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PROPOSED CAR PARK ON PICKFORD STREET, ANCOATS PPG15 STATEMENT REGARDING THE DEMOLITION OF BUILDINGS WITHIN A CONSERVATION AREA

Introduction

The proposed car park forms part of the Ancoats Public Realm Project which is being implemented on a phased basis and is due to be completed by the end of 2009. The project will deliver high quality streets and spaces using robust traditional materials as well as creating a pedestrian friendly environment by creating priorities in favour of pedestrians and cyclists and generating slower vehicle speeds. The project is based on the Ancoats Public Realm Strategy which was approved by Manchester City Council Executive Committee in 2003.

Pickford Street itself forms part of the earliest public realm work carried out in Ancoats as part of the Strategy and works were completed as part of the development of the MM2 development by Gleeson/Persimmon in 2002. At that time the building in question (8-10 Pickford Street) was operating as a café but was part of the Ancoats CPO which was confirmed in September 2002. The building was duly vested in the North West Development Agency and the former owners have since vacated the premises. The building has remained vacant for the last 4 years.

The existing building

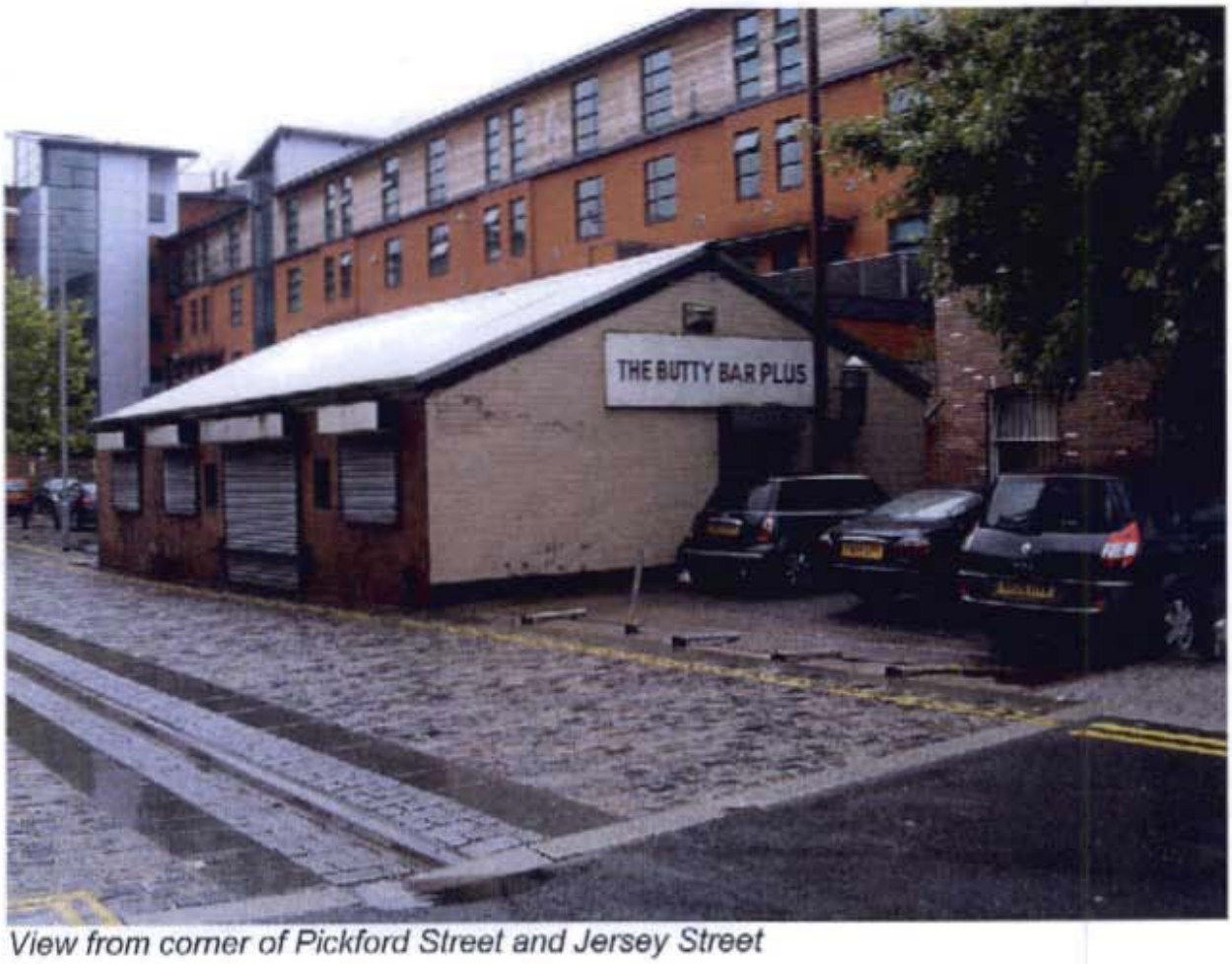
The building is single storey, brick built with painted gables and a pitched corrugated roof. Doorways and windows are protected by galvanised steel externally mounted roller shutters.



View of the former 'Butty Bar' looking along Pickford Street towards Jersey Street



Front elevation on Pickford Street



View from corner of Pickford Street and Jersey Street

Proposed demolition

It is proposed that 8-10 Pickford Street be demolished and replaced with a secure car park that will be available for local businesses only.

Although the current building is not regarded as being in a particularly poor state of repair, having been occupied and ran as a café until relatively recently, it nevertheless detracts from the character of the Conservation Area. The building is out of scale with the surrounding new development and all the original buildings that once lined up along this stretch Pickford Street have gone. The areas on either side of Pickford Street adjacent to the two buildings that make up the MM2 development are made up of car parking and landscaping and so the proposed car park would sit more comfortably with the existing uses and 'open' nature of Pickford Street.

The building is considered to be of neither architectural merit nor historical significance. In 2001 a study completed by URBED working alongside Peter Eley Architects and King Sturge & Co. assessed 68 buildings within the Ancoats Conservation Area to create a database which was *"capable of reconciling heritage and regeneration issues"* and that would allow *"difficult issues to be agreed away from emotive debates about individual buildings"*. 8-10 Pickford Street, along a small number of other unremarkable buildings in Ancoats, was not even deemed worthy of assessment as part of the study.

The replacement of this building with a high quality car park which will use the same palette of materials as the rest of the regenerated public realm in Ancoats is therefore regarded as a positive step in the renaissance of Ancoats Urban Village.