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Proposed Disabled Access, Kings House,

40-42 King Street West, Manchester

Application No. 083532

Background

Erected at the end of the 19th Century and to different designs, numbers 40 & 42 King Street West comprise one block of building bounded by Butter Lane and Back Bridge Street. These buildings are included in the King Street Conservation Area but the buildings are not listed.

With the exception of the San Carlo & Korean restaurants at each corner of the block the two buildings are currently being refurbished and interconnected for occupation by a single tenant namely Berryman's who currently occupy much of the office areas.
However this arrangement applies only to the period of the current lease.

As part of the building refurbishment it is intended that a disabled access complying with DDA requirements is provided.
This is necessary as the Ground Floor level of the building is above street level and all existing entrances have a flight of steps leading from street level to ground floor.

The main entrance to the building is in number 42 and leads directly to the lift lobby accessing all floors.
It is not sufficiently wide to allow for the installation of a disabled access platform. For this reason the most suitable location was considered adjacent to this entrance in the bay occupied by the Oriel Window.

The adaptation of this window and details of the disabled platform lift are illustrated in application REF 083532. (Option)

Support Justification to Application

Option 1

Before the selection of this option as the preferred option by both our client Bruntwood and SMC DTR:UK as architects the following criteria were applied:

A) Impact on the fabric of the building
B) Management of the building
C) Future adaptability of the building

A) Impact on the Fabric of the building

The solid infill forming the lower section of the Oriel window bay may originally have been used to provide goods access to the basement below. Adapting its use for disabled access reflects its original purpose as an access point.

In order to minimise the impact of the alterations the form of the window bay will be maintained and the lower section raised to a height which will allow access. The existing pediment detail will be replicated and the upper glazed window reduced in height, however the original frame details of this window will be retained.

B) Management of the building

The Oriel bay can be isolated from both the main entrance to the building and the entrance leading to Berryman's reception area during the construction of the disabled platform lift.
This is an important consideration as the building will remain occupied by Berryman's during the refurbishment period.

C) Future adaptability of the building

Although the office areas will be occupied by a single tenant this situation applies to the period of the current lease.

It is possible to introduce an internal door at the upper level leading to the main lift lobby which would allow use of the lift independently of Berryman's reception area should the building revert back to a multi-occupant tenancy.

Option 2

We have also been requested by the Planning Department to consider the siting of the lift in Berryman's entrance area (Option 2) which is located on the other side of the Oriel window.

Applying the same criteria to Option 2, the following were examined:-

A) Impact on the fabric of the building

The construction of the lift in this location will require the removal of the 5 stone steps at the entrance. It is not clear whether the bottom step is built into the stone surround of the doorway. This surround would require repair work after removal of the steps.

The outer ornamental steel security gates would require replacing to avoid leaving a 500mm gap below where the steps have been removed.

Viewed from the street the reconfigured entrance area would appear as a blank wall on the lower section with a glazed panel above as both the new stepped access and platform would be located at the sides of the present entrance and would not be immediately visible from the street.

The remaining entrances on this elevation both feature a flight of steps leading from street level. Viewed in conjunction with these entrances we consider that this reconfigured entrance would appear incongruous in the building façade.

B) Management of the building

The construction of the access in this location would require the Berryman's entrance to be closed completely during construction. This would impact considerably on the tenants, Berryman's, who will continue to use the building during this period. All access would be via the main entrance and lift lobby which is not immediately visible from the reception area.

C) Future of the building

As in Option 1, it would be possible to link the disabled platform lift to the lift lobby by introducing an internal door at the upper level.

However as the initial entry to the lift area will be via Berryman's entrance its use would be controlled by the occupants of this ground floor area. This could restrict access for other occupants of the premises if working hours are different.

Conclusion

Having applied the above criteria to both options we consider Option 1 to be preferable as it has less impact visually on the appearance of the building, minimises the inconvenience to the building occupants during the construction period and lastly will allow greater flexibility in the operation of the access lift for future tenants of the building.