

Beswick Co-op,
95-97 Northmoor Road,
Manchester

Design & Access Statement with Heritage Statement
For
Proposed Repairs to Roofs Over Shop Fronts, Repairs to Steelwork and Replacement of First Floor Windows

DESIGN STATEMENT

Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by IGL Surveying Ltd on behalf of Great Places Housing Association. This statement supports a listed building application for the proposed repairs to the Beswick Co-op which resides at 95-97 Northmoor Road, Manchester. Repairs are proposed to low level shop roofs, internal steelwork, and first floor windows are proposed to be replaced.

Property Details

The Beswick Co-op is a Grade II listed building that resides in a residential area between the Levenshulme and Belle Vue areas of Greater Manchester. The building is located to the east side of Northmoor Road, roughly half way along Northmoor Road.

Northmoor Road runs north to south and is predominantly lined with residential properties but there are also commercial premises interspersed along its length. The area is very busy as it provides a key link between the Levenshulme, Longsight and Belle Vue areas.

The front elevation of Beswick Co-op faces South West and directly overlooks Northmoor Road. There are residential side streets to either side of the building, with gable walls overlooking Farrant Road to the north and Elgar Street to the South. Behind the building there is a gated communal alleyway. This also provides access to the communal alleyway behind the properties of Farrant Road and Elgar Street.

The Beswick Co-op building is of contrasting construction when compared to the surrounding residential terraced and semi-detached properties which are of brickwork construction. The Beswick Co-op is a constructed from a hidden steel frame enclosed with a combination of brickwork and faience. The faience is generally green at lower levels and buff coloured at higher levels.

A location plan is enclosed as part of this application showing the exact location of the site. It has been noted that this building is not in a conservation area.

Project Aims

This listed building application does not proposed to make any changes to the use of the building. It does however propose to repair the existing building in order to preserve the historical asset of Northmoor Road. The aims of the project are to:

- Replace defective / unsuitable first floor sliding sash windows
- Repair abutments between asphalt roofs and faience buttresses above ground floor shop fronts to prevent water ingress
- Temporarily remove the signage above the shop front at one end of the building to expose structural steelwork behind which is believed to have been affected by water ingress. Then seek the advice of a structural engineer to determine whether repairs are required to this steelwork before reinstating the shop signage around the steelwork.
- Repoint and repair damaged faience buttresses and “shoulders” at lower levels

The proposals have been designed by IGL Surveying Ltd and are shown on the drawings accompanying the application. These are as follows:

- 3175/P/01 – Existing Roof Plan and Elevations
- 3175/P/02 – Proposed Roof Plan and Elevations
- 3175/P/03 – Existing Shop Front Construction Detail
- 3175/P/04 – Proposed Shop Front Construction Detail
- 3175/P/05 – Existing and Proposed Plans and Elevations
- 3175/P/06 – Location Plan and Site Plan
- 3175/P/07 – Existing vs. Proposed Elevation (focused on one abutment)
- 3175/P/08 – Section through Proposed Upstand
- 3175/P/09 – Proposed abutment of front lip to faience from front elevation
- 3175/P/10 – Proposed leadwork detail
- 3175/P/11 – Proposed lowered roof section

Design Objective

The design for the proposed works is driven by the following principles:

- The need to make repairs to low level roofs over shop fronts to prevent water ingress into the shops below
- The need to repair structural steelwork to prevent unwanted damage to other areas of the building due to expansion of the corroded beam
- The need to replace first floor sliding sash windows which have become rotten and also make these windows easier to use for occupants.
- The need to restore aspects of this listed building with the use of traditional materials, helping to preserve its positive impact on the area with the use of traditional materials.

Design Approach

The intention of the proposal is to preserve the historical aspect of this building while making necessary repairs which will prevent further deterioration of the building.

It is proposed that new windows will be installed at first floor level, but which will again be double glazed units set within a timber frame. The replacement windows will match the look of the existing, with new windows being sliding sash units.

Rainwater has been able to penetrate into shops at ground floor level due to a poorly detailed abutment between the low level asphalt roof coverings and the inverted faience “brackets” which occur at regular intervals. In order to provide a suitable weathering detail at this abutment, it is necessary to lower the roof level slightly in this area either side of each faience bracket to allow a flashing to be inserted into the lowest mortar joint of the faience, which is currently below the finish roof level.

However, it is proposed that the asphalt lip to the front edge of the roof remain in place and that minimal alteration is made to the front elevation of the building. This will preserve the historical aesthetic aspect of the building.

A steel beam has been identified to be corroded above the barbers shop to the north elevation (between columns A and B on the accompanying plans). In order to expose and treat this beam to prolong the life of the building, it is likely to be necessary to remove the shop signage between these two columns. All components removed are to be reinstated once the beam has been preserved. This will again maintain the look of the building externally.

Repointing of faience, and repairs to faience are to be carried out in order to prevent damage to faience and brickwork at both ground and first floor levels. Where any faience is damaged, it is to be repaired using modern, colour matched epoxy resin. Where broken faience must be replaced (for example; to column capitals between each shop) new faience is to be manufactured to match the existing pieces exactly in all aspects, including; shape, texture and colour. A photograph showing a sample of new faience compared to the existing can be seen in Appendix A.

Repointing is to be carried out using traditional lime based mortar, again to closely reflect that of the existing in both colour and texture. It is also important that lime based mortar be used in order to allow any moisture within the masonry to evaporate as lime mortar is more breathable than modern cement based alternatives.

Landscape

As the building fronts directly on to public footpaths to all sides except the rear, no changes to landscaping are proposed as part of this application.

ACCESS, CAR PARKING AND CYCLE PARKING

The site is located in a densely populated area and as such the Beswick Co-op building lacks any parking facilities.

The building opens directly on to public footpaths to the front and sides, while to the rear there is a gated communal alleyway. There is therefore no external space for cycle parking either.

The main access to the building is via the original main entrance to the centre of the front elevation which overlooks Northmoor Road. There is separate access into each of the 5 retail units from this same elevation. To the Northern elevation there is a fire escape opening on to Farrant Road, while there is a secondary entrance to the South elevation which provides staff access in to the ground floor community centre.

At the rear of the building, a number of fire escapes provide emergency access from the rear of the ground floor shops to the gated alleyway. There is also a large door to the centre of the rear elevation which provides access to the internal communal refuse area.

No changes to access or parking are proposed as part of this proposal.

CONCLUSION

It is considered that the proposals will no impact on the visual appearance of the building and will allow for repairs to be carried out which will preserve both this historical asset further into the future. The proposals aim to resolve issues of water ingress at various points which are affecting the internal fabric of the building. External proposals also aim to restore damaged faience at low level, helping to restore the building to its former glory.

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Description of the Heritage Asset

Although the Beswick Co-op is not located within a conservation area, it is a Grade II listed building and stands with a strong presence in a densely populated residential area. It is the only listed building along Northmoor Road and the only feature of important historical interest for 0.25miles.

The building was constructed in the early 1900's and the decorative faience parapet around the roof of the bay window at second floor level suggests that the property was built in 1912.

Information provided by the British Listed Buildings website explains that the building originally comprised of a community meeting hall within the upper levels, and a number of small retail units at ground floor level. This information from then goes on to describe the appearance of the building, with particular focus towards the iconic green faience columns, pilasters, cornices and contrasting buff coloured faience parapets, quoins, transoms and keystones.



Fig. 1 – Historical photograph looking at the North facing elevation

The original retail units at ground floor level can clearly be seen in figures 1 & 2.



Fig. 2 – Historical photograph looking at South facing elevation

This second photograph shows the building at a similar time from the Southern end of the building. Again, the ground floor retail outlets can clearly be seen. This photograph also shows the style of windows incorporated within the building at first floor level.
Although the exact date of these photographs is unknown, they are believed to have been taken in the early 1900's.

Today the building is overlooked by residential properties of various styles and ages. The Victorian era terraced houses shown in the photographs above remain, and there are more terraced properties lining Elgar Street. Other streets predominantly consist of more modern semi-detached houses. This makes the Beswick Co-op one of the largest buildings along Northmoor Road and a main focal point of the area. Although a number of the residential buildings around Beswick Co-op have been constructed more recently, the Beswick Co-op still compliments the brickwork Victorian terrace properties to the south which are of a similar age, and so it is important to preserve this traditional appearance of the building.

The external appearance of the building in its present form remains largely unaltered since its construction. The front elevation is supported off enclosed steelwork behind the original decorative faience. Other elevations are formed from cavity brickwork walls. There is a combination of brickwork and faience between the windows to the front elevation at first floor level and above. Pitched roofs are finished with clay tiles while all flat roofs have an asphalt finish.

Internally, the upper floors of the building were converted around the turn of the millennium to accommodate residential flats at both first and second floor levels. The ground floor continues to house a number of retail outlets, although a community facility now resides in the retail space to the southern end of the building. There is evidence that as part of the conversion of the building, improvements or repairs were made to the exterior of the building, including; repointing of masonry and replacement of some windows. Modern lightning protection has been added to the building and pigeon deterrents / netting have also been added at roof level. However, it is not known if these features were added as part of the recent building conversion.



Fig. 3 - Present day front elevation

Despite the relatively recent conversion of the building, more recently there have been a number of issues raised about elements of the construction which need to be addressed in order to preserve this historical asset, and to improve the environment within the building. Each of these issues is explained below, with proposed solutions and the considerations taken into how these proposals will affect the appearance and historical interests of the building.

Both internal and external repairs are also proposed to retail unit to the north (left) of the main entrance, as the previous lessee has carried out a number of unauthorised alterations which have negatively affected the historical aspects of the building in this area. These repairs and reinstatement works will also be explained within this report, outlining how it is proposed that the historical interests of the building be reinstated.

Each section of this report will take Historic Environment Good Practice Advice notes into account where necessary.

Windows

As part of the buildings conversion at the turn of the millennium, the majority of windows were replaced with modern, double glazed units. These newer windows have clearly been designed to try and preserve the historical interest of the building, as like the original windows would have been, they are timber framed units. It is noted that ground floor shop windows, the circular window to the south elevation at third floor level, and the dormer windows which feature to front and rear roof slopes appear to be original as they are still single glazed timber framed units.

Where windows have been replaced, the modern replacements have been created to closely reflect the original windows, with windows to gable elevations featuring central stanchions as per the historical photographs. However, all of the more modern windows have been upgraded to feature double glazing.

Windows to the front elevation have also been replaced and at first floor level the windows feature timber sliding sash units with transoms and headed casement windows above.

Unlike original sliding sash windows though, the more modern units at first floor level are operated with spiral balances rather than traditional weights and pulleys.

It has been seen that some of these windows have heavily deteriorated externally due to a lack of maintenance which has caused the timber frames to rot. This is particularly an issue to the three windows around the central bay, but it is a problem which has been identified to all the sliding sash windows.



Fig. 4 – Rotten timber sash window at first floor level

As well as this, residents within the first floor flats have complained that the sliding sash windows are very difficult to operate; with many unable to open the lower sliding sashes more than a few inches. If these windows could be opened to their full extent then they could be considered an emergency egress option for residents in case of fires within the building. In their current condition though, they cannot be opened enough to allow residents to escape. This issue is believed to be due to the large size of the lower sliding sashes and the inability for the current spiral balances to lift this weight.

It is therefore proposed that the existing sliding sash windows all be replaced with new units. In order to preserve the historic look of the building, it is proposed that these new windows will be of a matching size and style to the existing. Proposed windows will again be sliding sash timber framed units. The new windows will be double glazed to remain in keeping with other windows to the front elevation and to help reduce traffic noise from the busy Northmoor Road outside. The new window frames will also have a matching white finish to remain in keeping with existing windows. To improve the usability of the windows, new sliding sashes will be operated by new heavy duty spiral balances which are able to accommodate the large sliding sashes, making the windows easier to operate for residents.
Paragraph 15 of the Historic England Advice Note 2 states that repair is usually advisable to windows and doors as this helps to minimise the loss of the historic fabric.

However, the windows in question are clearly not the original units and therefore only contribute to the historic asset in terms of appearance. The proposed replacement windows are therefore to be of matching styles, sizes and finishes to those currently in place.

This same paragraph also states that minimum interference is the most suitable approach when replacing doors or windows, which is why the proposed windows will feature spiral balances as the existing windows do. If traditional weights and pulleys were to be introduced, despite this system being arguably more suitable for the size of sliding sashes, the jambs of the windows would have to be opened up internally, causing further disruption to the building.

Shop Roofs

The low level flat roofs over the shop fronts are formed with asphalt finishes. The flat roofs are raised up to the outer edges of the roofs, and have a step down to an asphalt gutter at the rear.



Fig 5 – Flat asphalt roofs over shops with inverted “bracket” also shown

Each ground floor retail unit is separated by green faience columns. Upon each of these columns is an inverted volute bracket linking these ground floor level columns to those at first floor level. Where the raised section of asphalt roof meets each of the inverted brackets, the asphalt finish has simply been laid up to the edge of the faience. These abutments lack a proper weathering detail as the asphalt finishes above the level of the upper most mortar within the faience, thus preventing a suitable weatherproof flashing being inserted. As the decorative capital over each column is formed from one large piece of faience it lacks any joints in to which the asphalt or a lead flashing can be inserted.



Fig. 6 – The abutment between the asphalt and the faience shows the upper most mortar joint available is below the level of the asphalt roof.

A number of the retail units beneath these flat roofs have raised complaints of water ingress affecting their properties. Although each of the retail units have experienced water ingress of varying degrees, the northern most retail unit has recently been experiencing sever water ingress during periods of rainfall. Evidence of water ingress is more prevalent around the columns of this northern most shop and is believed to be due to these defective abutments between the asphalt roof finishes above and the faience. The asphalt at a number of these abutments across the building has cracked and this has created large openings which rainwater can penetrate through. This is believed to be due to the thermal movement of the asphalt and the lack of a suitable upstand detail. Previous patch repairs have been carried out to some of these abutments in the past using sealants and modern lead-free flashings, neither of which are in keeping with the historical nature of this building.

Having developed an initial design solution and sending this to Steven McCombe at Manchester City Council for consideration, it was deemed inappropriate as this original design proposed to make considerable alterations to the front “lip” of the asphalt roof in order to create a good weathered abutment. This was deemed to negatively affect the character and appearance of the building and we were instead advised that a solution should be developed which maintains the appearance of the building.

In order to create a suitable weatherproof upstand it is necessary to lower the level of these flats roofs by 150mm where they abut the faience brackets. This will reduce the roof level below that of the upper most mortar joint and allow for an appropriate upstand to be formed. A lead flashing is then to be inserted in to the mortar joint of the faience and dressed over the newly formed asphalt upstand. This solution is proposed behind the front “lip” of the roofs and will not be visible when looking at the building from ground level (see drawings 3175/P/05 & 3175/P/07). This solution also proposes to use traditional materials in keeping with the style and age of the building.

However, as mentioned, we have been advised to preserve the “lip” to the front edge of the roofs in order to preserve the historical appearance of the building, yet doing this prevents a suitable weatherproof abutment being formed between the asphalt “lip” and the faience. In order to weather this abutment while maintaining this “lip” to the roof, it is proposed that the lip be cut back away from the faience as far as the overhanging dentils (see Fig. 6). The asphalt lip is then to be reformed up to this point and the gap between the faience and the asphalt lip is to be filled with Illbruck Tremco compriband expanding foam strips and sealed with flexible asphalt sealant (see drawing 3175/P/09).



Fig. 7 – The abutment of the asphalt “lip” to the front of the roof and the faience
With projecting dentils seen.

The small vertical strip of asphalt bonded to the shop front as seen from the front elevation (see Fig. 8) is then to be extended up to the faience column as far as possible with only a 20mm gap between the faience and the asphalt to remain. This again is to be filled in the same way as mentioned above. Although these modern foam strips and sealants would not have been available at the time of the buildings construction, they will allow for differential movement between the asphalt and the faience to occur while preserving a weathertight finish to the abutment.

All previous sealants, flashings and other inappropriate repairs are to be carefully removed from the faience as part of this exercise.



Fig. 8 – The front outer edge of the asphalt “lip” where It abuts the faience column

This proposal therefore aims to preserve the appearance of the building by maintaining the “lip” to the front edge of the shop roofs. The changes made behind this raised lip aim to comply with paragraph 11 of the Historic England Advice Note 2, as the existing asphalt roof finish is proposed to be reused, meaning that the new upstand will be formed mainly from existing materials. Where new asphalt is required, this will be combined with existing asphalt to create a homogenous roof finish. The new cover flashings proposed will be formed from traditional leadwork which is in keeping with the techniques used from the time of this buildings construction. The sealants proposed where each of the asphalt lips abuts the faience are admittedly not traditional materials, but without altering the appearance of this

roof edge and affecting the principle elevation further this has been deemed the least disruptive solution to weathering this abutment.

While repairing the flat roof abutments to the small section of roof to the north elevation (Farrant Road), it is proposed that the timber shop sign be removed to expose a steel beam behind which has been found to be corroded. In order to preserve the building and prevent damage to masonry due to the expansion of this steelwork, it is proposed that this steel beam be treated with rust inhibitors and painted thoroughly. The shop signage/frontage will then be reinstated.

Masonry / faience repairs

Despite large areas of the building having been repointed during the buildings conversion, vegetation has begun to grow in a large number of mortar joints of the faience brackets mentioned above. These mortar joints have also generally begun to weather away which will lead to further vegetation growth which may in turn cause faience to become loose or damaged.



Fig. 9 – Vegetation growth to mortar joints of faience bracket

These mortar joints are to be repointed using traditional mortar mix of 1 part 3.5 natural hydraulic lime and 2 parts natural sand. Although areas of the masonry of this building have been repointed with modern sand:cement mortars, it is important to re-point faience with a lime mortar in order to prevent the faience becoming damaged by weather and to restore the historic appearance of the building. This is in line with the Historic England Advice Note 2 paragraph 1.13 which outlines that mortars should be selected to preserve the integrity and integrity of the building as well as be sympathetic visually.

Four of the dark green faience capitals which top off the faience columns between the ground floor retail units have become damaged and have previously been crudely repaired or replaced with plastic replica capitals. Two of these plastic replicas have had to be removed as it they become loose and posed a serious health and safety risk.

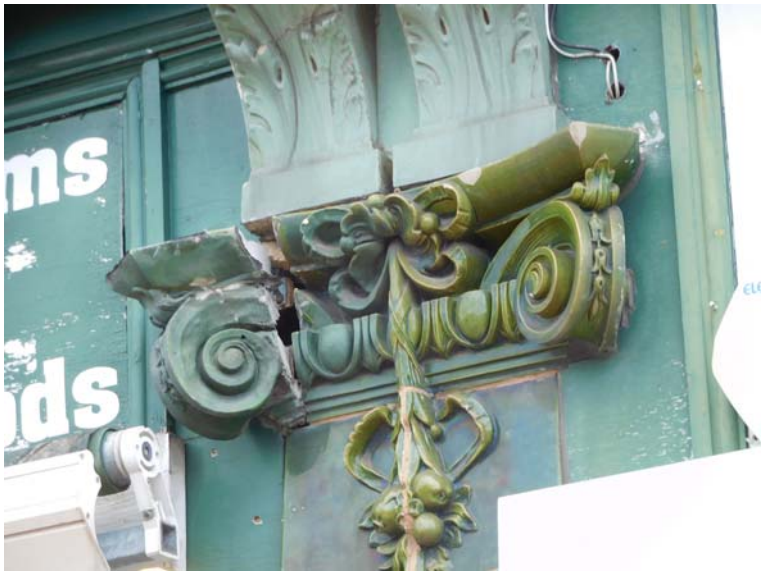


Fig. 10 – A faience capital between retail units. The left half has previously been replaced with a crude replica

As these four capitals are beyond repair and pose a danger to the health and safety of passers-by, they are to be replaced with newly fabricated faience capitals. It is proposed that the new capitals will be fabricated in a traditional way by Darwen Terracotta who have been producing detailed terracotta and faience since the end of the 19th century. The new capitals will be carefully moulded from the existing capitals to ensure that they are of matching size and pattern. The finishing colour of the new capitals will match the existing dark green faience as closely as possible. A photograph has been provided within the accompanying photographic schedule comparing a sample of new faience to the existing (photo 25). Overall, these new capitals will match the existing capitals in texture, quality and materials in accordance with paragraph 11 of the Historic England Advice Note 2. It is also hoped that this reduces concerns about replacing elements of the building with inappropriate materials, as has happened to these capitals in the past.

Shop reinstatement works

Finally, works are proposed to the ground floor retail unit to the left of the main entrance of the building. This retail unit has been named “Bottle Tops.” This shop has had a number of occupants over the last few years some of which have made unauthorised alterations to the exterior of the building. These have included; the addition of a secondary shutter fixed to the outside of the building, additional shop signage/advertisements being fixed to the principle

elevation and the removal of glazing from shop windows. Inspecting the premises has also revealed a lack of external door/window decorations. Inspection inside the property has also revealed defective sanitary goods, a need to replace / repair timber stud partitions, a need to re-wire and the need to redecorate the internally.

Internal decorations will generally consist of repainting walls and suspended ceiling surfaces. Original decorative covings at ceiling/wall junctions within one of the other retail units have been identified through the glazing at the shop window. These are enclosed within the void created by the suspended ceiling. It is therefore presumed that these remain within the shop in question ("Bottle Tops"). No work is proposed to expose the original ceilings or covings and instead the suspended ceiling which presumably encases these is to be preserved and redecorated.

Minor repairs are to be made to damaged plaster wall surfaces and timber stud partitions are to be replaced where they have been damaged by defective sanitary goods.

To the front elevation, the external glazing to the shop windows is to be replaced with single glazed panes of glass matching the thickness of the original windows. It is proposed that the timber frames and main entrance door will be redecorated with external quality paint matching the green colour and finish of the other shop windows. Unauthorised signage will then be removed from the shop, as will the galvanised shutters which have been fixed to the shop front. New shutters will then be installed and enclosed behind the shop sign over the main entrance as is the case with the other retail units. These will be powder coated green to match the other shutters which protect the other retail units.

The proposed repairs to this retail unit therefore are intended to remove unauthorised changes from the front elevation which have negatively impacted the heritage asset, and replace these with materials which reflect those found to the other retail units. So, although these proposals to the retail unit will have some impact on the building, they are proposed to be positive impacts.

APPENDIX A

Photographic Schedule

APPENDIX B

Photographic Schedule

Of Bottle Tops Shop