

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Roofing and Associated Works

Arkwright House
Parsonage Gardens
Manchester
M3 2HP

Version
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Report Date
27 August 2025

Client: Hillcrest 45468464 Limited

Job Reference: 202366

Property: Arkwright House, Parsonage Gardens, Manchester M3 2HP

Project Preface

Client Name and Address

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Identification photograph

View of north elevation of Arkwright House

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Watts Group Limited, on behalf of Hillcrest Limited, in support of a Listed Building Consent application for roofing and associated works at Arkwright House, Parsonage Gardens, Manchester, M3 2LF.
- 1.1.2 The purpose of this report is to assess the proposed works in relation to the requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and national and local policies and guidance relating to the historic built environment.
- 1.1.3 Arkwright House is a Grade II listed building and is located within the Parsonage Gardens Conservation Area. The building is a prominent addition to the Conservation Area with the front, east and west elevations of a neo-classical design making a positive contribution to the surrounding area containing a number of listed buildings.
- 1.1.4 This heritage statement accompanies an application for Listed Building Consent for the proposals set out within this statement. It should be read in conjunction with the application documents, specification and drawings (see appendices).

1.2 Scope and Sources

- 1.1.1 This heritage statement has been prepared to support the proposals and will provide:
 - description of the site.
 - brief overview on the history and significance of the building.
 - description of the proposals.
 - Justification and impact of the proposals on the building.
- 1.2.1 The preparation of this report involved the following:
 - Site inspections.
 - Review of historic and more recent architectural plans, drawings and photographs.
 - Consultation with the Local Authority Conservation Officer.
 - Review of web-based source material.
 - Catalogue of on-line listed buildings records from, English Heritage in connection with the Statutory List Description.
 - National Planning Policy Framework, Chapter 16 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment.

1.3 Recent Planning History

Listed Building Consents

- 141640/LO/2024 – LISTED BUILDING CONSENT – Relocation of brass signage, repositioning of existing gas lamps and installation of new planters. Decision: Approved.

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- 126930/LO/2020 – LISTED BUILDING CONSENT – Internal Refurbishment of the ground floor reception and back of house areas. Decision: Approved.
- 117592/LO/2017 – Internal fit out works to first floor office space to include new partitions, kitchen facilities and showers. Decision: Approved.

Heritage Partnership Agreement

- HPA/2017/001 – Heritage Partnership Agreement. Decision: Agreement signed 21.12.2017

2 Assessment of Significance

2.1 The Site and its Surroundings

The Area

- 2.1.1 Parsonage Gardens, a name dating to the 11th century, was the site of St Mary's Church, built in 1753, closed in 1890 and demolished in 1928. When St Mary's Church was demolished, Parsonage Gardens was laid out in much the form in which it is now found. In subsequent decades, most of the enclosing buildings surrounding Parsonage Gardens and on St Mary's Parsonage were replaced with larger buildings; the date and character of Parsonage Gardens is now Victorian and later.

The Building

- 2.1.2 Arkwright House was designed by Harry S Fairhurst in 1927 as the headquarters for the English Sewing Cotton Company on a site bounded by Parsonage Gardens, Southgate, Back South Parade, and St Mary's Parsonage. It was completed in 1929. The company was established in 1897 as an amalgamation of different sewing thread producers and manufacturers, aimed at promoting trade and preventing the different companies from undercutting each other. In 1973 the company became Tootal Ltd, then Tootal Group PLC. It is now part of the Coats Viyella Group.
- 2.1.3 The building was erected around a steel frame, its three main frontages (to Parsonage Gardens, Southgate and St Mary's Parsonage) clad in white Portland stone. The principal elevation fronting onto Parsonage Gardens has two storeys forming a podium, with banded rustication to the ground floor, which has an arcade of round-headed windows with stepped voussoirs. Above this is a 3-storey 14-bay order of giant Corinthian-style pilasters with plain frieze and dentilled cornice. Above this again, over are two attic storeys, the upper set back and finished with a frieze, cornice and blocking course. A single storey extension was added to the roof in 2017 creating a 7th floor and clad with modern metal finishes. At the either end of the building, a bay is set back. The side elevation to Southgate has two columns in antis surrounding a 3- storey bay window, but above first floor otherwise has paired windows similar to the first attic storey. The angled elevation to St Mary's Parsonage extends this treatment across the façade above the arched openings of the ground floor.



Plate 1: Decorative Portland stone façade to north elevation

- 2.1.4 The original building is comb-shaped on plan with a continuous range facing Parsonage Gardens (see plate 1 above) and four wings face Back South Parade, creating three recessed open light wells above ground floor level. These lightwells have more recently been infilled with full height glazed curtain walling from first floor to the 7th floor. These elevations are faced in a cream buff brick laid in an English garden wall bond and is fenestrated in a regular grid of simple window openings with a combination of 12-pane vertical sliding timber sash windows and steel framed windows (see plate 2 below).



Plate 2: Plain rear façade to Back South Parade

Description of the Heritage Asset

- Clegg and Knowles Warehouse, 3 Alberton Street c. 1868
- National Buildings 1905-9
- Kendal Milne department store 1939

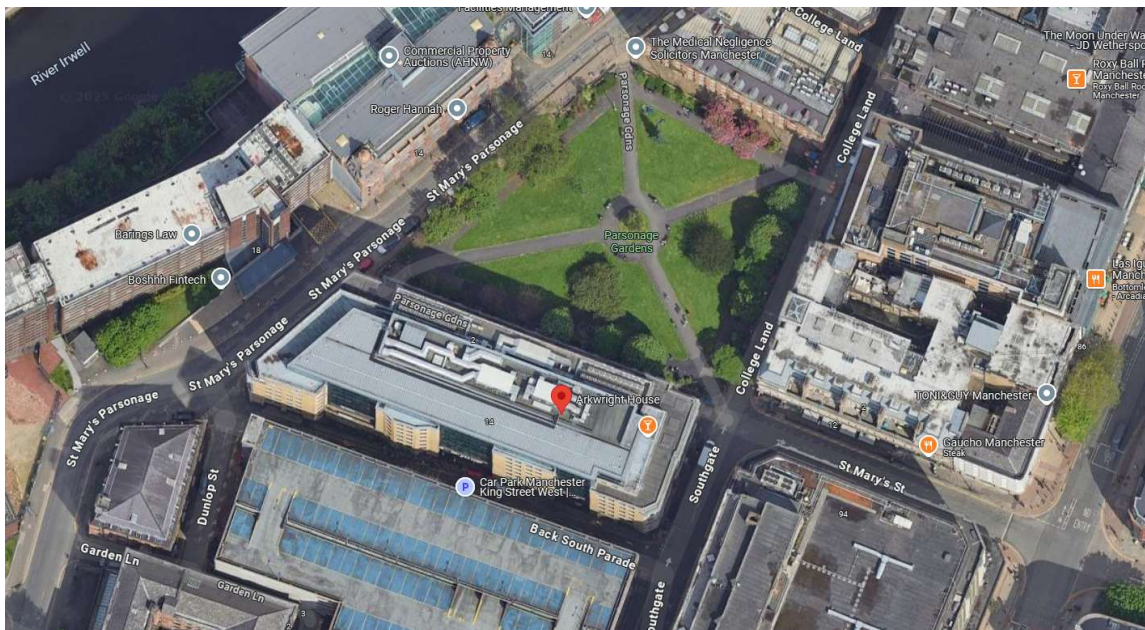


Plate 3: Aerial view of Arkwright House and surroundings (credit: Google Maps)

Heritage Value

2.2.2 The heritage significance of Arkwright House has the following components:

2.2.2.1 **Architectural Value** – The design, appearance, and specifically the grand neo-classical architectural style of the building as influenced by Art Deco ideas in the inter-war period. This is expressed in the overall scale and massing of the building, the nature of its elevations and its roof forms including dormers and tall chimneys, its use of Portland Stone, the design and materiality of its fenestration, the symmetry of its main elevation to, the use of classical detail, etc. It is also found in its position in relation to Parsonage

Gardens and neighbouring buildings - Arkwright House powerfully defines the southern side of Parsonage Gardens, and this is perhaps the most important aspect of its aesthetic significance.

- 2.2.2.2 Internally some of the common areas retain a certain amount of Art Deco detailing, but the building has been substantially altered and is now largely plain and recent in character, including the recent 2017 refurbishments, remodelling and extensions.
- 2.2.2.3 **Historic Value** - In terms of evidential or historic significance - the place that the building has in the overall development of this part of Manchester and its role in inter-war change in the area. That development is associated with a noted architect and with a significant north-western industrial company.
- 2.2.2.4 **Setting** - The heritage significance of the building is located principally in the main elevation to Parsonage Gardens, where the contribution of Arkwright House to the overall Parsonage Gardens Conservation Area is most clearly seen. In addition, the elevations to St Mary's Parsonage and Southgate have considerable quality and assist in extending the visual influence of this very large building into the streets around Parsonage Gardens. It is in these elevations where the original architectural intention of the architect is most clearly expressed, is most intact, and where it is most perceptible.
- 2.2.2.5 In summary, the key importance of Arkwright House lies in its powerful presence in the conservation area and the quality of its main elevations to Parsonage Gardens, St Mary's Parsonage and Southgate. Its rear parts and its roof (with nothing other than plant behind its parapet) have negligible architectural and historic interest. Internally the building retains some features from its original design.

2.3 Policy Review

- 2.3.1 National Policy will be used to assess the application, with consideration of local policy which typically follows and augments the national policy guidance.
- 2.3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and replaces the previously issued Planning Policy Statements. Section 16 of the Framework document covers Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment and is relevant to this application with regards to the impact on Arkwright House and the surrounding Parsonage Gardens Conservation Area.
- 2.3.3 In determining applications, the policy framework (paragraph 207) requires that *"local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance... using appropriate expertise where necessary."*

- 2.3.4 This heritage statement therefore fulfils this requirement by describing the history and significance of Arkwright House, and by setting out the potential impact on the building, as a result of the proposals.
- 2.3.5 The framework also provide guidance on considering the impact of proposals on the significance of heritage assets. It states *'great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance'*.
- 2.3.6 Therefore, the level of harm to a heritage asset through development or loss of a building can be measured by the significance of the asset affected and the contribution that the asset makes to its wider setting.
- 2.3.7 The framework sets out in paragraph 210 *'In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*
- *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation.*
 - *the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
 - *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness'.*

3 Description of Proposals

3.1 Proposed Works

- 3.1.1 The proposed works, as described below, are being carried out as part of a planned maintenance programme involving maintenance and repair of external building elements, removing unsuitable materials (i.e. cement pointing) which are potentially causing harm and replacing them using traditional techniques and materials (lime mortars) more appropriate to the building's historic character.
- 3.1.2 The works include the following:
1. Refurbishment of flat roof areas above the 5th floor (level 6) and 6th floor (level 7).
 2. Refurbishment of the coating above the stone cornice to level 5.
 3. Repairs and repointing to Portland stone and brickwork parapets to the west, north and east elevations above the 5th and 6th floors.
 4. Repairs and adjustments to existing lightning protection system to the 5th and 6th floor roofs.
- 3.1.3 The roof refurbishment works include cleaning and preparing the existing felt and liquid applied membranes and overlaying with a new high performance, cold installed, rapid

curing polyester liquid coating (see appendix 4 for further details). This will be applied directly to the existing roof coatings with no additional insulation being installed due to the restrictions of the roof mounted plant and upstand heights. Therefore, no new chases will be formed into the historic fabric.

- 3.1.4 The colour of the new liquid coatings will be iron grey (RAL 7011). [RAL 7011 Colour \(Iron grey\) - RAL Grey colours | RAL Colour Chart UK](#).
- 3.1.5 Cleaning of the roof coatings will involve removing soiling, debris, organic growths and bird faeces all by hand using biocide solutions. Power washing will not be permitted.
- 3.1.6 The new coating will follow the areas of the existing coating and be dressed up under existing trims, sills, thresholds and lead flashings.
- 3.1.7 The existing lead flashings will remain insitu and be repaired/replaced, where necessary with new Code 4 leadwork (see photos 9 & 10, appendix 3). This will be repaired with a new section of Code 4 leadwork and will follow the existing masonry chases.
- 3.1.8 The extent of works to the brick and stonework parapets will be limited to the top (sky facing) and inside vertical faces of the stonework. The works include the removal of light soiling, organic growths and bird faeces, all by hand using approved biocide solutions. Power washing will not be permitted.
- 3.1.9 The masonry will be repointed, where missing, loose or defective only. No wholesale repointing will be carried out. Where Portland stone parapets exhibit extensive cracking, spalling or debonding, these will be carefully repaired either using lime mortar or matching Portland stone.

4 Assessment of Impact

This heritage statement has been prepared on the premise of a minimal intervention approach retaining as much of the original historic fabric as is practically possible. The impact of the proposals outlined in item 3.1.2 above on the building and its surrounds will be assessed below.

4.1 Roof refurbishment works

Refurbishment of flat roof areas above the 5th floor (level 6) and 6th floor (level 7)

- 4.1.1 The potential order of magnitude of the works will have **no impact** on the building's significance as a designated Heritage Asset.
- 4.1.2 The reason for the order of magnitude is that the new coatings will not involve adversely impacting the architectural or historical appearance of the building. The roof areas are not visible from ground level or from the majority of surrounding buildings.
- 4.1.3 The new coatings will be applied over modern materials and details will respect the existing constraints of the building without the need to remove, damage or impact upon the historic fabric.
- 4.1.4 The colour of the new coatings is iron grey (RAL 7011) which has been chosen to harmonise with the appearance of the historic fabric and reflective of what would have been original asphalt coatings of the past. Part of the existing flat roof coatings are in a light grey liquid (see photo 5, appendix 3) and dark green mineral felt (see photo 6, appendix 3). The new coatings will remove the contrasting colours and be in keeping with the more modern 7th floor windows.
- 4.1.5 The existing lead flashings will remain insitu with the new coating dressed up under the flashings. An area of repair is required where no flashing currently exists (see photos 9 & 10, appendix 3). This will be repaired with a new section of Code 4 leadwork and will follow the existing masonry chases.
- 4.1.6 This impact assessment is also in-line with the description of the heritage value (see paragraph 2.2.2.5) which denotes the roof areas as having negligible architectural and historic interest.

Refurbishment of the coating above the stone cornice to level 5

- 4.1.7 The potential order of magnitude of the works will have **minor positive impact** on the building's significance as a designated Heritage Asset.
- 4.1.8 The reason for the order of magnitude is that the new coatings will not involve adversely impacting the architectural or historical appearance of the building. The works are to the

sky facing surfaces only, as existing, of the decorative cornice, which is not visible from ground level or from the majority of surrounding buildings.

- 4.1.9 The new coatings will be applied over modern materials and details will respect the existing constraints of the building without the need to remove, damage or impact upon the historic fabric.
- 4.1.10 The colour of the new coatings is iron grey (RAL 7011) which has been chosen to harmonise with the appearance of the historic fabric and reflective of what would have been original asphalt coatings of the past. The existing coatings are in a darker grey liquid (see photos 1-4, appendix 3).
- 4.1.11 The works will improve the aesthetics and visual appearance of the building where the 5th floor cornice is overlooked by surrounding buildings.

4.2 Masonry Works

Repairs and repointing to Portland stone and brickwork parapets to the west, north and east elevations above the 5th and 6th floors.

- 4.2.1 The potential order of magnitude of the works will have **minor positive impact** on the building's significance as a designated Heritage Asset.
- 4.2.2 The reason for the order of magnitude is that the existing stonework, in some areas, is in poor condition with cracked, spalling and eroded stonework, redundant fixing holes and eroded and missing pointing allowing water to penetrate the stonework and accelerate decay and deterioration (see plates 4-6 below). Some of the stonework has been crudely 'repaired' with modern materials '(see photo 20, appendix 3). The repairs will be carried out on a 'like for like' basis using sympathetic materials to match the existing (NHL 3.5 lime mortars and Portland stone inserts).
- 4.2.3 The works will enhance the architectural or historical appearance of the building when viewed from the roof areas or from higher level as the works will be limited to the sky facing top surfaces and inside vertical faces of the parapets only. These areas are not visible from ground level or from the majority of surrounding buildings.

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Plate 4: View of cracked Portland stone banding to north elevation parapet



Plate 5: Poor condition of mortar repair to top of south elevation parapet



Plate 6: Redundant fixing holes and failed pointing to stone parapets

4.3 Lightning Conductor

- 4.3.1 The potential order of magnitude of the works will have **no impact** on the building's significance as a designated Heritage Asset.
- 4.3.2 The reason for the order of magnitude is that the existing lightning conductor will remain insitu, fixed to the top of the parapet stonework (perimeter termination network) with cross bonding tapes traversing the roof areas affixed to metal structures (handrails, staircases, rainwater goods, metal cladding etc). No additional fixings to the stonework are deemed necessary. Some repairs are required to connect some metal structures back into the protection network where not currently. The works will not involve adversely impacting the architectural or historical appearance of the building.

5 Justification Statement

5.1 Justification Statement

- 5.1.1 The works involve planned maintenance works to the external fabric of the building to mitigate against on-going water penetration to the building leading to damage to the fabric of the building.
- 5.1.2 The proposals include the removal of unsympathetic materials i.e. cement mortar repairs and pointing and replacement with more appropriate lime mortar. There are also a number of redundant fixings which is allowing water penetration to the stonework leading to accelerated decay and deterioration. These works will prevent on-going damage and decay from occurring and will be in-keeping with the architectural and historic fabric of the building, whilst leading to the preservation of the historic fabric of the building.
- 5.1.3 The proposals are considered an essential piece of conservation and repair works, which is necessary to prevent ongoing deterioration and loss of architectural and historical fabric and to ensure the building can operate as a multi-tenanted office facility.
- 5.1.4 There will be no adverse effect on the building's significance as a designated Heritage Asset.

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Appendix 1

Statutory Listing Description

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Appendix 2

Written Specification of Works and Drawings

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Appendix 3

Photographs of areas affected by the proposals

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Appendix 4

Technical Information

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