Atelier MB
Urban Architects

Heritage, Planning and Access Statement to Support a Planning and Listed Building Application for Sunlight House, Manchester

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Sunlight House

1.0 Introduction

This report has been updated following receipt of a conditional planning and listed building consent, which requests further details of the proposals to the Little Quay St. façade. Following discussions with the planning department, we have revised and updated the Heritage Statement to include additional commentary on this aspect of the proposals. We have clarified the significance of this element, and elaborated on the harm caused by these specific proposals.

This report is written in support of a Planning and Listed Building Consent application, for works to Sunlight House, a Grade ll Listed Building on Little Quay St., Manchester. The drivers for the application are the needs to improve tired accommodation and facilities to attract tenants, and to ensure the iconic listed building remains a viable commercial offering, in an evolving city centre.
The works briefly comprise the following:

- New entrance from Little Quay St., and associated high quality landscaping.
- Restoration of central stained glass dome, and reinstatement of glazed over roof.
- Insertion of 2 no. glazed lifts into light-well
- Internal modifications to form an extended and reconfigured entrance and reception with a new seating area and cafe. This change will allow a single control point to the entrance to the offices and visible link to all lift cores.
- 13th and 14th floor renovation and improvements to enable vacant suits to be let.

1.1 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 conversion of St.. George's and St.. Mary's churches in Hulme into apartments, and most recently the remodelling of the entrance and reception at Churchgate House, Grade ll* office building on Oxford St.. 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.

2.0 Design Statement

2.1 Proposals

The proposals requiring Planning Consent, relate to the change of use of part of the ground floor area, the re-landscaping of the external space on Little Quay St., and the creation of a new entrance central to the Little Quay St. elevation.

In addition to the heritage policies, covered more fully elsewhere, the proposals also positively contribute to the following relevant local planning policies:

SP1: 'Development in all parts of the City should:- Make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice including:- creating well designed places that enhance or create character.... protect and enhance the built and natural environment.'

EC 1: Employment and Economic Growth in Manchester
'Priorities for ensuring continued economic growth include: Creating business destinations by enhancing the primary business use with ancillary commercial facilities;'

EC 2 Existing Employment Space:
'The Council will seek to retain and enhance existing employment space and sites.'

EN 1
'Wherever possible the opportunity should be realised to enhance existing and provide new areas of meaningful open space, and the maintenance and improvement of the City's permeability should be considered in all proposals.'

Change of Use

This work relates to the very front portion of the floor plate. The space is currently occupied by 2 no. corner entrance lobbies serving the upper floor offices, the Old Grapes public house, now vacant, and one small vacant retail unit.

The existing corner entrances at Quay St. and Atkinson St., will form a fire escape and retail units respectively, requiring very little modification to the building fabric. A new large central entrance will then be formed on the Little Quay St. elevation, in place of the existing Old Grapes public house.

The justification for these works is covered more fully in the Heritage Statement. However, these works are intended to overhaul an inadequate vertical circulation system, and create a grand entrance more suited to the sense of arrival anticipated by the ambition of the soaring exterior, and befitting a substantial office building bordering Spinning fields in the heart of central Manchester's business district.

Whilst once popular, the Old Grapes pub became tired, with an incoherent and cluttered façade, which detracted from the listed building. The external seating area and associated barriers certainly detract from the Little Quay St. elevation, and obstruct views and passage from Quay St. to Atkinson St. and into Spinning fields.
One small retail unit at the Quay St. end, recently vacated, will be absorbed into the enlarged reception area.
Two new retail units at the corner of Little Quay St. and Atkinson St., will then capitalise on the proximity of the vibrant Spinningfields development, and the improved footfall from Quay St. facilitated by the proposed significant landscaping improvements.

New Entrance

The new entrance on Little Quay St., will be located in place of the existing Old Grapes public house. Designed with reference to the existing façade detailing, this is an unequivocal contemporary proposal, offering an imposing sense of arrival to this iconic building

Design Development.

Internal Remodelling

Various options have been explored in terms of the remodelling of the ground floor to form a suitable new entrance and reception area to serve the building.

Our brief from our Client and building owner, has always been to form a new double height space. The requirement is to create a new generously sized double height volume in which to form a new central entrance and reception area befitting the size and scale of the existing listed building. This is to replace the existing dual corner entrances, the shortcomings of which are covered elsewhere in this report.

This brief has been derived from thorough analysis of the market, and the alternative accommodation available within the locality. The intention has always been to make a significant investment in the renovation of the building to improve its standing in the market and therefore command optimum rental values to facilitate the continued maintenance of this significant city centre building.

External Treatment

Various options have been explored as to how to convey the internal reorganization of the building externally. We have striven to achieve a balance between retaining the historic fabric as existing, and ensuring that the new entrance is clearly legible as such by all concerned.



Original Little Quey St Elevation

The two existing entrances are visually prominent at the corners of the Little Quay St. elevation, and are characterised by substantial decorative stone surrounds. In contrast, the existing former public house entrance along Little Quay Street is characterised by rather more refined and modest detailing in the form of decorative cast iron and timber framing.

Referring to the original elevational drawings by Joseph Sunlight, we can clearly see the visual hierarchy asserted by this change in elevational treatment. One which remains relevant along the side elevations – for example

the entrance into the basement gym on Quay Street needs to be subservient to the corner entrances serving the upper floor offices.

But it is a hierarchy that needs to be carefully re-addressed on the Little Quay St. elevation, to ensure the internal remodelling proposals are successfully conveyed and treated as part of the on-going modernisation of the building.

Proposals Explored

The design team, Client and Planning department all agree that the removal of all non-original clutter from the existing Grapes public house frontage is a beneficial proposal as the basis for any further modifications. This involves removal of non-original timber columns, and a plethora of vents, ramps, and lighting.

Our proposals for the treatment of this new entrance have evolved as the design team has explored the existing building fabric, and assessed various options.

One early proposal, is the use of a pre-patinated dark bronze as a finishing material. We are keen that the new proposals can be readily understood as contemporary yet timeless, a natural evolution of the architecture. The original materiality is characterised by Limestone, and painted iron decoration. We therefore sought bronze as a contrasting yet sympathetic high quality finish. Bronze is also a material used widely throughout the city – such as the Queen Victoria and Alan Turing statues, and the ornate railings fronting the John Rylands library.

Any facsimile of natural materials would clearly do a disservice to the heritage asset, whilst using a material already in abundance on the building would risk causing confusion as to the evolution of the building.
The options explored are summarised below;

1. Frameless Glazed Extension.

This option was explored as a way of having minimal physical intervention into the existing façade. The glass would lightly touch the existing stonework, whilst the translucency would allow the existing building to be read behind.

Despite this, it is the most physically intrusive option, as it must be sized to form a sufficiently wide entrance way, with the double height needed to balance with the scale of the existing elevation.
It is a significant departure from the existing architectural language, and somewhat un-balances and dominates the delicate composition originally conceived by Sunlight. For these reasons, it was rejected by the design team at the feasibility stage.


Option 1 - Frameless Glazed Extension

2. Projecting Circular Doorway

This option was derived from the circular architectural language at the heart of the building – the dramatic glass dome over the courtyard. The initial proposal was to form a simple bronze enclosure that would rise above the original iron frame, to ensure the scale suited the context. This option required the removal of the cast iron shop front frame. To prevent the need to remove original fabric, this proposal was later revised to sit beneath the existing iron frame, with free standing lettering above.
The proposal would project circa 2.5m from the building face – albeit just within the footprint of the basement below.

However, it remains a significant departure from the architectural language of the existing façade.
The width of door possible between the columns also limits the flow of visitors, despite considering both rotating doors and curved sliding doors. We considered using two rotunda doors, however, this would simply not be as effective in practice when channelling people towards a single reception desk.


Option 2 - Projecting Circular Doorway

This intervention would also break up the clear 'goal post' form of the former shop frontage from street level. This would be a visually dominant intervention into the façade composition, acting as a foil rather than in harmony with the existing design.

3. Frameless Glass Screen with Projecting slimline canopy

This option allows the existing iron frame to remain intact. A slim projecting bronze clad canopy would cut through a frameless glass screen, to form a covered entrance area.

This alternative has the benefit of affecting the iron framing minimally.

Unfortunately, from street level the upper portion of the shop front framing will be hidden from view by the canopy. We evolved the design to break the canopy into three pieces thus leaving the intermediate columns fully visible.

However, such a tripartite solution causes drainage and structural issues which have proved unfeasible to resolve successfully.

4. Frameless glass screen incorporating sliding doors, with bronze cladding to original timber/iron frame.

This is the solution we derived from the explorations above, and presented to the planning department for consideration. It is one that has evolved from the various constraints and limitations explored above.

It gives the new entrance the visual gravitas it deserves, whilst remaining in harmony with the existing fabric. All existing iron framing is retained in-tact behind the bronze cover – whose form is derived from the profile stone which frames the corner entrances. This is both a legible contemporary solution, and one which retains the majority of the original fabric in a fully reversible proposal.

This solution was not favourably received by the planning department and further options were explored. The building owner is strongly committed to a double height entrance space as being an important feature in the retention of Sunlight House's position in Spinningfields. The design team felt that the best solution for combining the clients desire to have this space, with the conservation officers ambition to retain the original shop fronts, is to restore and refurbish the latter in total but to celebrate the double height space by removing the 3 windows above the entrance and their surrounding stonework and to introduce full planar glazing above the ground floor levels. Whilst this is a less reversible solution to that which was reflected, it is a very small percentage of the elevation and does make a clear statement of the change proposed

The design intent is for the existing, original window structure to be fully refurbished and the planar glazing at the first floor level to be related to the stonework above. The planar glazing at the upper level will be forward of the existing window frames, reflecting the fact that this is a new intervention.



2.2 Heritage Statement

Introduction

This heritage statement forms part of the application for Sunlight House, Quay Street, Manchester. It has been prepared by Atelier Heritage and its author is Laura Jessup, MA History and Theory of Architecture.

Site and heritage assets

Building:
Sunlight House is a Grade II listed building (designated 1988) which sits within Deansgate/Peter Street Conservation Area.

An excerpt from the listing is included below:

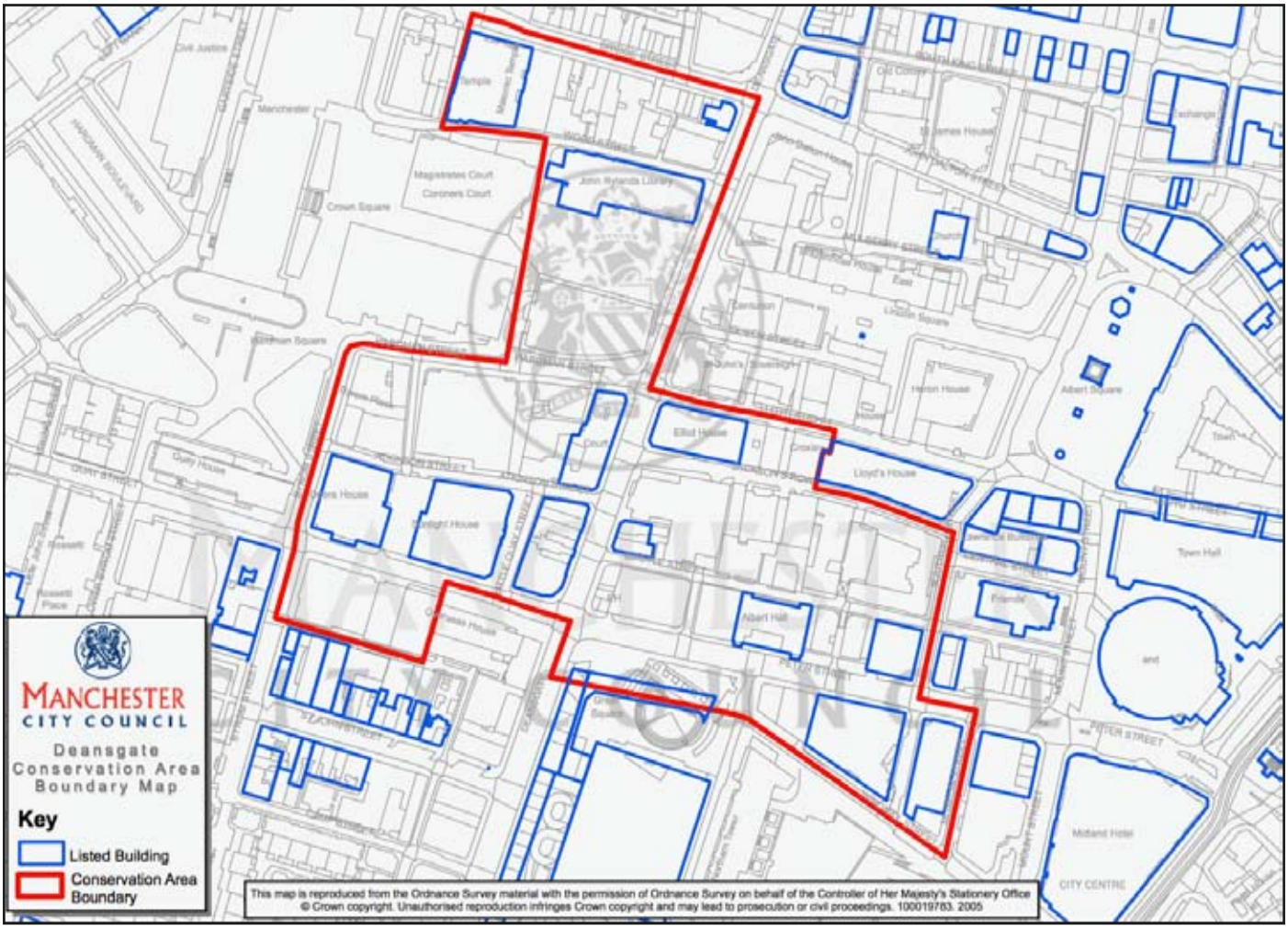
SJ8398 QUAY STREET
698-1/16/347 (North side)
20/06/88 Sunlight House
GV II
Office block. 1932, by Joseph Sunlight. Steel frame with cladding of Portland stone, slated 3-tier mansard roof with glazed centre. Large square plan with central light-well. International Modern style with classical elements. Ten storeys plus 4 attic storeys successively set back, 8 bays plus wide canted corner to right rising to octagonal turret with domed lantern and apex finial; ground and 1st floors treated as plinth, 6-storey 5-bay pilastrade to centre, with moulded frieze over 7th floor and enriched cornice over 8th floor, plain parapet over 10th floor. Very regular fenestration with casements of 3 lights to the 5-bay centre and 2 lights to the end bays, metal panels between floors; 3-light attic windows, those of the first 3 tiers set in individual projected rectangular dormers. Shop windows and a round-headed archway at ground floor. Canted corner treated as tower, given strong vertical emphasis by narrow 3-light mullioned windows in each face tiered continuously from 2nd to 10th floors, with carved decoration over 10th floor, a 1-storey drum over this, set-back 2-storey continuation, and set-back lantern;

square-headed doorways to entrance porch at ground floor. Return to right and rear elevation similar, but with slated attic and extruded dormers. Forms group with Royal London House to right (Nos 188-202 Deansgate, q.v.). Listing NGR: SJ8347398031

The history of the building is documented in the historic report which accompanies this application.

Conservation Area

The Deansgate/Peter Street conservation area was designated in 1985. A map of the area is included here.



Other assets

There are two listed buildings immediately within the setting of Sunlight House:
Royal London House. Grade II. 1904 by Charles Heathcote (listed in 1974). Built as an insurance office, iron frame with sandstone ashlar cladding, free baroque style.

Opera House. Grade II. 1912 by Richardson and Gill with Farquarson (listed in 1974). Stucco on brick, classical style. Some alterations.

Significance

NPPF paragraph 128 requires that local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of affected heritage assets including any contribution made by their setting, in a level of detail proportionate to the assets importance.

Building

The key historical and architectural features of significance of the building are assessed in detail in the accompanying historical report and are identified as follows:

The exterior of the building with its high-quality design and use of materials;
The main external elevations which make an important contribution to the streetscape;
The overall height, massing and corner emphasis which identify the building as a place marker;
Original internal features including the light-well, parts of the tiling and original corridor/internal office divisions on the 13th floor;
Original ceilings, doorways and perimeter storage cupboards on the same floor;
The glazed feature dome over the swimming pool.

The building has retained its original elevations with little alteration, except at ground floor level where the Little Quay Street elevation in particular has undergone significant change.

Photographic evidence proves conclusively that the majority of the existing pub frontage is non-original infill. The original elements are limited to the four metal posts,

decorative vases and a portion of the fascia. The later timber and glass parts were added in the late 1980s/early 1990s. The deliberate attempt to replicate the existing detail has confused the reading of the building and on closer inspection are of a much lower quality than the historic detail. These non-original elements are of no heritage significance.

Conservation Area

The Conservation Area history is outlined on the Manchester City Council website. The appraisal is limited but it is considered that the key elements of significance are identified as the commercial nature of the buildings; the characteristic full use of plots; high-quality heavy, solid materials; complete street-wall frontages with corner emphasis.

The setting makes a contribution to the significance of the building, namely in the immediate vicinity on Little Quay Street and Quay Street and in the longer views from Quay Street and Deansgate junction. The setting of Quay Street has a positive impact on the asset, the setting of Little Quay Street is less positive. The street was originally intended to be wider and create a buffer to the proposed enlarged tower and entrance envisaged by Sunlight. As this never happened, the street has been relegated to a delivery route and pedestrian access to the nearby Spinningfields development. The streetscape is cluttered with furniture and a mixture of surfaces which detract from Sunlight House.

Proposals

The proposed works are detailed in the drawings, elevations and plans included in this application. The proposed works can broadly be divided into five main areas:

- refurbishment of the thirteenth floor and refurbishment of the former caretaker's flat;

- provision of a new scenic lift running from the ground floor to the 12th floor and creation of associated lift lobby on each floor;

- removal of inappropriate housing, and the restoration and recovering with glass of the stained-glass dome in the light well;

- remodelling of areas of the ground floor and first floor to provide a new double height entrance area;

- provision of a new main entrance to the centre of the Little Quay Street elevation.

Impacts

The magnitude of impacts on the asset and the significance of the effects of these impacts (harm) on the asset are set out below.

13th and 14th floor

Proposed works comprise:
Retention of the external corridor around the perimeter of the floor; refurbishment of the office space (revealing and restoring original features); the repair and restoration of original timber floor (where required); retention, repair and repainting of original doors and frames; stopping up of limited number of doors where no longer required; the re-glazing of windows over doors; and fitting of a new door to access the new, modern-form door to toilet area.
All these changes are considered to have a low level of impact on the asset. They will restore and enhance original features and introduce limited high quality modern intervention at a low level. These changes are not considered to be harmful to the asset.

Sunlight House was a speculative office development and whilst it was always the intention to sub-divide the 13th floor space, the existing partitions are non- original and of a poor quality. These will be carefully removed, creating larger units on each side of the building as per the original drawings. The plant room division will stay to accommodate its function, and the space created to the side of it will be converted to a toilet facility. This location, near the existing lifts and next to the plant room is considered the least intrusive and most convenient for occupants. This is considered to have limited impact on the listed asset and does not constitute harm.

The non-original stair access to the caretaker's flat will be removed and the original access on the external wall retained. All existing lifts (including goods lift) will remain in their current form. The offices, including those in the two towers, will be repainted. This is a minimum level of impact, with a low level of harm.

The inappropriate suspended ceiling tiles will be removed, exposing the historic vaulted ceilings above. New lighting will be suspended directly from the ceilings. Any damage to historic fabric will be minimal and greatly outweighed by the benefit of exposing the historic vaulted ceilings. The roof lights no longer serve their original function as the glass has been painted over. These lights will be exposed and repaired, with paint stripped. This will allow natural light in to the offices, as originally intended and enhance the original features. This will have a positive impact.

Upstairs, the caretaker's flat will be redecorated. The fixtures and fittings within the space are not original, of low quality and no historic value. These will be removed. The original access stair (as seen on Joseph Sunlight's drawings) will be reinstated. This is a change of limited impact and is considered positive.

New Lift

The lifts are located in two corners (see existing plans). As the function of the building has evolved, and internal partitions have been added, the original circulation routes have altered and these lifts are no longer considered to serve the occupants efficiently. Detail is given in the report by lift consultants, Dunbar and Boardman.

As a solution two new lifts are proposed. Housing them internally would require the removal of a large area of floor area on each floor and this has been discounted as inappropriate, resulting in significant damage to the building. The location considered to have the least negative impact is external to the building, in the courtyard light well.

The proposed lifts are glass, housed in a glass walled structure which runs up the internal facing wall of the lightwell. The lift will serve the ground floor up to the twelfth floor. Restricting the lift towers to this height

enables the structure to remain below parapet level at roof height, ensuring it is not visible from street level and does not impact on the historic roof line. To minimise the impact of the lift pits on the health club and swimming pool below, the entrance to the lifts in the entrance hall is 1250mm above the current floor level.

It is acknowledged that installing the lifts will result in the loss of some historic fabric. The lift tower is an independent structure, but to achieve stability it will require bolting to the existing columns. The proposed approach will cause limited damage to the glazed bricks (the structure will not penetrate the existing original walls). To access the lift tower at every floor from ground to twelfth, an opening is required on the internal facing lightwell wall. This will require the removal of one complete window frame (four panes in width), sill and five courses of glazed brick below the window opening. The existing frames will be carefully removed and placed in safe storage. The lower courses of glazed bricks will be retained, keeping as much of the original wall as possible. The internal lightwell is recognised as a significant element of the listed building, and the design requires the removal of limited existing fabric to create a new scenic lift access. The affected area is limited to approximately one third of one of the four internal facing walls. This change does represent a level of harm to the asset at a low/medium level. The effect is less than significant to the whole asset and the lightwell feature is retained with a restricted amount of brick removal.

The level of harm has been mitigated by considered positioning of the lift in the least harmful location, the use of glass to open up views in to and through the lightwell (previously only seen from individual office units) and retaining the character of light and openness to a great extent.

The installation of the new lifts will also require the remodelling of the area adjacent to the lift cars at every floor, from ground to twelfth, in order to create the required internal lift lobby/circulation space. This takes a slightly different form on each level in response to the varying internal partition layouts. These partition walls are non- original and whilst their removal will create a 'gap' in the corridor wall, it should be recognised that the relative size of the opening is limited in relation to the floor plan

and does not have an impact on features of high historical significance.

The creation of efficient vertical access to serve the building is accepted as necessary to retain the building in office use. The mitigation undertaken is considered appropriate. The insertion of the lift constitutes a level of harm to the significance of the asset, but this is less than substantial.

Dome and lightwell

The original stained glass dome is currently housed in a wholly inappropriate shed like structure within the lightwell. The desire to replace this with a more sensitive housing, as well as to enhance the views as a result of the creation of the new lift access, have informed the new proposal for the lightwell. The various plant and materials that currently clutter the lightwell 'floor' will be removed where possible. The floor surface will then be covered with timber, or other lightweight, deck, which will conceal those service elements which cannot be removed. The decking will create a uniform level and will be finished in a suitable material to be agreed.

The dome itself is recognised as a key feature of historic significance. The proposal is to carefully remove the metal roof that currently sits over it, including some non-original supporting structure which has been added in an ad-hoc manner in the recent past. The later render will be removed and the original brick beneath retained and repaired. Original ventilation holes within the walls which have been blocked up will be re-opened and ventilation grilles to the corners of the dome will retained.

The main supporting metal frame is considered to be original and will be retained and repaired along with the stained glass. This upper frame will be re finished in a metallic grey paint. A new glass housing will be fitted over the dome, constructed from glass panels with adaptation to allow for ventilation.

The impact of removing the existing housing and replacing it with a new glass version will be high. The effect will be wholly positive, ridding the building of a low quality feature and repairing, exposing and enhancing the original dome feature. For the first time in many years, the

swimming pool will be flooded with daylight and tenants and visitors to the building will be able to see the stained glass dome. This part of the proposal is not considered to represent any level of harm.

Changes to ground/ first floor

External

Since its construction in the 1930s, Sunlight House has been subject to a number of piecemeal changes. It remains partly tenanted, but it has lost its allure as a landmark office destination. In order to secure its long-term viability as a commercial premises and live up to the original grand architectural aspiration, any refurbishment proposals should be comprehensive and address contemporary needs as well as the historic detail and design of the building. On this basis, it is considered desirable by the owners to create a new ground floor entrance.

The two original entrances are positioned on Quay Street and Atkinson Street. In recent years the primary reception has been located at Quay Street end, but for security, it is also necessary to staff the Atkinson Street end. The internal space is limited and access to the main parts of the building is inefficient and confusing due to the various partitions and compartmentalised nature of the space. The proposal is to create a new entrance, central to the Little Quay Street elevation and to consolidate the internal space, forming a flexible entrance space. The two existing entrances will be retained in their existing form with minor changes. At the Atkinson Street end, the opening side glass doors will be replaced with non-opening single glass sheets, the internal space will be used as a retail unit. At the Quay Street end, the existing external doors will be retained and converted to fire exit doors. Removable manifestations will be applied to convey that this is no longer an entrance. The impact of these changes is minimal and is not considered harmful.

The new single entrance will be formed in the space currently occupied by the Old Grapes public house. As described in detail in the historic assessment, the frontage of the pub retains the aesthetic of the original, but is a largely false and somewhat confusing addition to the

original design. The intention is to retain the original elements: the cast iron window frames and fascias and the decorative vase decoration. These will be retained and repaired. All non-original late 20th century infill, including timber frames and glazing, will be carefully removed. None of the original timber window frames remain in this area. The proposal is to insert glass in to the openings and create a double glass door entrance to the centre. The removal of non-original fabric will have a medium impact. The effect of this is considered positive. The use of extensive glazing is considered appropriate: it is clearly identifiable as a modern intervention, does not detract from the original elements which are better revealed and enhanced. This change will have no harmful effect on the significance of the asset.

To create a lighter internal double height space and to mark the new entrance on Little Quay Street, the proposal is to remove three original windows and the wall between and below.
In its place will be inserted a contemporary slimline perimeter aluminium frame, and silicone jointed glass panes. The detailing will be crisp and clearly contemporary. A deep reveal will be maintained. Pieces of recovered stone will be used to infill gaps in the reveal – with a subtle variation proposed to provide a telltale of the original window configuration. The timber window frames (certainly not unique to the building) will also be carefully stored in the building for future reinstatement if necessary.
There is a degree of harm by removing this historic fabric. The design has been though several iterations to find a solution that demarcates the new entrance.
The level of harm has been reduced through a change of design. We no longer propose covering or removing any of the original decorative ironwork. The elevation to be modified on Little Quay St., is not unique. The composition is also repeated on both the Quay St. and Atkinson St. elevations – where no modifications are proposed.

The effect of the impact on the asset is now considered limited in consideration of the whole listed building: the amount of fabric to be removed is limited, and when considered as a proportion of the Little Quay Street elevation and the building as a totality, it cannot be classed as significant harm to the significance of Sunlight House. The residual harm level is considered low.

The proposals for a new entrance represent less than significant harm and are considered to adhere to the NPPF, section 126 which states that,

'Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. 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;
the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.'

The development of Spinningfields and the lack of a coherent plan for the streetscape, has harmed the setting of the listed building. The proposed landscaping scheme, which will be implemented in tandem with the façade works, will go some way towards redressing this damage and improve the public realm.
Please refer to the Planning Statement for a detailed assessment of the public benefits of the scheme (as referenced in para 134 of the NPPF), and its compliance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, para 16(3)
"Any listed building consent shall (except in so far as it otherwise provides) enure for the benefit of the building and of all persons for the time being interested in it."

Internal

The entranceway will lead into a more open ground floor, creating a clear and easily navigable space with access routes to either side of the entrance area and the original lift lobbies, as well as the two new lifts ahead, clearly visible. The walls to be removed are almost all non-original and are not considered to be of historic or architectural significance.

There are two areas of impact on historic fabric: the removal of the wall to the side of the existing Atkinson Street entrance and the removal of the wall to the right-hand side of the Quay Street entrance.

The reconfiguration of the Quay Street entrance took place many years ago and included the removal of the walls that formed the space between the covered 'lobby' and the internal space (see historic report for details). The removal of the Atkinson Street entrance internal wall will, in effect, repeat this process. Ceiling beams will be retained to enable the historic position of the walls to be read, the same approach as that already taken at the Quay Street end. Subtle floor demarcation will also express former wall positions. The removal of any historic fabric represents a degree of harm, but as the extent of the original wall is limited, the Atkinson Street entrance will no longer be in its original use (its function already limited), and evidence of its existence will be retained, the impact and associated level of harm are considered to be well below significant levels. The changes are in line with section EN3 of Manchester Core Strategy,

'Proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets will be encouraged where they are considered consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.'

The wall forming the unit to the right of the Quay Street end of the Little Quay Street elevation (currently vacant) will be removed to allow a clear view of the Quay Street lift lobby and the sitting area created in the former entrance way. The provision of retail units has resulted in a number of piecemeal changes since the building was finished. The partitions to form these units were always intended to be flexible, based on tenant's space requirements. The end wall does appear to be original, but its removal is not considered to be of significant harm to the building. The entrance to Quay Street has already undergone a number of changes and major reconfiguration. The loss of the front unit separation is necessary if the internal open space is to be created. Externally, the unit elevation will remain unchanged and this is considered to be more significant than the wall itself.

In order to avoid further impact caused by the lift below ground level, it is necessary to add stairs up to the new

central lifts. This change of level is not considered to have a great impact on the significance of the building. The new proposed floor finish is terrazzo; the intention being to use a modern material that is clearly identifiable as non- original, but one that will complement the existing material palette.

The creation of a new, grander entrance to the building is hampered by the relatively low ceiling height in relation to the width of the new entrance space and this proposal includes the removal of a portion of the first floor to enable a double height space above the central three bays. This area is limited to the depth of the first line of columns. The floor itself is not of significant historic value, but there will be a change of character and plan to the original building and a limited loss of historic fabric. The extent of this loss and the associated impact when considered as a proportion of the whole is significantly less than substantial. The harm resulting is limited and is not considered to have any significant effect on the architectural or historical significance of Sunlight House. When weighed against the benefit of maintaining the building in viable long-term use, the degree of harm proposed is considered justified.

External changes to streetscape

External changes include the moving of existing pavement lights, which will be retained and re-laid to improve drainage and form level access. 2 no. non-original pavement lights at the Quay Street end will be removed, as will 4 no. at the new main entrance to improve safe level access. A change of pavement surface is proposed incorporating a sun ray design, to reference the building and create a distinct entrance to Sunlight House that is in-keeping with the character of the of the Deansgate Conservation Area and links to the newer design features of Spinningfields close by. These changes do not cause significant harm to the setting of the building or to the character of the Conservation Area.

Conservation area policy

The conservation area improvement and enhancement section states that, 'Where redevelopment proposals are put forward, the City Council will seek designs which are

consistent with the character of surrounding buildings.' http://www.manchester.gov.uk/info/511/conservation_areas/1092/deansgatepeter_street_conservation_area/8

The proposals will have a minimum impact on the conservation area and its significance as a heritage asset. The proposed streetscape alterations would improve the current situation and enhance the setting of Sunlight House. Plans are consistent with the surrounding buildings.

The proposals are not considered to have any impact on the heritage assets identified as being within the immediate setting: the Opera House and Royal London House.

Policy

The significance of the relevant assets has been assessed and the impact upon those assets described. It has been demonstrated that the proposals represent some enhancement to the heritage assets, and where it could be deemed there is a resulting level of harm (through removal of historic fabric) this is limited and has a low effect on the significance of the building and the conservation area.

This application does not represent significant harm to the significance of the listed building. The proposals will however remove a lot of later, unsympathetic interventions and enhance a number of original features.

2.3 M&E Servicing Strategy

Servicing of the proposals has been carefully designed to minimise the impact on original building fabric, and to be concealed where possible. Existing routes and penetrations are to be re-used where feasible.
The servicing strategy proposed comprises of the following:

Reception

- Concealed VRF Fan Coil Units located within 2 new enclosures in the seating and café area. Each enclosure shall have high & low level diffusers to distribute

conditioned air throughout the space..

- The main reception area shall incorporate under floor heating via a concealed LPHW manifold located within a new enclosure.

- 1Nr electric air curtain shall be installed over the main entrance door.

- The reception area shall make use of free cooling using the existing sash windows modified to operate using actuators.

- The toilet and café extract shall discharge into the lightwell area through new openings to meet building regulations requirements for ventilation. Where possible the existing openings in the building fabric will be retained and re-used.

- New decorative lighting shall be installed within the reception space. All associated cabling shall be hidden from view where necessary.

1st Floor

• The comfort cooling for the ground floor space shall make use of the existing condenser cooling water infrastructure installed on the first floor. A new internal water cooled condenser shall be installed within a store room located on the first floor. All refrigerant pipework shall be concealed where possible and drop to the ground floor in existing risers where possible.

13th Floor

• 2Nr new, exposed VRF Fan coil unit air conditioning systems shall be installed to provide heating and cooling to the office spaces. The new fan coil units shall be suspended from the existing curved ceiling structure between the refurbished rooflights, generally as shown on SK04 section A-A. All ductwork, cable trays and refrigerant pipework runs shall be suspended from the existing ceiling structure.

- 2Nr new internal water cooled condensers shall

be provided within the existing plant room located at this level.

- 2Nr New openings shall be formed through the lift motor plant room to allow refrigerant pipework to pass into the respective office spaces.
- New radiators and distribution pipework shall be installed throughout the floor plate to match the existing radiators.

- The toilets shall be mechanically ventilated via an extract fan located within the ceiling void of the toilets to meet Building Regulations requirements for ventilation. The extract shall discharge into the lightwell within the existing plant room located at this level.

- New light fittings shall be installed within the office areas and suspended from the existing curved ceiling

2.4 Landscaping

The re-landscaping of the tired and cluttered apron of land in front of the Little Quay St. elevation, will substantially upgrade the materiality and habitability of the space. New street furniture and trees will improve pedestrian amenity, and visibility through the space. The long term ambition is to re-landscape the entire square of space between Sunlight House and 196 Deansgate. This will be subject to more detailed discussions with the Planning and Highways depts. at Manchester City Council. Please refer to accompanying report by Planit I E. for further information.

2.5 Commercial Context and Justification

As part of this application, we have included a letter from the current agents of the building. This explains the commercial status of the building, and the need to make the changes outlined in this application to ensure continued viability of this listed building as its intended office use.

The entrances, circulation cores and common parts no longer meet the needs of the contemporary lettings market. As a result, rent levels have stagnated, and despite heavy investment in suite refurbishments in recent years, occupancies have dropped such that by 2016 up to 79% of the lettable space could be vacant. This is clearly an unviable and unsustainable situation, putting the long term future of the building at risk. The proposals are required to reposition Sunlight House to meet future market demand.

Sunlight House was conceived and developed as a speculative office building but what was appropriate in 1932 is not necessarily appropriate today and if the building is to remain viable as an office location into the future, it will be necessary to address its shortcomings in terms of ground floor reception presence and internal vertical circulation.

The modification of the first floor windows to Little Quay Street are accepted to cause harm to the significance of the heritage asset. However, this is less than substantial, and not considered significant.
Extensive design development has been undertaken to minimise the level of harm, with various alternative schemes outlined in the Design Access and Heritage Statement.

The concluding proposals are necessary to fulfil the needs of the property, to enable significant repair and restoration works to the property, and to ensure it continues to be a viable contribution to the city's commercial offering.
The harmful proposals are an intrinsic part of a much wider improvement scheme, which offers significant benefits to both the heritage asset itself, and the wider public.

Whilst there are commercial benefits to the scheme, these are necessary to fund the restoration works to the heritage asset, and the improvements to the wider public realm.

These benefits can be summarised as follows:

-Improved accessibility
-Unlike the existing entrances, new easily identifiable entrance will have a level threshold, and wide



automatic sliding doors.

-Upgraded public space

-The scheme results in the removal of the existing Grapes public house on Little Quay St.. This had become an eyesore, with a plethora of signs, lights, barriers and platforms cluttering the space in front of the building and resulting in a relatively inhospitable public space.
-The landscape proposals to the open space in front of the property have been designed to incorporate high quality materials such as natural stone, and bronze edgings. The proposals include new seating, planting, and lighting.

-Improved safety and security
-Improved visibility across the public space – the replacement trees have higher canopies, and existing barriers have been removed.
-Relocation of main entrance to building from 2 no. corner entrances (Quay St. and Atkinson St.) to one new larger entrance on Little Quay St. (former pub entrance). This entrance incorporates a larger glazed area at ground and first floor – thus improving inter visibility with the external environment and flow of light each way.
-Removal of the corner office building entrances resulting in the loss of congestion at peak periods (potentially reducing opportunistic pick-pocketing for example).
-New retail unit offering increased activity to the Atkinson St. corner – this again offers natural surveillance opportunities, looking through to the Spinningfields area.
-Significant reduction in 'loitering' at corner entrances (e.g. smokers). Loitering will also be much easier to prevent around the new main entrance due to the proximity of the reception desk, and the high portions of glazing will increase the inter-visibility.
-Improved public realm will increase footfall and bring the space back into active use as a place to cross or dwell.
-CCTV provision covering the area outside the building.
-24 hour manned reception.

The proposals in their entirety therefore balance less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage asset, with significant public benefits. Therefore, the proposals adhere to para. 134 of the NPPF:
"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."
The building requires an extensive level of investment to repair and restore significant historical elements of the building, and prevent fabric deterioration. The alterations to this section of the front elevation are essential to ensure letting income levels rise sufficiently to fund these works. In particular, the restoration of the stained-glass dome above the swimming pool, together with the re-in statement of the protective glazing above, has no impact on the likely rental value of the building but is a significant expenditure. The restoration works to the iron shop frontages on the Little Quay Street are also a significant investment in the property. These proposals are only deliverable when completed as part of the holistic modernisation package of work. The strategy is that the works will attract high quality tenants on longer leases without service charge caps which means an enhanced asset value which in turns allows for the none income generating enhancements to be made.

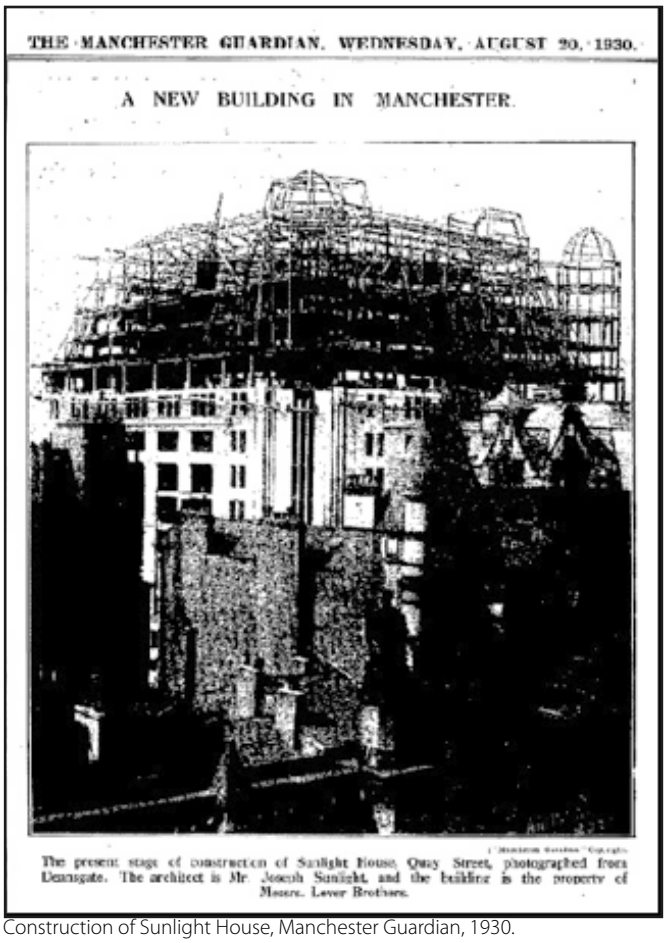
3.0 Access Statement

The two new lifts cannot be given level access due to structural limitations of working within an existing building. However, the addition of these lifts, along with the upgrade of the existing 4 no. lifts, will significantly improve the vertical circulation in the building. The current provision is significantly undersized for the occupancy and use patterns.

Whilst the existing corner entrances have shallow stepped thresholds, the remodelling of the external space with include the formation of new level thresholds serving the new main entrance, and 2 no. new retail units.
The new entrance on Little Quay St. will be clearly legible, and is accompanied by an integral illuminated sign to read "Sunlight House'.

4.0 Summary

This report has explained and justified proposals to improve Sunlight House and its landscaped setting. We have developed proposals that will facilitate the continued viable occupation of an important office building, whilst ensuring that the significance of the historical asset is respected, and where possible enhanced.


THE MANCHESTER GUARDIAN, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 20, 1930.

A NEW BUILDING IN MANCHESTER.

The present stage of construction of Sunlight House, Quay Street, photographed from Deansgate. The architect is Mr. Joseph Sunlight, and the building is the property of Messrs. Lever Brothers.

Construction of Sunlight House, Manchester Guardian, 1930.

5.0 Appendix A - Historical Assessment July 2015

Sunlight House

Location

Sunlight House is situated on Quay Street, close to its junction with Deansgate. To the eastern edge of the building is Little Quay Street and Atkinson Street is to the north. Both of these smaller streets are now limited as access and delivery functions, whilst Quay Street remains a major thoroughfare in Manchester City Centre.

Description

The description from Historic England's listing is included below.

SJ8398 QUAY STREET 698-1/16/347 (North side) 20/06/88
Sunlight House
GV II



View of internal-facing courtyard elevations..

Office block. 1932, by Joseph Sunlight. Steel frame with cladding of Portland stone, slated 3-tier mansard roof with glazed centre. Large square plan with central light-well. International Modern style with classical elements. Ten storeys plus 4 attic storeys successively set back, 8 bays plus wide canted corner to right rising to octagonal turret with domed lantern and apex finial; ground and 1st floors treated as plinth, 6-storey 5-bay pilastrade to centre, with moulded frieze over 7th floor and enriched cornice over 8th floor, plain parapet over 10th floor. Very regular fenestration with casements of 3 lights to the 5-bay centre and 2 lights to the end bays, metal panels between floors; 3-light attic windows, those of the first 3 tiers set in individual projected rectangular dormers. Shop windows and a round-headed archway at ground floor. Canted corner treated as tower, given strong vertical emphasis by narrow 3-light mullioned windows in each face tiered continuously from 2nd to 10th floors, with carved decoration over 10th floor, a 1-storey drum over this, set-back 2-storey continuation, and set-back lantern; square-headed doorways to entrance porch at ground floor. Return to right and rear elevation similar, but with slated attic and extruded dormers. Forms group with Royal London House to right (Nos 188-202 Deansgate, q.v.).
History

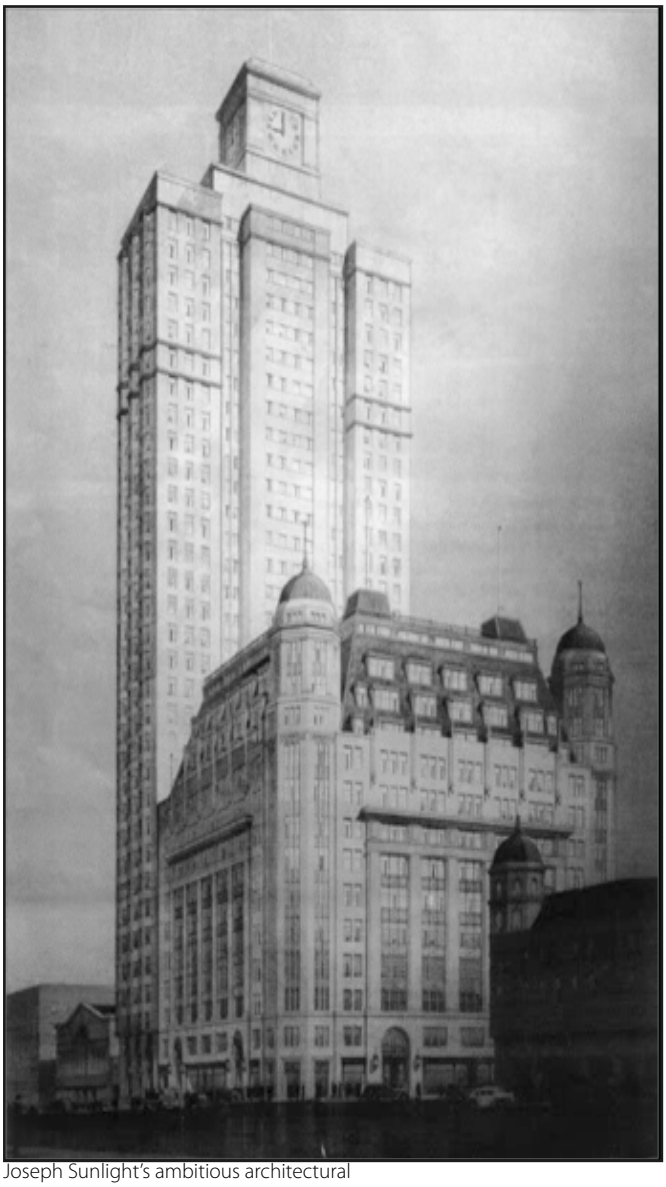
When Sunlight House was completed in 1932 it was Manchester's tallest building, boasting a basement, 13 floors and a caretaker's flat on the top storey. It reached 200 feet from foundation to roof ridge.

The building was designed by Joseph Sunlight as the city's first speculative office development. The architectural style is a hybrid of softened modernism and classicism, with some art deco features added to the mix. The strong vertical lines are emphasised by corner towers and slit windows, with a crisp, light Portland Stone finish and areas of fine detail seen in the carved angel faces (said to represent the architect and his family) and the decorative rosettes and metalwork on the elevations.

A contemporary newspaper photograph shows the building during its construction in 1930. The structural steel framework is in the process of being clad in Portland stone. This mixed approach of wrapping modern construction in a familiar and tradition building material was employed in many buildings of this period,

particularly commercial premises where their remained a desire to keep the traditional and solid appearance of stone facades, but utilise the potential of open floor design that steel frames could offer.

Sunlight House boasted large office spaces looking on to an internal, glazed brick core, to maximise light within the offices. The use of large numbers of windows within the elevations is executed to great effect at Sunlight House: the steel frame allows an extensive pattern of openings, creating an architectural rhythm to both the internal and external elevations. This is perhaps most evident within the courtyard space where the regularity of the fenestration pattern creates a striking space that is both visually impressive and highly practical in terms of internal light provision.



Joseph Sunlight's ambitious architectural plans for the site next to Sunlight House.

A mix of tenants were encouraged to rent individual floors or several floors together. The large, decorative basement was designed with a top-lit dome originally intended as a restaurant and soon after, when a licence application was refused, was fitted out as a swimming pool. Ground floor units were planned as shops, showrooms and a café. Internally the building featured various modern technological advances to attract tenants: every room was fitted with a synchronised clock and an in-house electric vacuum cleaning apparatus sucked dust into the basement. There was polished oak flooring, express lifts, radiators and ventilation in offices, a technically advanced firefighting system and fire proof brick partitions.
Sunlight House was a soaring architectural statement, replacing an area of slums. The immediate surroundings were home to low-rise buildings: the Hospital for Skin Diseases (1906) and the Opera House (1912) on Quay Street. The lower end of Deansgate had little commercial development, housing the Inland Revenue Office (later County Court, 1896), Elliot House (1888, home to School Board Office), Royal London House (1904) and dominated by the Great Northern Railway Company's Goods Warehouse (1896-98) which stands as the longest Victorian frontage in the country.

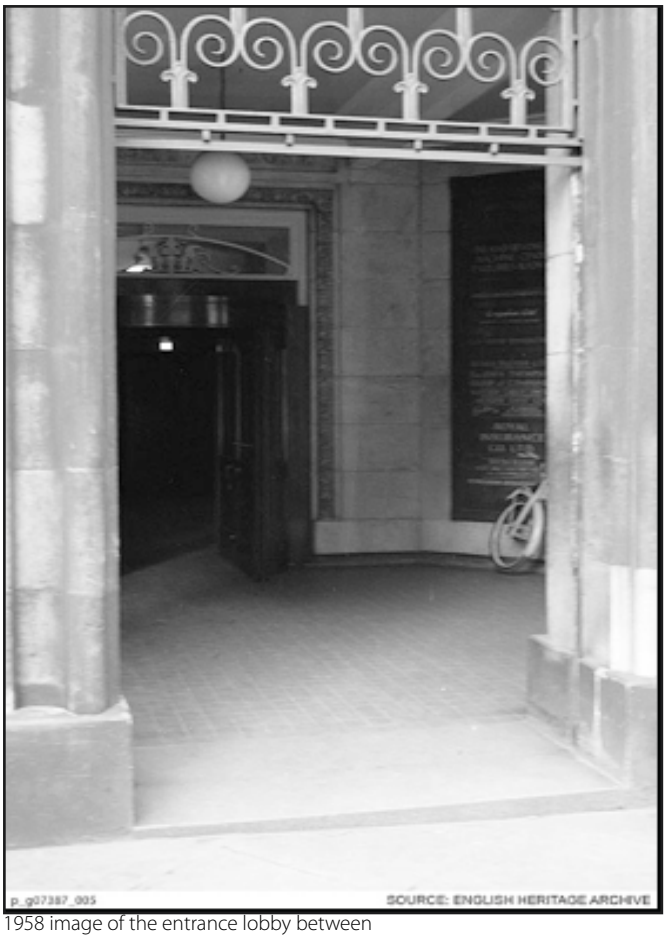
A speculative office building out of the established commercial centre of the city (King Street and environs) was a risky strategy in the early 1930s when the depression had seen a suspension of the gold standard, an increase in the frequency of empty offices and are

houses and the important trade with India dwindle. In 1931, the Manchester press was still reporting on cotton spinners attempting to lengthen of the working week and the increase of looms per weaver. Joseph Sunlight had great architectural ambition though and his plan was for Sunlight House to form the base for a 35 storey extension on the abutting Quay Street site (proposed in 1949). Along with his desire to double the height of Sunlight House itself, this gigantic architectural ambition was refused planning permission by the city. A second Sunlight House proposed for Peter Street/Jackson's Row was also refused, as was Sunlight's alcohol licence for the restaurant in the basement of Sunlight House.

Perhaps in anticipation of the admiring views of the soaring tower and in an attempt to promote the clean and airy conditions so desired in the unhealthy smog of the city, Sunlight widened the adjoining side street of Little Quay Street. This enables a longer view of the elevation, creates a sense of space and the opportunity to connect the ground floor with the streetscape.

Its location struggled to attract the desired commercial occupiers, but Sunlight House secured a major tenant in the Ministry of Works - the Taxation Department, the Ministry of Labour, the Employment and Insurance Department and Chief Conciliation Officer all taking space in the building.

The building is currently in mixed tenure with office use on the upper floors and retail and a mix of retail and leisure uses on the ground floor, including The Old Grapes pub on Little Quay Street and Bannatyne's Health Club in the basement. It remains a landmark building in the city due to its location and striking architectural form.



1958 image of the entrance lobby between the street and the office space within.



1958 Image of Little Quay Street and Quay Street entrance, showing the extended pavement.

Significance

Architect

Sunlight House was designed by the Manchester based architect Joseph Sunlight (1889-1978). Sunlight was born in Belorussia, with the family name Schimschlavitch, and was apprenticed as an architect in Manchester after his family moved to Britain. His other notable work is the South Manchester Synagogue (1913). It is reported he built several hundred houses in Prestwich and that when he died he was the highest tax payer in Manchester. Though little is published about his life, Sunlight's ongoing and public debates with both the city and his tenants about rent levels, skyscraper proposals and extensions are well documented in contemporary local press.

His architectural work appears to be limited to Manchester and his desire and dedication to create a skyscraper in his home city was the focus of his career. He intended Sunlight House to reach 30 storeys, and later proposed an extension between Sunlight House and the Opera House that would go higher still, and scrape 35 storeys, topped with a huge clock tower. A further Sunlight House was planned for Jackson's Row, but Sunlight's ambitions were not to be realised as the Council refused to permit his somewhat radical proposals.

Historical significance

Sunlight House was the first skyscraper in Manchester. It took inspiration from American tall buildings and European modernist styles; the result being a restrained version of both, with elements of classicism and art deco. It is a fine example of early speculative commercial premises, and built evidence of the ambition of the business entrepreneur in the early part of the 20th century.

Architectural significance

Sunlight House is high quality in its design and execution, particularly in its detailing and use of materials. It is a good example of architecture from the period and of its type and is a highly significant building in the development of Manchester as a forward thinking commercial city.

Locally, the form, quality and positioning of the building make it landmark within the city centre. It is suggested that currently the building is not meeting its full potential either as an important piece of Manchester's architectural landscape or as high quality rentable office space. Significant features of the building.

Exterior

The exterior is particularly significant in its use of materials and the quality of its designed form, particularly the elevation to Quay Street, which is a well-established component feature of the streetscape.

The key elements of exterior are its scale, massing and materials. The building has a strong vertical rhythm on its façade, with windows and panelling forming a pattern up the building, this is particularly evident on the corners, where architectural techniques are employed to accentuate the height of the building.



1958 Image of Little Quay Street and Quay Street entrance, showing the extended pavement.

The Quay Street corner is the most prominent, given its place on the busy road, and houses the main entrance. The corner is emphasised by the use of a canted design, common in Manchester architecture and taken further at Sunlight House by continuing the three sided form beyond the entrance, up the height of the building. The rhythmical pattern of the building is continued with the use of tall, narrow windows (also grouped in threes) to each face. The window openings are set back, and externally the effect is a strong vertical line of piers running tightly up the height of the building, receding in stepped form at the upper storeys and topped with a domed roof and tall mast with decorative bird.

The corner features a central entrance and two further openings of the same size to each side. All five are framed with large, stone surrounds featuring oversized moulding detail. The central three of these were originally semi-open, with no glazing, only gates. They accessed an internal transitional space between the street and the full interior of the building. This is illustrated in the photograph from English Heritage Archives: the business directory is visible on the wall and a bicycle is being stored in the area. The area functioned as an internal lobby and access to the offices was through a further set of revolving doors, originally placed within an ornate stone opening with Sunlight House lettering above. This surround remains, but has lost its context: the revolving door has been removed and the walls forming the internal entrance have been removed, leaving the decorative surround and lettering, but in a newly faced housing, forming a rather incongruous stand-alone feature within the extended reception area. The entrance lobby has been reconfigured to create direct access from the street to the building, with the loss of the intermediate space. A number of internal changes including remodelling of the stair cores and entrance foyers was undertaken in 2010.

The three street elevations have a similar treatment on the ground floor, where retail units were created to designs very similar to those on the archive drawings. There are a number of original architectural details on the exterior which have both historic and architectural significance. Repairs and modifications are evident in places. The Little Quay Street elevation has undergone the most significant of these changes and focus is given to this area below, as the subject of the proposed scheme of works.



1987 view of the Old Grapes pub frontage with inappropriate additions.

Little Quay Street elevation

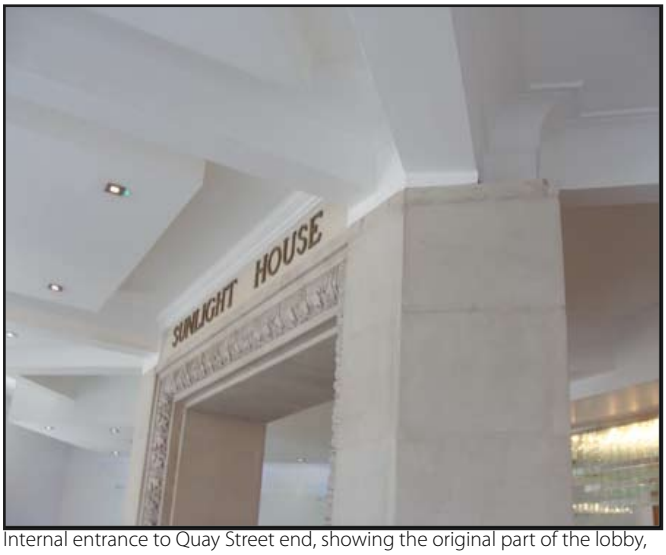
On initial viewing, the Little Quay Street ground level elevation appears to be broadly original, but closer inspection reveals that a number of changes have been made to the historic fabric, not all of which have been beneficial to the building.

The original plans went through many design alterations, evident in the number of drawings in the Manchester Central Library archives, but Sunlight's original intention was always to have a number of ground floor retail units along both Quay Street and Little Quay Street.
The latest available archive drawing of the Little Quay Street elevation is date stamped 1931. It shows the three central bays were a single shop front at ground level, fully glazed with a larger section of glass to the bottom and a narrower pane above. There is a fascia running across the top of the three sections. Four slim, square steel columns form the divisions between the glazing and each of these features a decorative head. Central to the middle panel was a single door, giving access to the unit within. This door is the same design as those in the bays to either side and is square headed with a decorative metalwork feature above.

The English Heritage archive image from 1958 shows the elevation apparently in its original form. The angle of the photograph makes it difficult to see the detail of the central door, but the layout, spacing and window pattern are an accurate reflection of the architect's drawings and the Quay Street elevation. The central section houses a garage and appears to be in single occupancy. Above the windows is a fascia board, on top of which, over each of the four columns, is a decorative metal urn. The elevation was designed to be almost exactly the same as that on Quay Street, shown in the photograph from Manchester Central Library Archives in 1968. The main difference is the treatment and finish level of the glazing. On Little Quay Street, the glazing was full length, on Quay Street it stopped at a higher level and the lowest course of stonework is polished granite.
It is not known at what date the frontage to Little Quay Street central retail unit was changed, but by the mid-1980s, the elevation had undergone significant and wholly unsympathetic alteration. As shown in the image of The Old Grapes pub from 1987.

It is possible to still identify the four original metal columns and the upper frame of the windows with its decorative urn features. However, the full glazing was lost with the insertion of a half-height brick wall with full height brick columns at either end, beyond which two new doorways were created. The central doorway was enlarged and the original door replaced with an inappropriate contemporary pub door. Three plastic canopies were fitted and obscure what parts were or were not left behind at upper level. There is little design or aesthetic merit in these alterations which were completely out of character with the rest of the building in their form, use of materials and style. These changes are considered to have been highly detrimental to the listed asset and can be classed as causing significant harm to the building, not only in terms of the loss of original historic fabric, but in their complete disregard for the character of Sunlight House. It is fortunate at least that they have been removed and a more sympathetic frontage has been installed. The result of these interventions however, is that the existing frontage follows the amended design, but in a faux period form which has blurred the lines between what is original and what is not.

The current frontage of the central bays retains its original columns which created the three sections. The decorative vases and a portion of the fascia is original. All other subdivisions (created in timber) are later additions made to replicate the original. This includes the two end doors and doorways, the central main pub entrance, and parts of the fascia and frame; both of which appear to have been repaired and replaced in parts, though the full extent of this replacement is difficult to ascertain.



Internal entrance to Quay Street end, showing the original part of the lobby, cut off from its original context but remaining as a historic feature.

The effect of the replica frontage has been to confuse the reading of the elevation as the non-original has been made to appear original. Not only is this against good conservation practice, it has also left some poorly executed timber features which are detracting from the design quality of the building. All non-original interventions in this central section are considered to be of low historic and architectural significance and to have a negative impact on the building. Their removal could be considered justifiable.

The significant features of this part of the elevation are the three original sections with their column divisions and the

original dimensions of the triple windows. The grouping of features in threes is a design devise employed throughout the building and it has been destroyed here by numerous interventions. A return to a form of the original tri-part design would be considered more appropriate.

As the original door and doorway have been lost, the significance of the remaining entrance is considered to be low, other than its central position within the wider frame. There is a decorative ironwork panel above the pub door, which is likely to be original though no longer in its intended position. This is considered to be historically significant and matches those found above other doors at ground floor level. The vases which top the windows are still in place and appear to be original. Although they are missing from the architect's drawings and are somewhat at odds with the paired back form of the building which leans towards a modernist style, they are evident in the 1958 images and there in nothing to suggest they were not fitted when the building was completed and consequently they are of historical significance.

The remainder of the ground floor elevation appears to be largely as designed and is a highly significant element of the building. Whilst the glazing in of the end openings is a later addition, it has been undertaken in a sympathetic manner and is not considered to harm the asset in any significant way. It should be noted that there is a noticeable issue with the internal side of one of the openings, which requires careful repair. The metal geometric fixings to the exterior of the ground floor at high level are thought to be original signage furniture and are significant historic features.

There are a number of long, narrow pavement lights at street level. These appear to be original and are of historic and design significance as part of the buildings function (to provide light to the basement) and as features in its setting.



View of corridor to 13th floor with timber storage units to the outside wall and parquet flooring.


Existing office on 13th floor with suspended ceilings and original barrel form behind.

Entrance hall

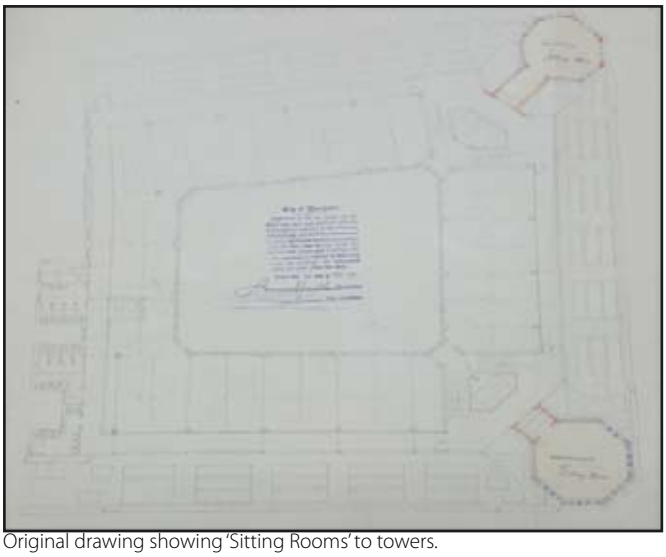
The reception/entrance hall area has undergone significant changes. As explained earlier in this report, the original design featured an internal lobby entered through the central opening in the canted corner. The three openings at street level were protected by gates, which would have been secured at night time. The external features of the entrance are considered significant, even in their adapted form.

Internally, several walls have been removed to form an open plan reception area. Importantly, the ceiling retains evidence of the lines of the former wall lines. The original entrance with decorative stone work is still in place, although it has lost its context with the removal of the walls and the sides have been re-clad in stone. This, along with the writing 'SUNLIGHT HOUSE' above, is an important historic element of the building. Its setting could be improved, but it is still a key feature of the internal space.

The floor surface is not original and plans indicate that there have been several changes to the layout of the interior, including the remodelling of the stairs to the left of the original entrance.

Lifts and tiles

The lifts are in their original positions, though it is considered that their timber housing is a later addition. Decorative custard yellow and black tiles are present to the outside wall of the lift area and other parts of the circulation space. These are original in places (the area where the fire extinguishers are located) and have been substituted with modern tiles in other places. Whilst the colour scheme is unusual and a poor match to the green colour of the modern floor coverings, these tiles are a historic feature and form part of the building's listed fabric. Further investigation of the walls to the side of the lifts and on the staircases is recommended to ascertain if historic features remain behind the modern interventions.



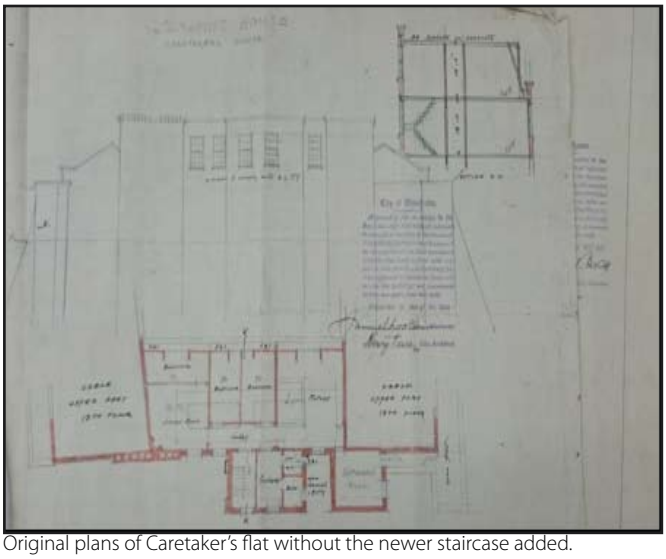
Original drawing showing 'Sitting Rooms' to towers.

Ground Floor

The ground floor has been subject to several changes. The original plan was a simple form, with two entrances (to Quay Street and Atkinson Street corners) formed from lobbies, narrowing to an entrance and opening out again leading to stairs. There were a number of subdivisions from front elevation to the back wall to form individual shop units. It is uncertain exactly where the internal partitions were and a number have been removed and revised over the lifetime of the building to form new spaces. These changes have altered the spatial qualities and proportions of the ground floor but are an inevitable part of the evolution of the commercial space to suit new tenants, such as the pub.

It is considered that the main areas of significance within the ground floor are the entranceways. The design intention was to a create lobby, funnelling through a doorway and opening out into the stair and lift area, forming two diamond shaped spaces with a linking space in between. There has been a number of changes made to the Quay Street end of the building but the lobby walls remain to the Atkinson Street entrance and are significant in demonstrating the architect's original intention.
Hoist

Sunlight House was designed with four passenger lifts and a hoist. The hoist (goods lift) is located to the opposite side of the building from the passenger lifts. The shaft and its location is historically important and should be retained as a historic part of the building's plan.



Original plans of Caretaker's flat without the newer staircase added.

Thirteenth floor

The original plans, dated 1931, show the thirteenth floor with open plan office area and a corridor running all the way around the perimeter. There are no internal divisions within the offices, and no door positions indicated to access the offices. It is possible that the division between the corridor and the offices was permeable i.e. open at ground floor level, but considered more likely that as a speculative built office block, the divisions and door positions were not finalised until the tenants moved in. The division between the corridor and internal office space is of historic interest, the internal divisions are not



Image from 1978. It is difficult to be certain of the condition of the glazing in the photograph, but at least some of it appears to be missing (see the highest band of coloured glazing, which is present today but not evident on the photograph).


The dome above the pool, with metal framework attached, thought to be original. The upper part of the metal frame and structural housing are thought to be non-original as are the flood lights and timber additions.

considered to be as important. The doorways that exist now are visible on the 1958 photograph and are likely to date from around the period of construction. They are full height timber frames, with a panel at high level, which was almost certainly glazed to maximise light penetration in to the offices behind. On the opposite side of the corridor are cupboards for storage, with timber double doors. These are still in place, though they have been panelled over, and are a significant historical detail.
The roof structure is visible and the floor is oak parquet. Both are original features and contribute to the character of the building. The high level external windows retain their positioning, but have been replaced.

Sunlight House boasted all modern facilities when it opened and the round vacuum cleaner points at skirting board level are a good example of this. The system was throughout the building, enabling cleaners to plug a portable hose in to the system without the need for heavy equipment. It is an interesting and important historic detail.

13th floor - office areas

The office areas have been divided through the use of partitions. It is difficult to date these changes with any degree of accuracy and their position could have changed to meet the requirements of new tenants throughout the lifetime of the building.

The original ceiling is no longer visible in places, covered by a false, suspended ceiling. This has had a negative impact on the original character and spatial qualities of the offices. The original barrel ceiling has a number of glazed rooflights set within it. These have been over painted and therefore their original purpose, to provide over lighting, has been lost and their fabric has been damaged by the application of an inappropriate covering. It is assumed that the positioning of the external roof lights corresponds to those at lower level, with a form of frame in between. Further investigation is needed to clarify this. The barrel ceiling and glazed panels are significant features and would benefit from being exposed.

13th floor - towers

The two towers at either end of the Little Quay Street elevation create architecturally interesting spaces at 13th floor level. The floors above 10 storeys are attic spaces, set within the steeply pitched roof. As a result, by floor 13, there is a gap between the continuous vertical line of the towers and the receding floor plates of the main building. Access to the towers is achieved by short bridge walkways, the Atkinson Street end is longer than the Quay Street end due to the asymmetry of the site plan.

The tower spaces feature high level windows around the perimeter and high domed ceilings. On the original 1931 drawings, these spaces are labelled as 'living rooms'. It is uncertain who these rooms were designed for, but they had good light from the windows and were impressive in design and spatial qualities. Although there have been a number of alterations to the spaces, including the replacement of the window frames and new doors, and the addition of a dark carpet and paint finish to the domes, these spaces are important and attractive elements of the building, not only contributing to the character of the Sunlight House but having architectural and design merit in their form.



The view through the courtyard area is currently compromised by the inappropriate 'shed' that hides the dome feature and creates an intervention that is unsympathetic to the rest of the building.

Caretaker's flat

Above the thirteenth floor is a flat, originally built for the building caretaker. The architect's drawings show sizeable accommodation with three bedrooms, a living room, bathroom and scullery. The current flat layout is a result of a number of changes made over time: the most significant being the addition of a new staircase within the flat, which sits where the two bedrooms were. As a result of the new staircase, the lobby area has been removed and a bathroom fitted in part of its space. Despite the loss of original fittings and significant alteration, the flat retains some of its proportions and has a value and significance historically and architecturally: as evidence of how Sunlight House was operated, and as a component part of the building.

The lift motor room retains original tiling. It is considered to be of heritage value, despite its evolutionary changes and is enables a further understanding of how the building functioned as a whole.



Image of the dome from the underside, illuminated with flood lights from above. The corners feature venting panels, which appear to be the original form.

Basement

The basement currently houses Bannatyne's Health Club, the pub cellar and a landlord's area. The gym contains a number of original historical features, in particular in the swimming pool area. These features are not the focus of the current phase of works and are therefore not covered in detail in this report, but it should be noted that they are considered to be of high significance, architecturally and historically.
The remainder of the basement is of limited heritage significance.

Dome

The swimming pool area has a large, ornate dome above it, with a slim frame and glazed panels within, featuring coloured patterned bands of stained glass. The dome is currently housed in a modern structure set within the courtyard at first floor level. The dome is an original feature and is highly significant. It has undergone a number of repairs, but the glazing is likely to be in its original pattern. Following the death of Joseph Sunlight, the dome deteriorated in the later part of the twentieth century and plans for its restoration are described in a newspaper article from 1978.

"…the Odeon décor of the pool with its ground floor pink-tiled gallery and stained glass domed ceiling overlooked by the well of the building is a caricature in microcosm of the architecture of the thirties. Once dances were held on the balustraded terrace and lunches were served there while office tenants of the building splashed in the 60ft square pool or relaxed in the maze of corridors that made up the maze of Turkish baths in the basement. The tables round the terrace have long since been removed, leaving only the milkshake pump at the bar as a forlorn reminder of the old sybarite days."
Manchester Evening News, 06 September 1978

The dome above the swimming pool has supporting metal framework above. Examples of covered glazed domes with electric lighting can be seen, particularly in American architecture of the period. At Sunlight House it is considered more likely that the dome was originally illuminated naturally through a secondary glazed housing, specifically designed to allow daylight through the decorative glass, whilst offering protection and ventilation for the dome and pool beneath. Whilst elements of the supporting framework appears to survive, sometime in the last 35 years the whole has been covered in a shed-like housing which is semi-industrial in look and additional framework has been added. Electric flood lights now illuminate the glass from above.

The modern housing has multiple negative impacts: what should be a feature of the main core of the building is now an inappropriate and unattractive modern addition and creates an impermeable view from the internal offices across the external space, whilst simultaneously obscuring the delicate effect of the stained glass from within the pool area.

Sunlight House is a Grade II listed building (designated 1988), within the Deansgate Conservation Area (designated 1985). Any proposed changes to the building must be considered within this context and the relevant legislation.

This document focuses on the elements of the building that are the subject of current proposals. The most significant parts are considered to be the external elevations, the internal courtyard space, the entrances and the basement pool with its dome. Other elements of less significance are identified in the above document.
As part of the Conservation Area, consideration should be given to any proposed changes to the external setting of building.

Relevant Planning Policy can be found in the National Planning Policy Framework, which states that,

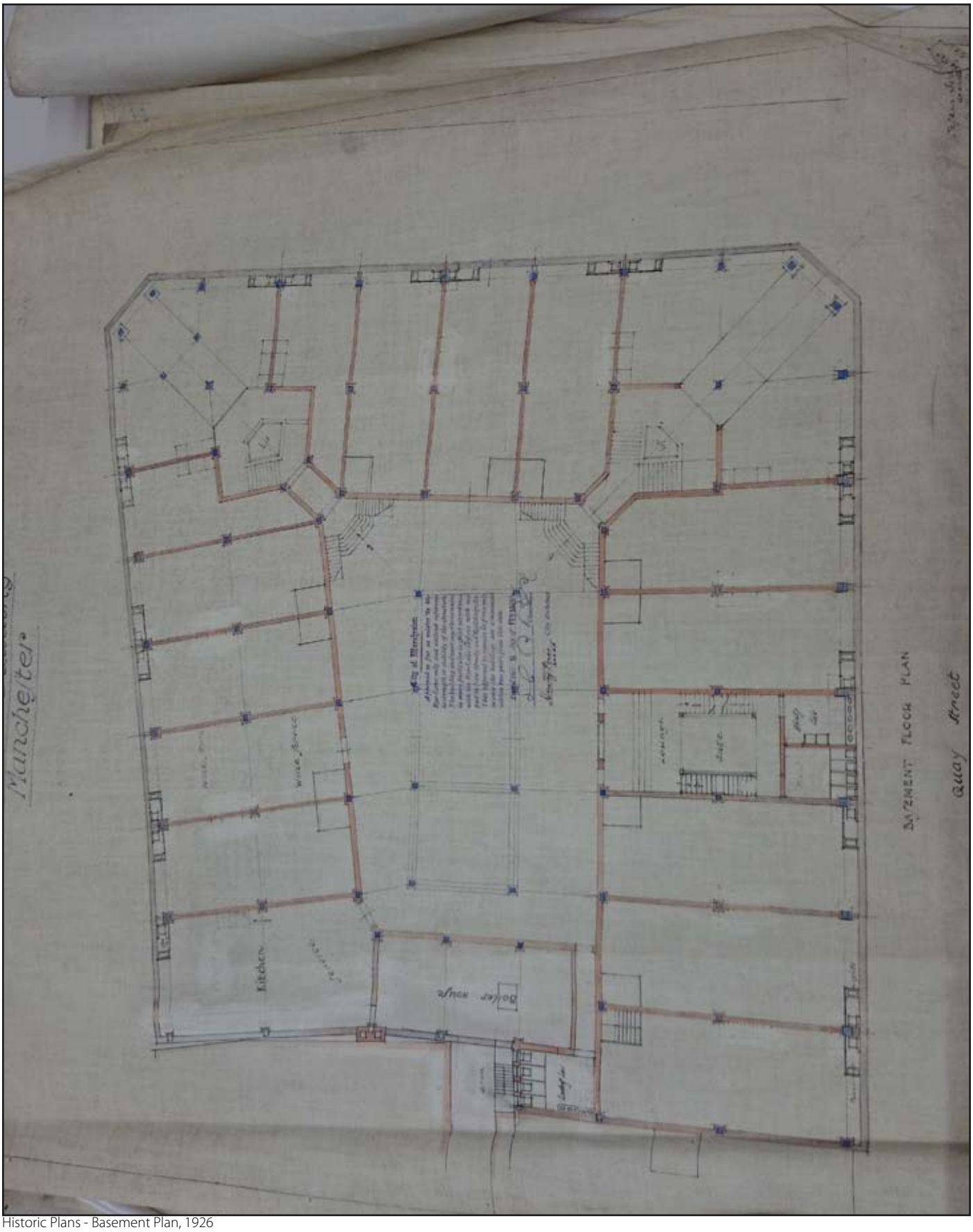
"Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal."

Crucially, any proposals must be justifiable in heritage terms and result in less than significant harm to the asset

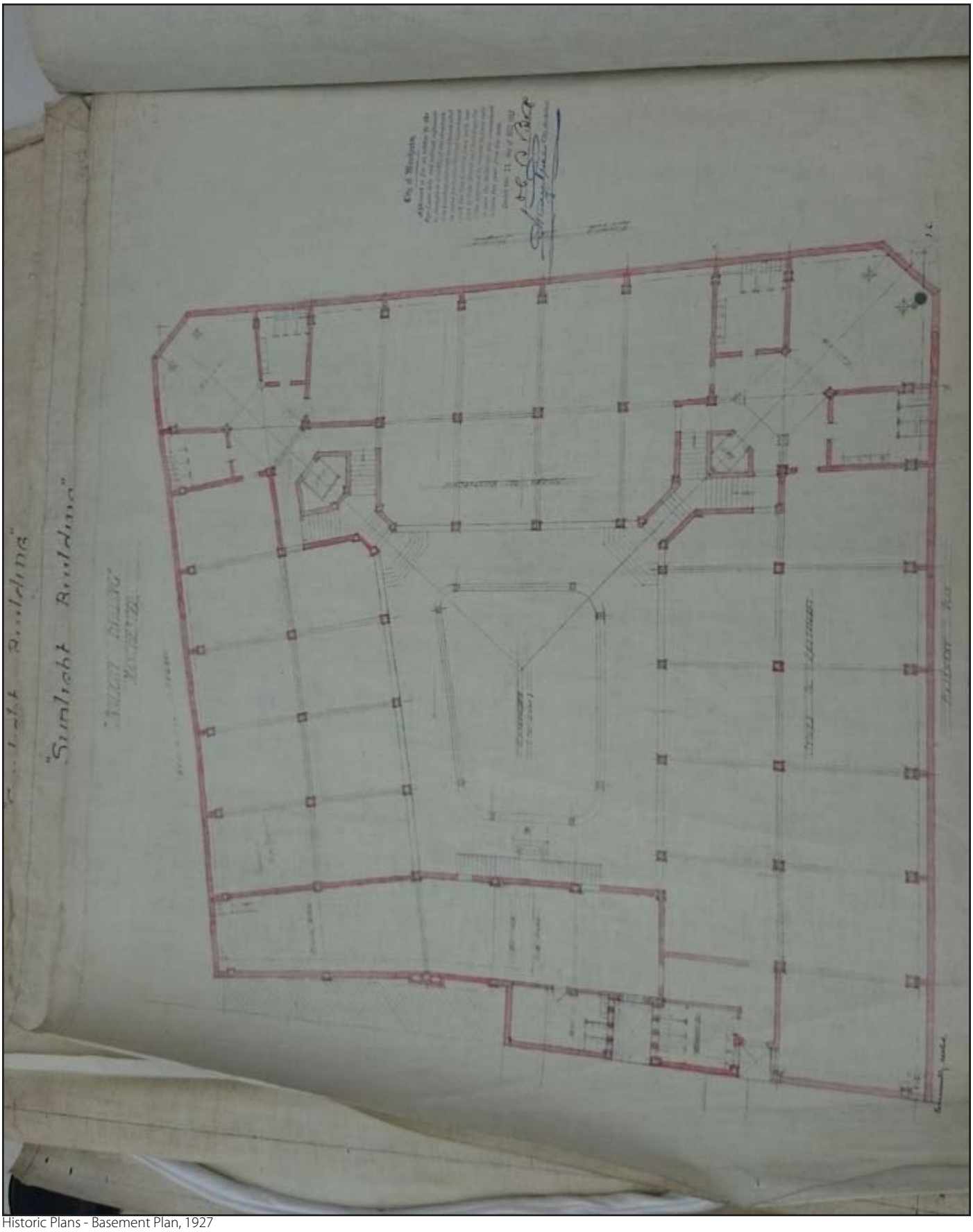
as set out in NPPF, section 134.

"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."

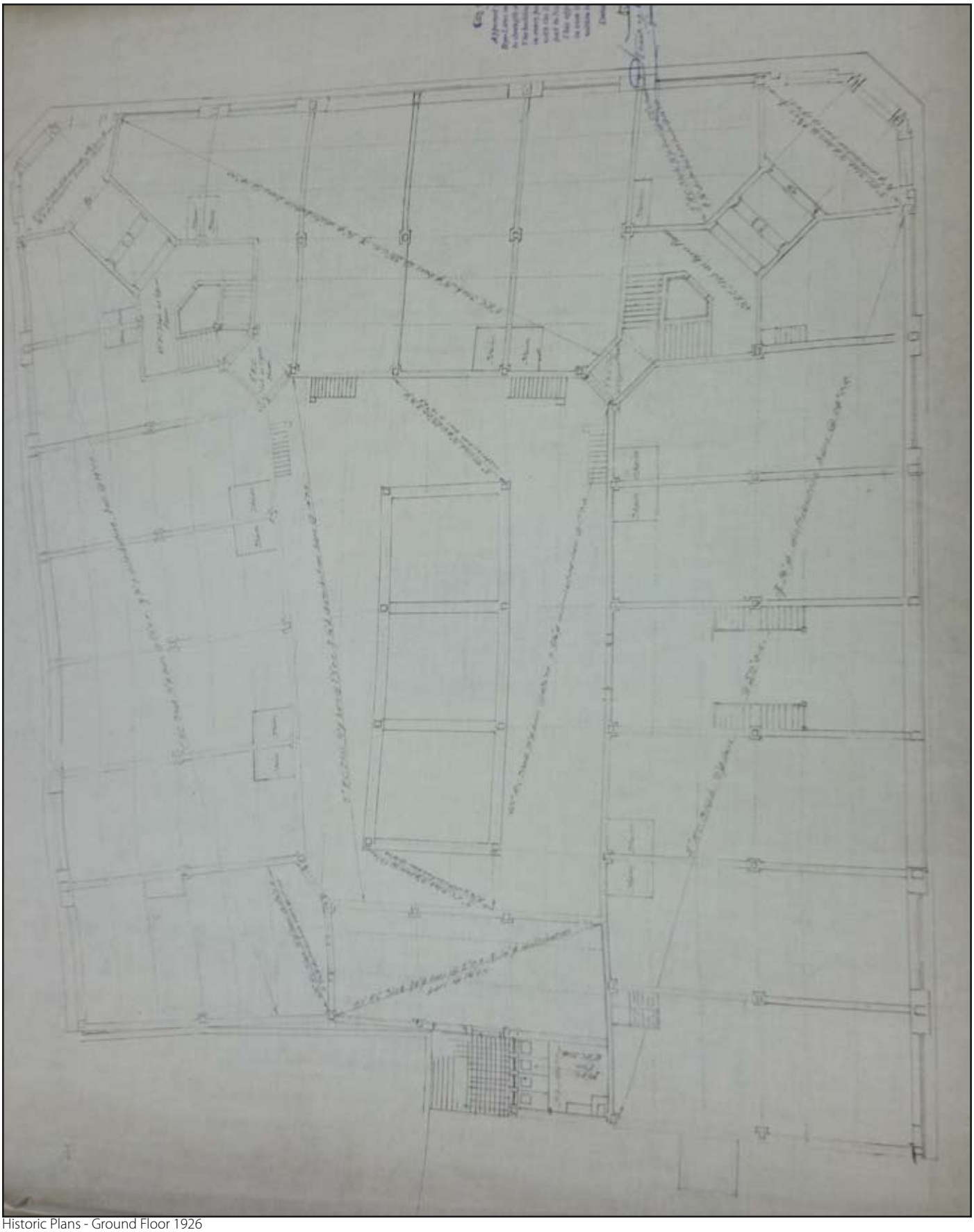
It is intended that this document will be used to inform design decisions and that it can form the basis of any further justifications and Heritage Statements required for specific applications.



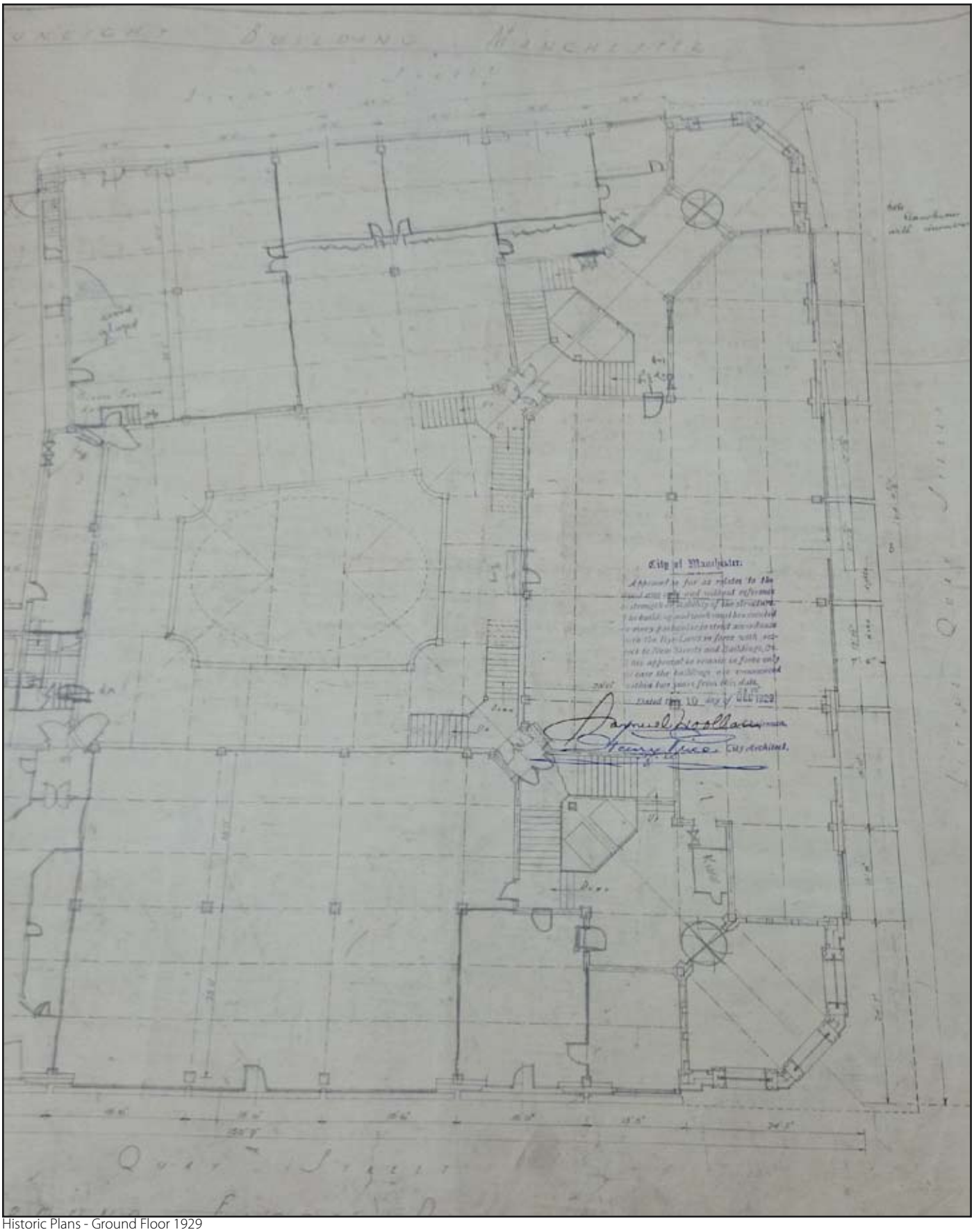
Historic Plans - Basement Plan, 1926



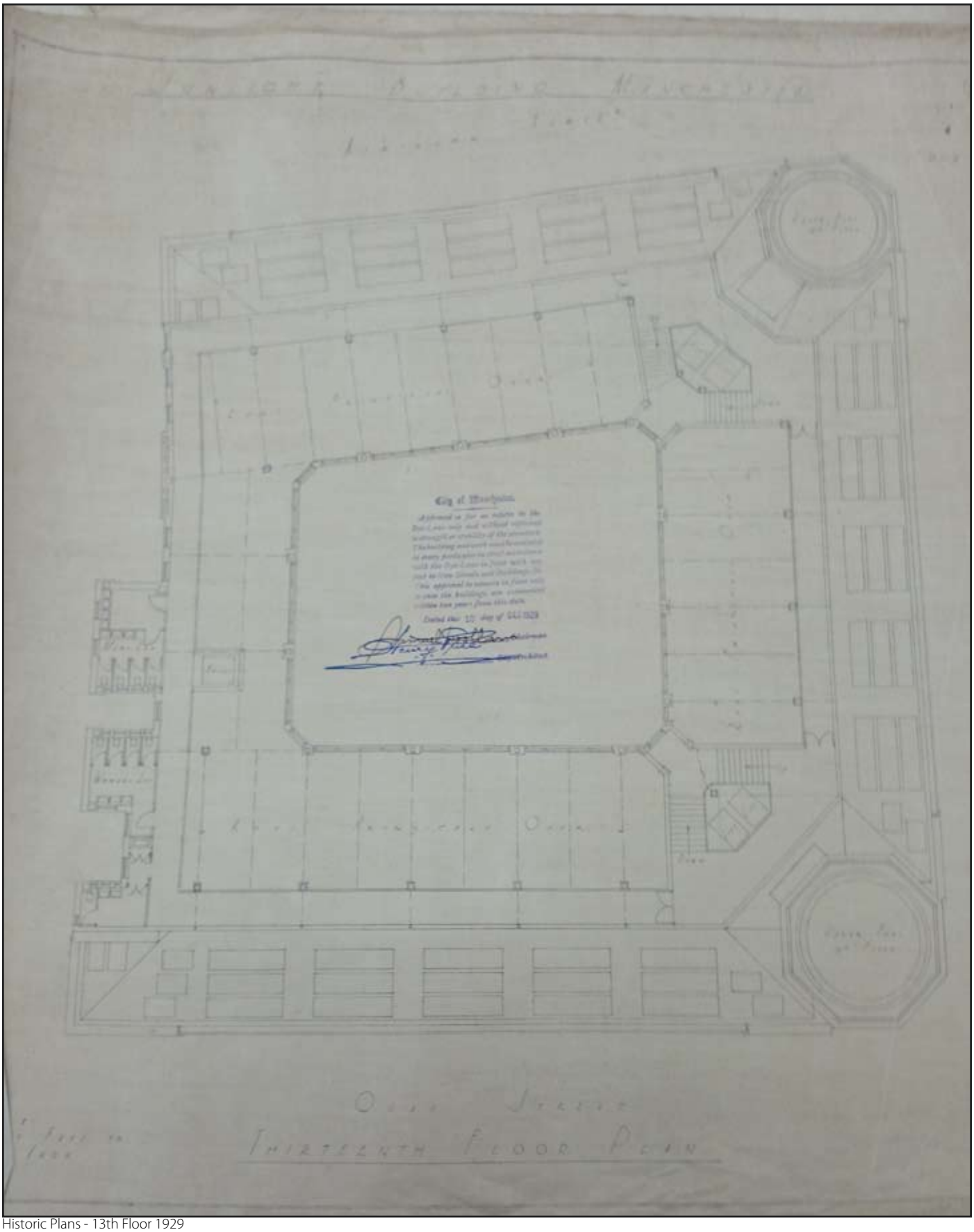
Historic Plans - Basement Plan, 1927



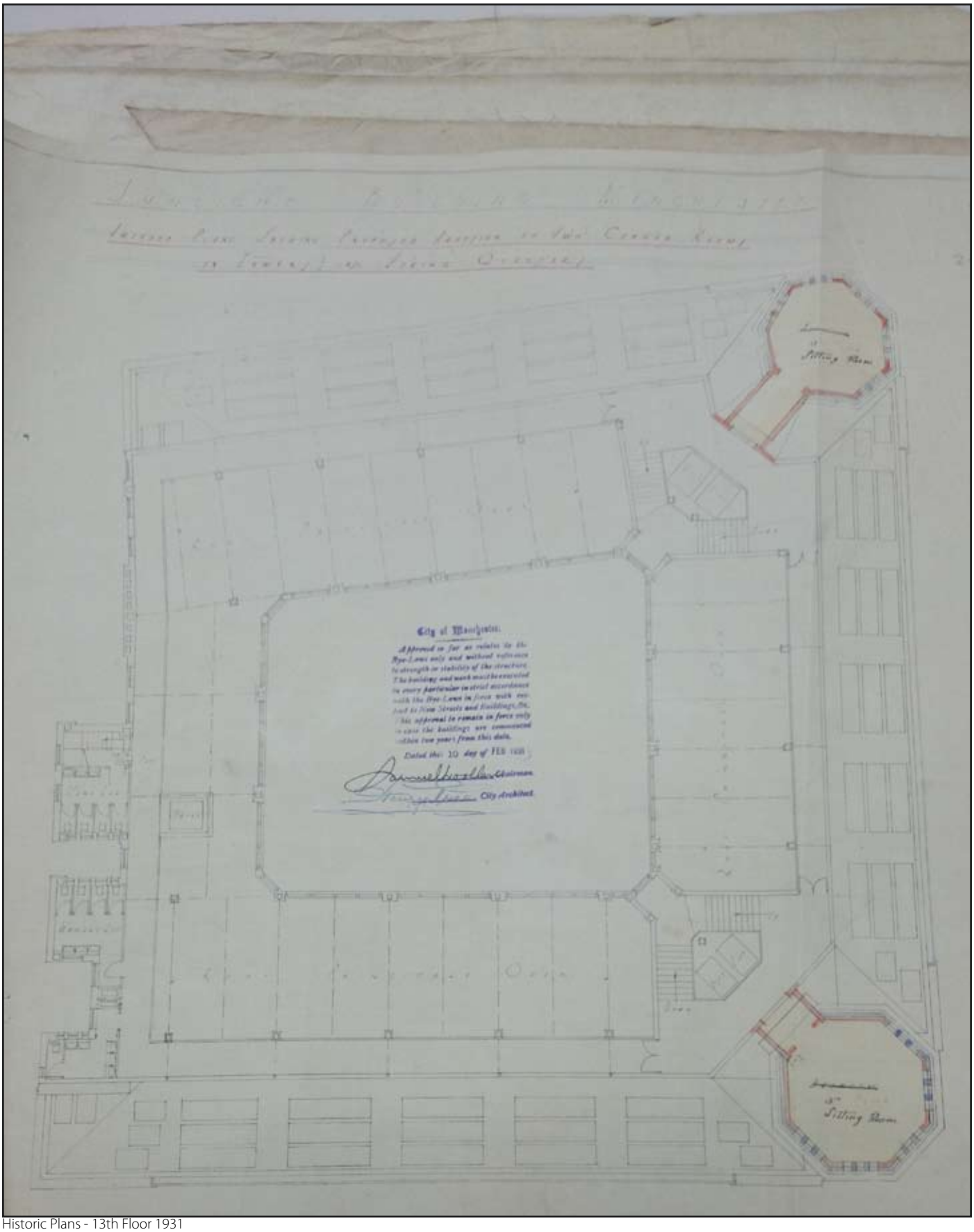
Historic Plans - Ground Floor 1926



Historic Plans - Ground Floor 1929



Historic Plans - 13th Floor 1929



Historic Plans - 13th Floor 1931



Historic Plans - Elevation towers to Living Quarters, 1931



Historic Plans - Elevation Little Quay Street, 1931