



THE PORTICO LIBRARY, MANCHESTER

Heritage Impact Assessment
Chambers Conservation Ltd, July 2025 – Issue 1

CHAMBERS

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Contents

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Methodology

3.0 The Scheme & Principles

4.0 Significance an Overview

5.0 Heritage Impact Assessment

6.0 Summary of Harm

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Impact Assessment has been prepared by Chambers Conservation as part of the NLHF funded *Portico Reunited* project, and the consequent planning and listed building consent applications. The project seeks to unify the whole building as the Portico, reuniting it for the first time since 1920, when the ground floor and cellars were first separated and sub-let to a bank.
- 1.2 The Portico Library is a Grade II* listed building, located on a prominent corner site at the junction of Mosley Street and Charlotte Street. Established in 1806, the Portico Library was founded as a subscription library and reading room by a group of wealthy Manchester businessmen and intellectuals, aiming to promote learning and access to literature during a time of rapid industrial growth.
- 1.3 In 1920, the Ground Floor and much of the Basement was leased to the Bank of Athens. To accommodate this new function, structural and interior modifications were made, particularly on the ground floor and separation from the First Floor, necessitating the in-filling of the substantial central atrium. A separate entrance was added to Charlotte Street, and a new staircase inserted. From this point bank customers (and subsequently pub users) access the commercial space from Mosley Street, Library members and visitors accessing the building from the side entrance on Charlotte Street. By the 1980's the bank had closed, and the space was let to a pub. This necessitated further changes, the first-floor was made solid (having previously had lay-lights to the space below), kitchens and other facilities were created in the basement. This is the configuration of the building today.
- 1.4 The document should be read together with the detailed Conservation Management Plan which has also been prepared and submitted with this application. This document fully defines the significance of the Portico, including a spatial gazetteer and has been used as the benchmark to assess the impact on individual elements.
- 1.5 In summary, the Impact Assessment has been prepared to consider the potential impact of the scheme on the significance of the Portico, including its wider setting and context.



Front Entrance Portico, 2025.



Current Entrance to the Portico Library, stepped access only from Charlotte Street.

2.0 Methodology

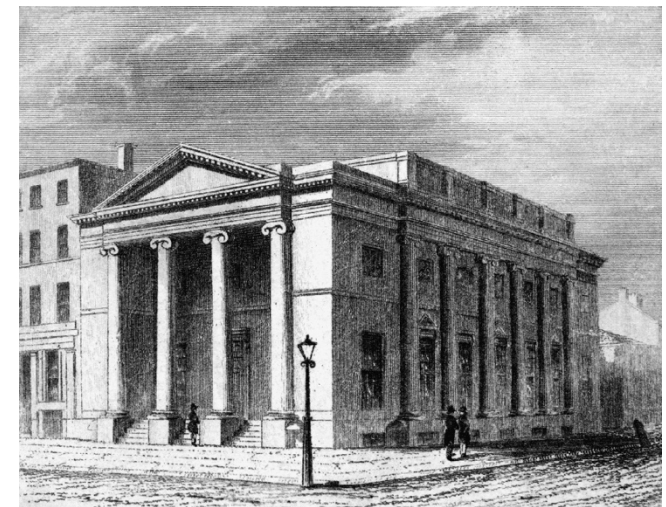
- 2.1 Together with the CMP, this Impact Assessment has been prepared to comply with the tests and requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF: 2024), specifically paragraphs 207 and 208, under which a description of the significance of a site, including any contribution made by its setting, must be provided to support any planning applications to assess the effect on significance of any proposed changes. There is also a requirement for applicants to make an informed assessment of heritage significance as part of a staged approach to decision making.
- 2.2 In the case of the Portico, the building is of such significance that a separate Conservation Management Plan has been prepared in order to fully understand the building and its individual component parts. This consequently enables a more comprehensive assessment of impact.
- 2.3 The approach to the assessment of impact is described more thoroughly in section 5.0.

3.0 The Scheme & Principles

- 3.1 The design proposals are part of the NLHF funded *'Reuniting The Portico'* project, which intends to bring the ground and basement levels, currently occupied by the Bank pub, back into use by the library.
- 3.2 The intention of the project is to conserve and repair the building, provide suitable and sustainable accommodation for the long-term, as well as being able to accommodate enhanced exhibition, retail, cafe, events and archive space. The design proposals also seek to resolve the significant accessibility issues, providing level access to all levels via the building's principal entrance on Mosley Street.
- 3.3 In summary, the Cellar/Basement will provide archive, office, meeting and WC spaces, including Changing Places toilet provision, plus a catering kitchen and storage.
- 3.4 The Ground Floor will provide a multi-purpose space, book shop, lending library, café and main entrance. The primary entrance reinstated to Mosley Street through the original Portico, this necessitates alterations to the entrance steps.



View c. 1824



View c. 1839

- 3.5 The First Floor, which current houses all the Library's accommodation will be allowed to become a reading room and study space, with flexibility for events. The Members Room remains largely as is, but with more flexible use.
- 3.6 Accessibility is a major issue for the Library. No level access is currently available to the first floor, which has resulted in the inability of the Portico to host key events such as the Manchester Literature Festival. This has consequently placed the library at risk, both financially and in context of the Equality Act. Some of the most significant changes, therefore, seek to address the issues of access for the long-term.

4.0 Significance, an Overview.

- 4.1 The Portico Library is a building of a high level of significance that is valued highly as both a fine example of Neo-Classical, and in particular Greek revival architecture, in the north-west. It is also a well-respected source of inspiration in the world of literature and home to a highly significant historic book collection and archive.
- 4.2 A comprehensive assessment of significance is provided in the Conservation Management Plan (CMP). Below is a brief summary only and the Impact Assessment should be read in context (and refers to) the CMP and spatial gazetteer which considers the significance of the whole, and individual elements.
- 4.3 The summary below provides an overview only, split into Evidential Value, Historical Value, Aesthetic Value and Communal Value.

Evidential Value

- 4.4 *Evidential value is the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.*
- 4.5 The Portico Library is a rare example of a Neo-Classical (Greek revival) building built in the north-west at the turn of the 19th century. The exterior survives almost entirely intact and a substantial amount of internal fabric is still present.
- 4.6 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 the collections of books, records etc.

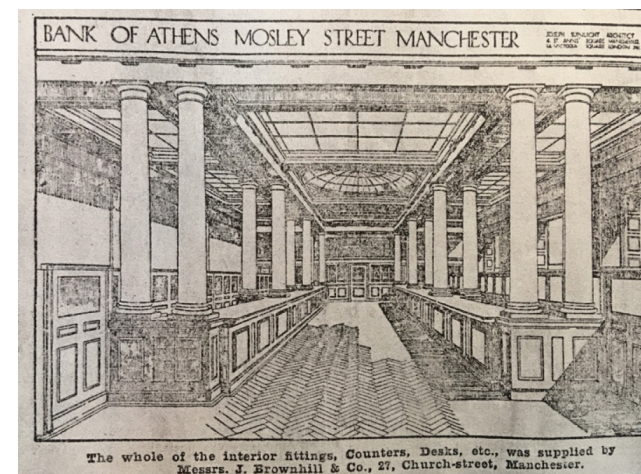
Historical Value

- 4.7 *Historical value is the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present.*



Interior before the 1920s alterations, showing the gasolier of c.1875. The floor aperture was subsequently infilled to accommodate the bank to the ground floor.

- 4.8 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.
- 4.9 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'*.
- 4.10 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'.
- 4.11 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.
- 4.12 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



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



General view of the Portico from Charlotte Street, the first floor windows were inserted into formerly blank panels c. 1920. The ground floor windows had lost their original glazing bars by the late C19.

records that, together with the physical fabric, helps to tell a fascinating story of the past two-hundred years.

Aesthetic Value

- 4.13 Aesthetic value is the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.
- 4.14 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 (being of the ionic order).
- 4.15 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.
- 4.16 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.
- 4.17 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.

Communal Value

- 4.18 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.
- 4.19 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.

- 4.20 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 Burgess, Val McDermid & Sarah Hall. The Prize is itself now part of the significance of the Portico.
- 4.21 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 it work with literature) but also more informally through its series of exhibitions, housed within the central space under the dome.
- 4.22 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 and exploring contemporary issues through the use of the book collection.

Refer to **Conservation Management Plan, Section 4.0, Statement of Significance and Appendix A Gazetteer of Internal Spaces** for fully detailed assessment.

5.0 Heritage Impact Assessment

- 5.1 Heritage impact is defined as the potential level of harm or benefit to the special architectural or historic interest caused by a proposed development. The NPPF does not prescribe a format for analysis of heritage significance and/or impact.
- 5.2 Scale or severity of impacts or changes can be judged taking into account their direct and indirect effects and whether they are temporary or permanent, reversible or irreversible. The cumulative effect of separate impacts should also be considered. Change can be either harmful or beneficial to heritage significance.
- 5.3 The following methodology is based on the guidance set out by ICOMOS (2011) Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties,

although intended for World Heritage Sites it provides a sliding scale of impacts that can be applied to assets on all significance levels.

5.4 Works are assessed and consequently graded/categorised in the following way:

Heritage Impact:

- **High Beneficial.** Comprehensive changes to an asset or its setting resulting in a major enhancement of significance.
- **Medium Beneficial** Significant changes to an asset or its setting resulting in a notable enhancement of significance.
- **Low Beneficial** Modest changes to an asset or its setting resulting in a slight enhancement of significance
- **Neutral.** Works will have no impact on the significance an aspect, or aspects of the significance of the site/building. *NB an element may have beneficial and impactful elements, resulting in a neutral assessment overall.*
- **Low Adverse.** Modest changes to an asset or its setting resulting in slight harm to significance. Works may be required in order to justify the need for the change and why alternatives are not possible.
- **Medium Adverse.** Significant changes to an asset or its setting resulting in notable harm to significance. Can be justified where significant other benefits can be seen to outweigh the impact of the changes.
- **High Adverse.** Comprehensive changes to an asset or its setting resulting in major (substantial) harm to significance. Works should be reconsidered and alternatives proposed.

5.5 In considering potential impacts arising from the development there must be a consideration of the direct or physical impacts upon significance such as works to an asset in relation the impact upon key views.

5.6 This section will consider the impacts upon individual assets of the direct works relating to their conversion followed by a separate narrative around impacts relating to setting.

Ref	Location/Scope	Objective	Aspects of Significance	Condition	Significance of Affected Fabric	Assessment of Heritage Impact	Mitigation/Approach/ Comments
1.0 Overall Proposal							
1.1	Reinstatement of the Library to a Single Entity and Use. Bring the whole library back into a single use, focussed on the books, collections	Enable the Library to survive for the long, term, provide space for expansion of the community programmes, literature programmes and commercial activities of the Portico.	Very High, the Portico is listed Grade II* and the overall significance of the building	Fair. The building is generally structurally sound, but issues with water ingress, life expired services, etc.	High.	Reinstatement of the Portico as a single entity, broadly as originally intended enhances Aesthetic, Historic and in particular communal values. Retention of the legibility and the interpretation of later change enhances evidential values. High Beneficial.	Mitigation/Approach elements relate more to specific elements, refer to commentary below.
2.0 Exterior.							
2.1	Entrance Portico, Removal of Steps	Essential to create level access. Reinstates original entrance to the library.	Steps are part of Harrison's design to echo the Temple of Minerva Polias at Priene. The Portico is an early example of Greek Revival architecture in Manchester. Significance detrimentally affected by in-filling of windows and later addition of door to the NE end.	Fair, Steps are in-situ, if heavily laminated in places. Some damage through pub adaption. Heavy soiling (carboniferous staining) to ashlar.	High.	Works are essential to allow full level access for all and reintegration of the Library enhancing communal and evidential values through re-engagement with the main entrance, <i>however</i> there is a resulting in loss of some significant historic fabric. Medium Adverse	Works are <u>essential</u> to allow full level access for all. Through discussion with key stakeholders (HE, MCC) the retention of the side steps retains the sense of a 'podium' and enables the original design intent to be understood. High quality materials, detailing and workmanship are essential to ensuring the change is successful.

2.2	Entrance Portico, Modification to door opening – drop threshold to create level access route.	Essential to create level access.	Door case (stone) is original to Harrison's design (adjacent windows removed 1920). Gates, fanlight arrangement etc are all c.1920.	Fair. Doors are likely not original (late C19 modified 1920). Can be repaired and re-used.	High (stone), Medium (door).	Works are essential to allow full level access for all and reintegration of the Library, however the result in modest loss of fabric below retained door surround. Low Adverse	Doors to be retained and re-used at adjusted level. Great care and detail is required in final detailing of fanlight and stone to plinth below door case and retained ashlar.
2.3	Entrance Portico – Other works associated with reinstating the original entrance. Detrimental features including metal door, signage, bracketry, poor lighting etc all to be removed. Stone repaired etc.	Reinstatement of original entrance (associated with level access provision).	Detrimental features including metal door, poor lighting. High quality ashlar work with sharp detail remains.	Poor/Fair. Some damage through pub adaption and changes, exposed services, heavy soiling (carboniferous staining) to ashlar.	High. (detrimental additions)	Reinstatement of original entrance greatly enhances significance and understanding. Removal of detrimental features and repair also greatly enhance the entrance area. High Beneficial.	Detail required for new lighting and signage to ensure sensitivity and appropriateness.
2.4	Entrance Portico – Reinstatement of Fenestration Pattern – modern alterations removed.	Reinstate original (c.1920) appearance to fenestration, part of reinstatement of main entrance to Portico and Mosley Street.	The NE and SW first floor windows were inserted either side of the original central window, all three windows were then pivot-lights. That to the office has been replaced with a poor casement, the central window has ventilation. Adversely affecting the significance.	Fair/Poor. Limited decay but poor quality changes and pivots are fixed shut.	Openings high, important to treatment of entrance façade. Windows (as existing) low.	Reinstatement of original fenestration pattern will enhance the aesthetic value. High Beneficial.	Window details will need to be precisely considered to ensure a cohesive appearance.
2.5	1920 Entrance, removal of later shutters. To enable use as escape, removal of later shutters, revealing original 1920's doors. Removal of	Former Portico Entrance (after 1920 subdivision). Now to become a fire escape/secondary route.	Door case and surround modified in the 1990's with external shutters. Original doors are of good quality and medium significance,	Good. Doors relatively recently repaired.	Medium. Not original but part of Sunlight's high-quality alteration work of 1920.	Generally reinstatement of 1920 appearance. Low Beneficial.	Ensure detailing of any ironmongery required for fire-escape purposes does not detract from the doors and stone door case. Consider retaining signage above the door.

	services associated with current entry point (intercom etc).		reflecting Sunlight's alterations of 1920.				
2.6	Repairs to Windows, reinstate to operation and reglaze (Charlotte St). Most of the ground floor windows are fixed shut. Reinstatement to operation is essential for ventilation. Replacement of the (modern) glazing with fine double glazing or vacuum glass. Integration of draught seals. First floor windows are 1920's pivot lights (generally modern glass).	Improve conditions in the library space for the highly significant and vulnerable collections. Ensure natural ventilation is achieved. Works will make a significant improvement to heat-loss.	Sashes are (mostly) original, albeit without the original glazing bars (removed by 1890). Pivot lights are c.1920, replacing recessed stone panels to bring more light to the first-floor reading room.	Sashes are painted shut, some decay to cills and bottom rails. Pivot lights generally sound (need redecoration).	Sashes - Medium as part of the original on key facade, albeit altered and of fairly conventional type. Pivot lights to first-floor, Medium, part of Sunlight's changes (and intent to reflect classical simplicity). Also reflective of the relocation of the library.	Repair works ensure original fabric is retained. Upgrading protects the Library by providing more sustainable conditions for the highly significant collections and limits other alterations through provision of natural ventilation. Minor adjustment to rebate depth is necessary however (no fine glazing bars) for vacuum glazing or fine DG units. Principles follow HE advice note 18 (HEAN 18) and para 81. Retaining original frames and replacing modern glass. Low Beneficial	Ensure detailing of rebate is fully considered. Selection of glazing type is also an important consideration. Paintable putty should be used to the sashes to maintain traditional appearance.
2.7	Remove Modern Door and Reinstall Window (Back George Street). Window previously removed during pub conversion to provide means of escape. Window will be reinstated to match adjacent, with associated repairs to brickwork etc.	essential to enable sustainable heating of the building and provision of heat pumps.	Current configuration adversely affects proportion of this secondary elevation.	Poor quality modern doors. Cementitious pointing.	Current configuration and detail is detrimental to the appearance of this secondary elevation.	Replacement enhances significance, especially through improvement to aesthetic value. Enables a greater appreciation of the original configuration and use. Insertion of two modern extract covers minor adverse to the overall beneficial impact. Medium Beneficial	Ensure detailing of sash, cill etc all match adjacent exactly. To be associated with lime repointing of brick etc.
2.8	Creation of Plant Deck at Roof Level	To enable sustainable heating	Slope is away from key views, most of	Fair/Poor. Roof slope and slating	Low (materially) generally replaced	Creation of the plant deck to achieve reduced	Enclosure for ASHP to be set-back from parapet to

	(Back George Street). Removal of rear slope of roof to create plant deck for heat pumps necessary for low-carbon heating. <i>Reconfiguration of gutters covered below.</i>	of the building and allow space for provision of heat pumps. Works will make a significant contribution to reducing the carbon footprint of the building.	the structure was renewed c.1994, including roof-line insulation and new rafters. Ceiling below is also modern having collapsed following water ingress during the same period. Maintains generally original configurations however.	are good. Parapet gutter drains to a siphonic drainage system which has caused significant issues internally.	in c.1994. Low/Medium as retaining original configuration.	carbon consumption is a critical part of the Library's future, and maintaining its significance overall, beneficial in this context. Loss of (relatively modern) fabric, however alteration to original roof configuration. No impact on key views. Principles follow HE advice note 18 (HEAN 18) Neutral	ensure protection of key views. Must be kept below ridge-line for same reason. Retained original ceiling lines (current ceiling below is modern).
2.9	Reconfiguration of Parapet Gutters to Rear Roof (Back George Street). Reversal of parapet gutters (in lead) to new chutes and hoppers.	Enables removal of damaging siphonic system and suitable adaption to deal with heavy rainfall events due to climate change.	Not visible from ground level. Gutter details and linings are from the 1990s repairs.	Fair/Good (linings) Poor, siphonic drainage (leaks).	Current configuration is causing damage to highly sensitive internal detail and putting collections at risk.	Replacement protects significance of interior and reflects future rainfall. Appropriate use of external cast-iron pipes and hoppers should not adversely affect aesthetic value of rear elevation. Low Beneficial	Previously discussed with conservation officer to alleviate water ingress, risks to collections and interior. Detailing through parapet critical to appearance.
3.0 Interior							
3.1	Entrance Portico Works to Vestibule. Lowering floor to new level, new steps through to primary ground floor space. New opening to connect 1920's stair. Lift dealt with separately, below.	Essential to create level access. Reinstates original entrance to the library. Enables removal of later pub fittings.	Vestibule retains Sunlight's original proportions, domed ceiling and marble wall linings (in part). Adversely affected by later pub flooring, furnishings and doors.	Fair. Linings remain, later fittings of basic quality.	High (as CMP) retaining original general configuration (architectural form), but with detrimental later change and added fittings/features.	Works retain strong architectural form (see CMP gazetteer) Some change to create new connections has minor adverse affect, fully mitigated by removal of later fittings and reinstatement of marble linings to side walls. Low Beneficial	Once access is possible, works should seek to understand if any original flooring survives below modern engineered boards and consider potential for re-use in new space.

	Removal of modern fittings.						
3.2	Entrance Portico Lowering of Floor/Ceiling (Cellar) Removal of cellar vault (part) to enable connection to be created at ground floor level.	Essential to create level access.	Broadly retains original form. Areas retain brick vault.	Poor. Significant water ingress, friable brickwork.	Low, basic space in poor condition.	Works essential to create level access (beneficial). Impact on space of low significance (minor harm). Neutral	Vault to side of new, lowered, floor above should be retained where possible and repaired.
3.3	New Lift Insertion of new lift and shaft to entrance vestibule.	Current lack of lift access puts the whole future of the library at risk. Rendering primary reading room unusable.	The lift links to Sunlight's entrance vestibule (see above). Shaft generally though basic, low significance spaces (back of house or from later change).	Fair, basic spaces only. Pub back-of-house space and basement spaces in poor condition (failing plaster, poor modern paint etc).	Low generally, new door opening and wall into Sunlight's entrance lobby (high).	Critical to protecting the future of the library and all aspects of its significance, highly beneficial. Minor harm through intervention in Sunlight's entrance vestibule. Medium Beneficial.	Treatment around lift door is critical in the entrance vestibule (G02). Proposed treatment of marble linings to match, should ensure impact is positive (replacing low-quality pub fittings).
3.4	Removal of Modern Pub Fittings , The former Banking Hall (G04), has a range of modern fittings relating to the pub use from 1980's onwards.	Reinstate quality of the space, enable flexible use.	G04 is a significant space, retaining the general proportions and details of the 1920's banking hall. Later pub fittings are detrimental to this significance.	Good/Fair. Front of house spaces to the Bank pub are generally reasonably well maintained.	Fittings are neutral/detrimental. G04 (Banking Hall, formerly lower part of Library) is of high significance.	Removal of the modern fittings which are ill proportioned and of poor quality will (with high quality replacements enhance the aesthetic and heritage values. High Beneficial.	Removal should be undertaken with due care for any concealed earlier features. Replacements (See below) will need to be of high quality.
3.5	New library shelving, bar and forward kitchen space. Replacement of pub fittings with new adaptable shelving and furnishings, new bar and forward kitchen.	New furnishings to 'bring the library downstairs' enable flexible and viable use and support catering function.	G04 is a significant space, retaining the general proportions and details of the 1920's banking hall. Later pub fittings are detrimental to this significance.	Good/Fair. Front of house spaces to the Bank pub are generally reasonably well maintained.	Existing fittings are neutral/detrimental. G04 (Banking Hall, formerly lower part of Library) is of high significance.	Bringing books and literary functions back to the ground floor will enhance communal and historical values. Better quality fittings will also enhance the historical value of the early features which remain. Minor detrimental through the insertion of	The design of the new fittings will need to be of exceptional quality to sit comfortably within the sensitive historic setting.

						the forward kitchen. Medium Beneficial.	
3.6	Modification of door cases for lift, In order to provide access for the lift, adjustment to existing opening is required. Door case proposed to be relocated to suit new opening (slightly further across).	Current lack of lift access puts the whole future of the library at risk. Rendering primary reading room unusable.	G04 is a significant space, retaining the general proportions and details of the 1920's banking hall. Door cases pre-date the banking Hall, but have been modified during the pub use.	Good/Fair. Front of house spaces to the Bank pub are generally reasonably well maintained. Door cases have some damage but generally intact.	High/Medium High, earlier features of the pre-bank space.	Lift is critical to protecting the future of the library (highly beneficial). Relocation (not loss) of door case has medium adverse impact on understanding through historic value (door case retained and conserved). Neutral	Extreme care and a detailed methodology required for and during relocation.
3.7	Insertion of Glass Box (Ground Floor), It is proposed to reinstate the visual connection between the ground and first floors (see below for first floor impact assessment).	To reinstate the visual connection between the ground and first floors, 'reunite' the Library, encourage visits to the Reading Room.	G04 is a significant space, retaining the general proportions and details of the 1920's banking hall. Section of ceiling where the light box proposed is modern (c.1986) dating from the pub conversion.	Good/Fair. Front of house spaces to the Bank pub are generally reasonably well maintained.	Low. Modern ceiling and structure (c.1986) dating from the pub conversion.	Reinstatement of the visual connection between ground and first enhances historic, aesthetic and communal values bringing the components of the Portico together. Affected fabric is low significance and modern. High Beneficial.	Careful detailing of the light box, connection and interrelationship with the adjacent downstand beams, columns and plasterwork will be essential to the enhancement and success of the intervention.
3.8	Removal of WCs Creation of New Lending Library (Ground Floor).	Create space for new Lending Library to Ground Floor.	G08 has been badly subdivided into low quality WC spaces, detrimental to the aesthetic and historic value.	Fair. Modern pub WCs.	Low. Modern ceiling partitions and structure (c.1986) dating from the pub conversion and later alterations.	Reinstatement of the Library at the ground floor, enhances communal and historic value. Removal of modern WC partitioning and reinstatement of (broadly) original proportions enhances aesthetic value. High Beneficial.	Careful consideration of ceiling treatments, window linings and other features will be key.
3.9	Provision of New Accessible WC to first floor (in current office). To achieve	Provide accessible WC provision for the Reading Room.	F01 Staff Office/Workroom has neutral/low significance as	Fair. Generally well maintained.	Low/Neutral (F01) Much altered, back-of-house space. High,	Accessible WC provision is essential to the Library, enhancing communal value.	Care will be needed to the treatment of the door and opening through the bookcase (although it

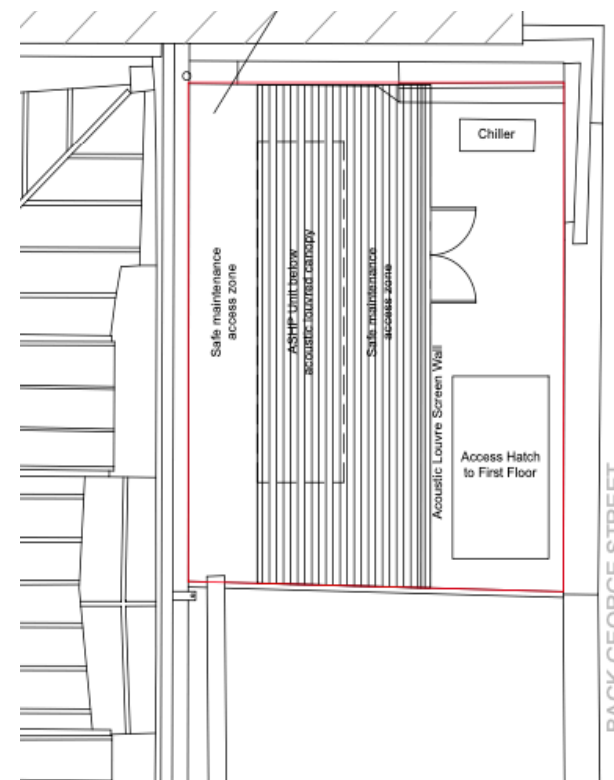
	access, it is proposed to relocate the opening through the bookcase across a bay.		space altered, leaving little in the way of historic features.		Bookcase, but impact limited, replaces existing opening through bookcase adjacent.	Limited impact on space of little significance. Bookcase opening replaces existing (adjacent). Medium Beneficial.	effectively mirrors that which exists).
3.10	Insertion of Glass Box (First Floor) , It is proposed to reinstate the visual connection between the ground and first floors (see below for first floor impact assessment). At first floor this forms part of a new reception, replacing the existing.	To reinstate the visual connection between the ground and first floors, 'reunite' the Library, encourage visits to the Reading Room.	F04 The Reading Room is the most significant space in the library. Originally open to the ground floor, the aperture was in-filled in 1920 (with glazed laylights) and solid floor in 1986.	Good/Fair. Space is generally well maintained if tired decoratively and with poor quality services.	Low (Materials). Modern ceiling and structure (c.1986) dating from the pub conversion. High, overall space F04.	Reinstatement of the visual connection between ground and first enhances historic, aesthetic and communal values bringing the components of the Portico together. Affected fabric is low significance and modern. Visual impact of the projecting section is balanced with removal of the existing counter, neutral overall. Medium Beneficial.	Careful detailing of the light box, counter, plinth and seating are all critical to the positive impact. Also consideration to retain/reuse elements of the existing counter (made from elements of the bank counters in 1986) on site.
3.11	Modifications to C19 Balustrade. Removal of sections of the C19 balustrade to enable viable and flexible use of the space.	Create a usable space for events, study and exhibitions.	F04 The Reading Room is the most significant space in the library. Originally open to the ground floor, the aperture was in-filled in 1920 (with glazed laylights) and solid floor in 1986. The balustrade originally protected the aperture. It was heavily modified and repositioned in 1986 (bottom fixing details modified), including various new	Good/Fair. Space is generally well maintained if tired decoratively and with poor quality services. Balustrade generally sound.	High, overall space F04. Medium/High, balustrade defines the extent of the aperture in Harrison's original design. Significance adversely affected by relocation in the 1980s, modern alterations and fixings.	Enabling the use of the space flexibly for events is important for the viability of the library and to enhance access to the collections through exhibition and study, enhancement of communal value and historic value (overall). Medium Adverse impact through loss of front and rear sections of balustrade (to be retained on site and reversible). Infilling of two later openings with original elements	Options explored included partial and full removal. Partial removal balanced flexibility, significance and definition of the original configuration. Floor coverings should be designed to reflect the original aperture, relate to retained balustrade sections and interpretation of the aperture provided. Approach to be reversible and sections removed retained on site.

			openings into the central area.			maintain continuity to sides. Low Adverse.	
3.12	Create Offices, Archive, WCs, Kitchen and Study Areas (Cellar). Modifications and partitioning to make usable spaces in the cellar.	Create essential staff, archive and service spaces for the Library. Kitchen refitted in current location.	Some areas of moderate significance where bank vault features (strong room doors etc) survive. Cellars were largely reconstructed in the 1920's bank conversion.	Poor (some fair), water ingress, poor, outdated services, poor decorative condition and other issues.	Some areas of moderate significance where bank vault features (strong room doors etc) survive. Otherwise low.	Retains and interprets main remaining historic detail. Enables full use of Cellar spaces, some of which were original Library spaces (Smoking Rooms etc). Enhancement of both historic and communal values. Benefits library as a whole, allowing better management of the building, collections and greater access. High Beneficial.	Detailing of linings (see below) and modern interventions should allow expression of remaining features.
3.13	Dry Lining to Outer Walls (Cellar), Drained tanking to the perimeter proposed to make spaces usable and dry.	Enable the creation of essential staff, archive and service spaces for the Library. Kitchen refitted in current location.	Some areas of moderate significance where bank vault features (strong room doors etc) survive. Cellars were largely reconstructed in the 1920's bank conversion.	Poor (some fair), water ingress, poor, outdated services, poor decorative condition and other issues. (hence dry-lining/tanking requirement).	Some areas of moderate significance where bank vault features (strong room doors etc) survive. Otherwise low.	Enables usage of spaces as outlined above (High Beneficial) Minor loss of exposed brickwork and appearance of detail in localised areas (low adverse). Medium Beneficial.	Usage of the right system (drained, not 'tanking') appropriate for historic structures is key.
4.0 Setting and Context (refer also to narrative which follows)							
4.1	Introduction of ASHP enclosure and Plant Deck. (material impact discussed above) (Back George Street). Removal of	To enable sustainable heating of the building and allow space for provision of heat pumps. Works will make a significant	Most of the structure was renewed c.1994, including roof-line insulation and new rafters. Ceiling below is also modern having	Fair/Poor. Roof slope and slating are good. Parapet gutter drains to a siphonic drainage system	Low in terms of key views, away from primary elevations, low significance of adjacent buildings (modern).	Creation of the plant deck to achieve reduced carbon consumption is a critical part of the Library's future, and maintaining its significance overall,	Ensure that ASHP enclosure is set back from the building line as per the proposed roof plan, and does not exceed the ridge line.

	rear slope of roof to create plant deck for heat pumps necessary for low-carbon heating. <i>Reconfiguration of gutters covered below.</i>	contribution to reducing the carbon footprint of the building.	collapsed following water ingress during the same period.	which has caused significant issues internally.		beneficial in this context. No impact on key views as demonstrated in the illustrations which follow. Principles follow HE advice note 18 (HEAN 18) Neutral	

Impact on Setting

- 5.7 The setting of the library as existing is highly urban, the library is surrounded by buildings of significantly larger scale, mostly of more recent date. Recent developments have, unfortunately, adversely affected the setting of the Portico, including the extension to the upper floors of the adjacent Calico building.
- 5.8 This said the library retains a presence on key views and as such the setting is still vulnerable to change. The changes to the Portico entrance on Mosley Street will have a negligible impact in terms of the setting (the impact on the building and historic fabric is more significant and discussed above).
- 5.9 The primary potential impact is the introduction of the new plant deck on the roof. At design stage a number of options were considered for the integration of Air-Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs) to enable the Portico to be heated sustainably.
- 5.10 The proposal is to remove a section of the roof to the rear to create a new plant deck. The impact of this in the building fabric is discussed in the table above. The potential impact on setting has been assessed, looking at views towards the Library from adjoining streets.
- 5.11 These views demonstrate that the introduction of the plant deck will have no impact on the setting of the Library or adjacent historic assets, minor changes such as the reinstatement of the window to Back George Street and removal of intrusive services penetrations will enhance the setting in this area.
- 5.12 On the following page are a number of key views, which illustrate the points made above.



Extract from Purcell's proposed roof plan, showing proposed new plant deck.



View 01 Looking north-west along Charlotte Street. Rear elevation concealed by the Bank of China.



View 02 Closer view from Charlotte Street. The setting back of the ASHP enclosure ensures it is not visible, or barely discernible from this viewpoint.



View 03 Looking South-west along Back George Street. Oblique angle screens any ASHP enclosure from view.



View 04 Narrow Character of Back George Street prevents views of ASHP enclosure. Note extent of extract vents, removal will enhance setting on Back George Street.

6.0 Summary of Harm

- 6.1 The works entail the repair of the Portico and its reinstatement as a single entity, and focussed on the original use of the building as a house of books, knowledge, learning and debate. This has a highly beneficial impact on the significance overall. However the scheme necessitates change, especially around the integration of level access, which has been a very significant issue for the Portico for many years.
- 6.2 As a consequence there are some instances of less than substantial harm. These are primarily to the entrance to facilitate level access. A dialogue with Manchester City Council, Historic England and other stakeholders has been undertaken, with a particular focus on these impacts. A mitigation strategy, removing only the central set of steps was agreed in principle as a balance between the access and the consequential harm.
- 6.3 In summary, the benefits of the proposal include the reinstatement of the Portico as a single entity. This not only *significant enhancement* of the Library in the context of its use and Communal Value, but protects the long-term future of both the library and its highly significant collections of historic books.
- 6.4 Each instance of harm is considered justified and necessary for the sustainable long-term and viable use of the Portico and the scheme should, therefore, be supported.