

74 Princess St. Central House Basement (Unit 4)

1. Site Description and Context

In Unit 4, as throughout the hotel, much of the original fabric had been amended and concealed by the late 20th century fit-out. The area of Unit 4 had been used as a leisure complex which included saunas, swimming pool and jacuzzi. Early opening up works at this level revealed the cast metal and brick columns. However, it also exposed severe water ingress from water and soil pipes leaking within the voids and causing damage to the fabric.

The floor above was supported on timber beams spanning across the space. A modern stair had been inserted from the former front entrance area at ground floor level down to the basement towards the Princess Street elevation of the building where a pool and leisure suite now lies derelict.

New stairs had also been inserted between Johnson House and Central House basements to overcome a change in level. A further stair has been built between the basement and ground floor level, adjacent to what appears to be an original historic stone stair next to the substation. Ducts from a substation and former kitchen ran across the ceilings and exit through basement windows to the canal elevation. The ducts, plasterboard cladding and other accretions have now been removed allowing for the exposure of the original structure.

Highly significant features to be preserved:

- Original metal basement windows to canalside and Princess St
- Original glazing bars
- Structural columns
- Exposed brickwork at top of walls

The basement area outlined in red is currently not in use, and the last remaining part of the hotel to be refurbished, though it was intended by the hotel to be used as a bar in 2018 these plans were abandoned due to maximum occupancy limitations.

Consequently the interior has been made safe according to building regulations to be an unused space. Work completed includes:

- Removal of hung ceiling to reveal original ceiling
- Fire and acoustic insulation boards installed to ceiling and internal walls
- Fire alarms linked with the rest of the building's network
- Covers to external windows as well as fire doors making it secure for the space above.

Aside from these changes the fit out of the 1989 swimming pool is intact, there is blanked off power, ventilation and plumbing to the site.

1.2 Existing Site Photographs A-D









1.3 Summary of Proposals and Justification

The proposed scheme of refurbishment has been carefully considered in terms of its impact on the significance of heritage assets. In the process of planning this refurb we have referred to National Planning Practise Guidance, pertaining to Conserving and Enhancing the historic environment. Consent is sought to turn this site into an inclusive, culture-centric beauty salon.

The work is largely cosmetic and seeks to upgrade the site to a safe, clean and working premises from its current derelict condition with as little effect on the original fabric as possible paying particular attention to the significant features of historical interest shown above.

To remove the need for structural changes, we plan to integrate the pool installation into our studio design, mitigating the messy details and forming it into one coherent space.

The benefits of this are twofold – the architectural features of importance are maintained and where necessary repaired and given priority, and where the effect of changing non-significant, later features would be neutral or structurally detrimental, our minimalist approach to change will be cost-effective and simple.

The fundamental and foremost benefit of the scheme is refurbishing the empty space to a ‘warehouse’ style to ensure its on-going viability as a commercial space now and in the long term and to increase employment activities in the area.

We will:

- Create a new culture-centred, inclusive business in the basement
- Make the space responsive to the robust industrial character of the heritage assets
- Improve the look of the entrance from Princess St and the Rochdale Canal wall
- Restore access from original stone corniced door on Princess St
- Make good damaged windows – which are original 1870 cast iron
- Create of ventilation and M&E services to basement making it a viable space

1.3 Heritage aspects to be refurbished:

- Restoration of original columns and paint with intumescent paint
- Maintenance and cleaning of exposed internal brickwork without paint or covering
- Protection and repair of all remaining visible historic fabric
- Returning to a more appropriate ‘warehouse style’ aesthetic
- Enhancing the setting of the basement level and its contribution to the local area
- Removal of boarding behind windows to ‘reactivate’ the building facades
- Restoration visibility of original windows to canalside
- Damp-proofing of wet under-pavement cellar rooms
- Strip back, restore and paint ceiling beams

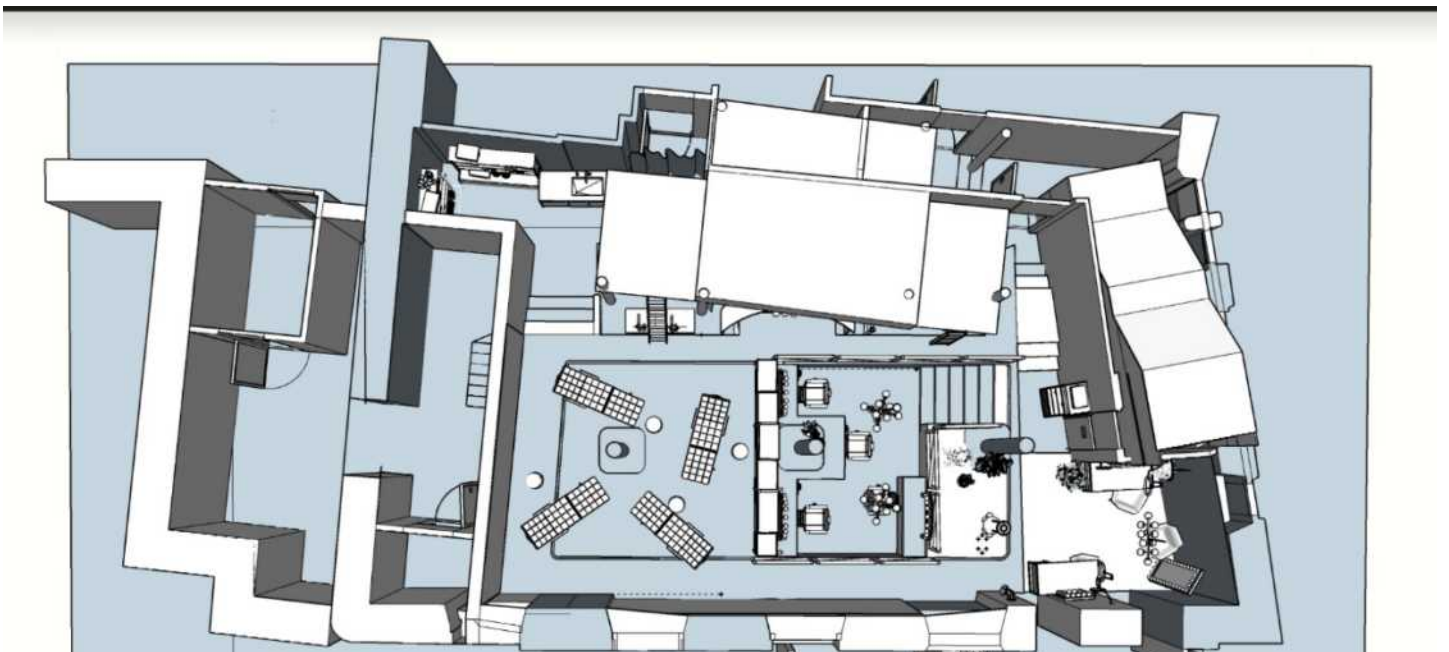
Heritage aspects that will be affected:

While the excavation of the pool in 1989 has meant that the original 1870 floor and potential assets of interest have been removed long ago, aspects of the newer 1989 additions build can be managed and made to look congruous and more in-keeping with the warehouse-style aesthetic using approved heritage paints and a bare, warehouse aesthetic.

We can:

- Treat and restore the brickwork with recommended preparations
- Prepare and restore the columns from rust
- Paint of pool tiles and wall tiles and render to heritage colours (colour swatches to be provided and approved) giving a coherent look in keeping with the warehouse aesthetic

Our proposals are described in the 3-D drawings, sketches, design and access statement plans below.



Proposed Layout



Proposed elevation facing Northwest, Rochdale Canal, Princess St.

Key:

Teal - Original external brickwork and original metal windows (Princess St)

Dark blue: Original windows (Rochdale Canal side)

Green: Original ceiling beams preserved and on show

Orange: Original cast columns x6

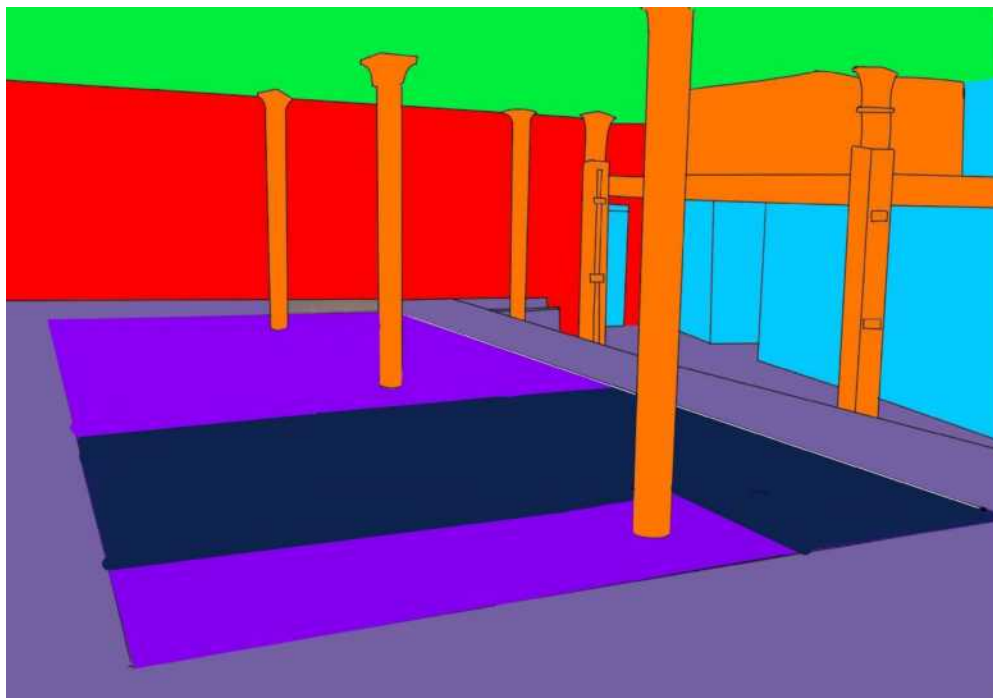


Figure XX: Internal walls (South East facing)

Orange - Original Cast columns and emergency lift shaft

Green - Original beams and ceiling on show

Planning Statement

In accordance with Section 1 (Building a strong and competitive economy) of the NPPF, the proposals would refurbish the existing space to provide a high-quality beauty studio which can be accessed from street level.

This would have multiple benefits including assisting in helping to build a strong economy by creating employment during the construction phase and once operational. Once operational, some 12 jobs will be supported by the business, with further jobs supported in the construction phase.

The development will therefore deliver benefits in accordance with Core Strategy Spatial Objective SO2 (Economy) which supports a 'significant further improvement of the City's economic performance'. Policy CC8 (Change and renewal) also states that "Developments

which make significant contributions to the City Centre's role in terms of employment", such as this, will be supported.

Having regard to the above, the proposed business should serve to support businesses, and economic growth within the city and provide amenities for the surrounding residential and working population.

The proposal would also enhance the vitality of the surrounding area as it would complete the site at 74 Princess St, and the entrance and windows to the basement area which are in need of repair and maintenance would be completed and maintained. It would also add to the activity levels around Whitworth and Princess Street in accordance with Section 2 (Ensuring the vitality of town centres) of the NPPF.

The proposed would therefore contribute to a high quality and accessible built environment that would reflect the community's needs whilst supporting its social and cultural well-being.

The refurbishment takes into account low carbon targets, and by sealing old windows, the use of short wave low energy radiant heating and the use of LED bulbs the business is designed to be environmentally conscious and will be the first B-Corp Certified tattoo studio in the UK.

2.1 PLANNING STATEMENT CONCLUSION

This Planning Statement has been prepared to support a Change of Use and Listed Building Consent application for the refurbishment and change of use of the basement pool area of Central House, part of Whitworth Locke Aparthotel.

The Shallows will operate as a partner and complete the public offering of the aparthotel under its "Locke" brand which is designed with the ideals of the 'new corporates' in mind. Specifically, The Shallows has been designed to work hand and hand with the existing Locke

brand; is design led, offering good quality services, training, events and employment opportunities.

The aim of The Shallows brand is to elevate the beauty offering in Manchester to a world-class level, providing best practices for industry and world-class 'good old fashioned service' offerings for guests and the wider public with a focus on the inclusivity of minorities in keeping with the locality.

The business will be installed to a Grade II Listed Building (Central House) located within the Whitworth Street Conservation Area. As such, the development has been proposed having due regard to the Site's heritage significance.

The proposed business also seeks to revitalise the site from disused and hidden to a beautiful and vibrant hub of economic benefit to the local area.

Of weight in the consideration of the proposed application is the site's heritage significance. In considering the impacts of the development (both good and bad) it is necessary to consider the heritage and public benefits of the proposals.

The most clear benefit of the scheme is the restoration of the site and the repair (where necessary) of the heritage assets and its reopening allowing the public to enjoy the historic character of the basement.

Additional benefits include: Protection and repair of the remaining historic fabric, The reworking of the space with a more appropriate 'warehouse style' aesthetic enhancing the setting of the heritage assets and contributing towards the character and appearance of the Conservation Area; Creation of active street frontage at ground level will enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area; The creation of some 14 jobs and a further 5 in the construction phase; and a development that broadens the City's tattoo and beauty offer, creating a unique business bringing world class artists and customers to the city.

In this context, it is concluded that the proposed scheme would have a beneficial impact upon the original listed warehouse building thereby maintaining the 'optimum viable use' of the heritage assets.

In the first instance it is considered that the proposed development would not lead to any harm to the significance of the heritage assets, and therefore paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework should not be applied. Nonetheless, if it were to be applied, the substantial public benefits of the scheme would undoubtedly outweigh any perceived harm in our view.

The fit-out is minimal and no structural changes will occur. We have designed this build to tread lightly and be as cosmetic and removable as possible while highlighting the beautiful original features as they ought to be. As such we believe it is the most considered and balanced way of approaching the project and getting our staff back to work after the long and difficult pandemic.