



Paul Butler Associates

Planning, Development & Heritage Consultants

Zidane Projects

47-47a Spear Street

Heritage Statement

June 2023

Paul Butler Associates, 31 Blackfriars Road, Salford, Manchester M3 7AQ
t. 0161 835 3530 | e. pba@paulbutlerassociates.co.uk | w. www.paulbutlerassociates.co.uk

Professional Planning, Development & Heritage Advisors since 1992.

Our professional staff are Members of the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) or the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA)

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	Name and Qualifications	Position	Date
Prepared by:	Lynsay Ewart BSc(Hons) MSc MRTPI	Senior Planner	19.06.2023
Checked by:	Tom Flanagan MTCP MRTPI	Director	21.06.2023
Issued by:	Lynsay Ewart BSc(Hons) MSc MRTPI	Senior Planner	22.06.2023

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Appendix 1: Historic Map Regression

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared to support a planning application for a development at 47-47a Spear Street. The application is submitted on behalf of Zidane Projects who has engaged Material Studio Architects to prepare architectural drawings. The proposals are for a mixed use development at a vacant site to provide office and residential accommodation within a 6 storey building above a basement. The planning application represents an opportunity to deliver a high quality development which will provide significant heritage, planning, and regeneration benefits.
- 1.2 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, in addition to an examination, analysis and assessment of available historic records and cartographic sources.
- 1.3 The application site does not contain any listed assets but is located within the Stevenson Square Conservation Area, whilst there are also listed buildings in proximity to the site. This Statement appraises the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the conservation area and the setting of nearby listed buildings. The Statement provides a review of the site and the immediate surrounding area from a heritage perspective. It considers the relevant heritage policy context against which the planning application should be assessed and provides an appraisal of the proposal against this context.

2. The Site and Surroundings

The Site

- 2.1 The application site is located in the heart of Manchester City Centre within the Northern Quarter District. The Northern Quarter is located to the northeast of the Manchester City Centre boundary and is surrounded by the Retail Core, Piccadilly Gateway, Ancoats and Victoria areas.
- 2.2 The Northern Quarter is characterised by a rich legacy of historic buildings, a grid-iron street layout and a variety of street widths from narrow alleyways to wider thoroughfares such as Oldham Street. The Northern Quarter District has been the subject of various physical, social and economic transformations since the 18th century. After the decline of retailing in the area through the 1970s and 1980s, regeneration initiatives led by Manchester City Council have helped revive the Northern Quarter as a mixed use area and a focal point for creative and independent businesses. A thriving residential community now exists, accommodated in new and converted buildings. Spear Street sits within this wider economic context.
- 2.3 Located at 47-47a Spear Street, the site is located centrally on the street, part way between Great Ancoats Street to the north and Piccadilly Gardens to the south. The subject site is rectangular in shape and extends to approximately 120sqm in size. The site forms part of an urban block which is bounded by Oldham Street and Spear Street. The site is accessed via Spear Street, with 54 Oldham Street backing onto the site.
- 2.4 The site location is illustrated in the below figures. Spear Street is a relatively narrow street, which functions primarily as a service access and has many back of house type features; in contrast Oldham Street is a busy commercial thoroughfare.

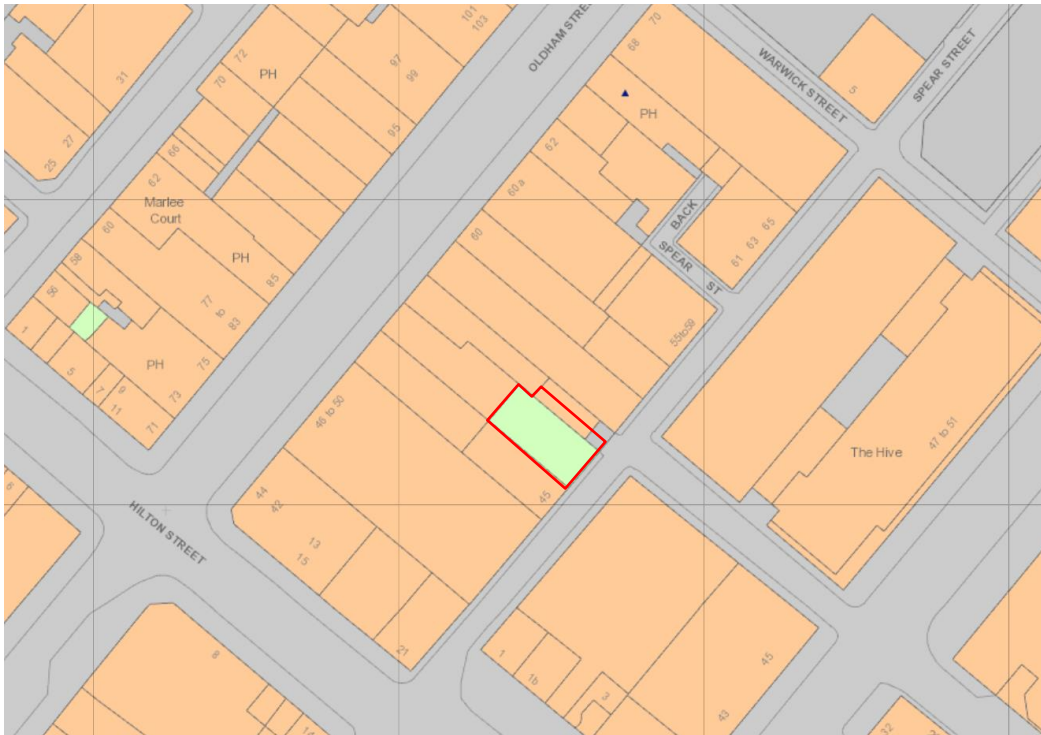


Figure 2.1: Site Location.



Figure 2.2: View of site enclosed by hoarding.



Figure 2.3: View of site looking north on Spear Street.

- 2.5 The site is vacant, but was formerly occupied by a building which occupied the entirety of the site except for a narrow strip of land running along the north-eastern boundary. The building is understood to have been demolished in the late 20th century, remaining parts of the exterior walls can be seen in Google street view imagery from 2008 (figure 2.4). These exterior walls have since been further removed / collapsed, particularly along the north eastern elevation. Built form adjoins the site to the south-west and north-west boundaries. A narrow strip of undeveloped land exists adjacent to the north-east of the site, which together with the north-east portion of the application site forms a narrow, truncated access as identified by the road markings and pavement layout.



Figure 2.4: Google Streetview from 2008 showing remnants of the exterior walls of the former building on site.

Site Planning History

- 2.6 Planning permission for the development of a five storey apartment building including live / work units has previously been approved at the site (application ref 118233/FO/2017) on 10th January 2018. This application proposes a revised scheme which seeks to make more efficient use of the site. Figure 2.5 below shows the approved streetscene elevation drawing.



Figure 2.5: Streetscene elevation drawing approved by planning permission 118233/FO/2017.

- 2.7 Application 045661/RU/CITY2/94 was approved in July 1994, granting consent for 'Renewal of planning permission F34170 for change of use to offices with elevational alterations'. This suggests the former building on site was demolished in either the late 20th or early 21st century.

Surrounding Area

- 2.8 The surrounding area is predominantly retail / commercial interspersed with residential and leisure uses reflecting the site's City Centre location. The site is located in a highly sustainable and accessible location due to its proximity to services and facilities within the City Centre and choice of high quality public transport links within a short distance of the site. The central retail core of the City Centre (Market Street and Piccadilly Gardens) is within a few minutes' walk, and the site is close to Manchester Victoria and Piccadilly train stations which are both

within a 5-10 minute walk of the site. Piccadilly Gardens bus station and Shudehill Interchange are also both within a 5 minute walk of the site.

3. National and Local Planning Policy Context

- 3.1 The planning policy of relevance to the future development of the site, 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

- 3.2 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. In this instance the development plan currently comprises the Manchester Core Strategy (2012); saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan for Manchester (1995); and, the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD (April 2007). The relevant provisions of these documents are discussed below.

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- 3.3 The application site comprises 47-47a Spear Street, which is a vacant site. Whilst limited traces of the former building on site may remain (i.e. perimeter walls), the building has been almost entirely removed and as such any heritage significance that may have been associated with this building is lost. The application site does not contain any listed buildings, although there are a number of nationally listed buildings nearby and the site is within the Stevenson Square Conservation Area.
- 3.4 In determining a planning application it is necessary to consider the impact of the proposal on the setting of any nearby listed buildings and upon the character and appearance of the Stevenson Square Conservation Area.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 3.5 The Revised NPPF was most recently updated in July 2021 and sets out the Government's planning policies regarding the conservation of the historic environment.
- 3.6 Section 16 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment' and paragraphs 189-208 of the NPPF 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'.
- 3.7 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.
- 3.8 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.
- 3.9 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.

- 3.10 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.
- 3.11 Paragraph 203 sets out that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly on non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
- 3.12 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.
- 3.13 Para 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'.
- 3.14 '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'.

- 3.15 '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)

- 3.16 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 apply.
 - An unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to a conservation area is individually of lesser importance than a listed building.
 - 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.
 - Non-designated heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage

significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets.

- It is important that all non-designated heritage assets are clearly identified as such. In this context, it can be helpful if local planning authorities keep a local list of non-designated heritage assets, incorporating any such assets which are identified by neighbourhood planning bodies.

Historic England Guidance

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

- 3.18 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)

- 3.19 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

- 3.20 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 changes to heritage assets.

Historic England: Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance

- 3.21 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: The Development Plan for Manchester

Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document (July 2012)

- 3.22 Manchester's Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document was adopted on 11th July 2012. The plan contains various core strategic objectives which seek to encourage residential development on sustainably located brownfield sites. The proposed development is therefore supported in principle by these strategic development plan policies. Any redevelopment proposal will be assessed against the relevant land use and heritage policies of the Core Strategy which are likely to include:
- 3.23 Spatial Objective SO1 'Spatial Principles' - states that the sustainable development of the city can contribute to halting climate change.
- 3.24 Policy SP1 Spatial Principles – the policy sets out the key spatial principles which will guide the strategic development of Manchester to 2027.

- 3.25 Policy CC6 City Centre High Density Development – explains that the appropriate, scale, massing and height of development in the City Centre will significantly exceed what is appropriate elsewhere in the city.
- 3.26 Policy CC7 Mixed Use Development – states that mixed use development should contribute to the economic regeneration of the city. Active ground floor uses will be encouraged in locations which have an established public function.
- 3.27 Policy CC9 Design and Heritage – explains that the design of new buildings will need to be of the highest standard in terms of appearance and function. The policy also advises that development in the City Centre will need to preserve or enhance the heritage assets such as conservation areas or listed buildings.
- 3.28 Policy EN1 Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas – within the City Centre character area, new developments will be expected to; consider the city’s heritage and contribute to the rich pattern of activity in the core area; contribute to the experience of all at street level; and where possible enhance existing public space provision, maintenance and improvement of the city’s permeability.
- 3.29 Policy EN3 Heritage – requires that new development should preserve or where possible enhance the historic environment, the character, setting, and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance.
- 3.30 Policy DM 1 Development Management - sets out various issues that development should have regard to, including: appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail; impact on the surrounding areas; effects on amenity; accessibility; community safety and crime prevention; adequacy of internal accommodation; refuse storage and collection; and effects relating to archaeological or built heritage.

Saved Planning and Heritage Policies of the Unitary Development Plan Review (UDP) for the city of Manchester (adopted 1995)

- 3.31 The UDP was superseded by the Core Strategy. However, a number of UDP policies have been 'saved'. Extant policies contained within the UDP relevant to the proposed development scheme are likely to include:
- 3.32 DC18.1 Conservation Areas – this explains that the Council will seek to preserve and enhance the character of conservation areas by carefully considering the following issues:
- i) The relationship of new structures to neighbouring buildings and spaces;
 - ii) The effect of major changes to the appearance of existing buildings;
 - iii) The desirability of retaining existing structures such as boundary walls, gardens, trees; and
 - iv) The effect of signs and advertisements.

The policy goes on to state that consent to demolish will be granted only where it can be shown that it is wholly beyond repair, incapable of reasonable beneficial use, or where its removal or replacement would benefit the appearance or character of the conservation area.

- 3.33 DC19 Listed Buildings - states that the Council will have regard to the desirability of securing the retention, restoration, maintenance and continued use of such buildings. In giving effect to this policy, the Council will seek to preserve and enhance the setting of listed buildings by appropriate control over the design of new development in their vicinity, control over the use of adjacent land, and where appropriate, by the preservation of trees and landscape features.

Other Relevant Guidance

Manchester Residential Quality Guidance

- 3.34 The Manchester Residential Quality Guidance was adopted following the meeting of the Council's Executive Committee on 14 December 2016. The design guidance is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The design guidance is intended to provide a clear indication of what is required to deliver sustainable

neighbourhoods of choice where people will want to live and also raise the quality of life across Manchester.

Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document 2007 (SPD)

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

- Section 1 'Creating a Sense of Place' aims to encourage the creation of places which are welcoming, inclusive, neighbourly, interesting and attractive.
- Section 2 'Design' provides guidance under 7 key principles recognised as being urban design characteristics which together create successful places.
- Section 3 'Accessibility' sets out design principles that will help to achieve accessible development and makes reference to the guidance document 'Design for Access 2' which provides detailed information on design standards.
- Section 4 'Environmental Standards' considers energy efficiency, the use of renewable energy and water and waste management.
- Section 6 'Parking Guidelines' promotes the sensitive location of car parking and secure cycle parking.
- Section 8 'Community Safety and Crime Prevention' promotes a safer environment.

4. Heritage Context

- 4.1 As noted in the previous section, the site does not contain any listed buildings, but it is located within the Stevenson Square Conservation Area. As illustrated in figure 4.1 below, there are a number of listed buildings nearby, the nearest of which is the Castle Hotel at 66 Oldham Street (grade II listed public house).

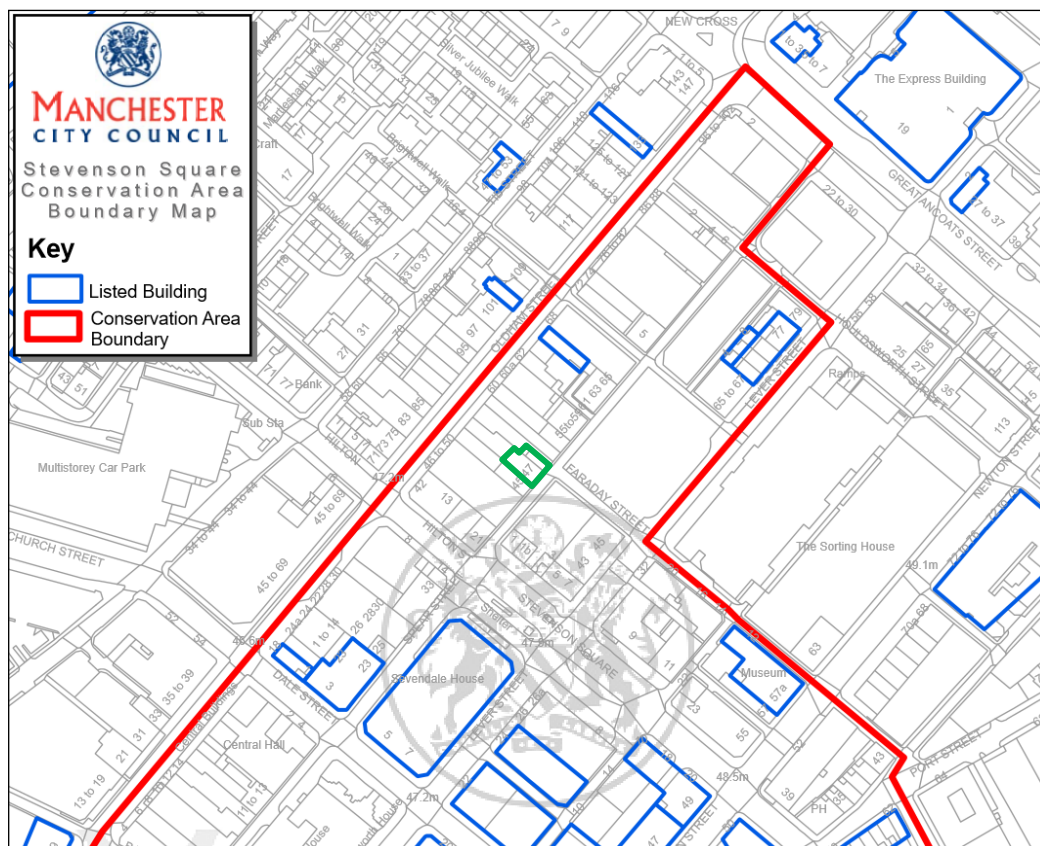


Figure 4.1: Stevenson Square Conservation Area, subject site outlined green.

- 4.2 As the site is located within the Stevenson Square Conservation Area, an appraisal should be undertaken as to what contribution the site makes to the character of the area. In order to understand this, the development of the site/surrounding area must be reviewed, together with identification of the key features which contribute to the special character and appearance of the conservation area.

Development of the Area

- 4.3 The small scale and unplanned development present in this area in the eighteenth century was generally accommodation for domestic weavers and other low-rise buildings. In the mid-18th century, Sir Ashton Lever conceded to pressure from local property developers and sold land to William Stevenson. In 1772, a privately owned track was converted to public use and given the name Oldham Street, the road taking its name from Adam Oldham.
- 4.4 By the end of the 18th century, a major planned residential development scheme had been drawn up for the area. William Stevenson's residential proposal was for three storey town houses designed to front a grid-iron layout with streets of varying widths surrounding a new public space at Stevenson Square. Whilst the original intention was for the area to become a residential area, instead it became largely commercial as he sold his land on, piecemeal, to others who often went on to develop commercial and industrial buildings which were more profitable.
- 4.5 By the 19th century the Northern Quarter experienced a decline in domestic weaving, although the expansion of commercial and industrial uses (such as the mechanised cotton mills) softened any potential harmful effects to the area's economy. In addition to workers housing, the area developed to accommodate public houses, textile warehouses and engineering and iron works. The development of the Smithfield Market further strengthened the area's role as a central district. The growth of a transient population discouraged higher status residential uses and many of the dwellings built under the Stevenson plan were demolished or converted into commercial premises. Affleck and Brown, a successful drapery firm in the 1850s redeveloped many shops, including 49-61 Oldham Street into a large drapery emporium.
- 4.6 A decline in commercial warehouse building in the area allowed the Northern Quarter to develop as a commercial and retail district instead. Oldham Street with its millinery and clothing-related shops became a popular shopping street up to the last quarter of the 20th century.

- 4.7 The fortunes of the Northern Quarter as a retail street suffered a sudden decline with the opening of the Manchester Arndale Centre in 1975. The new centre changed the focus of retailing in the City Centre. After the development of the Arndale, parts of the Northern Quarter became characterised with a high proportion of under-utilised floorspace and a lack of investment. In the last 30 years, the fortunes of the area have begun to revive with investment in new uses, notably cafés, bars, restaurants, residential and visitor accommodation.

Character and Appearance of Spear Street (Stevenson Square Conservation Areas)

- 4.8 In the vicinity of the application site, the character of Spear Street is defined by built development set at back of pavement on either side of the street. The main exception to the consistent building line is the gap site at 47-47a Spear Street, and to the south at its junction with Stevenson Square. The street is long and straight, which together with the back of pavement setting, restricts long distance views of buildings. Spear Street is narrow comprising a single carriageway in a southerly direction, and functions largely as a service street with back of house features such as grilles, air conditioning units and roller shutters being commonplace. Whilst some buildings front onto Spear Street, others may present their side elevation or rear elevation, such as no. 40-50 Oldham Street which spans from its frontage on Oldham Street to Spear Street or the recently constructed 'The Hive' which fronts on to Lever street.



Figure 4.2: View along Spear Street from the junction with Stevenson Square showing established building lines and consistency of back of pavement built form.

- 4.9 Buildings vary in terms of age and appearance, from late 18th – 19th century commercial buildings to modern infill development. Buildings also vary in orientation and footprint, those adjacent to the site have a narrow but elongated footprint, typical of the historical commercial developments built in this area. There are a number of larger buildings (in footprint) located towards the Piccadilly end of Oldham Street.
- 4.10 Building heights are variable and generally range from three to eight storeys, with taller and smaller buildings sitting side-by-side. An example of this is the seven-storey modern infill development at 53 Spear Street (120878/FO/2018) and the recently constructed building at 76 - 82 Oldham Street (110074/FO/2015/C2) which is up to eight storeys.

- 4.11 The 2008 English Heritage Publication 'Conservation and Change in the Northern Quarter' recognises the harmful effects of gap sites in the area and states "*Unsightly empty plots between buildings also invite good contemporary design*".



Figure 4.3: View of new build developments on Spear Street.

- 4.12 There is a variable roofscape along Spear Street including pitched gabled roofs fronting the street, flat roofs, mansard roofs and the more embellished rooflines of corner plot properties adjoining Hilton Street and Dale Street to the south of the application site. Roofs of historic buildings are usually slate with more modern materials also present.
- 4.13 In the vicinity of the site, building facades are relatively plain and lack the embellishment found on neighbouring buildings fronting onto Oldham Street. This suggests that this section of Spear Street (from Hilton Street to Warwick Street) historically functioned more as a service street, and less of a prominent thoroughfare where building owners were keen to demonstrate wealth through decorative architecture. Whilst buildings are typically plain and utilitarian in style, there is a clear vertical emphasis which is conveyed through the narrow frontages and the verticality of window openings, which offers a limited sense of visual

'rhythm' to the street, although this is somewhat interrupted by the back of house services such as grilles and air conditioning units as noted above.

- 4.14 Materials in the wider conservation area include red brick, stone, terracotta, tiles, slate and render/stucco, whilst contemporary buildings include materials such as buff and grey brick, cladding and glazing.



Figure 4.4: View of buildings on Oldham Street showing a greater level of embellishment and variety of materials.

- 4.15 Ground floor shopfronts have typically undergone the greatest level of alteration in the conservation area. The quality of shopfronts varies and there are a number of poor examples which have oversized signage areas, incorporate unattractive security shutters and boxings, and inappropriate materials. The general condition and maintenance of buildings is also variable and there are some buildings which are in poor/semi-derelict condition. Such buildings have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area and wider City Centre and should be a priority for investment and improvement.

Archaeological and Historical Background of 47-47a Oldham Street

- 4.16 This section reviews the historical development of the site, albeit the former building on site has now been cleared.
- 4.17 Mapping from 1793 shows the site as being occupied by a building which spans the width of the block from Spear Street to Oldham Street. The undeveloped land to the north of the building appears to show a narrow access route between Spear Street and Oldham Street. At this time Oldham Street is largely developed with the exception of the subject block which shows some undeveloped plots. In the wider area there are various vacant plots yet to be developed adjacent to Stevenson Square and to the north of the site.



Figure 4.5: 1793 Map

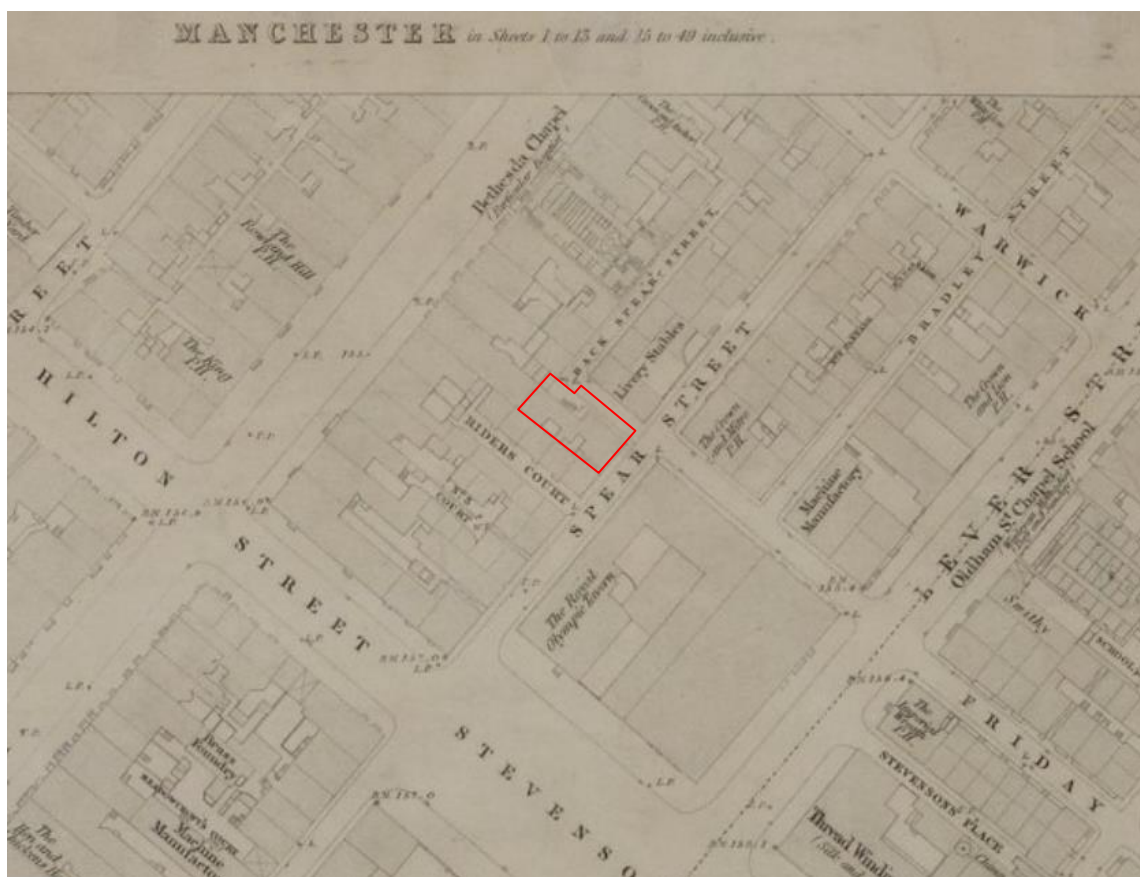


Figure 4.6: 1851 Map

- 4.18 The 1851 map shown in figure 4.6 above shows the development of surrounding plots, and the application site is occupied by a building with a rear courtyard and is clearly separate from the building to the rear which fronts onto Oldham Street. The narrow access route which previously spanned the block has now been developed to the north-west with no. 56 Oldham Street. What remains of the access route dog legs to the north-east parallel to Spear Street to form Back Spear Street, beyond this is a livery stables.
- 4.19 The extract of the 1888 Insurance Plan of the City of Manchester (figure 4.7 below) shows that the former building on site (47 Spear Street) appears to be internally linked to 56-58 Oldham Street, which together are occupied by 'Printers and Stationers'. The connection between the two buildings is also clearly shown on the 1934 map (see map regression at Appendix 1 of this Statement). Historic archive photographs of Spear Street dating from 1910 show this was occupied by Abel Heywood and Sons (figure 4.8), the English publisher, radical and twice Manchester mayor. The 1888 map also shows that the narrow access route has

been further developed to the north-west and no longer provides access onto Back Spear Street which has been shortened and the access relocated further north-west along Spear Street.



Figure 4.7: 1888 Insurance Map of the City of Manchester

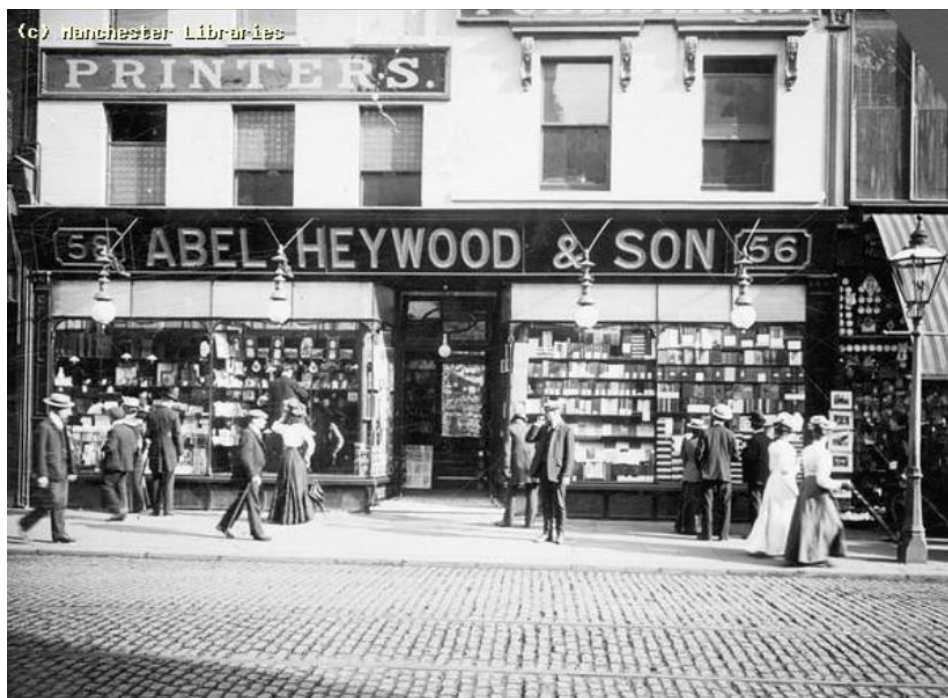


Figure 4.8: Photo from 1910 showing Abel Heywood and Sons printing business at 56-58 Oldham Street, understood to be internally connected to the former building on site.

- 4.20 A map dating from 1893 shows little change to the arrangement of the site. However, the neighbouring property to the south-west appears to have been partially demolished on the Spear Street side of the block.



Figure 4.9: 1893 Map

- 4.21 The 1908 map below shows that the north-west end of the narrow access route has been developed, but the strip remains predominantly undeveloped. A new building of similar footprint has been built on the neighbouring empty plot where a building had historically been demolished.



Figure 4.10: 1908 Map

- 4.22 The aerial view from the 1930s (figure 4.11 below) provides useful detail of the former building and the elevation which fronted onto Spear Street. The building was three storeys in height, under a pitched roof with a uniform three bay window arrangement at first and second floor level. The narrow access route remains undeveloped. The fire escape door on the building to the left of the application site again underpins the view that Spear Street functioned as more of a service access, particularly compared to Oldham Street to which that same building fronted onto. The change to the roovescape of the block is evident in 2023 Google aerial imagery (figure 4.12). There has been significant alteration to the roofs of buildings adjacent to the site, for example the replacement of pitched roofs for flat roofs, arched roofs, rooflights and solar panels.

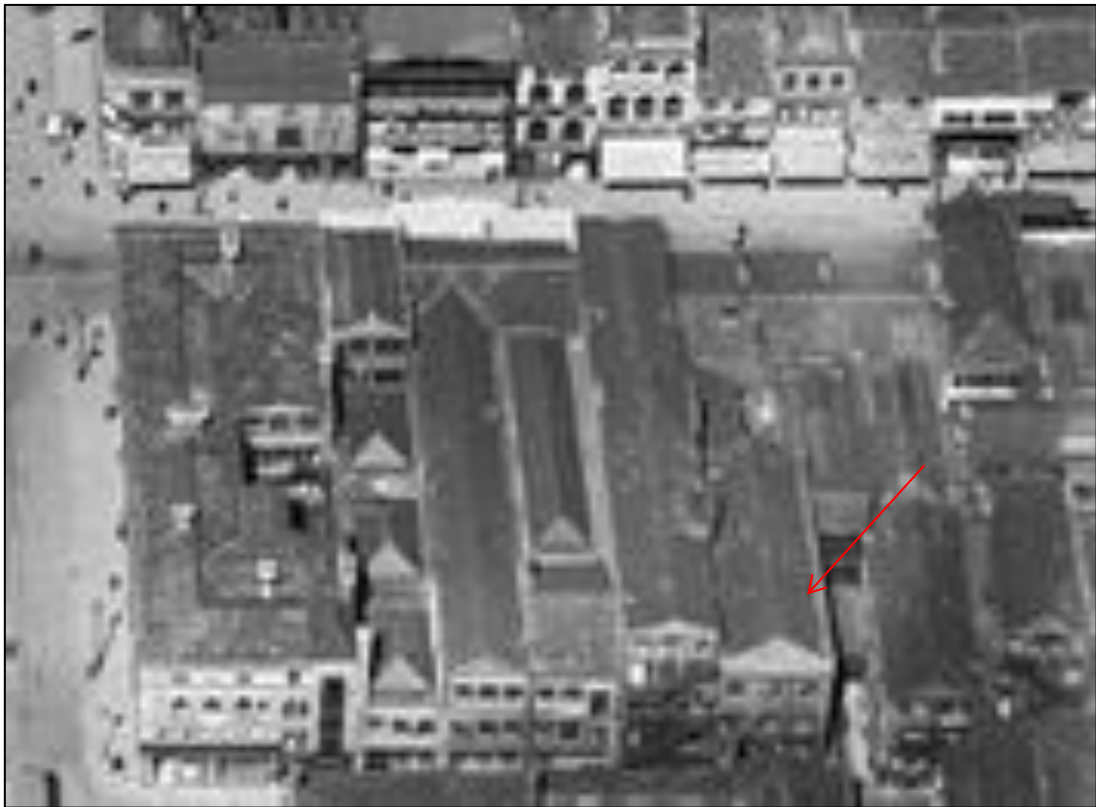


Figure 4.11: 1930s aerial view

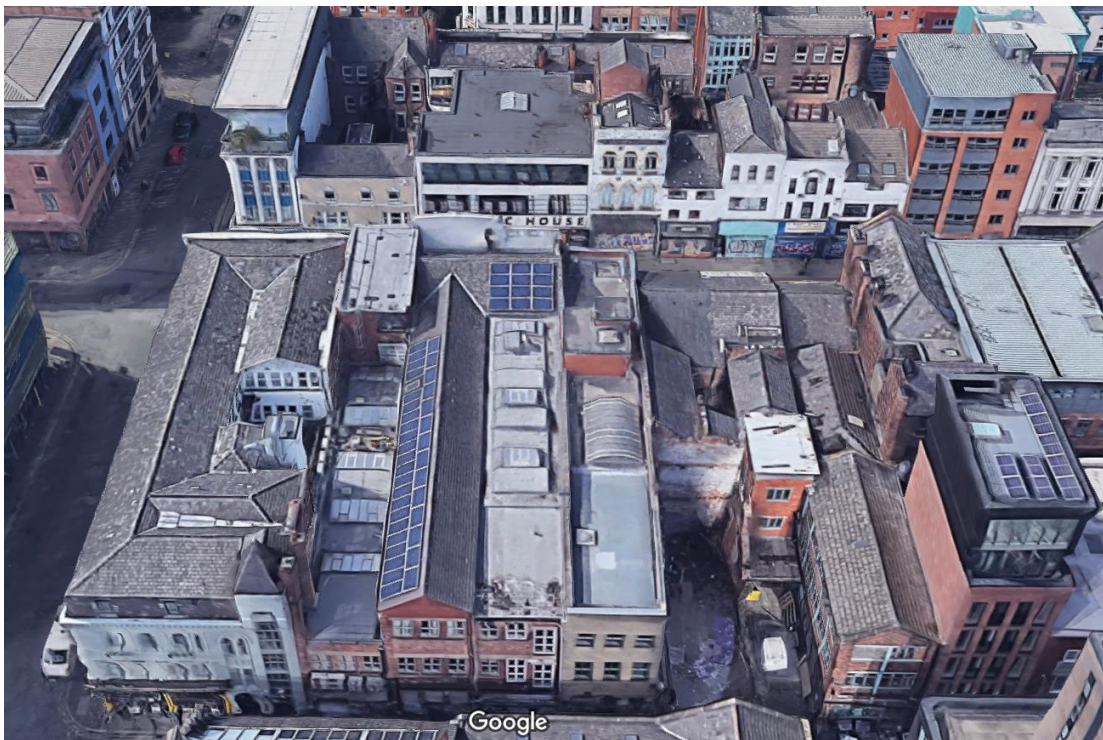


Figure 4.12: 2023 Google aerial image

- 4.23 The 1956 map (figure 4.13) shows the site was still developed at this time, and confirms that the no. 47 Spear Street building was demolished after this date – as is reinforced by planning history for the site. The narrow access road appears to be developed on mapping from 1934 to 1956 (see appendix 1) however this development may only have been at single storey given there are facing side windows on the building to the north, and likely within the former building on the application site.



Figure 4.13: 1956 Map

5. The Proposed Scheme

- 5.1 The application proposal has been developed in response to its conservation area setting. The planning application proposes the development of a longstanding vacant site, which has a harmful impact on the appearance of the area. The proposals therefore represent an opportunity to deliver significant heritage, planning, and regeneration benefits for Manchester.
- 5.2 The application proposes the creation of a six storey building above a basement that will accommodate office floorspace and five apartments. Office space is provided at basement level and ground floor level, and a single apartment will be provided on each floor level above.
- 5.3 The building will have a flat roof and be constructed in brick with panels of recessed brick soldier coursing above and below the windows to provide added interest. Window frames and doors will be an anodised aluminium, with matching coping at roof level. Windows are vertically proportioned, with a simple sash and two pane design.
- 5.4 Two lightwells will be created on the north-east side elevation of the building which will serve the basement office space. These will be accommodated within the narrow strip of land which historically has remained undeveloped and together with land to the north once formed part of Back Spear Street. This area will also accommodate bin storage. The existing gate enclosing this access strip will be replaced with a new steel access controlled gate.
- 5.5 Please refer to the architectural drawings and Design and Access Statement prepared by Material Studio for a full description of the drawings.

6. Heritage Assessment

- 6.1 In heritage terms the key impacts which require consideration are the impact on the character and appearance of the Stevenson Square Conservation Area, and potential impact on the setting of nearby listed buildings. This section appraises the significance of the site in terms of its conservation area setting, and also provides an assessment of the proposal upon heritage assets.

47-47a Spear Street

- 6.2 The site in its current form has a major negative impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The gap site disrupts the tight urban grain and consistent building line along this section of Spear Street. Furthermore, the site is unkempt and in a dilapidated condition. Although now hoarded, views of the exposed blank party walls, the partially collapsed exterior wall of the former building, together with means of enclosure including heras fencing are unsightly. The hoarding is also the subject of vandalism which further detracts from the appearance of the site. The significance of the remaining historic fabric on site is considered to be low.

Potential Impact on the Conservation Area: Assessment of Proposal

- 6.3 The proposals involve a six storey building above a basement. The building will have a narrow frontage and will occupy the footprint of the former building on site, thereby restoring the former urban grain of this section of Spear Street. The proposals also retain the thin strip of land running along the north-east of the site as undeveloped, which respects the historical layout and development of the site.
- 6.4 The proposed building, by virtue of occupying the same footprint of the former building, will present a narrow frontage to Spear Street which responds to the character of the 19th century commercial properties built along the western side of Spear Street. The development will use appropriate materials, namely brick to respond to the historic buildings which are predominantly red brick in the vicinity of the site. The elevation will be largely

simplistic, with a uniform and repetitive window arrangement which aligns with the vertical emphasis of the fenestration on nearby historic buildings. The recessed brickwork panels will provide added interest, whilst the flat roof and anodised aluminium frame coping, windows and doors will create a subtle contemporary feel to the development, ensuring it reads as a modern – yet sympathetic – addition to the streetscene.

- 6.5 The provision of built form to this space will also assist in obscuring views of the unsightly blank party walls which frame the site. The proposed height is considered to be acceptable, the building will extend circa two storeys above the adjacent properties. This variation in height and roofline of the urban block is considered appropriate and reflects the character of the Northern Quarter and conservation area. It is also important to highlight the proposed building is only one storey taller than the development previously approved under application 118233/FO/2017, and is considerably lower than seven storey building constructed at 53 Spear Street. The proposed building would serve to create increased built form along this street, helping 53 Spear Street to assimilate with the surroundings, whilst also screening the upper floors of this building. Whilst the upper floors on the south west elevation of the proposed building would be visible, this would be screened by the gable roofed element of 16-50 Oldham Street which backs onto Spear Street.
- 6.6 The proposed development therefore reinforces a number of positive characteristics of this part of the conservation area including materiality, fenestration, simplicity in appearance, and the narrow fronted character of buildings.
- 6.7 In more general terms, the scheme will provide heritage benefits by bringing the site back into use and contributing to activity and footfall on this section of Spear Street. Finally, the scheme has the potential to act as a catalyst for further development in this part of Spear Street which is in need of further investment and regeneration.
- 6.8 For the above reasons the application proposal is judged to have a positive impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area and to enhance its significance. As such the proposal is in accordance with relevant heritage provisions of the NPPF, Core Strategy Policies CC9, EN1, EN3 and DM1, and Saved UDP Policy DC18.1.

Current Influence on setting of nearby listed buildings

- 6.9 The nearest listed building to the site is the Castle Hotel at 66 Oldham Street (Grade II) which is circa 45m to the north east of the site. Sevendale House, Dale Street (Grade II) is circa 60m to the south of the site. The vacant application site has no impact or inter-visibility with the Castle Hotel. However, when taking long range views of the site looking north along Spear Street adjacent to Sevendale House, peripheral views of the north-west elevation of Sevendale House can be seen in this view. Due to the orientation of this view, and the backdrop of built form on the otherwise consistent frontage along the north-west of Spear Street, it is difficult to identify the gap in this building line as a result of the vacant plot. Furthermore, the full extent of the application site nor its harmful visual impact can be seen in this view. Therefore, it is considered that the application site in its current form has a neutral influence on the setting of nearby listed buildings.

Potential Impact on the Setting of nearby listed buildings

- 6.10 The proposed development will not be visible from Oldham Street. The back of pavement setting of buildings on Oldham Street means that long range views are restricted, furthermore the Castle Hotel is adjacent to taller four storey development at 60-62 Oldham Street, which would screen any glimpses of the proposals when taking in views of this listed building looking south on Oldham Street. It is also noted that the seven storey development at 53 Spear Street is not visible from Oldham Street.
- 6.11 Glimpses of the proposed development may be co-visible in views taken from Spear Street adjacent to Sevendale House looking north. Whilst the side / Spear Street elevation of Sevendale House is not the principal elevation and serves more as a service elevation, it is nonetheless considered that the reinstatement of built form – which in this case is of a high quality and appropriate design – to the ‘façade wall’ to Spear Street will have a positive influence on the setting of Sevendale House by reinforcing the tight urban grain of this part of the Northern Quarter. By virtue of the separation distance, and oblique orientation of the views of the proposed development, the impact upon the setting of the listed building is judged to be a minor positive impact.

6.12 For reasons already discussed in this section, the application proposal will have a major positive impact on the character and appearance of the Stevenson Square Conservation Area. The proposal will not have any impact on listed buildings on Oldham Street and will have a positive influence on the townscape in which Sevendale House is experienced. On this basis the proposals will preserve and enhance the setting of proximate listed buildings and as such comply with relevant provisions of the NPPF, Core Strategy Policies CC9, EN1, EN3 and DM1, and Saved UDP Policy DC19.

7. Conclusion

7.1 This Statement has assessed the impact of the application proposal on the significance of the Stevenson Square Conservation Area, and the significance of nearby listed buildings.

7.2 This Statement has demonstrated that the proposals are well-considered and respond positively to the heritage significance of the surrounding context, whilst providing significant heritage, planning, and regeneration benefits.

7.3 This Statement concludes that the scheme will have a positive impact on the heritage value of the conservation area, and the setting of nearby listed buildings. As such the proposals are consistent with relevant heritage policy and guidance at a local and national level. Based on this conclusion there is no requirement to demonstrate public benefits, however it is nonetheless useful to set out the series of positive planning benefits which the scheme will deliver. These include:

- The provision of high-quality office and residential accommodation in a sustainable and accessible City Centre location which will help to meet local demand and reduce pressures to develop less sustainable greenfield and Green Belt land.
- Major visual improvements by reinstating built form to this unsightly gap site.
- Securing direct investment into the local community through the provision of jobs during the construction stage and spending in nearby facilities by future residents.
- Acting as a catalyst for further investment and development in the City Centre.

7.4 For the above reasons and justification within this Statement we conclude that the application proposal is consistent with relevant heritage policies and guidance. On this basis Paul Butler Associates conclude that planning permission should be granted.

Appendix 1: Historic Maps



1793 Map



1851 Map



1888 Insurance Plan of the City of Manchester Vol. II: sheet 30



1893 Map



1908 Map



1922 Map



1934 Map



1947 Map



1956 Map