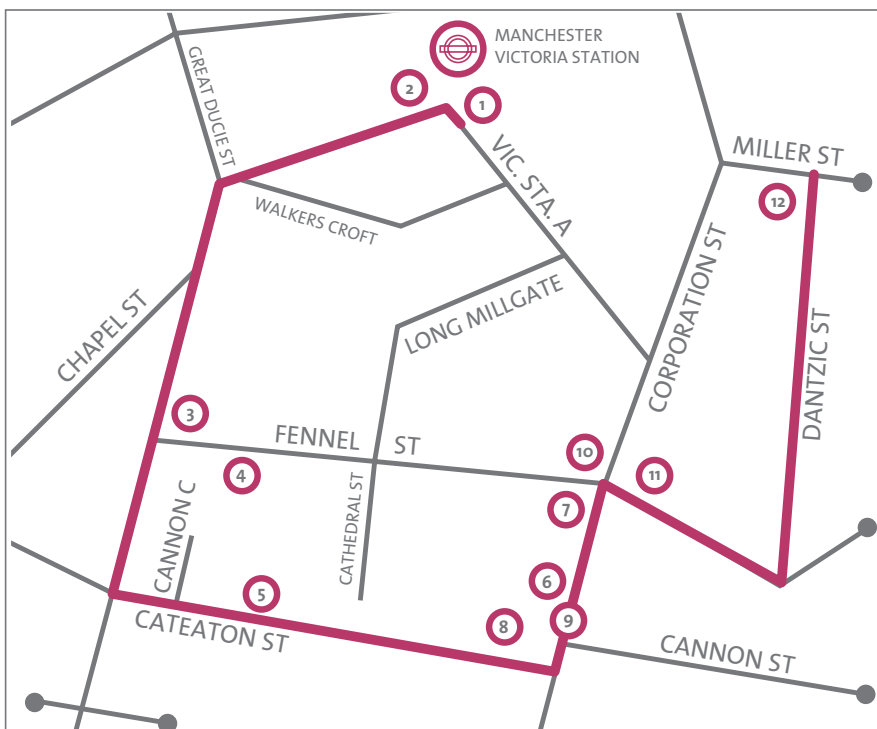


CITY TOURS: VICTORIA

The Victoria area continues to experience major redevelopment due in part to its excellent communication links to the region. Major developments include the MEN indoor events arena above Victoria station; the new Exchange Square; the Printworks entertainment complex and URBIS centre. EDAW's masterplan included reinstating the Royal Exchange; refurbishing the Corn Exchange, now called the Triangle; creating a 'Millennium Quarter' encompassing the cathedral; and building the largest Marks and Spencer's store in Europe.



THE BUILDINGS

- 01 Victoria Train Station
- 02 MEN Arena
- 03 Chethams School of Music
- 04 Manchester Cathedral
- 05 Sinclairs Oyster Bar
- 06 Corn Exchange
- 07 Zinc
- 08 Exchange Square
- 09 Arndale Footbridge
- 10 URBIS
- 11 Wagamama
- 12 CIS Tower

CITY TOURS: VICTORIA: 01

Victoria Station Approach, 1844

Architect: George Stevenson,
William Dawes



VICTORIA TRAIN STATION

The long elevation of Victoria Station presents the visitor with Manchester's finest port of entry. Eclectically classical with segmental pediments breaking the skyline, the wrought iron canopy lists some of the exotic destinations available (Scarborough, Fleetwood, Goole...). Internally, the provincial splendor continues with the tiled plan of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, the fine timber ticket office that echoes in miniature the dignity of the station exterior, and the exposed glass dome of the "restaurant". The roof of the train shed itself is a remarkable example of the ingenuity of the 19th century engineers. Downgraded in importance, the station now also serves the Metrolink tram system, and outlying platforms were sacrificed for the construction of the new indoor Manchester Evening News Arena.

CITY TOURS: VICTORIA: 02

Victoria Street, 1995

Architect: Austin Smith Lord &
Ellerbe Beckett



MEN ARENA

This huge scheme can be seen as wasted opportunity. The accommodation includes a multiplex cinema and a multi-purpose arena, plus associated multi-storey parking. Unfortunately these activities are housed in a building which is spatially incomprehensible. Partially sited in air rights space over Victoria Station, the scheme originally included proposals for a glass tower which would terminate the views along Deansgate. This has not yet been realised. The architectural design and detailing does not successfully accommodate the large scale of the building or adequately respond to the topographically complex nature of its site. The building's major achievement was its construction over Victoria Station without disrupting its day-to-day use. The weak commercial architectural language is especially evident when approaching from Cheetham Hill to the north.

CITY TOURS: VICTORIA: 03

Long Millgate, 1422

Architect: Alfred Waterhouse /
O. & C. Heywood



CHETHAMS SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Established as domestic accommodation for his collegiate church by Thomas de la Warre, the core of this complex has survived the Dissolution of the Monasteries and sequestration under Cromwell. The executors of the local philanthropist Humphrey Chetham purchased the buildings for use as a charity school and library in 1654, and it retains its educational function to this day, specialising in music. The buildings present an open-sided courtyard to the northern flank of the cathedral, its two storey ranges having late Gothic arches and a patterning of small double and triple bayed tracery windows beneath a large roof. The rear elevation is of particular architectural merit, with its dramatic chimneys and projecting bays, the result of a seamless upgrading in 1902. None of the other buildings, such as those by Alfred Waterhouse for the Manchester Grammar School, have any of the integrity of the original buildings. Internally, there remains a Great Hall and a panelled reading room, the home of Chetham's library.

CITY TOURS: VICTORIA: 04

Fennel Street, 1421

Architect: Basil Champneys /
H. Worthington /
J. P. Holde /
J. S. Crowther /
P. Worthington



MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL

J. P. Holden (1815/1868), J. S. Crowther (1886), B. Champneys (1898/1903),
P. Worthington (1934), H. Worthington (1940).

The Cathedral Church of St. Mary, St. Denys and St. George were originally a collegiate church founded by the Lord of the Manor Thomas de la Warre in 1421. Raised to cathedral status in 1847. Until recently, its position in the medieval core of Manchester has left it isolated on the edge of the city's commercial centre. The original late Gothic structure has been surrounded and engulfed by 19th century and later additions. Although the most significant surviving medieval building in the city, the external appearance is largely the result of these additions, especially the raising of the tower in 1867 and the creation of the new west porch in 1898. Internally, the elaborate timber choir stalls are remarkable, especially for the humour of the misericord carving (which include pigs dancing and playing the bagpipes, a rabbit cooking the hunter, and a man apparently breaking his wife's cooking pot). Following the I.R.A. bomb of 1996 EDAW and Ian Simpson Architect's new urban plan for Manchester has integrated this important historic fragment into the contemporary centre by the building of New Cathedral Street, Exchange Square and Urbis Gardens, forming clear connections into the Cathedral Precinct.

CITY TOURS: VICTORIA: 05

Cathedral Yard, 1650

Architect: Unknown



SINCLAIRS OYSTER BAR

C.17th century and primarily timber-framed structures, these two buildings are undergoing their second reincarnation in 30 years. Originally sited on Manchester's market place, they were raised by an indeterminate amount above their original street level to form a townscape feature in the centre of the 1960s commercial development of Shambles Square. The inherent flexibility of their structure allowed them to survive the impact of the I.R.A. bomb largely unscathed. However they lay in the path of the proposed Exchange Street, and have therefore been carefully taken apart and re-erected over one hundred metres to the north. Here they now sit next to the cathedral and the refurbished Corn Exchange, a relocated historical fragment reinforcing the "heritage" value of this quarter. Because of their peripatetic history, much of what is visible to the eye is a simulation of traditional construction.

CITY TOURS: VICTORIA: 06

Hanging Ditch, 1903

Architect: Potts, Son & Pickup



CORN EXCHANGE

Originally a produce exchange and then a flea market, the Corn Exchange occupies a medieval triangular block between the Cathedral and Exchange Square, presenting eclectic Renaissance façades (stylistically conservative for its time) in each direction. Acute corners provide opportunities to exaggerate the vertical emphasis of much of these broad surfaces. Following severe structural damage caused by the 1996 I.R.A. bomb, the building re-emerged as The Triangle, a destination retail outlet. This restates the original conception of a domed glazed central space, although this no longer acts as the primary trading area. The scheme forms the northern limit of Manchester's newly defined retail centre as set out in the post 1996 plan, terminating New Cathedral Street.

CITY TOURS: VICTORIA: 07

The Triangle, Hanging Ditch, 2000

Architect: Conran and Partners



ZINC

Zinc is Terence Conran's most recent addition to the Manchester bar and eatery scene. Hugely popular for both its menu and relaxed environment – it is often very busy towards the weekends. The interior is usual Conran fare, a rich palette of sumptuous materials sparingly applied; it creates a charming but rather bland sense of space. The main bar dominates the entrance space which often creates a bottleneck of both people wishing to enter and leave the bar. Overall, Zinc induces a curiously soporific mixture of calm and boredom, but nonetheless a popular destination for a quiet and relaxed drink.

CITY TOURS: VICTORIA: 08

New Cathedral Street, 1999

Architect: City of Manchester
Landscape Architects,
Martha Schwarz



EXCHANGE SQUARE

Connecting St. Ann's Square via New Cathedral Street to the Cathedral and Urbis Gardens and Victoria Station, Exchange Square addresses the Corn Exchange (Potts, Son and Pickup 1903), Marks and Spencer's (BDP 1999) and The Cross Street elevation of the Arndale Centre (Wilson and Womersley 1979). Sweeping bands of sandstone seating connect the higher Cross Street and Mark's and Spencer sides of the square with the slope of Hanging Ditch. The character of this as a water course is represented by a river of slate stepping stones fed by giant pipes. The square has successfully brought life to a previously empty area of the centre dealing with a difficult site, being north facing and with a strong level change. John Hyatt's Windmills (1999) form a visual foil to the sheer glass façade of BDP's store intending to evoke beach like qualities within the space.

CITY TOURS: VICTORIA: 09

Cathedral Gardens, 2002

Architect: Hodder Associates



ARNDALE FOOTBRIDGE

Out of the devastation caused by the IRA bomb, which exploded in the centre of Manchester on 15 July 1996, comes the bridge of the future. Its position could not be more significant as it marks the location where the stolen white Ford Cargo van exploded, displacing 670 businesses, injuring 220 people, and destroying the old bridge linking Marks and Spencer with the Arndale Centre. Taking the form of a hyperbolic paraboloid the new bridge is a progressive vision of the rejuvenated city centre. The bridge is constructed from a lightweight glass membrane that appears to twist around its surface, in both clockwise and anti-clockwise directions. Its symmetrical geometry redresses the change in level of the broadwalk running through its centre between the two shopping areas. Stretching across Corporation Street, the bridge's arched form also maximises visibility and allows uninterrupted views of the street and beyond. This bridge from one of Manchester's highly acclaimed architectural practices is a radical and forward-looking solution that demonstrates the city's ability to transform itself.

CITY TOURS: VICTORIA: 10

Cathedral Gardens, 2002

Architect: Ian Simpson Architects



URBIS

A Millennium Lottery funded [£30m] project, won in an international competition for a Manchester City Centre landmark building to provide an interactive forum for the interpretation of the city. The building grows from its setting. The sculpted glass-form edges the street, falls down a subtle incline, turns the corner and begins the journey back on itself, defining the entrance and forming a sheltering backdrop to a new public landscaped space. Legibility of parts, articulation of components, order simplicity and clarity are key themes explored within the programme, organisation and integrity of the building.

Inside the ground floor of Urbis is a public foyer, the Urbis shop and a café along with seminar, education and corporate entertainment spaces. From the foyer, visitors to the exhibitions travel diagonally up by a unique Glass Elevator to the 4th floor and make their way back down through a series of linked permanent exhibitions. The 5th and 6th floors are a restaurant and bar accessed separately from a dedicated entrance on the ground floor. Both of these levels are clear glazed, affording diners what is probably one of Manchester's finest views.

CITY TOURS: VICTORIA: 11

The Printworks, 2002

Architect: Original Architect Unknown



WAGAMAMA

Wagamama in the Printworks has a chic twenty-first century décor very much along the same lines as the original. Long rows of tables with bench style seating in a cavernous room decorated in minimalist pine and brightly lit. The juxtaposition of hard and soft materials is delicately balanced, combined with soft up-lighting creates a relaxed and highly informal eating experience that reflects the ethos of Wagamama. Certainly such décor does not encourage "destinational eating" but it is a solid and unobtrusive aesthetic attracting a wide customer appeal – highly appropriate for the Printworks.

CITY TOURS: VICTORIA: 12

Miller Street, 1962

Architect: G.S. Hay & Sir John Burnet
Tait & Partners



CIS TOWER

This Trans-Atlantic influenced group presents a sophisticated Modernist corporate image to the city. Referring to the mature work of Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, asymmetrically balanced towers, a 25 storey office tower and 122m (400ft) service tower, rise from a plaza formally counter-pointed by a lower horizontal block. The dominant sleek curtain walling and plain mosaic contrasts with George Mitchell's sculptural relief in the lobby. The scheme represents a total conception from its architectural language through to the formation of Modernist urban space that enables it to surpass location. It feels as if it could be in any major city in the Western world, truly international in character.

Interiors Sir Misha Black and the Design Research Unit 1962