

Cross Road, Chorlton Manchester

Heritage Statement: Significance Appraisal & Impact Assessment

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Prepared for:

**Southway Housing
Trust**

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Cross Road, Chorlton, Manchester - Heritage Statement

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Heritage Statement

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

The brief required SLHA to contribute to the decision-making process which informs the proposed redevelopment of the plot of land which is bound by Cross Road to the east, Beech Park to the south, Thornbridge Avenue to the west and the Chorlton Irish Club (CIC) and housing to the north (henceforth referred to as 'the site').



Figure 1: Baseline map of the site (identified within red line boundary). **Source:** Historic England, NHLE Map.

The site comprises a large, surface car park which serves the Chorlton Irish Club. Principal access to the car park is permitted from Cross Road. Whilst the site contains no Listed Buildings and is not located within any Conservation Areas, it is located near to the eastern boundary of the Wilbraham Road and Edge Lane Conservation Area. Proposals to redevelop the site must therefore be assessed against the potential impact upon the designated areas character and appearance.

It is further recognised that the CIC retains some architectural and historic interest in its own right. Whilst the Local Planning Authority (Manchester City Council, MCC) do not presently maintain a local

list of ‘non-designated heritage assets’; the relative age, aesthetic value and communal interest of the building is considered to be of sufficient interest to warrant consideration within the present report.

This Heritage Statement, and the preceding conservation advice to the client, has been prepared in the context of relevant national and local heritage planning policy and Historic England’s 2019 advice on the structure of Heritage Statements. In particular, the statement is presented to accord with the national policy requirement of **NPPF paragraph 199**, to describe the significance of the heritage assets affected, and the consequent potential impact of the current proposals.

This Statement should be read in conjunction with the plans, drawings and Design and Access Statement by View Associates.

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, fabric and settings of designated heritage assets (including 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, fabric or setting of a listed building, or 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 194 and 199** of the NPPF (2021) 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 Impact Assessment (Part 2) 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, as well as the archive material sourced from Manchester Archives.

Visual surveys of the Master-plan area were conducted in November 2021, in order to map out and identify the setting of the heritage assets which could be affected by the proposals.

Consideration has also been given to the historical development of the area and key views within the locality.

1.4 Authorship

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

2. THE SITE & HERITAGE CONTEXT

2.1 Location and site description

The site comprises a surface car park located to the rear of the CIC, which forms the relative northern boundary of the site. Cross Road bounds the site to the west, with Beech Road Park forming a southern boundary.

The character of the area is inherently residential in nature, principally consisting of Victorian semi-detached terraces set back from Cross Road. The open green space of Beech Road Park provides a communal focal point to the area, from which views of the CIC are limited. In contrast, High Lane comprises a heavily trafficked road which connects Edge Lane to Barlow Moor Road and Sandy Lane.



Figure 2: Oblique aerial view of the site, orientated south-west. The approximate location of the site is outlined in red. The Chorlton Irish Club is highlighted in blue. Road names and significant public spaces near to the site are identified and labelled on the image. **Source:** View Associates.

2.2 Area of Analysis

For the purposes of this assessment, consideration has been given to a 250m study area around the site. The area of analysis provides a focus for assessment but is not intended to be prescriptive; buildings outside this 'boundary' are considered where relevant.

2.3 Statutory Designations

2.2.1 Listed Buildings

Statutory listing of buildings means that a building is of special architectural or historic interest and is therefore of heritage significance. Grading of listed buildings reflects their architectural and historic interest; Grade I buildings are of exceptional interest; Grade II* buildings are particularly important buildings of more than special interest; and Grade II buildings are of special interest.

The site contains no Listed Buildings and is not within the setting of any Listed Buildings.

2.2.2 Conservation Areas

Conservation areas are designated areas that are deemed to have special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

The site is not located within a conservation area but is near to the 2007 extension to the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area (**Figure 3**, below). The area is located approximately 3 miles south east of the City Centre and is immediately north of the previously designated conservation area of Chorlton Green. They share a common boundary. The junction of Wilbraham Road, a major arterial route within the City of Manchester, and Edge Lane in Chorlton has long been recognised as possessing buildings and spaces of character and quality dating back to the late 19th century. The buildings continue to be complimented by a substantial and mature tree coverage.

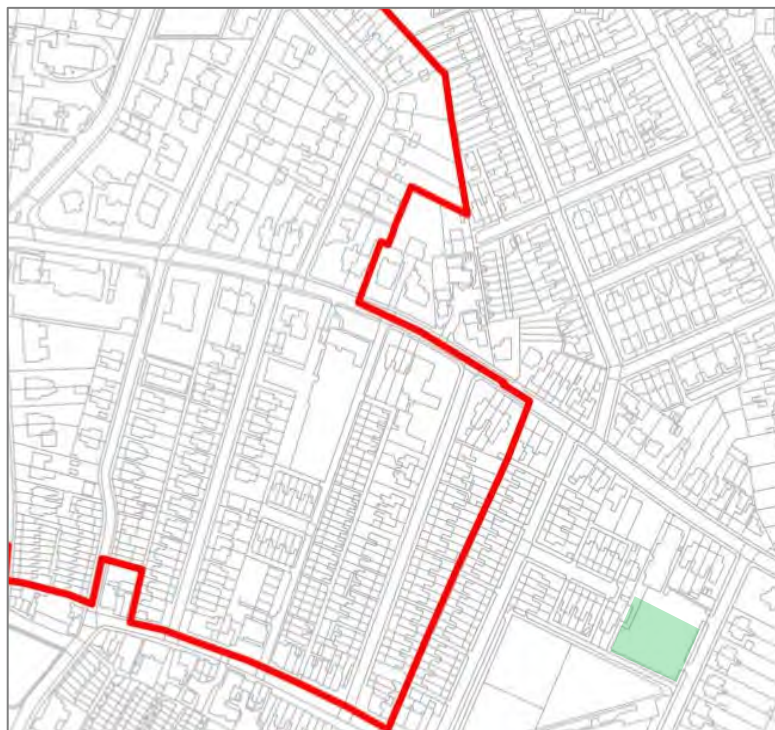


Figure 3: Plan of the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area; boundary identified by red line. The site (indicated in green) is shown to be located to the east and outside of the Conservation Area boundary. **Source:** Manchester City Council, Conservation Area Appraisal.

2.2.3 Non-designated Heritage Assets

Local planning authorities may identify non-designated heritage assets. These are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which are not formally designated heritage assets. In some areas, local authorities identify some non-designated heritage assets as 'locally listed'. At the time of writing, MCC do not maintain a local list. It is however, 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. The Chorlton Irish Club has been identified by the LPA as a 'non-designated heritage asset'.¹

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**".*

2.3 Archaeological potential

The Historic Environment Record (HER) does not identify any sites of archaeological interest within or around the site area. Desk-based research does however suggest there is some potential for below-ground archaeology, a qualified archaeologist should therefore be consulted to provide a desk-based assessment and a watching brief (if required).

¹ Email correspondence with MCC (24th February 2021).

3. POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is of relevance to the proposals as it provides specific protection for buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest, over and above that provided by development management.

As the site is located within the setting of the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area, **Section 72** of the Act is of relevance, as it states that local authorities should ensure while carrying out their planning function that *'special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that [conservation] area.'*

3.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021

The policies in the NPPF constitute the Government's view of what sustainable development in England means in practice. In these terms, development proposals which fail to give due weight to the conservation of heritage assets are deemed not to be sustainable development, and consequently should not be supported. This is because one of the key dimensions of sustainability is to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment (**NPPF paragraph 8, point c**).

The focus of the Government's planning policy guidance is to ensure that account is always taken of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses, consistent with their conservation (**NPPF paragraph 190, point a**).

The NPPF stresses that "great weight" should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets (**NPPF paragraph 199**), emphasising the need to avoid substantial harm in terms of: demolition, alteration, or the compromise of its setting. Substantial harm is broadly defined within the NPPF as having a fundamental impact on the significance of the heritage asset by means of its total loss, profound physical harm to its fabric, or the complete compromise of its setting.

It will be clear that any alteration or demolition of a heritage asset would have some impact on its fabric, and that it could be either beneficial, neutral or harmful. The fundamental design objective is to ensure that the balance of the impact on the heritage assets will minimise any negative impact on their significance.

Consequently, development works are required to be justified by clear and convincing evidence of the impact as presented in this Heritage Statement.

3.3 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (2014 and as subsequently amended)

The PPG is an online document which is amended as required by the Government. It provides current advice to assist with the interpretation of the NPPF. The section *"conserving and enhancing the historic environment"* of the current iteration of the PPG has been reviewed and referenced in the course of producing this Heritage Statement.

3.4 Local Planning Policy

Manchester's Core Strategy was adopted on the 11 July 2012 and is the key document in the Manchester Local Plan. The relevant, local heritage planning policy maintains the same focus as the NPPF. Manchester City Council's (MCC) heritage policies focus on the fundamental importance of *"preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment"*. The following policy from Manchester's Core Strategy are of importance to the heritage assets considered within this statement.

Policy EN3 (Heritage) states that throughout the City, MCC will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods. New developments must be designed to support MCC in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance.

3.5 Historic England's guidance.

In 2015 Historic England released three Good Practice Advice notes supporting the implementation of national policy and the related guidance in the PPG. The advice notes do not constitute a statement of Government policy itself, nor do they seek to prescribe a single methodology or particular data sources. Good Practice Advice Note 2 (Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment) and Good Practice Advice Note 3 (The Setting of Heritage Assets – as amended December 2017) were both utilised as part of this assessment in order to gain a full understanding of the relevant issues, alongside the NPPF and PPG.

As regards the approach to the impact assessment itself, the report takes account of Historic England's revised advice to the effect that *"as setting and views are matters of qualitative and expert judgement [...] technical analyses [...] 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."* This advice has informed the approach taken to the present report.

4. HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Introduction

This section of the report briefly analyses and interprets historic maps and primary and secondary information in order to provide a sound evidence base, placing the building in the context of the development of Chorlton, Manchester.

4.2 Brief historical background of the immediate context

The area in which the site is located, known today as 'Chorlton-cum-hardy', is bounded to the south and west by the River Mersey with its water meadows and defined by the long line of Barlow Moor Road which runs parallel to the east.

In the year 610 AD, the area was settled by Saxons who cleared it of its oak forest. The rural settlement comprised of four hamlets joined together to create a single parish. These hamlets were known as Chollerton, Hardie, Manslache or Martledge, and Hughend.

The name Chorlton is possibly derived from the Saxon Ceorlaton or Churl'stun, meaning the enclosure of the ceorls or peasants, or from Ceolfripton, meaning Ceolfip's enclosure. Either name refers to a woodland clearing, with the Latin word 'cum' meaning 'with'.

Over the following centuries, the small community slowly emerged into a township, but remained a quiet and secluded rural backwater until the mid-19th century. A railway station was established in the neighbouring area of Stretford in 1849, instigating development around High Lane and Edge Lane. The establishment of Wilbraham Road in 1869 created a new centre where it crossed Barlow Moor Road. The regular horse-drawn bus service to Manchester city centre started in the 1860s, and this further encouraged rapid growth within the area. A new village centre arose to the east of the green, centred on Beech Road.

It was not until 1880 that Chorlton acquired its own station, which subsequently prompted a great deal more high-quality homes being constructed in the area for affluent residents commuting to the city centre. Residential uses and supporting facilities such as shops, places of worship, hotels and schools were established in the latter half of the 19th century and the early part of the 20th century.

It was during this same period that records of Irish immigrants coming to work in the expanding industries of Manchester can be traced; principally working in small-scale horticulture, farming and domestic service. The community influenced the rising interest of Roman Catholicism within the area, and by the first decade of the 20th century, a church (St Augustine's) and convent school had been established on High Lane.

Further growth was aided by the arrival of Manchester Corporation's tramway before the First World War, when a terminus was built on Barlow Moor Road c.1907, a short distance south of the junction with High Lane.

4.3 Historical Development of the Site

Whilst the exact origins of the Masonic Hall (now the Chorlton Irish Club) are not known, the principal frontage of the building visible from High Lane appears to be a semi-detached property dating back to the 1870s. The building is visibly altered and extended to the rear, forming a linear plot which forms a common boundary with the site (currently comprising a surface car park to the rear).

The origins of the site can be traced back to the establishment of the 'Chorlton Masonic Lodge, No. 1387' which was formed in 1872 with 20 members (Freemasons) and rented accommodation in a village school room on the green before moving to the site at High Lane. Records indicate that in 1877, the Masonic Hall Company was formed *"for the purpose of erecting a building for Masonic purposes, club meetings, balls, soirees, concerts etc"*²

The earliest records for the Masonic Hall date to July 1878, when a *"foundation stone of the new building was laid by Dr Rains on July 27th 1878 on a site on High Lane and the building was opened on March 15th of the following year. It was a handsome structure of brick with stone facings in the gothic style of architecture.... The Directors formed a billiard club in connection with the hall, occupying the large hall on the ground floor"*.

It was around this time that the Bowling Green to the rear of the Hall was established, forming the distinct, square footprint of the site which is still present today.

The building was not however, strictly used by the Freemasons. Records from 1879 indicate that prior to the establishment of the Congregational Church at Barlow Moor Road (east of the site); religious services were held at the Masonic Hall until c.1883 (Figure 4, right).



Figure 4: Opening of Chorlton Congregational Church, 1883. The pamphlet notes that the services were previously held at the Masonic Hall (later Chorlton Irish Club) prior to the establishment of the church on Barlow Moor Road. **Source:** Manchester Archives.

² Ellwood, T.E, Bowling Greens, Chapter 26, History of Chorlton-cum-Hardy, South Manchester Gazette, May 15 1886

4.3.1 Formation of Chorlton Irish Club

The following section has been heavily informed by the ‘Irish Association History’, Silver Jubilee Programme.

Records of the ‘Irish Association’ in Manchester dates back to the mid-20th century, during which time, a large number of young Irish boys and girls were coming to England. Very few of them had either work or lodgings to go to. The Irish community in Manchester was very concerned about the welfare of these young people. The association pioneered a new structure for those who had immigrated from Ireland, finding them lodging and jobs.

The Irish Association wished to find suitable premises for a Club, which would form something of a headquarters. In late 1959 the Freemasons sought to privately sell their premises at 17, High Lane, Chorlton (**Figure 5, below**). In 1956, the building, grounds and assets were sold to the Chorlton Irish Association, with the purchase price of the Club having been almost entirely raised by contributions in the form of interest-free loans, from the founding members.



Figure 5: Former Masonic Hall at 17 High Lane (pictured here c.1959, when the building was used by the Irish Association). The principal façade fronts onto High Lane and is formed of two unequal bays, the left comprising a pitched gable. The east elevation is shown to have been heavily altered and extended, note the projecting, timber framed gable to the right of the image. **Source:** Manchester Image Archive.

Once the Club was purchased a lot of work needed to be done, as the building had remained empty for two years prior. A great deal of work was undertaken on a voluntary basis, including turning the bowling green into a car-park (the site). The Club was officially opened on Whit Friday 1960 by Alderman O'Donovan with Michael Connell in the Chair.

Records indicate that prior to these substantial works; Father L. Murray from St. John's Church, Chorlton, buried a Miraculous Medal in the front garden of the Club, and one in the centre of the bowling green prior to the installation of the carpark. It is worth recording that twenty-one years later Bishop Burke, the Auxiliary Bishop of Salford, with sixteen Priests and a huge congregation, celebrated Mass in a Marquee that was erected over the Medal in the carpark (**Figures 6 and 7, below**).

The most significant alterations to the building took place in 1975/76, when the association carried out major upgrading of the building, this consisted of new lounge, entrance hall, structural alterations, bars, dance floor, toilets, furniture, lighting, decoration on the ground floor, stairs, toilets, bars, furniture, lighting, decoration to the first floor.

The Club has been under the ownership of the Irish Association until c.2020.



Figure 6 (left): Congregation held within the car park c.1980s held in a marquee. **Figure 7 (right):** Rear (north) elevation of the Chorlton Irish Club pictured c.1980s, note the single storey entrance and double storey extension which was established during the mid-to-late 20th century; as part of the works to redevelop the building for the Irish Association. **Source:** 'Irish Association History', Silver Jubilee Programme.

4.3.2 Map Regression

Table 2: Historic Map Regression – NB: site boundary is indicative



Figure 8: OS Map Surveyed 1845, published 1848 - Historic mapping from the mid-19th century illustrates the land which encompasses the present-day site comprised a plot of undeveloped farmland to the south of High Lane. The map indicates some sparse development had begun to have been established in the area, principally formed of cottages and modest farmsteads. The principal thoroughfares of at this time are shown to have been laid out, with High Lane running east to west and Barlow Moor running north to south; Sandy Lane is evident to the east extending from the junction at 'Lane End'.



Figure 9: OS Map Surveyed: 1892, Published: 1894 - The OS Map above indicates that by 1894, the square plot of land in which the site is located had been developed into a bowling green which served the Masonic Hall to the immediate north. The Masonic Hall is believed to have been established in the 1870s, forming a linear building set back slightly from High Lane. The building is flanked by a neat row of terraced housing to the east. The site is shown to be further enclosed by neat rows of terraced housing to the west (Church Road), to the east (Sandy Lane), and to the south (Cross Road).

Table 2: Historic Map Regression – NB: site boundary is indicative

with Cross Road comprising a distinct array of semi-detached housing villas to the east. Note, the first phase of the Congregational Chapel to the east side of Barlow Moor Road is depicted on the map, just north of Lane End.



Figure 10: OS Map 1915, published 1922 (OS Map): This early 20th century map indicates no change to the site, which still comprises a bowling green. The immediate and wider area around the site does however, illustrate a great deal of change and redevelopment had occurred from the late-19th century to the early 20th century, principally to the west of the site is shown to be developed with new roads and terraced housing; including Wilton Road and Park Avenue (now Thornbridge Avenue). The early 20th century map is the first to depict the establishment of Beech Road Park to the immediate south of the site (labelled recreation ground); complete with a central bandstand. Beech Road Park was once known as Chorlton Recreational Ground. The park was originally sited south of Beech Road until 1896, when Lord Egerton gave the present site to the Council in 1904 when selling the original recreational ground for the development of housing.

Table 2: Historic Map Regression – NB: site boundary is indicative



Figure 11: Historic aerial view of the site (shaded red) c.1927, looking north. The site is shown in the context of the Masonic Hall (shaded blue) and Beech Road Park to the south. **Source:** EPW017620 ENGLAND (1927). Sandy Lane and environs, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, 1927.



Figure 12: Historic Image looking north-east across Beech Road Park towards the site (obscured from view). Note the distinct stone banding to the houses fronting onto Cross Road (right side of image), establishing a coherent architectural character. **Source:** Manchester Image Archive.

Table 2: Historic Map Regression – NB: site boundary is indicative



Figure 13: OS Map 1938, published 1947: Towards the mid-20th century, the site is shown to be little changed. The map illustrates the extent of the former Masonic Hall prior to the subsequent phases of redevelopment made in the late-20th century.

5. SIGNIFICANCE APPRAISAL

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of the significance appraisal is to use recognised criteria to assess the heritage significance and interest of the site and of the settings of the identified heritage assets which could be affected by the form of the proposed redevelopment of the site.

The significance appraisal will inform the subsequent Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) which considers the effects of the proposals in heritage terms upon the significance of the physical fabric and settings of the identified heritage assets. This in turn allows, in a planning policy context, the extent of “harm” upon any heritage asset incurred by the proposals to be established within the terms defined by the NPPF. In particular, the assessment of significance of setting informs the choice of heritage views which form a key part of the following visual impact assessment.

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 assessment of significance accords with the requirements of the NPPF and uses Historic England’s methodology outlined in its 2019 document, *“Statements of Heritage Significance”*. Historic England’s *“Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance”* 2008 and the revised guidance on *“Setting of Heritage Assets”* (as reissued in Dec. 2017) have also been acknowledged as part of the following assessment.

Consequently, 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 necessary and proportionate amount of information based on the perceived level of heritage significance (refer to **Table 7, Appendix I** for full definitions of heritage significance as defined in this present report).

5.3 Significance Appraisal - The Site

Historically, the site comprised a bowling green which served the Masonic Hall at 17 High Lane during the late-19th to early-20th century. The site remained unchanged for a number of decades until the 1950s when the Masonic Hall was purchased by the Irish Association and redeveloped into what is today known as the Chorlton Irish Club.

It was during this early redevelopment phase that the Bowling Green was overlaid to form a surface car park. Research sources do however suggest there may have been a 'Miraculous Medal' buried within the centre of the car park, which conveys some local historic and communal interest.

- **Archaeological Interest:** Negligible
- **Historic Interest:** Neutral
- **Architectural and Aesthetic Interest:** Neutral

5.4 Chorlton Irish Club

Interior was not inspected.

The former Masonic Hall at 17 High Lane (latterly Chorlton Irish Club) is situated to the immediate east of the site and shares a historical and spatial relationship with it. The principal entrance to the building is formed of an 1870s Victorian dwelling, which has been subjected to various and substantial phases of redevelopment. The principal façade fronting onto High Lane is formed of two-storeys with a single pitched gable to the second storey and two bay windows to the ground floor, flanking the main entrance. The building is constructed of polychromatic brick with a slate roof, all windows have been replaced with UPVC and the chimneys have been altered. The rear of the building is formed of a large, late-19th century 2-storey extension (established during the Masons occupation) with additional mid-to-late 20th century extensions made when the building was owned by the Irish Association.

The building is considered to be of limited architectural merit in its own right and lacks aesthetic interest due to the various fragmented extensions. It is however recognised that the building has been

something of a local landmark from the late-19th century to present day, representing a safe place for communal and religious values to be shared.

- **Archaeological Interest:** Negligible
- **Historic Interest:** Low
- **Architectural and Aesthetic Interest:** Negligible

5.5 Conservation Area

The site is located within the setting of the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation area.

The distinctive character and appearance of the Conservation Area is defined by historic street patterns and buildings which denote the evolution of the area from the early 19th century to present day. Landmark buildings within the area include the Lloyd's Hotel on the junction of Wilbraham Road and Manchester Road and St Clements Church on Edge Lane (both Grade II listed).

The outskirts of the Conservation Area are predominantly defined by neat rows of terraced housing, typically comprising of Manchester red / orange brick and buff sandstone. The domestic height and scale of these buildings offer a contrast to the much grander, Victorian villas which front onto Edge Lane. The trees and garden hedges to the front of properties make a significant contribution to the character of the street 'corridor'.

Negative components within the Conservation Area are identified as being predominantly related to the loss of original boundary walls, gateposts and their replacement.

The character-defining appearance of the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation area is however, largely maintained through the retention of historic buildings, mature greenery and street layouts. The Conservation Area is thus considered to be of **medium heritage significance**.

5.6 Statement of Significance

The site was historically a Bowling Green, which was developed in the late-19th century to serve the Masonic Hall at 17 High Lane.

The site comprises a surface car park which was created in the 1950s following the Irish Association's purchase of the adjacent property at 17 High Lane. Whilst the square footprint of the site is discernible, the ability to understand and appreciate the space as a bowling green has been inherently lost. Although the site has a clear relationship with the Chorlton Irish Club, the space is merely functional and yields **no heritage interest** in its own right. It is however recognised there is some potential for below-ground archaeology, albeit the significance of this is considered to be **negligible**.

At present, the surface car park is not viewed in conjunction with the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area and makes **no contribution** to its character and appearance.

6. HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 Measuring heritage impact

This assessment of the potential heritage impact principally concerns the visual (indirect) impact of the proposals upon the Chorlton Irish Club and the setting of the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation area. The contribution of the setting to significance in each case has thus 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 on the settings of the identified heritage assets. Where the proposed changes are considered to enhance the setting or appreciation of a heritage asset, the impact on its significance will be deemed to be beneficial. Conversely, where the Proposed Development is considered to compromise or diminish its positive heritage values 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: fabric, character, and appearance of the identified heritage asset, balanced against its relative significance. Please refer to **Table 4, Appendix I for relative significance / values used in this Heritage Statement.**

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 **Tables 5 and 6 (Appendix II and III)**, both direct heritage impacts (physical alteration or change in character) and indirect heritage impacts (such as the change to the setting of listed buildings), are set out in **Table 5 (Appendix II)**. 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*).

As Historic England’s Guidance Note on producing Statements of Heritage Significance makes clear, the reliance and use of tabulated matrices can lead to a reductionist approach when assessing the true ‘significance’ of impact. Consequently, the following impact assessment is formed of a 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.

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 and context of the identified 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.

Mitigation in respect of any adverse impact upon the setting, and / or the context of the identified listed buildings 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 (Iceini).

6.3 The Proposals

The proposed development comprises: *“The erection of a 29-unit residential development with associated vehicle and cycle parking, refuse stores and landscaping”*.

The proposals seek to redevelop the surface car park site and introduce a new 100% affordable housing development on the site. For details on the design and massing please refer to the Design and Access Statement (View Architects).



Figure 14: Proposed Site Plan. Approximate site area indicated in red. Source: View Architects

6.4 Visual Impact Assessment

Figure 15, below, provides a baseline map with the relative locations of key heritage viewpoints. A total of **3 heritage views** were agreed to be assessed for potential heritage impact. The selected views have been scoped in where; a) there is a baseline value to the view, in heritage terms, and b) where the proposed development was visible, and c) sensitive / key viewpoints which test whether the Proposed Development would be visible.

Figures 16 – 21, (Table 3) below provides before and after visuals of the Proposed Development within the context of the identified heritage assets.

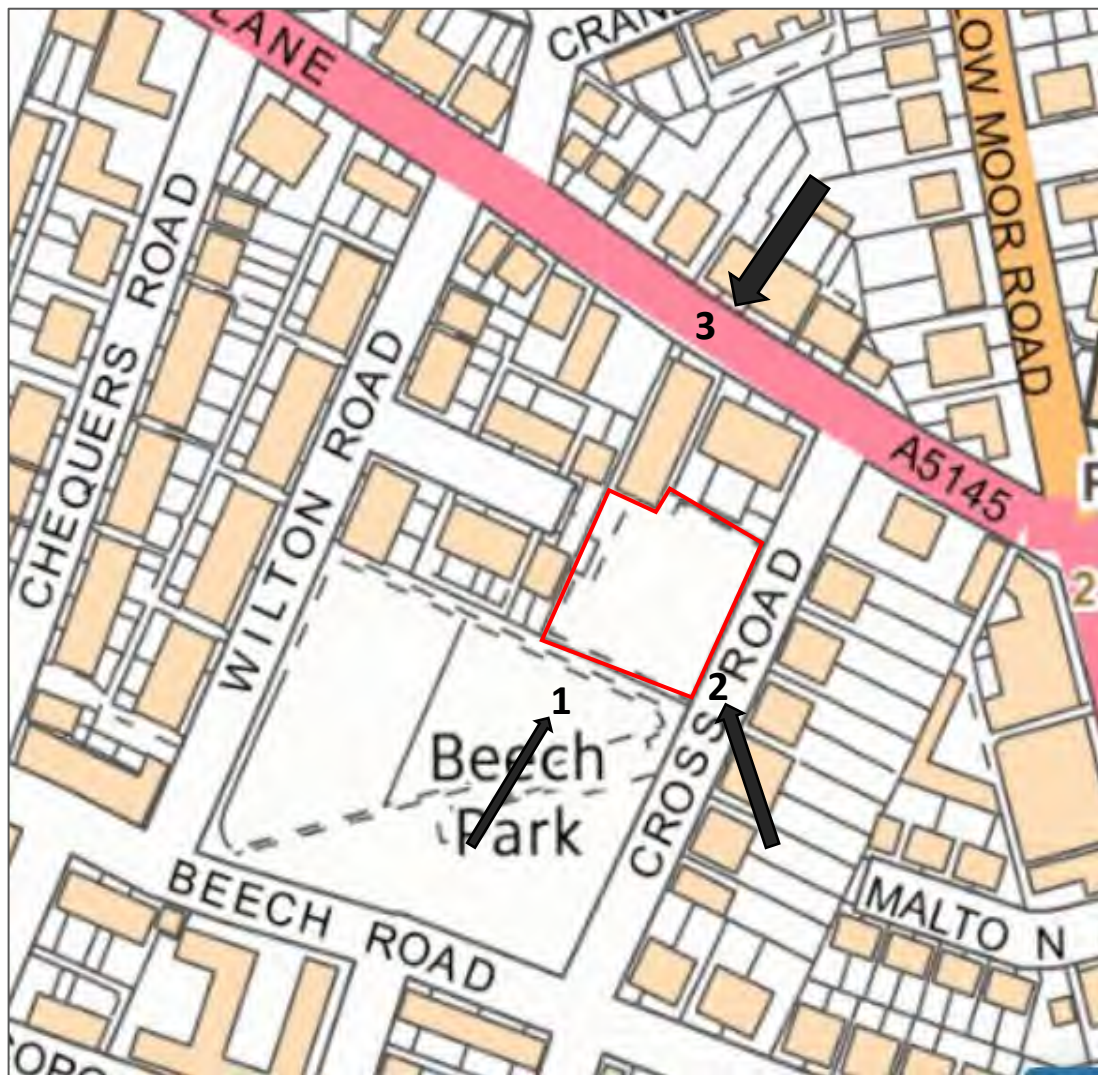


Figure 15: OS Map c.2021. Site indicated in red. Heritage views (1-3) identified and numbered.

Table 3: Existing and Proposed images of the Proposed Development**Figure 16: Viewpoint 1, Existing****Figure 17: Viewpoint 1, Proposed**

Viewpoint 1 – Existing: The baseline view is taken from Beech Road Park, looking north towards the Proposed Development Site. The railings in the foreground of the view denote the relative boundary between the site and the park. The Chorlton Irish Centre (former Masonic Hall) is visible in the middle distance, forming the only heritage asset in the view (non-designated).

The surface car park to the middle ground of the view comprises the Proposed Development Site. Whilst the space was historically designed to be a bowling green, the area has been utilised as a surface car park since the mid-20th century and retains very little sense of its former character and relationship to the principal building.

As the baseline view demonstrates, this is not the best place from which to appreciate the architectural and aesthetic interest of the heritage asset, which is better represented from High Lane. The various alterations and extensions made to the building detract from the ability to appreciate the historic relationship between the asset and the former bowling green space to the rear. These extensions have drastically altered the footprint of the building and create a fragmented architectural character.

Viewpoint 1 – Proposed: In the Proposed view, the development will be highly visible, forming a contemporary element in short-to-mid range views from Beech Road Park. The proposed design is distinctly modern in its approach, whilst taking subtle cues from the late-19th century buildings which enclose the park. In particular, the pitched gable roofline creates visual interest and breaks up the massing.

Whilst the development will limit views of the heritage asset from this location, as stated previously, this is not the best place from which to appreciate its significance. Further to this, the space to the rear of the asset has not been understood as a bowling green for over half a century. It should be noted that a number of houses already back onto the park, enclosing it to the north.

On balance, it is considered the overall impact upon the Chorlton Irish Club from Viewpoint 1 will be **neutral**. This does not necessarily equate to no visual change, rather that the resultant difference will be appropriately balanced. The proposal for the site will utilise a currently underutilised space within a prominent location for housing, in an area which has always been inherently residential in character.



Figure 18: Viewpoint 2, Existing



Figure 19: Viewpoint 2, Proposed

Viewpoint 2 – Existing: The baseline view is taken from the east side of Cross Road looking north-west towards the Site. The only heritage asset within the baseline view is Chorlton Irish Club, which is just visible to the centre of the image.

Mature trees and shrubbery obscure clear views of the building from this location, however, as above, this is not the best place from which to appreciate the architectural and aesthetic interest of the asset, which is better represented from High Lane.

The various alterations and extensions made to the building detract from the ability to appreciate the historic relationship between the asset and the former bowling green space to the rear. These extensions have drastically altered the footprint of the building and create a fragmented architectural character.

Viewpoint 2 – Proposed: The Proposed Development will be highly visible from short-range views to the north end of Cross Road, forming a contemporary new element into the street scene. Whilst the Proposed Development will demonstrably limit views of the Chorlton Irish Club from this location, it will principally screen those parts of the building which detract from its architectural and aesthetic interest.

Subsequently, although it is recognised that the Proposed Development will alter the ability to read the historic relationship between the heritage asset and the former bowling green to some degree, the space has not been understood as a bowling green for over half a century and yields no heritage interest in its own right. It is therefore considered the degree of change would alter, but not diminish, the intrinsic heritage interest of the identified heritage asset to any appreciable degree and would therefore have an overall **negligible adverse impact** on the setting of the heritage asset from Viewpoint 2.

Whilst the proposals will result in considerable visual change, the design has sought to be in keeping with the form and identity of the residential properties in the immediate area, whilst avoiding pastiche. The proposals seek to improve the pedestrian environment around the site, creating a more welcoming approach with new gate piers which takes cues from the historic gate piers which characterise the east side of Cross Road.



Figure 20: Viewpoint 3, Existing



Figure 21: Viewpoint 3, Proposed

Viewpoint 3 – Existing: The baseline view is taken from High Lane, looking south towards the Proposed Development Site, which currently comprises a surface car park, eclipsed from view to the rear. The Chorlton Irish Club forms the principal focus of the view, the late-19th century features and form of the building is well-represented to the immediate right of the image.

Whilst it is clear the building has been subject to alterations which detract from its overall interest (note the altered window and signage), the architectural integrity of the non-designated heritage asset is maintained through its form, scale and materiality. The existing site to the rear of the building currently makes no contribution to the view from High Lane.

Viewpoint 3 – Proposed: The Proposed Development is represented as a wireline in the view, with the form of the gable roofline plotted above the horizontal form of the proposed elevation.

The view has been selected to illustrate the degree of visual change (and potential impact) the proposals may incur on the setting of the non-designated heritage asset. It will be clear that whilst the Proposed Development will be seen in conjunction with the heritage asset, it will be read as a contemporary backdrop to the building and will not intrude upon the ability to appreciate its architectural interest to any significant degree.

The heritage asset will remain the prominent building within the view and retain its status within the street scene; despite the addition of a contemporary backdrop. It is therefore considered the degree of change would alter, but not diminish, the intrinsic heritage interest of the identified heritage asset to any appreciable degree and would therefore have an overall **negligible adverse impact** on the setting of the heritage asset from Viewpoint 3.

7. CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Introduction

It is a fundamental requirement of the NPPF that planning proposals contribute to the achievement of “*sustainable development*” (NPPF, 2021. Paragraph 8). In order to meet this key planning objective, it is essential that the Proposed Development avoids any unmitigated negative impact on surrounding 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 Parts 1 and 2 of this Heritage Statement.

The site is not located within a conservation area but is near to the 2007 extension to the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area. The site does not contain any Listed Buildings and is not within the setting of any Listed Buildings.

7.2 Overview of significance and impact

The site comprises a surface car park which was created in the 1950s following the Irish Association’s purchase of the adjacent property at 17 High Lane. Whilst the square footprint of the site is discernible, the ability to understand and appreciate the space as a bowling green has been inherently lost.

Whilst the site has a clear relationship with the Chorlton Irish Club (which has been identified by the LPA as a ‘non-designated heritage asset’), the space is merely functional and yields **no heritage interest** in its own right. It is however recognised there is some potential for below-ground archaeology, albeit the significance of this is considered to be negligible. At present, the surface car park is not viewed in conjunction with the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area and makes **no contribution** to its character and appearance.

The Proposed Development would introduce a contemporary development within the immediate setting of the Chorlton Irish Club, which has been identified by the LPA as a ‘non-designated heritage asset’. The foregoing Visual Impact Assessment has demonstrated in select views, the Proposed Development would have a **negligible adverse impact** upon the setting of the asset, this is principally due to the spatial quality to the rear of the building having a degree of significance.

It must however be recognised that the space has been utilised as a surface car park for a number of years, and currently does not make a positive contribution to the heritage asset. The Proposed Development addresses the need to redevelop the currently dilapidated and underused site at Cross Road. In regenerating the area and bringing the Site into active use, the proposals introduce a sense of cohesion and complement the existing character of this part of Chorlton, which has been defined by large, semi-detached Victorian villas since the late 19th century.

7.3 Balanced impact on the historic environment

The Proposed Development would present a carefully considered, contemporary-design, appropriate in scale and form to its location, while avoiding any unmitigated negative impact on the experience or appreciation of heritage assets within the immediate and wider area.

The development would deliver extensive public benefits whilst enhancing the character of the streetscape, which at present, is adversely impacted by gap sites. In the above terms, the Proposed Development positively addresses the core planning principles set out in paragraph 8 of the NPPF 2021. It is therefore considered the wider benefits of the proposals, which centre around affordable housing of high-quality design, should be taken into consideration in accordance with **NPPF Para.203**.

On balance, the proposals are thus considered to comply with the tests outlined in **NPPF Para. 203** and **Manchester's Core Strategy (2012), Policy EN3**.

REFERENCES

The following sources have been referenced and used to inform this report. Due to its name change all publications by English Heritage are referred to as Historic England.

1. Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas Act 1990.
2. Department of Communities and Local Government (2021). National Planning Policy Framework.
3. Department of Communities and Local Government (2019) Planning Practice Guide. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
4. Historic England (2019). Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management.
5. Historic England (2008). Conservation Principles. Policies and Guidance.
6. Historic England (2017). The setting of heritage assets.
7. Historic England (2016). Making Changes to Heritage Assets. Historic England Advice Note 2.
8. Historic England (2015). Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning. Note 2: Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment.
9. Historic England (2019). Statements of Heritage Significance.

APPENDICES

Appendix I: Definition of Significance Terms used in this Heritage Statement

Table 4: The hierarchy and definition of heritage significance relevant to the redevelopment of the Site (tailored from ICOMOS & Historic England 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, - and 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, - Unscheduled archaeological sites and landscapes of potential national interest 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.
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Appendix II: Assessing the Magnitude of Change or Impact

The magnitude of change or impact is assessed based upon a detailed understanding of how and to what extent the proposed development might impact the heritage asset.

The contribution of the setting to the value of the heritage asset is an integral component which also contributes to the overall value or significance of the asset. Which in turn, allows for the magnitude of direct and / or indirect heritage impact to be determined.

Table 5: 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 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 an identified heritage asset, or the setting of the 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	Negligible perceptible change to the character of an identified 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>	and its special architectural or 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 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 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. <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>	Development resulting in restoration or alterations to a designated heritage asset which comprises substantial restoration of its fabric and historic character and an enhancement of its cultural heritage interest.	Substantial improvement of the fabric and character of a designated 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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Appendix III: Assessing the Significance of Impact

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 6: Assessing the Significance of Impact

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



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