



For Yeargate Limited

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Birch Business Park, Whittle Lane, Heywood,
OL10 2SX





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WSP

3 Wellington Place

Leeds

LS1 4AP

WSP.com



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1

INTRODUCTION



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1. This Heritage Statement has been prepared by WSP on behalf of Yeargate Limited. The purpose of this Heritage Statement is to assist Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (the Council) in the consideration of an outline planning application at land to the north-east of Birch Business Park for:

“Outline planning application (with all matters reserved other than access) for the erection of two industrial warehouses (B2/B8), ancillary class E office, with supporting loading bays, trailer bays, trailer park spaces, parking spaces and landscaping.”

1.2 SITE AND LOCATION

- 1.2.1. Birch Business Park is located to the south-west of Heywood, to the north of the M62. The site is a major developed employment site, accessed off Whittle Lane. The business park comprises a range of buildings and units in B2/B8 use classes.
- 1.2.2. The Google extract below provides a clear overview of the site, with the site outlined in red.

Figure 1-1 - Site Context Map



- 1.2.3. The site is bound by the existing units at Birch Business Park to the west and open fields define the sites northern, southern and eastern boundaries. The site is 9.48 acres and is currently vacant open land. Access into the business park is currently taken off Whittle Lane with a series of internal roads providing access to each individual unit.

1.3 HERITAGE ASSETS

- 1.3.1. A search of the following sources has been undertaken to identify any heritage assets within the site and its surroundings:
- National Heritage List for England for nationally protected historic buildings and sites (listed buildings, Scheduled Monuments, protected wrecks, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields and World Heritage Sites),
 - Rochdale Borough Council's website for conservation areas and non-designated heritage assets, and
 - Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record for non-designated heritage assets.
- 1.3.2. The results of these searches are set out in Section 3. However, in summary there are no built heritage assets within the site (e.g. listed buildings), and the site does not fall within a heritage asset (e.g. conservation area). Within a 1km radius search of the site there is one Grade II listed building and one conservation area. Within a 500m radius search of the site there are three farmsteads that are on Rochdale Borough Council's list of non-designated heritage assets (they are also recorded on the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record). This Heritage Statement assesses the potential impact of the development proposals on these identified heritage assets.

1.4 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.4.1. This Heritage Statement has been prepared in the context of the national planning policy requirement for the impact of proposed works on the significance of heritage assets to be assessed, specifically:

Paragraph 207 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 states that:

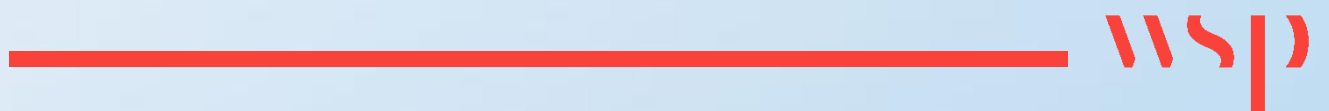
'In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to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

1.5 REPORT STRUCTURE

- 1.5.1. The Heritage Statement is structured as follows:
- Section 2 details the methodology used to prepare this Heritage Statement;
 - Section 3 provides a description, and commentary, of the significance of heritage assets, including the contribution made by their settings, that have the potential to be impacted by the proposed development;
 - Section 4 outlines a summary of relevant national and local planning policy;
 - Section 5 provides a heritage impact assessment; and
 - Section 6 sets out conclusions.

2

METHODOLOGY



2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

2.1.1. The preparation of this document has been guided by the following documents:

- Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets, Historic England Advice Note 12 (Historic England, 2019);
- Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (English Heritage, 2008);
- Planning Practice Guidance on the Historic Environment (DCLG, 2019);
- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (Historic England, 2015);
- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England, 2017); and
- British Standard 7913: 2013: Guide to the conservation of historic buildings (BSI, 2013).

2.1.2. This report focuses on the built heritage assets with a setting that has the potential to be impacted by the proposed development. It does not include an assessment of the archaeological potential of the site. Professional judgment is used in conjunction with policy, guidance and methodology in order to undertake the assessments in this Heritage Statement.

2.2 SOURCES CONSULTED

2.2.1. This Heritage Statement has been prepared taking into consideration the historical background of the site and the wider area. Sources consulted included:

- National Heritage List for England;
- Heritage Gateway;
- Rochdale Borough Council Local List; and
- Historical mapping.

2.2.2. In addition, a site visit was undertaken on 26th March 2026 to inspect the site and to better understand the heritage significance of the heritage assets identified and how their settings contribute to their significance.

2.3 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

HERITAGE VALUES

2.3.1. The document *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* (English Heritage, 2008) identifies four principal heritage values that should be taken into account when assessing significance. These values are:

- Evidential - deriving from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past activity;
- Historical - deriving from the ways in which people, events and aspects of past life can be connected through a place to the present;
- Aesthetic - deriving from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place; and

- Communal - deriving from the meaning of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience and memory.

2.3.2. The assessment of the significance of the heritage assets identified uses these heritage values.

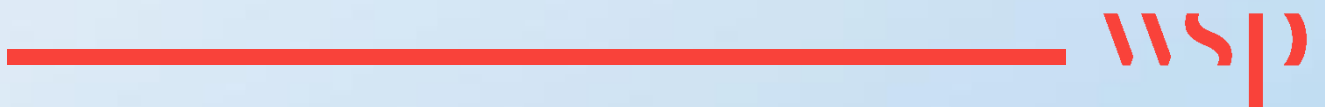
LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

2.3.3. There are also four commonly accepted levels of significance as well as neutral and an intrusive grade. The following levels of significance are based on criteria from the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB 2 Volume 11, 2009) and from guidance provided by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS, 2011):

- Very High Level of Significance: World Heritage Sites (including nominated sites) and assets of acknowledged international importance.
- High Level of Significance: Scheduled Monuments (including proposed sites); Grade I and II* Listed Buildings; Grade I and II* Registered Parks & Gardens; non-designated heritage assets of schedulable or exceptional quality and importance; and conservation areas containing very important buildings.
- Medium Level of Significance: Designated or non-designated assets that have exceptional qualities or contribute to regional research objectives; conservation areas; Grade II Listed Buildings; and Grade II Registered Parks & Gardens.
- Low Level of Significance: a non-designated asset important at a local level, including buildings which make a positive contribution to a conservation area. Some historic fabric but limited evidence and makes little contribution to significance. Buildings and parts of structures in this category should be retained where possible, although there is more scope for adaptation.
- No interest: the element is historically unimportant but does not have a negative visual impact on the surrounding buildings. May include insignificant late twentieth century interventions to listed buildings. The removal or adaptation of structures in this category is usually acceptable where the work will enhance a related heritage asset.
- Intrusive: the element is historically unimportant and has a negative visual impact on the surrounding buildings. Wherever practicable, removal of negative features should be considered, taking account of setting and opportunities for enhancement.

3

DESCRIPTION, SIGNIFICANCE AND SETTING OF HERITAGE ASSETS



3 DESCRIPTION, SIGNIFICANCE AND SETTING OF HERITAGE ASSETS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

- 3.1.1. This section describes the significance and setting of the heritage assets that need to be considered as part of this assessment. It should be read in conjunction with **Appendix B: Historical Mapping**, **Appendix C: Heritage Assets Maps** and **Appendix D: Site Photographs**. This section starts with a summary of the historical development of the site and its context.

3.2 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

- 3.2.1. Ordnance Survey mapping from the mid-nineteenth century and shows the site and its surroundings primarily in agricultural use. The area was characterised by dispersed farmsteads and a network of rural lanes and routes. Ordnance Survey mapping published in 1851 shows some sand pits, Barlow's coal pits and some old sandstone quarries. By the late nineteenth century and into the twentieth century, the surrounding settlements of Unsworth, Middleton and Heywood had grown, but the site and the surrounding area remained largely in agricultural use.
- 3.2.2. The character of the wider area surrounding the site became more urbanised from the second half of the twentieth century with the opening of the M62 in the early 1970s, followed by the opening of the M66 in the mid-1970s. Birch Industrial Estate was constructed in the 1980s. Development of the Heywood Distribution Centre, located to the north of the site, began in the late 1990s. More recently the Queen Elizabeth Way, located to the north-east of the site, opened in 2022.

3.3 IDENTIFIED HERITAGE ASSETS

- 3.3.1. In order to assess the potential impact on built heritage assets within the surroundings of the site, a study area comprising a 1km radius of the site has been defined for designated heritage assets and a study area comprising a 500m radius of the site has been defined for non-designated heritage assets. The difference in the study areas for designated and non-designated heritage assets reflects their level of significance.
- 3.3.2. A search of the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) – a register of all nationally protected historic buildings and sites (listed buildings, Scheduled Monuments, protected wrecks, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields and World Heritage Sites) – has revealed that there are no nationally protected heritage assets within the site. Within a 1km radius of the site, the search has identified one listed building, *Lower Whittle Farmhouse*, which is Grade II listed (NHLE: 1068502), to the east/south-east of the site. It is shown on the Heritage Assets Map contained in Appendix C.
- 3.3.3. A search of Rochdale Borough Council's website has revealed that the site does not fall within a conservation area, but within a 1km radius of the site there is the Birch Village Conservation Area. The extent of the conservation area is shown in Appendix C.
- 3.3.4. Rochdale Borough Council maintains a list of non-designated heritage assets, which was last updated on 19th February 2026. There are three buildings located within a 500m radius of the site that are identified the Council's list: Higher Fields Farm, Broom Hill Farm, and Stock Nook Farm.

These farmsteads are also identified on the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record. The location of the farmsteads is shown on the Heritage Assets Map contained in Appendix C.

- 3.3.5. The heritage assets identified above are described in more detail below. The potential impact on these heritage assets is then assessed in Section 5: Impact Assessment of this Heritage Statement.

3.4 LISTED BUILDINGS

Lower Whittle Farmhouse (NHLE: 1068502)

Description

- 3.4.1. As set out above, there is only one Grade II Listed building within a 1km radius of the site, which is located approximately 755m to the south-east. Lower Whittle Farmhouse is a timber-framed structure dating from the seventeenth century that was substantially rebuilt in the eighteenth century. The farmhouse is two storeys and comprises four bays. It has rendered masonry walls, which incorporate much of the timber-framed structure, and a slate covered roof.

Heritage significance

- 3.4.2. The heritage significance of Lower Whittle Farmhouse primarily derives from its historical and architectural (aesthetic) interest as a surviving seventeenth century farmhouse. It was first listed on 23rd March 1987. As a Grade II listed building, the farmhouse is of national interest.

Contribution of site to setting

- 3.4.3. Whilst the fields surrounding the Lower Whittle Farmhouse provide a wider rural setting to the listed building, there is no intervisibility between the farmhouse and the site due to the several large modern outbuildings/barns located immediately to the north. Lower Whittle Farm is enclosed on three sides by agricultural buildings (both traditional and modern). The site is completely physically and visually divorced from the listed building and is not considered to form part of its setting.

3.5 BIRCH VILLAGE CONSERVATION AREA

Description

- 3.5.1. The Birch Village Conservation Area falls within a 1km radius of the site. It covers the small village of Birch, which is located approximately 2 miles north-west of Middleton and 5.3 miles south-west of Rochdale town centre. The village follows the Heywood Old Road. Most of the village developed in the early nineteenth century following the construction of Birch Mill. By the late 1820s the village was large enough to support a parish church and St. Mary's Church was built in 1829 (this was replaced by a new building on a nearby site in 1962). By the mid-nineteenth century the village comprises a series of terraced and houses public houses along Heywood Old Road. Birch Mill continued to develop until the mid-twentieth century. Today, key features of Birch Mill survive, but it has suffered a number of fires and parts of it have been lost. The notable architect Edgar Wood had a significant influence on Birch designing a cluster of high-quality buildings in the Arts and Crafts style, including the Fountain Horse Trough Public House, which is Grade II listed (NHLE: 1245928).

Heritage significance

- 3.5.2. The special interest of the Birch Village Conservation Area is set out in the adopted conservation area appraisal. The architectural and historic interest of the conservation area predominantly lies in its distinctive nineteenth century townscape and its association with the notable architect Edgar

Wood. The character of the conservation area is closely related to its historic development associated with Birch Mill, the resultant workers housing and the Church of St. Mary. The relationship between these uses – industrial, residential and ecclesiastical – forms a key part of the character of the area.

Contribution of site to setting

- 3.5.3. It is worth noting that only the very edge of the Birch Village Conservation Area falls within a 1km radius of the site. Furthermore, the M62 motorway, which is characterised by dense belts of tree planting along either side, is located between the conservation area and the site. As a result, due to physical distance, changes in topography and intervening development, the site is completely physically and visually divorced from the conservation area and is not considered to form part of its setting. It does not contribute to the special interest set out in the adopted conservation area appraisal.

3.6 BROOM HILL FARM

Description

- 3.6.1. Broom Hill Farm is recorded on the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record as a ‘possible Georgian brick farmhouse building around a courtyard’. It is located at the junction of Whittle Lane and Moss Hall Road, approximately 235m to the south of the application site boundary (the access road off Moss Hall Road), but it is located approximately 485m to the south of the site itself.

Heritage significance

- 3.6.2. Broom Hill Farm is architecturally modest and altered but has a degree of local architectural interest. It also has some interest in providing an understanding of the area’s historic character of dispersed farmsteads and rural lanes. As a non-designated heritage asset of local interest, Broom Hill Farm is considered to have a low level of heritage significance.

Contribution of site to significance

- 3.6.3. Located between Broom Hill Farm and the site is the existing Birch Business Park. The original farmland setting to the north of Broom Hill Farm has been lost through the development of Birch Business Park. As a result, the site is completely physically and visually divorced from Broom Hill Farm and is not considered to form part of its setting.

3.7 HIGHER FIELDS FARM

Description

- 3.7.1. Higher Fields Farm is a former farmstead dating from the early nineteenth century with later nineteenth century additions. It is highly altered, including the buildings and their immediate settings that largely comprises hard surfacing used for car parking.

Heritage significance

- 3.7.2. Higher Fields Farm is highly altered, which has diminished its heritage significance. It has some remaining interest as a legible historic farmstead, which contributes to the understanding of the area’s historic rural character comprising a series of dispersed farmsteads and rural lanes. As a non-designated heritage asset of local interest, Higher Fields Farm is considered to have a low level of heritage significance.

Contribution of site to significance

- 3.7.3. The site is located approximately 100m to the east/south-east of Higher Fields Farm. It is visible from the farmstead and is considered to form part of its setting. The site is considered to form part of wider unbuilt setting to the non-designated heritage asset, which is consistent with its original use as a farmstead. However, the site is just a small part of the wider setting of Higher Fields Farm and its contribution to the heritage significance of the farmstead is limited.

3.8 STOCK NOOK

Description

- 3.8.1. Stock Nook is a former farmstead, which is considered to date from the early nineteenth century. It is referred to as Doctor's Moss on Ordnance Survey mapping published in 1851. The mapping shows a T-shaped building and a further detached building along with a well. The farmstead later became known as Stock Nook. There is currently a series of villa style buildings, orientated in a north-east to south-west direction, rendered and painted white. It is unclear whether the current villas represent an extended and altered version of the T-shaped building shown on mapping from 1851, or whether some of the villas replaced the original buildings. There are a small number of outbuildings to the south.

Heritage significance

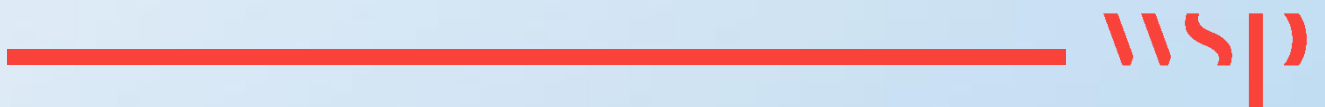
- 3.8.2. Stock Nook is architecturally modest and altered but has a degree of local architectural and historical interest. It has some interest in providing an understanding of the area's historic character of dispersed farmsteads and rural lanes. As a non-designated heritage asset of local interest, Stock Nook is considered to have a low level of heritage significance

Contribution of site to significance

- 3.8.3. The site is located approximately 350m to the west/north-west of Stock Nook at its closest point. There are distant glimpsed views of the site from the farmstead, and it is considered to form part of its setting. The site is considered to form part of wider unbuilt setting of the non-designated heritage asset, which is consistent with its original use as a farmstead. However, the site is just a small part of the wider setting of Stock Nook and its contribution to the heritage significance of the farmstead is limited. The site visit revealed that construction work is occurring within the immediate setting of Stock Nook, which is eroding its immediate rural setting (as shown with the photographs contain in Appendix D).

4

RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND PLANNING POLICY



4 RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND PLANNING POLICY

4.1 THE PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990

- 4.1.1. The statutory test remains the starting point for the consideration of proposals affecting heritage assets.
- 4.1.2. Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states: “In considering whether to grant planning permission (or permission in principle) for development which affects a Listed Building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses”.
- 4.1.3. Section 72 (1) of the Act states that with respect to any buildings or other land in a Conservation Area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.
- 4.1.4. A legislative change brought about by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, is the insertion of a new section 58B into the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Whereas previously, the statutory duty on local planning authorities to have special regard to the preservation of heritage assets extended only to Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas under the Listed Building Act, section 58B of the TCPA 1990 extends the duty to preserve or enhance to any “relevant asset”, namely Scheduled Monuments, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields and World Heritage Sites.

4.2 NATIONAL POLICY

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF) (2024)

- 4.2.1. Chapter 16 of the NPPF (2024) sets out national planning policy on the historic environment.
- 4.2.2. Paragraph 202 states that heritage assets range from buildings of local historic value to those of international significance.
- 4.2.3. Paragraph 210 provides a framework for decision making on proposals that could have an impact on heritage assets setting out that:
 - “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.”*
- 4.2.4. Paragraph 207 states that:
 - “In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by*

their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposals on their significance."

4.2.5. Paragraphs 212 to 221 set out how potential impacts should be considered in the determination of applications. Paragraph 212 requires *"great weight to be given to the (heritage) asset's conservation"* with Paragraph 206 stating that *"any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification"*. Paragraph 214 sets out matters to be considered where proposed works would lead to substantial harm. Paragraph 215 states that where proposals would result in less than substantial harm, the harm *"should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use."*

4.2.6. Paragraph 216 states that:

"The effect of an application of 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."

4.3 LOCAL POLICY

4.3.1. The development plan for Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council is as follows:

- Rochdale Local Plan; and
- Greater Manchester Combined Authority Places for Everyone Joint Plan.

4.3.2. The Rochdale Local Plan comprises the Rochdale Core Strategy and Saved Policies of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP).

Saved Unitary Development Plan (UDP)

4.3.3. The site lies outside of the Defined Urban Area and within the Green Belt as designated under Saved Policy G/D/2 of the UDP. Core Strategy policy G4 states that development in the Green Belt will be restricted unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated. To note, following the adoption of PfE, the site and wider area has been released from the Green Belt.

Rochdale Core Strategy (CS)

4.3.4. Core Strategy Policy P2 sets out that the Council will require new development to integrate successfully with the key natural features of the borough, protect and open up important views of hills and valleys and conserve and enhance townscape character. It sets out the need to conserve, enhance and promote key heritage assets including consideration of their wider settings.

Draft Local Plan

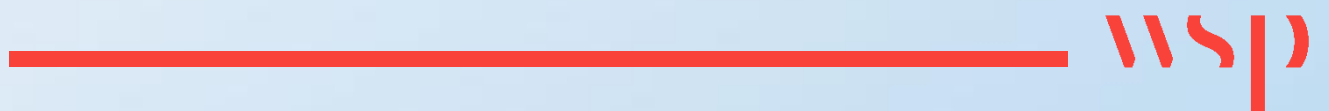
4.3.5. A new Local Plan is currently being prepared. A final version of the draft Local Plan will be consulted upon in Summer 2026. The Local Plan will then be submitted for examination, before being adopted in 2027.

Greater Manchester Combined Authority Places for Everyone Joint Plan

- 4.3.6. The Places for Everyone Plan is a joint development plan document for 9 Greater Manchester districts - Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan. It took effect and became part of the statutory development plan for each of the 9 districts on 21 March 2024 and covers the period from 2022-2039 with an overarching vision to make Greater Manchester one of the best places in the world to 'grow up, get on and grow old'.
- 4.3.7. **Policy JP-P1 (Sustainable Places)** sets out that all development, wherever appropriate, should be consistent with conserving and enhancing the historic environment, local history and culture, enable a clear understanding of how the place has developed, and respect and acknowledge the character and identity of the locality in terms of design, siting, size, scale and materials used.
- 4.3.8. **Policy JP-P2 (Heritage)** states that the Council will proactively manage and work with partners to conserve, sustain and enhance the historic environment and heritage assets and their settings. The Council also sets out that opportunities will be pursued to aid the promotion, enjoyment, understanding and interpretation of heritage assets, thus maximising wider public benefits and reinforcing Greater Manchester's distinct character, identity and sense of place.
- 4.3.9. **Policy JP-Allocation 1.1** the site falls within a key Places for Everyone Allocation known as 'Policy JP Allocation 1.1 Heywood / Pilsworth (Northern Gateway)'. The allocation seeks to deliver a total of around 1,200,000 sqm of industrial and warehousing space (with around 935,000 sqm being delivered within the plan period). The Northern Gateway is due to deliver a total of around 1,200,000 sqm of industrial and warehousing space (with around 935,000 sqm being delivered within the plan period).

5

IMPACT ASSESSMENT



5 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 INTRODUCTION

- 5.1.1. As set out in Section 3, the site is not within a conservation area and there are no heritage assets within it. Therefore, the proposals will not cause direct harm to the significance of any heritage assets. Any harm that could be caused will only arise if the development falls within the setting of any heritage assets, and then only if the proposals harm the contribution that the setting makes to the significance of the identified heritage assets or the ability to appreciate that significance.
- 5.1.2. 'Setting' is the surroundings in which an asset is experienced. Historic England's guidance states that setting itself is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation. Its importance lies in what it contributes towards the significance of the heritage asset or the ability to appreciate that significance. Furthermore, Historic England's guidance in relation to the setting of heritage assets states that, 'Conserving or enhancing heritage assets by taking their settings into account need not prevent change' (Historic England, 2017, paragraph 18).
- 5.1.3. This section assesses the impact of the development proposals on the heritage assets that have the potential to be affected by the development proposals:
- Lower Whittle Farmhouse (NHLE: 1068502);
 - Birch Village Conservation Area
 - Broom Hill Farm
 - Higher Fields Farm; and
 - Stock Nook.

5.2 LOWER WHITTLE FARMHOUSE (NHLE: 1068502)

- 5.2.1. As set out in Section 3, the site is completely physically and visually divorced from Lower Whittle Farmhouse and is not considered to form part of its setting. As a result, there would be no harmful impact on its setting from the development proposals. Furthermore, the proposed development would not block views towards farmhouse, nor be seen within key views of the listed building. As a result, there would be no harmful impact on how the locally listed building is understood, appreciated and experienced, and its heritage significance would be preserved.

5.3 BIRCH VILLAGE CONSERVATION AREA

- 5.3.1. As set out in Section 3, due to physical distance, changes in topography and intervening development, the site is completely physically and visually divorced from the Birch Village Conservation Area and is not considered to form part of its setting. It does not contribute to the special interest of the conservation area set out in the adopted conservation area appraisal. As a result, the heritage significance of the conservation area would be preserved.

5.4 BROOM HILL FARM

- 5.4.1. As set out in Section 3, Broom Hill Farm is located to the south of the site. However, the existing Birch Business Park is located between Broom Hill Farm and the site. As a result, the site is completely physically and visually divorced from Broom Hill Farm and is not considered to form part of its setting. The original farmland setting to the north of Broom Hill Farm has been lost through the development of Birch Business Park. Furthermore, the proposed development would not block

views towards farmhouse, nor be seen within key views of the listed building. As a result, there would be no harmful impact on how Broom Hill Farm is understood, appreciated and experienced, and its heritage significance would be preserved.

5.5 HIGHER FIELDS FARM

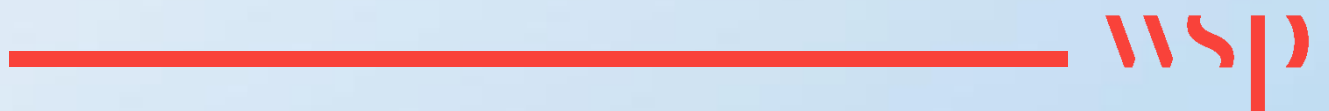
- 5.5.1. As set out in Section 3, the site is located approximately 100m to the east/south-east of Higher Fields Farm. It is visible from the farmstead and is considered to form part of its setting. However, the site is just a small part of the wider setting of Higher Fields Farm and its contribution to the heritage significance of the farmstead is limited. The development proposals would result in an extension to the existing Birch Business Park, which is located to the south-east of Higher Fields Farm. Whilst the proposed development would result in the loss of part of the wider unbuilt setting of Higher Fields Farm, the non-designated heritage asset would remain as a legible historic farmstead. The five fields immediately surrounding the farmstead would remain undeveloped as part of the proposals. As a result, the impact on the heritage significance of the farmstead from the development proposals would be low.

5.6 STOCK NOOK

As set out in Section 3, the site is located approximately 350m to the west/north-west of Stock Nook at its closest point. There are distant, glimpsed views of the site from the farmstead and it is considered to form part of its setting. However, the site is just a small part of the wider setting of Stock Nook and its contribution to the heritage significance of the farmstead is limited. The development proposals would result in an extension to the existing Birch Business Park. Whilst the proposed development would result in the loss of part of the wider unbuilt setting of Stock Nook, the non-designated heritage asset would remain as a legible historic farmstead. The fields immediately surrounding the farmstead would remain undeveloped as part of the proposals. As a result, the impact on the heritage significance of the farmstead from the development proposals would be negligible.

6

CONCLUSION



6 CONCLUSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

- 6.1.1. In accordance with Paragraph 207 of the NPPF (2024), this report has identified and described the significance of the heritage assets that have the potential to be affected by the development proposals. It has also considered the impact of the development proposals on the significance of these heritage assets.

6.2 KEY FINDINGS

- 6.2.1. This assessment has found that:
- There are no statutory listed buildings within the site, and the site does not fall within a designated heritage asset (for example, a conservation area).
 - There is one listed building within a 1km radius of the site, Lower Whittle Farmhouse, which is Grade II listed (NHLE: 1068502). The site is completely physically and visually divorced from the listed building and is not considered to form part of its setting. As a result, there would be no harmful impact on how the listed building is understood, appreciated and experienced, and its heritage significance would be preserved.
 - The Birch Village Conservation Area falls within a 1km radius of the site. The site, located to the north-west of the conservation area, does not form part of its setting. The site would remain visually divorced from the conservation area due to sufficient distance and intervening development. As a result, there would be no harmful impact on how the conservation area is understood, appreciated and experienced, and its heritage significance would be preserved.
 - There are three farmsteads within a 500m radius of the site that are on Rochdale Borough Council's list of non-designated heritage assets and are recorded on the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record: Broom Hill Farm and Higher Fields Farm and Stock Nook.
 - There are varying degrees of intervisibility between the non-designated heritage assets and the site. The site is not considered to form part of the setting of Broom Hill Farm and there would be no harmful impact on the farmstead is understood, appreciated and experience from the proposed development and its heritage significance would be preserved.
 - The site is visible from Higher Fields Farm and Stock Nook (albeit views from Stock Nook are distant glimpsed views), and the site is considered to form part of the setting of these non-designated heritage assets. However, the site is just a small part of the wider setting of Higher Fields Farm and Stock Nook and its contribution to the heritage significance of the farmsteads is limited. The fields immediately surrounding the farmsteads would remain undeveloped as part of the proposals. As a result, the impact on the heritage significance of Higher Fields Farm and Stock Nook from the development proposals would be low and negligible respectively. This would need to be weighed against the benefits of the proposed development.

Appendix A

REFERENCES





British Standards Institute (BSI) (2013) Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings (BS 7913: 2013).

English Heritage (2008) Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment.

Historic England (2015) Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment.

Historic England (2017) Historic Environments Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2nd Edition).

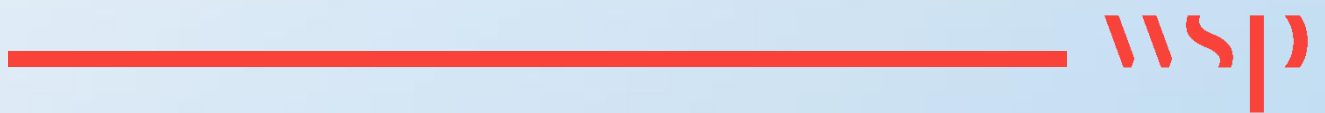
Historic England (2019) Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets, Historic England Advice Note 12.

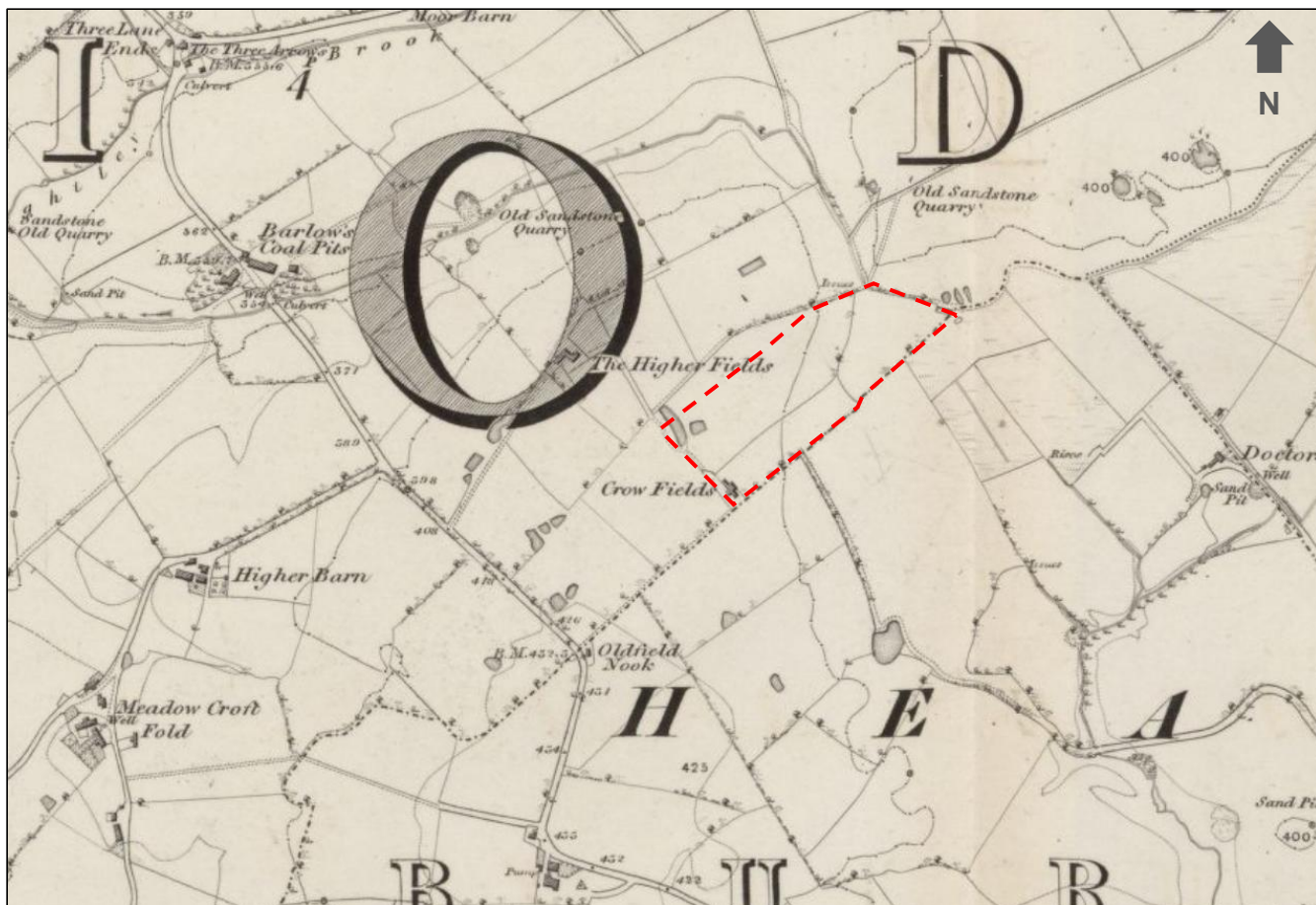
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Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (undated) Birch Village Conservation Area Appraisal

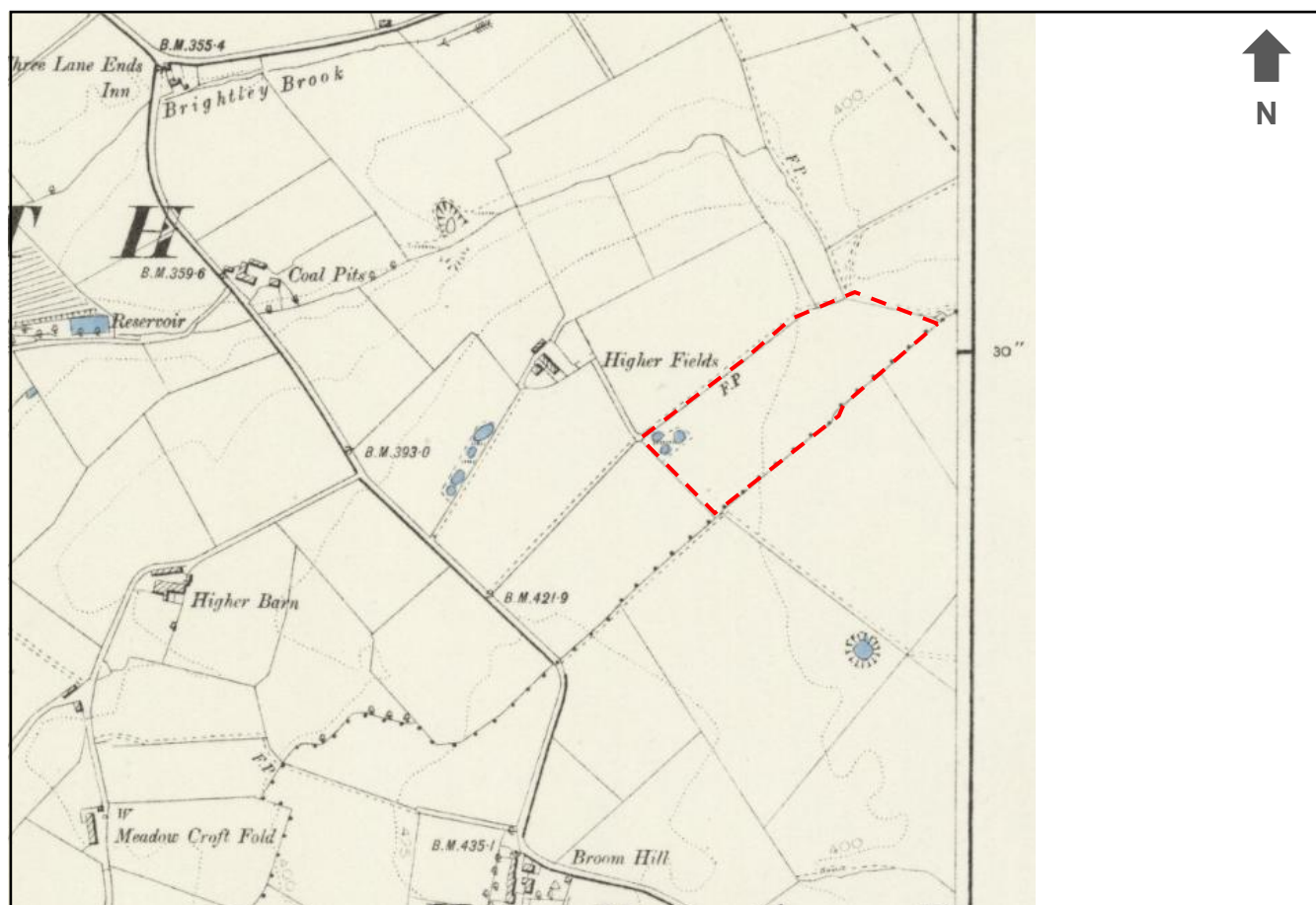
Appendix B

HISTORICAL MAPPING

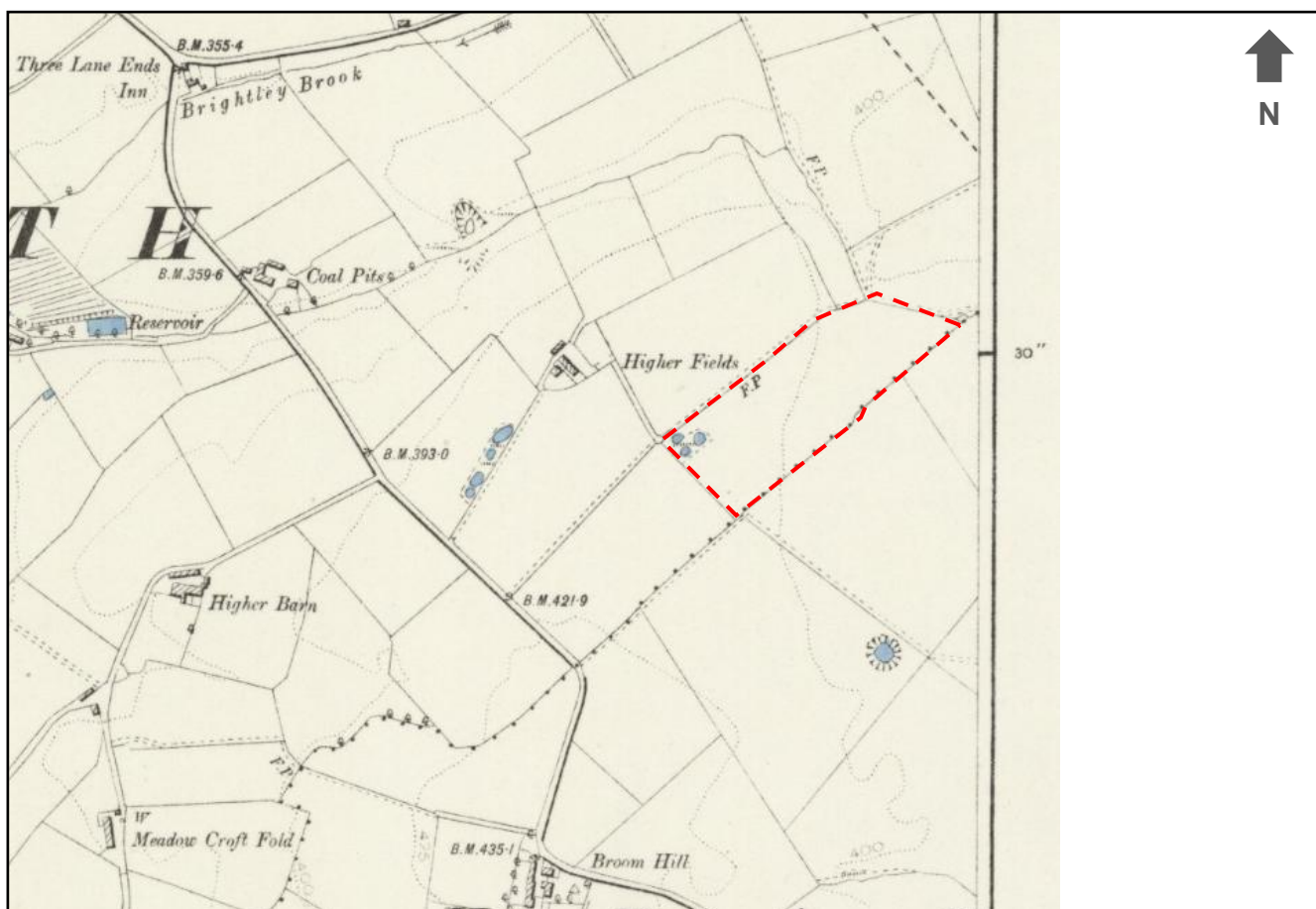
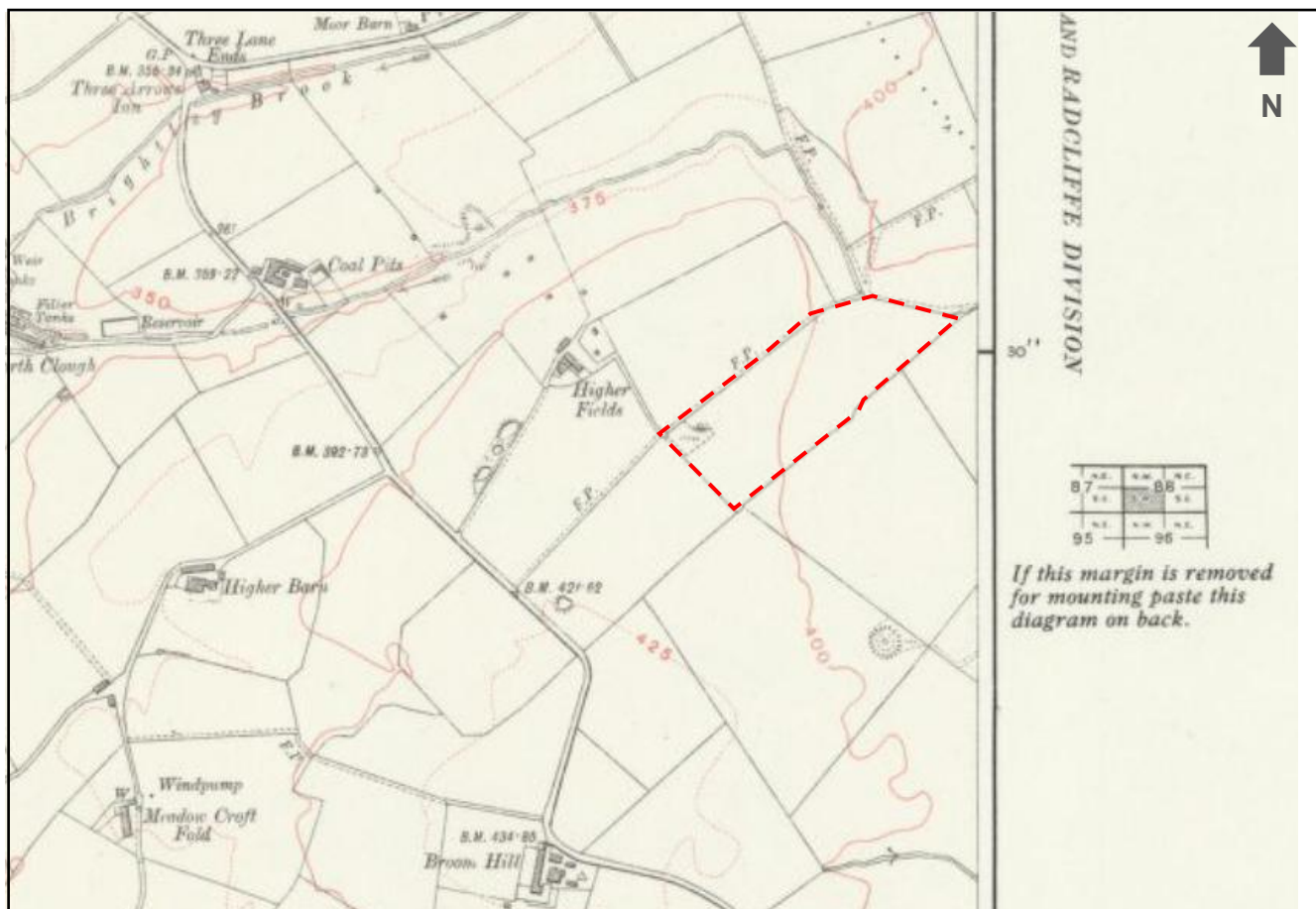




Historical Map, Ordnance Survey, Published in 1851, Source: National Library of Scotland
The site boundary is shown in red (approximate only)



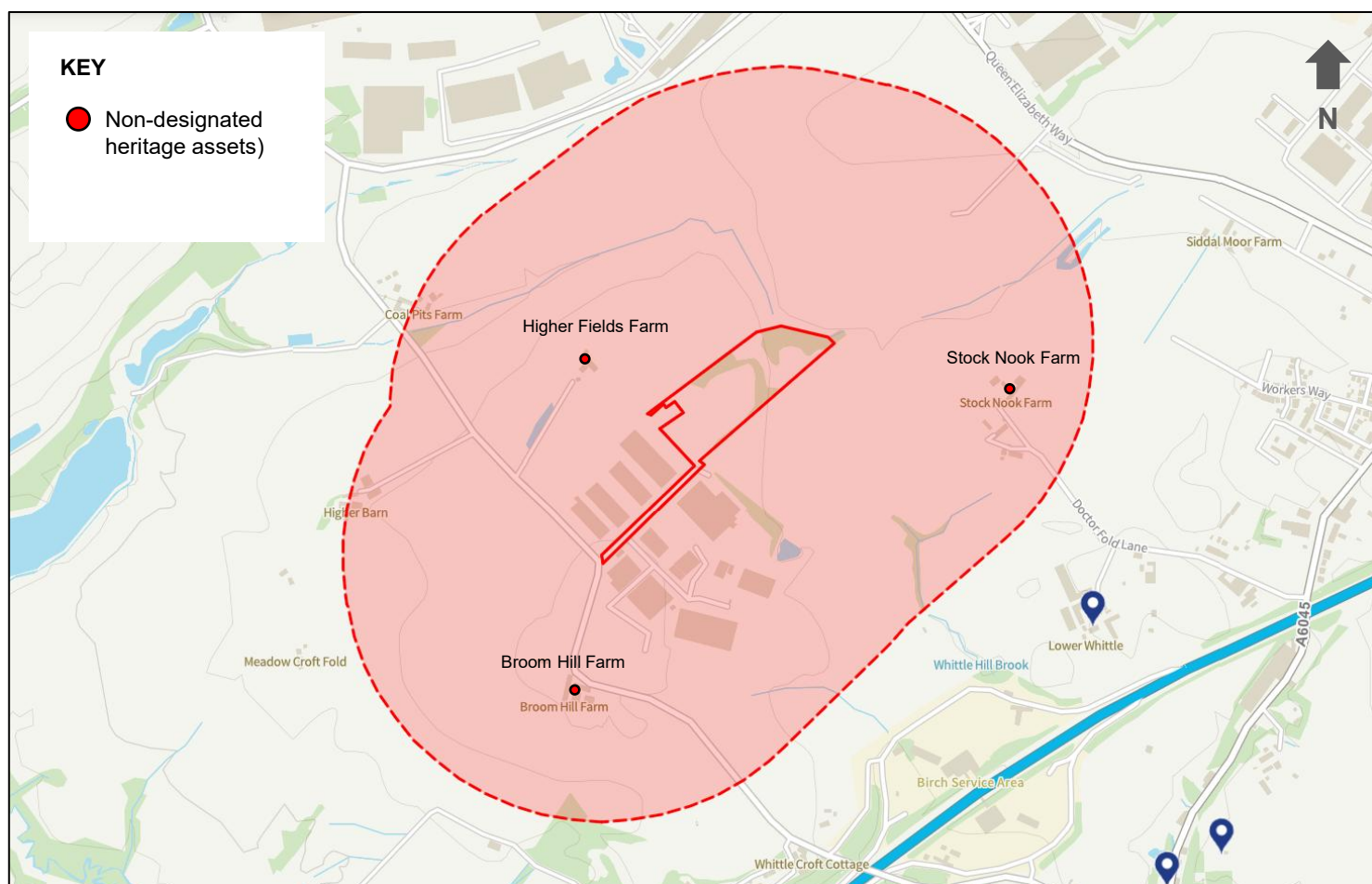
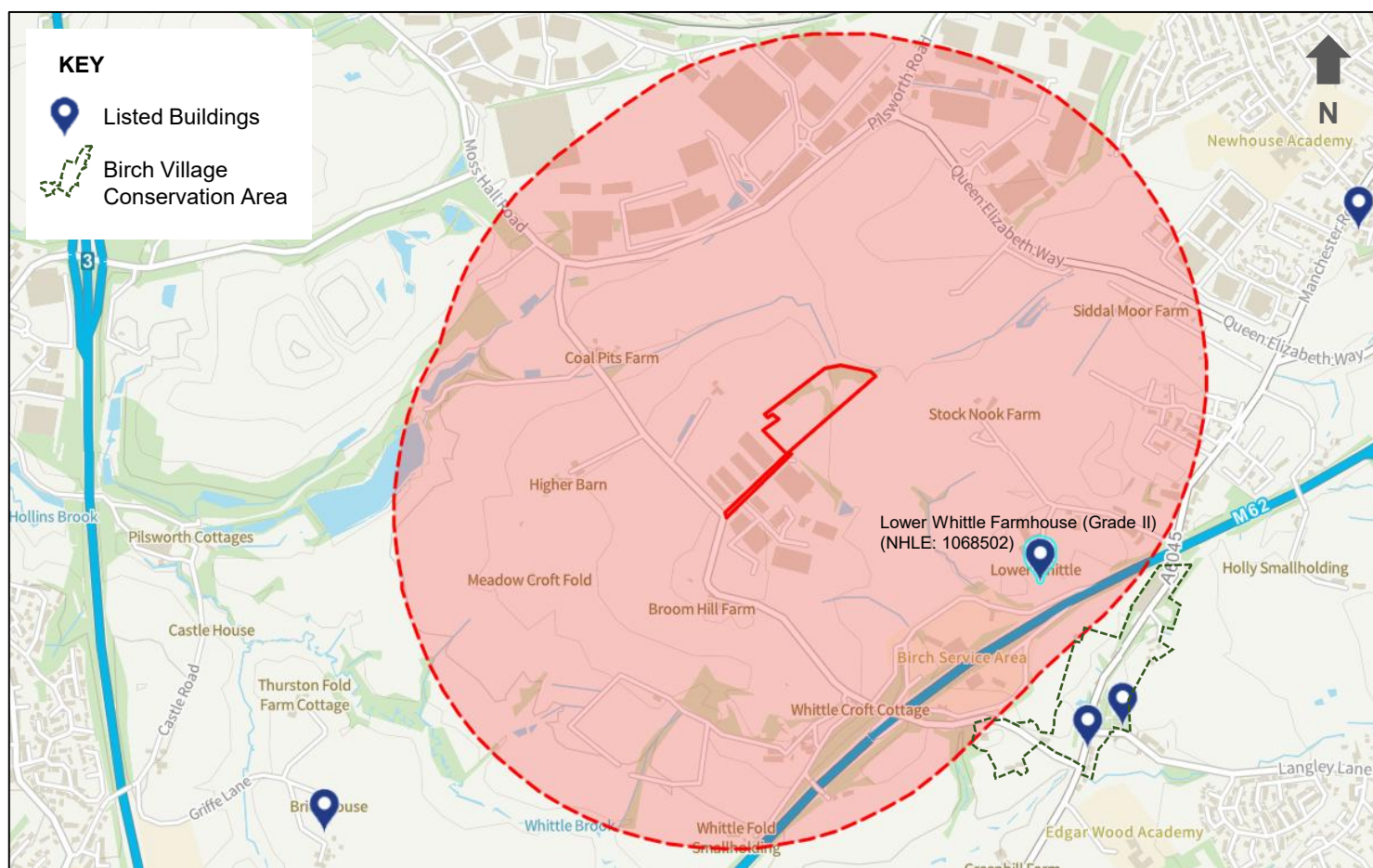
Historical Map, Ordnance Survey, Published in 1894, Source: National Library of Scotland
The site boundary is shown in red (approximate only)



Appendix C

HERITAGE ASSETS MAPS





Appendix D

SITE PHOTOGRAPHS





Heywood Distribution Park



View from within the Site looking north



Stock Nook



View from within the Site looking east/south-east



View from within the Site looking south-east



View from within the northern most part of Site looking west. Higher Fields Farm is visible in this view.



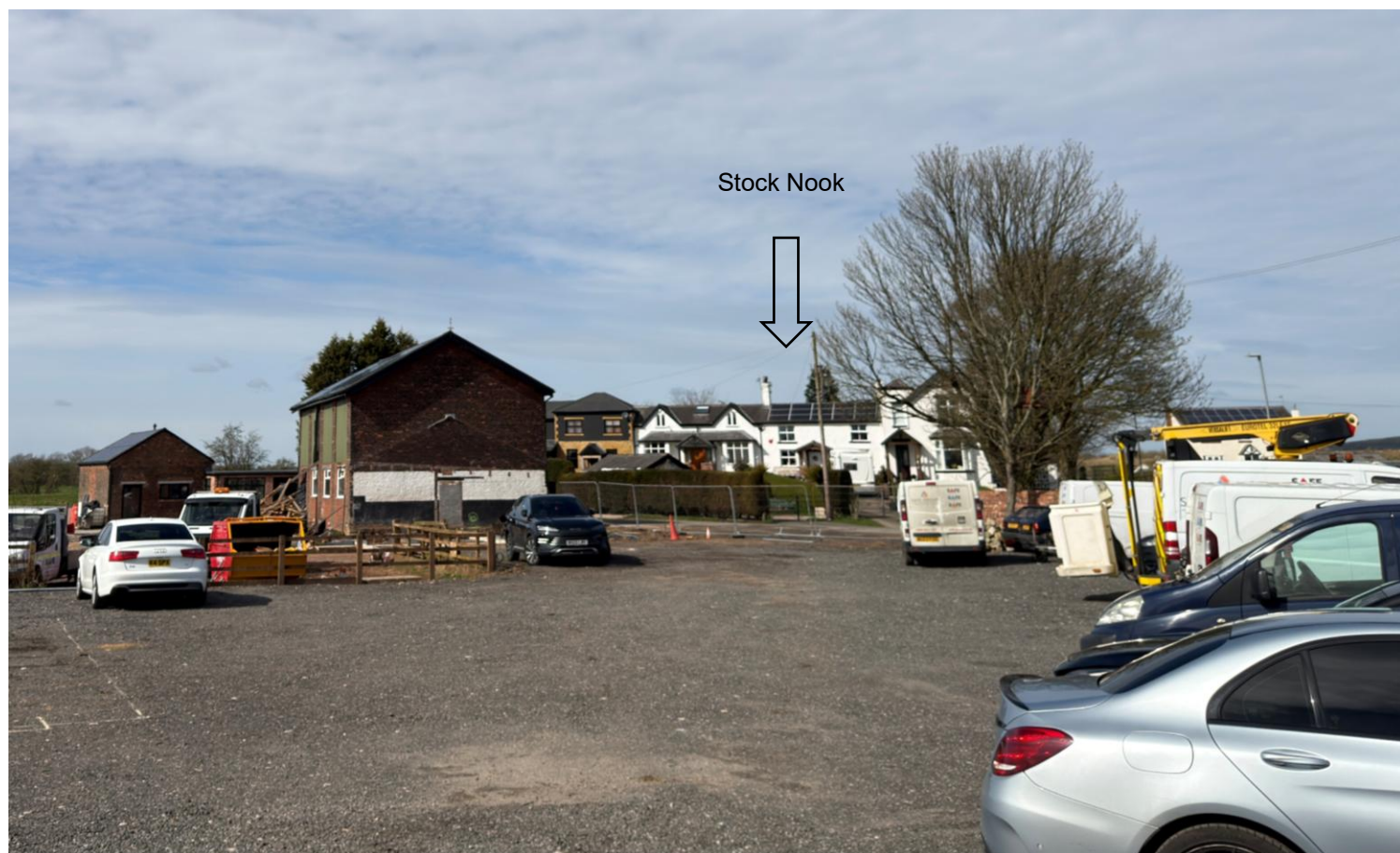
View of Broom Hill Farm from Whittle Lane



View from the entrance to Broom Hill Farm looking north towards the Site. Views of the Site are screened by the existing Birch Business Park



View looking north-east towards the Site from the entrance to Higher Fields Farm (also referred to as Moss Hall)



View of Stock Nook with construction work underway within its immediate setting



View looking south towards Lower Whittle Farmhouse from Dr Fold Lane (the Site is not visible in this view)



View looking west/north-west from the entrance to Lower Whittle Farmhouse off Dr Fold Lane towards the Site



View looking north out of the Birch Village Conservation Area along Heywood Old Road as it passes under the M62 motorway (the Site is not visible in this view)



View looking north-west out of the Birch Village Conservation Area along Whittle Lane (the Site is not visible in this view)



The M62 motorway, with dense tree planting on either side, is located between the Birch Village Business Park and the Site. As a result, the Site is physically and visually divorced from the conservation area



WSP
3 Wellington Place
Leeds
LS1 4AP

wsp.com

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