

45-47 Thomas St, Manchester

Morpark Ltd | Design and Access Statement

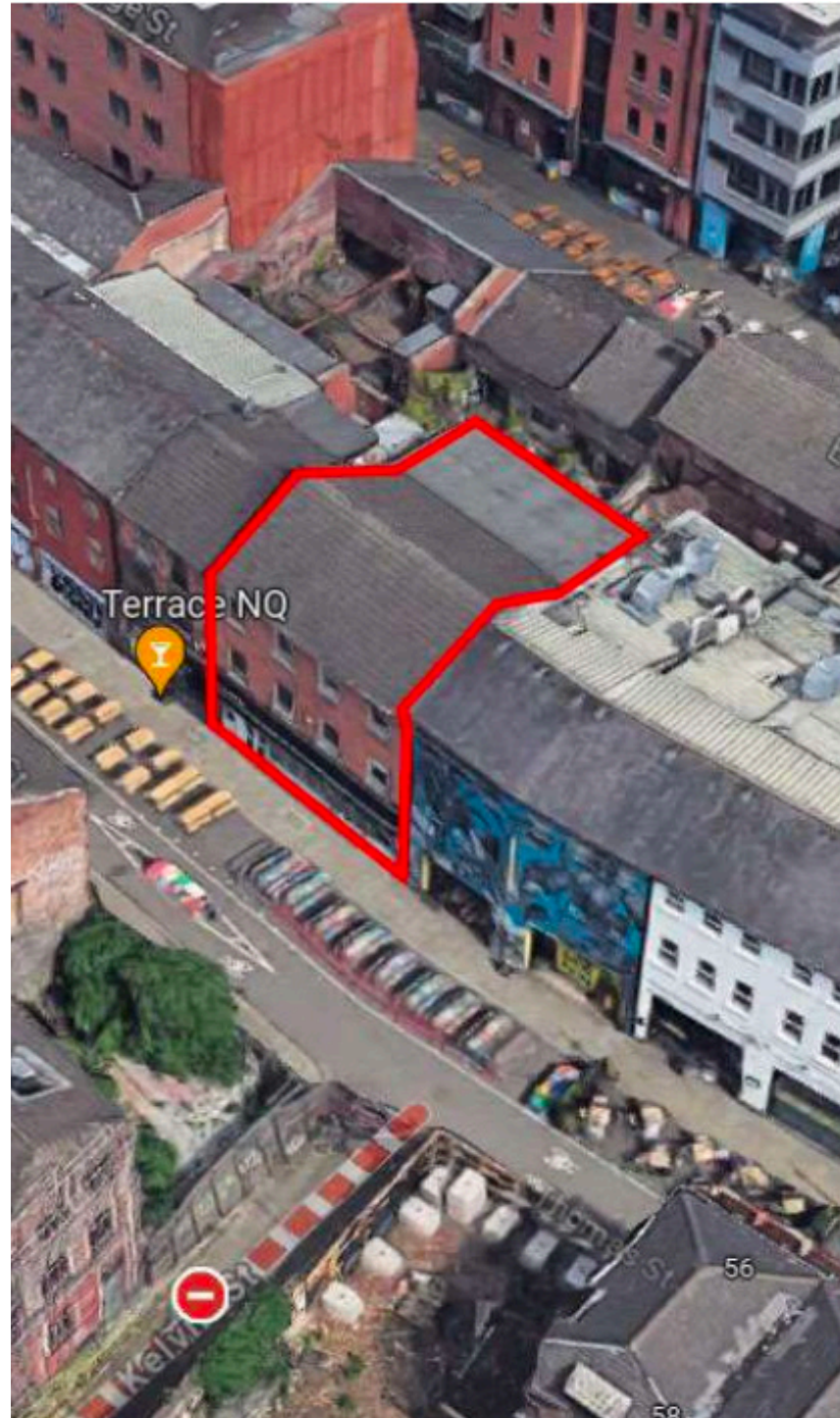


Aerial view with the application building outlined in red

Change of use from a photography studio (Use Class E) to a mixed-use venue (Sui Generis) which includes a bar, record shop, music and event space, co-working area and studio space. Installation of new front door and additional air conditioning unit (with relocation of two existing units) and emergency access stair to rear elevation.

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Aerial view of 45-47 Thomas Street

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 DOCUMENT OBJECTIVES

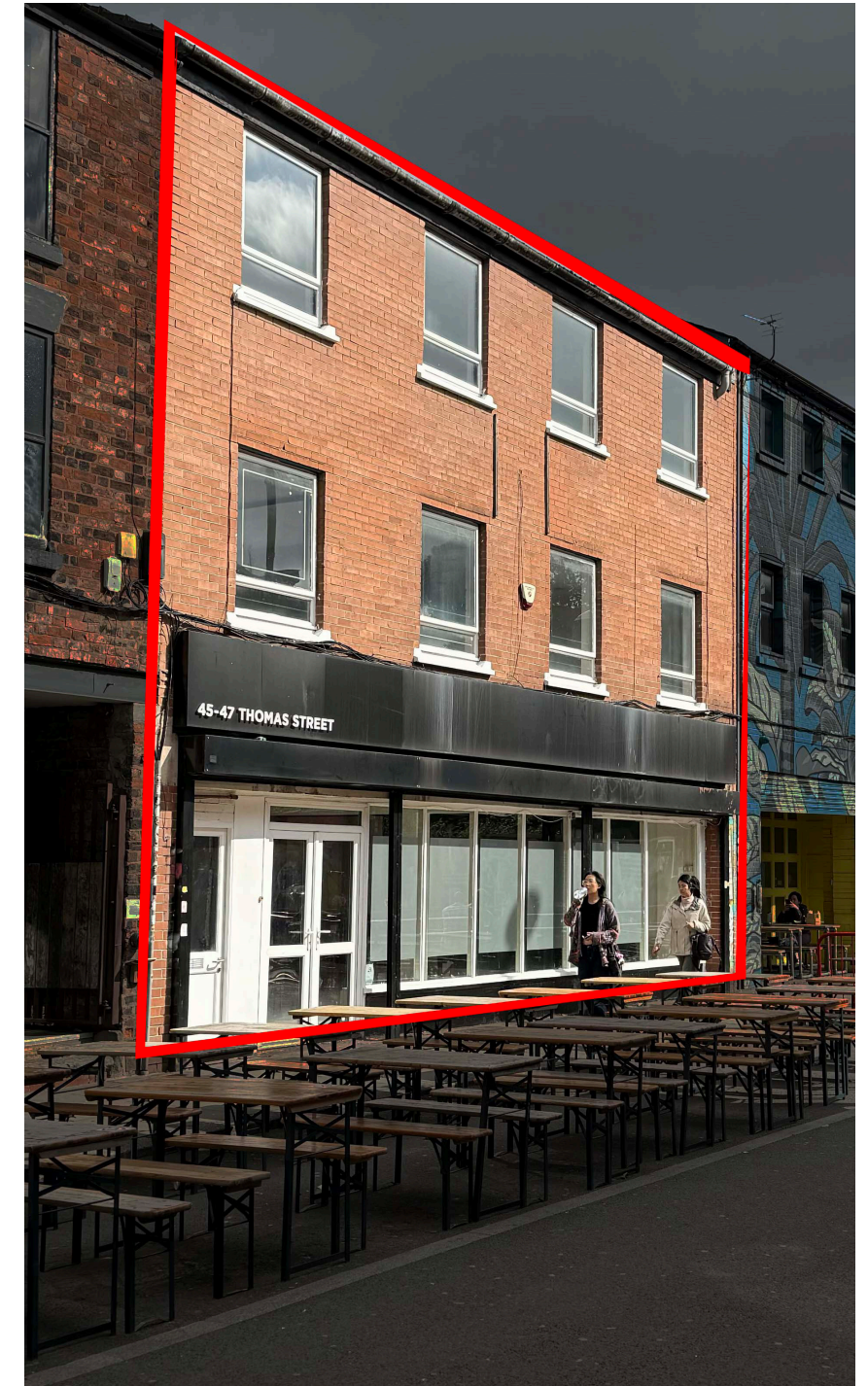
This Design and Access Statement accompanies the planning application for the renovation and change of use of 45-47 Thomas Street in the Northern Quarter.

This Statement should be read alongside the planning application drawings, application forms, ownership certificate, and operating policy

Savills Planning Consultancy Services, on behalf of Morpark Ltd, has submitted the proposal to the Planning Department

1.2 STRUCTURE OF THE DOCUMENT

This document outlines the design process, evaluating existing conditions, site constraints, and opportunities for the site's change of use and internal reconfiguration. It is intended to be reviewed alongside the drawings and other supporting materials.



45-47 Thomas Street

2.0 CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

2.1 GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

The site is situated on Thomas Street, in the lively Northern Quarter of Manchester, within the boundaries of the Smithfield Conservation Area.

The Northern Quarter spans approximately 0.3 square kilometres and is bordered by Shudehill and High Street to the west, Swan Street to the north, the Rochdale Canal to the east, and Piccadilly to the south.

The area is primarily defined by 18th-century former weaving houses, workshops, and cotton mills. Back Turner Street and Kelvin Street are particularly noted for their well-preserved examples of weavers' housing, while the influence of 18th-century commerce is evident in locations such as Stevenson Square.

The buildings along Thomas Street and Edge Street generally range from 2 to 4 storeys in height, creating a consistent vertical rhythm due to their terraced arrangement. Common building materials include brick, stucco, and stone, with brick facades often featuring stone detailing.

The windows are generally vertically aligned and feature sliding sash designs, except for the distinctive horizontal windows on the first and second floors, which allowed ample natural light to illuminate the long tables in some of the area's workshops.



Map of the Northern Quarter

2.2 ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL LANDSCAPE

During the Industrial Revolution, the area that would later become known as the Northern Quarter was a bustling hub of commercial activity, primarily dedicated to the booming cotton production and shipping industries. As the demand for textiles grew, smaller properties in the area were repurposed and expanded into vibrant centers of textile manufacturing, contributing significantly to the region's industrial economy. This period marked a time of substantial growth and transformation, laying the foundation for the area's historical and economic importance.

Building on this rich industrial heritage, the area underwent a significant shift in the late 20th century. In 1993, a study commissioned by the Council sought to capitalize on the area's historical significance while fostering its potential for new forms of development. This initiative aimed to reimagine the district as a hub for creative and artistic activities, ultimately leading to the establishment of what is now widely recognized as the 'Northern Quarter.'

Today, the Northern Quarter is celebrated as the cultural heart of Manchester, gaining national recognition for its unique character and dynamic atmosphere. On November 22, 2010, the district achieved a major accolade when the Academy of Urbanism awarded it the title of 'Best Neighbourhood in Britain.' This prestigious award, as reported by the *Manchester Evening News*, placed the Northern Quarter ahead of other notable contenders, including neighborhoods in Belfast and Glasgow. The judges of the 2010 Great Neighbourhood of the Year award praised the area for its remarkable redevelopment and diversification over recent years. They highlighted its transformation into a vibrant community that seamlessly blends a variety of creative enterprises, from fashion designers and creative agencies to art galleries and an eclectic mix of bars and restaurants.

Further enhancing its appeal, the area saw additional developments in 2020 with the pedestrianization of Thomas and Edge Streets. This initiative not only improved the overall ambiance of the neighborhood but also allowed local bars and restaurants to expand their services by offering outdoor seating. The result was the creation of a lively alfresco dining experience, further solidifying the Northern Quarter's reputation as a thriving and dynamic destination for both locals and visitors.



Image of Note Clothes Shop, 61 Thomas st



Image of Terrace, 43 Thomas St.



Image of Smithfield Social, 53 - 55 Thomas St.



Image of Cane & Grain, 49 - 51 Thomas St.



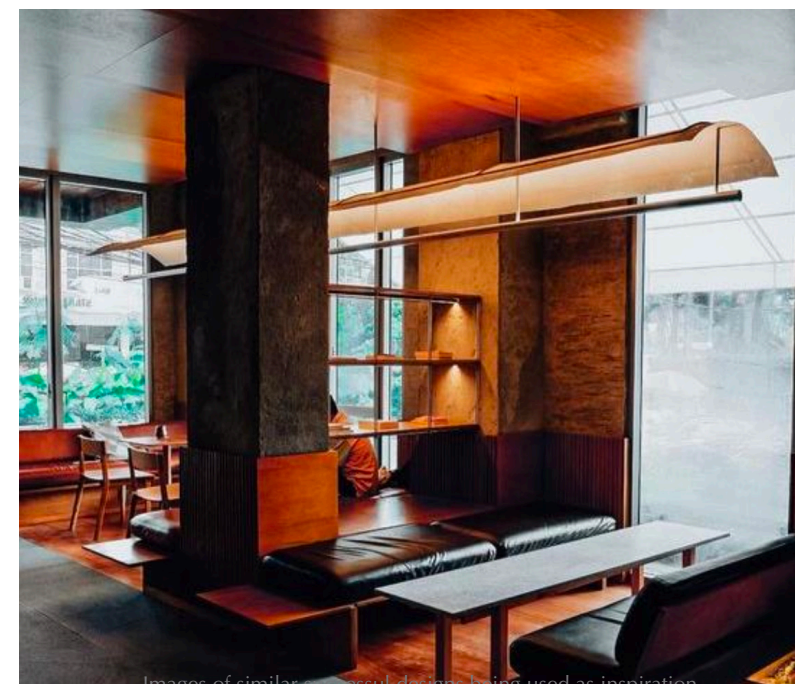
3.0 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

The proposal aims to present a well crafted approach to the renovation of the building, emphasising a sensitive and subtle strategy that seeks to preserve and enhance its existing character. This careful approach reflects an understanding of the building's historical and architectural significance, recognising its natural harmony with the distinctive aesthetic of Thomas Street and the wider Smithfield Conservation Area. By respecting these contextual elements, the proposal aims to retain the building's authenticity while making meaningful and sympathetic improvements.

The envisioned changes are focused on breathing new life into the currently vacant premises, transforming it into an inviting and vibrant bar that also incorporates thoughtfully designed community and creative spaces. This dual-purpose approach not only aims to provide an engaging venue for leisure and social interaction but also seeks to foster a sense of community and creative collaboration within the space.

Additionally, the proposal aspires to create a cohesive and interconnected cultural and leisure experience that spans multiple floors of the building. This interconnected design will contribute to enhancing the functionality and versatility of the space, ensuring it serves a broad range of purposes and appeals to diverse users. By aligning with the broader vision of creating a more dynamic and engaging streetscape, the proposal supports the ongoing transformation of the Northern Quarter into an even more lively and welcoming urban environment.

Through this renovation, the project will play a key role in the continued revitalization of the area, strengthening the Northern Quarter's identity as Manchester's thriving epicenter for small creative enterprises. These businesses span a variety of sectors, including office spaces, retail outlets, and leisure establishments, and the proposed changes will further reinforce the area's reputation as a hub for innovation, culture, and independent enterprise.



Images of similar successful designs being used as inspiration

3.1 USE

The planning application seeks a proposed change of use of 45-47 Thomas Street from a photography studio (Use Class E) to a mixed use venue (Sui Generis) which includes a bar, record shop, music and event space, co-working area and studio space

The proposal seeks to have separate operations on each of the 3 floors.

The ground floor will operate as a music focused bar and coffee shop with a retail element consisting of a record and book shop, both will be independent retailers from the local area brought in on 3 month residencies. This will allow for local traders to foster a lively and creative environment where people can socialise with friends and make new connections. We will offer a curated selection of craft beer, wine, and cocktails at accessible prices, ensuring excellent value for our guests.

The first floor will serve as a versatile space. During the day, it will host yoga and wellness classes, art and craft tutorials, and other community-supporting projects. In the evening, it will transform into a vibrant events venue, providing a platform for local artists to showcase their talents. This space will be an engaging creative hub for both the local community and visitors to enjoy. This floor is proposed to be a versatile space designed to appeal not only to creative groups but also to community organisations, small businesses, and individual entrepreneurs. This space will be well-suited for a range of activities, from hosting meetings and events to conducting classes, offering a functional and inviting atmosphere that adapts to the needs of diverse users.

The second floor will operate as a financially accessible co-working space providing a number of desks, video call booths, podcast studios and a meeting room. The space will be dedicated to accommodating Manchester’s growing population of remote workers by offering a welcoming and productive environment where individuals can focus, collaborate, and find inspiration outside the confines of their home offices.

Morpark Ltd is deeply committed to fostering and promoting small, independent creative ventures rooted in Manchester, recognising the unique energy and contributions they bring to the community. This proposal envisions creating a dynamic, adaptable space that will serve as a welcoming home for these creative enterprises throughout the week. It aims to provide an inspiring setting where individuals can gather, collaborate, and work comfortably while enjoying the convenience of free Wi-Fi and a good cup of coffee, all within an environment shared with like-minded, creative people who value connection and community.

This floor will also be equipped with professional podcast studios, catering to the needs of social media entrepreneurs, content creators, and aspiring influencers. These studios will serve as an ideal setting for those looking to produce high-quality content in a space tailored to support their creative and professional goals. By combining flexible work areas with specialised facilities, the second floor aims to attract a diverse group of modern professionals, fostering a vibrant community of innovators and digital creators in Manchester.

Through this vision, Morpark Ltd seeks to cultivate a thriving, collaborative hub that encourages both creativity and community engagement in the heart of Manchester.



3D Renders of proposed ground floor

Opening Hours

The hours of operation are as follows:

Ground and First Floors

Monday	8.00am – 1.00am
Tuesday	8.00am – 1.00am
Wednesday	8.00am – 1.00am
Thursday	8.00am – 2.00am
Friday	8.00am – 3.00am
Saturday	8.00am – 3.00am
Sunday	8.00am – 1.00am

Second Floor

Monday	8.00am – 6.30pm
Tuesday	8.00am – 6.30pm
Wednesday	8.00am – 6.30pm
Thursday	8.00am – 6.30pm
Friday	8.00am – 6.30pm
Saturday	8.00am – 6.30pm
Sunday	8.00am – 6.30pm

The second floor will close at 6.30 allowing any events on the lower floors to operate without causing disruption to patrons working on the floor above.

Seasonal variations and non-standard timings: From the start time on New Year’s Eve to the terminal hour for New Year’s Day.

On the day British Summer Time commences :- one additional hour following the terminal hour. Bank Holidays :- On Bank Holidays and on days preceding Bank Holidays until 3.00am (plus 30 minutes dispersal).



3D Renders of proposed ground floor

4.0 WASTE STRATEGY

Proposed Waste Capacity

The provision for waste storage within the alley area consists of:

- 4x. storage containers (240l) for recycled refuse [4 bags each]
- 1x food waste bin (240l) [4 bags]
- 1x Cage for dry mixed recycling (1m square, 5 high)

This provides a waste storage total of 25 bags which will be collected daily.

Proposed Waste Volumes

- 220 glass (bags/month)
- 195 general (bags/month)
- 80 cardboard (bags/month)

Total per month = 595 bags

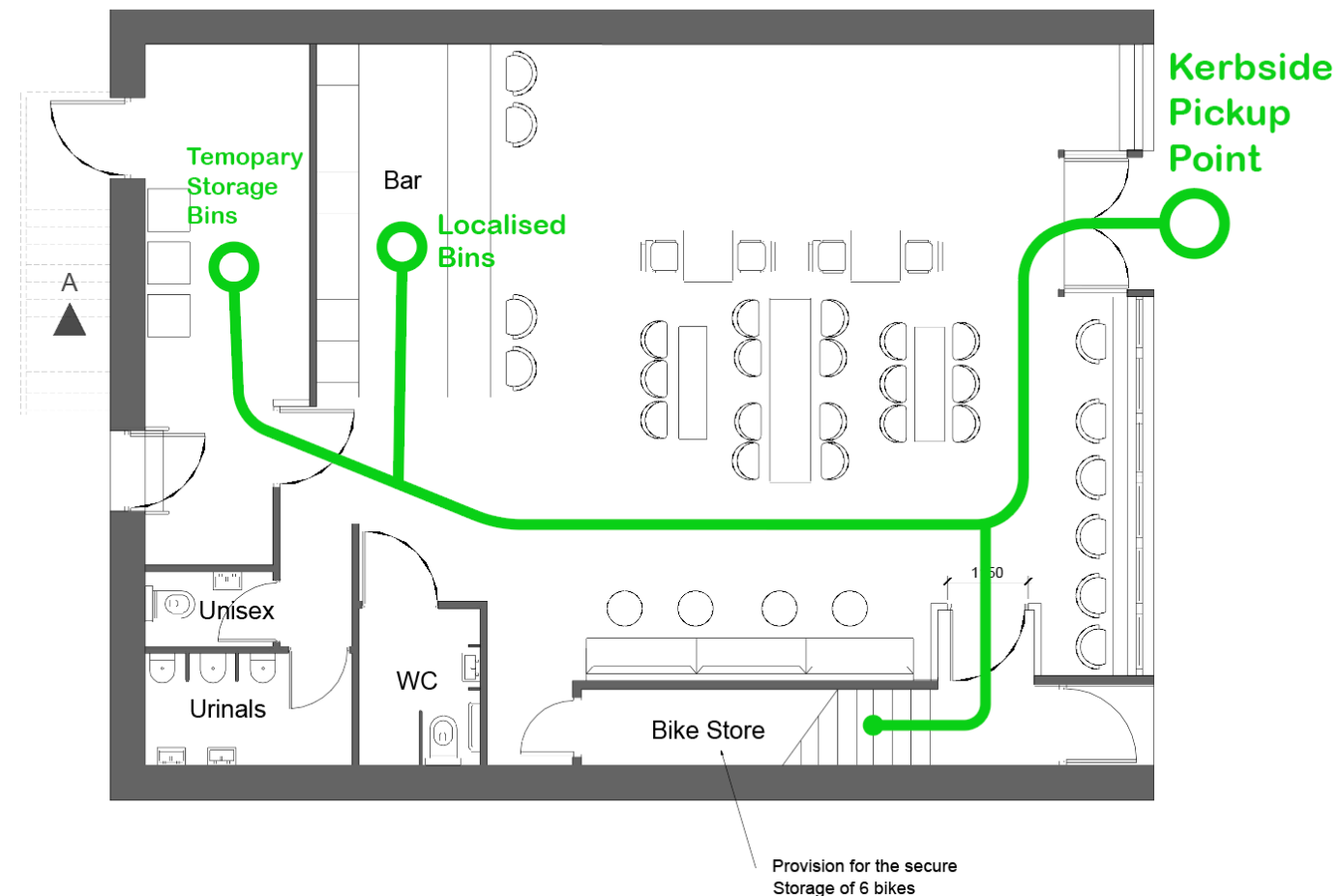
Total per day = 19.9 bags

Proposed Recycling Strategy

Localised back bar/pot wash area refuse bins will be provided for glass, and general waste. Bins will be monitored by staff and emptied, as necessary, during operation and emptied at close of operation. Waste from localised bins will be stored in the temporary storage bins in the back of house area.

Refuse Collection

Manchester bag and bins which also collect for other businesses on the street, will be employed to collect the waste daily. Waste is stored in containers situated in the rear of the building, as shown in the drawings. The containers will not be moved at any point and will only store bags during trading hours. At the end of the day, the bags will be moved to the front of the building, ready for collection by a 3.5 tonne open back transit/tipper. Collections will take place 8am, 7 days a week.



Waste Collection Strategy

5.0 APPEARANCE

Regarding the building’s exterior, the modifications will involve relocating the existing double doors and widening the current fire door. A new steel emergency access staircase is proposed for the first floor at the rear elevation. As this is not overlooked by any residential premises and will use a rust proof black coating it will have minimal visual impact on the building’s exterior. Existing AC units will be moved to accomodate the new exit and a third unit will be installed to supply heating and cooling to the second floor. Secondary glazing will be installed on the second floor and glazing will be upgraded with acoustic glass on the ground floor in accordance with recommendations of the submitted noise report. All glazing will be in keeping with the appearance of the building. These changes are designed to maintain the aesthetic harmony with Thomas Street and align with the conservation area’s character.

6.0 SECURITY

Details on security issues can be read within the Operations Policy at the rear of this document.

7.0 ACCESS

7.1 PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

Pedestrian access to 45-47 Thomas Street will be via the entrances on Thomas Street with this entrance also providing step free access for disabled customers.

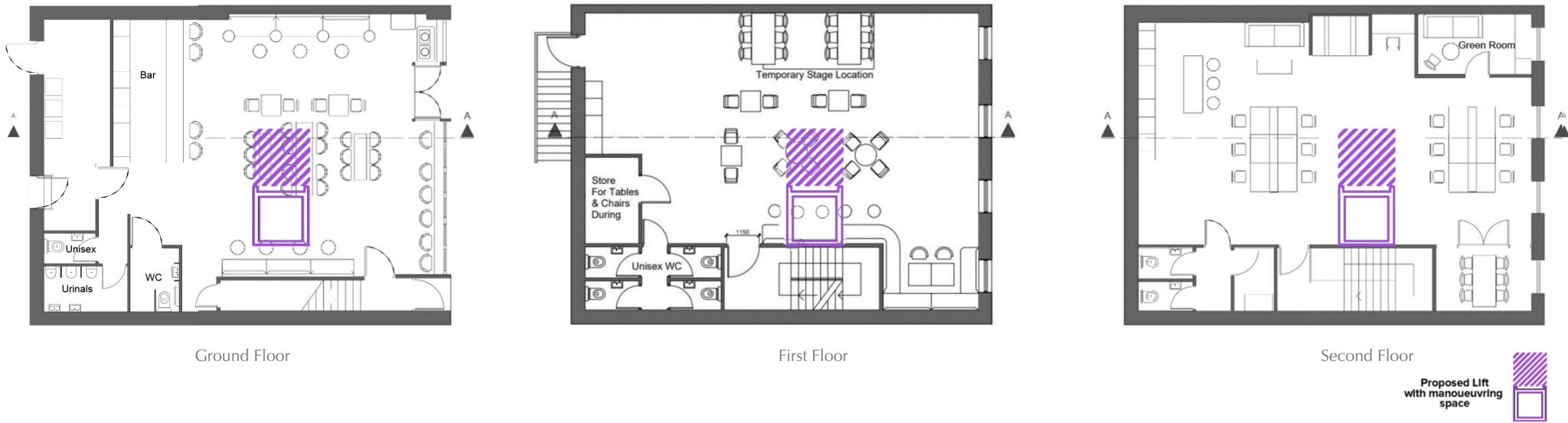
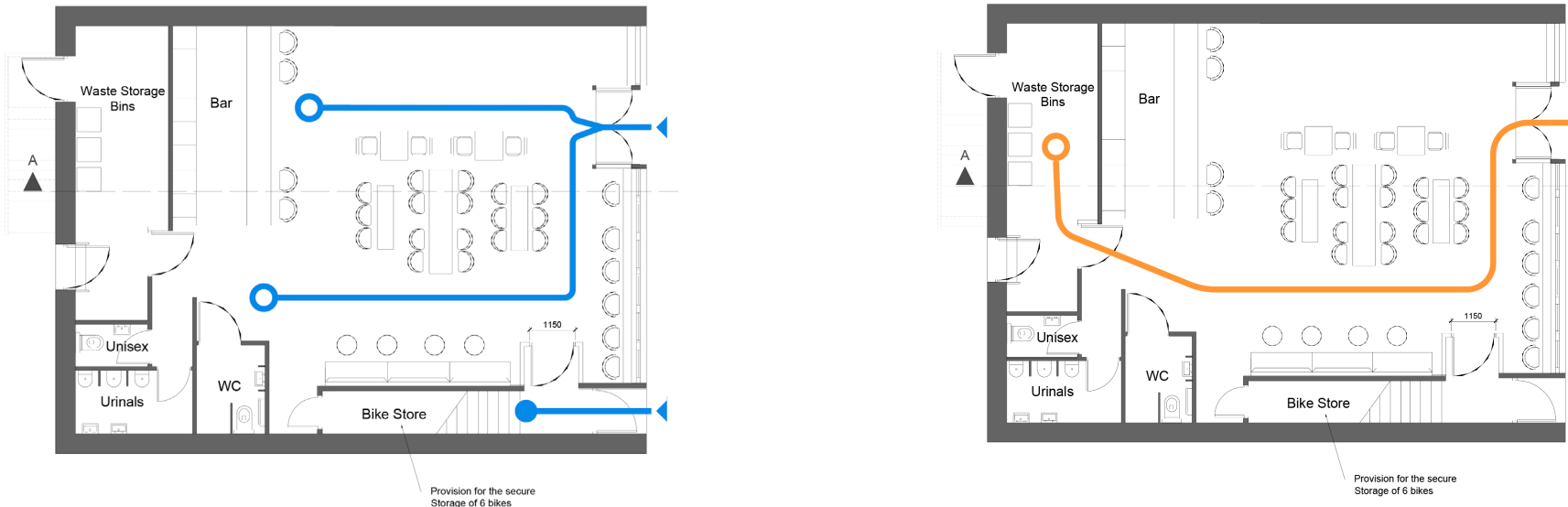
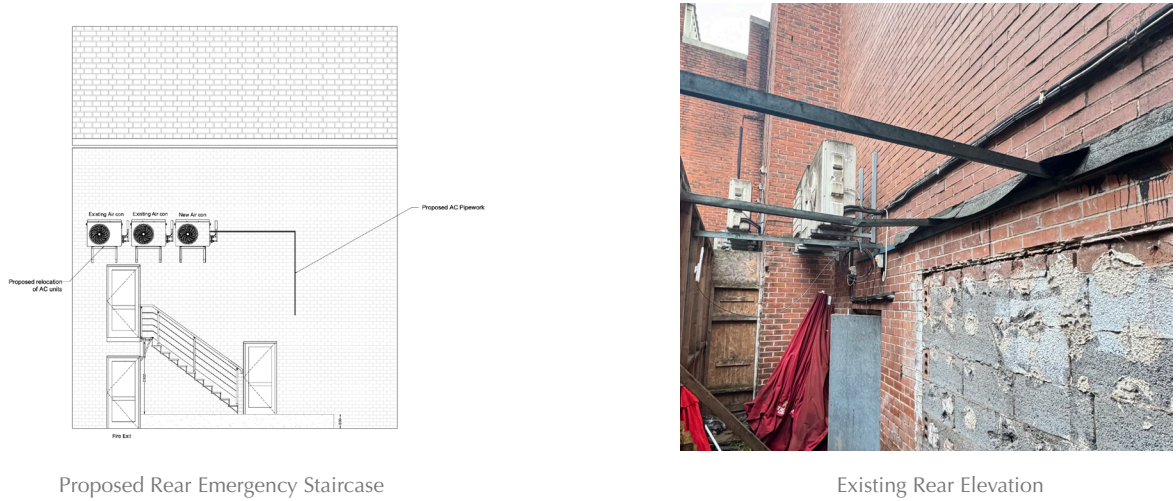
7.2 SERVICE ACCESS

Access for deliveries and refuse collection will be via Thomas st. Further details of this are listed in the Operations Policy within the appendices.

7.3 PASSENGER LIFT

It has been determined that installing a passenger lift in the building is not commercially feasible for several reasons:

Given the building’s limited footprint, installing a lift for wheelchair access to all floors is not feasible. Additionally, the costs associated with installing a lift in a building with limited upper-floor space are generally high. When combined with the significant expenses required for structural repairs, external renovations, and interior fit-out to make the building usable again, the addition of a passenger lift is simply not financially viable. However, the main bar, retail facilities and free wifi will be accessible at ground level, ensuring that wheelchair users are not disadvantaged. Ambulatory disabled access to the upper floors will still be possible with assistance from trained staff members.



8.0 LAYOUT

The main entrance to the new addition within the development is accessible from Thomas Street, providing direct entry into the ground floor unit as well as access to the staircase leading to the upper levels. An internal door connects the ground floor unit to the stairwell, allowing seamless access to the floors above.

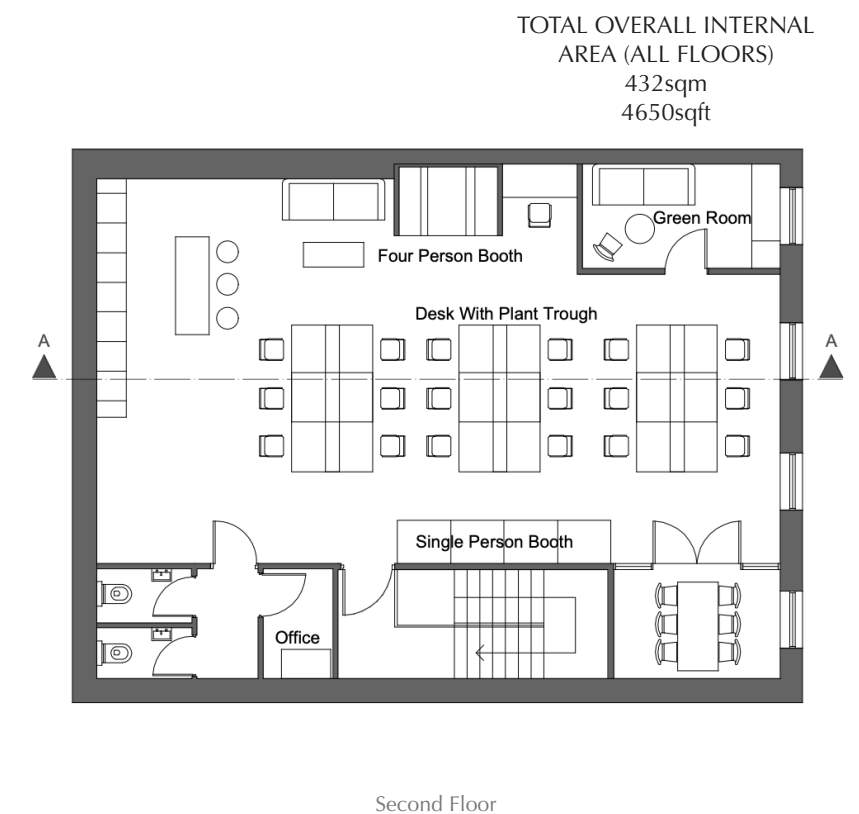
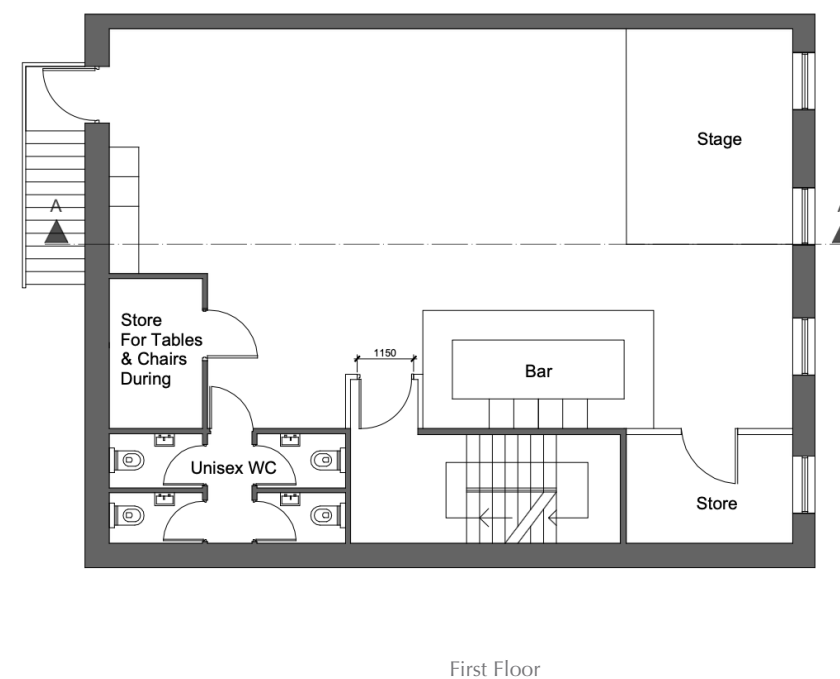
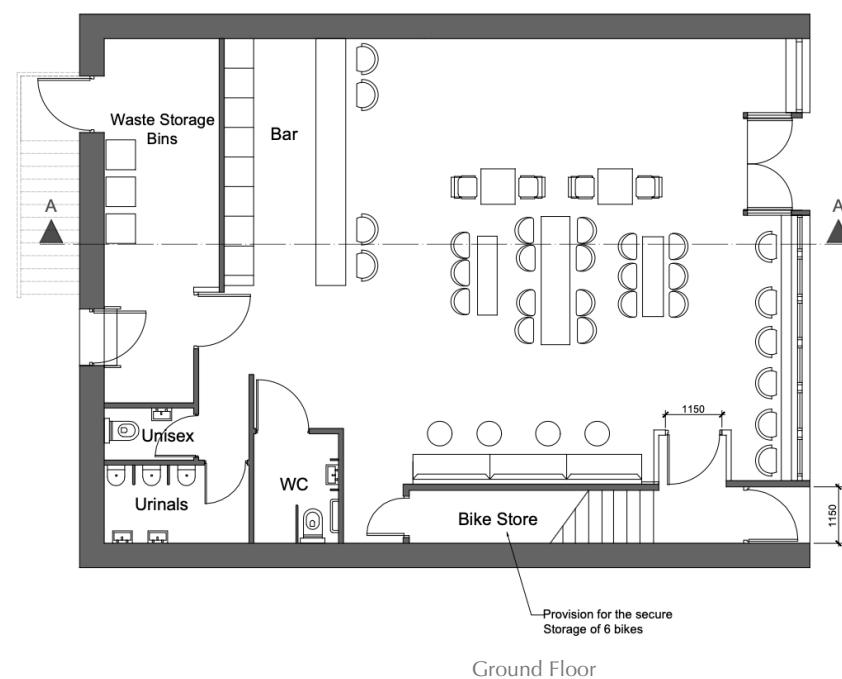
A second, single-door entrance at ground level offers direct access to the co-working space on the second floor, enabling this area to operate independently from the ground floor bar. Entry to the second floor will be managed through a secure key fob system, ensuring controlled access to the co-working area.

The entrance on Thomas Street will provide level access, ensuring ease of entry for all visitors. For the convenience and comfort of disabled patrons, an accessible WC will be available on the ground floor. Given the compact dimensions and structural configuration of the building, incorporating a lift to the upper floors has been assessed and determined to be impractical. Such an addition would substantially reduce the usable floor area, thereby compromising the commercial viability of the proposal.

An alternative option involving the installation of a stair lift with a drop-down seat was also thoroughly explored; however, this approach was ultimately deemed unsuitable. The current staircase does not satisfy the minimum width requirements necessary for safe emergency egress, rendering the stair lift option non-compliant and infeasible.

Vertical movement within the building will therefore be managed by a single staircase that connects all three floors, with direct access from Thomas Street. This staircase also links to the WC facilities located on the first floor and to the ancillary staff areas on the second floor. Additionally, service access to the building will be facilitated from Thomas Street, providing a streamlined solution for operational needs.

The layout has been carefully designed to provide seamless, direct access to the upper floors, allowing distinct areas within the facility to function independently without interference. To ensure minimal noise transmission to the exterior, all exits will be continuously monitored by staff, who will actively manage and control any potential sound leakage. This approach aims to maintain a quiet and controlled environment both inside and outside the building.



TOTAL OVERALL INTERNAL
AREA (ALL FLOORS)
432sqm
4650sqft

9.0 CONCLUSION

This design and access statement demonstrates how the proposed alterations and change of use can repurpose the currently vacant property into a vibrant and inclusive community hub for locals and visitors alike. The proposal will uplift the street by improving on current bar concepts and offering more health, wellness and work spaces for the community.

This change will enrich the cultural character of Thomas Street and the wider Northern Quarter, complement nearby bars and restaurants, and strengthen Thomas Street’s role as a vibrant destination.

10.0 APPENDICES

Drawings

Existing Plans

Proposed Plans

Documents

Design and Access Statement (this document)

Heritage Statement

Waste Proforma