



Donald Insall Associates

Chartered Architects and Historic Building Consultants

105-107 Princess Street, Manchester

Heritage Impact Statement
For Lapwine Ltd

April 2019



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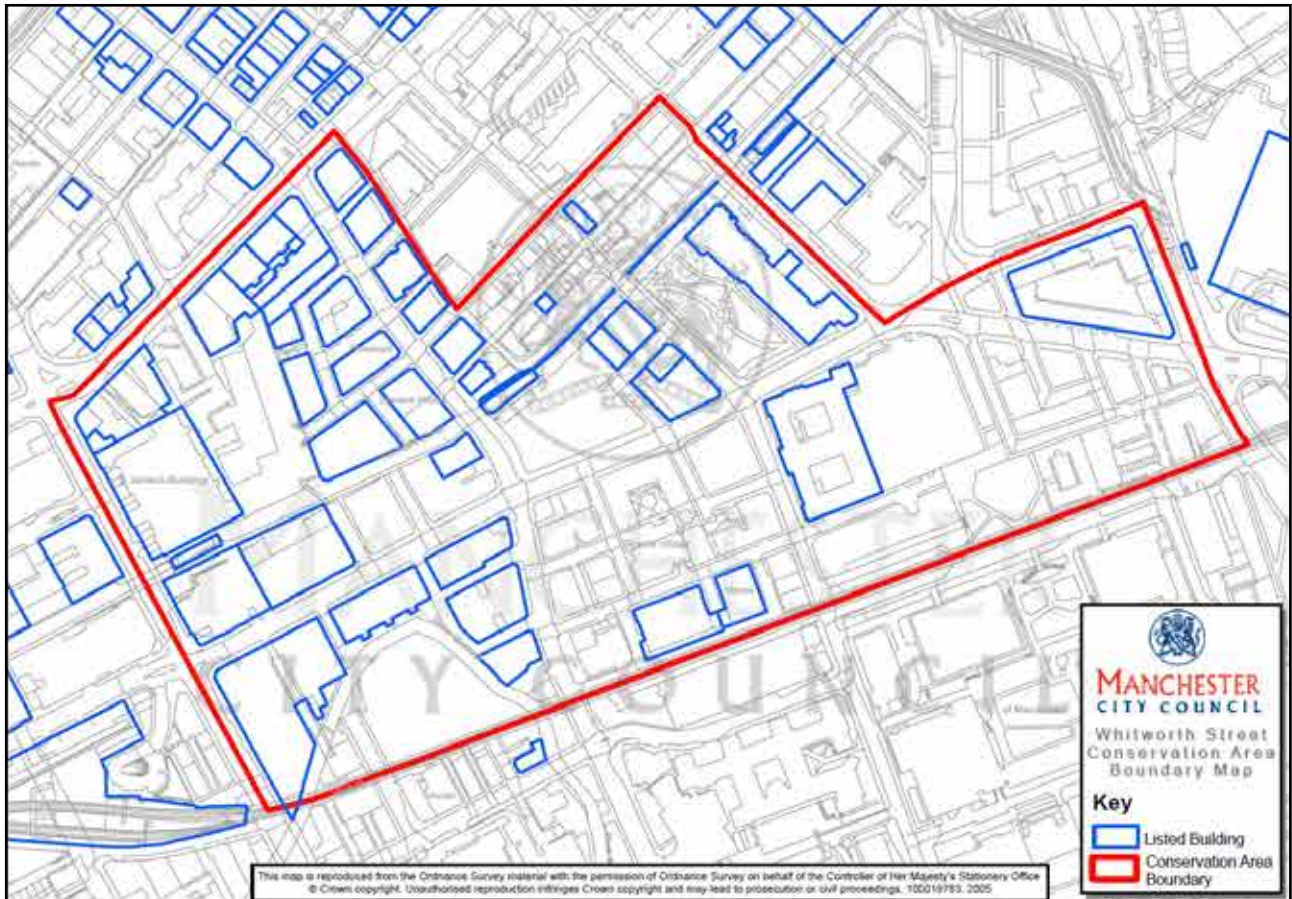


Plate 1.1 Map showing the Whitworth Street-Princess Street Conservation Area and listed buildings within in (Manchester City Council)

1.0 Summary of Heritage Impact Statement

1.1 Introduction

Donald Insall Associates was commissioned by Lapwine Ltd in November 2018 to assist them in the development of proposals for 105-107 Princess Street, Manchester, M1 6DD.

The investigation has comprised historical research, using both archival and secondary material, and a site inspection. A brief illustrated history of the site and buildings, with sources of reference and bibliography, is in Section 2; the site survey findings are in Section 3. The investigation has established the significance of the buildings, which is set out in Section 4 and summarised below.

Historic buildings are protected by law and in planning policy; the specific constraints for this building are summarised below. This report has been drafted to inform the design of proposals for the buildings by Bowker Sadler Architecture so that they comply with these requirements. Section 5 provides an assessment of the proposals against their impact on the significance of the heritage assets and a justification of the scheme according to the relevant legislation, planning policy and guidance.

1.2 The Buildings and their Legal Status

105-107 Princess Street is a pair of linked Grade II listed buildings located in the Whitworth Street/Princess Street Conservation Area in the City of Manchester. It stands in an urban block where all the buildings are listed and it shares a group value with no.103 to the north (Grade II*) and no.109 to the south (Grade II) **[Plate 1.1]**.

Alterations to a listed building generally require listed building consent; development in conservation areas or within the setting of a listed building or conservation area requires local authorities to assess the implications of proposals on built heritage.

The statutory list description of the listed building and the neighbouring buildings with which it shares a group value are included in Appendix I and a summary of guidance on the conservation area provided by the local planning authority is in Appendix II, along with extracts from the relevant legislation and planning policy documents.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is the legislative basis for decision-making on applications that relate to the historic environment. Sections 66 and 72 of the Act impose statutory duties upon local planning authorities which, with regard to listed buildings, require the planning authority to have '*special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses*' and, in respect of conservation areas, that '*special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area*'.

In considering applications for listed building consent or planning permission local authorities are also required to consider the policies on the historic environment set out in the National Planning Policy Framework 2019. At the heart of the Framework is 'a presumption in favour of sustainable development' and there are also specific policies relating to the historic environment. The Framework states that heritage assets are 'an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations'. The Glossary to the National Planning Policy Framework defines a heritage asset as:

A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

The Framework, in paragraph 189, states that:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

Section 4 of this report – the assessment of significance – meets this requirement and is based on the research and site surveys presented in sections 2 and 3, which are of a sufficient level of detail to understand the potential impact of the proposals.

The Framework also, in paragraph 193, requires that:

When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and that 'the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether the any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

The Framework goes on to state at paragraph 194 that:

Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting) should require clear and convincing justification.

Section 5 of this report provides this clear and convincing justification.

The Framework requires that local planning authorities categorise harm as either 'substantial' or 'less than substantial'. Where a proposed development will lead to 'substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset', the Framework states, in paragraph 195, that:

... local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.*

Where a development proposal will lead to 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the Framework states, in paragraph 196, that:

...this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

The Framework requires local planning authorities to look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Paragraph 200 states that:

Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

1.3 Summary Assessment of Significance

A detailed assessment of significance with guidance on the relative significance of elements of fabric and plan form and the extent to which these elements may be altered is included in Section 4.0 of this report. The following paragraphs are a summary explaining why 105-107 Princess Street and the Whitworth Street/Princess Street Conservation Area are considered of nationally-important architectural and historical interest.

105-107 Princess Street is one of a number of warehouse buildings by Clegg and Knowles, completed in 1871. Originally built as two separate shipping warehouses, the buildings were laterally connected at some point in the early 20th century but have a shared symmetrical composition occupying a full townscape block as well as service access to the rear. As part of a cluster of warehouses in the area with a shared scale and architectural grandeur, they collectively build up a Victorian industrial townscape of very high significance which underpins the historic identity of Manchester. The building has been subject to alterations internally and externally which detract from its historic industrial character however the robust quality of the exterior means that its significance overall has not been severely compromised and internally features remain which could be better revealed to restore this character.

It is the building's contribution to the unique Victorian townscape along Princess Street however and the physical evidence it provides of the textile trade and the wealth and status of packing and shipping

warehouses at that time which is of highest significance. This is integral to the significance of the Whitworth Street/Princess Street Conservation Area and the identity of Manchester rooted in its industrial past.

1.4 Summary of Proposals and Justification

The proposed scheme is outlined in detail in the application drawings and Design and Access Statement by Bowler Sadler Architecture which this report accompanies. They seek to change the use of the building to office use whilst refurbishing and upgrading the building in a manner sympathetic to its historic industrial character. A new entrance would be formed with provisions for DDA access and a rationalised central core with associated services such as cycle storage and showering/changing facilities set to the rear of the building. The exterior of the building would also be restored to its original grandeur with detracting features removed and windows revealed, re-presenting the building to the streetscape.

The impact of the proposals on the significance of 105-107 Princess Street and the Whitworth Street/Princess Street is outlined in detail in Section 5 below. It is the conclusion of this analysis that they would sustain and enhance the significance of the listed building and its contribution to the significance of the conservation area and would not result in any harm to heritage assets; they would therefore meet the tests for sustainable development insofar as they relate to the historic environment and accord with relevant national and local policies.

2.0 Historical Background

2.1 The Historical Development of the Area

The city of Manchester is well known for its cotton mills and robust 19th century commercial buildings. Indeed, the sheer number of textile warehouses and mills make a unique townscape. The origins of the textile trade reach back as far as the 16th century, when merchants and traders settled in Manchester. By the beginning of the 18th century the city was the regional centre for textile manufacture and in commercial terms it was second only to London. However, much of the industry was small scale; the immediate area around the application site for example, was still largely open with gardens, fish ponds and fields at this time. It was the completion of a network of canals in the early 19th century, including the Rochdale Canal and the Ashton Canal which connected the 1760s Bridgewater Canal to a wider hinterland, together with the widespread adoption of steam power, that led to Manchester's rapid industrialisation.

Raw materials from America and Britain's overseas colonies and coal from the hills to the north could now be transported cheaply and Manchester's cotton industry rapidly expanded, leading to a boom in the construction of mills and warehouses. Old buildings were demolished and new grand streets lined with warehouses and offices like those found on Princess Street were created. The ornate, imposing and often Italianate, street facing elevations often housed the offices, with the rear of the building used for storage with large windows to provide natural light for the inspection of goods. The buildings were six to seven storeys in height with deep, modelled facades in red brick, embellished with terracotta and often with a rear elevation almost entirely glazed. The traders who marketed their goods to the British Isles, known as "home based", had large architecturally bold warehouses which functioned as wholesale showrooms, with the upper floors used for light goods and the lower floors for heavy goods and plant. The Goad fire insurance plan of 1886 shows the grid pattern of the streets around Princess Street and the use of the buildings during the latter part of the 19th century **[Plate 2.1]** at the height of Manchester's textile boom.

The disruption of the shipping trade caused by two world wars and increased competition from Asia had a profound effect on the city's economy. By the mid-20th century Manchester's industry was in decline and the city and its buildings were falling into disrepair. To add to its troubles, the city had been badly bombed during World War II. Large swathes of housing and land were cleared in the city centre to facilitate the construction of new offices and hotels. In the latter part of the 20th century, however, a growing interest in industrial heritage together with the vogue for 'loft-style' living led to the colonisation of the area by the gay community and the growth of many bars and restaurants. This, in turn, saw the construction of the new housing and offices and the gradual regeneration of the city-centre.



Plate 2.1 Goad fire insurance map, 1886



Plate 2.2 Ordnance Survey map 1848

2.2 The Site and its Immediate Surroundings

The 1848 map of Lancashire and Furness **[Plate 2.2]** shows David Street with buildings flanking either side. The continuation of Portland Street and formation of Princess Street saw the demolition of most of those buildings and the widening of the road and canal bridge; and so began the construction of the 'the most impressive Victorian street of the city'.¹ The warehouses constructed along the street are typically post-1860 and a high number can be attributed to Clegg and Knowles or Charles Clegg – nos.105 and 107 by Clegg and Knowles and completed in 1871. The Goad Fire Insurance map of 1886 **[Plate 2.1]** shows the buildings in this section of Princess Street to be in use as shipping or packing warehouses although other uses are present including the Manchester Technical School at no.103 adjacent and the Union Inn just north of the canal bridge. The aerial photograph contained within Historic England's publication, *Manchester: The Warehouse Legacy* (2002) **[Plate 2.3]** shows quite clearly the density of packing and shipping warehouses clustered in the area. The shipping warehouses were used to store produce in the trans-shipment of typical perishable goods (raw cotton, textiles, food) which could not be stored in open yards; their construction just pre-dating the opening of the ship canal in 1894 which connected the city to the sea.

The buildings along Princess Street were four to five storeys set over a basement with a raised ground floor to allow light to the lower floor; Goad's map shows that they typically occupied an entire urban block although at this time nos.105 and 107 were separate buildings. As elsewhere in Manchester the architectural exuberance of the buildings implied wealth and status as owners sought to impress clients. The brown squares marked on the floor plans shown on Goad's map would suggest the location of the internal loading bay which were typically located next to service and workers entrances to the sides and rear to allow goods to be loaded onto wagons which would then make use of the road links serving the area. These were included in buildings from the 1840s in response to a by-law which sought to address issues of rising congestion and also to provide additional security.²

1 Pevsner, p.329

2 Historic England, *Manchester: The Warehouse Legacy*, p.25

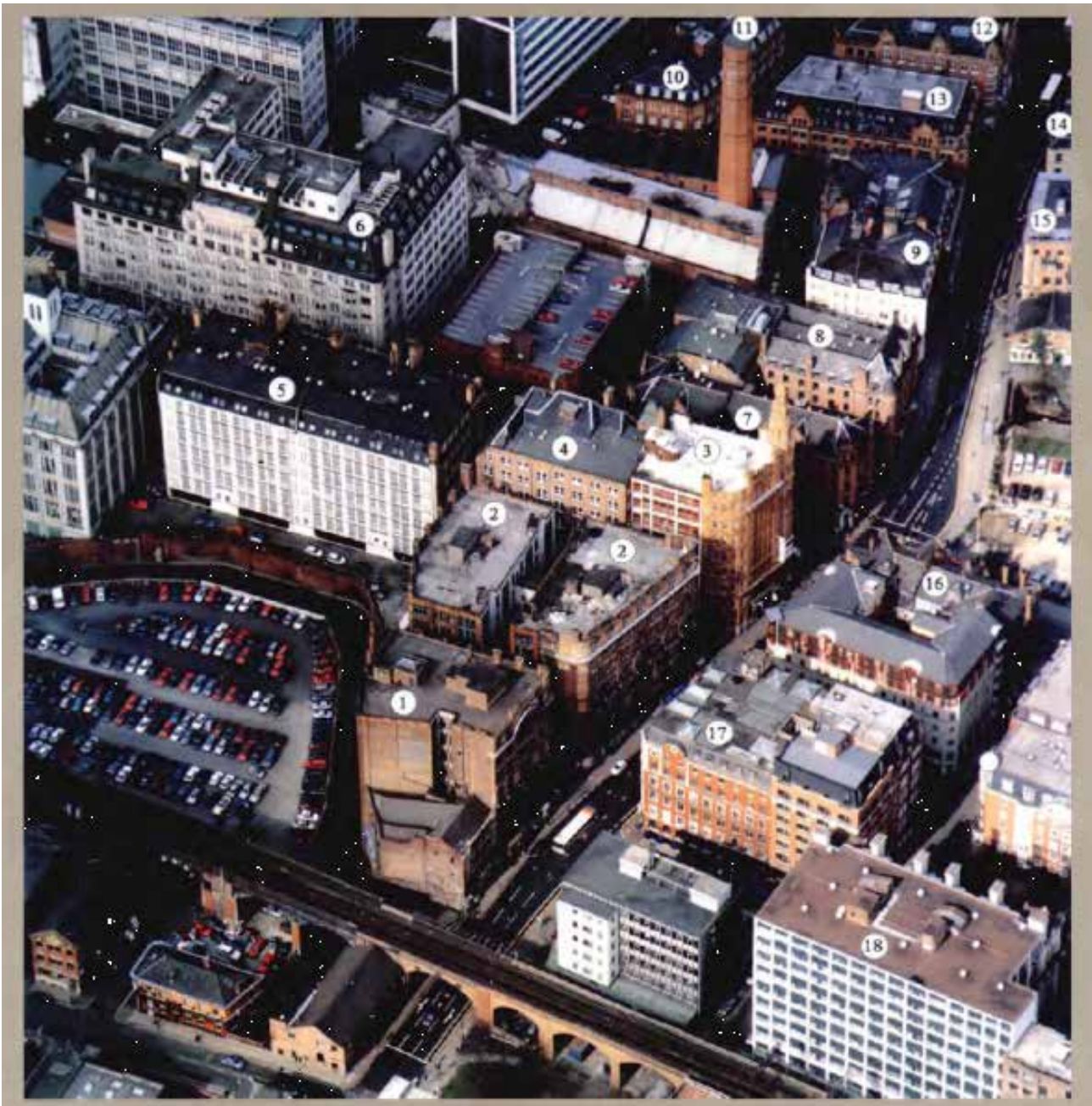


Plate 2.3 Aerial view of Whitworth Street, Princess Street and the River Medlock from the south-east, showing the dense concentration of packing and shipping warehouses (Historic England, Manchester: The Warehouse Legacy, p.22)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Manchester House, 84-86 Princess Street | 11. 12 Harter Street |
| 2. Asia House, 82 Princess Street | 12. Transact House, 48-50 Princess Street and 2 Waterloo Street |
| 3. Lancaster House, 80 Princess Street | 13. Rhodesia House, 102 Bloom Street |
| 4. Cambrian Buildings, 69-71 Whitworth Street | 14. Brazil House, 105-7 Princess Street |
| 5. India House, 73-5 Whitworth Street | 15. 109 Princess Street |
| 6. Bridgewater House, 58-60 Whitworth Street | 16. 61-5 Whitworth Street |
| 7. Dominion House, 48-50 Whitworth Street | 17. 121 Princess Street |
| 8. Central House, 74 Princess Street | 18. Orient House, 65-7 Granby Row |
| 9. Lionese House, 54-6 Princess Street | |
| 10. 104 Bloom Street | |

Whilst the buildings lining Princess Street were of grand, imposing designs **[Plate 2.4]** – Goad’s map shows a distinct change in scale behind the buildings fronting Princess Street to a more domestic character **[Plate 2.5]**. The Ordnance Survey map of 1922 **[Plate 2.6]** shows the area to be largely unchanged although the domestic-scale terraces immediately to the east of the site along Hart Street and the north side of Bloom Street had been replaced with larger scale buildings and the area surrounding the canal basin behind the buildings on the west side of Princess Street developed including the Manchester Corp Electricity Station. Nos. 105 and 107 remained separate buildings at this time.

The Ordnance Survey map of 1948 shows the two buildings connected with an internal loading bay spanning across the rear **[Plate 2.7]**. The map also shows further clearance of the more domestic scaled buildings in the area to the east of Princess Street and cleared sites along Portland Street and in the streets parallel on its southern side. By the Ordnance Survey map of 1965 **[Plate 2.8]** the buildings along this part of Princess Street appear little altered; the cleared sites to the north and east had however been largely redeveloped including the Manchester Omnibus Station (now Coach Station) aside from the area further east along Bloom Street which remained a surface level car park consuming this end of Hart Street (as it still stands today) **[Plate 2.9]**. The maps through the later part of the 20th century show only street blocks however the immediate area appears to remain largely unchanged; whilst many large warehouses in the city centre were being demolished at this time, along Princess Street a high number survive in continuous sequences which give this part of the city an impressive architectural and historic character.



Plate 2.4 View south along Princess Street from junction with Portland Street, 1914 (Manchester Image Archive)



Plate 2.5 Domestic terraces on Hart Street in foreground looking westwards to Princess Street, 1900 (Manchester Image Archive)



Plate 2.6 Ordnance Survey map 1922



Plate 2.7 Ordnance Survey map 1948

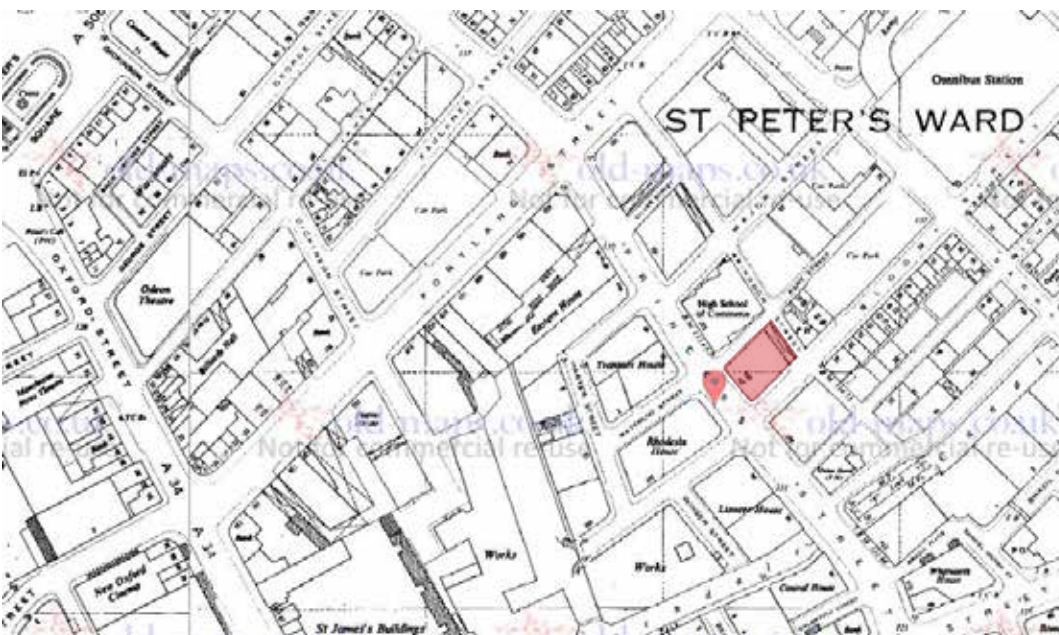


Plate 2.8 Ordnance Survey map 1965



Plate 2.9 View of rear 105-107 Princess Street looking westwards along Bloom Street showing surface level carpark, 1963 (Manchester Image Archive)

In 1915 building plans were submitted to Manchester City Council for the approval of internal alterations **[Plates 2.10a-j]** of behalf of the executors of A. Haworth Esq which show works in association with the lateral connection of the two buildings. The proposed use remained for the textile industry with annotations indicating the occupation at each floor level: basement – 8 persons receiving, examining and shampooing grey cloth and handing it to dyers; ground floor – 12 persons receiving cloth when dyed from the dyers; 1st floor – 12 persons counting house staff and invoice clerks; 2nd floor – 6 persons handling the stock; 3rd floor 6 persons handling the stock; 4th floor – 4 persons handling the dyed cloths. A number of alterations which in part remain today are also shown to have been implemented at that time, these are listed below; the cast iron columns which run through the building do not appear on the plans.

Basement [Plate 2.10a]: the plan shows the infilling of an opening at the rear from the basement of no.107 to the loading bay above and the addition of new escape stairs to both Bloom Street and Hart Street, the creation of lateral openings between the two buildings and the insertion of new fire resistant stair and lift core at the front of no.105, this runs the full height of the building **[Plate 2.10j]**. Lift shafts are shown adjacent to the secondary staircore which have since been removed (again serving all floors).

Ground Floor [Plate 2.10b]: the major intervention shown at ground floor is the insertion of the new fire resistant staircore in no.105 and the removal of the stair within no.107, blocking off the main entrance doorway at no.107 and the associated infilling of sections of the floor plate **[Plate 2.10g]**. Lateral connections are also shown between the two. To the rear of the plan the opening into the basement within the loading bay is shown infilled, alterations to the secondary workers stair exiting to the street in no.105 and the infilling of an opening at the rear of no.107 into the loading bay.

First Floor [Plate 2.10c]: the first floor plan again shows the new staircore, the removal of a stair in no.107 and the associated infilling of the floor plates **[Plate 2.10g]**. The plan also shows a fireplace in a remnant of wall demarking the former location of an office at the front of no.105. The location of a second workers stair or loading access serving no.107 is shown to be removed and the floor plate infilled; this would have aligned with the offset windows in the rear façade.

Second – Fourth Floors [Plates 2.10d-f]: the second to fourth floors repeats the interventions shown to the floors below including the new fire resistant staircore, removal of the stair at no.107, associated infilling of floor plates, lateral openings between the two and the infilling of the floor plates to the rear of no.107, aligned with the offset windows in the rear elevation.

In 1943 building plans were submitted to reinforce part of the ground floor in no.107 on behalf of the Enfield Rolling Mills **[Plates 2.11a-c]**; the plans submitted show only the area relating to the floor strengthening.

A photograph of the building dated 1982 appears to show the building to be at least partially vacant and in a poor state of upkeep **[Plate 2.12]**.

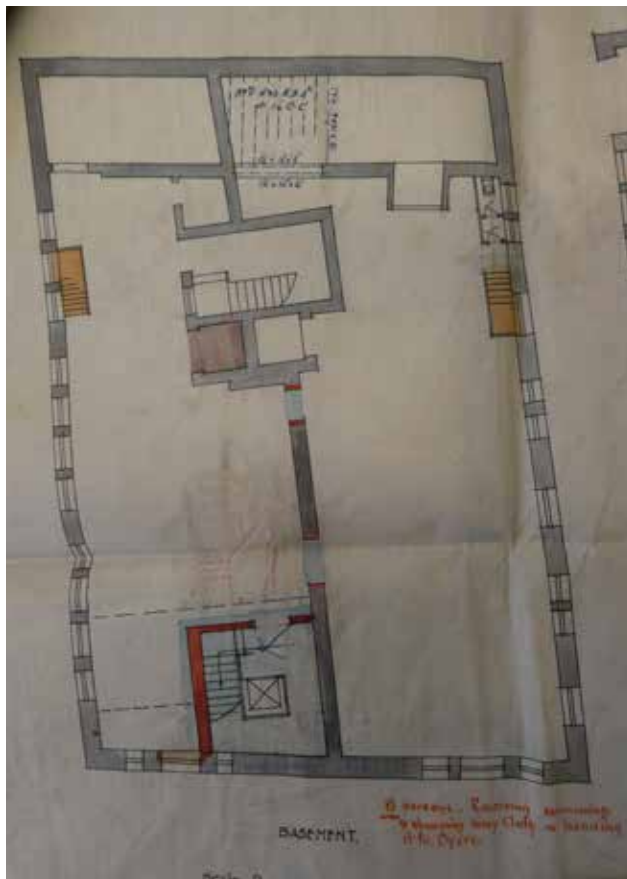


Plate 2.10a 1915 proposed basement plan (Manchester Archives)

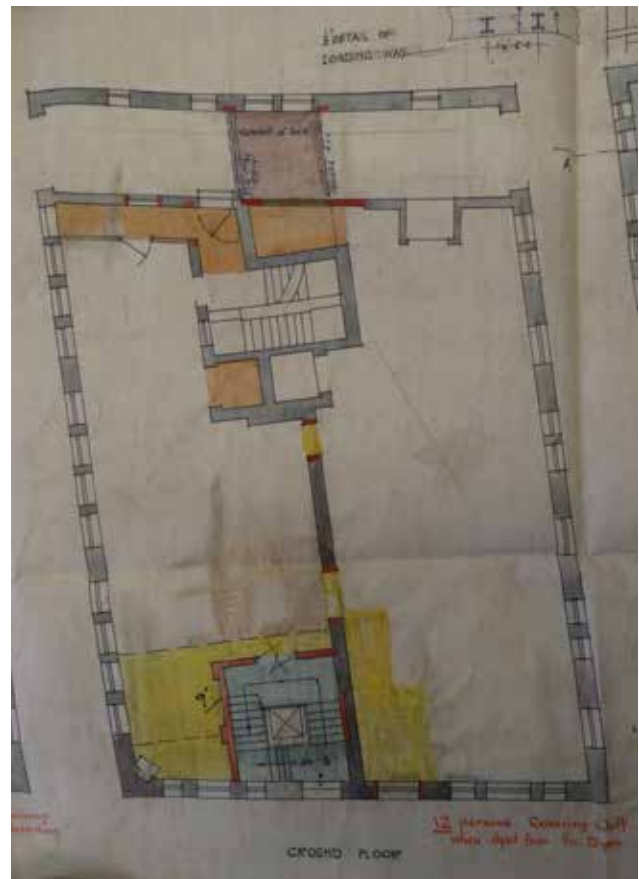


Plate 2.10b 1915 proposed ground floor (Manchester Archives)

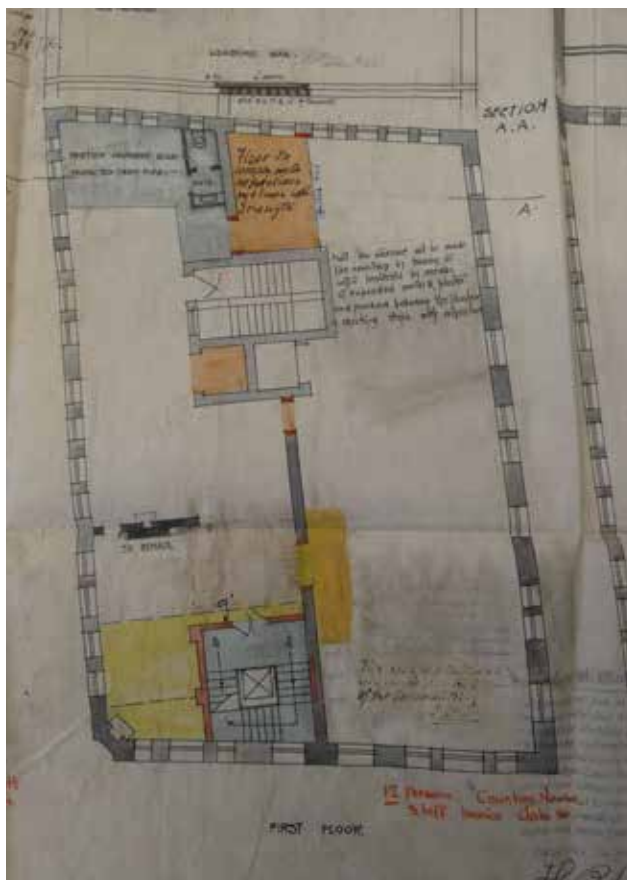


Plate 2.10c 1915 proposed 1st floor plan (Manchester Archives)

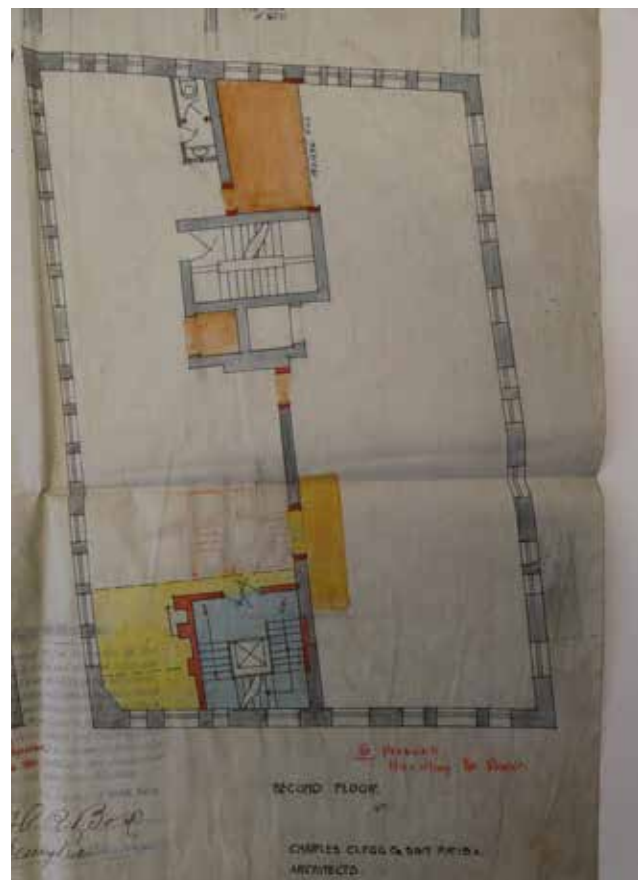


Plate 2.10d 1915 proposed 2nd floor plan (Manchester Archives)

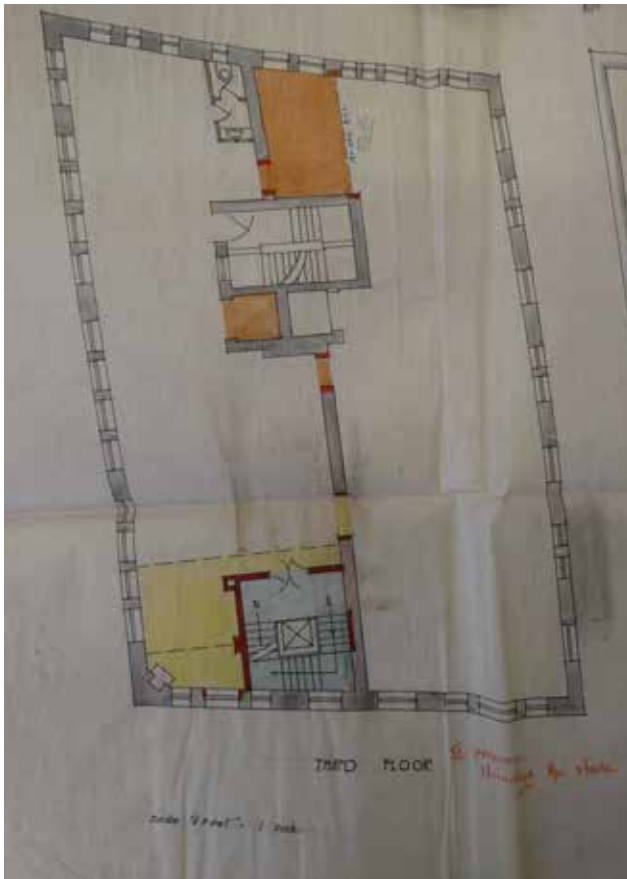


Plate 2.10e 1915 proposed 3rd floor plan (Manchester Archives)

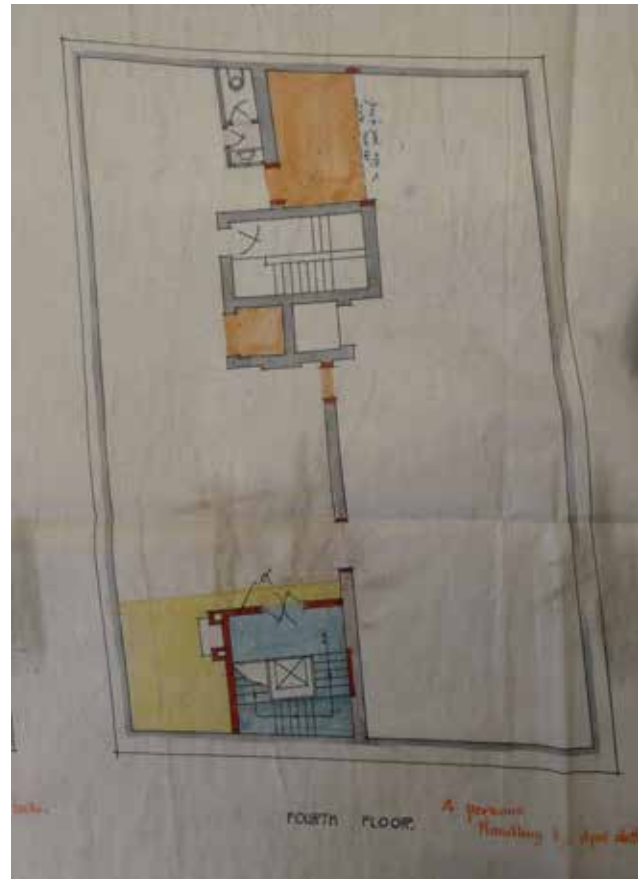


Plate 2.10f 1915 proposed 4th floor plan (Manchester Archives)

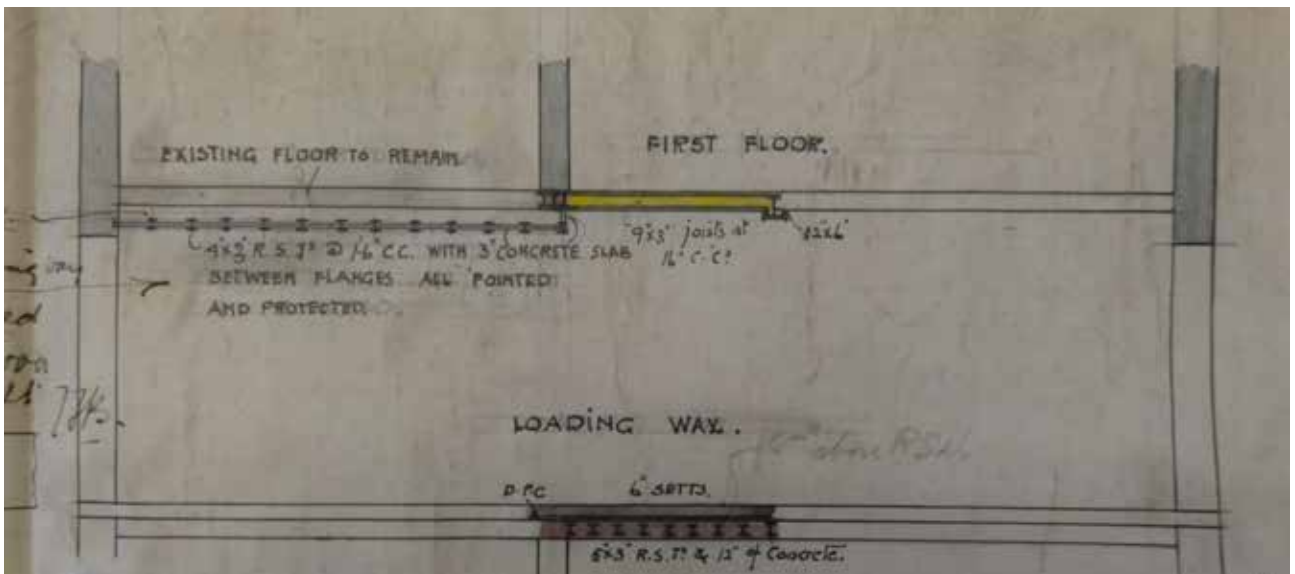


Plate 2.10g 1915 proposed section ground-1st (Manchester Archives)

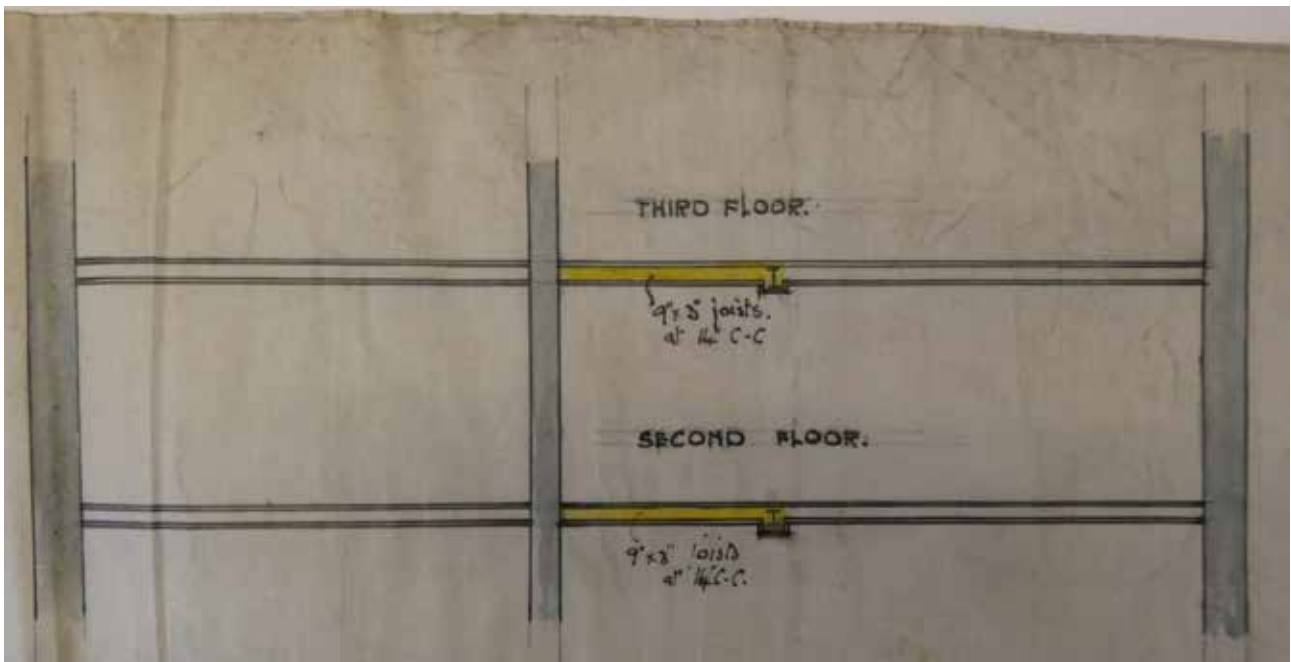


Plate 2.10h 1915 proposed section 2nd-3rd (Manchester Archives)

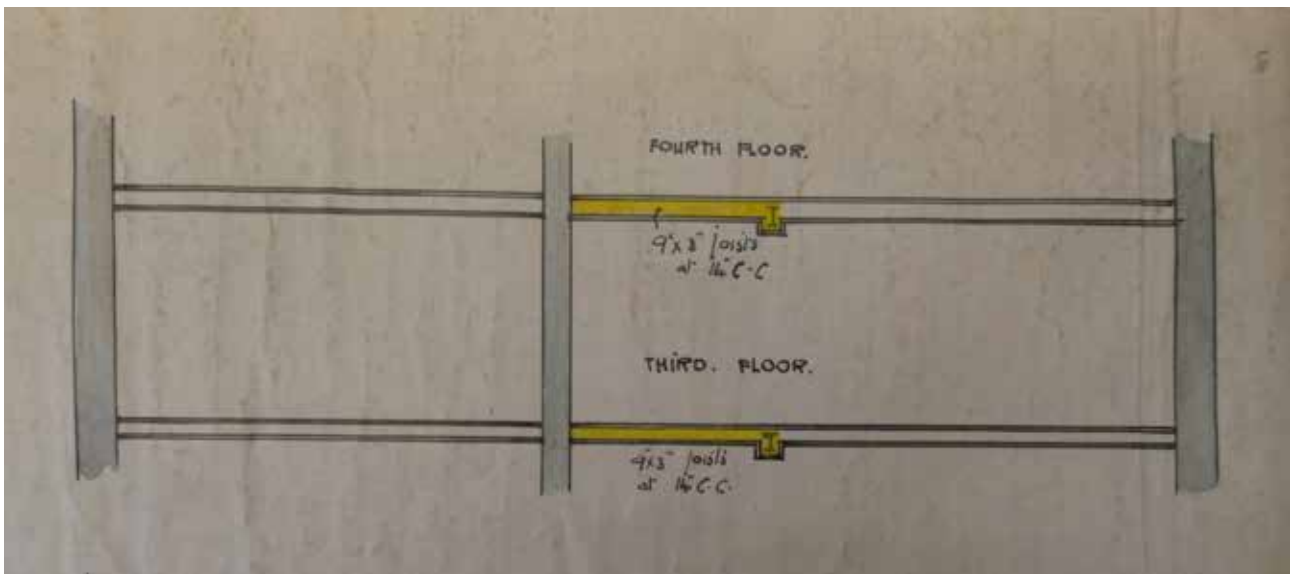


Plate 2.10i 1915 proposed section 3rd-4th (Manchester Archives)

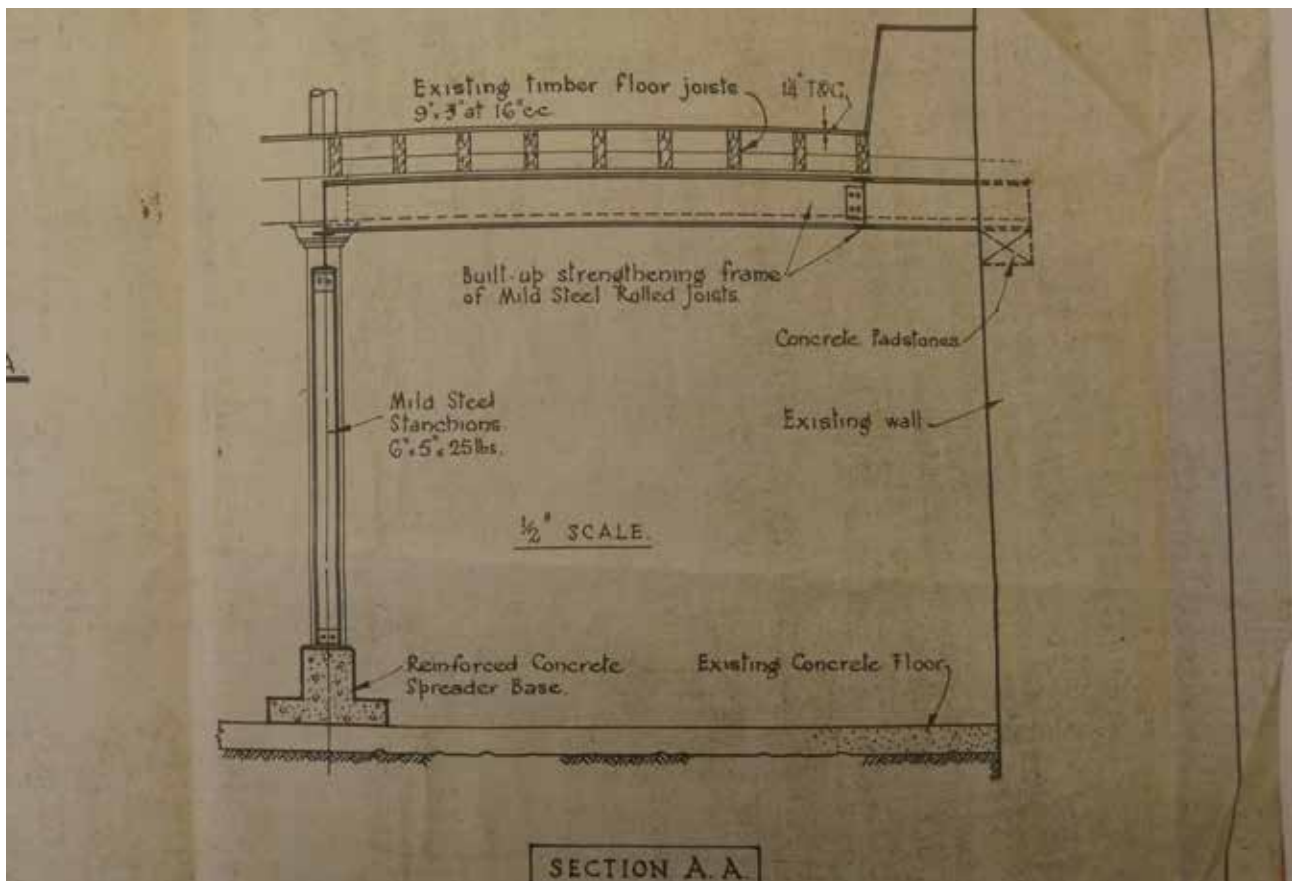


Plate 2.11c 1943 proposed section (Manchester Archives)



Plate 2.12 105-107 Princess House, 1982 (Manchester Image Archive)

Plans submitted in 1985 in association with the conversion of the building to office use show the changes undertaken to the building between 1915 and 1985 **[Plates 2.13a-k]** and the proposed works which were implemented at that time **[Plates 2.14a-l]**; outlined in detail below:

Basement [Plates 2.13a and 2.14a]: the existing plan shows the floor to have only been subject to minor alteration including the replacement of the lower flight of the rear workers stair with a boiler room, removal of the dividing wall between the two buildings in the undercroft below the loading bay and changes to the two fire escape stairs which exit into Bloom Street and Hart Street. Two new windows also appear to have been inserted into the Princess Street elevation. The proposed plan shows works largely associated with increased fire protection, including lower ceilings, additional fire protection to the main stair, bulkheads and columns and the removal of the two timber secondary fire escape stairs. A new staircase enclosure is also shown at the front of no.107.

Ground Floor [Plates 2.13b and 2.14b]: the ground floor appears to have been subject to little alteration during the 20th century. The existing plan from 1985 shows partitions forming a lobby area behind the main stair and linking to no.107, to the rear the ground floor access into the workers stair from no.105 has been removed, exiting directly into the loading bay, and the partition which had formed a corridor to the side exit on Hart Street removed with an opening now directly into the loading bay. The works consented at that time again include extensive fireproofing including lowered ceilings and lining of bulkheads, columns and the stairs. The principal alterations shown however include reinstating the main entrance in no.107 with a new stair leading to an entrance hall and wider opening into no.105; the doorway to the street at no.105 is shown to be replaced with a window. In no.105 a corridor has been formed along the party wall which leads to a new service core including WCs in the location of the former lift shafts and chimney breast. To the rear partitions are shown providing protected access from the workers stair (now denoted emergency stair) onto Abingdon Street, severing the original loading bay. The drawing also notes the lathe and plaster ceiling to be replaced and the loading bay structure in the rear of no.107 removed. Roller shutters are shown to replace the gates in both loading bay entrances and the rear door exiting onto Hart Street replaced with a window.

First Floor [Plates 2.13c and 2.14c]: by 1985 the first floor appears unchanged aside from the removal of a small WC to the rear of no.105. The proposed works repeat those at other floors with fire protection to the ceilings, stairs and columns; a fire lobby is also shown to the emergency stair and again partitions form a corridor/lobby space leading from the main stair to the new service core in place of the former lifts and chimney breast. The section of wall and chimney breast which remained denoting the former front office in no.105 is now removed. Minor alterations are also shown to the lateral openings between the two buildings.

Second – Fourth Floors [Plates 2.13d-f and Plates 2.14d-f]: little change is shown to have occurred at these floor levels during the 20th century including the removal of a WC to the rear of no.105 at all floors, infilling of an opening between the two buildings at second floor, creation of a small office to the rear of the third floor in no.107 and removal of a fireplace to the front of no.105 at fourth floor. The proposed works shown at second and third floors replicate the floors below; at fourth floor they are largely repeated but with a small lobby in place of the corridor linking the main stair to the new service core.

The impact of the lowered ceilings is best shown in the existing and proposed sections submitted **[Plates 2.13g and 2.14g]**; these also show the ceiling cut away and modern rooflights set in the inside face of the pitched roofs. The submitted Princess Street elevations also show the repositioned entrance from no.105 to no.107 and associated alterations **[Plates 2.13h and 2.14h]**. To Bloom Street and Hart Street the elevations submitted show the loading bay gates replaced with roller shutters and the doorway replaced by a window to the rear of the Hart Street facade **[Plates 2.13i/j and 2.14i/j]**. The windows are noted as being refurbished across the building other than the insertion of Georgian wired glass in the lower pane of the offset sashes in the rear elevation **[Plates 2.13k and 2.14k]**.

The combined building at 105-107 Princess Street is now operating in Use Class D1 (Non-Residential Institutions) at second floor and above with a nightclub occupying the ground and first floors, alongside the building entrance, and a further nightclub at basement floor.

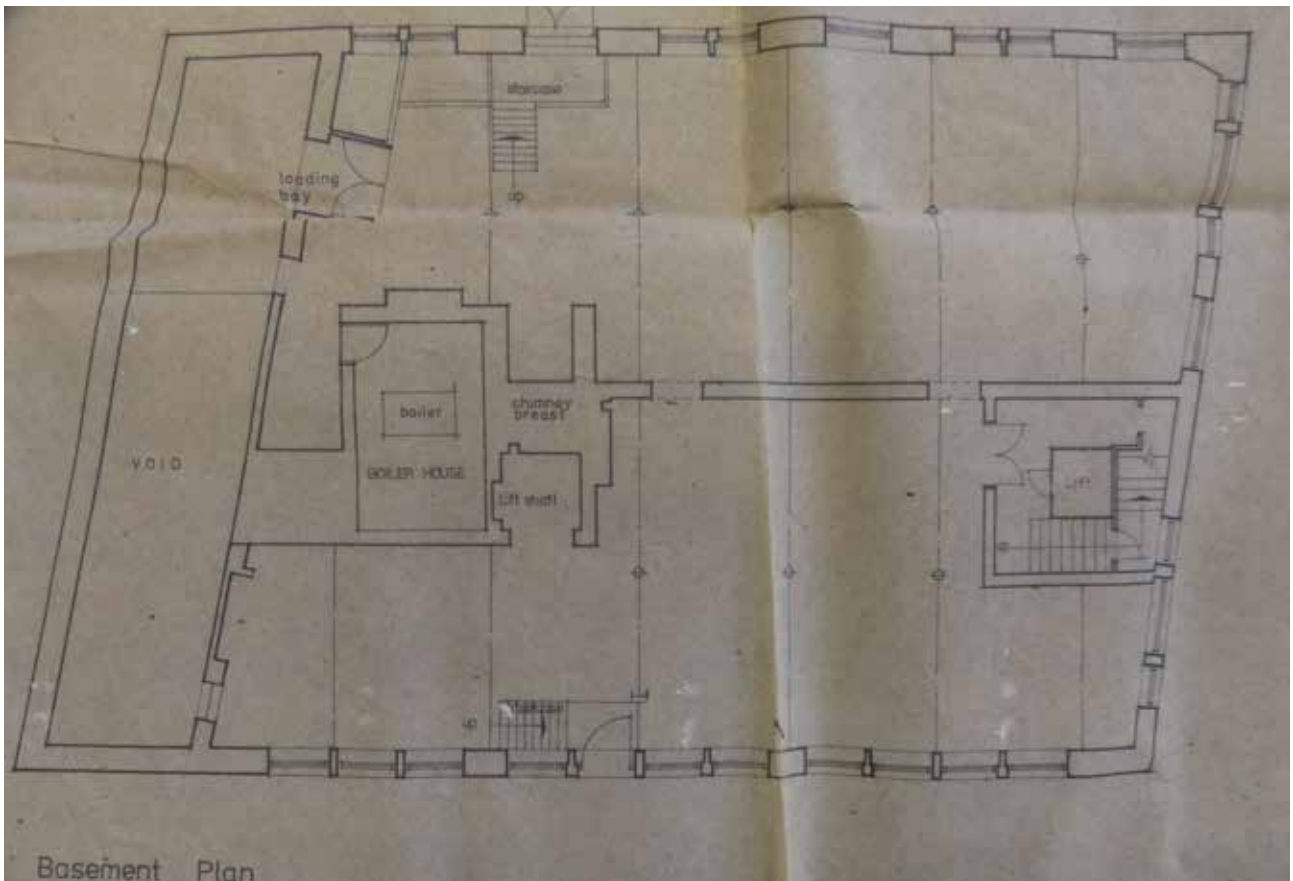


Plate 2.13a 1985 existing basement plan (Manchester Archives)

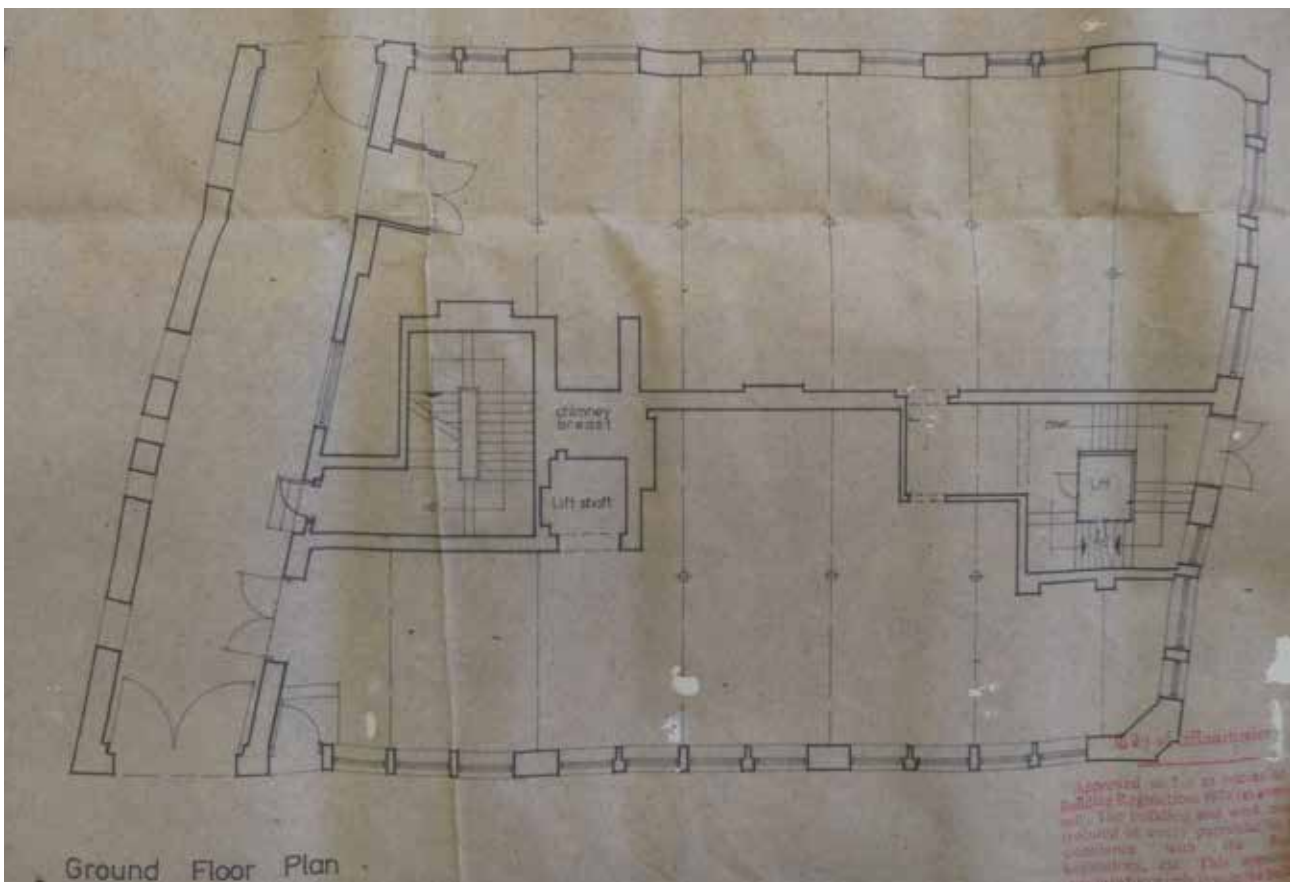


Plate 2.13b 1985 existing ground floor plan (Manchester Archives)

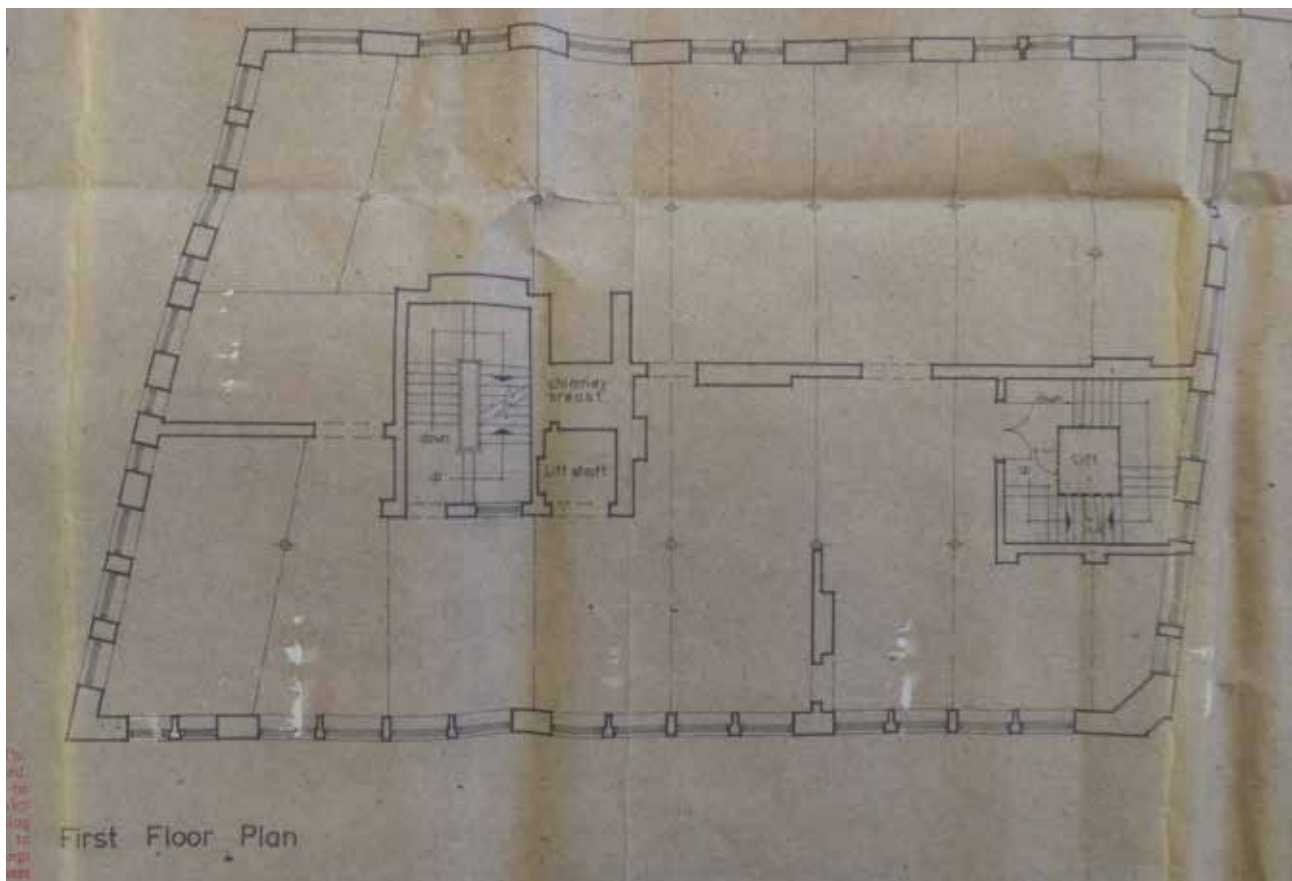


Plate 2.13c 1985 existing 1st floor plan (Manchester Archives)

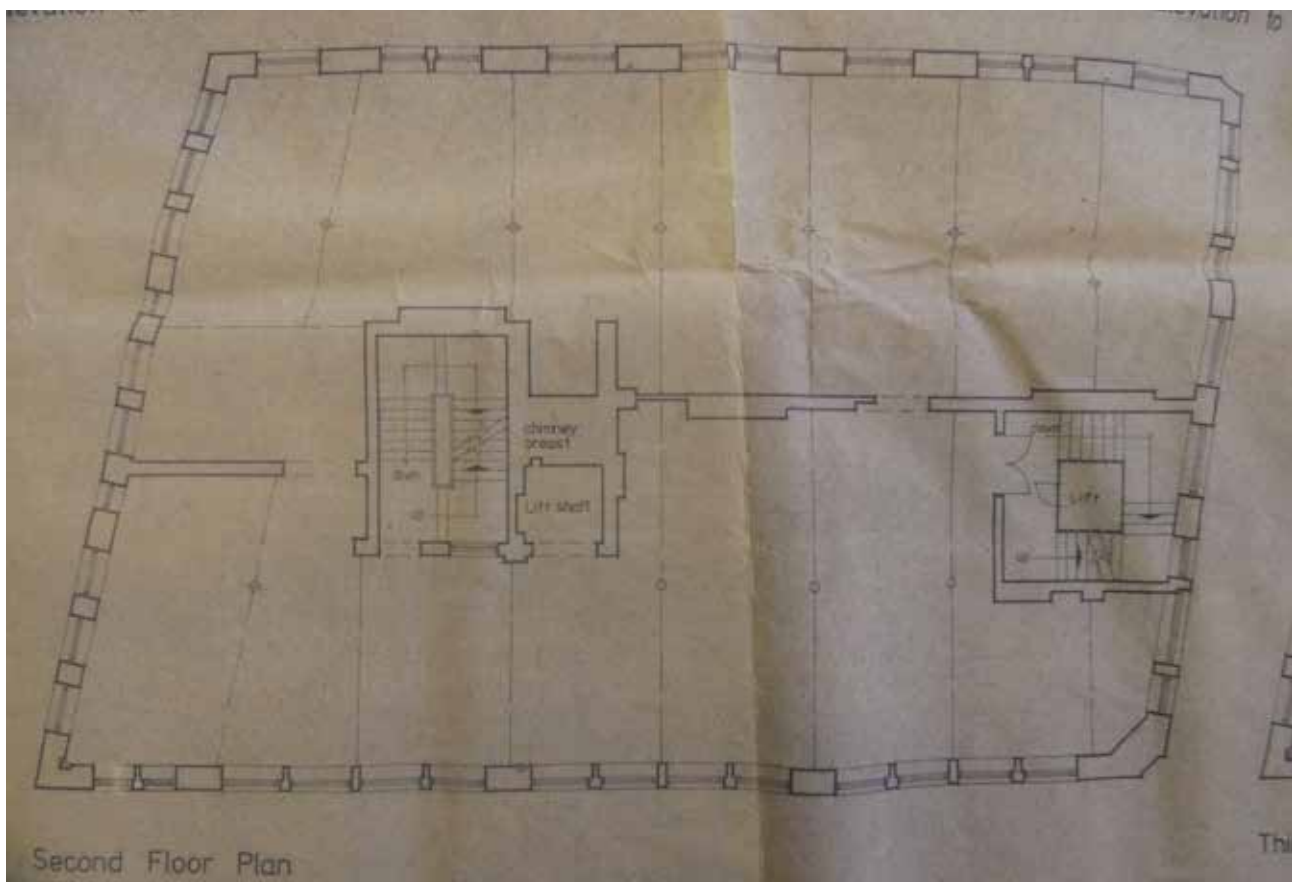


Plate 2.13d 1985 existing 2nd floor plan (Manchester Archives)

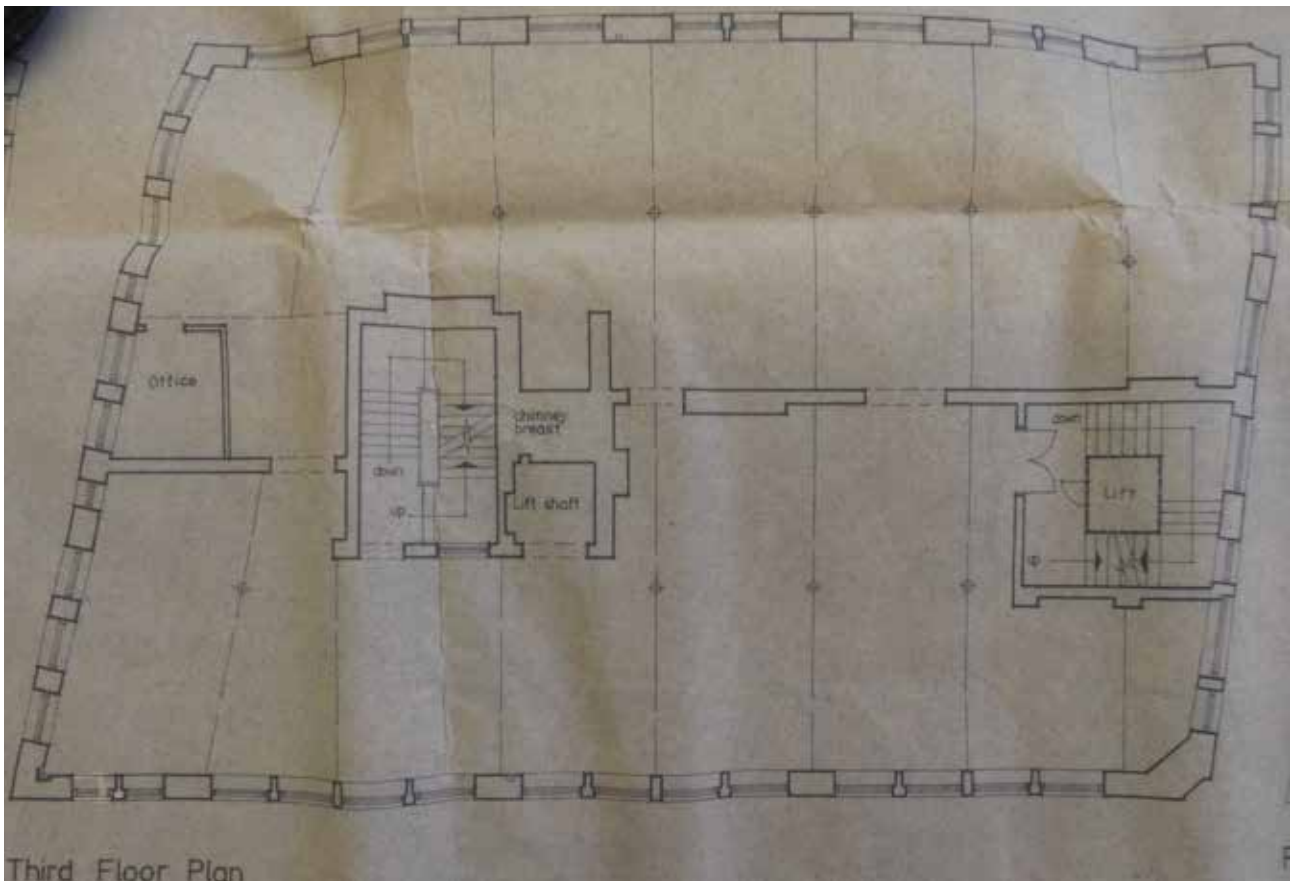


Plate 2.13e 1985 existing 3rd floor plan (Manchester Archives)

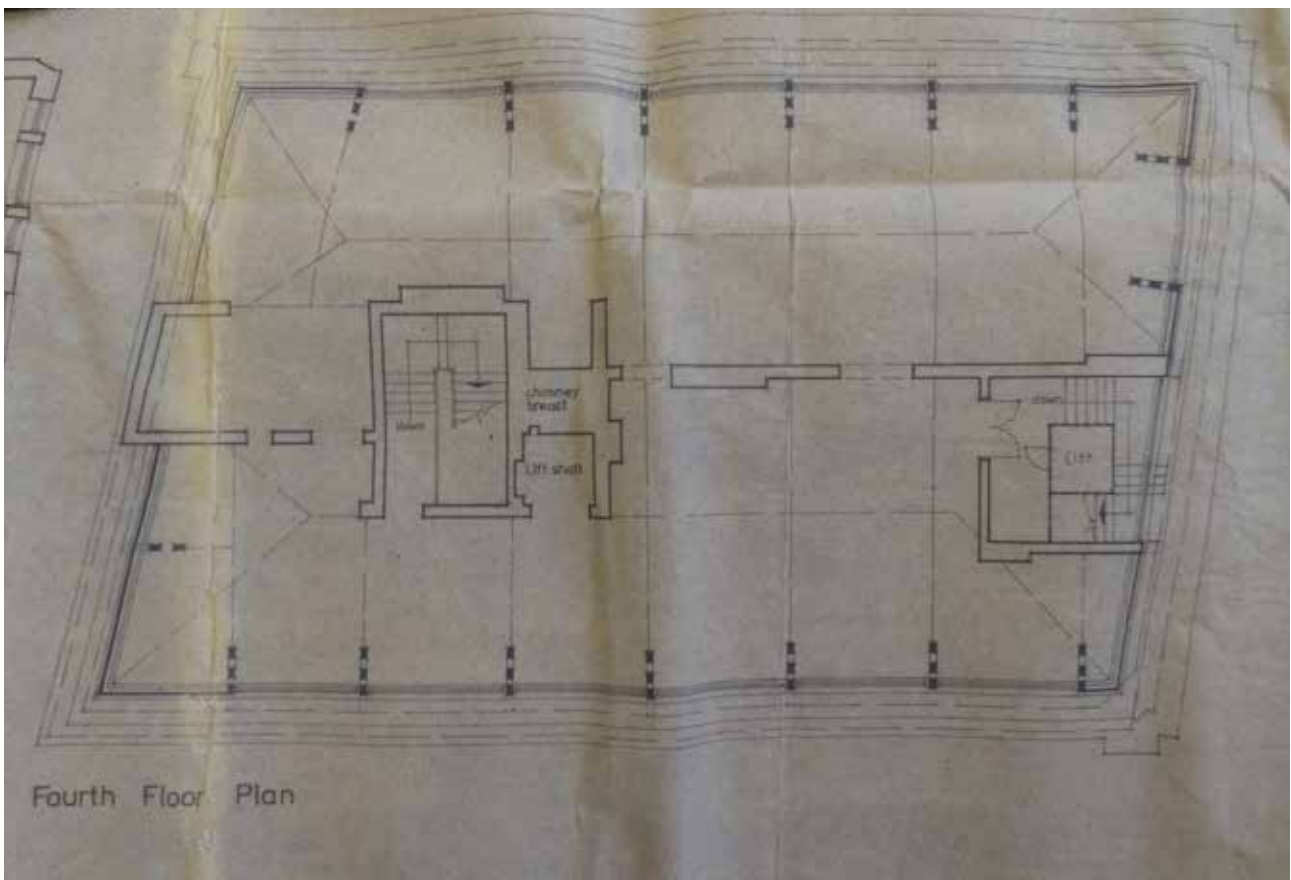


Plate 2.13f 1985 existing 4th floor plan (Manchester Archives)

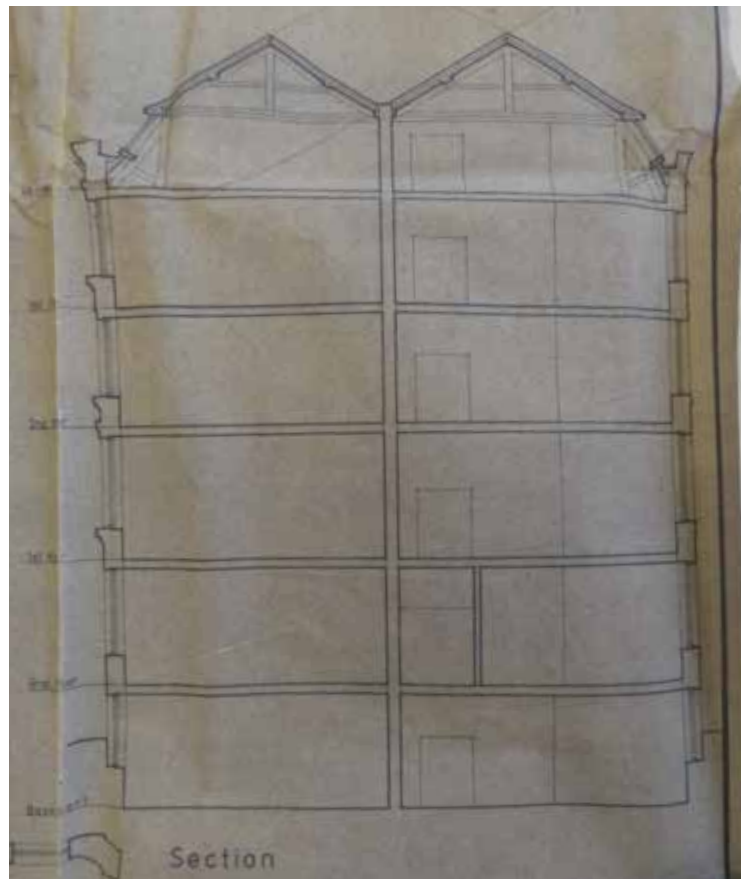


Plate 2.13g 1985 existing section (Manchester Archives)

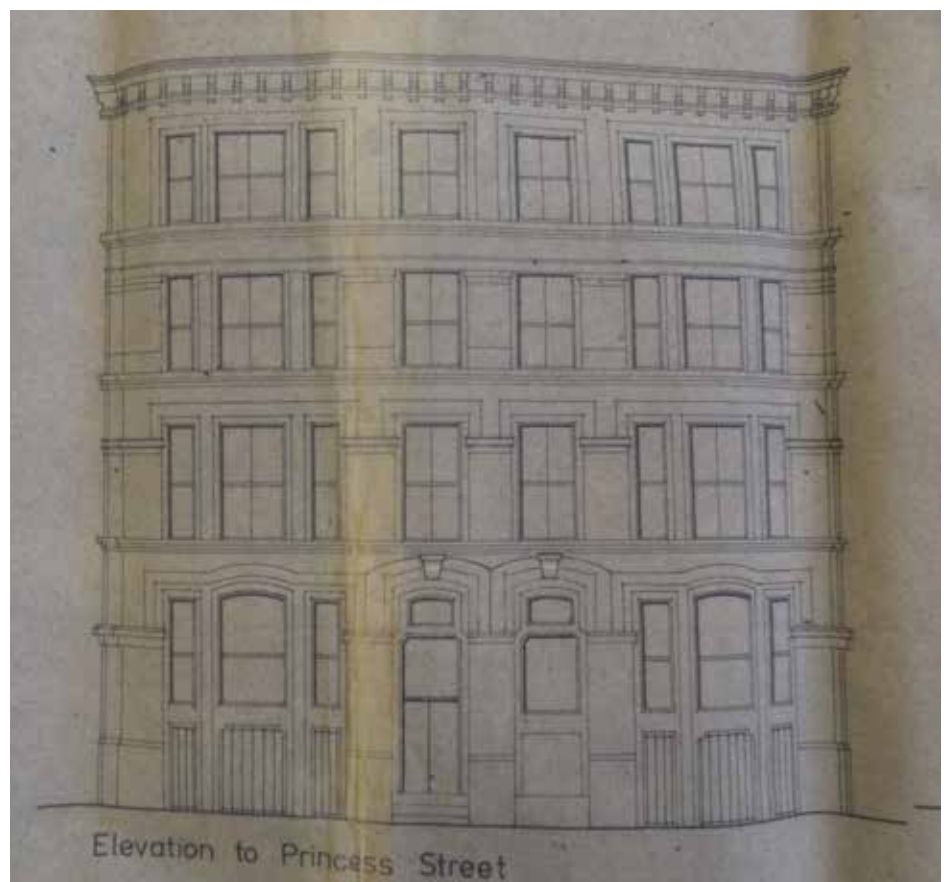


Plate 2.13h 1985 existing Princess Street elevation (Manchester Archives)

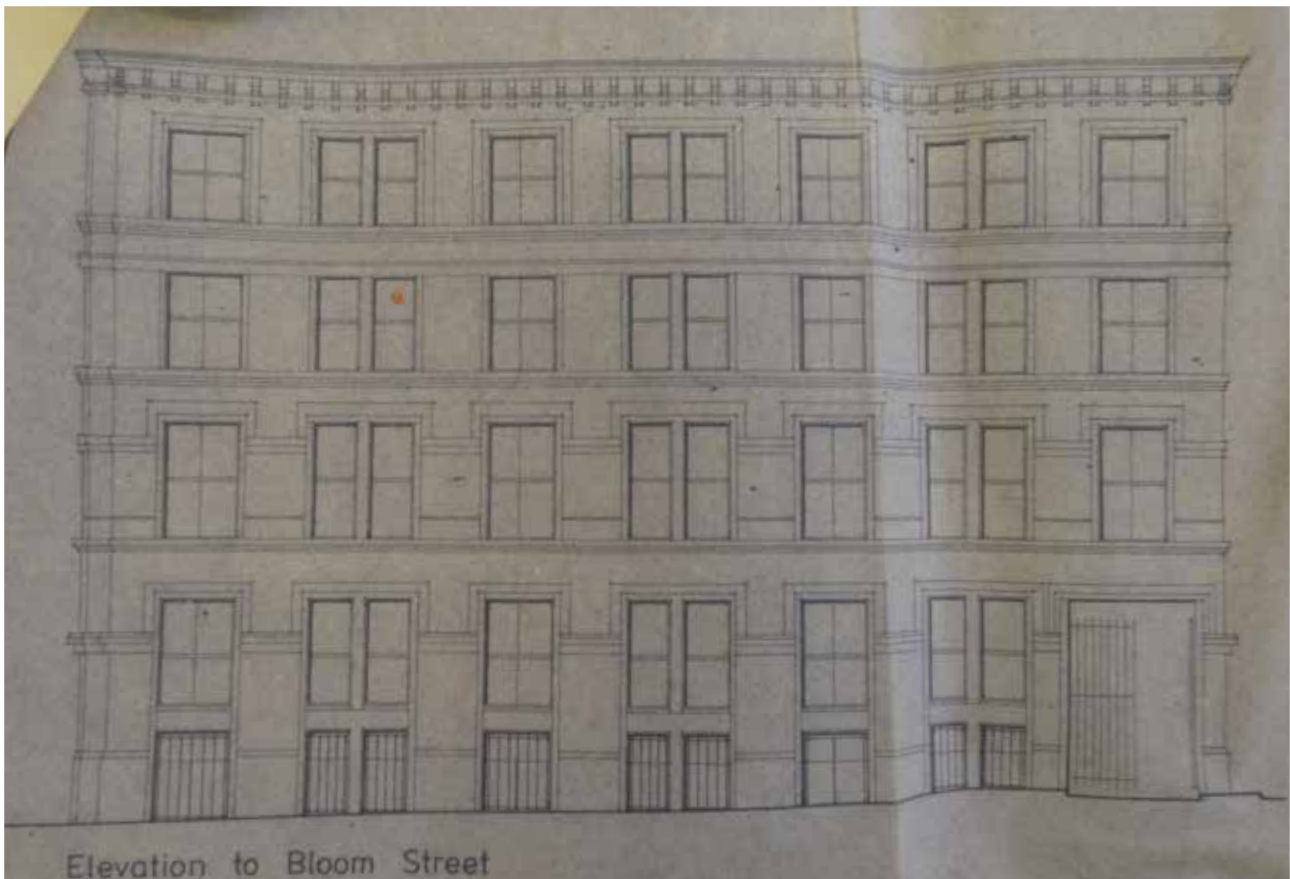


Plate 2.13i 1985 existing Bloom Street elevation (Manchester Archives)



Plate 2.13j 1985 existing Hart Street elevation (Manchester Archives)

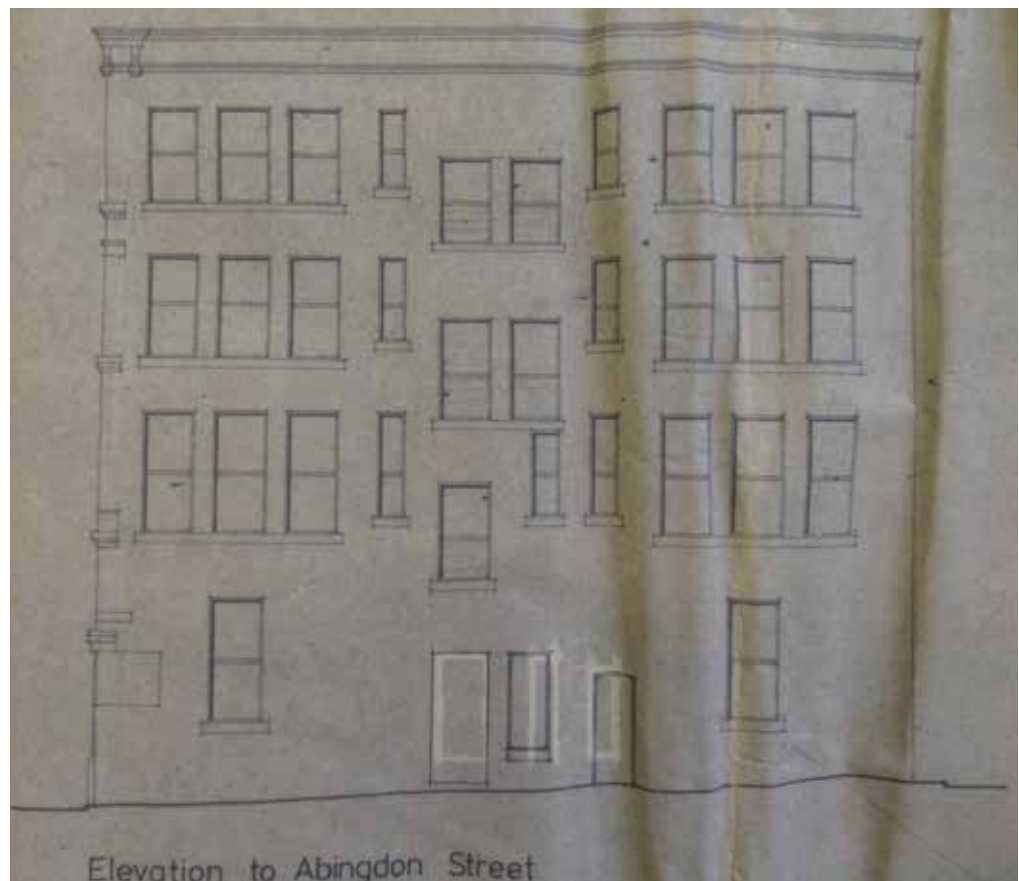


Plate 2.13k 1985 existing Abingdon Street elevation (Manchester Archives)

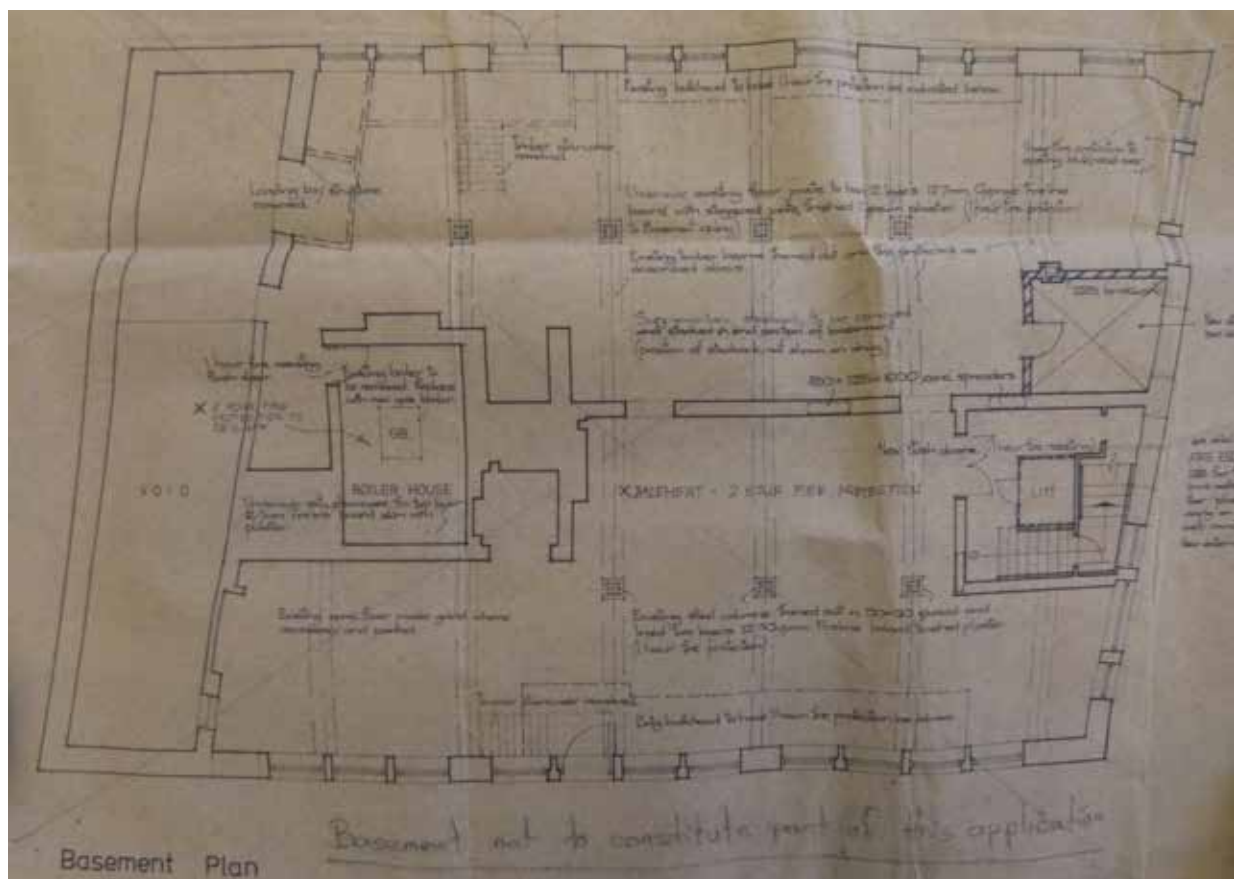


Plate 2.14a 1985 proposed basement plan (Manchester Archives)

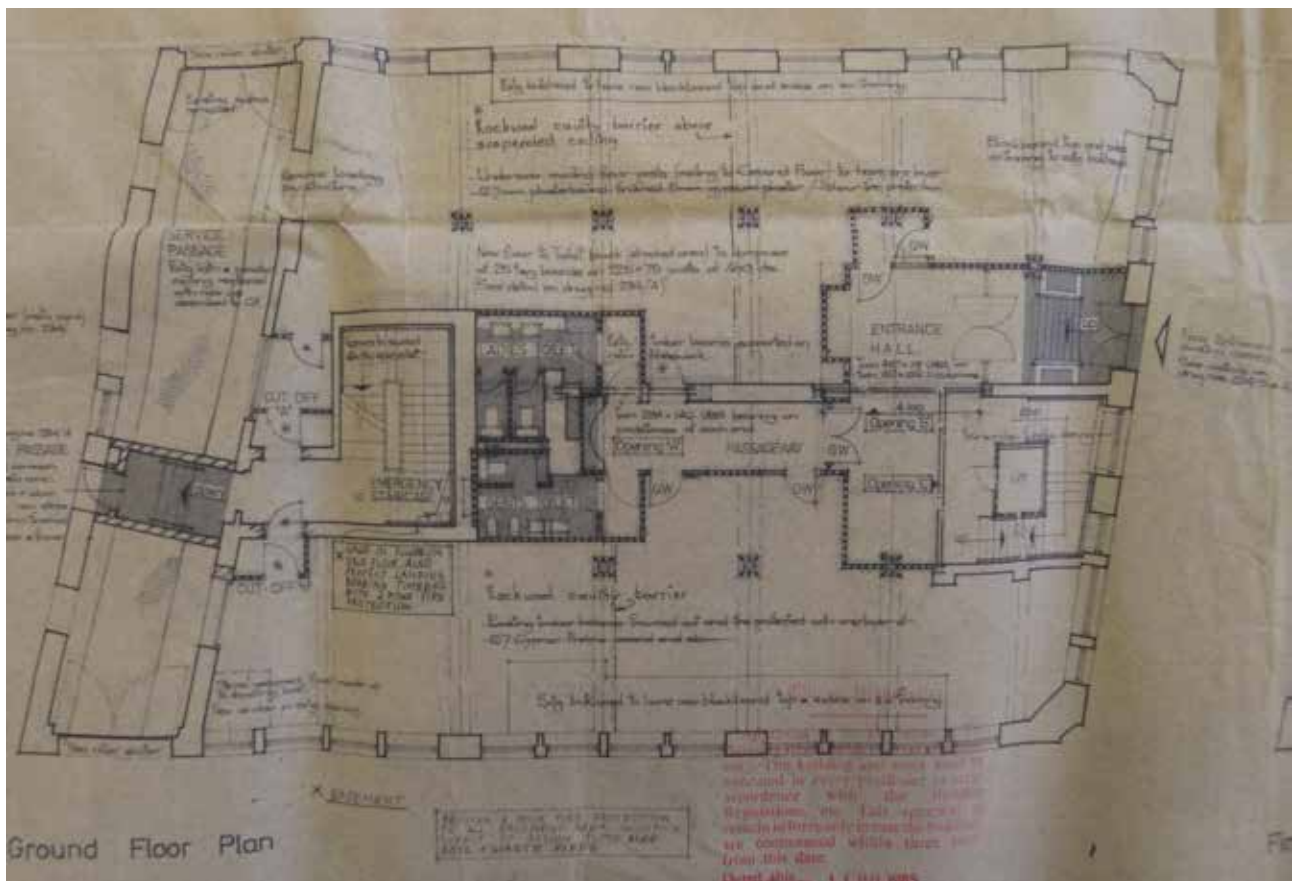


Plate 2.14b 1985 proposed ground floor plan (Manchester Archives)

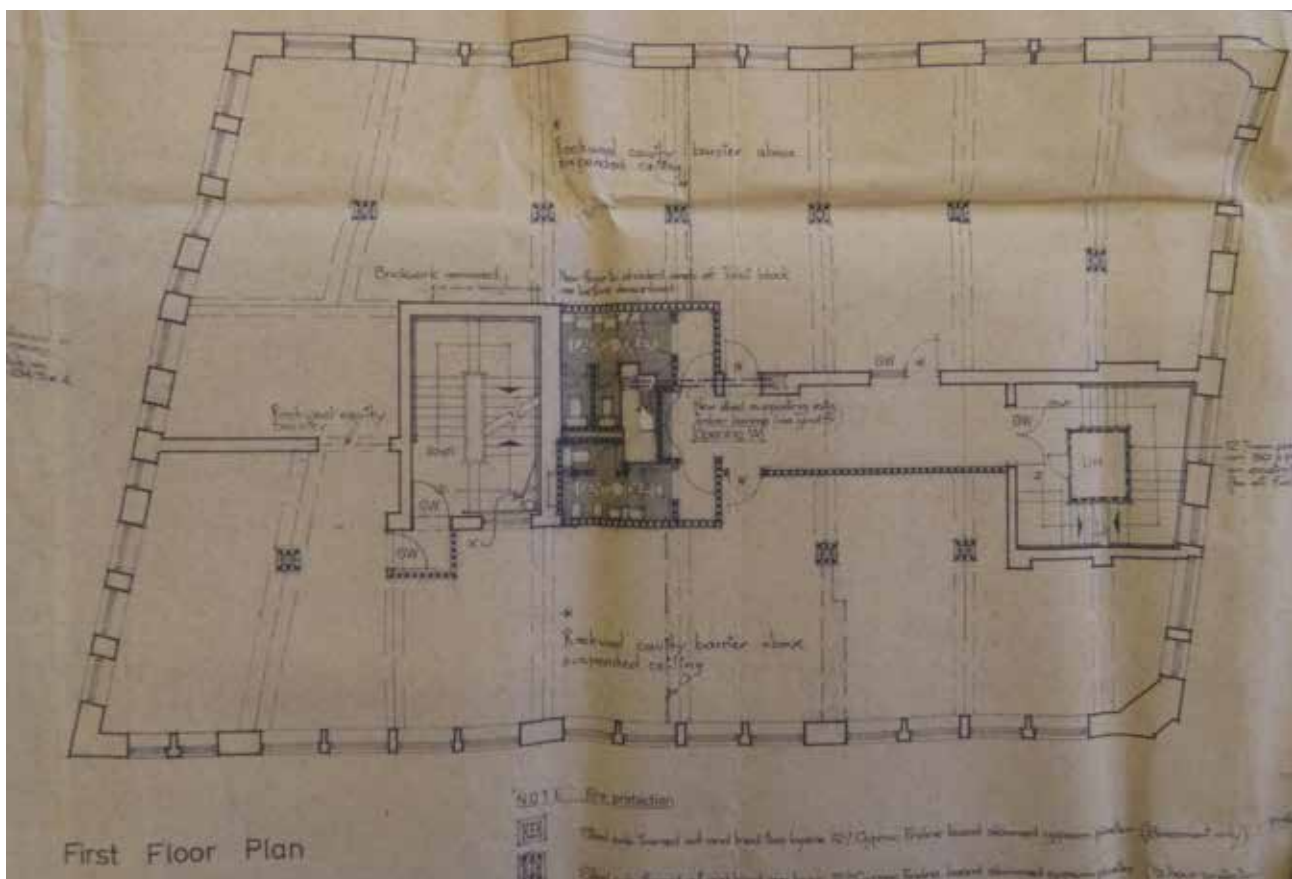


Plate 2.14c 1985 proposed 1st floor plan (Manchester Archives)

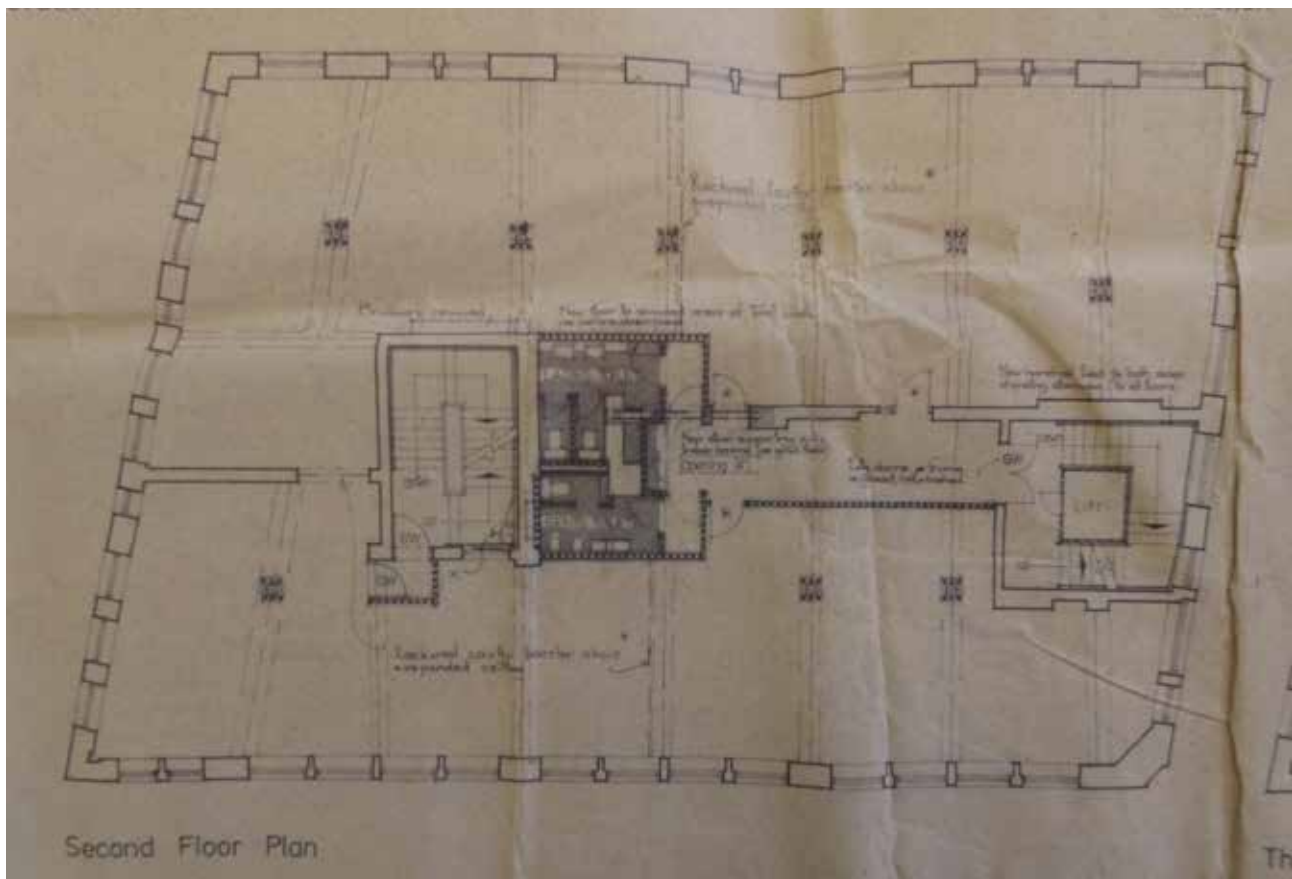


Plate 2.14d 1985 proposed 2nd floor plan (Manchester Archives)

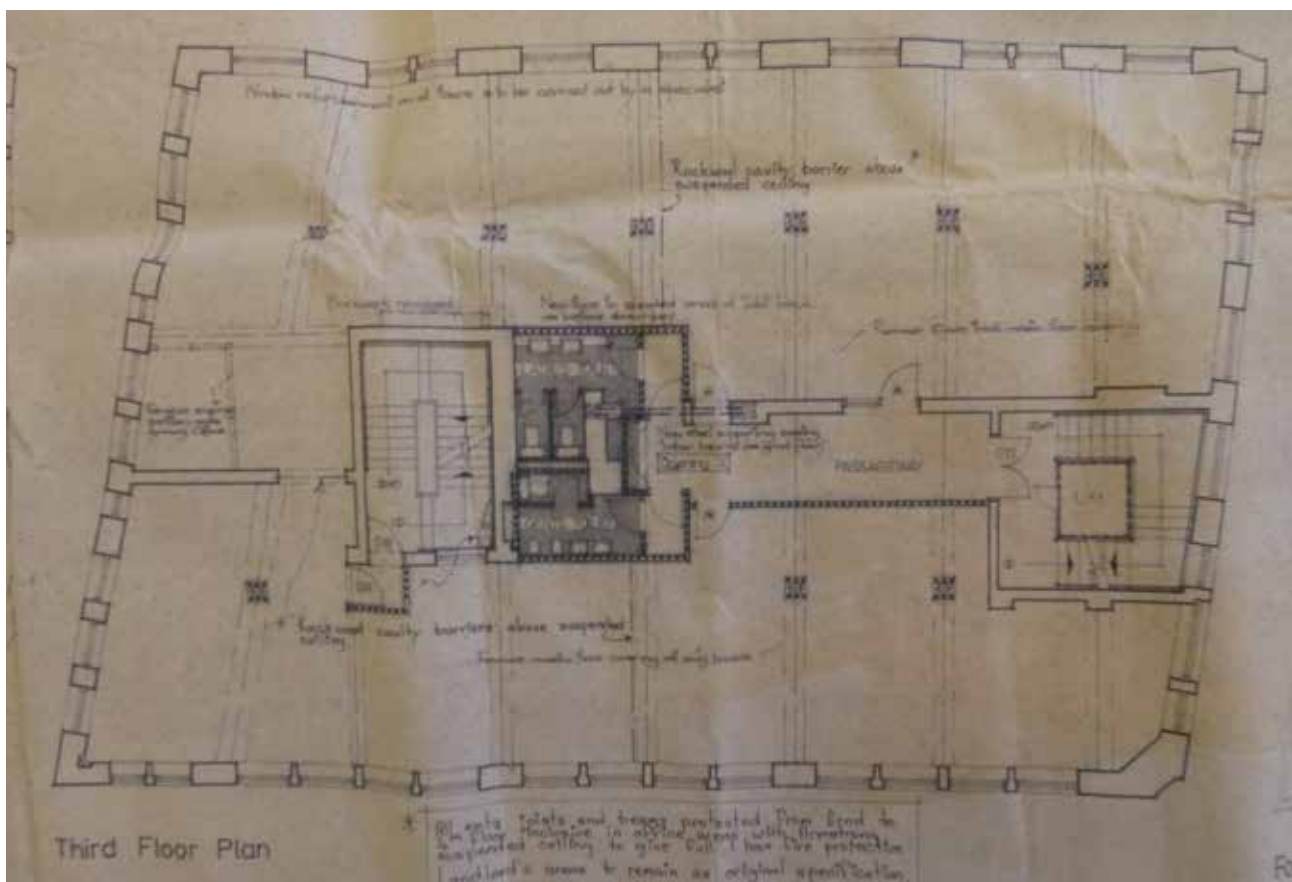


Plate 2.14e 1985 proposed 3rd floor plan (Manchester Archives)

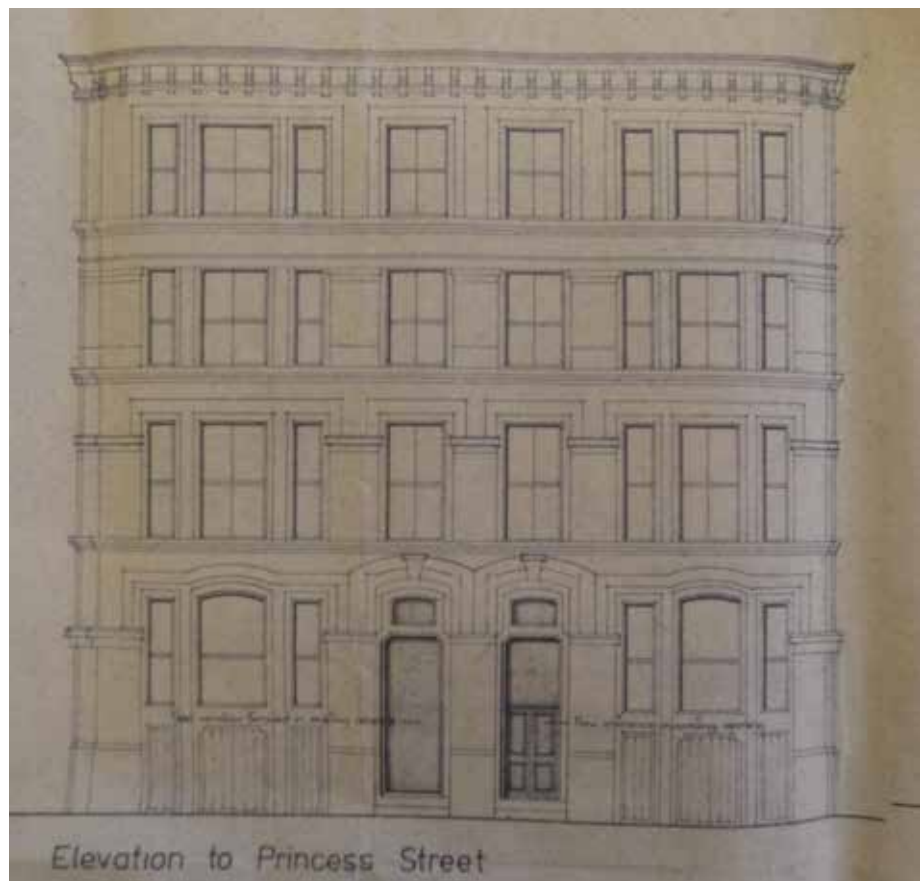


Plate 2.14h 1985 proposed Princess Street elevation (Manchester Archives)

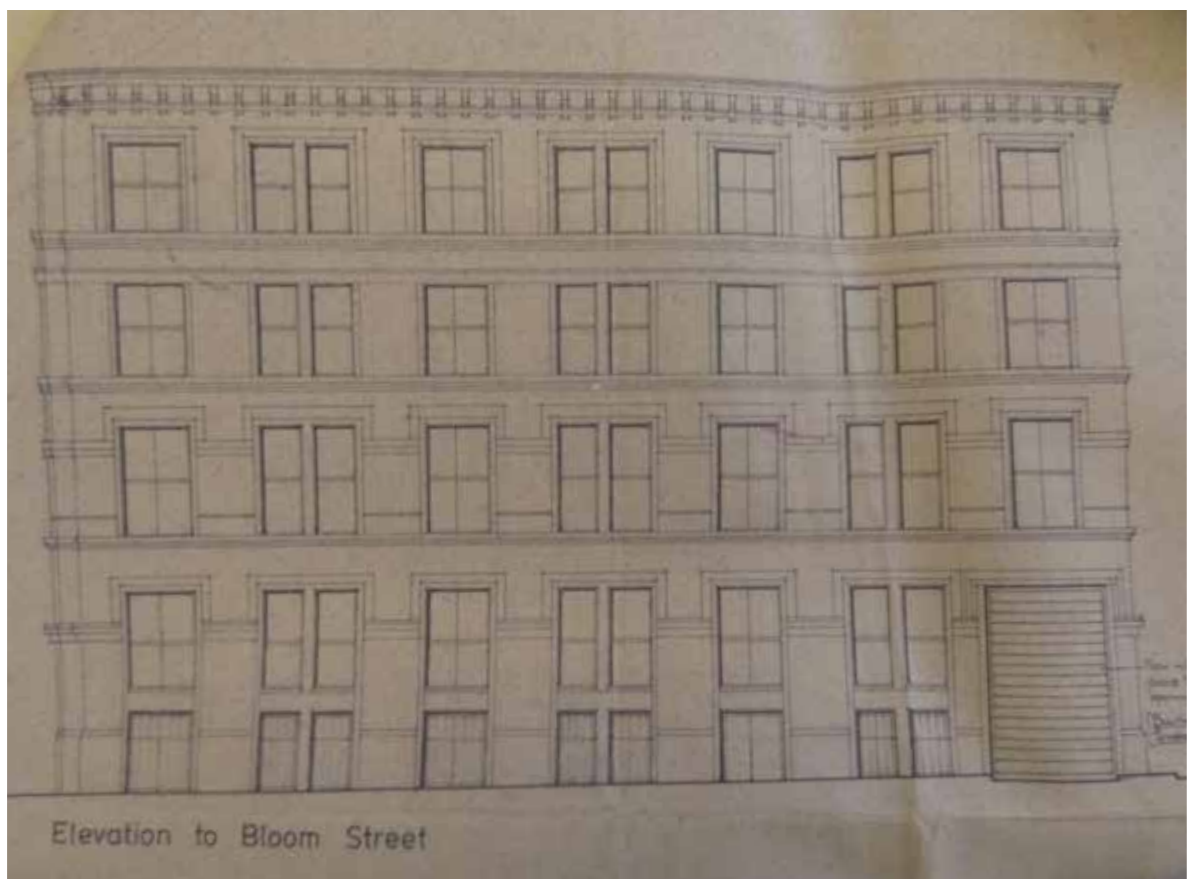


Plate 2.14i 1985 proposed Bloom Street elevation (Manchester Archives)



Plate 2.14j 1985 proposed Hart Street elevation (Manchester Archives)

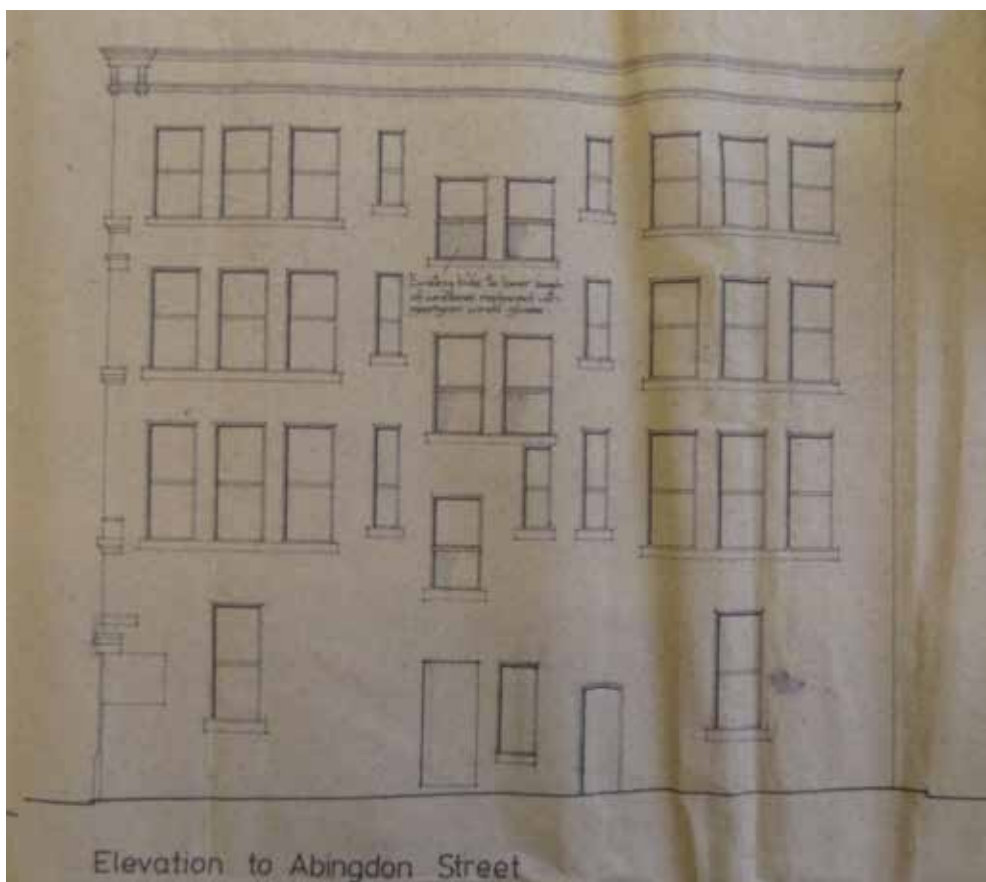


Plate 2.14k 1985 proposed Abingdon Street elevation (Manchester Archives)

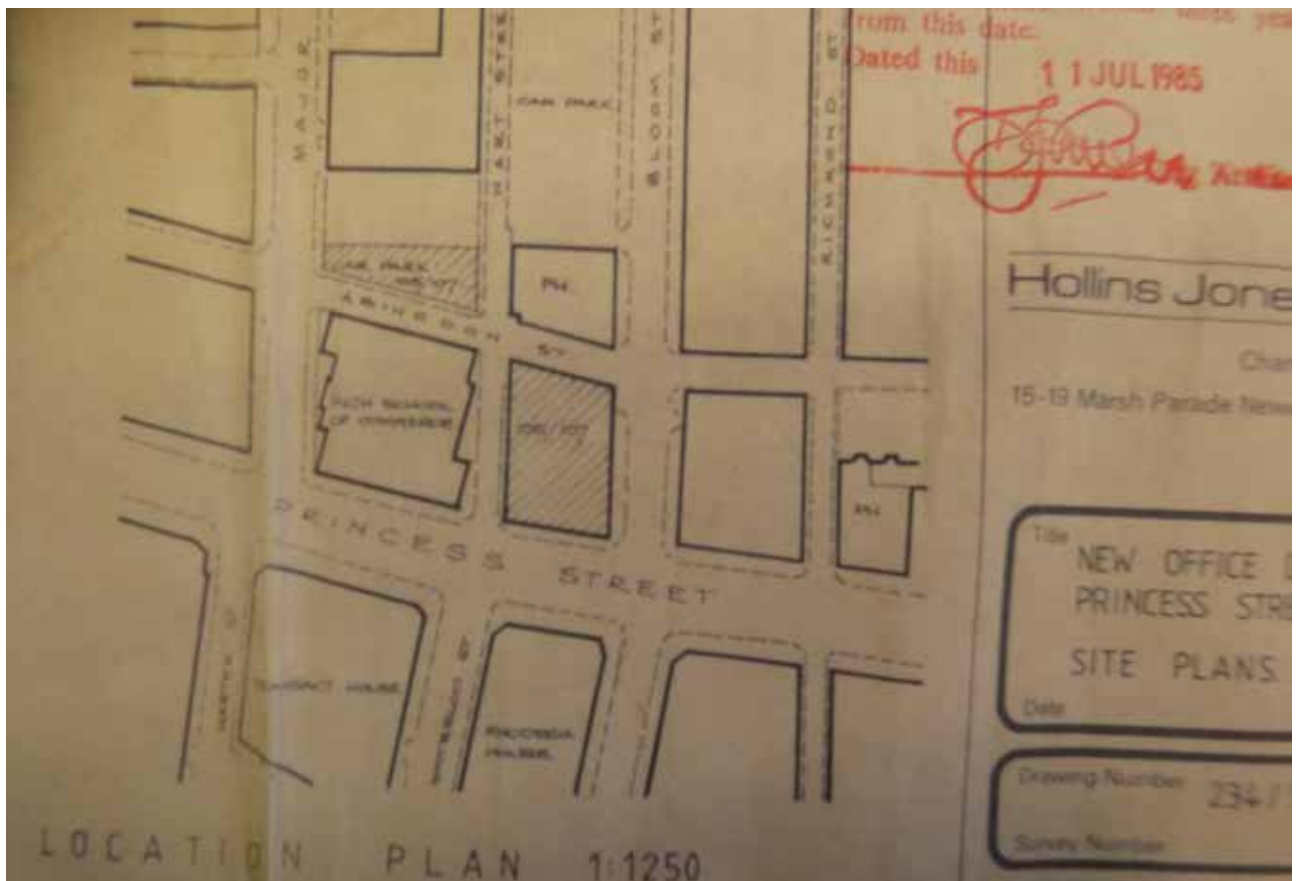


Plate 2.14I 1985 proposed site plan showing car park (Manchester Archives)

2.3 Planning History

F04266/LB: Use of ground, 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th floors as an Art Centre including exhibition gallery, 189 seat theatre, rehearsal rooms, 51 seat cinema, music school and studios.
Approved 6 October 1976

F12981: Change of use of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th floors from offices/showrooms to residential accommodation.
Approved 21 May 1980

021394: Change of use of the whole building to offices
Approved 13 March 1984

022009 and 022010: Alterations and refurbishment of existing premises providing new toilet blocks/entrance hall for lettable commercial accommodation
Approved 25 July 1984

024177: Change of use and alterations to form a wine bar/bistro
Approved 24 May 1985

027040: Installation of fixed canopies to front and side elevations
Approved 26 September 1986

027051: Illuminated motif sign to Hart St. elevation
Refused 3 September 1986

041021: Illuminated individual letter name sign to Hart Street elevation
Approved 23 April 1992

041084: Development involving elevational alterations and extension of existing basement premises to part of ground floor for licensed premises with dancing and food facilities.
Approved 27 April 1992

041388: Alteration to ginnel off Bloom Street to form entrance screen with internal alterations
Withdrawn 11 June 1992

048788/FO/CITY2/95: Internal alterations of offices to retail outlets and extension/alteration of existing wine bar
Approved 30 January 1996

051057/LO/CITY2/96 and 051058/AO/CITY2/96: Illuminated projecting "sphere" sign on Hart Street elevation
Approved 15 January 1997

052760/AO/CITY2/97 and 052761/LO/CITY2/97: The displaying of four projecting signs.
Approved 11 March 1999

052825/FO/CITY2/97: Change of use from shop unit to a radio control room for taxis with aerial to chimney stack
Approved 14 October 1997

056846/AO/CITY2/99 and 056847/LO/CITY2/99: 2 x Internally illuminated double-sided projecting box signs to Sackville St & Princess St elevations
Refused 16 August 1999

056893/LO/CITY2/99: Alterations, including the installation of a new staircase, in association with a change of use.
Approved 23 November 1999

056899/FO/CITY2/99: Change of use of ground and first floors to a mix of food and drink (Class A3) and taxi radio control base uses.
Approved 23 November 1999

061207/LO/CITY2/01: Works associated with Change of use of 2nd, 3rd, and 4th floors from offices to hotel including works at ground and first floor level.
Approved 26 January 2001

063052/FO/CITY2/01 and 063053/LO/CITY2/01: Installation of rooftop mounted telecommunications equipment
Appeal dismissed 17 January 2002

067514/FO/CITY2/03 and 067516/LO/CITY2/03: Installation of 3 No. telecommunications antenna and erection of bracing, steel supporting grillage and equipment cabinet
Approved 15 April 2003

075749/LO/2005/C2: Listed building consent to create disabled access from front elevation and new doors
Approved 15 August 2005

094716/FU/2010/C2: Change of use to non-residential education and training centre (Use Class D1)
Application refused 26 April 2011

096733/FO/2011/C2: Use of part of second floor and whole of third and fourth floors of Princess House for D1 (Non Residential Education and Training) purposes
Approved 22 August 2011

100881/FO/2012/C2 and 100882/LO/2012/C2: Upgrade of existing installation comprising the replacement of the 3no. existing antennas and installation of additional equipment cabinet.
Approved 27 February 2013

110724/FO/2015/C2 and 110724/LO/2015/C2: The installation of a telecommunication antenna to replace the existing.
Appeal allowed 10 March 2016

2.4 Sources and Bibliography

Manchester Local Archives

Manchester Image Collection
Maps Collection
Plans (Building Act Case Files)

Manchester Planning Archives

Building Case File
Redevelopment Drawings

Published Sources

Manchester: The Warehouse Legacy, An Introduction and Guide (Historic England, 2002)
Hartwell, C. Hyde, M. Pevsner, N. Lancashire: The Buildings of England: Manchester and the South-East (Yale University Press, 2010)

3.0 Site Survey Descriptions

3.1 The Setting of the Building and the Conservation Area Context

105-107 Princess Street is located in the Whitworth Street/Princess Street Conservation Area; the northern side of the conservation area boundary runs along Abingdon Street to its rear. The character of this part of the conservation area is defined by the dense concentration of packing and shipping warehouses. These form uninterrupted groups that create a canyon effect along the road and a townscape of exceptional architectural and historic interest [Plate 3.1]. Although the nature of the area and use of the buildings has changed over the latter part of the 20th century, this part of the city still has a strong identity rooted in its industrial past and is inherently Mancunian in character. This is an urban area, with strong defined building lines and robust architecture, which developed from the construction of the canal and Manchester's former role at the centre of the 19th century British textile industry.

The warehouses have a shared scale, typically four to five storeys set over a basement with a raised ground floor and in the main part occupy whole townscape blocks built hard up against the back pavement line. They exhibit robust Victorian classical architectural styles which exude status and longevity; materials are relatively consistent with sash windows predominating.

The Rochdale Canal runs through the centre of the conservation area and its bridges and locks are features of key historic, social and architectural interest. Additional character to this part of the conservation area is also given by the so-called 'Gay Village', with a number of bars and restaurants running along Canal Street and the eastern end of Richmond Street.

No.103 Princess Street (Grade II*) to the north of the site was formerly the Mechanics' Institute. It is built in the Italian palazzo style in red brick with sandstone dressings and is noted as J.E. Gregan's masterpiece, as well as architecturally reflecting the changing face of commercial Manchester. To the south is no.109 Princess Street (Grade II), a former shipping warehouse again constructed in the palazzo style in red brick with stone dressings; on the north bank of the Rochdale Canal stands the New Union Hotel public house – built around 1800 for the 'navvies' who dug the canal – its Georgian façade now rendered. The three facing buildings are all former shipping warehouses constructed in red brick with sandstone dressings in the eclectic style including Transact House (48 and 50 Princess Street, Grade II), Rhodesia House (52 Princess Street, Grade II) and Lionesse House (54 and 56 Princess Street, Grade II).

To the rear (east) the original Victorian public house and adjoining building are now in a single use; both constructed in red brick, the original pub exhibits greater detailing with a heavily bracketed cornice and pedimented doorcase – all dressings to both buildings are now painted black. This pair is located outside of the conservation area and form an island site surrounded by a large surface level car park.



Plate 3.1 View north along Princess Street flanked by listed shipping warehouses creating an exceptional Victorian townscape (DIA)

3.2 The Building

105-107 Princess Street is formed of two former shipping warehouses. Characteristically of warehouses within the area the trapezoid plan form of the two buildings occupies an entire urban block, bound to the south by Bloom Street, north by Hart Street and rear by Abingdon Street. Architecturally the two buildings form a set-piece and were linked internally in the early 20th century; they comprise four stories above a basement level with a further floor contained in the concealed roof storey. The use of buff yellow brick with sandstone dressings is atypical along Princess Street and in comparison to other works by Clegg and Knowles; otherwise the architectural detailing found on the Princess Street facade is characteristically exuberant in the eclectic style with some Gothic features. The side and rear elevations to Hart Street and Abingdon Street respectively exhibit a more restrained character however along Bloom Street the architectural detailing continues – alluding to Bloom Street's higher status [Plates 3.2 – 3.5].

Despite their lateral conversion both retain entrances on to Princess Street which lead to a raised ground floor (providing access to the basement club within no.105 and forming the entrance to the upper floors at no.107); the exposed basement windows below originally providing light into this lower floor. A former service bay spans across the rear of the building to provide off-street loading; this area is now much altered although the double height openings on both side streets remain. The workers would have also entered the buildings through this area with access into rear secondary stairs; plans dating to 1915 would suggest a workers stair or loading void also original existing to the rear of no.107, aligned with the offset windows in the rear facade.

Internally offices and warerooms or showrooms would have originally been located at ground floor with further offices, a sample room and pattern room and waiting room likely accommodated at first floor; the existing plan dating to 1985 shows a section of wall and chimney breast forming an office at the front of no.105 remained until that time. Both floors would have had architectural embellishment suited to their public facing aspect, the floors above would typically have been less detailed and used for storage and preparing goods whilst heavy goods and plant would have been located in the basement floor.



Plate 3.2 105-107 Princess Street (DIA)



Plate 3.3 Side return to Bloom Street continuing architectural detailing (DIA)



Plate 3.4 Side elevation to Hart Street with double height service access opening and more restrained character to this and rear facade (DIA)



Plate 3.5 Rear facade on Abingdon Street (DIA)

3.3 The Building Externally

3.3.1 Front Elevation

The symmetrical front elevation across the pair comprises four sets of windows, with single light openings over the centrally located coupled doorways and tripartite windows flanking either side. The façade has a chamfered plinth with saw-tooth sill-bands to all floors, impost bands are embedded in the walls at all levels but the top floor which is capped with a heavily bracketed cornice. The coupled doorways have pilaster jambs, carved stiff-leaf imposts and five-stepped segmental-arched heads with keystones. The flanking tripartite windows have segmental-arched centre lights and moulded surrounds with stiff-leaf imposts, set in a double height arrangement with the exposed basement windows below and square-headed tripartite windows to the floors above **[Plate 3.6]**.

The basement and ground floor windows are either boarded or back painted/shuttered and detract significantly from the appearance of the building and its contribution to the streetscape at human level; decorative railings span in front of the exposed basement windows (replaced to one bay); pavement lights in front have been infilled. Glazing bars have also been lost to all but one of the wider timber sash windows at first floor and the openings are largely obscured internally. Both doorways are modern; at no.105 this provides access to the basement club with associated advertising; the doorway at no.107 provides access to the floors above, crossing back into no.105 where the staircore is located (discussed further below); the modern doors both detract. Security cameras, floodlights and banners at first-second floor add clutter harmful to the appearance of the building **[Plate 3.7]**.

3.3.2 Side Elevation (Bloom Street)

The architectural decoration on the front elevation continues along the Bloom Street façade with alternating single and paired window openings. To the paired openings the windows are one-over-one timber sashes; to the second and third floor the single openings contain two-over-two timber sashes. Across the ground floor the stiff-leaf imposts run across the building face with the stone work between the paired windows unadorned. Again the windows at basement and ground floor are back painted or boarded, pavement lights infilled and the first floor windows are obscured internally and typically missing the central glazing bar; what appears to have been an earlier doorway roughly in the centre of the ground floor facade is also boarded. The original double-height loading bay entrance/exit set level with the street remains to the rear of the façade with a moulded surround and framed by pilasters with stiff-leaf imposts. The opening has however been infilled with modern solid doorways and a large painted fascia above which, alongside the obscured windows, provides a deadening street frontage which detracts from the appearance of the building. Modern fixtures such as security cameras, floodlighting and window vents also detract, as well as the flag pole which projects from the rear corner at first floor level **[Plate 3.8]**.



Plate 3.6 Front elevation (DIA)



Plate 3.7 Altered entrances on Princess Street (DIA)



Plate 3.8 Bloom Street elevation and former loading bay access (DIA)

3.3.3 Side Elevation (Hart Street)

The side elevation on Hart Street exhibits a much more restrained character, absent of the architectural embellishments found in the Princess Street and Bloom Street facades. Simple stone lintels form banding across the façade and window heads with stone sills define the windows in their four-four-four-two groups. The paired windows to the rear sit over the original double-height loading bay entrance which again has a modern infill and detracting signage associated with the club at ground and first floors. Back painted/boarded windows at basement and ground floor create a deadening street frontage and detract – a former opening roughly located in the centre of the façade is also boarded. Pavement lights again appear to be infilled and some sections of railings have been replaced. Windows are two-over-two sashes with central glazing bars. Further detracting features include openings now infilled with vents, windows obscured internally at first floor and clutter mounted to the facades including an air-conditioning unit mounted at first floor level and a flag pole projecting from the rear corner **[Plate 3.9]**.

3.3.4 Rear Elevation (Abingdon Street)

The rear elevation again has a more restrained character with a symmetrical composition. At the centre are paired windows set between the main floor levels alluding to the loading bay and access located internally to the rear of the building (with a tower at roof level above), they are flanked by raised smaller windows and then by an outer bay of three windows **[Plate 3.10]**. Stone sills unify the windows where grouped, lintels are brick; sash windows are all one-over-one owing to the narrower width of the window openings. Former ground floor openings have modern solid infills (one boarded, one roller shutter) **[Plate 3.5]**. Obscured windows again detract from the appearance of this part of the building as well as a plethora of clutter mounted to the façade including air-conditioning units, wiring, security equipment/lighting and boxing.

3.3.5 Roof

Both buildings have a pitched raised roof, visible only in limited views down facing side streets, clad in slate with rooflights along the lower slope serving the accommodation at this level. A lift overrun punctures the roof at no.105 and a raised party wall runs the length of the central valley with a large rooflight to the rear and a tall chimney located centrally **[Plate 3.11]**. Modern rooflights (on proposed plans submitted in 1985) are set within the internal roof pitches.



Plate 3.9 Hart Street elevation and former loading bay access (DIA)



Plate 3.10 Offset windows to rear elevation and roof tower above (DIA)



Plate 3.11 Roof as seen from the west side of Hart Street (DIA)

3.4 The Building Internally

3.4.1 Ground Floor

The main entrance to the upper floors above is through the original doorway within no.107. Steps then lead up to the raised ground floor at which point the access to the upper floors crosses into no.105 where the main staircore and lift is located (see below). The reception fit-out is modern, with dropped ceilings and plain skirting/mouldings which run up to the half landing at first floor **[Plates 3.12 – 3.14]**.

A fire escape access from the club also leads into this entrance area however the main club entrance is through the former loading bay access to the rear of Hart Street, a secondary access is within the opposing loading bay entrance on Bloom Street. In both locations a modern stair mediates between the street level opening and raised ground floor. The rear secondary stair bypasses this floor and exits directly onto the street. There is no connection between the two buildings to the rear, with a half landing on the south side (no.107) with dressing room and beer cellars below; to no.105 this area provides refuge storage **[Plates 3.15 – 3.18]**.

The windows are a mix of shuttered, blocked off or totally obscured by a partition wall which runs in front. Whilst the floor has a modern club fit-out, the cast-iron columns remain. The two buildings are connected at the front of the plan, partitions are modern with modern stairs to first floor at the front of no.105 and a double height void connect to the first floor of the club above in no.107 **[Plates 3.19 – 3.21]**.



Plate 3.12 Entrance to raised ground floor through doorway at no.107 (DIA)



Plate 3.13 Large opening in party wall providing access from street entrance at no.107 into reception and staircore in no.105 (DIA)



Plate 3.15 Fire escape access from ground floor club leading to main reception area (DIA)



Plate 3.14 Ground floor reception area, modern fit-out and staircore (DIA)



Plate 3.16 Main entrance to ground floor club through former loading bay entrance with modern stair to raised ground floor (DIA)

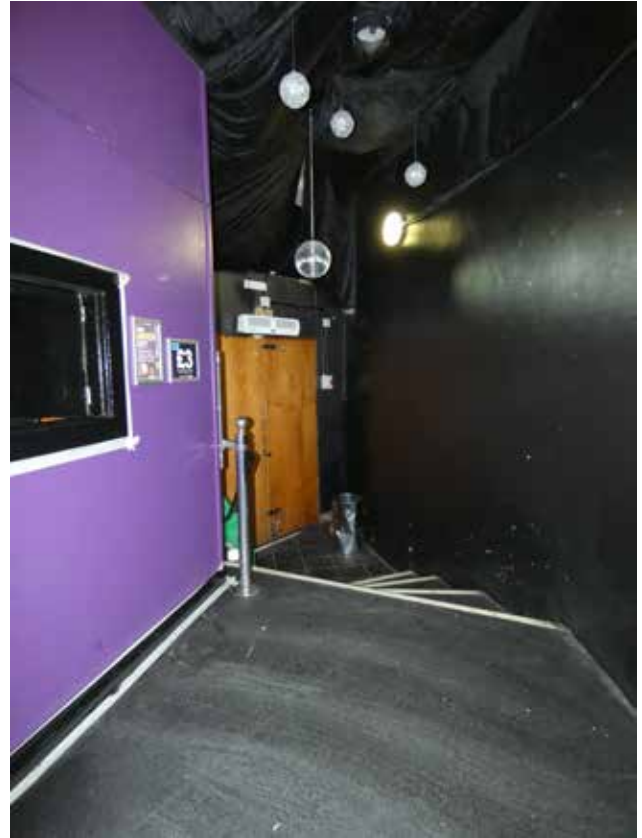


Plate 3.17 Secondary access via former loading bay on Bloom Street with modern stair (DIA)



Plate 3.18 Dressing room on half landing at rear of no.107 9DIA)



Plate 3.19 Ground floor club with modern stair to first floor, iron column and link between buildings (DIA)



Plate 3.21 Ground floor club area on south side (no.107) with columns retained (DIA)



Plate 3.20 Shuttered windows in north-west corner at ground floor (DIA)

3.4.2 Stair Enclosures

The staircase which runs the height of the building providing access to all floor levels is located within no.105 but access to the ground and upper floors is via the main entrance in no.107; building plans show this general arrangement to have been implemented as part of works consented in 1985. Building plans from 1915 show that the stair was inserted at this time when the buildings were laterally converted; the concrete stair is built around the central lift core which projects with an overrun at roof level. The manner in which the stair crosses across the front windows and the skirting board detailing provide further evidence that it is a later addition to the building; alongside the awkward projection of the staircase enclosure into the rooms in the north-west corner of the building. The skirting within the staircase enclosure varies; overtly modern in places. The architraves to the doorways at second floor and above have a traditional moulded character likely to date to 1915, doors are modern **[Plates 3.22 – 3.25]**.

Located towards the rear of the building is the secondary 'service' staircase which bypasses the ground floor (through the former loading bay) but provides access to the basement area. This would have formed an original workers entrance and stair, away from the public facing part of the building in the loading bay area. The buildings plans dating to 1915 suggest an additional stair or loading shaft original served no.107, set against the rear façade and aligning with the offset windows in the rear façade **[Plates 3.26 – 3.30]**.

3.4.3 First Floor

The first floor is accessed internally from the ground floor club; a fire escape leads out onto the main stair – the opening absent of joinery. The interior has a modern club fit-out, which characteristically is completely internalised with windows boarded or blocked. To the front of the plan the two original buildings are open to one another and there is a modern stair to ground floor here; to the rear there are large openings between the two buildings. This collectively has a disorienting impact and the distinction between the two buildings would be difficult to discern to the casual observer. The structural cast-iron columns which run through this space give the only nod to the building's industrial past and are now surrounded by modern club fit-out. Skirting is plain. On the southern side (no.107) modern partitions are set between columns and there is a double height void to the ground floor towards the front of this floor with a modern stair down to ground floor at the rear. Cumulatively large sections of the floor have been removed. The front office sash windows are not blocked in this area **[Plates 3.31 – 3.34]**.



Plate 3.22 Concrete floor bisecting windows at half landing between first and second floors (DIA)



Plate 3.23 Main stair at second-third floor half landing, bisecting windows (DIA)



Plate 3.24 Main stair at third-fourth floor half landing, bisecting windows and skirting detailing (DIA)

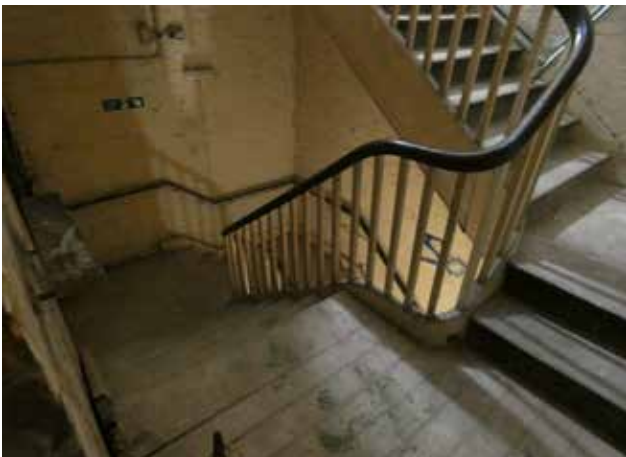


Plate 3.26 Lower section of secondary workers staircase (DIA)



Plate 3.25 Entrance to second floor (DIA)



Plate 3.27 Top of secondary stair with roof light above (DIA)



Plate 3.28 View from fourth floor of secondary staircase (DIA)



Plate 3.29 Window at first floor within secondary staircase (DIA)



Plate 3.30 Section of original wall at base of access up to secondary stair (DIA)



Plate 3.31 Club fire escape on to main stair at first floor (DIA)



Plate 3.32 Iron columns in first club area in no.105 (DIA)



Plate 3.33 Modern stair to south-east corner of first floor club linking to ground floor (DIA)



Plate 3.34 Windows unobscured to first floor office area at front of no.107 (DIA)

3.4.4 Second Floor

The second floor is the first level of accommodation Use Class D1 (Non-Residential Institutions) with a central lobby located off the stair landing; this floor is currently being upgraded. Walls are modern stud partitions and cut sections of the decorative cornice show this to be modern.

Flooring is largely modern boarding although there is evidence of original brick and timber flooring within the new bathrooms and surrounding the cast-iron columns in the main rooms **[Plates 3.35 – 3.36a/b]**. The original party wall between the two buildings is evident with openings providing access between the two to the front and rear of the central secondary stair/service core.

The floor plan is open on both sides of the building with structural columns forming prominent features which invoke an industrial character; with timber beams running across. To the north side (no.105) there is a modern ceiling with no cornice; to the south (no.107) the ceiling is lowered – obscuring the upper half of the sash windows, the original ceiling has been removed above. The offset windows in the rear façade are exposed however the floorplate bisects, plans dating to 1915 show that this was infilled at that time. Surface mounted cabling and pipes run the perimeter and the large sash windows are a prominent feature which chamfered column details between some pairs **[Plates 3.37 – 3.42]**.



Plate 3.35 Second floor lobby currently being upgraded, WCs and services to the rear and openings in party wall to the right (DIA)



Plate 3.36a Original timbers around columns at second floor (DIA)



Plate 3.36b Original brick flooring in WC core at second floor (DIA)



Plate 3.37 North-west corner of second floor showing exposed columns and beams, large sash windows and surface mounted cables and pipes (DIA)



Plate 3.39 Second floor timber sash windows with roof beam and chamfered column detail (DIA)



Plate 3.38 Rear of northern side of second floor (DIA)



Plate 3.40 Rear windows set at half level in no.107 and partially obscured by floor plate at rear second floor (DIA)



Plate 3.42 Sash windows in south elevation at second floor, partially obscured by lowered ceiling (DIA)



Plate 3.41 South side of second floor with columns and lower ceiling (DIA)

3.4.5 Third Floor

The third floor is divided into cellular offices, accessed via a corridor which runs around the secondary stair and WC core, creating a ring plan form which spans the two buildings. The lobby partitions are modern, with modern architraves and doors. The central lobby uncharacteristically exhibits the same decorative cornice as the floors above and below and is modern. A false ceiling largely obscures the original ceiling height, in places this awkwardly bisects the windows, otherwise it steps or chamfers to reveal their full height, ceiling joists above are stripped. The sash windows are original with a handsome column feature – splice repairs are evident to some windows. Partitioning to the rear is awkward in places; the lateral links between the two buildings are well established and the large opening to the rear makes the definition between the two buildings unclear **[Plates 3.43 – 3.49a/b]**.



Plate 3.43 Lateral openings between two buildings in lobby at third floor (DIA)



Plate 3.45 Third floor office with false ceiling and column detailing to windows (DIA)



Plate 3.44 Third floor north-west corner (DIA)



Plate 3.47 Window alignment in the centre of rear facade at third floor (DIA)



Plate 3.48 Third floor south-west corner (DIA)

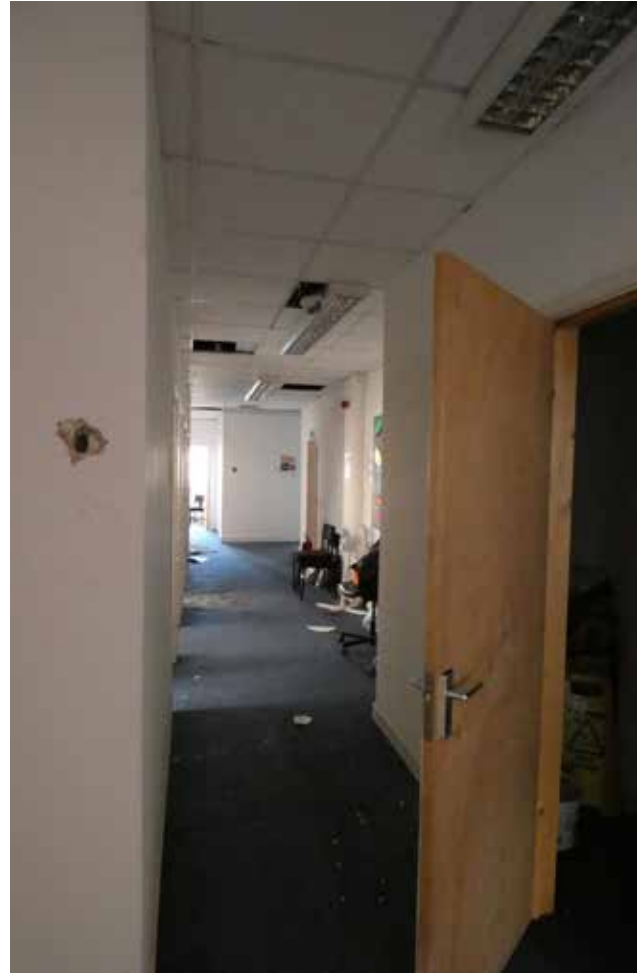


Plate 3.46 Third floor central corridor (DIA)



Plate 3.49a Sash window with original glazing bar (DIA)



Plate 3.49b Sash window with splice repair (DIA)

3.4.6 Fourth Floor

The fourth floor is contained within the roof structure. It comprises a main lobby area as to the floors below; a corridor and smaller office spaces run along the side of no.105 with an open plan space to no.107. As to the floors below, WCs etc. are located to the rear of the lobby spanning across the two buildings and the secondary stair is accessed via no.105. The partitions are modern with modern skirtings and doors. False ceilings conceal the original roof timbers which have lathe and plaster scars where the original ceiling has been removed; the false ceiling steps where rooflights are located above. Plasterwork in the central lobby uncharacteristically matches that found to the floors below and is modern. The original party wall remains between the two buildings but the links to the front and rear of the floorplate are well established. The roof structure cuts through the space and is of interest; there is however an issue with water ingress around the rooflights and surrounding joinery – rooflights over the central lobby area are modern. The floor is in a poor condition and state of upkeep and is in need of repair and refurbishment **[Plates 3.50 – 3.52]**.

3.4.7 Basement

The basement floor is occupied by a club with a modern fit-out, although large sections of brick are exposed to the rear and structural cast-iron columns remain which give it a historic character. It is accessed via a modern stair from the main entrance at no.105; a fire escape also exits on to Bloom Street. The area under the former loading bay spans the whole width with exposed brick – the ceiling is vaulted. A service passage runs across the two buildings on the inner face of the boiler room (located under the secondary stair above); otherwise the party wall between the two is largely intact **[Plates 3.53 – 3.55]**.



Plate 3.50 Fourth floor central lobby with modern partitions, decorative features and rooflights and openings in the party wall to the right (DIA)



Plate 3.51 Room on north side of fourth floor adjacent to corridor, false ceiling with original timbers above showing lathe scars (DIA)



Plate 3.52 South-west corner of fourth floor showing false ceilings, exposed roof structure and roof lights (DIA)



Plate 3.53a Columns in the basement club (DIA)



Plate 3.53b Columns in the basement club (DIA)



Plate 3.54a Vaulted ceilings at basement level under former loading bay (DIA)



Plate 3.55 Exposed brick walls and arches at basement level (DIA)



Plate 3.54b Vaulted ceilings at basement level under former loading bay (DIA)

4.0 Assessment of Significance

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to provide an assessment of the significance of 105-107 Princess Street so that the proposals for change to the building are fully informed as to its significance and so that the effect of the proposals on that significance can be evaluated. The assessment begins with a general summary of the building's history and significance; then the various elements of the building are assessed according to a sliding scale of significance, reflecting the extent to which they contribute to the listed building's special architectural and historical interest and the character and appearance of the Whitworth Street/Princess Street Conservation Area.

This assessment responds to the requirement of the National Planning Policy Framework to 'recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance'. 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 (potential to yield evidence about the past), architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting'.

The principles for consideration of the significance of the listed building are based upon The Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings document produced by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (2010) which identifies the special interest as comprising of two key elements (in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990:

Architectural Interest. To be of special architectural interest a building must be of importance in its architectural design, decoration or craftsmanship; special interest may also apply to nationally important examples of particular building types and techniques (e.g. buildings displaying technological innovation or virtuosity) and significant plan forms;

Historic Interest. To be of special historic interest a building must illustrate important aspects of the nation's social, economic, cultural, or military history and/or have close historical associations with nationally important people. There should normally be some quality of interest in the physical fabric of the building itself to justify the statutory protection afforded by listing.

These are informed by the following General Principles;

Age and rarity. The older a building is, and the fewer the surviving examples of its kind, the more likely it is to have special interest.

Aesthetic merits. The appearance of a building – both its intrinsic architectural merit and any group value – is a key consideration... but the special interest of a building will not always be reflected in obvious external visual quality. Buildings that are important for reasons of technological innovation, or as illustrating particular aspects of social or economic history, may have little external visual quality.

Selectivity. A building may represent a particular historical type which merits preservation to ensure that example(s) of that type are preserved.

National interest. Significant or distinctive regional buildings that together make a major contribution to the national historic stock such as those which illustrate the importance of distinctive local and regional traditions or those which represent a nationally important but localised industry.

4.2 105-107 Princess Street

105-107 Princess Street is one of a number of warehouse buildings by Clegg and Knowles and was completed in 1871. Originally built as two separate shipping warehouses, the buildings were laterally connected in 1915; however their symmetrical principal façade, occupation of a full townscape block and shared loading bay shows that they were linked at least in part throughout their lives. Constructed in buff brick in the eclectic style they differ from the typically red brick warehouses clustered in this part of the city; otherwise they share a scale and architectural grandeur with the other warehouses flanking this part of Princess Street. Built up against the rear line of the pavement and occupying full townscape blocks, they collectively build up a Victorian industrial townscape of very high significance which underpins the historic identity of Manchester.

The buildings themselves have been subject to alteration which has detracted from their significance: principally blocked windows at basement, ground and first floor level in association with the club use, clutter across the facades and alterations to the rear loading bay and workers entrances. Internally much alteration has been undertaken in association with the club use at basement to first floors – although exposed brickwork and vaulted ceilings under the loading bay are retained at basement level alongside cast-iron columns at all these floor levels. Whilst the original loading bay to the rear of the ground floor has been much altered, the entrances and volume do remain in each rear corner of the building. The strongest sense of the original character of the building is retained at second floor, with two large open plan spaces, punctured with cast-iron columns and the full height of the characteristically large windows exposed on the north side.

The third and fourth floors have been much altered with internal partitions and lowered ceilings; however the exposed roof structure at fourth floor and rooflights in the outer face of the pitched roof are of interest. A single main staircore serves the upper floors dating to the early-20th century; curiously whilst this is located within no.105, works consented in 1985 saw the ground floor reconfigured to exit through the original doorway of no.107. This stair was inserted at the time the buildings were laterally converted and has an awkward relationship with the window openings it bisects. The rear secondary 'service' stair within no.105 would have originally provided workers access to the upper floors away from the

principal public facing part of the building; the historic fabric largely remains and this is of high significance within the building. The workers stair or loading void to the rear of no.107 was removed and floor plates infilled as part of the 1915 works; this awkwardly bisects the offset windows in the rear façade.

Whilst architecturally the building has been altered, the robust quality of the exterior means that its significance overall has not been severely compromised and could be very much enhanced by reversing the harmful alterations undertaken – principally associated with the club at basement, ground and first floors. Internally the significance of the original building has been diminished but there remains a sense of its historic character at second floor which could be reinstated to the floors above and below, particularly given the presence of the cast-iron columns running through the building and large original sash windows which remain serving these spaces.

However it is the building's contribution to the unique Victorian townscape along Princess Street and the physical evidence it provides of the textile trade and the wealth and status of packing and shipping warehouses at that time which is of highest significance; underpinning the identity of Manchester rooted in its industrial past.

This special interest is manifest in the fabric and plan form of the building, which has the following hierarchy of significance.

Of the **highest significance** are:

- The principal modelled facades to Princess Street and Bloom Street
- Original sash windows and evidence of historic entrances (albeit now largely altered)
- Secondary workers staircase

Of **high significance** and also sensitive are:

- Secondary facades to Hart Street and Abingdon Street
- Tower over former loading bay and chimney
- Cast-iron columns which run through the building
- Exposed brick and vaulted ceilings at basement level
- Open plan form and original volume (north only) at second floor
- Roof structure and historic rooflights at fourth floor

Of **modest significance** and therefore less sensitive to change are:

- Expression of rear loading bay internally, albeit much altered
- Original sections of flooring where it remains

Of **neutral significance, neither contributing to or detracting** from the significance of the whole and therefore a clear opportunity are:

- Modern joinery/plasterwork
- Modern reception area

Factors which detract from the building's significance and offer an opportunity for enhancement are:

- Blocked window openings and modern entrances at basement, ground and first floors
- Clutter across the facades including security fittings/lighting, a/c units, wiring, advertising
- Modern staircore in no.105
- Club fit-out at basement, ground and first floors including modern stairs and voids between ground and first floors
- Modern partitions and corridors at third and fourth floor
- False ceilings throughout the building
- Relationship between infilled floorplates and offset windows in rear facade
- Water ingress and damage to rooflights at fourth floor
- Modern rooflights at fourth floor and lift core protruding through roofline

4.3 Whitworth Street/Princess Street Conservation Area

The significance of the Whitworth Street/Princess Street Conservation Area is founded in its role in the industrial development of Manchester through the 19th century based on the growth of the canal and railway networks – the Rochdale Canal which crosses the conservation area is key to this significance. The area has a high density of substantial warehouses which have a strong shared character with defined building and roof lines situated in continuous sequences which give this part of the city an impressive architectural and historic character. The ornate and imposing architecture embodies the historical importance of the textile industry in the city and is typically Mancunian in character. This is enhanced further by the rise of the 'Gay Village' which halted the onset of decline and triggered the now common-place celebration and reuse of these buildings. 105-107 Princess Street form an integral part of the Victorian industrial character of Princess Street and the conservation area more widely and make a direct contribution to the setting of adjacent listed buildings owing to the high and shared townscape value.

5.0 Commentary on the Proposals

5.1 Description of the Proposals and their Impact on the Heritage Assets

The proposed scheme is outlined in detail in the application drawings and Design and Access Statement by Bowler Sadler Architecture which this report accompanies. They seek to change the use of the building to office use whilst refurbishing and upgrading the building in a manner sympathetic to its historic industrial character. A new entrance would be formed with provisions for DDA access and a rationalised central core with associated services such as cycle storage and showering/changing facilities set to the rear of the building. The exterior of the building would also be restored to its original grandeur with detracting features removed and windows revealed, re-presenting the building to the streetscape. These works are discussed further below.

Office accommodation

The club fit-out at basement, ground and first floor levels as well as modern partitions, floor coverings and false ceilings at upper floors would be removed to create large open plan office spaces. The removal of these modern detracting insertions – most critically the club at basement, ground and first floors which has almost obliterated the character of the original building at these levels – would substantially enhance the building's significance. The industrial character of these floors would be further enhanced by better revealing original features such as the cast-iron columns and timber beams and full windows heights, as well as the proportions and volume of spaces more akin to the original warehouse use. An appropriate decorative scheme and the introduction of services more sensitive to the reinstated industrial character of the building are also proposed.

At the front of the floor plates it is proposed to increase the size of the lateral openings to create more attractive lettable office space. At principal floor levels this would have little impact owing to the disorientating plan form which exists currently and the benefits of the reordering of the layout proposed at these levels. At upper floor levels this will blur the distinction between the two original buildings to a degree; however the lateral connection of the buildings is long established, dating from 1915 when they were still in textile use. As a consequence, other than the loss of some concealed original fabric, the proposed enlarged openings would not result in harm to the significance of the listed buildings.

New entrances and external works

At ground floor it is proposed to reconfigure the two former entrances to create a single entrance into the building. This part of the building currently has a confused layout with detracting modern doors and the entrance through the former doorway at no.107 leading to the staircore located within no.105. It is proposed to form a single lobby area and unified entry level through the removal of a section of the party wall behind the retained external doorways, with recessed doors leading up to a contemporary reception area at raised ground floor. The lift would

also be modified to serve the street level and basement level below. The new reception would be separated from the large open floor plan office space behind, reminiscent of the separation between offices/waiting rooms etc and the larger warehouse spaces originally. Externally a modern bronze canopy would be inserted, overtly contemporary in character this would form a high quality architectural response which would be entirely reversible and which must be viewed in connection within the overall scheme of which it forms part.

The facades would otherwise be restored with all windows reopened, window railings refurbished or reinstated and detracting clutter removed. To the rear of the building the detracting infills and entrances to the original loading bay entrances would be replaced with more sensitive contemporary openings with bronze detailing sympathetic to the building's industrial character. Separate access to the basement floor on Bloom Street would be provided in addition to a louvered facade and door into a boiler room and bicycle store on Hart Street, akin to its original service character. The secondary workers staircase would also be maintained as a fire escape – subject to structural investigations – and the openings onto Abingdon Street at the rear replaced.

5.2 Justification of the Proposals

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is the legislative basis for decision making on applications that relate to the historic environment. Sections 66 and 72 of the Act impose a statutory duty upon local planning authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses and to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. As a minimum, therefore, the impact of development on the listed building and conservation area should be neutral to not engage the presumption within the Act against the grant of permission.

The proposals to convert the building into office use would see the wholesale removal of detracting modern partitions, insertions and false ceilings, enhancing the original industrial character of the building. Externally the façades would be restored with the removal of clutter and windows unblocked to enliven the street frontage and engage passers-by with the building, enhancing its contribution to the distinctly Mancunian townscape of this part of the Whitworth Street/Princess Street Conservation Area. Furthermore, the contemporary design of the proposed new entrances would be comfortably accommodated whilst signifying a change in the building's use, again typically Mancunian in character, reflecting the modernisation of a former shipping warehouse to meet contemporary needs and fashions. As such, overall, the special interest of the listed building and the character and appearance of the conservation area would be very much enhanced and the presumption within the Act against the grant of permission is not engaged.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has crystallised previous policy approaches to the historic environment and draws focus to *'the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation'* and *'the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness'*. It has given strong emphases to the need to 'weigh up' the pros and cons of proposals which impact on

heritage assets. In particular, policy now states that benefits arising from proposals, and in particular public benefits which may include securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset, should be part of the weighing up process (NPPF para 196 – see appendix). As highlighted in the analysis above, the proposals would both sustain and enhance the significance of the listed building and its contribution to the significance of the Whitworth Street/Princess Street Conservation Area. Whilst it is proposed to remove sections of the original party wall internally, it has been demonstrated that owing to the lateral connections formed in the early-20th century and alterations undertaken since, this would have a negligible impact on the building's significance overall. However should the decision maker find the loss of this fabric to cause 'less than substantial' harm, in accordance with paragraph 196 of the NPPF this would be very much outweighed by the substantial public benefits of the scheme.

Public benefits which follow from development could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental objectives as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 8). Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and should not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits.

In this instance, the fundamental and foremost benefit of the proposals is the implementation of a scheme which would refurbish and upgrade the existing building to ensure its on-going viability and therefore the conservation of the building in the long-term. As part of this ambition for the building there are a number of associated heritage benefits which are listed in turn below; alongside the general improved public experience of the building, improved accessibility and the delivery of planning aspirations to increase employment activities and vibrancy in this area.

- Restoration of missing or currently concealed historic features including cast-iron columns, timber beams and full windows heights, better revealing the robust industrial character of the listed building;
- Removal of detracting later fabric internally, better revealing the original character, proportions and volume of the floors within the building;
- Protection and repair of remaining historic fabric including the secondary stair;
- Reworking of the entrances to again define their role in the façade, reconnecting the building and its internal use with the streetscene;
- Reopening of blocked windows to 'reactivate' the building facades, enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area;
- Removal of unsympathetic features externally and restoration of the façades.

5.3 Conclusion

The proposed scheme would enhance the significance of 105-107 Princess Street as a Grade II listed building and the Whitworth Street/Princess Street Conservation Area. As such the proposals meet the tests for sustainable development insofar as they relate to the historic environment and accord with relevant national and local policies. They are therefore considered to be acceptable in heritage terms.

Appendix I - Statutory List Description

Nos.105 and 107 Princess Street (Brazil House)

Grade II

Pair of shipping warehouses, now offices, etc. c.1870-80; altered. Yellow brick with sandstone dressings (roof not visible). Trapeziform plan on island site, at right-angles to street, with rear loading bay. Eclectic style, with some Gothic features. Four storeys over basements, 2+2 windows (the outer windows tripartite), symmetrical; with chamfered plinth, saw-tooth sill-bands to all floors, impost bands to all except the top floor, heavily bracketed cornice. The ground floor has tall coupled doorways in the centre, with pilaster jambs, carved stiff-leaf imposts, and 5-stepped segmental-arched heads with keyblocks, flanked by tripartite windows with segmental-arched centre lights and moulded surrounds with stiff-leaf imposts; the upper floors all have square-headed tripartite windows to the outer bays and single-light windows over the doors, those at 1st and 2nd floors with pilaster jambs and the lower with stilted moulded heads. All these windows sashed without glazing bars. Lift-head on roof. Return sides very simple, with windows grouped 4, 4, 4 and 2; loading bay entrances at rear end. Interior not inspected. Forms group with No.103 to left (q.v.) and 109 to right (q.v.).

No.103 Princess Street

Grade II*

Mechanics' Institute, now museum. 1854, by J.E.Gregan; altered and internally remodelled. Red brick in Flemish bond with sandstone dressings (roof not visible). Irregular plan within a parallelogram, on an island site. Italian palazzo style. Three storeys with cellar and added attic, 7 bays, symmetrical; stone plinth, sill-bands to all floors, plain frieze, modillioned cornice, high pilastered parapet disguising added attic. Central round-headed doorway with moulded stone surround and very prominent cornice on consoles; tall 4-pane sashed windows to all floors, all with moulded architraves, those at ground floor with cornices, aprons, and raised sills on large brackets, and those at 1st floor with segmental pediments on consoles, and blind-balustraded aprons linked by a band. Left return wall has one bay in matching style, with a lettered plaque near the front corner, and then breaks forwards, the further portion having a large tripartite window on each floor, both with stone surrounds but the upper larger and with round-headed lights. History: the first Trades Union Congress was held in this building.

No.109 Princess Street

Grade II

Packing and shipping warehouse, now offices. 1863, by Clegg and Knowles. Red brick with sandstone dressings (roof not visible). Rectangular plan on island site, at right-angles to street. Italian palazzo style. Four storeys over basement, 8 bays, symmetrical; with rusticated punch-dressed plinth, narrow chamfered corners with channelled rustication in the centre and rusticated quoins to the angles, cornice over ground floor, sill-bands to all upper floors, enriched frieze and bracketed cornice. Round-headed arcades to ground floor, 3:1:3 bays: central doorway with rusticated surround, set-in polished shafts with carved capitals, moulded head with volute keystone and carved spandrels, and prominent cornice on pairs of heavily decorated brackets and surmounted by ornamental iron balcony railings; flanking arches on brick piers, with moulded stone heads, keystones and linking imposts, containing tall basement openings with decorated cast-iron railings and shorter windows with altered glazing. 1st and 2nd floors have segmental-headed sashed windows with set-in shafts, moulded imposts, and stilted stone heads with keystones, and 3rd floor has round-headed sashes with similar enrichments. Left side wall (to Bloom Street), 10 bays in matching style, with segmental-headed loading bay entrance near far end. Forms group with Nos 105 and 107 to left (q.v.).

Appendix II - Planning Policy and Guidance

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The Act is legislative basis for decision making on applications that relate to the historic environment.

Sections 66 and 72 of the Act impose a statutory duty upon local planning authorities to consider the impact of proposals upon listed buildings and conservation areas.

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that:

in considering whether to grant permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority, or as the case may be the Secretary of State shall 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.

Similarly, section 72(l) of the above Act states that:

... with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

National Planning Policy Framework

Any proposals for consent relating to heritage assets are subject to the policies of the NPPF (February 2019). This sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. With regard to 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment', the framework requires proposals relating to heritage assets to be justified and an explanation of their effect on the heritage asset's significance provided.

Paragraph 7 of the Framework states that the purpose of the planning system is to 'contribute to the achievement of sustainable development' and that, at a very high level, 'the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

At paragraph 8, the document expands on this as follows:

Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives:

a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

and notes at paragraph 10:

10. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).

With regard to the significance of a heritage asset, the framework contains the following policies:

190. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

In determining applications local planning authorities are required to take account of significance, viability, sustainability and local character and distinctiveness. Paragraph 192 of the NPPF identifies the following criteria in relation to this:

a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and

c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

With regard to potential 'harm' to the significance designated heritage asset, in paragraph 193 the framework states the following:

...great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether the any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

The Framework goes on to state at paragraph 194 that:

Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting) should require clear and convincing justification.

Where a proposed development will lead to 'substantial harm' to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset paragraph 195 of the NPPF states that:

...local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.*

With regard to 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of a designated heritage asset, of the NPPF states the following:

196. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

In terms of non-designated heritage assets, the NPPF states:

197. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non-designated heritage assets, a balance judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

The Framework requires local planning authorities to look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas and world heritage sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Paragraph 200 states that:

Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

Concerning conservation areas and world heritage sites it states, in paragraph 201, that:

Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 195 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 196, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.

National Planning Practice Guidance

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) was published on the 6th March 2014 to support the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 and the planning system. It includes particular guidance on matters relating to protecting the historic environment in the section: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment. The NPPG will be updated, as appropriate, to reflect the revised NPPF published in July 2018.

The relevant guidance is as follows:

Paragraph 3: What is meant by the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment?

The conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance is a core planning principle. Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and effective conservation delivers wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits.

Conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change. It requires a flexible and thoughtful approach to get the best out of assets as diverse as listed buildings in everyday use to as yet undiscovered, undesignated buried remains of archaeological interest.

In the case of buildings, generally the risks of neglect and decay of heritage assets are best addressed through ensuring that they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation. Ensuring such heritage assets remain used and valued is likely to require sympathetic changes to be made from time to time. In the case of archaeological sites, many have no active use, and so for those kinds of sites, periodic changes may not be necessary.

Where changes are proposed, the National Planning Policy Framework sets out a clear framework for both plan-making and decision-taking to ensure that heritage assets are conserved, and where appropriate enhanced, in a manner that is consistent with their significance and thereby achieving sustainable development.

Part of the public value of heritage assets is the contribution that they can make to understanding and interpreting our past. So where the complete or partial loss of a heritage asset is justified, the aim then is to capture and record the evidence of the asset's significance which is to be lost, interpret its contribution to the understanding of our past, and make that publicly available.

Paragraph 8: What is "significance"?

"Significance" in terms of heritage policy is defined in the Glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework.

In legislation and designation criteria, the terms 'special architectural or historic interest' of a listed building and the 'national importance' of a scheduled monument are used to describe all or part of the identified heritage asset's significance. Some of the more recent designation records are more helpful as they contain a fuller, although not exhaustive, explanation of the significance of the asset.

Paragraph 9: Why is 'significance' important in decision-taking?

Heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. Being able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset, and the contribution of its setting, is very important to understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals

Paragraph 13: What is the setting of a heritage asset and how should it be taken into account?

The "setting of a heritage asset" is defined in the Glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework.

A thorough assessment of the impact on setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset under consideration and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.

Setting is the surroundings in which an asset is experienced, and may therefore be more extensive than its curtilage. All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not.

The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places. For example, buildings that are in close proximity but are not visible from each other may have a historic or aesthetic connection that amplifies the experience of the significance of each.

The contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public rights or an ability to access or experience that setting. This will vary over time and according to circumstance.

When assessing any application for development which may affect the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities may need to consider the implications of cumulative change. They may also need to consider the fact that developments which materially detract from the asset's significance may also damage its economic viability now, or in the future, thereby threatening its ongoing conservation.

Paragraph 15: What is a viable use for a heritage asset and how is it taken into account in planning decisions?

The vast majority of heritage assets are in private hands. Thus, sustaining heritage assets in the long term often requires an incentive for their active conservation. Putting heritage assets to a viable use is likely to lead to the investment in their maintenance necessary for their long-term conservation.

By their nature, some heritage assets have limited or even no economic end use. A scheduled monument in a rural area may preclude any use of the land other than as a pasture, whereas a listed building may potentially have a variety of alternative uses such as residential, commercial and leisure.

In a small number of cases a heritage asset may be capable of active use in theory but be so important and sensitive to change that alterations to accommodate a viable use would lead to an unacceptable loss of significance.

It is important that any use is viable, not just for the owner, but also the future conservation of the asset. It is obviously desirable to avoid successive harmful changes carried out in the interests of repeated speculative and failed uses.

If there is only one viable use, that use is the optimum viable use. If there is a range of alternative viable uses, the optimum use is the one likely to cause the least harm to the significance of the asset, not just through necessary initial changes, but also as a result of subsequent wear and tear and likely future changes.

The optimum viable use may not necessarily be the most profitable one. It might be the original use, but that may no longer be economically viable or even the most compatible with the long-term conservation of the asset. However, if from a conservation point of view there is no real difference between viable uses, then the choice of use is a decision for the owner.

Harmful development may sometimes be justified in the interests of realising the optimum viable use of an asset, notwithstanding the loss of significance caused provided the harm is minimised. The policy in addressing substantial and less than substantial harm is set out in paragraphs 132 – 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Paragraph 20: What is meant by the term public benefits?

Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental progress as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 7). Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and should not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits.

Public benefits may include heritage benefits, such as:

- sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting
- reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset
- securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset

Historic England: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning (March 2015)

The purpose of the Good Practice Advice note is to provide information on good practice to assist in implementing historic environment policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the related guidance given in the National Planning Practice Guide (NPPG).

Note 2 'Managing Significance in Decision-Taking'

This note provides information on:

- assessing the significance of heritage assets, using appropriate expertise, historic environment records, recording and furthering understanding, neglect and unauthorised works, marketing and design and distinctiveness.

It states that:

The advice in this document, in accordance with the NPPF, emphasises that the information required in support of applications for planning permission and listed building consent should be no more than is necessary to reach an informed decision, and that activities to conserve or investigate the asset needs to be proportionate to the significance of the heritage assets affected and the impact on that significance.

In their general advice on decision-taking, this note advises that:

Development proposals that affect the historic environment are much more likely to gain the necessary permissions and create successful places if they are designed with the knowledge and understanding of the significance of the heritage assets they may affect. The first step for all applicants is to understand the significance of any affected heritage asset and, if relevant, the contribution of its setting to its significance. The significance of a heritage asset is the sum of its archaeological, architectural, historic, and artistic interest.

Paragraph 6 highlights the NPPF and NPPG's promotion of early engagement and pre-application discussion, and the early consideration of significance of the heritage asset in order to ensure that any issues can be properly identified and addressed. Furthermore, the note advises that:

As part of this process, these discussions and subsequent applications usually benefit from a structured approach to the assembly and analysis of relevant information. The stages below indicate the order in which this process can be approached – it is good practice to check individual stages of this list but they may not be appropriate in all cases and the level of detail applied should be proportionate.

- Understand the significance of the affected assets;
- Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance;
- Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF;
- Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance;

- Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance and the need for change;
- Offset negative impacts on aspects of significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating and archiving archaeological and historical interest of the important elements of the heritage assets affected.

The Assessment of Significance as part of the Application Process

Paragraph 7 emphasises the need to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting early in the process, in order to form a successful development, and in order for the local planning authority to make decisions in line with legal objectives and the objectives of the development plan and the policy requirements of the NPPF.

8. Understanding the nature of the significance is important to understanding the need for and best means of conservation. For example, a modern building of high architectural interest will have quite different sensitivities from an archaeological site where the interest arises from the possibility of gaining new understanding of the past.
9. Understanding the extent of that significance is also important because this can, among other things, lead to a better understanding of how adaptable the asset may be and therefore improve viability and the prospects for long term conservation.
10. Understanding the level of significance is important as it provides the essential guide to how the policies should be applied. This is intrinsic to decision-taking where there is unavoidable conflict with other planning objectives.
11. To accord with the NPPF, an applicant will need to undertake an assessment of significance to inform the application process to an extent necessary to understand the potential impact (positive or negative) of the proposal and to a level of thoroughness proportionate to the relative importance of the asset whose fabric or setting is affected.

Curtilage Structures

15. Some buildings and structures are deemed designated as listed buildings by being fixed to the principal building or by being ancillary within its curtilage and pre-dating 1 July 1948. Whether alteration, extension or demolition of such buildings amounts to harm or substantial harm to the designated heritage asset (i.e. the listed building together with its curtilage and attached buildings) needs careful consideration. Some curtilage structures are of high significance, which should be taken fully into account in decisions, but some are of little or none. Thus, like other forms of heritage asset, curtilage structures should be considered in proportion to their significance. Listed buildings designated very recently (after 25 June 2013) are likely to define curtilage definitively; where this is (or is not) the case will be noted in the list description.

Cumulative Impact

28. The cumulative impact of incremental small-scale changes may have as great an effect on the significance of a heritage asset as a larger scale change. Where the significance of a heritage asset has been compromised in the past by unsympathetic development to the asset itself or its setting, consideration still needs to be given to whether additional change will further detract from, or can enhance, the significance of the asset in order to accord with NPPF policies. Negative change could include severing the last link to part of the history of an asset or between the asset and its original setting. Conversely, positive change could include the restoration of a building's plan form or an original designed landscape.

Listed Building Consent Regime

29. Change to heritage assets is inevitable but it is only harmful when significance is damaged. The nature and importance of the significance that is affected will dictate the proportionate response to assessing that change, its justification, mitigation and any recording which may be needed if it is to go ahead. In the case of listed buildings, the need for owners to receive listed building consent in advance of works which affect special interest is a simple mechanism but it is not always clear which kinds of works would require consent. In certain circumstances there are alternative means of granting listed building consent under the Enterprise & Regulatory Reform Act 2013.

Opportunities to Enhance Assets, their Settings and Local Distinctiveness

52. Sustainable development can involve seeking positive improvements in the quality of the historic environment. There will not always be opportunities to enhance the significance or improve a heritage asset but the larger the asset the more likely there will be. Most conservation areas, for example, will have sites within them that could add to the character and value of the area through development, while listed buildings may often have extensions or other alterations that have a negative impact on the significance. Similarly, the setting of all heritage assets will frequently have elements that detract from the significance of the asset or hamper its appreciation.

Design and Local Distinctiveness

53. Both the NPPF (section 7) and PPG (section ID26) contain detail on why good design is important and how it can be achieved. In terms of the historic environment, some or all of the following factors may influence what will make the scale, height, massing, alignment, materials and proposed use of new development successful in its context:
- The history of the place
 - The relationship of the proposal to its specific site
 - The significance of nearby assets and the contribution of their setting, recognising that this is a dynamic concept

- The general character and distinctiveness of the area in its widest sense, including the general character of local buildings, spaces, public realm and the landscape, the grain of the surroundings, which includes, for example the street pattern and plot size
- The size and density of the proposal related to that of the existing and neighbouring uses
- Landmarks and other built or landscape features which are key to a sense of place
- The diversity or uniformity in style, construction, materials, colour, detailing, decoration and period of existing buildings and spaces
- The topography
- Views into, through and from the site and its surroundings
- Landscape design
- The current and historic uses in the area and the urban grain
- The quality of the materials

Note 3 'The Setting of Heritage Assets' (December 2017)

This note provides guidance on the setting of heritage assets, which is separate to issues of curtilage, character or context.

The Extent of Setting

- 8 The NPPF makes it clear that the extent of the setting of a heritage asset 'is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve'. All of the following matters may affect considerations of the extent of setting:
- While setting can be mapped in the context of an individual application or proposal, it cannot be definitively and permanently described for all time as a spatially bounded area or as lying within a set distance of a heritage asset. This is because the surroundings of a heritage asset will change over time, and because new information on heritage assets may alter what might previously have been understood to comprise their setting and the values placed on that setting and therefore the significance of the heritage asset.
 - Extensive heritage assets, such as historic parks and gardens, landscapes and townscapes, can include many heritage assets, historic associations between them and their nested and overlapping settings, as well as having a setting of their own. A conservation area is likely to include the settings of listed buildings and have its own setting, as will the hamlet, village or urban area in which it is situated (explicitly recognised in green belt designations).
 - Consideration of setting in urban areas, given the potential numbers and proximity of heritage assets, often overlaps with considerations both of townscape/urban design and of the character and appearance of conservation areas. Conflict between impacts on setting and other aspects of a proposal can be avoided or mitigated by working collaboratively and openly with interested parties at an early stage.

Views and Setting

- 10 The contribution of setting to the significance of a heritage asset is often expressed by reference to views, a purely visual impression of an asset or place which can be static or dynamic, long, short or of lateral spread, and include a variety of views of, from, across, or including that asset.
- 11 Views which contribute more to understanding the significance of a heritage asset include:
- those where the composition within the view was a fundamental aspect of the design or function of the heritage asset
 - those where town- or village-scape reveals views with unplanned or unintended beauty
 - those with historical associations, including viewing points and the topography of battlefields
 - those with cultural associations, including landscapes known historically for their picturesque and landscape beauty, those which became subjects for paintings of the English landscape tradition, and those views which have otherwise become historically cherished and protected
 - those where relationships between the asset and other heritage assets or natural features or phenomena such as solar or lunar events are particularly relevant
- 12 Assets, whether contemporaneous or otherwise, which were intended to be seen from one another for aesthetic, functional, ceremonial or religious reasons include:
- military and defensive sites
 - telegraphs or beacons
 - prehistoric funerary and ceremonial sites
 - historic parks and gardens with deliberate links to other designed landscapes and remote 'eye-catching' features or 'borrowed' landmarks beyond the park boundary
- 13 Views may be identified and protected by local planning policies and guidance for the part they play in shaping our appreciation and understanding of England's historic environment, whether in rural or urban areas and whether designed to be seen as a unity or as the cumulative result of a long process of development. This does not mean that additional views or other elements or attributes of setting do not merit consideration. Such views include:
- views identified as part of the plan-making process, such as those identified in the London View Management Framework (LVMF, Mayor of London 2010) and Oxford City Council's View Cones (2005) and Assessment of the Oxford View Cones (2015 Report)
 - views identified in character area appraisals or in management plans, for example of World Heritage Sites
 - important designed views from, to and within historic parks and gardens that have been identified as part of the evidence base for development plans, and
 - views that are identified by local planning authorities when assessing development proposals

Where complex issues involving views come into play in the assessment of such views – whether for the purposes of providing a baseline for plan-making or for development management – a formal views analysis may be merited.

Setting and the Significance of Heritage Assets

- 9 Setting is not itself a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, although land comprising a setting may itself be designated (see below Designed settings). Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset or to the ability to appreciate that significance. The following paragraphs examine some more general considerations relating to setting and significance.

Cumulative Change

Where the significance of a heritage asset has been compromised in the past by unsympathetic development affecting its setting, to accord with NPPF policies consideration still needs to be given to whether additional change will further detract from, or can enhance, the significance of the asset. Negative change could include severing the last link between an asset and its original setting; positive change could include the restoration of a building's original designed landscape or the removal of structures impairing key views of it (see also paragraph 40 for screening of intrusive developments).

Change over Time

Settings of heritage assets change over time. Understanding this history of change will help to determine how further development within the asset's setting is likely to affect the contribution made by setting to the significance of the heritage asset. Settings of heritage assets which closely resemble the setting at the time the asset was constructed or formed are likely to contribute particularly strongly to significance but settings which have changed may also themselves enhance significance, for instance where townscape character has been shaped by cycles of change over the long term. Settings may also have suffered negative impact from inappropriate past developments and may be enhanced by the removal of the inappropriate structure(s).

Access and Setting

Because the contribution of setting to significance does not depend on public rights or ability to access it, significance is not dependent on numbers of people visiting it; this would downplay such qualitative issues as the importance of quiet and tranquillity as an attribute of setting, constraints on access such as remoteness or challenging terrain, and the importance of the setting to a local community who may be few in number. The potential for appreciation of the asset's significance may increase once it is interpreted or mediated in some way, or if access to currently inaccessible land becomes possible.

Buried Assets and Setting

Heritage assets that comprise only buried remains may not be readily appreciated by a casual observer. They nonetheless retain a presence in the landscape and, like other heritage assets, may have a setting.

These points apply equally, in some rare cases, to designated heritage assets such as scheduled monuments or Protected Wreck Sites that are periodically, partly or wholly submerged, eg in the intertidal zone on the foreshore.

The location and setting of historic battles, otherwise with no visible traces, may include important strategic views, routes by which opposing forces approached each other and a topography and landscape features that played a part in the outcome.

Buried archaeological remains may also be appreciated in historic street or boundary patterns, in relation to their surrounding topography or other heritage assets or through the long- term continuity in the use of the land that surrounds them. While the form of survival of an asset may influence the degree to which its setting contributes to significance and the weight placed on it, it does not necessarily follow that the contribution is nullified if the asset is obscured or not readily visible.

Designed Settings

Many heritage assets have settings that have been designed to enhance their presence and visual interest or to create experiences of drama or surprise. In these special circumstances, these designed settings may be regarded as heritage assets in their own right, for instance the designed landscape around a country house. Furthermore they may, themselves, have a wider setting: a park may form the immediate surroundings of a great house, while having its own setting that includes lines-of-sight to more distant heritage assets or natural features beyond the park boundary. Given that the designated area is often restricted to the 'core' elements, such as a formal park, it is important that the extended and remote elements of the design are included in the evaluation of the setting of a designed landscape. Reference is sometimes made to the 'immediate', 'wider' and 'extended' setting of heritage assets, but the terms should not be regarded as having any particular formal meaning. While many day-to-day cases will be concerned with development in the vicinity of an asset, development further afield may also affect significance, particularly where it is large- scale, prominent or intrusive. The setting of a historic park or garden, for instance, may include land beyond its boundary which adds to its significance but which need not be confined to land visible from the site, nor necessarily the same as the site's visual boundary. It can include:

- land which is not part of the park or garden but which is associated with it by being adjacent and visible from it
- land which is not part of the site but which is adjacent and associated with it because it makes an important contribution to the historic character of the site in some other way than by being visible from it, and
- land which is a detached part of the site and makes an important contribution to its historic character either by being visible from it or in some other way, perhaps by historical association

Setting and Urban Design

As mentioned above (paragraph 8, The extent of setting), the numbers and proximity of heritage assets in urban areas mean that the protection and enhancement of setting is intimately linked to townscape and urban design considerations. These include the degree of conscious design

or fortuitous beauty and the consequent visual harmony or congruity of development, and often relates to townscape attributes such as enclosure, definition of streets and spaces and spatial qualities as well as lighting, trees, and verges, or the treatments of boundaries or street surfaces.

Setting and Economic and Social Viability

Sustainable development under the NPPF can have important positive impacts on heritage assets and their settings, for example by bringing an abandoned building back into use or giving a heritage asset further life. However, the economic viability of a heritage asset can be reduced if the contribution made by its setting is diminished by badly designed or insensitively located development. For instance, a new road scheme affecting the setting of a heritage asset, while in some cases increasing the public's ability or inclination to visit and/or use it, thereby boosting its economic viability and enhancing the options for the marketing or adaptive re-use of a building, may in other cases have the opposite effect.

Landscape Assessment and Amenity

- 14 Analysis of setting is different from landscape assessment. While landscapes include everything within them, the entirety of very extensive settings may not contribute equally to the significance of a heritage asset, if at all. Careful analysis is therefore required to assess whether one heritage asset at a considerable distance from another, though intervisible with it – a church spire, for instance – is a major component of the setting, rather than just an incidental element within the wider landscape.
- 15 Assessment and management of both setting and views are related to consideration of the wider landscape, which is outside the scope of this advice note. Additional advice on views is available in Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd edition, published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (in partnership with Historic England).
- 16 Similarly, setting is different from general amenity. Views out from heritage assets that neither contribute to significance nor allow appreciation of significance are a matter of amenity rather than of setting.

A Staged Approach to Proportionate Decision-taking

- 17 All heritage assets have significance, some of which have particular significance and are designated. The contribution made by their setting to their significance also varies. Although many settings may be enhanced by development, not all settings have the same capacity to accommodate change without harm to the significance of the heritage asset or the ability to appreciate it. This capacity may vary between designated assets of the same grade or of the same type or according to the nature of the change. It can also depend on the location of the asset: an elevated or overlooked location; a riverbank, coastal or island location; or a location within an extensive tract of flat land may increase the sensitivity of the setting (ie the capacity of the setting to accommodate change without harm to the heritage

asset's significance) or of views of the asset. This requires the implications of development affecting the setting of heritage assets to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

- 18 Conserving or enhancing heritage assets by taking their settings into account need not prevent change; indeed change may be positive, for instance where the setting has been compromised by poor development. Many places coincide with the setting of a heritage asset and are subject to some degree of change over time. NPPF policies, together with the guidance on their implementation in the Planning Policy Guidance (PPG), provide the framework for the consideration of change affecting the setting of undesignated and designated heritage assets as part of the decision-taking process (NPPF, paragraphs 131-135 and 137).

- 19 Amongst the Government's planning policies for the historic environment is that conservation decisions are based on a proportionate assessment of the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal, including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset. Historic England recommends the following broad approach to assessment, undertaken as a series of steps that apply proportionately to the complexity of the case, from straightforward to complex:

Step 1: Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected

Step 2: Assess the degree to which these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated

Step 3: Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance or on the ability to appreciate it

Step 4: Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm

Step 5: Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes

Historic England: Conservation Principles and Assessment (2008)

Conservation Principles (2008) explores, on a more philosophical level, the reason why society places a value on heritage assets beyond their mere utility. It identifies four types of heritage value that an asset may hold: aesthetic, communal, historic and evidential value. This is simply another way of analysing its significance. These values can help shape the most efficient and effective way of managing the heritage asset so as to sustain its overall value to society.

Evidential Value

- 35 Evidential value derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.

- 36 Physical remains of past human activity are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them. These remains are part of a record of the past that begins with traces of early humans and continues to be created and destroyed. Their evidential value is proportionate to their potential to contribute to people's understanding of the past.
- 37 In the absence of written records, the material record, particularly archaeological deposits, provides the only source of evidence about the distant past. Age is therefore a strong indicator of relative evidential value, but is not paramount, since the material record is the primary source of evidence about poorly documented aspects of any period. Geology, landforms, species and habitats similarly have value as sources of information about the evolution of the planet and life upon it.
- 38 Evidential value derives from the physical remains or genetic lines that have been inherited from the past. The ability to understand and interpret the evidence tends to be diminished in proportion to the extent of its removal or replacement.

Historical Value

- 39 Historical value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be illustrative or associative.
- 40 The idea of illustrating aspects of history or prehistory – the perception of a place as a link between past and present people – is different from purely evidential value. Illustration depends on visibility in a way that evidential value (for example, of buried remains) does not. Places with illustrative value will normally also have evidential value, but it may be of a different order of importance. An historic building that is one of many similar examples may provide little unique evidence about the past, although each illustrates the intentions of its creators equally well. However, their distribution, like that of planned landscapes, may be of considerable evidential value, as well as demonstrating, for instance, the distinctiveness of regions and aspects of their social organisation.
- 41 Illustrative value has the power to aid interpretation of the past through making connections with, and providing insights into, past communities and their activities through shared experience of a place. The illustrative value of places tends to be greater if they incorporate the first, or only surviving, example of an innovation of consequence, whether related to design, technology or social organisation. The concept is similarly applicable to the natural heritage values of a place, for example geological strata visible in an exposure, the survival of veteran trees, or the observable interdependence of species in a particular habitat. Illustrative value is often described in relation to the subject illustrated, for example, a structural system or a machine might be said to have 'technological value'.

- 42 Association with a notable family, person, event, or movement gives historical value a particular resonance. Being at the place where something momentous happened can increase and intensify understanding through linking historical accounts of events with the place where they happened – provided, of course, that the place still retains some semblance of its appearance at the time. The way in which an individual built or furnished their house, or made a garden, often provides insight into their personality, or demonstrates their political or cultural affiliations. It can suggest aspects of their character and motivation that extend, or even contradict, what they or others wrote, or are recorded as having said, at the time, and so also provide evidential value.
- 43 Many buildings and landscapes are associated with the development of other aspects of cultural heritage, such as literature, art, music or film. Recognition of such associative values tends in turn to inform people's responses to these places. Associative value also attaches to places closely connected with the work of people who have made important discoveries or advances in thought about the natural world.
- 44 The historical value of places depends upon both sound identification and direct experience of fabric or landscape that has survived from the past, but is not as easily diminished by change or partial replacement as evidential value. The authenticity of a place indeed often lies in visible evidence of change as a result of people responding to changing circumstances. Historical values are harmed only to the extent that adaptation has obliterated or concealed them, although completeness does tend to strengthen illustrative value.
- 45 The use and appropriate management of a place for its original purpose, for example as a place of recreation or worship, or, like a watermill, as a machine, illustrates the relationship between design and function, and so may make a major contribution to its historical values. If so, cessation of that activity will diminish those values and, in the case of some specialised landscapes and buildings, may essentially destroy them. Conversely, abandonment, as of, for example, a medieval village site, may illustrate important historical events.

Aesthetic Value

- 46 Aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.
- 47 Aesthetic values can be the result of the conscious design of a place, including artistic endeavour. Equally, they can be the seemingly fortuitous outcome of the way in which a place has evolved and been used over time. Many places combine these two aspects – for example, where the qualities of an already attractive landscape have been reinforced by artifice – while others may inspire awe or fear. Aesthetic values tend to be specific to a time and cultural context, but appreciation of them is not culturally exclusive.

- 48 Design value relates primarily to the aesthetic qualities generated by the conscious design of a building, structure or landscape as a whole. It embraces composition (form, proportions, massing, silhouette, views and vistas, circulation) and usually materials or planting, decoration or detailing, and craftsmanship. It may extend to an intellectual programme governing the design (for example, a building as an expression of the Holy Trinity), and the choice or influence of sources from which it was derived. It may be attributed to a known patron, architect, designer, gardener or craftsman (and so have associational value), or be a mature product of a vernacular tradition of building or land management. Strong indicators of importance are quality of design and execution, and innovation, particularly if influential.
- 49 Sustaining design value tends to depend on appropriate stewardship to maintain the integrity of a designed concept, be it landscape, architecture, or structure.
- 50 It can be useful to draw a distinction between design created through detailed instructions (such as architectural drawings) and the direct creation of a work of art by a designer who is also in significant part the craftsman. The value of the artwork is proportionate to the extent that it remains the actual product of the artist's hand. While the difference between design and 'artistic' value can be clear-cut, for example statues on pedestals (artistic value) in a formal garden (design value), it is often far less so, as with repetitive ornament on a medieval building.
- 51 Some aesthetic values are not substantially the product of formal design, but develop more or less fortuitously over time, as the result of a succession of responses within a particular cultural framework. They include, for example, the seemingly organic form of an urban or rural landscape; the relationship of vernacular buildings and structures and their materials to their setting; or a harmonious, expressive or dramatic quality in the juxtaposition of vernacular or industrial buildings and spaces. Design in accordance with Picturesque theory is best considered a design value.
- 52 Aesthetic value resulting from the action of nature on human works, particularly the enhancement of the appearance of a place by the passage of time ('the patina of age'), may overlie the values of a conscious design. It may simply add to the range and depth of values, the significance, of the whole; but on occasion may be in conflict with some of them, for example, when physical damage is caused by vegetation charmingly rooting in masonry. 53 While aesthetic values may be related to the age of a place, they may also (apart from artistic value) be amenable to restoration and enhancement. This reality is reflected both in the definition of conservation areas (areas whose 'character or appearance it is desirable to preserve or enhance') and in current practice in the conservation of historic landscapes.

Communal Value

54. Communal value derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. Communal values are closely bound up with historical (particularly associative) and aesthetic values, but tend to have additional and specific aspects.
55. Commemorative and symbolic values reflect the meanings of a place for those who draw part of their identity from it, or have emotional links to it. The most obvious examples are war and other memorials raised by community effort, which consciously evoke past lives and events, but some buildings and places, such as the Palace of Westminster, can symbolise wider values. Such values tend to change over time, and are not always affirmative. Some places may be important for reminding us of uncomfortable events, attitudes or periods in England's history. They are important aspects of collective memory and identity, places of remembrance whose meanings should not be forgotten. In some cases, that meaning can only be understood through information and interpretation, whereas, in others, the character of the place itself tells most of the story.
56. Social value is associated with places that people perceive as a source of identity, distinctiveness, social interaction and coherence. Some may be comparatively modest, acquiring communal significance through the passage of time as a result of a collective memory of stories linked to them. They tend to gain value through the resonance of past events in the present, providing reference points for a community's identity or sense of itself. They may have fulfilled a community function that has generated a deeper attachment, or shaped some aspect of community behaviour or attitudes. Social value can also be expressed on a large scale, with great time-depth, through regional and national identity.
57. The social values of places are not always clearly recognised by those who share them, and may only be articulated when the future of a place is threatened. They may relate to an activity that is associated with the place, rather than with its physical fabric. The social value of a place may indeed have no direct relationship to any formal historical or aesthetic values that may have been ascribed to it.
58. Compared with other heritage values, social values tend to be less dependent on the survival of historic fabric. They may survive the replacement of the original physical structure, so long as its key social and cultural characteristics are maintained; and can be the popular driving force for the re-creation of lost (and often deliberately destroyed or desecrated) places with high symbolic value, although this is rare in England.
59. Spiritual value attached to places can emanate from the beliefs and teachings of an organised religion, or reflect past or present-day perceptions of the spirit of place. It includes the sense of inspiration and wonder that can arise from personal contact with places long revered, or newly revealed.

60. Spiritual value is often associated with places sanctified by longstanding veneration or worship, or wild places with few obvious signs of modern life. Their value is generally dependent on the perceived survival of the historic fabric or character of the place, and can be extremely sensitive to modest changes to that character, particularly to the activities that happen there.

Local Policy

Manchester City Council

Manchester's **Core Strategy** was adopted on 11 July 2012 and is the key Development Plan Document in the Local Development Framework (LDF).

Policy CC 9 Design and Heritage

Design of new buildings will need to be of the highest standard in terms of appearance and function. The standards and guidance explained in other LDF policies should be the basis for the approach to design, with particular attention to be given to the City Centre context and character. Development in Manchester City Centre should preserve or enhance the heritage assets that have been identified, including listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled ancient monuments. The Council will support high density and mixed use development in the City Centre, but developers must recognise the specific design challenges that must be overcome to ensure complementarity of function and form. New development must support the range of uses the Council expects in the City Centre and contribute to a coherent and integrated physical environment.

Policy EN 3 Heritage

Throughout the City, the Council will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods, including those of the City Centre. New developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance, including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas and archaeological remains.

Proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets will be encouraged where they are considered consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.

The **Unitary Development Plan** for the City of Manchester (UDP) was adopted by the Council on 21 July 1995; the following relevant policies remain extant.

18. CONSERVATION AREAS

DC18.1 *The Council will give particularly careful consideration to development proposals within Conservation Areas.*

The Council will seek to preserve and enhance the character of its designated conservation areas by carefully considering the following issues:

- i) the relationship of new structures to neighbouring buildings and spaces;*
- ii) the effect of major changes to the appearance of existing buildings;*
- iii) the desirability of retaining existing features, such as boundary walls, gardens, trees, (including street trees);*
- iv) the effect of signs and advertisements;*
- v) any further guidance on specific areas which has been approved by the Council.*

The Council will not normally grant outline planning permission for development within Conservation Areas.

Consent to demolish a building in a conservation area will be granted only where it can be shown that it is wholly beyond repair, incapable of reasonably beneficial use, or where its removal or replacement would benefit the appearance of character of the area.

- a. Where demolition is to be followed by redevelopment, demolition will be permitted only where there are approved detailed plans for that redevelopment and where the Council has been furnished with evidence that the development will be undertaken.*
- b. Development proposals adjacent to Conservation Areas will be granted only where it can be shown that they will not harm the appearance or character of the area. This will include the protection of views into and out of Conservation Areas.*

19. LISTED BUILDINGS

DC19.1 *In determining applications for listed building consent or planning applications for development involving or having an impact on buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, the Council will have regard to the desirability of securing the retention, restoration, maintenance and continued use of such buildings and to protecting their general setting. In giving effect to this policy, the Council will:*

- a. Not grant Listed building consent for the demolition of a listed building other than in the most exceptional circumstances, and in any case, not unless it is satisfied that every possible effort has been made to continue the present use or to find a suitable alternative use;*
- b. Not permit a change of use of a listed building, where it would have a detrimental effect on the character or appearance of the building;*
- c. Not permit any external or internal alteration or addition to a Listed building where, in its opinion, there would be an adverse effect on its architectural or historic character;*
- d. Seek to preserve and enhance the settings of listed buildings by appropriate control over the design of new development in their vicinity, control over the use of adjacent land, and where appropriate, by the preservation of trees and landscape features;*
- e. Permit demolition only where there are approved detailed plans for redevelopment and where there is evidence of a firm building contract;*
- f. Not permit alterations to a listed building which would prevent the future use of any part of the building, in particular upper floors or basements, or where poor maintenance is likely to result.*

The Whitworth Street/Princess Street Conservation Area

Whitworth Street/Princess Street and its buildings today

The conservation area contains many of Manchester's most important buildings and not only those related to the textile industry.

In the row of textile warehouses along Princess Street, No 103 was the odd one out, having been designed by J. E. Gregan in 1854 as the Mechanics Institute. It has been altered internally during its change first to a college of commerce and later to the first Museum of Labour History. The exterior, however, is still Gregan's masterpiece in the Italian Palazzo style and the top floor and roof structure is an innovative piece of structural engineering by the celebrated Victorian engineer William Fairbairn. The first Trade Union Congress was held here as well as the first meeting of the Co-operative Insurance Society.

Further down Princess Street, on the north bank of the Rochdale Canal, is the conservation area's oldest building, the New Union Hotel public house. It was opened around 1800 for the benefit of the navvies who dug the canal and is a simple red brick Georgian style building, now rendered and painted.

Across the street and canal from the New Union is central House, Manchester's only building in the Scots Baronial style. It is distinguished by its large corner tourelles and steeply pitched slate roof. It was renovated in 1989 and together with Dominion House has been incorporated into a hotel. Use has been made of the street between them to create a glass and metal entrance lobby.

Lancaster House on the Whitworth Street and Princess Street junction has a most distinctive corner tower with a cupola. It rises in several stages above the general height of the building. The corner entrance below currently provides access to a public house.

Like Lancaster House, two other imposing buildings - India House and the former Refuge offices - have been converted to other uses. On the site of the former Africa House another cotton warehouse a multi-storey car park has been designed in a manner which attempts to fit in with the character of the area. It is of especial benefit to the patrons of the Palace Theatre, itself upgraded in recent years.

Some of the cotton warehouses have been given a new lease of life by being converted into flats in the 1980's and 90's thus providing more opportunity for people to live in the city centre.

Canal Street and the immediate area is known as the Gay Village. This is now a vibrant area, with many café bars, public houses and restaurants bringing former vacant buildings back into active use.

Control of Development

Whitworth Street/Princess Street is situated on the southern edge of the city centre and is consequently some distance from the commercial heart. There is some commercial activity however and further development in this direction will be encouraged where appropriate.

Many properties have been totally or partially vacant since the 1930's, when the city changed its character from warehousing to commerce and administration. Although the area has seen little investment, efforts are now being made to find uses for vacant property, since active use mitigates against deterioration of the fabric.

The general policy in the conservation area is to retain existing structures where feasible, but where it can be shown that this is impossible, proposals for new buildings and extension to existing ones must achieve a high standard of design which relates to the architectural and urban design character of the area.

As with other parts of the city centre, new developments should generally be aligned to the back of the pavement in order to preserve the linear character of the streets and complete the street wall.

Improvement and Enhancement

There is potential for further commercial development in the area, as well as for the conversion of warehouses to residential or other uses.

The open space on the corner of Princess Street and Whitworth Street, following the demolition of previous buildings on the site, contributes very little to the character of the wider area. This corner, the most important in the conservation area, was originally occupied by a tall building and must be seen as the most significant potential building site in the area. New building, commanding the corner, would be a great advantage to the two streets, to the canal and to the wider area.

However, there remains a large supply of existing vacant floor space within several significant buildings in the conservation area, and it is important in terms of the character of the area that this space is put to beneficial use.

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