



Yeargate Limited

LAND NORTH OF BIRCH BUSINESS PARK

Environmental Statement Vol I Chapter 14 –
Cultural Heritage

August 2026

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14 CULTURAL HERITAGE

14.1 INTRODUCTION

14.1.1. This Chapter reports the outcome of the assessment of likely significant effects arising from the proposed development upon Cultural Heritage. It focuses on above ground heritage assets and assesses the potentially significant effects to the below identified receptors:

- Lower Whittle Farmhouse (NHLE: 1068502);
- Birch Village Conservation Area;
- Broom Hill Farm (non-designated heritage asset);
- Higher Fields Farm (non-designated heritage asset); and
- Stock Nook (non-designated heritage asset).

14.2 METHODOLOGY

SCOPE OF THE ASSESSMENT

14.2.1. This Chapter focuses on the built heritage assets within the surroundings of the Site (there are no built heritage assets within the Site itself).

14.2.2. 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.

- Statutory designated heritage assets – there are no designated heritage assets present within the boundary of the Site. Within the 1km study area, there is one Grade II listed building – Lower Whittle Farmhouse (NHLE: 1068502) – and a small portion of one conservation area – the Birch Village Conservation Area.
- Non-designated heritage assets – there are no non-designated heritage assets present within the boundary of the Site. There are three non-designated built heritage assets within the wider study area – Broom Hill Farm, Higher Fields Farm and Stock Nook.

METHOD OF BASELINE DATA COLLATION

Desk Study

14.2.3. The baseline data gathering exercise has examined the following:

- Relevant national and local planning policy;
- Relevant guidance found in the NPPF and PPG;
- A search of the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record (HER) data centred on the Site and extending from the boundary of the Site (the Study Area);
- Historical background (including published and unpublished sources), drawn from a variety of sources including Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council;
- National heritage datasets including The National Heritage List for England (NHLE), Historic England Archive (HEA), Images of England, Historic England Research Records, Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC), www.britainfromabove.org.uk, and Google Earth;

- Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council, Heywood Non-Designated Heritage Assets (February, 2026); and
- Historical maps available online.

Site Visit and Surveys

- 14.2.4. A site visit was undertaken on 26th April 2026. The survey included accessible areas of the Site and the Study Area.

ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

- 14.2.5. This ES Chapter assesses the potential for likely significant effects from the Construction and Operational Phases of the proposed development on built heritage assets.
- 14.2.6. For the purposes of this ES Chapter, standard EIA terminology has been used. For example, the term 'heritage receptor' (heritage assets that have the potential to be affected by a proposed development), and 'sensitivity' (the degree of response of a receptor to change) are used.
- 14.2.7. This assessment has identified receptors within a 1km radius of the Site, assessed the sensitivity of the receptors by appraising their value and the contribution of setting to that value, and identified those receptors with a potential to experience a significant effect during the Construction and Operational Phases.
- 14.2.8. The assessment of significance follows the heritage interest approach to significance set out in the NPPF and has been used to ascribe a sensitivity to each receptor for the purposes of this assessment. This is informed by designation status, desktop research and fieldwork to inform a professional judgement against the heritage interests, taking into account the likely nature, date, extent, survival, condition, rarity and group value of the receptor.
- 14.2.9. Assessing the potential scale of impact is similarly an exercise of professional judgement, applying an understanding of the effects of the proposed development (the magnitude of change) on the sensitivity of the receptors established in the baseline conditions.
- 14.2.10. The scope of assessment has been determined in light of Paragraph 207 of the NPPF which requires applicants to describe the significance (sensitivity) of heritage assets (receptors) potentially affected by a proposed development. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact and effect of the proposed development on their significance.
- 14.2.11. The assessment methodology has been guided by various published documents including:
- Historic England GPA2 'Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment' (2015);
 - Historic England GPA3 'The Setting of Heritage Assets' (2017);
 - Historic England Advice Note 12: Statements of Heritage Significance (2019);
 - IEMA 'Principals of Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment' (2021);
 - ICOMOS 'Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties' (2011);
 - Design Manual for Roads and Bridges 'LA106: Cultural Heritage Assessment' (2019); and
 - North West England Regional Research Framework (2021).

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

- 14.2.12. The significance of effect thresholds for cultural heritage are determined by considering the sensitivity of the heritage receptors alongside the magnitude of impact that will be experienced.
- 14.2.13. The sensitivity criteria (significance in the content of NPPF terminology) are based upon the value of the heritage receptor. This is defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as:

The value of heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage assets physical presence but also from its setting.

- 14.2.14. The setting of a heritage asset is described in Annex 2 of the NPPF as:

The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance, or may be neutral.

- 14.2.15. The PPG (2014, updated 2019) provides the following interpretation of archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic interest:

“Archaeological interest: As defined in the Glossary to the National Planning Policy Framework, there will be archaeological interest in a heritage receptor if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

Architectural and artistic interest: These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage receptor has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skill, like sculpture.

Historic interest: An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage receptors can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage receptors with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation’s history, but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.”

- 14.2.16. The methodology for appraising significance is an exercise of professional judgement informed by an evidence base, comprising desk-top research of primary and secondary source material, together with a visit to the Site and the surrounding area. Source material consulted as part of this exercise

includes historical Ordnance Survey mapping and the interrogation of historical photographs via online sources including 'Britain from Above'¹ and Historic England's 'Aerial Photo Explorer'².

14.2.17. The assessment of setting has been undertaken with reference to the assessment steps set out in Historic England's guidance document GPA3 'The Setting of Heritage Assets'. This sets out a staged approach to taking decisions on setting as follows:

- Step 1: Identifying the heritage receptors affected and their settings;
- Step 2: Assessing whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage receptor(s);
- Step 3: Assessing the effect of the proposed development on the significance of the receptor(s);
- Step 4: Maximising enhancement and minimising harm; and
- Step 5: Making and documenting the decision and monitoring outcomes.

14.2.18. Steps 1, 2 and 3 are relevant to establishing the baseline condition; steps 4 and 5 deal with assessing the impact of the change and measures for mitigating any identified effect and will be considered as part of the ES Chapter.

Sensitivity (value)

14.2.19. Each heritage asset, or 'receptor', is ascribed a Sensitivity value in accordance with a five-point scale as shown in Table 14-1 below:

Table 14-1 - Criteria for Establishing Sensitivity of Heritage Receptors (adapted from ICOMOS 2011).

Magnitude of Impact	Criteria for Assessing Impact
High	■ Remains of inscribed international importance, such as World Heritage Sites; ■ Grade I and Grade II* Listed Buildings; ■ Grade I and Grade II* Registered Parks and Gardens; ■ Scheduled Monuments; ■ Registered Battlefields; ■ Conservation Areas containing very important buildings; and ■ Undesignated archaeological receptors of clear national or international importance.

¹ Britain from Above available online at < <https://britainfromabove.org.uk/>>

² <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/archive/collections/aerial-photos/>

Magnitude of Impact	Criteria for Assessing Impact
Moderate	- Grade II listed Buildings; - Conservation Areas; - Grade II Registered Parks and Gardens; - Undesignated buildings, monuments, sites or landscapes that can be demonstrated to have heritage value equivalent to the designation criteria; and - Designated or undesignated archaeological remains or sites that have regional interest.
Low	- Locally Listed Buildings as recorded on a local authority list; - Undesignated buildings, monuments, sites or landscapes that can be demonstrated to have heritage value equivalent to the local listing criteria; and - Archaeological remains of limited value but with a potential to have interest at a local level.
Not Significant	- Buildings, monuments, sites or landscapes identified as being of negligible or no historic, evidential, aesthetic or communal interest; and - Archaeological resources that have very little or no surviving archaeological interest.
High	- Remains of inscribed international importance, such as World Heritage Sites; - Grade I and Grade II* Listed Buildings; - Grade I and Grade II* Registered Parks and Gardens; - Scheduled Monuments; - Registered Battlefields; - Conservation Areas containing very important buildings; and - Undesignated archaeological receptors of clear national or international importance.

Magnitude of Impact

14.2.20. An impact can be characterised in terms of timing, scale, duration and reversibility. These can be described as short, medium or long-term, permanent or temporary.

14.2.21. A direct impact on a heritage receptor is likely to result from changes to the physical fabric of the receptor. An indirect impact is likely to result from changes to the receptor's setting.

14.2.22. In considering the potential magnitude of an impact, a professional judgement has been made about the receptor's susceptibility to change as a result of the proposed development Table 14-2 below sets out criteria that has been used to determine the magnitude of an impact, which can vary from 'Major' to 'No Change'.

Table 14-2 - Criteria for Establishing the Magnitude of Impact

Magnitude of Impact	Criteria for Assessing Impact
Major	■ Change such that the significance of the receptor is totally altered or destroyed; ■ Comprehensive change to setting.
Moderate	■ Change to the receptor, such that it is significantly modified; ■ Change to the setting such that it is significantly modified.
Minor	■ Change to the receptor, such that the receptor is slightly different; ■ Change to the setting.
Negligible	■ Very little change to the fabric or setting that would materially harm significance, approximating to a 'no change' situation.
No Change	■ No change to fabric or setting that would harm significance.

Significance of Effect

14.2.23. The assessment to determine the significance of the effect utilises a matrix that considers the sensitivity of the receptor against the magnitude of impact (change) from the proposed development (Table 14-3). The significance of effect is determined by the interaction of the receptor's sensitivity to change and the magnitude of change (impact). Effects that are graded as **Major** or **Moderate** are considered '**significant**' with respect to the EIA regulations. Effects can be adverse, beneficial, or neutral.

Table 14-3 - Significance of Effects Matrix

		Magnitude of Impact				
		No change	Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major
Sensitivity	High	Neutral	Minor Adverse/ Beneficial	Moderate Adverse/ Beneficial	Major Adverse/ Beneficial	Major Adverse/ Beneficial
	Moderate	Neutral	Minor Adverse/ Beneficial	Minor Adverse/ Beneficial	Moderate Adverse/ Beneficial	Major Adverse / Beneficial
	Low	Neutral	Negligible	Minor Adverse/ Beneficial Negligible	Minor Adverse/ Beneficial	Moderate Adverse / Beneficial
	Not Significant	Neutral	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Minor Adverse/ Beneficial

EIA “Significant Effects” versus NPPF “harm”

- 14.2.24. The degree of impact on a heritage asset (receptor) within the NPPF falls into three categories: substantial harm, less than substantial harm, and no harm.
- 14.2.25. There are more categories of impact used in the EIA assessment methodology than that used for the NPPF. In this sense, the EIA is more nuanced and would result in a greater range of outcomes in terms of the degree of impact.
- 14.2.26. EIA assessment grades impact as neutral, negligible, minor adverse/beneficial, moderate adverse/beneficial, and major adverse/beneficial. For the purposes of this assessment, impact that is assessed as beneficial is disregarded, as a positive effect would not be considered harmful (in NPPF terms).
- 14.2.27. When translating the degree of impact under the EIA methodology to the NPPF assessment, EIA best practice considers that a ‘significant adverse effect’ equates to ‘substantial harm’ under the NPPF. ‘Substantial harm’ is a high test as set out in the National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) Paragraph 18. This would, therefore, only apply to the heritage receptors that fall within the grades show in grey in Table 14-5
- 14.2.28. Under the EIA assessment process, the sensitivity of the receptor needs to be considered in addition to the magnitude of change (impact). A receptor could, therefore, be subject to ‘less than substantial harm’ under the NPPF and fall within ‘significant effect’ by the EIA assessment matrix. For example, a receptor that falls within ‘less than substantial harm’ under the NPPF and is of medium or low sensitivity could fall within significant effects if the magnitude of impact is moderate or major.

14.2.29. As outlined above, there is no published methodology or prescriptive criteria that enables a pre-judgement to be made as to whether a heritage asset (or receptor) that is subject to 'less than substantial harm' would also fall within the category of 'significant effect'. The application of the EIA methodology relies on professional judgement to establish the sensitivity of a receptor and the magnitude of impact. Professional judgement is also required to understand whether development that causes less than substantial harm to heritage would also result in significant effects on the heritage receptor. An assessment of 'less than substantial harm', therefore, does not also equate to no 'significant effect'. There is the potential for the pool of assets / receptors that experience 'less than substantial harm' to overlap with those that fall within the EIA category of 'significant effects'.

Assumptions and Limitations

14.2.30. The following limitations apply to this assessment:

- The baseline assessment has been prepared based on information readily available at the time of undertaking the assessment;
- The baseline assessment relies on the accuracy of secondary source data. There is always some degree of uncertainty in relation to these sources;
- During the visit to the Site and surrounding area, weather conditions, the time of day and seasonal factors influenced the visual assessment and photographic record of the environment; and
- Access to private properties has not been obtained.

14.2.31. The following assumptions have been made in this assessment:

- The Chapter assumes the worst-case scenario which comprises full build out to the proposal plans;
- Measures will be undertaken during the construction phase in order to minimise disruption and manage the impacts of the proposed development, with the implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), which will be secured by planning condition; and
- Tall plant and machinery, including cranes, will be in place for the minimum practicable period of time in the assessment of residual construction effects.

14.3 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK, POLICY AND GUIDANCE

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

14.3.1. The applicable legislative framework is summarised as follows:

- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979,
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and
- Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

14.3.2. Scheduled Monuments are afforded statutory protection under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. This statutory protection extends to direct works only. The setting of Scheduled Monuments is protected through local and national planning policy.

14.3.3. Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas are afforded statutory protection under the provisions on the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 66 requires the decision maker to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the heritage significance of the listed buildings and any contribution made by their setting when exercising their planning functions.

Section 72 requires that the decision maker must pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. The setting of conservation area is protected through local and national planning policy.

- 14.3.4. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires application for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

POLICY

National Policy

- 14.3.5. In December 2024, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government released the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). In line with current guidance, this section details the relevant policies and paragraphs appropriate for the proposed development from the latest edition of the NPPF (2024).
- 14.3.6. The NPPF sets out the Government Planning Policy, with Chapter 16 providing policy guidance for conserving and enhancing the historic environment. The guidance recognises the importance of preserving heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance and guides that any harm or loss to their significance should require clear and convincing justification.
- 14.3.7. Paragraphs 214 and 215 set out two decision making tests where proposals would lead to substantial and less than substantial harm, respectively. Paragraph 214 guides that substantial harm to or loss of significance should not be permitted unless that harm is necessary to deliver substantial public benefits that would outweigh the harm or loss, or other criteria are met. Paragraph 215 guides that where a development proposal would result in less than substantial harm, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.
- 14.3.8. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset is considered at paragraph 216. It notes that 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.
- 14.3.9. Implementation of the NPPF is supported by Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).³

Local Policy

- 14.3.10. The development plan for Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council is as follows:
- Rochdale Local Plan; and
 - Greater Manchester Combined Authority Places for Everyone Joint Plan.
- 14.3.11. The Rochdale Local Plan comprises the Rochdale Core Strategy and Saved Policies of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP).

³ MHCLG: Planning Practice Guidance (2014, amended 2019)

Saved Unitary Development Plan (UDP)

- 14.3.12. 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)

- 14.3.13. 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

- 14.3.14. 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

- 14.3.15. 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'.
- 14.3.16. 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.
- 14.3.17. 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.
- 14.3.18. In addition, this chapter has been prepared in accordance with the Government's National Planning Practice Guidance⁴ and guidance prepared by Historic England as set out below.

GUIDANCE

- 14.3.19. No standard methodologies exist for assessing the likely significance effects of a proposed development on the environment with respect to archaeology and built heritage through the EIA process. However, the assessment methodology will be guided by the following documents:

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment>

- The Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment's (IEMA) 'Principles of Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment' (2021)⁵ sets out an authoritative set of principles that promote good practice in cultural heritage impact assessment.
- The Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB)⁶ provides general guidance for environmental assessment and monitoring for impacts arising from highway schemes (LA 104 [2019]). LA 106 Revision 1 (2020) provides guidance specifically on assessing cultural heritage.
- The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) issued guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties (2011)⁷. Though specifically addressing World Heritage Sites and development impacts on their Outstanding Universal Value, the document provides a useful approach to the assessment and evaluation of impact.
- ClfA's Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment (2014)⁸ defines good practice for the execution and reporting of desk-based assessment in line with the regulations of ClfA.
- The North-West Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment (NWRRF) provides guidance on historic environment projects within the region. It provides: An up-to-date overview of current understanding – ie "what we currently know, a Research Agenda – identifying gaps in our knowledge and providing questions to fill these gaps and strategies to carry out this research.

14.3.20. In addition, the assessment is guided by best practice guidance, including from Historic England, the local planning authority and other statutory and non-statutory bodies where applicable.

14.4 BASELINE CONDITIONS

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

14.4.1. The baseline conditions are fully addressed in the Heritage Statement in Appendix 14.1, which includes a review of the historical development of the Site and its surroundings and contains historical mapping.

FUTURE BASELINE

14.4.2. If the proposed development were not implemented, then there would be no changes to the settings or sensitivity of the identified built heritage receptors. There would, however, likely be wider effects arising from local consented and forthcoming development sites.

SENSITIVE RECEPTORS

14.4.3. The following sensitive receptors have been assessed:

- Lower Whittle Farmhouse (NHLE: 1068502);
- Birch Village Conservation Area
- Broom Hill Farm (non-designated heritage asset);

⁵ IEMA, Principles of Cultural Heritage Impact Assessments (2021)

⁶ Design Manual for Roads and Bridges LA 104 (2019) and LA 106 Rev.1 (2020)

⁷ ICOMOS Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties (2011)

⁸ ClfA (2014) Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment

- Higher Fields Farm (non-designated heritage asset); and
- Stock Nook (non-designated heritage asset).

Lower Whittle Farmhouse, Grade II listed, NHLE: 1068502

- 14.4.4. 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.
- 14.4.5. As a Grade II listed building, Lower Whittle Farmhouse is of national interest. Its heritage significance primarily derives from its historical and architectural (aesthetic) interest as a surviving seventeenth century farmhouse. Whilst the fields surrounding the Lower Whittle Farmhouse provide a wider rural setting to the listed building, it is enclosed on three sides – north, east and west – 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.

Birch Village Conservation Area

- 14.4.6. Birch Village Conservation Area falls within a 1km radius of the site. The conservation area 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).
- 14.4.7. The special interest of the Birch Village Conservation Area is set out in the adopted conservation area appraisal (Birch Village 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.
- 14.4.8. 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.

Broom Hill Farm

- 14.4.9. 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.
- 14.4.10. 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.
- 14.4.11. 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.

High Fields Farm

- 14.4.12. 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, 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.
- 14.4.13. 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.

Stock Nook

- 14.4.14. 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.
- 14.4.15. 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. Albeit its immediate setting is subject to ongoing construction works, which is eroding its immediate rural setting. As a non-designated heritage asset of local interest, Broom Hill Farm is considered to have a low level of heritage significance
- 14.4.16. 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 Higher Fields Farm and its contribution to the heritage significance of the farmstead is limited.

14.5 IDENTIFICATION AND VALUATION OF KEY IMPACTS (CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATIONAL)

- 14.5.1. The description of Development is included in **Chapter 3: Description of the Proposed Development** of the ES addendum. This, along with the submitted detailed drawings, parameter plans, and illustrative Masterplan should be read alongside the below assessment.
- 14.5.2. There would be no direct impacts to any built heritage assets from the proposed development due to the lack of any such heritage assets within the boundary of the Site. There could be indirect impacts caused by changes in the setting of a given heritage asset. However, it is worth noting that change within the setting of a heritage asset may not impact its overall significance.

CONSTRUCTION PHASE

Table 14-4 - Assessment of potential effects, additional mitigation, residual effects and monitoring during construction

Sensitive Receptor	Potential Effects/Additional Mitigation/Residual Effects and Monitoring	
Lower Whittle Farmhouse (Grade II listed building, NHLE: 1068502)	Potential Effects	The receptor is to be retained as part of the Proposed Development. There is the potential for indirect impact through noise, vibration and dust. However, this is unlikely given the distance of the heritage asset from the Site and the intervening development (outbuildings relating to the farm) and landscape features. Construction activity would not be visible from the farmhouse, nor its immediate setting due to physical distance and intervening development (particularly the outbuildings that 'wrap around' the farmhouse to the north, east and west) and landscape features.
	Additional Mitigation	Appropriate mitigation will be included within the CEMP to be agreed with the LPA.
	Residual Effects and Monitoring	There would be No Change to a receptor of Moderate sensitivity, which equates to a Neutral significance of effect.
Birch Village Conservation Area	Potential Effects	The receptor is to be retained. There would be no indirect impact through noise, vibration and dust due to the distance of the heritage asset from the Site and intervening development, including the M62 Motorway that is a significant source of noise. There would be no views of construction activity from the conservation area due to physical distance and intervening landscape features/development.
	Additional Mitigation	Appropriate mitigation will be included within the CEMP to be agreed with the LPA.

Sensitive Receptor	Potential Effects/Additional Mitigation/Residual Effects and Monitoring	
	Residual Effects and Monitoring	There would be No Change to a receptor of Moderate sensitivity, which equates to a Neutral significance of effect.
Broom Hill Farm	Potential Effects	The receptor is to be retained as part of the Proposed Development. There is the potential for indirect impact through noise, vibration and dust. However, this is unlikely given the distance of the heritage asset from the Site and intervening development in the form of the existing extent of Birch Business Park. There may be some very limited views of construction activity from the non-designated heritage asset if cranes are used in the construction process. Any limited impact on views would be temporary.
	Additional Mitigation	Appropriate mitigation will be included within the CEMP to be agreed with the LPA.
	Residual Effects and Monitoring	There would be a Negligible level of change to a receptor of Low sensitivity which equates to a Negligible Adverse significance of effect. These impacts would be short term and temporary in nature.
Higher Fields Farm	Potential Effects	The receptor is to be retained. There is the potential for indirect impact through noise, vibration and dust. There is also the potential for indirect impact from the location of construction machinery within the wider setting of the receptor that would be visible from the non-designated heritage assets. However, indirect impact through noise, vibration, dust and views of construction activity from the listed buildings would be limited in nature and temporary.
	Additional Mitigation	Appropriate mitigation will be included within the CEMP to be agreed with the LPA.
	Residual Effects and Monitoring	There would be a Minor level of change to a receptor of Low sensitivity which equates to a Minor Adverse significance of effect. These impacts would be short term and temporary in nature.
Stock Nook	Potential Effects	The receptor is to be retained. There is the potential for indirect impact through noise, vibration and dust. There is also the potential for indirect impact from the location of construction machinery within the wider setting of the receptor that would be visible from the non-designated heritage assets. However, indirect impact through noise, vibration, dust and views of construction activity from the listed buildings would be limited in nature and temporary.
	Additional Mitigation	Appropriate mitigation will be included within the CEMP to be agreed with the LPA.
	Residual Effects and Monitoring	There would be a Negligible level of change to a receptor of Low sensitivity which equates to a Negligible Adverse significance of effect. These impacts would be short term and temporary in nature.

OPERATIONAL PHASE

Table 14-5 - Assessment of potential effects, additional mitigation, residual effects and monitoring during operation

Sensitive Receptor	Potential Effects/Additional Mitigation/Residual Effects and Monitoring	
Lower Whittle Farmhouse (Grade II listed building, NHLE: 1068502)	Potential Effects	Lower Whittle Farmhouse is located approximately 755m to the south-east of the Site. The heritage receptor is to be maintained as part of the Proposed Development. Operational impacts would arise from the presence of the proposed development within the wider setting of the farmhouse. However, the proposed development would not be visible from the farmhouse due to physical distance and intervening development (particularly the outbuildings that 'wrap around' the farmhouse to the north, east and west) and landscape features. As a result, there would be no harmful impact on the significance of the listed building.
	Additional Mitigation	No additional mitigation is required/proposed.
	Residual Effects and Monitoring	The sensitivity of the Lower Whittle Farmhouse is Moderate , and the magnitude of impact would be No Change . Therefore, the residual significance of effect on the Lower Whittle Farmhouse would be Neutral (non-significant) .
Birch Village Conservation Area	Potential Effects	The majority of Birch Village Conservation Area is located over 1km to the south-east of the Site, to the south-east of the M62 Motorway. Only a small portion of the conservation area fall within a 1km radius of the Site. As a result, the Site is considered to make no contribution to the heritage significance of this heritage receptor, which is primarily derived from its architectural and historical interest. The receptor is to be retained. Operational impacts would arise from the presence of the proposed development within the wider setting of the conservation area. However, there would be no intervisibility between the proposed development and the conservation area due to physical distance and intervening development and landscape features, particularly the M62 and the extensive tree planting along both sides of this major transportation corridor. As a result, there would be no harmful impact on the significance of the conservation area.
	Additional Mitigation	No additional mitigation is required/proposed.
	Residual Effects and Monitoring	The sensitivity of the Birch Village Conservation Area is Moderate , and the magnitude of impact would be No Change . Therefore, the residual significance of effect on the Birch Business Park would be Neutral (non-significant) .

Sensitive Receptor	Potential Effects/Additional Mitigation/Residual Effects and Monitoring	
Broom Hill Farm	Potential Effects	Broom Hill Farm is located approximately 485m to the south of the Site (existing access road excluded). The receptor is to be retained as part of the Proposed Development. Operational impacts would arise from the presence of the proposed development within the wider setting of the non-designated heritage asset. However, the proposed development would not be visible from the farmhouse due to physical distance and intervening development (particularly the existing Birch Business Park) and landscape features. As a result, there would be no harmful impact on the significance of the non-designated heritage asset.
	Additional Mitigation	No additional mitigation is required/proposed.
	Residual Effects and Monitoring	The sensitivity of Broom Hill Farm is Low , and the magnitude of impact would be No Change . Therefore, the residual significance of effect on the Broom Hill Farm would be Neutral (non-significant) .
Higher Fields Farm	Potential Effects	The Site is located approximately 100m to the east/south-east of Higher Fields Farm. The receptor is to be retained as part of the Proposed Development. Operational impacts would arise from the presence of the proposed development within the wider setting of the non-designated heritage asset. 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 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 five fields immediately surrounding the farmstead would remain undeveloped. As a result, the impact on the heritage significance of the farmstead from the development proposals would be minor.
	Additional Mitigation	The proposed development includes landscaped buffers to the Site perimeter that would provide some screening of the proposals.
	Residual Effects and Monitoring	The sensitivity of Higher Fields Farm is Low , and the magnitude of change, following mitigation, is Minor . Therefore, there is likely to be an indirect long-term Minor adverse residual effect on Higher Fields Farm (non-significant) following the implementation of mitigation measures.
Stock Nook	Potential Effects	The Site is located approximately 350m to the west/north-west of Stock Nook.

Sensitive Receptor	Potential Effects/Additional Mitigation/Residual Effects and Monitoring	
		The receptor is to be retained as part of the Proposed Development. Operational impacts would arise from the presence of the proposed development within the wider setting of the non-designated heritage asset. There are distant, glimpsed views of the Site from the farmstead, but 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 a result, the impact on the heritage significance of the farmstead from the development proposals would be negligible.
	Additional Mitigation	The proposed development includes landscaped buffers to the Site perimeter that would provide some screening of the proposals.
	Residual Effects and Monitoring	The sensitivity of Stock Nook is Low , and the magnitude of change, following mitigation, is Negligible . Therefore, there is likely to be an indirect long-term Negligible residual effect on Stock Nook (non-significant) following the implementation of mitigation measures.

ASSESSMENT AGAINST FUTURE BASELINE

- 14.5.3. With regard to built heritage receptors, if the proposed development were not implemented then there would be no changes to the settings or sensitivity of the identified built heritage receptors. There would, however, likely be wider effects arising from local consented and forthcoming development sites.

14.6 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

- 14.6.1. The above assessment has demonstrated that the proposed development would have no significant residual effects. Therefore, an assessment of cumulative effects of the proposed development alongside other consent and foreseeable development is not required. This approach is supported by Planning Practice Guidance, which confirms that Environmental Statements should be focused on likely significant effects and be proportionate to the nature and scale of the development.

14.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

- 14.7.1. To mitigate some of the visual impacts of the proposed development, mitigation by design (embedded mitigation) in the form of landscape buffers to the Site perimeters are proposed to provide some screening of the proposals.

14.8 RESIDUAL EFFECTS

- 14.8.1. Residual effects relating to the operational and constructional phases of development are set out in Table 14-4 and Table 14-5 above. No likely significant effects have been identified followed mitigation.

14.9 APPENDICES

14.9.1. A Heritage Statement that supports this ES Chapter is contained in Appendix 14.1.

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