



Atelier MB
Urban Architects

Design, & Access Statement
to support a Planning Application
for works to the basement at Churchgate House

Client: Helical (Churchgate) Ltd.

Job Reference 1819
Revision A



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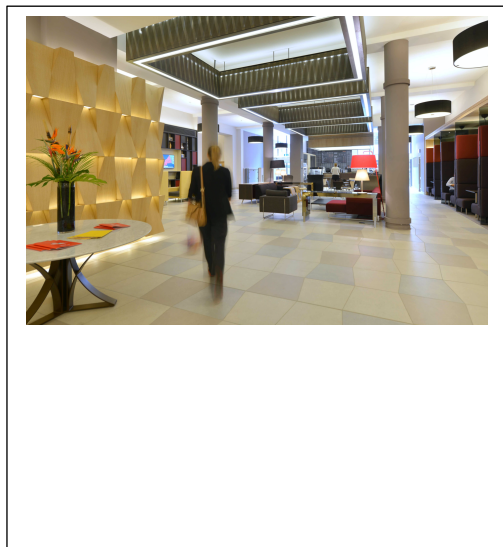
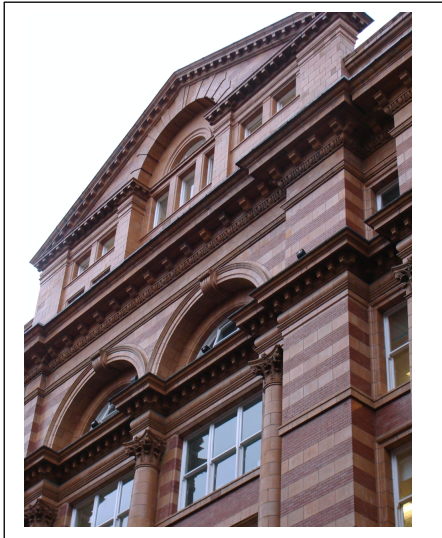
Preamble

This report has been written by Atelier M B Architects, a practice specialising in works to historic buildings.

Atelier MB

The practice was established in 1980 by Jo Provan and Ray Makin and has gained a strong reputation for its work on the historic building fabric in Manchester and beyond. We have worked closely with English Heritage/Historic England, Conservation Officers and Local Planning Departments to deliver award winning schemes, which preserve the historic nature of heritage assets but crucially keep them economically viable.

Notable examples in Manchester include the conversion of St. George's and St. Mary's churches in Hulme into apartments, and more recently the remodelling of the entrance and reception at Churchgate House a Grade II* office building, works to Dale House, Grade II, Manchester House, Grade II, Sunlight House, Grade II, and others in Manchester. At the heart of all our heritage schemes is the facilitation of the viable usage of heritage assets. Informed by an intelligent understanding of the historic asset, we ensure the retention and optimisation of principle historic fabric.



1.0 Introduction

Atelier MB have been instructed to act for the building owner (Helical plc) to design this scheme sympathetically and without compromising the special and unique features of Churchgate House.

This application is for the change of use of part of the basement level at Churchgate House, Oxford Street, from car parking (Sui Generis) to B1 Office accommodation.

These works will upgrade the existing fabric providing high quality lettable space helping to ensure the continued occupancy and thus viability of the building. All proposals have developed from the recognised need to maintain the characteristic significance of the listed building and its historic features, namely the existing open plan spatial quality and exposed columns.

2.0 The Building and its History

Churchgate House, a Grade II* listed building, is located on Oxford Street, in Manchester city centre. An excerpt from the listing and detailed information on its history and significance are included in the Heritage Statement, prepared by Atelier Heritage, supporting this application.

3.0 Planning History

The building has undergone a series of upgrading works in recent history to ensure the building remains lettable and complies with current standards.

A recent application was made to modify the courtyard suite to suit a new tenant, and the courtyard itself was refurbished in the last few years to provide a more welcoming and attractive communal space.

Works have been completed to enlarge and enhance the entrance Hall. This has been very successful and has intensified interest in the building.

In recent years, many of the floors to both Churchgate and Lee have been refurbished in accordance with relevant Listed Building consents. These fit-outs were carefully considered and strike a necessary balance between the need to preserve the Heritage Asset and the need to sustain the building at commercial rent with all the requirements of modern servicing.

4.0 Design Statement

The building has an existing basement and an existing partial sub-basement.

4.1 Design Summary

By facilitating the sustained re-use of a Heritage Asset, this application assists the council objective highlighted in paragraph 185 of the NPPF 'In developing this strategy, local planning authorities should take into account: the

desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of Heritage Assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation’.

4.3 Design proposals

The original use of the Basement was typical for a 19C warehouse basement, including mechanics and engine rooms and storage, hence the proposed Plant rooms are in keeping with the original character of the space.

This application relates to proposed changes in response to requirements of modern commercial tenants. The drawings show an open plan office with removal of non-original partitions.

Details of the proposed changes are a response to the significant features of the listed building.

In summary the proposed works comprise:

- Installation of louvres within existing windows for ventilation purposes facing the canal and the reinstatement of the window openings facing the canal.
- New exposed services to service the B1 use.
- New VRF heating/cooling and ventilation.
- New lighting and small power provision to serve office fit-out.
- New raised floor to facilitate servicing for data and power for future tenants.
- New accessible WCs.
- New access/escape staircase from Oxford Road.
- Reinstatement of pavement lights along Great Bridgewater Street.
- Reopening of the windows looking into the basement from Oxford Road and Great Bridgewater Street.

Windows to Canal

The design of the canal side will benefit greatly from opening up the space to the canal views. This feature will enhance the space and allow natural daylight into the basement.

Windows to Street level on Oxford Road.

The non-original framework and boxing to the back of the display windows are proposed to be removed in order to bring in more natural daylight into the space.

The non-original glazed display windows are proposed to be replaced with new modern slim aluminium framed glazing, to allow maximum daylight into the basement. Automated sliding doors will enable access to the new premises from Oxford Road and allow emergency egress.

Windows/ Louvres on Great Bridgewater Street.

Our aim was to bring as much natural light into the basement as possible. For this purpose, the servicing needs of potential basement occupiers have been carefully analysed to calculate the amount of ventilated area required and the possibility of replacing some of the existing louvres with glazing has been explored. Hence, the proposal is to replace three of the louvred windows on the Great Bridgewater Street elevation with glazing, with modern aluminium frames, but split in three equal sections to mimic the existing windows pane relationship.

Windows facing Canal

Our aim was to remove as much as the non-original louvres to the Canal side elevation and reinstate with glazing, whilst ensuring the building meets existing and future needs. We are retaining the original frames, and not altering the existing windows. Louvres at high level will serve necessary airflow from the new offices with a full heat recovery system in operation.

The rectangular windows facing into the loading bay are split vertically and horizontally to form openings for four panels of glass. It is proposed to replace some of the existing panes of glass with a louvered panel in order to meet the requirements for ventilation. These windows are located on the internal courtyard facing elevation and are of historic significance as part of the original building. There will be a visual impact from their alteration, but in the wider context of the external face of the building, these areas are considered to be very limited. The overall look of the window will only undergo minor change, with the window frames and pane pattern remaining as existing. The proposed louvers are to match those previously approved on the building and panel positioning will be replicated on all the adapted windows, creating a uniform effect.

Staircases from Oxford Road

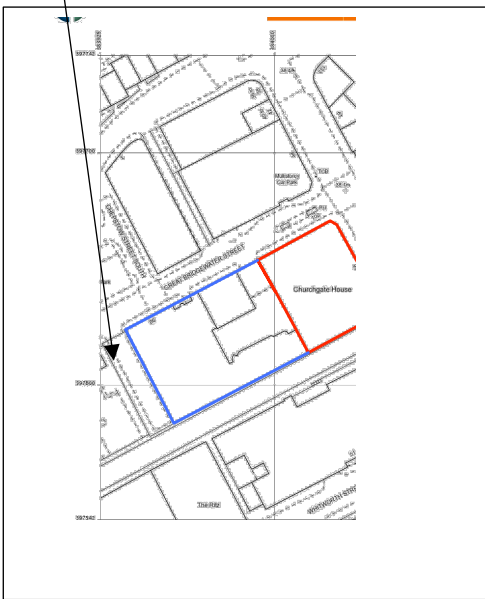
A new staircase is proposed to connect the street level on Oxford Road directly with the basement unit. The staircase is to be designed to have an industrial feel, in keeping with the original character and use of the space.

Pavement Lights reinstatement

In our effort to bring in more natural light into the basement, we are proposing to reinstate all pavement lights on Great Bridgewater Street but one, with new appropriate replacement. Although not original, the pavement lights carry significance and by making them functional again, we will make the basement space underneath more desirable to future tenants.



Bin Store



Bin store

Existing bin stores that service the whole of Lee House and Churchgate House are located to the East of Lee House. The new basement office in the proposals will utilise this existing store which has ample capacity for expansion.

Ramps levelling

No longer used as car park to the front of the basement, the need for a ramp connection between the front and the back of the basement by car is no longer necessary, hence the vehicle ramp connecting the front with the back car park area is no longer needed. The proposal is to level the floor in that area and convert the space above the ramp into a storage space.

Timber door facing Canal

The doors which appear to be historical, but unlikely to be original, are to be retained and fixed open. A glazed internal screen is to be installed as a modern intervention for security and containment, but the original doors will remain in situ and be a fitting memory of the original use of the passage of goods from the building to the canal and vica-versa.

Services

Service distribution is via exposed ceiling services and this is detailed in the accompanying information from Marketaylor. The exposed distribution of air via ceiling ductwork units and heat recovery is deemed appropriate in this space. The volume of the original space will remain intact and the new interventions will be clearly obvious. Lighting and fire alarms will also be exposed.

Floors

The floors are concrete, and the proposal is to install a small raised floor into the space to facilitate power and data distribution to new tenants. The existing floors have little heritage value and any columns are brickwork and have no base detail. The installation of this floor will therefore not compromise any historic detail and remove the need to distribute services down existing walls.

Ceilings

Ceilings will remain exposed and visible as there are in the existing car park. The only exception to this will be the new WC area which will have suspended ceilings to aid sanitation and protect a large volume of services in this small space.

5.0 Access Statement

The basement is approximately 3200mm below the average footpath level.

There is an existing disability compliant lift that connects the footpath level on Oxford Road to both the basement carpark level and to the upper ground floor lobby level inside the building. This lift is accessed from the existing door to the right-hand side of the main door from the Churchgate house entrance lobby. There will be no need for any modifications to this lift shaft or the door openings as this already fully operational.



Existing entrance to disabled lift from Oxford Road affording full access to basement and lobby floors

People who may have difficulty with the main staircase entrance from Oxford Road will be able to use the Oxford Road lift to access the basement and the lobby area and also be able access the entire building from the lobby itself. There is a full range of disabled WC facilities proposed at basement level and wherever changes in level are identified, compliant disabled ramps have been added. Please refer the General Arrangement plan for further detail and to drawing E(101) to see the existing lift from Oxford Road.

In addition, there is an existing internal lift that connects all upper floors and the lobby and the basement. This lift will be modified to connect to the basement as currently it does not serve the basement. However, the shaft and door openings are in place and so there will be no need for any structural modifications.

Staircase access to the basement is introduced in the window nearest to the canal and the second window closest to great Bridgewater Street. Due to the limited width at the top section closest to the street, the stair width is limited to 900mm.

7.0 Conclusion

This application represents minimum change and a low level of intervention through additional walls, doors, stairs and re-glazing. The proposals will not harm the heritage significance of Churchgate House and will ensure the space remains in active use. This is considered to meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 134:

‘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 securing its optimum viable use.’

It is suggested that this application will enhance the heritage asset by safeguarding its future through the provision of a viable end use.

