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Refurbishment Proposals for
Beehive Mill. Jersey Street, Manchester.
Prepared By
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On Behalf of
Beehive Mill Properties Ltd

Proposed Refurbishment works to the Beehive, Mill Manchester

This project should be read in conjunction with general arrangement drawings and is intended to illustrate the background to the proposed scheme. The attached drawings reflect the proposed layout and refurbishment works. In addition to the drawn information a series of existing and proposed photographic sheets have been included. These sheets identify existing areas within the building which have fallen into disrepair along with areas which we feel will benefit from additional attention in order to improve the current status of the building.

Listed Building PPG 15 Introduction and statement

PPG 15 was issued jointly in September 1994 by the Department of Environment and Department of National Heritage. It outlines central government policy and provides advice to local authorities, applicants and other interested parties on the operation of the planning system in relation to the historic built environment. PPG 15 requires applicants to fully justify their proposals in seeking listed building consent.

Historical and Physical context

The proposed site is located at the junction of Jersey Street and Radium Street within the Ancoates and New Islington district of Manchester. Historically the site has been dominated with Mill building from the Industrial Revolution many fine example still remain. With a high concentration of historically important buildings, the area has been designated a Conservation area. The area is currently undergoing a significant regeneration with a number of surrounding sites under development. The area immediately surrounding the site is currently dominated by light industrial and land currently being developed for residential and mixed-use developments. There are also a number of adjacent derelict buildings.

Before the late 18th Century, Ancoates had still retained a semi-rural aspect but by 1800 it had been transformed into an effective industrial suburb, dominated as it was by the new steam driven Murray Mill by 1789 and recently completed Ashton Canal which provided material and goods transportation in and out of the City. Many other mills followed, including the Decker Mill, the New Mill, Beehive Mill, Little Mill, Paragon Mill, Royal Mill and Pin Mill.

Some 50 acres of Ancoates have now been declared a Conservation Area and a dozen or more listed buildings are located within the area – mostly mills and associated buildings.

The Beehive Mill has been declared a Grade II* listed building. Constructed in 1824 and subsequently extended with completion in 1850. The building houses an innovative fireproofing construction, including oversized timber beams and stone flag floors/ceilings. Erected as a power & loom establishment rented to multiple tenants. Now commonly known as "Sankey's", the building was converted in 1996 to office/workspace accommodation, predominantly aimed at the music industry.

Social and Economic

The Beehive Mill currently contains a number of uses and has become synonyms with the production of music. There are a series of rehearsal studios over the five floors of the building. Following the production of music, the building has become a focal point for the music and associated industries. Sankey Soap nightclub is contained at the rear of the building.

Involvement

We have held preliminary discussions with the Conservation Officer from Manchester City Council who, in principle, are supportive of both the internal refurbishment works and the minor alterations to the main entrance to the Beehive Mill.

Evaluation

Initial scheme proposals for the reception and common areas to the upper floors were developed from the client having put on hold the refurbishment of the existing 5th floor roof space.

The clients desire to remarket the building and to let empty office units started with the initial entrance into the building, the reception. This space will be seen as a focal point to the building. The reception is currently the most active point in the building

A number of areas within the reception area were identified as either problematic or the use had outgrown the previous reception refurbishment.

The identified problems of the reception were the lack of storage space for the general administration activities, CCTV and associated electrical equipment. In addition to these issues the reception desk creates a difficult pinch point as the desk projects out into the reception space. We understand that part of the design considerations for the existing desk was to provided a security vantage point between the front and rear entrances of the reception area. Following the installation of CCTV this is no longer a requirement as the perimeter of the building can be viewed from the monitor behind reception.

Lighting within the reception area is limited, both naturally and artificially. Natural light, the reception relies solely on the main entrance from Jersey Street, with the towering building opposite adding to the reduction in natural light. Currently there are two steel 'I' section columns set in front of the glazed shop front, further reducing natural light entering. We understand the two steel columns were installed during the previous refurbishment works as a 'Ram Raid' prevention.

The reception has been provided with a series of up lighters, spaced some distance between each fitting. Light from these units is broken down by the steel beams supporting the floor above. Subsequently a series of temporary lights have been positioned around the front reception area. The knock on effect of this adhoc lighting scheme, has left a trailing tangle of cables running round the space, adding further confusion to the entrance of the building. The materials used for the reception furniture, such as the desk and associated storage furniture are all of a dark timber. This reduces the potential reflective qualities to bounce light around the space. A similar colour pallet has been applied to the dark stained terracotta floor tile installed over the last 10 years.

The reception area is a long orthogonal space entered directly from the road level. The previous reception opening function as a vehicular entrance, accessing the rear courtyard. A stepped entrance from the road level exists currently. The main staircase and lift are contained to the rear of the reception area. Moving through the building from the reception to the office spaces on the upper floors, the common areas are equally important in terms of marketing the building to potential new tenants as well as retaining current tenants.

Corridors, WC's and kitchen spaces are all in need of refurbishment. Carpets have split and in places are held together with hazard tape. Partition walls have been damaged in places and have been patched up as and when required. WC's and kitchen facilities generally require attention where furniture has either been damaged or broken following years of use.

In order for the building to develop commercially a refurbishment program for the reception and common areas throughout the building is important in maintaining the continuity for the users from reception through to the office areas.

Following the initial brief from our client and subsequent site investigations we have been able examined the current status of the building and the individual spaces in order to develop our proposal to work with the existing fabric of the building.

A number of proposals for the reception area have been developed centring around the requirements for greater storage facilities and creating a brighter space. Given the adhoc development of the reception area a need to incorporate future growth of the space has been taken into consideration.

Not only does the reception act as a point of entry/exit but also functions as a meeting point for its users. Therefore the reception gained a secondary role as a waiting area. Creating a more orthogonal reception desk which working with the length of the front part of the reception allowed for a greater flow through the space and also afforded additional room to house a waiting area.

Design

Following our discussion with the Conservation department, our approach to the building begins with the removal of the steel columns to the front entrance of the reception. Replacing the current dilapidated glazed shop front with a new toughened glazed system, retaining the layout, door located centrally with sidelights and fan light over the door. New stainless steel ironmongery, patch fittings and door handle to be fitted.

The approach of the refurbishment works to the reception centred around creating a new reception area which fulfilled the needs of the clients and its users, whilst taking into account the growth and development of the space. It was also important to create a contemporary space providing unity between the reception as a whole and linking the reception and common areas within the refurbishment.

The proposal intends to remove the existing reception desk and plinth, and the associated individual storage units. Remove the existing floor terracotta tiles and adhesive.

The existing floor tiles are approximately 30mm thick and in numerous places have chipped or broken with an attempt to repair and re-patch. Our intension is to replace thhe tile with a new granite floor tile 30mm 400 x 400mm, in a buff colour (Malva Buff-Tobermore). The tile is laid on an internal adhesive bed 2-3mm thick. The selection of the granite material provides a greater resilience to heavy traffic. The selected colour has been selected for its lighter appearance, helping to bounce light deeper into the reception.

The reception desk and storage units have been designed to create a sense of unity between the pieces of furniture. Both are constructed in MDF with a white spray lacquered gloss finish. In order to protect the lacquered finish a black steel plate has been folded over the desk. The steel plate provides a works surface and footplate to the desk.

The storage unit to the rear is again constructed in the same material and finish as the desk. The form of the storage wall has been derived from the hexagonal form associated with bee and beehives. The hexagonal holes provide pigeon hole space for the occupants of the building. The pigeon hole will be back lit with a yellow light, which will emanate through the individual post holes.

Following the installation of the CCTV system the control box and monitor are housed at reception. Currently the cable system is exposed and trails across the wall to the rear of the desk. As part of the proposal, the cables will be re-routed and housed within white conduit to run into the new storage wall, in order to create unity within the space.

Opposite the reception desk is the waiting bench. Constructed from 6mm steel plate in black with a soft blasted finish. The folded bench creates a small seating area along with storage for magazines, flowers and flyers. The bench has been formed in order to frame the existing sprinkler pipe work and spaced 20mm away from the existing column. The bench will rest on the granite floor and be fixed to the exposed brick wall with 8mm 'Multi Monty' concealed bolts.

Currently sited above the entrance door is the housing for the roller shutter. We intend to hide this with a simple white painted boxing out in plasterboard construction. This bulkhead will disguise the shutter housing and contain a series of fluorescent lights.

New lighting units are proposed to replace the existing. The units reflect light onto the ceiling and diffused light onto the floor. Through the choice of material for both the furniture and flooring, the reception space will contrast the current dark area.

The existing steel staircase is to be repainted from the current silver to a black. The re-painting of the staircase will continue through the building. Stringers, handrail, treads and balustrade are all to receive the new black paint finish. The existing lift is to be cleaned as part of the ongoing maintenance program by the client.

The second, third and fourth floor houses a glazed screed between the stairwell and common areas. As part of the proposed refurbishment works we are proposing to infill the glazed panels with an adhesive vinyl containing a semi transparent large scaled image of flowers, reflecting back to the honeycomb and bees reference from the hexagonal forms in reception. The glazed panels to the doors are not to receive a graphic infill in order to maintain clear visual contact through the screen.

The shared WC's and kitchen also form part of the refurbishment works due to their current state of decoration and damage following years of use. The concept of a landscape has been used within the rooms. New rubber floor in forest green will replace the existing. Walls are to be painted white, with a feature wall receiving a large scale 'formica' laminated printed image of a photographed landscape. New cubicles systems will replace the existing. The existing worktop and cupboards in the kitchen will be replaced with new units. Again the floor and walls will receive the same treatment as the toilets.

Corridors between the 1st and 4th floor are to be re-decorated, with the existing partitioning walls patched and treated where required. Walls and ceilings are to be painted white. Existing cable trays and sprinkler pipes are to be cleaned and painted black RAL 9011. Existing doors and frames are to be re-painted Agate grey RAL 7036. Following the repainting of the corridor walls, a large scale mural (paint-by-numbers), landscape will be painted along one of the walls. This landscape image will be painted over the four floors giving a different section of the landscape to each floor.

Access

All existing access levels into the reception will be maintained, with level access at the rear of reception adjacent to the lift. Access to the floor above is provided by an existing lift and staircase serving all five floors. The proposed refurbishment works to the common areas above does not propose to change any door opening or corridor widths.

Design Justification

The Beehive Mill was substantially renovated over eleven years ago in which time the requirements of the buildings occupants have changed. Over the years cosmetic peace meal adaptations have appeared around the building in ad hoc fashion, with little thought or consideration given to the unification of the internal spaces within the building.

The main body of the proposed application is concentrated with the refurbishment of the Ground Floor reception and the associated common areas to the four floors above. Externally our proposal firstly plans to removes the two steel columns to the reception area. These columns do not provide any structural integrity, and as state earlier these were installed as a precautionary security measure against ram raiding. In the first instance our proposal to remove these columns creates a greater relationship with the adjacent keystone vehicle entrance to the left of the reception. It is felt that the current steel columns have disguised the prominence of the two large openings. Therefore we feel within our proposal it is necessary to remove the offending columns.

The steel columns are currently connected to a series of steel beams, which do provide structural barring. The beam is has been painted mid to light blue for a number of years, whether this colour scheme was part of the original building renovation works in 1996, is unclear. Under our proposal this beam will receive a black paint finish.

The current terracotta tile floor is to be replaced with a new granite floor tile 400x400mm butt jointed. The proposed flooring will replace the existing both internally throughout and where the terracotta projects externally to form the stepped entrance and face to the step. The granite floor tile will maintain the current floor level throughout and the face of the external stepped entrance. The granite floor tile has been specified to form a close material colour relationship with the exposed ceiling stone flags above reception.

Initially the brief from the client requested our attention to individual areas throughout the building. Our approach has been one of unification from the point of entry through reception and onto the floors above. The choice of materials for the newly inserted pieces of furniture was developed to create a contrast between the existing building. Whist the refurbishment works to the common areas ties the proposal together.