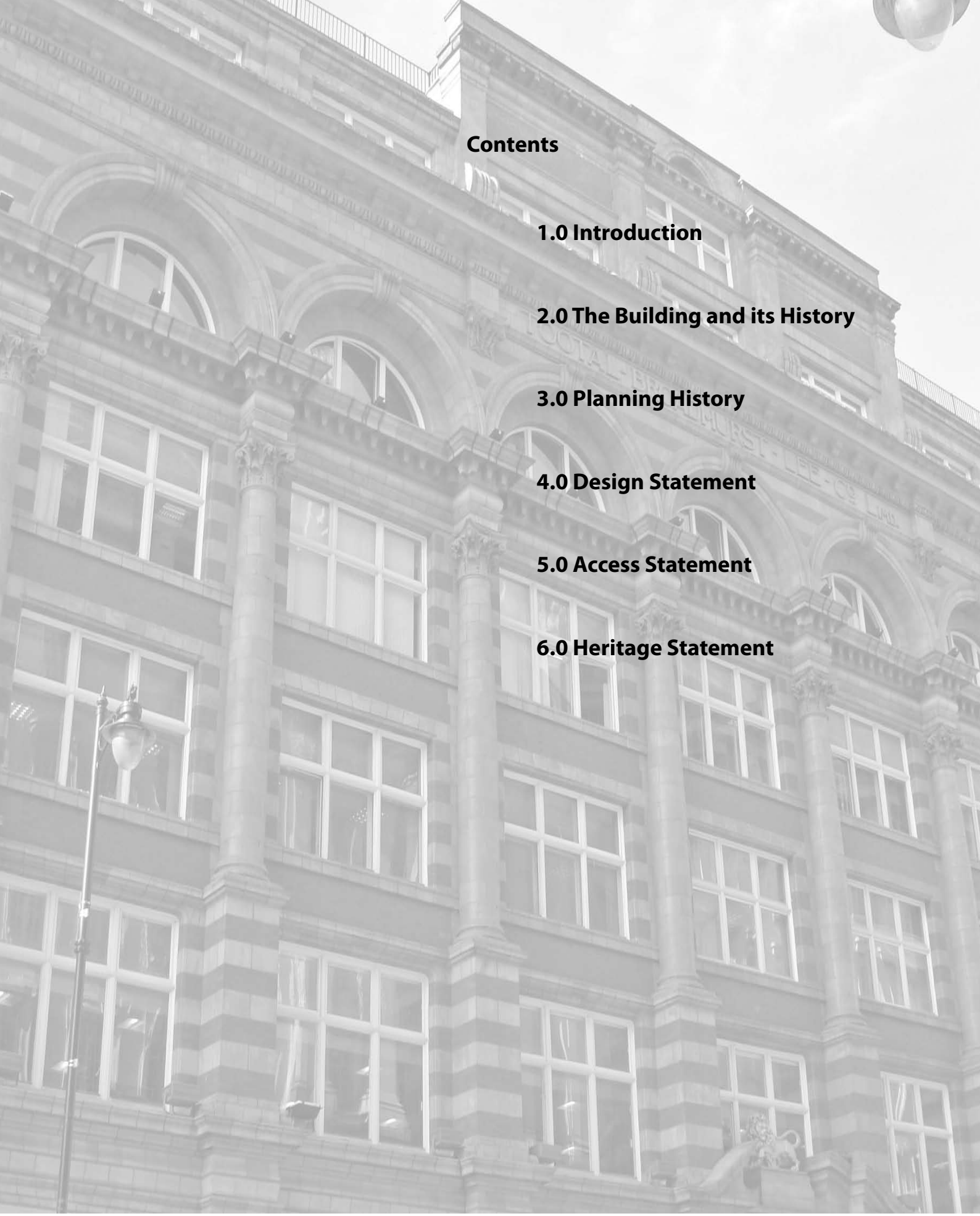
Atelier MB
Urban Architects

Design, Access and Historical Statement to support a Listed Building Application for Churchgate House & Lee House, Manchester

June 2019
Job 1841

Rev **A - Grill/louvre proposal justification updated.**





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Site Location Plan



External view of Churchgate House looking down Oxford Street

1.0 Introduction

Atelier MB have been instructed to act for the building owner (Helical) and ADT Workspace in assisting them to design this scheme sympathetically and without comprising the special and unique features of Churchgate House.
This application is for both CAT A shell modification works, and CAT B fitout works. The works relate to the following areas of the building:

Lee House – Floors 4, 5.

Churchgate House - Floor 5.

This application follows an earlier Listed Building Approval. ref 110193/LO/2015/C1 for the shell works (CAT A) to Churchgate House floor 3; and ref 119075/LO/2018 for the shell works (CAT A) to Lee House 6th and 7th floors. There is also a current application ref. 123883/LO/2019 for CGH 3rd, and Lee House 6th and 7th - all CAT B for the same tenant that will take the suites referred to in this report. Therefore a lot of the Cat B proposals are the same across both applications.

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, the columns and windows.



Churchgate House Elevation



Elevation detail

2.0 The Building and Its History

Churchgate House is located on Oxford Street, in Manchester city centre. It is a Grade II* listed building. An excerpt from the listing is included below.

SJ8497NW OXFORD STREET
698-1/2/265 (West side)

03/10/74 No. 56 Tootal, Broadhurst & Lee Building

GV II*

Textiles warehouse, now offices. 1896-8 (dated 1896 over doorway), by J.Sankey Gibbons. Probably steel-framed, clad in red brick with liberal dressings of buff and yellow terracotta (roof not visible). Large rectangular plan. Baroque style. Five storeys with basements and attic, 7 bays plus canted corners; glazed terracotta to ground floor with raised banding, alternating bands of red brick and yellow terracotta to all upper floors; cornice over ground floor, banded piers to 1st floor serving as pedestals to giant Corinthian colonnade at 2nd and 3rd floor which has a modillioned cornice and finishes as an arcade of semi-circular windows at 4th floor; very prominent modillioned cornice, attic treated as a parapet and raised in the centre; set-in semi-octagonal corner turrets rising from 2nd floor and capped by colonnaded octagonal cupolas with prominent cornices and apex finials with flagmasts. Massive central round-headed doorway with banded surround and cartouche dated 1896, set in architrave of coupled banded columns and broken pediment; 6-light windows with transoms. Right-hand return to Great Bridgewater Street, 5:2:5 bays in matching style, but the 2-bay centre with coupled round-headed loading-bay arches at ground floor (furnished with wrought-iron gates in Art Nouveau style), and pedimented attic. Interior not inspected.



Tootal, Broadhurst & Lee advert, 1920s

Listing NGR: SJ8402497647

2.1 Tootal Broadhurst and Lee

Churchgate House was initially built to provide city centre premises for the Tootal, Broadhurst & Lee Co. Ltd. textile company.

The origins of the company appear to go back to 1799 when Robert Gardner established a textile business in Manchester. In 1817, the Tootal family became involved when his company was absorbed by Atkinson, Tootal & Co. This Tootal was Edward and he had been working with his brother Henry in a silk manufacturing company in Cannon Street, Manchester. After Atkinson left this company in 1851, Henry Lee and Henry Tootal Broadhurst became partners in Tootal Broadhurst Lee and Co. The company's address is given as 56 Mosley Street, Manchester. In the 1860s the company acquired Sunnyside Mills in Bolton and Newton Heath Mills in Manchester. There were a series of name changes until, on the 17 January 1888, Tootal, Broadhurst & Lee Co Ltd was formed and took over the business of spinners and manufacturers with addresses in Manchester and London. The company also traded as Lee Spinners.

As a result of the company's great success and expansion, they came to the decision to erect their own building and acquired a site alongside the Rochdale Canal, on Oxford Street, from the Atlas Iron Works. Its location close to the Great Northern Goods Warehouse and Central Station





Original Entrance Hall

would have greatly assisted import/export trade.

2.2 The Building

In 1895 Salford architect Joseph Gibbons Sankey commenced the design of a building to contain warehousing and offices for the company. His final design, was described by Pevsner as 'large, in red brick striped with orange terracotta, but comparatively classical'. It is generally described as being in 'Edwardian Baroque' style. The building was completed in 1898 or 1899 and was one of Joseph Gibbons Sankey's last works as he died before its completion aged 37. His practice continued as Sankey, Cubbon and Cubbon and they would have seen the building to completion. The date stone over the entrance reads 1896. This was the year that work began.

Such was the continued success of TB&L that, on the land to the west that had been reserved for future development, a brick store house was proposed alongside the canal, but separate from the main building. Designs by Sankey, Cubbon and Cubbon, dated 1900, were executed and appear on the O.S map of 1922.

In February 1910, an extension was proposed to extend the north wing, alongside Great Bridgewater Street. This was also designed by Sankey and Cubbon in a style which closely copied that of the original building. At ground level the two buildings are separated by two openings allowing access to the courtyard whilst above, doorways were formed to link the buildings. Windows had to be infilled at all levels. This extension was always meant to be open plan and the aim was to accommodate a further 200 workers.

Alterations over the next few years were confined to a glazed roof over the rear loading bay (1911 by Sankey and Cubbon and altered in 1916 by the same company) and some alterations to the lavatories. In 1924, J Henry Sellers produced proposals for further conveniences, but these do not seem to have been implemented.


Original Offices

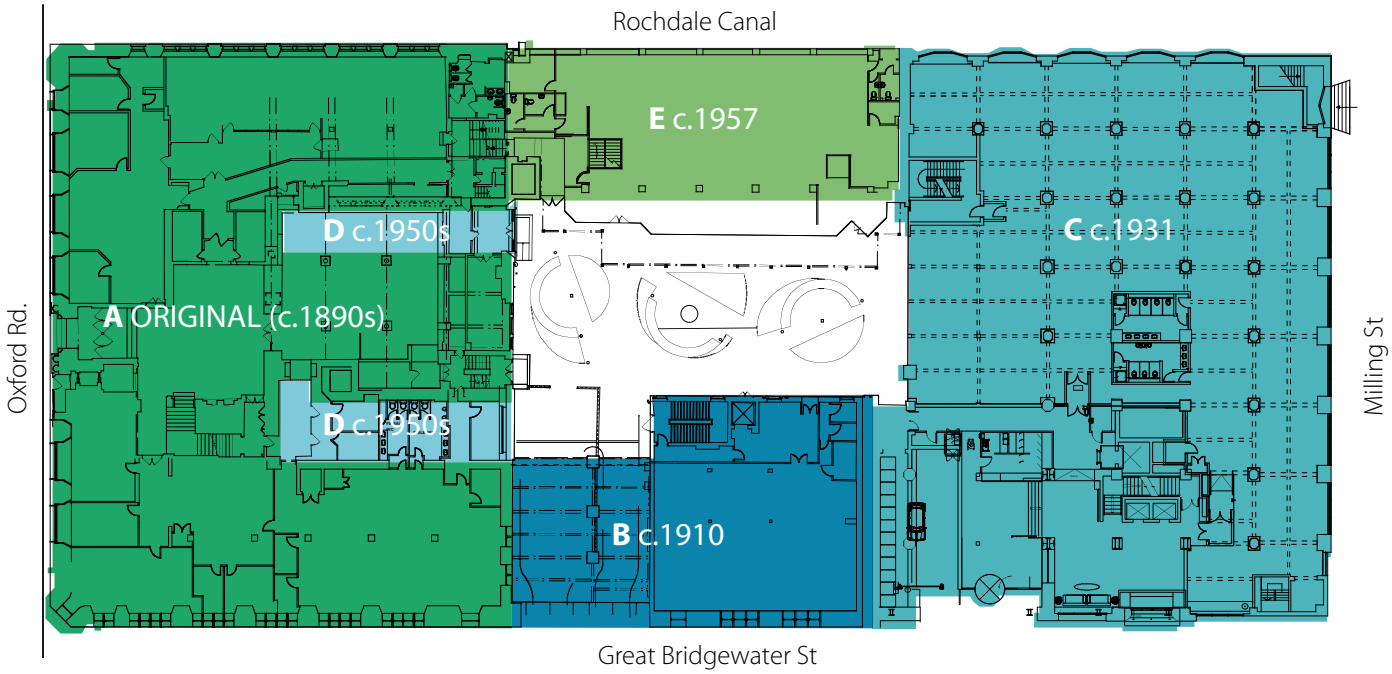
J Henry Sellers achieved a rather more prestigious instruction in 1928 when Tootal, Broadhurst and Lee asked him to design a 17 storey warehouse on the west end of the site. Clearly influenced by American skyscrapers at 217ft it would have been the tallest building in Europe but, for some reason, it was capped at 8 storeys in 1931 and no further added after that date. This building became Lee House. Little change took place until after the second world war when, in the early 1950s, the two loading ways were infilled to the height of ground and first floor (though not identically) and in 1953 an 8 storey canal side building connected the 1898 building to Lee House with the result that the warehouse of 1900 was demolished. The initial use for this building was 'comptometers' and the invoice department. This demonstrates the size of the operation of Tootal, Broadhurst and Lee.

However, this was the end of the boom in the cotton industry and in 1963, Tootal Broadhurst and Lee merged with the English Sewing Company Ltd.

In 1966, the Manchester architect Harry Fairhurst produced designs for alterations to the 1950's canal side buildings and for removing the partitions on the first floor alongside the Oxford Street elevation to create showrooms for Barlow & Jones and Ogden & Madeleys. At the same time, suspended ceilings were installed and many of the original features, including parquet flooring, timber and glass partitions, fireplaces, board room panelling, wall tiles and doors, were removed as part of a 'modernisation'. The proposals also show the windows on the south canal side elevation being replaced with double glazing. It is probable that the mosaic floor to the entrance hall was also lost at this time as it was not in-situ when the 2002 remodelling took place. Fairhurst's 'vandalism' was the first of several but, inexplicably, his is the only work that can be excused as being prior to the listing in 1974.

During the 1980s, other alterations began to be made, including the creation of the basement car parking in 1989, and in the early part of the 1990s the building was extensively stripped out to create offices to rent. In 1995, the main elevations were restored and replacement

terracotta was supplied by Shaws of Darwen. Further remodelling, by Buttress Fuller Alsop Williams took place in 2002 and it would seem that there were some attempts to reinstate the spectacular tiling of the entrance hall. Unfortunately, it bears no resemblance to that which once existed and is but a parody of Sankey's original work. In 2012 the building's new owners undertook a strip out of the first floor. The restoration reveals the column heads and better views of the window heads by cutting back the suspending ceilings. This work, to the designs of Makin Architecture (now Atelier MB), was a first step in the upgrade of the building for improved office use whilst at the same time ensuring that any original features are restored and exposed to view whenever possible or protected for future generations if the exposure is not appropriate.



Existing ground floor plan indicating historic phases of development



Original Board Room on Ground Floor



Counting room

2.3 Design

The building has a basement and a partial sub-basement. The ground floor circulation and entrance hall were finished in fine mosaics incorporating the TBL logo in intertwined Arts and Craft style, at various locations.

The elevation to Oxford Road contained a board room, together with private offices with timber and glass walls to the corridors. On return to the canal side elevation was a large room with tiled walls and columns and plaster cornices to the beams. This room was known as the counting house and was adjacent to the cashiers office. There are excellent photographs, taken at the time, which show how fine the building was. They are included in this report.

The plan of this original building was 'E' shaped so the Counting House occupied the south leg of the E (along the canal side) whilst the north leg is said to be No.10 Department and Sales Room. Separating the two legs from the centre section were two loading bays entered from the west end, which was an open area at that time. These loading areas had loading docks opening into the central leg of the 'E', two on the south side and one on the north, and each side has two crane wells. The two loading bays were linked at the east end by a gangway which appears to have been separated from the main building by a mixture of masonry walls, including a door into 'Mr Smiths' office, and some type of timber and glass screen wall, to the west of the gangway, separates the area from an area known as the 'Towns Room'. What the name means is unclear but the room had two pairs of double swing doors opening onto the loading dock of the south loading bay and a single pair to the north side and the room seems to have been a receiving and shipping facility. As well as the crane wells, there were hoists which travelled up the building. Two of these opened onto the gangway but the most northerly one seems to open into the loading bay.


Pattern making on the top floor

It would seem that the function of the counting house is ambiguous. Was it a place where the goods were 'counted' in and out, or, as it was next to the cashier office, was this to do with book-keeping. Found images suggest the latter. At the rear of the Towns Room there were another set of taking-in doors flanked by windows. A stub jetty is shown on the drawings, to enable vehicle, to load/ unload. The windows and doors were separated by large piers which look as if they are masonry but if so, there is another conundrum because what is evident on site is a cast, or wrought iron frame with uprights in the positions shown on the blueprint. This feature is referred to later.

So the ground floor was always meant to be sub-divided whilst, as we journey up the building, the sub-division was much less defined and there are notes on the 5th and 6th floors, in particular, which refer to areas being sub-divided to suit departmental requirements. We know that the top floor was partially used by the pattern makers, see photograph, but it is clear that most of the top floors were, simply, open spaces used for manufacturing or storage.

It could have been expected that the building would have been used for warehousing, as many others in the city were, but the building did have power lines feeding each floor and so it is clear that some manufacturing did take place in addition to export and packing. However, the layouts of the lower floors are more cellular, especially on the Oxford Street frontage and the architect's original drawings note that 'floors are to be sub-divided to meet the requirements of the several departments'.
In January 2008, the Architectural History Practice produced a Historic Building appraisal for Churchgate House and it is not intended that we repeat that information here. We have included this document as an appendix to this submission.



Refurbished, extended and restored entrance by Atelier MB and Space Invader


Refurbished, extended and restored entrance by Atelier MB and Space Invader

3.0 Planning History

The building has undergone a series of upgrading works in recent history to ensure the office suites remain lettable and to comply 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.

There is also extant permission for additional plant to the roof area – which will in part be implemented as part of these proposals.

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 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.


Refurbished, extended and restored entrance by Atelier MB and Space Invader

4.0 Design Statement

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'.*



Example view of an existing suite Churchgate House 5th Floor



Example view of an existing suite Churchgate House 5th Floor

4.1.1 Proposals

In summary:

• Strip-out non original suspended ceilings

• Strip out non original lightweight partitions

• Reconfigure suite entrances to provide ramp access.

• New/revise existing raised access floors

• Add new WC accommodation within Churchgate House

• Installation of louvres within existing windows for ventilation purposes in Lee House

• Exposed services

• New VRF heating/cooling and ventilation

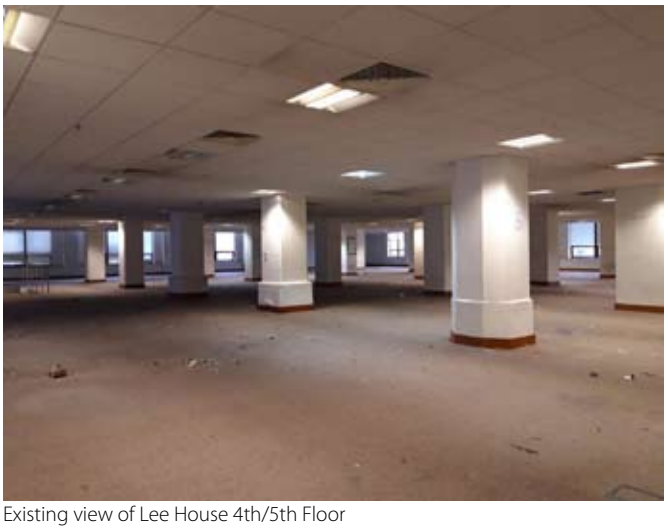
• New lighting and small power provision to serve office fit-out.

•New fitted furniture and finishes as part of tenant fit-out.

4.2 Design Detail

4.2.1 Layout

The proposed suite fit-outs are largely open plan in nature. This suits the working environment of the tenant and the nature of the building. As with most offices, there is a need



Existing view of Lee House 4th/5th Floor



Proposed Lee House 4th Floor Fit Out Plan

to provide meeting spaces, private offices, IT comms and store rooms. Where possible new walls will be glazed. If that is not possible, pods are utilised with ceilings below that of the existing structural slab thus enabling the entire space to continue to be read.

Fully solid walls are primarily only proposed for stores, server rooms and WC areas. Please refer to the details for more information.

4.2.2 Ceiling, Plant and Servicing

This application includes the removal of the existing suspended ceiling, which is a later addition and is of no historic or architectural significance. The original ceilings and structural framework will be cleaned and left exposed. This will have a positive impact on the spatial qualities, restoring the original proportions of the interior. It will also have the benefit of removing the current tiles, which detract from the space as they limit the ceiling height and are not of a form considered wholly sympathetic with the nature of the listed building.

As a consequence of removing the suspended ceiling, the required services within the unit will be exposed, and run in minimal housings suspended from the ceiling.

This approach is considered to be the least harmful and invasive to the listed structure. A minimal number of fixings to carry the services will be required and they will be clearly visible as a modern intervention within the space and identifiable as non-original. The required fixings will have a limited impact on historic fabric and are at a level that is considered justifiable when weighed against the option of retaining the suspended ceilings.

The proposed heating, cooling and ventilation strategy is required to meet the needs of the modern office environment. The ducted system requires intake and extract via an external wall. These have been concentrated into an area of Lee House facing into the courtyard. Frame colour matched aluminium louvres will replace some of the top panes of glass – whilst the frame is retained.

4.2.3 Entrance Doors

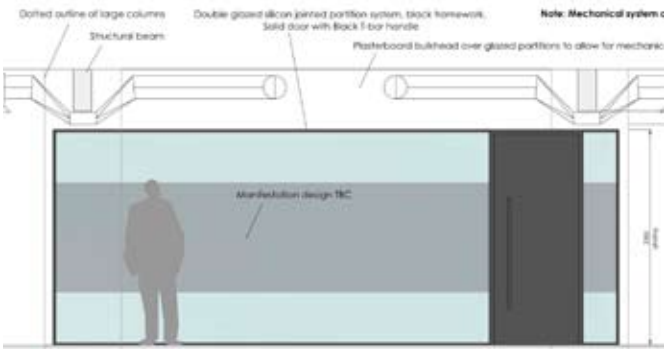
In Lee house, this proposal includes for the careful removal and replacement of both suite entrance doors off the main stair core at floors 4 and 5. The proposed doors will be the same style of that which has been previously approved on other floors within this building.

4.2.4 Secondary Glazing

This is located in Churchgate house and will offer both thermal and acoustic improvements. The frames will not be visible externally, and are similar to those approved elsewhere within the building.

5.0 Access Statement

All suites will now be accessed via part M compliant ramps, and in places the raised access floors are being extended or modified to ensure level access across each suite. As a result, the suites will be fully accessible to wheelchair users. New Part M complaint WC facilities are also proposed within each suite where currently non exist.



Example Meeting Room Enclosure - by ADT Workspace

6.0 Heritage Statement

This proposal is part of a series of upgrades to the building, which are gradually removing previous non appropriate modern interventions and replacing these with more sympathetic and minimal modifications that both suit the needs of the modern office tenant, whilst respecting and giving deference to the historical fabric.

6.1 Significance

The main features of significance within the area of the proposal are: structural columns (currently compromised by partition walls running in to them); the open plan nature of the space; the distinction between the original block and later extension; and the windows which form a significant proportion of the elevations to the front and rear.

6.2 Proposals and Impact

The proposals are intended to have minimal intervention on the spatial characteristics. Primarily limited to demountable partitions and furnishings which do not extend to ceiling height.

6.2.1 Removal of partitions and ceiling tiles

The existing sub-divisions are modern partitions with no heritage value. They will be carefully removed from the space. This proposal does not cause harm to historic fabric and is considered an enhancement to the space, particularly as current partitions clash with structural columns.
The modern suspended ceiling has no heritage value. It will be removed throughout the office space and original ceiling heights exposed.

6.2.2 Openings Between Churchgate and Lee

At several areas throughout the building, there are already connections between Lee House and Churchgate. Our proposals add new openings on each side of the floorplate to greatly improve the connection between the spaces and allow the entire floorplate to be let to a single tenant. This tenant has instructed the fit out

works included within this application. The openings will be limited in height to ensure they read as modern modifications.

Where existing openings are uncovered (i.e. former windows in the face of Churchgate House prior to the construction of Lee), we will re-open and lower the sill to form full walkways. Any profiled reveals will be repaired/ reinstated and remain exposed. This act will help to clarify the historical evolution of the building layout.
The historical significance of the building areas covered in this application is the identification of two different parts (original and extension blocks). This clear division will remain easily readable as the wall is being punctured in limited areas, not removed.
The significance of the plan form is retained, and the removal of suspended ceilings and clear legibility of columns will mean the two distinct parts are more easily identifiable.

On the basis that the impact on the overall architectural and historic significance of the listed building is low, and that the new scheme allows a return to a more historically accurate open plan, the change is considered justified.

6.2.3 Re-arrangement of toilet facilities

The existing toilet facilities are not original and have no heritage significance. The remodelling and replacement of the WC area will have no heritage impact.

6.2.4 Insertion of louvres in windows

The new office layout requires louvres to be fitted in a limited number of windows to address the ventilation requirements. These are noted on drawings as being in the elevations facing into the courtyard.

In Lee House and NBX, the proposal is to insert louvres within the existing powder coated aluminium frames of the windows, in the top panes only. They are to match the colour of the frame and are the same as previously approved existing louvres on other floors.
In CGH the window frames are timber, so here the grills are set back from the face of the frame, and painted a dark colour to minimise their visual impact. The changes are

reversible, and necessary to meet modern standards of office accommodation. In response to Planner comments, the M&E consultant has explored reducing the size of these vents. But due to the significant amount of air that must be transferred, the vents need to be the size shown. The level of impact is low in visual terms, and when the elevation is read as a whole, the panes being altered are a small proportion of this. The change will have a low impact on the architectural and historic value of the building.

6.2.5 Ducts

All proposed ventilation/heating/cooling ducts will be exposed and clearly legible as contemporary insertions. They will not harm the character of this office space.

6.2.6 Doors

The replacement of non-original internal doors with upgraded versions is not considered to have an impact on the heritage significance of the building.

6.3 Policy

The impact of these proposals on the heritage value of Churchgate House is low. They are part of a wider refurbishment programme which has proved successful in attracting tenants to the building and is providing a secure commercial future for the asset.

This application represents minimum change and a low level of intervention. The proposals will not harm the heritage significance of Churchgate House and will ensure the space remains in active use.

They are considered to meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 195: '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.'

Plans also adhere to Manchester City Council's Core Strategy, Local Development Framework, which states, 'Proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets will be encouraged



Example view of an existing suite

where they are considered consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.' Policy EN Heritage.

The proposals described in this application will neither substantially harm nor adversely affect the heritage asset. They are similar in nature to those already approved and implemented on other floors of Churchgate House. It is suggested that this application will enhance the heritage asset by safeguarding its future through the provision of a viable end use.

Sources consulted:

-Historic plans.

-Manchester – An Architectural History, John J Parkinson-Bailey, Manchester University Press, 2000.

- Pevsner Architectural Guides – Manchester, Claire Hartwell, Penguin Books, 2001.

-Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment, Communities and Local Government Dept, 2010.

- PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide, March 2010.

- Historic Building Appraisal, Churchgate House Manchester, AHP 2008.