

Heritage Statement

Manchester Royal Exchange – Pavement Light Replacement

1. Introduction & Context

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement has been produced to support a Listed Building Consent Planning Application for the replacement of no. 5 Pavement lights at the (Grade II Listed) Manchester Royal Exchange Building, Old Bank Street, Manchester. M2 3PE. This Heritage Statement outlines the heritage context of the subject site and the proposed development.
- 1.2 As outlined in the accompanying cover letter supporting this application, the building played an important role in the textile trade of the northwest from the 1700s. The building holds a significance presence within Manchester City centre and defines its immediate area of its surroundings of St. Ann's square. It is one of the most iconic buildings located within the commercial and retail core of the city centre. More recently, the ground floor of the building is predominately in use for retail (Use Class E(a)), the upper floors as office accommodation (Use Class E(g)) and part of the building as a theatre (*sui generis*).
- 1.3 The proposed development aligns fully with National and Local level planning policy. Specifically, paragraph 203 of the NPPF outlines that when determining application, local planning authorities should take account of a number of items, one of which includes *"the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;"*

2. Impact on Listed Building

- 2.1 The proposed development would not have a material change on how the building operates, nor alter the character of the building. The proposal is considered minor and has only come about for consideration to assist in ensuring the maintained heritage value and appearance of the Manchester Royal Exchange Building. The specific design details have been carefully considered and the iron-gate appearance with imprinted writing design along the edges of the casting has been proposed, taking inspiration from the original construction design, providing a heritage sensitive solution to the required replacement of the lights.
- 2.2 In light of this, the public benefits of the proposal significantly outweigh the any potential harm to the listed building, in accordance with paragraph 203 of the NPPF and Core Strategy policies CC9, EN9, CC1 and saved policy DC19 of the UDP.

3. Impact on the St Ann's Square Conservation Area

- 3.1 The site is located within the St Ann's square Conservation Area and is a prominent building on St Ann's square.
- 3.2 The proposal, although it does include external alterations to the building footprint, the nature of which should be considered by the merits of this proposal. The proposal involves the removal of existing un-original in-situ cast concrete design, with a built heritage sensitive solution that incorporates original construction design details. By proposing a design detail that takes inspiration from the original design features including finer details of lettering, the proposal looks to reinstate the original design feel, and would strengthen the buildings appearance from a heritage aspect.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 In conclusion, the proposal has been carefully designed to respect and enhance the historical and architectural significance of the pavement light element of the Manchester Royal Exchange building. This proposal demonstrates a commitment to preserving and where possible enhancing the character and heritage significance of the building. The proposal allows for the necessary updates to ensure the building stays in continued use, whilst reintroducing iron-grate pavement lights, in replace of the current in -situ cast concrete design.