Design and Access Statement

52 Princess Street, Manchester

on behalf of

UKRO II Property Holdings III Limited

Prepared by
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Sixteen.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Design & Access Statement has been prepared by Sixteen Real Estate on behalf of 'UKRO II Property Holdings III Limited' in support of applications for Planning & Listed Building Consent to Manchester City Council (MCC).

1.2 The application relates to internal and external works to 52 Princess Street (also known as Rhodesia House), a Grade II Listed office building in Manchester City Centre. It is also located in the Whitworth Street/Princess Street Conservation Area.

1.3 The description of development as stated on the application form is:

"***Planning and Listed Building Consent for internal and external alterations to building to allow for refurbishment, including creation of cycle store and showers in basement, replacement exterior lighting, painting of window frames and entrance door to ground floor and painting of metal railings."***

1.4 The works are part of a strategy to sensitively refurbish and enhance the building which is necessary to attract new occupiers within a competitive office market. Additional works for new signage will be subject to a separate application for Advertisement Consent.

1.5 The Statement will address the design and access considerations relevant to the proposed development and should be read in conjunction with the Heritage Statement which accompanies the application.

2.0 Site and Context

Physical Context

2.1 The building, formerly known as Rhodesia House, is located at 52 Princess Street within Manchester City Centre and is believed to have been built in the mid-1880s as a Victorian textile packing warehouse.



2.2 It is 6-storeys in height, including 2 attic storeys in the roof and a basement. It is built with red brick and incorporates carved sandstone details. Internally, the structure comprises a grid of cast iron columns supporting timber beans and floor boards.

2.3 The application relates to the following parts of the building:

- Ground and First Floor Reception
- Ground Floor WCs
- Stairwells
- First Floor Meeting Room
- Part Third Floor Office Accommodation
- External frontage

2.4 The building has undergone various alterations over the years, including a comprehensive refurbishment in 2007/8 into its current format and the introduction of two lifts. It was originally converted to office use in 1994, with office accommodation arranged over ground and five upper floors.

2.5 The main entrance of the building fronts onto Princess Street, with a large arched opening which reflects the arched stone lintels above the ground floor windows to each side.

2.6 This entrance provides access to office occupiers to the upper floors with a reception area to the ground floor.

2.7 The windows to the front elevation are modern, casement type, replacement windows with outward opening, side hung sashes fitted with modern sealed double glazing units and externally fixed wooden glazing beads.

2.8 Windows to the basement have previously been removed but the opening remain and have been fitted with ventilation grills with iron railings.



Image 1: View of front elevation from Princess Street

2.9 The basement has been converted to car parking (19 existing spaces) with an access ramp down from the original goods entrance and loading bay at street level off Waterloo Street.

2.10 The property sits within an area that contains buildings with a variety of uses, predominantly within the commercial, business and service sectors. This includes a number of historic properties that have been converted to offices, with all of the buildings surrounding it being listed. This includes no. 103 Princess Street (Grade II*) to the north and no. 105-107 Princess Street (Grade II) directly adjacent.

2.11 The building is bounded by Harter Street to the east, Waterloo Street to the north and Bloom Street to the south.

2.12 It is also located in the Whitworth Street/Princess Street Conservation Area which was designated in 1974 due to the high number of buildings of architectural and historic interest.

Relevant Planning History

2.13 The following previous planning applications are relevant to the proposal:

- **Listed Building Consent: Internal and external alteration associated with refurbishment of offices** (ref: 085215/LO/2007/C2) – Application approved 28th January 2008.
- **External alterations associations with refurbishment of offices** (ref: 085212/FO/2007/C2) – Application approved 28th January 2008.
- **Listed Building Consent: Sub-division of existing open plan office, located at the rear second floor, into two separate offices for separate unrelated tenancies** (ref: 091329/LO/2009/C2) – Application approved 16th November 2009.

Planning Policy

Local Policies

2.14 The following policies from the *Manchester Core Strategy* and the *Saved Policies of Unitary Development Plan (UDP)* have been considered in relation to the proposal design:

- **Policy SP1:** Spatial Principles
- **Policy CC1**: Primary Economic Development Focus: City Centre and Fringe
- **Policy CC8**: Change and Renewal
- **Policy CC9**: Design and Heritage
- **Policy EC8**: Central Manchester
- **Policy EN1**: Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas
- **Policy EN3**: Heritage
- **Policy DC18.1**: Conservation Areas
- **Policy DC19.1**: Listed Buildings

National Policy

2.15 The *National Planning Policy Framework* sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied.

2.16 Section 6 relates to "***Building a strong, competitive economy***" and states that decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and take account of local business needs.

2.17 Section 12 relates to "***Achieving well-designed places***" and states that decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change. It adds that where the design

of a development accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be used by the decision-maker as a valid reason to object to development.

3.0 Design

3.1 The proposed development includes the following elements which are described in more detail in the Schedule of Works and floorplans:

Ground Floor Reception, First Floor Landing and Other Common Parts

3.2 The ground floor reception area is to be upgraded to bring a new identity to the building, with a balance of modern style and an industrial tone, reflecting the history of the building and its features. Works include:

- New and repositioned reception counter;
- Creation of seating booths to the rear of the reception;
- Creation of central seating area with planter to break up the space;
- Replacement of floor tiles with light concrete effect;
- Form new ceiling above booth where existing bulkhead/soffit is to be removed;
- New balustrading;
- Painting of metalwork;
- Upgrade of WCs;
- Other cosmetic refurbishment and mechanical/electrical works as described in Schedule of Works and plans.

3.3 The existing and proposed design of the reception area can be seen in the images below.

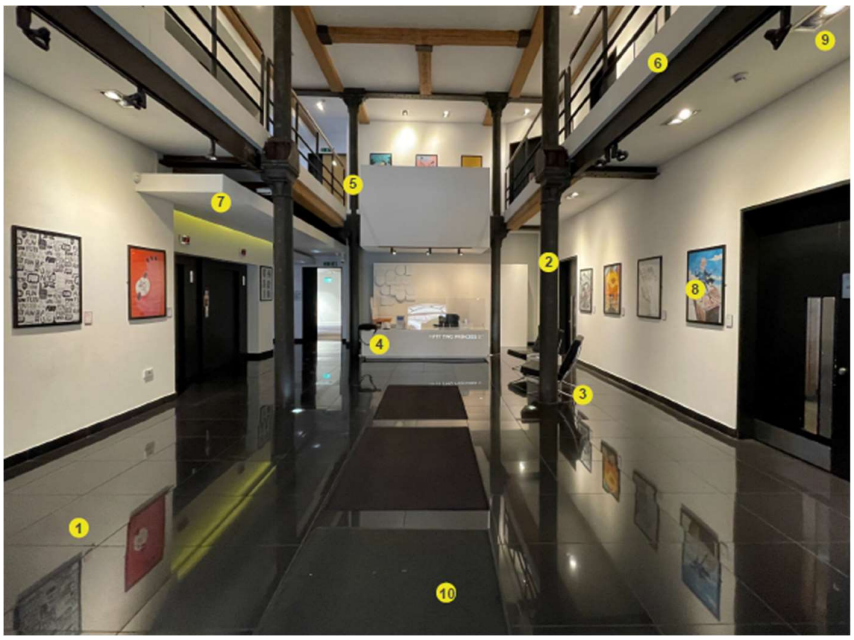


Image 2: Existing reception



Image 3: CGI showing proposed reception refurbishment

First Floor Meeting Room

3.4 Works to the first-floor meeting room include:

- Installation of new plasterboard sections fitted between beams across ceiling;
- Other cosmetic refurbishment and electrical works as described in Schedule of Works and plans.

Part Third Floor Office Accommodation

3.5 Works to part of the third-floor meeting include:

- Dismantling and removal of solid and glazed partitioning forming large meeting room and separating kitchen from remaining floorplate;
- Installation of solid plasterboard partitions and glazed partitions to create separate meeting rooms;
- Installation of new plasterboard ceiling sections to fit between exposed beams;
- Replacement of floor tiles;
- Other cosmetic refurbishment and minor mechanical/electrical works as described in Schedule of Works and plans.

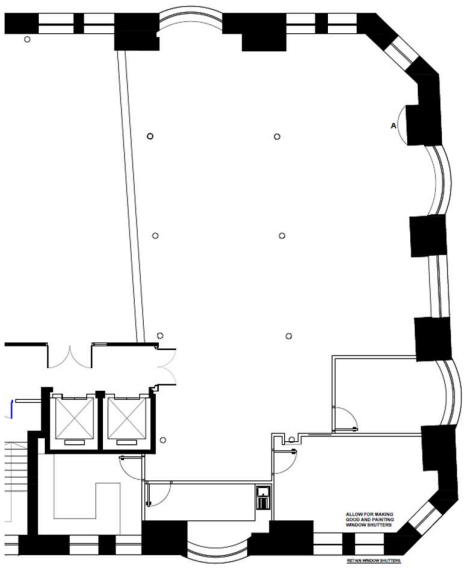


Image 4: Existing third floor plan

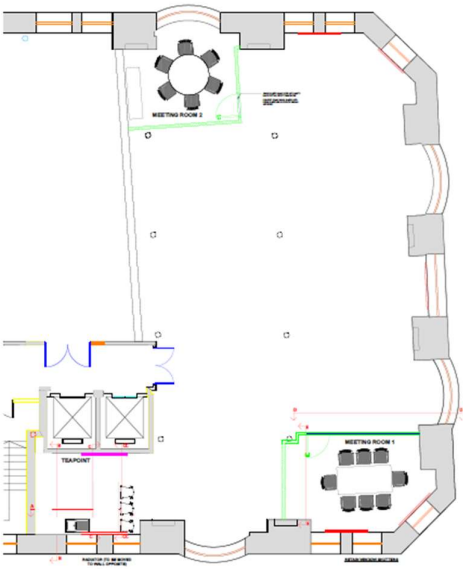


Image 5: Proposed third floor plan

Stairwells

3.6 Works to part of the basement include:

- Cosmetic refurbishment and mechanical/electrical works as described in Schedule of Works and floorplans.

Part Basement

3.7 Works to part of the basement include:

- Installation of new perimeter walls and partitions to form cycle store, WC/showers, locker area and cleaners store;
- Installation of new plasterboard ceiling;
- Installation of raised floor and laying of new anti-slip floor coverings;
- Installation of two electrical car charger points to the car parking area;
- Other cosmetic refurbishment and mechanical/electrical works as described in Schedule of Works and plans.
- 3 existing car parking spaces will be lost out of the existing total of 19 spaces.

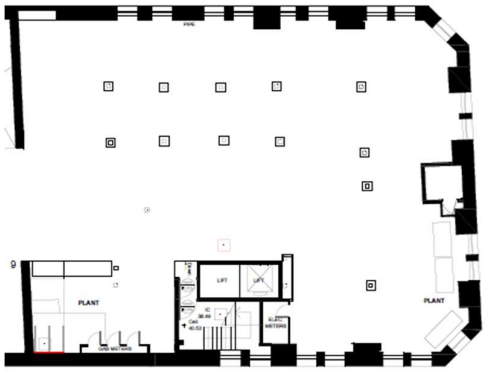


Image 6: Existing basement plan

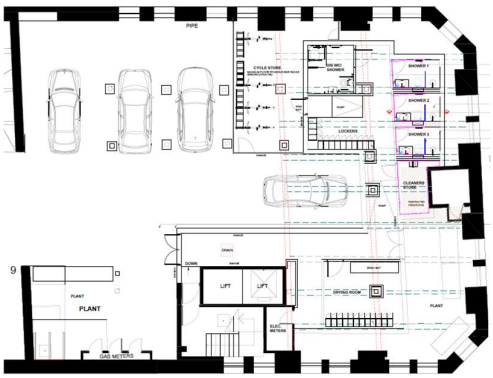


Image 7: Proposed basement floor plan

External frontage

3.8 Works to front elevation include:

- Installation of two replacement exterior wall lights
- Painting of all window frames on ground floor in black (Dulux: 00NN 07/000)
- Painting of entrance door in black (Dulux: 00NN 07/000)
- Painting of metal railings in black (Dulux: 00NN 07/000)

3.9 Additional works for new signage are subject to a separate application for Advertisement Consent.



Image 8: CGI of proposed external alterations

Evaluation

3.10 The final design scheme has evolved through assessment of the building's heritage and review of planning policy.

3.11 The purpose of the development is to sustain the building's role and viability as offices through the attraction and retention of tenants. Externally, the works are relatively minor and will enhance the appearance of the Listed Building with new lighting and painting of the windows, entrance door and railings.

3.12 Internally, the sensitive refurbishment and alterations develop upon the industrial aesthetic which was adopted for the previous internal works. The development therefore essentially upgrades modern elements from previous refurbishments.

3.13 The scheme accords with local and national planning policy, in particularly Policy CC9 (Design and Heritage) of the Core Strategy, by enhancing the standard of design of the building, while preserving the Whitworth Street/Princess Street Conservation Area and causing no harm to the Listed Building itself, as well as those adjacent.

4.0 Access

4.1 The current access arrangements are to be retained, with no change to the existing arrangement including level access from Bloom Street.

4.2 In order to create the basement cycle store and showers, three car parking spaces will be lost, with the 16 retained spaces being sufficient for the building given the sustainable location within the city centre.

4.3 The existing entrance door on Princess Street will only be painted and so there will be no change to its security arrangements.

4.4 The replacement lighting at the Princess Street entrance is also intended to assist with security without creating unnecessary light pollution.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 This Statement has explained the design principles and concepts applied to the works and demonstrates the steps taken to appraise the context of the development.

5.1 The internal and minor external alterations are part of a strategy to sensitively refurbish and enhance the building without impacting upon its significance as a heritage asset.

5.2 The works are important in ensuring that new occupiers are attracted and retained within a competitive office market. This will ensure that the Listed Building will continue to be preserved and protect against future deterioration, while also acting as a catalyst for further regeneration of this part of the city centre.