

Install Communications Cabling: Design, Heritage & Access Statement

The proposal involves bringing communications cabling into the basement of Fourways House, and then running this, along the walls of a stairwell, up to first floor offices. Once inside, cabling runs on an existing tray, above head height. The works are required to connect the Server in the Office to the Vodafone fibre network below the public highway on Brewer Street.

The installation has been carefully sited so as to utilise existing trunking and have a neutral effect on the character and appearance of both the listed building and conservation area. This proposal was considered by both Max Gibson and Emily Booth, Planning Officers whose advice was to apply for listed building consent.

The property is Grade II listed, (List Entry Number 1380335), described as:

Packing warehouse, now offices. 1906, with minor late C20 alterations. By James William Beaumont, architect, of Manchester. Red brick on a low stone plinth with ashlar sandstone dressings and moulded brick detailing. Multiple ridge roof, with a Welsh slate covering. PLAN: Rectangular plan, with centrally- placed narrow rectangular courtyard/light well accessed from streets to east and west. FRONT (NORTH) ELEVATION. Symmetrical 8-bay frontage range to Tariff Street, of six storeys above a basement. Entrances to bays 2 and 7, with stepped approaches to altered double doorways set within ashlar surrounds. Ashlar cill band to first and sixth floor. Ground floor shop front windows with metal lintel beams and deep stall risers, and above, coupled sash windows without glazing bars to all floors. These are flat-headed, except to upper floor, where openings have semicircular arched heads below a shallow parapet. Bays 2 and 7 have triple windows, a wide central opening with narrower flanking windows, all with sash frames, and with the lintels set lower than in other six bays. The heads of these bays step up above parapet level, with a wide banded semi-circular arch to the heads of the upper floor windows. Angled corner to right returns onto Hilton Street, and incorporates ground floor single doorway with late C20 canopy. Stacked single light openings above extend to 5th floor, those above first floor in widened chamfered frontage carried on shallow side corbels. SIDE (WEST) ELEVATION: Asymmetrical facade, with wide central vehicular entrance beneath flat metal lintel beam wagon. Windows in couples and triples, arranged 1:2:2:2:4:3:3:3, with entrance to bay 7, and raised parapet with wide arch to window heads. Remaining elevations reflect various aspects of these elevational details. INTERIOR. Load-bearing external walls carry internal frame of cast iron columns and metal cross beams. Service lifts for goods and passengers survive, together with original staircases. Exposed roof structure to attic storey. Glazed brickwork to internal courtyard to create light well.

A little-altered and prominently sited example of a distinctive Manchester commercial building type, designed by a notable Manchester architect, and a component of a significant commercial quarter. It forms a group with the adjacent canal warehouse (item 29/416) and other packing warehouses (items 29/ 85, 29/86, and 29/87)

The cabling will enter Fourways, below ground, beneath the Brewer Street entrance. No new holes will be made in the stonework/brickwork (above ground). Cabling will mainly follow the route of existing trunking/cables. Cabling will run across the Basement ceiling and exit room via an existing hole. Cabling will then run along Basement wall to Fire Exit. Cabling will then be taken upwards, utilising existing penetrations, to third stairwell landing (First Floor). Cabling will then enter Offices (Fire Exit) using existing hole. Inside the Office, the cabling will utilise existing overhead cable tray to reach Cabinet. The Offices have previously been modernised (listing occurred in 2000). Therefore, the proposal will have a neutral affect, causing no harm to the character and appearance of the building.

Fourways is located within Stevenson Square Conservation Area, designated in 1974.

The majority of buildings of architectural or historic interest in the conservation area are Victorian or early-20th century. Most are related to the cotton industry, often warehouses, showrooms or workshops. These buildings are taller than the earlier examples and create a varied matrix of building mass, divided by largely dark, narrow streets. Wealth produced by the cotton industry can be seen reflected in the buildings, either stone or brick with stone dressings, many of which are elaborately decorated.

The property is a former warehouse. None of the cabling will be attached to the elevation. Therefore, the cabling will have a neutral affect, causing no harm to the character and/or appearance of the Conservation Area.

The Basement, Stairwell and Office are accessible from within the building, itself reached via internal stairs. There is no reason why any member of the public would need access to these works.

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