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OASIS OF THE CONTINUITY. THE MODERNIZATION OF THE HISTORICAL BUILDING AT ARDWICK GREEN STREET IN MANCHESTER

This article investigates the adaptive reuse of the abandoned British Army complex in Manchester, a project that foregrounds the principles of continuity—both aesthetic and functional—while engaging in a rigorous dialogue with historical and cultural heritage. The intervention aspires to preserve the architectural integrity of the Ardwick Drill Hall, a Grade II listed structure, while integrating contemporary elements that both respect and reinforce its historical significance. By striking a careful balance between restoration and innovation, the project ensures the site's sustained relevance within an evolving urban landscape. The project adheres to stringent conservation guidelines, retaining significant structures while selectively removing incongruous additions. It emphasises the synthesis of preserved elements with a newly constructed wing, reinforcing the site's urban coherence while offering a contemporary reinterpretation of its architectural identity. The intervention reinterprets the existing spatial hierarchy, ensuring that new functions—primarily cultural and educational—align seamlessly with the historical character of the complex. The material and formal language of the new architectural elements is informed by a meticulous analysis of the site's original fabric, fostering a sense of continuity between the past and present. Sustainability is embedded in the project through the implementation of energy-efficient technologies and the adaptive reuse of existing structures, thereby minimising environmental impact while maintaining the integrity of the historical ensemble. Moreover, the spatial organisation prioritises accessibility, ensuring an inclusive and enduring public realm. By synthesising conservation and contemporary intervention, the project offers a refined approach to urban regeneration—one that safeguards historical and cultural narratives while fostering new modes of engagement. Through its reconciliation of heritage and modernity, it establishes a paradigm for the respectful and sustainable transformation of historically significant sites.

Keywords: Manchester, adaptive reuse, continuity, new architecture

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1. INTRODUCTION

Victorian architecture of the second half of the nineteenth century is distinguished by its expressiveness and attention to detail, which had a significant impact on civil engineering within the British Empire. This period, associated with the stability and prosperity that accompanied Queen Victoria's reign, left numerous architectural testimonies behind, including Ardwick Drill Hall in Manchester – a British Army reserve centre designed by Lawrence Booth [Levrant, 2020]. Contemporary architecture, often subsumed by rapid and unreflective construction, requires a renewed attention to the historical and cultural values of urban spaces. The adaptation and modernisation of historic buildings are an important part of sustainable urban development strategies, bringing disused spaces back to life and engaging local communities. This article presents the concept of upgrading the Ardwick barracks complex in the spirit of Adaptive Reuse, which involves harmoniously combining the historic architectural fabric with modern design solutions. Such activities not only preserve heritage, but also contribute to the development of communities through education as well as strengthening of a sense of identity and belonging to a place. The project is based on the idea of architecture as a single form or set of forms representing a lasting material continuity, which is recognisable in objects known from the past, those that are currently being implemented or in new projects that are biding their time [Słuchocka, 2021].

The Oasis of the Continuity project presents the development of a multi-functional cultural centre, set within the walls of abandoned British Army barracks. Taking into account the conservationist's guidelines and respecting the magnificent English history and culture, a complex concept had to be prepared. It involves the preservation and use of valuable buildings, the demolition of insignificant additions, and the addition of a wing to complement the urban fabric at the junction of Downing Street and Ardwick Green Street. The extension is a contemporary continuation of the most valued segment among the entire ensemble of buildings, see Fig. 1.

Unused since 2018, the historic site is listed on the National Heritage List for England (Grade II). The neighbouring property is an undeveloped plot at the junction of Ardwick Green N and Downing Street. The whole site is situated in a prominent location, being close to sprawling residential areas, Manchester Piccadilly Central Station, the University Quarter (Manchester Metropolitan University and The University of Manchester), on one of the main north-south link roads in England (the A6), which is the fourth longest numbered road in the country.

Fig. 1 Front design visualization.
[Source: prepared by the authors]

The area lacks a centre for interaction and social integration for a large group of residents (the Ardwick neighbourhood alone had a population of 21,042 in 2021), and the attractive location of the site together with vacant land could create a place that is easily accessible and meets the cultural and integration needs of the local community.

The proposed solution to the problem is the extension and redevelopment of an existing historic building of high historic, social and aesthetic value, which is a contemporary continuation of the existing context and responds to the needs of the users. The design should follow the rhythm of the existing entrance block to the barracks on the exterior, while simultaneously creating a new, attractive space that offers residents and visitors opportunities for leisure, access to education, and entertainment. Such a venture could bring numerous benefits to both the local community and the environment. A cultural centre would provide a stimulus to the area, attracting residents and tourists, which in turn would support the development of the nearby businesses and shops. It would also be a place that promotes arts and culture, offering a rich programme of events such as exhibitions, concerts, theatre performances and other artistic initiatives. Education could also be an important aspect of the centre's activities. Workshops, lectures and courses organised there would allow residents to develop their interests and skills in culture and arts. The building would also serve as a social space for integration and exchange of ideas, strengthening

bonds between the residents and supporting the active participation in the cultural life of the city. At the same time, the redevelopment of the former British Army building would be an important element of heritage conservation. Giving it a new function would not only preserve its historic value, but also adapt it to the needs of the contemporary community. Sustainability should be a key aspect of the project – the use of green building technologies and energy-efficient solutions would help to protect the environment and create a modern, welcoming space for residents.

Manchester is one of the UK's major cultural and entertainment centres, offering a wide range of activities to suit the diverse interests of residents and tourists alike. The city is home to a number of renowned academic institutions, such as Manchester Metropolitan University and The University of Manchester, and is the birthplace of world-renowned musical acts including Oasis, The Stone Roses, The Smiths, New Order and Hurts. The rich cultural infrastructure includes museums and art galleries, including Manchester Art Gallery, Museum of Science and Industry and Whitworth Art Gallery, as well as theatres and concert halls, such as The Lowry, Royal Exchange Theatre and Bridgewater Hall. Manchester also stands out for its dynamic sports scene, being home to two leading football clubs, Manchester United and Manchester City, whose stadiums, Old Trafford and Etihad Stadium, are among the most recognisable sports venues in the world. In addition, the city offers numerous parks and recreational areas, an extensive network of cafés and restaurants as well as regularly organised cultural events, all of which encourage social integration and highlight its importance as a centre of cultural and social life. All of these elements are testament to Manchester's huge development potential and its important role in the UK's cultural landscape. This is due to the unique demand of the local community for culture and leisure opportunities. Socialising, meeting people with shared passions and interests, is an integral part of residents' lives.

Despite Manchester's many attractions, it is important to provide places that are emblematic of the local community, that recall the history of individual neighbourhoods and provide space to broaden horizons and pursue personal interests. Particularly in the developing neighbourhood, the lack of more intimate places for residents to socialise is notable.

The number of unrenovated and refurbished conservation buildings in England is an indication of the direction to be taken: given today's shortage of land for urban development, it is important to restore monuments and give them new value and functionality. Creating spaces within them that meet the needs of neighbourhood residents, is an excellent solution.

The proposed concept harmoniously combines aesthetic and functional qualities, responding to the key challenges of contemporary architecture. It makes use of disused spaces, highlighting the most salient visual features and introducing a subtle, contemporary interpretation of Victorian buildings. With attention to detail, thoughtful composition and functionality, the new architectonic form contributes to urban order and spatial coherence. The structure of the building has been divided

into several zones: a cultural centre, workshop rooms, an exhibition space, an event hall and an administrative and storage area. In this way, the venue becomes a multifunctional space that responds to the cultural, educational and social needs of its inhabitants.

By combining the preservation of cultural heritage with sustainable development, the cultural centre project can become an example of how the past can be integrated with the future, while caring for the environment and the local community.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Industrial and military buildings, once purely functional and often overlooked, have become an integral part of the cultural landscape of modern cities. Their adaptive reuse not only protects the architectural heritage, but also serves as a catalyst for urban regeneration, fostering creativity, economic growth and community engagement [Sulimowska-Ociepka 2021].

The adaptation of Ardwick Drill Hall in Manchester is a compelling case study in architectural conservation, urban regeneration and adaptive reuse. This project demonstrates the transformation of a 19th century military complex into a multi-functional public space, highlighting its historical significance, the challenges of modernisation and the integration of contemporary design within a historic structure. The methodology used in this study includes architectural and urban design analysis, historical research and material studies to assess how the project is to preserve the identity of the existing structure while adapting to new functional requirements.

From a historical research perspective, it was necessary to take a closer look at conservation reports and materials, as well as past information. This provided an insight into the chronology of events shaping the Ardwick district and the location of the developed building. Designed by Lawrence Booth in the Victorian era, the building is a representative example of military architecture, which was successively extended with additions that were less significant from a conservation perspective. By analysing the surviving original elements and conservation guidelines, it is possible to determine which elements should be exposed and which should be demolished. The available report clearly indicates the division into the most important, less important and also those segments without any major historical value. Parts marked in red are treated as those of High heritage significance, justifying that the loss of such elements (through demolition, removal or alteration) could potentially cause a serious negative impact on the special significance of the building. In orange as Considerable heritage significance, in purple Moderate heritage significance, in blue Low heritage significance. Areas in green are marked as No significance /Detrimental elements, which was explained by the fact that the loss of such elements (through demolition, removal or alteration) could potentially have

a neutral or beneficial impact on the special interest of the building. Fig 2 and 3. With these guidelines, and a precise inventory in the BIM model, it was possible to freely eliminate unnecessary elements in the design.

Fig. 2 Ground Floor Significance Plan [Source: Stephen Levrant Heritage Architecture Ltd]

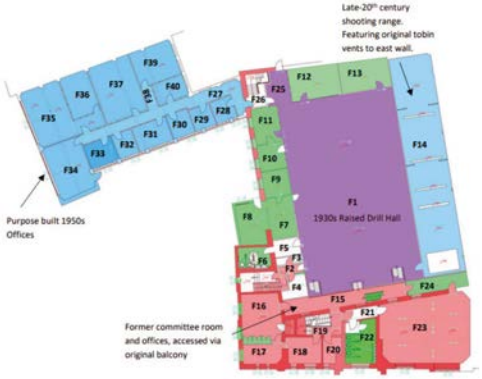

Fig..3 First Floor Significance Plan [Source: Stephen Levrant Heritage Architecture Ltd]

Architectural and urban studies carried out at different scales – the city, the district and the building complex itself – allowed for a thorough analysis of the location, its potential and the challenges of adapting the space. They also enabled the assessment of the possibility of harmoniously integrating the new development into the existing urban context. The project is being developed on a corner site, strategically located close to key areas of Manchester, with convenient access to public transport and green spaces. Although the external condition of the building prior to the commencement of works was adequate, the interior required a comprehensive upgrade in terms of functionality and aesthetics. The site also presents an opportunity for expansion with the aim of integrating historic and modern architectural elements in a way that enriches the local townscape and enhances its identity.

The analysis of materials used in the Ardwick Drill Hall, combined with a study of local material solutions and contemporary construction techniques, enabled the development of a concept that harmonizes authenticity with efficiency. Particular attention was paid to the detailing of the façade, which is a continuation of the historic structure designed by Lawrence Booth, creating a coherent dialogue between the past and present. The use of local materials has integrated the building into Manchester's architectural context, while the use of contemporary construction techniques has contributed to its sustainability and energy efficiency, in line with the principles of sustainability.

This interdisciplinary approach highlights the importance of adaptive reuse in shaping contemporary architecture. The Oasis of Continuity project, using the

modernization of the Ardwick Drill Hall as a case study, demonstrates how historic structures can be transformed to meet the needs of the contemporary city while preserving their identity and cultural value.

3. ARDWICK DRILL HALL STATUS

Ardwick Drill Hall, designed by Lawrence Booth and completed in 1886, originally served as the headquarters of the 5th (Ardwick) Battalion of the Manchester Volunteer Regiment. The building was officially opened in September 1887 with Prince George, Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces in attendance. With the integration of volunteer forces within the Territorial Army in the 20th century, the building gradually began to lose its functionality, leading to a number of modernisations. In 1930, a decision was made to raise the Drill Hall by ten feet, which enabled the creation of a two-storey space—comprising a new exercise hall and additional office rooms on the lower level. In subsequent years, notably in the 1950s, the facility was expanded to include a new wing with a garage and an administrative space, see Fig. 4.

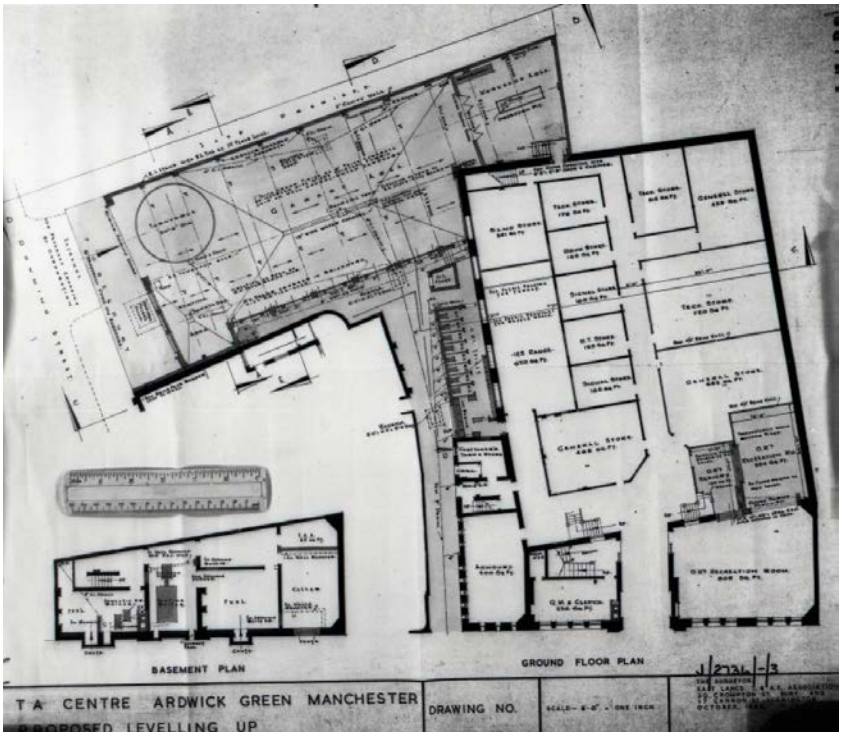

Fig. 4 Reconstruction project of the building from 1956 – ground floor.
[Source: Stephen Levrant Heritage Architecture Ltd]

During the Second World War, the barracks served as a detention centre for deserters and after the war it reverted to being the headquarters of the 8th Battalion of the Manchester Regiment. The building changed its purpose a number of times in the decades that followed, including being the headquarters of Manchester Regiment Territorials from 1967 and Company D (Inkerman) of the 4th Battalion The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment from 2006. Eventually, the barracks were abandoned in 2018 and put up for sale a year later, opening up the possibility of adaptive re-use in the context of the city's contemporary needs.

The current state of the building requires a thorough adaptation of its purpose, as the characteristics of military buildings differ significantly from those of public buildings and especially from cultural buildings. Fig. 5 and 6. According to the conservation guidelines, the building currently contains unnecessary extensions and walls that have no architectural value. In order to reconfigure the function, it is necessary to remove elements of no value, while simultaneously emphasizing, restoring, and highlighting the most significant parts.

Fig. 5 Photograph of the building from Downing Street.
[Source: photo authors]

Fig. 6 Photograph of the Drill Hall interior.
[Source: photo authors]

4. ARRANGEMENT AND EXTENSION

The corner plot, which is an important element of the urban layout of the area, was once built up, but remains unused as a result of the bomb damage of 1940. In order to fill it in harmoniously with the historical architectural context, it was necessary to analyse the rhythms and spatial relationships of the most important element of the establishment, the Castle – the entrance gate.

A study of the composition of the façade became the starting point for the development of the first concepts for the extension. Understanding the proportions and divisions of the façade made it possible to design an architectural complement that

fits in with the style of the existing Victorian structure. The design process, supported by numerous sketches and form studies, focused on maintaining appropriate proportions and coherence with the surrounding buildings.

Thanks to this detailed analysis, it was possible to take into account the historical context and the aesthetic qualities of the building, which was a key aspect of the design. The extension not only complements the existing urban fabric, but also restores architectural continuity to a site affected by wartime destruction.

The final volume is not only an urban complement, but also a contemporary interpretation of the most important element of the post-military, diverse site. Fig. 7. It corresponds subtly with the whole, referring to the non-regional heights, allowing further simplified communication and calming the rhythm of the whole complex. Creative solutions are presented, referring to historical elements such as cornices or characteristic narrow windows.

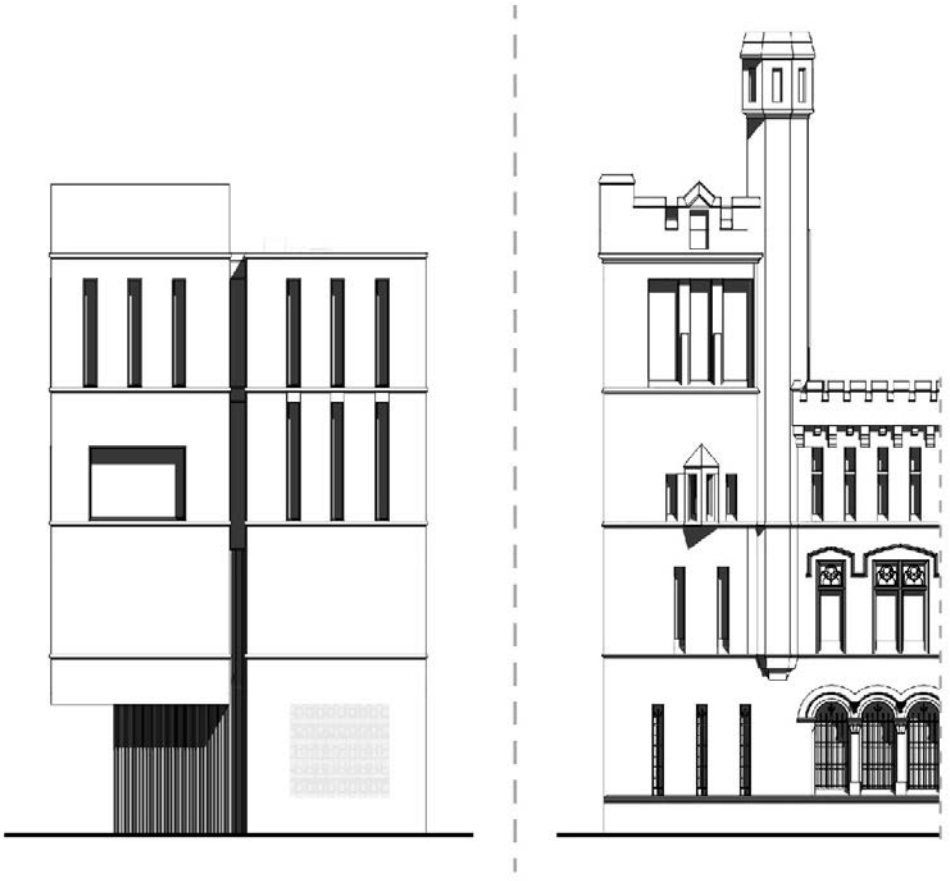

Fig. 7 Comparison of the new elevation with the existing one.

[Source: prepared by the authors]

The shape was also influenced by the idea of a scenic exposure of the tower, and an enticing entrance to the courtyard. Fig. 8 The form is not only a continuation of the siting context, but is also inspired by Manchester's Hollaway Wall. Fig. 9. The 1966 brutalist form, listed on the National Heritage List for England in Grade II, was designed by Hollaway in collaboration with the architect Harry M. Fairhurst on behalf of the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST). The form was intended to act as a sound barrier. As a result, this particular wall, rather than being incorporated into the site, gained the status of a stand-alone structure.

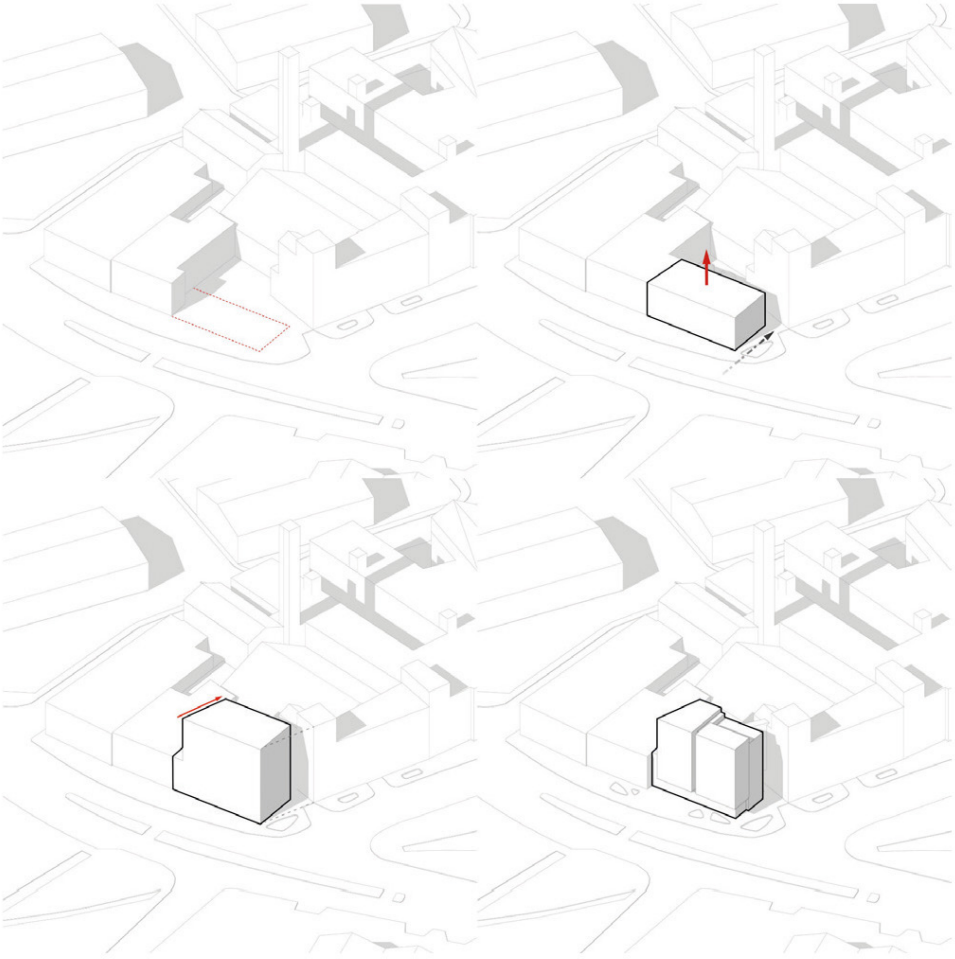

Fig. 8 Form development diagram.
[Source: prepared by the authors]

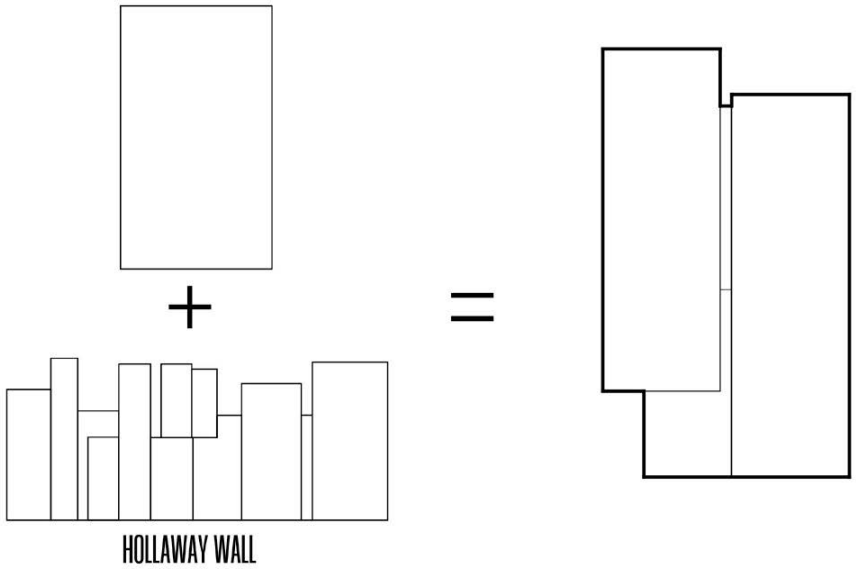

Fig. 9 Hollaway Wall Inspiration Diagram.

[Source: prepared by the authors]

5. (RE)PURPOSING

"Preservation is overtaken by the inevitable corruption of time and function." [Koolhaas 1994] In the context of the developed project, this can be understood as an acceptance of the changing nature and an adaptation to modern needs, instead of aiming to preserve the building in its original state. The building has lost its original purpose over time, and in order to give it a second life it is necessary to change its completely original function.

The starting point for the development of the Continuity Oasis project was the Drill Hall report, Ardwick. Heritage Statement: Part 1 Significance Appraisal, prepared by Stephen Levrant Heritage Architecture Ltd, providing a historical outline and conservation guidelines for the selected building. The detailed report presents, among other aspects, the current condition of the building, its history and phases of expansion, plans indicating the building's significance, as well as the identification of its most essential details. Based on this document, a comprehensive modernisation and extension concept could be developed. These plans for the importance of the building were the source for the preparation of a new functional layout, taking into account the intact elements and the parts whose demolition would make communication easier. The design concept was developed after careful analysis and categorisation of the situation according to Musk Petzet's book, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, which enabled appropriate design strategies to be selected. [Petzet, Heilmeyer 2012].

The project to revitalise the derelict barracks in the Ardwick district involves transforming the historic complex into a multifunctional cultural centre that responds to the needs of the local community while preserving its architectural heritage The success of the adaptive reuse of the buildings depends on a carefully considered functional programme that harmonises with their history and breathes new life into the space, engaging and inspiring its users [Chen 2018]. A key consideration is the adaptation of the existing building and the harmonious extension with a new wing, acting as a link between the four core parts of the site: the front building ("Castle"), the exercise hall ("Drill Hall"), the former warehouse and the newly designed Cultural Centre. Each of these zones has been adapted to new functions, taking into account their historical context – the "Castle" houses a workshop and an education area, the "Drill Hall" serves as a cultural events hall, the former warehouse has been converted into administrative facilities and space for staff and visitors, and the new wing includes a recreational area, conference rooms and a library. Fig. 10 and 11. The structure of the complex allows each part to be accessed from the ground floor level – the main entrances to the "Warehouse" and "Cultural Centre" are from Downing Street, the "Castle" from Ardwick Green N Street, while the "Drill Hall" is accessible from both the courtyard and via the "Castle". In addition to the main entrances, technical doors are also provided, further enhancing the functionality of the building.

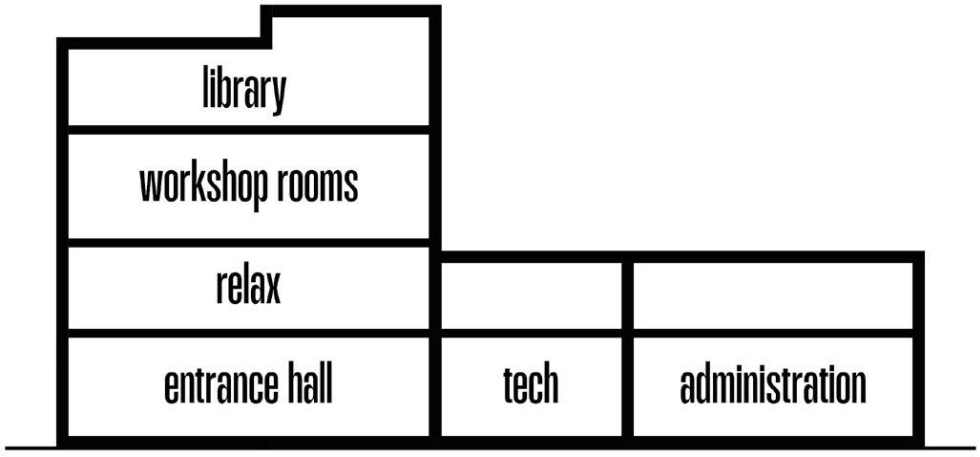

Fig. 10 Function diagram of the Cultural Center.
[Source: prepared by the authors]

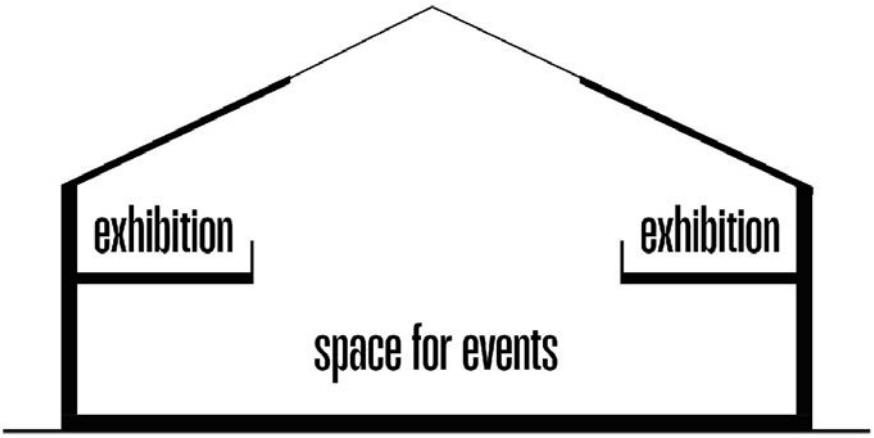

Fig. 11 Drill Hall function diagram.
[Source: prepared by the authors]

An important element of the design was to ensure seamless communication both horizontally and vertically, which was achieved through the use of staircases, lifts and connectors between floors. The front building and the newly designed wing have four accessible floors, the hall and warehouse have two, with the warehouse topped by an accessible roof. In the 'Castle', workshop rooms and bathrooms are arranged on each floor, while the warehouse houses offices, special guest suites, a rehearsal room, a staff kitchen and sanitary facilities. The Drill Hall serves as an open space equipped with essential technical facilities and access to restrooms adapted for individuals with disabilities. Fig 12. The final functional layout, based on the conservation analysis and the needs of the users, ensures stylistic and functional coherence of the complex, allowing the integration of historical and contemporary architectural elements, which contributes to both the preservation of the material heritage and the social activation of the inhabitants of Manchester.

A properly completed building, combining history and modernity, should serve future generations just as the original version did. It is a huge responsibility to create buildings that last, rather than are temporary or add no social value. A good building that lasts for decades can be described as "antifragile" and we should strive to create such buildings today as well, because they can be reused many times in the future. "Antifragility is beyond resilience or robustness. The resilient resists shocks and stays the same; the antifragile gets better." [Taleb 2013] It is this antifragility of the high quality of the age-old architecture that has determined that over time Ardwick Drill Hall may be of even greater value, both socially and aesthetically.

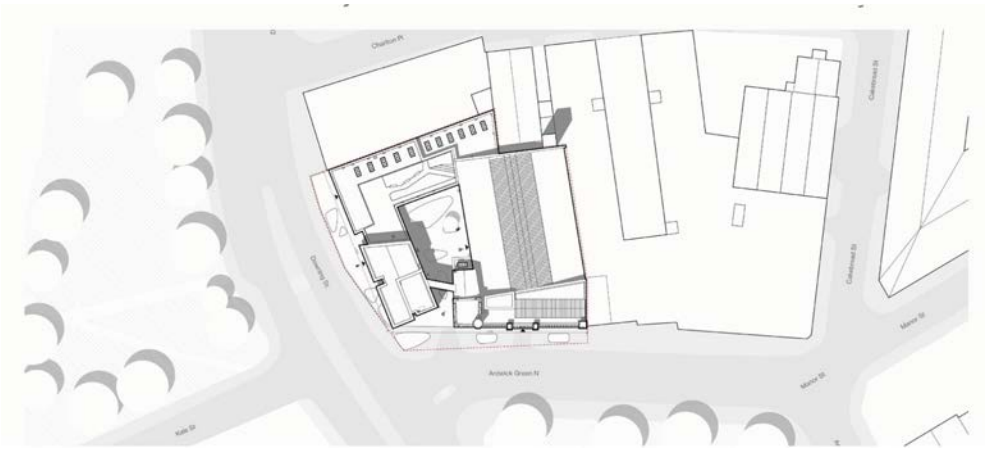

Fig. 12 Functional site plan.

[Source: prepared by the authors]

6. CONTEXT WITHIN MATERIALS AND TECHNOLOGIES

Contemporary architectural design requires a conscious selection of façade materials that not only respond to aesthetic and functional requirements, but also take into account ecological aspects and the historical context of the building in question. In the case of the Continuity Oasis, a key consideration was to maintain coherence with the existing buildings while introducing modern material solutions. Figs. 13 and 14 After a detailed analysis and comparison of the available material options, the decision was made to use clinker bricks of the highest quality. This choice was dictated by both its high durability and resistance to weathering, as well as its ability to integrate with the historic character of the building. The final choice was the hand-moulded Columbus brick manufactured by the renowned Danish company Petersen Tegl, whose products are used in prestigious architectural projects around the world.

Fig. 13 Photograph of details of the existing facade. [Source: photo authors]

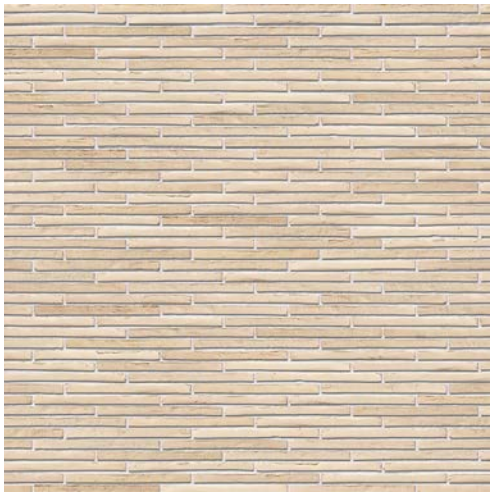

Fig. 14 Catalog photo of Petersen Columbus K31. [Source: petersen-tegl.dk]

The decision to use Columbus brick was based on its unique aesthetic and technical properties. Its distinctive format, inspired by the building techniques of ancient Rome, allows it to make a subtle reference to the historic frontage while giving the façade a modern character. 'Made from the purest elements imaginable – clay, water and fire – it has an almost infinite lifespan and requires no maintenance. Bricks laid in lime mortar can be taken apart and reused. They can also be crushed and the grains used to make new bricks or to build roads, squares and other structures.'' [Præstegaard, Petersen 2022] Thus, its production process is based on sustainable principles – the raw materials used to make the bricks come from controlled sources, and the production itself is done with minimal water and energy consumption. In this way, the choice of Columbus bricks fits in with the idea of responsible construction, minimising the negative impact on the environment.

To ensure the highest quality of execution, the selection process for the facade materials also included a study visit to the Petersen Tegl factory in Broager, Denmark. During the visit, specialists were consulted in detail, allowing verification of key material parameters such as texture, shade and processing. In addition, the opportunity to observe the full production cycle allowed for a better understanding of the technological processes and their impact on the final product quality. The final selection of the Columbus K31 brick model was a result of a comprehensive comparison of the available variants and their juxtaposition with the façade of the historic Drill Hall building, enabling a harmonious material composition to be achieved.

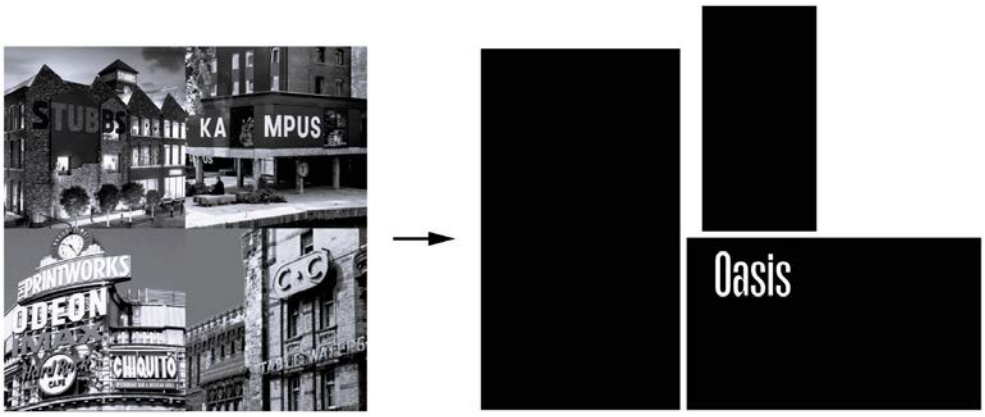

Fig. 15 Scheme of using the sign on the facade.
[Source: prepared by the authors]

In addition, to enhance the visual and functional aspect of the new wing's façade, black aluminium laths were also used to give the façade a contemporary feel and emphasise its vertical rhythm. The solution refers to the black accent on the facades of many sublime properties in Manchester. A reference to local solutions was also used in the form of the "Oasis" sign on the facades, a common treatment on successful developments in the city. Fig. 15. Equally important elements of the concept are the green roofs and photovoltaic tiles used on the hall, which not only contribute to the energy efficiency of the building, but also fit in with the idea of sustainability by reducing CO_2 emissions and increasing the biologically active area. In this way, the revitalisation of the historic Ardwick Barracks complex not only brings new life to the building, but is also an example of the successful synthesis of tradition with modern technological and ecological solutions.

Such a comprehensive approach to facade design confirms that care in the selection of materials, supported by research, analysis of the historical context and contemporary environmental challenges, is an indispensable element of high-quality contemporary architecture. The use of Columbus K31 bricks in the revitalised building not only fits into the local historical context, but is also a conscious reference to contemporary architectural trends that combine aesthetics with durability and sustainability.

7. CONTINUITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

The regeneration project is an example of architecture embedded in the idea of contextualism, in which historical and spatial continuity shapes new architectural interventions. The preservation and adaptation of the existing built fabric not only

minimize the carbon footprint but also emphasize the identity of the place by integrating material heritage with contemporary technological solutions. The use of carefully selected materials of the highest quality, including Columbus K31 brick, reinforces the compositional and cultural coherence of the project, creating a space that resonates with its surroundings and responds to aesthetic and functional needs.

The project respects the principles of sustainability through the use of a number of innovative solutions to reduce energy consumption and environmental impact. Green roofs, in addition to their retention capacity, significantly improve the energy efficiency of the building, reducing the urban heat island effect and supporting local biodiversity. Fig. 16 When combined with photo-voltaic roof tiles generating renewable electricity, the facility significantly reduces the need for conventional energy sources, reducing CO_2 emissions. In addition, thermo-modernisation reduces heat loss, ensuring optimal indoor thermal conditions and reducing the need for heating and air conditioning.

The project takes into account the needs of the local community by offering an open, accessible and multi-functional space, which fosters the integration of residents and reinforces the social value of the development. The Oasis of Continuity emphasises the importance of community development through education while at the same time strengthening the sense of identity and belonging to the place where they live. The creation of a well-considered circulation system that ensures full accessibility for people with disabilities is an important element of inclusive design, making architecture more democratic. Thus, the project becomes an example of how to harmoniously combine the past with the future, aesthetics with functionality, and local heritage with global standards of sustainable design, creating a space that is sustainable, resilient to change and open to the needs of future generations.

Fig. 16 Axonometric visualization of the entire building complex.
[Source: prepared by the authors]

8. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The adaptation of Ardwick Drill Hall exemplifies an architectural approach based on the principles of continuity, contextualism [Spuybroek, 2009] and sustainability. The historical analysis of the building and its surroundings allowed the development of a design strategy that harmoniously combines the heritage of the past with the demands of the present. The implementation of the project has contributed to the protection of the tangible and intangible heritage of the site, highlighting its importance to the local community and the urban fabric of Manchester.

The Ardwick Drill Hall regeneration project involved both the preservation of the historical building substance and the introduction of modern functional and ecological solutions. Key measures included adapting the space for new social and educational functions, ensuring its continued usefulness. In addition, the use of strategies to minimise the carbon footprint, such as the reuse of the building fabric, improved thermal insulation and the integration of renewable energy sources, allowed the principles of sustainable design to be implemented.

"Old ideas can sometimes use new buildings. New ideas must use old buildings" [Jacobs 1961]. By using an existing building it is possible, despite numerous design complications, to create an open, creative space for people. Fig. 17 Acting within a limited space allows new ways of thinking about the city and its use to be developed. In the social context, the revitalisation of the building aimed to increase the accessibility of the space and bring cultural values to different user groups. The improvement of the traffic system and the application of solutions enabling free access for people with disabilities influenced the inclusiveness of the space. The thoughtful combination of public and recreational functions means that the building can become an important point on the map of the local community, offering development, education, meeting cultural needs and integrating residents.

Fig. 17 Interior visualization.
[Source: prepared by the authors]

The analysis of the Continuity Oasis project shows that thoughtful adaptation of existing buildings can be an effective response to contemporary urban and environmental challenges. The preservation of the historic urban fabric combined with modern architectural solutions promotes the protection of cultural heritage while supporting the idea of sustainable development. The regeneration model based on adaptation rather than demolition allows for a reduction in carbon emissions and optimisation of resource use, making this project a model to follow in the context of other retrofits of historic buildings.

The conclusions from this project demonstrate the necessity of an interdisciplinary approach in the process of adapting historic buildings. By combining the knowledge resources from the areas of architecture, urban planning, history and sustainable development, it is possible to develop solutions that not only protect the historical value, but also adapt the space to contemporary use requirements. The Oasis of Continuity confirms that revitalisation can be an effective tool in the fight against the degradation of the urban fabric, while at the same time responding to the global challenges of climate change and urbanisation fig 18.

Fig. 18 Downing Street view visualization.
[Source: prepared by the authors]

9. CONCLUSIONS

Contemporary architecture faces a number of challenges related to the limited availability of building land, high property prices and the problem of neglected and abandoned buildings. In the face of these difficulties, effective management of spatial resources, revitalisation of existing buildings and a conscious approach to design that takes into account both historical, social and

environmental aspects become necessary. In the context of contemporary urban challenges, the pursuit of architectural continuity, one of the main tenets of contextualism, becomes crucial. The adaptation and modernisation of historic buildings, as well as their skilful combination with new structures, allows not only the preservation of heritage, but also the creation of spaces that meet contemporary utilitarian requirements.

Designing in the spirit of continuity implies an analysis of the historical, cultural and material context, enabling the integration of new elements into the existing urban fabric. The solutions introduced should be compatible with the character of the place, while responding to social and environmental needs. The revitalisation of sites provides an alternative to new developments, reducing the carbon footprint associated with demolition and reducing the consumption of raw materials. The use of energy-efficient technologies, such as high-quality thermal insulation, green roofs or renewable energy sources, further reinforces the sustainability aspect. The reuse of building materials, such as clinker bricks with high durability and low environmental impact, contributes to reducing carbon emissions and extending the life cycle of buildings.

The social value of revitalisation projects derives not only from improved urban aesthetics, but also from an increased quality of life for residents. The creation of open spaces accessible to all user groups fosters social integration and the development of local bonds, which constitutes a vital element of contemporary urban design [Stone 2020]. The application of solutions ensuring full accessibility for people with disabilities, such as appropriate communication systems, barrier-free access and adapted common spaces, increases the inclusiveness of urban spaces.

Examples of modern developments show that the harmonious combination of history and modernity can be the key to effective design in urban spaces. Modern technologies allow precise reproduction of historical details and the use of materials that relate to the original architecture, which reinforces the aesthetic coherence of the buildings. The selection of the highest quality building materials plays an important role in ensuring the quality and longevity of realisations.

In conclusion, the conscious use of existing buildings and the skilful composition of new architecture in a historical context is not only an answer to current urban problems, but also a strategy to ensure long-term sustainability and quality of urban space. Revitalisation and adaptation of buildings are not only a design challenge, but also an architectural responsibility towards future generations. Integrating cultural, technological and ecological values in the design process makes it possible to create the cities of the future – sustainable, inclusive and respectful of their past.

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OAZA CIĄGŁOŚCI. MODERNIZACJA HISTORYCZNEGO KOMPLEKSU BUDYNKÓW PRZY ARDWICK GREEN STREET W MANCHESERZE.

Streszczenie

Artykuł ukazuje ponowne wykorzystanie pod względem urbanistycznym i architektonicznym opuszczonego kompleksu budynku Armii Brytyjskiej w Manchesterze. Projekt, który kładzie nacisk na zasady ciągłości – zarówno estetycznej, jak i funkcjonalnej – jednocześnie prowadząc rygorystyczny dialog z dziedzictwem historycznym i kulturowym. Interwencja ma na celu zachowanie integralności architektonicznej Ardwick Drill Hall, budynku wpisanego na listę zabytków klasy II, przy jednoczesnym wprowadzeniu współczesnych elementów, które zarówno szanują, jak i wzmacniają jego historyczne znaczenie. w dynamicznym krajobrazie miejskim.

Projekt przestrzega rygorystycznych wytycznych dotyczących konserwacji, zachowując istotne struktury przy jednoczesnym selektywnym usuwaniu niepasujących dodatków. Interwencja na nowo definiuje istniejącą hierarchię przestrzenną, zapewniając, że nowe funkcje – głównie kulturalne i edukacyjne – harmonijnie współgrają z historycznym charakterem kompleksu. Materiałowy i formalny język nowych elementów architektonicznych i urbanistycznych opiera się na skrupulatnej analizie oryginalnej struktury miejsca, co sprzyja poczuciu ciągłości między przeszłością a teraźniejszością.

Zrównoważony rozwój jest integralnym elementem projektu dzięki wdrożeniu energooszczędnych technologii oraz adaptacyjnemu ponownemu wykorzystaniu istniejących struktur, co minimalizuje wpływ na środowisko przy jednoczesnym zachowaniu

integralności historycznego zespołu. Ponadto organizacja przestrzenna priorytetowo traktuje dostępność, zapewniając inkluzywną i trwałą przestrzeń publiczną.

Poprzez integrację współczesnej interwencji projektowej możliwe jest zachowanie i wzmocnienie narracji historycznych oraz kulturowych, przy jednoczesnym tworzeniu warunków dla rozwoju nowych form praktyki architektonicznej. Tak rozumiane pogodzenie dziedzictwa z nowoczesnością prowadzi do ustanowienia modelu referencyjnego dla przekształceń obiektów i miejsc o szczególnym znaczeniu historycznym.

Słowa kluczowe: Manchester, ponowne wykorzystanie, ciągłość, nowa architektura