



17 York Street - Manchester

# design + access statement

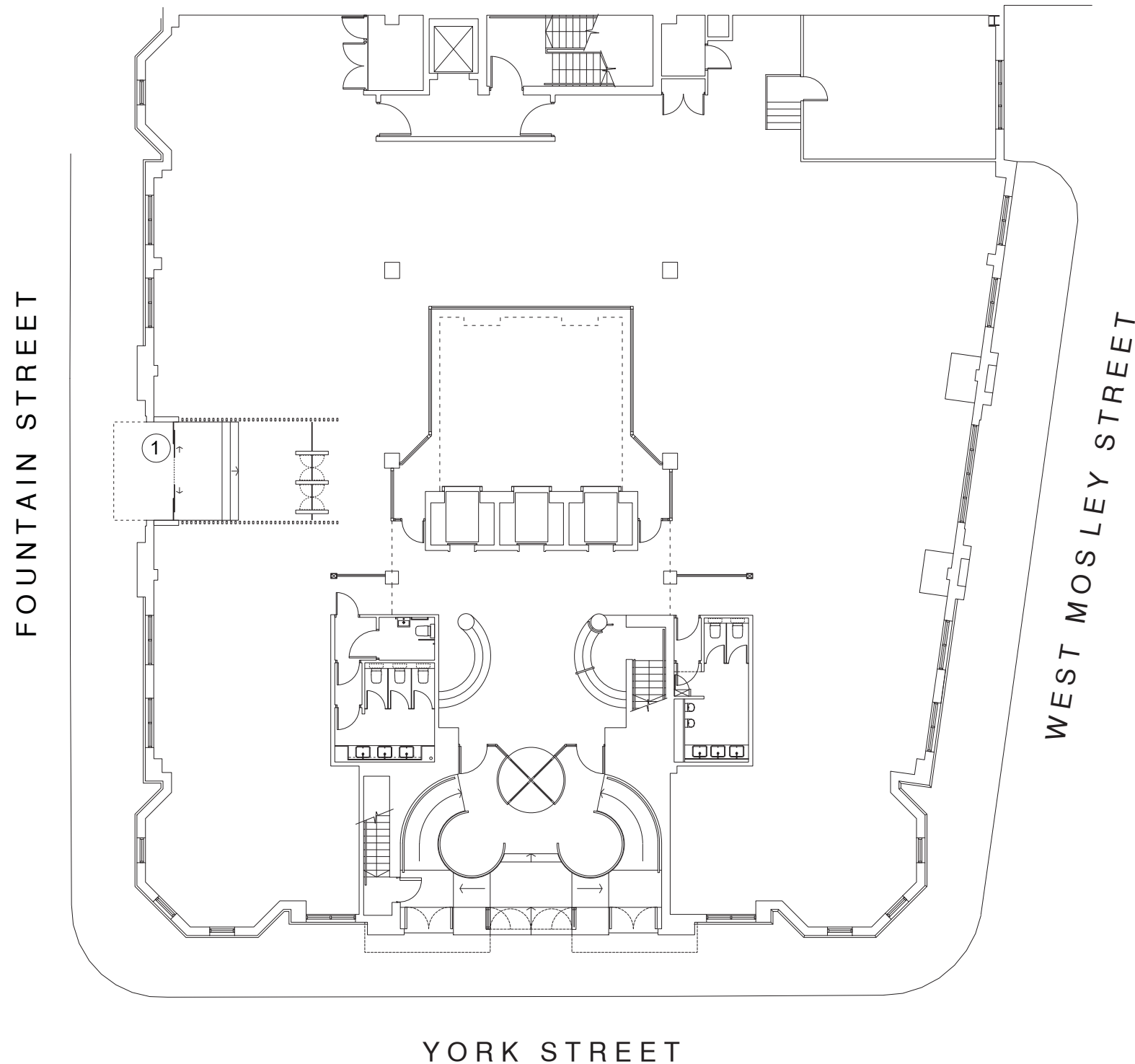
Fountain Street entrance

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## 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 the 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.

① LOCATION OF PROPOSED NEW ACCESS



- 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. But 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 proposal is to create a new entrance to the ground floor office space via an existing window opening in the Fountain street façade.
- The existing floor slab is re-modelled to move any steps (required to transition from street level to office floor level) to be internal.
- The existing glazing/curtain wall assembly is cut below the level 1 floor slab to create the new opening.
- New automatic sliding doors and fixed side and over panels in clear glass will be fixed in lieu. The new screen will be recessed from the main plane of the building elevation.
- A new canopy over the entrance is to be installed providing cover at the doors, defining the new and existing work and facilitating the change in elevation plane.
- The new wall return sections within the existing granite veneer lined opening and new canopy to be in corten steel.
- Canopy and return walls to be down and side lit.
- Creating the new entrance - and removing a section of the battered granite plinth - will increase engagement of the building with the street. The full height glazed doors will offer views deeper into the space and increase visibility for new occupiers.



Photographs of elevation as existing at location of new entrance



CGI of canopy insertion into existing opening

### 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:
  - A.L.002 - Location plan
  - A.L.003 - Aerial and street level photography
  - A.L.006 - General arrangement plan - existing ground level
  - A.L.038 - Detailed plan/section/elev - Fountain Street entrance existing
  - A.L.072 - Detailed plan/section/elev - Fountain Street entrance proposed
  - A.L.116 - General arrangement plan - proposed ground level

