



Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council

Station Square, Rochdale

Heritage Statement





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Heritage Statement

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Executive summary

WSP has been commissioned by Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC) to produce a Heritage Statement in advance of proposed works within Station Square in Rochdale, Greater Manchester.

The proposed works involve the refurbishment of Station Square, located within the Maclure Road Conservation Area, a designated heritage asset. Station Road and Station square were laid out in conjunction with a new railway station in 1887-1889. This building replaced an earlier station built in 1837-41, which was further to the east, which was demolished in 1975. The current railway station at this location was completed in 1979. As well as the conservation area, other designated heritage asset assessed, is located in the vicinity of Station square and within the Maclure Conservation Area, is the Grade II* listed St John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church which was constructed in 1925-27 under the direction of Ernest Bower Norris of Manchester architects' Hill, Sandy and Norris (NHLE ref:1376506). Its significance comes from its mosaiced interior and its Byzantine style architecture, complete with a large dome. The setting of the church is primarily in its relationship to the conservation area and to other non-designated heritage assets which surround the square including, the fire station and accompanying housing and 29-31 Maclure Road, all of which are assessed within this report.

This Heritage Statement provides an understanding of the heritage significance of the Maclure Road Conservation Area, as well as the Grade II* St John the Baptist RC Church and other built heritage assets within the vicinity of Station Square and considers how setting contributes to that significance. It then assesses the likely impact of the proposals on that significance in support of a planning application to undertake the proposed works, which is required under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The proposed scheme design would visually enhance the conservation area and the group of heritage assets located along the northern and eastern enclosure of Station Square which are positive contributors to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The de-cluttering of the site and the removal of vehicular traffic would reduce the overall visual and noise impacts from traffic.

The proposed scheme would not result in harm to the Maclure Road Conservation Area, or any of the assets within in it, including the Grade II* listed St John the Baptist RC Church, or those assets noted on the local planning authority non-designated heritage asset list; the fire station, 15,17, 19,21, 23,25 Maclure Road and 29-31 Maclure Road.

There will also be no harm to the small industrial building on Station Road.

The use of sympathetic and quality surfacing materials within the conservation area should be considered.

1 Introduction

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1. WSP has been commissioned by Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC) to produce a Heritage Statement to support a planning application in advance of proposed works centred on Station Square. The works involve a number of public realm improvement schemes within Rochdale, centred around Station Square, located within the Maclure Road Conservation Area (National Grid Reference/ NGR SD 98363 51386).
- 1.1.2. The *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* sets out the legal requirements for the control of development and alterations which affect listed buildings and conservation areas. The proposed works include:
- The surrounding streets would become pedestrian prioritised routes with designed traffic calming measures. Low kerbs, narrowed carriageways, widened footways and clear movement routes are proposed. High quality block materials, tree planting and integrated Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs) in the form of rain gardens are proposed to create decluttered green corridors connecting the Milkstone community to the space. Vehicle parking, loading, access and circulation is incorporated into the design. Taxi ranking would be relocated to Station Road (east) as would the bus stop. Thresholds between the streets/Square would create a transition point to mark the changing character and emphasise arrival within the square.
 - A controlled access and bus route incorporated within the square along Maclure Road. Materials are small scale block units and coloured/textured poured materials that provide a pedestrian character to the square.
 - Tree Planting/Greening to separate areas within the square, supporting both passive and formal activity. Bespoke furniture is proposed to clearly define the space, in order to protect and control movement flow.
 - It is proposed that the viaduct walls would provide a canvas for local street art and green wall panels.
 - Paving materials would be used to replace the current surface treatments, providing a cohesion across the square, integrating the Metrolink and reflecting the local heritage.
 - A Green Space is proposed, to be located in the existing landscaped area outside Nye Bevan House.

1.2 Aim and objectives

- 1.2.1. The aim of this report is to understand the heritage significance of the conservation area and to assess the impact of the proposed scheme to that significance, in order to support a planning. Professional expert opinion has been used to assess heritage significance, based on evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal value, as set out in Historic England's *Conservation Principles* (2008).

1.2.2. The aim is achieved through the following objectives:

- Provide a summary historical background of the Maclure Road Conservation Area, as well as the Grade II* listed St John the Baptist RC Church and their context within Station Square.
- Describe the current condition of the asset as determined from a site visit.
- Interpret the significance of the asset and the contribution of setting to this significance, based on values set out in Historic England's *Conservation Principles* (2008) and *Statements of Heritage Significance* (2019).
- Assess the likely impacts upon the significance of the asset arising from the proposals.
- Provide recommendations where appropriate.

1.3 Statement of liability

- 1.3.1. This document is for the exclusive benefit of the Client (Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council). It may not be assigned to or relied upon by a third party without the agreement of WSP UK Limited ('WSP') in writing. WSP retains all copyright and other intellectual property rights in the document and its contents unless transferred by written agreement between WSP and the Client.
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- 1.3.3. No person except the Client shall have the benefit of this document by virtue of the *Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999*.

2 Planning framework

2.1 Statutory protection

Listed buildings and conservation areas

- 2.1.1. *The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* sets out the legal requirements for the control of development and alterations which affect listed buildings or conservation areas (including buildings of heritage interest which lie within a conservation area).
- 2.1.2. Section 66(1) deals with listed buildings. It states that in considering any development which affects a listed building including its setting, the local planning authority '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.'
- 2.1.3. Section 72(1) addresses the general duty with respect to conservation areas in the exercise of planning functions. It states that 'special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.'

2.2 National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.2.1. The Government issued a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in July 2021 (MHCLG 2021) and supporting revised Planning Practice Guidance in 2021 (MHCLG 2021).
- 2.2.2. 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 historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic.' The determination of the significance is based on statutory designation and/or professional judgement against these values (they are also identified in Historic England's *Statements of Heritage Significance* 2019).
- 2.2.3. The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, and the NPPF has a presumption in favour of such, where it meets needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable development is achieved within the context of economic, social and environmental objectives.
- 2.2.4. Section 16 of the NPPF deals with 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment'. The NPPF recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource which 'should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations' (para 189).
- 2.2.5. The NPPF requires the significance of heritage assets to be considered in the planning process, whether designated or not. NPPF Section 16 is reproduced in full below:

189. Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

190. Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

191. When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.

192. Local planning authorities should maintain or have access to a historic environment record. This should contain up-to-date evidence about the historic environment in their area and be used to:

- a) assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment; and
- b) predict the likelihood that currently unidentified heritage assets, particularly sites of historic and archaeological interest, will be discovered in the future.

193. Local planning authorities should make information about the historic environment, gathered as part of policy-making or development management, publicly accessible.

Proposals affecting heritage assets

194. 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. As a minimum the relevant historic environment

record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

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

196. Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.

197. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- 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.

198. In considering any applications to remove or alter a historic statue, plaque, memorial or monument (whether listed or not), local planning authorities should have regard to the importance of their retention in situ and, where appropriate, of explaining their historic and social context rather than removal.

Considering potential impacts

199. 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.

200. 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. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;

b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

201. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total 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 not for profit, 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.

202. 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.

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

204. Local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.

205. Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.

206. Local planning authorities should 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. 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.

207. 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 200 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 201, 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.

208. Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.

- 2.2.6. The web-based National Planning Policy Guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>) provides supporting information in respect of conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

2.3 Local planning policy

Rochdale adopted Core Strategy

- 2.3.1. Rochdale's adopted Core Strategy (Rochdale Borough Council, 2017) was published in February 2017 after being adopted in 2016. Policy P2 in the Rochdale Core Strategy focuses on "Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage." Below are the aspects of the policy which are relevant to the heritage statement.
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:*
 - 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;*
 - 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 non-statutory, including consideration of their wider settings. Key heritage assets of the borough include:*
 - ii. *Other designated assets such as listed buildings, conservation areas, registered parks and scheduled ancient monuments;*

- iii. The heritage of the Co-operative movements, the Rochdale Pioneers and the Labour movement;*
- iv. The Edgar Wood and the 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 reception;*
- 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 regards.*

Rochdale Borough unitary development plan

2.3.2. In June 2006 the Unitary Development Plan (Rochdale Borough Council, 2006) was adopted for Rochdale Borough Council. Within this plan three policies are relevant with regards to the proposed development, these comprise: BE/11, BE/16 and BE/17, of which are detailed below.

BE/11: Protection of locally important buildings and features of architectural and historical interest

“The council will permit development proposals that do not adversely affect buildings and features which are of local interest and which contribute to the character of an area and/or are important in townscape terms.”

BE/16: Demolition of buildings in conservation areas

“When considering proposals for the demolition of unlisted buildings in a Conservation Area, the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area in which the building is situated will be considered. Proposals to demolish such buildings will be assessed against the same broad criteria as proposals to demolish Listed Buildings. Consent to demolish will only be granted where it can be demonstrated that the building cannot be beneficially use and all possible efforts have been made to find a use for the building. Where demolition of an unlisted building is acceptable, there must be detailed plans for the development or appropriate treatment of the site and development must enhance the appearance of the Conservation Area. Any grant of consent for demolition will include a condition that demolition shall not take place until a contract for the carrying out of

works of redevelopment has been made and planning permission for those works has been granted.”

BE/17: New Development affecting conservation areas

“Development proposals will be permitted that preserve or enhance the character or appearance of a conservation area.” The development plan will take into account:

- *“Its relationship to existing buildings, the site and its surroundings;*
- *Its design – including elevations...materials, finishes and detailing;*
- *The design and siting of advertisements, new street furniture, paving and other highway surfaces and related structures (e.g., lighting and signs); and*
- *The design and siting of car parking and service facilities.*

Development proposals should include detailed plans and drawings enabling its implication(s) for the character appearance of the conservation area to be established”.

3 Methodology and sources

3.1 Desk-based assessment

- 3.1.1. The assessment has been carried out in accordance with the requirements of the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990*, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (MHCLG 2021, MHCLG 2021) and to standards specified by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA Dec 2014a, 2014b) and Historic England (HE 2016, HE 2017).
- 3.1.2. A range of data sources were used in the research for this report, all of which are referenced in the text and detailed in full in the bibliography in Appendix A. The table below provides a summary of the key data sources.

Table 3-1 –Data sources consulted

Source	Data	Comment
Historic England	National Heritage List for England (NHLE) with information on statutorily designated heritage assets	Statutory designations (scheduled monuments; statutorily listed buildings; registered parks and gardens; historic battlefields) can provide a significant constraint to development.
Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC)	Historic Environment Record (HER)	Primary repository of archaeological information. Includes information from past investigations, local knowledge, find spots, and documentary and cartographic sources
Historic England	National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE)	National database maintained by Historic England. Not as comprehensive as the HER but can occasionally contain additional information. Accessible via pastscape website. This was consulted for the site and its immediate vicinity only.
Local Planning Authority	Conservation area	An area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.
Local Planning Authority	Locally listed building	Building of local importance designated by the local planning authority due to architectural and/or historic significance and a positive contributor to the character of an area. Whilst not statutorily protected, a building's inclusion on the list means that it is a material consideration in the planning process.

Source	Data	Comment
Landmark Information Group	Ordnance Survey maps from the 1st edition (1860–70s) to present day.	Provides a good indication of past land use and impacts which may have compromised archaeological survival. Provides an indication of the possible date of any buildings on the site.
County Record Office / Rochdale Local Studies Library	Historic maps (e.g. Tithe, enclosure, estate), published journals and local history	Baseline information on the historic environment
Google	Satellite imagery and Streetview	General mapping and visual information of the site and surrounds.
Internet	Web-published local history	Many key documentary sources, such as the Victoria County History, the Survey of London, and local and specialist studies are now published on the web and can be used to inform the archaeological and historical background.

- 3.1.3. This report sets out the history of the site and assets (Section 5), its significance (Section 6) and assesses the impact of the proposed works in relation to relevant policy (Section 7).
- 3.1.4. To provide historic background context for the site, and to inform the assessment of setting, a 50m radius study area around the site was considered, as the Proposed Development works are expected to be small scale and unobtrusive. The extent of the study area was defined using professional judgement. Occasionally there may be reference to heritage assets beyond this study area, where appropriate, e.g., where such assets are particularly significant and/or where they contribute to current understanding of the historic environment.
- 3.1.5. Figure B-2, shows the location of selected designated heritage assets within 50m of the site, as identified by the sources above, the site visit, or during the course of research for this assessment. These have been allocated a unique 'assessment' reference number (WSP001, WSP002, etc.). Where there are a considerable number of listed buildings in the study area, only those within the vicinity of the site (i.e. within 50m) are included, unless their inclusion is considered relevant to the study. All distances quoted in the text are approximate (within 5m).

3.2 Site visit

- 3.2.1. A site visit took place on the 21st September 2022 to undertake a visual inspection of the Proposed Scheme area and to conduct a site walkover of the surrounding area, taking photographs and recording notes. The visual inspection formed the basis of a basic visual condition appraisal of the Maclure Road Conservation Area and the Catholic Church of St John the Baptist, and other non-designated assets. Photographs were also taken on this site visit, a selection of which are used within this report.
- 3.2.2. Photographs were also taken on site in order to produce a 360 view to support the project, which will be supplied as a webmap on submission of this document.
- 3.2.3. The site visit also extended beyond the site for the purposes of scoping designated heritage assets and their intervisibility with the proposed development, as required by Historic England guidance, and for the settings assessment itself.

3.3 Assessing heritage significance

- 3.3.1. 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 historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic.' The determination of the significance is based on statutory designation and/or professional judgement against these values (they are also identified in Historic England's Statements of Heritage Significance (2019) as Archaeological Interest, Architectural and Artistic Interest and Historic Interest).
- 3.3.2. The determination of the significance of these assets in this report is based on statutory designation and/or professional judgment against the following values referred to in Historic England's Conservation Principles (2008):
 - Evidential value: the potential of physical remains to yield evidence about past human activity. This might consider date; rarity; state of preservation; diversity/complexity; contribution to published priorities; supporting documentation; collective value and comparative potential.
 - Historical value: the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place and/or heritage asset to the present. This tends to be illustrative or associative.
 - Aesthetic value: the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place and or heritage asset, considering what other people have said or written.
 - 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.
- 3.3.3. These values encompass the criteria that Historic England are obliged to consider when statutorily designating heritage assets. The assessment also considers the contribution which the historic character and setting makes to the overall significance of the asset.
- 3.3.4. Each asset is evaluated against the range of criteria listed above on a case by case basis.

3.3.5. The table below gives examples of the significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets.

Table 3-2 – Significance of heritage assets

Heritage asset description	Value
World Heritage Sites	Very High
Scheduled Monuments Grade I Listed Buildings Grade II* Listed Buildings Grade II Listed Buildings which can be shown to have exceptional qualities in their fabric or historical associations, or which are clearly associated with heritage assets of high, national significance Conservation Areas containing buildings of great importance Undesignated structures of clear national importance. Undesignated below ground heritage assets of clear national importance	High
Grade II Listed Buildings which can be shown to have qualities in their fabric or historical association of regional importance only Historic (unlisted) buildings that can be shown to have exceptional qualities in their fabric or historical associations Conservation Areas containing buildings that contribute significantly to its historic character Historic Townscape or built-up areas with important historic integrity in their buildings, or built settings Known buried heritage assets of regional importance	Medium
Locally Listed Buildings Historic (unlisted) buildings of modest quality in their fabric or historical association. Historic Townscape or built-up areas of limited historic integrity in their buildings, or built settings Known buried heritage assets of local importance	Low
Buildings of no architectural or historical note; buildings of intrusive character	Negligible
Buildings with some hidden (i.e. inaccessible) potential for historical significance Unknown buried heritage assets	Uncertain

3.4 Assessing harm

- 3.4.1. Professional judgement is used to consider the impact (the magnitude of change) of future development on the significance a known or potential heritage asset. This is assessed in NPPF terms as ‘no harm’, ‘less than substantial harm’, ‘substantial harm’ or ‘total loss of significance’.

3.5 Assessing the contribution of setting

- 3.5.1. In relation to designated heritage assets, the assessment considers the contribution that setting makes to the overall significance of the asset.
- 3.5.2. Setting is the way in which the asset is understood (i.e. evidential and historical values) and experienced (aesthetic and communal values). It is not an asset in itself. It differs from curtilage (historic/present property boundary); context (association with other assets irrespective of distance) and historic character (sum of all historic attributes, including setting, associations, and visual aspects).
- 3.5.3. Guidance produced by Historic England (HE 2017) and the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013) has been used to adopt a stepped approach for settings assessment. The former sets out five steps, of which the first four are relevant:
- *Step 1: asset identification.* The NPPF requires an approach that is proportional to the significance of the asset, and for this reason only the settings of the most sensitive (i.e. designated) heritage assets are considered in this assessment. A scoping exercise filters out those assets which would be unaffected, typically where there are no views to/from the site.
 - *Step 2: assess the contribution of setting.* This stage assesses how setting contributes to the overall significance of a designated asset.
 - *Step 3: assess change.* This considers the effect of the proposals on asset significance. It is noted however that it can be difficult to quantify such change to the overall significance of a designated heritage asset (for example, significance would rarely be downgraded from ‘high’ to ‘medium’ due to changes in setting). For this reason, the impact is reported in this assessment in terms of the extent to which the proposals would change how the asset is understood and experienced (in terms of no harm, less than substantial harm, substantial harm or total loss of significance).
 - *Step 4: mitigation.* This explores the way to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm. This is typically considered at the design stage (i.e. embedded design mitigation).
 - *Step 5: reporting.* Making and documenting decisions and outcomes. This reports the assessment of effects.
- 3.5.4. The assessment has considered the physical surroundings of the asset, including topography and intervening development and vegetation. It also considers how the asset is currently experienced and understood through its setting, in particular views to and from the



asset and the site, along with key views, and the extent to which setting may have already been compromised.

4 Historical background and asset description

4.1 Site location and context

- 4.1.1. The Proposed Scheme is located in Station Square Rochdale (National Grid Reference/NGR 389908, 412676: Figure 1).

4.2 Historical background

- 4.2.1. Rochdale is first mentioned in the Domesday survey, in 1086 although the parish church's dedication to St Chad, a 7th century bishop, as well as its circular churchyard, suggest that the town's origins are of an earlier date. The town's name in the Domesday survey is 'Recedham' meaning homestead with a hall or village of the people Rheged. By 1195, the town had been renamed as 'Rachedale' meaning the valley of the river Roch (Historic England, Central Rochdale, Greater Manchester: Historic Area Assessment, 2019)
- 4.2.2. The Parish of St Chad was once one of the largest in the country, covering over 41,000 acres and for centuries, Rochdale was its administrative, ecclesiastical, and economic centre. (Historic England 2019). Rochdale's position in the economy of the wider area, was closely linked to its location. During the 16th century, the woollen industry in Rochdale began to dominate the town and remained the main local industry into the 19th century (University of Salford, 2020).
- 4.2.3. Like many north-western towns in the post medieval period cotton mills began to be established along the River Roch, then later with the advent of steam power, throughout the whole town. However, the town enjoyed a 'golden age' during the Cotton Famine of the 1860s, when woollens became once more price-competitive with cotton goods; the population of the town increased by over 60% during this period (University of Salford, 2020).
- 4.2.4. The railway, in the form of the Manchester & Leeds Railway, arrived in Rochdale in 1839. The first station in Rochdale was located to the east of Oldham Road. Now demolished, the name Railway Street is the only reminder left in the present townscape. By 1856 the station was unable to accommodate the number of daily trains and plans were made to build a new station to the west, where the viaduct could be widened to accommodate additional numbers of platforms. The new station opened on the 28th of April 1889. Station Road itself was laid out at the same time. (Historic England, 2019).

Development of the area

- 4.2.5. The Proposed Development area remains relatively undeveloped prior to the opening of Rochdale station in its present position, which seems to be the catalyst for the development of this area of Rochdale. The main area of development are buildings and gardens related to St John's Covent, within which the original St Johns Chapel is situated. The last quarter of the 18th century saw new freedoms for Catholics in Britain, when two acts of parliament were passed in 1778 and 1791, allowing Catholics to hold and inherit land. The first

Baptismal record for St John's is 1822, although there are very few records regarding this we can assume the convent and church were built just prior to this (Duffy, 1980).

- 4.2.6. **The Ordnance Survey first edition, 1:1,056 map of 1851.** Figure B-3 shows that in the mid-19th century, the site boundary area was mostly undeveloped, with lots of open pasture. The Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, had been constructed by this date, as it is seen running north-east to south-west across the south of the map.
- 4.2.7. To the immediate north-west of the site outline, the original St John's Chapel can be seen situated along Ann Street and as was common in the 19th century, with a school attached to it (see Figure 4-3). It also included a graveyard, and St John's Convent and gardens (Bell Green). The area is characterised by a clearly marked and definite southern boundary, which is presumably associated with the proposed new layout of Station Square.
- 4.2.8. **The Ordnance Survey second edition, 1:2,500 map of 1891.** Figure B-4 still shows that although pockets of open land were still present within the site, development has taken place within the site outline. This included the construction of, Rochdale station, and the laying out of Station Road. The railway has been realigned and the tracks have shifted northwards towards the site outline with what appears to be a canopied frontage at the centre of the station and intruding through the southern end of the site boundary.
- 4.2.9. Pitt Street and the area around it, is seen to have expanded to the south along Richard Street. Dowling Street is also now partially in place, as is Lower Tweedale Street, with the area between them filled with domestic and commercial properties, such as a school and a hall. Although Pitt Street is still in place, the beginnings of Maclure Street can also be seen, being marked out. A new school has been constructed to the east of St John's church and there is a second school seen to the north, alongside some terraced housing.
- 4.2.10. Named after the Very Revd Edward Craig Maclure (1833–1906), Maclure Road was laid out in 1906, linking the corner of Drake Street and Richard Street with the railway station of 1887–9. Plans for the new road appear to have been first proposed in 1899. (Historic England, 2019).
- 4.2.11. **The Ordnance Survey 3rd edition, 1:2,500 map of 1910.** Figure B-5 shows the school to the south of Dowling Street has been expanded and the domestic or commercial properties surrounding it have been removed. Maclure Road is now in place, running where Pitt Street once stood, however it is much wider and runs all the way to the train station. St John's Convent is now listed as a presbytery, with an infant school to the north of it. Numbers 29 and 31 Maclure Road first appear, and a tram line has been established along Lower Tweedale Street and carried passengers through Station Square and north along High Level Road.
- 4.2.12. **By 1930, the Ordnance survey, 1:2,500 map.** Figure B-6 shows that the present St John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church is in place, adjacent to the east side of the presbytery. An additional school has been constructed between the infant school and St John the Baptist, no doubt to cope with a growing population, and the school to the east of St John's

Chapel is now marked as a club. A new addition to the town is the Employment Exchange in which can be seen on station road. Outside of the red-line boundary the area of Rochdale appeared industrial to the south of the train line, with a building marked as Railway Leather Works to the immediate west of Halfpenny Bridge.

- 4.2.13. The **Ordnance Survey, 1:2,500 map of 1958**. Figure B-7 shows the site in greater detail as buildings are labelled, albeit labelled after the rules of war-time mapping which only marked factory buildings as ‘works’ and no more, to prevent planned airborne targets. The site is by this date significantly urbanised and changes to the roads include removal of the tramway and the establishment of a round-about at fronting Rochdale Station at the intersection between Maclure Road, and Station Road (Figure 5-2). A shelter can also be seen to the immediate east of the roundabout and suggesting that buses were now the public transport of choice. The addition of the roundabout would have allowed vehicles including buses, to approach the station and drop passengers off and then return northwards without too much inconvenience,
- 4.2.14. Along the north-eastern extent the of the site area a t fire station has been constructed, the west-facing edge of which sites within the red-line boundary. This is surrounded by terraced housing which the HER data lists as having been associated with fire station staff.
- 4.2.15. Outside of the site outline the Employment Exchange is still present to the south-east of the boundary, and an addition Youth Employment Bureau has been constructed to the south-west of the site outline. To the north-west of the site, the buildings are seen marked as the Curtain Theatre, the Central Ward Liberal Club, several public houses, the Victory Cinema, garage, and buildings marked simply as works. As a whole, 1950’s Rochdale provides an interesting post-war social landscape.
- 4.2.16. Today, the present landscape of Rochdale Station Square is one of mixed development, where take-away food retailers, offices, retail and industrial units dominate.

4.3 ASSETS LOCATED WITHIN THE SITE

Maclure Road Conservation Area

- 4.3.1. The site is located within the Maclure Road Conservation Area, which was designated in 2006. There is no conservation appraisal for this area, however there is a description of the asset in the Central Rochdale Historic Area Assessment (Historic England 2019). It notes:
“The area focuses on the approach to the railway station but also includes a few earlier side streets. Richard Street and Henry Street were both laid out as part of the development of the Drake Street area between the 1790s and 1810s. The railway station opened in 1887-9 but was initially approached via Richard Street and Pitt Street. In 1906, Maclure Road was created as a more direct approach from Drake Street.”
- 4.3.2. The conservation area forms the approach to the railway station, but also includes some side streets, which were set out at an earlier date, including Richard Street and Henry

Street, which were both laid out in the 1790s and 1810s. The railway station built in 1887-9 was originally approached via Richard Street and Pitt Street, before Maclure Road created a more direct route in 1906 (Historic England, 2019).

- 4.3.3. The conservation area is dominated by interwar brick buildings, notably the Roman Catholic church of St John the Baptist and the former fire station, which was part of a larger development of the triangle between Maclure Road and Richard Street, with a group of houses for firemen and policemen. There are a few earlier 19th century domestic buildings which survive within the conservation area on Hampton Street and Henry Street, as well as 29-31 Maclure street, which a date to the early 20th century. To the front of the station, is a wide T-junction, which is now dominated by a metrolink station.

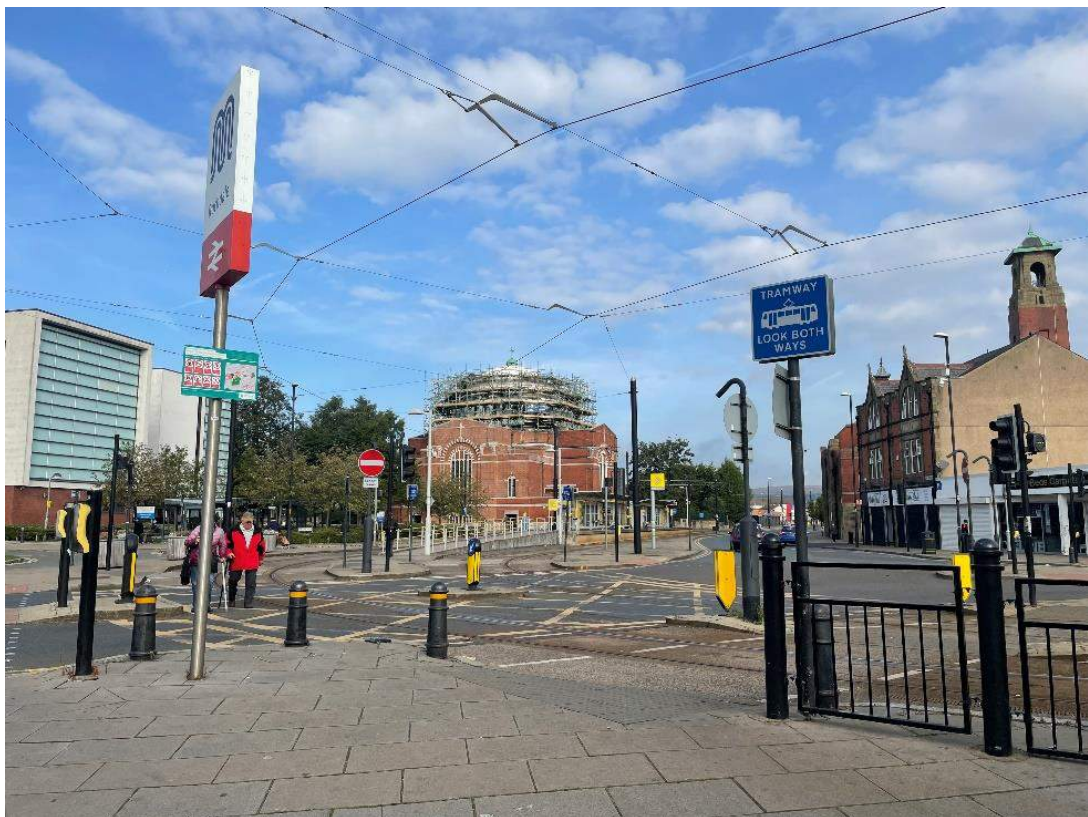


Figure 4-1 – T-Junction to the front of Rochdale Station, facing north



Figure 4-2 - Maclure Conservation Area towards Rochdale Railway Station, facing south.

Conservation area contribution summary

- 4.3.4. Based on a rapid visual survey of external elevations, the condition of the buildings in the area is generally good. However, St John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church, is currently on the Historic England Heritage at Risk Register, but at the time of the survey repair works appeared to be underway. The fire station has also undergone restoration in recent years to support its use as a museum and café.
- 4.3.5. The conservation area is defined by its group of interwar civic, religious and domestic buildings, which are important and positive contributors to the character and appearance of the asset. There are however elements of the conservation area that could be improved: including the condition of shop frontages at ground level, which are also currently not harmonious with the simplicity of the facades seen on the other heritage assets in the conservation area, such as the fire station and associated housing. There is also an excess of street furniture, signage and road markings which contributes to a cluttered feeling in the square, something which has been exacerbated by the construction of the Transport for Greater Manchester Metrolink station.
- 4.3.6. These individual assets within the conservation area, located beyond the site boundary, will be assessed in the following section of the report.

4.4 ASSETS LOCATED WITHIN THE CONSERVATION AREA

Roman Catholic Church of St John the Baptist Description (NHLE ref : 1376506)

- 4.4.1. Prior to 1824 Catholics in Rochdale were ministered to by the clergy of Manchester. The first entry into the baptismal register is August 1822. The priest at the time was W. Turner, who subsequently became the first Catholic Bishop of Salford. He presided over the parish when the first Catholic church was constructed on Ann Street, in 1830. Before this date it is thought the Catholics of the parish worshipped in part of a Mill building. The church was constructed of squared sandstone, with ashlar dressings. A small school, constructed of red brick, was attached to the northern end.



Figure 4-3 - St John the Baptist RC Church and school, Ann Street (no longer extant, ©Rochdale Local Studies and Archive)

- 4.4.2. The Roman Catholic Church of St John the Baptist, directly adjacent to the Proposed Development was designed by Oswald Hill (d. 1917), a promising architect with a clear interest in contemporary church-building trends who also designed the Grade II listed RC Church of St Joseph in Heywood. He was tragically killed in action in the First World War.
- 4.4.3. Designated in 1998 and amended in 2015, the asset is listed at Grade II* (NHLE ref: 1376506). The new church was constructed under the direction of Ernest Bower Norris of Manchester architects' Hill, Sandy and Norris, in 1925-27, by the building company R & T

Haworth of Rochdale. The church first appears on the 1:2,500 OS Lancashire map, published in 1930 (Figure B-6), where it is shown with its current footprint. The original plans show a campanile (bell tower); however, this was never built. (Rochdale Borough Council, 1933)

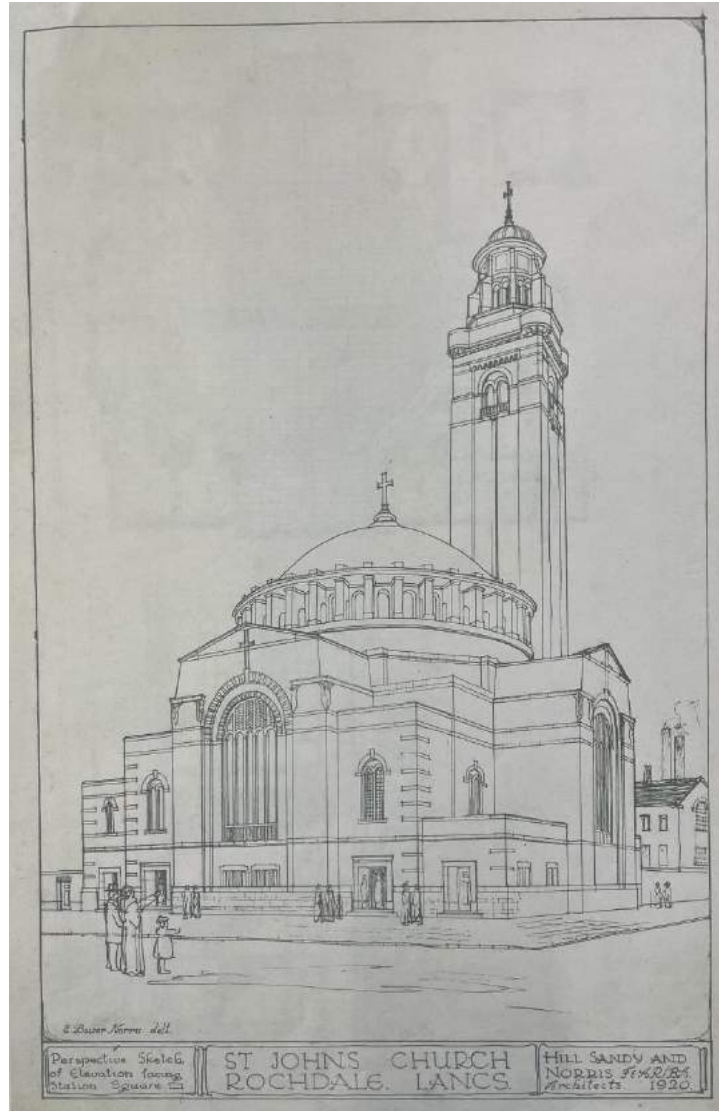


Figure 4-4 - Original Plans front elevation of St John the Baptist church, 1920. © Rochdale Local Studies and Archive 2022

The asset was built in the Early Christian Byzantine style using red brick with artificial stone dressings. It was built cruciform in plan, with a central dome formed of ferro-concrete, barrel vaulting, and a Narthax. This was an architectural element typical of early Christian and Byzantine churches consisting of the entrance or lobby area, located at the west end of the nave, opposite the church's main altar. Other features of the church building included vaulted transepts, a sanctuary, and a sacristy, which has since been partially converted into a flat.



Figure 4-5 - Grade II listed St John the Baptist RC Church, south elevation facing north.*

It was not possible to view the interior of the church on the site visit. However, the list entry notes that the sanctuary is completely clad in mosaic (Historic England, 2022) with a theme of Eternal Life. This was designed by Eric Newton who studied Byzantine mosaics in Venice, Ravenna and Rome. Newton had begun the mosaic in 1932 and took over a year to complete, costing £4,000 (Historic England, 2019).



Figure 4-6 - East elevation of St John the Baptist RC Church, from Maclure Road, facing west.

- 4.4.4. The Church is on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register, due to issues with the covering to the roof and dome, causing water ingress, the corrosion of concrete reinforcement and damage to the mosaic (Historic England, 2022). However, at the time of the site visit the dome of the church was covered in scaffolding, presumably in connection with these issues.

4.5 Fire Station, Maclure Road, Rochdale (WSP 001)

- 4.5.1. Noted in the Rochdale Borough Council non-designated heritage asset list is Maclure Road fire station, which was opened in May 1933. This was the largest fire station at the time within the Manchester region and was built by a local firm J.E.Rangeley of Deeplish. (Historic England, 2019). Although this building was turned down for listing in 2008, it is referred to by Historic England as a building of note within the Central Rochdale, Historic Area Assessment (Historic England, 2019a).
- 4.5.2. At ground floor level the walls were dressed in sandstone which extended above the double height fire-vehicle doors on the primary façade, and along the elevations. The second floor was of plain red brick with dressed sandstone window surrounds and wide sandstone parapet with moulded detail. Above the central ground floor door a sandstone fanlight recorded the date of construction as 1933 and was flanked by art-deco moulding. The heraldic crest of Rochdale was carved in the sandstone apron of the first floor window the ribbon of which read "CREDE SIGNO", the Rochdale motto meaning "believe in the sign"
- 4.5.3. To the rear of the station was an exercise yard with a 35-metre-high hose tower (*Figure 4-7*), which, at the time of its construction was one of the tallest in the country. Originally, its function was to hang canvas fire hoses at full-length to dry naturally after use.



Figure 4-7 - Fire station (rear), drill yard and hose tower (the dome of St John's can be seen in the background) © Rochdale Local Studies and Archive 2022

- 4.5.4. When it opened in 1933, the fire station was one of the most technologically advanced in the country. On the operation of a single switch, all the electric bells and turnout lights throughout the station and the firemen's houses would be actuated: the front doors would automatically open, fire appliance engines would be started, and a timer started to record the speed of the response. (Historic England 2019).
- 4.5.5. The station was operated by Rochdale Fire Brigade (1933 to 1941) the National Fire Service (1941 to 1948) Rochdale Fire Brigade again (1948 to 1974) and then the Greater Manchester (County) Fire (and Rescue) Service from 1974 until its closure in 2014.

The first floor above the appliance room was originally a ballroom used for various functions and dances in the town. Its original "sprung" floor is still *in situ* despite the ballroom having been converted to a suite of offices several years ago. The building appears to be in a good condition, based on a rapid visual survey of the external elevations. and is currently in use as the Greater Manchester Fire Service Museum which opened to the public in September 1983.



Figure 4-8 - fire station from road, facing south-east.



Figure 4-9 - Fire station and St John the Baptist RC Church, from Maclure Road, facing south

4.6 Nos. 15, 17, 19, 21, 23 and 25 Maclure Road, Rochdale (WSP 002)

- 4.6.1. As well as the fire station itself, the 32 houses for members of the brigade and their families, were constructed at the same time. These houses still survive, adjacent to the Proposed development area on Maclure Road, as well as to the rear of the fire station on Richard Street, 60m from the Proposed Development. The houses that face Maclure road are noted on Rochdale Borough Councils non-designated heritage asset list.

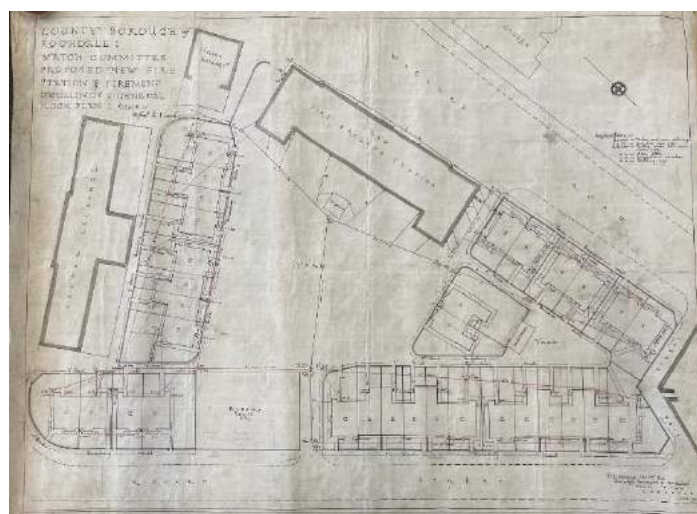


Figure 4-10 - Block plan including fire station and fire staff houses. © Rochdale Local Studies and Archive

- 4.6.2. Adjacent to the Proposed Development area, numbers 15,17, 19,21, 23, and 25 Maclure Road, are a group of 3 semi-detached firemen's houses dating to 1933 and designed by S.H. Morgan, the Rochdale Borough Engineer and Architect (Historic England, 2019). They are mentioned by Historic England as buildings of note within the Central Rochdale, Historic Area Assessment.
- 4.6.3. The houses complement the design of the fire station, being built of the same red brick, with dressed stone used in fenestration surrounds. The coping of the parapet was of dressed stone, with a slightly recessed slate roof behind, replicating the fire station. The houses appeared to be in a good condition, based on a rapid visual survey of external elevations, with all of them currently occupied.



Figure 4-11 - Fire station and fire staff housing 1930s. © Rochdale Local Studies and Archive

4.1 29-31 Maclure Road (WSP 003)

- 4.1.1. Also noted on Rochdale Borough Councils non-designated heritage asset list are a pair of gabled Edwardian buildings, built between 1906 and 1910. Although the assets are not designated, they are referred to Historic England as buildings of note within the Central Rochdale, Historic Area Assessment. They are two of the earliest surviving buildings on Maclure Street.
- 4.1.2. They are constructed of red brick, with stone dressings, and designed in a complementary style to the fire station and associated housing on Maclure Road. It is possible that they influenced the design of the fire station (WSP 001). Based on a rapid visual survey of the external elevations, the buildings appear to be in a good condition and are currently in use as a retail food outlet.



Figure 4-12 - 29-31 Maclure Road, showing adjacent fire station, taken from Station Road, facing north east

4.2 ASSETS OUTSIDE THE CONSERVATION AREA

Rochdale Railway Station and Railway Viaduct

- 4.2.1. Station Road was laid out in conjunction with the new railway station in 1887/1889. It replaced an earlier station from 1837–41, which was further east, and demolished in 1975. The new station opened in April 1889. The station comprised two long island platforms, with two bays. The building had a low frontage, a central clock tower and several buildings on its platforms. This Victorian station was demolished in the 1970s and in 1979, the current station was constructed. The only remnants of the Victorian Station are ironwork on the abandoned island platform and tiled tunnel (Historic England, 2019).



Figure 4-13 - Rochdale Railway Station, viewed from Maclure Road, facing South

- 4.2.2. The redbrick viaduct rises behind the current train station building, with steps up from ground level within the station to access the platforms on the viaduct. The viaduct is seen from ground level as a solid brick wall, which runs the length of Station Road. The lower part of the wall was constructed with blue engineering brick, whilst the remainder was of red brick wall and incorporated redbrick buttresses at equal intervals along its length



Figure 4-14 - Rochdale Station viaduct, from the front of Rochdale Railway Station, facing west. .

Small industrial building, Station Road (WSP 004)

- 4.2.3. A small early 20th century industrial building facing on to Station Road, is located opposite the station viaduct to the west of Rochdale Railway Station. It is first seen on the 1910 Ordnance Survey map, and on later maps, and is shown within a complex simply marked works. It was positioned next to the entrance into the 'works', however, its original purpose of its industrial character is unclear at this high level of assessment.



Figure 4-15 - Small early 20th century industrial building, from Station Road, facing north.

- 4.2.4. The industrial building is constructed in red brick with a Staffordshire blue engineering brick plinth. The primary façade faced south, and the building comprised a pitched roof. A pedestrian timber door was noted on the west end of the façade, whilst a larger double width timber goods entrance encompassed the majority of the south-facing elevation. . Three boarded up windows on the second storey were noted to have dressed stone lintel and sill, which ran across the extent of the elevation. A stone rail was also present across the façade at first floor height and Based on a rapid visual survey of the external structure, the roof appeared to be in a poor condition.

5 Statement of significance

5.1 Maclure Road Conservation Area

- 5.1.1. Maclure Conservation Area, is an asset of medium significance, which it gains from its collection of notable red brick inter war buildings, dominated by the grade II* listed St John the Baptist RC church, the fire station and associated housing. This collection of buildings form a cohesive group within the Conservation area and define its character. They were noted for their collective special character, when the area was designated as a conservation area, in 2006. The conservation area forms a gateway to Rochdale when approached by train.

Contribution of setting

- 5.1.2. The setting of the conservation area is formed by its relationship to the individual designated and non-designated assets within it and the wider townscape and railway. It has become cluttered with street furniture and the metrolink station, which affect the intervisibility between St John the Baptist Church and the fire station, which was constructed with the views between the two assets in mind. The different scale and materials of the modern NHS buildings, planting, bus shelters to the west of the conservation area, from the heritage assets within it, which form such an important part of the conservation areas character.
- 5.1.3. Taken overall, setting makes a medium contribution to the asset's significance.

Roman Catholic Church of St John the Baptist (NHLE 1376506)

- 5.1.4. As a Grade II* listed building it is a heritage asset of high significance, which it gains from its historic and architectural interest. Its artistic value comes from its apsed sanctuary which is completely covered mosaic, designed by Eric Newton, which *"the apsed encompass a mosaic scheme 'of powerful emotional intensity'"* (Historic England, 2022).
- 5.1.5. Its architectural value comes from design as an *"urban Catholic church designed in a Byzantine style with a large dome"*
- 5.1.6. It is constructed in red brick with stone dressings which complement the other heritage assets within the conservation area. Its architectural importance and its prominent position within a cohesive group of civic buildings is listed as a reason for the designation of Maclure Road conservation area.

Contribution of setting

The Roman Catholic Church of St John the Baptist is defined and experienced by its location in Station Square opposite Rochdale Railway Station, as well as by its relationship to the Maclure Road Conservation Area. As the site was bounded by three roads, the architects decided it needed more than usual dimensions and character (Duffy, 1980). The

asset still dominates the area in the present day and is very prominent in views from the Metrolink and train, and the elevated platforms of the train station afford excellent views of the church. Which makes it a very visible asset on arrival into the town by public transport.



Figure 5-1 - View of the Church of St John the Baptist RC Church from the platforms at Rochdale Railway Station.



Figure 5-2 - Roundabout to the front of St John the Baptist's Church in the mid-20th Century, roundabout and column removed in the 2010s as part of the tram works © Rochdale Local Studies and Archive, 2022

- 5.1.7. The area to the front of the church along Maclure Road was once more open with a large roundabout in Station Square. In 2010 a Metrolink tram stop was added to the square, which is visually intrusive in the church's immediate setting. The different scale and materials of the modern NHS buildings, planting, bus shelters and street furniture to the west of the square, detract from the asset's visual dominance at street level and give a cluttered feel to the square.
- 5.1.8. Taken overall, setting makes a medium contribution to the asset's significance.



Figure 5-3 - St John the Baptist Church, with the Metrolink stop and NHS buildings within Station Square, from in front of the railway station facing north. Rochdale fire station.

- 5.1.9. As a non-designated heritage asset, Rochdale fire station is an asset of **low significance**. It gains its significance from its historical value. as a fire station and from its position as one of the most technically advance fire stations of its day. It was also designed to complement the design of St John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church opposite, the design and location of which was a factor in the design and architecture of the fire station.
- 5.1.10. It also has group value as part of a larger development located in the triangle between Maclure Road and Richard Street, with a group of houses for firemen and policemen. Contribution of setting.
- 5.1.11. The tower was specially designed and built at above-average height so as to complement the architectural style of the nearby St Johns the Baptist Church. Although the church's planned campanile was never constructed, the fire station's hose tower was built with views between the two assets in mind. The location of the fire station in opposite the church and the historic and visual relationship between these two assets adds greatly to the setting of the fire station, especially as its architecture was designed to complement and enhance the

setting of the church and therefore, they are intrinsically linked. The construction of the Metrolink station between the assets has reduced their intervisibility at ground level. However, the relationship between the two buildings can still be appreciated, especially at a distance. The elevated view from the station platforms, emphasises this relationship.

5.1.12. Taken overall, setting makes a medium contribution to the asset's significance.

5.2 15–25 Maclure Road, Rochdale

5.2.1. Numbers 15-25 Maclure Road are non-designated heritage assets of low significance, gained from their historical and architectural value. Their historical value comes from their association with the fire station, as they were built to house the staff from the station. Their design mirrors and enhances that of the fire station and should be viewed as an architectural group.



Figure 5-4 - Fire station houses, showing joined archways between the houses and the fire station, viewed from Maclure Road, facing north east.

Contribution of setting

5.2.2. The assets are within Maclure Conservation Area and contribute greatly towards the character of the conservation area. They were constructed at the same time as the fire station and the visual and historic relationship between these assets and the fire station is a key part of their setting. They are meant to be appreciated together, with the similarity in their architecture emphasising the relationship between them. The houses nearest to the fire station numbers 23 and 25 are physically joined to it by a brick archway, which is then repeated between each set of houses along the road, making a continuous chain between the assets highlighting their similarities and historical connection (*Figure 5-4*).

5.2.3. Taken overall setting makes a medium contribution to the asset's significance.

5.3 Rochdale Railway Station and Viaduct)

- 5.3.1. Rochdale Railway Station and viaduct are non-designated heritage assets of low significance, gained from their historical value. Its historical value comes from the asset's association with the railway, which along with other forms of transportation, helped to transform Rochdale into a thriving industrial town.

Contribution to setting

- 5.3.2. Station road was constructed to service the railway station, along the route of the viaduct. Maclure Road Conservation Area, is focused on the approach to the railway station. The conservation area and the buildings within it provide the setting to the station. St John the Baptist RC Catholic church and the firestation in particular, draw the focus, when leaving the station.
- 5.3.3. However, Rochdale Railway station and viaduct are not very dominant features within the square at ground level. They are lost behind a clutter of street furniture and dominated by buildings of a far greater scale. As one of the gateways into Rochdale, its position with the town is important. 'Rochdale Railway Station is one of the key gateways to the town centre, in recent years it has become distant and disconnected from the town centre.' (Historic England, 2017).

5.4 Taken overall, setting makes a low contribution to the assets' significance. Small industrial building, Station Road

- 5.4.1. This non-designated industrial building is of low significance. It gains its significance from its historical value as the only surviving industrial building on Station Road.

Contribution to setting

- 5.4.2. The setting of this small industrial building is Station Road and the Station Viaduct opposite. The other buildings associated with this building, classed as 'works' on Ordnance survey maps, from 1910 onwards have been cleared and replaced by modern corrugated iron industrial buildings and car parking areas. The style of architecture and materials used to create a cohesive, feel with other buildings in the area, including those within nearby Maclure Road Conservation area, such as 29-31 Maclure Road, which were probably constructed at a similar time.
- 5.4.3. Taken overall, setting makes a low contribution to the asset's significance.

5.5 29-31 Maclure Road WSP 003)

- 5.5.1. Numbers 29-31 Maclure Road are non-designated heritage assets of low significance, gained from their historical and architectural value. Their historical value comes from being some of the oldest surviving buildings on Maclure Road, and their architectural value comes from their use of materials, a combination of red brick with stone dressings, which are a dominant feature of the buildings on Maclure Road. The assets are the oldest surviving

buildings on the road, and it is likely that their design style inspired neighbouring buildings in the area.

Contribution of setting

- 5.5.2. The assets are within the Maclure Road Conservation area, which forms its setting. The assets are dominated by their location on Maclure Road and by Station Square. On the 1910 Ordnance Survey map numbers 29-31 Maclure Road they are the only buildings constructed in the newly laid out Station Square and are shown with a definite boundary of a backyard area at the back, suggesting they were constructed on a small plot, with a plan for further buildings close by. Today the area is now built up, although, the architecture of the adjacent buildings also within Maclure Conservation area are of a similar complementary style and scale. The buildings are still in use as shops and their heritage value can still be appreciated.
- 5.5.3. Taken overall, setting makes a medium contribution to the asset's significance.

6 Impact assessment

6.1 Proposals

6.1.1. The proposed works comprise:

- The surrounding streets would become pedestrian prioritised routes with designed traffic calming measures. Low kerbs, narrowed carriageways, widened footways and clear movement routes are proposed. High quality block materials, tree planting and integrated Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs) in the form of rain gardens are proposed to create decluttered green corridors connecting the Milkstone community to the space. Vehicle parking, loading, access and circulation is incorporated into the design. Taxi ranking would be relocated to Station Road (east) as would the bus stop. Thresholds between the streets/Square would create a transition point to mark the changing character and emphasise arrival within the square.
- A controlled access and bus route incorporated within the square along Maclure Road. Materials are small scale block units and coloured/textured poured materials that provide a pedestrian character to the square.
- Tree Planting/Greening to separate areas within the square, supporting both passive and formal activity. Bespoke furniture is proposed to clearly define the space, in order to protect and control movement flow.
- It is proposed that the viaduct walls would provide a canvas for local street art and green wall panels.
- Paving materials would be used to replace the current surface treatments, providing a cohesion across the square, integrating the Metrolink and reflecting the local heritage.
- A Green Space is proposed, to be located in the existing landscaped area outside Nye Bevan House.

6.2 Impact assessment

6.2.1. The proposed works, involve alterations which are of a similar scale to what is currently in place, they will involve minor works at ground level.

Though there will be minor alterations within the Maclure Road Conservation Area, the increased provision of pedestrian access and the de-cluttering of the square, which would potentially improve its overall character and appearance. They should help open up the views at ground level from the station towards St John the Baptist Church and the fire station.

6.2.2. The opening up of the area to the front of the St John the Baptist Church and the fire station could have a beneficial impact to the conservation area and to the setting of the Grade II* listed St John the Baptist Church. It would bring the church, closer to what was originally intended for the square, as can be seen in archive photographs of the area, where the square contained a roundabout, with a monument of a simple design in the centre, without

the clutter of street furniture now in place. However, the use of sympathetic materials in keeping with the assets in the area should be considered to minimise any overall visual impact.

- 6.2.3. The proposed scheme would not result in harm to the Maclure Road Conservation Area, or any of the assets within in it, including the Grade II* listed St John the Baptist RC Church, or those non -designated assets noted on the local planning authority website the fire station, 15/17, 19/21, 23/25 Maclure Road and 29 -31 Maclure Road.
- 6.2.4. There will also be no harm the small industrial building on Station Road.

7 Conclusion and recommendations

- 7.1.1. This Heritage Statement has been undertaken following the principles set out in the NPPF and in line with relevant local and national guidance and best practice. This Heritage Statement has assessed the impacts of the proposals on the Maclure Road Conservation Area, the Grade II* listed St John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church and the non-designated station, 15-25 Maclure Road, 29 -31 Maclure Road or the small industrial building on Station Road.
- 7.1.2. The proposed works have been developed in line with national and local policies on the historic environment. They have been developed to minimise any potential harmful effects to the significance of the assets through use of appropriate methodologies and specifications that meet the requirements of good conservation practice, whilst achieving the required works to manage their long-term future.
- 7.1.3. The proposed scheme is designed to enhance this part of the conservation area and the designated and non-designated heritage assets located along the northern and eastern enclosure of the square which contribute to a positive experience of the conservation area. The de-cluttering of the site would potentially help to re-reveal the facades/features of the heritage assets, as a more decluttered design would put the emphasis of the area back to the buildings, rather than the street furniture. The removal of vehicular traffic would also potentially improve appreciation and understanding of the designated and non-designated heritage assets by residents and visitors.
- 7.1.4. The use of sympathetic and quality surfacing materials, within the conservation area should be considered.
- 7.1.5. The proposed scheme would not result in harm to the Maclure Road Conservation Area.
- 7.1.6. It would not result in harm to the Grade II* listed St John the Baptist RC Church, and to the non-designated fire station, 15-25 Maclure Road, 29 -31 Maclure Road or the small industrial building on Station Road.
- 7.1.7. The proposed scheme will not cause harm to the setting of Grade II listed St John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church, Maclure Road Conservation Area and the non-designated assets of the fire station and associated housing. However, due to the proposed scheme being within a conservation area any works will need to be done with consultation with the Local Conservation Officer.
- 7.1.8. Also, any works which involve any ground disturbance within the Square, due to the close proximity to a known graveyard, should be done in consultation with the Local Planning Archaeologist.

Appendix A

References

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8 Bibliography

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Other sources

Historic England designation data

Rochdale Local Studies Centre;

Photo - St John the Baptist RC Church and school, Ann Street.

Original Plans front elevation of St John the Baptist church, 1920

Photo -Fire station, drill yard and hose tower.

Block plan including fire station and fire staff houses.

Photo- Fire station and fire staff housing 1930s.

Photo- Roundabout to the front of St John the Baptist's Church in the mid-20th Century,

CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES

Ordnance Survey mapping from the 1st edition to the present day.

Appendix B

Figures

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Figure B-1 - Site Location Plan

Figure B-2 - Designated and built heritage assets

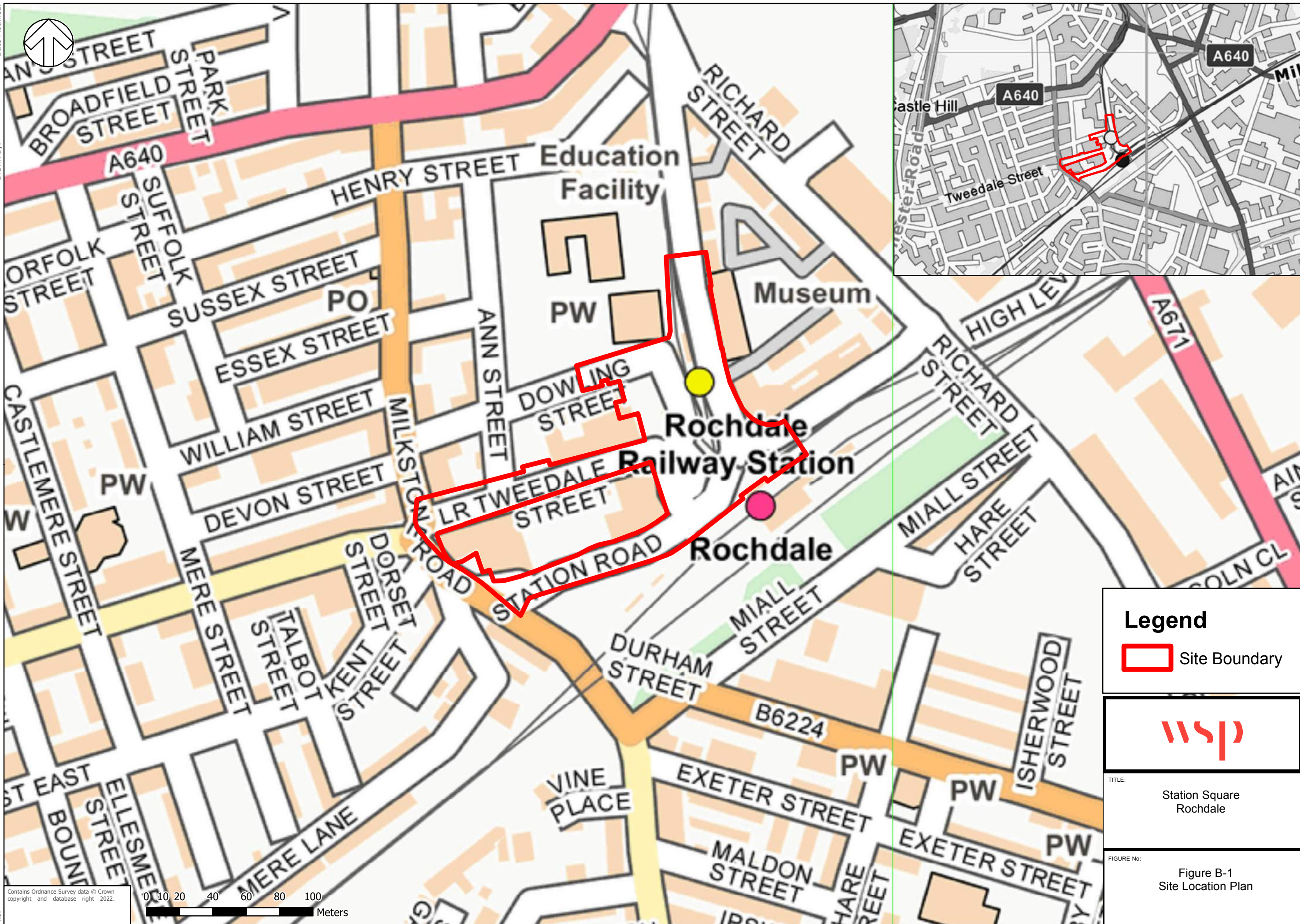
Figure B-3 - 1851 OS extraction map

Figure B-4 - 1891 OS map extract

Figure B-5 - 1910 OS extract map

Figure B-6 - 1930 OS extract map

Figure B-7 - 1958 OS extract map



Legend



Site Boundary

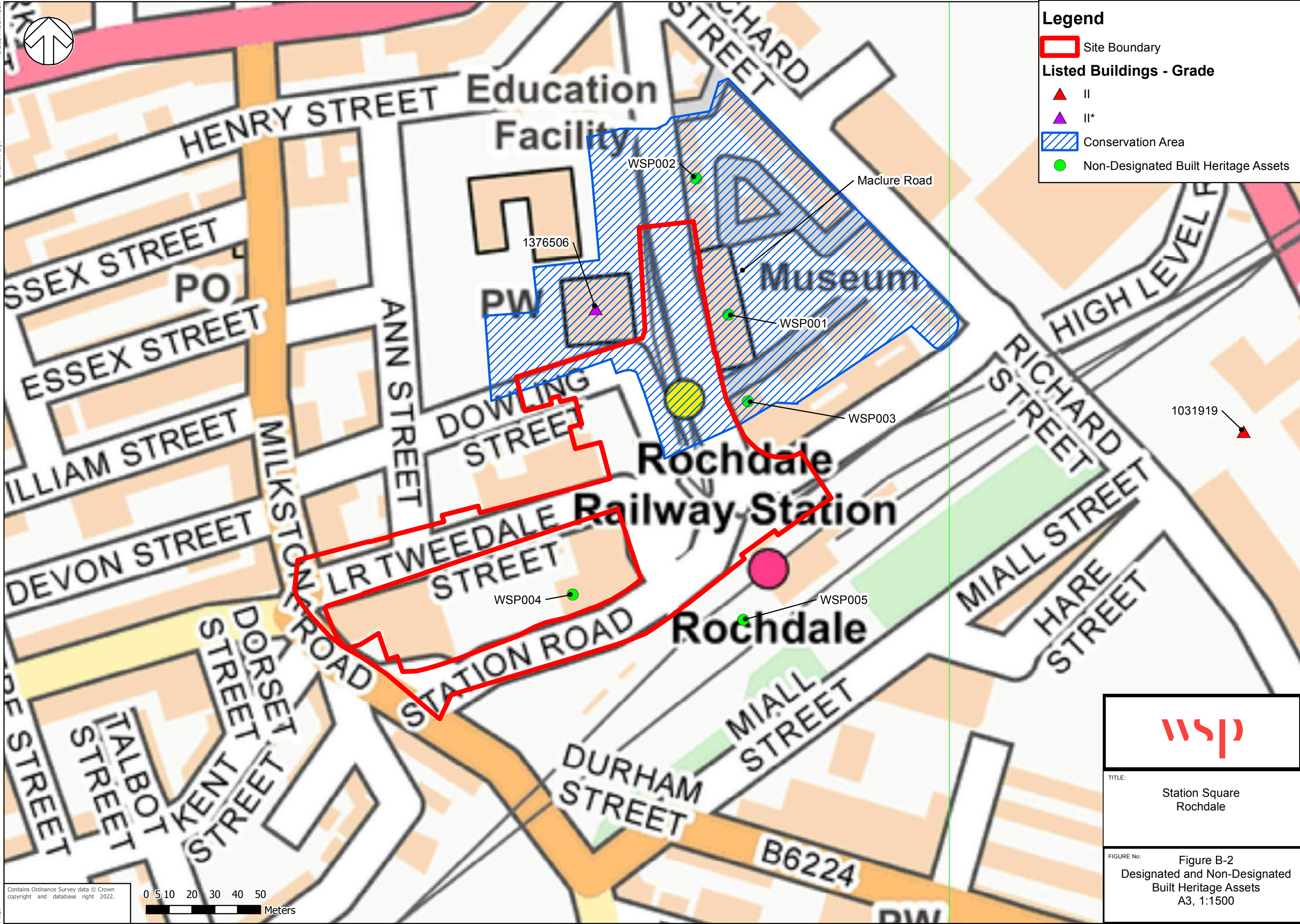


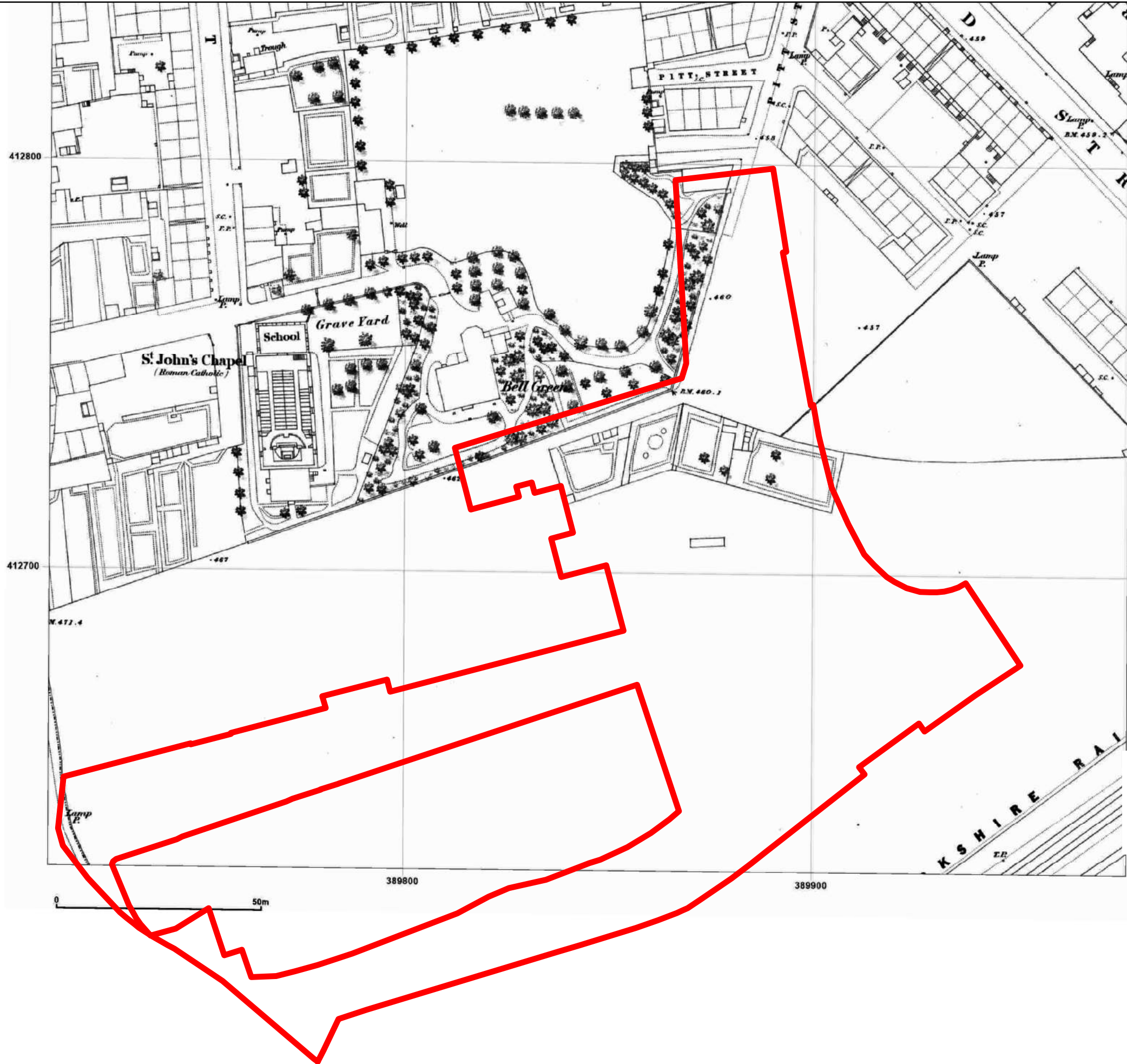
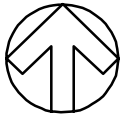
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Station Square
Rochdale

FIGURE No:

Figure B-1
Site Location Plan





Legend

 Site Boundary



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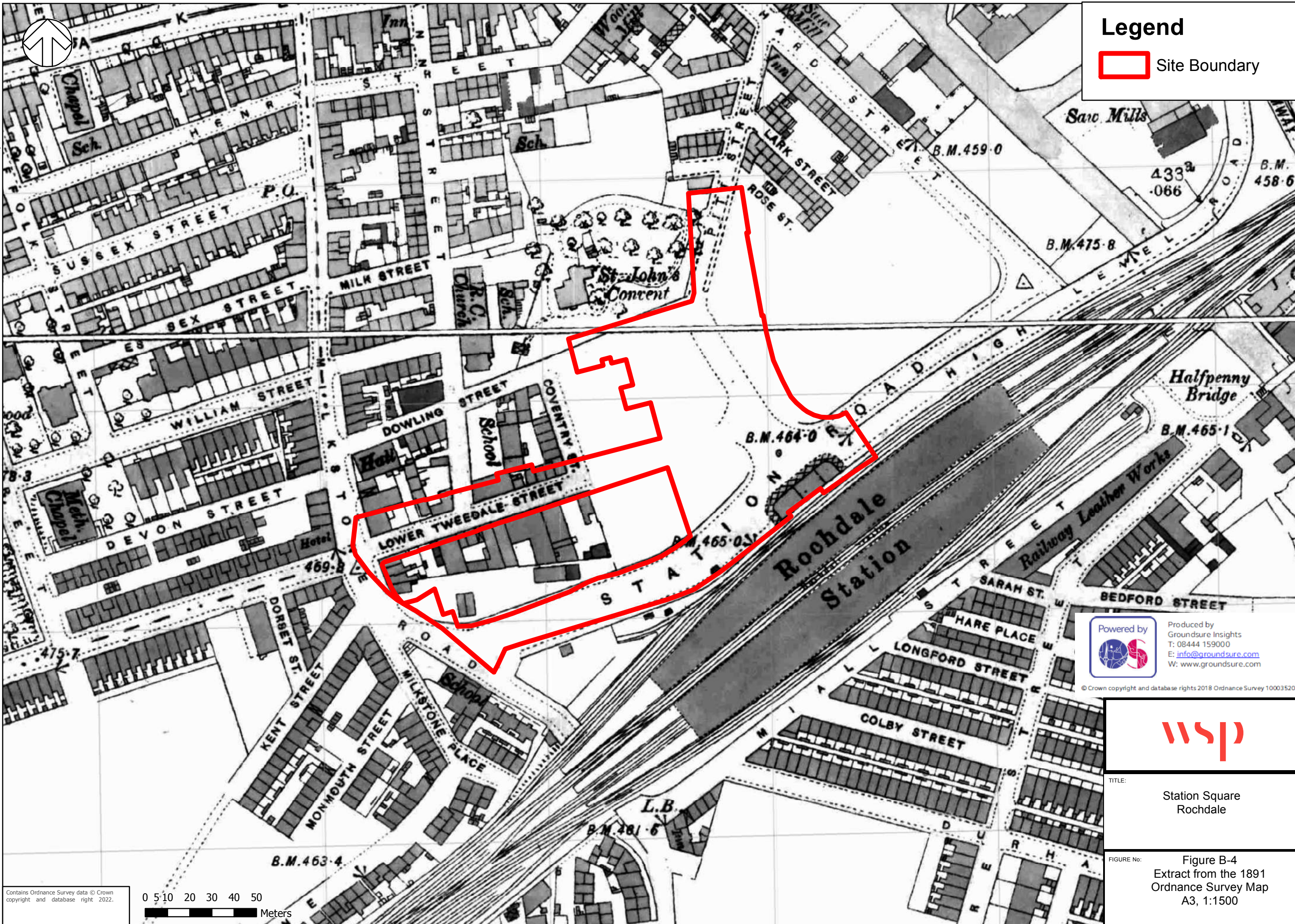
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Station Square
Rochdale

FIGURE No:
Figure B-3
Extract from the 1851
Ordnance Survey map
A3, 1:1000



Legend

 Site Boundary



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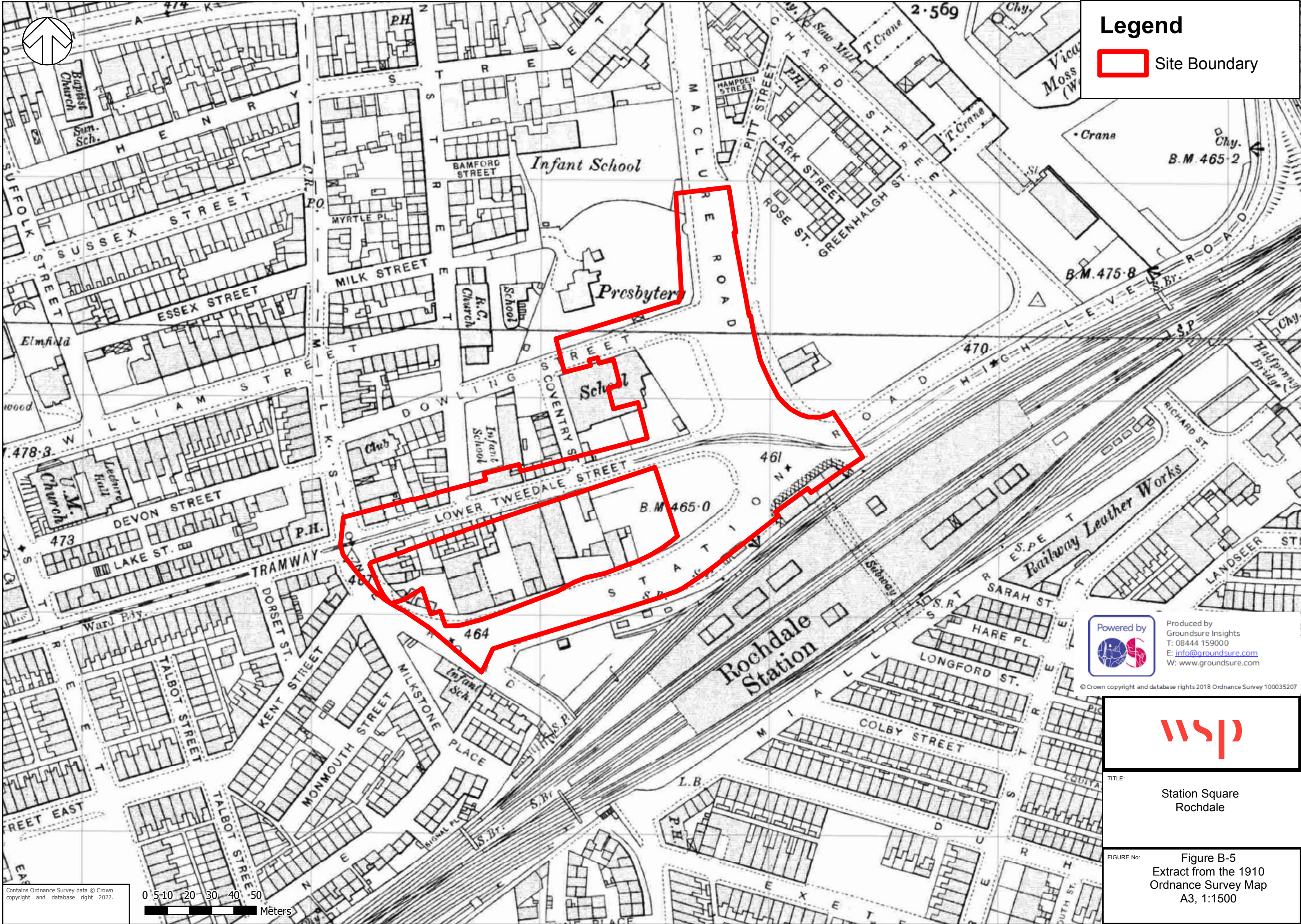
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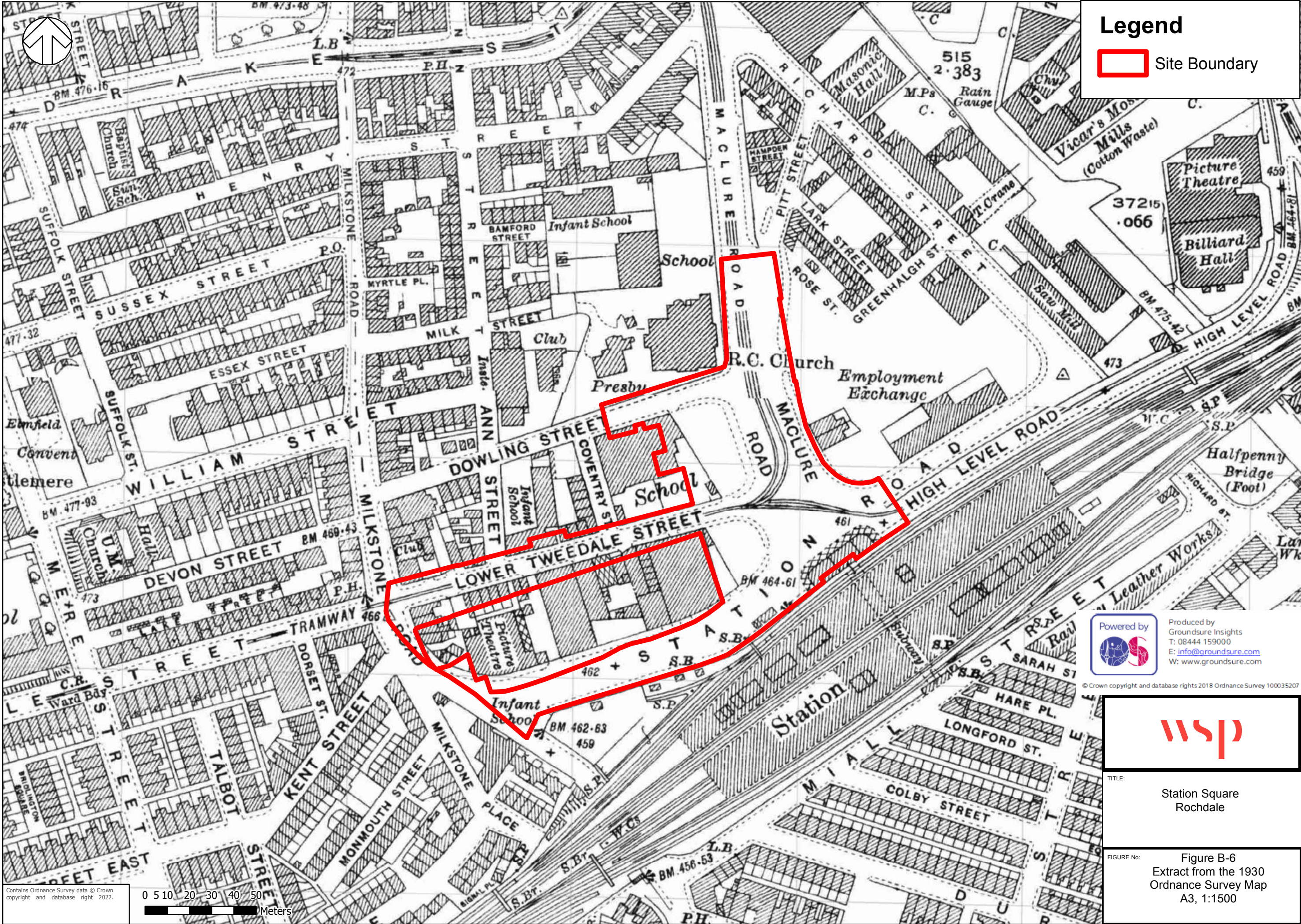
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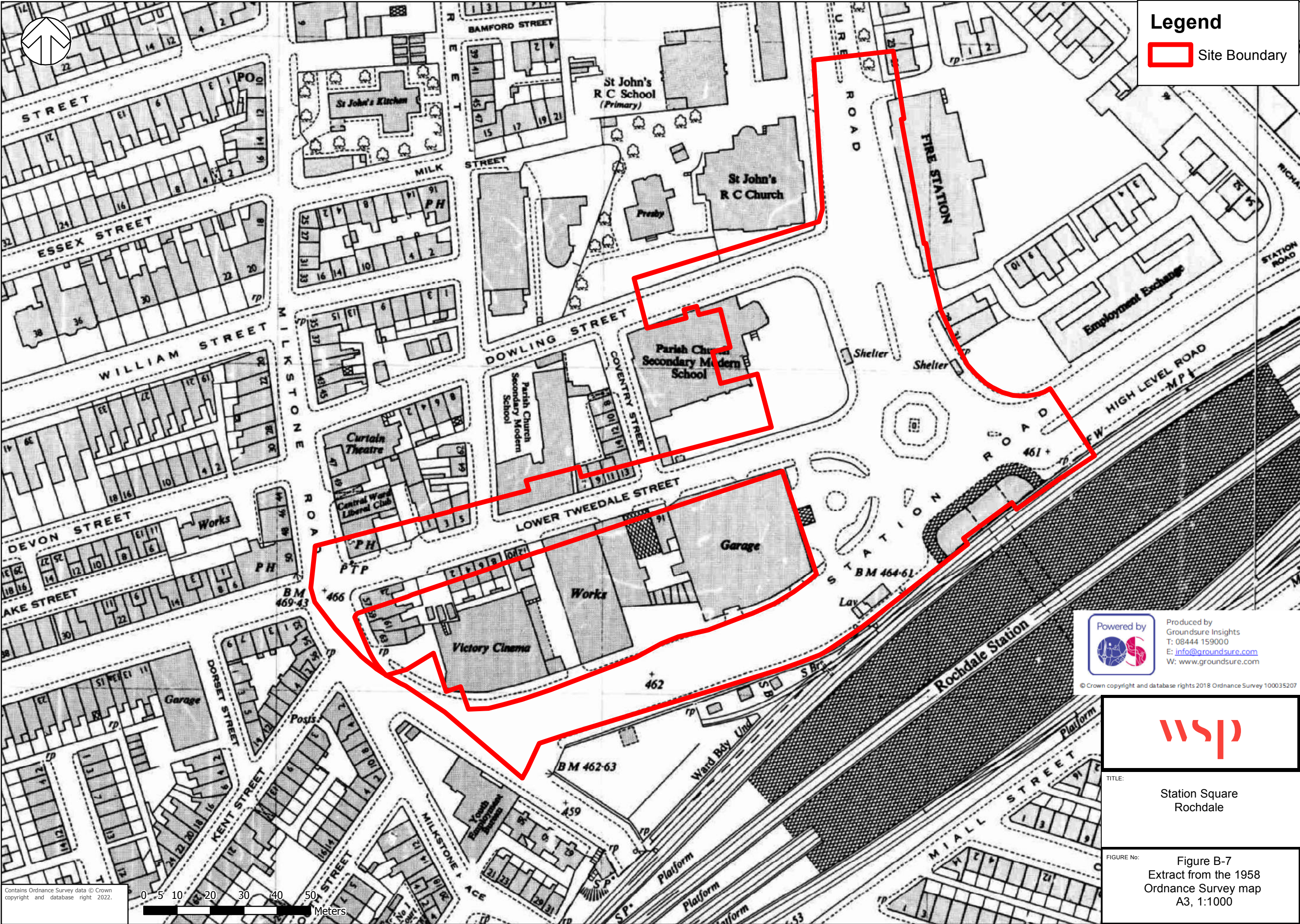
Station Square
Rochdale

FIGURE No:

Figure B-4
Extract from the 1891
Ordnance Survey Map
A3, 1:1500









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