



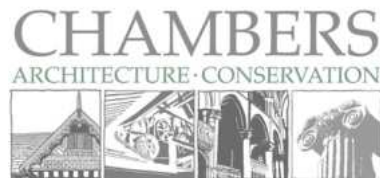
THE PORTICO LIBRARY, MANCHESTER

Conservation Management Plan
Chambers Conservation Ltd, July 2025 – Issue 3

Prologue

This report, commissioned by The Portico Library, has been written by Jennifer Chambers BA (Hons) BArch RIBA SCA IHBC of Chambers Conservation Ltd.

The purpose of this report is plan is to assess the significance of the building and its components to help guide future decision making and change.



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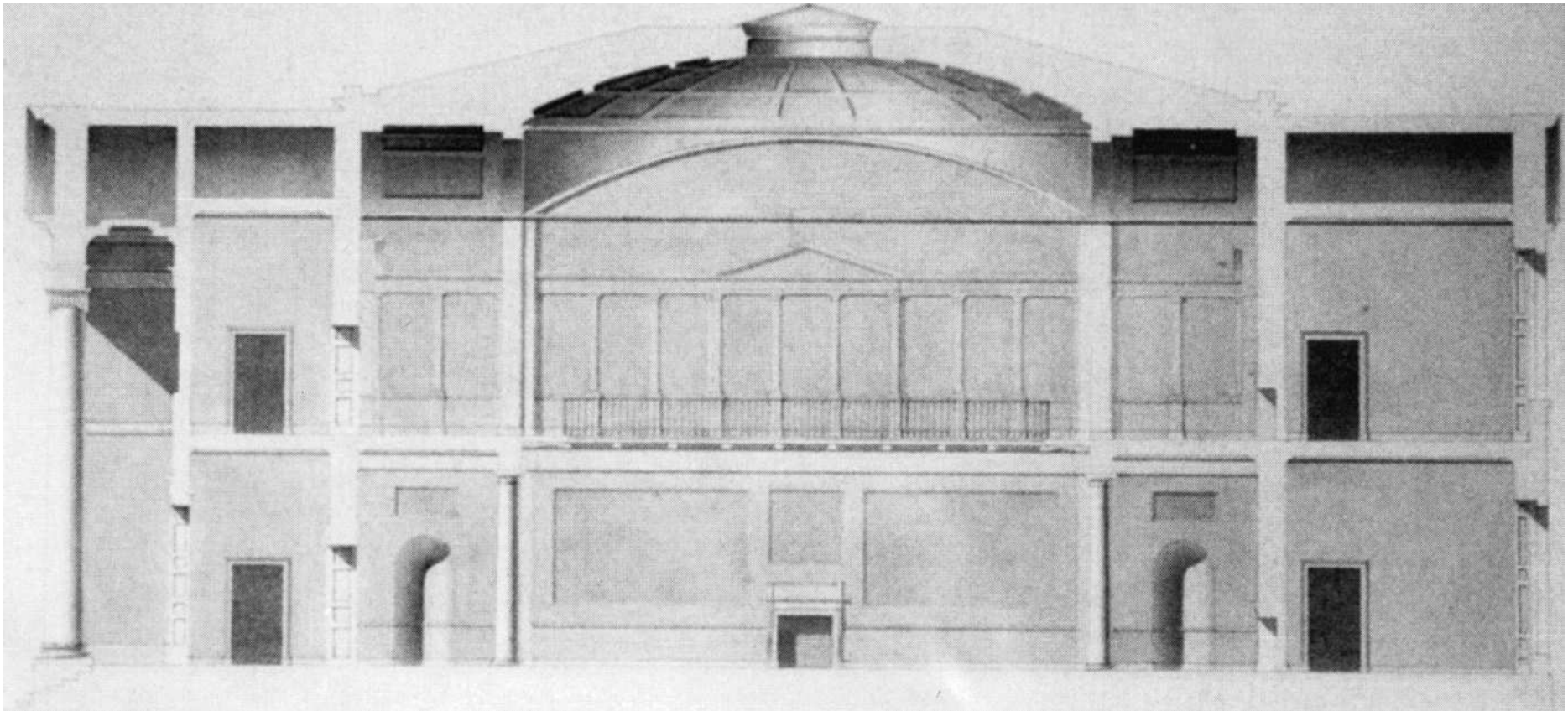
1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Portico Library is a building of a high level of significance that is valued highly as both a fine example of Neo-Classical architecture in the north-west but also a well-respected source of inspiration in the world of literature. Although the building fabric is in moderately good condition there are more significant issues that affect the Library's ability cater for the needs of all users and to reach a wider audience – the most notable is the almost complete lack of accessibility for many people with disabilities.
- 1.2 This Plan is written as an extension to the Conservation Statement, issued in 2019. In the intervening period, the Library has progressed its plans to bring back the ground floor and basement areas into their use and therefore this more detailed document will be vital in supporting the decision-making process for both this design work and all other matters affecting the fabric and use of the building.
- 1.3 The Portico Library will undoubtedly change over the forthcoming years or decades and this document proposes policies for managing the building and implementing alterations in a way that preserves and enhances its significance.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 Chambers Conservation Ltd has been appointed as a specialist conservation subconsultant to lead architects Purcell to write this Plan on behalf of the Portico Library to help inform decision making and accompany applications from grants and listed building / planning consents.
- 2.2 In November 2023, the Library was awarded a development grant by the National Lottery Heritage Fund towards making plans for the following vision to be realised:
 - Inviting local communities to work with them on testing how to transform the ground floor and basement into an open and welcoming area with dining and exhibition areas, a 'Northern Bookshop', educational activities, a collections-care lab, plus flexible and high-quality event and meeting spaces.
 - The upper floors will conserve and enhance the existing heritage, showcasing the unique book collection, manuscript archive and architecture.

- The technical access requirements, such as a lift, will be supported by creative consultation to establish how best to make the building fully accessible for all.



Original concept sectional drawing by Harrison



Photograph from the Library's own collection showing the original form of the interior, prior to the 1920s alterations (c. 1910)



Smoking Room in the Basement, prior to the 1920s conversion

3.0 Understanding the Heritage

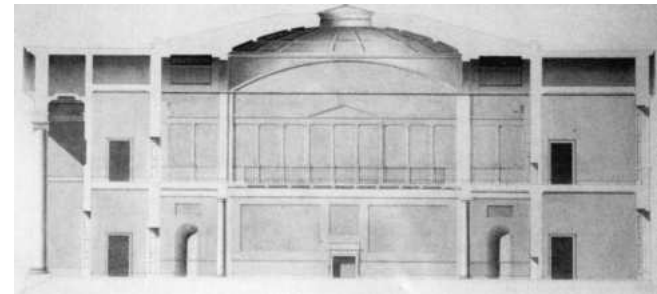
3.1 Description of the Heritage Asset:

- 3.1.1 The Portico Library is important example of a Georgian subscription library and is an attractive classical building. The very high level of significance of the building is shown by its grade II* listed status.
- 3.1.2 The building is within the immediate context of the George Street Conservation Area, which starts on the other side of Charlotte Street to the south-west.
- 3.1.3 The Portico Library and Gallery is located on the first floor, with the main entrance on Charlotte Street near the junction with Mosley Street. 'The Bank' bar/restaurant is located in the main space on the ground floor below the library, with ancillary accommodation in the basement.

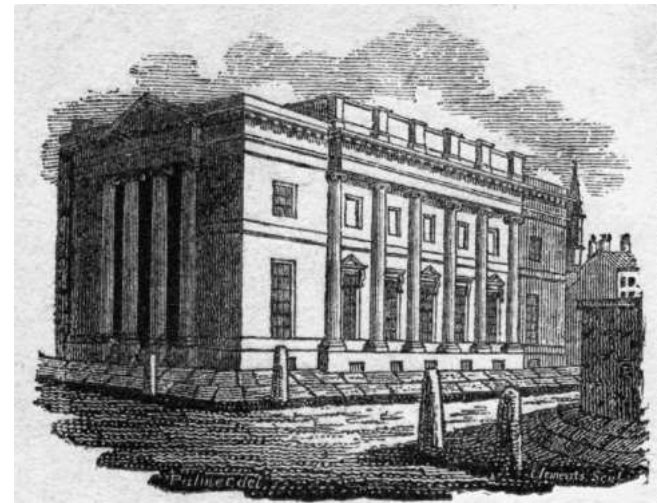
3.2 History

The Building of the Library

- 3.2.1 Fundraising began for what was to become the Portico Library from 1799 onwards by local businessmen Robert Robinson and Michael Ward, who has reportedly gained inspiration from the Athenaeum in Liverpool, which had been founded in 1797. The nearby city had by this time had another such library in the pipeline and the rivalry between the two cities almost certainly meant that Manchester did not want to be left behind.
- 3.2.2 Robinson and Ward proposed to construct a 'Newsroom and Library', where members would become part-owners – this proved popular at the time when Manchester's population and its industry was burgeoning. The library offered a different environment, unusually largely free from political or religious associations. There were 400 on the list of subscribers and the site chosen was to be the corner of Mosley Street and Charlotte Street – a position that was within a fashionable and up-and-coming area.
- 3.2.3 The well-known Chester-based architect, Thomas Harrison, was commissioned to design the new building with Manchester builder Thomas Bellhouse given the



Harrison original design – cross section



View c. 1816

construction contract. It is thought to have been built with Runcorn stone. The foundation stone was laid in 1802 and the building opened in January 1806, with the name of the Portico Library apparently not used until a month later. At the time of opening, John Dalton described Mosley Street as ‘the most elegant and retired street in the town’.¹

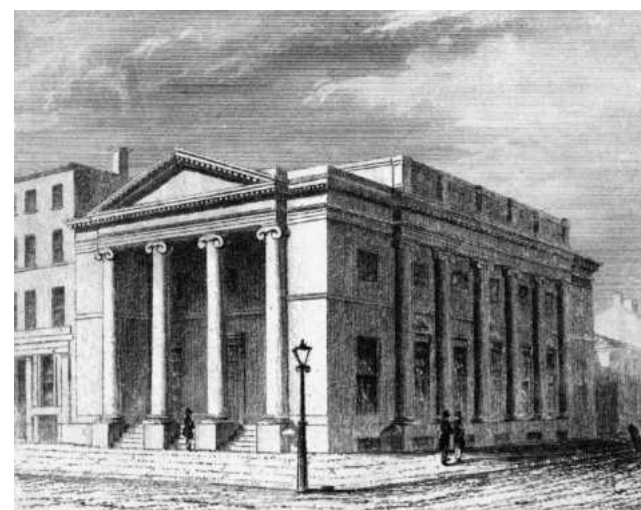
- 3.2.4 The ground floor Newsroom was the main attraction for users, and it was proudly declared to be considerably larger than the equivalent facility in the Athenaeum in Liverpool. The library above become stocked with books and visitors could also have non-alcoholic refreshments or partake in games of backgammon, draughts and chess.
- 3.2.5 The Portico Library was known to have been a part of Manchester’s 1828 music festival – the finale of which was a fancy-dress ball with a canvas tent thrown over Mosley St and part of Charlotte St to connect the Assembly Rooms with the Portico.

Problems and Early Changes

- 3.2.6 Early committee meetings reportedly discussed matters such as heating and light, including that ‘the present apparatus for heating the rooms by means of steam, to be totally inadequate to produce the intended effect’. The purchase of candlesticks was discussed but by 1814, lighting was provided using ‘illumination lamps’ lit by sperm whale oil (chosen for the colour of its light and lack of smell / smoke).²
- 3.2.7 In 1808, just two years after opening, there were reports of problems with the building’s roof, although the matter was understood to have been settled amicably with the contractor, with minor repairs undertaken the following year. However, the problems reoccurred frequently with further roof repairs documented in 1813, 1884, 1893 and 1900.
- 3.2.8 A further ongoing issue, almost from the outset, were the toilets – in 1815 they were declared so unpleasant that they closed and for two years members had to cross the road to use the facilities at the Assembly Rooms opposite. In 1818 matters improved by providing a WC in the basement. By 1893 the existing toilet was again deemed to be dilapidated and there were also calls for a separate Ladies Room. At around this



View c. 1824



View c. 1839

¹ Manchester Guardian 20.01.1956 – ‘Portico Library Celebrates its 150th Birthday – Survived Every Crisis – Including a Bomb’

² Country Life 02.05.1985 – ‘Buttered Toast in the Reading Room’ by Keith Spence

time there were discussion about the desirability of wider-ranging changes, with the flooring-over of the newsroom discussed in 1891.

- 3.2.9 The basement was at various times rented out separately. In 1817 the floor was changed to bricks to make it more habitable. In 1840 the Keeper of the Rooms lived in the front section of the basement. The rear basement was let in the 1850s, but problems arose with dry rot.
- 3.2.10 Gas lighting had been fitted within the building in 1844 (it had been installed earlier on the exterior with large globe fittings). initially the use of gas internally caused problems with excess heat and 'noxious gases' and in 1851 improvements to ventilation had to be made. The interior was originally lit by the central dome of plain glass - in 1856 the stained-glass panels were fitted to a design by a Mr Bowman. Under the dome, a feature 'gasolier' was installed later in 1875.
- 3.2.11 The main library was originally intended to be heated by steam being passed through the fluted columns (presumably those originally on the ground floor, now removed), but this plan was apparently changed very early on as the heat provided was insufficient – unfortunately the remedial options were also unsatisfactory in other ways, most notably the smoke caused by coal fires.

Twentieth Century Changes

- 3.2.12 Towards the end of the 19th century, following the Great Depression of 1873-96, where business and industry in the city changed greatly and the starting up of public libraries, the finances of the Portico suffered considerably. Originally there were no windows from the main library space on the first floor, but in 1904 three windows had been added, replacing the previous blanks (niches externally). The bookcases had also been altered and enlarged or replaced altogether and the whole building redecorated. Also, at this time, a smoke room has been created in the basement and, at last, women were allowed throughout the building except the ground floor reading/committee room.
- 3.2.13 Despite the improvements, the Library was still in jeopardy and discussions were had regarding the potential transfer of the Library to the City Council (Corporation) or its conversion into a private club. Other alternatives were considered, such as an amalgamation with the Atheneum. These debates went on extensively over a period



Interior before the 1920s alterations, showing the gasolier of c.1875.

from 1907-10. An article in the Manchester Guardian of 19th January 1909 describes the situation as follows:

'The venerable Portico, as the Chairman of the meeting yesterday called it, is one of those threatened institutions which live long and, if they must die, die hard. Certainly it deserves sympathetic consideration, for it was founded over a century ago and has an honourable place in Manchester history. Purely as a historical monument, however, it takes up a good deal of room, and it is becoming difficult to justify its existence as a centre of culture or amusement. It is the usual order for a cause or a movement to find a building, but here is a building that is looking for a cause.'

We can hardly hope that the proprietors will think of something quite fresh and stimulating, and it is natural that some of them should remember that they have a very valuable site which, if the institution were to be wound up, would give everybody something rather handsome.

There is, however, a Portico tradition of public service, and several suggestions are made with the idea of merging the institution in bigger things. Mr. Albert Nicholson succeeded in carrying an amendment to the winding-up resolution which at least defers the end; but possibly he was not alone in looking coldly upon the suggestion of the President of the Manchester Athenæum that the proprietors of the Portico should throw in their lot with that more active and vital institution. This would be a very generous proceeding on the part of the proprietors of the Portico, and in the interests of the public perhaps they might do worse.

Practically it would mean the obliteration of the Portico, which one section of the proprietors do not want, and we take it that it would also imply a surrender of the contingent financial advantage. Another suggestion is that the property should be assigned to the Corporation on terms to be considered, and some of the proprietors, again, believe that it still has a chance of development on the present lines. On the whole the old Portico has weathered another storm.'

- 3.2.14 No immediate action was taken, however, and the appetite and ability to make changes inevitably stagnated during the First World War. A previous chairman, H.W. Eggers, described that period in an article in 1980:

'I think the decline dates from around the Great War... At that time the Library ceased to be an evening club, because no one lived in the town centre any more. And society was changing too – that war changed everything – and membership started to fall off. Since then it's been one crisis after another. The site is tremendously valuable, of course.... We're sitting on a goldmine, but we're still broke!' ³

- 3.2.15 The site did indeed have monetary value and in 1919 the library received an offer from the Manchester and Salford Bank – they would purchase the building but lease it back to them. The Portico was on the brink of agreeing to the proposal when another option emerged, this time via an architect named Joseph Sunlight who represented the Bank of Athens.
- 3.2.16 The Bank of Athens offered to lease the ground floor and basement of the building for a period of 30 years – this was soon accepted by the committee and proprietors. The Bank paid for the necessary alterations which took place in 1920-1. The ground floor was roofed-over in glass (with a shallow dome in the centre) and the library moved upstairs. A Librarian's Office and Porter's Room were also to be provided. Two men's toilets were created overlooking Mosley Street. The Portico retained the old smoking room as a Magazine Room with access from the rear Back George Street Entrance.
- 3.2.17 Whilst these changes may have saved the Portico, the impact on the original composition and in particular the loss of the use of the main Mosley Street entrance and stair had a detrimental effect. The impact was described later in 1936 as follows: (...The Bank of Athens... That is where you arrive if you go in by the great Ionic portico; to get the books you have to use the side entrance where footmen used to go for their masters' reading matter.'⁴
- 3.2.18 Around a decade after the changes, the tenancy of the ground floor and basement changed to the London Joint City and Midland Bank, before being sold on once again in 1938 to Lloyds Bank, who's lease length was to be 42 years. Also, at this time, the library relinquished the basement Magazine Room.



Design for the interior of the Bank of Athens within the ground floor of the Portico building

³ The Artful Reporter (Manchester) June 1980 – 'The Portico Library'

⁴ Manchester Guardian 20.01.1956 – 'Portico Library Celebrates its 150th Birthday – Survived Every Crisis – Including a Bomb'



Magazine Room in the ground floor prior to the 1920s conversion

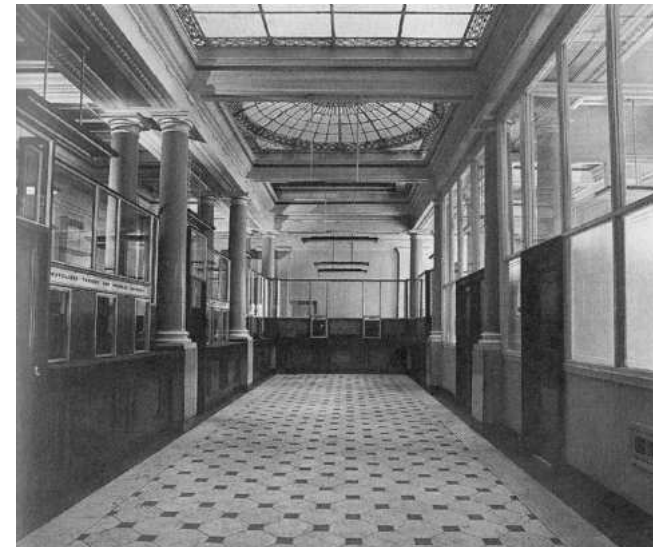
3.2.19 In the early 20th century, there were continued problems with roof leaks – in 1916 meetings were reportedly stopped as a result and in 1925 dry rot was discovered in roof beams, suggesting a lack of maintenance. Extensive leaks occurred due to blocked gutters in 1932 and 1953, before a significant part of the ceiling collapsed in 1960 in the reading room. The main feature gasolier was removed in 1914 to be replaced with electric lighting.

3.2.20 Electric fires were eventually introduced in 1935, before being replaced by a gas-powered central heating system.

3.2.21 Ironically, the roof and buildings a whole had survived almost undamaged through the Second World War, despite the decimation of much of the surrounding area and long-term issues with roof. The basement had been partially converted to form an air-raid shelter in 1941, before being eventually converted back again by the bank. A document exists in the Library's collection⁵, which lists work carried out to construct the shelter. It is not clear if any evidence of these elements survive today:

- 14" brick walls inserted behind basement windows (thought to have been removed)
- 14" brick wall built off main wall
- New 4 ½" brick wall to form wardens post with new door and frame
- New hollow block partitions to form WCs (thought to have been removed)
- New steps to emergency exit
- New doors and door frames to new walls
- Strengthening to existing steelwork (thought to have been removed)
- Corrugated sheeting to ceiling (thought to have been removed)
- Louvres fitted to top panels of entrance doors (thought to have been removed)
- 14" brick hood with door and frame forming emergency exit
- 24 holes cut in main walls (Charlotte Street?)

3.2.22 The air raid shelter was at least mostly dismantled in 1947.



Interior of the Bank prior to the 1980s alterations

⁵ City of Manchester City Surveyor – Schedule of Condition of Premises Relinquished

- 3.2.23 The building was listed in 1952, whilst this placed some restrictions on changes to both the exterior and interior of the building, it had the advantage of raising the profile of the building.
- 3.2.24 The early 1960s saw the exterior stonework cleaned and lights fitted as well as the redecoration of the interior. In 1960 the ceiling of the reading room reportedly collapsed.
- 3.2.25 In the 1970s the local area saw further changes - Manchester's exchanges closed, but clubs, music venues and the press industry thrived. In the late 1970s the barometer was moved from the stairs into the library to avoid further attempts at theft. The decade also saw some grant funding for repairs, however, reading room ceiling fell down again following leaks in 1982, previous repairs having been inadequate.
- 3.2.26 In terms of ancillary facilities, in 1982 there was a kitchen, members cloakroom and lavatory, together with a spiral staircase to the loft. It had been previously proposed to build a newsroom in this, effectively second floor space. A grant from English Heritage was awarded in 1983, again to repair the roof, this time with extensive re-slating. However, in 1983, the weathervane was damaged in a storm - it had not been connected to the wind dial since 1957, but the decision was taken to replace the shaft and vane itself and restore the wind dial itself. The storm had also damaged the window and cupboards with the reading room.
- 3.2.27 In 1984 the Portico Library Charitable Trust was formed to help deal with the tax liabilities from the rental income but also with the wider objective of promoting the advancement of education, learning and knowledge. Also in that year, a former WC opened as the bindery and conservation room - over 1000 books were conserved the following year (funded by the British Library).
- 3.2.28 In 1985 a fundraising campaign brought interest from Tetley Walker to acquire the lease of the ground floor and basement as a cafe bar - the revenue from Lloyd's had been inadequate and they had previously shown a desire to discontinue their lease. The proposal was approved to go ahead but sound attenuation issues were a concern - therefore it was agreed to install a load bearing, soundproof floor in place of the early 20th century glazing. Tetley Walker also paid for the exterior to be cleaned. The new floor, installed in November 1986, quickly became a problem, however, as it had not been installed as specified and as a result only 150 people could use it at any one time. A flat was also constructed in the basement for the pub manager, but this could not be used as it could not be made to meet the necessary regulations. Other work



Interior during the 1980s prior to the removal of the glazed ceiling



Interior during the 1980s during the work to install a new floor

include new WCs and a dishwashing area on the ground floor, various changes to the basement and new external signage and brass wall lights behind the portico columns. Around this period, English Heritage also funded the repair of the glazed dome and central heating was installed.

- 3.2.29 In March 1987, The Portico reopened after a 6 month closure.
- 3.2.30 In 1990 a condition report identified further work that needed to be undertaken on the roof and work to the back stair - this work was completed in 1994. The works to enlarge and modernise the kitchen and work room were carried out next in 1996. At this time stone repairs were carried also out to the masonry over the pediment.
- 3.2.31 This work was part funded with an English Heritage grant and also included the following:
- Restoration of rear staircase
 - Reroofing of area over reading room (commenced Dec 1992, completed June 1993. This included strengthening of trusses)
 - Refurbishment of light pendant (Sept 1993-Jan 1995)
- 3.2.32 In 1996 damage occurred as a result of the nearby Arndale Shopping Centre bombing. Invoices show that the following work was needed:
- Cleaning of carpets
 - Taking down (and presumably subsequent repairs to a cornice)
 - Damage to the stained-glass panels – these were replaced with new with safety film with work also carried out to the aluminium cappings
- 3.2.33 Also in 1996, general improvements were undertaken including:
- Roof repairs to the front section
 - Leadwork and other repairs to the main roof
 - Safety improvements to roof access
 - Rebuilding a brick roof upstand
 - Leadwork
 - Works to the kitchen and toilets

- Stonework repairs

3.2.34 Between 1999-2000 English Heritage grant funded plasterwork repairs were carried out (reported to be necessary from shock vibrations from traffic in Charlotte Street, but the effect of the continued water leaks from the roof and also from the impact of the IRA bomb in 1996 were rumoured to be contributing factors). Loose laths were fixed back to the structure.

3.2.35 In 2001 feasibility study was carried out into a potential lift installation, this concluded that it was not viable at that time, although stairlift was later to be installed on the rear stair.

3.2.36 In 2006 Mitchells and Butler refurnished the ground floor with works thought to include:

- New signage and presentation of frontage and lighting
- New bar and fixed seating installed
- New dados and skirting
- Removal of boxing from columns and redecoration
- Renewal of floor coverings and exposure of earlier floor

2007 – Repair and redecoration of shelving

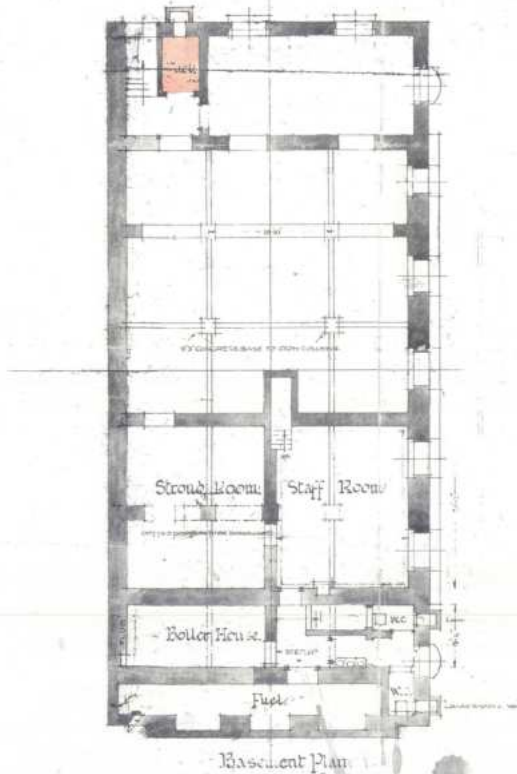


Plan of the building in 1920, annotated showing uses of rooms (blue) and features that have been removed subsequently (red)

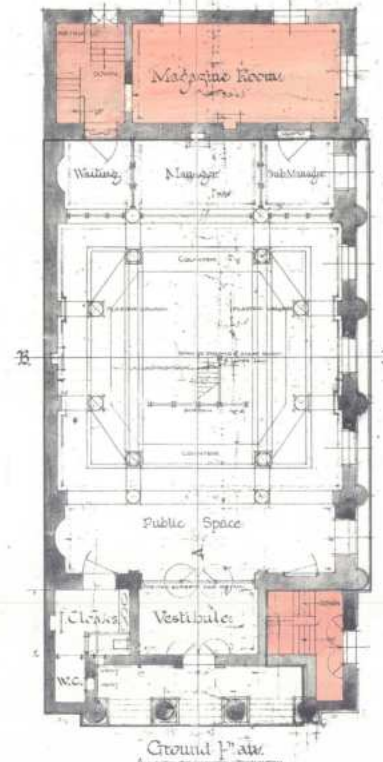
THE PORTICO LIBRARY MOSLEY ST. MANCHESTER. IN AGREEMENT WITH M^{ESRS}.

THE BANK OF ATHENS.

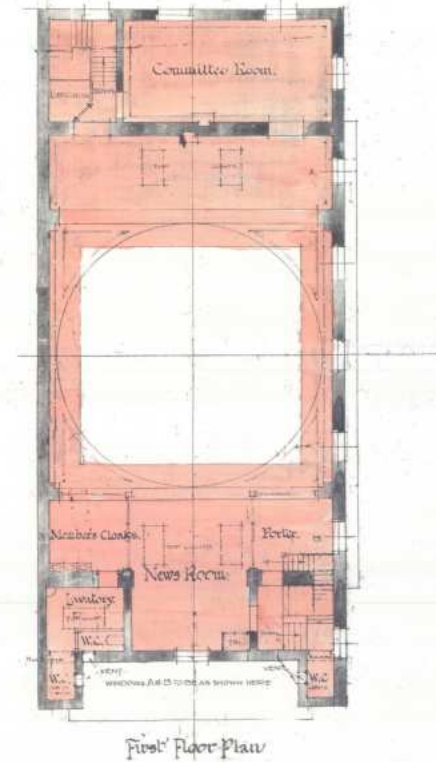
Portion shown in Red to be occupied by Library



This plan is subject to the lease of Messrs. Brotherton, Messrs. & Co. to part of the basement



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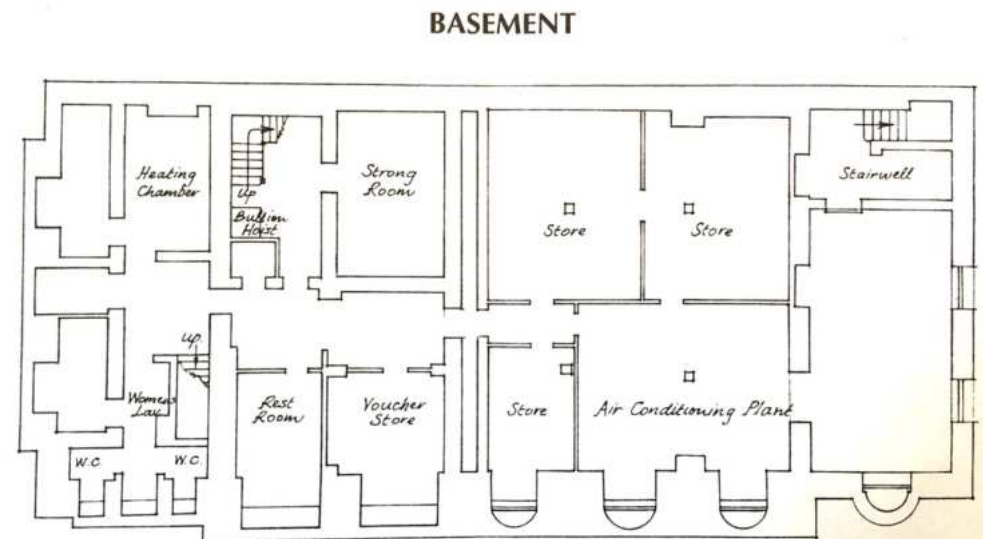
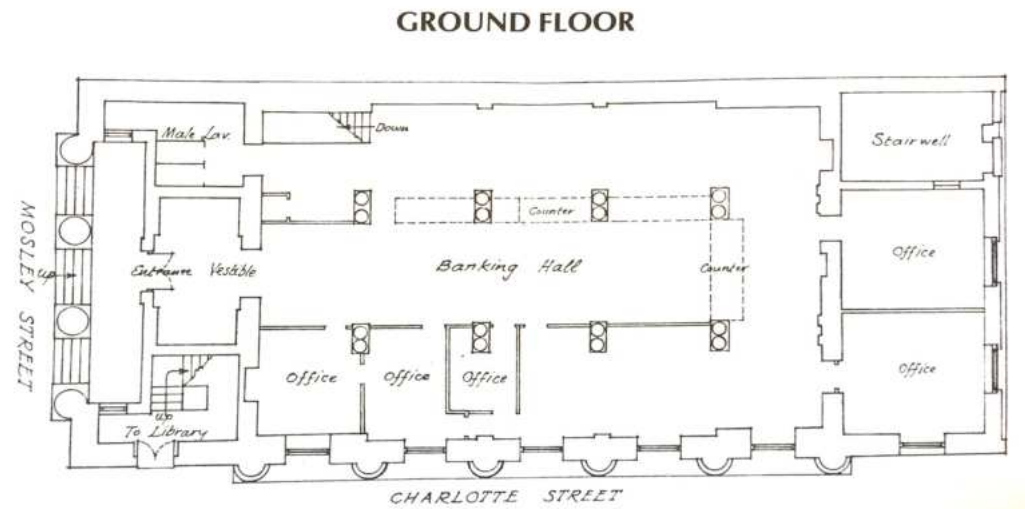


ALL PORTION NOT OCCUPIED BY LIBRARY

Initial proposal for the bank conversion – not as built (e.g. the pattern of the ground floor columns is shown differently)



Photo of the Library level prior to the 1980s alterations



Plans of the Library prior to the 1980s alterations

3.3 Local Context

Current Context

- 3.3.1 The building is on the corner of Mosley Street and Charlotte Street, with a rear elevation onto Back George Street. Its fourth side shares a wall with former warehouse known as 'Calico' (formerly Europa House). This building has recently been refurbished and now houses flexible workspaces for small-medium sized businesses. It also has recently had a two-storey roof-top extension.
- 3.3.2 The Portico is within the main business district of the city, with the predominant use of the upper floors of surrounding buildings being offices. However, it is only a short distance from Piccadilly Gardens, the Arndale Shopping Centre and the retail area of Market Street as well as the cultural areas of the Manchester Art Gallery and Central Library and the administrative and ceremonial buildings of the Town Hall. The Metrolink tram route was constructed along Mosley Street, opening in 1992.
- 3.3.3 The Library sits within a high-density area of buildings which range between four and eight storeys in height. The height of the surrounding buildings has increased in recent years, with new office buildings being higher than their predecessors. Architecturally the area is also varied, with more recent buildings sitting amongst Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian examples. Architecturally, there is also great complexity and variation in style and materials – Portland stone cladding, red brick, steel and glass and buff sandstone all feature in the immediate context. Whilst the level of detail on the buildings varies hugely there is a unifying characteristic of regular and geometrically designed facades in the local area.

Historical Context

- 3.3.4 Mosley Street was considered as a genteel prime residential area in the early 19th century – most Portico Library members lived within a short walk and the majority were in the textiles trade. There were also many doctors and surgeons, a number of whom were on the committee.
- 3.3.5 By around 1800 there were several other libraries in the city. Chetham's library was the first free library in Europe, having been founded as early as 1657. The Manchester Circulating Library was founded in 1765 and then the New Circulating Library founded in 1792. In addition, societies and churches also had libraries.



1922 OS map extract



Chetham's Library (by Mike Peel, Wikimedia)

- 3.3.6 Opposite the Portico was the popular Independent Chapel (erected in 1788) and the Assembly Rooms which was also run on a subscription basis and included facilities such as a ballroom, a tearoom, a billiard room and a card room. The Athenaeum opened in 1839 next door to the Manchester Royal Institute, which became the City Art Gallery – this is another example of a classical, albeit slightly later building (it was also built by the same contractor as the Portico, David Bellhouse and Sons).
- 3.3.7 By the mid 1830s, the area around the Portico began to change, with many of the houses demolished or converted into warehouses. As transportation improved considerably into that period, it became easy for the Library's users to travel further. By the turn of the twentieth century, it had become a financial area with a number of large banks appearing.
- 3.3.8 In the 19th century there were also commercial circulating libraries - Mudies on Cross Street (founded 1842) was particularly dominant. The national Public Libraries and Museums Act of 1851 made possible a levy, which in turn allowed for the creation of a public collection of books. Whilst this was a highly beneficial service, it had knock-on consequences onto a number of major book suppliers and as a result, the commercial circulating libraries all gradually disappeared
- 3.3.9 In 1899 the third wife of a wealthy cotton magnate, Enriqueta Rylands, established the John Rylands Library on Deansgate in memory of her husband. The building was designed to hold one of the finest collections of rare books, manuscripts and archives in the world which would be intended to be used by the public. The building is also of a high level of significance, but instead of the classical design opted for at the Portico, the John Rylands Library is considered one of the best examples of neo-Gothic architecture in Europe. Whilst the Portico is light, airy and spacious inside, at Rylands the character is deeply atmospheric with spaces deliberately darker and accessed from long cloister-like corridors.
- 3.3.10 Much of the surrounding area near the Portico was greatly altered during the 1940 'Christmas Blitz' that hit central Manchester, with Piccadilly in particular changed for good. In the decades following, the area was gradually rebuilt.



John Rylands Library (by Michael D Beckwith, Flickr)



Manchester Central Library (by David Dixon, <https://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/2266490>)

3.4 Wider Heritage Context

Thomas Harrison

- 3.4.1 The Portico Library was designed by the renowned Thomas Harrison, who worked extensively across the north-west but most notably in Chester and Lancaster, where he designed significant new bridges across both the Dee and the Lune as well as the civic buildings at the Castle, Shire Hall and Armoury (now the Crown Court) (Chester) and Gothic Shire Hall and Gaol (Lancaster). He is arguably one of the few north-west based architects who was well-known outside of the region.
- 3.4.2 Harrison studied for a period in Rome, at which time he carefully recorded some of the ancient ruins and undoubtedly gaining a love of classical architecture and an understanding of the precision needed to design such buildings. When Harrison had moved to Chester, he clearly aimed to also design work in the nearby cities of Liverpool and Manchester. In Liverpool he had entered (but initially failed to win) a competition to design a newsroom, coffee house and library – work was started in March 1801 and completed by the summer of 1802. The building more recently called The Lyceum (but formerly the Athenaeum), is also a two-sided classical stone building, but unlike the portico, it has its entrance under an ionic portico on the longer, Bold Street side. The library is a circular space with a balcony supported on fluted Tuscan columns.
- 3.4.3 The Portico is the only Harrison building left in the city of Manchester - he had designed the second Theatre Royal (built 1806-7), but it was destroyed by fire in 1844. He also had a commission for the Exchange, which also provided members with a newsroom and library – this was built at a similar time between 1806-9. The building had an impressive curved frontage with Doric half columns beneath a triglyph frieze.

Neoclassicism

- 3.4.4 Britain gained a taste for mainstream revival classical styles following the publication of a number of significant and influential works on the subject such as Palladio's *Four Books of Architecture* (1715), although the country had of course seen the seminal work of Inigo Jones a century earlier. This Palladianism led on to Neoclassicism by the 1750s which included a broader range of classical influence, most notably from Ancient Greece. Designers such as Harrison were inspired by the excavations at Pompeii as well as the work of British contemporaries such as Robert Adam and



The Lyceum, Liverpool (c. 1828)



Chester Castle, by Thomas Harrison

William Chambers. John Soane was a particularly important architectural figurehead of this period, bringing his detailed understanding of classical architecture (learnt on the popular Grand Tour) into his publicly important buildings which included the Bank of England and the Royal Academy.

Libraries in Britain

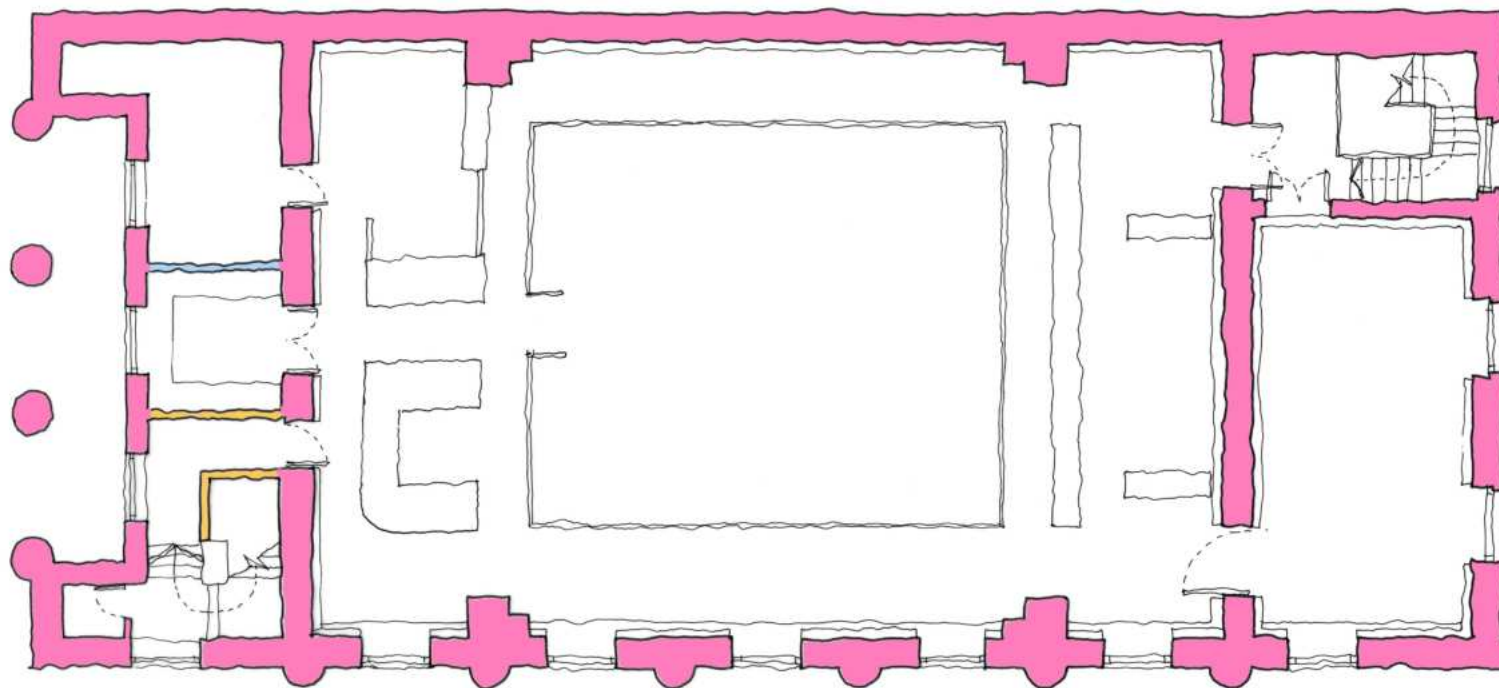
- 3.4.5 At the time of the establishment of the Portico, there were many libraries across the country run on a private or institutional basis – it was at a time when book collecting was highly popular but also establishments such as the Portico were particular popular in the mercantile cities including Liverpool as already described, where there had been a rise in the middle-classes, consisting of educated people with money to pay for regular subscriptions but probably not enough to own a significant number of books themselves. Establishments such as the Portico, were also like some of the private members clubs of the period, where it became a fashionable place to be seen and socialise. The Portico would have been a large and relatively prestigious library at the time of its construction, with only significantly larger buildings seen in London, prior to the Public Libraries and Museums Act of 1851 which led to the building of the large city libraries and the gradual decline of the smaller private institutions.

Cataloguing Changes

- 3.4.6 Plans on the following pages show approximate ages of the fabric of the Portico and includes notes on changes that have taken place. A time-line of changes and important dates is also included in the appendix to this document.

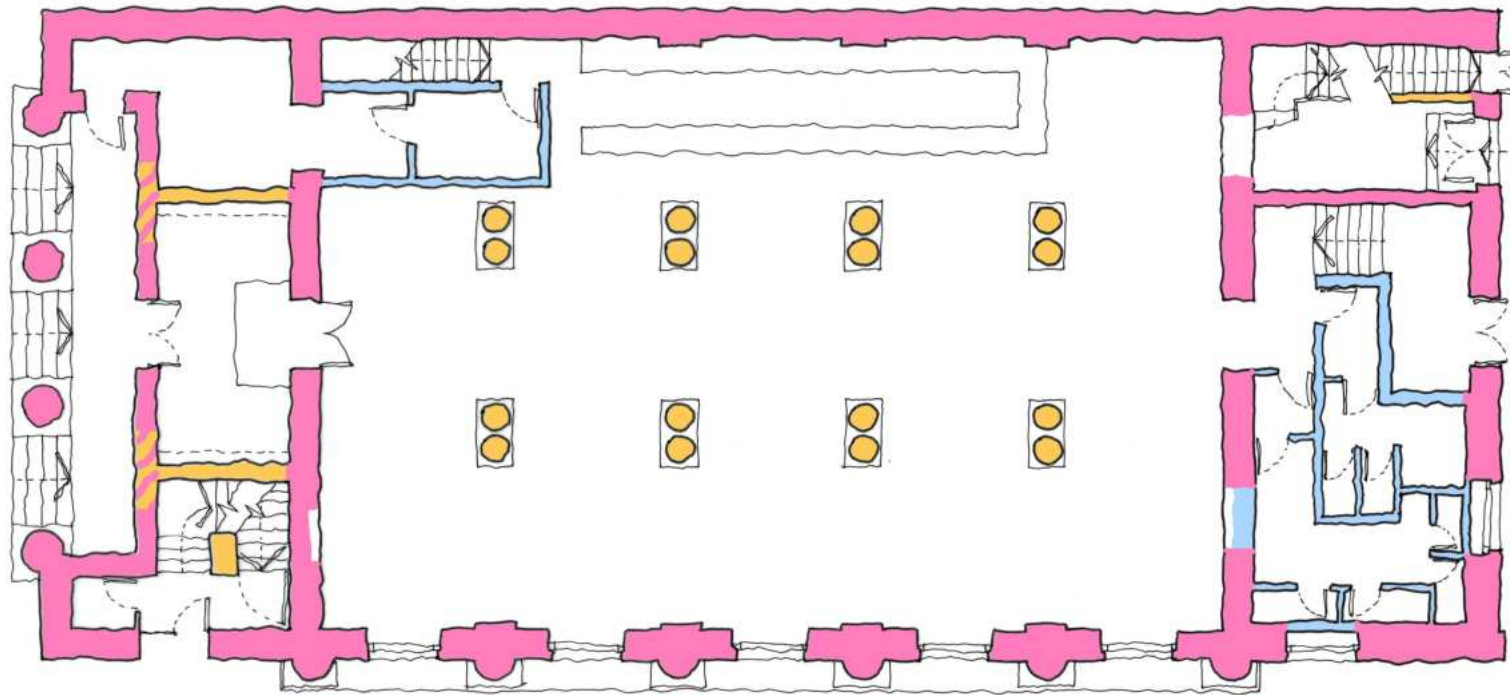


Manchester Art Gallery (Wikimedia Commons)



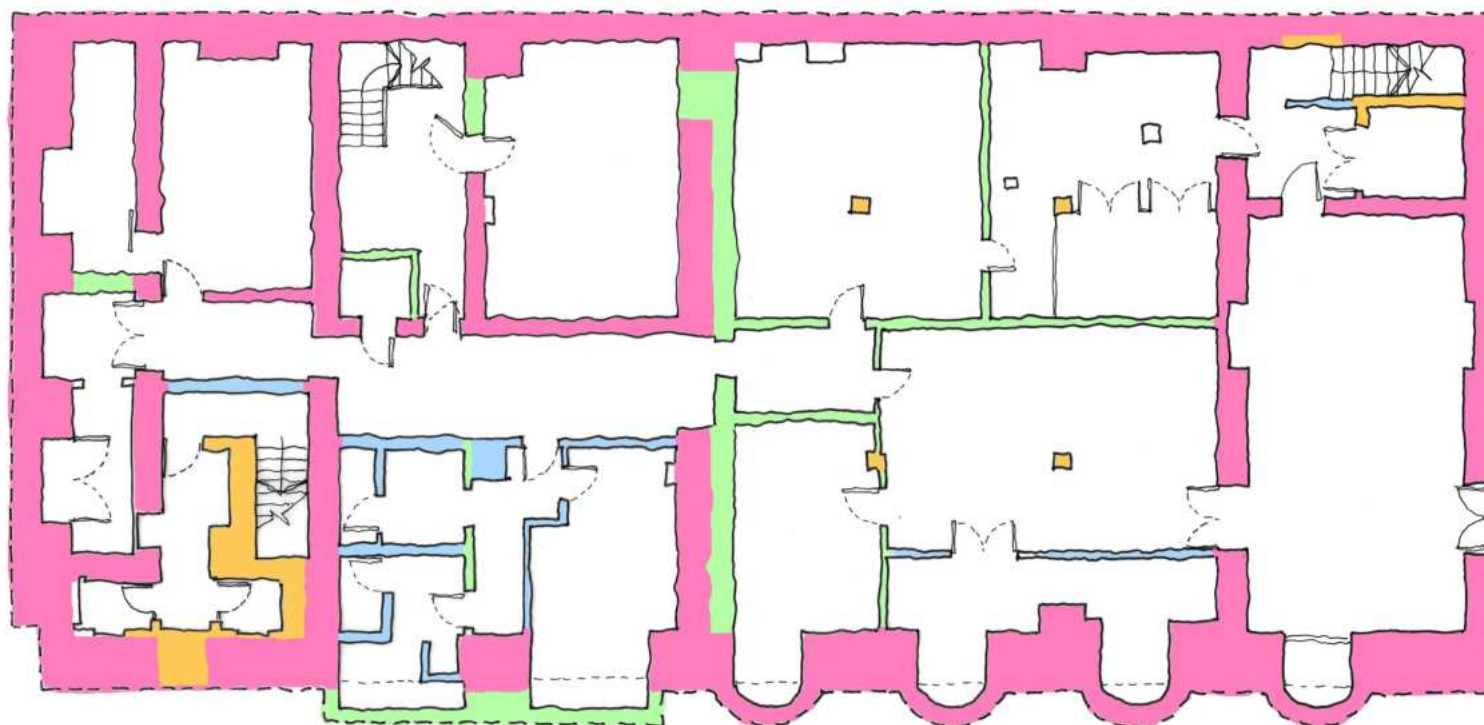
First Floor Plan -
Showing Ages of Building Fabric and Annotations of Changes

- Original or early fabric
- Fabric relating to 1920s alterations
- Mid 20th century
- 1980s or later



Ground Floor Plan -
Showing Ages of Building Fabric and Annotations of Changes

- Original or early fabric
- Fabric relating to 1920s alterations
- Mid 20th century
- 1980s or later



Basement Plan -
Showing Ages of Building Fabric and Annotations of Changes

- Original or early fabric
- Fabric relating to 1920s alterations
- Mid 20th century
- 1980s or later

3.5 Current Management

Management Team, Staff, Board, Trustees and Charity Status

- 3.5.1 The Portico Library is still run as an independent subscription library. The Portico Library and Newsroom is a registered charity and a limited company. Its work is overseen by a Board of Directors, who are also its Trustees. Before the forming of the charity in 2017, some of the Board were members of the Main Committee, the group responsible for the management of the Library. The current board members were all elected in 2022.
- 3.5.2 The Library has full and part-time staff including a Librarian and CEO, Creative Producer, Project Coordinator, Admin Assistant, Kitchen Manager, Exhibitions and Volunteers Coordinator, Collections and Access Librarian, Kitchen Assistant, Operations Manager and Welcome Desk Assistant.
- 3.5.3 The Board of Directors is made up of ten members which includes the three controlling Officers; Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. The Board of Directors is supported by the House Committee, Book Committee, Equity and Representation Action Group, Public Programme Committee and the Strategic Development Committee. These committees represent the interest of the membership and help develop The Portico's public programme.
- 3.5.4 The Library is now open free to the public six days a week for various exhibitions and events which complement the unique collection of books, archives and illustrations spanning over 450 years. Visitors can now enjoy a meal or drink in the cafe and participate in diverse outreach and engagement programmes including the prestigious Portico Prize and Portico Sadie Massey Awards.
- 3.5.5 The Portico Library Trust was set up in 1984 to assist in the maintenance of public libraries and libraries providing facilities for study by students, the public and members of such libraries. With the support of the Trust, The Portico Library is able to provide an ever-expanding programme of activities for the public including provision of a publicly accessible online catalogue. The Trust manages the lease of the ground floor and basement.
- 3.5.6 The Portico Library has recognised that it faces major challenges, the most urgent of which are governance, the building and income generation. As it addresses them, it



intends to become more resilient and grow stronger, to increasingly be able to achieve their ambition to become inclusive, accessible, engaged and outward-facing. To help them do this, they have recently applied for a Resilient Heritage Grant. In particular, new governance structures are needed to support their newly achieved charitable status.

Ground Floor and Basement Tenancy

- 3.5.7 The Portico Library and Gallery now just occupies the first floor (except for minor circulation and ancillary areas below. 'The Bank' pub and restaurant, run by the chain Mitchells & Butlers Plc, occupies the ground floor and basement (the lease had been transferred from the original occupier, Allied Breweries Ltd, which had been signed in 1986). The freehold lease came to an end in 2021 but was extended to 2026.
- 3.5.8 Under the lease, the pub is responsible for maintaining and repairing the whole of the front portico including the pillars and roof over it, together with all stonework on the Mosley Street and Charlotte Street frontages and the masonry at the ground floor level of Back George Street frontage. They are also responsible for 66% of the cost of the shared buildings insurance.

Protection and Care of the Building

- 3.5.9 Over the past few years, the Library has undertaken measures to help ensure the protection and care of the building. The Library commissioned conservation architects Purcell to produce a detailed condition survey (issued in September 2017), which included all parts of the building including those currently in control of the tenants. This report has enabled them to prioritise repairs and plan for expenditure over the forthcoming years.
- 3.5.10 In 2018 the Library secured funding from the Heritage Lottery fund through their Resilient Heritage Programme. This funding has supported the development of this, Conservation Statement, as well as a masterplan and options appraisal, business planning, fundraising and skills development. Chambers Conservation Ltd have been appointed to advise on ongoing minor repairs, upgrades (e.g. to the security system) and general building issues as well as provide outline designs for potential



improvements that will help the Library overcome issues such as accessibility, whilst preserving the special interest of the building.

3.6 In November 2023, the Library was awarded a development grant by the National Lottery Heritage Fund towards making plans for the following vision to be realised:

- Inviting local communities to work with them on testing how to transform the ground floor and basement into an open and welcoming area with dining and exhibition areas, a 'Northern Bookshop', educational activities, a collections-care lab, plus flexible and high-quality event and meeting spaces.
- The upper floors will conserve and enhance the existing heritage, showcasing the unique book collection, manuscript archive and architecture.
- The technical access requirements, such as a lift, will be supported by creative consultation to establish how best to make the building fully accessible for all.

3.6.1 In 2024 architects Purcell were appointed as the main designers for the next stage of the project, with Chambers Conservation continuing a role as a specialist heritage consultant.



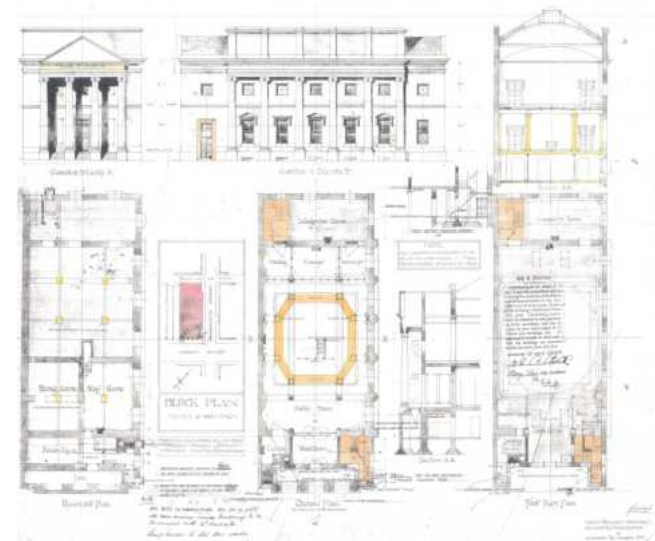
4.0 Statement of Significance

4.1 Evidential value:

- 4.1.1 Evidential value is the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.
- 4.1.2 The Portico Library is a rare example of a Neo-Classical building built in the north-west at the turn of the 19th century. The exterior survives almost entirely intact and a large percentage of the original internal fabric is still present.
- 4.1.3 The Library as a whole is important and rare in that it consists of historic evidence in such a number of forms, from the building itself to the physical contents in terms of both fittings and books, records etc.

4.2 Historical value:

- 4.2.1 Historical value is the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present.
- 4.2.2 The building is a variation on the 18th century fashion for coffee houses, book clubs and commercial libraries and distinctly reminds us of the character of middle-class Manchester Georgian society. It is a very rare survivor of an early 18th century library that remains today in its original use, with a very large part of the building clearly recognisable in its original form.
- 4.2.3 The Library is important for being one of the first Greek-revival buildings to be completed in the city. The Portico is also highly significant from its association with prominent architect Thomas Harrison and for being the last surviving building he designed in Manchester. Architectural historian Giles Worsley described Harrison as 'the first English Architect to grasp the full potential of the Greek Revival.... [he had a] thorough, but unpedantic, understanding of Greek architecture' and that he 'created some of the finest neo-classical architecture of the Regency'.
- 4.2.4 The Portico has an interesting connection with architect Joseph Sunlight, who had designed the 1920s conversion of the ground floor and basement - he went on to become a millionaire and design Sunlight House on Deansgate, Manchester's first skyscraper.



Earlier Joseph Sunlight scheme for the Bank of Athens, not executed

- 4.2.5 The Portico has a large number of highly significant connections to the literary world – Elizabeth Gaskell (together with her husband Reverend William Gaskell, who had been chairman) was a frequent user and referred to the building in a letter to Charlotte Bronte. She was a vocal critic of the 19th century rule prohibiting women from entering the newsroom. P.M. Roget, author of the Thesaurus, was the Library’s first secretary and Thomas De Quincey mentions the building in his book "Confessions of an English Opium Eater". Also a member was Dr John Dalton, famed for introducing atomic theory. Dalton had superintended the going of the clock on the basis he was offered free admission.⁶
- 4.2.6 The Portico is not an unaltered relic of Georgian Manchester but instead the building today is a visual history book, which helps to document some of the key changes in Manchester’s economy and society in its two centuries of history. The key changes to the building’s fabric reflect shifts, firstly towards the area becoming more commercial and part of the financial centre of the city, and then the transition towards a more entertainment and leisure focus. Looking more carefully, there is evidence of more subtle changes that reflect other important historical transitions such as the inclusion of ladies’ toilets or the changes of technology that brought in new forms of lighting or heating. The Portico is unusual for having a well-minuted set of written records that, together with the physical fabric, helps to tell a fascinating story of the past two-hundred years.

4.3 Aesthetic value:

- 4.3.1 Aesthetic value is the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.
- 4.3.2 The Portico is an elegantly simple building – its design is particularly important as an early example of the Greek Revival movement in Manchester – it is thought to have been based on the Temple of Minerva in Athens, although the Temple of Minerva Polias, Priene is more likely and suggested by others⁷, being of the ionic order – it was meticulously measured and recorded in 1769, therefore it is possible Harrison studied it).



Elizabeth and Reverend William Gaskell



⁶ Old Lady of Mosley Street (GMC Count Wide March-May 1978)

⁷ The Guardian 26.03.1962 – ‘Revival Survivor’

- 4.3.3 The building is a bold composition, with ionic columns supporting a classical pediment - deliberately heavy to give a character of earnestness, whilst the considered detailing provides a scholarly reference.
- 4.3.4 Inside, the building is particularly significant from having a large unsupported dome and from the sizeable, airy expanse of the main library, which would have once been even greater when the ground-floor newsroom was part of the principal space. A strong sense of balance and symmetry is important to the primary internal spaces which retain much of their original character from the Harrison concept images.
- 4.3.5 The building contributes greatly to the character of both Mosley Street and Charlotte Street as it stands prominently and proudly on the corner. It adds to the texture of materials and building styles that visually characterise Manchester and fairly represent the wideness of its cultural influences and history. Despite being just outside of the George Street Conservation Area, it contributes to its setting.

4.4 Communal value:

- 4.4.1 Communal value is the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.
- 4.4.2 The communal value of the Portico has inevitably changed through time and it was important for different reasons in the past. When built, the prestigious nature of the space was important and it was a place to be seen and to socialise. It was significant in the development of the Manchester enlightenment. Its communal value has, in the past century, changed to something quieter, with more emphasis on learning or its being a place to take a tranquil break from city life.
- 4.4.3 The Portico sits within, as is valued as part of, a collection of cultural buildings in Manchester that, together, make the city a world leader in art and culture. The library established the Portico Prize in 1985, to celebrate the strong regional and literary identity of the North of England, with the aim of raising awareness of the diversity of its cultural, literary and historical heritage. The Prize is awarded biennially to the highest quality book set wholly or mainly in the North of England. It has been described as the 'Booker of The North', with previous winners including Anthony



Temple of Minerva Polias, Priene

Burgess, Val McDermid & Sarah Hall. The Prize is itself now part of the significance of the Portico.

- 4.4.4 More locally, the Library is valued for its work with schools and young people - each year The Portico awards prizes to young people in book review and creative writing categories. The Library works with authors to deliver workshops across Greater Manchester and promote essential skills in communication, creativity and critical thinking but to most importantly encourage a life-long love of literature. It is used for both a formal learning tool (in terms of its work with literature) but also more informally through its series of exhibitions, housed within the central space under the dome.
- 4.4.5 The Library's current community work is supported by the historical backdrop of the building together with the institution's connections with figureheads such as Elizabeth Gaskell.

4.5 Significance of the Exterior

- 4.5.1 As stated previously, the exterior of the Portico is significant for being an early example of the Greek Revival movement in Manchester that has seen relatively few changes over its history.
- 4.5.2 The Mosley Street elevation is the most important (in particular as it features the architectural feature of the 'portico' itself. The main features of this façade remain entirely intact – namely the columns and pediment. One of the only minor exemptions is the addition of the gold-coloured lettering on the entablature. Later changes are largely hidden within the area that is set back behind the columns in a much less prominent shaded area – these include the blocking in of windows at ground floor level and alterations to the main door, changes to the first-floor windows and the addition of railings and simple signage for the pub. These changes have had limited detrimental impact but this elevation has retained its original very high level of significance.
- 4.5.3 The external post box, also on the Mosley Street elevation, is significant for being the oldest posting point on its original site in Manchester – it was installed in 1882 and is the largest of its type.
- 4.5.4 The side Charlotte Street frontage also remains largely as Harrison envisaged, but there have been changes to the fenestration. To the ground floor, the windows which originally would have been 9-over-9 multipaned sashes, are now much simpler, with a



plain piece of glass top and bottom. It is not exactly known when this change took place, but most likely was at the time of the conversion into a bank. The stone recesses on the first floor were also changed to windows. These windows seemed to have been inserted at different times – three were documented to have been put in in 1904 and all were present by the time of the 1920s changes. The other key alteration was the creation of the new entrance to the Library, following the occupation of the ground floor by the Bank of Athens. This would originally have been a sash window, mirroring that at the other end of the elevation. Despite these changes, the robustness of the composition and the primary elements of the stone work detailing are retained. The elevation, can be said to have a very high level of significance.

- 4.5.5 The elevation onto Back George Street has always been very much a rear façade – it is built of brick with stone features limited to very simple cills, a plain plinth and a modest pediment to the gable end. This elevation has suffered with some detrimental changes and ground floor level, generally relating to the provision of ventilation or fire escapes. The addition of an escape door on the far right-hand side (date unknown, but possibly 1920s) has further unbalanced the composition and elemental simplicity of this elevation. The loss of what would have been the multi-panes windows, makes the elevation plainer still. Despite this, the façade does keep its early 19th century character and therefore it can be described as having moderate significance.

4.6 Significance of the First Floor Interior

Please also refer to the Gazetteer of Internal Spaces in the Appendix for further detail.

- 4.6.1 The first floor is undoubtedly the most significant area of the interior as it retains the most surviving features.
- 4.6.2 The large, unsupported dome is the most striking feature in the main space – it is in its original form, but the glazing dates from 1856. Running around the circumference of the raised lantern are a series of decorative vents. The remainder of the large dome (where not glazed), has coffered panels. The dome spans across the full width of the room – the areas to each end (where it does not reach) have shallow-arched vaulted ceilings, again with small laylights. The ceiling has been painted with a series of subtly varying shades of stone-coloured paint, which give its form greater depth whilst



1986 photograph showing the central ground floor window that was subsequently converted into a fire escape for the Pub. The smaller escape door on the righthand side is already in place.

adding to the airy-feel of the space. This is the most significant part of the interior of the building.

- 4.6.3 Immediately below the ceiling on each of the four sides is an arched section of wall – the front side features a clock and the rear has a wind-dial. Both were made by John Twaites of Clerkenwell – the wind-dial is connected to a weathervane on the roof. Beneath is a modest cornice with dentils – it appears that it would have originally been more elaborate, featuring a regularly repeating pattern of roundels indented with possibly a floral motif. The surviving features are considered highly significant.
- 4.6.4 Beneath, the bookcases rise almost to the springing point of the ceiling all around the room. Documents held at the Library state that the bookcases were originally painted white, then straw coloured with graining, with the shelves themselves lined with green baize. It is known that there was work undertaken to the bookcases in the early 20th century, but the extent of the alterations is not known. The current bookcases show some evidence of having been painted a much lighter colour in the past, therefore it is likely that a large extent of the bookcases seen today are early in origin. There would, however, have been some alteration to accommodate the windows onto Charlotte Street and therefore it might be this that the document is alluding to. The bookcases as a whole have a high level of significance as they are a vital part of the character of the building and clearly elucidate the original and intended use. Individually, each section may vary in significance, depending on the age and quality of construction – it is recommended that an additional level of study would benefit the understanding of the bookcases and aid the process of repair work in the future.
- 4.6.5 The free-standing bookcases are of a different construction and character to those on the outside walls and almost certainly date to the 20th century alterations, not being visible in earlier photos. With this in mind, some may be considered to be of limited significance to the building, although the unit facing into the main space is clearly a high-quality piece – of mahogany and fitted with sliding doors – this is much more of a bespoke piece of furniture that may have been reused from elsewhere in the building or made for a very specific purpose and therefore likely to be of a higher level of significance. Further research into its original location would be beneficial.
- 4.6.6 On the rear wall of the main space there is a simple fireplace of moderate significance that is recessed flush into the bookcases – it has a plain surround with no lining or grate, other than a modern log-burning stove.



Above: the simple current colour scheme of the ceiling that highlights its form and detail – this is in contrast to the bold colour scheme of 1986 shown below, before repair and redecoration



- 4.6.7 Around what would have been the old balcony, is an iron balustrade with a polished timber handrail. This seems to correspond to that shown in the older photos of the interior in terms of the pattern of plain and decorative elements. Assuming, this is the case (there is some speculation that it is a 1920s replica), it has a high level of significance as it is a reminder of the previous form of the space, although it is not very visible in places, being obscured by bookcases and displays.
- 4.6.8 Also, with the ground floor are a number of large pieces of furniture. The main desk is understood to have been made using panels reclaimed from the old bank counters from the ground floor during the 1980s and the unit with 50 or so small drawers was also thought to be from there as well.
- 4.6.9 The reading room is a very attractive and relaxing space, but it has been altered over the years e.g. following a number of roof leaks. The bookcases onto Charlotte Street and the ceiling are modern (c. 1980s) and the remaining bookcases are distinctly different from those in the main library and possibly were installed at the time of the 1920s changes. The fireplace is again simple and presumably dates from the early 20th century, with a simple marble surround – the insert has been replaced in recent decades to accommodate a modern electric fire.
- 4.6.10 The Kitchen is small and simple with no significant features visible except the window (frame) and door. All fittings appear to date from the 1990s and beyond and are somewhat basic in nature.
- 4.6.11 The Work Room also lacks significant features, with no historic joinery visible within the space. The room is visually dominated by an abundance of exposed services, such as the boiler, electrical distribution board and several pipes, plus fittings / equipment such as metal shelving and a photocopier. It should be noted, however, that an original cornice is understood to exist above the Work Room and Kitchen ceilings which is of significance to the building and should be considered in any proposals for this area.



The Reading Room



The Kitchen and Work Room

4.7 Significance of the Ground Floor Interior

Please also refer to the Gazetteer of Internal Spaces in the Appendix for further detail.

- 4.7.1 The ground floor, despite its conversion into use by a pub, has many surviving older elements, but many, if not all, seem to date from the 1920s works. These include:
- Pairs of columns supporting a ceiling with decorative downstand beams
 - Cornice
 - Window architraves and panelled lining
 - Pairs of pilasters
- 4.7.2 The only older elements, from the use of the ground floor as a newsroom, are the door cases.
- 4.7.3 The main space still has much of the character of the bank space due to the visual dominance of the paired columns and large sash windows. There is some confusion caused by the recent insertion of 'replica' finishes and fittings – including: anaglypta wallpaper on the ceiling, ceiling roses, heavily-gilded picture frames, etc. There is also a slight detrimental incursion into the otherwise uninterrupted rectangular space – this is to form a protected staircase into the basement. Despite of a large number of changes, the space still has an overall high level of significance, retaining the proportions and some detail from the Hall of the Bank of Athens.
- 4.7.4 At the rear end of the ground floor is a space that would have once been the magazine room, which is now subdivided and greatly altered to provide toilets and a fire escape. These rooms are apparently devoid of any historic features, sadly, although some still may survive above the lowered veiling.
- 4.7.5 At the front end of the ground floor (NE corner) is a small 'L' shaped space that would have been the porter's room and scullery. This of some significance for having a few earlier elements including a Georgian doorcase, glazed brick at high level (presumably 1920s or late Victorian) and a plastered cornice. Also, visible from the late 20th century staircase to the basement, is a section of raised and fielded panelling that is likely to be a remnant from the 1920s bank.
- 4.7.6 The main entrance vestibule appears to have retained its 1920s form generally intact. It has a domed (vaulted) ceiling with arched recesses either side. This, together with



Main ground floor space



Ground floor entrance vestibule

the doors and the marble lining make for a highly attractive space, which has a high level of significance relating to the development of the ground floor as a banking hall.

4.8 Significance of the Basement

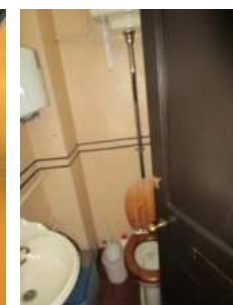
Please also refer to the Gazetteer of Internal Spaces in the Appendix for further detail.

- 4.8.1 The basement is almost entirely devoid of older features and therefore can be said to have a low level of significance. It was subject to numerous attempts at waterproofing and various changes of use that would have stripped out most finishes, but the greatest impact would have been the replacement of the ground floor structure in the 1920s – the shuttered concrete finish which is exposed shows no potential hidden cornices or other interest. Any features of slight interest are to the northern end. These include:

- A barrel-vaulted ceiling to a narrow space underneath the main steps
- A beaded, ledged and braced double door to the above space (with architrave)
- An old metal security door
- The metal bars across the room at the foot of the stairs
- An area of older plasterwork including a beaded corner detail

4.9 Significance of the Staircases and Toilets

- 4.9.1 The main staircase serving the library dates from the 1920s and is very much reflects the characteristics of that period, with smooth curving corners and a distinct absence of timber mouldings or other plaster details. Visual interest is provided by simple lines painted on the walls that reflect the flow of travel and the Greek key on the outer wall – this detail, together with the colour scheme, are not original, however, as photographs from the 1980s show pink-red walls (also in an eggshell finish) with white lines. Sadly, now missing from the top of the stair is the bronze figurine that held a simple light fitting – it is understood that this was stolen. In summary this staircase



(From top) Barrel vaulted ceiling beneath from steps; rear staircase; WC; main stair as existing and in the 1980s.

has a high level of significance as it as it represents a key component of the 1920s changes and has some architectural features.

- 4.9.2 Situated off this staircase on three different levels are single toilet cubicles. The rooms themselves also date from the 1920s, but the only original elements are the doors, which were modified to replace the glass panels in painted MDF. This was undertaken at the same time as the general refitting, which included replica fixtures and fittings. In summary, these toilets have little historic interest, but contribute to the overall character of the stair therefore they moderate significance.
- 4.9.3 The rear staircase is likely to date from the original construction of the building. It is constructed from timber with a simple projecting detail under each tread. Balustrading is plain, but is topped with an attractive polished timber handrail. Sadly, this simple stair is visually dominated by the relatively recent addition of a stair lift and vinyl coverings / nosings, which adversely affect the appearance of the space. However, the space is still considered to be of high significance, as one of the surviving original library components.

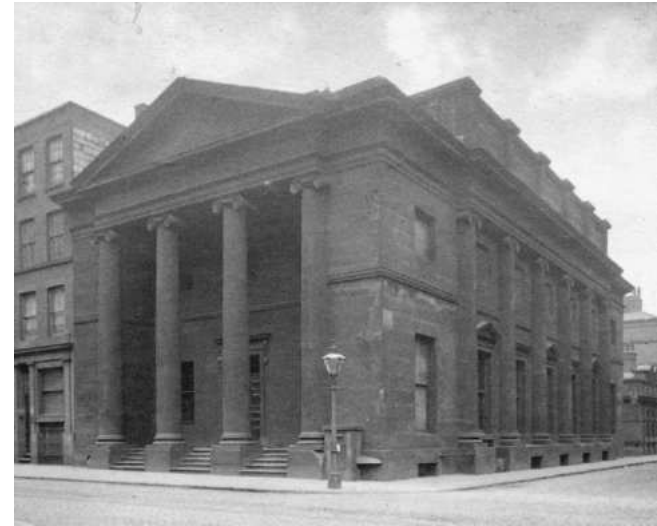
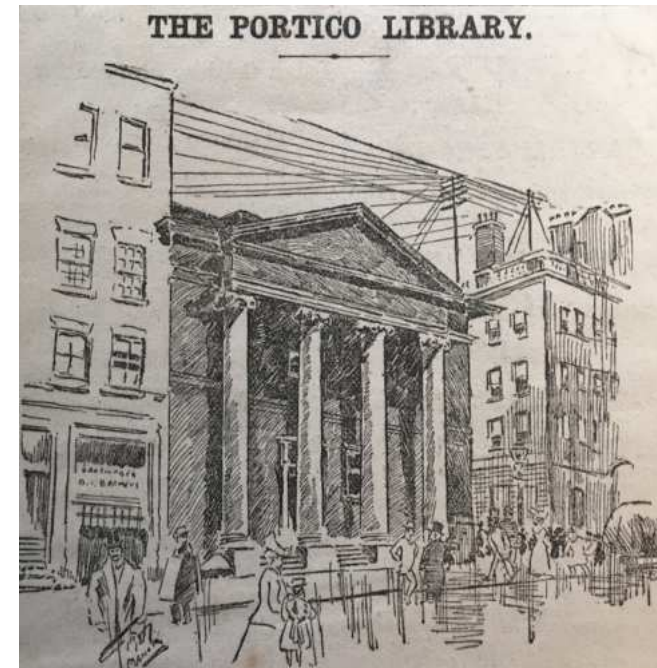


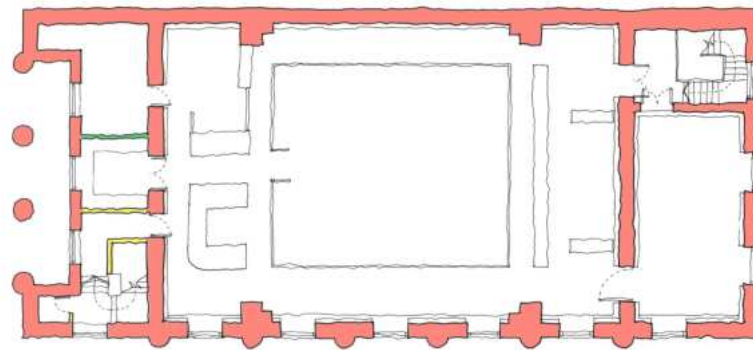
Photo from 1892 – note the ground floor Mosley Street windows, lack of railings and the blank first floor windows recessed onto Charlotte Street

4.10 Defining Significance levels:

- 4.10.1 It is useful to define the relative significance of the various parts of the building fabric and the spaces within to help guide future change. It should be noted that this assessment should be expected to change as the understanding of the historical development and importance of the fabric inevitably evolves over time.
- 4.10.2 The following categories are used to define significance levels for this building:
- **Very High Significance;** a space or piece of building fabric of exceptional architectural, historical or social interest, that plays a critical role in the significance of the building as a whole
 - **High significance:** a space or piece of building fabric of architectural, historical or social interest, that plays an important role in the significance of the building as a whole
 - **Moderate significance:** a space or piece of building fabric with some general architectural, historical or social interest but with few specific features
 - **Limited / Neutral Significance:** a space or piece of building fabric without features of interest or known specific historic or social interest
 - **Detrimental:** a space or piece of building fabric that is detrimental to the significance of the building as a whole
- 4.10.3 The plans on the following pages are to help define the relative significance of the various parts of the building fabric and the spaces within to help guide future change. They cannot say where change can take place, but guide where it is most likely to be appropriate, subject to further investigation and obtaining the necessary consents.
- 4.10.4 The plans showing the significance of 'spaces' consider the overall character of the room and the quality and type of its features and fixings, such as joinery (including bookcases doors, doorcases, staircases, architraves etc), wall / floor / ceiling finishes or specific fixed objects such as clocks.

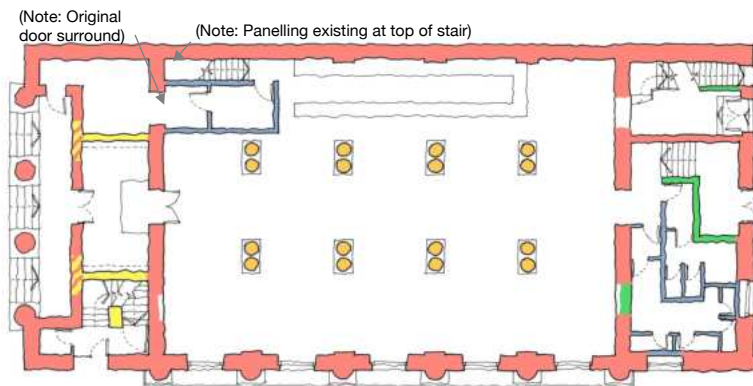


Sketch within an article in the Manchester Evening News, 1907

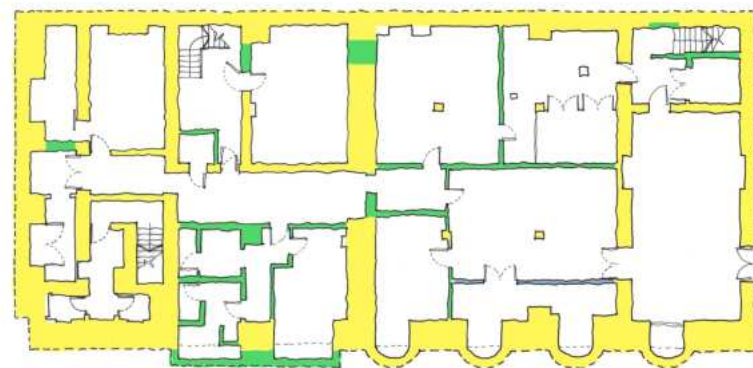


First Floor Plan –
Significance of Fabric

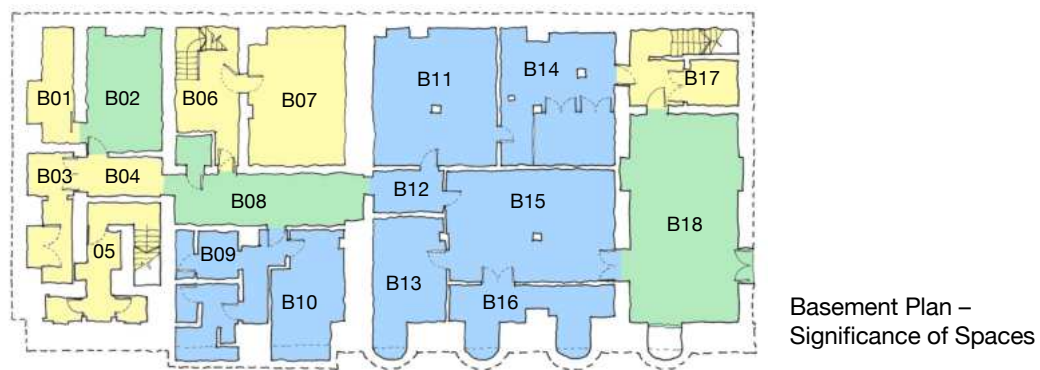
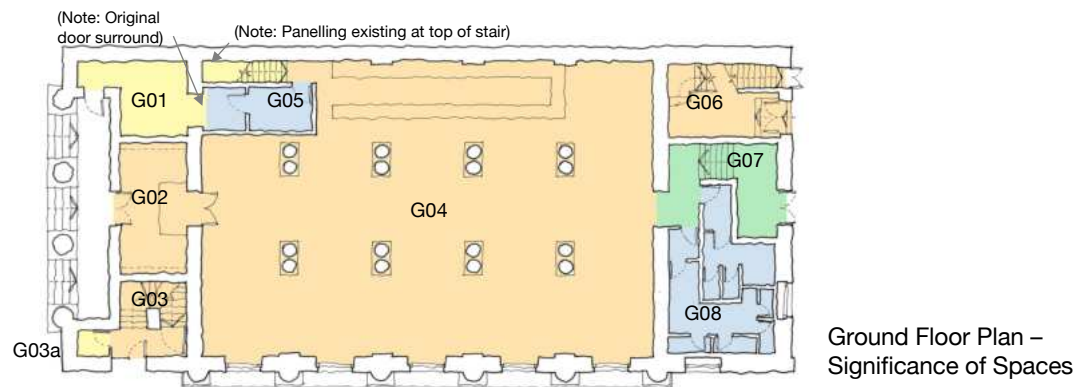
- Very High Significance
- High Significance
- Moderate Significance
- Neutral
- Detrimental



Ground Floor Plan –
Significance of Fabric



Basement Plan –
Significance of Fabric



5.0 Risks and Opportunities

5.1 Definition

- 5.1.1 This section explains what is happening to the building, how it might be vulnerable and what the potential threats are to its long-term survival. It is also important to identify the opportunities for improving the condition of the building and the benefits it provides for its users.

5.2 Risks and Threats

Condition of Building Fabric

- 5.2.1 The condition survey of September 2017 confirmed that that, overall, the Portico Library was at that time in fairly good condition and had been well maintained in the proceeding years. Repairs to the roof carried out in the 1990's were to a high standard and appear to have solved the main water ingress issues. However, cracking to plaster ceilings and mortar joints in the parapet walls appear to indicate that remedial works carried out to the roof structure have not completely resolved issues related to movement of the structure and since 2017 there has been some further, mostly gradual, deterioration. There is extensive cracking to the dome plaster ceiling in the library. The cracking coincides with movement and displacement of moulded details around the perimeter of the panels. In addition, extensive mortar repairs carried out to the stonework are beginning to crack and fail in some places.
- 5.2.2 The access around the roof is unsafe, due to the low height of the parapet and absence of a fall prevention system. This precludes regular inspection and maintenance and therefore is a threat to the future condition of the fabric of the building.
- 5.2.3 Whilst the building does not apparently have any imminently threatening issues such as regarding the roof or overall structure, the 2017 survey raised a significant number of smaller concerns, in particular with the condition of the basement in which there are considerable problems with damp and general wear and tear.
- 5.2.4 A pressing threat, however, is the mechanical and electrical equipment, primarily housed within the basement, which is in poor condition - the system is in need of urgent overhauling. The system has been upgraded on an ad-hoc basis and to a great



Roof – the low parapets pose a risk when attempting to clean lead gutters



Photo c. early 1980s, prior to pub tenancy (note the hoarding above the post box).

extent does not meet current requirements. In particular, the back-up for the emergency lighting has been declared to be dangerous and is in urgent need of replacement.

Impact of Surroundings:

- 5.2.5 Recent work to refurbish and extend the neighbouring building has highlighted the potential impact changes beyond the boundary may have on the Portico's fabric (there have been concerns that the rooftop extension may lead to a higher level of rainwater entering the existing disposal system and may therefore increase changes of leaks / subsequent damage.
- 5.2.6 In the future, it is equally possible that work along the street (e.g. by utilities companies or highways work) may also impact the fabric. Whilst the impact was not proven, the installation of the tramway also was thought to have potentially damaged internal plasterwork.

Accessibility

- 5.2.7 In summary, access is a major issue and the Library does not currently meet the requirements of the Equality Act. It is currently forbiddingly difficult, or even impossible, for some people to access our first-floor premises as there is only a stairlift, which would not be suitable for a wheelchair user or a person with dexterity issues. Fundamentally, the Library is at present exposing itself to a risk of litigation and, more importantly, unacceptably denying people access into their premises.
- 5.2.8 Access=Design produced an Access Audit report in October 2018 (covering only the current library). It was an assessment of the accessibility of the premises for disabled people and took into account the needs of those with mobility impairments, including wheelchair users, and those with sensory and cognitive impairments. The report recommended improvements that would significantly improve accessibility into and around the building for a number of existing and potential new users. These include:
- Improve the entrance arrangements (e.g. widening doors)
 - Improve visitor information regarding entrance and access



The impact of recent works to the adjacent building

- Insertion of a lift to provide step-free access (the current stair lift cannot transport wheelchairs)
- Provision of wider circulation routes in the library
- WC

Ground Floor Tenancy

- 5.2.9 The current ground floor tenancy provides a regular income to the Library which is very useful in helping to meet the costs of repairs, maintenance and insurance. The proposed termination of the current lease gives a wealth of opportunities for the library but of course is a threat to this income which could mean that the library needs to source funding for these expenditures themselves.

Management

- 5.2.10 The potential for future management issues are always a potential threat to a building. In this instance the main foreseeable issues may be as follows:

- Potentially not maintaining current numbers of trustees / volunteers
- Not fulfilling the requirements of the charity status
- Reducing risk of damage caused by events

Use

- 5.2.11 There are the following issues regarding the use of various parts of the building:
- It is not possible to separately lease certain spaces due to access issues
 - Noise attenuation – the pub inevitably will produce a lot of noise at certain times, this causes a conflict with the library's natural state of quiet
 - The Library's Work Room is wholly inadequate in size to meet the 'back-of-house' requirements of the library, therefore 'office' equipment and filing inevitably spills out into the main space, which is not ideal in terms of security or appearance.



Stair lift in rear stair



Pub ceiling

- The Library urgently needs more storage and staff accommodation
- The Library's Kitchen is too small to cater for anything but small events, limiting the use of the building.
- The collections are currently housed in an environment which is leading to potential deterioration - there is little monitoring currently undertaken as there is only one sensor (provided recently). There is potential damage from high levels of humidity or fumes from opened windows.
- The building has limited cloakroom and lavatory facilities (the absence of which, with poor access, has led the Manchester Literary Festival to decide not to use the Library as a venue)
- Storage is currently a major issue in the library – there is nowhere to presently store larger items such as folding chairs and many items are kept haphazardly around the building (as a matter of necessity), for instance tucked behind the old balcony rail. If this were to escalate, the clutter would detract from the appearance of the internal space. The use of the rear fire escape could be an unacceptably dangerous fire risk.

Commercial Pressures

- 5.2.12 The Portico's financial situation is currently stable, but it has a high dependency on rent from tenants, the membership subscriptions and donations. In the past, periods of low income have left it vulnerable to offers buy the building, which would of course lead to the loss of much of its special interest, but importantly the existence of the institution as a whole.
- 5.2.13 The Library has a secure annual income from Nicholson Pubs operated on behalf of Mitchells & Butlers until 2026, after which the situation is likely to change. Any further lease (if required) may be made on worse terms and may have other issues:
- Lease terms have tended to become considerably shorter in recent years - 5-10 years more normal than the 35 years agreed in 1986
 - There is often a void period whilst a new tenant is sought but also that a new tenant would expect to receive a rent-free period as an incentive to take the accommodation



Work Room



Early 20th century 1st floor window onto Charlotte Street

- The existing terms are more favourable to the landlord than the tenant for repairs and insurance
- It is likely that materially poorer terms would be secured in relation to the length of the term, the rent and the key lease cost recovery provisions.

Impact of Alterations

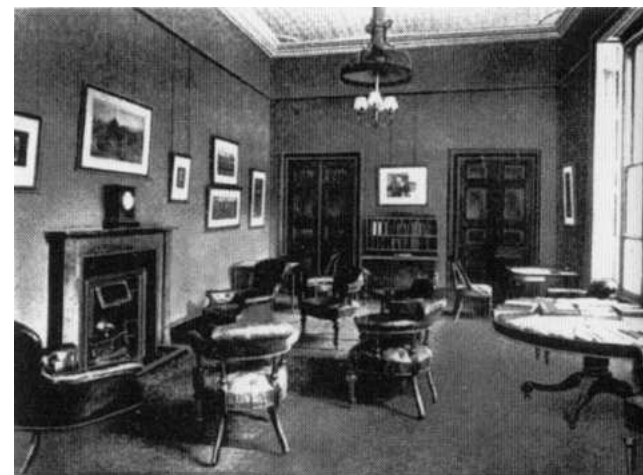
- 5.2.14 At present the Library is not undertaking works to the building without suitably qualified professional help, however, if this practice does not continue in the future, a risk is posed to the building: If not carefully designed, alterations to its fabric or fittings could have a negative impact on the appearance or even the future continued use of the building. If changes are not adequately considered by an experienced and suitable team, the Library may waste money on detailed design work that is either a) rejected by a conservation officer / other statutory body; b) is implemented without consent and there is a risk of enforcement action; or c) is of an inappropriate quality and the work is needed to replace the affected fabric in a short period of time, costing more money in the long term.

Impact of Works to Reduce Carbon Emissions

- 5.2.15 As with any building owner, over the Portico Library will undoubtedly be taking action over the forthcoming years and decades to reduce carbon its emissions. If not considered carefully, this might put the appearance the building or survival of its historic fabric at risk. Issues might include:
- Changing of windows, which would impact on the building's appearance but also the internal climate which is important to the survival of the collections
 - The introduction of insulation to walls, roofs or ceilings – this might affect the breathability of the existing structure and in turn lead on to problems such as condensation.



Evidence of the old window openings can be seen at ground floor level



Magazine Room at the rear of the ground floor

Security Measures

- 5.2.16 Ineffective security measures put the fabric of the building at risk – this has been seen in the past with the theft of artefacts from the staircase. The bigger risk, however, is from fire (arson or accidental), though people entering the building illegally, for example, at night, or from the impact of threats to personal safety on the usership of the Library. The library has recently significantly improved its security (e.g. through the installation of a CCTV camera at the main entrance), but it is important that this is maintained.
- 5.2.17 Whilst not currently a problem with the library at present, it should be noted that enhanced security measures could make the heritage less accessible to the public (i.e. if the door was kept locked) and the equipment itself could be visually intrusive.

5.3 Opportunities

Preserving and Enhancing the Significance of the Building

- 5.3.1 The external elevations have been slightly altered over the years – there is an opportunity to enhance the significance of the exterior by:
- To the main Mosley Street façade replacing the first-floor non-matching window, improving signage and railings or reinstating the original windows either side of the entrance door.
 - Improving the appearance of the rear façade, e.g. by removing the grille over the bottom of one of the windows, the extract vent / panel covering what would have been a fanlight and reconsidering the small modern vented doors on the right-hand side.
- 5.3.2 The external elevations have been slightly altered over the years – there is an opportunity to enhance the significance of the interior by:
- Agreeing and implementing an approach for the internal fittings and decoration of the ground floor – this could either better connect it with the rest of the building or establish it as a separate identity – the current decoration is a confusing mix of Georgian, Edwardian and Victorian textures, patterns and colours.



Reading Room



Basement Smoking Room prior to the 1920s conversion

- Seeking to reinstate accurate colour schemes, or more appropriate colour schemes for the first floor, and improving lighting and other key details.

Public Awareness

- 5.3.3 The Portico has recently undergone a significant expansion of its heritage/cultural programme and they wish this growth to continue. They are engaging more people (numbers doubled in the last two years) from new areas and backgrounds, especially women, young people, LGBTQ+ people and those from BAME/international backgrounds. This growth is linked to programming changes, specifically more exhibitions and events, a strong recent Portico Library's Equity and Representation policy and subtle changes to their image and branding. Examples of recent events that have helped forge this new inclusive image include the legacies of slavery, Manchester feminism, children's poetry, and refugees and asylum seekers.

Improvement to Facilities

- 5.3.4 The Portico wishes to make better use of the floor areas in the building as a whole – the ground and first floors are well used at present, whilst the basement has the same footprint, but is only used to a maximum 50% of its potential.



1986 image of the bank counters being dismantled. Note to the greeny-blue colour of the columns, which also appear highly polished, perhaps in imitation of granite.

6.0 Policies

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 This section on the following pages sets out the guiding principles for looking after the listed building, informed by the previous sections of the document.

Ref	Policy	Reason	Actions
Conservation (CO)			
CO-01	The building owner and any tenants should commission any necessary surveys and reports on the condition and conservation needs of the building and update them as required.	In order to conserve or enhance the existing building fabric, resolve any conflicts between the differing needs of the building and meet conservation standards	- Carry out a regular update of the condition survey (every five years is recommended) - Update and add to this Conservation Plan at regular intervals (every five years is recommended) - Agree targets for implementing any required work and a process for recording progress
CO-02	The building owner and any tenants should ensure work carried out is appropriate for the needs of the listed building, is appropriately recorded and consents are obtained	To ensure work is not damaging, money is not wasted, lessons can be learnt from any successes / mistakes and statutory obligations are followed.	- Maintain a regular log of works carried out, in particular keeping records of material used (e.g. mortar mixes, paint types etc) - Agree and record a protocol for maintenance works that can be carried out without professional help – for example, the use of specific paints, fixing methods, plaster, pointing etc. It should be noted that professional advice will be required to establish this initial list. - Use the services of an architect or surveyor with proven experience in working with historic buildings for the specification and implementation of any other repair or alteration works. It would usually be expected that a conservation architect would have professional accreditation (e.g. AABC or RIBA SCA) – this is required by a number of grant-funding bodies. - Ensure all contractors working within the building are experienced in dealing with the requirements of listed buildings – this can be done by regularly using the same people (e.g. maintaining a list) or by seeking out references from other listed building owners / managers.
CO-03	Repair work should include improvements that enhance the prospects of maintenance and address poor quality / inappropriate changes.	To make the best use of funding and to take opportunities to utilise high-level access and professional expertise	With respect to the findings of the current condition survey work should include (for instance): - The repair of the Library ceiling - Installation of a safety access system to allow gutters etc on the roof to be inspected and cleaned out without risk - Overhauling of the existing mechanical and electrical equipment Other enhancements to the fabric should include (for instance):

Ref	Policy	Reason	Actions
			- To the main Mosley Street façade regularise the first-floor non-matching window.
CO-04	Work should not be carried out outside the building's perimeter that causes damage to the setting or fabric of the Portico Library	To preserve the building	Increase awareness the conservation needs of the building to relevant heritage bodies, neighbouring landowners and the local council (e.g. highways departments) / amenity providers. Ensure that developments / changes affecting surround land / buildings are known about and ensure that public consultations concerning development are responded to. Seek professional advice where necessary to ensure that appropriate responses can be made.
New Work (NW)			
NW.01	It is important that any new design or building work: - Does not damage heritage unnecessarily. - Anticipates impact on the listed building. Includes action to reduce that impact. (e.g. opening up and recording work). - Is based on a proper understanding of what is significant.	To avoid unnecessary damage or loss to the special interest of the building	The objectives should be achieved by: - Always referring back to this Conservation Statement before whilst making design decisions. - Using the services of an architect or surveyor with proven experience in working with historic buildings to specify and monitor implementation alteration works. - Consulting with heritage bodies at an early stage.
NW.02	It is important that any new design or building work: - Makes use of appropriate materials - Is located in the most appropriate place. - Uses an appropriate approach to restoration, reconstruction and the reinstatement of lost features. - Is of a suitable scale and does not impact on the setting of important heritage (including	To avoid unnecessary damage or loss to the special interest of the building	The objectives should be achieved by: - Always referring back to this Conservation Statement before whilst making design decisions. - Using the services of an architect or surveyor with proven experience in working with historic buildings to specify and monitor implementation alteration works. Consulting with heritage bodies at an early stage.

Ref	Policy	Reason	Actions
	heritage in its wider context, for example the adjacent conservation area).		
NW.03	Alterations work should seek to include the reinstatement of lost elements or removal of detrimental elements from the historic building where there is good evidence of their design / form is available	To enhance the significance and understanding of the listed building	Compile a list and collate evidence to potentially allow features to be reinstated e.g.: - Reinstating sash windows to the first-floor level of the Mosley Street frontage - Improving the appearance of the rear façade, e.g. by removing the grille over the bottom of one of the windows, the extract vent / panel covering what would have been a fanlight and reconsidering the small modern vented doors on the right-hand side.
NW.04	Wider changes should include alterations and additions that support the viability and future sustainability of the building.	To help ensure that the building remains in use and if at all possible in its original use.	Wider changes should also include, for instance: - Addressing issues of access to the building as a whole. - Addressing noise attenuation issues - Improving the Work Room and providing more storage and staff accommodation - Enlarging the kitchen and improving its appearance if it remains visible to the public - Provide environmental monitoring in areas where the collection is housed and, if shown to be necessary, provide means of controlling, for instance, humidity and pollution. - The provision of more WC facilities
NW.05	Changes to the ground floor and basement should be undertaken in a way that supports the use of the rest of the building as a library and are appropriate to the character and special interest of the building	To preserve and enhance the special interest of the building	Agreeing and implementing an approach for the internal fittings and decoration of the ground floor – this could either better connect it with the rest of the building or establish it as a separate identity (the current decoration is a confusing mix of Georgian, Edwardian and Victorian textures, patterns and colours.)
NW.06	Where changes are made that involve the removal of fabric or fittings dating to 1945 or earlier (or if the date is not clear), preliminary investigations should be made and recording work undertaken.	To ensure that evidence of previous form is not inadvertently lost, and where loss is unavoidable it is recorded to aid the future understanding of the building.	- Carry out preliminary investigations ahead of a final design, which may include enabling works to remove clearly modern fittings, such as wall cladding, suspended ceilings etc. - Ensure that removals works are fully recorded at appropriate stages by a conservation professional.

Ref	Policy	Reason	Actions
NW.07	The impact of any significant changes should be tested through the production of a Heritage Impact Assessment by an experienced conservation architect or heritage advisor.	To ensure changes are accountable, appropriate and are likely to be supported in a listed building consent application.	Prepare a Heritage Impact Assessment to test all significant changes
Management and Use (MU)			
MU.01	The library should continue to get the best possible advice with regards to financial and legal matters such as with regards to the lease of the lower floors. renewal (or otherwise) of the ground floor lease.	To ensure that either the maximum possible income is maintained without any further negative implications whilst enabling rethinking the usage of these two levels to be properly explored and a scheme implemented that would best support the current and future needs / aspirations on the Library	Continue to seek legal / financial advice where needed.
MU.02	Better use should be made of the floor areas in the building as a whole – in particular the underused areas of the basement.	To ensure the viability of the building	Carry out design work as needed
MU.03	The numbers of trustees / volunteers are regularly assessed, together with their needs to ensure that numbers are maintained.	To ensure compliance with charity rules and to keep the ethos and spirit of the library alive.	Assess numbers of trustees /volunteers regularly and ensure their needs are addressed.
MU.04	The Library should continue to keep up a good level of security provision, that can monitor and	To help prevent malicious damage	Continue to review current access and make necessary improvements (e.g. using improved remote monitoring / locking)

Ref	Policy	Reason	Actions
	control access, but not discourage the public from using the building.		
MU.05	The Library should reduce the risk of damage caused by events	To reduce the risk of physical damage caused by events	Agree a mean of achieving this – e.g. by producing an advice document (for example stating what type of fixings might be appropriate and specific risks to vulnerable items) and a statement of contractual requirements.
MU.06	The Portico should continue to expand its of its heritage/cultural programme	To continue to extend its public image and increase footfall / awareness	Provide more and a greater variation of events, particularly when improved facilities will allow
Access (AC)			
AC.01	Following on from the 2018 Access Audit, the Library should set out their Access Policy which would explain how accessibility is to be improved.	Improve accessibility	For example, it should say how the library will: - Improve access without damaging heritage, such as providing wheelchair access to all parts of the historic building - Provide alternative solutions, where physical access is not possible, such as by using digital technology to provide virtual access; or - Provide access for people with sensory impairments, such as improving lighting
AC.02	Any design access improvements should be appropriate to the site, including choice of materials, scale and location – this will need to be a collaborative exercise between a conservation architect and experts in dealing with accessibility requirements.	Improve accessibility whilst not adversely impacting the historic building	Conservation architect to work with Access Consultant to consider matters such as choice of materials, scale and location for accessibility improvements.
AC.03	The Library should list and put a priority / timescale against improvements. Short-medium term improvements much be included in any significant proposals for wider alterations.	To ensure appropriate access improvements are made as soon as possible and are budgeted for.	In particular the Portico should seek to achieve the following in the short-medium term: - Improve the entrance arrangements - Improve visitor information regarding entrance and access - Insertion of a lift to provide step-free access (the current stair lift cannot transport wheelchairs) - Provision of wider circulation routes in the library

Ref	Policy	Reason	Actions
			- At least one accessible WC
Environmental Impact / Reducing Carbon Footprint (EV)			
EV.01	The Library should consider in the short-term ways in which they can reduce effects on the environment / use of carbon by ways that will have little impact on the historic fabric of the building.	Reduce environmental impact whilst having a negligible impact on the historic building	Make a list of simple, achievable objectives, for example: - Encouraging visitors to use public transport or cycling (e.g. by providing bike storage within the building) - Conserving energy (e.g. by changing light fittings or replacing an old boiler, more appropriate heating) - Minimising waste
EV.02	In the medium-longer term, when any other changes are considered to the building, the inclusion of larger scale projects to reduce carbon emissions should be proposed.	Reduce environmental impact whilst having a proportionate / managed impact on the historic building	All design work to include medium-long term improvements which may include: - Inclusion of insulation (e.g. in the roof if reslating or at ceiling level) - A wider re-appraisal of the heating and electrical systems - Secondary glazing - Renewables
EV.03	The impact of any changes proposed to achieve environmental improvements must be properly assessed.	Reduce environmental impact whilst having a predictable / managed impact on the historic building	Engage specialist who have worked with historic buildings previously. A conservation Architect should assess: - The impact on the external appearance of the building and the neighbouring conservation area - The impact on fabric and spaces of significance within the building - Other physical effects, such as to fabric breathability
Managing Information about the Building (IN)			
IN.01	All staff, volunteers and trustees are to have access to the Conservation Plan and will be made aware of its contents and purpose. It will also be made available to future architects or designers working on the building to ensure that decisions are based on the available	Transparency and full support for decision make procedures.	Publish the Conservation Plan in an agreed and easily accessible location. Ensure that all existing and future staff and trustees are aware of it.

Ref	Policy	Reason	Actions
	information on its history and special interest.		
IN.02	Historic information on the building, such as old photos, will be catalogued and stored in an agreed location so that they are available when needed in the future. The desirability for more information will be made public, so that further photographs or documents could be included within the collection if available.	Easy access to information and security against potential loss.	Continue with cataloguing work

7.0 Adoption and Review

- 7.1 This Conservation Management Plan will be formally adopted by the Library.
- 7.2 It is to be reviewed every five years or at intermediate intervals when, for instance, more information comes to light or physical work is undertaken.
- 7.3 This Conservation Management Plan is to be stored both on paper and digitally by the library and copies are to be sent to the local authority conservation officer and record office.
- 7.4 The plan has been shared with MCC's conservation officer and Historic England for comment.
- 7.5 The Conservation Policies will be further developed during RIBA stage 4.

Appendix A – Gazetteer of Internal Spaces

Room F01 – Workroom / Staff Office



Description: L shaped room, containing storage, staff desks, the boiler and an access hatch to the roof space in the pediment.

Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Partition added to subdivide a larger space (creating the kitchen). The current partition dates from 1995, but this replaced a previous one approximately 600mm further into the kitchen. Original ceiling much higher – lower ceilings were installed (in the 1980s?) but the cornice remained in a smaller ceiling void until the loft space was fully opened up in 1994/5

Historical Documents / Evidence: Thomas Worthington 'as existing' plans of 1994

Condition / Notes: Fairly unsatisfactory as an office, due to presence of boiler and storage pressure

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: Neutral significance as space altered a number of times, leaving little in the way of historic features. A fairly large degree of change possible without harm.

Room F02 – Kitchen



Description: Small, square-shaped room, containing kitchen equipment and storage

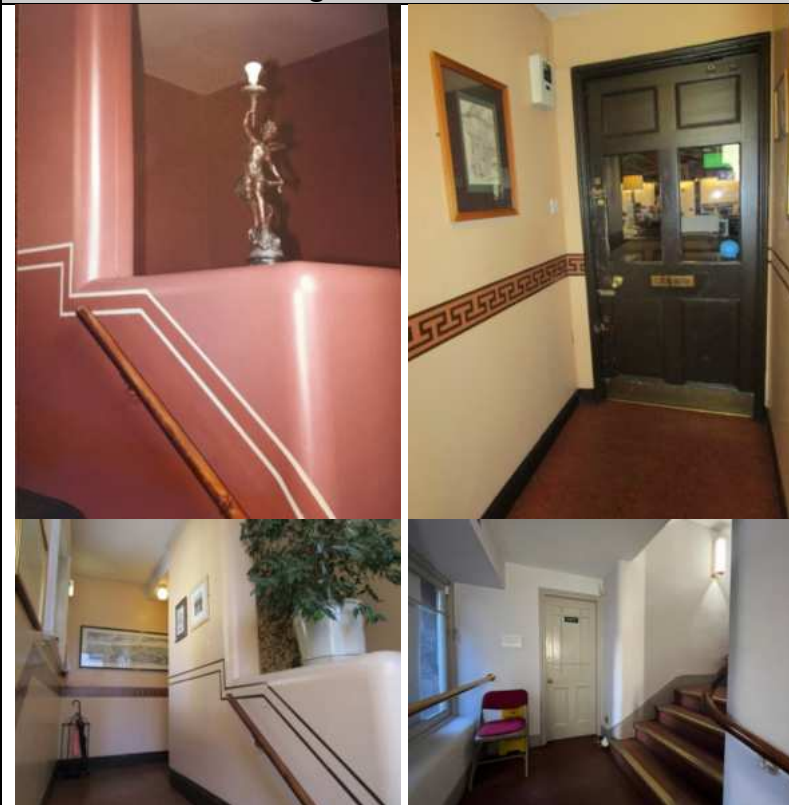
Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Current form dates from 1994/5, when a new partition was installed between the staff room and kitchen, although the earlier, larger space had already been subdivided. Panelled door added to connect the kitchen to the main space in the 1994/5. Door blocked to the landing at this time.

Historical Documents / Evidence: Thomas Worthington drawings of 1994/5 including door detail

Condition / Notes: Fairly unsatisfactory as a kitchen due to very small size.

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: Neutral significance as space altered a number of times, leaving little in the way of historic features. A fairly large degree of change possible without harm.

Room F03 – Landing and Stair



Description: Relatively small landing and stair

Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Dates from 1920s alterations. Changes to doorways made in 1990s.

Historical Documents / Evidence: Thomas Worthington 'as existing' plan of May 1994. Photo of terracotta paint scheme, possibly 1985.

Condition / Notes: Generally lacks the formality and detail of what would be expected in classical building of this period, but has some well-crafted elements, such as the sweeping handrail, curved plasterwork and panelled doors. The original colour scheme is not known – it is now painted off-white, having more recently been painted in creams / beiges / browns with a painted dado detail that picked up the plaster detail in the main space. It is possible that the 1980s terracotta colour attempted to match the original scheme? The bronze figuring originally holding a light fitting is now sadly missing – reportedly stolen.

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: High significance as it represents a key component of the 1920s changes and has some architectural features. Some degree of change may be possible without harm, provided that it is justified as benefitting the elements of very high significance.

Room F03a – First Floor Landing WC (note: also includes mezzanine level)	
	Description: Single WC off landing
	Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Dates from 1920s changes. Door glazing removed in 1995 and replaced with MDF. New plasterboard ceiling 1994. It is not completely clear whether the toilet fittings are reclaimed or fitted at this time.
	Historical Documents / Evidence: Thomas Worthington 'as existing' plan of May 1994
	Condition / Notes: Fittings not thought to be original to 1920s date but are comfortable with the 1920s character of the space
	Significance / Sensitivity to Change: Moderate significance as part of 1920s changes but probably without original fittings, except door. Some change possible without harm, with consideration to the character of the part of the building in question.

Room F04 – Main Library Space



Description: Large rectangular space, now the main reading room of the library. The central section is used for events and seating for the café.

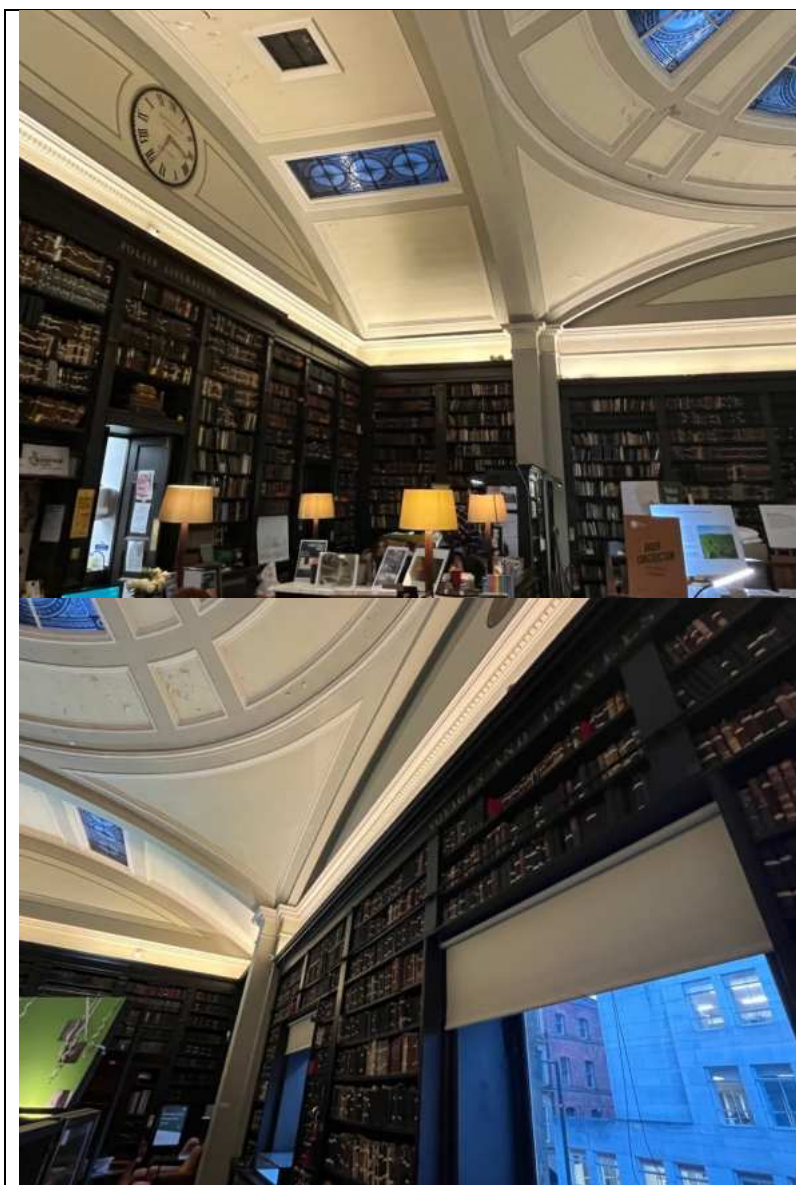
The large, unsupported dome is the most striking feature in the main space – it is in its original form, but the glazing dates from 1856. Running around the circumference of the raised lantern are a series of decorative vents. The remainder of the large dome (where not glazed) has coffered panels. The dome spans across the full width of the room – the areas to each end (where it does not reach) have shallow-arched vaulted ceilings, again with small laylights. The ceiling has been painted with a series of subtly varying shades of stone-coloured paint, which give it its form greater depth whilst adding to the airy-feel of the space.

Immediately below the ceiling on each of the four sides is an arched section of wall – the front side features a clock and the rear has a wind-dial. Both were made by John Twaites of Clerkenwell – the wind-dial is connected to a weathervane on the roof. Beneath is a modest cornice with dentils – it appears that it would have originally been more elaborate, featuring a regularly repeating pattern of roundels indented with possibly a floral motif.

Beneath, the bookcases rise almost to the springing point of the ceiling all around the room. Documents held at the Library state that the bookcases were originally painted white, then straw coloured with graining, with the shelves themselves lined with green baize. It is known that there was work undertaken to the bookcases in the early 20th century, but the extent of the alterations is not known. The current bookcases show some evidence of having been painted a much lighter colour in the past, therefore it is likely that a large extent of the bookcases seen today are early in origin. There would, however, have been some alteration to accommodate the windows onto Charlotte Street and therefore it might be this that the document is alluding to.

The free-standing bookcases are of a different construction and character to those on the outside walls and almost certainly date to the 20th century alterations, not being visible in earlier photos.

On the rear wall of the main space there is a simple fireplace that is recessed flush into the bookcases – it has a plain surround with no lining or grate, other than a modern log-burning stove.



Around what would have been the old balcony, is an iron balustrade with a polished timber handrail. This seems to correspond to that shown in the older photos of the interior in terms of the pattern of plain and decorative elements.

Also, with the ground floor are a number of large pieces of furniture. The main desk is understood to have been made using panels reclaimed from the old bank counters from the ground floor during the 1980s and the unit with 50 or so small drawers was also thought to be from there as well.

Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Originally a balcony space with a railing overlooking the ground floor space below. Glazed lights installed in the 1920s before being removed in the 1980s when a solid floor was installed. Many changes to the bookcases, which have not been thoroughly documented. More subtle changes to the ceiling and dome glazing, including to colour schemes (current colourings thought to reflect original, from paint analysis).

Historical Documents / Evidence: 1920s plan, pre-conversion. Various photographs, including one prior to the 1920s.

Condition / Notes: Ceiling in need of redecoration and some repair.

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: This space is the most significant part of the interior of the building with the ceiling and overall symmetry / balance of the room being a critical feature. It has a very high level of a significance as a whole, but the special interest of individual components varies.

The surviving 19th century features are considered highly significant – these include the plasterwork and glazing of the ceiling and the clock and wind-dial.

The bookcases as a whole have a high level of significance as they are a vital part of the character of the building and clearly elucidate the original and intended use. Individually, each section may vary in significance, depending on the age and quality of construction – it is recommended that an additional level of study would benefit the understanding of the bookcases and aid the process of repair work in the future.

The free-standing bookcases date from a period after the bank conversion, some may be considered to be of limited significance to the building, although the unit facing into the main space is clearly a high-quality piece – of mahogany and fitted with sliding doors – this is much more of a bespoke piece of furniture that may have been reused from elsewhere in the building or made for a very specific purpose and therefore likely to be of a higher level of significance. Further research into its original location would be beneficial and would help define its significance.

The simple fireplace on the rear wall of the main space moderate significance.



Assuming, that the iron balustrade is the original (there is some speculation that it is a 1920s replica), it has a high level of significance as it is a reminder of the previous form of the space, although it is not very visible in places, being obscured by bookcases and displays.

The main desk has a moderate level of significance as it is likely to consist of components from the old bank counters.

The main Library space would be sensitive to change, but alterations may be possible provided that:

- They are focussed on the more recent fabric / elements
- Where they improve the understanding of the original form of the building
- They respect the original form and character of the space, in particular its symmetry and proportions



Room F05 – Rear Stair



Description: Relatively airy / spacious stair and landing. Wheelchair lift installed. Stair has vinyl floor coverings and modern nosings.

Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Generally in original form (i.e. from 1806) but refurbished in c. 1990 (e.g. installing new skirtings and replacing damaged slates etc).

Historical Documents / Evidence: Hattrell and Partners drawings from c. 1990. Plans from 1920s, before alterations.

Condition / Notes: The wheelchair lift has been beneficial for access as a temporary measure but it has an unexcitable impact of the usability of the stair for able-bodied people and also impacts the character of the original stair.

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: High significance as one of the surviving original spaces, with the stairs, handrail and overall shape of the space surviving intact.

Some degree of change may be possible without harm, provided that it is justified as benefitting the elements of very high significance and alterations do not impact original fabric.

Room F06 – Reading Room



Description: Rectangular room in its original form. Room fully lined with bookcases and with a fireplace on the internal wall. The reading room is a very attractive and relaxing space, but it has been altered over the years e.g. following a number of roof leaks. The bookcases onto Charlotte Street and the ceiling are modern (c. 1980s) and the remaining bookcases are distinctly different from those in the main library and possibly were installed at the time of the 1920s changes. The fireplace is again simple and presumably dates from the early 20th century, with a simple marble surround – the insert has been replaced in recent decades to accommodate a modern electric fire.

Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Original form but the bookcases have been altered at various times.

Historical Documents / Evidence: 1920s plan prior to alterations. Old photos within Library's collection. Drawings of alterations to bookcases.

Condition / Notes: Mixture of ages of joinery

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: High significance due to the room being in its original form and it retaining its historic character.

Some modest degree of change may be possible without harm, provided that it is justified as benefitting the elements of very high significance and alterations do not impact original / earlier fabric. The form of the room should remain intact.

Room G01 – Store



Description: L-shaped corner room, used for general storage.

Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Originally the porter's room with a small stair down to the basement and a 'scully' area in the recess. It was then probably converted to a cloakroom and WC in the 1920s and the stair removed. It was known to be a male lavatory during latter years of the bank's use.

Historical Documents / Evidence: 1920s plan pre conversion. Bank of Athens proposal plan (note, not exactly realised, but useful to show general intentions). Plan c. 1980s.

Condition / Notes: Poor condition visually, dominated visually by suspended ceiling and modern fixtures and fittings but contain evidence as to earlier forms, particularly with the glazed brick and door surround visible above the suspended ceiling. Other features may be hidden.

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: Moderate significance as has some features from 1920 changes and earlier. Some change possible without harm, but loss of early features would need strong justification in terms of benefit to the rest of the building and/or mitigation in terms of recording etc.

Room G02 – Vestibule



Description: Rectangular lobby acting as main entrance to pub, but would have been the main entrance to the Library and Bank.

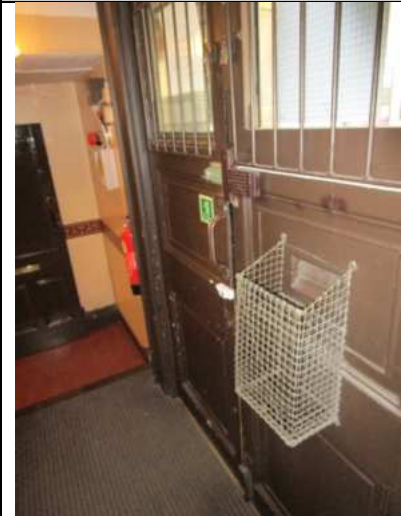
Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Current shape and form dating from 1920s remodelling – the original stair leading from the shape was removed, the vaulted ceiling presumably inserted, together with the symmetrical walls and finishes (e.g. door surround and wall cladding?).

Historical Documents / Evidence: Sunlight plan pre 1920s works

Condition / Notes: Space retains impact despite condition issues with the plasterwork.

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: High significance as strong architectural form dating from the 1920s works. Some change possible without harm, but the retention of the architectural character and symmetry/ balance would be important.

Room G03 – Stair (Part of Library)



Description: Relatively small hallway, landing and stair

Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Dates from 1920s alterations. Changes to doorways made in 1990s.

Historical Documents / Evidence: Thomas Worthington 'as existing' plan of May 1994. Photo of terracotta paint scheme, possibly 1985.

Condition / Notes: Generally lacks the formality and detail of what would be expected in classical building of this period, but has some well-crafted elements, such as the sweeping handrail, curved plasterwork and panelled doors. The original colour scheme is not known – it is now painted off-white, having more recently been painted in creams / beiges / browns with a painted dado detail that picked up the plaster detail in the main space. It is possible that the 1980s terracotta colour attempted to match the original scheme?

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: High significance as it represents a key component of the 1920s changes and has some architectural features. Some degree of change may be possible without harm, provided that it is justified as benefitting the elements of very high significance.

Room G03a – Ground Floor WC



Description: Single WC off small hallway

Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Dates from 1920s changes. Door glazing removed in 1995 and replaced with MDF. New plasterboard ceiling 1994. It is not completely clear whether the toilet fittings are reclaimed or fitted at this time.

Historical Documents / Evidence: Thomas Worthington 'as existing' plan of May 1994

Condition / Notes: Fittings not thought to be original to 1920s date but are comfortable with the 1920s character of the space

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: Moderate significance as part of 1920s changes but probably without original fittings, except door. Some change possible without harm, with consideration to the character of the part of the building in question.

Room G04 – Main Pub Space



The whole of the interior fittings, Counters, Desks, etc., was supplied by Messrs. J. Brownhill & Co., 27, Church-street, Manchester.



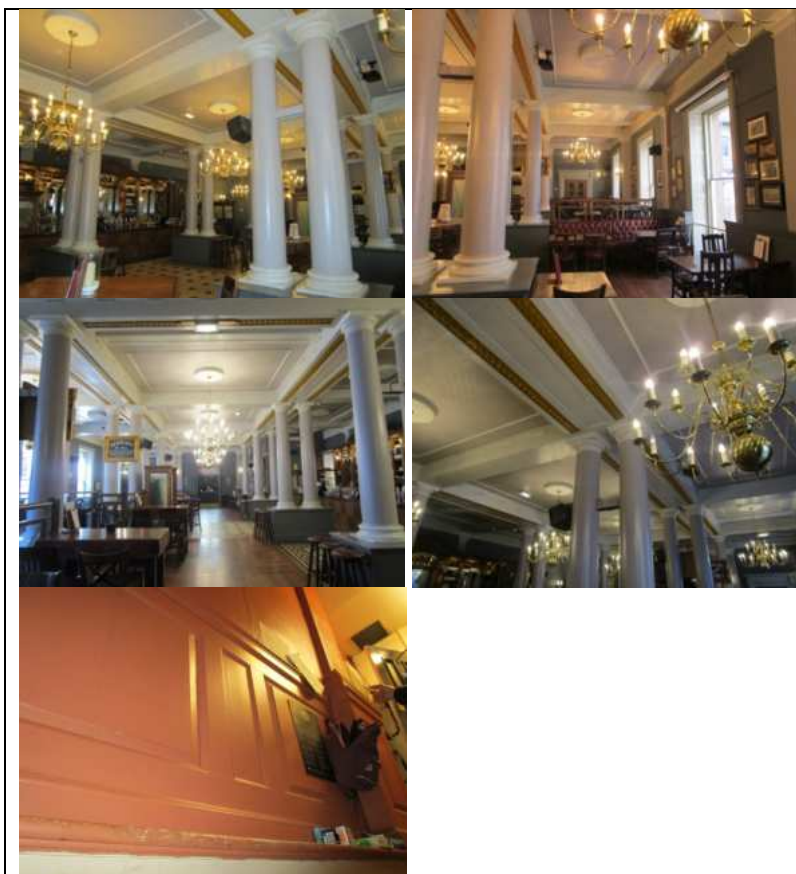
Description: Currently main public area of pub. Large, nearly rectangular space with a small modern addition in one corner. Eight pairs of columns on square bases support the coffered ceiling above, which has moulded decoration and downstands. Modern bar. Pilasters, window linings and door surrounds survive. Central tiled floor likely to be from early-mid 20th century from Bank use. Panelling at top of stair down to basement from early banking hall.

Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Originally the Newsroom of the Library prior to conversion into the main Banking Hall for the Bank of Athens in the 1920s. Later during the use as a bank, subdivisions were added to form offices on the south-west (window) side.

Historical Documents / Evidence: Bank of Athens – internal perspective, presumed to be as built. 1986 photo looking down into space from above pre conversion. Photo presumably only a sort while (bank not in use) before of interior.

Condition / Notes: Space retains sense of grandeur and its 20th century proportions, despite later additions / alterations.

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: High significance due to the survival of the much of the 1920s character and fabric, probably together with a few components probably from the original scheme, such as architraves. Some change possible without harm, particularly where modern elements are replaced, but changes should preserve and enhance the strong architectural form of the space and the understanding of both the original and 1920s forms. There would be a presumption against removal of original / 1920s components without a strong justification.





Room G05 – Store / Lobby



Description: Small pair of linked rooms created in the late 20th century. Historic door surround visible however.

Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Modern partitions, fixtures and fittings.

Historical Documents / Evidence: Does not appear on plans prior to pub conversion.

Condition / Notes: Basic quality

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: Detrimental to the significance of the building as a whole as the installation adversely impacts the balance, proportions and character of the main ground floor space.

Room G06 – Rear Lobby and Stair (Connects to Library)



Description: Relatively airy / spacious stair and hallway. Wheelchair lift installed. Stair has vinyl floor coverings and modern nosings.

Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Generally in original form (i.e. from 1806) but refurbished in c. 1990 (e.g. installing new skirtings and replacing damaged slates etc).

Historical Documents / Evidence: Hattrell and Partners drawings from c. 1990. Plans from 1920s, before alterations.

Condition / Notes: The wheelchair lift has been beneficial for access as a temporary measure but it has an unexcitable impact of the usability of the stair for able-bodied people and also impacts the character of the original stair.

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: High significance as one of the surviving original spaces, with the stairs, handrail and overall shape of the space surviving intact.

Some degree of change may be possible without harm, provided that it is justified as benefitting the elements of very high significance and alterations do not impact original fabric.

Room G07 – Rear Pub Stair and Exit to Street



Description: L shaped shape with a short flight of steps, leading to the pavement level externally. Walls and ceiling plain and simple.

Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Former Magazine Room, subdivided in the 1980s to form a rear exit and toilets

Historical Documents / Evidence: Undated photo in Brooks & Haworth book.

Condition / Notes: Simply presented.

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: Neutral significance due to apparent lack of original features / form. A fairly great amount of change possible without harm to the special interest of the building.



Room G08 – Toilets	
(No photos available)	Description: Modern toilets, no historic features currently apparent
	Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Former Magazine Room, subdivided in the 1980s to form a rear exit and toilets
	Historical Documents / Evidence: Undated photo in Brooks & Haworth book.
	Condition / Notes: Very basic quality fixtures and fittings that do not reflect the special interest of the building.
	Significance / Sensitivity to Change: Considered detrimental to the special interest of the building as detracts from its character and quality. A fairly great amount of change possible without harm to the special interest of the building.

Room B01 – Basement Space – Fuel Store	
	Description: Unused space with low-height sliding door from adjacent room
	Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Wall blocked – originally the space extended all of most of the way across the frontage. Probably originally a fuel (coal?) store. Door later – not on 1920 plan, but presumably early in bank's history.
	Historical Documents / Evidence: 1920s plan pre conversion. Bank of Athens proposal plan (note, not exactly realised). Plan c. 1980s.
	Condition / Notes: Not accessed.
	Significance / Sensitivity to Change: Moderate significance as the space survives largely in an early form. Some change possible without harm, but alterations should be justified in terms of benefit to the overall significance of the building.

Room B02 – Basement Plant Room



Description: Plant room with exposed brick walls.

Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Originally room had its own stair to Porter's Room above – may have been a small bedroom? Probably converted to boiler house in 1920s – still shown as heating chamber in 1980s

Historical Documents / Evidence: 1920s plan pre conversion. Bank of Athens proposal plan (note, not exactly realised). Plan c. 1980s.

Condition / Notes: Modern M&E equipment visually dominates space. Some propping?

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: Neutral significance as space greatly altered leaving little or nothing in the way of historic features. A fairly large degree of change possible without harm to the significance of the building as a whole provided no original features (if found) are lost.

Room B03 – Basement Room



Description: Narrow space under front steps, possibly originally a fuel store but now used for general storage. Part of the room is plastered, implying a use, such as a WC.

Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Wall blocked – originally the space extended all of most of the way across the frontage. Possibly originally a fuel (coal?) store.

Historical Documents / Evidence: 1920s plan pre conversion. Bank of Athens proposal plan (note, not exactly realised). Plan c. 1980s.

Condition / Notes: Old cast iron hopper and downpipe behind double doors.

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: Moderate significance as the partial survival of the stair and 1920s cupboard helps visually tell the story of the evolution of the building. The exposed brickwork shows some of the original / early character. Some change possible without harm but alterations should be justified in terms of benefit to the overall significance of the building.

Room B04 – Basement Lobby / Corridor



Description: Small lobby. Painted plaster walls / ceiling and vinyl covered floor.

Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Area reconfigured during 1920s changes. Additional wall put in presumably in the late 1980s to separate off the library WCs.

Historical Documents / Evidence: 1920s plan pre conversion. Bank of Athens proposal plan (note, not exactly realised). Plan c. 1980s. Older architrave to double doors of store. Doors themselves traditionally made timber doors with beaded t&g panels. What appears to be a short length of cornice survives above the double doors to the store.

Condition / Notes: Visually dominated by service runs.

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: Moderate significance as the potential survival of the double doors / architrave / cornice section helps to tell the story of the evolution of the building. Some change possible without harm, but alterations should be justified in terms of benefit to the overall significance of the building.

Room B05 – Library Basement Toilets	
(Add photo)	Description: Add
	Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Previously the building's ladies' toilets. There had just been one toilet in this location in the 1920s, prior to the bank conversion.
	Historical Documents / Evidence: 1920s plan pre conversion. Bank of Athens proposal plan (note, not exactly realised). Plan c. 1980s.
	Condition / Notes: Add
	Significance / Sensitivity to Change: Add

Room B06 – Basement Room



Description: Small storage room with timber stair coming from ground floor. Painted plaster walls / ceiling / vinyl covered floor. Hoist to ground floor.

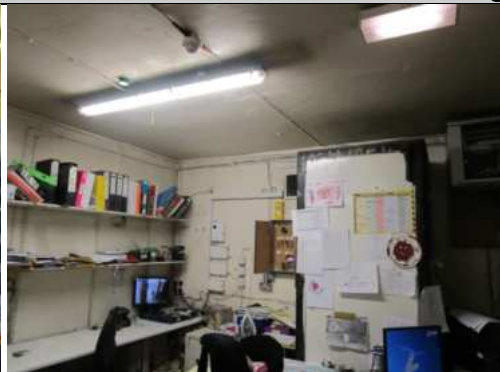
Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Stair dates from after 1920s

Historical Documents / Evidence: Rectangular space similar to existing on 1920 plan. Shown as intended to be strong room on 1920s Bank of Athens proposal plan.

Condition / Notes: Stair relatively simple, with a modest amount of detailing to the strings and plain square-section balusters. Robust 20th century metal security / safe door to Room B07 adjacent. Older (20th century) secure door retained to corridor B08 with modern flush door in front.

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: Moderate significance as the partial survival of the stair and 1920s cupboard helps visually tell the story of the evolution of the building. The exposed brickwork shows some of the original / early character. Some change possible without harm but alterations should be justified in terms of benefit to the overall significance of the building.

Room B07 – Basement Room – Staff Office / Strong Room



Description: Staff office with secure area behind a railing.

Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Shown as 'strong room' during 1980s. Originally would have had a different opening to adjacent room plus another to the larger space beyond.

Historical Documents / Evidence: 1920s plan pre conversion. Bank of Athens proposal plan (note, not exactly realised). Plan c. 1980s.

Condition / Notes: Finishes appear to be modern.

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: Moderate significance as the partial survival of the stair and 1920s cupboard helps visually tell the story of the evolution of the building. The exposed brickwork shows some of the original / early character. Some change possible without harm but alterations should be justified in terms of benefit to the overall significance of the building.

Room B08 – Basement Corridor



Description: Corridor connecting various basement rooms. Painted plaster walls and ceiling. Vinyl floor covering. All modern flush doors. Decorative cast iron vent at high level on solid wall may be an older feature.

Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Was part of Smoking Room (up to 1920s) and then possibly a staff room in initial bank years. Subdivided later during bank occupation and further for the pub use.

Historical Documents / Evidence: 1920s plan pre conversion. Bank of Athens proposal plan (note, not exactly realised). Photo pre 1920s conversion. Plaster detail to corner of original square column in smoking room still visible.

Condition / Notes: It appears likely that the cornice and dado features in the historic photo have been lost (it is understood that the ground floor was entirely replaced in concrete). Modern services visually dominate.

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: Neutral significance as space greatly altered leaving little or nothing in the way of historic features. A fairly large degree of change possible without harm to the significance of the building as a whole provided no original features (if found) are lost.



		
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Room B09 – Basement Staff WCs and Shower



Description: Series of small spaces with modern finishes: lowered suspended ceiling. Plain plastered or tiled walls. Modern, basic sanitaryware. Cast iron light window possibly from 1920s conversion. Various ventilation ducts.

Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Was part of Smoking Room (up to 1920s) and then possibly a staff room in initial bank years. Subdivided later during bank occupation and further for the pub use.

Historical Documents / Evidence: 1920s plan pre conversion. Bank of Athens proposal plan (note, not exactly realised). Photo pre 1920s conversion. Space marked as 'rest room' on 1980s plan.

Condition / Notes: It is not clear whether any of the original cornices etc survive above the modern ceiling (it is understood that the ground floor was entirely replaced in concrete, therefore this is very unlikely). Space dominated by modern, basic quality sanitary fittings and associated services etc. Ducts inserted through cast iron window.

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: In current form / presentation detrimental to the significance of the building as a whole as original / early form of room not visible and probably (subject to confirmation) has little in the way of historic features. A fairly large degree of change possible without harm provided original walls and any surviving features remain intact.



Room B10 – Basement Room – Staff Locker Room



Description: Space with modern finishes: lowered painted plasterboard ceiling. Plain plastered walls. Metal lockers. Cast iron light window possibly from 1920s conversion. Large ventilation ducts.

Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Was part of Smoking Room (up to 1920s) and then possibly a staff room in initial bank years. Subdivided later during bank occupation and further for the pub use.

Historical Documents / Evidence: 1920s plan pre conversion. Bank of Athens proposal plan (note, not exactly realised). Photo pre 1920s conversion. Space marked as 'voucher store' on 1980s plan.

Condition / Notes: It is not clear whether any of the original cornices etc survive above the modern ceiling (it is understood that the ground floor was entirely replaced in concrete, therefore this is very unlikely). Space dominated by modern ducts and lockers. Duct inserted through lefthand side of cast iron window.

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: In current form / presentation detrimental to the significance of the building as a whole as original / early form of room not visible and probably (subject to confirmation) has little in the way of historic features. A fairly large degree of change possible without harm provided original walls and any surviving features remain intact.



Room B11 – Basement Room	
	Description: roughly square room, subdivided from a previous larger space. Painted brick walls to NW and NE, modern plasterboard (?) to other walls. Concrete column roughly centrally.
	Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Partitions added in mid – late 20 th century. Was previously one large space across full width of basement. Wall on north-west side likely to be a later skin, possibly to provide additional security for the bank.
	Historical Documents / Evidence: Shown as an unnamed space in 1920s plans.
	Condition / Notes: Text
	Significance / Sensitivity to Change: In current form / presentation detrimental to the significance of the building as a whole as original / early form of room not visible and has little in the way of historic features. A fairly large degree of change possible without harm provided original walls remain intact.

Room B12 – Basement Room – Small lobby	
	Description: Small lobby, formed during the late 20 th century
	Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Partitions added in mid – late 20 th century. Was previously one large space across full width of basement.
	Historical Documents / Evidence: Shown as an unnamed space in 1920s plans.
	Condition / Notes: Add
	Significance / Sensitivity to Change: In current form / presentation detrimental to the significance of the building as a whole as original / early form of room not visible and has little in the way of historic features. A fairly large degree of change possible without harm provided original walls remain intact.

Room B13 – Basement Room



Description: Rectangular room with a combination of painted plaster, painted brick and modern walls. Modern tiles to ceiling.

Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Partitions added in mid – late 20th century. Was previously one large space across full width of basement. Wall on north west side likely to be a later skin, possibly to provide additional security for the bank.

Historical Documents / Evidence: Shown as an unnamed space in 1920s plans.

Condition / Notes: Visually dominated by service runs and equipment. Modern flush doors. Doors over lightwell opening.

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: In current form / presentation detrimental to the significance of the building as a whole as original / early form of room not visible and has little in the way of historic features. A fairly large degree of change possible without harm provided original walls remain intact.

Room B14 – Basement Room (Kitchen Storage)



Description: Space entirely lined with modern panels. Suspended tiled ceiling and vinyl floor. Modern refrigerator built within space. Square sectioned, presumably concrete, columns. Modern flush doors.

Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Partitions added in mid – late 20th century to the north-west and south-west sides of the room. Was previously one large space across full width of basement.

Historical Documents / Evidence: Shown as an unnamed space in 1920s plans.

Condition / Notes: It is not possible to know what may survive (in terms of historical evidence) under the modern surfaces.

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: In current form / presentation detrimental to the significance of the building as a whole as original / early form of room not visible and has little in the way of historic features. A fairly large degree of change possible without harm provided original walls remain intact.

Room B15 – Basement Room



Description: Rectangular room with concrete floor above exposed. Concrete floor and a square column. 20th century infill brickwork. Later plasterboard (?) partition to south-west.

Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Partitions added in mid – late 20th century. Was previously one large space across full width of basement.

Historical Documents / Evidence: Shown as an unnamed space in 1920s plans. Shown as 'Air Conditioning Plant' on 1980s plan as one space with adjacent room. Concrete bases presumably from previous equipment.

Condition / Notes: Visually dominated by service runs and equipment. Modern flush doors.

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: In current form / presentation detrimental to the significance of the building as a whole as original / early form of room not visible and has little in the way of historic features. A fairly large degree of change possible without harm provided original walls remain intact.

Room B16 – Basement Room



Description: Long, thin space using former lightwells. Exposed brickwork with modern boarded partition to north-east side. Now contains water tanks and heating / air handling equipment. Steel mesh fixed over openings.

Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Partitions added in mid – late 20th century. Was previously one large space across full width of basement.

Historical Documents / Evidence: Shown as an unnamed space in 1920s plans. Shown as 'Air Conditioning Plant' on 1980s plan as one space with adjacent room.

Condition / Notes: Visually dominated by service runs and equipment, as well as the modern partitioning / infill. Unknown ceiling feature – possibly an old duct to the ground floor?

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: In current form / presentation detrimental to the significance of the building as a whole as original / early form of room not visible and has little in the way of historic features. A fairly large degree of change possible without harm provided original walls remain intact.

Room B17 – Basement Room – Rear Stair Lobby



Description: Stair to connect basement with rear ground floor. Small cleaners store in cupboard.

Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Room generally as pre-1920s alterations. Stair appears to have been simplified as was originally wider at base. Walls added and amended alongside stair. Cupboard added in 1920s work.

Historical Documents / Evidence: Shown in 1920s and 1980s plans

Condition / Notes: Space poorly presented due to services, modern blockwork and crude repairs and alterations.

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: Moderate significance as the partial survival of the stair and 1920s cupboard helps visually tell the story of the evolution of the building. The exposed brickwork shows some of the original / early character. Some change possible without harm but alterations should be justified in terms of benefit to the overall significance of the building.



Room B18 – Basement Room



Description: Rectangular room which appears to be in its original form, currently used for beer storage. Painted brick walls and a possibly older (?) concrete floor. Modern flush panelled ceiling. Modern mechanical barrel drop / hoist.

Historic Changes / Previous Forms: Remains in its early form.

Historical Documents / Evidence: Shown as an unnamed space in 1920s / 1980s plans but in current form.

Condition / Notes: Visually dominated by services. Lightwell blocked over.

Significance / Sensitivity to Change: Neutral significance as space altered a number of times, leaving little in the way of historic features – however, room is in original form. A fairly large degree of change possible without harm provided original space remains legible.

Appendix B - Sources

The main sources of information used in the production of this Statement were the fabric of the building itself, old photographs and articles within the Library's collection and a book entitled 'Portico Library – A History' by Ann Brooks and Bryan Haworth (Carnegie Publishing, 2000).

A set of plans originally produced by Purcell was used as a base for drawings.

Books etc:

Other published references include:

- Champness, John - 'Thomas Harrison – Georgian Architect of Chester and Lancaster 1744-1829' University of Lancaster, 2005)
- Pratt, Tinsley – 'The Portico Library, Manchester: Its History and Associations (1802-1922) (Portico Library, 1922)
- <http://history.aboutmanchester.co.uk/mosley-street/>

Articles:

The Portico Library has a large collection of Newspaper Articles concerning the institution including the following read / used for this document:

- Manchester Evening News 18.12.1907 – The Portico Library – Discusses potential disposal of building and transfer of books to the Corporation
- Daily Dispatch 19.12.1907 – Change in Fortunes of an Historic Building
- Manchester Guardian 19.12.1907 - – The Portico Library – Interesting Offer to the City
- The Manchester Evening News 20.01.1908 – Portico Library – Suggested Transfer to Corporation – Successful Opposition
- The Manchester Evening Chronicle 20.01.1908 – Portico's Future – question Settled After a Stormy Meeting – Narrow Majority – City Library Committee Scheme Fails
- The Manchester Guardian 21.01.1908 – The Portico Library – Proposed Transfer to the City Dropped

- The Manchester Evening Chronicle 18.01.1909 – Library's Fate – Deciding the Future of the Portico – Drastic Motion
- The Manchester Evening News 18.01.1909 – The Portico Library – Mr E. Tootal Broadhurst's Suggestion
- The Daily News 18.01.1909 – Library Amalgamation – Future of Manchester's Portico Club
- The Manchester Guardian 19.01.1909 – The Portico Library
- The Manchester Guardian 19.01.1909 – The Portico Library – The Institution an Its Future
- The Manchester Guardian 21.01.1909 – The Future of the Portico
- The Manchester City News 23.01.1909 – Portico's Future – Important Meeting of Proprietors
- The Manchester Guardian 28.01.1909 Manchester Athenaeum – The Portico Library Future
- The Manchester City News 30.01.1909 – The Athenaeum – The Future of the Portico Library
- The Manchester Guardian 27.07.1909 (8?) – The Portico Library – Not to be Acquired by the Corporation
- The Manchester Courier 18.01.1910 – Portico Library – Waiting for the Corporation
- Manchester City News 18.06.2021 – The Bank of Athens - discusses Joseph sunlight and the Bank of Athens
- Manchester Guardian 20.01.1956 – 'Portico Library Celebrates its 150th Birthday – Survived Every Crisis – Including a Bomb'
- The Guardian 28.09.1961 – 'Library to be Illuminated After 147 Years' – also discusses internal redecoration, stone cleaning and the original 1814 lighting celebrating Napoleon's abdication
- The Guardian 26.03.1962 – 'Revival Survivor' – discusses classical precedent, by Cecil Stewart
- Old Lady of Mosley Street (GMC Count Wide March-May 1978) by Ursula Birkett
- The Artful Reporter (Manchester) June 1980 – 'The Portico Library' by Martin Parr and Rob Powell
- Country Life 02.05.1985 – 'Buttered Toast in the Reading Room' by Keith Spence

- A.M. Weekend 29.11.1985 – ‘Its true... Saving books in the loo’ – discusses opening of the bindery
- The Guardian 19.03.1986 – ‘Books to furnish a future’ by Murdoch Lothian – discusses recent lease of ground floor and financial appeal to support improvements.
- Lancashire Life – April 1986 – ‘Heritage at Risk’ – discusses the history and flight of the Portico and Lancaster’s Ashton Memorial by A.F Sheard
- Manchester Evening News 07.02.1987 – ‘Facelift in the Halls of Fame’ by Mike Grimes – describes paint colour choices and (lack of) paint analysis
- Daily Telegraph 27.02.1987 – ‘The Portico is back to Georgian glory’ by Michael Kennedy
- A.M. Weekend 09.03.1987 – ‘A New Chapter for the Portico – Experts Restore Glass Dome in the Library’ by Anne Gorringe
- Book News – Summer 1987, No. 47 – The Portico Library & Gallery – describes reopening
-
- Manchester Faces and Places – Volume VI, 1892-3 - Portico Library, Manchester (p.63-4) – General description of the Library
-

Letters:

Appendix C – Listed Building Description

MANCHESTER

SJ8498SW MOSLEY STREET 698-1/28/240 (East side) 25/02/52 No.57 The Portico Library and The Bank PH (Formerly Listed as: MOSLEY STREET (East side) No.57 Portico Library and Lloyds Bank)

GV

II*

Subscription library, subsequently bank and library, now public house and library. 1802-6, by Thomas Harrison of Chester; altered. Sandstone ashlar (roof not visible). Rectangular plan on corner site at junction with Charlotte Street. Classical style. Two storeys with basement and attic, presenting a slightly projected 3-bay pedimented loggia with 4 giant Ionic columns; with a plinth (steps between the columns), 1st floor string-course carried round, moulded architrave, plain frieze and dentilled cornice also carried round; 2 doorways and 3 square 1st-floor windows under the loggia. Inserted in the front wall is a VR post box. The right-hand return wall to Charlotte Street has a doorway into the side of the loggia, a square window above this and another at 1st floor, then breaks forward as a 5-bay colonnade of giant Ionic semi-columns, each bay containing a tall sashed window at ground floor, with pediments and cornices in alternate bays, a square window at 1st floor, and an attic storey expressed as a pilastered parapet; and terminates with one bay beyond. Interior: formerly galleried, with reading room at ground floor level and library on gallery, but ceiling inserted at gallery level c.1920 and ground floor remodelled recently, leaving only the columns of the gallery exposed; 1st floor not inspected, but reported to have saucer dome. History: founded as social, literary and philosophic society, the first honorary secretary being P.M.Roget (author of the Thesaurus); until Public Libraries Act of 1856 was chief circulating library in Manchester; mentioned by Thomas De Quincey in his "Confessions of an Opium Eater".

Listing NGR: SJ8414398139

Appendix D – Historical Timeline of Events

- 1802 – foundation stone laid
- 1806 – Library opened its doors
- 1809 – Major roof repairs
- 1813 – Further roof repairs
- 1817 – Basement floor changed to brick
- 1818 – WC provided in basement
- 1821 – Gas fittings to the front doors
- 1844 – Gas lighting provided internally
- 1851 – Improvement to the ventilation to deal with vapour released from gas lights
- 1856 – Coloured glass fitted to the dome
- 1875 – Feature ‘gasolier’ gas light installed
- 1884 – Further roof repairs
- 1893 – Further roof repairs
- 1900 – Further roof repairs
- 1904 – 3 windows added at first floor level onto Charlotte Street
- 1907-10 – Debates about the future of the library including a potential amalgamation with the Athenaeum
- 1914 – Lighting changed to electric fittings (removing the feature gas light)
- 1919 – Offer from, the Manchester and Salford Bank
- 1920-1 – Conversion of ground floor and basement for use by the Bank of Athens with the ground floor roofed over in glass and two men’s toilets were created overlooking Mosley Street
- Approx. 1930 – tenancy of ground floor and basement changed to London Joint City and Midland Bank
- 1925 – Dry rot discovered in the roof beams and flooding occurred due to blocked gutters
- 1935 – Electric fires introduced
- 1938 – Tenancy of ground floor and basement changed to Lloyd’s Bank
- 1938 – Library relinquished Magazine Room for use by bank
- 1938-45 (Exact dates unknown) – Part of Basement used as public shelter during wart
- 1952 – Building listed
- 1959 – Lloyds signed a new 42-year lease
- 1960 – Electric flood lights were installed to exterior after stone cleaning
- 1960 – Ceiling collapse in Reading Room
- 1961 – Redecoration of main ceiling with moulded sections ‘picked out in blues and white and a rich rust brown’
- 1972-5 (approx.) Roof repairs (reportedly after minimal investment on fabric in proceeding years)
- 1975 – The Trustees request to take over lease from Lloyds Bank (this did not happen until later)
- Late 1970s - the barometer was moved from the stairs into the library to avoid further attempts at theft
- 1982 – Reading Room ceiling falls down again
- 1982 – New Shelving
- 1983 – reroofing work
- 1983 – Replacement / reinstatement / repair of wind-dial and weather vane
- 1984 – Portico Library Charitable Trust formed
- 1985-6 – Tetleys take over lease of ground floor and basement and works carried out including extensive alterations and the provision of a solid first floor.
- 1987 – Portico reopens after a 6 month closure
- 1991 – fire precaution work undertaken – including altering the main library doors to open outwards
- 1994 – Completion of work to the roof and work to the back stair
- 1996 – Arndale Shopping Centre bomb nearby causes damage to the Library
- 1996 – General improvements were undertaken including: roof repairs to the front section; leadwork and other repairs to the main roof; safety improvements to roof access; rebuilding a brick roof upstand; leadwork; works to the kitchen and toilets; stonework repairs

- 1998 - the library installed a male WC in their retained part of the basement
- 1999-2000 English Heritage grant funded plasterwork repairs were carried out (reported to be necessary from shock vibrations from traffic in Charlotte Street, but the effect of the continued water leaks from the roof and also from the impact of the IRA bomb in 1996 were rumoured to be contributing factors). Loose laths were fixed back to the structure. Work presumed to have been carried out by Hirst and to a contract value of c. £73,000.
- 2000 - Stonework repairs to front and back elevations – new lead to cornice and pediments and render repairs to eroding stone (initial work undertaken by Camerons – completed in 2002 by Mather and Ellis)
- 2000 - Paint analysis undertaken by Hirst Conservation
- 2001 - Feasibility study carried out into a potential lift installation
- 2006 - Mitchells and Butler refurbished the ground floor with works thought to include: new signage and presentation of frontage and lighting; new bar and fixed seating installed; new dados and skirting; removal of boxing from columns and redecoration; renewal of floor coverings and exposure of earlier floor
- 2007 – Repair and redecoration of shelving
- 2017 (?) – Establishment of the Portico Library as a Charity (members relinquished their ownership of the building)
- 2018-2019 – Resilient Heritage Grant from the NLHF (HLF) enabling a first Conservation Statement and Long-term Masterplan to be developed by the library, working with Chambers Conservation.
- 2023 – Successful NLHF Development Phase Application.