Atelier MB

Urban Architects

Heritage Statement to support a Listed Building Consent Application for works at Ground and Basement Floors of 13-15 King Street, Manchester

December 2013

Job 1502

revision A

Information added following planner's request

revision B

Information added following planner's request





facade along King Street



view from the corner of King Street
and Police Street

Introduction

This heritage statement accompanies the listed building consent application for alterations to the interior of 13-15 King Street Manchester. Previously let to the retailer Monsoon, on a 25 year lease, the building has now been vacant for some months. A combination of the wider economic environment and the general retail decline of the King Street area has not helped in the securing of a new tenant.

Listing Text

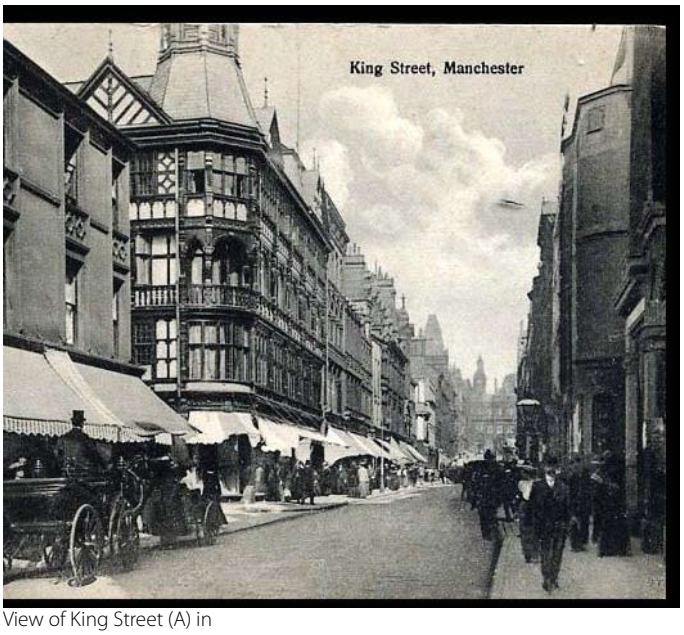
Shop. c.1920-30. Probably steel-framed but with elaborate "timber-framed" cladding; slate roof. Rectangular plan on corner site, with rounded corner. Tudor style. Four storeys with 5 bays to King Street, one curved corner bay, and 3 wide bays to Police Street; panelled piers and large plate-glass windows to ground floor; carved wallposts to 1st and 2nd floors, wooden blind balustrading between the floors, projected eaves with mutules, an octagonal turret over the corner with swept slated sides and arcaded cupola, gables flanking this and coupled gables over the 4th and 5th bays, all with herring-bone stuts and finials. The 1st floor has wooden mullion-and transom windows (6 lights to King Street, 10 curved lights to the corner and 8 lights to Police Street);the 2nd floor has set-in oriels with arched centre lights and sharply-curved corners with transoms and small-paned top lights (and those in the the wide bays to Police Street flanked by galleries with splat-baluster fronts); and the top floor has 10-light mullion-and-transom windows (those in the narrower bays to King Street forming continuous fenestration and those in the wide bays to Police Street flanked by lozengepanels). A good pastiche of the richest period of decorative timber-framing, forming a very striking feature in the street. Included for group value.

Listing NGR: SJ8372598330

King Street



View of King Street (B)
believed to be the 50s



View of King Street (A) in
the early 20th Century

Building History

Although the listing text describes the building's age as "c 1920-1930" this has been widely disputed. Clare Hartwell in "Pevsner's Manchester" states 1902 as the date of construction. This is perhaps more accurate as the detailing of the windows and the decoration of the building are more reminiscent of a Victorian era than a newer, plainer 30s pastiche, more common of public houses on new roads which were so commonly built in the 30s. (Even pastiche buildings follow trends of the time.)

The architects, Maxwell and Tuke, were more famously the architects for the Grade 1 listed Blackpool Tower completed in 1894. Both founders of the practice had died by 1893 some 9 years before 13-15 King is believed to have been completed. For this reason it is doubtful whether either of them had any input in the design. The building appears to have been built for Goodall and Co, a firm of furniture manufacturers and agents, and we have not been able to determine when Goodall and Co vacated and the building became offices and pure retail.

What is known is that the ground floor retail space was occupied by Jeager, in the 1950s right up until the early 1990s, when Monsoon took out a long lease on the premises. At this time the upper floors were used as offices.

With reference to the historic photograph A. Although not dated, the horse drawn cart and manner of dress would suggest that this photograph was taken in the early Edwardian era. Awnings on the ground floor unfortunately hide much of the ground floor detail, but the upper floor elevations can clearly be seen. Photograph B shows a hand drawing of the building from the City Council Archives. This is dated as "1930", but the style of the cars and dress would indicate that the 50s was the actual date of the sketch.

The remarkable fact is that, with the small exception of the introduction and removal of a canopy over the front door, there appear to have been very few elevation changes since the building was constructed. The façade, as well as being intact, is in very good condition, having been well maintained by the present and former Landlords. Very little information on the original state of the interior has been found



Detail of ceiling at
Ground Floor

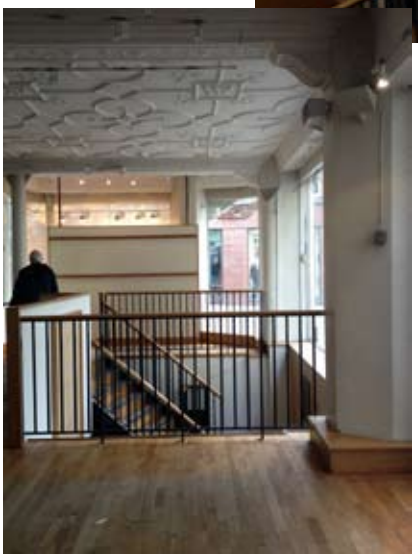
Internal qualities of the Retail Unit.

Internally on the ground floor much of the historic ceiling pattern is still present and in good order. There has been an inappropriate lay-in-grid suspended ceiling installed in the small bay beyond the non-original stud wall. On inspection the ceiling detail is largely intact in this ceiling void.

Much of the shopfront is also intact and, as far as can be ascertained, original. However, it is unlikely that originally the glass expanse would have been so large. As glass technology improved, original mullions and transoms may have been removed to improve visibility for retail purposes. There are no plans to alter any of the shopfront as part of this application, and any works will seek to reinforce improve and enhance rather than change.



images of non-
original staircase



The one major departure from the original layout is the presence of a non-original staircase between ground and basement floor. This is located on the edge of the unit by the Police Street façade. Apart from being a rather dominant and alien feature in the space, the design of the stairs handrail and risers are rather visually heavy. The irregular orientation and location of the flight detract from the orthogonal nature of the space highlighted by the steel columns, the ceiling patterns and the decorative downstand beams.

In order to form this opening between ground and basement floors, new steelwork members in the form of columns and beams were introduced in the basement and subbasement. Again the bizarre orientation of the stairs has facilitated the rather random sub-basement column layout.

In the basement, a complex non-original mf suspended ceiling of differing heights is present. As far as can be ascertained, there is no original ceiling above this and the bare floor joists supporting the ground floor boards can be seen through apertures in the plasterboard. We enclose photographs taken through the void to illustrate this.

As part of this application we proposed to carefully remove this ceiling and expose the beams and joists in accordance with the method statement in appendix A



Basement view showing modern MF ceiling

A decision on the finishing of this element can be made at that point.

Historical Research

It has not been easy to establish many details on the interior of the ground floor of the unit.

The landord has a plan in his possession which is dated January 1990. This does not show the present front staircase, but does show a spiral staircase to the rear of the unit. Interestingly, the works described in this drawing do not show any alteration to the spiral stair and we must assume that it was there prior to these works. Additionally, now that the floor covering has been removed at ground floor it is possible to see that the original floorboards are not present. This would confirm that sometime in the past there has been an opening in this location and confirms the fact that a spiral or other stair was present.

We have based our proposed location for the new stair on the above research. At worst, we will be altering already disturbed fabric and at best we will be proposing a new stair in a location which previously had a staircase.

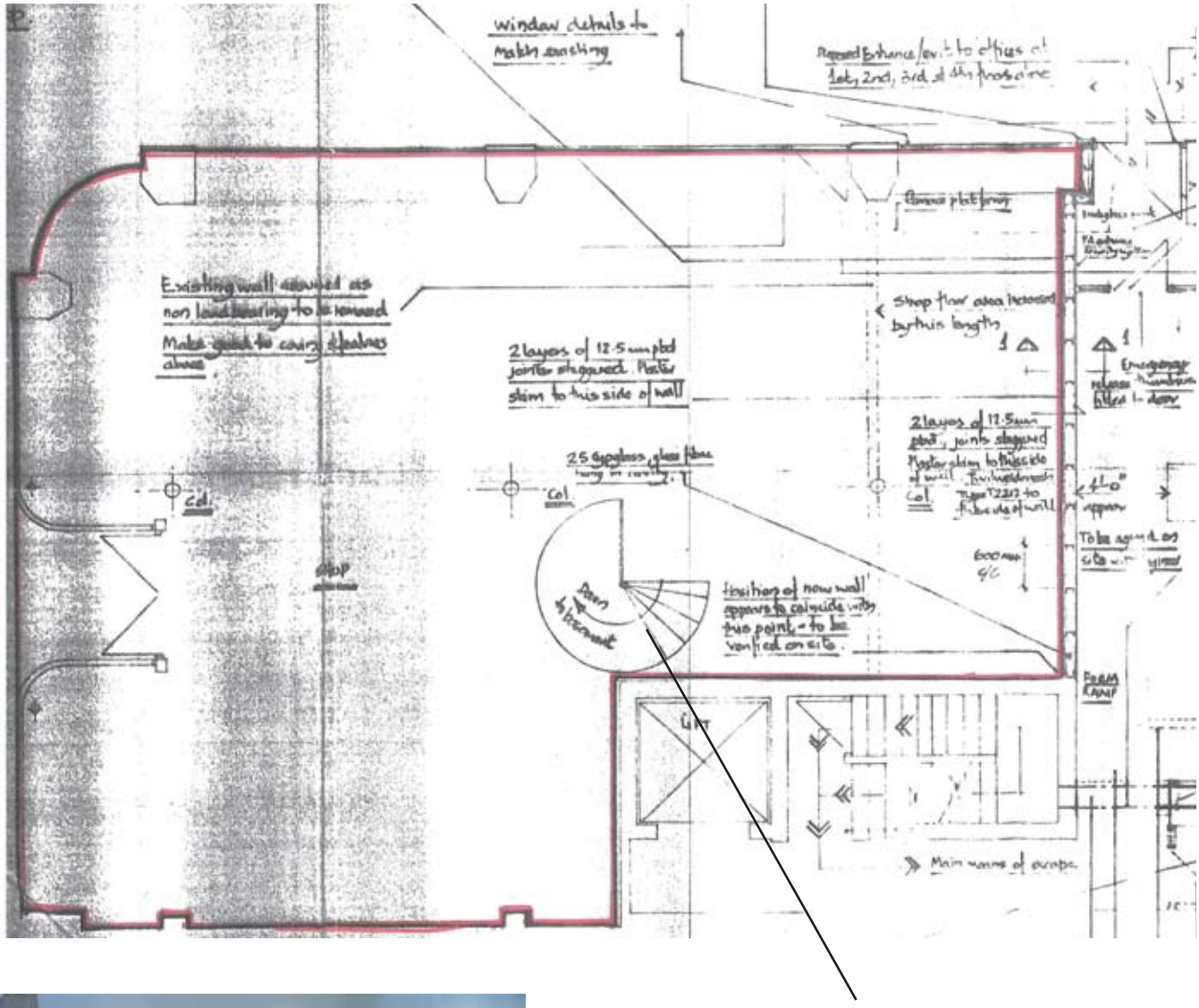
Sub Basement view showing non original columns to be removed





views in void of basement MF ceiling showing joists and floorboards - no ceiling detail is present





scan of 1990 drawing showing spiral stair in this location



Photograph of proposed stair location at ground floor showing infill

Proposals

In summary our proposals are as follows:

1. Soft strip of various non original elements on the ground floor (refer to drawing).

2. Soft Strip of various non original elements in the basement (refer to drawing).

3. Careful removal of non-original columns in sub-basement

4. Careful removal of non original staircase and introduction of new stair to rear of unit.

5. Insertion of new staircase

6. Make good existing trimmed opening.

The new staircase

We are proposing to carefully remove the existing staircase and install a new, more sympathetic fully DDA compliant staircase to the rear of the space. There will be no need to introduce extra steelwork to support the trimmed opening and intervention will be minimal. (please refer to the Clancy Consulting report for more detail)

In terms of design, the use of steel and glass for the handrails will clearly express the contemporary nature of the intervention risers.

The existing opening will be floored over and all steelwork columns formally supporting the trimming elements will be removed.

We have shown details of the proposed trimming of the new opening. However, we would re-access these details based on exactly what is found when the MF ceiling is removed. We are happy to have a planning condition to this effect.

Cat B work

Any fit out work for a new tenant will be the subject of a separate application. This will include mechanical, electric lighting, signage and any other appropriate works.

Conclusion

This application seeks to strip non original elements and replace the dominant staircase with a more sympathetic orthogonal and contemporary structure to the rear of the unit. On completion of the proposed works the space will be relieved of the non original clutter that had previously been in evidence.

Appendix A

Method statement for Soft Strip of basement ceiling

1. Contractor to ensure that a full set of current soft strip drawings are on site for reference throughout progress of the works. PLEASE NOTE THAT THE STORAGE AREA SHOULD BE CONSTRUCTED AND THE PROTECTION MEASURES PUT IN PLACE PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF STRIPOUT.

2. Items identified for soft strip are as indicated on drawings P(111), and P(110).

3. All existing elements that are to remain are to be properly protected. Ensure that the following elements are protected as follows:
Existing Iron Columns - wrapped securely in foam.
Exposed floors - covered with hardboard in trafficked and storage areas.
Exposed walls on route of removal - protected with hardboard.
Note that the non-original stair will be removed as part of the works, and protection of this element is not required.

4. Isolate all services prior to commencement of works. Ensure adequate temporary lighting throughout the course of the works and this is to remain for the post strip inspection.

5. Carefully Remove all electrical and mechanical fixings from ceiling (light fittings, duct covers, fire alarm receptors, sounders, cowls and comfort cooling units. Dispose off site.

Plasterboard Ceilings

6. Carefully remove ceiling plasterboard and associated MF fixings in basement using only handtools taking care not to damage the edge of retainined sufaces such as walls and column heads, downstand plaster detail (if this exists) and any other features fixed to the building that are to remain following the soft strip.

7. With the ceiling removed and off site, carefully remove all non original plant, ducts, and wiring which were present in the void. Take extra care not to damage the existing building fabric when removing fixings and brackets from the walls, ceilings and timbers.

8. Dispose of all soft strip items off site and bring to first floor level via the non-original staircase and store in the centre of the ground floor retail unit away from existing columns or walls.

9. In the event that any structure, feature or element is discovered in the void that is not clearly on the drawings then report immediately to Atelier MB (AMB). Ensure no further work is carried out in that locality until AMB have attended site and given further instructions.

10. Carefully remove all clips, fixings, brackets and screws from original surfaces taking care to unscrew rather than by using force, Take extra care when fixings are through elements which will be retained, such as joists, lathe and plaster, columns, beams and floorboards.

11. Brush off exposed joists, plaster surfaces, columns, beams and floorboards ready for inspection.

Lay in grid ceilings on ground and basement floors.

12. Carefully remove all lay in grid panels.

13. Carefully remove all grid elements .Take extra care not to damage the existing building fabric when removing fixings and brackets from the walls, ceilings and timbers.

14. In the event that any structure, feature or element is discovered in the void that is not clearly on the drawings then report immediately to Atelier MB (AMB). Ensure no further work is carried out in that locality until AMB have attended site and given further instructions.

15. Carefully remove all clips, fixings, brackets and screws from original surfaces taking care to unscrew rather than by using force, Take extra care when fixings are through elements which will be retained, such as joists, lathe and plaster, columns, beams and floorboards.

none original Stud walls on ground and basement

16. carefully remove timber skirting and then plasterboard to both sides of the stud work. Take extra care not to damage the existing building fabric when removing close to ceiling, walls and floors. NOTE THAT TOP SECTION OF STUD IS BUILT UP TO HISTORIC CEILING DOWNSTAND DETAIL. THESE DETAILS ARE TO BE RETAINED AND SHOULD NOT BE DISTURBED

17. Carefully remove timber studs taking care with new fixings through historic fabric.

18. Dispose off site via storage area as indicated.

19. Brush off exposed joists, plaster surfaces, columns, beams and floorboards ready for inspection.

Basement Columns

20. Carefully remove none-original steelwork in the basement as indicated on drawing. Existing lathe and plaster ceiling to be reinstated where penetrations remain following careful removal. Floor to be made good with screed to match existing.