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Moss Lane East PBSA, Manchester

Listed Building – Proposed Stair Wall Remediation
August 2026

This statement has been prepared in support of relevant documentation for the s19 Planning Application for the Listed Building – part of the Moss Lane East PBSA development – in relation to the proposed remedial works to the existing stair masonry walls in the listed building.

The statement focuses on the architectural and spatial assessment of various design options considered for the remediation proposals (in relation to the internal wall reinstatement) following on from recent comments received from Manchester City Council and is to be read fully in conjunction with Structural Engineer's information explaining in detail the primary structural concerns and recommendations associated with the works.

Existing condition

The existing north and south masonry walls enclosing both stairwells vary in terms of their build-up (and thickness) between basement and the upper levels. Generally, the walls start as a double-leaf brick at the basement level (at 230mm thick) and continue as a single leaf brick at the ground, first and second floor level (at 100mm thick). The thinner upper-level brick walls align with the north face of the thicker basement walls.
The Structural Engineer's report explains the range of issues with the existing condition of these walls at both stairwells which became apparent upon full removal of existing plaster and lining.

Proposed options

When reviewing structural options for remedial works to the north and south stair walls in question, from architectural perspective, the key consideration was to ensure that the inside face of the walls enclosing the stairs is maintained. This set out the reference planes that

either the replaced or reinstated masonry walls required to adhere to so that the existing spatial parameters (i.e. width of stair flights including balustrading) are maintained when reinstating the stairs in their original form.

Following on from the initial Structural Engineer's assessment and recommendations, the masonry walls at basement level have been advised to remain in their existing thickness (i.e. at 230mm) – either in the existing brick or in the new blockwork already rebuilt to alleviate the immediate structural stability concerns. This approach allowed for a couple of possible options to be considered for the structural remediation works to the continuation of the walls at the upper levels where these require to be reinstated in one form or another due to their existing single-leaf brick condition being structurally unsuitable for the proposed use, as explained in the Structural Engineer's report.

Option 1

This option takes into consideration utilizing reclaimed brick from the site for the purposes of reinstating the existing walls at the upper levels (following on from a query by MMC to review such option in detail). As advised by the Structural Engineer, forming the upper walls in reclaimed brick as a single leaf would not be structurally viable and this would require to be doubled in thickness to provide a suitable solution (i.e. to 230mm thick).
However, in order to tie in this thickness of upper-level walls with the existing position of the basement walls (north side only) and to maintain the existing profile of the stairwell, the upper-level walls would require to either project outwards (i.e. outside of the line of the basement walls) or inwards (i.e. into the stairwell).
If projecting outwards, i.e. beyond the outside face of the north basement walls, half of the upper-level walls would be unsupported. The existing basement walls would require to be made thicker by another 120mm and this has been advised not possible due to the limitations of the existing foundations. Such adjustment would also have potential implications on the desired internal room floor areas and on the room layouts.
If projecting inwards, i.e. into the stairwell, this would alter the existing spatial parameters of the stairs and would prevent reinstating the stairs in their original form and character.
For the stated reasons, this option has been deemed unsuitable for the required purpose and a further alternative option as described below has been therefore proposed.

Option 2

This preferred option takes a more efficient and structurally robust approach by reinstating the existing upper walls in a new concrete blockwork in 140mm thickness. These walls would be adequately supported off the 230mm thick basement walls (existing and reinstated) whilst adhering to the fixed spatial parameters of the stairwells and maintaining their existing widths. Please refer to the Structural Engineer's information for further details.