Manchester Royal Exchange

Southern Offices
Heritage + Access Statements

Rev. P5

jul23

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1.0 Purpose of report

This report has been prepared to accompany the Listed Building Consent Application for the proposed alterations to the South offices of the Royal Exchange in Manchester.

For the most part, these alterations consist entirely of decorations and fitting out works to some of offices on the second, third, fourth and fifth floors. This includes lighting and electrical installations.

The Royal Exchange is a Grade II listed structure under the Planning Act 1990 as amended, due to its special architectural and historic interest.

In accordance with Para. 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework the report will describe the significance of this heritage asset and will set out how the design proposals have been considered to preserve and enhance the appearance of one of the most important historic buildings in Manchester city centre.

This resport refers to the accompanying architectural drawings and the Heritage and Access Statements prepared by HK Architects Ltd.

The Third Exchange Building (Murgatroyd & Mills) prior to its expansion in 1914-21.

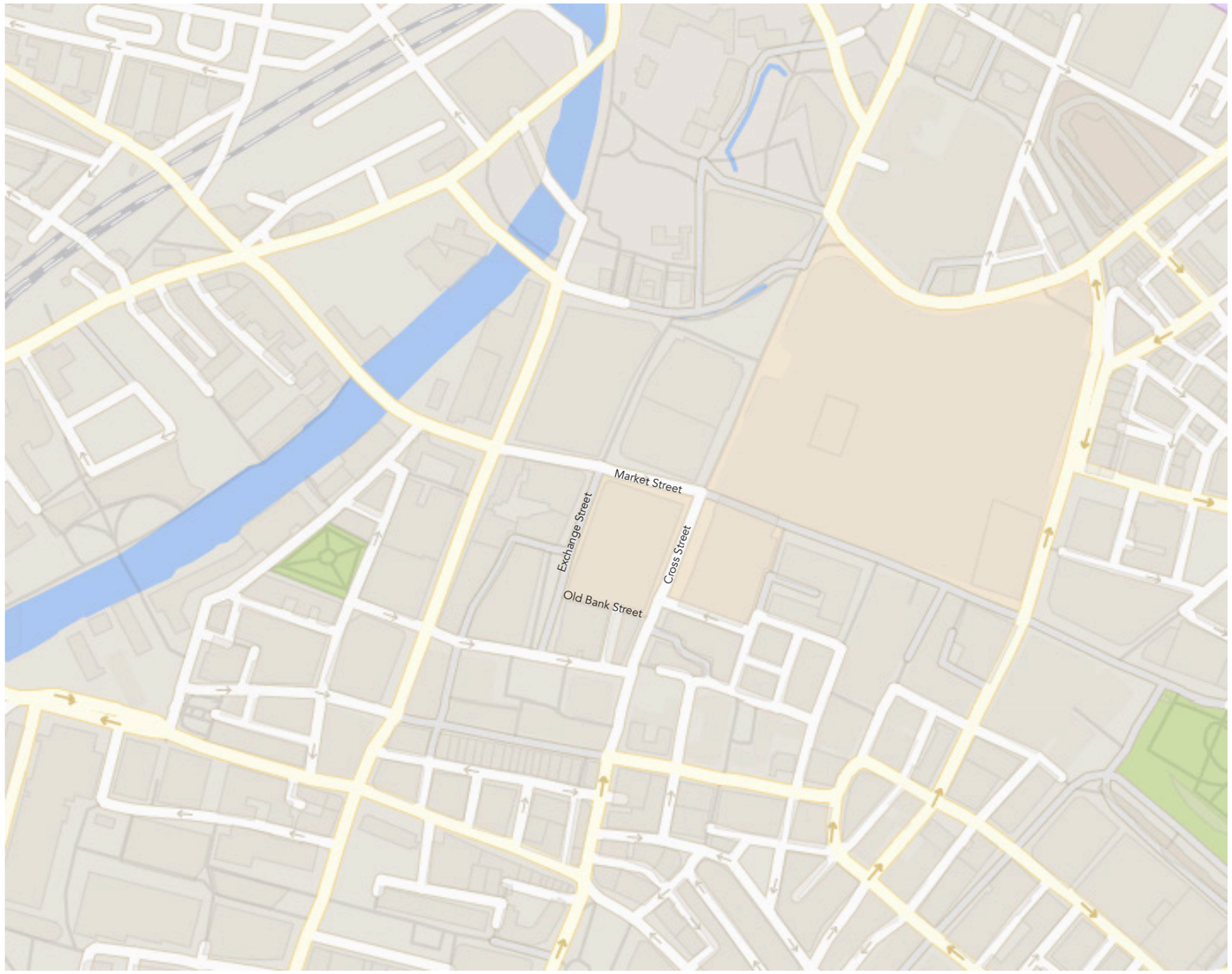
Heritage

2.0 Site and Context

The current, and fourth, Exchange building on the site is bounded by Market Street to the North, Cross Street to the East, Old Bank Street to the South and Exchange Street to the West. The building in its present form dates from the period between 1914 and 1921, when it was expanded to the South, to designs by architects Bradshaw, Gass and Hope, incorporating what was once Bank Street and the northern half of the blocks either side of Half Moon Street.

The trading floor at Exchange Level was effectively doubled during this phase, creating two large spaces, each covered by three domes.

The trading spaces were supported by a small number of offices and the Board Room at Exchange Level. Additional offices and members' facilities, such as toilets and the reading room were located at mezzanine level. Refreshment and communal spaces were built at ground floor level and the arcade was created to connect these spaces, as well as introduce a transverse connection between Cross Street and Exchange Street. Further levels of office were found on the upper floors to level 5, with the two above-parapet floors given over to storage.



3.0 Background to the proposals

The Exchange was bombed in 1940, during WWII, destroying much of the North part of the building. This was rebuilt as offices and opened in 1953.

The southern half of the building largely survived and the trading hall and the upper offices are substantially unchanged from their original state.

The upper floors of the South portion of the building are highly cellularised, comprising small office units accessed off a corridor which follows the void space around the surviving trading hall, now the Theatre and its environs.

The plan form of these upper floors largely survives from the 1914-21 phase and the decorative detailing, including architraves and other mouldings, such as the ceiling cornices, appear to have survived from this phase.

The South offices were refurbished at some point in the late 20th Century, using low-quality materials and fittings and concealing much of the original detailing.

More recently, the common parts to these levels were refurbished in a similar manner to that being proposed for the offices here. This was done under the granted Listed Building Consent Ref.124719/FO/2019. As well as being consistent with the nature of the historiacal asset, it is intended to be consistent with this recent common-areas refurbishment.

Exchange floor

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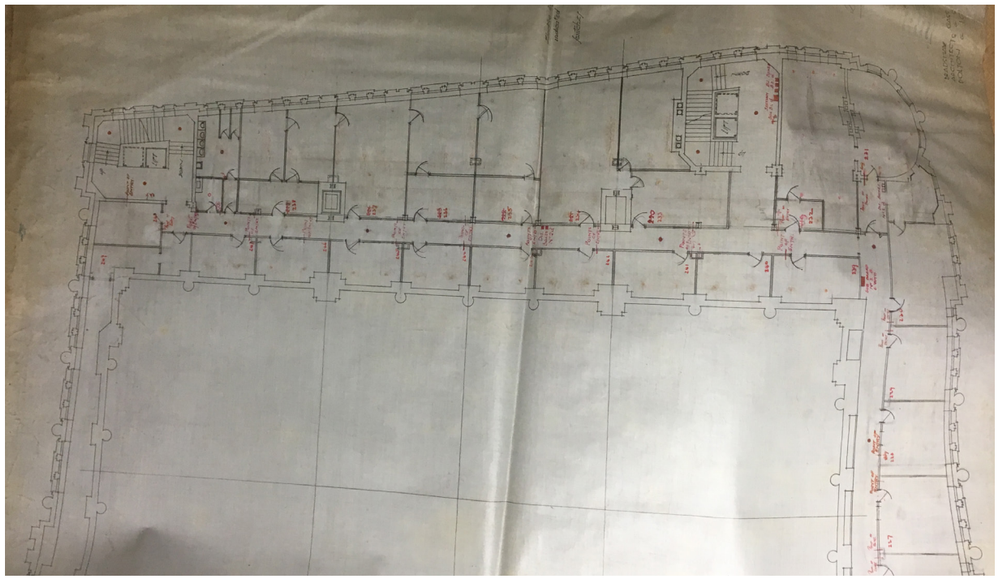
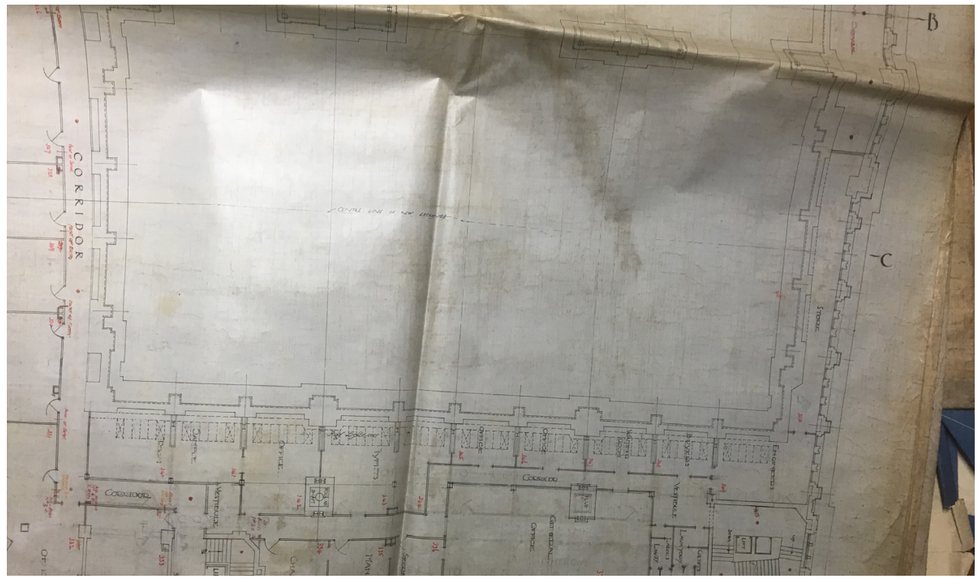
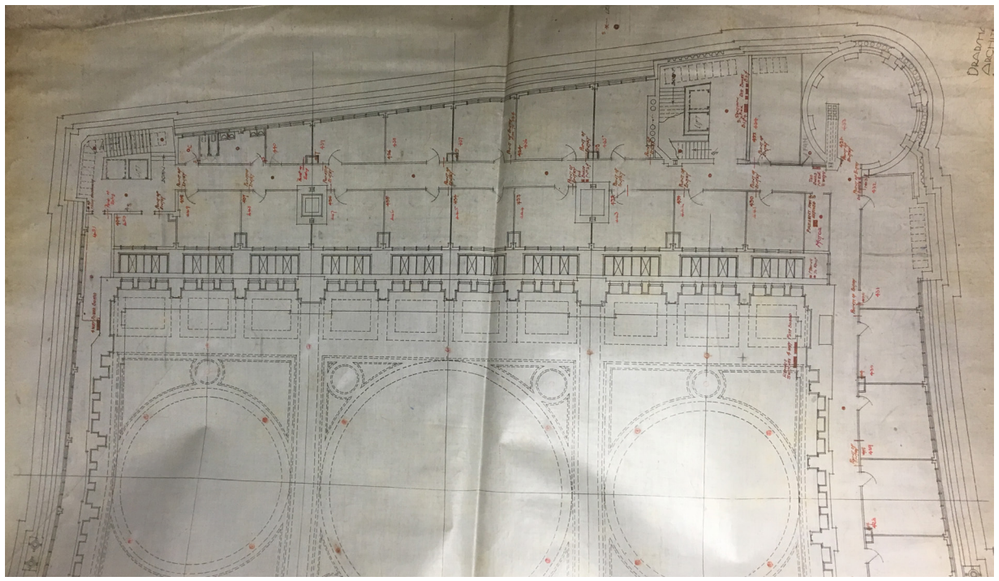
Archive research - South Offices plans



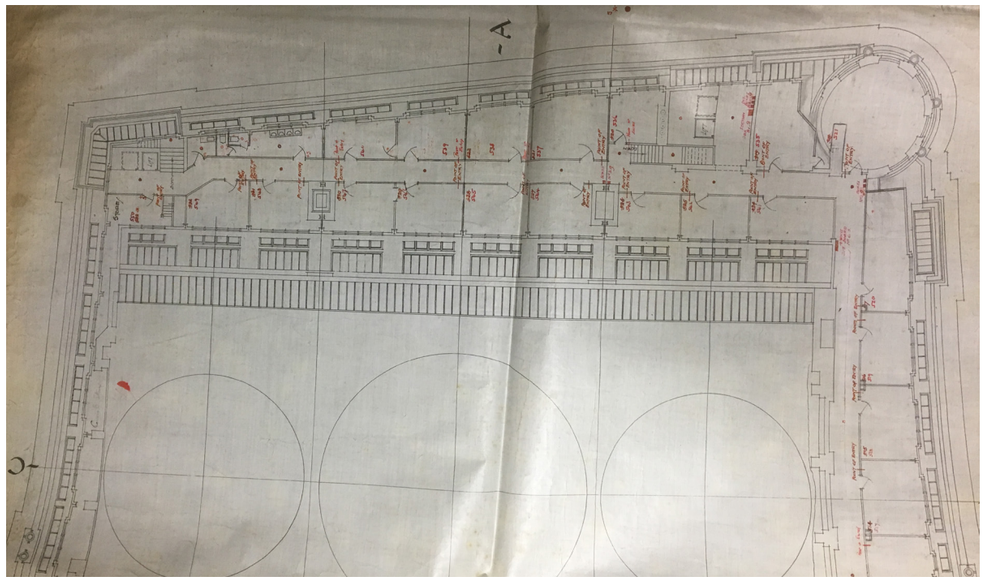
Bradshaw, Gass & Hope plans 1915 - Second floor



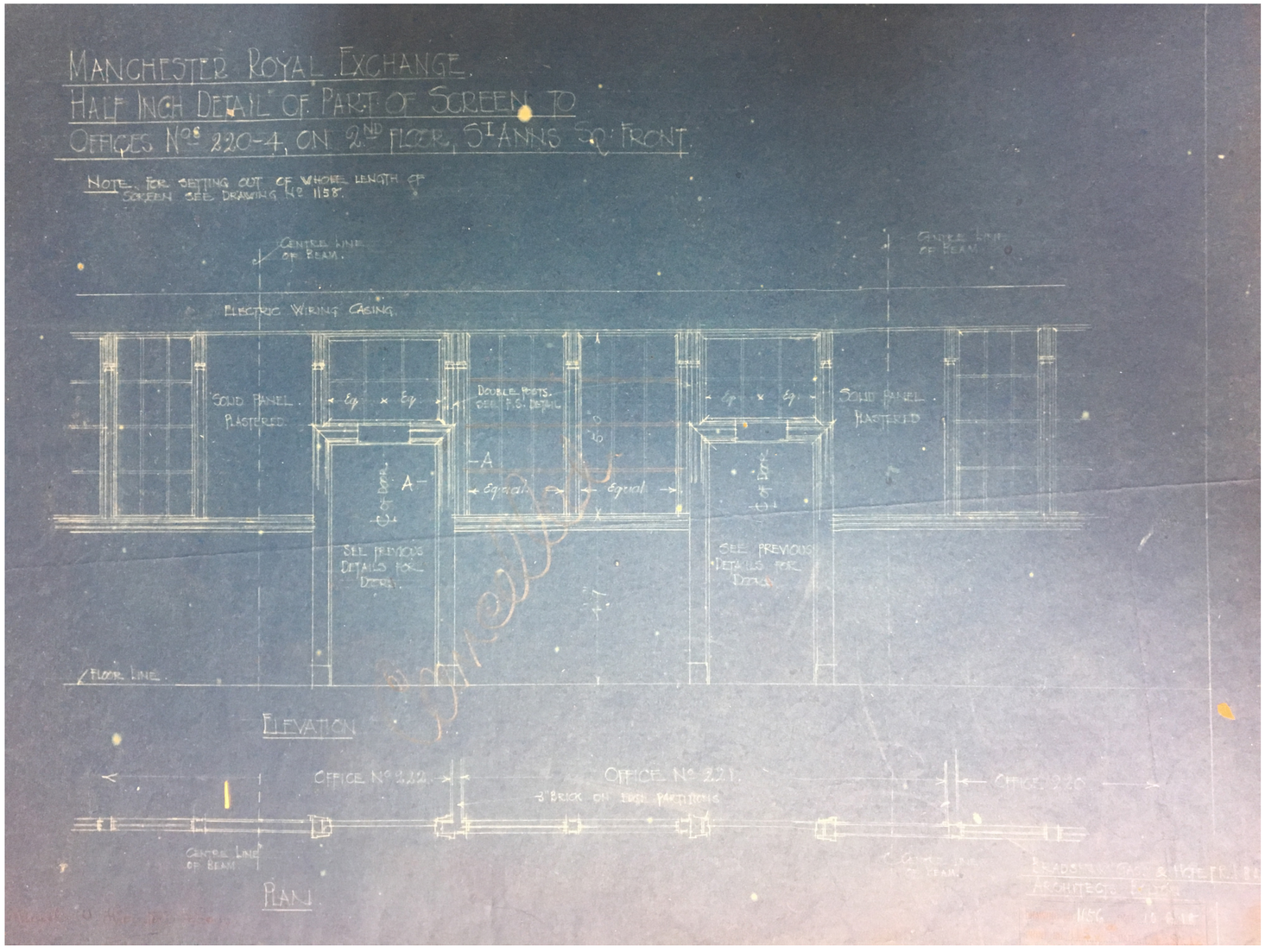
Bradshaw, Gass & Hope plans 1915 - Third floor



Bradshaw, Gass & Hope plans 1915 - Fourth floor



Bradshaw, Gass & Hope plans 1915 - Fifth floor



Archive Research

The archive of architects, Bradshaw, Gass and Hope, held by Bolton Library, was consulted.

The drawing collection contains material on the Royal Exchange dating from 1914 through to the 1950s, covering their work on the post-war restoration of the North offices.

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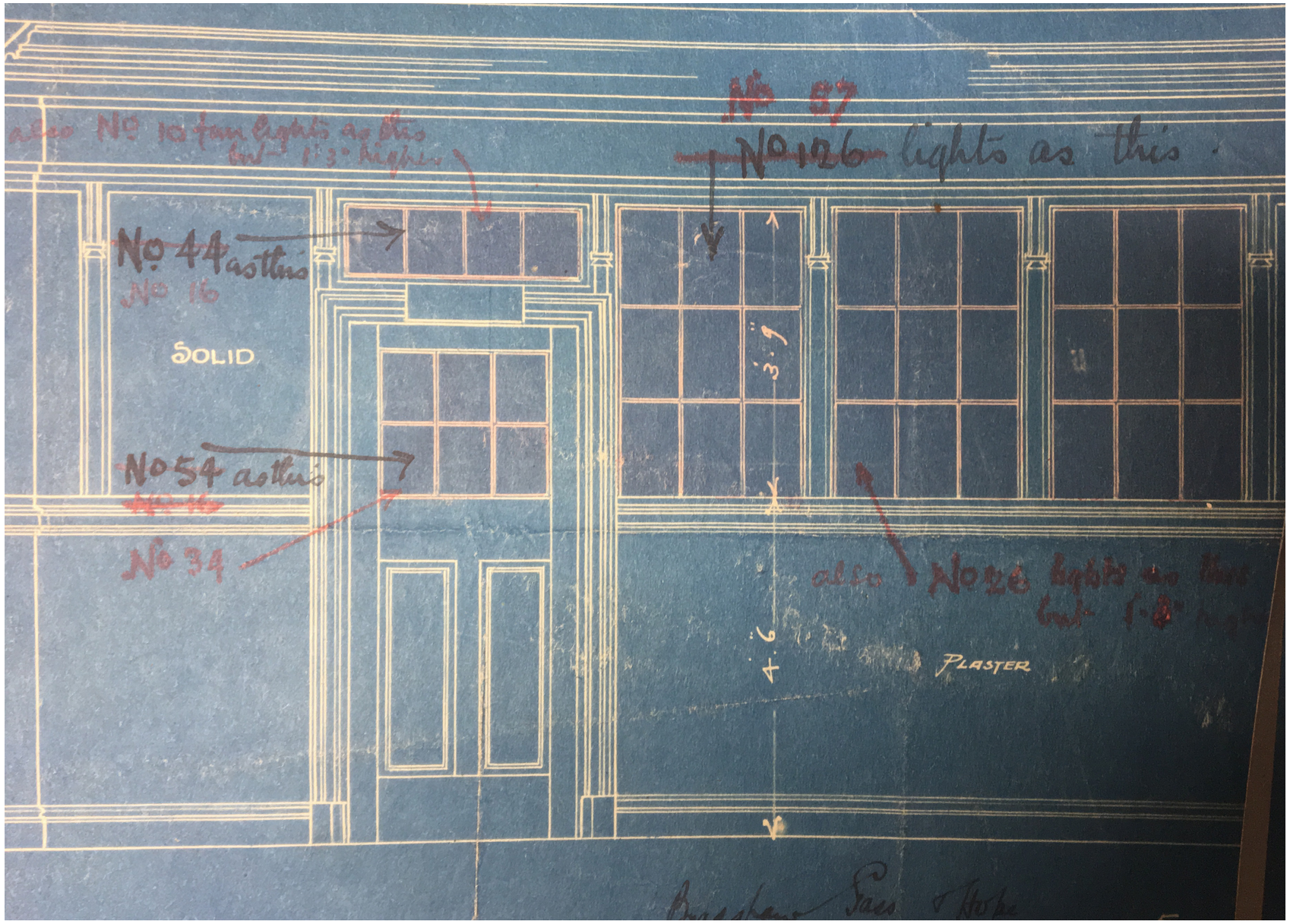
Archive research - Typical Office Fronts



4.0 Relevant Planning Policy

Proposals for the refurbishment of the building have been developed in consideration of the guidance set out within paragraphs 189-208 in Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework., 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment'.

The proposals seek to maintain and manage change to the heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.

In particular, Para 137 describes "[…] 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 or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably."

At a local level, Manchester's Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document states in Policy CC9, 'Design & Heritage':

"Development in Manchester City Centre should preserve or enhance the heritage assets that have been identified, including listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled ancient monuments."

And in Policy EN 3, 'Heritage':

"Throughout the City, the Council will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods, including those of 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 of 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."

Para 12.21

"Historic sites and areas of particular heritage value should be both safeguarded for the future and, where possible, enhanced both for their own heritage merits and as part of wider heritage regeneration proposals."

DC18 Conservation Areas

"The Council is [...] to encourage and help ensure the protection, preservation and enhancement of its Conservation Areas, which are areas of special character representing the rise and development of the world's first industrial city"

DC19 Listed Buildings

The Listed Building policies "are to be pursued by the Council to help ensure the protection of the City's built character and its heritage."

Heritage

5.0 Design Statement and Impact Assessment

As noted in the Background section 3.0 of this report, the South offices were unsympathetically fitted-out at some point in the last 20-25 years.

A low-cost, mineral fibre, suspended ceiling system has been fitted in places within the offices being refurbished The suspended ceilings conceal the modern cable trays which support the extensive landlord and tenant electrical and data cabling. The lighting is tired and dated, consisting of a mixture of recessed 'egg-crate' fittings and suspended egg-crate and plain fluorescent fittings.

A survey within the ceiling void has revealed that the original cornices and door architraves are largely intact. The images opposite illustrate the typical conditions within the void.

The modern suspended ceiling has a detrimental effect on the reading of the original period interiors and should be removed. Furthermore, removal of the suspended ceiling will reveal the variety of floor to floor heights in the building. .

The removal of the ceilings and other modern accretions, improvements in lighting and the addition of a period-appropriate doorset, will make a significant and positive contribution to the heritage asset.

With the exception of the corridor wall at the new third floor kitchen, there are no alterations proposed to the Listed Buiding fabric and the partitions to be removed are modern. It is therefore considered that this will not negatively affect the heritage asset.

At the proposed 3rd Floor kitchen, a new door and fanlight are proposed in the existing corridor wall. The impact of this will be minimised by carefully removing the existing mouldings and glazing to re-use in the revised arrangement. Additionally, the new door and fanlight will be replicas of the existing ones nearby. The existing are to be used as templates for all dimensions and details including the architrave.

uncomfortable junctions between joinery, reeded glass and ceiling

existing cornices hidden above suspended ceiling

large ceiling voids, compromising height of offices and concealing extensive cabling within ceiling void

cable trays and recessed lighting

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Walls and ceiling: Matt Dulux 30BB 83/001 White Mist including cornices

Satinwood paint to doors
Dulux 00NN 13/000

Carpet tiles JHS Carpets:
Range: Glastonbury,
Colour: 82 Cast Iron

Stable Green

One wall in each tenancy to have feature colour - Stable Green or similar agreed

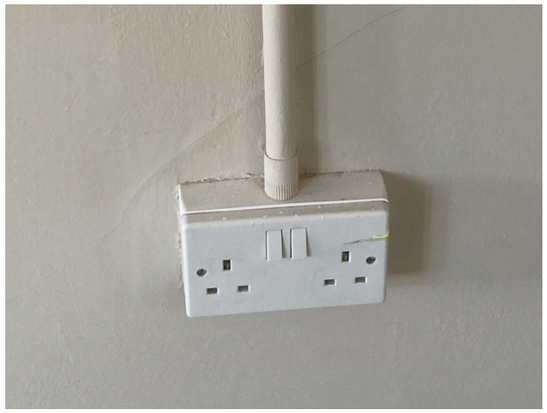
Emulsion paint to architraves trims:
Dulux 'Goosewing'

Heritage

Office - New Fittings

Suspended Light fitting

Easilume
Asola LN14 Direct/ Indirect Suspended Linear
Colour: RAL 9016 PPC
Colour Temp: 4000K



Wall socket outlets

TBC
Surface mounted box with surface mounted tube
Colour: standard white

6.0 Design for Access 2

The criteria to improve accessibility and inclusive design standards has been considered for this application.

The design standards reviewed applicable to the refurbishment works proposed are:

Doors

One door is being added, on the 3rd Floor. This is to match the size and detailing of the existing, original door to the adjacent tenancy. This gives a clear openg of around 850mm i.e in excess of the 750mm required bt Part M in existing buildings. There will be more than 300mm of unobstructed space beside the leading edge of this door.

Door Furniture

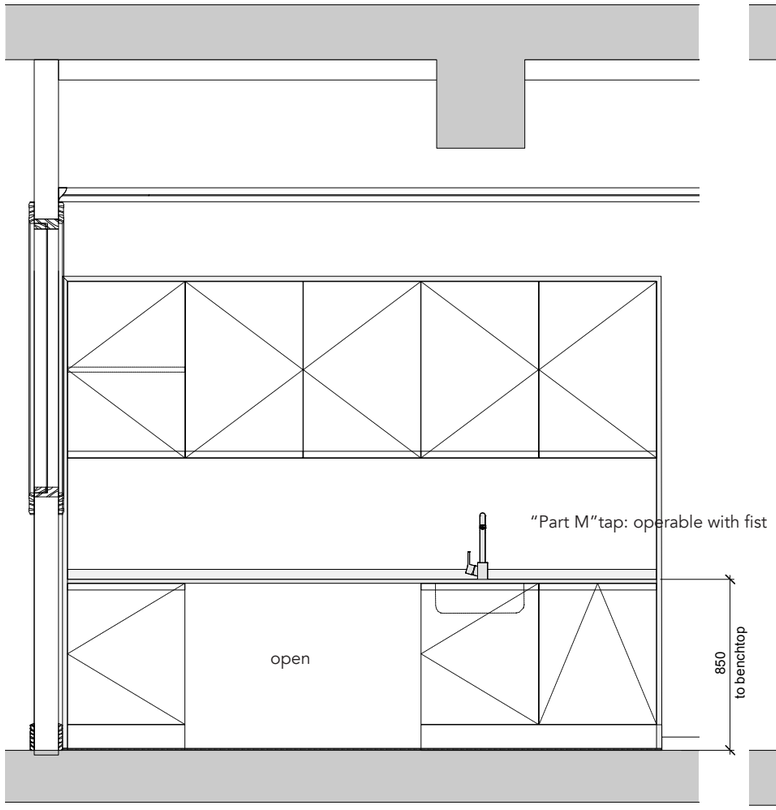
The new internal door proposed on the corridor, 3rd Floor will comply with the DFA2 standards for door furniture. Lever handles will be installed that match the existing historic ones in the 3rd Floor corridor.

Offices

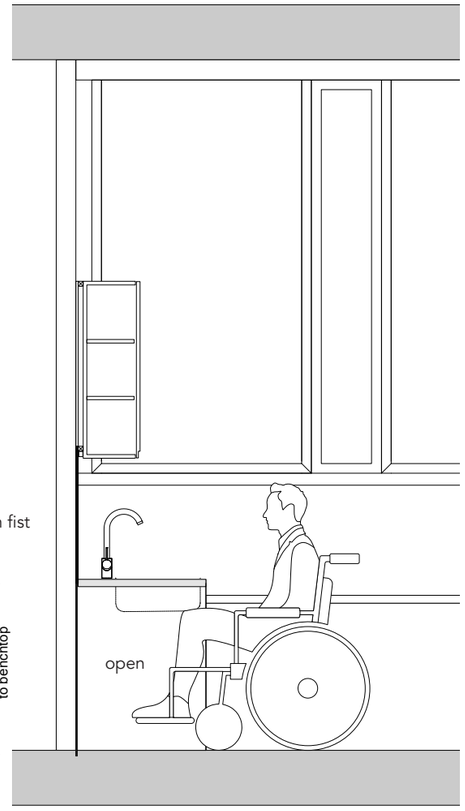
The existing offices will receive a light refurbishment. The existing carpet will be replaced by a more modern and durable carpet. Please refer to page 11 for material palette proposed. The offices' spatial arragements will remain the same. No alterations to the layout are proposed.

Kitchen Provision

The new tea point proposed on the second floor will comply with the requirements set out on the DFA2. Please refer to the drawings on this page and the proposed kitchen drawings..



Typical Kitchen Elevation



Typical Kitchen Section at wheelchair space