EDWARDS
WILSON

CENTURY BUILDINGS

RETROSPECTIVE LISTED BUILDING CONSENT & BASE-LINE HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

PHASE 1 - OPENING-UP WORKS

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Executive Summary

This Executive Summary provides an overview of the retrospective investigative works undertaken at Century Buildings (formerly National Buildings), 14 St Mary's Parsonage, Manchester M3 2DE, a Grade II listed building within the Parsonage Gardens Conservation Area. It accompanies the full Retrospective Listed Building Consent application and the combined Supporting Statement + Heritage Impact Assessment.

Purpose of the Application

This application seeks retrospective consent for limited, targeted, fully reversible opening-up works undertaken in 2024 to investigate the condition of the building's internal fire compartmentation, raised floor zones, risers and service penetrations. These works were necessary because professional fire-safety surveys identified immediate, systemic life-safety risks, and reliable information on existing construction was not available.

This document is intended not only to support the retrospective consent application for investigative opening-up works, but also to establish a comprehensive baseline understanding of the building's significance, construction history, fire-safety context and conservation constraints, which will inform future phases of fire-safety remediation and associated Listed Building Consent applications.

Why the Works Were Necessary

A sequence of surveys—including a Type 2 Passive Fire Protection Survey, Type 4 Intrusive Surveys and a photographic record of the "Most Egregious Fire-Stopping Failures"—revealed extensive failures in fire stopping, compartment walls, penetrations and dampers. Without opening-up key areas, it would have been impossible to design a safe, appropriate and conservation-led remedial strategy.

Heritage Considerations

The building's primary significance lies in its Edwardian terracotta façade, structural frame and contribution to the Parsonage Gardens Conservation Area. The areas opened up in 2024 were located exclusively within low-significance, modern fabric created during the 1999–2000 conversion. No historic or architecturally significant elements were disturbed. All areas were reinstated like-for-like.

Outcome and Next Steps

The works caused no harm to the listed building and now provide the essential evidence base for a heritage-led fire remediation strategy. A separate LBC application will soon follow covering the actual fire-stopping and compartmentation improvements. The applicant welcomes a site meeting with the Conservation Officer to review both the retrospective works and forthcoming proposals.



2.0 Introduction

2.1 Introduction

This combined document provides the Retrospective Listed Building Consent Supporting Statement and Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for internal, investigative opening-up works undertaken at the Grade II listed Century Buildings in 2024.

These works were required urgently due to:

- Severe, systemic fire-safety deficiencies identified through professional surveys;
- The absence of reliable as-built information for the 1999–2000 conversion;
- The need to understand the building's complex mix of historic and modern construction;
- The need to avoid uncontrolled or harmful works to historic fabric during future fire-safety remediation.

All opening-up works were limited, controlled, reversible and carried out within modern, low-significance fabric. All areas were fully reinstated.

A full, separate LBC will follow for the forthcoming compartmentation remedial works.



3.0 Site Description & Context

3.1 Location & Building Context

Century Buildings stands at 14 St Mary's Parsonage, overlooking Parsonage Gardens in central Manchester. It comprises:

1. The 1905–1909 Edwardian block (National Buildings) designed by Harry S. Fairhurst;
2. A 1960s concrete-framed tower to the rear;
3. A 1999–2000 residential conversion, including atriums, raised floors, walkways, services and penthouse additions.

The Edwardian block and its terracotta façade are the principal sources of heritage significance.

3.2 Statutory designation

- Grade II Listed (List Entry 1254470)
- Listed since 6 June 1994
- Located within the Parsonage Gardens Conservation Area

The listing covers the entire building, including later structures.

3.3 OVERVIEW

Century Buildings, formally listed as National Buildings (List Entry Number: 1254470), is included on the National Heritage List for England as a Grade II listed building, designated on 6 June 1994.

The listing identifies the building as an early 20th-century commercial structure of architectural and historic interest, forming part of Manchester's established civic and commercial core. Its significance derives from its architectural composition, materials, and contribution to the character and appearance of the surrounding townscape, particularly in relation to Parsonage Gardens.

The building is recognised for its well-composed principal elevation, which exhibits characteristics typical of high-quality commercial architecture of the period, including strong vertical articulation, regular bay spacing, and the use of durable and decorative façade materials. These features contribute to a coherent and legible architectural form that reinforces the building's presence within the Conservation Area.

The listed status applies to the building as a whole, including later phases of alteration and extension. However, as is typical for buildings of this type, significance is understood to be concentrated in the original external envelope, overall form, and structural expression, with later internal alterations generally making a more limited contribution to the building's special interest.

Subsequent phases of development—including mid-20th-century additions and late 20th-century conversion works—form part of the building's evolution. While these elements contribute to an understanding of the building's continued use and adaptation, they are typically of lesser heritage significance when compared to the principal early 20th-century fabric.

Accordingly, the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building is primarily derived from:

Its external architectural composition and material quality;
Its scale, massing, and relationship to the surrounding urban context; and
Its contribution to the character and appearance of the Parsonage Gardens Conservation Area.

This understanding of significance provides the basis for assessing the impact of the retrospective opening-up works described within this application.







3.5 OFFICIAL LISTING

Heritage Category: Listed Building Grade:II
List Entry Number:1254470
Date first listed:06-Jun-1994
List Entry Name:National Buildings
Statutory Address 1:NATIONAL BUILDINGS, 14, ST MARYS PARSONAGE

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.
District:Manchester (Metropolitan Authority)
Parish:Non Civil Parish
National Grid Reference:SJ 83566 98477

SJ8398SE ST MARY'S PARSONAGE 698-1/27/407 (West side) No.14
National Buildings

GV II

Office block. 1905-9, by Harry S. Fairhurst, for National Boiler and Generator Insurance Company. Iron or steel frame, with cladding of buff and white terracotta and some red brick. Large quadrilateral plan. Eclectic style. Five storeys with basement and 2 attic storeys, 9 bays, symmetrical; with rusticated terracotta and mutuled cornice to the first 2 floors, pilasters to the next 3 floors of the 7-bay main range (panelled and of brick at 2nd and 3rd floors, terracotta with coved niches at 4th floor), with a mutuled cornice; and banded terracotta to the outer bays which are treated as towers and finished with Baroque cupolas; set-back attic storeys between the turrets. The ground floor has large round-headed windows with cavetto surrounds and triple keystones, a similar but larger waggon entry to the right, and a central doorway with banded pilastered surround carried up to a semi-circular pediment enclosing a circular window at 1st floor, with moulded enrichments. The 1st floor has segmental-headed 3-light windows with enriched keyblocks; the upper floors have (inter alia) 3-storey canted oriels to the outer bays, 3-light windows to the 2nd and 3rd floors and a plaque in the centre lettered "NATIONAL BUILDINGS", 2-light windows to the 4th floor with Ionic colonnettes, Diocletian windows to the first attic storey, with triple keystones, and 3-light windows to the 2nd attic (forming almost continuous glazing). Rear and interior not inspected. Forms group with Arkwright House, Parsonage Gardens (q.v.).

Listing NGR: SJ8356698477







3.6 BUILDING DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

Century Buildings is a complex, multi-phase structure whose significance, condition and fire-safety challenges can only be understood in the context of its layered architectural history. This section provides a detailed chronological account of the building's development, drawing on known historical data, architectural context, and established patterns of commercial building construction in Manchester from the early 20th century onwards. It is structured in phases and can be referenced directly within the Heritage Impact Assessment.

3.6.1 Phase 1 — 1905–1909: Harry S. Fairhurst's Edwardian Block

The origins of Century Buildings lie in the early 20th century, when Manchester experienced rapid commercial expansion. This period saw the transformation of the city's central core into a centre of banking, insurance, warehousing and professional services. Harry S. Fairhurst (1863–1945), the architect of National Buildings, was one of the principal figures shaping this architectural evolution.

3.6.1 Architectural Context

Fairhurst was responsible for many of Manchester's most recognisable Edwardian commercial structures—including India House, Bridgewater House, Lancaster House, and warehouses along Whitworth Street. His work is characterised by:

- Steel-frame construction (cutting-edge for Manchester at the time)
- Terracotta and faience cladding
- Baroque-influenced commercial classicism
- Large industrial window openings enabling maximum natural light
- Strong attenuated vertical bays and rhythmic façades
- National Buildings (now Century Buildings) fits squarely within this typology.

3.1.2 Original Design Characteristics

The original 1905–1909 construction comprised:

- A multi-storey steel-framed office block, Clad predominantly in moulded terracotta, a material prized for fire-resistance and ornament Richly modelled façades with pilasters, cornices and classical detailing
- Cupola-topped end bays, providing visual prominence from Parsonage Gardens
- Large sash or casement windows arranged in regular vertical rhythms
- A pronounced and carefully articulated roofline and attic storey

Internally, the building would have been arranged as:
- Large, open-plan office floors served by
- Central staircases,
- A principal entrance frontage,
- Substantial floor spans afforded by the steel frame.
- Finishes internally included plaster walls, timber joinery and robust floor structures capable of supporting commercial occupancy.

3.6.3 Relationship to Parsonage Gardens

The building's south elevation forms part of a coherent Edwardian and interwar architectural ensemble around Parsonage Gardens—an important green space within the Conservation Area. Its elevated, ornate façade forms a defining element of the local townscape.

3.6.4 Surviving Elements

While the internal arrangement has undergone substantial change, aspects of this phase survive:
- The primary structural frame
- Terracotta façades
- The original massing and spatial envelope
- Elements of circulation and residual floorplate geometry
- These parts contribute significantly to the building's current listing.

3.7 Phase 2 — 1960s: Addition of the Concrete Tower

During the post-war decades, increasing demand for commercial space in central Manchester led to extensive redevelopment and vertical expansion. It was during this time—likely the mid-to-late 1960s—that the rear tower was constructed.

3.7.1 Architectural Characteristics of the Tower

The tower is typical of mid-century commercial architecture:
- Reinforced concrete frame
- Flat roofs and parapets
- Simple, utilitarian façade treatment
- Functional distribution of office or service spaces
- Minimal decorative treatment

3.7.2 Structural Relationship to the Edwardian Block

The tower is structurally independent but physically linked to the Edwardian block through shared cores and circulation routes. It lacks the ornamental qualities, craftsmanship, or high architectural value associated with the 1905–1909 building, and therefore contributes low significance to the heritage asset.

3.7.3 Later Integration

This block became fully integrated into the overall complex during the 1999–2000 conversion and now forms part of the residential layout.

3.8 Phase 3 — 1999–2000: Residential Conversion & Atria Insertion

The most transformative phase of the building's life occurred in 1999–2000 when the commercial complex was converted to a large residential scheme. This phase introduced almost all of the internal fabric that was opened up during the investigative works in 2024.

3.8.1 Conversion Drivers

During the late 1990s, central Manchester underwent a wave of conversion-driven urban regeneration. Former commercial buildings were reimagined as apartments and mixed-use developments, particularly in the Parsonage Gardens and Deansgate areas.

3.8.2 Major Interventions

The conversion included:
- The creation of two large internal atria, formed by glazing over historic lightwells, with; steel walkways bridges, communal access decks
- Insertion of raised access floors throughout much of the historic block to route mechanical and electrical services
- New plasterboard partitions establishing apartment layouts
- Installation of MF ceilings, suspended ceilings and service voids
- Formation of extensive services risers, ductwork routes and plant zones
- Upgrading or inserting new fire-compartmentation systems
- Construction of penthouses, built from modern lightweight materials, above the historic cornice line
- Application of cladding and curtain walling to tower and penthouse areas
- Re-routing and consolidating building-wide ventilation systems and communal ductwork

3.8.3 Fire-Safety Implications

It is now known—through the Type 2 and 4 FRAs—that many of the fire-stopping systems installed during this phase were incorrect, incomplete, inconsistent and poorly recorded. Overall the fire stopping is accepted as non-compliant by modern standards. These defects made the 2024 opening-up works essential.

3.8.4 Heritage Implications

From a significance perspective, the 1999–2000 works:
- Altered internal spatial organisation
- Introduced modern linings of low or negligible significance
- Covered historic elements behind new construction layers
- Reduced legibility of the original Edwardian plan form

It should be noted that the areas opened during the 2024 investigations belong predominantly to this phase.

3.9 Phase 4 — 2002–Present: Maintenance & Fire-Safety

Since the residential conversion, Century Buildings has functioned as a mixed residential community. Maintenance has been largely piecemeal.

3.9.1 Incremental Adaptations

Small alterations over the past two decades include:
- Replacement of internal finishes
- Minor services modifications
- Apartment-level upgrades
- Localised repairs to building management systems

These have contributed to further concealment of original fabric and introduced variable-quality interventions.

3.9.2 Government Fire-Safety Programmes

Following the Grenfell Tower tragedy in 2017, Century Buildings underwent in-depth reassessment under:
- PAS 9980 FRAEW (external walls)







- Type 2 passive fire protection surveys
- Type 4 intrusive fire-stopping and compartmentation assessments
- The findings from 2023–24 revealed widespread and severe fire-safety failings, including:
- Missing or defective fire stopping
- Open penetrations
- Compromised compartment walls
- Defective dampers
- Absent cavity barriers
- Raised floors containing unprotected services
- High-risk voids hidden beneath 1999–2000 construction

3.9.3 Project Execution Plan (2025)

The PEP confirms that intrusive investigation was a required precursor to design.

This phase culminated in the 2024 opening-up works, forming part of the dutyholder's response to the Building Safety Act 2022.

3.10- Summary: Understanding the Layered Nature of the Building

Century Buildings is not a single homogenous structure. It is:
- An Edwardian commercial landmark of genuine architectural interest (Phase 1)
- Partly extended by a mid-century utilitarian tower (Phase 2)
- Substantially reconfigured through late-20th-century residential interventions (Phase 3)
- Subject to extensive 21st-century scrutiny due to modern fire-safety requirements (Phase 4)
- The internal fabric predominantly affected by the 2024 investigations belongs to Phase 3 (1999–2000) and Phase 4 (post-2000 modifications).

These areas hold low or negligible heritage significance, making them appropriate zones for controlled investigative opening-up.

4.0 Fire Safety Context

the retrospective opening-up works were driven by a series of professional fire-safety investigations completed between 2023 and early 2025. together, these reports concluded that century buildings contains extensive and systemic failures in fire-stopping, compartmentation, service penetrations and construction detailing—with many features found to present immediate life-safety risk to residents.

this section summarises the findings in detail, explaining why destructive investigation became essential and unavoidable before any remedial design work could proceed. these findings form the justification for the retrospective listed building consent.

4.1 The Type 2 Passive Fire Protection Survey (Airey Miller)

Key Finding: Fire compartmentation across the building does not function.
The Type 2 FRA, which required partial access behind linings, identified severe and widespread failings, including:

4.1.1 Widespread Missing or Defective Fire-Stopping

Surveyors documented:
- Entirely unsealed service penetrations through compartment walls and floors.
- Gaps around ducts and cables left untreated.
- Fire-stopping materials either missing, incorrectly installed, or degraded.
- Multiple areas where insufficient, inappropriate or non-fire-rated foams were used.
- These failures were consistent across flats, communal areas and risers.

4.1.2 Compromised Compartment Walls and Floors

Dry-lined walls intended to be 60-minute fire-resisting were found to contain hidden voids and unprotected penetrations. Junctions between walls, floors and risers failed to maintain continuity of fire resistance. In several locations, plastic pipework passed through slabs without collars or sleeves.

4.1.3 Inaccessible or Non-Functional Fire Dampers

Dampers installed in risers and ducts were either unreachable, incorrectly fitted, or not fitted with required access hatches. Many dampers had never been tested due to lack of safe access.

4.1.4 Raised Floor Voids Not Providing Fire Separation

The survey highlighted that the raised floors installed in 1999–2000 contain:
- Large interconnected voids
- Unprotected services routes
- Areas enabling the uncontrolled spread of smoke and heat
- These voids were described as critical unknowns requiring further investigation.

4.1.5 Summary of Type 2 FRA Conclusion

The report clearly stated that the building could not be considered adequately compartmented and that intrusive investigation was required to determine the precise extent of the defects.

4.2 The Type 4 FRA – Intrusive Fire-Stopping Investigations (PM Update 09-02-24)

The Type 4 survey involved destructive opening-up in multiple locations and revealed even more severe issues than originally anticipated.

4.2.1 Extensive Unsealed Penetrations

Examples included:
- Holes through plasterboard shaftwalls with no stopping whatsoever
- Cables, ducts and conduits passing through floors with zero protection
- Bathroom extract ducts in extended voids with no fire collars
- Kitchen extracts installed with incorrect fire stopping
- These failings were frequently found in every sample location investigated.
- Airey Miller FRA Site Surveys

4.2.2 Poor-Quality or Inappropriate Fire-Stopping Materials

Inspectors found:
- Expanding foam (non-fire rated) packed into critical voids
- Silicone fillers instead of proper fire-rated mastics
- Mineral wool stuffed around pipes without proper intumescent coatings
- “Mixed materials” forming ad-hoc, uncertified solutions

4.2.3 Defective Construction from 1999–2000 Conversion

Numerous issues pointed to historic installation problems, including:
- Missing fire collars on UPVC pipes
- Dry-lining systems incorrectly installed or incomplete
- Compartment walls that did not extend to structure or terminated short of slabs
- Voids left open behind MF ceilings and boxing

4.2.4 Risks Associated with Atrium Interfaces

Several breaches were found around atrium edges, balconies and communal walkways, including:
- Unsealed voids at the junction of walkway structures and the original building
- Cable bundles allowed to travel across compartments
- Large voids above ceiling lines which linked apartments vertically and horizontally

4.2.5 Failure of Penetration Seals at Flat Boundaries

Investigations to sample flats showed inadequate compartmentation between:
- Bedrooms and corridors
- Kitchens and risers
- Ensuite bathrooms and ductwork zones

The Type 4 report concluded that these defects significantly increased the potential for rapid fire spread, particularly via concealed voids.

4.3 “Most Egregious Fire-Stopping Failures” Report

This photographic dossier captured the worst examples of fire-stopping failures across the building and visually demonstrated the critical risk. Examples Included:
- Holes in compartment walls large enough to reach through
- Ducts suspended across voids with no fire collars
- Service penetrations left entirely open in communal risers
- Historic materials removed and replaced with unsuitable expanding foam
- PVC ventilation pipes penetrating slabs with no sleeves or collars
- Cable trays feeding directly into unprotected cavities
- The imagery confirmed that breaches were not isolated, but systemic and widespread.

4.4 Implications

The presence of so many significant breaches raised the possibility that:
- Compartmentation lines may never have been properly formed during the original conversion
- Fire-resisting elements were built without adequate oversight
- Void conditions could not be modelled or remediated without direct physical opening-up

4.5 Project Execution Plan (PEP) – Need for Intrusive Opening-Up Works

The PEP (Rev C03) issued by the fire engineering and construction management team clearly states that:

- There was no reliable as-built information available for many walls, floors, risers and services.
- The 1999–2000 drawings did not accurately represent compartmentation construction.
- The layout and content of services risers were not documented.
- Raised floors and ceiling voids needed to be opened sequentially to understand their extent.
- The remediation design could not proceed safely or accurately without destructive investigation.

The PEP mandated controlled, documented opening-up works as a precondition for:
- Establishing compartment lines,
- Mapping fire-stopping defects,
- Sequencing remediation, and
- Protecting areas of heritage sensitivity.

4.6 Combined Assessment – Why Immediate Opening-Up Was Unavoidable

The combined professional findings demonstrated:

4.6.1 Systemic Risk

Defects existed across the entire building fabric—in flats, communal areas, risers and voids.

4.6.2 Incomplete or Inaccurate Historic Records

The absence of design-quality as-built drawings meant fire engineers had no reliable information to work from.

4.6.3 Hidden Voids Representing Unknown Risk

Raised floors, boxed-in risers and MF ceilings concealed conditions that could not be assessed visually or non-intrusively.

4.6.4 Risk to Residents and the Historic Asset

Without functioning compartmentation, a fire could spread:

- Vertically, via risers
- Horizontally, beneath raised floors
- Across multiple apartments via concealed voids
- Through unprotected penetrations

This created a significant life-safety hazard for residents and placed the historic Edwardian building at risk of catastrophic loss.

4.6.5 Need for a Heritage-Led Remediation Strategy

To plan appropriate, minimally invasive remedial works, the design team had to:
- Know where services were located;
- Understand which linings belonged to which construction phase;
- Identify where historic structure lay behind modern interventions;
- Avoid damaging sensitive heritage materials during future works.

The opening-up was essential to prevent greater harm later.

4.7 Outcome of Findings

By early 2024, the building’s dutyholders had no reasonable option but to:
- Carry out controlled, targeted destructive investigations,
- Record all findings,
- Reinstate all areas, and
- Use the information to develop a robust, heritage-sensitive remediation strategy.

This LBC application addresses only those investigative works.

A separate future LBC will cover the full remedial compartmentation programme which is being developed from the findings of the above works.

5.0 Opening-Up Works

This Listed Building Consent application covers the targeted, controlled and fully reversible opening-up works undertaken in 2024 to investigate the existing construction, compartmentation and services within Century Buildings.

The works were required to address serious fire-safety concerns identified in professional surveys and to establish accurate information for the design of forthcoming remedial works. All openings were confined to modern, low-significance fabric installed during the 1999–2000 conversion.
No historic or architecturally significant fabric was affected.

5.1 Purpose of the Investigations

The opening-up works were undertaken to:
- Confirm actual construction build-ups, where 1999–2000 drawings were incomplete or unreliable.
- Map concealed service routes, risers, ducts and cable runs relevant to compartmentation.
- Inspect high-risk areas flagged by the Type 2 and 4 FRAs, including penetrations, risers, and raised floor voids.
- Identify the relationship between modern linings and original structure, to avoid unintentional damage during future fire-stopping works.
- Provide essential information to support a heritage-led, proportionate fire-safety remediation strategy.

5.2 Methodology

The investigations followed the method set out in the Project Execution Plan (PEP) and were undertaken under strict controls:
- Hand tools only were used to minimise disturbance.
- Opening-up locations were selected based on FRA findings, risk mapping, and service layouts.
- Each opening was photographically recorded before, during and after inspection.
- All areas were reinstated like-for-like on the same day or immediately after completion.
Work was confined to post-1999 plasterboard linings, raised floors, MF ceilings and modern riser enclosures.

5.3 Scope of Works by Element

5.3.1 Raised Access Floors

Localised lifting of raised floor panels allowed inspection of:
- Void continuity,
- Presence/absence of cavity barriers,
- Service penetrations,
- Routes of ducts and cable trays.

These floors date entirely from the 1999–2000 works and hold negligible significance. They are also noted as poor quality and offer limited access for future maintenance.

5.3.2 Wall Linings and Compartment Walls

Small sections of plasterboard were removed (typically 300–600mm openings) to examine:
- Compartment wall construction,
- Continuity of fire-resisting layers,
- Concealed service penetrations,
- Junctions between walls and structural floors.

All such locations involved modern materials only. No original fabric was disturbed.

5.3.3 Ceiling Voids

Targeted openings in MF/suspended ceilings enabled inspection of:
- Mechanical extract ductwork,
- Cable runs,
- Fire dampers and collars,
- Potential interconnections between flats.

All such locations involved modern materials only. No original fabric was disturbed.

5.3.4 Riser Enclosures

Access panels or small plasterboard sections were removed to verify:
-The construction of riser walls,
-Whether risers were compartmented floor-by-floor,
- Penetrations through riser walls and floors,
- The condition and accessibility of dampers.

5.3.5 Service Penetration Areas and Atrium Interfaces

Openings were made where FRA reports identified high-risk junctions, including:
- Extract duct penetrations,
- Pipework through floors,
- Bathroom pod interfaces,
- Walkway/atrium structural junctions.

All such locations involved modern materials only. No original fabric was disturbed.

5.4 Location and Scale

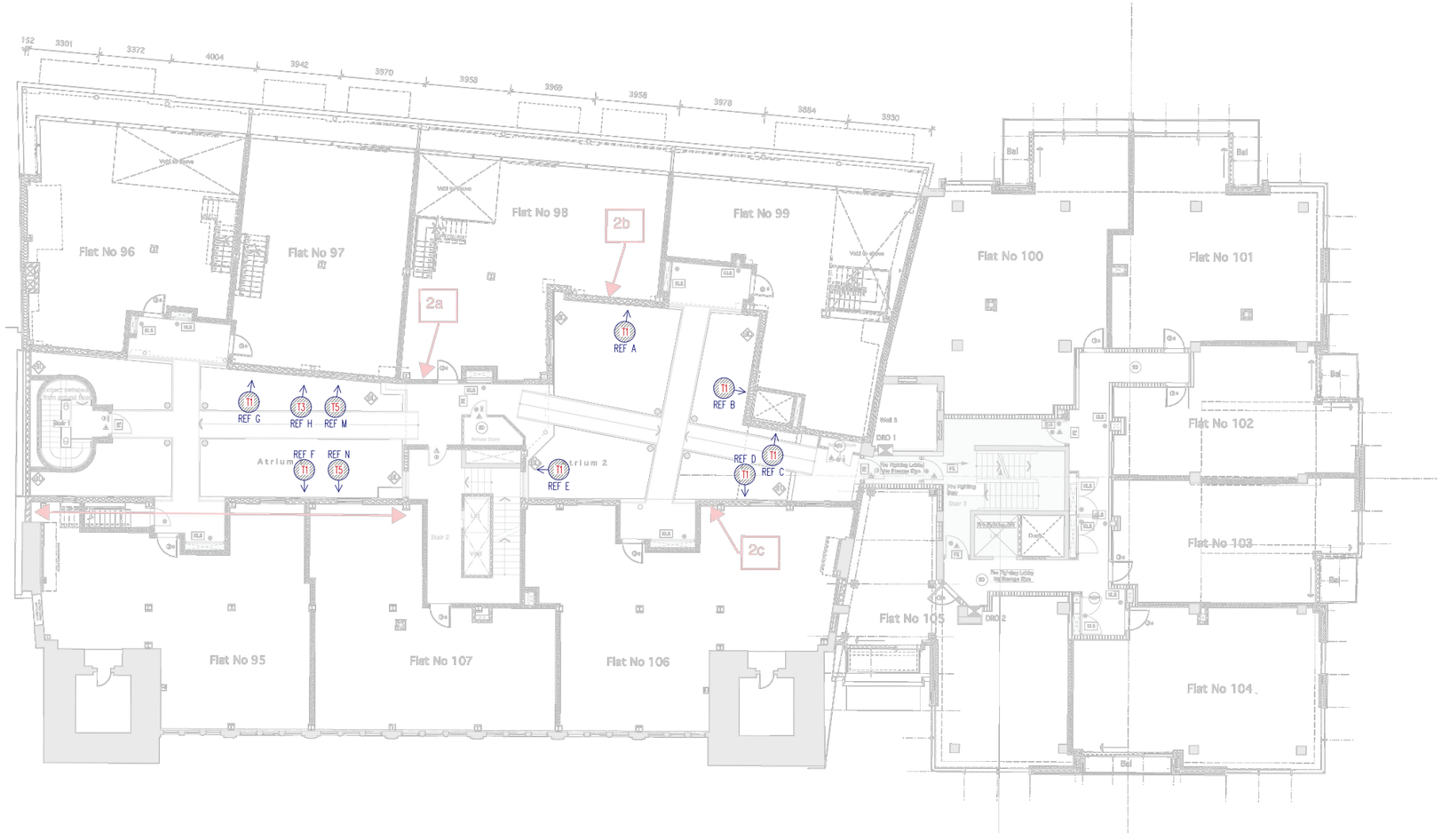
The works were distributed across:
- Selected apartments (representative sampling),
- Communal corridors,
- Both atria,
- Risers serving multiple floors,
- Plant areas and service rooms.

The total volume of openings was modest (approx. 40–60 openings), typically <0.25m² each, and all reinstated. None were made in:
- The 1905–09 terracotta façade,
- Original structural steelwork,
- Historic stair cores or circulation spaces,
- Any area of high architectural significance.

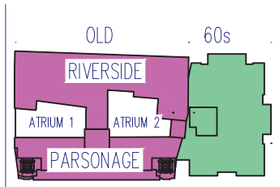
5.5 Outcomes of Investigation

The opening-up works successfully:
- Confirmed the extent of fire-stopping defects and validated the FRA findings.
- Provided accurate data on service routes, void connectivity and compartment lines.
- Identified areas where original structure sits behind modern linings, informing heritage-sensitive remediation.
 - Enabled fire engineers and architects to prepare a comprehensive, targeted and minimal-impact compartmentation upgrade strategy.

The works have therefore directly contributed to the safe and conservation-led design of the forthcoming remedial fire-safety package, which will be submitted via a separate Listed Building Consent application.



OLD . 60s



EXTERNAL BUILDING BLOCK PLAN

ACCESS REQUIRED

APARTMENT NUMBERS 96, 97, 98 OR 99
ACCESS TO EXTERNAL TERRACES TO CONDUCT VISUAL SURVEYS OF CURTAIN WALL SPANDREL PANELS
NOTE: NON-INTRUSIVE

INTRUSIVE SURVEYS
APARTMENT NUMBERS 95, 97, 98, 99 & 106
INTRUSIVE SURVEY TO BUILDING EXTERNAL WALL CLADDING (TO ATRIUM)

STAIR CORE HALF LANDING TO ATRIUM 2
INTRUSIVE SURVEY TO BUILDING EXTERNAL WALL CLADDING (TO ATRIUM)

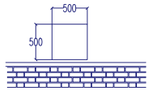
EXPOSURE DETAILS

TYPE 1



APPROXIMATE 500x500mm EXPOSURES TO EXISTING COMPOSITE PANELS AS INDICATED

TYPE 3



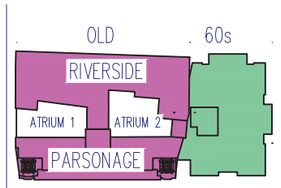
APPROXIMATE 500x500mm EXPOSURE TO EXISTING COMPOSITE PANELS AS INDICATED, AT BASE OF BOTTOM PANEL – TO EXPOSE FLOOR SLAB CONSTRUCTION BEHIND

TYPE 5



APPROXIMATE 500x500mm EXPOSURES TO EXISTING COMPOSITE PANELS AS INDICATED. TO BE TAKEN AT LEVEL 7 FLOOR SLAB POSITION, BELOW ATRIUM ROOF, TO EXPOSE FLOOR SLAB CONSTRUCTION BEHIND.





EXTERNAL BUILDING BLOCK PLAN

ACCESS REQUIRED
APARTMENT NUMBERS 108 OR 109
ACCESS TO EXTERNAL TERRACES TO CONDUCT SURVEYS OF CURTAIN WALL SPANDREL PANELS
NOTE: NON-INTRUSIVE

INTRUSIVE SURVEYS
APARTMENT NUMBER 113
INTRUSIVE SURVEY TO BUILDING STAIR CORE WALL TO SIDE TERRACE OF APARTMENT

APARTMENT NUMBERS 96 & 98
INTRUSIVE SURVEY TO BUILDING EXTERNAL WALL CLADDING (TO ATRIUM)

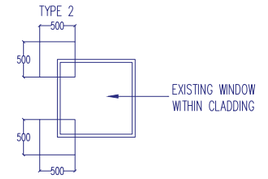
EXPOSURE DETAILS

TYPE 1



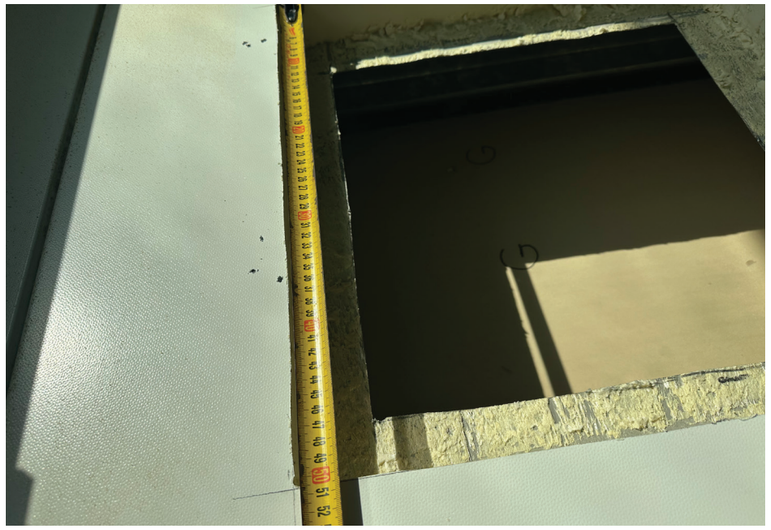
APPROXIMATE 500x500mm EXPOSURES TO EXISISTING COMPOSITE PANELS AS INDICATED

TYPE 2



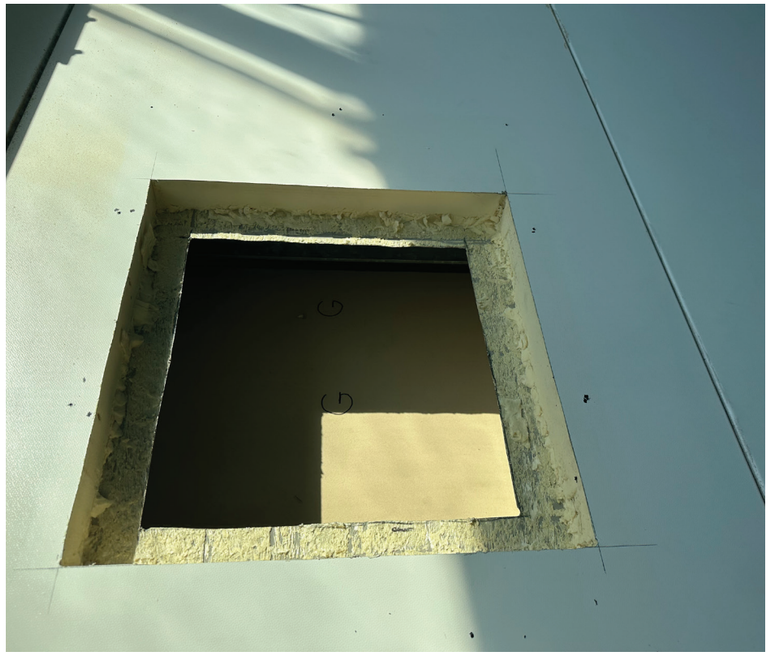
APPROXIMATE 500x500mm EXPOSURES TO EXISTING COMPOSITE PANELS AS INDICATED TO TOP AND BOTTOM CORNER OF ONE EXISTING INTERNAL WINDOW, TO EXPOSE WINDOW SUPPORT CONSTRUCTION BEHIND






Milwaukee







6.0 Significance

The significance of Century Buildings arises from its architectural, historic, evidential and communal values, as defined under Historic England's Conservation Principles (2008). Although the internal fabric has been substantially altered—particularly during the 1999–2000 conversion—important elements of the original 1905–1909 building remain, and the overall form makes a strong contribution to the Parsonage Gardens Conservation Area.

The significance of the building varies considerably between the different construction phases, and this assessment identifies where significance is concentrated and how each area contributes to the building's listing.

6.1 Evidential Value — Medium

Evidential value concerns the physical material that provides insight into past construction techniques, technologies, and historical development.

Positive Evidential Contributors:
- The original 1905–1909 steel-frame structure, which survives behind later linings and demonstrates early use of fire-resistant, high-capacity office framing typical of Manchester's Edwardian commercial boom.
- Elements of the original floorplate geometry, including bay spans and column alignments that remain legible in some areas despite modern subdivision.
- Historic secondary elements within core zones (staircases, substructures, slab edges) that help to illustrate earlier building forms.
- Elements of Limited Evidential Value
- The 1960s tower provides some insight into mid-century commercial building techniques but is architecturally modest and not a focus of the listing.

Negligible Evidential Contributors
- Dry-lining, raised floors, MF ceilings and service risers constructed during the 1999–2000 conversion, which conceal original fabric and do not themselves contribute evidence of heritage value.

Overall, evidential value is medium, concentrated in the building's structural core and historic framing.

6.2 Historical Value — Medium–High

Historical value considers how the building connects to past people, events or phases of development.
Historical Value Derived from the Edwardian Block
- The building is associated with Harry S. Fairhurst, a major Manchester architect whose commercial work shaped the city's Edwardian identity (e.g., India House, Bridgewater House).
- It forms part of the early 20th-century commercial expansion around St Mary's Parsonage and the River Irwell.

The surviving massing and façade contribute to an understanding of Manchester's industrial-commercial evolution, reflecting the city's economic importance during this period.

Historical Value in Later Phases

- The 1960s tower is a modest example of post-war commercial pragmatism but does not hold strong associative or illustrative value.
- The 1999–2000 conversion contributes some historical interest as part of Manchester's late-20th-century regeneration wave, though its architectural merit is limited.

Overall, the building has medium to high historic value, centred on its Edwardian origins and its place within Manchester's architectural narrative.

6.3 Aesthetic Value — High Externally; Low Internally

Aesthetic value concerns the design, craftsmanship, materials, and the sensory experience of the building.
- High Aesthetic Value (Exterior & Townscape)
- The principal source of aesthetic significance lies in the Edwardian terracotta façade, which displays:
- High-quality faience and terracotta ornamentation;
- Baroque-classical composition with strong vertical pilasters and symmetrical bay rhythms;
- Decorative features including cupolas, cornices and mouldings;
- An architectural style emblematic of Manchester's early-20th-century civic confidence.
- Its contribution to Parsonage Gardens Conservation Area is significant, forming a prominent and recognisable frontage that strengthens the architectural enclosure of the public green space.

Medium Aesthetic Value (Selective Interiors)

Certain internal elements—particularly structural and circulation components—retain hints of the Edwardian character, such as:
- Parts of the structural frame visible in plant rooms or behind modern linings;
- Remnants of original slab geometry or stair alignment.

Although highly fragmented, these offer limited aesthetic interest.

Low / Negligible Aesthetic Value (Most Internal Spaces)

Most internal areas date from the 1999–2000 conversion, including:
- Plasterboard partitions;
- MF/suspended ceilings;
- Raised floors;
- Modern joinery;
- Risers and boxing.

These elements are purely functional and have negligible aesthetic significance.

Overall, aesthetic value is highest at the exterior and lowest at the interior, where the modern conversion dominates.

6.4 Communal Value — Medium

Communal value relates to the meanings a place holds for people, including social, collective or symbolic values. Areas of Communal Value include:
- The building accommodates a long-established residential community, contributing to a sense of place and identity for occupants.
- The façade contributes to the public appreciation of Parsonage Gardens, making it a recognised part of the townscape.
- The building's historic presence provides a visual anchor within the Conservation Area, supporting local character and amenity.
- While internal areas do not offer high communal value, the overall building has meaning for residents, passers-by and the local area.

7.0 Impact & Mitigation

This section provides a detailed assessment of the impact of the 2024 investigative opening-up works on the heritage significance of Century Buildings, combined with the mitigation measures that ensured the works caused no harm and actively supported long-term conservation. It draws directly on the significance assessment in Section 6 and the nature of the works described in Section 5.

7.1 Overview and Method of Assessment

The heritage impact has been assessed by considering:
- Whether works affected significant fabric,
- How any risk to significance was avoided,
- Whether the works have any lasting physical or visual effect, and
- Whether the works support or undermine long-term conservation.

Assessment follows the principles of Historic England GPA2, HEAN12 and NPPF paras. 199–211. Because all opening-up occurred in low-significance modern fabric, the heritage impact is minimal to negligible, and the works contribute positively to future conservation outcomes.

7.2 Direct Physical Impact — No Harm

The investigative works caused no physical impact on historic or architecturally significant elements of the listed building.

7.2.1 Works Confined to Modern Fabric (1999–2000 conversion)

All openings were made exclusively in:

- Plasterboard partitions and linings;
- MF and suspended ceilings;
- Modern riser enclosures;
- Raised access floors;
- Lightweight boxing and service chases.
- These elements have negligible heritage significance, as confirmed in Section 6.

7.2.2 No Impact to Original 1905–09 Fabric

There was no removal, alteration or exposure of:
- Terracotta or faience façades;
- Original steel-frame structure;
- Original masonry walls;
- Historic stair cores;
- Any original joinery;
- Any areas of high or medium significance.

7.2.3 Full Reinstatement

Every opening was reinstated like-for-like, leaving no visible change. The works were entirely reversible and have no lasting physical footprint.

Conclusion:
Direct physical impact = None.
Impact on the building's special architectural or historic interest = None.

7.3 Visual and Spatial Impact — Neutral

The works were temporary, small-scale and internal, with:
- No effect on internal character areas of medium significance;
- No effect on external appearance;
- No change to spatial arrangement;
- No loss of original internal plan form (which is largely already eroded by 1999 conversion).

Conclusion:
Visual/spatial impact = Neutral.

7.4 Impact on Heritage Values

Referencing the four heritage value categories in Conservation Principles:

7.4.1 Evidential Value

- No evidential material was removed.
- Some areas provided glimpses of the original structure behind modern linings, slightly enhancing evidential understanding.

Effect: Neutral to slightly positive.

7.4.2 Historical Value

- No historic fabric was altered.
- The works improve understanding of how the building evolved.

Effect: Neutral to positive.

7.4.3 Aesthetic Value

- No aesthetic elements (external façade, significant interiors) were affected.
- All reinstated like-for-like.

Effect: Neutral.

7.4.4 Communal Value

- The works improve resident life-safety and long-term building performance.
- This is beneficial to communal appreciation and confidence in the building's future.

Effect: Positive.

7.5 Indirect Impact — Positive

Although the investigations themselves made no alteration to significant fabric, they play a crucial role in ensuring that ongoing and future works:
- Are accurately targeted,
- Avoid historic elements,
- Reduce unnecessary opening-up later,
- Protect areas of high heritage significance,
- Result in a safer building that is more viable for long-term occupation.

The Type 2/4 FRAs identified numerous unknown risks hidden within modern layers. Without opening-up, future remedial works would have required larger, more invasive exploratory demolition, with a corresponding increase in risk to historic elements. The 2024 investigations therefore reduced the amount of historic fabric that would be disturbed later.

Conclusion:
Indirect impact = Positive
(contributes to the protection of significance).

7.6 Cumulative Impact — None

The openings were:
- Small;
- Widely dispersed;
- Exclusively in modern fabric;
- Fully reinstated;
- Identical in appearance post-works.

There is no cumulative erosion of fabric or character, and no long-term change to the asset.

7.7 Temporary Impact — Neutral to Negligible

During the short period when linings were open:
- The appearance of affected rooms was temporarily altered,
but no sensitive interior spaces were affected,and all were reinstated within days.

Post-completion, no substantial evidence of the works remains.

7.8 Risk Reduction & Conservation Benefits

The works deliver wider conservation benefits by:

7.8.1 Enabling a Heritage-Led Fire Strategy

Understanding the true construction behind linings allows future remediation to:
- Place fire-stopping in the correct locations;
- Design solutions that avoid original structure;
- Ensure no unnecessary removal of sensitive materials.

7.8.2 Protecting the Edwardian Façade & Frame

By knowing where services actually run, the design team can avoid:
- Drilling into original steel members;
- Opening linings that conceal historic elements;
- Interfering with original terracotta-backed construction.

7.8.3 Supporting Long-Term Sustainability

A building with functioning compartmentation is:
- Safer,
- More robust,
- More likely to remain in long-term occupation,
- Less likely to require emergency invasive repairs later.

This supports the building’s ongoing viable use, a key principle of conservation.

7.9 Mitigation Measures Implemented

These measures ensured that no harm occurred:
- Works restricted to low-significance fabric;
- Hand tools only, avoiding vibration or overcutting;
- Pre-planning of each location using FRA data;
- Avoidance buffers around known heritage elements;
- Photographic and written recording;
- Immediate like-for-like reinstatement after each opening;

Findings integrated into the Golden Thread for future management;

Specialist oversight to ensure heritage considerations were embedded in decision-making.

7.10 Overall Impact Conclusion

The 2024 investigative opening-up works:
- Caused no harm to any element of significance;
- Affected only parts of the building identified as having negligible heritage value;
- Wwere fully reinstated;
- Were essential for life-safety and regulatory compliance;
- Provide critical information to prevent harm during future remedial works;
- Support the building’s long-term conservation and sustainable use.

Accordingly, the works constitute “no harm” for the purposes of the NPPF and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and are acceptable in heritage terms.

8.0 Justification

8.1 Statutory and Policy Basis for Justification

The retrospective opening-up works are fully justified in planning and heritage terms. They were necessary, proportionate, unavoidable and beneficial in the context of serious fire-safety concerns, extensive unknowns within the building fabric, and the need to prepare a safe, heritage-led compartmentation strategy.
This section explains why the works met the statutory, policy and conservation tests for justified intervention in a listed building.

8.1.1 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 – Sections 16 & 66

The Act requires the decision-maker to have special regard to the desirability of:
- Preserving the building,
- Preserving its setting, and
- Preserving its special architectural or historic interest.

The retrospective works did not affect any part of the building's special interest. They were confined to post-1999 fabric of negligible significance and were reinstated like-for-like.

8.1.2 NPPF (2023) – Paras. 199–211

The NPPF requires:
- Clear and convincing justification for any harm;
- Proportionate assessment;
- Consideration of public benefits;
- Securing the building's long-term conservation.

As the works caused no harm, the justification test is easily met.
Furthermore, there are clear public benefits in undertaking investigations that:
- Protect residents from life-safety risks;
- Prevent future damage to significant fabric;
- Ensure that forthcoming interventions are precise and minimal.

Therefore, the works are fully compliant with NPPF policy.

8.2 Necessity of the Works

The opening-up works were strictly necessary because:
- Fire-safety surveys identified systemic failures

The Type 2 and Type 4 surveys revealed:
- extensive unsealed penetrations,
- Missing fire-stopping,
- Unsatisfactory riser construction,
- Unsafe duct penetrations,
- Continuous underfloor voids,
- Defective compartmentation.

These issues presented a direct threat to life safety and made further investigation unavoidable.

As-built, construction and services information was incomplete or unreliable

- 1999–2000 drawings lacked critical detail on:
- Which walls were compartment walls;
- How compartmentation was constructed;
- The true extent of raised floor voids;
- Construction of riser enclosures;
- Alignment of services, ducts and dampers.

Without verification, no safe or accurate remedial design could be prepared.

8.2.1 The building contains complex, concealed voids

These include:
- Under-floor services routes,
- Multi-level voids beneath bathrooms and kitchens,
- Corridor ceiling voids,
- Service risers that do not align floor-by-floor,
- Atrium interface voids.

These areas could not be understood without inspection openings.
Therefore, the only way to confirm construction and risk was via physical opening-up.

8.3 Proportionality of the Works

The works were proportionate because:
- They were the minimum necessary to obtain essential information
- Only the smallest practical openings were created (typically 300–600mm).
- No overcutting occurred.
- No area was opened unless justified by risk assessment.

8.3.1 They avoided all areas of heritage significance

Each opening was located in:
- Plasterboard linings,
- MF/suspended ceilings,
- Modern risers,
- Raised floors,
- Service boxing.

All of these are low- or negligible-value elements associated with the 1999–2000 conversion.

8.3.2 The works were fully reversible

Every opening was reinstated like-for-like, leaving no lasting footprint.

8.3.3 The works prevented larger, more harmful intervention later

Without these investigations, future remedial works would have required:
- Extensive trial-and-error opening,
- Broader walls and ceilings being removed,
- Higher risk of exposure or damage to original 1905–1909 fabric.

The investigations therefore reduced future potential harm.

8.4 Benefits to Heritage Conservation

Although the openings were in modern fabric, the works deliver direct conservation benefits.

8.4.1 Protecting original Edwardian fabric

By determining where services run and where modern linings conceal historic structure, the team can:
- Avoid drilling into original steelwork,
- Avoid breaking through historic walls or slab edges,
- Plan new fire-stopping without accidental damage.

8.4.2 Supporting long-term building survival

A building with defective compartmentation is at heightened risk of:
- Uncontrolled fire spread,
- Structural compromise,
- Loss of significant heritage fabric in an incident.

By enabling proper remediation, the works increase the likelihood of the building remaining viable and safely occupied.

8.4.3 Informing a targeted, minimal-intervention remedial strategy

Future fire-stopping can now be:
- Located precisely,
- Installed to correct depth and location,
- Carried out without unnecessary disturbance.

This is a central principle of conservation: do only what is required, and no more.

8.5 Compliance with the Building Safety Act & Golden Thread

Under the Building Safety Act 2022, building owners have statutory duties to:
- Understand the building's structure and fire-safety systems;
- Maintain accurate Golden Thread information;
- Identify and mitigate fire spread risks.

The investigative works were necessary to fulfil these legal duties. They enabled:
- Accurate Golden Thread records,
- Mapping of services and compartmentation,
- Validation of FRA findings,
- A compliant remediation plan.

Thus, the investigations were not only justified—they were required by law.

8.6 Public Benefits

The works deliver immediate and future public benefits:
- Life-safety improvement for residents and visitors.
- Avoidance of catastrophic building loss through uncontrolled fire spread.
- Creation of accurate fire-engineering information for long-term safety.
- Protection of heritage significance by enabling targeted conservation-based interventions.
- Support for sustainable occupation, ensuring the building remains functional and viable.
- Under NPPF paras. 202–204, these benefits substantively outweigh the negligible, temporary impacts to modern fabric.

8.7 Conclusion on Justification

The investigative opening-up works are fully justified because they were:
- Necessary to understand life-safety risks;
- Proportionate in scale and scope;
- Confined to non-significant modern fabric;
- Fully reversible;
- Essential to the preparation of a safe, heritage-led remediation scheme;
- Required under national fire-safety legislation;
- Aligned with NPPF, the 1990 Act, HEAN12 and Conservation Principles;
- Beneficial to the long-term conservation of the listed building.

Therefore, the works meet all relevant statutory and policy tests and are acceptable in heritage terms.

9.0 Future Works

The investigative opening-up works covered by this retrospective Listed Building Consent form the essential first stage of a wider programme to bring Century Buildings into compliance with modern fire-safety and life-safety standards. This section outlines the forthcoming phases of work, the approach to future heritage consents, and the commitment to proactive engagement with Manchester City Council.

9.1 Forthcoming Compartmentation & Fire-Safety Remedial Works

The opening-up investigations have provided the key technical foundation for the design of a building-wide compartmentation remediation strategy, which is now in preparation. This forthcoming package of works will include, as required:

- Installation or reinstatement of fire-stopping solutions to walls, floors and risers;
- Properly certified intumescent collars, wraps and sleeves for pipe and duct penetrations;
- Upgrading or replacing fire dampers and providing compliant access for their inspection and maintenance;
- Rationalisation and reconfiguration of service penetrations to limit future risk and maintenance burden;
- Enhancing compartment wall continuity where 1999–2000 construction was incomplete;
- Upgrading or replacing fire doors, including frames, intumescent strips and self-closers where required;
- Installation of discrete, well-located access hatches to allow ongoing inspection without further unplanned opening-up;
- Localised ceiling and floor void compartmentation around high-risk zones;
- Improvements at atrium and walkway interfaces, ensuring that vertical fire spread routes are appropriately controlled.

All remedial works will be carefully designed to ensure that intervention is:
- Technically compliant;
- Proportionate and necessary;
- Coordinated across engineering and architectural disciplines;
- Fully considerate of heritage significance.

A separate Listed Building Consent will be submitted for these future works.

9.2 Heritage Sensitivity in Forthcoming Works

The next phase will be undertaken with a clear focus on heritage conservation, including:
- Minimising disturbance to historic structure and original elements, especially areas where original steelwork or historic masonry exist behind later linings;
- Designing new interventions so that they avoid original fabric entirely, unless there is no alternative;
- Ensuring any necessary interventions in sensitive areas are fully documented, reversible where possible, and carefully justified;
- Avoiding visual impact on significant interior spaces and ensuring the exterior envelope remains completely unchanged;
- Working with small, discrete access points rather than broad removal of linings.

This conservation-led approach is supported by the detailed understanding obtained during the 2024 investigations.

9.3 Commitment to Ongoing Engagement with the Conservation Officer

The applicant and design team welcome and encourage early and continued collaboration with Manchester City Council's Conservation Officer, including:
- A site meeting to review areas where opening-up took place;
- Joint inspection of areas with potential heritage sensitivity;
- Discussion of the emerging approach to fire-safety remediation;
- Agreement on the level of detail required for future LBC submissions;
- Ongoing dialogue on specific heritage constraints and opportunities.

This proactive engagement will help ensure that the forthcoming works are carried out in a manner that is compliant, proportionate and respectful of the listed building's significance.

9.4 Golden Thread Integration & Long-Term Management

All information obtained during the investigative works:
- Has been recorded,
- Will form part of the building's Golden Thread,
- Will be embedded into the Building Safety Case File, and
- Will inform future maintenance, inspection and safety planning.

This ensures the building is managed in accordance with the Building Safety Act 2022 and upholds long-term conservation and sustainability principles.

10.0 Policy Compliance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2023)
Para. 199–202 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

The NPPF requires that:
- Great weight is given to the conservation of heritage assets;
- Harm should need clear and convincing justification;
- Works should be proportionate and no more intrusive than necessary.

Compliance:
The opening-up works caused no harm to the special architectural or historic interest of the building. Works were confined to modern fabric, fully reinstated, and needed to address significant life-safety issues. The proposal meets the NPPF requirement for “clear and convincing justification.”

- Para. 203 – Public Benefits
- Public benefits include:
- Improved life safety;
- Reduced fire-spread risk;
- Informed, targeted remedial design;
- Long-term preservation of the listed building.

Compliance:
The works clearly deliver public benefit without heritage harm.

- Para. 204–211 – Decision-making, Proportionality and Viability
- The NPPF supports decisions enabling:
- A building’s optimum viable use;
- Avoidance of unjustified loss of significance;
- Sustainable, well-informed interventions.

Compliance:
The retrospective works support the building’s ongoing viable use by enabling compliant, conservation-led upgrades.

10.2 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

SECTIONS 16 & 66

Authorities must have special regard to preserving the building and its setting.

Compliance:
No elements of special interest were affected; the character of the listed building is wholly preserved.

10.3 Historic England Guidance

HEAN12: STATEMENTS OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

This application provides:
- A full significance assessment;
- Analysis of heritage values;
- Proportionate impact assessment;
- Clear avoidance, mitigation and justification.

Compliance:
The submission aligns comprehensively with HEAN12 methodology.
- GPA2 – Managing Significance
- GPA2 emphasises:
- Understanding significance before change;
- Avoiding harm;
- Proportionate investigation.

Compliance:

The retrospective opening-up was an essential step in understanding significance and was undertaken in a proportionate, reversible manner.

10.4 Manchester Local Plan (Heritage Policies)

Although policy wording may vary, local heritage policies generally require:
- Protection of designated heritage assets;
- Minimisation of harm;
- Justification for interventions;
- Enhancement where possible.

Compliance:
- Preserve the listed building;
- Enable enhanced long-term safety;
- Facilitate future heritage-led improvements;
- Avoid any harm to the building’s special interest.

10.5 Building Safety Act 2022 & Fire Safety Regulatory Framework

Although not heritage policy, these statutory obligations form an important part of justification:
- Dutyholders must actively manage fire risk.
- Accurate safety information must be maintained.
- Golden Thread data must be established.

Compliance:
The retrospective works were essential to meeting these statutory obligations and cannot be separated from the building’s modern regulatory environment.

11.0 Conclusion

The retrospective opening-up works carried out in 2024 were necessary, proportionate, fully justified and carefully controlled. They were essential for establishing an accurate understanding of fire-safety risks within Century Buildings and for enabling the design of a robust, heritage-led remediation strategy.

Key conclusions:

11.1 No Harm to Heritage Significance

Century Buildings derives its significance chiefly from:

- Its Edwardian façade,
- Its early 20th-century commercial architectural typology,
- Its townscape role within Parsonage Gardens, and
- Its associative value with Harry S. Fairhurst.

By contrast, the internal environment, much of which dates from the late 1990s conversion possesses little or no heritage value, and was therefore the appropriate focus for intrusive investigation.

The significance assessment confirms that the retrospective opening-up works avoided significant fabric;did not adversely affect the building's architectural, historic or evidential value;supported the longer-term conservation of significant elements by informing a carefully targeted remedial strategy.

- All works were restricted to modern, low-significance fabric.
- No original or architecturally important elements were altered.
- All openings were fully reinstated, leaving no trace.

11.2 Essential for Life Safety and Statutory Compliance

- FRA findings identified severe fire-safety failures
- Investigations were required to determine construction, service routes and risk.
- The works enabled the building owner to fulfil obligations under the Fire Safety Order and Building Safety Act.

11.3 Essential for Heritage-Led Remediation

- Without opening-up, future fire-stopping works could risk damaging historic fabric.
- The investigations reduce future intervention and ensure targeted, minimal, and sensitive remediation.
- A future LBC will be submitted for full compartmentation works.

11.4 Clear Public Benefits

Improved resident safety;
- Reduced risk of catastrophic fire impacting the heritage asset;
- Support for the building's long-term occupation and viability;
- Improved Golden Thread information.

11.5 Final Position

The works:
- Meet the requirements of the NPPF;
- Comply with the 1990 Act;
- Align with Historic England guidance;
- Preserve the building's special architectural and historic interest;
- Support its sustainable and safe future.

For these reasons, the retrospective opening-up works are acceptable in heritage terms, and Listed Building Consent is respectfully requested.