

Heritage Statement – Listed Building Consent (Grade II)

1. Proposed Development

This application seeks Listed Building Consent for:

- The removal of later internal partition walls to facilitate a revised internal layout; and
- The installation of slim-profile double glazing within existing window frames, which are to be fully retained.

The proposals are limited in scope and designed to support the continued viable use of the building while preserving its special architectural and historic interest.

2. Policy Context

The proposals have been assessed against:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):
 - Paragraph 200 – proportionate assessment of significance
 - Paragraph 205 – great weight to conservation
 - Paragraphs 206–208 – tests of harm and balancing exercise
- Guidance from Historic England, including:
 - *Conservation Principles*
 - *Managing Significance in Decision-Taking*
- Local policy of Manchester City Council:
 - Manchester Core Strategy Policy EN3
 - Manchester Core Strategy Policy EN1

These policies require proposals to preserve the significance of listed buildings, with harm clearly justified.

3. Methodology

This assessment follows a proportionate methodology consistent with Historic England guidance:

1. Identify significance of the Grade II listed building

2. Assess contribution of affected elements (internal partitions and windows)
3. Assess impact of the proposed works on significance
4. Categorise harm in line with the National Planning Policy Framework
5. Consider mitigation and public benefits

4. Assessment of Significance

The Grade II listed building is of special architectural and historic interest, deriving significance from:

- Its external architectural composition and materials
- Surviving original fabric and features
- Its contribution to the surrounding townscape

Importantly:

- The internal walls proposed for removal are later additions and do not form part of the building's original plan form
- As such, they make no positive contribution to the building's significance, and in some cases may detract from it by obscuring the historic spatial arrangement

The windows, particularly their frames, are likely to be of high significance, contributing to both fabric and appearance.

5. Impact Assessment

5.1 Removal of Internal Walls (Later Additions)

The proposed removal relates exclusively to non-original partition walls.

- These elements are of low or negligible heritage significance
- Their removal will not result in loss of historic fabric of importance
- The works may better reveal the original plan form and spatial qualities of the building

Conclusion:

This element of the proposal results in no harm to the significance of the listed building and may result in a minor heritage benefit.

5.2 Installation of Double Glazing (Frames Retained)

The proposals involve:

- Full retention of existing historic window frames
- Installation of slim-profile double glazing units

Impact assessment:

- The retention of frames ensures that the primary architectural significance is preserved
- Slim-profile glazing minimises visual change and maintains the original appearance and detailing
- Any change to glass reflectivity or thickness will be subtle and not harmful to overall character

Conclusion:

This element results in no harm or very minor less than substantial harm, at most.

6. Level of Harm (NPPF Test)

In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework:

- The removal of later partitions results in no harm
- The glazing upgrade results in no harm or negligible less than substantial harm

Overall, the scheme results in no harm to significance, or at worst less than substantial harm at the very lowest end of the spectrum.

7. Justification and Public Benefits

The proposals deliver clear public benefits, including:

- Supporting the optimum viable use of the building
- Improving energy efficiency in a manner consistent with conservation principles
- Enhancing the functionality and usability of internal spaces
- Potentially revealing the building's original spatial character through removal of later alterations

In line with the National Planning Policy Framework, any very limited harm is clearly outweighed by these benefits.

8. Mitigation Measures

- Retention of all significant historic fabric, including window frames
- Careful specification of slim-profile glazing
- Removal restricted to modern, low-significance partitions only
- Potential for recording prior to alteration, if required

9. Conclusion

The proposed works have been developed with a clear understanding of the significance of the Grade II listed building.

The assessment concludes that:

- The removal of later internal walls results in no harm and potential heritage benefit
- The glazing proposals preserve the key architectural features of the windows
- The scheme results in no harm overall, or at worst negligible less than substantial harm

The proposals therefore:

- Preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the building
- Comply fully with the National Planning Policy Framework
- Accord with policies of Manchester City Council

Accordingly, Listed Building Consent should be granted.

