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HERITAGE PLANNING

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Delivered by Email

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Dear Cait

Listed Building Consent Application

Neptune Mill, Chapeltown Street, Manchester

Heritage Statement

Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared on behalf of Capital & Centric (Rush) Limited (the 'applicant') in respect to works to fit out Neptune Mill for office use.

The application comprises two elements: firstly, detailed proposals to fit out the ground and first floors of the building; and secondly, a set of design guidance and principles for the future fit out of floors 2-4 to allow tenants to convert and occupy the upper floors of the building without the need to submit formal applications to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) each time a tenant is secured for the property. This latter aspect of the proposed development follows the principles of Listed Building Consent Orders, which were introduced by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act (2013) as a pro-active means of streamlining the Listed Building Consent (LBC) regime by reducing the need for applicants to submit repeated applications for routine works.

Planning and LBC were granted for the conversion of Neptune Mill for modern office use in 2023 (Application Reference: 136866/LO/2023 and 136865/FO/2023). Two subsequent applications, to

vary conditions in respect to the above approvals (Application Reference: 138795/JO/2023) and bring forward amendments to the internal layout and elevations (Application Reference: 138819/NMC/2023) were approved by the LPA in early 2024.

The current proposals build on that process of securing the full occupation of Neptune Mill as a modern office facility and the current formal description of development is as follows:

Listed building consent for internal alterations to the ground and first floor of Neptune Mill, in addition to approval for the future fit-out works to floors 2-4 and an associated Fit Out Guide. Alterations to include the installation of partition walls, material finishes and associated works.

In determining the proposals Manchester City Council, as LPA, has a 'statutory duty' under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed buildings or their settings or any features of special architectural or historic interest that they possess.

In respect to information requirements for relevant planning applications, Policy JP-P2: Heritage of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (2022-2039) requires that:

"Proposals should be informed, as necessary, by the findings and recommendations of the appropriate heritage assessment(s) in the development plan evidence base and/or any updated heritage assessment submitted as part of the planning application process."

National planning policy in respect to the conservation of the historic environment is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (revised 2023) (NPPF) and places the following requirements on applicants:

"In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understanding the potential impact of the proposals on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation." (NPPF Paragraph 200)

Significance of the Heritage Asset

Neptune Mill has been identified, by the LPA and applicant, as a curtilage listed building throughout the above planning history. In this context, the principal listed building is the Crusader Works (Grade II Listed) (List Entry Number 1293172) which was first designated in June 1994.

The heritage significance of Neptune Mill has been well rehearsed during the relevant planning history. A detailed Heritage Statement was submitted with the original applications for the conversion of the former mill to office use, and Addendum Heritage Statements were submitted with the subsequent applications.

While the LBC regime applies to the curtilage listed Neptune Mill, it seems highly unlikely that the building holds 'special architectural or historic interest' in its own right. The building has been occupied by a variety of uses over time, with associated adaptations. Indeed, the original scheme

secured the opportunity to bring forward a series of enhancements, including reinstating a more appropriate pattern of windows, uncovering the original rooflights and enabling a package of brickwork repairs to be undertaken.

In this context, a proportionate description of the significance of the Crusader Works complex as a whole, including the contribution of Neptune Mill, to that significance is provided in Appendix 1 of this Heritage Statement.

Impact Assessment

Ground and First Floor Fit Out:

The proposed ground floor layout would be very similar to the original approved scheme. The WCs would be reconfigured and one of the enclosed meeting rooms would be omitted, creating a slightly more open plan form to the workspace and allowing the full width of the building to be appreciated. The ground floor would incorporate two principal spaces, occupied by the main workspace and entrance foyer/coffee shop, with most of the small cellular spaces positioned along the northern side of the floor plate. The central line of columns would remain exposed through the two main spaces, allowing the structure to be appreciated, rather than enclosing the columns in small cellular rooms.

The proposed first-floor would be largely open plan, with service spaces such as the WCs and store located to each end of the floor plate adjoining the original stair enclosures. One enclosed office space would be placed towards the centre of the southern elevation; however, the continuous line of columns would be appreciated along the full length of the first floor.

New partitions would be formed with metal stud framing and clad in a range of boarding with a painted finish. The partitions would be reversible if future uses of the building required an alternative layout. The refuse store, towards the north-eastern corner of the ground floor would be constructed of blockwork and lined with insulated plaster board.

The proposed partitions to the first floor would be similarly constructed with a light-weight approach that would be reversible.

The principal (north and south) internal elevations of the host building would remain as exposed brickwork, allowing the industrial character of the building to be appreciated.

The existing concrete slab that covers the majority of the ground floor would be retained in situ, polished and sealed. The main staircase, in the north-eastern corner of the building, would be repaired and clad with studded rubber flooring. The underside of the staircase would remain exposed.

The existing screed to the first floor would be covered in acoustic backed carpet tiles, which would be reversible in the event that the use of the building changed again in the future.

The existing ceilings to the ground floor space would remain largely exposed, but treated with an intumescent coating, thus retaining the industrial character of the interior. The ceilings inside the cellular spaces would be lined with several forms of boarding depending on the use of the space.

The existing first floor ceiling would be treated in the same way, with an intumescent coating to the existing timber structure. The cast iron beams to the columns, and the columns themselves, would also be treated with an intumescent coating, allowing a modern office use in an historic interior.

In respect to the lower floors and the upper floor Fit-Out Guide, new partitions would be clad in a contemporary finish to clearly express the new interventions and contrast with the exposed brickwork of the original mill building. In this respect, the partitions would be 'read' as new elements and clearly distinguished from the historic character of the building. The applicant has an established track record of successfully integrating legible, contemporary elements into historic buildings to add a new layer of interest. The conversion of the Crusader Works, the principal listed building of the complex, provides examples of this approach.

The use of full height glazing to the fronts of the meeting rooms would allow views into the rooms from the open spaces. Thus, the full width of the floor plate, and internal scale of the building, would be appreciable. This approach would also be common to the lower and upper floors.

Upper Floor Fit-Out Guide:

A Fit-Out Guide with associated principles and parameters has been proposed for floors 2-4 of Neptune Mill. The Guide is intended to inform the conversion work of future tenants without the need for routine, and largely repetitive, formal applications to the LPA.

As noted above, the approach proposed for the upper floors follows the principles behind Listed Building Consent Orders, which allow LPAs to grant consent for works to a listed building over an extended period. Historic England Good Practice Advice Note 6 (2015) notes:

"Such orders allow works which would otherwise require a series of applications for listed building consent to be dealt with by a single consent mechanism, potentially covering a much longer period. They have potential to act as a focus for development of consensus between multiple owners and local planning authorities, to establish well-understood approaches to common issues of maintenance, repair or minor alterations, to increase certainty over the aspirations and requirements of all parties, and to save time and resources for owners and LPAs alike. They allow the LPA to spend less time on minor and well-understood works to well-understood listed buildings in their area, and will make it easier for owners to get on with minor and uncontentious changes."

In this context, the proposed Fit-Out Guide has been subject to extensive consultation with the LPA and the approach to the future fit-out of the upper floors of the building would follow the best practice approach set out in the Historic England advice.

The proposed principles of the Fit-Out Guide cover the following aspects of future conversions:

- Partition Arrangements
- Partition Materiality
- Ceilings
- Detailed Design and Sign-Off

Future sub-division would be limited to a maximum of 20% of each floor, and cellular spaces would be clustered towards each end of the floor plate as far as possible and avoid the centre of the floor. This approach is proposed in respect to the detailed conversion of the first floor, it would allow the scale of the interior to be appreciated, including the continuous centre line of cast iron columns.

In addition, the attic floor has the additional characteristics of the full-length roof lights, which would be reinstated as part of the conversion, and the interesting tie-bars that connect the roof

trusses through the floor and into the beams of the floor below. The applicant would ensure that any partitions to the attic floor are placed at each end of the floor space to avoid obscuring the rooflights and tie-bars.

Partitions shall be primarily constructed with glazing, with solid elements between cellular spaces to allow for necessary privacy and the installation of modern office equipment, such as screens.

Further justification would be required for the installation of false ceilings. However, the detailed proposals for the ground floor and first-floor seem to strike a good balance of maintaining the exposed timber ceilings and structure over the main open spaces, with necessary fire protection, while introducing false ceilings to create sufficient acoustic insulation in partitioned spaces.

The proposed sign-off process would enable the building owner to move forward with confidence in their discussions with prospective tenants, while providing a system for gaining approval from the LPA without recourse to a formal LBC application.

With reference to Places For Everyone Joint Development Plan Policy JP-P2 (Clause 2), the heritage significance of Neptune Mill is well understood and has been considered throughout the planning history of the on-going office conversion. In this context, this and previous applications have been consistent with the requirement of the NPPF for applicants to describe the significance of the heritage assets that may be affected by their proposals (NPPF Paragraph 200).

A creative approach has been taken to the adaptation of Neptune Mill, with new interventions being clearly legible against the industrial character of the building, for example with modern partitions of glazing and cladding contrasting with the exposed brickwork and retained cast iron columns of the host building (Policy JP-P2, Clause 3).

The proposed development will deliver positive benefits that sustain and enhance the historic environment, as well as contributing to the economic viability of the Neptune Mill site. The applicant has a track record of proposing enhancements to the building as part of the on-going office conversion and the scheme is consistent with Policy JP-P2 Clause 4.

In developing the principles of the Fit-Out Guide 'great weight' has been given to the conservation of the heritage asset (NPPF Paragraph 205). The proposed development would preserve the significance of the listed building and is therefore in accordance with S.16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Therefore, NPPF Paragraphs 206-208, regarding substantial and less than substantial harm to the designated heritage asset, should not apply in this instance.

Summary

The proposed development is considered to be consistent with the NPPF definition of Conservation (for heritage policy):

"The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance."

The proposed Fit-Out Guide should provide a means for all parties to move forward with confidence, sustaining and enhancing a well-understood curtilage listed building through the on-going conversion to a modern office building.

The proposals and associated Fit-Out Guide would not harm the significance of the heritage asset and would be in accordance with the relevant 'statutory duty' of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and the relevant policies of the Local Plan and NPPF.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G. J. Ives'.

Graeme Ives

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Appendix 1

The Significance of the Heritage Asset

Introduction

- 1.1 The NPPF defines significance (for heritage policy) as:

“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. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site’s Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance.” (NPPF Annex 2: Glossary)

- 1.2 The setting of a heritage asset is defined by the NPPF as follows:

“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.” (NPPF Annex 2: Glossary)

- 1.3 The national Planning Practice Guide (PPG) further advises, that:

“The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places.” (Paragraph: 013 Reference ID: 18a-013-20190723)

- 1.4 Historic England guidance on The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition, 2017) confirms that:

“9. Setting is not itself a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, although land comprising a setting may itself be designated. Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset or to the ability to appreciate that significance.”

- 1.5 The Historic England Good Practice Advice Note provides a non-exhaustive checklist of potential attributes of setting, concerning the ‘physical surroundings’ and ‘experience of the asset’, that may help to elucidate the contribution of setting to significance and have been used to help inform this Heritage Statement.

- 1.6 The description of the significance of the heritage assets, provided below, is proportionate to their importance and the likely impact of the proposed development on their significance, including their setting.

Crusader Works, Chapeltown Street (Grade II Listed)

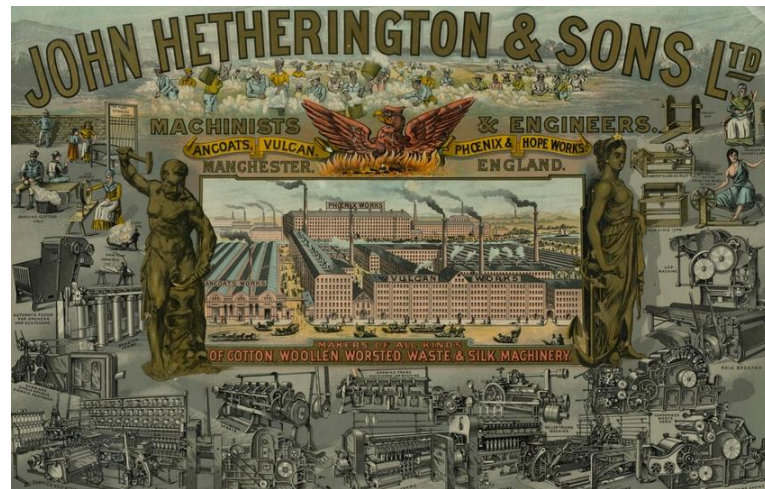
Special Historic Interest

- 1.7 The Crusader Works was originally designated in June 1994 and the list entry describes it as follows:

"Probably cotton spinning mill, now works. Mid C19, altered. Red brick with some sandstone dressings, roof not visible. Very long rectangular plan parallel to street. A six-storey 28-window range with three-storey four-window continuation at west end; panelled corner pilasters with stone cornices, parapet with stone coping, eight-window centre breaking forwards very slightly; vertical rectangular windows with raised sills and flat-arched heads, those in the west portion mostly four-pane sashes but the others with altered glazing; inserted doorway in second bay of centre; round-headed doorways in first and fourth bays of right-hand portion, that to the right altered as a window."

- 1.8 Although the list entry suggests the original complex, then known as the Phoenix Works, was probably a cotton spinning mill, it seems that it was actually constructed for the manufacture of machines for the cotton industry. However, it was soon subject to various changes of use, including packaging, warehousing, printing and making clothing.
- 1.9 The first detailed map of the complex, the Manchester Townships Map of 1850 (Figure 3.5), indicates that the Crusader Works was first used as a 'machine works' by Parr, Curtis and Madeley who had taken over another business, just south of Store Street, in 1838. In 1851 they received an award at the Great Exhibition for their carding and spinning machines (www.gracesguide.co.uk).
- 1.10 In 1861 a devastating fire destroyed much of the Phoenix Works. A contemporary account of the fire (www.gracesguide.co.uk) referred to the oil drenched floors of the machine works and the damage to an eight-storey range of 28 bays. The account is not clear whether the fire took place on the northern or southern side of Chapeltown Street, however the description of a building of 28 bays is likely to refer to the current listed building, and it appears that the original top two floors were lost at that time. The account of the fire dates the building to 1845, which is consistent with the historic map regression and advises that the building was *"... not constructed upon the fire-proof principle."*
- 1.11 The damage to the main complex pre-dated the construction of Neptune Mill, however the historic maps indicate that it was constructed soon after and may have been part of the renewal of the complex in response to the fire.
- 1.12 In 1895 the works was taken over by John Hetherington and Sons, which owned a series of machinery works in the Ancoats area, including the Vulcan Works.

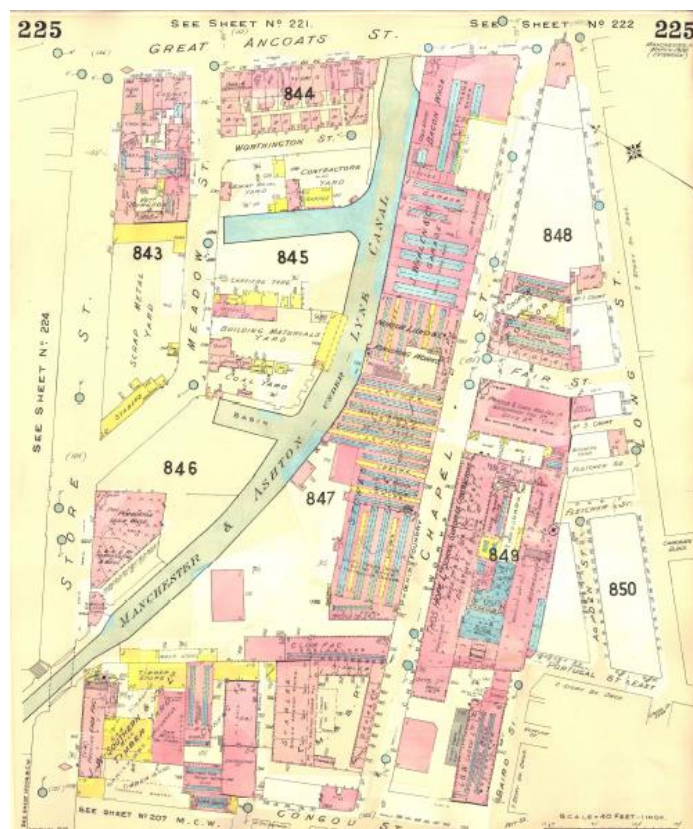
Figure 1.1: An advert for John Hetherington and Son's with Phoenix (Crusader) Works in the background



1.13 By March 1928 the Goad Insurance Map (Sheet 225) indicates that the complex accommodated a variety of uses, including a packing warehouse to the main front range to Chapeltown Street and also within the application site.

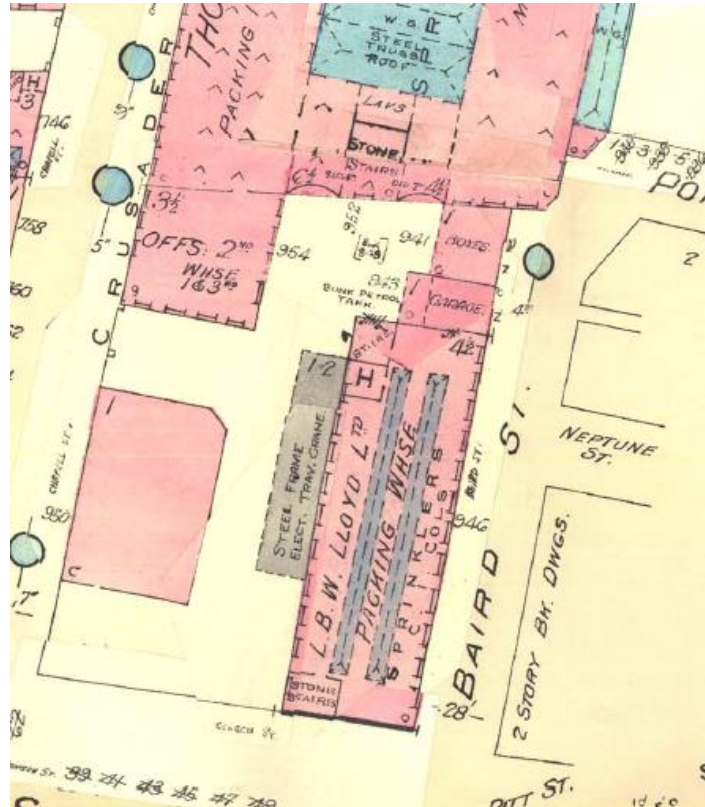
1.14 The complex therefore appears to have been constructed as primarily a machine works, for the manufacture of textile related machinery, then became used as a warehouse, before being identified as a 'clothing works' by the mid C20th.

Figure 1.2: Goad Insurance Maps of Manchester (Sheet 225)



- 1.15 The detail of the Goad Insurance Map is also interesting in respect to the roofscape of the application site, which illustrates long, parallel rooflights to both sides of the main ridge. Internally, the alignment of the rooflights is still legible, however the external surface of the roof has been re-slatted, covering the former rooflights.

Figure 1.3: Detail of Goad Insurance Map (March 1928) illustrating the roofscape of the application site



- 1.16 A planning application determined in October 1980 (Reference: F16409) for the erection of a chrome plating shop at the Crusader Works indicates that the manufacturing use of the building continued through the later C20th.
- 1.17 The remainder of the complex, adjoining the current application site was granted consent for residential use with 126 apartments, and a ten-storey new-build apartment building immediately to the north-east of the listed building, in October 2016 (Reference: 113363/FO/2016).

Special Architectural Interest

- 1.18 The principal range to Chapeltown Street is six storeys in height and is 28 bays wide. The repetitive elevation accentuates the scale of the building. The Crusader Works was designed to be functional in character, with the few architectural embellishments limited to the corner brick pilasters and associated stone capitals, which contribute to the monumentality of the building. The principal range is constructed with Flemish bond brickwork and stone sills and heads to the windows.

- 1.19 The brick pilasters and capital detail continue into the four-storey range that returns along the southern side of the narrow passageway between Crusader Works and the new Phoenix apartment building.
- 1.20 The historic maps indicate that the three-storey continuation, to the western end of the complex, was contemporary with the principal phase of building and continues the same pilaster and capital detail to the front elevation.

Figure 1.4: The principal range and three-storey element to Chapeltown Street



Figure 1.5: Capital and pilaster and the northern return elevation



- 1.21 The main internal courtyard forms a highly enclosed space and is illustrative of the ad hoc adaptation common to industrial complexes such as the Crusader Works. The Goad Insurance Map of 1928 illustrates the southern part of the courtyard as an enclosed, internal space. The recent residential conversion has included an external lift and landings that add a sculptural feature within the former industrial courtyard.

Figure 1.6: Looking northwards through the internal courtyard behind the principal range



- 1.22 The eastern side of the courtyard is enclosed by a four-storey range with three principal bays of seven, eight and nine bays of windows from north to south. The central bay of eight windows projects forward and incorporates the octagonal chimney to the north-eastern corner of the building.

Figure 1.7: The Fair Street elevation and chimney



- 1.23 The application site is connected to the southern end of the main three-bay range to Fair Street by a third-storey bridge link that crosses over the southern courtyard of the complex.
- 1.24 The building line of the application site appears to have been dictated by the inherited street pattern and is set back slightly behind the main Crusader Works frontage to Fair Street.

Figure 1.8: The application site looking northwards along Fair Street



Figure 1.9: The application site looking south-westwards across Fair Street and the Metro-link



- 1.25 The application site building is constructed with English garden wall brickwork with simple, non-gauged, segmental brick archers to the windows and simple stone sills. The southern gabled elevation incorporates a narrow, external brick flue, which appears to have been a later addition to the building. Much of the roof is concealed by a brick parapet.

Figure 1.10: The southern elevation of the application site adjoining the single-storey warehouse



- 1.26 The lower part of the western elevation is partly concealed by the single-storey warehouse. The line of the parapet is broken by a vertical stairwell and a lift shaft, with an adjoining stairwell, to the southern and northern ends of the elevation respectively. The roof top additions to both projections are quite crude.

Figure 1.11: The southern part of the application site, including the southern stairwell projecting above the adjoining supermarket



Figure 1.12: The northern part of the application site set back to the rear of the southern courtyard



Figure 1.13: The roofscape above the western elevation of the application site



- 1.27 The Goad Insurance Map illustrates parallel roof lights on both pitches of the roof that extended for almost the full length of the building. The roof appears to have been re-surfaced in the past, screening evidence of the rooflights in current aerial photographs. Internally, the position of the rooflights remains legible, with the remainder of the roof clad in timber boarding. The trusses are anchored through the beams of the floor below with slender tie-rods.

Figure 1.14: The interior of the roof and detail of the tie rods that are fastened through the floor beams



- 1.28 Below the attic level, the floors are largely open-plan, with a central row of columns and a stair and WC enclosure to the south-western corner. The second floor has been partly subdivided with light-weight partitions.
- 1.29 The floors are constructed with timber boards, rather than a fire-proof construction. The application site does not retain any machinery associated with a packing warehouse or for clothing manufacture.

Figure 1.15: The western side of the 3rd floor



Figure 1.16: The northern part of the second floor



The Contribution of Setting to Significance

- 1.30 The physical surroundings of the Crusader Works include the topography of Chapeltown Street, which gently slopes downhill from Great Ancoats Road to the north-east, to Piccadilly station, to the south-west. The southern frontage of the works has a relatively open aspect due to the process of clearance that took place during the mid C20th and the vacant sites that have persisted since that time. The Metrolink now forms an open corridor immediately to the south of Crusader Works, lending a much greater sense of prominence to the secondary frontage of the works. Views from the south towards the application site have also become more open over time as sites have been cleared and the townscape has become more fragmented.

Figure 1.17: The view northwards towards the application site from Sheffield Street



- 1.31 The aspect to the northern part of Chapeltown Street itself has become increasingly enclosed with the construction of the residential canal side developments of the 1980s and more recently the construction of the Phoenix apartment scheme, which screens Crusader Works in views from Great Ancoats Road.

Figure 1.18: The view south towards the Phoenix Apartments from Great Ancoats Road



- 1.32 The townscape setting of the Crusader Works, between Great Ancoats Road and Piccadilly Station, remains fragmented. There are few heritage assets in this area and none that help illustrate the type of townscape formerly associated with the mill complex, for example the associated mills of the Phoenix Works on the opposite side of Chapeltown Street were replaced with the current residential townscape in c.2000 and all of the former mill workers housing or the associated grid-like street pattern of the area that once wrapped around the southern side of Crusader Works has been removed. Therefore, the immediate functional relationships between the works and contemporary townscape have been lost over time.
- 1.33 Crusader Works contributes to the wider 'context' of mill development on the northern side of Manchester and derives an historic association from the Hetherington's, who acquired the works as part of their wider portfolio. However, the degree of change over time in respect to the setting of the listed building has been considerable. The asset is experienced in a relatively weak townscape, which lacks a particular character or distinctiveness. Several recent taller developments now form significant landmarks within the setting of the mill.

Figure 1.19: The view north-eastwards towards the site application along Baird Street



Crusader Works Summary of Significance and Contribution of Application Site

1.34 The significance of the grade II listed Crusader Works is principally derived from the following attributes:

- The monumental scale of the Chapeltown Street range, which was characteristic of the mill townscape of the northern edge of Manchester City Centre.
- The rhythm of the principal elevation and scale of the pilasters and capitals that frame the elevation.
- The retention of the courtyard planform and group value of the cluster of functional, brick industrial buildings, including the truncated octagonal chimney.
- The historic association with John Hetherington and Sons and its previous uses related to manufacturing and as a packing warehouse associated with the textile industry.

1.35 The significance of the application site, as a curtilage listed buildings is derived from the following:

- As part of the renewal and expansion of the Crusader Works site following the devastating fire of 1861.
- The contribution to the group value of the Crusader Works complex, particularly the consistent frontage of brick constructed former industrial buildings that now enclose the Metrolink line.
- The retention of the cast iron columns and roof structure within the interior of the building.