

DATE: 01-08-2025

MNA JOB REF: 1452/1B

PLANNING APP REF: 143403/LO/2025 – HERITAGE STATEMENT : Revision A

BIMM/NORTHERN BALLET SCHOOL

THE DANCEHOUSE

10a OXFORD ROAD, MANCHESTER M1 5QA

The Dancehouse Building:

Grade 2 Listed in 2000 ref 1384997 (see Document at appendix A).

A full description of the building's history: for its owners, construction date, uses and design are provided in the listing document.

The listing description makes a passing reference the works to the building's interior, when it was converted (in the 1990s) into a place of education, from a dual auditorium venue to a single auditorium with ancillary spaces for teaching.(see Photos at appendix B)

The exterior of the building was largely untouched by the 1990s works. The listing description reviews front facade and identifies the entrance and canopy area: “ ... *the facade is divided into 9 bays filled with shop units at ground level, except for the central bay which forms the entrance to the theatre, with a canopy above to attract attention* ...”. That description is still accurate and relevant today.

The Proposals:

Efforts have been made to collate drawings or images from the Manchester Planning portal and elsewhere, to cross reference the current proposals with historic or earlier development, relating to the exterior of the building and focusing upon the signs or advertising media that would likely have been adopted to “*attract attention*” of the general public and that would have been positioned on or adjacent to the entrance and the projecting canopy throughout the life of this building.

Please see appendix C for archive images of the Dancehouse Manchester. The images show various views looking down Oxford Road, which are fairly recent date and historic – judging by the age of the vehicles. Each image indicates a variation of the signs including in the application proposals .

Unfortunately, no other specific original or significant information has been found from any of the sources investigated.

The proposals are looking to:-

- Renew the existing canopy fascia signs
- Add free standing individual letter signs on the top of the canopy
- Re-establish to use of a hanging banner sign.

These are all traditional sign types that are often used upon theatres and have in the past been used at this site. The proposal is seeking a consent to maintain and re-establish the signs in respect to the fascia and hanging banner and a consent for the individual letter sign.

- Banner sign.
 - As noted above, no evidence has been found for the date when the existing banner gantry was installed. It is possible that prior to the conversion works by

the NBC in the mid 1990s, that gantry was used by the previous theatrical operator, and has remained in place.

- The existing painted steel Canti-lever gantry mounted at third floor level is already fitted with rigging ropes, that hang vertically down to corresponding rigging tethers mounted upon the flat roof of the entrance canopy.
 - Subject to the applicant establishing the condition of the gantry and tethering ropes prior to erecting the banner, no additional works are proposed that will adversely affect the Listed Building's façade or the canopy roof.
- Canopy fascia and letter signs.
 - Investigations into the historic use of the entrance canopy, have established via archive photographs that the vertical faces of the canopy have been used for mounting signs to advertise events or shows in the building.
 - It is possible that the canopy was originally conceived and designed with a deep fascia to permit the application of advertising media, that is easily accessed from street level, allowing for regular changes to the sign panels to reflect and advertise the current or forthcoming shows or events.
 - It is assumed, that various sign types have been mounted on these surfaces since the canopy was originally erected for the dual cinemas, and used latterly when the building became a theatre.
 - More recently, the NBC-Bimm operators since the conversion from a theatre to a college in the mid 1990s, have utilised the fascia areas for sign panels to identify the college.
 - The existing fascia signs are a pre-printed composite board (non-illuminated panels), that are affixed via screws to a background framework forming the canopy's outer structure. It is proposed to remove these panels in lieu of the new proposals.
 - The new fascia sign proposals are for internally illuminated signs, created from aluminium as a shallow 60mm box to contain the LED lighting, with fret cut apertures forming the text and logo. The internal illumination is defused via opal acrylic 'lenses' applied behind the fret cut apertures.
 - The letter signs are individual letters vertically mounted upon the top face of a continuous 'carrier' aluminium box, via a welded bar positioned behind each letter. The letters are to be illuminated via LED contained within the box, defused by an opal acrylic lens.
 - The carrier box will be fixed into the canopies roof edge upstand, via spacers embedded in non-setting roofing mastic to permit levelling and preclude water ingress.

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EXISTING BANNER GANTRY AT SECOND FLOOR LEVE



EXISTING BANNER GANTRY AND RIGGING ROPES

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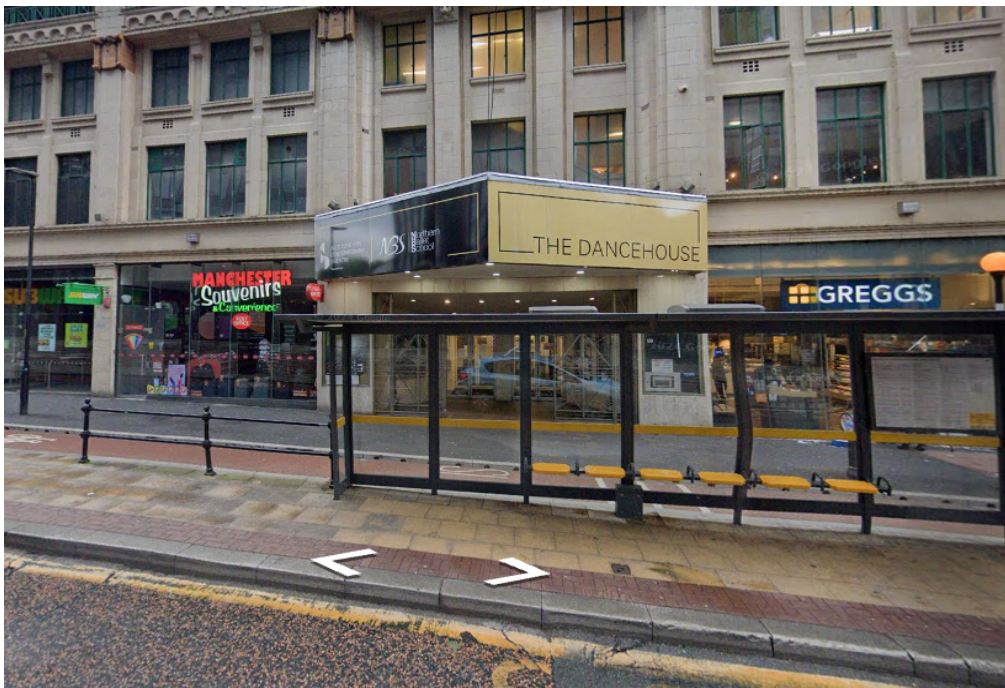
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EXISTING CANOPY ROOF, BANNER RIGGING ROPES & TETHERS



EXISTING CANOPY AND FACIA SIGNS