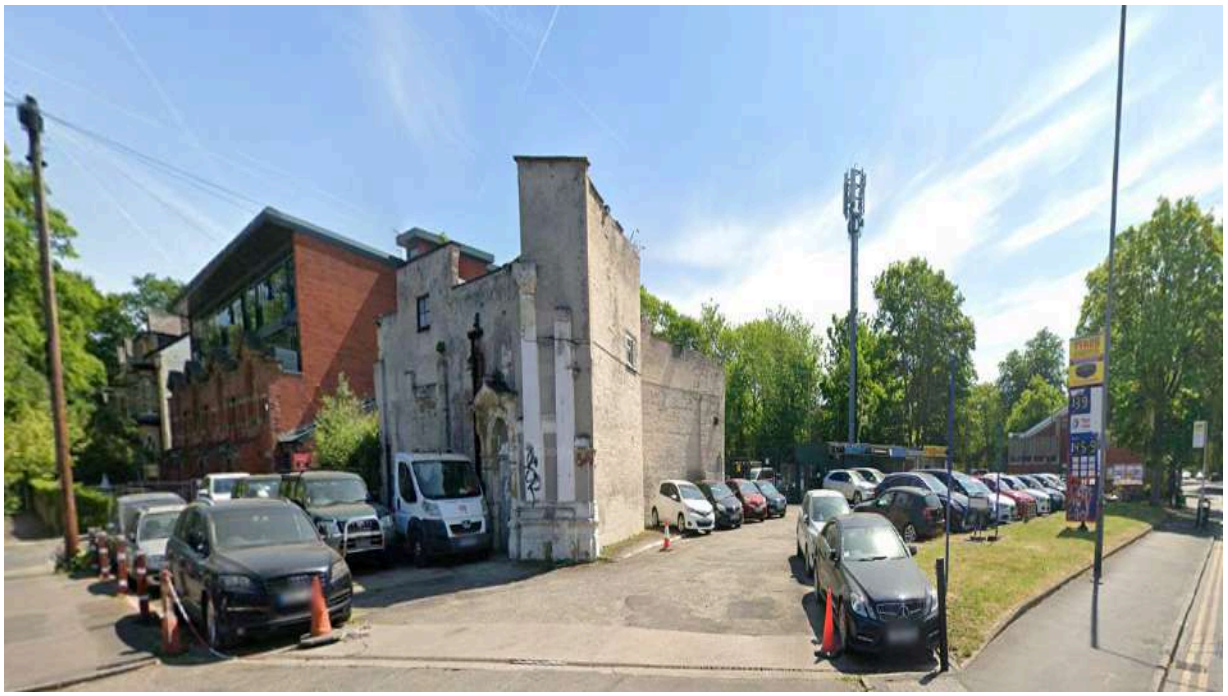
HOMZ

DESIGN | PLAN | BUILD

Heritage Statement

131 Withington Road in Whalley Range, Manchester, M16 8EE



Site Location:	131 Withington Road, Whalley Range, Manchester, M16 8EE
Date:	24/08/2026
Planning Authority:	Manchester City Council

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1 Introduction

1.1 Homz has been instructed by Salman Saeed (**"the Applicant"**) to prepare this Heritage Statement in support of an application for Full Planning Permission (ref. PLA-2026-000486), submitted to Manchester City Council (**"the Local Planning Authority"**), for the erection of mesh fencing to two areas of the garage forecourt at 131 Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8EE (**"the Site"**).

1.2 The Site is situated within the Whalley Range Conservation Area. Accordingly, the assessment considers the contribution made by the Site to the character, appearance and heritage significance of the Conservation Area, together with any other relevant heritage assets within the surrounding area.

1.3 This Heritage Statement has been prepared in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), relevant policies of the Manchester development plan, and relevant guidance published by Historic England.

1.4 The Statement provides a proportionate, desk-based assessment of the heritage significance of the Site and its historic context and assesses the likely heritage effects of the proposed development on the character, appearance and significance of the Whalley Range Conservation Area and any other relevant heritage assets.

1.5 This Heritage Statement has been prepared to:

- identify the designated and non-designated heritage assets relevant to the proposal;
- assess the significance, character and appearance of the Whalley Range Conservation Area;
- consider the contribution made by the Site and its setting to that significance;
- identify any other relevant heritage assets within the vicinity of the Site; and
- assess the effect of the proposed erection of mesh fencing to two areas of the garage forecourt on the character, appearance and significance of the Whalley Range Conservation Area and any other relevant heritage assets.

2 Site Characteristics and Significance

(1) Site Description and Context

2.1 The Site is located at 131 Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8EE, within the Whalley Range Conservation Area. It comprises garage premises with a substantial hard-surfaced forecourt used for vehicular access, manoeuvring and parking.



Figure 1: Application Site Location (Courtesy of Google Maps)

2.2 The existing Site contains a number of buildings of differing form and materials. A painted masonry building occupies a prominent position within the Site and is visible from Withington Road, with additional built development located towards the side and rear.

2.3 A substantial proportion of the Site comprises open hardstanding associated with the existing garage use. Vehicles are parked across the forecourt, which has a relatively open relationship with the adjoining highway.

2.4 The immediate surroundings of the Site have also undergone subsequent alteration and incorporate later buildings, structures, infrastructure and modern materials alongside surviving historic fabric. The proposal would therefore be experienced within an already altered and mixed townscape, rather than an intact nineteenth-century streetscape.

2.5 The adjoining Co-op site, immediately to the south of the Application Site, already incorporates tall, green coated welded-steel mesh security fencing with matching access gates. This establishes similar security fencing as an existing feature within the immediate streetscape. The open mesh construction retains visual permeability and has a functional,

utilitarian character appropriate to the commercial use of the adjoining site.



Figure 2: Existing fencing and access gate at the adjoining Co-op site

2.6 The Site fronts Withington Road, where the immediate streetscape includes the pavement, grassed verge, highway infrastructure and mature trees. Mature vegetation within the wider surroundings contributes to the established green and tree-lined character of the area.

2.7 The Site has a more utilitarian appearance than the predominantly residential character found across much of the wider Whalley Range Conservation Area, reflecting its longstanding garage and commercial use.

(2) Planning History

2.8 A review of Manchester City Council's online planning register has been undertaken to identify previous planning applications relating to the Site. The planning history is summarised below.

Ref no	Description	Decision Date	Decision
078552/FO/2006/S1	Retrospective Application for the erection of a 600mm blockwork wall with a 1.8 metre metal pallisade fence on top	06/04/2006	Refuse
088889/AOH/2009/S1	Retrospective application for the installation of a free standing internally illuminated double sided 6 sheet advertisement.	19/03/2009	Refuse
092755/FU/2010/S1	Use of land for a temporary period of 2 years as a hand car wash	10/8/2010	Refuse

099953/FO/2012/S1	Application for the upgrade of an existing telecommunications mast including the replacement of 3 No. antennas, the addition of a further 3 No. antennas and the installation of 1 No. 0.6m diameter dish.	12/09/2012	Approve
115379/FO/2017	Change of use of car sales area (sui generis) to hand car wash (sui generis) including installation of canopy and fencing	29/09/2017	Refuse
122999/FO/2019	Replacement of 17.5m high mast with 25m high mast supporting radio apparatus, plus ancillary works	26/04/2019	Withdrawn
124816/FO/2019	Replacement of 17.5m high mast with 25m high mast supporting radio apparatus, plus ancillary works	29/10/2019	Withdrawn

(3) Historic Development of the Site

2.9 Historic mapping demonstrates that the Site has undergone substantial physical and functional change over time.

2.10 The land was formerly occupied by Moss House, which the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record records as having been constructed in 1786. Moss House remained shown on historic mapping until the late nineteenth century, when it was demolished and the land was subsequently redeveloped.

2.11 The 1889 historic map shows the Site occupied by an extensive complex associated with the Manchester Carriage & Tramway Co.'s Depot. The depot comprised substantial built development extending across much of the Site, with a considerably denser arrangement of buildings than exists today.

2.12 The depot continued to occupy the Site into the early twentieth century. Following the cessation of its original tramway-related use, the buildings were subsequently adapted for a range of commercial purposes.

2.13 By 1951, historic mapping identifies a substantial part of the former depot complex as a Garage, with a Laundry adjoining it. The mapping demonstrates that a considerable proportion of the earlier built form remained at this time, although its use had changed.

2.14 Subsequent redevelopment and demolition resulted in the progressive loss of much of the former depot complex. The Site today contains substantially less built development than shown on the nineteenth- and mid-twentieth-century mapping, with a large proportion of the land now forming the open hard-surfaced garage forecourt.

(4) Heritage Assets and Historic Environment Record

2.15 The Historic England National Heritage List for England (NHLE) and the Heritage Gateway were reviewed to identify designated and non-designated heritage assets within the vicinity of the Site. The findings have informed the assessment of the significance of

the surrounding historic environment and the potential effects of the development on nearby heritage assets and their settings.

Historic England

2.16 A review of the Historic England National Heritage List for England (NHLE) confirmed that there is no designated heritage assets within 100 metres of the application site.

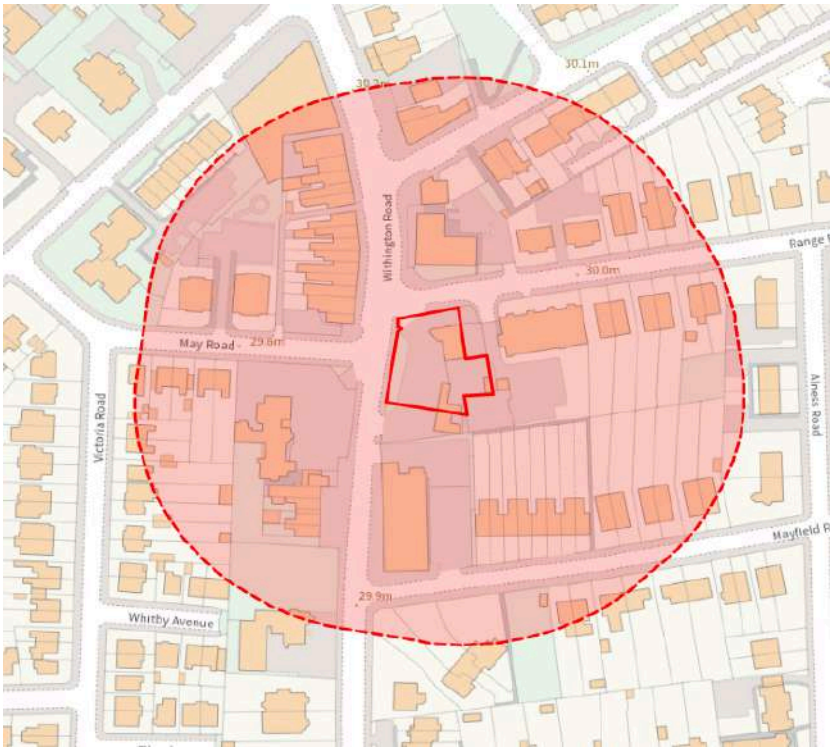


Figure 3: Heritage Assets Within a 100 m Radius of the Application Site (Source: Historic England)

Heritage Gateway

2.17 A search of the Heritage Gateway was undertaken to identify known heritage assets and historic environment records within 100 metres of the Application Site. Heritage Gateway provides access to records held by national and local heritage organisations, including archaeological sites, historic buildings and historic landscapes. The search identified three relevant records held within the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record (HER) within this search area.

Greater Manchester HER (Local Historic Environment Record)

2.18 The identified assets and heritage interests are recorded on the Greater Manchester HER and are non-designated. They are not statutorily designated heritage assets and are not identified as locally listed heritage assets. Their inclusion on the HER nevertheless provides evidence of their archaeological, architectural and/or historic interest, and they have therefore been considered proportionately within this Heritage Statement.

2.19 The relevant Greater Manchester HER records are as follows:

1) Manchester Carriage and Tramway Company's Depot (Withington Road Depot)

2.20 The Manchester Carriage and Tramway Company's Depot (Withington Road Depot) (HER 17358.1.0) is also recorded within the Application Site.

2.21 The HER records the depot on an Ordnance Survey Town Plan published in 1891, occupying the junction of Withington Road and Range Road. Tram access was provided from the splayed corner at this junction.



Figure 4: Ordnance Survey Town Plan, Published in 1891
(Source: National Library of Scotland)

2.22 The depot remained substantially in the same layout on Ordnance Survey mapping published in 1907 and 1922, although it was no longer specifically annotated as a tramway depot.

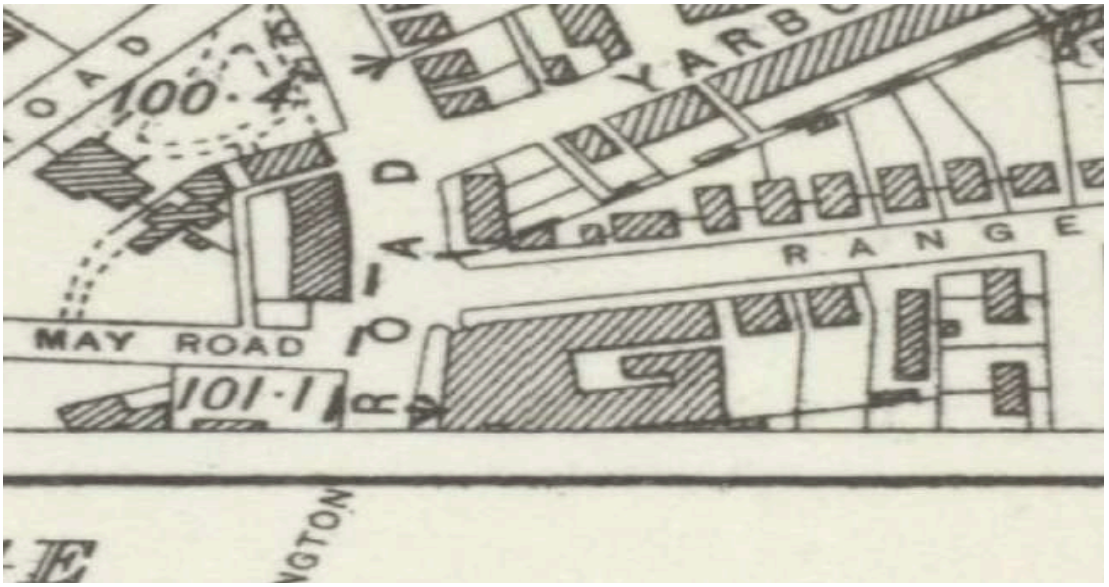


Figure 5: Ordnance Survey Town Plan, Published in 1923
(Source: National Library of Scotland)

2.23 By 1950, the former depot buildings had been repurposed for a number of uses, including an Ice Cream Factory, Laundry and Garage. This accords with the 1951 historic mapping reviewed as part of this assessment, which identifies Garage and Laundry uses across the Site.

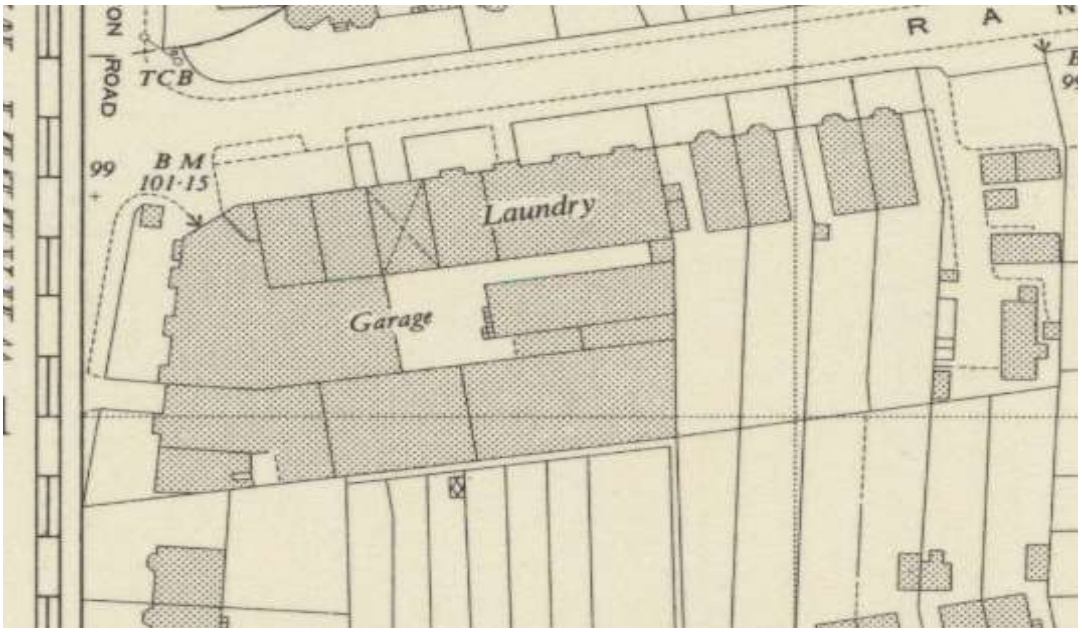


Figure 6: National Grid Map, Published in 1891
(Source: National Library of Scotland)

2.24 The HER records that by 1973, the western end of the building fronting Withington Road had been demolished to accommodate new development associated with the garage use. The remaining parts of the former depot accommodated a range of commercial activities, including a Laundry, Carpet Cleaners, Shopfitters and Welders.

2.25 A review undertaken for the Greater Manchester HER in February 2023 confirmed that the majority of the former depot had been cleared, at least above ground. A roofed and occupied remnant was nevertheless recorded fronting Range Road, incorporating fabric which originally formed the depot office and one set of stables.







Figures 7, 8, 9 and 10: Range Garage in 1962 and 2014[1]

2.26 The surviving fabric and the documented historic development of the depot provide evidence of the Site's former role in Manchester's transport history. However, the substantial loss of the wider depot complex has reduced the extent to which its original form and layout can now be appreciated.

2.27 Following the cessation of its former tramway function, the depot buildings were adapted for a range of commercial uses, including a garage, laundry, ice cream factory, carpet cleaners, shopfitters and welders. The Site remains in use as garage premises today.



Figure 11: Current Site Condition

[1] https://chorltonhistory.blogspot.com/2017/05/on-range-road-in-whalley-range-with.html?m=1



Figure 12: Site Location

2) Shop and Hall, including former Police Station, Withington Road

2.28 The HER also records the Shop and Hall, including former Police Station, Withington Road (HER 2225.1.0) within the surrounding area.

2.29 The building is described as a predominantly red-brick building of 1930s character, comprising commercial premises with an adjoining hall. The HER records that it was constructed adjoining an earlier terrace of three shops first shown on mapping dating from the 1920s.

2.30 The southern part of the building was subsequently identified as a police station on mapping dating from 2006, although it was no longer in that use by the time of the HER's later review.

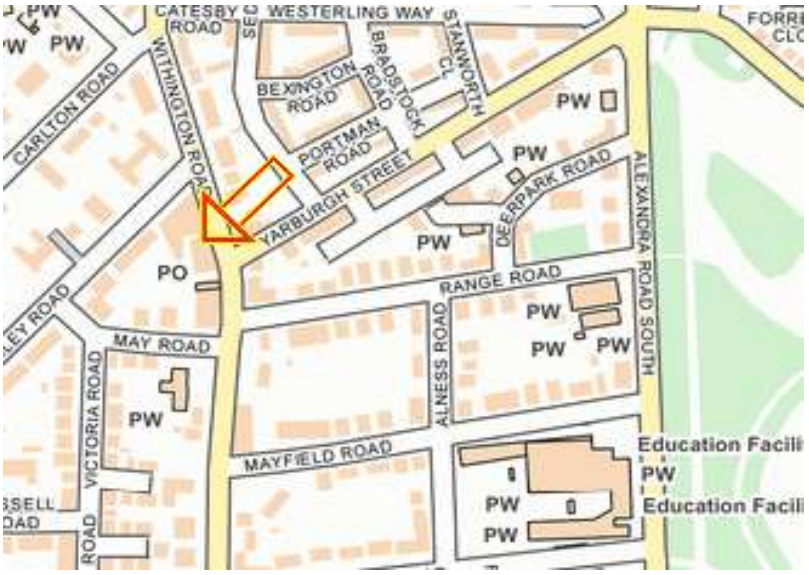


Figure 13: Site Location

3) Moss House (site of)

2.31 Moss House (HER 2226.1.0) is recorded within the Application Site. The HER records that Moss House was constructed in 1786 and remained shown on mapping until the 1880s/1890s, when it was demolished and replaced by a block of buildings.

2.32 The HER further records that the later buildings subsequently became associated with the tramway depot and were later adapted to accommodate garage and laundry uses during the twentieth century.

2.33 No above-ground remains of Moss House itself are identified within the present Site. Its significance is therefore principally archaeological and historic, providing evidence of the occupation and development of the land prior to the establishment of the tramway depot.

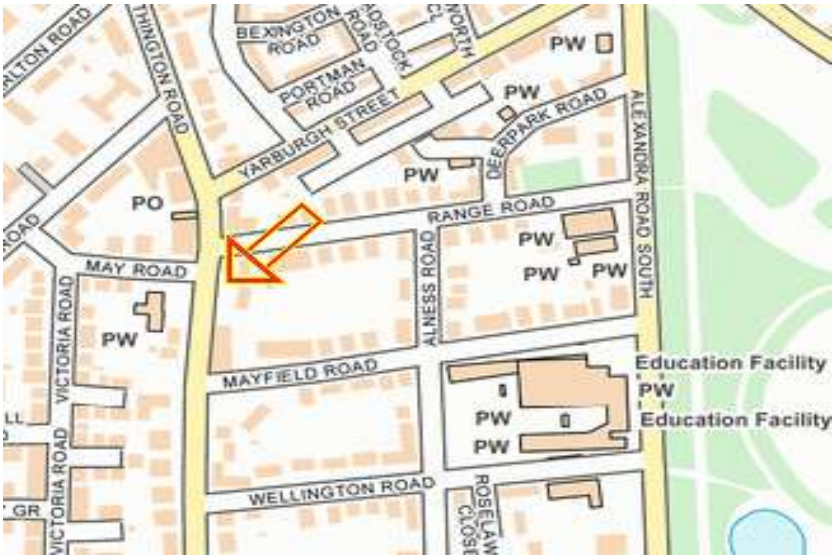


Figure 14: Site Location

(5) Whalley Range Conservation Area

2.34 The Site lies within the Whalley Range Conservation Area, which Manchester City Council identifies as one of Manchester's early suburban residential developments.

2.35 During the Industrial Revolution, Manchester expanded beyond the historic city centre into surrounding townships and newly established suburban areas. Whalley Range was developed as one of these early suburbs and was conceived by Samuel Brooks as a residential estate providing an alternative to the increasingly congested industrial city.

2.36 The estate was laid out between two earlier farm tracks, now known as Withington Road and Upper Chorlton Road. The tree-lined avenues of Dudley Road, Whalley Road and Chorlton Road formed the basis of the historic estate layout.

2.37 Manchester City Council describes the present-day Conservation Area as retaining much

of the layout established by Samuel Brooks, characterised principally by large houses set along tree-lined avenues. Many original houses remain, although the area has also experienced redevelopment, conversion and the construction of later buildings.

2.38 The Council identifies a number of buildings of particular architectural interest within the Conservation Area, including the former Lancashire Independent College, St Bede's College, St Edmund's Church and the Church of St Margaret.

2.39 The Council also specifically identifies Nos. 4–14 Withington Road, comprising three pairs of stucco villas, as a distinct architectural group. The central pair are Gothic in character, with Italianate-style pairs positioned to either side.

2.40 More generally, the architectural character of Whalley Range is defined by substantial nineteenth-century buildings employing traditional materials including red or orange-red brick, stone dressings and blue slate roofs, together with decorative brickwork, moulded architectural details and vertically proportioned windows.

2.41 Mature trees and landscaping are also integral to the character of the Conservation Area, reinforcing the spacious and verdant qualities of the historic suburban layout.

2.42 Manchester City Council identifies the retention of the character and quality of both buildings and the spaces between them as an important objective of Conservation Area designation. Development is expected to respond appropriately to the wider context and to maintain harmony in relation to matters including scale, materials and appearance.

2.43 The Council's guidance also identifies traditional boundary treatments as a characteristic feature of Whalley Range. Boundary walls are typically formed in stone or brick, frequently accompanied by evergreen hedging, while surviving historic gateposts are encouraged to be retained.

2.44 The Application Site differs from the predominantly residential nineteenth-century character which defines much of the Conservation Area. Its historic development as a carriage and tramway depot, followed by a succession of garage and other commercial uses, has resulted in a more utilitarian character, while later demolition has created the extensive open forecourt which forms a prominent component of the Site today.

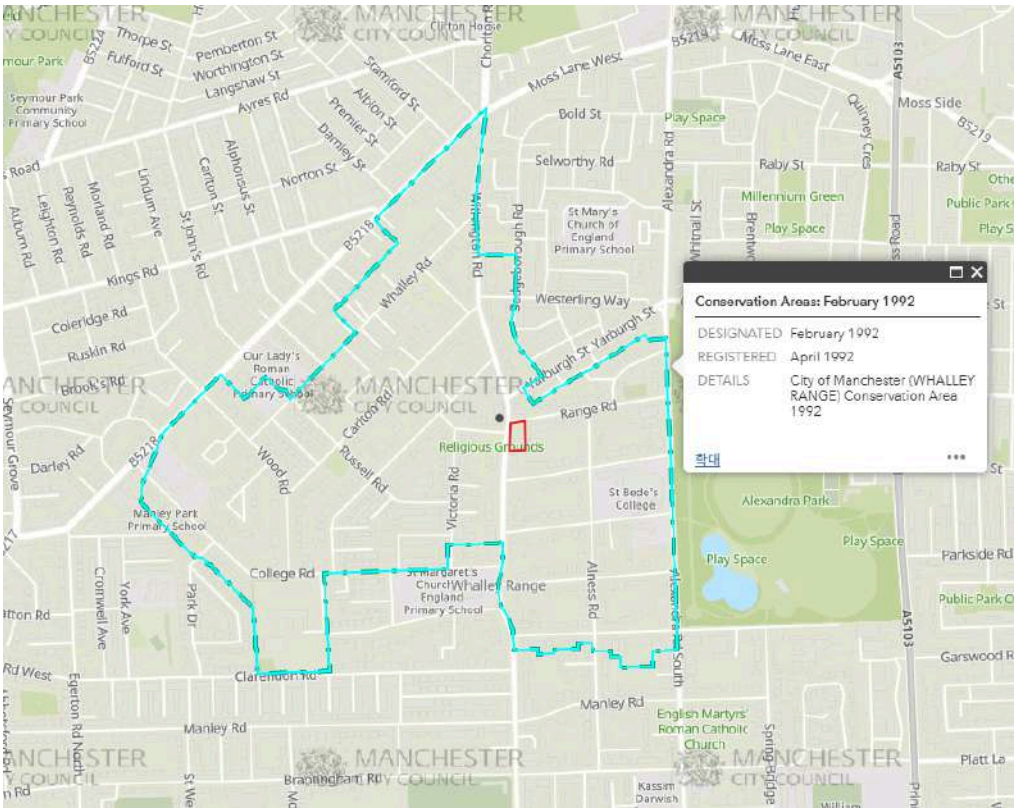


Figure 15: Conservation Area Map

(6) Significance of the Application Site

Architectural / Aesthetic Significance

2.45 The architectural and aesthetic significance of the Site is derived partly from its location within the Whalley Range Conservation Area and its relationship with the established townscape of Withington Road.

2.46 The Site itself differs from the principal architectural character identified by Manchester City Council across much of Whalley Range. Whereas the wider Conservation Area is principally characterised by substantial nineteenth-century houses, landscaped plots and traditional architectural detailing, the Site is defined by its garage use, open hardstanding, vehicle parking and more utilitarian built form.

2.47 Historic mapping demonstrates that the Site previously contained a substantially more extensive and coherent group of buildings associated with the Manchester Carriage and Tramway Company's Depot. The subsequent demolition and alteration of much of this complex has significantly reduced the architectural legibility of the former depot.

2.48 The Greater Manchester HER nevertheless confirms the survival of a roofed and occupied remnant of the former depot fronting Range Road, incorporating fabric which originally formed the depot office and one set of stables. This surviving element provides a tangible architectural connection with the former use of the Site.

2.49 The architectural and aesthetic significance of the Site is therefore considered to derive primarily from the surviving historic fabric associated with the former depot, together with the Site's relationship with the wider Conservation Area. This significance has been reduced by the extensive alteration and loss of the original depot complex.

2.50 Mature trees and vegetation around the Site also contribute positively to the wider green and tree-lined character identified by Manchester City Council as an important characteristic of Whalley Range.

Historic Significance

2.51 The Site has clear historic significance arising from its documented evolution and the successive phases of development represented by Moss House, the Manchester Carriage and Tramway Company's Depot, and the later commercial uses of the former depot buildings.

2.52 Moss House, constructed in 1786, represents the earliest documented phase of occupation identified through the HER evidence and predates the nineteenth-century suburban development of Whalley Range.

2.53 The subsequent redevelopment of the Site as the Manchester Carriage and Tramway Company's Withington Road Depot represents a significant later phase in the Site's history. The depot's location at the junction of Withington Road and Range Road, together with its dedicated tram access, illustrates the Site's historic relationship with the development of Manchester's transport infrastructure.

2.54 The continued use and adaptation of the depot buildings after the original tramway use ceased also contributes to the Site's historic interest. Historic mapping and the HER demonstrate successive twentieth-century uses including a Garage, Laundry, Ice Cream Factory, Carpet Cleaners, Shopfitters and Welders.

2.55 The Site has undergone substantial demolition and alteration, reducing the physical legibility of these earlier phases. Nevertheless, the surviving former depot fabric and the documentary evidence provided by historic mapping and the HER allow the Site's historic development to remain understood.

2.56 The Site also has wider historic contextual value through its location on Withington Road, one of the historic routes between which the Whalley Range estate was laid out.

2.57 Overall, the Site is considered to possess historic significance, principally through its documented association with the Manchester Carriage and Tramway Company's Depot and the evolution of transport and commercial uses on the land from the late nineteenth century onwards.

Communal Significance

2.58 The Site forms part of the Whalley Range Conservation Area, whose distinctive historic townscape, mature landscaping, tree-lined streets and surviving nineteenth-century buildings contribute to the established identity of the local area.

2.59 The former use of the Site as the Manchester Carriage and Tramway Company's Withington Road Depot also provides a historic association with the development of public transport in Manchester and contributes to an understanding of the evolution of this part of Withington Road.

2.60 The Site has subsequently maintained a longstanding commercial and garage-related function, forming part of the everyday streetscape of Withington Road.

2.61 No specific evidence identified through the desk-based assessment demonstrates that the Application Site itself possesses particular commemorative, social or community associations which would confer a distinct level of communal significance. Its communal value is therefore principally associated with its contribution to the wider Conservation Area and its documented local transport and commercial history.

3 Description of Proposed Development

Overview

3.1 The proposed development comprises the erection of V-mesh security fencing to two separate areas within the existing garage forecourt at 131 Withington Road.

Materials and Appearance

3.2 The proposed fencing would comprise 2-metre-high anti-climb V-mesh security panels, with individual panels measuring approximately 3 metres in width by 2 metres in height. The fencing would have a green powder-coated finish.

3.3 Each of the two enclosed areas would incorporate gated access, with the same fencing specification used throughout to provide a consistent boundary treatment.

3.4 The open mesh construction would retain a degree of visual permeability, allowing views through the fencing while providing a secure enclosure to the two areas of the garage forecourt.



Figure 16: Proposed Development Plan

Proposed Area 1

3.5 Gated Fenced Area 1 would be located within the northern part of the Site, adjacent to Range Road. The proposed fencing would enclose a defined area of the existing forecourt, with fencing extending along the northern, eastern and western boundaries of the enclosure and incorporating gated access.

3.6 The enclosure would be situated entirely on existing hardstanding and would comprise 2-metre-high green powder-coated V-mesh security fencing, providing an open and visually permeable form of boundary treatment rather than a solid enclosure. It would be positioned immediately adjacent to the surviving remnant of the former Manchester Carriage and Tramway Company's Depot (Withington Road Depot) identified within the Greater Manchester HER.

Proposed Area 2

3.7 Gated Fenced Area 2 would be located within the western part of the Site, adjacent to Withington Road. The proposed fencing would enclose a separate area of existing hardstanding, with fencing extending along the northern, southern and western boundaries of the enclosure and incorporating gated access.

3.8 The enclosure would comprise the same 2-metre-high green powder-coated V-mesh security fencing as Area 1, providing a consistent form of boundary treatment across both proposed areas.

4 Relevant Planning and Heritage Policy Context

Statutory duty

4.1 Section 72(1) of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* requires that, in the exercise of planning functions in relation to buildings or land within a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

National Policy

4.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (August 2026) is a material consideration in the determination of this application. The following sections are of particular relevance:

- **Section 20 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment**

4.3 **HE4 – Securing the conservation of heritage assets**
Policy HE4 requires heritage assets to be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. Proposals should maintain or secure a use consistent with conservation and should avoid, or where this is not possible minimise, harm to heritage significance.

4.4 **HE5 – Assessing effects on heritage assets**
Policy HE5 requires proposals affecting heritage assets to be supported by a proportionate assessment of their significance and the potential effects of development upon that significance and setting. The assessment should identify whether the proposal would result in a positive effect, no effect or harm to significance.

4.5 **HE6 – Proposals affecting designated heritage assets**
Policy HE6 requires substantial weight to be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets. Proposals having a positive effect should be supported, while any identified harm must be given considerable importance and weight.

4.6 **Policy HE7 – Decisions on Non-Designated Heritage Assets**

Policy HE7 requires decision-makers to assess the effect of development on the significance of non-designated heritage assets and, where harm is identified, undertake a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of that harm or loss, the significance of the asset, and the benefits of the proposal.

4.7 **HE9 – Conservation Areas**
Policy HE9 requires development within or affecting a conservation area to retain and conserve buildings and features making a positive contribution and to take account of the area's special architectural and historic interest. Proposals conserving positive elements should be supported.

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

4.8 The *National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)* provides further guidance on the conservation and management of the historic environment.

4.9 Conservation is defined as an active process of maintenance and managing change, requiring a flexible and thoughtful approach to ensure heritage assets remain in viable and appropriate use (Paragraph: 002, Reference ID: 18a-002-20190723). Sympathetic alterations may therefore be necessary to support the continued use and long-term conservation of such assets.

4.10 The NPPG identifies that the significance of heritage assets may derive from archaeological, architectural, artistic, or historic interest (Paragraph: 006, Reference ID: 18a-006-20190723).

4.11 It further advises that where harm to a designated heritage asset is identified, it must be balanced against the public benefits of the proposal (Paragraph: 020, Reference ID: 18a-020-20190723). Public benefits may include:

- Sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset;
- Reducing risks of neglect or decay; and
- Securing the optimum viable use of a building consistent with its conservation.

Historic England Guidance

4.12 Relevant guidance published by Historic England has also been taken into account in the preparation of this assessment.

4.13 *Making Changes to Heritage Assets (Historic England Advice Note 2)* emphasises that change is acceptable where it is informed by an understanding of significance, is proportionate to the asset's characteristics, and is justified in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, particularly where it supports the continued use and long-term conservation of the building.

4.14 *Good Practice Advice Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment* highlights that heritage significance may be understood through a range of values, including aesthetic, communal, historic and evidential value.

4.15 *Good Practice Advice Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets* provides a framework for assessing the impact of development on the setting of heritage assets, including consideration of their curtilage, surroundings and wider context. These principles have informed the assessment of the site and its surroundings.

Local Plan

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan 2022–2039

4.16 The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan 2022–2039 (PfE) was adopted with effect from 21 March 2024 and forms part of the statutory Development Plan for Manchester. It therefore forms part of the policy framework against which the application is to be determined.

4.17 Policy JP-P2 – Heritage seeks the positive conservation, sustaining and enhancement of Greater Manchester's historic environment, heritage assets and their settings. It requires the significance of heritage assets to be considered through the planning and design process and seeks the integration of heritage conservation with contextual design responses which contribute positively to significance and sense of place.

Manchester Core Strategy 2012–2027

4.18 The Manchester Core Strategy 2012–2027 was adopted on 11 July 2012 and continues to form part of the Manchester Local Plan. Following the adoption of Places for Everyone in March 2024, elements of a number of Core Strategy policies were replaced and the Core Strategy should therefore be read alongside the 2024 Addendum.

4.19 The following policies are of particular relevance to the proposed development:

4.20 **Policy EN1 – Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas**, which requires development to respond to its context, reinforce local character and distinctiveness and have regard to the strategic character area within which it is located;

4.21 **Policy EN3 – Heritage**, insofar as it remains extant following the adoption of Places for Everyone and the 2024 Core Strategy Addendum; and

4.22 **Policy DM1 – Development Management**, which requires consideration of matters including siting, layout, scale, form, materials and detail; the effect of development on the character and appearance of its surroundings; community safety and crime prevention; and effects relating to archaeological and built heritage.

Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (1995)

4.23 Although much of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan (UDP) has been superseded by the Core Strategy and Places for Everyone, a number of policies remain extant and continue to form part of the Development Plan.

4.24 **Saved Policy DC18.1 – Conservation Areas**, which requires particularly careful consideration to be given to development within conservation areas and seeks to preserve and enhance their character. Relevant considerations include the relationship of

new structures to neighbouring buildings and spaces, the retention of existing features such as boundary walls, gardens and trees, and any area-specific guidance adopted by the Council.

Whalley Range Conservation Area Guidance

4.25 Manchester City Council's guidance for the Whalley Range Conservation Area is also a material consideration in assessing the proposal. The Council advises that development should respond to the wider context and respect the area's special architectural and visual qualities.

4.26 The Council identifies the retention of the character and quality of both buildings and the spaces between them as an important objective of the Conservation Area. Its guidance also identifies traditional stone and brick walls, frequently supplemented by evergreen hedging, as characteristic boundary treatments within the area.

5 Heritage Impact Assessment

(1) Assessment Methodology

5.1 The following assessment considers the effects of the proposed development on the significance of the heritage assets identified within and surrounding the Site. This includes the Whalley Range Conservation Area as a designated heritage asset, together with the non-designated heritage assets and archaeological interests identified through the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record (HER).

5.2 The assessment has been informed by the significance assessment set out above and by a proportionate desk-based assessment, including review of historic mapping, the National Heritage List for England, the Greater Manchester HER, Manchester City Council's Conservation Area guidance and available photographic evidence. Regard has also been given to Historic England GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets.

5.3 The Greater Manchester HER identifies three relevant records which have been carried forward for assessment: the Manchester Carriage and Tramway Company's Depot (Withington Road Depot) (HER 17358.1.0) and Moss House (site of) (HER 2226.1.0) within the Application Site, together with the Shop and Hall, including former Police Station, Withington Road (HER 2225.1.0) within the surrounding area.

5.4 In accordance with Policy HE5 of the NPPF, the assessment considers the effect of the proposal on heritage significance. Where an adverse effect is identified, the degree of harm is assessed in accordance with Appendix 1. For non-designated heritage assets, regard is also given to the balanced judgement required by Policy HE7.

(2) Effect on the Whalley Range Conservation Area

Significance and Existing Context

5.5 The Whalley Range Conservation Area is a designated heritage asset. Its significance derives principally from its historic suburban development, substantial nineteenth-century buildings, landscaped plots, mature trees and tree-lined streets, together with traditional architectural materials and boundary treatments.

5.6 The character of the Conservation Area is not uniform. While substantial areas retain their historic residential character, the wider townscape has also experienced later redevelopment and the introduction of modern buildings, structures, infrastructure and materials.

5.7 The Application Site is itself distinct from the predominantly residential character of the wider Conservation Area. Its former use as a carriage and tramway depot, followed by garage and other commercial uses, has resulted in a more utilitarian character defined by

extensive hardstanding, vehicle parking and buildings of differing age, form and materials. The immediate surroundings similarly contain a mixture of historic and later development.

Impact and Degree of Harm

5.8 Both proposed fenced areas would be located within the existing hard-surfaced garage forecourt. The proposal would not alter the established use of the Site, its relationship with the surrounding road network or the wider pattern of development within the Conservation Area.

5.9 The proposal would nevertheless introduce 2-metre-high fencing into parts of the forecourt which are presently relatively open. Gated Fenced Area 2 would be experienced in association with the Withington Road frontage, while Gated Fenced Area 1 would introduce enclosure towards Range Road.

5.10 Manchester City Council's Conservation Area guidance identifies traditional stone and brick walls, frequently supplemented by evergreen hedging, as characteristic boundary treatments. The proposed V-mesh fencing would not replicate these traditional forms and would therefore introduce a contemporary and more utilitarian treatment.

5.11 The effect must, however, be considered in the context of the established garage use and the degree of previous alteration within the Site and its surroundings. The fencing would not be introduced into an otherwise wholly intact nineteenth-century residential frontage, nor would it replace an identified historic boundary feature.

5.12 The open V-mesh construction would retain visual permeability into and across the forecourt and would avoid the greater visual mass and sense of enclosure associated with a solid wall or opaque boundary. The green powder-coated finish would provide a consistent and comparatively recessive appearance within a townscape which already contains later materials and infrastructure.

5.13 A similar form of security enclosure is already present at the adjoining Co-op site immediately to the south of the Application Site, comprising tall, dark green coated welded-steel mesh fencing and a matching mesh access gate (Figure 2). Although associated with a separate commercial use, this boundary treatment forms part of the immediate visual context of the Site. The proposed fencing would therefore be visually compatible with an established form, material and colour of security treatment within the immediate surroundings, rather than introducing an entirely unfamiliar feature into the local townscape.

5.14 The proposal would not result in the loss of any identified historic building, mature tree or positive landscape feature, nor would it alter the historic street pattern, skyline or principal nineteenth-century buildings which contribute to the wider significance of the Conservation Area.

5.15 The fencing would also be capable of removal without fundamental alteration to the spatial arrangement of the garage forecourt. While reversibility does not remove the adverse effect while the fencing is present, it limits its permanence and overall degree.

5.16 The proposal would therefore result in a minor and localised adverse effect, principally through the introduction of contemporary fencing and a modest reduction in the openness of parts of the forecourt. This effect would occur within an already altered and utilitarian part of the Conservation Area.

5.17 The effect upon the significance of the Whalley Range Conservation Area is therefore assessed as Low Harm. The proposal would not seriously affect any key element of its significance and would remain well below the threshold of Substantial Harm.

(3) Effect on Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Manchester Carriage and Tramway Company's Depot (Withington Road Depot)

5.18 The Manchester Carriage and Tramway Company's Depot (HER 17358.1.0) is recorded within the Application Site. Its significance derives principally from its association with Manchester's transport history and from the surviving fabric which provides tangible evidence of the former depot complex.

5.19 Much of the original depot has been demolished and its former layout is no longer fully legible. The Greater Manchester HER nevertheless records a surviving roofed remnant fronting Range Road, incorporating the former depot office and one set of stables.

5.20 Gated Fenced Area 1 would be positioned immediately adjacent to this surviving remnant and would therefore introduce a contemporary feature within its immediate setting. No surviving depot fabric would, however, be demolished, removed or altered.

5.21 The open V-mesh construction would retain views through the enclosure and avoid creating a solid visual barrier. The surviving remnant would continue to be capable of being viewed and understood in relation to Range Road and the wider Site.

5.22 The effect upon the significance of the former depot is therefore assessed as **Low Harm**, arising principally through localised change within its immediate setting. The harm would be limited by the already altered character of the Site, the visual permeability of the fencing and its reversible nature.

Moss House (Site of)

5.23 Moss House (HER 2226.1.0) represents an earlier phase of development within the surrounding area. No above-ground remains have been identified and its significance is principally archaeological and historic.

5.24 The recorded site of Moss House lies outside the proposed fencing area and the

proposed fencing would therefore result in no direct physical disturbance to any known or potential archaeological remains associated with the asset.

5.25 Having regard to the nature and limited scale of the proposed fencing, its location within the existing garage forecourt and the absence of any identified relationship with the archaeological significance of Moss House, the proposal would not affect the significance of the asset.

5.26 The proposal is therefore assessed as having **No Effect** on the significance of Moss House (site of).

Shop and Hall, including Former Police Station

5.27 The Shop and Hall, including former Police Station, Withington Road (HER 2225.1.0) is located outside the application area, within the surrounding townscape. The building is predominantly red brick and of 1930s character.

5.28 The asset is experienced within a mixed and altered commercial setting. The frontage opposite the Application Site includes existing shops and later alterations incorporating modern materials, such that its surroundings are not characterised by an intact historic townscape.

5.29 The proposal would not physically affect the asset. Having regard to its separation from the application area, the existing altered character of its surroundings and the visually permeable form of the proposed fencing, the development would not materially alter any aspect of its setting which contributes to its significance.

5.30 On the evidence available, the proposal is therefore assessed as having **No Effect** on the significance of the Shop and Hall, including former Police Station.

(4) Overall Heritage Effect, Benefits and Policy Balance

5.31 The proposal would result in Low Harm to the significance of the Whalley Range Conservation Area and Low Harm to the Manchester Carriage and Tramway Company's Depot through change within its immediate setting. No Effect is identified in relation to Moss House (site of) or the nearby Shop and Hall, including former Police Station.

5.32 In accordance with Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, special attention has been paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Whalley Range Conservation Area. Consistent with Policies HE4, HE5, HE6 and HE9 of the NPPF, substantial weight is afforded to its conservation and the identified harm is given considerable importance and weight.

5.33 The harm would nevertheless be localised and limited in degree. It would occur within an

already altered and utilitarian part of the Conservation Area and would not result in the loss of identified historic buildings, mature landscaping, traditional boundary features or other elements which make a positive contribution to its significance.

5.34 The proposal would therefore retain the principal architectural, historic, townscape and landscape characteristics of the Conservation Area.

Public and Community Benefits

5.35 The proposal would provide secure and controlled areas within the existing garage forecourt, supporting the safe, orderly and effective management of an established commercial premises. This responds to the considerations of community safety and crime prevention identified within Policy DM1, while supporting the continued functional use of the Site.

5.36 The use of open V-mesh fencing provides the required security while retaining visual permeability between the Site and the adjoining public realm. This avoids the greater enclosure and visual dominance associated with a solid boundary and maintains a more open relationship with Withington Road and Range Road.

5.37 The design therefore represents a proportionate response to the operational requirements of the Site. Its open construction, green powder-coated finish and reversible form minimise its visual and heritage effects, consistent with Policies JP-P2, EN1 and DM1, which seek development that responds appropriately to context, heritage significance, siting, form and materials.

5.38 The proposal also responds to Saved Policy DC18.1 and the Whalley Range Conservation Area guidance by considering the relationship of the development with surrounding buildings and spaces. Although the proposed fencing would not replicate the traditional stone and brick boundary treatments identified within the guidance, its effect would be moderated by the established commercial character of the Site, the altered surrounding townscape and the visually permeable nature of the proposed enclosure.

Policy Balance

5.39 In accordance with Policy HE6, the identified Low Harm to the designated Conservation Area has been weighed against the public and community benefits of the proposal, including the secure and orderly management of the Site, the maintenance of visual permeability towards the public realm and the avoidance of a more visually intrusive form of enclosure.

5.40 In relation to the non-designated former depot, the balanced judgement required by Policy HE7 similarly weighs the limited harm against the benefits of the development. No surviving historic fabric would be removed or altered and the remnant would remain visible and legible within its historic relationship with Range Road.

5.41 Overall, having regard to the statutory duty, the NPPF, Planning Practice Guidance, Historic England guidance and the relevant local Development Plan policies, the identified Low Harm is considered to be outweighed by the benefits of the proposal. The development therefore represents a justified and proportionate intervention, with heritage effects minimised through its siting, visually permeable design and reversible form.

6 Conclusion

6.1 This Heritage Statement has assessed the effects of the proposed V-mesh security fencing on the heritage assets within and surrounding the Site.

6.2 The proposal would result in **Low Harm** to the Whalley Range Conservation Area and **Low Harm** to the former Manchester Carriage and Tramway Company's Depot, principally through localised change within an already altered and utilitarian part of the Site. No identified historic fabric would be removed or altered.

6.3 Moss House (site of) lies outside the application area and would not be physically affected by the proposed development. The proposal is therefore assessed as having **No Effect** on its significance. The nearby Shop and Hall, including former Police Station, would similarly experience **No Effect**, having regard to its separation from the Site and the existing altered commercial character of its surroundings.

6.4 The proposal would provide secure and controlled areas within the existing garage forecourt, supporting the safe and effective management of the premises. The open V-mesh design would retain visual permeability and provide a less visually intrusive form of enclosure than a solid boundary treatment.

6.5 Overall, the identified heritage harm would be limited, localised and proportionate and is considered to be outweighed by the functional and modest public-facing benefits of the proposal. The development therefore represents an acceptable and proportionate intervention within the historic environment.

6.6 Should the Local Planning Authority require any further information to assist in determining the application, please contact **Jiwon Kang** at **Homz UK** (jiwon@homz.uk). We would be pleased to provide any additional information or clarification as required.

Appendix 1. Heritage Scale of Harm

Level of Harm		Definition	Typical Characteristics
Total Loss		Complete loss of the heritage asset or its significance.	Complete demolition, destruction or irreversible loss of the asset and its heritage significance.
Substantial Harm		Harm which would seriously affect a key element of the heritage asset's significance.	Major loss or alteration of historic fabric, form, setting or other elements fundamental to the asset's significance.
Harm	**Greater**	Major adverse effect on significance, but below the threshold of Substantial Harm.	Significant alteration or loss of important elements of significance, while the asset's key significance remains appreciable.
	Moderate	Noticeable adverse effect on significance.	Partial alteration or loss affecting character, appearance, setting, historic fabric or legibility.
	Low	Minor and localised adverse effect on significance.	Limited visual or physical change; small-scale or localised intervention where the principal significance of the asset remains appreciable.
No Effect		No effect on the significance of the heritage asset.	No loss or alteration of heritage significance and no material change to those aspects of setting which contribute to significance.
Positive Effect			Enhancement or better revelation of heritage significance; removal of intrusive elements; improved setting, character, appearance or legibility; or conservation of features that contribute positively to the asset's significance.

Appendix 2. Assessment Step 2: Contribution of Setting to Significance (GPA3)

	The Asset's Physical Surroundings	Experience of the Asset
Attribute / Consideration	Topography	Surrounding landscape or townscape character
	Aspect	Views from, towards, through, across and including the asset
	Other heritage assets (including buildings, structures, landscapes, areas or archaeological remains)	Intentional intervisibility with other historic and natural features
	Definition, scale and 'grain' of surrounding streetscape, landscape and spaces	Visual dominance, prominence or role as focal point
	Formal design (e.g. hierarchy, layout)	Noise, vibration and other nuisances
	Orientation and aspect	Tranquillity, remoteness, 'wildness'
	Historic materials and surfaces	Busyness, bustle, movement and activity
	Green space, trees and vegetation	Scents and smells
	Openness, enclosure and boundaries	Diurnal changes
	Functional relationships and communications	Sense of enclosure, seclusion, intimacy or privacy
	History and degree of change over time	Land use
		Accessibility, permeability and patterns of movement
		Degree of interpretation or promotion to the public
		Rarity of comparable survivals of setting
		Cultural associations
		Celebrated artistic representations
		Traditions

Appendix 3. Assessment Step 3: Effects of Development on Setting (GPA3)

	Attribute/Consideration
Location and Siting of Development	Proximity to asset
	Position in relation to relevant topography and watercourses
	Position in relation to key views to, from and across
	Orientation
	Degree to which location will physically or visually isolate asset
Form and Appearance of Development	Prominence, dominance, or conspicuousness
	Competition with or distraction from the asset
	Dimensions, scale and massing
	Proportions
	Visual permeability (extent to which it can be seen through), reflectivity
	Materials (texture, colour, reflectiveness, etc.)
	Architectural and landscape style and/or design
	Introduction of movement or activity
	Diurnal or seasonal change
Wider Effects of the Development	Change to built surroundings and spaces
	Change to skyline, silhouette
	Noise, odour, vibration, dust, etc.
	Lighting effects and 'light spill'
	Change to general character (e.g. urbanising or industrialising)
	Changes to public access, use or amenity
	Changes to land use, land cover, tree cover
	Changes to communications/accessibility/permeability, including traffic, road junctions and car parking, etc.
	Changes to ownership arrangements (fragmentation/permitted development/etc.)
	Economic viability
Permanence of the Development	Anticipated lifetime/temporariness
	Recurrence
	Reversibility