

St Gabriel's Victoria Park Manchester

Heritage Statement

Prepared by:



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Prepared for:

**McLaren (St Gabriels)
Ltd**

July 2022



St Gabriel's, Victoria Park, Manchester – Heritage Statement

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The building and work must be executed in every particular in strict accordance with the Bye-Laws in force with respect to New Streets and Buildings, &c. This approval to remain in force only in case the building within two years from this date.
Dated this 14 day of FEB 1922
H. P. D. Chairman
Mr Henry Price City Architect

Jan. 21 / 1922

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

This Heritage Statement has been produced by Stephen Levrant Heritage Architecture Ltd (SLHA), a specialist practice of conservation architects, surveyors, planners, and heritage consultants which specialises in the historic environment.

This report has been prepared to accompany the planning application for the redevelopment of St Gabriel's site, Oxford Place, Victoria Park, Manchester (**The Site - Figure 1**), which comprises a series of buildings constructed between the c1850s and the 1960s, located within the Victoria Park Conservation Area.



Figure 1: An aerial view looking north-east across the Site (outlined). Source: Google, c.2020.

Full Planning Permission is sought for the redevelopment of the Site, including the refurbishment and partial demolition of certain parts of the Site, and the construction of new build student residential elements, along with a holistic landscaping design.

This Heritage Statement, and the preceding conservation advice to the project team, has been prepared in the context of relevant national and local heritage planning policy. In particular, the Statement is presented to accord with the national policy requirement of the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) Paragraph 194**, to describe the significance of the heritage assets affected and the consequent potential impact of the Proposed Development.

This Statement should be read alongside the accompanying planning stage drawing set and Design and Access Statement by Simpson Haugh Architects and the Landscape & Public Realm Design Statements by Reform, which provides full details of the Proposed Development.

1.2 General Methodology – focus on proportionality

This Heritage Statement is framed by the requirements of the **Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Section 72**. This is necessary because the 1990 Act requires that the Local Planning Authority (LPA) must treat the desirability of preserving the character and settings of conservation areas as issues which are afforded great weight (rather than simply as material considerations) as defined by **NPPF paragraph 199**.

The LPAs assessment of potential harm to the character and appearance of a conservation area, must be an evidence-based planning judgment. This is because the weight which the authority applies to determine the degree of direct (physical) or indirect (visual) impact must be *proportionate* to the relative significance of the identified heritage asset. Thus, *'less-than-substantial'* harm should not be afforded the same weight as that defined as being *'substantial'*.

The NPPF also stresses that all analysis and evidence must be **proportionate** to the relative significance of the heritage asset and the impact of the proposed development. This fundamental requirement informs the methodology used in this Heritage Statement.

The analysis of heritage significance and impact in this Heritage Statement accords with the requirements of the **paragraphs 199** of the NPPF and Historic England's October 2019 guidance, as it presents sufficient and proportionate evidence to enable the Council, *"to reach an informed decision"*. The conclusions of this Heritage Statement are thus based on the *"need to be proportionate to the significance of the heritage assets [potentially] affected, and the impact on the significance of those heritage assets"*.

The Heritage Statement assessment is based on the definition of **'designated heritage asset'** defined in the NPPF:

"World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or a Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation".

The Heritage Impact Assessment (**Section 6**) comprises an assessment of both the **direct and indirect heritage impacts**, defined as follows by ICOMOS in its 2011 guidance:

Direct heritage impacts are physical alterations to the fabric or character of the Site arising as a primary consequence of the proposed development. They result in a degree of change to the Site, or alterations to the surroundings in which the heritage asset is experienced (i.e. its setting).

Indirect heritage impact are changes to the experience of the Site, or the setting of other heritage assets. Indirect heritage impacts on setting refers to perceptible visual effects on the experience and/or character of heritage assets beyond the development footprint.

The assessment of relative significance is a comparative process, and for this reason it relies heavily on the analysis of a range of information, including local knowledge. It aims to establish whether a

component of the area is of local, regional, national or international significance, and therefore merit appropriate consideration in the Planning process.

1.3 Research sources

This Heritage Statement is the result of an extensive process which synthesises relevant evidence sourced from: documentary research, site analysis, building surveying, and professional judgment. The documentary research was based upon primary and secondary sources, including maps, drawings and reports.

Visual surveys of the Site were conducted in August 2021 in order to map out and identify the relative architectural and historic interest of the Site and its contribution to the character and appearance of Victoria Park and the Victoria Park Conservation Area.

Consideration has also been given to the historical development of the area and key views around the Site. The purpose is to define the contribution of the built form to the appreciation and understanding of the special interest of the area.

1.4 Authorship

This report has been prepared by Stephen Levrant Heritage Architecture Ltd., an architectural practice specialising exclusively in the historic cultural environment.

Authors:

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- Kirsten McKnight [BA (Hons), MA, MSc, IHBC] – Associate Director

2. THE SITE

2.1 Location

The Site is located within the Victoria Park area of Manchester, and consists of three principal parts, each with their own respective buildings.

The Site is bounded by the backs of buildings located on Hathersage Road to the north, by Nos. 5 and 7 Oxford Place to the east, by No. 11 Rusholme Place to the west, and by Oxford Place to the south (**Figure 2**).

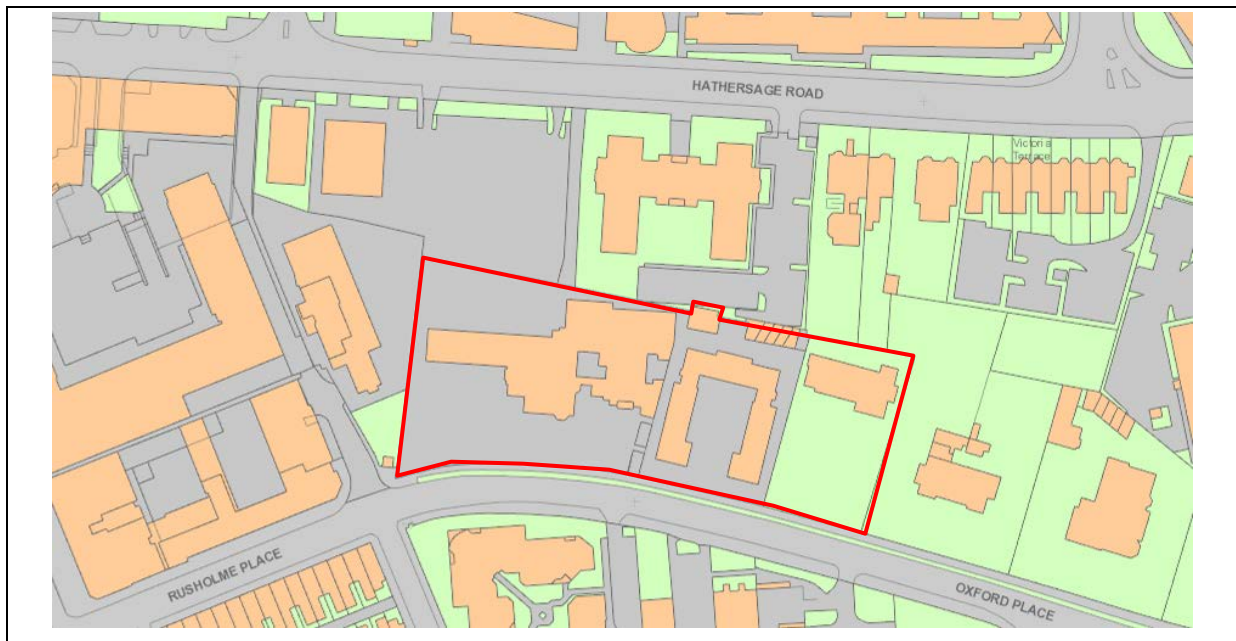


Figure 2 – Site plan looking north (outlined red).

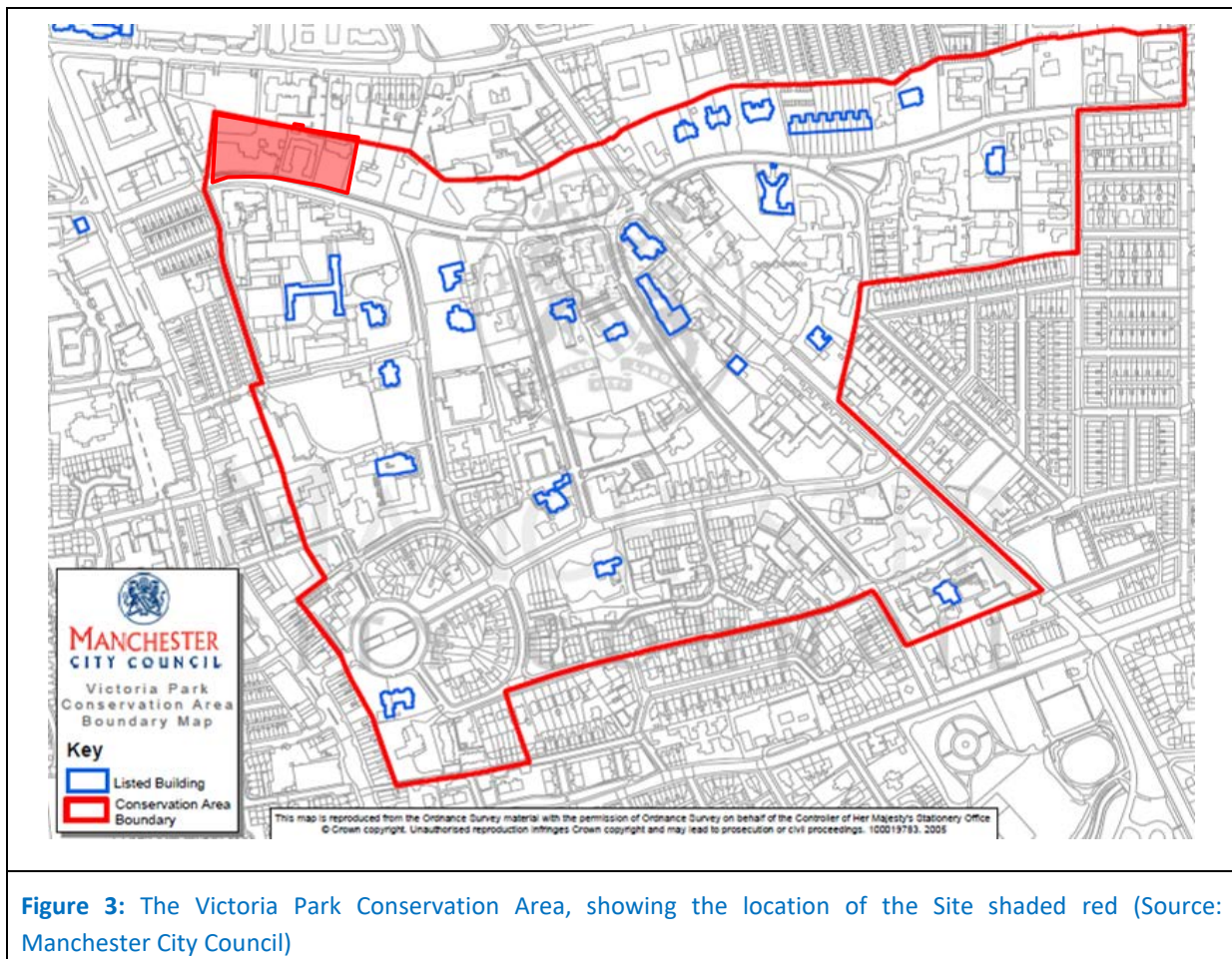
2.2 Statutory designations

2.2.1 Listed buildings

None of the buildings that form the Site are statutorily listed and the Site is not within the immediate setting of any listed building.

2.2.2 Conservation Areas

The Site is located within the Victoria Park Conservation Area, which was designated in March 1972 (Figure 3, below). As the Site is within a conservation area, any proposed development upon the Site has the potential to impact its character and appearance. This impact will be assessed in **Section 6**.



2.2.3 Non-designated Heritage Assets

It is considered that a number of buildings across the Site could be considered by the LLP as being non-designated heritage assets. Local planning authorities may identify buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes as “non-designated heritage assets” (NDHA). These sites are understood as having a degree of significance, which merits consideration in planning decisions, but which are not formally designated heritage assets (i.e. listed). In some areas local authorities identify non-designated heritage assets as ‘locally listed’.

Some non-designated heritage assets, such as buildings of good local character or sites of archaeological interest, are of heritage significance but not at a level that would pass the threshold for national designation (listing). Such assets can, singularly and collectively, make an important, positive contribution to the local environment. It is important to note that not all non-designated heritage assets will necessarily feature on a local list and may be identified at any time during the planning process.

Therefore, the following **paragraph 203** of the **National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF)** should be considered when progressing an appropriate level of development for the Site:

“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 directly

*or indirectly affect 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***”.

Also of relevance is Policy CC9 (Manchester City Council's Core Strategy, 2012), which states that: “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.”

3. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Introduction

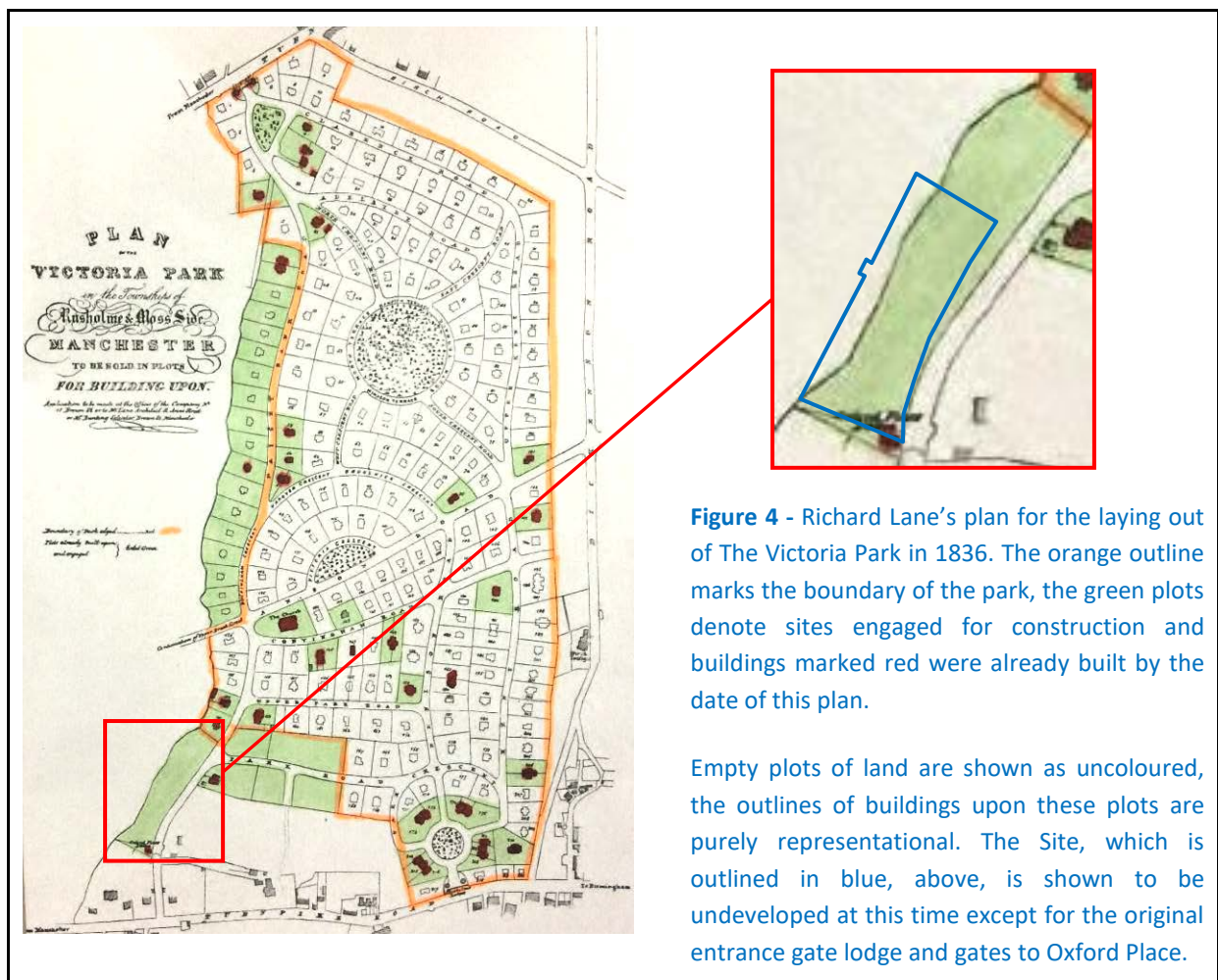
The Victoria Park area of Manchester was planned as a large and exclusive, early-19th Century gated residential suburb.

The area that forms the Site contains a number of buildings dating from the 19th and 20th Centuries, which demonstrates a sequence of historic former uses from the early origins of Victoria Park to the development of the Site for religious, residential, and educational uses during the early and mid-20th century. This section will chronologically chart these phases and developments.

3.2 Development of Victoria Park

The area of Victoria Park is described in Nicholas Pevsner's 'The Buildings of England' guide as *"an early example of a planned residential suburb all laid out in one go; the first gated suburban residential park in Manchester, and one of the first in the country"*.

The Park crosses the boundaries of the townships of Rusholme, Moss Side and Chorlton-on-Medlock, and was established in 1836, with the formation of the Victoria Park Company on the 23rd May 1836.



The new residential suburb of Victoria Park was named after Princess Victoria, during the reign of her uncle, King William IV, in anticipation of the crowning of the future Queen Victoria. Before 1836, the area on which the park was laid out, was open fields and pastureland, with only two buildings being located upon it, these being timber-framed farmhouses.

In August of 1836, the land was offered first to the shareholders of the company, then in September to the public. On the 7th May 1837, still under the reign of King William, the Victoria Park Company received an Act of Parliament to consolidate the company. The Act provided very definite powers to the Company. The objective of the Company was to build a number of dwellings of respectable appearance and condition, with gardens and pleasure grounds attached, with proper rules and regulations for the management thereof.

One of the founding members of the Victoria Park Company was renowned architect, Richard Lane. The Company had made a conditional purchase on pieces of land at three pence per yard and the idea for Victoria Park was to buy land from its owners, on lease, and develop the land by means of laid out road networks and drainage.

Some individual plots could be purchased with a house already built upon it to the purchaser's design, although when the Park opened on the 31st July 1837, the majority of plots contained no buildings, and could be bought as a plot ready for construction. Architect Richard Lane was directed to complete contracts for the construction of roads, for the building of a perimeter wall around the park, and to construct classical stone lodges at the entrances. Lane was also responsible for the design of the majority of the earliest houses within the development, which originally focused around Oxford Road Crescent and the eastern end of Oxford Place.

When the Park was opened nine 'mansions' had already been built. However, by December 1839, the Victoria Park Company was declared bankrupt and ceased to exist, owing to a decline in trade and to its impracticability. In 1845 a new group, the Victoria Park Trust, was founded to develop the remaining portions of the site and by 1850 it was recorded the Park had sixty-five houses within it.

Between 1836 and 1898 the Park contained only large 'mansion' houses, as were originally intended, and it was during this period in which the two villa's originally located on the Site. The Lodge and Woodthorpe, were constructed. However, following 1898 a number of smaller houses were constructed in the locations originally intended for large villas. By 1899 the park had grown to accommodate 128 houses, which is in stark contrast to the total number of 700 houses that were present by the time of the Park's centenary in 1937.

By the early-20th Century, a number of original, large 'mansions' in the park had been converted for alternative uses such as hotels, nursing homes and educational buildings. A. P. Simon's book of 1936, entitled 'Manchester Made Over', explains the change in Victoria Park's original purpose: *"The large mansion, built for a large family, served by a large staff, can only be conserved as a hostel, or for some purpose of a similar character, and is very often not particularly suitable for that use"*.

It was indeed during the early-20th century that the Site's original exclusive residential use ceased, and it became used for educational, religious, student residential and nursing purposes.

3.3 Map Regression

In order to understand how the Site and the area around it have developed in detail, historic maps are interrogated. Through discursive commentary the identification of salient features and useful contextual and interpretative information can then be analysed which will inform the assessment of any features or assets that remain today.

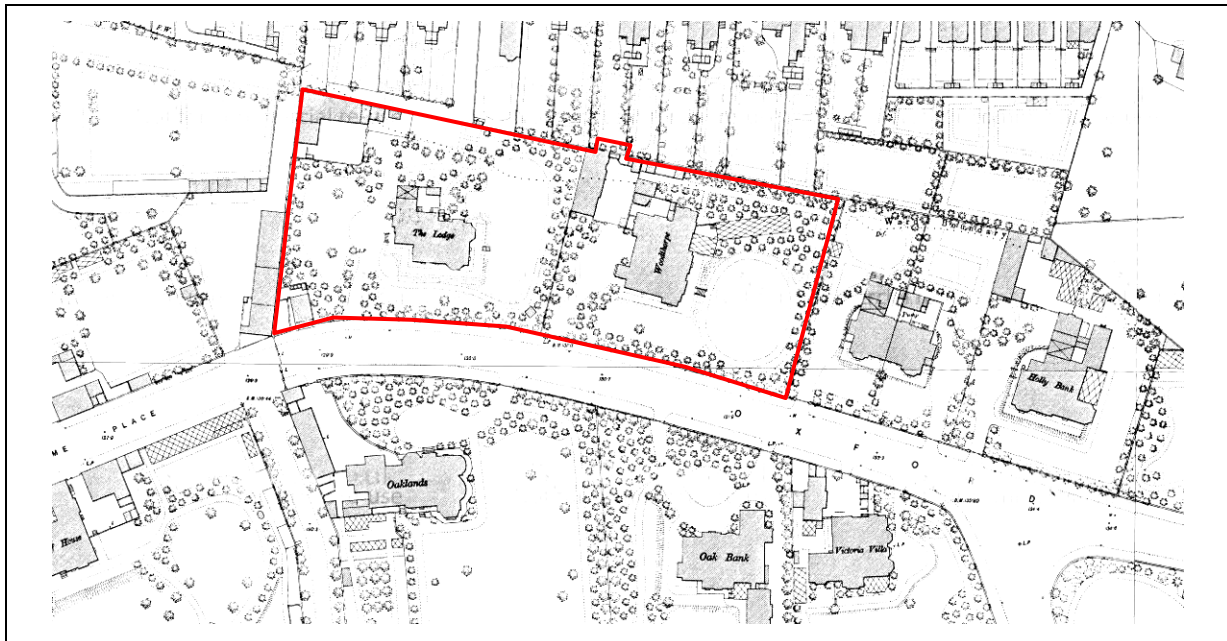
Table 1: Historic mapping



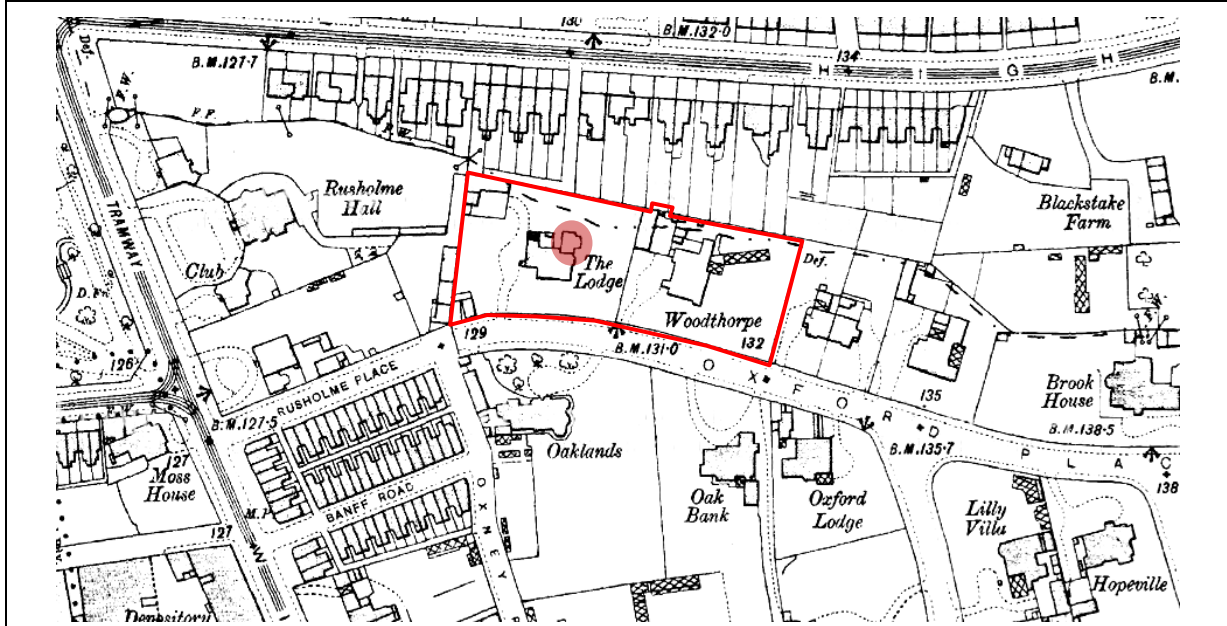
1850 OS – The 1850 map shows Victoria Park 13 years after its opening. Although Oxford Place contains a number of early villas, the Site is not yet developed, except for the original stone gate lodge to the entrance into Victoria Park from Rusholme Place (circled green). To the north-east of the Site can be seen the early Blackstake Farm and its large grounds/fields, which predated the formation of the Park.



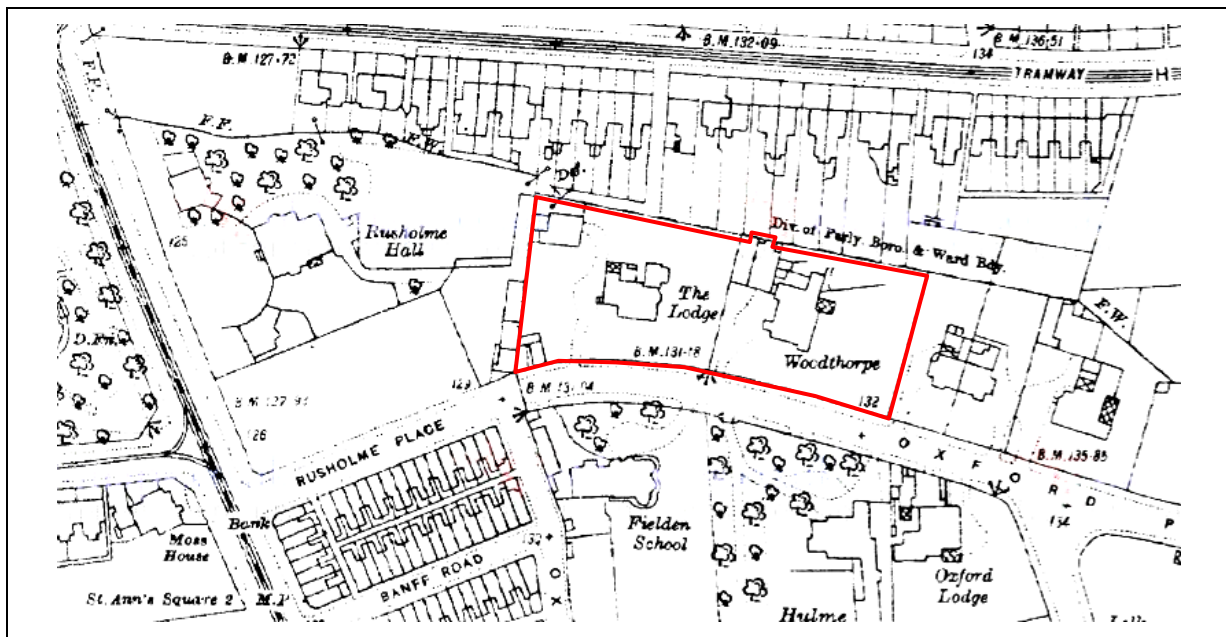
1883 Slater's New Plan of Manchester and Salford – This indicative map shows that by 1883 the Site had been developed with the construction of the two former villas, The Lodge, to the west, and Woodthorpe, to the east.



1891 OS – By the early 1890s the Park is almost complete. The Site can be seen to be clearly split into two parts, The Lodge and its grounds and outbuildings to the west, and the larger, Woodthorpe villa and its ground, glasshouses, and outbuildings to the east.



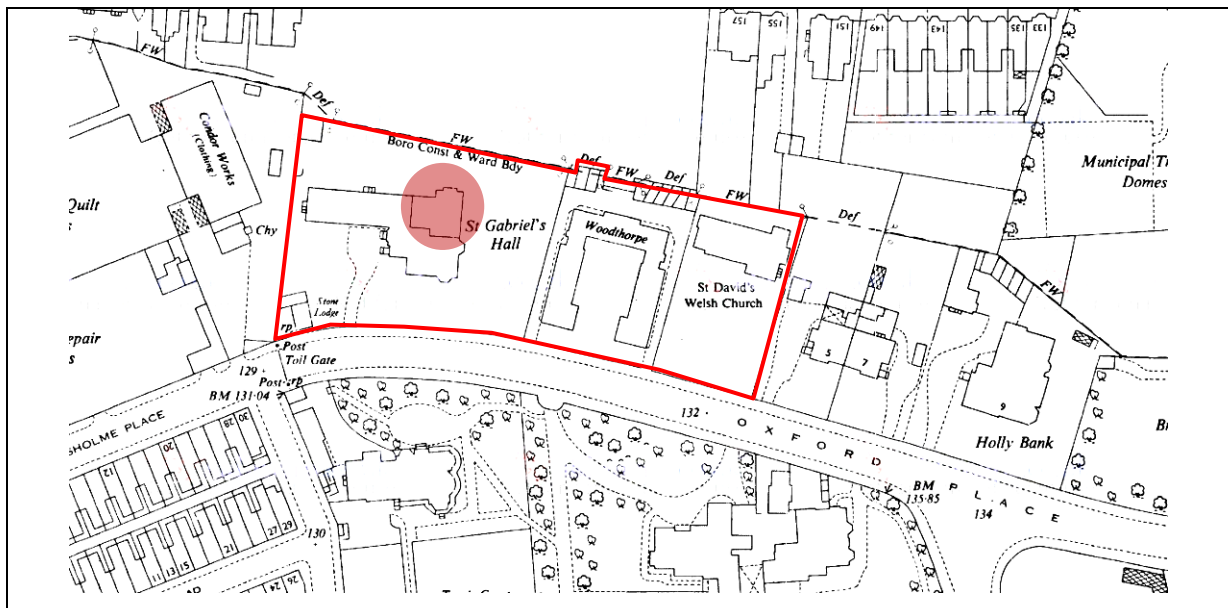
1908 OS – By 1908 the Site remains largely unchanged, except for the addition of a new extension to the north-east corner of The Lodge (circled).



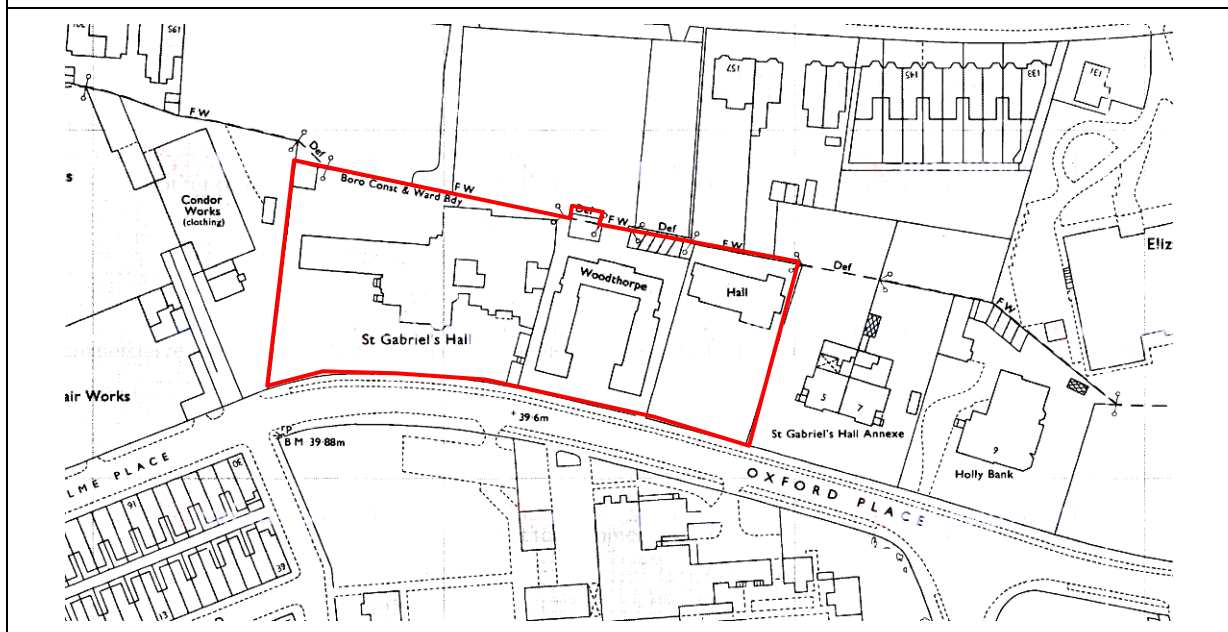
1922 OS – By 1922 The Lodge had been used as the St Gabriel's Hostel for two years, although no alterations to the Site had been undertaken by this date. The long glasshouse to the grounds of Woodthorpe has been demolished.



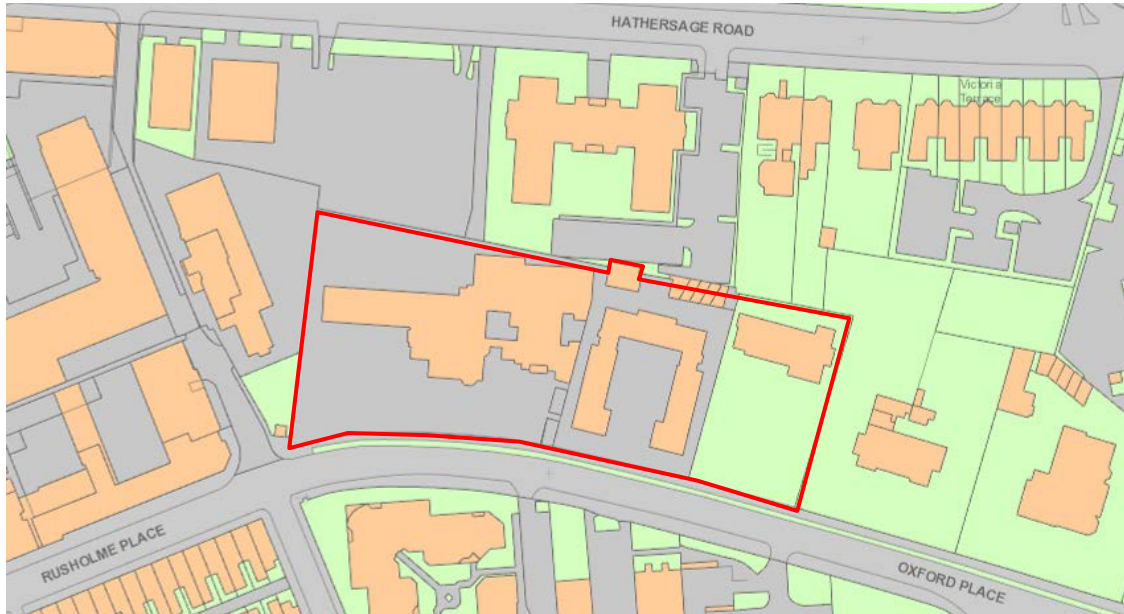
1932 OS (revised in 1941 to show wartime bomb damage) – This map illustrates the Site as it appeared in 1932 and shows The Lodge has now been renamed "St Gabriel's Hall" and has a large new residential block constructed to its north-western corner, which was built in 1922. The red circle drawn over the 1922 block shows the location for an incendiary bomb which was dropped in June 1941. Note the drastic changes to the west of the Site where Rusholme Hall and its gardens have been replaced with large industrial works.



1951 OS – By 1951 a number of changes had been undertaken across the Site, including the replacement of the c1908 extension to the north-east corner of The Lodge with a larger extension (shaded red). Woodthorpe can be seen to have been demolished (in 1938) and this part of the site split into two plots. To the middle plot is the current Woodthorpe Hall flats, built in 1938-9, and to the eastern plot is St David's Church Hall, built in 1935.



1970 OS – By 1970 St Gabriel's Hall has been extended by the construction of a large new chapel and kitchen in 1962-3, which is connected to the eastern side of the former villa. This map also shows that the original Victoria Park entrance lodge to the south-west corner of the grounds of St Gabriel's Hall, has been demolished (in c1939).



2021 OS – This recent map shows the Site as it appears today, showing that it remains largely unaltered since the 1970s. The sites to the north and west have been redeveloped for residential use.

3.4 Historic Development of the Site

The Site is formed of three distinct parts; St Gabriel's Hall to the western end (**shaded red, Figure 5**), Woodthorpe Hall to the middle (**shaded blue, Figure 5**) and the former St David's Church Hall to the eastern end (**shaded green, Figure 5**).

This Section will chart the development of each of the individual site/building components across the three separate parts of the Site.



Figure 5: An aerial view looking north across the Site, showing the St Gabriel's Hall phase shaded red, the Woodthorpe Hall phase shaded blue, and the former St David's Church Hall shaded green.

3.5 St Gabriel's Hall Site

The St Gabriel's Hall Site comprises a sprawling building formed of three main phases; the original c1850s villa called "The Lodge" to the centre, a 1922 residential accommodation block to the east, and a 1963 chapel to the west.

St Gabriel's Hall was established in 1920 by the Sisters of the Cross and Passion (otherwise known as the Passionist Sisters), as a women's only halls of residence connected to the University of Manchester.

Helen Gibbon provides a succinct history of the order's early work:

The order was founded in Manchester in 1851 when the majority of Manchester's population was desperately poor, and a number were Irish Catholic immigrants escaping the Potato Famine. Further to this, Catholics in Britain had, at least in historical terms, only just regained full civic and political rights that had been denied to them since the Reformation with the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act in 1829. As a result, many Catholics in Manchester faced strong, and at times violent, anti Catholicism.

Despite such hostility, Elizabeth Prout, later Mother Mary Joseph of Jesus, founded the Sisters of the Cross and Passion. She did this aged just 29 and as the youngest, and first, English Catholic woman to found a Catholic order in 19th century England. She and her fellow sisters were remarkable for their feminism. For most, Victorian England was a harsh and cruel place to live especially for young, unmarried, uneducated, women. The sisters worked tirelessly to

care for all of the poor and needy, but in particular women. Mother Mary Joseph also accepted that sisters would have to earn their living, which enabled working-class women to enter Religious Life without a patron. This was radical for the Catholic Church at the time.¹

An advert in the Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer on the 1st July 1927 described St Gabriel's as: *"halls of residence for women students of Manchester University by the Board of Education, Licenced by the University"*.

In 1963 a modern, purpose-built chapel was added to the villa's eastern side. Linking the gap between "The Lodge" and the Woodthorpe Hall flats.



Figure 6: Aerial view of the western part of the site. From left to right – the 1922 extension, the c.1850s villa, and the 1963 Chapel

¹<http://crossandpassion.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/St-Gabriels-Hall-Helen-Kilburns-Address.pdf>

3.5.1 The Lodge

“The Lodge” now forms the centre of the much-extended St Gabriel's Hall site. The villa was constructed in the c.1850s and set in expansive, mature grounds. The building was designed in the Italianate style, using buff brick, and was similar in style to a number of other contemporary villas in the immediate area, such as Holly Bank and Greygarth Hall.



Figure 7: 1907 – view of the original entrance posts and gates to Oxford Place. The former Gate Lodge can be seen to the left and The Lodge Villa is seen beyond this.

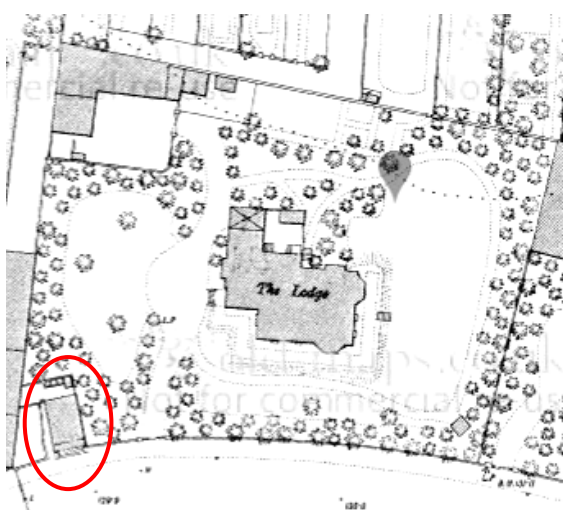


Figure 8: 1891 plan of the western aspect of the Site illustrating the location of the original Gate Lodge (circled in red).



Figure 9: the Gate Lodge in 1938

Census records and historic trade directories record the various people that resided in The Lodge. The first known resident of The Lodge was engineer Charles P Stewart, who is recorded as residing at

the villa in the 1861 census, however by the time of the 1863 trade directory, a merchant named Adolf Schwabe, is recorded at the property.



Figure 10: Greygarth Hall, originally called Lilly Villa, built in c1868 immediately south-east of the Site.

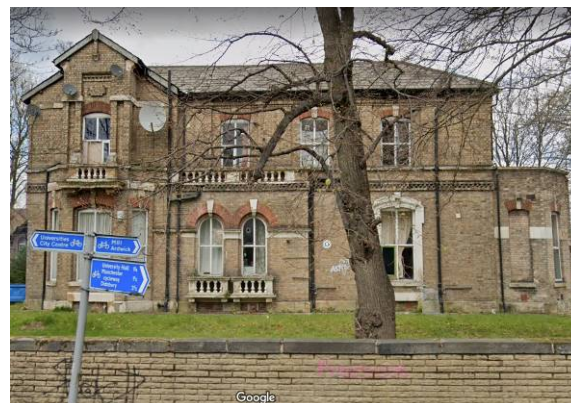


Figure 11: Holly Bank, immediately east of the Site on Oxford Place

The longest residents of the villa were the Marx family. The German born cotton goods manufacturer, Charles Marx, is first recorded as living at The Lodge in the 1891 census, where he resided with his family and servants. The 1911 census records Marx as still living with his wife, daughter and four servants at The Lodge, which is noted as containing 12 rooms.

In 1920, the Passionist Sisters furthered their work supporting women by founding St Gabriel's Hall within The Lodge. Until the turn of the 20th century, in almost all higher education institutions, women were only granted an honorary degree. The first female graduates from the University of Manchester graduated in 1887. The very first university to admit women was University College London, whose first female graduates graduated only six years earlier in 1881. The University of Manchester was thus very much a pioneering university in terms of women's rights.

Higher education remained a privilege of the upper and middle classes though stigma remained a significant barrier to entry. Even in 1920, most 'respectable' families considered it scandalous for a young, unmarried woman to leave the family home to attend university.

By establishing a sorority hall, the Sisters of the Cross and Passion enabled many women to attend university without scandal and thus offered them a revolutionary opportunity.

Plans for the building, included in proposals for the 1922 extension and 1949/1950 Chapel extension are provided in **Appendix II**. These plans illustrate the uses of the rooms within the Villa as part of the Halls and demonstrate how the original plan form of the Villa has been subdivided to accommodate additional bedrooms, especially at 1st floor level.



Figure 12: 1953- view of the entrance to Oxford Place, the former Gate Lodge and the now named St Gabriel's Hall (Source: Manchester Archives)

3.5.2 St Gabriel's Extension

In 1922 a large new student residential block was designed by J. W. Gunson and Son, recorded in the 1922 street index book held in Manchester Central Library's Archives as being "Additions to St Gabriel's Hostel". The new building was completed in June 1923 (See Figures 13 – 15).

The once spacious 'study bedrooms' of the extension have all been subdivided and the original communal spaces converted into bedrooms. Other alterations include the replacement of all of the original windows. See **Appendix I** for archival plans of the building.

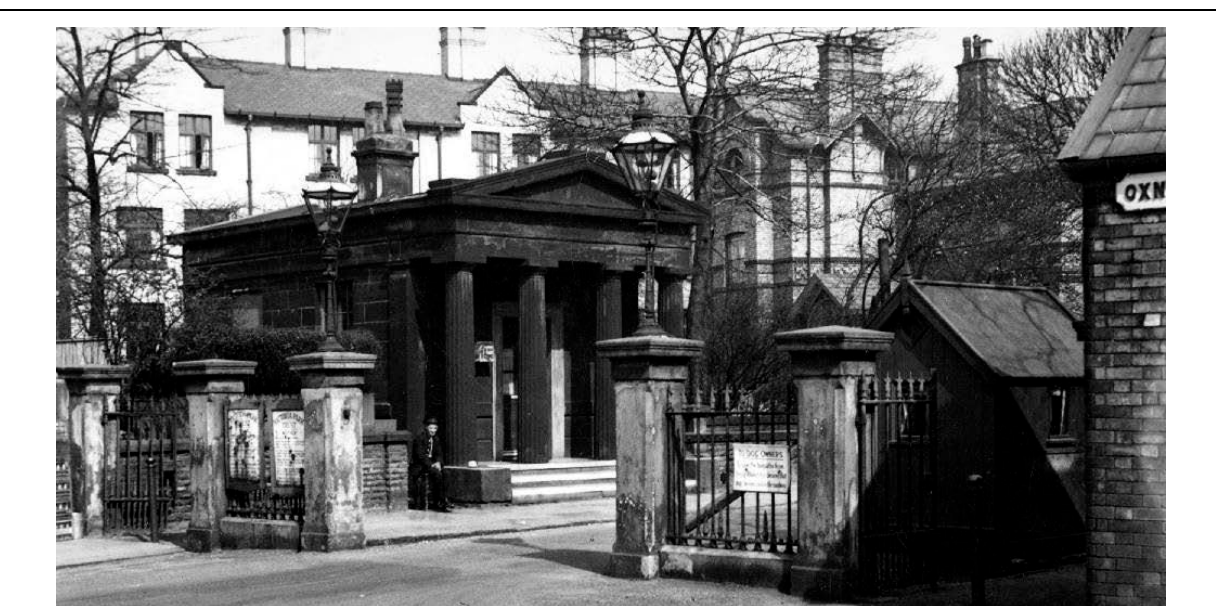


Figure 13: The 1922 extension seen beyond the former Gate Lodge (Source: Manchester Archives)



Figure 14: The 1922 extension seen in 1970. Note the original windows which are now replaced with UPVC. (Source: Manchester Archives)



Figure 15: The 1922 extension in 1976. (Source: Manchester Archives)



Figure 16: The western end of the Site as seen from Oxford Place in 1976. The lamp post denotes the location of the original gate lodge, which was demolished in the 1930s. (Source: Manchester Archives)

3.5.3 The Chapel

The c1850s “The Lodge” Villa had previously been extended to the north-east with a chapel, by Manchester practice Reyonolds and Scott, but in 1963 a larger chapel was constructed to designs by the same architects (**Figure 17**). The earlier chapel extension to the north-east was thereafter converted into a library.



Figure 17: View of the 1963 Chapel in 1976. (Source: Manchester Archives)

3.5.4 Woodthorpe Hall and the former St David's Welsh Church Hall

The original Woodthorpe was built as a large, detached villa in the circa late 1850s (**Figure 17a**). The 1929 Kelly's Directory of Manchester and Salford records that the former Woodthorpe villa, which had been in residential use throughout its history, became the Woodthorpe Nursing Home. However, this use was a short-lived as on the 18th February 1933 an article was published in the Manchester Guardian advertising the auction of nursing home furniture and equipment at Woodthorpe.



Figure 17a: Looking north over the Site in 1937, showing the original Woodthorpe villa shortly before its demolition (shaded blue), and the completed St David's Church Hall shaded green to its right. (Source: Britain From Above)

In 1935 the Woodthorpe estate was bought by the Trustees of St David's Welsh Church, who retained the villa and built the current church hall on the eastern part of the grounds. The Church's original plan for the Woodthorpe site was to build a large church along with a "parochial hall" and caretaker's lodge, allowing the original Woodthorpe villa to be retained and let as apartments.

However, the Church's original aspirations for the site were never fulfilled, and in 1937 they sold the western half of the plot, retaining only their already completed church hall on the site, never realising their original, more ambitious scheme.



Figure 18: The two parcels of land that form the eastern part of the Site, which together formed the site of Woodthorpe villa. The 1938-39 Woodthorpe Hall is to the left (blue) and the former St David's Welsh Church Hall is to the right (green)

The current Woodthorpe Hall was designed by Oakley & Sanville and built on the site of the earlier Woodthorpe villa in 1938-9 and formed three sides of a quadrangle containing thirteen flats, each within their own front door at ground floor level.



"WOODTHORPE," OXFORD PLACE
 Quiet Situation within 300 yards of Wilmslow Road and Anson Road, and within 2 miles of the centre of the city. Designed by well-known Architect. Fully equipped. Each Flat has private hall and front door on ground floor. Sound-resisting floors. Wireless aerials. Lock-up Garages.
 For Floor Plans and further details apply:
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 With ONE to THREE BEDROOMS, sitting room, bathroom, kitchen, larder, etc.
 Rents from £95 inclusive

Figure 19: Advert in the Manchester Guardian, 2 Dec 1939, advertising the new development of Woodthorpe Hall

The Neo-Georgian/Arts and Crafts styled Woodthorpe Hall was a private residential development of thirteen flats each with a sitting room, two or three bedrooms, bathroom, kitchen and larder. Each flat had a private hall and front door at ground level. Six lock-up garages and an air raid shelter were also provided. It remained rented accommodation until the mid-1950s or later, before being taken over to provide additional accommodation for St Gabriel's Hall of Residence.

The Manchester Guardian, 06th April 1940, notes:

"At Woodthorpe, Victoria Park, Manchester, are flats of quite a different type. There are thirteen of them. and they might be described as maisonettes because those on the first floor have their front door leading direct from the ground floor where there is a hall. The rooms are smaller and not so lofty as at Lansdowne House, and perhaps the chief feature is quietness. Sound-resisting is applied in the same way as at Lansdowne House. In both cases there are specially constructed air-raid shelters. Built last year, the flats at Woodthorpe range in rental from £95 to £140 a year. Lock-up garages are available. Inquiries regarding tenancies at Lansdowne House or Woodthorpe should be made to W. H. Sutton and Sons, 60, Spring Gardens, Manchester.

The work of the Moston Brick and Building Company, Ltd., Manchester, as displayed in prominent buildings in many districts, is familiar to the public, and it was this company that erected Lansdowne House. which is a further proof of their expertness in construction and the soundness of the materials used. They were also the builders of Woodthorpe.

Considerable care was given to the electrical installation by F. Beardmore and Company Limited, Manchester. The flats have electric cookers. linen cupboard heaters, electric towel rails, convectors

heaters for the hall. A special screened wireless aerial system has been installed to ensure good reception free from interference.

As is usual in modern building contracts of any size. rock asphalt work has been done by the Limmer and Trinidad Lake Asphalt Company, Limited, Manchester. They have products for floors. Roofs, etc., special heat and pressure resisting properties.

Fireplace. door. and window fittings by Parker, Winder, and Achurch Limited, Manchester. help to complete the harmonious equipment of the building. These fittings are eminently practical”

See **Appendix I** for archival plans of the building.



Figure 20: 1969 – Woodthorpe Hall. Note original, timber sash windows, which have since been replaced with less sympathetic examples. (Source: Manchester Archives)



Figure 21 – Woodthorpe Hall in 1976 (Source: Manchester Archives)



Figure 22 – The simple, yet austere communal gardens of Woodthorpe Hall in 1976 (Source: Manchester Archives)

3.5.5 St David's Welsh Church Hall

The foundations of the first of the new Church's buildings, the Hall, were completed on the 28th July 1935. An article in the Manchester Guardian on the 29th July 1935 stated that the Hall will be followed by the building of a church, whilst Woodthorpe villa would be let out as flats.

St David's Hall is the third religious building for Welsh Anglicans of the same name in Manchester. The church was originally housed in Denmark Road, moving to a new building in Lime Grove/Oxford Street in 1898.

Following the construction of the first part of the new St David's Church scheme on the site of Woodthorpe in 1935, it was realised that the church was not needed for the Welsh community, and by the Charity Commissioners' Scheme of the 30th November 1961 the land and building were transferred to St. Chrysostom's, Victoria Park, as a church hall. In 1969 St. Chrysostom's sold the parish hall to the trustees of the Convent of the Cross and Passion, Mount St. Joseph, Deane, Bolton.

See **Appendix I** for archival plans of the building.



Figure 23: The building when it was used as the “St Edwards Youth Club” in 1976 (Source: Manchester Archives)



Figure 24: The Former Church Hall as seen in 2017 (Source: SLHA)



Figure 24a: The western aspect of the former Church Hall as viewed from Woodthorpe (2021). (Source: SLHA)

4. SITE DESCRIPTION

All photographs taken in September 2021 by SLHA except where otherwise stated.

4.1 St Gabriel's Hall, Extension, and Chapel

4.1.1 Exterior

Table 2: Exterior photos and description of St Gabriel's Hall, extension, and chapel



Figure 25: Principal south and west elevations of the former lodge Villa with the 1922 extension to the left (west)



Figure 26: South elevation of the 1922 extension



Figure 27: West elevation of the original entrance of the c.1850s villa to the right; additional entrance to the left created by altering a historic window opening.



Figure 28: South elevation of the c.1850 villa.



Figure 29: East elevation of the c.1850 villa and the 1963 link extension to access the chapel to the right



Figure 30: South elevation of the 1963 chapel



Figure 31: North elevation of the 1922 extension and 1950s extension/ infill to the left.

4.1.2 Interior

Table 3: Interior photos and description of St Gabriel's Hall, extension, and chapel



Figure 32: Original entrance lobby to the c.1850s villa. Note the mosaic tiled floor and original panelled doors.



Figure 33: Inner entrance doors to the lobby, with original c1850s double stained glass doors.



Figure 34: Detail of the 19th century mosaic lobby floor.

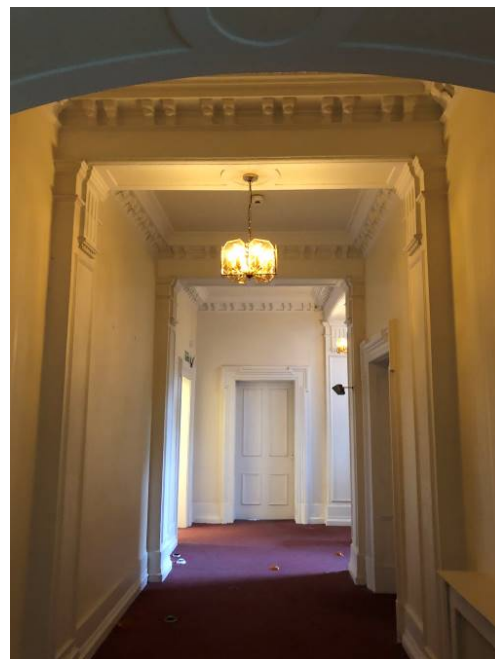


Figure 35: Entrance hall to the c.1850s villa. Note the original skirtings, cornicing, plasterwork, doors and doorframes.



Figure 36: Original staircase to the c.1850s villa



Figure 37: Example of one of the ground floor rooms with original decorative plasterwork to ceiling and cornice, original skirtings, shutters and windows.



Figure 38: Example of the alterations that have taken place to the first floor of the c.1850s villa; rooms have been subdivided and original features removed



Figure 39: Internal corridor within the 1922/ 1950s extension to the villa.



Figure 40: The 1950s extension to the north-east of the villa- formerly used as a chapel and latterly used as a library.



Figure 41: Looking north across the first floor 1963 chapel.



Figure 42: The lower ground floor of the 1963 chapel



Figure 43: Interior of the 1963 extension that links the chapel with the villa.

4.2 Woodthorpe Hall

4.2.1 Exterior and interior

Table 4: Exterior and interior photos and description of Woodthorpe Hall



Figure 44: South, west (left) and east (right) elevations of Woodthorpe Hall



Figure 45: Detail of the west elevation of Woodthorpe Hall. Note the c2000s modern, UPVC sash window replacements.



Figure 46: North elevation of Woodthorpe Hall, illustrating modern UPVC windows.



Figure 47: Typical example of the altered interior of Woodthorpe Hall

4.3 St David's Church Hall

4.3.1 Exterior and interior

Table 5: Exterior and interior photos and description of St David's Church Hall



Figure 48: The south elevation of the former church hall

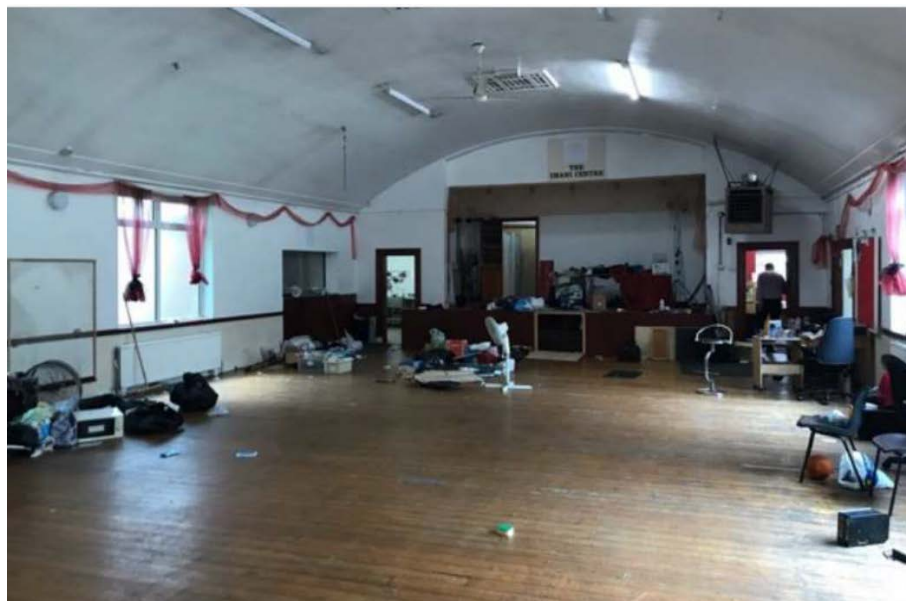


Figure 49: The interior of the former church hall looking west

5. SIGNIFICANCE APPRAISAL

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of the significance appraisal is to use recognised criteria to assess the heritage interest of the buildings that form the Site.

The analysis of significance allows for an assessment of the current integrity and authenticity of each building and its contribution to the character and appearance of the Victoria Park Conservation Area.

5.2 Methodology

Criteria have been established to appraise a building's significance. Statutory criteria, as set out in the 'Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings', DCMS, 2018, provides a list of principles for assessing significance based on architectural and historic interest, age and rarity, aesthetic merits, selectivity and national interest.

The following significance assessment is framed within the context of established guidance, utilising recognised and well-established terminology used with the ICOMOS Guidance for Heritage Impact Assessments (2011), with particular reference to the example guide for assessing the 'value' of heritage assets (ICOMOS, **Appendix III**).

The following section will consequently assess the relative heritage interest of the Site utilising Historic England's guidance on local heritage assets and the Listing Selection Guides for: Suburban and Country Houses (Domestic 3 - 2017), and Places of Worship (2017).

Ultimately, the significance of a heritage asset is determined by an analysis of the relevant aspects of the following:

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.

The focus is on providing the necessary and proportionate amount of information based on the perceived level of heritage significance (refer to **Table 6, below** for definitions of heritage significance of the Site as defined in this present report).

Table 6: Definition of significance terms used in this Heritage Statement
High heritage significance relates to those components of the site deemed to be of special interest. They are important to the understanding of the site's design concept and play a considerable role in reflecting its archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic interest.
Medium heritage significance relates to those components of the site deemed to be of some interest. They will make a modest contribution to the understanding of subject site's design concept and play a minor role in reflecting its archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic interest.
Low heritage significance relates to those components of the site deemed to be of more modest interest. They make a relatively insignificant contribution to the understanding of the architectural design concept and retain a slight role in revealing the site's archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic interest.
No significance /Detrimental features and elements within the site that do not contain any special interest. These can <i>detract from the significance</i> of the site and can be evidence of poor craftsmanship or ad-hoc refurbishments.

5.3 Heritage Interest of the Site – Discussion

The following section appraises the 'significance' of the St. Gabriel's site in accordance with recognised criteria and guidance. Whilst there is no standard guidance for assessing 'impact' on heritage assets, the ICOMOS guidance (Jan.2011) makes specific reference to designated, locally listed and historic buildings and is therefore an objective (and widely recognised) method to assess heritage significance, even where sites have no formally identified heritage status.

When assessed in a national context, the relative heritage 'interest' of the Site will be demonstrably low compared to buildings and sites that have been statutorily designated (refer to **Table 9, Appendix II**). However, for the purposes of this report, the significance of the St. Gabriel's Site will be discussed from high, medium, low or no / detrimental significance (in line with the definitions outlined in Table 6, above). The purpose of this approach is to understand the key components of the site which yield the most 'interest', albeit at local level.

5.3.1 St Gabriel's Hall Site

"The Lodge" villa

The c1850s former villa is of high heritage interest due to its architectural interest and as a component of the Victoria Park Conservation Area. The building is also of historic interest due to its association with the Victoria Park development and in terms of being an early example of a women's-only halls of residence which allowed the advancement of women's higher education.

Areas of **high significance** include:

- The south, east and west elevations
- the ground floor plan form which still survives
- original windows
- decorative features such as mosaic tiling, plasterwork, and joinery (including doors, skirtings, doorframes etc)
- The boundary wall to Oxford Place, including gate piers

Areas of **medium** significance include:

- the 1950s chapel extension (latterly the library) which is by architects Reynolds and Scott
- the basement plan form

Areas of **low significance** include:

- The second floor

In assessing the heritage interest of the building against Historic England's Selection Guides, and the DCMS' Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings, **it will be clear that the building does not yield sufficient heritage interest to warrant statutory listing, however the building clearly yields sufficient heritage interest at a local level to be considered a non-designated heritage asset and is a positive contributor to the Conservation Area.**

The contribution of setting to significance is low/moderate, as the building has been successively extended since 1922, and is largely shorn of its original, detached/open landscaped setting, and is now experienced and appreciated from Oxford Place and its immediate environs to the south, which is enhanced by its maturely planted boundary treatment.

The 1922 residential extension

The 1922 extension to the villa was a purpose-built student accommodation block. It has been substantially altered internally and externally, through the subdivision/ alteration of the original plan form, loss of original features, and replacement of all the original windows. Features that do survive are utilitarian and typical of the period (e.g. the staircase (which has been altered)).

The building is of standard construction for its date and does not exemplify any technological innovations.

The architects for the building, Gunson and Son, were a local Manchester practice working between 1891-1924. The practice worked on a range of commissions, including churches, but aren't well known due to the loss of many of their buildings and their short existence as practice. The 1922 extension building is not a good example of their work being distinctly utilitarian in character.

In assessing the heritage interest of the building against Historic England's Selection Guides, and the DCMS' Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings, it will be clear that the building does not yield sufficient heritage interest to warrant statutory listing. **In a local context, the building yields low historic interest due to its association with the development of the wider site and is considered to be a neutral contributor to the Conservation Area.**

1963 Chapel

The 1963 Chapel is by architects Reynolds and Scott, who were prolific in mid-century modernist church design. Several of their buildings are listed at Grade II, including the Roman Catholic Church of St Joseph, Wembley, and the former chapel at Hopwood Hall College, Rochdale.

The chapel and link buildings at St Gabriel's are modernist in style and retain many original features. The use of concrete for the functional portal frame as well as for the decorative zig-zagged canopy exemplifies the practice's flair in the use of the material.

Areas of **high significance** include:

- The south elevation
- The canopy to the southern entrance, doors and terrazzo lobby which are a set piece
- The fenestration, including stained glass
- The boundary wall to Oxford Place

Areas of **no significance** include:

- the fittings to the lower ground floor

In assessing the heritage interest of the building against Historic England's Selection Guides, and the DCMS' Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings, **it will be clear that the building does not yield sufficient heritage interest to warrant statutory listing, however the building clearly yields sufficient heritage interest at a local level to be considered a non-designated heritage asset and is a positive contributor to the Conservation Area.**

The contribution of setting to significance is low, and is largely experienced and appreciated from Oxford Place.

5.3.2 Woodthorpe Hall

Woodthorpe Hall is an unusual example of a 1930s, high-quality maisonette development in Manchester. Despite only being a private residential block for a short time, before becoming consumed within the St Gabriel's site, its architectural interest as a component of the mid-20th century development of the area can still be understood and appreciated.

The flat block was designed by Oakley and Sanville who were a local Manchester practice that focused on domestic commissions and churches. It may have been their church work that brought

them to the attention of the trustees of St David's Welsh Church who it is believed developed and sold the plot.

The flat block is a well-proportioned, well-mannered composition in a debased neo-Georgian style built in brick. Arranged around three sides of a grassed court, full height polygonal bays alternate with paired and single doorways to articulate the elevations.

Areas of **high significance** include:

- The external elevations
- The grassed courtyard setting
- The boundary wall to Oxford Place

Areas of **no significance** include:

- The interior

In assessing the heritage interest of the building against Historic England's Selection Guides, and the DCMS' Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings, **it will be clear that the building does not yield sufficient heritage interest to warrant statutory listing, however the building clearly yields sufficient heritage interest at a local level to be considered a non-designated heritage asset and is a positive contributor to the Conservation Area.**

The contribution of setting to significance is low, and is largely confined to the landscaped enclosed courtyard garden, immediate views of the building/garden from Oxford Place, which is enhanced by its maturely planted boundary treatment.

5.3.3 St David's Church Hall

The church hall was built in 1935 as part of wider proposals for a new church that were never realised. Designed by architect G. Caradoc Roberts, the simple, brick hall is purely functional and utilitarian in appearance with no architectural embellishment; all the original windows have been replaced. Internally, the hall retains its open plan form, but does not contain any original fixtures or fittings.

In assessing the heritage interest of the building against Historic England's Selection Guides, and the DCMS' Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings, it will be clear that the building does not yield sufficient heritage interest to warrant statutory listing. **In a local context, the building yields low historic interest due to its association with the development of the wider site and is considered to be a neutral contributor to the Conservation Area.**

5.4 The Victoria Park Conservation Area and the contribution of the Site to its Character and Appearance

Victoria Park was designated in March 1972 as a Conservation Area due to its **high historic and architectural interest** as an important, early example of a planned residential suburb all laid out in one go; the first gated suburban residential park in Manchester, and one of the first in the country.

The Park remained a private estate to which access could be gained only by paying a toll at the Park's entrance gates. During the second half of the nineteenth century, the professional classes moved into the area, and a number of houses came to be associated with prominent politicians and artists. A steady deterioration of the area became noticeable in the 1920s, when changing economic and social circumstances accelerated the decline.

The houses were built on a large scale in brick, with projecting bays, string courses in a contrasting colour, tall chimneys and vertically-proportioned windows, some in Venetian style. Roofs were pitched and finished in blue slate.

In many cases the large spaces between buildings have been maintained and a significant number of trees retained. The gardens are enclosed by walls of stone or brick, most of which are of medium height with or without a hedge behind them for additional height. Other walls are high enough to screen the house and grounds entirely from the road. At the entrances to properties there were large gates and gate piers, many of which have unfortunately been demolished.

However, relatively few of the houses from the 1830s and 1840s still exist and where they were demolished there now stand either groups of smaller houses or large, institutional buildings, such as schools, colleges, churches, university halls of residence and blocks of flats. Houses on Oxford Place were demolished in 1910 to make way for Hulme Hall, a university hall of residence, which is a large building designed in the Arts and Crafts style and incorporating a quadrangle. Many more high-quality buildings were built on the site in the 1960s and later.

The north side of Oxford Place, between Rusholme Place/ Oxney Road and Anson Street contains five of the original 19th Century Victoria Park villas; all are either empty or derelict. **Oxford Place is a key route through the Conservation Area and whilst the architectural interest of this character area can still be understood and appreciated, the inactivity and dereliction have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the wider Conservation Area.**

To the west of the St Gabriel's site, and within the setting of the Conservation Area, modern development has also had an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The loss of the historic entrances and gate lodges, as well as modern development within the boundary of the Conservation Area, and indeed the eclectic amount of development within the St Gabriel's site has seen the defined residential character of the Conservation Area eroded in this area. However, **the western end of Oxford Place, is a distinct character area, and represents the 20th century development of this part of the Conservation Area, reflecting changes to the social and economic spheres that changed the predominant use from residential to educational/ institutional.**

As a consequence, the buildings within the St Gabriel's site that beneficially contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, are the c.1850s villa, the 1963 Chapel, and the 1938-39 Woodthorpe Hall.

There is clearly a capacity for change within the St Gabriel's site, especially to the west side where the larger height, form, massing and scale of the buildings within the Site's setting are different to the smaller scale of development to the east.

5.5 Statement of Significance

The statement of significance provides a summary of the Site's heritage interest.

- The St Gabriel's site is of historic and architectural interest due to its association with the Victoria Park development from the 1830s to the late 1890s and because of its association with the provision of women's only halls at a time when women struggled to access higher education due to their sex. Consequently, the established use of the site as student accommodation is of high importance.
- The St Gabriel's site is multi-phased and eclectic in character; this reflects the character area of the west end of Oxford Place within the Victoria Park Conservation Area which is different to the defined residential character to the south east, within the centre of the Conservation Area.
- None of the buildings within the Site yield sufficient heritage interest to warrant statutory listing.
- The c.1850s villa, 1963 Chapel, and 1938-39 Woodthorpe Hall are considered to be **positive contributors** to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. These buildings are non-designated heritage assets (NDHA).
- The 1922 villa extension and 1935 St David's Church Hall are considered to be **neutral contributors** to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- It is considered that there is capacity for change within the site, as a whole, which could enhance the heritage interest of the NDHA buildings. In turn there is the opportunity to enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area by reactivating the Site and giving it a sustainable, active use.

6. HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 Measuring heritage impact

This assessment of the potential heritage impact concerns the visual impact of the proposals upon the character and appearance of the Victoria Park Conservation Area and settings of identified non-designated heritage assets within the Site. The contribution of the setting to significance in each case has been established in the significance assessment above, in preparation for the following impact assessment.

The magnitude of impact is a product of the extent of change which is likely to result from the Proposed Development. Where the proposed changes are considered to enhance the setting of a heritage asset or appreciation of a heritage asset or the character and appearance of a conservation area, the impact on its significance will be deemed to be beneficial. Conversely, where the Proposed Development is considered to compromise its positive heritage interests, the impact on the significance will be deemed adverse.

Therefore, measuring the heritage impact of the Proposed Development is essentially an evaluation of change to the: setting of the identified heritage asset/ character and appearance, balanced against its relative significance.

The relative importance and interest of each heritage asset is considered in the context of its surroundings, and the extent to which the setting contributes to the interest of the asset is considered. In terms of the context, where this exists, historical relationships between heritage assets and their surroundings, and other assets in the vicinity, are considered. In some instances, these relationships may be understood in the light of historic research but may not be, immediately, visually apparent.

The effects are rated as: **Major, Moderate, Minor, Negligible or Neutral**, and can be direct or indirect, adverse or beneficial.

The criteria for assessing the magnitude of change and significance of impact are set out in **Table 7 below**), both direct heritage impacts (physical alteration or change in character) and indirect heritage impacts (such as the change to the setting of a heritage asset). This follows the recommended approach to evaluating heritage impact derived by ICOMOS (2011) and the tests set by Historic England in the 2017 guidance on the evaluation of: “The Setting of Heritage Assets” (*Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning. Note 3*).

6.2 Determining the overall impact

The significance of the effect of change – i.e. the overall impact on an attribute is a function of the importance of the attribute and the scale of change.

The overall impact of the Proposed Development upon the setting, character and appearance of the above mentioned heritage assets is assessed in light of the consideration of the identified heritage views and the effect of the development in each case to arrive at a conclusion as to the effect of the proposals. This gives particular consideration to the overall effects upon key heritage assets (listed

buildings and conservation areas) which may form part of the Site, exist in close proximity to it, or be frequently visible in a series of views in conjunction with the proposals. Please refer to **Table 10, Appendix III** for ICOMOS Guide on determining significance of overall impact.

Mitigation in respect of any adverse impact upon the setting, and / or the context of the identified heritage assets is formulated upon the overall benefits of the Proposed Development. Benefits relate to both the place in which the development will be constructed, as well as benefits to the wider community or society as a whole. Discussion of such benefits fall outside the scope of the Heritage Statement and are expounded in the wider Planning Statement.

Table 7: Criteria for defining the effect and degree of direct and indirect heritage impact

Definition of magnitude and nature of heritage impact.	Direct heritage impacts	Indirect heritage impact
Major adverse Impact. <i>Substantial harm of this nature, which results in total loss of significance or fundamentally affects the significance of defined heritage assets, should normally be avoided.</i>	Development resulting in demolition of a significant historic fabric component which results in total loss of significance, or fundamental compromises the setting of a designated heritage asset.	Substantially harmful change to the fabric and character of a designated heritage asset, or the setting of the identified designated heritage assets. Where the development severely erodes the heritage interest of the identified heritage assets in the view, or the ability to understand and appreciate its architectural and historic interest and thus results in total loss of significance.
Moderate Adverse Impact. <i>Less-than-substantial harm will need to be demonstrably mitigated and justified by clear public benefits.</i>	Development resulting in extensive harmful alterations (but not total demolition) of a designated heritage asset or its setting.	Less than substantial harm to the fabric and character of a designated heritage asset, or the setting of the identified designated heritage assets. Where the development erodes to a clearly discernible extent the heritage interest of the heritage assets in the view, or the ability to appreciate its heritage interest.
Minor Adverse Impact. <i>The negative impact on the setting or overall character will need to be clearly balanced by appropriate mitigation.</i>	Development resulting in alterations to a designated heritage asset which result in minor compromise of its fabric or erosion of its character.	Minor compromise to the fabric and character of a designated heritage asset, or the setting of the identified designated heritage assets. Where the development erodes to a minor extent the heritage interest of the heritage asset and its setting, such that it is noticeably changed.
Negligible adverse impact. <i>This does not mean that there will be no physical or visual change, rather that the resultant difference would not diminish the value of the</i>	Development resulting in negligible direct impact on a designated heritage asset which results in the removal of a minor, original fabric component, but avoids diminishing its character and its special architectural or	Negligible perceptible change to the character of a designated heritage asset, or the experience and understanding of its special interest. The degree of change would alter, but not diminish, the intrinsic

<i>heritage assets' significant physical fabric, their settings or significance to any appreciable degree.</i>	historic interest.	heritage interest of the identified heritage assets, or the experience and appreciation of the buildings or the designated area to any appreciable degree.
Neutral Impact. <i>This does not necessarily mean that there will be no physical or visual change, rather that the resultant difference will be imperceptible or appropriately balanced.</i>	Development which comprises an imperceptible physical impact resulting in no apparent change or achieved by removing a component of no heritage value which detracts from the special interest of the building fabric.	Imperceptible change to the fabric and character of a designated heritage asset, or the setting of the identified designated heritage assets. A neutral impact occurs when the development does not affect the architectural, aesthetic and historic interest of the heritage assets in the view, or the ability to appreciate its significance to any measurable degree.
Negligible beneficial impact. <i>The resultant difference will be imperceptible but have a positive impact on the understanding or appreciation of the heritage asset.</i>	Development resulting in a negligible beneficial direct impact on a designated heritage asset which results in the removal of a minor non-original fabric component which detracts from the character and its special architectural or historic interest.	Negligible perceptible change to the character of a designated heritage asset, or the experience and understanding of its special interest. The degree of change would imperceptibly enhance the intrinsic architectural and historic of the identified heritage assets, or the experience and appreciation of the buildings or the designated area.
Minor Beneficial Impact. <i>The proposed change would result in a demonstrable improvement to the overall character or setting of a heritage asset.</i>	Development resulting in alterations to a built heritage asset which deliver a minor beneficial physical impact or enhancement of the site's special interest.	Minor enhancement to the fabric and character of a designated heritage asset, or the setting of the identified designated heritage assets. Where the development enhances to a minor extent the architectural and historic interest of the heritage assets in the view, or the ability to appreciate its significance.
Moderate Beneficial Impact. <i>The proposed change would result in a considerable improvement to the overall character and appreciation of a heritage asset with clear beneficial enhancement of its heritage interest.</i>	Development resulting in alterations to a built heritage asset resulting in moderate beneficial physical impact, or an enhancement of the site's character.	Evident improvement of the fabric and character of a designated heritage asset (or the setting of the identified designated heritage assets) resulting in an enhancement of its cultural heritage interest. Moderate enhancement to the setting of the built heritage asset. Where the development will enhance to a clearly discernible extent the heritage interest of the heritage assets in the view, or the ability to appreciate its significance.
Major beneficial Impact.	Development resulting in restoration or alterations to a	Substantial improvement of the fabric and character of a designated

<i>The proposed change would result in substantial improvement to the overall character and appreciation of a heritage asset, revealing and/or enhancing important characteristics of its heritage interest.</i>	designated heritage asset which comprises substantial restoration of its fabric and historic character and an enhancement of its cultural heritage interest.	heritage asset (or the setting of the identified designated heritage assets) resulting in a significant enhancement of its cultural heritage interest. Substantial restoration or enhancement of the setting of the built heritage asset where the development will enhance to a fundamental extent the heritage interest of the heritage assets in the view, or the ability to appreciate its significance.
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6.3 Assessment Methodology

In December 2017, Historic England updated their policy guidance on the Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3, Second Edition).

The revised guidance calls, in general terms, for a more discursive approach to Visual Impact Assessments and a reduced reliance on matrices and technical assessment. In particular, the guidance states (p. 8) that *“technical analyses of this type should be seen primarily as material supporting a clearly expressed and non-technical narrative argument that sets out ‘what matters and why’ in terms of the heritage significance and setting of the assets affected, together with the effects of the development upon them.”*

With this in mind, and in accordance with the revised policy guidance, the following Visual Impact Assessment is presented in the form of text discussion comprising an assessment of the extent of change to the settings of the identified heritage assets which would arise as a result of the proposed development, the impact of that change, and whether any such changes could be considered to amount to either ‘harm’ or ‘substantial harm’ within the terms set out by the NPPF.

Finally, as recommended by the revised Historic England guidelines, the Visual Impact Assessment is supported by a table identifying the *scale* of the impact incurred by the proposed development upon the setting of each identified designated heritage asset and the *significance of effect* of the change in each case which may be *adverse* or *beneficial*. This creates a sliding scale of overall impact ranging from *Major Adverse* through *Neutral* to *Major Beneficial*. This is provided within **Table 7**, above.

These terms, and the processes for their use and implementation, follow the recommendations set out in the technical guidance document published by ICOMOS, *Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties* (2011). Whilst prepared for use in relation to World Heritage Sites, this document provides one of the few available international standards for this type of assessment, and hence acts as an acknowledged benchmark for the assessment of heritage impacts.

6.4 The Proposals

6.4.1 Introduction and context

Following the closure of the St Gabriel's site, over the last few years the Site has fallen into a state of disrepair and has now contributed to the existing wider sense of disuse and disrepair which exists along the entirety of the northern side of Oxford Place.

The aspiration for the Site is to retain and refurbish/restore the best examples of buildings across the Site, whilst replacing poorer examples with high quality new build elements that will continue the Site's long student use history that will be enhanced by a holistic, site-wide landscaping scheme.

6.4.2 Design response

Reflecting the Site's long and varied history and development has been the principal aim of the proposed scheme. A number of new design elements/features have been inspired directly from the retained historic buildings across the Site, and which echo existing architectural features.

The design approach to the western half of the Site actively responds to "The Lodge" villa, whilst the approach to the eastern half of the Site responds to the "Woodthorpe Hall". To the west (**See Figure 50 below**) the new build element uses a similar buff brickwork that incorporates raised brickwork patterns that echo those found in the buff 19th century brickwork of The Lodge, whilst the powder-coated patterned screens to the window openings are derived from the villa's historic roof structure.

The western half of the Site employs a dark red brick, reflecting the rough, red 1930s brickwork of Woodthorpe Hall. The landscaping scheme restores a sense of a purposely landscaped setting for the retained and new buildings, which provides much new planting and hard landscaping that connects all parts of the currently disjointed and convoluted Site with areas set aside for courtyard spaces that act as green buffers that can be enjoyed by students as enjoyable walking route or places to study (**See Figure 51-2 below**).

Other enhancements to the Site include the planting of a number of new trees, the creation of wildlife habitats and areas of wild flower planting, and the demarcation of the original footprint of the 1830s former Victoria Park entrance gate lodge in hard landscaping to the south-west corner of the Site, which will enable this lost piece of the Victoria Park development to be celebrated.



Figure 50: The proposed southern aspect of The Lodge (right) illustrating the new build element to the west (left) and the landscaping proposals.



Figure 51: An example of one of the proposed courtyard spaces to the west of the Site.



Figure 52: An example of one of the proposed courtyard spaces to the east of the Site.

6.5 Direct Heritage Impact Assessment

Direct Heritage Impacts are those that result as a primary consequence of the proposed development or change of use. They will comprise of physical changes to fabric, or a change in the character or appreciation of a designated heritage asset. The degree of impact will thus depend on the relative importance of the affected component.

The **NPPF (paragraph 199)** requires that, when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset that great weight is given to its conservation in order to avoid any 'harm' which might diminish the value of the asset and its significance.

The Site boundary does not contain any designated heritage assets. It will be clear, therefore, that the principal concept of the development would result in **no direct impact** (i.e. harm) to the built historic environment.

The focus of the following section will therefore focus on the indirect (visual) impact upon the setting of heritage assets closest to the Site. This principally relates to visual impact, but also takes into consideration the changed experience within the setting of the heritage assets in the view, including traffic, noise, accessibility, permeability and patterns of movement. As set out within Historic England's assessment checklist for assessing the impact on 'setting'.²

For each proposed view below please refer to Section 6.5 and Table 5 which provides the definition of magnitude and nature of each heritage impact and methodology for the assessment of each concluding visual impact.

² Historic England (2017). The Setting of Heritage Assets. Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition).

6.6 Visual Impact Assessment

To assist in this discussion, two existing and proposed key heritage views have been produced in order to facilitate the Heritage Visual Impact Assessment carried out below.

The selected views have been scoped in where; a) there is a baseline value to the view, in heritage terms, b) where the proposed development was visible, and c) sensitive / key viewpoints which test whether the Proposed Development would be visible.

Figure 53, below, provides a baseline map with the relative locations of key heritage viewpoints. The existing and proposed views are provided below following the Visual Impact Assessment text.



Figure 53 – Plan illustrating the locations of heritage viewpoints assessed.

6.6.1 View 1

Existing

This view is experienced looking in an easterly direction along Oxford Place towards the Site (left).

The existing view illustrates some of the typical characteristics of the Victoria Park Conservation Area and wider Victoria Park area, with the generous width of the street, a continuous buff sandstone boundary wall to the left of the view, which forms the southern boundary of the Site, much mature planting and trees, and views of both 19th and mid-20th century buildings which can be glimpsed through the mature canopy of the trees along the perimeter of the Site, and can be seen to be in a state of neglect, with overgrown grounds and boarded-up windows.

The buildings that form the Site to the left can be seen to be of differing footprints, each with varying levels of articulation to their pitched roofs, which adds visual interest. The buildings to the

foreground, which includes The Lodge, the 1922 extension and the 1960s chapel, all use buff coloured brick, whilst the buildings to the background, including Woodthorpe Hall and the St David's Church Hall, both use a dark, rough red brick.

There is a generally established height of buildings to the left (north) of Oxford Place, whilst the modern red brick buildings that form extensions to the Hulme Hall student campus to the right (south) of Oxford Place are taller, designed without any articulation to facades or roof level, and located closer to the pavement.

The existing view well represents the heritage interests of the heritage assets within the view and the character and appearance of the Victoria Park Conservation Area.

Proposed

The proposed development will be partially visible to the immediate left and distant left of the view from this location. The development will be seen to introduce two modern, new build elements, which will form new student accommodation. This view illustrates the approach to the Site-wide design well, which can be seen to use historic and architectural cues from the historic buildings that currently form the site.

to the left (west),

The proposed building to the west takes its design cues from The Lodge, including the use of buff brickwork, raised brick patterns, and window screen design, and can be seen to replace the current, 1920s accommodation block, which is a neutral contributor to the conservation area, with a building of high quality design and materials.

To the far right of the view the new build student accommodation building can be seen to have been constructed partially on the site of the St David's church hall, and takes its design cues from the adjacent 1939 Woodthorpe Hall and former St David's Hall, using darker red brickwork. The detailing and colour palette will be better appreciated when traveling eastwards along Oxford Place towards the building.

Although the proposals introduce a new build element in this location, the new building has been set back from the pavement to allow for an area of mature trees to help conceal the building, and maintain the current "villa in a garden" character of Oxford Place and the wider conservation area. The additional height of one storey taller than the adjacent roof level of Woodthorpe Hall, is visually lessened by the use of a darker palette, and will become visually lessened when you move closer towards the building along Oxford Place and appreciate the gap between the new build element and Woodthorpe Hall.

Although not obvious through the mature tree canopy in the proposed CGI view, the proposals include the restoration of the c1850s "The Lodge" villa (which can be glimpsed to the left-middle of the view), including the return of its original 19th century footprint following the demolition of the later, 1922 wing.

Also not visible within this view will be the proposed planting and landscaping scheme, which will tie all parts of the wider Site together, and will provide pleasant views into the Site from the public footpath. Another feature concealed within this view will be the inclusion of the outline footprint of the original 1830s gate lodge, which will be marked using hard landscaping to the south-west corner of the Site (behind the wall to the immediate left of view), which will allow for a better understanding and appreciation of the original conception and use of Victoria Park in the 19th century.

The proposed development will be seen and understood as being a part of the historic and multi-phased St Gabriel's student campus, and will improve the character and appearance of the Victoria Park Conservation Area by improving the settings of the non-designated heritage assets within the view, and replacing those that are of a neutral contribution, consequently it is considered there will be an overall minor beneficial impact on the heritage assets within the view.



View 1: Existing



View 1: Proposed

6.6.2 View 2

Existing

This view is experienced looking in a westerly direction along Oxford Place from its junction with Lower Park Road towards the Site (right).

The existing view again illustrates some of the typical characteristics of the Victoria Park Conservation Area and wider Victoria Park area, principally being the generous street widths that form mature tree-lined boulevards, the use of 19th century buff sandstone boundary walls, which partially forms the southern boundary of the Site to the right of the view, with areas of surviving perimeter wall to the left of the view, which originally contained a large 19th century villa which has since been demolished and replaced with the current Hulme Hall student campus.

This view illustrates the almost entirely concealed nature of the Site at times when the trees are in full leaf, which although almost hidden from view, reveal occasional, glimpsed views of the buildings that form the Site.

To the left of the view can be seen the c1960s additions to the Hulme Hall halls of residence site, illustrating the extent of a number of modern student accommodation buildings to the southern aspects Oxford Place.

The existing view represents the heritage interests of the character and appearance of the Victoria Park Conservation Area well, but due to the concealed nature of the Site does not represent the heritage interests of the identified positive contributors to the conservation area, which are better understood and appreciated when moving closer west towards the Site.

Proposed

The proposed development will be partially glimpsed in isolated instances behind existing mature tree coverage to the immediate right of the view from this location.

The proposed student accommodation building to the right foreground, although cannot be appreciated/seen within this view due to the existence of mature trees, uses historic and architectural cues from the 1939 Woodthorpe Hall, including darker red brickwork echoing the original building and patterned screens derived from the historic roof structure.

Due to the mature tree canopy to the centre of the view, the proposals for the restoration of the c1850s "The Lodge" villa (which can be fleetingly glimpsed to the distant left of the view), the retention and restoration of the 1963 chapel (centre right) and the construction of a new accommodation building to the distant left, are all concealed from this viewing place.

As seen in the proposed View 1 above, also not visible within this view will be the proposed planting and landscaping scheme, which will tie all parts of the wider Site together and will provide pleasant views into the Site from the public footpath.

The proposed development will be imperceptible from this viewing location, and consequently, it is considered that the proposed development will have no impact on the character and appearance of the Victoria Park Conservation Area, and will result in an overall neutral impact on the heritage assets within the view.



View 2: Existing



View 2: Proposed

6.7 Visual (indirect) Impact Assessment – Summary

As recommended in the revised Historic England guidance on the Settings of Historic Buildings referenced above, the perceived indirect (visual) impact upon the identified nearby non-designated heritage assets have been tabulated below. The impact assessment has been informed by the baseline significance appraisal above and follows the recommended ICOMOS scheme of Heritage Impact Assessment as defined by the Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties (2011).

These values have been established within the following table (**Table 8**) assessing the scale of impact and the perceived effect of change in each case as regard each of the heritage assets identified which could potentially be affected by the proposed development.

Table 8– Predicted impacts of proposed development upon significance of setting of Heritage Assets				
No. ref.	Heritage Asset and designation	Significance value	Scale of impact	Significance of the effect of change, or overall impact
1	The Lodge <i>Considered to be a NDHA</i>	Low	Moderate change	Moderate beneficial
3	The Chapel <i>Considered to be a NDHA</i>	Low	Moderate change	Moderate beneficial
4	Woodthorpe Hall <i>Considered to be a NDHA</i>	Low	Moderate change	Negligible adverse

6.8 Victoria Park Conservation Area

The visual impact assessment above has demonstrated the clear heritage benefits of bringing a large, abandoned and semi-derelict site back into full and active long-term use. The visual impact assessment above has resulted in one moderate beneficial impact and one minor beneficial impact.

The retention and enhancement of the positive contributors across the Site, and the addition of good quality new build elements to replace neutral/detrimental contributors that respond to the materiality and colour palate of existing historic buildings, improves the character and appearance of this important, yet much altered historic entrance route through the area, and will result in an overall minor beneficial impact on the character and appearance of the wider conservation area.

6.9 Conclusions

The current Site contains a number of buildings and spaces that vary in their contribution to the character and appearance of the Victoria Park Conservation Area, with some elements of the site being of a neutral/detrimental contribution.

The above assessment has concluded that the c1850s “The Lodge”, the 1963 Chapel and the 1939 Woodthorpe Hall are positive contributors to the character and appearance of the conservation area and are considered to be non-designated heritage assets, whilst the 1922 St Gabriel’s residential extension and the St David’s Church Hall are neutral contributors and are not considered to be non designated heritage assets.

The current condition of the buildings, their landscaping/grounds and settings, adversely impact on the character and appearance of the Victoria Park Conservation Area and on the heritage interests and appreciation of the identified heritage assets across the Site and the Site as a whole.

The proposals actively seek to retain and restore the best examples of buildings across the Site, maintaining and continuing their long history of being student residences, whilst celebrating and enhancing their design and architectural features, which in turn enhances the wider Site and its environs within the conservation area.

The proposals see the two neutral components being replaced with two new build residential buildings of good quality and character, which will increase the number of resident students across the Site. The new build elements actively respond to the history and design of their immediate environs, with the western building echoing the buff brickwork and interesting brick pattern of the adjacent The Lodge villa, whilst the eastern building takes its design cues from the dark red brickwork of Woodthorpe Hall.

The chosen location of the building to the east introduces a new built element to this previously unbuilt upon plot. Although there will be an element of increased height when viewed in conjunction with the adjacent Woodthorpe Hall, this is reduced by the new building being set back from the pavement and the retention of mature trees to the boundary with Oxford Place, and the carefully chosen brick type and colour, which along with the use of a darker colour palette to the top floor level and raised brick patterns, subtly break up the elevations.

Together, the clear differences, yet similarities used in both the two new build elements help to define the character of the Site into two distinct parts, which is interconnected and interwoven with the proposed landscaping design that plays a major part in re-establishing a high quality and considered planting scheme throughout, improving the character and setting of the buildings and encouraging pedestrian activity and enjoyment of the spaces across the Site and wider streetscape.

The proposed development will remove currently neutral and partially detrimental components across the site and replace them with high quality buildings that respond positively to their surroundings.

The proposed development will facilitate and encourage pedestrian movement into Victoria Park and the wider conservation area, and through the Site itself, allowing for the enjoyment and usability of Oxford Place, which is much altered to the western end and currently presents a largely unkempt and abandoned character, and which especially at night forms an unpleasant and undesirable route for pedestrians that discourages further exploration of the area.

7. PLANNING POLICY ASSESSMENT AND CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

The NPPF (2021) and the associated Planning Practice Guide emphasise the need for a thorough understanding of the significance of designated heritage assets, to form the basis for the assessment of any development impact. The Heritage Significance Appraisal (Part 1 of this report) has informed the Heritage Impact Assessment (Part 2), which demonstrates that the cumulative impact of the development proposals would have an **overall minor beneficial impact** upon the built historic environment.

In retaining and sensitively refurbishing the buildings and features across the site that are considered to be positive contributors to the Victoria Park Conservation Area and bringing the Site and its buildings back into active use, the proposals demonstrably introduce a sense of place and cohesion.

The Proposed Development addresses the need to enhance, reactivate and reuse the best examples of existing buildings across the Site, whilst replacing those buildings considered to be of a neutral contribution to the conservation area with new buildings of good quality that help to activate and facilitate the functionality of the Site as a whole, which together with a holistic landscaping design, creates an enjoyable place in which to live and study, and will improve this long deteriorating part of the conservation area.

This sense of cohesion is enhanced by the improvement in soft and hard landscaping, planting and garden features, which can be seen to greatly improve the currently unconsidered and disconnected open spaces and pedestrian routes across the Site. Ultimately these areas of the scheme compliments and improves the semi-rural historic character of the Site, Oxford Place and the wider Conservation Area.

7.2 Statutory and policy requirements

The NPPF requires that all planning proposals contribute to the achievement of “*sustainable development*” (**NPPF. Paragraph 8**), which in this case means the preservation of the fabric, character and appearance of the identified heritage assets. This requires a clear and proportionate evaluation of the significance and impact on the identified heritage asset as has been outlined in this Heritage Statement.

The NPPF establishes a clear hierarchy of significance for heritage assets, derived from their designated status. The fundamental objective is to avoid compromising designated heritage assets, such that any potential ‘harm’ from a development must be balanced against the potential advantages of the public benefits that may outweigh any harm (**paragraphs 201-202**).

The Proposed Development greatly enhances the settings of The Lodge villa and the 1962 Chapel building, whilst new build elements will introduce buildings of good quality that actively take their cues of colour palate, materiality and brick design from the historic buildings across the site, primarily The Lodge and Woodthorpe Hall. The cumulative impact of the proposals would avoid any

unmitigated conflict with the conservation of the identified designated heritage assets and non-designated heritage assets overall. Thus, the proposal meets the requirements of NPPF, **paragraphs 199 and 203**.

The Visual Impact Assessment has demonstrated that the Proposed Development would enhance the currently dilapidated character of the Site and its buildings, and will establish a sense of cohesion and quality into the conservation area and especially Oxford Place, which is long been defined by derelict and abandoned historic buildings and lack of general maintenance and upkeep of grounds and planting.

The development would thus, demonstrably deliver extensive public benefits, principally by enhancing the public realm surrounding the Site and the permeability within the Site itself, bringing the best historic buildings back into full and active uses that continues the historic use of the Site as a halls of residence since 1920. In the above terms, the proposed development positively addresses the core planning principles set out in **paragraph 8** of the NPPF 2021.

7.3 Balanced impact on the heritage assets and historic environment

The Proposed Development will herald a vital example of investment in this part of Victoria Park, which has long been in a progressive state of disrepair through lack of investment, and lack of maintenance of grounds and buildings. The Proposals will clearly make a demonstrably positive contribution to the vitality of this part of the Victoria Park Conservation Area, which has long been overlooked.

Consequently, the Proposed Development is demonstrably consistent with national and local policy, in particular, the proposals accord with the requirements of the NPPF, **paragraph 190 point a, b, c and d**.

8. APPENDICES

Appendix I: Archival Plans

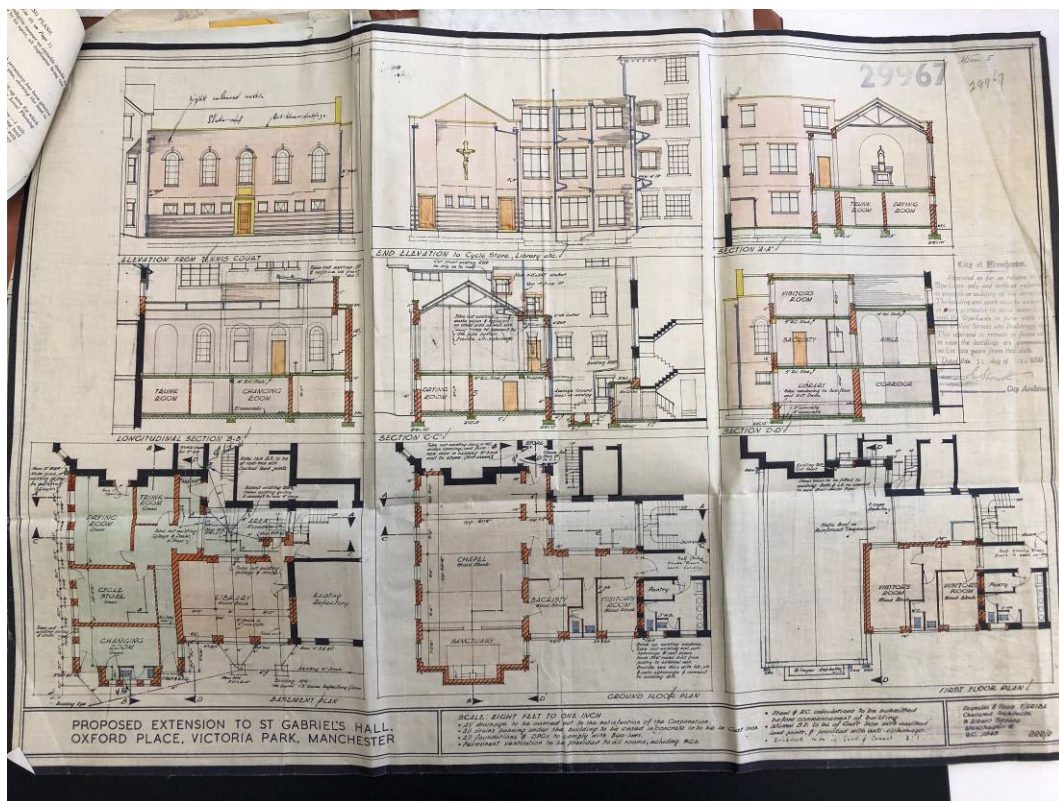
The 1922 extension of the c.1850s villa



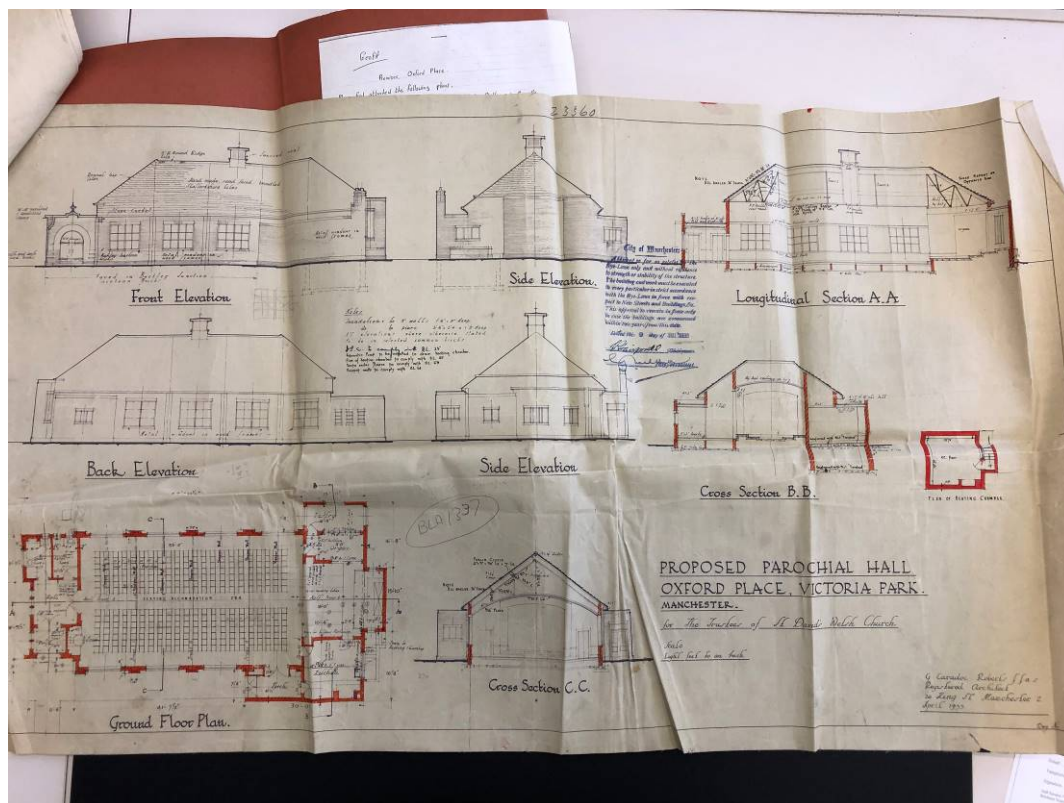




The 1950s extension of the c.1850s villa



St David's Church Hall, 1935



MAISONNETTES WOODTHORPE VICTORIA PARK
MANCHESTER.

for freeholds and leaseholds Manchester and

Section A to B
Elevation to Oxford Place.

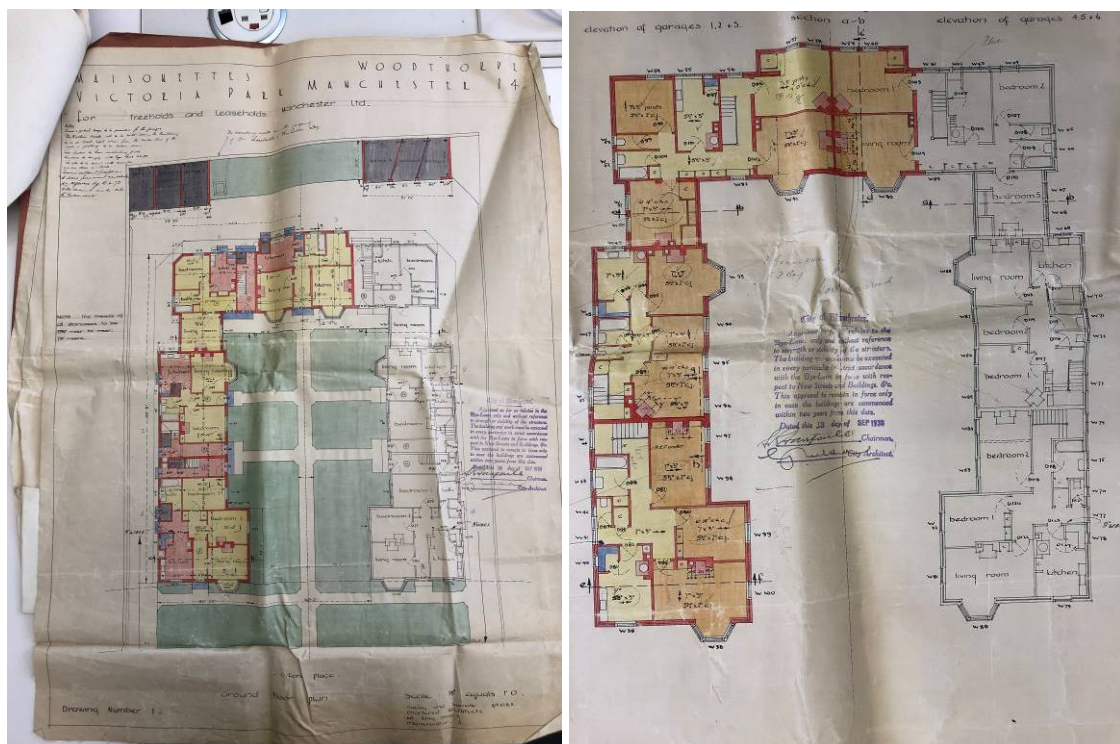
Section C to D
Back Elevation.

Section E to F
Side Elevation.

Elevations and Sections to Scale 1/8" equals 1' 0"

DRAWING NUMBER 4

JOHN AND BERNARD SHERRARD ARCHITECTS.
10, BURY STREET,
MANCHESTER 2.



8.3 Appendix II : Methodology for assessing significance and impact

Table 9: The hierarchy and definition of heritage significance (from ICOMOS guidance)

Heritage status / hierarchy	Description.
Very High / Exceptional heritage significance <i>International architectural and historic interest and importance.</i>	This heritage grading relates to the fabric and setting of: • Scheduled Ancient Monuments, • Grade-I listed buildings, • Grade-I historic parks/gardens, • Battlefields, defined by statute, where the particular site is well represented in the impacted historic environment.
High heritage significance <i>National architectural and historic importance and interest.</i>	This heritage grading relates to the fabric and setting of: Grade-II* and grade-II listed buildings, Grade-II* and grade-II historic parks/gardens, battlefields, as defined by statute, Conservation Areas containing very Important buildings where the particular site is well represented in the impacted historic environment.
Medium heritage significance <i>Regional architectural and historic importance and interest.</i>	This heritage grading relates to the fabric and setting of: Grade-II listed buildings (dependant on character), Grade-II historic parks/gardens and battlefields, designated Conservation Areas, where the fabric and character of the site is well represented in the impacted historic environment.
Low heritage significance <i>Local architectural and historic heritage importance and interest.</i>	This heritage grading relates to the fabric and setting of: Locally Listed Buildings (as formally identified by the Council and defined by an adopted Local Planning Policy), Site's identified and recorded as being of heritage interest on the Historic Environment Record, which retain a definable heritage interest as a component of the historic environment. Unrecorded buildings, structures, or designed landscape features, which demonstrably retain a degree of heritage value due to their: architectural design, historic, communal, or townscape interest.
Negligible heritage significance <i>Buildings or fabric components which have been extensively altered, eroding or compromising their architectural and historic interest</i>	This heritage grading relates to sites which may be: recorded on the Historic Environment Record in record form or as 'Find Sites' but retain minimal or no original fabric or definable character. buildings, structures, or designed landscape features, which detract from the architectural design, historic, communal, or townscape interest of the principal heritage asset.
Unknown heritage potential <i>Buildings/sites where the potential importance interest requires determination</i>	This heritage grading relates to sites which may be locally identified as meriting recognition but have not been previously recorded or investigated so that their origins and fabric significance have yet to be objectively defined.

Appendix III: Assessing the Significance of effect

The table below, Assessing the Significance of Impact, uses a matrix to combine the value of the heritage assets with the magnitude of impact. As stated within Historic England's Guidance, this is a general guide and is **not intended to be prescriptive**.

Scale or severity of impacts or changes can be judged taking into account their direct and indirect effects and whether they are temporary or permanent, reversible or irreversible. The cumulative effect of separate impacts should also be considered. The scale or severity of impact can be ranked without regard to the value of the asset. This significance of impact can be either adverse or beneficial.

Table 10: Assessing the Significance of effect

Value of Heritage Asset	Scale & Severity of Change/Impact				
	No Change	Negligible change	Minor change	Moderate change	Major change
For WH Properties Very High – Attributes which Convey OUV	Significance of Effect or Overall Impact (Either Adverse or Beneficial)				
	Neutral	Slight	Moderate/ Large	Large/Very Large	Very Large

For Other Heritage Assets or Attributes	Significance of Impact (Either Adverse or Beneficial)				
Very High	Neutral	Slight	Slight/ Moderate	Large/very Large	Very Large
High	Neutral	Slight	Slight/ Moderate	Moderate/ Large	Large/Very Large
Medium	Neutral	Neutral/Slight	Slight	Moderate	Moderate/ Large
Low	Neutral	Neutral/Slight	Neutral/Slight	Slight	Slight/ Moderate
Negligible	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral/Slight	Neutral/Slight	Slight