



Atelier MB
Urban Architects



Design, Access and Heritage Statement
86 Princess Street
September 2021
Job 1944
Revision -

Executive Summary

AtelierMB are appointed by LSH to prepare proposals for the repair and conservation of the stone hood to the main entrance of the Grade II listed Manchester House.

Manchester House is a 6 storey building with a basement and sub basement, formerly home to shippers and merchants. The site is located at 84-86 Princess Street, close to its junction with Charles Street and opposite Granby Row.



IMAGE 01: View of Manchester House from Princess Street



IMAGE 02: Main entrance to Manchester House from Princess Street

Introduction

Location and Description

Manchester House is located at 84-86 Princess Street, close to its junction with Charles Street and opposite Granby Row. The building sits next to Asia House, the two are separated by an access route (previously gated but now in use for deliveries). The rear of the building faces straight on to the River Medlock, with no pedestrian access.

Planning History

The building has had a number of minor planning applications dating back to 2005. These include the addition of a corner entrance, alterations to the existing entrance, internal alterations and change of use.

Design Statement

The proposed works are limited to the main entrance of the building. Namely, the repair and replacement of parts of the stonework and the installation of lead flashing over the main entrance. The focus of these works is to halt the current water ingress, whilst causing minimal detriment to the significance of the building. This will assist in the long-term protection of the building fabric and thus its significance.

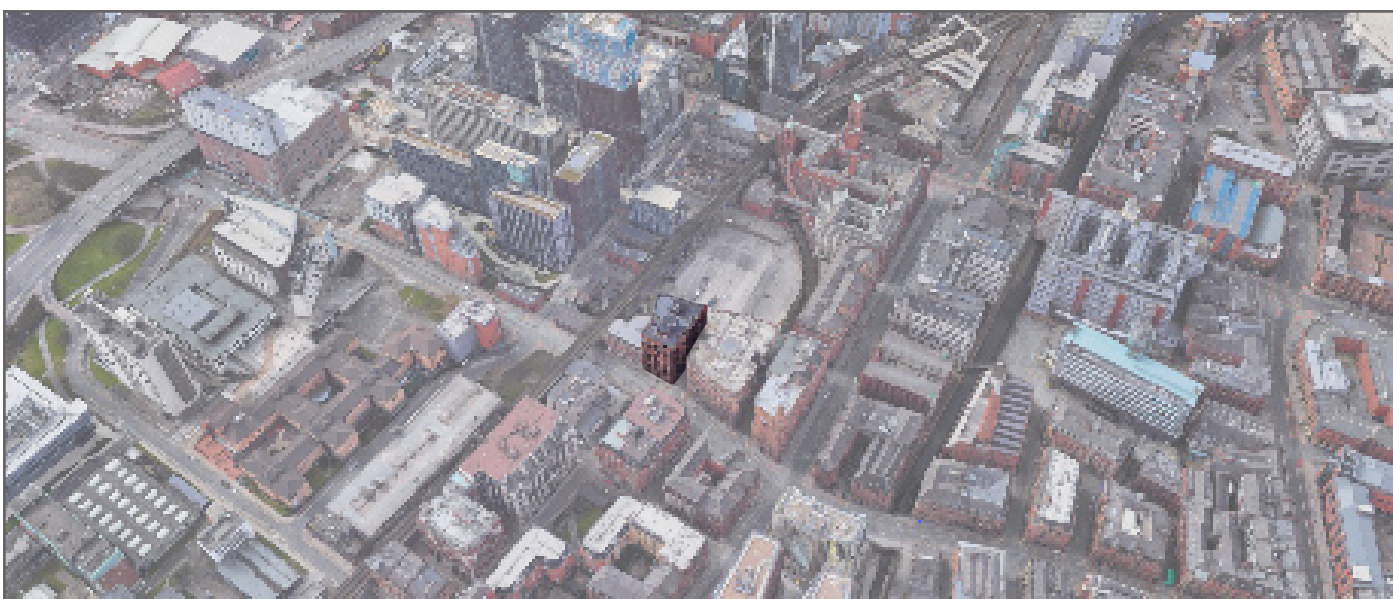


IMAGE 03: Aerial view of Manchester House



IMAGE 04: View of Manchester House from Princess Street

- Main entrance
- Secondary entrance

Access Statement

The main access into the building is on Princess Street, along side a secondary access on the corner of the building, also on Princess Street. The access into the building will not be altered by any of the proposed works..

Heritage Statement

Introduction

This heritage statement has been prepared by Atelier Heritage to accompany a listed building consent application for repair to the front elevation of 86 Princess Street, Manchester. It was written by Laura Jessup, MA History and Theory of Architecture, PGCert. Conservation of the Historic Environment. It follows an original statement for an application concerning the wider internal alterations and fit out of the building, approved in 2019.

This statement focusses on the areas to be repaired but will give an overview of the wider listed building.

86 Princess Street is Grade II listed. An extract from the listing description is included here.

SJ8497NW PRINCESS STREET
698-1/32/338 (South West side)
No.86

Manchester House

GV II

Shipping and packing warehouse, now restaurant, offices etc. 1914, probably by Birkett; altered. Iron frame with cladding of brown sandstone and some buff brick (roof concealed).

Irregular plan at right-angles to street, with chamfered right-hand corner. Free Baroque style. Six storeys with basement and attic, 4 bays (1:1:2:1 windows) plus the corner; with a grey stone plinth, channelled rustication to the first 3 floors, giant Ionic pilasters to the 4th and 5th floors rising from banded pedestals at 3rd floor; those flanking the centre bay coupled and all with festoons, a moulded frieze



IMAGE 05: Manchester House Elevation from Princess Street

with large central cartouche, prominent mutilated cornice with a large mutilated segmental pediment arched across the centre of the attic storey, which has a small cornice and interrupted parapet. At ground floor the centre has a doorway and side windows in Venetian window form, with open segmental pediment and cartouche crest, the outer bays have round-headed windows with run-out voussoirs and triple keystones, and the corner has a square-headed doorway with pilaster jambs and carved tympanum under a segmental hood. The 1st and 2nd floors have windows with moulded architraves and cornices, those at 2nd floor on slender consoles with pendent festoons; the windows at 4th and 5th floors also have moulded architraves, those at 4th floor with small cornices; and the attic has a 4-light Diocletian window in the pediment, and windows in the other bays with keyed architraves and cornices. Interior not inspected. Forms southern end of uninterrupted linear group of similar buildings on this side of Princess Street. Listing NGR: SJ8429697579

History

The building is six floors over a ground floor; basement and sub-basement. The front elevations are Edwardian Baroque in style. The architect was I. Birkett, the same as for Asia House. This is acknowledged in the listing but has been elsewhere attributed to Waterhouse possibly because he was the architect of the Refuge Assurance main building on Oxford Road, for whom Manchester and Asia Houses were built. The name of the architect (Birkett) is visible on the original plans located in Manchester archives.

The original drawing titles confirm the premises were built for Refuge Assurance Company, labelled 'Warehouse Number 2' with Asia House being 'Warehouse Number 1'. The buildings were sub-let to various companies who took space dependent on their needs. The drawings are a good indicator of the original form but are not a wholly accurate resource, the elevations on paper and in built form showing various discrepancies.

The earliest reference to the building in the trade directory is from 1911 (compiled earlier). The entries for 82 (Asia House) and 86 (Manchester House) are long, with 35 and 20 tenants respectively. Manchester House was home to shippers and merchants. The presence of a loading bay and arms/teagles on the original drawings indicate that goods

were delivered and dispatched directly to and from the building. Shipping/packing warehouses of this date were more than just storage areas: they included inspection areas, making up areas, packing and delivery functions as well as offices. The majority of shipping business was concluded in The Exchange, and a limited number of visitors came to inspect samples. Laying out benches in front of large windows gave natural light for quality checks by buyers and workers and for making up. The more formal areas including most offices were located in the front part of the building, with more functional use in the rear; and this can be read in the varying external elevation treatments. The basement or sub-basement usually had presses to form tight packages of fabric for delivery, though no evidence of these has been found in Manchester House. Goods in and out were transported around the building using the hoists, goods lifts and bale holes through to the basement (now no longer evident from the loading bay).

The Slater's Directory shows number 84 has a separate entry for Leisler, Bock Brothers & Co, shipping merchants. This is reflected on the plan, which shows that access from the splayed corner door (numbered 84 externally) did not connect with the main part of the ground floor but instead led to the first floor which was, in effect, independent. They were presumably a larger company occupying a whole floor whilst other smaller businesses had smaller sections of space in the building. This separation is no longer evident and all upper floors are accessible from the ground floor reception staircase and lift.

In 2019, permission was granted for the refurbishment of the building, and it now houses multiple office users and communal space.

Significance

Evidential: Manchester House is an example of early twentieth century shipping warehousing, dating from the last great period of warehouse construction in Manchester. It is evidence of the former uses within this part of the city and the two connected blocks with vertical access, loading arrangements including basement still exist in plan. Externally the building is of high evidential value, with the exception of modern interventions at ground floor. Historical: The building has medium historical significance. Its associations with Asia house, by the same architect,



IMAGE 06: Image showing the main Princess Street elevation in original drawing



IMAGE 07: Photograph showing entrance on Princess Street, taken in the mid-20th century (Manchester Archives).

the other warehouses along Princess/Whitworth Street and the link to the landmark Refuge Assurance Company building on Oxford Road give it additional significance.

Aesthetic: The building has medium aesthetic value. It is a well-constructed commercial property and the differing elevation types are of interest and contribute to the character of Princess Street (formal), the side street opposite Asia House (good example of functional curtain wall glazing) and the rear (contribution to the surrounding buildings and rhythm of glazing). Its visual and historical links to Asia House are of particular significance but it lacks the high-quality detail of Asia House and other warehouses in the vicinity. Decoration seems to have been limited in the original design and has been almost entirely lost in later changes. The rear elevation has a visual relationship with surrounding warehouse buildings.

Communal: The building has medium/low communal value. It has an associative value as it forms a part of the streetscape familiar in character to the people of Manchester. However, unlike the Refuge Assurance building, Manchester House was not designed as a recognizable landmark for the city and the building lacks strong connections to any particular group of people.

Main Entrance to Princess Street

The subject of this application is the main entrance to Princess Street. The original elevation drawing and photograph from Manchester Archives show the entrance which features a stone pediment with carved cartouche above. The centre section is arched, and those to either side are flat, with windows contained by pilasters with bases and capitals.

The entrance is decorative and forms a key focus to the principal elevation of the building. It is of high significance to the wider building and plays a positive role within the existing streetscape.

Photograph showing entrance on Princess Street, taken in the mid-20th century (Manchester Archives).

Existing Condition

The stonework forming the arch over the main entrance has deteriorated and been subject to poor and inappropriate repair with cement. As a result, water ingress is currently causing damage. The stone cartouche is built

into the existing wall and, along with other parts of the stonework, has green biological surface deposits (algae, etc).

Proposals

The proposals are limited to the repair and replacement of parts of stonework and lead to the area above the existing main entrance.

Specialist stonemasons have confirmed that the extent of the damage means that localised limited repair is not possible, and replacement of stone is necessary.

The area is to be scaffolded prior to works commencing to enable closer inspection and steam cleaning of existing fabric. Controlled steam cleaning will avoid over saturation of stone and will use the lowest pressures and temperatures required to clean green deposits. Prior to removal, measurements of the existing features will be taken to allow for accurate replacements to be made. All damaged stone/cement will be removed and replacement sandstone will be fitted to hood with nominal falls away from building to route rainwater. All sandstone will match original existing as closely as possible.

New lead flashing to be installed with lap joints. Upstand to be lead covered. Flashing to be secured within existing or newly formed joints. There is a requirement to chase lead into stone walls in order to form the required upstands as recommended by lead specialist.

The cartouche is understood to be structurally integral to the façade. Therefore it will be steam-cleaned in-situ. It is possible the feature may sit over new lead flashing, but this will become apparent upon closer inspection.

Impact

The proposal involves the removal of existing stonework and a limited number of cuts into the wall above to form narrow channels for lead flashing. The level of harm is considered to be low, and vastly outweighed by the benefit of cleaning, repairing and renewing the entrance hood, which is a significant feature of the listed building. The overriding intention is to prevent further water ingress in the long term, to repair and replace damaged fabric and to maintain the existing design as far as possible with minor

Fabric Condition Map

- FMS Fabric/Plaster
- FMS Fabric/Plaster/Stone
- FMS Fabric/Plaster
- FMS Fabric/Plaster/Stone
- FMS Fabric/Plaster



IMAGE 08: Elevation of the Manchester House doorway off Princess Street

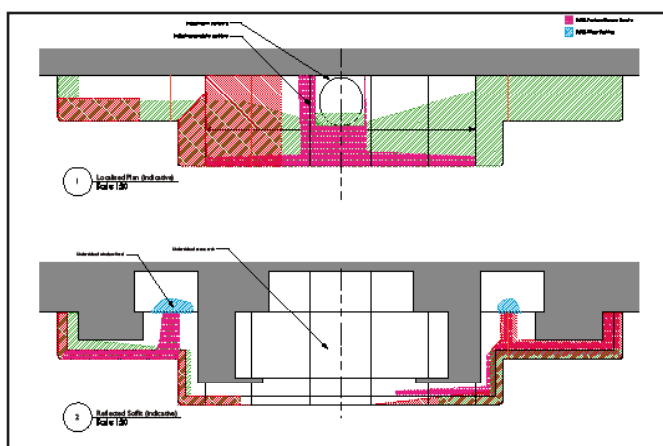


IMAGE 09: Plan of the Manchester House doorway off Princess Street

changes only where required to achieve a lasting solution to water penetration issues. Overall the low level of harm is considered necessary and justified.

Planning Context

National Planning Policy Framework (**NPPF**), revised 2021, sets out government planning policies for England and how they are to be applied by local authorities.

Paragraph 194 requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by proposals. This report is considered to meet that requirement.

Paragraph 197 states, 'In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- 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.' The proposals are a positive response as they will enhance the condition of the building, ensuring its conservation and safeguarding its future long-term use.

Paragraph 202 '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.'

Proposals are considered to be an enhancement and improvement to the building. In this instance, the removal of historic fabric is wholly necessary, and its repair will bring public benefit through long-term protection and ongoing use.

Manchester's Local Development Framework, Core Strategy, adopted July 2012, contains local policy and the council's vision for the city from 2012-2027.

Policy **CC9** states 'design in Manchester City Centre should preserve or enhance the heritage assets that have been identified, including listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled ancient monuments.'

Policy **EN3** concerns heritage and notes that '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 proposals will add to the already executed refurbishment scheme and are a continuation of the enhancement of the listed building, ensuring its re-use. They are entirely consistent with national and local policy.