



17 York Street - Manchester

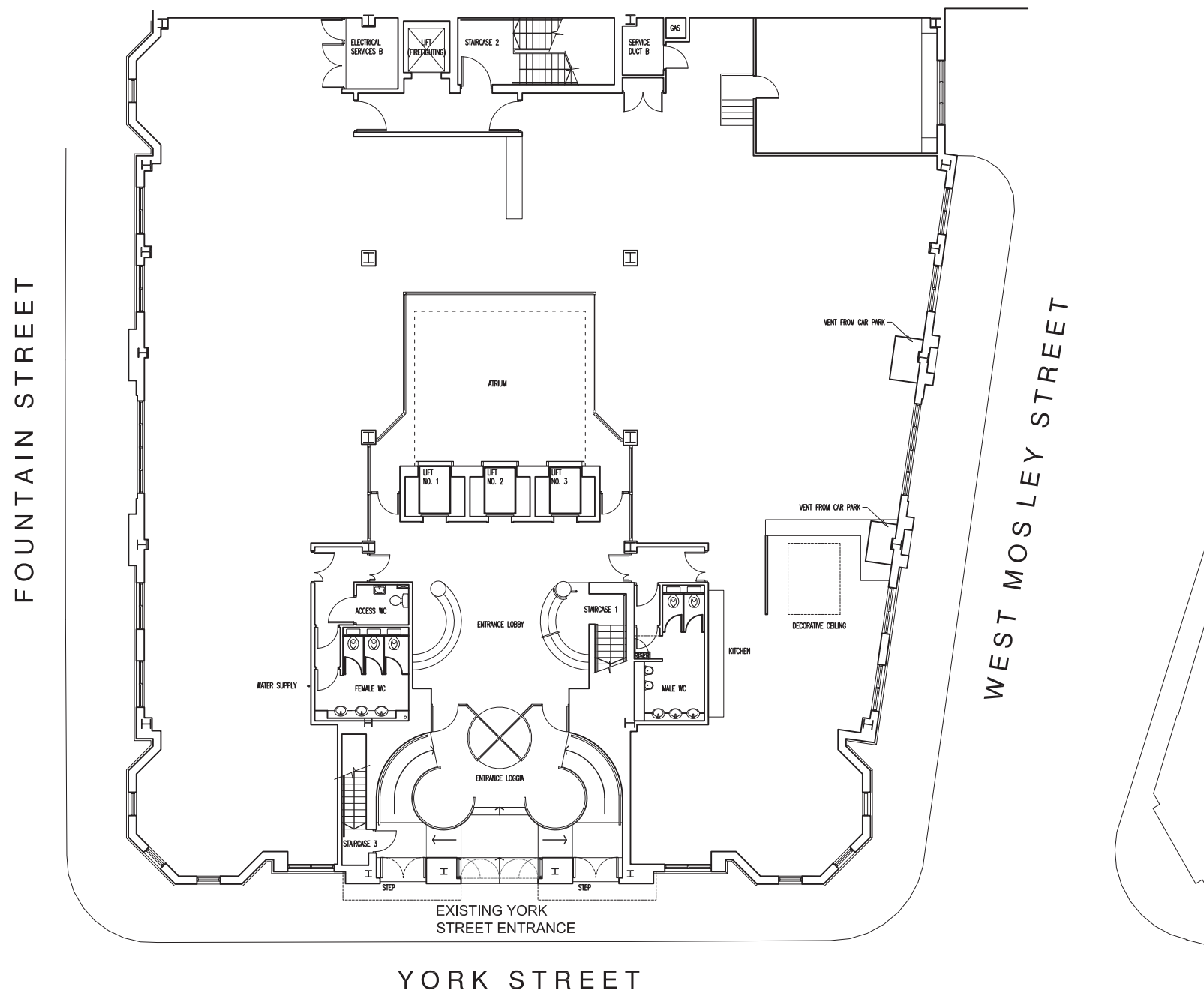
## design + access statement

York Street entrance

1914\_5.2\_001  
01:09:21

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 17 York Street is an office building located in the central business area of Manchester.
- The building is formed on 2 levels of basement plus seven upper storeys.
- The building is located within the Upper King Street Conservation Area.
- Listed buildings sit adjacent to the plot – see drawing A.L.002.
- Completed around 1996/7 the building is now around 25 years old.
- Externally the building is faced with a mix of buff sandstone (likely originating from Derbyshire) and red brick. There is a significant use of a number of granite colours/ types/finishes as plinths, pediments and featuring. (Granites visually appear to be Baltic brown, Giallo Venezia and Assoluto Nero (or equivalents).
- Windows and openings created with clear and opaque glazing in coloured aluminium framing.
- The elevation design/composition is a post modern stripped pastiche of classical orders and architectural elements with references to military/defensive devices (rustication, battering of wall surfaces and massive defensive hinged gates).
- The building is now approximately 25 years old and, though well maintained over its life, now faces challenges to its commercial potential due to the age of its mechanical and electrical installations and the rapidly evolving approach to the workplace.
- Changing work practices over time, now brought into very sharp focus by the impact of Coronavirus, mean a fresh view of the office environment is beneficial. This has highlighted a number of challenges to the existing building. RSA is a national financial organisation with a presence across the UK. They have been steadily reducing staff levels at 17 York Street over the last years. Lockdown and the changed approach to working from home has increased the rate of change of the view of this workplace dramatically.
- RSA is committed to staying in the building and to maintaining the whole of the building as office use – continuing its contribution to the commercial core of the city.
- They are however going to reduce their occupation levels.
- This will leave vacant space in the building.
- To maintain the commercial viability of the building any resulting tenant spaces left vacant will be brought to market.
- To make the offer of space attractive to new tenants the interior of the building is to undergo a comprehensive refurbishment. A significant capital investment will cover work from the renewal of the mechanical and electrical installations through to new interior design throughout.



- The approach to interior design is to work with new and evolving workplace trends. This will include:
  - Improved support for use of cycles and electric vehicles.
  - Also the provision of leisure facilities to support occupiers – gym, fitness studio, showers and changing.
  - Work towards a touch free office.
- The existing elevation design at the ground level York Street entrance may have been symbolically suitable for a 1990 financial institution with its massive steel gates. However, this image is not a positive one for an open and inclusive workplace.
- In conjunction with the interior re-design some external elevation changes are proposed to assist in modernising the image of the building in the public spaces and increasing the transparency and permeability of the building facade to improve street presence.
- There are proposals to create another entrance to the ground floor spaces - which are subject of another planning application.
- The remodelling of the York Street entrance is the subject of the application this document supports.

## 2.0 DESIGN STATEMENT

- The existing transition space between the office reception and the street is currently an external space.
- Its sole purpose it seems is to provide area in which to make the transition from street level to office ground floor level.
- The use of quality materials in this - almost wholly sandstone and granite - is recognised, but this palette is dark and not a visual draw to the interior. The space is also poorly lit.
- Out of hours the large steel section framed gates are closed to 'protect' the inside.
- The intent is to take this space into the interior of the building making the weather line now at the street.
- Design internally, with material overlays, colour and lighting, will draw the reception/ lobby area into the whole of the combined space.
- On the external elevation this will manifest itself in the installation of new frameless glass screens and doors into the existing openings maintaining visibility deep into the ground floor plan.
- The intent is also to improve signalling of the building by reducing the impact of the very dated post modern elevation design. This is achieved by removing the large steel gates and masking the pediment over the 3 entrance openings.

- The visual impact at street level is to be positively changed by adding the decorative laser cut steel screen to cover the main entrance pediment.
- The overall ground level visual impression of the building will be much more contemporary with improved permeability and therefore a positive addition to the street.
- The works to be carried out are to be done with minimal disruption to the elevation material. There will be minimal small bore coring through fascia to fix the screen sub-frame. The glazing infills are to be in face fixed small section channels.

### **3.0 CONSTRUCTION AND MANAGEMENT**

- The proposed works the planning application refers to is part of the larger refurbishment project that is currently being designed and tendered.
- As part of the investigation into the existing building the client has located City's record of the original building control submission.
- A dialogue is also underway with the original engineer for the project - which will give access to their archive of the new build drawings and specifications.
- A construction methodology is being prepared with assessment of the available archive material and a recommended schedule of intrusive investigations (if required) by the project engineer to ensure safe and minimal changes to any existing fabric and structure.
- It is proposed that the works will be carried out as part of the overall refurbishment scope. A construction management and phasing plan will be provided by the successful tenderer to include integration of the works to the York Street entrance.

### **4.0 ACCESS**

- Existing access and Part M/DDA arrangements to the building remain unaffected by the work.
- The existing entrance and office reception - with level access from York Street - remains connected to the ground floor tenant space.
- As the ground level is currently used as office space there is full provision for Part M WC at ground level.

### **5.0 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

- Read this statement together with Reid Architects drawings:

Photographs of elevation as existing at location of new entrance

- A.L.002 - Location plan
- A.L.003 - Aerial and street level photography
- A.L.006 - General arrangement plan - existing ground level
- A.L.036 - Detailed plan/section/elev - York Street entrance existing
- A.L.071 - Detailed plan/section/elev - York Street entrance proposed
- A.L.115 - General arrangement plan - proposed ground level

Reid Architects

Carvers Warehouse  
77 Dale Street  
Manchester  
M1 2HG

0161 234 0991

[reid-architects.com](http://reid-architects.com)