

Heritage Statement

St Joseph Group

24 Lever Street – Basement Level

14th November 2023

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared on behalf of St Joseph Group. The statement has been prepared in support of the proposal for Change of Use and full planning of the basement floor of Watts Bros. 24 Lever Street, Manchester, M1 1DZ (hereafter referred to as 'the site' or 'building') which is a Grade II Listed Building. The site is located within Manchester City Council Conservation Area.



Image 1: Street Level view of application site

- 1.2 The proposal comprises the necessary physical works to provide the change of use for the basement level, providing the changes to the internal floor to create areas for use as toilets, cellar, stores, offices and bar as part of the change of use application.
- 1.3 This Heritage Statement has been prepared to consider the potential impact of the scheme on the significance and setting of the Listed Building and also considers any impact on the nearby heritage assets.
- 1.4 This statement has been prepared in accordance with the policies and procedures of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) following a visual and photographic survey of the site.
- 1.5 This statement includes:
- A description of the application site's location.
 - A summary of the proposed scheme.
 - A summary of the heritage planning policy guidance context.
 - A review of the relative historical and architectural significance of the application site.

2.0 The Site and Surroundings

The site

2.1 The site is located at 24 Lever Street, Manchester, M1 1DZ. The site is located on the South East side of Lever Street at the junction of the corner with Bunsen Street. The building is nationally listed as Grade II meaning it is of special national interest and it also contributes positively to the character of Manchester City Conservation Area.

2.2 The site is a red brick building in Flemish bond, with Basement, 4 Storeys and Attic. For this application we are concerned with the Basement floor only.

2.3 The building's listing notes that the building received Listed status on 6th June 1994. It was the former Watts Bros hardware and furniture warehouse dated 1898 at the third floor, it is now offices.



Image 2: Lever Street Front Façade



Image 3: Bunsen Street Side Facade

2.4 The site is 0.025 Hectares in size and approximately rectangular in shape. It is occupied by a single building which is set to the back of pavement on Lever Street. There is an adjoining building to the left of the site.

2.5 The basement level of the building is currently vacant. It was last occupied as a printing and retail unit.

The Surrounding Area

2.6 The site is located within the heart of Manchester's Northern Quarter. Surrounding uses are therefore primarily retail, leisure and entertainment uses. Architecturally Lever Street retains multiple historic buildings from various periods, therefore the area has a historic as well as commercial character.

2.7 As noted above, the application building is located within the Manchester City Centre Conservation Area. Proposed works to the building therefore have the potential to impact upon the character and appearance of / significance of this designated heritage asset. The Manchester City Centre Stevenson Square Conservation Area was one of three designated in February 1987; the others are Shudehill and Smithfield. Stevenson Square is the most easterly of the city centre conservation areas and was subsequently extended in December 1987 to include houses on Lever Street and Bradley Street.

2.8 The Manchester City Council Stevenson Square Conservation Area appraisal and improvement and enhancement documents have been referred to and used to assess the existing site and the

building's special character and appearance. The Stevenson Square area as a whole is important to Manchester's history of industrial significance and therefore we have focussed our assessment of the proposed development on the impact any changes to the basement floor will have upon the conservation area and street view.

3.0 The Proposal

3.1 The proposal is to change the use of the basement floor from A1 Retail to Sui Generis Public House, Wine Bars and drinking establishments.

The external appearance of the building will be retained as existing, using the existing entrance and stair, with exit routes retained as existing to the rear of the property via existing exits.

It is proposed to replace 1no. existing window to the Bunsen Street elevation with a louvered grille, powder coated to match the existing security grilles fitted, which will allow for suitable extract, ventilation and cellar cooling to the basement floor.

3.2 Internally, the proposal is to remove modern internal partitions to create a space suitable for its new use. The scheme will retain the existing features, such as the sliding metal door to the rear escape area, existing columns and wall mounted high level delivery door, whilst refurbishing the space to create a new bar space. The unit would require customer toilets, storage room and cellar areas to be formed in plasterboard partitions with a new bar and seating areas installed.

3.3 As is evident from the submitted photographs the internal space of the unit is mainly open, with a smaller area sectioned off to the Lever Street end of the building. This is divided by a plasterboard wall and door, which runs within a column line to delineate the space. The proposal would remove this wall and make good any surfaces around and associated with this.

The existing floor would be retained, with the exception of areas where safety flooring would be required for Health and Safety, such as the bar, cellar and toilet areas.

3.4 The ceiling has existing sprinkler positions and cable trays running the extent of the building. It is proposed to re-use these elements whilst introducing new lighting positions from the existing trays and removing any redundant cabling and lights throughout.

3.5. It is proposed to utilise existing waste positions, locating toilets and sinks in areas where there are existing drainage points to minimise any works to the fabric of the building.

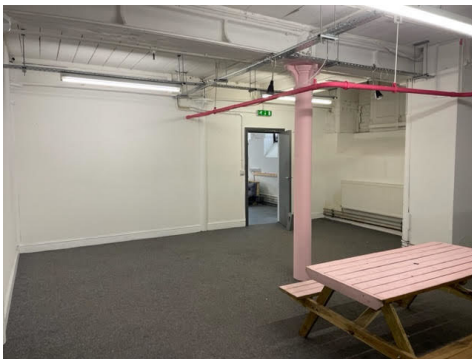


Image 4: Internal dividing wall

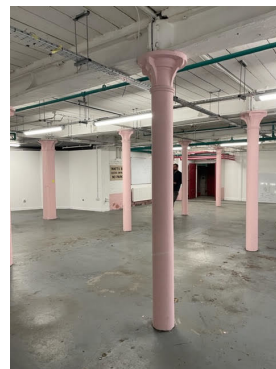


Image 5: Existing ceiling

4.0 Heritage Policy Context

4.1 Planning policy guidance of relevance to the proposed development, and which provides the context for its assessment, is set out within national and local planning policy guidance.

National Planning Policy Guidance

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

4.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning Act states that the determination of planning applications must be made in accordance with the Development Plan, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. This establishes the Development Plan as the primary decision making document when considering planning applications.

4.3 In this instance the development plan currently comprises The Manchester City Council Citywide Development Control Policies and The Core Strategy 2012-2017 which sets out the long term strategic policies for Manchester's future development. The provisions of these documents are discussed below.

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

4.4 Once a building is listed, Section 7 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act provides that consent is required for any works of alteration which may affect its special interest.

4.5 Controls apply to all works, both external and internal, that would affect a building's special interest, whether or not the particular feature concerned is specifically mentioned in the list description. Fixtures and curtilage buildings (defined as any object or structure which is fixed to the building, or is within the curtilage and forms part of the land and has done so since before July 1948) are also treated as part of the building for the purposes of listed building control.

4.6 In considering development affecting Listed Buildings, special regard will be given to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest (Section 66, Planning [Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas] Act 1990).

National Planning Policy Framework

4.7 The NPPF which was most recently updated in July 2021, sets out the Government's planning policies regarding the conservation of the historic environment.

4.8 Section 16 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment' sets out the heritage context. The NPPF states that Heritage Assets are 'an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations'.

4.9 Paragraphs 194 and 195 requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting; sets out that the level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance; and, states that local planning authorities should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

4.10 Paragraph 197 sets out three considerations which local planning authorities should take account of in determining applications.

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

4.11 Paragraph 199 notes that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Paragraph 200 follows that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification.

4.12 Paragraph 201 identifies a series of criteria that must be met where substantial harm to or total loss of significance will be caused to a designated heritage asset, or that it can be demonstrated that substantial loss or harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss. Paragraph 202 states that where a development 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.

4.13 Paragraph 206 states that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance; and, that proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.

4.14 Paragraph 207 advises 'Not all elements of a Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 201 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 202, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area as a whole'.

4.15 'Significance' is defined by Annex 2: 'Glossary of NPPF' as: 'The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting'.

4.16 'Setting of a heritage asset' is also defined by Annex 2 as 'The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.'

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

4.17 The NPPG was published in March 2014 (and updated regularly since). The Guidance includes a section on 'historic environment'. Relevant paragraphs from the Guidance are set out below:

- All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not.

- What matters in assessing whether a proposal might cause harm is the impact on the significance of the heritage asset. As the National Planning Policy Framework makes clear, significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.
- Proposed development affecting a heritage asset may have no impact on its significance or may enhance its significance and therefore cause no harm to the heritage asset. Where potential harm to designated heritage assets is identified, it needs to be categorised as either less than substantial harm or substantial harm (which includes total loss) in order to identify which policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 199-202) apply.
- The National Planning Policy Framework requires any harm to designated heritage assets to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental objectives.

4.18 With regard to assessing substantial harm, National Planning Practice Guidance advises: 'Whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision taker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the policy in the National Planning Policy Framework. In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed. The harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting.' (Paragraph: 017 Reference ID: 18a-017-20140306)

Historic England Guidance

4.19 Historic England (HE) has published guidance to assist with the management of the historic environment. This assessment has been prepared having regard to the following HE Guidance.

Historic England Advice Note 2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets

4.20 Published in February 2016, this advice note illustrates the application of the policies set out in the NPPF in determining applications for planning permission and listed building consent.

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice 2: 'Managing Significance in Decision- Taking in the Historic Environment'

4.21 This document was published in March 2015 and provides advice to local authorities, planning and other consultants, owners, applicants and other interested parties. It sets out practical guidance to assist interested parties in making an assessment of the impact of proposals on the significance of heritage assets.

Historic England Advice Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2nd Edition)

4.22 Published in December 2017, this document sets out guidance on managing change within the setting of heritage assets, including historic buildings, sites, areas and landscapes. Building on the historic environment provisions of national planning policy, the document provides advice on the definition of 'setting' before setting out key principles for assessing the implications of development proposals on the settings of heritage assets.

Historic England Advice Note 12: Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets

4.23 This Guidance was published in October 2019 and covers the National Planning Policy Framework requirement for applicants for heritage and other consents to describe heritage significance to help local planning authorities to make decisions on the impact of proposals for change to heritage assets.

Historic England: Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance

4.24 This Guidance was published by Historic England (then English Heritage) in April 2008. The Document is designed to provide a logical approach to making decisions and offering guidance on all aspects of England's historic environment. Guidance is provided on understanding heritage values (evidential, historical, aesthetic, and communal), and assessing heritage significance.

Local Planning Policy Guidance

4.25 The Manchester City Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan , Manchester Citywide Development Control Policies and The Core Strategy 2012-2017 which sets out the long term strategic policies for Manchester's future development.

Manchester's Local Development Framework: Core Strategy (MLDF)

4.26 The MLDF was adopted on 11th July 2012 and forms part of the statutory development plan for the City. The purpose of the document is to provide the overall vision, strategic objectives, spatial strategy and strategic planning policies for the City to 2027. The heritage-related policies of relevance to the proposed scheme include:

- Policy ENV 3 'Heritage' states that the Local Plan will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods, including those in the City Centre. New developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings acknowledged importance, including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas and archaeological remains. Proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets will be encouraged where they are considered consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.

The Manchester Citywide Development Control Policy (MCDP)

4.27 The Manchester Citywide Development Control Policy provides detailed information relating to Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings within the City's boundaries. This is to help ensure the protection of the City's built character and its heritage. It states that Retention and protection of this character is important in encouraging local pride, tourism and future investment in the city. The council recognises that listed buildings can present problems in respect of their continuing use and as such note that a flexible approach will be taken in determining applications for uses in listed buildings. The policy gives effect to the obligation placed on the Council by statute to give particular attention to retain, restore, maintain and continue uses in listed buildings in Manchester.

It provides further information on the which support the strategic objectives as part of the Council's aim to produce a comprehensive planning framework to achieve sustainable development in the City. Key notes of relevance include:

- Item DC19.1 (b) notes The Council will not permit a change of use of a listed building , where it would have a detrimental effect on the character or appearance of the building.

- Item DC19.1 (c) notes the Council would not permit any external or internal alteration or addition to a Listed building where, in its opinion, there would be an adverse effect on its architectural or historic character.

- Item DC19.1 (f) notes the Council would not permit alterations to a Listed building which would prevent the future use of any part of the building, in particular upper floors or basements, or where poor maintenance is likely to result.

1. it can be demonstrated that the use of the existing building has been sensitively approached to ensure the existing features are retained and highlighted within the design;

2. it can be demonstrated that the use of the basement floor, which is currently vacant, will ensure its ongoing upkeep and maintenance to ensure the Listed building for the future.

3. it can be demonstrated that the change of use proposed is in keeping with the area and the surrounding uses of the adjoining and neighbouring properties. The City's Night economy is vibrant and this proposal will bring a vacant space into use again with insignificant change to the fabric of the external or internal building.

4. the use of high quality and durable materials appropriate to the building and its setting is proposed;

5. the proposal, adopts visually appropriate and discreet louvre fitting, finished to match the existing security grilles to the little used Bunsen Street elevation to minimise their visual impact;

6. the proposal will not result in the loss of any historic routes.

4.28 Additional guidance is provided relating to signage proposals, which does not form part of the scope of this application.

5. Heritage Significance

5.1 The Historic England Publication 'Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets' (HE 2019) suggests three areas of interest for assessing a heritage asset's significance. These are to be described, following which the level of the general significance of the heritage asset should be assessed, with the particular contribution of any described features. The three areas of interest are:

- **Archaeological interest** - if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

- **Architectural and artistic interest** - which are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skills, like sculpture.

- **Historic Interest** - which is an interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

5.2 These areas of interest are reviewed within the table below:

Period	The building was erected in 1898 at a time of major Industry in Manchester. It was used as a Hardware and Furniture Warehouse.
Rarity	This conservation area has many buildings from this era reflected in the red brick construction and that the buildings are taller than the earlier examples in the area. These buildings were mainly related to the cotton industry, often warehouses, showrooms or workshops. The significance is therefore medium.
Documentation	This part of the City Centre has been well documented and detailed descriptions of the building are present within its Listing and the HER. The significance is therefore medium.
Survival/Condition	The building has been extensively modified since it was originally built, with the building being divided into individual units resulting in the loss of some of it's original internal features. Externally however the building broadly retains its historic and decorative features. The surviving part of the building is in good condition. The significance is therefore medium.
Fragility/Vulnerability	The building is in good condition and is in no danger of collapsing. It will also shortly be occupied and is within a conservation area. It is not considered to be vulnerable to vandalism or detrimental conditions.

6.0 Analysis

6.1 The building was erected in 1898 to be used as warehousing for a hardware and furniture retailer, Watts Bros. Externally the main elevation to Lever Street retains many original features, although on the less significant Bunsen Street elevation, limited alterations to window openings at low level appear to have been made.

6.2 Internally the building has been substantially altered through multiple waves of refurbishment and adaptation to sub divide the space. Whilst much of the interior has been altered and modernised, some original features remain such as the columns through the building and evidence of the delivery door retained at high level in the basement.

6.3 In general, the building is regarded as being significant, but this significance primarily relates to its Lever street-facing elevation, and its group value with surrounding buildings and other similar buildings within the City Centre.

7.0 Impact on Heritage Significance

7.1 This section appraises the proposals against the heritage significance of the building and surrounding heritage assets including the Manchester City Conservation Area. It should be highlighted that from the outset, the architect has sought to design a solution which does not adversely impact upon the building's heritage significance.

7.2 Section 5 of this Heritage Statement provides an analysis of the heritage significance of 24 Lever Street, Manchester. Whilst the building has lost some of its original fabric and features, it holds a heritage value, forming part of a group of similar buildings of a similar period in and around the Stevenson Square Conservation Area.

7.3 The building is considered to be of medium architectural, artistic and archaeological interest, and high historic interest. Alterations affecting the exterior of the building have the potential to impact upon the architectural interest of the building both positively and negatively. The majority of the building's heritage value denotes from its external appearance and as a result of its group value with other adjacent and nearby buildings.

Assessment of Impact

7.5 The building is nationally Listed and is therefore a 'designated heritage asset'. It is also located within a Conservation Area, meaning it effectively also forms part of a designated heritage asset. The table below considers the proposed works and subsequent impact upon the significance of the building.

Proposed Works	Impact / Mitigation
Utilise existing window opening to Bunsen Street elevation, replacing existing security screen with louvre – coloured to match.	Minor Adverse Whilst the necessary incoming air supply is proposed to be positioned through an existing window, it is located to the less significant Bunsen Street Elevation, along the elevation which has security shutter positioned. The positioning is sympathetic and allows the required air intake to the building whilst not creating additional penetrations through the wall. All AC units are proposed to be located internally, again minimising the impact on this listed building. In mitigation, the louvre will be finished to match the 2no. security screens to this elevation, which will help to reduce any impact.
Installation of toilet black, bar and internal seating.	Minor Adverse Whilst the necessary installation of plasterboard walls and fixed furniture is required to operate this development, the works have been designed to be sympathetic to the existing layout. Maintaining the drainage to the same position allows for little change to the drainage system. The columns and other features existing in the site will be retained and maintained, conserving them for future. In mitigation, the new walls and furniture will be contained within the existing footprint, working around the existing columns and utilising existing cable tray/ sprinkle heads etc.

Impact of Scheme on the Heritage Significance of The Manchester City Stevenson Square Conservation Area

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

Summary of Impact

7.7 An assessment of the impact of the proposal has been undertaken. The potentially affected heritage assets are limited to the building itself and the Manchester City Stevenson square Conservation Area, both of which are designated heritage assets. The assessment has found that the proposal will have minor impact on the exterior of the building, with some minor conservation harm, due to the necessary installation of a louvre for fresh air supplies. Due to the location of these works and the proposed mitigation measures, the harm is regarded as less than substantial. In accordance with the plan, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The harm resulting from the scheme is outweighed by the following public benefits:

- The re-use of the building will have a positive impact on the regeneration of the area, increasing spending within the local area, and encouraging further investment into this key location within Manchester City Centre.
- The re-use of the building will help to increase natural surveillance and reinstate active frontage to the north elevation of the building, whilst also increasing overlooking to rear back alley areas
- Creating temporary employment during construction works, and permanent employment once the use is operational.
- Investing in a building which is within a highly accessible location, therefore encouraging the use of sustainable modes of transport.

7.10 Public benefits also include heritage benefits which include enabling full re-occupation of the vacant floor of this building, thereby securing the future of this designated heritage asset; and delivering a proposed use which will enable the general public to visit this Listed Building and view it internally as well as externally.

8.0 Conclusion

8.1 This Heritage Statement provides detailed analysis of the heritage significance of 24 Lever Street, Manchester, and sets out an assessment of the impact of the proposed scheme upon that significance.

8.2 The proposal will be undertaken in a discreet manner in order to minimise any visual impact within the conservation area and Listed Building frontage.

8.3 The building remains of historic significance as a designated heritage asset, and contributes positively to the character of the Manchester City Conservation Area which it is located within. The identified heritage significance has helped inform the design of the proposed works.

8.4 The assessment of impact has found that the proposed scheme will not significantly adversely impact upon the Listed Building's special interest, and that the re-use of the building will secure its future and enhance its contribution to the Manchester City Conservation Area.

8.5 This Statement has been prepared in accordance with national and local planning policy guidance. The design team look forward to working further with the Council in progressing the proposals through to a positive determination.

Appendix 1 – Photographs of the Listed Building



Image 1: Existing Entrance Stair



Image 2: Existing unit from entrance to rear.



Image 3: Existing Kitchen



Image 4: Existing Rear doors to redundant Lift.



Image 5: View to rear escape route – looking at existing lift.

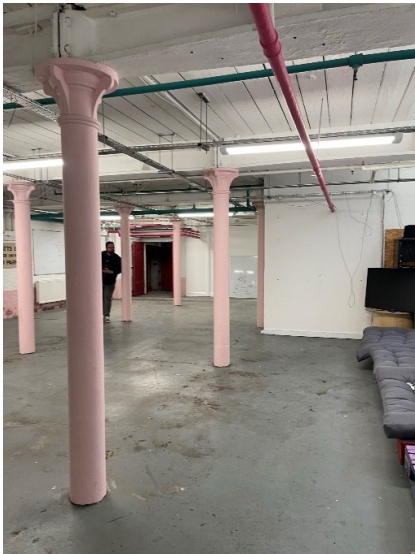


Image 6: View of internal columns and ceiling cable trays.



Image 7: Existing high level door. Bricked up behind.

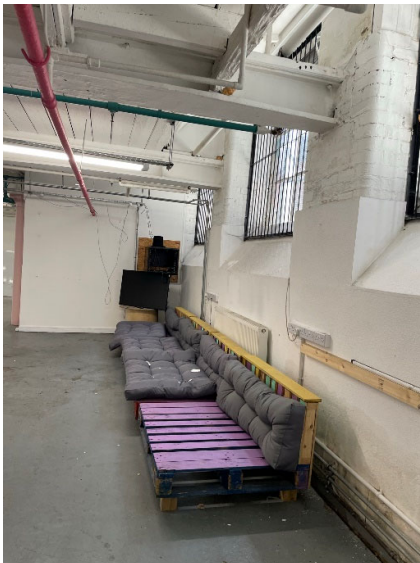


Image 8: Existing windows



Image 9: Existing partitions