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G9448/LSC/AY

7 August 2026

Manchester City Council
Floor 6 Town Hall Extension
Albert Square
P.O. BOX 532
M60 2LA

Attention of Sue Wills - Principal Planner

By email [redacted]

Dear Madam,

We write with respect to your correspondence dated 18th June 2026 with Joe Rawlinson (Project Director) at GMI requiring clarification and/or additional information relating to the proposed works removing the internal corridor walls in the Listed Building at Moss Lane, Manchester.

Firstly, initial pre-contract work included visual and localised intrusive survey works within the listed building which did not indicate (at the time) any structural concern regarding the walls structural condition or stability. Whilst aware that the walls were likely single skin and wouldn't meet current design codes, the design intent was that the walls were not going to receive any additional or different loading than the existing building use exerted (bar very localised alterations).

Secondly, once the contractor was on site and all the walls fully exposed, significant structural concerns were identified with the walls' general condition, by inspection and laboratory mortar testing.

The primary structural concerns included the following:

- Single thickness panels, exceeding allowable slenderness ratio with their performance reduced after the soft strip works.
- Lack of wallhead tying.
- Lack of tying to perpendicular walls, generally vertical risband joints that have historically cracked, removing any bond between panels.
- Substantial areas of previous infill/ builderswork completed (very poor standard) with lightweight aircrete blockwork. This presented fire/ acoustic concerns in addition to structural unsuitability.
- Laboratory mortar testing results, some areas identified below conservative strength expectations, and some results determined the compressive strength was unquantifiable.
- Re-use of selected bricks.
- The proposed works included slap throughs and new lintel openings, given the condition of the walls there was significant structural concern of further movement during the temporary state of site works. At ground floor level, one doorway wall jamb already shown signs of movement with little physical force applied.

Following the concerns raised, a desktop review was undertaken to investigate whether any of the walls could be retained by structural strengthening as part of remedial works. Possible methods of strengthening could involve (any, if not all) the following, installing windposts, remedial ties and repointing all the mortar. The nature of the repair work would involve propping all the walls until all windpost installations, drilling, fixing and repointing was complete. Given the significant structural works and the risk of any potential structural movement and vibration during the works, the conditions on site prevented this as outlined in our earlier bullet points.

As a result, it was determined the walls were not structurally safe in their current condition to utilise/ retain as part of the new development despite the original design intent that there would be no additional or different loading.

In conclusion, rebuilding the corridor walls using the same existing construction does not comply with current codes of practice (a single skin brick wall over those extents does not). This has meant the utilisation of proposed 140mm thick concrete blockwork construction. Rebuilding the corridor from 1st floor to underside of 2nd floor walls in 215mm thick brickwork would comply with current codes of practice but due to the increased thickness these would not line up and bear onto the basement walls which are being retained.

The proposed rebuilds have been assessed spatially and do not alter the load path of the building as the per the original construction, the rebuilds include the following after further discussions:

- Basement walls will remain.
- Ground floor – 140mm dense blockwork with plaster on hard for corridor walls. Ground floor wing walls to be rebuilt in 215mm reclaimed bricks.
- First floor – 140mm dense blockwork with plaster on hard.
- Second floor – 100mm reclaimed brickwork sourced from the takedown with plaster on hard (the upper floor wall thickness is reduced due to the lesser floor to ceiling height and to achieve same thickness as original wall).

We trust the above provides further information on the very poor structural condition of the walls. We have included some sample photographs of the walls post soft strip works at the end of this report for your records.

Yours faithfully,

[redacted]

Leon S.Church BEng (Hons)
Senior Engineer
For Will Rudd Davidson (Glasgow)



1.0 Ground floor door jamb wall movement



2.0 Slightly bowed wall, different masonry construction, broken, loose, cracked, eroded masonry.



3.0 Different types of masonry construction



4.0 Roof level different construction



5.0 Roof level dilapidated masonry (typical)



6.0 Slightly bowed wall, different masonry construction, broken, loose, cracked, eroded masonry.