

Heritage, Design and Access Statement

3rd and 4th Floors, Express Building,
9 Great Ancoats Street, Manchester M4
5AD



London



Harrogate



Bristol

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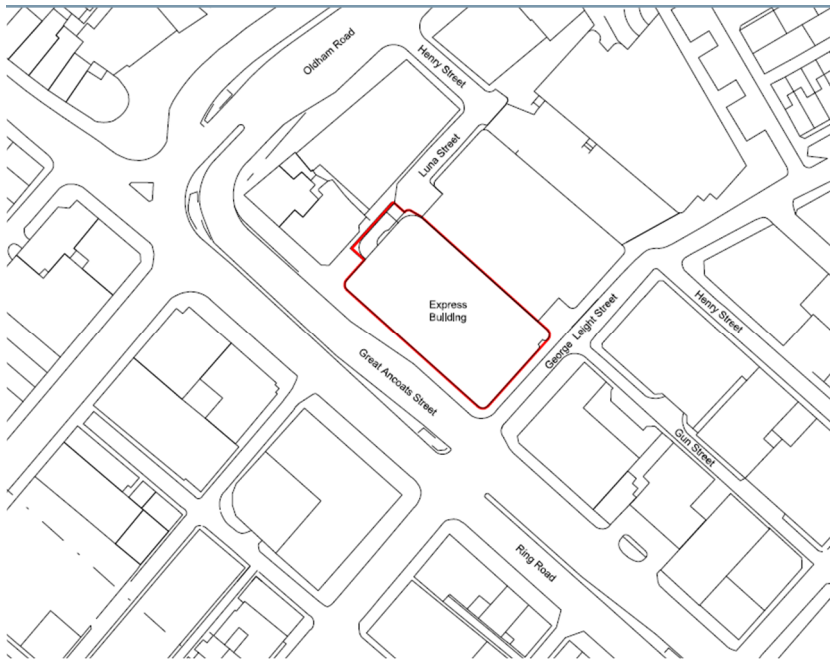
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1. Introduction and Site Location

- 1.1. This Statement has been provided on behalf of Wittington Investments in support of an application for Listed Building Consent relating to the Express Building at 9 Great Ancoats St, Manchester M4 5AD. The proposed scheme relates to the introduction of internal solid stud partitions to subdivide the third and the fourth floors of the building, as well as create new lobby areas at these levels, to ensure the vacant floorspace can attract a new occupant.
- 1.2. The site as a whole is bounded by Henry Street to the north-east, George Leigh Street to the south-east, Great Ancoats Street to the south-west, and Luna Street to the north-west.
- 1.3. It is located within the Ancoats district of Manchester which was a former industrial area of the city that played an important role in Manchester's boom as the textile capital of the world during the 19th century. The area has been the subject to large-scale investment and redevelopment over the past 20 years, ensuring that key heritage assets have been preserved and restored, as well as encouraging a range of new uses that have rejuvenated the area for the 21st century.
- 1.4. The Daily Express Building is Grade II* listed and located within the Ancoats Conservation Area. The building was designed in a starkly contemporary, modernist / Art Deco style for the Daily Express Newspaper Company in 1935 and opened in 1939. The building had gradually expanded after the Second World War and served as a printers until the late 1980's. It has undergone various interventions and refurbishments to retain occupancy since the 1990's and is now primarily used for office floorspace.
- 1.5. The Express Building is a particularly important building of 'more than special interest'. Only about 5.5% of listed buildings are Grade II* listed, making it a relatively rare and prestigious example of a 1930's building to meet this grade.
- 1.6. The main purpose of this statement is to consider the heritage significance of the building and the potential impact of the proposed scheme of works at the third and fourth floor of the building, that seeks to return occupancy for office use, principally by subdividing the floor areas to more attractive scales. Since the works are limited to the interiors of the building, there will be no impact on the Conservation Area and only Listed Building Consent (LBC) is sought.

Location Plan



Source: KAP Architect

2. Historic Background

- 2.1. From the late 18th century onwards, Ancoats was a thriving industrial district and a crucial hub during Manchester's boom as the textile capital of the world. The area suffered accelerating economic decline from the 1930s onwards, and almost total depopulation in the years following the Second World War, particularly during the slum clearances of the 1960s.
- 2.2. The Daily Express Building is a purpose-built newspaper printing works designed by prominent engineer and architect Sir Owen Williams for the Daily Express Newspaper Company in 1935 and opened in 1939. It was an unusual investment in the already waning prosperity of the district in the 1930's but injected new life and a radical new aesthetic to this part of Ancoats. The building was extended in a matching style to the north-east by Sir Owen Williams in 1960, with subsequent upwards and side additions accommodated in the 1970's. The printers ceased operating in 1989 and the building lay vacant until it was refurbished and extended to form general office accommodation by Michael Hype and Associates starting in 1992.
- 2.3. The six-storey building utilises a steel frame with glazed curtain walling and fronts directly onto the pavement. The two top storeys are set back with a narrow 7-storey tower occupying the left end when viewed from Great Ancoats Street. The building is noted for its futuristic looks that appear ahead of its time, with black glass in continuous bands and strips, with clear glazing between. The site was refurbished in 1992-93, ensuring the clear glass curtain walls were replaced and made reflective, thereby preventing views in from the outside. In 1998 reflective solar film was also added to the internal face of all glazing.
- 2.4. An image below depicts a view of newly completed "Express House" in 1939 and shows the original lettering along the principal elevation, the since replaced transparent glass, and No. 9 Great Ancoats Street to the left, which was subsequently demolished to make way for an extension to the building in the 1960's.

Express Building in 1939



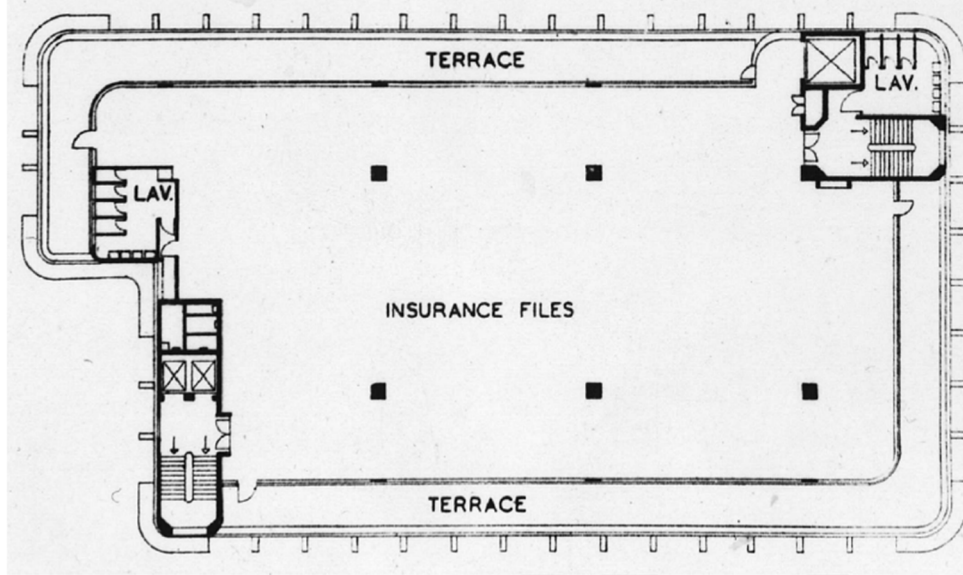
Source: Manchester City Council

- 2.5. The listed building description acknowledges the 'Early use of glazed curtain walling' which is very similar to its counterpart on Fleet Street, London. However, whilst the building followed a similar architectural approach to the other Express Buildings (London and Glasgow), the Manchester site is considered to be the finest and remains a landmark building on a prominent position on Great Ancoats Street.

Interior

- 2.6. Internally, the ground to fourth floors were of very similar historic plan form, with a large open-plan office space and original concrete cruciform columns interspersed within. The third floor was originally noted in *The Builder* (1936) as being for "stationary stores, circulation department and welfare area, including cloakrooms, dining room and kitchen". The fourth floor was used as a filing department and emergency paper store.

1939 Plan of Fourth Floor



Source: Manchester City Council

- 2.7. To the north-east corner of each floor is the original secondary staircase, with a now altered circulation route. To the south-west corner is the original main staircase, also retained, and now extended on each floor to accommodate toilets. Between 1992-1993, a glazed internal light well was inserted to the centre of the Gun Street elevation, requiring the removal of floor slab up the building.
- 2.8. A special type of flooring was employed in most of the building, which was devised by Williams. This took the form of 3ft sections of plywood with a lino finish, which were screwed individually onto batons. Due to the ever-changing requirements of the internal floors of the building, this system allowed for portioned offices and cabling points to be altered through any section being able to be easily lifted and new electric/telephone cabling to be re-laid or altered to any point in the floor.
- 2.9. An image below depicts a general view of an office floor in the early 1960s, showing the concrete cruciform columns and glazed metal-framed internal office partitions.

Interior of the Express Building in 1960s



Source: Manchester City Council

- 2.10. The top two floors diminish in size and would originally have accommodated the plant, transformers and ventilation spaces for the building. Their décor would have been plainer and do not contain Williams' characteristic cruciform columns or continual glazed windows. The basement floor now contains a car park and gym.

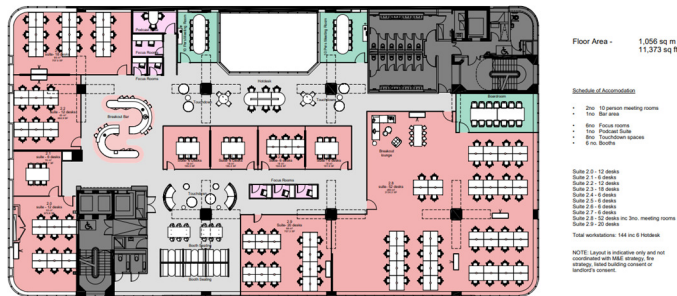
The Ancoats Conservation Area

- 2.11. The Express Building lies within the Ancoats Conservation Area, designated by Manchester City Council in 1979. This densely developed area retains its Victorian grid iron street pattern which has shaped the siting of many historic buildings. Ancoats is dominated and characterised by its early former mill buildings, largely concentrated to the east of the area. This arrangement is interspersed by small pockets of domestic buildings, such as the converted St Peter's Church.
- 2.12. Whilst the industrial heritage of Ancoats and its subsequent impact on architectural character were the primary reason for conservation area designation, the Express Printing building is of considerable significance in this context. It represents one of the few major new employers to expand in Ancoats as the textile industry declined and reflects a clearly recognisable and progressive 1930's design, with considerable prominence in the area.
- 2.13. Owing to the internal and light touch nature of the works, potential impacts on the conservation area are not anticipated as a result of the development proposed.

3. Planning History

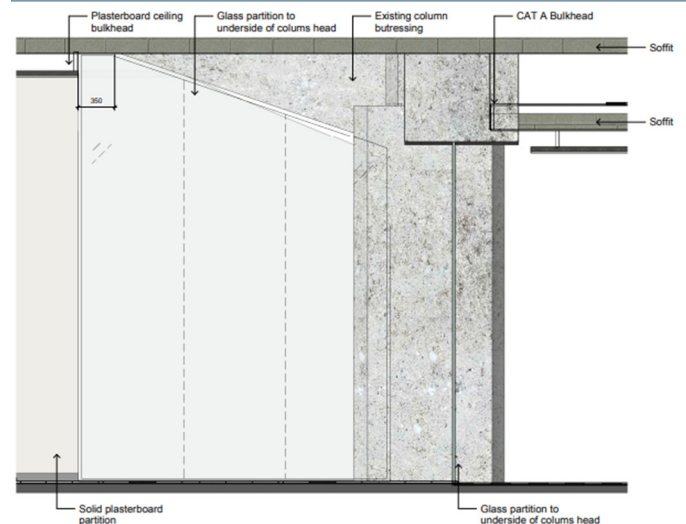
3.1. In the 2010s and 2020s, various internal refurbishments and fit outs were introduced at different floor levels. These works typically included the introduction of partitions, upgrading of M&E, as well as elevational alterations including alterations to the main entrance, creation of external seating areas and new boundary treatment to car park.

Approved General Layout (Ref: 134129/LO/2022)



Source: Huckletree

Column Abutment Details (Ref: 134129/LO/2022)



Source: Huckletree

3.2. The most recent 2022 LBC 134129/LO/2022 for the installation of internal partitions and alterations to the second floor introduces new partitions to subdivide the space and a suspended ceiling. It is also interesting to note that glazed partitions were allowed to be applied directly to the existing columns in this case. Associated drawings are provided above for reference.

3.3. A full planning history table (online records) has been appended to this statement for completeness.

Pre-Application Discussions

3.4. Informal pre-application discussions for the current scope of works were held with Paul Mason, Heritage & Urban Design Manager at Manchester City Council on 10th September 2024. A written response was received from Daniella Cooper, Planning Officer, on the 23rd September 2024. The conclusions of the pre-application process are summarised in the bullet points below:

- The proposed internal works would cause a degree of harm to the Grade II* listed asset, with adverse impact on its appreciation of space/openness. However, the harm would be less than substantial in NPPF terms and justified on the grounds that the proposal will help support the full use of the building by securing tenants for the office space and provide jobs.
- Notwithstanding the above, a more detailed explanation will be required with the LBC application which justifies why and how this solution has come about given its degree of harm to the Grade II* listed asset.
- Details of changes to the M&E services will also be required.
- To ensure future tenant fit outs have little harm to the listed building, within the Design and Access Statement submitted with the LBC application, a section will need to be dedicated to detailing a 'tenant fit out strategy' as a guide for future tenants of what will be appropriate. i.e. free-standing desks/chairs, and kitchenettes. Low level partitions/glass partitions with minimal fixtures if necessary, however would need to be justified.
- Future tenant fit outs will themselves need a separate Listed Building Consent when they come forward. The tenant fit out guide will be used to inform future fit outs, and they will need to follow the principles set out.

3.5. To this end, the principle of the subdivision and creation of associated at both levels was accepted at pre-application stage. Subject to the submission of the requested additional information, provided in this submission, the proposals should be acceptable in heritage terms and granted LBC accordingly.

4. Legislation, Policy and Guidance

Heritage Legislation

- 4.1. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is the primary legislation and foundation on which further policy, and guidance relating to the conservation of the historic environment is built. Section 66 of the Act relates to the 'general duty as respects listed buildings in exercise of planning functions', with Section 66 (1) stating that when deciding whether to grant planning permission for a development, special regard must be given by the local authority to the "desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses".
- 4.2. Section 66 (2) of the Act states that "a local authority shall have regard to the desirability of preserving features of special architectural or historic interest, and in particular, listed buildings".
- 4.3. Section 72 of the Act relates to the 'general duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions', with Section 72 (1) of the Act stating that in exercising planning functions, "special attention should be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area".

NPPF: Heritage (2023)

- 4.4. The National Planning Policy Framework, with which all Local Development Plans must comply, constitutes the national level of planning policy and is a material consideration in planning decisions. The NPPF was originally introduced in March 2012 and was subsequently updated and published on 24 July 2018. The 2018 update broadly retains the wording of the 2012 Chapter on Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment (Chapter 16).
- 4.5. The NPPF was updated again in February 2019 in order to provide definitions for housing need. No paragraph numbers changed as a result of this update. Similarly, an update was published in July 2021 and September 2023 with no associated changes to paragraph numbers.
- 4.6. The most recent update was published on 20 December 2023. This update did not cause any changes to national heritage policy.
- 4.7. The NPPF represents a continuation of the philosophy contained within Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5), introduced in 2010 and one of a number of planning policy documents replaced by the NPPF in 2012.
- 4.8. The NPPF uses slightly different terminology to the Act and emphasises that authorities 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" (Paragraph 196).
- 4.9. 'Conservation' is defined within the NPPF as "the process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance" (p.69).
- 4.10. No definition of 'preservation' (or any variant) is contained within the document. However, Historic England advise that both 'conservation' and 'preservation' are concerned with the management of change which seeks to sustain the special interest or significance of heritage assets. 'Conservation' has the addition of taking opportunities to enhance significance where it is possible and considered to be appropriate. This is discussed in Historic England's 2018 publication Decisions: Legal Requirements for Listed Building and Other Consents.
- 4.11. The NPPF also helps to define other key terms within heritage policy. These are provided within the table below.

Term	Definition
Heritage Assets	"A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing)." (p.70)
Designated Heritage Assets	"A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation." (p.69)

Significance	"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting." (p.75)
Setting of a Heritage Asset	"The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral." (p.75)

- 4.12. Chapter 16 specifically relates to conserving and enhancing the historic environment (paras. 195-214).
- 4.13. Paragraph 200 stipulates that applicants are required to describe the significance of the heritage assets affected and the contribution made by their setting. Local authorities should also identify and assess the significance of the heritage assets affected by a proposal.
- 4.14. This should be taken into account when assessing the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset (Paragraph 201). Paragraph 203 of the NPPF goes on to state that when 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 viable 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. (p.58)
- 4.15. Paragraphs 205-214 of the document discuss how potential impacts to heritage assets should be considered with paragraph 199 stipulating a requirement for great weight to be given to an asset's conservation when considering the impact of a proposed development on its significance. The weight given should reflect the importance of the asset (p.59).

NPPF Degrees of Harm

- 4.16. Where harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset is identified, the NPPF requires clear and convincing justification of the proposals. The document categorises levels of harm as: total loss; substantial harm; and less than substantial harm.
- 4.17. Paragraph 207 states that where a development would lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of) the significance of a designated asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that such harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm, or all of the following apply:
- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
 - b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
 - c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
 - d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.
- 4.18. Paragraph 208 states that where a proposed development will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated asset, this should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.
- 4.19. In the case of impact on non-designated heritage assets, Paragraph 209 states that a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan 2012 and “Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document for Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan 2022 To 2039”

- 4.20. The Core Strategy, adopted in July 2012, sets out the long-term strategic policies for Manchester’s future development. In 2024 the core policies have been partially replaced by Places for Everyone (PfE) policies. Any part of the policy that is not replaced remains part of Manchester’s Core Strategy.
- 4.21. Core Strategy objectives and policies of particular relevance to the proposed scheme include:
- 4.22. Policy EC 1 “Employment and Economic Growth in Manchester” emphasises further: “The Council will support significant contributors to economic growth and productivity including health, education, retailing, cultural and tourism facilities, and other employment generating uses mainly in the City Centre and Eastlands in line with Policy C1. Priorities for ensuring continued economic growth, among others, include:
- Demonstrating that employment-generating development has fully considered opportunities to provide jobs for local people, through construction or use;
 - Improving the portfolio of employment premises, by providing a range of employment sites and premises for small, medium and large businesses;
 - Creating business destinations by enhancing the primary business use with ancillary commercial facilities;
 - Ensuring the continued social, economic and environmental regeneration of the City;
 - Ensuring design makes the best possible use of a site or building in terms of efficient use of space, enhancing the sense of place of the wider area and minimising detrimental impacts on adjacent uses, considers the needs of users/employees of a site/building.
- 4.23. Policy EN 3 “Heritage” advises that 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. Proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets will be encouraged where they are considered consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.”
- 4.24. Policy EN 3 ‘Heritage’ of Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan 2012 had been partially replaced with Policy JP-P2: Heritage of “Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document for Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan 2022 To 2039”. It states: “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 character, identity and sense of place”.

5. Significance of the Heritage Asset

Historic Significance

- 5.1. The Daily Express Building was designed by the renowned engineer and architect Sir Owen Williams as a purpose-built newspaper printing works in a futuristic Modernist style. Williams worked on a number of key modernist buildings in the mid C20, being the principal engineer for the original Wembley Stadium and architect of the D10 and D6 buildings in Nottingham.
- 5.2. Historically the Daily Express Newspaper was an important business in Manchester and is considered the finest of the three Express Buildings operating in England and Scotland from the 1920s to the 1980s.
- 5.3. Architecturally, the building is an important and unusual building type of a 1930s printing works that adopted a progressive form of construction, and was designed with interiors, decorations and fixtures/fittings of a functional nature.
- 5.4. In the listing description Historic England acknowledged the 'Early use of glazed curtain walling'. In 1969, architectural historian Sir Nikolaus Pevsner described the building as being "the best Manchester building of between the wars".
- 5.5. Although substantial alterations have taken place during the 1990s, these have not entirely impacted on the understanding of the building's original design or circulation/planform and unique futuristic Modernist/ Art Deco style.

Architectural and Artistic Significance

- 5.6. The Daily Express Building is highly significant for its futuristic appearance, due to continuous glazed curtain windows, curved corners and the progressive methods of its construction. The building has high streetscape value.
- 5.7. Although the original curtain wall system was replaced between 1992-1993, the design and materials of the replacement glazing system is almost identical and continues the original design closely, and thus considered to be of some significance.
- 5.8. Although, the internal spaces were substantially altered and refurbished in the 1990s, the building retains much of its original open-plan planform, two original concrete staircases, original structural concrete frame/floors and cruciform columns which are of high significance. Images depicting the current state of the interiors can be found in Appendix 2.
- 5.9. The original black and white tiling to both stair cores appears to survive beneath modern carpet and as one of the few remaining original elements of decorative scheme, this is considered to be of high significance.

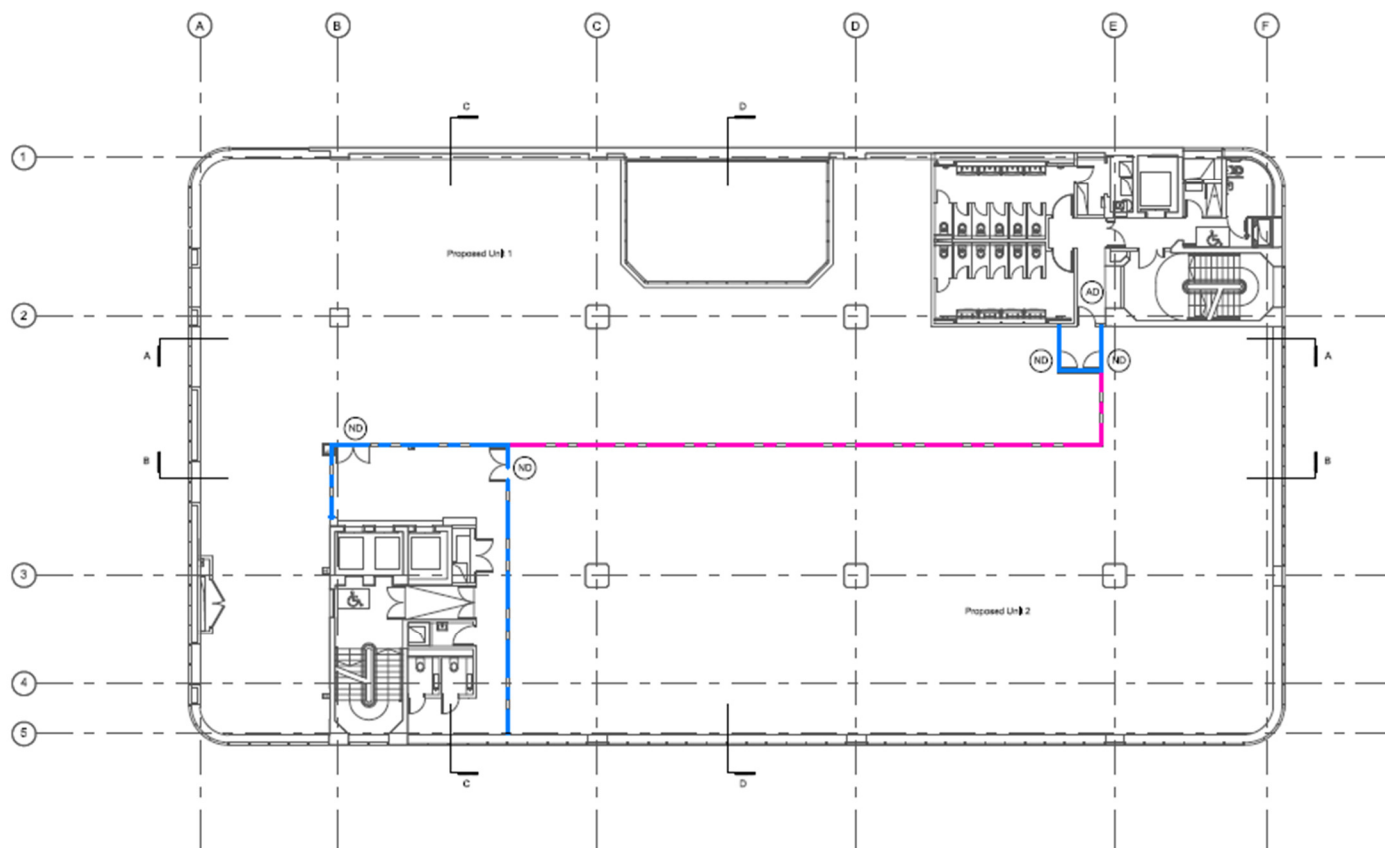
Archaeological Significance

- 5.10. The Ancoats area is rich in archaeological finds, particularly from the Roman period. Additionally, the area may contain evidence of the city's industrial past.
- 5.11. The fabric and construction methods of the application site building may also hold archaeological significance for future generations. However, these aspects fall outside the scope of the current assessment.

6. Proposals

- 6.1. The application proposals relate solely to the interior of the third and the fourth floors of the original and main Express Building fronting Great Ancoats Street.
- 6.2. The works proposed consist of the construction of a demising wall, and the creation of associated lobbies, on the 3rd and 4th floors.
- 6.3. The existing mechanical, electrical and lighting systems are evenly split down the middle of the floor. This means the new wall can run between them and not require any work to the mechanical, electrical or lighting systems.

Proposed Floor Plan (For 3rd and 4th Floors)



Source: KAP Architect

7. Design & Access Statement

- 7.1. In accordance with the National Planning Practice Guidance, this Design and Access statement provides a summary of the works proposed and how the design principles and concepts have taken into account the building's use, amount, layout, scale, landscaping and appearance.

Proposed Works Summary

- 7.2. The works proposed consist of the construction of a demising wall, and associated lobbies, on the 3rd and 4th floors. The wall's construction allows for two separate office spaces to be created on each of these floors. Two smaller, more manageable spaces provides greater flexibility for tenant occupation and significantly improves prospects for re-occupying the vacant floorspace (see also the submitted CBRE marketing report). This flexibility helps to ensure that the building stays occupied throughout its lifespan. The building's continual occupation not only helps maintain the building itself, but also positively contributes to its neighbourhood. It does this by bringing in more activity via the tenants within these spaces.
- 7.3. Access to daylight, the lifts, WCs, stairs, and fire escapes have all been considered when laying out the office spaces and locating the demising wall. Several design options were considered, but the proposed layout, with the wall down the middle of the floor plate, ensured that both units had windows, could access the lifts, WCs & stairs, and that their fire escape strategy was not compromised. The lobbies created off of each core are needed to provide access to each unit.
- 7.4. No works are proposed to the exterior of the building, to the cores, to the WCs, to the roof and to the basement, ground, 1st, 2nd, and 5th floors. No additional floor space is proposed. No change of use is proposed, with the new units remaining as office space.
- 7.5. In order to construct the wall, a portion of the raised access floor under the lobby walls will need to be removed so that these walls sit on the concrete slab. The replacement raised access floor will then be cut so it's edge meets the wall. This creates the required fire and acoustic separation at the lobbies.
- 7.6. The wall running between the lobbies and separating two units will have a fire barrier inserted under the raised access floor. This barrier provides the required acoustic separation. The sprinklers and fire alarms between the two units will be connected so that a fire separation between the units is required.
- 7.7. For the head of the wall, the existing suspended ceiling will be cut back so that the wall head can be fixed to the concrete slab. The suspended ceiling will be replaced, dressed into the sides of the wall, and then refinished. The wall will be constructed out of metal studs and finished either side with plaster board and paint. The new doors will be painted.
- 7.8. The existing mechanical, electrical and lighting systems are evenly split down the middle of the floor. This means the new wall can run between them and not require any work to the mechanical, electrical or lighting systems.

Use

- 7.9. The building is currently used as office space and the proposed work does not propose to change this or request any new uses. The new spaces on the 3rd and 4th floors will be used as offices (E Use Class).

Amount

- 7.10. The proposed works do not create any additional floor area, additional stories, or any change to the buildings mass and footprint. The new demising walls on the 3rd and 4th floors split one unit into two, opening up the building to a wider range of tenants.

Layout

- 7.11. The work does not involve any changes to the buildings entrances, vertical circulation, footprint, lifts, stairs, fire escape strategy or WCs. The only change to the building's existing layout is to introduce the lobbies and demising wall on the 3rd and 4th floors. The reason for splitting the 3rd and 4th floors is to make the office sizes more attractive to a wider range of prospective tenants. This split will help to ensure the building is more fully occupied, benefiting it and the neighbourhood (again see evidence in CBRE Report).

- 7.12. The demising wall has been positioned so that each unit has access to daylight, the lifts & stairs, the WCs, and a clear fire escape. The wall runs between the existing mechanical, electrical, and lighting services, meaning that these will not have to be altered as part of these works.

Scale

- 7.13. The proposed works are all interior in nature and do not include any proposed changes to the building's scale or massing.

Landscaping

- 7.14. The proposed works are all interior in nature and do not include any proposed changes to the building's landscaping.

Appearance

- 7.15. The proposed works are all interior in nature and do not include any proposed changes to the building's appearance.

8. Heritage Assessment

- 8.1. The proposals have been designed to ensure that architectural features of heritage significance are maintained and preserved for future users of the floorspaces. Internally, the large, characterful columns have been identified as such a feature, along with the original staircases and the external glazed curtain walls. Furthermore, the historically open plan form of the building is significant, albeit there is evidence the floorplates were designed with evolving needs in mind and have accommodated a variety of amendments in the past, including subdivision.
- 8.2. Externally, the building possesses high architectural and historical significance. As the proposed works only consist of creating new interior lobbies and an interior demising wall at each level, there are no changes proposed that would materially alter the external appearance of the building. Whilst the southern extent of the new lobby partitions would interact with the southern elevation, the curtain wall glazing has been replaced with a specification that does not allow clear views into the floorspace and due to the height of the proposed partitions, the external character of the building would not be perceptibly impacted.
- 8.3. The proposed subdivision has been designed to maintain the appreciation of the columns within a still fairly large, open floor area. None of the partitions proposed will physically interact with the columns and the subdivision will create two equally sized areas, with three columns per demise, which is sympathetic to the significance of the floorspace and aligns with the original design intention to allow the building to be adapted easily, as required.
- 8.4. Indeed, the existing mechanical, electrical and lighting systems are already evenly split down the middle of each floor area. This means the new wall can run between them and not require any work to the mechanical, electrical or lighting systems. As such, the only impacts to the current M&E arrangement is through the removal of modern suspended light fittings and addition of new recessed light fittings in the proposed lobbies, neither of which would be harmful.
- 8.5. Any degree of subdivision to an originally open plan floor area has some potential to result in harmful impacts, however it is considered at that the appreciation of two large, open floor plans with key original features retained unimpeded within, would not result in harmful impacts in this case. The new lobby partitions to north and south are similarly set out away from the concrete columns and given the projection of the existing stair cores, the new lobby areas have a negligible capacity to impact plan form overall.
- 8.6. The concrete slabs, which are covered by a suspended ceiling, are original, but the minimal nature of fixings to this non-decorative, structural fabric that is screened from view, means that impacts on fabric would be negligible and not harmful in this context. Further details of the methodology for fixing partitions into the floorspace are contained in the submitted architectural method statement and Metal Stud Installation Method Statement.
- 8.7. Consideration has also been given to potential future tenant fit outs, to ensure the open plan nature of the newly created floorspaces and appreciation of their historic character will be conserved in the long term. Tenants are expected to treat the remaining features of heritage significance with respect to preserve the architectural and historic interest of the Grade II* listed building.
- 8.8. Potential design parameters for future tenants to consider would include:
- Retain large open areas and avoid significant future subdivision, wherever possible
 - Use freestanding furniture
 - Where further partitioning is required, make use of fully or partially glazed partitions to ensure a perception of openness is retained
 - Avoid interaction with the cruciform columns to retain an appreciation of their character in 360 degrees
 - If new partitions are required, ensure they have minimal fixings to existing fabric
- 8.9. Notwithstanding the advisory guidance above, any future applications for a tenant fit out within the new demises at third and fourth floor would be controlled by the LBC process and determined on its own merits.
- 8.10. In conclusion, the current proposals are not considered to be harmful to the listed building and Paragraphs 207 and 208 of the NPPF do not need to be engaged. However, even if a low level of 'less than substantial harm' were to be interpreted as a result

of the subdivision, it is material to note the significant public benefit of returning occupancy to the long vacant floorspaces by introducing a reduced floor area that is much more attractive to current market demand, as evidenced in the submitted market analysis report.

- 8.11. Re-occupancy is the most effective way to ensure effective ongoing conservation of the building and will also result spin off social and economic benefits, through bringing jobs and activity to a significant underused portion of the building, as well as to the immediate locality.
- 8.12. The understanding of market demand is fully evidenced in CBRE's marketing report, submitted with this application.

9. Summary

- 9.1. This Statement has been provided on behalf of Wittington Investments in support of an application for Listed Building Consent relating to the Express Building at 9 Great Ancoats St, Manchester M4 5AD.
- 9.2. The former Daily Express Building is Grade II* listed and located within the Ancoats Conservation Area. The main purpose of this statement was to consider the heritage significance of the building and to appraise the impact of the proposed scheme on this significance.
- 9.3. The floorspace at 3rd and 4th floors have proven very difficult to let because of their size and have now been vacant for over 5 years since completing the significant refurbishment works in 2019. As such, the layout of these spaces now requires adjusting with a view to finally achieving long term re-occupancy.
- 9.4. The proposals have been designed to ensure that architectural features of heritage significance are maintained and preserved. They are the minimum required to secure the public benefit of assured long-term re-occupancy. The information set out in the application fully aligns with the advice received at pre-application stage and is considered proportionate to demonstrate the appropriateness of the works in heritage terms.
- 9.5. The current proposals are not considered to be harmful to the listed building and Paragraphs 207 and 208 of the NPPF do not need to be engaged. However, even if a low level of 'less than substantial harm' were to be interpreted as a result of the subdivision, the significant public benefit of returning occupancy to the long vacant floorspaces by introducing a reduced floor area to account for current market demand is compelling. Re-occupancy is the most effective way to ensure effective ongoing conservation of the building and will also result spin off social and economic benefits, through bringing jobs and activity to a significant underused portion of the building, as well as to the immediate locality.
- 9.6. To this end, there should be no conservation grounds to refuse the listed building consent application and, respectfully, permission should be granted accordingly.

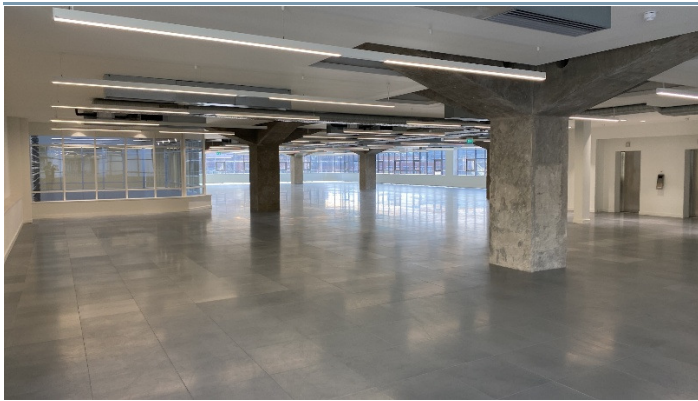
1. Full Planning History

Application ref no	Application	Decision Issued Date	Decision
134129/LO/2022	Listed Building Consent for the installation of internal partitions and alterations to the second floor. Express Building 1 George Leigh Street Manchester M4 5DL	Wed 28 Sep 2022	Approved
128828/LO/2020 128827/FO/2020	Listed Building Consent for the creation of a gym (Use Class E) within the basement with associated elevational alterations Part Of Basement Of Express Building 1 George Leigh Street Manchester M4 5DL	Mon 08 Feb 2021	Approved
126505/LO/2020	Listed Building Consent for the installation of internal partitions and alterations including installation of mechanical and electrical works 5th, 6th And 6th Floor Mezzanine Express Building 1 George Leigh Street Manchester M4 5DL	Thu 07 May 2020	Approved
123826/FO/2019	Creation of ancillary storage space to the offices within the basement following removal of car parking and cafe (Class A3) to ground floor together with elevational alterations including alterations to main entrance canopy, creation of external seating area to cafe and new boundary treatment to car park Express Building 1 George Leigh Street Manchester M4 5DL	Fri 04 Oct 2019	Approved
123827/AO/2019	Installation of on illuminated individual letter sign affixed to refurbished canopy and fascia branding to the building entrance Express Building 1 George Leigh Street Manchester M4 5DL	Fri 04 Oct 2019	Approved
123620/LO/2019	Listed Building Consent for internal refurbishment, elevational alterations and external works associated with the creation of ancillary basement storage area, ground floor cafe together with new fascia sign and alterations to the building entrance, car park and boundary treatment. Unit 1 Express Building 1 George Leigh Street Manchester M4 5DL	Fri 04 Oct 2019	Approved
122969/LO/2019	Listed Building Consent for the installation of internal partitions to the lower ground, ground and first floors Express Building 1 George Leigh Street Manchester M4 5DL	Tue 07 May 2019	Approved
122682/LO/2019	Listed Building Consent for the refurbishment of the curtain wall facade and refurbishment and repair of the roof top apartment Express Building 1 George Leigh Street Manchester M4 5DL	Tue 09 Apr 2019	Approved
121483/AO/2018	LBC for the installation of back-lit individual letter fascia sign	Mon 18 Feb 2019	Approved

121484/LO/2018			
121251/FO/2018	Remodelling of entrance and associated elevational alterations Express Building 1 George Leigh Street Manchester M4 5DL	Thu 06 Dec 2018	Approved
119394/AO/2018 119395/LO/2018	Installation of internally illuminated letter sign to southern elevation and projecting internally illuminated lettering on lifting boom at roof level Express Building 1 George Leigh Street Manchester M4 5DL	Fri 18 May 2018	Approved
118002/LO/2017	Listed Building Consent for the refurbishment of existing office building (Use Class B1) including the creation of additional office space (258 sqm) (Use Class B1) in basement following removal of part of basement car park together with alteration to main entrance steps and reception, cutting back of non-original ground floor slab, insertion of mezzanine at 6th floor with associated alterations to part of roof, replacement of window film, facade refurbishment, alterations to atrium and associated works Express Building 1 George Leigh Street Manchester M4 5DL	Wed 31 Jan 2018	Approved
098142/FU/2011/N1	Provision of additional use class D1 (to a maximum floorspace of 350 sq. m) within Express Networks buildings 1, 2 or 3 Express Networks 1,2,3 1 George Leigh Street Manchester M4 5DL	Thu 01 Mar 2012	Approved
094335/LO/2010/N1	LBC for internal alterations including installation of suspended ceilings, new partitions, tiling and doors. Express Building Great Ancoats Street Ancoats Manchester M4 5FD	Mon 15 Nov 2010	Approved
058723/LO/NORTH2/00 058722/FO/NORTH2/00	LBC Mixed use development involving conversion of building into office units on ground, mezzanine and first floors, 22no. residential units at 2nd and 3rd floor levels, and car parking with new vehicle ramp to the basement. Express Buildings, 60s Block, George Leigh Street, Ancoats	Mon 05 Jun 2000	Approved
055658/LO/NORTH2/98	LBC Display of signage on front elevations. Express Building, 19, Great Ancoats Street, Ancoats	Thu 02 Sep 1999	Approved
054178/LO/NORTH2/98	LBC Installation of solar film to windows Express Building, 11, Great Ancoats Street, Ancoats	Thu 11 Jun 1998	Approved
050339/AO/NORTH2/96	Erection of a non-illuminated advertising board Express Building, Great Ancoats Street, Ancoats	Mon 04 Nov 1996	Approved
043964/LO/NORTH2/93	Alteration and refurbishment to form new office space Daily Express Building bounded by Gt. Ancoats Street/Luna St/Gun St and George Leigh Street Ancoats	Fri 10 Sep 1993	Approved

041004	Refurbishment and extension of the Express Building for general office use and the erection of multi-storey car park incorporating Blossom garage on adjoining site. 9-27, Great Ancoats Street and site bounded by George Leigh Street, Henry Street, Blossom Street, and Gun Street, Ancoat	Mon 29 Jun 1992	Approved
038090	LISTED BUILDING CONSENT Erection of an antenna on roof. Daily Express Building, 27 Great Ancoats Street Ancoats CENTRAL	Thu 15 Nov 1990	Approved
030417	Construction of a vehicular crossing access over the footpath rear of Daily Express Building, Cornell Street, Ancoats CENTRAL	Thu 21 Jan 1988	Approved
F/AD02704	Illuminated individual letter name sign on front elevation of building as per the 2 existing signs. B) Illuminated intermittent individual letters at roof level to replace existing on corner elevation of business premises, projecting over highway. Daily Express Building, Gt. Ancoats Street, City.	Wed 03 Sep 1980	Approved
F12089	Erection of 2-storey building for the storage of Bulk Nitric and Gaustic Soda and associated plant and Pipe Bridge to the existing Express Building. Site of 9-17 Luna Street, Ancoats.	Wed 06 Feb 1980	Approved
F09845/LB	Erection of 2-storeys on rear building and erection of 3 storeys over internal roadway (Gun Street) for Newspaper Printing and Publishing. Express Newspaper Building, Great Ancoats Street, George Leigh Street, Henry Street, Luna Street, City.	Tue 12 Dec 1978	Approved

2. Photomontage of Third and Fourth Floor Interiors



Source: Heritage Potential Research



Source: Heritage Potential Research



Source: Heritage Potential Research