

Oakley, 188 Wilmslow Rd, Fallowfield

Heritage Statement

September 2026

Prepared for: Views

LEVRANT

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Contents

Executive Summary 5

1. Introduction 6

1.1. Purpose 6

1.2. Research Methodology 7

1.3. Authorship 7

2. The Site 8

2.1. Location 8

2.2. Heritage Context 8

2.2.1. Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas 8

2.2.2. Non-designated Heritage Assets 9

2.2.3. Archaeological Potential 9

3. Policy Context 10

3. Historical Development 16

3.1. Introduction 16

3.2. Historical Development of the Site 16

4. Site Survey 43

4.1. Exterior (2020-2025, Levrant) 43

4.2. Interior (2020-2025, Levrant) 50

4.3. Interior – First Floor (2020-2025, Levrant) 60

4.4. Interior – Second Floor (2020-2025, Levrant) 62

4.5. Interior – Basement (2020-2025, Levrant) 63

5. Significance Assessment 64

5.1. Introduction 64

5.2. Methodology 64

5.3. Statement of Significance 65

6. Heritage Impact Assessment 67

6.1. Scope of Potential Impact 67

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6.2. Assessment Methodology 67
6.3. Proposals 68
6.4. Physical (direct) impact Assessment 68
6.5. Physical (direct) impact Assessment Summary 69
6.6. Visual (indirect) Impact Assessment 69
6.7. Visual (indirect) Impact Assessment – Summary 77
6.8. Summary & Conclusions 77
7. Appendices 78

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Executive Summary

- The Site contains a former villa, known as Oakley, built in c. 1837 by an unknown architect. It is a large, detached building in the Gothic revival style, which was located within its own extensive grounds. The villa was substantially extended and refurbished in c. 1887.
- Oakley remained as a single residential dwelling until 1903, when the estate became a private residence/club.
- In 1921, the estate was purchased by the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers (U.S.D.A.W) for use as their headquarters and offices, of which it remained for 100 years until c. 2020.
- Further additions and alterations to the Site included the construction of a large extension along the southern boundary in 1937, a further extension adjacent to this block in the 1950s, and a third extension to the west of the Site in the late-1970s/early-1980s.
- The original grounds of the house have been absorbed into the adjacent Platt Fields recreational park, but remnants of the former domestic garden setting still exists to the east of the Site, facing Wilmslow Road.
- Internally, the former villa retains a high number of original Gothic revival features, fixtures and fittings, located primarily to the ground floor level. Later, c. 1880s decorations in the Aesthetic Movement style can be found within some ground floor reception rooms and the main staircase, which, based on stylistic grounds could be the work of notable local architect and furniture designer George Faulkner Armitage.
- The former villa has been identified as Non-designated Heritage Asset (NDHA) by Manchester City Council (MCC).
- The objective of the Proposed Development has been to minimise the visual and physical impact on the heritage interest of the NDHA (Oakley) and on the settings of surrounding heritage assets, whilst facilitating the wider residential redevelopment of the Site.
- The Proposed Development is considered to result in a moderate adverse effect on the significance and setting of the NDHA and would equate to 'harm' under Policy HE5(2c) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2026). In accordance with Policy HE7(2), the identified harm must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, and a balanced judgement made having regard to the significance of the NDHA, and the scale of the harm.
- Due to the low, domestic scale and height of the proposed new residential development surrounding the Site, it is considered that there will be no effect on the settings of any identified, surrounding listed buildings.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose

This Heritage Statement has been prepared on behalf of Views, by Levrant, a practice of conservation architects, surveyors, planners, and heritage consultants specialising exclusively in the built historic environment.

The following report has been written to accompany a planning application for the redevelopment of 'Oakley', 188 Wilmslow Road, Fallowfield, Manchester (hereafter referred to as 'the Site'), which comprises an unlisted building dating to the early 19th century that has been confirmed by Manchester City Council (MCC) to be a 'Non-designated Heritage Asset' (NDHA) (see **Figures 1 and 2**).



Figure 1: The principal north entrance front of the early-19th century villa.

(Source: Levrant)

The Proposed Development includes the demolition of the existing twentieth-century buildings and the construction of new houses around the perimeter, along with the extension and refurbishment of the existing villa and associated landscape work.

Part 1 of this Heritage Statement provides a heritage appraisal of the Site, which has informed the design development of the current proposals, whilst Part 2 of the Statement considers the potential effects of the Proposed Development on the historic built environment.

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Figure 2: Current aerial view looking north-west across the Site (shaded red).

(Source: Google)

1.2. Research Methodology

The definition of a particular site's heritage significance is derived from its intrinsic physical qualities, its fabric authenticity, its historic interest and its identified status as a national or local asset.

This Heritage Statement is the result of an extensive process which synthesises literature and documentary research, analysis and processing of information, building surveying, and professional judgment. The documentary research was based upon primary and secondary sources, including maps, drawings, photographs, newspapers and reports.

Surveys of the Site were conducted in December 2025 by visual inspection.

In line with the requirements of Policy HE5(1) of the NPPF, this Heritage Statement provides the proportionate amount of information necessary to evaluate the significance of the Site and its context and provide commentary on the potential effects of the Proposed Development.

1.3. Authorship

Authors:

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2. The Site

2.1. Location

The Site is located in Fallowfield, Manchester, and is bounded by Wilmslow Road to the east, Langley Road to the south, and Platt Fields Park to the north and west. (see **Figures 3 and 4** below).



Figure 3: Map looking north showing the boundary of the Site outlined red.

(Source: Historic England)

2.2. Heritage Context

2.2.1. Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas

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 buildings within the Site are not statutorily listed. The nearest designated buildings/structures to the Site are highlighted in **Figure 4** below.

The Site is not located within or within the setting of a conservation area.

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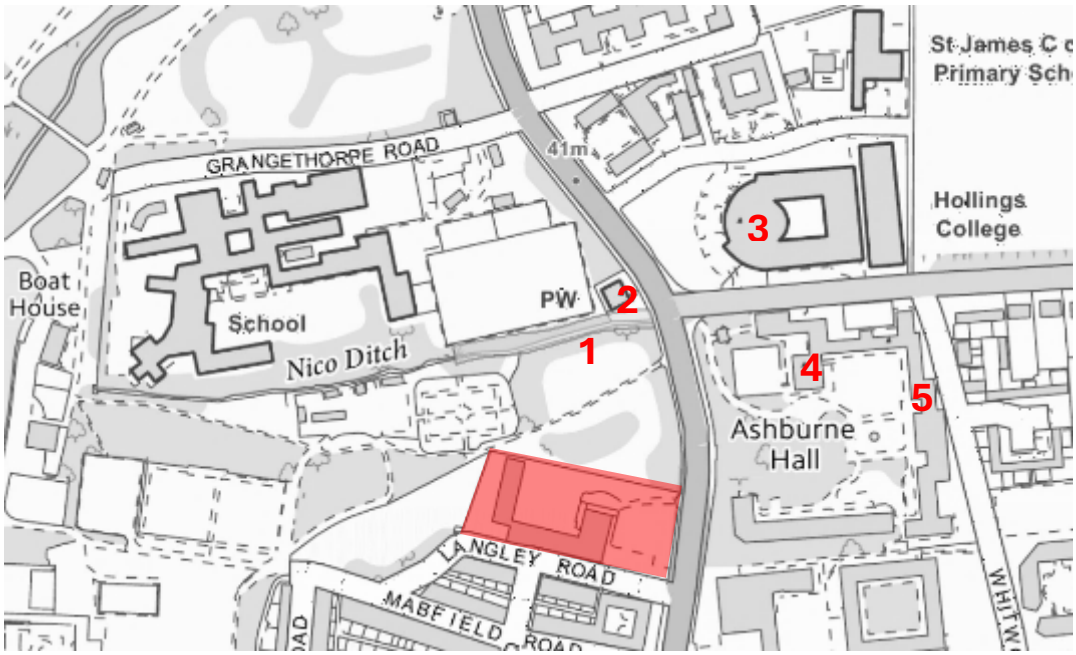


Figure 4: Looking north over the Site, showing the Site shaded red, and surrounding designated buildings/structures (numbered).

(Source: Historic England)

Listed buildings located close to the Site are as follows (see **Figure 4** above):

1. Nico Ditch (Scheduled Monument) - Section of an early medieval boundary ditch.
2. Platt Chapel (Grade II)
3. Hollings Building at Manchester Metropolitan University (Grade II)
4. Behrens Hall (originally 'The Oaks') (Grade II)
5. Ashburne Hall (Lees, Mary Worthington, Ward and Central block), including the Alice Barlow memorial gates to Wilmslow Road and Ashburne Hall Lodge (Grade II)

2.2.2. Non-designated Heritage Assets

Local planning authorities (LPA's) may identify buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes that are identified as having a degree of significance, and which merit a material consideration in planning decisions as 'non-designated heritage assets'. In some areas, LPA's identify non-designated heritage assets as 'locally listed'.

Manchester City Council have identified Oakley as a Non-designated Heritage Asset (NDHA). Consequently, it will be clear that proposals to redevelop Site will have both direct and indirect impacts upon the heritage asset. The heritage interest of the Site is considered further in **Section 5**.

2.2.3. Archaeological Potential

An archaeological desk-based assessment has been prepared by RPS which identifies there is a low potential for archaeology within the Site.

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3. Policy Context

The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

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

As the Site is within the setting of surrounding Listed buildings, Section 66 of the Act is applicable, as it requires the LPA to *"have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses,"* when considering whether to grant planning permission.

National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') 2026

The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published by the Government on the 17th of August 2026. 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' now constitutes Chapter 20 of this document, and the policies regarding the built environment have been re-organised from the previous iteration of paragraphs into ten central policies. Policies HE1, HE2, and HE3 are Plan-making policies, and policies HE4, HE5, HE6, HE7, HE8, HE9, and HE10 are Decision-making policies.

The policies which are of relevance to the Site comprise:

- HE4: Securing the conservation of heritage assets,
- HE5: Assessing effects on heritage assets; and
- HE7: Decisions on non-designated heritage assets.

Policy HE5(1) requires development proposals affecting heritage assets to be accompanied by an assessment of the significance of the assets affected, and an assessment of the effects of the proposals on that significance. This policy reiterates the requirement for proportionality when assessing potential effects on significance. HE5(2) explicitly categorises the potential resultant effects of development proposals on the significance and setting of heritage assets as:

- Positive effect,
- No effect,
- Harm,
- Substantial harm, which is defined as where *"the development proposal would seriously affect a key element of the asset's significance"* [including setting]; or

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- Total loss of significance.

HE5(3) notes that it is the "effect on a heritage asset's significance rather than the scale of the development which should be considered" when assessing development proposals.

Previously, non-designated heritage assets were assessed against Paragraph 216 of the NPPF (2024) which stated that *"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".*

The revised NPPF (2026) assesses non-designated heritage assets under Policy HE7, stating that positive effects will be supported (1); and that a development proposal which would result in harm to significance should be weighed against the benefits of the proposal and a balanced judgement made having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset (2).

Under the 2024 NPPF, the concept of substantial harm was reserved in policy for designated heritage assets, as set out in Paragraph 214. However, HE7(3) introduces the concept of 'substantial harm' in policy in relation to non-designated heritage assets, stating that where a development proposal would cause substantial harm to, or the total loss of significance, it should only be supported where the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefits of the proposal, having regard to the scale of the harm and the significance of the asset.

HE7(3) therefore applies a balancing exercise similar to that previously contained within Paragraph 214, whereby substantial harm, or total loss, to the significance of a non-designated heritage asset must be outweighed by the public benefits arising from the development.

The loss or removal of a heritage asset is further assessed within Policy HE10, whereby, whether designated or not, development which would result in the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset *"should not be approved without all reasonable steps being taken to ensure that the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred"* (1a), and that the applicant should *"record and advance understanding of the significance of the asset to be lost in a manner proportionate to its importance and the potential impact upon it"* (1b).

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 consulted while producing this report.

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Manchester City Council Core Strategy, 2012

Local planning policy maintains the same focus as the NPPF. The City Council's design and heritage related policies focus on the fundamental importance of *"preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment"*. The following policies from Manchester's Core Strategy are of relevance.

Policy CC9 (Design and Heritage) states that development in Manchester City Centre should preserve or enhance the heritage assets that have been identified, including Listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled monuments.

Policy EN1 (Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas) states that new development will be expected to follow the key principles of urban design (character, continuity and enclosure, quality of public realm, ease of movement, legibility, adaptability, and diversity) and to contribute to the quality of the local and wider area.

PolicyEN3 (Heritage) states that throughout the City, the Council will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods, including those of the City Centre.

The Policy explains that new developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance, Including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas and archaeological remains

Places For Everyone ('PfE') (2024)

PfE is the long-term plan of nine Greater Manchester districts for jobs, new homes and sustainable growth. The plan sets out a strategic policy framework for the nine boroughs and helps these areas to meet their local housing and employment needs by identifying land and infrastructure to support growth.

Objective 4 of the PfE seeks to: *"Enhance our cultural, heritage and educational assets; - Improve sustainable transport and active travel access to these locations; - Improve access for local people to jobs in these locations."*

Relevant extracts from Policy JP-11 addressing 'Sustainable Places', encourage developments which are/offer:

Distinctive, with a clear identity that:

A) *Responds to the natural environment, landscape features, historic environment and local history and culture;*

B) *Enables a clear understanding of how the place has developed; and*

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C) *Respects and acknowledges the character and identify of the locality in terms of design, siting, size, scale and materials used*

Visually stimulating, creating interesting and imaginative environments which raise the human spirit through the use of green space, public art and quality design

Socially inclusive:

D) *Responding to the needs of all parts of society*

E) *Enabling everyone to participate equally and independently*

F) *Providing opportunities for social contact and support; and*

G) *Promoting a sense of community*

Legible, being easy to understand and navigate, with the protection and enhancement of key views and new development well-integrated into the place

Easy to move around for those of all mobility levels, particularly by walking and cycling, with enjoyable routes free from obstacles and disorienting stimuli, and with places to rest

Well-connected to other places, particularly by public transport and digital infrastructure enabling everyone to take advantage of the employment, cultural and leisure opportunities across Greater Manchester and beyond

Comfortable and inviting, with indoor and outdoor environments:

A) *Offering a high level of amenity that minimises exposure to pollution; and*

B) *Addressing microclimate issues such as sunlight, indoor air quality, overheating, shade, wind and shelter*

Incorporating high quality and well managed green infrastructure and quality public realm, with:

A) *Opportunities for recreation and outdoor play for children, and interaction between the generations;*

B) *Public and private spaces clearly distinguished;*

C) *Development clearly defining, and promoting activity within, public spaces*

D) *High quality landscaping with schemes*

E) *Well-served by local shops, services and amenities, including education and health facilities.*

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Policy JP-P 2 addressing 'Heritage', states:

"Through this Plan we will proactively manage and work with partners to positively conserve, sustain and "enhance its historic environment and heritage assets and their settings. Opportunities will be pursued to aid the promotion, enjoyment, understanding and interpretation of heritage assets, as a means of maximising wider public benefits and reinforcing Greater Manchester's distinct identity and sense of place. Local Plans will set out the key elements which contribute to the district's identity, character and distinctiveness and which should be the priority for safeguarding and enhancing in the future, and demonstrate a clear understanding of the historic environment and the heritage values of sites, buildings or areas and their relationship with their surroundings. This knowledge should be used to inform the positive integration of our heritage by:

1. *Setting out a clear vision that recognises and embeds the role of heritage in place-making;*
2. *Utilising the heritage significance of a site or area in the planning and design process, providing opportunities for interpretation and local engagement;*
3. *Integrating the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings, with creative contextual architectural responses that contribute to their significance and sense of place;*
4. *Delivering positive benefits that sustain and enhance the historic environment, as well as contributing to the economic viability, accessibility and environmental quality of a place, and to social wellbeing; and*
5. *Exploring opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that restoration of historic buildings offer.*

Particular consideration will be given to ensure that the significance of key elements of the historic environment which contribute to Greater Manchester's distinctive identity and sense of place are protected from harm. These include historic town centres, places of worship, historic Places for Everyone transport routes including the canal network, industrial buildings and structures including textile mills, farmsteads and other sites, buildings and areas of identified archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic value.

Development proposals affecting a designated heritage asset (or an archaeological site of national importance) and a conservation area should conserve those elements which contribute to its significance including those identified in any conservation area appraisal as making a positive contribution to the area. Harm to such elements will only be permitted where this is clearly justified and outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal.

Proposals should be informed, as necessary, by the findings and recommendations of the appropriate heritage assessment(s) in the development plan evidence base and/or any updated heritage assessment submitted as part of the planning application process."

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Historic England Guidance

In 2015, Historic England released three Good Practice Advice notes supporting the implementation of national policy and the related guidance provided within the PPG. *Good Practice Advice Note 2 - Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment* (2015) ('GPA2') and *Good Practice Advice Note 3 - The Setting of Heritage Assets* (amended December 2017) ('GPA3') have both been utilised in the preparation of this Heritage Statement in order to gain a full understanding of the relevant issues.

In particular, this report takes account of the advice contained within the revised version of GPA3 on understanding what constitutes the setting of a listed building or other heritage asset. Furthermore, this report relies on the guidance provided on the identification of assets and their settings which have the potential to be affected by development proposals, as well as the approach to the selection of indicative key views of a proposed development in a context which includes heritage assets and heritage sensitivities.

In terms of assessing the impacts of development proposals, the forthcoming Heritage Statement will take account of the advice in GPA3 which states that *"setting and views are matters of qualitative and expert judgement [...] technical analyses [and] 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 report also accords with the guidance and approach established in H*istoric England Advice Note 12 - Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets* (2019) and *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* (2008).

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3. Historical Development

3.1. Introduction

In order to understand the potential heritage significance of the Site, it is first necessary to understand its historical development. Please see **Appendix 9.2** for full map regression of the Site.

The following sections detail the owners, companies and tenants of the Site, providing background information of its development in order to:

- Provide a sound evidence base highlighting the main periods of development; and
- Inform assessment of the survival and significance of the Site.

3.2. Historical Development of the Site

The Site today comprises the early-19th century villa known as "Oakley", along with three large office extensions constructed for USDAW in the 1930s, c. 1950s and the 1970s (see **Figure 5**). To the centre, north and east of the Site are remaining open grounds of the Site, including stone and brick boundary walls, and the remains of an early-20th century garden potting shed.



Figure 5: Chronological Site development: Red – 1837s-1880s, Blue - 1937, Yellow - c.1950s, Purple - 1978-81.

(Source: Google – adapted by Levrant)

The original residential villa of 'Oakley' (**Figure 7**) is the sole survivor of a number of large 19th century villas on the western side of Wilmslow Road, as noted by the eminent architectural historian, Nikolaus Pevsner: "*Oakley – a large early c19 Gothic house in its own grounds, one of the only survivors of a number of large, detached villas of this date in the area*".

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The architect for Oakley is unknown at the time of writing, however, in Mrs. W. C. Williamson's 1888 book 'Sketches of Fallowfield and the Surrounding Manors, Past and Present', the author explains that *"Oakley* [was] *built by Mr. Hodgson for one of his sons, at the time when he himself lived at Ashfield*".

Richard and Elizabeth Hodgson lived in the now demolished adjacent villa "Ashfield" (**Figure 6**), building Oakley for their son Francis Hodgson, who is the first recorded resident of Oakley.



Figure 6: 'Ashfield' – home of Richard and Elizabeth Hodgson, originally located immediately north of Oakley.

(Source: GMLives)

1837-1852 - Francis Roger Hodgson Esq & family

The first record of the Site is in the Electoral Register for 1837, where Richard Hodgson's son; Francis Roger Hodgson, is recorded as being the occupier of 'Oakley'. Francis Hodgson is again recorded as living in the property in the Manchester & Salford trade directory of 1841. The subsequent Electoral Registers for 1841, 1845 and 1850 continue to record Francis Roger Hodgson as the occupier of Oakley.



Figure 7: View c. 1900. Photograph above is of 'Oakley', one of the three large mansions built on the western side of Fallowfield Brow in the early 19th century.

(Source: Historic Postcard)

Francis Hodgson was a merchant in Manchester who also held high-ranking social positions such as Police Commissioner in Manchester in 1829, a church warden of the parish of Manchester in 1836, and a Magistrate between the 1820s and 1850s.

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The original Oakley villa originally occupied a smaller in footprint, and was enlarged later in the century, and contained large landscaped grounds, glasshouses and outbuildings – see Figure 8 below.

In 1851 Hodgson is recorded as living at Oakley with his wife, three sons, three daughters and four servants, and passed away soon after in November 1851 aged 49.

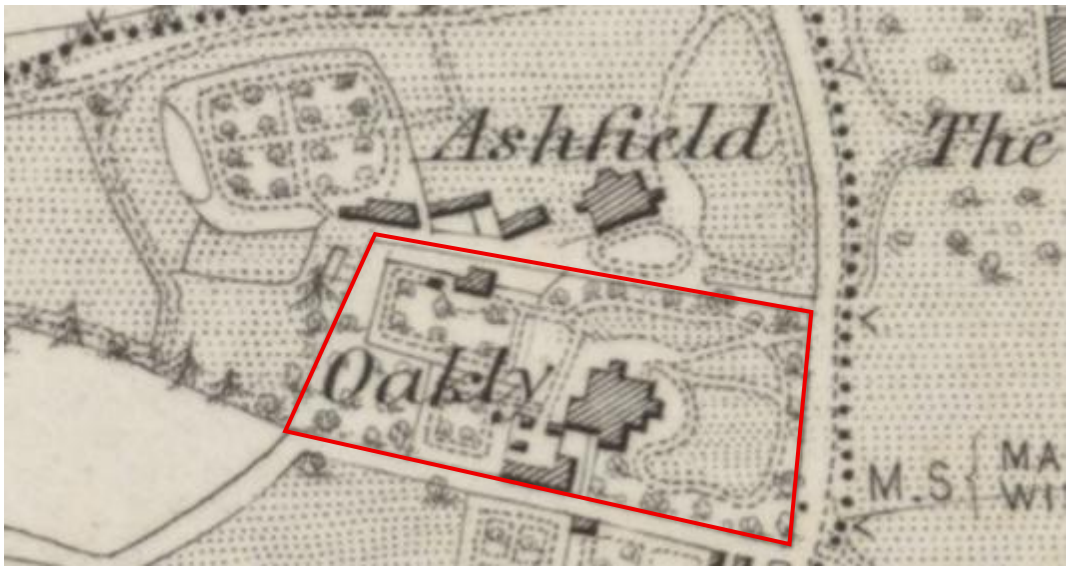


Figure 8: 1845 OS map – This map shows the original footprint of Oakley and its grounds as seen approximately 8 years after its construction.

(Source: https://maps.nls.uk)

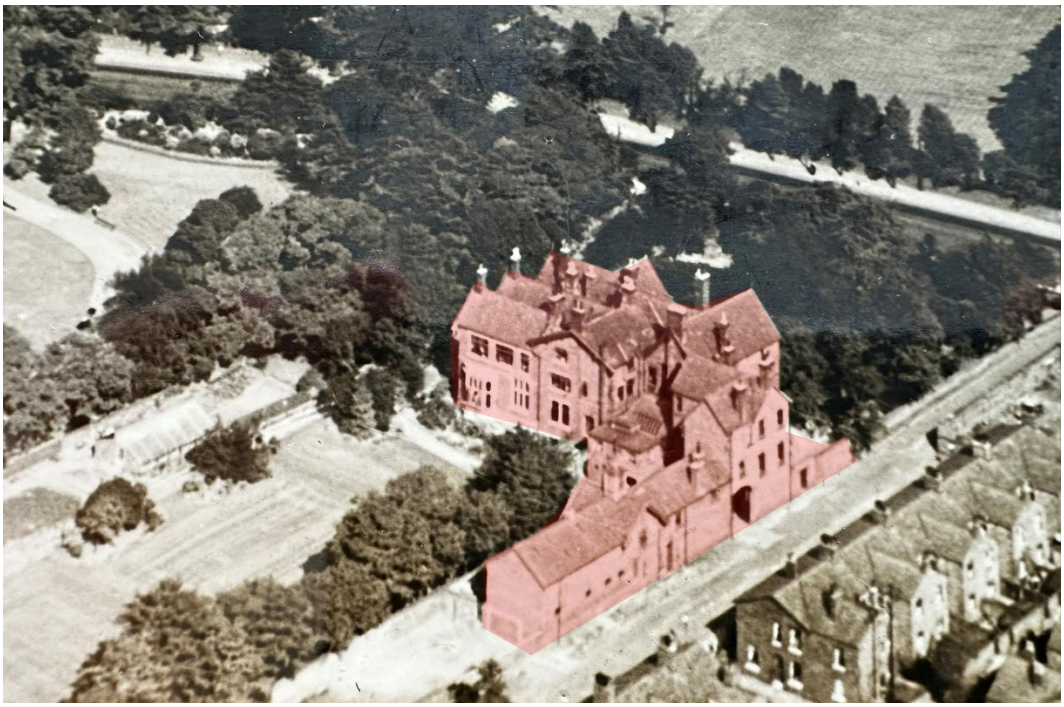


Figure 8a: An aerial view looking north-east across the site buildings (shaded) in the c. 1920s, illustrating the vast scale of the original outbuildings, stabling, coach house etc., along Langley Road (right), along with Oakley (left).

(Source: Usdaw Archive, The Union of Shop Distributive and Allied Workers, Manchester, England)

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Figure 8b: A view looking east towards the western aspect of Oakley in the c. 1920s, showing the villa itself to the left, and the northern aspect of a range of ancillary outbuildings etc to the right.

(Source: Usdaw Archive, The Union of Shop Distributive and Allied Workers, Manchester, England)

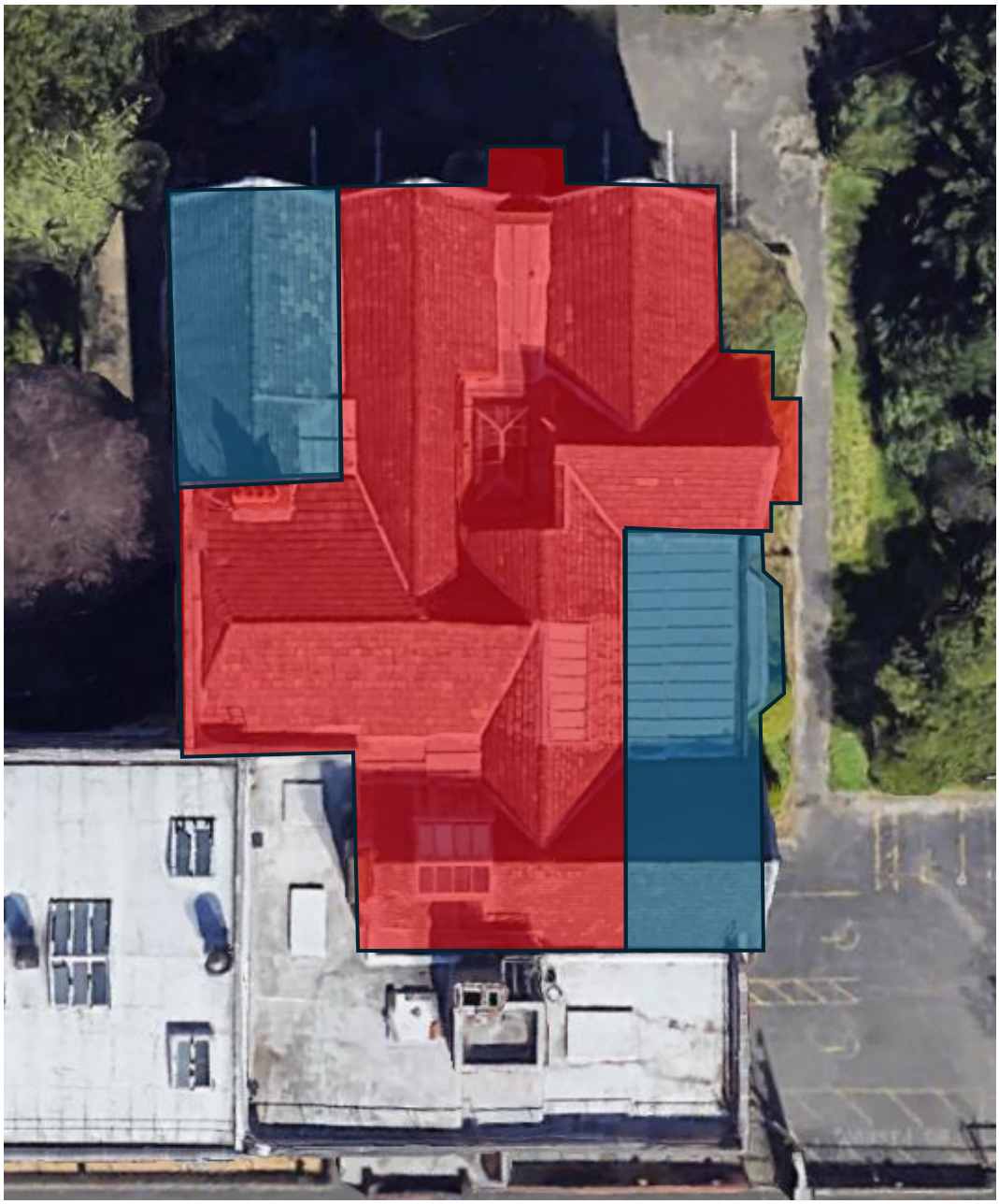


Figure 9: Current aerial view illustrating the phasing of 'Oakley'. The original 1830s villa is shaded red, and the 1880s additions are shaded blue.

(Source: Google – adapted by Levrant)

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1852-1868 - John Barratt Esq

Following Hodgson's death, Oakley was purchased in 1852 by John Barratt (1806-1887), who is recorded in the Manchester and Salford trade directory of 1863 as being a corn merchant of *'Barratt, Trueman & Co'* in Manchester.

The deeds for Barratt purchasing the estate in 1852 record the seller as being the owner of the large neighbouring Platt Hall Estate; Charles Carril Worsley Esq, suggesting that it was Worsley family that may have been responsible for originally building Oakley and not the Hodgsons.

The Electoral Registers for 1855 and 1860 continue to record Barratt as living at 'Oakley House', with a relative, possibly his son, James Reynal Barratt, who is also recorded as also living at Oakley in the Electoral Register of 1860.

After fourteen years at Oakley, Barratt auctioned the estate in 1866 due to a move to the south of England. The following auction details for the estate were advertised in the Manchester Guardian on the 14th of April 1866 (see Figure 10).



TO BE SOLD, OAKLEY, Fallowfield, the residence of John Barratt, Esq., who is removing to the south of England, all that Capital MANSION, with coach-houses, stables, loose-boxes, shippon, gardener's house, and various outbuildings, green and hot houses, pleasure grounds, choice trees and shrubs; the contents of the estate are ten acres, surrounded with full-grown trees, and is free from chief-rent.—Apply to WILLIAM HEWITT, agent, 13, Dickinson-street.

Figure 10: Advertisement from the 14th of April 1866.

(Source: Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser)

The notice in Figure 10 states that the Site then contained the 'mansion', coach houses, stables, loose boxes, shippon, gardener's house, and various outbuildings, green houses and hot houses, and pleasure grounds, set in approximately ten acres of grounds.

The majority of the outhouses mentioned were located along the Langley Road aspect of the Site. It appears that Oakley did not sell at first, and subsequently Barratt held an auction of the contents of the house in 1868 (The Athenaeum magazine, 18th July 1868).

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1868-1873 - Robert Barnes Esq & family



Figure 11: Robert Barnes in later years. (Source: Ancestry)

Oakley was purchased in 1868 by Robert Barnes Esq (b. 1800 – d.1871 – **Figure 11**) who is first recorded as living there in an article in the Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser dated the 5th of February 1869.

The Electoral Register for 1870 records Barnes as occupying "Oakley House".

Robert Barnes was a successful, Manchester-based textile mill owner and noted philanthropist and was Mayor of Manchester for two terms between 1851-52 and 1852-53.

Barnes held a series of local high-ranking positions for the city but was primarily noted for his public and private philanthropy both during his life and following his death. Barnes was the founder of the charitable organisation, 'Barnes Children's homes'.

Robert Barnes passed away at Oakley on Christmas morning 1871 aged 71. The contents of the house were then auctioned following his death on his request to support the children's home charity. An article placed in the Manchester Courier on the 26th of December 1871 describes Barnes's life and works.

Robert Barnes started from humble beginnings in Manchester, and following a successful venture in cotton spinning *"he succeeded in acquiring a fortune - a fortune that meant more than anything else to him, the opportunity of alleviating human suffering*". He was well known in Manchester as a *"benevolent man of great liberality and much activity, and as kindly and generous employer".*

1873-1885 - William Leech Esq

Following Robert Barnes' death, Oakley was sold by his widow Louisa Mabel Barnes to William Leech Esq in 1873. Leech is recorded as living at Oakley at the time of his marriage soon after on the 4th of March 1873 (Manchester Evening News).

During the 1870s a number of articles in leading gardening and horticulture publications detail the collection of orchids William Leech's gardener Mr Swan grew in the greenhouses and hothouses at Oakley, and it was noted at the time as cultivating the first flowering Cymbidium Parishii Orchid in Britain in 1876.

On the 21st of October 1884 a fire broke out in the hayloft at Oakley, which was recorded in the Manchester Evening News the following morning: *"A fire broke out in a range of outbuildings, consisting of a stable, hayloft, and coach house, connected with the house of Mr William Leech, Oakley, Wilmslow Road,*

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Fallowfield". Although the fire did not cause much damage, the article does explain that the hay loft was located above the stable and that this was in the buildings that were connected to the south-west corner of the villa.

Leech is last recorded as occupying Oakley in the 1885 Electoral Register, followed by the estate being auctioned again on the 25th of June 1885. An advertisement was placed in the Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser on the 13th of June 1885 which noted that the sale was due to William Leech moving away.

c. 1887 -1894 - William Valentine Blake McGrath & family

William Valentine Blake McGrath (Born 1842 – died 1925) was an export merchant shipper from Dublin, and partner in the firm of Messrs Escombe Brothers and Co (and Escombe, McGrath & Company Limited), ship & insurance brokers & forwarding agents.

Oakley is not registered in the Manchester and Salford Trade Directory for 1886, meaning it is likely the house was empty at this time; however, an advert was placed in the Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser the following year on the 8th of July 1887 advertising the sale of the greenhouses at Oakley by "Mr McGrath".

It appears that a number of alterations and enlargements were carried out to the house during McGrath's occupation (See **Figure 9** above), including the addition of the current north-west corner of the house along with the addition of the southern wing. As the advert in **Figure 12** below describes, one of the reception rooms following the alterations formed a billiard room, which, due to the size is presumed to be the current southernmost room (containing fitted bookcases).

A scheme of redecoration appears to also have been undertaken to the north-west ground floor reception room with the addition of plaster/embossed paper decorations to the frieze and the insertion of the current inglenook fireplace inscribed with the date "1887". A further reception room to the centre of the east elevation of the ground floor also displays an example of Aesthetic Movement plaster/embossed paper frieze decoration dating to the c. 1880s.

Other alterations appear to include the current carved staircase with stained glass internal window/surround to its base. The Aesthetic Movement style and date of these alterations suggest the work could have been undertaken by local architect George Faulkner Armitage, who designed similar designs in and around Manchester during this period.

The 1891 census states that William lived at Oakley (numbered '122 Wilmslow Road) with his wife, their two sons and daughter, eight servants, a teacher and two visitors.

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1894-1902 – Sigmund Baerlein & family

Sigmund Baerlein (b. 1846– d.1910) was a yarn merchant and partner with his brother Maximilian in the firm 'Maximilian Baerlein & Co'.

Sigmund is recorded as living at Oakley in the Manchester and Salford Trade Directory for 1895 where the house is numbered as '122 Wilmslow Road'. Also in 1895, a letter from Sigmund's son, Henry Philip Bernard Baerlein was included in an article in Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser, having been sent from Oakley. Sigmund's daughter Edith Anna Baerlein was married in 1898, stating her place of residence as being "Oakley".

On the 21st of June 1902 Oakley was advertised for auction in the Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser (see Figure 12).



FALLOWFIELD.—TO BE SOLD or LET, or divided to suit tenants, the Exceedingly Well-built Family HOUSE, known as Oakley; it contains five entertaining-rooms, billiard-room, eleven bedrooms, two dressing-rooms, three bathrooms, servants' bedrooms, stabling for six horses, three loose boxes, coachhouse, coachman's and gardener's cottages. The grounds are well laid out, and contain conservatory, vinery, greenhouse, and outbuildings. The site contains about 10,600 square yards of land, freehold, and free from chief rent.—For further particulars, apply SILK WILSON & SONS, 20, Albert-square.

Figure 12: Advert for the auction of Oakley dated 21st June 1902.

(Source: Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser)

The auction article stated that Oakley was to be sold or let, and that it could be divided to suit a tenant. The house is described as having five entertaining rooms, a billiard room, eleven bedrooms, two dressing rooms, three bathrooms, servants' bedrooms, stabling for six horses, three loose boxes, a coach house, coachman's and gardener's cottages.

The grounds are noted to contain a conservatory, a vinery, greenhouse and outbuildings. Oakley did not sell and instead was let to the "Oakley Club Limited".

1902-1904/5 - Oakley Club

During the years 1902 and 1903 the width of Wilmslow Road immediately outside Oakley was widened, accommodating new footpaths and a tramway in the style of a boulevard, resulting in the original wall and gates to Oakley being set back approximately 5ft to their present position (Figure 13).

The "Oakley Club Limited" limited company had been set up in order to purchase Oakley and its grounds to form a gentlemen's club, however, following the auction in June 1902 Oakley did not sell, and instead Baerlein let Oakley to the Oakley Club Limited.

The below article in the Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser, dated 26th November 1902 (Figure 14) states that: *"Oakley Club Limited has been formed for the purpose of acquiring the family*

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residence and grounds, with cottages and outbuildings, known as Oakley at Fallowfield, Manchester, and the establishment there of a high-class residential and social club for a gentleman.

The purchase will include certain fittings and effects in the house, and the option of a lease of about 7 acres of adjoining land, and of the use of 53 acres reserved for golf and other outdoor recreations. The promoters say that there are a large number of gentlemen in Manchester who experienced difficulty in obtaining congenial residence within easy distance of the centre of the city".



Figure 13: An early 1900s view looking north along Wilmslow Road from outside the front perimeter wall and entrance gates to Oakley (far left) showing the results of the road widening scheme.

(Source: Historic Postcard)

OAKLEY Club, Fallowfield, Manchester.—This high-class Residential and Social Club for Gentlemen, distant fifteen minutes from the city, is now ready to receive Members. The house is exquisitely furnished, and is an ideal home for bachelors. Excellent cuisine, billiards, &c., lawn tennis, bowling, croquet, &c.; also about 70 acres of adjoining land, available for golf, polo, baseball, &c. Bedrooms and private sitting-rooms, from 20s. each per week. Breakfast, 1s. 9d.; luncheon, 2s.; dinner, 2s. 6d. Qualification at least one £5 share in Oakley Club, Limited. No entrance fee. Annual subscription: Residential and country members, £1. 1s.; town members, £3. 3s. Gentlemen desirous of becoming members, residential or otherwise, should communicate at once with the Secretary at above address.

Figure 14: Auction advert dated 22nd January 1903.

(Source: Manchester Guardian)

The newly formed Oakley Club converted the former villa into a private social and residential club. Activities included billiard's matches, lawn tennis, bowling, croquet, polo and baseball, a 70-acre golf course located in the adjacent grounds, and garden parties, fund raisers and concerts were held in the grounds (Figure 15).

The club opened in January 1903 and offered bedrooms and private sitting rooms to guests, with breakfast, lunch and dinner. The requirement for membership was acquiring at least a £5 share in the Oakley Club Limited.

The following article in the Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser, dated 24th March 1903, gives a sense of the facilities provided by the newly opened golf club: *"On the right-hand side of the road,*

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just before entering Fallowfield Village, the beautiful old mansion of Oakley, the residence of one of the merchant princes of Manchester, has been acquired and it now bears the title Oakley Club.

Already a strong membership has been secured, a fact which is the more readily understood when it is mentioned that the members, in addition have all the comforts incidental to the best clubs in the city, with perhaps a few in addition, in this finely appointed house with its numerous beautifully fitted public rooms, comfortable cosy bedrooms, and the best of catering, all especially appealing to those who look upon club life from the lofty point of view of the most exacting epicurean.

The gardens and grounds around the house are of so great expense and so little overlooked that the members on simply stepping out through one of the French windows might readily imagine from the nature of their surroundings that they have been transported by some genii brought by the aid of Aladdin's lamp to some picturesque spot right in the centre of rural England".

A notice was placed in the Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser on the 18th of July 1903 advertising the auction of *"the valuable and extensive private collection (not required for club purposes)",* including decorative China, oil and water colour paintings, bronzes and statutory, and furniture.

The venture of the Oakley Club Limited was short lived, and after three years the Baerlein family took the Oakley Club Limited to court resulting in the company being wound up. The Baerlein family once again attempted to auction Oakley on the 19th of September 1905, where the estate was advertised as a going concern (Figure 16). The Electoral Register for 1905 states that Sigmund Baerlein was still living at Oakley, 122 Wilmslow Road.



THE EVENT OF THE SEASON.

THE BRITISH CALICO PRINTERS' AND DYERS'

GARDEN PARTY

("THE COTTONERIES"),

proceeds in aid of the Lifeboat Saturday Fund,

TO-MORROW (SATURDAY), at 3 p.m.

TO BE OPENED BY

The LORD MAYOR and LADY MAYORESS OF MANCHESTER,

assisted by the several Mayors and Mayoresses of Lancashire towns, at the

OAKLEY CLUB, WILMSLOW ROAD, FALLOWFIELD

(by kind permission of the Directors).

THE BAND OF THE MANCHESTER ARTILLERY.

Mr. A. HENRY NICHOLSON'S CONCERT PARTY.

GENTLEMEN FROM THE ARTS CLUB.

THE LESLIE LIGHT OPERA COMPANY.

SPECIAL ENGAGEMENT of the FAMOUS FLORIDA COONS,

who will present their inimitable

CAKE WALK.

Afternoon, at 3 p.m., 2 . 6d. Evening, at 6 p.m., 1s.

Figure 15: An advert for an event held at Oakley in 1903.

(Source: Manchester Guardian, 4th September 1903)

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SALES BY AUCTION.

By Mr. R. S. Pilcher.

1903. Letter B. No. 273.

In the Chancery of the County Palatine of Lancaster, Manchester District.

In the matter of OAKLEY CLUB LIMITED.

TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION, in one lot as a going concern, by Mr. ROBERT SEPTIMUS PILCHER, of the firm of Capes, Dunn, and Pilcher, pursuant to an Order made in the above action before and with the approbation of the Manchester District Registrar, at the Crown Hotel, Booth-street, Manchester, on TUESDAY, the 19th day of September, 1905, at three o'clock in the afternoon, subject to conditions of sale:

ALL that Valuable FREEHOLD PLOT of LAND (free from chief rent), situate in Fallowfield, in the county of Lancaster, with a frontage to the Manchester and Didsbury main road of some 70½ yards, and containing in the whole some 10,057 square yards or thereabouts. And also the MANSION, with the Stables, Hothouses, and other Outbuildings erected thereon, and known as Oakley, at present occupied as a residential club. And also all the Fittings, Furniture, China, Linen, Plants, Tools, and Utensils (both outdoor and indoor) in or about the said premises and the goodwill and connection of the said club.

Orders to view may be obtained from Mr. Hubert Miller, chartered accountant, 16, Kennedy-street, Manchester

Particulars and conditions of sale may be obtained at the Chancery Office, Duchy Chambers, Clarence-street, Manchester; from the Auctioneer, Clarence-street, Manchester; from Messrs. R. F. Miller and Co., 16, Kennedy-street, Manchester; from Messrs. Boote, Edgar, and Co., solicitors, 18 and 20, Booth-street, Manchester; or from Mr. W. E. HARWOOD, solicitor, 78, Cross-street, Manchester.

Figure 16: Auction details from 19th September 1905.

(Source: Manchester Guardian)

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c. 1905- c. 1920 - Oakley Hotel

The 1905 auction did not result in a sale, and instead Oakley was again let to become a boarding house/hotel called Oakley Hotel. An article placed in the Manchester Guardian on the 24th of January 1906 advertised Oakley as offering: *"Board and residence: large house and ground: billiards, stabling, garage: late dinner: separate tables, Apply manager, Oakley"*.

In November 1908, Sigmund Baerlein submitted plans to Manchester Corporation for the demolition of Oakley and the construction of a new residential cul-de-sac of 26 semi-detached houses called "Oakley Gardens" to be constructed east-west through the centre of the site (see **Figure 17**).

However, the District Surveyor, H. Chesney, concluded that the scheme would cause the amenities in the area to be *"seriously prejudiced by the carrying out of such a scheme"*, and consequently the scheme did not gain planning, and by the time of the 1910 Electoral Register, Sigmund Baerlein is still recorded as living at Oakley, 122 Wilmslow Road, and died later in that year.

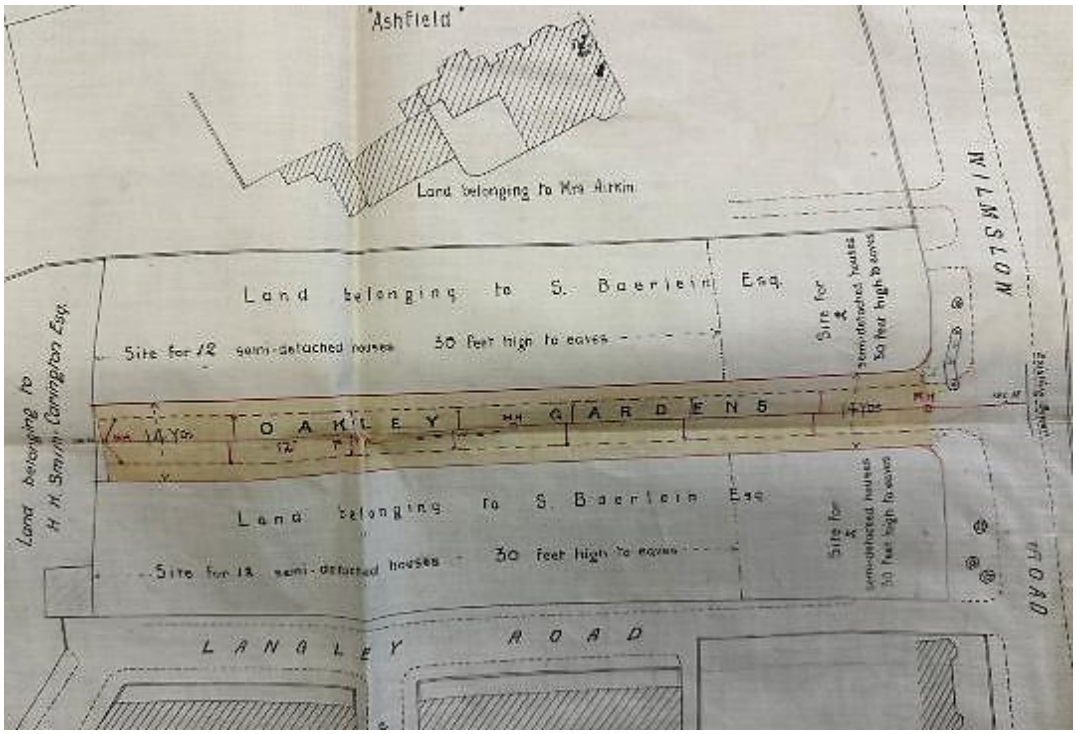


Figure 17: The proposed scheme for "Oakley Gardens" in 1908.

(Source: Manchester Archives)

A notice was placed in the Manchester Guardian on the 30th of June 1911 advertising the hotel: *"Manchester - Oakley, Fallowfield. Tennis, Billiards, Stabling and Garage. Moderate inclusive terms"*.

The 1911 census states that Oakley had 27 rooms and was known as 'Oakley Private Hotel'. George Simmons was recorded as being the boarding housekeeper, along with his wife who assisted in the business. The couple lived at Oakley with their son, along with a cook, waitress, two housemaids and a boot keeper, and six boarders. A further advertisement of the hotel was placed in the Manchester Evening News on the 13th of March 1917, stating the name of the building as being *"Oakley Hotel, Fallowfield"*.

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1921 – c. 2020 - National Union of Distributive and Allied Workers

On the 14th of January 1921 the Oakley estate was sold by the relatives of Sigmund Baerlein; Anna and Arthur Baerlein, to the Amalgamated Union of Co-operative Employees. Due to the amalgamation of the two Unions, the ownership of Oakley was transferred between the Trustees of the Amalgamated Union of Co-operative Employees to the Trustees of the National Union of Distributive and Allied Workers on the 7th of December 1923, both having offices in Oakley at the time.

The union was formed In the late-19th century, during a period of great economic and social change in Great Britain. These developments were to transform the retailing trades, with big department stores and multiple chain stores beginning to replace the traditional family draper or grocer.

The wages, hours and working conditions of those employed in these establishments were among the worst experienced by the employed population, with unemployment, sickness and old age not yet being commonly provided for by the State.

As a result of these social changes, the representatives of 11 shop assistants' organisations met to form the National Union of Shop Assistants on the 18th of March 1891.

In 1893 the Union changed its name to the National Union of Shop Assistants, Warehousemen and Clerks (NUSAW&C) and five years later joined with the United Shop Assistants Union to form the National Amalgamated Union of Shop Assistants, Warehousemen and Clerks (NAUSAW&C).

The union was formed in 1947 by the merger of the National Union of Distributive and Allied Workers and the National Union of Shop Assistants, Warehousemen and Clerks. Other unions have since merged into the NAUSAW&C, including the Amalgamated Society of Boot and Shoe Makers and Repairers in 1955, and the Scottish Union of Bakers and Allied Workers in 1978.

In 1937 a large new extension was proposed to Oakley in order to accommodate offices and other facilities for the Union. The new extension was designed by the in-house Co-op architect, W. A. Johnson, and was designed in a simple Moderne style with subtle Art Deco decoration.

The alterations to the Site were explained in an article entitled "EXTENSIONS TO A MANCHESTER BUILDING" in the Manchester Guardian on the 18th of August 1937 (**Figure 18**):

"Oakley is an attractive old building which was built as a private residence and was for a time a private hotel. The N.U.D.A.W. has occupied it for some years. A straightforward simple design has been adopted for the elevations of the new portions, and to obtain this effect all unnecessary ornamentation has been avoided...the general finance office, which will be the largest room in the new extensions and will be on the second floor. On the first floor will be a staff dining room and kitchen. The ground floor will house the dispatch and stationary, printing, and maintenance sections"

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It appears that a number of alterations to the building had already been undertaken prior to the 1937 extensions, as the 1937 plans show that a number of the current, inserted window openings to the east elevation of Oakley existed at the time of the extension meaning they were possibly undertaken when the Union took over the building in 1920.

Other alterations which formed part of the 1937 scheme included the addition of glazed bookcases to a number of rooms in Oakley, and the partial re-panelling/alteration to some of the reception rooms.

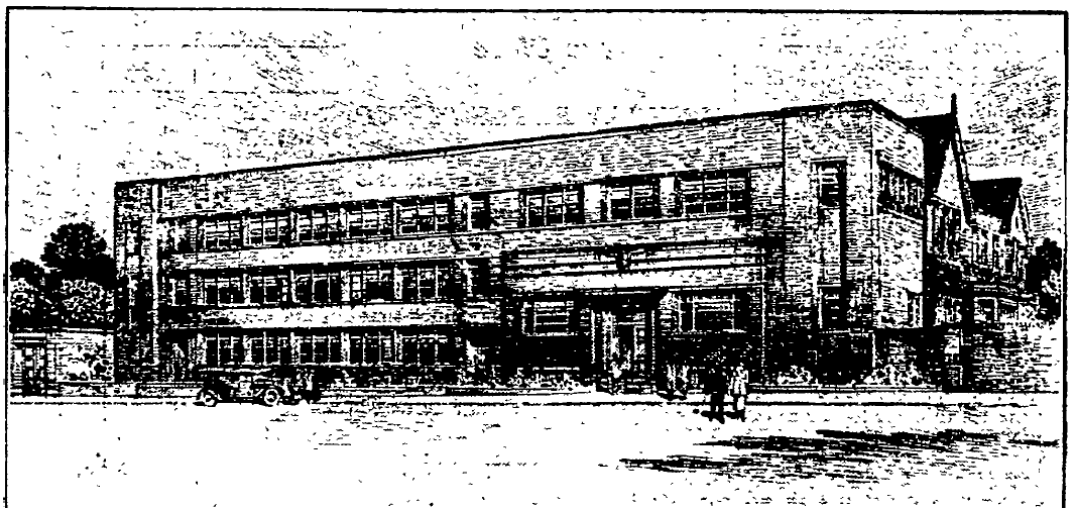


Figure 18: Newspaper illustration of the new extension dated 18th August 1937.

(Source: Manchester Guardian)



Figure 19: An aerial view looking north over the Site in the late 1930s/early-1940s showing the completion of the extension in the foreground.

(Source: https://rusholmearchive.org)

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Figure 20: Looking west along the newly completed wing on Langley Road in the c. 1930s/40s.

(Source: www.usdaw.org.uk)

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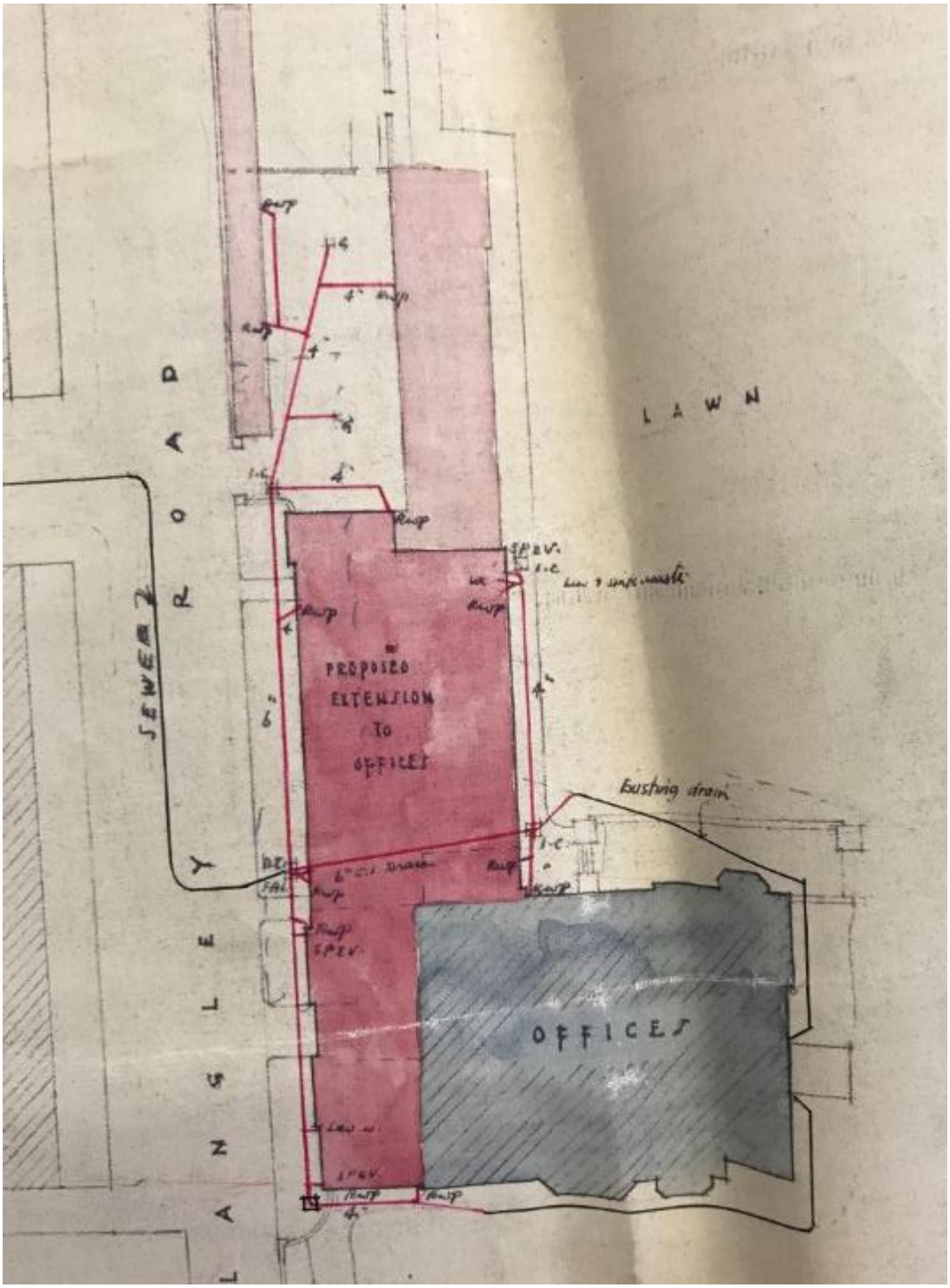


Figure 21: 1937 block plan showing the original Oakley house in grey and the proposed extensions in red.

(Source: Manchester Archives)

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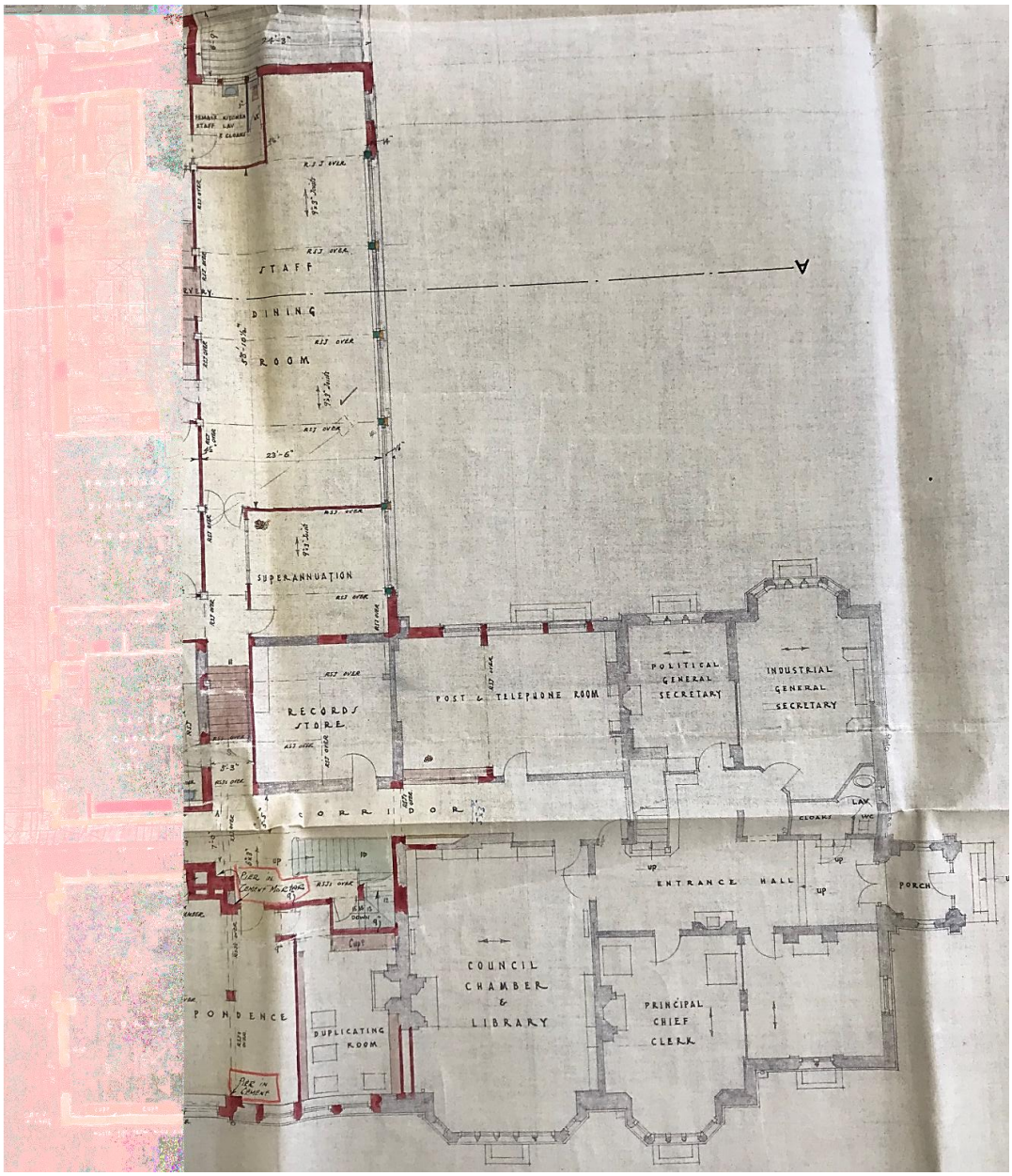


Figure 22: Proposed 1937 ground floor showing the original house to the right, and the extension to the left.

(Source: Manchester Archives)

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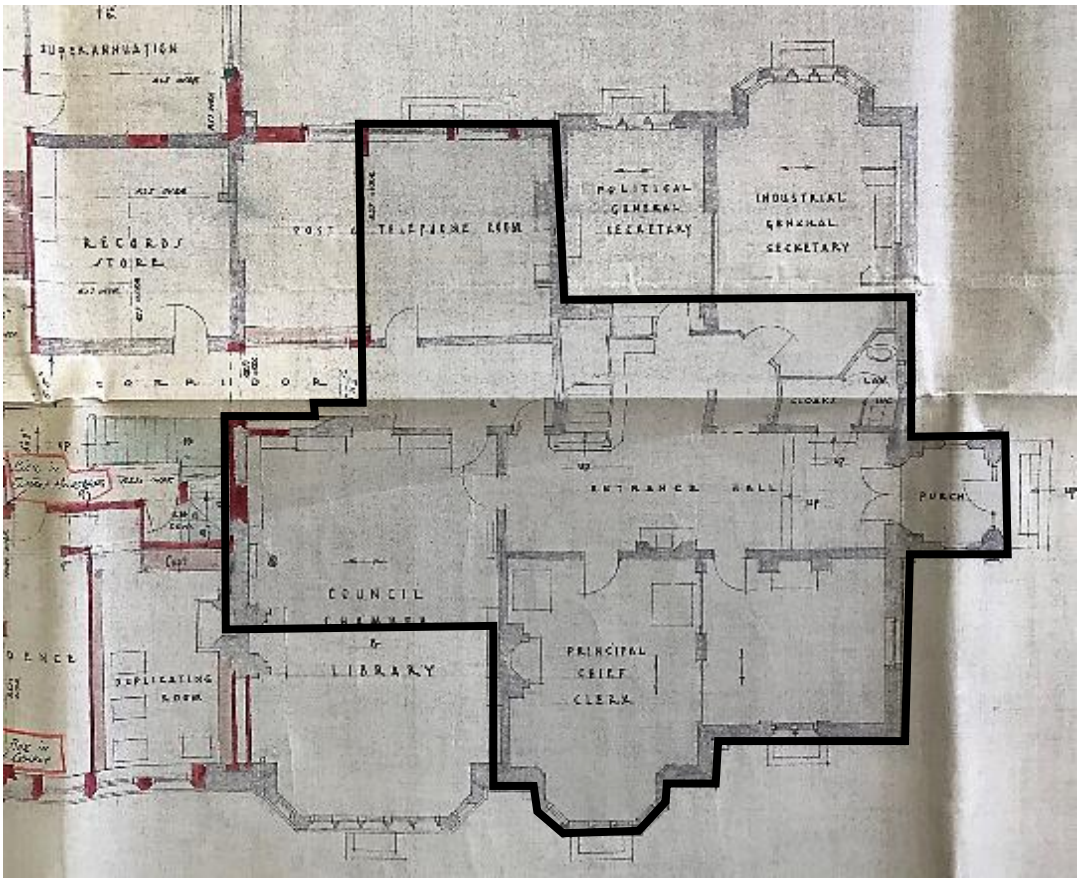


Figure 23: Detail of the proposed 1937 ground floor plan of the original Oakley house. The black outline/shading denotes the approximate original footprint of the villa when first built in the 1830s.

(Source: Manchester Archives, adapted by Levrant)

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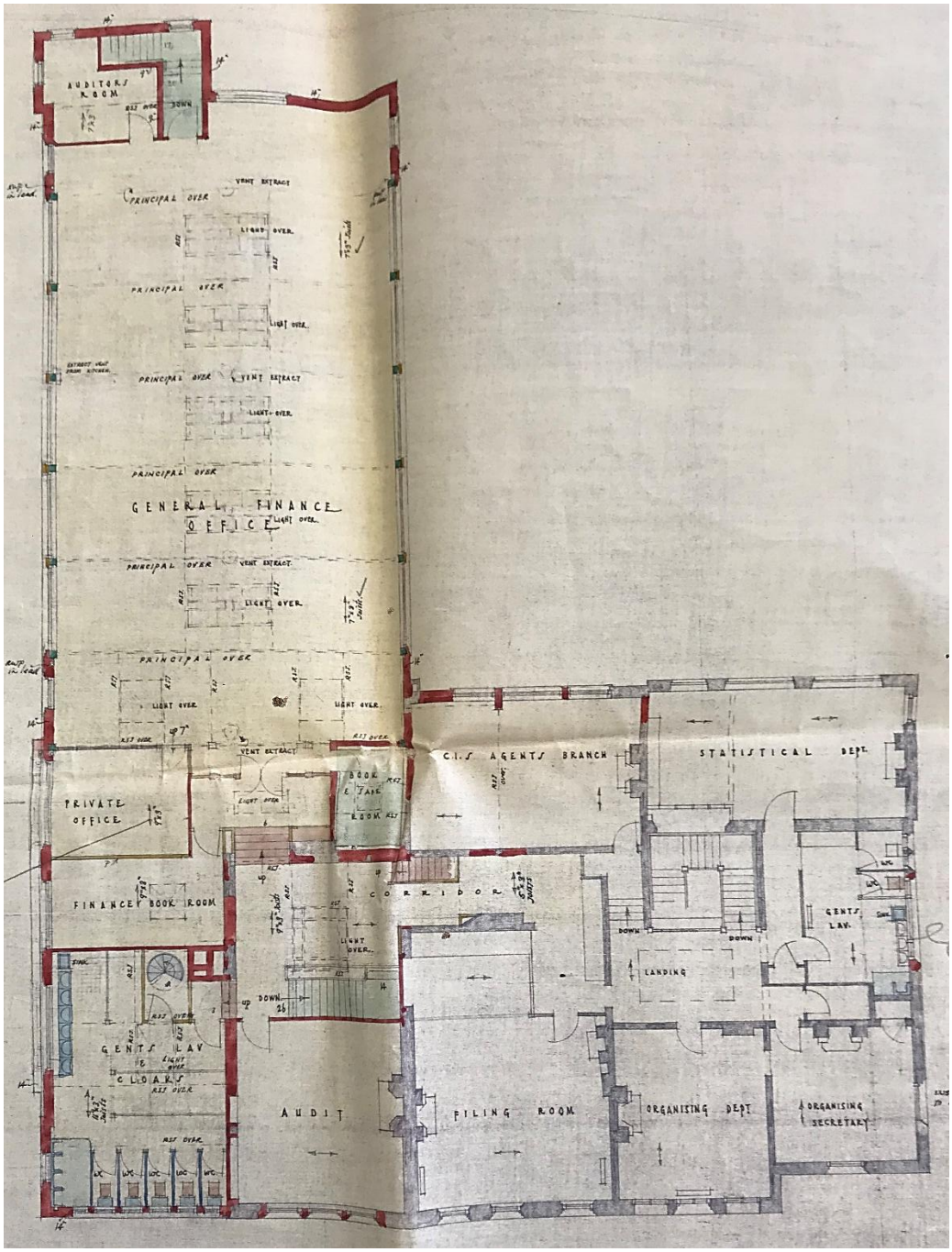


Figure 24: Proposed 1937 first floor plan showing the original house to the right, and the extension to the left.

(Source: Manchester Archives)

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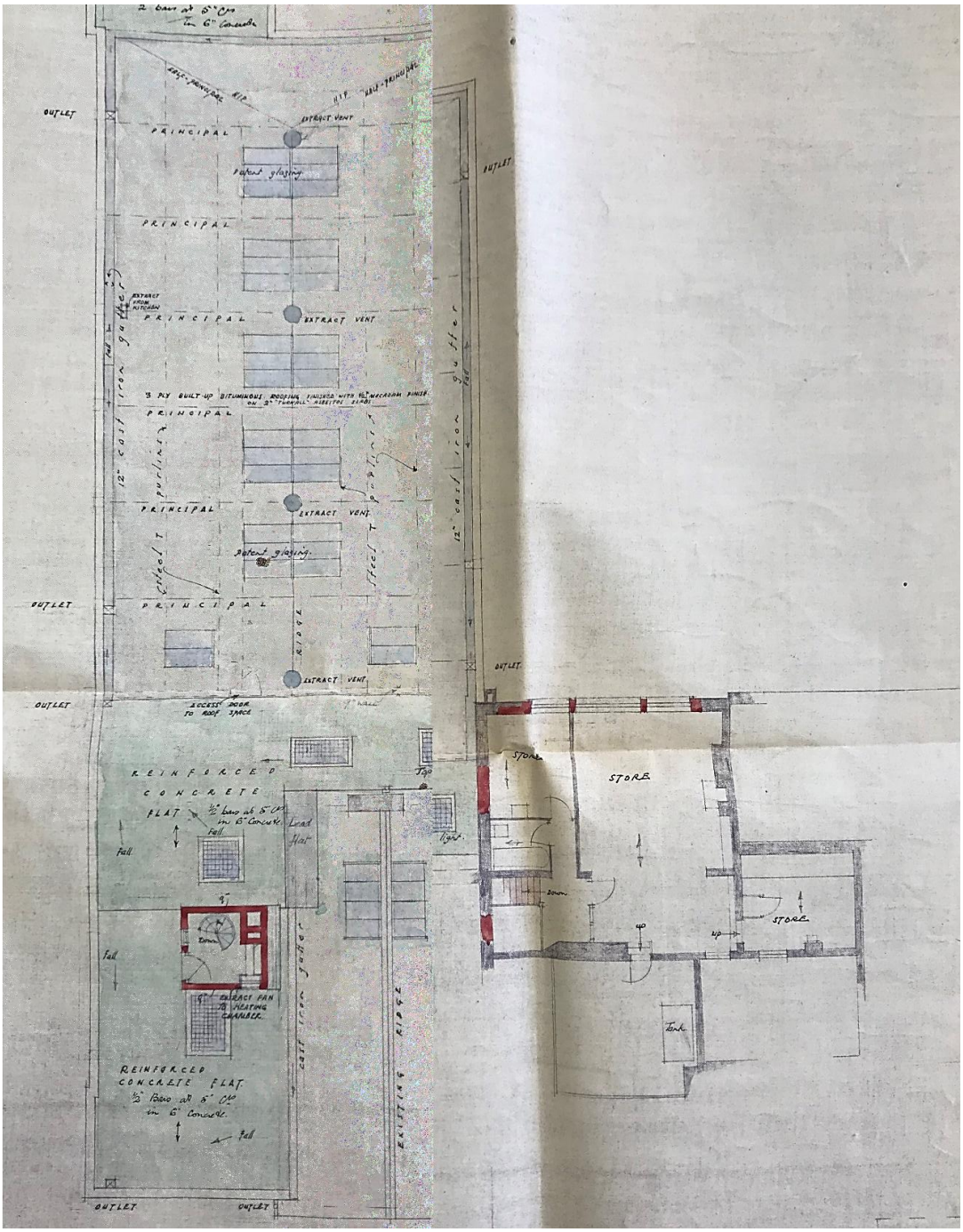


Figure 25: Proposed second floor plan showing the original house to the right and the extension to the left.

(Source: Manchester Archives)

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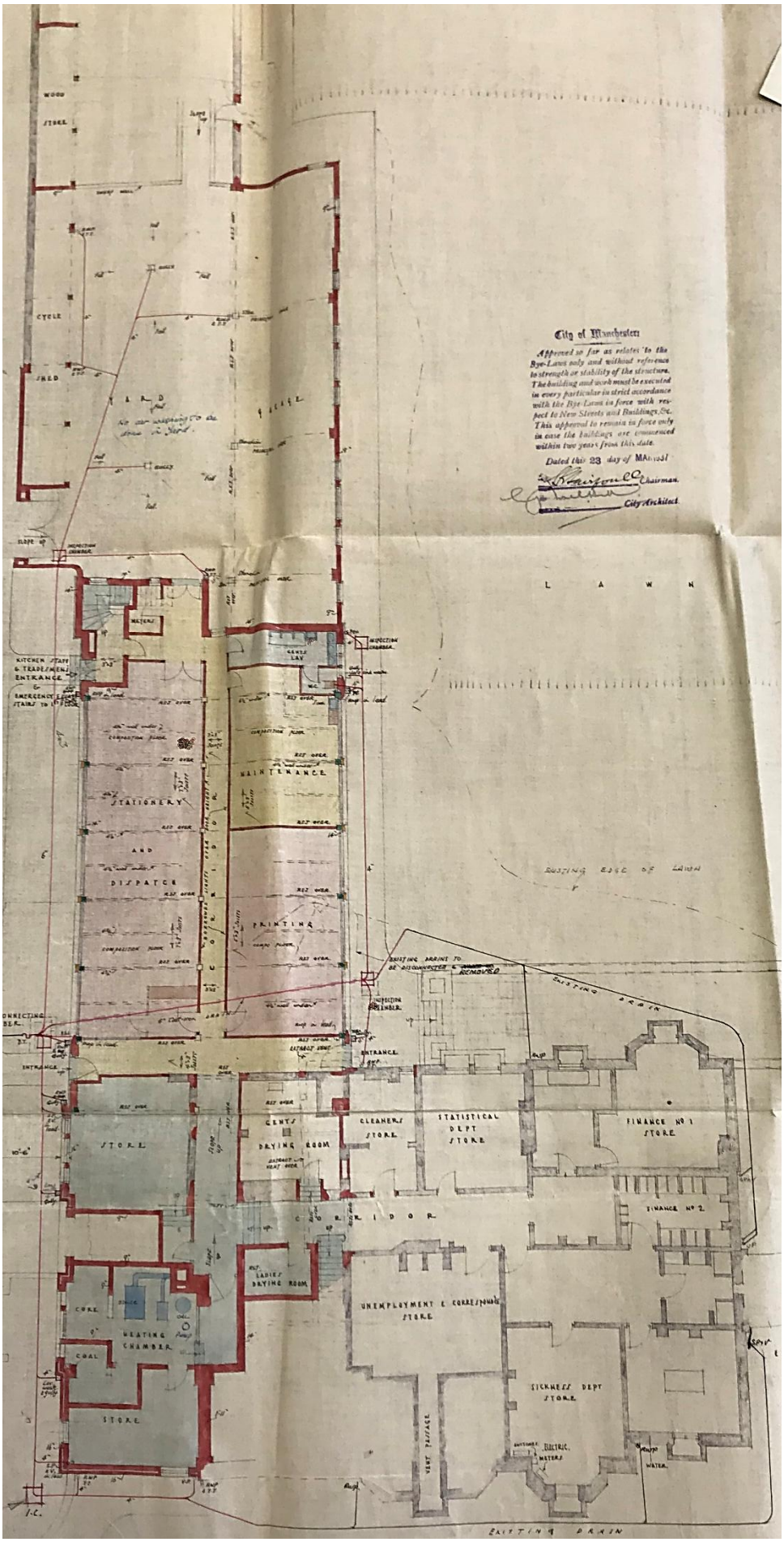


Figure 26: Proposed 1937 basement floor plan showing the original house to the right and the extension to the left. (Source: Manchester Archives)

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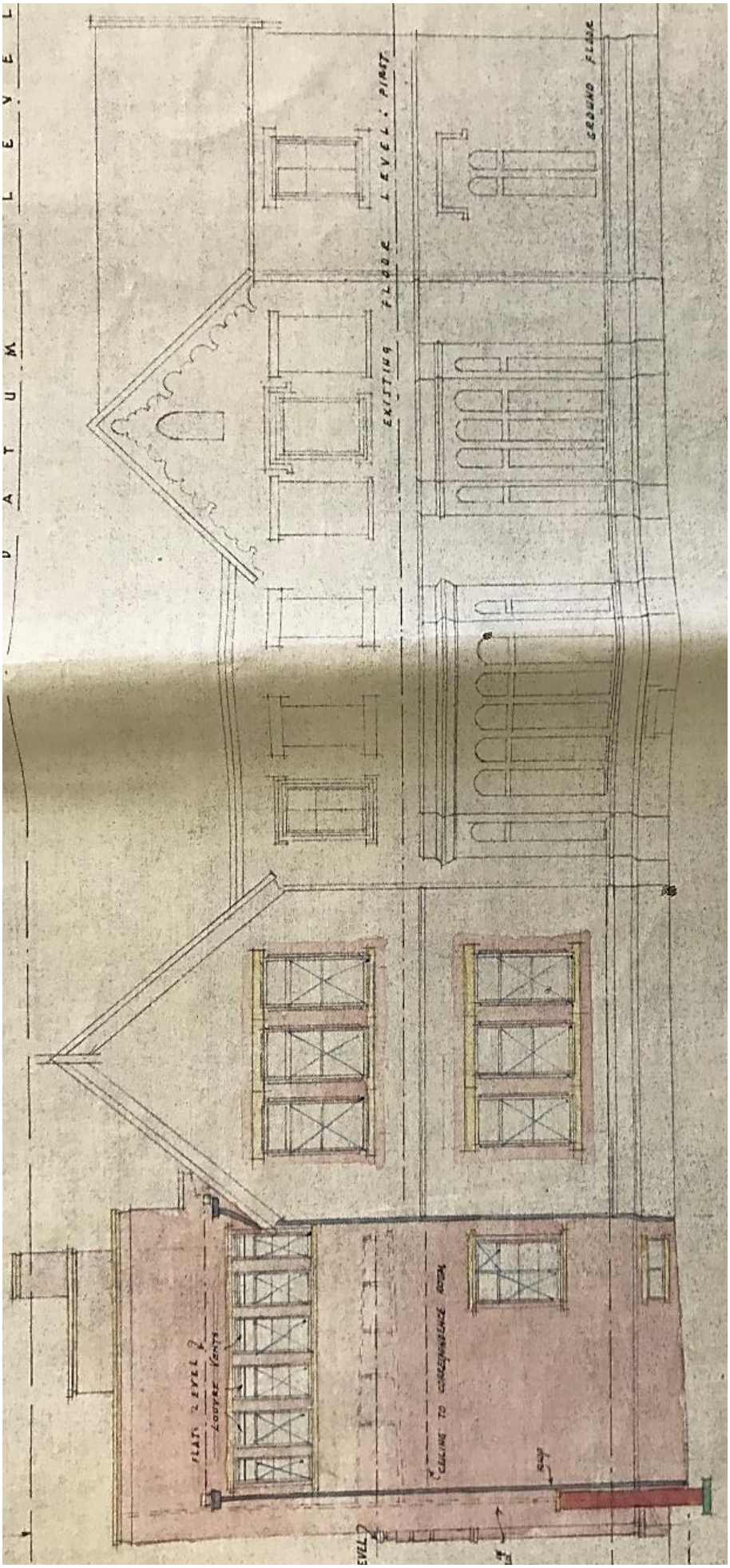


Figure 27: Proposed 1937 east elevation of Oakley (right) and new extension (left), showing the proposal to insert six new windows to the left gable of the house.

(Source: Manchester Archives)

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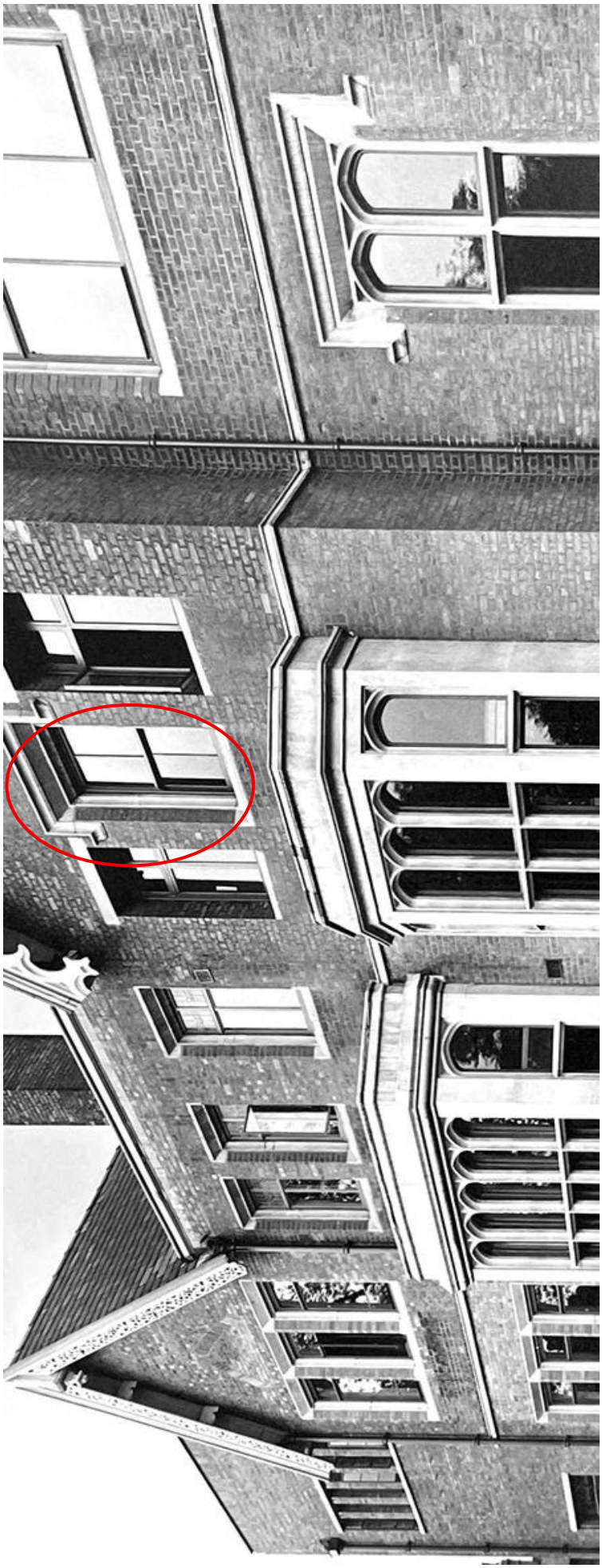


Figure 28: The east elevation in the c. late 1930s/early 1940s, showing the original Gothic stone bay windows to the ground floor. Note the original two-over-two sash window circled.

(Source: www.usdaw.org.uk)

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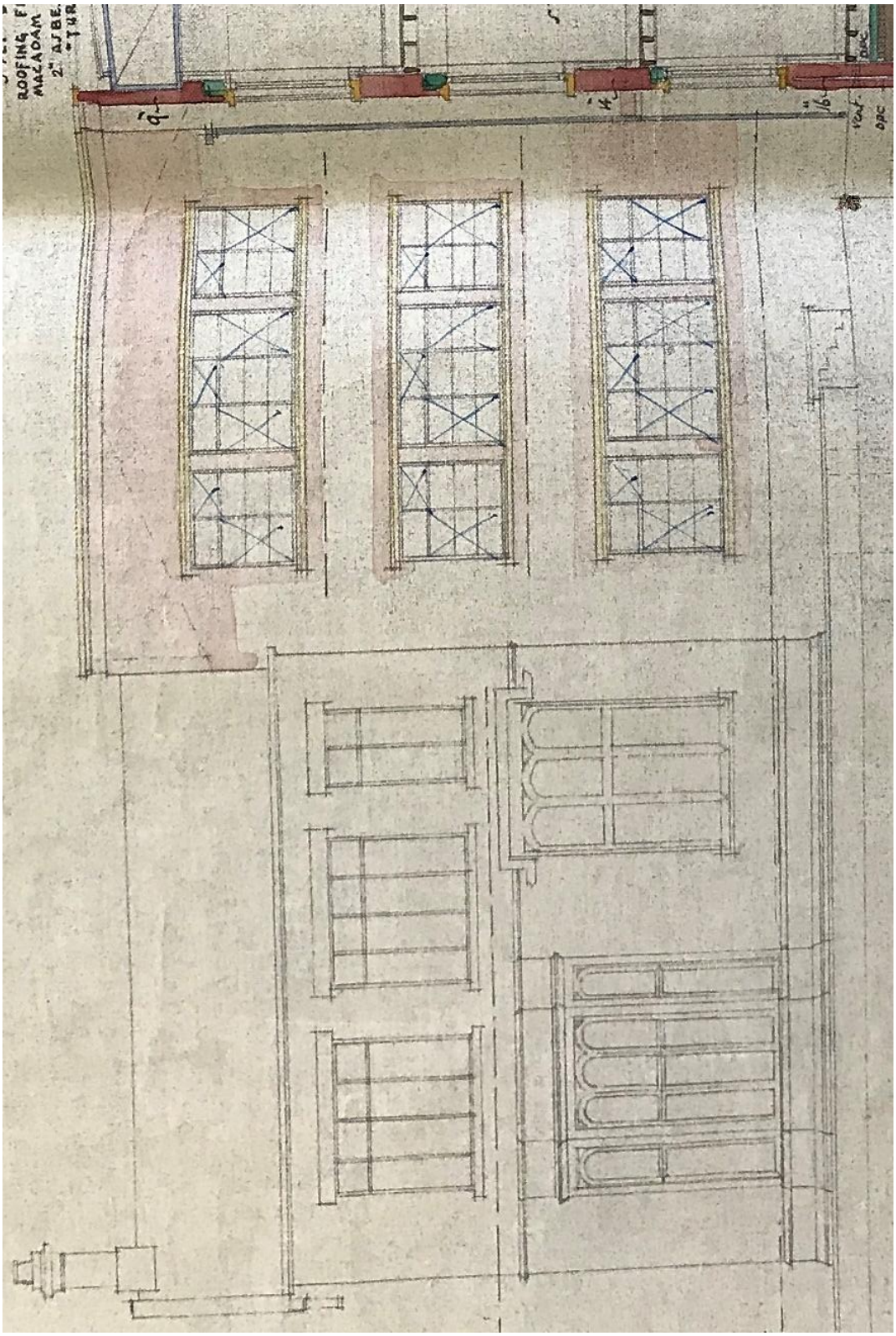


Figure 29: Proposed 1937 west elevation, showing the proposed extension to the right and its junction with the house.

(Source: Manchester Archives)

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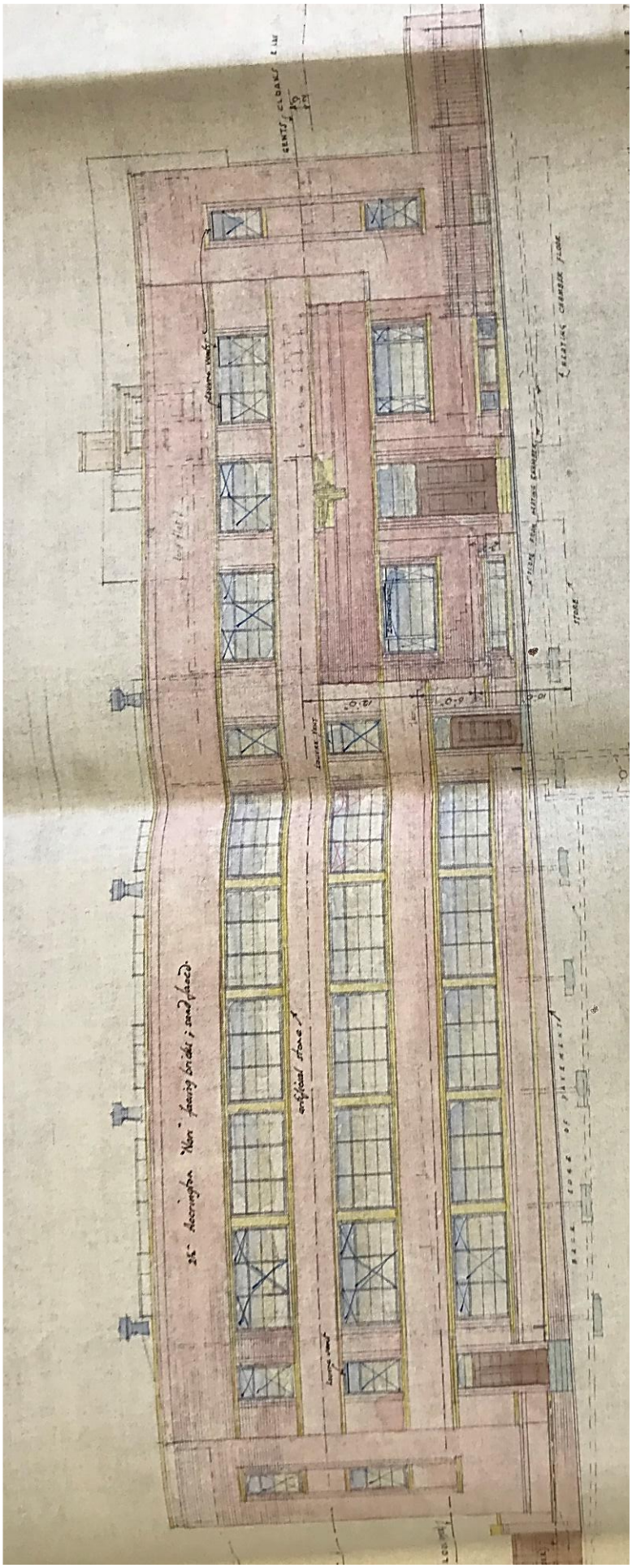


Figure 30: The proposed new extension as seen from Langley Road.

(Source: Manchester Archives)

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Figure 31: A view of the principal east elevation of Oakley as seen in 1959, showing the completion of the 1937 extension to the left.

(Source: GMLives)



Figure 32: A detail of the 1959 U.S.D.A.W sign on Wilmslow Road, with the east elevation of Oakley immediately behind.

(Source: GMLives)

Later developments to the Site comprised a further extension extending from the western elevation of the 1937 block in the c. 1950s (**Figures 33 & 34),** and a third extension from this block in the late-1970s/early-1980s, which formed a partial quadrangle arrangement (**Figure 35**).

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PLATE X The original building is on the left, with most of successive additions to the right.

Figure 33: An image from the c. 1960 showing the western aspect of the building as seen from the gardens. Oakley can be seen to the left, the 1937 extension to the centre, and the c. 1950s extension to the right.

(Source: c1960 U.S.D.A.W guide)



Figure 34: Looking east along Langley Road in 1973, showing the c. 1950s extension to the left, and 1937 extension to the right.

(Source: www.usdaw.org.uk)



Figure 35: An aerial view looking east across the Site in the c. 1980s, showing the buildings that form the Site.

(Source: https://luna.manchester.ac.uk/)

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4. Site Survey

4.1. Exterior (2020-2025, Levrant)



Figure 36: The original Gothic stone entrance to the north elevation, showing the original 1830s section to the left, and the 1880s extension to the right (outlined red). The yellow shading denotes the location of the original chimney breast, which was removed as part of the 1880s alterations. Note the different fenestration pattern also resulting from changes in the 1880s and early-20th century. Also, the modern UPVC windows are seen to detract from the appearance of the former villa.



Figure 36a: The east elevation of Oakley, which fronts Wilmslow Road, showing the 1937 extension to the left. Note the UPVC windows which detract from the appearance of the former villa.

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Figure 37: The west elevation. Note the insertion of UPVC windows which detract from the appearance of the villa. Also note the original ground level has been lowered against the western side of the building, when compared to **Figure 38** below.



Figure 38: 1937 west elevation plan showing the original Gothic stone mullion windows to the ground floor level of Oakley (left) and pre 1937 alteration to fenestration pattern to the first floor. The coloured shading to windows to the right illustrate the alterations to this wing in 1937.

(Source: Manchester Archives)

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Figure 39: The north elevation of the 1937 extension (left) and c. 1950s extension (right).



Figure 40: The 1970s/80s extension to the west of the Site.

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Figure 41: The 1937 former main entrance on Langley Road which is now blocked off.



Figure 42: The Langley Road elevation of the 1937 extension.

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Figure 43: A c. 1900 view of the east elevation of Oakley as seen from Wilmslow Road, showing the original 1830s part of the house to the right and 1880s extension shaded red to the left. Note the 1880s stone transoms to the first floor of the 1880s extension.

(Source: Historic postcard)



Figure 44: The same view seen in Figure 43 as detailed in the 1937 alteration plans, showing the proposed alteration of the original first floor windows to the left, converting two pairs of windows to three larger versions. Note the original 1830s Gothic stone mullioned windows to the centre and right of the ground floor are still present at this time.

(Source: Manchester Archives)

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Figure 45: The same view seen in Figure 44 above as it appeared following the 1930s alterations for USDAW (c. 1930s/40s) showing the original Gothic stone mullioned ground floor windows.

(Source: www.usdaw.org.uk)



Figure 46: The east elevation as seen in 2020 showing the subsequent removal of the original Gothic stone mullions to both ground floor bay windows.

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Figure 47: The driveway looking towards Wilmslow Road and former gardens to the east of the house.



Figure 48: Looking west from Wilmslow Road at the original stone entrance, which retains the word “Oakley” carved to the left side.

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4.2. Interior (2020-2025, Levrant)





Figure 49: The original c. 1837 Gothic entrance porch, showing similar surviving Gothic tracery windows which would have been a feature of the east elevation.

Figure 50: Inside the entrance porch, showing the original Gothic plaster and stone decoration.



Figure 51: The original ribbed, vaulted roof with carved boss to the entrance porch and 1930s lamp shade.

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Figure 52: Detail of the intricately carved central boss.



Figure 53: Looking into the entrance hall from the porch.

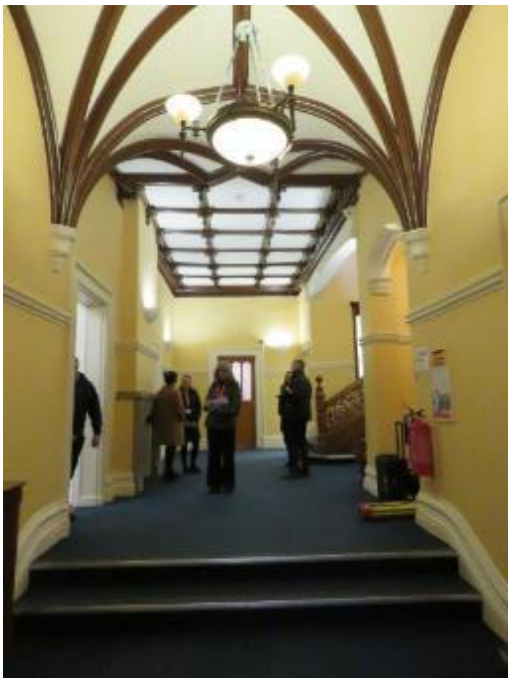


Figure 54: Looking further into the entrance hall (porch behind).

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Figure 55: Looking north towards the entrance porch from the stairs. Note the 1830s stone fire surround to the right and original joinery (skirtings, doorframes, ceiling etc.)

Figure 56: The c. 1880s tiles to the fire surround cheeks.





Figure 57: The main staircase, which appears on stylistic grounds to have formed part of the c. 1880s alterations.

Figure 58: Unusual carved timber detail at the base of the staircase.

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Figure 59: The main staircase and hallway. The openings to the right appear to have been inserted in the 1880s when this part of the house was extended.

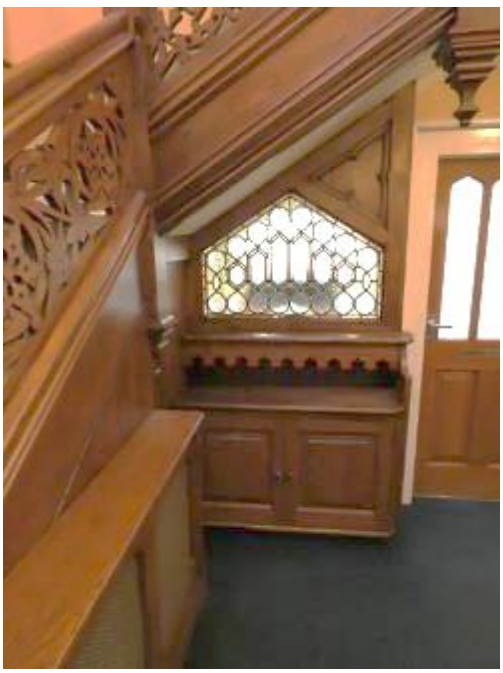




Figure 60: Detail of the c. 1880s stained glass window, shelf and cupboards; possible serving station for servants.

Figure 61: The inside face of the internal window, which forms part of the 1880s alterations.

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Figure 62: Looking east across USDAW's board room in 2020, which was constructed as part of the 1880s alterations, showing the inserted 1937 bookcases and panelling around the original c. 1880s carved stone fire surround.

This room is considered to have originally been designed as the billiard room.



Figure 62a: The same view as seen in the 1930s.

(Source: Usdaw Archive, The Union of Shop Distributive and Allied Workers, Manchester, England)

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Figure 63: An original carved stone fireplace dating to the 1880s.



Figure 64: The north-west reception room, which was added as part of the 1880s alterations. The inglenook fire surround/cupboards feature the year “1887” carved into the left and right corner spandrels, whilst the old proverb "Far from court, far from care" is carved to the centre.

The panelling above the cupboards either side of the fire surround dates to the 1930s. The tiles are modern reproductions.

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Figure 64a: The same view as seen in the 1930s.

(Source: Usdaw Archive, The Union of Shop Distributive and Allied Workers, Manchester, England)



Figure 65: The bay window to the north-west reception room. The panelling to the left and right of the window dates to the c. 1930s.

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Figure 66: The decorative ceiling and frieze embossed paper.

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Figure 67: The central, east reception room, which dates to the 1830s and originally connected via the two arched openings seen in Figure 61 below into the northernmost corner room to likely have formed the drawing room.

This room features a very high quality, possibly Bocote wood, surround and over-mantle with inlay mother of pearl and bevelled mirror inserts, and green baize inserted in the mantal shelf.

The Gothic ceiling plasterwork dates to the 1830s, whilst the embossed paper frieze dates to the c. 1880s.

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Figure 68: The two original arched openings which originally linked this room with the north-east corner room to form a larger drawing room.



Figure 69: The original Gothic plaster ceiling.

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4.3. Interior – First Floor (2020-2025, Levrant)



Figure 70: The first floor landing, showing the c. 1880s carved timber balustrade and c. 1830s ribbed ceiling.



Figure 71: A detailed view of the balustrade.

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Figure 72: The internal Art Nouveau stained glass windows to the main stairs, which before the 1880s extension formed an external wall/window.

The stairs within the 1937 extension where it connects with the 1830s villa. Note the attic stairs to the left of the photo.



Figure 73: The stairs within the 1937 extension where it connects with the 1830s villa. Note the attic stairs to the left of the photo.

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Figure 74: A typical office to the first floor.

4.4. Interior – Second Floor (2020-2025, Levrant)





Figure 75: The simple timber staircase to the second floor attic level

Figure 76: An original timber panelled door at second floor attic level.

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4.5. Interior – Basement (2020-2025, Levrant)





Figure 77: The modified stairs to the basement (left) – note original 1830s railing top right,

Figure 78: A typical room with Yorkshire flag stone floor.



Figure 79: View of the access / ventilation passage, extending east under the later 1880s billiard room, possibly modified for Air Raid Protection measures in the 1940s.

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5. Significance Assessment

5.1. Introduction

The purpose of the Significance Assessment is to use recognised criteria to assess the heritage significance of identified heritage assets which could be affected by the Proposed Development of the Site. The assessment will address consider to what degree the existing building on the Site is of architectural / historic significance.

The significance appraisal will inform Heritage Impact Assessment in **Section 6** which will consider the effects of the proposals in heritage terms upon the non-designated Oakley and on the setting of identified surrounding heritage assets. This in turn allows, in a planning policy context, the "effect" upon any heritage asset incurred by the proposals to be established within the terms defined by the NPPF.

This assessment will also use recognised criteria to assess the heritage significance and interest of the Site in line with its identified status as a NDHA.

5.2. Methodology

The assessment of significance accords with the requirements of the NPPF and uses Historic England's methodology outlined in its 2021 document, *"Local Heritage Listing, Historic England Advice Note 7"* (January 2021), in conjunction with *"Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance"* 2008 and the revised guidance on *"Setting of Heritage Assets"* (as reissued in Dec. 2017). The following section is framed within the context of established guidance, utilising recognised and well-established terminology used with the ICOMOS Guidance for Heritage Impact Assessments (2011), with particular reference to the example guide for assessing the 'value' of heritage assets (ICOMOS, **Appendix III**).

The ICOMOS guidance makes specific reference to designated, non-designated (such as the Site) and historic (unlisted) buildings and is therefore an objective (and widely recognised) method to assess heritage impact, even where sites have no formally identified heritage status.

When assessed in a national context, the relative heritage 'value' of the Site will be low, reflecting the Site's planning status as a 'non-designated heritage asset'. The following section will consequently assess the relative heritage interest of the Site on a local scale, utilising recognised criteria adapted from Historic England's recent guidance on local heritage assets.

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.

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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 1, Appendix I** for full definitions of heritage significance as defined in this report).

5.3. Statement of Significance

This statement of significance provides further details and a summary of the Site's special interest.

- The villa element was originally constructed in 1837 as a large, high-quality villa in the Gothic style, set within its own landscaped grounds. The villa was substantially extended and refurbished in c. 1887.
- The 1930s, 1950s and 1970s extensions are not considered to yield any heritage interest.
- Remnants of the historic, domestic setting of the villa that survive include gate piers, garden/ boundary walls, driveway, paths and gardens although the extensive original grounds of the house have been consumed within the adjacent Platt Fields recreational park.
- Platt Fields provides an extended setting to the Site in which short-range views of the 1970s extension and the brick boundary wall can be experienced. However, the wider park setting does not contribute to the significance of the villa; it is the immediate 'domestic' setting of the villa that contributes to its significance.
- Internally the original house retains a high number of original Gothic revival features, fixtures and fittings, located primarily to the ground floor level. Later, c. 1880s decorations in the Aesthetic Movement style can be found within two ground floor reception rooms and the main staircase, and based on stylistic grounds could be the work of local architect George Faulkner Armitage.

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- The villa underwent substantial alterations throughout the 20th century, which have removed and altered a number of original elements internally and externally diminishing the special interest of the building.
- Due to the level of alteration, not being by a named architect, and the building being a relatively atypical example of an early-to-mid 19th Century residential villa, it is considered that the building would not meet the criteria for statutory listing and is of local architectural and historic interest.
- The Site yields **medium architectural and artistic interest** through its surviving high quality internal decorative schemes, primarily to the ground floor level. The exterior of the building is considered to be of low architectural interest.
- The Site yields **medium historic interest** through its relatively early date of construction and Gothic revival design. Medium historic interest is also yielded by the number of prominent previous owners and tenants throughout the 19th century, and the Site's long links with USDAW as its headquarters.
- The Site is not within the immediate settings of any surrounding, identified heritage assets.
- **The villa is considered to be of low heritage significance and is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset.**

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6. Heritage Impact Assessment

6.1. Scope of Potential Impact

In the interests of proportionality, and recognising the low, local heritage status of the Site, this Heritage Impact Assessment provides a narrative description of the proposed works and the direct and indirect impacts of these works on the heritage interest of the Site.

The aim of this assessment is to demonstrate the cumulative impact of the proposed alterations to the building and its setting as a whole. Thus, the key purpose of the section is to consider changes and the cumulative impact that the proposals will have on the building's significance and its setting. In accordance with planning policy, the proposals aim to balance the degree of change, to deliver both a continued and sustainable use while contributing to wider conservation objectives established in national and local policy.

There is no recognised standard methodology for the appraisal of impact on heritage assets. Therefore, the method used below is a synthesis of the Historic England's guidance, the policy requirements of the NPPF, and the ICOMOS methodology for evaluating impact.

The current proposals strive to minimise the loss or compromise of the building's significance. However, it is evident that (in accordance with Historic England guidance) the sustainable re-use of the building requires a degree of intervention and change. Consequently, in evaluating the *overall* impact of the works, careful consideration has been given to the balance of benefits in order to reach a proportionate and justifiable conclusion.

6.2. Assessment Methodology

This assessment concerns the potential physical (direct) effect and visual (indirect) effect on the setting of the NDHA (Oakley) in conjunction with the visual (indirect) effect of the proposals upon the settings of identified, surrounding heritage assets.

The magnitude of effect is a product of the extent of change which is likely to result from the Proposed Development. Where the proposed changes are considered to enhance the appreciation, significance or setting of a heritage asset, the impact/effect on its significance will be deemed to be *positive*. Conversely, where the Proposed Development is considered to compromise an asset's significance, the impact/effect on the significance will be deemed as *adverse*, equating to *harm*.

Therefore, measuring the "effect" of the Proposed Development is essentially an evaluation of change to the fabric, character and setting of the Site (Oakley) and the settings of surrounding, identified heritage assets, balanced against their relative significance. Please refer to Table 1, Appendix I for relative significance / values used in this Heritage Statement.

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The assessment methodology adopted in this report evaluates the effects of the Proposed Development according to their magnitude using a scale of Major, Moderate, Minor, Negligible or Neutral. These effects may be either beneficial or adverse and may arise through direct or indirect change.

The conclusions of this assessment are then aligned with the categories set out within Policy HE5 of the NPPF (2026), which notes that 'assessments of the potential effects of development proposals on the significance of heritage assets (including through effects on their setting) should identify whether proposals would be likely to result in a:

- Positive effect;
- No effect;
- Harm;
- Substantial harm, which is defined as where the "*development proposal would seriously affect a key element of the asset's significance*"; or
- Total loss of significance.

6.3. Proposals

The proposals comprise the demolition of all existing 20th century buildings on the Site, the construction of new residential dwellings around the perimeter of the Site, and the part demolition and extension of the existing Oakley villa, along with its external and internal refurbishment to form apartments as the centrepiece of the new development along with associated landscaping works.

6.4. Physical (direct) Impact Assessment

Internally, the refurbishment of Oakley strives to retain and celebrate as many historic features as possible, including the principal staircase and its stained glass windows, fireplaces, timber panelling, decorative ceiling papers/plasterwork, and historic skirtings/cornice, whilst externally, the current, modern UPVC windows will be replaced using a design that better reflects the original appearance of the facades (see **Figure 83**).

The circulation and apartment layouts have been designed to minimise the removal of the existing building fabric, but will include the removal of some original walls and features as part of that adaption. To the south-west corner of the building, a portion of the original (but altered) servant's quarters part of the villa will be demolished, and the rear, western garden front of the villa truncated to allow a new secondary access to be located between the villa and the new-build extension to the south.

The new build extension of the villa to the south will adopt a different architectural treatment to ensure the definition of the junction between existing and new. The extension will form a group of three apartments which will hold the corner of the villa as it turns into Langley Road, with lower ridge and eaves levels to

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ensure the new building is subservient to the Villa, echoing the original servant's quarters block of the villa which was demolished in the 1930s. A traditional palette of materials is proposed for the new build, detailed in a contemporary way, using recessed soldier courses providing a textured façade.

6.5. Physical (direct) impact Assessment Summary

Given the site is not statutorily listed or within a designated conservation area, the degree of harm must be weighed against HE7(2) of the NPPF (2026), *"where a development proposal would harm the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, this should be weighed against the benefits of the proposal and a balanced judgement made, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the non-designated heritage asset"*.

The proposals will see the celebration of historic features and rooms internally, but the adaptation of the villa into a number of apartments will require instances of demolition (internal walls, former servant's accommodation wing), and the removal of some original decorative features and schemes within the ground floor level of Oakley, along with the subdivision of principal reception rooms to accommodate the proposed apartment planform.

Externally, the significance of the building will be enhanced with the replacement of the current, incongruous UPVC windows, along with high quality relandscaping which will return a prominence back to the former villa.

The proposals will result in the retention of the NDHA through its conversion to apartments and will return a residential use back to this former residential villa for the first time in over 100 years, resulting in an overall **minor positive effect** on the significance of the building, which is where the significance of a heritage asset would be enhanced, or better revealed, as outlined in NPPF Policy HE5.(2).

6.6. Visual (indirect) Impact Assessment

The below views form key heritage viewpoints within and surrounding the Site. These viewpoint locations have been identified following an analysis of the baseline conditions and scoped-in where;

a) there is a baseline value to the view in heritage terms,

b) where the Proposed Development is visible, and

c) sensitive / key viewpoints which test whether the Proposed Development would be visible.

The proposals for the grounds surrounding the villa include a terraced row of townhouses in the location of the current 1930s/50s extensions along Langley Road. The design of the new dwellings will be read as visually distinct from the principal villa, echoing the architecture of the Edwardian terraced houses directly opposite on Langley Road (see **Figure 87**).

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Within the original front grounds of the villa will be three, carefully sited new houses, which will take advantage of the mature planting with relandscaping, retention of key mature trees and introduction of ornamental lawn to form a sylvan character set apart from the wider scheme (see **Figures 81, 83, 85 & 87**). Visibility into the site from Wilmslow Road is largely concealed by the existing, incongruous bus shelter and mature trees/planting that conceals the villa from sight.

The adjacent original stone entrance portal from Wilmslow Road will be restored as a private gated pedestrian access (see **Figure 81**). To the rear, west of the villa, a new street will be formed parallel with Langley Road forming a cul-de-sac that will be visually terminated with the western elevation of the villa, and which will provide resident parking and access into the new terraced townhouse blocks to the north and south (see **Figures 88, 90 & 92**).

Figure 90 shows the proposed view looking existing view looking south-east from Shakespearean Gardens in Platt Fields Park towards the north-west corner of the Site, illustrating the new townhouse blocks to the north-west and west of the Site, which can be seen to introduce more architecturally pleasing buildings that will replace the current, utilitarian 1980s office building on the Site.

Figure 92 illustrates the proposed view looking east from the eastern perimeter of Platt Fields Park towards the Site, showing the dense, mature tree cover that will continue to largely conceal the new blocks to the north-west corner and west of the Site from view, with only glimpses of the distinctive gable features being able to be experienced.



Figure 80: Existing view looking south-west from Wilmslow Road towards the original entrance into Oakley.

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Figure 81: Proposed view.



Figure 82: Existing view looking west towards the entrance front of Oakley from the end of the original carriage drive.

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Figure 83: Proposed view.



Figure 84: Existing view looking east into Langley Road from its junction with Wilmslow Road.

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Figure 85: Proposed view.



Figure 86: Existing view looking further east into Langley Road from its junction with Wilmslow Road.

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Figure 87: Proposed view.



Figure 88: Proposed view looking east towards the rear, western front of Oakley.

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Figure 89: Existing view looking south-east from Shakespearean Gardens in Platt Fields Park.

From the sunken Shakespearean Gardens, the view captures the meeting point of two building masses, anchored by a prominent mature tree that defines the corner, while the existing brick boundary wall integrates comfortably with the setting.



Figure 90: Proposed view.

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Figure 91: Existing view looking east from Platt Field's Park.



Figure 92: Proposed view.

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6.7. Visual (indirect) Impact Assessment – Summary

As recommended in the revised Historic England guidance on the Settings of Historic Buildings referenced above, the perceived indirect (visual) impact upon the setting of the NDHA (Oakley – the Site) and settings of nearby identified heritage assets have been considered. The Assessment has been informed by the baseline Significance Appraisal above and follows the recommended ICOMOS scheme of Heritage Impact Assessment as defined by their Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties (2011).

Although much of the original grounds of the house have since been absorbed into the adjacent Platt Fields recreational park, the siting of the new buildings within the open rear (west), and front (east) grounds of Oakley, will alter the remaining character of the villa's original, domestic garden setting, which currently contributes to the NDHA's significance, by encroaching on the remaining aspects of the site's open character.

Consequently, the effect of the proposals on the significance of the setting of the NDHA is considered to result in **major adverse effect, which is equated to "harm"** to the significance of the heritage asset, as outlined in NPPF Policy HE5(2).

Due to the low, domestic scale and height of the proposed new residential development surrounding Oakley (the Site), it is considered that there will be **no effect on the settings of any identified, surrounding listed buildings**.

6.8. Summary & Conclusions

The overall effect of the Proposed Development on the significance of the NDHA (Oakley) and its setting is considered to result in **moderate** level of **"harm"** to the significance of the heritage asset, as outlined in NPPF Policy HE5. 2, and which should weighed against the benefits of the proposal as outlined in Policy HE7.2.

Due to the low, domestic scale and height of the proposed new residential development surrounding the Site, it is considered that there will be **no effect** on the settings of any identified, surrounding listed buildings.

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7. Appendices

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

Table 1: 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 *International architectural and historic interest and importance.*	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 *National architectural and historic importance and interest.*	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 *Regional architectural and historic importance and interest.*	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	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),

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Local architectural and historic heritage importance and interest.	• Sites 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 *Buildings or fabric components which have been extensively altered, eroding or compromising their architectural and historic interest*	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 *Buildings/sites where the potential importance interest requires determination*	This heritage grading relates to sites which may be locally identified as meriting recognition but have not been previously recorded or investigated so that their origins and fabric significance have yet to be objectively defined.

Appendix II - Criteria for defining the degree of physical and visual heritage effect

Table 2: Criteria for defining the degree of direct (physical) and indirect (visual) heritage effect	
Heritage effect & degree of impact (using ICOMOS methodology)	**Direct and indirect heritage effect**
Total loss *of the significance of a heritage asset, or from development within its setting.* Degree of impact (adverse) ○ Major	Total demolition of a heritage asset, including total loss of setting (designated or non-designated). – Total loss of the significance of a Grade II listed building/Grade II registered parks or gardens should be exceptional. – Total loss of the significance of a scheduled monument, protected wreck site, registered battlefield, Grade I and II* listed building, Grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, or World Heritage Site, should be wholly exceptional. – Total loss of the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should only be supported where the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefits of the proposal, having regard to the scale of the harm or loss and the significance of the non-designated heritage asset.
Substantial Harm, *where the*	Where the development proposal would seriously affect a key element of the asset's significance, including setting (designated or non-designated).

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development proposal would seriously affect a key element of the asset's significance or from development within its setting. Degree of impact (adverse) ○ Major ○ Moderate	– Substantial harm to a Grade II listed building/Grade II registered parks or gardens should be exceptional. – Substantial harm to a scheduled monument, protected wreck site, registered battlefield, Grade I and II* listed building, Grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, or World Heritage Site, should be wholly exceptional. – Substantial harm to a non-designated heritage asset should only be supported where the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefits of the proposal, having regard to the scale of the harm or loss and the significance of the non-designated heritage asset.
Harm *to the significance of a heritage asset, either from work affecting the asset itself or from development within its setting.* Degree of impact (adverse) ○ Moderate ○ Minor ○ Negligible	Where a development proposal would harm the significance of a heritage asset (designated or non-designated) or its setting. The effect on the asset and its significance should be weighed against any public benefits resulting from the proposal. Where a development proposal would harm the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, this should be weighed against the benefits of the proposal and a balanced judgement made, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the non-designated heritage asset.
No effect *on the significance of a heritage asset.* Degree of impact ○ Neutral	Where a development proposal would not affect the significance of a heritage asset (designated or non-designated) or its setting.
Positive effect*, which is where the significance of a heritage asset would be enhanced, or better revealed.* Degree of impact (beneficial) ○ Major ○ Moderate ○ Minor ○ Negligible	A positive effect on the significance of a heritage asset (designated or non-designated) or its setting, is achieved where a development proposal would lead to significance being enhanced, or better revealed. Development proposals which would have a positive effect on a designated or non-designated heritage asset should be supported.

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Appendix III - Map Regression

In order to understand how the Site and the area immediately surrounding it have developed, historic maps are interrogated in detail.

Through discursive commentary the identification of salient features, useful contextual and interpretative information can be analysed which will inform the assessment of the development of buildings and features that remain today.

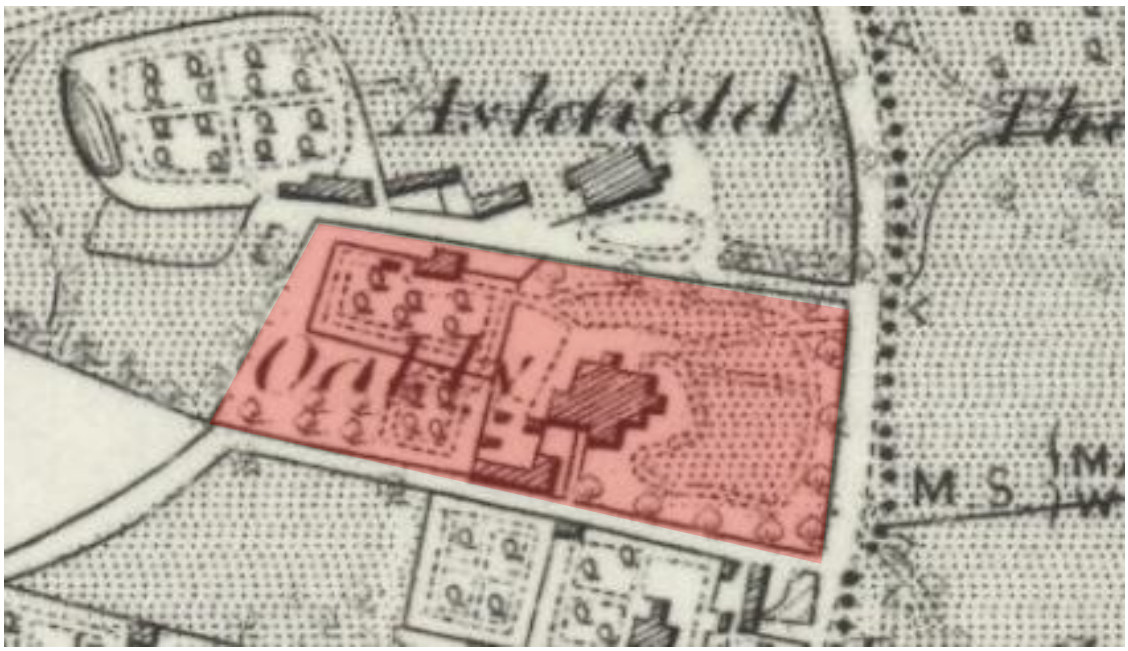
Table 3: Historic Map Regression



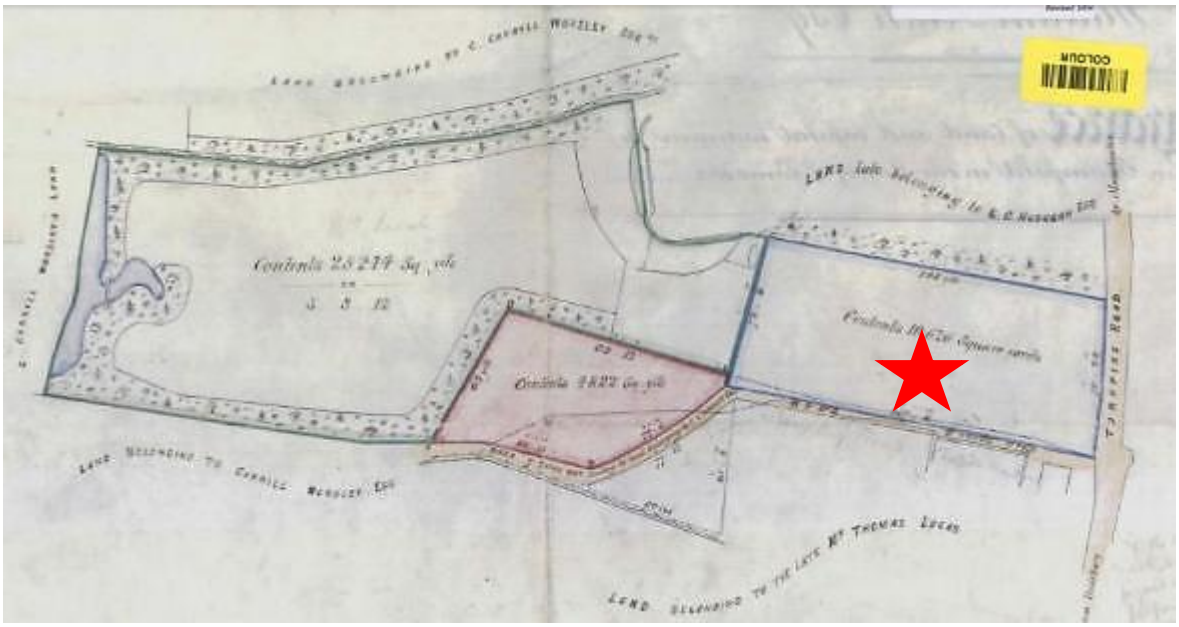
1843 Sketch Map of Fallowfield from 'Sketches of Fallowfield and the surround manors", by Mrs C Wilkinson 1888 – This early map shows the relatively few large houses in and around Wilmslow Road in the early-19th century. Oakley (outlined red) can be seen to be located next to Ashfield.

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Table 3: Historic Map Regression



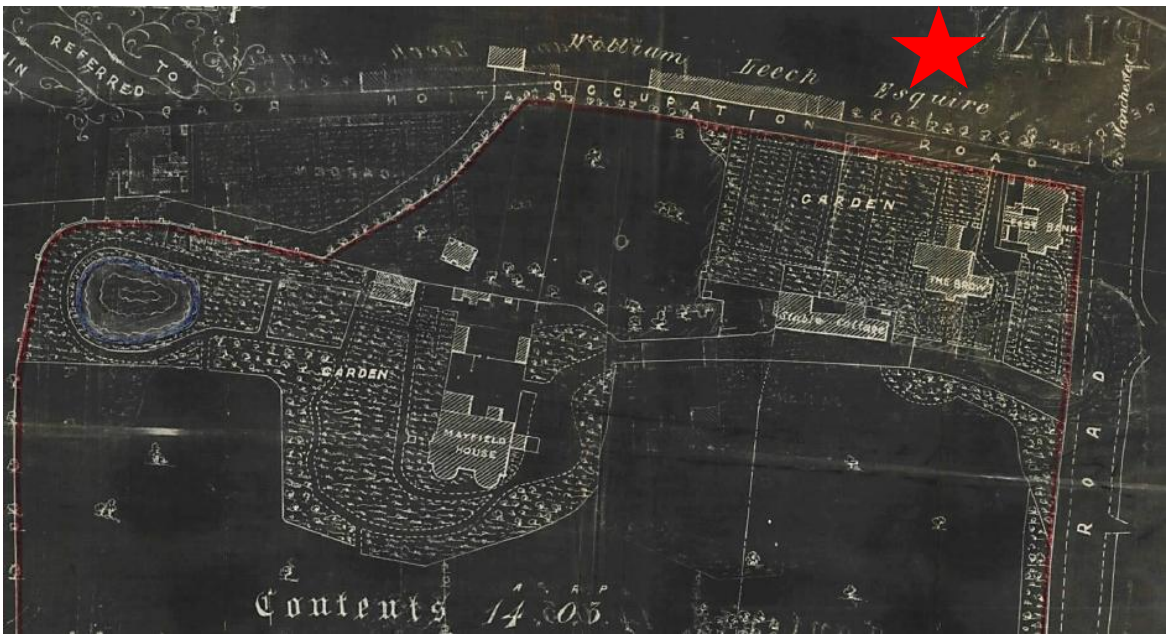
1845-1848 OS map – This map shows the original footprint of Oakley and its grounds as seen approximately 8 years after its construction.



1873 estate plan – This plan, which forms part of the original deeds, shows the location of Oakley marked by the red star, and its grounds being outlined in blue.

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Table 3: Historic Map Regression



1883 estate plan – This plan, from the deeds of the adjacent Mayfield House (now demolished), shows the site of Oakley marked by the red star, and recorded as belonging to William Leech Esquire.



1893 OS – This map shows the Oakley estate to have remained largely as built, with the addition of various outbuildings and greenhouses.

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Table 3: Historic Map Regression



1907 OS – This map shows the Site following the widening of Wilmslow Road, and the relocating of Oakley's entrance gates and walls.



1923 OS – This map shows the increasing development of the immediate environs surrounding Oakley to form a number of new student halls of residences. This map also shows that the adjacent villa, Ashfield, has been demolished and integrated into the wider Platt Fields Park.

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Table 3: Historic Map Regression



1934 OS – This map shows the Site immediately before the 1937 extension was constructed, and shows a number of outbuildings have been demolished.



1957-8 OS – This map shows the completion of the 1937 and 1950s extensions to Oakley, which can be seen to extend westwards along the south boundary of the Site.

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