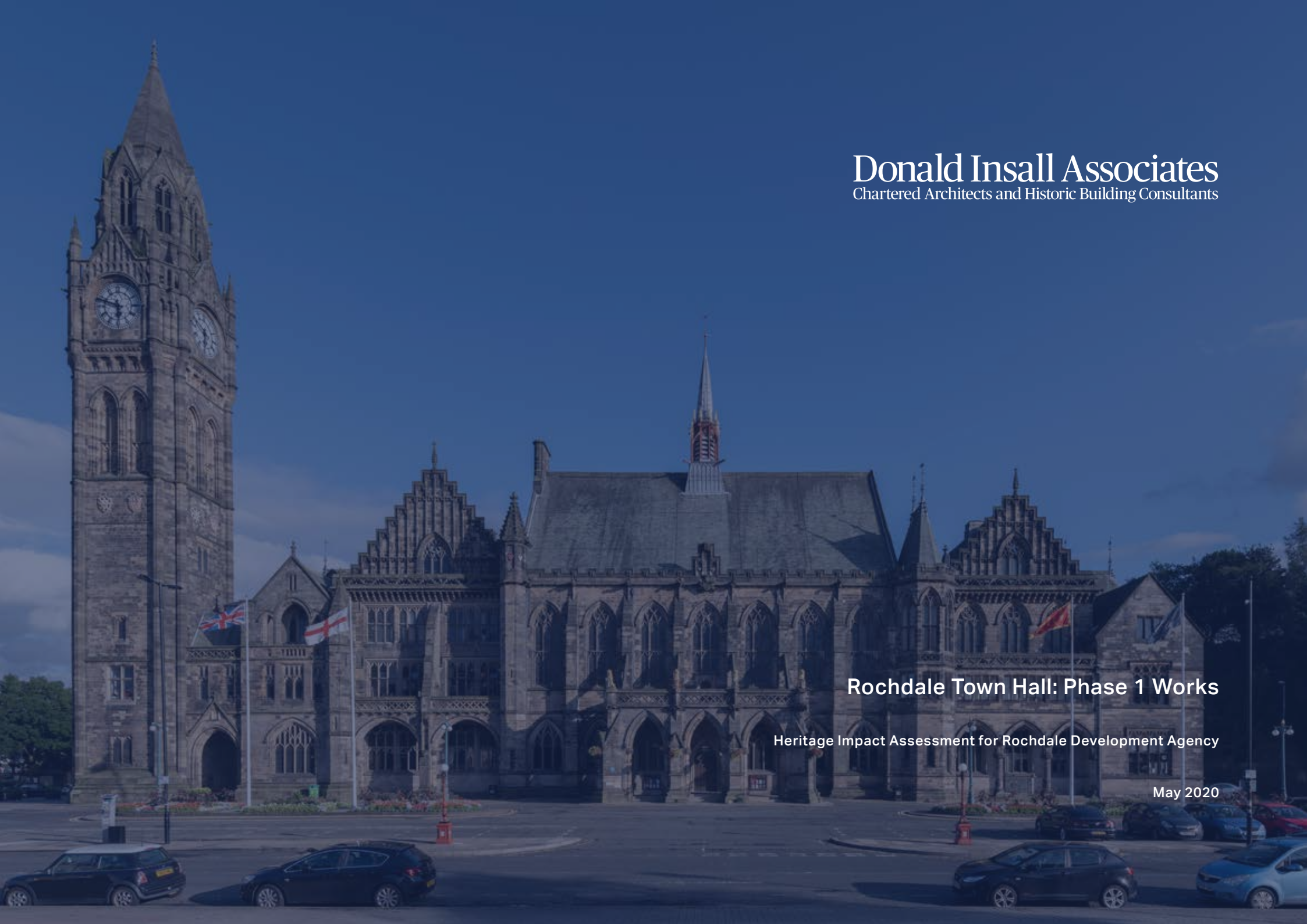


A wide-angle photograph of Rochdale Town Hall, a large Gothic Revival building with a prominent clock tower on the left. The building features intricate stonework, multiple gables, and a central spire. Several flags are flying in front of the building. The foreground shows a paved area with parked cars and a clear blue sky.

Donald Insall Associates
Chartered Architects and Historic Building Consultants

Rochdale Town Hall: Phase 1 Works

Heritage Impact Assessment for Rochdale Development Agency

May 2020



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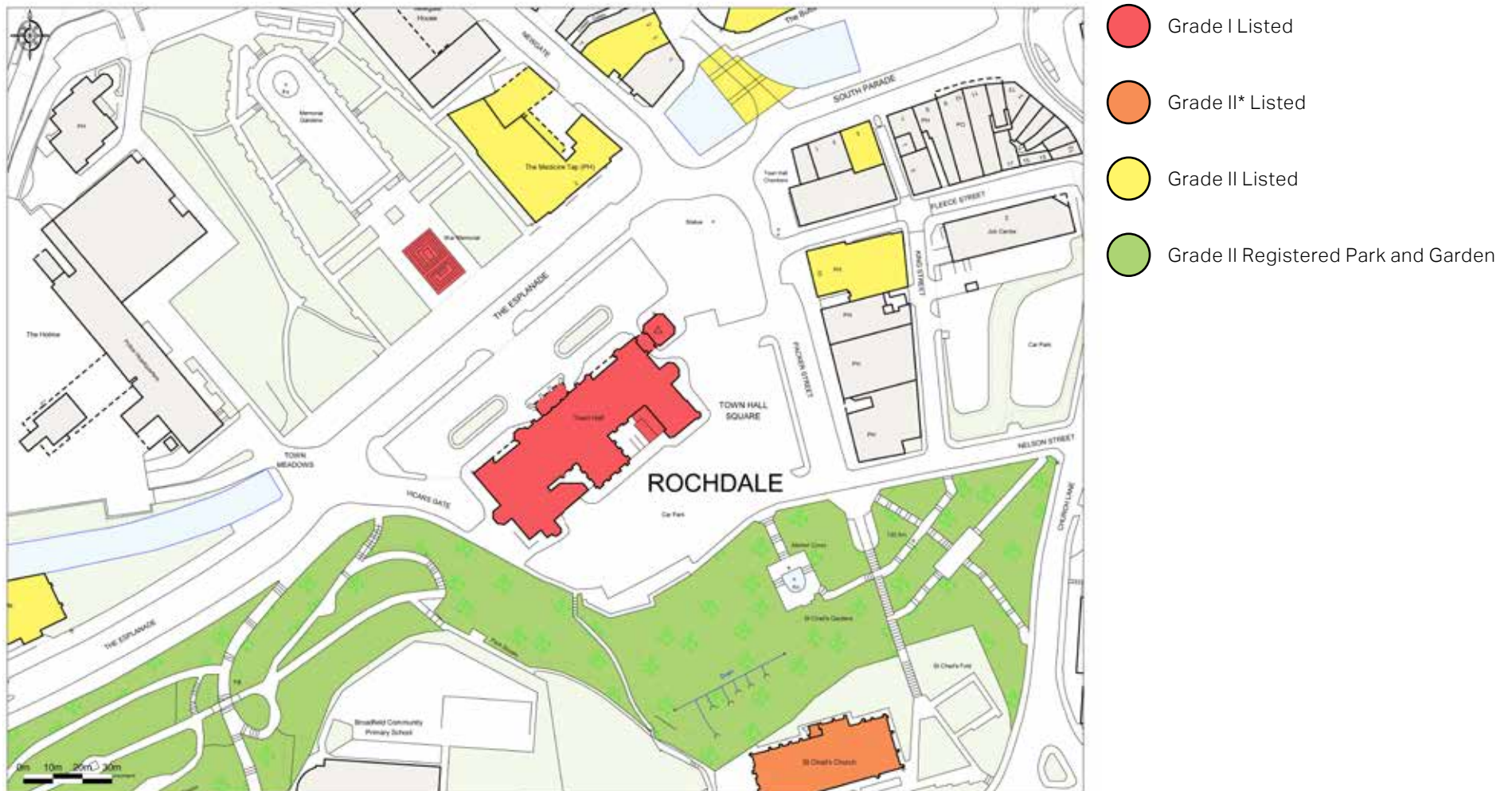
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1.1. Listed Buildings, Parks and Gardens



1.0 Summary of Heritage Impact Assessment

1.1 The Rochdale Town Hall Project

Donald Insall Associates were appointed in February 2019 to continue providing lead consultant and conservation architect services for Rochdale Borough Council (RBC) at Rochdale Town Hall following the successful outcome of the Heritage Fund stage 1 bid.

The development of the building and its social, architectural and artistic context was fully researched from the beginning of the project. A full assessment of significance and analysis of the building and its contents culminated in the *Rochdale Town Hall Conservation Management Plan*, Donald Insall Associates, 2019 (CMP). This plan has underpinned the development of the brief and the scheme. It summarises the significance of the building, the potential threats to that significance and opportunities to make improvements to its condition and long-term sustainability; it also provides guidance on its conservation and management within an accompanying Gazetteer.

Rochdale Town Hall is owned and managed by Rochdale Borough Council. Many of the administrative functions have however relocated to the new offices at Number One Riverside, and therefore the Town Hall's function as council offices has almost ceased. Some areas are now underused and have reverted to storage, whilst others are crowded with surplus office furniture and equipment. There are numerous instances where the current use or management of rooms affects the significance of the building, or where aspects of the building are not well-suited to their current use. Rochdale Borough Council's challenge is to maintain

and manage the building so that it meets public expectations for a civic and community building and complies with current legislation within a constrained budget, whilst protecting its exceptional significance.

Following the refinement of the proposals and commissioning of specialist surveys and opening up works, the project has been divided into three phases of work:

- Phase 1: the primary objective of Phase 1 proposals has been enabling works to reduce risks to the Phase 2 NLHF works and largely comprise strip-out works, structural openings and preparatory works funded by RBC.
- Phase 2: the main body of the NLHF works for the repair and restoration of the Town Hall including surrounding terracing.
- Phase 3: the potential later commercial re-use phase of works following delivery of Phase 2.

The proposals have been developed with our client Rochdale Development Agency and the project consultant team, along with specialist surveyors and contractors. Planning permission and listed building consent are now sought for Phase 1 of the proposed works which are described in detail in the application drawings, Planning, Design and Access Statement and supporting consultant reports which this report accompanies.

1.2 Purpose of this Report

This report has been drafted as a continuation of the CMP, which informed the development of the proposals for the building and its surrounding environs, the key principles of which are summarised in the Conservation Philosophy which is contained at Section 3 of this report. It seeks to demonstrate how the proposals comply with the relevant legislation, planning policy and guidance and to provide a justification of the scheme on this basis. It is underpinned by the comprehensive illustrated historic background, detailed building analysis and room-by-room gazetteer contained within the CMP and should be read in conjunction with that document; the Assessment of Significance is also provided at Section 2 of this report to provide context to the analysis and justification of the proposals contained in Section 4.

1.3 The Site and its Legal Status

Rochdale Town Hall is a Grade I listed building located in the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area (designated in 1980 and extended in 2011) in the Metropolitan Borough of Rochdale. It is in the setting of a number of nationally significant designated heritage assets. Directly opposite the Town Hall lies the Cenotaph (Grade I) and the old Post Office (Grade II); to the rear, St Chads Church (Grade II*) sits at the top of the hill with Broadfield Park and Slopes (Grade II Registered Park and Garden) extending between. The recently listed Rochdale Bridge (Grade II) forms part of the NLHF funded 'Revealing the Roch' scheme. The site also lies within the Historic England designated 'Heritage Action Zone' – a 5 year

programme of heritage-led regeneration. Alterations to a listed building generally require listed building consent; development in conservation areas or within the setting of a listed building or conservation area requires local authorities to assess the implications of proposals on built heritage.

The statutory list description of the listed building is included in Appendix I and a summary of guidance on the conservation area provided by the local planning authority is in Appendix II, along with extracts from the relevant legislation and planning policy documents.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is the legislative basis for decision-making on applications that relate to the historic environment. Sections 66 and 72 of the Act impose statutory duties upon local planning authorities which, with regard to listed buildings, require the planning authority to have '*special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses*' and, in respect of conservation areas, that '*special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area*'.

In considering applications for listed building consent and planning permission, local authorities are also required to consider the policies on the historic environment set out in the National Planning Policy Framework 2019. At the heart of the Framework is 'a presumption in favour of sustainable development' and there are also specific policies relating to the historic environment.

The Framework, in paragraph 189, states that:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

Section 2 of this report – the assessment of significance – meets this requirement and is based on the research and site surveys undertaken as part of the CMP, which are of a sufficient level of detail to understand the potential impact of the proposals.

The Framework also, in paragraph 193, requires that:

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

The Framework goes on to state at paragraph 194 that:

Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting) should require clear and convincing justification.

Section 4 of this report provides this clear and convincing justification.

The Framework requires that local planning authorities categorise harm as either 'substantial' or 'less than substantial'. Where a proposed development will lead to 'substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset', the Framework states, in paragraph 195, that:

... local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.*

Where a development proposal will lead to 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the Framework states, in paragraph 196, that:

...this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

The Framework requires local planning authorities to look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Paragraph 200 states that:

Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

Concerning conservation areas it states, in paragraph 201, that:

Not all elements of a Conservation Area...will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or...should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 195 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 196, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area...as a whole.



2.0 Assessment of Significance

2.1 Introduction

This assessment responds to the requirement of the National Planning Policy Framework to 'recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance'. The NPPF defines significance as:

'The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological (potential to yield evidence about the past), architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting'.

Historic England's *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* of 2008 sets out current good practice for assessing the significance of historic buildings in England and is derived from the 1979 Burra Charter. It states that the following values should be considered in order to fully understand the significance of a place:

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

Historical value: the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present – it tends to be illustrative or associative.

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

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

This significance of a heritage asset should also be considered spatially, as well as conceptually, because significance is not always manifest in equal measure in all parts of a building or place. In some situations, for example, all four categories of heritage values are present; in others, fewer; in some places the heritage values might even be in conflict.

A hierarchy of significance is an essential tool for managing change. Areas of the highest or high significance are most sensitive to change; areas of medium and low significance are correspondingly more adaptable. Negative elements, and to a lesser extent areas of medium or low significance, also provide the clearest opportunities for change.

- Highest – an asset important at the highest national or international levels, including scheduled ancient monuments, Grade I and II* listed buildings and World Heritage Sites. The NPPF advises that substantial harm should be wholly exceptional.
- High – a designated asset important at a regional level and also at a national level, including Grade II listed buildings and conservation areas. The NPPF advises that substantial harm should be exceptional.
- Medium – an undesignated asset important at a local to regional level, including local (non-statutory) listed buildings or those that make a positive contribution to the setting of

a listed building or to a conservation area. May include less significant parts of listed buildings. Buildings and parts of structures in this category should be retained where possible, although there is usually scope for adaptation.

- Low – structure or feature of very limited heritage or other cultural value and not defined as a heritage asset. May include insignificant interventions to listed buildings, and buildings that do not contribute positively to a conservation area. The removal or adaptation of structures in this category is usually acceptable where the work will enhance a related heritage asset.
- Negative – structure or feature that harms the value of a heritage asset. Wherever practicable, removal of negative features should be considered, taking account of setting and opportunities for enhancement.

2.2 Statement of Significance

Rochdale Town Hall is a Grade I listed building of exceptional interest, its dramatic Gothic exterior and jewel-like interior are in harmony and together they exemplify not only the apex of High Victorian design and suggest the beginning of the Aesthetic movement, but also represent Rochdale's specific position on trade and politics and the building is a symbol of civic pride and as such is of national significance.

The Town Hall was designed by William Crossland, a prominent Victorian architect, and is of the highest significance in terms of its historic value as one of the

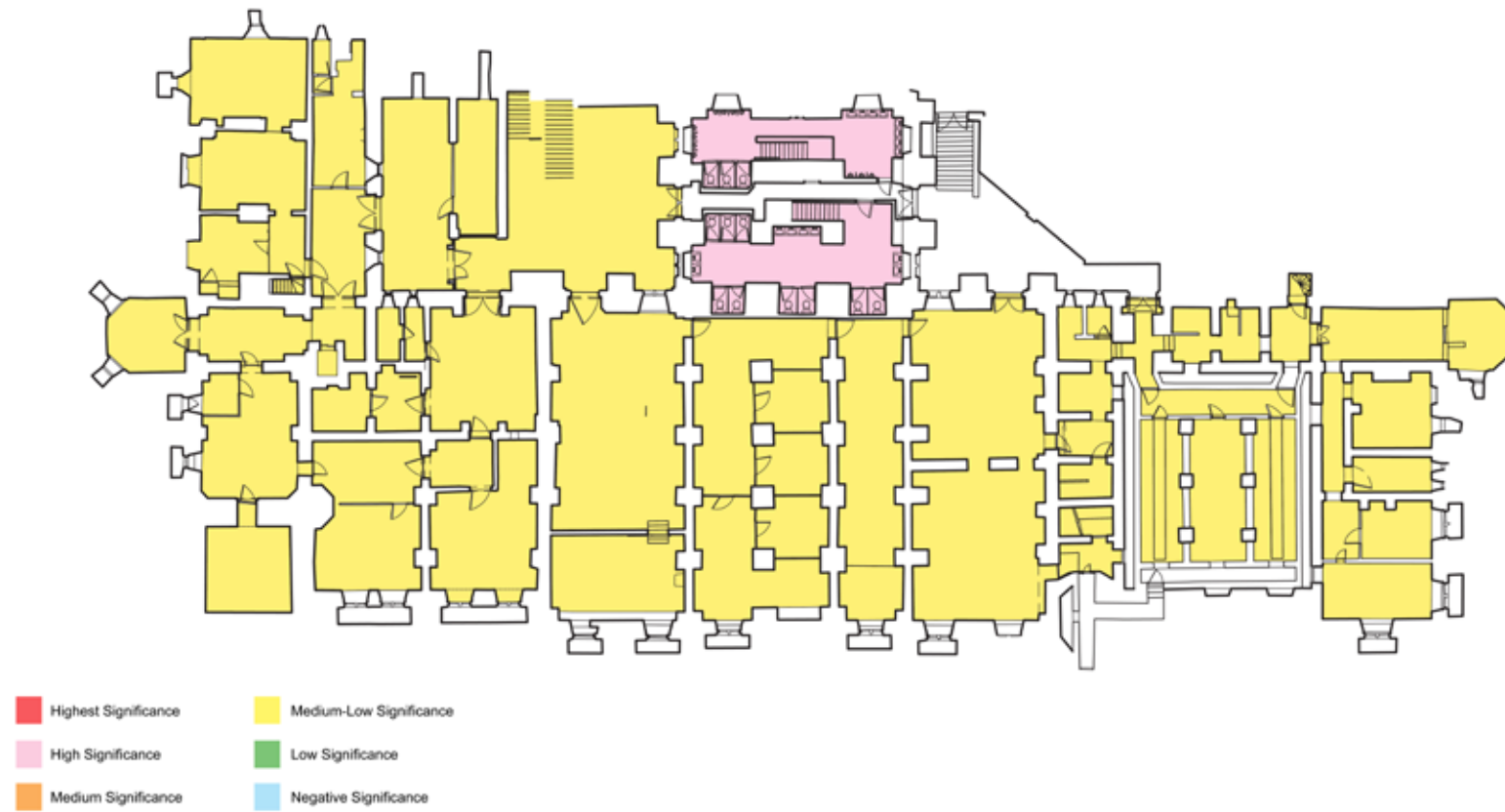
finest examples of a Victorian town hall nationally. As well as being an outstanding example of the Gothic Revival, it also includes early examples of Aesthetic Movement design, then a very new movement in art.

Its original form as designed is little altered with the exception of the later tower, itself a fine example of design by Waterhouse, and the north front and tower are of the highest architectural significance. This is derived through the aesthetic value of its exterior and for the particularly outstanding decorative design of the interior. Externally, Crossland utilised the form of the architecture and a hierarchy of decorative detail to express separate internal functions and create a unified interior and exterior scheme, with stone carvings and stained glass of the highest quality embellishing the building, with symbolic sculpture and motifs by the leading craftsmen of their trade.

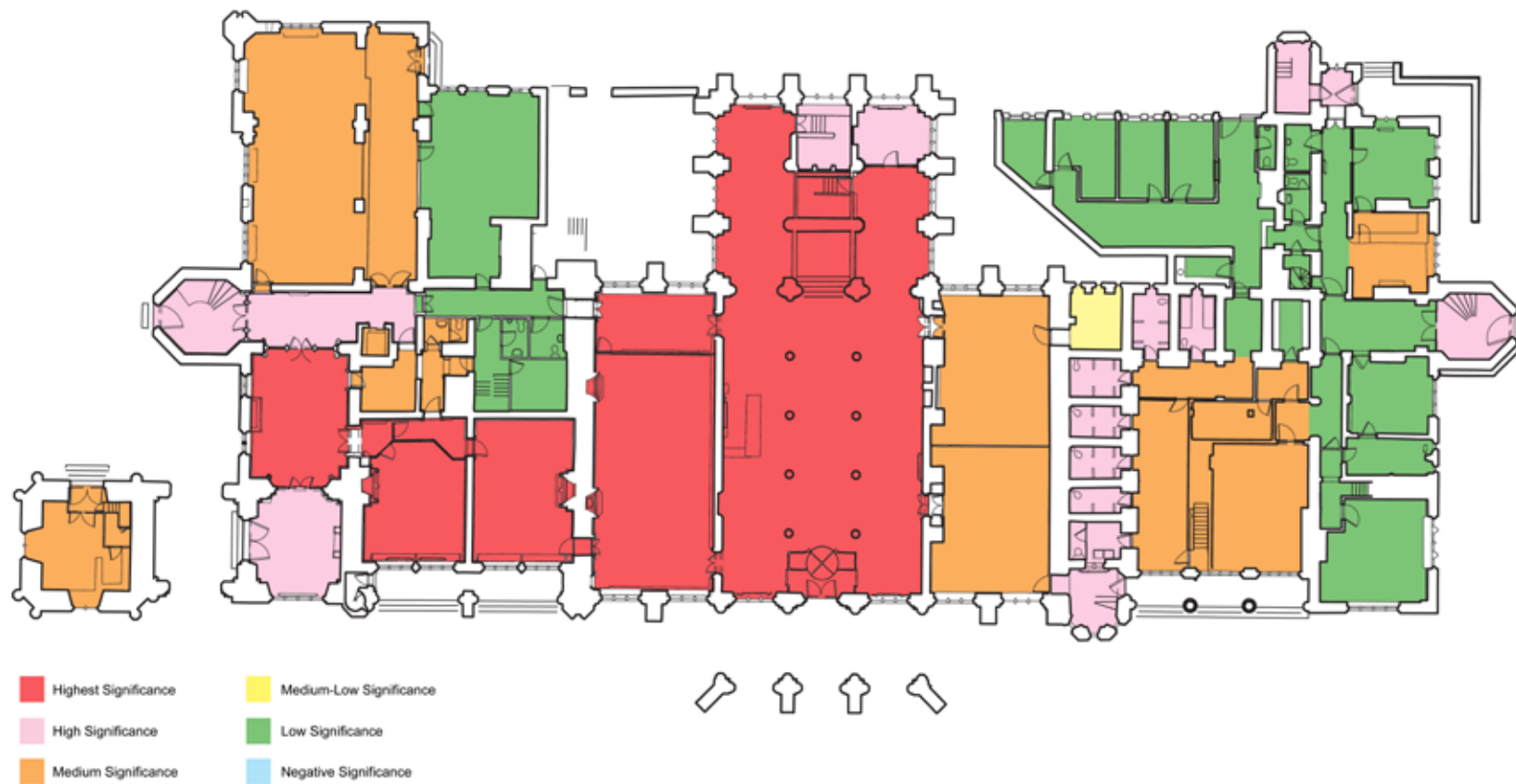
Internally the surviving rooms with intact schemes are probably unmatched as examples of Victorian polychrome decorated interiors, with one of the most elaborate examples of pictorial and heraldic decoration of this era. The building has been in continuous public use for over 140 years and has a high evidential value founded in several major phases of alteration undertaken to reflect the changing aspirations and priorities of the Council; the layers of paint and other finishes in the decorative scheme hold evidence for the original appearance and composition of paint colours and are part of the building's significance. Adaptations undertaken in the 1970s and 1990s are of low value and detract from the significance of the building.

A socially and culturally radical building, the Town Hall is regarded as a symbol of civic pride and identity in Rochdale. It has communal value for its presence in the town centre, as a focus of significant events and for the interior decoration illustrating the balance between radical politics, Victorian trade and a claim on tradition which Rochdale's entrepreneurs and politicians sought - rooted in Rochdale's heritage. The theme of interior decoration showing industrial processes and working people are extremely rare within Victorian fine art.

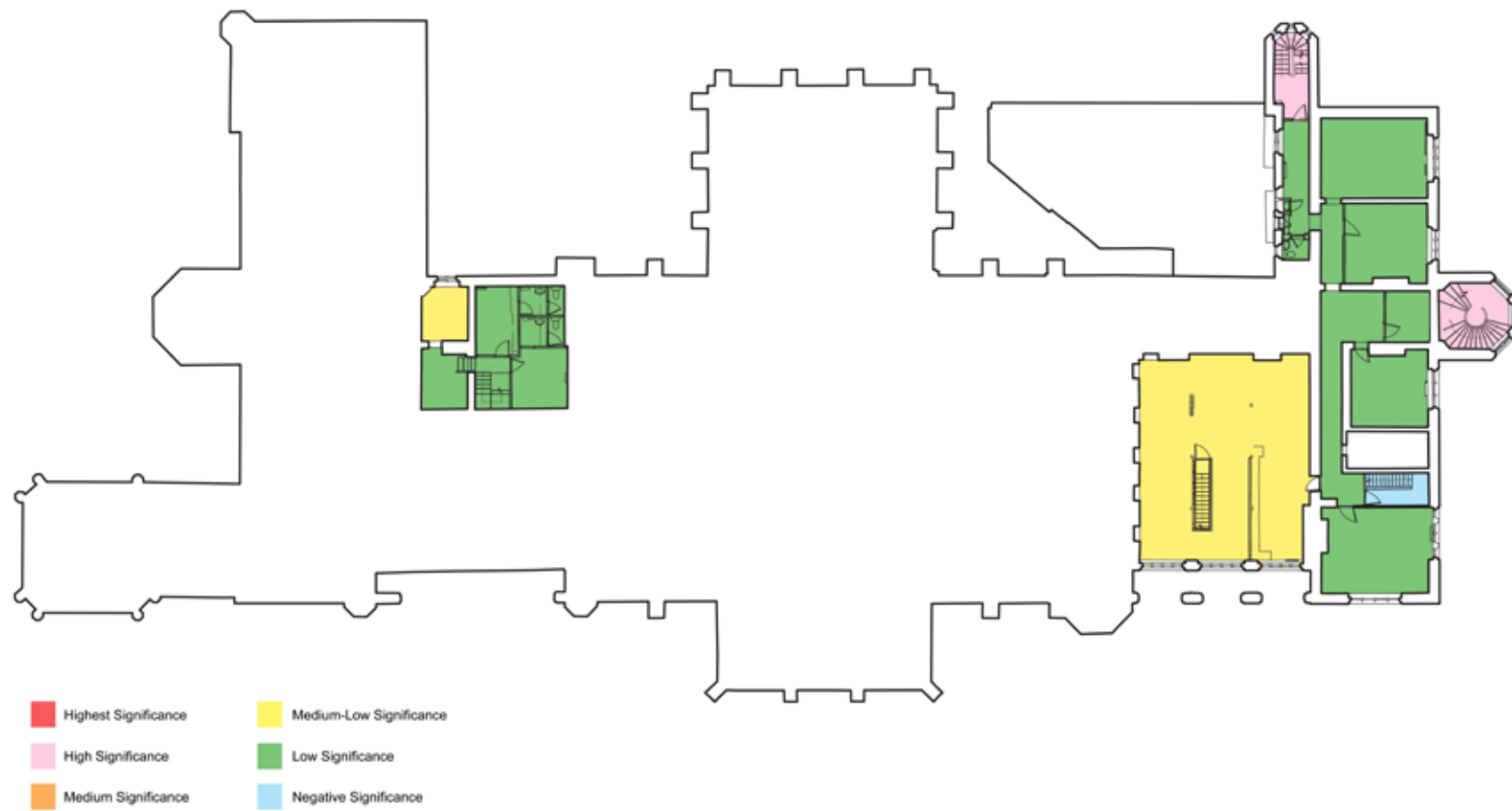
The Town Hall is the most significant building in the conservation area; lying on an island site it forms a major landmark on the Esplanade and dominates the town centre. It forms part of an attractive group of civic and community buildings that include St Chad's Church and the Post Office set in a designed landscape that was developed in stages between the late 19th century and the mid-20th century and recently enhanced through the reopening of the River Roch. Views from the west along the Esplanade, from Park Slopes and from Memorial Gardens are of particular significance; whilst car parking, traffic and associated highway clutter detract from the Town Hall's wider landscaped setting.



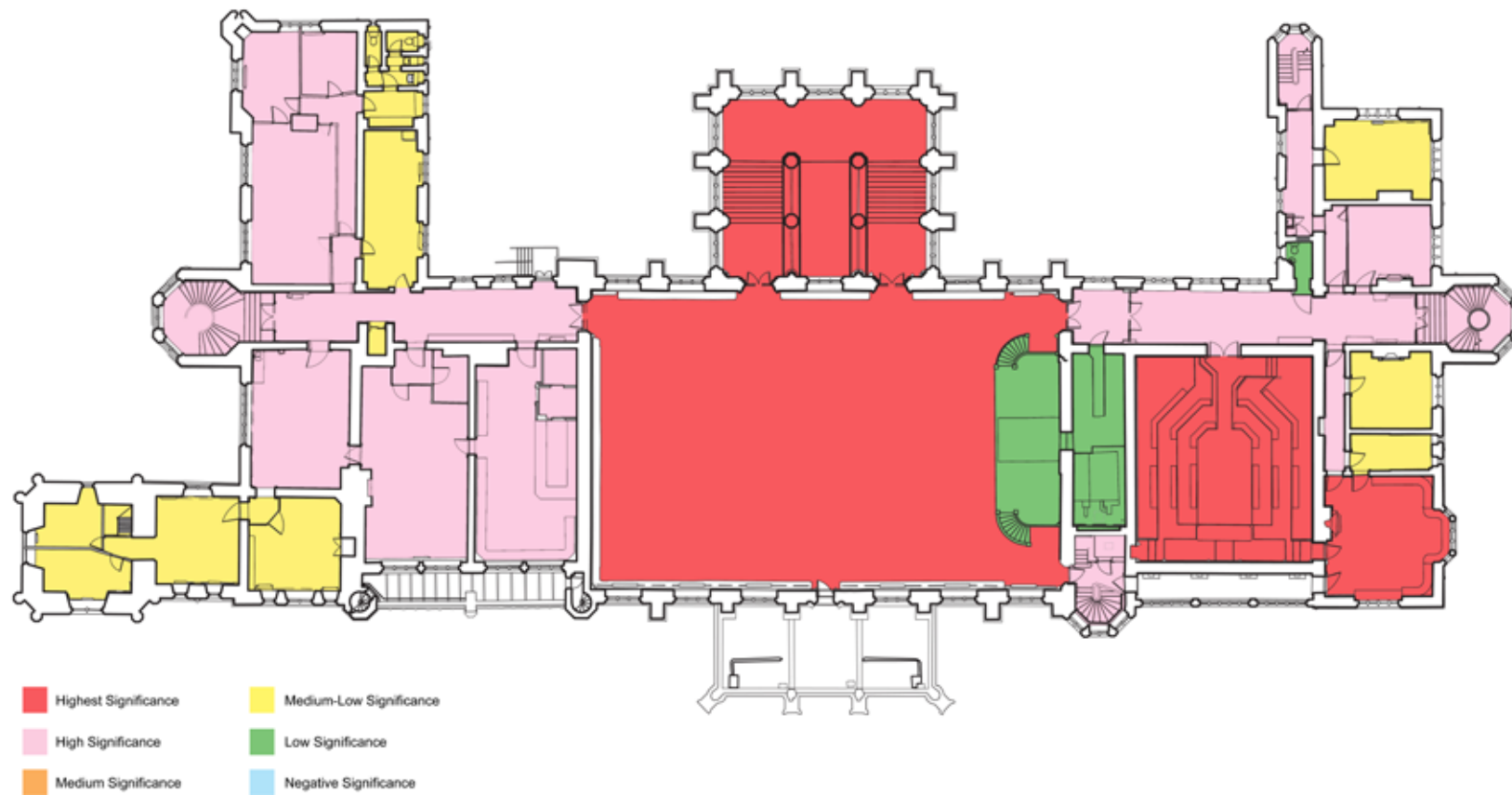
Basement *significance*



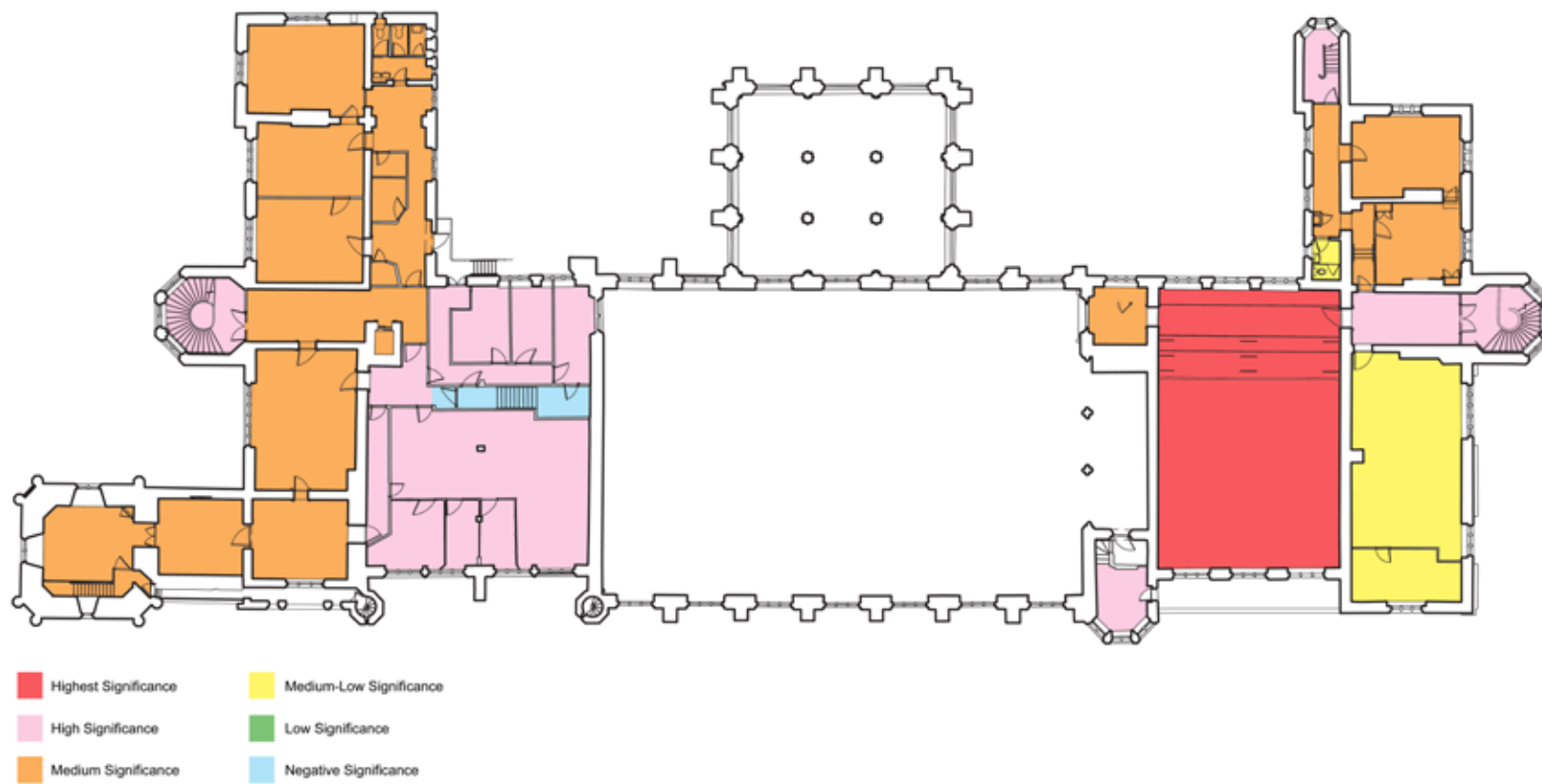
Ground Floor *significance*



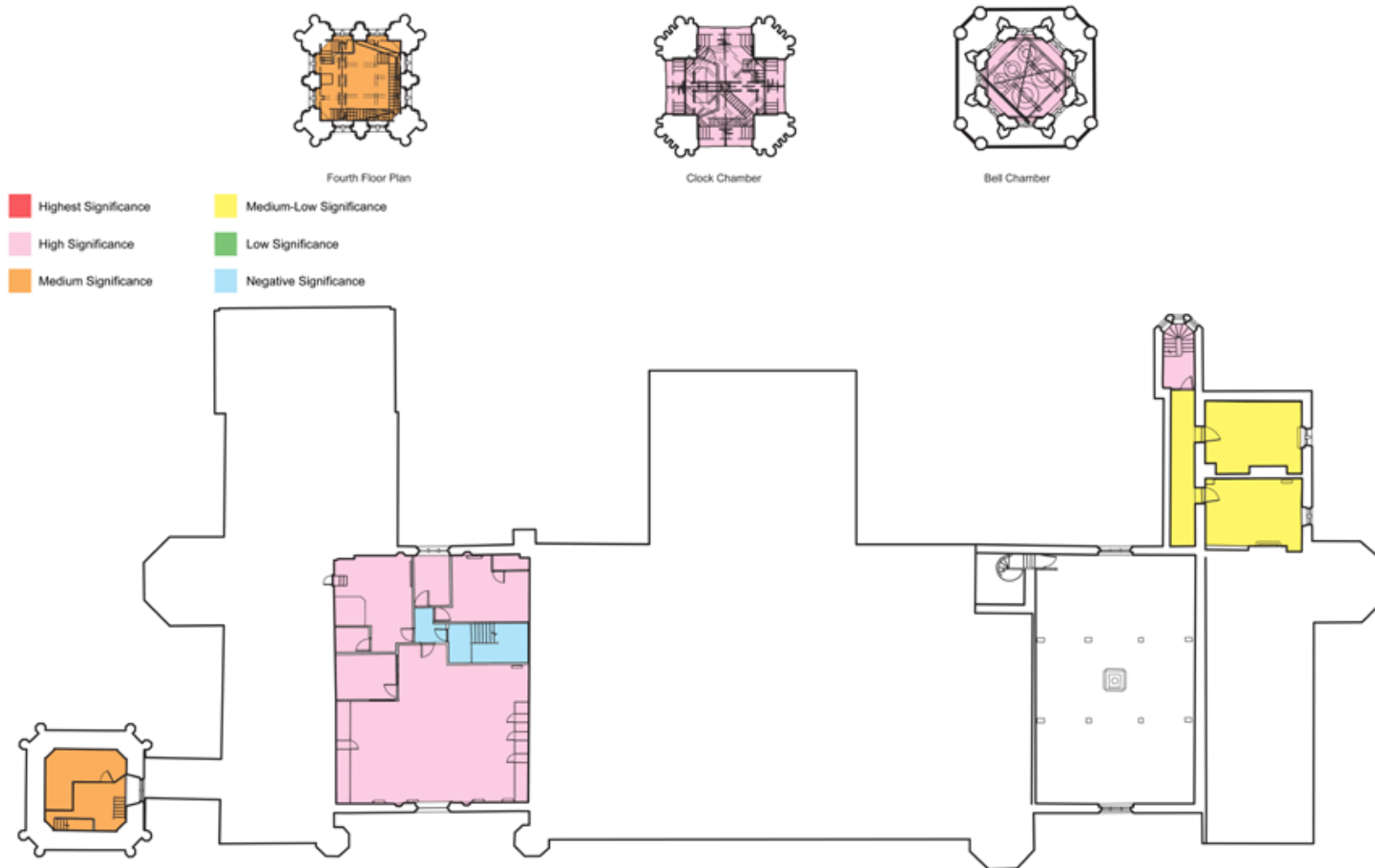
Mezzanine *significance*



First Floor *significance*



Second Floor *significance*



Third Floor and High Tower *significance*

2.3 Detailed Assessment of Significance

2.3.1 Significance: Setting

The Town Hall stands on an island site and forms the major landmark on the Esplanade and within the town centre. The site was cleared to allow for its construction and as a consequence the Town Hall does not have a strong relationship with the surrounding historic street pattern which was altered to accommodate it. Its immediate setting however was also remodelled to designs by Crossland to create a dignified civic setting for the building. To the north a new road edged with a new riverside parapet was laid out whilst to the south, Park Slopes was created with an informal park for recreation; both schemes were finished by 1870 in time for the opening of the Town Hall. The Town Hall Square and Memorial Gardens both formed later additions to its setting, the former altered by modern car parking. Views from the west along the Esplanade, from Park Slopes and from the Memorial Gardens are of particular significance. The existence of such an unusually generous space around the Town Hall is the result of separate phases of investment by the Corporation over a period of over 70 years, to create a landscape setting for their Town Hall. Car parking, traffic and associated highway clutter added since the mid-20th century however detracts from the overall civic quality of its setting.

2.3.2 Significance: External Fabric

The exterior architecture of the Town Hall is of the highest significance as an example of a Town Hall designed in the Gothic Revival architectural style, with separate functions expressed in the form of the architecture and a hierarchy of decorative detail used to clearly express the most important areas and functions. Crossland used the country's best stone carvers and stained glass artists to embellish the building with individually created, highest quality symbolic sculpture and motifs. The principal north façade and tower are of the highest significance whilst the rear elevation and south wings were deliberately treated more plainly, creating a clear contrast between these functional areas and the imposing public frontage - these are still of high significance. Minor late-20th century alterations to the south-east elevation have had a minor impact on the appearance of this façade; however overall the exterior is virtually unaltered and remains as designed by Crossland, with the later tower by Waterhouse **[Plates 2.1 and 2.2]**.



2.1 The north front (Damian Griffiths 2019)



2.2 Waterhouse's tower, viewed from the north-east (Damian Griffiths 2019)

2.3.3 Significance: Interior and Decorative Scheme

The interior as a whole is considered to be of high significance. The Gazetteer contained within the CMP sets out the relative significance of different spaces, also shown on the accompany Significance Plans. The original internal structure and plan form is largely intact; the planning of the building was not particularly innovative at the time it was built, but reflected divisions between different historic functions of the Council at that time. Some aspects of circulation did not work well from the beginning, and changes were made incrementally to address this as municipal functions evolved within the Council.

Rooms were designed in a hierarchy so that at the lower end of the scale, functional offices and service rooms were plainly finished; these are of lower significance than the high status reception and civic rooms. The plan form has been altered in some areas making the historic layout less legible. Where spatial quality and the integrity of rooms have been compromised by these changes, significance is lower, for example in the former police parade ground (G15a-g). In some altered areas, such as in Committee Room 3 (G2b), the later changes could easily be reversed and the overall high decorative quality of the room means that it is still of the highest significance. Where the most important rooms have survived intact, these are of highest significance.

The decorative design of the high status rooms in the interior is of the highest significance; Rochdale has one of the most elaborate programmes of pictorial

and heraldic decoration of all Victorian town halls. It is of the highest significance in the context of comparable schemes, such as Manchester Town Hall. The subject matter depicting modern tradesmen and textile machinery expresses pride in contemporary industrial processes is unique to Rochdale Town Hall, not occurring elsewhere in Victorian art. This is highly significant in the context of Victorian art and also in a social history and architectural context. In contrast, depictions of birds, flowers and animals, as in the Mayor's Parlour, were a popular subject in Victorian interiors, but the Rochdale scheme is an early example. In domestic settings, such schemes have often been altered or lost and so the Rochdale interiors are nationally significant. The use of historicist imagery is less unusual in Victorian civic settings. The symbolism used in the decorative art, in wall painting, stained glass and on carved wood and stone architectural sculpture contributes to the importance of the whole interior **[Plates 2.3 – 2.13]**.

The decorative scheme in intact high status rooms is of the **highest significance**. Current room names and numbers in brackets:

- The Exchange (G1a)
- Former Council Chamber (Reception Room) (G1b)
- Mayor's Parlour (G2a)
- Mayor's Reception Room (Committee Room 3) (G2b)
- Principal Staircase (F8)
- Great Hall (F1)
- Mayor's Vestibule (Small Exchange) (G3b)

Of **high significance** are:

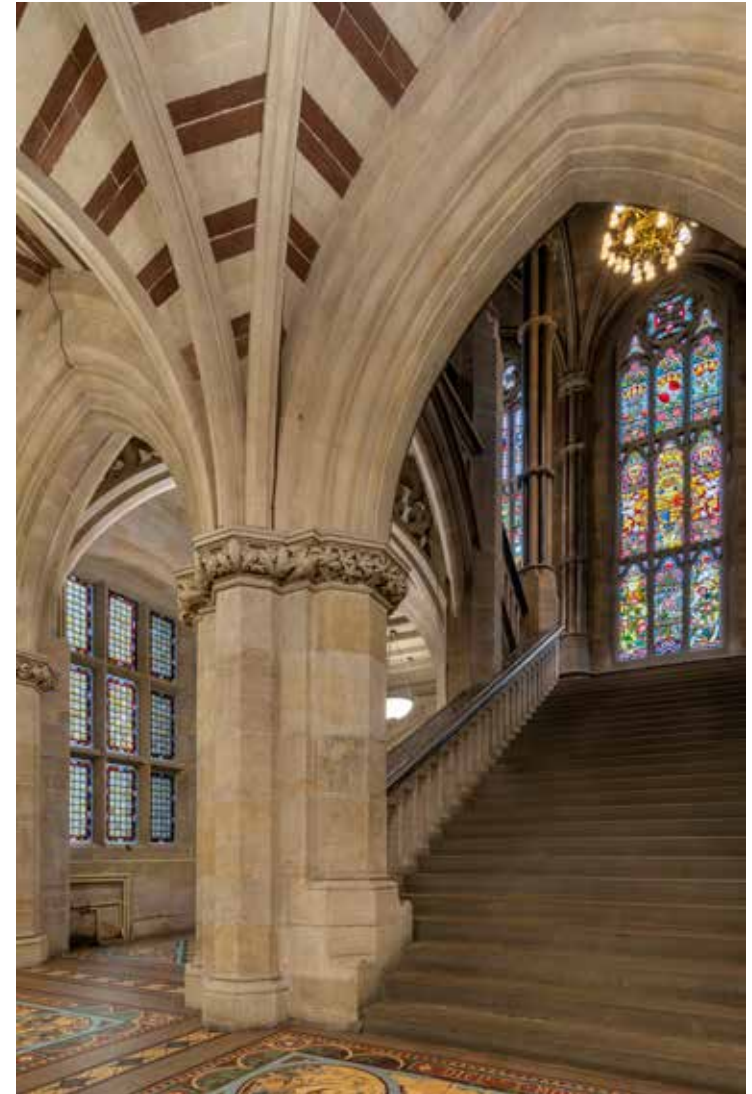
- Borough Court (Council Chamber) (F15a)
- Magistrate's Retiring Room (Members' Room) (F14a)

Of **medium significance** (certain key elements have been replaced and interior further compromised by insertion of dominant new elements):

- Refreshment Room (F2a)



2.3 Gothic Revival details designed by Crossland in the Town Hall (Damian Griffiths 2019)



2.4 Foliate capitals by Earp in the Exchange, G1a (Damian Griffiths 2019)



2.5 Polychromatic Minton floor tiles in the Exchange, G1a (Damian Griffiths 2019)



2.6 Traceried stone beams in the former Council Chamber, G1b (Damian Griffiths 2019)



2.7 Detail of the frieze in the former Council Chamber, G1b (Damian Griffiths 2019)



2.8 1930 screen in Mayor's Reception Room (Damian Griffiths 2019)



2.9 Wall stencilling in Committee Room 3 (Damian Griffiths 2019)



2.10 Carved oak corbels in ground floor Committee Room (Damian Griffiths, 2019)



2.11 Vaulted principal staircase with stained glass representing towns with which Rochdale traded (Damian Griffiths 2019)



2.12 *The Great Hall with angelic hammerbeam roof (Damian Griffiths 2019)*



2.13 *Holiday's Magna Carta mural in the Great Hall (Damian Griffiths 2019)*

2.3.4 Significance of Movable Furniture

The design of the movable furniture is less advanced than that of the architecture or the decorative painting and stained glass. The best pieces by Snowden, a local maker, are of high significance, but most of the furnishings are of medium or low significance. In contrast to the furniture designed by Waterhouse at Manchester Town Hall, the surviving furniture at Rochdale is conservative, mostly neither Gothic or Aesthetic Movement in style, nor relating well to the motifs employed in the interior design. Where pieces were designed for the Town Hall, they contribute to the overall significance of the rooms and are worth retaining.

The design of the principal furniture appears to have been based on a neo-Jacobean style in Danzig oak and incorporating lion masks, carving of holly and oak leaves and distinctive moulded edges to tables. The specifications prepared by Crossland's office for the furniture survive but the drawings have not been found, although Crossland may have designed key pieces. Some of the tables have been identified with a reasonable degree of certainty using original documentation but the lack of drawings has meant that it has not been possible to be certain that extant chairs were designed by him. The 2012 AHP Inventory included in the CMP Gazetteer appendix provides significance assessments for each piece.

2.3.5 Significance of the Town Hall to the Local Community

The decision to build a town hall was taken very soon after incorporation of the borough and, even though the building cost much more than originally estimated, funds were made available and the local and national press approved of the results. The construction of the building is not directly associated with important national political figures, although John Bright laid the foundation stone, but it was built through the influence and efforts of local politicians such as the Mayor George Ashworth, who believed that the town deserved a landmark town hall.

The building is a symbol of civic pride and identity in Rochdale, as the literal and figurative heart of the town it has high communal significance. The Town Hall has been the focus of important occasions such as VE Day at the end of the Second World War and royal visits, such as that by George V in 1913 and Queen Elizabeth II in the 1950s. The balcony over the entrance is traditionally used for dignitaries to greet the crowds. As the town's principal venue for social and public gatherings, the Town Hall is also the focus of events celebrating local people and their achievements; Gracie Fields was given the Freedom of Rochdale in a ceremony at the Town Hall, for example, whilst the Register Office has borne witness to the key events in many local lives. The architectural grandeur and very nature of its imposing Gothic design, however, has been for some in the community a barrier to perception of accessibility and ownership.

There are specific local groups which care for the town's heritage, something which attests to the strength of community locally. The Friends of Rochdale Town Hall (FORTH) and Rochdale Cultural Heritage Group (RoCH) both value the Town Hall as a venue for large meetings and events, as a symbol of the town, as a potential tourist destination, and for its context in the town centre, surrounded by other locally important buildings. Improving the setting of the Town Hall, by the reopening of the river in 2016 has created a pedestrian area with an important relationship to the Town Hall.



3.0 Conservation Philosophy

The development of Rochdale Town Hall, the people responsible for its creation and its social, architectural and artistic context was fully researched at the beginning of the project - providing an assessment of significance and analysis of the building and its contents which formed the basis of the updated CMP and underpinned the development of the scheme. Central to this was the development of a conservation philosophy for the proposed scheme, focused on four key themes:

3.1 Continued use of the building in a manner sympathetic to its original use and function whilst allowing sensitive adaption to accommodate modern requirements

The continued and expanded use of Rochdale Town Hall as both a focus for the local community, an expression of active citizenship, and a revitalised visitor destination in its own right is required to retain the building in a manner very much in line with its original use. The original design provided all the functions then required of a new Council including an embodiment of civic pride, a place for public ceremony, entertainment, learning, administration, justice and other public services such as the fire brigade.

Many of these functions have outgrown the building, moving to larger buildings designed to meet the now very different scale of services offered by local authorities. These include housing, policing, the fire service, courts, library and council offices. But a physical focal point for local, regional and national

pride, public ceremonies, entertainment, learning and (on a reduced scale) administration can still be provided by a revitalised Rochdale Town Hall.

It is important to retain the ceremonial role of the building in relation to the mayor and council and, more importantly, as focus for local community, active citizenship and as a wider visitor attraction to allow people to experience the exceptional heritage value of a restored Rochdale Town Hall.

3.2 Retention of the building as a key cultural facility for the local community

The original Rochdale Corporation was forward looking but its sponsors, designers and craftspeople could not have imagined the values and leisure time activities of the modern era. Social inequality, however, remains a very significant problem and Rochdale Town Hall needs to serve all facets of the local community, in the spirit of Rochdale's radical 19th-century politicians and cooperative movement founders.

Just as Rochdale Town Hall originally symbolised an unprecedented vision for an emerging industrial town, now it needs to accommodate and facilitate a new vision for a post-industrial town. Just as learning and culture were part of its original agenda, and were embodied in the building, so today can they be agents of social justice and change. New facilities should therefore be inclusive to everybody from all cultures, including or perhaps even especially from the poorest families so that they can participate in and enjoy this remarkable building. As an enduring symbol of Rochdale's local identity, pride and resilience Rochdale

Town Hall is the perfect building for this task; using its inherent architectural, historic and artistic values as a foundation for greater social inclusion, regeneration and interpretation.

3.3 Repair and restoration of the building fabric and interiors

Rochdale Town Hall is an imposing and robust building externally, its character much influenced by the gritty Pennine stone of its masonry. Stylistically the exterior and interior are in perfect harmony, yet the colour, richness and joyful detail of the interior comes as something of a surprise. The interior decoration is also fragile when compared to the exterior.

As an outstanding building with nationally important interiors it is crucial that the fabric of the building is in good repair to minimise decay and ensure the conservation of the fabric, which has suffered from years of use and some past unsympathetic decoration and 'restoration'. Furthermore, the creation of a dry and weather-tight building is critical to the preservation of the interior and its decorative finishes which are extremely vulnerable to water damage and damp. Major external repairs are required alongside a programme of conservation work, to remedy years of use and some past unsympathetic decoration and 'restoration'.

3.4 Sustainable use and improved access

The challenge of breathing new life into existing buildings is rarely limited to sensitive repair alone, even in a building such as Rochdale Town Hall, which has remained in constant use. The building will need to adapt to changing circumstances whilst retaining and enhancing what makes it so special, and this will require innovative design solutions and conservation approaches. Repairs must be completed to a high standard, significantly increasing its current lifespan and enabling the building to be inherently more 'green'. This can be achieved in a variety of ways, including specifying appropriately long-lasting materials from sustainable sources, and avoiding high carbon footprints where possible through improvements to thermal and energy efficiency. The economic advantages of repurposing this building include: full use of the embodied energy which has already been expended in its construction and decoration, thus avoiding the need for new construction elsewhere; reduced use of new materials; reduced construction periods; and enhanced use of traditional building skills.

Rochdale Town Hall is one of the very finest examples of civic architecture in the country and is a highly significant communal asset to the people of Rochdale. However, the very nature of its imposing Victorian Gothic design, with limited level access renders it inaccessible both physically and – in some cases – culturally to people within the local community. In order to allow the Town Hall to truly stand as an 'accessible' community asset, improvements to access into and within the building are required to address issues inherent with a building designed long before the

advent of modern standards, whilst being sensitive to its original design. However 'accessibility' goes far beyond physical barriers and the proposed scheme should bring forward improvements to the legibility and interpretation of the building's significance, features and its historic context to improve people's knowledge, and relationship with, this iconic building – embracing the opportunity to reengage the community through the building's restoration.



4.0 Heritage Impact Assessment

4.1 Proposals

Phase 1 has been developed to include a series of works, which would prepare the building for the main NLHF funded project (Phase 2). These enabling works include internal strip-out, asbestos removal, structural works, installation of dry risers and a trial replacement window. Exposing original fabric and volumes would enhance the understanding of the building to inform the Phase 2 technical design work, reducing the risk of unknowns to the NLHF funded works. This would also maximise the opportunity to integrate and conceal services without impact on the significance of the building. The scope of works is focused largely internally; predominantly in the centre and east of the building.

Opening-up works already undertaken have provided an understanding of the building which has informed the development of the Phase 1 proposals. These included lifting a number of floors to understand the primary and secondary structures, to understand loadings, existing floor build ups and potential new routes for services.

The Phase 1 works are centred on achieving the following objectives:

Protecting the significant interiors of national importance

Drainage repair works would halt any further decay of fabric during the closure of the building and duration of the NLHF funded works delivery programme. Special

protections would also be installed during Phase 1 to safeguard significant building fabric of national importance from any potential damage.

Reducing the risk of unknowns

Undertaking careful strip out works in advance of the main programme of works would reveal the original building fabric and proportions and enable the design team to prepare informed detailed proposals and measurement of costs for repair.

Removal of modern fabric

The removal of modern linings, partitions, structures and mezzanines would reveal original fabric, volumes and spaces to inform the development of the detailed design proposals.

Improving the safety of the building

Asbestos removal and MEP strip out works - including the termination of live services, where redundant, and old pipework and wiring – would reduce the risk of fire and water damage and would improve the safety of the building in advance of the main works.

Increasing the capacity for protection of the building

Removal of the existing wet risers and provision of new dry risers to modern standards, would improve the safety of the building in the event of a fire in advance of the main works.

Reducing design risks and time delays

The formation of lift pits, service trenching and other structural openings would allow more 'risky' structural works to be undertaken at an earlier stage, preventing potential delays to the Phase 2 programme. Installation of a new three phase electrical supply at an early stage would also help to mitigate potential delays to the main works programme. Phase 1 preliminaries will include a requirement for the Phase 1 contractor to handover accurate as-built drawings so that any risk of the Phase 2 contractor not accepting works as built is mitigated and the lines of responsibility clear at the outset.

The scheme principally comprises strip-out works, the exposure of structure that was not possible in previous opening up works, asbestos removal and further works, as listed below:

- Lifting and careful storage of stone flags in the Porte Cochère and installation of a new structural floor slab.
- Formation of structural openings and strip-out works within the tower to enable Phase 2 circulation core.
- Removal of existing lift and installation of two new lift pits.
- Installation of a trial window to inform design decisions and allow consultation prior to wider Phase 2 replacement works.
- Substantial strip out of the modern areas of mezzanine between ground and first floor.
- Substantial strip out in the Bright Hall, to remove modern partitions and the modern mezzanine floor.

- Structural works, strip out, excavation and installation of new slabs and M&E trench at basement level.
- Removal of wet risers and insertion of dry risers.
- Storage of removed elements of interest, including timber partitions, stone flooring and joinery.
- Removal of later external interventions, including fire escape stairs and access ramps.
- Structural and strip-out works to the café and committee rooms flanking the Exchange.
- Structural alterations to enable the implementation of Phase 2 works.
- Installation of a new three phase power supply



4.2 Assessment of Impact

The aim of the Phase 1 works proposed is to provide the knowledge and understanding of the building to ensure the Phase 2 full programme of NLHF funded works is fully informed, minimising design risks and potential time-delays later in the project. Furthermore, these works are required to protect the building fabric until the main scheme of works is implemented and to improve safety and security during this period. Cumulatively, they all seek to meet the primary objective of securing the sensitive restoration of the building in a timely manner.

Clearly, therefore, Phase 1 forms an integral part of the overall scheme of works to ensure the continued use of the building in a manner consistent with its conservation, sustaining and enhancing its significance and its role in the conservation area and historic townscape more widely. Whilst the relationship between the proposed phases and their shared vision is clear, it is important to note that the works proposed as part of Phase 1 would also preserve and indeed enhance the overall special interest of the listed building in its own right, as assessed below.

It is proposed to remove limited areas of original fabric - including an opening within the inner face of the tower to form an internalised entrance, a small opening proposed between the spine corridor and café and at basement level to accommodate new areas of plant and associated services. In the first two instances, the openings are proposed to improve public access into the respective part of the building, whilst at basement level these relatively minor interventions would enable

plant and services required to be accommodated. Two new lift pits would also be constructed, the existing lift and car removed and the existing wet risers replaced with dry risers. These minor interventions would be balanced against the removal of a significant amount of modern and detracting fabric including modern suspending ceilings and partition walls, mezzanines, 1930s screens and joinery and the external rear fire escape. The removal of this fabric would have a particularly beneficial impact on the appreciation of the original proportions, architectural character and detailing of key spaces of significance within the building, including committee rooms 1 and 2 and the original library (Bright Hall). The proposed trial window would form a reversible alteration which would allow for the impact of the window works to be practically and visually assessed before the development of this element of the works is progressed. Furthermore, the works proposed at this stage, including repairs to the drainage, insertion of the dry risers and M&E strip-out works would further serve to improve safety and protect historic fabric, preserving the overall significance of the listed building and support its ongoing conservation.



4.3 Policy

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is the legislative basis for decision making on applications that relate to the historic environment.

Sections 66 and 72 of the Act impose a statutory duty upon local planning authorities to consider carefully the impact of proposals upon listed buildings and conservation areas.

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that:

in considering whether to grant permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority, or as the case may be the Secretary of State shall 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.

Similarly, section 72 of the above Act states that:

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

This overarching statutory duty to preserve listed buildings and their setting and to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas requires that any harm to heritage assets should be given significant importance and weight in the decision making process. Whilst some limited elements of the works would impact on parts of the listed building, when viewed in context of the beneficial impact of removing detracting later interventions, halting decay and securing the building, its special architectural and historic interest overall would be preserved and indeed enhanced. Furthermore, the external works proposed would modestly enhance the contribution the Town Hall makes to the character and appearance of the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area - through the removal of the detracting rear fire escape. As such, the presumption against the grant of planning permission within the Act is not engaged and there are clear benefits to the scheme, which support the granting of consent.

The National Planning Policy Framework

The requirement to conserve heritage assets in a manner *appropriate to their significance* is important and as identified in the above assessment, whilst very limited harm may be identified to parts of the building, the proposed scheme seeks to conserve the significance of the listed building overall.

With regard to the significance of a heritage asset, the framework contains the following policies:

190. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

The Phase 1 works have been informed by the detailed assessment of what is significant about the Town Hall, and subsequent opening-up works, to ensure that potential conflict between the development of the technical design for the NLHF funded Phase 2 works is avoided.

In determining applications local planning authorities are required to take account of significance, viability, sustainability and local character and distinctiveness. Paragraph 192 of the NPPF identifies the following criteria in relation to this:

*a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

With regard to potential 'harm' to the significance of designated heritage assets, in paragraph 193 the framework states the following:

...great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether the any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

This report demonstrates the clear and convincing justification for these proposals – which, viewed in isolation, would bring forward clear benefits including the removal of a significant amount of modern and detracting fabric including modern suspending ceilings and partition walls, mezzanines, 1930s screens and joinery and the external rear fire escape, halting further deterioration of historic fabric and ensuring the safety and security of the building. However, the wider scheme of works which they would enable must also be noted; founded in securing the viable use of the building in a manner which would ensure its relevance and accessibility to the community it serves, in a manner not previously achieved in the lifetime of the building. Considering the scale and sensitivities of building this achievement should not be underplayed and the requirement to undertaken enabling works in advance of the main project prudent.

Whilst this report concludes that these Phase 1 proposals would cause no harm to significance, it is helpful to consider the impact of the wider scheme to provide context for these enabling works.

In relation to harm, the NPPF states that benefits arising from proposals, and in particular public benefits including securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset, should be part of the weighing up process:

196. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Here the proposals of the wider scheme are exceptionally strong, and the list of genuine, meaningful and lasting public benefits is impressive. Paragraph 20 of the National Planning Practice Guidance states that public benefits which follow from development could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental progress, as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 8). Public benefits may include heritage benefits, such as:

- *sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting*
- *reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset*
- *securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long term conservation*

The repair and restoration of Rochdale Town Hall alongside works proposed to open-up the building with enhanced public access and interpretation, would better reveal its significance (and that of the wider conservation area) and reinforce its relevance to the local community it was designed to serve for this and

future generations. This is the foremost and critical benefit offered by the scheme; however the associated additional public benefits it brings are numerous:

Economic Objective

- Investment in the fabric of the building to prolong its life and give it a revitalised new purpose;
- Sensitive and high quality repair and enhancement of areas of high historic significance;
- Restoration and repurposing of key commercial areas;
- Contribution of increased visitor footfall and in turn the vitality and vibrancy of Rochdale town centre;
- Increase visitor spend and dwell time in Rochdale Town Centre;
- Central role within an ambitious heritage-led town centre regeneration strategy to uplift economic wellbeing of the town;
- Generation of employment during the construction project;
- Creation of 9.5 FTE permanent jobs and up to 50 positions including casual events staff and Town Hall ambassador volunteers;
- Giving the Town Hall a sustainable future.

Social Objective

- Facilitating public access to a building of

exceptional significance – to spaces never before accessed by the public;

- Egalitarian access and interpretation of historic and architectural importance of the building, reinforcing local identity;
- Provision of free access, seven days a week with volunteer Town Hall Ambassadors welcoming the public to the building;
- Creation of central community resource with cross-cultural activities encouraged;
- Central role within ambitious heritage-led town centre regeneration strategy, contributing to sense of place and uplifting social wellbeing;
- Creation of Heritage Conservation Skills and Training Studio – as an investment in the wider community;
- Appointment of three apprentices to the project and commitment to appointment of four construction apprentices;
- Provision of monthly construction tours;
- Assistance in the delivery of DEC course at local high school.

Environmental Objective

- Repair and restoration of the building both externally and internally;
- The sensitive reordering of uses and circulation, to secure the long-term use and conservation of the building;
- Facilitating public access to the building to

enable the appreciation of the areas of high significance;

- The delivery of exemplary levels of sustainable design in respect of the new build elements of the scheme;
- Facilitating improvements to the sustainability performance of the building, uplifting EPC rating from F to D;
- Improvements to the internal environment control to better conserve the important wall paintings and stained glass;
- Creation of Heritage Conservation Skills and Training Studio – ensuring the ongoing skilled maintenance and management of the building;
- Contribution of the restored building to the heritage-led vibrancy of Rochdale town centre;
- Central role within an ambitious heritage-led town centre regeneration strategy to uplift the historic environment and cultural offer of the town;
- Reduction of negative environmental impacts.



4.4 Conclusion

The proposals have been assessed against the relevant national planning policies and their impact on the significance of the Grade I listed building and the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area has been analysed. The conclusion of this report is that when viewed in isolation the proposals would preserve and indeed enhance the special interest of the listed building. Furthermore, they would enable a scheme of works which would lead to major and wholly positive benefits, centred on securing a continued, viable use for this building of exceptional importance, ensuring its conservation in the long-term and therefore meeting the tests for sustainable development as outlined in the NPPF.

Appendix I - Statutory List Description

ROCHDALE TOWN HALL

Grade: I

Date of most recent amendment: 12th February 1985

Town hall. 1866-1871, W.H Crossland; tower 1883 by A. Waterhouse. Ashlar, Westmorland slate roof.

The reception room, Lord Mayor's Parlour, the Small Exchange, members lounge and committee rooms are placed to either side of the entrance hall (or the Exchange). The grand staircase rises to the first floor Great Hall and small staircases terminate the essentially axial plan.

To the south west of the hall on the upper floor is the Council Chamber (formerly Court room) and retiring room. Gothic revival in an elaborate form with Continental antecedents. Facade of fourteen bays is asymmetrical but balanced with linking bay and tower added to left. Outer bays have triangular gables and are of three storeys, although they differ in treatment. The next two on left and three on right have an arcade across the ground floor, then tiers of plate glass windows, mostly mullioned with cusped heads, and end above a corbelled balcony in a stepped gable richly panelled with blind tracery. The central seven bays (containing the Hall) are flanked to left by a slim octagonal stair turret with stone spirelet and to right by an octagonal stair tower with tall two-light pointed windows and a steep pyramidal slate roof with cresting. The central three bays have a heavily buttressed porte-cochere supporting heraldic beasts and acting as a balcony to the Hall which is lit

by tall three-light windows with geometrical tracery. Battlements behind which rises an immense slate roof with central wooden fleche.

The tower, a version of that at Manchester Town Hall rises sheer from the plinth through three stages to the broader clock stage where gables surmount each face flanked by pinnacles. Above this a short octagonal lantern carries a stone spire. The whole facade is richly carved with naturalistic foliage in the style of Southwell Minster. The main feature of each return wall is a tall semi-octagonal stair tower with lead windows and pyramidal slate roofs.

The rear is comparatively plain, but the centre is occupied by the great stair hall of three bays with weathered buttresses and very tall three-light windows, roofed separately. The entrance hall is 5x3 bays with quadripartite red and white stone vaulting, fine carved capitals of Southwell Minster type carved by Thomas Earp, polished granite columns and Minton floor tiles; it forms an undercroft to the hall and was intended as an Exchange. The reception room has three pierced diaphragm arches, two Tudor arched fireplaces with castellated mantles and heraldic panels, and wall paintings depicting the various machines used in textiles. The Lord Mayor's Parlour has a similar fireplace, chamfered beams carried on corbels representing the sections of an orchestra, William Morris stained glass depicting the seasons and months of the year, and wall paintings.

The members lounge has a vaulted ceiling carried on granite corner columns. The Small Exchange has the industries of Rochdale represented in the

stained glass and ceiling paintings. The vaulted stair hall has one flight which returns in two with clustered columns rising between the flights. The heavy marble handrail rests on a stone arcade, the upper landings are supported on flying ribs and the stained glass represents the towns with which Rochdale traded. The Great Hall has a painted timber roof with angelic hammer beams: Henry Holiday's wall painting of 1870 depicts King John signing the Magna Carta, the stained glass is by Bayne of Heaton But and Bayne and includes two rose windows to the gables. A large organ is housed in three pointed arches. The Council Chamber and Court Room are elaborately decorated with carved timber fittings. Most rooms have original painted wall pattern designs by Best of Rochdale and oak linenfold panelling of varying designs.

The design was selected by competition in 1864 and is an important early departure from High Victorian heaviness.

The Builder 7:4:66, 7:10:71, and 12.2.76. B.o.E.

Listing NGR: SD8958413253

ROCHDALE CENOTAPH

Grade: I

Date of most recent amendment: 28th October 2015

SUMMARY

First World War memorial by Sir Edwin Landseer Lutyens, 1922, with later inscriptions.

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION

Rochdale Cenotaph, situated in Memorial Gardens, is listed at Grade I for the following principal reasons:

- * Historic interest: as an eloquent witness to the tragic impacts of world events on this community, and the sacrifices it made in the conflicts of the C20;
- * Architect: by the nationally renowned architect Sir Edwin Landseer Lutyens (1869-1944), who designed 58 memorials at home and abroad including the Cenotaph in Whitehall;
- * Design quality: an elegant complex of a monumental cenotaph - one of Lutyens' most ambitious - with stone flags and the Stone of Remembrance;
- * Group value: with the adjacent Town Hall (Grade I-listed), Post Office, and lamp posts (Grade II-listed).

HISTORY

The great wave of memorial building after the First World War resulted in thousands of commemorative monuments being raised both at home and on the battlefield. Lutyens was the most outstanding designer to work in this field. This is one of eight cenotaphs in England designed by Lutyens. The earliest to be erected was at Southampton in 1920; the latest at Norwich, in 1927.

A public meeting in Rochdale on 10 February 1919 decided that there should be a physical memorial to commemorate the war as well as a fund to provide for the dependents of servicemen who had been killed or disabled. Lutyens was duly appointed as architect and prepared an unusual scheme for a war memorial bridge across the River Roch (which was then open but is now culverted) in front of the Town Hall. The centrepiece would be a Stone of Remembrance with a statue of a recumbent soldier on a bier on either side. However Alderman William Cunliffe (a former mayor of Rochdale) purchased Manor House, a C18 building, on the opposite side of the river from the Town Hall, which he then donated for the construction of a suitable memorial. This had a particular resonance because Manor House had been used as a recruiting station during the War.

Lutyens prepared a new design for a cenotaph and Stone of Remembrance (which he had originally designed for the Imperial, now Commonwealth, War Graves Commission). Manor House was demolished, and the memorial was built by Hobson Ltd of Nottingham at a cost of £12,611, out of a total fund collected of £29,443 10s. It was unveiled by the Earl of Derby on 26 November 1922 and dedicated by the Archdeacon of Rochdale.

Inscriptions commemorating the fallen of the Second World War were added at a later date.

Sir Edwin Lutyens OM RA (1869-1944) was the leading English architect of his generation. Before the First World War his reputation rested on his country houses and his work at New Delhi, but during and after the

war he became the pre-eminent architect for war memorials in England, France and the British Empire. While the Cenotaph in Whitehall (London) had the most influence on other war memorials, the Thiepval Arch was the most influential on other forms of architecture. He designed the Stone of Remembrance which was placed in all Imperial War Graves Commission cemeteries and some cemeteries in England, including some with which he was not otherwise associated.

DETAILS

MATERIALS: Cornish granite.

DESCRIPTION: the memorial stands in Memorial Gardens, in front of Rochdale Town Hall. The cenotaph and Stone of Remembrance stand on a broad rectangular dais of three equal steps.

The cenotaph, c10m tall, stands on a further six steps. It comprises a rectangular pier which recedes as it rises to a tall, narrower pier with stout semi-columns to the north-west and south-east sides. The abacus carries a further plinth which supports a catafalque bearing a draped recumbent figure. Against the upper plinth rest carved wreaths enclosing the arms of Rochdale. From the lower plinth project four carved, painted, flags. On the south-west side are the Union Flag (left) and White Ensign (right); on the north-east side the RAF Ensign (left) and Red Ensign (right). The flagpoles finish in decorative pinnacles which are encircled by laurel wreaths.

The inscriptions are carved into the narrower pier:

(south-west) 1914 – 1919/ 1939 – 1945

(north-west) TO THE MEMORY/ OF THE MEN
OF/ ROCHDALE/ WHO/ GAVE THEIR LIVES/
IN THE GREAT WAR

(north-east) MCMXIV/ + /MCMXIX/ ET/
MCMXXXIX/ +/ MCMXLV

(south-east) THEY WERE A WALL/ UNTO US BOTH BY/
NIGHT AND BY DAY

This latter dedication is a quotation from the Book of Samuel chosen following an appeal in the Rochdale Observer. A later bronze plaque beneath reads TO ALL THOSE WHO DIED/ IN THE/ SERVICE OF THEIR COUNTRY.

To the south-east of the cenotaph and facing the Town Hall, a Stone of Remembrance is raised on three steps rising from the dais. Inscribed on the stone is THEIR NAME LIVETH/ FOR EVERMORE. All the lettering on the memorial is gilded, as are the flagpoles and flag wreaths.

THE OLD POST OFFICE

Grade: II

Date of most recent amendment: 1st April 1986

ROCHDALE THE ESPLANADE (North west side) The Old Post Office

(Formerly listed as Post Office) GV II Former post office, designed 1911, opened 1927. C.P. Wilkinson. Portland stone with Westmorland slate roof. L-shaped plan with single storey appendage to rear enclosing a yard. In a restrained Baroque style.

Two storeys plus attic with a nine bay facade, the central seven being brought forward. The ground floor is rusticated, has a projecting plinth, semi-circular headed openings with coved surrounds and large 'S' shaped scroll keystones. The first floor sash windows have architraves, and sills and cornices supported by console brackets. Rusticated quoins and a modillion eaves cornice with egg and tongue moulding and carved lion heads. Steeply pitched roof with pedimented dormer windows. The side elevations are treated similarly but in a more restrained manner. Many of the internal fittings and finishes remain intact.

A similar building was to be erected on the other side of the War Memorial (q.v.) but was abandoned due to cost.

Listing NGR: SD8956213340

CHURCH OF SAINT CHAD

Grade: II*

Date first listed: 25th October 1951

Church. Tower C13 and later, top stage added in 1870. Nave arcade columns partly C14, arches in south aisle C14, clerestory 1557, chancel and chapel 1883-8, otherwise of various Victorian restorations. South aisle, porch and belfry by W.H. Crossland, chancel and chapels by J.S. Crowther. Rossendale stone, Yorkshire stone and slate and copper roofs. Nave with aisles, clerestory, central west tower and south porch. Chancel with chapels to north and south. Largely in a Decorated style. Castellated 5-bay nave and aisle with square headed 3-light cusped windows and 3- light traceried windows to aisle in mixed style with hood moulds. Weathered buttresses and crocketed pinnacles. South porch has diagonal weathered buttresses, grotesque gargoyles, crocketed pinnacles, statue of St. Chad and arched opening with heavily enriched ogee shaped surround. The 3-stage castellated tower has offset angle buttresses surmounted by carved heads and decorative pinnacles, elaborate bell-stage, gargoyles and crocketed pinnacles. The 6-bay castellated chancel has clerestory and side chapels with square-headed traceried clerestory lights and 3-light, four-centred arches to chapel with Perpendicular tracery. Buttresses and pinnacles as above but with grotesque gargoyles. The chancel roof is higher than that of the nave, the east window is of 6-lights with Perpendicular tracery. Interior: 6-bay nave arcade with alternating round and octagonal piers with

stiff-leaf and upright-leaf and headed capitals, and some with broaches at the springing of the arches. The arches are double chamfered and the roof of an ornate tie-beam construction. The chancel is also of 6 bays with clustered columns. Fittings: plain C14 font, some Perpendicular stalls and chapel screens, C17 twisted-baluster communion rail in south chapel. W. Morris west window 1872-4, A.S. Wild, Top o'th'Steps, 1970 and B.o.E.

Listing NGR: SD8966613145

BROADFIELD PARK

Grade: II

Date first listed: 24th April 2001

DETAILS

A public park designed by Messrs Stansfield and Sons, and opened in successive phases between 1870 and 1874. It was designed to form a setting for Rochdale Town Hall and was extended in the 1930s. The park was formerly known as 'Rochdale Park', or simply 'The Park'.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Broadfield Park and Sparrow Hill Slopes were laid out on former glebe land acquired by the Rochdale Corporation in 1860, and were designed by Messrs Stansfield and Son, Landscape Gardeners, of Todmorden (Wrigley and Sons 1871). By the 1890s Broadfield Slopes had been added to the park and were laid out to a design by, and at the expense of, Mr J Ogden Kilnerdeyne (Souvenir of Rochdale). By 1910 Broadfield Slopes had been extensively remodelled, with a new entrance from the Manchester Road (Derek Lovejoy Partnership 1998). The site of Packer Spout and St Chad's Gardens was presented to the town in 1893 but was not laid out until 1925 to a design by the Borough Surveyors Department (ibid). Parts of the western sides of Sparrow Hill Slopes and Broadfield Slopes were destroyed as a result of the widening of the Manchester Road in the 1970s.

The site remains (2000) in use as a public park in the ownership of Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING: Broadfield Park lies to the south of Rochdale Town Hall on a spur of the River Roch and covers an area of c 6.8ha. Broadfield Park is a complex site which incorporates three distinct areas: the formal layout of Broadfield Park on high ground to the south-west of Rochdale Town Hall; Sparrow Hill and Broadfield Slopes to the west of Manchester Road; and The Esplanade, and Packer Spout and St Chad's Gardens lying between Rochdale Town Hall to the north and St Chad's church to the south.

The formal area of Broadfield Park lies on a plateau and is bounded by Sparrow Hill (formerly Vicarage Road) to the north, Vicar's Drive to the east, St Albans Street to the south, and to the west by the footpath which runs between this part of the park and Sparrow Hill and Broadfield Slopes to the west and north. There are terraced houses to the south of this part of the park, while to the north is Sparrow Hill Primary School, the Broadfield Hotel, and the vicarage of St Chad's church. The boundaries of this part of the park are marked by a low stone wall which forms a retaining wall on the northern boundary. The western boundary was marked in the late C19 by an iron fence, now replaced by concrete posts and wire although the central iron gate survives.

Sparrow Hill and Broadfield Slopes lie to the west and north-west of the formal area of Broadfield Park. These two areas are bounded to the south by St Albans Street, and to the east by the footpath which separates it from the formal area of Broadfield Park. To the west this part of the park falls steeply to the Manchester Road (A58). The Slopes continue to the north, separated from the main area of the park by Sparrow Hill. The southern boundary of this part of the park is marked by the boundaries of Sparrow Hill Primary School, the Museum, and part of St Chad's churchyard. To the north the land falls steeply to The Esplanade. The park boundary is formed by a 1.2m high retaining wall to the north, a retaining wall and banking to the west, a 1.5m high wall to the south, and a low wall to the east.

Packer Spout and St Chad's Gardens at the north-east tip of the site are bounded to the north by Nelson Street, to the east by Church Lane, to the south by St Chad's churchyard, and to the west by Broadfield Slopes. This part of the park is bisected by a flight of 122 stone steps which connect the church with Town Hall Square. Packer Spout Gardens is bounded by a low stone wall to the north and east and by the high stone wall which surrounds the church.

From the formal area of Broadfield Park on the plateau to the south-west of the Town Hall, the ground falls steeply to the west and south. There are extensive views across Rochdale and surrounding open country from the park.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES: There are four entrances to the formal part of Broadfield Park. Two entrances give access from the public footpath which crosses the site linking St Alban's Street and Sparrow Hill on the western boundary of this part of the site. A further entry at the north-east corner gives access from Sparrow Hill and Vicar's Drive, and an entry on the southern boundary of the site gives access from St Albans Street.

There are further entrances to the Sparrow Hill part of the park. An entry on the northern boundary gives access from Sparrow Hill, an entry on the eastern boundary gives access from the public footpath linking St Albans Street and Sparrow Hill, a further entry at the south-west corner gives access from St Albans Street, and an entry at the north-west corner gives access from Manchester Road and The Esplanade. These entrances are marked by stone gate piers although the gates are missing.

Two entrances to the southern boundary of Broadfield Slopes provide access from Sparrow Hill, and two further entrances on the northern boundary give access from The Esplanade. The sunken path which runs north/south across the site has its steep sides retained by massive rockwork. There are no entrance gates.

There are five entrances to Packer Spout and St Chad's Gardens (formerly Nelson Street Slopes). Two entrances on the northern boundary give access from Town Hall Square. Both these entrances have steep flights of stone steps leading to the Market Cross and to St Chad's churchyard. A further entrance at the at

the north-east corner of the site gives access from Nelson Street and Church Lane, and an entrance to the south-east gives access from Church Lane. On the southern boundary an entrance gives access from St Chad's churchyard. These entrances are marked by stone piers. The eastern part of this area is closed to public access (November 2000).

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS: Broadfield Park has four distinct areas. Broadfield Park itself is on a level site and has a formal layout. Sparrow Hill, to the west of the formal area, has serpentine paths and a small lake. Broadfield Slopes, to the north of Sparrow Hill, has massive earth terraces following the contours of the hill and providing platforms for views across the Pennines to the north. Packer Spout and St Chad's Gardens, to the south-east of the Town Hall, have a formally laid out path system connected by flights of stone steps.

The western part of Broadfield Park has large sunken lawns with elaborate ornamental bedding, at the centre of which is a statue of Alderman G L Ashworth, JP (listed grade II) erected in 1878. The decorative iron fence which originally protected the statue has been removed. The paths are tarmacked with stone steps leading down to the sunken lawns. Three C19 pavilions around the perimeter of the sunken gardens were lost or removed in the early part of the C20 (Derek Lovejoy Partnership 1998). The Jubilee Drinking Fountain (Co-operative Memorial) at the south-west corner of the sunken garden was presented to the town by the Provident Society in 1907. The stone fountain is disused and has lost the four lions which sat on plinths around the centre, and the pinnacle which completed

the central canopy. From this point the path runs east past modern timber trellis-work and planting beds and the former site, about 30m from the St Albans Street entry, of a glacial boulder found at Castleton and placed in the park in 1893.

The octagonal stone plinth of a bandstand occupies the central section of the park. The supporting columns and canopy have been removed and only the decorative iron railings survive. What remains of the structure is protected by modern iron railings. The bandstand was presented by Alderman Duckworth in 1893. Two bowling greens occupy the eastern section of Broadfield Park: that at the south-east corner of the park was opened in 1908 when the footpath running diagonally across this area, the former glebeland, was diverted. The bowling green at the north-east corner was opened in 1927. The bowls pavilions on the eastern boundary of the park date from this period and the single-storey brick building to the south-west of the bowling area close to the St Albans Street entrance dates from the 1970s.

A footpath which starts opposite Broadfield Stile to the south of the site runs north/south between Broadfield Park and Sparrow Hill Slopes, linking St Albans Street with Sparrow Hill and then continuing north to The Esplanade. The footpath is of York stone and is flanked with trees and shrubs. In the Sparrow Hill Slopes area of the park the ground falls steeply to the west and north and the path system follows the contour of the land. Winding paths enclose areas of open lawn surrounded by trees and shrubs with some terraces to the west and north marked by hedgerows

supported by concrete posts and wire fences. There are extensive views out across the surrounding countryside to the north and west.

A modern play area at the south-east corner of this part of the park occupies the position of one of the C19 'Play Grounds' or outdoor gymnasias (ibid). The second gymnasium, the south-west corner of the park, and part of the original western boundary were lost when the Manchester Road was widened in the 1970s. The footpath system in the northern half of Sparrow Hill Slopes reflects the C19 layout but two former footpaths in the west part of the park and a major part of the footpath system in the central and south-west area were lost as a result of the road widening. A pond occupies the north-west corner, at the lowest part of Sparrow Hill, close to one of the main entrances at the intersection of Manchester Road and The Esplanade. The irregularly shaped pond, lined with York stone, was part of the C19 design but has been reduced as a result of late C20 road widening. The grassed and wooded area along the western boundary of Sparrow Hill was laid out following the road scheme, when the former through road, Vicarage Road, was truncated and renamed.

In the Broadfield Slopes area the three levels of terraces and footpaths running parallel to The Esplanade reflect the extensive remodelling of this part of the park in the early years of the C20. The sunken pathway running north/south from Sparrow Hill to The Esplanade between banks of rockwork divides Broadfield Slopes into eastern and western sections, connected by the 'Victoria Bridge', an ornate iron footbridge. The Rochdale Dialect Writers Memorial

lies midway along the central footpath of the western section of Broadfield Slopes. The Memorial, backed by an area of ornamental planting (2000), was erected in 1900 to commemorate local dialect writers Edwin Waugh, John Trafford Clegg, Miss Lahee, and Oliver Ormerod. The statue of John Bright (listed grade II) at the north-west edge of Broadfield Slopes was moved from Town Hall Square to this position overlooking the roundabout in the 1970s when the original landform and looped path system were destroyed as part of the road-widening scheme. The eastern section of Broadfield Slopes is open grass with a central path running down to The Esplanade. The southern part of this area was reduced in the late C20 to create playing fields for Sparrow Hill School.

Packer Spout and St Chad's Gardens lie to the east of Broadfield Slopes. Church Steps, a steep flight of 122 stone steps, lie in the central area of the site and link the Town Hall Square to the north-west and St Chad's churchyard to the south. The garden to the east of Church Steps is arranged around three main interconnecting paths with a central sitting area (this area was closed to the public November 2000). Paths lead off from the west of Church Steps to an area paved with York stone, laid out in the 1930s, around a drinking fountain and Market Cross. This part of the park rises steeply from the Town Square but former views to the north across the town and open countryside beyond are blocked by mature trees and shrubs.

Tree cover within the park is predominantly sycamore, with some ash, lime, and hawthorn. Elm trees were removed from the park in 1980(8). The vegetation of

the park is more extensive now than at earlier periods and many of the views out from the park are blocked by over-mature trees and shrubs.

**ROCHDALE BRIDGE, AT THE JUNCTION OF THE
ESPLANADE, YORKSHIRE STREET, THE BUTTS,
SOUTH PARADE, ROCHDALE**

Grade: II

Date first listed: 6th June 2019

SUMMARY

Road bridge. medieval with a 1667 east extension, C18 extensions to both sides completed by 1787, an east extension in 1821, and 2015 to 2016 parapets and restoration of the outer walls following the removal of 1996 extensions (which had replaced late-C19 extensions) and early-C20 Hennebique-type platforms to each side.

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION

Rochdale Bridge, a medieval bridge with a 1667 east extension, C18 extensions to both sides completed by 1787, an east extension in 1821, and 2015 to 2016 parapets and restoration work, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

Architectural interest: * as a multi-phased bridge originating in medieval times with later extensions to widen it in 1667, the C18 and the early C19;

* the structure encapsulates evolving styles of bridge design with the medieval bridge built with a Gothic pointed central arch flanked by round outer arches, and in the C18 extensions built in a classical style with circular arches separated by wide pilasters and dentillated voussoirs.

Historic interest: * the building of the original bridge shows a considerable investment in the pre-industrial transport infrastructure of Rochdale, suggesting the growth of the settlement and growing importance of the route between Halifax and Manchester, which had previously depended upon an adjacent fording point;

* the subsequent widenings of the bridge and the progressively wider angling on the southern side provide a material record both of Rochdale's continuing expansion and the increasing size of coaches or carts as the volume of goods and people using the route grew.

Group value: * the bridge is situated in the centre of Rochdale and contributes to its civic and public character, benefiting from a spatial group value with a number of historic listed buildings, including the Grade I Town Hall and the Grade II former Post Office, adjacent former Oldham Joint Stock Bank (HSBC) and former Union Bank of Manchester.

HISTORY

Rochdale grew up around the route between Manchester and Halifax which navigated the steep valley slopes down to the valley bottom where there was a fording point, and subsequently also a stone bridge, over the River Roch. The original Rochdale Bridge is medieval, although the date of its construction is not known. The narrow three-span masonry bridge had a pointed central arch flanked by round outer arches, a style characteristic of bridges built between 1200 and 1600. A 1324 document refers to 'John of the Brig', which suggests that a bridge existed at this time. A C13 or early C14 bridge would

coincide with the creation of the medieval borough, reconstruction of the parish church and establishment of a Market Charter in 1251, although cannot be verified. In the late medieval times the town began to grow as a woollen industry began to develop, which may have led to an improvement of the transport infrastructure and building of a bridge. A 'Survey of the Manor' in 1626 noted that the bridge to the west of the ford was 'in decay' though, which would seem to suggest that the bridge had already been standing a long time by this date.

In 1667 the medieval bridge had a narrow bridge extension built abutting its east side, widening the bridge to allow two carriages or carts to pass simultaneously. The new bridge was also of three spans with round outer arches and a pointed central arch, though the crown of the arch was slightly higher than the original. It appears that the southern arch of the medieval bridge may have been rebuilt at this time as the masonry differs from that of the rest of the bridge, using smaller stones.

An ever increasing flow of traffic over the course of the C18 led to a widening of the bridge on both sides. A description of Rochdale Bridge in 1787 by Edmond Holme recorded accurate dimensions which show that these two extensions were in existence by that date. The bridge on the west side abuts the medieval bridge. It comprised three round arches separated by wide pilasters, the southern two of broadly similar size with a smaller arch to the north which disappeared into the bank. The bridge on the east side was a narrow, tapering extension which was a single-stone width at its northern end and widened out at its southern end to

ease the sharp turn of the road on the southern bank. An artist's impression of around 1820 showed the east side of the bridge with three round arches. A crowd is shown on the bridge watching a bull-baiting, which was being held below in the river bed; on 8 November 1820 this caused the east parapet to collapse with eleven people losing their lives.

The collapse of the parapet resulted in a further widening of the bridge in 1821 to 'facilitate the communication between the parts of the town on opposite sides of the river'. The bridge extension on the east side of the already widened bridge had a marked curve to its outer, eastern face, especially towards the south side. This helped larger vehicles crossing the bridge and climbing or descending Drake Street, a wide new street constructed around 1810 and forming a major route out of Rochdale towards Manchester. The extension comprised three flattened segmental arches diminishing in size from the southern to the northern side.

In 1864, the General Purpose Committee recommended that the bridge should be widened again on its west side 'to the extent of 12 feet and rounding the corners in to the Wood Estate' as part of the development of the Town Hall and Square. A newspaper report of January 1869 noted that the widening was on the point of completion. The extension was a flat-decked bridge supported by stone bridge piers with cast-iron beams supporting the deck and a decorative balustraded parapet. By 1881 it appears that the bridge had been similarly expanded on its east side, with both extensions shown on the 1:2,500 Ordnance Survey map published

in 1893. Around 1882 a second bridge known as Wellington Bridge had been constructed to the east, at the bottom of Drake Street.

In the early C20 it was decided to culvert the river with a platform to create a flat surface for a variety of uses in the constricted town centre and to hide the polluted river from view. Hennebique-type concrete structures were constructed on either side of the extended bridge obscuring it from view. In May 1903, the covering of the River Roch between Rochdale Bridge and Wellington Bridge to the east commenced. It was constructed by Leeds-based contractors D Jones & Company, subsequently known as Yorkshire Hennebique Contracting Co Ltd, and was completed in July 1904. As such it was at the cutting edge of concrete bridge construction in England, built at the same time as the two Rochdale bridges on Mellor Street spanning the River Spodden (Grade II, National Heritage List for England: 1412243). The platform was used for the tramway centre, with two tramway shelters shown on the 1:2,500 Ordnance Survey map published in 1910. In April 1909, construction began on extending the covering of the river westwards to form a road junction with Newgate. The work was again undertaken by the Yorkshire Hennebique Contracting Co Ltd and was completed in July 1910.

Further extensions of the river covering were undertaken in the early 1920s, widening the area in front of the town hall to the west and covering of the river eastwards between Wellington Bridge to Weir Street.

In 1996 the Victorian extensions using cast-iron beams were replaced by concrete and steel composite bridges because the original beams had become corroded and not fit for purpose. The stone piers/cutwaters were left in-situ. The Hennebique-type covering between Rochdale and Wellington Bridges was also heavily rendered during 1995 to 1997 repair work, using a modern proprietary polymer modified sprayed concrete.

In March 2015 work started on a restoration project which involved the removal of the 1996 extensions and the Victorian piers/cutwaters, and also the partial de-culverting of the river with the removal of the Hennebique-type platform of 1909 to 1910 built between Rochdale Bridge and Newgate to the west and part of the 1903 to 1904 Hennebique-type platform to the east. The uncovering of the river to either side reinstated the bridge as an entity and also reduced flood risk. The outer walls of the re-exposed bridge required restoration work as they had been damaged by the later extensions. In addition, new parapet walls were needed as the previous culverting had resulted in their removal. The work was completed in June 2016.

DETAILS

Road bridge, medieval with a 1667 east extension, C18 extensions to both sides completed by 1787, an east extension in 1821, and 2015 to 2016 parapets and restoration of outer walls following the removal of 1996 extensions (which had replaced late-C19 extensions) and early-C20 Hennebique-type platforms to each side.

MATERIALS: sandstone.

PLAN: bridge carrying the road over the River Roch. The bridge is wider at the south end with a straight outer spandrel wall on the west side and a curved outer spandrel wall on the east side.

DESCRIPTION

MEDIEVAL BRIDGE: this bridge has two circular outer arches and a four-centred pointed central arch set on a projecting plinth. Later extensions to each side obscure all but the barrels of each arch and the lowest portion of the voussoirs, which project below the slightly higher C18 bridge on the west side. The arches are constructed of well-dressed sandstone blocks; the masonry of the southern arch uses smaller stone blocks. The central arch has ashlar-faced voussoirs.

1667 EXTENSION: this narrow, tapering extension abuts the east side of the medieval bridge and is wider at its southern end. It too has two circular outer arches and a similar four-centred pointed, central arch. It is built of similar, well-dressed sandstone blocks.

C18 (pre 1787) BRIDGES: the C18 widening of the bridge comprises an extension on each side. The west bridge abuts the west side of the medieval bridge. It has three circular arches separated by wide pilasters with cutwaters; the smaller northern arch is partially obscured by a modern walkway and retaining wall. The bridge is constructed of well-dressed, regular sandstone blocks with dentillated voussoirs to the arches. The outer spandrel wall has visible original stonework and voussoirs to the lower part of the wall.

The cutwaters, pilasters, upper part of the spandrel wall and the parapet are modern stonework related to the restoration (2015 to 2016).

The east bridge abuts the east side of the 1667 extension. It too is a narrow, tapering extension which is wider at its southern end. The extension has three circular arches and is constructed of well-dressed sandstone blocks. The outer spandrel wall is obscured by the 1821 bridge extension. **1821 EXTENSION:** this wide extension abuts the east side of the C18 east bridge and has a marked curve to its outer spandrel wall with three flattened segmental arches diminishing in size towards the northern side. It is constructed of rock-faced sandstone blocks with stepped voussoirs and a shaped cutwater between the central and southern arch. The upper part of the outer spandrel wall is modern, rock-faced stonework with smoother dressed stone blocks forming a new parapet wall (2015 to 2016).

Appendix II - Planning Policy and Guidance

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The Act is legislative basis for decision making on applications that relate to the historic environment.

Sections 66 and 72 of the Act impose a statutory duty upon local planning authorities to consider the impact of proposals upon listed buildings and conservation areas.

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that:

in considering whether to grant permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority, or as the case may be the Secretary of State shall 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.

Similarly, section 72(l) of the above Act states that:

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

National Planning Policy Framework

Any proposals for consent relating to heritage assets are subject to the policies of the NPPF (February 2019). This sets out the Government's planning policies for

England and how these are expected to be applied. With regard to 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment', the framework requires proposals relating to heritage assets to be justified and an explanation of their effect on the heritage asset's significance provided.

Paragraph 7 of the Framework states that the purpose of the planning system is to 'contribute to the achievement of sustainable development' and that, at a very high level, 'the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

At paragraph 8, the document expands on this as follows:

Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives:

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

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

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

and notes at paragraph 10:

10. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).

With regard to the significance of a heritage asset, the framework contains the following policies:

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

assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

In determining applications local planning authorities are required to take account of significance, viability, sustainability and local character and distinctiveness. Paragraph 192 of the NPPF identifies the following criteria in relation to this:

a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

With regard to potential 'harm' to the significance designated heritage asset, in paragraph 193 the framework states the following:

...great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether the any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

The Framework goes on to state at paragraph 194 that:

Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting) should require clear and convincing justification.

Where a proposed development will lead to 'substantial harm' to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset paragraph 195 of the NPPF states that:

...local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

*a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.*

With regard to 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of a designated heritage asset, of the NPPF states the following:

196. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should

be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

In terms of non-designated heritage assets, the NPPF states:

197. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non-designated heritage assets, a balance judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

The Framework requires local planning authorities to look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas and world heritage sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Paragraph 200 states that:

Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

Concerning conservation areas and world heritage sites it states, in paragraph 201, that:

Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area

or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 195 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 196, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.

National Planning Practice Guidance

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) was published on the 23rd July 2019 to support the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 and the planning system. It includes particular guidance on matters relating to protecting the historic environment in the section: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment.

The relevant guidance is as follows:

Paragraph 2: What is meant by the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment?

Conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change. It requires a flexible and thoughtful approach to get the best out of assets as diverse as listed buildings in every day use and as yet undiscovered, undesignated buried remains of archaeological interest.

In the case of buildings, generally the risks of neglect and decay of heritage assets are best addressed through ensuring that they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation. Ensuring such

heritage assets remain used and valued is likely to require sympathetic changes to be made from time to time. In the case of archaeological sites, many have no active use, and so for those kinds of sites, periodic changes may not be necessary, though on-going management remains important.

Where changes are proposed, the National Planning Policy Framework sets out a clear framework for both plan-making and decision-making in respect of applications for planning permission and listed building consent to ensure that heritage assets are conserved, and where appropriate enhanced, in a manner that is consistent with their significance and thereby achieving sustainable development. Heritage assets are either designated heritage assets or non-designated heritage assets.

Part of the public value of heritage assets is the contribution that they can make to understanding and interpreting our past. So where the complete or partial loss of a heritage asset is justified (noting that the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted), the aim then is to:

- capture and record the evidence of the asset's significance which is to be lost
- interpret its contribution to the understanding of our past; and
- make that publicly available (National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 199)

Paragraph 6: What is "significance"?

'Significance' in terms of heritage-related planning policy is defined in the Glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework as the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

The National Planning Policy Framework definition further states that in the planning context heritage interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. This can be interpreted as follows:

- **archaeological interest:** As defined in the Glossary to the National Planning Policy Framework, there will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
- **architectural and artistic interest:** These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skill, 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.

In legislation and designation criteria, the terms 'special architectural or historic interest' of a listed building and the 'national importance' of a scheduled monument are used to describe all or part of what, in planning terms, is referred to as the identified heritage asset's significance.

Paragraph 7: Why is 'significance' important in decision-taking?

Heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. Being able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset, and the contribution of its setting, is very important to understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals.

Paragraph 13: What is the setting of a heritage asset and how should it be taken into account?

The setting of a heritage asset is defined in the Glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework.

All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not. The setting of a heritage asset and the asset's curtilage may not have the same extent.

The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to the visual relationship between the asset and the proposed development and associated visual/physical considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part in the assessment of impacts on setting, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust, smell and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places. For example, buildings that are in close proximity but are not visible from each other may have a historic or aesthetic connection that amplifies the experience of the significance of each.

The contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public rights of way or an ability to otherwise access or experience that setting. The contribution may vary over time.

When assessing any application which may affect the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities may need to consider the implications of cumulative change. They may also need to consider the fact that developments which materially detract from the asset's significance may also damage its economic viability now, or in the future, thereby threatening its ongoing conservation.

Paragraph 15: What is the optimum viable use for a heritage asset and how is it taken into account in planning decisions?

The vast majority of heritage assets are in private hands. Thus, sustaining heritage assets in the long term often requires an incentive for their active conservation. Putting heritage assets to a viable use is likely to lead to the investment in their maintenance necessary for their long-term conservation.

By their nature, some heritage assets have limited or even no economic end use. A scheduled monument in a rural area may preclude any use of the land other than as a pasture, whereas a listed building may potentially have a variety of alternative uses such as residential, commercial and leisure.

In a small number of cases a heritage asset may be capable of active use in theory but be so important and sensitive to change that alterations to accommodate a viable use would lead to an unacceptable loss of significance.

It is important that any use is viable, not just for the owner, but also for the future conservation of the asset: a series of failed ventures could result in a number of unnecessary harmful changes being made to the asset.

If there is only one viable use, that use is the optimum viable use. If there is a range of alternative economically viable uses, the optimum viable use is the one likely to cause the least harm to the significance of the asset, not just through necessary

initial changes, but also as a result of subsequent wear and tear and likely future changes. The optimum viable use may not necessarily be the most economically viable one. Nor need it be the original use. However, if from a conservation point of view there is no real difference between alternative economically viable uses, then the choice of use is a decision for the owner, subject of course to obtaining any necessary consents.

Harmful development may sometimes be justified in the interests of realising the optimum viable use of an asset, notwithstanding the loss of significance caused, and provided the harm is minimised. The policy on addressing substantial and less than substantial harm is set out in paragraphs 193-196 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Paragraph 18: How can the possibility of harm to a heritage asset be assessed?

What matters in assessing whether a proposal might cause harm is the impact on the significance of the heritage asset. As the National Planning Policy Framework makes clear, significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

Proposed development affecting a heritage asset may have no impact on its significance or may enhance its significance and therefore cause no harm to the heritage asset. Where potential harm to designated heritage assets is identified, it needs to be categorised as either less than substantial harm or

substantial harm (which includes total loss) in order to identify which policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 194-196) apply.

Within each category of harm (which category applies should be explicitly identified), the extent of the harm may vary and should be clearly articulated.

Whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision-maker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the policy in the National Planning Policy Framework. In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed. The harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting.

While the impact of total destruction is obvious, partial destruction is likely to have a considerable impact but, depending on the circumstances, it may still be less than substantial harm or conceivably not harmful at all, for example, when removing later additions to historic buildings where those additions are inappropriate and harm the buildings' significance. Similarly, works that are moderate or minor in scale are likely to cause less than substantial harm or no harm at all. However, even minor works have the potential to cause substantial harm, depending on the nature of their impact on the asset and its setting.

The National Planning Policy Framework confirms that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). It also makes clear that any harm to a designated heritage asset requires clear and convincing justification and sets out certain assets in respect of which harm should be exceptional/wholly exceptional (see National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 194).

Paragraph 20: What is meant by the term public benefits?

The National Planning Policy Framework requires any harm to designated heritage assets to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental objectives as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 8). Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits, for example, works to a listed private dwelling which secure its future as a designated heritage asset could be a public benefit.

Examples of heritage benefits may include:

- sustaining or enhancing the significance of a

- heritage asset and the contribution of its setting
- reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset
- securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long term conservation

Historic England: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning (March 2015)

The purpose of the Good Practice Advice note is to provide information on good practice to assist in implementing historic environment policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the relate guidance given in the National Planning Practice Guide (NPPG).

Note 2 'Managing Significance in Decision-Taking'

This note provides information on:

- assessing the significance of heritage assets, using appropriate expertise, historic environment records, recording and furthering understanding, neglect and unauthorised works, marketing and design and distinctiveness.

It states that:

The advice in this document, in accordance with the NPPF, emphasises that the information required in support of applications for planning permission and listed building consent should be no more than is necessary to reach an informed decision, and that activities to conserve or

investigate the asset needs to be proportionate to the significance of the heritage assets affected and the impact on that significance.

In their general advice on decision-taking, this note advises that:

Development proposals that affect the historic environment are much more likely to gain the necessary permissions and create successful places if they are designed with the knowledge and understanding of the significance of the heritage assets they may affect. The first step for all applicants is to understand the significance of any affected heritage asset and, if relevant, the contribution of its setting to its significance. The significance of a heritage asset is the sum of its archaeological, architectural, historic, and artistic interest.

Paragraph 6 highlights the NPPF and NPPG's promotion of early engagement and pre-application discussion, and the early consideration of significance of the heritage asset in order to ensure that any issues can be properly identified and addressed. Furthermore, the note advises that:

As part of this process, these discussions and subsequent applications usually benefit from a structured approach to the assembly and analysis of relevant information. The stages below indicate the order in which this process can be approached – it is good practice to check individual stages

of this list but they may not be appropriate in all cases and the level of detail applied should be proportionate.

- Understand the significance of the affected assets;
- Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance;
- Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF;
- Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance;
- Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance and the need for change;
- Offset negative impacts on aspects of significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating and archiving archaeological and historical interest of the important elements of the heritage assets affected.

The Assessment of Significance as part of the Application Process

Paragraph 7 emphasises the need to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting early in the process, in order to form a successful development, and in order for the local planning authority to make decisions in line with legal objectives and the objectives of the development plan and the policy requirements of the NPPF.

8.	Understanding the nature of the significance is important to understanding the need for and best means of conservation. For example, a modern building of high architectural interest will have quite different sensitivities from an archaeological site where the interest arises from the possibility of gaining new understanding of the past.	Curtilage Structures		change could include severing the last link to part of the history of an asset or between the asset and its original setting. Conversely, positive change could include the restoration of a building's plan form or an original designed landscape.		
9.	Understanding the extent of that significance is also important because this can, among other things, lead to a better understanding of how adaptable the asset may be and therefore improve viability and the prospects for long term conservation.	15.	Some buildings and structures are deemed designated as listed buildings by being fixed to the principal building or by being ancillary within its curtilage and pre-dating 1 July 1948. Whether alteration, extension or demolition of such buildings amounts to harm or substantial harm to the designated heritage asset (i.e. the listed building together with its curtilage and attached buildings) needs careful consideration. Some curtilage structures are of high significance, which should be taken fully into account in decisions, but some are of little or none. Thus, like other forms of heritage asset, curtilage structures should be considered in proportion to their significance. Listed buildings designated very recently (after 25 June 2013) are likely to define curtilage definitively; where this is (or is not) the case will be noted in the list description.	Listed Building Consent Regime		
10.	Understanding the level of significance is important as it provides the essential guide to how the policies should be applied. This is intrinsic to decision-taking where there is unavoidable conflict with other planning objectives.			29.	Change to heritage assets is inevitable but it is only harmful when significance is damaged. The nature and importance of the significance that is affected will dictate the proportionate response to assessing that change, its justification, mitigation and any recording which may be needed if it is to go ahead. In the case of listed buildings, the need for owners to receive listed building consent in advance of works which affect special interest is a simple mechanism but it is not always clear which kinds of works would require consent. In certain circumstances there are alternative means of granting listed building consent under the Enterprise & Regulatory Reform Act 2013.	
11.	To accord with the NPPF, an applicant will need to undertake an assessment of significance to inform the application process to an extent necessary to understand the potential impact (positive or negative) of the proposal and to a level of thoroughness proportionate to the relative importance of the asset whose fabric or setting is affected.	Cumulative Impact				
		28.	The cumulative impact of incremental small-scale changes may have as great an effect on the significance of a heritage asset as a larger scale change. Where the significance of a heritage asset has been compromised in the past by unsympathetic development to the asset itself or its setting, consideration still needs to be given to whether additional change will further detract from, or can enhance, the significance of the asset in order to accord with NPPF policies. Negative	Opportunities to Enhance Assets, their Settings and Local Distinctiveness	52.	Sustainable development can involve seeking positive improvements in the quality of the historic environment. There will not always be opportunities to enhance the significance or improve a heritage asset but the larger the asset the more likely there will

be. Most conservation areas, for example, will have sites within them that could add to the character and value of the area through development, while listed buildings may often have extensions or other alterations that have a negative impact on the significance. Similarly, the setting of all heritage assets will frequently have elements that detract from the significance of the asset or hamper its appreciation.

Design and Local Distinctiveness

53. Both the NPPF (section 7) and PPG (section ID26) contain detail on why good design is important and how it can be achieved. In terms of the historic environment, some or all of the following factors may influence what will make the scale, height, massing, alignment, materials and proposed use of new development successful in its context:

- The history of the place
- The relationship of the proposal to its specific site
- The significance of nearby assets and the contribution of their setting, recognising that this is a dynamic concept
- The general character and distinctiveness of the area in its widest sense, including the general character of local buildings, spaces, public realm and the landscape, the grain of the surroundings, which includes, for example the street pattern and plot size

- The size and density of the proposal related to that of the existing and neighbouring uses
- Landmarks and other built or landscape features which are key to a sense of place
- The diversity or uniformity in style, construction, materials, colour, detailing, decoration and period of existing buildings and spaces
- The topography
- Views into, through and from the site and its surroundings
- Landscape design
- The current and historic uses in the area and the urban grain
- The quality of the materials

Note 3 'The Setting of Heritage Assets' (December 2017)

This note provides guidance on the setting of heritage assets, which is separate to issues of curtilage, character or context.

The Extent of Setting

8. The NPPF makes it clear that the extent of the setting of a heritage asset 'is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve'. All of the following matters may affect considerations of the extent of setting:

- While setting can be mapped in the context of an individual application or proposal, it cannot

be definitively and permanently described for all time as a spatially bounded area or as lying within a set distance of a heritage asset. This is because the surroundings of a heritage asset will change over time, and because new information on heritage assets may alter what might previously have been understood to comprise their setting and the values placed on that setting and therefore the significance of the heritage asset.

- Extensive heritage assets, such as historic parks and gardens, landscapes and townscapes, can include many heritage assets, historic associations between them and their nested and overlapping settings, as well as having a setting of their own. A conservation area is likely to include the settings of listed buildings and have its own setting, as will the hamlet, village or urban area in which it is situated (explicitly recognised in green belt designations).
- Consideration of setting in urban areas, given the potential numbers and proximity of heritage assets, often overlaps with considerations both of townscape/urban design and of the character and appearance of conservation areas. Conflict between impacts on setting and other aspects of a proposal can be avoided or mitigated by working collaboratively and openly with interested parties at an early stage.

Views and Setting

10. The contribution of setting to the significance of a heritage asset is often expressed by reference to views, a purely visual impression

	of an asset or place which can be static or dynamic, long, short or of lateral spread, and include a variety of views of, from, across, or including that asset.		
11.	Views which contribute more to understanding the significance of a heritage asset include: - those where the composition within the view was a fundamental aspect of the design or function of the heritage asset - those where town- or village-scape reveals views with unplanned or unintended beauty - those with historical associations, including viewing points and the topography of battlefields - those with cultural associations, including landscapes known historically for their picturesque and landscape beauty, those which became subjects for paintings of the English landscape tradition, and those views which have otherwise become historically cherished and protected - those where relationships between the asset and other heritage assets or natural features or phenomena such as solar or lunar events are particularly relevant	- telegraphs or beacons - prehistoric funerary and ceremonial sites - historic parks and gardens with deliberate links to other designed landscapes and remote 'eye-catching' features or 'borrowed' landmarks beyond the park boundary	authorities when assessing development proposals Where complex issues involving views come into play in the assessment of such views – whether for the purposes of providing a baseline for plan-making or for development management – a formal views analysis may be merited.
		13. Views may be identified and protected by local planning policies and guidance for the part they play in shaping our appreciation and understanding of England's historic environment, whether in rural or urban areas and whether designed to be seen as a unity or as the cumulative result of a long process of development. This does not mean that additional views or other elements or attributes of setting do not merit consideration. Such views include: - views identified as part of the plan-making process, such as those identified in the London View Management Framework (LVMF, Mayor of London 2010) and Oxford City Council's View Cones (2005) and Assessment of the Oxford View Cones (2015 Report) - views identified in character area appraisals or in management plans, for example of World Heritage Sites - important designed views from, to and within historic parks and gardens that have been identified as part of the evidence base for development plans, and - views that are identified by local planning	Setting and the Significance of Heritage Assets 9. Setting is not itself a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, although land comprising a setting may itself be designated (see below Designed settings). Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset or to the ability to appreciate that significance. The following paragraphs examine some more general considerations relating to setting and significance.
12.	Assets, whether contemporaneous or otherwise, which were intended to be seen from one another for aesthetic, functional, ceremonial or religious reasons include: military and defensive sites		Cumulative Change Where the significance of a heritage asset has been compromised in the past by unsympathetic development affecting its setting, to accord with NPPF policies consideration still needs to be given to whether additional change will further detract from, or can enhance, the significance of the asset. Negative change could include severing the last link between an asset and its original setting; positive change could include the restoration of a building's original designed

landscape or the removal of structures impairing key views of it (see also paragraph 40 for screening of intrusive developments).

Change over Time

Settings of heritage assets change over time. Understanding this history of change will help to determine how further development within the asset's setting is likely to affect the contribution made by setting to the significance of the heritage asset. Settings of heritage assets which closely resemble the setting at the time the asset was constructed or formed are likely to contribute particularly strongly to significance but settings which have changed may also themselves enhance significance, for instance where townscape character has been shaped by cycles of change over the long term. Settings may also have suffered negative impact from inappropriate past developments and may be enhanced by the removal of the inappropriate structure(s).

Access and Setting

Because the contribution of setting to significance does not depend on public rights or ability to access it, significance is not dependent on numbers of people visiting it; this would downplay such qualitative issues as the importance of quiet and tranquillity as an attribute of setting, constraints on access such as remoteness or challenging terrain, and the importance of the setting to a local community who may be few in number. The potential for appreciation of the asset's

significance may increase once it is interpreted or mediated in some way, or if access to currently inaccessible land becomes possible.

Buried Assets and Setting

Heritage assets that comprise only buried remains may not be readily appreciated by a casual observer. They nonetheless retain a presence in the landscape and, like other heritage assets, may have a setting. These points apply equally, in some rare cases, to designated heritage assets such as scheduled monuments or Protected Wreck Sites that are periodically, partly or wholly submerged, eg in the intertidal zone on the foreshore.

The location and setting of historic battles, otherwise with no visible traces, may include important strategic views, routes by which opposing forces approached each other and a topography and landscape features that played a part in the outcome.

Buried archaeological remains may also be appreciated in historic street or boundary patterns, in relation to their surrounding topography or other heritage assets or through the long-term continuity in the use of the land that surrounds them. While the form of survival of an asset may influence the degree to which its setting contributes to significance and the weight placed on it, it does not necessarily follow that the contribution is nullified if the asset is obscured or not readily visible.

Designed Settings

Many heritage assets have settings that have been designed to enhance their presence and visual interest or to create experiences of drama or surprise. In these special circumstances, these designed settings may be regarded as heritage assets in their own right, for instance the designed landscape around a country house. Furthermore they may, themselves, have a wider setting: a park may form the immediate surroundings of a great house, while having its own setting that includes lines-of-sight to more distant heritage assets or natural features beyond the park boundary. Given that the designated area is often restricted to the 'core' elements, such as a formal park, it is important that the extended and remote elements of the design are included in the evaluation of the setting of a designed landscape. Reference is sometimes made to the 'immediate', 'wider' and 'extended' setting of heritage assets, but the terms should not be regarded as having any particular formal meaning. While many day-to-day cases will be concerned with development in the vicinity of an asset, development further afield may also affect significance, particularly where it is large-scale, prominent or intrusive. The setting of a historic park or garden, for instance, may include land beyond its boundary which adds to its significance but which need not be confined to land visible from the site, nor necessarily the same as the site's visual boundary. It can include:

- land which is not part of the park or garden but which is associated with it by being adjacent and visible from it

- land which is not part of the site but which is adjacent and associated with it because it makes an important contribution to the historic character of the site in some other way than by being visible from it, and
- land which is a detached part of the site and makes an important contribution to its historic character either by being visible from it or in some other way, perhaps by historical association

Setting and Urban Design

As mentioned above (paragraph 8, The extent of setting), the numbers and proximity of heritage assets in urban areas mean that the protection and enhancement of setting is intimately linked to townscape and urban design considerations. These include the degree of conscious design or fortuitous beauty and the consequent visual harmony or congruity of development, and often relates to townscape attributes such as enclosure, definition of streets and spaces and spatial qualities as well as lighting, trees, and verges, or the treatments of boundaries or street surfaces.

Setting and Economic and Social Viability

Sustainable development under the NPPF can have important positive impacts on heritage assets and their settings, for example by bringing an abandoned building back into use or giving a heritage asset further life. However, the economic viability of a heritage asset can be reduced if the contribution

made by its setting is diminished by badly designed or insensitively located development. For instance, a new road scheme affecting the setting of a heritage asset, while in some cases increasing the public's ability or inclination to visit and/or use it, thereby boosting its economic viability and enhancing the options for the marketing or adaptive re-use of a building, may in other cases have the opposite effect.

Landscape Assessment and Amenity

14. Analysis of setting is different from landscape assessment. While landscapes include everything within them, the entirety of very extensive settings may not contribute equally to the significance of a heritage asset, if at all. Careful analysis is therefore required to assess whether one heritage asset at a considerable distance from another, though intervisible with it – a church spire, for instance – is a major component of the setting, rather than just an incidental element within the wider landscape.
15. Assessment and management of both setting and views are related to consideration of the wider landscape, which is outside the scope of this advice note. Additional advice on views is available in Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd edition, published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (in partnership with Historic England).

16. Similarly, setting is different from general amenity. Views out from heritage assets that neither contribute to significance nor allow appreciation of significance are a matter of amenity rather than of setting.

A Staged Approach to Proportionate Decision-taking

17. All heritage assets have significance, some of which have particular significance and are designated. The contribution made by their setting to their significance also varies. Although many settings may be enhanced by development, not all settings have the same capacity to accommodate change without harm to the significance of the heritage asset or the ability to appreciate it. This capacity may vary between designated assets of the same grade or of the same type or according to the nature of the change. It can also depend on the location of the asset: an elevated or overlooked location; a riverbank, coastal or island location; or a location within an extensive tract of flat land may increase the sensitivity of the setting (ie the capacity of the setting to accommodate change without harm to the heritage asset's significance) or of views of the asset. This requires the implications of development affecting the setting of heritage assets to be considered on a case-by-case basis.
18. Conserving or enhancing heritage assets by taking their settings into account need not prevent change; indeed change may be

positive, for instance where the setting has been compromised by poor development. Many places coincide with the setting of a heritage asset and are subject to some degree of change over time. NPPF policies, together with the guidance on their implementation in the Planning Policy Guidance (PPG), provide the framework for the consideration of change affecting the setting of undesignated and designated heritage assets as part of the decision-taking process (NPPF, paragraphs 131-135 and 137).

19. Amongst the Government’s planning policies for the historic environment is that conservation decisions are based on a proportionate assessment of the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal, including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset. Historic England recommends the following broad approach to assessment, undertaken as a series of steps that apply proportionately to the complexity of the case, from straightforward to complex:

Step 1: Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected

Step 2: Assess the degree to which these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated

Step 3: Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance or on the ability to appreciate it

Step 4: Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm

Step 5: Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes

Historic England: Conservation Principles and Assessment (2008)

Conservation Principles (2008) explores, on a more philosophical level, the reason why society places a value on heritage assets beyond their mere utility. It identifies four types of heritage value that an asset may hold: aesthetic, communal, historic and evidential value. This is simply another way of analysing its significance. These values can help shape the most efficient and effective way of managing the heritage asset so as to sustain its overall value to society.

Evidential Value

35. Evidential value derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.
36. Physical remains of past human activity are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them. These remains are part of a record of the past that begins with traces of early humans

and continues to be created and destroyed. Their evidential value is proportionate to their potential to contribute to people’s understanding of the past.

37. In the absence of written records, the material record, particularly archaeological deposits, provides the only source of evidence about the distant past. Age is therefore a strong indicator of relative evidential value, but is not paramount, since the material record is the primary source of evidence about poorly documented aspects of any period. Geology, landforms, species and habitats similarly have value as sources of information about the evolution of the planet and life upon it.
38. Evidential value derives from the physical remains or genetic lines that have been inherited from the past. The ability to understand and interpret the evidence tends to be diminished in proportion to the extent of its removal or replacement.

Historical Value

39. Historical value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be illustrative or associative.
40. The idea of illustrating aspects of history or prehistory – the perception of a place as a link between past and present people – is different from purely evidential value. Illustration

- depends on visibility in a way that evidential value (for example, of buried remains) does not. Places with illustrative value will normally also have evidential value, but it may be of a different order of importance. An historic building that is one of many similar examples may provide little unique evidence about the past, although each illustrates the intentions of its creators equally well. However, their distribution, like that of planned landscapes, may be of considerable evidential value, as well as demonstrating, for instance, the distinctiveness of regions and aspects of their social organisation.
41. Illustrative value has the power to aid interpretation of the past through making connections with, and providing insights into, past communities and their activities through shared experience of a place. The illustrative value of places tends to be greater if they incorporate the first, or only surviving, example of an innovation of consequence, whether related to design, technology or social organisation. The concept is similarly applicable to the natural heritage values of a place, for example geological strata visible in an exposure, the survival of veteran trees, or the observable interdependence of species in a particular habitat. Illustrative value is often described in relation to the subject illustrated, for example, a structural system or a machine might be said to have 'technological value'.
42. Association with a notable family, person, event, or movement gives historical value a particular resonance. Being at the place where something momentous happened can increase and intensify understanding through linking historical accounts of events with the place where they happened – provided, of course, that the place still retains some semblance of its appearance at the time. The way in which an individual built or furnished their house, or made a garden, often provides insight into their personality, or demonstrates their political or cultural affiliations. It can suggest aspects of their character and motivation that extend, or even contradict, what they or others wrote, or are recorded as having said, at the time, and so also provide evidential value.
43. Many buildings and landscapes are associated with the development of other aspects of cultural heritage, such as literature, art, music or film. Recognition of such associative values tends in turn to inform people's responses to these places. Associative value also attaches to places closely connected with the work of people who have made important discoveries or advances in thought about the natural world.
44. The historical value of places depends upon both sound identification and direct experience of fabric or landscape that has survived from the past, but is not as easily diminished by change or partial replacement as evidential value. The authenticity of a place indeed often lies in visible evidence of change as a result of people responding to changing circumstances. Historical values are harmed only to the extent that adaptation has obliterated or concealed them, although completeness does tend to strengthen illustrative value.
45. The use and appropriate management of a place for its original purpose, for example as a place of recreation or worship, or, like a watermill, as a machine, illustrates the relationship between design and function, and so may make a major contribution to its historical values. If so, cessation of that activity will diminish those values and, in the case of some specialised landscapes and buildings, may essentially destroy them. Conversely, abandonment, as of, for example, a medieval village site, may illustrate important historical events.
- Aesthetic Value
46. Aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.
47. Aesthetic values can be the result of the conscious design of a place, including artistic endeavour. Equally, they can be the seemingly fortuitous outcome of the way in which a place has evolved and been used over time. Many places combine these two aspects – for

example, where the qualities of an already attractive landscape have been reinforced by artifice – while others may inspire awe or fear. Aesthetic values tend to be specific to a time and cultural context, but appreciation of them is not culturally exclusive.

48. Design value relates primarily to the aesthetic qualities generated by the conscious design of a building, structure or landscape as a whole. It embraces composition (form, proportions, massing, silhouette, views and vistas, circulation) and usually materials or planting, decoration or detailing, and craftsmanship. It may extend to an intellectual programme governing the design (for example, a building as an expression of the Holy Trinity), and the choice or influence of sources from which it was derived. It may be attributed to a known patron, architect, designer, gardener or craftsman (and so have associational value), or be a mature product of a vernacular tradition of building or land management. Strong indicators of importance are quality of design and execution, and innovation, particularly if influential.
49. Sustaining design value tends to depend on appropriate stewardship to maintain the integrity of a designed concept, be it landscape, architecture, or structure.
50. It can be useful to draw a distinction between design created through detailed instructions (such as architectural drawings) and the direct

creation of a work of art by a designer who is also in significant part the craftsman. The value of the artwork is proportionate to the extent that it remains the actual product of the artist's hand. While the difference between design and 'artistic' value can be clear-cut, for example statues on pedestals (artistic value) in a formal garden (design value), it is often far less so, as with repetitive ornament on a medieval building.

51. Some aesthetic values are not substantially the product of formal design, but develop more or less fortuitously over time, as the result of a succession of responses within a particular cultural framework. They include, for example, the seemingly organic form of an urban or rural landscape; the relationship of vernacular buildings and structures and their materials to their setting; or a harmonious, expressive or dramatic quality in the juxtaposition of vernacular or industrial buildings and spaces. Design in accordance with Picturesque theory is best considered a design value.
52. Aesthetic value resulting from the action of nature on human works, particularly the enhancement of the appearance of a place by the passage of time ('the patina of age'), may overlie the values of a conscious design. It may simply add to the range and depth of values, the significance, of the whole; but on occasion may be in conflict with some of them, for example, when physical damage is

caused by vegetation charmingly rooting in masonry. 53 While aesthetic values may be related to the age of a place, they may also (apart from artistic value) be amenable to restoration and enhancement. This reality is reflected both in the definition of conservation areas (areas whose 'character or appearance it is desirable to preserve or enhance') and in current practice in the conservation of historic landscapes.

Communal Value

54. Communal value derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. Communal values are closely bound up with historical (particularly associative) and aesthetic values, but tend to have additional and specific aspects.
55. Commemorative and symbolic values reflect the meanings of a place for those who draw part of their identity from it, or have emotional links to it. The most obvious examples are war and other memorials raised by community effort, which consciously evoke past lives and events, but some buildings and places, such as the Palace of Westminster, can symbolise wider values. Such values tend to change over time, and are not always affirmative. Some places may be important for reminding us of uncomfortable events, attitudes or periods in England's history. They are important aspects of collective memory and identity,

places of remembrance whose meanings should not be forgotten. In some cases, that meaning can only be understood through information and interpretation, whereas, in others, the character of the place itself tells most of the story.

56. Social value is associated with places that people perceive as a source of identity, distinctiveness, social interaction and coherence. Some may be comparatively modest, acquiring communal significance through the passage of time as a result of a collective memory of stories linked to them. They tend to gain value through the resonance of past events in the present, providing reference points for a community's identity or sense of itself. They may have fulfilled a community function that has generated a deeper attachment, or shaped some aspect of community behaviour or attitudes. Social value can also be expressed on a large scale, with great time-depth, through regional and national identity.
57. The social values of places are not always clearly recognised by those who share them, and may only be articulated when the future of a place is threatened. They may relate to an activity that is associated with the place, rather than with its physical fabric. The social value of a place may indeed have no direct relationship to any formal historical or aesthetic values that may have been ascribed to it.

58. Compared with other heritage values, social values tend to be less dependent on the survival of historic fabric. They may survive the replacement of the original physical structure, so long as its key social and cultural characteristics are maintained; and can be the popular driving force for the re-creation of lost (and often deliberately destroyed or desecrated) places with high symbolic value, although this is rare in England.
59. Spiritual value attached to places can emanate from the beliefs and teachings of an organised religion, or reflect past or present-day perceptions of the spirit of place. It includes the sense of inspiration and wonder that can arise from personal contact with places long revered, or newly revealed.
60. Spiritual value is often associated with places sanctified by longstanding veneration or worship, or wild places with few obvious signs of modern life. Their value is generally dependent on the perceived survival of the historic fabric or character of the place, and can be extremely sensitive to modest changes to that character, particularly to the activities that happen there.

Local Policy

Rochdale Core Strategy

The Core Strategy for the Rochdale Borough Local Plan was adopted on 19 October 2016 and sets out the strategies for the borough through to 2028. The following policy relates to the borough's heritage:

P2 - Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage

1. We will protect and enhance the borough's character, the distinctiveness of its town centres, housing areas and countryside, and the qualities of its landscapes, utilising the considerable potential of these assets in development and regeneration schemes. We will do this by:

- a) Requiring new development to integrate successfully with the key natural features of the borough, e.g. river valleys and the Pennine landscape;
- b) Requiring new development to take opportunities to protect and open up important views of hills and valleys which are part of the borough's unique character;
- c) Restoring the River Roch and other water bodies to their place as key and attractive features of the borough, including opening up waterways where they have been covered, and enhancing their setting, heritage assets and biodiversity potential;
- d) Protecting, enhancing and utilising outstanding cultural landscapes, such as the Cheesden

Valley area and around Littleborough and Hollingworth Lake; and

- e) Conserving and enhancing townscape character.

2. We will protect the borough's heritage by:

- a) Conserving, enhancing and promoting key heritage assets, both statutory and nonstatutory, including consideration of their wider settings. Key heritage assets of the borough include:
 - i. Four outstanding conservation areas: Central Rochdale, Middleton and Littleborough town centres and Rock Nook / Summit;
 - ii. Other designated assets such as listed buildings, conservation areas, registered parks and scheduled ancient monuments;
 - iii. The heritage of the Co-operative movement, the Rochdale Pioneers and the Labour movement;
 - iv. The Edgar Wood and J. H. Sellers cultural heritage;
 - v. The heritage of the seventeenth and eighteenth century vernacular tradition; and
 - vi. The engineering heritage, including mills, canals and railways.

- b) Conserving, enhancing and utilising other non-statutory heritage assets of local interest, be they buildings, parks, gardens or archaeological sites, including promoting their sensitive restoration;
- c) Using heritage assets positively and intelligently to strengthen identity and image and support the visitor economy, particularly in development and regeneration schemes; and
- d) Prioritising the conservation of heritage assets at risk from decay, giving special attention to designated heritage assets in this regard.

Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area

The *Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal* was published in November 2011. The character of the area surrounding the Town Hall is described as follows:

Rochdale Town Hall, Square and Esplanade

South of the river, the Town Hall Square and The Esplanade (1864-71) was an artistic creation of the highest order with set-piece buildings in an expansive layout planned according to romantic and picturesque principles. Rochdale Town Hall and the clock tower rise sublimely from a very large plaza connected to Manchester Road by a ceremonial way, The Esplanade. The scheme is completed by romantic gardens created on the valley slopes (registered park grade II). The simplicity and the visionary scale of the scene contrast with the adjacent Old Town. Excessive parking dramatically lowers the quality of the scene and the functionality of the plaza.

Town Hall Square

Town Hall Square is part of the Crossland master plan. Originally, Town Hall Square was a beautifully urbane and uncluttered space. It joined all four parts of Victorian Rochdale together, the north, via Yorkshire Street, the east, via The Butts, the south, via Church Steps, and the west via The Esplanade - altogether a very symbolic piece of town planning. The focus of the square 45 was the statue of John Bright, created by the famous sculptor Hamo Thorneycroft, which could be seen from all four directions. Commercial buildings were planned and built on the eastern side of the Square. Crossland and Crowther's enlargement of St Chad's Church enclosed the Square from the south. Crossland also doubled the width of Rochdale Bridge, transforming it into a wide platform so people could sweep down Yorkshire Street over the river and into the Square unhindered by any obstruction. Access from the south was via the ancient Church Steps which gave excellent views across the Square.

The buildings along Packer Street form an impressive frontage, the impact of which has been obstructed by a row of mainly purple ash trees, which although attractive in their own right cut these important buildings off from the square and are damaging their stonework.

The Esplanade

The name, "*Esplanade*" means a stretch of pavement used as a promenade and was proposed by a Cllr. Taylor as an alternative to the ubiquitous "*Corporation Street*". It was laid out in 1871 and formed a seamless extension of the "*wrap-around*" Town Hall Square. Trinity United Presbyterian Church marked the western extent, a Gothic focal point similar to St. Chad's Church.

The Gothic theme was continued by the Old Grammar School, (since replaced by Broadfield Hotel) which sat atop Park Slopes overlooking The Esplanade. Behind this Sparrow Hill was alignment with Trinity Church as its focal point.

The Esplanade is the picturesque equivalent of a long symmetrical vista to a classical town hall and square. However, unlike classical design, nothing is perfectly straight, symmetrical or "on axis" and everything appears informal and accidental. For example, from the west, the gently curving Esplanade never quite frames the Town Hall.

Over the decades, the junction of The Esplanade with Manchester Road has been the principal gateway to Rochdale Town Hall and centre. After the unfortunate destruction of Trinity Church and The Angel, the gateway has been strengthened by two "Spires" that take their cue from the five picturesque fleches on the roofs of Touchstones. The Spires were created in 1997 by Jeremy Waygood and with the creation of Touchstones have helped to redress the earlier losses. They are thoroughly positive developments that have helped to recreate the gateway effect, though their general setting is compromised by the road junction that takes up most of the available space.

The fast-flowing River Roch was another element to the design that imparted a sense of wild-ness so beloved by the Romantics. The character of the river varied: at the Butts it was wider and slower and had been crossed by a bridge and ford for centuries but adjacent The Esplanade it was narrow and faster running. The land levels adjacent the Roch were raised thereby alluding to the cliff-like edges and foot bridges found in fantasy

illustrations of the picturesque. A footbridge and cutting was also created for Bird Cage Walk where it runs through Park Slopes.

