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The Rooftop Project at 26 Lever Street

Design and Access Statement



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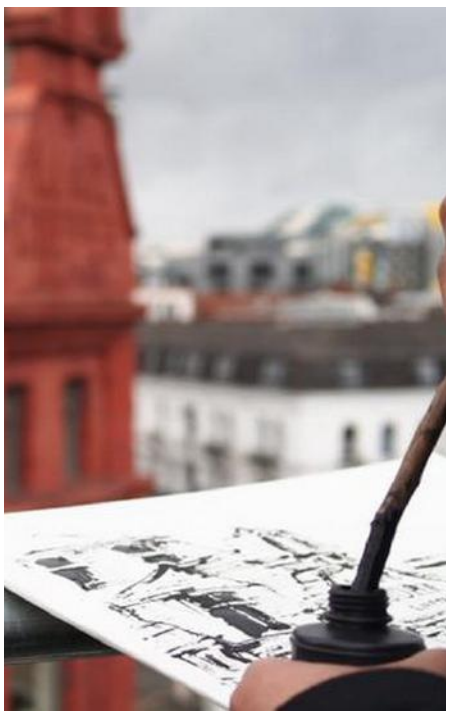
Executive Summary

The Shelia Bird Group, The Neighbourhood and Hawkins\Brown have developed a shared vision for the new rooftop project at 26 Lever Street. The strength of the proposal is such that the rooftop project is kept alive and financially underwritten by The Neighbourhood's need for more space, their commitment to the building and the Northern Quarter.

Hawkins\Brown have been appointed by the Shelia Bird Group to work with them and The Neighbourhood to develop a scheme for The Rooftop Project (atop 26 Lever Street), to allow expansion space for The Neighbourhood's studio (currently housed on the fourth floor of the listed 24 Lever Street) and to build on the success of their current initiative that offers a varied programme of semi-public events on the rooftop of 26 Lever Street, where the new expansion will be built, as well as reflecting The Neighbourhood's personality and creative energy. The extension would create additional commercial floorspace of circa 400m^2, sat atop of 26 Lever Street – one full floor (4th), connected by an internal accommodation stair to the third floor. The Rooftop Project will sensitively connect back into the existing fourth floor at 24 Lever Street through existing apertures as well as reconciling interstitial spaces at third floor. External shared amenity space will be created at the rooftop level and will be served by new/dedicated circulation.

Critically the project presents a unique opportunity to make the rooftop 'garden' initiative permanent to support the community facing side of the building and provide a great event space for shared use, including dedicated WC's, storage space, better power, lighting and servicing and potential for cover in bad weather.





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1 .0 Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of Shelia Bird Group as supporting information to the application for Full Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent.

The Design Statement provides a description and analysis of the site and context, including the Listed building to which the proposal connects at No. 24 Lever Street.

At 3.0, we set out the brief from 'The Neighbourhood' for their purposes of expansion as well as the precursor of 'The Rooftop Project'- the community focused initiative that currently occupies the rooftop of No. 26 Lever Street and which the proposal seeks to recreate, preserve and enhance.

At 4.0, we capture our engagement with statutory consultees, neighbours, building occupants, and other third parties.

At 5.0, we present the process of design development showing options that were evaluated.

At 6.0, we set out the headline and detail design; use and amount, layout, scale and appearance and at 7.0 we present our access strategy with 8.0 covering more detailed technical design issues.

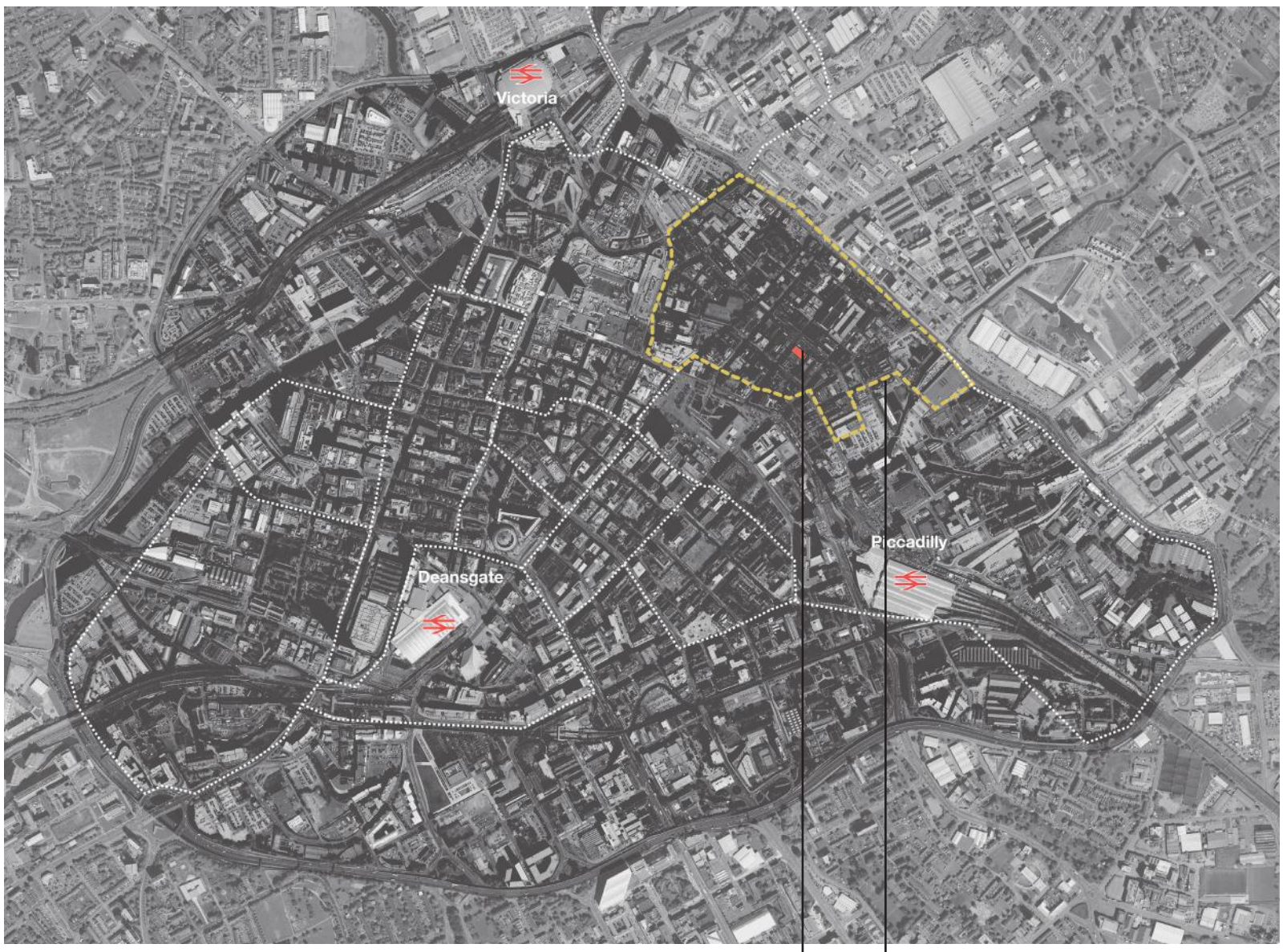
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2 .0 Site and Context Appraisal

2 .1 Site Location

The site is located within central Manchester at the heart of the Northern Quarter. The area is located close to Manchester's main commercial and retail core. It is well connected to the local and national public transport network; a five minute walk to Piccadilly Train Station with Piccadilly Gardens bus station, and Metrolink Interchange even closer.

The changing nature of the Northern Quarter's built history has led to a diverse tapestry of architectural typology and character in the area including old and new buildings, which are also preserved through the administration of the Stevenson Square Conservation Area. The area is home to a vibrant mix of independent retailers, cafes/bars, restaurants, and commercial offices and studios that have a focus on creative activities and industries. This mix has created an area of distinct identity, atmosphere and a location for creative production and cultural consumption



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2 .2 Site Context

The site is the rooftop of 26 Lever Street; accessed and connected through to the existing circulation that currently serves 24 / 26 Lever Street. The north east elevation of 26 Lever Street faces into Stevenson Square. A historic square, it is lined with retail and commercial businesses housed within a mixture of historic and newer build developments. It is a trafficked square with central islands and a bus layover in front of the site. The square is approximately 100 metres in length and 35 meters in width. The rooftop on which the proposal would sit is setback a further 4 meters from the back of the pavement. Within the square itself, the buildings are largely historic, some listed and show a myriad of architectural languages and building heights (from three to six stories). Wiithin the immediate context / conservation area listed buildings sit alongside large new build developments such as 'The Hive' (Lever Street) at seven stories.

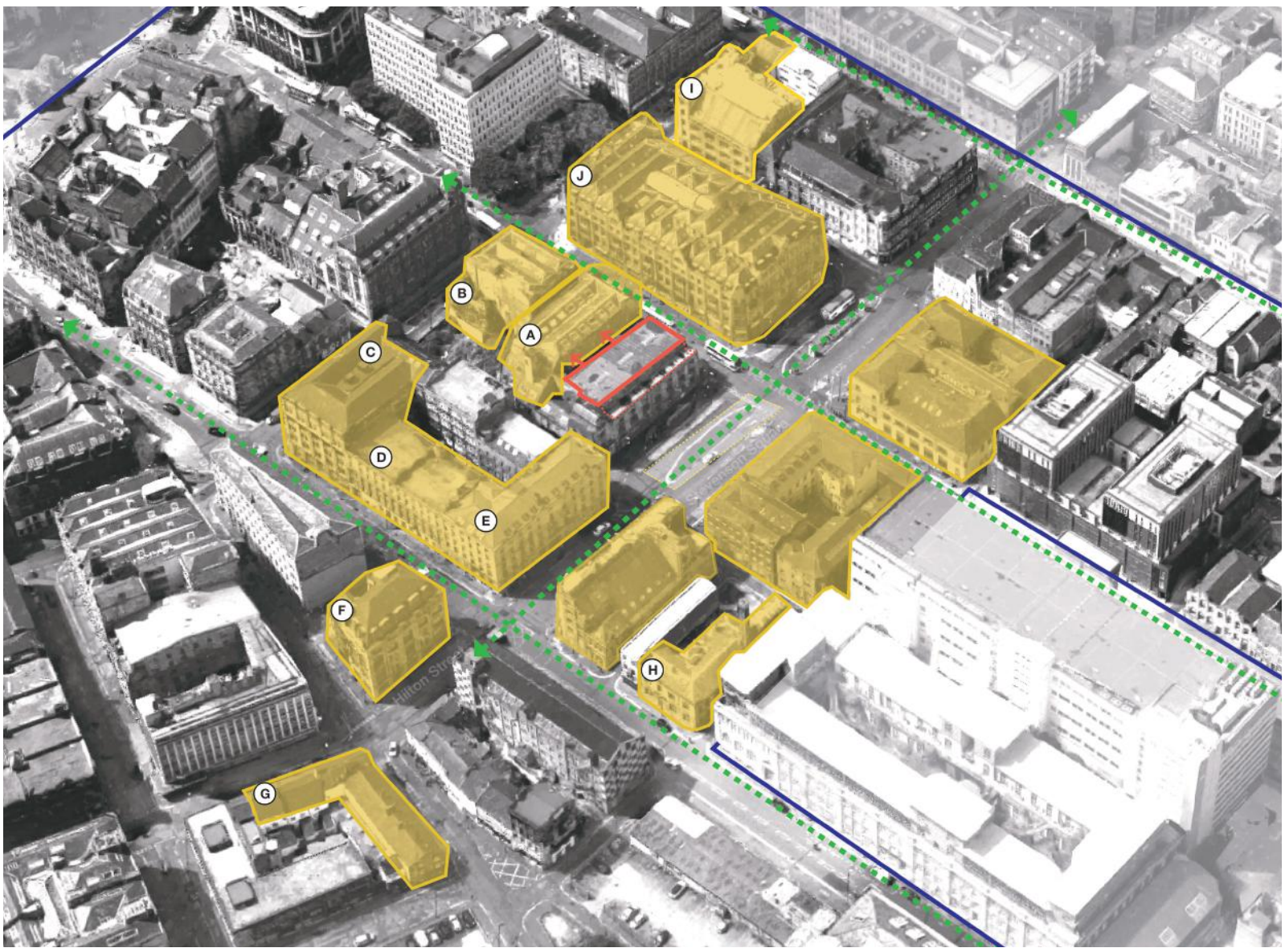
The Site (26 Lever Street)

Conservation Area

Main bus routes

Listed Buildings

A No.24. Lever Street (Grade II. 6.6.94)
B Nos.25 and 27 Lever Street (Grade II. 6.6.94)
C Nos.29 and 31 Dale Street (Grade II. 6.6.94)
D Nos.45 and 47 Newton Street (Grade II. 6.6.94)
E No.49 Newton Street (Grade II. 6.6.94)
F Newton Buildings, Hilton (Grade II. 20.6.88)
G Nos.50 to 62 (even) Hilton Street (Grade II. 20.6.88)
H Former Newton Street Police Station, Newton Street (Grade II. 6.6.94)
I No.3 Dale Street (Grade II. 6.6.94)
J Sevendale House, Dale Street (Grade II. 6.6.94)



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2 .3 Stevenson Square Conservation Area

Extract from Manchester City Council, Stevenson Square Conservation Area Guidance

“Applications may require the preparation of designs shown in relation to an entire street or square, or as viewed down long vistas, especially if seen from the junction of two streets. The urban design context is vital in conservation areas. Designers of proposed buildings should take account of this rather than evolving a design which could be located anywhere in Manchester, or indeed in any other city.

In Stevenson Square itself, moderately tall buildings, creating a varied and interesting tapestry of built form are located hard up to the back of pavement. In the numerous buildings of special interest in and around Stevenson Square, there is not only an enormous variety of styles but also a common unity which designers of new and refurbished buildings must acknowledge. Designers should be aware of proportion and rhythm in their buildings and also differentiate the ground floor, a middle portion and a top part which creates a varied sky-line, in order to enhance the area.”

In the context of this guidance, we have sought to understand the setting of the proposal from within Stevenson Square. We walked the extent of the conservation area, recording key vistas towards the site, especially at the junctions of streets, so that the proposal can be robustly tested for visibility and impact. The variety of architectural styles, rhythm and proportional building ‘crowns’; have been analysed further to inform and support our proposal.



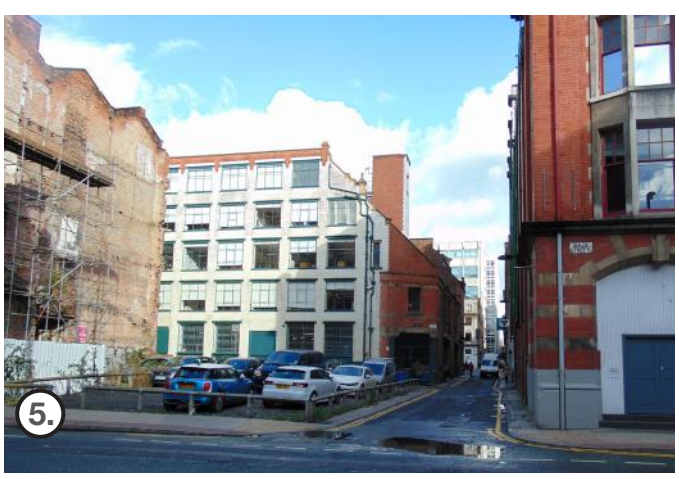
Stevenson Square Conservation Area











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The rich patina of materials, colour, texture, and detail.



5 Stevenson Square



1-3 Stevenson Square



21 Hilton Street



Habib House



5 Stevenson Square



Habib House



Rutland House



Sevendale House



Sevendale House



26 Lever Street



26 Lever Street



24 Lever Street



Sevendale House at six stories



The Hive, Lever Street at seven stories

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2 .4 Context Rooftop Conditions

Within the Northern Quarter, the rooftop condition is celebrated. Sevendale House has a distinct ‘crown’, where a different architectural language and material is employed. In some cases these ‘crowns’ have been added to the building at a later date (see right). An analysis of the area, shows this pattern within the urban grain. Whether historic, new build or rooftop extension, the use of rooftop architecture, or ‘crowns’ have become an established pattern within the area.

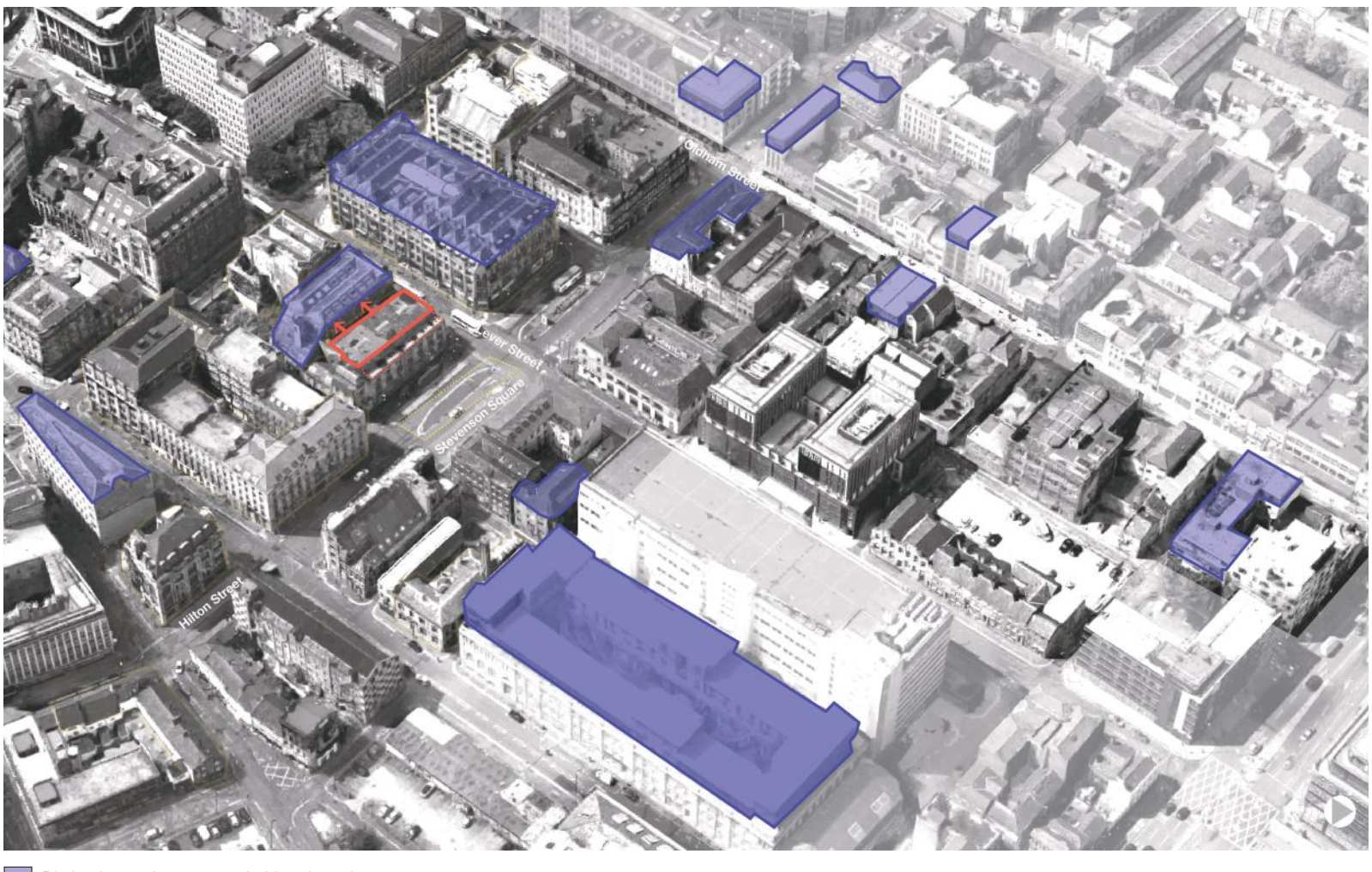
Top : Stevenson Square 1939 Below: Stevenson Square 2015



Sevendale House ‘Crown’







Distinctive rooftop ‘crowns’ - historic and new

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2 .5 Building Analysis and Alterations to Listed Building

Lever Street Elevation (1 and 2)

The main entrance to the building is from Lever Street. A busy thoroughfare and bus route this road connects the Ancoats and Piccadilly areas. The entrance to the building is housed within 24 Lever Street (2). This elevation shows the two buildings of distinctive character, butted together and now interconnected internally for vertical circulation purposes .





Stevenson Square Elevation (3)

This elevation (8 Stevenson Square and 26 Lever Street) fronts onto Stevenson Square. This elevation sits between the listed buildings of Sevendale House and Rutland House.



Little Lever Street / Bunsen Street Elevations (4)

The Bunsen Street elevation of 24 Lever Street is clad with glazed white brick. The Little Lever Street elevation of the block tapers down to a drive-through hovel or cart way across the width of the building. Rising from this area is a service hoist to lift goods from the ground floor. These two features are integral to the historic importance of 24 Lever Street, demonstrating the industrial heritage of the building.



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From Top :

External Features

26 Lever Street shows a red brick as its primary material with deep set windows that are framed by a darker brick. Additional decorative motifs are used below the parapet created by protruding and contrasting coloured bricks to form a diamond pattern. Metal work used within the elevation have functional purposes but have been decoratively painted. The building plays host to a variety of signage - modern and old, face fixed, protruding and painted directly onto the brickwork.

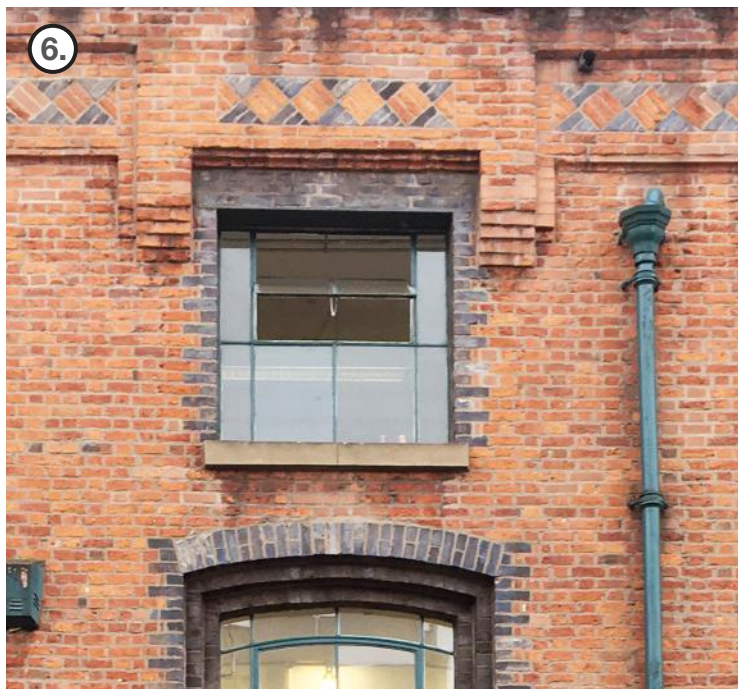
Internal Circulation

The building is served by a main circulation area within 24 Lever Street (8), with secondary circulation in 8 Stevenson Square. Within the central circulation area, parts of the 1920's timber and glazed partitions remain and have become a feature (9).

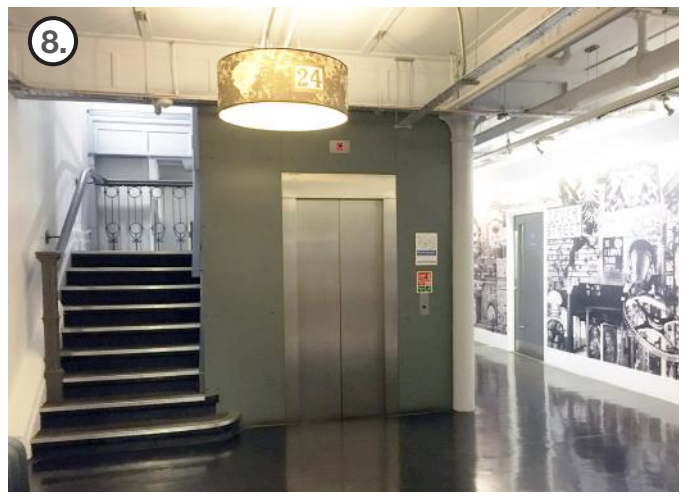
Existing Commercial Space at the 4th Floor for 'The Neighbourhood' (10 and 11)

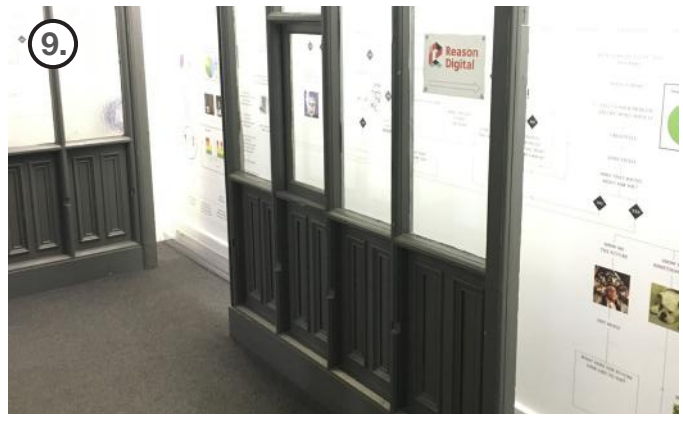
Currently housed on the 4th floor of 24 Lever Street 'The Neighbourhood' have created a studio that embraces their historic building yet adds a layer of contemporary interventions to create a modern workplace.



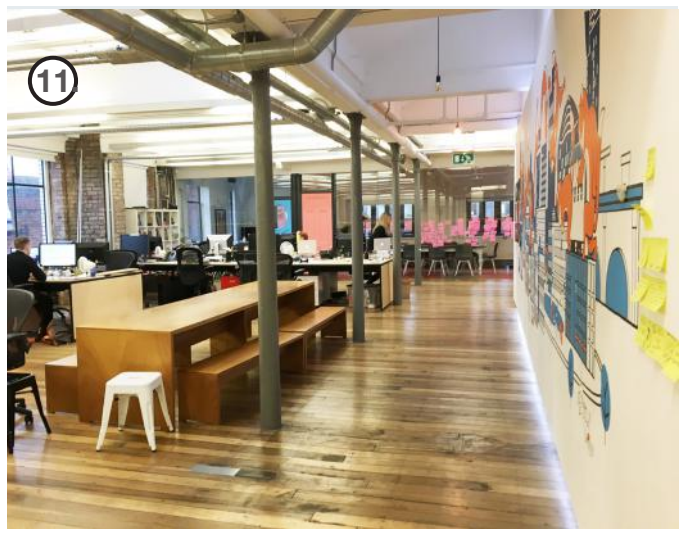












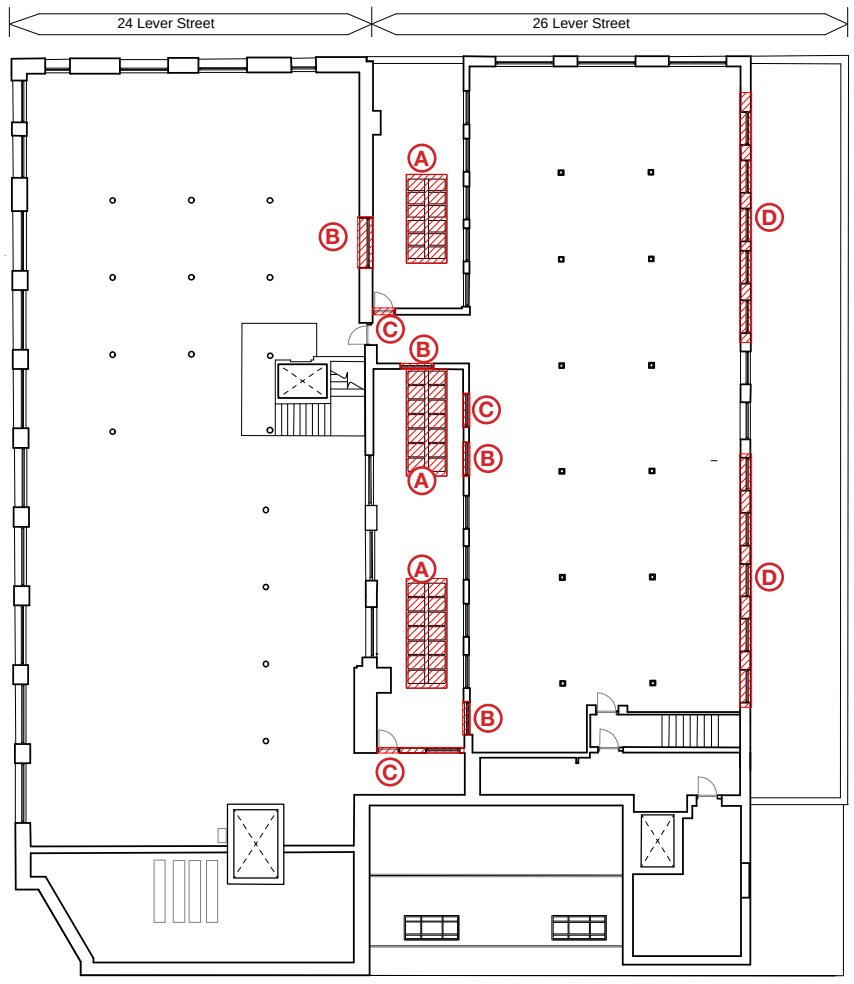
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Alterations to 3rd Floor

Alterations to the third floor of 24 Lever Street (Listed) involves localised removal of **one** steel window, the dropping of that aperture to ground to form a door and alterations to some brickwork, to match original.

Alterations to the third floor of 26 Lever Street (Non-Listed) involves localised removal of three steel windows, dropping of these apertures to ground and alterations to some brickwork, to match original. Doors to access landlocked balconies from corridors linking 24 and 26 Lever Street will be closed, sealed and secured. There will be removal of roof lights in this area.

A - Roof lights to be removed
B - Areas of wall carefully removed, working where possible with existing window apertures and lowering to form the connection between 24 and 26 Lever Street
C - Existing aperture to be closed, sealed and secured
D - Existing operation to be consolidated in single bi-folding door



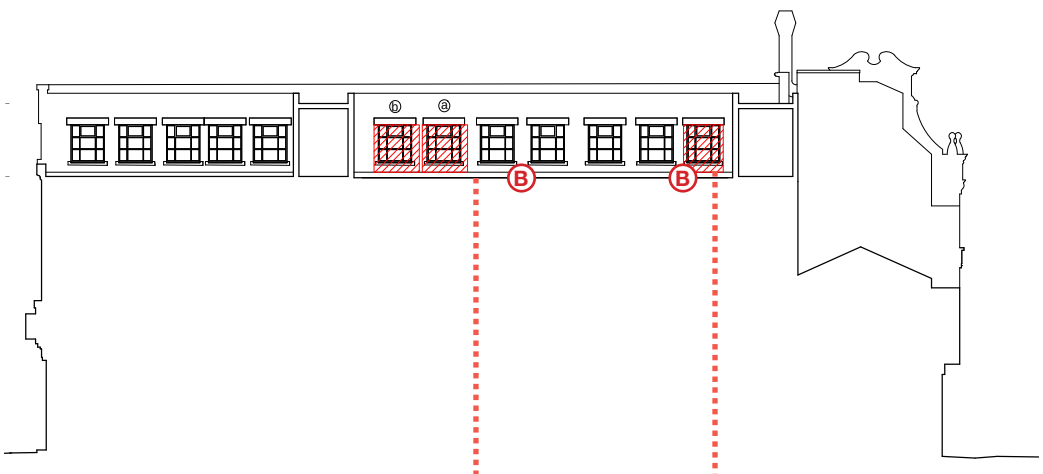
Alterations to 24 and 26 Lever Street at third floor

Alterations to 24 Lever Street (Listed)





Alterations to 26 Lever Street at third floor (Non-Listed)





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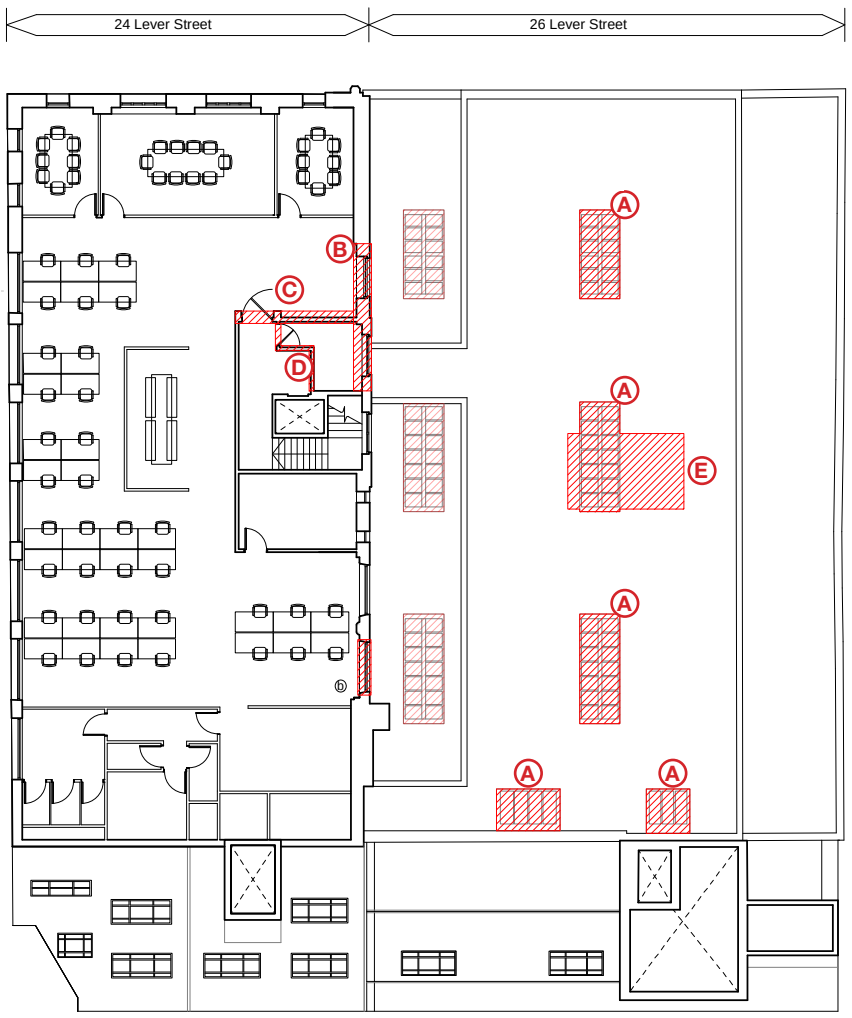
Alterations to 4th Floor

Alterations to the fourth floor of 24 Lever Street (Listed) involves sections of the north-easterly wall of 24 Lever Street, highlighted in the images (right), that will be removed to create connections through to the proposal at 26 Lever Street. The location of these connections mirror the existing connections on the floors below. This work will involve the localised removal of the steel windows identified, dropping of apertures to ground to form doors and alterations to some brickwork, to match original.

Alterations to the interior of the fourth floor of 24 Lever Street (Listed) will include the careful removal and repositioning of 1920's Internal Partitions. The removal of the partitions allow for the extension of the vertical core to offer shared access to the new rooftop terrace.

Alterations to the fourth floor of 26 Lever Street (Non-Listed) involves the removal of roof lights highlighted right.

A - Roof lights to be removed
B - Areas of wall carefully removed, working where possible with existing window apertures and lowering to form the connection between 24 and 26 Lever Street
C - Existing aperture to be closed, sealed and secured
D - Existing operation to be consolidated in single bi-folding door
E - Area of roof removed to create inter-connected floors



Alterations to 26 Lever Street at fourth floor



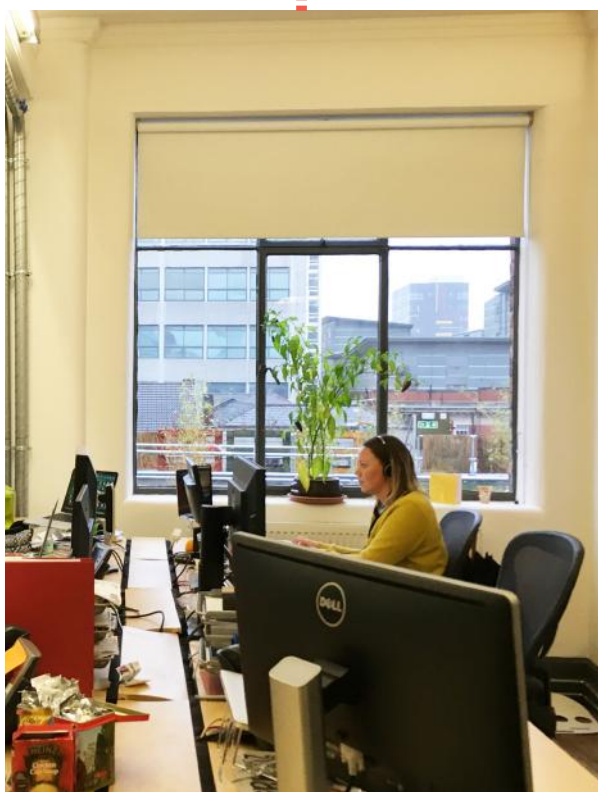
Alterations to 26 Lever Street at fourth floor

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Internal Partitions to be removed and repositioned









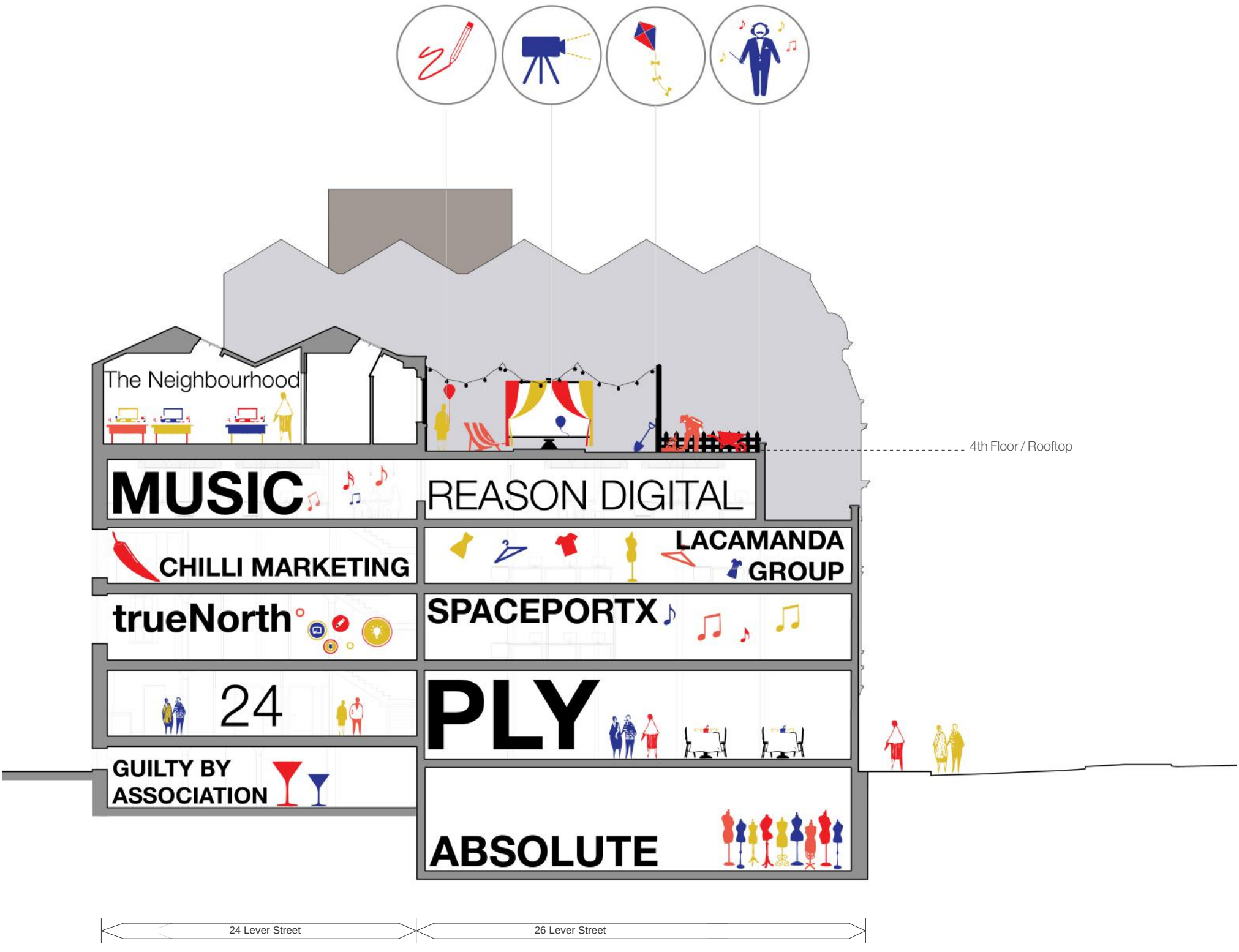


Apertures to be modified

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2 .6 Building Use and Occupation

24 and 26 Lever Street are mixed use buildings. Basement and ground floor levels are currently occupied by bars and restaurants, such as ‘Ply’ and ‘Guilty by Association’, while upper floors of the buildings are occupied by a variety of creative industries, such as Music a creative branding and communication agency.



Section Through 24 and 26 Lever Street

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The Neighbourhood and the Refurbishment of 24-26 Lever Street in 2010

‘The Neighbourhood’, a creative communications agency are long standing tenants of 24 Lever Street occupying the 4th floor. In early 2007 a fire damaged the fourth floor of the building, largely affecting the interior. The fire presented the opportunity for refurbishment and the restoration of interior elements of the building, such as the part glazed partitions on upper floors added in the 1920s by Messers Schofield. Works to refurbish the building started in 2010, in collaboration with the client and tenant ‘The Neighbourhood’. Largely affecting the interior, it removed insensitive later alterations, revealing historic features and improving the infrastructure of the building. The general aim of the refurbishment was to improve the quality of office accommodation balanced with the restoration and celebration of historic features, drawing in creative industries, benefiting and enhancing the conservation area.

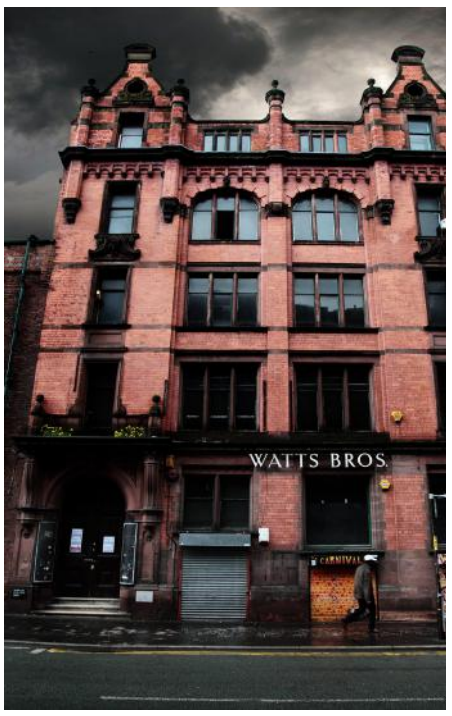
‘The Neighbourhood’ in collaboration with Various Artists and ‘Digital Blah Blah’ created a new identity for 24, along with a website and promotional print material. The identity was designed to be flexible, and to juxtapose the historic (Grade 2 listed building) and modern. The Neighbourhood’ have shown considerable commitment to the building playing a large part in its original refurbishment, demonstrating significant commitment to the building and the Northern Quarter.

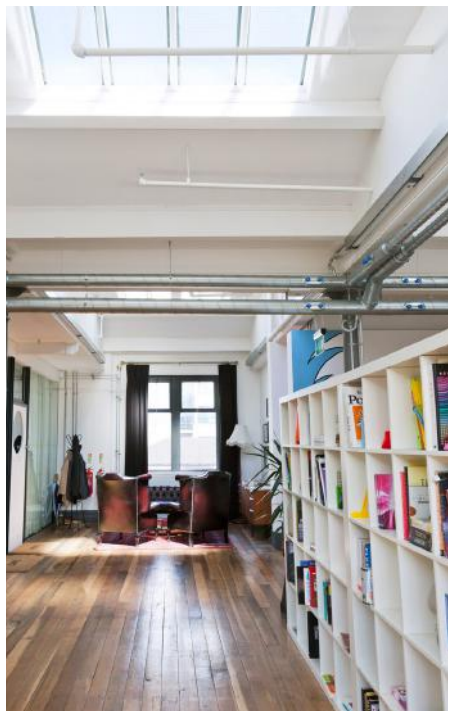
The Rooftop ‘Garden’ Project

The Rooftop ‘Garden’ Project began in October 2014. What began as an idea to transform disused urban spaces into places with purpose and value for the city, soon turned into a living project that sparked curiosity, conversation and active collaboration amongst local residents right from the off.

Through the hard work and generosity of everyone collaborating on the Rooftop Project, the rooftop garden has blossomed into a fruitful social space for the tenants at 24 Lever Street and a place that is inviting an increasing involvement from local communities. Already it is growing conversations with Ladies Room/National Trust, UpRising, Open Cinema, Manchester School of Art and many more.

The Rooftop ‘Garden’ Project is managed to limit numbers on the rooftop and events are selected for their cultural and community value. Non-tenants who wish to provide an event on the rooftop must have sponsorship from a member of the Rooftop Project Tenants Committee (who are predominately made up of tenants of 24 and 26 Lever Street) to use the space. The sponsor of any event is required to take full responsibility for said event and all attendees. The Rooftop ‘Garden’ Project is **not** run to provide any commercial profit, as such the Rooftop Project Tenants Committee can afford to be discerning as to which events are allowed to use the rooftop space. Events are carefully curated to provide a cultural or community benefit to the Northern Quarter. The use of the rooftop space for non cultural / community use is strictly not permitted.









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2 .7 Site and Building History

Building Context - Stevenson Square

In the late 18th century, middle class suburban residential development program in the Northern Quarter was initiated by Sir Ashton Lever's sale of 25 acres of land. The buyer of the land, William Stevenson laid out a formal grid system. At the crossing of two main roads; Great Lever Street and Hilton Street, he created a square named after himself. This grid system and square still dictates the Northern Quarter's urban grain today. However Stevenson sold small plots of land to developers without restrictions on what could be built, this led to incoherent and slow development in the area, reflected in the architectural character seen today.

Stevenson's plan for a middle class suburb was ultimately interrupted by the changing character of the Northern Quarter and its neighbouring areas, particularly the industrial Ancoats. Construction in late 18th Century of cotton spinning mills meant the area was ultimately 'given up' for industrial and commercial use.

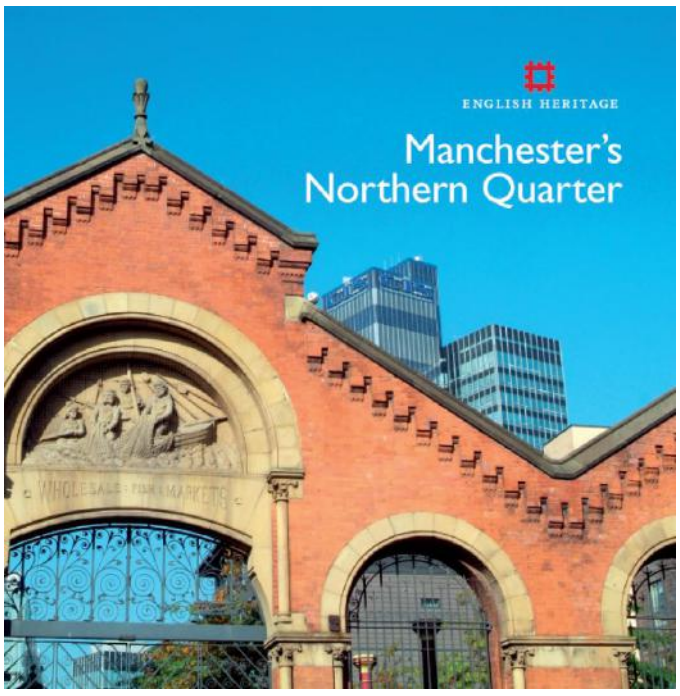
Stevenson Square then saw a period of industrial construction including Taylor's Mill now Habib House, Sevendale House, and 24 Lever Street.

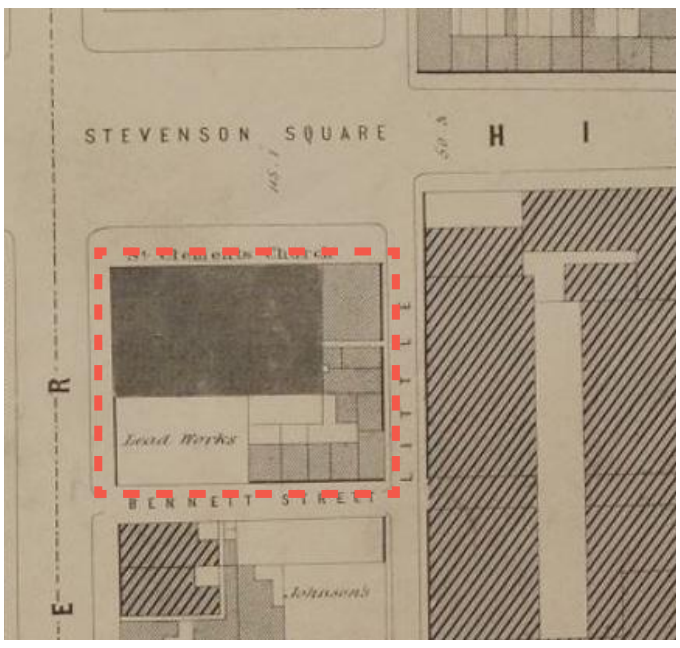
24 Lever Street

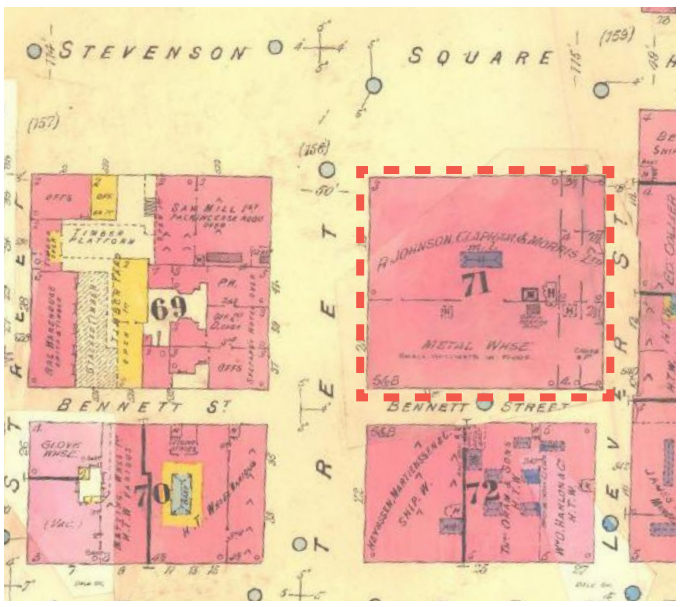
24 Lever Street is a medium sized purpose built warehouse constructed in 1897-98 for Johnsons & Sons, intended for the storage of hardware and metal products. The building was given Grade II listing in 1994, although 26 Lever Street to which it is adjoined is not listed. 24-26 Lever Street lies within the Stevenson Square conservation area as designated by Manchester City Council. In early 2007 a fire damaged the fourth floor of the building, largely affecting the interior. The buildings have both now been refurbished.

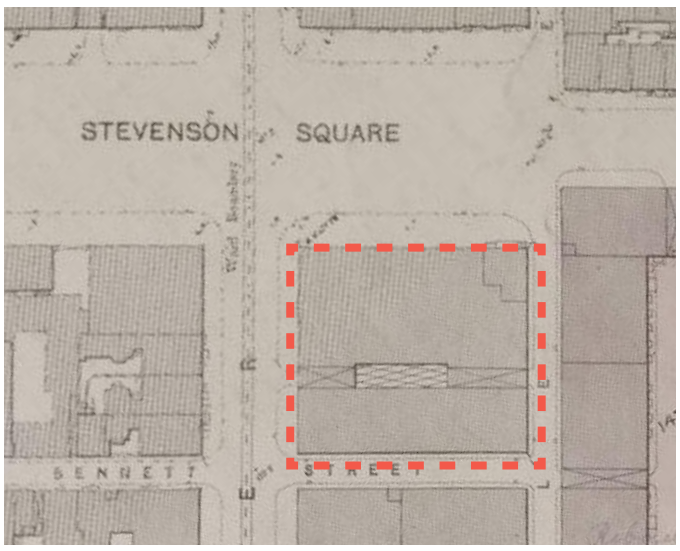
Extract from Grade II Listing of 24 Lever Street:
(Focused on Lever Street facade)

Hardware and furniture warehouse, now offices. Dated 1898 at 3rd floor; altered. Red brick in Flemish bond, with red sandstone dressings, slate roof. Rectangular plan at right-angles to street, with loading bay at rear. Free Elizabethan style. Basement, 4 storeys and attic, 4 bays, with plinth, cornice over ground floor, slightly-projected outer bays with tall shaped gables, and chamfered shafts piercing a prominent cornice. The attic has 3-light mullioned windows in the centre bays and vertical windows in the gables with ornamental architraves including oculi in steeply-swept gables finished with small segmental pediments.









From top:
1850 Township Map, St Clement's Ward
1886 Goad Insurance Map
1891 Ordnance Survey Map

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