

55 Newton Street

2021002

Design and Access Statement

21 June 2021



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 This Design and Access Statement ('DAS') has been prepared by Ruth Jackson Planning Limited ('RJP') on behalf of AAIP Partnership. The DAS supports a planning application for change of use from office to residential and external alterations to the existing building at 55 Newton Street, Manchester M1 1ET.
- 1.1.2 A DAS is required to accompany applications for planning permission within a designated area¹ where one or more dwellings is proposed. In this case, the site is located within the Stephenson Square Conservation Area in Manchester city centre.
- 1.1.3 This DAS covers the following topics as required by planning legislation:
- a. explains the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development;
 - b. demonstrates the steps taken to appraise the context of the development and how the design of the development takes that context into account;
 - c. explains the policy adopted as to access, and how policies relating to access in relevant local development documents have been taken into account;
 - d. states what consultation has been undertaken on issues relating to access to the development and what account has been taken of the outcome of this consultation; and

¹ A conservation area or a World Heritage Site.

- e. explains how any specific issues which might affect access to the development have been addressed.

1.1.4 The report should be read alongside the submitted Planning Statement and Environmental Standards Statement and other application documents.

1.2 Proposed development

1.2.1 The proposed development is for the change of use from office to residential use at 55 Newton Street, Manchester. The proposal includes alterations to the existing property commensurate with the change of use to create a residential townhouse. Features of the existing building will be retained as far as possible in recognition of the site's contribution to the character and appearance of the Stephenson Square Conservation Area and to reduce construction waste.

1.3 Report structure

1.3.1 The report is structured as follows:

- Site and surrounding area
- Design principles and concepts
- Access and account of policy
- Consultation
- Summary and conclusions.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 This section provides a description of the site and surrounding area to provide context for the proposed development, including a summary of the heritage context that has influenced the design decisions for exterior alterations to the building.

2.2 Site

- 2.2.1 The site comprises a three-storey (plus basement) office building dating from the mid-19th Century located at the corner of Newton Street and Bradley's Court. The building occupies a narrow corner site and is lower in height than the adjacent buildings to the south and west. It is constructed of brick with feature dental courses and a pitched slate roof behind a parapet. The existing floorspace is 111 sq. metres Gross Internal Area (GIA).
- 2.2.2 The building's main frontage is towards Newton Street (south east elevation), with the north east façade of the building facing onto Bradley's Court. There are four sash windows at upper ground floor level, with half height security bars, and four sash windows at first floor level on the Bradley's Court elevation. Former windows at the lower ground floor level are bricked-up. The building is secured by roller shutters on the upper ground floor and lower ground floor windows facing Newton Street.
- 2.2.3 As described in the accompanying Heritage Statement, *"[t]he front elevation comprises three bays, with the ground floor and basement bays amalgamated to form tall arches that emphasise the diminishing proportions of the façade"*.

2.2.4 The building has been vacant since September 2020. The interior of the building has been altered for office use and does not contain any original heritage features. The building has a stepped access up to the upper ground floor level (1.2 metres) from Newton Street.

2.3 Surrounding area

2.3.1 55 Newton Street adjoins 25 Hilton Street to the south. The Cow Hollow boutique hotel is located opposite the building on Bradley's Court. Other uses in the surrounding area on Newton Street include a print and copy shop, hostel, café and the Greater Manchester Police Museum and Archives.

2.3.2 The site is located within a highly sustainable location in Manchester's Northern Quarter within an eight-minute walk of Manchester Piccadilly railway station and a five-minute walk from Piccadilly Gardens Metrolink and bus stops.

2.3.3 Northern Quarter Car Park and Piccadilly Gardens Car Park are located within a four minute walk of the site.

Heritage context

2.3.4 A heritage statement was instructed before the design was finalised to appraise the historic context of the site.

2.3.5 The site is located in proximity to a cluster of listed buildings including:

- Marlsbro House (Grade II)
- Former Newton Street Police Station (now the Police Museum) (Grade II)
- Newton Buildings (Grade II)

- Nos. 45 and 47 Newton Street (Grade II)

2.3.6 The location of these listed buildings is shown in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1 Listed buildings in the vicinity of 55 Newton Street (Source: Historic England).

- 2.3.7 The site is also located within the Stevenson Square Conservation Area. According to the Council's Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA), the original intention was for Stevenson Square area to become a residential area. Instead, it became commercially oriented, with a wide variety of small businesses including hat block makers, cork cutters and tin-plate workers among other trades and professions.
- 2.3.8 As shown in the accompanying Heritage Statement, in the late 19th Century 55 Newton Street was used as a warehouse and formed part of a block occupied by a row of small dwellings fronting onto Bradley's Court with larger, domestic scale properties fronting onto Hilton Street in use as offices. It states, "[t]he diminutive warehouse appears to

have resulted from a piecemeal approach that would have responded to the scale of the adjoining residential properties". Between 1908 and 1922 these smaller properties located on the same block as 55 Newton Street were replaced with the larger buildings still in place today.

- 2.3.9 The Heritage Statement considers 55 Newton Street to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Stephenson Square Conservation Area.

3.0 DESIGN PRINCIPLES AND CONCEPTS

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 This section provides an overview of the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the proposed development followed by a summary of the key features of the design, both external and internal.

3.2 Design principles and concepts

- 3.2.1 Due to the building's history and contribution to the conservation area context, the key design principle is to retain and enhance the existing character and appearance of the building's exterior. This will be achieved through the reinstatement of bricked up windows at basement level, replacement timber sash windows to the first floor, and general cleaning and repairs to the exterior (removal of graffiti and minor repairs as required to the roof tiles and parapet copings). In addition, the development will provide a modern living environment for future residents.
- 3.2.2 The new roof terrace to the Bradley's Court elevation has been designed to retain the existing roof line to minimise any impact on the character of the existing building while providing an important amenity space for future residents. In terms of heritage impact, the Heritage Statement considers that, *"[t]he proposed adaptation of the rear part of the roof would be set well back from the Newton Street frontage and would not affect the contribution of setting to the significance of the listed buildings, or the ability to appreciate that significance."*
- 3.2.3 The key design concepts are therefore to retain and enhance the historic character of the building's exterior while providing a modernised residential interior.

3.3 Key features of the proposed development

3.3.1 The key features of the proposed development are summarised below.

Layout

3.3.2 The existing office layout will be removed and replaced with the following:

Level	Rooms
Lower ground	Bedroom 2 Bedroom 3 Bathroom Bin store
Upper ground	Kitchen/dining room WC Cycle store
First floor	Lounge Void
Second floor	Bedroom 1 Bathroom Roof terrace

Scale

3.3.3 The existing building is three storeys plus partial basement level. The proposed residential townhouse will retain the existing four floors and floorplates.

Space standards

3.3.4 The minimum space standards for Manchester City Council (which reflect the nationally described space standard) are set out in the table below. There are no adopted standards for a four-storey dwelling, therefore, the standards for a three-storey dwelling have been used to assess compliance.

Bed spaces (persons)	Three storey dwelling (m ²)	Built in storage (m ²)
4p	90	2.5
5p	102	

6p	108	
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3.3.5 In addition, to comply with the standard:

- a dwelling with two or more bedspaces must have at least one double or twin bedroom.
- A single bedroom must have a floor area of at least 7.5 sq. metres and be at least 2.15 metres wide.
- A double or twin bedroom must have a floor area of at least 11.5 sq. metres.
- One double (or twin) bedroom must be at least 2.75 metres wide and every other double (or twin) bedroom must be at least 2.55 metres wide.
- Any area with a headroom of less than 1.5 metres is not counted within the Gross Internal Area unless used for storage.
- Areas used solely for storage with headroom of 0.9-1.5 metres is counted at 50% of its floor area. Areas lower than 0.9 metres are not counted.
- A built-in wardrobe counts towards the Gross Internal Area and bedroom floor requirements, but should not reduce the effective width of the room below the minimum widths.
- Built in areas exceeding 0.72 sq. metres for a double bedroom and 0.36 sq. metres for a single bedroom count towards the built-in storage requirement.
- The minimum floor to ceiling height is 2.3 metres for at least 75% of the Gross Internal Area.

3.3.6 The total floor area to be provided by the proposal is 108 sq. metres. This figure excludes roof pitched areas below 1.5 metres and the roof terrace.

3.3.7 Bedroom sizes and built-in storage sizes are set out in Table 1 below. Note: the floor areas below are measured where the ceiling pitch is above 1.5 metres only. Unless stated otherwise, floor areas in the below table do not include storage to avoid double counting.

Table 1 Assessment against nationally described space standard

Bedroom	Type	Area (m ²)	Height (m)	Min. area standard (m ²)	Min. height standard for GIA (m)	Compliance
Bedroom 1	Double/twin	12.3*	2.6	11.5	1.5	Yes
Storage		2.7		0.75		Yes
Bedroom 2	Double/twin	11.5**	2.46	11.5	1.5	Yes
Storage		1.1		0.36		Yes
Bedroom 3	Single	10.5	2.46	7.5	1.5	Yes
Storage		1.2		0.36		Yes

*Bedroom 1 floor plate is 16.9m² (plus storage) including areas below 1.5m ceiling height.

**includes storage.

3.3.8 The proposal therefore complies with the nationally described space standard with respect to bedroom floor areas, bedroom storage areas and the overall GIA for a five person, three-storey dwelling (there are no standards for a five-person, four storey dwelling).

Roof terrace

3.3.9 Manchester's Residential Quality Guidance encourages provision of sufficient private amenity space to meet the demands of intended users, which should be 9 sq. metres for three-bed units. The development will provide 3.7 sq. metres of private outdoor

amenity space to the second floor facing Bradley's Court. Although this is smaller than the guidance, the size of the terrace is considered to be acceptable in the context of existing site constraints and the need to provide sufficient floorspace to Bedroom 1 on the second floor.

Windows

- 3.3.10 The existing timber framed single glazed windows to the first floor will be replaced with timber framed double glazed sliding sash windows to improve the acoustic performance and energy efficiency of the building.
- 3.3.11 New openings to the lower ground floor along Bradley's Court will be inward opening side and bottom hung timber framed windows. These windows will also provide an alternative means of fire escape from the basement level.
- 3.3.12 Existing uPVC windows at ground level will be retained for sustainability reasons and to avoid unnecessary construction waste.

Bin store

- 3.3.13 A new external bin store will be created with access from Bradley's Court. The bin store will provide capacity for 3 no. 240L bins (one each for refuse, paper recycling and co-mingled recycling) and a 23L food waste caddy.
- 3.3.14 The bin store will be located approximately 11 metres from Newton Street. The store will be secured with a new metal door. The bin store will utilise a former entrance space that is currently bricked-up.

4.0 ACCESS AND ACCOUNT OF POLICY

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 This section provides a summary of relevant policies adopted with respect to access and how the proposal takes these policies into account.

4.2 Adopted policies with respect to access

- 4.2.1 The adopted development plan for Manchester City Council comprises the Manchester Core Strategy 2012-2027, adopted in July 2012, and saved policies from the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) adopted in July 1995.

Core Strategy

- **Policy CC5 (Transport)** seeks to ensure that development includes adequate parking provision for cars and bicycles based on the adopted standards in Appendix B. The Appendix B standards specifically exclude maximum car parking standards in the city centre, which are determined on a case-by-case basis. There are no standards provided for residential use.
- **Policy DM1 (Development Management)** requires all development to have regard to accessibility. Specifically, the policy aspires for buildings and neighbourhoods to be fully accessible to disabled people and for access to new development to be achieved by sustainable transport modes. In addition, development should have regard to vehicular access and car parking.

UDP

- **Policy DC7.1** states that the Council will negotiate with developers to ensure that new housing is accessible at ground floor level to disabled people, including

those who use wheelchairs, wherever this is practicable. All new developments containing family homes will be expected to be designed so as to be safe areas within which children can play and, where appropriate, the Council will also expect play areas to be provided.

- **Policy DC22.1** states that, in considering development proposals, the Council will have regard to the effect on existing pedestrian routes and will not normally allow development which would result in unacceptable inconvenience to local pedestrian movement.

4.3 Other relevant documents

Manchester Residential Quality Guidance 2017

- 4.3.1 City Centre developments will be required to provide where possible an appropriate level of car parking within the constraints of site-specific circumstances and other requirements. The Guidance recognises that,

“With listed buildings, for example, it is often impossible to accommodate car parking in a manner that does not compromise the architectural and historic qualities of that asset. In these scenarios there is a need to look more holistically at car parking provision across an area, and utilise appropriate off site car parking solutions to meet demand. This may for example involve the use of multi-storey car parks, which

increasingly are located or proposed around the edges of the city centre with easy vehicular access of the Inner Ring Road.”²

- 4.3.2 Cycle storage should actively encourage use and be designed, located and managed in such a way that residents feel that their bike is in a safe and secure location, and that they themselves feel safe using it. The design of internal layouts should be evaluated in anticipation that bicycles may be stored within the home.

4.4 Account of policy

Car parking

- 4.4.1 Due to the sustainable location of the site close to public transport, the existing constraints associated with a 19th Century building and lack of space to provide on-site parking, the car free nature of the proposed development is considered to be acceptable. Where required, any future parking demand from residents may be accommodated within multi-storey or surface car parks on the city centre periphery. There are two multi-storey car parks available within a four-minute walk of the site. This approach is supported in the Manchester Residential Quality Guidance.

Cycle parking

- 4.4.2 There are no adopted minimum standards for cycle parking in residential developments in the adopted Core Strategy or Residential Quality Guidance. The proposed development will provide cycle storage at upper ground floor level behind the kitchen

² Manchester City Council, *Manchester Residential Quality Guidance* [PDF], https://secure.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/download/6682/residential_quality_guide (accessed 9 June 2021), p. 88.

so as not to create clutter in the entrance area. The cycle parking has been considered in the design of the internal layout from an early stage.

Disabled access

- 4.4.3 It is not possible to achieve level access at this site due to the existing site constraints associated with a mid-19th Century building set over four storeys. Currently, the building has stepped access from street level, with stairs between each floor.

Achieving level access to the site and between the floors would require installation of ramped access (or similar solution) at street level and an internal lift, which would impact negatively on the viability of the scheme and compromise the ability of the development to comply with internal space standards. It is noted that the nationally described space standard states that Gross Internal Areas in the standard, *“will not be adequate for wheelchair housing (Category 3 homes in Part M of the Building Regulations) where additional internal area is required to accommodate increased circulation and functionality to meet the needs of wheelchair households”*.³

³ Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard (March 2015), p. 4.

5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 This section summarises the pre-application consultation carried out with the local planning authority and explains how feedback from the consultation was taken into account in refining the proposals prior to submission.

5.1.2 Consultation with the local community was not carried out due to the scale and nature of the proposal, which is considered to be a compatible use in context. It is noted that, while encouraged, pre-application consultation is not a statutory requirement for an application of this type.

5.2 Consultation with the local planning authority

5.2.1 Prior to submission of the planning application, the applicant undertook consultation with Manchester City Council. Full details of the consultation are provided in the accompanying Planning Statement.

5.2.2 With respect to design and access matters, a pre-application advice request was submitted to Manchester City Council on 24 March 2021. This request included draft plans for the proposed townhouse, which included a new 7.8 sq. metre external balcony to be created behind the existing parapet. Details of the proposed bin store and internal cycle parking were provided, along with confirmation that the proposed development would be car free. A summary of the proposal's compliance with the nationally described space standard and Manchester's guidance on external amenity space standards were also provided. A response was received on 9 April 2021.

Heritage

- 5.2.3 Feedback provided by the Conservation Officer requested confirmation of changes at lower ground floor level with respect to the reinstatement of windows, which should be timber sliding sash windows with railings to match the existing design. In addition, there was some concern about the impact on the conservation area as a result of alterations to the roof profile to facilitate the balcony, as *“this would impact on the contribution that this makes to the visual coherency of the varied and largely unaltered roofscape on buildings of this scale”*. It was requested that an option that retains the existing profile and ‘cuts’ a balcony into this be considered.
- 5.2.4 The proposal was subsequently revised to include outdoor amenity space at roof level facing onto Bradley’s Court. Although the new roof terrace is smaller than originally proposed at 3.7 sq. metres, the terrace retains the existing roof profile in response to feedback from the Conservation Officer. The revised design is considered to provide an appropriate balance between the need to provide outdoor amenity space and the heritage constraints presented by the site.
- 5.2.5 New windows at lower ground floor level will be timber framed in response to the Conservation Officer’s request. The Conservation Officer also requested confirmation that the new security bars to the lower ground level will match those at upper ground – this will be the case.

Minimum space standards

- 5.2.6 The draft plans presented at the pre-application stage provided 108.4 sq. metres of internal floorspace, which slightly exceeded the standard for a five-person dwelling

(102 sq. metres). The 6.75 sq. metre terrace was considered to broadly comply with the 9 metres expected for three-bedroom dwellings set out in the Manchester Residential Quality guidance.

- 5.2.7 The Council agreed that the scheme's level of compliance with the minimum space standards was acceptable taking account of constraints associated with the conversion of an existing building.

Access

- 5.2.8 The Council confirmed that there would be no requirement for parking provision owing to the highly sustainable location. The Council also confirmed that off-street commercial parking would be an acceptable solution for this site to accommodate parking demand.

- 5.2.9 The level of parking provision was considered likely to be acceptable subject to feedback from Highways, which would not take place until after submission of an application.

Bin store

- 5.2.10 The Council confirmed that, provided the waste provision is in line with the guidance, the proposed bin store seemed acceptable.

6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1.1 This DAS has been prepared by RJP on behalf of AAIP Partnership to support a planning application for change of use from office to residential and internal and external alterations to the existing building at 55 Newton Street, Manchester.
- 6.1.2 A DAS is a statutory requirement to accompany planning applications within conservation areas.
- 6.1.3 The report has provided a summary of the design principles and concepts that have been used to develop the proposals. The key design principle is to retain and enhance the historic character and appearance of the existing building, which is located within Stevenson Square Conservation Area, while providing a modern residential interior.
- 6.1.4 The key aspects of the development have been summarised as follows:
- The new dwelling will be set across four floors. Bedrooms will be located at lower ground and second floor levels and bathrooms at lower ground and second floors. The kitchen will be provided at upper ground floor level and the living and dining room on the first floor.
 - The proposal will comply with the nationally described space standard with respect to internal spaces and the overall GIA for a five-person, three storey dwelling (there are no standards provided for a four-storey dwelling).
 - Former openings at basement level on Bradley's Court will be reinstated to create new windows to the lower ground level bedrooms and a new door for the newly created bin store.

- Single glazed timber sash windows at first floor level will be replaced with double-glazed timber windows to improve the acoustic performance and energy efficiency of the property.
- A new terrace will be created at roof level to provide outdoor amenity space for future residents.
- A cycle store will be provided within the storage area at upper ground floor level and a bin store will be located off Bradley's Court.

6.1.5 A summary of the policies adopted with respect to access has been provided along with an overview of how these policies have been taken into account. The key points with respect to access are as follows:

- The proposed development will be car free owing to the highly sustainable location of Newton Street, which has excellent access to public transport networks and local services. The site also benefits from good access to nearby public car parks, two of which are located within a four-minute walk. This is considered to be acceptable as there are no set parking standards within the city centre and on-site parking is not feasible due to existing site constraints.
- The proposed development will provide cycle storage at upper ground floor level. The need to provide cycle parking has been considered from an early stage in the design.
- It will not be possible to provide level access to the site for disabled people owing to the existing constraints presented by a mid-19th Century building. The site has

stepped access from the street and is set over four levels. The provision of lift access would have a negative impact on the development viability and would compromise the ability to comply with internal space standards.

- 6.1.6 The report has also provided a summary of pre-application consultation carried out with the local planning authority and how feedback has been taken into account. In design terms, the key change made in response to feedback from the Conservation Officer is the revised design for the roof terrace, which has been moved to the rear of the property fronting onto Bradley's Court and amended to retain the roof profile of the existing building.
- 6.1.7 Overall, the proposal will have a positive impact on the site and surrounding area by bringing a vacant building back into use and improving the external appearance of the building whilst retaining its original features.