

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no. 141783/LO/2024

Date registered valid: 19 December 2024

Proposal: Listed Building Consent for works associated with refurbishing the existing conference centre.

Address: New Warehouse, Museum Of Science And Industry, Liverpool Road, Manchester, M3 4JP

Ward(s): Deansgate Ward

Applicant: Science & Industry Museum

Agent (if any): Buttress Architects Ltd

Case officer: Jack Naven
Tel: 0161 219 2095
Email: jack.naven@manchester.gov.uk

Recommendation: Approve

Date of recommendation: 11 March 2025

Application Details

Type of application: Listed Building Consent

Development type: Listed building alteration

Date of site visit: 3 January 2025

Standard consultations:

Printed: 2 January 2025 Expired: 23 January 2025

Neighbour notifications

Printed: 2 January 2025 Expired: 23 January 2025

Site notice

Posted: 3 January 2024 Expired: 24 January 2024

Press advert

Published: 7 January 2025 Expired: 28 January 2025

Departure from Development Plan: No

Environmental Statement: Not required

Description of Site/Area

Listed building: Grade II

Conservation area: Castlefield Conservation Area 1979

Tree Preservation Order: Not applicable

The Science and Industry Museum (formerly known as the Museum of Science and Industry) is a large museum devoted to the development of science, technology and industry with emphasis on the city's achievements in these fields. The museum is part of the Science Museum Group, a non-departmental public body of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, having merged with the National Science Museum in 2012.

The site is located within the Castlefield Conservation Area. The large and complex former "Liverpool Road Railway Station" site contains a significant collection of Grade I and Grade II listed buildings.

The application site relates to the New Warehouse, a Grade II Listed building within the Science & Industry Museum complex.

The warehouse was constructed as a fireproof bonded (secure) warehouse in 1878-80 for the Great Western Railway Company. The building forms a three-storey (plus basement), seven bay rectangular red and blue engineering brick warehouse, with entrances for railway lines through the wester elevation from the 1869 viaduct which ran into the warehouse using an apron extended at basement level westwards from the 1867 viaduct.

The building was converted and extended in 2001. Stair cores and entrances were introduced, and its interior was substantially remodelled.

The Lower and Upper Yards are open cobbled spaces which connect the various historic buildings within the Science and Industry Museum complex.

The Upper Yard is bounded by the New Warehouse to the north and the Power Hall to the south. The historic electric gantry covers the southern half of the yard space, running along the length of the Power Hall.

The New Warehouse is a part of the oldest passenger/goods railway in the world. The Liverpool Road Site as a whole is of national and global significance as it is the first of its kind and a model for others that followed. Historically, the whole site, including the New Warehouse, is of the highest value, for its broader associations with railway pioneers and for its wider global influence on the development of railway transport. The associated communal value, both at the time of their development and today, as an educational and historical resource, is of the highest order. Liverpool Road remains the most complete surviving early railway station complex in the world and the historic buildings make a unique and highly positive contribution to the Castlefield Conservation Area and the wider city.

The New Warehouse is a significant component part of the station complex and is a good example of the evolving design of railway warehousing. Its importance is reflected by its Grade II listed status. Architecturally and aesthetically, the New Warehouse embraced fire-proofing technology and represents a distinct shift from the early warehousing form (for example, at the 1830s warehouse). The engineering and form displayed in the Liverpool Road buildings went on to influence railway development around the globe.

The original structure of New Warehouse building has a high heritage significance. Numerous alterations have been made to the building, particularly in order to serve its museum function. For example, the roof covering has previously been replaced in the late Twentieth century. Evidential values remain high despite the numerous adaptations and alterations to facilitate the use of a museum.

Description of Development

The application seeks listed building consent for works associated with refurbishing the existing conference centre.

These works primarily consist of a new glazed screen being installed on the second floor, that will be situated around an existing floor void which runs through the first floor and to the ground floor level.

The interventions are required in order to mitigate noise breakout that comes through the void from visitors to the main entrance to the New Warehouse below. This includes a presentation screen on the ground floor, where staff often show videos and explain elements of the exhibition to large groups of people, often large groups of children.

There will also be some light touch refurbishment and redecoration work to non-historic elements.

Consultations & Notification Responses

Publicity - Neighbour notification letters were sent to surrounding properties. A site notice and local press advert were also produced. At the time of writing this report, no representations have been received because of this publicity.

Policy

The effect of the proposal on the affected heritage asset has been considered under the following criteria.

The Adopted Core Strategy for the City of Manchester (2012)

SP1 (Spatial Principles) advises that development in all parts of the City should protect and enhance the built environment.

EN1 (Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas) advises that developer's will be expected to consider the City's heritage, including its listed buildings, conservation areas, archaeological remains and historic street pattern.

EN3 (Heritage) advises that throughout the City, the Council will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods, including those of the City Centre and that proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets will be encouraged where they are considered consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.

CC9 (Design and Heritage) advises that development in Manchester should preserve or enhance the heritage assets affected.

DM1 (Development Management) advises that all development should be appropriately sited, scaled, formed, massed, and detailed with appropriate layout and materials and should have regard to the character of the surrounding area and effects on built heritage.

The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) for the City of Manchester (1995)

DC18.1 (Conservation Areas) states that the Council will give particularly careful consideration to development proposals within Conservation Area. The Council will seek to preserve and enhance the character of its designated conservation areas by carefully considering; the relationship of new structures to neighbouring buildings and spaces; and the effect of major changes to the appearance of existing buildings.

DC19.1 (Listed Buildings) states that the Council will have regard to the desirability of securing the retention, restoration, maintenance and continued use of such buildings and to protecting their general settings by; not permitting any external or internal alterations or addition to a listed building where, in its opinion, there would be an adverse effect on its architectural or historic character; and seek to preserve and enhance the setting of listed buildings by appropriate control over the design of new development in their vicinity, control over the use of adjacent land, and where appropriate, by the preservation of trees and landscape features.

Places for Everyone

The Places for Everyone Plan is a Joint Development Plan Document, providing a strategic plan and policies, for nine of the 10 boroughs which make up Greater Manchester.

JP-Strat2 (City Centre) states that the role of the City Centre as the most significant economic location in the country outside London will be strengthened considerably. The City Centre will continue to provide the primary focus for business, retail, leisure, culture and tourism activity in Greater Manchester, but the increasingly important residential role of the City Centre will be expanded. It will be a priority for investment in development and infrastructure. This will include addressing current network capacity issues in the City Centre which will enable the future expansion of the rapid transit public transport network across Greater Manchester.

Improvements in the public realm, walking and cycling facilities, and green infrastructure will help to enhance the local character and environmental quality of the City Centre so that it can rival city centres across the globe, enabling it to compete effectively at the international level for investment, businesses, skilled workers, residents and tourists. A broad range of commercial accommodation will be delivered, helping the City Centre to capture growth across key economic sectors. The new functions within the City Centre will be delivered in a way that complement, rather than displace the area's non-residential functions and will seek to protect and enhance the city centre's historic environment and assets.

JP-P1 (Sustainable Places) states an aim to become one of the most liveable city regions in the world, consisting of a series of beautiful, healthy, and varied places, each having the following key attributes that all development, wherever appropriate, should be distinctive, with a clear identity, visually stimulating, socially inclusive, resilient, adaptable, durable, resource efficient, safe, supported by critical infrastructure, functional and convenient, incorporating accessibility, legible easy to move around, well connected, comfortable and inviting, incorporating high quality and well managed green infrastructure and public realm, well served by local shops, services and amenities.

JP-P2 (Heritage) aims to proactively manage and work with partners to positively conserve, sustain and enhance its historic environment and heritage assets and their settings. Opportunities will be pursued to aid the promotion, enjoyment, understanding and interpretation of heritage assets, as a means of maximising wider public benefits and reinforcing Greater Manchester's distinct identity and sense of place. The policy requires development proposals affecting a designated heritage asset (or an archaeological site of national importance) and a conservation area to conserve those elements which contribute to its significance including those identified in any conservation area appraisal as making a positive contribution to the area. Harm to such elements will only be permitted where this is clearly justified and outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024)

Development decisions should, therefore, accord with the requirements of the NPPF, in particular to section 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment).

It is a fundamental requirement of the NPPF that planning proposals contribute to the achievement of "sustainable development". In order to meet this key planning objective, in this instance, the development should sustain and contribute to the stimulation of a thriving historic environment.

Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places) advises that the government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.

Section 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) states the following:

Paragraph 202 advises that heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

Paragraph 207 advises that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected. The level of detail should be sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

Paragraph 208 advises that LPAs should ensure that any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal is avoided or minimised.

Paragraph 210 advises that in determining applications, LPAs should take account of:

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation.
- The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality.
- The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraph 212 advises that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.

Paragraph 213 advises that any harm to or loss of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm or loss should be exceptional and substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, including grade I and II* listed buildings should be wholly exceptional.

Paragraph 214 states that where a development proposal will lead to substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

Paragraph 215 advises that proposals of less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset should be assessed against the wider public benefits of the proposal.

Paragraph 219 advises that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance.

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) is a web-based resource which was launched in March 2014 and coincided with the cancelling of the majority of Government Circulars. It provides guidance on many aspects of planning including plan-making and decision taking.

NPPG advises that 'In the case of buildings, generally the risks of neglect and decay of heritage assets are best addressed through ensuring that they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation. Ensuring such heritage assets remain used and valued is likely to require sympathetic changes to be made from time to time' (Paragraph 002).

Other Legislation

Sections 16, 66 and 72 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 require that special consideration is given to the preservation of the significant fabric and setting of listed buildings and conservation areas.

Issues

In determining whether the proposed works are acceptable, the main issue to consider is the impact these proposed works will have on the historic character, significance, and fabric of the listed building itself and to establish whether the public benefits, including heritage benefits, of the proposal will outweigh any harm to the significance of the heritage asset.

Principle of the Development

Works have been undertaken to the roof of the New Warehouse for most of the past year.

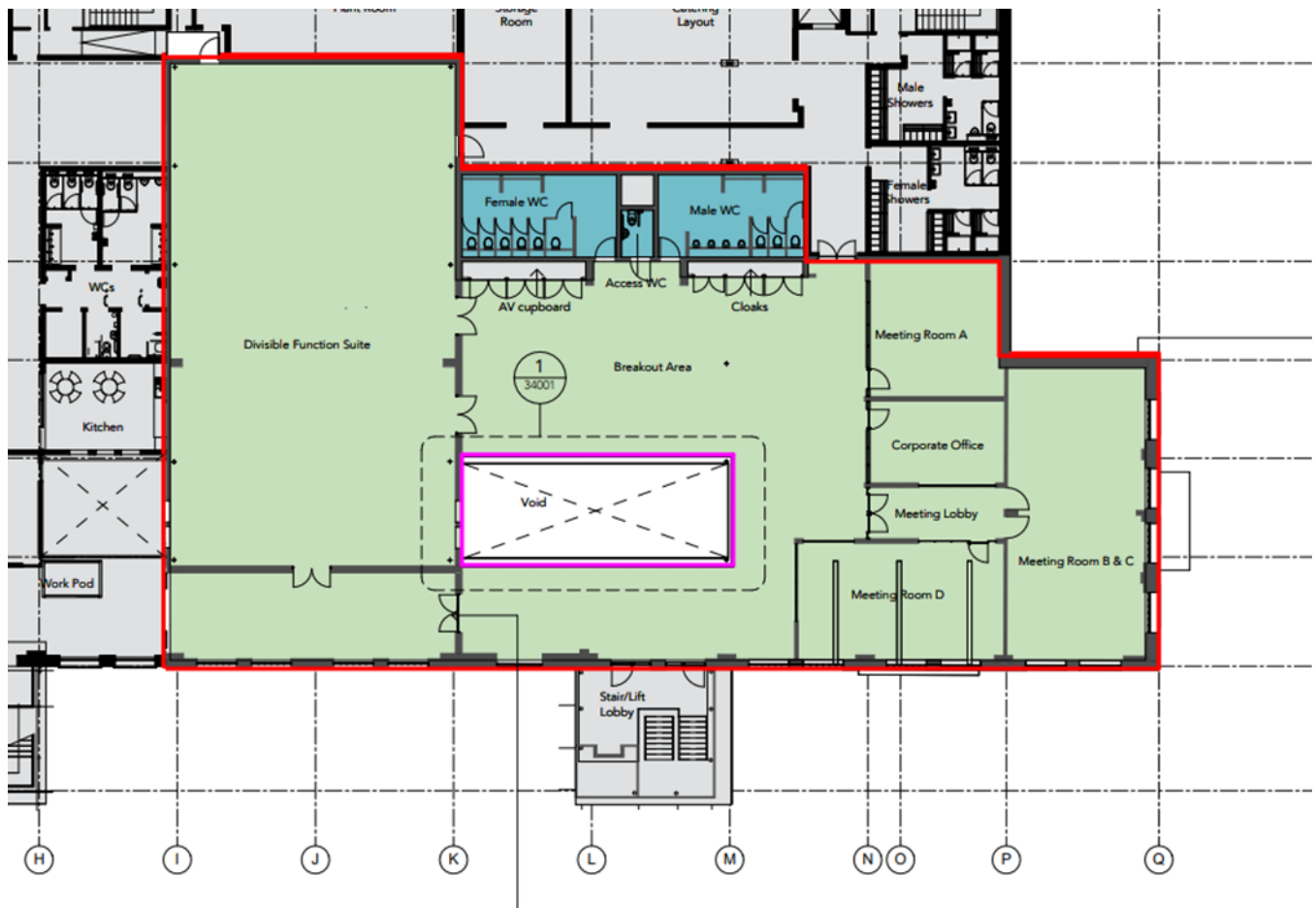
A crash deck was temporarily in place around the atrium, placed there for an extended period due to the work going on to the roof.

This temporary crash deck structure successfully mitigated noise transfer from the public exhibition spaces below on the ground floor.

The areas on the second floor are rented out as conference spaces and the reduction in noise transfer that has taken place over the past year has resulted in positive feedback from users of this space.

The museum therefore wants to install a void surround that achieves a similar level of noise transfer mitigation but is more in keeping the visual consistency and sympathetic to the historic significance of the New Warehouse.

The principle of the development is considered to be acceptable on the basis that the mitigation in noise transfer from the lower levels will result in a higher usage of this historic space which will allow for greater appreciation of this space, especially the historic roof.



Proposed second floor plan showing proposed void location

Assessment of Significance

The main significance of the building is derived from its architectural interest as a late C19th bonded warehouse with a distinctive industrial aesthetic and also associated the development of the Liverpool Road Station, the first passenger railway station.

The second-floor space of the New Warehouse, which is the area that this application is concerned with, is now largely subdivided into multiple spaces, used for conferencing, meetings, education and teaching. Floor and wall finishes are largely modern with the exception of the exposed brick walls around the perimeter. Spaces are open to the roof, with the trusses and rooflights visible throughout.

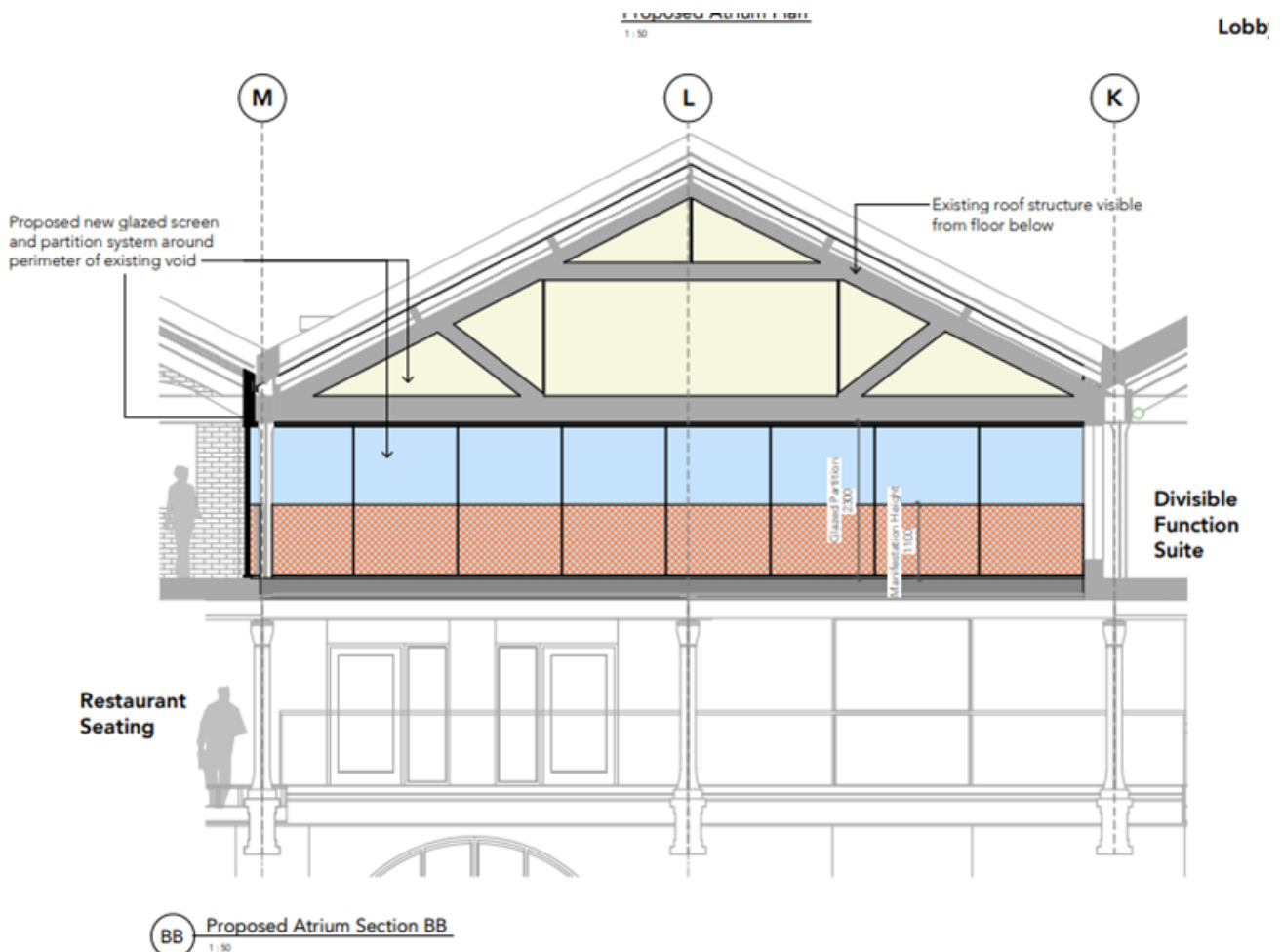
The second-floor space is significant in its functional layout and design and illustrative value in relation to the building's former use. The large open plan layout is indicative of the space's original function as a storage area, differing from the layout of those below, with a simpler layout.

The building's complex and attractive roof trusses are visible within the space, contributing to its character and illustrating the level of engineering a design incorporated into Victorian Industrial infrastructure.

Overall, the significance of the space would be considered to be medium.

Impact on Heritage Asset

Where the new partition system meets the existing roof structure and connects to the pulins, interface detailing will be light weight to reduce stress and intervention with the fabric.



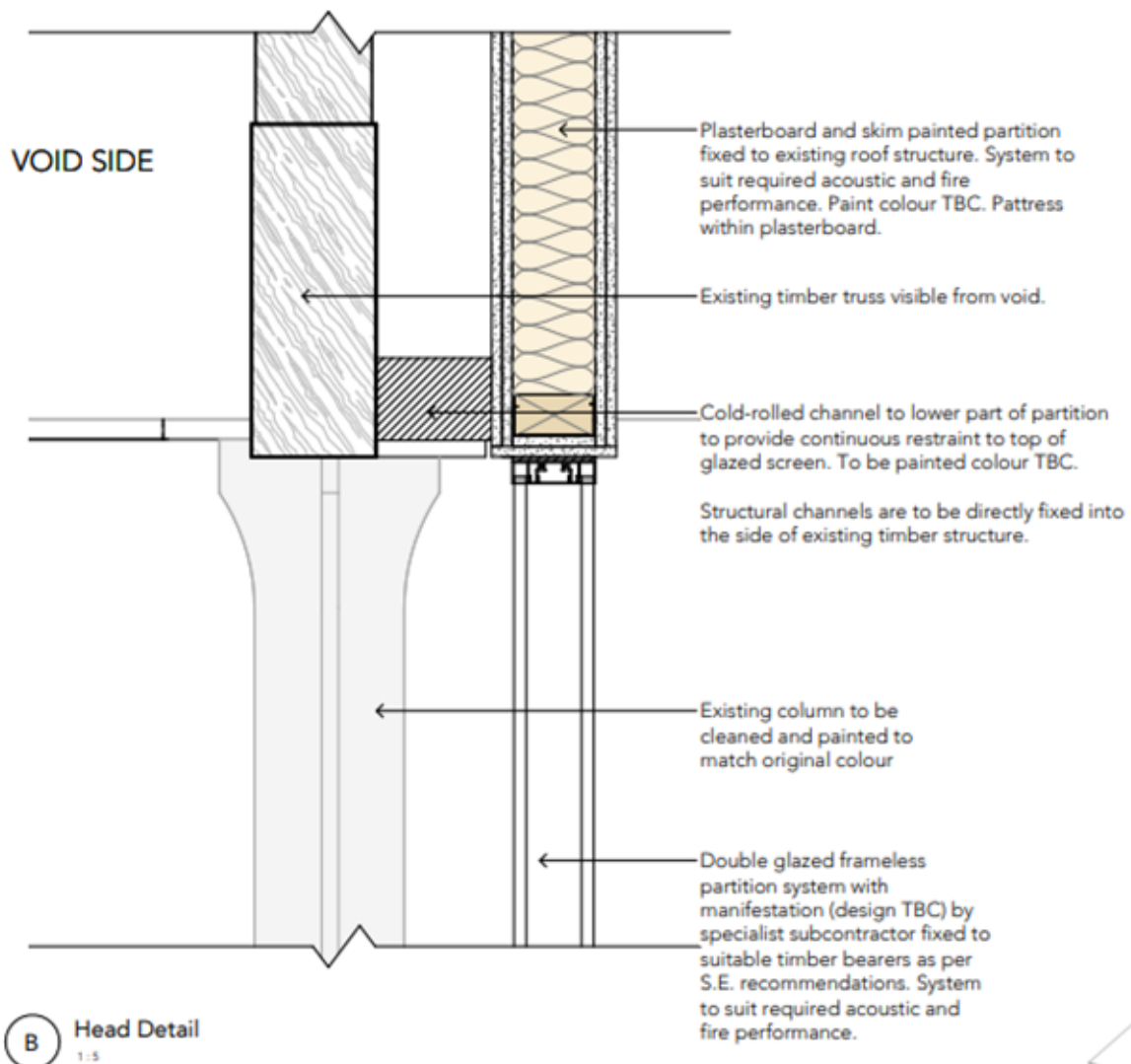
Proposed section of the atrium

The timber itself, although much of it thought to be early, does not hold any specific significance based on factors such as rarity of fabric type or composition, and so direct fixing to it will not be directly harmful.

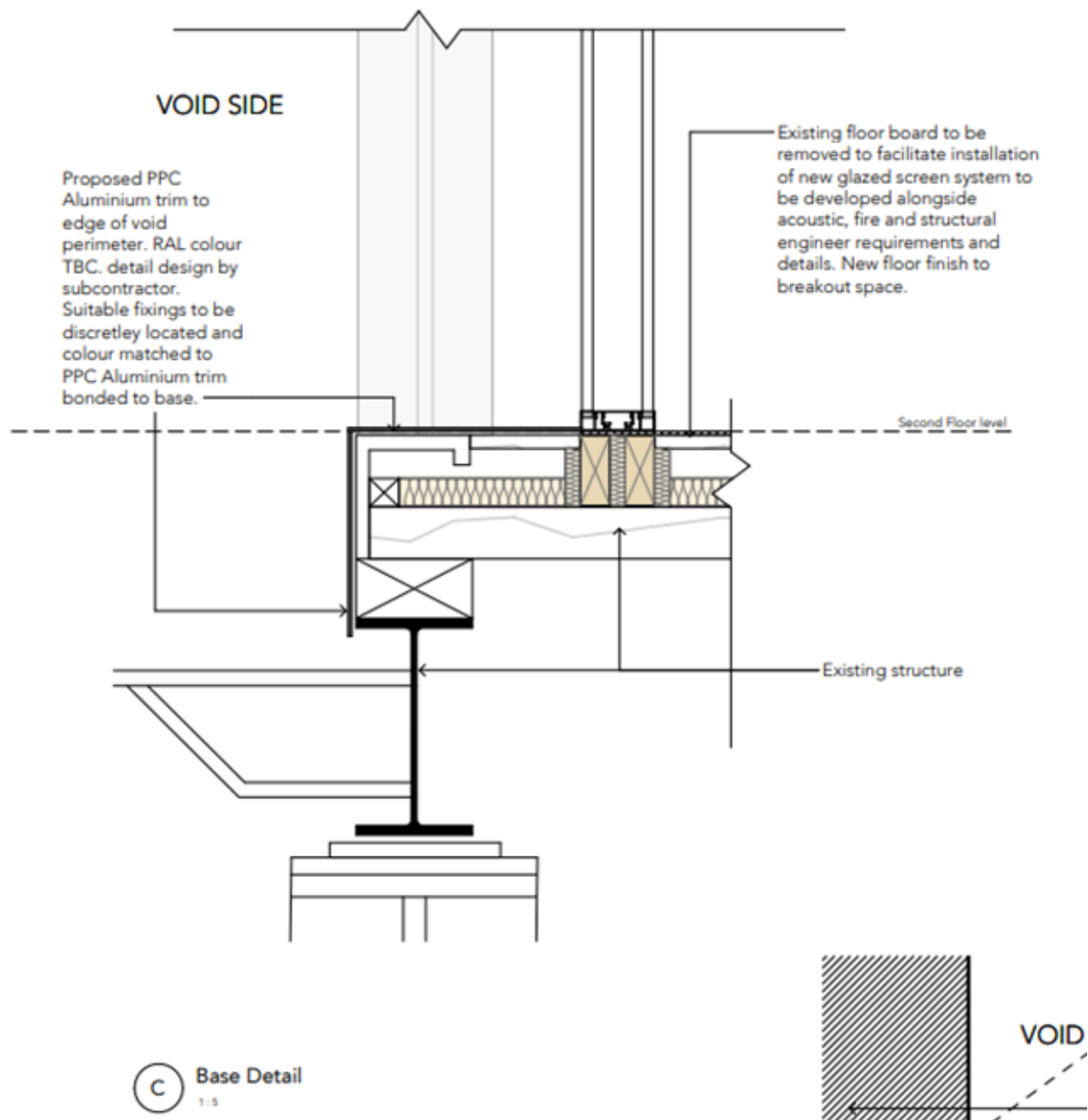
The truss and roof structure has been subject to significant intervention, repair and replacement since the building's construction and has been largely subdivided. As a result, the additional division of the new partition will not make an overall difference to the character or appearance of the space.

The new enclosure has been designed intentionally to be largely glazed to maintain visual connectivity through the building and maintain the open nature of the second-floor space. It is intended to be honest and visible parts of the building's structure and ongoing development, but one that will mirror the design language of existing interventions.

The originally submitted proposal had the height of the glazing from the floor to just below the truss beam. Whilst this proposal retained some visual permeability to the void and trusses through the frameless glazing, the lower extent of the plasterboard partition would obscure views of the horizontal truss beam and cast-iron column.



Interface with timber head



Interface with the base/floor

The fact that the cast iron column and beam would be concealed from various angles was considered to result in too significant an impact upon the heritage asset in order to support.

The proposal was subsequently revised to raise the glazing up to the truss horizontal beam, which improved visual permeability compared to the originally proposed scheme.

Conditions have been added to confirm the full and final details of the penetrations into the timber structure and into the floor and to confirm the final RAL paint colour of the painting of various elements, which is currently unconfirmed in the proposed submission.

On the whole, there will be a low level of less than substantial harm that will result from these works being carried out. Particularly in relation to the interventions in the timber beams and the floor, as well as some overall reduction in visual permeability.

Public Benefits

There will be an overall reduction in noise transfer from the ground floor exhibition area as a result of these proposed works.

This will in turn likely lead to a greater use in the conference spaces on the second floor.

The continue use of historic spaces is seen as a positive and a public benefit, as the use of these spaces results in better maintenance of the spaces and prevents them from deteriorating, which means that more members of the public to be able to appreciate the historic space and the historic significance of the building over a long period of time.

Overall, the mitigation of noise transfer and the increased use of this space, which will allow for greater long term public appreciation of the historic significance of this space, are considered to be public benefits that out weight any less then substantial harm that will result from the works being carried out.

Conclusion

In view of the above, this application is considered acceptable, as the works are considered to cause a low level of less than substantial harm to the special interest and the historic character of the Grade II listed building which would outweighed by the public benefits outlined above.

Other Legislative Requirements

Equality Act 2010

Section 149 (Public Sector Equality Duty) of the Equality Act 2010 requires due regard to the need to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act and; Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The Equality Duty does not impose a legal requirement to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment. Compliance with the Equality Duty involves consciously thinking about the aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making.

Human Rights Act 1998 considerations

This application needs to be considered against the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. Under Article 6, the applicants (and those third parties, including local residents, who have made representations) have a right to a fair hearing and to this end the local planning authority must give full consideration to their comments.

Protocol 1 Article 1, and Article 8 where appropriate, confer(s) a right of respect for a person's home, other land and business assets. In taking account of all material considerations, including Council policy as set out in the Core Strategy and saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan, the Director of Planning, Building Control & Licensing has concluded that some rights conferred by these articles on the applicant(s)/objector(s)/resident(s) and other occupiers and owners of nearby land that might be affected may be interfered with but that that interference is in accordance with the law and justified by being in the public interest and on the basis of the planning merits of the development proposal. She believes that any restriction on these rights posed by the recommendation given is proportionate to the wider benefits of and that such a decision falls within the margin of discretion afforded to the Council under the Town and Country Planning Acts.

Recommendation: Approve

Article 35 Declaration

Officers have worked with the applicant/agent in a positive and proactive manner based on seeking solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with the application.

Condition(s) to be attached to decision for approval

1) The development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason - Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings and documents received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 19 December 2025:

- Location Plan
- Proposed Second Floor Demolition & Removals Plan SMGCON-BUT-SI-02-DR-A-20001-P01
- Proposed Second Floor Demolition & Removals Sheet 1 SMGCON-BUT-SI-02-DR-A-20002-P01
- Proposed Second Floor Demolition & Removals Sheet 1 SMGCON-BUT-SI-02-DR-A-20003-P01

And the following drawings and documents received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 10 March 2025:

- Proposed 2F Plan SMGCON-BUT-SI-02-DR-A-04004-P02
- Proposed Atrium Details Sheet 1 SMGCON-BUT-SI-XX-DR-A-34001-P02
- Proposed Atrium Details Sheet 2 SMGCON-BUT-SI-XX-DR-A-34002-P02
- Design and Statement Rev 4
- Heritage Statement Rev 4

Reason - To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans. Pursuant to policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy and saved policies DC18.1 and DC19.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester.

3) Notwithstanding the details as set out in condition 2 above, prior to the commencement of any painting works that are annotated on the drawing 'Proposed Atrium Sheet 2 SMGCON-BUT-SI-XX-DR-A-34002-P02' as the painted colour being 'TBC', the RAL colour of the paint shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall then be implemented as part of the development.

Reason - In the interests of visual amenity and because the proposed works affect a building which is included in the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest and careful attention to building work is required to protect the character and appearance of this building and to ensure consistency in accordance with policy and EN3 of the Core Strategy and saved policy DC19.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester.

4) Notwithstanding the details as set out in condition 2 above, prior to the commencement of works to the glazed screen around the existing floor void, the full and final details of the structural channels to be directly fixed into the side of existing timber structure and the suitable fixings to be discretely located and colour matched to PPC Aluminium trim bonded to base,

shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall then be implemented as part of the development.

Reason - In the interests of visual amenity and because the proposed works affect a building which is included in the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest and careful attention to building work is required to protect the character and appearance of this building and to ensure consistency in accordance with policy and EN3 of the Core Strategy and saved policy DC19.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Heritage & Urban Design

83 Rozel Square, Manchester, M3 4FQ
77 Rozel Square, Manchester, M3 4FQ
6 Rozel Square, Manchester, M3 4FQ
26 Rozel Square, Manchester, M3 4FQ
10 Rozel Square, Manchester, M3 4FQ
Bonded Warehouse, 18 Lower Byrom Street, Manchester, M3 4AP
4 Rozel Square, Manchester, M3 4FQ
36 Rozel Square, Manchester, M3 4FQ
34 Rozel Square, Manchester, M3 4FQ
32 Rozel Square, Manchester, M3 4FQ
30 Rozel Square, Manchester, M3 4FQ
28 Rozel Square, Manchester, M3 4FQ
24 Rozel Square, Manchester, M3 4FQ
22 Rozel Square, Manchester, M3 4FQ
20 Rozel Square, Manchester, M3 4FQ
2 Rozel Square, Manchester, M3 4FQ
18 Rozel Square, Manchester, M3 4FQ
16 Rozel Square, Manchester, M3 4FQ
14 Rozel Square, Manchester, M3 4FQ
12 Rozel Square, Manchester, M3 4FQ
8 Rozel Square, Manchester, M3 4FQ
79 Rozel Square, Manchester, M3 4FQ
75 Rozel Square, Manchester, M3 4FQ
73 Rozel Square, Manchester, M3 4FQ
Chaos Karts, Lower Byrom Street, Manchester, M3 4AP
EE PICO CELL (1592366), Communication Station Outside Museum Of Science And Industry,
Liverpool Road, Manchester, M3 4FP
15 Atherton Street, Manchester, M3 3GS
Ground Floor, 91 - 93 Liverpool Road, Manchester, M3 4JN
The Crystal Maze, Lower Byrom Street, Manchester, M3 4AP

Appendix 2 – Planning constraints

Article 4 Direction - City Centre PD Restriction - Class B1(a) To C3
Article 4 Direction - Removal Of PD Rights Change Of Use From Class C3 To Class C4
Coal Authority - Development Low Risk - Name: DEVELOPMENT_LOW_RISK_AREA
Conservation Area - Castlefield Conservation Area 1979
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Area Team Boundary - Name: CENTRAL