LAWRENCE BUILDINGS • 2 MOUNT STREET • MANCHESTER

HERITAGE STATEMENT

in support of an application for Listed Building Consent



Produced by Wrather & Co, February 2014

W&Co.

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INTRODUCTION

This Design & Access Statement has been prepared to accompany an application for Full Planning and Listed Building Consent for alterations at Lawrence Buildings, 2 Mount Street, Manchester. It is intended to be read alongside the architects drawings and associated documents as set out below:

Drawings

W552_1.03a	Proposed External Works
W552_1.04	Existing Entrance Elevation
W552_1.05	Proposed Entrance Elevation
W552_L01	Location Plan
	Mount St entrance montage
	Design and Access Statement



DESCRIPTION & SIGNIFICANCE

Situated on Mount Street, Lawrence Buildings is a Grade II* listed building over 6 levels. Comprehensively redeveloped in 2000, the building comprises of A3 classified units to the ground floor and basement with offices over, and is situated within the Albert Square Conservation Area.

The Conservation Area is centred on the Town Hall with most of the buildings around the Square itself, excluding those immediately opposite the front of the Town Hall, constructed during the Victorian era. Though variable in style and materials, all of the buildings tend to be typified by a ground floor retail element with office accommodation above. This pattern was established in the late 1800's when land in the city centre had become too expensive for domestic residences and city centre locations became favourable for offices.

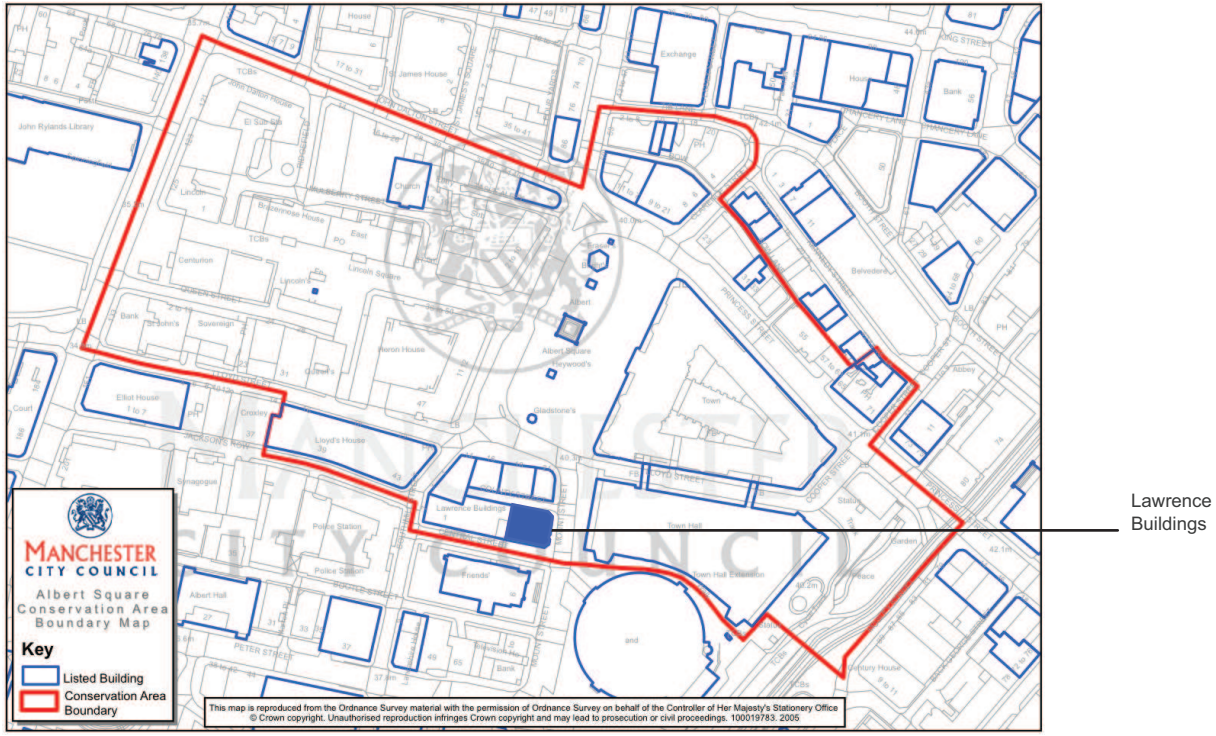


Figure 1: The building is Grade II* listed and lies within the Albert Square Conservation area

The building was listed in October 1974. The listing refers to the property as to the two buildings making up the property; 7, CENTRAL STREET and 2 AND 4, MOUNT STREET (extracted from the List Entry from English Heritage):

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.).



Figure 2: The building is Grade II listed and lies within the Albert Square Conservation area





Figure 3 & 4 (opposite): Lawrence Buildings displays elaborate detailing throughout the sandstone facades

LAYOUT

The property has three main entrances at ground floor level. One on the corner of Mount Street and Central Street, giving access to Velvet Central Restaurant (entrance 1), one on the opposite corner of Mount Street and County Street (entrance 2), giving access to the Bowlers Café, and the third, central to the Mount Street elevation, providing access to the offices above (entrance 3).

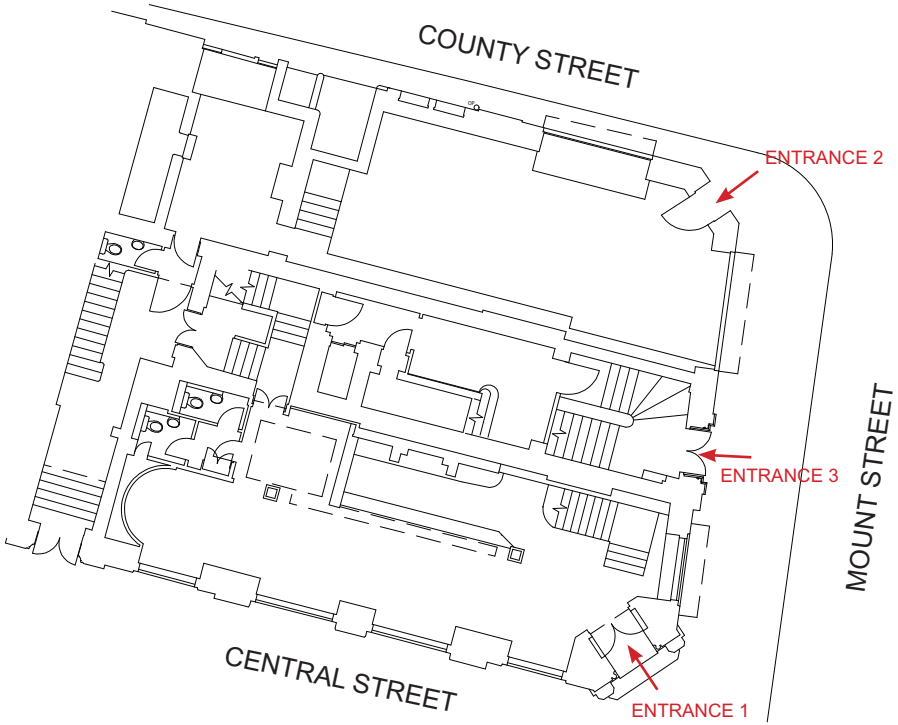


Figure 5: Ground floor plan to 2 Mount Street showing location of three main entrances
Figure 6,7,8 (opposite) : Entrance 2; Entrance 3; Entrance 1







DESIGN CONCEPT & STRATEGY

The central entrance to the property from Mount Street provides access to the offices above.

Following major refurbishment works in 2000, the office suites have been renovated and refurbished to a very high standard, creating modern yet characterful spaces, which appeal to high-end tenants.

Further, more recent works to the office element of the property have seen the upgrade of the internal entrance areas and circulation spaces, which have been refurbished to reflect the requirements of modern day clientele. This has included the introduction of additional lighting, sensitive yet complimentary decoration and rationalisation of existing fittings.

Subsequent to the improvement works, we have received complimentary feedback from our agents and potential tenants, however it has been noted on numerous occasions that the high quality internal spaces are let down by the external appearance of the entrance, which appears somewhat dilapidated, oppressive and not in-keeping with the modern, airy interior. These comments serve to reinforce our own thoughts on the matter.

In view of the above, and following much consideration, we have devised a series of modern yet sensitive amendments, as documented over the following pages, which we hope will enable the building to reach it's full potential and to continue to succeed long into the future.





Figure 9 & 10: Internal works have been carried out to the entrance and inner lobby to improve the viability of the property to office tenants

PROPOSED WORKS & IMPACT

New step to Mount Street Elevation

Integral to a package of improvement works carried out in 2000, new sandstone facings were applied to the front step to improve its appearance. Unfortunately, owing to heavy passing footfall and the effects of weathering, this resolution has proven unsuccessful in this location, hence the step now appears dilapidated and in need of an alternate solution.

Following much consideration, we have conceived a design solution which we believe recognises and compliments the appearance and materiality of the existing building whilst simultaneously addressing the issue of accessibility.

Introducing an additional step to the front of the central entrance will significantly improve the existing situation, making it more compliant with the ideal situation of 150-170mm rise as set out in Part M.

The failure of the existing step also permits the consideration of an improved design solution, which will tie in with our other recent improvement works. The use of high quality materials and excellent craftsmanship will combine to create a modern yet conscious addition to the building.



Figure 11: Existing step to Mount Street entrance



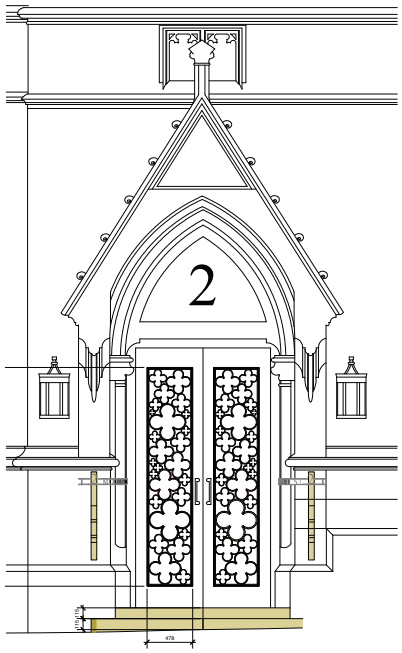
Figure 12: Failure of sandstone facing to step

2. Amendment of the existing entrance Doors to Mount Street Elevation

The existing entrance doors were installed in 2000 as part of a package of improvement works. In keeping with the character of the building, they are of timber construction, with timber and glass infill panels. Whilst satisfactory in appearance the dark finish of the doors detracts from the recent internal improvement works, which seek to sensitively introduce additional lighting and an element of modernity in order to bring the property up to date.

The use of additional glazing will improve natural lighting levels within the entrance internally, whilst the introduction of external grills will add a level of security and provide an opportunity to connect the building to present day tastes and requirements.

The quatrefoil design of the grills draws from the buildings gothic style, whilst existing finishes inspire their materiality, expressing the buildings understanding of modern day tastes whilst not compromising its character.





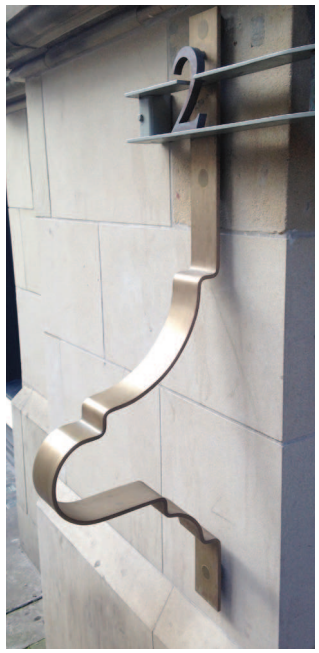
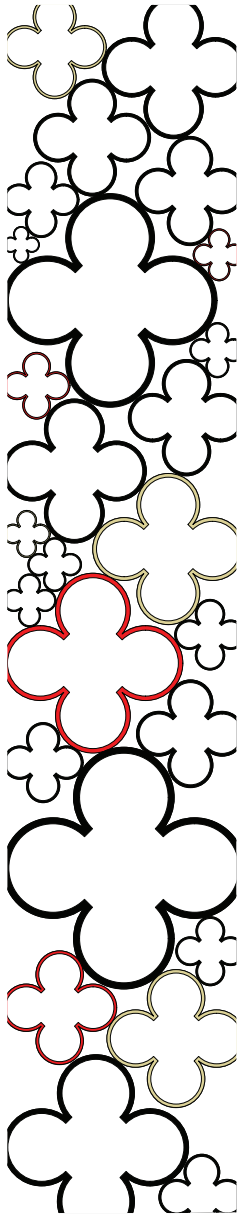


Figure 10 (above): Drawing showing proposed works to entrance door and step
Figure 11,12 (above right): Existing copper lantern light and brass handrail to Mount Street facade
Figure 13 (opposite): Proposed design to new grill incorporating quatrefoil detailing



CONCLUSION

The design, strategy and impact of the proposed amendments to Lawrence Buildings have been carefully considered and assessed in relation to local and national planning policy and, in particular section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

We consider the proposed amendments to be relatively minor and appropriate, and do not detrimentally efftect any of the existing fabric of the building.

Given the above, we recommend that Listed Building Consent should be granted for the proposals in order to ensure the viability of the asset going forward.

