



Bridgewater House

Design Statement
06.07.2022 Rev 00

*Bridgewater House
Whitworth Street
Manchester
M1 6LT*



ARCHITECTURE × INTERIOR

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Company No: 11847325

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Introduction to the Design and Access Statement

This Design Statement has been prepared by AXI. The statement acts as a description of the design process to accompany the drawings submitted in conjunction with this application. This statement demonstrates that the proposed works has emerged from a full assessment of the site's circumstances and characteristics. This document should be read in support of the separate Planning and Heritage Statement produced by PBA. The proposals involve the refurbishment to facilitate office use within the existing building demise and ensure the continued use of this magnificent building in the heart of the City Centre.

1.2 Development Team and Relevant Experience

Client: APAM

Architect: AXI

Contractor: Blok Projects

Heritage Consultant: Paul Butler Associates

Quantity Surveyor & Project Management: Brawdia

Building Control: Ball & Berry

Relevant Experience:

APAM have vast experience in the successful refurbishment and renewal of commercial building stock in Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds and Birmingham. AXI is a Manchester based architectural practice and is committed to producing architecture of the highest quality. AXI have most recently been working with APAM on the refurbishment works at the 60 Spring Gardens and Cornerblock.

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2.0 Assessment

2.1 Assessment

2.1.1 Physical Site Assessment

Site Description

Bridgewater House, 58-60 Whitworth Street was designed by Harry S. Fairhurst and completed in 1912 for Lloyds Packing Warehouses. Its nine storeys, clad in stone coloured 'self-cleaning' tiles/blocks, were the biggest packing warehouse in the world at the time of construction. Previously, individual merchants had their own packing arrangements, but it became more efficient to share facilities and equipment and Lloyds Packing Warehouses offered flexible rental space for office staff alongside the provision of labour and machinery for packing and despatch. Tenants could rent portions of a floor dependent on the size of their business. Bridgewater House formed part of group similar warehouse buildings on Whitworth/Princess Street – India House, 1905; Lancaster House, 1909; and Asia House, 1910; all designed by Fairhurst, a prominent Manchester architect in the Edwardian era.

Typical of Fairhurst's warehouse architecture, Bridgewater House is a fireproof construction, with a grand frontage and efficient, functional interior and rear elevation. The Whitworth Street elevation is alternating bays and flat windows, faience blocks above the granite plinth. Two original entrances are clad in granite with bust of Duke of Bridgewater over the door.

Two original pedestrian entrances at 58 and 60 Whitworth Street led to internal halls containing stairs and double lifts. The ground floor was split into three large, open warerooms along the front of the building, behind which were 5 large hoists serving the floors above. Beyond the warerooms, the width of building was open to a loading bank serving a covered private street that ran round the building and allowed up to 30 lorries to be loaded /unloaded at one time with space for vehicles to circulate: a revolution in loading. The rear half of the building was essentially a single space covered with a glazed canopy which spanned the loading bank, to the boundary wall with the tow path on the canal.

Site History

Please refer to separate Planning and Heritage Statement by Paul Butler Associates.

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2.0 Assessment

2.1 Assessment

Status of Site

The 5th floor is vacant in its entirety and the 6th floor is currently under occupation.

Surrounding Context

Please refer to separate Planning and Heritage Statement by Paul Butler Associates.

3.0 Description of Proposals

3.1 Design Objectives

- Reconfigure lobby entrance doors from lift on 5th and 6th floor to introduce new glazed entrance doors to offer a better approach and visibility into office suites
- Full refurbishment 5th and half of the 6th floor offices to create best in class CAT A office space with localised repairs to existing features where necessary.

3.2 Design Proposals

The design proposals aim to satisfy the design objectives and issues contained within the previous Chapter and outlined in the supporting PBA documentation.

3.3 Principles of the Design

3.3.1 Use:

The existing Use Class of the building is E (commercial, business and service). The existing Use Class for most of the building is unchanged by the proposals. Works only relate to the existing office served on the 5th and 6th floor.

3.3.2 Layout

The existing configuration of the building is retained by the proposals. There is new internal non load bearing partition wall modifications to the office spaces. All soft strip modifications have been proposed following a detailed discussions appraisal with the Conservation team from MCC.

3.3.3 Scale

There is no change to the overall scale or footprint of the building with selective internal structural modifications to room sizes as noted above.

3.3.4 Materials

Internally, new walls are set to be sympathetic to the nature of the existing building, faced in plasterboards and to receive full decoration. Please refer to the relevant detail drawing for further information on materials and finishes.

Office spaces will receive new floor finishes throughout, befitting of a modern office with carpet to the majority to overcome acoustic issues between suites.

New doors will be laminate faced solid doors with glazed sections to meet the requirements of modern offices. New entrance doors suites from lift lobby to be glazed to improve customer arrival.

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The mechanical and electrical strategy will be suspended beneath the existing structure and configured to achieve maximum visibility of the high-level detailing where possible.

Please refer to the separate detail drawings for information on materials and finishes.

5.0 Summary

In conclusion, the location and current use of the building and site have been summarised and proposed plans have been introduced. The scheme seeks to ensure the continued use of the building, reinstating the majority of damaged heritage features and bringing a beautiful Manchester landmark back into the public domain.

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