



40 Princess Street – Alterations to Suites 4.1, 4.2 & 7.0

Design & Access Statement
08/10/25. Rev 00

40 Princess Street
Manchester
M1 6DE



ARCHITECTURE X INTERIOR

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Company No: 11847325

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Introduction to the Design and Access Statement

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by AXI. The statement acts as a description of the design process to accompany the drawings submitted in conjunction with this application.

This statement demonstrates that the proposed development has emerged from a full assessment of the site's circumstances and characteristics. This document should be read in support of the separate Planning and Heritage Statement produced by First Plan Planning Consultants.

The proposed development involves the refurbishment, alterations and selective demolition of modern elements to the eighth floor to facilitate the ongoing office and education use within the existing building demise and ensure the continued use of this magnificent building in the heart of the City Centre.

1.2 Development Team and Relevant Experience

Client: Whittingham Investments

Architect: AXI

Planning and Heritage Consultant: First Plan Planning Consultants.

Relevant Experience:

AXI is a Manchester based architectural practice and is committed to producing architecture of the highest quality. AXI have delivered numerous listed and heritage schemes, alongside MCC over recent years.

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2.0 Assessment

2.1 Assessment

2.1.1 Physical Site Assessment

Site Description

The site is located in the heart of Central Manchester, and is bounded by Princess Street to the East and Harter Street to the South. Neighbouring properties adjoin the building to the rear (south west) and a service courtyard/alley forms the boundary to the north west. The site consists of two adjoining structures: Eastern House, previously identified as 40–42 Princess Street, and Langley Buildings, formerly 44–46 (or 46A) Princess Street. Together, they are now collectively referred to as Forty Princess Street. Although each building holds its own Grade II listing, the two have been adapted and connected to function as a single unified property. The existing property consists of six stories above a basement, with a sub-basement extending beneath part of the footprint. The ground floor (Level 00) sits approximately 2 metres above the back-of-pavement level on Princess Street. The building extends to the rear as far as 113 Portland Street, with the south-east elevation forming a continuous boundary with 44–46 Princess Street.

Langley Buildings

This element of the property similarly comprises six storeys above a basement. The ground floor (Level -01) is positioned approximately 800mm above street level, sitting marginally lower at each level than the adjacent 40–42 Princess Street building. To the rear, the structure continues beyond the curve of Harter Street for approximately 10–15 metres, with the rear elevation overlooking a car park accessed via Dickenson Street. The rear section is stepped back at second-floor level, while the north-west elevation forms a continuous party boundary with 40–42 Princess Street.

The entire building complex underwent major refurbishment and upgrading works between 2021 and autumn 2023, resulting in the creation of high-quality speculative Cat A office accommodation complemented by reception areas, amenities, and cyclist facilities. The majority of the office premises are unoccupied and available for lease.

Location plan placeholder

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Site History

Please refer to separate Planning and Heritage Statement by First Plan Planning Consultants.

2.0 Assessment

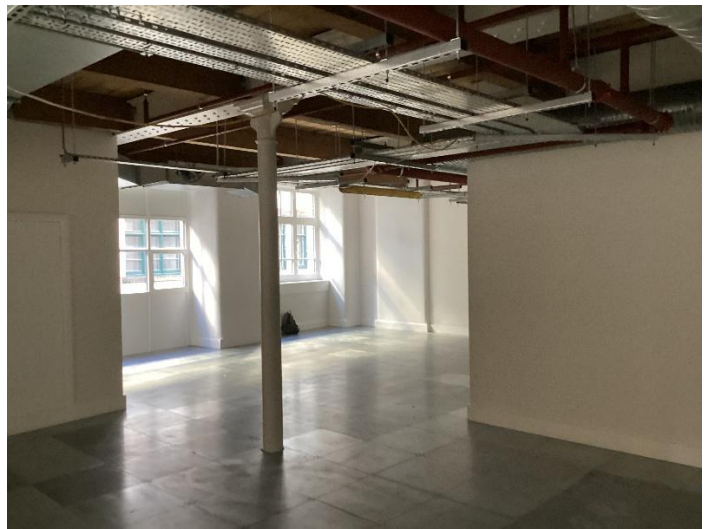
2.1 Assessment

Status of Site

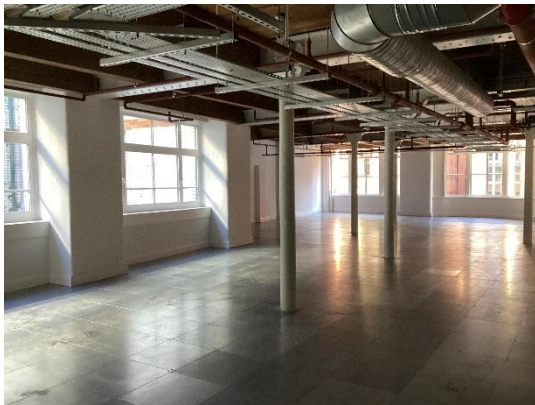
The photographs illustrate the recent CAT A refurbishment works which were completed in Autumn 2023.



(Fig001)



(Fig002)



(Fig003)

Fig001 Suite 7.0 Existing CAT A vacant Suite, Figs002/003 Existing CAT A Vacant Suite 4.0

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Surrounding Context

Please refer to separate Planning and Heritage Statement by First Plan Planning Consultants..

3.0 Description of Proposals

3.1 Design Objectives

The proposal seeks to create flexible, speculative workspace suitable for a range of incoming tenants (Proposed suites 4.1 & 4.2, previous planning obtained for subdivision lobby works), and full refurbishment of existing Seventh floor suite 7.0 office space that is currently vacant CAT A to a CAT B high specification finish.

Design Objectives

- To respect, retain, and celebrate the building's historic fabric and architectural character.
- To deliver high-quality, refurbished CAT **B** office accommodation, including the introduction of meeting rooms, board rooms and workpods.
- To introduce a variety of Cat A office fit-outs and smaller self-contained suites, encouraging occupancy by smaller businesses and start-up tenants.

The design approach remains consistent with the principles established under the 2021 Planning and Listed Building Consents, as well as the subsequent Listed Building Consent Applications for internal alterations.

For comprehensive context and design rationale, reference should be made to the Design and Access Statement prepared by Bridge Architects in support of the Cat A refurbishment works (Listed Building Consent Application Ref: 130043/LO/2021).

3.2 Design Proposals

The design proposals aim to satisfy the design objectives and issues contained within the previous Chapter and outlined in the supporting First Plan Planning Consultants documentation.

3.3 Principles of the Design

3.3.1 Use:

The existing use class for floors Four & Seven are unchanged from office use by the proposals.

3.3.2 Layout

The existing overall footprint for the Seventh Floor Suite 7.0 (Fig004) floor configuration is set to be unchanged as per the existing. The addition of the 2 x No meeting spaces, 1 x boardroom and 3x workpods abutting the existing northern internal wall, which retains the openness to the suite via light from the glazed Southern, East & West Glazed elevations. A single new meeting room is proposed to be located adjacent to the suite entrance facing onto the principal elevation. The intended location of additional rooms has been put forward not only for practical purposes befitting an incoming tenant to allow direct access for clients to a meeting room near the entrance, as opposed to travelling across the floorplate to make use of the existing spaces at the far end of the space.

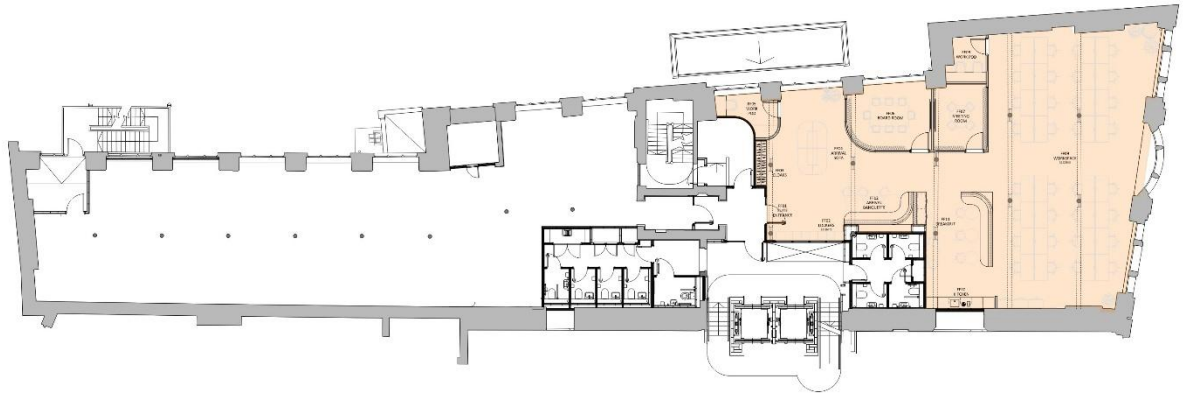
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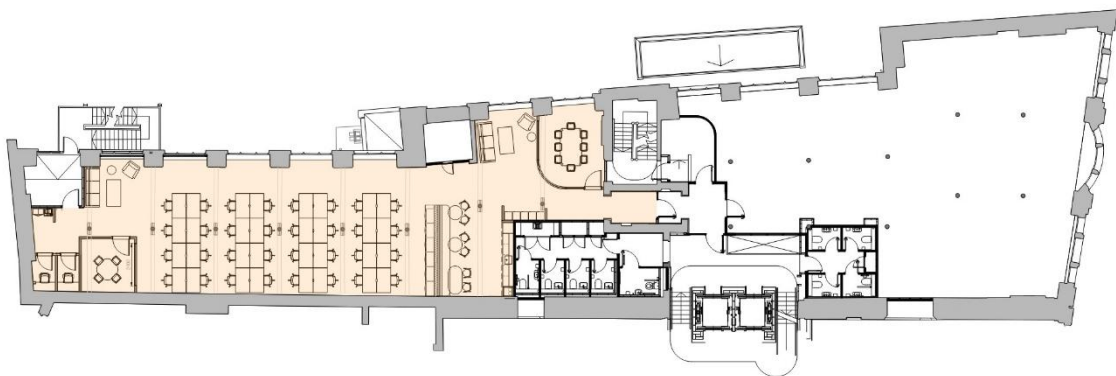
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(Fig005)

Within Suite 4.2 (Fig006) the intention is create light open meeting and board rooms, supplemented by individual workpods. Proposed partitions have been limited away from the glazed north elevation. Entrance into these rooms will incorporate matching Crittall style glazing to the existing suite entrance. Aligned with the strategy of minimal interventions, the existing mechanical and electrical services are proposed to be retained, with the proposed internal glazed partitions working within the constraints are the existing datum.

The proposed layout retains the openness to the suite via light from the glazed Northern elevation. The intended location of additional rooms has been put forward not only for practical purposes befitting an incoming tenant to allow direct access for clients to a meeting room near the entrance, as opposed to travelling across the floorplate to make use of the existing spaces at the far end of the space.



(Fig006)

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3.3.3 Scale

There is no change to the overall scale or footprint of the building with selective internal structural modifications to room sizes as noted above.

3.3.4 Materials

The office space will receive new floor finishes throughout, the existing raised access flooring is exposed without floor finish. Vinyl flooring will be provided to breakout/kitchen areas for ease of maintenance.

Proposed and existing partition walls will receive a new decoration painted finish with existing exposed brickwork to be cleaned and retained where necessary. Existing steel columns and finials will receive new paint decoration finish and remain within high visibility circulation spaces. Existing exposed timber joists and floorboards will remain as existing.

The mechanical and electrical services will remain in existing finish where exposed within the proposed scheme, to achieve maximum visibility of any high-level detailing where possible and maintain the volume of the spaces.

Please refer to the separate ceiling, floor and wall finishes drawings for information on materials and finishes.

4.0 Access

4.1 Movement Through and To the Site

The principal entrance(s) to the building is located from Princess, with a glazed door set accessed level from street level.

4.1.1 Internal Layout

The general layouts of the existing Seventh and Fourth floors are set to remain, with the addition of perimeter meeting, board and workpod rooms. The new meeting and board rooms partition walls will be fixed on top of the existing raised access floors and exposed ceiling soffit with large glazing panels to maximise visibility through. The glazing intended to be used will match the existing suite Crittall style layout REF AXI Door & Glazed Opening drawings.

The existing plasterboard ceilings with exposed services, steel beams / columns and exposed timber joist and floorboards will remain.

All modifications have been proposed following a detailed pre-application appraisal with the Conservation team from MCC.

The principal lift core and central staircases will be retained as are in full working order and provide vertical access to all floors across the building's entirety.

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4.2 Inclusive Access

The proposed development does not impact upon the existing arrangements for inclusive access. The principal level access from Princess Street is maintained.

Within the building footprint, lift cores enable vertical access to all floors, allowing for level access onto the raised access flooring which covers the entirety of the floorplate.

DDA WC provision is allowed for and already present on all floors within the existing building amenities.

This ensures that the proposed development adheres to the regulations set out in Part M of the Building Regulations.

5.0 Summary

In conclusion, the location and current use of the building and site have been summarised and proposed plans have been introduced. The scheme seeks to ensure improved commercial use of the building, whilst retaining heritage features and creating a more considered office space to users and visitors.

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6.0 Schedule of Works

Suite 7.0

- New decoration finishes throughout to walls and columns - (see drawing AXI 617)
- New decoration finishes throughout to floors – (see drawing AXI 607)
- New decoration finishes throughout to ceilings and steel beams – (see drawing AXI 627)
- New decoration finishes throughout to skirting (see drawing AXI 647)
- Modifications to existing task lighting and supplementary feature lighting throughout to accommodate new internal layout while retaining existing ceiling as well as working with new look and feel to enhance spaces – (see drawing AXI 307)
- New internal partitions – (see drawings AXI 407)
- New Crittall style doors and glazed openings (see drawings AXI 907)

Suite 4.1

- New decoration finishes throughout to walls and columns - (see drawing AXI 614.1)
- New decoration finishes throughout to floors – (see drawing AXI 604.1)
- New decoration finishes throughout to ceilings and steel beams – (see drawing AXI 624.1)
- New decoration finishes throughout to skirting (see drawing AXI 644.1)
- Modifications to existing task lighting and supplementary feature lighting throughout to accommodate new internal layout while retaining existing ceiling as well as working with new look and feel to enhance spaces – (see drawing AXI 304.1)
- New internal partitions – (see drawings AXI 404.1)
- New Crittall style doors and glazed openings (see drawings AXI 904.1)

Suite 4.2

- New decoration finishes throughout to walls and columns - (see drawing AXI 614.2)
- New decoration finishes throughout to floors – (see drawing AXI 604.2)
- New decoration finishes throughout to ceilings and steel beams – (see drawing AXI 624.2)
- New decoration finishes throughout to skirting (see drawing AXI 644.2)
- Modifications to existing task lighting and supplementary feature lighting throughout to accommodate new internal layout while retaining existing ceiling as well as working with new look and feel to enhance spaces – (see drawing AXI 304.2)
- New internal partitions – (see drawings AXI 404.2)
- New Crittall style doors and glazed openings (see drawings AXI 904.2)

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