15-030 - The Coffee

103 Deansgate, Manchester M3 2BQ

Heritage Design & Access Statement

by MGMA Architects

CLIENT/ SITE INFORMATION

Client	Coffee Xpertiz Manchester Limited
Site address	103 Deansgate, Manchester M3 2BQ
LPA	Manchester City Council

DESIGN TEAM INFORMATION

Architect	MGMA Architects
Planning Consultant	-
Heritage Consultant	-
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1.0 PROJECT INFORMATION

1.1 APPLICATION DESCRIPTION

This Heritage Design & Access Statement accompanies the applications for listed building consent and advertisement consent prepared by MGMA Architects, on behalf of the applicant The Coffee. It concerns the proposed development at 103 Deansgate, Manchester M3 2BQ, which comprises:

- Installation of a replacement illuminated projecting sign to the Deansgate elevation, and replacement window signage to the Deansgate and South King Street elevations.

The proposed works are listed in Section 1.3 and are fully described in this statement and the accompanying drawings.

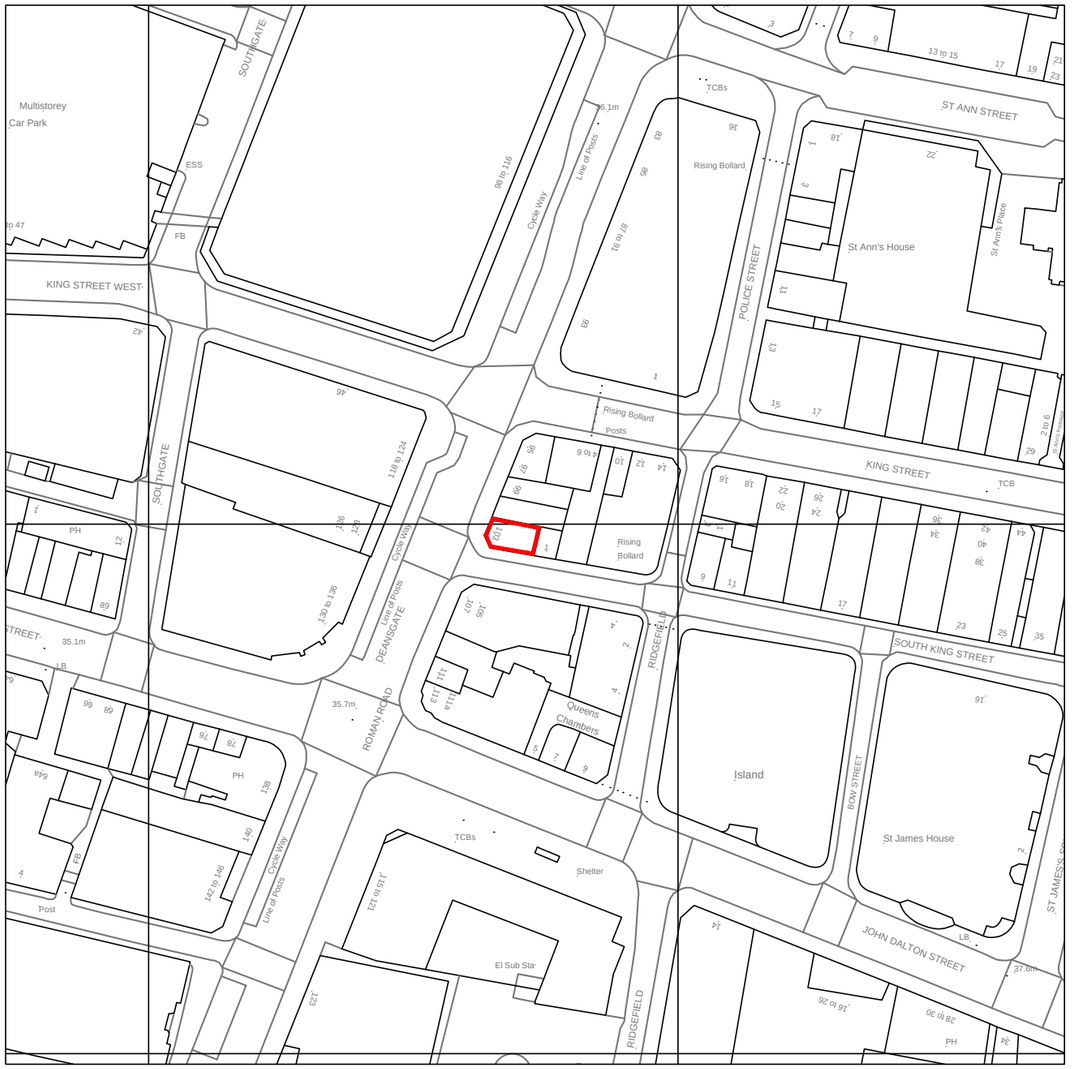
1.2 SITE LOCATION & DESCRIPTION

103 Deansgate is a self-contained commercial unit located at the ground floor of a four storey Grade II listed mixed use building, occupying a full urban block bounded by Deansgate, King Street, Ridgefield, and South King Street. 103 Deansgate is located at the south-west corner of this block, with frontage to Deansgate and South King Street, and is accessed by way of a pedestrian entrance at this chamfered corner of the block.

103 Deansgate forms part of a designated heritage asset in the form of the block described above, list entry 1210004, identified as 95-103 Deansgate, 1-5 South King Street, and 4-14 King Street, and listed Grade II. The heritage asset and its setting are fully described in Section 2 of this document.

The application site is located within the St Anns Square conservation area of central Manchester.

The application site area is 55m², the gross internal area of the premises (taken from the Agent's particulars) is 47m².



SITE AREA: 55 m²

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1.3 PURPOSE OF THIS STATEMENT

Paragraph 207 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, updated December 2024) states that applicants are required

> "*...to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance*."

This statement accordingly describes the significance of the heritage asset, 95-103 Deansgate, 1-5 South King Street, and 4-14 King Street, together with that of the immediate context within the St Anns Square conservation area.

An assessment of the potential impact of the proposed development is provided with reference to the local and national planning policy context. The level of detail in this statement is considered proportionate to the significance of the heritage asset and its setting, and appropriate to the scale of works proposed. The statement should be read in conjunction with the supporting documentation within the application pack, which comprises:

- Location Plan;
- Application form;
- Plans and elevations;
- Site photographs (within this statement); and
- Outline schedule of proposed works (within this statement).

This statement has been prepared with regard to the guidance contained in the following documents:

- CABE publication Design & Access Statements: How to Read, Write & Use Them (2006);
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, updated December 2024);

In addition, this statement has been prepared in full accordance with the requirements for Design and Access Statements set out by Article 9 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.



Aerial view of central Manchester with the site marked *
(source: Google Maps, July 2026).

1.4 THE EXISTING CONDITIONS & THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development comprises the installation of illuminated lettered signage over a black decal sheet to the retained existing fanlight window on the Deansgate/ South King Street elevations, together with the installation of an illuminated projecting sign to a stone pilaster on the Deansgate elevation.

The window graphic signage which related to the last known use as a ‘Cinnabon’ bakery-cafe (Use Class E) has previously been mostly removed. Previously, decal logotype signage was applied to each of the panes on the Deansgate and South King Street elevations as shown right. The Cinnabon store closed in 2025.

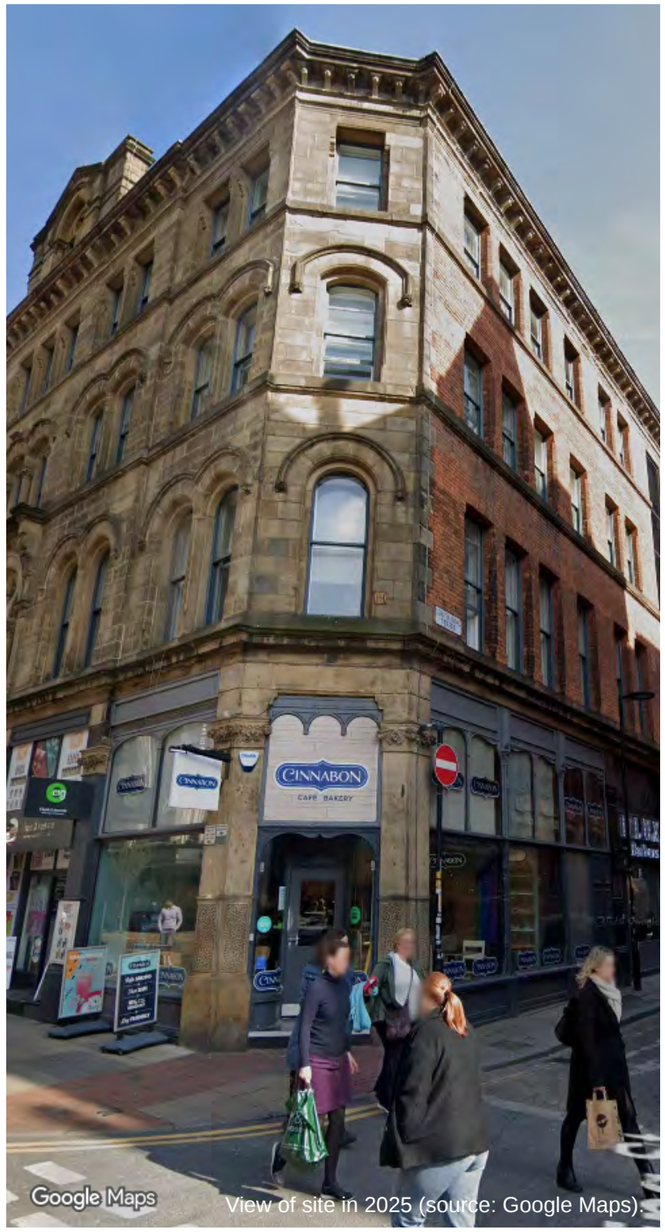
The existing window graphic signage comprises a fully adhered printed decal advertisement sheet which it is assumed relates to the electronic cigarette store at the adjacent unit, 101 Deansgate.

An internal premises sign is partially visible below the part-removed decal to the fanlight over the entrance to 103 Deansgate, which relates to the prior use of the unit as a Wrap-it-Up cafe, closing in 2020 (far right).

The previous projecting sign was externally illuminated, with the aluminium sign and luminaires supported on a painted steel bracket fixed directly into the stone pilaster to the left of the main entrance. The projecting sign was removed prior to the applicant taking the lease for the premises.

The table below sets out the application strategy for the proposed development, including all proposed signage elements. The proposed development does not seek to change extant Use Class E of the application site.

OUTLINE SCHEDULE OF PROPOSED WORKS				
WORKS ITEM		APPLICATION		
		PP	LBC	ADV
1	Installation of window decal and illuminated lettered signage to the fanlight over the main entrance (Deansgate/ South King Street elevations).	-	Y	Y
2	Installation of internally illuminated projecting lightbox sign (Deansgate elevation)	-	Y	Y



View of site in 2025 (source: Google Maps).



View of site in 2020 (source: Google Maps).

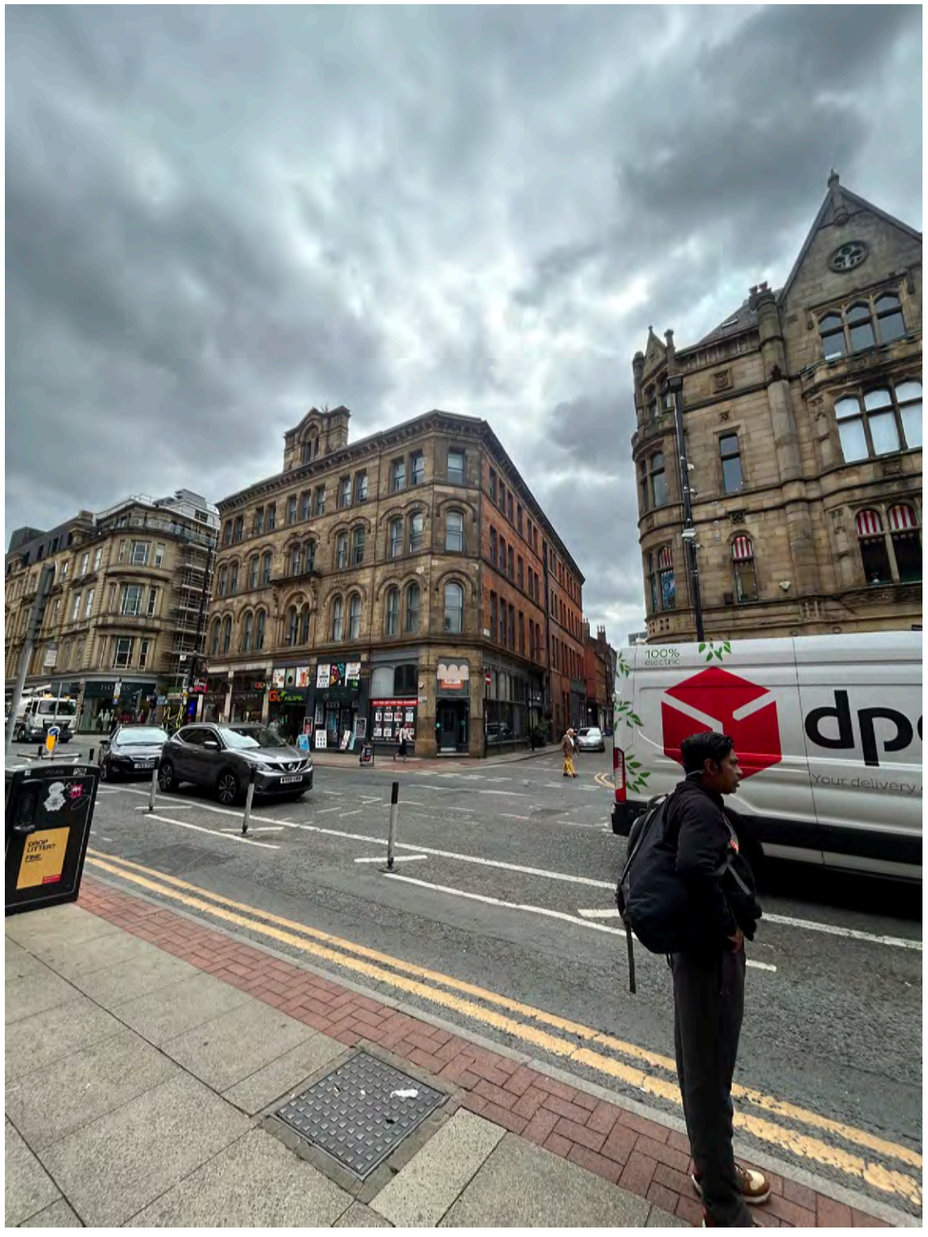
1.5 CURRENT SITE PHOTOGRAPHS





Left: View of the ‘Hanover Chambers’ block from Deansgate (source: MGMA).
Right: View of 103 Deansgate unit (source: MGMA).
Overleaf: Views from Deansgate showing the block’s context (source: MGMA).


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Left: View of the Deansgate elevation (source: MGMA).
Right: View of the South King Street elevation (source: MGMA).

2.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT

2.1 INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

This section of the document provides sufficient detail through which to understand the heritage asset in which the application site is located, its setting, and its significance. It is considered proportionate to the scale of the proposed development which, concerning facade signage only to the south-west corner of the block, is reasonably considered minor in scale. This approach accords with the requirements of paragraph 207 of the NPPF (December 2024).

This Statement has been prepared with regard to the guidance contained in the following documents:

- National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024);
- BS 7913:2013 Guide to the conservation of historic buildings; and
- Conservation Principles (English Heritage, 2008).

2.2 A BRIEF SITE HISTORY & MORPHOLOGY

As stated earlier in this statement, 103 Deansgate is a self-contained 47m² commercial unit located at the ground floor of a four storey Grade II listed mixed use building, occupying a full urban block bounded by Deansgate, King Street, Ridgefield, and South King Street, in the St Anns conservation area of central Manchester.

103 Deansgate forms part of a designated heritage asset in the form of the block described above, list entry 1210004, identified as 95-103 Deansgate, 1-5 South King Street, and 4-14 King Street, and listed Grade II.

Deansgate is one of the primary commercial thoroughfares of central Manchester, running south-west to north-east from the Rochdale Canal close to Deansgate Station to the River Irwell close to Manchester Cathedral. The application site is located to the north of Deansgate's intersection with the east-west axis of Bridge Street and John Dalton Street.

Dean's Gate (sic) is well established in Berry's plan of Manchester and Salford (1750), as is the route of (South) King Street and the fine grain of properties around King Street and St Ann's Square.

King Street is not yet fully formed through to Dean's Gate, with the application site comprising minor perimeter buildings and open land at this time.



Berry's Plan of Manchester & Salford (1750) with the application site demarcated by an arrow (source: Manchester Archives).

Berry's plan boasts a number of fine elevations for several fine private residences, and interestingly the close grain of domestic character plots survives at the heart of the St Anns conservation area, where the dense C18 street grid around King Street and St Anns Square meets the larger C19 urban blocks to the west of Deansgate. Pevsner et al (2004) note that the south portion of King Street "...has kept its Georgian proportions but only two buildings of that date survive." Parkinson-Bailey (2000) notes that development of the lower portion King Street commenced in 1753.

By 1850, the 25" Ordnance Survey reveals the block structure as firmly established, but the block itself is formed of individual properties, with the Deansgate frontage occupied by 'The King's Arms Hotel'.

South King Street is Back King Street at this time, not the only contrast to be noted. The refinement indicated by Berry's map and Pevsner's Georgian quarter is at striking odds with the Deansgate Shambles, which may be seen to the east of the site.



Ordnance Survey (1850) showing urban block composition with the application site demarcated by an arrow (source: National Library of Scotland).



King's Arms Hotel, Deansgate (undated)
(source: Jonathan Schofield Manchester Tours).

2.2 A BRIEF SITE HISTORY & MORPHOLOGY [CONT.]

There are slight differences in dating and attribution for the block, depending upon which source is consulted. The NHLE list entry 1210004 describes the building as: “Commercial block with chambers over shops. c.1870-80, altered.” No architect is recorded. The block is identified as ‘Hanover Chambers’ on early C20 editions of the Ordnance Survey, according with the list entry.

Parkinson-Bailey (2000) dates earlier, c.1860s, and also does not record an architect. He does note the patron as “S. & J. Watts, with their initials entwined over the entrance, together with allegorical figures of arts and crafts and textile manufacture.”

The earlier date is contradicted by Pevsner et al (2004), who describe the building as “offices and shops by Clegg and Knowles, 1875”, noting also the fine carved detail of the entrances.

Whichever of the dates might be closest to correct is unfortunately beyond the scope this statement to determine. It is clear, however, that the building as block is recorded by the 1890 Ordnance Survey, with the application site identifiable at this date.



Ordnance Survey (1890) showing consolidated urban block as one building, with the application site demarcated by an arrow (source: National Library of Scotland).

Parkinson-Bailey (2000) shows a view of Queen’s Chambers, Deansgate, which is the block to the south of Hanover Chambers; the latter is clearly visible in the background. The image appears to be dated 1876, but the Manchester Libraries record for the image (accession number m01452) gives 1895 as the date for the photograph.



View of Queen’s Chambers, Deansgate (1876 or 1895) with the application site demarcated by an arrow (source: Parkinson-Bailey (2000)).

In either event, by the late C19 it is clear that Deansgate is a thriving commercial thoroughfare, with substantial edifices of four storeys and more occupying whole urban blocks.

The prolific local partnership of Charles Clegg and John Knowles lasted from formation in 1851 to cessation in 1884. The Victorian Society records list their Manchester premises in succession at Booth Street, Brown Street, Cross Street, and finally King Street. A branch office in central Blackpool was briefly established in the late 1860s.

As metropolitan architects in the booming city of Manchester, Clegg and Knowles completed a typical range of warehouses, offices, schools, institutes, and private residences. It is fair to surmise that their work was a level of scale and prestige lower than their more illuminated contemporary, Alfred Waterhouse. For Hanover Chambers, they adopted a mostly restrained form of the ‘Palazzo’ style so central to the identity of C19 Manchester’s commercial and industrial architectures.

Parkinson-Bailey (2000) notes the Yorkstone frontage, which extends to the primary elevations along Deansgate and King Street, with the South King Street and Ridgefield elevations faced in Flemish bond Cheshire red brickwork, maintaining the sandstone string courses and cornice.

The upper storeys are undoubtedly where the elegance sits in this composition. The piano nobile features Roman arched and hooded windows, with shallower arches to the second floor, and flat heads to the third. The centre of the Deansgate elevation is crowned by the most eccentric central gable, at attic level over the cornice. The narrow proportions of Deansgate force an approach at obtuse angles, highlighting the slender nature of this gable’s frontage - a compositional eccentricity as evident in the C19 view as it is today.

The sandstone elevations are chamfered at the corners of King Street and Ridgefield, King Street and Deansgate, and Deansgate and South King Street. The ‘lesser’ material of brick is nonetheless afforded the delight of the curved junction between South King Street and Ridgefield. The brickwork is fine throughout, with chamfered jambs to window openings and shallow arched heads with tapered voussoirs.

The roof may be one element which explains to the “altered” epithet in the list entry, with the original hipped roof form featuring a continuous ridge parallel with the permitted, valley gutters, and a central flat roofed section replaced 1984-5 to designs by the hugely influential Manchester practice of Stephenson & Mills. Their replacement roof form was a single hipped roof with a central glazed lantern rooflight. Such is the height of the cornice and parapet that the change is scarcely readable from street level, and the eccentricity of Clegg and Knowles’ original Deansgate gable is preserved.

Further substantial change to the upper storeys was provided by another Manchester practice in 2013-14, with the conversion of the offices to 21 residential apartments by the Hurd Rolland Partnership.

2.2 A BRIEF SITE HISTORY & MORPHOLOGY [CONT.]

Subsequent alterations appear to be confined to the ground floor commercial premises including shopfront and signage. A 2024 listed building consent application was granted for repairs and refurbishment works at roof level. This application identifies the building as King Street Chambers, presumably in reference to the Barristers' Chambers which operated from the upper storeys until 2013.

Throughout its history, the upper storeys have played host to a range of accountants, architects, barristers - the professions for whom a 'chambers' style office would be a natural environment. With the 2013-14 conversion to apartments completed, commercial activity is now confined to the ground floor of the building.

Taken as a whole, the ground floor is less elegant than the upper storeys, in this author's opinion. Finer examples of the Palazzo style might employ a rusticated base, and Stewart (1956) illustrates the exemplars of Edward Walters' work at the Portland Street warehouse (1851) or the Free Trade Hall (1853). Where the weight of the upper stories is borne on a stout rusticated base, at Hanover Chambers Clegg and Knowles opted for slender pilasters below the string course over the shopfronts, with the result that the proportion of openings appears too great for the supporting masonry in relation to the floors above.

This effect is compounded by the somewhat haphazard nature of the collective commercial premises at ground floor level, most prominently on the Deansgate elevation. In each bay, shopfronts compete to outdo each other in their volume which, in a more muscular building, may be subsumed by the strength of the whole, but here surely makes the case for future calming measures. The King Street and Ridgefield elevations at ground floor level are more refined, by virtue of the general quality of shopfronts and signage.

2.3 THE APPLICATION SITE CONDITIONS 'AS FOUND'

The application site occupies a ground floor self contained commercial unit at the south-west corner of the building, with frontages to the Deansgate and South King Street elevations. Section 1 of this document provides a photographic record of the site.

Whilst it is clear there have been cumulative changes at ground floor level, the site retains a number of original or historic features. The original stone pilasters survive to the structural bays, as does the moulded string course over the signage frieze. The pilasters feature a plain plinth with a decorative panel of vermiculation. Regrettably, the pilaster between the site and the adjacent unit has been painted at some point in the past, and an advertisement sign has been fixed over the vermiculated stone panel. This panel also features an internally illuminated projecting sign.

The timber shopfront within the Deansgate elevational bay of the site features an historic timber stallriser, a large plate glass window at street level with a segmented fanlight featuring original or historic arched frame heads below a timber frieze panel which sits under the moulded string course. The pilaster at the chamfered corner to Deansgate and South King Street carries two highway signs, with the projecting sign for the unit having been previously removed.

The chamfered entrance features curved glass sidelights over an historic timber stallriser below a fanlight featuring three segmented original or historic timber arches at the head. The entrance door is part glazed and is late C20 or early C21, of no significance.

The South King Street shopfront is perhaps the most elegant, with three bays comprising each an historic timber stallriser, plate glass window, and a segmented fanlight with elegant swept moulding to the frame towards the central mullion. The timber signage frieze is split by the chamfered moulding to the frame which defines the bays. The lower window has been subdivided in the final bay, with six framed panels (the upper two outlet grilles) presumably a late C20 or early C21 modification.

A similar surviving shopfront treatment may be seen at 2 King Street, suggesting the likely historic nature of the frame arrangement.

2.4 DEFINING SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of the heritage asset as a whole is enshrined by the Grade II listing. The schedule of listing records a physical description of the building as a whole, with limited detail to the material descriptions of the elevations. It may reasonably be surmised that a greater part of the significance of the heritage asset lies in the overall form and material quality of the elevations, which at part of the ground floor and almost all of the upper floors, appears to be complete and historic if not original.

Given that 103 Deansgate occupies a small portion of the south west corner of the building at ground floor, it can be seen that any significance is proportional to the contribution made to the heritage asset as whole

As section 2.1 notes and section 1.5 shows, the original stonework pilasters defining the structural bays at ground floor level survive in situ, with the left hand example unfortunately having been previously painted on the Deansgate elevation. These original stonework elements are of the highest significance in their contribution to the building as a whole.

It is also clear from the description in section 2.3 that historic if not original shopfront frame elements survive in situ at 103 Deansgate. It is highly unlikely that ground floor shopfront glazing is historic, and from the site inspection by this office, the glass is not of the hand blown or 'crown' glass type, indicating more recent float glass replacements over time.

Without invasive investigation, it is not possible to establish exactly which elements may be historic, which more recent replacement. Notwithstanding, the overall combined character merits significance. The timber shopfront frame elements should be regarded as having a medium to high level of significance in their contribution to the building as a whole, not least their group value together with the surviving similar elements at 2 King Street.

2.5 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development seeks to retain the extant Use Class E and fit out the premises as a coffee shop, for Brazilian specialist The Coffee. The Coffee opened their first UK store in Liverpool's Grade I listed Oriel Chambers in 2025, and 103 Deansgate continues the trend for boutique serving in heritage settings.

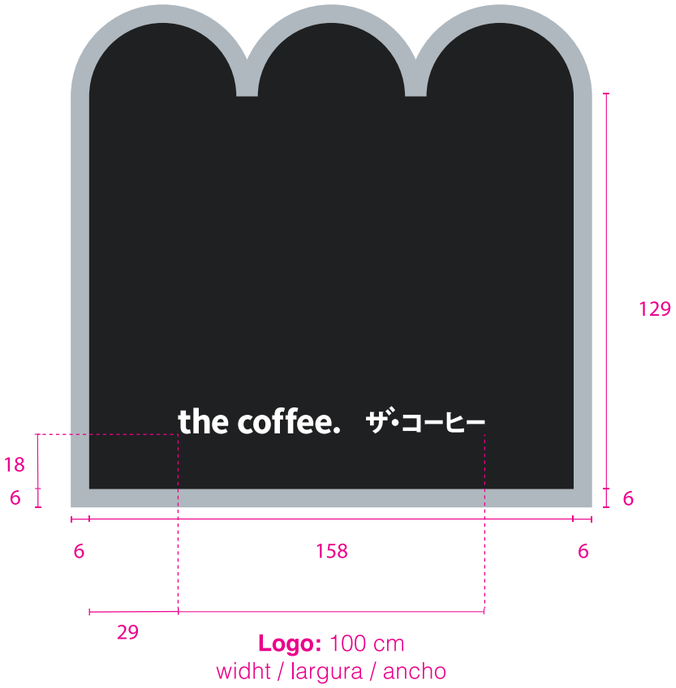
As the concept illustration (right) shows, the design intent is a calm, minimalist approach to the architecture, colour scheme, and signage in line with The Coffee brand guidelines. The signage is designed by BR.A Arquitetura. Translating this to the specific context of 103 Deansgate, the design amplifies the retained historic shopfront elements by removing the accrued visual clutter from all windows, restoring the visual link through the glazing currently obscured.

Signage is restrained and lettered in monochrome, so as not to detract from the historic character of the shopfront. The signage elements are confined to the main entrance fanlight and the right-hand pilaster of the Deansgate elevation.

The window signage is located over the main entrance only. The existing glazing and frame of the fanlight is retained, and a black decal sheet will be installed to fully obscure the pane. Individual letters are surface mounted on the glazing, illuminated by a concealed lamp behind the glazing and decal, the result being individually illuminated letters. Although vinyl signs are generally discouraged in the Shopfront and Signage Design Guide published by the City Council, it can be seen that the approach here is high quality, confined to one location, and necessary to offset the white lettered signage.

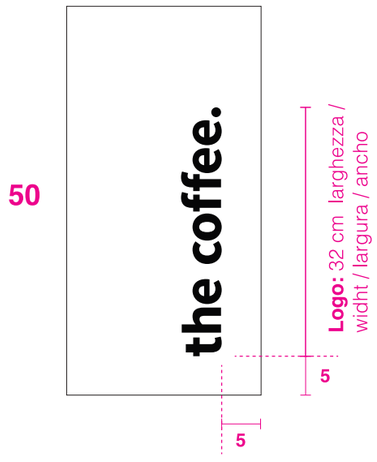
The projecting sign comprises an internally illuminated acrylic 'lightbox' with black surface mounted lettering. The sign will be mechanically fixed to the stonework, if possible using one of the previous fixing points evident on the pilaster. There is an extant electricity supply route from the previously removed projecting sign.

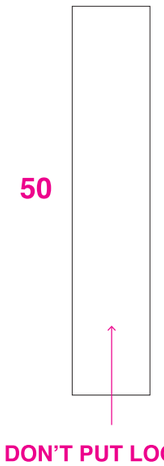
The signage and concept visual are shown right. Full details of the signage, including dimensions and position, are included in the application drawing pack.

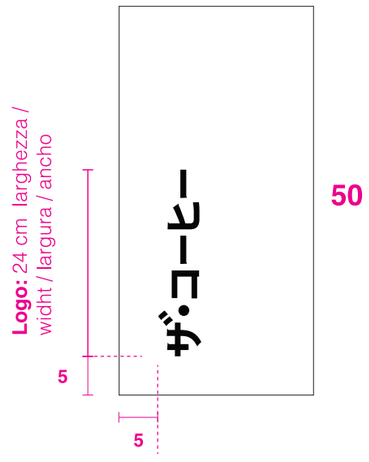




Above: 103 Deansgate storefront concept image
Below: Cube projecting facade sign
Left: Window fascia sign
Source: BR.A Arquitetura.







2.6 THE POLICY CONTEXT: MANCHESTER CORE STRATEGY

The proposed development contributes to maintaining an active ground floor frontage to this mixed use building (Policy CC 7), and is located in the Primary Shopping Area of the city centre close to the employment area of Spinningfields (Policy CC 2). The new coffee shop is ideally located for local transport and to serve the vibrant local market of city centre shops, offices, and nearby residents.

Alongside local residents, the proposed development will support the new coffee shop to provide services to visitors to the city, supporting the objectives of Policy CC 4.

This statement and the accompanying drawings sets out how the proposed development comprises high quality design proposals complementary to the historic character of the heritage asset. It is clear that the historic shopfronts are both preserved and enhanced by the proposed development, with discrete contemporary design complementary to the heritage. The proposed development is demonstrably supportive of Policy CC 9.

This statement defines the character of the setting and the significance of the heritage, demonstrating how the proposals are sympathetic in response to this analysis in accordance with Policies EN 1 and EN 3.

The proposed development has been brought forward with regard to the Shopfront and Signage Design Guide, and can be seen to be a high quality design complementary to the historic shopfront setting within the wider Grade II listed heritage asset.

2.7 IMPACT ON THE HERITAGE ASSET

This statement and the accompanying application drawing pack has demonstrated that the proposed development retains in situ all original and historic elements of the building facade. The existing graphics to be removed are of no significance. Restoring clear glazing to the premises will have a positive impact on the heritage asset by removing visual clutter and amplifying the historic shopfront elements.

The stone pilasters will be retained in situ as found. Any repointing required following the installation of the projecting sign will be carried out in natural hydraulic lime mortar, in a mix to be agreed with the local authority conservation officer.

The installation of the projecting sign will require mechanical fixings into the stonework. If possible, existing fixing points will be used, but it isn't possible to guarantee this before testing the strength of the previous repair. A new fixing has some level of harm on the original stonework, but is confined to the four mechanical fixings for the 500 x 100mm fixing plate/ lamp channel for the sign. The small scale, and the high quality and restrained design of the signage are mitigating factors. On balance there is a moderate impact from the installation of the new projecting sign.

Installation of the lettered signage to the retained fanlight over the main entrance removes a previous accumulation of unsympathetic and unsightly graphics and signage, which is beneficial to the heritage asset overall. The decal and lettered signage over the main entrance are restrained and high quality, and can reasonably be assessed to have no impact on the heritage asset.

Paragraph 213 of the NPPF (December 2024) states that harm to the significance of Grade II listed heritage assets should be exceptional. This statement demonstrates that the level of harm is minor and confined to fixings into stonework. Any harm may reasonably be termed as less than substantial by some measure.

The proposed development has been brought forward to support the new occupier of 103 Deansgate opening their coffee shop premises. The signage is vital to establish the business as a trading venture, and the design has been carefully considered to celebrate the heritage features of the shopfront. The proposal does not detract from the character of the wider heritage asset, and through its restrained, high quality contemporary design can be seen to be complementary to the Grade II listed building and the wider St Anns Square conservation area. On balance, the neutral to minor impact associated with the signage may be considered acceptable, and the local authority is politely requested to grant consent for the application.

2.8 REFERENCES

Beesley, I. & de Figueiredo, P. *Victorian Manchester and Salford* (Halifax: Ryburn Publishing, 1988).

Hartwell, C., Hyde, M., & Pevsner, N. *Lancashire: Manchester and the South-East* (The Buildings of England) (London: Yale University Press, 2004).

Parkinson-Bailey, J. Manchester: An Architectural History (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000).

Reilly, C. H. *Some Manchester Streets and Their Buildings* (London: The University Press of Liverpool, 1924).

Stewart, C. *The Stones of Manchester* (London: Edward Arnold, 1956).

3.1 USE

The proposed development does not seek to change extant Use Class E of the application site.

The application site is currently vacant. The last known use was as a bakery-cafe (Use Class E). The proposed use is a coffee shop (Use Class E).

3.2 AMOUNT

The application site area is 55m², the gross internal area of the premises (taken from the Agent's particulars) is 47m². The proposed development described in this application is confined to the elevations of the ground floor self contained commercial unit at 103 Deansgate.

3.3 LAYOUT & ACCESS

The premises will continue to operate in the same configuration, with the public accessing the coffee shop via the main entrance at the chamfered corner of Deansgate and South King Street.

The proposed projecting building signage is located on the Deansgate elevation. The proposed lettered window sign is located over the main entrance, on the chamfered corner facing Deansgate and South King Street. Full details are provided earlier in this statement and on the accompanying drawings.

3.4 SCALE

The scale of the proposed projecting sign has been carefully considered so as to be proportionate to the retained stone pilaster on which it is mounted. The restrained contemporary design is a high quality addition to the premises, complementary to the historic character of its setting.

The scale of the proposed window signage is limited to a small area of illuminated lettering over the main entrance. This subtle approach is also complementary to the historic shopfront.

Full details, including materiality and dimensions, are provided on the accompanying drawings.

3.5 APPEARANCE

The proposed signage adopts a complementary approach to the historic character of the heritage asset. An elegant, restrained, contemporary design has been developed with modest proportions clearly subordinate to the historic shopfronts and the wider heritage asset.

The projecting sign is a simple 'lightbox' with surface lettering and concealed bracket fixings. Located centrally on the retained stone pilaster, the proposal represents a significant improvement on the quality of previous signage previously fixed to the premises.

The lettered signage to the fanlight over the main entrance is similarly a significant improvement on the current conditions. The restrained nature of The Coffee as a brand is eminently suited to the historic character of the premises.

The retained shopfronts are liberated from clutter and celebrated in the new signage arrangement.

The signage proposals have been carefully developed alongside the shopfront redecoration scheme, providing a coordinated high quality appearance which retains all historic elements. The scheme is understated and is ultimately respectful of the heritage, in the form of both the retained shopfronts, the listed building as a whole, and the wider St Anns conservation area setting.

APPENDIX A: NATIONAL HERITAGE LIST FOR ENGLAND ENTRY

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