

Radcliffe Market Chambers



Heritage Assessment
February 2023



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Contents

1.0	Introduction	7
1.1	Background	7
1.2	Methodology	7
1.3	Authorship & Ownership	7
1.4	Location & Description	8
1.5	Current Land Use & Management	8
1.6	Designations	8
2.0	Understanding the Heritage	10
2.1	Description of the Heritage	10
2.2	History & Development	13
2.3	Historic Mapping	15
3.0	Assessment of Significance	17
3.1	Archaeological Interest	18
3.2	Architectural & Artistic Interest	18
3.3	Historic Interest	18
4.0	Summary of Proposed Works	20
4.1	Market Chambers Link Block	20
4.2	New Radcliffe Hub Building	20
5.0	Heritage Impact Assessment	22
5.1	Methodology	22
5.2	Impact on the Radcliffe Market Chambers	23
5.3	Conclusion	29
6.0	Bibliography	31
6.1	Endnotes	31

Project Summary

Project Summary

SITE NAME: Radcliffe Market Chambers
ADDRESS: 11 Blackburn St, Radcliffe, Manchester, M26 1PN
SITE OWNERS: Bury Council
LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY: Bury Council
DESIGNATIONS: N/A
CONSERVATION AREA: N/A
DATE OF PROPERTY: Late Victorian

PROJECT TYPE: Heritage Statement
PREPARED BY: Freya Needham, MA, – Buttress Architects
QA BY: Jenna Johnston, MA(Hons) MSc - Buttress
DATE:

1.0

Introduction

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

The following report presents a Heritage Assessment for Radcliffe Market Chambers, Bury, Greater Manchester, henceforth referred to as ‘The Site’. The Radcliffe Strategic Regeneration Framework highlights the refurbishment of the Market Chambers and Basement as a priority project to be achieved by 2025. The following report aims provide an understanding of the heritage significance of the asset and assess the potential impacts of the proposed development on this significance.

Radcliffe Market Chambers is a non-designated heritage asset. The site does not lie within the boundary of a Conservation Area.

1.2 Methodology

The document is intended to support the submission of a Planning application.

The document surveys the heritage, providing an overview of important information to foster a better understanding of the asset and its significance. It does this through assessment of the surviving building fabric and its wider context. Significance is assessed in relation to heritage interests outlined by Historic England. The aims of this assessment is to understand the site to provide a baseline against which to assess heritage impacts. This document has been written in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (2021), Historic England’s Statements of Heritage Significance (2019), Conservation Principles, Policies & Management for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment (2008), and BS7913 - British Standards Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings.

1.3 Authorship & Ownership

This document has been prepared by Freya Needham, BA (Hons), MA, Heritage Consultant at Buttress, and reviewed by Jenna Johnston MA (Hons) MSc, Senior Heritage Consultant at Buttress

1.4 Location & Description

The site is located in the centre of Radcliffe, Bury, Manchester, on Blackburn Street. Constructed in the late Victorian period, the chambers houses a number of commercial units and first and second floor office spaces.

The site is bordered to the east by the River Irwell. Extending from the rear of the chambers is Radcliffe Market Hall, reopened in 2014 after a £1 million refurbishment. The site is bordered to the west by a large 1960/70 retail complex.

1.5 Current Land Use & Management

At ground floor, the chambers building is currently occupied by a small number of businesses, including a nail salon.

The first and second floors, along with the adjoining bank building are currently vacant.

1.6 Designations

Radcliffe Market Chambers is not designated, however is considered a non-designated heritage asset.

The site does not lie within a Conservation Area.



2.0

Understanding the Heritage

2.0 Understanding the Heritage

2.1 Description of the Heritage

2.1.1 Exterior

Built in the late Victorian period between 1893 and 1929, Radcliffe Market Chambers is constructed primarily of red brick with slate tile roof. The building is three-storey, the second floor housed within the roof and dormer space. The main facade is divided by pilasters into five bays.

The ground floor facade is characterised by shopfronts of modern character. The shopfronts have low stall risers, large glazing panels with clerestory lights and slim mullions, tall fascias and pedestrian width doors. The corner unit is defined by a more ornate doorway with curved pediment and corbel detailing.

At first floor, each bay has a pair of fixed windows with rounded corners serving the internal office spaces. Above each pair of windows is carved a simplified variation of the Radcliffe coat of arms.

The second floor of the building sits within the roof space of the building; roof is pitched with blue slate and crenelated red clay ridge tiles. Ornate gable features and dormer windows provide additional roof space and contribute to the architectural character of the building. Pilasters terminate with Corinthian style capitals, supporting pediment features. The central pediment on the facade details the coat of arms of the Earl of Wilton.

The east elevation of the building drops steeply to meet the river Irwell at basement level. This elevation is two bays deep and three storeys high. Radcliffe market extends to the rear of the chambers building along the river bank.

2.1.2 Interior

The Market Chambers building houses retail space at ground floor and office spaces on the upper floors.

The interior of the chambers building retains no features of heritage interest and is in poor condition due to water ingress.



Figure 2 North Elevation



Figure 3 East Elevation and Adjoining Market Hall

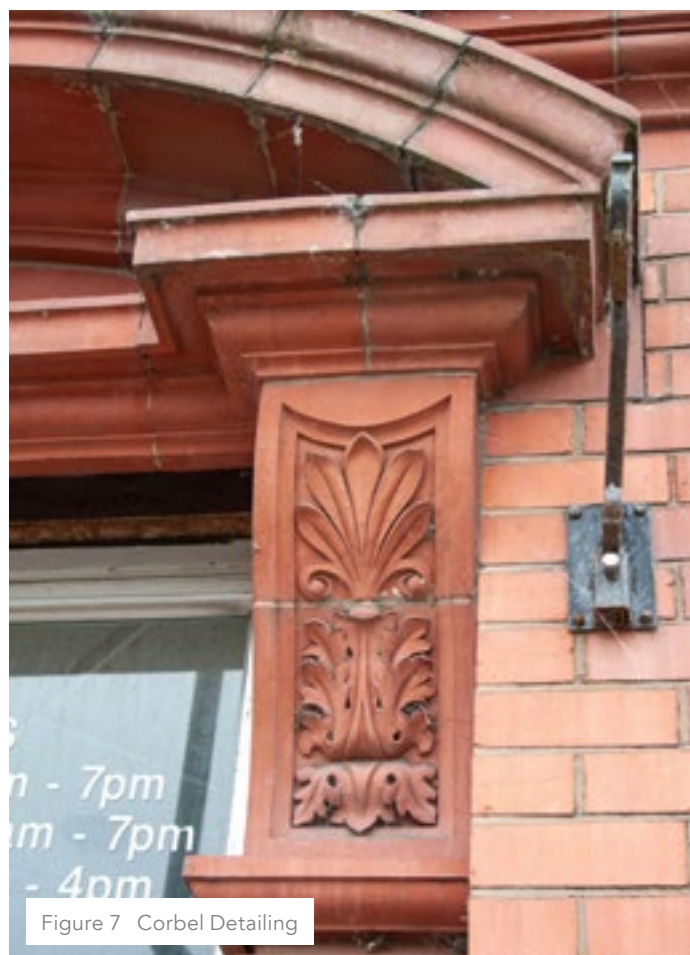
2.1.3 Setting

The chambers building is located in the heart of Radcliffe town centre. The area is largely populated with retail units; encompassing the site to the west is a large 1960/70s retail block with concrete frame, referred to as the 'south block'. To the north west of chambers is a small piazza with public seating.

The site is immediately bordered to the south-east by the River Irwell. Views to the east elevation of the chambers building and the adjoining market to the rear are clearly visible from the adjacent bridge.



Figure 4 View South of Chambers and Setting



2.2 History & Development

Historic mapping and photographs suggest that previous to the construction of the Market Chambers building, the site was occupied by worker housing and a Dye Works¹. A street ran adjacent to the site to the north west named Factory Street [Figure 17].

The most significant change that has occurred to the site is in relation to its setting and surroundings. At the advent of the 20th century the character of the area changed from industrial and residential to retail.

A market hall was constructed just west of the site in 1851 by the Earl of Wilton. The Market Chambers building was subsequently constructed by the Earl in the late Victorian period and the area to the rear of the Chambers was turned into an open air market.²

An indoor market was later added to the rear of the Chambers building and the Market Hall and associated retail space [Figure 12] were demolished in the 1930s to make way for the new Art Deco Odeon cinema opened in 1937 [Figure 13].

During the mid-late 20th century development continues with the construction of the 1960s concrete frame 'South Block' just west of the chambers building, in front of the Odeon building. The Odeon was later demolished in 2005.

Throughout the mid-20th century the basement of the Market building to the rear of the Chambers served as a community billiard hall, referred to locally as 'The Grot'³ English professional snooker player and former World Professional title holder, John Spencer played and trained in the Grot whilst growing up in Radcliffe.

The form and function of the chambers building has remained largely unchanged throughout its history and at ground floor it has remained in continuous use as retail space. The shopfronts have however been altered over time and some traditional features have been lost.



Figure 11 View Across Radcliffe Bridge c1850 © Heritage Photo Archive



Figure 10 Market Chambers early 20th century © 'Radcliffe As It Was'





Figure 16 County Series, 1844



Figure 18 County Series, 1907



Figure 17 County Series, 1889



Figure 19 County Series, 1927

3.0

Assessment of Significance

3.0 Assessment of Significance

Following guidance outlined in Historic England's *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* (2008), along with the more recent *Historic England Advice Note 12 Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets*, the following section will aim to assess any heritage interest(s) that the site might hold.

The level of significance will be assessed based on the scale below:

Exceptional: Heritage interests having national or international importance, usually found where assets are designated at grade II*, grade I, scheduled monuments and UNESCO World Heritage sites.

High: Heritage interests having national importance, usually found where assets are designated at grade II*.

Medium: Heritage interests having regional importance, usually found where assets are designated grade II. Also, generally applies to Conservation Areas.

Low: Heritage interests that make a positive contribution to their area, group or setting. Usually, non-designated heritage assets and historic townscapes.

Neutral: Historically unimportant. These ratings are intended to address the heritage values outlined below, and do not relate to the significance of specific buildings, spaces, or areas of fabric.

3.1 Archaeological Interest

There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

The condition of any potential remains on the site is likely to be poor due to high levels of disruption from urban development and the introduction of a cellar to the chambers building.

With regard to any potential buildings archaeology, interest is also limited due to lack of any early material within the buildings itself. Any structural fabric that relates to the earlier phase of the building is still clearly evident externally.

The archaeological value of Radcliffe Market Chambers is **low**.

3.2 Architectural & Artistic Interest

These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skills, like sculpture.

The Market Chambers holds architectural interest as a building of vernacular merit and design value, constructed of high-quality red brick, a material historically used widely across Radcliffe.

The architectural interest of the chambers building is increased by its prominent position within Radcliffe town centre; the building is framed by a large number of modern developments and remains one of the few remaining historic buildings within the vicinity. The pediment and corbel detailing seen on the first and second floors of the chambers building are reflective of the style of the surrounding market buildings that existed on the site before their demolition in 1937. This contributes to the illustrative value of the chambers building as it serves as a material record of previous architectural character in the area.

The architectural and artistic interest of Radcliffe Market Chambers is **low**.

3.3 Historic Interest

An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history, but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

Radcliffe Market Chambers holds historic value in relation to the development of the market in Radcliffe. The chambers building is the only surviving historic building relating to the original market established in the town by Lord Wilton during the late Victorian era. The coat of arms of the Earl that is repeated across the facade of the chambers building provides illustrative value in this regard.

The historic value of Radcliffe Market Chambers is **low**.

4.0

Summary of Proposed Works

4.0 Summary of Proposed Works

The following scheme has been designed by Pozzoni Architects; the following assessment responds to information provided by the design team.

4.1 Market Chambers Link Block

To improve circulation between the Market Chambers building and the Radcliffe Market, and create access to the buildings for all members of the public, a new link block is proposed.

The new intervention will replace the existing contemporary block that currently exists. [Figure 20](#) shows a CGI visual of the proposed new link block.

The block will be 3-storey, matching the new adjacent Hub building in style and material palette.

4.2 New Radcliffe Hub Building

The new Radcliffe Hub will replace the existing leisure centre in Radcliffe, while also providing other recreational facilities and council services.

The 3-storey building is of high-quality modern design and will be constructed using pale brick and metallic cladding, with perforated panelling and metal fin detailing.



5.0

Heritage Impact Assessment

5.0 Heritage Impact Assessment

5.1 Methodology

Impacts will be assessed and scaled per British Standards BS7913 guidance for the scale of impacts, which correlates with the ICOMOS Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments. ICOMOS suggest a 9-point scale spectrum for defining the impacts of proposed changes, which is included here in [Figure 23](#). This scale is a useful tool within the context of the benefit and harm dichotomy of the NPPF. The scale provides the opportunity for beneficial outcomes to be quantified, balanced, and considered alongside the NPPF outcomes of: no harm, less than substantial harm, and substantial harm. Together they create a holistic approach to assessment.

5.1.1 Assessment of Scale of Specific Impact and Change

The **scale of change** is based on the level of proposed intervention and how much potential the intervention has to alter fundamental principles of significance of the asset. The scale of impact relates this to the significance of the asset in question. It is important to note that impacts can be both direct and indirect, and do not only relate to the physical fabric. Change and impact can also be primary or secondary; temporary or permanent; reversible or irreversible; and may arise as a consequence of construction or operation of the proposed development. For the purpose of this assessment, the following definitions have been applied:

Direct impacts are those that arise as a primary consequence of the Scheme. Direct impacts can result in the physical loss of part or all of an asset, and/or changes to its setting. Setting is, ‘the surroundings in which a place is experienced, its local context, embracing present and past relationships to the adjacent landscape.’

Direct impacts resulting in physical loss are usually permanent and irreversible; normally occur as a consequence of construction; and are confined within the development footprint. The magnitude of these impacts will depend on the proportion of the asset affected, and whether its key characteristics would be affected.

Direct impacts that affect the setting of an asset can occur as a consequence of construction or operation of the scheme and can affect assets some distance from the development. Assessment of impacts on setting refers to perceptible visual and aural effects that can be appreciated at a given time. Such impacts may be temporary or permanent, reversible or irreversible depending on the extent to which the cause of the impact can be removed. Impacts may also be transient where occurrence is sporadic or of limited duration, for example related to hours of operation or the frequency of passage of vehicles.

Indirect impacts occur as a secondary consequence of construction or operation of the development, and can result in physical loss or changes to the setting of an asset beyond the development footprint.

Severity of impacts has been judged taking into account their direct and indirect effects and whether they are temporary or permanent, reversible or irreversible. The cumulative effect of separate impacts has also been considered. The magnitude of impact (summation of direct and indirect impacts) is assigned one of the descriptors; impacts may be adverse or beneficial.

VALUE OF HERITAGE ASSET	SCALE & SEVERITY OF CHANGE/IMPACT (EITHER ADVERSE OR BENEFICIAL)				
	No Change	Negligible Change	Minor Change	Moderate Change	Major Change
Very High (Grade I/Scheduled Monument)	Neutral	Slight	Moderate/ Large	Large/Very Large	Very Large
High (Grade II*)	Neutral	Slight	Moderate/ Slight	Moderate/ Large	Large/Very Large
Medium (Grade II/ Conservation Area)	Neutral	Neutral/Slight	Slight	Moderate	Moderate/ Large
Low (Locally Listed)	Neutral	Neutral/Slight	Neutral/Slight	Slight	Slight/ Moderate
Negligible (Non-Designated)	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral/Slight	Neutral/Slight	Slight

Figure 21 Significance/Scale of Impacts Table

No Change	Negligible Change	Minor Change	Moderate Change	Major Change
No material change to the heritage asset or its setting.	A small change or alteration, but unimportant. Having no visual or indirect impacts on the asset or its setting. Slight changes to use or access.	A small change to an element of fabric or setting that results in a noticeable difference. Limited indirect impacts or changes to character.	Changes to an element, including replacement, or insertion of a new element, where the asset or its setting has clearly been modified. Noticeable indirect impacts.	A change of great extent, including the complete removal of an element. Changes to most or all of the asset or its setting. Total alteration of the asset. Extreme indirect impacts.

Figure 22 Definition of types of change

Major beneficial	Moderate beneficial	Minor beneficial	Negligible beneficial	Neutral	Negligible adverse	Minor adverse	Moderate adverse	Major adverse
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Figure 23 9-point scale of impact

5.2 Impact on the Radcliffe Market Chambers

5.2.1 Demolition of Existing Link Building

The demolition of the existing link building will have no impact on the Market Chambers building. The existing link (as can be seen in [Figure 24](#)) does not contribute to the significance, setting or character of the asset and its loss will not affect the understanding or appreciation of the Market Chambers.

The existing link building holds no architectural merit in its own right and does not contribute to the character of the wider town centre.



5.2.2 Construction of the Proposed New Link Building

The design of the new link building has been developed and modified to respond appropriately to its setting and context. The link will provide much needed circulation between the Market Chambers and the Market Hall, improving the usability of the spaces and ensuring easy public access.

5.2.2.1 Massing and Perspective

The third storey of the link block has been stepped back and is detailed with perforated panels to ensure the additional mass does not overbear the Market Chambers, maintaining permeability across the site from longer ranging views.

Additional visual cues have been taken from the chambers building to ensure the design of the link block responds to its context. The link block uses proportions and indicators from the Market Chambers building to set levels and reference points across the link block facade.

The fenestration pattern of the new link mirrors that of the Chambers building to provide continuity between the two buildings.



Figure 26 and Figure 27 show initial elevational studies carried out by Pozzoni to develop design cues for the new link building.



Figure 26 Initial Elevational Study

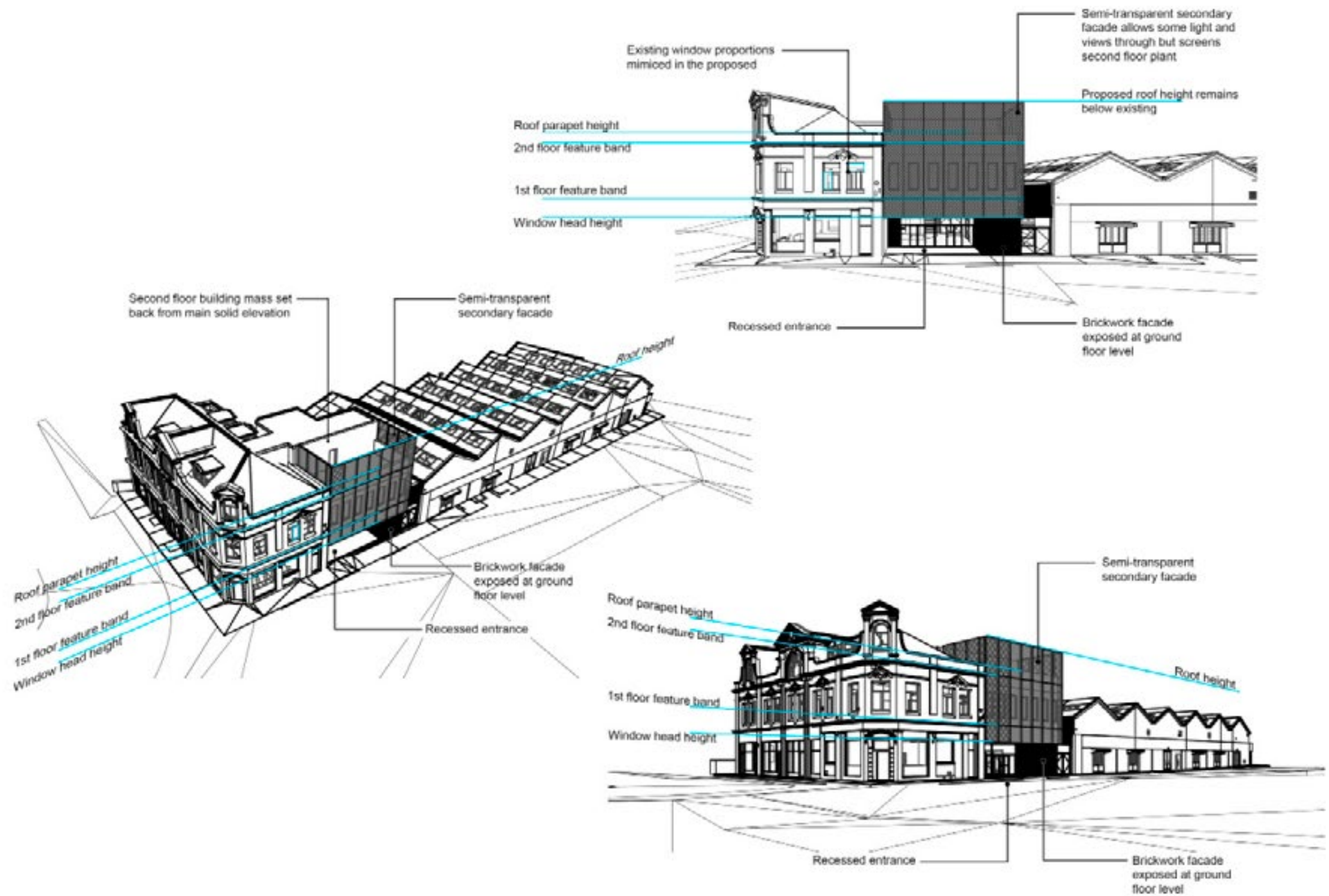


Figure 27 Initial Proposal in the Context of the Elevational Study. Design has since been developed to reach final proposal.

5.2.2.2 Materials

The materials chosen will match those proposed for the new adjacent hub building to ensure the visual language of the development is maintained across the site. Refer to DAS for full description of chosen materials. The neutral palette ensures the link block remains visually subservient to the chambers building, the traditional red brick remaining as the visual focus within the streetscape.

The proposed east elevation uses substantial glazing to provide visual variation along the river-front elevation of the site, as can be seen in [Figure 28](#). This elevation will be set back from the edge of the site to reduce the prominence of the link block within the setting of the asset.

5.2.2.3 Summary

The new development will constitute **moderate change** to the setting and character of the asset, resulting in a **neutral/slight** impact. This change is considered to be **moderate beneficial** in nature and will result in **no harm** to the significance of the asset.



Figure 28 Proposed East Elevation

5.2.3 New Hub Building

The proposed Hub Building responds positively to its context and will have no impact on the setting of the Chambers Building. The hub building lies within the immediate context of the Chambers Building however does not contribute to its setting as a heritage asset.

Although the mass of the new construction is greater than the existing buildings on the development site, the refined design of the Hub, along with the proposed improvements to the surrounding landscaping, will improve views across the wider site, improving permeability, and movement from the piazza to the market building.

High quality materials have been chosen to respond to the local vernacular, resulting in a new construction that is purposefully modern in order to demarcate old from new. The neutral material palette will ensure that the strong red brick of the Chambers building will remain visually dominant within views across the public realm, ensuring the asset still sits prominently within the new streetscape.

The new development will constitute **moderate change** to the setting and character of the asset. This change is considered to be **moderate beneficial** in nature and will result in **no harm** to the significance of the asset.



Figure 29 CGIs Showing Proposed Hub Building (Pozzoni)

5.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposed development has sought to balance the needs of market hall and town centre of Radcliffe with consideration for the site's location within the setting of the Market Chambers.

The scheme takes a considered design approach to respond effectively to its context with regard to scale, mass and material, and proposes to introduce high-quality design to Radcliffe town centre.

Overall, the proposed development will result in **no harm** to the significance of the asset.

6.0

Bibliography & Sources

6.0 Bibliography

Radcliffe Local History Society ‘*Radcliffe as it was: a pictorial record of Radcliffe since 1854*’ (The Society 1977).

“The parish of Radcliffe,” in A History of the County of Lancaster: Volume 5, ed. William Farrer and J Brownbill (London: Victoria County History, 1911), 56-67. British History Online, accessed May 27, 2022, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/lancs/vol5/pp56-6>

Heritage Photo Archive. ‘*Heritage Photo Archive and Heritage Image Register*’. Accessed May 12, 2023. <https://www.heritagephotoarchive.co.uk/>

6.1 Endnotes

- 1 ‘Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service Monument Full Report’
- 2 “The parish of Radcliffe,” in A History of the County of Lancaster: Volume 5, ed. William Farrer and J Brownbill (London: Victoria County History, 1911), 56-67. British History Online, accessed May 27, 2022, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/lancs/vol5/pp56-6>
- .3 Radcliffe Local History Society ‘Radcliffe as it was: a pictorial record of Radcliffe since 1854’ (1977).

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