

# **Office Building, Harton Quay, South Shields Heritage Impact Assessment**

Muse Developments Limited

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared by Lichfields on behalf of Muse Developments Limited and South Tyneside Council to inform proposals for the construction of an office building on land to the west of Mill Dam, Harton Quay, South Shields.
- 1.2 The site lies partially within the boundary of the Mill Dam Conservation Area. It comprises 0.5 hectares of land which has been largely cleared of existing buildings. However, a locally listed brick boundary wall runs along the length of the site's eastern boundary and a locally listed free-standing chimney associated with the former Swinburne Glassworks is in the south-west corner of the site. The site is adjacent to three Grade-II listed buildings and several locally listed buildings. Most of the site has been largely vacant and unused since the 1980s, although the Staithes House that previously fronted Mill Dam, associated with the locally listed brick wall along the eastern boundary, was demolished c.2016.
- 1.3 This report explains the history and evolution of the application site and the surrounding area and assesses the significance of the heritage assets which could be affected by the proposals and the potential impact of the proposals on their significance.

## Methodology

- 1.4 This report identifies the above-ground heritage assets that may be affected by the proposed development. In accordance with paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF'), it establishes the significance of the assets, including an understanding of their setting and how this contributes to significance.
- 1.5 The NPPF defines significance as the 'value' of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its 'heritage interest'. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. This broadly aligns with the heritage values outlined in Historic England's Conservation Principles (2008), which are evidential, aesthetic, historical and communal value.
- 1.6 The NPPF confirms that significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence but also from its setting. The setting of a heritage asset is the surroundings in which it 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 contribution or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance, or may be neutral.
- 1.7 The approach to considering the effect of changes to setting upon significance has been carried out in accordance with Historic England's *'The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment'* Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition) (2017) and *'Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment'* Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2 (2015). GPA3 discourages detailed analysis of very large numbers of heritage assets and supports an approach that considers the effects on the assets that are most sensitive to change (para. 23).
- 1.8 The assessment of significance and the potential effects of the proposed development have been undertaken after conducting a site visit. The visual role of the application site in the setting of the surrounding heritage assets has been investigated. The National Heritage List for England, the Mill Dam Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2006), the Mill Dam Conservation Area Management Plan (2010), SPD21: Locally Listed Heritage Assets (2011), relevant mapping, photographs, plans and documents in the Historic Environmental Record have been used to identify heritage assets as part of this assessment.

## 2.0 Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The site is located close to the southern bank of the River Tyne, approximately 600m west of the centre of South Shields and 200m south-east of the South Shields Ferry Terminal. Along with Mill Dam, the site is separated from the town centre by the busy road network. The site slopes from north to south and occupies a slightly elevated position relative to the properties lining Mill Bank to the south. The site lies immediately to the west of the Mill Dam-Commercial Road junction, with Harton Quay road wrapping around the northern and western boundaries of the site. There are traces of previous development on the site, including a locally listed brick wall that runs along the length of the eastern boundary that was once connected to the Staithes House, a locally listed brick chimney stack associated with the former Cookson Glassworks and a modern electricity substation. The part of the site containing the wall and the chimney stack lie within the Mill Dam Conservation Area boundary.
- 2.2 The site's northern boundary is formed by Harton Quay with a modern office development '*One Harton Quay*' located opposite. The north-east boundary is formed by a large five-road roundabout providing links to Coronation Street and Church Way into the centre of South Shields. To the east of the site, is Mill Dam, a cobbled street lined with 19<sup>th</sup>-century buildings, many of which are listed or locally listed and form the main part of the Mill Dam Conservation Area. Beyond these buildings is Commercial Road, a surface carpark and a large ASDA supermarket. To the south of the site, Mill Dam continues, but it is separated by bollards from a second cobbled road at Brewery Lane with the Grade II listed The Customs House arts centre and surface carparks located to the south. The site's western boundary is formed by Harton Quay, with large areas of landscaping leading down towards the river.

Figure 2.1 Aerial image of the site and surrounding area – site boundary marked in red



Source: Google Earth 2020

Figure 2.2 View to the north-east across the site



Figure 2.3 View to the east across the site



Figure 2.4 View to north across the site



Figure 2.5 View to south across the site





## 3.0 Historical Development

- 3.1 The Mill Dam area that the site forms part of derives its name from a mill that stood in that location in the thirteenth century belonging to the Prior and Convent of Durham. Much of the land was not reclaimed until the 1760s.

### 19<sup>th</sup> century

- 3.2 The 1<sup>st</sup> edition 6-inch OS Map of 1862 (Figure 3.1) shows that the area was densely built-up and comprised various irregular shaped buildings. A group of buildings stood along the riverside including the Subscription Brewery complex, a large crane, landing stage and dock. The site was occupied by the sprawling Swinburne Glassworks complex and its chimneys with Cookson's Quay to the west. The wider area was home to various industries including a bottle works, glass works, brick manufacturers and collieries.

Figure 3.1 OS Map 6-Inch (1862) Surveyed 1855



- 3.3 The 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 6-inch OS Map of 1899 (Figure 3.2) reveals changes to the road network and the expansion of the Swinburne Glassworks towards Coronation Street. It also reveals the replacement of the riverside brewery and crane with the impressive Customs House (1863) and the adjacent River Tyne Police and Port Sanitary Authority buildings (1886). The Customs House was of considerable civic importance, symbolising South Shields' independence from Newcastle as a customs port and its separation from the customs house in North Shields in 1863. It was designed by borough architect Thomas M Clemence. To the east, the town had expanded around the collieries and along grids of terraced housing. Railway sidings and a goods station were built to the east of Mill Dam. The river also featured several ferry stations, indicating the importance of the river to local transport. The area remained densely built-up in this period although many of the buildings along Coronation Street appear to have been rebuilt since the 1850s after the realignment of the road. The industries in the area had changed by this time with the closure of the bottle works and brick fields and the opening of a boiler works.

Figure 3.2 OS Map 6-Inch (1899) Revised 1894 - 1895

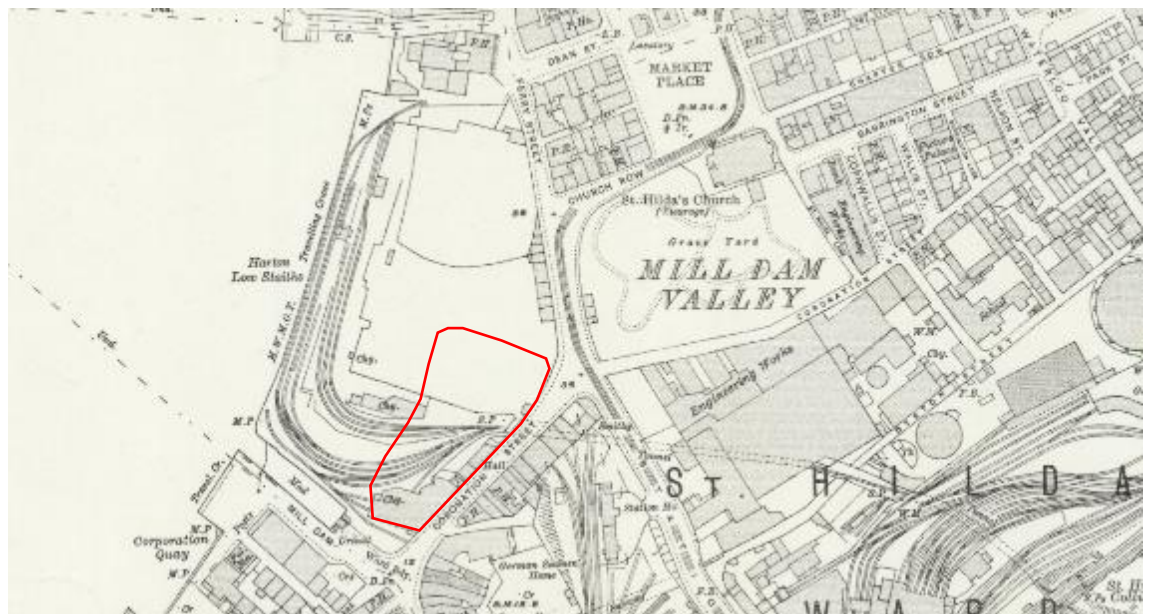


## 20<sup>th</sup> century

3.4

The 25-inch OS Map of 1915 (Figure 3.3) shows the replacement of the glassworks complex with railway lines leading to Harton Low Staithes and a travelling crane, which delivered coal down to the water's edge. A short tunnel gave access to the staithes under the road network. The chimneys that were formally associated with the glassworks remained in place on the site. A local trolleybus service had also been introduced that passed by the eastern boundary of the former glassworks site and led up towards the Market Place and the town centre. The wider area continued to be home to industrial uses, including a large engineering works at Station Road to the east.

Figure 3.3 25-Inch OS Map (1915) Revised 1912 - 1913



3.5

In the 1930s, buildings in the area that had formerly been occupied by merchants, shipping companies and engineering works were demolished around the Customs House leaving large

areas of cleared space. Figure 3.4 shows an aerial photograph taken in 1948 which shows areas of clearance in the top-left hand corner. It also shows the extent of the Harton Low Staithes and the wagons that used to be a characteristic feature of the site. The small dock at Mill Dam was closed and further clearance took place from the 1950s through to the 1970s. Major infrastructural changes and the redevelopment of industrial sites changed the character and appearance of the surrounding area. By this time, the former glassworks chimney had been lowered in height and large open yards and grass was in place across the proposed development site following the closure of Harton Low Staithes in the early 1980s.

- 3.6 In 1981, the area around Mill Dam was designated as a conservation area. Historic buildings were converted for new uses and the Customs House was sold for restoration and conversion to an arts centre. The development site remains largely vacant and the Staithes House that was constructed on the site in the early 1900s was demolished c.2016, with only the boundary wall left standing.

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Figure 3.4 Aerial Photograph c.1948



Source: Britain from Above (ref. EAW014535)

## 4.0 **Legislative and policy context**

### **Statutory legislation**

4.1 The Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the 1990 Act') provides protection for buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest. When considering whether to grant planning permission for a development which affects a listed building or its setting, S.66(1) requires the local planning authority to 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. S.72(1) requires that with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, that special attention be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

4.2 The statutory Development Plan for the site comprises the Core Strategy (2007), the South Shields Town Centre & Waterfront Area Action Plan (2008) and Development Management Policies (2011).

### **Core Strategy (2007)**

4.3 There are no relevant heritage policies in the Core Strategy.

### **South Shields Town Centre & Waterfront Area Action Plan (2008)**

4.4 The following policies from the Action Plan are relevant:

#### **Policy SS12: Protecting the Built Environment Assets of South Shields**

- Policy SS12 states that the built environment assets of South Shields town centre, riverside and foreshore areas will be protected, together with their settings. The Council will promote and encourage schemes and proposals that protect, preserve and enhance the historic, cultural and architectural character and heritage, visual appearance and contextual importance of the designated sites and settings of Mill Dam Conservation Area.

### **Development Management Policies (2011)**

4.5 The following Development Management policies are relevant:

#### **Policy DM1: Management of Development**

- Policy DM1 states that all applications will ensure that the development is designed to convey sensitive consideration of its surroundings, and where possible enhance its local setting and reinforce local identity, having particular regard to scale and proportions, alignment, form, use of materials and architectural detailing.

#### **Policy DM6: Heritage Assets and Archaeology**

- Policy DM6 states that the Council will support development proposals that protect, preserve and where possible enhance the historic, cultural and architectural character and heritage, visual appearance and contextual importance of heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings and structures, non-listed buildings and structures included on the Council's list of locally significant heritage assets, significant landscape features of local heritage and archaeological value and archaeological deposits and remains.

## **Material Considerations**

### **Emerging Local Plan**

- 4.6 The consultation on the Pre-Publication Draft of the emerging local plan has been completed, but the plan is not at an advanced enough stage for its policies to be afforded any weight.

### **Mill Dam Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2006)**

- 4.7 The Mill Dam Conservation Area was designated in 1981. The appraisal is used to support the effective determination of planning and listed building applications.

### **Mill Dam Conservation Area Management Plan (2010)**

- 4.8 The Mill Dam Conservation Area Management Plan (2010) is an adopted SPD. The policies within the Management Plan that are relevant include:

#### **CA-MD1: New Development**

- CA-MD1 states that new development within the Conservation Area or affecting its immediate setting will normally be required to protect, preserve and where possible enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. It should complement the place-making and regeneration aspirations as set out in South Shields Riverside Regeneration: Strategic Development Framework (2007) and Supplementary Planning Document 8: South Shields Riverside Regeneration (2009). It should be of an imaginative, high quality design that should respect, harmonise and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The development should respect the scale, harmony and character of good quality buildings in the immediate and wider area it should retain and enhance the setting of significant buildings, structures and townscape features.

#### **Action A-MD1: Swinburne Glassworks**

- Action A-MD1 states that the Council will seek to secure the retention and maintenance of the Swinburne Glassworks' Chimney.

#### **Action A-MD2: Staithes House and adjoining boundary wall**

- Action A-MD2 states that the Council will seek to retain and refurbish the Staithes House as an integral element of the Harton Staithes development proposals and will balance the heritage benefits of retaining the Mill Dam Road boundary wall with the Council's aspiration to establish a high-quality street scene. The Council will also seek to improve interpretation of the local heritage as part of a wider interpretation programme for the Conservation Area.

#### **Action A-MD3: Interpretation and Repairs**

- Action A-MD3 states that the Council will explore opportunities to introduce interpretation to the site of the former Glassworks and Staithes House.

### **SPD21: Locally Significant Heritage Assets (2011)**

- 4.9 The list of locally significant heritage assets was compiled by assessing whether the different assets merited inclusion on the list. The buildings that feature on the list have been included for their heritage interest, historic association, architectural or design merit or their townscape merit.

## Key Considerations

- 4.10 Having regard to the above, the key considerations are:
- 1 Does the proposal protect, preserve and enhance the historic, cultural and architectural character and heritage, visual appearance and contextual importance of the designated sites and settings of the Mill Dam Conservation Area? (Policies SS12, DM6 and CA-MD1, and NPPF paragraphs 127. 185 and 192).
  - 2 Does the proposal have regard to scale and proportions, form, materials and architectural detailing of the surrounding area? (Policy DM1 and CA-MD1)
- 4.11 It is noted that the appropriateness of the design, or otherwise, will have a bearing on the nature (positive, neutral, negative) and scale (minor, moderate, major) of any effects. Furthermore, it is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of development that is to be assessed.<sup>1</sup> The effects will also, therefore, depend upon the contribution that setting makes to their significance.

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<sup>1</sup> Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph: 019 Ref ID: 18a-019-20190723 Revision 23/07/19

## 5.0 Overview of Proposals

- 5.1 The proposed development includes a five-storey plate glass fronted office building located at the northern end of the site, utilising the north-east corner plot to create a new landmark in views from the town centre towards the river. The building will be constructed on a landscaped deck, which will lead down towards an area of extensive landscaped public realm and green space on the southern end of the site, opposite the Grade II listed Customs House. The design also utilises the historic boundary wall along the eastern boundary as part of the public realm and has been considered when designing the building and the wider site. It is proposed that the Mill Dam wall will have openings created within it utilising the historic openings that were bricked up when the Staithes House was demolished. This would have a number of benefits including improving connectivity across the site and opening up views towards the river. The historic chimney of the Swinburne Glassworks will become a focal point for the public realm design, emphasising its significance within the landscape.
- 5.2 As part of the proposals, the locally listed Swinburne Glassworks chimney will have its degraded render and brickwork fully repaired using a suitable lime render, improving its appearance and condition.
- 5.3 The top floor of the new building is cut back to the south, west and north to take advantage of the views over the river with roof terraces. Parking will be in an undercroft with 22 spaces and amenity accommodation including a cycle store, shower and changing facilities.
- 5.4 A comprehensive description of the proposals can be found in the attached Design Report.

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Figure 5.1 Proposed office development and landscaping



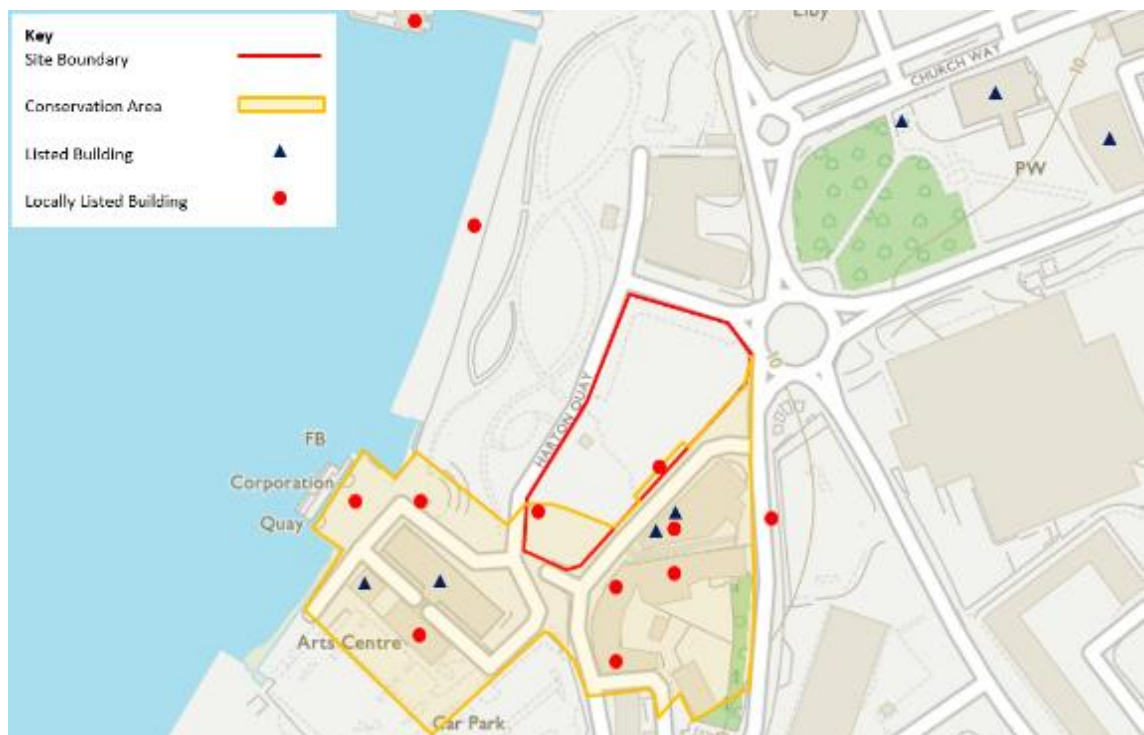
Source: Ryder

## 6.0 Assessment of impact on the significance of Heritage Assets

6.1 This assessment, in accordance with Historic England guidance, summarises the significance of the heritage assets, (including the contribution that setting makes to that significance) before identifying the impact that the proposals will have on that significance.

6.2 This study has considered the National Heritage List of England, the Mill Dam Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2006), the Mill Dam Conservation Area Management Plan (2010), SPD21: Locally Listed Heritage Assets (2011) and relevant mapping. Fieldwork was carried out to confirm the role of the site in the setting of other heritage assets.

Figure 6.1 Map of Heritage Assets



Source: Lichfields

6.3 Figure 6.1 shows the location of the site in relation to the Mill Dam Conservation Area and the surrounding listed and locally listed buildings and monuments. The following assets will be assessed either because they are located within the site boundary or their settings are likely to change because of the proposed development:

- 1 Mill Dam Conservation Area
- 2 Swinburne Glassworks Chimney (Locally Listed) ref. LSHA/4/SS
- 3 Boundary wall and external wall of the former Staithes House (Locally Listed) ref. LSHA/6/SS
- 4 The Former Mercantile Marine Offices (Grade II) UID: 1232273
- 5 (Group 1 –Listed Buildings on Mill Dam road) Nos. 51 and 23 Mill Dam (both Grade II) UIDs: 1231582 and 1277489



- 6 (Group 2 – Locally Listed Buildings on Mill Dam road) The Quadrant, Holborn House, Unity Hall and The Waterfront Public House (Locally Listed) refs. LSHA/1/SS, LSHA/7/SS, LSHA/9/SS and LSHA/10/SS.
  - 7 (Group 3 – Locally Listed Buildings to the south-west of the site) Merchant Navy Memorial and the Mill Dam Jetty (Locally Listed) refs. LSHA/5/SS and LSHA/2/SS.
  - 8 The Painted Mural on Commercial Road (Locally Listed) ref. LSHA/11/SS
  - 9 Harton Low Staithes (Locally Listed) LSHA/13/SS
- 6.4 The locally listed Dalton Lane workshops (ref. LSHA/8/SS), the Tyne Port Health Authority building (Grade II) (UID: 1232160) and the ferry landing (ref. LSHA/12/SS) have been scoped out of this assessment because views of the site from these structures are largely obscured by intervening buildings, or topography. Similarly, St Hilda’s Church (Grade II) (UID: 1232156) has been scoped out because of a lack of intervisibility between the site and the church.
- 6.5 The assets that are within the site boundary and are most sensitive to the proposed development will be assessed first, followed by listed buildings and locally listed buildings located outside of the site boundary. Heritage assets that are close to each other and are likely to experience the same changes to their settings have been grouped together to avoid repetition.

## **Mill Dam Conservation Area**

### **Significance**

- 6.6 The Mill Dam Conservation Area was designated in 1981. It is a small area that contains remnants of South Shields’ riverside heritage. It contains impressive buildings that are evocative of the area’s commercial history. The character appraisal described the area as having a ‘disjointed feel’ because the two main building groups, boundary walls and remnant industrial heritage are left isolated by an over-supply of open space and car parks. The scale of the buildings, the continuous high brick wall along Mill Dam road, and the remnant chimney are all considered to be impressive features that demonstrate the area’s past status and prosperity.

### **Setting**

- 6.7 The setting of the Mill Dam Conservation Area has experienced considerable change due to clearance of former industrial sites and the construction of modern developments in the surrounding area, such as the nearby ASDA supermarket, the ferry landing and the new BT office building. The visual relationship between the conservation area and the River Tyne continues to be a defining and positive feature of its setting, informing its historic significance. Other features of the setting include large surface car parks and wasteland to the south, which make no contribution to the significance of the conservation area. New riverside landscaping and public realm improvements have enhanced the appearance of the conservation area’s setting along the riverfront. Key views of the conservation area can be found at the top of the incline at Mill Dam road, from Harton Low Staithes and the River Tyne.
- 6.8 Overall, the setting has a positive impact due to the strong association between the conservation area and the river, but there are many modern features within the setting that make no contribution to the conservation area’s significance and detract from the quality of its setting, such as the large ASDA supermarket to the north-east and large surface car parks to the south.

### **Contribution of the site to the setting**

- 6.9 The southern end of the site lies within the conservation area boundary and contains a prominent boundary wall and the former Swinburne Glassworks chimney, both locally listed.

Further to the north, the site comprises an area of wasteland with an isolated electricity kiosk that detracts from the appearance of the conservation area. The current appearance of the site does not reflect the historic pattern of development in the area, which was historically densely built-up. The boundary wall on the site and the chimney are prominent historic features in views to and from the conservation area that make a positive contribution to the setting and significance of the conservation area.

### **Assessment of Impact**

- 6.10 The proposed office building will be located at the northern end of the site, outside of the conservation area boundary. This will redevelop an area of vacant brownfield land that is currently a negative feature in the setting of the conservation area. While the office building will be a new feature in setting of the conservation area, it will be seen in the context of other modern developments that have been built to the north over the last twenty years, including the ferry landing and the modern office building currently occupied by BT. The existing open space on the site is the result of de-industrialisation and land clearance, whereas historically the site was developed for large scale industrial purposes. The proposed office building will be prominent in views to and from the conservation area due to the topography of the area and the position on high ground that the office will occupy, but it will not block views of the principal buildings within the conservation area, such as the Customs House and the buildings on the western side of Mill Dam.
- 6.11 Across the remainder of the site, the proposal will repurpose the boundary wall as part of proposed landscaping and public realm improvements, which will blend the site into the recent public realm improvements along the riverside. This will improve the condition and appearance of the site and provide a higher quality setting for the chimney, which will retain its landmark status.
- 6.12 Overall, the proposed office building and landscaping works will have a minor positive impact on the setting of the conservation area and no impact on its significance. The proposal will not adversely affect any of the listed or locally listed buildings in the area, nor will it have any detrimental impact on the important connection between the conservation area and its riverside setting. While there will be a noticeable change to the setting of the conservation area, this is in the context of existing modern developments to the north and will be at a sufficient distance from the conservation area to avoid it overshadowing the historic buildings. The historically significant features of the site are to be retained and enhanced as part of the public realm improvements which will preserve the significance of those features and improve the appearance of the overall site.

## Swinburne Glassworks Chimney (Locally Listed)

Figure 6.2 Swinburne Glassworks Chimney



### Significance

- 6.13 Standing 30ft high and 10ft square, the truncated chimney structure is all that remains of the Swinburne Glassworks, dating from 1865. It is in fair condition with varying local red brick laid with a lime mortar in Flemish bond. Glass manufacturing in the area began in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century and continued up until the 1890s. The site was later taken over and used to ship coal from the nearby collieries via the Harton Low Staithes. It is included on the list because of its association with the former glassworks and the area's historic prosperity. The chimney is shown on the 1862 OS Map and predates the Harton Low Staithes.

### Setting

- 6.14 The chimney forms part of the proposed development site. The immediate setting of the chimney is defined by the area of wasteland and an electricity kiosk to the north, which was previously occupied by the Swinburne Glassworks and Harton Low Staithes. Its setting has been transformed over time and the de-industrialisation of the surrounding area has left it standing as an isolated monument to the industry that once defined the area. The cobbled streets, the 19<sup>th</sup>-century buildings along Mill Dam and the Customs House are all features of the historic townscape that contribute positively to the setting of the chimney. The views to and from the river towards the chimney are also significant and reveal the relationship between the historic

industries of the area and the riverside location. The setting contains modern commercial developments which make no contribution to the significance of the chimney.

- 6.15 The boundary wall contributes positively to the setting and is closely associated with the chimney and the historic use of the site. The vacant state of the site does not contribute to the significance chimney and leaves it isolated from the surrounding development in the area. This does not reflect the historic pattern of development in the area, which was densely built-up along the river, although the lack of surrounding development has emphasised the scale and importance of the chimney structure within the landscape. Overall, the setting of the chimney contributes positively to its significance and contains elements of its historic surroundings.

### **Assessment of Impact**

- 6.16 The proposed works will include the restoration and repair of the chimney brickwork and render, which is currently in a degraded condition. This will be achieved using a suitable lime render.
- 6.17 The proposed office building will redevelop an area of vacant brownfield land that currently makes no contribution to the setting or significance of the chimney. While the office building will be a new feature in its setting, it will be seen in the context of other modern developments that have been built to the north. Important views of the chimney from the river and from the top of Mill Dam road will not be affected by the development. The proposal will repurpose the boundary wall as part of landscaping and public realm improvements, which will blend the site into the recent public realm improvements along the riverside. The public realm improvements have also been designed around the chimney, enhancing the landmark feature within the site. This will improve the condition and appearance of the site and provide a higher quality setting for the chimney.
- 6.18 Overall, the proposed office building and landscaping works will have a minor positive impact on the setting of the chimney and no impact on its significance. However, the repair work to the render and brickwork will have a positive impact and improve the appearance and condition of the chimney. The public realm improvements will preserve its significance and improve the appearance of its setting, helping to tie the chimney structure in with the surrounding public realm works that have taken place, better integrating the structure with the surrounding area.

## Boundary wall and external wall of the former Staithes House (Locally Listed)

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Figure 6.3 Boundary wall and external wall of the former Staithes House



### Significance

- 6.19 The Staithes House was a single-storey building on the west side of Mill Dam, originally constructed to house the washing and locker facilities for Harton Low Staithes' engine drivers and coal handlers. It was largely demolished c.2016 and only the external wall fronting Mill Dam remains standing, retaining traces of the embellished red brick façades, with bricked-up openings. The adjoining boundary wall has similar detailing and was reconfigured in the 1980s. The boundary wall indicates the enclosure of the wagonwright's workshop and the staithes site. It provides a very strong local feature within the Conservation Area.

### Setting

- 6.20 The wall forms part of the proposed development site. The setting of the wall is defined by Mill Dam, the cobbled streets and the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup>-century buildings on the eastern side of the road; this reflects its historic setting. However, the setting at the northern end of the wall is less positive and has changed more dramatically due to changes to the road network and the construction of large modern developments, including a large roundabout, an ASDA

supermarket and offices occupied by BT. The Customs House and the river define the setting to the west, and in the distance, to the south, large cranes and industrial uses can be seen along the river towards Jarrow, providing a trace of the riverside industries that once dominated the space between the wall and river.

- 6.21 The setting to the west, including the wider proposed development site, has changed dramatically due to the clearance of the staithes, which the wall once surrounded. Overall, the setting, particularly along Mill Dam makes a positive contribution to the significance of the wall and reflects important aspects of its historic surroundings.

### **Assessment of Impact**

- 6.22 The proposed office building will redevelop an area of vacant brownfield land that currently makes no contribution to the boundary wall. While the office building will be a new feature in its setting, it will be seen in the context of other modern developments. The wall currently has an important role in the townscape of the area and enhances the appearance of Mill Dam. This role will be enhanced as part of the proposed development. The proposal will repurpose the boundary wall as part of proposed landscaping and public realm improvements and will visually contain the new development as well as providing points of access between Mill Dam and the site. It is proposed that openings will be created in the Mill Dam wall by reopening the historic openings that were bricked up when the staithes house was demolished. Three additional small openings will be made that will reflect the character and appearance of the original historic openings but will result in the loss of some historic fabric. This will have a minor adverse impact on the wall. The loss of this historic fabric will be limited to a very small part of the wall and is designed to increase connections across the site whilst also incorporating the wall into the overall design. The wall has been reconfigured and changed over time as the area has developed, with the southmost part of the wall realigned and rebuilt in the 1980s. This makes the wall far less sensitive to further change and the proposed alterations would represent the latest phase in its use and function as part of the area's ongoing redevelopment.
- 6.23 The changes will not detract from the overall significance of the wall and its prominent role in the townscape. The proposals will improve the condition and appearance of the site and help to give the boundary wall a new purpose. The important features of the setting, particularly the visual connection between the wall and Mill Dam and the Customs House will be largely unaffected by these changes. The office building will be located behind the boundary wall, preserving its function and significance along Mill Dam.
- 6.24 Overall, the proposed office building and landscaping works will have a minor positive impact on the setting and a neutral impact on the significance of the boundary wall. The public realm improvements will preserve its significance and improve the appearance of its setting.

## The Former Mercantile Marine Offices (Grade II)

Figure 6.4 Former Mercantile Marine Offices



### Significance

- 6.25 The Grade-II listed former mercantile marine offices were built c.1863, designed by the architect and borough surveyor T M Clemence. It features an extension to the rear, added in 1878 designed by J H Morton. The building is two-storeys with three bays on a square plan. It is an imposing public building in the Renaissance style. The front elevation features an open rusticated arcade (now glazed) of three segmental arches on rectangular piers. The first floor has pairs of Corinthian columns framing three semi-circular headed windows. The centre bay contains a sculpted coat of arms and is crowned by pediment.
- 6.26 The building was originally the Customs House, constructed in anticipation of South Shields being declared a separate customs port in 1865. The addition of 1878 was built to house the offices of the local Marine Board. The Customs House was of considerable civic significance as it symbolised South Shields' independence from Newcastle as a customs port (in 1848, following years of acrimony), and its separation from the customs house in North Shields in 1863. The building is the dominant building in the area and its formal Classical composition in sandstone and buff brick displays the status and wealth that is typical of Victorian institutional buildings. The building was extended in the 1990s in slightly contrasting materials and style.

### Setting

- 6.27 The setting of the building is defined by the River Tyne, which reflects its historic maritime role and importance to South Shields. The historic buildings along Mill Dam and the remnants of industry in the area also contribute positively to the setting. The Grade-II listed building immediately to the south, which was built to house the Tyne Port Health Authority, has a group

value with the Customs House, particularly when viewed from the river, due to their similar age, design and maritime associations. Other features in the setting are less positive, including swathes of car parking to the south. The large expanses of open space to the north are relatively recent features in the setting of the Customs House that have emerged due to post war clearance and de-industrialisation. This does not reflect the historic pattern of development that was previously densely built-up, although recent public realm works along the riverside have improved the appearance of the area. Overall, the setting makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Customs House.

### **Contribution of site to the setting**

- 6.28 The remains of the chimney and the brick boundary wall to the east of the site are historic features in the setting of the Customs House. However, the large areas of open space across the site make no contribution to the setting or significance of the Customs House.

### **Assessment of Impact**

- 6.29 The proposed works will have no direct impact on the Customs House or the features that contribute to its significance. The proposed office building will redevelop an area of vacant brownfield land that currently makes no contribution to the setting of the Customs House. While the office building will be a prominent new feature in its setting, it will be seen in the context of other modern developments that have been built to the north over the last twenty years. This will not impact on the significance of the listed building. Across the remainder of the site, the public realm improvements will improve the condition and appearance of the site and provide a higher quality setting. The features of the setting that make a positive contribution to the building include the chimney structure and retaining wall, which will both be preserved.
- 6.30 Overall, the proposed office building and landscaping works will have a minor positive impact on the setting of the Customs House and no impact on its significance.

## **Group 1: Listed Buildings on Mill Dam**

### **Significance**

#### **No. 27 Mill Dam**

- 6.31 No. 27 Mill Dam is an early 19<sup>th</sup> century building, rendered with a slate roof that is hipped at the west end. It is two storeys in height. It features quoins at first floor level and the ground floor has a mid-19<sup>th</sup> century public house front, named The Steamboat. There are Tuscan pilasters over the west elevation.

#### **No.23 Mill Dam**

- 6.32 No.23 Mill Dam is a narrow, one-bay early 19<sup>th</sup> century building which is listed for its mid-19<sup>th</sup> century shop front, comprising a front of two windows and a central door, described as 'eccentric' in the list entry. The building is two storeys in height with an attic and is covered by a slate roof. The windows comprise single sheets of glass. The cornice is supported by long carved, scrolled brackets.
- 6.33 The significance of the two listed buildings is derived from their age, architectural details and the quality of their original frontages which have been well preserved.



Figure 6.5 No.27 Mill Dam



Figure 6.6 No.23 Mill Dam



## **Setting**

- 6.34 The setting of the listed buildings is defined by the adjoining buildings on Mill Dam, which creates an unbroken line of historic development facing towards the river. The locally listed boundary wall and the cobbled street are positive features of Mill Dam and the remains of the chimney and the Grade-II listed Customs House are significant historic landmarks in the setting of these buildings. The historic boundary wall contains the view at street level, preventing clear views across the site and towards the river, although better views will be possible on the upper floors. While there are modern developments within the setting, including car parks and warehouses to the rear of the listed buildings, office developments to the north and the surface car parks and 1990s extension to the Customs House to the south. Overall, the historic features of the setting make a positive contribution to the listed buildings.

## **Contribution of site to the setting**

- 6.35 Apart from the boundary wall, most of the proposed development site is largely screened by the wall and makes no contribution to the setting of the listed buildings. However, from the upper floors, views across the whole site and down to the river will be possible. The wasteland area of the site is a negative feature in the setting of these buildings.

## **Assessment of Impact**

- 6.36 The significance of the listed buildings on Mill Dam is associated with their architectural details and the quality of their frontages. These features will not be affected by the proposed development. The views across to the river from the upper floors will change, but the quality of the open space to the south of the site will be significantly improved and the wasteland area will be redeveloped. The locally listed wall will be retained along with the chimney. While the office building will be a new feature in their setting, it will be seen in the context of other modern developments that have been built to the north. At street level, the proposed landscaping works will be largely concealed from view by the existing boundary wall, therefore, the improvement to the appearance of the site will not be fully apparent.
- 6.37 Overall, the proposed office building and landscaping works will have a minor positive impact on the setting of the listed buildings on Mill Dam and no impact on their significance.

## **Group 2: Locally Listed Buildings on Mill Dam**

### **Significance**

#### **The Quadrant**

- 6.38 The Quadrant, formerly known as Chandlers' Buildings, nos. 53-67 Mill Dam form a neat, three-storey, late-19<sup>th</sup> century curved terrace. They retain prominent upper levels in white glazed brick. The building also features decorative eaves and string courses. Vertically proportioned windows survive at the upper level, as do a mix of the ground floor windows and shop fronts, some with metal grilles in the stall risers. Unity to the group comes from the common colour scheme and the largely unbroken sweep of the slate roof and brick chimneys. The buildings are now in residential use which has led to the loss of some of the original doorways.

#### **Holborn House**

- 6.39 Holborn House was built in 1909 and has a grand institutional appearance with an ordered classical composition. It is constructed from brick and ashlar, with a slate mansard roof. The copper domed turrets are significant features. The side elevations are also of high quality,

including a two-storey entrance frontispiece. The building is home to the Mission to Seafarers, an organisation that has served seafarers visiting the Tyne for over 150 years. The Mission in Newcastle was established in 1857, one year after the Church of England established the Missions to Seafarers in London. In 1921, due to increasing numbers of seafarers around Mill Dam, the Mission bought the vacant German Sailors' Home (Holborn House), built in 1909. The building features on the local list because of the quality of its architecture and its association with the Mission to the Seafarers.

### **Unity Hall**

- 6.40 Unity Hall is a 19<sup>th</sup>-century meeting hall which was built as a charitable gift by the Bishop of Durham. It was from the steps of Unity Hall that the Riot Act was last read in England. It comprises a strong Gothicised vertical form with an asymmetrical gable and bell tower. The stone mouldings and quoins contribute positively to its character. The building is now in residential use. It features on the local list because of the quality of its architecture and its association with historic events in the area.

### **The Waterfront Public House**

- 6.41 The Waterfront public house dominates the first range of buildings along Mill Dam. Each storey is progressively taller, giving it impressive proportions. The building is well-detailed and its painted shopfront is a distinctive feature of the area. The building's brickwork, shaped gables and heavy entablature decorations over the upper level windows (including paired columns and Venetian windows in the front gables) are interesting and high quality.
- 6.42 The historic nature of the commercial uses of the properties along Mill Dam is still evident in the design of the buildings. They have strong Victorian and Edwardian features. The architecture is high quality and well-proportioned. The Welsh slate roofs and brick chimneys are prominent in views from the riverside. The large upper level windows including oriels provide good views towards the river. Moulded joinery including shopfront, hooded cornices, panelled pilasters, stall risers, corbels and sliding sash windows are key details.

Figure 6.7 The Quadrant



Figure 6.8 Holborn House



Figure 6.9 Unity Hall



Figure 6.10 The Waterfront Public House



## **Setting**

- 6.43 The setting of the listed buildings is defined by the adjoining buildings on Mill Dam, which creates an unbroken line of historic development facing towards the river. The views across the river contribute positively to the significance of the listed buildings. The locally listed boundary wall is a positive feature of Mill Dam and the remains of the chimney and the Grade-II listed Customs House are significant historic landmarks in the setting of these buildings. While there are modern developments within the setting, including car parks and warehouses, office developments and the modern extension to the Customs House, the setting overall makes a positive contribution to the listed buildings.

## **Contribution of site to the setting**

- 6.44 Much of the proposed development site is screened by the brick boundary wall and makes no contribution to the setting of the listed buildings. Some areas of green space on the site are visible but these make no contribution to the setting or significance of these buildings. The chimney and the brick boundary wall are positive features of within the setting and reflect the historic development of the area.

## **Assessment of Impact**

- 6.45 The significance of the listed buildings on Mill Dam is associated with their architectural details and the quality of their frontages. These features will not be affected by the proposed development. The views across to the river will be largely unaffected by the proposals and the locally listed wall will be retained along with the chimney. The surrounding buildings on Mill Dam and views of the Custom House will also be unchanged. The proposed landscaping works will be partially concealed from view by the existing boundary wall, therefore, the improvement to the appearance of the site will not be fully apparent.
- 6.46 Overall, the proposed office building and landscaping works will have a minor positive impact on the setting of the listed buildings on Mill Dam by improving the appearance of the site. This will have no impact on their significance.

## **Group 3: Locally Listed Buildings to the south-west of the site**

### **Significance**

#### **Mill Dam Jetty**

- 6.47 The structure of the Mill Dam Jetty comprises timber staithes that are evocative of the historic coal industry and maritime heritage. It features on the local list because it is related to the characteristics of the area and its economic history and is a prominent feature when viewed from the river.

#### **The Merchant Navy Memorial**

- 6.48 The Merchant Navy Memorial is a bronze statue that was installed in 1990, created by the sculptor Robert Olley and designed by Graham Ibbetson. It depicts a sailor at the wheel on a sloping base overlooking the River Tyne. The statue was unveiled by Lady Mountbatten and was paid for through donations from mariners and their families at the cost of £56,000. It features on the local list because of its association with the Seaman's Mission and the quality of the statue's design.

Figure 6.11 Mill Dam Jetty



Figure 6.12 Merchant Navy Memorial



## **Setting**

- 6.49 The setting of both assets is dominated and defined by the River Tyne, which reflects their historic maritime associations. The historic buildings along Mill Dam and the remnants of industry in the area contribute positively to the setting and reflect the historic industrial activities that once dominated the area. The Grade-II listed buildings of the Customs House and the Tyne Port Health Authority enhance the setting of these assets. Other features in the setting are less positive, including the distant views of the ASDA supermarket to the east. Recent public realm works along the riverside have improved the appearance of the setting to the north. Overall, the setting makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Mill Dam Jetty and the Merchant Navy Memorial

## **Contribution of site to the setting**

- 6.50 The remains of the chimney and the brick boundary wall to the east of the site are historic features in the setting of these assets and make a positive contribution. However, the large areas of open space across the site make no contribution to the setting and significance of these locally listed structures.

## **Assessment of Impact**

- 6.51 The proposed works will have no direct impact on the locally listed structures. The proposed office building will redevelop an area of vacant brownfield land that currently makes no contribution to the setting of these assets. While the office building will be a new feature in their setting, it will be seen in the context of other modern developments and will not affect the visual relationship these structures have with the surrounding historic buildings within the conservation area. The proposed public realm improvements will improve the condition and appearance of the site, preserve the historically significant structures on the site and provide a higher quality setting.
- 6.52 Overall, the proposed office building and landscaping works will have a minor positive impact on the setting of these locally listed heritage assets and no impact on their significance.



## Painted Mural on Commercial Road (Locally Listed)

Figure 6.13 Painted Mural on Commercial Road



### Significance

- 6.53 The mural on Commercial Road was painted in 1980 as part of a Youth Enterprise Project in South Shields. The mural was designed by D Wilkinson to depict the history of the town from its Roman beginnings up to the industrial era of the 1970s. It is hand painted on a retaining wall of an old railway embankment that used to carry trains into Low Shields Station (now demolished). It features on the local list because of its relevance to the social history of the area.

### Setting

- 6.54 The setting of the mural is defined by Commercial Road to the west and the rear of the buildings that front Mill Dam. To the west, behind the retaining wall that the mural is painted onto, there is a surface carpark with large industrial units and an ASDA supermarket beyond. To the north there is a roundabout and modern office developments. Although the mural is related to the area and reflects the area's history, the views from the mural towards the river are blocked by vegetation and intervening development. Overall, the setting makes no contribution to its significance.

### Contribution of site

- 6.55 The only part of the site that is visible from the mural is the locally listed boundary wall, which screens the rest of the site. Overall, the site makes no contribution to the significance of the mural.

### **Assessment of Impact**

- 6.56 The proposed works will have no direct impact on the mural. The proposed office building will redevelop an area of vacant brownfield land that currently makes no contribution to its setting. While the office building will be a new feature in the setting of the mural, the setting makes no contribution its significance.
- 6.57 Overall, the proposed development will have a neutral impact on the setting and no impact on the significance of the mural.

### **Harton Low Staithes (Locally Listed)**

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Figure 6.14 Harton Low Staithes



### **Significance**

- 6.58 The Harton Low Staithes is a restored wooden structure on the riverfront between the Customs House and the ferry landing. It was built to facilitate the loading of coal from the local collieries onto waiting ships.

### **Setting**

- 6.59 The setting is defined by the River Tyne, which contributes to its historic function as the final destination for coal wagons transporting coal from the area's collieries. The setting features many important listed and locally listed buildings along Mill Dam and the Customs House which are historic features of its setting and contribute positively to the significance of the structure.

### Contribution of site

- 6.60 The site makes a negligible contribution to the setting and significance of Harton Low Staithes. The proposed development site once formed part of the staithes and featured the rail tracks, coal wagons and buildings used by the staithes workers. All the structures associated with the staithes, except for the boundary wall, have been cleared from the site. Modern landscaping and tree planting introduced between the staithes and the site has obscured views between the two locations.

### Assessment of Impact

- 6.61 The proposed works will have no direct impact on Harton Low Staithes. The proposed office building will redevelop an area of vacant brownfield land that currently makes no contribution to its setting. While the proposed office building and landscaping will be a new feature in the setting of the staithes and will improve the appearance of the site, the important visual connection with the listed and locally listed buildings along Mill Dam and with the Customs House will not be affected.
- 6.62 Overall, the proposed development will have a minor positive impact on the setting and no impact on the significance of Harton Low Staithes.

### Summary

Table 6.1 Summary of Heritage Impact

| Asset(s)   | Impact on Setting | Impact on Significance |
|--|-------------------|------------------------|
| Mill Dam Conservation Area                                   | Minor positive    | Nil                    |
| Swinburne Glassworks Chimney                                 | Minor positive    | Minor positive         |
| Boundary wall and external wall of the former staithes house | Minor positive    | Neutral                |
| The Former Mercantile Marine Offices (Grade II)              | Minor positive    | Nil                    |
| Group 1  | Minor positive    | Nil                    |
| Group 2  | Minor positive    | Nil                    |
| Group 3  | Minor positive    | Nil                    |
| Painted Mural on Commercial Road                             | Neutral           | Nil                    |
| Harton Low Staithes  | Minor Positive    | Nil                    |

## 7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 This Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared to inform proposals for the redevelopment of a vacant brownfield site at Harton Quay, South Shields. It has assessed the impact of the proposed development on the heritage assets within and around the site that have the potential to be affected by the proposed development. It has also assessed the contribution that setting makes to their significance. It is concluded that the scheme would meet the heritage policy and legislative requirements outlined in Sections 1 and 4.
- 7.2 The site was home to the Swinburne Glassworks for much of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and was part of the Harton Low Staithes for much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century until the site was cleared in the 1980s. Almost all traces of these phases of development have been lost, except for the Swinburne Glassworks chimney and the boundary wall and external wall of the former staithes house.
- 7.3 The settings of the heritage assets have experienced considerable change because of de-industrialisation, post war demolitions and new developments in the area. However, the important role of the river in the setting of the heritage assets persists and contributes positively to their significance. The concentration of listed and locally listed buildings have group value, which underpins the significance of the Mill Dam Conservation Area. Overall, the surviving historic features on the site are a positive feature in the setting of the surrounding heritage assets, but the large area of vacant wasteland that comprises much of the site makes no contribution to their significance. The views to the north are dominated by a modern office development, which also make no contribution to the significance of the heritage assets.
- 7.4 The proposed development will preserve and enhance the historic features that have survived on the site, incorporating them into the proposed public realm improvements. This will enhance the appearance of the site and have a positive impact on the setting of the surrounding heritage assets. The new office will be built further to the north but will be a significant new addition in the setting of the surrounding heritage assets. However, as this part of the setting has already experienced extensive change and redevelopment, the proposed office would reflect the modern character of the setting to the north and will have a neutral impact on the setting overall. The proposed development will have no impact on the significance of any of the heritage assets, but will have a positive impact on the chimney which will be repaired to restore the lime render and brickwork.



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