



Cheeky Deanos

95 OXFORD STREET

Heritage Statement





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INTRODUCTION

This Heritage Statement has been prepared to support a planning application and listed building consent for the minor alteration, refurbishment and change of use of 95 Oxford Street which forms a unit within the St James' Buildings at ground floor level. Consent is sought for the change of use from a retail unit (previously Venus flower shop) to allow the sale of hot food on and off site.

The report assesses the significance of the heritage assets, then considers the impact of the proposed development on that significance. This report provides a detailed description as to the level of harm and impact of the works on the significance in accordance with S16 of the NPPF.

The St James' Buildings is a substantial Grade II listed multi-storey office building completed in 1912. It occupies the majority of the east side of Oxford Street and sits adjacent to and over the Rochdale Canal. The site is also located within the Whitworth Conservation Area of central Manchester.

The proposed development comprises internal and very limited external alterations and refurbishment works to the ground floor unit in support of creating a new high end unit for food and beverage use in the form of a hot food eatery. The proposed works are minor in nature but briefly comprise the incorporation of kitchen equipment within the empty unit together with ventilation equipment to allow hot food to be prepared on site.

The unit is essentially an empty shell with no historical features internally. Externally, the proposed alteration comprises two small louvre grills above the shop front. It is not an historical shopfront. The surrounding façade of the listed building of which there is significance, remains as existing.

This heritage statement concludes that the proposed development is in compliance with policies EN3 and CC 9 of the Core Strategy together with chapter 16 of the NPPF. The proposed development is a response to the need for a prominent but vacant, underutilised site to be brought back into use. There is no loss or impact, internally or externally, to any original features or fabric of the listed building nor to the significance of the conservation area and therefore the impact on the heritage asset is negligible.

The proposal will essentially preserve the significance, character and legibility of the listed building as a monumental symbol of the Manchester textile trade through occupying the currently vacant unit which, through it being vacant and shuttered up is currently a detractor in the conservation area.

The proposal in our view affects a significant designated heritage asset but has a negligible impact up on it. The public benefits from the occupation of the unit, provision of jobs and active use more than outweigh the negligible impact in accordance with NPPF paragraph 202.

The key findings are as follows:

- The proposal would preserve and enhance the character both internally and externally of 95 Oxford Street. The façade is considered to be the most significant element of the listed building whereby no changes are proposed. The unit is currently vacant with a garish orange signage and window advertisement, the proposal will bring this unit back into use and presents a more complimentary design (cosmetic) for the unit;
- The overall internal layout will remain the same. The only changes proposed are the installation of a kitchen whereby there are no historical features and cosmetic changes such

as decorating. The unit has undergone significant alterations and infilling over time and contains few, if any, features of significance.

- The proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, in line with the 'control of development' aspirations set out by MCC.
- The proposal would not result in changes to the settings of nearby listed buildings and there will be no impact on the significance of any nearby listed buildings.

It is therefore considered that the proposed development is in accordance with guidance on conserving and enhancing the historic environment within the NPPF and the requirements set out at Section 66(1) and Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

THE PREMISES AND SURROUNDING AREA

The application site is a ground floor unit within the St James' Buildings, a building that is owned and managed by Bruntwood, a specialist property company. The building predominantly comprises multi-tenant office space together with food, drink and retail uses located on the ground floor as shown via the photograph below.



St James Buildings is located on Oxford Street and together with Wilmslow Road and Oxford Road, form part of an 18th century route from Manchester to Oxford.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This planning application seeks permission and listed building consent for internal alterations and refurbishment works together with the change of use to the ground floor unit (Class E to sui generis). The site was formally occupied by a flower shop – Venus Flowers, but is now vacant and has been for some time.

Consent is sought to allow a high-end eatery to operate from the currently vacant space.

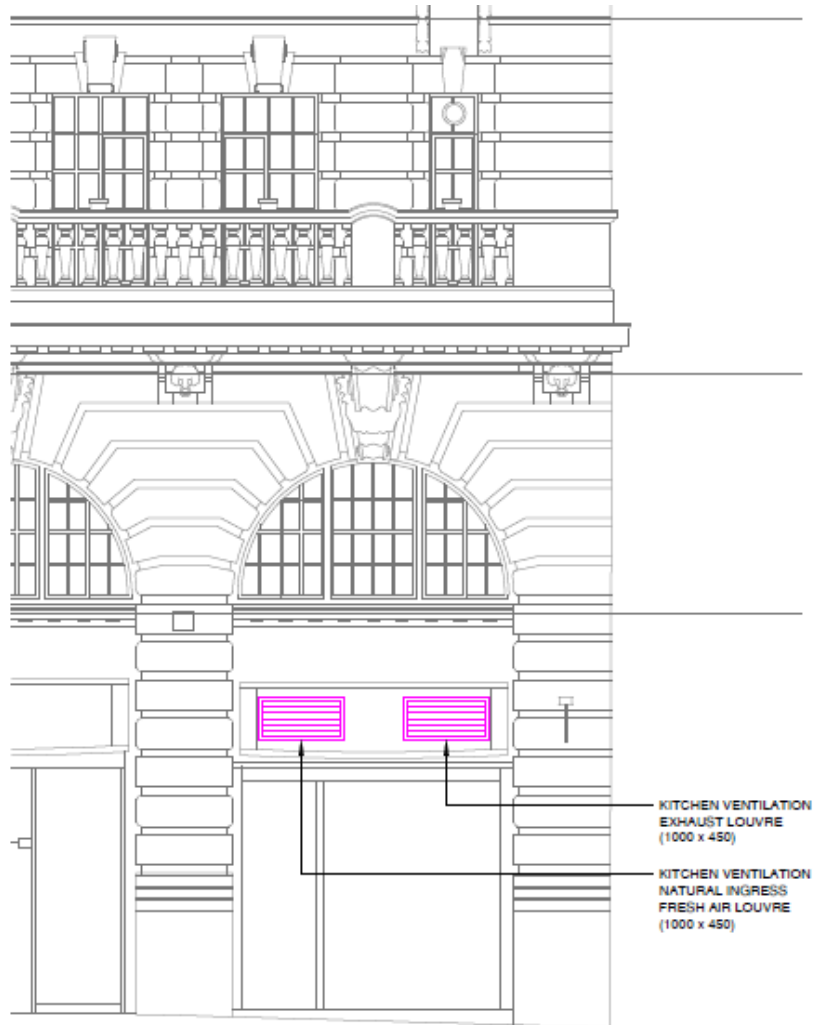
The main elements of the proposal are summarised below:

- Change of use from retail unit Class E to sui generis high end hot food take-away;
- Cosmetic internal fit out to form kitchen, counter and customer areas. No structural changes are to be made to the internal or external facades of the unit;
 - o All walls to be re-plastered to ensure a smooth base for decorative purposes;
 - o Floors to be tiled throughout;
 - o Walls painted up to the kitchen area and then tiled beyond;
 - o Extraction system to be installed to allow for hot food preparation, but to remain exposed;
 - o All piping and electrical wiring to be run on trays suspended from the ceiling;
 - o Industrial style lighting suspended from the ceiling;
 - o Strip out of existing suspended ceiling; and
 - o Replacement signage.

Details regarding the fit out for the unit are set out on the plans. To the rear of the unit will be the chargrill, plancha, infill table and two fryers. The sink unit and hand wash basin will also be located along the rear wall. The centre of the unit will be occupied by the counter, cooler and bin area. Between the counter and the cooking facilities at the rear will be the prep tables and sink with dishwasher underneath.

Details regarding the proposed ventilation equipment are set out in the supporting ventilation statement and plan. Internally, ventilation plant will be exposed and suspended from the ceiling.

Externally, the works are minor with two simple external louvres on the front elevation as demonstrated below. They will be discrete in design and sit in the modern shopfront. The approach is entirely consistent with other units at the ground floor of the St James' Building.



In terms of signage, the proposed signage (shown below) will simply replace the existing vinyl sign at the front of the shop. No internal or external illumination is proposed at this stage. The existing signage to the unit is a vinyl sign fitted in a curve to the façade. The new vinyl sign will just replace it with a different colour and logo. It is considered a very minor change and is arguably more subtle and complementary than the existing bright orange signage on site. Advertisement consent will be sought for signage separately.



METHODOLOGY

The preparation of this document has been guided by the following documents:

- Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets, Historic England Advice Note 12 (Historic England, 2019);
- Planning Practice Guidance on Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment (DCLG, 2014);
- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (Historic England, 2014);
- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England, 2017); and
- British Standard 7913: 2013: Guide to the conservation of historic buildings (BSI, 2013).

This report focuses on the built heritage assets in and adjacent to the application site (and their settings). Professional judgment is used in conjunction with policy, guidance and methodology in order to undertake the assessments in this Heritage Statement.

This Heritage Statement has been prepared taking into consideration the historical background of the site and the wider area. Sources consulted included the Historic Environment Record and the National Heritage List for England.

In addition, a site visit has been undertaken to inspect the building and to better understand the heritage significance of 95 Oxford Street and its setting.

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Paragraph 190 of the Revised National Planning Policy Framework states local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of a heritage asset, including its setting, and take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal in order to avoid or minimize conflict between the asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal. Significance is defined in the NPPF Glossary as:

The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

The document Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment (English Heritage 2008) identifies four principal heritage values that should be taken into account when assessing significance. These values are:

- **Evidential** – deriving from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past activity;
- **Historical** - deriving from the ways in which people, events and aspects of past life can be connected through a place to the present;
- **Aesthetic** - deriving from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place; and
- **Communal** - deriving from the meaning of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience and memory.

The assessment of the significance of 95 Oxford Street uses these heritage values.

There are also four commonly accepted levels of significance as well as neutral and an intrusive grade. The following levels of significance are based on criteria from the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB 2 Volume 11, 2009) and from guidance provided by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS, 2011):

- **Very High Level of Significance:** World Heritage Sites (including nominated sites) and assets of acknowledged international importance.
- **High Level of Significance:** Scheduled Monuments (including proposed sites); Grade I and II* Listed Buildings; Grade I and II* Registered Parks & Gardens; non-designated heritage assets of schedulable or exceptional quality and importance; and conservation areas containing very important buildings.
- **Medium Level of Significance:** Designated or non-designated assets that have exceptional qualities or contribute to regional research objectives; conservation areas; Grade II Listed Buildings; and Grade II Registered Parks & Gardens.
- **Low Level of Significance:** a non-designated asset important at a local level, including buildings which make a positive contribution to a conservation area. Some historic fabric but limited evidence and makes little contribution to significance. Buildings and parts of structures in this category should be retained where possible, although there is more scope for adaptation.

- **No interest:** the element is historically unimportant but does not have a negative visual impact on the surrounding buildings. May include insignificant late twentieth century interventions to listed buildings. The removal or adaptation of structures in this category is usually acceptable where the work will enhance a related heritage asset.
- **Intrusive:** the element is historically unimportant and has a negative visual impact on the surrounding buildings. Wherever practicable, removal of negative features should be considered, taking account of setting and opportunities for enhancement.

Conservation Principles (2008) states that new work or alteration to a significant place should normally be acceptable if:

- there is sufficient information comprehensively to understand the impacts of the proposal on the significance of the place;
- the proposal would not materially harm the values of the place, which, where appropriate, would be reinforced or further revealed;
- the proposals aspire to a quality of design and execution which may be valued now and in the future;
- the long-term consequences of the proposals can, from experience, be demonstrated to be benign, or the proposals are designed not to prejudice alternative solutions in the future.

SIGNIFICANCE OF ST JAMES' BUILDING AS A DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSET

St James' Building is Grade II listed. The official list entry is enclosed within Appendix 1. The building occupies the majority of the east side of Oxford Street, sitting adjacent to and over the Rochdale Canal, within the Whitworth Conservation Area of central Manchester. To the north, the building adjoins the late 19th century and early 20th century commercial buildings. To the south, the building adjoins the Palace Theatre. To the east, the unit (95 Oxford Street) overlooks the Rochdale Canal, the canal also continues to the west of the site beyond Oxford Street.

Based on the above, the site is of medium level of significance. The Grade II designation of St James Buildings is identified as national importance for its special architectural and historic interest. This interest is the basis of its heritage significance and can be summarised as that of a monumental office/warehouse complex built for the Calico Printers Association. The significance of this heritage asset essentially relates to the form, appearance and commanding streetscene presence of the building - which also establish it as a definitive building of Whitworth Street Conservation Area.

In terms of exterior, St. James' Buildings is an imposing structure, and presents a striking combination of different architectural treatments both in the same building, and under the same authorship. Essentially, the building divides into two conjoined structures, each a formal expression of its original use. The Portland stone elevation of the head office, showrooms, and administrative functions in the Baroque style, with a central tower fronts Oxford Street. Courtyarded 'wings' of the warehouse, executed in the manner of the functional tradition with expressed frame, and storey height curtain wall glazing are to the rear.

The application site comprises the small ground floor unit at 95 Oxford Street, formerly occupied by Venus flower shop. Along Oxford Street, within the St James Buildings at ground floor, are more

eateries such as Bundobust and Patisserie Valerie. The overall character of the area therefore is active commercial uses.

The building has experienced a near continuous pattern of gradual change to suit commercial needs. These changes have added layers to the building, providing clues as to the social and economic history of the period of their incorporation. On the whole, these changes have still resulted in the original fabric surviving, or alternatively the fabric records several generations of change. In the case of this unit, the original fabric of the brickwork and arch detail remains – and the implementation of the eatery will allow for this fabric to remain untouched.

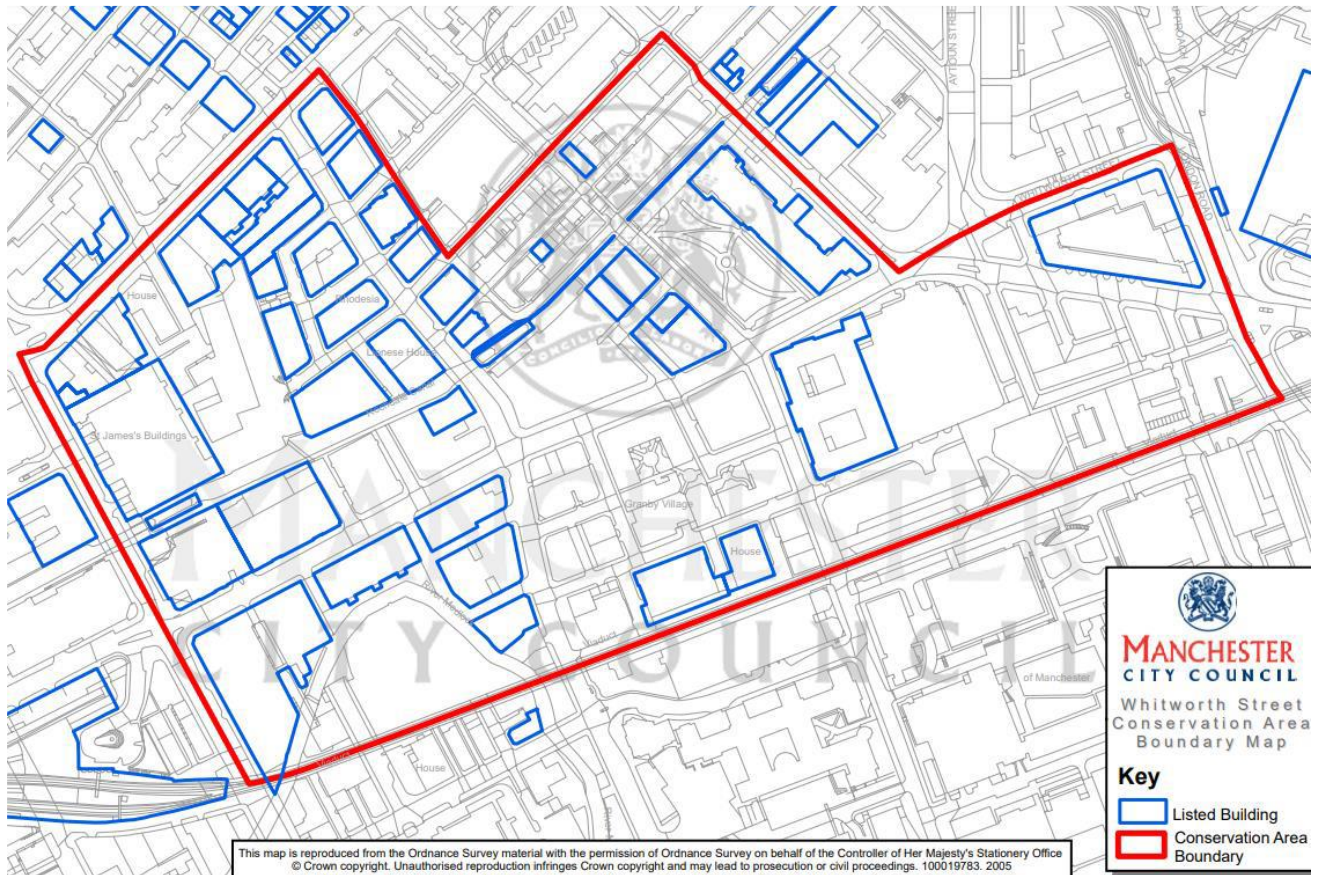
Linked to the above, internally, this unit has seen an abundance of change in that it now contains minimal historical features. It is essentially an empty shell. There is a brick archway within the unit's sidewall which could be deemed as holding limited historical merit however, regardless, this will remain in situ and be unaffected by the proposal. There are no skirting boards or cornices, and the unit has modern flooring over concrete. It has a suspended ceiling (to be removed) and a modern metal shopfront.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WHITWORTH STREET/PRINCESS STREET CONSERVATION AREA

The site lies in the conservation area. Its boundary is shown below. The area contains a number of listed buildings close to the site (together with the site itself). As set out on the councils website:

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.

The conservation area was designated by the City Council in September 1974, and was bounded by Oxford Street, Portland Street, Abingdon Street, Bloom Street, Chorlton Street, Cobourg Street and the Piccadilly to Oxford Road railway viaduct. It was extended in June 1985 to include an area bounded by Whitworth Street, London Road and the above viaduct.



ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT ON THE HERITAGE ASSETS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

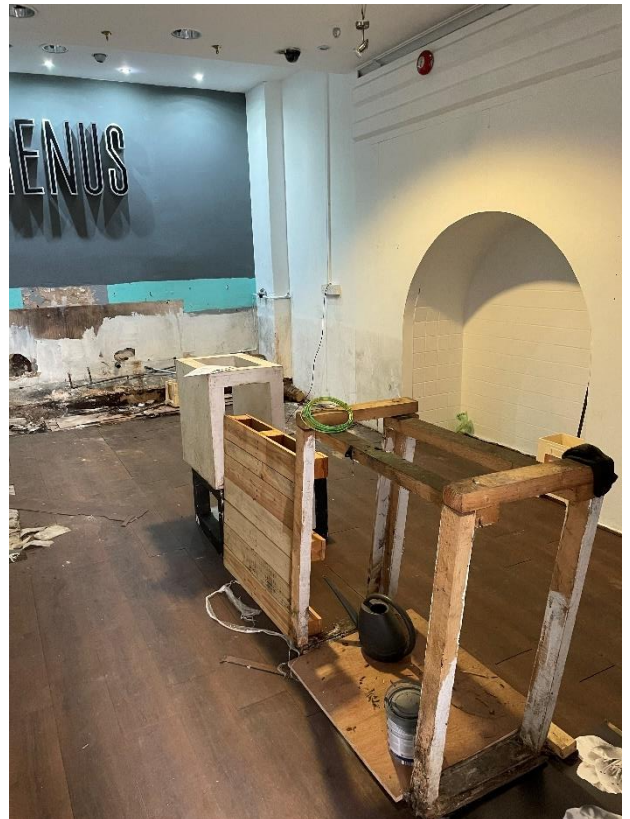
The proposed works, both externally and internally, are of a minimal nature and will not adversely affect historical fabric. In the context of the building as a whole, their effect will be negligible, and beneficial.

The importance of the gradual process of modification and change inherent in commercial and industrial structures cannot be overstated. This has been to service the needs of commerce and industry. The application unit has clearly undergone several changes internally. Externally, the original façade remains around the unit parameters. This section details how the proposal will have negligible impact of the heritage asset and its significance.

Internal alterations

The proposed works internally constitute minor interventions, simply comprising cosmetic/decorative changes. However, most importantly, there are no historical features existing within the unit. The alterations will simply be replacing the existing modern changes to suit the style and requirements of the proposed use. In this regard, the significance of impact of the proposed works can only be classed as being negligible.

To allow for the sale of hot food on and off the site, fit out works are required however as demonstrated by the images below, the works are cosmetic and the unit has very little internal features of significance – it is essentially an empty shell.



No structural changes are to be made internally or externally. The removal of the current suspended ceiling will allow the full height of the space to be appreciated, bringing a heritage benefit.

The walls will be plastered for decorative purposes and the floors will be tiled throughout. Industrial style lighting will be suspended from the ceiling to reflect the nature of the site and surroundings in addition to the extraction system remaining exposed and all piping and wiring to be run on trays suspended from the ceiling. The proposals will not cause detrimental impact to the listed building. The entrance will remain as in situ with no changes proposed.

From the evidence available, it is assessed that the internals of the unit are not surviving original fabric. It would be reasonable, therefore, to apply a low level of significance to this element. Regardless, the works simply involve the installation of a kitchen and the provision of tables and so will not cause any further changes to the unit.

External alterations

The unit only has two visible façades. The rear façade will remain untouched. The front façade will remain as it currently is, with the only minor change the insertion of two small louvres in the shop front above the fascia sign. They will be discreet and are essential to allow ventilation to be achieved using internal plant. This means that external plant is not required to the rear façade where it faces the canal, and would be more visible in the conservation area.

As shown via the photographs below, the façade is not the historical fabric of the building and does not contribute to the significance of the listed building or the conservation area. It was simply used to display advertising.



The louvres are small in nature and allow for the plant to be located internally. The alternative would be to utilise the rear of the unit as other premises have within St James Building (see photograph below) which would cause greater impact on the heritage significance.



The main architectural features of St James Building will remain in situ such as the original brickwork encasing the unit and the arched windows above the unit.

The only alterations relate to minor changes to the actual unit façade which has already been modernised and altered to accommodate the previous flower shop use. The 'Venus' signage area is not part of the original fabric and therefore it would be reasonable to apply a low level of significance to this element of the unit. The proposed external alteration of only two louvres represents minor development and will not cause detrimental impact to this low level of significance element. Likewise, the simple replacement of signage will not cause any impact. An application for signage will be applied for separately.

From the evidence available, it is assessed that the brickwork surrounding the unit parameters are surviving original fabric however the unit itself is not. The proposed development will not cause any changes to the surviving fabric and the only change to the existing unit is the provision of two small louvres. The change of use will allow for a vacant site to be brought back into use and the design/colour scheme of the eatery will have a positive impact on the site and setting.

CONSERVATION AREA IMPACT

With regards to the conservation area, in terms of the control of development for Whitworth Street Conservation area, (detailed below), given the minor changes proposed, the works are not substantial enough to be categorised within the 'control of development' aspirations however they are certainly not contrary to the requirements set out.

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.

As with other parts of the city centre, new developments should generally be aligned to the back of the pavement in order to preserve the linear character of the streets and complete the 'street wall.'

The proposed development will have no impact on the significance of the Conservation Area given that, externally, consent is simply sought for the provision of two louvre grills on the existing modern 'banner' of the unit (which will display the name of the eatery).

Given the small size of the unit and the very limited external changes, the proposal will have no adverse impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. The proposal will bring active use to the unit and allow it to play a positive role in animating the conservation area which is characterised by active ground floor uses and leisure uses.

CONCLUSION

In accordance with Paragraph 194 of the NPPF (2021), this report has described the significance of 95 Oxford Street and the Whitworth Street Conservation Area. It has also considered the impact of the development on the significance of these two designated heritage assets.

The assessment has found that:

- The proposal would preserve and enhance the character both internally and externally of 95 Oxford Street. The façade is considered to be the most significant element of the listed building whereby no changes are proposed. The unit is currently vacant with a garish orange signage and window advertisement, the proposal will bring this unit back into use and presents a more complimentary design (cosmetic) for the unit;
- The overall internal layout will remain the same. The only changes proposed are the installation of a kitchen whereby there are no historical features and cosmetic changes such as decorating. The unit has undergone significant alterations and infilling over time and contains few, if any, features of significance.
- The proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, in line with the 'control of development' aspirations set out by MCC.
- The proposal would not result in changes to the settings of nearby listed buildings and there will be no impact on the significance of any nearby listed buildings.

The proposed development is a response to the need for a prominent but vacant, underutilised unit to be brought back into use. There is no loss or impact, internally or externally, to any original features or fabric of the listed building and therefore the impact on the heritage asset is negligible.

The proposed development is sought to bring a vacant unit back into use to create a positive, active frontage along Oxford Street in the conservation area. The works are minor in nature to allow the unit to operate as a high end hot food eatery. No structural changes are proposed, only cosmetic/decorative. These changes will provide a more aesthetically pleasing space compared to the current vacant unit.

With regards Chapter 16 NPPF the proposals will have a negligible impact in the designated heritage assets of the St James' Building and the Conservation Area, and arguably a beneficial impact given the removal of the suspended ceiling and occupation of the unit. The proposal will deliver significant public benefits from securing use of the vacant unit, bringing activity to the conservation area as well as economic benefits and jobs.

The proposed development is in compliance with policies EN3 and CC 9 of the Core Strategy together with chapter 16 of the NPPF. The scheme has been developed with a conscious approach to the building's heritage and setting through only proposing minor changes. It represents a carefully considered approach to stripping back the unit internally and fully exposing the ceiling height. This will allow the proportions to be better appreciated. The development will thus allow for an improvement to the current vacant unit and assist in continuing to bring vibrancy to this part of Oxford Street without causing detrimental impact to the historical context nor the heritage assets.

Appendix 1

Official list entry

Heritage Category: **Listed Building**

Grade: **II**

List Entry Number: **1246571**

Date first listed: **20-Jun-1988**

Statutory Address 1: **ST JAMES BUILDINGS, 65-95, OXFORD STREET**

This List entry helps identify the building designated at this address for its special architectural or historic interest.

Unless the List entry states otherwise, it includes both the structure itself and any object or structure fixed to it (whether inside or outside) as well as any object or structure within the curtilage of the building.

For these purposes, to be included within the curtilage of the building, the object or structure must have formed part of the land since before 1st July 1948.

Understanding list entries (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/understanding-list-entries/>)

Corrections and minor amendments (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/minor-amendments/>)

Location

Statutory Address: **ST JAMES BUILDINGS, 65-95, OXFORD STREET**

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

District: **Manchester (Metropolitan Authority)**

Parish: **Non Civil Parish**

National Grid Reference: **SJ 84074 97689**

Details

MANCHESTER

SJ8497NW OXFORD STREET 698-1/32/267 (East side) 20/06/88 Nos.65 TO 95 (Odd) St James' Buildings

GV II

Commercial building. 1912, by Clegg, Fryer and Penman. Steel frame with facade of Portland stone; green slated mansard roof. Very large rectangular plan. Neo-Baroque style. Eight storeys plus dormers, 3:6:3:6:3 bays, symmetrical,

the centre and the ends breaking forwards slightly; ground to 2nd floors treated as rustic, with channelled masonry, ground and 1st floors set in arcaded round-headed openings with massive polished granite plinths to the piers, shops at ground floor and lunettes at 1st floor, triple keystones to the arches. The centre and ends have balustraded balconies to recessed 2nd-floor windows, and above this level are treated as giant pedimented aedicules (to the 7th and 6th floors respectively), with paired Ionic pilasters framing the windows (projected canted bay windows in the centre at the 1st level), and open pediments (triangular in the centre and segmental at the ends); and the centre has a square tower with stepped Baroque spire. Main entrance in centre bay, with massive round-headed archway. Otherwise, the 2nd-floor windows of the main ranges have aedicules with small balconies, engaged columns and alternating triangular and segmental pediments, and the other floors have 2 smaller windows per bay, all with architraves. Dormer windows to 7th floor. Moulded chimney stacks. Rear and interior not inspected.

Listing NGR: SJ8407497689

Legacy

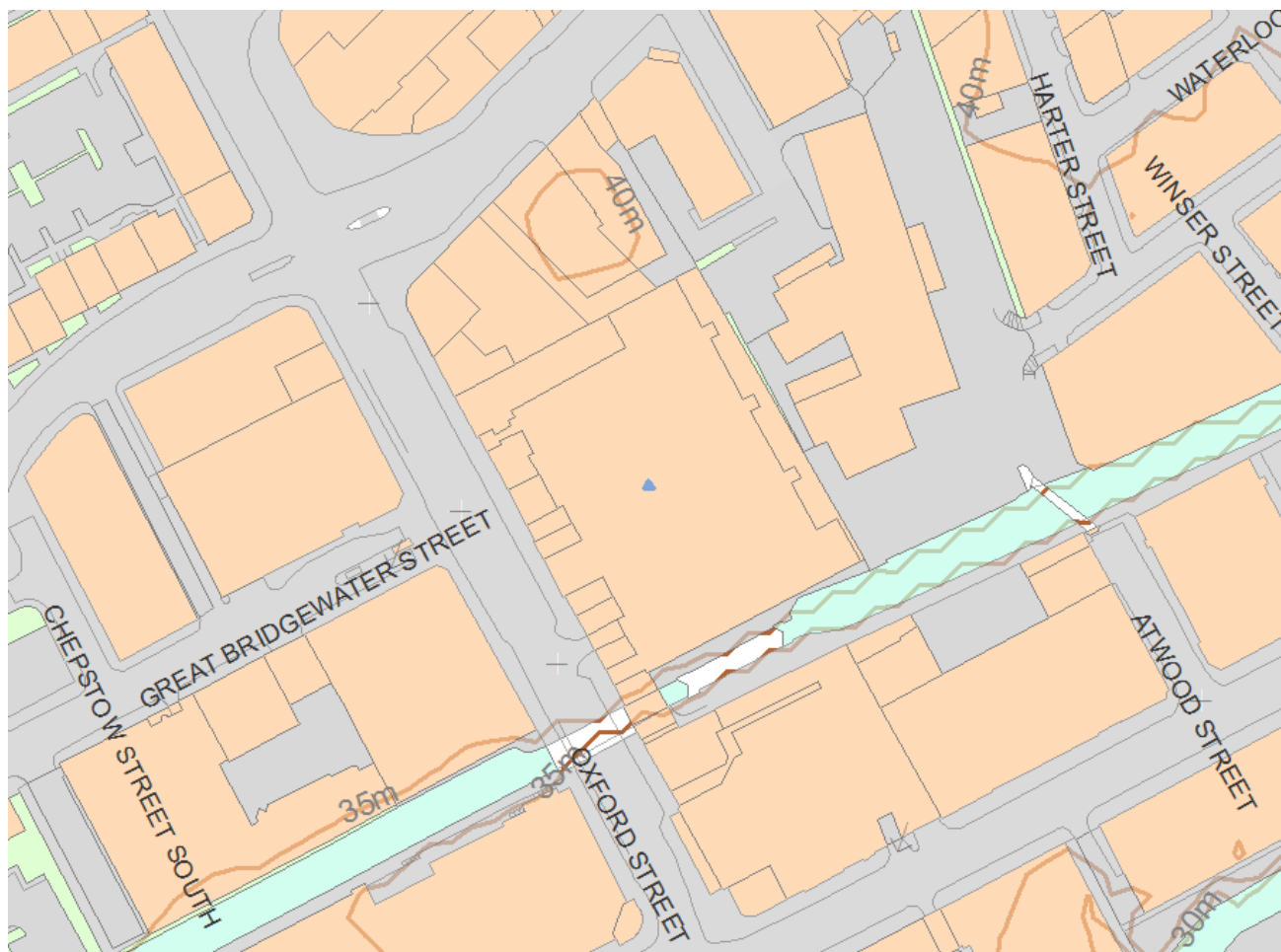
The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number: **454853**

Legacy System: **LBS**

Legal

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.



Map

This map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale.
This copy shows the entry on 20-Sep-2022 at 13:17:01.

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(<https://historicengland.org.uk/terms/website-terms-conditions/>).

End of official list entry



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