Hotspur Press, Cambridge Street, Manchester

Structural and Façade Retention Appraisal

December 2025

PREPARED FOR

Manner



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1. Executive Summary

Civic are appointed by Manner for the proposed development at Hotspur Press site, Cambridge Street, Manchester. The development proposals comprise the redevelopment of the Hotspur Press to provide new Purpose-Built Student Accommodation (PBSA), tenant amenity and new public realm.

In June 2025 a fire broke out at the Hotspur Press. Civic was asked by Elmloch Limited (the building owner) to attend site to provide insight into the extent of damage caused by the fire and provide initial commentary on the condition of the structure. This included any immediate short term structural risk as a result of this fire. It was the intention that this visit would allow relevant parties to mee to discuss and agree an initial, safe and pragmatic route forward to mitigate risk to the public.

During Civic's input, Manchester City Council Building Control provided input to consider the risk posed to the general public as a result of the fire. This included a series of site visits by their representatives and discussions with the building owner.

This resulted in a Section 78 notice being served to demolish *and take appropriate and immediate steps to remove any dangerous condition which poses a threat to public safety.*

Civic visited site on Friday 24th October 2025 to carry out a further visual inspection of the building to observe ongoing risk and condition of the building and to support a revised planning application.

A subsequent file note was issued to the building owner Elmloch Ltd and Manchester City Building Control, via the Client Manner, on 25th November 2025, to identify our initial observations.

The conclusions of this site visit and drone survey are as follows

- The north eastern mill façade remains partially standing to underside of former second floor having either partially collapsed during the fire or demolished due to immediate public safety concerns.
- To the northern area neighbouring the Network Rail viaduct, the façade continues to present a lean inwards, currently restrained from further deterioration by the remaining internal structure although significantly limited.

In this zone there are no practical solutions available to retain the remaining façade due to the condition of the structure locally as well as the safety of operatives accessing and working around the building.

- To the southern area of the north eastern façade, adjacent to Gloucester Road, the façade is generally buttressed by a series of interlocking perpendicular walls. However, without internal restraint from the floor structure this presents a risk of collapse in the medium term.
- Externally, closure of Gloucester Road will be required to install an external façade retention solution. Practicalities to be confirmed by specialist demolition contractor and temporary works engineer and discussed with Manchester City Council/ Manchester City Highways. This would require consideration of existing services within the highway and demonstration these assets will not be affected by the works. Detailed negotiations with the providers are likely necessary to reach an mutually acceptable solution to all parties.
- The southern warehouse façade remains standing, full height and no demolition works have taken place. Recent investigations reveal significant concerns. Localised areas of this façade now present a significant risk of collapse into the River Medlock and potentially beyond into third party land. Should this area of façade collapse it presents further risk to the adjacent areas and the potential for a progressive collapse to the wider façade.

In this zone local areas of demolition are recommended.

Elsewhere opportunity for façade retention could be available, though very challenging and presenting complex and high risk strategies. The feasibility of this is considered further within this report.

Externally, the River Medlock will present significant challenges to the design and installation, including the safety of operatives, of an external façade retention solution. In this scenario an external façade solution, bridging the River Medlock and founded on third part land could be possible.

This solution may be impractical and present significant further risk to the existing structure. In this instance access agreements would be required with adjacent land owners and negotiations to temporarily erect structures on their land. We understand that no such agreements are in place and the ability to secure such agreements is uncertain. Discussions will be required between the Client and adjacent land owners and may require compensation. This should be reviewed and commented on in detail by specialist demolition contractors and temporary works engineers. Remaining areas of the façade have been, and continue to be identified for demolition. This strategy remains unchanged.

Swanton Consulting, the temporary works specialist engaged under the previous design proposals to provide façade retention design, have provided further input via an “Engineering Assessment of Damaged Building due to Fire”

The conclusion of this report as written by Swanton Consulting (the temporary works specialist) is that “the existing structure cannot be rendered safe, as the remedial works required involve complex engineering works to provide a safe working environment. Such measures would expose operatives to a high risk of injury due to uncontrolled collapse or sudden, unforeseeable structural failure. Therefore, the Hotspur Press building should be classified as a ‘Dangerous Structure’.”

2. Introduction

2.1. Commission

Civic are appointed by Manner for the proposed development at Hotspur Press, Cambridge Street, Manchester. The development proposals comprise the reuse and redevelopment of the Hotspur Press to provide new Purpose-Built Student Accommodation (PBSA), tenant amenity and new public realm.

This structural note is produced to complement Civic structural engineering work to date and support a strategy for a revised Planning Application.

2.2. Input to Date

Having been involved in the redevelopment of Hotspur Press since 2018 Civic are well placed to provide commentary on the overall condition of the building and to support in devising a strategy for redevelopment. We have acted as Structural Engineers to support a series of planning applications and have observed the deterioration of the building since this time.

Our most recent involvement includes supporting the building owner in response to a significant fire event in Q2 2025. At the time Civic produced a structural appraisal report which observed and reported on the implications of the fire and an appropriate response to mitigate risk to the general public through the short term temporary stability of the structure. The report at the time did not consider the safety of operative and emergency services entering the site beyond an initial tranche of works.

3. The Hotspur Press Structural Arrangement

Due to the historic and phased nature of site, the historic structure can be categorised in two distinct zones to align with its development history as follows

1. **The Mill** — Constructed for use as a cotton spinning and weaving mill.
2. **The Warehouse** – Suggested to have been constructed for use as a printing press under the ownership of Percy Brothers Ltd.

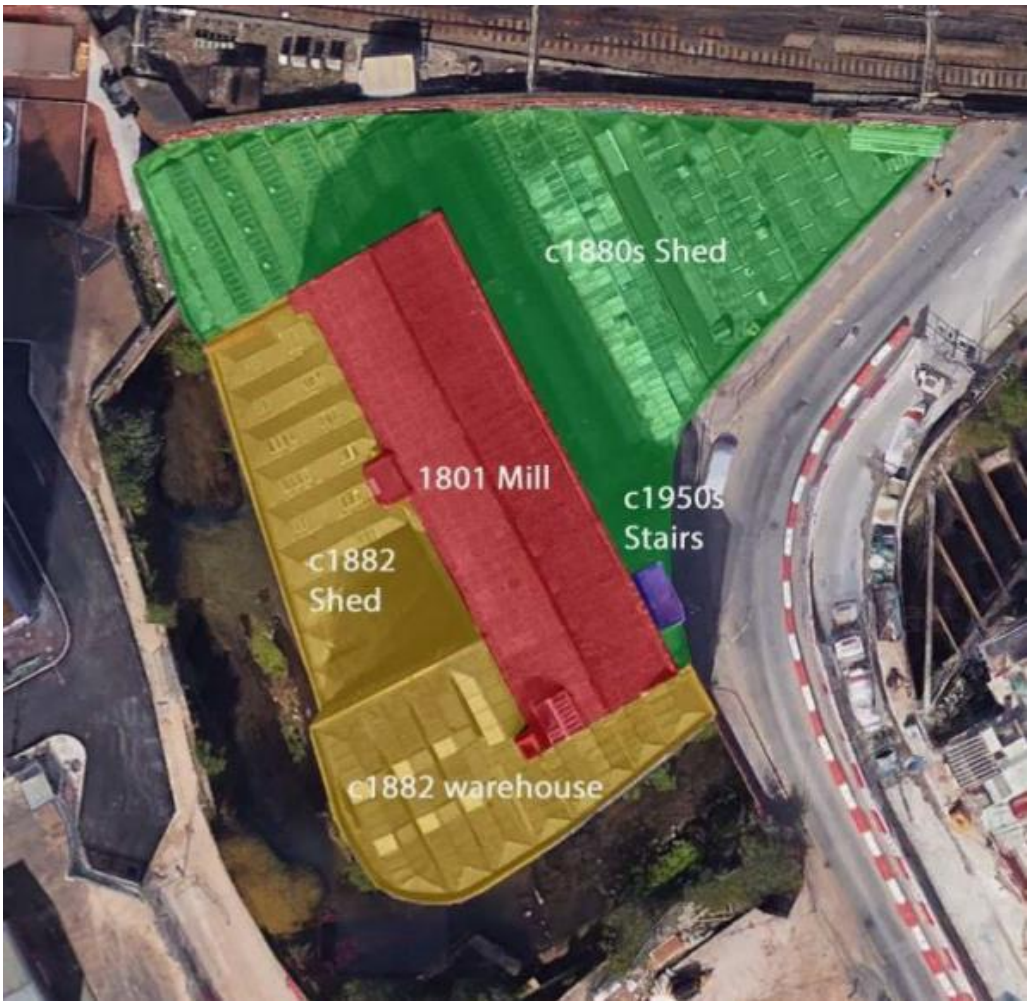


Figure 1 - Hotspur Press Historic Construction Phasing

Although there are differing elements of construction between these two zones of the historic site, the general and fundamental principles of these buildings were similar and can be summarised in the following sections.

It is not the intention of this report to provide a detailed report on the historic principles of the structure of the existing building. Instead this is summarised to provide a background to the main purpose of the report's recommendations.

3.1. Roof and Floor Structures

Roof structures were constructed using traditional means of timber joists supported by timber purlins and timber ridge beams.

Timber purlins were supported by timber roof trusses. Where timber trusses were not present roof structures were formed with timber joists supported by primary timber/iron beams with an internal line of support.

At the building perimeter roof structures were supported by a load bearing masonry façade of varying thickness. At this support timber members were generally embedded within the masonry façade.

Examples of these previous construction techniques are presented in Figure 2 and Figure 3.

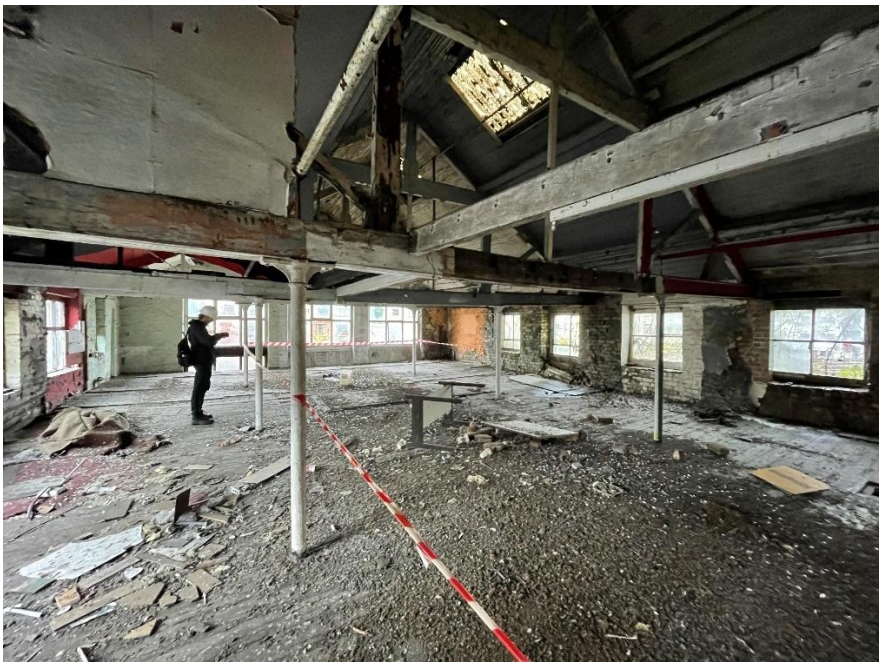


Figure 2: An example of timber trussed roof construction



Figure 3: An example of timber roof construction

Floor structures were generally constructed using traditional means of timber joists supported by either primary timber beams or primary iron and steel beams. In some instances primary timber beams were strengthened through intervention with steel plate splices and or back to back strengthening with steel sections.

Throughout the building and owing to the life span of the building and various use, there had been evidence of structural intervention in the form of additional steel frames in localised areas. Figure 4 and Figure 5



Figure 4: Example of timber joist floor structures supported on primary timber beams



Figure 5: Example of structural intervention

3.2. Vertical Structure

Roof and floor structures were generally supported by a series of internal vertical supports within the building and the façade.

Internal supports were provided in the form of either iron or steel columns. Column lines were continuous from upper levels to basement beneath which foundations are provided. Perimeter supports were provided through the load bearing masonry façade. Foundations were not exposed as part previous studies into the building. However, given the age of construction, foundations were likely to be spread type formed using either masonry corbels or solid stone blocks. Figure 6.

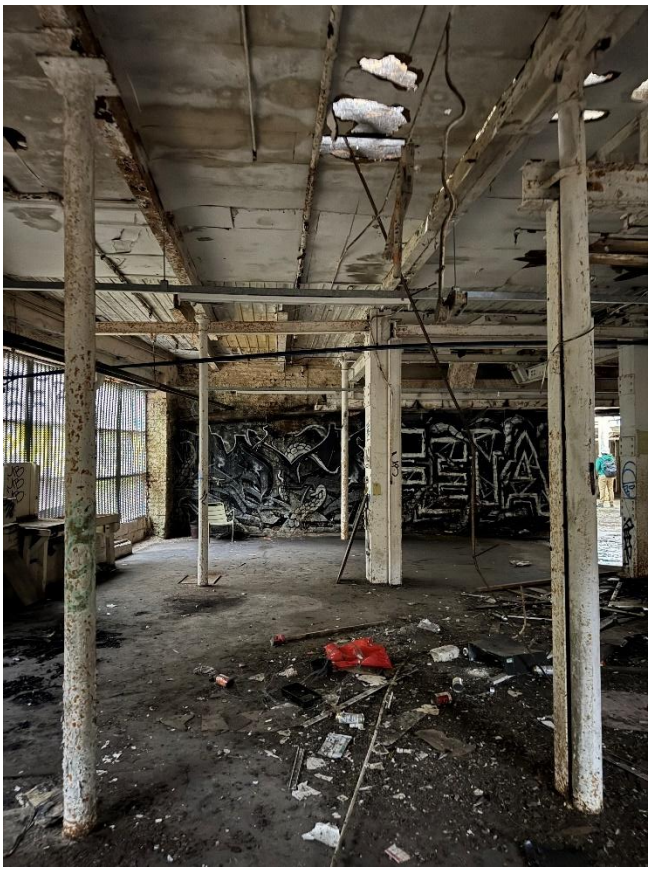


Figure 6: Example of column within basement

3.3. Stability

Stability was provided by the existing façade and internal masonry shear walls. Wind loads imposed on the façade panels span between structural roof and floor structures. These horizontal structures acted as structural diaphragms to distribute forces in shear and bending to the stiff masonry walls.

The internal masonry walls forming the old goods lift, as well as the primary masonry façade acted as closed “tubes” to distribute loads in bending and shear, as large cantilevers, to transfer load to the foundations and underlying ground in bearing.

An important clarification in this principle is that to maintain local stability and integrity of the full height masonry walls, floor and roof structures acted to tie and provide horizontal restraint to these walls. This prevented out of plane buckling when horizontal and vertical loads are applied.

4. Current Planning Application

A planning application was submitted to Manchester City Council in December 2023 which captured the proposals for partial demolition of the former Hotspur Press Complex (Medlock Mill) and redevelopment of the site to provide Purpose Built Student Accommodation above ground floor commercial or community uses.

As part of these proposals it was the intention to partially retain elements of the existing façade as seen in Figure 7



Figure 7: Q2 2025 Planning Application Strategy

Areas of the façade shown in red were to be retained via an external façade retention system. Areas of the façade shown in blue were to be retained via an internal façade retention system given the presence of the River Medlock. Areas of the façade shown in yellow were to be dismantled and rebuilt to facilitate construction activity and areas of the façade shown in green were to be dismantled and rebuilt.

This strategy along with a report on condition was discussed and included within a Construction Methodology & Façade Retention Report Structural Appraisal, Condition and Proposals Report respectively, submitted as part of the planning application.

Detailed discussions on the reasoning for the differing approaches to façade retention can be read in the above reports.

5. Fire of June 2025 and Initial Response

On 23rd June 2025 a fire broke out at the Hotspur Press. Civic was asked by Elmloch Limited (the building owner) to attend site to provide insight into the extent of damage caused by the fire and provide initial commentary on the condition of the structure. This included any immediate short term structural risk as a result of this fire. It was the intention that this visit would allow relevant parties to meet to discuss and agree an initial, safe and pragmatic route forward to mitigate risk to the public and building moving forward.

Civic Engineers attended site on Tuesday 24th June 2025. The scope of this site visit was limited to a visual inspection from footpath and highway only. It was not possible to determine the condition of the building in any further detail given the limitation on access.

5.1. Drone Survey

On Friday 27th June 2025 Civic were commissioned by Elmloch Ltd (the building owner) to carry out a visual drone survey of the Hotspur Press building. This survey was limited to the surrounding area and high level views. The drone did not enter the building due to ongoing risk.

The purpose of this survey was to further understand the condition of the building and refine/develop our recommendations in conjunction with other parties where appropriate. The survey was carried out in anticipation of a follow up site visit on Monday 30th June attended by the building owner, Manchester City Council planning department and building control and Civic.

The below sections describe the findings of this drone survey and a series of recommendations to mitigate any immediate risk of collapse which may present a risk to the public.

A series of sketches are presented within Appendix 1&2 to illustrate the observations and recommendations made at the time of the fire which are also discussed below respectively. It is important to note that the recommendations were based on the limitations of access given the current condition of the building at the time.

5.2. Northeast Mill Facade

In the northern area behind the northeast mill façade which had collapsed to Level 2, the timber floor structures are seen to have collapsed/burnt out on all floors. From Level 2 down, iron/steelwork was seen to still be present. Figure 8.

Without a detailed survey it was not possible to confirm, however the presence of this steel/ironwork in this area may have mitigated collapse of the façade on these levels. This may provide short-medium term restraint to arrest any further local collapse however a detailed survey would be required, if safe access available, to confirm this.

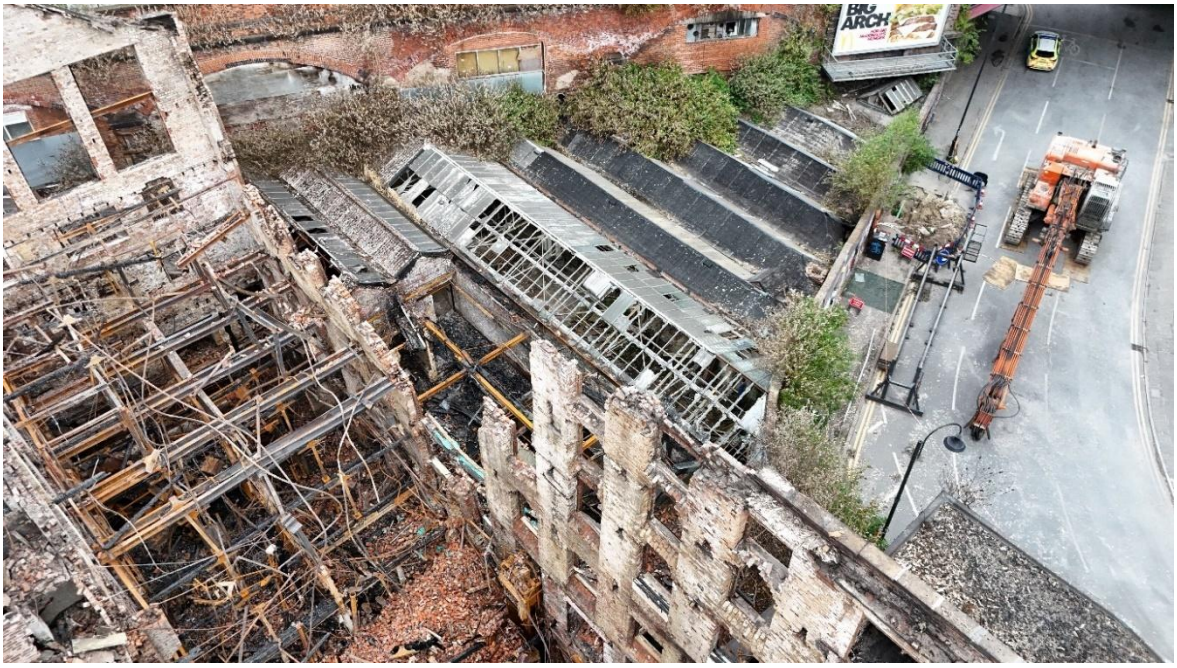


Figure 8: Drone Survey Northeast Mill Façade

This area of façade above the remaining iron/steelwork was unstable in the short term. However, this was unlikely to pose a physical risk to the public given its location relative to publicly accessible areas surrounding the site.

As such, there was no recommendation for immediate action in this area at the time of the fire. However, this would need to be assessed in detail in a future phase of works to allow appropriate access for investigations and clean up.

In the area behind the northeast mill façade which remained partially intact, the timber floor structures and iron/steelwork were seen to have collapsed/burnt out on all floors. A burst water main was also observed.



Figure 9: Drone Survey Northeast Mill Facade

Given Civic Engineers involvement in the Hotspur Press it is also known that the existing staircore abutting this façade, constructed in the 1950s and fronting Gloucester Street, was not tied into the façade. Figure 10 shows earlier imagery (dated 2025) from within the staircore where the buttressing walls of the staircore are not tied to the façade structurally and are presenting evidence of peeling from this façade.



Figure 10: Northeast Facade Abutting Staircore

The loss of floor structures in this area, and knowledge of lack of restraint from a 1950's staircore demonstrate that the area of main façade was free standing across the full height with no horizontal restraint.

This is presented a very high risk of collapse adjacent to the public footpath and highway.

The existing 1950s staircore was not structurally linked to the existing façade and was therefore considered free standing. This was likely to have been the case for some time during which it has likely relied on the existing Mill building for stability. Given the significant loss of mill structure behind the staircore this was no longer the case.

The staircore presented a risk of collapse under wind loads. Having assessed the staircore when subject to wind loads it is likely that above a low threshold of wind speed, which cannot be controlled, this staircore may have collapsed.

It was therefore our recommendation that in absence of the ability to safely access this space to provide temporary stabilisation measures that this façade as well as the staircore were demolished. The extent of this demolition should extend beyond the staircore the original end gable of the mill. This is illustrated in Appendix 2.

Temporary stabilisation measures had been considered to this staircore, to reduce the amount of demolition required, however safe access to do so will limit the practicalities of installing any structural framing. Any temporary structural frames would have encroached into the existing highway requiring a prolonged closure.

5.3. Southern Warehouse Facade

In the area behind the southern warehouse façade, the timber floor structures were seen to have collapsed/burnt out above ground floor to roof. It was not possible to determine the condition of ground floor given the debris in place though the structure on this level appeared to be more intact than others. On Levels 1 and 2, limited iron/steelwork can be seen to still be present. Figure 11.

Without a detailed survey it was not possible to confirm, however the presence of this steel/ironwork in this area may have mitigated collapse of the façade on these levels. This may have provided short-medium term restraint to arrest any further local collapse however a detailed survey would be required, if safe access available, to confirm this.

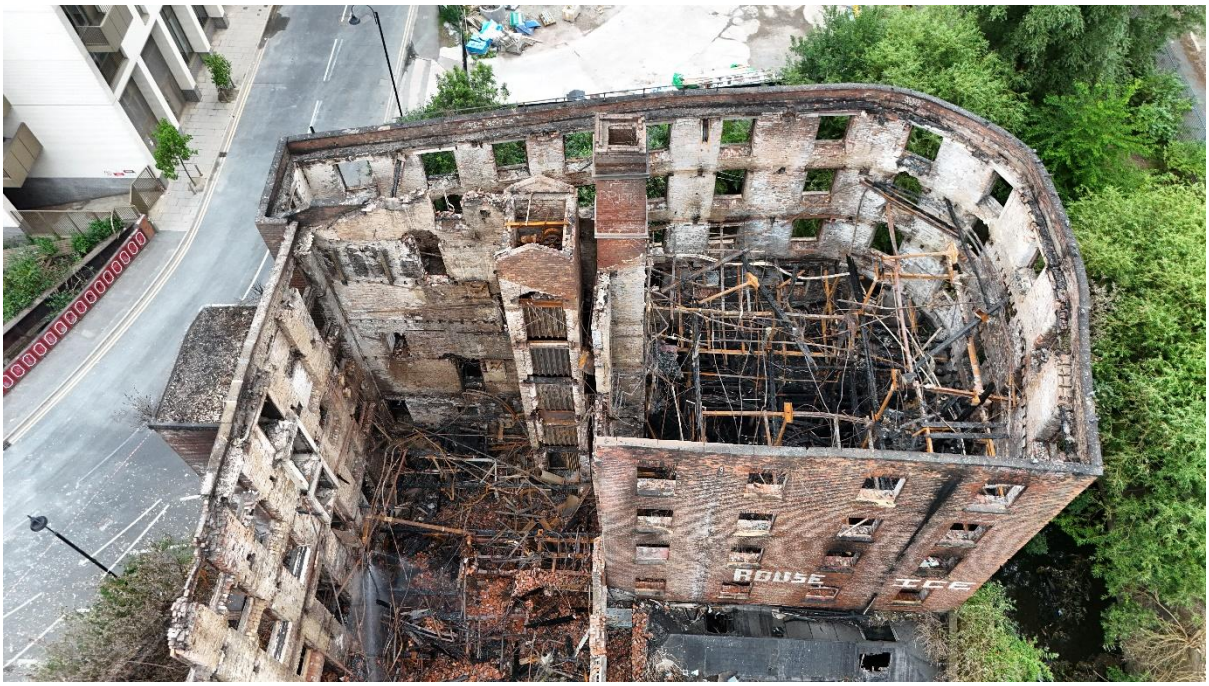


Figure 11: Drone Survey Southern Warehouse Facade

This area of façade above the remaining iron/steelwork was unstable. However, given the geometry of this façade including in plane arching and buttressing end restraints, this risk was likely to extend to a medium term. This was also unlikely to pose a physical risk to the public given its location relative to publicly accessible areas surrounding the site.

Intervention in the form of temporary restraint would be required to maintain stability beyond this initial period.

At this stage there was no recommendation for immediate action in this area. However, this area will need to be assessed in detail in a future phase of works to allow appropriate access for investigations and clean up. This is illustrated in Appendix 2.

In the area behind the northern warehouse façade, the timber floor structures were seen to have collapsed/burnt out above ground floor to roof. It was not possible to determine the condition of ground floor given the debris in place though the structure on this level seems to be more intact than others. On Levels 1 and 2, limited iron/steelwork was seen to still be present. Figure 12.

Without a detailed survey it was not possible to confirm, however the presence of this steel/ironwork in this area may have mitigated collapse of the façade on these levels. This may have provided short-medium term restraint to arrest any further local collapse however a detailed survey would be required, if safe access available, to confirm this.



Figure 12: Drone Survey Northern Warehouse Facade

This area of façade above the remaining iron/steelwork was unstable, particularly at the end of the flank wall. Given the loss of floor structures this was free standing across the full height with no horizontal restraint.

This presented a high risk of collapse in the short term. At this stage there was no recommendation for immediate action in this area given its location relative to publicly accessible areas surrounding the site and the associated risk.

Intervention in the form of temporary restraint or local removal of wall structure, will be required to maintain stability beyond this initial period. The scope of this temporary restraint or local removal lies outside the scope of this report.

At this stage there was no recommendation for immediate action in this area. However, this area will need to be assessed in detail in a future phase of works to allow appropriate access for investigations and clean up. This is illustrated in Appendix 2.

5.4. Northwest Façade

In the area behind the northwest mill façade, the timber floor structures were seen to have collapsed/burnt out on all floors. On Levels ground to 1, limited iron/steelwork was seen to still be present. On Level 2 iron/steelwork was seen to still be present thought this was unlikely to be providing any meaningful contribution. Figure 13.

Given the previous horizontal restraint provided by timber joists embedded into the wall, the steel/ironwork in this area was unlikely to have contributed to mitigating collapse of this façade. The steel/ironwork did not provide any horizontal restraint to this façade.

The end of this gable wall would have also relied on end restraint from the returning buttressing walls of the northeast and southwest mill façades. Given the loss of façade above Level 2 on the north east façade this gable was unrestrained along one edge also.



Figure 13: Drone Survey Northwest Mill Facade

The loss of floor structures and end restraint in this area demonstrate that this façade was free standing across the full height. This is presented a very high risk of collapse adjacent to the critical Network Rail Asset.

It was therefore our recommendation that in absence of the ability to safely access this space to provide temporary stabilisation measures that this façade was demolished to Level 01. This is illustrated in Appendix 2.

5.5. Southwest Façade

In the area behind the southwest mill façade, the timber floor structures were seen to have collapsed/burnt out on all floors. On Levels ground to 1, limited iron/steelwork was be seen to still be present. On Level 2 iron/steelwork was seen to still be present thought this was unlikely to be providing any meaningful contribution. Figure 14.

The observed steel/ironwork appeared to be a later addition to the structure of the building and therefore was unlikely to contribute to the original structural principle of floor to wall restraint. Observing the imagery it was unlikely, given the presence of columns adjacent to the façade, that this steel/ironwork provided any horizontal restraint to the façade.

The end of this façade will have also relied on end restraint from the returning buttressing wall of the northwest gable. Cracking was observed at this interface on Level 04 which reduced the robustness of this end restraint. Given also the recommendations to demolish the north west gable from Level 01 this will increase the risk of collapse of this façade.



Figure 14: Drone Survey Southwest Mill Facade

The loss of floor structures and end restraint in this area demonstrate that this façade was free standing across the full height. This is presented a very high risk of collapse.

It was therefore our recommendation that in absence of the ability to safely access this space to provide temporary stabilisation measures that this façade was demolished to Level 01. This is illustrated in Appendix 2.

5.6. Site Visit

Civic Engineers attended site again on Monday 30th June 2025. It was the intention that this visit would allow the opportunity to talk through our initial findings from the drone survey and further discuss and develop recommendations with relevant parties.

In attendance at the time were the following parties

- Civic Engineers Ltd
- Elmloch Ltd, the building owner and their representative.
- Building Control Lead, Manchester City Council.
- Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service.
- Greater Manchester Police
- Manchester City Council Planning Department

The above recommendations of Section 4.5 were discussed with those in attendance.

6. Initial Conclusions

After the significant fire on Monday 23rd June 2025 Civic was asked by the building owner to attend site to provide insight into the extent of damage caused and provide initial commentary on the condition of the structure. This included any immediate short term structural risk as a result of this fire.

The observations and recommendations of this survey are summarised as follows;

6.1. North East Mill Façade

In the area behind the northeast mill façade which had collapsed to Level 2, the timber floor structures were seen to have collapsed/burnt out on all floors. From Level 2 down, iron/steelwork was seen to still be present.

This area of façade above the remaining iron/steelwork presented a risk of local collapse in the short term. However, this was unlikely to pose a physical risk to the public given its location relative to publicly accessible areas surrounding the site.

As such, there was no recommendation for immediate action in this area. However, this area would need to be assessed in detail in a future phase of works to allow appropriate access for investigations and clean up.

In the area behind the northeast mill façade which remained partially intact, the timber floor structures and iron/steelwork were seen to have collapsed/burnt out on all floors.

The existing 1950s staircore was demonstrated to not be structurally linked to the existing façade and was therefore considered free standing.

It was therefore our recommendation that in absence of the ability to safely access this space to provide temporary stabilisation measures, this façade as well as the staircore were demolished.

6.2. Southern Warehouse Façade

In the area behind the southern warehouse façade, the timber floor structures were seen to have collapsed/burnt out above ground floor to roof. It was not possible to determine the condition of ground floor. On Levels 1 and 2, limited iron/steelwork was seen to still be present.

This area of façade above the remaining iron/steelwork presented a risk of local collapse. However, given the geometry of this façade and end restraints, this risk was likely to extend to a medium term. This was also unlikely to pose a physical risk to the public given its location relative to publicly accessible areas surrounding the site.

Intervention in the form of temporary restraint will be required to maintain stability beyond this initial period.

There was no recommendation for immediate action in this area. However, this area will need to be assessed in detail in a future phase of works to allow appropriate access for investigations and clean up.

In the area behind the northern warehouse façade, the timber floor structures were seen to have collapsed/burnt out above ground floor to roof. It was not possible to determine the condition of ground floor given the debris in place. On Levels 1 and 2, limited iron/steelwork can be seen to still be present.

This area of façade above the remaining iron/steelwork presented a high risk of local collapse, particularly at the end of the remaining flank wall.

Intervention in the form of temporary restraint or local removal of wall structure, will be required to maintain stability beyond this initial period.

There was no recommendation for immediate action in this area. However, this area will need to be assessed in detail in a future phase of works to allow appropriate access for investigations and clean up.

6.3. Northwest Mill Façade

In the area behind the northwest mill façade, the timber floor structures were seen to have collapsed/burnt out on all floors. On Levels ground to 1, limited iron/steelwork was seen to still be present. On Level 2 iron/steelwork was seen to still be present thought this was unlikely to be providing any meaningful contribution to local stability of the façade.

The end of this gable wall will have also relied on end restraint from the returning buttressing walls of the northeast and southwest mill façades. Given the loss of façade above Level 2 on the north east façade this gable was unrestrained along one edge also.

It was therefore our recommendation that in absence of the ability to safely access this space to provide temporary stabilisation measures that this façade was demolished to Level 01.

6.4. Southwest Mill Façade

In the area behind the southwest mill façade, the timber floor structures were seen to have collapsed/burnt out on all floors. On Levels ground to 1, limited iron/steelwork was seen to still be present. On Level 2 iron/steelwork was seen to still be present thought this was unlikely to be providing any meaningful contribution to local stability of the façade.

The observed steel/ironwork appeared to be a later addition to the structure of the building and therefore was unlikely to contribute to the original structural principles of floor restraint. Observing the imagery it is unlikely, given the presence of columns adjacent to the façade, that this steel/ironwork provided any horizontal restraint to the façade.

The end of this façade will have also relied on end restraint from the returning buttressing wall of the northwest gable. Cracking was observed at this interface on Level 04 which reduced the robustness of this end restraint. Given also the recommendations to demolish the north west gable from Level 01 this will increase the risk of collapse of this façade.

It was therefore our recommendation that in absence of the ability to safely access this space to provide temporary stabilisation measures that this façade was demolished to Level 01.

7. Initial Demolition

During Civic's input, Manchester City Council Building Control provided input to consider the risk posed to the general public as a result of the fire. This included a series of site visits by their representatives and discussions with the building owner.

This resulted in a Section 78 notice being served to demolish *and take appropriate and immediate steps to remove any dangerous condition which poses a threat to public safety.* The scope of this work included

1. The removal of an unstable panel of masonry fronting Gloucester Street.
2. The removal unstable panels of masonry above widow openings fronting Gloucester Street.
3. The securing of all points of entry to the building (and the site generally) on Gloucester Street.
4. Additional demolition works required, as agreed during a site meeting on the afternoon of Tuesday 24th June.
5. The provision of appropriate protective/Heras fencing around the parts of the facade where building operations or demolition works will be carried out, to prevent unauthorised or inadvertent public access to the site. The removal of unstable masonry and stair core structure fronting Gloucester Street.
6. The removal of an unsupported masonry tower.

A copy of these notices are included within Appendix 3.

8. Current Condition

The current structural arrangement of The Hotspur Press subsequent to enforced demolition works by Manchester City Council is as per the below figures and sketches presented in Appendix 4.

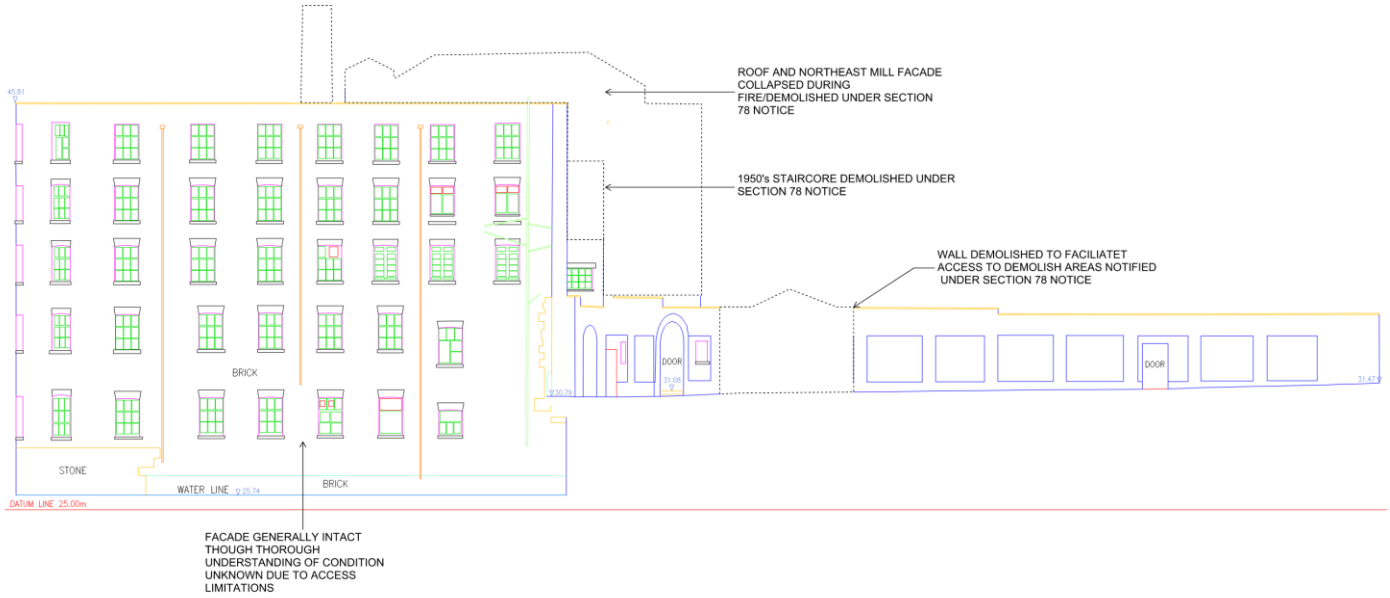


Figure 15: Southern Elevation Layout

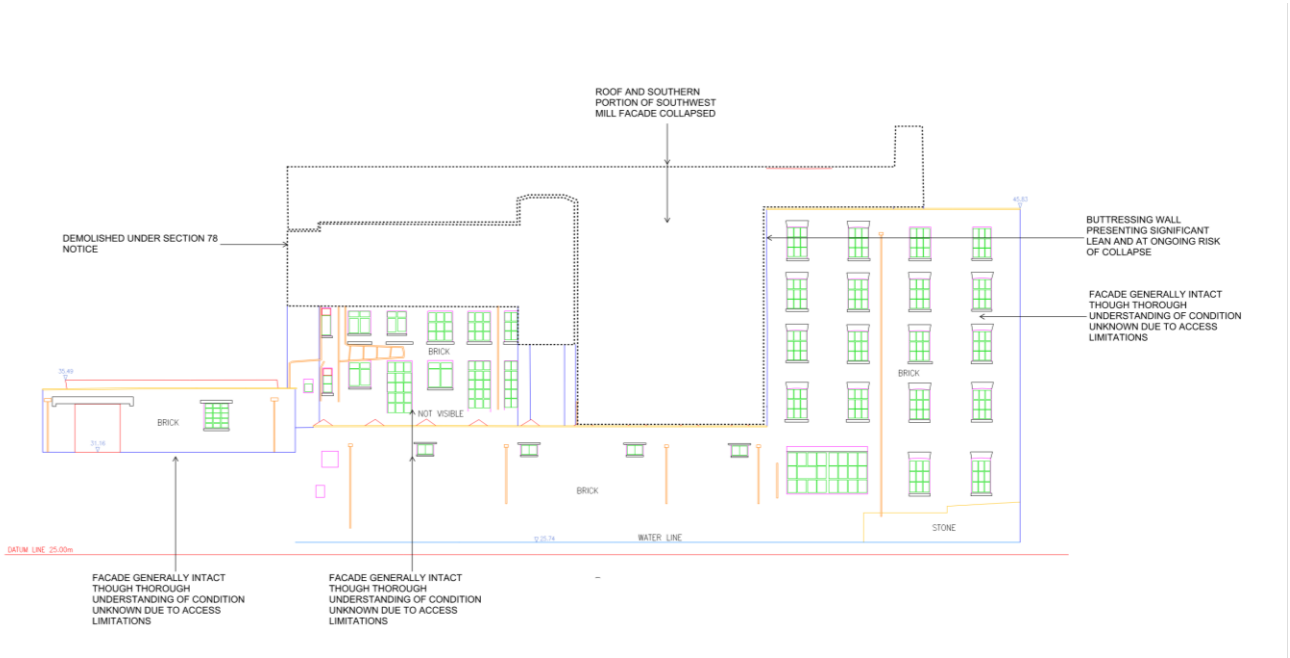


Figure 16: Southwestern Elevation Layout

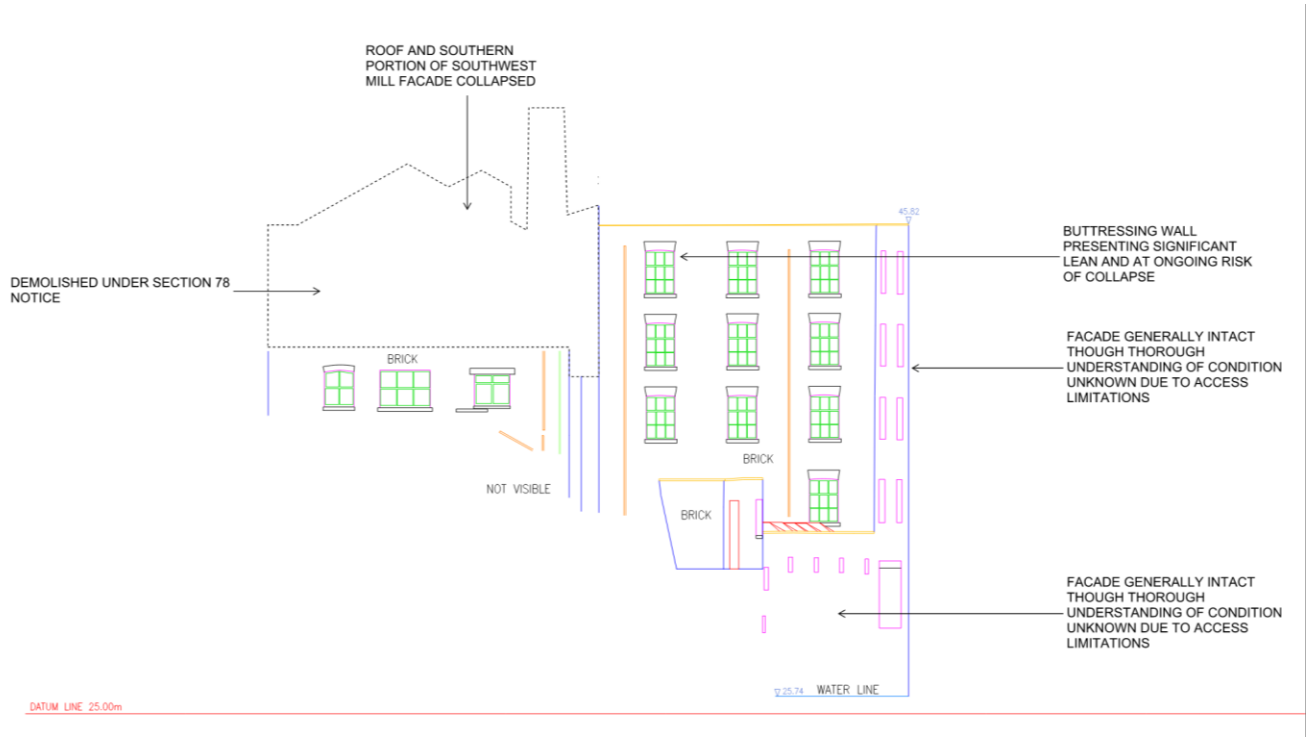


Figure 17: Southeastern Elevation Layout

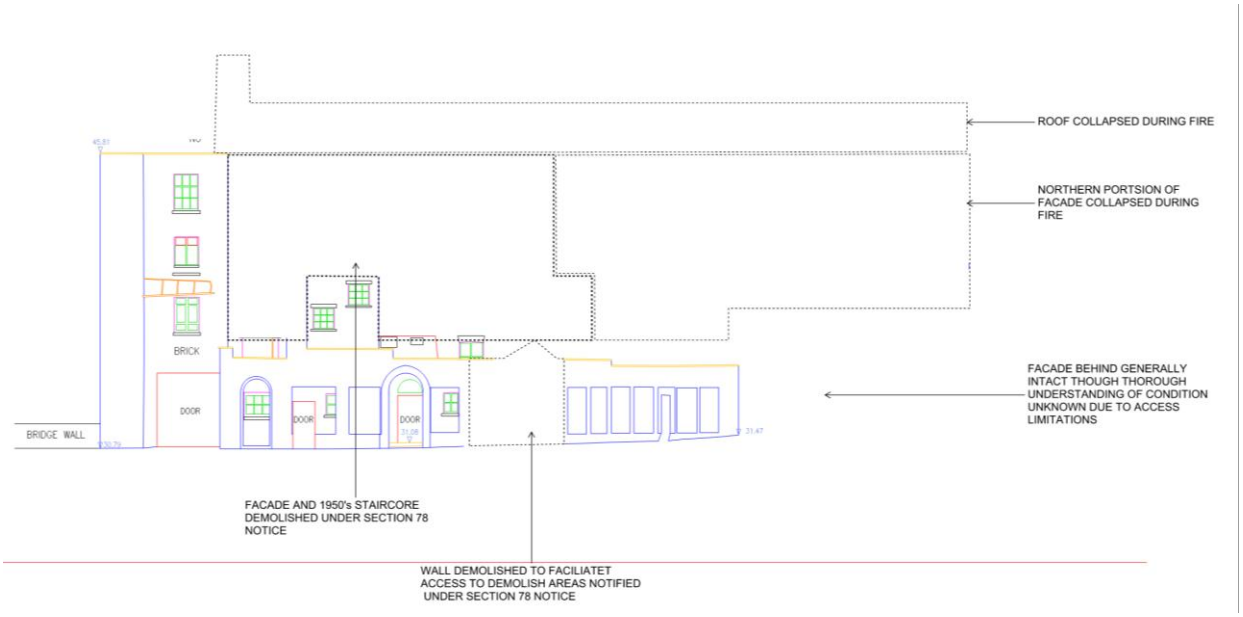


Figure 18: Northeastern Elevation Layout

8.1. Site Visit

Civic visited site on Friday 24th October 2025 to carry out a visual inspection from foot level. Generally, there did not appear to be any significant change beyond our observations described in earlier sections of this report. However, notable points to raise initially are as follows;

- The flanking façade to the curved elevation continues to present an obvious lean inward towards the building footprint, Figure 19. This is and will continue to be a risk and is likely to be progressive increasing the likelihood of collapse of this wall into the building. Local collapse of the coping/parapet has been observed.
- There appears to have been some movement in the masonry spandrel panels over existing openings, particularly on the main elevation fronting Gloucester Road. Cracking and debonding of the masonry units in these areas was observed. Figure 20

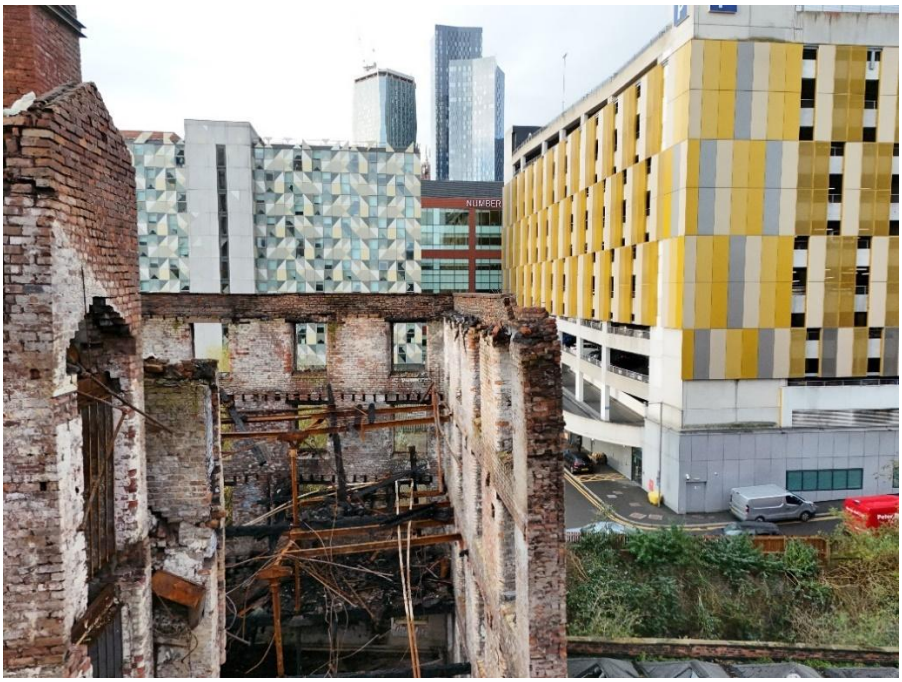


Figure 19: Inward Lean



Figure 20: Internal view of dropped lintels

8.2. Drone Survey

On Wednesday 19th November 2025 Civic carried out a second visual drone survey of the Hotspur Press building. This survey was limited to the surrounding area and high level views and in this instance the drone was able to gain further access to the building.

The purpose of this survey was to interrogate further the external and internal condition of the building and compare with previous surveys to determine whether the condition had worsened.

Generally, the survey supported comments in Section 7.1 with one area of particular concern

8.2.1. Southern Warehouse Façade

This area of façade above the remaining iron/steelwork remains unstable and previous conclusions suggested the geometry of this façade may mitigate short term risk though still pose a risk to the medium term stability.

At the time this was unlikely to pose a physical risk to the public given its location and was therefore not considered for intervention as per stipulation from Building Control.

Since this time, and based on the recent drone survey there are two areas of structural concern to note.

Façade Lean



Figure 21: Southern Façade Q4 and Q2 2025

Figure 21**Error! Reference source not found.** shows an apparent lean towards the river. This may be an historic l ean as read alongside an image from Q2 2025, though when considered against factors as below presents further risk of significant deterioration.



Figure 22: Masonry Cracking

Cracking to the masonry panels can also in Figure 22. This can also be seen in Figure 21 which demonstrates the cracking to have been present since the time of the fire. It can be seen that cracking has propagated and that masonry panels, most notably between ground and first floor have shifted out of plane. This is evidenced by the masonry units which no longer sit flush beneath the cills and above lintels.

This is likely to be a result of failed lintels, the action of collapsed material leaning on the façade internally and possibly, impact forces from internal collapse or thermal shock during the fire.

The location of this cracking, along with an apparent lean to the façade raises cause for concern of the short term stability of this portion of the remaining façade.

Figure 23 shows an aerial view of the southern façade. In plan the arched area of façade can be seen to have moved out of plane from the remaining perpendicular façade, refer to the coping which appears to show a shift in coursing.

This supports a theory that this portion of façade is leaning towards the River Medlock



Figure 23: Aerial View of Southern Façade

The diagram in Figure 24 shows how the combination of façade lean and presence of cracking at spandrels within the façade presents a risk of local collapse.

In this diagram a façade lean generates forces transmitted back to the adjacent and perpendicular elements of façade. Where cracking is present this is the point at which tension forces are a maximum having generated and propagated along the length of the arch. If the façade is cracked at this interface there is no restraint available to prevent progressive movement or restrain in place.

It may also be the case that both these occurrences are influencing each other with additional weight loaded onto the façade, pushing outwards, from collapsed material internally.

It is therefore our opinion that this area of façade now presents a risk of local collapse into the River Medlock and potentially beyond into third party land.

Should this area of façade collapse it presents further risk to the adjacent areas. It is likely this portion of the façade provides restraint to the remaining areas along the river, which in turn provide restraint to return flanking façade of the warehouse and the main façade on Gloucester Street.

If the arched area of façade collapses then this presents a high risk of progressive collapse to the remaining areas

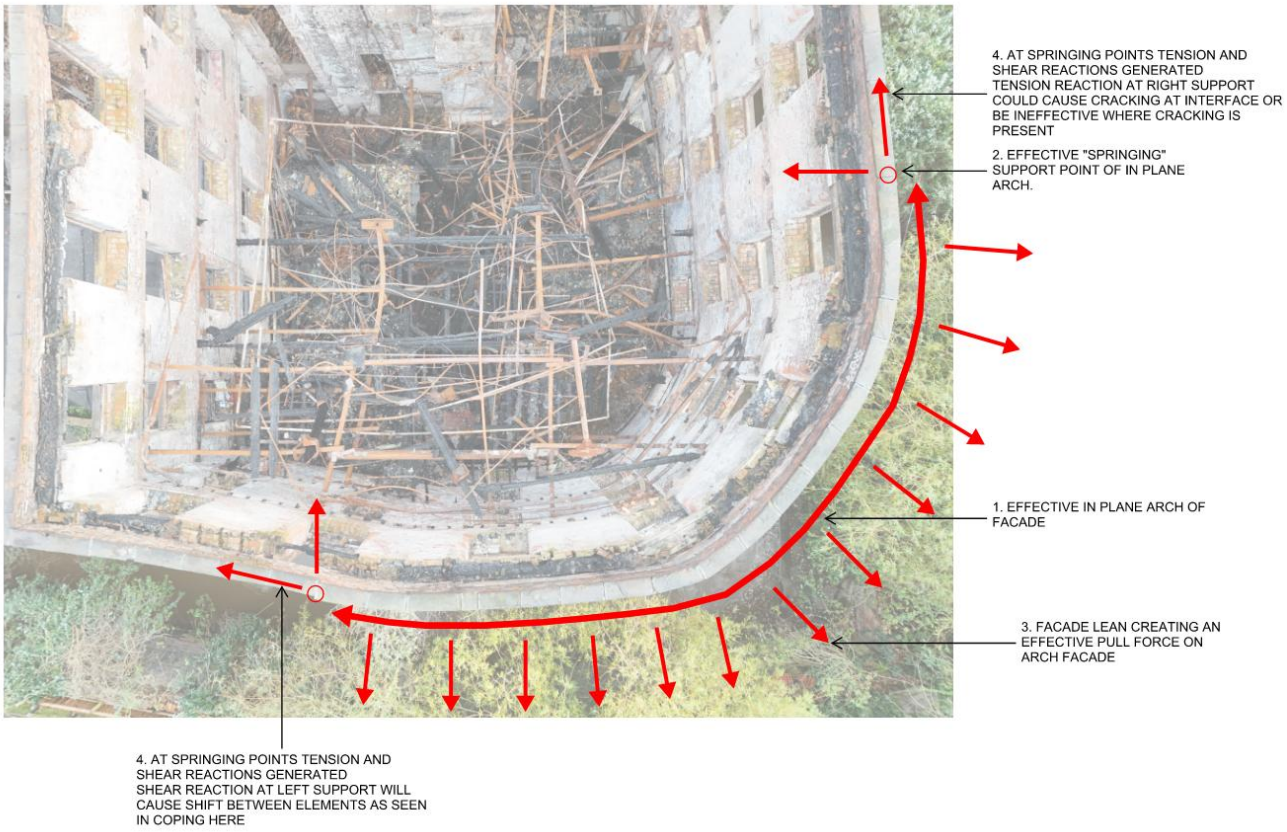


Figure 24: Facade Force Diagram

It is our conclusion that this area of façade presents a significant risk of collapse into the River Medlock and potentially beyond into third party land. Without short term intervention this may result in further deterioration of the building, beyond this local area, and present further risk to the safety of the public and possible environmental risk to the River Medlock. Figure 25.

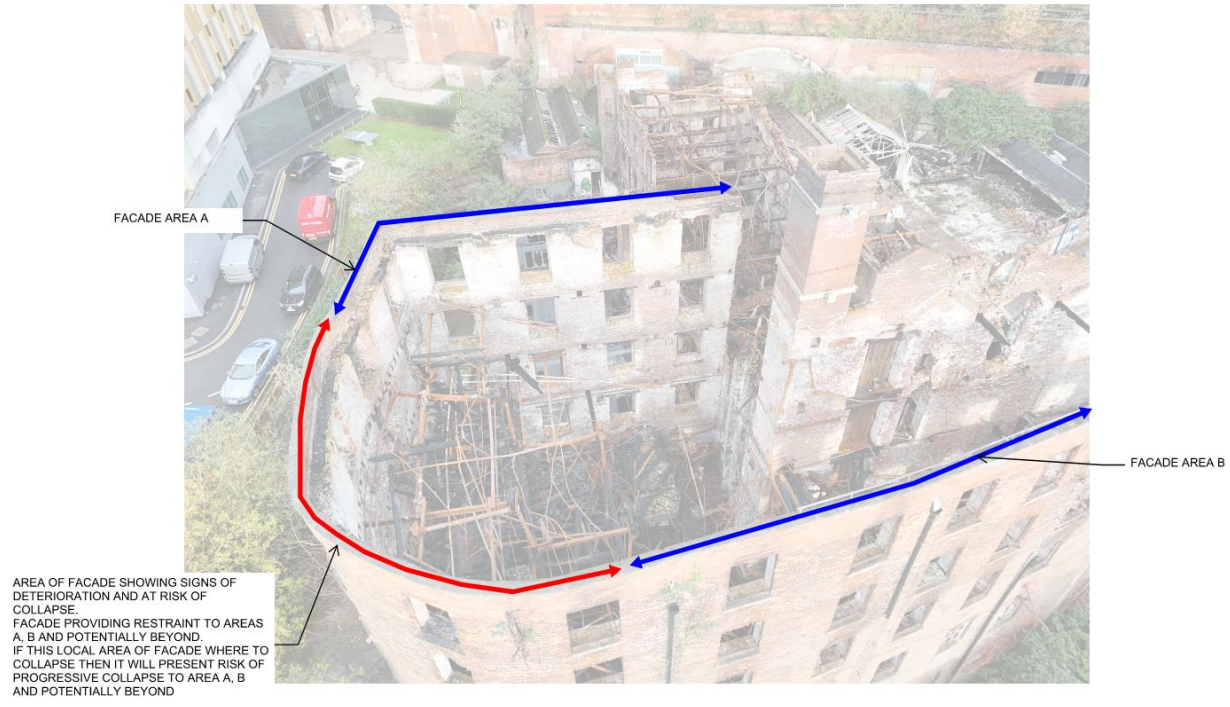


Figure 25: Potential Collapse Implications

9. Revised Planning Application

A revised planning application is to be submitted for The Hotspur Press considering the implications of the fire on the existing building.

As part of this application the opportunity for retention of the remaining structure is to be explored. The most recent planning strategy for façade retention is described in Section 3 and can be summarised as follows.



Figure 26: Current consent facade retention strategy

East Façade

An external temporary façade retention option for this façade was most suitable. Limited working space was available between the proposed slab edge of the new building and the existing façade resulting in greater challenges to adopt and internal retention solution.

This elevation generally had sufficient working space and access should not have posed an issue. A braced bay with horizontal spanning truss would have been required at the end abutting the proposed retained 1882 warehouse.

Northern Façade and Single Storey River Facade

A dismantling and rebuild option for this façade would be most suitable given the following considerations

- Geometry of the façade.
- Widespread vegetation growth which had been identified.
- Strengthening requirements to the triangular wall gable head.
- Modified windows.
- Proximity to Network Rail Viaduct.

Southern Elevation

An internal temporary façade retention option for this façade was most suitable given the proximity of the adjacent River Medlock. To adopt an external façade retention would require either temporary works within the river or over the river to adjacent land which would not be possible due to ownership.

This strategy had been designed by the Temporary Works Engineer Swanton Consulting and can be read within Appendix 5.

Given the extent of the fire the opportunity to maintain this strategy has been reviewed to establish whether still feasible/practical.

9.1. Façade Retention Options Post Fire

9.1.1. North East Mill Façade



Figure 27: Internal View

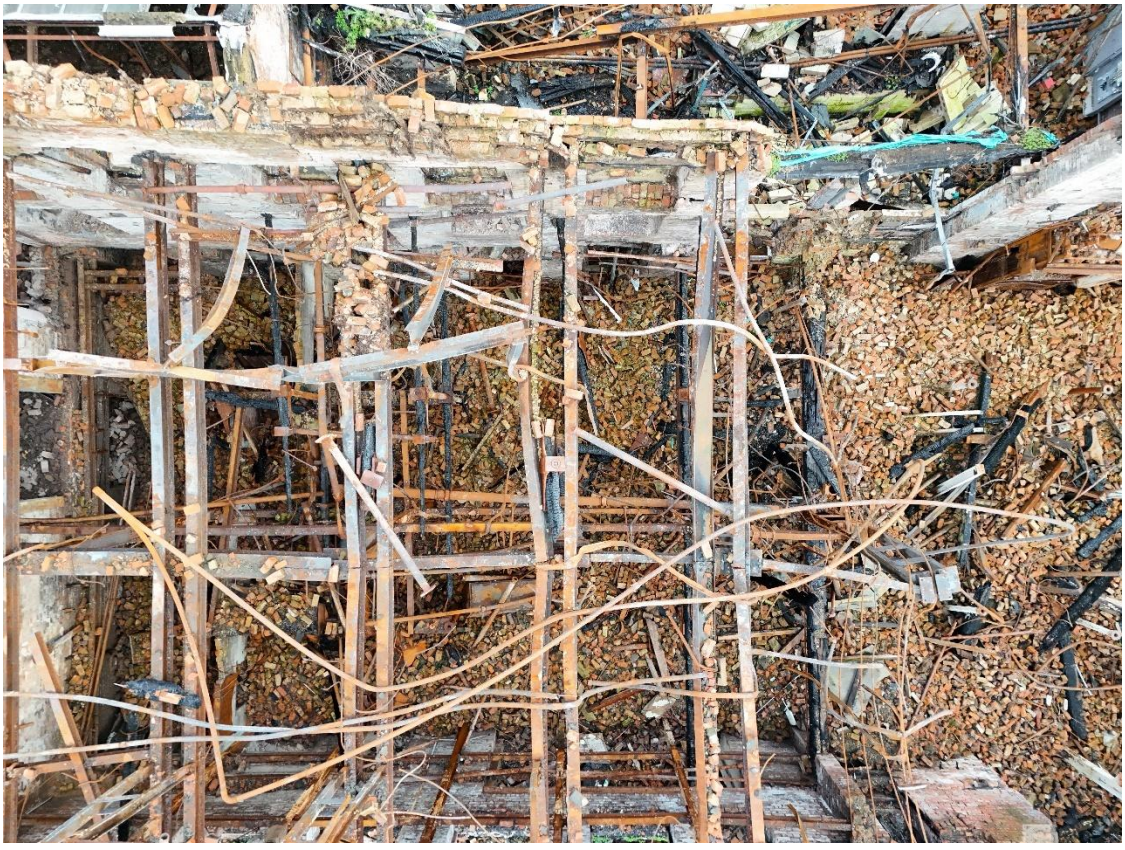


Figure 28: Aerial View

The north eastern mill façade (Zone 1 Figure 29) remains partially standing to underside of former second floor having either partially collapsed during the fire or demolished due to immediate public safety concerns.

To the northern area neighbouring the Network Rail viaduct, the façade continues to present a lean inwards, currently restrained from further deterioration by the remaining internal structure although significantly limited.

Internally, demolition and collapse material, as well as safe access due to the unstable nature of remaining structure, will prevent installation of an internal façade retention solution.

Externally, demolition and collapse material, as well as safe access due to the unstable nature of remaining structure, will prevent access to install an external façade retention solution.

To the southern area (Zone 2 Figure 29) adjacent to Gloucester Road, the façade is generally buttressed by a series of interlocking perpendicular walls. However, without internal restraint from the floor structure this presents a risk of collapse in the medium term.

Internally, demolition and collapse material, as well as safe access due to the unstable nature of remaining structure, will prevent access to install an internal façade retention solution.

Externally, closure of Gloucester Road will be required to install an external façade retention solution.

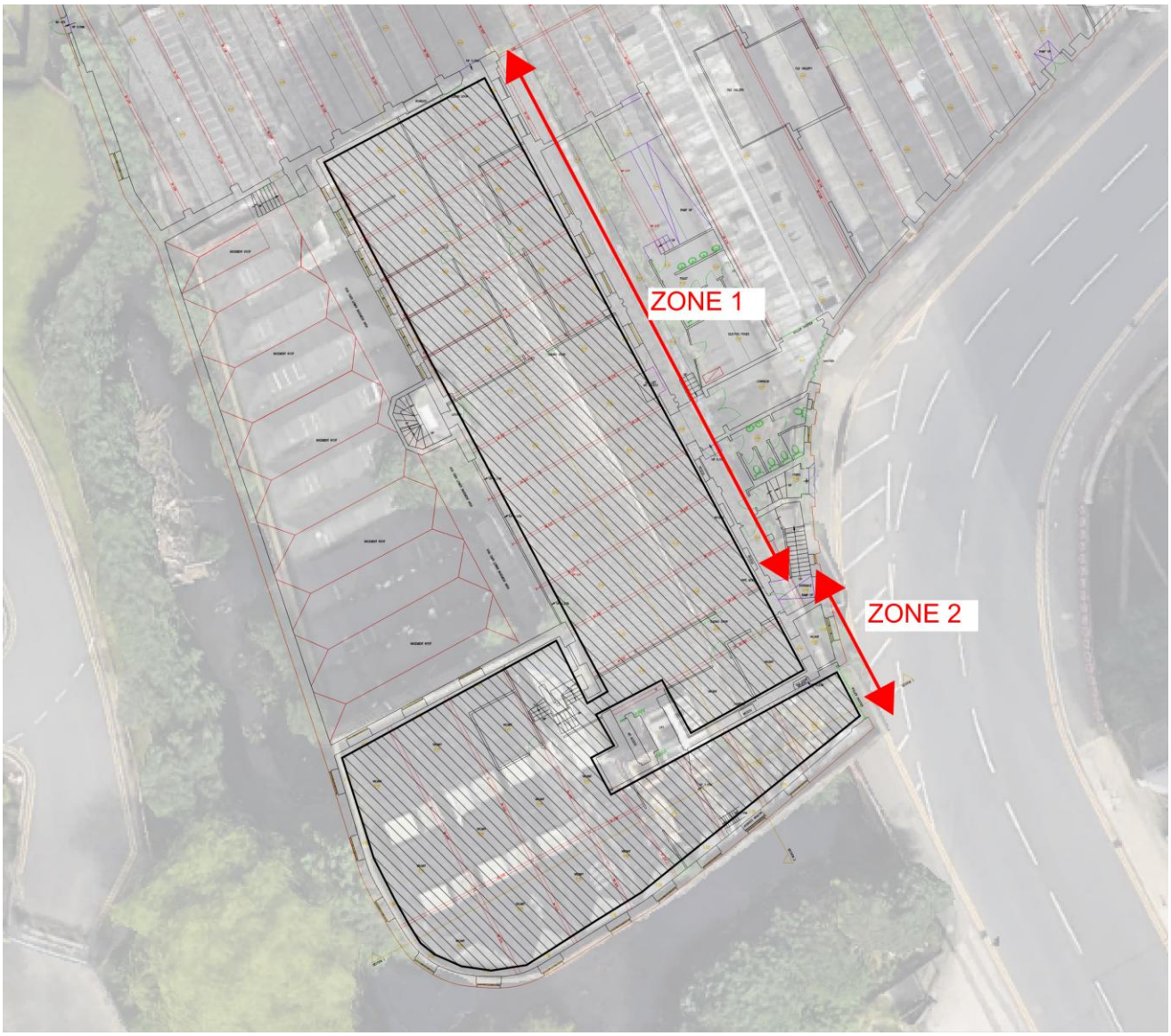


Figure 29: North East Mill Facade Limitations

Refer also to Appendix 5.

9.1.2. Southern Warehouse Façade



Figure 30: External View



Figure 31: Aerial View

The southern warehouse façade remains standing, full height and no demolition works have taken place given its location and limited risk presented to public safety at the time of fire.

Civic had initially, in the time immediately after fire recommended that no immediate action was required in this area. However, this area would need to be assessed in detail in a future phase of works to allow appropriate access for investigations and clean up.

Since this time further investigations have been carried out which reveal significant concerns to the arching element of this façade. Localised areas of this façade present a significant risk of collapse into the River Medlock and potentially beyond into third party land. Should this area of façade collapse it presents further risk to the adjacent areas and the potential for a progressive collapse to the wider façade. Figure 32.

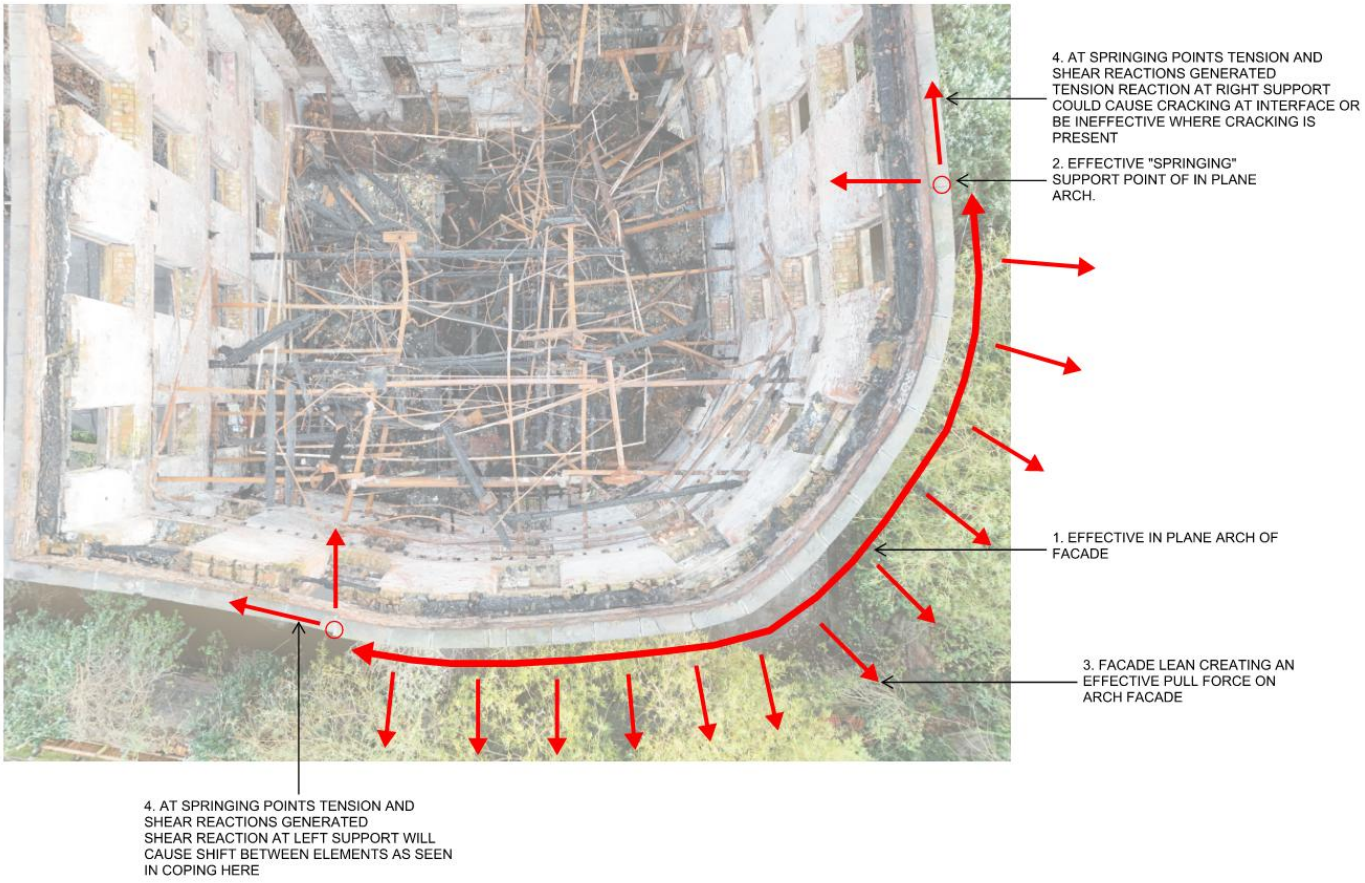


Figure 32: Southern Warehouse Facade

Elsewhere opportunity for façade retention maybe available but are substantially compromised.

Internally, demolition and collapse material, as well as safe access due to the unstable nature of remaining structure, will prevent installation of an internal façade retention solution.

Externally, the River Medlock will present challenges to the design and installation of an external façade retention solution. In this scenario an external façade solution, bridging the River Medlock and founded on third part land will be possible. Indicative structural arrangements are shown in Figure 33.

There are significant constraints and challenges to consider with this solution including:

- **Access to third party land**. Agreements would be required with adjacent land owners to accept the construction of temporary structures. It is assessed that penetrative ground works would not be accepted, for instance piled foundations, therefore a foundation solution using pads and kentledge blocks would be required
- **Temporary structures in the highway**. Agreements would be required with Manchester Highways to accept the construction of temporary structures. Penetrative ground works would be not be accepted due to the presence of the public highway and buried services below, therefore a foundation solution using pads and kentledge blocks would be required
- **Constructing structures over the River Medlock**. The Environment Agency would need to be consulted to accept a solution over an active waterway.
- **Protection structures to the River Medlock.** Protection measures may be enforced by the Environment Agency to mitigate risk of falling debris/ contamination to the River. This may require the use of protection decks constructed on floating pontoons or hung from the façade retention structures.

- **Logistics and safety of proposals**. A main contractor and temporary works engineer should be consulted to understand
    - The feasibility of constructing these structures on third party land, installation over the River Medlock and connection to an unstable building.
    - The safety implications of doing so to operatives.

The above should be reviewed and commented on in detail by specialist demolition contractors and temporary works engineers.

These proposals and risks and logistics are presented in further detail in Appendix 5.

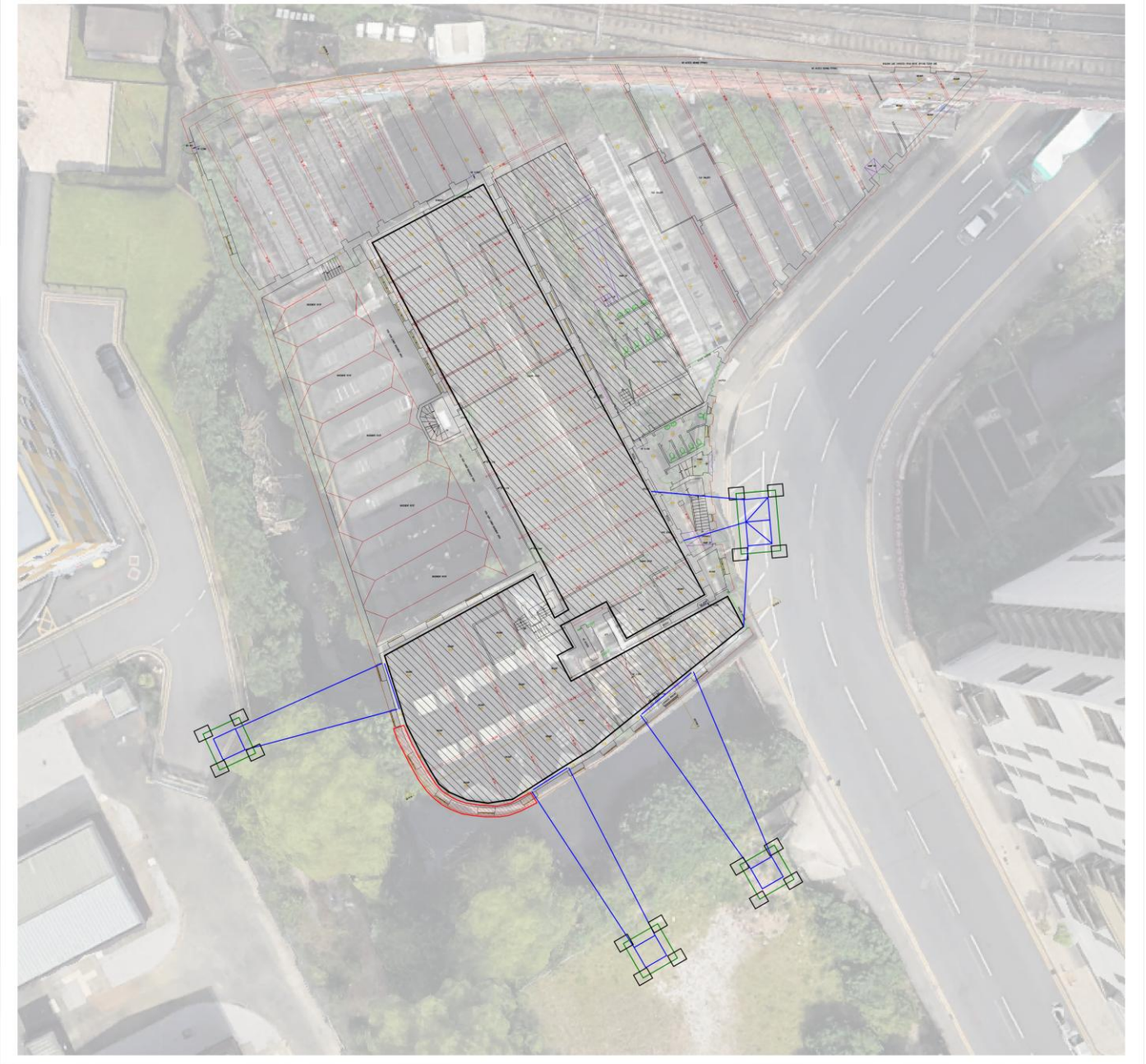


Figure 33: Possible Facade Retention Strategy

9.1.3. North West Mill Façade



Figure 34: North West Mill Facade

The north west mill façade remains partially standing to underside of former second floor having either partially collapsed during the fire or demolished due to immediate public safety concerns.

The current strategy is that this façade will be dismantled and rebuilt. This strategy is recommended to remain.

9.1.4. South West Mill Façade



Figure 35: South West Mill Façade

The current strategy is that this façade will be demolished. This strategy is to remain.

9.1.5. Summary

Table 1 presented below summarises the evolution of the façade retention proposals, why these are no longer appropriate and/or practical solutions to move forward with since the fire.

Table 1: Facade Strategy Summary

Façade Reference	Previous Solution for Temporary Façade Retention	Appropriateness Since Fire	Alternative Option	Conclusion
North East Mill Façade	External Steel Frame	No internal access possible due to collapse and demolition debris. No external access possible due to collapse and demolition debris. No access available generally due to safety implications and unstable remaining structure.	No feasible option apparent to the north to implement façade retention structures. To the south external façade retention strategy is possible. Would require partial closure of Gloucester Street.	Closure of Gloucester Street likely to cause significant disruption to highway. Practicalities to be confirmed by Main Contractor and discussed with Manchester City Council, Manchester City Highways and asset holders in the highway, for instance telecoms, gas, electricity. Further investigations will be required in the highways to determine the presence of buried services. A strategy for protection of these, when temporary structures are sited over, will require development as well as agreement with Manchester City Council Highways.
Southern Warehouse Façade	Internal Steel Frame	No internal access possible due to collapse and demolition debris. No external access possible due to River Medlock.	External façade retention strategy possible. Would require access to third party land and bridging structures over the River Medlock..	Practicalities to be confirmed by Main Contractor and discussed with third party land owners and to accept temporary structure proposals. Further investigations will be required on adjacent land to determine the presence of buried services. A strategy for protection of these, when temporary structures are sited over, will require development as well as agreement with land owners. Negotiations required with Environment Agency to agree structures spanning over the River. Where temporary structures are sighted the EA may require demonstration this will not adversely affect their asset i.e. stability of the River Bank/ River Wall. Further intrusive investigations in the form of trial pits will be required to determine the existing conditions (via third party land) to provide and negotiate this strategy. Practicalities and safety considerations of installation of structure spanning over the River Medlock to be confirmed by Main Contractor.
North West Mill Façade	Dismantle and Rebuild	Appropriate	N/A	Façade to be dismantled and rebuilt.

10. Specialist Temporary Works Input

Swanton Consulting, the temporary works specialist engaged under the previous design proposals to provide façade retention design, have provided further input via an *"Engineering Assessment of Damaged Building due to Fire"* Ref 3430-SCL-XX-XX-RP-Y-00001 appended to this report with Appendix 6.

This report discusses the impact of the fire on both the original structure and fabric of the building as well as the practicalities and logistics of any possible, future temporary works in the form of façade retention.

This should be read in conjunction with Civic's report though can be summarised to focus on a series of key points as follows.

1. Public Health and Safety

- Contaminated material known to have been present in the building prior to the fire, including asbestos, has now been exposed to the environment as a result of the fire.
- As such the site condition is not safe for construction activities. Environmental Specialist and Agencies should be informed, and appropriate advice should be followed.
- Structural debris should requires testing for contamination and further action. However, given the collapse and instability of the existing structure, safe access if not possible to do so, for risk of local collapse.
- Exclusion zones should be considered on public areas where pavements, highway or green areas are within the collapse radius of the walls.

2. Structural Stability

- The historic façade walls have lost a significant amount of lateral support from roof level down to the basement, as the intermediate floors and roof have collapsed. As a result, the walls are now exposed to unrestrained horizontal forces, particularly wind loading.
- There is considerable uncertainty regarding the extent of damage to the brickwork, due to fire exposure and local structural collapses. High volume of temperature for long hours might cause may have caused a loss compressive strength of brick material and mortar.
- Under the consideration of damage on brick wall and losing lateral support on façade walls, the existing structure is unstable and unsuitable for site activities such as construction or salvaging historic parts.
- Leaving partly collapsed north, west and east walls unrestrained condition is not viable. On the basement, load-bearing walls might be damaged and lost structural integrity or become overloaded during the collapse.
- It is to be noted that temporary works were specified in the first place to enable a safe demolition while maintaining part of the historic fabric of the building. The fire led to the collapse of the current stability system of the building, prior to any installation of the temporary works required.
- With regard to current building condition, walls, roof and floors collapsed during the fire, so retrofitting any temporary works to provide stability is now extremely dangerous, as the structure is unstable.
- Vibrations near the building should be under control. In this context, long jib machinery or high reach excavator should be used from far distance to make demolition safer. Heavy demolition or construction machines, such as excavators, diggers, loaders or pneumatic machines should not be used to close distance to site.

3. Design and Build New Retaining Structure

- Façade retention system cannot be built internally.
- Rubble cannot be cleaned due to contamination, stability and access issues. Therefore, external retaining systems might be considered in order to retain remaining parts from existing façade. Health and safety and structural stability must be considered.
- Before planning any alternative retaining structure the following actions should be taken during the new retention system design, installation and demolition.

Material Tests

- Material tests should be carried out prior to the design of retention system in order to assess material mechanical property such as compressive strength and anchor pull-out tests. With the aim of taking test samples from existing façade or carrying pull-out tests in place, working platform should be considered in order to provide access to masonry wall externally.

- Based on asbestos contamination and structural stability issues, working closely with existing façade is extremely dangerous. Collection of material samples and testing materials on site should be done in accordance with extensive care.

Masonry Repairs

- Structural defects on existing masonry need to be addressed prior to cleaning rubble from inside the building to mitigate risk of further collapse. In the absence of internal access to site, masonry repairs can be done to external face of façade only.
- Although required masonry repairs might be undertaken once the external access platform is erected from ground floor to roof level, there remain significant risks of collapse at the upper masonry section during repair works at the lower level, as well as health hazards associated with working in a contaminated area.

Installation of Retention System

- Installation of the retention system to existing façade requires machinery as well as operatives to work in close proximity to existing façade, because manual work tasks are unavoidable. However, post-fire photographs and visual inspections indicate continuous structural movements, resulting in a loss of stability.
- In the absence of lateral support to existing masonry wall, any disturbance caused by site activities may trigger a structural collapse. A comprehensive risk assessment should be carried out, taking into account all high-risk factors. Site activities such as demolition, construction, or rubble clearance are extremely hazardous under current condition of the building.

The conclusion of this report as written by Swanton Consulting (the temporary works specialist) is that “the existing structure cannot be rendered safe, as the remedial works required involve complex engineering works to provide a safe working environment. Such measures would expose operatives to a high risk of injury due to uncontrolled collapse or sudden, unforeseeable structural failure. Therefore, the Hotspur Press building should be classified as a ‘Dangerous Structure’.”

11. Conclusion

Civic are appointed by Manner for the proposed development at Hotspur Press site, Cambridge Street, Manchester. The development proposals comprise the redevelopment of the Hotspur Press to provide new Purpose-Built Student Accommodation (PBSA), tenant amenity and new public realm.

In June 2025 a fire broke out at the Hotspur Press. Civic was asked by Elmloch Limited (the building owner) to attend site to provide insight into the extent of damage caused by the fire and provide initial commentary on the condition of the structure. This included any immediate short term structural risk as a result of this fire. It was the intention that this visit would allow relevant parties to mee to discuss and agree an initial, safe and pragmatic route forward to mitigate risk to the public.

During Civic's input, Manchester City Council Building Control provided input to consider the risk posed to the general public as a result of the fire. This included a series of site visits by their representatives and discussions with the building owner.

This resulted in a Section 78 notice being served to demolish *and take appropriate and immediate steps to remove any dangerous condition which poses a threat to public safety.*

Civic visited site on Friday 24th October 2025 to carry out a further visual inspection of the building to observe ongoing risk and condition of the building and to support a revised planning application.

A subsequent file note was issued to the building owner Elmloch Ltd and Manchester City Building Control, via the Client Manner, on 25th November 2025, to identify our initial observations.

The conclusions of this site visit and drone survey are as follows

- The north eastern mill façade remains partially standing to underside of former second floor having either partially collapsed during the fire or demolished due to immediate public safety concerns.
- To the northern area neighbouring the Network Rail viaduct, the façade continues to present a lean inwards, currently restrained from further deterioration by the remaining internal structure although significantly limited.

In this zone there are no practical solutions available to retain the remaining façade due to the condition of the structure locally as well as the safety of operatives accessing and working around the building.

- To the southern area of the north eastern façade, adjacent to Gloucester Road, the façade is generally buttressed by a series of interlocking perpendicular walls. However, without internal restraint from the floor structure this presents a risk of collapse in the medium term.
- Externally, closure of Gloucester Road will be required to install an external façade retention solution. Practicalities to be confirmed by specialist demolition contractor and temporary works engineer and discussed with Manchester City Council/ Manchester City Highways. This would require consideration of existing services within the highway and demonstration these assets will not be affected by the works. Detailed negotiations with the providers are likely necessary to reach an mutually acceptable solution to all parties.
- The southern warehouse façade remains standing, full height and no demolition works have taken place. Recent investigations reveal significant concerns. Localised areas of this façade now present a significant risk of collapse into the River Medlock and potentially beyond into third party land. Should this area of façade collapse it presents further risk to the adjacent areas and the potential for a progressive collapse to the wider façade.

In this zone local areas of demolition are recommended.

Elsewhere opportunity for façade retention could be available, though very challenging and presenting complex and high risk strategies. The feasibility of this is considered further within this report.

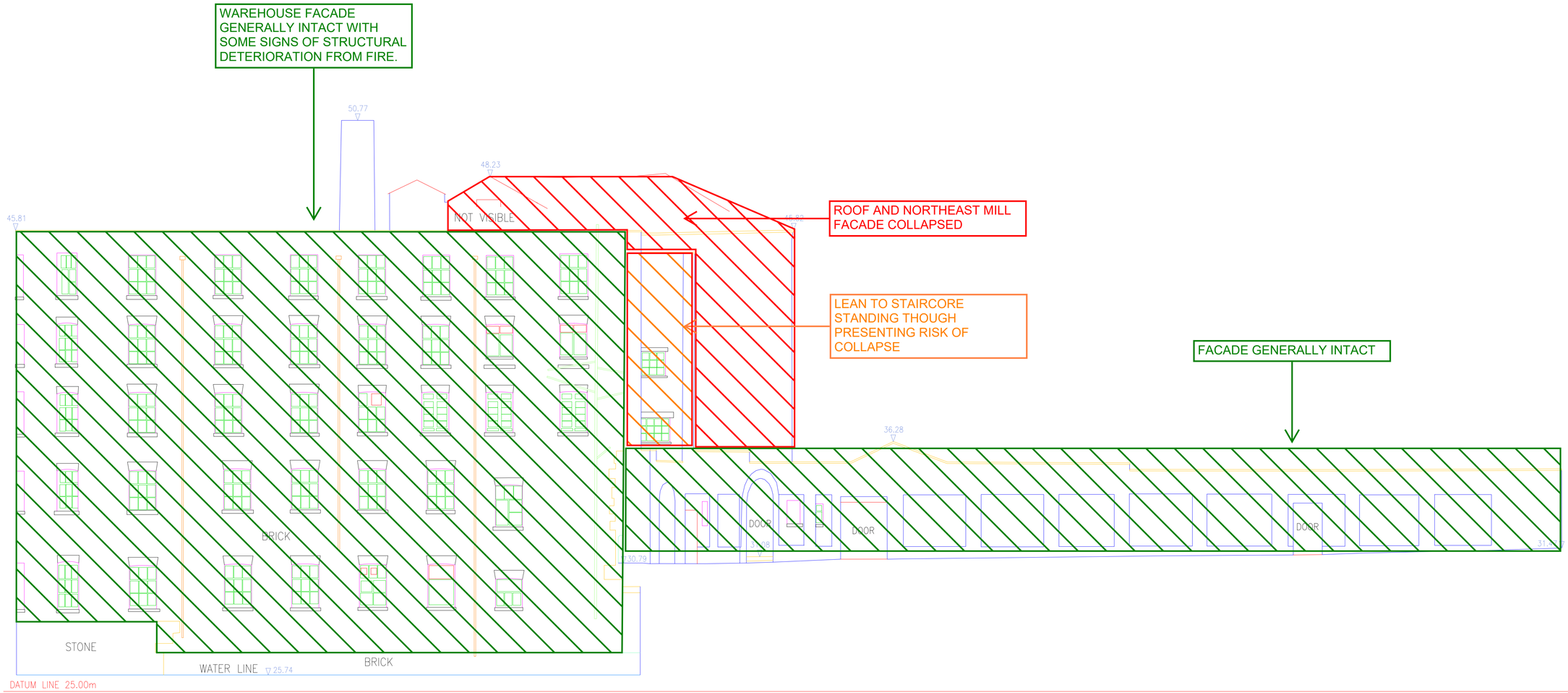
Externally, the River Medlock will present significant challenges to the design and installation, including the safety of operatives, of an external façade retention solution. In this scenario an external façade solution, bridging the River Medlock and founded on third part land could be possible.

This solution may be impractical and present significant further risk to the existing structure. In this instance access agreements would be required with adjacent land owners and negotiations to temporarily erect structures on their land. We understand that no such agreements are in place and the ability to secure such agreements is uncertain. Discussions will be required between the Client and adjacent land owners and may require compensation. This should be reviewed and commented on in detail by specialist demolition contractors and temporary works engineers. Remaining areas of the façade have been, and continue to be identified for demolition. This strategy remains unchanged.

Swanton Consulting, the temporary works specialist engaged under the previous design proposals to provide façade retention design, have provided further input via an "Engineering Assessment of Damaged Building due to Fire"

The conclusion of this report as written by Swanton Consulting (the temporary works specialist) is that “the existing structure cannot be rendered safe, as the remedial works required involve complex engineering works to provide a safe working environment. Such measures would expose operatives to a high risk of injury due to uncontrolled collapse or sudden, unforeseeable structural failure. Therefore, the Hotspur Press building should be classified as a ‘Dangerous Structure’.”

Appendix 1 – Initial Structural Observations



OBSERVATIONS BASED UPON FOOT SURVEY AND RECENT DRONE IMAGERY ONLY. DETAILED OBSERVATIONS NOT POSSIBLE DUE TO ACCESS RESTRICTIONS

DATE	REV	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHKD
02.07.25	P01	PRELIMINARY	DP	JBr

CIVIC ENGINEERS

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PROJECT

HOTSPUR PRESS, MANCHESTER

TITLE

SOUTHERN ELEVATION
OBSERVATIONS POST FIRE

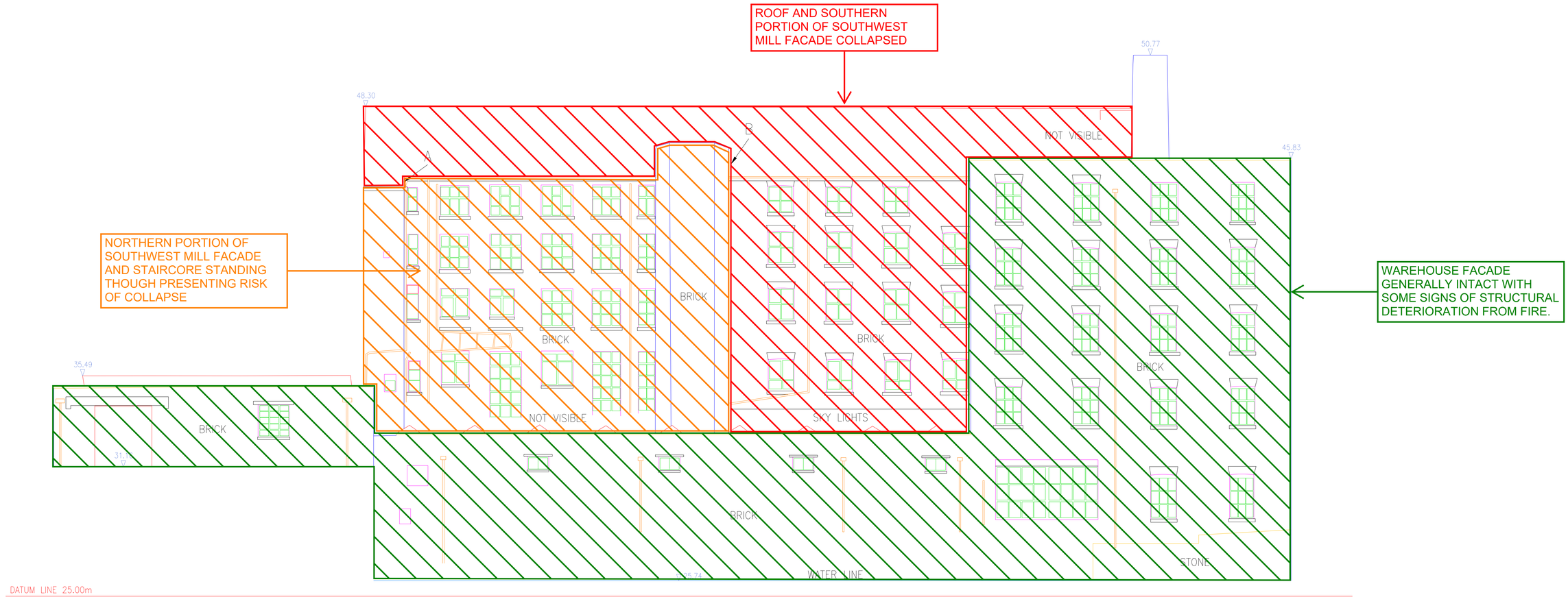
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DRAWING No.: 1006-04-CIV-XX-XX-SK-00001

REV: P01



OBSERVATIONS BASED UPON FOOT SURVEY AND RECENT DRONE IMAGERY ONLY. DETAILED OBSERVATIONS NOT POSSIBLE DUE TO ACCESS RESTRICTIONS

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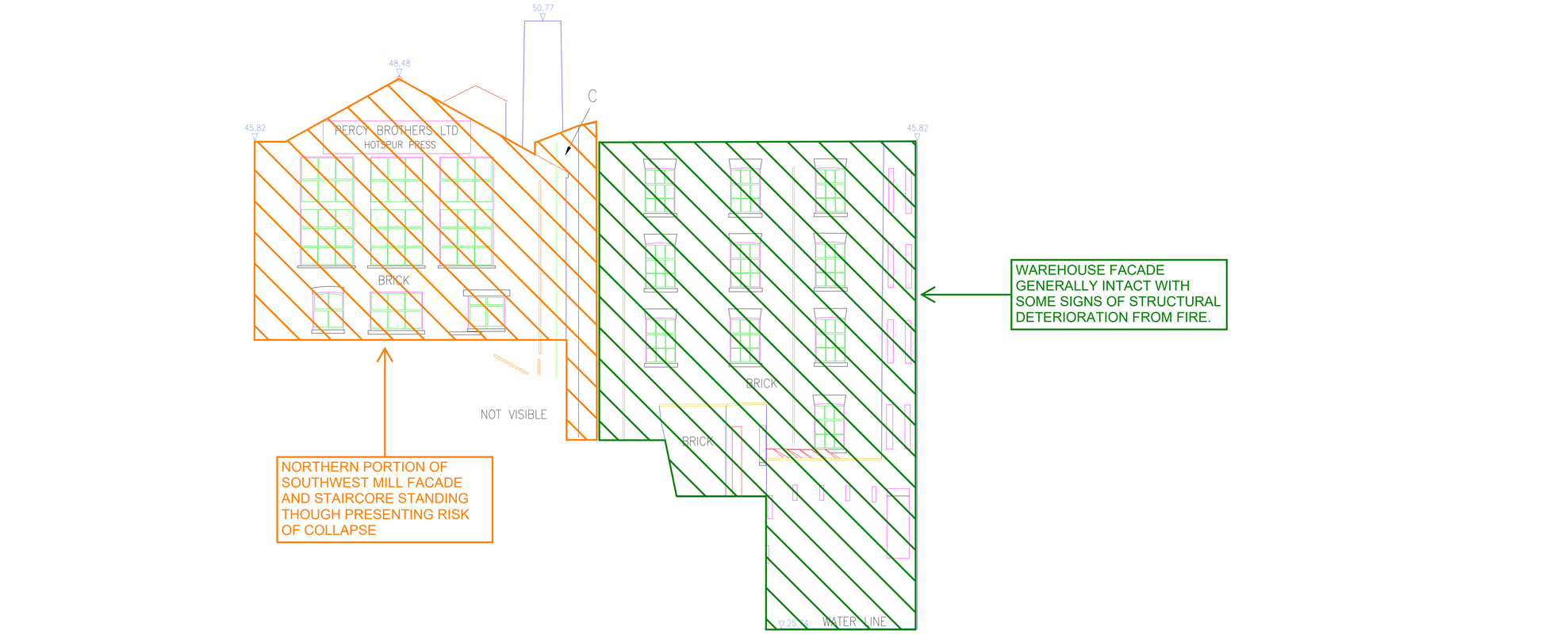
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PROJECT
HOTSPUR PRESS, MANCHESTER

TITLE
SOUTHWESTERN ELEVATION
OBSERVATIONS POST FIRE

DRAWING STATUS				STATUS CODE
PRELIMINARY				
CE PROJECT No.	SCALE @ A1	DATE CREATED	DRAWN	CHECKED
1006-04	NTS	JUL 25	DP	JBr
DRAWING No.				REV
1006-04-CIV-XX-XX-SK-00002				P01



WAREHOUSE FACADE GENERALLY INTACT WITH SOME SIGNS OF STRUCTURAL DETERIORATION FROM FIRE.

NORTHERN PORTION OF SOUTHWEST MILL FACADE AND STAIRCORE STANDING THOUGH PRESENTING RISK OF COLLAPSE

OBSERVATIONS BASED UPON FOOT SURVEY AND RECENT DRONE IMAGERY ONLY. DETAILED OBSERVATIONS NOT POSSIBLE DUE TO ACCESS RESTRICTIONS

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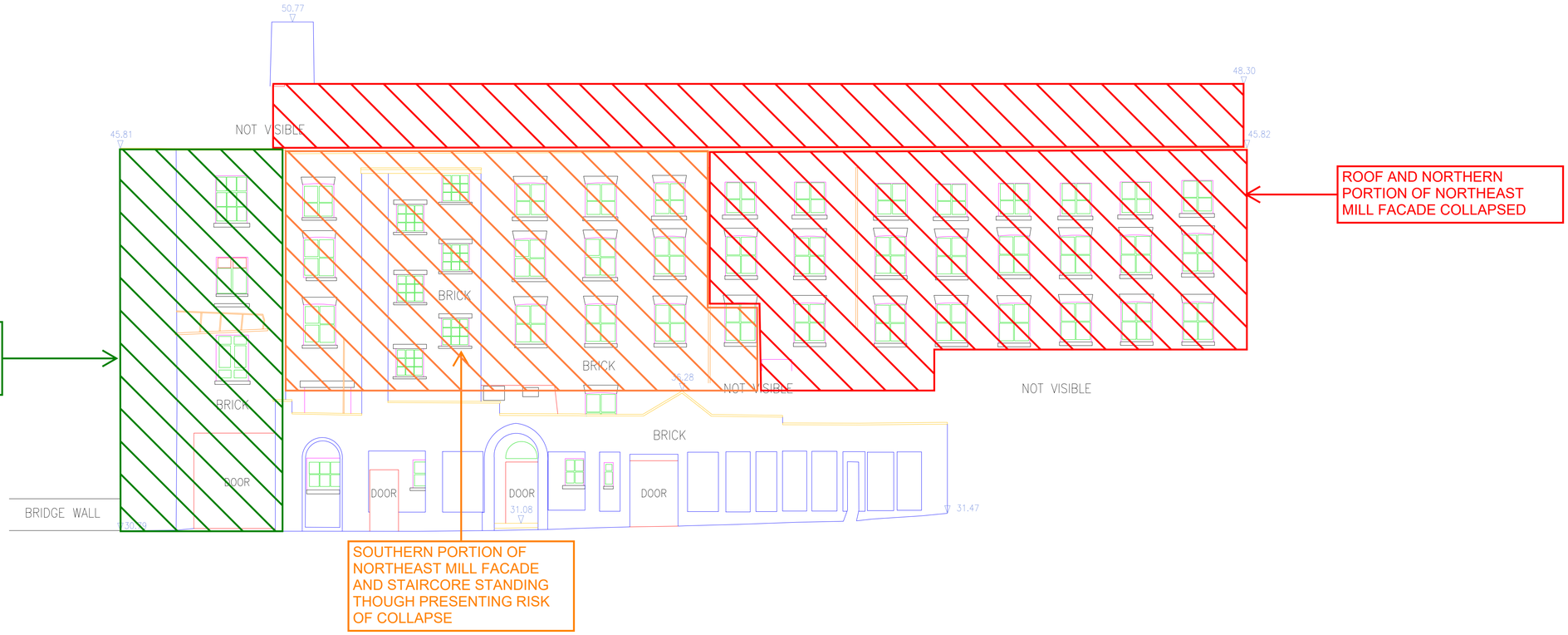
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HOTSPUR PRESS, MANCHESTER

TITLE
SOUTHEASTERN ELEVATION
OBSERVATIONS POST FIRE

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DATE	REV	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHKD
02.07.25	P01	PRELIMINARY	DP	JBr

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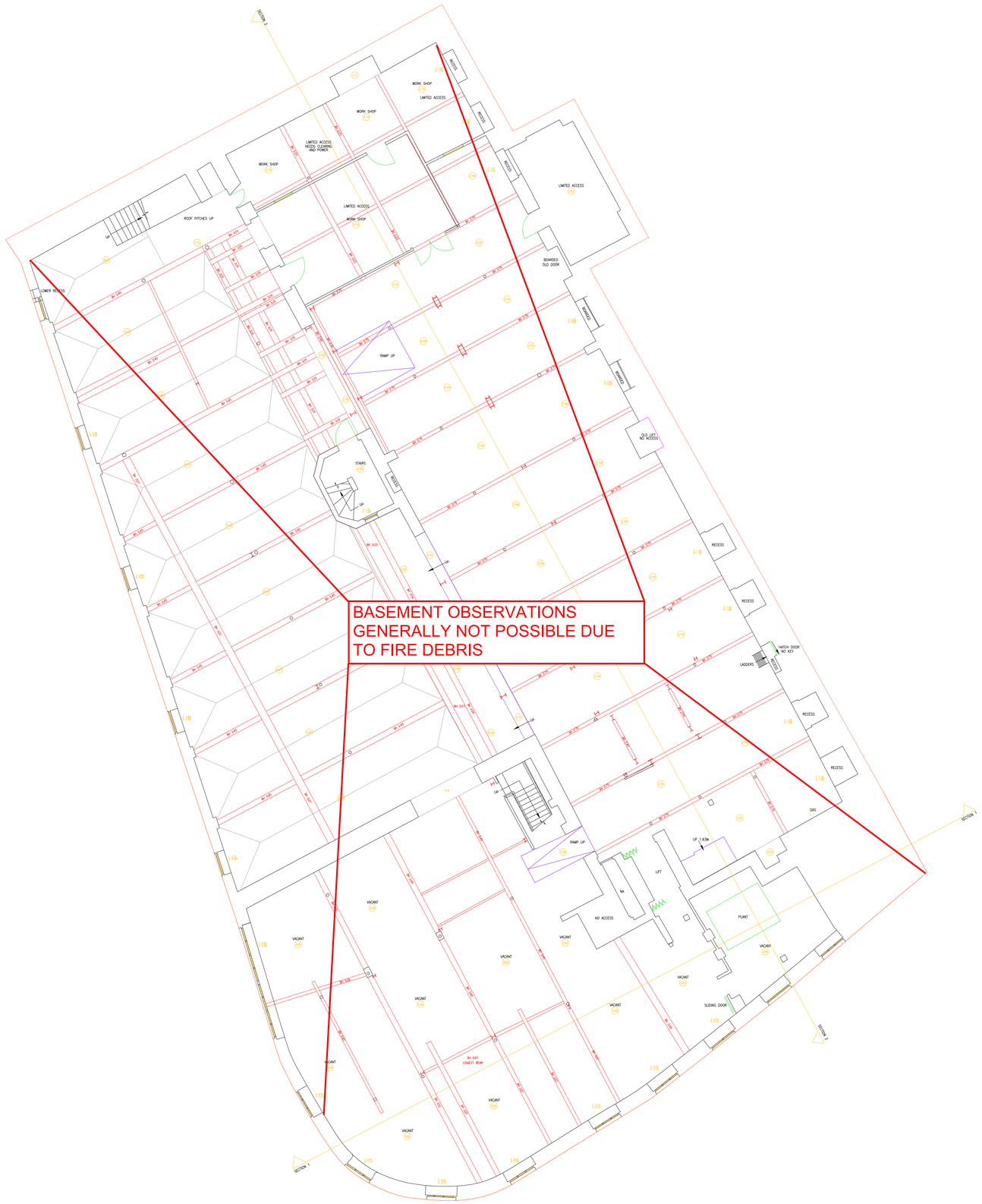
PROJECT
HOTSPUR PRESS, MANCHESTER

TITLE
NORTHEASTERN ELEVATION OBSERVATIONS POST FIRE

DRAWING STATUS	STATUS CODE
PRELIMINARY	

CE PROJECT No.	SCALE @ A1	DATE CREATED	DRAWN	CHECKED
1006-04	NTS	JUL 25	DP	JBr

DRAWING No.	REV
1006-04-CIV-XX-XX-SK-00004	P01



OBSERVATIONS BASED UPON FOOT SURVEY AND RECENT DRONE IMAGERY ONLY. DETAILED OBSERVATIONS NOT POSSIBLE DUE TO ACCESS RESTRICTIONS

DATE	REV	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHKD
02.07.25	P01	PRELIMINARY	DP	JBr

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PROJECT

HOTSPUR PRESS, MANCHESTER

TITLE

BASEMENT GENERAL ARRANGEMENT OBSERVATIONS POST FIRE

DRAWING STATUS				STATUS CODE
PRELIMINARY				
CE PROJECT No.	SCALE @ A1	DATE CREATED	DRAWN	CHECKED
1006-04	NTS	JUL 25	DP	JBr
DRAWING No.				REV
1006-04-CIV-XX-XX-SK-00005				P01



OBSERVATIONS BASED UPON FOOT SURVEY AND RECENT DRONE IMAGERY ONLY. DETAILED OBSERVATIONS NOT POSSIBLE DUE TO ACCESS RESTRICTIONS

DATE	REV	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHKD
02.07.25	P01	PRELIMINARY	DP	JBr

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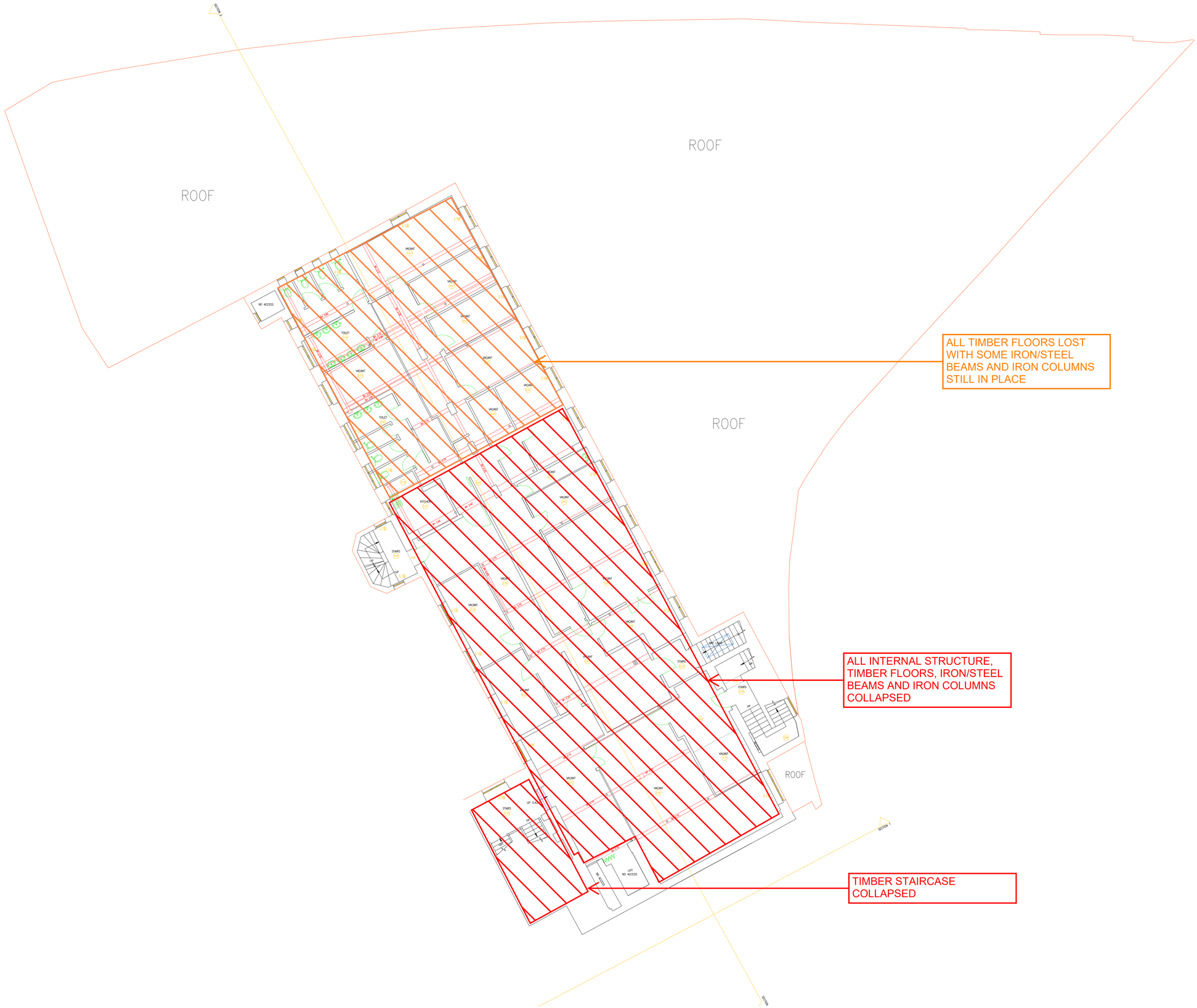
PROJECT
HOTSPUR PRESS, MANCHESTER

TITLE
GROUND FLOOR GENERAL ARRANGEMENT OBSERVATIONS POST FIRE

DRAWING STATUS	STATUS CODE
PRELIMINARY	

CE PROJECT No.	SCALE @ A1	DATE CREATED	DRAWN	CHECKED
1006-04	NTS	JUL 25	DP	JBr

DRAWING No.	REV
1006-04-CIV-XX-XX-SK-00006	P01



OBSERVATIONS BASED UPON FOOT SURVEY AND RECENT DRONE IMAGERY ONLY. DETAILED OBSERVATIONS NOT POSSIBLE DUE TO ACCESS RESTRICTIONS

DATE	REV	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHKD
02.07.25	P01	PRELIMINARY	DP	JBr

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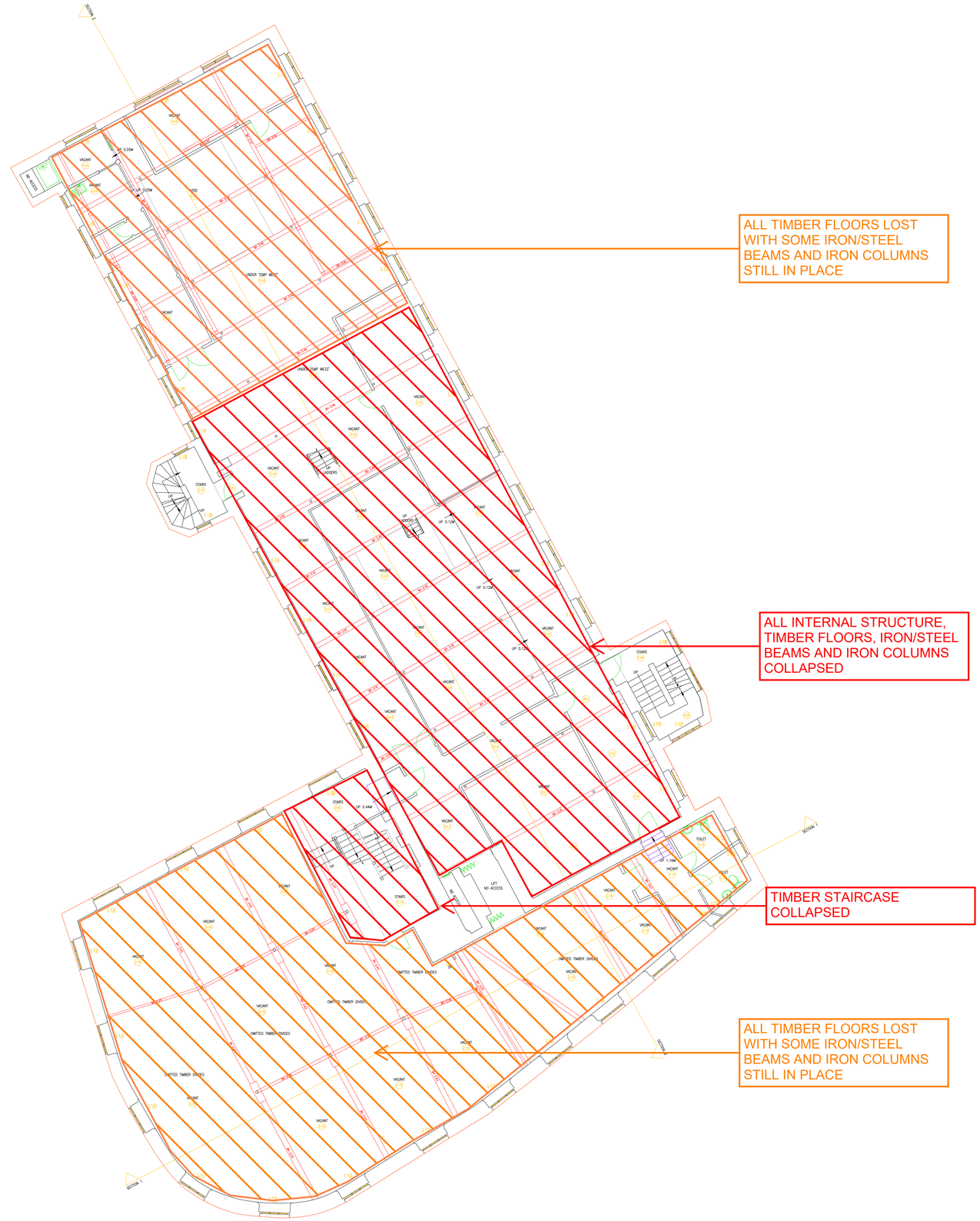
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HOTSPUR PRESS, MANCHESTER

TITLE

UPPER GROUND FLOOR GENERAL ARRANGEMENT OBSERVATIONS POST FIRE

DRAWING STATUS				STATUS CODE
PRELIMINARY				
CE PROJECT No.	SCALE @ A1	DATE CREATED	DRAWN	CHECKED
1006-04	NTS	JUL 25	DP	JBr
DRAWING No.				REV
1006-04-CIV-XX-XX-SK-00007				P01



ALL TIMBER FLOORS LOST WITH SOME IRON/STEEL BEAMS AND IRON COLUMNS STILL IN PLACE

ALL INTERNAL STRUCTURE, TIMBER FLOORS, IRON/STEEL BEAMS AND IRON COLUMNS COLLAPSED

TIMBER STAIRCASE COLLAPSED

ALL TIMBER FLOORS LOST WITH SOME IRON/STEEL BEAMS AND IRON COLUMNS STILL IN PLACE

OBSERVATIONS BASED UPON FOOT SURVEY AND RECENT DRONE IMAGERY ONLY. DETAILED OBSERVATIONS NOT POSSIBLE DUE TO ACCESS RESTRICTIONS

DATE	REV	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHKD
02.07.25	P01	PRELIMINARY	DP	JBr

CIVIC ENGINEERS

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PROJECT

HOTSPUR PRESS, MANCHESTER

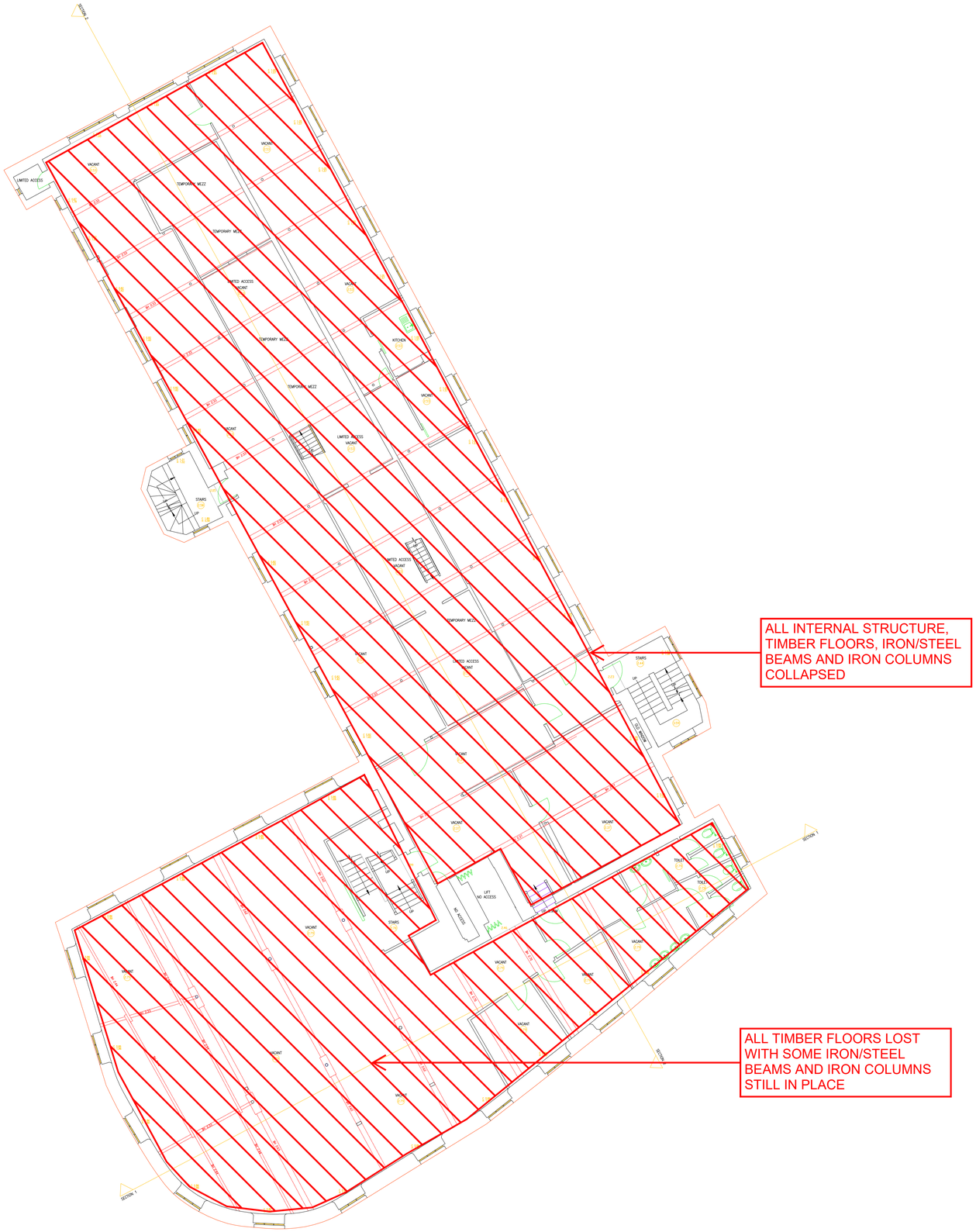
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FIRST FLOOR GENERAL ARRANGEMENT OBSERVATIONS POST FIRE

DRAWING STATUS	STATUS CODE
PRELIMINARY	

CE PROJECT No.	SCALE @ A1	DATE CREATED	DRAWN	CHECKED
1006-04	NTS	JUL 25	DP	JBr

DRAWING No.	REV
1006-04-CIV-XX-XX-SK-00008	P01



OBSERVATIONS BASED UPON FOOT SURVEY AND RECENT DRONE IMAGERY ONLY. DETAILED OBSERVATIONS NOT POSSIBLE DUE TO ACCESS RESTRICTIONS

DATE	REV	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHKD
02.07.25	P01	PRELIMINARY	DP	JBr

CIVIC ENGINEERS

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PROJECT

HOTSPUR PRESS, MANCHESTER

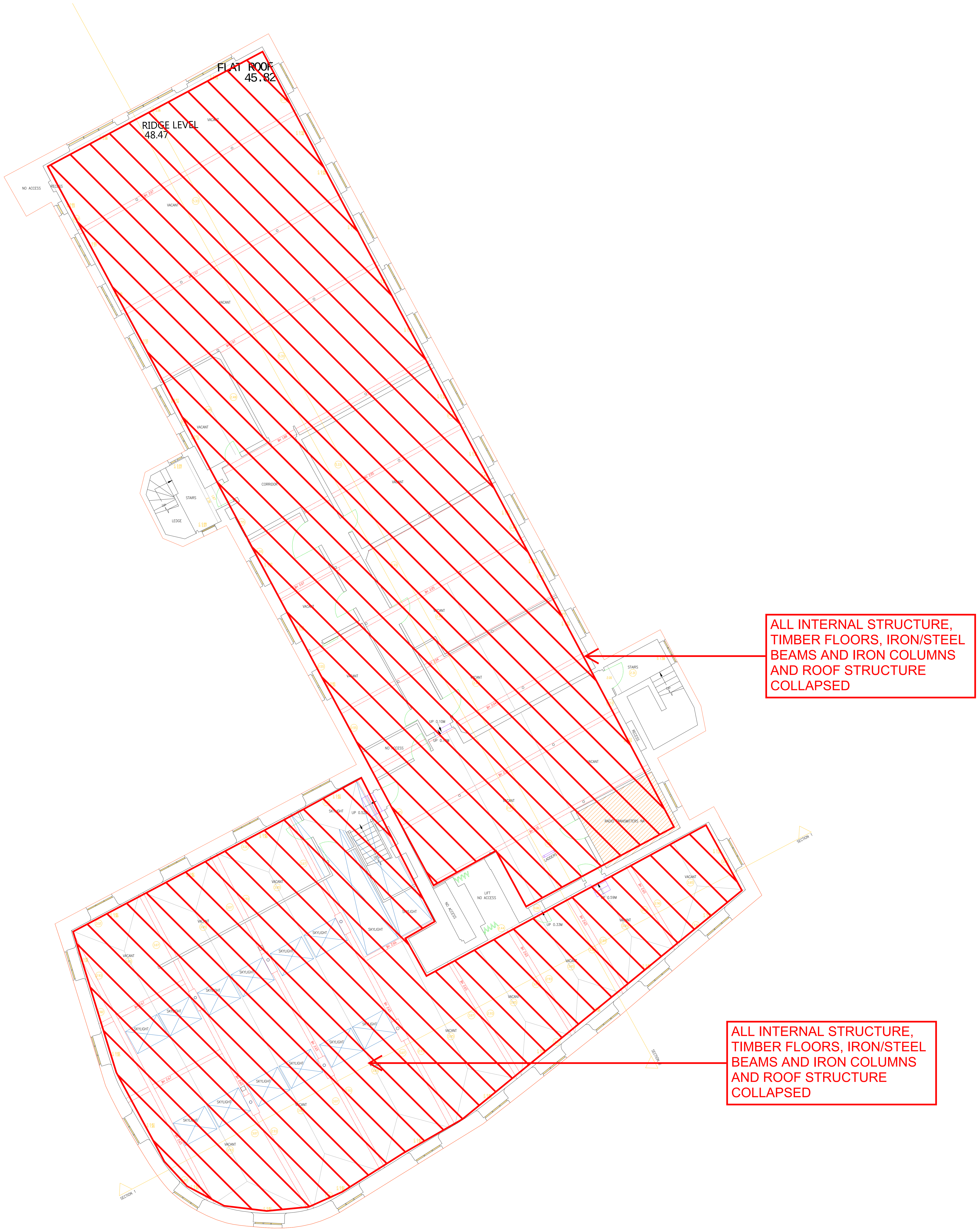
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SECOND FLOOR GENERAL ARRANGEMENT OBSERVATIONS POST FIRE

DRAWING STATUS	STATUS CODE
PRELIMINARY	

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1006-04	NTS	JUL 25	DP	JBr

DRAWING No	REV
1006-04-CIV-XX-XX-SK-00009	P01



OBSERVATIONS BASED UPON FOOT SURVEY AND RECENT DRONE IMAGERY ONLY. DETAILED OBSERVATIONS NOT POSSIBLE DUE TO ACCESS RESTRICTIONS

DATE	REV	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHKD
02.07.25	P01	PRELIMINARY	DP	JBr

CIVIC ENGINEERS

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PROJECT
HOTSPUR PRESS, MANCHESTER

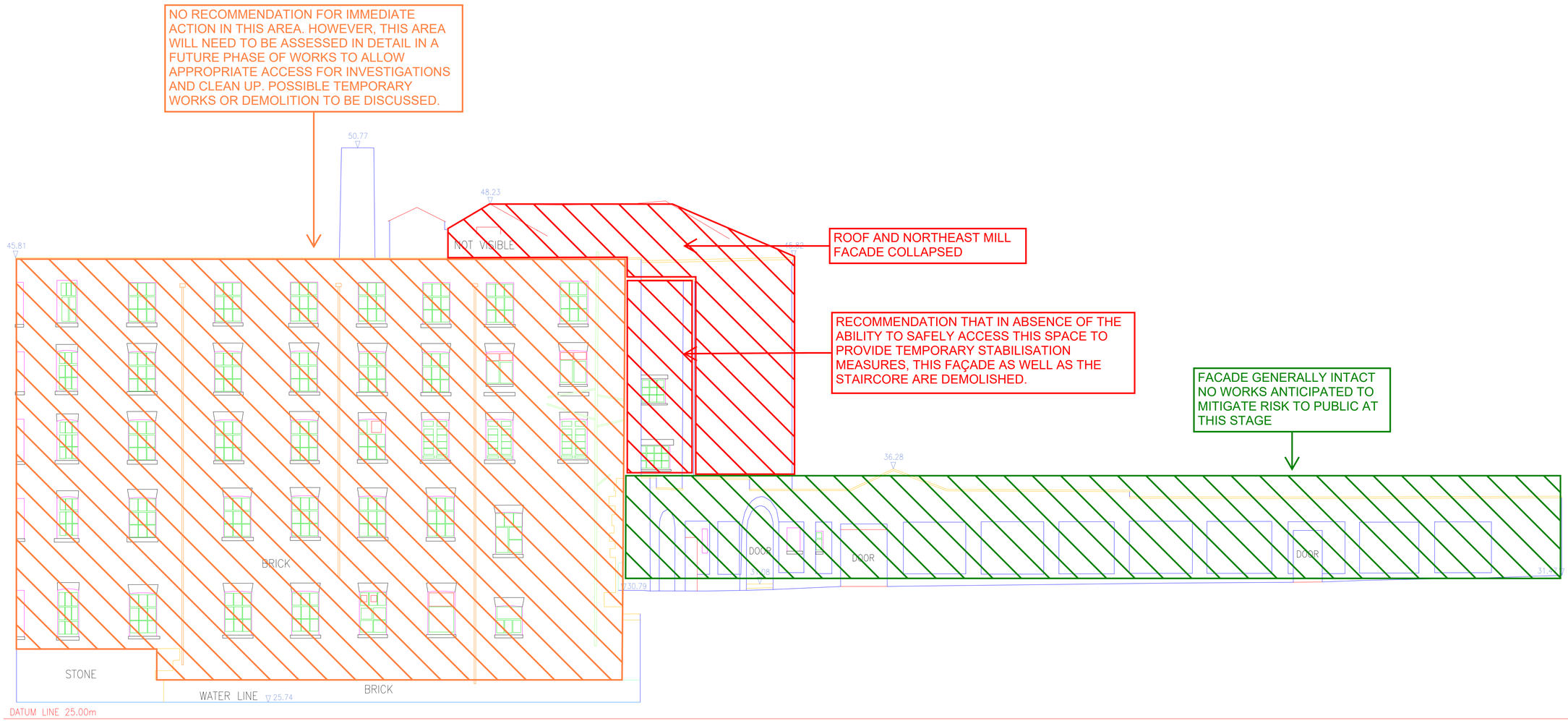
TITLE
THIRD FLOOR AND ROOF GENERAL ARRANGEMENT OBSERVATIONS POST FIRE

DRAWING STATUS: PRELIMINARY
STATUS CODE:

CE PROJECT No.	SCALE @ A1	DATE CREATED	DRAWN	CHECKED
1006-04	NTS	JUL 25	DP	JBr

DRAWING No.: 1006-04-CIV-XX-XX-SK-00010
REV: P01

Appendix 2 – Initial Structural Recommendations



RECOMMENDATIONS ARE BASED UPON OBSERVATIONS DOCUMENTED IN DETAILS WITHIN CIVIC ENGINEERS STRUCTURAL APPRAISALREF 1006-04
RECOMMENDATIONS ARE INTENDED TO BE AN INITIAL PHASE OF WORKS TO MITIGATE RISK TO THE PUBLIC GIVEN THE BUILDING PROXIMITY TO PUBLIC FOOTPATHS AND HIGHWAYS.
IT IS LIKELY THAT FURTHER WORKS IN THE FORM OF ADDITIONAL DEMOLITION OR TEMPORARY WORKS WILL BE REQUIRED TO ALLOW ACCESS INTO THE BUILDING TO FACILITATE FIRE BRIGADE AND POLICE INVESTIGATIONS AND CLEAN UP OPERATIONS.

DATE	REV	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHKD
02.07.25	P01	PRELIMINARY	DP	JBr

CIVIC ENGINEERS
civicengineers.com

PROJECT
HOTSPUR PRESS, MANCHESTER

TITLE
SOUTHERN ELEVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

DRAWING STATUS	STATUS CODE
PRELIMINARY	

CE PROJECT No.	SCALE @ A1	DATE CREATED	DRAWN	CHECKED
1006-04	NTS	JUL 25	DP	JBr

DRAWING No.
1006-04-CIV-XX-XX-SK-00011
REV
P01

ROOF AND SOUTHERN PORTION OF SOUTHWEST MILL FACADE COLLAPSED

RECOMMENDATION THAT IN ABSENCE OF THE ABILITY TO SAFELY ACCESS THIS SPACE TO PROVIDE TEMPORARY STABILISATION MEASURES THAT THIS FAÇADE IS DEMOLISHED TO LEVEL 01.

THIS AREA WILL NEED TO BE ASSESSED IN DETAIL IN A FUTURE PHASE OF WORKS TO ALLOW APPROPRIATE ACCESS FOR INVESTIGATIONS AND CLEAN UP. POSSIBLE TEMPORARY WORKS OR DEMOLITION TO BE DISCUSSED.

NO RECOMMENDATION FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION IN THIS AREA. HOWEVER, THIS AREA WILL NEED TO BE ASSESSED IN DETAIL IN A FUTURE PHASE OF WORKS TO ALLOW APPROPRIATE ACCESS FOR INVESTIGATIONS AND CLEAN UP. POSSIBLE TEMPORARY WORKS OR DEMOLITION TO BE DISCUSSED.



FACADE GENERALLY INTACT NO WORKS ANTICIPATED TO MITIGATE RISK TO PUBLIC AT THIS STAGE

RECOMMENDATIONS ARE BASED UPON OBSERVATIONS DOCUMENTED IN DETAILS WITHIN CIVIC ENGINEERS STRUCTURAL APPRAISALREF 1006-04
RECOMMENDATIONS ARE INTENDED TO BE AN INITIAL PHASE OF WORKS TO MITIGATE RISK TO THE PUBLIC GIVEN THE BUILDING PROXIMITY TO PUBLIC FOOTPATHS AND HIGHWAYS.
IT IS LIKELY THAT FURTHER WORKS IN THE FORM OF ADDITIONAL DEMOLITION OR TEMPORARY WORKS WILL BE REQUIRED TO ALLOW ACCESS INTO THE BUILDING TO FACILITATE FIRE BRIGADE AND POLICE INVESTIGATIONS AND CLEAN UP OPERATIONS.

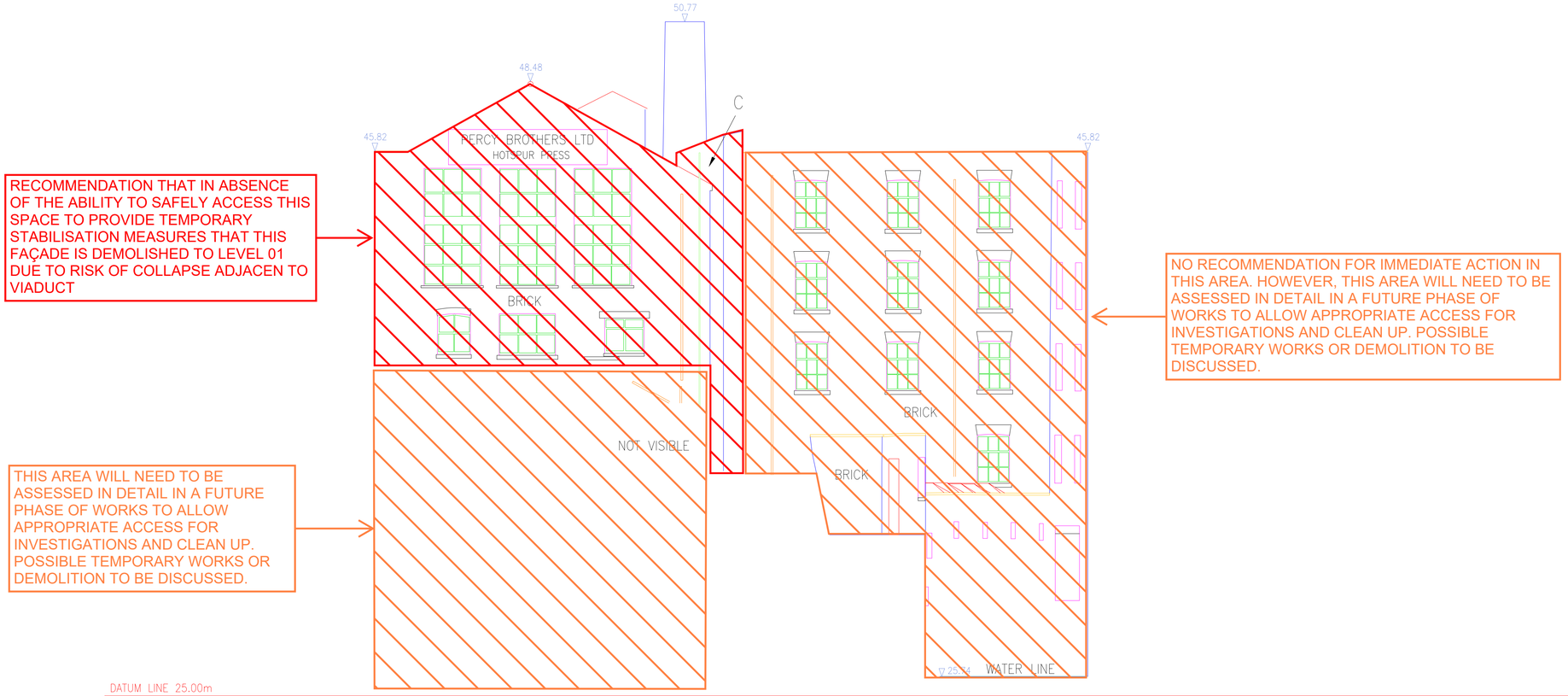
DATE	REV	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHKD
02.07.25	P01	PRELIMINARY	DP	JBr

CIVIC ENGINEERS
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PROJECT
HOTSPUR PRESS, MANCHESTER

TITLE
SOUTHWESTERN ELEVATION OBSERVATIONS POST FIRE

DRAWING STATUS				STATUS CODE
PRELIMINARY				
CE PROJECT No.	SCALE @ A1	DATE CREATED	DRAWN	CHECKED
1006-04	NTS	JUL 25	DP	JBr
DRAWING No.				REV
1006-04-CIV-XX-XX-SK-00012				P01



RECOMMENDATION THAT IN ABSENCE OF THE ABILITY TO SAFELY ACCESS THIS SPACE TO PROVIDE TEMPORARY STABILISATION MEASURES THAT THIS FAÇADE IS DEMOLISHED TO LEVEL 01 DUE TO RISK OF COLLAPSE ADJACEN TO VIADUCT

NO RECOMMENDATION FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION IN THIS AREA. HOWEVER, THIS AREA WILL NEED TO BE ASSESSED IN DETAIL IN A FUTURE PHASE OF WORKS TO ALLOW APPROPRIATE ACCESS FOR INVESTIGATIONS AND CLEAN UP. POSSIBLE TEMPORARY WORKS OR DEMOLITION TO BE DISCUSSED.

THIS AREA WILL NEED TO BE ASSESSED IN DETAIL IN A FUTURE PHASE OF WORKS TO ALLOW APPROPRIATE ACCESS FOR INVESTIGATIONS AND CLEAN UP. POSSIBLE TEMPORARY WORKS OR DEMOLITION TO BE DISCUSSED.

RECOMMENDATIONS ARE BASED UPON OBSERVATIONS DOCUMENTED IN DETAILS WITHIN CIVIC ENGINEERS STRUCTURAL APPRAISALREF 1006-04.
RECOMMENDATIONS ARE INTENDED TO BE AN INITIAL PHASE OF WORKS TO MITIGATE RISK TO THE PUBLIC GIVEN THE BUILDING PROXIMITY TO PUBLIC FOOTPATHS AND HIGHWAYS.
IT IS LIKELY THAT FURTHER WORKS IN THE FORM OF ADDITIONAL DEMOLITION OR TEMPORARY WORKS WILL BE REQUIRED TO ALLOW ACCESS INTO THE BUILDING TO FACILITATE FIRE BRIGADE AND POLICE INVESTIGATIONS AND CLEAN UP OPERATIONS.

DATE	REV	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHKD
02.07.25	P01	PRELIMINARY	DP	JBr

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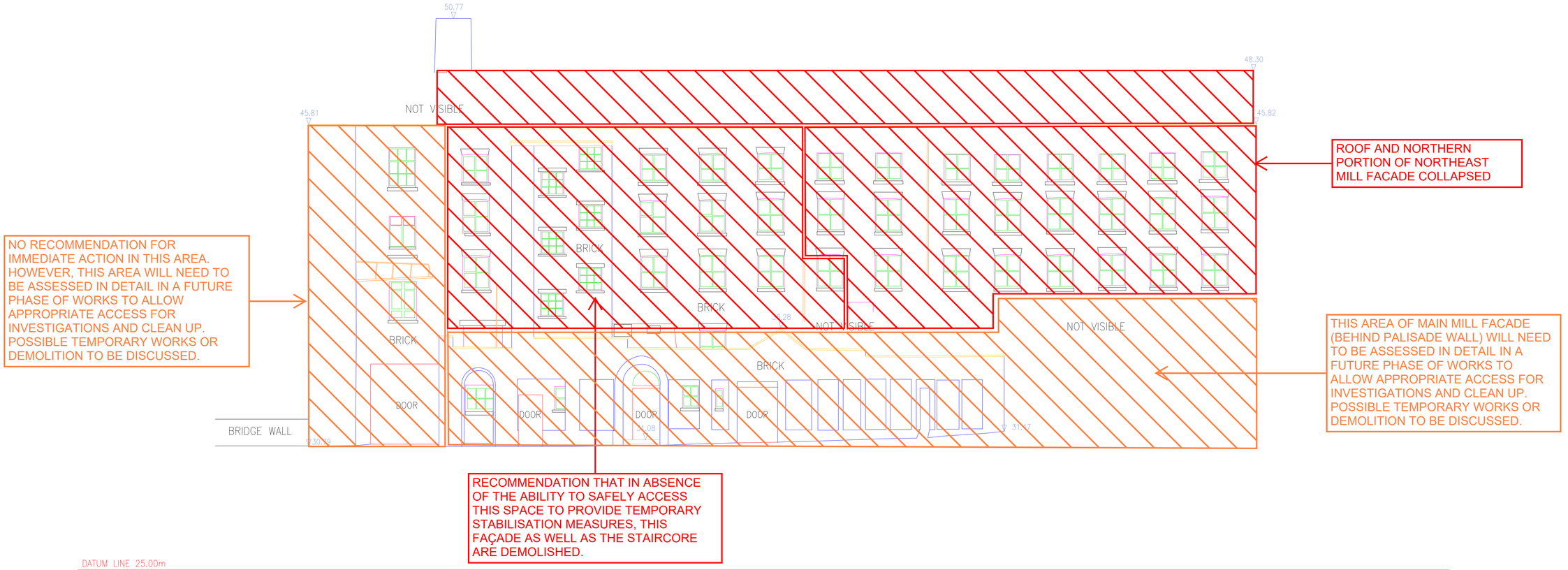
PROJECT
HOTSPUR PRESS, MANCHESTER

TITLE
SOUTHEASTERN ELEVATION OBSERVATIONS POST FIRE

DRAWING STATUS	STATUS CODE
PRELIMINARY	

CE PROJECT No.	SCALE @ A1	DATE CREATED	DRAWN	CHECKED
1006-04	NTS	JUL 25	DP	JBr

DRAWING No.	REV
1006-04-CIV-XX-XX-SK-00013	P01



NO RECOMMENDATION FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION IN THIS AREA. HOWEVER, THIS AREA WILL NEED TO BE ASSESSED IN DETAIL IN A FUTURE PHASE OF WORKS TO ALLOW APPROPRIATE ACCESS FOR INVESTIGATIONS AND CLEAN UP. POSSIBLE TEMPORARY WORKS OR DEMOLITION TO BE DISCUSSED.

ROOF AND NORTHERN PORTION OF NORTHEAST MILL FACADE COLLAPSED

THIS AREA OF MAIN MILL FACADE (BEHIND PALISADE WALL) WILL NEED TO BE ASSESSED IN DETAIL IN A FUTURE PHASE OF WORKS TO ALLOW APPROPRIATE ACCESS FOR INVESTIGATIONS AND CLEAN UP. POSSIBLE TEMPORARY WORKS OR DEMOLITION TO BE DISCUSSED.

RECOMMENDATION THAT IN ABSENCE OF THE ABILITY TO SAFELY ACCESS THIS SPACE TO PROVIDE TEMPORARY STABILISATION MEASURES, THIS FAÇADE AS WELL AS THE STAIRCORE ARE DEMOLISHED.

RECOMMENDATIONS ARE BASED UPON OBSERVATIONS DOCUMENTED IN DETAILS WITHIN CIVIC ENGINEERS STRUCTURAL APPRAISALREF 1006-04.
RECOMMENDATIONS ARE INTENDED TO BE AN INITIAL PHASE OF WORKS TO MITIGATE RISK TO THE PUBLIC GIVEN THE BUILDING PROXIMITY TO PUBLIC FOOTPATHS AND HIGHWAYS.
IT IS LIKELY THAT FURTHER WORKS IN THE FORM OF ADDITIONAL DEMOLITION OR TEMPORARY WORKS WILL BE REQUIRED TO ALLOW ACCESS INTO THE BUILDING TO FACILITATE FIRE BRIGADE AND POLICE INVESTIGATIONS AND CLEAN UP OPERATIONS.

DATE	REV	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHKD
02.07.25	P01	PRELIMINARY	DP	JBr

CIVIC ENGINEERS
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PROJECT
HOTSPUR PRESS, MANCHESTER

TITLE
NORTHEASTERN ELEVATION OBSERVATIONS POST FIRE

DRAWING STATUS	STATUS CODE
PRELIMINARY	

CE PROJECT No.	SCALE @ A1	DATE CREATED	DRAWN	CHECKED
1006-04	NTS	JUL 25	DP	JBr

DRAWING No.	REV
1006-04-CIV-XX-XX-SK-00014	P01

Appendix 3 – Manchester City Council Building Control Section 78 Notice

MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Building Control

Telephone: 07810 557 519

anthony.parkerroberts
@manchester.gov.uk

PO Box 532 Town Hall
Manchester M60 2LA

The Company Secretary
Elmloch Limited
Universal Square, Building 2
Devonshire Street North
Manchester
M12 6JH

Date: 1st July 2025

Our Ref: EM/25/00412

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Building Act 1984 (as amended): Section 78

Hotspur House, Gloucester Street, Manchester, M1 5QR

Important – This Document Affects Your Property

Please be advised that on 24th June 2025 at 04:55 the City Council received a report from Greater Manchester Fire Service (GMFRS) that the above property was in a dangerous condition.

HM Land Registry records that Elmloch Ltd. (with company directors Carol Allen, Benjamin Graham Eades and Nils Barton Wager) are the legal owner of the property and are responsible for its condition. Mr Paul Lake of MCR Property Group Limited (sharing the same business address, and having two of the same company directors – Carol Allen and Benjamin Eades), has declared that his company is acting as your agent for the property owner in this matter.

An inspection of the property revealed that the building had suffered major fire damage, with the loss of almost all sections of roof, internal floors, and sections of external walls. The remaining elements of the building can be broadly categorised as being either:

- Structurally stable and not in immediate danger of collapse (due to a combination of their thickness, their shape, or their being buttressed by internal walls, corner returns, or curved facades).
- Structurally unstable walls which **do not** pose any threat to public safety (free-standing, slender panels of masonry, containing large window openings and distorted arched brickwork lintels, but which are sufficiently remote or separated from any public areas that do not constitute a danger).
- Structurally unstable sections of external walls which may, due to their proximity to areas of public access, **do** pose a threat to public safety.

Under the provisions of Section 78 of the Building Act 1984, you are required to take appropriate and immediate steps to remove any dangerous condition which poses a threat to public safety. The Act also enables the City Council, in the event that you are unable to carry out these necessary emergency works, to have them carried out in default, and to recover the cost incurred from the building owner.

Further to a site meeting on 30th June 2025 attended by interested parties, a further assessment was carried out and the initial necessary emergency works required can be summarised as:

1. The removal of an unstable panel of masonry fronting Gloucester Street (as identified in the images, below).
2. The removal unstable panels of masonry above widow openings fronting Gloucester Street (as identified in the images, below).
3. The securing of all points of entry to the building (and the site generally) on Gloucester Street.
4. Additional demolition works required, as agreed during a site meeting on the afternoon of Tuesday 24th June (as identified in the images, below).
5. The provision of appropriate protective/Heras fencing around the parts of the facade where building operations or demolition works will be carried out, to prevent unauthorised or inadvertent public access to the site.

The Building Act simply imposes a duty on the owner of a dangerous building to make their property safe; irrespective of the cause or responsibility for the conditions that gave rise to the danger. You may wish to enquire whether you are covered for a problem of this nature with your insurance company.

If you wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above telephone number.

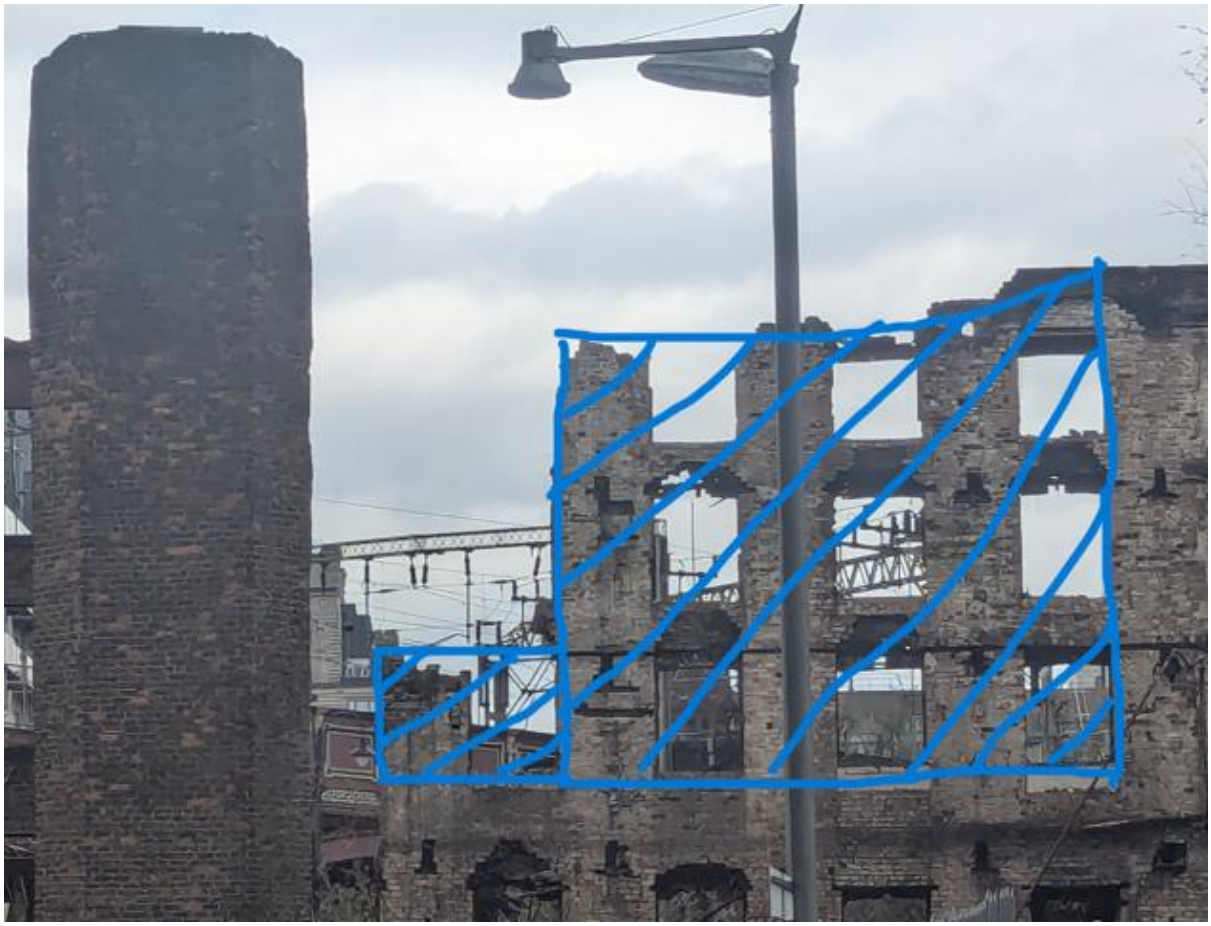
Yours faithfully

Parker-Roberts

Anthony Parker-Roberts
Building Control Team Leader
Class 3 & 4 Registered Building Inspector



30-06-25



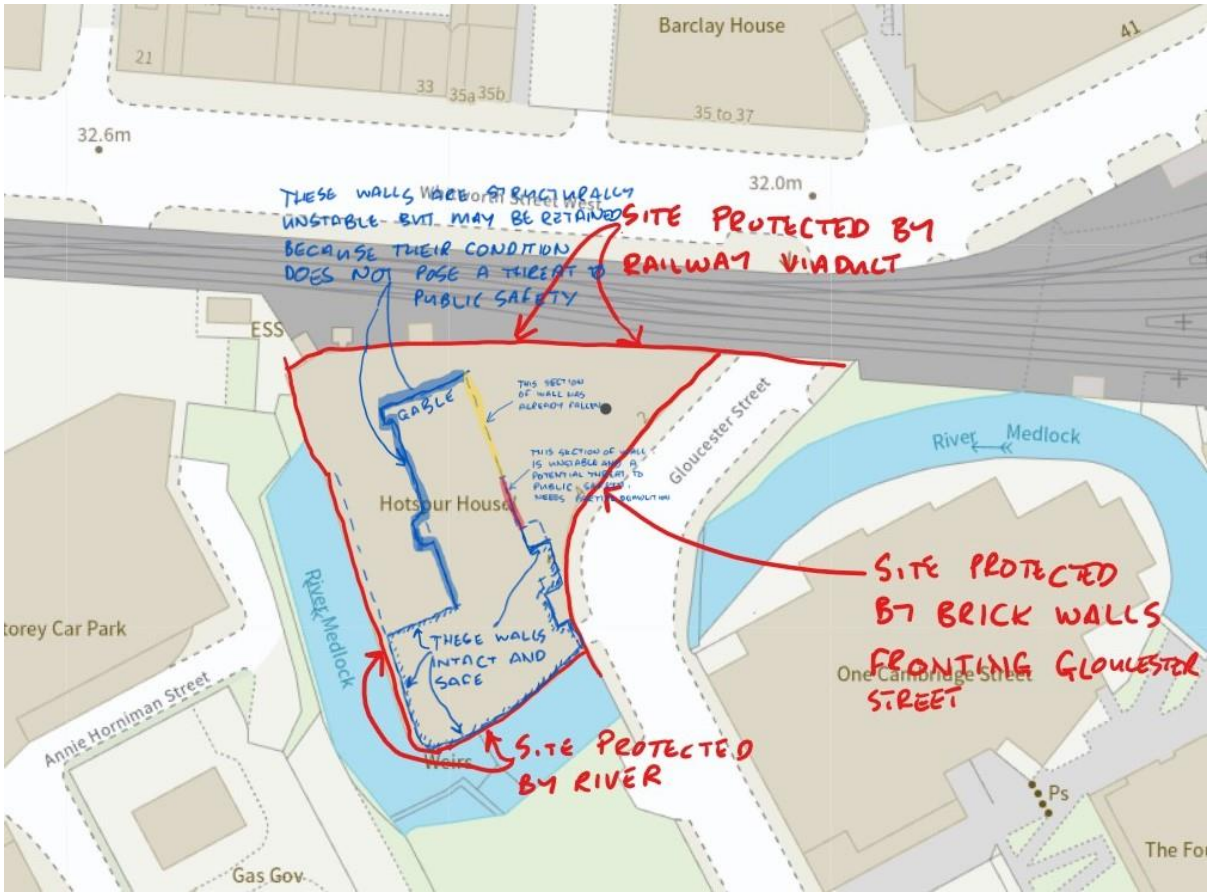
30/06/25



30/06/25



30/06/25



Site Plan

Additional demolition works required, as agreed during site meeting on the afternoon of Tuesday 24th June:



MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Building Control

Telephone: 07810 557 519

anthony.parkerroberts
@manchester.gov.uk

PO Box 532 Town Hall
Manchester M60 2LA

The Company Secretary
Elmloch Limited
Universal Square, Building 2
Devonshire Street North
Manchester
M12 6JH

Date: 14th July 2025

Our Ref: EM/25/00412

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Building Act 1984 (as amended): Section 78

Hotspur House, Gloucester Street, Manchester, M1 5QR

Important – This Document Affects Your Property

Please be advised that on 24th June 2025 at 04:55 the City Council received a report from Greater Manchester Fire Service (GMFRS) that the above property was in a dangerous condition.

HM Land Registry records that Elmloch Ltd. (with company directors Carol Allen, Benjamin Graham Eades and Nils Barton Wager) are the legal owner of the property and are responsible for its condition. Mr Paul Lake of MCR Property Group Limited (sharing the same business address, and having two of the same company directors – Carol Allen and Benjamin Eades), has declared that his company is acting as your agent for the property owner in this matter.

Under the provisions of Section 78 of the Building Act 1984, you are required to take appropriate and immediate steps to remove any dangerous condition which poses a threat to public safety. The Act also enables the City Council, in the event that you are unable to carry out these necessary emergency works, to have them carried out in default, and to recover the cost incurred from the building owner.

Further to a site meeting on 14th July 2025 attended by interested parties, a further assessment was carried out on completion of the initial agreed necessary emergency demolition works and it was established that further demolition works are required and can be summarised as:

1. The removal of unstable masonry and stair core structure fronting Gloucester Street (as identified in the images, below).
2. The removal unsupported masonry tower (as identified in the images, below).
3. The securing of all points of entry to the building (and the site generally) on Gloucester Street.

The Building Act simply imposes a duty on the owner of a dangerous building to make their property safe; irrespective of the cause or responsibility for the conditions that gave rise to the danger.

You may wish to enquire whether you are covered for a problem of this nature with your insurance company.

If you wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above telephone number.

Yours faithfully

Anthony Parker-Roberts
Building Control Team Leader
Class 3 & 4 Registered Building Inspector

Images of additional required demolition works



The removal of unstable masonry and stair core structure fronting Gloucester Street

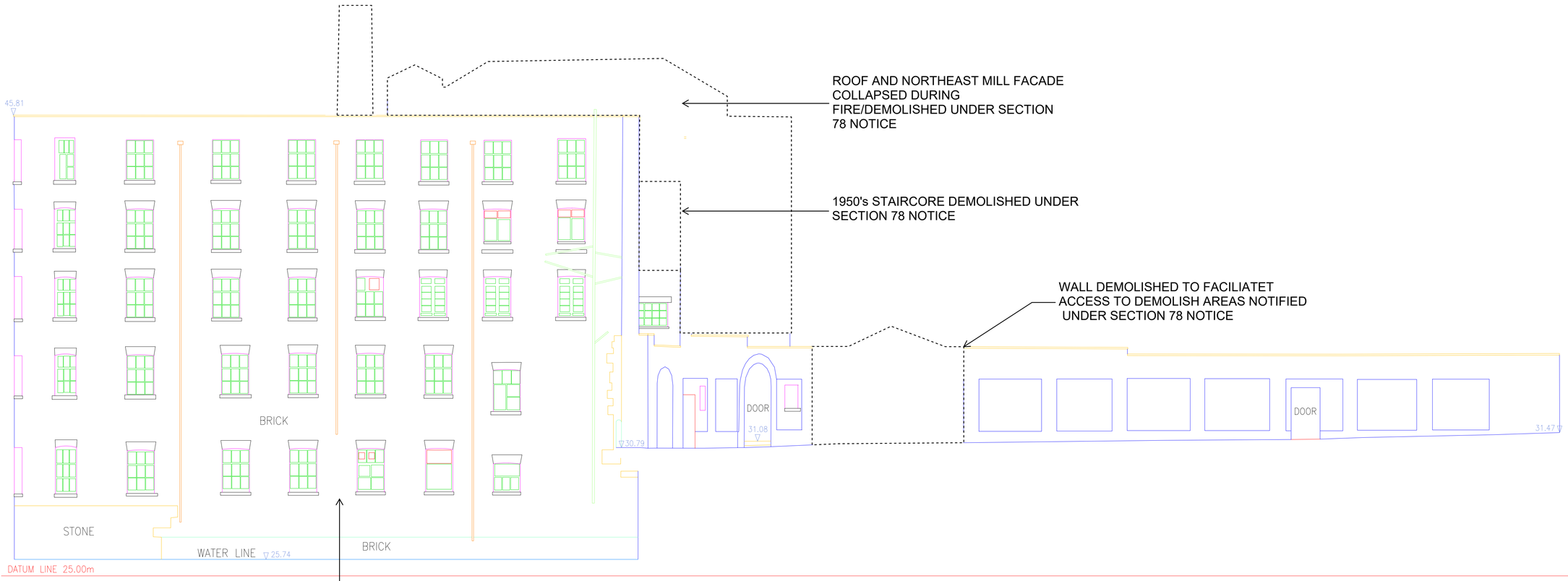


The removal of unstable masonry and stair core structure fronting Gloucester Street and The removal unsupported masonry tower



The removal unsupported masonry tower

Appendix 4 – Current Structural Arrangement



DRAFT

ALL AREAS OF OBSERVATIONS ARE APPROXIMATE AND BASED UPON VISUAL INSPECTION. NO DETAILED MEASURED SURVEY HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT TO CONFIRM EXTENT OF DEMOLITION WORKS.

DATE	REV	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHKD
01.12.25	P01	PRELIMINARY	DP	JBr

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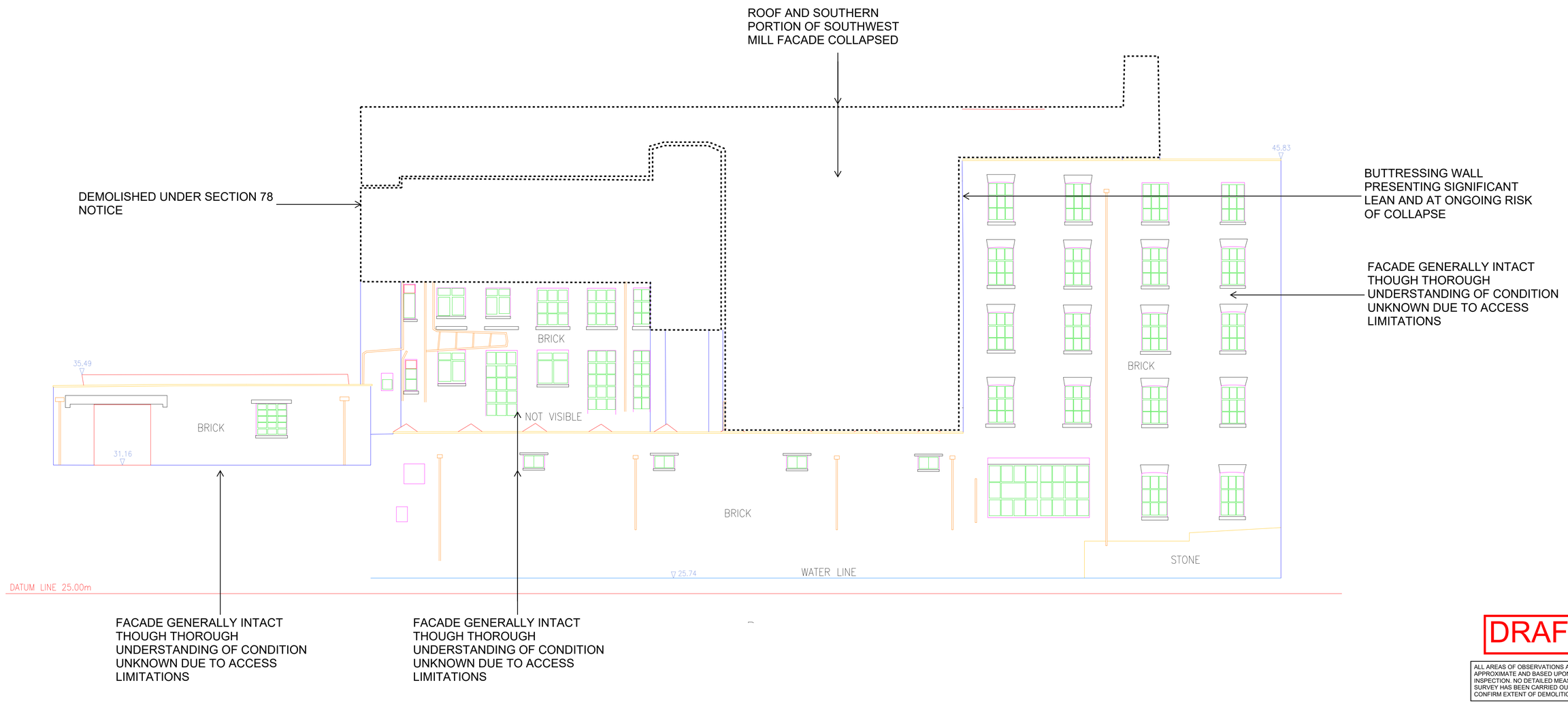
PROJECT
HOTSPUR PRESS, MANCHESTER

TITLE
SOUTHERN ELEVATION LAYOUT

DRAWING STATUS	STATUS CODE
PRELIMINARY	

CE PROJECT No.	SCALE @ A1	DATE CREATED	DRAWN	CHECKED
1006-01	NTS	DEC 25	DP	JBr

DRAWING No. 1006-04-CIV-XX-XX-SK-00015 REV P01



DRAFT

ALL AREAS OF OBSERVATIONS ARE APPROXIMATE AND BASED UPON VISUAL INSPECTION. NO DETAILED MEASURED SURVEY HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT TO CONFIRM EXTENT OF DEMOLITION WORKS.

DATE	REV	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHKD
01.12.25	P01	PRELIMINARY	DP	JBr

CIVIC ENGINEERS

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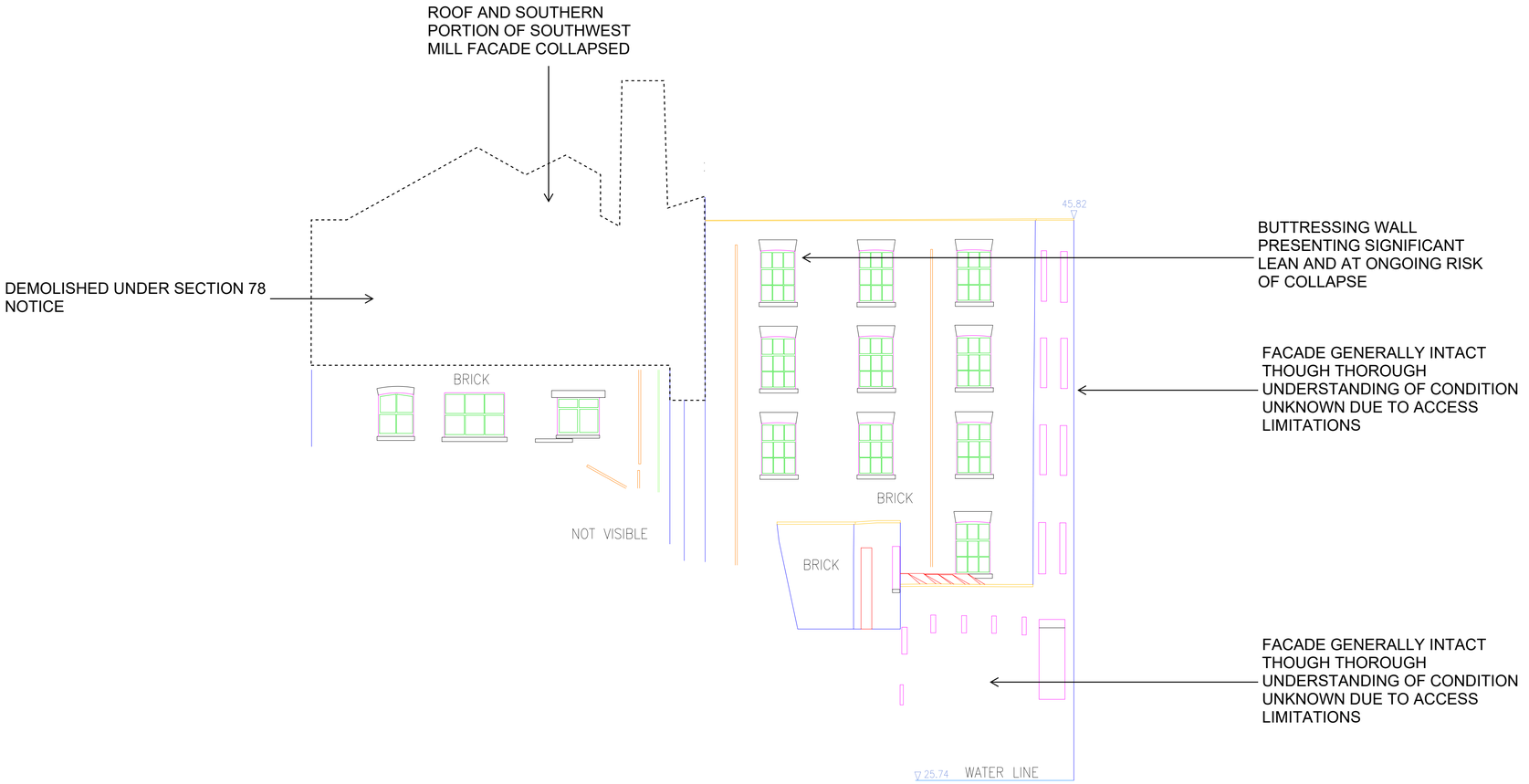
PROJECT
HOTSPUR PRESS, MANCHESTER

TITLE
SOUTHWESTERN ELEVATION LAYOUT

DRAWING STATUS: PRELIMINARY | STATUS CODE

CE PROJECT No.	SCALE @ A1	DATE CREATED	DRAWN	CHECKED
1006-01	NTS	DEC 25	DP	JBr

DRAWING No.: 1006-04-CIV-XX-XX-SK-00016 | REV: P01



DRAFT

ALL AREAS OF OBSERVATIONS ARE APPROXIMATE AND BASED UPON VISUAL INSPECTION. NO DETAILED MEASURED SURVEY HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT TO CONFIRM EXTENT OF DEMOLITION WORKS.

DATE	REV	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHKD
01.12.25	P01	PRELIMINARY	DP	JBr

CIVIC ENGINEERS

civicengineers.com

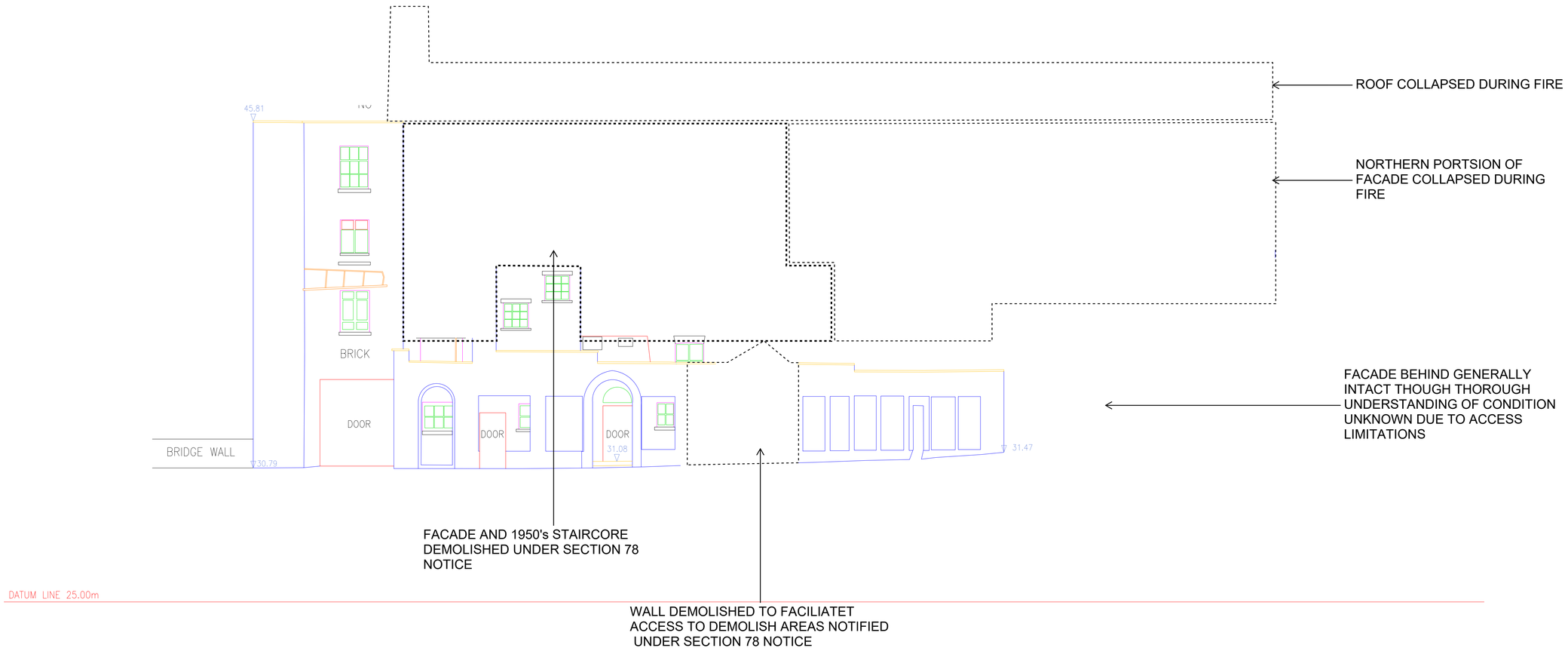
PROJECT
HOTSPUR PRESS, MANCHESTER

TITLE
SOUTHEASTERN ELEVATION LAYOUT

DRAWING STATUS: PRELIMINARY | STATUS CODE:

CE PROJECT No.	SCALE @ A1	DATE CREATED	DRAWN	CHECKED
1006-04	NTS	DEC 25	DP	JBr

DRAWING No.: 1006-04-CIV-XX-XX-SK-00017 | REV: P01



DRAFT

ALL AREAS OF OBSERVATIONS ARE APPROXIMATE AND BASED UPON VISUAL INSPECTION. NO DETAILED MEASURED SURVEY HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT TO CONFIRM EXTENT OF DEMOLITION WORKS.

DATE	REV	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHKD
01.12.25	P01	PRELIMINARY	DP	JBr

CIVIC ENGINEERS

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PROJECT
HOTSPUR PRESS, MANCHESTER

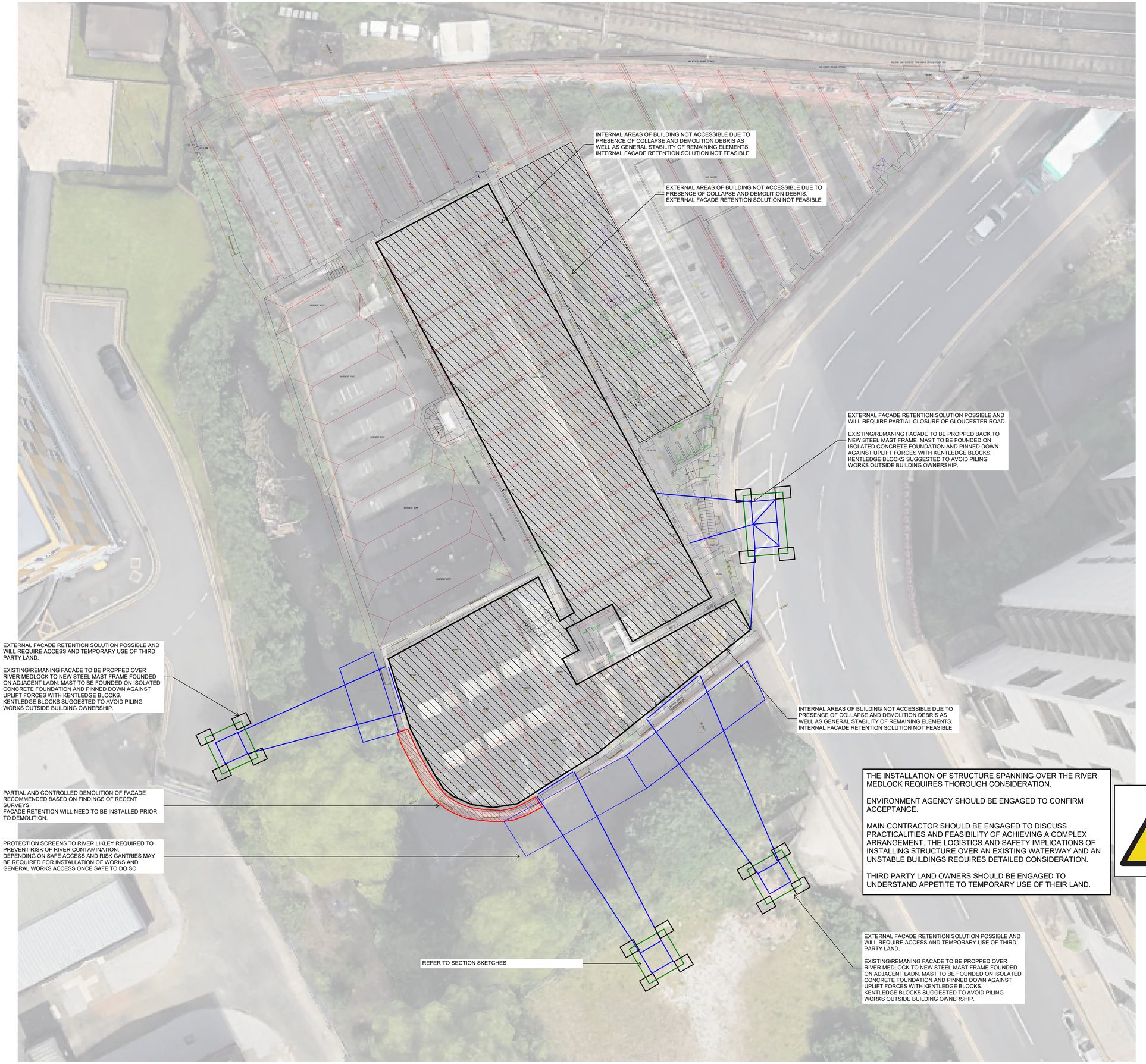
TITLE
NORTHEASTERN ELEVATION OBSERVATIONS POST FIRE

DRAWING STATUS: PRELIMINARY | STATUS CODE

CE PROJECT No.	SCALE @ A1	DATE CREATED	DRAWN	CHECKED
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Appendix 5 – Potential Future Strategy for Façade Retention



DRAFT

DATE	REV	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHKD
01.12.25	P01	PRELIMINARY	DP	JBr

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PROJECT

HOTSPUR PRESS, MANCHESTER

TITLE

NORTHEASTERN ELEVATION OBSERVATIONS POST FIRE

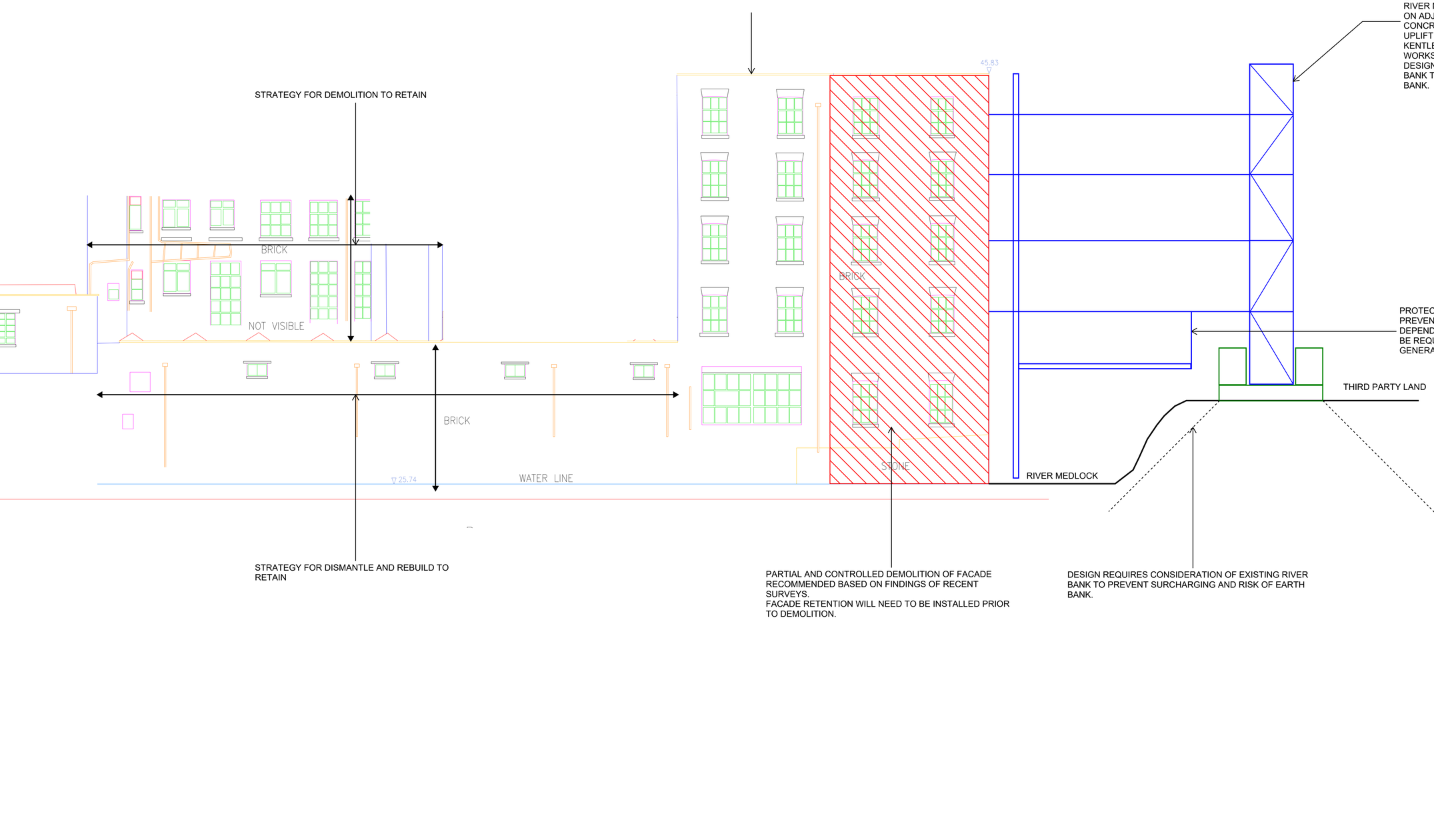
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EXTERNAL FACADE RETENTION SOLUTION POSSIBLE AND WILL REQUIRE ACCESS AND TEMPORARY USE OF THIRD PARTY LAND.

EXISTING/REMANING FACADE TO BE PROPPED OVER RIVER MEDLOCK TO NEW STEEL MAST FRAME FOUNDED ON ADJACENT LADN. MAST TO BE FOUNDED ON ISOLATED CONCRETE FOUNDATION AND PINNED DOWN AGAINST UPLIFT FORCES WITH KENTLEDGE BLOCKS.
KENTLEDGE BLOCKS SUGGESTED TO AVOID PILING WORKS OUTSIDE BUILDING OWNERSHIP.
DESIGN REQUIRES CONSIDERATION OF EXISTING RIVER BANK TO PREVENT SURCHARGING AND RISK OF EARTH BANK.



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DESIGN REQUIRES CONSIDERATION OF EXISTING RIVER BANK TO PREVENT SURCHARGING AND RISK OF EARTH BANK.

PROTECTION SCREENS TO RIVER LIKLEY REQUIRED TO PREVENT RISK OF RIVER CONTAMINATION.
DEPENDING ON SAFE ACCESS AND RISK GANTRIES MAY BE REQUIRED FOR INSTALLATION OF WORKS AND GENERAL WORKS ACCESS ONCE SAFE TO DO SO

STRATEGY FOR DEMOLITION TO RETAIN

STRATEGY FOR DISMANTLE AND REBUILD TO RETAIN

PARTIAL AND CONTROLLED DEMOLITION OF FACADE RECOMMENDED BASED ON FINDINGS OF RECENT SURVEYS.
FACADE RETENTION WILL NEED TO BE INSTALLED PRIOR TO DEMOLITION.

DESIGN REQUIRES CONSIDERATION OF EXISTING RIVER BANK TO PREVENT SURCHARGING AND RISK OF EARTH BANK.

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TITLE
SOUTHWESTERN ELEVATION
INDICATIVE FACADE RETENTION SOLUTION

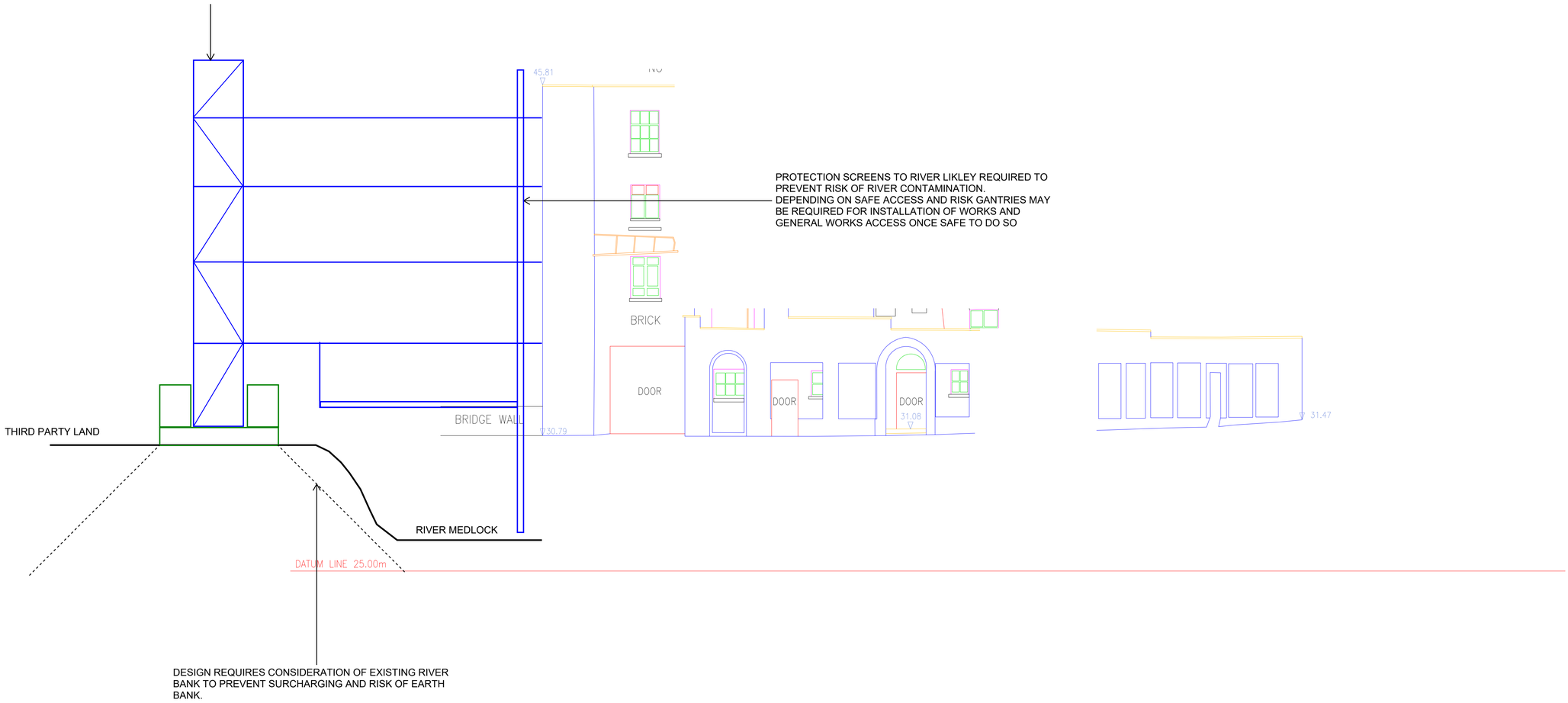
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DRAWING No.: 1006-01-CIV-XX-XX-SK-00020 | REV: P01

EXTERNAL FACADE RETENTION SOLUTION POSSIBLE AND WILL REQUIRE ACCESS AND TEMPORARY USE OF THIRD PARTY LAND.

EXISTING/REMANING FACADE TO BE PROPPED OVER RIVER MEDLOCK TO NEW STEEL MAST FRAME FOUNDED ON ADJACENT LADN. MAST TO BE FOUNDED ON ISOLATED CONCRETE FOUNDATION AND PINNED DOWN AGAINST UPLIFT FORCES WITH KENTLEDGE BLOCKS. KENTLEDGE BLOCKS SUGGESTED TO AVOID PILING WORKS OUTSIDE BUILDING OWNERSHIP.
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NORTHEASTERN ELEVATION OBSERVATIONS POST FIRE

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Appendix 6 – Specialist Temporary Works Engineer Input

JOB **Manchester Hotspur Press**

CLIENT **Erith Contractors**

REF **3430-SCL-XX-XX-RP-Y-00001**

TITLE **Engineering Assessment of Damaged Building due to Fire**

Revision History

Revision	Section/Page No.	Description	Author	Checker	Date
P01	All	Initial Issue	EK	LB	26/06/2025
P02	All	Issued for information	EK	LB	15/12/2025

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1. Introduction

Swanton Consulting has been requested to provide an engineering assessment of damaged building due to fire for the Manchester Hotspur Press Building, Manchester, 2 Gloucester St, Manchester M1 5QR. This report includes information regarding the site location, building condition after fire incident, and engineering advice for further actions on site.

1.1. Site location

The site is bounded by River Medlock to the South and west, Gloucester Street to the east and National Railway to the north. The figure below shows the site extent and the footprint of the structure on site.

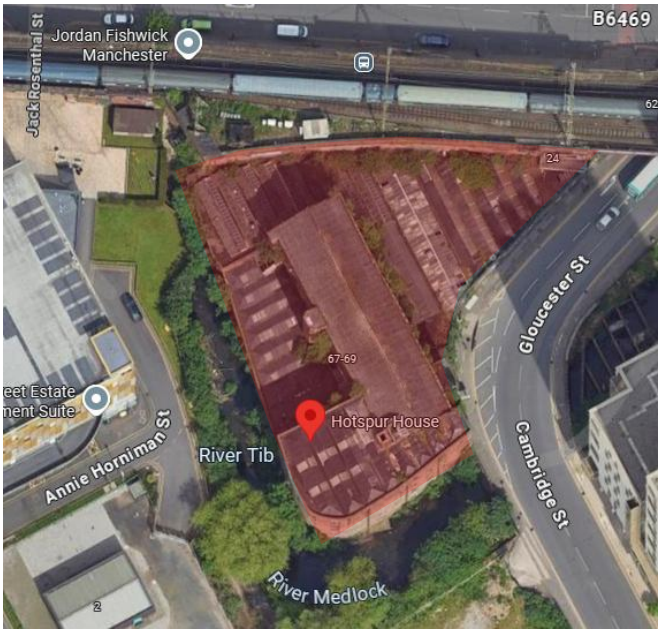


Figure 1: Site View and Location

1.2. Proposed Development and Temporary Works

The proposed redevelopment of the Hotspur Press site involves the retention and structural integration of key historic façade elements along Cambridge Street and the River Medlock and constructing a new RC high-rise building behind them.

The scheme includes demolition of existing internal elements, retaining the historic facade and the erection of a new reinforced concrete frame. Bespoke temporary system has been designed to stabilise the heritage masonry during the demolition and prior the construction phase to provide lateral restraints. The proposed temporary works of existing façade can be seen over the figure below.

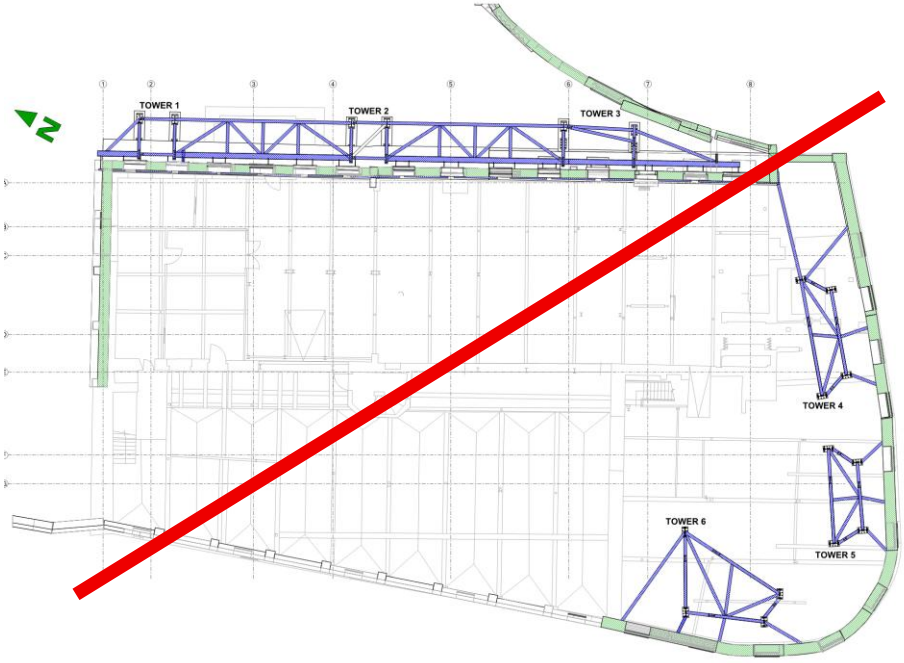


Figure 2: Façade retentions arrangement (previous)

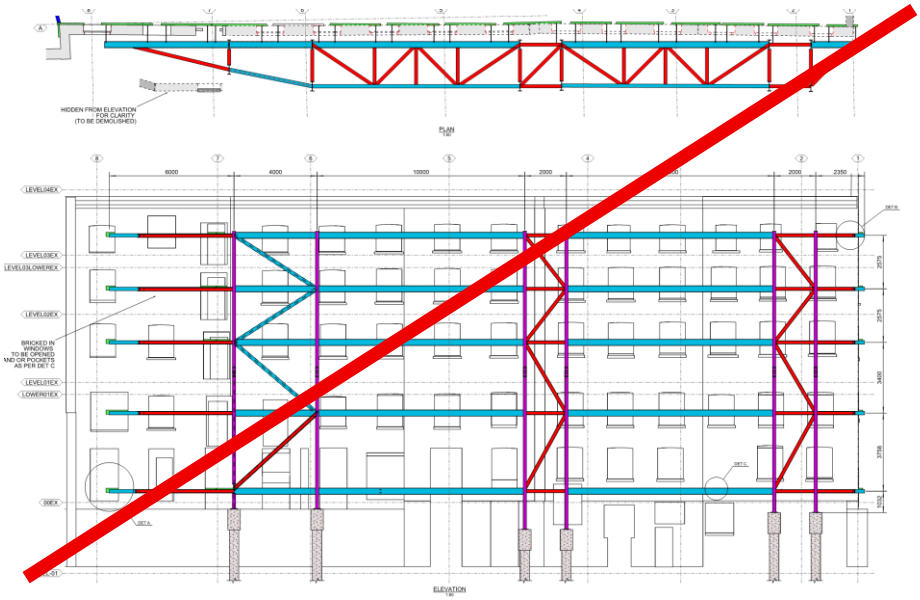


Figure 3: Façade retention elevation (previous)

Additional temporary works were required for the basement walls, forming the new foundations and retaining the existing wall along the River Medlock. However, proposed retaining systems have been redundant due to impact of fire event on existing structure.

1.3. Fire Damage of Building

On 23 June 2025 a major fire incident was declared for Manchester Hotspur Press main building. 5-storey main building timber floors, including roof, burned and collapsed during the fire.

Main building west and east walls were party collapsed due to timber floors collapse and loosing lateral supports. On the external shed area, around the main building, roof panels and some parts of roof locally collapsed.

Owing to restricted physical access to the site, we have limited information for current condition of building. Hence, assessment of the building's current condition has been limited to the analysis of available photographs and aerial drone footage captured. These visual resources have provided preliminary insights into the extent of structural damage, material degradation, and localized collapse; however, a comprehensive evaluation will require on-site inspection related to structural stability and material condition once access is permitted.

Building visual conditions can be seen in the figure below.



Figure 4: West and east walls after fire

Current footage indicates that west and east walls of existing Building A are exposed to wind forces from both sides, with no lateral support, as the existing floors collapsed during the fire. All floors of existing Building B, including roof, have also collapsed. Part of remaining existing floor beams can be seen over the figure below.



Figure 5: Condition of existing steel beams

Most of existing steel beams collapsed during the fire and remaining steel sections have lost structural integrity due to prolonged exposure to high temperatures. Furthermore, existing brick walls were also subjected to elevated temperatures during the fire.

In terms of contaminated material conditions, the asbestos survey conducted by Omega Asbestos Consulting confirmed the presence of asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) across multiple floors and roof areas of the building. The identified ACMs include asbestos insulating board (AIB), asbestos textiles, cement-based products, and Bakelite components. These materials were located within structural elements and interior elements such as walls, ceilings, pipe insulation, electrical enclosures, and sanitary fittings. Given the extent of fire damage and structural collapse, it is highly probable that a significant proportion of these ACMs have been compromised, resulting in potential fibre release, disintegration, and widespread contamination across affected zones.

2. Engineering Advice

Although limited information of the existing façade after fire incident, intensive structural damage can be seen clearly over photo footages for main building and external shed area.

For further actions on Manchester Hotspur Press site following factors should be taken into account in terms of public health and safety and structural stability of existing building. The listed considerations explain the reasons for necessity of demolition rest of building.

2.1. Public Health and Safety

Resulting from current damage to contaminated materials on structural and non-structural items, asbestos is exposed to environment. Particularly, broken asbestos fibres are respirable, and they might be spread by wind. Additionally, contaminated materials might mix with water via Medlock River which runs adjacent to the west and south walls.

In terms of contamination, current site condition is not safe for construction activities. Environmental Specialist and Agencies should be informed, and appropriate advice should be followed. The rubble should be tested for contamination and further action.

Due to losing structural stability of historic walls and unsuitable conditions for construction activities, full demolition of building should be considered. Because any close distance work or wind force might cause additional local collapses or full collapse of building. In contrast, exclusion zones should be considered on public areas where pavements, highway or green areas are within the collapse radius of the walls.

2.2. Structural Stability

The historic façade walls have lost a significant amount of lateral support from roof level down to the basement, as the intermediate floors and roof have collapsed. As a result, the walls are now exposed to unrestrained horizontal forces, particularly wind loading. Additionally, there is considerable uncertainty regarding the extent of damage to the brickwork, due to fire exposure and local structural collapses. High volume of temperature for long hours might cause losing compressive strength of brick material and mortar.

Under the consideration of damage on brick wall and losing lateral support on façade walls, the existing structure is unstable and unsuitable for site activities such as construction or salvaging historic parts. Furthermore, leaving partly collapsed north, west and east walls unrestrained condition is not viable. On the basement, load-bearing walls might be damaged and lost structural integrity or become overloaded during the collapse.

It is to be noted that temporary works were specified in the first place to enable a safe demolition while maintaining part of the historic fabric of the building. The fire led to the collapse of the current stability system of the building, prior to any installation of the temporary works required. With regard to current building condition, walls, roof and floors collapsed during the fire, so retrofitting any temporary works to provide stability is now extremely dangerous, as the structure is unstable.

Vibrations near the building should be under control. In this context, long jib machinery or high reach excavator should be used from far distance to make demolition safer. Heavy demolition or construction machines, such as excavators, diggers, loaders or pneumatic machines should not be used to close distance to site. The remaining building parts should be demolished under extensive care.

2.3. Design and Build New Retaining Structure

Under consideration of fire impact to existing masonry walls and existing building floors, as most of structural parts collapsed inside, façade retention system cannot be built internally as proposed. Furthermore, rubble can not be cleaned due to contamination, stability and access issues. Therefore, external retaining systems might be considered in order to retain remaining parts from existing façade of Hotspur Press Building.

However, health and safety and structural stability must be considered, as explained above, at first stage before planning any alternative retaining structure. Following actions should be taken during the new retention system design, installation and demolition.

2.3.1. Material Tests

Material tests should be carried out prior to the design of retention system in order to assess material mechanical property such as compressive strength and anchor pull-out tests. With the aim of taking test samples from existing façade or carrying pull-out tests in place, working platform should be considered in order to provide access to masonry wall externally.

However, based on asbestos contamination and structural stability issues, working closely with existing façade is extremely dangerous. Collection of material samples and testing materials on site should be done in accordance with extensive care.

Furthermore, material tests should be continuous in line with site inspections during the contamination cleaning, demolition and building retention system.

2.3.2. Masonry Repairs

Structural defects on existing masonry need to be addressed prior to cleaning rubble from inside the building to mitigate risk of further collapse. In the absence of internal access to site, masonry repairs can be done to external face of façade only. Based on industry guidance and relevant building codes regarding the masonry repairs, minor cracks should be repaired using either mortar or helical bars. If a wall is out of plumb by more than 25 mm or exhibits deep cracking, condition should be treated as a stability issue, and most such cases should be addressed through rebuilding. Where there are significant signs of material decomposition, masonry wall should either be rebuilt or locally repaired.

Although required masonry repairs might be undertaken once the external access platform is erected from ground floor to roof level, there remain significant risks of collapse at the upper masonry section during repair works at the lower level, as well as health hazards associated with working in a contaminated area.

2.3.3. Installation of Retention System

Installation of the retention system to existing façade requires machinery as well as operatives to work in close proximity to existing façade, because manual work tasks are unavoidable. However, post-fire photographs and visual inspections indicate continuous structural movements, resulting in a loss of stability. In the absence of lateral support to existing masonry wall, any disturbance caused by site activities may trigger a structural collapse. A comprehensive risk assessment should be carried out, taking into account all high-risk factors. As stated in Section 2.2, site activities such as demolition, construction, or rubble clearance are extremely hazardous under current condition of the building.

In conclusion, based on our assessment, existing structure cannot be rendered safe, as the remedial works required involve complex engineering works to provide a safe working environment. Such measures would expose operatives to a high risk of injury due to uncontrolled collapse or sudden, unforeseeable structural failure. Therefore, the Hotspur Press building should be classified as a 'Dangerous Structure'.

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