Heritage Statement (External Signage REV 01 June 2023)

40-46 Princess Street, Manchester

Doc No: P0214_HS_REP002
Issue: FOR CONSENT
Rev: 01
Date: JUNE 2023

Contents

1) Introduction / purpose of document
2) Understanding the Site
3) Assessment of Significance
4) Proposed Works & Impact Assessment
5) Statutory Requirements
6) Conclusions

1.0 Introduction / Purpose of Document

1.1 A detailed Heritage Statement was prepared by BB Heritage Studio on behalf of Wittington Investments (Properties) Limited, for the refurbishment, extension and partial change of use to 40-46 Princess Street (Eastern House and Langley Buildings), Manchester which was granted consent in September 2021 (see document reference P0214_HS_REP001). This abridged Heritage Statement has been prepared to accompany the planning and listed building consent applications for external signage to the Princess Street elevation.

1.2 BB Heritage Studio provides built heritage advice and consultancy services. It is led by Bernadette Bone who is a qualified architect with over 20 years experience of designing in historic environments. Bernadette is an RIBA Accredited Specialist Conservation Architect (RIBA SCA) and has a Post Graduate Diploma in Building Conservation (GradDiplConsAA).

1.3 The site of 40-46 Princess Street contains two separately Grade II listed buildings (Eastern House and Langley Buildings) and is located in the Whitworth Street Conservation Area. As such this Heritage Statement has been prepared to satisfy the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). As required by the NPPF the statement considers the characteristics of the site, the conservation area and adjacent heritage assets in sufficient detail to understand the potential impact of the proposals on their significance.

1.4 This report consists of six parts. Following this introduction the second section 'Understanding the Site' outlines the heritage context focussing principally on the characteristics of the Whitworth Street Conservation Area and describes the historic background and the buildings today. The third part contains an assessment of significance which is followed in section four by an outline of the proposed works and assessment of impact. The fifth part considers the statutory requirements and the sixth part contains the conclusions.

2.0 Understanding the site

2.1 HERITAGE CONTEXT

2.1.1 40-46 Princess Street is located within the Whitworth Street Conservation Area. The conservation area was designated in September 1974 and extended in June 1985. In describing the significance of the conservation area the online appraisal states;

'The Whitworth Street/Princess Street conservation area is uniquely Mancunian in character, its physical form being established by the wealth of fine Victorian and Edwardian buildings erected between 1850 and 1920. They reflect the historical importance of the textile industry in the city.'

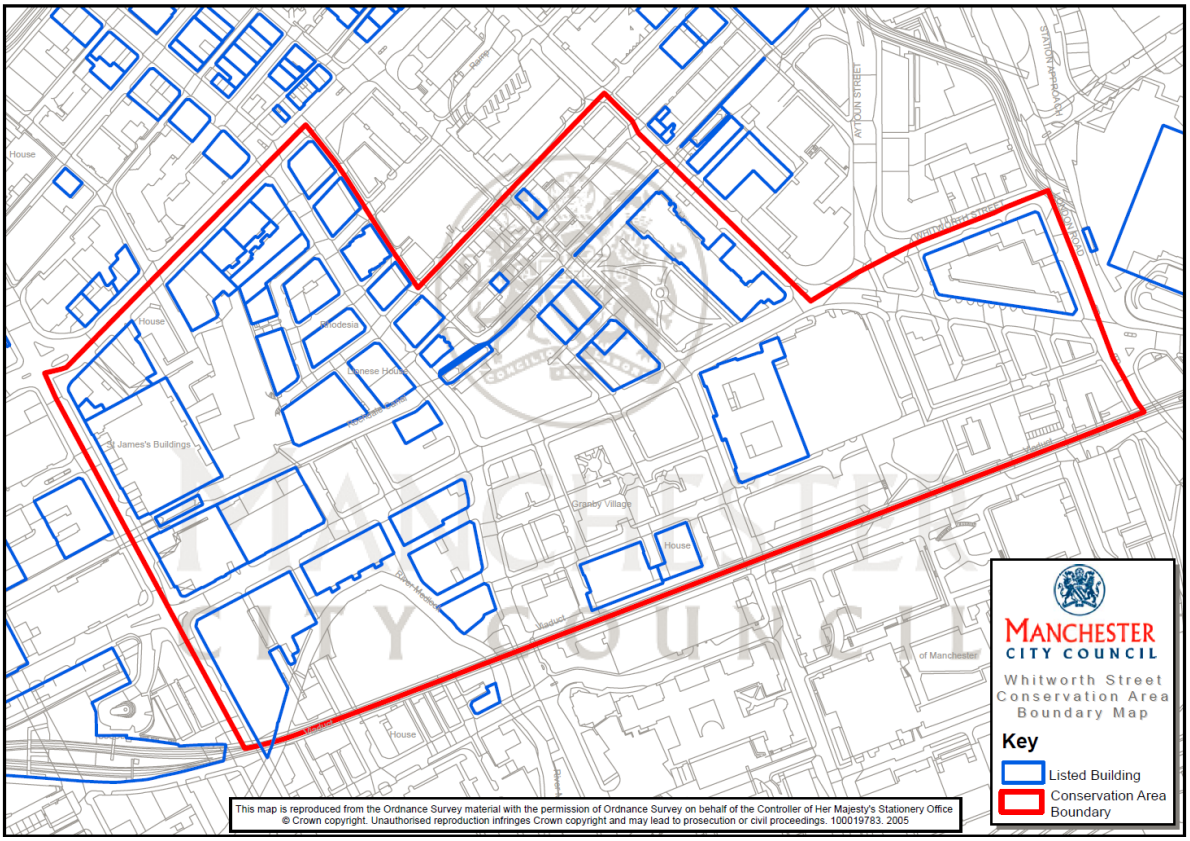

Fig.01 Whitworth Street Conservation Area Map

2.1.2 The appraisal goes on to explain that the buildings within the Whitworth Street Conservation Area are a result of Manchester's position as the largest textile centre in the world. The need for warehousing grew so that by the middle of the nineteenth century the warehouse buildings in the city centre were 'larger than before and built with considerable architectural characteristics'.

'The distinctive architecture which arose was both functional and expressive of the wealth of the owners. The front of the warehouses facing the main street was often used for offices whilst the rear of the building was used for storage space and for the inspection of the cotton goods in natural light. This led to six - or seven - storey buildings with opulent and deeply modelled front facades in brick and/or terracotta, whilst the rear was almost entirely glazed either in a vertical plane or stepped configuration. The building style reached its zenith in the early years of the twentieth century, and culminated in the grand Edwardian commercial architecture of Whitworth Street.'

2.1.3 The townscape assessment within the conservation area appraisal states;

'The Princess Street warehouses are relatively early in date, and for the most part are relatively plain and simplified developments of the Italian palazzo style….

Generally, slate is used to roof the buildings, though many are too high, or their roofs are too gently pitched, for this to be seen from ground level.

Windows, like those in most Manchester buildings of this period, are predominantly of the vertical sliding-sash type. They occur singly, but are more often seen in pairs, threes or occasionally in groups of four.

Entrance doors are very frequently located on the corners of buildings, and this is often associated with the further emphasis of a corner by means of elaborate detail, or by means of an extended roofline embellished with a tower or cupola.'

2.1.4 In relation to control of development and improvement and enhancement opportunities the appraisal states;

'The general policy in the conservation area is to retain existing structures where feasible, but where it can be shown that this is impossible, proposals for new buildings and extensions to existing ones must achieve a high standard of design which relates to the architectural and urban design character of the area.'

'There remains a large supply of existing vacant floor space within several significant buildings in the conservation area, and it is important in terms of the character of the area that this space is put to beneficial use.'

2.1.5 There are a number of other listed buildings in proximity to 40-46 Princess Street as shown to Fig. 01 including adjoining buildings along Princess Street / Portland Street and to Harter Street.

2.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.2.1 This section provides a brief overview of the historical development of the site area to provide the context for the assessment of significance.

Fig.02 Left: William Green Map 1793

2.2.2
At the time of the William Green map in 1793 (see Fig. 02) the site area remains as unbuilt land. The north-eastern part of Portland Street is established by this date, as is Chorlton Street, Sackville Street and Abingdon Street. The line of Princess Street has been established but is named David Street to the late 1700's maps.

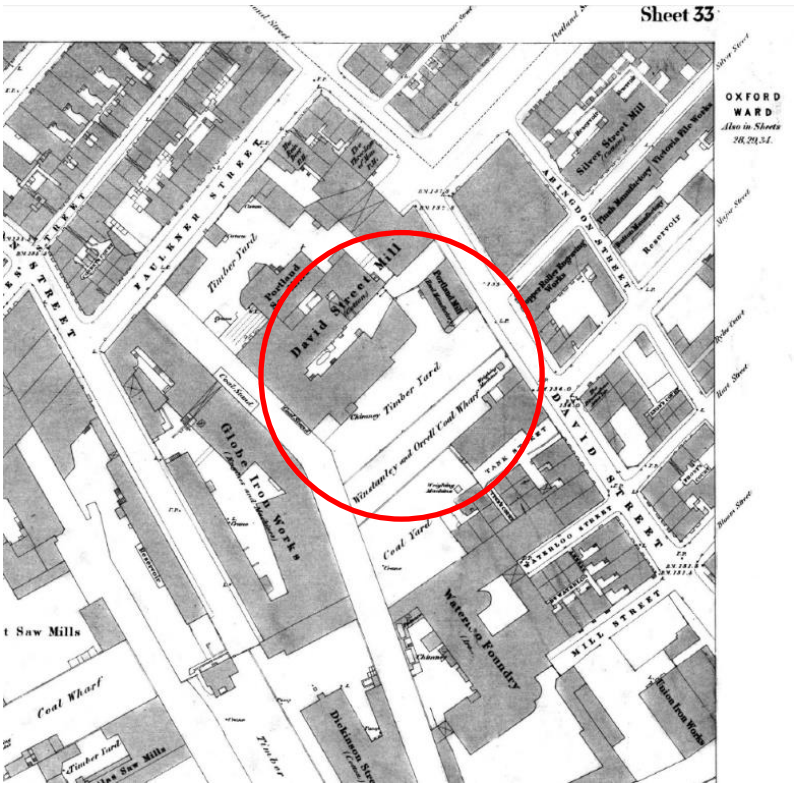

Fig.03 Left: 1849 Map

2.2.3
The line of Princess Street continues to be known as David Street into the 1800's. At the time of the 1849 map (see Fig. 03) Portland Street stops at the junction with David Street and there is built form on / adjacent to the proposed site area of 40-46 Princess Street.

Fig.04 Left: 1886 Goad Map (British Library)

2.2.4
By the time of this early Goad map the line of Portland Street had been continued and Princess Street named. This map shows the intended outline for construction on the corner of Portland Street and Princess Street (although labelled as 'ruins') with what is probably retained earlier construction associated with the former timber yard & coal wharf on the future site of Langley Buildings.

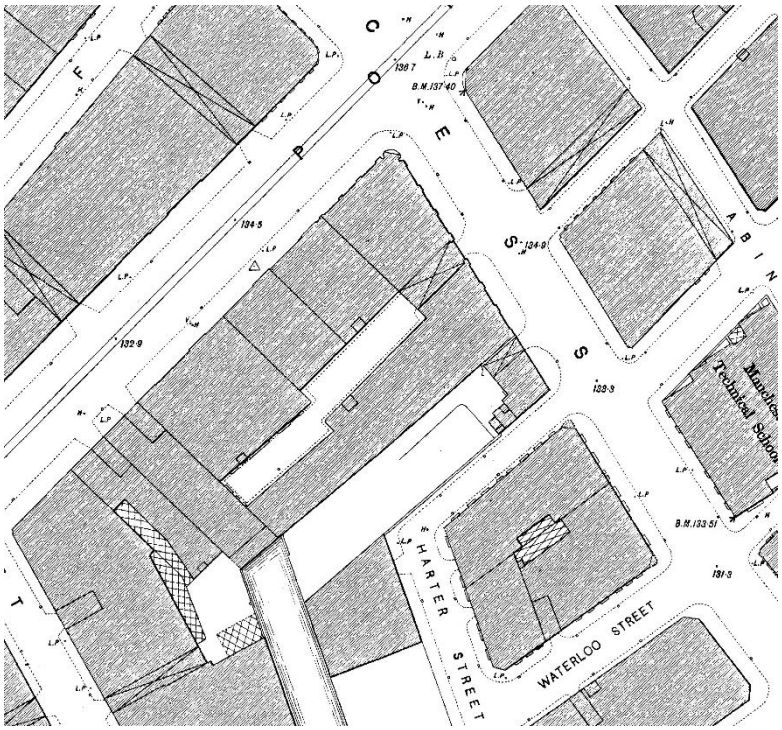

Fig.05 Left: 1891 OS Map

2.2.5
By 1891 the buildings to the corner of Portland Street and Princess Street had been constructed as well as Eastern House. On the site of Langley Buildings the earlier built form remains.

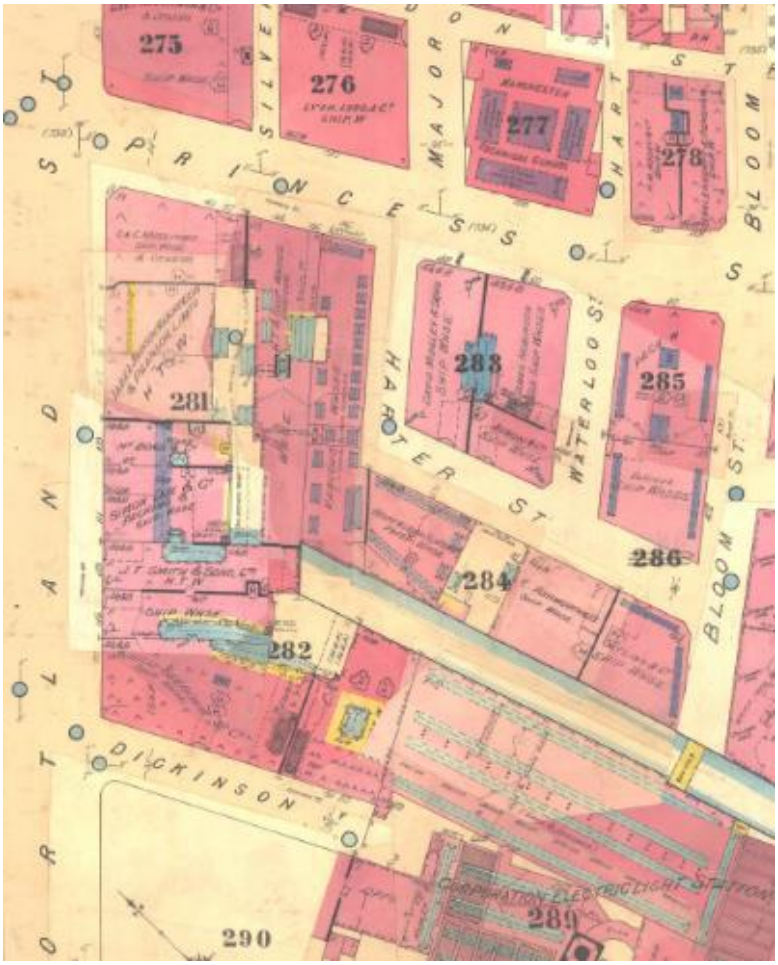

Fig.06 Left: Post 1895 Goad Insurance Plan

2.2.6
By the time of this revision of the Goad Insurance Plan both Eastern House and Langley Buildings have been constructed. The Goad Map shows the outline configuration of the buildings including stair and hoist locations, glazed light locations, the height and use of the buildings.

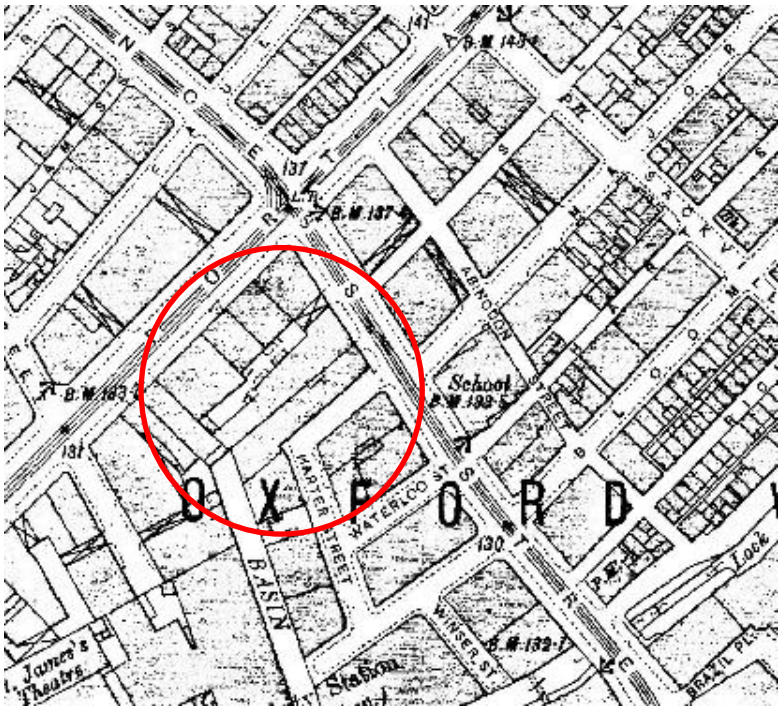

Fig.07 Left: 1908 OS Map

2.2.7
The 1908 OS map shows the built form of Eastern House and Langley Buildings. The canal basin remains directly to the south-west of Langley Buildings.

2.2.8 From the previous map sequence it can be seen that Eastern House was constructed first, as part of the phase of construction which included the buildings on the corner of Portland Street and Princess Street. Langley Buildings then followed.

2.2.9 Portland House including Eastern House was constructed in 1887 to designs by Pennington & Bridgen.[1] Described by Pevsner as '*a huge eclectic effort … red brick, with pale stone bands and hipped gables and finials*.' Pevsner then states '*Squashed up beside it No.46a LANGLEY BUILDINGS, c. 1895 by W.Waddington & Son, with a corner entrance with a ship's prow over it*.'

2.2.10 No archive plans have been located for Eastern House but the later Goad Insurance Plan provides some details. To this we can see the location of the hoists internally, one of the stairs from the courtyard and the location of glazed canopies and rooflights within the building footprint and to the courtyard.

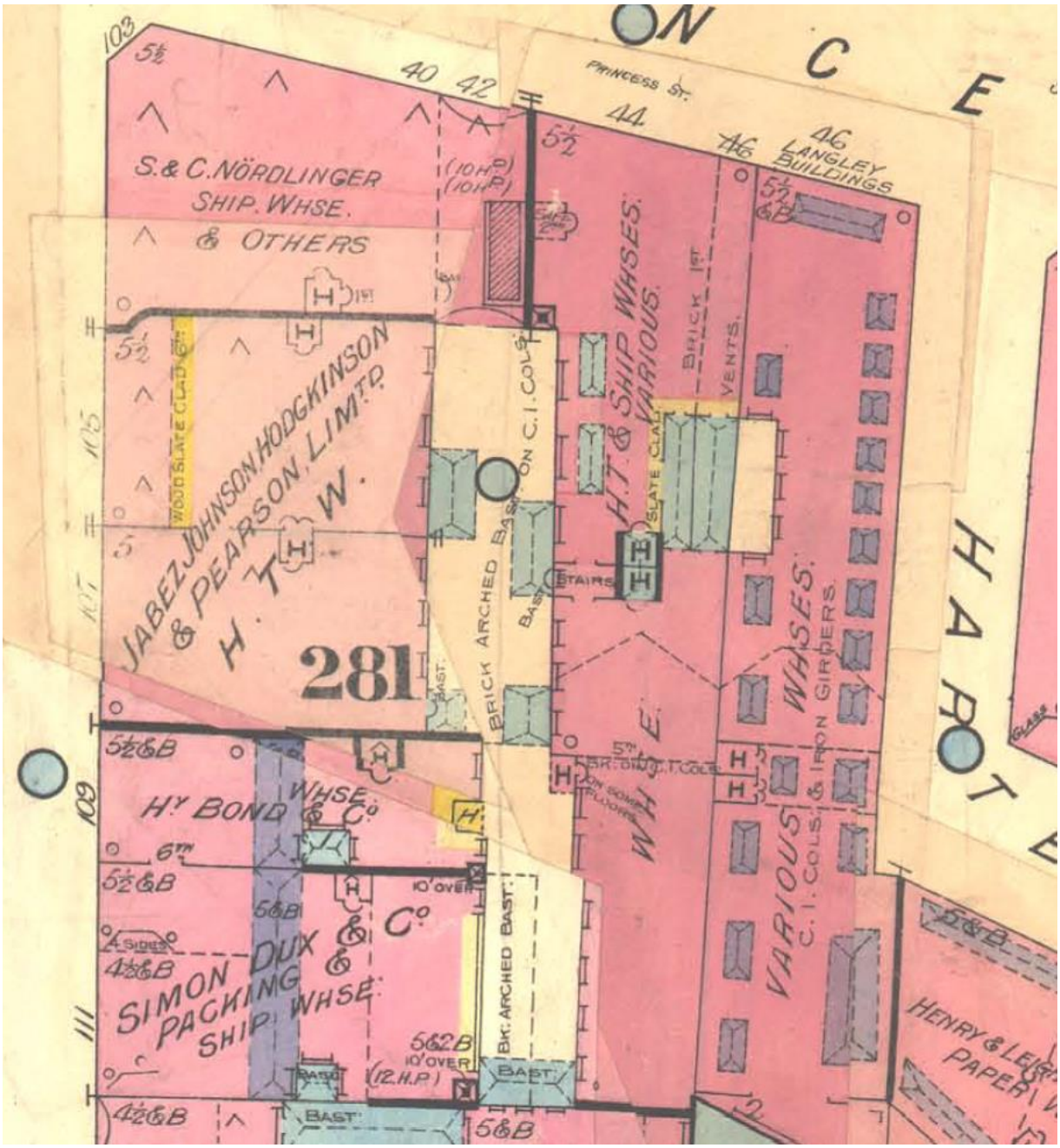

Fig.08: Later Goad Map as Fig 06 enlarged

[1] Clare Hartwell, Matthew Hyde and Nikolaus Pevsner '*The Buildings of England, Lancashire: Manchester and the South-East*', p330

2.2.11 Original plans survive in the Manchester Archives for Langley Buildings. The building was constructed to provide offices and warehouses. The archive plans show that the floor plate was predominantly open plan. An entrance from Princess Street formed a small internal lobby which accessed a curved staircase. A further entrance from Harter Street also then accessed directly a secondary staircase. The corner entrance then appears to have accessed the basement only. The hoists were located roughly midway along the party wall which then corresponded on the ground floor with the loading bay off Harter Street.

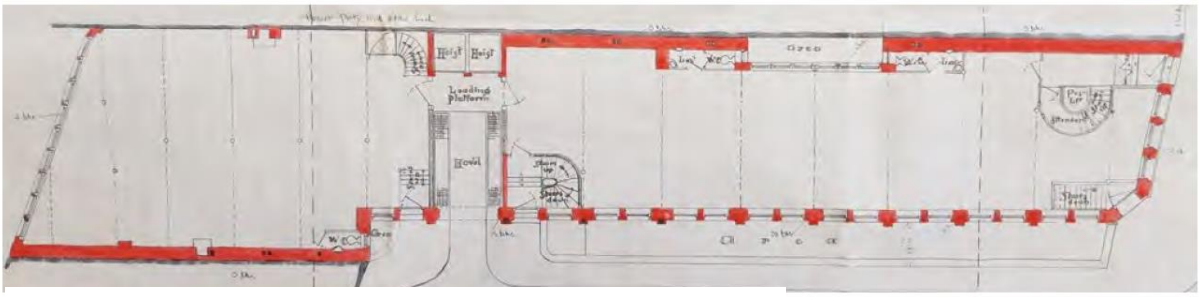

Fig.09: Langley Buildings 1895 Ground Floor Plan

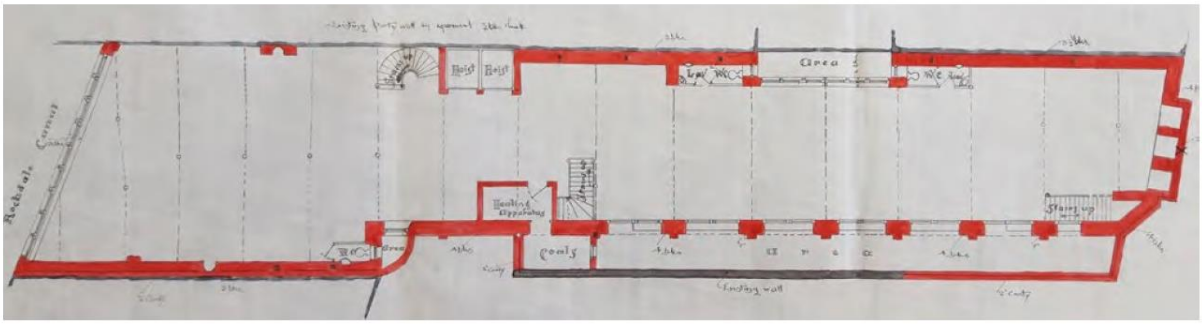

Fig.10: Langley Buildings 1895 Basement Plan

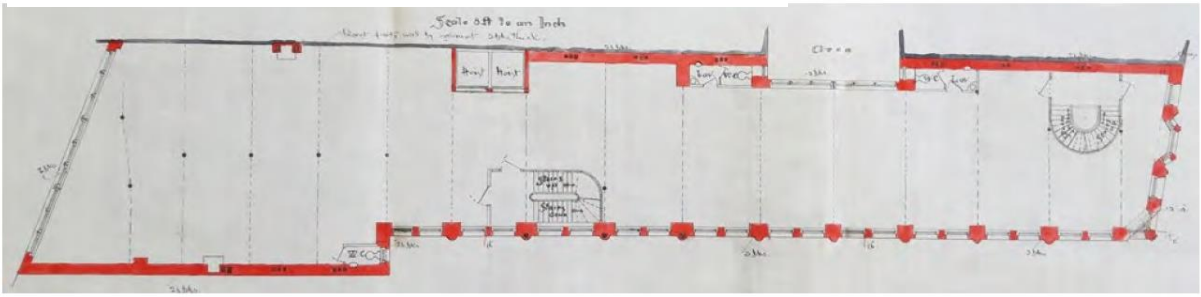

Fig.11: Langley Buildings 1895 First Floor Plan

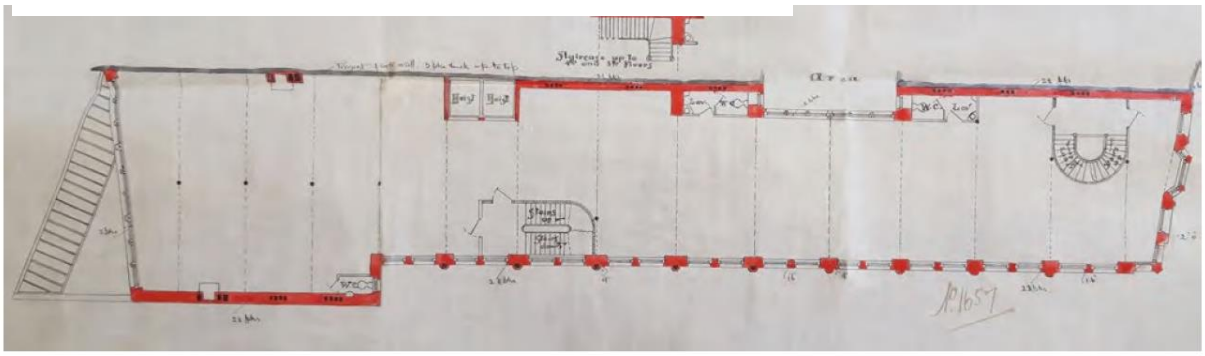

Fig.12: Langley Buildings 1895 Upper Floor Plan

2.3 EASTERN HOUSE & LANGLEY BUILDINGS TODAY

2.3.1 The buildings appear to have been used as warehouses into the mid-late 20th century. The planning history (refer to Paul Butler Associates planning statement) includes a change of use application for part of the site in January 1988 from a warehouse to a restaurant. From the late 20th century onwards the site was used as office space with the ground floor and basements used as restaurants and bars. Eastern House and Langley Buildings are currently in vacant and poor condition and require significant refurbishment to enable the two adjoining buildings to function as office space.

2.3.2 As noted within the D&A Statement the building has an extensive planning history. The recent applications since 2017 all relate to an aspiration for the comprehensive refurbishment, re-use and part extension to the buildings principally for B1 office use.

2.3.3 Listed Building Consent and Planning Consent applications in 2018 were approved and comprised a fourth floor rooftop extension, the installation of a glazed roof over the lightwell, the re-opening of historic windows, the reconfiguration of the main entrance staircase, the removal of existing entrance canopy, roller shutter and associated cladding, the provision of a new lift core and overrun, the reconfiguration of floor plates and the installation of modern WC facilities, the reconfiguration of external plant and equipment, provision of internal service risers, the fit out of the basement as a gym and the provision of a cycle store. Some unresolved technical issues have led to the fact that these proposals could not be taken forward to construction and as such Bridge Architects have been appointed to design the scheme from first principles.

2.3.4 Following the approval in 2018 soft strip out works have been undertaken. The historic plan form of the buildings as indicated to the later Goad Insurance Plan and archive drawings remains legible following these works. To Eastern House the centrally located workers stair accessed from the main courtyard and adjacent hoists as seen to the Goad Insurance Plan remain, with some alterations which have altered the historic fabric. The glazed canopies to the main courtyard are no longer extant. The form of the lightwell between Eastern House and Langley Buildings also remains legible, again with some alterations. In Langley Buildings the lobby and stair from Princess Street have been removed but sections of cornices to the ceiling indicate the previous lobby area. The workers stair from Harter Street remains, this had been concealed with plasterboard which has been removed as part of the post 2018 strip out works to reveal the historic detailing. The adjacent hoists in Langley Buildings also remain. (refer to the accompanying photo survey for images of these areas).

2.3.5 Within Eastern House, other than the retained central workers stair accessed from the courtyard, the original intended entrance sequence and vertical circulation is not clearly legible. The existing entrance into Eastern House from Princess Street is part of the later 20th century alterations to convert the building to office space. A staircase is located adjacent to this entrance area which contains some remnants of lath & plaster and what has been assessed to be its likely original plan form of curved corners. At upper levels this staircase has been considerably altered and the extant fabric appears to be patched together. The extent of retained historic fabric within this staircase which is considered to be of high significance is limited and is considered further to 4.7.

2.3.6 It is known that there were two fires in Eastern House in the early 1900's, evidence of fire damage can be seen to the underside of the floor at the upper level. It is likely that the staircase was damaged in these fires, resulting in the need to reconstruct the enclosure which would explain the patchy reconstruction. A newspaper article dated 15th July 1919 in The Guardian states;

'Cotton and woollen goods to the value of many thousands of pounds were destroyed by fire yesterday morning on a large block of buildings known as Eastern House, princess Street, Manchester and used as warehouses and offices by a number of firms. The fire brigade was successful in containing the outbreak to the upper portion of the building, where the fire originated. It is recalled that a serious fire occurred in the same building in 1916, and that the repairs following upon the former fire had scarcely been completed. The cause of the outbreak is not known.'

2.3.7 This staircase also appears to be located where offices that fronted Princess Street were then separated from the open warehouse space to the rear. This subdivision can be seen in remnants of plaster cornicing at level 02, although there isn't evidence for this subdivision on every floor.

2.3.8 The workers staircase in Langley Buildings which is accessed from Harter Street, has had some minor alterations but remains principally in its historic form throughout the buildings and is one of the elements of high heritage significance.

2.3.9 The listing notices for the buildings contains the following information;

Name:	**Eastern House**
Grade:	II
List Entry Number:	1247058
Date First Listed:	06-Jun-1994

Listing Description:

Includes: Nos.40 TO 46 Eastern House PRINCESS STREET. Shipping warehouse, now offices, club, etc. c.1870-80. Probably iron-framed, with cladding of red brick in Flemish bond, sandstone dressings, slate roof. Trapeziform plan on corner site, with loading at rear. Eclectic style. Five storeys with basement and attic, 3 bays, symmetrical, with stone-banded pilasters and bracketed cornice to ground floor, some stone bands to upper floors, moulded terracotta panels between 2nd and 3rd floors, plain frieze interrupted in the centre, steeply-pitched roof with hipped gable in the centre finished with a finial. Ground floor has square-headed doorway with moulded surround and plain frieze with attached lettering "PORTLAND HOUSE", flanked by pairs of segmental headed windows over basement openings; 1st, 2nd and 3rd floors have 3-light windows with stone mullions, those at 1st and 2nd floors of the centre in a segmental oriel with a carved panel between floors, segmental-headed lights to the upper floor, dentilled cornice and brick parapet, those at 1st floor of the outer bays with pilaster mullions and segmental pediments to the centre light, and those at 3rd floor segmental-headed with keystones; pairs of 1-light windows to 4th floor; flat-roofed dormers over the outer bays; gable chimneys. Left return (40 to 46 Princess Street), 7 bays in matching style, symmetrical, with hipped gables to the 2nd and 6th bays and square-headed loading bay entrance in the centre. Rear and interior not inspected. Forms group with No.101 (q.v.) on opposite corner of Princess Street; and with Nos 105 and 107, 109 and 111, and 113 to 119 to the right (q.v.), together comprising a complete block of former shipping warehouses.

Name:	**Langley Buildings**
Grade:	II
List Entry Number:	1247385
Date First Listed:	06-Jun-1994

Listing Description:

Textiles warehouse, now offices. c.1880-90, altered. Cast-iron frame with sandstone ashlar facade and red brick side (roof not visible). Narrow rectangular plan at right-angles to street, with chamfered corner. Eclectic style with some Jacobean detailing. Five storeys over basement, a 3-window facade plus the left corner, with cornice to ground floor, sill-bands to all floors, cornice to top floor with carved upstand at corner. The ground floor has a doorway to the right with 2-light overlight in Jacobean style and cornice over this lettered "LANGLEY BUILDINGS", coupled windows in the centre, a former window to the left altered as a doorway, and in the splayed corner a square-headed doorway with moulded surround and panelled door. Above the door is the moulded corbel to a right-angled 2-storey oriel which has a shaped parapet, above this a canted 3-light window which has a parapet with strap-work panels and urn finials, and at top floor a 2-light window and parapet inscribed "LANGLEY BUILDINGS". Otherwise, the main facade is symmetrical, with a recessed centre bay almost filled by a rectangular oriel with pilasters tiered through 3 floors, and finished with a parapet like the other, and flanked by exceptionally

narrow sashed windows in the re-entrants. All windows sashed without glazing bars. Ten-bay return wall of brick, with semi-octagonal pilasters finished as short pinnacles, and coupled sashed windows. Forms part of uninterrupted linear group of similar buildings on this side of Princess Street. Included for group value..

3.0 Assessment of Significance

3.1 An assessment of significance is a requirement for any planning application that affects a heritage asset. This section of the report provides an assessment of the heritage merit of the application site based on desk based research and site visits. The assessment has been carried out with reference to the heritage values as defined in the English Heritage document *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidelines* which can be summarised as follows;

- Evidential value – the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity (i.e. archaeological interest)
- Historical value – the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life are connected through a place.
- Aesthetic value – the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place (i.e. architectural and artistic interest)
- Communal value – the meanings of a place for the people that relate to it.

3.2 A statement of significance follows uses the following 'grades' of significance

- Exceptional – the elements of the heritage asset which are of exceptional value (equivalent to Grade I)
- High – the elements of the heritage asset which are of high value (equivalent to Grade II*)
- Considerable – the elements of the heritage asset which are of moderate value (equivalent to Grade II)
- Some – the elements of the heritage asset which are of some value (equivalent to local listing status)
- Neutral – the elements of the heritage asset which have neutral value
- Negative – the elements of the heritage asset which have a negative impact or are visually intrusive
- Undefined – any elements which could be of heritage value but have yet to be determined due to lack of available information

3.3 **Evidential Value**

As noted above, evidential values are those that derive from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity (Conservation Principles para.35). These values will usually comprise physical remains inherited from the past and tend to be primarily archaeological in form. Consequently, the ability to understand and interpret the evidence is diminished in proportion to the extent of its removal or replacement (Conservation Principles para.36).

The site of 40-46 Princess Street has the potential to yield evidence about the construction of the warehouse building typology across the period. The principal construction of both Eastern House and Langley Buildings remains largely unchanged with elements which correspond with the archive information. This has been partly diminished by some 20th century alterations but it is considered that the site has the potential to yield considerable evidential value, corresponding to its Grade II listing.

3.4 **Historical Value**

As noted above, historical values derive from the ways in which people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present day (Conservation Principles para.39). The evidence may be either illustrative or associative and is of relevance to the site of 40-46 Princess Street as the buildings provide both illustrative and associative evidence relating to Manchester's position as the largest textile centre in the world. There is historical value in the retained fabric which demonstrates the original design intent for the buildings and construction methods of the time.

3.5 Aesthetic Value

Aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place (Conservation Principles para 46), in particular architectural and artistic interest.

The buildings are constructed at a time where more decorative expression is starting to be incorporated into the detailing of the external facades which therefore have considerable aesthetic value. The interiors are typically aesthetically robust and functional with limited areas of decorative expression but are still aesthetically important as examples of the building typology of the period.

3.6 Communal Value

Communal value derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory (Conservation principles para 54).

The strong association of the warehouse buildings with the historic development of this period in Manchester strengthens the communal value. However this value is limited by the specific use of the site.

4.0 Proposed Works & Impact Assessment

4.1 The proposed works for the full refurbishment and modernisation of the building are described to the previous application. The design objectives as detailed in the D&A Statement are;

- To respect and celebrate the building's historic fabric.
- To make the existing building more legible, accessible, safe and welcoming.
- To provide a ground floor 'hub' space to provide a high quality reception and arrival experience into the building. This will include supplementary accommodation including meeting and breakout areas for the office spaces, with a dedicated entrance off Princess Street and DDA access.
- To provide basement ancillary accommodation for office users to include cycle storage areas and showers, with a dedicated entrance off the courtyard.
- To provide high quality, refurbished open plan office space to the upper floors with full DDA access throughout the building, with high quality common areas, circulation spaces and sanitary provisions, and with the addition of an extension at the rear rooftop level of Eastern House.
- To provide new space for gym use to the basement level with dedicated entrance and separately demised accommodation.
- To provide enhanced servicing provisions for refuse etc within the courtyard.
- To provide means of escape for building users that will comply with current legislation.
- To provide high quality new lift installations that will serve all levels of the building and provide DDA access throughout.
- To provide new mechanical and electrical installations that meet the requirements of contemporary use.
- To achieve BREEAM sustainability assessment method 'Good' rating.

4.2 This application is for the provision of 1no. external sign to the Princess Street elevation. The design of the sign is proposed to be five individual letters and a full stop, read as the word "f o r t y .". These will be laser cut from 5mm thick aluminium sheet and powder coated RAL 9005 black to a maximum height of 170mm. Each character will be dowel and resin fixed into the new stone.

The signage details are shown to drawing ref: 0247-al(79)101_P02 & 0247-al(79)101_P01 . The architect has given considered thought to the overall dimensions and location of the sign, as follows;

'The scale and location of the proposed signage has been carefully considered and consultation with MCC was sought prior to the application being made...
The proposed building signage installation is limited to a single sign on the right hand side of the entrance in order to limit intrusive drilling work to the building fabric, rather than providing one either side of the entrance… Furthermore the right hand side of the entrance has been selected (as) the stone band is an entirely new replica piece and as such the holes required to insert the resin fixed dowels will not be made into original fabric.'

4.3 The sign will therefore have negligible physical and visual impact on the heritage asset. The location of the sign is focussed on the new entrance way and located sympathetically with consideration for the building and the features of special interest which it possesses. As such the proposed signage is not considered to cause harm to the heritage asset.

5.0 Statutory Requirements

5.1 The aim of the following statement is to demonstrate that the proposed works meet the requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation) Act 1990 and the NPPF.

PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990

5.2 Section 16 of the Act requires that;
(1) the local planning authority may grant or refuse an application for listed building consent and, if they grant consent, may grant it subject to conditions.
(2) in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interested which it possesses.
(3) Any listed building consent shall (except in so far as it otherwise provides) ensure for the benefit of the building and of all persons for the time being interested in it.

5.3 Section 66 of the Act requires that;
(1) in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

5.4 Section 72 requires that;
(1) in a conservation area special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

Response: The proposed signage has carefully considered the building, its setting and the features of special architectural and historic interest which it possesses.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (2018)

5.5 Section 16 (paras 184 – 202) of the NPPF (February 2019) is specific to conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

5.6 Para 189 states *'In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. 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.'*

5.7 Para 192 states *'In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*

- *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.'*

5.8 Para 194 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;*

a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;

b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.'*

5.9 Para 196 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 securing its optimum viable use.'*

5.10 Para 200 states *'Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.'*

Response: The proposed signage will have a negligible impact on the heritage asset and is not considered to cause harm.

6.0 Conclusions

6.1 The NPPF requires planning applicants and local planning authorities to assess and understand the particular nature of the significance of heritage assets which will be affected by proposed development. Such assessment of heritage asset significance is necessary to understand the potential impact of proposed development.

6.2 This report considers the nature of the significance of the site of 40-46 Princess Street. The analysis shows that the Grade II listed buildings are an integral part of the Whitworth Street Conservation Area, and retain elements of heritage significance internally which are important to their character and heritage value, albeit altered.

6.3 The report identifies that the proposed signage will have a negligible physical and visual impact on the heritage asset. The location of the sign is focussed on the new entrance way and located sympathetically with consideration for the building and the features of special interest which it possesses. As such the proposed signage is not considered to cause harm to the heritage asset.

6.4 The proposals therefore fulfil the requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the relevant sections of the NPPF.