

57 Prince Street, Bristol, BS1 4QH

DESIGN, ACCESS AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

March 2024
Revision B



Junction of Prince Street and The Grove

1. Introduction

- i. This 'Design & Access Statement including Heritage Assessment' has been written to support the listed building application for the renovation of the 3rd and 4th floors of 57 Prince Street, Bristol, BS1 4QH.
- ii. This statement should be read in conjunction with the application forms and drawings that have been prepared by 3bd Architects at the request of the Local Planning Authority.
- iii. The statement also considers the effects on the wider context of the Conservation Area and the significance of the listing.

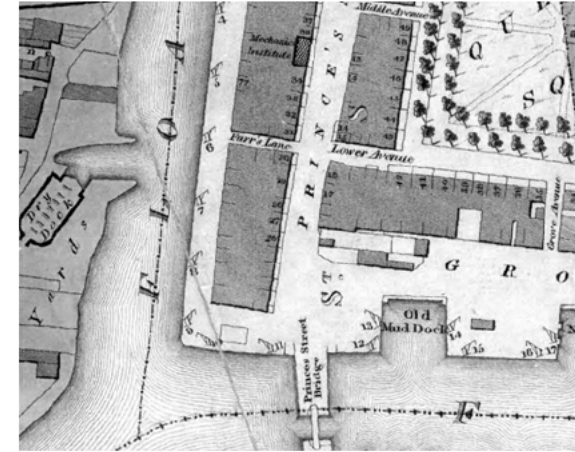
2. Site Location & Context

- i. 57 Prince Street known as 'The Old Port House' is situated centrally within the city of Bristol.
- ii. The site is located at the junction of Prince Street and The Grove. The floating harbour is to the southern side of the site and to the north is Queens Square.
- iii. The site sits as a bookend to a terrace of offices. These comprise a mixture of periods and styles, mostly low-quality post-war development. The adjoining offices along the grove are four stories with a semi-basement car parking.
- iv. The site is partially grade II listed and lies within the boundary of the City and Queen Square Conservation Area No. 4.
- v. The surrounding context is predominantly commercial, comprising offices, restaurants, hotels, and attractions.
- vi. The site lies in an accessible and sustainable location. Both Queen Square (Stop Q1) Bus stops are located 300 ft from the front entrance of the site on Prince Street; bus routes A1, M1, and M2 depart from these stops. The site is approximately 0.7m from Bristol Temple Meads Overground station. An electric scooter parking station is approximately 0.3km adjacent to the Arnolfini.



3. Site History

- i. Constructed in the early 1700s the site played a part in Bristol tobacco and slave industries until around 1834.
- ii. The site after 1834 was used for transporting merchant goods to neighbouring inland cities. Furthermore, Bristol was manufacturing glass adjacent to the site on the other side of the river.
- iii. Towards the end of the 1800s and early 1930s, the emphasis shifted towards small shipbuilding, this never took off and became redundant.
- iv. Constructed between 1700 and 1727, Queen Square was originally marshland, with terrace houses around the periphery. It probably contained small warehouses and stables for the principal buildings in the Square. These were demolished as a result of the 1831 reform riots.
- v. With the development of the adjacent Mud Docks, the buildings were replaced with large Victorian warehouses, most likely including The Port House. The site was constructed in c1880 as one of the robust working buildings and warehouses along the waterside.
- vi. The building was constructed as a five-story squared Pennant rubble structure, with limestone dressings and banding. With only quoins and small segmental-arched windows and doorways, it was an austere design.
- vii. The original function of The Port House was a Seed Warehouse. This function informed the rectangular open plan layout with cast-iron structural columns to timber beams that can still be seen today.
- viii. In 1981 the site was converted into offices with a public house on the ground and first floor.
- ix. In the early 2000's the site was converted again into a hostel and split the public house in two becoming a restaurant and nightclub.
- x. The surrounding area has been revitalised over the years and the site has found itself amongst newly converted cultural venues and tourist destinations. Such as the Arnolfini Art Gallery, Watershed Media and Arts Centre, Mudock Cafe, various hotels and restaurants, and Thekla nightclub.
- xi. The site is currently running as a restaurant on the ground floor and a hostel on the 1st and 2nd floors. The 3rd and 4th floors were formerly a hostel however, have been redundant since 2019, due to a fire risk resulting in a site closure by Avon Fire.



1828



1860



1887



1894

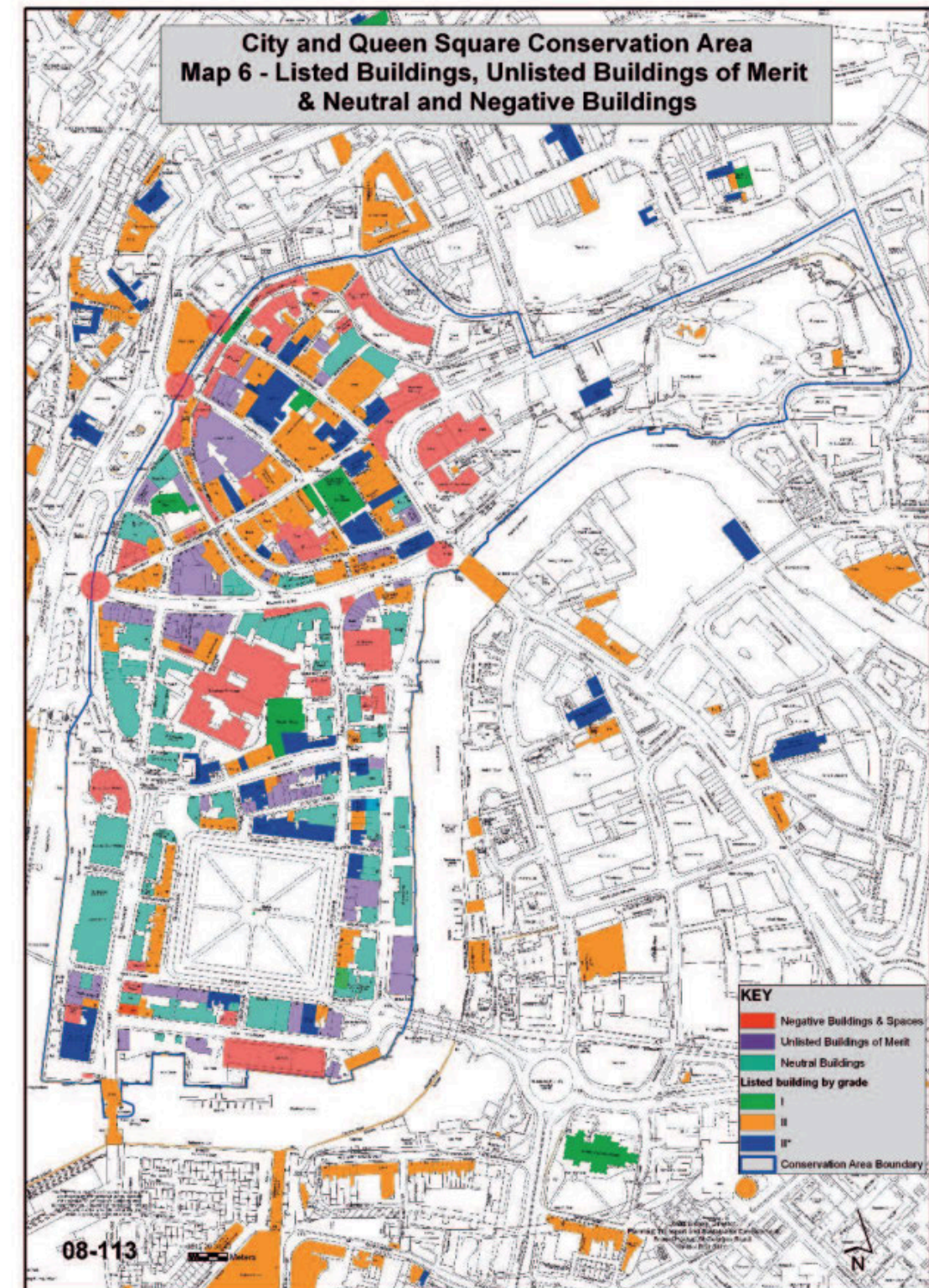


1950

4. Conservation Area

- i. City and Queen Square Conservation Area was designated on the 3rd of August 1972. The Conservation Area extended to include Castle Park and the area southwest of Fairfax Street on the 14th of January 2009.
- ii. Paragraph 3.1.1 of the City and Queen Square Character Appraisal states 'The Conservation Area forms the historic heart of the city of Bristol, bounded on the south, east and west by the Avon and Frome Rivers, and on the north by the site of the mediaeval castle (now Castle Park).'
- iii. City and Queen Square Conservation Area is known for being tightly packed, with dense interconnected development of various historical eras. The architectural style has distinctively different characteristics in different areas. The conservation area comprises The Old City with Queens Square at the heart of it. Due to the important role this conservation area has played over the many centuries the original architectural features, materials and details are vital to the heritage of individual buildings and the character of the Conservation Area. As agreed within Paragraph 4.1 of the City and Queen Square Character Appraisal.
- iv. Map 6 of the City and Queen Square Character Appraisal categorises each building in the conservation area as either Listed Buildings, unlisted buildings of merit, or neutral and negative buildings. This is shown in the image to the right. As you can see the building is separated in two, part of the building is classed as negative and the other is neutral.
- v. 7.8.1 of the City and Queen Square Character Appraisal states that 'negative features are elements that detract from the special character of a Conservation Area and therefore present an opportunity for enhancement. This can include both small features and larger buildings and sites. It may be that simple maintenance works can remedy the situation, reinstate original design or lost architectural features.'
- vi. As per the local authority's guidance, there is an opportunity to address the adverse elements that have developed on the site and restore a dilapidated building to a functional state while preserving or enhancing its historical and architectural value.

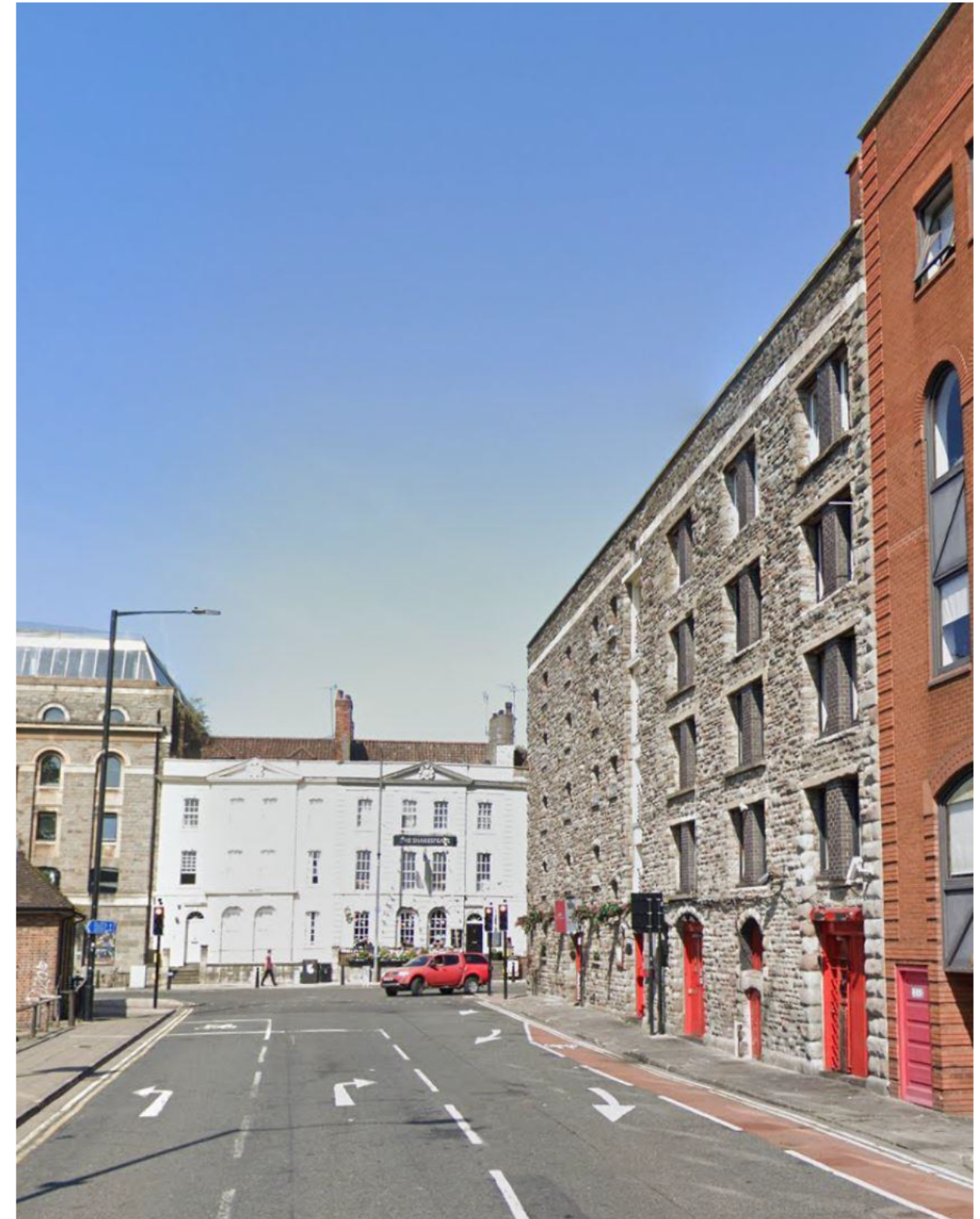
Map 6: Listed Buildings, unlisted buildings of merit, negative and neutral buildings.



City and Queen Square Character Appraisal p.35

5. Listing

- i. First Listed on the 04th of March 1977, as a grade II Listed building under the List Entry Number 1292440.
- ii. Listing Name - ST5872 THE GROVE, Floating Harbour 901-1/42/295 (East side) 04/03/77 No.1 including the Bristol Clipper Public House (Formerly Listed as: THE GROVE No.1 The Seed Warehouse)
- iii. Listing Description - Seed warehouse, now offices and public house. c1880, converted 1981. Squared Pennant rubble with limestone dressings, roof not visible. Rectangular open plan. 5 storeys; 8-window range. An austere warehouse free of decoration, has quoins and a limestone band below the parapet. 2 segmental-arched doorways divide the wall into 3, with a full-height hoist bay between with C20 glazing, and small segmental-arched windows with plate-glass; to the right is a 3-window range with concrete lintels and black brick late-C20 mullions, with a wide doorway below the right-hand windows. Prince Street front is a 3-window range with a C20 public house front to the left and a full-height hoist bay above it. INTERIOR: cast-iron columns to timber beams. (Gomme A, Jenner M and Little B: Bristol, An Architectural History: Bristol: 1979-: 359). Listing NGR: ST5864872463
- iv. The listing description provides details about The Old Port House, which constitutes only a portion of the present structure at 57 Prince Street. 57 Prince Street and 1 The Grove have probably been interconnected over time, a notion that becomes apparent when examining the current floor plans.
- v. There are statutory requirements relating to listed buildings and their respective settings (Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990). Special regard is to be had when preserving a listed building. Based on the information presented in the listing description, the specific considerations are as follows:
 - i. External materials
 - ii. External detailing
 - iii. External Door and Window positions, frames and glazing
 - iv. Internal cast iron columns
 - v. Internal stone arches
 - vi. Internal structural timber beams



6. Planning Policies

- i. The proposal has been developed with due regard to the following development plans and planning policies:
 - i. Town and Country Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990
 - ii. National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012 (NPPF)
 - iii. Bristol Core Strategy, 2011 (BCS)
- ii. The following development plan policies are relevant to the determination of this application:
 - i. Town and Country Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990
 - 1. Section 1 - Places a statutory duty upon Local Planning Authorities to have regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses. A building is listed by virtue of its special architectural or historical interest
 - 2. Section 72 - Establishes a duty in the exercise of any function under the Act to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
 - ii. National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012 (NPPF)
 - 1. No. 134 - Where proposals would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals, including securing its optimum viable use
 - 2. No.137 - Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.
 - iii. Bristol Core Strategy, 2011 (BCS)
 - 1. Policy BCS22 - states that development proposals should safeguard or

enhance the character and setting of Conservation Areas.

- 2. Policy BCS21 - new development should deliver high quality urban design and safeguard the amenity of existing development.
 - 3. Policies DM26, DM30 and DM31 - Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (emerging) express that alterations to buildings should safeguard the amenity of the host premises and neighbouring occupiers, and preserve or enhance historic settings.
- iv. The Local Plan, 1997 (LP)
 - 1. Policy B2 - development should be designed with regard to local context
 - 2. Policy B6 - building exteriors and elevations should be of a high standard and provide visual interest, especially adjacent to public routes

7. 57 Prince Street Planning History

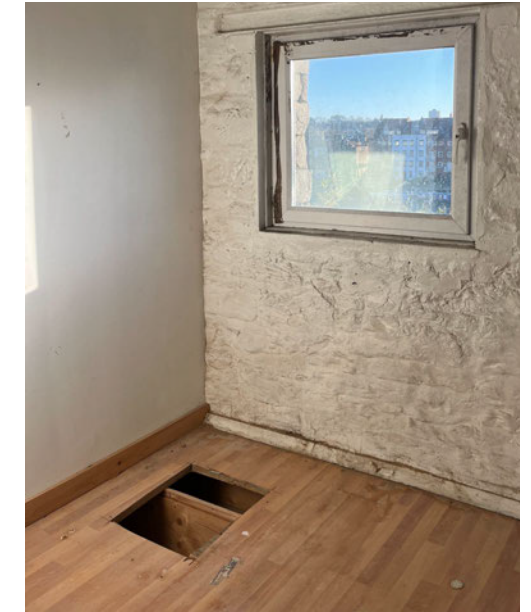
- i. 69/03195/U_U - Use ground and first floor of premises as Art Gallery - GRANTED subject to condition(s)
- ii. 72/04914/P_U - Erection of four and five storey office accommodation with semi-basement car parking - GRANTED subject to condition(s)
- iii. 77/01138/P_C - Conversion of seed warehouse to club premises and small workshop units - GRANTED subject to condition(s)
- iv. 78/00968/U_U - Alterations of interior to form two new staircases to all levels and some partitions, work associated with additional fire-proofing, replacement of shop front with timber doors - GRANTED subject to condition(s)
- v. 78/01655/P_C - Application under reserved matters on 1022P/76C CA.319/76 - GRANTED subject to condition(s)
- vi. 78/04785/P_C - Conversion of existing warehouse to public house and small workshop units.
- vii. 79/01337/U_U - New softwood painted windows in existing openings. New staircases, lift and other internal alterations. New roof with clay tiles re-used - GRANTED subject to condition(s)
- viii. 79/04566/P_C - Ground floor - Public House. Upper floors - office/small business centre - GRANTED subject to condition(s)
- ix. 80/00251/P_C - Erection of 4 storey office building with basement car park - GRANTED subject to condition(s)
- x. 80/01692/U_U - Conversion of existing buildings into Public House and stores on ground floor and small office units on all upper floors - GRANTED subject to condition(s)
- xi. 80/03428/P_C - Conversion of existing buildings into Public House and stores on the ground floor and small office units on all upper floors (LBC 1692/80) - GRANTED subject to condition(s)
- xii. 81/03381/L_C - Replace existing shop front and doorway to Prince Street - GRANTED subject to condition(s)
- xiii. 81/04099/P_C - Change of use of ground floor from stores to Wine Bar - GRANTED subject to condition(s)
- xiv. 82/00282/U_U - Change of use of first and second floors to restaurant and kitchens from warehouse/stores - GRANTED subject to condition(s)
- xv. 82/00726/U - Mon 26 Apr 1982 - Alterations to existing ground floor front for wine bar entrance and windows - GRANTED subject to condition(s)
- xvi. 82/02416/P_C - Mon 16 Aug 1982 - Change of use of 3rd floor from warehousing to staff accommodation - GRANTED subject to condition(s)
- xvii. 90/02534/F - Fri 16 Nov 1990 - Change of use from storage to dance studio, cafe and light entertainment - GRANTED subject to condition(s)
- xviii. 94/02248/L - Fri 20 Jan 1995 - New signage to building giving identity to the public house. (Externally floodlit) - GRANTED subject to condition(s)
- xix. 94/02249/A - Fri 20 Jan 1995 - New pub signage externally illuminated by floodlights - GRANTED subject to condition(s)
- xx. 97/02384/L - Wed 06 May 1998 - Removal of existing infill to original brick arches. General internal layout changes - GRANTED subject to condition(s)
- xxi. 97/02556/F - Wed 06 May 1998 - Alteration to the front entrance of The Clipper from Prince Street - GRANTED subject to condition(s)
- xxii. 97/02744/L - Wed 06 May 1998 - Alterations to existing ground floor front entrance - GRANTED subject to condition(s)
- xxiii. 13/04958/F - Fri 20 Dec 2013 - Proposed installation of an ATM through the front elevation - REFUSED
- xxiv. 13/04959/A - Fri 20 Dec 2013 - Non illuminated white and blue lettering to dark blue and light blue ATM surround. Cash Zone. Cash withdrawals. Safe & Secure. Internally illuminated white acrylic Cash Zone sign to top of ATM fascia. Blue lettering out of white background - REFUSED

8. Proposal

- i. This application seeks permission to reinstate, restore and renovate the 3rd and 4th floors of 57 Prince Street. As well as change the use from a Hostel (Sui Generis) to a Hotel (C1).
- ii. The client has decided to use the required refurbishment as an opportunity to improve the accommodation by upgrading the existing hostel layout to a 3-star hotel.
- iii. The proposed design comprises 40 hotel bedrooms over the 3rd and 4th floors. The hotel will remain separate from the existing hostel on the 1st and 2nd floors. The proposed layout has been designed to minimise the disruption to the listed building, whilst making necessary changes to comply with current fire regulations.
- iv. The 3rd and 4th floors have been shut down, by the fire brigade, due to unsafe accommodation. A Fire Strategy has been submitted with the application from Nigel Jagger at FRAMS Associates. The fire consultant has been consulted throughout the design process to ensure the revised layout meets the fire regulations.
- v. The proposal had been designed in accordance with the requirements of a 3-star hotel. This will make better use of the existing building and the prominent location by increasing standards of accommodation, design and layout.
- vi. In order for the new hotel on the 3rd and 4th floors to meet the requirements of a 3-star hotel several changes have been made, these are listed below:
 - i. En-suites are proposed for each bedroom. This will require new plumbing and drainage on the 3rd and 4th floors.
 - ii. A lift has been proposed from the ground floor to the 4th floor. This will replace an existing dumbwaiter, to create minimal disruption to the structure of the listed building.
- vii. It is proposed to remove and rebuild all the existing stud work walls on the 3rd and 4th floors due to their current poor state. This change would make a safe and comfortable environment for the hotel users.
- viii. It has been proposed that all existing windows will be replaced to their original materiality. Replacing all windows will restore coherence in the elevations of the heritage asset and improve the quality of the building.
- ix. The existing low quality laminate floor is to be removed and upgraded throughout the 3rd and 4th floors. Laminate has been chosen to reduce the disruption on the listed building.



Low quality stud walls



Low quality laminate floor



Existing dumbwaiter



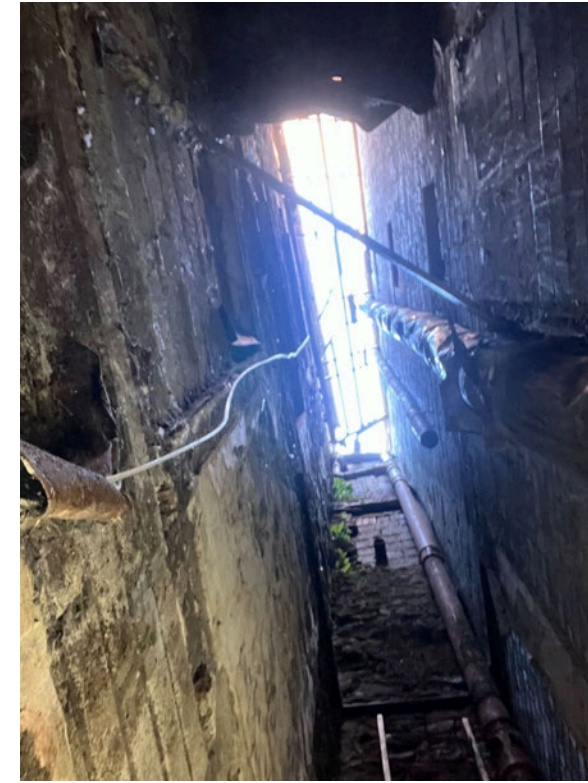
Existing structural columns

9. Third floor specific changes

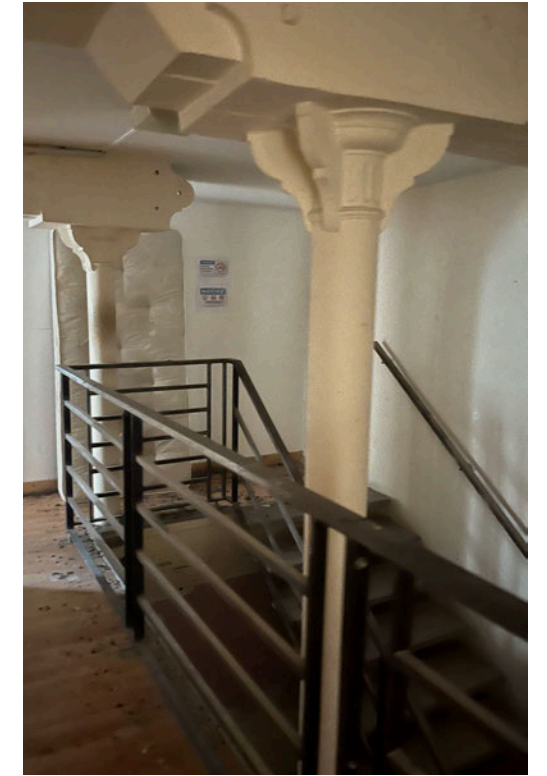
- i. Due to the nature of the site footprint and existing window locations, there are several rooms on the 3rd floor which can't have access to an external window or rooflight. In these cases, it is a requirement to install an air conditioning unit in order to achieve a three-star hotel rating. There are a total of 6 rooms where this is required and therefore there are 6 external units needed. It is proposed to position these in the external void next to rooms 320 and 420, as this isn't visible to the public.
- ii. There is an existing metal staircase that runs from the 2nd to the 3rd floor. It is unknown when this was installed in the building, however, it would be thought to be a recent addition as there is an adjacent staircase which runs from the 2nd to the 4th floor. This application seeks permission to completely remove the staircase as it is no longer required.

10. Fourth floor specific changes

- i. The submitted proposal has altered the existing layout on the fourth floor in order to provide appropriate travel distances to all the bedrooms from fire escapes. This change is essential for the building to reopen..
- ii. The proposed lift will run from the ground to the 4th floor, as the existing dumbwaiter only travels to the third floor it will be required to remove the floor structure on the fourth floor to allow for the new lift. A structural engineer will need to inspect the work to confirm if steel will be required to support the new void.
- iii. The existing roof has formed a valley gutter at the boundary of 53 Prince Street. Internally this creates a vaulted roof along the corridor with structural timbers for support. This can be seen in the adjacent photo. This valley will need to be partially infilled at the location of the lift to achieve the required space for the lift installation, this can be seen in more detail on drawing 388-PLA-150_Lift Detail.



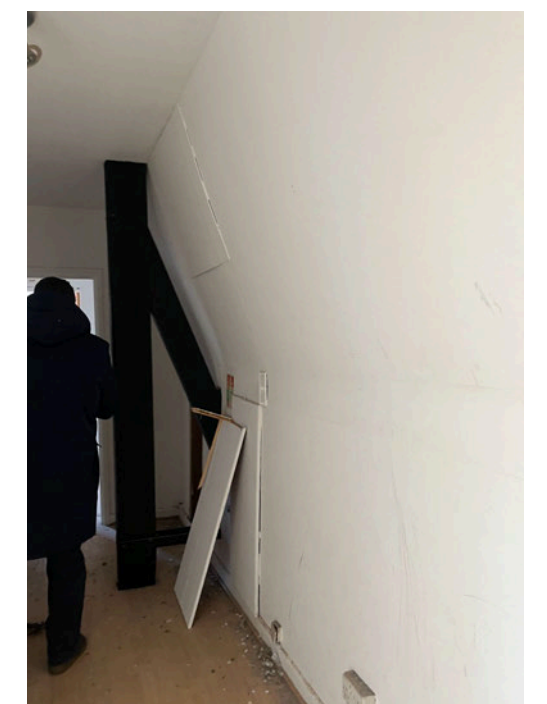
External void adjacent to rooms 320 and 420



Existing metal staircase



Valley roof construction



Mansard roof structure

11. Impact on the Historic Environment, City and Queen Square Conservation Area No. 4

- i. Map 6 of the City and Queen Square Character Appraisal categorises 57 Prince Street as a partially negative building within the conservation area, therefore it is crucial that the redevelopment of the 3rd and 4th floors enhance the quality of the external appearance.
- ii. The proposal enhances the quality of the external appearance, and therefore for the outlook of the conservation area, by upgrading the windows and reinstating their original materiality and glazing type, this creates coherency in the elevation.
- iii. We feel that the proposal design and scale respond to section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requiring the decision maker to pay 'special attention [...] to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area'.

12. Impact on the Heritage Asset

- i. The 3rd and 4th floors of 57 Prince Street are in desperate need of investment and repair. They are in a derelict state following the shutdown due to the fire risk. The building must adapt in order to run as a functioning building again. It is likely that if the dilapidation continues then it will harm the structure and integrity of the whole building.
- ii. The modifications proposed will be fundamental to bringing the building back into use and securing its future by attracting a high demand of hotel users and ensuring maintenance to the building can be carried out.
- iii. The demolitions proposed are to ensure that the building can be fully reinstated in a manner which enables the building's users to have a safe and comfortable stay.
- iv. As the building was originally an open-plan warehouse it is understood that the stud walls are not original and therefore removing them is not affecting the heritage asset.

13. Conclusion

- i. The building is located in a very central and well-connected location. Hotel rooms in such a prominent location are a valuable asset for the city, the proposal will create suitable exemplary hotel rooms that contribute positively to the tourism provisions within the city centre and respond to the high demand of visitors.