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HERITAGE STATEMENT

NEWTON ST. CAT B FLOOR 1 UNIT 1

REVISION	-
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ARCHITECTURE + HERITAGE

AMAZON HOUSE • BRAZIL STREET

MANCHESTER • M1 3PW

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Image: Photograph of site, taken from corner of Newton Street and Dale Street, April 2024.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

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This Heritage Statement has been written to accompany a Listed Building Consent Application for the first floor of 08 – 16 Newton Street, Manchester.

It was produced in July 2025 by Atelier MB. Its author is Laura Jessup, MA History and Theory of Architecture, PGCert. Conservation of the Historic Environment.

This application relates to changes to the first floor internal space only.



Image: Photograph of site, taken from corner of Newton Street and Dale Street, April 2024.

2.0 LOCATION

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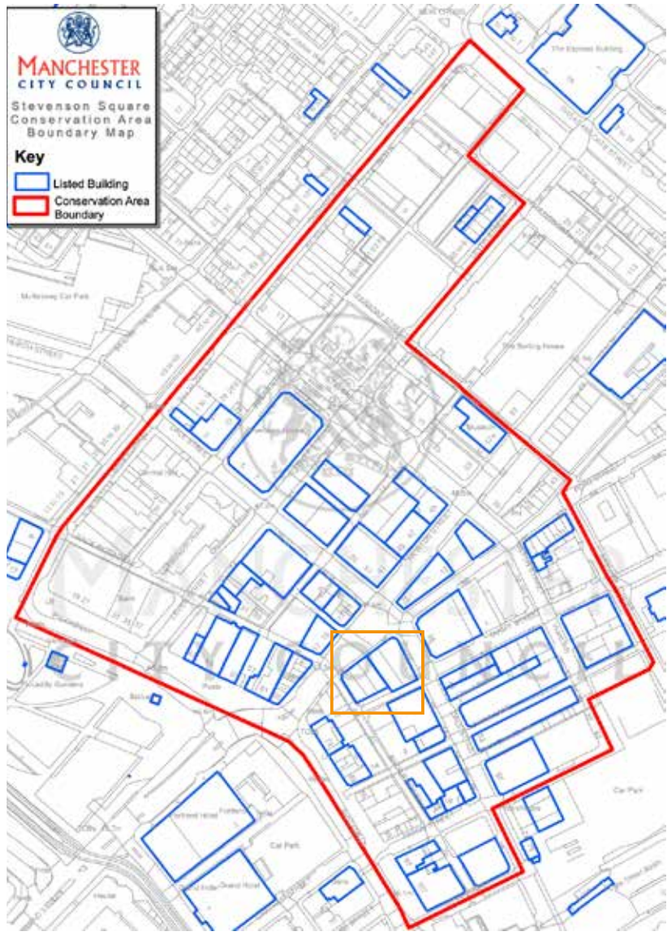


Image: Map of Stevenson Square Conservation Area showing 08-16 Newton Street.

The building is located within Manchester city centre, in the Northern Quarter area, close to Piccadilly Gardens. The main facade and entrances are on Newton Street and the block is set between Newton Street, Mangle Street, Back Piccadilly, and Dale Street.

08-16 Newton Street sits within the Stevenson Square Conservation Area, on the north eastern edge of the city and designated in 1987.

3.0 DESCRIPTION + HISTORY

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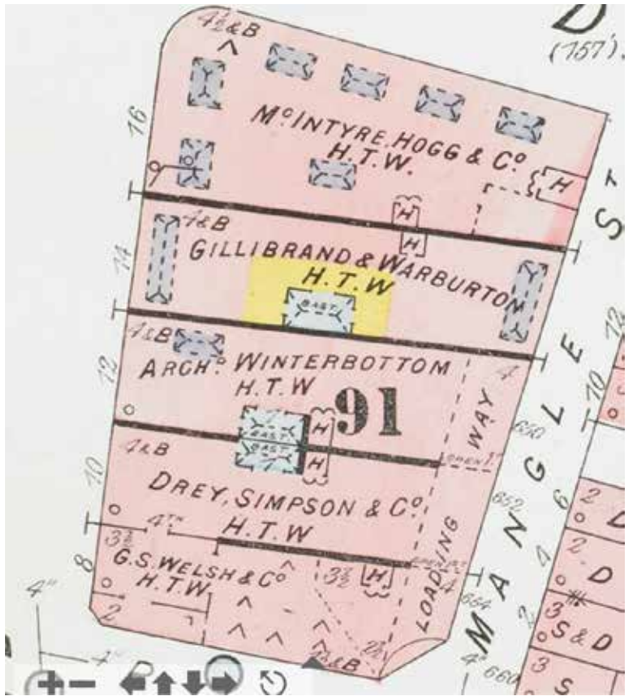


Image: Extract from Goad's Insurance Plan, 1886.

The buildings at 08-16 Newton Street are former home trade warehouses, dating from the late 19th century. They are in two separate parts (8-12 forming one building and 14-16 a second) and together they make one block, with main elevations facing Newton Street. Both are in the same architectural style but they differ slightly in appearance and height. It is possible they were built for two different owners, but the fact that they share internal walls and read as one, indicates they date from the same period.

16 Newton Street does not appear on the 1851 map but is visible on the 1891 map. The listing dates the buildings as 1860-70, but there is no reference in the trade directory of 1879 when Hilton Street is listed as appearing straight after number 12, showing there was a different street layout. The buildings do appear in 1883. From the available evidence therefore, the buildings can be dated to 1879-1882. No reference has been found to the architect/s, nor has it been possible to locate any original drawings or plans within the Manchester Central Library archives.

There is no documentary evidence of internal layout, other than the Goad's Insurance Plan (1886), but it is almost certain to have followed the typical plan of home trade warehouses in the area and of this period.

It was common for floors to be sub-divided for different businesses. This kind of warehouse was particularly common around Portland Street (grander in form) and Dale Street (often smaller). The only identified reference with any detail for 8-16 Newton Street is the Goads Insurance Plan from 1886, which offers some information on structure and the roof. Following the decline in the textiles industry there was little need for warehousing of this nature in the city. The buildings continued in office and light manufacturing use in to the 20th century and each building was occupied by several individual tenants, the result of which has been an undocumented and piecemeal set of alterations, including a number additional internal partitions and walls and changes to windows and openings.
An extract from listing is included here,

SJ8498SE NEWTON STREET 698-1/29/248 (South East side) Nos.14 AND 16
GV II
Includes: No.36 DALE STREET. Manufacturers' warehouses and agents' offices, now shops, etc. Late C19, altered. Red brick in Flemish bond (part painted white), with sandstone ashlar plinth and dressings, slate roof. Trapezoidal plan with rounded corner to Dale Street. Basement, 4 storeys and attic, No.14



Image: Building in 1966, corner junction of Newton Street and Back Piccadilly.
Image from Manchester Archives



Image: Building in 1967, main Newton Street elevation and corner to Dale Street.
Image from Manchester Archives.

having a narrow 4-window façade treated as one wide bay, and No.16 to the left a wider 6-window facade in 3 bays; with a high plinth (interrupted by basement openings), cornice to ground floor, string courses to the upper floors, a moulded stone cornice over the top floor on thin brick brackets, and a parapet with chimneys over 2 piers of No.16. Doorways adjacent to the junction, tall, with panelled doors, square overlights, and cornices on elongated consoles; No.14 to the right has 3 sashed windows at ground floor and 4 on each of the next 2 floors, with continuous stone lintels; No.16 to the left has altered windows at ground floor, sashed windows on the next 2 floors with stone lintels to each pair; both have coupled sashed windows at 4th floor and square dormers in a mansard roof. The fenestration of No.16 carries round the curved corner and continues in the 5-bay side to Dale Street, with chimneys over 4 piers, and 2 dormers. Interior not inspected. History: occupied c.1905-13 by various manufacturers' agents, No.14 by Horrocks Crewdson & Co. Listing NGR: SJ8460698288

SJ8498SE NEWTON STREET 698-1/29/247 (South East side) Nos.8, 10 AND 12
GV II
Warehouses, workshops and offices, now shops and offices. c.1860-70; altered. Brown brick with some polychromy, sandstone dressings (roof not visible). Rectangular plan. Eclectic style, with Gothic accent. Basement and 4 storeys, 4 unequal bays divided by brick pilasters, with sill-bands, cornice and parapet. The ground floor has coupled doorways in the 2nd bay, with banded plinths to the height of the tall basement, then short colonettes with carved capitals, and arched heads (rounded intrados with pointed extrados), and linked hoodmoulds, and a large mullioned 3-light window to the left (tripartite basement openings below); but is otherwise altered by C20 shop fronts, with numerous large signboards attached. The upper floors have 3-light windows with brick mullions in the 1st and 3rd bays, coupled windows in the 2nd and 4th, those at 2nd floor with banded arched heads and linked hoodmoulds, and all sashed. Prominent cornice and panelled parapet. The right-hand return wall has a 2-storey canted bay (altered at ground floor), arched windows at 2nd floor, and a gabled arched window at 3rd floor. Rear and interior not inspected. History: occupied c.1905 by umbrella manufacturer, sewing machines, etc. Included for group value.
Listing NGR: SJ8458498270

4.0 SIGNIFICANCE

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Image: Photograph of Newton Street elevation, April 2024



Image: Photograph of Newton Street elevation to Back Piccadilly end, April 2024

The setting of 8-16 Newton Street contributes to its high significance, aesthetically and historically, as part of the group of similar warehouses in this area of the city.

It is a positive contributor to the street scape and the wider Stevenson Square Conservation Area. Prior to ongoing renovation works, the building had been compromised by modern interventions, including the use of varied materials and treatments to the street frontage, which had a negative impact on its presentation as a cohesive block. Some historic fabric had also been lost through alteration to the various street level openings, most notably at the 08-10 end. The condition of the interior at upper levels, namely the poor state of the roof and upper windows and roof lights, was detrimental to the significance of the setting and impacts on the heritage value of the building.

The buildings have been assessed on Historic England's four categories for heritage value, as set out in their Conservation Principles document, 2008.

EVIDENTIAL VALUE

The Newton Street buildings have a medium/high degree of evidential value. Warehouses are an important characteristic architectural type in Manchester and these are typical examples, with the plan and parts of the interior and exterior illustrating how these buildings worked, particularly the vertical hoists and lightwells, columns, windows and entrances. They are however of an average quality when compared to others. The original parts of the exterior are of high significance, as are the distinct component parts (entrances, loading bay, main floors and basement). The altered parts are of low/ negative significance, many detracting from the heritage value as they are low quality and unsympathetic in design and finish.

HISTORICAL VALUE

The buildings are of high historical value. They are associated with the period of rapid industrial and commercial growth in the city, which is a crucial part of the history of Manchester. Their place in a wider group in this area in also recognised as highly significant. The degradation to the exterior through inappropriate change, and the removal of most historical features internally, has lowered this value in places. Later internal additions (including those proposed to be removed) are of a low historical value.



Image: Photograph showing refurbished sash windows, to be retained.

AESTHETIC VALUE

08-16 Newton Street has some interesting features, particularly in the external stonework detail, the form of the rear sloping roof and the characteristic roof spaces internally, giving them a medium aesthetic value. They are in the vernacular tradition of brick Manchester warehouses. The internal spaces are almost entirely functional and most have a medium aesthetic value. The later changes have low/negative value.

COMMUNAL VALUE

The industrial past of Manchester is a key element of the city's heritage. The associated architecture has formed the character of the city and is recognised by people as what sets it apart from other places. The personal links to this building are considered low but there is a degree of associational value to the wider city for residents and visitors.

The first floor has recently undergone refurbishment. Significance remains and architectural and historical values are medium. Where original features have been retained, these are of high significance, including the staircase; timber floors; windows; walls and columns. The space is an important component part of the listed building and its plan form. The open plan nature has historical and evidential value.



Image: Photograph showing timber floor surface, to be retained.

5.0 PROPOSALS + IMPACT

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The proposals involve the fit out of commercial space to meet the requirements of new tenants. Relevant changes are:

i) Relocation of existing historic screens.

ii) Addition of lidded pods to create internal spaces.

iii) Limited number of new full height walls to form photographic studio and kitchen area.

iv) New lighting



Image: Photograph of first floor showing location for reused historic partition.

i) Previously removed historic screens will be repositioned within the space to form the meeting room in the western corner and a further screen will be re-used to infill an existing opening to the south side of the space.

IMPACT: MODERATE BENEFICIAL

Over the period of its life the building has been subdivided to create offices and sub-rooms on an ongoing basis, as evidenced by the numerous partitions present pre-2018. It must be accepted that contemporary re-use of the space involves an amount of change. These proposlas are considered to be appropriate, proportionate and sensitive. The re-use of historic partition screens will allow significant features to be re-installed into contemporary space.

ii) There is a desire to create a number of smaller subspaces within the office. In mitigation these are to the edges of space and in mitigation, the proposal is to utilise lidded pods, which will ensure the full height and proportions of the space is retained.

IMPACT: NEUTRAL

These additions are reversible and have been designed to protect historic fabric. The approach is appropriate.

iii) Provision of a number of full height walls to form photographic studio and kitchen. A further small portion of full height and a door will be needed to form the bevelled corner door to the north meeting room. All new walls will be set away from window openings and shadow gaps will ensure they are recognisable as addiitons

IMPACT: NEUTRAL

There is a degree of change to the visual transparency within the space, but this is considered to be minimal and the proposal justified on the basis that it is necessary to put the building back into long-term re-use.

iv) Limited number of small penetrations to exisiting ceilings to allow for new light fittings.

IMPACT: NEUTRAL

The extent and size of the required holes are not considered to demonstrate any level of harm to the significance of the building.



Image: Photograph of first floor showing opening to be infilled.

6.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

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The main heritage planning considerations affecting this site are its Grade II listed status and its position within the Stevenson Square Conservation Area.
The legislation concerning built heritage is contained within Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Government Policy is set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, updated 2023). Local planning policy is set by Manchester City Council.

Statutory legislation states that special regard should be given to 'the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any feature of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.' Clause 66. Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990.

The NPPF recognises that sympathetic changes to heritage assets are necessary to ensure their viable ongoing use, but that alterations must be justified and their impact upon significance assessed.
This report meets the requirements of NPPF, paragraph 207, 'In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting'.

Paragraph 210 states,
'In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:
a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to uses consistent with their conservation;
b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.'
The high significance of this complex of buildings will be retained and enhanced through ongoing improvement. Works are considered compatible with historic fabric and the retention of key features such as walls, window openings, entrances and internal features makes a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. The viable re-use of these buildings is of great public benefit, as part of the street scape, the Conservation Area and in terms of conserving the listed asset.

Paragraph 212 states, ‘When considering the impact of proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation.’
Proposals have been designed to work with the historic features and fabric, with modern intervention only proposed where it is necessary to create viable, modern, and accessible office space.

The buildings are an important component of the Conservation Area and of the Northern Quarter/ Piccadilly area. They represent a good example of their kind and have typical key characteristics of their typology and date. The most important elements such as external elevations and entrances, loading bay, lightwell, internal spaces and features, will remain and be enhanced. It is not considered that these proposals will be of harm to the significance of the existing building.

Sustainability is a key overarching aim of NPPF and this application is a positive response to that, seeking to re-use existing fabric wherever possible and to make sensitive and minimal intervention to allow for adaptation to new use.

Local policy reflects principles established in the NPPF and is contained within the Local Development Framework Core Strategy, 2012. Of particular relevance are CC9, which states that development should preserve or enhance listed assets; and EN3 which states the Council will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of historic and heritage features of neighbourhoods.

Places for Everyone is Greater Manchester's joint development plan. Policy JP-P2 relates to heritage and states that particular consideration will be given to ensuring 'the significance of key elements of the historic environment which contribute to Greater Manchester's distinct identity and sense of place are protected from harm' and that positive management and integration of heritage should be informed by 'delivering positive benefits that sustain and enhance the historic environment as well as contributing to the economic vitality, accessibility and environmental quality of a place.'

The proposals are considered to accord with local and national policy.

7.0 CONCLUSION

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The building has heritage significance, as evidenced by its Grade II listing.

Recent refurbishments have sought to enhance original fabric and remove inappropriate and non-original interventions.

The first floor is a component part of the building and has significance, through its remaining features and its plan form.

Proposals seek to ensure the first floor can be put back into long-term viable end use, meeting the needs of modern office users. Changes will have a minor impact upon the space and are not considered to exert any degree of harm. There is a recognisable benefit in bringing the space back into long term viable end use.

The evidential and historical significance of the first floor will be retained and the space will still be readable in its original intent. Proposals have been designed to work alongside historical features and existing character and are both appropriate and sympathetic in nature. They are considered to accord with local and national policy.

OLD PLACES • NEW STORIES

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