Hawkins\
Brown

10.07.2026

Manchester Metropolitan University – All Saints West

Planning Application Reference: 145084/FO/2026
Pre-Commencement Conditions Discharge, Condition No.4

Architectural Design Note

External Metal Wall Cladding Panels to Sandra Burslem Building east elevation:

This design note has been prepared in support of the discharge of pre-commencement planning conditions, condition no.4, relating to the specification and appearance of making good the external wall cladding panels to the east elevation of the Manchester Metropolitan University's Sandra Burslem Building (Law School).

Proposed Cladding Panels:

The proposed works comprise the installation of uninsulated, secret-fixed metal rainscreen wall cladding panels to make good and extend areas of existing facade panelling. The new panels will be finished in RAL 9006 (White Aluminium) with a metallic finish (unless a more suitable colour and finish is found) selected to closely match the colour, reflectivity and overall appearance of the surrounding existing facade panels.

The proposed panels will be set out to match the existing panel arrangement wherever practicable, including panel dimensions, orientation, jointing rhythm and general facade composition. Minor variations to panel setting out may occur only where necessary to accommodate contemporary system requirements, manufacturing constraints and/or installation tolerances.

Compatibility with Existing Cladding:

The existing cladding system is understood to be an historic Proteus panel system. Due to the passage of time, changes in industry standards, product development and regulatory requirements, the original panel system is no longer manufactured and cannot be directly replicated on a like-for-like basis.

Notwithstanding this limitation, it remains the architect's intention that the new cladding works achieve the closest possible visual match to the existing facade. Current proposals therefore seek to utilise a contemporary panel system of similar appearance, anticipated to be supplied by the same manufacturer, Proteus, where possible.

Panel Jointing and Visual Continuity:

A key distinction between the existing and proposed systems relates to the treatment of panel joints. The existing panels incorporate a fixing system with an integral sealed gasket, which contributes significantly to the visual character of the facade through the expression of recessed joint lines.

The contemporary system is likely to utilise an open jointed secret-fix arrangement, which differs from the original construction methodology. To ensure visual consistency and maintain the homogeneous appearance of the building envelope, HBA propose the introduction of a matching gasket seal detail within the new panel joints.

This approach will replicate the visual characteristics of the existing facade by maintaining the appearance of shadow gaps and gasketed joint lines across both the retained and new areas of cladding. The intention is to minimise any discernible distinction between old and new fabric when viewed from normal public vantage points.

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Design Intent:

The overarching design objective is to preserve the established architectural character of the Sandra Burslem Building through the use of a new, contemporary cladding system that:

- Matches the existing panels in size, orientation and general setting out wherever reasonably achievable.
- Utilises secret-fixed metal panels finished in metallic RAL 9006 to closely match the existing colour and surface finish where reasonably achievable.
- Maintains a consistent facade rhythm and appearance despite the unavailability of the original cladding system.
- Introduces a complementary gasket joint detail to replicate the visual effect of the existing panel system and ensure continuity across the facade.

The proposed solution represents the closest practical and commercially viable equivalent to the existing installation and is being carefully developed with Eric Wright Construction and their specialist subcontractor to ensure that the design intent is realised, and the completed works read as a coherent and visually unified facade.