



Atelier
Heritage



08-16 Newton Street

Heritage Statement

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Image 01: Conservation Area, with building marked in pink

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This heritage statement forms part of a planning and listed building application for 08-16 Newton Street, Manchester. It relates specifically to proposals for the creation of amenity breakout space, the restoration of the Newton Street shop fronts and internal changes to the ceilings on the third floor. A previous application for works to refurbish the building was approved in early 2018 (118678/LO/2017) and is currently underway.

The statement was produced in December 2021 by Atelier Heritage and its author is Laura Jessup, PGCert Conservation of the Historic Environment, MA History and Theory of Architecture.

2.0 LOCATION

Newton Street is located within Manchester's Northern Quarter, to the north-east of the city centre. It is a busy vehicular route running between Great Ancoats Street and Piccadilly. Numbers 08-16 form a block, bounded by Newton Street, Mangle Street, Back Piccadilly and Dale Street.

3.0 DESCRIPTION

The buildings at 08-16 Newton Street were listed Grade II in 1994. They also fall within the Stevenson Square Conservation Area. The property is one of a cluster of listed buildings, the majority of which are warehousing of a similar scale and nature. The listing extract is provided here for reference.

SJ8498SE NEWTON STREET 698-11/29/248 (South East side) Nos. 14 AND 16

GV II

Includes: No.36 DALE STREET. Manufacturers' warehouses and agents' offices, now shops, etc. Late C19, altered. Red brick in Flemish bond (part painted white), with sandstone ashlar plinth and dressings, slate roof. Trapezoidal plan with rounded corner to Dale Street. Basement, 4 storeys and attic, No.14 having a narrow 4-window facade treated as one wide bay, and No.16 to the left a wider 6-window facade in 3 bays; with a high plinth (interrupted by basement openings), cornice to ground floor, string courses to the upper floors, a moulded stone cornice over the top floor on thin brick brackets, and a parapet with chimneys over 2 piers of No.16. Doorways adjacent to the junction, tall, with panelled doors, square overlights, and cornices on elongated consoles; No.14

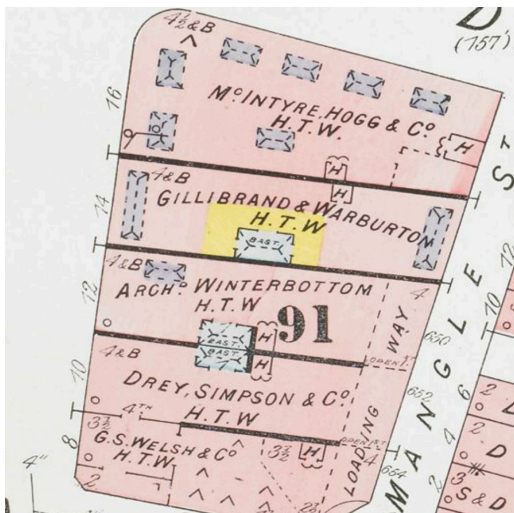


Image 02: Goads Insurance Plan, 1886

to the right has 3 sashed windows at ground floor and 4 on each of the next 2 floors, with continuous stone lintels; No. 16 to the left has altered windows at ground floor, sashed windows on the next 2 floors with stone lintels to each pair; both have coupled sashed windows at 4th floor and square dormers in a mansard roof. The fenestration of No. 16 carries round the curved corner and continues in the 5-bay side to Dale Street, with chimneys over 4 piers, and 2 dormers. Interior not inspected. History: occupied c. 1905-13 by various manufacturers' agents, No. 14 by Horrocks Crewdson & Co.

Listing NGR: SJ8460698288

SJ8498SE NEWTON STREET 698-1/29/247 (South East side) Nos. 8, 10 AND 12

GV II

Warehouses, workshops and offices, now shops and offices. c. 1860-70; altered. Brown brick with some polychromy, sandstone dressings (roof not visible). Rectangular plan. Eclectic style, with Gothic accent. Basement and 4 storeys, 4 unequal bays divided by brick pilasters, with sill-bands, cornice and parapet. The ground floor has coupled doorways in the 2nd bay, with banded plinths to the height of the tall basement, then short colonettes with carved capitals, and arched heads (rounded intrados with pointed extrados), and linked hoodmoulds, and a large mullioned 3-light window to the left (tripartite basement openings below); but is otherwise altered by C20 shop fronts, with numerous large signboards attached. The upper floors have 3-light windows with brick mullions in the 1st and 3rd bays, coupled windows in the 2nd and 4th, those at 2nd floor with banded arched heads and linked hoodmoulds, and all sashed. Prominent cornice and panelled parapet. The right-hand return wall has a 2-storey canted bay (altered at ground floor), arched windows at 2nd floor, and a gabled arched window at 3rd floor. Rear and interior not inspected. History: occupied c. 1905 by umbrella manufacturer, sewing machines, etc. Included for group value. Listing NGR: SJ8458498270

The Stevenson Square Conservation Area is described as representing 'a significant portion of the city centre in which the majority of Victorian buildings remain intact. Many are listed by the Department of the Environment as being of special architectural or historic interest.' MCC Conservation Area appraisal at <https://manchester.gov.uk>



Image 03: The building in the mid-20th century (Manchester Archives).

4.0 HISTORY

The buildings at 8-16 Newton Street are former home trade warehouses, dating from the late 19th century. They are in two separate parts (8 – 12 forming one building, and 14-16 a second) and together they form one block, with main elevations facing Newton Street, secondary elevations to Dale Street and Mangle Street/Back Piccadilly being less visible and with fewer features. Both buildings are in the same architectural style, but they differ slightly in appearance and height. It is possible they were built for two different owners, but the fact that they share internal walls and read as one, indicates they date from the same period.

16 Newton Street does not appear on the 1851 map, but is visible on the 1891 map. The listing dates the buildings as 1860-70, though there is no reference to the buildings in the trade directory of 1879 when Hilton Street is listed as appearing straight after number 12, indicating there was a different street layout. The buildings do appear in directories from 1883 onwards. From the available evidence therefore, the buildings can be dated to 1879-1882. No reference has been found to the architect/s, nor has it been possible to locate any original drawings or plans within the Manchester Central Library archives. The Slater Trade Directory from 1883 lists one manufacturer per building in numbers 08, 10 and 12. By 1911 there is further separation within the buildings, particularly at numbers 08 and 14. Tenants are a mixture of manufacturers and agents.

The properties were home trade warehouses. The goods were supplied by manufacturers and agents who visited, and buyers were usually wholesale drapers. Home trade warehouses were common within the city in the 19th century, and characteristic of this area of the Northern Quarter.

There is no documentary evidence of internal layout, but it is almost certain to have followed the typical plan of home trade warehouses in the area and of this period. It was common for floors to be sub-divided for different businesses. The ground or main floor often had a counting house for credit customers, along with consulting rooms, and offices positioned towards the front. Upper floors were used for the lightest goods and were often top-lit. Light wells allowed for natural light to penetrate the central areas. The lower floors housed heavier goods and the basement was for packing. It was common to have a more



Image 04: The building in the 1960s (Manchester Archives).

decorative formal frontage and internal stair for customers and a distinct functional service stair at the rear, for workers. Goods were moved internally by internal hoists and packed in the basement, ready for dispatch through the openings on to the street, often through the open-walled loading bay. This kind of warehouse was particularly common around Portland Street (grander in form) and Dale Street (often smaller). The only identified reference with any detail for 8-16 Newton Street is the Goads Insurance Plan from 1886.

Hoists, with iron doors, are identified by letter 'H'. 8 and 10 have an internal connection through an opening in the internal brick wall. The Mangle Street elevation of the building features a loading way across 8-12 which is open at 1st floor level. The main roof is indicated as being of slate, over four storeys and a basement to the main part of the building. There is a mansard roof to number 16, which is 4 and a half storeys plus basement. At the end closest to Back Piccadilly there are 1 and a half storeys plus basement, and 2 storeys with a 'metal' roof over, to the front Newton Street corner.

Following the decline in the textiles industry, there was little need for warehousing of this nature in the city. The buildings continued in office and light manufacturing use into the 20th century and each building was occupied by several individual tenants, the result of which was piecemeal alterations including additional internal partitions and walls. Recent uses of the ground floor include a variety of food/drink outlets and a skate/clothing retail unit. The basement of number 08 operated as a nightclub and music venue until recently.

The buildings are currently undergoing major refurbishment. The interiors have been altered over the lifetime of the building, mainly through the insertion of new partitions and over covering of floors. The lightwell of 08-12 has also been altered, as has the appearance of the external elevations at street level, on the Newton Street side in particular.

The insurance plans show there were 6 hoists in 08-16. Of these, three remain (two at 10/12 and one at 16), and an additional one has been added to number 14.

5.0 SIGNIFICANCE, PROPOSALS AND IMPACT

The assessment of significance has been undertaken in relation to a) the listed asset b) the Conservation Area and c) the elements subject to change as part of this application.

Building

Assessment is based on Historic England's criteria found within Conservation principles, 2008. Classification of aesthetic, communal, evidential and historical values are accepted as being a criteria against which significance is assessed.

Setting- The setting of the buildings is a contributor to their significance. They form a group of warehouses sharing similar characteristics (eg. height, mass, materials and historic uses) within this part of the city, and are positive contributors to both the streetscape and the wider Conservation Area.

Historical- The buildings are of higher historical value. They are associated with the period of rapid industrial and commercial growth in the city, which is a crucial part of the history of Manchester, connecting the past to the present. Their place within a wider group in this area is also recognised as highly significant. The degradation to the exterior through inappropriate change, and the removal of most historical features internally has compromised this value in places. Later internal additions are of negligible or historical value and in many cases are detracting from the significance of the asset.

Evidential- The Newton Street buildings have a medium/high degree of evidential value. Warehouses are an important characteristic architectural type in Manchester and these are typical examples, with the plan and parts of the interior and exterior illustrating how the buildings worked, particularly the vertical hoists and lightwells, columns, windows and entrances. They are however, of an average quality when compared to others. The original parts of the exterior are, on the whole, of high significance though individual elements are not all equal in importance. The altered parts are of low/negative significance.

Aesthetic- 08-16 Newton Street have some interesting features, particularly in the external stonework detail, the form of the rear sloping roof and the characteristic roof spaces internally, giving them a medium aesthetic value.

They are in the vernacular tradition of brick Manchester warehouses. The internal spaces are almost entirely functional and most have a medium aesthetic value. The later changes have low/negative value.

Communal- The industrial past of Manchester is a key element of the city's heritage. The associated architecture has shaped the character of the city and is recognised by people as what sets it apart from other places. The personal links to this building are considered low, but there is a degree of associational value to the wider city for residents and visitors. This is particularly true of the elevations to Newton Street, which is a busy thoroughfare and close to the focal point of Piccadilly.

Not all elements within the building are equally significant and specific areas relevant to the application are discussed below.

Conservation Area

8-16 Newton Street form a large, prominently positioned block within the Stevenson Square Conservation Area. Newton Street was developed for commercial warehousing in the second part of the 19th century and retains a good number of original structures, in varying designs but with a typical shared characteristics in use of materials and general architectural form.

Rather than any individual building, it is the concentration of 19th/20th century commercial architecture that forms the main significance of the CA. The MCC appraisal states, 'Most are related to the cotton industry, often warehouses, showrooms or workshops. These buildings are taller than the earlier examples and create a varied matrix of building mass, divided by largely dark, narrow streets. Wealth produced by the cotton industry can be seen reflected in the buildings, either stone or brick with stone dressings, many of which are elaborately decorated.' and 'The main characteristic of the Stevenson Square conservation area is one of a closely woven network of narrow streets intersecting at right angles.'

Specific elements and proposals

The proposals are centred around the restoration of the Newton Street shop frontages, the provision of open-air amenity space within the existing footprint of the building in one location, the addition of a number of internal partition walls at first and fourth floors, alterations to ceilings on level three and the replacement of glass blocks with windows at level three.



Image 05: Photograph of Newton St corner.



Image 06: Showing area of brickwork to be removed to form door to access roof deck.

The intention is to create a small amenity space for tenants' use, improve external facades at street level, improve the existing space internally and retain the character of the building.

Impact is assessed against the significance of the built fabric and the principles of aesthetic, historical, communal and evidential values.

Alternative options for these proposals have been explored and this scheme is a result of a process of mitigation and discussions with MCC planning officers have informed the current scheme.

In order to provide further public benefit within the weighting balance outlined in NPPF, proposals include the detailed restoration of the front Newton Street elevations at street level. These frontages are in a poor state of repair and have been subjected to numerous inappropriate interventions and changes over a period of decades. The intention is to remove all modern interventions and restore elevations to a form close to their original design.

Floor two

Existing: At second floor level there is a corner terrace above the Newton Street/Back Piccadilly corner, with a low stone parapet and pitched slate roof. This is an area which is decorative and currently has no access from the interior. The short wall behind to the southeast is red brick with two recessed sections.

Significance: This is an attractive feature and focal point for the corner of the block, on its main Newton Street elevation. It works well in combination with the ornate arched corner entrance and angled corner. The red brickwork to be removed is original fabric, but with no distinct features.

The pitched slate roof is similarly original, but with no features which would deem it to be of particular architectural or historical interest. The individual elements are classed as being of limited heritage value.

Proposal: Removal of existing pitched slate roof and replacement with new flat roof, creating an external terrace, to be drained through existing drainage system. New opening and door created within recess to existing brick wall to form access.



Image 07: Photograph of roof area of second floor; from above.



Image 08: The existing non-original windows to fourth floor.



Image 09: Interior of fourth floor space with roof structure (to be retained).

Impact: Proposed loss of limited value historic fabric to the roof and to create an access point. Overall, the effect is considered to be minor adverse. Previous plans to include a glass balustrade behind the existing wall have been modified by placing the floor at a lower level, thus utilising the existing wall as a barrier. This mitigation has improved the scheme by reducing the visual impact and required penetrations into historic fabric.

It is accepted that in order to secure long term uses for vacant listed buildings, change is inevitable. The degree of harm (less than substantial) in this instance is considered justified when balanced against the potential to enhance this focal point and provide a level of amenity space that is expected by tenants within the city centre, ensuring a continuing occupation and optimum viable end use. The mitigation has lowered the impact of changes.

Throughout the city, especially within the Northern Quarter (see nearby Stevenson Square), permission has been given for roof gardens and new external access. The re-purposing of the roof as terrace will bring animation to this corner; in-keeping with the adaptations evident in this part of the city where part of its attraction and character is the continuing creative re-use of old buildings.

Floor four

Existing: The area subject to proposals is at fourth floor roof level (mansard roof). Proposals relate to a small section of the Mangle Street facing elevation at number 14.

Significance: Mangle Street is the rear facing elevation of the building and is of secondary aesthetic importance. The Mangle Street roof is experienced only obliquely from street level, given the narrow nature of the street. The three windows are behind existing parapets and within the face of the mansard roof.

They are in very poor condition and appear to be replacements from a later date. They are a minor contributor to the significance of the listed building with limited aesthetic, communal, historical or evidential value. Proposal: Removal of existing three non-original windows within mansard side elevation and replacement with new timber framed versions.

Bi-fold doors and glass screens to be installed from a downstand. New downstand to meet existing ceiling and new glass partitions. Set away from existing ceiling joists.

Impact: There is minimal loss of existing fabric (windows) which do not appear original and are in poor condition. The physical loss of a feature of minor significance will have a negligible impact. Glass screens are positioned to avoid

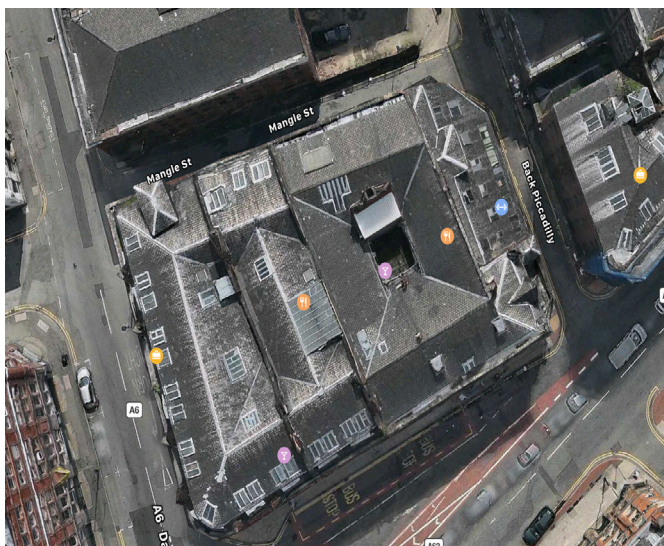


Image 10: Existing aerial view

columns and will use minimum fixings. The flow of natural light will be retained. There is a negligible impact from adding internal screens, but it does not demonstrate any degree of harm to significance of heritage values and visual transparency will be retained.

This application is in response to the requirements of potential tenants. The changes will not erode the historical importance of this building nor its architectural value and represent an effort to make modern interventions which are subservient to the existing form.

The vast majority of the upper floors of numbers 08-16 Newton Street have remained vacant and in poor condition for several decades. Their refurbishment is a substantial project and a significant enhancement to the buildings and the wider Conservation Area. Newton Street elevations, street level (units 08-14)

Shop Fronts at 08, 10 and 12

Existing form and significance: The elevations of 08 and 10 have been subjected to a high level of alteration. The existing arrangement is unsightly, of low quality and utilises inappropriate materials. These elements are detracting from the significance of the larger elevation and have a negative impact upon the street scene within the Conservation Area and the way the listed building is experienced by passers-by and users. They have no heritage value.

Unit 8: Blocked up upper recessed panels, dividing lintel, poor quality white upvc shop window and door with step up. This has no heritage value.

Unit 10 (former Alabama): Original stonework and glazing has been removed and the façade has been entirely replaced with thick framed glazing and entrance door, with solid stall riser and smaller lights over main windows. The arrangement means the interior mezzanine level is visible from the outside which distracts and detracts from the wider elevation. Both shop fronts are set forward and break with the existing rhythm of recessed windows and doors seen in the wider building. Modern alterations are of no heritage value.

Doorways: Right hand entrance filled in with block, and window fitted to the upper half. Left hand entrance remains in original form with timber panelled door in-situ.

Unit 12: Boarded and louvred panel at lower level, with 3 sliding sashes above. Whilst some details remain, the infill is a negative alteration.



Image 11: External view along Newton Street.



Image 12: External view along Newton Street with corner:



Image 13: View of Newton Street elevation pre-scaffold.

This is the main elevation of the building, on a busy thoroughfare and is of high heritage significance. The current arrangement has destroyed the uniform design and introduced poor quality fabric and a disjointed elevation. All modern alterations are having a negative impact upon significance.

Proposal and impact: Remove all non-original altered fabric to front of units 08 and 10. This removal will rid building of inappropriate intervention and have a substantial positive impact.

Reinstate vertical stone divisions and sliding sash windows above. Reinstate street level windows, one over one to unit 8, with right hand side to open as entrance door. Reinstatement is a positive return to original design, materials and original set back position of glazing lines. Maintaining transom lines across new doors will maintain visual rhythm, which is considered a positive change. Single panes with solids over to units 10 and 12 will hide internal floor level changes and echo those already in place on the Dale Street elevation. Stonework which will match existing and reproduced decorative details and profiles will restore original intent. Missing timber entrance door will be replaced using existing original door as template. Unit 14 to have louvres and blocked lower panels replaced with glazing and door.

The scheme will restore original proportions of openings and is a return to a more uniform design.

The overall impact of these changes is substantial and positive for the listed building and conservation area. There is a significant public benefit in removing decaying fabric and restoring original features along this street elevation, improving the visual appearance and quality of the elevations.

Internal ceilings

This application also includes proposals for alteration to the ceilings within the third-floor spaces to numbers 10 and 12.

Existing form and significance:

The ceiling was originally lath and plaster finish. In many areas it was badly damaged beyond repair and several previous alterations had been made with the addition of low-quality ceiling tiles. Roof lights were set within shafts. A horizontal window frame with glazing was in place to the southern end of the space, intended to allow light through from the roof light above.

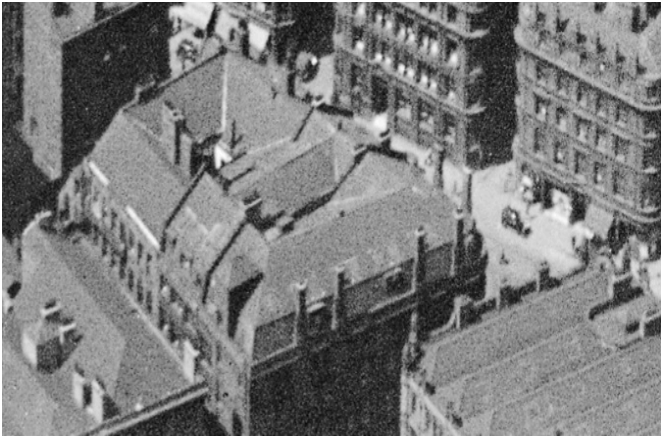


Image 14: Historic aerial shot from 1933, showing roof and rooflight positions.



Image 15: Showing non-original ceiling tiles and horizontal windows, taken a number of years ago.



Image 16: Showing damaged and non-original ceiling with lath and plaster missing. Taken in 2018.

The ceilings, in general, were failing and suffering from extensive decay and hazardous effects of severe pigeon guano. They have been removed to provide a safe working space for necessary repair of trusses (the subject of previous approval). Glass from the internal frame has also been removed for similar reasons. The frame remains in-situ.

As historical insurance plans show that the roof light in this location was not original, it can also be concluded that this frame and glazing were non-original additions (an internal roof light without an external rooflight would serve no purpose). Walls are brick: painted below the ceiling line and unfinished brick above.

The use of lath and plaster is typical of a nineteenth century building of this nature, and there is some evidential significance to the fabric, though condition was extremely poor. There were no features of architectural or aesthetic note and the ceilings were standard features, with limited historical, aesthetic, communal or evidential significance. They had a limited ability to convey meaningful evidence of past activity or connect the present to the past. The horizontal window frame is an unusual feature, of makeshift quality and appears similar in form to the frames used within the staircase areas. This has limited significance as evidence of the evolution of the building, but with no particular quality in their finish or design.

Proposals: The proposal attempts to follow an honest design approach and retain part of the exposed roof to the rear end of the space 'as is' rather than 'as was'. The current identity of the building can be found not only in its historical form, but in the layers of changes and alterations which have taken place over its lifetime, and this is a valid conservation approach, providing there is still the ability to read original form. In response to this, and in recognition of the former ceiling line, brick work will retain its painted finish to the lower section and exposed finish above and holes which formerly housed timber joists will also remain on view. To ensure the original intention is maintained within parts of the space, the lath and plaster will be reinstated to the majority of the ceiling area. Where the new plaster ceiling meets the exposed structure, there is a plasterboard upstand, set back with existing beams running beyond. See sketch views for details. In keeping with the desire to preserve evidence of the evolution of the space, the existing horizontal window frame is to remain in place, without glazing. This approach has precedence in other buildings, most recently at Band on the Wall, where the remaining horizontal frames are left in place, with open central sections to allow views of the underside of the roof.



Image 17: Showing extent of non-original ceiling tiles to far end of space.



Image 18: Showing ceiling with roof structure exposed.

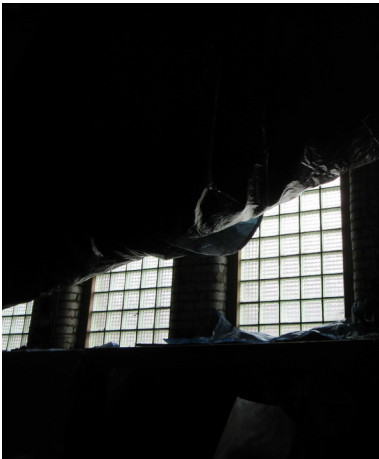


Image 19: Showing glass block bricks to be replaced with timber-framed windows.

Impact: Replacement of lath and plaster will have a neutral impact on the space. Retaining the lower height ceilings to the majority of the roof, and differing brickwork treatments and exposing former joist holes in the portion to be exposed will ensure the original intention can still be read and understood. This is considered a positive response. The exposure of timber roof structure will alter the spatial dimensions of the rooms from that originally intended but not to that which exists now. Furthermore, it will improve natural lighting and retain the character of the space, which has been altered over time. The approach is to resist replacing missing fabric with replica to part of the end section, and to allow interventions and omissions where they exist. This set of Newton Street warehouse spaces has been subjected to ongoing alteration, removals, and additions throughout its lifetime and this itself has become a heritage quality of the space. The omission of replica fabric will amount to change, but is not considered to demonstrate any degree of harm to the historical or architectural qualities of the listed asset and represents a careful combination of honest conservation and new intervention. Its impact will be minor beneficial.

Glass block bricks have been inserted into windows to the far end of the space. These have replaced original timber sashes and were most likely added mid-20th century. In order to create more light within the space, and to allow a return to historic form, the proposal is to remove these bricks and replace with traditional construction timber framed sashes with clear glazing. This will have a minor positive impact upon the significance.

Further changes are proposed to the WC arrangements contained within the previous application. These do not impact upon historic fabric.

6.0 PLANNING CONTEXT AND CONCLUSION

The main heritage planning considerations affecting this site are its Grade II listed status and its position within the Stevenson Square Conservation Area.

The legislation concerning built heritage is contained within Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Government Policy is set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, updated 2021). Local planning policy is set by Manchester City Council. Statutory legislation states that special regard should be given to

'the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any feature of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.'

Clause 66. Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990.

The NPPF recognises that sympathetic changes to heritage assets are necessary to ensure their viable ongoing use, but that alterations must be justified and their impact upon significance assessed.

NPPF, paragraph 197 states,

'In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

a. the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to uses consistent with their conservation;

b. the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and

c. the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.'

When considering potential impacts of proposed development on an asset's significance, NPPF states

that 'great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.....this is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm'. NPPF, para. 199.

And that, 'where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm....this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.' NPPF, para. 202.

Government Historic Environment Guidance (2014, updated 2019) states that 'in general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so may not arise in many cases' and that 'an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest'. In this case, the degree of harm arising from the proposals is clearly less than substantial.

This 'less than substantial harm' is mitigated by the upgrading of the currently vacant space to ensure the benefit of its ongoing optimum viable use. There is a limited amount of loss of historical fabric, but this fabric has low heritage significance, and makes a negligible contribution to the evidential, aesthetic, historical and communal values set out by Historic England.

The nature of the roofscape is altered in one limited area but of the available options to create break out space, the proposals are considered to be the least harmful alternative and outweighed in balance by the major benefit of the restoration of the shopfronts and wider improvements to the Conservation Area brought about by these changes.

The changes to the ceilings have been considered in the context of the overall conservation approach adopted for the interior spaces. The recognition of ongoing internal adaptations and decision to expose alterations where they have been necessary rather than replace with replica fabric is considered appropriate in this instance and will not erode the heritage values of the asset.

Local Manchester City Council policy follows the principles established in the NPPF. In particular, Policy EN3,

'Historic sites and areas of particular heritage value should be both safeguarded for the future and, where possible, enhanced for their own heritage merits...'

The best way to safeguard a building is to ensure it is tenanted and maintained. The proposed changes will ensure the building is protected, enhanced and its character better revealed. Mitigation has been applied through design alterations and the wider benefit of the Newton Street restoration is considered to outweigh any limited degree of harm.



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