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HERITAGE NOTE

PROJECT	Newton Street
PROJECT REF.	1665
DATE	18/03/2026
ISSUE	Original partition re-use

Context
Six historic partitions remained on site when initial proposals were submitted. When originally constructed, these partitions were functional, forming dividing walls between office/workspaces. They were built, moved and reconfigured in response to changing users and were constructed from basic timber framing, with most featuring tongue and groove panelling below and single glazed windows above, some with basic timber-framed door openings. Reflecting the informal nature of the office spaces and ad hoc changes to layouts over decades, the remaining partitions are different in appearance, in various conditions, various forms and states of completeness.

Significance
The majority of the partitions have a low architectural value, being of basic quality and utilitarian in form, whilst the ground floor partition appears to be of a higher quality, in better condition and with finer proportioned detail.

The heritage significance of the partitions from the upper floor is primarily evidential, demonstrating sub-division of floorplates and a basic built form. The shorter runs are of lower significance, often of a low quality.

As a multi-tenanted building, the re-use of these partitions could not be determined until tenants were committed to occupation and their specific operational requirements understood.

A number of partitions have already been successfully incorporated into new office spaces, gaining approval as part of those respective schemes:
Partition number 1 (second floor meeting room).
Number 3 (first floor).
Number 6 (first floor).
The majority of partition number 5 (retained in-situ, ground floor).

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Proposal
The proposal re-locates the two mid-sized partitions, numbers 4 and 2, to the second-floor rear office. Partition 4 will form a meeting room wall and Partition 2 will be placed opposite the room, dividing the larger space. These locations are considered entirely appropriate.

It is necessary to reconfigure Partition 2 to ensure it can work within the context of the office suite, which is limited in size, and simultaneously adhere to relevant regulations. The proposal is to remove the section which has the door-way opening (the door is missing) and two glazed lights above. The larger windows, frame, and panels to lower section will all be retained. This represents a degree of loss of historic fabric, though that fabric is low quality and has clearly already been reconfigured at some point in the past. The majority of the partition is retained and re-used as per its original function. The level of harm to significance caused by removing the door-way section and refinishing the end of the timber frame to match the existing, is considered to be very low.
The remaining section is a remnant removed from Partition 5 – a doorway and two four pane windows with tongue and groove below. This originally formed part of the ground floor partition and was removed to allow for a wider opening to meet access requirements. The section was an integral part of the larger panel and did not sit within its own substantial frame. Consequently, the only option was to cut it out, leaving it in a number of pieces.

Re-use would involve rebuilding and creating a pastiche version of this section of partition, building brand new framing and refitting the remaining pieces within it, including some replacement and repair. The heritage significance and value of the resulting construction would be questionable. The pieces have limited heritage value when placed in a new context and substantially rebuilt. It is proposed that this section of partition is not re-used at this time and is instead labelled and safely stored onsite.

Impact
The removal of this fabric has already been approved (on the basis of creating access). Storing the detached parts allows for potential re-incorporation at a future date. Overall, all six historic partitions will be re-used, with the exception of a small section from Partition 5 and an already altered section of Partition 2. This is considered a good level of retention to display both evidential and aesthetic qualities. On the basis that the overwhelming benefit of bringing this vacant listed building back into use through a high-quality refurbishment clearly outweighs the very minor degree of resulting harm, the proposals are considered appropriate.