



26th January 2023

Rev A - Addendum Heritage Note – Bridgewater House, Manchester – proposed amendments to submitted scheme

1. Introduction

Following the submission of the current Listed Building Consent application for the restoration and conversion of Grade II listed Bridgewater House, Chester Road, Manchester on the 14th August 2022 (Ref: 134695/LO/2022), comments from Manchester City Council's planning department, dated 5th October 2022, have resulted in amendments to the submitted scheme.

The subsequent changes to the submitted application comprise:

- A. Windows.
- B. Plaster cornice and ceilings to 18th century dwellings.**
- C. Plaster cornice and ceilings to 1840s extension.
- D. Alcove cupboard to proposed ground floor bathroom.
- E. Alcove cupboard to G05.
- F. Retention of original architrave to inside face of doors to ground floor rooms.
- G. Fire openings/hearths.
- H. Railings to front gardens.
- I. Basement windows to Crown Street.
- J. Entrances in the Crown Street elevation.
- K. Garden entrances on Chester Road elevation.
- L. Railings and lightwells to Crown Street elevation.
- M. Change of dormer design
- N. Rainwater goods.
- O. Stone dressings.
- P. Changes to new build block.

Changes to the scheme since the previous version of this addendum Heritage Statement (dated 1st December 2022) concentrates on final proposals for **B. Plaster cornice and ceilings to 18th century dwellings** (as highlighted above), which will be discussed in this revised addendum Heritage Statement below.

2. Significance

The special architectural and historic interest of Bridgewater House is recognised by its Grade II Listed designation. The Site comprises of two late-18th century Georgian dwellings and an early Victorian c1842/3 office extension for the Trustees of the Bridgewater Canal Company to the rear, along with other later additions and alterations. The buildings represent a rare survival of a pair of high quality, upper class Georgian domestic villas within Manchester city centre, which pre-date the rapid 19th century industrial and commercial expansion of the city.



The dwellinghouses themselves were converted into offices soon after the Bridgewater Navigation Company Ltd purchased the site in 1883, and subsequently the Manchester Ship Canal Company (Bridgewater Department). The building was vacated by the Manchester Ship Canal Company in 1976, when it was taken over by Securicor Limited, who adapted the site in two phases in the 1970s and 1980s. The Site remained in office use since until the early 2000s, but has remained empty since this date.

Please refer to the submitted Heritage Statements by SLHA for a thorough assessment of significance.
Grade II listed building

- The Site yields **high historic interest** through its unique survival of a originally exclusive residential development, which due to its close proximity to the burgeoning Castlefield Canal Basin and the growth and success of canal transportation in the area became the prime location for various canal companies offices from c1838 to 1975, and is historically important to the understanding to the historic development of this area and daily use and management of the large Castlefield Basin and canal network.
- The Site also yields **high historic interest** through the ability to clearly understand the evolution and development of the Site, the planform of the 18th century domestic dwellings. The survival of two large, upper class Georgian villas is unique within the city centre of Manchester.
- The Site also yields **high historic interest** through its links to the Stretford and Hulme Turnpike Road, which subsequently became Chester Road, and though the Site's close historical associations with the Dukes of Bridgewater and their families, as well as commercial historical

associations with significant canal companies, which were important in the commercial/trading boom in the adjoining Castlefield Basin and canal networks.

- The Site also yields **high historic interest** through its long history connected to the running, management, advertising, construction and staffing of various canal companies from c1838 until 1975.
- The Site yields **high architectural and aesthetic interest** through the readability of the two original 18th century dwellings, both of which retain a number of original fixtures and fittings including original cornice, three panelled internal doors to the ground floor level, with some at basement and attic level, architrave and skirting. The attic levels of both former dwellings form the most untouched parts of the building and retain original 18th century doors with hand-forged hinges and hooks, architraves and three chimneypieces.

3. Updated Impact Assessment

A. Windows

Submitted proposal - 14th August 2022

Remove all original and later date multi-pane sash windows and replace with new, timber sash windows using slimline Histoglass panes fixed with putty and using an Ovolo moulding to glazing bars throughout.

Original round-headed coloured glass staircase window to Silvercroft Street will be replaced with new timber sash windows which will incorporate surviving panes of coloured glass which will be encapsulated into double glazed units, any missing coloured glass will be replaced with new.

Original pulleys and weights will be reused in new windows subject to condition assessment. New heritage style brass sash locks and pull handles will be fitted.

Impact – Major adverse

Current amended proposal - 1st December 2022

The current approach to the sash windows across the entirety of Bridgewater House is to retain and repair all windows that are able to be restored, with any windows that are missing or in too poor condition/missing to be remade like-for-like using the precise detailing, mouldings and measurements of each window concerned as a template and will reuse any non-cracked/damaged glass panes, with any that cannot be reused replaced in single glazing.

A thorough window condition assessment and repair spec of each window will be undertaken by a specialist window restoration company following the provision of safe access to all parts of the building.

Impact – Negligible beneficial

B. Plaster cornice and ceilings to 18th century dwellings

Submitted proposal - 14th August 2022

Due to the requirement to improve the fire rating of the building through its change of use to apartments, 60 minute fire ratings are required for the ground and first floor ceilings.

Consequently, all original lath and plaster ceilings and cornice to all rooms at ground and first floor level of the 18th century dwellings will be boxed-in as part of a new dropped ceiling to all rooms. All lath and plaster and cornice will be left in-situ within the dropped ceiling void, with any loose or fallen elements discarded.

The new dropped ceilings will not aim to replicate the original decorative plasterwork and instead will form simple flat surfaces.

Impact – Major adverse

Amended proposal - 1st December 2022

The amended approach to the ceilings and cornice to the 18th century dwellings has been informed by the production of an options appraisal.

Five options have been considered regarding the retention and upgrading of the historic lath and plaster ceilings and cornice to the two 18th century former dwellings. Out of these options it is considered that Option D meets the necessary requirements for 60 minute fire protection and acoustic enhancement between apartments, whilst also aligning with the viability study.

Option D will see the original lath and plaster ceilings to the principal ground floor rooms along the north, Chester Road, elevation being retained, with the addition of 30mm of soundbloc boards mounted on gyproc resilient bar in order to provide 60 minutes fire resistance. The new underboarding will allow for a narrow shadow gap between its edge and the retained plaster cornicing, which will be kept in-situ, repaired and redecorated using Envirograf.

The approach to all other rooms within the ground floor level of the 18th century dwellings will also use Option D, however, this will be dependent on the findings of a thorough condition survey which will be undertaken once there is safe access to the spaces.

This option, although retains the original lath and plaster ceilings, these will be entirely concealed by overboarding, which will result in a depreciation of the character and appearance of the formal rooms as well as interrupting the appearance and appreciation of the retained cornicing.

Impact – Moderate adverse

Current amended proposal – 26th January 2023

The amended approach to the ceilings and cornice to the 18th century dwellings has been informed by the production of an options appraisal.

Five options have been considered regarding the retention and upgrading of the historic lath and plaster ceilings and cornice to the two 18th century former dwellings. Out of these options it is considered that Option D met the necessary requirements for 60 minute fire protection and acoustic enhancement between apartments, whilst also aligning with the viability study.

However, following further conversations with MCC, Option D has now been modified to remove the proposal to repair and replace all areas of lost and damaged lath and plaster to the 18th century ceilings, and to instead to apply 30mm of soundbloc boards mounted on gyproc resilient bars directly onto the damaged original ceilings of a number of principal rooms to the ground and first floor levels of the dwellings, as highlighted by MCC and indicated in the updated, submitted reflective ceiling plans.

The new underboarding will allow for a narrow shadow gap between its edge and the retained plaster cornicing, which will be kept in-situ, repaired and redecorated using Envirograf to all principal rooms highlighted by MCC, and shown in the submitted reflective ceiling plans.

This option will also include the repair/restoration of the original decorative plaster ceiling rose to Room G08 and its refixing to its original location to the centre of the room.

All other rooms within the 18th century dwellings that have not been highlighted by MCC and shown in the submitted reflective ceiling plans, will have their original lath and plaster ceilings/cornice and later ceilings removed and replaced with modern plasterboard/ soundbloc boards.

Impact – Moderate adverse

C. Plaster cornice and ceilings to 1840s extension

Submitted proposal - 14th August 2022

The original design for the ground floor level included suspended/dropped lath and plaster ceilings with deep plaster cornice which concealed a fireproof, brick, jack-arched ceiling beneath. Due to the prolonged water ingress to the former office wing, the majority of the original dropped lath and plaster ceilings have now either perished or survive in small fragments in some rooms.

It is proposed to therefore remove any surviving original dropped lath and plaster ceilings and utilise the original brick jack-arched ceilings within the void beneath, exposing the structural brickwork ceilings throughout the ground floor level. The exposed brickwork and pointing/cast ironwork will be repaired.

The first floor level ceilings were designed with flat lath and plaster and deep plaster cornice (no jack-arches). It is proposed to remove all remaining areas of lath and plaster and replace with modern plasterboard.

Impact – Moderate adverse

Current amended proposal - 1st December 2022

It is proposed to remove all surviving original dropped lath and plaster ceilings and cornice to all parts of the 1840s extension, with one apartment on the ground floor having its original ceiling arrangement reconstructed in order to preserve an area of the building's original character and appearance.

All other areas of the ground floor level will leave the original brick jack-arched ceilings, of which the pointing/cast ironwork will be repaired.

At first floor level it is proposed to remove any remaining areas of original lath and plaster and plaster cornice and replace with modern plasterboard/fire boarding.

Impact – Moderate adverse

D. Alcove cupboard to proposed ground floor bathroom

Submitted proposal - 14th August 2022

Conceal original fitted cupboard behind proposed shower.

Impact – Minor adverse

Current amended proposal - 1st December 2022

Replan proposed bathroom arrangement to allow fitted cupboard to be left exposed and repaired.

Impact – Minor beneficial

E. Alcove cupboard to room G05

Submitted proposal - 14th August 2022

Remove built-in alcove cupboard to alcove.

Impact - minor adverse

Current amended proposal - 1st December 2022

Retain fitted alcove cupboard, replace current 1977 flush door with new architrave/timber door matching the same design as the other surviving original panelled doors on the ground floor. Construct new fire separation wall to back of cupboard separating neighbouring apartment.

Impact – Minor beneficial

F. Retention of original architrave to inside face of doors to ground floor rooms

Submitted proposal - 14th August 2022

Seal both original doors shut, remove original timber architrave to openings and seal opening shut flush with modern studwork.

Impact – Moderate adverse

Current amended proposal - 1st December 2022

Retain architrave in original locations and board over opening to achieve fire separation between apartments and staircase hall.

Impact - Minor adverse

G. Fire openings/hearths

Submitted proposal - 14th August 2022

All original fire surrounds to both dwellings were removed from ground and first floor levels as part of the 1970s alterations, with the fire openings blocked and plastered over.

These openings were subsequently reopened approximately ten years ago to check for surviving fire surrounds. It is proposed to simply retain these openings as they appear currently, without the addition of fire surrounds.

Impact – Minor beneficial

Current amended proposal - 1st December 2022

Retain original openings as originally proposed, and tidy up the rough edges of each opening by removing any remaining pieces of later (1977) brick infill and apply lime plaster around the outer perimeter of each opening where brickwork is now exposed (not including the exposed brickwork within each opening, which will be left exposed).

Impact – Minor beneficial

H. Railings to front gardens

Submitted proposal - 14th August 2022

Creation of new front gardens for ground floor apartments, which will see new grass lawns, box hedging, planting and heritage-styled cast iron railings replacing the current 1960s railings of no heritage significance.

New railings will continue the proposed design for railings along the Crown Street elevation.

Impact – Moderate beneficial

Current amended proposal - 1st December 2022

Creation of new front gardens for ground floor apartments, which will see new grass lawns, box hedging, planting and heritage-styled cast iron railings replacing the current 1960s railings of no heritage significance.

No railings to be installed dividing the gardens.

Impact – Moderate beneficial

I. Basement windows to Crown Street

Submitted proposal - 14th August 2022

Reintroduce two new sash windows into two blocked original window openings to basement level of western dwelling on Crown Street.

Impact – Minor beneficial

Current amended proposal - 1st December 2022

Remove the proposal to install new windows to basement level.

Impact – No impact

J. Entrances in the Crown Street elevation

Submitted proposal - 14th August 2022

Remove 1970s window and brick infill from both original arched entrance doors to Crown Street. Using historic photographs of original removed doors, recreate panelled doors and refit into openings. Recreate missing original arched fanlight, whilst retaining remaining original fanlight/repair and redecorate.

Construct new stone steps to replace those lost.

Impact – Moderate beneficial

Current amended proposal - 1st December 2022

Remove 1970s window and brick infill from both original arched entrance doors to Crown Street. Using historic photographs of original removed doors, recreate panelled doors and refit into openings. Recreate missing original arched fanlight, whilst retaining remaining original fanlight/repair and redecorate.

Uncover concealed original stone steps within the entrance vestibule behind the northern door opening and reuse instead of constructing new steps on the exterior of the entrance.

Impact – Moderate beneficial

K. Garden entrances on Chester Road elevation.

Submitted proposal - 14th August 2022

Create six new door openings (three to each original Georgian dwelling) at ground floor level.

The locations of the two original 18th century front entrances to each dwelling (converted to windows in the c1880s) will be reintroduced, whilst two further door openings will be created in original window openings to each dwelling in order to form access from the proposed apartments into their own private gardens to Chester Road.

The new doors will follow the 18th century tradition of using “sash window doors”, which in essence will keep a full sash window to the upper parts of the openings, whilst introducing a pair of small panelled timber doors beneath, thus maintaining the visual appearance of full sash windows from Chester Road.

Access from the new doors will be via sets of new brick and stone staircases.

Impact – Moderate adverse

Current amended proposal - 1st December 2022

Create four new door openings (three to each original Georgian dwelling) at ground floor level.

The locations of the two original 18th century front entrances to each dwelling (converted to windows in the c1880s) will be reintroduced, whilst two further door openings will be created in original window openings to each dwelling in order to form access from the proposed apartments into their own private gardens to Chester Road.

The new doors will follow the 18th century tradition of using “sash window doors”, which in essence will keep a full sash window to the upper parts of the openings, whilst introducing a pair of small panelled timber doors beneath, thus maintaining the visual appearance of full sash windows from Chester Road.

Access from the new doors will be via sets of new brick and stone staircases.

Impact – Moderate adverse

L. Railings and lightwells to Crown Street elevation

Submitted proposal - 14th August 2022

Form new lightwell to Crown Street elevation within current footpath in order to create defensible space between new apartments and to futureproof the basement level for any future refurbishment.

Instal sympathetic metal railings, which will continue the design used on the Chester Road elevation.

Impact – Negligible adverse

Current amended proposal - 1st December 2022

Proposals for new lightwells and railings have been removed.

Impact – No impact

M. Change of dormer design

Submitted proposal - 14th August 2022

Creation of seven, floor to ceiling dormer windows of a contemporary design, on the rear (Silvercroft Street) elevation of the attic floor (Rooms A02, A05, A06, A08, A09, A11 and A12) in order to create adequate living space and head room for proposed attic apartments.

Impact – Moderate adverse

Current amended proposal - 1st December 2022

Reduction in size and change in design of proposed dormers.

Impact – Moderate adverse

N. Rainwater goods

Submitted proposal - 14th August 2022

Replace all existing PVC rainwater gutters and downpipes with new, painted aluminium versions.

Impact – Minor beneficial

Current amended proposal - 1st December 2022

Replace all existing PVC rainwater gutters and downpipes with new cast iron versions.

Impact – Minor beneficial

O. Stone dressings

Submitted proposal - 14th August 2022

Modern paintwork to red sandstone plinth and windowsills will be redecorated.

Impact – Minor beneficial

Current amended proposal - 1st December 2022

Remove all paint layers from all stone dressings.

Impact – Moderate beneficial

P. Changes to new build block

Submitted proposal - 14th August 2022

The visual impact assessment concluded that there was one instance of negligible adverse impact, one instance of minor adverse impact and one instance of moderate beneficial impact, consequently it was considered the visual impact assessment would result in an overall **minor adverse impact** on the setting and character of Bridgewater House and would have no impact on the settings of any surrounding listed buildings or on the setting of the Castlefield Conservation Area.

Current amended proposal - 1st December 2022

Changes to the external elevational design of the new build block to the south of the Site include straight columns green block to side of entrance doors to the courtyard elevation.

The current proposals will result in an overall **minor adverse impact** on the setting and character of Bridgewater House and would have no impact on the settings of any surrounding listed buildings or on the setting of the Castlefield Conservation Area.

4. Conclusion

The above changes to the submitted scheme to the Grade II listed Bridgewater House aim to maintain, enhance and expose the surviving highly significant building elements and features throughout the earliest parts of the building, whilst allowing for changes in order to accommodate a number of new apartments as part of the building's change of use back to its original residential use.

It is considered that although some elements of the current proposals will still result in instances of adverse impact, a number of other amendments demonstrably result in the **reversal of a number of adverse impacts** on the special interest of the building, as previously submitted.

Consequently, although a number of adverse impacts have been reversed or lessened, on balance, the impact of the current, amended proposals for Bridgewater House are still considered to result in a **moderate adverse** impact overall.