Planning Policy Guidance Note 15, 1995 (PPG 15) Statement

Ground Floor
SACKVILLE STREET BUILDING- ROOM D1 REFURBISHMENT



Prepared for:
University of Manchester
Directorate of Estates
Oxford road
Manchester
M13 9PL

Prepared by:
Halliday Meecham Architects Ltd
111 Piccadilly
Manchester
M1 2HY
tel : 0161 661 5566
fax : 0161 661 5567
e-mail : hma@hallidaymeecham.com

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1.0 Introduction

This statement is prepared in accordance with PPG 15 paragraph 3.4 – 'Applicants for listed building consent must be able to justify their proposals'. This statement shows why the proposed works are desirable or necessary, and provides full information to assess the likely impact of those proposals upon the buildings and their setting.

This statement is to be read in conjunction with the drawings prepared by Halliday Meecham Architects.

This statement is to accompany the Listed Building consent application. The works are of a minor nature in respect of the extent and impact upon the listed buildings. For those reasons a full PPG15 Statement, which would give detailed appraisal of the listed buildings and their environs, is deemed not necessary. This statement concentrates on the works of immediate concern and their impact upon the historic fabric.

2.0 Outline description of the proposed works

Due to a minimal budget being available the works are to be restricted to the relocation of the self contained modular laboratory that is to be dismantled within the refurbishment of room A13. This project is on the third (D) floor of the building, on the south side adjacent to Sackville Street.

Works in listed building third floor

- Strip out of existing offices and labs (see attached photographs)
- Install relocated laboratory
- Installation of new linoleum, with protective underlay to existing timber floor
- Installation of new ventilation ducting
- Minimal refurbishment, re-decoration and repairs to area affected by strip out
- No works to windows or exterior items

3.0 The Architectural And Historic Qualities of The Sackville Building and its Contribution To The Area

The immediate environs are institutional/educational, and generally impression is one of large footprint buildings of a wide age range and various materials

The area is very rich in very high quality buildings, several of which are listed. There are some buildings of high significance for their architecture and townscape value. These are interspersed with numerous examples of lesser architecture, and modern buildings, that have varying contributions to make to the character of the area. There are still sites and poor quality buildings, which have a negative or neutral contribution, and these are prime candidates for enhancement.

4.0 Building Materials, Colours and Textures

Facades are principally brick with recent construction in many modern materials. Walling is adorned with many architectural embellishments contrasting with very plain facades. The newer buildings bring the variety and techniques of the present-day architecture into the area, creating interest points in vistas and streetscapes.

5.0 Particular Local Detail

There are no details that could be regarded as particularly locally distinctive. Many individual buildings have idiosyncratic or particular design features representing a particular aesthetic or

type of design; all of which contribute to the overall character. The Sackville Building is perhaps the most distinctive building in the area

6.0 Setting, Landmarks, Vistas and Panoramas

This scheme is not introducing any changes to the existing streetscape. All landmarks, vistas and panoramas would remain intact

7.0 The Significance of The Sackville Building

The Sackville Building was originally a UMIST building providing facilities and laboratories for scientific subjects generally. The footprint and massing of the building is considerable and is visible from many locations. This building is a fine example of the architecture in Manchester at the time.

The building, the largest on the combined campus, comprises an original structure on Sackville Street, built in 1895 – 1912 to the design of Spalding and Cross with an extension to the East completed in 1957 to a 1930's design by Bradshaw Gass and Hope. The building is listed Grade II and a transcript of the schedule of listing is included below. The original structure comprises 4 main storeys with a semi-basement and attic in French renaissance style with red brick and terra cotta used extensively on the exterior and interior. The extension has a total of 10 storeys in similar materials but to a simpler design. There are additional mezzanine levels.

The accommodation is arranged around two courtyards with principal rooms facing onto surrounding streets and two large ceremonial halls sub-dividing the earlier Western courtyard.

The building has remained in educational use throughout its life, and has suffered relatively little change. The continuity of use has preserved many of the interior features of the building. However, there have been minor alterations to planning and layout and new lightweight partitions to create offices and laboratory spaces. The surface finishes have suffered some wear-and-tear, as would be expected in over a century of very intensive use, but much original joinery, details and ironmongery survive. The roof of the courtyard of Sackville building has a number of items of plant. Generally the building is made up of generously sized open plan teaching spaces with wide corridors and high ceilings. Windows are large and filter light into the main circulation areas.

8.0 Architectural and Historic Significance of Interiors

The principal interiors in the original building are those on the ceremonial route from the Sackville Street Entrance, through the Statue Hall on Floor B, up the principal staircase and into the Main Hall on C Floor. These are imposing spaces with terra cotta pilasters, columns and facings, reflecting the design and materials of the exterior. Another significant interior is the Council Chamber located on B Floor at the corner of Sackville Street and Whitworth Street. The chamber has a decorative plaster ceiling apparently supported by moulded plaster caryatids and timber panelled walls.

The corridors and staircases in the original building and the extension are important to the overall character of the building. The corridors in the 1957 extension have distinctive oak lockers with glazed screens above which provide a unifying element.

9.0 Listing

UMIST MAIN BUILDING

Schedule of Listing

03/10/74

Grade II

University Institute of Science and Technology1895-1912 by Spalding and Cross. Red brick with dressings of red sandstone and terracotta, slate mansard roof. Large rectangular plan with 2 internal courtyards. French Renaissance Style. Five storeys, basement and attics; mullion and transome windows tiered over lower 4 storeys with rusticated pilasters, richly moulded aprons and entablatures and surmounted by elaborate shaped gables; projecting gabled bay at centre and arched entrance, returned side to Whitworth Street has projecting gabled bays, that to left surmounted by cupola. Moulded bands and eaves cornice; brick chimney stacks. Terracotta forecourt balustrading extending over both facades. Rear similar. Interior not inspected.

10.0 Character Assessment of Interiors

Room D1
Refer to Drawing No 3957 (2) 201 and the photographs

Located over the central entrance portico of the original 1912 building on Sackville Street, room D1 measures approximately 15 metres by 10 metres between structural walls, with a height of approximately 4.5 metres. The space is sub-divided by glazed timber partitions forming 6 No. small workshops around the central laboratory.

The original space has plastered walls and ceilings. Plain plastered beams span between the external wall and the corridor wall. The floor is mostly pitch pine wood block with pine covers to electrical ducts, with a section of terracotta tile to one end.

There are large south facing double hung sash windows.

Original cast iron radiators located on the external wall heat the rooms.

An existing air supply system has a high level intake duct leading from an external cowl fitted within a solid panel in the upper sash of one window. An extract duct runs back to the corridor.

The existing rooms have modern lighting electrical and fire detection fittings and associated distribution.

The Proposals

Works in the room D1
Please refer to drawing 3957 (2) 202, the specific drawings identified below for each element, and the Specification with Scope of Works document for D1.

Strip out:
Existing partitions, furniture, lab furniture and a non-original lab clean room is to be removed from the end of the room to which works are restricted. Ad-hoc shelving, and Mechanical and electrical wires and kit are to be removed. The original ceilings and wall surfaces are to be made good. See drawings NW6400/D/M03 & NW6400/D/E05.

Freestanding laboratory structure:
The proposed works are restricted to the re-assembly of the modular laboratory, with its own suspended ceiling. This comprises a front wall with air intake units, and sidewalls, which with the suspended ceiling are to connect back to the original wall. New partitions and ceiling sections are to create a plant area and changing room at either end, so that the structure reaches the window and corridor walls. The ceilings are set at a height of 3m, leaving a 1.5m clear void above, to which the original ceiling and spatial feel of the whole room is perceived from outside of the relocated laboratory.

Floors:
No works are proposed to the existing wood block floors, other than to protect them during the works. A floating floor with linoleum finish is proposed to the terracotta floor section around the relocated laboratory. Timber transition strips will be provided where the floating adjoins existing timber sections.

Windows:
No works are proposed. Existing ventilation cowl in solid upper sash panel to remain.

Provision of new ducting:
The replacement fresh air ducting required to ventilate the space cannot travel within the ceiling voids within the corridor and will terminate in the corridor walls in high level grilles. Engineer surveys reveal that there is no available supply ductwork in the vicinity that can be tapped into. New ducting cannot be routed back through the building due to restricted access. The proposed solution is to connect a new supply fan and duct at high level to the existing ventilation cowl in solid upper sash panel. See drawing NW6400/D/M05-A.

Drainage:
Water services are to run within the retained perimeter hardwood encasement, or inside the relocated laboratory. See drawing NW6400/D/M05-A.

Electrical power:
Electrical power and data distribution will be by means of dado trunking, restricted to the supply of the relocated laboratory. In order to minimise the visual impact of the trunking and to achieve a suitable appearance, steel trunking powder coated in an ivory colour to match the wall finish will be used. See drawing NW6400/D/E06.

Lighting:
New fitting are restricted to within the relocated laboratory, where existing recessed units are to be reused, with additional fittings to the side extension ceilings. See drawing NW6400/D/E06.

11.0 Detailed PPG15 Considerations

PPG15 is the principal policy guidance or interpretation of the Act, and the most relevant criteria for testing of applications for listed building and conservation area consent. The policy guidance it contains acknowledges throughout that changes will and must occur, and that those changes may be necessary for the survival of the area and to meet the prevalent social and economic conditions. PPG15 extensively promotes a positive attitude towards change, but is also cautious and exacting in demanding full details of impacts and reasoning.

Responses to the relevant clauses of PPG15 have been provided below in their numerical sequence in the document. A new document to replace PPG15 – the first Planning Policy Statement – is currently being written.

PPG15 Para 1.2 "The function of the planning system... is to regulate the development and use of land in the public interest. It has to take account of the government's objective of promoting sustainable economic growth and make provision for development to meet economic and social needs of the community."

Response: The proposals are the epitome of this policy. The buildings need to meet educational needs of the present day. The changes encourage sustainability by affective re-use of an important cultural asset.

PPG15 Para 1.3 "The Government has committed itself to the concept of sustainable development... This commitment has particular relevance to the preservation of the historic environment... and it cannot in practice be preserved unchanged"

Response: The University will always be subject to dynamic and positive change in order to remain sustainable and at the forefront of modern technology and research. The proposed works are designed with the sustainability expected of a long established institutional landlord.

PPG15 Para 3.3 "While the listing of a building should not be seen as a bar to future change, the starting point for the exercise of listed building control is the statutory requirement on local planning authorities to 'have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses" (section 16).

And

PPG15 Para 3.18 "Where proposed works would not result in the total or substantial demolition of the listed building or any significant part of it, the Secretaries of State would expect the local planning authority to address the same consideration as it would in relation to an application in respect of alteration or extensions."

Response: The works are in the nature of alteration with any demolition of original fabric being very minor, and does not detrimentally affect the character of the listed buildings, rather it will be an enhancement. This clause in PPG15 promotes positive change in listed buildings, but calls for the consideration of the affect of that change. In this case the changes will affect relatively minor elements of the historic fabric but the effect upon the character of the entire buildings are minimal.

PPG15 Para 3.4 "...assess the likely impact of their proposals in the special architectural or historic interest of the building and its setting."

Response: The impact is clearly illustrated in the drawings provided and will not severely compromise the historic integrity of the buildings.

PPG15 Para 3.5: "The issues which are generally relevant to the consideration of all . . .applications are:

(i) Importance of the building, architectural and historic interest and rarity . . ."

Response:. Described in detail above. The significance of the building is not disputed, and the relative cultural importance of the various elements which make up its character as a building of special interest have been analysed and the following is revealed:

"Significant plan form"

It is, and the alterations proposed do not erode the identity of the plan form.

"illustrate important aspects of the nation's social, economic or cultural history"

The University buildings represent a particular time of growth for the University and therefore Manchester

"group value"

It is an important part of a group of buildings that form the character of the area

PPG15 Para 3.5 (ii): " . . . particular physical features

Response: As given in the appraisal above, these are: the configuration of the massing and elevational design and the quality of its materials. Internally there are some spaces of high status and include good joinery, ironmongery and constructional features.

PPG15 Para 3.5 (iii): 'The building's setting and contribution to the local scene . . . where it forms an element in a group . . . or where it shares particular architectural forms or details with other buildings nearby . . ."

Response: The building contribute most positively to the local scene, and it shares some form and detail with other nearby buildings

PPG15 Para 3.5 (iv) "the extent to which the proposed works would bring substantial benefits for the community, in particular by contributing to the economic regeneration of the area or the enhancement of its environment."

Response: The provision of a widely based educational resource is of paramount importance to inner city regeneration. Besides providing an ideal sustainable use the introduction of substantial population of students brings vitality and interest to the area, as well as immediate economic benefit.

Para 3.8: "The best way of securing the upkeep of historic buildings is to keep them in active use... This must mean economically viable uses if they are to survive..."

And

Para 3.10: "The best use will very often be the use for which the building was originally designed...and the continuation... of that use should certainly be the first option when the future of a building is considered." The nature of uses can change over time. Policies for development and listed building controls should recognise the need for flexibility... to secure a building's survival.

Response: The building was constructed for departments of the University and has remained in educational use ever since. This is an important element of its cultural significance. The building design has allowed this continued use despite huge changes in the social and cultural milieu of education in the century since their construction. This is a positive approbation of the quality of

the designs and materials. Without this continuing use the historic integrity of the building would undoubtedly be threatened if a change of use was required, or if no suitable use could be found the very survival of the building would be in doubt. In this instance, adaptations to meet changing requirements are modest and fall very much within the intended remit of this part of PPG 15. The alterations will allow a variation for advanced continuing use, with minimum impact. This carefully considered response to the needs of the users and the needs of the building is actively encouraged in the attitude to change for benefit in the immediate and long term. The applicants would respectfully draw attention to the recognition of "flexibility" in this clause of PPG 15.

PPG 15 - 3.12 "Alterations and Extensions...buildings already in well established uses...Changes need to be considered only in this context" In judging the effect of any alteration or extension it is essential to have assessed the elements that make up the special interest of the building in question. They may comprise not only obvious visual features such as a decorative facade or, internally, staircases or decorated plaster ceilings, but also the spaces and layout of the building and the archaeological or technological interest of the surviving structure and surfaces. '

Response: The special interest of the building has been assessed above. The changes do not detrimentally affect the special interest of the building, and allow its continued beneficial use.

Para 3.13: "Many listed buildings can sustain some degree of sensitive alteration or extension to accommodate continuing or new uses"... "the merit of some new alterations or additions, especially where they are generated within a secure and committed long-term ownership, should not be discounted."

Response: This is a building of considerable mass, and much fine detail. The alterations have been sensitively handled reflecting the nature of both the materials of construction and the nature of the place. The ownership is a public body and the investment in these alterations and the major refurbishment that accompanies them is a testament to long-term commitment.

Following a meeting with Angela Leckie the Planning officer and Myles Leatherbarrow the Conservation officer and Halliday Meecham on 28 05 08 the following comments were noted:

Windows.
All existing fittings should be retained if possible, and disconnected as necessary.
Winders, as fitted in room D2, are to be handed in pairs on the same separating pier between windows if possible.
The aluminium secondary glazing type in room C24 would be acceptable if required.

New partition screens
The timber and frameless glass types seen in room E10 would be acceptable.
Shadow gaps are to emphasise the difference between new & old.
Partitions are to be centred beneath downstand beams if possible, or at least recessed some 100mm from the faces of adjoining columns.
Solid sections against the ceiling should match the depth of downstand beams.

Flooring
It would be preferred if a section of the existing timber where restored and left exposed within the room. Hardwood wedge transfer strips could adjoin carpet areas. An area off the double entrance doors was identified for this.

Basement stair enclosure
This would better be capped or stepped at low level, rather than interrupt the ceiling profile.

Light fittings
Examples shown in rooms E10 & D2/3 deemed acceptable, with minimal surface attachments or conduit.

Air ducts
If necessary these should again be articulated as new architectural elements.

Trunking
To have an MDF shadow back plate where attached to original walls. Metal rather than plastic fittings preferred.
Post meeting note
The Client was concerned with the shadow gap detail as difficult to maintain, clean and gets damaged easily. Therefore trunking will be fixed directly to wall, albeit with a good quality metal casing. Colour to be Polyester powder coated.

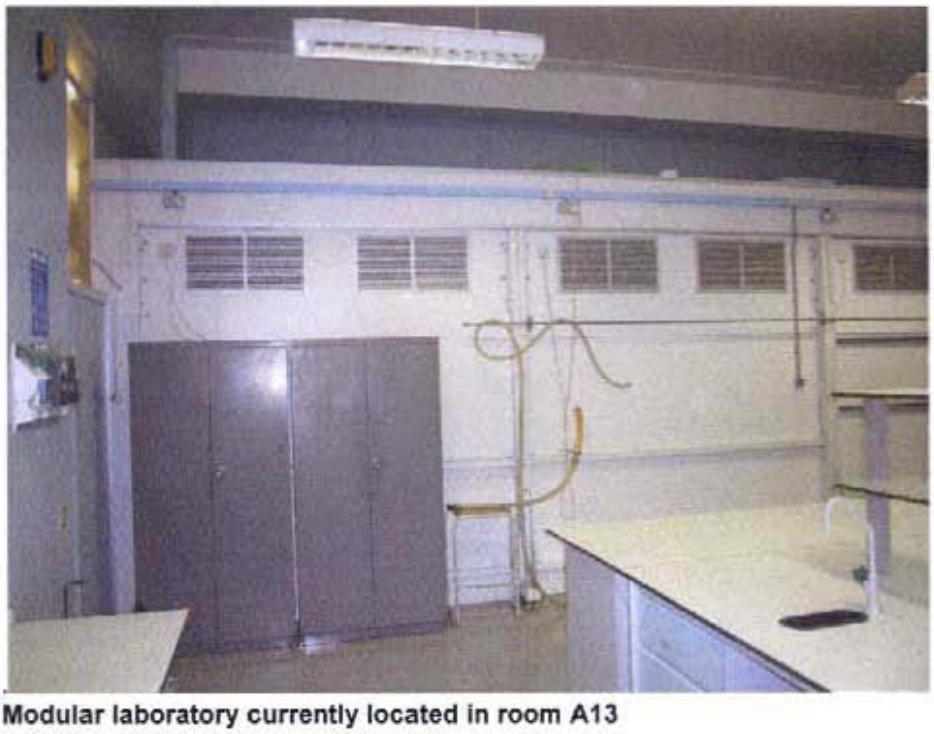
PPG 15 - 3.15: "Achieving a proper balance between the special interest of a listed building and proposals for alterations or extensions is demanding and should always be based on specialist expertise; but it is rarely impossible, if reasonable flexibility and imagination are shown by all parties involved"

Response: Architects of high repute have been engaged upon the formulation of the proposals, which demonstrate that flexibility and imagination have been positive constituents in the design process.

PPG15 Para 3.23 Local planning authorities should also consider, in all cases of alteration or demolition, whether it would be appropriate to make it a condition of consent that applicants arrange suitable programmes of recording of features that would be destroyed in the course of the works for which consent is being sought.

Response: The Applicant would be pleased to arrange for such recording.

12.0 Photographs as existing



Modular laboratory currently located in room A13



Room D1 with workshop partition to be removed



Room D1 with workshop partition to be removed



Room D1 with air duct to be removed



Elevation onto Sackville street with existing air cowl visible to the right



Junction of terracotta and timber floors in Room D1