

3.0 Assessment of significance

3.1 Assessing significance

Assessing significance is the means by which the cultural importance of a place and its component parts is identified and compared, both absolutely and relatively. The purpose of this is not merely academic, it is essential to effective conservation and management because the identification of elements of high and lower significance, based on a thorough understanding of a site, enables owners and designers to develop proposals that safeguard, respect and where possible enhance the character and cultural values of the site. The assessment identifies areas where no change, or only minimal changes should be considered, as well as those where more intrusive changes might be acceptable and could enrich understanding and appreciation of significance.

Statutory designation is the legal mechanism by which significant historic places are identified in order to protect them. The designations applying to the site are listed in Section 1.5). However, it is necessary to go beyond these in order to arrive at a more detailed and broader understanding of significance that considers more than matters archaeological and architectural-historical. This is achieved here by using the terminology and criteria from the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF, updated 2021). This document places the concept of significance at the heart of the planning process.

Annex 2 of the *NPPF* defines significance as:

The value of a 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 asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

3.1.1 Heritage interests

Historic England's *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* (2008) includes a methodology for assessing significance by considering 'heritage values'. In this instance *NPPF* terms are used because their adoption simplifies the preparation and assessment of planning and listed building consent applications, but the equivalent Historic England heritage values are given in brackets for reference.

- **Architectural and Artistic Interest ['aesthetic value']:** These are the interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset 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 ['historical value']:** An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history, but can also provide an emotional meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity [**communal value**].

Historic England has helpfully sought to clarify the distinction between archaeological interest and historic interest that the NPPF intends. Para 13 of the organisation's *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice In Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-taking in the Historic Environment* (July 2015) begins:

Archaeological interest, as defined in the NPPF, differs from historic interest, because it is the prospect for a future expert archaeological investigation to reveal more about our past that need protecting.

The assessment of significance is usually an amalgam of these different interests, and the balance between them will vary from one case to the next. What is important is to demonstrate that all these interests have been considered.

3.2 Significance of buildings within the site

3.2.1 No. 357 Mile End Road (locally listed)

No. 357 Mile End Road is locally rather than statutorily listed: it has some architectural and/or historic interest within a local, rather than national context.

The building has historic interest as part of the development of this part of Mile End Road, particularly related to the construction of Regent's Canal in 1820, and the industrial and commercial development this triggered. It also has a local connection to the Gardner family who built and operated the adjacent New Globe Public House as well as Commercial Wharf. No. 357 appears to have been a dwelling and/or office space for the Gardners; the public face of Commercial Wharf.

The building's architectural interest is concentrated in its external appearance. Its interior has been altered substantially over the course of the building's lifetime and little, if any, historic fabric remains. The exterior of the building, however, still relates to its immediate context, echoing the scale, materials and architectural rhythm of the adjacent nos. 359–381 Mile End Road as well as the lock-keeper's graduate centre to the north. It clearly has a contextual relationship these structures, as well as the bridge, canal and lock, and together they tell the story of historical development in the area. No. 357 is an important part of this group, mediating between the level of the road and canal. In addition, with the modern development of the area, particularly to the site's immediate west, no. 357 Mile End Road is an increasingly rare remnant of the extensive urbanisation of Mile End in the nineteenth century.

3.2.2 Lock-keeper's graduate centre

The lock-keeper's graduate centre currently has no official heritage designation. However, in our opinion, because of its local historic and architectural interest, it is a non-designated heritage asset. The graduate centre has historic interest as part of the development associated with the construction of Regent's Canal in 1820, legible through its proximity and positive relationship with Mile End Lock. Related to this, its architectural interest is primarily expressed through its external elevations which, despite the building being substantially remodelled in 1865, retain their nineteenth-century appearance and echo the scale, materials and architectural style of the other surviving structures from this time. The graduate centre, together with the buildings along Mile End Road, the canal, lock and adjacent ragstone wall, is part a group that still offers a tangible appreciation of the operational nineteenth-century canal.

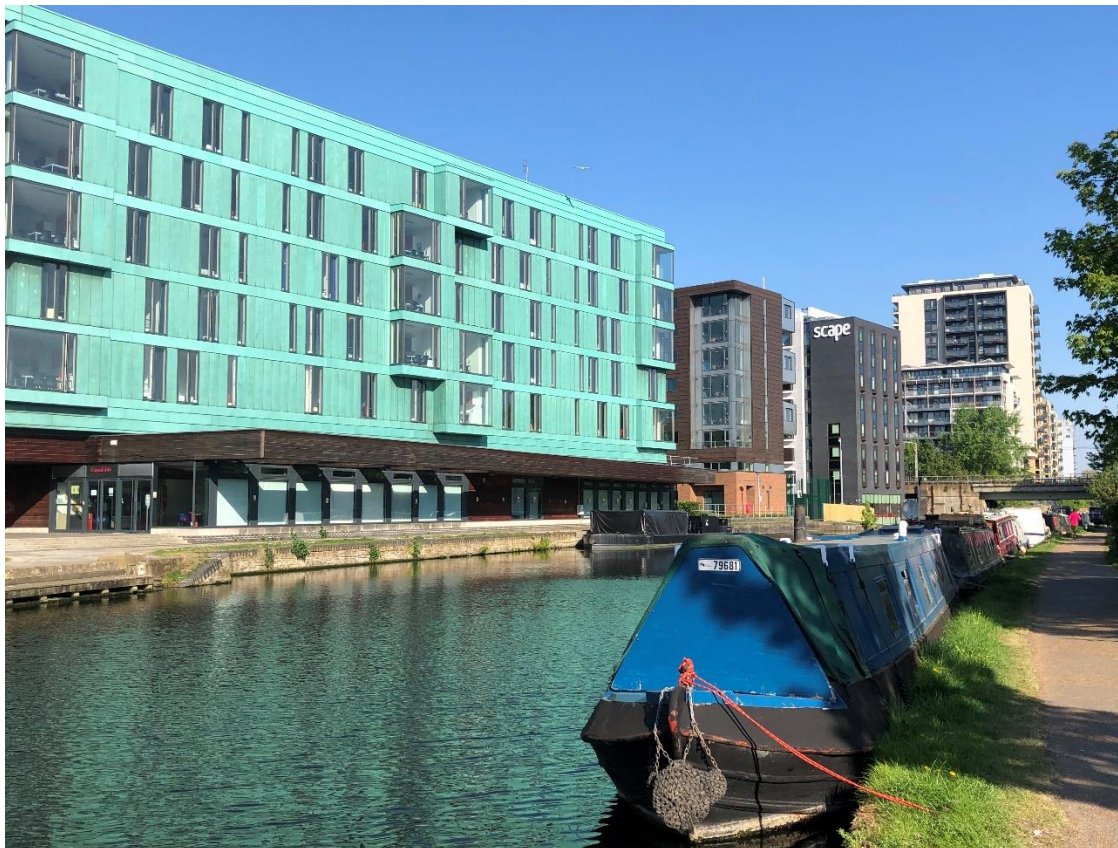
3.2.3 Hatton House and security lodge

These buildings date from the late-1980s/early 1990s and are typical in design and materials to other developments of this time within the area. They have no heritage significance.

3.3 Regent's Canal Conservation Area

3.3.1 Character and appearance

The *Regent's Canal Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Guidelines* (LB Tower Hamlets, 2009), sets out the Conservation Area's character and appearance, which centres around the canal and historic features associated with it such as bridges; locks; lock cottages; warehouses and other industrial features. Today these are experienced primarily as a leisure resource, used by boat-owners; walkers; runners and cyclists, rather than as an industrial/commercial hub. The report also acknowledges that the Conservation Area's character and appearance is highly dependent on other buildings that today adjoin the canal. This varies along the length of Regent's Canal but in the section north of the site, towards Victoria Park, this is characterised by large, contemporary blocks on the canal's western side and the green, open space of Mile End Park on its eastern side (Figure 18).



Alan Baxter

Figure 18 Development along the west side of Regent's Canal immediately to the north of the site, looking north-west from the eastern side of Regent's Canal (2020)

3.3.2 Contribution of the site

The primary character and appearance of the Conservation Area is the canal itself and surviving historic features associated with it. Within the site, both the lock-keeper's graduate centre and no. 357 Mile End Road, being contemporaneous with the canal and associated with its operation and use, make an important contribution to this part of the Conservation Area's character and appearance. This contribution is strengthened by the group value that these buildings have with the adjacent Mile End Lock; Mile End Bridge; the ragstone wall on the eastern side of the canal and the former Globe Public House. Together this collection of buildings and structures tells the story of the development and operation of the canal in this area and therefore make a substantial contribution to the Conservation Area's character and appearance.

3.4 Other heritage assets

3.4.1 Introduction

The site is located within the vicinity of other designated and non-designated heritage assets, which may be affected by the proposed development (Figure 7). Therefore, in order to robustly assess the proposals' potential impact, the significance of these assets needs to be evaluated. This is achieved in the following section by focusing primarily on the assets' exterior form and how this relates to their immediate context (i.e. the site). More detailed analysis, for example of their interior, was not undertaken as it was not relevant in assessing the impact of the current proposals.

Setting is defined in the NPPF (2021, Annex 2: Glossary) 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.

This means that all heritage assets have a setting, separate from the concept of curtilage, character and context. However, the contribution made by the setting to the significance of heritage assets varies considerably and is subject to change over time. Defining the extent, nature and contribution of a heritage asset's setting can be challenging. Historic England offers guidance on this in its *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets* (December 2017). This states that one of the most used expressions of a setting's contribution to the significance of a heritage asset is through views. However, the setting of a heritage asset encompasses more than just this purely visual impression. It is influenced by other environmental factors and the historic relationships between places.

3.4.2 Clinton Road Conservation Area

Character and appearance

The *Clinton Road Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Guidelines* (LB Tower Hamlets, March 2007) states that the special architectural and historic interest of the Conservation Area derives from its rich history and significant architecture. Two distinct townscapes are identified. Firstly, the two-storey, c. 1870s, residential terraces of Clinton Road whose character derives from their overall uniformity and rhythm, height, bay width, arched window heads, consistent setback, matching materials and details. Secondly, nos. 359–381 Mile End Road which consists of early-nineteenth-century Georgian style terraces (nos. 359–371 and nos. 379–381), the mid-nineteenth-century Italianate no. 373 and the Grade-II listed Guardian Angels Roman Catholic Church (1901–03) and adjacent Presbytery (also Grade-II listed). The remainder of the Conservation Area is an area of green, open space which is part of Mile End Park. Although this has no architectural importance it is culturally and historically significant to Tower Hamlets as an initiative of the County of London Plan 1943 to provide open space in London.

Contribution of setting

The character and appearance of the Clinton Road Conservation Area should not be judged in isolation but in conjunction with the character and appearance of adjacent Conservation Areas: Regent's Canal (including the site) to the west and Tredegar Square – a formal development, dating from 1820–1860 laid out around Tredegar Square, designated 1971 – to the east. Taken together these Conservation Areas tell the story of the development of this section of Mile End Road through the nineteenth-century. In this respect, the setting of the Clinton Road Conservation Area, makes an important contribution to its character and appearance. Whilst minimally visible, the Site forms part of the urban backdrop and therefore does not contribute to the setting of this Conservation Area.

3.4.3 The Novo Cemetery (including historic boundary walls) (Grade II)

Heritage significance

The Novo Cemetery is a Sephardi Jewish cemetery opened in 1733. The surviving portion dates from an 1855 extension. The reasons for designation given in the National Heritage List Entry are as follows:

- *Historic interest* – as the sole remaining portion of one of Britain's earliest post-Resettlement Jewish cemeteries, whose connection with the London Sephardi community does back nearly three centuries
- *Landscape interest* – as the expression of distinctive Sephardi burial practices, and especially the avoidance of all upright monuments
- *Rarity* – one of only two exclusively Sephardic cemeteries in England
- *Location and group value* – part of a cluster of early Jewish burial grounds in the Mile End area, within the historic heartland of London Jewry.

Contribution of setting

The setting of Novo Cemetery has changed dramatically since it was constructed in 1733 when it was surrounded predominantly by fields, Bancroft's hospital and almshouses to the west and later, Regent's Canal and Commercial Wharf to the east. In addition, following QMUL's acquisition of the site in the late-twentieth-century, the surrounding area has been more densely developed and the 1733 section of the cemetery has been cleared. Therefore, the cemetery's surrounding context makes a neutral contribution to its overall heritage significance. The Site is minimally visible within the urban backdrop and therefore does not contribute to the heritage significance of the Cemetery.

3.4.4 Guardian Angels Roman Catholic Church, Primary School and Presbytery (Grade II)

Heritage significance

The heritage significance of this collection of associated buildings stems primarily from their historic interest as part of the first enclave of Catholicism in the area and the Church's association with F. A. Walters, one of the leading Roman Catholic architects of his generation. Their architectural interest is expressed in their characterful and attractive facades: the earlier, yellow stock brick, Queen Anne Revival/Arts and Crafts Primary School and the red brick Gothic Revival Church and neo-Tudor Presbytery. Together these buildings have substantial group value and presence in the surrounding streetscape.

Contribution of setting

These buildings were constructed within a densely developed setting, much more so than today where the open, green space of Mile End park extends both to the north and south. This has meant the primacy of the Church within the streetscape, initially due entirely to both its scale and its materials (which are entirely unique in this part of Mile End) has been enhanced. Although the area has changed substantially, remnants of the buildings' historic context – nos. 357–371 and nos. 379–381, Clinton Road, and the Tredegar Square Conservation Area – still survive, serving as a reminder of the residential area the Church, Presbytery and School were built to serve. Therefore, these elements of the buildings' setting do make a limited contribution to their overall heritage significance.

3.4.5 Nos. 359–373 and nos. 379–381 Mile End Road (locally listed)

Heritage significance

The heritage significance of these terraces derives primarily from their historic interest as part of the early-eighteenth-century development of this part of Mile End Road. Although initially residential, with the exception of no. 359 which has always been a public house, the ground floor of the terrace was later converted into shops. Their appearance reflects their age and evolving use through their uniform height and parapet and their attractive yellow stock brick upper floors with symmetrical and rhythmical fenestration. No. 373 is later than the rest of the terrace and is of a more flamboyant Italianate design.

Contribution of setting

No. 357 Mile End Road, has a similar architectural style and history of development and ownership to this terrace. Therefore, no. 357 Mile End Road makes a limited contribution to the terraces' overall heritage significance by allowing this terrace to be seen and understood in its historic context. This relationship is particularly strong between no. 359 and no. 357 Mile End Road due to their close proximity either side of the contemporaneous Regent's Canal.

4.0

Heritage impact assessment

4.1 A short summary of changes relative to the refused scheme (July 2019)

The initial scheme for the site which was refused on 13 December 2019 (ref. PA/19/01422). The decision notice gave two reasons for this refusal:

- 1. The proposed development, by reason of the demolition of the locally listed no. 357 Mile End Road, would result in harm to the character and appearance of the Regent's Canal Conservation Area. The harm, whilst significant, would be less than substantial and would not be outweighed by the public benefits of the proposed development.*
- 2. The proposed development, by reason of its height, scale, mass and relationship with non-designated heritage assets including the Lock Keeper's Cottage, would result in harm to the character, appearance and heritage significance of both the Regent's Canal Conservation Area and the Clinton Road Conservation Area. The harm to each of these heritage assets, whilst significant, would be less than substantial and would not be outweighed by the public benefits of the proposed development.*

- Reason 1 above has been addressed through amending the design in order to retain the historic, southernmost section of no. 357 Mile End Road and by proposing alterations to its exterior that will have a positive impact on its overall significance and, by extension, the Regent's Canal Conservation Area. Following reviews of working proposals for a mansard roof, it was felt that a flat roofed extension to No. 357 kept the design simple and better transitioned the historic building into the proposed SBM building. The building is to be used as further teaching space and provides an active use for the locally listed building. The historic frontage would simultaneously be restored- which would be a heritage benefit.
- The scale and mass of the proposed SBM building was re-considered. The refused nine storeys building of two tiers has been reduced to seven storeys including basement articulated by vertical fins to break up the massing with the top two storeys set back to create a terrace on both the north and south elevations. From the street, this will better align with the roof extension to No. 357. This is also in keeping with the rooflines of the historic terraces that line Mile End Road.
- A 'cut back' has been introduced to the north-west corner which helps to address the relationship and space with the Lock-keepers cottage and reduce the sense of enclosure along the Westfield Way.
- In terms of the materials and palettes, the initially proposed brick façades were replaced with a light-coloured brick, pre-cast concrete and aluminium to respond sensitively to the neighbouring buildings made of a variety of materials.
- The design proposed the setting back of the second tier to balance the proposed building and improve the sense of scale in relation to the Lock-keeper's cottage.
- Further articulation of the façades to create interest within the mass. For example, the building is articulated by the use of horizontal bands underneath windows to define the floor levels- this emulates the stucco bands used across No. 357.

- The dynamic façade, created by angled protecting windows (solar control) and vertical fins particularly of the upper storeys, responds to the angled form of the extension to lock keeper's cottage, balancing the transition between the new architecture and the nineteenth-century cottage.
- The exterior of the modern extension to the Lock-keeper's cottage responds to the proposed SBM building and balances the transition between old and new architecture fronting the canal.
- For the proposed SBM building, grey brick with a light mortar and use of aluminium is intended to complement nearby buildings on Mile Ed Road including those within the campus and to mask the effects of significant pollution on Mile End Road. The projecting angled window façades would be constructed in pre-cast concrete and brickwork.
- The materiality of the roof extension to No. 357 is confirmed. Setback from the existing parapet, the extension is clad in glass with windows to be integrated and aligned with the historic windows below.
- The site of the refused scheme was approximately 8,336 square metres. This was reduced in light of massing to approximately 6,900 square meters and then approximately 6,600 square metres.
- The internal plan of the SBM building is less divided with teaching spaces across all floors. The main entrance faces west. Much of the internal arrangements have been altered as a result of reducing the massing of the structure. This revised plan improves the circulation of the building and the relationship between the outside open spaces and those inside.
- The proposals concern the internal arrangement of the Lock Keeper's Cottage, previously unaffected by the proposed site development. The plans make better use of the building as a graduate centre with a café.
- The wide towpath and the active canal frontage including a large opening creates smart public spaces for students and sets back the building from the canal whilst creating a smoother transition between outside and inside space. This is a positive contribution to the conservation area. The proposed landscape improvements to the canal and square south-west of the lock-keeper's graduate centre, as well as the provision of a new, wider and more welcoming stair to the canalside, constitute substantial public benefits that will enhance appreciation of the Regent's Canal Conservation Area.

4.2 Summary of the proposals

4.2.1 Introduction

The proposed development consists of approximately 6,500 square metres of new, high-quality education and research floorspace for QMUL's School of Business Management (SBM). Accommodation is provided for three primary uses: larger teaching spaces, study spaces and academic areas across the top floors.

To facilitate the new building proposed for the SBM, Hatton House and the security lodge will be demolished. The other two buildings within the site, no. 357 Mile End Road and the lock-keeper's graduate centre have local historic interest and will be either entirely or largely retained. No. 357 Mile End Road's 1979 one-to-two storey rear extension and the middle, late-nineteenth century extension – both of no historic merit - will be demolished. The historic building fronting Mile End Road will be retained, with various changes to the façade (see Section 4.3.1 for a more detailed discussion). No. 357 Mile End Road will house teaching, seminar, study spaces and WCs. The upper floors will also provide a free legal advice centre provided by the QMUL Law students. The

Lock Keeper's cottage will offer a café at ground floor level and seminar/study spaces above.

The new SBM's height, massing, materials and form have been, the subject of a number of pre-application meetings with the London Borough of Tower Hamlets' Planning and Conservation Officers as well as public and stakeholder consultation. The proposed scheme represents an evolution of the initial design which responds more positively to the site's architectural and historic context, as well as its current character.

The main entrance to the building will be from the west, facilitating better connections with the rest of QMUL's Mile End Campus. A social space will be provided at lower ground floor level adjacent to the canal.

4.2.2 Demolition of Hatton House and security lodge

Hatton House and the adjacent security lodge were both constructed c. 1990. They have no historic or architectural interest and do not positively contribute to the character and appearance of the Regent's Canal Conservation Area or the setting of nearby heritage assets. The demolition of Hatton house facilitates the building of the proposed SBM building which will occupy the same site. Therefore, their demolition will not impact the overall significance of these heritage assets. The immediate removal of Hatton House may temporarily impact the relationship between the undesignated buildings along the canal and will be temporarily detrimental to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The replacement of Hatton House with the introduction of a high-quality designed scheme, particularly relative to that of Hatton House, will resolve this temporary harm and will be a positive addition to the conservation area responding sensitively to the non-designated historic buildings. The replacement of the SBM building is necessary for QMUL to meet the demands and expectations of twenty-first century teaching as an educational institution and secures the continued occupation of the campus and site by the university.

4.2.3 Height and massing

The proposed development's massing will respond to the site's immediate context: it will have a wedge shape with a narrow southern section, facing no. 357 Mile End Road, widening out to the rear, northern face. A clear gap has been provided between the proposed development and the lock-keeper's cottage. This will ensure that a sense of space and proportion is maintained between the lock-keeper's cottage and the taller proposed building.

The proposed development is seven storeys including ground level and a lower ground floor level adjacent to the canal. The top two floors have been set back from the line of the building to reduce its apparent mass and provide more space between the proposed development and its surrounding context, particularly no. 357 Mile End Road and the lock-keeper's graduate centre. The building negotiates a change of level across the site between Westfield Way to the west and the canalside to the east, which is 2.7m lower.

4.2.4 Materials and detailing of façades

The detailing of the proposed development's façades was carefully considered in order to create a more human scale and experience. The choice of materials and approach to the architectural expression of the façades were inspired by both the existing context and historic precedents. The proposed development is of a light-coloured brick, concrete and aluminium to provide a contrast with the yellow stock brick of the surrounding historic buildings. This also has the effect of grounding the building within the site. The top storeys will be articulated vertically in order to help reduce the appearance of the building's massing.

The proposed development's façades will be broken up by strong horizontal banding underneath windows and vertical articulation, to help express bays and give the elevations a strong rhythm. Further detail will be added by changes in depth and angled windows. Glazing will be used extensively in both the central circulation section and at the ground and first floor in

order to activate the building's elevations and increase their permeability and transparency. This will animate the area around the building and also facilitate views through it, towards the Conservation Area including the canal and Mile End Park, improving wayfinding and create a more welcoming, attractive and open space for visitors within, and therefore enhancing appreciation of, the Conservation Area.

4.2.5 Landscaping

Landscape design is an important part of the proposed scheme. It is proposed to re-landscape two squares: behind the Arts One building (the block immediately adjacent to the west and to the south of the lock-keeper's cottage). These will create external communal areas that link to those interior social spaces visible at ground floor level of the propped SBM building and lock-keeper's cottage.

The arrival to the campus from Mile End Road will feature planting in front of No. 357 to relate to the canalside planting and appearance of the conservation area and further enabling better integration of the different buildings within the conservation area. There will also be improved permeability of Mile End Road from the campus, with Westfield Way reconfigured to be more welcoming for pedestrians.

In addition, the canalside path will be widened with new canal planting and seating areas accessed via a new, wider stair provided to help create a more visible, welcoming and attractive access to the canal from Mile End Road. This will be a substantive enhancement to the appearance of the conservation area. The stair will also link the green rear wall of No. 357 to the canalside planting and the transition between the different areas of the campus. Planting has been carefully considered to create a landscape link and sense of continuity between the Regents' canal and the Novo cemetery. In addition, the proposals protect and retain existing trees alongside the canal associated with the current appearance of the conservation area.

The security outbuilding and gates currently located next to No. 357 will be removed with two new sets of gates proposed. The first would be set back from the south end of the new SBM building and the second would be a pedestrian gate located at the top of the proposed canalside staircase. This overall provides a better manned security presence protecting this central area of the conservation area and the removal of the existing outbuilding partially facilitates the building of the new SBM building and the necessary space required around No. 357.

External lighting has been carefully considered to preserve the appearance of the conservation area by highlighting key aspects of the site but with minimised or reduced lighting levels against the edge of the canal.

Overall, the landscaping proposals significantly enhance the attractive nature and accessibility of the canalside and are therefore a substantive enhancement to the conservation area, improving access to the canal and appreciation of the canalside environment as well enabling better integration of the campus buildings including the locally listed No. 357.

4.3 Impact on heritage assets within the site

4.3.1 No. 357 Mile End Road (locally listed)

No. 357 Mile End Road is locally listed for its local historic and architectural interest as part of the historic development of Mile End Road. This is concentrated primarily in its external elevations which, despite alterations still relates to a group of surviving nineteenth-century buildings associated with the Canal, in terms of its scale, materials and architecture.

The 1979 one-to-two storey extension has no special historic or architectural interest and therefore its demolition will not harm the building's overall significance. The middle extension, dating from the late-nineteenth-century, has very limited historic interest (but no architectural interest) as part of the development of the building over time. Its demolition will cause a limited

amount of harm to the building's overall significance. However, the demolition of this section is necessary to facilitate the new, wider stair to the canal. This will improve access to the canal and facilitate greater appreciation of no. 357 Mile End Road's fundamental connection to the canal. This improvement in no. 357's setting, outweighs the limited harm resulting from the demolition of the late-nineteenth century extension. A number of alterations are proposed to no. 357 Mile End Road's exterior. The western window on the southern elevation will be extended to ground level. In addition, the two windows on the west elevation will be extended and a new entrance door inserted in between them. The width of these openings reflect those on the upper floors and the new door will be placed in between the existing openings, respecting the symmetry of the façade. The openings on the eastern side of no. 357 Mile End Road, facing the canal, will be rationalised and arranged symmetrically, resulting in a cleaner and neater appearance, which is more in-keeping with the character of the other façades.

The rear elevation will comprise a green wall. This will improve the quality of the urban realm and further the relationship between the proposed development and the landscape.

Overall, the proposed improvements to the historic façade of no. 357 Mile End Road, the improved integration with the campus buildings and to its setting and the removal of the existing detracting extensions, will constitute a minor heritage benefit. In previous iterations of this report, the overall impact was considered neutral but subsequent revisions in the proposals allow a positive conclusion.



Nicholas Hare Architects

Figure 19 Visualisation of the proposed development from the towpath on the eastern side of Regent's Canal, looking south (2022)

4.3.2 Lock-keeper's cottage (non-designated heritage asset)

The historic part of the lock-keeper's cottage has limited, local architectural and historic interest as part of the development of this part of Mile End associated with Regent's Canal.

The proposed SBM building has been specifically designed to respond to and respect this non-designated heritage asset. The building line has been set back to leave a clear gap between it and the graduate centre. In addition, the top storey has also been set back from the building line in order to lessen the appearance of the massing of the proposed development. The current single-paneled entrance door is to be replaced with a double-framed glass door. The diagonal blue band on the rear elevation will be removed and replaced with additional windows for the staircase. This will complement whilst also differentiate the proposed development from the historic part of the lock-keeper's graduate centre. The brickwork of the original cottage and slate roofs are to be cleaned and repaired which will enhance the appearance of the historic building within the conservation area.

It is also proposed to re-landscape the square to the south-west of the lock-keeper's graduate centre. At present this area is dominated by hard standing and waste bins, resulting in a hard and unattractive environment. The proposed landscaping works will create a more attractive setting to the lock-keeper's graduate centre.

In summary, the proposed development will have no impact on the architectural or historic interest of lock-keeper's cottage but will substantially improve its setting creating a more attractive context. This will constitute an improvement to the appearance of this part of the Regent's Canal Conservation Area.



Figure 20 The west elevation of the lock-keeper's graduate centre (2020)

4.4 Impact on the Regent's Canal Conservation Area

The character and appearance of the Regent's Canal Conservation Area is primarily derived from the surviving historic features associated with the Canal. However, there is also an acknowledgement of both the more recent development – predominantly large, contemporary residential blocks in Tower Hamlets – as well as the changing use of the canal from industry to leisure and recreation. No. 357 Mile End Road and the lock-keeper's graduate centre make an important contribution to the Conservation Area's character and appearance as remnants of historic development associated with the Canal.

The alterations to no. 357 Mile End Road have already been assessed in the context of their impact on its intrinsic significance (see Section 4.3.1) and were considered to provide a heritage benefit. As no. 357 Mile End Road contributes to the character and appearance of the Regent's Canal Conservation Area, these benefits are also relevant within the wider heritage context.

The proposed new SBM building has been carefully designed to respond to both the surviving nineteenth-century buildings and the surrounding context. It is of a similar scale and massing compared to other buildings along this section of canal. Furthermore, its material palette and the architectural expression of its façades also takes cues from these elements.

The way in which the building is experienced, at ground and lower ground (canalside) level has been carefully considered. The extensive use of glazing creates a sense of openness, transparency and permeability and encourages views and movement through the building to the canal and Mile End Park beyond. Attractive planting and spill-out activities will animate this area and improve its appearance and experience. Greater access to this area is facilitated by the creation of a new, wider and more welcoming stair from Mile End Road to the Canal. This represents a significant benefit to the conservation area as it will both increase access to it and enhance an appreciation of its character, particularly the group interrelated developments associated with the canal. Therefore, in our opinion, high-quality architecture will be introduced to the conservation area providing associated positive benefits and improvements to the overall character and appearance of the Regent's Canal Conservation Area.

4.5 Impact on other nearby heritage assets

4.5.1 Clinton Road Conservation Area

The character and appearance of the Clinton Road Conservation Area derives from its two distinct townscapes, Clinton Road and Mile End Road as well as the large open space of Mile End Park.

The proposed new SBM's form, massing, materials and architectural expression has been carefully considered in order to respond to both surviving historic elements and its immediate context. Its height is in-keeping with the larger residential block along this side of Regent's Canal in the vicinity of Mile End. The design of its façade, with the use of brick (a common building material in the area) and glazed panels, echoes the surrounding context as well as providing a transparency and permeability that allow views and movement through the site between Mile End Road, QMUL's campus, Regent's Canal and Mile End Park. The feeling of openness within the Clinton Road Conservation Area will be preserved. Therefore, the proposed development will not impact the character and appearance of the Clinton Road Conservation Area.

4.5.2 The Novo Cemetery (including historic boundary walls) (Grade II)

The Novo Cemetery is designated primarily for its historic interest as one of the earliest post-Resettlement Jewish cemeteries. Its setting has changed dramatically since it was constructed and is now almost entirely surrounded with buildings on the QMUL's Mile End Campus. Therefore, its current setting makes a neutral contribution to its overall significance. The proposed development represents a small change in the cemetery's surrounding context but this will not impact on its overall significance.

4.5.3 Guardian Angels Roman Catholic Church, Primary School and Presbytery (Grade II)

The heritage significance of these buildings lies in their historic interest, their architecture (and art) and their cumulative group value. Guardian Angels Roman Catholic Church in particular has a substantial presence in the surrounding streetscape. Surviving elements of townscape of a similar age make a limited contribution to its setting. The proposed development will result in a change in the surrounding context. However, this will not impact their overall significance.

4.5.4 Nos. 359–373 and nos. 379–381 Mile End Road (locally listed)

This terrace is contemporary with no. 357 Mile End Road and the lock-keeper's graduate centre. As such, these buildings make a limited contribution to the setting, and by extension the overall significance, of this terrace by allowing it to be experienced in context as part of a group of development associated with the canal. The improvements to no. 357 Mile End Road therefore will, also, have a very limited positive impact on this terrace's overall significance. The new SBM's height, massing, materials and form have been carefully considered, taking cues from these surviving historic remnants such as their use of brick, their strong hierarchy and rhythm in order to integrate it as successfully as possible into the surrounding context. The proposed development as a whole will have a neutral impact on this terrace's overall significance.

4.6 Conclusion: the planning balance

The proposed scheme represents the results of a lengthy and revised design process. The design has also been further finessed following the refusal of planning permission in December 2019, subsequent pre-application meetings, a CADAP meeting and Mayors' meeting. The July 2021 QMU Mile End Campus SPD in principle guides and accepts development on the Mile End Campus within the conservation area.

The retention of the historic southernmost section of nos. 357 Mile End Road and associated improvements to the façade constitute a substantial benefit relative to the previous scheme and will have a positive impact, both on no. 357 Mile End Road's intrinsic significance as well as surrounding heritage assets such as the character and appearance of the Regent's Canal Conservation Area. Every aspect of the proposed new SBM building has been carefully considered in order to positively respond to its surrounding context and the surviving historic environment. It does this through its sensitive massing (stepping back the upper storeys) and use of materials as well as its approach to the articulation of the façades. The provision of landscaping works, including the creation of a new, wider and more welcoming stair to the canalside and two communal squares, are substantial public benefits that will enhance appreciation of the Regent's Canal Conservation Area and generally improve the integration of campus buildings.

Overall, the scheme constitutes positive heritage benefits to both the conservation area and the locally listed building. Great weight is given to the conservation of the Conservation Area- the proposals are therefore compliant with Paragraph 199 of the NPPF and consistent with section 72 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act. There will be no or neutral impact to those heritage assets identified nearby. The proposals will therefore not engage Paragraph 202 of the NPPF as there will be no harm to the historic environment.

Should LBTH consider that Paragraph 202 is engaged however, attention is drawn to the substantial public benefits provided by the scheme (see Planning Statement) including identified heritage benefits: the introduction of high-quality architecture replacing a non-descript building that backs onto the Regent's Canal (Conservation Area) with limited interaction between the two; improvements to the façade and integration of No. 357 more fully into the wider university campus; improvements to the setting of the lock-keeper's cottage and substantive sensitive landscaping within the conservation area that will improve the canalside setting and access to it. These benefits alone would outweigh any minor harm to designated heritage assets or to the non-designated No. 357. By either route, the proposed scheme fully complies with national, regional and local planning policy (i.e. Policy S.DH3) concerning the historic environment.

5.0

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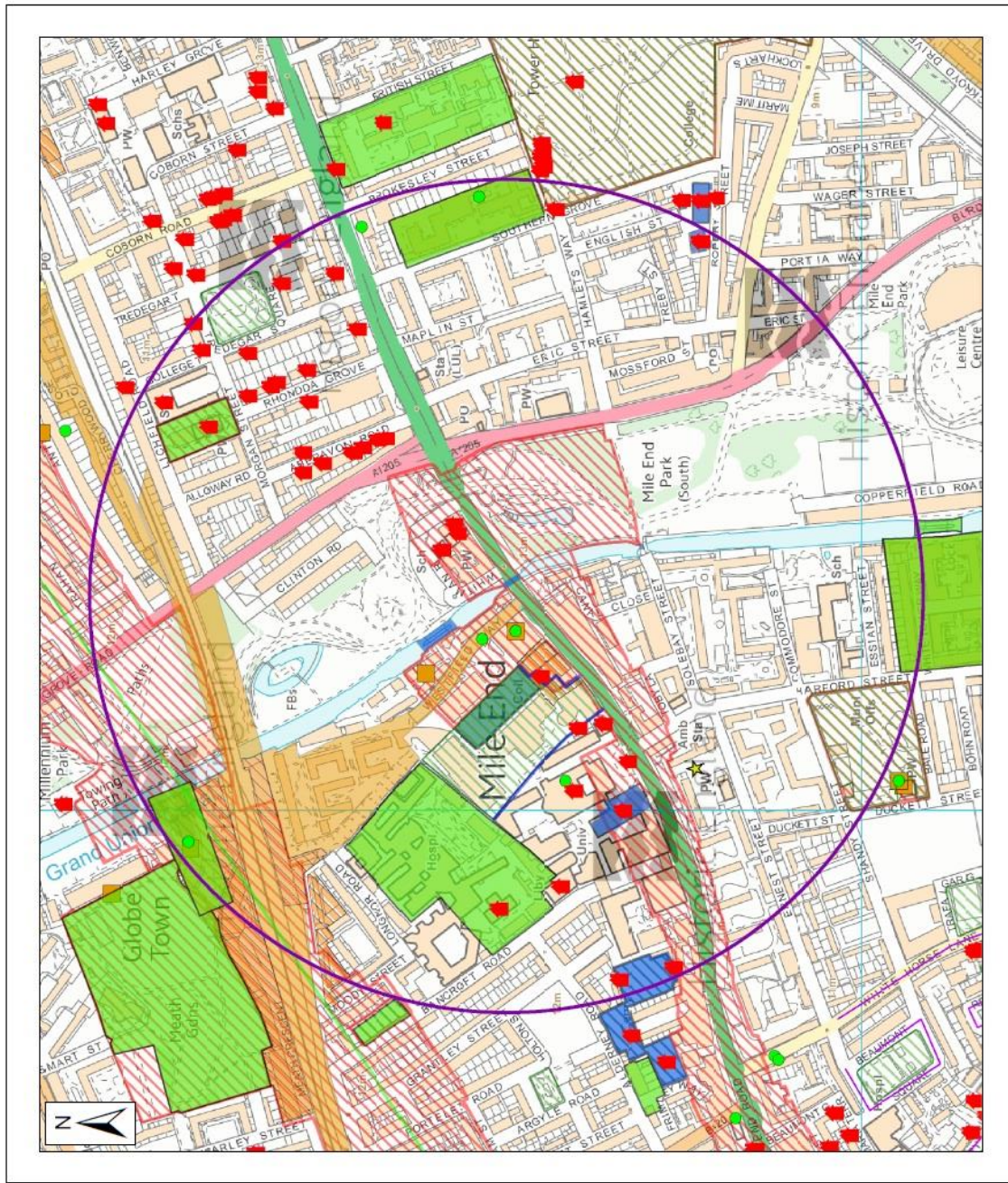
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Historic Environment Record search results

<p>GLHER Report 15555 357 Mile End Road TQ 36257 82426 500m radius search</p>	<p>27 April 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Archaeology ★ Archaeological Find Spot ■ Listed Building ◇ TDP & TWS ⊕ Maritime Archaeology ■ Registered Parks & Gardens ■ Scheduled Ancient Monuments ■ World Heritage Sites ■ Archaeological Priority Area ■ Event Location ■ Event Location (Not fully recorded on the GLHER database) ■ Requested Search Area 	<p>Scale (at A4): 1:6,000</p> <p><small>This map is based upon Ordnance Survey data with the permission of Ordnance Survey. It is not to be used for navigation. Ordnance Survey, the Royal Geographical Society, the British Crown, and the Crown. Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction is prohibited. Ordnance Survey, the Royal Geographical Society, the British Crown, and the Crown. Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction is prohibited. Ordnance Survey, the Royal Geographical Society, the British Crown, and the Crown. Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction is prohibited. Ordnance Survey, the Royal Geographical Society, the British Crown, and the Crown. Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction is prohibited.</small></p>	<p>Canon Bridge House, 25 Dowgate Hill, London EC4R 2YA Tel: 020 7973 3000 Fax: 020 7973 3001 www.HistoricEngland.org.uk</p>
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Relevant planning policy

National and regional policy

The designation of the Clinton Road and Regents Canal Conservation Areas means that proposals affecting their special interest will be subject to the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the national guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Relevant sections of the NPPF include paragraph 194, which requires applicants to 'describe the significance of any heritage assets affected' and paragraph 195, which recommends that 'local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal'.

Regional policies are addressed in the London Plan (2021):

Policy HC1- Heritage conservation and growth:

Development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings, should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the assets' significance and appreciation within their surroundings. The cumulative impacts of incremental change from development on heritage assets and their settings should also be actively managed. Development proposals should avoid harm and identify enhancement opportunities by integrating heritage considerations early on in the design process.

Policy D3:

1. enhance local context by delivering buildings and spaces that positively respond to local

distinctiveness through their layout, orientation, scale, appearance and shape, with due regard to existing and emerging street hierarchy, building types, forms and proportions.

11. respond to the existing character of a place by identifying the special and valued features and characteristics that are unique to the locality and respect, enhance and utilise the heritage assets and architectural features that contribute towards the local character

12. be of high quality, with architecture that pays attention to detail, and gives thorough consideration to the practicality of use, flexibility, safety and building lifespan through appropriate construction methods and use of attractive, robust materials which weather and mature well

Local policy

Also relevant are the local policies within the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Local Plan (adopted 2020) in particular Chapter 8 'Creating attractive and distinctive places' which includes guidance on high quality design, views, and shopfronts. Policy S.DH3 – Heritage and the historic environment states:

- 1. Proposals must preserve or, where appropriate, enhance the borough's designated and non-designated heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance as key and distinctive elements of the borough's 24 places.*
- 2. Proposals to alter, extend or change the use of a heritage asset or proposals that would affect the setting of a heritage asset will only be permitted where:*
 - a. they safeguard the significance of the heritage asset, including its setting, character, fabric or identity*

- b. *they are appropriate in terms of design, height, scale, form, detailing and materials in their local context*
 - c. *they enhance or better reveal the significance of assets or their settings*
 - d. *they preserve strategic and locally important views and landmarks, as defined in Policy D.DH4, and*
 - e. *in the case of a change of use from a use for which the building was originally designed, a thorough assessment of the practicability of retaining its existing use has been carried out outlining the wider public benefits of the proposed alternative use.*
3. *Applications affecting the significance of a heritage asset will be required to provide sufficient information to demonstrate how the proposal would contribute to the asset's conservation. Any harm to the significance of a heritage asset must be justified having regard to the public benefits of the proposal: whether it has been demonstrated that all reasonable efforts have been made to sustain the existing use, find new uses, or mitigate the extent of the harm to the significance of the asset; and whether the works proposed are the minimum required to secure the long term use of the asset. Factors that will be considered can include:*
- a. *The significance of the asset, architecturally, historically and contextually*
 - b. *The adequacy of efforts made to retain the asset in use, and*
 - c. *The merits of any alternative proposal for the site.*
4. *Substantial harm to or the total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset will only be supported where it is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or the following criteria can be satisfied:*
- a. *The nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site*
 - b. *No viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation*
 - c. *Conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible*
 - d. *The harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.*
5. *Alterations, extensions or changes of use, or development in the vicinity of listed buildings (as shown on the Policies Map) will be expected to have no adverse impact on those elements which contribute to their special architectural or historic interest, including their settings.*
6. *Significant weight will be given to the protection and enhancement of the borough's conservation areas (as shown on the Policies Map), including their setting. Development within a conservation area will be expected to preserve or, where appropriate, enhance those elements which contribute to their special character or appearance. There will be a presumption in favour of the retention of unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of a conservation area. Planning applications should explore opportunities from new development within conservation areas and their setting to enhance or better reveal their significance.*
9. *Development that lies in or adjacent to archaeological priority areas (as shown on the Policies Map) will be required to include an archaeological evaluation report and will require any nationally important remains to be preserved permanently in situ, subject to consultation with Historic England.*
10. *We will seek to ensure the protection and appropriate enhancement of the borough's historic parks and gardens (as shown on the Policies Map). Development proposals should therefore safeguard those features which form an integral part of the special character or appearance of the park or garden and ensure they do not detract from the enjoyment, layout, design, character, appearance or setting of the park or garden, key views into and out of the park, or prejudice its future restoration. Where development is likely to affect a historic park and garden or its setting, applications should include a heritage impact assessment setting out the likely impact which it*

would have upon its significance and the means by which any harm might be mitigated.

LB Tower Hamlets adopted the Queen Mary University Mile End Campus – Supplementary Planning Document in July 2021. The masterplan for QMUL in Mile End outlines the development opportunities for the campus that align with the interests of the local community and in accordance with policies from the Local Plan.

The SPD also takes into consideration the important spatial context surrounding the campus, including the Mile End Hospital, the Regent's Canal and Mile End Park.

Of particular relevance in Section B are chapters 4.0 Built and Townscape which discusses the character and appearance of the Regents Canal Conservation Area and relevant heritage assets, 5.0 High Quality Design and Building Heights, 6.0 Accessibility and Integration and 7.0 Campus Spaces and Places.

4.2 Improving the Setting for Heritage Assets

New developments on the campus should seek to bring a positive contribution to heritage assets through preserving their fabric, providing an appropriate setting and being considered in regard to materials. Proposals for new development should be accompanied by a heritage assessment which includes a townscape visual assessment where appropriate.

This is as much about improving the quality of the public spaces which form the immediate setting of these assets.

The SPD notes in regards to No. 357 Mile End Road that:

The building's contribution to Mile End Road has been diminished by changes over the decades and currently does not participate in the street scape with active frontages. The use of the building is partly compromised by noise and vibrations of adjacent underground tunnel.

There are opportunities to:

Incorporate the building in new South-East Gateway and introduce a better public realm around the asset. Opportunities for refurbishment and potential sensitive extension to create a better fitted space for its use. There is also potential to sensitively 'open up' the ground floor level with careful incorporation of historic features in order to introduce a more public and animated setting for the building.

4.6 Building Scale: Mile End Road

The Mile End Campus fronts a large portion of this section of Mile End Road. On the north side of Mile End Road, buildings back straight onto the pavement, with only a few exceptions. One of these is the main entrance to the campus at the Queens' Building, which provides a moment of relief and a sense of civic importance.

5.1 When developing new proposals for Mile End campus established building height datums should be carefully considered, including surrounding Conservation areas and heritage assets. A thorough townscape analysis must be presented for all proposals within the SPD boundary.

New development needs to create interest, improve identity and legibility through reinforced local character and meaningful variation in building footprint, height and potential imaginative deployment of setbacks alongside an imaginative vision for the ground plane.

5.2 It is important that these buildings are of the highest architectural quality and are buildings of strategic academic and community importance such that they reinforce the outward facing

and civic nature of the institution.

5.3 New buildings to the Canalside area should adopt a varied approach to height and massing to avoid creating a continuous 'wall' along the canal.

6.1 improved visual and physical permeability and access through the campus must be considered as part of future development; while making the campus more inviting and accessible to the public through landscape improvements and architectural design. Furthermore, create active frontages to Mile End Road would help to improve the streetscape setting and offer opportunities for natural surveillance; and existing buildings should be made more accessible, including improved wheelchair access.

7.1 Campus spaces should therefore provide a high-quality environment that is accessible to all, is rich in character and has a unique sense of place. The relationship between buildings and landscape should be enhanced. Campus spaces should provide a high-quality setting for buildings, aid ground-level activation and enhance building access and legibility.

Section C Site Design Guide

This section of the document sets out the core development opportunities and the key design principles that should be considered in developing proposals for individual sites.

Section 2 sets out a framework including Design Principles for development alongside the canal, addressing the integration of development, height and massing that should positively respond to and enhance the conservation area, heritage assets and historic buildings.

Section D Obligations and Mitigation

1. for the assessment of individual major applications that come forward on the campus, site-specific mitigation measures should be accompanied by a detailed and carefully prepared mitigation and public benefits strategy (or similar), which takes into consideration the campus as a whole; delivers on good place-making; is design led and accords with the vision, proposals and strategies set out within this SPD.

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