Design and Access and Heritage Statement

Victoria Baths – Ramp Works

Victoria Baths
Hathersage Road
Manchester
M13 0FE

Proposed Ramp and Drainage Alterations to Front Elevation of Victoria Baths

Prepared on behalf of

Manchester City Council
Town Hall Extension
Albert Square
Manchester
M60 2LA

Job No: 37437
Date: 01/07/2026

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Authorised for Issue:

For and on behalf of Baily Garner LLP

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Design and Access Statement

Property Address and Postcode

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 General

1.1.1 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Baily Garner on behalf of Manchester City Council.

1.1.2 This report responds to the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (Amendment) (England) Order 2006 (the GDPO) for planning applications (with some exceptions) to be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement.

1.1.3 The structure and content of the statement have been informed by DCLG Circular 01/2006 Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System (12 June 2006) and Design and Access Statements: How to Write, Read and Use Them (CABE, 2007). Together these have provided advice on what a Design and Access Statement should include.

1.2 Structure of the Statement

1.2.1 Based on the Circular 01/2006 and CABE advice, the following sections of the Statement comprise:

- Section 2.0 - Understanding the Context
- Section 3.0 - Design
  - Description of Proposal, Use, Layout, Scale and Appearance
- Section 4.0 - Access
- Section 5.0 - Summary and Conclusion

2.0 Understanding the Context

2.1 Site Description

2.1.1 Victoria Baths is a Grade II* listed Edwardian swimming pool situated in the Chorlton-upon-Medlock area in Manchester and was completed in 1906. The Baths are within a residential area of Manchester and are bounded by Hathersage Road to the South, Bax Road to the West and North and residential properties to the East.

2.1.2 Victoria Baths is a Grade II* listed Edwardian swimming pool situated in the Chorlton-upon-Medlock area in Manchester. Victoria Bath's was first planned in 1897, the site was purchased in 1899 and then construction began in 1903 and was completed in 1906. The building is managed by Manchester City Council who have been consulted in the preparation of this Heritage Statement and proposed works.

2.1.3 The Baths were built at a cost of £59,000, equivalent to approximately £6.4 million as of May 2026. The façade was constructed of red brick and terracotta, and the interior floor spaces were clad in glazed tiles from floor to ceiling. The majority of the windows are decorative stained glass, including the angel of purity in the Turkish Baths Rest Room.

2.1.4 The Bath's consisted of three Olympic sized swimming pools which were originally split for separate use by 1st Males, 2nd class Males and Females only as well as a Turkish baths suite and 64 'wash baths. The 1st class pool, known as the Gala Pool, was designed so that it could be floored over during the winter months and used as a venue for dances and concerts etc.

2.1.5 Following Victoria Bath's closure on the 13th March 1993, a charitable trust, The Friends of Victoria Baths, was formed with the aim of restoring the building and reopening at least one of the swimming pools back to the public. No works were carried out in the baths for a number

of years following their closure and this meant the building deteriorated rapidly. A number of projects have been undertaken over the years including roof and dry rot repairs in 2002, front block restoration in 2007, further restoration to the roof in 2009 and restoration to the Turkish Baths in 2015.

3.0 Design

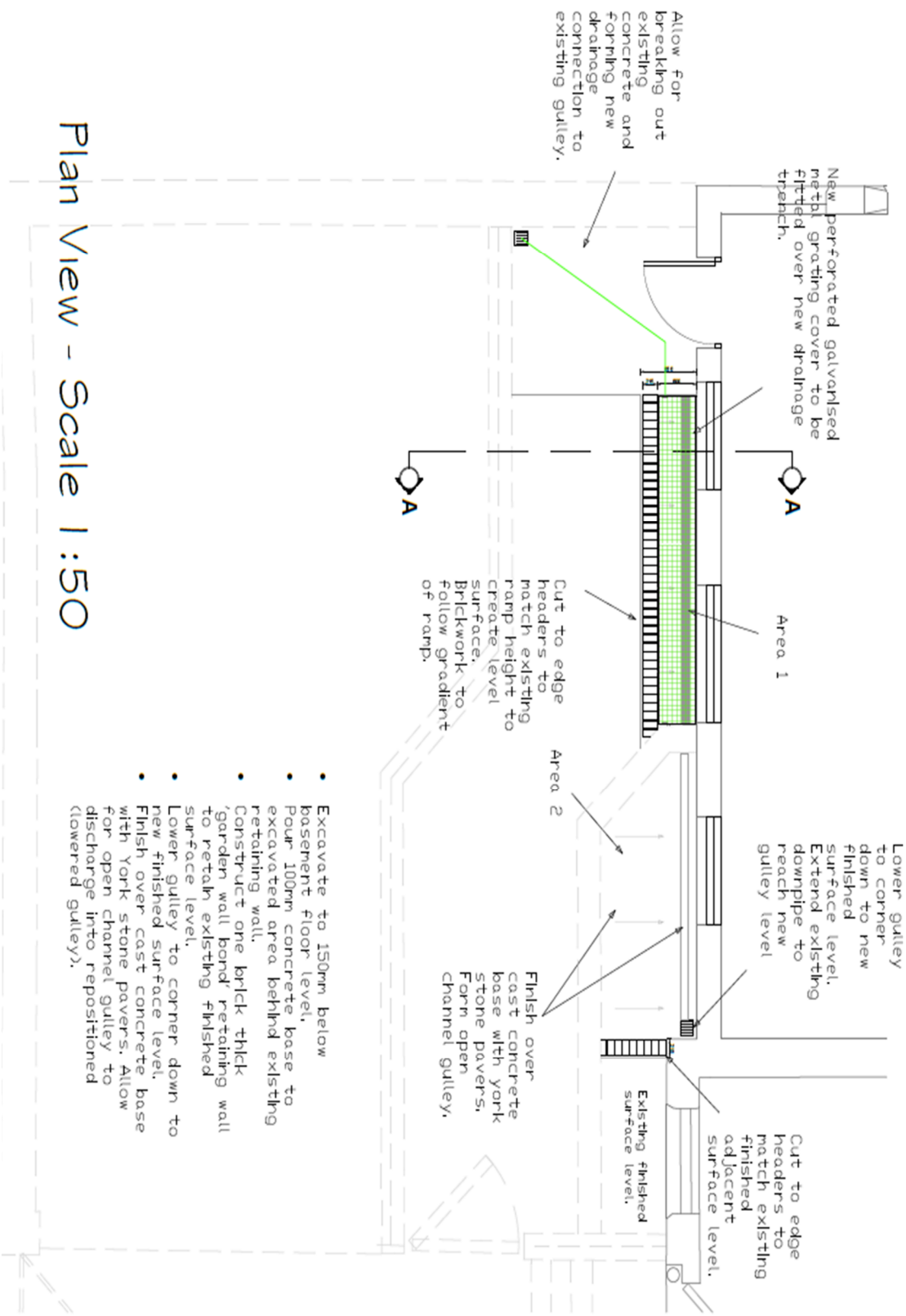
3.1 Description of the Proposal

3.1.1 The area of proposed works is to the concrete ramp installed to the West Corner of the South Elevation, to the left of the Males 1st class entrance as seen from Hathersage Road. The rooms accessed by this concrete ramp are suffering from significant water ingress due to the water run-off from this ramp. The water is currently running down the ramp and soaking into the brickwork which is causing the water ingress issues. The proposal for these works is to adapt the ramp and drainage to prevent this from occurring and allow the internal areas to dry out. Please note that the internal areas do not form part of this application.

3.1.2 The proposals are split into two sections as per the drawings provided as part of this application. It is proposed that in area 1 the ramp is excavated back from the front elevation of the building by 850mm to a depth of 150mm below finished floor level. 150mm of concrete will then be poured to form the footing of a new masonry retaining wall. 100mm of concrete will be poured behind the proposed retaining wall and this will fall towards the proposed new threshold drain. The proposal includes for the connection of the threshold drain to an existing drainage connection which will require further breaking out of the existing concrete and reinstating once installed. The new masonry retaining wall will be one brick thick in garden wall bond built to the height of the existing ramp and following the gradient of the ramp as it runs down to the entrance door. The top course will be laid with headers. There is an acceptance that the now exposed section of brickwork as part of the Victoria Baths front elevation will need repointing, but the exact amount of repointing cannot be determined until the wall is exposed. New Code 5 lead flashing will be installed to the brickwork to a minimum of 150mm above the new gully lining and dressed into the new gully to prevent splashback into the newly exposed bricks. The newly formed concrete will be covered with a new perforated aluminium drainage cover to allow drainage but prevent the outlets below from being blocked. The drainage cover will be detachable to allow future maintenance.

3.1.3

3.1.4 In area 2, there is an existing retaining wall already in place, but this has been mass filled with concrete in the past. The proposals are to excavate 150mm below the finished floor level in the basement as in area 1 on the proposed drawings. This area will then have 100mm concrete directed towards an open channel which will fall towards the existing gulley. Where the excavation and subsequent concrete pour have created a difference in levels, a new brickwork wall in the manner described in area 1 will be constructed. This gulley will need to be lowered to the new finished surface level as part of the work including extending the existing downpipe to reach the new level. This extension is proposed to be in cast iron to match the existing in style and profile.


Plan View - Scale 1:50
Allow for breaking out existing concrete and forming new drainage connection to existing gulley.
New perforated galvanised metal grating cover to be fitted over new drainage trench.
A
A
Area 1
Area 2
Cut to edge headers to match existing ramp height to create level surface. Brickwork to follow gradient of ramp.
Lower gulley to corner down to new finished surface level. Extend existing downpipe to reach new gulley level
Finish over cast concrete base with york stone pavers. Form open channel gulley.
Existing finished surface level.
Cut to edge headers to match existing finished adjacent surface level.
• Excavate to 150mm below basement floor level.
• Pour 100mm concrete base to excavated area behind existing retaining wall.
• Construct one brick thick 'garden wall bond' retaining wall to retain existing finished surface level.
• Lower gulley to corner down to new finished surface level.
• Finish over cast concrete base with York stone pavers. Allow for open channel gulley to discharge into repositioned lowered gulley.

3.1.5

3.2 Existing Use

3.2.1 Victoria Baths was closed as a public bath in 1993 and remained dormant for a number of years. It was reopened as a building of public interest in 1997 and has a number of uses over the years including film set, wedding venue, a licensed arts venue, cinema and other uses. The Baths are now open to the public for free between April & September on Tuesdays between the hours of 11:00am & 3:00pm. Outside of this the Baths are open for events but other than that remain closed to the general public outside of these hours.

3.2.2 The Victoria Baths Trust host an occasional 'Big Splash' event where swimming is returned to the Victoria Baths, but this is a rare event.

3.2.3 The property is Grade II* Listed but not set within a conservation area. The official list entry number is 1200808 and was granted on 18th January 1983.

3.3 Layout

3.3.1 No alterations required to the existing layout of any dwelling.

3.4 Scale

3.4.1 No change in scale is proposed and therefore this item is not considered applicable.

3.5 Appearance

3.5.1 The works proposed will have a very minor amendment to the concrete ramp to the front elevation of the building. The change will be from a concrete ramp to a concrete ramp with facing brickwork which will match the surrounding building. There will be a galvanised aluminium grating installed to allow water drainage but prevent debris from entering the drainage runs.

4.0 Heritage Statement

4.1.1 Victoria Bath's and the attached forecourt walls were designated as a Grade II* listed building in 1983. The listing mentions but is not limited to "Red brick with buff terracotta dressings, steeply pitched slate roof with glass skylights. The Eclectic style combining Jacobean and Baroque elements. Two-and-a-half storey main range with single-storey wings and 2-storey bath halls, with basements. The entrance block is a symmetrical 5-bay composition, with 3:2:1:2:3 windows, the centre and end bays breaking forwards slightly and steeply gabled, and flanked by single-storey 3-window side wings on the same axis… The centre has a canted bay at ground floor with mullion-and-transom windows and a parapet with moulded terracotta panel, but all other ground floor openings are round-headed with keyed terracotta surrounds, including a doorway with Ionic shafts in the centre of each of the 3-window end bays…"

4.1.2 The building also has significant social value and is open for guided tours, open days and other public events. The Baths are also available for private hire for events such as weddings, film locations and others.

5.0 Precedent Decision

5.1.1 We do not believe that any part of this proposal is creating a precedent as there have been works undertaken to the access of Victoria Baths previously. These include the formation of a temporary access ramp for 2 years whilst works were undertaken to the front façade & roof in 2009. There have also been works to the Males 2nd Class and female entrances to create an accessible ramp which provides level access to both entrances.

5.1.2 The works proposed are smaller in nature than the two described above and have been proposed to prevent the continued deterioration of the internal finishes of the basement offices.

5.1.3 The ramps are not mentioned within the Historic England listing entry for Victoria Baths, and the gradient of the ramp is in excess of those required for disabled access. Entry for disabled users is provided elsewhere, the ramp is primarily used for accessing the basement offices and storage by the site staff.

6.0 Access

6.1.1 No changes to access are proposed and therefore access is considered not applicable.

7.0 Summary

7.1.1 The proposed works are the amendment of a concrete ramp to the front elevation of Victoria Baths. The ramp is located next to the Males 1st Class entrance and is utilised to access the basement offices. Currently water running down the ramp during rainfall events and soaking into the brickwork on the front elevation, which is causing the deterioration of the finishes internally. The proposed works involve breaking out the concrete ramp and adjoining area to a width of 850mm and a depth of 150mm below floor level. The excavated areas are then retained with brickwork walls constructed with bricks to match existing in appearance and colour and capped in a header bond. Threshold drains are to be installed to the excavated areas to diver the water run off towards new and existing drainage connections. Area 1 is finished with a galvanised aluminium grating, area 2 is finished with York stone pavers. The brickwork to the front elevation that is exposed by the excavations is to be repointed in a mortar mix to match existing.

APPENDIX A

37437 – Victoria Bath's Listed Building Application – Photo Schedule

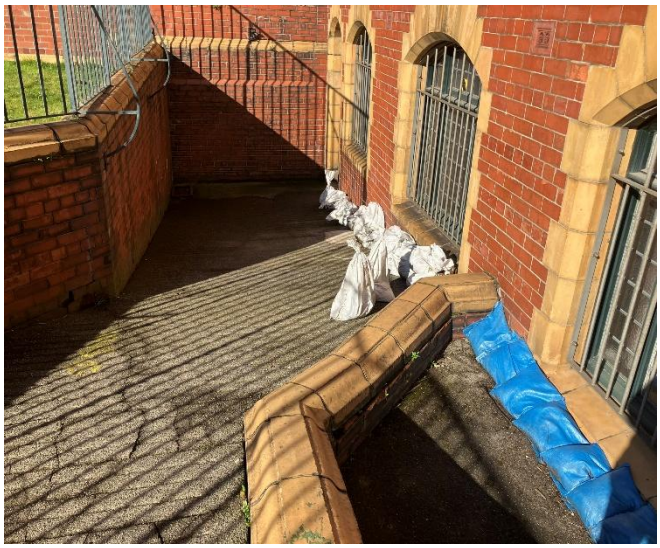


Photo 1: Overview of area of proposed works.

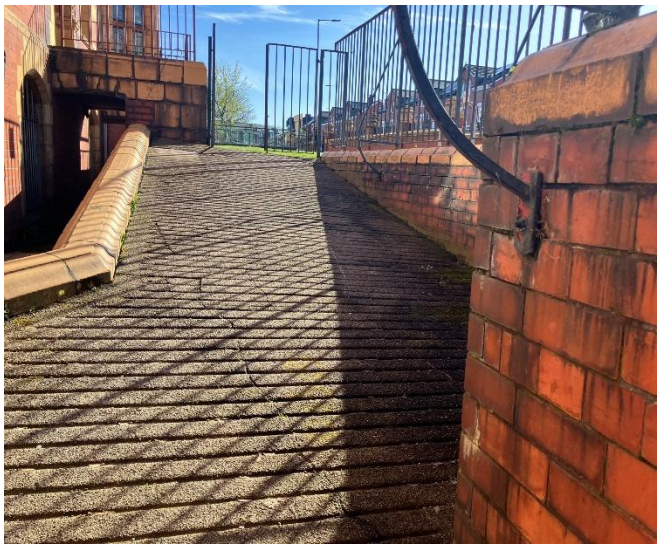


Photo 2: View from the bottom of the ramp looking up.



Photo 3: Photo showing area 1 as described within drawings & specification. Sandbags have been used as a temporary measure to try and reduce the water ingress into the building. Note existing drain to bottom left hand corner of ramp. This will be connected onto by area 1's new threshold drain.



Photo 4: Significant gap to abutment between concrete ramp and external face of brickwork to Victoria Baths. The ramp is currently diverting water to this gap and causing water ingress internally.



Photo 5: Photo showing area 2 as described within drawings & specification. Sandbags are again being used as a temporary measure to try to reduce water ingress. This area will be exacvated down and a threshold drain installed diverting any water towards existing drainage.



Photo 6: Existing downpipe and drainage will require extending and shortening once the area has been excavated. The existing downpipe will be extended in cast iron in a profile to match the existing one. The existing drainage to both areas will be jetted to ensure free flowing.

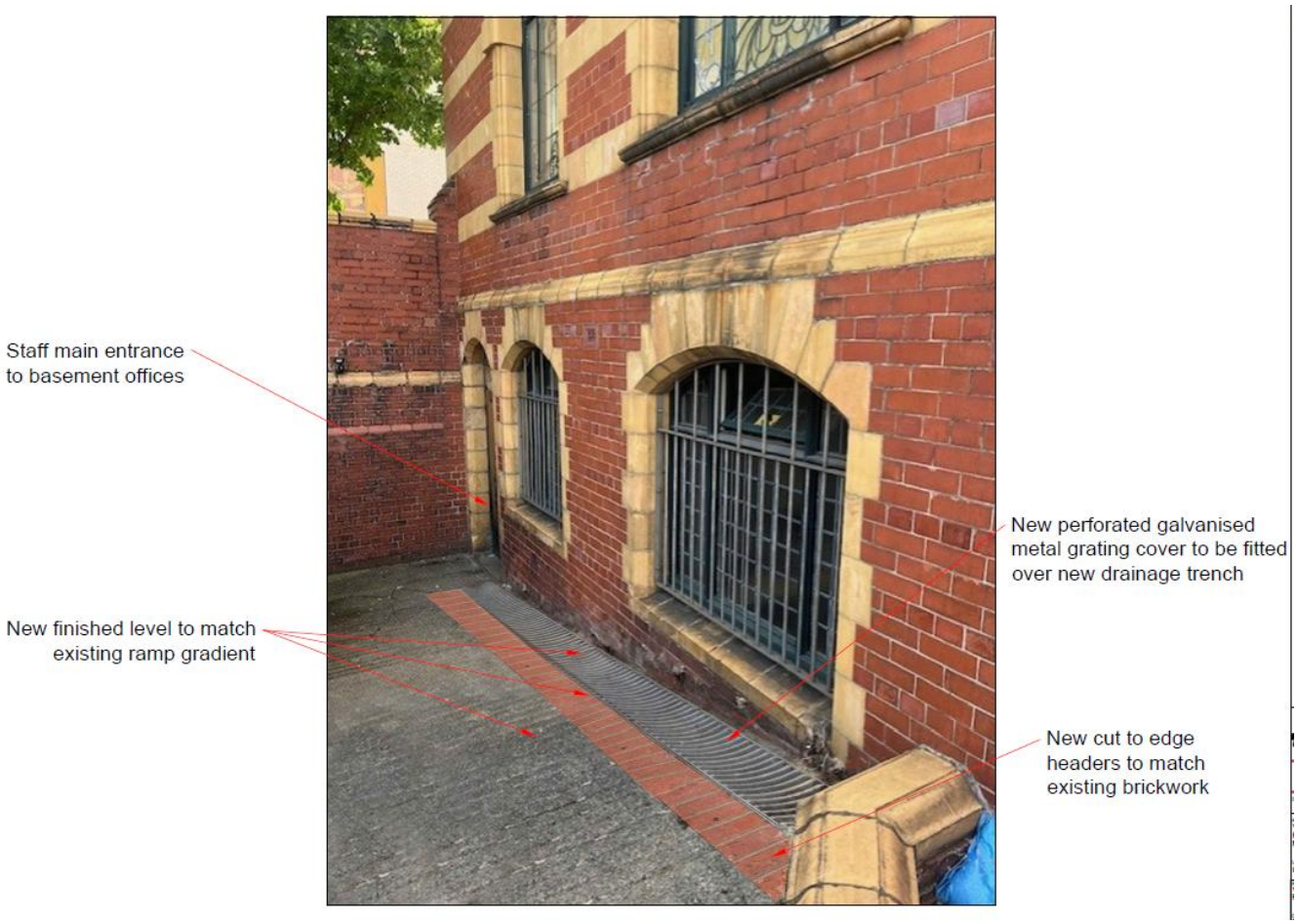


Photo 7: An impression showing what area 1 will look like following the works, including the installation of the retaining wall capped with headers, galvanised metal grating to cover retained area behind wall and prevent trips and a new connection to the existing drainage.