Heritage Statement

Project Reference:	5960
Project Description:	John Owens Fire Remedials
Client:	University of Manchester John Owens Building
Site Address: *(if different from above)*	
Date:	04 March 2014
Revision	0

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1.1 Location

The John Owens Building is situated off Burlington street, off Oxford Road, and is part of The University of Manchester's property portfolio, with a post code of M13 9PL



The Location Plan is also included in the application documents

2.0 Description of the Heritage Asset

Date listed: 18 Dec 1963
Grade: II*
List entry number: 1271428



The full List Entry can be viewed on the English heritage website at http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1402638&searchtype=mapsearch

2.1 Building Age

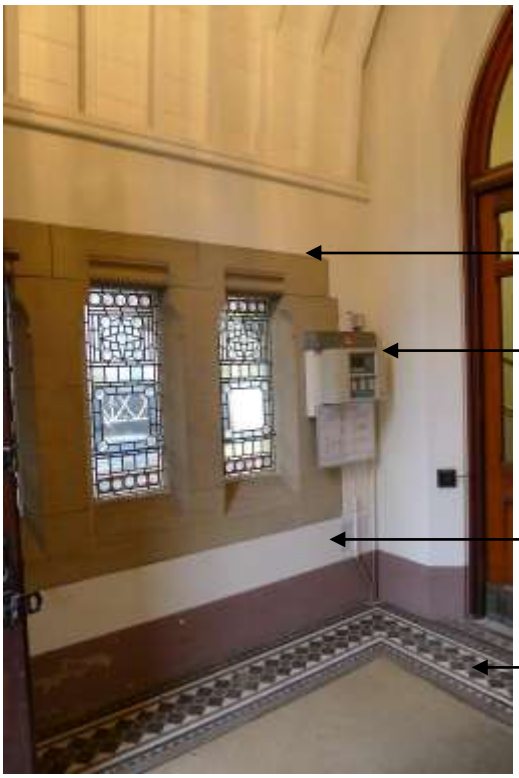
University. West range begun 1870, east range 1883-7 and north range 1888, all by Alfred Waterhouse; with Whitworth Hall added to south end of east range c.1895-1902 by Paul Waterhouse (taken from English Heritage website)

2.2 Building Characteristics

Further to National Planning Policy Framework section 12 clause 128, an explanation of the existing building is included below:

Sandstone ashlar, red tiled roofs with fishscalebands. Large and irregular plan round a courtyard which is open at the south-west corner. Gothic style. The WEST RANGE (Main Building), the first on the site, in domestic scale and style, of 2 storeys plus basements and attics, has a projected gabled wing in the centre flanked by large canted entrance bays which have gabled porches with moulded 2-centred doorways and large 2-centred arched windows of 3 stepped lancet lights rising into steep gables, and tall coupled arched windows in the flanks (some with stepped sills); the central wing has a canted 2-storey bay at the gable end with a niche at ground floor containing a carved shield, a large 5-light window at 1st floor and a tiled hipped roof, a clockface in the apex of the gable, side walls with gables, and a fleche on the roof. The outer wings differ in plan and elevation; all parts have various mullioned, arched and arcaded windows, and small gabled dormers and tall stone chimneys. (all taken from English Heritage website)

2.3 Photographs of Existing (taken in November 2012)



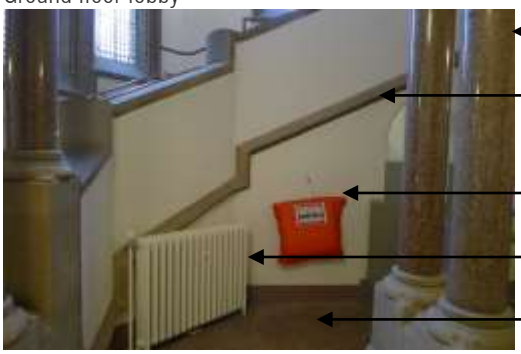
Existing original stone reveals

Existing fire panel, not original

Original walls, paintwork likely original colours but more recently painted

Original mosaic flooring

Ground floor lobby



Original marble columns

Original stone detailing

Existing resQmat fixed within last 2 years

Existing radiator, unlikely original

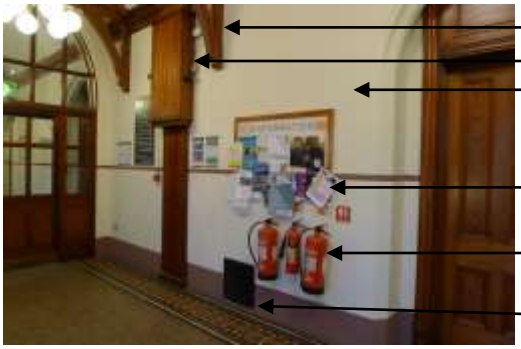
Existing filled in hole in floor, not original

Upper Ground floor within stair nook



Existing lift, not original

Upper Ground floor within stair nook



Original timber floor supports
Timber pier cladding, unknown age
Original walls, paintwork likely original colours but more recently painted
Notice board, not original
Fire extinguishers non original
Original grill

First floor corridor



Timber and glass doors and screens with brass ironmongery, unlikely to be original but likely matched to the original design

Original flooring

Ground and first glazed screens

3.0 Impact of proposed development on the heritage asset

In February 2014 the University of Manchester approached us to upgrade John Owens building to incorporate a disabled refuge system. The building currently has no means of communication from a trapped disabled individual at Upper Ground or First floors to ground floor fire marshall. This has been deemed as an imperative life safety requirement. There is no option available for a management strategy.

As part of the works we intend to perform minor maintenance works such as replacing the plywood background of the metal grilles with an intumescent backing. The grilles will be replaced upon completion.

The main works involve the installation of a disabled refuge communications system. The panel below will be installed within the ground floor lobby, next to the master fire alarm panel. The communications device (far below) will be fitted within the corridors of the upper ground and first floors.





The Omnicare brochure containing technical information on these systems is included with the application.

The location of the devices are shown on the drawings included with the application.

Further to National Planning Policy Framework section 12 clause 131, the desirability of installing a disabled refuge alarm system is so that disabled persons are able to communicate with the fire officer in a fire alarm situation, rather than waiting on the corridor for someone to check if they are there.

The provision of a disabled communications device is now a requirement under part B of the building regulations.

3.1 Design considerations

The location of the communication devices on upper ground and first floors has been taken in consideration by the design Engineers DSSR in relation to their proximity to alarm points.

These devices need to be situated at 1100mm high in order for a disabled wheelchair bound person to use. In order to reduce the impact on the heritage asset we intend to surface mount the box. If the installation was to change in the future, damage to the substrate would be limited.

We previously considered providing a wireless system to reduce the impact on the heritage asset, but as the wireless devices need a fused spur, these would need to be routed in exactly the same locations as the fully wired systems.

We previously considered providing a battery operated system in order to significantly reduce the impact on the heritage asset, but a system reliant on batteries is not acceptable to the University Fire Officers or within the regulations.

Further to National Planning Policy Framework section 12 clause 133, the heritage asset will not be totally lost, and with reference to clause 134, whilst there will be limited damaged to the plastered substrate, the provision of the life safety communications system will secure the buildings use for all persons disabled or otherwise.

3.2 Conclusions

By utilising a surface mounted strategy which would allow 'return to normal' if the facility's use was changed, and by painting conduit and pattresses to match the existing surface colours (as the current building strategy) we believe the impact to the heritage asset is minimal.