

1 Castle Hill Crescent, Rochdale,
OL11 4HA

Doc Ref: 2371 02-03 001

Heritage Statement



Revision /
29th December 2025

**SOLID
VOID**

1.0 Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Solid Void on behalf of Buckley Developments Ltd to supplement a full planning application for a proposed, 3-storey, new-build apartment development at 1 Castle Hill Crescent, Rochdale.

The site is presently a single, family dwelling with extensive, hard and soft landscaped gardens, across a sloping site with associated car parking. Located adjacent to Sparth Bottoms Road and Manchester Road, the site sits in a highly sustainable location approximate 0.5 miles from the centre of Rochdale which affords potential future residents all the shops, amenities and transport hubs required to travel further afield. Rochdale town centre has a train station offering services to Leeds, Manchester, Blackburn and Clitheroe to mention a few and future expansion plans to provide a service to London. The Metrolink serves the majority of Greater Manchester and bus terminal also offers alternative means of sustainable public transport.

At the top of Castle Hill Road sits Castle Hill House. The site is believed to be first developed shortly after the Norman conquest of England in 1066, when a fort was built on the crest of the hill and was occupied until the 1200's. The site is presently, a Georgian manor house that was built in 1820 and is stone faced with a portico, hipped roof behind a parapet and has 12-panel traditional sash windows.

As well as being highly accessible, the site has been previously developed and as such is classed as a brownfield land. Manchester Road to the east is one of the main arterial roads out of the town centre, leading towards Castleton, Heywood, Bury, and beyond. The proposal seeks to demolish the existing bungalow and create a new part 2/3 storey apartment development to realise the full potential of the site and seeking to provide much needed homes in the form of 1-bed and 2-bed flats. The development would also fall under the +15-unit requirement to provide affordable housing, so the proposed tenure is for open market rent.

The site has been carefully appraised by the Design Team and sensitively designed to respect neighbouring interface distances, protecting existing and future resident's outlook and amenity spaces. The shape of the building seeks to create an architecture that addresses both Castle Hill Crescent and Manchester Road primarily, which also creating a presence to Sparth Bottoms Road.



Figure 1
Castle Hill House
Ref: IOE01/00549/24)

2.0 Listings

Within 200m radius of the site there are two listings on Historic England's register: Castle Hill House and Broadfield Park.

Castle Hill House is a grade II listed building and Broadfield Park is a grade II listed park and garden. The Historic England entry for both reads as follows:

"SD 81 SE ROCHDALE CASTLE HILL CRESCENT

6/40 Castle Hill House

G.V. II

House. c.1820. Ashlar, with hipped slate roof. Double- pile of 2 storeys with central entrance. 3-bay facade has an advanced pedimented central bay. The 4-panel door has enriched overlight, 2-step approach, attached Tuscan columns and entablatures. Plinth, first floor sill band, plain cornice and parapet and original sash windows with glazing bars, and panelled apron to the ground floor. The plain pediment has an uncarved shield and scroll. 2 central stacks. The interior has fine plasterwork and stone fireplaces. The house is seen from all over Rochdale as it stands on the former site of Rochdale Castle.

Listing NGR: SD8916712853"

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

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

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

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

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING

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

the north and St Chad's church to the south.

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

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

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

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

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES

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

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

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

There are five entrances to Packer Spout and St Chad's Gardens (formerly Nelson Street Slopes). Two entrances on the northern boundary give access from Town Hall Square. Both these entrances have steep flights of stone steps leading to the Market Cross and to St Chad's churchyard. A further entrance at the north-east corner of the site gives access from Nelson Street and Church Lane, and an entrance to the south-east gives access from Church Lane. On the southern boundary an entrance gives access from St Chad's churchyard. These entrances are marked by stone piers. The eastern part of this area is closed to public access (November 2000).

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS

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

The western part of Broadfield Park has large sunken lawns with elaborate ornamental bedding, at the centre of which is a statue of Alderman G L Ashworth, JP (listed grade II) erected in 1878. The decorative iron fence which originally protected the statue has been removed. The paths are tarmacked with stone steps leading down to the sunken lawns. Three C19 pavilions around the perimeter of the sunken gardens were lost or removed in the early part of the C20 (Derek Lovejoy Partnership 1998). The Jubilee Drinking Fountain (Co-operative Memorial) at the south-west corner of the sunken garden was presented to the town by the Provident Society in 1907. The stone fountain is disused and has lost the four lions which sat on plinths around the centre, and the pinnacle which completed the central canopy. From this point the path runs east past modern timber trellis-work and planting beds and the former site, about 30m from the St Albans Street entry, of a glacial boulder found at Castleton and placed in the park in 1893.

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

A footpath which starts opposite Broadfield Stile to the south of the site runs north/south

between Broadfield Park and Sparrow Hill Slopes, linking St Albans Street with Sparrow Hill and then continuing north to The Esplanade. The footpath is of York stone and is flanked with trees and shrubs. In the Sparrow Hill Slopes area of the park the ground falls steeply to the west and north and the path system follows the contour of the land. Winding paths enclose areas of open lawn surrounded by trees and shrubs with some terraces to the west and north marked by hedgerows supported by concrete posts and wire fences. There are extensive views out across the surrounding countryside to the north and west.

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

In the Broadfield Slopes area the three levels of terraces and footpaths running parallel to The Esplanade reflect the extensive remodelling of this part of the park in the early years of the C20. The sunken pathway running north/south from Sparrow Hill to The Esplanade between banks of rockwork divides Broadfield Slopes into eastern and western sections, connected by the 'Victoria Bridge', an ornate iron footbridge. The Rochdale Dialect Writers Memorial lies midway along the central footpath of the western section of Broadfield Slopes. The Memorial, backed by an area of ornamental planting (2000), was erected in 1900 to commemorate local dialect writers Edwin Waugh, John Trafford Clegg, Miss Lahee, and Oliver Ormerod. The statue of John Bright (listed grade II) at the north-west edge of Broadfield Slopes was moved from Town Hall Square to this position overlooking the roundabout in the 1970s when the original landform and looped path system were destroyed as part of the road-widening scheme. The eastern section of Broadfield Slopes is open grass with a central path running down to The Esplanade. The southern part of this area was reduced in the late C20 to create playing fields for Sparrow Hill School.

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

Tree cover within the park is predominantly sycamore, with some ash, lime, and hawthorn.

Elm trees were removed from the park in 1980(8. The vegetation of the park is more extensive now than at earlier periods and many of the views out from the park are blocked by over-mature trees and shrubs."

3.0 Development Assessment

Castle Hill Crescent is completely screened from Broadfield Park by Manchester Road and the buildings and trees that abound the road. Due to this reason, the proposed development has no impact on the setting of the park and has therefore been discounted in this review.



Figure 2 - View from Broadfield Park looking across Manchester Road towards the site

Castle Hill House is a grade II listed building that has a clear line of sight due south towards the development site, as indicated in red below.



Figure 3 - View from Castle Hill House looking south towards the site (red indicating the site)

The established character of the street is 1-2 storey dwellings with a palette of materials that include red brick walls, grey and brown tiled, duo pitched roofs, dormers and uPVC windows and doors. The existing materials present on the neighbouring buildings are not of particularly high quality and therefore cause harm to the setting of the listed building.

The scale and massing of the proposed built form is deemed to be appropriate in this locality for the following reasons:

- It occupies a prominent position on the corner of Castle Hill Crescent and Sparth Bottoms Road which creates a 'gateway' opportunity to add some additional height in this context (3-storeys facing Manchester Road), without the massing appearing incongruous.
- The building is 2-storeys at the northern end of the block, facing towards Castle Hill House. This scale knits neatly into the neighbouring buildings are a mix of two and two and a half storey properties.
- The extensive, front facing, garden of the existing property results a poorly defined streetscape with lack of built form. The street would be enhanced by a building that makes the most of the sloping topography to create a building that is part two-storey and part three-storey.



Figure 4 – Proposed perspective view looking south along Castle Hill Crescent



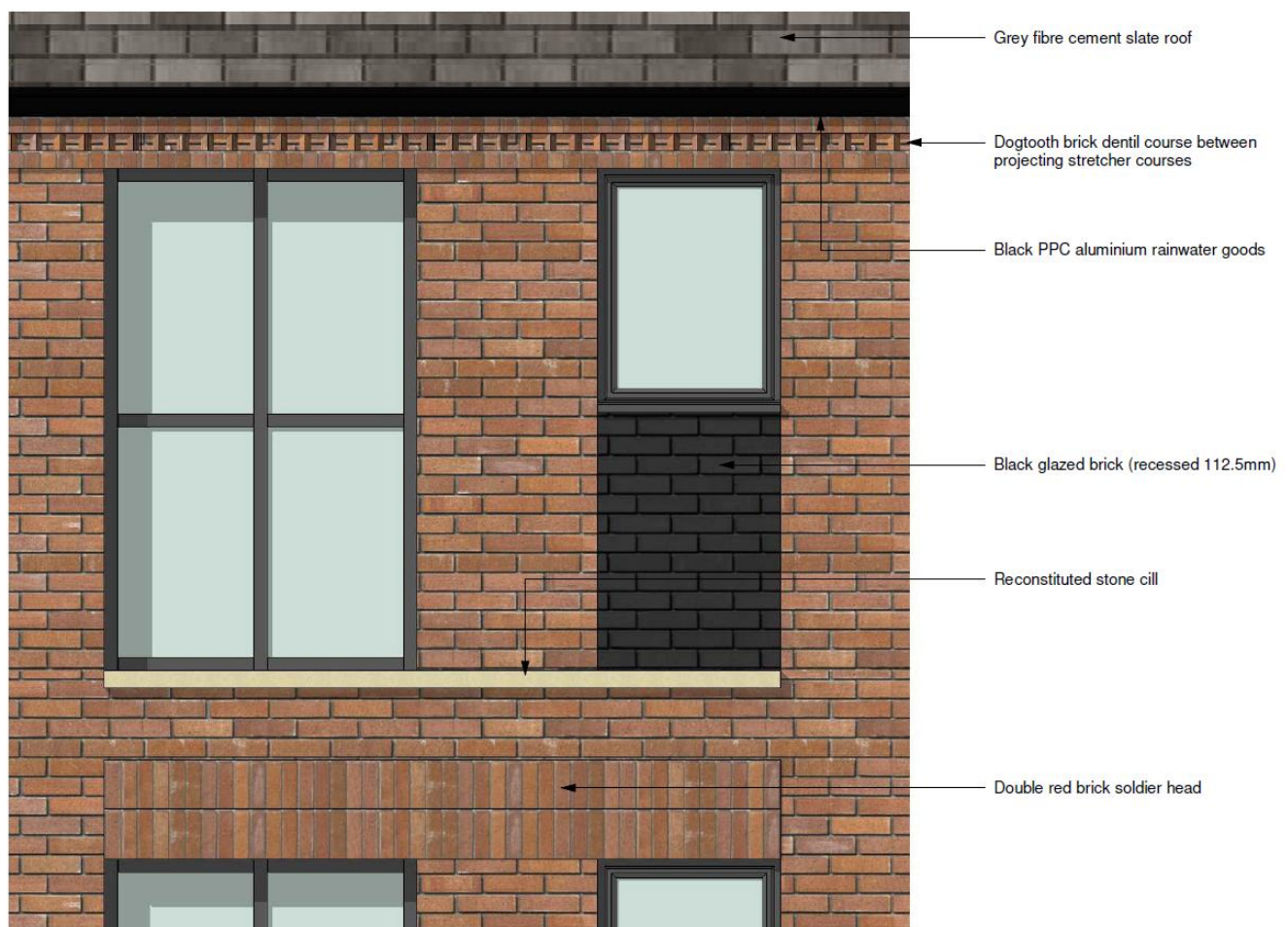
Figure 5 – Proposed streetscene elevation looking from Castle Hill Crescent

The building is proposed with a double, duo pitched roof, and the form is faceted in order to align the building to the share of Castle Hill Crescent. The design minimises the impact of the massing towards adjacent dwellings to reduce any sense of overbearing.

The building's facing materials will be selected from a high-quality palette, including natural roof slates, heritage multi-style red bricks, black glazed brick, stone cills, smooth blue engineering bricks, dark grey aluminium framed windows, doors, curtain walling and a glazed balustrade projecting balcony. All these materials will serve to enhance the setting of the listed building and will be a positive impact on the streetscene.

Windows are punctuated into the façade in a regular, rhythmic fashion with two styles of window proportional that are arranged in a repeating pattern. The proportion of windows are broken down into regular modules sizes using transoms and mullions to create a harmonious and considered window format.

The façade is further activated with stone string course / cill detail, red brick double soldier heads, and a black glazed brick which is used to define the window module size whenever a half height window is required to be used, and to demarcate the main entrance, where a canopy is also used for shelter.



4.0 Conclusion

The proposals serve to create enhancing architecture with form, scale and massing which is complementary to the existing streetscene, finished with high-quality materials that positively contribute to the outlook of Castle Hill House.

The development is not visible from vantage points in Broadfield Park and therefore has no impact on the setting of the grade II listed park.