

Appendix 3

Project Brief supporting information for Project Objectives

a) Access Improvements

The Portico Library faces significant challenges in terms of access. The first floor has no lift access, only a poor-quality stair-lift to the rear stair, plus the need to overcome a stepped access to reach this stair initially. As part of this project, therefore, an access audit (and subsequently review of the proposed options and designs) was commissioned from Ann Sawyer of Access = Design.

The primary conclusions and recommendations of the Access Audit can be summarised as follows:

Entrance

Visitor entry arrangements do not meet current standards with a narrow entrance door and change of level at the main entrance, though alternative access can be arranged via a temporary ramp and with staff assistance. It is recommended that options are considered for improving the entrance arrangements.

Recommendations also cover improvements to visitor information regarding entrance and access.

Vertical circulation

There is currently stair lift access to the upper floor via the rear door. This is not a satisfactory method of access as does not allow independent use and will not transport wheelchairs.

It is recommended that new lift access is provided to give a good standard of independent step-free access for everyone. The lift location to be coordinated with new entrance arrangements.

The lift provision and location is likely to be part of a wider study considering conservation requirements as well as the potential future occupation of other parts the building.

Internal circulation in the library

Circulation within the library is very restricted in places and could be improved substantially without major alteration. Wider and clear circulation routes would benefit all library users.

Sanitary accommodation

It is recommended that a wheelchair accessible WC is provided as well as improvements to the existing male and female WC accommodation.

The south-east roof void

This space, that houses a large part of the Portico Library archive is currently accessed through a hatch and ladder. More appropriate stair access should be considered as part of the new design.

Guidance to be followed

It is recommended that all new works follow good practice guidance as given in AD M and BS 8300

b) Improvements to the First Floor

The large library room on the first floor, with the domed ceiling and the members reading room are to be retained as unique spaces that reflect the heritage of the Portico. These are enjoyed by many of the current visitors to the building. However, the emphasis within these spaces is to change to become more reflective of the collection, access to the collection, conservation, and research as well as a space for quiet working.

There will be greater emphasis on public access and the public offer which will require a station for a librarian to provide a welcome, an introduction to the facilities if needed and to answer any queries about the use of the space and accessing the collection during a visit. All the other staff desks within the space and the office accommodation in rooms off the main library space are to be housed elsewhere.

The café currently in the centre of the main library space, and the small kitchen that serves this, are to be relocated elsewhere. It is hoped that the space made available by moving these elements can be used to improve the library offer, create better circulation, improve the exhibition space and infrastructure, and provide a dedicated area for conserving the collection in the basement.

The proposal is that the central exhibition space and the Reading Room would still be available for event use but the primary focus for regular events will be elsewhere, (see section d).

c) Redevelopment of the Ground Floor

The ground floor of the Portico Library is currently leased and used as a pub called The Bank, named after a period in the past when the space was leased for that purpose. Although the decoration and form of the space is not as it would have been when the building was created it does reflect its lengthy tenure as a bank and has a, grandness, openness, and

character that is very much an asset and should be carefully considered when designing the space.

It is proposed that the ground floor houses the primary income drivers for the organisation, which will be supplemented by the events spaces discussed in section 4. These are key contributors to a business model that is based around:

- Increasing membership subscriptions and gift-aid
- Developing a commercial operation of a café/bar and events catering business
- Meeting room hires, office rental income alongside larger event hires (weddings, special events)
- Expanding the retail offer, incorporating a small Northern bookshop
- Workshop income
- Increases in donations sponsorship and project related funding

The ground floor should include the following elements.

Welcome

It is important that we establish a warm and inclusive welcome to customers from the start of the visit. It is imagined that all visitors, coming either via the steps or the lift access from street level will be welcomed in some form as they arrive. They will have access to information to orientate themselves and to understand what is happening where and when in the building that day. If they have made a booking for a room or space in the building, then they will be taken to that space. If they want to buy something from the retail space, it should be obvious how they do this.

The current design shows a welcome desk inside the entrance as a location for a member of staff to deliver the welcome and information activities. However, we welcome different views on how these activities can be achieved as the design of the ground floor is being considered. Could this be a roving role, with a digital tablet, with a station the member of staff can go back to? Might these tasks be included within the roles of the staff within the servery, in a similar way to Everyman cinemas?

Café and bookshop

We wish to create a social space on the ground floor that combines retail and catering together. This should include a cafe with circa 80 covers along with a counter/servery that will deliver drinks, cakes and sandwiches. All other hot and cold food will be prepared/cooked in a kitchen in the basement.

As part of the daily tasks for the catering team, they will also prepare pre-ordered food for the meetings rooms on the ground floor or for events that could be taking place in spaces in the basement, on the ground or first floor. This would be delivered to the location for the previously agreed time.

There also maybe catering required for evening events. The largest event space in the building will be the space that is the café during the day, on the ground floor. There will need to be occasions when the café space can be reorganised in the evening, and the variety of café furniture is changed for large round tables, to deliver a more formal dining experience. This would be delivered with tables of eight and six and would need a capacity of 100 covers. There would need to be visibility to a single point, for a speaker/presentation.

Storage requirements for 14 table (8 tables of 8=64 + 6 table of 6=36 Total 100) plus 100 chairs. Should be considered.

As part of this offer, alongside the cafe, we would like to include a bookshop that will showcase northern writers and publishers. This would sell second-hand and new stock. The stock should be presented on portable units that can be wheeled away when the retail areas is needed for other purposes. A location to store the units will need to be recognised for when the ground floor is in large scale event mode but most of the time the units will remain, forming part of the backdrop to smaller events. We imagine that the retail area would need to be circa 40 sqm. Visitor would be able to pay for purchases at either the welcome desk or the café servery. There should be some lockable storage in the units for replenishment and a shop store should be recognised where larger amounts of shop stock will be kept.

d) Events and private hire

Another important aspect to the proposed offer is the delivery of events, some run by The Portico Library and some private bookings. In some instances, these will be delivered in spaces dedicated to that purpose, in others they will take place in spaces that otherwise would be serving an alternative purpose. Our thoughts on this are set out below from the first floor down to the basement.

First Floor

We would like to continue to build on the event activity that takes place both in the members reading room and the library space. The reading room will continue to be the backdrop to small scale (no more than 25) events. This might also be the location for a private dining event in the evening for example.

The central area of the library will continue to be the location for exhibitions, albeit with improved infrastructure and will be the location of exhibition private views, possibly drinks receptions and could form the backdrop to some aspect of a wedding event taking place in the building.

Ground Floor

The area of this floor dedicated to serving as a café will also double up as a flexible events space. At one end of the scale this would be a formal sit-down dinner or award ceremony for circa 100 covers. Consideration will need to be made for power and data distribution to enable different set ups and scales of event to be created. The location of a projector and suitable screen should also be considered in the optimum location. Lighting will need to be thought through to help create drama and sense of occasion within the space for an evening event. Manchester Literary Festival have expressed an interest in using this space during the festival, as a hub. Their requirements will need to be taken into account.

At least three meeting rooms should be included in the scheme (although these don't all need to be on the ground floor). Two should be able to accommodate up to ten people, one up to eight.

There is a room which would become available if the current, ground floor, toilets were moved into the basement, towards the back of the building on the ground floor directly beneath the members reading room. It is imaged this would become a flexible space used for events and functions. It might also be considered as overflow for the café. This will need to accommodate seated talks, film screenings and private dining. Consideration should be given to storage for tables and chairs accessible for the various types of event.

Basement

There is a requirement for a black box performance space. The exact requirements need to be developed with the client and Critical Friends. It would seem logical to include this in the basement as this is the area with limited daylight.

e) The temporary exhibition space

One of our aspirations is to deliver improved temporary exhibitions within the main library space on the first floor. The current exhibition space should be reviewed with the view to making this more suited for this purpose. There is currently a space conflict because of the dual use of the space, with the café pushing the exhibition to the outside edges of the central zone created by the insertion of the floor. The proposal to move the café to the ground floor creates an opportunity. How the exhibition space could be made more

impactful, whilst maintaining circulation and presenting the library in the most appropriate way, should be considered.

f) Review Back of House and supporting functions

A key part of representing the Portico Library is creating more accessible public space by relocating the service spaces to the basement. This should include the following:

- a) A full catering kitchen capable of delivering the hot food requirements for the café, private hire of meeting rooms and event spaces and for the members dining requirements. Consideration should be given to how largescale formal dinners are catered. It might be that outside caterers deliver these, but their requirements, either in the kitchen or close to the café/event space need to be thought through.
- b) Fridge and freezer storage and dry store for the kitchen within easy access.
- c) Delivery routes from the back of the building to the kitchen and storage areas.
- d) The main public toilets for the building. This should include at least one accessible toilet. Ideally, this would be a Changing Places toilet. The approach to toilets should be developed with the Critical Friends. This might lead to unisex toilets or other approaches might need to be considered. A further accessible toilet should be included on the first floor.
- e) Plant room. See section 6 about building services renewal but it is imagined that there is a plant room, serving the building, located in the basement.
- f) Office space. It is thought that staff accommodation should be in the basement, but on the side with the pavement lights, so some daylight comes into the space. This should provide accommodation for 6 people. This should have a sink and a small tea and lunch preparation space.
- g) A green room space is needed for performers, who could be performing in spaces anywhere in the building. This could be a space that would otherwise be bookable, such as a meeting room, but it should have easy access to the toilets.
- h) Storage should be included in basement that serves all floors. This should have easy access to street level and to the lift.
- i) There is a requirement to have a space dedicated to the ongoing conservation of the collection. This will also be a point where book conservation training will be delivered to external groups. The space requirement and location for this needs to be greater refined with the client and conservation specialists.

g) Review of building services

Services Renewal

The condition survey revealed that most of the equipment is outdated, damaged or redundant, and that the M&E distribution networks have required upgrades over the years. This is evidence that the original installation may not be suitable to support the current

needs of the building. Furthermore, increasing age and obsolescence of the systems are such that they are all now nearing the end of their expected lifespan and will require increasing levels of investment to maintain in operation. To this end, it is firstly recommended that any redundant equipment be decommissioned and disposed of in an appropriate manner. Considerations should then be made for investment in new, appropriately sized services infrastructure. The installation should be consistent with today's technologies and should reflect the building's current and future requirements to ensure that the investment is appropriate.

In addition, the following service-specific recommendations should be taken into account:

Incoming Services

In upgrading the infrastructure, the utilities and metering requirements of the building should also be considered. The bar area is currently serviced and metered separately to the library, which may be an element of the infrastructure that is no longer necessary.

Heating and Cooling Installation

The current heating distribution network runs within the bookshelves, alongside valuable and delicate books. A more appropriate pipework routing option should be considered that does not compromise the historic elements of the building and equally does not risk damage to the works stored and displayed in the library. Similarly, the heating medium may also be reassessed, as the current system poses risks of hot water leakage from the heating pipework. A conservation heating approach may also be explored, in which spaces are kept at a cooler temperature to maintain a humidity level that is more appropriate for the conservation of such artefacts.

Finally, on a more urgent note, it is recommended that any heating and cooling equipment making use of R22 refrigerant or other banned HCFC gas be decommissioned and disposed of in an appropriate manner. If this kit is to be replaced, it should be done so with equipment that does not employ dangerous gases that are banned or form part of the phase-down program.

Ventilation

The ventilation requirements of the main library spaces are largely met by natural ventilation. As the building is located at the heart of Manchester city centre, openings to the outside invite levels of air pollution that may be damaging to the stored artefacts, as well as to the building fabric itself. Poor air quality may also diminish the comfort and well-being of the building users. If air pollution is deemed a significant risk to the building, a filtered mechanical ventilation option may be explored. Slightly positively pressurising the spaces, coupled with draught-sealing of openings may be considered to minimise infiltration and reduce air-pollution entering the library.

Renewal and upgrading of the services in line with these recommendations is therefore considered a key part of the development of any scheme for the Portico Library.

IT Infrastructure

The IT provision for the whole building needs to be developed and a new scheme that fully meets the requirements of both staff and visitors needs to be provided. The broadband into the building should be part of this review.

Lighting

A new lighting scheme needs to be designed for all spaces including those with multiple functions, that meets both statutory requirements from a safety point of view but also is the most energy efficient.

h) Building Repairs

The Condition Report, Appendix 4, sets out a schedule of internal and external repair work. This has been included in the Estimated Repair and Feasibility Option Costs prepared by DH Associates. This full document will be made available to the successful candidate but has been used to build up the budget costs shown in Section 7. This work will need to be reviewed and revised if necessary as it will form part of the contract works for the project.

i) Historic Context

Finally, all design development needs to be carried out in the context of the historic nature of building. This context is set out in the Conservation Statement created by Chambers Conservation and included as Appendix 5 and some key points from this can be summarised as follows.

It is worth noting that the heritage value and historic nature of the building whilst key to the design approach also create barriers to many of the local communities Portico wish to work with. Their thoughts and needs also need to be considered and ways in which these barriers can be broken down will be key to the success for Library in the future.

Heritage Parameters

When undertaking works to any historic building, especially those which are subject to statutory protection, there are several factors which need to be considered. These then provide a framework within which to consider the acceptability or desirability of change. As this is a relatively high-level study, this is by necessity an overview at this stage. The

following text should be read in conjunction with the Conservation Statement provided separately.

The first principle is to establish the significance of the site and its various facets. This summary assessment is outlined in the following pages. From this point it is then possible to understand the capacity for change, i.e. areas which are more or less vulnerable to change, or where change is desirable.

Significance

It is useful to define the relative significance of the various parts of the building fabric and the spaces within to help guide future change. It should be noted that this assessment should be expected to change as the understanding of the historical development and importance of the fabric inevitably evolves over time.

Significance can be defined as the sum of the cultural, social and/or natural heritage values that make a place important to this and future generations. As well as the physical fabric, age, aesthetic value and more intangible qualities such as communal value, association with historic people and events and former uses are all important in defining the significance of a place. Understanding the significance of a place is vital to inform sensitively managed change to ensure that the significance is maintained and, where possible, further revealed, reinforced and enhanced.

The significance assessment is based on the heritage values identified in Historic England's Conservation Principles which separate heritage value into four categories:

- Evidential: The potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.
- Historical: The ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. This can be both illustrative and associative.
- Aesthetic: The ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.
- Communal: The meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

The significance of the Portico is assessed using a number of significance ratings as follows:

- High significance: a space or piece of building fabric of architectural, historical or social interest, that plays an important role in the significance of the building as a whole.
- Moderate significance: a space or piece of building fabric with some general architectural, historical or social interest but with few specific features

- Limited / Neutral Significance: a space or piece of building fabric without features of interest or known specific historic or social interest.
- Detrimental: a space or piece of building fabric that is detrimental to the significance of the building as a whole.

The plans within the Conservation Statement help define the relative significance of the various parts of the building fabric and the spaces within to help guide future change. They cannot say where change can take place, but guide where it is most likely to be appropriate, subject to further investigation and obtaining the necessary consents.

The plans showing the significance of 'spaces' consider the overall character of the room and the quality and type of its features and fixings, such as joinery (including bookcases doors, doorcases, staircases, architraves etc), wall / floor / ceiling finishes or specific fixed objects such as clocks.

For the detailed description of the significance of the building fabric, please refer to the Conservation Statement, however the over-arching values are described below.

Evidential value:

- The Portico Library is a rare example of a Neo-Classical building built in the north-west at the turn of the 19th century. The exterior survives almost entirely intact and a large percentage of the original internal fabric is still present.
- The Library as a whole is important and rare in that it consists of historic evidence in such a number of forms, from the building itself to the physical contents in terms of both fittings and books, records etc.

Historical value:

- The building is a variation on the 18th century fashion for coffee houses, book clubs and commercial libraries and distinctly reminds us of the character of middle-class Manchester Georgian society. It is a very rare survivor of an early 19th century library that remains today in its original use, with a very large part of the building clearly recognisable in its original form.
- The Library is important for being one of the first Greek-revival buildings to be completed in the city. The Portico is also highly significant from its association with prominent architect Thomas Harrison and for being the last surviving building he designed in Manchester. Architectural historian Giles Worsley described Harrison as 'the first English Architect to grasp the full potential of the Greek Revival.... [he had a] thorough, but unpedantic, understanding of Greek architecture' and that he 'created some of the finest neo-classical architecture of the Regency'.

- The Portico has an interesting connection with architect Joseph Sunlight, who had designed the 1920s conversion of the ground floor and basement - he went on to become a millionaire and design Sunlight House on Deansgate, Manchester's first skyscraper.
- The Portico has a large number of highly significant connections to the literary world – Elizabeth Gaskell (together with her husband Reverend William Gaskell, who had been chairman) was a frequent user and referred to the building in a letter to Charlotte Bronte. She was a vocal critic of the 19th century rule prohibiting women from entering the newsroom. P.M. Roget, author of the Thesaurus, was the Library's first secretary and Thomas De Quincey mentions the building in his book "Confessions of an English Opium Eater".
- The Portico is not an unaltered relic of Georgian Manchester but instead, the building today is a visual history book, which helps to document some of the key changes in Manchester's economy and society in its two centuries of history. The key changes to the building's fabric reflect shifts, firstly towards the area becoming more commercial and part of the financial centre of the city, and then the transition more towards a focus on entertainment and leisure. Looking more carefully, there is evidence of more subtle changes that reflect other important historical transitions such as the inclusion of ladies' toilets or the changes of technology that brought in new forms of lighting or heating. The Portico is unusual for having a well-documented set of written records that, together with the physical fabric, helps to tell a fascinating story of the past two-hundred years.

Aesthetic value:

- The Portico is an elegantly simple building – its design is particularly important as an early example of the Greek Revival movement in Manchester – it is thought to have been based on the Temple of Minerva in Athens, although the Temple of Minerva Polias, Priene is more likely, being of the ionic order).
- The building is a bold composition, with ionic columns supporting a classical pediment - deliberately heavy to give a character of earnestness, whilst the considered detailing provides a scholarly reference.
- Inside, the building is particularly significant from having a large unsupported dome and from the sizeable, airy expanse of the main library, which would have once been even greater when the ground-floor newsroom was part of the principal space.
- The building contributes greatly to the character of both Mosley Street and Charlotte Street as it stands prominently and proudly on the corner. It adds to the texture of materials and building styles that visually characterise Manchester and fairly represent the wideness of its cultural influences and history. Despite being just outside of the George Street Conservation Area, it contributes to its setting.

Communal value:

- The communal value of the Portico has inevitably changed through time and it was important for different reasons in the past. When built, the prestigious nature of the space was important and it was a place to be seen and to socialise. It was significant in the development of the Manchester enlightenment. Its communal value has, in the past century, changed to something quieter, with more emphasis on learning or by being a place to take a tranquil break from city life.
- The Portico sits within, and is valued as part of, a collection of cultural buildings in Manchester that, together, make the city a world leader in art and culture. The library established the Portico Prize in 1985, to celebrate the strong regional and literary identity of the North of England, with the aim of raising awareness of the diversity of its cultural, literary and historical heritage. The Prize is awarded biennially to the highest quality book set wholly or mainly in the North of England. It has been described as the 'Booker of The North', with previous winners including Anthony Burgess, Val McDermid & Sarah Hall. The Prize is itself now part of the significance of the Portico.
- More locally, the Library is valued for its work with schools and young people - each year the Portico Sadie Massey Awards gives prizes to young people in book review and creative writing categories. The Library works with authors to deliver workshops across Greater Manchester and promote essential skills in communication, creativity and critical thinking but to most importantly encourage a life-long love of literature. It is used for both a formal learning tool (in terms of its work with literature) but also more informally through its series of exhibitions, housed within the central space under the dome.