Heritage Statement - 2 Mount Street

Albert Square Portfolio, Manchester

February 2016

Turley
Heritage

Contents

1.	Introduction	1
2.	Context and Historic Development	2
3.	Assessment of Significance	8
4.	Assessment of Impact	18
5.	Conclusions	22
Appendix 1:	National Heritage List Entry	
Appendix 2:	Planning and Building Control History	
Appendix 3:	Legislation and Planning Policy	

Client
LJ Group
Our reference
LJGH3001

17 February 2016

1. Introduction

1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Turley Heritage on behalf of LJ Partnership to support an application for listed building consent for "*new glazed entrance doors, creation of a plant room on the 4th floor including louvered vents to the Country Street elevation, and the internal refurbishment of the ground floor and common areas including lifts, the toilet accommodation and the office accommodation on floors 1-4 (including mezzanine)*" together with an application for planning permission for "*new glazed entrance doors and louvered vents*" (the 'Proposed Development') at 2 Mount Street (the 'Application Site').

1.2 2 Mount Street, "the Lawrence Buildings" is a grade II* listed Victorian Office building, designed by Pennington and Bridgen (1874-6) for the Inland Revenue.

1.3 LJ Partnership has recently acquired 2 Mount Street along with two other office buildings on Albert Square; Northern Assurance Building at 9-21 Princess Street (grade II listed) and the Victoria Building (grade II listed) at 1-7 Princess Street and 59-61 Cross Street. Although having been refurbished, the specification of the office accommodation at 2 Mount Street is lower than that which occupiers in the current market demand and the building has failed to attract any new tenants since 2010.

1.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides the Government's national planning policy on the conservation of the historic environment. In respect of information requirements for applications, it sets out that:

'In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.[1]"

1.5 To comply with these requirements, Section 3 of this Statement provides an assessment of significance of Lawrence Buildings; proportionate to both the importance of the asset and the likely impacts. This assessment is undertaken on the basis of published information, archival research and an on-site visual survey.

1.6 Section 4 provides an assessment of the impact of the proposed works on the significance of the Lawrence Buildings, in light of the in light of the statutory duties of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, national policy set out in the NPPF, and local planning policy for the historic environment.

[1] DCLG (2012) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 128.

2. Context and Historic Development

Victorian Offices

2.1 Historic England's listing guidance for commercial buildings[2] identifies the commercial office building (as opposed to law and government buildings) as a Victorian development. It states that:

"Offices emerged out of the development of business in the various forms of Exchange buildings in the eighteenth century. Private or speculative offices, as a distinct building type, are a development of the Victorian age: bespoke premises for the sole conducting of business do not feature in the Georgian period with the single exception of the legal chambers in London's Inns of Court, which still survive in some numbers."

2.2 Prior to this, business had occurred primarily in private or merchants houses, inns, workshops and warehouses, or fronting factories. The emergence of office buildings reflected the country's huge growth in domestic and foreign business during the Victorian period; particularly in northern industrial cities such as Manchester which is noted in the listing guidance as retaining outstanding examples of Victorian commercial office buildings.

2.3 Due to increasing land prices, building heights within city centres increased to accommodate more letting space within sites. Commercial pressures also advanced important innovations in plan and structure to overcome problems of light and ventilation. Central light wells clad with reflective white tiles/bricks and internal glazed partitions were introduced to provide light into deep floor-plates.

2.4 From the mid-19th century buildings typically combined offices of varying ranks, meeting rooms and fire-proof strong rooms. Many combined ground-floor shops, offices or banks, with further offices on the upper floors.

2.5 The elevations were often impressively treated. Classical or Italianate styles were popular as they gave an appearance of dependable dignity. Grand and distinctive exteriors provided a corporate identity and for lettable office space distinguished developments from competitors.

Development of the Victorian Office Building in Manchester

2.6 In the first half of the 19th century, Manchester experienced unprecedented growth as a result of its textile industry to become an internationally important city. As the city's businesses and commerce grew, so did the demand for office space. As the century progressed, increased land prices and pollution within the city centre led to the upper and middle classes leaving the city centre to live in the surrounding townships. Parts of the city were redeveloped for commercial purposes and at increased heights to account for the increased cost of land. The Pevsner Architectural Guide for Manchester notes:

[2] Historic England (2011) Designation and Listing Selection Guide, Commerce and Exchange Buildings.

"The 1870s and 1880s saw the virtual rebuilding of several city streets, with the next generation of warehouses along Princess Street and Portland Street, and new shops and offices along Deansgate and the lower part of King Street. Italianate and Gothic styles continued, seen in the architecture of some of the better local firms such as Clegg & Knowles, Pennington and Bridgen, and G.T. Redmayne.[3]"

2.7 After the creation of Albert Square and the building of the Town Hall (completed 1877), the surrounding area became a fashionable location for office development. The Town Hall influenced the design of new buildings in Albert Square; many of which reflect its gothic style.

Victorian Offices

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[3] Hartwell, Clare (2001) Pevsner Architectural Guides: Manchester
[4] Historic England (2011) Designation and Listing Selection Guide, Commerce and Exchange Buildings.

Site Development

2.13 Historic Map Regression shows that the area around Mount Street was laid out at the end of the 18th century and the Site had previously been developed. The Lawrence Buildings was designed and built between 1874 and 1876. The architects were Pennington and Bridgen, who are discussed in Section 3.

2.14 The Lawrence Buildings, which includes 7 Central Street, 2 and 4 Mount Street, was built for the Inland Revenue to provide a northern office. The Inland Revenue occupied 7 Central Street (on the corner) with the remainder of the building, including portions of the vaulted sub-basement, which were not immediately required by the Inland Revenue, let as separate offices. It has not been established whether the Inland Revenue did eventually expand into other parts of the building.



Figure 2.1: Ordnance Survey Map Extract, published 1848



Figure 2.2: Sketch of Lawrence Buildings[5]



Figure 2.3: Photograph of the Lawrence Buildings c1980-1900[6]

[5] The Builder (1874) 29 August p731
[6] Manchester Central Library

2.15 Figs 2.2 and 2.3 show the building was constructed principally as envisaged in the sketch. The Goad Fire Map which was surveyed c1899 (Fig 2.4) shows that as well as offices, from at least the late 19th century the building accommodated a restaurant. Two light wells are shown; the left lit the rear stairwell and the right provided light to the offices and the main stairwell.

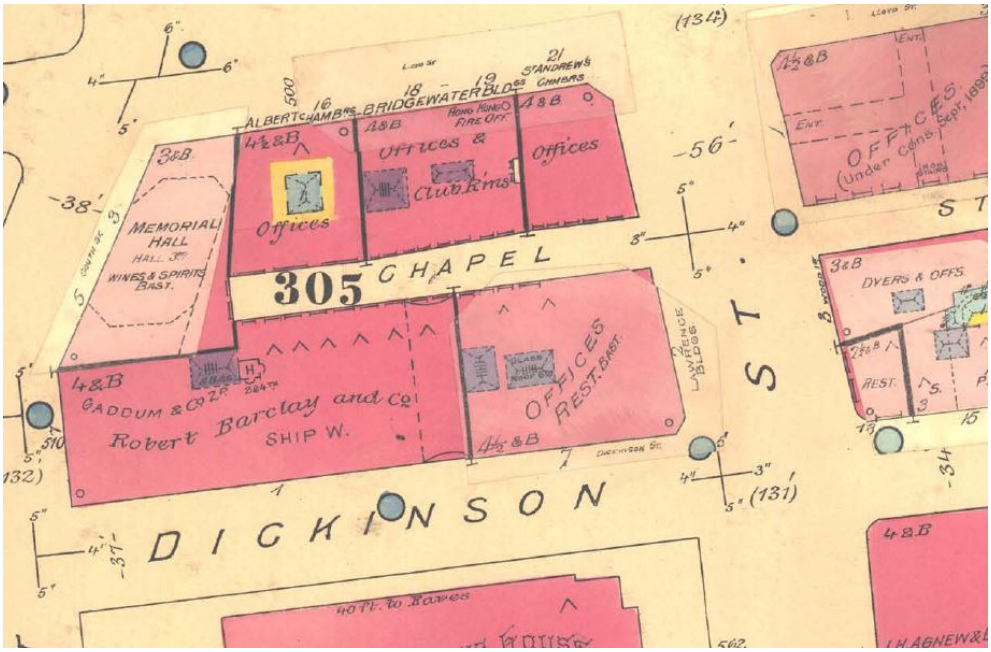


Figure 2.4: Goad Fire Map Extract, surveyed c1899

2.16 Historic photographs show that by c1910 roof lights had been added to the Mount Street elevation (Fig 2.5) and by 1972 dormer windows had been added to both the Mount Street and Central Street roofs.

2.17 Figs 2.5 and 2.6 also shows that between 1910 and 1972 the ground floor windows were lowered to create shopfronts to Central Street and Mount Street and the windows on the upper floors were replaced with windows in a different glazing pattern. The design of the shop fronts in Fig 2.6 suggests these works took place in the 1960s or early 1970s. The 1972 photograph may have been taken to mark the completion of the works. The scale of the external works make it conceivable that they were accompanied by a programme of internal works, however there are no plans from this period to confirm this. Both the shop fronts and windows have subsequently been replaced with designs more appropriate to the architectural character of the listed building.

2.18 In addition, historic photograph analysis indicates that the original external doors have been replaced. The style of the existing doors suggests they were replaced in the late 20th century. Around 1998 a roof extension added a mezzanine level to the fourth floor; altering the roof structure by adding a flat raised central area.

2.19 The above review of historic sources and planning/building control records indicate frequent alterations to the internal office space and restaurants/cafes on the ground floor and basements (full planning and building control history is set out at Appendix 2).



Figure 2.5: Photograph of the Lawrence Buildings c1910[7]



Figure 2.6: Photograph Lawrence Buildings 1972[8]

[7] Manchester Central Library

3. Assessment of Significance

Significance and Special Interest

3.1 The NPPF defines the significance of a heritage asset as:

"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.[9]"

3.2 This section assesses the significance of Lawrence Buildings in terms of its special architectural and historic interest. The Historic England listing guidance for commerce and exchange buildings[10] provides additional attributes that may contribute to the special interest of commercial buildings. These have also been taken into consideration in the assessment of significance below:

- Selectivity/date/rarity
- Group Value
- Alterations/authenticity
- Interiors
- Signage
- Community Interest

3.3 2 Mount Street is located within the Albert Square Conservation Area (designated in 1972). A broad assessment of significance has been included within this report due to the nature and limited extent of proposed external works.

Assessment

3.4 As previously mentioned, 2 Mount Street is listed as the Lawrence Buildings (grade II*) and is described in the list entry description as follows:

Includes: No.7 CENTRAL STREET. Offices (formerly Inland Revenue). 1874, by Pennington and Bridgen; altered. Sandstone ashlar, slate roof. Rectangular plan on end-of-block site. Gothic style with much elaborate detail. Four storeys and attics, an asymmetrical 5-window facade to Mount Street (including chamfered corner to left), with sill-bands, 3-sided corner with corbel-table, tourelles and slated spirelet, tall crocketed gable to right of this also with tourelles; central doorway under steeply-pitched canopy with 2-centred arch, flanked by altered windows; 2-centred arched 1- and 2-light windows to the upper floors with cusped lights and hoodmoulds, 2nd-floor niche with

[8] Manchester Central Library
[9] DCLG, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2012 – Annex 2: Glossary
[10] English Heritage (2011) Listing Selection Guide, Commerce and Exchange Buildings

statue and crocketed canopy; at the left corner a 2-centred arched doorway with shafts, carved surround and hoodmould, flanked by lions on pedestals holding shields of arms; and immediately over the door the traceried corbel of an elaborately decorated 2-storey canted oriel. Five-bay left return wall to Central Street in similar style, with central gable. Steeply-pitched roof with low box dormers and tall chimney stacks. Interior not inspected. Forms group with St Andrew's Chambers, 20 and 21 Albert Square, in similar scale and style to the right (q.v.).

Architectural Interest

Pennington and Bridgen

3.5 The Lawrence Buildings was designed by Pennington and Bridgen and was featured in The Builder (1874)[11].

3.6 Pennington and Bridgen are identified as a notable architectural practice operating in Manchester in the 1870s and 1880s[12]. There is limited information available about the practice and in particular on Nathan Glossop Pennington (1849-1900). Obituaries for Thomas Edward Bridgen (1832-1895) provide a level of insight into the work of the practice.

3.7 Bridgen was the Manchester representative of Pennington and Bridgen and is described as having "*occupied a prominent position among Manchester architects*.[13]" He was successful in obtaining a considerable share of the work in the City during the 1870s and 1880s and this is reflected in the number of Pennington and Bridgen buildings that survive today and that have been added to the statutory list. They designed buildings in the gothic, Italian gothic and Queen Anne styles.

3.8 The practice is best known for the great number of hospitals they designed, including the Royal Eye Hospital (1884-86, grade II), Manchester's Children's Hospital at Pendlebury (c1873, demolished) and the remodelling of Manchester Royal Infirmary (demolished). Manchester's Children's Hospital at Pendlebury was noted as being the first built on the pavilion system, which became universally adopted[14].

3.9 Their other work in Manchester included warehouses; 42-44 Sackville Street (c1860-80, grade II), 70 and 72 Portland Street (1873, grade II), Portland House on the corner of Princess and Portland Street (1887, grade II), 11 Bloom Street (1889, grade II); as well as commercial premises; 32-34 Kennedy Street (c1875, grade II), 62 King Street (1874, grade II), 5-15 John Dalton Street (1876, grade II) and Victoria Building at 1-7 Princess Street (1877, grade II).

3.10 The practice were also responsible for a number of churches including the churches of St Saviour and St Mark at Oxton, and the restoration of the parish church of Banbury in Cheshire (all grade II listed), amongst others.

[11] The Builder (1874) 29 August p731
[12] Hartwell, Clare (2001) Pevsner Architectural Guides: Manchester
[13] RIBA Journal, Volume 2. 1895, p335
[14] RIBA Journal, Volume 2. 1895, p335

3.11 Pennington and Bridgen are therefore considered a notable Victorian architectural practice. Although best known for their hospital work, the Lawrence Buildings is one of their better known works; having featured in a national architects' journal.

Exterior

3.12 The Lawrence Buildings is a seven-storey building, faced with Darley Dale sandstone and with a slate roof. Its two principal elevations are onto Mount Street and Central Street. At the rear it is attached to a former shipping warehouse (1-5 Central Street). The County Street elevation faces an alleyway which separates Lawrence Buildings from St Andrews Chambers (grade II) and is a secondary elevation.

3.13 The building is 14th century English Gothic in style and is highly elaborate. The location and arrangement of architectural detail on the external elevations is well balanced, but attention is focused on the corner of the building and onto Mount Street. Principal features include the two-storied oriel window which was identified in The Builder as "*an important feature in the composition,*"[15] a large crocketed gable, tourelles, a second floor niche with statue of Queen Victoria, lion and unicorn sejents, hoodmoulds, and moulded arches over the secondary entrances to Mount Street and Central Street.

3.14 The two-storied oriel window above the corner entrance, together with the lion and unicorn sejents either side of the entrance combined with shields of six northern counties, clearly identifies the corner entrance as the principal access of the building and the former use of this part of the building as a government office.

3.15 As mentioned in Section 2, the exterior of the building was altered during the 20th century. The loss of the original windows has resulted in some loss of historic character although the current replacements do not markedly detract from the architectural character of the building. The lowering of ground floor windows to create shopfronts and the loss of the original door to the Inland Revenue office has reduced the legibility of the former use: the secure door (without glazing) and high windows were indicative of the high security needs of the Inland Revenue. The late 20th century replacement door at this entrance and the Mount Street entrance are of limited quality but not wholly insensitive to the Victorian character of the building.

3.16 The roof extension is contained within the previous roof valleys and is therefore not clearly visible from the exterior of the building.

3.17 Despite the alterations noted above the exterior is well conserved; the majority of the building's external architectural features have been retained and its elaborate gothic character maintained.

[15] The Builder (1874) 29 August p731



Figure 3.1: Entrance door to offices at the Lawrence Buildings

Interior

3.18 As noted in the listing guidance for commercial and exchange buildings: "*Commercial premises are intrinsically prone to change and alteration, and cannot be expected to survive in their original configuration"* and this is reflected in the low survival of interior features and fittings in the Lawrence Buildings.

3.19 There is limited information available about the former interior of the building to understand what features have been lost. The 1874 article in The Builder reports that the staircases and landings were constructed of stone and the stairwell and landing walls tiled to a height of five foot. The original staircases, balustrades and handrails survive however there is no evidence of the wall tiles. The article also notes that "*All the internal finishings are of plain and simple character, the woodwork and screens being stained and varnished*[16]*."* The plain and simple character of the interior would have been a contrast to the elaborate exterior of the building and clearly indicated an architectural and financial focus on the public exterior of the building. Such an approach would not be unusual for lettable offices, but it is more surprising the interior of the part of the building occupied by the Inland Revenue was plainly decorated internally.

[16] The Builder (1874) 29 August p731

3.20 The Inland Revenue stamping office was accessed from the main canted doorway under the oriel window, and was a large public room (51ft long by 20ft wide by 14ft high) directly connected to offices on the upper floors by a stone staircase. The public room was most recently a bar, although now vacant, and there is no longer a direct staircase linking this room to the upper floors. The ground floor unit onto Mount Street is currently occupied by a café. The sub-basement was fire-proofed and vaulted.

3.21 A lobby is accessed from the Mount Street entrance which provides steps down to the basement and steps up to a timber glazed screen, behind which is the main staircase. The entrance lobby and stairwell are highly altered. The current decorative scheme; the carpets, doors, lighting, artwork and wall finishes are not of architectural or historic interest. Careful exposure work has confirmed that the curved feature wall is of modern construction. The 'block effect' is common with Victoria Building, also designed by Pennington and Bridgen, although may have been added to both buildings at a later date.

3.22 The glazed timber screen with an incorporated bench on the interior side is likely to be an original feature, although it has been altered. The different colour of timber and lack of mouldings on some the mullions indicate these are a later addition; along with the glazing. There is also evidence of later splicing of wood into the side panels of the screen. A dividing wall between steps to the basement and the timber glazed screen has been altered by the addition of a timber coping and Victorian-style handrail (Fig 3.1).

3.23 At ground floor there is a pointed arch through which the lift is accessed, which is consistent with the gothic architecture of the building. On the upper floors the lift is recessed behind a column on a plinth which is not consistent with the architectural character of the building, which suggests the columns are later additions.

3.24 The main staircase is original and retains its timber handrail and iron balustrades. The stairwell also retains a cornice, although parts may have been replicated to match. The stairwell is an important feature within the building. Diamond features around the lights and plain corbelling do not appear to be historic and are not of architectural interest. There is a second staircase to the rear of the building, which is plainer and from floor three the balustrades have been replaced by simple timber posts (see Fig 3.4).

3.25 The office spaces within the building have been extensively refurbished and, on those floors which have been inspected, no features of architectural interest remain. An application for listed building consent to refurbish the second and third floors indicates some piecemeal survival of original cornices and skirting, alongside modern replica features to match (ref: F14282/LB). The light wells were covered and the windows from the offices and main staircase into the central light well have been removed. Planning history also indicates that where there had been multiple doors from the stair landings into the offices, these have been blocked up to leave only one door from the staircase into the office suites at each level. The offices would have been designed to allow tenants to partition the accommodation as per their requirements. Consequently the internal layout of the building has been altered, and partitions added and removed, on several occasions.

3.26 In summary, the significance of the listed building principally resides in the external elevations to Mount Street and Central Street; where the grandeur and former use of the

building can be best appreciated. The original interior of the Lawrence Buildings was purposefully simple and there has subsequently been a high degree of internal alteration resulting in a low number of surviving features which are dispersed across the building; preventing a coherent and legible historic interior. Where replica skirtings and coving have been matched to the existing, they have a degree of value by facilitating an understanding of the building's historic features. Other later additions are not of special interest. It is therefore concluded that by virtue of the extent of internal alterations and the fact that the original interior was plain; the interior of the Lawrence Buildings makes a low contribution to the overall architectural and historic interest of the listed building.



Figure 3.2: Entrance lobby



Figure 3.3: Columns adjacent to lifts on upper floors



Figure 3.4: Main staircase



Figure 3.5: Rear staircase

Historic Interest

3.27 The Inland Revenue established a branch stamping office in Manchester to alleviate the inconvenience and delay "*in attending to the transmission of deeds and other documents*"[17] to Somerset House in London. In addition to the stamping office, Excise and Income-tax Surveyors were also accommodated in the building. The public room was used for the issue and distribution of stamps, the reception of documents and collection of duties. The location of a branch office in Manchester is illustrative of the importance and growth in Manchester's commerce during the Victorian period. The former use of the building by Inland Revenue is only legible externally.

3.28 The resonance between the gothic style of the Lawrence Buildings and the Town Hall is illustrative of the influence the Town Hall had on architects of that period; particularly in the Albert Square area. That is reinforced by the similar style of St Andrew's Chambers, 20 and 21 Albert Square, which the list entry identifies the Lawrence Buildings as having group value with.

3.29 The separate entrances and 'loading ways' allow the separate uses of the building to be read. The architectural treatment of the exterior provides a clear hierarchy between the

[17] The Builder (1874) 29 August p731

entrances; allowing the Inland Revenue office and lettable office space to be clearly distinguished.

3.30 The building also has a level of historic interest in its association with the architectural practice Pennington and Bridgen who designed a number of notable buildings in the Manchester area.

Group Value

3.31 The Lawrence Buildings has group value as one of a number of prominent commercial office buildings from this period which flank Albert Square. The quality of the elevations fronting the square and nearby streets contributes to the grandeur of the square and character and appearance of the Albert Square Conservation Area.

Summary of Special Interest

3.32 In summary, the significance of the Lawrence Buildings is ascribed to:

- The highly elaborate elevations to Mount Street and Central Street, and the use of symbolism in the architectural detail which allows the former use as an Inland Revenue Office to be read.
- The interior makes a low contribution to the significance of the building due to it being purposefully simpler than the exterior and subsequently having undergone successive alterations and loss of historic features and character. The key interior feature of architectural interest is the main staircase.
- Historic interest in the association with notable architectural practice Pennington and Bridgen and in its former use as an Inland Revenue Office which illustrates the commercial importance of Manchester in the late 19th century.
- The group value with neighbouring buildings surrounding Albert Square which enclose the square.

Albert Square Conservation Area

3.33 The conservation area is centred on Albert Square and the Town Hall (grade I listed); the focus of Manchester's civic spaces. By the late 18th century, much of the present street pattern had been established, although the majority of Georgian buildings have since been replaced. The town hall was completed in 1877. Many of the buildings which enclose Albert Square were built during the late 19th century and most survive today. The circular library, designed by Vincent E. Harris, was completed in 1934, followed by the town hall extension; also by Harris. A number of sculptures and statues have been located in Albert Square and the surrounding vicinity; including the Albert Memorial (grade I listed).

3.34 Manchester City Council identifies the main characteristic of the Albert Square Conservation Area as its civic grandeur; whilst also noting that it contains many commercial properties and small-scale buildings[18]. The buildings facing onto Albert Square enclose the townscape and are of varied architectural style and materials including gothic, classical and modern as well as brick, granite and sandstone. The

[18] www.manchester.gov.uk

conservation area was originally intended to include the immediate surroundings of Albert Square and the Town Hall, although it was extended in 1985 to create comprehensive coverage of the city's Victorian core.

3.35 2 Mount Street forms part of the enclosing townscape around Albert Square. The quality of its elevations onto the square is representative of the surrounding buildings and its gothic architecture and sandstone has resonance with the town hall itself. The building contributes to the historic interest of the conservation area as a commercial building which continues in its original intended use. The scale and grandeur of the building is illustrative of the commercial importance of this part of the city during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

3.36 Due to the minor nature and extent of the proposed external works, the visual impact of the proposed development will be very limited meaning there will be no impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. Therefore the impact on the Albert Square Conservation Area has not been considered further within this report.

4. Assessment of Impact

Introduction

4.1 The following section assesses the impact of the Proposed Works on the special architectural and historic interest (the significance) of the listed building. The relevant heritage legislation, policy and guidance context for consideration of the Proposed Development is set out in full in Appendix 2. This includes the statutory duties set out in s16(2), s66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, national policy set out in the NPPF and local policy for the historic environment, as well as other national guidance.

Proposed Works

4.2 Listed building consent is sought for:

"new glazed entrance doors, creation of a plant room on the 4th floor including louvered vents to the Country Street elevation, and the internal refurbishment of the ground floor and common areas including lifts, the toilet accommodation and the office accommodation on floors 1-4 (including mezzanine)"

4.3 Full planning permission is also sought for:

"new glazed entrance doors and louvered vents"

4.4 The LJ Partnership is proposing a package of mainly interior works which together with the installation of improved servicing is intended to make the building more attractive to tenants; thereby securing the future use of the building and continuing the office use for which it was intended.

4.5 This package of works comprises:

- The replacement of the existing late 20th century entrance door with a glazed entrance door.
- The creation of an internal mechanical room at 4th floor level including the insertion of louvered vents into existing steel-framed windows.
- Refurbishment and redecoration of the entrance lobby and the widening of a staircase up to the lift/staircase lobby.
- Refurbishment of the lift and main staircase including replacement of recent 'padded' doors to office suites. .
- Refurbishment of office accommodation including replacement of modern suspended ceilings, replacement of modern toilet and kitchen facilities, redecoration and refurbishment of lightwell and sash windows.

Pre-application Consultation

4.6 A pre-application meeting was held between OBI Property and Manchester Council's Conservation Officer on 29 September 2015. At the meeting options for the location of plant and the proposed scheme for a double entrance stair were discussed.

Assessment

4.7 Proposed external works are limited to the replacement of the entrance doors with glazed doors to the Mount Street elevation and the addition of louvered vents to the fourth floor, County Street elevation.

4.8 The current entrance door dates from the late 20th century and as previously identified is of limited quality and of a different design to the door present in historic photographs. Whilst it is sympathetic to the Victorian character of the building it is not of special architectural interest. The new entrance door would be glazed and would therefore not be read as a contemporary intervention and would not be visually intrusive or detract from the ornate elevation. It is proposed that the detailed design of the door be regulated by condition including fixings and method of installation. Subject to the detailed designed of the entrance door; the impact on the significance of the building will be neutral.

4.9 To upgrade the office accommodation improved servicing is required which creates additional plant. A number of options had been considered including mounting plant externally on the County Street elevation which would add to the accumulation of plant within the alleyway; detracting from its historic character. Housing the plant internally on the 4th floor provides a solution which minimise the impact on the buildings special architectural interest and the character and appearance of the conservation area. The louvered vents would be inserted into steel windows which appear to be contemporary with the c1998 4th floor mezzanine and are not of special interest. The height of the windows and their location to the rear of the building will limit their visibility. Internally the mechanical room will require the demolition of modern partitions. It is concluded that the proposed solution is the optimal way to upgrade the servicing of the office accommodation which preserves the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

4.10 The entrance lobby comprises a staircase up to the lift/main staircase lobby and a disused staircase down to the basement. As previously mentioned this area has been extensively altered and the current decorative scheme is of no architectural or historic interest with the exception of the glazed timber screen which is likely to be an original, although altered, feature. The screen will be retained, sanded and re-stained as part of the proposed works.

4.11 The current staircase layout is assumed to be historic, although further opening up works once the refurbishment is underway may confirm this. As previously identified it is of limited architectural interest. Initial options considered by the design team included a full width staircase; capping the disused staircase down to the basement. The widening of the staircase provides a compromise between retaining the legibility of the (assumed)

historic access to the basement and current legibility of the space in terms of creating a clear entrance to the office accommodation.

4.12 The lift is not of architectural or historic interest and its refurbishment will not impact the significance of the listed building. Similarly the padded doors and carpets which are proposed to be replaced are also not of special interest. Therefore the replacement of these elements will have no impact the significance of the listed building. The repair and maintenance of the staircase and exposure of the staircase to first floor level will sustain the contribution this feature makes to the building's architectural interest.

4.13 As previously identified, the office accommodation has been extensively refurbished and on those floors which have been inspected, no features of architectural interest remain. The existing suspended ceiling will be replaced and will be carefully stripped back to protect any historic features concealed behind. Where historic features are exposed during the works they will be retained in situ and re-concealed within the replacement suspended ceilings. Although some opening up work has been undertaken, the full extent of this part of the works is unknown at this stage. It is recommended that an appropriate method statement for opening up, recording features and agreeing detailed interventions is agreed through a condition attached to the listed building consent. The lavatory and kitchen facilities to be stripped out are modern and are of no interest. Existing sash windows will be repaired and refurbished as part of the proposed works.

Summary of Impact

4.14 The redecoration of the interior and replacement of modern facilities, suspended ceilings, carpets and padded doors will have a neutral impact on the significance of the building. The replacement of the late 20th century entrance door with a glazed entrance and the location of the louvered vents will a negligible visual impact on the exterior of the building and will preserve the significance of the principal elevations. Whilst widening the staircase will alter the entrance lobby, given the low contribution the stair makes to the significance of the listed building and the retention of a stair to the basement, the impact on the architectural and historic interest of the building is considered to be negligible. The refurbishment of the sash windows, main staircase and light well will have a slight beneficial impact on the architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

4.15 When the significance of the building, which principally resides in the external elevations on Mount Street and Central Street, and limited architectural and historic interest of the interior are considered together with the limited nature of the proposed works; it is concluded that the proposed development will preserve the special architectural and historic interest of 2 Mount Street.

Statutory Duties and the NPPF

4.16 The statutory duties of s16(2) and s66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 for decision makers to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the special interest of a listed building is a matter which should be accorded considerable importance and weight.

4.17 One of core land-use planning principles set out in the NPPF (paragraph 17) is that planning should:

"conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations."

4.18 Conservation is defined by the NPPF as the process of maintaining and managing change to heritage assets in ways that sustain, and where appropriate enhance their significance. In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable use consistent with their conservation (paragraph 131).

4.19 The NPPF also requires that great weight is given to the conservation of designated heritage assets (paragraph 132) and this reflects the statutory duties of the 1990 Act with respect to listed buildings.

4.20 The Proposed Works intend to enable a grade II* listed building to be brought back into full and viable use. An effective balance has been struck between the need to upgrade the accommodation and preserve the historic fabric of the building. Whilst it is acknowledged that there will be some, limited, alteration to historic fabric due to the widening of the staircase in the entrance lobby; this is an area where there has already been extensive alteration. Considering, the low significance of the interior of the building and its already altered state, it is concluded that on balance the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building will be preserved.

Local Planning Policy Considerations

4.21 Policy DC19.1 of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan states that "*the Council will have regard to the desirability of securing the retention, restoration, maintenance and continued use of such buildings and to protecting their general setting*." The policy continues by stating that "*the Council will not permit any external or internal alteration or addition to a listed building where, in its opinion, there would be an adverse effect on its architectural or historic character."* This Heritage Statement concludes that there is no harm caused to the significance of the listed building as a result of the proposed works.

4.22 Policy CC9 of the Manchester Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy, states that development in Manchester City Centre should preserve or enhance heritage assets and new development must support the range of uses the Council expects in the City Centre. Policy EN3 states that "*Proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets will be encouraged where they are considered consistent with the significance of the heritage asset*." The Proposed Works are consistent with Policies CCP and EN3 in enabling the reuse of vacant parts of 2 Mount Street whilst preserving the key elements which contribute to its significance; the exterior elevations onto Mount Street and Central Street.

5. Conclusions

5.1 LJ Partnership have recently acquired 2 Mount Street (The Lawrence Buildings), a grade II* listed Victorian Office building, together which two additional grade II listed office buildings on Albert Square. It is seeking to undertake a modest programme of interior works and the installation of air conditioning units, with the intention of bringing vacant floor space back into sustainable and viable use. This will continue the historic office use, for which the building was designed and built.

5.2 The significance of the Lawrence Buildings resides primarily in its elaborate gothic elevations to Mount Street and Central Street. The interior of the building was comparatively plain and has undergone extensive alteration with limited survival of original features.

5.3 The Proposed Works comprise a new glazed entrance doors, the creation of a plant room on the 4th floor including louvered vents to the Country Street elevation, and the internal refurbishment of the ground floor and common areas including lifts, the toilet accommodation and the office accommodation on floors 1-4 (including mezzanine). When the significance of the building, which principally resides in the external elevations to Mount Street and Central Street, and the extent of previous and successive alterations to the interior of the building are considered, together with the limited nature of the proposed works; it is concluded that the proposed development will preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the building.

5.4 The proposals will sustain the scale and grandeur of the principal elevations and will bring the building back into sustainable commercial use; it's original and intended use. The character and appearance of the Albert Square conservation area will therefore be preserved as a result of the proposed development.

5.5 The proposed works are therefore in accordance with the statutory duties of s16(2), s66(1) and s72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the NPPF, Policy DC19.1 of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan and Policy CC9 of the Manchester Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy.

Appendix 1: National Heritage List Entry

LAWRENCE BUILDINGS

List Entry Summary

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.
Name: LAWRENCE BUILDINGS

List entry Number: 1220257

Location

7, CENTRAL STREET
LAWRENCE BUILDINGS, 2 AND 4, MOUNT STREET

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County:

District: Manchester

District Type: Metropolitan Authority

Parish:

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: II*

Date first listed: 03-Oct-1974

Date of most recent amendment: Not applicable to this List entry.

Legacy System Information

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System: LBS

UID: 388337

Asset Groupings

This list entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official record but are added later for information.

List entry Description

Summary of Building
Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Reasons for Designation
Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

History
Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Details
MANCHESTER

SJ8398SE MOUNT STREET 698-1/27/242 (West side) 03/10/74 Nos.2 AND 4 Lawrence Buildings

GV II*

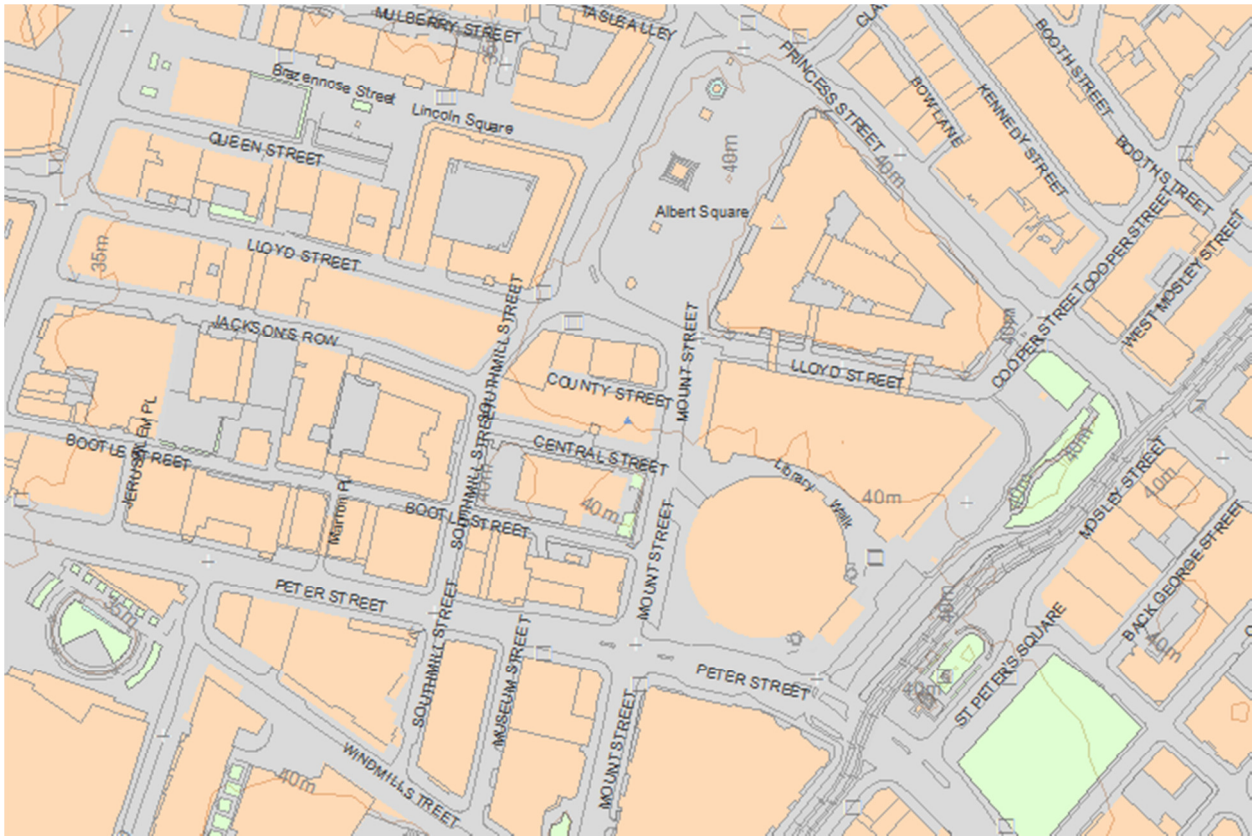
Includes: No.7 CENTRAL STREET. Offices (formerly Inland Revenue). 1874, by Pennington and Bridgen; altered. Sandstone ashlar, slate roof. Rectangular plan on end-of-block site. Gothic style with much elaborate detail. Four storeys and attics, an asymmetrical 5-window facade to Mount Street (including chamfered corner to left), with sill-bands, 3-sided corner with corbel-table, tourelles and slated spirelet, tall crocketed gable to right of this also with tourelles; central doorway under steeply-pitched canopy with 2-centred arch, flanked by altered windows; 2-centred arched 1- and 2-light windows to the upper floors with cusped lights and hoodmoulds, 2nd-floor niche with statue and crocketed canopy; at the left corner a 2-centred arched doorway with shafts, carved surround and hoodmould, flanked by lions on pedestals holding shields of arms; and immediately over the door the traceried corbel of an elaborately decorated 2-storey canted oriel. Five-bay left return wall to Central Street in similar style, with central gable. Steeply-pitched roof with low box dormers and tall chimney stacks. Interior not inspected. Forms group with St Andrew's Chambers, 20 and 21 Albert Square, in similar scale and style to the right (q.v.).

Listing NGR: SJ8380298016

Selected Sources
Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details

National Grid Reference: SJ 83802 98016

Map



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Appendix 2: Planning and Building Control History

Reference	Planning, LBC, or building control application	Description	Date of determination	Determination
104604/FO/2014/C1 PP-02996639 104605/LO/2014/C1	Planning	Installation of a new step to the Mount Street entrance, amendments to existing Mount Street entrance doors and retention of existing handrails.	07 Jan 2014	Application Withdrawn
FP/0754143	Building control	Internal alterations to restaurant/bar	27 July 2008	Refused
084854/LO/2007/C1	Listed building consent	LISTED BUILDING CONSENT for internal alterations to form a disabled toilet at ground level, and the removal of mezzanine toilets	24 Oct 2007	Application Approved
074550/LO/2005/C1	Listed building consent	LISTED BUILDING CONSENT for internal refurbishment of second and third floors, including removal of non-original partitions, installation of raised floor, plasterboard ceiling and new heating/lighting system	12 Apr 2006	Approved
46726/0504	Building control	Alterations to offices at 2nd and 3rd floor levels	April 2005	Approved
30852/C/9905	Building control	Alterations to fourth floor including installation of mezzanine level and roof	July 1998	Approved
043262/FU/CITY1/93	Change of use	Change of use from B1 use to A2 use	29 Mar 1993	Application Approved
F14282/LB	Change of use	Change of use of part of 1st floor offices to a sales area in connection with existing ground floor shop.	09 Sep 1980	Application Approved

F/AD01907	Planning - signage	A) Illuminated fascia box signs on front and side elevation of office. B) Illuminated fascia box signs on front and side elevation of office. C) Illuminated fascia box signs on front and side elevation of office.	03 Jan 1979	Temporary Approval
F/AD01858	Planning - signage	A) Repositioning of existing illuminated double sided box sign on front elevation of restaurant projecting over highway. B) Illuminated single sided menu board on Mount Street elevation of restaurant.	-	Application Not Proceeded With
F09399/LB	Listed building consent	Erection of canopy over entrance doorway to restaurant.	01 Nov 1978	Application Approved
18515/C/9411	Building control	Alterations to Bar	-	Approved

Appendix 3: Legislation and Planning Policy

Statutory Duties

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides that listed building consent is required for:

> *'(s.7) … any works for the demolition of a listed building or for its alteration or extension in any manner which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest …'*

In determining such applications the following duty is placed on the decision maker:

> *'s.16 (2) In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority, or as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall 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.*

Similarly in determining planning applications affecting a listed building, the decision maker:

> *s66(1) shall 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.*

In relation to conservation areas, the following duty is placed on the decision maker:

> *'s72(1) special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.'*

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

Paragraph 17 of the NPPF sets out a set of core land-use planning principles which should underpin plan-making and decision-taking. One of these principles is that planning should:

> *"conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations."*

Chapter 12 contains policies regarding the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.

The NPPF defines 'significance' in respect of heritage policy as:

"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting."[19]

Paragraph 128 outlines the information required to support planning applications affecting heritage assets. It states that applicants should provide a description of the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

Paragraph 129 states that:

"Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal…They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal."

Paragraph 131 states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of (amongst other things) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable use consistent with their conservation.

Paragraph 132 confirms that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. It also confirms that significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification.

Paragraphs 133 and 134 of the NPPF differentiate between 'substantial harm' and 'less than substantial harm'. Paragraph 134 states that where a proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

Local Planning Policy

Manchester Unitary Development Plan 1995 (Extant Policies)

Policy DC18.1 states that the Council will give particularly careful consideration to development proposals within Conservation Areas. It will seek to preserve and enhance the character of its designated conservation areas by carefully considering the following issues:

i) the relationship of new structures to neighbouring buildings and spaces;

ii) the effect of major changes to the appearance of existing buildings;

iii) the desirability of retaining existing features, such as boundary walls, gardens, trees, (including street trees);

19 DCLG (2012) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – Annex 2: Glossary

iv) the effect of signs and advertisements;

v) any further guidance on specific areas which has been approved by the Council.

Policy DC19.1 states that in determining applications for listed building consent or planning applications for development involving or having an impact on buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, the Council will have regard to the desirability of securing the retention, restoration, maintenance and continued use of such buildings and to protecting their general setting. In giving effect to this policy, the Council will not permit any external or internal alteration or addition to a listed building where, in its opinion, there would be an adverse effect on its architectural or historic character. It will also not permit alterations to a listed building which would prevent the future use of any part of the building, in particular upper floors or basements, or where poor maintenance is likely to result.

Manchester Local Development Framework (LDF)

Core Strategy (2012)

Policy CC9 states that development in Manchester City Centre should preserve or enhance the heritage assets that have been identified, including listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled ancient monuments. New development must support the range of uses the Council expects in the City Centre and contribute to a coherent and integrated physical environment.

Policy EN1 states that within the City Centre Character Area (1), developers will be expected to consider the City's heritage and continue the rich pattern of activity in the core area.

Policy EN 3 states that throughout the City, the Council will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods, including those of the City Centre. New developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance, including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas and archaeological remains. Proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets will be encouraged where they are considered consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.

Guidance

Planning Practice Guidance (2014)

Paragraph 003 of the 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' section of the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) describes conservation as:

> *"an active process of maintenance and managing change.[20]"*

It also confirms the following:

> *"In the case of buildings, generally the risks of neglect and decay of heritage assets are best addressed through ensuring that they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation. Ensuring such heritage assets remain used and valued is likely to require sympathetic changes to be made from time to time. Where changes are*

[20] DCLG (2014) Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) - Paragraph 003 Reference ID: 18a-003-20140306

proposed, it is confirmed that the NPPF sets out a clear framework for both plan-making and decision-taking to ensure that heritage assets are conserved, and where appropriate enhanced, in a manner that is consistent with their significance and thereby achieving sustainable development."[21]

In advising on how proposals can avoid or minimise harm to the significance of a heritage asset, it is confirmed that the clear understanding of the significance of a heritage asset and its setting is necessary to develop proposals which avoid or minimise harm.

The PPG also advises on what constitutes a viable use for a heritage asset. It states the following:

"The vast majority of heritage assets are in private hands. Thus, sustaining heritage assets in the long term often requires an incentive for their active conservation. Putting heritage assets to a viable use is likely to lead to the investment in their maintenance necessary for their long-term conservation…..

It is important that any use is viable, not just for the owner, but also the future conservation of the asset. It is obviously desirable to avoid successive harmful changes carried out in the interests of repeated speculative and failed uses.

If there is only one viable use, that use is the optimum viable use. If there is a range of alternative viable uses, the optimum use is the one likely to cause the least harm to the significance of the asset, not just through necessary initial changes, but also as a result of subsequent wear and tear and likely future changes.

The optimum viable use may not necessarily be the most profitable one. It might be the original use, but that may no longer be economically viable or even the most compatible with the long-term conservation of the asset. However, if from a conservation point of view there is no real difference between viable uses, then the choice of use is a decision for the owner.

Harmful development may sometimes be justified in the interests of realising the optimum viable use of an asset, notwithstanding the loss of significance caused provided the harm is minimised."[22]

The PPG confirms that a clear understanding of the significance of a heritage asset is necessary to develop proposals which avoid or minimise harm. Early appraisals, a conservation plan or targeted specialist investigation can help to identify constraints and opportunities arising from the asset at an early stage. Such studies can reveal alternative development options, for example more sensitive designs or different orientations, that will deliver public benefits in a more sustainable and appropriate way.

It states that public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental progress as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 7). Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and should not just be

[21] DCLG (2014) Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) - Paragraph 003 Reference ID: 18a-003-20140306
[22] DCLG (2014) Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) - Paragraph 016 Reference ID: 18a-016-20140306

a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits.

Public benefits may include heritage benefits, such as:

- sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting
- reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset
- securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long term conservation.

Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment

Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning: 2 (2015)

The guidance stresses the importance of being able to properly asses the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset early in the process. It also endorses understanding the nature of significance, the extent of that significance and the level of significance.

It confirms that change to heritage assets is inevitable but it is only harmful when significance is damaged. The nature and importance of the significance that is affected will dictate the proportionate response to assessing that change, its justification, mitigation and any recording that may be needed if it is to go ahead.

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