



Heritage Impact Statement

Client:

**BLANK
STREET**

Location: 131 Portland st
Manchester

Description: Proposed coffee
shop within existing commercial
premises

Issue Date: 19.05.25

Rev A 06.08.25

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Executive Summary

Blank Street Coffee wishes to carry out the works of creating a coffee shop at the Grade II building No.131 Portland Street. The proposed works are to re-purpose the building, which is situated on the busy high street within Manchester, by providing a hospitality service to the public.

This Heritage Statement has been prepared to support the application for listed building consent to carry out the works. This Heritage Statement defines and describes the fabric affected by the proposals, identifying the age and significance of the relevant areas.

The proposed changes are assessed in detail and in relation to the significance of the fabric affected. They are assessed as appropriate, proportionate for their purposes, and necessary for sustainable/ viable use of the spaces concerned. Approval of the proposals would therefore be appropriate.

1 Summary

1.1 Introduction

This report has been prepared by Bradley Architects, on behalf of Blank Street Coffee, to form part of the submission for Listed Building Consent for the proposal to carry out the works of creating a coffee shop at the Grade II building No.131 Portland St.

The proposed works are to re-purpose the ground floor within No.131 of the building, to which is situated on the busy high street within Manchester, by providing a hospitality service to the public.

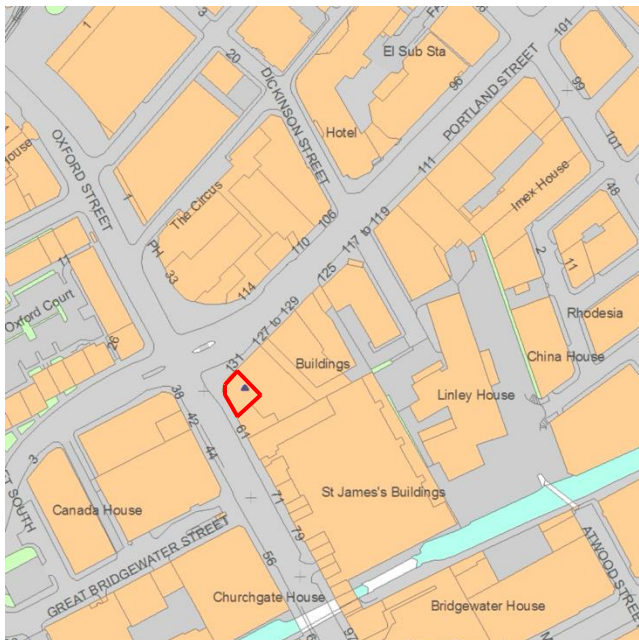
1.1.1 Location

The site for Blank Street Coffee (127-133, Portland St) is located on a corner plot of Portland St and Oxford Rd.

The building is in the national grid reference of SJ 84027 97733

SJ8497NW PortlandStreet 698-1/32/316 (South East side)
03/10/74 Nos.127 TO 133 (Odd)

The size of the building is approx. 3293 square feet with typical floor size being approx. 1883 (GF Area) square feet. (GF Gross)



1.2. The buildings and their legal status

1.2.1 Heritage

The No.131 Portland Street site sits within the boundaries of more than one authority. The district being Manchester (Metropolitan Authority)

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1246958

Date first listed: 03-Oct-1974

List Entry Name: 127-133, PORTLAND STREET

Statutory Address 1:

1.2.2 Planning

The site of No.131 Portland Street has had previous planning and listed building consents applications submitted;

- LBC Giorgio Ristorante 131 – 135 Portland Street
Application Reference: 106452 / LO / 2014 / C2
- Planning for replacement glazing to 131 Portland Street
Application Reference: 090292 / FO / 2009 / C2
- LBC internal office fitout 131 Portland Street
Application Reference: 089223 / LO / 2009 / C2
- LBC New partitions 131 Portland Street
Application Reference: 087627 / LO / 2008 / C2

1.2.3 Archaeology

The potential for buried archaeological remains has not been examined in any detail since the proposed interventions are all to be built within the original fabric, with no interventions below ground.

1.3 Summary of significance

In the final half of the 19th century Manchester's reputation as a financial and commercial centre was boosted by the unprecedented number of warehouse erected in the city centre. In 1806 there were just over 1,000 but by 1815 this had almost doubled to 1,819.

Manchester is a product of the Industrial Revolution, recognisable for its industrial past. The city is synonymous for its canals, railway viaducts, cotton mills and warehouses which were used to store or house goods before or after transit. As a result of the Industrial Revolution, the city amassed a wide array of warehouses dating from before the Victorian era (1837–1901) to the end of the Edwardian (1910).

The city has examples of six main warehouse types: display of goods, overseas, packing, shipping, railway and canal warehouses. In 1806 there were just over 1,000 but by 1815 this had almost doubled to 1,819.

Manchester was dubbed "warehouse city". The earliest were built around King Street although by 1850 warehouses had spread to Portland Street and later to Whitworth Street. They are direct descendants of the canal warehouses of Castlefield.

Behrens Building

127–133 Portland Street, Manchester city centre

Grade II. Various shipping warehouses, built by P.Nunn for Louis Behrens and Sons. Red brick and sandstone exterior. Strong horizontal emphasis which fronts onto Portland Street.

Overseas warehouses were the meeting places for overseas wholesale buyers where printed and plain cloth was discussed and ordered.^[3] Trade in cloth was conducted by merchants of many nationalities. The 1851 census showed 1000 persons of German birth in the city, and in 1871 there were 150 German business houses. Behrens Warehouse was built for Louis Behrens & Son by P Nunn in 1860. It is a four-storey predominantly red-brick building with 23 bays along Portland Street and nine on Oxford Street. The Behrens family were prominent in the banking and social life of the city's German community.

1.4 Summary of the Proposals and Justification

The proposal neither adversely impacts any part of the existing building, contributing positively to its significance as a heritage asset, nor does it result in substantial harm to the heritage asset's significance; any potential harm is minimal.

In accordance with paragraph 207 of the NPPF, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Securing the long-term optimal use of the building as office premises and offering goods services such as food and drink to Manchester's bustling high street will deliver ongoing benefits to the public resulting from this proposal. These benefits outweigh any minimal harm caused to the building, which primarily involves redecorating the interior and implementing well considered signage on the exterior.

The proposals impact on the conservation area will be negligible given that the proposed works will mainly be internal, to which most of the heritage assets are within the ground floor which are to remain. Further to this, those that are on the ground floor, such as heritage ceiling detailing will also be retained. Repair works to the external façade have been considered, with a like for like material being used and stitched in as sympathetically as possible. All existing holes will be filled and repaired to blend in with the existing stone building.

The proposals are acceptable with regard to Section 16 of the NPPF.

The proposals also accord with core strategy policy EN 3 as they will support the council's aim of preserving the continued use of heritage assets. The application should therefore be fully supported by the council.

1.4.1 Information and sources consulted

The report has been prepared in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Historic England guidance, especially those paragraphs regarding designated heritage assets. It also takes due account of Manchester City Council policy on planning, listed buildings and conservation.

Research has included consultation of various sources as part of the preparation works for this Heritage Statement, which included but were not restricted to: National Heritage List (Historic England).

2. Site Analysis

2.1 Brief History



In the mid-19th century, warehouses were mostly built of brick with sandstone dressings and steps to the front door. They were five or six storeys tall with basements housing hydraulic presses, had wooden floors supported on cast iron columns and at the rear of the building was a loading bay with hydraulic cranes. Fireproof construction was used at the end of the century and into the next. The most successful traders built their own warehouse and many speculative developments offered suites and offices for those who needed smaller premises. Warehouses for the home market in ready-made clothing, haberdashery and fancy goods attracted retailers who visited them to view the goods and make orders. Shipping warehouses, receiving and storing and packing goods for export, multiplied after 1815.

Many early-20th-century warehouses were built to a common design with steps to a raised ground floor with a showroom and offices, and the first floor contained more offices and waiting rooms for clients all decorated to impress customers. The working areas above were plain with large windows to allow in natural light. Orders were packed there and sent to the basement on hoists powered by Manchester hydraulic system and packed into bales using hydraulic presses before dispatch. The warehouses were lit by gas

Warehouses were a dominant part of the urban landscape in the 19th century and continued to be through the 20th century; the buildings remained when their original use had changed. There were several types of cotton warehouse.

Behrens Building is part of the various shipping warehouses, now bank (No.133) and variously occupied. Built in 1860, by P.Nunn for Louis Behrens and Sons; altered. Some sandstone ashlar but mostly red brick with sandstone dressings (roof concealed). Irregular plan on large trapeziform corner site, with rounded corner to Oxford Street. Four storeys with basement, 23 bays plus 2-window corner, a very regular composition with strong horizontal emphasis; with stone plinth, channelled rusticated facings to piers and doorway surrounds at ground floor, moulded stone cornice over this, rusticated quoins to the corners, moulded sill-band to 3rd floor, and brick parapet with stone coping. The ground floor has 3 pairs of segmental-headed loading bay entrances with run-out voussoirs and voluted keystones, and a round-headed doorway in similar style, alternating with groups of 3 sashed windows over basement openings; and the bank at the right-hand end has a corner doorway with richly moulded surround, and coupled plate-glass windows in each side wall. The 1st and 2nd floors form a continuous arcade of giant round-headed arches with moulded imposts and keyed heads, segmental-headed sashes at 1st floor, round-headed sashes at 2nd floor, and brick panels between; the 3rd floor has pairs of small square-headed sashes. Corner and 4-bay return in matching style. Forms group with No.61 Oxford Street (q.v.).
Listing NGR: SJ8402797733



It is evident that the site has been cleared after the previous leaseholder especially in the basement areas and ground floor some original features have been preserved through various occupancies. Particularly in the basement, you can observe elements such as original metal gate door see **FIGURE 2.1**. Even though, some features were retained over time in the basement, the original layout has changed with several partition walls fitted to create smaller plants, storage rooms. It was also noted that there have been considerable repairs to the existing steel columns see **FIGURE 2.2** , also alterations to the existing lath and plaster ceiling for the installation of ductwork/services, see **FIGURE 2.3 & 2.4**

On the ground floor, an existing ceiling and cornice has been installed above the existing columns by the previous occupier see **FIGURE 2.5** The existing ceiling detail will be used for the installation of lighting whilst retaining the locations of the emergency escape and lighting details. Existing doors to be retained see **FIGURE 2.6**.

The ground floor area comprises one large open space, with windows to two of the four sides of the room.



FIGURE 2.1 SITE PHOTOGRAPH WITHIN BASEMENT OF ORIGINAL METAL GATE



FIGURE 2.2 SITE PHOTOGRAPH WITHIN BASEMENT OF THE REPAIRS TO THE EXISTING STEEL COLUMN



FIGURE 2.3 SITE PHOTOGRAPH SHOWING EXISTING CEILING OPENINGS FORM&E SERVICES



FIGURE 2.4 SITE PHOTOGRAPH OF BASEMENT SHOWING ORIGINAL LATH & PLASTER CEILING



FIGURE 2.5 SITE PHOTOGRAPH OF GROUND FLOOR SHOWING NEW CORNICE INSTALLED BY PREVIOUS OCCUPIER





FIGURE 2.6 SITE PHOTOGRAPH OF GROUND FLOOR SHOWING EXISTING DELIVERY DOORS TO BE RETAINED



FIGURE 2.7 SITE PHOTOGRAPH OF GROUND FLOOR SHOWING EXISTING ENTRANCE DOORS TO BE RETAINED



FIGURE 2.8 SITE PHOTOGRAPH OF GROUND FLOOR SHOWING EXISTING CEILING TO BE RETAINED



FIGURE 2.9 SITE PHOTOGRAPH OF GROUND FLOOR SHOWING EXISTING FLOOR FINISHES



FIGURE 2.10 SITE PHOTOGRAPH OF GROUND FLOOR SHOWING EXISTING FINISHES



FIGURE 2.11 SITE PHOTOGRAPH OF BASEMENT FLOOR SHOWING EXISTING PLANT

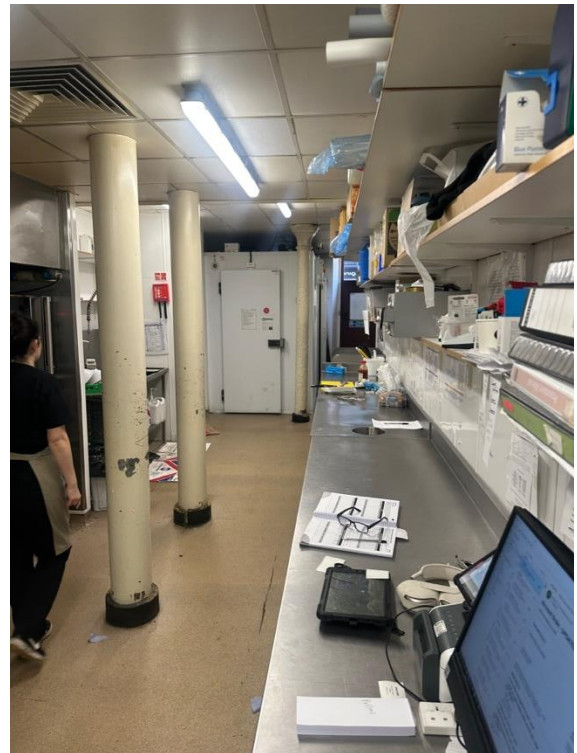


FIGURE 2.12 SITE PHOTOS OF GROUND FLOOR AREA SHOWING THE KITCHEN AREA.

3. Assessment of Significance

This section identifies the significance of the relevant areas of the proposed works using the following hierarchy of significance: high (national), medium (local/county) and low (slight) significance, including neutral (not important but also does not detract from a site's value) and detrimental (where something has a negative effect on significance) or visually intrusive. These assessments cover the historic, evidential, aesthetic and community values of the heritage asset in question if appropriate.

3.1 Summary of Significance

In the final half of the 19th century Manchester's reputation as a financial and commercial centre was boosted by the unprecedented number of warehouse erected in the city centre. In 1806 there were just over 1,000 but by 1815 this had almost doubled to 1,819. Manchester was dubbed "warehouse city". The earliest were built around King Street although by 1850 warehouses had spread to Portland Street and later to Whitworth Street.

The Behrens Warehouse Warehouses, now bank (No.133) and variously occupied. 1860, by P.Nunn for Louis Behrens and Sons; altered. Some sandstone ashlar but mostly red brick with sandstone dressings (roof concealed). Irregular plan on large trapeziform corner site, with rounded corner to Oxford Street. Four storeys with basement, 23 bays plus 2-window corner, a very regular composition with strong horizontal emphasis; with stone plinth, channelled rusticated facings to piers and doorway surrounds at ground floor, moulded stone cornice over this, rusticated quoins to the corners, moulded sill-band to 3rd floor, and brick parapet with stone coping.

The ground floor has 3 pairs of segmental-headed loading bay entrances with run-out voussoirs and voluted keystones, and a round-headed doorway in similar style, alternating with groups of 3 sashed windows over basement openings; and the bank at the right-hand end has a corner doorway with richly moulded surround, and coupled plate-glass windows in each side wall. The 1st and 2nd floors form a continuous arcade of giant round-headed arches with moulded imposts and keyed heads, segmental-headed sashes at 1st floor, round-headed sashes at 2nd floor, and brick panels between; the 3rd floor has pairs of small square-headed sashes. Corner and 4-bay return in matching style. Forms group with No.61 Oxford Street
The building was listed in 1974 namely for it's exterior.

3.2. Hierarchy of Significance

High

- The exterior façade plays a crucial role in the broader street scene, adding to the character of the conservation area.

-

Medium

- Cast iron columns (within ground floor)
- Metal gate door (within basement)
- Main entrance doors

Low

- None

Neutral

- None

Detrimental

- None

4. Proposals

4.1 Brief and Needs

Blank Street Coffee wishes to carry out the works of creating a coffee shop at the Grade II building 131 Portland Street. The proposed works are to re-purpose the building, which is situated on the busy high street within Manchester, by providing a service to the public.

Re-purposing listed buildings addresses the dual goals of preserving cultural heritage and meeting contemporary needs, contributing to sustainable development, and fostering community well-being.



FIGURE 4.1 PROPOSED RENDERED IMAGE OF THE NEW BLANK STREET COFFEE

4.2. The Proposed Scheme

4.2.1. Heritage Impact Assessment

The impact assessment below is provided to satisfy the requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023, particularly paragraphs 200 and 201. These highlight the requirements of local authorities to consider the impact of proposals and assess the level of harm that they might cause to the significance of a designated asset.

The proposals part of this application are described in section 4.2, with a particular focus on where and how they affect significant fabric. This section analyses, as required by the NPPF, if the proposals would cause harm to the significance of the listed building or surrounding heritage assets. This analysis of harm is presented, for ease of read, alongside the descriptions of the proposals, but shown in italics.

Following the ICOMOS guidance, NPPF requirements and considering the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 the impacts are categorised as adverse, neutral, or beneficial, and where harm is identified, it is determined as 'substantial' or 'less than substantial'. The assessment also considers whether there are mitigating factors which lessen the potential for harm.

4.2.2 New Services to the Basement

Works to the basement will include the fixing of new services and the associated pipework runs, and these comprise: air conditioning outlets and pipework for the 1no. Ceiling mounted cassette unit on the ground floor, mechanical ventilation and foul drainage for the new toilet on the ground floor, and a new wall mounted air conditioning unit in the basement.

The new pipework for this unit and the unit to the groundfloor are fixed using existing services trays and where not possible new service trays are to be fixed to the ceiling using small screw fixings.

The proposed mechanical ventilation for the new ground floor toilet will run within the ceiling void of the new toilet enclosure, and down to the basement using the existing services riser, and with associated pipework at ceiling height .The new pipework will be fixed at ceiling height using duct brackets fixed using small screw fixings and the penetrations



FIGURE 4.2 BASEMENT: EXISTING SERVICES TO BE REPLACED. EXISTING PENETRATIONS RE-USED.



FIGURE 4.3 BASEMENT: EXISTING SERVICES TO BE REPLACED AND CABLE TRAY RE-USED.

4.2.3. Repairs to the Basement

The basement area is to be used exclusively for storage and mechanical equipment. There will be no customer access and all the original heritage features are to be retained.



FIGURE 4.4 BASEMENT: AREA.

4.2.4. Repairs & proposed works to the ground floor

The ground floor is where the main coffee shop will be and is the area that will have the most significant changes, however the proposal has been carefully considered to be sympathetic to the original building and existing historic features.



FIGURE 4.9 EXISTING CEILING AND COLUMNS TO BE RETAINED WITH NEW PAINT FINISH



FIGURE 4.10 EXISTING VINYL FLOORING TO BE CAREFULLY LIFTED, AREA TO HAVE 12MM PLY FINISH WITH CERAMIC TILE FINISH.



FIGURE 4.16 GROUND FLOOR: EXISTING TIMBER FLOOR TO BE OVERLAID WITH 12MM PLY TO RECEIVE TILED FINISH



FIGURE 4.17 GROUND FLOOR: EXISTING EQUIPMENT AND WORKTOPS TO BE REMOVED



FIGURE 4.18 EXISTING STAFF TOILET AREA TO BE RECONFIGURED FOR NEW CUSTOMER DISABLED TOILET



FIGURE 4.19 EXISTING WALK-IN FRIDGE FREEZER AND KITCHEN WALL TO BE REMOVED

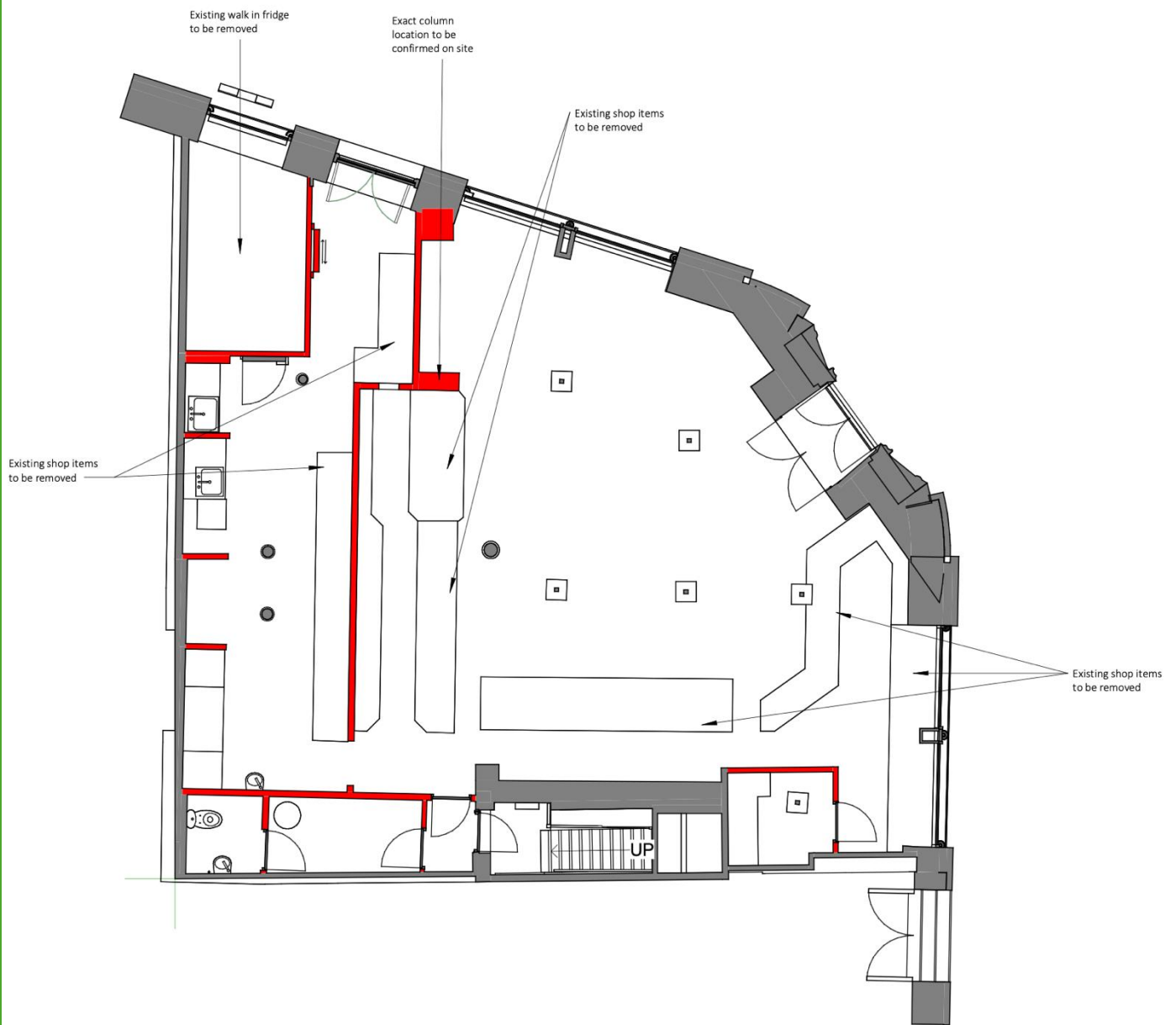


FIGURE 4.5 EXISTING PLAN

Note: Walls in red to be removed

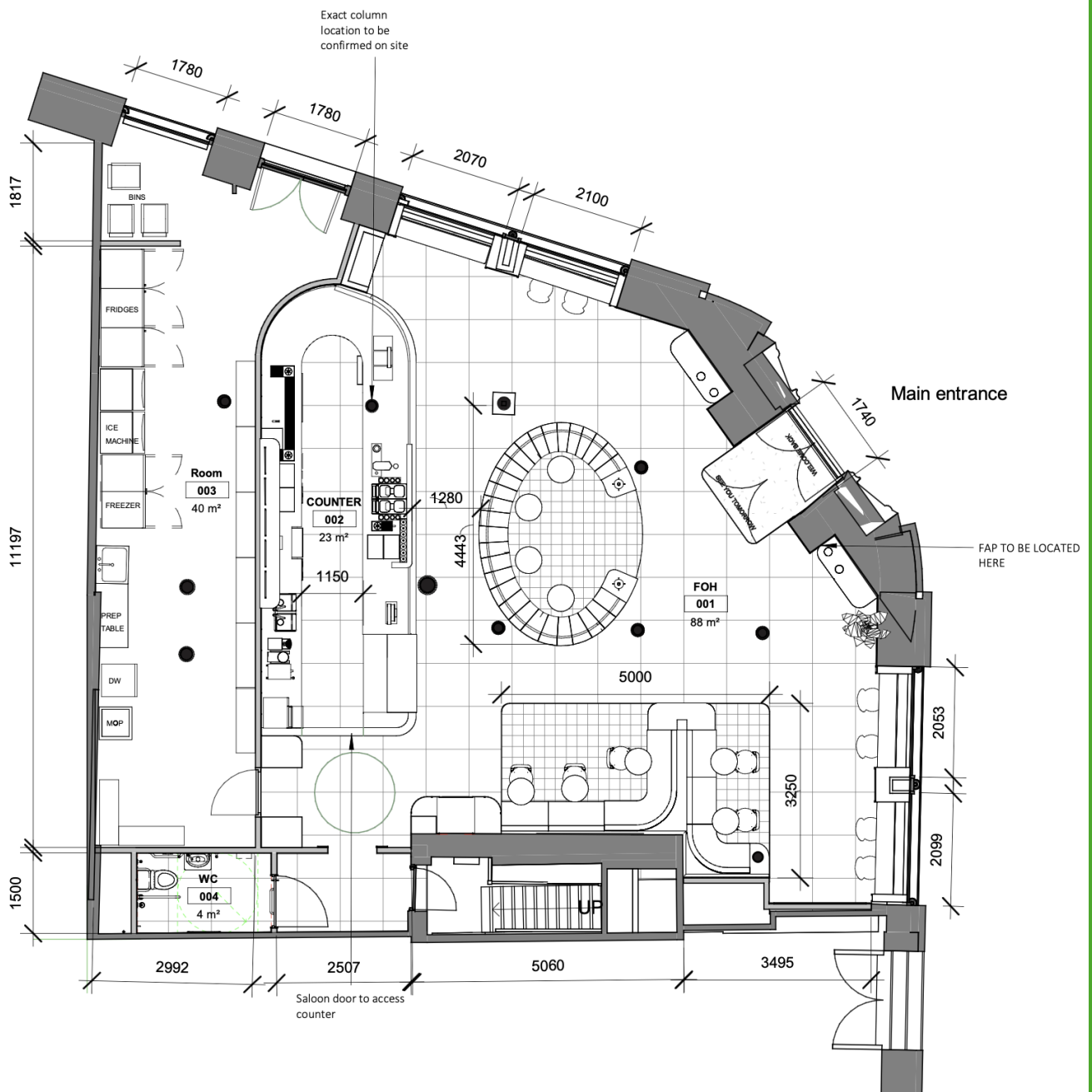


FIGURE 4.6 PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR PLAN

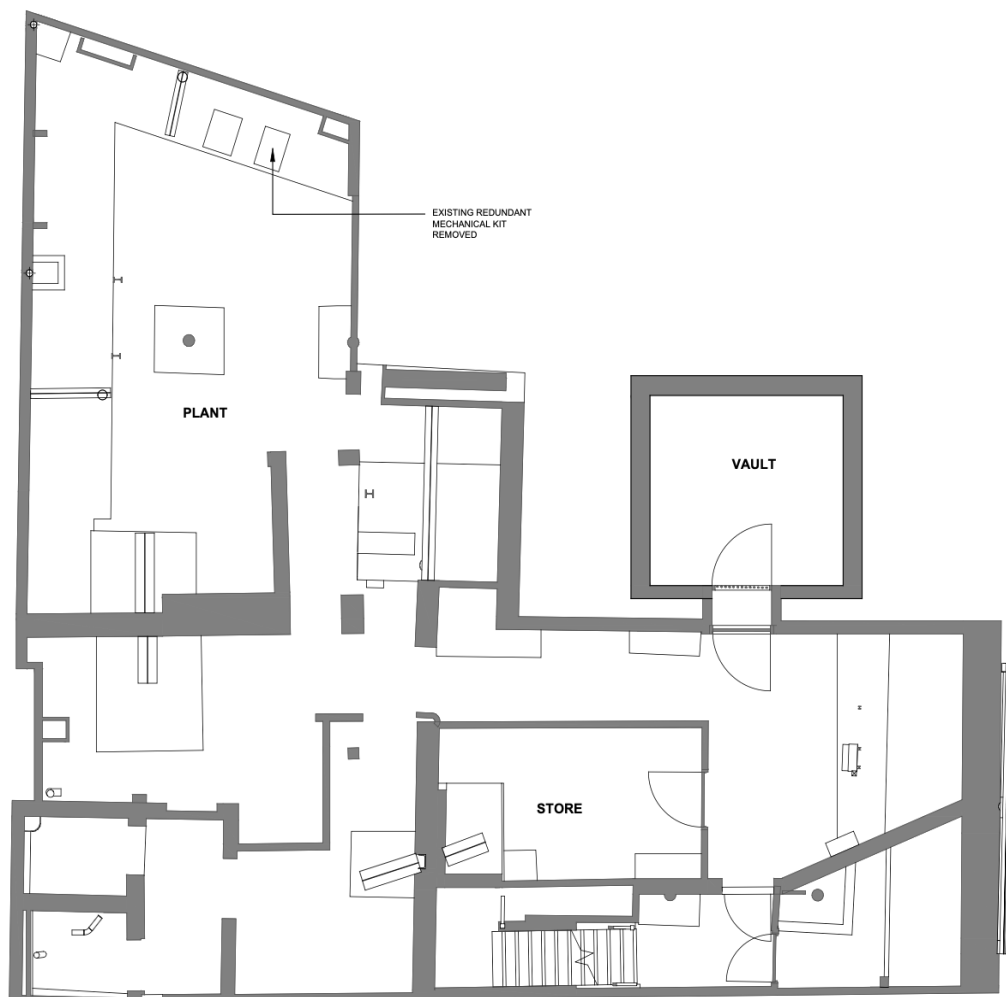


FIGURE 4.7 PROPOSED BASEMENT PLAN

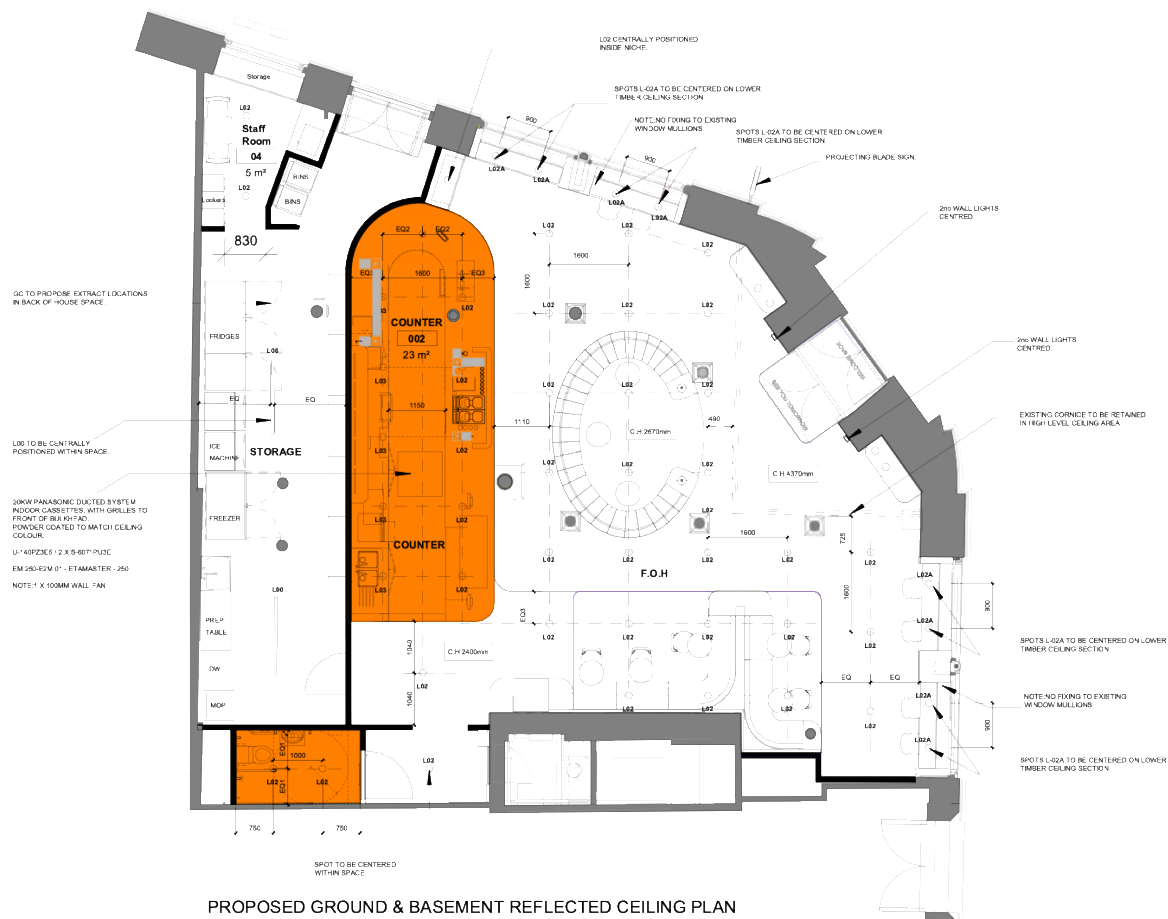


FIGURE 4.8 PROPOSED RCP PLAN

4.3. Justification of the Proposals

In line with the 2023 NPPF and Sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the justification for the works described above is listed below.

The site has remained vacant for awaiting a new occupant. Proposing a coffee shop is a reasonable choice, considering the previous use by Philpots which occupied the space for numerous years. The overall design has been thoughtfully crafted to complement the style of the building. Subtle and complementary illuminated signage will be placed above the entrance, along with a small sign on the Oxford Street external wall.

There will be no alteration to the existing shop front colour. Internally, 'Blank Street Coffee' branding colours have been chosen for cohesion across their UK stores. However, to honour the Grade II listed building, colour and design choices have been made to harmonise with and highlight the original features.

Furthermore, the site will be adapted to include an accessible toilet on the ground level, enhancing public accessibility.

4.4. Conclusion

The proposal neither negatively affects any part of the existing building, making a positive contribution to its significance as a heritage asset, nor does it result in substantial harm to the heritage asset's significances; any harm is minimal. In accordance with paragraph 134 of the NPPF, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

Securing the long-term optimal use of the building as office premises and offering goods services such as food and drink to Manchester's bustling high street will deliver ongoing benefits to the public resulting from this proposal. These benefits outweigh any minimal harm caused to the building, which primarily involves redecorating the interior and implementing well considered signage on the exterior.

The proposals impact on the conservation area will be negligible given that the proposed works will mainly be internal, to which most of the heritage assets are externally which is to remain. Repair works to the external façade (Holes drilled due to previous signage schemes) have been considered, with a like for like material being used and stitched in as sympathetically as possible.

The proposals are acceptable with regard to Section 16 of the NPPF.

The proposals also accord with core strategy policy EN 3 as they will support the council's aim of preserving the continued use of heritage assets. The application should therefore be fully supported by the council.

5. Case Study: Cross St, Manchester



Blank Street Coffee recently opened a second coffee shop development in Manchester at No.62 Cross Street in April 2024, which is also a Grade II listed building. The proposed works at Portland street is of a similar nature.



FIGURE 5.1 EXISTING CEILING FINISHES RETAINED FOR THE LONGEVITY OF THE BUILDING.



FIGURE 5.2. EXTERNAL SIGNAGE

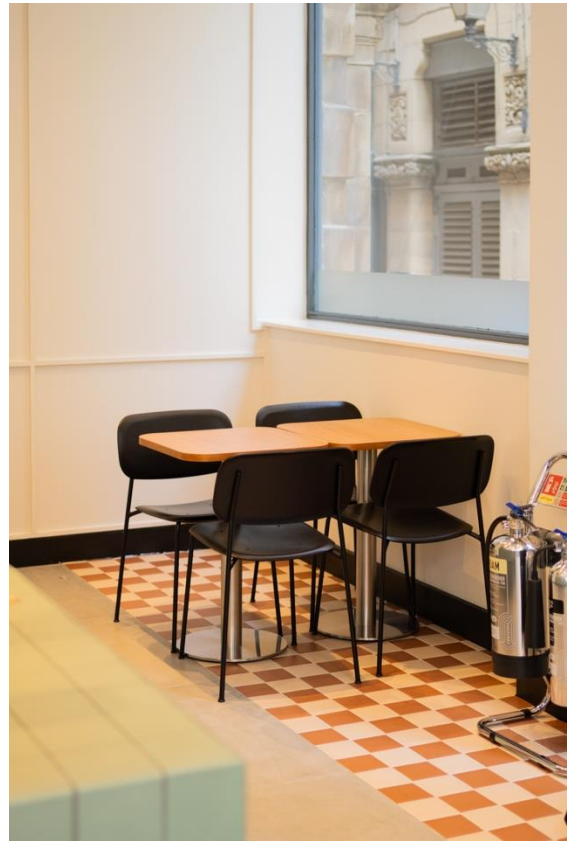


Figure 5.3 Blank Street, conversion of Grade II Listed building on Cross St, Manchester. Internal photos.

BLANK STREET

131 Portland St. Manchester

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