



Installation of new shopfront, replacement windows and new signage

45 – 47 Thomas Street, Manchester, M4 1NA

June 2024

Heritage Statement

Prepared by LWE Interiors

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1. Introduction

1.1 - This Heritage Statement has been prepared by LWE Interiors on behalf of Agecroft investments. It forms part of a planning application for a proposed development at 45-47 Thomas Street, Manchester, M4 1NA.

1.2 - The premises is currently unoccupied, 'but it was previously occupied by The Thomas street photography studio dating back to 2014. The premises became unoccupied in December 2023 and the application proposal will enable the building to provide 1 ground floor retail unit, and retain 2 offices to the upper floors for potential new tenants.

1.3 - In order to provide a clear understanding of the proposed scheme and its relationship with the surrounding area, this statement includes:

- A description of the application site and surrounding area.
- A review of the application site's planning history.
- An overview of the proposal.
- A review of the relevant national and local planning policy guidance.
- An appraisal of the proposal against its planning policy context.

1.4 - The application is supported by the following information:

- Drawing 058TS 01- Rev B - Existing ground 1st and 2nd floor.
- Drawing 058TS 02- Existing external front elevation and section.
- Drawing 058TS 101- Rev G - Proposed ground 1st and 2nd floor.
- Drawing 058TS 112 - Proposed external front elevation and section.
- Heritage Statement (This document).
- Design and Access Statement

2. The Application Site and Surrounding Area

2.1 - The application site comprises of a three-story property, this property forms part of a terrace located on the east side of Thomas Street. It has a single street frontage, with the west elevation fronting Thomas Street. There is a rear yard which backs onto Kerschicks shoe shop (Edge Street)' only separated by the rear garden area. The site address is 45-47 Thomas Street, Manchester, M4 1NA.

2.2 - The site is bounded to the north by 'Terrace NQ' (a Bar) and 'Cain and Grain' (a bar) to the south. The application relates to the ground floor of the building. The first and second floors comprise of office accommodation which does not form part of the application.



Figure 1: Aerial view with the application building outlined in red. The application relates to floorspace at ground floor only.

2.3 - The application building has red brick elevations to Thomas Street and the rear of the building. The building was constructed in the late 1970's and comprises of machine-made brick. As can be seen from figure 1 above, the roof comprises part slate pitch roof to the street frontage and a flat roof to the rear area. The ground floor frontage to Thomas Street comprises of glazed shopfronts with timber framed windows, UPVC doors, and two roller shutters.

2.4 - The site lies within the Northern Quarter area of the City Centre which is characterised by a broad mix of uses. Food and drink, retail, office uses are particularly established within the Northern Quarter have been successful in bringing activity and vibrancy to the area and providing vacant buildings with active uses. Thomas Street already comprises of the following businesses 'Rivet & Hide', 'Fierce & Beer', 'Smithfield Social', 'Cane & Grain', 'Thomas Street Beer House', 'Terrace NQ', 'The Bay Horse Tavern', 'Cathedral Jewellers', 'Clark Brothers', and 'Wolf at the door'.

2.5 - The site lies within the Smithfield Conservation Area. The building is not nationally listed and was constructed in the late 1970s as noted above. Despite this the building contributes to the character and appearance of the conservation area, comprising the uniform street wall to Thomas Street.

3. Planning History

3.1 - Planning history research using the Council's planning application database identified a number of planning applications associated with the site and neighbouring properties on Thomas Street. These are set out in the table below for reference:

Planning Reference	Location	Description of development	Decision	Decision Issued date
F00646	28, 32, 36, 38, 40 & 42 Edge Street	Alterations to front elevations of vacant shop premises	Approved	Fri 27 Sep 1974
F05652	45 – 47 Thomas Street	Proposed rebuilding of a double unit, consisting of 3 storeys and a basement for use as a wholesale warehouse.	Approved	Wed 02 Mar 1977
F/AD01625	45 – 47 Thomas Street	4 Non-illuminated 16 sheet advertisement boards situated on existing fence on vacant land.	Approved	Tue 14 Mar 1978
F09791	45 – 47 Thomas Street	Erection of a 3-storey building to form a retail shop at ground and 1st floor level and storage at 2nd floor level.	Approved	Tue 16 Jan 1979
F12537	45 – 47 Thomas Street	Construction of a shop front	Approved	Tue 04 Mar 1980
098120/FO/2011/C2	43 Thomas Street	Change of use of vacant A1 to mixed Sui Generis Class A3 (cafe /restaurant), Class A4 (bar), Class B1 (Business), D1 (Community gallery) and D2 (cinema) Use and elevational alterations.	Approved	Thu 16 Feb 2012
109072/FO/2015/C2	43 Thomas Street	Use of roof area as roof garden for eating and/or drinking by up to 20 patrons at a time	Approved	Fri 28 Aug 2015

		from 10:00 to 21:00 daily in association with and ancillary to the Restaurant, bar, business, community gallery and cinema (Sui Generis) within 43 Thomas Street		
126496/FO/2020	43 Thomas Street	Change of use of ground floor vacant area to mixed use Sui Generis Class A3 (cafe /restaurant), Class A4 (bar), Class B1 (Business), D1 (Community gallery) and D2 (cinema); and extension of opening hours for whole of ground floor unit	Approved	Mon 07 Sep 2020

4. The Proposal

- 4.1 – The application proposal is for the proposed Installation of new ground floor powder coated aluminium glazed shopfront with new stall riser, ground floor to be 1 retail unit, new signage, and replacement 1st and 2nd floor windows.
- 4.2 - The application proposal does not involve any external structural alterations to front of the building. The only structural change to the building will be to create an emergency exit into the rear of the building to suit the new ground floor arrangement. The ground floor shopfront is proposed to be replaced with a new painted timber frame glazing and doors to reflect the current shopfront in style. There will be a new security grille to replace the existing roller shutter, which will have 3 separate grilles to suit the entrances. A new signage zone will replace the existing signage box. The new signage will consist of new unit numbers to differentiate that there are three separate units. Further new tenant signage will be applied for separately at a future point. There will also be powder coated aluminium window replacements to the 1st and 2nd floor.
- 4.3 - The current windows comprise a hardwood frame and external beads and single glazed units. The principal elevations contain stone cills which will all be retained.
- The current windows appear to be a mix of single and double glazed installed circa late 1970s. We propose to remove all the windows including frames and replace in the current form/style with new powder coated aluminium frame double glazed units finished to create a uniformed design.
- 4.4 - Internally the ground floor retail unit will have, new stores, w/c, kitchenette will provide the retail area with the amenities for potential new tenant. There will be a full landlord Cat A (Shell and Core) fit out which includes the essential infrastructure and finishes necessary for occupancy
- 4.5 - The existing 1st and 2nd floors will also have a full landlord Cat A fitout.
- 4.6 - In essence the external visual impact of the proposal will remain largely unchanged, the key change will be a newly formed entrance to suit the ground floor. The new ground floor shopfront will replace the existing upvc and timber shopfront with a new painted timber installation. The stall riser will remain as part of the proposal which is in keeping with the current situation.

4.7 - The proposed opening hours of the premises applied for reflect those of other retail premises in the area and are 10am – 6pm Monday - Saturday, and 11am – 5pm Sunday.

5. National and Local Planning Policy Context

5.1 – Planning policy guidance of relevance to the proposed scheme, and which provides the context for its assessment, is set out within the following documents:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- The Development Plan for Manchester

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5.2 - The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. A revised NPPF was published July 2021 and last updated September 2023. The document states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It seeks to achieve this objective by:

- Recognising that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and advising that they should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance (Paragraph 197).

- Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:

(a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

(b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;

(c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness;

(d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place. (Paragraph 196)

- Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal. (Paragraph 201)

- In 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. (Paragraph 203)

- The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. (Paragraph 209)

- Setting out that there is a need for the planning system to perform a number of roles, including an economic role, social role and environmental role. The economic objective relates to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy and ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places. The social objective seeks to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities. The environmental objective seeks to protect and enhance the natural, built and historic environment and make effective use of land, and minimise waste and pollution (Paragraph 8).

- Requiring that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible (paragraph 47).

- Ensuring that planning decisions help create conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be

placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity (Paragraph 80).

- Ensuring that planning policies support the role that town centres play and taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaption (Paragraph 85).

- Stating that planning decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social interaction (Paragraph 91).

- Requiring that planning decisions promote effective use of land including giving substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for identified needs, and promoting and supporting the development of under-utilised land and buildings (Paragraph 118).

- Requiring that planning decisions should ensure that developments: will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short-term but over the lifetime of the development; are visually attractive as a result of good architecture; are sympathetic to local character and history including the surrounding built environment; maintain a strong sense of place; and, create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible (Paragraph 127).

The Development Plan for Manchester

5.3- The Development Plan for Manchester comprises the following documents:

- The Core Strategy Development Plan Document (July 2012 to 2027);
- Saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan for Manchester (July 1995);
- Interactive Proposals Map;
- The Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Guidance (April 2007);
- Design for Access 2 (2003).
- Manchester City Centre Strategic Plan 2015-2018
- Our People, Our Place – The Greater Manchester Strategy 2018 - 2020

The Core Strategy Development Plan Document (July 2012 to 2027)

5.4– The Core Strategy, adopted in July 2012, is the key Development Plan Document against which proposals should be judged. Core Strategy

objectives and policies of particular relevance to the proposed scheme include:

- Policy SP 1 'Spatial Principles' which states that the Regional Centre will be the focus for economic and leisure activity; and, that development should enhance/protect the built/natural environment, reuse previously developed land wherever possible and improve access to jobs.
- Policy EC 1 'Employment and Economic Growth in Manchester' aims to improve access to jobs and continue the social, economic and environmental regeneration of the City, whilst seeking efficient use of buildings and minimising detrimental impacts on adjacent uses.
- Policy CC 1 'Primary Economic Development Focus' states that a range of uses, including leisure, will be encouraged in the City Centre, to support the development of a vibrant employment location attractive to businesses, employees and visitors to the City Centre
- Policy CC 4 'Visitors - Tourism, Culture and Leisure' states that the City Centre will be the focus for culture and leisure; and, promotes development which improves facilities for visitors and residents.
- Policy CC 9 'Design and Heritage' states that development in the City Centre should preserve or enhance heritage assets, including conservation areas.
- Policy CC 10 'A Place for Everyone' promotes developments which increase the diversity of activity in the City Centre.
- Policy C 1 'Centre Hierarchy' states that development of town centre uses will be prioritised in centres, taking account of the different roles of the City Centre.
- Policy T 2 'Accessible area of opportunity and need' seeks to ensure that new development is accessible by walking/cycling/public transport.
- Policy EN 1 'Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas' states that development in Manchester must follow the seven principles of urban design and should have regard to the strategic character area in which the development is located. With regards to development in the City Centre developers will be expected to

consider the City's heritage and continue the rich pattern of activity in the core area.

- Policy EN 3 'Heritage' sets out that new developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving/enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance including conservation areas.

Saved Policies of the Unitary Development Plan for Manchester (July 1995)

5.5 - The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was superseded by the Core Strategy. However, a number of UDP policies have been 'saved'. Extant policies contained within the UDP which are relevant to the proposed scheme include:

- Policy DC18.1 'Conservation Areas' seeks to protect, preserve and enhance the character of the city's conservation areas.
- Policy DC22.1 'Footpath Protection' which seeks to ensure that local pedestrian movements are not unacceptably inconvenienced by new development.
- Policy RC20 Area 4 'Swan Street/Shudehill/Tib Street/Church Street' This policy describes the area in 1995 and is of little relevance today. The policy confirms that investment in existing buildings will be encouraged.

Interactive Proposals Map

5.6– The Interactive Proposals Map shows both Core Strategy and Saved UDP Policies which apply in Manchester. This shows that the site is located within the City Centre and the Smithfield Conservation Area.

Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document (2007)

5.7- This document aims to support and enhance the on-going shaping of the City by providing a set of reasoned principles which will guide developers, designers and residents to the sort of development that everyone wants to see in Manchester. The sections of the guide that have been considered in the development of the proposed scheme include

- Section 1 'Creating a Sense of Place' aims to encourage the creation of places which are welcoming, inclusive, neighbourly, interesting and attractive.
- Section 2 'Design' provides guidance under 7 key principles recognised as being urban design characteristics which together create successful places.
- Section 3 'Accessibility' sets out design principles that will help to achieve accessible development and makes reference to the guidance document 'Design for Access 2' which provides detailed information on design standards.
- Section 8 'Community Safety and Crime Prevention' promotes a safer environment.

Design for Access 2 (2003)

5.8 – This document sets out the Council's best practice guidance on inclusive design standards. Design for Access 2 has been produced as a manual for architects, planners, engineers, landscape architects and other designers and sets out the City's aspirations for inclusive development.

Manchester City Centre Strategic Plan 2015-2018

5.9 - This document presents a vision for the City Centre and sets out the strategic action required to work towards achieving this over the period 2015-2018.

5.10 - The site falls within the area designated as the Northern Quarter which is recognised for its rich mix of uses including many independent businesses which make a major contribution to the city centre offer. A key priority identified for the Northern Quarter is to build on the successes of the area's evening economy as well as encouraging more and a greater variety of people to visit and dwell within the area.

Our People, Our Place – The Greater Manchester Strategy 2018 - 2020

5.11 - The strategy aims to broaden the range of investment and activity in town centres including ensuring that they have the highest quality environment and amenities to offer a good quality of life to all and support efforts to repurpose and reinvigorate them as locations for work, leisure and housing.

5.12 - For the reasons given in section 6 below it is considered that the proposal is wholly consistent with the above planning policy guidance.

6. Planning Appraisal

6.1 – Having regard to the planning policy guidance detailed in section 5, the key material considerations against which the proposed scheme should be considered include:

- Principle of Development
- Heritage and Design Considerations
- Sustainable Development: Economic, Social and Environmental Benefits
- Access for Disabled People and Compliance with Design for Access
- Accessibility and Highway Issues
- Local Amenity

Principle of Development

Principle of Proposed Ground floor retail unit and shopfront replacement with 1st and 2nd floor window replacements.

6.2 - The proposed scheme involves the use of existing floorspace as a retail use. The application ground floor space currently has permission for a retail facility which was approved in 1979 by planning permission F09791. This was a retail premises and the proposed unit premises will be the same to this existing lawful use. The premises will have the ability to be rented out by the landlord for future tenants to further confirm the principle of the proposed use to be acceptable.

6.3 - As noted previously the application floorspace became vacant in December 2023 with the departure of 'Thomas street studios' therefore this planning application will allow the subject floorspace to become potential rentable unit for future active economic use. This will ensure that it can continue to make a positive contribution to the area by providing activity and frontage to Thomas Street; contributing to footfall on these streets; and, enhancing the established retail offer within this part of the Northern Quarter

6.4 - Opening hours have been applied for to allow the premises to open during the daytime. The Daytime economy, shops and offices, have played a key part in the renaissance of the area and have assisted in bringing numerous buildings into active economic use. The application proposal supports the continued success of the area.

6.5 - In summary the principle of the retail unit in this location is consistent with the provisions of the NPPF and policies SP 1, CC 1, CC 4, and C 10 of the Core Strategy.

Opening Hours

6.6 - Proposed opening hours of 10am-6pm Monday - Saturday, and 11am – 5pm Sunday are applied for which will allow the premises to operate throughout the day. The hours reflect other retail premises in the vicinity. The proposed opening hours are therefore wholly appropriate and will allow the premises to provide a retail offer throughout the day and to reflect the trading hours of similar businesses in the area.

Heritage and Design Considerations

6.7 - The application proposal consists of a shopfront replacement within the same structural envelope that is as existing currently, with 1st and 2nd floor powder coated aluminium window replacements will be in the same style as the current windows which are consistent with other buildings in the Thomas street heritage zone.

The proposal will allow to improve the application floorspace to become a desirable area to allow future tenants to occupy in the future, which will be positive for the application building and the wider Smithfield Conservation Area.

The application building as previously stated earlier in this document forms part of a terrace block on Thomas Street, which runs from the corner of high street to Oak Street and was built in the late 1970's in the same size and style as the majority of the other buildings on the terrace.

The terrace block is made up of 11 similar sized 3 storey brick faced buildings that predominantly have the same appearance. After researching the area there are only 2 listed buildings in the immediate vicinity which have Heritage importance.

The 2 listed buildings are as follows

- 31-35, Thomas Street (Grade II listing) - Row of 3 small town houses, or shops with dwellings and workshops over, now shops. Late C18, altered. Red brick painted white, slate roof. Double-depth plan, each house single-fronted, with back extensions. Three low storeys over cellars, a 3-window range; each has a doorway to the left, up 3 steps, those to Nos 31 and 35 round-headed with open-pedimented Tuscan pilaster doorcases, panelled doors and plain fanlights, and that to No.33 square-headed with similar door and plain overlight; each has one large square shop window at ground floor with a cornice on consoles (that to No.33 run out over the door), all now with C20 plate glass; one large segmental-headed window at 1st floor, all with coupled 4-pane sashes; at 2nd floor Nos 33 and 35 have low horizontal 3-light casements, and No.31 has 2 shorter but similar windows with 8 panes each. Large multiple-flue chimney stack to left.
- 42, 44 and 46 Thomas Street (including 41, 43 and 45 Back Turner Street) (Grade II listing) - Six former industrial workshop dwellings of the C18 with later alterations.

Historic interest: as important contributors to Manchester's pre-eminence as the world's first industrial city, providing unique contextual evidence of the origins of industry in Manchester based on domestic scale manufacturing.

Architectural interest: for their local distinctiveness as urban workshop dwellings erected through small-scale individual enterprise in the rapidly-expanding proto-city;

for their rarity as surviving examples of this type of building in Manchester, and including single-depth examples on Back Turner Street.

The works proposed as part of the application are necessary to form a rentable retail unit in this currently vacant unit. There is minor adverse impact upon the Conservation Area in physical and visual terms but will be crucial in bringing this vacant building back into use, thereby securing its future, will arguably have a positive heritage impact upon the Conservation Area.

On this basis the application therefore accords with heritage provisions of the NPPF paragraphs highlighted in 5.2 above; policies CC 9, EN 3 of the Core Strategy; UDP policy DC18.1; and, the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD.

Sustainable Development: Economic, Social and Environmental Benefits

6.8 - The proposed scheme will achieve high sustainability credentials as a result of the economic, social and environmental benefits it will bring.

Economic

6.9 - The proposed development will bring a number of economic benefits during and post fit-out, particularly in terms of job creation and increased expenditure in the City Centre. As well as the construction and service jobs created in the fit-out of the application floorspace, permanent full-time jobs and part-time jobs will be created directly by the premises.

Social

6.10 - The scheme will add to and enhance retail offer in this part of the City Centre. It will provide a new venue for people to shop, whilst enabling active use of floorspace which will add vitality to the area and minimise the opportunities for anti-social behaviour.

Environmental

6.11 - The proposed scheme will have environmental benefits since it involves increasing rentable floorspace for future active use. Also, the site is easily accessible by various modes of public transport and on foot minimising the use of private cars.

Access for Disabled People and Compliance with Design for Access 2

6.12 – The standards set within 'Design for Access 2' (DfA2) are intended to be used on buildings/projects where Manchester City Council (MCC) are the lead or the client, or the building is owned by the Council. The application proposal external alterations are minimal to the building and the level thresholds from Thomas Street are retained. The proposed scheme makes acceptable provision for disabled access and therefore complies with Core Strategy policies CC 10, DfA2; and, the provisions of the NPPF

Accessibility and Highway Issues

6.13 - The site is in a highly accessible location within Manchester City Centre and an area that is well served by various methods of public transport including buses, trains and the Metrolink. The site can be easily accessed on foot, whilst there are Sheffield Stands for securing bikes located on the pavement at the junctions of Tib Street and Church

Street and Oldham Street and Church Street. With regards to car parking, the multi-storey car park on Church Street and at the Arndale Shopping Centre are within walking distance, whilst on street pay and display spaces are also available in the locality

Local Amenity

- 6.14 – The proposal will have a positive impact in terms of amenity by ensuring that the application floorspace provides more rentable retail units and can add to the diversity of the retail offer in this part of the City Centre. It will provide activity and natural surveillance to Thomas Street which will help reduce the possibility of crime and anti-social behaviour to be committed

7. Conclusion

7.1 - The proposed development will provide a series of benefits that will have a positive impact on Thomas Street, and this part of the Northern Quarter. As has been demonstrated in this Planning and Heritage Statement, the proposal accords with all relevant national and local planning policies, the development will not have an impact on the nearby uses, and will have a positive impact in minimising the potential for crime.

7.2 - On this basis, the proposed scheme fully accords with national and local planning policy guidance. LWE are pleased to submit this planning application on behalf of Agecroft Investments and look forward to working with Manchester City Council in progressing the application through to a positive determination