

Chancellors Hotel Conversion



Design and Access Statement
August 2020



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Buttress

Buttress Architects Ltd.
41 Bengal St.
Manchester
M4 6AF

T: 0161 236 3303
W: www.buttress.net



Buttress is a leading design studio providing architecture, urban design interiors and conservation design services.

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1.0

Introduction

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Statement

This Design and Access Statement accompanies the planning and listed building consent application for the conversion of the Chancellors Hotel to student accommodation for the University of Manchester.

1.2 Authorship & Acknowledgements

This assessment has been prepared by Lucy Furniss, Architect at Buttress, with direction from Jenna Johnston MA(Hons) MSc, Senior Heritage Consultant at Buttress.

1.3 Methodology

The Design and Access Statement has been prepared in line with the guidance document ‘Design and Access Statements: How to Write, Read and Use Them,’ published by CABE. The statement is to be read in conjunction with the drawings submitted for planning in March 2020.

1.4 Location & Site Description

Chancellors Hotel is located close to the University of Manchester's student accommodation in Fallowfield. It is to the west of Richmond Park, and is situated to the east of Whitworth Lane of Moseley Road. The hotel is approximately 15-20 minutes away from the City Centre by car. The hotel is accessed through the 1997 alteration work to the building, and the original house is only seen from the gardens to the rear.

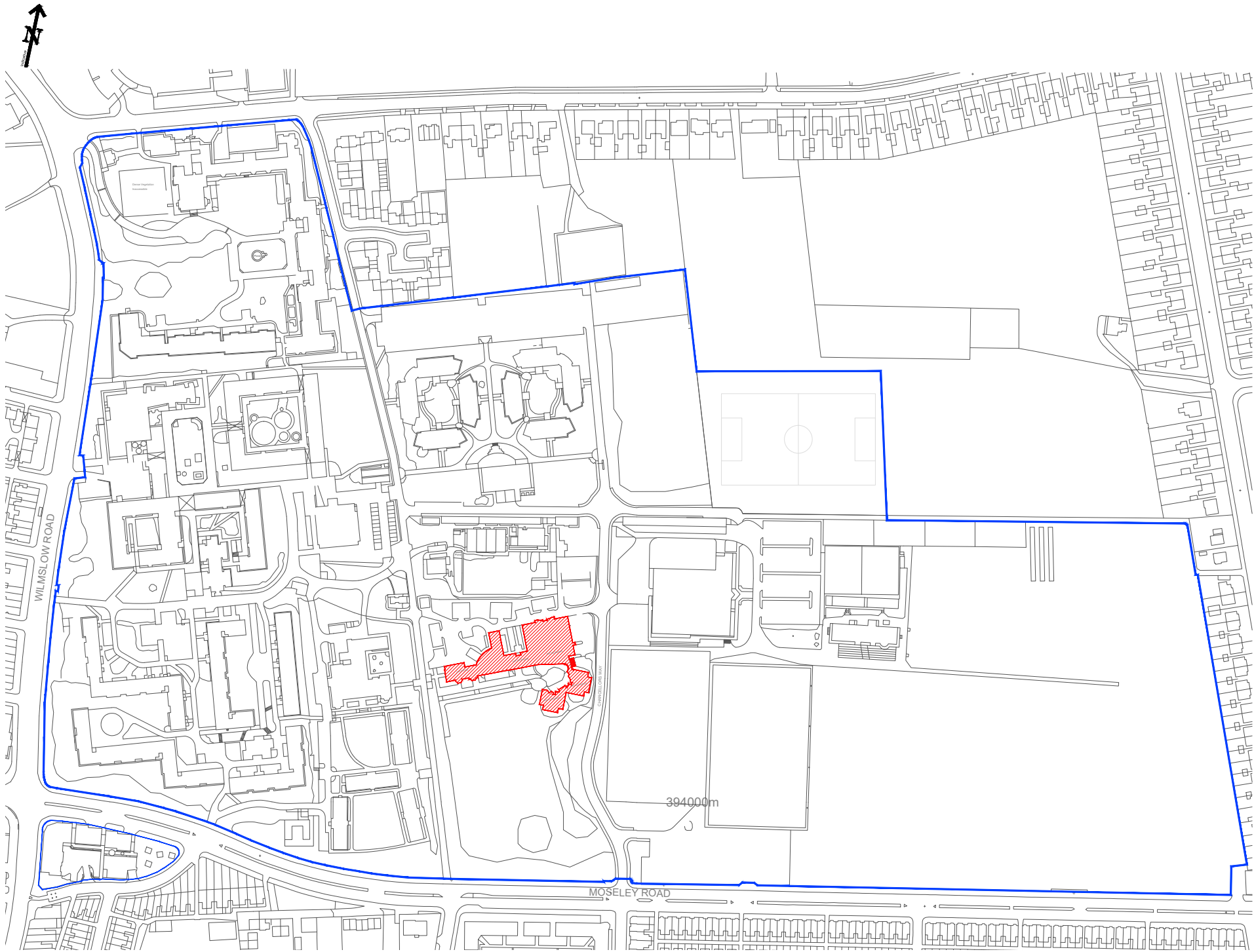


Figure 1 Location plan, SDA Consulting 2020 - not to scale

2.0

Background

2.0 Background

2.1 Historic Background

In the late 1840s, there was a small house on the land currently occupied by Chancellors Hotel. A new house, originally known as The Firs, was built in 1851 for Sir Joseph Whitworth by architect Edward Walters.

The grounds of the house were developed in 1851, with the parkland created by taking in surrounding fields to the east. A shooting gallery was built by the War Office in the grounds in order to help Whitworth enhance the accuracy of his Whitworth Rifles.

The house’s blue plaque states that Whitworth occupied the house until 1872, though it was not until 1881 that Charles Prestwich Scott leased the property. His tenancy was originally for three years, but continued to live there until 1932, renewing his contract with subsequent owners of the property. Whilst Scott was in residence, Thomas Grundy was tenant of the farm on the estate from 1897.

Upon Scott’s death in 1932, the Firs became the University of Manchester’s Vice-Chancellors residence. The Owens College (the University’s predecessor) acquired part of the estate in 1989, and the remainder in 1902. In 1997, it received a large extension and was converted into a hotel. Planning consent was approved for the demolition of the 1997 conservatory extension and associated works in 2007, though this work was never carried out.

Chancellors Hotel is one of only a few grand residences remaining from the Victorian period of prosperity in Manchester. The building is situated in an area heavily populated by students, and therefore its scale and setting are unusual within its context.

2.2 Current Use

The building was in use as a hotel for almost 20 years, and has remained the property of the University of Manchester and its predecessors for over 100 years. The hotel was also used as a conference and wedding venue. This has since closed and the buildings have been vacant for around a year.



Figure 2 The Firs (1971) Reproduced courtesy of rusholmearchive.org



Figure 3 Chancellors Hotel (2016)

2.3 General Exterior Photos (2016)



2.4 General Interior Photos (2020)



2.5 Summary Statement of Significance

The heritage significance of Chancellors Hotel is intrinsically linked to its associative values. The building's patron, architect, and subsequent resident are all important figures, particularly in Manchester history, but ranging more broadly to national history also. Joseph Whitworth and C.P Scott are currently memorialised within the building through the naming of ground floor meeting rooms. With the exception of the blue plaque for Whitworth on the north entrance, these tokens are the only way that visitors can engage with this aspect of the building's history. Without turning the building into a museum or heritage centre, this is the most appropriate way to acknowledge the building's origins whilst keeping it in active use. Due to the private nature of the building, as a personal residence, and to a lesser extent, as a hotel, the building's communal values are negligible. However, improving the building's aesthetic will provide a more memorable first impression for guests and passers-by. Evidential value is also neutral due to the lack of evidence regarding earlier structures or developments.

The aesthetic of the building is important, however, it is not as important as its historical values. The villa-style of the original house, in conjunction with the large gardens, are unusual within its urban location. The 1997 extension, which may now be considered dated, has reinstated a form of viewing gallery along the south wall, enhancing the relationship between the building and its natural surroundings. Due to the uncertainty regarding to provenance of the current stucco finish, it is important to acknowledge that the building did not always look as it does today, particularly as a turret appears to have been removed also. However, as previously stated, the white finish of the building is now an iconic part of its identity and best efforts should be made to repair, maintain, and refurbish this aspect of the building.

The proposed scheme of work seeks to keep the Chancellors Hotel in a viable use by providing student accommodation for the University of Manchester. The proposals attempt to isolate the key areas of intervention to the 1997 extension, rather than the core of the historic house in order to minimise heritage impacts. Where changes are required, these have been identified as the minimum required.

2.6 Summary of Proposed Works

The proposed works are intended to provide the University of Manchester with additional student accommodation space through the conversion of the hotel. The building will be used for a small catered community, with supporting ancillary spaces for study and leisure.

The change of use of Chancellors Hotel to a Student Residence replaces St Gabriel's Hall, which the University was unable to negotiate a new lease for in 2018. This was the University's only female hall of residence, responding directly to the Student Union lobby for the University to provide this type of accommodation.

The accommodation will provide homes for 63 students and a residential advisor from the university. It will also support additional learning spaces, including a computer cluster provision, and is situated in good proximity to the University.

The works principally include removal of partitions and modern fixtures and fittings, and installation of moveable screens in the 1997 extension. These are to create new kitchens and provide flexible communal space.

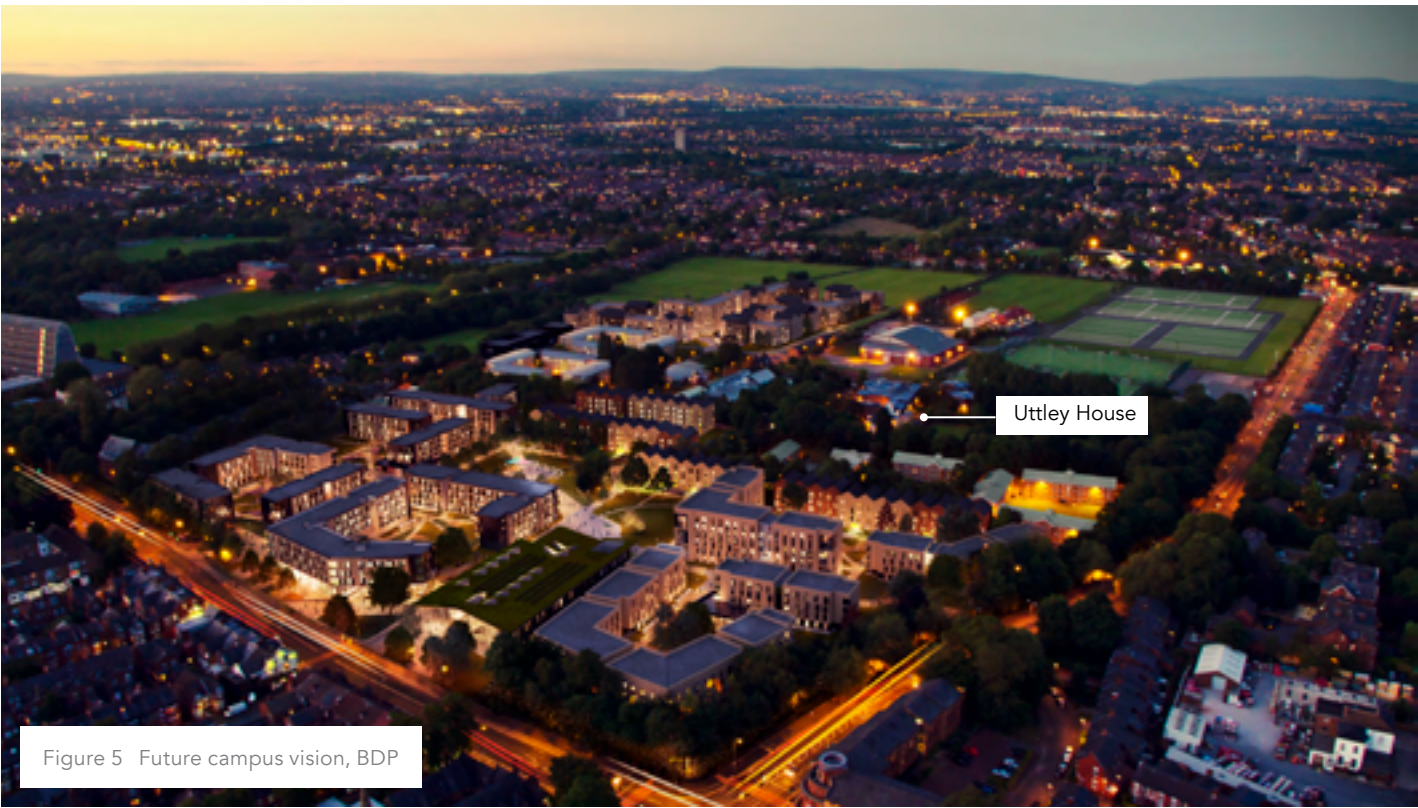
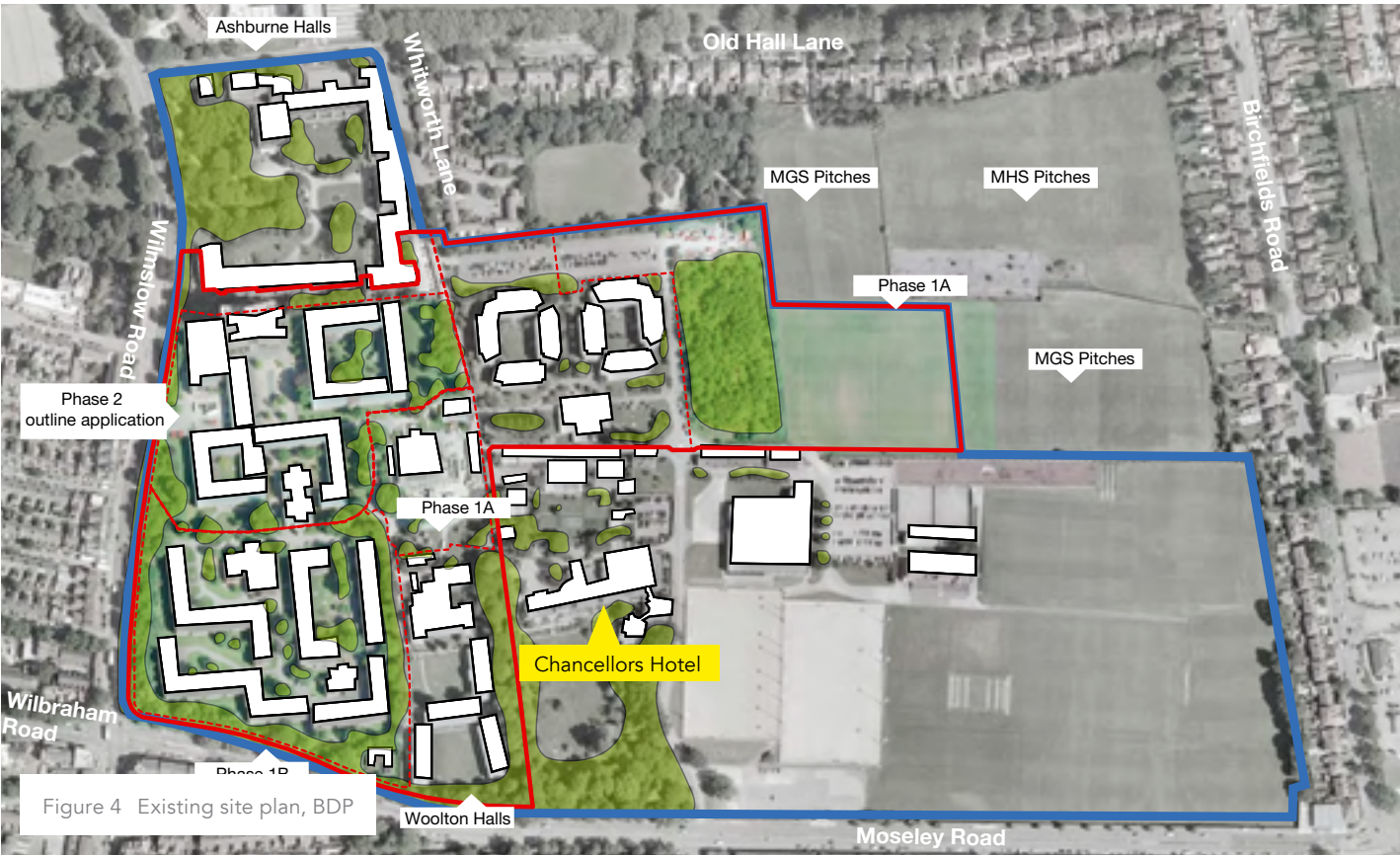
Works to the historic house are limited to the strip out of modern interventions and the reinstatement of a previously blocked doorway.

Remedial works to drainage and the parapet of the 1997 extension are also covered.

Following the remodelling, the new student residence will be called Uttley Hall.

2.7 Context within Fallowfield

Chancellors Hotel is located in the centre of the Fallowfield residential campus, the University's largest destination for student living, providing 3750+ student bedrooms, primarily for first year undergraduate students. Once converted, Chancellors will be renamed Uttley House. It is well placed, close to Wilmslow Road which is one of the key arterial routes into Manchester City Centre and the University's academic campus. It is also located close to the University's main sporting facilities, the Armitage Centre and the new residential development at Unsworth Park.



3.0

Use

3.0 Use

The function of Chancellors has been defined so that there are minimal works to the historic building, with minor works to the 1997 extension to convert it to student accommodation. The adjacent diagram explains these uses.

The impact of the works within the historic house has been assessed within the heritage assessment and can be found in Section 5.0.

The new hall of residence will provide accommodation for 63 female students, with the 'general access' accommodation on the ground floor providing additional learning space and facilities to benefit other students residing in Fallowfield.

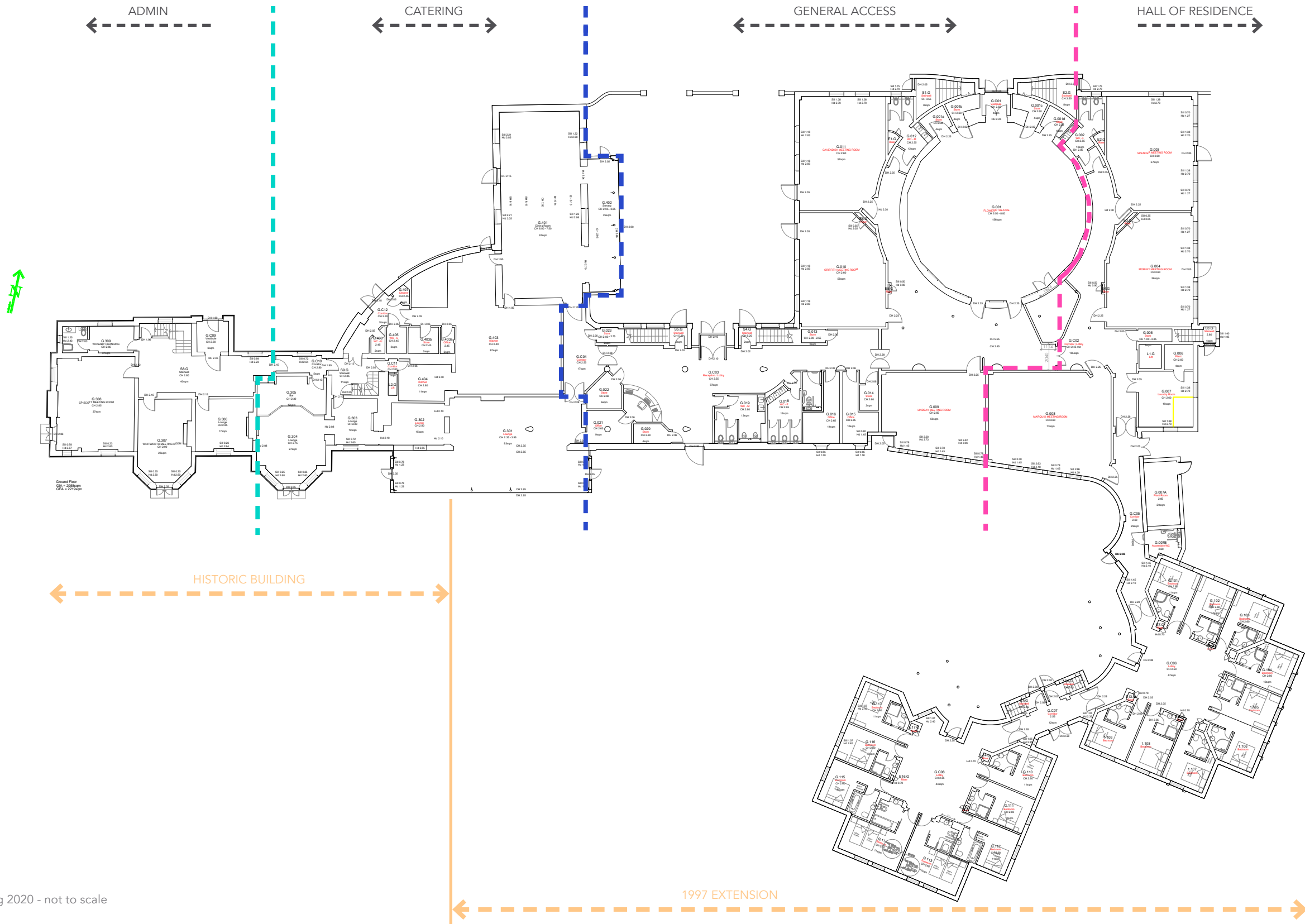


Figure 6 Existing ground floor plan, SDA Consulting 2020 - not to scale

4.0

Layout

4.0 Layout

The change of use from hotel to student accommodation is appropriate as it requires the least amount alteration to suit the new purpose. Externally, there is no change to the built footprint or surrounding landscape.

There are logistical factors to consider, relating to the building's new use:

4.1 Waste Disposal

Waste disposal for Uttley House will be in accordance with the Fallowfield Operational Waste Strategy, 2015.

The external waste provision for Utterly Hall would be 2 no. 1100ltr black metal general waste towable bins, which will be emptied by the University porters into the on site compactor daily.

Sited with these will be 1 no. brown metal 1100ltr glass/plastic recycling bin and 1 no. blue metal paper/card recycling bin. These to be collected weekly in rotation by Biffa in line with the city councils "Kerbit "residential scheme.

As the hall will be catered, the main kitchen will require for its use 2 no. 110ltr black metal general waste towable bins, which will be emptied into the ons ite compactor by the University porters daily. The kitchen will also require 2 no. brown metal 1100ltr glass/plastic recycling bins, which will be a commercial weekly collection, and 2 no. 1100ltr orange metal paper/card recycling bins, provided by 'Paperchase' (a free commercial collector).

There needs also to be provision of 3 x 45ltr wheeled plastic bins for food waste to be collected weekly at cost by the University's food waste contractor.

4.2 Cycle Parking

The University has developed a Living Campus Plan as part of their Environmental Sustainability Strategy, covering the period between 2016-2022. Travel, as well as wellbeing for staff and students is integral to the plan, therefore the University is ensuring there are suitable facilities in order to meet the set targets.

The Fallowfield campus is well catered for in terms of cycle storage and access routes. Bike storage is to be provided in line with the design used for the rest of the Fallowfield campus.

The location of this bike storage on site is not yet identified.

4.3 Internal Alterations

Most of the alterations will take place in the 1997 extension. On the ground floor a student kitchen is being installed within the existing walls of a meeting room, with the existing catering kitchen requiring minimal work. The first floor is to have three new student kitchens which will involve the removal of modern internal walls.

In the historic house a partial height wall separating the bathroom from the bedroom in one of the rooms is to be removed, in order for this space to be converted into office accommodation. This is an enhancement to the significance of the room, as it was originally intended to be one, open room.

The alterations, therefore, to convert the hotel into student accommodation are relatively modest.

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5.0

Elements to Remain as Existing

5.3 Scale

There is no extension proposed to the existing building.

5.4 Landscaping

Remedial works to an area of existing York stone paving in the entrance courtyard are necessary to maintain safe access. There are some limited remedial works required to the parapets of the 1997 extension (drawing: 2278_STAGE 4_015).

There are no further changes proposed to the hard or soft landscaping.

5.5 Accessibility

Following consultation with the University of Manchester by SDA Consulting, no accessible bedrooms are to be included within the student accommodation. This shall be managed by the University through the provision of suitable accommodation on other sites. Current accessible toilets to the ground floor are to be retained.

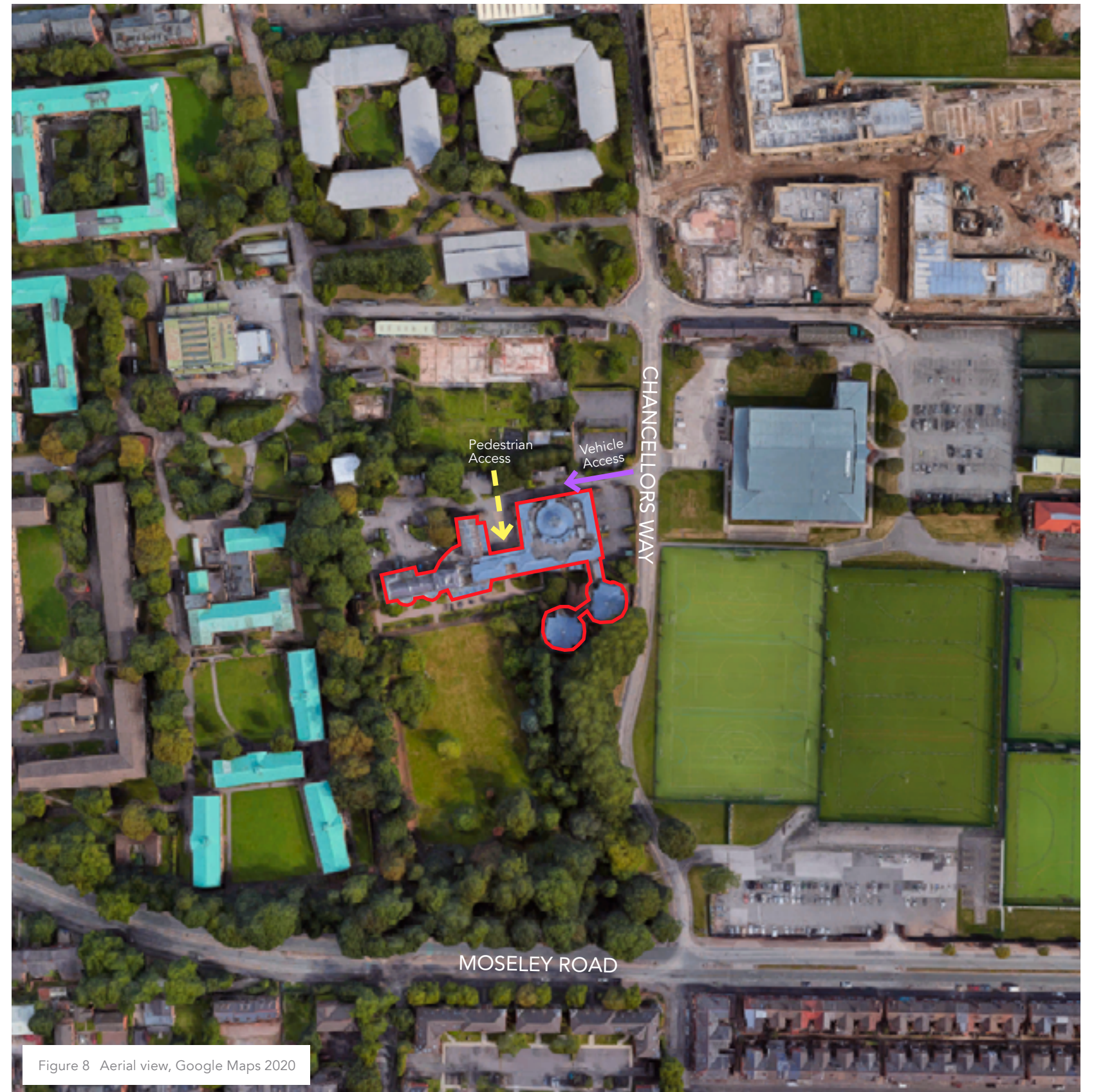


Figure 8 Aerial view, Google Maps 2020

6.0

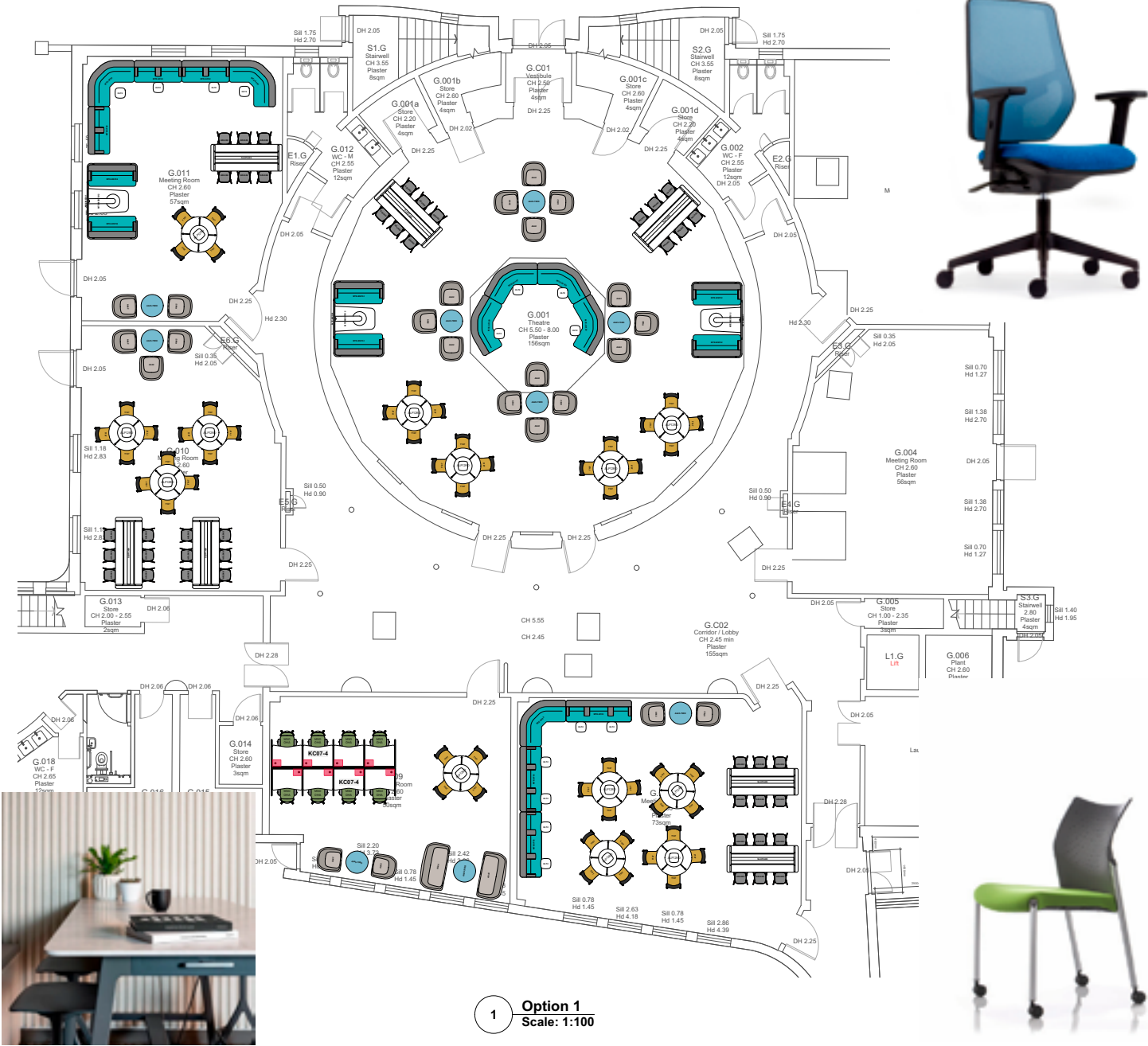
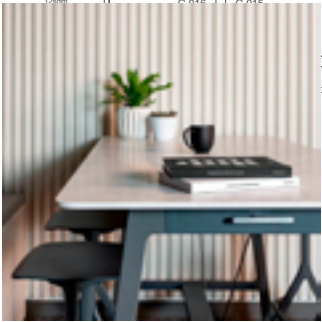
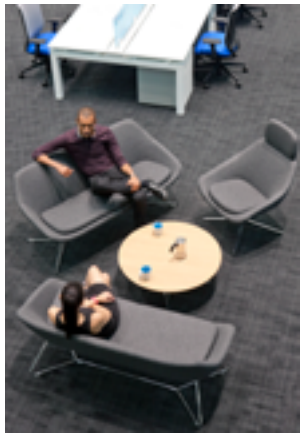
Appearance

6.0 Appearance

6.1 General

The scope of works ranges from decoration only, to minor structural work, kitchen facilities, new bedroom furniture and new floor finishes. New acoustic insulation to the student kitchens will minimise noise travel to the surrounding student bedrooms. The scope of work and finishes for each room is available as part of the application drawings.

The finishes will be suitable for commercial accommodation, modern and welcoming.



Count	SymbolName	Image
2	(JLR Furniture) KF07-4	
23	A642	
2	A644	
9	A645-75RD	
13	ALP12RD	
42	AXL04U	
14	HLT2	
8	M500HA	
6	MTE-BSF02	
3	MTE-MED01	
3	MTE-MEDTB12	
3	MTE-SF02	
3	MTE-SF03	
4	MTE-SF120	
7	SLHP2409	
52	T107	

The Senator Group

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Title - Chancellors Court Hotel

Company/Dealer- The Senator Group

Contact- James Knight

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Figure 9 Example furniture layout and products

6.2 Sample Room

Between November and December 2019, a sample room was updated to show the process of converting the room and the expected finish.

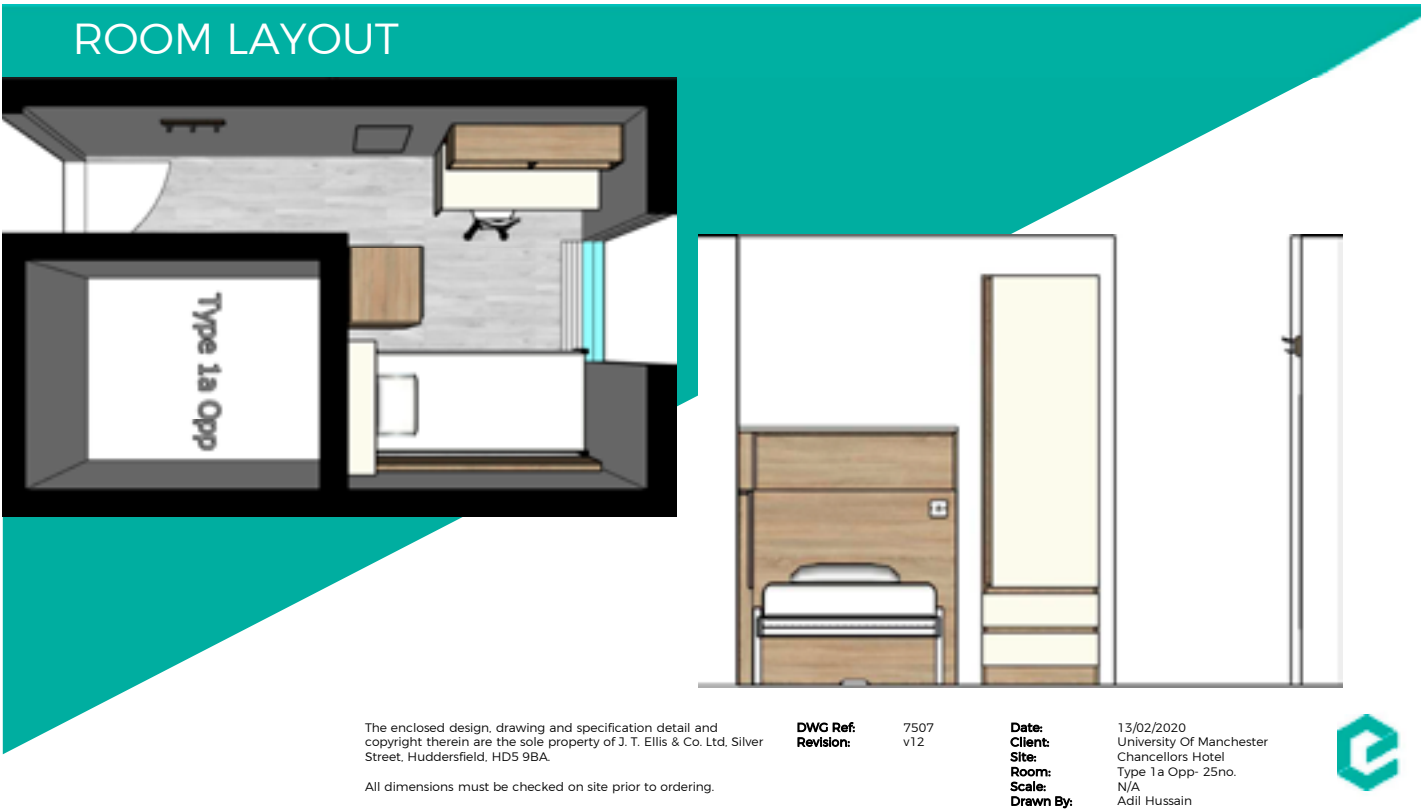


Figure 10 Example room layout, Ellis, 2019



Figure 11 Existing hotel room, Manchester and Cheshire Construction



Figure 12 Proposed bedroom, Manchester and Cheshire Construction

7.0

Summary

7.0 Summary

The conversion of Chancellors Hotel to Uttley House will provide accommodation for 63 students and a ‘reslife’ advisor. It will support the University of Manchester’s aim to create a diverse range of residential room types. It is planned that this will be an all-female hall in the first instance to replace the loss of St Gabriel’s Hall.

The location of Chancellors makes it a natural choice for conversion into student accommodation and requires relatively little alteration to suit its new purpose. The historic house will involve minimal works to convert it to office accommodation and this has been assessed in the Heritage Assessment.

Externally, there are no physical alterations to the buildings or landscaping, apart from remedial works to certain lengths of the 1997 parapet. An area of York stone paving in the entrance courtyard is to be repaired to maintain safe access.

The fit out and furniture will be appropriate for its use as student accommodation.

The resulting Uttley House will bring together catering, living, learning and student activity within one space. It will support and supplement the academic experience of the student and provide opportunities for social interaction in a safe and nurturing environment.

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Architects | Masterplanners | Heritage Consultants