



Donald Insall Associates
Chartered Architects and Historic Building Consultants

Cheetwood House, 21 Newton Street, Manchester

Heritage, Design and Access Statement

Kamani Property



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1.0 Summary of Heritage, Design and Access Statement

1.1 Introduction

Donald Insall Associates was commissioned by Kamani Property in February 2024 to develop proposals for Cheetwood House, 21 Newton Street, Manchester, M1 1FZ. This statement has been prepared in support of an application for listed building consent for new partition walls in order to subdivide the existing commercial space.

The design process has been informed by an assessment of the site's significance, comprising historical research, using both archival and secondary material, and a site inspection. An illustrated history of the site and building, with sources of reference and bibliography, is in Section 2; the site survey findings are in Section 3. The investigation has established the significance of the building, which is set out in Section 4 and summarised below. This understanding has informed the development of proposals for change to the building which are outlined in Section 5. Matters relating to access and sustainability are included in Section 6 and Section 7 provides a justification of the scheme according to the relevant planning policy and guidance.

1.2 The Building, its Legal Status and Policy Context

Cheetwood House is a Grade II-listed building located in the Stevenson Square Conservation Area in the Manchester City Council district. Alterations to a listed building generally require listed building consent; development in conservation areas or within the setting of a listed building or conservation area requires local authorities to assess the implications of proposals on built heritage.

The statutory list description of the listed building is included in Appendix I and a summary of guidance on the Stevenson Square Conservation Area provided by the local planning authority is in Appendix III along with extracts from the relevant legislation and planning policy documents.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is the legislative basis for decision-making on applications that relate to the historic environment. Sections 16, 66 and 72 of the Act impose statutory duties upon local planning authorities which, with regard to listed buildings, require the planning authority to have '*special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses*' and, in respect of conservation areas, that '*special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area*'.

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan

unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan applicable to the Site comprises the Manchester Local Plan. The GMCA Places for Everyone is also a material consideration.

The Manchester Local Plan has policies that deal with development affecting the historic environment, and these require that proposals in historic locations are of the highest standard in terms of appearance and function, which preserve or enhance the heritage assets that have been identified within the area. The council encourages development which complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods, and proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets where they are considered consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.

The courts have held that following the approach set out in the policies on the historic environment in the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 will effectively result in a decision-maker complying with its statutory duties. The Framework forms a material consideration for the purposes of section 38(6). At the heart of the Framework is '*a presumption in favour of sustainable development*' and there are also specific policies relating to the historic environment. The Framework states that heritage assets are '*an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations*'. The Glossary to the National Planning Policy Framework defines a heritage asset as:

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).

The Framework, in paragraph 200, states that:

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 understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

Section 4 of this report – the assessment of significance – meets this requirement and is based on the research and site surveys presented in sections 2 and 3, which are of a sufficient level of detail to understand the potential impact of the proposals.

The Framework also, in paragraph 205, requires that:

When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

The Framework goes on to state at paragraph 206 that:

Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting) should require clear and convincing justification.

Section 7 of this report will, when the proposals are finalised, provide this clear and convincing justification.

The Framework requires that local planning authorities categorise harm as either 'substantial' or 'less than substantial'. Where a proposed development will lead to 'substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset', the Framework states, in paragraph 207, that:

...local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, 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

Guidance on the meaning of 'substantial harm' is given in the National Planning Practice Guidance (2019), as follows:

In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed. The harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting.

The courts have also considered the meaning of substantial harm in *Bedford Borough Council v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government* (2012) which defined substantial harm as 'an impact which would have such a serious impact on the significance of the asset that its significance was either vitiated altogether or very much reduced'.

Where a development proposal will lead to 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the Framework states, in paragraph 208, that:

...this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

1.3 Summary of Project Brief

Donald Insall Associates was commissioned by Kamani Property in February 2024 to secure Listed Building Consent for the installation new partition walls, to subdivide the existing commercial space. The brief set out by the client consists of creating office spaces that have a more viable and manageable floor area for multiple tenants on the first, second, third and fourth floors of the building. The design proposes to infill an existing opening on each floor to divide the space with minimal impact on the existing fabric.

1.4 Summary Assessment of Significance

The Grade-II listed building is of high heritage interest as a typical example of the late-19th century commercial buildings that defines the character of the conservation area and surrounding streets. The building reflects the development that took place during this time, and Manchester's commercial history. The exterior of the building holds high architectural value, while the interiors have been substantially modernised and hold limited interest beyond staircases, cast-iron columns, skirting and roof structures.

A more detailed description is included in Section 4.

1.5 Summary of Proposals and Justification with Respect to Design, Access and Heritage

The proposals involve the following minor alterations to the first, second, third and fourth floors of the building:

- Infill of existing opening to create two separate office spaces on each floor.
- Installation of kitchenette on each floor.
- Formation of reception space on first floor where existing meeting room is located.

The design process involved the assessment of the existing skirting board treatment on each floor and identifying where infills have already been carried out in the building. As the proposals are based on the existing details and shall match the existing fabric where possible, the designs will not result in any harm to the the historic fabric or overall heritage significance.

2.0 Historical Background

2.1 Site and Context

The area of northern Piccadilly largely consisted of open countryside until development began in the late-18th century, when most of the land was sold in large blocks to developers by Sir Ashton Lever of Alkrington¹. Some buildings from this period still survive, which are simple brick houses with attic workshops.

The majority of the buildings within the conservation area of special architectural or historical interest are Victorian and early 20th century. As the cotton industry created large profits for the city many of the buildings in the area were replaced with those with commercial functions, such as warehouses, showrooms or workshops². The character and architectural

features of these buildings illustrate the wealth that was generated during this period; either made of stone or brick with stone dressings, taller than earlier structures and many adorning elaborate decorations which are separated by dark, narrow streets³. Later buildings were often formed of terracotta, either used on its own or with brick.

One of the main characteristics of the conservation area is the street layout, which can be described as a tight network of narrow streets which intersect at right angles, except for wider open spaces at Stevenson Square and the Port Street area. Buildings tend to be of moderate height with a variety of built forms situated hard-up to the pavement.

1 Pevsner, N. (2001), p. 215

2 Manchester City Council, Stevenson Square Conservation Area, https://www.manchester.gov.uk/info/511/conservation_areas/1208/stevenson_square_conservation_area/2

3 Manchester City Council, Stevenson Square Conservation Area, https://www.manchester.gov.uk/info/511/conservation_areas/1208/stevenson_square_conservation_area/2



1.2 1849 Ordnance Survey

2.2 Map Progression

2.2.1 Mid-Late 19th Century

By the mid-19th century, the buildings around Stevenson Square began to be replaced by those with commercial functions⁴. Many of the surrounding buildings, shown on the 1849 OS map, have industrial functions, such as mills and manufactories, or are terraced houses [Plate 1.2].

As Manchester became increasingly prosperous through the cotton industry, the area became more established with the replacement of some of the earlier, smaller structures with larger, commercial buildings, as shown on the 1888 OS map [Plate 1.3].

4 Pevsner, N. (2001), p. 215



1.3 1888 Ordnance Survey

2.2.2 20th Century

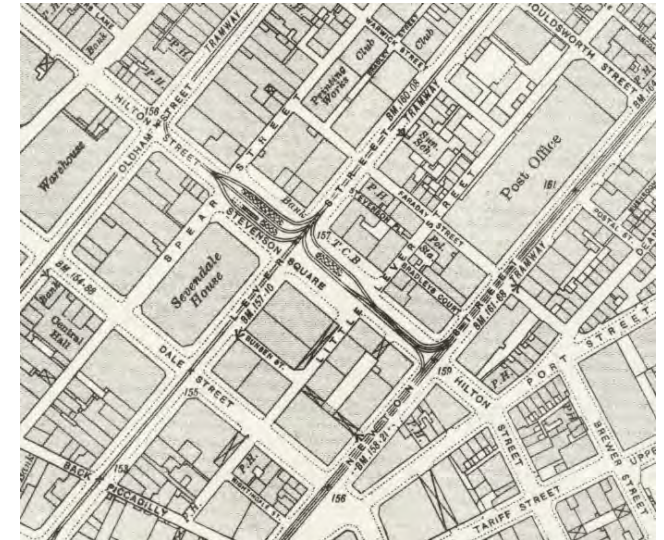
By the early 20th century, the area was further developed as a commercial area as shown by the expansion of the tram network into Stevenson Square [Plate 1.4]. There also appears to be more public buildings such as the addition of the post office, the alteration of the police station and school on Lever Street. The streetscape changes with the shortening of Bennet Street which is replaced by a large block on the north-west side. The corner of Port Street at the junction with Dale Street was also altered, with the replacement of what appears to be housing with a larger block.

Economic development continued throughout the early 20th century as the tram network was further expanded, and new buildings were added on Stevenson Square and Lever Street [Plate 1.5]. Other developments include the replacement of buildings on Brewer Street and the formation of Sevendale House.

By the mid-20th century the street layout appears to remain mostly unchanged which infers by this time less development took place [Plates 1.6 - 1.7].



1.4 1915 Ordnance Survey



1.5 1931-32 Ordnance Survey



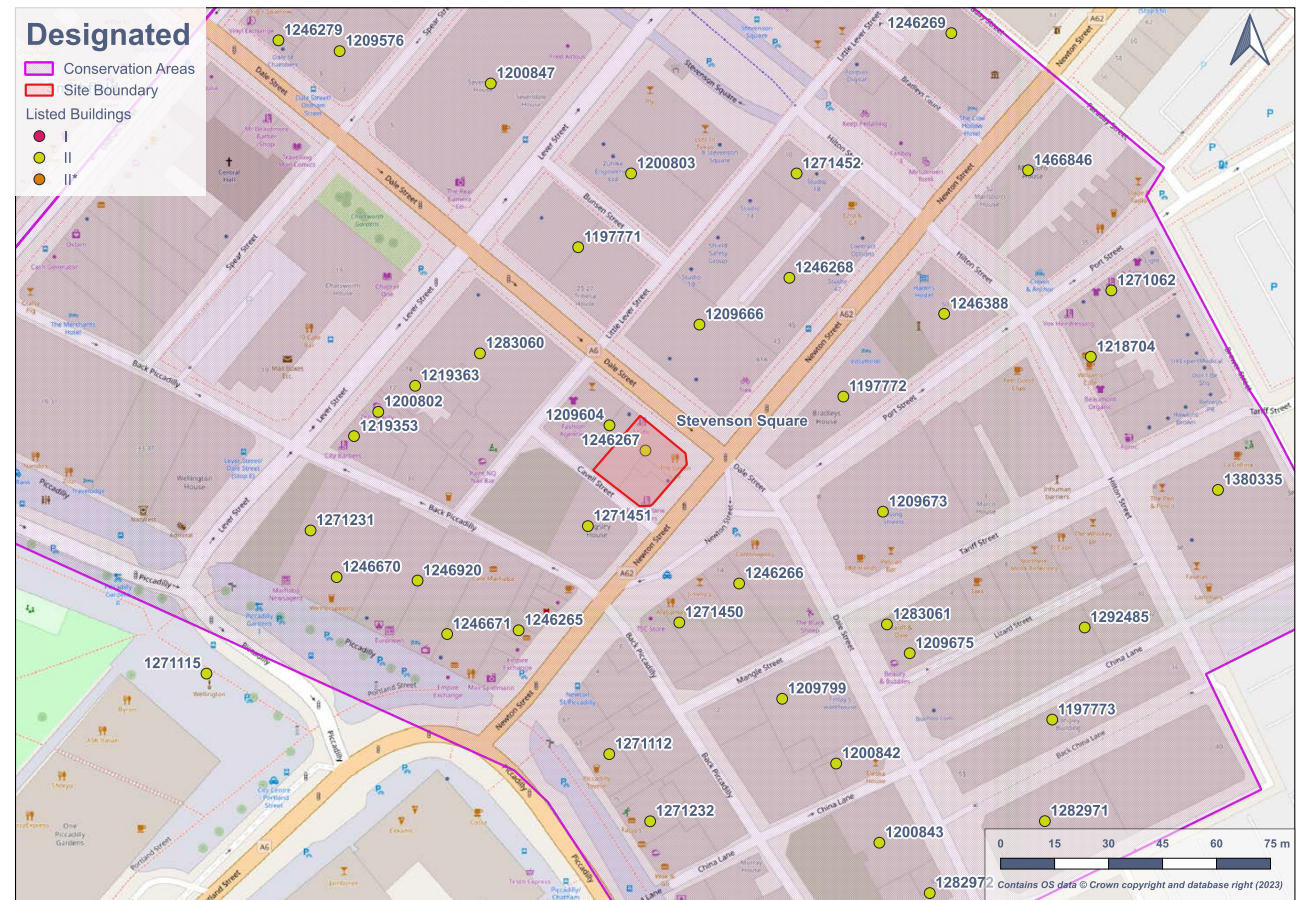
1.7 Piccadilly Gardens and environs, Manchester, 1953



1.6 1948-55 Ordnance Survey

2.2.3 Present Day

Many buildings from the 19th and 20th centuries still survive, with the street layout remaining mostly unchanged **[Plate 1.8]**. The tram line no longer runs through Stevenson Square and Chatsworth House appears to have replaced the buildings opposite Sevendale House. Several sites are now vacant where buildings have been demolished, most of these are now car parks such as those to the east.



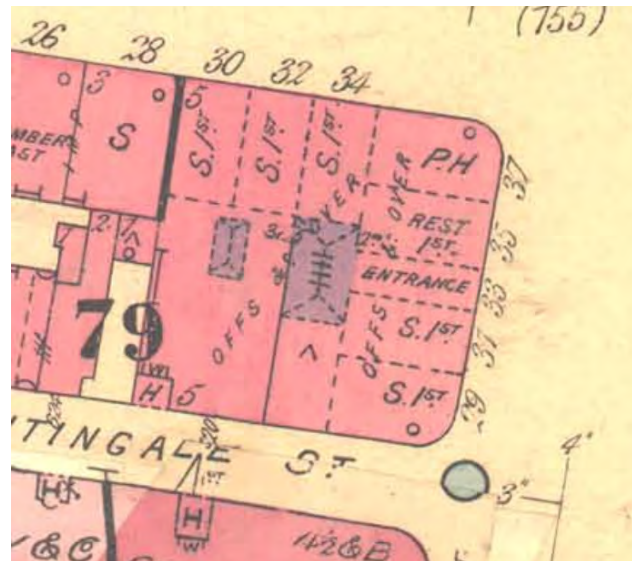
1.8 Present Day

2.3 The Building

2.3.1 19th Century

The 1849 map [Plate 1.9] shows the site as a block of terraced buildings, presumably housing, and the Haunch of Venison Hotel to the north-west, prior to the construction of Cheetwood House. By the late 19th century, the hotel remained but the housing had been replaced and the block had been partly demolished to make way for the new road of Newton Street. The Goad Fire insurance Plan of 1886 [Plate 1.10] shows Cheetwood House has been constructed, covering half the block, and was occupied by offices on Nightingale Street. The main entrance was accessed from Newton Street, the rest of the ground floor was formed of two shops on Newton Street, a restaurant and public house on the corner of Newton Street and Dale Street, and three shops on Dale Street. The upper storeys appear to have been used as offices.

By 1888 [Plate 1.11], the internal layout appears to have been altered to presumably allow for access to the south-east unit from Dale Street, and what was the restaurant has now been merged with one of the shops to form one unit. The rest of the units appear to follow the same layout, with some minor alterations.



1.10 1886 Goad Map



1.9 Ordnance Survey 1849



1.11 Ordnance Survey 1888

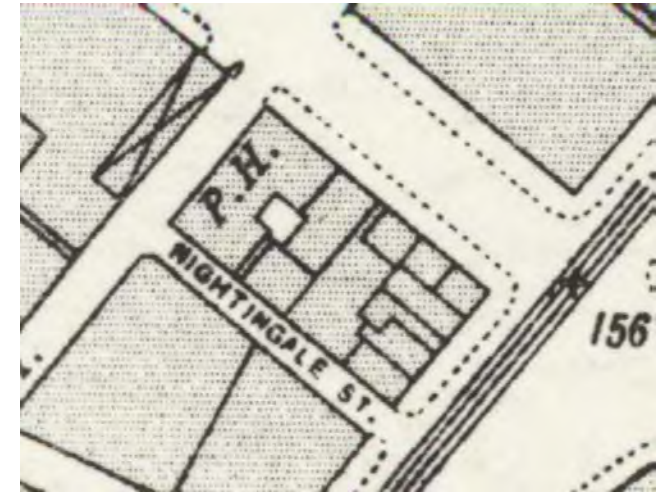
2.3.2 20th and 21st Centuries

The 1915 map [Plate 1.12] shows the internal layout has been altered with a new internal division between the middle unit on Dale Street and the unit on Newton Street. There also appears to be an infill adjacent to the building on Nightingale Street. This layout appears to remain unchanged into the 1930s [Plate 1.13].

The photos from the 1960s [Plates 1.14-1.15] appear to show the ground floor occupied by commercial spaces on Newton Street and Dale Street. The first floor also appears to be used as commercial space, with the second floor displayed as 'to let'. This also shows an alternative frontage where there now seems to be a damaged stone arched doorways on Dale Street. There are no photographs or drawings available of the original stonework, however from the photos of the shopfront in the 1960s, it could be inferred that the frontage may covered the original stonework and when this was removed the stonework underneath was damaged.



1.12 Ordnance Survey 1915



1.13 Ordnance Survey 1931_32



1.14 Dale Street 1966



1.15 Newton Street 1966

2.4 Planning Records

Reference: 125944/LO/2020

Applicant: Kamani Commercial Property

Description: Listed Building Consent for internal and external works to the building, including the demolition of a non-original staircase, installation of four air conditioning units within the loading bays on Cavell Street and refurbishment of the upper floors associated with the use of the building for a yoga studio (D2) in the basement, a cafe (A3) and barbers (A1) at ground floor and continued use of the upper floors as offices (B1).

Approved: Wed 25 Mar 2020

Reference: 125943/FO/2020

Applicant: Kamani Commercial Property

Description: Use of building as yoga studio (D2) in the basement, cafe (A3) and barbers (A1) at ground floor level and continued use of the upper floors as offices (B1), and external alterations including the installation of new shop fronts and four air conditioning units within the loading bays on Cavell Street.

Approved: Wed 25 Mar 2020

Reference: 122285/LO/2019

Applicant: Coda Architecture

Description: Listed Building Consent for internal refurbishment and alterations to first to fourth floors of the building.

Decision Date: Wed 17 Jul 2019

Reference: 117785/LO/2017

Applicant: Beech Holdings

Description: Listed Building Consent application for the creation of an emergency access hatch and ladder from the ground floor to the basement electrical room.

Approved: Wed 14 Mar 2018

Reference: 111999/LO/2016

Applicant: Beech Holdings

Description: Listed Building Consent for internal and external works to the building, including the demolition of a staircase and the installation of four air conditioning units on the roof, to create 16 apartments (use class C3) on first, second, third and fourth floors, with commercial uses including retail (use class A1), cafe (use class A3) and mixed use restaurant/takeaway (use class A3/A5) provided at ground floor and basement level.

Approved: Thu 06 Apr 2017

Reference: 111998/FO/2016

Applicant: Beech Holdings

Description: Change of use and internal/external works to the building, including the installation of four air conditioning units on the roof, to create 16 apartments (use class C3) on the first, second, third and fourth floors, with commercial uses including retail (use class A1), cafe (use class A3) and mixed use restaurant/takeaway (sui generis) provided at ground floor and basement level.

Approved: Thu 06 Apr 2017

Reference: 106314/FO/2014/C2

Applicant: Mr Alex Rothwell

Description: Change of Use of part of 4th floor from B1 office use to D2 leisure use, with associated internal alterations.

Approved: Mon 13 Oct 2014

Reference: 106315/LO/2014/C2

Applicant: Mr Alex Rothwell

Description: Listed Building Consent for internal alterations, including stud walls, in association with use of part of 4th floor, from B1 office use to D2 leisure use.

Approved: Mon 13 Oct 2014

Reference: 075900/LO/2005/C2

Applicant: Brooklawn Estates

Description:.. Listed Building Consent Installation of 1 no. new partition each on 1st and 2nd floors of building

Approved: 30 Aug 2005

Reference: 074713/LO/2005/C2

Applicant: Olsen (UK) Ltd

Description:.. Listed Building Consent Internal alterations in association with new showroom fit out

Approved: 30 Jun 2005

Reference: 074712/FO/2005/C2

Applicant: Olsen (UK) Ltd

Description:.. Change of use to showroom with ancillary office, kitchen and store room

Approved: 30 Jun 2005

Reference: 074514/LO/2005/C2

Applicant: Carnarvon Street Properties

Description:.. Listed Building Consent Installation of new internal ramp to allow full access at main entrance to shop unit

Approved: 11 May 2005

Reference: 070007/LO/2003/C2

Applicant: Brooklawn Estates

Description:.. Retrospective Listed Building Consent - Alterations to install new lift door and refurbishment of communal areas, re-glazing of central part of atrium roof and removal of walls at first, second and third floor level.

Approved: 21 Oct 2004

Reference: 056553/LO/CITY2/99

Applicant: P&O Properties Ltd.

Description:.. Listed Building Consent General refurbishment of ground floor entrance and all common stairwell & landing

Approved: 06 Aug 1999

Reference: 033286

Applicant: Commonword Ltd.

Description: Alterations to entrance from Newton Street to provide access for the disabled and internal alterations to the top floor toilets for disabled persons use.

Approved: Fri 24 Feb 1989

Reference: F16314

Applicant: The Creek Connection Ltd.

Description: Change of use and new shop front to form a wholesale clothes outlet.

Approved: Tue 08 Sep 1981

3.0 Site Survey Descriptions

3.1 The Setting of the Building and the Conservation Area Context

Cheetwood House is sited at the junction of Dale Street and Newton Street. It is also bound by Cavell Street to the south-west and the property on Little Lever Street to the north-west. The area has kept much of its historic street pattern which was formed late-18th century and altered by Victorian industrial development. One key change relevant to the site was the construction of Newton Street in the mid-19th century, which resulted in the demolition of several structures on the Cheetwood House block. Principal streets include: Oldham Street, Piccadilly, Newton Street, Port Street, Dale Street, Hilton Street and Stevenson Square and narrower lanes such as Little Lever Street.

The pattern of the buildings and streets of Stevenson Square, Oldham Street and Newton Street can be described as compact, except for the large open space at Stevenson Square. Most of the buildings in the area are unique with large footprints and are situated against the pavements in both the main streets and some narrower lanes, however, the buildings are cohesive in their use of orange/red brick, stone details, curved corners and strong eaves and chimneys. There are several buildings which predate 1850 such as 69- 77 Lever Street and many fine Victorian and Edwardian buildings, many of these are listed, most of them at Grade II. The Cheetwood House block is characteristic of this, as a large five-storey commercial structure on the south-east side of the block, with remnants of smaller, three-storey 18th-century development (the former Haunch of Venison Hotel) to the north-west. Key views of the building include those from: the corner of Port Street and Dale Street **[Plate 1.16]**, 50

Newton Street **[Plate 1.17]**, Sevendale House **[Plate 1.18]**, and the corner of Back Piccadilly and Newton Street **[Plate 1.19]**.

Most of the buildings are commercial with some regenerative conversions to residential use, such as the former post office depot and mills. Some of the original canal network and basins around Hilton Street and Ancoats survive. Some of the wharves and warehouses have been redeveloped for housing, with some open areas remaining as surface carparks.



1.16 Corner of Port Street and Dale Street



1.17 View from 50 Newton Street



1.18 View from Sevendale House



1.19 Corner of Back Piccadilly and Newton Street

3.2 The Building Externally

3.2.1 Front Elevation

The front elevation faces south-east and five bays wide, with the two additional curved bays on prominent corners, and faces Newton Street **[Plate 1.20]**. The building is formed of four storeys and an attic, it is constructed in an orange/red brick with sandstone dressings, including quoined strips to the corners. The ground floor is formed of 20th Century shop fronts with the main entrance located in the central bay, which has a decorative, classical-style pedimented architrave made from stone. The upper floors all have two-over-two sash windows with seven windows to each floor, including on the curved corners at each side of the building. The window treatment varies for each floor as follows: quoined jambs on the first floor; segmental headed with keyed architraves on the first, third and fifth bays on the second floor; pedimented on the third floor, except on the curved corners; smaller windows to the attic with keyed segmental heads and gablets with finials, which are separated by six chimneys between them rising above the parapet. Each of the upper floors have stone sill- and head-bands and there is prominent bracketed cornice on the third floor.



1.20 Front Elevation

3.2.2 South-West Elevation

The south-west elevation faces Cavell Street and is only partially visible from south of Newton Street and Little Lever Street **[Plate 1.21]**. This side of the building is much less decorative than the front and north-east elevations. A full-height loading slot is located on the west side of the building with a platform and double doors at each floor. Adjacent to this are tripartite windows on each of the upper floors, each window being a two-over-two sash window. The bay next to this is formed of two windows at each of the upper floors, except for the attic which has six narrower and smaller windows. The 20th century shop front partially continues around the corner of the building, with the middle bays formed of solid brick walls and vents separated by a brick pier. Black pvc down-pipes cover this side of the building.



1.21 South-West Elevation

3.2.3 North-West Elevation

This side of the building adjoins the neighbouring 18th century properties on Cavell Street and Dale Street **[Plate 1.22]**. The property fronting Cavell Street covers up to the first floor of this elevation, whilst the property on Dale Street reaches the third floor. The elevation is mostly formed of brick and is not decorative, being visible only from Cavell Street and Little Lever Street. The second, third and fourth floors each have tripartite windows, the attic floor has three smaller 4-pane windows.



1.22 North-West Elevation

3.2.4 North-East Elevation

The north-east elevation faces Dale Street **[Plate 1.23]**. It is four bays wide and is architecturally continuous with the Newton Street (south-east) elevation. The ground floor is a modern shop front, although to the right are two round arched doorways in stone, with large keystones and a balustraded parapet above. The spandrels contain decorative tracery and it is possible that these doorways have been relocated from an older structure elsewhere, or it could also be assumed that the stonework is dating to the original construction and that it has been badly damaged. The stonework appears to have been keyed and rendered in the past. Each of the upper floors have four windows, which follow the same detailing as the front elevation.



1.23 North-East Elevation

3.3 The Building Internally

3.3.1 Summary

The building is set over six floors, inclusive of basement and attic floors. Each of the first, second, third and fourth floors have a largely similar plan form and decoration. The building has retained the original layout, where the upper floors were accessed from the main door on Newton Street, leading to a central staircase. Each floor is accessible from this stair with doorways leading to individual units. The high skirting boards and panelled door jambs appear to have been retained. Another feature which has remained since the building was used as a warehouse includes the loading doors and platform at each of the upper floors. The central core is lit by a large roof-light, which appears to be original and indicated on the The Goad Fire insurance Plan of 1886. There is a modern lift shaft within the central staircase. 'Original' refers to the 1880s construction and 'modern' refers to any fabric since the 2010s refurbishment works.

3.3.2 Basement

Outside scope, not inspected.

3.3.3 Ground Floor

Outside scope, not inspected.

3.3.4 First Floor

This floor comprises:

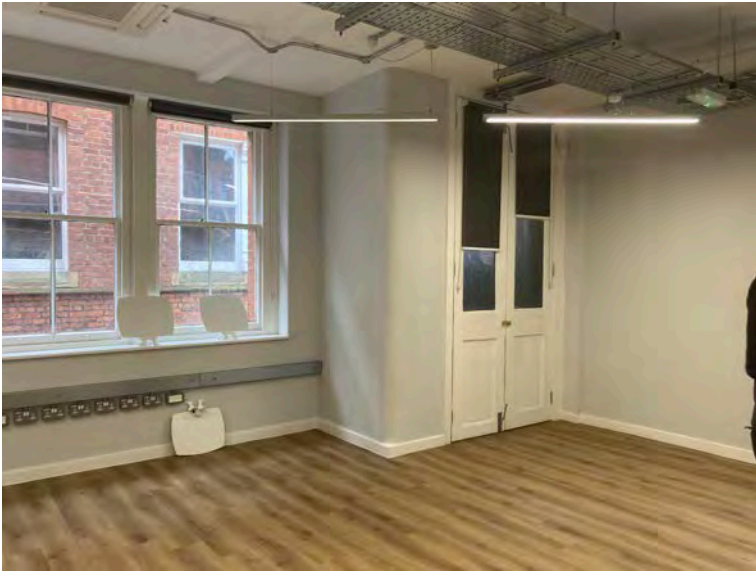
- A central historic staircase and modern inserted lift shaft with multiple doors opening into the floorspace [Plate 1.24].
- Largely open plan with series of historic cast-iron columns [Plate 1.25].
- Doors opening out onto platform where the original loading slot is located on Cavell Street [Plate 1.26].
- The floors are modern timber, no historic floor finishes are visible.
- Recently plastered and painted walls.
- Historic timber sash windows, painted white, including curved glazing on corners [Plate 1.27].
- A series of modern screen partitions made out of black painted timber frame and plaster infills [Plate 1.28].
- Modern glass screen to meeting room [Plate 1.29].
- Painted historic high skirting boards, and simple block skirting boards also painted white [Plate 1.30].
- Decorative cornices and beams, possibly historic.
- A modern kitchenette [Plate 1.31].
- Cable trays, strip lights and AC unit suspended from the ceiling.
- Alternative fire escape stair, possibly 20th century [Plate 1.32].
- Modern WC's [Plate 1.33].



1.24 Main Staircase



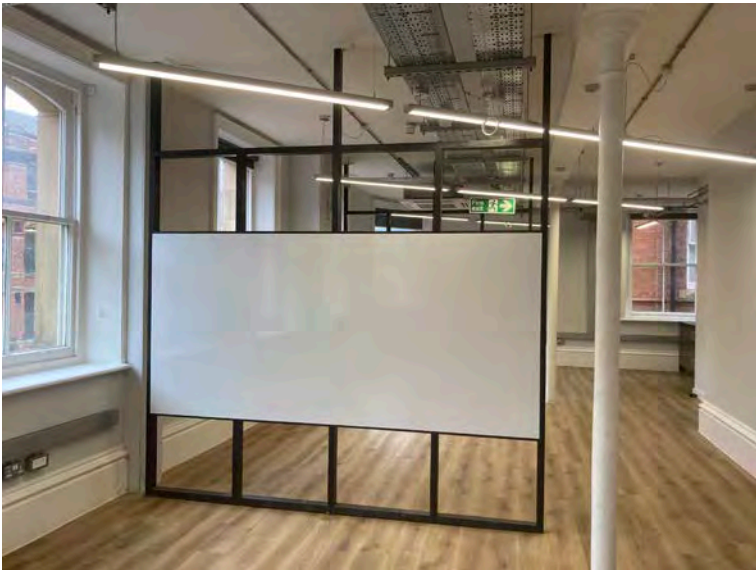
1.25 First Floor Interior



1.26 Loading Platform Doors



1.27 Windows



1.28 Partitions



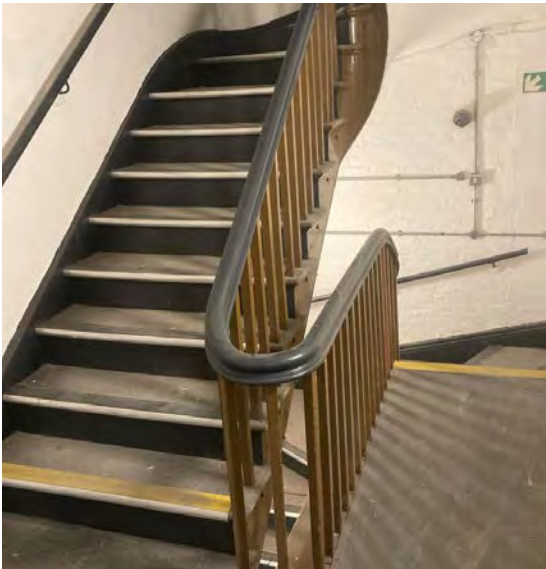
1.29 Modern Glass Screen



1.30 Skirting Boards



1.31 Kitchenette



1.32 Escape Stair



1.33 Modern WCs

3.3.5 Second Floor

Second floor follows the same description as the first floor, with an additional comms room **[Plate 1.34]** adjacent to the alternative fire escape stair.

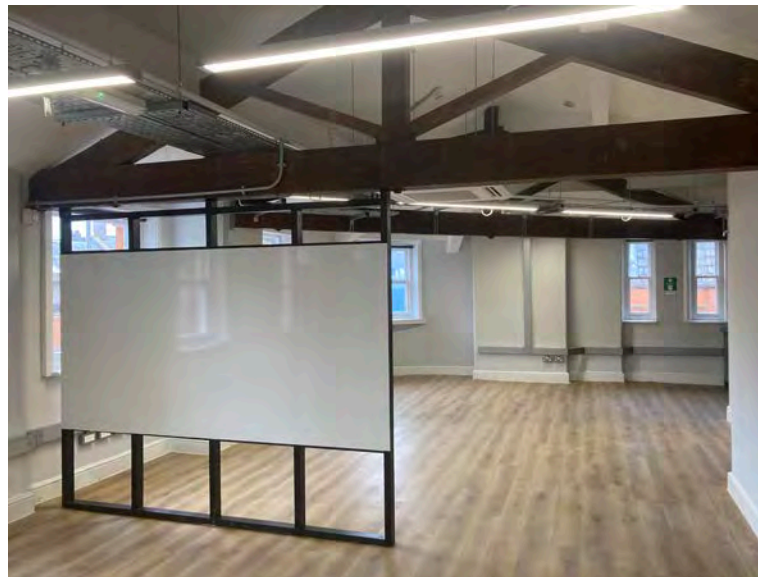
3.3.6 Third Floor

Third floor follows the same description as the first floor, with modern DDA accessible shower and toilet.

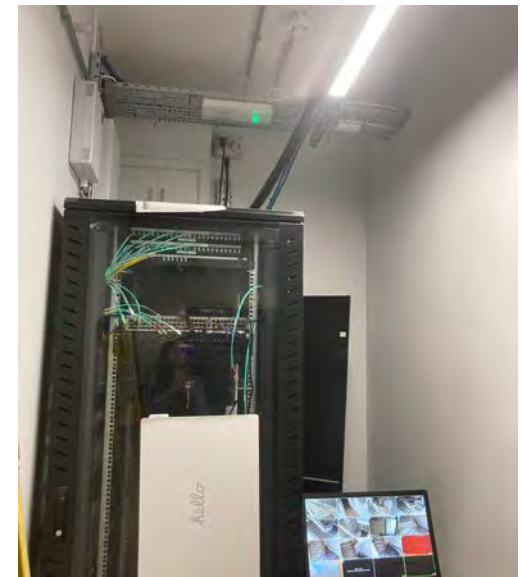
3.3.7 Fourth Floor

Fourth floor follows the same description as the first floor, except for:

- A lower floor to ceiling height.
- Exposed historic timber beams **[Plate 1.35]**.
- Mid-height, historic skirting boards.
- Modern roof lights.



1.34 Comms Room



1.35 Attic Beams

4.0 Assessment of Significance

4.1 Contribution of Cheetwood House to the Conservation Area

Cheetwood House contributes to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Dale Street is the most significant street in terms of the redevelopment that took place during the Victorian and Edwardian periods, with the importance of the buildings increasing at the junction of Newton Street and Port Street. Number 35 Dale Street is of particular significance; constructed out of terracotta and orange-red brick with various pinnacles contributing to the character of the skyline. Another example is 50 Newton Street which was constructed in the early 20th century. This five-storey, red brick building has impressive arcade windows across the three middle storeys with buff terracotta quoins and attic dormers. Cheetwood House is characteristic of the surrounding buildings, which have similar features, materiality and scale, and illustrate the development that took place in the area. The conservation area also contributes to the setting of Cheetwood House.

4.2 Assessment of Significance

4.2.1 Architectural Interest

Externally, Cheetwood House holds high architectural interest for its high-quality architectural features and the way it illustrates historic function and the character of its surrounding commercial buildings. Beyond alterations to the ground floor shop fronts, the building retains much of its integrity and has been little altered.

Internally, despite modern alterations, the overall floorplan layout still reflects the historic design. The building was constructed around 1880 when many warehouses were built in the area and is a typical example of a commercial building for this time. While several warehouses were built in Manchester during this period, fewer were specifically designed as offices, making it a significant contributor to the area. Several historical elements have survived and are in good condition, such as the main façade, windows and skirting boards. The building has undergone substantial internal redecoration and alterations. Much of the internal fabric is no longer historic, except for the two sets of stairs, some joinery, cast-iron columns and roof timbers. The stairs are generally in good condition, however there is some bowing of the stair treads, and some balustrades are missing.

4.2.2 Historic Interest

The building is of high historical interest as a typical late-19th century commercial building which defines the character of the conservation area and surrounding streets. The building reflects the development that took place during this time and Manchester's industrial history.

Internally, the building retains its historic use as a commercial/office building, which gives it historic interest.

4.3 Relative Significance

This special interest is manifest in the fabric of the building, which has the following hierarchy of significance.

Of **high significance** and sensitive to change are:

- The decorative primary façades to Dale Street and Newton Street.
- The central roof light.
- The exposed beams on the fourth floor.
- The timber sash windows.
- The cast-iron columns.
- The historic skirting boards.
- The panelling around the internal doorways on the landing.
- The staircases.

Of **moderate significance** are and therefore less sensitive to change are:

- The simple block skirting boards.
- Secondary elevations to Little Lever Street, and visible from Hilton Street.

Of **neutral significance, neither contributing to nor detracting** and therefore less sensitive to change are:

- The modern facilities, fixings and equipment, which contribute to its use as an office.

Factor which detracts from the building's significance and offers an opportunity for enhancement is:

- The damaged stone work on the façade of the Dale Street elevation.
- The modern lift structure impacting on the historic staircases.

5.0 Client Brief and Design Development

5.1 Understanding the Brief

The client brief is to create office spaces that have a more viable and manageable floor area for multiple tenants on the first, second, third and fourth floors of the building. The client has asked that the existing toilets and kitchenettes be accessible from all office spaces, with the addition of a new kitchenette space and reception area on the first floor.

5.2 Design Development

The current floor plan consists of one open floor space. In order to make the building more viable as office spaces, the proposal consists of infilling an existing wall opening to subdivide the first to fourth floors into two office spaces per floor. The works will be carried out to follow the same form as other infills found in the building [Plate 1.36]. An assessment of the existing skirting treatment was undertaken as part of the heritage assessment and site survey. Three types were identified and the design proposal aims to match the existing skirtings where wall infills are proposed.

5.3 Description of the Proposals

In order to achieve the aims set out in the brief, the design consists of infilling an existing opening on the first, second, third and fourth floors, in order to divide the existing floor plan into two offices, to create more viable spaces for let. This also involves the installation of a reception space at the entrance of the first floor, and an additional kitchenette on each floor similar to the existing.

There will be four infills in total, one on each floor from the first to fourth storeys, and located in the same place on each. The openings do not interact with the cornicing and there are no existing architraves to the openings. The skirting boards will be replicated according to the types identified as described in Section 4. The infills will be made from plasterboard as shown in Appendix II, and painted to match the existing walls. What appears to be other infills in the building are set back from the existing wall and are located in the centre of the opening, therefore the proposed infill will replicate this. The proposed infills will not interact with the columns, cornicing, windows, views, exposed beams or fixings. Therefore the proposals will be very sensitive to the existing fabric with no harm to the significance of the building and internal space.



1.36 Existing Infills

6.0 Further Design Considerations

6.1 Accessibility

The building is wheelchair accessible, with step-free access from the entrance with a lift to each floor. The existing toilets, including a DDA toilet on the 3rd floor will be retained and are accessible from each proposed office space. Access to the lift and staircases will also be retained.

6.2 Sustainability

The proposed works are minor with a minimal amount of proposed fabric and will help secure the future for the building by helping to meet the demand for office space within the area by providing more viable units.

7.0 Commentary on the Proposals

7.1 Impact on the Listed Building

The proposals consist of infilling an existing opening which is located in the same place on the first, second, third and fourth floors in order to create more viable office spaces. The interior spaces have been altered with other modern partitions and fixings added, the proposals will not interfere or harm any features of significance within these spaces as described in Section 4 and 5. The proposals will respond sensitively to the existing skirting boards by replicating the various styles across the floors as described in Section 3 where necessary.

7.2 Policy Justification of the Proposals

The proposals are necessary in order to make the building viable and fit for modern use as office spaces, which is currently underutilised due to lack of demand for larger spaces. They are minor in nature and relate to the infill of an opening on the first, second, third and fourth floors to divide the current open-plan layout into two smaller spaces. The proposals have been sensitively designed and it is considered that they would not cause harm to the significance of the listed building (Cheetwood House) or the character and appearance of the Stevenson Square Conservation Area. The proposals would sustain the significance of the listed building in accordance with paragraph 203 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Moreover, it is considered that the proposed works would preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed buildings and the character and appearance of the conservation area, in accordance with the statutory duties set out in Sections 16, 66 and 72(l) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The proposals would also accord with Policy CC 9 and Policy EN 3 of the Manchester Development Framework Core Strategy, Policy JP-P 2 and Policy JP-J 3 of the GMCA Places for Everyone, and would ensure the beneficial long-term and optimum viable use of the building as offices.

7.2.1 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

It is considered that the proposals would overall preserve the listed building and its setting and would enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area in accordance with the statutory duty imposed by Sections 16, 66 and 72 (l) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

7.2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework and Local Policy

As explained above, the proposals would result in no harm to the significance of heritage assets. They would accord with the relevant policies of the NPPF, including policies 200, 201, 203 and 205, and with the relevant policies of the Manchester Development Framework Core Strategy as outlined above. The proposals are therefore considered to be acceptable in heritage terms.

Appendix I - Statutory List Description

Nos. 17-25, NEWTON STREET, and Nos. 32 and 34, DALE STREET

Grade II listed building

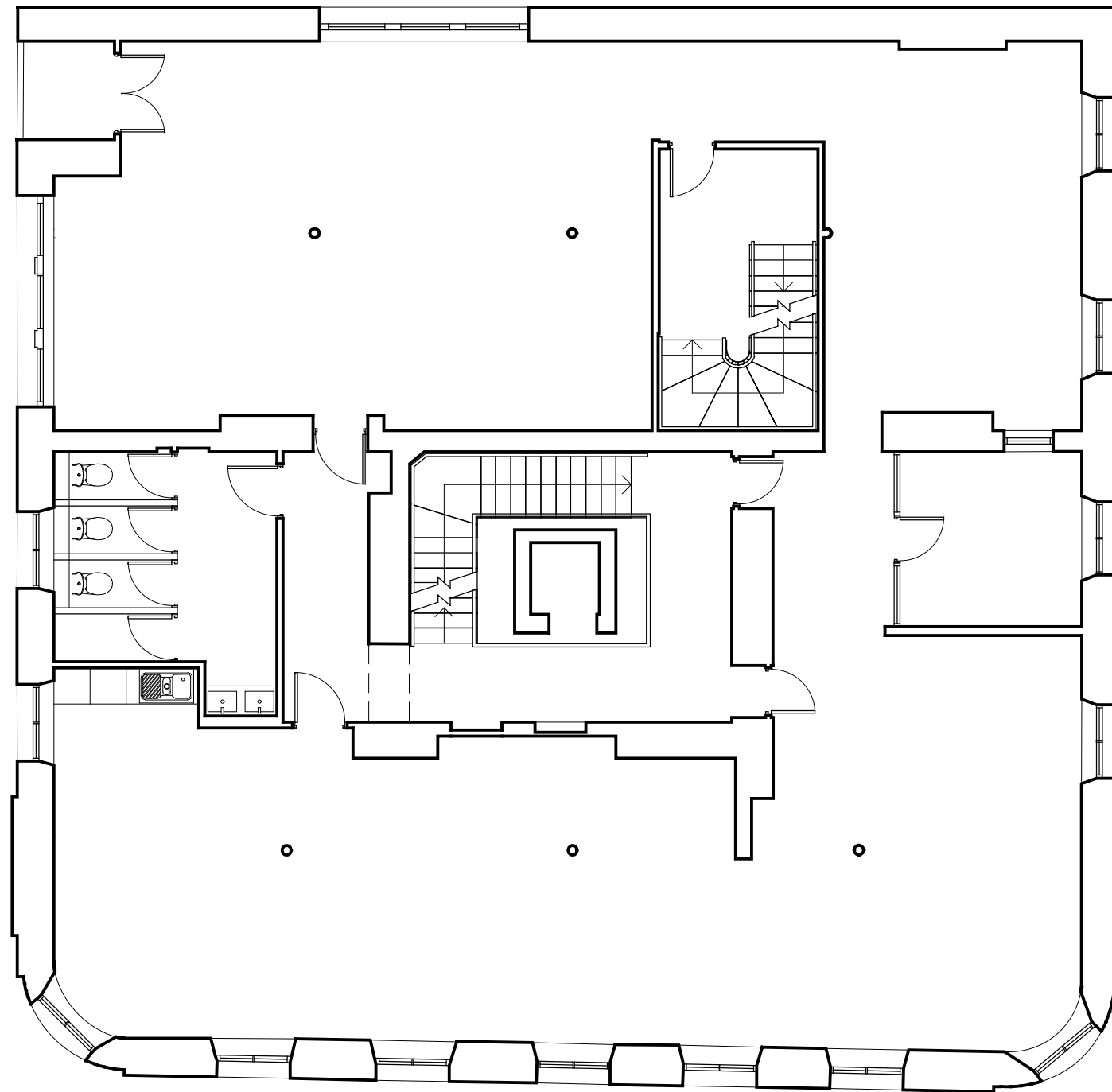
List Entry Number: 1246267

Date first listed: 05-Jun-1994

Listing NGR: SJ8457898328

Includes: Nos. 32 and 34 DALE STREET. Shops and clothing warehouses with offices over. Late C19; altered. Red brick with sandstone dressings, mansard slate roof with skylights. Rectangular plan with loading at rear left corner. Four storeys and attic, a 7-window facade (including curved corners); sill- and head-bands to all upper floors, quoined strips to the corners, prominent bracketed cornice, and attic treated as a high parapet. The ground floor has a central segmental-headed doorway with elaborate classical-style pedimented architrave, but is otherwise occupied by C20 shop-fronts; all the upper floors (including the attic) have 4-pane sashed windows and curved sashes at the corners, those at 1st floor with quoined jambs, those at second floor segmental-headed and the 2nd, 3rd, and 5th with keyed architraves and cornices on consoles, and those at 3rd floor with pediments (except at the corners); and the attic has smaller windows with keyed segmental heads and gablets with finials, alternating with six chimneys rising from the parapet. The left return wall has, inter alia, tripartite windows near the rear and a full-height loading slot under a gablet. Right-hand return wall to Dale Street. History: in 1905 No. 21 was occupied by 10 separate offices, mostly commission agents.

Appendix II – Design Development Plans



<div>Notes</div> <div><div>1. Any dwg format drawing is to be read in conjunction with and at the scale of the accompanying pdf.</div><div>2. Where colours other than black or grey are used, the drawing must be plotted in colour.</div><div>3. For status 'C' (Construction) drawings all dimensions are to be checked on site by the contractor, scaling is for Local Authority purposes only.</div><div>4. Unless otherwise indicated, all dimensions are in millimeters.</div><div>5. All information on this drawing is to be read in conjunction with the relevant Donald Insall Associates specification and trade contractors' drawings and information by specialists.</div><div>6. In the event of any discrepancy, please contact us immediately.</div><div>7. This drawing may contain survey information by others and is to be used solely for the purposes for which it was issued.</div><div>8. These are uncontrolled documents issued for information purposes only. If you have any queries regarding the drawings, please contact DIA immediately.</div><div>9. Please note DIA cannot be held responsible for any errors arising from changes made to an uncontrolled dwg file.</div></div>	<div>Drawing Status</div> <div><div>F Feasibility</div><div>S Sketch Design</div><div>P Planning</div><div>B Building Control</div><div>D Design Development</div><div>M Measurement</div><div>T Tender</div><div>C Construction</div><div>R Record</div></div>											<div>Project</div> <div>MAN.CH.01</div>		<div>No</div> <div>1000</div>	
												<div>Scale (A3)</div> <div>1: 100</div>		<div>Status</div> <div>1F</div>	<div>Revision</div> <div>1</div>
		Rev	Date	Dwn	Auth	Revision	Rev	Date	Dwn	Auth	Revision				

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Donald Insall Associates

Chartered Architects and Historic Building Consultants

53 King Street

Manchester M2 4LQ

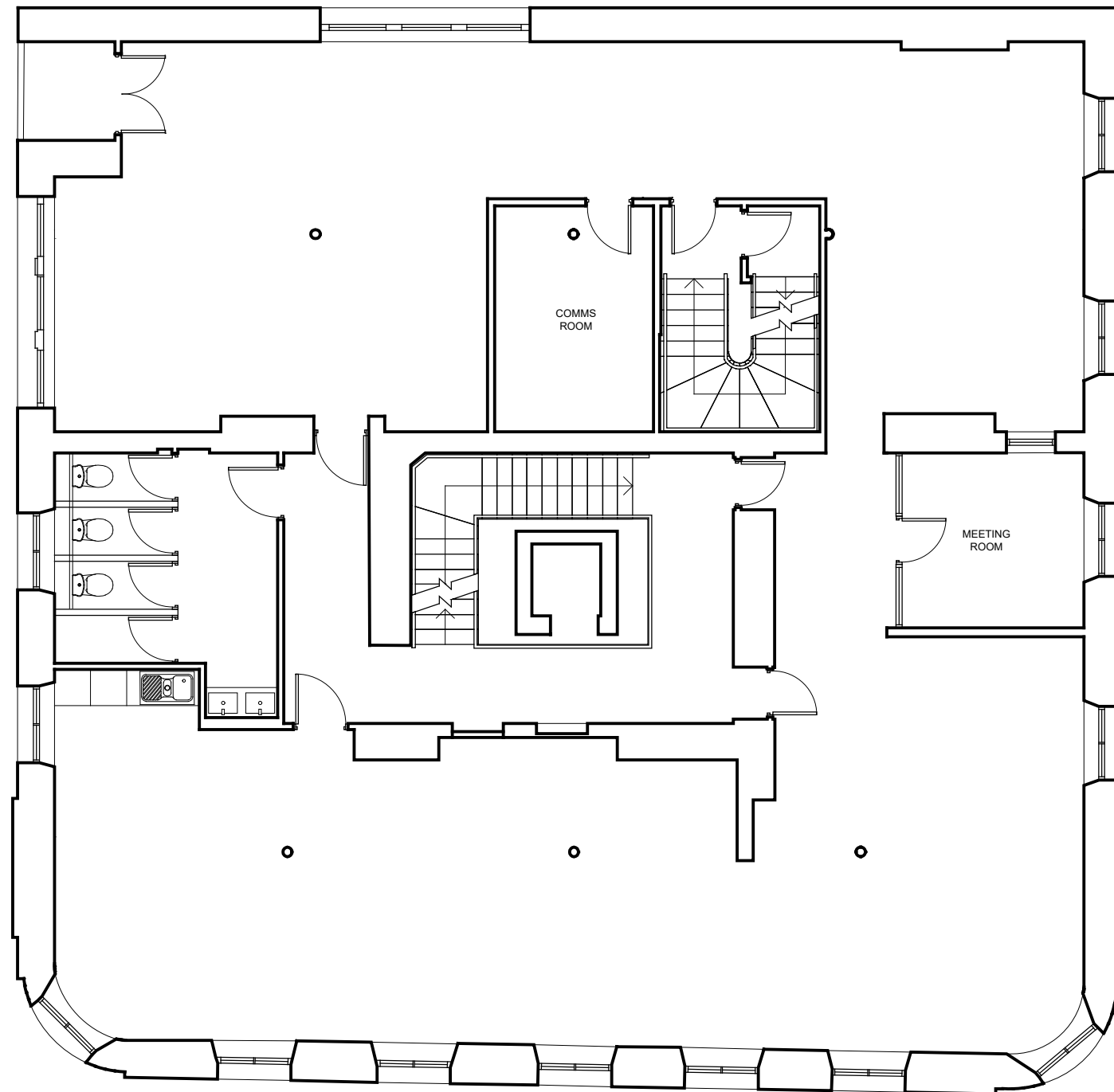
(+44) 0161 359 4326

manchester@insall-architects.co.uk

Cheetwood House, Manchester

First Floor

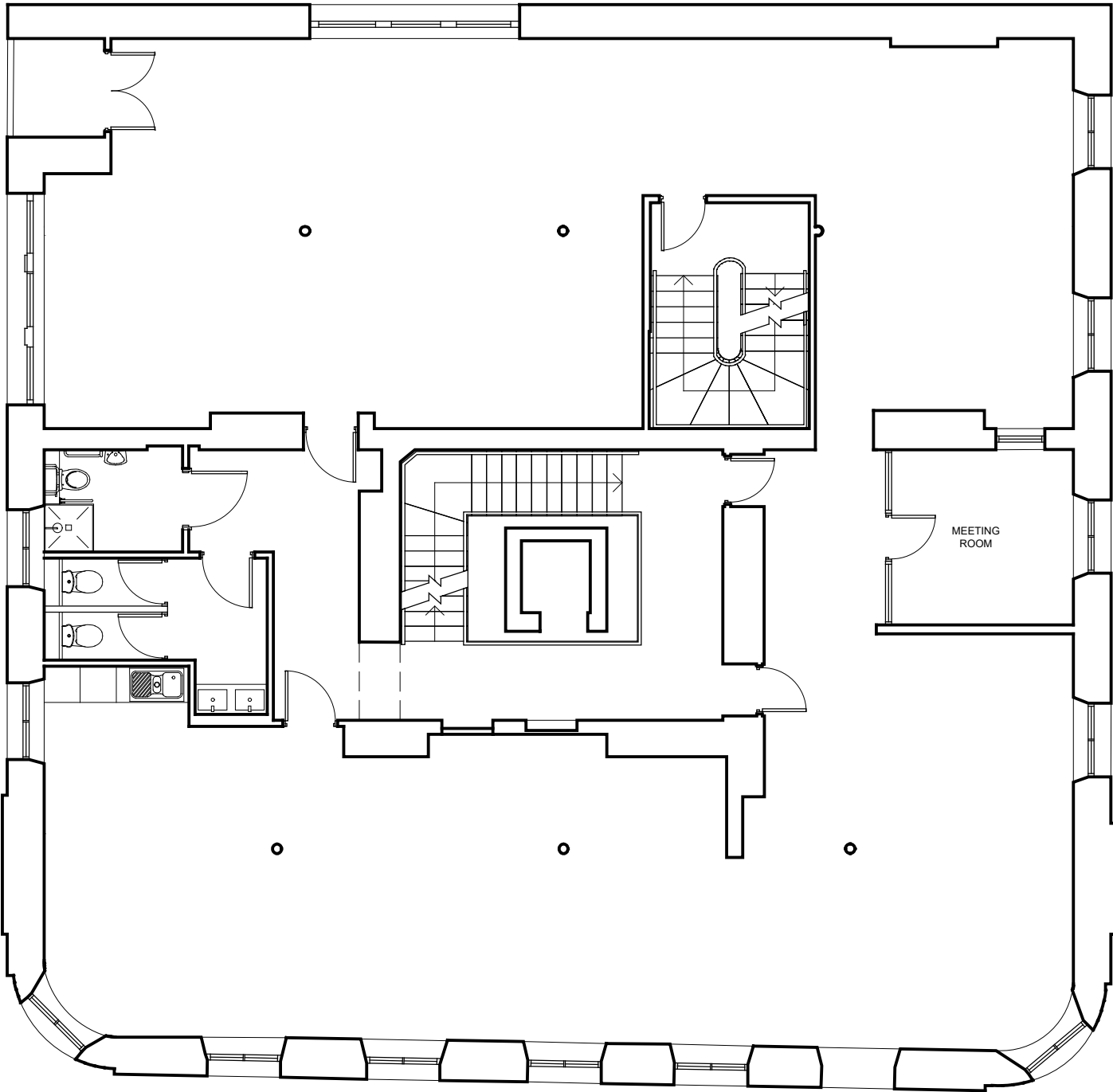
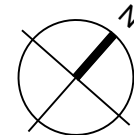
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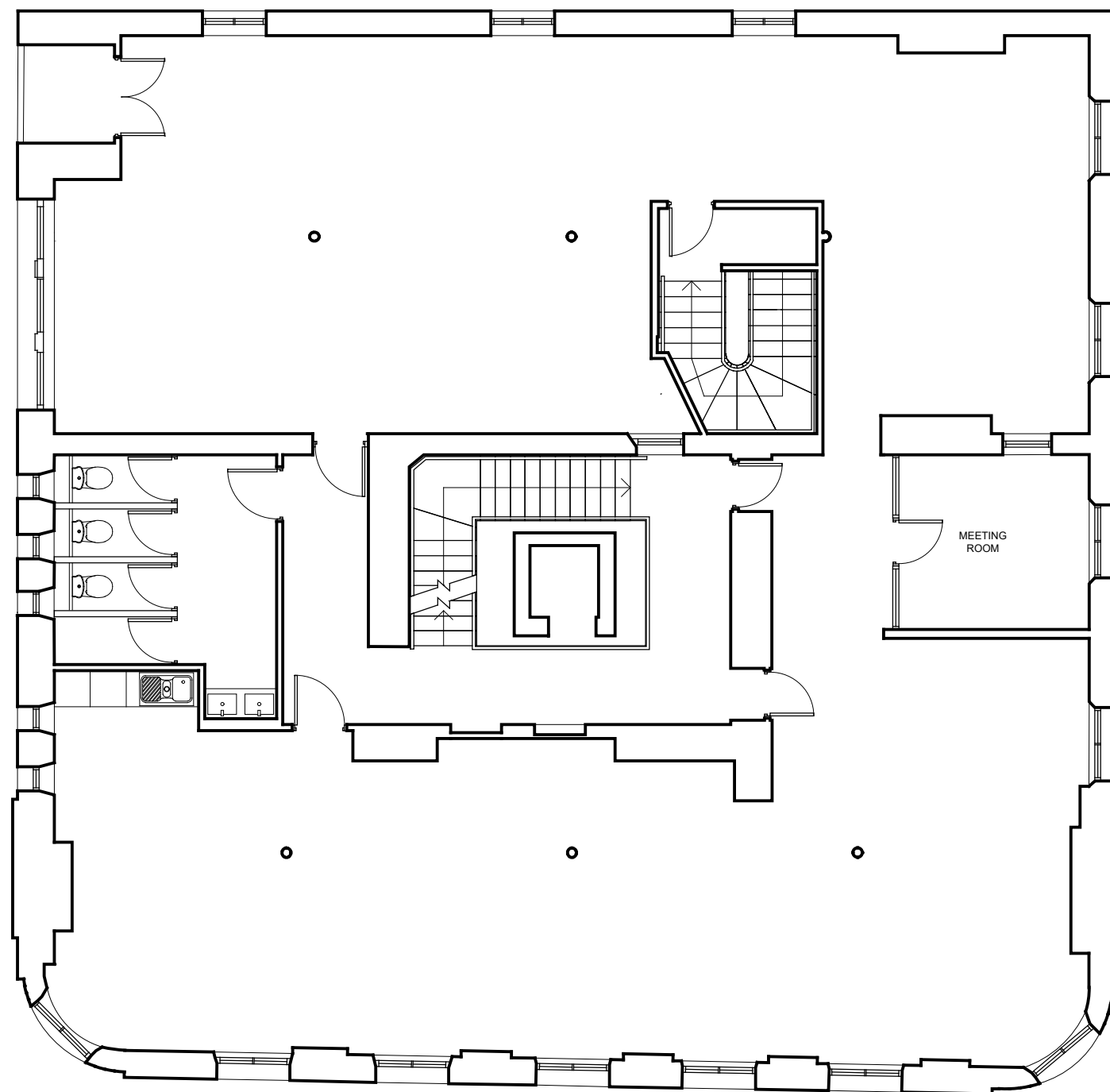
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T	Tender			
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NOTES

For Listed Building Consent only. Performance of the proposed infill and fire strategy to be approved by Fire Consultant. M&E and FFE installation, and detailing to be confirmed by specialists.

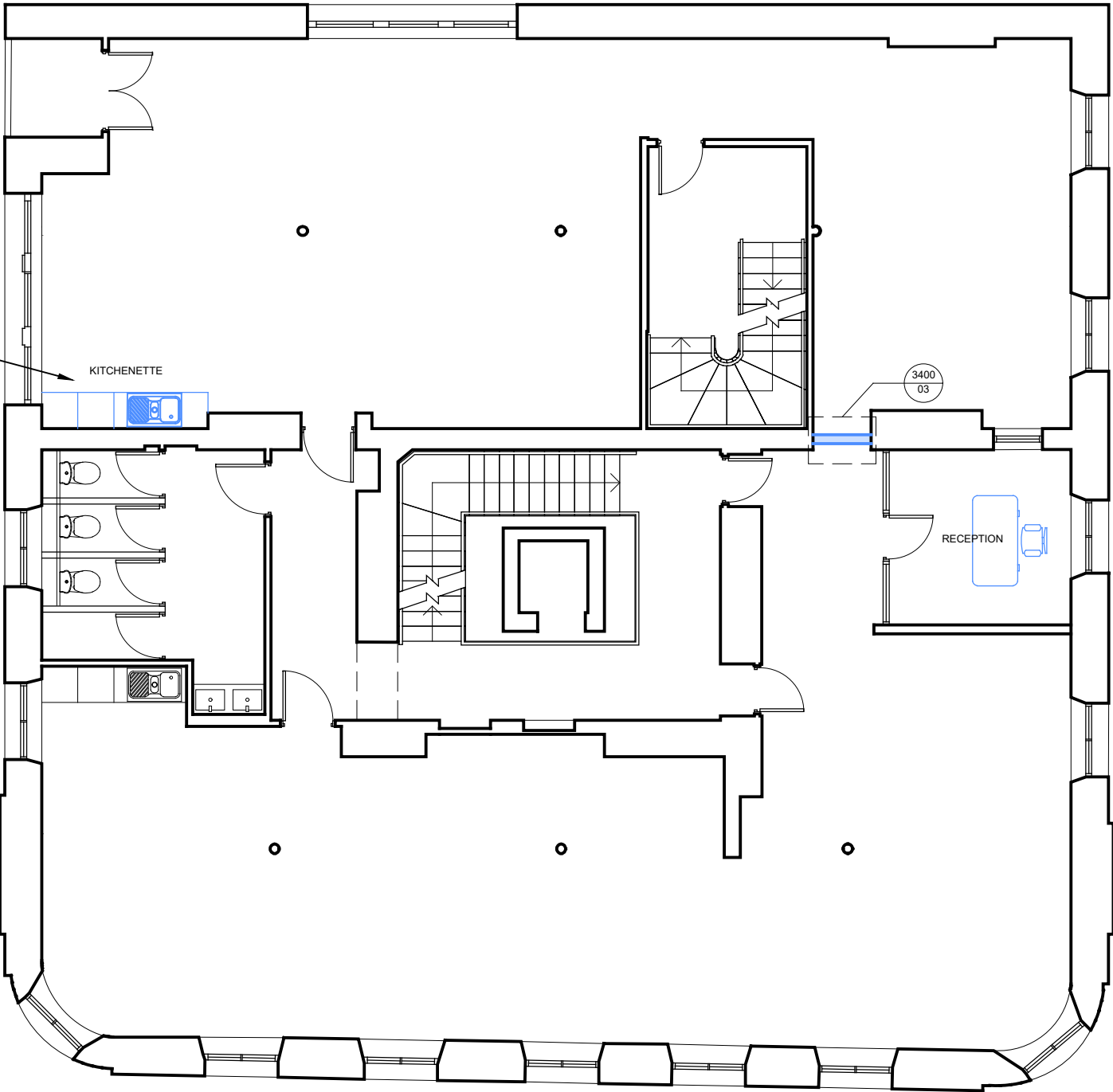
Key:

Proposed



Photo of Existing Kitchenette

Proposed kitchenette to match existing (refer to photo)



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C Construction

R Record

Rev

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NOTES

For Listed Building Consent only. Performance of the proposed infill and fire strategy to be approved by Fire Consultant. M&E and FFE installation, and detailing to be confirmed by specialists.

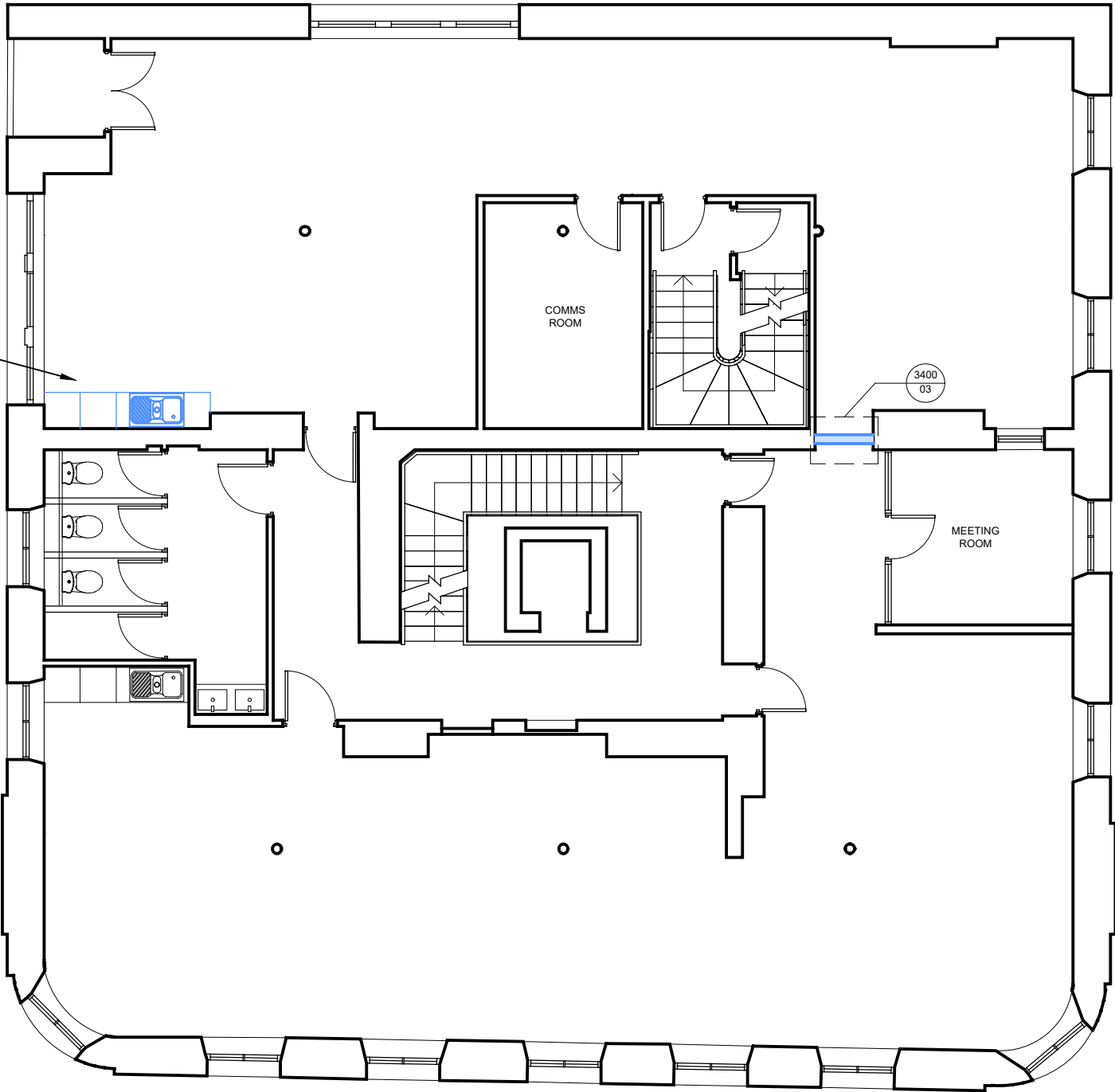
Key:

Proposed



Photo of Existing Kitchenette

Proposed kitchenette (see photo for existing kitchenette)



Notes

1. Any dwg format drawing is to be read in conjunction with and at the scale of the accompanying pdf.

2. Where colours other than black or grey are used, the drawing must be plotted in colour.

3. For status 'C' (Construction) drawings all dimensions are to be checked on site by the contractor, scaling is for Local Authority purposes only.

4. Unless otherwise indicated, all dimensions are in millimeters.

5. All information on this drawing is to be read in conjunction with the relevant Donald Insall Associates specification and trade contractors' drawings and information by specialists.

6. In the event of any discrepancy, please contact us immediately.

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Drawing Status

F Feasibility

S Sketch Design

P Planning

B Building Control

D Design Development

M Measurement

T Tender

C Construction

R Record

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Key:

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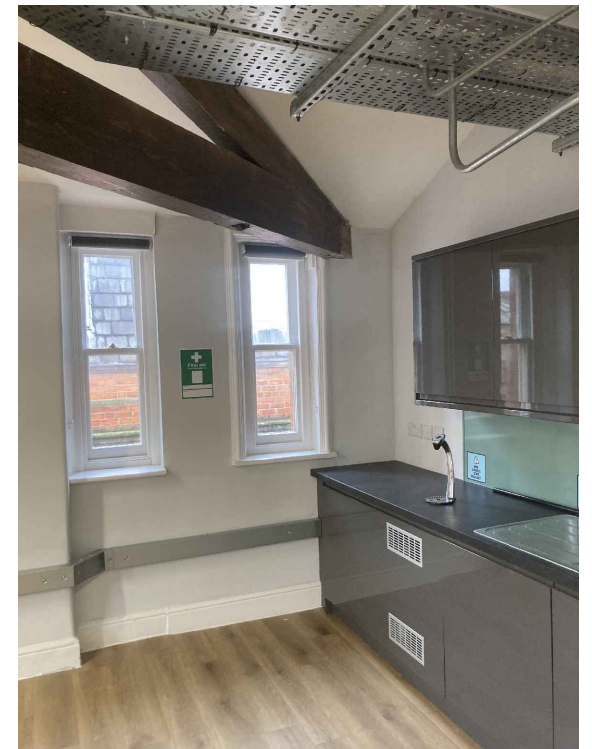
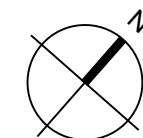


Photo of Existing Kitchenette



Proposed kitchenette (see photo for existing kitchenette)

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NOTES

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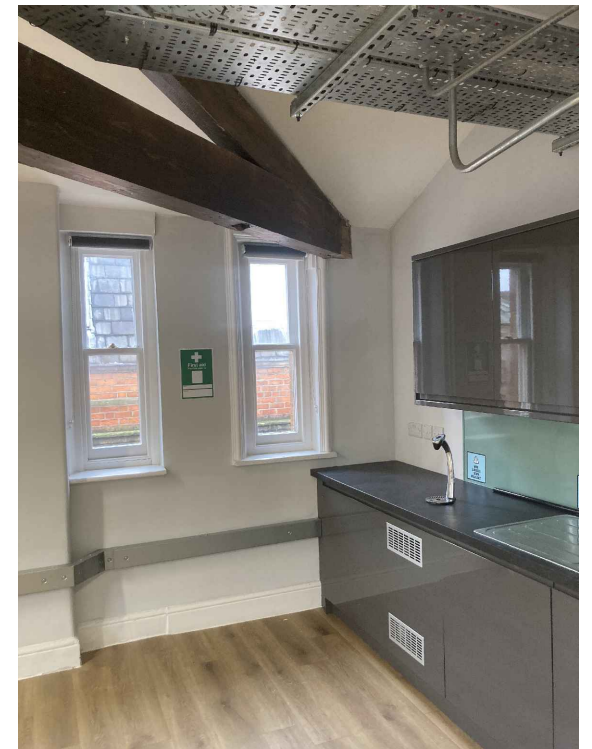
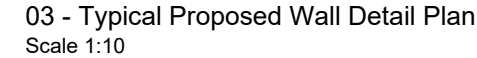


Photo of Existing Kitchenette



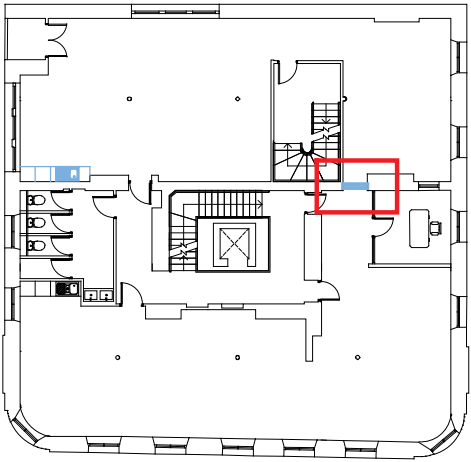
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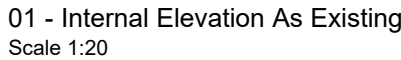
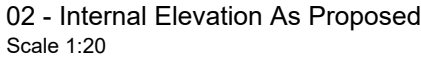
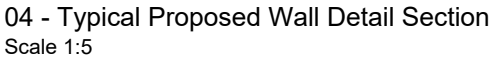


For Listed Building Consent only. Performance of the proposed infill and fire strategy to be approved by Fire Consultant. M&E and FFE installation, and detailing to be confirmed by specialists.

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Key Plan
Not to scale



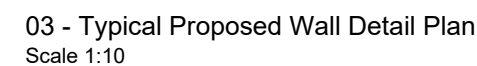
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Skirting to match existing

Gyproc Sealant for optimum sound insulation

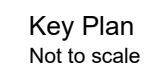
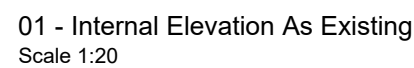
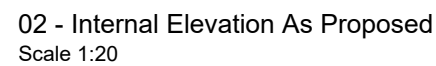
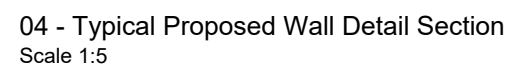
Gyproc jointing material bulk fill where gap exceeds 5mm

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☐ Proposed

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Appendix III - Planning Law, Policy and Guidance

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The Act is legislative basis for decision making on applications that relate to the historic environment. Sections 16, 66 and 72 of the Act impose a statutory duty upon local planning authorities to consider the impact of proposals upon listed buildings and conservation areas.

Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that:

[...] in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Local Policy

Manchester Development Framework Core Strategy

The Manchester Development Framework Core Strategy was adopted by the Council on 11th July 2012. The core strategy describes Manchester today and the Council's plans for Manchester in 2027, including the planning policies which will be used to deliver them. The following policies are of relevance:

Policy CC 9 Design and Heritage

Development proposals will be expected to:

- Be of the highest standard in terms of appearance and function.
- Comply with the standards and guidance explained in other LDF policies, with particular attention to be given to the City Centre context and character.
- Preserve or enhance the heritage assets that have been identified
- Be complementary of function and form- for high density and mixed use development in the City Centre
- New development must support the range of uses the Council expects in the City Centre and contribute to a coherent and integrated physical environment.

Policy EN 3 Heritage

The Council will encourage:

- Development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods
- New developments which enhance the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance
- Proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets where they are considered consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.

GMCA Places for Everyone

The *Places For Everyone Joint Development Plan Document August 2021* is currently at publication stage. The following policies are of relevance:

JP-P 2 Heritage

A high priority will be given to positively conserve, sustain and enhance the historic environment and heritage assets of Greater Manchester.

The key elements set out in the Local Plans should be used to inform the positive integration of Greater Manchester's heritage by:

- Setting out a clear vision that recognises and embeds the role of heritage in place-making.
- Utilising the heritage significance of a site or area in the planning and design process, providing opportunities for interpretation and local engagement.
- Integrating the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings, with creative contextual architectural responses that contribute to their significance and sense of place.
- Delivering positive benefits that sustain and enhance the historic environment, as well as contributing to the economic viability, accessibility, and environmental quality of a place, and to social wellbeing; and
- Exploring opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that restoration of historic buildings offer.

Development proposals affecting a conservation area should conserve those elements which contribute to its significance including those identified in any conservation area appraisal as making a positive contribution to the area. Harm to such elements will only be permitted where this is clearly justified and outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal.

Policy JP-J 3 Office Development

The refurbishment of existing office accommodation will be encouraged including improving standards of accessibility.

National Planning Policy Framework

Any proposals for consent relating to heritage assets are subject to the policies of the NPPF (December 2023). This sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. With regard to 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment', the framework requires proposals relating to heritage assets to be justified and an explanation of their effect on the heritage asset's significance provided.

Paragraph 7 of the Framework states that the purpose of the planning system is to 'contribute to the achievement of sustainable development' and that, at a very high level, 'the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. At paragraph 8, the document expands on this as follows:

Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives:

a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

and notes at paragraph 10:

10. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).

With regard to the significance of a heritage asset, the framework contains the following policies:

201. 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.

In determining applications local planning authorities are required to take account of significance, viability, sustainability and local character and distinctiveness. Paragraph 203 of the NPPF identifies the following criteria in relation to this:

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

With regard to applications seeking to remove or alter a historic statue, plaque, memorial or monument (whether listed or not), paragraph 204 states that:

...local planning authorities should have regard to the importance of their retention in situ and, where appropriate, of explaining their historic and social context rather than removal.

With regard to potential 'harm' to the significance designated heritage asset, in paragraph 205 the framework states the following:

...great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

The Framework goes on to state at paragraph 206 that:

Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.

Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;*
- b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.*

Where a proposed development will lead to 'substantial harm' to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset paragraph 207 of the NPPF states that:

...local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, 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*

With regard to 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of a designated heritage asset, of the NPPF states the following;

208. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

In terms of non-designated heritage assets, the NPPF states:

209. 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.

The Framework requires local planning authorities to look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas and world heritage sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Paragraph 212 states that:

... Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

Concerning conservation areas and world heritage sites it states, in paragraph 213, that:

Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 207 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 208, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.

Concerning enabling development, it states, in paragraph 214, that local authorities should:

assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.

National Planning Practice Guidance

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) was published on 23 July 2019 to support the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023 and the planning system. It includes particular guidance on matters relating to protecting the historic environment in the section: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment.

The relevant guidance is as follows:

Paragraph 2: What is meant by the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment?

Conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change. It requires a flexible and thoughtful approach to get the best out of assets as diverse as listed buildings in every day use and as yet undiscovered, undesignated buried remains of archaeological interest.

In the case of buildings, generally the risks of neglect and decay of heritage assets are best addressed through ensuring that they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation. Ensuring such heritage assets remain used and valued is likely to require sympathetic changes to be made from time to time. In the case of archaeological sites, many have no active use, and so for those kinds of sites, periodic changes may not be necessary, though on-going management remains important.

Where changes are proposed, the National Planning Policy Framework sets out a clear framework for both plan-making and decision-making in respect of applications for planning permission and listed building consent to ensure that heritage assets are conserved,

and where appropriate enhanced, in a manner that is consistent with their significance and thereby achieving sustainable development. Heritage assets are either designated heritage assets or non-designated heritage assets.

Part of the public value of heritage assets is the contribution that they can make to understanding and interpreting our past. So where the complete or partial loss of a heritage asset is justified (noting that the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted), the aim then is to:

- capture and record the evidence of the asset's significance which is to be lost
- interpret its contribution to the understanding of our past; and
- make that publicly available (National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 211)

Paragraph 6: What is "significance"?

'Significance' in terms of heritage-related planning policy is defined in the Glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework as the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

The National Planning Policy Framework definition further states that in the planning context heritage interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. This can be interpreted as follows:

- **archaeological interest:** As defined in the Glossary to the National Planning Policy Framework, there will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
- **architectural and artistic interest:** These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skill, like sculpture.
- **historic interest:** An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history, but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

In legislation and designation criteria, the terms 'special architectural or historic interest' of a listed building and the 'national importance' of a scheduled monument are used to describe all or part of what, in planning terms, is referred to as the identified heritage asset's significance.

Paragraph 7: Why is 'significance' important in decision-taking?

Heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. Being able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset, and the contribution of its setting, is very important to understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals.

Paragraph 13: What is the setting of a heritage asset and how should it be taken into account?

The setting of a heritage asset is defined in the Glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework.

All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not. The setting of a heritage asset and the asset's curtilage may not have the same extent.

The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to the visual relationship between the asset and the proposed development and associated visual/physical considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part in the assessment of impacts on setting, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust, smell and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places. For example, buildings that are in close proximity but are not visible from each other may have a historic or aesthetic connection that amplifies the experience of the significance of each.

The contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public rights of way or an ability to otherwise access or experience that setting. The contribution may vary over time.

When assessing any application which may affect the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities may need to consider the implications of cumulative change. They may also need to consider the fact that developments which materially detract from the asset's significance may also damage its economic viability now, or in the future, thereby threatening its ongoing conservation.

Paragraph 15: What is the optimum viable use for a heritage asset and how is it taken into account in planning decisions?

The vast majority of heritage assets are in private hands. Thus, sustaining heritage assets in the long term often requires an incentive for their active conservation. Putting heritage assets to a viable use is likely to lead to the investment in their maintenance necessary for their long-term conservation.

By their nature, some heritage assets have limited or even no economic end use. A scheduled monument in a rural area may preclude any use of the land other than as a pasture, whereas a listed building may potentially have a variety of alternative uses such as residential, commercial and leisure.

In a small number of cases a heritage asset may be capable of active use in theory but be so important and sensitive to change that alterations to accommodate a viable use would lead to an unacceptable loss of significance.

It is important that any use is viable, not just for the owner, but also for the future conservation of the asset: a series of failed ventures could result in a number of unnecessary harmful changes being made to the asset.

If there is only one viable use, that use is the optimum viable use. If there is a range of alternative economically viable uses, the optimum viable use is the one likely to cause the least harm to the significance of the asset, not just through necessary initial changes, but also as a result of subsequent wear and tear and likely future changes. The optimum viable use may not necessarily be the most economically viable one. Nor need it be the original use. However, if from a conservation point of view there is no real difference between alternative economically viable uses, then the choice of use is a decision for the owner, subject of course to obtaining any necessary consents.

Harmful development may sometimes be justified in the interests of realising the optimum viable use of an asset, notwithstanding the loss of significance caused, and provided the harm is minimised. The policy on addressing substantial and less than substantial harm is set out in paragraphs 205-208 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Paragraph 18: How can the possibility of harm to a heritage asset be assessed?

What matters in assessing whether a proposal might cause harm is the impact on the significance of the heritage asset. As the National Planning Policy Framework makes clear, significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

Proposed development affecting a heritage asset may have no impact on its significance or may enhance its significance and therefore cause no harm to the heritage asset. Where potential harm to designated heritage assets is identified, it needs to be categorised as either less than substantial harm or substantial harm (which includes total loss) in order to identify which policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 205-208) apply.

Within each category of harm (which category applies should be explicitly identified), the extent of the harm may vary and should be clearly articulated.

Whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision-maker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the policy in the National Planning Policy Framework. In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed. The harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting.

While the impact of total destruction is obvious, partial destruction is likely to have a considerable impact but, depending on the circumstances, it may still be less than substantial harm or conceivably not harmful at all, for example, when removing later additions to historic buildings where those additions are inappropriate and harm the buildings' significance. Similarly, works that are moderate or minor in scale are likely to cause less than substantial harm or no harm at all. However, even

minor works have the potential to cause substantial harm, depending on the nature of their impact on the asset and its setting.

The National Planning Policy Framework confirms that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). It also makes clear that any harm to a designated heritage asset requires clear and convincing justification and sets out certain assets in respect of which harm should be exceptional/wholly exceptional (see National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 206).

Paragraph 20: What is meant by the term public benefits?

The National Planning Policy Framework requires any harm to designated heritage assets to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental objectives as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 8). Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits, for example, works to a listed private dwelling which secure its future as a designated heritage asset could be a public benefit.

Examples of heritage benefits may include:

- sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting
- reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset
- securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long term conservation

Other Relevant Policy Documents

Historic England: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning (March 2015)

Historic England: Conservation Principles and Assessment (2008)

Donald Insall Associates