

Mosley Street/Princess Street- Job 1995

Heritage Statement

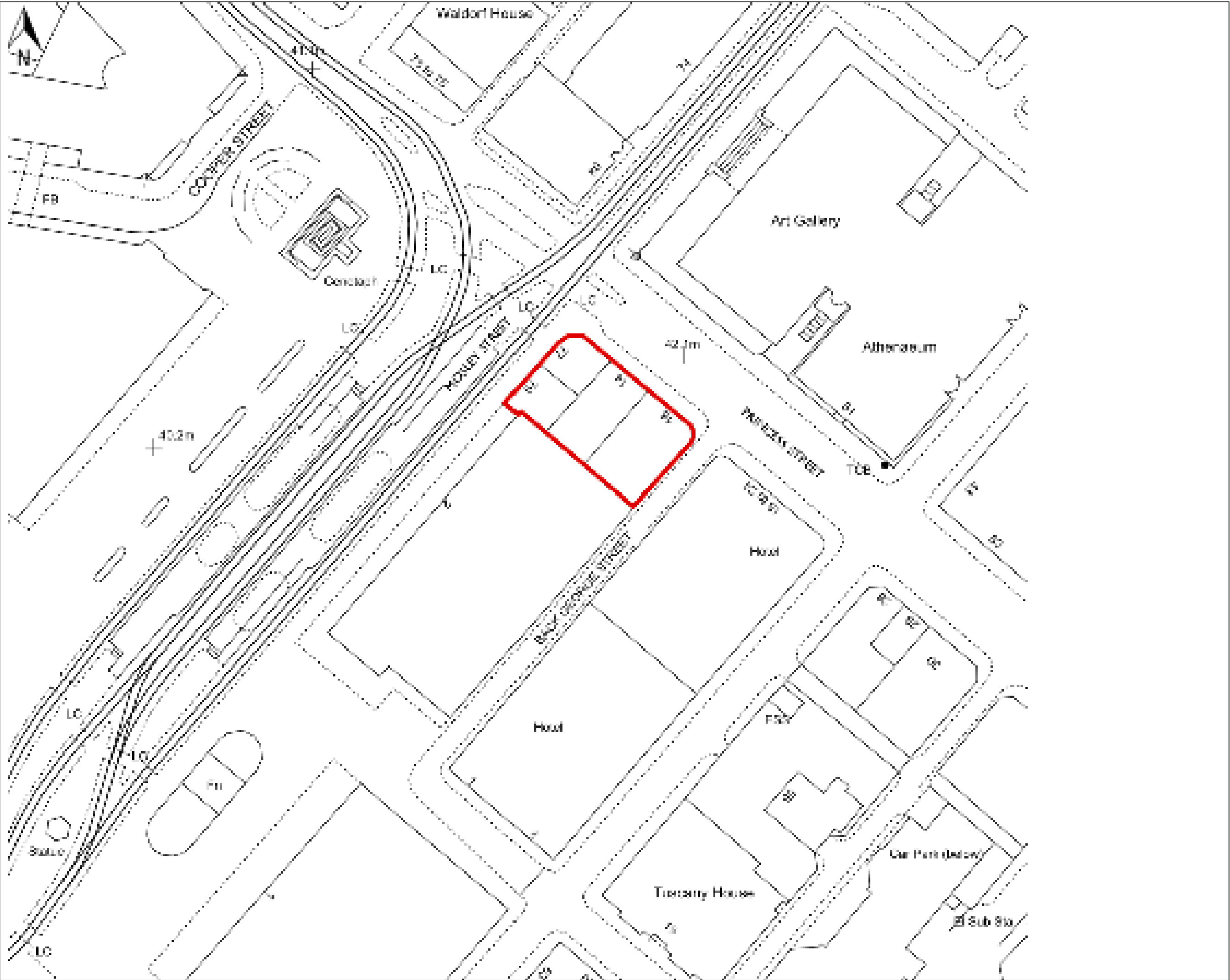
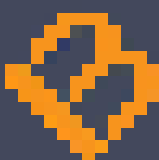
77-79 Mosley Street
Manchester
M2 3FX

Client: Biz Assets Ltd
Date: May 2023
Revision: _C



City of
Manchester





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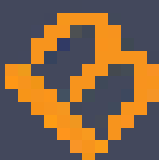
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Location plan of 77-79 Mosley Street.



1.0 Introduction





1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Heritage Statement accompanies a listed building consent and planning application for the property at 77-79 Mosley Street, Manchester. It was produced in May 2023 by Atelier Heritage and its author is Laura Jessup, MA History and Theory of Architecture, PGCert. Conservation of the Historic Environment.



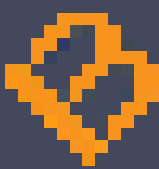
Image 1: Site context- listed buildings.



City of
Portland

2.0 Site Location and Description





2.0 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The subject of the application is located on the corner of Mosley Street (to the north-west) and Princess Street (to the north-east), within Manchester city centre. To the south-east, at the rear of the property, is Back George Street, a narrow side road. The building is addressed from both streets: 14 and 16 Princess Street and 77, 77a & 79 Mosley Street, and for ease is herein referred to as '79 Mosley Street'. It is a Grade II listed former home trade warehouse, offices and shops, in three distinct internal areas which are inter-linked, yet with different characteristics.

The property is on the edge of St Peter's Square, in a prominent position within a wider area of civic and commercial buildings, the most notable of which are: Manchester Town Hall (Grade I listed) Town Hall Extension (Grade II* listed) Manchester Art Gallery (composed of two former buildings of Grade II* and Grade I listed status).

New development to the Mosley Street side includes the site immediately adjoining (2 St Peter's Square) which is an 11-storey modern office block, completed in 2017. To the Princess Street side are several 19th century former warehouses, mostly in a similar red brick and stone detailed form, forming a distinct group.

Elevations are high-quality in design and execution and characteristic of the period, location, and use of the site. Walls are red brick and sandstone, with a parapet to the roof, and stone balconies to primary elevations of Princess and Mosley Streets. Key internal features include the lantern light (as detailed on Goads Map of 1880s); a basement level; two internal staircases (one decorative and one less ornate); exposed columns in a tight grid to the warehousing section; some remaining cornicing; lightwell; hoist; and decorative detail within the former bank. The building is Grade II listed and sits within the George St. Conservation Area.

An extract from the listing description is included here:

MANCHESTER
SJ8497NW PRINCESS STREET 698-1/32/322 (Southwest side)
03/10/74 Nos.14 AND 16
GV II
Includes: Nos.77 AND 77A MOSLEY STREET. Offices and home trade warehouse, now bank and offices. c.1860-70, altered. Red brick with sandstone dressings (roof concealed). Rectangular plan parallel to street, on end of block site, with curved corners. Four storeys over basements, 4:2:4 windows, plus 3-window corners; stone plinth, pilaster strips framing the centre, sill-bands to all floors with saw-tooth courses below the windows, bracketed cornice and balustraded parapet. Arcaded ground floor with panelled pilasters, moulded imposts and stilted segmental arches with keystones, square-headed doorway to 4th bay and sashed windows to the other bays (but 2 bays at right-hand end, and the corner, now have C20 bank front). All upper floors have windows with moulded architraves, those at 1st floor with cornices, those at 2nd floor segmental-headed with keystones and cornices, and those at 3rd floor with keystones; but windows at 1st and 2nd floors of centre and corners have more elaborate treatment, those at 1st floor with swagged cartouches and masks on the heads, and those at 2nd floor with balustraded balconies. Most windows sashed without glazing bars. Five-bay returned ends similar.
Listing NGR: SJ8401797998



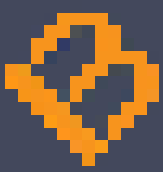
Image 2: Contemporary view of site, looking towards Mosley St. with the Cenotaph to the foreground.



Image 3: Contemporary photograph of 77-79 Mosley Street, with the modern block of 2 St. Peter's Square to the right.



Image 4: Contemporary views of site, looking towards Peter's Square with Manchester Town Hall extension to right and site to far left.



3.0 HISTORY

Constructed as combined use home trade warehousing, offices, and retail premises, the building dates from the mid-1860s, and was likely to have been built as speculative multi-tenanted space to be let on a unit-by-unit basis.

The warehousing was situated to the rear of the upper floors accessed by double doors off 16 Princess Street, and an internal decorative cast-iron staircase with polished timber handrail. The front (Mosley Street-facing) side contained offices at upper levels, accessed via 79 Mosley Street and a plainer timber stair behind. Retail premises were situated on the ground floor at 77 and adjoining 77a, later to include partial use of the basement. The shops were accessed directly from Mosley Street, taking advantage of the valuable frontage.

Home trade warehouses enabled visitors to examine goods in sale rooms, and, as such, they were designed with attractive external faces, in contrast to the functional aesthetic of shipping or packing warehouses. The formal decorative elevations of red brick and stone at 79 Mosley Street are characteristic of both this area of the city, and the specific office/warehouse form.

Typically, warehousing was created free of internal walls, to facilitate circulation and storage. This is evident in the open-plan nature of the spaces at 79 Mosley Street, which feature three rows of structural cast iron columns but no dividing walls. A hoist (situated to the rear wall, facing Back George St) enabled vertical movement of goods and direct access to the narrow street below, and would have been served by taking-in doors. To enable better viewing conditions, trade warehouses maximised the provision of natural light through their design, with large windows set between reduced width piers, and a central lightwell puncturing the floors, in this instance also separating the office and warehouse functions. Windows were

openable, with sashes, to allow for air circulation throughout the building.

Basements were typically used for packing, storage, and dispatch and the ground floor usually contained offices and counting houses. Occasionally, as at Mosley Street, part of the ground floor was partitioned off to be sub-let as retail space.

By the 1860s, Mosley Street had evolved from a residential area to an important commercial centre. Macbeth Brothers Tailors operated their shop from the unit at number 77 from the 1880s onwards, later expanding to the adjoining shop, before condensing back into a single unit and utilising part of the basement under 77 and 77a. Original shop front detail exists behind later over-cladding and have been partially exposed.

Archives show the building has been tenanted by a number of occupiers:

- Manchester Guardian Society for Protection of Trade: Offices, accessed via 79 Mosley St. Taking all three office floors from 1880-1901.
- Cowlshaw, Nicol & Co, importers of upholstery/wool goods: Warehousing, accessed via 16 Princess St.
- A variety of warehouse tenants from the mid 1890s onwards, including pattern card makers and textile printers.
- Macbeth Brothers Tailors: 1880s, Retail, 77 Mosley Street with direct street access. The tenant later extended the shop into 77a via internal opening, later the shop reverted back to 77a and took additional space in the basement under 77 and 77a.
- Huddersfield Building Society: Mid-1930s with existing refurbishment dating from 1955 (by Clifford Hickson, architect) 77 Mosley Street and extending to room along Princess Street at ground floor level. These spaces were later joined to office entrance and warehouse.

The 1955 alterations by Huddersfield Building Society added an Art Deco influenced external cladding and decorative internal features reflecting the more formal design

characteristics of a bank interior, including over-cladding of columns and internal beams.

As commercial activities evolved in the city, warehousing was no longer required, and the main floors of the building were re-purposed as standard office space. Later evolutions in use include a restaurant and a barber, both situated within part of the basement in the late 20th century. More recently the building has been vacant for several years after tenants moved to newer office space.

Previous owners obtained planning permission and listed building consent for internal and external works in 2018. The scheme (118399/LO/2017) essentially involved the total demolition of the interior of the Grade II listed building with façade retention, new internal structure, roof extension and refurbishment of the exterior including the restoration of the historic shop front to 77a Mosley Street.

Historic England raised objection to the proposed scheme, stating that the applicant had not demonstrated sufficient public benefit in the balance against substantial harm. As part of their response, Historic England further stated that they would rather consider options, including the use of the lightwell, than see the interior demolished. Permission was granted, based on the demolition option, and works commenced, being paused after a short time. The building was subsequently sold to the current owner, who is now seeking to implement a new, alternative scheme, which retains a high percentage of the interior and does not add further storeys.

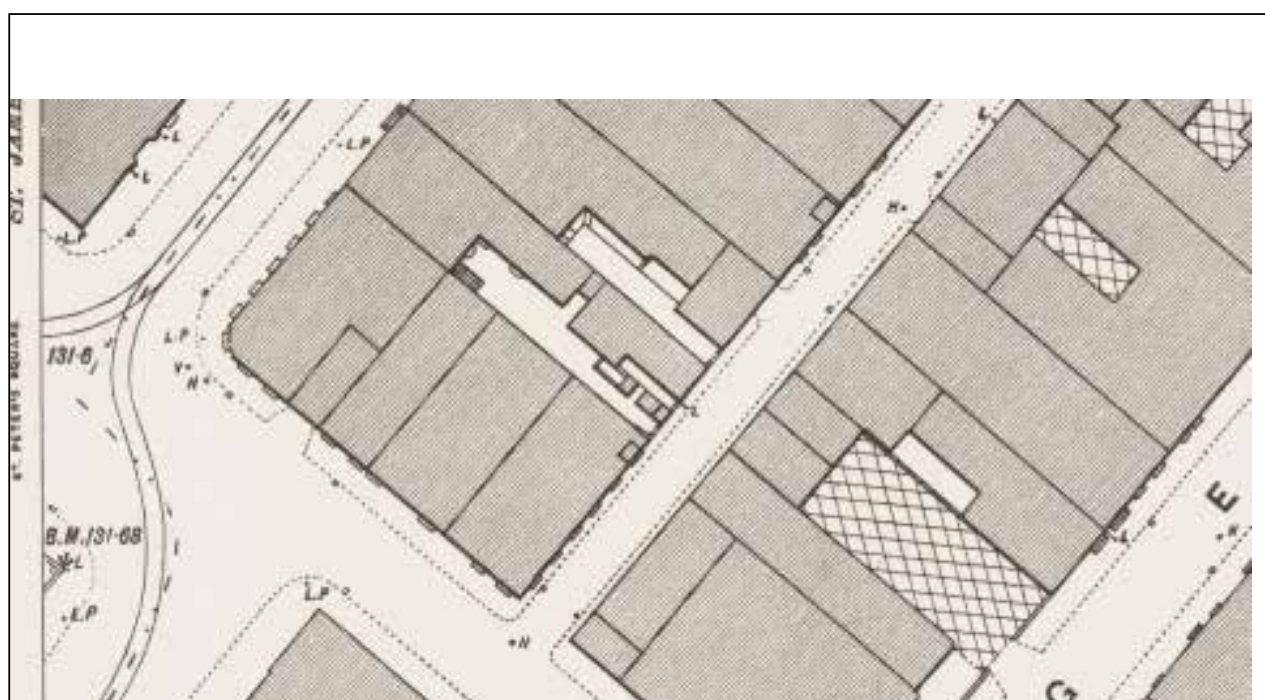
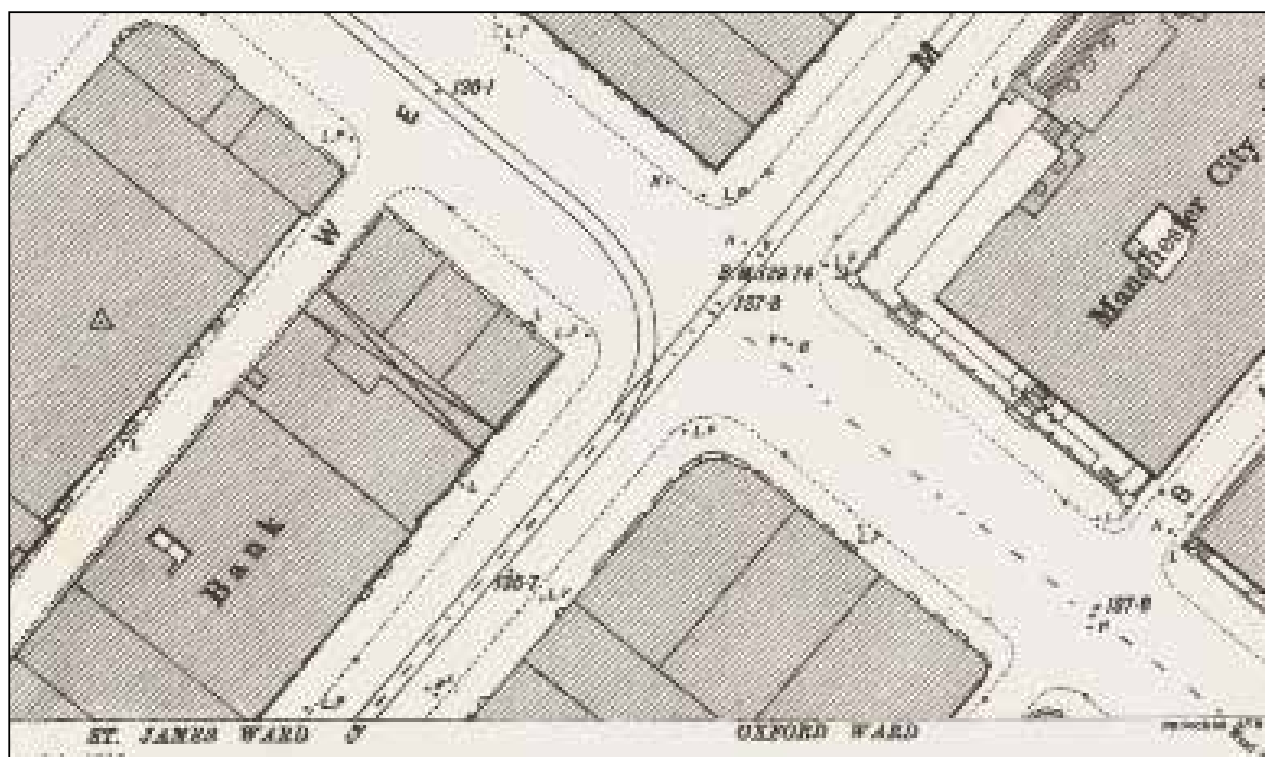
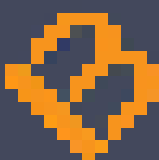


Image 5: OS map, 1891. Site is visible in recognisable form (split across maps).

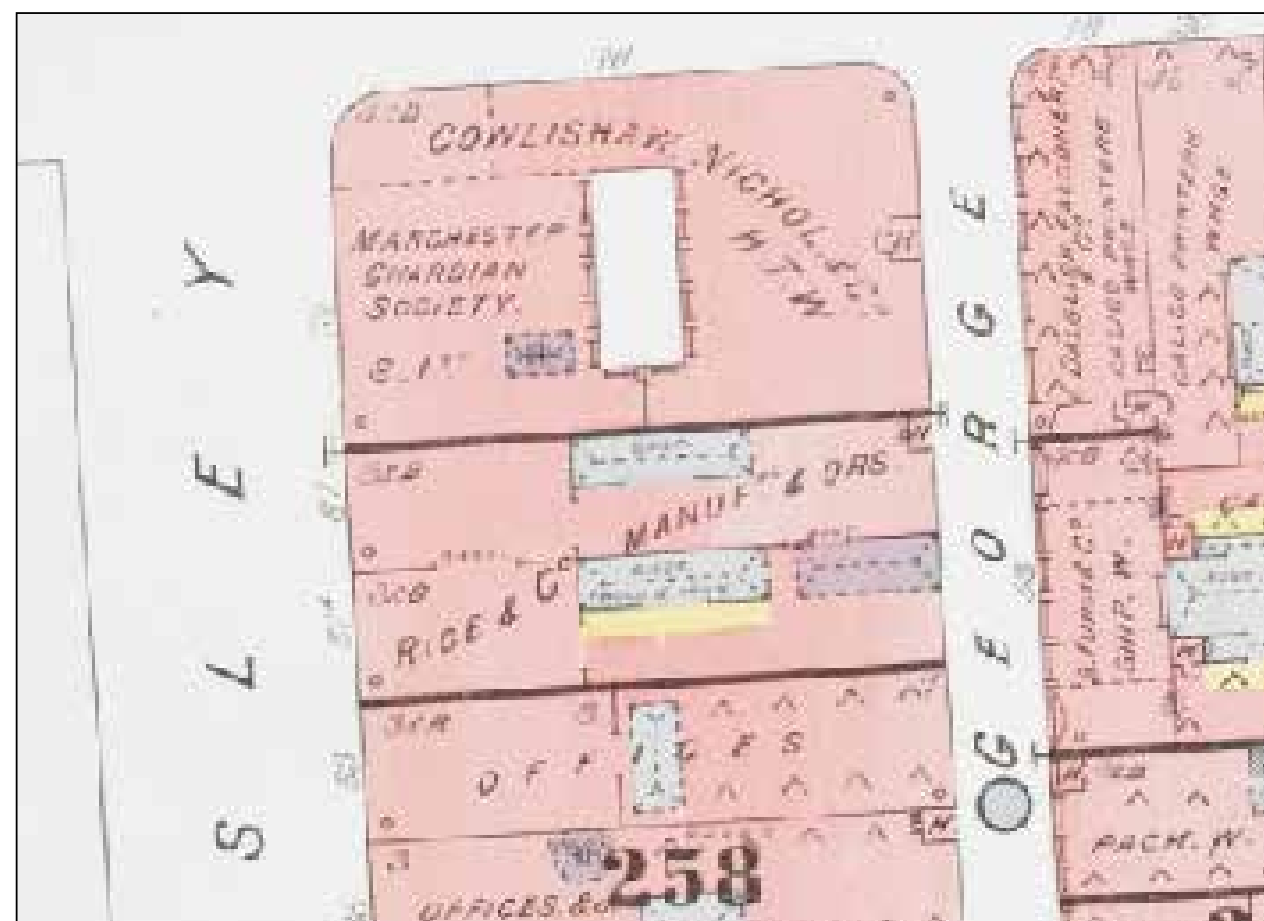


Image 6: Extract from Goads Insurance Plan, 1886.



Image 8: Photographic image from the early 1900s, showing site in a view from Princess St. Manchester Archives.



Image 7: Photograph, 1973, showing external view of Mosley St. elevation. Manchester Archives.

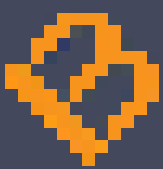


Image 9: Photograph, 1974, showing external view of Mosley Street elevation. Manchester Archives.



4.0 Significance





4.0 SIGNIFICANCE

The building has heritage significance, evidenced by its Grade II listing. It has undergone a series of changes over time, including significant loss to internal areas. This has had a negative impact upon its heritage values. This assessment reflects the current situation within the building in 2023.

The categories provided by Historic England's 'Conservation Principles, 2008' have been used to assess the significance in general terms.

Evidential: the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity. The building is an example of multi-purpose commercial premises, from 1860-1870. The interior has evidential value in its plan form, with three distinct uses (shop, office and warehouse) reflected in the different spaces and features, including changes in levels across the building. The presence of the hoist, separate entrances to serving different areas and the lightwell are evidence of past uses. The external elevations are typical of commercial architectural design from the mid-late 19th century, sharing a typology with surrounding properties. The changes made to the facilitate the building society are a good example of mid 20th century design and, along with the historic shop front, are of high evidential value. Alterations to taking-in doors to Back George Street have had a negative impact on evidential value, though the internal hoist remains (altered), and it is still possible to discern former use. Loss of interior features has had a detrimental impact upon evidential value. Overall, there is a high level of evidential value to the exterior and a lower level to the interior, with specific elements of interest.

Aesthetic: the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.

The principal elevations have good design value, built in an Italianate style with decorative features in red brick and stone detailing on well-proportioned façades. The property

is an attractive building, making a positive contribution to St Peter's Square and the George Street Conservation Area. The 1955 bank dates from a later phase, with a green granite frontage and feature square columns. It is broadly built in a typical 1930s art deco influenced style. The exterior has a high evidential value, and, despite changes, there are remaining areas of aesthetic interest internally including the columns, windows, lightwell, detailing to the bank, and the volumes of spaces.

Historical: As an example of characteristic 1860/70s architectural style using typical materials, the building has historical value. It is evidence of mixed use premises, giving an insight into the nature of commercial property of the era. Whilst the loss of elements of the interior has compromised the understanding of the historical aspects of the building to an extent, value remains in the layout and retained features, including the relationship with the main frontages to Princess and Mosley Streets and the rear, more function elevation to Back George Street.

Communal: The building makes a positive contribution to the street scape and the wider area, particularly in the context of surrounding properties from a similar period which form a group. The important location on a busy corner, close to the metrolink stops, and opposite Manchester Art Gallery and the Town Hall extension, also lends the building communal interest as it is experienced by large groups of people.

Component Elements

The plan form has value, though this has clearly been compromised by removal and alteration.

The main elements of fabric have been assessed.

i) Elevations

External elevations are of red brick and sandstone detailing to Mosley Street and Princess Street, and plainer brick elevation

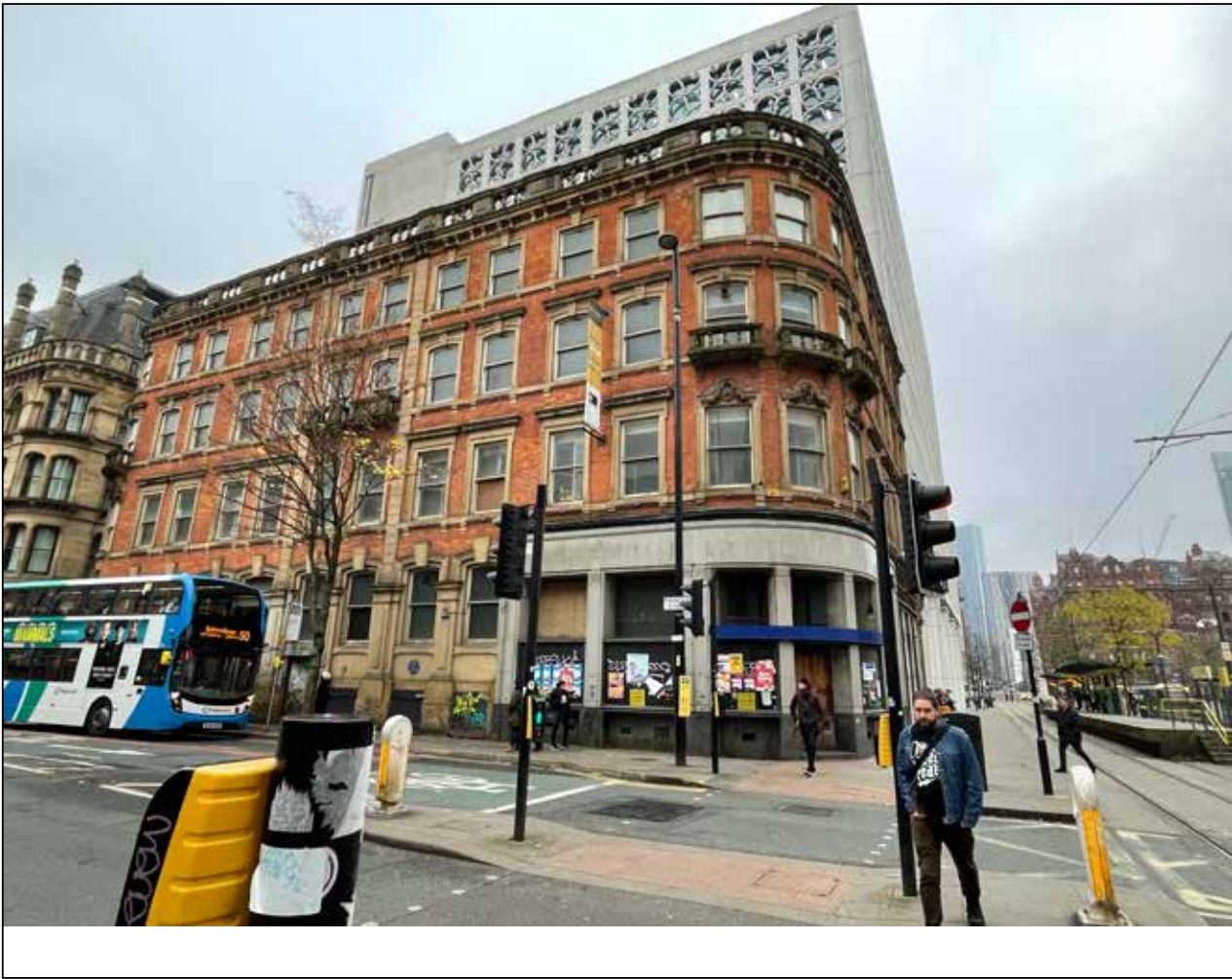
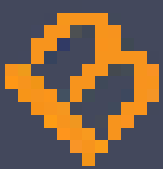


Image 10, 11: View of Princess St. elevation from outside Manchester Art Gallery (top) and detail of former hoist to Back George St. elevation (bottom).



to the rear, all sitting upon a rusticated stone plinth. The contrasting treatment of formal principal elevations and more functional rear façades is of significance. The end bays feature carved stone swag decoration to the first floor and balconies are present at second floor to end bays, central 2 bays to Princess Street and across the rounded corner. These details, along with high-level balustraded parapet, form attractive, well-proportioned elevations with decoration conveying a sense of the commercial wealth in 19th century Manchester.

Main elevations retain high significance with evidential, aesthetic, historical and communal value. The exception to this is the altered shop front to 77a, which holds no heritage value and has been partially removed to reveal a historic shop front behind (high significance). Shop signage from the late 19th century relates to the tenant, Macbeth Brothers Tailors. This has high evidential and historical significance, giving insight into the mixed-use nature of the building and is an important part of its character.

The Princess Street elevation has some over-painted stonework at street level, which detracts from the original fabric, this is also the case to Back George Street, where alterations to the brickwork and openings have also been made. Modern railings over basement windows are non-original on this elevation, as is the (secondary) reduced height door added to the right-hand side of the entrance to number 16. These elements have no heritage significance.

The 1950s bank frontage is a component part of the building, being of high quality and a good example of its age and type, and whilst it contrasts with the wider style, it serves as important evidence in the evolving use of the building.

The secondary back elevations to Back George Street are less ornate, built in a functional style almost entirely of red brick with stone sills and low-level rusticated stone, later painted black (paint is a negative addition). There are metal grilles over basement windows which appear original. Numerous alterations and infill on this facade detract from significance.

The former hoist is slightly recessed and still identifiable from outside but includes partial infill and alteration to allow for later windows. Internally, the hoist housing remains, and contributes to the historical and evidential value of the building, in terms of plan form, character, and the ability to understand how the building functioned.

A blue Royal Society of Chemistry plaque is attached to the elevation, referencing F.C. Calvert, Manchester Royal Institution Chemistry Professor, stating '1850 F. C. Calvert and Co near this site' and '1857 First commercial production of phenol, carbolic acid, used as a disinfectant in soaps and powders for making dyes.' The plaque is a late 20th century/early 21st century addition. The references are of communal and associative interest but the plaque itself is of little heritage value.

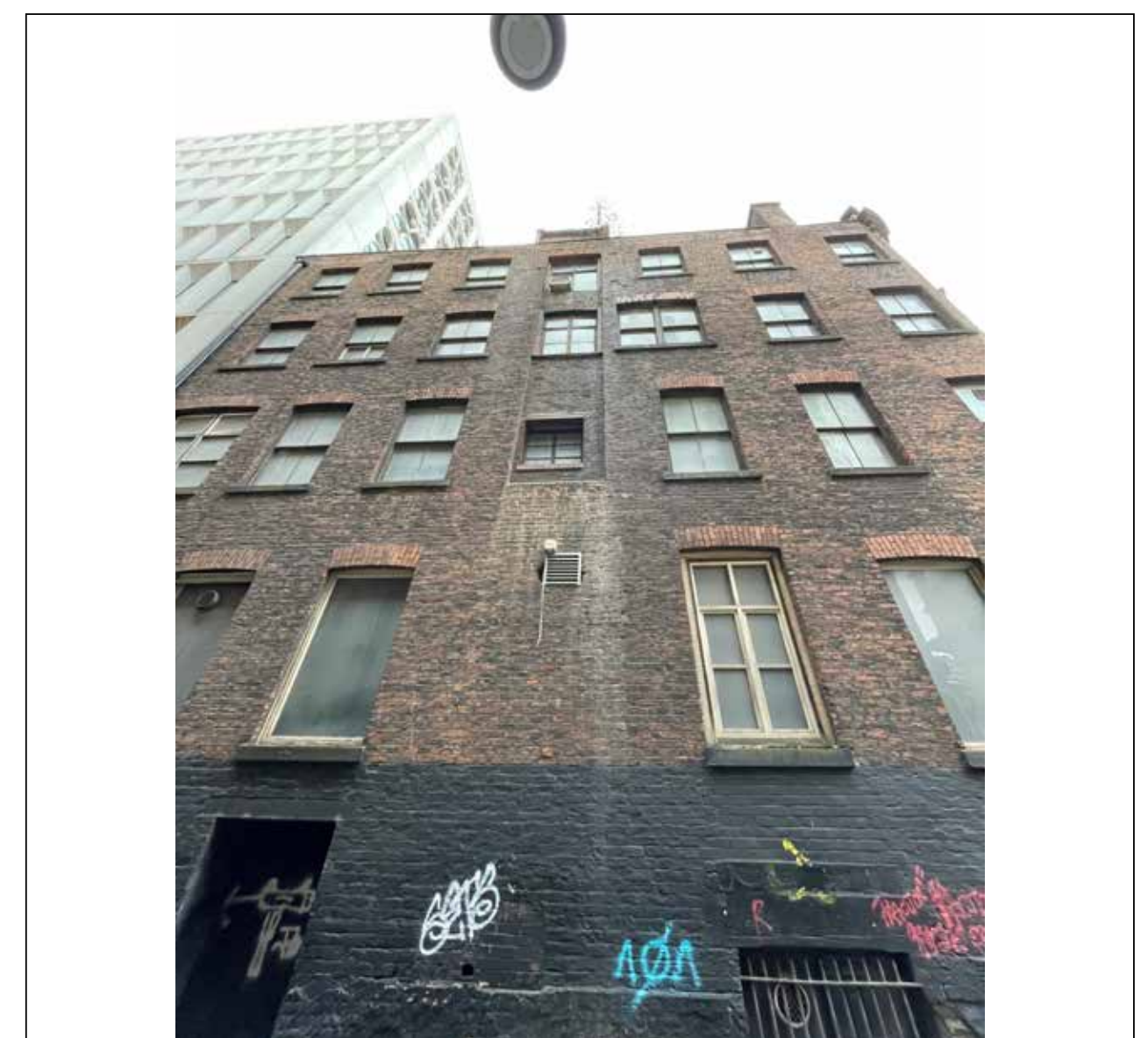
ii) Pavement Lights

Pavement lights exist around the perimeter of the building. The small section to the end of Princess Street/Back George Street end is in original form. Those to the Back George Street elevation are infilled. Those to the Mosley Street elevation are present, though are a later date. All pavement lights have historical and evidential value, though infill has had a detrimental impact upon their current significance.

iii) Windows to main elevations

The upper floors of the Princess Street and Mosley Street feature various forms of original ornate stone window surrounds, all of which are of high significance. Timber framed sliding one over one sashes are present, and some original window fixings/closers remain. Secondary glazing (later addition) is present to some upper floors. Whilst this is of some age, it is not considered to have any particular heritage value.

At ground floor, Princess Street, windows are within arched openings with central key stones. To the right of the entrance doors are one over one sashes in timber frames (of high significance). Those to the left of the doors are single pane replacements (of low significance).



Images 12,13: Top: Detail of modern inserted shop front over historic fabric, Mosley St. Bottom: Back George St. elevation.

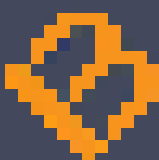


image 14: Photograph showing typical early 20th century leaded windows to lightwell.



Image 16: Photograph showing one over one sliding sash windows to Mosley/Princess St. corner, with non-original secondary glazing.

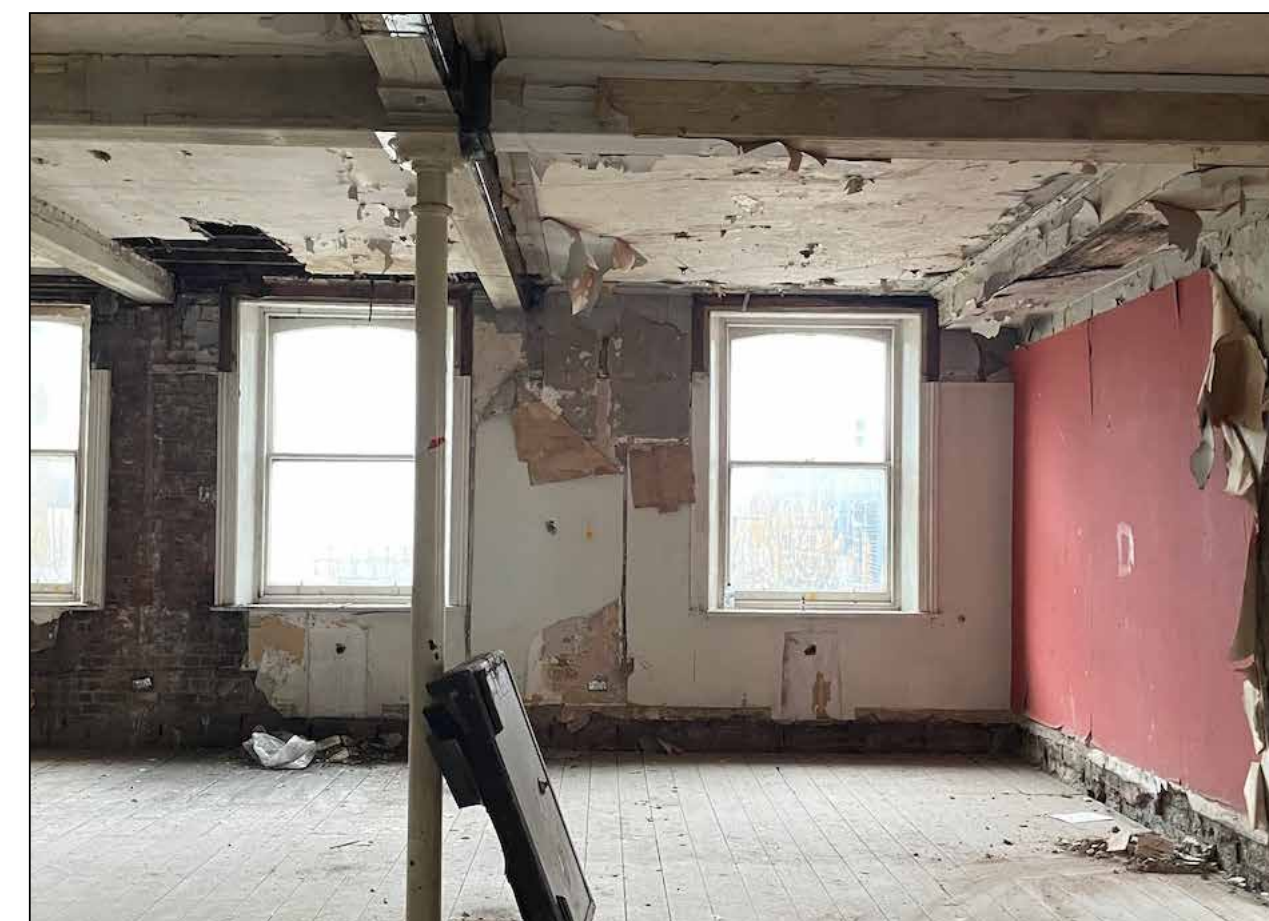


Image 18: Photograph showing typical one over one sliding sash window to Mosley St.



Image 15: Photograph to show later inserted windows to lightwell, upper floor.



Image 17: Photograph showing example of two over two sliding sash windows to lightwell, with vent hole and obscured glass (later alteration).



Image 19: Photograph showing typical upper floor one over one sliding sash window to Princess St.

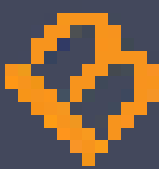


Image 20: Contemporary view of site from Mosley St, showing Manchester Art Gallery to left.



Image 22: Detail of corner of Princess St. showing basement opening and original pavement lights.



Image 24: Detail of external opening to basement (over-boarded) with railings.



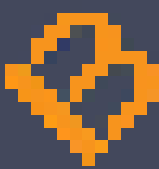
Image 21: Back George St view, towards Princess St.



Image 23: Detail on Back George Street elevation showing basement openings and over-painting to brickwork.



Image 25: Detail of pavement lights to Princess St.



Basement windows to this elevation are over-boarded but have evidence of remaining multi-paned glazing, seen internally. The end bay to Princess/Back George Street has curved frames and curved glazing which are of high significance.

Windows to the former bank are original to the alterations and housed within metal frames. These have heritage value as part of the overall 1950s scheme. Windows to 77a, former shop unit, are later replacement and of no heritage value.

Window openings to Back George Street are plainer, signifying the secondary importance of the elevation. Openings have arched tops and flat sills and are considered original in positioning retaining two over two sashes. There is apparent alteration in two instances where openings appear to have been made larger (far left bay at first floor and fourth bay at second floor). These are likely early twentieth century alterations and are of low heritage significance. The remainder of the upper floor windows are of high significance. At ground floor all windows to this elevation are later replacements with no heritage significance. Further windows have been inserted into the hoist run, replacing taking-in doors at first, second and third levels. These are of no heritage significance and have a negative impact upon the reading of the building.

iv) Entrances

To the ground floor there are several original entrances, all of high significance.

The Princess Street elevation features double doors accessed via steps. There is a decorative door surround, in restrained classical form.

A secondary entrance has been added to this elevation to the right-hand side of the original, accessing the former barbers. This is a later change, is of no heritage significance and detracts from the aesthetic qualities of the elevation.



Image 26: Princess St. elevation with Back George St to left.

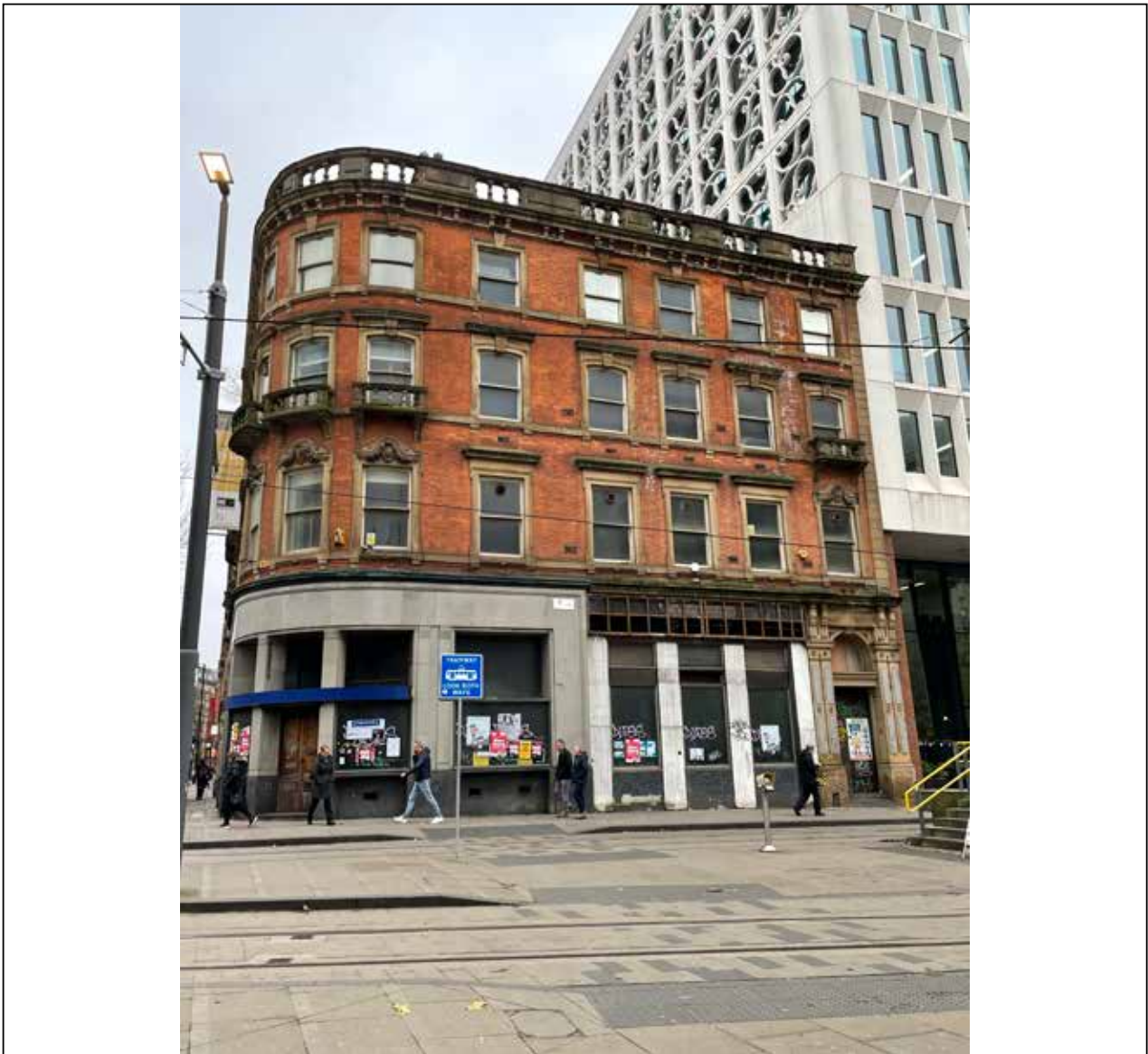


Image 27: Elevations to Mosley St. showing former building society and historic shop frontage, partially hidden beneath modern cladding.



Image 28: Detail of corner of Princess/Back George St. with original rounded windows and later flat replacement versions.



Image 29: Detail of mid-1950s frontage to former building society.

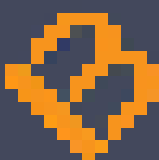


Image 30: Detail of later inserted doorway on Princess St. elevation.



Image 32: Detail of former building society entrance, 77 Mosley St. with signage band.



Image 34: Detail of entrance to offices at 79 Mosley Street.



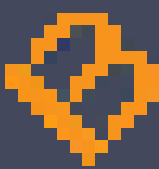
Image 31: Detail of entrance doorway to Princess St. elevation.



Image 33: View along Back George St. showing doors.



Image 35: Detail of stone decoration and brick elevations to curved Mosley St. corner, showing balconies, windows, and roof level detail.



The building society corner entrance is part of the later alteration and is an example of Art Deco influenced style. Corner entrances are typical of Manchester architecture, and this attractive rounded example is a noteworthy feature. The doors are flanked by granite pilasters with marble to the lower stall risers. This entrance is considered to be of high significance with the exception of the wider horizontal signage band, which has been added later and interrupts the original design.

The Mosley Street elevation features an ornate entrance to the far right, with double doors, stepped threshold and highly decorative surround in stone. The entrance is emphasised by the more detailed swag stonework to the window above. This entrance is the most highly decorated and is of high heritage value.

To the rear there are three sets of double doors on to the street. These do not fit the symmetry of the elevation and it is unclear at what date they were added. They are of negligible heritage significance. Modern doors are of no heritage significance.

v) Internal upper floors
Internally the two distinct areas of office (Princess Street end) and warehousing (Mosley Street end) are still clearly discernible on floors 1-3, and the different architectural treatment of the two spaces has evidential and historical significance. They are linked by a narrower corridor space to the 2 St Peter’s Square end of the building.

Cast iron columns are present in several areas throughout the floors, and a particularly tight grid pattern is present in the former warehouse. Columns differ in size and form slightly, reflecting former loadings, but are of high heritage significance throughout, as is exposed timber roof structure. Ceilings appear to be lath and plaster and are of high significance for their historic and evidential value. There is a partial fourth floor which contains the lift motor room, accessed via a steep set of timber stairs. It has a



Image 36: View of warehouse side of building with columns and former hoist visible.



Image 38: An example of modern finishes to typical bathroom/kitchen spaces and altered window to lightwell.

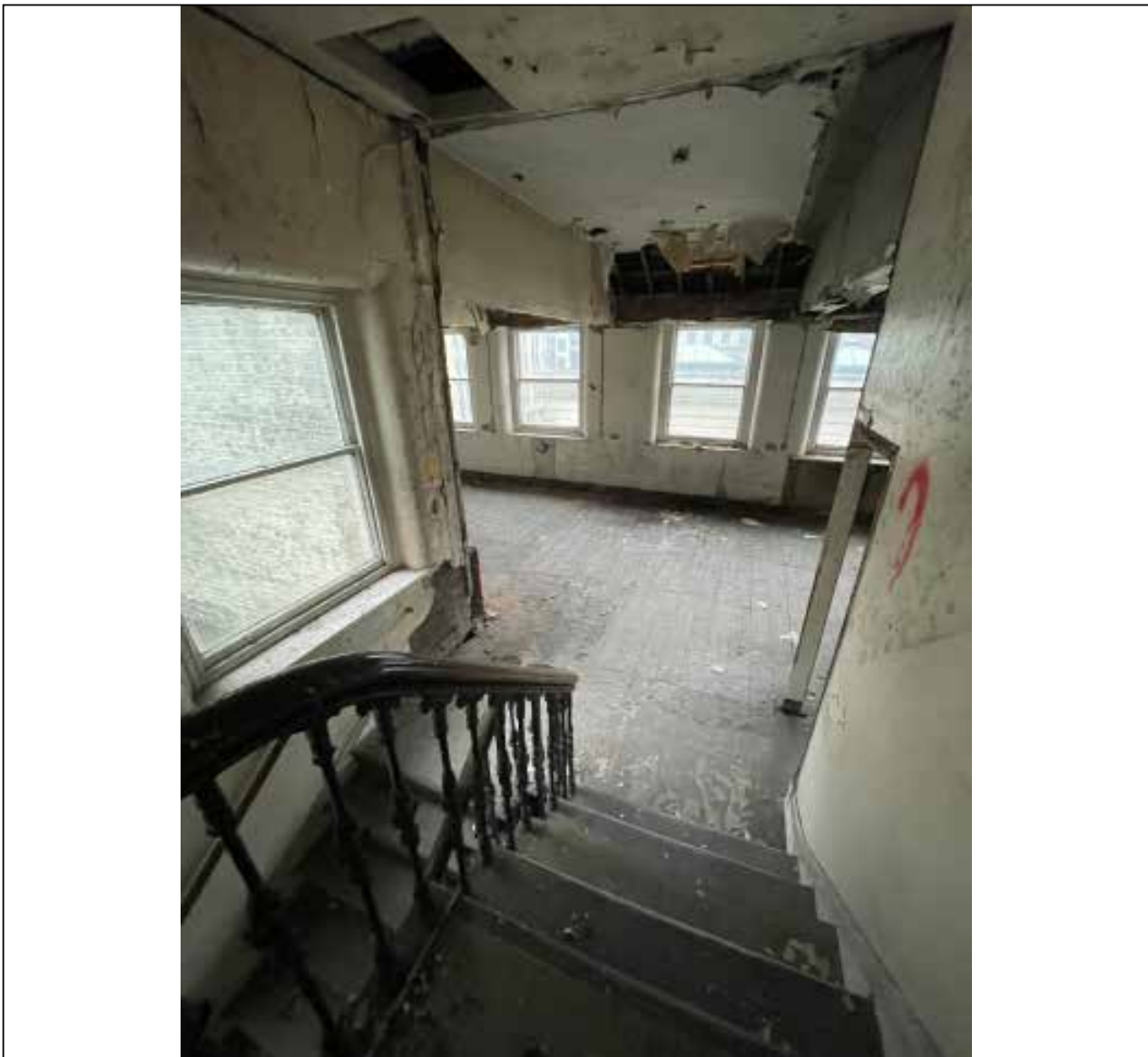


Image 37: View of warehouse staircase, windows to lightwell and longer space to Princess St. side.

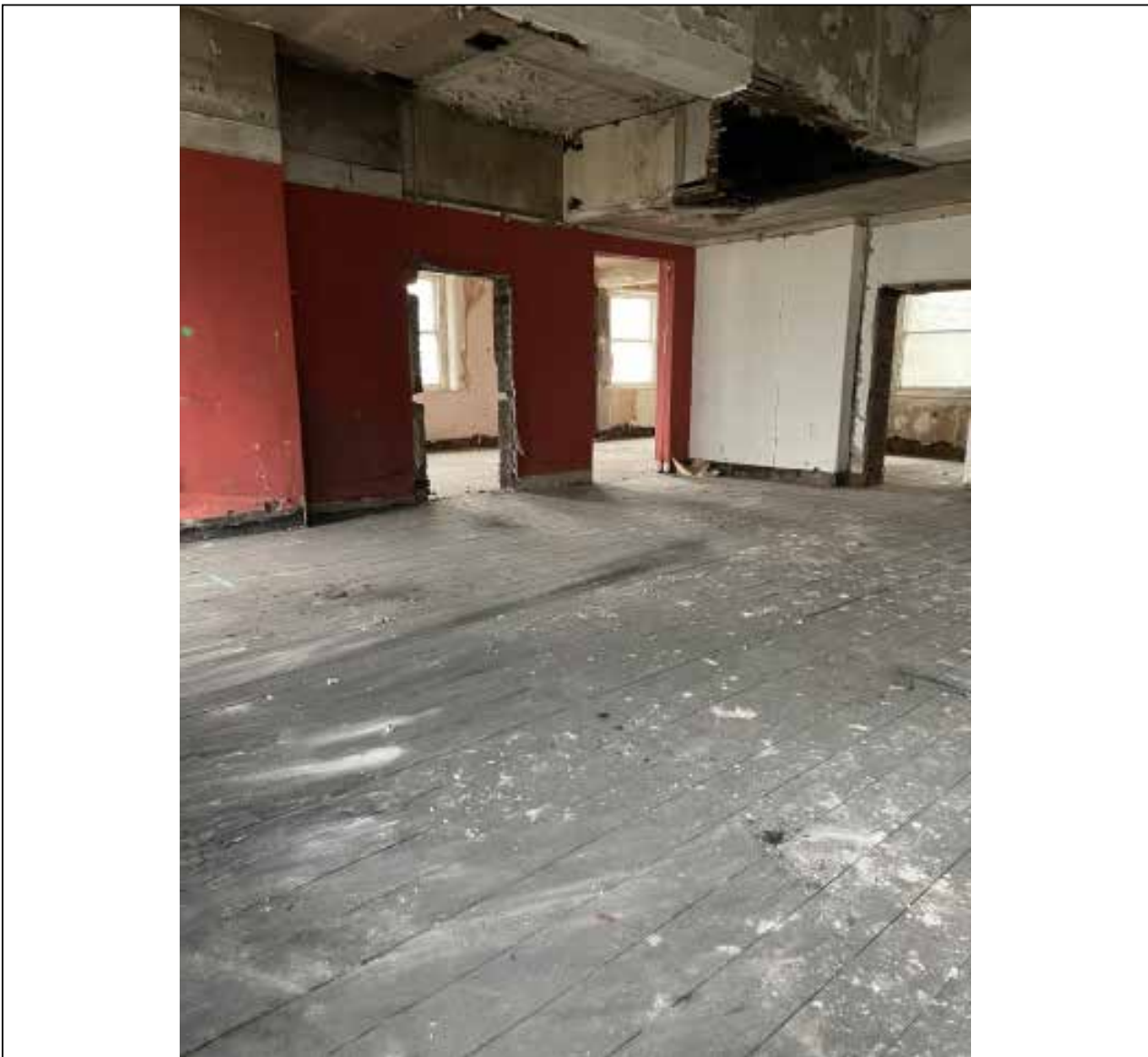
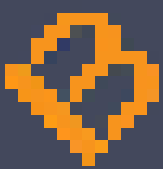


Image 39: View of third floor, dividing wall to office side and Princess St. side (altered openings).



timber framed roof with glazed roof light, meshed to the inner side. This form is evident on the Goads plan of 1880s and is considered original, though likely altered, and has a moderate/high level of significance.

At third floor, a partial mezzanine level is served by original cast iron spindled stair. It is assumed this led to a structure which allowed roof access, but now terminates in a WC. As part of the plan form, there is a moderate degree of significance. Modern added WC facilities are of no heritage value and are present in various locations including to the top of the staircase at third floor, where the higher-level space is of historical significance, but the fittings are not.

Walls are painted plaster, which is considered typical of this type of warehouse. Where cornicing exists (more extensively to the first floor; around staircases; and within sub-offices) it is of high significance, though it is limited in general extent and has been damaged/lost in places. Fireplace openings remain in places, but surrounds are missing. Floors are timber boards on timber joists. These are original throughout and of high significance as original fabric and evidence of original design. A timber and glass dividing screen is present to third floor office area and is of historical value, though it is uncertain if it is original. Kitchen facilities are modern low-quality additions and have no heritage significance. An arched top doorway at first floor level is non-original and of no heritage value.

Internal walls with openings are found in the office accommodation side of the building. These are of moderate value but have been altered in several places.

vi) Ground Floor

The ground floor has a greater degree of subdivision than the upper floors, reflecting the retail use. There are numerous staircases linking change of floor levels within the spaces. The floor level changes are most evident between the former bank at 77 Mosley Street and the remainder of the space. This is due to lowered basement ceilings in this area and as an original feature of the design has significance.



Image 40: Interior corridor space to rear of lightwell, linking office and warehouse sides, with lift and stairs to left.



Image 41: View within former shop unit, ground floor.



Image 42: View of tight column grid to warehouse space and former hoist to back wall.



Image 43: Former office access showing existing lift with original staircase running around (altered in places).

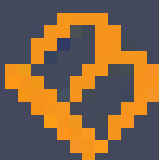


Image 44: Photograph showing basement columns and blocked windows.



ilmage 46: Photograph showing upper Princess St. section of building with original floorboards.



Image 48: Photograph showing housing for former hoist, damaged and with non-original opening inserted.



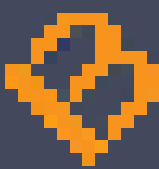
Image 45: First floor windows and columns with exposed heads.



Image 47: First floor example of cornicing to ceiling.



Image 49: First floor, damaged cornicing and evidence of lath and plaster finishes.



77 Mosley Street (later former bank) has a large room of significant height (approx.4.5m), accessed via the entrance on the rounded corner (now blocked), with steps up to a further room to the Princess Street mid-section. The former bank room has plaster ceilings as part of the 1950s refurbishment, with heavy cornicing, dentilled features, and swirling decoration over beams. These are of good quality and have a high heritage value along with the columns (heads hidden). Windows have been blocked and boarded at a later date. There is a high value to the openings though later infill has no heritage value.

77a, has few features but the columns and walls are of value, as is the existing ceiling. The stairs are later additions and have no significance. The former opening between the two units has been reinstated.

79 is the former shop unit and retains a lath and plaster decorative ceiling with ceiling panelling and plaster mouldings (column capitals exposed). This is plainer than the 1950s bank decoration and dates from the period of the Macbeth Brothers tenancy (1880/90s). It is badly damaged in parts but is of high heritage significance. Behind the main shop space is a secondary room facing the lightwell. This has more decorative window surrounds and plaster cornicing which are of medium/high heritage significance.

vii) Basement

The basement has significance as an integral, but distinct, element of the building. Cast iron columns are present, sitting on sandstone and brick (columns are of high significance). Low level brick sleeper walls are evident throughout. Windows visible at street level would have provided light and openings have a high level of significance (some remain blocked/over-boarded and cannot be easily accessed to assess whether glass and frames are original).

viii) Lightwell

The lightwell runs full height within the centre of the building, with brick walls painted white to reflect light. There are 5 openings to each side and 2 windows to one end, acting



Image 50: Blocked up openings to ground floor unit along Princess St.



Image 52: Blocked up windows to lightwell on ground floor.

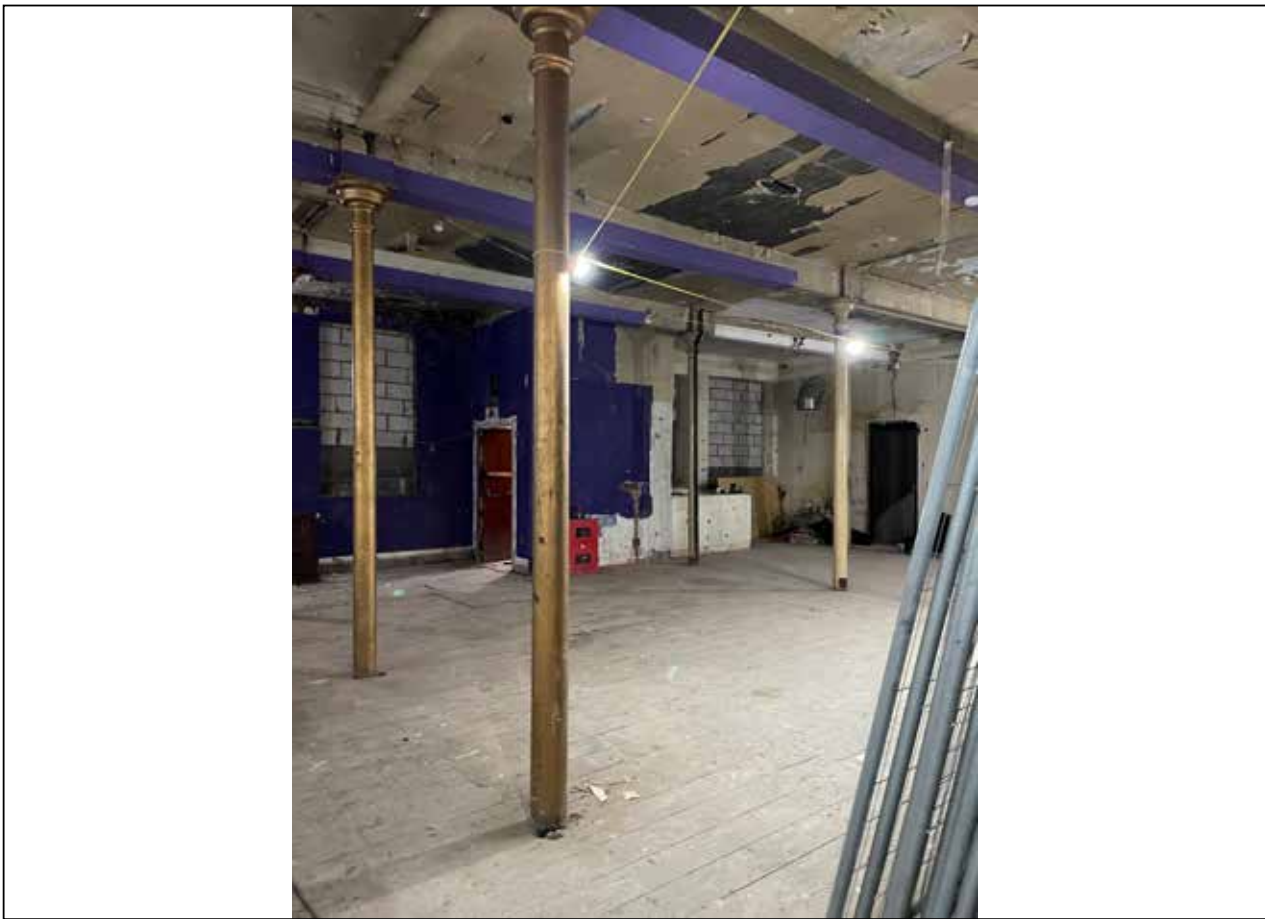


Image 51: Columns within the ground floor space, warehouse side, with blocked Princess St facing openings.

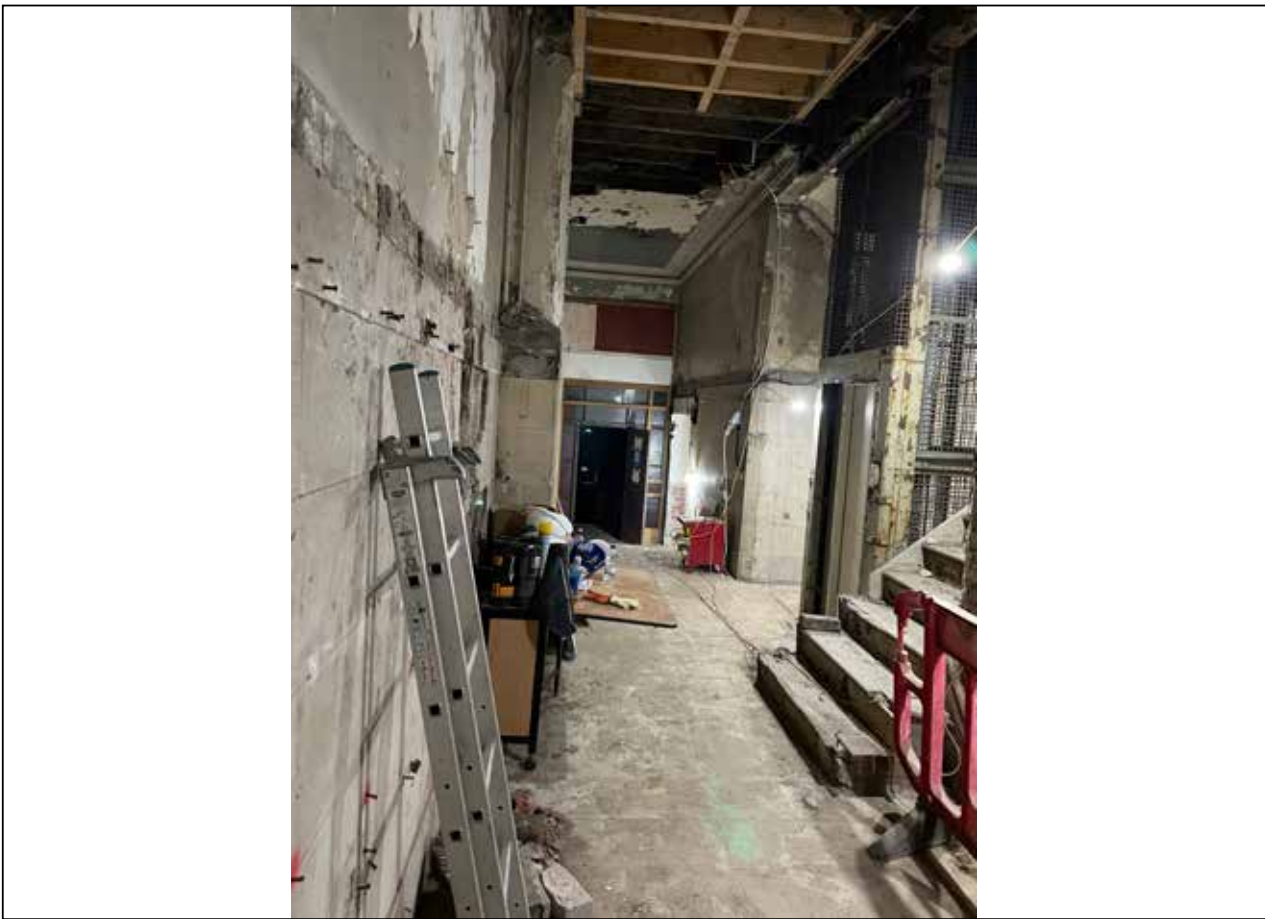
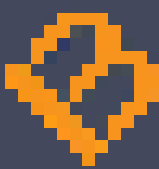


Image 53: View of ground floor staircase and lift, previously serving offices.



as a source of natural light for those areas without access to external elevations. As a characteristic design feature in warehousing from this period, the lightwell has both evidential and historical value. It is of high significance as an integral part of the plan form. The ground level to the lightwell appears to be concrete, in poor condition. An overhanging projecting window at second floor is a later poor-quality alteration with little heritage significance. Windows overlooking the lightwell are a mix of likely original sashes (one over one, high significance), early 20th century leaded additions (of medium heritage significance) and later, poor-quality replacement (no heritage significance). At basement level, access doors are over-boarded. Large diameter venting pipes run up the height of the lightwell to the roof level and at low level, extraction units are visible to some walls. These are modern, unsympathetic additions and detract from the space.

ix) Vertical circulation

Of the two original main staircases, one served the offices and the other served the warehouse spaces. The principal office staircase would have been that off Mosley Street, now running around the later added lift shaft. It is plain in form, constructed of timber with no added decoration and some alteration. The surrounding walls are plastered and painted, with cornice and skirting. Despite its functional form, it retains a high significance as evidence of original layout and circulation.

The more decorative stair is that to the warehouse, located next to the lightwell. In the staircase area, windows are replacement leaded sliding sashes, likely to date from the early decades of the 1900s. The staircase is constructed from timber with decorative cast iron spindles, with a limited number of cruder timber replacements. It features an original, long, sweeping handrail of polished timber, has carved stringers and is of high heritage value.

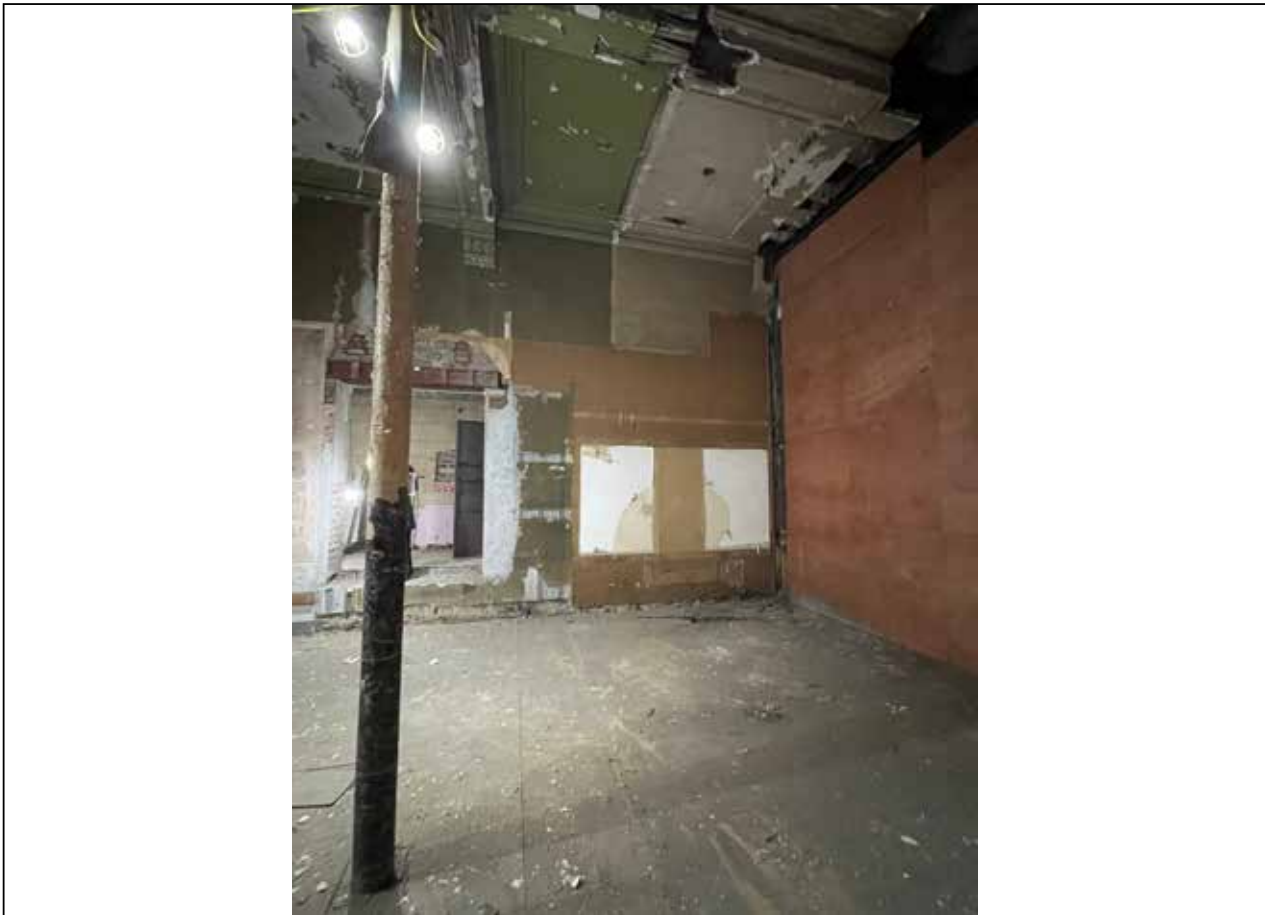


Image 54: Ground floor, 77 Mosley St. former tailors shop.



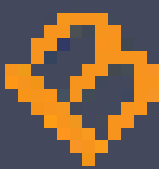
Image 56: Detail of original timber staircase to ground floor, former office side.



Image 55: Detail of lightwell window with early 20th century glazing, ground floor.



Image 57: Evidence of lath and plaster to ground floor ceiling.



The surrounding wall has skirting and cornicing in areas. Enclosing lath and plaster original walls are present. The location of the staircases as part of the plan form has significance and their positioning is significant.

The vertical means of moving goods was via the hoist, opening out at upper levels to Back George Street. External doors have been replaced with more modern windows and part infill (no heritage significance). The recessed elevational brickwork to this vertical run is still evident and despite the alterations, the feature is highly significant evidentially and historically. The internal hoist walls have been altered in place, but are present to each floor and are in plastered masonry. Original internal fire doors to hoist are missing. The internal evidence of the hoist is of high significance.

The rear, warehousing, space has few features. Those of value are the columns and the hoist, along with the various internal steps and stairs (to basement and to entrance). The bulkheads over basement steps are plain timber and functional in form with limited heritage significance.

x) Internal Steps and Entrance Areas
The main entrance on Mosley Street served the office areas. It has been altered internally with a marble type cladding and terrazzo floor added (1930-1950s). The entrance is highly significant, but the altered fabric is of lower heritage value.



Image 58: Detail of ground floor office stair and further steps (background).



Image 60: View of tall space to ground floor, former shop section.

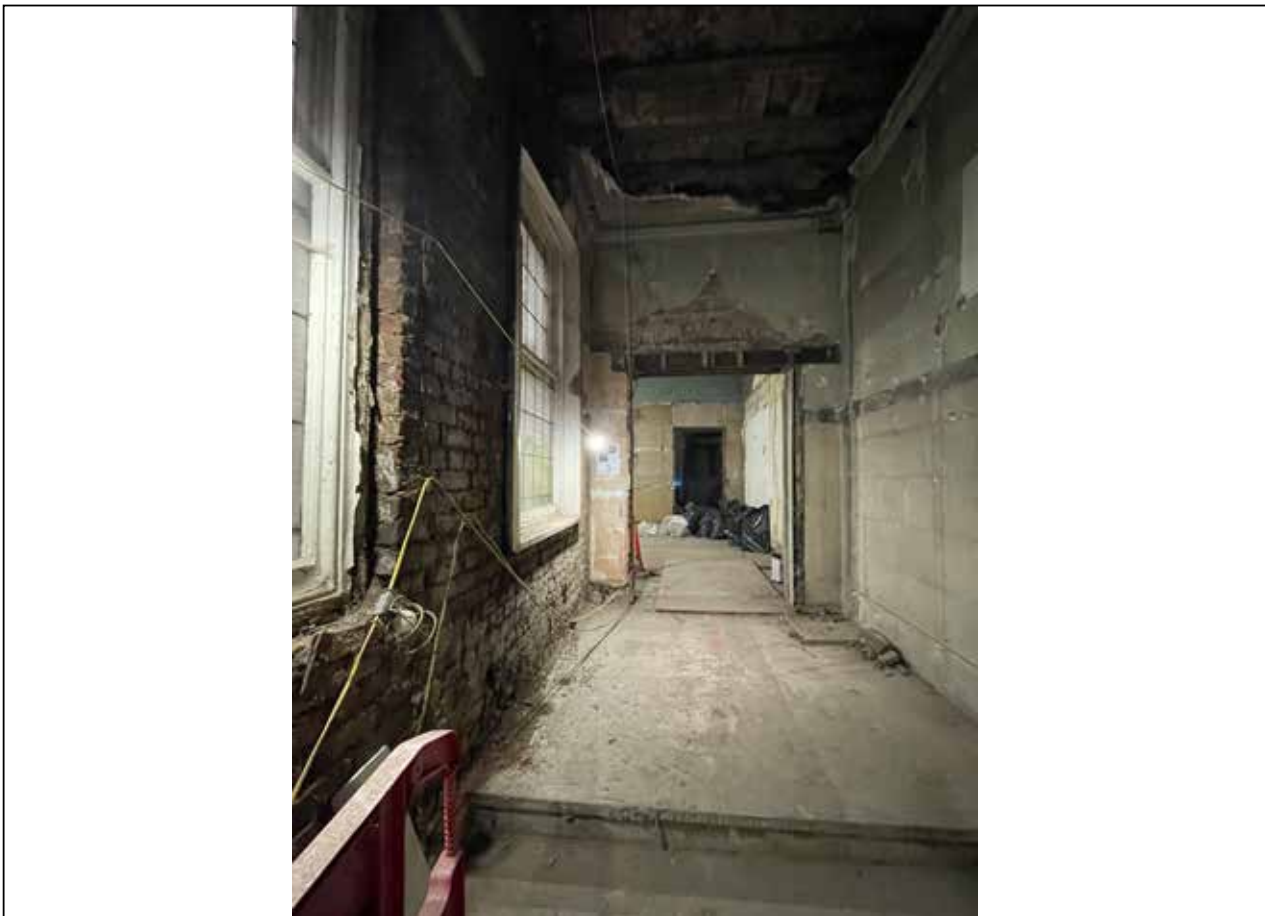


Image 59: View of lightwell to left, and link from Mosley St. side to Back George St. side.

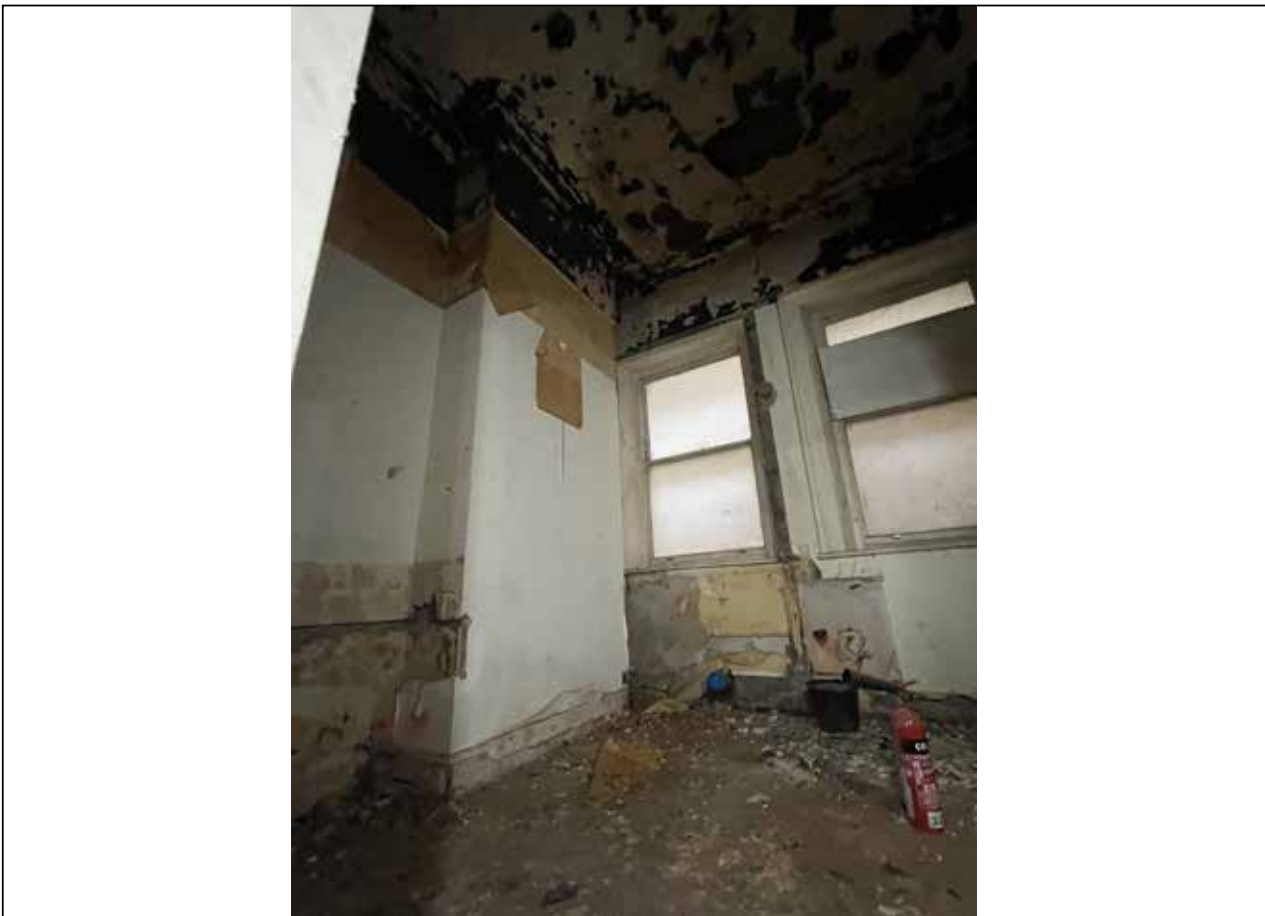
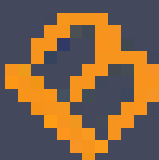


Image 61: Interior of sub-office to former building society, overlooking lightwell, with chimney breast to left hand side.



Within the ground floor there are two runs of steps on the route between the doors at 79 Mosley Street and the bottom of the cast iron staircase. Additional steps are behind the Princess Street entrance. Steps link the former bank to the room behind to the centre of the Princess Street facing elevation. All these stairs are of heritage significance being original in their placement, though those to 79 have been altered.

There are flights of stairs to the Back George Street doors, one from the far end double doors which link to the ground floor and steps over the hoist area, the bottom of which have been lost. Those from the end double doors on Back George Street appear to be a later insertion and are of low heritage value.

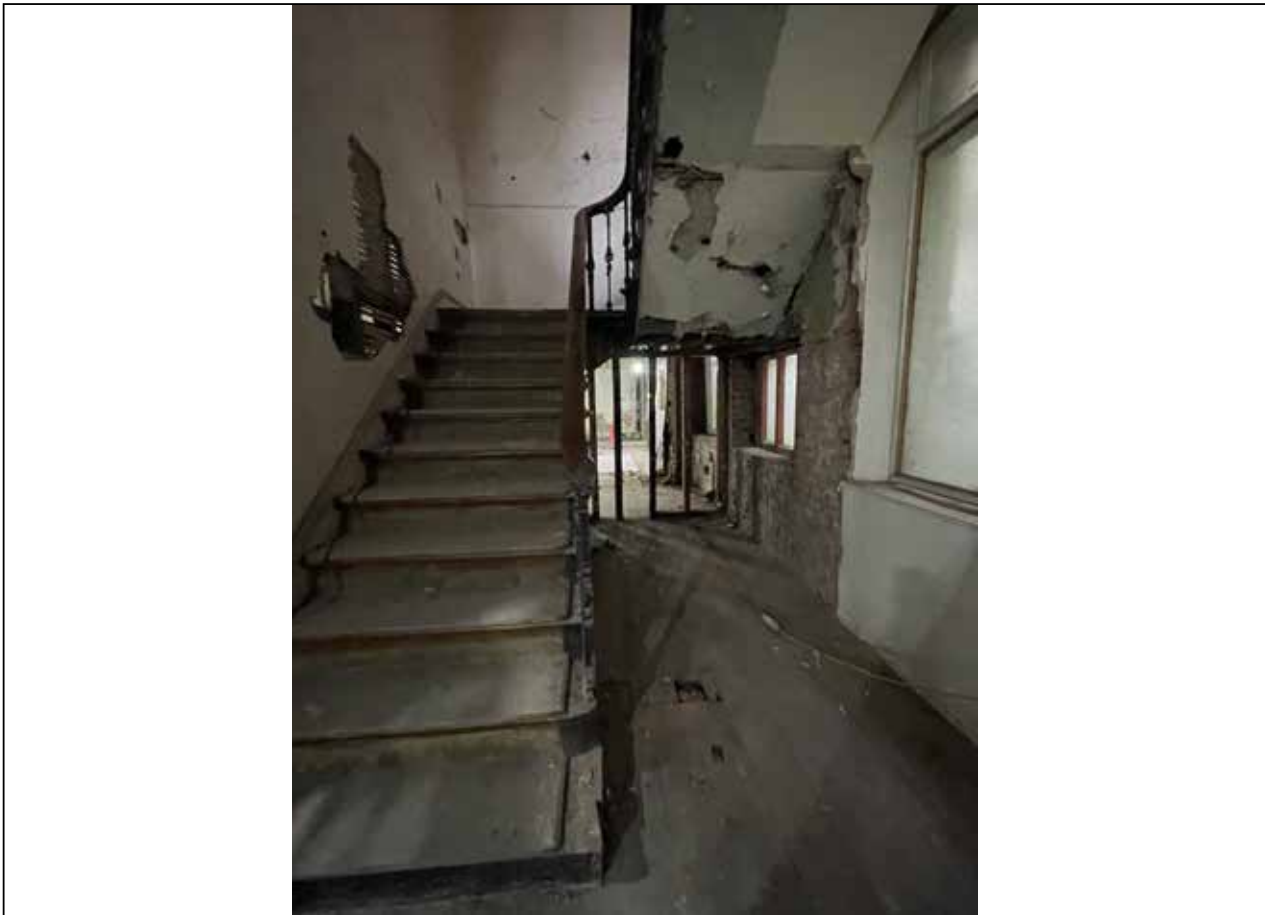


Image 62: Ground floor, warehouse staircase with sweeping handrail.



Image 64: Detail of ceiling cornice around lift and office stairs.

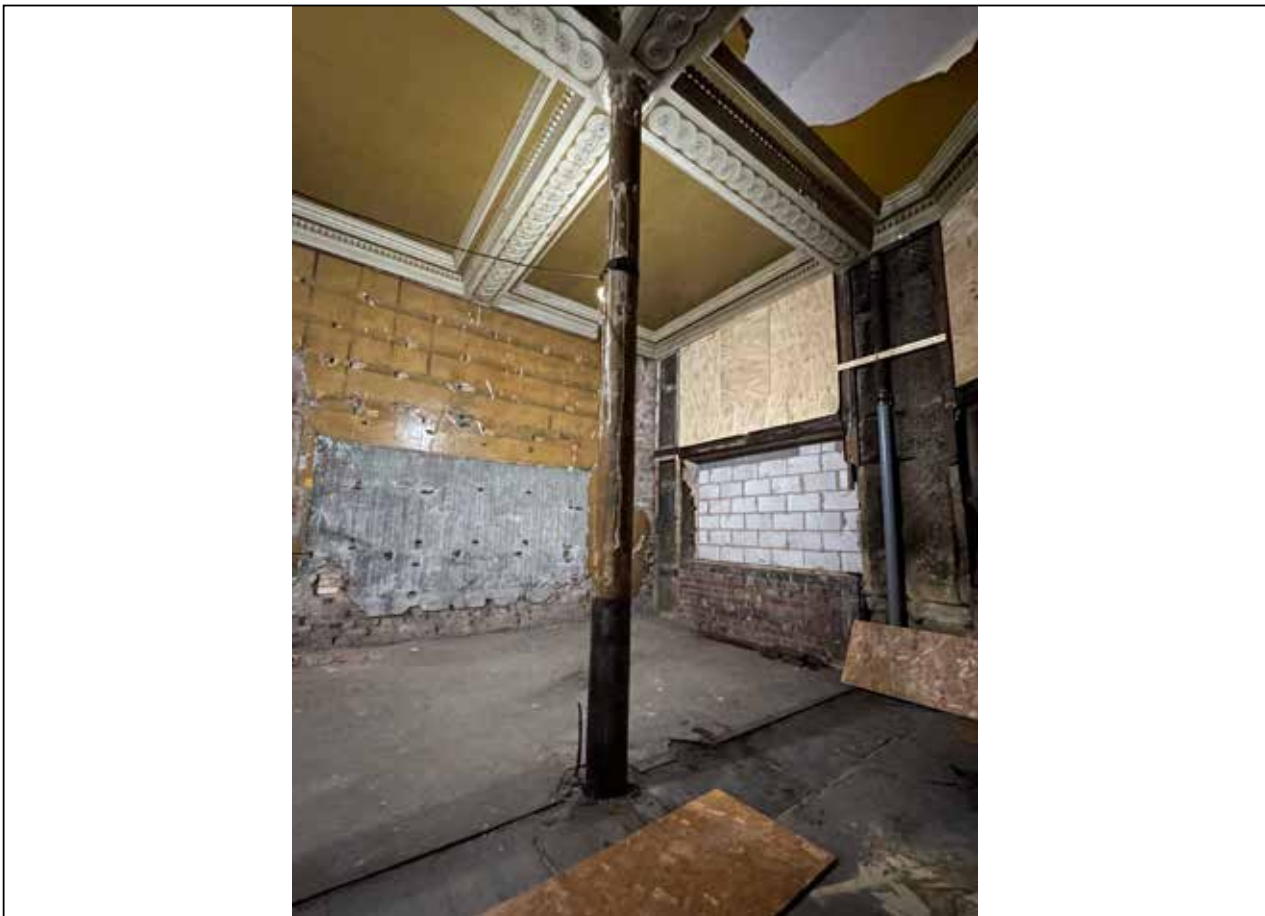


Image 63: Former building society premises with decorative ceiling.

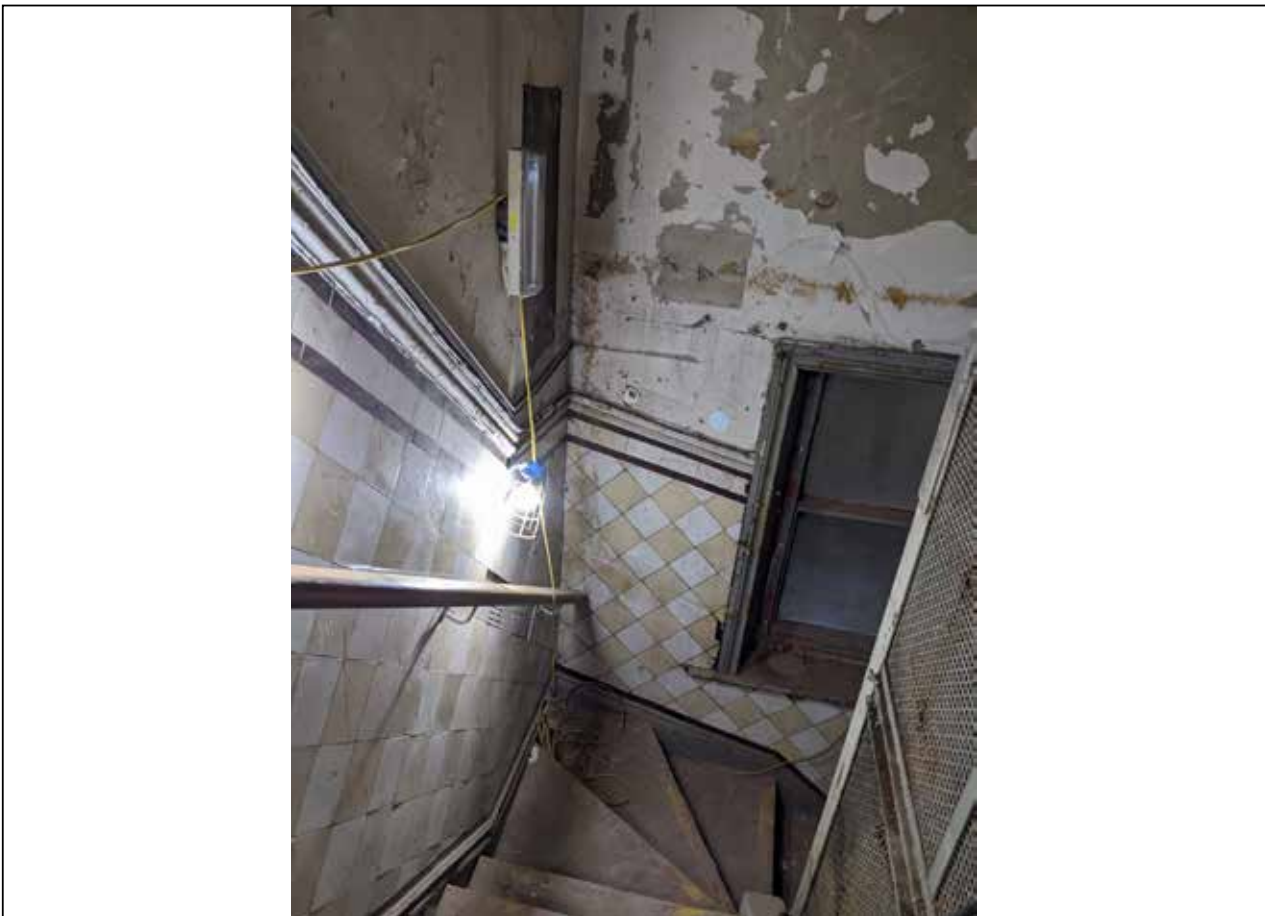


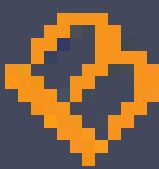
Image 65: Detail of primary stair (office) to basement.



City of
Portland

5.0 Proposals and Impact





5.0 PROPOSALS AND IMPACT

79 Mosley Street sits within George Street Conservation Area, which is primarily an area of commercial buildings, with several Italianate warehouses. The MCC appraisal of the area states the desire to see it prosper and notes that the continued use of existing buildings will ensure they do not fall into disrepair.

Proposals are designed to serve the refurbishment of the existing building as office space to the first, second and third floors and food/drink use at ground floor and basement.

External elevations, upper floors

Princess Street and Mosley Street elevations to have like for like repairs, where required. Later added paint will be cleaned from low level stone.

Impact: Moderate, positive enhancement of fabric of high significance.

All upper floor windows (floors 1-3) to Mosley Street and Princess Street to be retained and refurbished where necessary, with original design of one over one timber framed sashes retained.

Impact: Moderate, positive enhancement of fabric of high significance.

External elevations, Ground floor

Modern shop front at 77a Mosley Street to be removed and historic timber framed frontage behind revealed, retained, and repaired (former Macbeth Tailors). Stone signage within this frontage to be revealed and retained.

Impact: Major, positive by re-exposing fabric of high significance.

Former building society frontage retained and glazing to be revealed and reinstated where necessary.

Impact: Major, positive enhancement of fabric of high significance.



Image 66: Historic shop front to be revealed to former tailors shop on Mosley St.



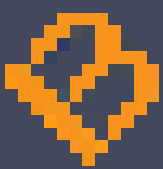
Image 68: Front step to 77 Mosley St. to be replaced with ramp.



Image 67: Photograph showing existing street scape with boarded windows, over-painted stone and graffiti.



Image 69: Photograph of Back George St. showing existing street scape.



Later addition sign band to be carefully removed from building society entrance.

Impact: Moderate, positive. Removal of adverse feature.

Existing low step to former bank at no. 77 to be removed and replaced with new ramp in granite (colour to match existing) to allow for level access.

Impact: Minor adverse. Impact of loss of fabric of medium significance outweighed by public benefit of providing level access to unit. Matching materials will ensure minimal visual change.

Later entrance to basement barbers on Princess Street to be retained and door replaced with high quality replacement in suitable style.

Impact: Minor enhancement to existing situation.

Princess Street basement windows to be re-exposed and glass reinstated or repaired where possible.

Impact: Moderate, positive- reinstatement of high significance feature.

Non-original entrance to corner Back George/Princess Streets to be retained and new door fitted, in more appropriate form.

Impact: Minor, positive.

Back George Street

Non-original windows inserted within former hoist run at floors 3, 2 and 1 to be removed. Openings returned to likely original dimensions and fully glazed within new slim steel frames.

Impact: Major, positive. Removal of inappropriate, adverse additions. Plain glass and metal frames will reinstate the sense of void within the former hoist openings and enable the former vertical run to be identified from both interior and exterior. There is an additional benefit of increased daylight from the overshadowed Back George Street elevation. The use of modern design is clearly identifiable as contemporary and sympathetic to the overall elevation. This is a substantial

improvement on the existing situation and allows for enhancement of heritage values.

To first floor, non-original windows will be carefully removed and two over two timber framed sashes will be inserted within existing openings, in a return to historic form.

Impact: Moderate, positive, removing adverse alterations, reinstatement of historic form, improving character and appreciation of the asset.

To the far left-hand bay, non-original door to be replaced with steel panelled, dark-coloured, new door.

Impact: Neutral

The third bay from the left has an altered door, to be removed and replaced with slim steel frame window to match those The second bay has a low opening with lintel. It is considered likely to be historic but not necessarily original. In order to create an access route for bins, the opening will be made taller by removal of limited area of brick work, a new steel lintel will be fitted, referencing the industrial nature of this façade, and a new steel door to match that at bay two will be fitted.

Impact: Minor, adverse. The loss of limited historic fabric is justified on the basis that it is not of high significance and the resulting neater elevation is an enhancement to the existing situation. This is a necessary route for bins, avoiding the need for intervention in the more significant primary elevations.

Poorly matched inserted brickwork to Princess Street end of elevation to be replaced with more appropriate matching.

Impact: Minor, positive, enhancing condition of the elevation.

Interior

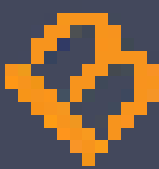
Basement

Chimney breast to be removed to right-hand side of plan, central room. This is historic fabric, with some significance in terms of plan form, though has no particular features.

Impact: Minor, adverse. Removing this feature will have a limited impact upon the significance of the whole.



Image 70: Photograph along Back George St.



Ground floor

A small section of floor to be removed from internal space behind Back George Street elevation, to allow for installation of lift for bins (linking ground floor and basement).

Impact: Minor adverse. The floor is historic fabric, with no specific features. Its significance in isolation is limited and its removal will not result in substantial harm. The low adverse impact is considered to be outweighed by the need to create a route for bins if the building is to be brought back in to use.

Lightwell

Lightwell to be floored over at ground floor, to match level of Back George Street portion of building, with framed glass roof fitted over at first floor level. Lightwell space linked to internal unit at ground floor, with opening through existing windows, by removal of brickwork and cill. A larger opening to be created to the Princess Street end of lightwell.

Impact: Moderate, adverse. The nature of the lightwell will be compromised to a limited degree with the insertion of a solid floor. A limited number of windows will be lost by conversion to openings. A portion of windows and wall will be replaced with a larger opening.

Justification: It has been maintained that the resulting additional floor area is necessary in order to ensure viability, after prolonged vacancy. The possibility of utilising the lightwell was raised by Historic England in their response to the previous application. Flooring over at this level has the benefit of creating a secure bike store to the basement. The two side doorways will retain the memory of the windows in their openings and the larger opening will retain existing wall to either side. Openings are necessary to access the ground floor space.

Mitigation: In mitigation, the solid floor has been limited to the ground floor only and the wider characteristics of space and light are maintained to the upper parts. The use of a glazed roof will ensure the views upwards remain and that the ground floor continues to benefit from natural light.

Entrances

Internal floor levels vary within the ground floor. In order to create level access from Mosley Street, and to allow for an adequately sized reception area, 2 no. steps will be removed to the main doors at 79 Mosley Street and the door lowered, with matching infill panel fitted above, retaining frame, and reinstating glazed panel in upper section. This is the treatment previously approved in the last application and is considered to be the least harmful way to provide the necessary access, as a ramp is not feasible within the limited space. Harm is considered to be less than substantial and, on balance, is outweighed by the pressing need to return the space to viable ongoing use. The mitigation measures have limited harm as far as possible.

Internally, behind no. 79 entrance, the existing and altered steps will be rationalised. Existing steps will be removed, and a single flight inserted at a pulled back position within the entrance space. The reception area will be created by inserting a new portion of floor, running at the same level as that existing from the Back George Street portion of the building and allowing for a level route to the main lifts. A platform lift will give access for non-stair users.

Impact: Minor, adverse. This change represents an alteration to the historic form, removing a limited amount of historic fabric. The steps are part of the plan form, but those closest to the door have already been altered previously. Key elements of the external doorway are retained.

Justification: Required to provide level access and maintain use of this key, original Mosley Street entrance. Will remove a small portion of fabric.

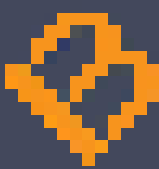
Mitigation: The proposal has been designed to balance the need for level access against the provision of a reception area and access to new lifts, whilst avoiding clashes between windows and floors. The characteristic height of the entrance space is retained to the front section by the use of the platform lift.



Image 71: Interior view of basement, with chimney breast to left hand side.



Image 72: Internal view of lightwell.



Internally, to allow for the lift, a dividing wall will be inserted to bring the right-hand bay of the historic shop front into the no. 79 entrance space.

Impact: Minor, adverse. This is an alteration to the original form.

Justification: The new wall will not easily be discernible from the exterior and its insertion gives the benefit of the aforementioned level access, whilst avoiding clashes between new internal additions and windows on Mosley Street. The less than substantial harm is considered justified by the benefit of increased access, and will retain usable and distinct entrances to numbers 79 and 77a.

Steps behind the entrance of 16 Princess Street to be removed to create level access. New steps in alternate position and access lift to be inserted at a position set back from entrance.

Impact: Minor, adverse. Steps have significance as part of the original historic fabric and plan form.

Justification: As level access cannot be provided to the unit in any other location, the loss is considered to be unavoidable and to have a greater public benefit.

To 16 Princess Street, level access will be created by removal of steps and lowering of threshold. Internally, new steps parallel to the elevation will be inserted, and a new platform lift.

Impact: Minor, adverse. Loss of floor for new lift and minor alteration of levels to create access.

Justification: As level access can not be created by other means, the loss is considered necessary to achieve greater benefit.

New stair linking ground floor and basement to be inserted in front unit. Involves loss of portion of floor.

Impact: Minor, adverse. Considered necessary to create link between ground and basement within unit to ensure viability.

New internal window added to dividing wall to front unit.

Impact: Negligible. The window will fit within existing wall and is intended to create visual link between units. It is considered



Image 73: Detail of steps to back of Princess St. entrance.

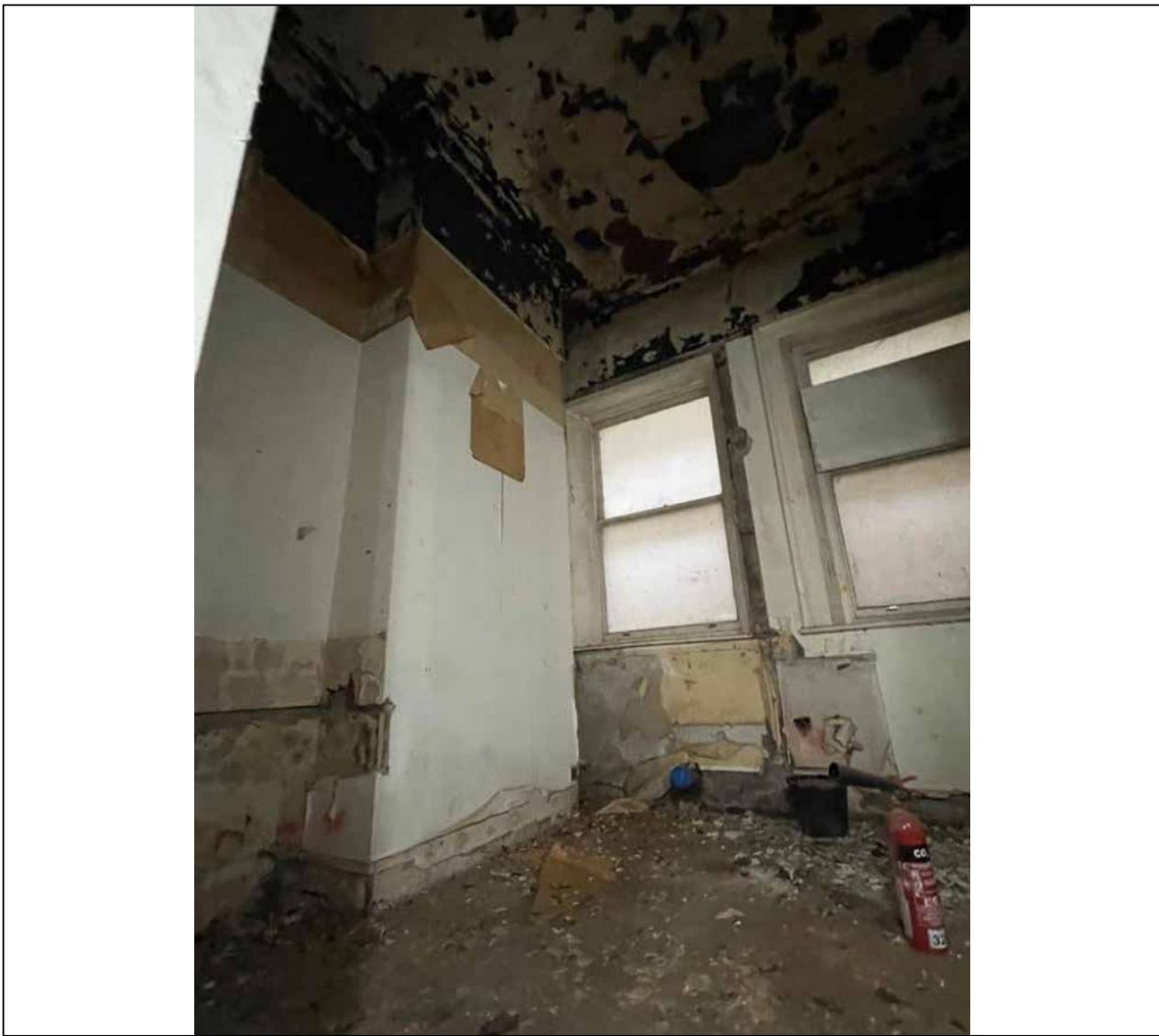


Image 74: Chimney breast to dividing wall of sub-offices, next to lightwell.

preferable to the removal of the wall and involves a limited amount of fabric. New window to be clearly identifiable as modern addition.

Upper floors

Retention of columns, column grid, and timber floor structure.

Impact: Major, positive. These are principal remaining historical features within the space and reflect the character and structural make up of the building. Their retention and protection will ensure their evidential value is maintained.

Retention of original floorboards

Impact: Neutral. Boards are of historical value and will be retained and protected under new floor coverings. An acoustic floor build up is required to ground and first floor. The original will be retained beneath this and build up will be on upper face. This is considered a preferable alternative to upgrading the ceilings, which would result in compromising the cornice features.

Retention of two distinct areas of space to the warehouse side and the office side.

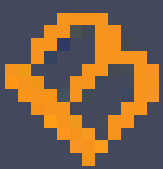
Impact: Major positive. The differing architectural treatment of warehouse and offices is highly significant. Reusing the two sides as separate units will retain this separation.

Insertion of corridor walls to form routes from lifts and to WC provision.

Impact: Negligible. Separation is required to create safe routes from both sides of the building to shared WC facilities. High level glazing will ensure full space can continue to be read. Fixings to existing historic fabric will be minimal, as will intrusion into the unit, ensuring as much of the office floorplan is revealed as possible. The contemporary nature of the intervention will easily be discernible as a modern intervention.

Removal of chimney stack wall to enable WC provision (also at ground floor).

Impact: Moderate, adverse, involving loss of fabric of high significance. The original dividing wall formed the two sub-office spaces with fireplaces either side (now lost).



Justification: The WC provision is necessary and locating it in an alternative position will limit already tight floor plates to an unviable degree. A degree of loss is unavoidable in order to provide the greater public benefit of long term re-use.

Widen opening to central partition wall to Princess St section of 77 Mosley Street, at all upper floor levels. The wall itself is historic fabric but skirting and cornicing is not present.

Impact: Minor, adverse. Removal of a section of this wall will have a limited impact upon heritage significance. It is not certain the existing fabric is original and it has undergone change. Alteration will widen the opening as nibs will be retained at either side, meaning it will still be possible to read the historic intention. The chimney breast will be retained in this location, which is of greater significance.

Removal of hoist structure and subsequent floor infill.

Impact: Moderate adverse. Loss of fabric and feature of high significance, though feature already damaged.

Justification: The hoist is already compromised by the loss of taking-in doors as well as further alteration to some of the walls. It has been maintained that retention of the hoist is not possible if floor plates, already restricted and compromised by the close column grid, are to be made into viable letting space.

Mitigation: To the ceiling, floor and walls, the existence of the previous feature will be marked by a different treatment in the new finishes. The removal of inappropriately inserted windows and fitting of clear glazing in new frames will highlight the former hoist run feature from the interior and exterior, allowing it to be identified as a distinct element of the warehouse building. The loss of the hoist, on the basis of viability, is considered to be significantly less harmful than the loss of the whole interior.

Removal of cast iron balustraded warehouse staircase and subsequent floor infill, also involving removal of surrounding wall.

Impact: Major adverse. The stair is a significant decorative and high-quality feature of the space, reflecting the nature

of the showroom typology of the warehouse and an integral part of the plan form. It does have some alteration already, with several timber dummy pieces. Removal will, compromise understanding of the building to some extent, and remove a feature of high significance.

Justification: The existing stair does not meet fire safety regulations and therefore cannot be used as a means of escape. As the refurbished space is to serve multiple tenants, it has been maintained that the loss of the stair is unavoidable if the already restricted floor plates are to be brought back into long-term viable use, in terms of lettable space. This is considered a particular issue in the context of the tight column grid to this side of the building, which is itself of high significance and is to remain. On balance, the loss of the staircase to increase viability is considered to be substantially less harmful than the loss of the whole interior, as approved in the existing scheme, and the remaining viable alternative.

Mitigation: Where fabric is removed, the memory of the stair will be retained by a different treatment to the inserted floor. The other historic staircase, serving the former office areas, will be retained and in use. The differing character of office and warehouse is retained within plan form, which is considered to be of greater significance.

Main Lifts

Insertion of new lifts (x2), fitted within the lightwell, to serve all floors. Glass doors with metal cladding to the internal facing side (lightwell). Glazed slots within cladding.

Impact: Moderate adverse. Limited area of open lightwell is compromised. New doorway openings are required to end wall, created by removing existing windows and lowering cills in this location on floors.

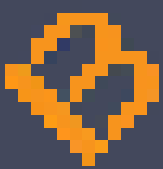
Justification: The existing non-original lift is insufficient for modern office use and cannot be upgraded. The proposed lifts are necessary if the space is to be put back into long-term office use. Alternative locations for lifts involve a greater degree of damage to historic fabric through loss of floor and structure, and loss of internal floor area. The key



Image 75: Detail of secondary (warehouse) staircase.



Image 76: Detail of secondary (warehouse) staircase with cast iron balustrade.



characteristics of the lightwell are the provision of natural light to floor plates and the well-like form, both of which are retained. Access and circulation is improved.

Mitigation: The design is positioned to involve as minimum interface with historic fabric as possible. Original openings in historic fabric will remain, in an altered state. The use of metal cladding will identify intervention as contemporary and is intended to reflect light, maintaining the brightness of the lightwell space. Ducting will be fitted to outer lift housing and covered by metal cladding.

Plant Deck

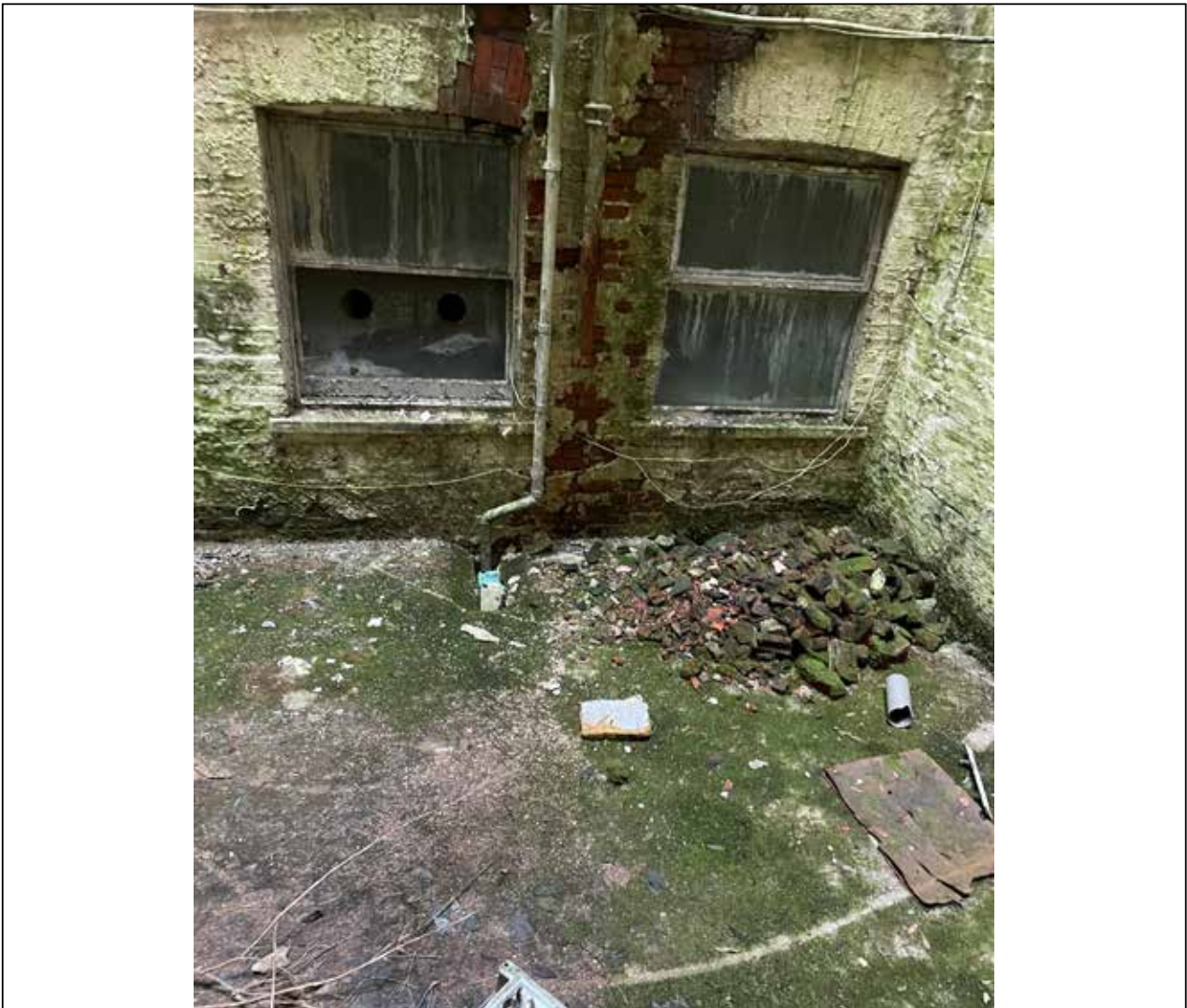
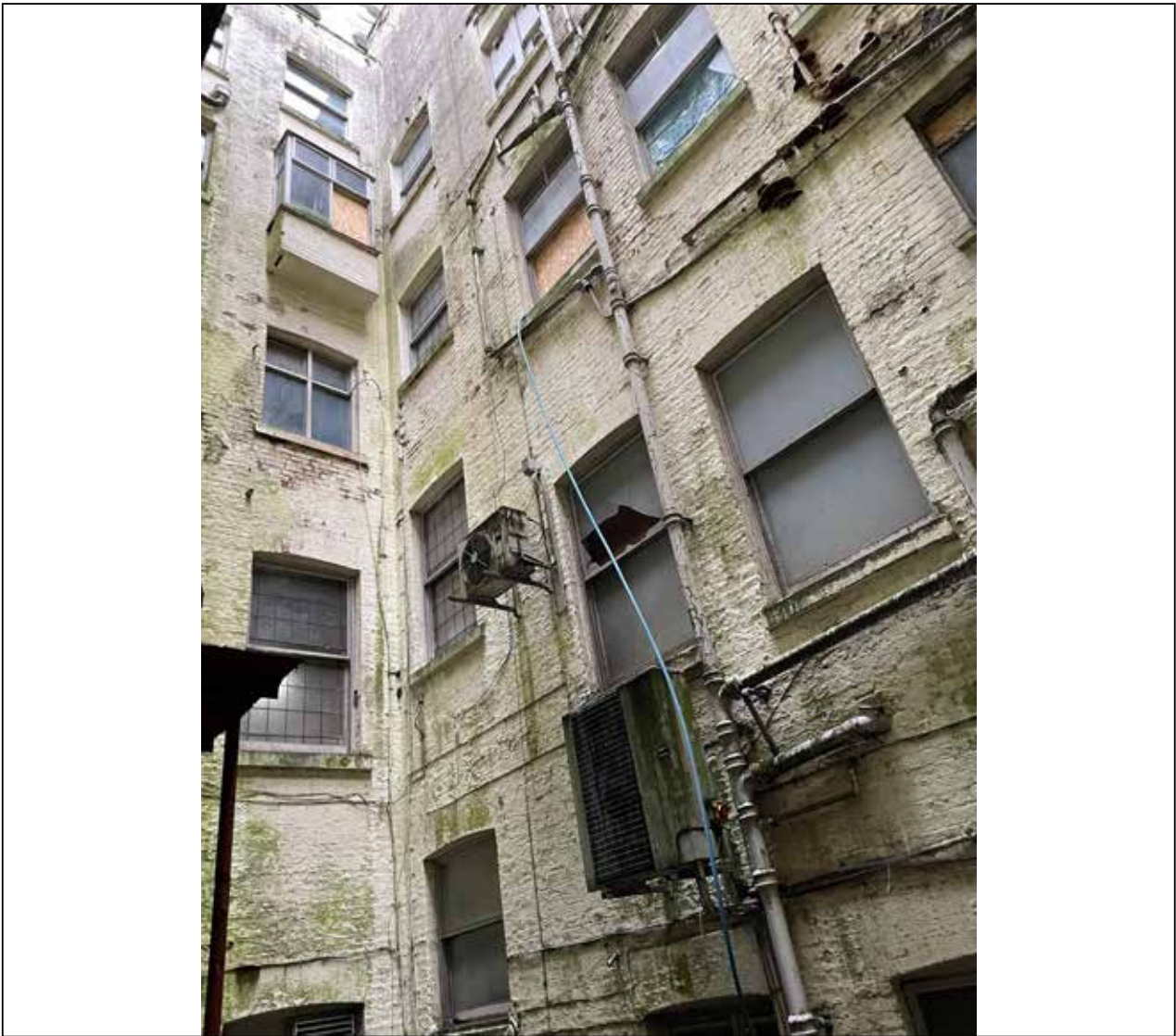
Assumed original roof covering and timber structure which is of medium/high significance.
Provision of a plant deck at roof level, to serve the building.
Removal of existing roof covering (slate) and timber roof structure in area of single sloped roof adjacent to lightwell.
Installation of new steel wind posts to support existing wall to lightwell, and installation of new timber joists to support plant deck.

Impact: Moderate adverse. Limited in scale and to one section of roof only.
Justification: In order to create office space with modern servicing, plant kit is unavoidable. There is a degree of harm from historic fabric loss and from a slight change to the roofscape as a result of the deck. The less than substantial harm is considered to be outweighed by the need to bring the building back into use and the resultant public benefit.
Mitigation: Alternative locations within the lightwell, or internally are not viable. Placement of the deck within the valley would require substantial steel beams connecting to external walls, penetrating several areas of roof in multiple locations. The chosen location is considered to be the least harmful.

Rationalisation of pipe/ducts to light well.
Impact: Minor, positive, clearing the walls of non-original and insensitive interventions.

Repair and redecoration of internal facing white-painted brickwork to lightwell.
Impact: Minor, positive. The white colour of the bricks is a typical and significant characteristic of the lightwell, as it allowed light to reflect into internal spaces. Restoring it will enhance the feature.

A number of windows to the lightwell will be reinstated in their original configuration and louvres added to serve WC extract system, where necessary.
Impact: Negligible. The presence of louvred sections within glazing is considered to be outweighed by the benefit of restoring the original configuration.

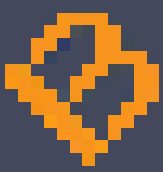


Images 77,78: Photograph showing lightwell walls with various window styles. One over one sliding sashes are considered original form. Non-original extended bay at second floor level.



6.0 Planning Context





6.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

The **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**, updated 2021, sets out Government planning policy for England and how it is expected to be applied. There are specific sections which have particular relevance.

Paragraph 194 requires applicants to describe the significance of heritage assets, including the contribution made by their settings.

Response: This statement satisfies that requirement.

Paragraph 197 states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:
(a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
(b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
(c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Response:
Wide-spread retention of historic features will sustain and enhance the identified significance of the building, protecting internal and external elements for the long-term. Putting the building back to viable use is the only way to secure its sustainable future and ensure its role as a positive contributor to the street scape and wider Conservation Area. The optimum viable use is one which responds best not just to the owner, but minimises harm to the asset in the short-and long-term. This proposal is deemed to represent the use which retains most historic fabric and is the most viable.

The retention of the majority of the interiors is considered to be more sustainable than the alternative option of facade retention only and contributes to retention of character and distinctiveness, keeping the distinct

separation within the building plan. As the last listed building in this particular area to be re-developed, it is particularly important to put 79 Mosley Street back into active use, whilst retaining evidential significance. Justification is made on the basis that the retention of the greater portion of original fabric is only possible if the redevelopment is viable and sustainable, and that the re-use requires a level of change.

Paragraph 199 *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.*

Response: The scheme is considered overall to be conservation led in its approach. There are limited instances where conservation is not possible and harm is proposed. In these cases, alternatives have been sought and discounted and the level of harm and loss reduced as far as possible.

Paragraph 200 states,
‘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.’

Response: The justification for specific instances of proposed harm and loss have been justified on the basis of lack of viable alternative; necessary to ensure the viability of the scheme; necessary to provide expected end user requirements and access. Justification is contained in the Proposals and Impact section. Further detail on viability is provided by others as part of this application.

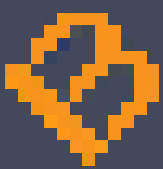
Paragraph 201 *Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve*

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.

Response: The removal of the hoist and warehouse stairs would result in the loss of features of high significance, and the removal of the staircase in particular can be seen to equate to substantial harm. A more detailed response to paragraph 201 is included here.

Substantial Harm and Justification
The previous scheme (application 118398/FO/2017) comprised basement unit; retail at ground floor; offices to floors 1-5; mansard roof extension; internal demolition works,; refurbished façade and reinstatement of original shop frontage to 77a. It was approved and permission granted in Summer 2018.

The St Peter’s Square area has undergone major upgrading and investment in recent years, including the construction of Nos. One and Two St Peter’s Sq (270,000sq ft and 160,000 sq ft); remodelling of the public square; refurbished Town Hall Extension and library; and complete refurbishment of the Town Hall (currently underway). 79 Mosley St is the last remaining site requiring investment on St Peter’s Square. It has been vacant for over a decade, and, despite several owners and numerous schemes, no developer has secured its future and it remains at risk of further deterioration. Its current state has an adverse impact on the George Street Conservation Area, the streetscapes of Mosley Street and Princess Street, and within the context of the suite of listed buildings surrounding the Square.



The building is of heritage significance, as recognised by its Grade II listed status. Detail is set out in the Significance section of this report. Items of particular heritage significance are acknowledged in the Stephen Levrant report, the Historic England comments, and the 2018 Planning Committee report, all of which accompanied the previous application. These elements are, namely, the façades; the internal ‘cast iron’ decorative staircase (that serving the warehouse); and the split plan form of the warehouse/office/shop combination. It is suggested that in addition to these parts, the lightwell, the separate entrances, evidence of hoist run to Back George Street elevation and the partially exposed historic shop front are of high significance.

Whilst the 2018 approval was in response to a separate scheme, the context of that determination remains relevant to this application. It is for this reason that reference to the 2018 application is made in this document.

The ‘wholly exceptional circumstances’ which led to the acceptance of substantial harm resulting from 2018 scheme have not altered, and have been further magnified by the passing of an additional 5 years, the lack of progress on site, and another change of ownership. In addition, the 2018 scheme for internal demolition has permission and remains the alternative option.

This application can demonstrate significant positives:

- The majority of internal fabric is retained including the lightwell, the floors, ceilings, walls, columns, openings, and decorative cornicing throughout, all of which would be lost in the 2018 proposal.
- The highly significant plan form is retained, with a clear distinction between the open plan nature of the office space and column grid to the former warehouse, a feature lost in the alternative scheme.
- The roof and roof line is retained with minor alteration for plant deck only, with no proposal for additional height, unlike in the approved scheme.

- The former hoist run is to be removed, but evidence retained by returning the openings to Back George Street to their original proportions and inserting high quality modern metal framed glass to highlight the original voids on the elevation.
- The frontage will still be retained and restored.
- The original entrances are still proposed for re-use.
- The important element of level change across Princess Street side remains.
- The scheme has been designed to work with the remaining fabric, removing only what is necessary to provide a viable end use.
- The development would allow for fully accessible thresholds to all major entrances, with minimal loss of historic fabric.
- There would be no adverse impact upon the Conservation Area, and the building would be returned to much its original form, with the benefit of restoration, repair and high-quality modern interventions.
- The harm to the listed asset, whilst still classed as ‘substantial’ due to the proposed removal of the cast iron staircase, would be at a much-reduced level when compared to the 2018 scheme, for which permission was granted.

The **public benefits** of the scheme are considered to outweigh the substantial harm by:

- Securing the long-term future of the listed asset;
- Bringing the last vacant site in this distinct area of the city back into active use;
- Enhancing the streetscape and George Street Conservation Area through restoration of elevations, re-integration of the historic shop frontages and avoiding further dereliction and decay;
- Being a positive response to the sustainability agenda, retaining a large portion of existing fabric and minimising the need for new construction;
- Providing space for employment and increasing security through active ground floor uses;
- Conserving, protecting and enhancing significant features of a listed building.

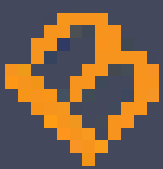
Floorplates and Staircase

It was concluded in 2018 that the restrictive floorplates were a barrier to viability and retention of historic fabric.

“The work undertaken by the project team demonstrates that in order to bring forward a viable use, the proposed level of intervention to the building’s structure and features are required in order to overcome the current constraints to its viable reuse as detailed above and to create a space that is attractive to future occupiers ending the current protracted period of vacancy which is putting the listed building at risk.” The current proposal represents a less harmful alternative to the previous proposed level of loss and harm to listed fabric.

Staircase and Hoist

It is suggested that the cast iron staircase and the hoist run represent a level of encroachment on to the column-dense warehouse side that is not compatible with modern high quality office use, and that their removal is necessary to make the project viable. The loss of the staircase would be unfortunate: it was acknowledged by all parties in 2018 that this is an element of high heritage significance, and this report draws the same conclusion. In neither the previous approved scheme, nor in this one, is the staircase retained, but in balance, the loss of one specific feature and retention of the wider building is considered to be a clearly preferable option.



Manchester Conservation Areas and Historic Buildings Panel responded to the 2018 application. They aired concern about the demolition of the core, but understood *‘the constraints of building, with the interior construction including split ground floor levels, lightwells and numerous columns.’* Further, they *‘did not believe that this is the best option but felt a pragmatic approach would ensure the long-term viability of the building. They felt the proposal would cause harm and questioned whether it would be outweighed by the public benefits.’*

Historic England objected to the 2018 scheme on heritage grounds. *‘They consider that the total removal of a significant floor layout and historically important historical features causes substantial harm’.* In their response they stated that, *‘The local authority would need to be satisfied that this proposal - which would result in the removal of all internal features - is necessary, and that there is no other reasonable means of delivering similar public benefits through, for example, a different design solution that accommodates at least some internal features of historic interest.’* And *‘the local authority would need to be satisfied that there are no other ways of achieving these benefits without causing the amount of harm proposed.’*

Historic England confirmed that the features of special interest to be the cast iron columns with acanthus mouldings, some decorative plasterwork in the public entrances, an elaborate cast iron staircase and a historically relatively well retained floor layout. In the proposed scheme, all but one of these are retained.

This proposal offers the opportunity to achieve the public benefits described, without causing the same degree of harm. This report suggests that the proposed scheme would therefore be a more favourable solution.

The Victorian Society strongly objected to previous proposals, noting that the internal layout combining warehouse and office use was significant and that the building is *‘an unusually intact survivor of one of Manchester’s key 19th century commercial building types.’* The conservation of the split character of the space can be retained within the proposed scheme, which is considered to be a great benefit.

Substantial Harm and Exceptional Circumstances

The Manchester City Council Planning and Highways committee report stated that the 2018 was consistent with sections 1,2,4,7,10,11 and 12 of the NPPF. In relation to heritage specifically, NPPF Sections 7 (requiring good design) and 12 (conserving and enhancing the historic environment) along with local Core Strategy Policy EN1 (Design Principles and Strategic Character Area), CC9 (Design and Heritage), EN3 (Heritage) and saved UDP Policies DC18.1 (Conservation Areas) and DC19.1 (Listed Buildings) are all relevant.

The Council response stated that, *‘Whilst the proposals would result in substantial harm to the listed building in terms of the loss of original fabric, this needs to be balanced against the constraints to the buildings viable reuse and the negative impact that its continued vacancy has on the quality of the physical and visual environment in this corner of one of the City’s main civic spaces, along with the substantial public benefits including regeneration benefits which would be derived from the proposals.’*

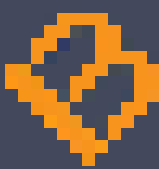
The loss of the cast iron staircase is recognised as substantial harm. NPPF states that local planning authorities should refuse proposed development which will lead to substantial harm to, or total loss of, significance of a designated heritage asset, unless it can be demonstrated that the harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

The nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site;
No viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation;
Conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible;
The harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

These tests were considered to have been met in 2018, and the position stated that this was an ‘exceptional case’ where there was clear and convincing justification for the development, despite the substantial harm. This situation has not changed, those NPPF tests are still met, this remains an exceptional case and there is clear and convincing justification for the degree of harm caused by proposals. Furthermore, it is suggested the new scheme is of a significantly lower degree of harm than that previously approved, albeit that the removal of the staircase still pushes that level to ‘substantial’.

Wider Objectives and Benefit

Central Manchester Strategic Regeneration Framework sets out a spatial framework for the city centre in order to maximise the potential positive contributions to social, economic and other objectives. This proposal is a positive response to achieving key objectives including:
A renewed urban environment through the resultant return of active use to a listed building in a key location within the city and the Conservation Area;
The positive enhancement of the character of the site through sensitive refurbishment;
The improved sense of place deriving from the repair and restoration of external features;
The removal of a poor quality street level environment and ongoing sense of decline and dereliction on the site, which has a negative impact upon this important city centre area and upon the designated George Street Conservation Area.



It is suggested that all the regeneration benefits associated with the previous scheme would be provided by the new proposals, and with the additional, important benefit of the conservation of a much higher proportion of the interior and less modification to the exterior, as the roof is retained.

Alternative Options

It should be noted that as well as numerous considerations by previous owners, previous work by others in 2018 appraised 9 different options for re-use in detail, with associated cost plans, commercial advice and professional advice. The only option which was considered financially viable was that of the façade retention scheme. These appraisals were independently considered and neither the council nor Historic England challenged their findings.

The new owner has worked with an experienced design team to re-visit and challenge the previous conclusion and this application is a result of that process. They are satisfied that a viable scheme can be achieved, but only with the loss of the staircase and the other accompanying changes contained within this application.

Paragraph 202 states, ‘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.’

Response: Limited incidences of ‘less than substantial harm’ to significance have been identified. In these cases, mitigation has been undertaken to minimise harm and make positive enhancements to historic fabric and its appreciation, with priority given to retaining and protecting significant features, character and historic fabric wherever possible. Where there are examples of less than substantial harm, these are considered to be outweighed by the related public benefit.

Local Policy

Local policy is within the Local Development Framework Core Strategy, 2012. Of particular relevance are CC9, which states that development should preserve or enhance assets including listed buildings; and EN3, which states that 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 policy.

The scheme is considered to meet national and local policy requirements, in relation to heritage as outlined in this report. There are clear and substantial benefits to the proposals which are considered sufficient to outweigh the level of harm caused to the asset. There is a balance in favour of public benefits versus harm. The exceptional circumstances surrounding the site are demonstrated through its planning history, the granted permission of 2018, and the fact that the site still remains vacant and in deteriorating condition.

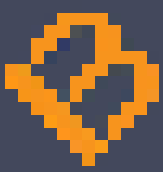


Image 79: Photograph showing internal space to former warehouse. The close knit grid of columns is evident, as is the former hoist which extends into floor space from the Back George St. wall. The warehouse staircase is visible to the right hand side.



Conclusion





7.0 CONCLUSION

This statement has assessed the significance of the Grade II listed building at 79 Mosley Street, described the proposals and their impact upon that significance.

The proposals seek to retain, enhance and protect the majority of internal and external historic fabric. A number of inappropriate additions will be removed and instances of new intervention are considered to be a sensitive response to character and built fabric.

Instances of harm have been identified and mitigation and justification measures set out.

The relevant national and local planning context has been provided and changes judged in response to those policies.

The scheme is considered to have significant benefit for the long-vacant site and in most instances demonstrates substantial enhancement to the building, and the ability to understand the asset. Proposals are seen as making a positive contribution to the wider Conservation Area.

The loss of the staircase would cause harm to one area of the interior, but would allow the greater majority of fabric to be retained.

Justification for proposed harm is centred around the core principle running throughout NPPF, which is the sustainability of development.

There are recognised major constraints to adaptation within the floor plates of the building, particularly to the former warehouse side which retains a tight knit column layout. The continued vacancy and granting of previous permission for facade retention scheme demonstrate the difficulties in

retaining all features and achieving lettable space.

Limited and specific incidences of substantial harm are considered to be justified within the exceptional circumstances given a) the history of the building and multiple failed attempts at re-use and b) set within the context of the existing permission to demolish the majority of internal fabric, which would cause a greater degree of substantial harm and loss to the listed building.

It is considered that the removal of the stairs and hoist would not result in a **total loss** of significance to the property and that even with their removal, the building will retain a high degree of its historical, aesthetic, evidential and communal value, and substantially more than the approved scheme.

No other less harmful, practicable, options have been identified, in this scheme or those previously explored, and in mitigation, loss has been reduced to the minimum consistent with achieving the re-use objective.

The proposal would not adversely impact the larger proportion of fabric, which would be enhanced. It would not adversely impact the setting of any adjacent heritage assets nor the character and appearance of the George Street Conservation Area, which would be improved, along with the general streetscape.

The harm resulting from the loss of two individual elements is considered to be substantially less than the total loss approved in the alternative scheme. There is a clearly identifiable set of public benefits to a scheme which avoids total internal demolition; contributes to the economic vitality of St Peter's Square by creating employment and workspace within a long-term vacant listed building; provides enhancement and improvement to the appearance and enjoyment of the Conservation Area; and contributes to the

wider economic and sustainability aims set out in national and local policy.

When balancing the relative values of the Grade II asset, the impact of the proposals upon significance, avoiding internal demolition and the wider benefit of securing a viable re-use in this prominent city centre location, the proposals are considered justified.

