

**Milnrow Memorial Park,
Rochdale
Heritage Statement**

Client: LABOSPORT GROUP

AB Heritage Project No: 63593

Date: 13/12/2024

Milnrow Memorial Park, Rochdale

Heritage Statement

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AB Heritage Limited has been commissioned by Labosport Group to produce a Heritage Statement covering proposed works at Milnrow Memorial Park, Rochdale, OL16 4JF. It was requested a part of a forthcoming planning application.

The proposed scheme is for the refurbishment and improvement of an existing late 20th century sports and public recreation area. The 1,225sqm site is currently used as a hard-standing asphalt multi-use sports pitch, enclosed by a tall metal fence on all sides.

The site sits within the Memorial Park (not a Registered Park and Garden) and is c.50m south of the Grade II Listed Milnrow War Memorial (NHLE:1162572). The War Memorial was originally erected on Dale Street in the 1920s, approximately 1km to the northwest of its current location. However, due to the need to widen the road on Dale Street and given the opportunity to rededicate the memorial to the dead of the First and Second World Wars, the memorial was moved to the former grounds of Cliffe House to the south of the town in 1952. The War Memorial consists of a sandstone base with a bronze statue depicting a British Soldier and several panels commemorating the names of 252 men from Milnrow who died during the World Wars. The memorial utilised the former grounds of Cliffe House, centring the statue in the footprint of the former house on a raised area above much of the park.

Development in the second half of the 20th century has subsequently destroyed or altered parts of the original park. A portion of the north-western section was lost for the construction of the M62 motorway, which has also effectively separated the park and the monument from the town. Later 20th century development for public recreation to the south of the monument, including the site of proposed development, has also altered the character of the park and the setting of the War Memorial from its original mid-20th century designed landscape.

This report has assessed Milnrow War Memorial to be a heritage asset of High Significance due to it's Historic, Setting and Architectural / Artistic interests.

The proposed development is confined within the existing enclosure and being 50m south of the Grade II Listed War Memorial, the proposal will not incur any direct impact to the significance of the monument. The proposal is seeking merely to upgrade the existing surface, enclosure and lighting around the MUGA. This will require superficial changes that will not exceed the extent of the baseline infrastructure and character of the proposal site. In terms of impacts, the proposed changes could very well improve the appearance of the proposal site, and this would in turn very slightly enhance the setting of the War Memorial by encouraging more visitors to the park and thus to the monument.

There are no recommendations for further work. All future recommendations for further works are the preserve of the Local Planning Authority.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 AB Heritage Limited has been commissioned by Labosport Group to produce a Heritage Statement covering proposed works at Milnrow Memorial Park near Rochdale, OL16 4JF. It was requested as part of plans for the refurbishment of the existing late 20th century hardstanding asphalt sports pitches enclosed by metal mesh wire fencing in the southern section of the park.
- 1.1.2 This report includes a description of the baseline conditions, from an examination of readily available sources on the history of the site, identifying any known and potential heritage assets subject to potential impact.

1.2 Site Location & Description

- 1.2.1 Located at Milnrow Memorial Park near Rochdale, OL16 4JF, the existing site is a 1,225sqm macadam hard-surface area, enclosed with a fence to create a multi-purpose sports area, with combination football goals and basketball hoop frames at the northern and southern ends of the pitch (located at National Grid Reference: SD 93309 11896). The site is part of a wider cluster of recreation features including a bowling green, play area, car park and public toilets in the south-eastern section of Milnrow Memorial Park. Further afield but still within the Memorial Park, is a Premier Inn Hotel and a Public House alongside Newhey Road (Plate 1).
- 1.2.2 Approximately 50m to the north of the site is the Grade II Listed Milnrow War Memorial (NHLE: 1162572), a statue which stands on elevated ground overlooking the site and much of the park. The site is centred on the National Grid Reference (NGR: SD 93309 11896). The park sits at the conjunction of the towns of Milnrow and Newhey and is separated from Milnrow by the M62 motorway embankment which runs approximately 100m to the north-west of the site (Plate 1).



Plate 1. Aerial photograph of the proposed development site (Google Earth 2024)

1.3 Overview of Proposed Development

- 1.3.1 The proposed development scheme is for the refurbishment of the sports pitch. This involves the removal of the existing macadam surface and the installation of a new asphalt base followed by a synthetic turf top layer, as well new smaller footprint fencing and an LED floodlight system.

1.4 Planning Background & Consultation

- 1.4.1 The Rochdale Borough Council Planning website records several previous planning applications in the area, all of which relate to either the Premier Inn or John Milne Restaurant on the opposing side of Newhey Road to the park.
- Submission of details to comply with condition 6 of planning permission, Premier Inn Newhey Milnrow OL16 4JF. 22/09/15. REF: 15/01105/DOC. Decision: Request completed.
 - Application to remove condition 6 of planning permission in relation to boundary treatment works on land adjacent to the Metrolink, Premier Inn Hotel Newhey Road Milnrow Rochdale OL16 4JF. 06/07/15. REF: 15/00779/VRCN. Decision: Refused.
 - Two storey extension to existing hotel to Elizabethan Way elevation together with associated works to the existing car park, John Milne Travel Inn Newhey Road Milnrow Rochdale OL16 4JF. 22/04/15. REF: 15/00337/FUL. Decision: Grant subject to conditions.
 - Erection Of New Entrance Lobby to Public House and Paving to Children's Play Area Installation of Two Groundsleeves for Umbrellas | The John Milne Travel Inn, Newhey Road, Rochdale, OL16 4JF. 12/04/07. REF: 07/D49063. Decision: Grant.
 - Externally Illuminated Pole Mounted and Fascia Signs | The John Milne Travel Inn, Newhey Road, Rochdale, OL16 4JF. 11/01/07. REF: 07/A5568. Decision: Part Granted and Part Refused.
 - Erection Of Two Storey, 20 Bedroom Extension to Hotel Providing a Net Additional 18 Bedrooms in Total and Alterations to Car Park | The John Milne, Newhey Road, Rochdale, OL16 4JF. 29/06/06. REF: 06/D47605. Decision: Grant subject to conditions.
 - Externally Illuminated Free Standing Sign | The John Milne, Newhey Road, Rochdale, OL16 4JF. 20/04/06. REF: 06/A5498. Decision: Refused.
 - Various Externally and Internally Illuminated Wall Mounted Signs And 2 Externally Illuminated Free Standing Signs | John Milne, Newhey Road, Milnrow, Rochdale, Lancashire, OL16 4JF. 18/12/02. REF: 02/A5232. Decision: Granted subject to condition.
 - Illuminated Freestanding Panel Sign Together with Replacement of Existing Signage Within Site | Travel Inn, Newhey Road, Milnrow, Lancs, OL16 4JF. 05/07/99. REF: 99/A4913. Decision: Granted subject to condition.

- 1.4.2 In email correspondence of 6th of December 2024 between Daniel Dodds (Associate Director, AB Heritage) and Ian Miller (Heritage Management Director at the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advice Service), AB Heritage agreed to scope out the need for any in-depth archaeological assessment or the need for a HER data request due the publicly available data and historic mapping. Ian Miller identified several heritage assets including; Butterworth Hall Conservation Area, the Grade II Listed Church of St. Thomas New Hey, and the Grade II Listed Bradley's Farmhouse that could potentially be affected by the proposed development.

1.5 Project Qualifiers

- 1.5.1 This report has been prepared under instruction and solely for the use of Labosport Group, and any associated parties they elect to share this information with.
- 1.5.2 Measurements and distances in this report are approximations only and should not be used for detailed design purposes.
- 1.5.3 All work undertaken is based upon the professional knowledge of AB Heritage and relevant standards, technology and legislation at the time of writing. Changes in these areas may occur in the future, causing changes to the conclusions, recommendations or advice given. AB Heritage is not responsible for advising any parties on the implications of such changes.
- 1.5.4 This report utilises information obtained from third party sources. AB Heritage takes no responsibility for the accuracy of such information.
- 1.5.5 Where recommendations are provided these need to be approved by the Local Planning Authority and do not themselves comprise mitigation of impacts.

2. AIMS & METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims of Report

- 2.1.1 Early assessment of the implications of proposed development on the heritage resource is key to informing reasonable planning decisions. Indeed, NPPF 200 requires local planning authorities to request descriptions on the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, including any contribution made by their setting. This states that:

‘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’.

- 2.1.2 This assessment therefore has the following objectives:

- To provide sufficient evidence on the heritage of the site and any potential impacts on such a resource, to inform the Local Planning Authority’s decision-making process in relation to the current planning application; and
- To develop appropriate recommendations / mitigation responses, where necessary, to assist the work of the planning team.

2.2 Methodology

Focus of Study

- 2.2.1 Due to the proposal scheme being of a relatively limited scope and footprint, and the very intrusive effect of the M62 motorway, the study area is the Milnrow War Memorial Park and its immediate surroundings.

Standards & Guidance Used

- 2.2.2 The assessment has been carried out in line with the following guidance:

- *Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment* (CIfA, 2020).
- *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings and Structures* (CIfA, 2020).
- *Conservation Principles, Policies & Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* (Historic England, 2008).
- *Understanding Historic Buildings* (Historic England, 2016).
- *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (Historic England, 2017).
- *Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets* (Historic England, 2019).

Selection and Assessment of Sources

- 2.2.3 In line with para 3.3.6 and Annex 1 of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment, this report considers appropriate sources of information and a rationale behind their use. These have been detailed in Table 1:

Table 1: Examination of Appropriate Sources

SOURCE	TYPE OF EVIDENCE	CONSULTED	COMMENT
Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record	The primary source of information concerning the current state of archaeological, heritage and architectural knowledge in this area. Contains published and unpublished archaeological and historical sources, including any previous investigations undertaken within the study area.	06/12/2024	The HER dataset was not obtained after consultation with Ian Miller (Heritage Management Director of the GMAAS).
Consult Rochdale Borough Council Conservation Officer	Early discussion with the Local Planning Authority Planning Archaeologist and / or Conservation Officer is key to understanding the significance of an area and creating a tailored approach most appropriate to assessment of a site.	21/11/2024	Labosport Group were advised by Melanie Hale, Head of Planning Services at Rochdale Borough Council, that a Heritage Statement would be required to support the application.
Site Walkover	This task allows for development of a greater understanding of the on-site heritage resource, or any historic issues of the site, including information the general condition and setting of the area of proposed development and the site in which it stands.	25/11/2024	The site walkover was conducted by Daniel Dodds, Associate Director, AB Heritage. The site was open to the public and all areas were freely accessible. The application site was very basic, and it was evident that the War Memorial was raised well above the application site, but that views between them were slightly hindered by mature trees, even in winter. The general character of the park was one of rolling grassed slopes to the east and south, but the central and west part was characterised by hardstanding for carparking, paths, and the sports pitch. The large Premier Inn is dominant, and the Free Trade public house is also a major feature.
National Heritage List for England	Information on statutory and non-statutory designated sites, including Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments.	03/12/2024	A Grade II Listed War memorial was identified to the immediate north of the site. Several other designated assets were identified within the locale, but these were identified as having no visual or group relationship with the site.

SOURCE	TYPE OF EVIDENCE	CONSULTED	COMMENT
Lancashire Archives	Readily accessible information on the site's history from readily available historic documentary sources, maps and photographs.	10/12/2024	The archive had a number of records relating to the ownership of Land in the Milnrow Area that was not relevant to the main phases of activity discussed in this report.
Rochdale Local Studies Centre		10/12/2024	The centre has limited digitised items but does feature two 19 th century publications about the history of the Rochdale area which were consulted on the Medieval and Post-Medieval history of the area.
Heritage Gateway	An extensive database allowing for cross-search of over 60 resources on England's local and national historic sites, buildings and archaeology, including images of listed buildings.	03/12/2024	Heritage gateway was consulted to see if there were any non-designated assets within a close proximity to the site, which there was not.
Imperial War Museum War Memorials Register	The IWM maintains an extensive record with historical details about war memorials across the UK.	09/12/2024	The record for the Milnrow War Memorial was consulted and several key pieces of information including the monuments erection date, inscriptions and original location were found.

Assessment of Significance

- 2.2.4 Assessment of heritage significance is judged on various factors, including existing designation(s) and the perceived heritage interests or values of a feature and / or its setting in-line with criteria set out by English Heritage in '*Conservation Principles, Policies & Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*' (2008) and Historic England's '*Advice Note 12*' (2019).
- 2.2.5 As a result, this report will assess significance against **Archaeological**, **Architectural**, **Artistic**, **Historic** and **Setting** interests. Each relevant category discussed will result in an overall level of significance being defined for the feature, in accordance with a five-point scale comprising Very High, High, Medium, Low and Uncertain.

Impact Assessment

- 2.2.6 The degree of impact upon the heritage resource is determined based on professional judgement as to the level of effect from a proposed development on the baseline conditions of the site and the cultural heritage resource identified. The criteria for assessing the level of impact will be expressed against a five-point scale comprising Very High, High, Medium, Low and Uncertain.
- 2.2.7 Overall, the degree of change will be assessed in terms of NPPF (as harmful or beneficial) and, where appropriate, against relevant local planning policy.

3. PLANNING & LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

3.1 Heritage Legislation

- 3.1.1 Current legislation, in the form of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, provides for the legal protection of important and well-preserved archaeological sites and monuments through their addition to a list, or 'schedule' of archaeological monuments.
- 3.1.2 Likewise, structures are afforded legal protection in the form of their addition to 'lists' of buildings of special architectural or historical interest, under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990. This legislation also allows for the creation and protection of Conservation Areas by local planning authorities to protect areas and groupings of historical significance.
- 3.1.3 The categories of assets with some form of legal protection have been extended in recent years, and now include Registered Parks and Gardens, and Historic Battlefields. While designation as a UNESCO World Heritage Site is not a statutory designation under English planning law, such a designation is regarded as a material consideration in planning decisions.

3.2 National Planning Policy Framework 2023

- 3.2.1 The NPPF sets out government policy on the historic environment, which covers all elements, whether designated or not, that are identified as 'having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest'.
- 3.2.2 Paragraph 200 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 required in the assessment should be 'proportionate to the assets importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance'.
- 3.2.3 Paragraph 207 explains that '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 loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss.
- 3.2.4 Paragraph 208 advises that where a proposal involve 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 securing its optimum viable use. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non designated heritage assets, Paragraph 209 states that a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

3.3 Local Planning Policy

Rochdale Core Strategy (2016)

Policy P2 – Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage

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.
- 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.

4. HERITAGE REVIEW OF THE SITE

4.1 Historic Development of the Site & Study Area

Post-Medieval Period (AD 1537 – AD 1800)

- 4.1.1 The memorial park and the area surrounding the site today is largely a product of the later 19th and 20th centuries. Historic mapping and readily available cultural heritage sources suggest that the traditional centres of settlement and activity were focused to the west and especially north of the site. Tithe records show that in 1846 the site was part of a field system owned by a John Whitworth and occupied by Abraham Milne (The Genealogist, IR 29/18/59). The oldest features in the area relate to the hugely important wool and cotton weaving industry in the local area. Much of what is now the designed landscape of the memorial park was originally part of the grounds of Cliffe House, which occupied high ground and was surrounded by woodland (Plate 2). At that time the proposal site was an open field south of the woods of Cliffe House.

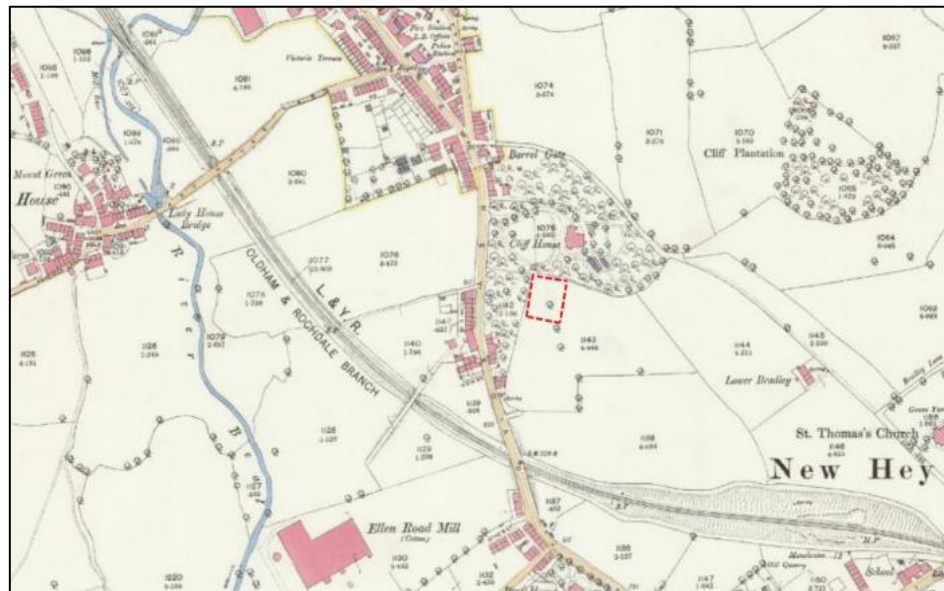


Plate 2. OS Survey Map, 1889-91 (National Library of Scotland, 2024)

- 4.1.2 Other development during this period appears to have been located along Newhey Road with buildings such as the extant Free Trade Tavern appearing c.50m south-west of the site. One of the other few remaining features of this period in the vicinity is the Scheduled Ellenroad Ring Mill (NHLE: 1001958), which is the preserved engine house of the original Cotton Mill. The building is approximately 325m south-west of the site, but the chimney stack can be seen from the application site.

Modern Period (AD 1801 – Present)

- 4.1.3 After the First World War, a memorial to those killed during the conflict was erected at the north end of Dale Street near the intersection with Bridge Street, approximately 1km north-west of the site. Records suggest that the memorial was unveiled in 1924 by the Rev T W Wareham and Major General A Solly-Flood CB CMG DSO (Imperial War Museum, War

Memorials Register, 13073, 2024). The War Memorial appears on the OS Map from 1928 as can be seen on Plate 3. At the same time, a 23-ton Mark IV tank was given to the town as thanks to the people who had donated over £180,000 to fund tank production during the war. The tank was placed at the southern end of Kiln Street until 1934 when it was judged to be a safety risk for local children playing on it and it was subsequently removed (Rochdale Online, July 2018).

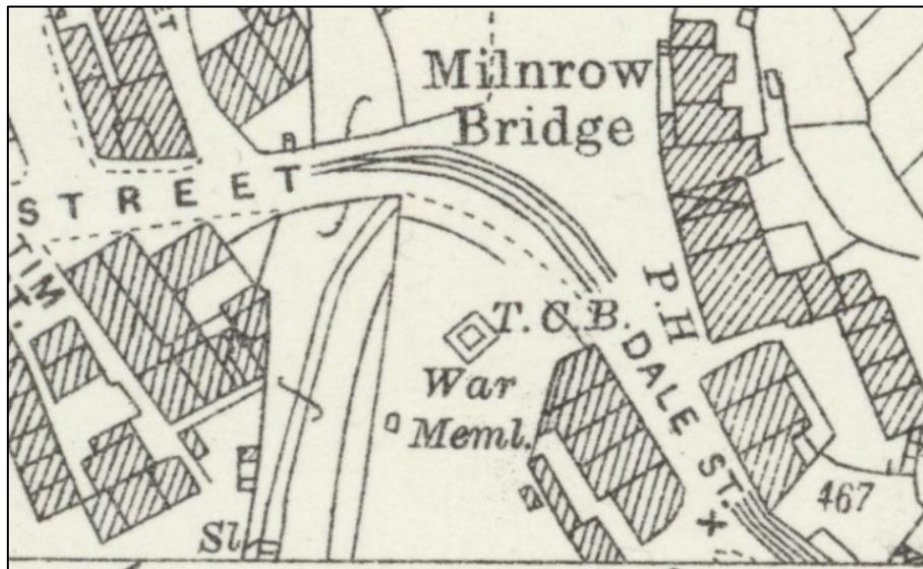


Plate 3. OS Survey Map, 1928 (National Library of Scotland, 2024)

- 4.1.4 After the Second World War there appears to have been fairly rapid change to the site and the local area. Cliffe House was demolished, and the grounds were converted into a public park centred around the war memorial which had been relocated from Dale Street. It is suggested in the Imperial War Museum archive, that this was done due to the need to widen the road around Dale Street and Bridge Street (IWM, War Memorials Register, 2024).
- 4.1.5 Documentary sources refer to the park opening in 1952, and aerial photography dated to 1948 suggests that the house had already been demolished. What is clear is that the 1954 OS map (Plate 4) shows the War Memorial *in situ*, with a park and woodland surrounding it. It appears that several buildings along Newhey Road in the southern tip of the wooded grounds of Cliffe House were also demolished during this period, leaving only the Free Trade Tavern c.50m south-west of the site.

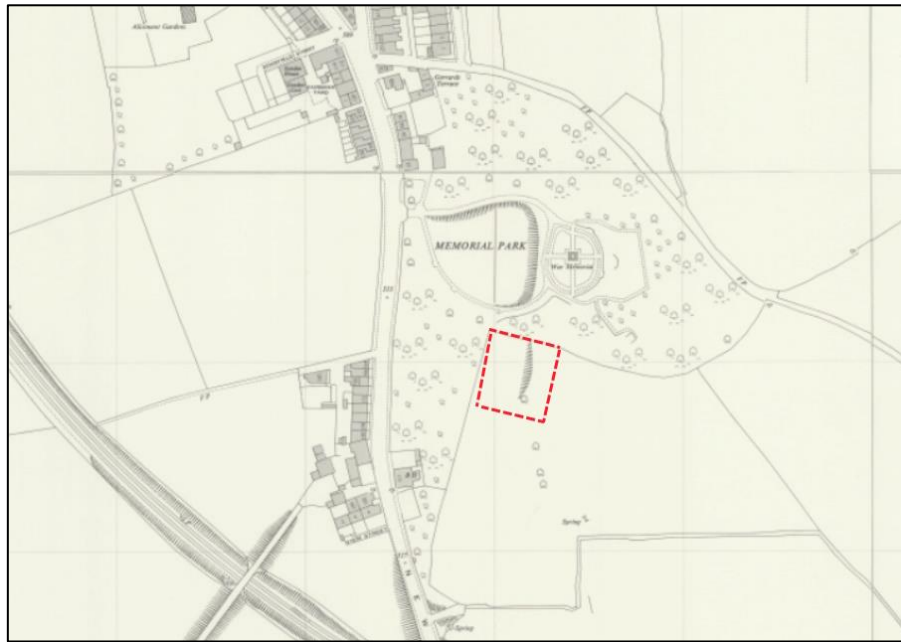


Plate 4. OS Survey Map, 1954-55 (National Library of Scotland, 2024)

- 4.1.6 The Memorial Park utilised the gardens and woodland already present in the grounds of Cliffe House without the need for much alteration, while the War Memorial itself was placed within the former footprint of the house (Rochdale Online, Milnrow Memorial Gardens, 2024). It was not until 1961 when the remainder of the park, an area covering the site of proposed development, was purchased for £300 on the stipulation that the land was to be used for public pleasure and recreation grounds (Rochdale Online, Milnrow Memorial Gardens, 2024).
- 4.1.7 Part of the original wooded grounds in the north-western corner of the park were lost during the construction of the M62 in the early 1970s, and the motorway now runs along the park's northern edge (UK Motorway Archive, 2024). The construction of facilities around the site such as the pavilion, bowling green, public toilets and car park appear to have taken place over the subsequent years. Plate 5 is an aerial photo of the site in taken in 2000, while available historic aerial photos on Google Earth suggests that the children's play area and skatepark would not be built until some point between 2005 and 2016.



Plate 5. Aerial Photo, 2000 (Google Earth, 2024)

- 4.1.8 The Listed War Memorial has also seen some alteration, with 51 names added in 2011 that had been found to be missing originally (IWM, War Memorials Register 2024).

4.2 Site Walkover

- 4.2.1 The site walkover was conducted by Daniel Dodds, Associate Director, AB Heritage on 25th November 2024. The site was open to the public and all areas were freely accessible. It was immediately evident that the War Memorial was raised above the application site on a large mound, but that views between them were slightly hindered by mature trees, even in winter.
- 4.2.2 The general character of the park is one of rolling grassed slopes to the east and south. The north part which includes the War Memorial is a grassed central space, irregular in shape and surrounded by relatively dense mature planting. The central and west part of the park is characterised by development and hardstanding for carparking, paths, and the sports pitch and the pavilion. The large Premier Inn is dominant, and the Free Trade public house is also a major feature located alongside Newhey Road.
- 4.2.3 The M62 motorway skirts the park to the north. The road is raised on an embankment and even the presence of a dense vegetation boundary (trees at the back on Plate 6) cannot suppress the sound of the traffic. The M62 is a detrimental feature that is at odds with the prevailing green character, and which interrupts the tranquillity of the Memorial Park. The scale and form of the M62 embankment entirely precludes views into the park from Newhey Road in Milnrow to the north.
- 4.2.4 The proposal site is one of two enclosed sports pitches in the park, one of which is a bowling green behind a hedge. The application site is a hard surfaced pitch enclosed within a wire mesh fence, and with small floodlights around the perimeter (Plate 6).



Plate 6. The proposal site. Looking NE the memorial is in the trees on the left

- 4.2.5 Plate 7 below, shows the Grade II Listed War Memorial. It occupies a rectangular, paved forecourt decorated with herbaceous borders, and the statue looks west towards Milnrow.



Plate 7. The War Memorial which faces west towards Milnrow

- 4.2.6 As mentioned, the War Memorial is on ground raised above the surrounding landscape, and looking to the SW from the forecourt the observer can appreciate the sports facilities, the Free Trade pub and the Premier Inn as dominant features, with the mill chimney in the backdrop (Plate 8).



Plate 8. Looking SW towards Newhey Road, taking in the proposal site and the developed backdrop

5. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

5.1 Focus of Study

5.1.1 In accordance with English Heritage guidance *Conservation Principles, Policies & Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* (2008), and Historic England's Advice Note 12 (2019), Heritage Assets derive their significance from a defined range of interests or values. These are **Archaeological**, **Architectural** or **Artistic**, **Historic** and **Setting** Interest. This report will assess those factors relevant to the overall understanding of the importance of the feature under consideration.

5.1.2 The site is in proximity to several heritage assets (see Fig. 1). However, based on the site visit, historic research, and consultation, this report will focus on providing an understanding of the potential impacts to the Grade II Listed Milnrow War Memorial only. Other designated heritage assets have been identified within the vicinity but following research and the site visit they are assessed as being unaffected by the proposal and will not be assessed (Plate 9). Those heritage assets are:

- Butterworth Conservation Area. In Milnrow, the southern extent is closest to the proposal site at c. 335m to the north. The M62 embankment completely obliterates any potential intervisibility.
- Scheduled Ellenroad Mill (375m southwest of the proposal site). Intervening development and vegetation render only the chimney as an appreciable feature from the proposal site. The distance to the chimney and the ground level nature of the proposal means the proposed works would be insufficient to affect the significance of the Scheduled Monument.
- Grade II Listed Milnrow Carnegie Library and forecourt Wall, c. 285m north-west of the site. Intervening residential development and the embankment of the M62 completely obliterates any potential intervisibility.
- Grade II Listed Bradley's Farmhouse c. 480m east of the proposal site. Intervening vegetation on field boundaries and topography preclude intervisibility.
- Grade II Listed Church of St. Thomas New Hey c. 435 south east of the proposal site. Intervening vegetation on field boundaries and topography preclude intervisibility.



Plate 9. Aerial Photograph of the site and surrounding area with Heritage Assets Marked

5.2 Milnrow War Memorial

Description & General Condition

- 5.2.1 Milnrow War Memorial is a Grade II Listed feature consisting of an ashlar sandstone plinth with a bronze statue of a soldier with a rifle and bayonet. The plinth features several panels with the names of those people from Milnrow who died in the First and Second World Wars inscribed upon them. There are in total 252 recorded names across both conflicts under the message; *"In memory of the men of the Milnrow urban district who died for England"*. The monument was first erected in 1924 almost 1km to the northwest on Dale Street, although no public record of its designer is available. The monument is in a generally good condition, with repair to the statue and repointing of stones in the plinth having been carried out between 1998-99.

Assessment of Significance

Historical Interest

- 5.2.2 The historical and evidential interest of Milnrow War Memorial is as a permanent record of the names and numbers of people from the local community who died in the First and Second World Wars, and a dedication to the armed forces regiments in which they served. It demonstrates the impact that those conflicts had on Milnrow and on the families and descendants of those who died. It could also be instructive on the wider economic and societal fabric of the area in the first half of the 20th century. There are far fewer names recorded as having died in the second war (54) as having died in the first (198). This may be

reflective of a population decline because of severe economic hardships faced after the great depression and its impact on the dominant local weaving industry.

- 5.2.3 The War Memorial also draws significance from its communal interest. It serves as a central feature for local remembrance events such as the annual Armistice Commemoration where several generations of veterans, their families and the wider public gather to pay their respects. It is therefore an important community feature that links the contemporary community with their past.
- 5.2.4 Overall, the historical and evidential interest is the primary contributor to this designated asset's significance.

Setting

- 5.2.5 The setting of the war memorial makes a considerable positive contribution to the significance of the asset. The statue itself is sat on high ground in a public park that was specifically laid out to feature and enhance the memorial. It is viewable from much of the southern and eastern parts of the park and the statue's immediate surroundings include a number of paths, benches, flower beds and small hedges that work to enhance the central vista of the statue.
- 5.2.6 The park utilises the grounds of the previous structure, 'Cliffe House', with the Listed statue being positioned in the former footprint of the house.
- 5.2.7 However, a large portion of these original grounds were lost during the construction of the M62 to the immediate north of the park. This has in effect separated the park from the town of Milnrow and while access to and from is still relatively easy due to a tunnel under the motorway, there has been very marked degree of disruption and negative effect to the setting.
- 5.2.8 Furthermore, the original site of the War Memorial was on Dale Street in the town of Milnrow. The present location therefore indicates that the monument was not designed for the specific setting or context, as the War Memorial Park is a completely different location to Dale Street. Even since the relocation of the War Memorial, in 1952, the park has undergone considerable development including the hard-surfaced sports area, public toilets, bowling green, car park and children's play area and skatepark, during the later 20th century and early 21st century.
- 5.2.9 Overall, despite factors which have somewhat diminished the importance of the setting, the landscape around the War Memorial positively contributes to the designated heritage asset's significance.

Artistic Interest

- 5.2.10 The War Memorial derives some of its significance from an artistic interest as a good surviving example of an early 20th century commemorative statue. The statue is typical in its sombre but proud representation of an unknown or non-specific soldier, wearing iconic British Army uniform items such as the *Brodie* Helmet and *Puttee* leg wrappings that were very common for soldiers of the First World War. The statue has no publicly available recorded artist or creator, but it clearly belongs to a specific artistic trend for commemorating the armed forces who served in the First World War.
- 5.2.11 While the asset does draw significance from its artistic interest it remains less substantial compared to the historic interest or the positive effect of the setting.

Summary of Heritage Significance

- 5.2.12 Overall, the historical and to some extent artistic interest of the asset, reinforced by the positive effect of it's setting means that Milnrow War Memorial is considered to be a heritage asset of High Significance.

6. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 Details of the Proposed Development

- 6.1.1** The proposed development will feature several changes. The existing hardstanding macadam asphalt layer and kerbs will be removed to allow for the regrading and releveling of the stone sub-base layer. This will then be followed by the installation of a new 40mm thick asphalt base layer on the eastern side of the site, with a 15mm thick prefabricated shock pad and 40mm thick 3G synthetic turf following.
- 6.1.2** The existing fence will be removed with a new 3m high fence with goal recesses, and gates will be erected around the footprint of the new play zone. This play zone will have 20m x 30m dimensions in eastern side of the site. The left-over unused area of the site (approximately 512sqm) will feature 2 new benches, 2 new waste bins and a storage container, as well as new basketball keys and pickleball markings. Finally, the existing free-standing floodlighting will be replaced with a new fence mounted LED system.

6.2 Assessment of Change

Direct Changes

- 6.2.1** The proposed development will incur no direct impacts to any heritage assets.

Indirect Changes

- 6.2.2** The proposal to replace the current layer of macadam asphalt as well as laying a new astroturf pitch in the eastern section of the site will bring a slight beneficial impact to the setting of the Grade II Listed War Memorial. The current hardstanding surface is several decades old and it's continuing deteriorating condition can only be understood as a negative impact to setting of the asset. The new astroturf surface will in fact match better with the surrounding grass-covered area between the site and the designated heritage asset and would be more reflective of the site prior to the development of the sports area when the memorial park was first opened. On a more prosaic reading, the proposal site will be refreshed and look cleaner.
- 6.2.3** The proposal to replace the existing fencing with new fencing on a new smaller footprint in the eastern section will bring a very small beneficial change to the setting of the War Memorial. Although the new fencing will be largely a replacement, with a similar height, material and colour to the existing structure, the reduced footprint could open up new sightlines of the the War Memorial. This is particularly true from the existing car park, where many people arrive at the park and get their first view of the asset. The removal of the fence along the western edge of the site means that anyone approaching from the car park or south-west in general is likely to get a better view of the asset.
- 6.2.4** The proposal to introduce new floodlights, as well as street-furniture such as new benches and wastebins is likely to have neither an adverse nor beneficial impact on the asset's setting. The new floodlights would be replacing existing ones and would be in very similar positions to the current ones. While the new street furniture is entirely consistent in character with features already present around the Memorial Park.

6.3 Impact Assessment

- 6.3.1 The proposed scheme includes some changes to the existing ground surface and to the surrounding enclosure within the site. While these will be within the view from the War Memorial, it is the assessment of this report that these changes will still retain the fundamental character of the proposal site. These changes would in fact slightly benefit the appearance of the proposal site and in turn would slightly enhance the setting of the War Memorial and could therefore be considered as a very low enhancement of the asset's significance. While the proposals would also clearly provide public benefit in refurbishing and improving an old and worn public recreation area.
- 6.3.2 Overall, this report finds that the proposed scheme of work is compliant with Paragraph 212 of the National Planning Policy Framework, as well as Policy P2 of Rochdale's Core Strategy (2016).

7. RECOMMENDATIONS & CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Outline Recommendations

- 7.1.1 There are no recommendations for further work.
- 7.1.2 All future recommendations for further works are the preserve of the Local Planning Authority.

7.2 Conclusion

- 7.2.1 AB Heritage Limited has been commissioned by Labosport Group to produce a Heritage Statement covering proposed works at Milnrow Memorial Park, Rochdale, OL16 4JF. It was requested a part of a forthcoming planning application.
- 7.2.2 The proposed scheme is for the refurbishment and improvement of an existing late 20th century sports and public recreation area. The 1,225sqm site is currently used as a hard-standing asphalt multi-use sports pitch, enclosed by a tall metal fence on all sides.
- 7.2.3 The site sits within the Memorial Park (not a Registered Park and Garden) and is c.50m south of the Grade II Listed Milnrow War Memorial (NHLE:1162572). The War Memorial was originally erected on Dale Street in the 1920s, approximately 1km to the northwest of its current location. However, due to the need to widen the road on Dale Street and given the opportunity to rededicate the memorial to the dead of the First and Second World Wars, the memorial was moved to the former grounds of Cliffe House to the south of the town in 1952. The War Memorial consists of a sandstone base with a bronze statue depicting a British Soldier and several plinths commemorating the names of nearly 250 men from Milnrow who died during the World Wars. The memorial utilised the former grounds of Cliffe House, centring the statue in the footprint of the former house on a raised area above much of the park.
- 7.2.4 Development in the second half of the 20th century has subsequently destroyed or altered parts of the original park. A portion of the north-western section was lost for the construction of the M62 motorway, which has also effectively separated the park and the monument from the town. Later 20th century development for public recreation to the south of the monument, including the site of proposed development, has also altered the character of the park and the setting of the War Memorial from its original mid-20th century designed landscape.
- 7.2.5 This report has assessed Milnrow War Memorial to be a heritage asset of High Significance due to its Historic, Setting and Architectural / Artistic interests.
- 7.2.6 The proposed development is confined within the existing enclosure and being 50m south of the Grade II Listed War Memorial, the proposal will not incur any direct impact to the significance of the monument. The proposal is seeking merely to upgrade the existing surface, enclosure and lighting around the MUGA. This will require superficial changes that will not exceed the extent of the baseline infrastructure and character of the proposal site. In terms of impacts, the proposed changes could very well improve the appearance of the proposal site, and this would in turn very slightly enhance the setting of the War Memorial by encouraging more visitors to the park and thus to the monument.

- 7.2.7 There are no recommendations for further work. All future recommendations for further works are the preserve of the Local Planning Authority.

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Abbreviations

SM – Scheduled Monument

AB No.	Period	Description	Status	NGR	Ref. No.
1	20 th century	GII LB Milnrow War Memorial. Erected in 1924 in its original position on the north-end of Dale Street to commemorate the First World War. Moved to current site between 1948-52 to feature as part of the memorial park and re-dedicated to the fallen in WW2 as well.	GVII	SD 93341 11960	NHLE: 1162572

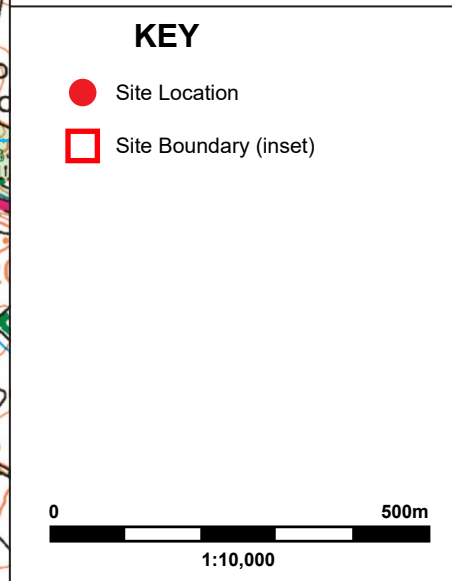
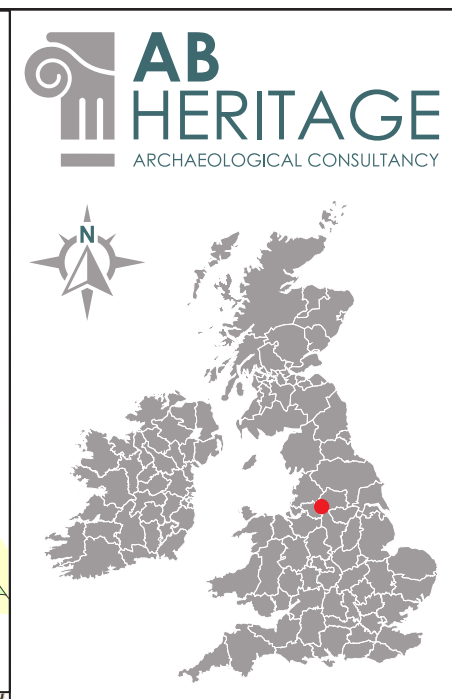
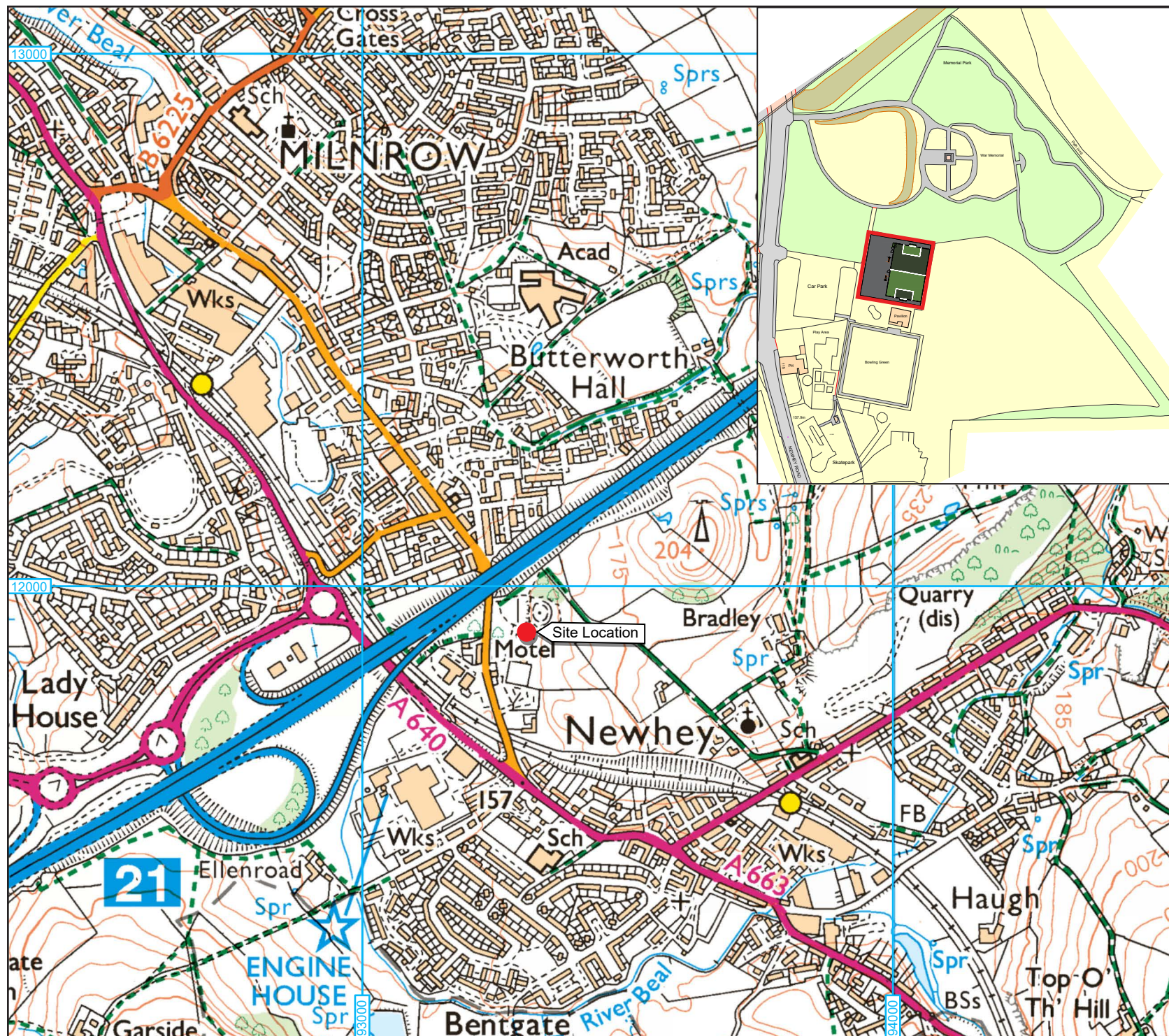


Figure 1: Site Location	
Project: Milnrow Memorial Park, Rochdale	
Date: 12/12/24	Job No: 63593

FACILITY TYPE

FOOTBALL ONLY REFURBISHMENT
NON-FILL SYNTHETIC TURF PLAYZONE WITH PERIMETER FENCING, FLOODLIGHTING,
HARD-STANDING AREA AND EQUIPMENT

CONSTRUCTION MAKE UP - PLAYZONE

DUE TO FALL OF THE EXISTING FACILITY, IT IS PROPOSED THE EXISTING MACADAM SURFACING LAYER AND KERBS ARE REMOVED, TO ALLOW FOR RE-GRADING AND LEVELLING OF THE STONE SUB-BASE LAYER AND INSTALLATION OF NEW KERBS LAND RETAINING FEATURES WILL BE INSTALLED TO THE EASTERN SIDE
NEW 40MM THICK POROUS ASPHALT (MACADAM) BASE LAYER
15MM PREFABRICATED SHOCKPAD
40MM 3G NON INFILL SYNTHETIC TURF

CONSTRUCTION MAKE UP - LEFT OVER AREA

AS THE EXISTING FACILITY IS LARGER THAN A STANDARD PLAYZONE, THE LEFT OVER AREA MEASURES APPROXIMATELY = 515 M2
EXAMPLES SHOWN OF POTENTIAL USE FOR THE LEFT OVER AREA INCLUDE BASKETBALL KEYS AND PICKLEBALL MARKINGS

DIMENSIONS

FENCE TO FENCE = 30 X 20M
2NR GOAL RECESSES = 3.66 X 1M
HARD STANDING AREA = 30 X 2M
ACCESS ROUTE = VIA EXISTING PARK PATHWAYS

LINE MARKING

GOAL BOXES = 10.0 X 5.0M
GOAL LINE = 3.66LM
CENTRE LINE = 20LM
CENTRE CIRCLE = 0.2M RADIUS

FENCING

NEW TWIN BAR PANEL FENCING (3M HIGH) AROUND FOOTPRINT OF PLAYZONE

1NR DOUBLE MAINTENANCE / EMERGENCY GATE ACCESS
WITH ONE SIDE TO HAVE AN EGRESS ONLY PANIC BAR WITH A CLOSING MECHANISM,
OTHER SIDE TO HAVE LOCKABLE DROP BOLT WITH ROBUST COMBINATION LOCK

1NR SINGLE GATE MOUNTING FRAME FOR CIA / CLUBSPARK GATE

1NR DOUBLE GATE TO STORAGE AREA

FLOODLIGHTING

NEW LED FLOODLIGHT SYSTEM - FENCE POST MOUNTED
(4 LUMINAIRES TOTAL) TO MEET FOLLOWING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS:
AVERAGE LUX = 120LUX
UNIFORMITY = 0.65

EQUIPMENT

2NR GOALS (INTEGRAL TO FENCING)
2NR BENCHES
2NR WASTE BINS
1NR STORAGE CONTAINER

