Heritage Statement
Manchester Central

January 2020

Turley
Heritage

Contents

1.	Introduction	1
2.	The Heritage Assets	2
3.	Assessment of Significance	3
4.	Impact Assessment	6
5.	Summary and Conclusions	9
Appendix 1:	Heritage Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance	

Our reference
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1. Introduction

1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Turley Heritage in support of a full planning application and application for listed building consent for minor alterations (the 'Proposed Works') to the grade II* listed Manchester Central, Manchester (the 'Application Site'). The works are confined to the installation of infill panels to 3 no existing arches to the building.

1.2 The Proposed Works consists of the wider Manchester Civic Quarter Heat Network (MCQHN) project which is part of Manchester City Council's climate change action plan within 'Manchester – A Certain Future' (MACF). The proposals involve creating an Energy Centre which connects to a number of key Manchester City Council owned buildings (Manchester Art Gallery, Town Hall Extension and Central Library) and other buildings (the Midland Hotel and Manchester Central) with low-carbon energy.

1.3 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty upon the Local Planning Authority in considering whether to grant planning permission or listed building consent to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses (s.16 and s.66).

1.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides the Government's national planning policy on the conservation of the historic environment. In respect of information requirements for applications, it sets out that:

"In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance"[1].

1.5 Section 2 of the statement identifies the heritage assets that will be affected by the Proposed Works. Section 3 provides an assessment of the significance, in terms of the special architectural and historic interest, of the grade II* Manchester Central. This assessment of significance is proportionate to both the importance of the identified heritage assets and the likely impacts of the application proposals. It is undertaken on the basis of published information, archival research and on-site visual survey.

1.6 Section 4 provides an assessment of the impact of the Proposed Works, in light of the statutory duties of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, national policy set out in the NPPF, and local planning policy for the historic environment (set out in detail at **Appendix 1**).

[1] MHCLG (2019) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – para. 128

2. The Heritage Assets

2.1 The NPPF (2019) defines a heritage asset as:

"A building, monument, site, place, area, or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest"[2].

Designated Heritage Assets

2.2 Designated heritage assets are those which possess a level of heritage interest that justifies designation under relevant legislation and are then subject to particular procedures in planning decisions that involve them.

Listed Buildings

2.3 Manchester Central (originally known as G MEX) was included on the statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest at grade II* on 18 December 1963 with amendments on 06 June 1994. The list description states the following:

"Railway station, now exhibition hall and car park. 1876-9, by Sir John Fowler, for Midland Railway Company; altered. Iron and glass on brick undercroft, with brick side walls. Rectangular plan. Single segmental-vaulted vessel of 15 bays with 210-foot span, built on extensive undercrofts; pilastered 2-storey south side with 3 windows on each floor of each bay, those at ground floor round-headed and those above square-headed; segmental arched roof with ridged bands of glazing. C20 glazed canopy to entrance at north end. Vaulted undercroft with intersecting tunnel vaults. Intended entrance block at north end never built."

[2] MHCLG (2019) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – Annex 2: Glossary

3. Assessment of Significance

Significance and Special Interest

3.1 The NPPF defines the significance of a heritage asset as:

"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting."[3]

Listed Buildings

3.2 Listed buildings are defined as designated heritage assets that hold architectural or historic interest. The principles of selection for listed buildings are published by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and supported by Historic England Listing Selection Guides for each building type.

Assessment

3.3 The following assessment of significance is proportionate to both the significance of the identified heritage asset and sufficient so as to understand the impact of the Proposed Works, given their nature and extent. The assessment has been undertaken on the basis of published information, archival research and on-site visual survey.

Manchester Central (Grade II* Listed)



Figure 3.1: Manchester Central (2017)

3.4 Manchester Central is located in Manchester City Centre on a large triangular site with an open space to the north. It is positioned on raised ground allowing for prominent

[3] MHCLG (2019), National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - Annex 2: Glossary

views of the structure from the north. To the immediate west is the grade II* listed Deansgate Goods Station, and the grade II* Midland Hotel is located to the north.

Architectural Interest

3.5 Manchester Central is of architectural interest as an impressive example of Victorian transport architecture, designed in 1875-80 by Sir John Fowler for the Midland Railway Company. It is described in the Pevsner Architectural Guide of Manchester as "*a coolly sophisticated building, with a glass foyer on two levels fronting Windmill Street*"[4].

3.6 The former railway terminal station is rectangular on plan and has a substantial footprint oriented north east to south west. The south east elevation is faced with red brick and contains regular rows of windows at first and second floor levels. At ground floor a series of round-headed openings are topped with painted semi-circular hoodmoulds with raised keystones. At first floor level windows are rectangular and framed with sandstone shouldered architraves.

3.7 The 15 bays of the south elevation are divided by brick buttresses with semi-circular caps below a brick dentilled frieze. The parapet is moulded with rectangular blind relief panels. The design motifs assist in breaking up the massing of the building and create an interesting rhythm across the south façade. The north and south elevations appear as a network of cast iron lattice grids providing a sense of depth to these facades. The north elevation is partially obscured by the single storey modern extensions to the listed building.

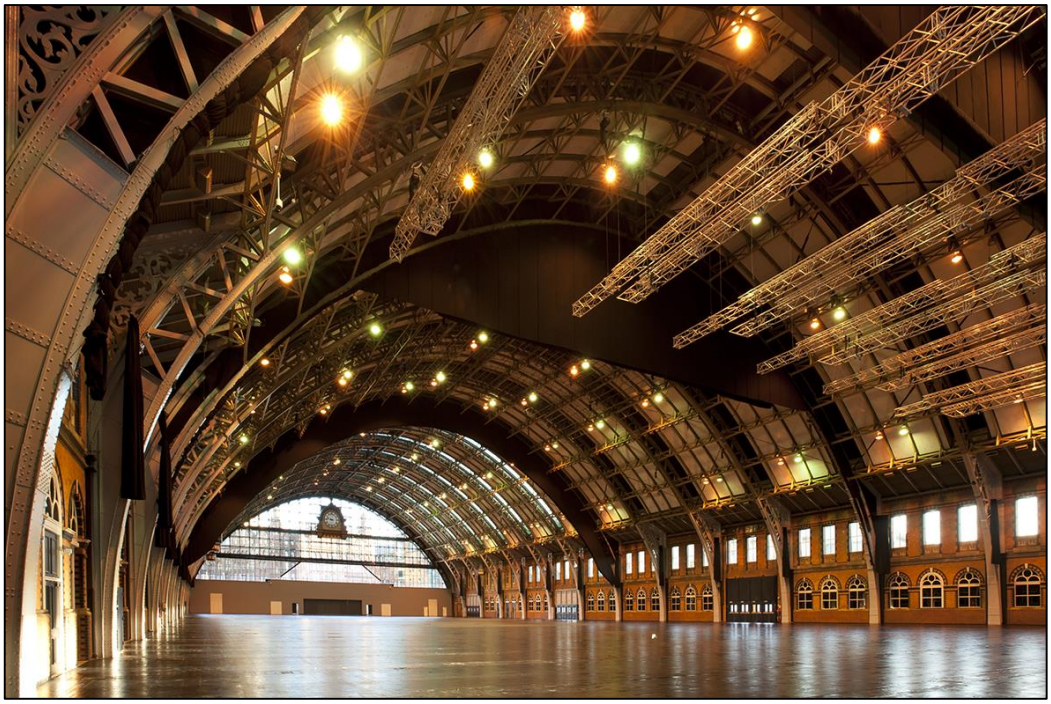


Figure 3.2: Interior of Manchester Central

3.8 The convex roof structure spans 210 feet/64 metres and is segmentally vaulted, giving the building a horizontal appearance. Arches are linked by lattice purlins carrying

[4] Pevnser, Hart (2002) Pevsner's Architectural Guides: Manchester

intermediate ribs. Internally, the building retains its large open vaulted space which, despite its conversion in the 20th century to an exhibition space, has maintained its character and grand form.



Figure 3.3: Interior of Manchester Central

3.9 At basement level, there is a brick undercroft with numerous tunnel vaults which is believed to have originally been used for storage and housed train locomotives. It has since been converted into a car park.

Historic Interest

3.10 The G MEX was Manchester's fourth railway station. It was designed by chief engineers Sacre, Johnson and Johnstone who came together from the Midland, Great Northern, and the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railways, to form the Cheshire Lines Committee. The Midland Hotel, to the north, was designed to accommodate passengers arriving at the station, and the station and hotel were connected by a walkway to the north of the station.

3.11 The station closed in 1967 and following closure it was bought by the Greater Manchester Council who acquired control of the site in 1978. The building was then converted to the Greater Manchester Exhibition and Events Centre by Jack Bogle of the architects firm Essex, Goodman and Suggitt, opening in 1986.[5]

[5] Pevnser, Hart (2002) Pevsner's Architectural Guides: Manchester

4. Impact Assessment

Summary of Legislation and National Planning Policy

4.1 Under The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Manchester City Council (MCC), in determining the submitted full planning application and application for listed building consent, has a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their setting or any features of special interest it may possess (s.16 and s.66).

4.2 The NPPF also requires that great weight is given to the conservation of designated heritage assets and this reflects the statutory duty of the 1990 Act with respect to listed buildings.

4.3 The key heritage issue to be taken into consideration is therefore the effect of the works on the significance and the special interest of the grade II* listed Manchester Central.

4.4 In accordance with paragraph 128 of the NPPF, the significance of the affected heritage asset has been described at Section 3 of this report.

4.5 Paragraph 192 states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, putting them into viable uses consistent with their conservation, as well as the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

4.6 Paragraph 193 requires when considering the impact of a Proposed Development on the significance of a designated heritage asset that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. 'Conservation' is defined by the NPPF as *'the process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance'*[6].

Pre-Application Discussions

4.7 The application proposals have been informed by pre-application discussions with the MCC conservation officer and without prejudice, were considered to be acceptable in principle.

The Proposed Works

4.8 The Proposed Works are primarily confined to the interior and basement level of the grade II* listed Manchester Central. The works involve the installation of infill panels to 3 no. of arches.

[6] DCLG (2012) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – Annex 2: Glossary

4.9 The arches form a perimeter to the proposed energy centre site. The infill panels will be installed in order to provide protection against un-authorised access from the existing Manchester Central car park to the proposed New MCQHN Energy Centre.

4.10 Further detail on the Proposed Works is set out in the supporting Design and Access Statement prepared by Vital Energi.

Impact on the Significance and Special Interest of Manchester Central

4.11 As set out in the supporting Design and Access Statement, the existing arches consist of original masonry which forms part of the external façade of the grade II* listed Manchester Central basement and sub-basement. The arches have been partially altered with modern concrete and the addition of steel vehicle barriers.

4.12 The proposed infill panels will consist of three recessed, open mesh infill panels supported by galvanised steel posts. The posts are to be sensitively secured at the base and head with drilled resin anchor fixings into the existing concrete vehicle barrier and masonry. No architectural features of interest are proposed to be removed or altered as part of the proposals.

4.13 All the proposed mesh steelwork and posts will finished in polyester powder coating (PPC) to RAL 7016 Anthracite colour to match the proposed energy centre being constructed adjacent. This will allow the warmer tones of the red brick arches to remain appreciable.

4.14 Overall, the proposed works are generally minor in their nature and extent and are confined to the lower basement of the building. This part of the building is of less significance and the works do not conflict with any features of interest to this space. The significance of the listed building will be sustained by the proposals. Furthermore, this part of the building will be largely screened in views from the road by the approved Energy Centre.

Statutory Duty

4.15 Under The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Manchester City Council, in determining the application for listed building consent has a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their setting or any features of special interest they may possess. The meaning of 'preservation' in this context, as informed by case law, is taken to be the avoidance of harm.

4.16 The installation of the panels to the existing arches at Manchester Central have been carefully considered and has also been informed by pre-application discussions with the MCC conservation officer. The works do not involve the removal of historic fabric and are confined to an area which will be screened by the new Energy Centre. There will be no harm to the significance of the grade II* listed Manchester Central and the Proposed Works address s.16 and s.66 of The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

National and Local Planning Policy

4.17 With respect to the core planning principle of the NPPF in relation to the historic environment, the Proposed Works will have no adverse impact on the identified heritage asset and will sustain and thereby conserve its significance. The application proposals therefore meet the objectives of paragraphs 192 and 193 of the NPPF.

4.18 In accordance with Policy EN3 of the Core Strategy, the Proposed Works sustains the significance of the historic environment, including the grade II* listed Manchester Central. The proposals also comply with Policy DC19 by not resulting in any adverse effect on the buildings architectural or historic character.

5. Summary and Conclusions

5.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Turley Heritage in support of a full planning application and application for listed building consent for minor alterations (the 'Proposed Works') to the grade II* listed Manchester Central, Manchester (the 'Application Site'). The works are confined to the installation of infill panels to 3 no existing arches to the building.

5.2 The Proposed Works consists of the wider Manchester Civic Quarter Heat Network (CQHN) project which is part of Manchester City Council's climate change action plan within 'Manchester – A Certain Future' (MACF). The proposals involve creating a heat network within the Civic Quarter to provide a number of key Manchester City Council owned buildings (Manchester Art Gallery, Town Hall Extension and Central Library) and other buildings (the Midland Hotel and Manchester Central) with low-carbon energy.

5.3 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty upon the Local Planning Authority in considering whether to grant planning permission or listed building consent to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses (s.16 and s.66).

5.4 The installation of the panels to the existing arches at Manchester Central have been carefully considered and has also been informed by pre-application discussions with the MCC conservation officer. The works do not involve the removal of historic fabric and are confined to an area which will be screened by the new Energy Centre. There will be no harm to the significance of the grade II* listed Manchester Central and the Proposed Works address s.16 and s.66 of The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

5.5 In accordance with Paragraphs 192 and 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Proposed Works will sustain the significance of the heritage asset identified in this report.

5.6 For the reasons set out above, the Proposed Works accords with Policies EN 3 and DC19 of the Manchester Local Plan.

Appendix 1: Heritage Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance

Heritage Legislation and Planning Policy Considerations

Statutory Duty

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides that listed building consent is required for:

"(s.7) … any works for the demolition of a listed building or for its alteration or extension in any manner which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest…"

In determining such applications the following duty is placed upon the decision maker:

"s.16(2) In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority, or as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses."

National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework, 2019
One of the twelve core planning principles of the NPPF is that planning should:

"conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations."

Chapter 16 outlines the Government's guidance regarding conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraph 189 outlines the information required to support planning applications affecting heritage assets. It states that applicants should provide a description of the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

With regard to determining such planning applications, Paragraph 192 provides that local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of the heritage assets, and putting them into viable uses consistent with their conservation, as well as the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraph 193 further outlines that local planning authorities should give great weight to the asset's conservation when considering the impact on a Proposed Scheme on the significance of a designated asset. The more important the heritage asset, the greater the weight should be. Annex 2: Glossary defines conservation (for heritage policy) as:

"The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance."

It also specifies that any harm to, or loss, of significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification. Paragraph 195 outlines that local planning authorities should refuse consent where a proposal will lead to substantial harm or total loss

of significance, unless it can be demonstrated that this is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh such harm or loss, or a number of other tests can be satisfied. Paragraph 196 concerns proposals which will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset. Here harm should be weighed against the public benefits, including securing the optimum viable use.

In considering development affecting non-designated heritage assets, paragraph 197 only requires that the effect of an application on the significance of such an asset should be taken into account in determining the application. It requires decision makers, in weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non designated heritage assets, to make a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Paragraph 200 states that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of a heritage asset should be treated favourably.

Local Policy

Manchester Core Strategy, July 2012
Policy EN1 (Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas) requires that developers within the City Centre consider the City's heritage and continue the *"rich pattern of activity in the core area"*.

Policy EN3 (Heritage) states that the Council will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of the City Centre. New development should support and enhance the historic environment and the character, setting and accessibility of listed buildings. The support text (paragraph 12.21) confirms that: *"The re-use of empty listed buildings will be encouraged subject to consideration of the building's special interest and significance."*

Manchester Unitary Development Plan (saved policies)
Policy DC19.1 (Listed Buildings) states that, when determining applications for listed building consent, the Council will have regard to the desirability of securing the retention, restoration, maintenance and continued use of listed buildings and to protecting their general setting.

In giving effect to this policy, the Council will, inter alia, not permit any external or internal alteration or addition to a listed building where there would be an adverse effects on its architectural or historic character.

Guidance

National Planning Practice Guidance, 2019
Whilst not planning policy the Planning Practice Guidance provides a clear indication of the Government's approach to the application of national policy contained in the NPPF. Where there is conflict between the guidance in the PPG and earlier documents the PPG will take precedence.

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