Plate 5 Wilbraham Road c.1920

4. Heritage Designations

4.1 Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area

4.1.1 The application site is within the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area (Plan 2), which was designated by Manchester City Council. A formal conservation area appraisal has not been prepared for the conservation area, although much analysis of the characteristics and appearance of the conservation area are provided at <https://www.manchester.gov.uk/info/511/conservation-areas/1398/wilbraham-road-edge-lane-conservation-area>.



Plan 2. Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area

4.2 Listed Buildings

4.2.1 The only listed buildings within the conservation area are: Lloyd and Platts Hotel; Chorlton War Memorial; the Roman Catholic Church of Our Lady and St John and; the Church of St Clement. They are all Grade II listed buildings and all are separated from the application site by distance and intervening buildings. The proposal will therefore have no impact whatsoever on their setting.

4.3 Archaeology

The site has no known archaeological interest or designation.

5. Heritage Significance

Introduction - Understanding Heritage Significance

5.1.1 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 refers to conservation areas as being “areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance” but this “special interest” is referred to more recently in heritage terms in Historic England guidance and in the National Planning Policy Framework as “heritage significance”.

5.1.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) requires that:

*194. 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....*

*195. 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) 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.*

5.1.3 The Glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) defines “Significance” (for heritage policy):

*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.*

5.1.4 In assessing the heritage significance of the application site and the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area, regard has been had to the heritage interest of the area as identified in the NPPF and the heritage values, as defined in Historic England’s *Conservation Principles* (2008). This document asserts that a tangible heritage asset can have the following four values:

Evidential value - the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.

Historical value - the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present.

Aesthetic value - the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.

Communal value - the meaning of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

5.1.5 *Conservation Principles* also clarifies that:

The significance of a place embraces all the diverse cultural and natural heritage values that people associate with it, or which prompt them to respond to it. These values tend to grow in strength and complexity over time, as understanding deepens and people’s perceptions of a place evolve.

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In order to identify the significance of a place, it is necessary first to understand its fabric, and how and why it has changed over time; and then to consider:

- *who values the place, and why they do so*
- *how those values relate to its fabric*
- *their relative importance*
- *whether associated objects contribute to them*
- *the contribution made by the setting and context of the place*
- *how the place compares with others sharing similar values.*

Understanding and articulating the values and significance of a place is necessary to inform decisions about its future. The degree of significance determines what, if any, protection, including statutory designation, is appropriate under law and policy.

5.1.6 *Conservation Principles* goes on to state that:

4.1 Change in the historic environment is inevitable, caused by natural processes, the wear and tear of use, and people's responses to social, economic and technological change.

4.2 Conservation is the process of managing change to a significant place in its setting in ways that will best sustain its heritage values, while recognising opportunities to reveal or reinforce those values for present and future generations.

4.3 Conservation is achieved by all concerned with a significant place sharing an understanding of its significance, and using that understanding to:

- *judge how its heritage values are vulnerable to change*
- *take the actions and impose the constraints necessary to sustain, reveal and reinforce those values*
- *mediate between conservation options, if action to sustain one heritage value could conflict with action to sustain another*
- *ensure that the place retains its authenticity – those attributes and elements which most truthfully reflect and embody the heritage values attached to it.*

4.4 Action taken to counter harmful effects of natural change, or to minimise the risk of disaster, should be timely, proportionate to the severity and likelihood of identified consequences, and sustainable.

4.5 Intervention may be justified if it increases understanding of the past, reveals or reinforces particular heritage values of a place, or is necessary to sustain those values for present and future generations, so long as any resulting harm is decisively outweighed by the benefits.

4.6 New work should aspire to a quality of design and execution which may be valued both now and in the future. This neither implies nor precludes working in traditional or new ways, but should respect the significance of a place in its setting.

5.1.7 In Historic England's *Informed Conservation*, Kate Clark advises that:

Significance lies at the heart of every conservation action, which for the historic environment means the recognition of a public value in what may well be private property. Historic buildings and their landscapes are significant for many different cultural reasons: for their architecture, for their archaeological significance, for their aesthetic qualities, for their association with people and memories, beliefs and events or simply because they are old. They can tell us about technology, innovation, conflicts and triumphs. Their interest may lie in the materials used or in the decorative finishes, in the grouping of landscape,

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building and place. That significance may be personal, local, regional, national or international; it may be academic, economic or social...

5.1.8 Important considerations when assessing levels of significance are the authenticity and integrity of the heritage assets. These are defined as:

Authenticity is a measure of truthfulness. Understanding of the concept of authenticity is guided by ICOMOS's *Nara Document on Authenticity* (1994)

Integrity is a measure of the wholeness and intactness of cultural heritage and its attributes

5.1.9 Historic England issued *Statements of Heritage Significance* in October 2019, which advocates that the assessment of significance of heritage assets should be part of a staged approach to decision-making, in which assessing significance precedes designing the proposal.

The Advice Note recommends:

For each heritage asset, describe the various interests:

Archaeological interest

There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

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.

Historic Interest

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.

Having described the various interests, assess the level of the general significance of the heritage asset and the particular contribution to that significance of any features which would be affected by the proposal, or of its setting if it, too, is affected by the proposal.

Again in the development of proposals and during works, more information may become available which increases the understanding of the heritage asset, and of its significance. The opportunity may usefully be taken to re-appraise significance in such cases.

The applicant can assist the LPA's decision-making by setting out a clear and succinct explanation of the impact of the proposal on significance and how negative impact on significance has been avoided, by continuing to follow the staged approach, as shown below.

5.2 Levels of Significance

5.2.1 There is no definitive grading system or methodology for assessing the levels of significance or values across all heritage assets but the most reliable methodologies have clearly defined criteria for grading, based upon the designations and other values of the heritage assets.

5.2.2 The assessment of heritage significance of the heritage asset of the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area has been undertaken using the general methodology recommended in Volume 11 Section 3 Part 2 (Cultural Heritage) of Highways England's *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges* 22016 (DMRB). The DMRB recommends that heritage assets should be assessed into one of five categories, based upon specified criteria. The categories are:

- Very High;
- High;
- Medium;
- Low;
- Negligible.

Although the DMRB itself has been withdrawn by the government, the methodology for assessing impact on heritage assets and the definitions for levels of significance remain valid. The levels of heritage significance are in the DMRB are also recommended in BS 7913:2013 *Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings* for use in Heritage Impact Assessments.

The criteria for assessing the level of significance of historic buildings and historic areas is provided in the annex to the DMRB and is provided in Appendix 1 to this report.

5.2.3 Australia ICOMOS's *The Burra Charter* (The Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, Updated 2013) provides guidance for the conservation and management of places of cultural significance and is widely regarded as an exemplar in understanding and conserving heritage significance. In Article 1, it states:

Cultural significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations.

Cultural significance is embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects.

Places may have a range of values for different individuals or groups.

5.2.4 It is important to recognise that levels of significance are not permanently fixed and a current low designation of significance does not necessarily imply that a feature is expendable. Future research and improved understanding of heritage assets could result in raising or lowering the ascribed level of significance, especially where there is a lack of information or understanding at the moment.

5.3 Heritage Significance of the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area.

The Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area has evidential value in demonstrating the evolution of a South Manchester settlement during the second half of the 19th C and early 20th C, from an agricultural hamlet into a residential suburb. The distribution of the development and its shift of its centre bear witness to the important role of public transport systems, notably the railway and tram networks which radiates from the city centre, enabling easy commuting to places of work. In particular, the CA illustrates a range of accommodation for differing social and economic classes in that period. It illustrates both piece-meal planning and development with a general consistency of layout within pockets of development, rather than uniform development across the whole area.

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The CA has historical value in illustrating both the continuity of uses of some of the buildings for residential, commercial, religious and social uses. It also illustrates the tradition of adaptation, change of use and redevelopment of other buildings, perhaps most noticeably the sub-division of large houses into apartments.

The CA has some aesthetic and architectural value in illustrating various architectural styles of the period, notably in the landmark public and religious buildings and to a lesser degree in the housing. The area displays both simple terraced housing and more ornate details such as: painted timber, vertically sliding sash windows, eaves and barge boards; much use of bracketed eaves supporting overhanging pitched roofs ; projecting bay and oriel windows, corbelling and mouldings around windows; bays and rooflines punctuated with gables, pikes, dormers and chimneys. The area also demonstrates the predominant of: natural slates for the roofs; local red/orange brick for elevations and; terracotta panels and polychromatic brickwork, although there are some exceptions and; natural stone for dressings and many of the boundary walls. In some senses the variety of styles, detailing and house types could be said to illustrate the wide range of influences during the period of its development but ultimately the area lacks a universally distinctive architectural character and this limits its distinctiveness as a clearly defined area.

The open spaces and gardens around the buildings reflect the street pattern. Together with the mature trees, brick and stone boundary walls and their related gateposts, the pavements, kerbs and highway surfaces, they are important spatial and visual characteristics of the conservation area.

The CA has high communal value as a popular place in which to live and work.

The authenticity and integrity of the CA have been substantially eroded by piecemeal interventions in historic fabric and detailing and by some redevelopments but the CA retains its fundamental attribute in representing an example of a residential suburb of its time.

Overall heritage significance - **Medium**

5.4 Heritage significance of the Application site

The main body of the applications site has no heritage significance. It is an example of "SLOAP" - space left over after planning (albeit planning in the late 19th C), which has subsequently been built upon with lock-up garages and containers which have no architectural merit and which detract from the higher quality of the historic houses which surround the site.

The vehicular access on Oswald Road has a low level of aesthetic value, only in that part of its N boundary is an historic stone wall which was probably built contemporaneously with the houses in Vincent Avenue.

The site of the proposed vehicular access on Vincent Avenue has a low level of historic and evidential value, in that it forms part of the driveways and gardens of 9 and 11 Vincent Avenue and original gap between them. However, the aesthetic value and authenticity of the access has been much diluted by the changes from the original surfaces and the removal of the original boundary between them.

Overall heritage significance - **Negative**

6. Relevant Heritage Policies and Legislation

6.1 National Legislation

6.1.1 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990

This is the primary legislation for heritage assets.

6.1.2 Section 72 (1) of the act is:

In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, ...special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

Manchester City Council therefore has a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane CA.

6.2 National Policy

6.2.1 National Planning Policy is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework 2021(NPPF). Three over-arching objectives of the planning system for achieving sustainable development set out at Para 8, are:

*a) **an economic objective** – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*

*b) **a social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and*

*c) **an environmental objective** – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.*

6.2.1 In Section 16 “Conserving and enhancing the historic environment” it states, inter alia:

*199. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, **great weight should be given to the asset's conservation** (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.*

*206. 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**. 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.*

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6.2.2 The NPPF effectively identifies three levels of harm to heritage assets: Total Loss; Substantial Harm and; Less Than Substantial Harm. It states:

202. 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.

6.3 National Guidance

6.3.1 Historic England issues national guidance to assist LPAs in making decisions about their own cultural heritage at a local level. The key Historic England guidance which is relevant to this proposal are listed below:

a) Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment

This is an over-arching document which seeks to establish good policies and practice.

b) Making Changes to Heritage Assets Historic England Advice Note 2

This document provides information on repair, restoration, addition and alteration works to heritage assets to assist local authorities, planning and other consultants, owners, applicants and other interested parties in implementing historic environment legislation, the policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the related guidance given in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

c) The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice Planning Note 3. (December 2017)

i) This document reinforces the importance of the setting of heritage assets and provides guidance on managing development that may affect the setting of heritage assets. It begins by stressing the importance of setting and its careful management:

The significance of a heritage asset derives not only from its physical presence and historic fabric but also from its setting – the surroundings in which it is experienced. The careful management of change within the surroundings of heritage assets therefore makes an important contribution to the quality of the places in which we live.

ii) It defines setting:

...as 'the surroundings in which [the 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'.

iii) It sets out key principles for the understanding of setting:

- *Setting is the surroundings in which an asset is experienced...*
- *The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations...*
- *Setting will, therefore, generally be more extensive than curtilage...*
- *The setting of a heritage asset can enhance its significance whether or not it was designed to do so. The formal parkland around a country house... may...contribute to the significance.*
- *The contribution that setting makes to the significance does not depend on there being*

public rights or an ability to access or experience that setting.

iv) It provides guidance on assessing proposed and past changes:

11. Protection of the setting of heritage assets need not prevent change; indeed change may be positive, for instance where the setting has been compromised by poor development. Many places are within the setting of a heritage asset and are subject to some degree of change over time. NPPF policies, together with the guidance on their implementation in the Planning Policy Guidance (PPG), provide the framework for the consideration of change affecting the setting of undesignated and designated heritage assets as part of the decision-taking process (NPPF, Paragraphs 131-135 and 137).

v) In providing guidance on the management of development affecting the setting of heritage assets, it recommends the following broad approach:

*Step 1: identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected;
Step 2: assess whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s);
Step 3: assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance;
Step 4: explore ways of maximising enhancement and avoiding or minimising harm;
Step 5: make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.*

6.4 Local Heritage Policy

6.4.1 Manchester's Core Strategy was adopted on the 11 July 2012 and is the key document in the Manchester Local Plan. It sets out the long term strategic policies for Manchester's future development and will form the framework that planning applications will be assessed against.

6.4.2 The most relevant policies for the current proposal are:

Policy CC 9 Design and Heritage

Design of new buildings will need to be of the highest standard in terms of appearance and function. The standards and guidance explained in other LDF policies should be the basis for the approach to design, with particular attention to be given to the City Centre context and character.

Development in Manchester City Centre should preserve or enhance the heritage assets that have been identified, including listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled ancient monuments.

The Council will support high density and mixed use development in the City Centre, but developers must recognise the specific design challenges that must be overcome to ensure complementarity of function and form. New development must support the range of uses the Council expects in the City Centre and contribute to a coherent and integrated physical environment.

Policy EN 3 "Heritage"

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

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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.

Proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets will be encouraged where they are considered consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.

6.4.3 Manchester City Council's Local Plan has retained Policy 18 Conservation Areas from its former Unitary Development Plan and it remains its adopted policy on development affecting conservation areas:

18. CONSERVATION AREAS

DC18.1 The Council will give particularly careful consideration to development proposals within Conservation Areas.

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 of 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.

7. The Proposal

7.1 The current proposal consists of:

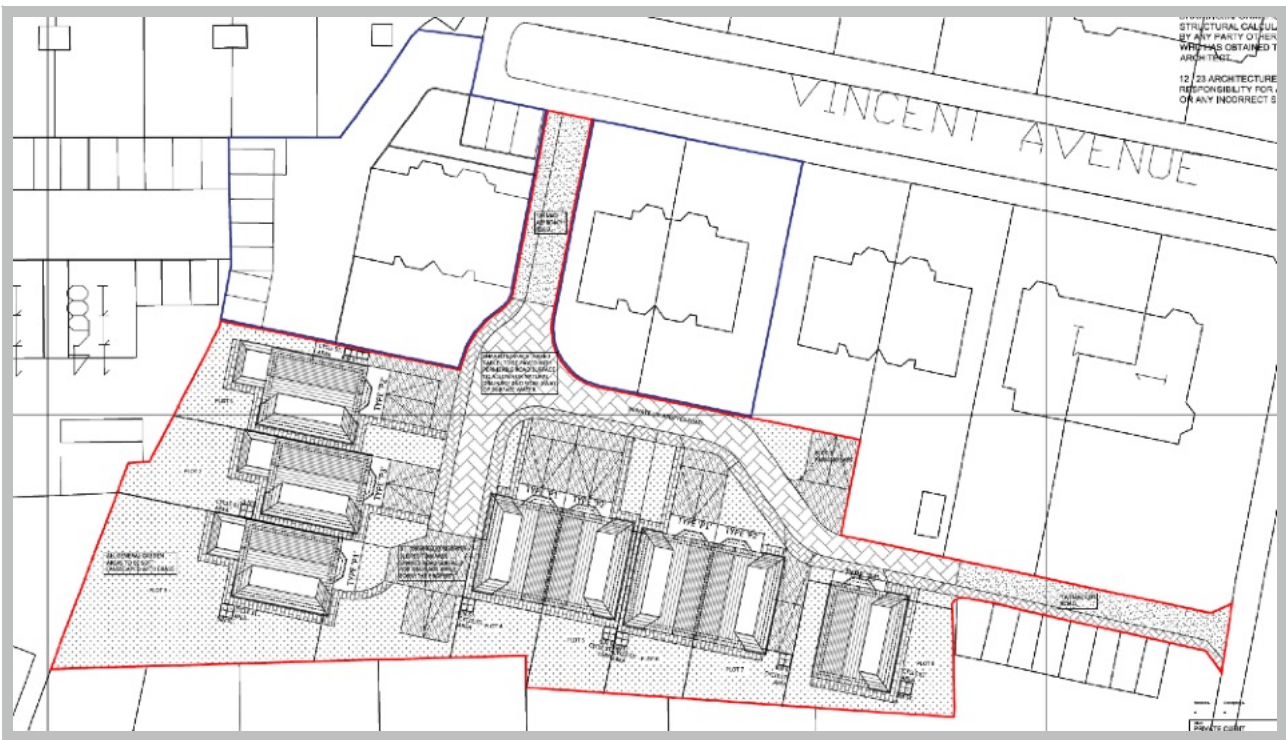
- a) The demolition of the lock-up garages
- b) The construction of eight three-storey houses with four house-types
- c) The continued use of the existing access on Oswald Road, as the egress only; the use of the existing access to 9 and 11 Vincent Avenue as the ingress and; associated landscape works.

7.2 The proposals for the building are presented in fully-detailed and high resolution plans submitted with the application (at appropriate scales) and are shown below (Plans 7-12) at low resolution and not to scale, for ease.

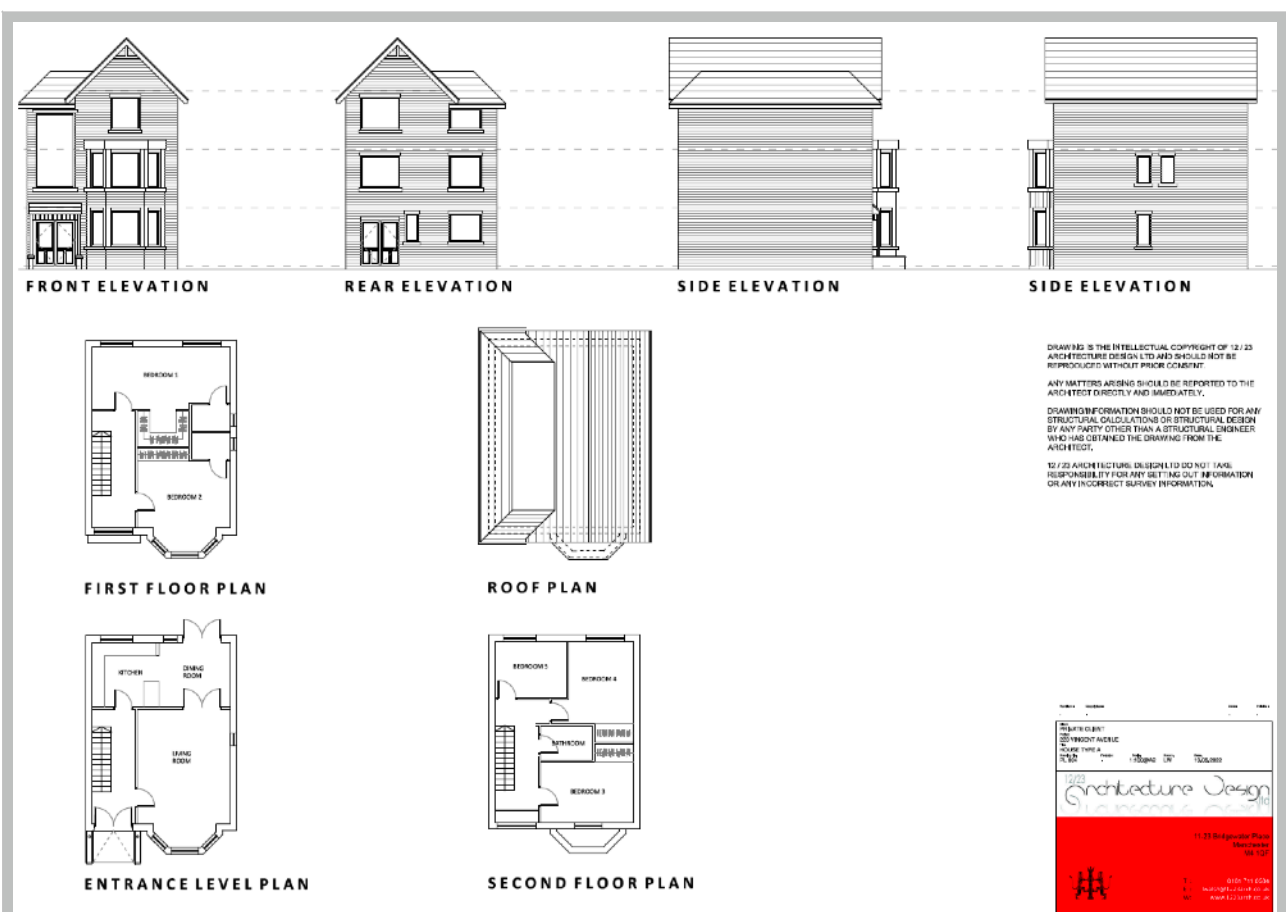


Plan 3. Block Plan

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Plan 4. Site Plan

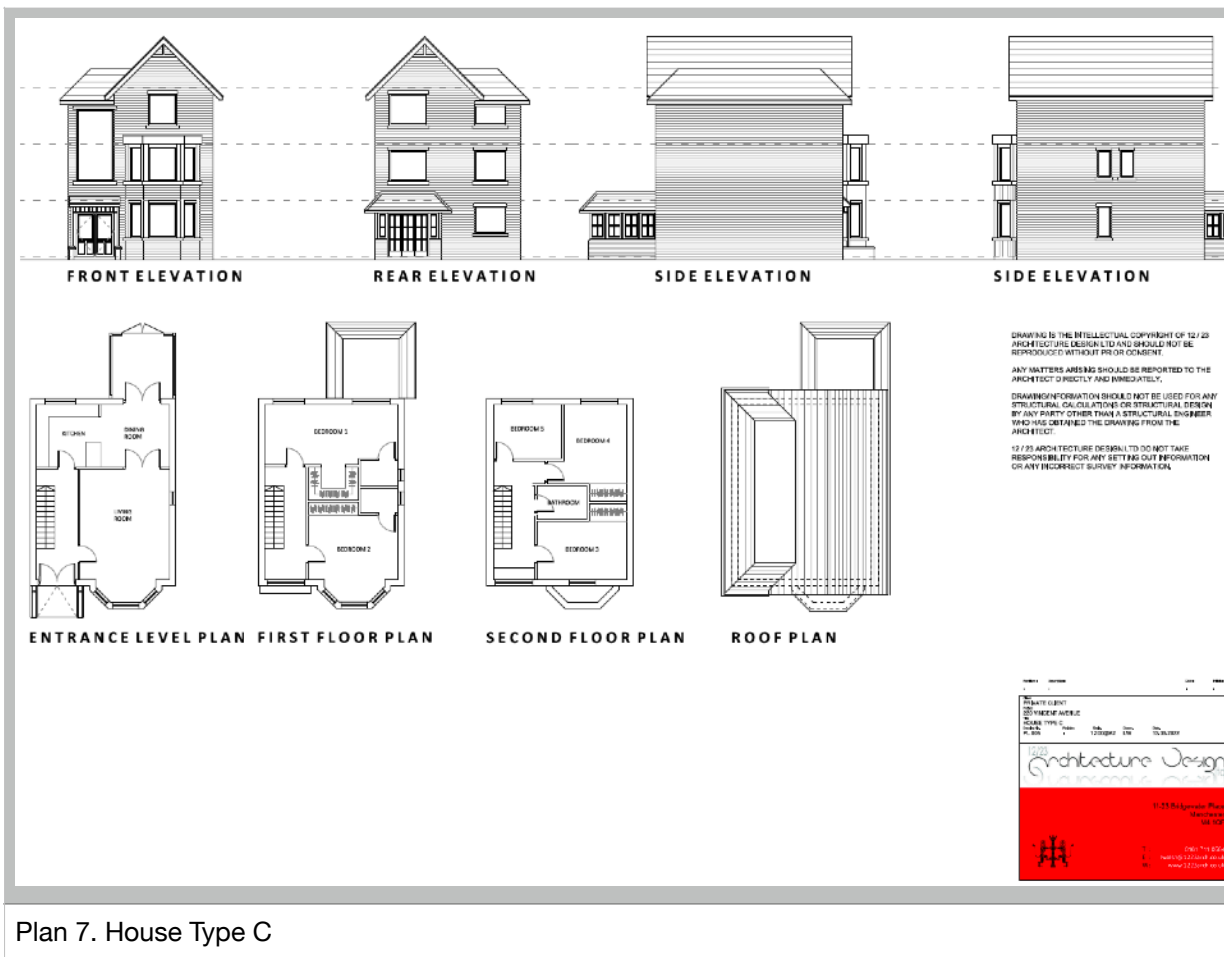


Plan 5. House Type A

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Plan 6. House Type B



Plan 7. House Type C

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[illegible]

Plan 9. House Type D Plans

8. Assessment of the Impact of the Proposal on the Significance of the Heritage Assets

8.1 Change in the Historic Environment

8.1.1 This assessment has been undertaken on the principle that change in the historic environment is not necessarily harmful to the significance of heritage assets and indeed can be beneficial.

8.1.2 The NPPF (2021) acknowledges the potential for new development to enhance a heritage asset or its setting. It states:

190. Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account: ...

c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and ...

8.1.3 The Glossary of the NPPF defines *Conservation (for heritage policy)*:

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

8.1.4 Similarly, Historic England adopts this approach to change in the historic environment, as set out in its over-arching document, *Conservation Principles*.

It states at 4.1:

Change in the historic environment is inevitable, caused by natural processes, the wear and tear of use, and people's responses to social, economic and technological change.

and asserts at 4.2 that:

Conservation is the process of managing change to a significant place in its setting in ways that will best sustain its heritage values, while recognising opportunities to reveal or reinforce those values for present and future generations.

8.1.3 *Conservation Principles* states at Para 138 that:

New work or alteration to a significant place should normally be acceptable if:

- a. there is sufficient information comprehensively to understand the impacts of the proposal on the significance of the place;*
- b. the proposal would not materially harm the values of the place, which, where appropriate, would be reinforced or further revealed;*
- c. the proposals aspire to a quality of design and execution which may be valued now and in the future;*
- d. the long-term consequences of the proposals can, from experience, be demonstrated to be benign, or the proposals are designed not to prejudice alternative solutions in the future.*

8.1.4 There is thus no objection in principle by the NPPF or Historic England to change in the historic environment, provided that these criteria are met.

8.2 The Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) Methodology

8.2.1 This heritage impact assessment has been undertaken to comprehensively, systematically and transparently assess the impact of the proposed development on the heritage significance of the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area. Major development proposals which affect heritage assets of the highest heritage significance require that heritage impact assessments should be undertaken using rigorous methodologies, such as the methodology recommended by ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) in its *Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties* (2011). Whilst the heritage significance of the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area, as a heritage asset of **Medium** heritage significance, is acknowledged, the proposal and the heritage significance do not justify the use of such a methodology. Even so, the impact of the proposal is assessed in the context of the NPPF and guidance in Historic England's *Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment* *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 2* and *Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets* *Historic England Advice Note 12*.

8.2.2 Para 194 of the NPPF states that:

*The level of detail (of heritage statements) should **be proportionate to the assets' importance** and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance...*

This heritage statement therefore assesses the impact of the different elements of the proposals on the conservation area in a simple and straightforward manner but it is comprehensive, systematic and transparent.

8.2.3 As recommended by most formal impact assessment methodologies, including that in the IHBC's *Guide to the conservation of historic buildings* (BS7913:2013) and the *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges* (DMRB), the Heritage Statement assesses the direct impact into one of several categories. The DMRB states:

5.34 The magnitude of the impact (degree of change) can be negative or positive, and should be ranked without regard to the value of the asset. The total destruction of a Low Value asset will have the same magnitude of impact on the asset as the total destruction of a High Value asset; the value of the asset is factored in when the significance of the effect is assessed. The magnitude of impact should be ranked according to the following scale:

- *major;*
- *moderate;*
- *minor;*
- *negligible;*
- *no change.*

8.3 Assessment of Impact of Demolition of the Lock-up Garages

8.3.1 The existing lock-up garages and containers on the application site are single storey buildings/structures, which have no architectural merit whatsoever. Indeed, their cheap materials, diminutive scale and purely functional building form create an overall appearance which is in stark contrast to the high quality materials, grand scale and refined architecture of the historic buildings in Vincent Avenue, Oswald Road and the rest of the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area. In visual terms, the existing buildings and structures are therefore harmful features which detract from the character and appearance of the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area

8.3.2 The proposed demolition of the garages and containers and the clearance of the site will therefore considerably enhance the the character and appearance of the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area (CA).

8.2.4 Manchester City Council states in its description of the CA:

...almost all of the late 20th century/early 21st century developments for apartment buildings lack the vitality of earlier designs and fail to exhibit any creative contemporary design qualities. In that regard such properties may be regarded as having a neutral impact in the conservation area.

Conclusion

Analysis of the characteristics should enable new developments, extensions and alterations to be designed so as to complement, or at least maintain, the character of the area. Generally, demolition of existing buildings and boundary walls should not be considered unless it can be clearly shown that new proposals on such sites will maintain or enhance the character of the area...

8.2.5 In this case, the garages and containers have a negative impact on the CA and their demolition alone will enhance the character of the area. The proposed demolition is also accompanied by a proposed development which will further enhance the character and appearance of the CA. (as discussed below).

Impact of Demolition on CA - **Moderate Beneficial**

8.4 Impact of construction of eight three-storey houses with four house-types

8.4.1 It is proposed that the cleared site will be redeveloped with eight three-storey houses:

- with four similar house-types based upon a consistent theme
- two pairs of semi-detached and four detached houses
- laid out along a short cul de sac and the through access road.

8.4.2 The design concept for the new houses is that they should respond positively to their context of Victorian Villas, in terms of: layout; scale; building type; some architectural details and; materials.

- The layout of the development with a short cul de sac reflects the layout of Vincent Avenue as a short cul de sac.
- The footprints of the houses also reflects the general footprints of the houses in Vincent Avenue and the surrounding area, albeit perhaps with slightly smaller gardens and higher density to reflect changing demands and land values. The mix of detached and semi-detached houses also reflects the mix of detached and semi-detached houses in the area, albeit with a slightly higher proportion of detached houses. They are all three-storey houses, as are those in Vincent Avenue.
- The houses are all on a consistent design theme which is influenced by the houses in Vincent Avenue, but they have four subtle different compositions, again to respond to the slightly different compositions in Vincent Avenue and to avoid exact repetition. They all incorporate similar features of bays, gables, barge-boards and porch canopies and so will be contextual with the houses in Vincent Avenue.
- They will all be constructed in red brick with stone dressings and have slate roofs.
- However it is also proposed that they will also incorporate some contemporary elements, notably in the form of simple, single-paned and energy-efficient fenestration and the less-fussy porch canopies.

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In this way, the proposed new houses will integrate harmoniously into their historic setting but also represent a high quality new development which contributes positively to the character and appearance of the CA.

8.4.3 Under its Policy EN 3 “Heritage”, the Council will encourage new development provided that that it complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its locality and does not cause harm to its heritage significance.

8.4.4 Manchester City Council states in its description of the CA:

Particular attention will be given to overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, site layout and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and to the wider area.

This should not be seen as an attempt to impose particular architectural styles or tastes, nor is it intended to stifle innovation or originality. It is however seeking to promote and reinforce local distinctiveness.

The key message from Manchester City Council in this summary is that new development should be based upon an understanding of the historic context of a site and should respond positively to it. The design of the proposed new development has paid particular attention to overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, site layout and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and to the wider area. It also promotes and reinforces local distinctiveness and so complies with both elements of this advice.

8.4.5 Historic England’s *Making Changes to Heritage Assets* advises:

41 The main issues to consider in proposals for additions to heritage assets, including new development in conservation areas, aside from NPPF requirements such as social and economic activity and sustainability, are proportion, height, massing, bulk, use of materials, durability and adaptability, use, enclosure, relationship with adjacent assets and definition of spaces and streets, alignment, active frontages, permeability and treatment of setting. Replicating a particular style may be less important, though there are circumstances when it may be appropriate. It would not normally be good practice for new work to dominate the original asset or its setting in either scale, material or as a result of its siting. Assessment of an asset’s significance and its relationship to its setting will usually suggest the forms of extension that might be appropriate.

The design of the proposed new houses has considered all of the recommended main issues but, due to the siting of the application site, it will remain a low-key development within the CA and will not dominate the existing positive elements of the heritage asset.

8.4.6 The government’s *National Design Guide - Planning practice guidance for beautiful, enduring and successful places* (2019) identifies the essential components for good design and thereby delivering beneficial change. It states:

20 Buildings are an important component of places and proposals for built development are a focus of the development management system. However good design involves careful attention to other important components of places. These include:

- *the context for places and buildings;*
- *hard and soft landscape;*
- *technical infrastructure – transport, utilities, services such as drainage; and*
- *social infrastructure – social, commercial, leisure uses and activities.*

21 A well-designed place is unlikely to be achieved by focusing only on the appearance, materials and detailing of buildings. It comes about through making the right choices at all levels, including:

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- ■ *the layout (or masterplan);*
- ■ *the form and scale of buildings;*
- ■ *their appearance;*
- ■ *landscape;*
- ■ *materials; and*
- ■ *their detailing.*

The current proposal has been designed with careful attention being paid to all of these components to create a “Well-designed place”:

8.4.7 Historic England and CABE (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) produced some guidance on new buildings in historic areas in its *Building In Context* (2001) . It states:

A successful project will:

- *relate well to the geography and history of the place and the lie of the land*
- *sit happily in the pattern of existing development and routes through and around it*
- *respect important views*
- *use materials and building methods which are as high in quality as those used in existing buildings*
- *create new views and juxtapositions which add to the variety and texture of the setting*

The proposed new houses will relate well to the geography and history of the place and the lie of the land and sit happily in the pattern of existing development. The proposal therefore also complies with this advice.

8.4.8 Overall, this heritage statement makes the case that the design and materials of the proposed new houses follows all local and national guidance and will not only preserve the character and appearance of the CA but will also enhance it by making more efficient and attractive use of a backland site which is not currently put to its optimum use.

Impact of eight new houses on CA - **Minor Beneficial**

8.5 Impact of Accesses and Landscape

8.5.1 It is proposed the development will be served by the continued use of the existing access on Oswald Road, as the egress only and the use of the existing access to 9 and 11 Vincent Avenue, as the ingress only and will be accompanied by some associated landscape works.

8.5.2 The proposed continued use of the access on Oswald Road as the egress will involve no alterations to the access, other than the resurfacing of the carriageway with tarmac and the creation of a pavement surfaced with pavers. These new ground surfaces will replace the existing rough compacted gravel and road planings with a smoother and more attractive (the pavers) materials and so will marginally improve the appearance of this access.

8.5.3 The proposed use of the exiting driveways between 9 and 11 Vincent Avenue as the ingress will involve some minor interventions in the existing driveways and boundaries. It is proposed that the two existing driveways will be amalgamated into a single road, with: a pavement adjacent to No. 11, with both the pavement and carriageway surfaced with tarmac up to the back of the houses (and the pavement in pavers beyond) and; narrow garden strip being retained at the side of No. 9.

8.5.4 Historically, the two houses had separate drives which were divided by a boundary, which was probably a brick wall. However, the original boundary has been removed in the past and the existing boundary, between the buildings only, is a concrete post and close-boarded fence, not along the full boundary. The fence is in poor condition and so it is of inappropriate materials and length and detracts from the overall appearance of the CA. The buildings already share an undivided driveway in front of the houses and the removal of the existing boundary will cause no

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harm to the character or appearance of the CA. The proposal also presents the opportunity to erect a new suitable boundary along the side of No. 9 and around the rear of both.

8.5.5 At present, the driveway for No.11 and its rear garden are slightly lower than those of No. 9 and so some minor adjustment in levels will be required to take the proposed access through to the main body of the application site. However, these areas and the rear boundaries have been altered in the past and have no features which contribute positively to the heritage significance of the CA. The proposed minor interventions and loss of rear boundaries will therefore cause no appreciable harm to the character or appearance of the CA.

8.5.6 The hard-surface landscape works within the site are primarily the replacement of the existing surface of rough compacted gravel and road planings with a smoother and more attractive permeable materials and so these will marginally improve the appearance of this access. Some soft landscape works could also be undertaken and details will be submitted in due course.

8.5.7 Overall, this heritage statement makes the case that the proposed accesses will slightly enhance the contribution of the site to the character and appearance of the CA .

Impact of accesses and landscape works on CA - **Negligible Beneficial**

8.6 Summary of Impacts

8.6.1 The assessments above have found that the proposed development will bring a range of impacts on the character and appearance of the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area and that all of the impacts will be beneficial. The demolition of the unsightly garages and containers will have a moderate beneficial impact by removing features which detract from the CA. The proposed new houses will have a minor beneficial impact, as they will be quietly contextual and integrate harmoniously into their historic setting. The proposed access and landscape works will have a negligible beneficial impact, due to minimal changes to the access to Oswald Road, no loss of heritage features at the access on Vincent Avenue and the improved appearance of the ground surfaces. The net impact of the proposal on the CA is therefore minor/moderate beneficial.

8.6.2 Although the proposal will bring change to the CA, it will be beneficial change which is consistent with the opportunity recognised in generic terms by the NPPF which states:

197. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and

c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

8.6.3 Historic England acknowledges in its *Conservation Principles - Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* (2008) that change in the historic environment is inevitable and that good conservation involves the careful management of change. It states:

14. New work or alteration to a significant place should normally be acceptable if:

a. there is sufficient information comprehensively to understand the impacts of the proposal on the significance of the place;

b. the proposal would not materially harm the values of the place, which, where appropriate, would be reinforced or further revealed;

c. the proposals aspire to a quality of design and execution which may be valued now and in the future;

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d. the long-term consequences of the proposals can, from experience, be demonstrated to be benign, or the proposals are designed not to prejudice alternative solutions in the future.

On “New work and alteration ”, it states:

‘The proposals (should) aspire to a quality of design and execution which may be valued now and in the future’

142. The need for quality in new work applies at every level, from small interventions in an historic room, to major new buildings or developments. Small changes need as much consideration as large ones, for cumulatively their effect can be comparable.

143. There are no simple rules for achieving quality of design in new work, although a clear and coherent relationship of all the parts to the whole, as well as to the setting into which the new work is introduced, is essential. This neither implies nor precludes working in traditional or new ways, but will normally involve respecting the values established through an assessment of the significance of the place.

The current proposal meets the generic criteria for new work in a significant place, not least as it aspires to a quality of design and execution which may be valued now and in the future by delivering a development which works in both a traditional way and a new way.

9. Conclusion

9.1 This Heritage Statement has found that the proposed development of eight houses with associated landscaping will bring a range of impacts on the character and appearance of the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area and that all of the impacts will be beneficial. The demolition of the unsightly garages and containers will have a moderate beneficial impact by removing features which detract from the CA. The proposed new houses will have a minor beneficial impact, as they will be quietly contextual and integrate harmoniously into their historic setting. The proposed access and landscape works will have a negligible beneficial impact, due to minimal changes to the access to Oswald Road, no loss of heritage features at the access on Vincent Avenue and the improved appearance of the ground surfaces. The net impact of the proposal on the CA is therefore minor/moderate beneficial.

9.2 Importantly, the NPPF, in Section 16 on *Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*, provides advice to local planning authorities on decision-making in respect of proposals which will affect heritage assets. It states at Para 197:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and

c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

9.3 Crucially, the advice on *The presumption in favour of sustainable development* in Para. 11 of the NPPF (2021) is especially relevant. It states:

Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

...For decision-taking this means:...

c) approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay;...

9.5 The proposal represents sustainable development and accords with the development plan and so this Heritage Statement makes the case that the proposal should be considered favourably and that the application should be approved without delay.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Manchester City Council's Assessment of the Character and Appearance of the Wilbraham Road/Edge Conservation Area

Introduction

The junction of Wilbraham Road, a major arterial route within the City of Manchester, and Edge Lane in Chorlton has long been recognised as possessing buildings and spaces of character and quality dating back to the late 19th century. The buildings continue to be complimented by a substantial and mature tree coverage.

Increased development pressure in the late 20th and early 21st century had the potential to destroy the character of the area, thereby contributing to the reduction in the quality of Manchester's suburbs.

The area is located approximately 3 miles south east of the City Centre and is immediately north of the previously designated conservation area of Chorlton Green. They share a common boundary.

Approximately 660 people live in the area in a combination of substantial individual houses, semi-detached villas, terraces and apartments within either converted older properties or purpose-designed contemporary buildings.

There are no dramatic changes in levels throughout the area, although there is a general fall of approximately 3 metres from a high in the north to a low in the south.

Architectural and historic qualities of buildings

Surprisingly, in an area of fine individual and often historic properties, only two buildings are formally listed as for their architectural or historic interest: Lloyd's Hotel on the junction of Wilbraham Road and Manchester Road and St Clements Church on Edge Lane.

Built in the typical Manchester red/orange brick with buff coloured sandstone dressings Lloyd's Hotel is a high two-storey building with a third storey contained within the steeply pitched roof that is covered in blue/black welsh slate. Brick and sandstone corbels form the brackets to the eaves and are emphasised by a course of blue brick at the lower level with the wall junction.

Vertical sliding sash windows are evident in all window openings. A single storey bay window on the Manchester Road elevation is linked by a horizontal stone balcony to an adjacent doorway. A brick faced dormer window breaks up the roofline to this elevation.

At the corner of the building a double height curved bay is surmounted by a conical roof, providing an architectural statement at the Wilbraham Road/Manchester Road junction. A double height splayed bay window, with its own roof, characterises the Wilbraham Road elevation.

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The building would have had an increased presence in the area by virtue of its tall chimneys, but these structures have been reduced in height and capped.

The bowling club building, located at the rear of the hotel, effectively at right angles to Manchester Road, is also two storeys high, the upper storey projecting beyond the ground floor and supported off four cast iron columns.

The ground floor elevation is a screen wall of glass and timber. An adjacent single storey building, rising from back of pavement on Manchester Road, also in red/orange brick, is covered with a hipped roof with patterned slates.

Clearly built at a time when the adjacent area was being expanded, the hotel and associated bowling club with clubhouse provided recreational facilities for the local residents, helping to fulfil a social role. It was listed grade II in 2005.

The stone built St Clements Church was constructed between 1861 and 1866 to the designs of Pennington and Bridgen, following the poor condition of the old church which was located near Chorlton Green close to the Bowling Green Hotel. The south transept and chapel are by Higginbottom and constructed in 1895. The building was listed grade II in June 1988.

Contribution of key unlisted buildings

Many of the buildings that line the streets within the area are architecturally impressive and most of them can be regarded as making a positive contribution to the conservation area.

It is the relationship of these various buildings to each other, to their sites and to the streets that mostly determine the character of the area, rather than individual buildings of high architectural or historic quality. The fact that only two buildings in the area are formally listed bears out that fact.

There are four places of worship that contribute to the character of an essentially residential area: the previously mentioned St Clement's Parish Church on Edge Lane, Wilbraham road Unitarian Church, Our Lady and St John Roman Catholic Church and Chorlton Methodist Church.

Wilbraham Road Unitarian Church, located between numbers 548 and 550 is set behind a 1990s residential development. The place of worship appears to be the rear remains of a larger building on the site. It opened in 1901, although it was founded in 1890, and built in Accrington brick.

Our Lady and St John RC Church is located on the St. Clements Road/High Lane junction, on the east side of St. Clements Road and directly opposite St Clements Church. The two buildings have a major urban and architectural presence in the wider area. The red brick and yellow terracotta church was opened in 1927. It has Decorated (14th century) and Perpendicular (15th century) window tracery, does not have a tower, but has an aisleless wide interior. The pews and fittings are reputed to be from St Andrews church in Ramsbottom.

Chorlton Methodist Church on Manchester Road opened in 1873, but needed to be restored following a fire in 1883. A church hall and Sunday school was also added at the rear of the site.

The buff coloured sandstone building, with a steeply pitched roof covered in Welsh blue/black slate, was designed by H.J. Paull. It has geometrical tracery to a large east window facing the road and a south-east turret, also close to the road.

The Conservative Club on Wilbraham Road was built in 1892 and its basement in particular seems to have been used for a variety of uses, such as a skittle alley (1897) a rifle range (1904), and a bike park (1900).

The Lauriston Club (former Liberal Club, prior to 1962) at 12 Manchester Road, The Hellenic Centre at 562 Wilbraham Road and the South Manchester Freemasons Hall at 12 Edge Lane all provide facilities for local residents.

Chorlton C of E Primary School located alongside St Clements Church is accessed from Vicars Road. It was built in 1901 and extended upwards in 1970.

William Hulme Grammar School, Day Nursery and Early Years Centre at 643/5 Wilbraham Road are located in a pair of converted semi-detached houses.

The Spread Eagle hotel, on the northern side of the junction of Wilbraham Road and Oswald Road, is in a 1980s conversion of two large semi-detached houses and in a visually prominent location.

Character and relationship of spaces

The spaces within the conservation area are based on the street pattern, so spaces are essentially linear, their width determined by the distance buildings are set back from their road boundaries.

The spaces are characterised by the front gardens to individual properties, sometimes containing mature trees, by the brick or stone boundary walls and their related gateposts, by the pavements, kerbs and highway surfaces.

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There is evidence of earlier floor surfaces throughout the area. It is clear that the characteristic pavement detail was comprised of riven surfaced natural stone flags, bonded at right angles to the boundary walls, contained by a 300mm wide stone kerb.

Road surfaces, as seen on St Clements Road, had 3 or 4 courses of either granite or gritstone setts bonded parallel with and next to the kerb, whilst the rest of the carriageway was bonded at right angles, but in the same sett.

As identified in other suburban districts within the city the rear gardens of properties that line streets provide an important amenity facility to the wider area, because they can be viewed from the roads between buildings. They can be regarded as being within the public realm, even though they are privately owned.

Collectively, gardens, both front and rear, provide important spatial characteristics relevant to the conservation area.

Whilst the size and shape of the spaces between buildings vary they are essentially street dominated. There are no consciously-designed contrasting spaces, although the spaces around the larger public buildings, such as the churches, tend to be bigger.

Prevalent materials and local details

Most of the buildings in the area are constructed in Manchester red/orange brick, sometimes in conjunction with buff coloured sandstone dressings. Occasionally blue brick is used to provide detail within the mainly red/orange brick facades.

Timber details are also commonly used for windows, eaves and barge boards, whilst render is employed to create contrasting surfaces, eg. Hastings Avenue. All the 19th century buildings have pitched roofs covered in blue/black Welsh slate.

Local details

Bracketed eaves supporting an overhanging pitched roof covered in blue/black Welsh slate are repeated throughout the area.

Window openings are almost exclusively vertically proportioned, originally with timber vertical sliding sash windows, the frames of which were well set back from the outer face of masonry, creating a modelled façade.

The modelling of the late 19th century buildings was enhanced by projecting bay and oriel windows, corbelling and mouldings around windows. Bays are sometimes single storey high and two storeys in other cases.

In Hastings Avenue some of the houses have two storey bays surmounted by a bracketed and projecting third storey clad in black and white half-timber. This adds to the heavily modelled characteristic.

The use of timber windows and associated detailing not only helps to establish the architectural character of individual buildings, but also contributes to the character of the wider area. Where other replacement materials have been used it has resulted in a loss of the area's established character.

Rooflines are generally punctuated with gables, pikes, dormers and chimneys. Even ridgelines were occasionally ornamented with crested ridge tiles and finials, although some of these appear to have been removed.

Contribution of green spaces

As identified earlier, the spatial characteristics of the area are determined by the street pattern. The trees and garden hedges to the front of properties make a significant contribution to the character of the street 'corridor'.

The trees planted within the private gardens make an important contribution to the public realm, to which can be added the street trees planted within pavements, as in Wilbraham Road and Hastings Avenue.

Spatially, the area behind street fronting properties is often ignored, but this is often a space of great significance, particularly where large properties in large gardens back onto each other. The largest such space in the area is that of the rear gardens to houses facing Wilbraham Road and Edge Lane.

These gardens and the trees within them are in the public realm by virtue of the fact that they can be viewed from the adjacent streets. This space, and other extensive rear gardens to properties throughout the area are important elements in contributing to the character of the conservation area.

The setting of the conservation area

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The conservation area is surrounded by suburban development, mostly carried out in the 20th century; consequently there is no relationship with surrounding countryside.

Wilbraham Road, provides the most public experience of the conservation area, with views into the area on both sides. The same road also provides the location for one of the area's most important landmark buildings, Lloyds and Platt Hotel.

As a consequence of its location at the junction of two important roads in the area and because of its angled geometry in relation to the roads, the building can be viewed from long distances in both directions along Wilbraham Road and from both Manchester Road and Oswald Road.

Views into the designated area along the length of Wilbraham Road are significant, but views both into and out of the area at its junction with Edge Lane are particularly important. The relationship of this area to Chorlton Green is important and the views in both directions along St. Clements Road are of considerable significance.

Negative factors

The removal of original boundary walls, gateposts and their replacement with weakly detailed fencing or railings generally throughout the area is a significant loss to the character of the area. The replacement of original timber windows with flat faced alternatives, especially in older buildings, has resulted in a loss to the character of both the building in question and to the wider area. Similarly, the loss of original external floor surfaces and their replacement with bland alternatives is a negative factor in the area.

A particularly bland large apartment building at the junction of High Lane and Whitelaw Road pays little regard to the geometry of the adjacent road.

Constructed in the early 1990s the development's low roof pitch, long horizontal ridgelines, and lack of modelling on the elevations contribute to its inappropriate character.

Little consideration has been given to the boundary treatment: a three plank, horizontal stained timber fence is not characteristic of this suburban area. The architectural character and urban form of the surrounding area has not been considered in designing this development. It is intrusive and significantly damages the character of the area.

Neutral areas

A pair of 20th century semi-detached properties and an adjacent detached house of similar design on York Road are bland in comparison with the late Victorian buildings that provide the most architectural interest in the area.

Similarly almost all of the late 20th century/early 21st century developments for apartment buildings lack the vitality of earlier designs and fail to exhibit any creative contemporary design qualities. In that regard such properties may be regarded as having a neutral impact in the conservation area.

Conclusion

Analysis of the characteristics should enable new developments, extensions and alterations to be designed so as to complement, or at least maintain, the character of the area.

Generally, demolition of existing buildings and boundary walls should not be considered unless it can be clearly shown that new proposals on such sites will maintain or enhance the character of the area.

Particular attention will be given to overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, site layout and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and to the wider area.

This should not be seen as an attempt to impose particular architectural styles or tastes, nor is it intended to stifle innovation or originality. It is however seeking to promote and reinforce local distinctiveness.

Appendix 2. Levels of Heritage Value and Definitions, from DMRB

Heritage Statement: Vincent Avenue, Chorlton

Very High	• Structures inscribed as of universal importance as World Heritage Sites. • Other buildings of recognised international importance.
Medium	• Grade II (Scotland: Category B) Listed Buildings. • Historic (unlisted) buildings that can be shown to have exceptional qualities in their fabric or historical associations. • Conservation Areas containing buildings that contribute significantly to its historic character. • Historic Townscape or built-up areas with important historic integrity in their buildings, or built settings (e.g. including street furniture and other structures).
Low	• ‘Locally Listed’ buildings (Scotland Category C(S) Listed Buildings). • Historic (unlisted) buildings of modest quality in their fabric or historical association. • Historic Townscape or built-up areas of limited historic integrity in their buildings, or built settings (e.g. including street furniture and other structures).
Negligible	• Buildings of no architectural or historical note; buildings of an intrusive character.
Unknown	• Buildings with some hidden (i.e. inaccessible) potential for historic significance.