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HERITAGE STATEMENT

NEWTON ST. CAT B FLOOR 2 UNIT 2

REVISION	-
DATE ISSUED	JUNE 2024
PROJECT REF.	2046

ARCHITECTURE + HERITAGE

AMAZON HOUSE • BRAZIL STREET

MANCHESTER • M1 3PW

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Image: Photograph of site, taken from corner of Newton Street and Dale Street, April 2024.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

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This Heritage Statement has been written to accompany a Listed Building Consent Application for the second floor of 08 – 16 Newton Street, Manchester.

It was produced in June 2024 by Atelier MB. Its author is Laura Jessup, MA History and Theory of Architecture, PGCert. Conservation of the Historic Environment.

This application relates to changes to the second floor internal space only.



Image: Photograph of site, taken from corner of Newton Street and Dale Street, April 2024.

2.0 LOCATION

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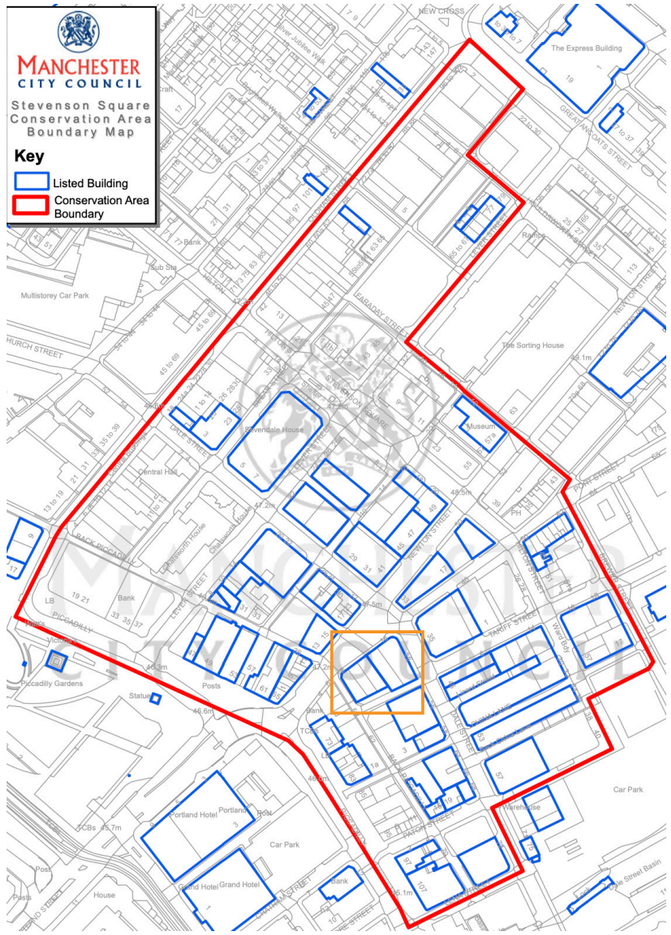


Image: Map of Stevenson Square Conservation Area showing 08-16 Newton Street.

The building is located within Manchester city centre, in the Northern Quarter area, close to Piccadilly Gardens. The main facade and entrances are on Newton Street and the block is set between Newton Street, Mangle Street, Back Piccadilly, and Dale Street.

08-16 Newton Street sits within the Stevenson Square Conservation Area, on the north eastern edge of the city and designated in 1987.

3.0 DESCRIPTION + HISTORY

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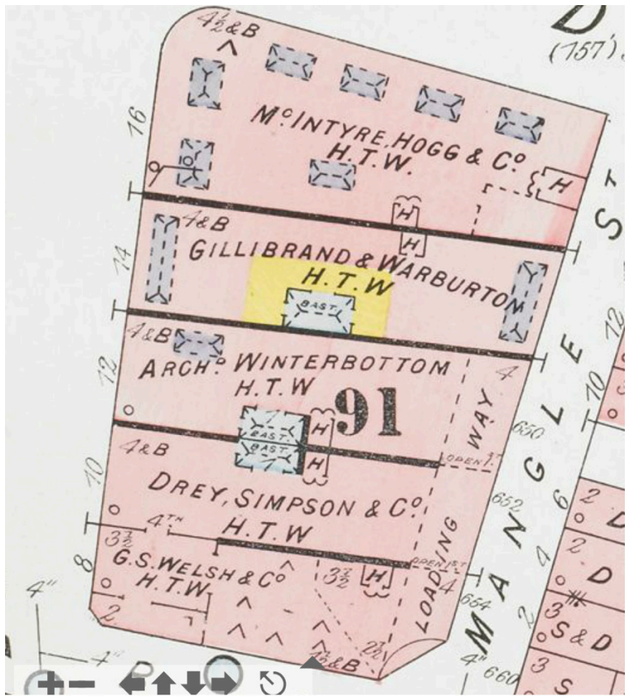


Image: Extract from Goad's Insurance Plan, 1886.

The buildings at 08-16 Newton Street are former home trade warehouses, dating from the late 19th century. They are in two separate parts (8-12 forming one building and 14-16 a second) and together they make one block, with main elevations facing Newton Street. Both are in the same architectural style but they differ slightly in appearance and height. It is possible they were built for two different owners, but the fact that they share internal walls and read as one, indicates they date from the same period.

16 Newton Street does not appear on the 1851 map but is visible on the 1891 map. The listing dates the buildings as 1860-70, but there is no reference in the trade directory of 1879 when Hilton Street is listed as appearing straight after number 12, showing there was a different street layout. The buildings do appear in 1883. From the available evidence therefore, the buildings can be dated to 1879-1882. No reference has been found to the architect/s, nor has it been possible to locate any original drawings or plans within the Manchester Central Library archives.

There is no documentary evidence of internal layout, other than the Goad's Insurance Plan (1886), but it is almost certain to have followed the typical plan of home trade warehouses in the area and of this period.

It was common for floors to be sub-divided for different businesses. This kind of warehouse was particularly common around Portland Street (grander in form) and Dale Street (often smaller). The only identified reference with any detail for 8-16 Newton Street is the Goads Insurance Plan from 1886, which offers some information on structure and the roof. Following the decline in the textiles industry there was little need for warehousing of this nature in the city. The buildings continued in office and light manufacturing use in to the 20th century and each building was occupied by several individual tenants, the result of which has been an undocumented and piecemeal set of alterations, including a number additional internal partitions and walls and changes to windows and openings.
An extract from listing is included here,

SJ8498SE NEWTON STREET 698-1/29/248 (South East side) Nos.14 AND 16
GV II
Includes: No.36 DALE STREET. Manufacturers' warehouses and agents' offices, now shops, etc. Late C19, altered. Red brick in Flemish bond (part painted white), with sandstone ashlar plinth and dressings, slate roof. Trapezoidal plan with rounded corner to Dale Street. Basement, 4 storeys and attic, No.14



Image: Building in 1966, corner junction of Newton Street and Back Piccadilly.
Image from Manchester Archives



Image: Building in 1967, main Newton Street elevation and corner to Dale Street.
Image from Manchester Archives.

having a narrow 4-window façade treated as one wide bay, and No.16 to the left a wider 6-window facade in 3 bays; with a high plinth (interrupted by basement openings), cornice to ground floor, string courses to the upper floors, a moulded stone cornice over the top floor on thin brick brackets, and a parapet with chimneys over 2 piers of No.16. Doorways adjacent to the junction, tall, with panelled doors, square overlights, and cornices on elongated consoles; No.14 to the right has 3 sashed windows at ground floor and 4 on each of the next 2 floors, with continuous stone lintels; No.16 to the left has altered windows at ground floor, sashed windows on the next 2 floors with stone lintels to each pair; both have coupled sashed windows at 4th floor and square dormers in a mansard roof. The fenestration of No.16 carries round the curved corner and continues in the 5-bay side to Dale Street, with chimneys over 4 piers, and 2 dormers. Interior not inspected. History: occupied c.1905-13 by various manufacturers' agents, No.14 by Horrocks Crewdson & Co. Listing NGR: SJ8460698288

SJ8498SE NEWTON STREET 698-1/29/247 (South East side) Nos.8, 10 AND 12
GV II
Warehouses, workshops and offices, now shops and offices. c.1860-70; altered. Brown brick with some polychromy, sandstone dressings (roof not visible). Rectangular plan. Eclectic style, with Gothic accent. Basement and 4 storeys, 4 unequal bays divided by brick pilasters, with sill-bands, cornice and parapet. The ground floor has coupled doorways in the 2nd bay, with banded plinths to the height of the tall basement, then short colonettes with carved capitals, and arched heads (rounded intrados with pointed extrados), and linked hoodmoulds, and a large mullioned 3-light window to the left (tripartite basement openings below); but is otherwise altered by C20 shop fronts, with numerous large signboards attached. The upper floors have 3-light windows with brick mullions in the 1st and 3rd bays, coupled windows in the 2nd and 4th, those at 2nd floor with banded arched heads and linked hoodmoulds, and all sashed. Prominent cornice and panelled parapet. The right-hand return wall has a 2-storey canted bay (altered at ground floor), arched windows at 2nd floor, and a gabled arched window at 3rd floor. Rear and interior not inspected. History: occupied c.1905 by umbrella manufacturer, sewing machines, etc. Included for group value.
Listing NGR: SJ8458498270

4.0 SIGNIFICANCE

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Image: Photograph of Newton Street elevation, April 2024



Image: Photograph of Newton Street elevation to Back Piccadilly end, April 2024

The setting of 8-16 Newton Street contributes to its high significance, aesthetically and historically, as part of the group of similar warehouses in this area of the city.

It is a positive contributor to the street scape and the wider Stevenson Square Conservation Area. Prior to ongoing renovation works, the building had been compromised by modern interventions, including the use of varied materials and treatments to the street frontage, which had a negative impact on its presentation as a cohesive block. Some historic fabric had also been lost through alteration to the various street level openings, most notably at the 08-10 end. The condition of the interior at upper levels, namely the poor state of the roof and upper windows and roof lights, was detrimental to the significance of the setting and impacts on the heritage value of the building.

The buildings have been assessed on Historic England's four categories for heritage value, as set out in their Conservation Principles document, 2008.

EVIDENTIAL VALUE

The Newton Street buildings have a medium/high degree of evidential value. Warehouses are an important characteristic architectural type in Manchester and these are typical examples, with the plan and parts of the interior and exterior illustrating how these buildings worked, particularly the vertical hoists and lightwells, columns, windows and entrances. They are however of an average quality when compared to others. The original parts of the exterior are of high significance, as are the distinct component parts (entrances, loading bay, main floors and basement). The altered parts are of low/ negative significance, many detracting from the heritage value as they are low quality and unsympathetic in design and finish.

HISTORICAL VALUE

The buildings are of high historical value. They are associated with the period of rapid industrial and commercial growth in the city, which is a crucial part of the history of Manchester. Their place in a wider group in this area in also recognised as highly significant. The degradation to the exterior through inappropriate change, and the removal of most historical features internally, has lowered this value in places. Later internal additions (including those proposed to be removed) are of a low historical value.



Image: Photograph of second floor, following refurbishment works.

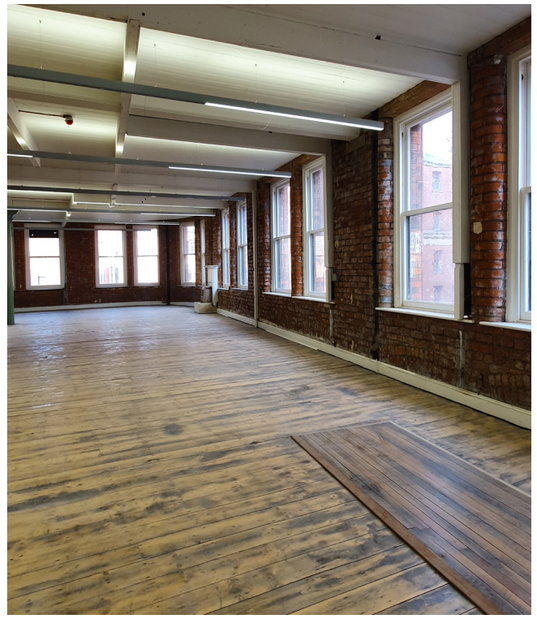


Image: Photograph of second floor showing floor, windows and wall.

AESTHETIC VALUE

08-16 Newton Street has some interesting features, particularly in the external stonework detail, the form of the rear sloping roof and the characteristic roof spaces internally, giving them a medium aesthetic value. They are in the vernacular tradition of brick Manchester warehouses. The internal spaces are almost entirely functional and most have a medium aesthetic value. The later changes have low/negative value.

COMMUNAL VALUE

The industrial past of Manchester is a key element of the city's heritage. The associated architecture has formed the character of the city and is recognised by people as what sets it apart from other places. The personal links to this building are considered low but there is a degree of associational value to the wider city for residents and visitors.

The second floor has recently undergone refurbishment. Significance remains and architectural and historical values are medium. Where original features have been retained, these are of high significance, including the staircase with decorative open string; the glass and timber partition under the stairs; timber floors; windows; walls and columns. The space is an important component part of the listed building and its plan form. The open plan nature has historical and evidential value.



Image: Photograph of second floor windows, following refurbishment works.



Image: Photograph of second floor staircase, following refurbishment works.

5.0 PROPOSALS + IMPACT

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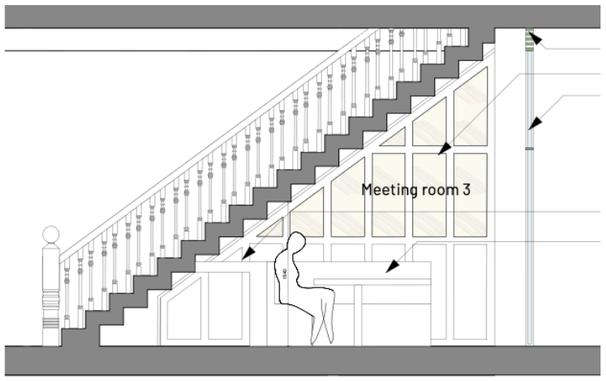


Image of proposed changes to create meeting room 3



Image of proposed changes to create meeting room 3

Changes are limited to the interior of the second floor and do not involve any external works.

The proposals involve the fit out of commercial space to meet the requirements of new tenants. Changes and their impact on the significance of the asset are set out here.

i) Creation of 4 meeting rooms: Nos. 1 and 2 to the far northern end, no. 3 under the existing staircase and no. 4 to the south-eastern end.
ii) Addition of a kitchen area to the southwest.
iii) Infill of the existing opening between the units.
iv) Infill of existing opening between floors.

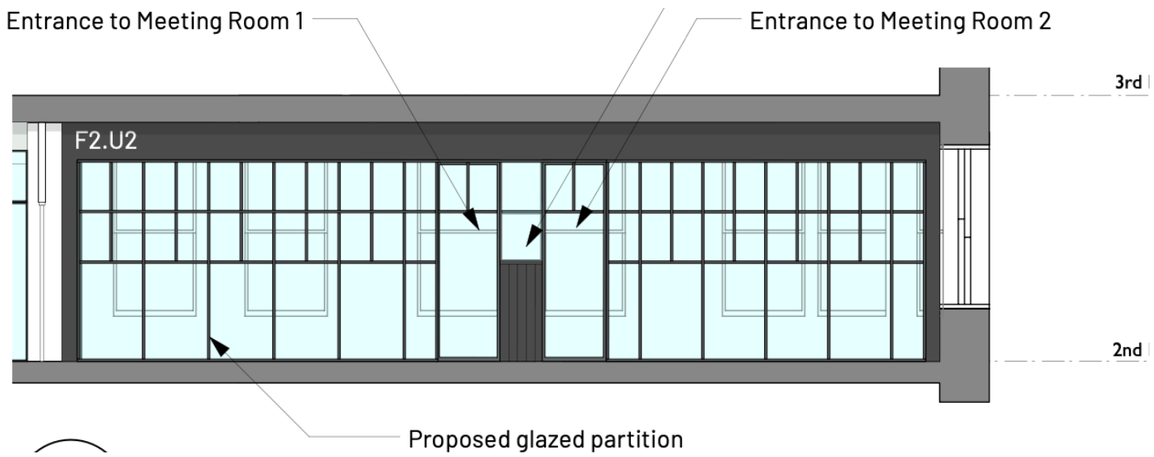
i) Meeting Rooms 1 and 2 are formed against the north-western edge of the unit by the addition of slim framed glazed partitions. They are deliberately placed along the edges to retain a larger open space within the unit. The use of glass will ensure visual transparency and natural light are maintained and the frame/glass proportions/pattern of glazing references the existing historic partition. Walls are placed to avoid historic fireplaces and require minimal fixings.

Meeting room 3 is below the existing large staircase within the unit. It is formed by inserting a booth under the steps, accessed from the south-eastern end.

Doors are to be glass with slim framed glazing and ventilation grilles above, retaining transparency. The proposal is an appropriate re-purposing of space and will allow for meeting facilities whilst retaining the historically important staircase.

Meeting room 4 is to the south-eastern corner. An existing historic partition will be re-used and a new door fitted alongside in proportions to reference the historic fabric.

Impact upon significance: Negligible
It is clear that over the period of its life the building has been subdivided to create offices and sub-rooms on an ongoing basis, as evidenced by the numerous partitions present before the recent upgrading works started in 2018. It must be acknowledged that contemporary re-use of the space involves an amount of change. These changes are considered to be appropriate, proportionate and sensitive. They reference historic partitions and are reversible.
Where old fabric and new fabric meet, fixings will be minimal and avoid unnecessary penetrations to historic elements. The proportion/orientation of the glazed panels and slim metal frames has been designed to reference the remaining re-used historic partition, giving a sense of stylistic continuity and ensuring that aesthetic values are retained.



Proposed partitions forming meeting rooms 1 and 2

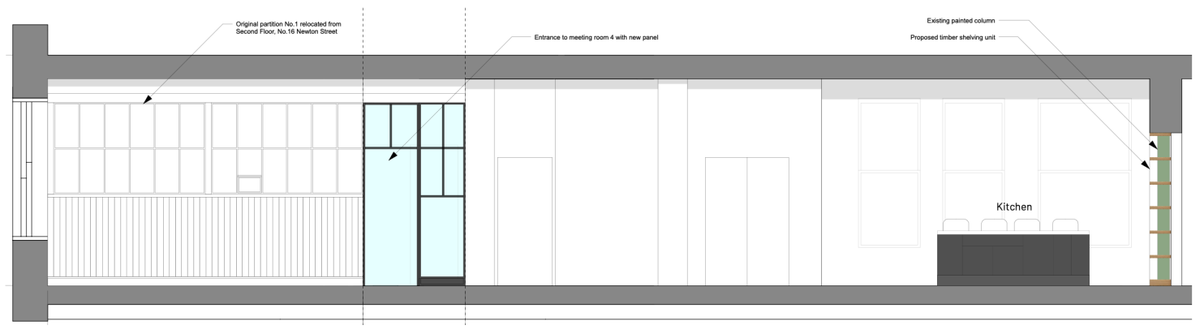


Image of proposed re-use of existing historic partition and new door to form meeting room 4.

ii) Provision of a kitchen area is acknowledged as a necessary addition for modern day office use.
Impact: Negligible
The kitchen is limited in size. Units will be fixed to the existing walls which have limited architectural or historical significance, with minimal fixing points. Additions can be removed at a future date with no damage to historic fabric

iii) Infill of the existing opening between the units.
The existing layout has an approved opening between units 14 and 12. The tenancy is to be split in to two units and therefore the hole needs to be infilled. Junctions with the existing column will be avoided by the use of a staggered wall.

Impact: This partition/infill will alter the existing layout but minimal fixings will be used into existing brick walls, floors and ceilings and the partition can be reversed should the floor be let to a single occupier in the future. There is a degree of change to the visual transparency between the units, but the level of harm is considered to be minimal and the proposal justified on the basis that it is necessary to put the units back into long-term re-use.

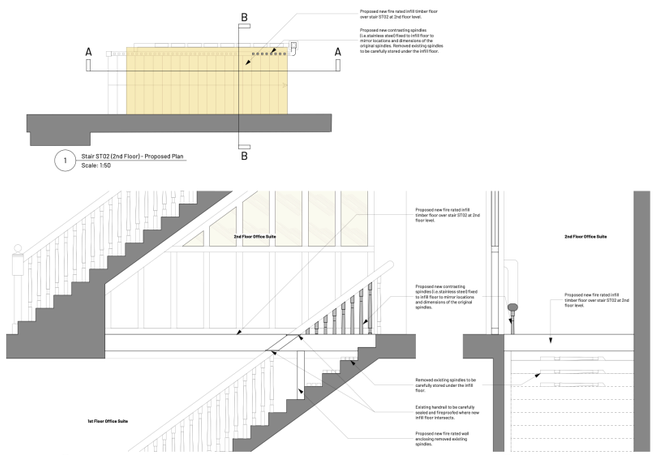


Image showing proposed treatment of separation between floors 1 and 2.

iv) Infill of existing opening between floors.
The occupancy of floors by separate tenants requires the stairs between levels one and two to be blocked for fire and security reasons. The staircase as it exists now has an exposed handrail on the diagonal runs but on the horizontal, the balustrade and handrail have been removed and replaced with a timber and glass panel which is historic but not necessarily original.

Change: Limited number of existing timber balusters to be carefully removed and stored within the enclosed staircase, to be re-fitted at a later date if possible. Only those which bridge the two floors pose a fire path risk and require removal.

Impact: The existing stair is historic and of high heritage value. However, it has also been altered at floor two. The careful removal and storage of timber balusters will enable them to be reinstated with little harm, should the floors be in single use at a later date. Any minor degree of harm is limited in scale and nature and is considered to be outweighed by the benefit of protecting the listed building against potential fire risk.

Change: New section of floor infill to be fitted to existing opening to create a separation between floors 1 and 2. 60 min fire rating. Floor to be fitted around existing timber handrail, which will be sealed.

Impact: It is accepted that the building will not be in single use and therefore for fire and security, there needs to be a separation between floors in this location. An alternative is to remove the entire banister and balusters altogether, which is considered to be of greater harm to significance. The proposals maintain the handrail, all the steps and the majority of balusters. The separate floors and the location of stairs will still be clear. The minor harm to circulation and form is considered to be outweighed by the potential of safeguarding the fabric of the building against the risk of fire spread.



Image of balusters, a small number of which it is proposed to remove and store.

Change: New short section of wall to be fitted to underside of stairs at level 1 where spindles are removed. Wall to run from underside of new floor.

Impact: This is considered to be a change with negligible impact upon significance, as the original staircase remains behind the short wall and the smallest section possible has been walled off. In the scale of the listed building, this change has a very low impact upon significance. The limited harm is outweighed by the benefit of protecting the listed building against potential fire risk.

Change: At second floor where wooden balusters are to be removed, new replicas are to be fitted (in a contrasting material such as stainless steel) to be readily identifiable as additions, but in matching profile and position to original.

Impact: The removal and storage of the balusters will leave a gap in the banister. Replacing them in wood will only serve to confuse the authenticity of the feature. It is generally acknowledged that new interventions in old spaces should be identifiable as such, and be honest additions of their time. Adding balusters in a modern material, but following the historic form, is considered wholly appropriate and will allow the necessary changes to be read as such. This approach shows consideration to balancing the old and the new, and retaining the evidential and aesthetic values of the space with no substantial harm to significance.

6.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

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The main heritage planning considerations affecting this site are its Grade II listed status and its position within the Stevenson Square Conservation Area.
The legislation concerning built heritage is contained within Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Government Policy is set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, updated 2023). Local planning policy is set by Manchester City Council.

Statutory legislation states that special regard should be given to 'the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any feature of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.' Clause 66. Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990.

The NPPF recognises that sympathetic changes to heritage assets are necessary to ensure their viable ongoing use, but that alterations must be justified and their impact upon significance assessed.
This report meets the requirements of NPPF, paragraph 200, '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'.

Paragraph 203 states,
'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 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.'
The high significance of this complex of buildings will be retained and enhanced through ongoing improvement. Works are considered compatible with historic fabric and the retention of key features such as wall, window openings, entrances and internal features makes a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. The viable re-use of these buildings is of great public benefit, as part of the street scape, the Conservation Area and in terms of conserving the listed asset.

Paragraph 205 states, 'When considering the impact of proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.'
Proposals have been designed to work with the historic features and fabric, with modern intervention only proposed where it is necessary to create viable, modern, and accessible office space.
Paragraph 208 states that '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.'

Proposals are considered to result in an impact upon significance which is low on the overall scale, though it is recognised that there are limited instances which are classed as 'less than substantial harm'. In these cases mitigation has been applied and the least harmful solution proposed, with priority given to the retention and protection of significance. The buildings are an important component of the Conservation Area and of the Northern Quarter/Piccadilly area. They represent a good example of their kind and have typical key characteristics of their typology and date. The most important elements such as external elevations and entrances, loading bay, lightwell, internal spaces and features, will remain and be enhanced. Limited areas of loss of fabric are not considered to be detrimental to the overall understanding and appreciation of the asset. The benefit of bringing a long-term use and street level animation through the proposals, along with improved access for all, is considered to greatly outweigh the limited less than substantial harm.
Sustainability is a key overarching aim of NPPF and this application is a positive response to that, seeking to re-use existing fabric wherever possible and to make sensitive and minimal intervention to allow for adaptation to new use.

Local Manchester City Council policy follows the principles established in the NPPF and is contained within the Local Development Framework Core Strategy, 2012. Of particular relevance are CC9, which states that development should preserve or enhance listed assets; and EN3 which states the Council will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of historic and heritage features of neighbourhoods.

The proposals are considered to accord with local and national policy.

7.0 CONCLUSION

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The building has heritage significance, as evidenced by its Grade II listing.

Recent refurbishments have sought to enhance original fabric and remove inappropriate and non-original interventions.

The second floor is a component part of the building and has significance, through its remaining features and its plan form.

Proposals seek to ensure the second floor can be put back into long-term viable end use, meeting the needs of modern office users. Changes will have a minor impact upon the space and are not considered to exert anything other than a low degree of harm, which is at the minor end of 'less than substantial'. This harm is considered justified on the basis that it is outweighed by the very positive benefit of bringing the space back into long term viable end use and of lowering the potential risk of fire spread.

The evidential and historical significance of the second floor will be retained and the space will still be readable in its original intent. Historical features will be protected, including balusters which will be safely stored within the stair. Replacement balusters in an historic profile maintain evidential and aesthetic values and are considered appropriate. Proposals have been designed to work alongside historical features and existing character and are both appropriate and sympathetic in nature. They are considered to accord with local and national policy.

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