



Design & Access Statement

Level 5, Millgate Building,
Chethams School of Music

SEPTEMBER 2022

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1.0 Executive Summary

1.01 - Key Information

Location:

Millgate Building, Chethams School of Music

Proposal:

Refurbishment and remodeling of existing dormitory to create X new dormitory rooms

Use:

Class C2 - Residential Institution

Client:

Chethams School of Music

Project Team:

Manor Architecture

(Architectural Design)

Buttress

(Heritage Consultants)

This Design & Access Statement accompanies a full planning and listed building application for the remodel and refurbishment of the south-eastern wing of Level 5, Millgate Building at Chethams School of Music. The Millgate Building is Grade II Listed and is made up of several extensions which have been added to the original buildings over the years. This statement concentrates on the proposed works to be carried out to Level 5 and will therefore only deal with the parts of the building affected by the works.

This statement has been prepared by Manor Architecture Ltd on behalf of Chethams School of Music and written in accordance with guidance and structure set out in the CABI document "Design and Access Statements – How to write, read and use them". The statement has been written in an effort to demonstrate the design development process and the collaborative approach of the design team to ensure the design is of high quality and adheres to preserving the historic fabric of Millgate Building.

2.0 Project Background

2.01 Overview

The planning and listed building application in which this statement relates seeks to alter the internal layout of Level 5 of Millgate Building in order to rationalise the existing space and create a more regular structured dormitory layout which is more fit for purpose than the current facilities.

As part of these proposed works, a full strip out of the current partition system will be required and the rationalisation of the existing services in this part of the building. This work will involve the creation of some additional penetrations to the existing external walls to facilitate new drainage and ventilation systems as well as patching up historic penetrations to make good on the elevations affected.

The current facilities being provided are functional but are in need of renewal or extensive repair. It is therefore thought that a full remodel and refurbishment

of this area would be more financially viable but more importantly offer a higher standard of accommodation for the students which will be fit for its use for many years to come.

2.02 Project Brief

The initial brief for the refurbishment of the dormitory on Level 5 Millgate Building is as follows:

- Assess current layout to ascertain if the existing layout can be utilised in a better way
- Assess the structural design of the current layout to ascertain what walls can be removed to facilitate a new design
- Rationalise the dormitory design to create more regular and compliant room layouts
- Review the existing building for significant heritage features which could be retained as part of the design proposals
- Provide private bathroom accommodation for each of the dormitory rooms and remove the old shared communal shower block
- Utilise the full height of the floor to ceiling to maximise floor area

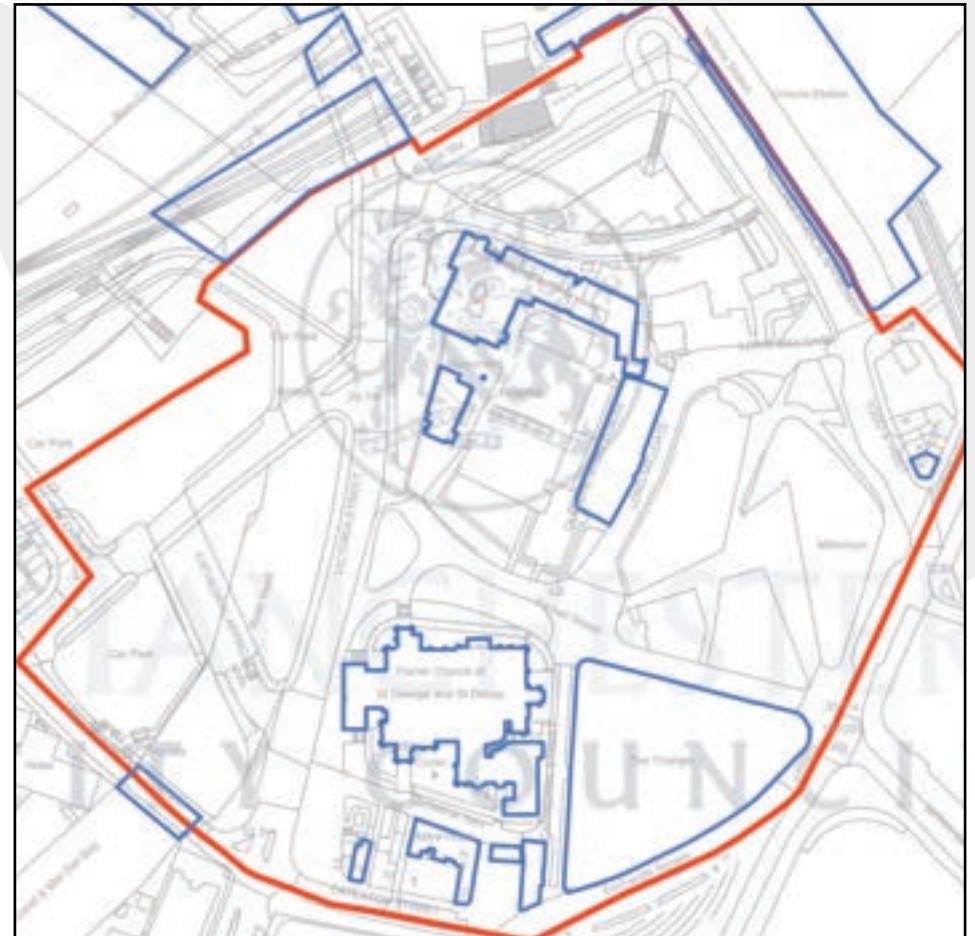


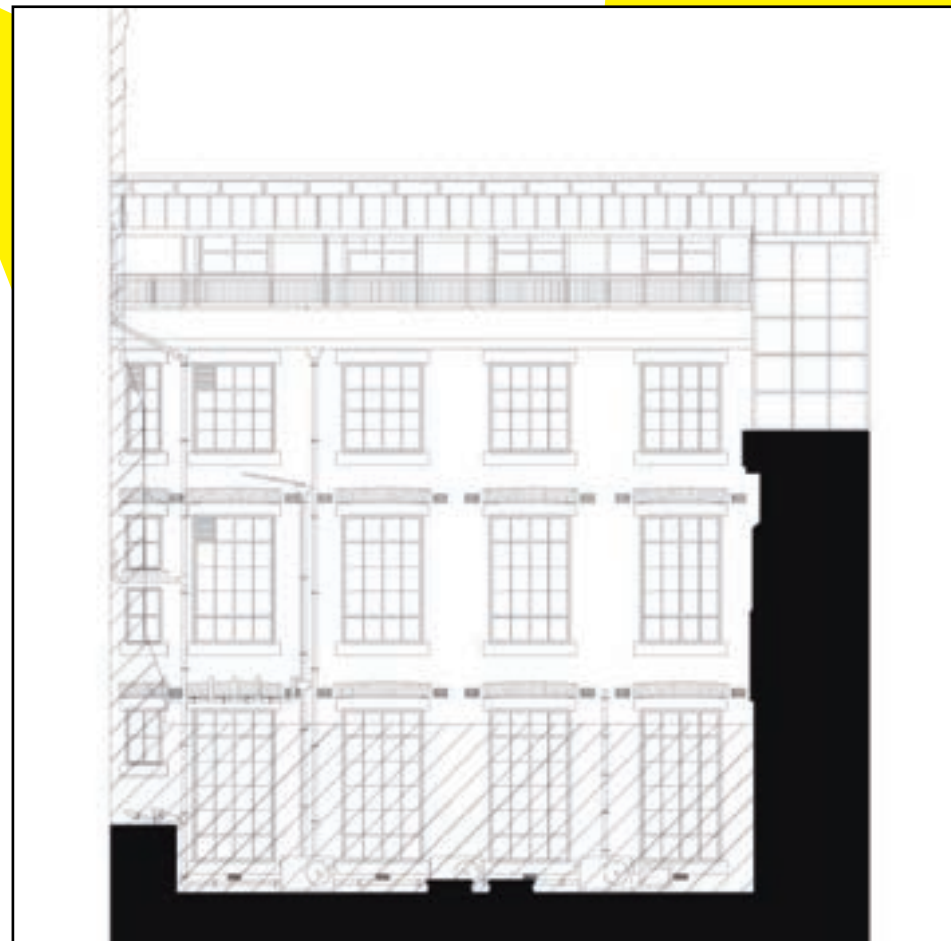
3.0 Context

3.1 Site Location and Context

The Millgate Building is one of a number of buildings which form the Chethams School of Music campus. The Millgate Building has the long elevation which fronts on to Long Millgate and is the former Manchester Grammar School building. Millgate Building is made up of a number of extensions which have been developed over the course of many years starting with the northern sections which is dated 1869-70 and is known as the Barker and Ellis Building which is connected on the opposite side to the historic Chetham's gatehouse. Attached to the Barker and Ellis Building is the Figgis and Munby Building which dates back to 1911-13 and finally the Nicholls Building which dates back to 1950's.

The area of proposed works within Level 5 of Millgate Building are straddle two sections with the majority of the proposed works within the Figgis and Munby Building and one room within of the older Barker and Ellis Building. In the wider context the site lies within the Manchester Cathedral Conservation Area of which the Chethams School of Music campus forms an integral part. The works are almost entirely internal works with only a small proportion of works to be visible externally.

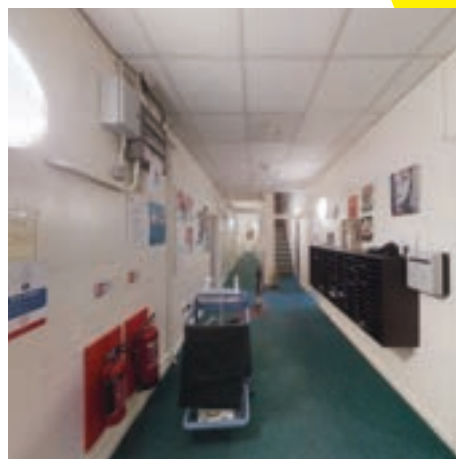


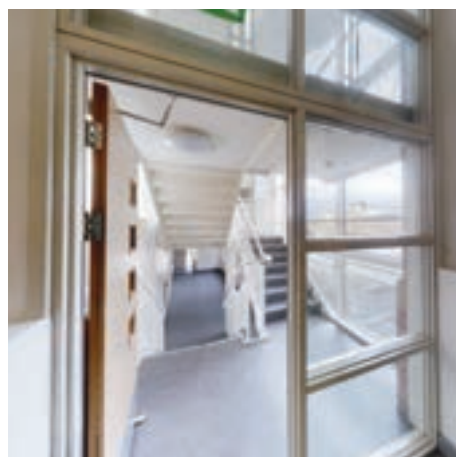
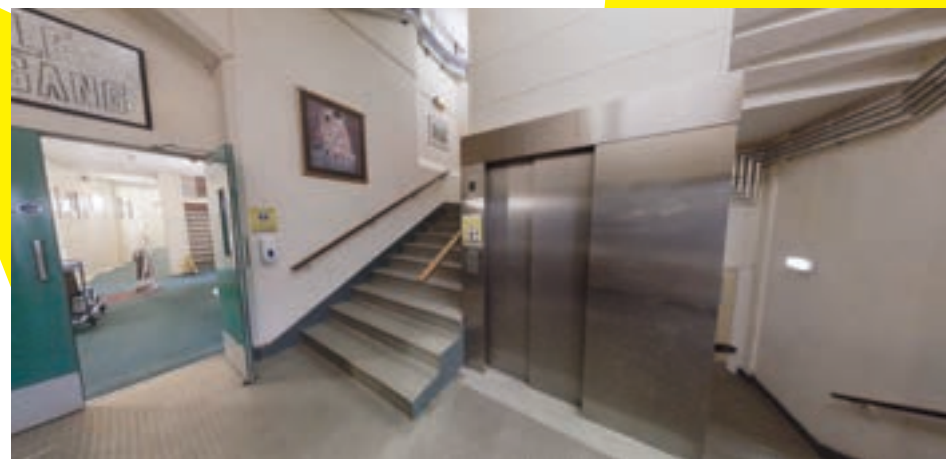


3.2 Site Photography

Existing site images







3.3 Planning History

There are numerous planning applications in relation to works at the school as would be expected. It is believed that all works in relation to the historical elevational repairs along Long Millgate and wholesale replacement of drainage from PVC-U to cast iron was covered in the same application but they do not appear on the councils website. These are the only planning and listed consent works believed to have related to the area of Millgate Building in which we are proposing to carry out works.

3.4 Policy Review

The below review has been assessed against the following:

- The National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF)
- Manchester Core Strategy 2012-2027 (MCS)

NPPF

The NPPF sets out the Governments desired approach on how planning policy should be applied to proposed developments. Below are a list of examples of how the proposed remodelling and refurbishment works comply with the Governments guidance.

Chapter 2 of the NPPF, Paragraph 7 states “The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.”. The very ethos of this project aligns to creating a sustainable and futureproofed solution by renovating and remodelling this area within Chethams School of Music.

Paragraph 8 follows up to state there are three overarching objectives to achieving sustainable development, and they are:

- Economic
- Social
- Environmental

All three objectives can demonstrably be implemented as a result of the proposed works as detailed below:

Economic

The positive economic effect of the proposals are that the income generated by the school by maximising the number of pupil bed spaces will allow the school to generate an income through tuition fees which in turn contribute to the ongoing maintenance of the heritage assets within the Chethams school campus.

Social

Paragraph 8b states that development must “support strong, vibrant and healthy communities” by way of “fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places”. The current facilities provided within Millgate Building are now very dated in their design, irregular in shape and in general need of renewing sanitary facilities. The proposals are to provide more functional spaces for students to live, work and socialise which are more reflective of today’s standards of living.

Each student will be provided with clear private space and with the remodelling of the communal washing facilities, access to much higher quality bathroom provision.

Environmental

Paragraph 8c states that developments should “protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment” which can be demonstrated by replacing dysfunctional spaces through rationalisation and modernisation, whilst adhering to the principals of enhancing the existing historic features set out within the building. By providing modern facilities, not only does this contribute to the social benefits as outlined above, but it also allows for the renewal of old lighting and heating systems with the provision of more efficient means which will reduce the overall carbon footprint of the scheme.

Providing more emphasis on the social impact of the proposed development Chapter 12 Achieving Well Designed Spaces, paragraphs 124 -132 stipulates that achieving high quality and well design spaces is key to the planning process and what any application should aim to achieve.

The current format and quality of the accommodation provided is adequate and functional, but even with the renewal and renovation of the existing layout, does not confirm to what would be described as “well designed”. Due to the nature of the school, this area of the building has been re-purposed throughout time for many uses and as a result does not have a conventional design. The general principal of the layout is poor and means of escape through the common room is neither desirable nor suitable by today’s standards. It is for this reason that a full redesign of this space has been taken forwards as this clearly demonstrates a vast improvement of the quality of the design and how this will improve the well being of the students.

Chapter 16 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment is a key point in the NPPF which is covered largely in the accompanying heritage impact assessment. To summarise in Paragraph 197a, the NPPF states that local authorities should take account of the following when determining an application of this nature:

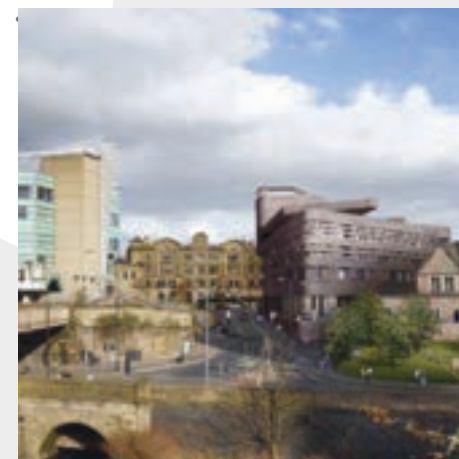
- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation

The above is key as justification for the ongoing use and enhancement of the parts of the heritage asset which is affected as this is outweighed by the positive contribution the development will provide.

This point is touched upon again in Chapter 202 whereby the NPPF states “where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed

against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use”. It is deemed that the harm to the heritage asset will be minimal with the proposed works due to the fact that the internal partition system does not appear to be original in nature, therefore the proposed works and sensitive nature proposed for any localised repairs to the external envelope outweigh the negatives.

Finally in Paragraph 95a the NPPF states that local authorities should “give weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools though the preparation of plans and decisions on applications”. Given the fact that the school requires investment to cope with the ongoing maintenance and keep on top of increased running costs coupled with the increased costs of construction, it is hopeful that Manchester City Council will work with Chetham’s school to bring forward the proposals swiftly and deem them to be more favourable than the facility in which the new scheme proposes to supersede.





3.5 Opportunities and Constraints

Opportunities

- Creation of higher quality living accommodation for students
- Creation of more bed spaces to financially benefit the school
- Improvements via building regulations to improve fire safety as well as thermal efficiency
- Improvements to existing M&E equipment to reduce the carbon footprint and make the scheme more sustainable
- Enhance features of the historic building which are currently impeded by poor quality ceiling systems
- Remove unsightly ventilation fans through windows on both Long Millgate and Courtyard elevations

Constraints

- Works proposed will have an impact on the historic fabric of the building albeit only minor
- The works will temporarily reduce the capacity for students and their associated communal area for the duration of the project
- The integrity of the prominent elevations limits the ability to make significant changes in order to facilitate new services and therefore this limits the internal design to where current services currently run.

4.0 Design

4.01 Design Development

As set out in the proposed brief, the existing layout was reviewed to ascertain whether there was an opportunity to “carve up” the space to make for a better design solution. Upon carrying out a measured survey and full design review of this approach, the extent of the removal of the ceilings to make best use of the height of Level 5 coupled with the unorthodox locations of the sanitary provision and fire escape routes it was determined that a redesign would be the best approach.

Looking at the design of Level 4 where the dining room was located, there are no structural walls which divide the space as is the case in the basement below. In the Barker and Ellis Building, the construction was such that the floors were spanned off large beams and had no internal structural supports and therefore it was initially assumed that this would be the case in this wing. Therefore, the initial design approach was to clear the current existing partitions and divide the space up equally with a central corridor with

dormitory rooms either side and introduce a mezzanine level into each of the dormitory rooms to make best use of the available height and maximise floor space and create a balcony feature within each of the rooms. This resulted in a balanced design utilising the space between the prominent windows for party walls to split up the dormitory rooms. This design solution included larger dormitory rooms with capacity for up to 27 bed spaces for pupils and one staff flat. The design although more open, was in line with the minimum required standards for students to bathroom ratios.

Upon review by the client although the number of bed spaces achieved were appealing, they did not want to overcrowd students and decided that they would prefer a less dense scheme with a higher student to bathroom ratio, this would also assist in providing betterment of the accommodation which they had access to currently. Therefore, the brief was to have no more than 4 students per bathroom and floor.

A second concept was arrived at and issued to DW LLP Consulting Engineers for review and to provide comment following which they were to carry out some high level non-intrusive investigation works to establish if any of the walls which were laid out were structural despite the levels below being open. After the initial feedback was given and a site visit carried out, the steel frame was located within a wall which was off centre to the floor plan. Other than the steel columns which were identified, it was ascertained that although the partition walls on this level were made of a solid clay material, they were not structural and could be removed if required.

Following the advice from DW LLP, the scheme was revisited to adjust the circulation space to accommodate the steel frame which was now evident. This created an unequal layout with the rooms facing the Courtyard now much smaller than those facing Long Millgate. The solution for this was to create longer thinner rooms on the Long Millgate side and wider rooms on

the Courtyard side. This iteration of the design also proposed creating a new opening between the Figgis and Munby and Barker and Ellis buildings to create a kitchen for the proposed staff accommodation and maintained the wall between the cleaner’s store and the adjacent room to keep the existing services in the same location. This design solution created a total of 18 student bed spaces and a staff flat but the compromise for this solution was that the common room was now reduced quite a bit more than the existing provision.

After an internal consultation the client team fed back that the common room reduction was not an option, and the provision should be the same as or exceed the floor area already allocated in the existing layout. There was to be a new office added into the scheme to provide a private space for disciplinary matters and admin staff. Therefore, the courtyard side of the building was altered to reduce the number of bed spaces and increase the common room which was then positioned centrally

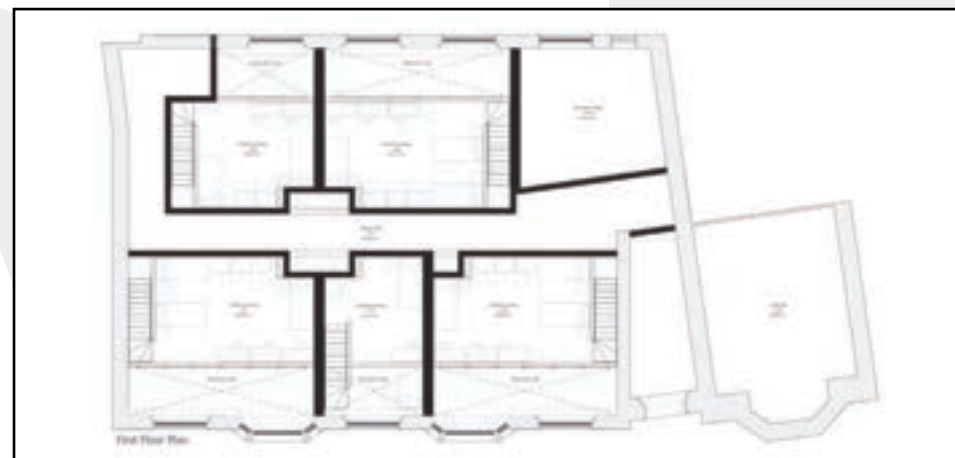
including a mezzanine above. This design iteration was more in line with the client aspiration for the scheme and however they wanted further improvements on the common rooms so requested that the mezzanine was extended out further to increase the space available as much as practically possible.

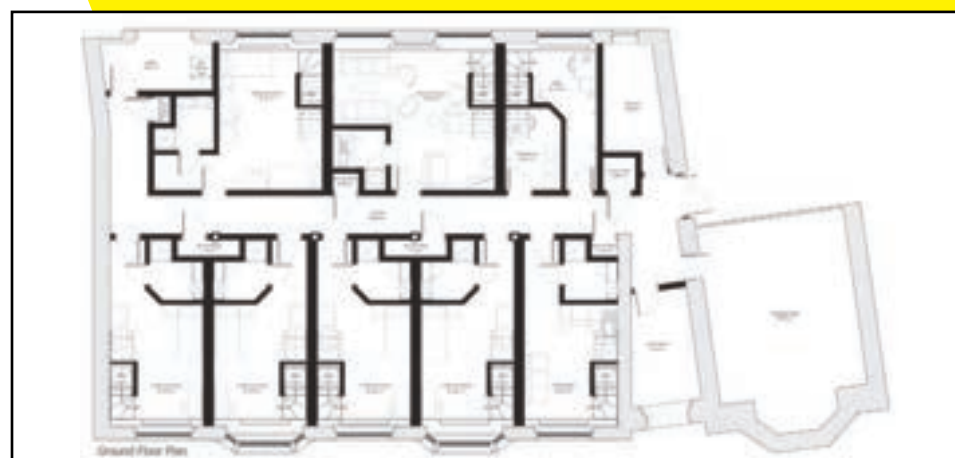
Following these changes, the client team were happy that this design solution offered a balance between the 15 student bed spaces provided coupled with 6no. private bathrooms, a staff flat, office and cleaner's store.

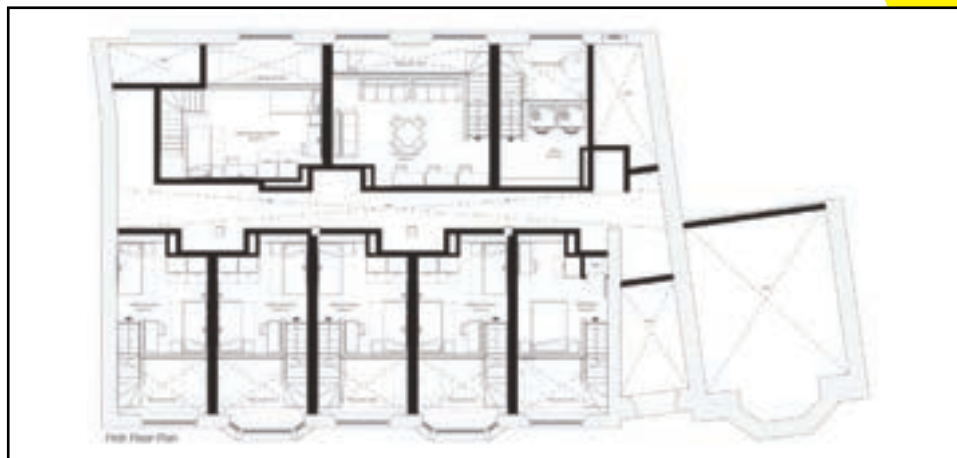
The final iteration prior to fixing was the inclusion of a DDA compliant room with associated bathroom facilities. As there had been a DDA compliant bathroom provided previously, the replacement of this was a key provision to maintain.

It was also identified at sign off stage that there would be a requirement to upgrade the Reading Room's fire protection as part of the renovation works and therefore a new fire door

would be required as the door was positioned onto a communal hallway the wall separating the stairwell from the reading room would also need to be upgraded for Part B compliance. Other than the above, there are to be only general decoration works within the Reading Room.







4.02 Use

The use in planning terms is not changing and the provision for student accommodation remains the same which is why the proposals do not seek a change. Use in terms of the functionality of space for the students and faculty will be improved a great deal by the implementation of the changes. Not only does it offer up a higher quality of living accommodation, but it also improves the communal spaces which student utilise for socialising.

The aspiration for this project has always to be the provision of quality accommodation and socialisation spaces for the use of the students and faculty

alike. The client believes that this design solution offers a good balance between amenity and accommodation space that can maximise the future use of this space for years to come.

4.03 Amount

The current space comprises of a large 3-bedroom staff apartment, 3

dormitory rooms with accommodation for up to 8 students, a common room, communal shower space and a cleaner's store. The total floor area is 354m² which is for the current Level 5 layout only.

The proposed layout seeks to increase the floor area by introducing a mezzanine in all dormitory rooms, common room and staff accommodation. By rationalising the oversized 3-bedroom staff flat, the occupancy of the dormitory has been increased from 8 bed spaces to 15 bed spaces with 6 private bathrooms providing facilities for the private bedrooms. The area of the common room is now 30m² and the office provision has been incorporated into the scheme also.

By utilising the height of the space and making features of the large windows, this has allowed the amount of usable floor area to increase significantly to increase the school's capacity whilst renovating a heritage asset in the process.

4.04 Layout

The development of the layout and the form in which it has taken is covered extensively in the design development section, but to summarise the layout is set out as follows:

- The general form of the layout was designed around the structural columns and large windows as they were deemed the key features of the current dormitory layout.
- A centralised corridor was not achievable, so an asymmetrical design was thought to be the best way to achieve a balanced and well-proportioned design for the dormitory rooms.
- The key features of Millgate Building at this level are the windows and it was thought not to be appropriate to have walls running into windows as is the case in other parts of the building and that all dividing party walls should sit between the window reveals.
- By utilising the height available, the design creates more efficient use of the available space and by

introducing a mezzanine it creates an aspirational space more befitting of a modern-day dormitory room.

- Each dormitory room is formed around a bathroom at the entrance with bed spaces located at the floor level with a staircase positioned against the external wall running back on itself up to the mezzanine level. This was designed in such a way so as to create a balcony feature and make use of the natural light coming in from the large windows on the Long Millgate and Courtyard elevations.
- Service risers are placed along the hallway which will centralise the services for the dormitory rooms and allow convenient access for repairs and maintenance as well as getting the services out of the building in dedicated locations.

4.05 Scale

The overall scale of the development has not increased as the proposed design is contained within the existing Level 5 dormitory. As mentioned earlier in the document, utilising the height in the existing space increases the scale of the usable floor area whilst maintaining the integrity of the existing building fabric.

The current floor to ceiling height on Level 5 is 4.5m. The mezzanine will be positioned equally between both levels to maximise the head height of each level.



4.06 Appearance

The appearance of the current dormitory is befitting the era in which it was constructed. The walls and surfaces are functional and “hard” in nature which are not considered of a high standard today.

The proposed approach will have a more considered design with its materiality, lighting and furnishings which will in turn provide a more modern living provision for students.

The materials palette is detailed in the attached mood board.



5.0 Access

5.01 Movement and Access

Access to level 5 is from the main stair core to Millgate Building located in the Ellis and Barker portion of the building, which has a large grand staircase wrapping around the lift shaft. Access to the dormitory is from the main stair core which in turn allows for a Part M compliant access to the dormitory.

The previous layout did not allow for a fully compliant Part B escape route from the dormitory as access to the fire escape on the far side of the Figgis and Munby building was accessed through the common room.

In the proposed layout, the central corridor has been designed to comply with Part B and allows escape out of the dormitory in both directions along a protected corridor.

Within the individual dormitory rooms, the mezzanine floor levels have also been designed to comply with Part B in relation to escape distances within

each of the rooms. Each of the rooms allows for safe passage from all areas within the dormitory rooms to the entrance to each room in a compliant manner.

5.02 Part M

As mentioned in the previous section, access can be gained to Level 5 via the lift on the main stair core which provides a compliant solution for Part M access to the dormitory. The corridor widths have been designed for clear access by wheelchair users and within the design a fully compliant DDA dormitory room has been provided including a fully fitted sanitary provision with associated grab rails.



6.0 Conclusion

6.1 Conclusion

In conclusion the following positive outcomes will be achieved if the proposals are granted permission:

- Much needed renovation and refurbishment will be carried out to a prominent listed building prolonging its current usage.
- The increased number of pupils allows for Chethams School of Music to generate more income for reinvestment and contribute to the increasing operating costs of the school.
- Provision of high-quality student accommodation, which in turn promotes the well being of the students.
- Provision of dedicated DDA compliant accommodation for students.
- The removal of unsightly features such as windows fans along Long Millgate and Courtyard elevations returning the building's character.





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