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DESIGN AND ACCESS REPORT, ADDENDUM

ST MARGARET'S CHAMBERS

REVISION	A
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PROJECT REF.	2093

ARCHITECTURE + HERITAGE

AMAZON HOUSE • BRAZIL STREET

MANCHESTER • M1 3PW

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document is an addendum to the existing Design and Access Statement prepared for St Margaret's Chambers, 5 Newton Street, Manchester. It follows planning applications Ref. No. 144155/FO/2025 and 144156/LO/2025 and relates to amendments to the approved schemes.

The addendum addresses only those aspects of the proposals that differ from the approved schemes for the conversion of the upper floors into 12 apartments. The amendments comprise the relocation of the bin and cycle store, including associated alterations to the facade at 36 Back Piccadilly, the introduction of a new residents' gym within the basement, and revised access arrangements to the rooftop plant equipment.

This document has been prepared by Atelier MB Architects for our Client, Charlotte Street Estates Ltd, and must be read in conjunction with the full supporting information package, including the Heritage Statement prepared by Atelier MB.

2.0 CONTEXT

2.1 LOCATION + CONNECTIVITY



Image: St Margaret's Chambers, location plan.

The building sits on the edge of the significant Piccadilly Gardens urban 'node' - a public transport and pedestrian focus point which offers gateways into various areas of the city from the main shopping area of Market Street, to the more office based districts of Portland Street and beyond. This building is also located on the corner of Newton Street; a gateway into the Northern Quarter area of the city. The uses around the site vary considerably from upper floor apartments on Piccadilly itself, to hotels, offices, and predominantly commercial retail units at ground floor.

The existing surrounding uses are a mix of retail, food and drink, office, and residential.

The building sits in a prominent city centre position – facing both Piccadilly and with its main entrance on Newton St, at a busy thoroughfare junction for both pedestrian and vehicular traffic and a meeting point between the shopping district of Market Street and Piccadilly gardens to the Northwest, and the Piccadilly train station to the Southeast.

The site is highly accessible by public transport, with Metrolink, national and local rail and bus services located within the immediate area and most required amenities found within walking distance. Car share is available throughout the city, the closest car club located at Piccadilly Place. Cycle storage will be provided.

2.2 BUILDING CONDITION + USE



Image: St Margaret's Chambers, main frontage on Newton St.

Interior
The property has undergone a series of internal modifications in recent years, including the insertion of a modern lift into the stairwell, additional subdivisions, and the introduction of toilets and kitchen areas.

Most rooms are missing at least some of their historic details. Many of the panelled partitions have been modified, the date of changes is uncertain. Some appear to date from c.1930 and others are of much later modern construction. Similarly, doors are a mixture of older versions with a higher quality construction and later, lower quality, additions.

Whilst some sash windows remain, many have been modified into casements, others have been replaced with timber subframes and steel casements. Remnants of contemporary secondary glazing remain to the bay windows on some floors.

At ground floor, areas of historic terrazzo remain underneath contemporary flooring and staircase walls retain low level decorative blue glazed tiles. The balustrades remain predominantly. Some cornicing and skirtings remain, but many are poor quality contemporary versions.

There are several decorative fireplaces remaining, although many have been boarded over. Contemporary light fittings are visible throughout but there is no evidence of any further historic servicing.

Exterior
The lightwell needs further investigation at ground level due to the deterioration of a felted roof and existing M&E equipment obscuring the junction with the walls.

In general, the external envelope appears to be in sound condition, with isolated damage to be investigated further once scaffolding is erected. Evidence suggests that the roofing has been replaced in recent years.

Use
A language school recently vacated the upper floors. The ground and basement floors remain in use as retail units.

The office market trend in this location is for open plan offices and large floorplates. Due to the nature of this office building, the floorplate is divided into cellular spaces. The interior plan form and remaining features have heritage significance, in particular the partitions and associated details. Therefore, conversion to modern office use was not considered an appropriate solution for this property.

2.3 HERITAGE

This report is to be read in conjunction with the separate Heritage Statement addendum prepared by Atelier MB. An extract is included below:

'St Margaret's Chambers dates from the end of the 19th century. Published sources attribute the building to Charles Henry Heathcote and date it between 1885 and 1889. Photographic and mapping evidence from 1885/6 show an empty site, but it is likely the building was constructed soon after.

St Margaret's Chambers was built as a commercial premises, with ground floor shops with offices above. Dating from the last decade of the 19th century, the property is four storeys of red/pink brick, plus an attic and a basement. It is elaborate in architectural style with a decorative frieze to external elevations and ornate gables.

Research in newspaper archives shows St Margaret's Chambers named as the Manchester offices of the West India and Pacific Company in 1891. In 1896 an advertisement in the Manchester Guardian describes 'single and double' offices within the building with 'perfect light' and a 'passenger elevator'.

At the centre of the Newton Street façade, is located a main entrance and hallway, with stairs and a lift to the upper floors. Each floor thereafter follows a similar pattern with a central corridor and cellular spaces located off to each side. A small lightwell to the rear is terminated at ground level by a pitched roof.'

Please refer to the Heritage Statement for further details.

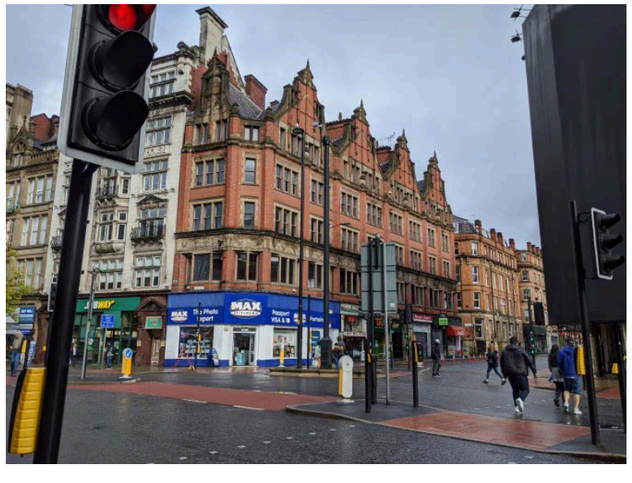


Image: External view from Piccadilly

2.4 MATERIALITY









Images: Red brick, sandstone, gable detail, stone freize.

Images: Example brick facade, stone detail and slate roof covering.

The property is red brick with sandstone details and a decorative stone frieze across the two main elevations.

Built around 1890, it has particularly elaborately shaped gables, regular timber framed sash windows (with metal frames at first floor level) and a slate roof covering. The adjoining property is slightly taller, with a predominately Portland stone façade, whilst across Newton St on the corner, a new hotel has consent which will have a red/brown concrete façade.

2.5 POLICY CONTEXT

National Policy
The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), updated 2024

At its core, NPPF seeks to achieve sustainable development through economic, social and environmentally sustainable objectives and states that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

NPPF recognises that sympathetic changes to heritage assets are necessary to ensure their viable ongoing use, and that alterations must be justified and their impact upon significance assessed.

NPPF, paragraph 210 states,
'In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.'

c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.'

When considering potential impacts of proposed development on an asset's significance, NPPF states that 'great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.....this is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance'. NPPF, para. 212.

and that
'where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm....this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.' NPPF, para. 215.

The building is part of the Stevenson Square Conservation Area, which is itself designated as a heritage asset. It is considered to be a positive contributor to the special architectural and historical character of the Conservation Area. The above policy therefore applies to the building and its role within the wider heritage asset.

Local Policy
Manchester City Council policy of relevance:

'EN1 The City Centre contains a rich legacy which reflects its urban evolution to the current day and includes listed buildings, conservation areas, archaeological remains and an historic street pattern. Developers will be expected to consider the City's heritage and continue the rich pattern of activity in the core area. '

The Greater Manchester Strategy (2021-2031)
This strategy sets out the aim to become a carbon neutral city by 2038, and the desire to protect and encompass heritage in the city going forwards:

'We will seize the opportunities presented for our local towns and centres to develop post-pandemic, building on their distinctive and unique identities, maximising the local culture, heritage and recreational offers, providing safe, sustainable local centres which are reflective of, and responsive to, the needs of their communities. Drawing on places uniqueness and with rich culture, heritage and diversity at their hearts.'

Places for Everyone became part of the statutory development plan for 9 Greater Manchester authorities in 2024.

In relation to heritage it states that positive management and integration of heritage should be informed by,
' Integrating the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings, with creative contextual architectural responses that contribute to their significance and sense of place.

Delivering positive benefits that sustain and enhance the historic environment, as well as contributing to the economic viability, accessibility and environmental quality of a place, and to social wellbeing; and

5. Exploring opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that restoration of historic buildings offer.

3.0 THE BRIEF

3.0 THE BRIEF

The client brief was to develop a series of amendments to the approved scheme that would improve the operation, management and accessibility of the building while retaining the overall design intent.

The client requested that the approved basement cycle and bin store be relocated to a more convenient street-level location, providing improved access for residents and facilitating refuse collection without the need to use the passenger lift.

The client also requested the introduction of a residents' gym within the basement, with new internal access from the ground floor.

In addition, the client sought to improve access to the rooftop plant equipment by replacing the existing external access arrangement with a safer and more practical internal solution.

The scope of the brief therefore comprises:

- Relocation of the approved cycle and bin store to improve accessibility and building management.
- Improved street-level access for residents and refuse collection.
- Introduction of a residents' gym within the basement.
- Simplified and compliant access to the rooftop plant equipment.
- Retention of the overall principles of the approved development.

4.0 PROPOSALS

4.1 INTERVENTIONS

The proposed amendments have been carefully developed to minimise intervention to the approved scheme while improving the operation and management of the building.

The principal changes comprise the relocation of the approved cycle and bin store to a more accessible ground floor location, together with the associated façade alterations required to accommodate it, the introduction of a residents' gym within the basement accessed via a new internal staircase extending from the existing apartment staircase, and the revision of the approved rooftop access strategy to provide a simpler and safer means of accessing the plant equipment.

These amendments have been designed to preserve the overall design principles of the approved development, with minimal impact on the building's architectural and historic significance.

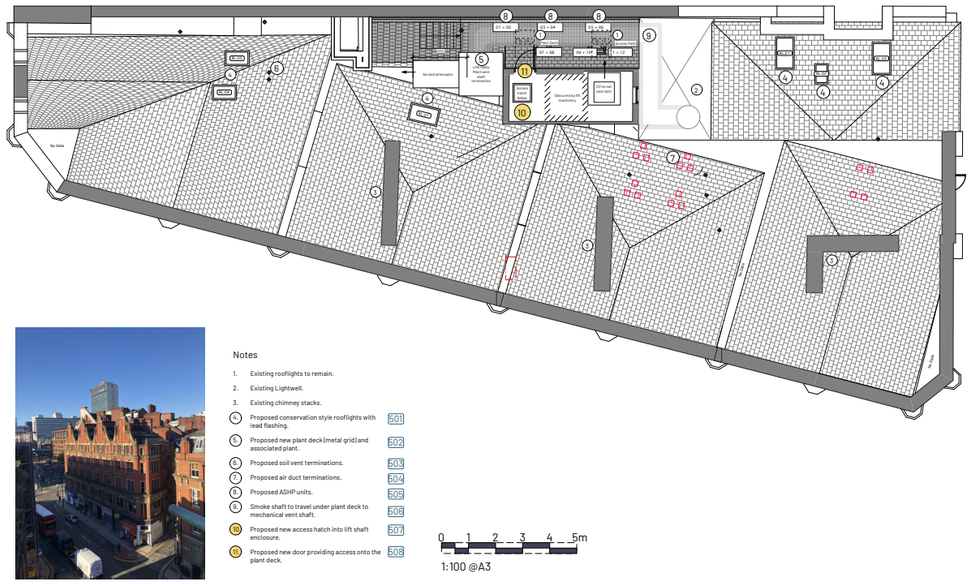


Image: Extract of proposals for roof interventions to support fire strategy.

4.2 CYCLE AND BIN STORAGE

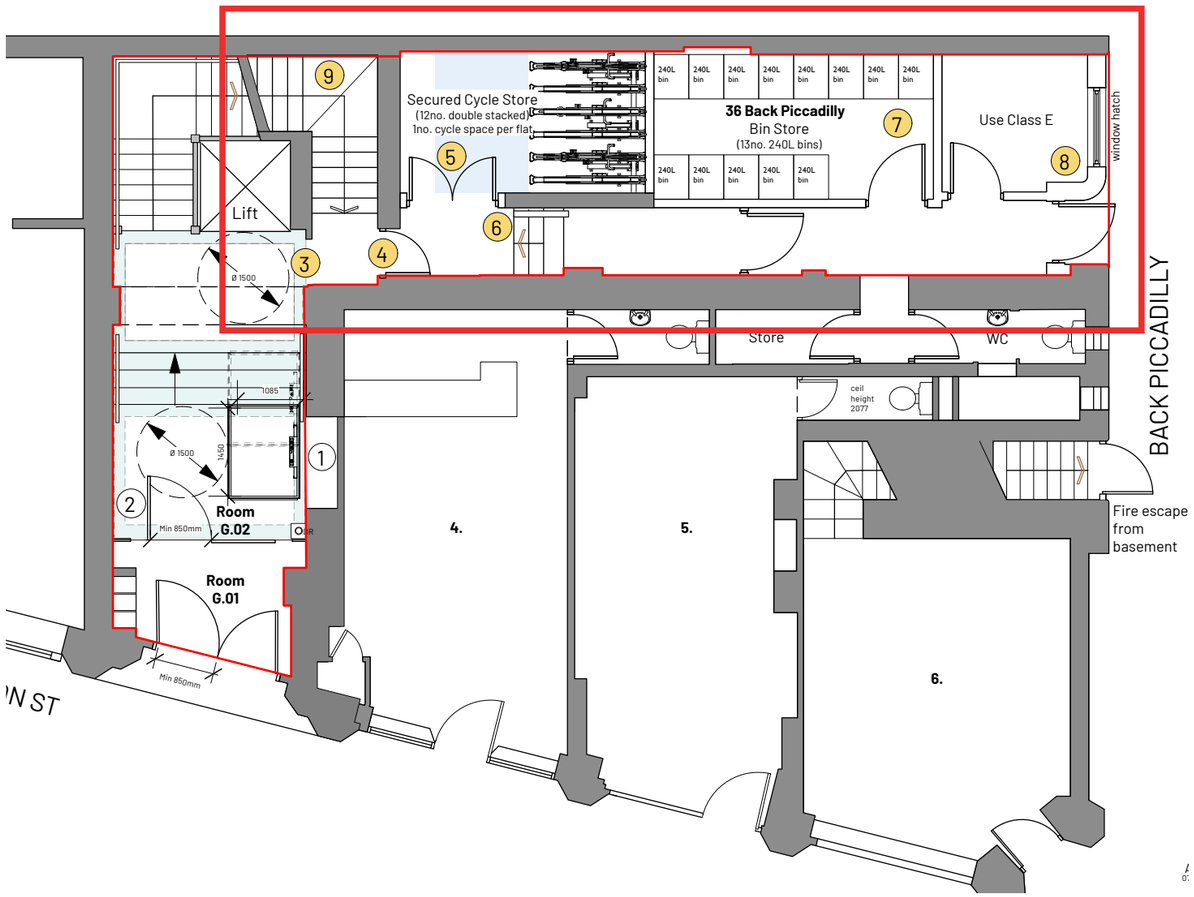


Image: Ground floor plan showing cycle and bin store location.

REF: B04, G03, G04, G05, G06, G07

Following further design development, the cycle and bin storage provisions have now been accommodated at ground floor level within the former takeaway unit at 36 Back Piccadilly. This arrangement provides direct street-level access and removes the need for the basement platform lift previously proposed for transporting bins and bicycles.

The revised arrangement offers a more practical and accessible solution for residents. The bin and cycle stores are accessed via a new door created from the apartment lobby into the storage area, providing both internal resident access and direct external access from Back Piccadilly via a new secure access door incorporated within the proposed reconfigured facade.

The cycle store provides 12 no. cycle spaces (one space per apartment) arranged in a double-stacked configuration within a secure internal store.

The refuse storage facilities have been designed in accordance with the Council's waste management requirements and include provision for 13 no. 240L bins.

4.3 36 BACK PICCADILLY FACADE

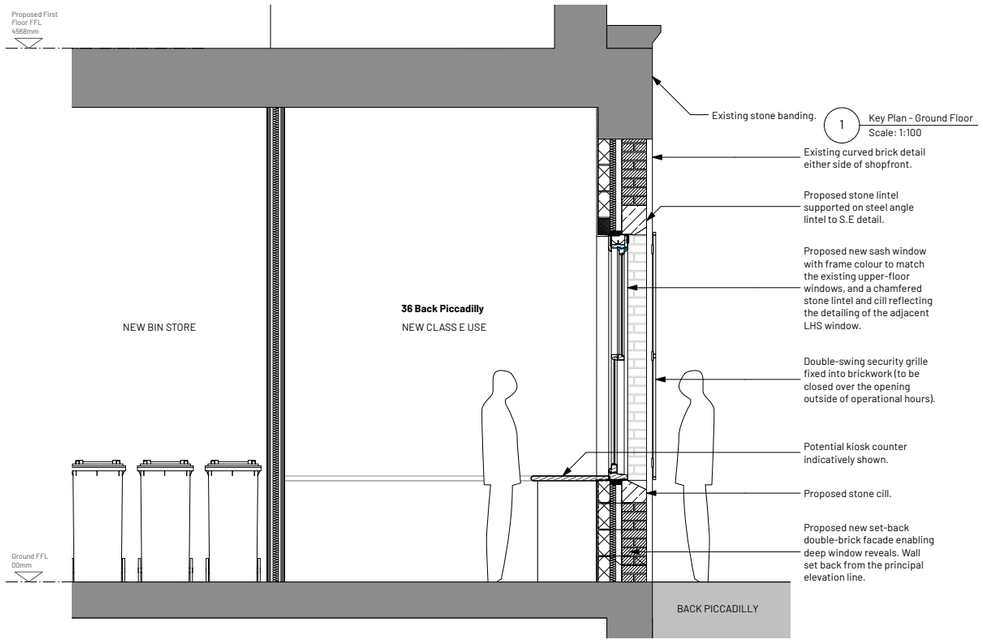


Image: Proposed section through 36 Back Piccadilly elevation.

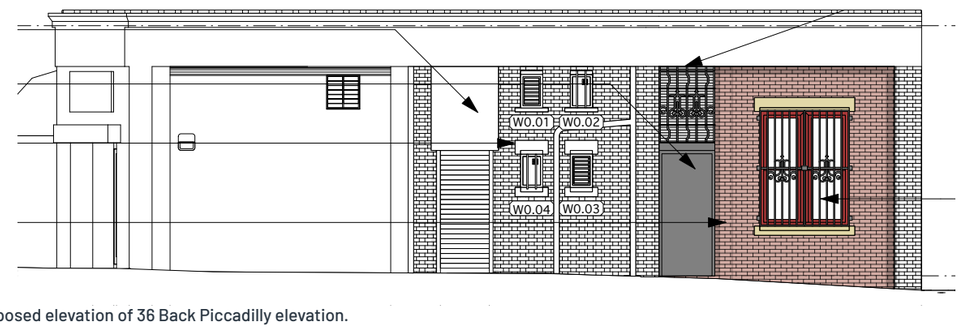


Image: Proposed elevation of 36 Back Piccadilly elevation.

REF: G08

As part of the proposals to relocate the cycle and bin store into 36 Back Piccadilly, the existing non-original former takeaway shopfront will be removed and replaced with a reconfigured facade. The new design has been developed to better reflect the architectural character, detailing and material palette of the listed building, while enhancing the appearance of the wider Conservation Area.

The proposed frontage adopts a recessed brick facade set back from the principal elevation line and framed by the existing curved brick detailing to the frontage edges. Brick has been selected in response to the existing red brick fabric of the existing building.
A new timber framed sash window is proposed, with frame colour and proportions designed to reflect the existing upper floor windows. The window will incorporate deep reveals with a stone lintel and cill, taking reference from the adjacent left-hand side window detailing.

To provide security outside operational hours, the shopfront window will incorporate a decorative metal grille designed to reflect the existing railings along Back Piccadilly.

A new recessed access door is proposed within the frontage, providing access to the Class E unit together with the apartment cycle and bin stores. A louvred ventilation panel is proposed above the doorway, with a decorative metal railing positioned in front to match the existing adjacent railing detailing.

4.4 ROOF ACCESS

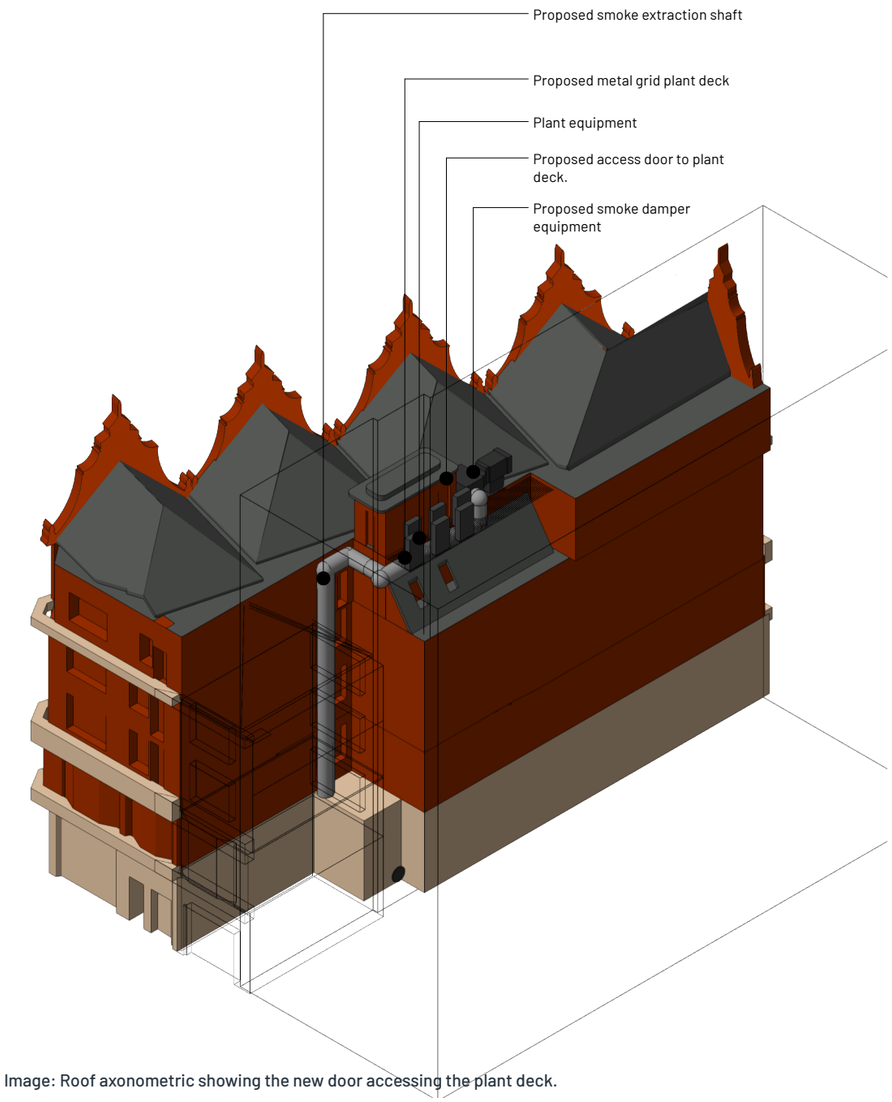


Image: Roof axonometric showing the new door accessing the plant deck.

REF: 407, 409, 410, 411, 412, 507, 508

The existing arrangements for accessing the roof for maintenance and cleaning purposes comprise a series of non-original external ladders and platforms located within the lightwell. These additions contribute to visual clutter and detract from the character and appearance of the lightwell.

The proposals seek to rationalise these arrangements through the removal of the existing external access structures and associated fixings. Access to the rooftop plant deck will instead be provided internally via a new ceiling hatch at fourth-floor level, accessed from a small extension to the existing stair landing. This route will lead directly into the lift shaft enclosure, from which a new access door will provide entry to the rooftop plant deck for maintenance personnel.

The revised access strategy provides a simpler, safer and more discreet means of accessing the rooftop plant equipment, while removing unsympathetic modern interventions from the lightwell and enhancing the appearance of the listed building.

4.5 BASEMENT STAIR & GYM

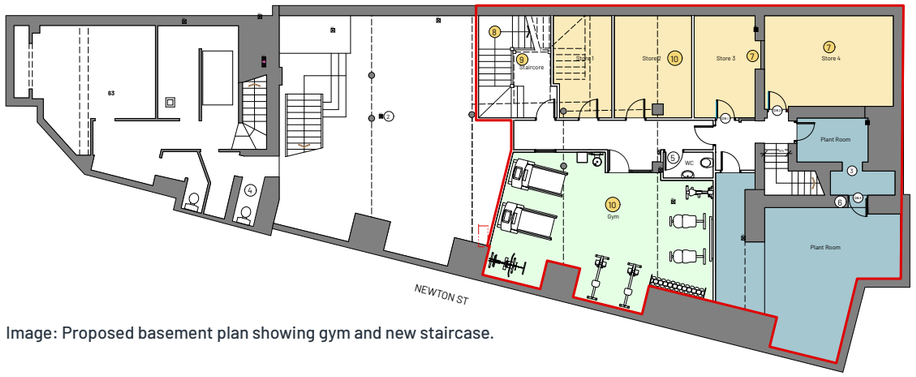


Image: Proposed basement plan showing gym and new staircase.

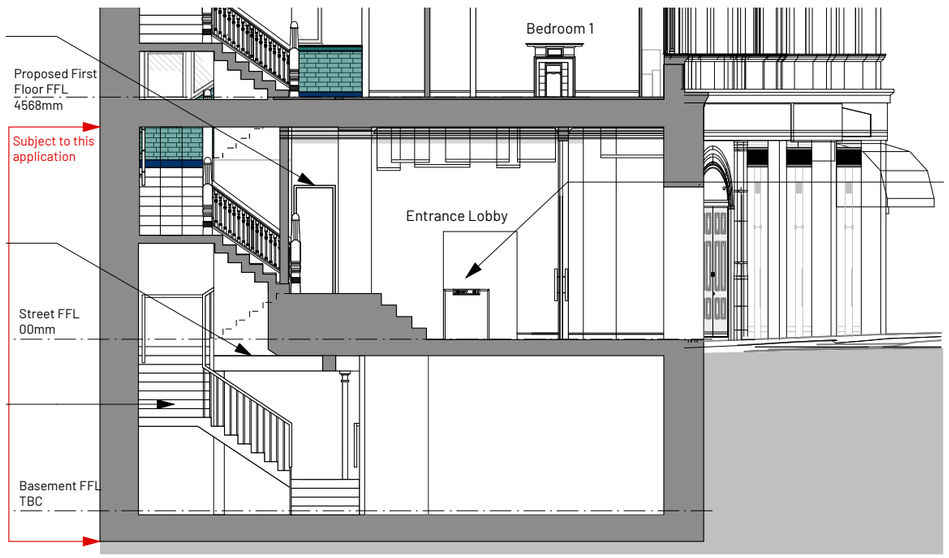


Image: Proposed section showing new stair from ground to basement level.

REF: B05, B06, B07

The proposals include the introduction of a residents' gym within the basement, together with ancillary storage accommodation. New lightweight plasterboard partitions will be introduced to define the new spaces, with glazed screens incorporated within the gym frontage to provide passive surveillance and visual connection with the circulation route. The proposals include the conversion of the existing basement commercial accommodation to provide enhanced resident amenity associated with the approved residential development.

Access to the gym will be provided via a new internal staircase forming a continuation of the existing apartment staircase, providing a direct internal connection between the ground floor and basement.

The insertion of the new staircase requires the localised removal of part of the existing ground floor structure and 2no. non-original beams at basement ceiling level, assumed to have supported the former lift. New structural works will be undertaken in accordance with the Structural Engineer's details. Further structural investigation will be undertaken as required.

5.0 PLANNING STATEMENT

5.1 PLANNING STATEMENT

In accordance with The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, updated 2024) this scheme protects the grade II listed heritage asset. The changes made are necessary to change the use of the building into apartments and thus ensure its ongoing viability and contribution to the wider community and its economic vitality. The development facilitates the ongoing positive contribution of the asset to the local character and distinctiveness of place.

In accordance with Manchester's Core Strategy Development Plan the scheme adheres to the principals outlined in EN1, EN3 and CC9. The proposals are considered to be in accordance with Places for Everyone.

Proposals consider the heritage asset's significance, utilising these characteristics to maintain and enhance the distinctive character of the locality.

6.0 TECHNICAL DESIGN

6.1 SUSTAINABILITY

As a practice we operate a ‘fabric first’ approach when considering how to reduce the C02 use of a building in use. However, when in the context of Historic properties, we recognise that traditional construction methods and historically significant fabric usually limits the opportunities in this respect. Done incorrectly, and well meaning ‘upgrades’ can cause more harm than benefit to historic fabric. We have worked with an M&E consultant to develop a holistic strategy to further reduce the operational CO2 without significant detriment to the heritage significance value of the property.

The inherent re-use of existing buildings offers significant savings on embodied carbon, and indeed the benefits of the existing fabric are often much greater in terms of in-use energy need than is often realised. Recent Historic England research revealed: “the measured performance of solid brick walls was a third better than the performance predicted by energy-performance models.”

In conjunction with our in-house Sustainability Strategy documentation, we have used the Sustainable Traditional Buildings Alliance (STBA) Responsible Retrofit Guidance Wheel to review the potential options with regards to the upgrade and modification of fabric to St Margaret’s Chambers.

Each aspect of potential upgrade has been considered in the context of the building specifics and whether the ‘retrofit’ options available will be of overall benefit to the building and its significance.

6.2 M&E APPROACH

The scheme will incorporate a full ducted mechanical ventilation with heat recovery system.

Heating will be provided by radiators, and the systems will be powered by electricity.

Due to the limitations imposed on the upgrade of the existing floors, most services will be exposed. However, we will utilise the service routes created whilst upgrading some of the walls, to run cabling and ducts where possible.

6.3 WASTE AND DELIVERIES

A Waste Management Strategy and accompanying site plan have been prepared to demonstrate how refuse storage, collection arrangements and deliveries will operate within the development.

Refuse storage is provided at ground floor level within 36 Back Piccadilly, allowing bins to be moved directly to the collection point at street level without the need for a lift. Waste collection vehicles will continue to utilise the existing loading bay on Newton Street adjacent to the building.

6.4 CYCLE STORAGE

Internal cycle storage will be provided at ground floor level within 36 Back Piccadilly, accessed from the apartment lobby and via a new access door from Back Piccadilly within the proposed reconfigured facade.

The number of cycle storage spaces provided is 1 per apartment, 12 no. in total, in accordance with MCC standards outlined within the Core Strategy document.

6.5 SECURITY

Access to the building for residents will be controlled through a fob-operated entry system and a video/audio intercom at the main entrance. From the internal lobby, secure access-controlled doors will provide residents with entry to the cycle and bin stores and to the new staircase serving the basement residents' gym. Access to the gym itself will be controlled by a further fob-operated door at basement level. The external entrance to the cycle and bin stores on Back Piccadilly will also be secured by fob access control. CCTV coverage will be provided along Back Piccadilly.

All new doors and internal partitions will be designed and constructed in accordance with Secured by Design recommendations.

7.0 ACCESS STATEMENT

7.1 ACCESS STATEMENT

The proposals have been developed to improve accessibility within the constraints of the existing listed building, seeking to provide an inclusive environment whilst minimising intervention to the historic fabric.

Vertical circulation

The existing property has level access from street level, however there are 4 no. steps up to the lift. Our proposals include a new platform lift which enables level transition from street level to the main lift. The main lift is existing and does not fully comply with current accessibility standards. However, the lift shaft cannot be enlarged as it is restricted by the existing staircase dimensions.

Horizontal circulation

Corridor widths and doorways comply with Building Regulation standards. Most kitchens and bathrooms comply with Building Regulations part M standards. Any deviation is because of the limitations imposed by the geometry of the existing listed building.

8.0 CONCLUSION

8.1 CONCLUSION

In summary, our proposals achieve the following:

- Relocation of the approved cycle and bin store to a more accessible ground floor location.
- Introduction of a residents' gym within the basement, accessed via a new internal staircase.
- Improved resident access, refuse management and cycle storage.
- A revised internal access strategy to rooftop plant equipment.
- Enhancement of the 36 Back Piccadilly frontage through a sympathetic replacement shopfront.
- Improved building management with minimal intervention to the historic fabric.
- Retention of the approved design principles and heritage-led approach.

The public benefits brought by the proposals are as follows:

- Improved accessibility for residents.
- Enhanced resident amenity through the provision of a dedicated basement gym.
- Enhanced refuse management and servicing arrangements.
- Safer access to rooftop plant equipment.
- Enhancement of the Back Piccadilly streetscape.
- Reduction in visual clutter within the rear lightwell.
- Continued sustainable use of the listed building.

Proposals are a positive response to heritage significance, planning policy and the operational requirements of the approved development. They improve accessibility, resident amenity, servicing and building management whilst respecting the significance of the listed building and the Stevenson Square Conservation Area. The amendments have been carefully developed to minimise intervention to the historic fabric and represent a proportionate refinement of the approved scheme.

OLD PLACES • NEW STORIES

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MANCHESTER • M1 3PW