

PROPOSED ALTERATIONS AT 23 PETER STREET

MANCHESTER CITY CENTRE



HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

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GARRY MILLER HERITAGE CONSULTANCY

Garry Miller is a heritage consultant, architectural historian and published author who has spent more than 40 years studying and working with buildings of town and countryside, in particular those of North West England. His career as a consultant began in the mid-1980s with the Preston-based Nigel Morgan Historic Building Consultancy, of which he became a partner in 1992 upon its rebranding as Datestone. In 1997 he was commissioned by the Heritage Trust for the North West, a buildings preservation trust based at Barrowford, Lancashire, to produce an in-depth regional study of vernacular houses in southwest Lancashire: the result, *Historic Houses in Lancashire: The Douglas Valley, 1300-1770* was published in 2002. The book was described as ‘scholarship as its best’ by *Country Life* (June 2003), and ‘well analysed and presented’ in *Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society* (Vol 48, 2004); and was widely cited in the 2006 *Buildings of England* volume on Liverpool and Southwest Lancashire. Extensive research on the houses of Georgian and Regency Liverpool has also been undertaken, with a view to future publication. Following the success of his Douglas Valley book, Garry Miller established his own consultancy, producing analytical and interpretive reports on historic buildings, in particular the heritage assessments required to support planning applications affecting the historic environment. His area of operation encompasses the North West, Midlands, North Wales and parts of Cumbria and North and West Yorkshire. Several local authorities have cited his assessments as examples of best practice, and reports on more than 150 buildings or sites are produced annually.

THIS REPORT

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1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report supports proposed works at number 23 Peter Street in Manchester City Centre. The property houses the Peaky Blinders bar/restaurant and occupies a prominent position close to the junction with Deansgate. The building is itself undesignated but stands within Deansgate Conservation Area, and within the setting of several listed buildings. It is a former variety theatre drastically altered in the 1970s.

Proposals are being submitted to Manchester City Council for alterations to the first floor of the application property to create a set-back dining terrace. The heritage consideration arising is therefore the proposal's potential impact (in respect of the external works only) upon the significance (i.e. heritage interest and value) of the conservation area and setting of the listed buildings. The scope and purpose of this report is to identify this significance and assess how the proposal will affect it.

The significance of Deansgate Conservation Area derives from its character and appearance as the one of the most historic parts of the city's commercial core, focussed upon the key Deansgate/Quay Street/Peter Street/Bridge Street junctions. It is populated primarily by Victorian and Edwardian commercial properties but also contains a group of significant assembly buildings, some of which, notably the Grade I listed John Rylands Library and Grade II* Free Trade Hall, are of the highest national importance. The significance of the conservation area is therefore embodied primarily in these buildings and their architectural quality and diversity along with their relationship to each other amid the historic street pattern. The listed buildings within the conservation area are significant primarily for the intrinsic special architectural and historic interest, in the national context, that has warranted their designation. This significance is enhanced by their setting within the architecturally-rich surrounding streetscene.

The application property is the much-altered and now virtually-unrecognisable remnant of the former Grand Circus, dating originally from 1884 but subsequently much altered and unsympathetically refronted in the 1970s. Its predominant feature is an ugly, monolithic brick first floor with blocked windows. As an undesignated building, the significance of the application property extends to the immediate local context (i.e. Manchester only rather than beyond), and primarily for the role its external envelope plays in the character and appearance of the conservation area. However the architectural significance of the property was devalued, indeed almost erased, by the 1970s alterations. Hence its significance now derives primarily from its historical associations rather than its fabric, via the part it played in the development of entertainment in Manchester from the late Victorian era to the early 20th century, first as the Grand Circus, then subsequently the Grand Theatre and Palladium Cinema.

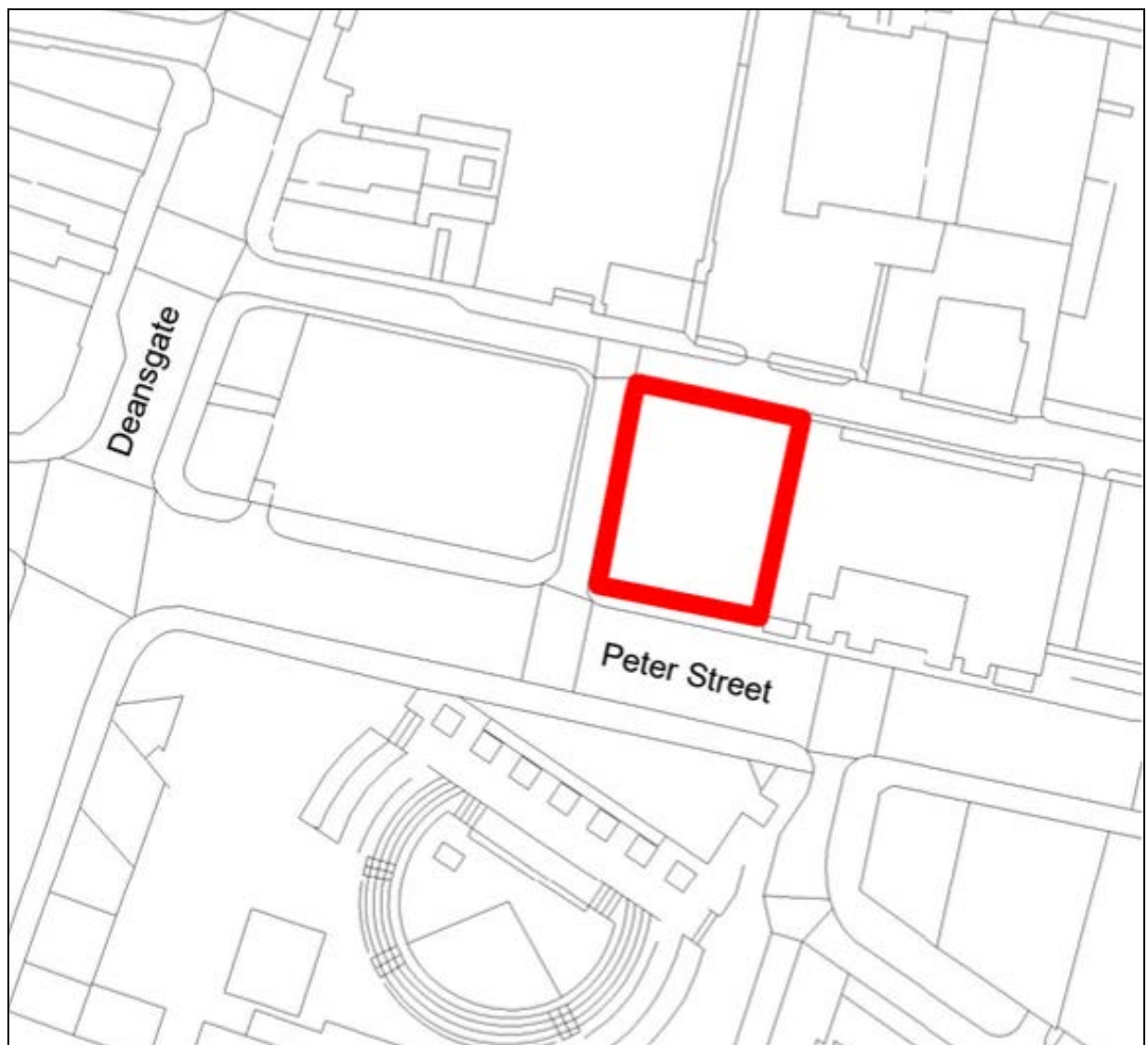
The proposal seeks consent for remodelling of the existing 1970s frontage to create a set-back first floor dining terrace. This involves cladding the brick first floor in fibre cement board of lighter shade than the current brickwork and creating three large openings flanked by two narrow openings, fitted with glass balustrades, along with glazing to separate the terrace from the internal bar area. The proposed works will

correct the unsympathetic treatment carried out in the past and will unquestionably improve its appearance by alleviating the massing and predominance of the brick first floor via the large balustraded openings and use of the lighter-coloured cladding. The proposal will consequently enhance the building's visual contribution to the conservation area, and the setting of the listed buildings, while preserving the historic interest that is the primary source of the building's significance.

The proposal will clearly have a positive effect upon the conservation area and setting of the listed buildings and is thus in accordance with the requirements of national planning guidance along with those of the local development plan. Consent should therefore be granted without delay.

2: THE SITE

The application site is located in the heart of Manchester city centre. Number 23 Peter Street currently houses the Peaky Blinders bar/restaurant and occupies a prominent position on the north side of the street close to its junction with Deansgate. Its surroundings are the historic commercial core of the city, characterised by impressive buildings dating from the height of Manchester's 19th century prosperity as the centre of the global textile trade. The application property is itself a former variety theatre drastically and unsympathetically remodelled in the 1970s.



Map 1. Location of the application property



1. The proposal building



2. Its role within the Peter Street streetscene, looking west towards Deansgate

3: THE PROPOSAL/SCOPE OF THIS REPORT

3.1 Proposed development

Proposals are being submitted to Manchester City Council for alterations to the first floor of the application property to create a set-back dining terrace.

3.2 Designations

The application property is itself undesignated, but stands within Deansgate Conservation Area. It also forms part of the immediate setting of several listed buildings.

3.3 Heritage impact

The heritage consideration arising is therefore the proposal's potential impact upon the significance (i.e. heritage interest and value) of the conservation area and setting of the closest listed buildings.

3.4 Scope and purpose of this report

Paragraph 194 of Chapter 16 (*Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment*) of the National Planning Policy Framework (as revised July 2021) states local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of the heritage assets affected, including the contribution made by their setting. The scope and purpose of this report is to describe the significance of the conservation area and listed buildings and to assess the proposal's impact in the context of relevant heritage planning policies. It is considered the level of detail is, in accordance with paragraph 194, proportionate to the importance of these heritage assets and no more than is necessary to understand the proposal's impact. The report is to be read in conjunction with other documentation supporting the application.

3.5 Report structure

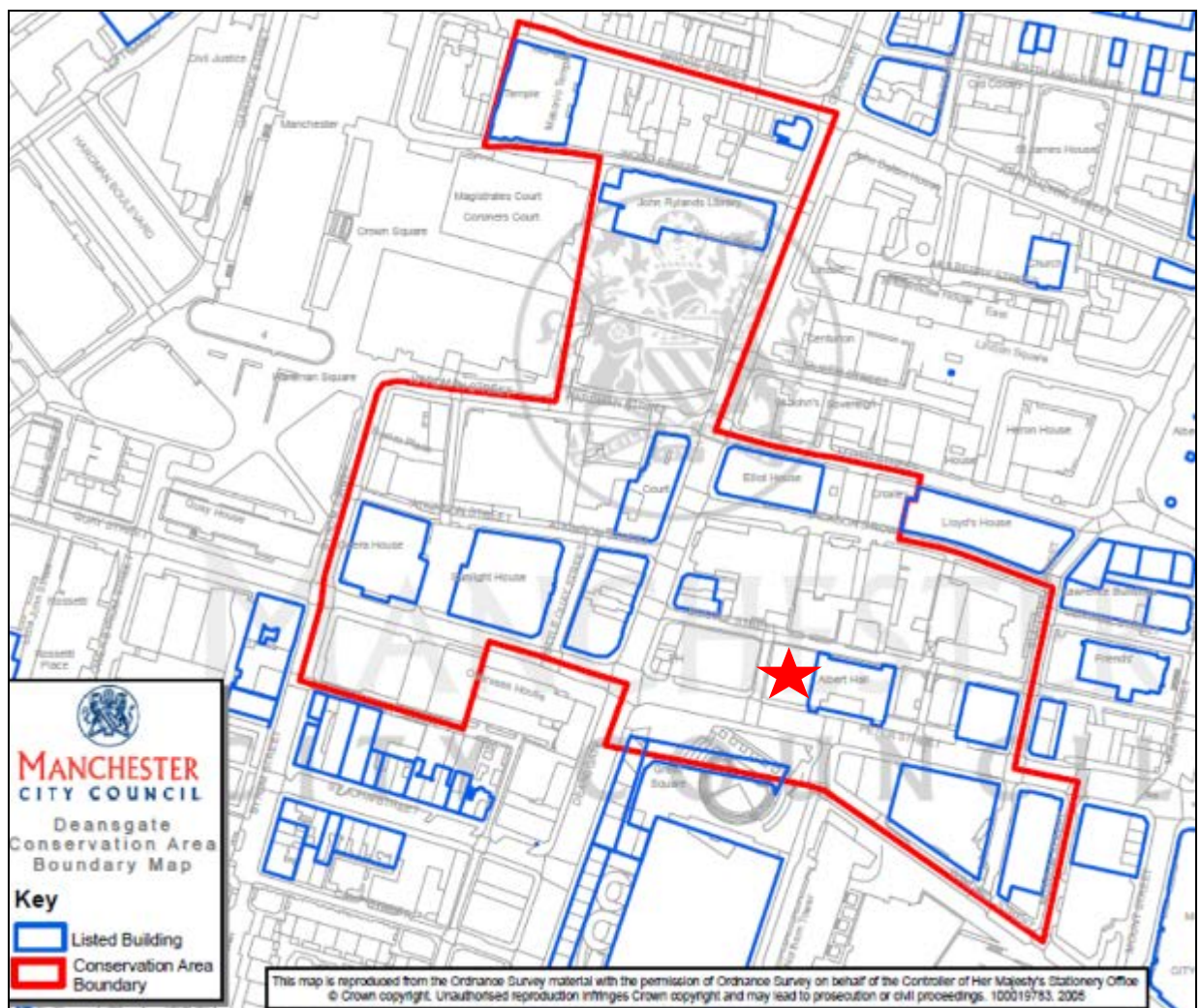
This is as follows:

1. A brief analysis of the conservation area and listed buildings (Section 4) along with the contribution made by the application property (Section 5)
2. Evaluation of the significance of these heritage assets (Section 6)
3. A summary of the relevant planning policies against which the application will be assessed (Section 7)
4. Evaluation within this policy context of the impact of the proposal upon the conservation area and setting of the listed buildings (Section 8).

4: THE CONSERVATION AREA

4.1 Overview

Deansgate Conservation Area was first designated in 1985 and covers a substantial part of the Victorian city centre. It is centred on the junction of Quay Street and Peter Street with Deansgate, along with section of the latter extending north to Bridge Street.



Map 2. The conservation area, with the application building indicated

4.2 Character/townscape/buildings

No character appraisal of the conservation area exists, but its qualities are described as follows in Manchester City Council's website pages:

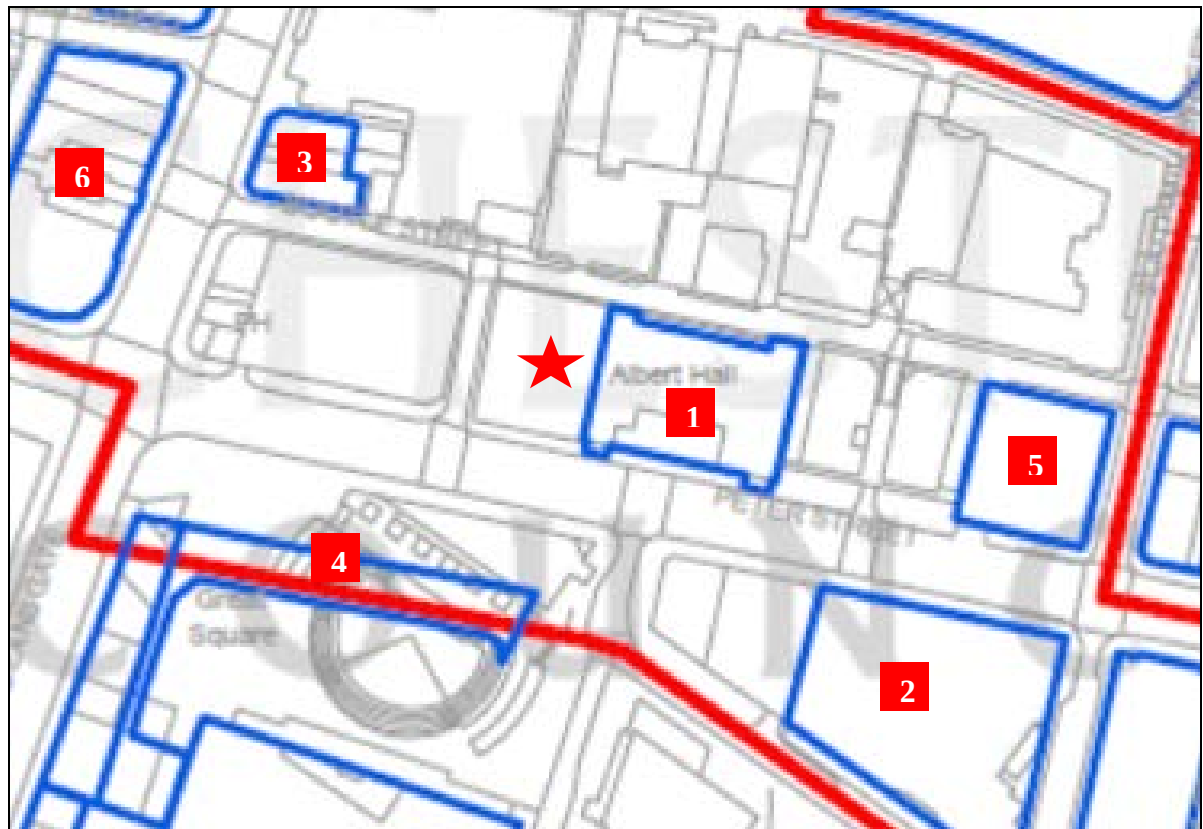
- The Roman origins of Deansgate and its role as one of Manchester's most historic streets
- The creation of Quay Street and its 1794 extension that was named Peter Street, after St Peter's Church
- The area's historical association with the Peterloo Massacre of 1819, the site of which is now occupied by the Free Trade Hall
- The predomination of Victorian commercial buildings, interspersed with various places of assembly
- Distant views along Deansgate, the longest and straightest street of the city centre
- Important listed buildings including the Grade I John Rylands Library on Deansgate and the Grade II* Free Trade Hall on Peter Street, along with the Opera House on Quay Street and Theatre Royal and Albert Hall on Peter Street, all Grade II
- Bridge Street, a well-preserved example of a Victorian/Edwardian shopping street

4.3 Listed buildings

The conservation area also contains 14 listed building, of which those in closest proximity to the proposal site, and whose settings are therefore potentially affected by the proposal, are:

- 1** The Albert Memorial Halls, a former Wesleyan Mission of 1910, Grade II
- 2** The Free Trade Hall, originally of 1853-1856, Grade II*
- 3** Onward Buildings, shops and offices of 1903-1905, Grade II
- 4** The former entrance to Deansgate Goods Station, Grade II
- 5** Harvester House, a warehouse of 1868, Grade II
- 6** Royal London House, an insurance office of 1904, Grade II

Their locations are shown on Map 3 (following page).



Map 3. The listed buildings closest to the site



3. The adjoining Albert Memorial Hall is the nearest listed building

5: THE APPLICATION PROPERTY

5.1 Overview

Altered, virtually unrecognisable remnant of former variety theatre, its facade unsympathetically rebuilt in 1970s.

5.2 Historical summary

The property was first built in 1884 as The Grand Circus, owned by showman Edward Cargia and with a three-storey auditorium accommodating 3,000 people (1). It was converted to a theatre ten years later, when initially known as the Temperance Theatre of Varieties and later the Grand Theatre. It then has a brief role as the Palladium Cinema from 1916 but became a Christian Scientist Church by 1924. The facade was replaced in the 1970s when the building switched to restaurant use.

(1) www.arthurlloyd.co.uk/ManchesterTheatres/GrandTheatreManchester.htm



Map 4. The Grand Theatre as depicted by the 25-inch OS mapping of 1913



Map 5. The property was a Christian Scientist Church by 1932

5.3 The present building

a. Description. As a result of the 1970s remodelling, the property is read as a discordant feature within the historic Peter Street streetscene. Its appearance is dominated by its ugly, monolithic brick first floor, punctuated by blocked windows, which dwarfs the modern pseudo-Neoclassical fascia below. The side and rear however, despite a profusion of air conditioning equipment and other alterations, retain more of their original appearance along with a hipped roof, and evoke the building's original theatrical function.

b. Contribution. The rebuilt brick first floor has a decidedly negative appearance, to the detriment of the conservation area and the setting of the nearby listed buildings, in particular the adjacent Albert Memorial Hall. The remainder of the building is, on balance, neutral.



4. Stark brick first floor dominates the front elevation



5. Side and rear elevations however retain some of the character of the original building

6: SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

6.1 Rationale

Paragraph 190 of the 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.

6.2 The conservation area/listed buildings

The significance of Deansgate Conservation Area derives from its character and appearance as the one of the most historic parts of the commercial core of the city, focussed upon the key Deansgate/Quay Street/Peter Street/Bridge Street junctions. It is populated primarily by Victorian and Edwardian commercial properties but also contains a group of significant assembly buildings, some of which, notably the Grade I John Rylands Library and Grade II* Free Trade Hall, are of the highest national importance. The significance of the conservation area is therefore embodied primarily in these buildings and their architectural quality and diversity along with their relationship to each other amid the historic street pattern. The listed buildings within the conservation area are significant primarily for the intrinsic special architectural and historic interest, in the national context, that has warranted their designation. Their significance is enhanced by their setting within the surrounding architecturally-rich streetscene.

6.3 The application property

The application property is the much-altered and now virtually-unrecognisable remnant of the former Grand Circus, dating originally from 1884 but subsequently much altered and unsympathetically refronted in the 1970s. As an undesignated building, the significance of the application property extends to the immediate local context (i.e. Manchester only rather than beyond), and primarily for the role its external envelope plays in the character and appearance of the conservation area. However the architectural significance of the property was devalued, indeed almost erased, by the

1970s alterations. Hence its significance now derives primarily from its historical associations rather than its fabric, via the part it played in the development of entertainment in Manchester from the late Victorian era to the early 20th century, first as the Grand Circus, then subsequently the Grand Theatre and Palladium Cinema.

7: PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

7.1 Statutory duties

Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local planning authorities to give special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest. Section 72 (1) requires LPAs to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character of a conservation area.

7.2 Relevant policies

Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework provides the guidance on how the statutory duty is to be put into practice. Paragraph 197 states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- *The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation*
- *The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality, and*
- *The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness*

Regarding designated heritage assets, paragraph 199 states that ‘*great weight*’ should be given to their conservation and the more important the asset, the greater that weight should be; and that significance can be lost through development within its setting.

In the local planning context, policy EN3 of the City Council’s Local Development Framework Core Strategy, adopted July 2012, requires new development to preserve or where possible, enhance the historic environment. Saved policy DC18 of the Unitary Development Plan specifically applies to conservation areas, which are to be preserved and enhanced. Saved policy DC19 requires the setting of listed buildings to be protected.

8: IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL

8.1 Summary of the scheme

The proposal seeks consent for remodelling of the existing 1970s frontage to create a set-back first floor dining terrace. This involves cladding the brick first floor in fibre cement board of lighter shade than the current brickwork (classic neutral) and creating three large openings flanked by two narrow openings, fitted with glass balustrades, along with glazing to separate the terrace from the internal bar area.



6. Visualisation of the proposed remodelling

8.2 Its effect

The existing frontage currently makes a negative contribution within what is otherwise a neutral building. The proposed works aim to correct the unsympathetic treatment carried out in the past and will unquestionably improve its appearance by alleviating the massing and predominance of the brick first floor via the large balustraded openings and use of the lighter-coloured cladding. The proposal will consequently enhance the building's visual contribution to the conservation area and the setting of the listed

buildings, while preserving the historic interest that is the primary source of the building's significance.

8.3 Conclusion

It has been demonstrated above that the proposal will clearly have a positive effect upon the conservation area and setting of the listed buildings and is thus in accordance with the requirements of national planning guidance along with those of the local development plan. Consent should therefore be granted without delay.