

27-33 King Street West, Manchester - Heritage Addendum

- 1 This note has been prepared following the receipt of the consultation response from SAVE Britain's Heritage. It seeks to clarify our understanding of the relative heritage significance of the part known as Reedham House (31-33 King Street West) as part of the overall complex of Grade II listed buildings on the site.
- 2 The submitted Heritage Townscape Impact Assessment provides a comprehensive history and assessment of the evolution of the site and this is further augmented with the Design and Access Statement and Heritage Asset Statement prepared by Jon Matthews Architects.
- 3 Although the plot that forms today's Reedham House is historically part of the whole complex, in reality the site was in separate occupation and activity by the late 1870s. Historic Maps from 1886 show three separate occupations of considerably different purpose: brass works, leather goods factory and tea & coffee warehouse on the site.
- 4 The rebuilding of Reedham House in 1926 further confirmed this separation, with a total re-build behind a façade that was so heavily re-modelled it would appear to be an almost complete re-construction in a more classical style fashionable at that time.
- 5 The architectural treatment – which is just skin-deep along the southern elevation, turning the corner by one bay, is polite but not of 'special interest' in its own right. All of the ground floor shop fronts are modern and in poor condition.
- 6 Considering the extent of overall change and the limited elements of quality remaining within Reedham House we do not believe that it represents a rare surviving example of early commercial architecture – there is almost nothing remaining of the pre-1926 structure and much of that was subsequently damaged and repaired in the post-war period.
- 7 It would be misleading to think that the building that is on site is the former showroom to the original site – it was almost entirely re-built almost 50 years later – including floor levels, window openings etc for a different purpose – by which time it had no commercial connection with the remainder of the site.
- 8 Internally there are no features of interest at all. Not only was the building much repaired following bomb damage, but subsequent refurbishments have further altered the interior.
- 9 As a consequence of this level of physical intervention as well as occupational change it is almost impossible to understand how carriage making historically operated and functioned, and whilst it is known that the building originally located on the site of Reedham House was once the showroom to the carriage works it gives no hint of this original purpose.
- 10 Therefore, whilst it is recognised within the submitted Assessment that the loss of Reedham House will cause an element of harm to an appreciation of the overall complex of listed buildings on the site and that the proposed new 14 storey building will alter the

setting of the remaining historic complex and that of No.3 St Mary's Parsonage, we do not agree this lead to 'substantial' harm to the significance of the listed building or the character and appearance of the conservation area.

- 11 We believe that the 1926 element of the building makes a neutral contribution to the wider St Mary's Parsonage conservation area. It is a 'good neighbour' to other buildings in Trinity Square (also known as Motor Square) and Bridge Street, however there is little consistency of architectural style, materials or scale in the immediate surroundings and Motor Square is a relatively modern concept following post-war clearance.
- 12 Therefore, whilst it is recognised within the submitted Assessment that the loss of Reedham House will cause an element of harm to an appreciation of the overall complex of listed buildings on the site and that the proposed new 14 storey building will alter the setting of the remaining historic complex and that of No.3 St Mary's Parsonage, we do not agree with the SAVE Britain's Heritage response that it will lead to 'substantial harm' to either designated heritage asset.