**MOSI**

**August 2013**

**Application for Proposed New Gates at the Museum of Science and Industry (MOSI)**

# DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

# DESIGN

The Museum of Science and Industry (MOSI) is a highly popular visitor attraction in Manchester and across the region. The museum is located on a large city centre site directly off Lower Byrom Street and housed within and around a series of former industrial railway buildings. The buildings date back to the 1830s and several have Listed Building status including, at the western end of the site, the Grade 1 1830 Warehouse, Station building and viaduct which are of international heritage significance. Over recent decades, the site and buildings have been adapted and extended to meet the changing and growing demands of the museum. Alterations and interventions include the formation of new entrances, galleries, circulation and support facilities. Whilst some of these changes have proved to be successful, the area around the main entrance off Lower Byrom Street is considered by MOSI to be less so.

Following careful consideration, proposals have been developed by MOSI to introduce new glazed gates and screens, remove the metal steps adjacent to the Great Western Warehouse and reinstate windows to the original design, take down the 1982 Visitor Services block and, consequently, make good the north elevation of the Power Hall. The proposals have been devised to: -

- improve the eastern end of the site as the main visitor entrance
- improve access within and around the site
- enhance the Museum's appearance in the public realm
- create a design that will be lightweight and transparent
- remove those unlisted physical elements that obstruct visibility into the site upon approach
- bring greater clarity to the entrance sequence by removing the notion of the gates being an entry point to the site and thereby direct visitors to the Main Entrance in the east facing gable of the Great Western Warehouse
- reinstate to their original condition those affected areas of the Great Western Warehouse and Power Hall listed buildings
- communicate the Museum's core offer by making artefacts immediately visible eg moving engines and haulage equipment
- shift the perception of the external area between the Great Western Warehouse and Power Hall from a disused Engine Yard to an External Gallery with attractive exhibits

- create a more authentic visitor experience of the site's history

**CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The desire to carry out the proposals has been long-standing for MOSI and the Conservation Management Plan sets out in the Conservation Management Policies, Retension of Significance the following: -

**Policy RS4 To reinforce the historic character by removing the twentieth century Visitor Services Building and barriers, additions identified as intrusive, if the structures are no longer necessary.**

Reason: The intrusive elements have a detrimental effect on the integrity of the surrounding structures.

**Policy RS5 To allow the removal of any neutral buildings or elements, if the structures are no longer necessary.**

Reason: The removal of the neutral elements will not have a detrimental effect on the the integrity of the surrounding site.

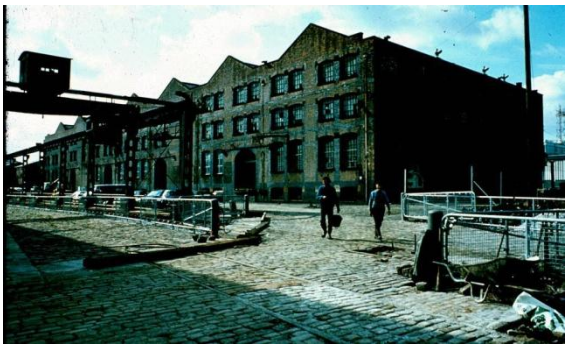
Detailed extracts from the Conservation Management Plan are included in the Heritage Statement included in the applications.

**VISUAL STUDY: VIEWS INTO THE SITE**

The following images show the historic, current and proposed views of the entrance to the site and demonstrate how the proposals intend to reinstate the original views into the site whilst ensuring a secure boundary is maintained to meet the Museum's requirements.



Current view from the Visitor Services building looking west



View into the site from Lower Byrom Street in the 1960s



Colour view of the site from Lower Byrom Street in the 1970s



Existing view of site restricted by existing gates and Visitor Services block



Proposed view of new gate and screens looking into the site

**GATE AND SCREEN DESIGN**

The design of the gates has evolved from MOSI's desire to maximise views into the site. This has been achieved by creating a regular series of glazed panels set at a height of 2.4m. The existing gate and barriers are set at a height of 2.2m. The new height for the panels has been established through consultation on site security with the MOSI Technical Services Manager. Within the proposed design arrangement, one of the panels is to be openable to form a gateway giving site entry and egress for large vehicles. The minimum width requirement of 4.2m for the vehicles to pass through the gate has determined the size of the glazed panels. Through careful detailing, the appearance of the gate is identical to the fixed glazed panels which creates a highly uniform screen along the boundary. The structural frames are constructed from fabricated steel sections and the panels are toughened single pane glass. A gate track is set into the ground to carry the jockey wheel to the manually operated gate. All steelwork is to receive an external paint finish. Manifestation is to be applied to the glazing in accordance with Building Regulations. Drawings of the proposed design are included in the application.

The design of the gate and panels has been developed in accordance with the Conservation Management Plan, Conservation Management Policies, New Developments, as follows: -

**Policy ND1.2 To ensure that the style of the new structure appears clearly modern, expressing the new use and utilising a contemporary architectural vocabulary that does not imitate the existing details.**

**PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF WORK**

As well as the introduction of the gate and screens, several existing unlisted structures are to be removed and listed buildings to be made good to their original condition. The overall scope of the proposals is described below: -

**Phase 1**

1. Take down existing boundary gates and posts, remove kerb plinths and bollards. Make good hardstanding to ground level, including revised levels locally as required. Materials to match existing plus installation of jockey wheel track in preparation for new gates and screens.
2. Fabricate and install new gate, screens and posts including pedestrian pass gate. Install 4no. low level steel bollards to protect the gate.
3. Take down external metal platform, balustrade and steps leading from external corner doors on the south elevation of Great Western Warehouse. For details refer to Application for Conservation Area consent accompanying the Planning Application. Form hardstanding to match existing at ground level including casing to gas pipework supply as necessary. For details refer to Application for Conservation Area consent accompanying the Planning Application.
4. Take down external corner doors and windows on south elevation of the Great Western Warehouse leading to an external platform and steps. Reinstate original windows and build bullnose brick infill panel below to match original existing brickwork. For details refer to Application for Listed Building consent for the Great Western Warehouse accompanying the Planning Application.
5. Take down external steps, balustrade and retaining wall to paved area to the east of the boundary gates. Form a new retaining wall, glazed balustrade and steps located at the southeast corner of the Great western Warehouse. For details refer to Application for Conservation Area consent accompanying the Planning Application.

**Phase 2**

1. Take down the 2-storey Visitor Services building. For details refer to Application for Conservation Area consent accompanying the Planning Application.
2. Make good the exposed areas of the Power Hall north elevation to match original condition. For details refer to Application for Listed Building consent to Power Hall accompanying the Planning Application.
3. Make good the footprint area of the Visitor Services building with hardstanding at ground level, including adjustments to levels as required to form seating and entrance apron to the Power Hall. Erect a glazed balustrade at the change in level adjacent to the entrance.
4. Take down the Phase 1 pedestrian pass gate.
5. Fabricate and install gate screens. Refer to planning application drawings for details.

Regarding the finishes to the ground and steps, these are proposed in accordance with the Conservation Management Plan, Conservation Management Policies, Settings, as follows: -

**Policy S2 To ensure any new paving materials are simple, functional, and reflect and enhance the character of the site.**

Reason: An inappropriate paving material or design would detract from the significance of the site and not meet the principles for enhancing and improving design promoted by Manchester City Council.

**ARCHAEOLOGY**

In accordance with the Conservation Management Plan, Conservation Management Policies, Settings, Policy S3 will be applied: -

**Policy S3 To ensure that an archaeological watching brief is in place before any excavation of the site for alterations, extensions or new build.**

Reason: It is necessary that any remains of archaeological significance are properly preserved or recorded. This area formerly contained several phases of buildings, and evidence of these may still exist below ground.

# ACCESS

The existing access arrangements around the location of the proposed gates are not satisfactory. The pair of double doors at the southeast corner of the Great Western Warehouse lead on to a metal deck landing which leads on to a short flight of metal steps with no ramp or lift in place. The alternative route is to leave the MOSI site via a pedestrian gate along the boundary and pass back into the site via another gate adjacent to the Visitor Services block. The proposals are to remove the metal landing, take out the pair of doors to the Great Western Warehouse and reinstate a pair of windows to match the original windows. Access from the Great Western Warehouse into the yard would be maintained via the existing ramp and lift at the centre of the ground floor plan.

Existing external access to the Power Hall is via a steep ramp and the proposals are to form a more level apron to the entrance with a seating area and glazed balustrade in the location of the Visitor Services building. For details, refer to the planning application proposed drawings.

These access arrangements are proposed in accordance with the Conservation Management Plan, Conservation Management Policies, Disabled Access and Disabled Facilities,, as follows: -

**Policy DA1 To provide reasonable access to the buildings and site and ensure the design and location of disabled access and disabled facilities are sympathetic to the buildings while respecting current practice.**

**PHOTOGRAPHS**




Existing gates and Visitor Services building from Lower Byrom Street



Existing external gates from within the site with doors and landing from Great Western Warehouse to the left






Visitor Services building



Existing landing and steps to Great Western Warehouse




Existing entrance apron to Power Hall




External steps and retaining wall east of gate boundary