St Peters Square

St Peters Cross : Relocation

Design and Access Statement

MANCHESTER TOWN HALL COMPLEX
TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME



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Prepared by Manchester City Council

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this Design and Access Statement is to explain the proposals for the relocation of the St Peters Cross, in St. Peter's Square. The St Peters Cross was designed by Temple Moore. The Monument was Grade II listed in 1974.

Triggered by the need for the major redesign of St Peter's Square, as part of the transformation of the Town Hall Complex and the delivery of improved services, the opportunity to enhance the setting of the Cross and Cenotaph (being dealt with under separate Planning and Listed Building Applications which is to be submitted concurrently with that of the Cross) has been seized by Manchester City Council (MCC). It is therefore proposed to dismantle and store the Cross off site to facilitate the relocation of the Cenotaph and the proposed public realm works to St Peter's Square before reconstructing the Cross within the Square.
The proposal to dismantle and store the Cross is subject to a listed building consent application.

This document presents the architectural and landscape design concepts accompanying a Listed Building Consent application. The proposed works will consist of:

- Recording: Numbering and photographing each individual stone to a corresponding drawing and data log with description of conditions and pathologies, extensive non-destructive surveys;
- Dismantling: careful dismantling of the Cross's existing stone blocks
- Transporting: careful transporting of the Cross's stone blocks for storage at an agreed location prior to reassembly at the proposed site;
- Reassembly: Build new reinforced concrete foundations to receive historic stone blocks;
- New Works to the setting will include:
    - Reconstruction of the monument onto a new substrate to match existing;
    - Construction of a new stone plinth to elevate the monument to a height comparable to the Central Library Portico;
    - Yorkstone paving;
    - Lighting.
- Services and Infra-Structure: Diversion of existing infra-structure and provision of new drainage systems.
- Structure: New reinforced concrete foundations to receive the original stone blocks.

- Conservation and Repairs: Re-carve severely eroded decorative carved elements or lettering, consolidation works localised repairs, cleaning.

- Inclusive Access: as detailed in the Access element of this report the monument does not need to be accessed, it is set on a plinth to enhance its viewing;

The proposals have been developed in accordance with the advice included in the following reports:

- A method statement for all works, including removal, dismantling, transportation, construction, installation, rebuilding and remediation, including a strategy for the protection of the Cenotaph against damage during disassembly, storage, transport and re-construction efforts by Laing O'Rourke, SLHA and Transport for Great Manchester [Refer to Appendix 1];

- Ground Contamination Assessment to indicate areas of broken ground during removals and / or installation and construction.

- Ecological Assessment ÷ Indicating the impacts that will result from the tree removals in the Peace Gardens;

- Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment: To indicate the potential for disturbing buried remains the wider area covered by red line boundary;

- Flood Risk Assessment

The Cross is located on an island site to the south of St Peter's Square, abutted by the Metrolink platform on the West side, and bounded by vehicular traffic roads to the East (St. Peter's Square), to the South (Oxford Street and Peter Street). The North side of the Cross faces the 1949 Memorial Gardens whilst the south side faces the Cenotaph. The Metrolink tracks run in a north-east/ south-west alignment.

The proposals are for the relocation of the Cross and for the creation of its new setting within the footprint of the original site of the St Peters Church with an adjustment to allow alignment with the portico of Central Library.

2. Historical Information :

Under *The Manchester Churches Act, 1906*, Manchester City Council was charged with demolishing the St Peters Church. In 1908, following the demolition of St Peter's Church the year before, a stone cross to the design of Temple Moore was erected in the centre of St Peter's Square.

Discussions about what should be done with the site led to the decision that in a city short of open spaces, it was not to be built upon. The trustees, however, had reserved the right to erect a memorial to mark the site of their church. They commissioned Temple Moore to provide a memorial cross. Moore, who had studied under George Gilbert, was recognised as one of the foremost church architects. His response to the commission was a Gothic cross.

The cross was unveiled in September 1908.



3. The Project

Consultation :

Consultations have been taken place with Manchester Cathedral Representative the Rector of St Ann's Church.

Design Principles for the Cross :

Aside from ensuring a dignified setting for the Cross, it was vital that the thoughts and needs of the Church were considered as part of the overall proposals. The Church's views were considered under the following headings :

Siting: The Cross has been part of St. Peter's Square for more than a century. The proposed site retains the current historical relationship with the Square, albeit with a stronger focus and relationship with the Central Library, to the benefit of the Cross itself.

Function, Presence and Views: Consideration was given to the Cross as a monument commemorating the former site of the St Peters Church. Elevating the Cross by provision of a further plinth enhances its presence and allows for prominent views from Oxford Road and Moseley Street.

Group Value (The Relationship with Cenotaph): The Cross was present in St Peters Square before the Cenotaph and whilst the original design of the Cenotaph does accommodate the St. Peter's Cross, it is known that Lutyens was not fond of religious symbolisms. The listing description does mention group value. The monuments were built at different dates and are listed at different Grades (St. Peter's Cross is Grade II listed). The significance of the relationship between the Cross and the Cenotaph was dramatically altered in 1949 with the loss of Lutyens Cross setting, replaced by Howitt's Memorial Garden in 1949. Therefore the relocation independently of each other is not seen as detrimental.

4. Design

The proposed design has been subject to evaluation by the Design Team (DT) which consists of expert structural and civil engineers, contractor and specialist sub-contractors, quantity surveyor and planning consultant.

Surveys and Investigative Works:, a series of non-destructive surveys have been commissioned and carried out to ensure that as much information as possible is gathered on the monument, with particular focus on its construction details and existing foundations. Surveys will also be undertaken on the proposed site to assess the condition of the existing crypt and its capacity to support the monument in its new location.

- Measured survey of the existing monuments/laser scan:

- Measured survey of St Peters Square (new location).

- Existing Services Survey – obtaining utilities records and carrying out a scan survey to verify locations

- Condition survey of the monument's fabric, including a photographic record of the stonework to the memorials to record the physical condition of the stonework and paving:

- Site Investigations: Trial excavations and inspections to area of the existing Cross location.

- NDE (Non-destructive evaluation) – Impulse Radar to cover the elevations and plan of the Cross and immediate adjacencies

- Mortar Analysis; removal of small samples of existing mortar and lab testing

4.1. Use

As a focal point of the southern part of St Peters Square, the Cross's new uncluttered location provides space around the monument more in line with its original setting when first erected.

4.2. Amount

The increased height of the Cross reemphasises its location and status as the monument commemorating the site of the demolished St Peters Church

4.3. Layout

The Cross marking the historic location of St. Peter's Church is suggested to be reinstalled within the historic view corridor built up by Lutyens in the Mosley Street corridor as a stand alone item like it was before the erection of the Cenotaph. Further it should be enhanced in status by lifting it

to the top height of the Library colonnade on a prominent plinth. The Cross therefore becomes a prime landmark, focal point for vistas from North and South and a meeting point. The garden around the Cross is giving way for hard surface but the garden in front of One, St. Peter's Square recalls its existence in a location close by, this aspect of the redevelopment of St Peters Square is to be covered under separate Planning Application.

4.4. Scale

The proposals aim at enhancing the setting of the Cross by increasing the height to equal that of the portico of the adjacent Central Library.

4.5. Landscaping

The square is currently occupied by numerous vertical elements added over the years in a largely ad hoc manner, the relocated Cross will be positioned within a clear simple hard landscaping scheme thus enhancing the view of the monument.

4.6. Appearance

The new landscape finishes will follow the principle of sawn Yorkstone for paving surfaces adopted across Manchester City Centre. A specific treatment to the edge of the paving stones will establish the public as being within the St Peters Square area.

Lighting is being proposed to enhance the Cross's prominence in the Square at night. The lighting strategy proposes recessed, in-plinth fixtures, to accent the monument's sculptural details and emphasise its presence. Light fixtures will not be installed in the historic fabric, instead, the proposed plinth can accommodate the insertion of light fixtures.

5. Access statement St Peter's Cross

The Cross is in place to commemorate St Peter's Church which stood there until 1907. The cenotaph was located close by some years later. Some people use the cross to place flowers and wreaths to remember those killed whilst on active service with the armed forces. It has plaques relating to this in front of it. Currently the cross is located within a small garden on a lawn and so can only be accessed by crossing grass. It is fairly close to the Cenotaph.

The cross is supported by a hexagonal plinth that has 5 tiers giving the effect of 5 steep steps. There is no apparent reason why this should be considered to be steps as there is nothing to be accessed. The tops of each layer are too narrow to stand on or sit on comfortably.

The new location is just a few yards from the current position within the space that was formerly occupied by St Peter's church and close to the former site of the altar. It will be in an open area with no gardens or walls or fencing around it. It will have tram tracks either side of it. All plaques relating to war memorials will be relocated near the Cenotaph.

Stepping onto, sitting or placing flowers, wreaths or other tributes on the plinths will not be encouraged, however the Cenotaph will be available for these activities and the plaques currently near the Cross will be moved to the new location of the Cenotaph.

Access issues are related to warning or potential hazards.

1. The cross and plinth will have corduroy tactile York stone paving around its base. (DfA2 - 2.7.Tactile surfaces: 3)

2. The monument will be lit at night which will alert passers-by to its presence

3. The tram tracks will have a 25mm upstand in accordance with standards of the national office for rail regulation to alert pedestrians of the presence of the tracks, this is not covered by DfA2.

4. The plinth will be raised with a new bottom layer height of 500mm, it will have a narrow width which should be too narrow to step or sit on. This will discourage stepping or sitting on the plinth. So there are no access issues in relation to this.