



## Central

The city's identity has been significantly shaped by its strong Victorian infrastructure, largely connected to the new wealth brought by the industrial revolution. Manchester's central area comprises the city's key civic, commercial and entertainment functions, combining the robust architecture of Manchester's period as a "cottonopolis" with vigorous new additions in all areas and building types over the past decade. This massive reappraisal of the city centre and progressive redevelopment agenda is a brave and ambitious attempt to redefine the future of a city in motion.

### 109 Princess Street

Princess Street, 1863

**Architect[s]:** Clegg and Knowles

**Area[s]:** Central

**Theme[s]:** DesRes Manchester Edwardian Warehouses

Clegg and Knowles were the leading architectural practice for the design of warehouses of the late 1860s – 1880s. 109 Princess Street is a typical example of their work, which could be described as Palazzo-style. The building is also very similar to their 101 Princess Street development, featuring brick with stone dressings, a cornice above the ground floor, and first floor windows emphasised alternate flat and pedimented heads, all crowned with the usual emphatic cornice.

Due to the greater floor-to-ceiling heights and larger areas of glazing; warehouses of this nature tend to be attractive for new office, hotel, residential and mixed uses; 109 has been converted into a bar and apartments.

### Albert Memorial

14 Albert Square, 1862

**Architect[s]:** Thomas Worthington

**Area[s]:** Central

**Theme[s]:** Civic Late Georgian and Victorian

Funded by public subscription during the national mourning for the Prince Consort and designed as a suitable receptacle to 'contain or cover' the statue (by Matthew Noble), Worthington chose a Gothic style to create an elaborate canopy topped by a spire. Elevated on a stepped plinth, the armorial decoration refers to Albert's Saxon origins, while his work in England is referred to by the small corner statues representing Art, Science, Agriculture and Commerce. These figures inhabit small corner tabernacles and were temporarily removed in the 1960s to reduce maintenance. Combining architectural and decorative motifs, this is the centrepiece of by far the best statuary group in the city and its setting was enhanced by the subsequent design of the Town Hall. (This statue predates the larger and more famous Albert Memorial in London by 15 months, and it is hard to believe that its design did not influence Sir George Gilbert Scott's work.)



## Aldine House

Bridge Street, 1967

**Architect[s]:** Leach, Rhodes and Walker  
**Area[s]:** Central  
**Theme[s]:** 1960's Modern

Counter-pointing pre-cast sculptural concrete panels and articulated round cornered stair-towers with a Miesian black marble pavilion, this scheme formed the first part of an unfinished phased redevelopment of the area between the River Irwell and Salford railway viaduct. Its neatly counterpoints restraint with expressionism in a scheme that was envisaged to range from 5 to 16 storeys in height using a standardised language of pre-cast concrete panels and round cornered ribbed stair towers.

## Arndale Centre

Market Street, 1979

**Architect[s]:** Wilson & Wormersley  
**Area[s]:** Central  
**Theme[s]:** 1960's Modern

This is a built example of the brave new world of retail c.1965 and represents the final unlovely outcome of the Post War Manchester Plan. Obliterating 8 city blocks, this huge structure accommodates a full mega-structural range of programmes. Two levels of retail, a covered market, multi-storey car parking, a bus station, office tower and roof top housing are accommodated in this shopping machine. The ruthless commerciality of the scheme was emphasised by the total use of buff coloured tiles (allegedly chosen to replace Portland stone to cut costs) with brown GRP highlights enabling its identification not thorough form but through graphic surface. Following the 1996 IRA bomb the Arndale Centre has been extensively reworked by a number of practices to introduce a more 'contemporary' feel, reducing the hermetic quality of the original scheme. The original elements which once predominated have now been marginalized to less visible sides e.g. the brown tiled pedestrian ramp from Shude Hill and the Arndale Tower that still retains the original cladding scheme.

## Asia House

Princess Street, 1906

**Architect[s]:** I R E Birkitt  
**Area[s]:** Central  
**Theme[s]:** Manchester Edwardian Warehouses

Asia House was built as a speculation by the Refuge Assurance Company and was occupied by the Oxford Packing Company and by 1910, was home to thirty six shipping merchants.



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The warehouse is trapezoidal in plan and consists of two distinct blocks, each seven storeys high over a basement and subbasement linked together at and below ground level. While the main façade is an exuberant Baroque display in sandstone, brick and marble, the less visible side elevations are of glazed white brick chosen to amplify the available light, and the rear elevation is of common brick.

The main entrance on Princess Street is in the centre of the front façade while the service entrances are in the side streets. The loading bays are between the blocks and can be reached from the side streets. The interior also contrasts architectural richness, seen in the public areas and offices intended for the shipping merchants, with the starkly utilitarian warerooms in which the cloth was checked and stored.

## **Bank of England**

Portland Street, 1971

**Architect[s]:** Fitzroy Robinson

**Area[s]:** Central

**Theme[s]:** 1960's Modern

The main bulk of The Bank of England building was set back from the original line of Portland Street to accommodate a proposed road widening scheme. This was unrealised and until 2001 the elevation to this stretch of Portland Street was a sheer black granite clad podium wall with a small area of planting. This has now been filled with Whitby and Bird's glass pavilion providing retail space and producing a more intense street scene. Above the podium and jutting out are the bank and the office tower, Bank Chambers.

The former is polished granite and Portland stone, with projecting chamfered bays, and an overhanging cornice-cum-plant space. Bank Chambers is a more conventional tower with bronzed glazing and cream panelling. The tower elements are suitably corporate in their character, distancing themselves from their urban surroundings. They refer to a time when Portland Street was conceived of as a transport artery with towers rather than an urban street.

## **Barbirolli Square**

Lower Mosley Street, 1996

**Architect[s]:** Renton Howard Wood Levin

**Area[s]:** Central

**Theme[s]:** Regeneration Urban Spaces and Parks

The Barbirolli Square commercial development is the largest in Manchester, with the offices predominantly let to Law and Accountancy firms. Immediately, the development brought economic benefits to the area with cafes and restaurants opening nearby. Prior to this the site was a run-down public transport interchange well beyond its usefulness, eventually being earmarked as a potential home for the Halle Orchestra on the condition that the commercial development to place to help the regeneration process.

The Square is a large plaza and belvedere over a café bar and restaurant, enclosing over 36,000 square metres of office space, the 2,400 seat Bridgewater Hall and a canal basin. The whole scheme responds



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carefully to existing buildings, in particular the façade of Bridgewater Hall which uses cladding stone to match the colour of the nearby Victorian brick buildings.

The waterside café bar below the plaza is reasonably well used as are the surrounding public spaces even though continuous traffic on Lower Mosley Street, coupled with the tram service in and around the quarter produces a noisy and busy environment.

### Bridgewater Hall

Lower Mosley Street, 1996

**Architect[s]:** [Renton Howard Wood Levin](#)  
**Area[s]:** [Central](#)  
**Theme[s]:** [Civic Contemporary Buildings](#)

Home to the Hallé Orchestra and acoustically superior to the now disused Free Trade Hall, the Bridgewater Hall fails to create a meaningful link with Albert Square and the Town Hall, which was the reason for its alignment. The exterior is clothed in a language derived from contemporary commercial and leisure buildings, attempting to create a visual interest while failing to express the formally simple idea of the building as an 'egg in a box'. The concert hall is surrounded by a series of foyers echoing the architect Hans Scharoun's 1960s Philharmonie in Berlin. The building is notable for its new canal basin off the Rochdale Canal which offers the opportunity to arrive for a concert by barge, and is the centrepiece of the adjacent linked commercial development.

### Central Station / GMEX

Windmill Street, 1879

**Architect[s]:** [Essex Goodman & Suggit Sir John Fuller for the Midland Railway Co.](#)  
**Area[s]:** [Central](#)  
**Theme[s]:** [Civic Grade II Listed Late Georgian and Victorian](#)

Conversion Essex Goodman & Suggit

Originally the railway terminus for transport from the west of the city centre, Central Station continued the role established by the Rochdale Canal and Castlefield Basin. Built over a complex layered urban fabric, a canal still runs beneath the building. The station shed, raised on its podium, is now approached by an extensive cobbled forecourt, where one would reasonably expect to find a hotel masking the shed. Following its closure in the 1960s its future remained uncertain until the shed was reconfigured into the exhibition and conference centre G-MEX. This provides an appropriate functional scale to use the whole of the station building effectively. However the banal smoked glass 'skirt' does not do justice to the quality of the heroic engineering structure it fronts.



## City Art Gallery

Mosley Street, 1835

**Architect[s]:** [Sir Charles Barry](#) [Sir Michael Hopkins & Partners](#)

**Area[s]:** [Central](#)

**Theme[s]:** [Contemporary Interiors](#) [Late Georgian and Victorian](#) [Museums and Galleries](#)

Constructed as the Royal Manchester Institution, Barry's only Greek Revival building integrates a graceful Ionic portico with a robust urban block. The delicacy of this arrangement continues internally with the immense height of the top-lit vestibule contrasting with its miniature Doric colonnade. The galleries were redecorated in High Victorian style in the 1890s to enhance the significant collection of paintings from this period. Following an international competition Sir Michael Hopkins and Partners were appointed to develop the gallery extension (2002).

Back George Street is absorbed into the gallery and glazed over to connect main gallery to the north and Barry's Athenaeum and the new gallery to the south. Internally the rear wall of the main gallery is exposed and counter-pointed against a technologically derived language. The new galleries provide exhibition and educational space and allow for expansion of the gallery shop and café. Externally a tartan grid façade of sandstone, brass strip and in-situ concrete produces a self-effacing urban presence.

## Commercial Union Offices

Mosley Street, 1966

**Architect[s]:** [Watney, Eiolart, Inman and Partners](#)

**Area[s]:** [Central](#)

**Theme[s]:** [1960's Modern](#)

Referring to the context of Mosley Street and the adjacent City Art Gallery this building attempts to fuse Mannerist Classicism and Modernism. The rectangular main block floats over a simple podium at street level. This simple arrangement is counterpoised with an elevational treatment that refers to Classical precedent in its use of rhythmic fenestration with a mannered split parapet terminating the facade. The simplicity of the basic arrangement is enlivened by the Modernist treatment of alternating floors of ABABAB and BABABA rhythm and the use of roach limestone throughout as a durable and prestigious cladding material.



## Eagle Star House

Mosley Street, 1973

**Architect[s]:** [Cruikshank and Seward](#)  
**Area[s]:** [Central](#)  
**Theme[s]:** [1960's Modern](#)

Incorporating what must be one of the last built elements of Manchester's proposed elevated city centre pedestrian deck Eagle Star House contrasts with the scale and verticality of its built context. A level of deck sits above street shop frontage, above which are three storeys of horizontally expressed offices and a rooftop penthouse. End elevations express the section of the scheme with circulation space being articulated by a full height cleft running from deck level upwards. Clad in smooth Portland stone its Modernist credentials are emphasised with a Corbusian stair meeting the street corner at the northern end of the building.

## Fairbairn Building UMIST

70-72 Sackville Street, 1996

**Architect[s]:** [Stephenson Bell](#)  
**Area[s]:** [Central](#)  
**Theme[s]:** [Education](#) [Warehouses](#)

Named after Sir William Fairbairn, distinguished scientist and an originator of the institute, the building is a conversion of two former cotton warehouses designed in 1896 by Charles Clegg and Sons. The need to repair each building's structural fabric, along with the spatial restructuring necessary for open-plan use presented the architects with a challenging but familiar brief. With a track record in warehouse conversion and a practice vocabulary of 'careful restoration coupled with contemporary expression', Stephenson Bell modernised the building while retaining as much of its original character as possible. Although the two buildings are now integrated the existing entrances were retained. Access to a new public computer facility is through the doorway at No. 70, leading straight up to the first floor. No. 72's remodelled double-height foyer leads to three floors of offices with shared boardroom and conference facilities for the Estates Department and UMIST Ventures Limited.

## Former Bank of England

82 King Street, 1846

**Architect[s]:** [Charles Robert Cockerall](#) [Holford Associates](#)  
**Area[s]:** [Central](#)  
**Theme[s]:** [Late Georgian and Victorian](#)

Built as a branch office of the Bank of England, this fine building demonstrates both the archaeological



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skill and architectural inventiveness of Cockerell. A major figure of 19th century British architecture, his work is commemorated by a blue plaque on the façade. The austere side elevations adjoin a complex frontispiece to King Street which freely combines Greek and Roman precedents. Engaged Doric columns support an attic and pediment containing a small Serlian motif. These elements frame three thermal windows and a doorway (a late 19th century insertion) which light the former banking hall with its central barrel vault. However, the original entrance was the arched opening on to Pall Mall, reinstated during the building's conversion by Holford Associates into a lobby for their new post-modern office tower behind, which attempts a sympathetic relationship to this exquisite building.

### Former Natwest Bank

King Street, 1969

**Architect[s]:** Brett and Pollen Casson, Conder & Partners

**Area[s]:** Central

**Theme[s]:** 1960's Modern

Demonstrating a skilled and inventive interpretation of the shift away from International Style Modernism the prevailing curtain walls of the period are rejected for vertically ribbed black granite that abstracts traditional mansard, dormer and window forms. The original smooth white Modernist banking hall, intended to contrast with the fortress like exterior has been destroyed in the building's recent retail conversion. The building forms one side of a plaza deck over a parking level facing Pall Mall Court.

Forming the other sides of the plaza to the Natwest Building Pall Mall Court (1968) uses a restrained palette of uncompromisingly modern materials, blue-bronze mosaic, and bronze tinted glass to create an oriel windowed elevation to King Street. The scheme builds up formal volumes to produce a dramatic profile, the dark windows mirroring the eclectic surroundings of King Street and the elevations changing to address the four very different conditions of its location. Like the Natwest building this won an R.I.B.A. regional award and presented an innovative take on design of office buildings for a dense city site

### Fourth Church of Christ the Scientist

38-42 Peter Street, 1998

**Architect[s]:** OMI Architects

**Area[s]:** Central

**Theme[s]:** Contemporary Interiors

Historically, the Christian Scientists have had a reputation for being closed and secretive and this was reflected in their previous premises that turned its back on the street. The new church has upturned this ethos, and it now occupies the basement, ground and first floors of a former car showroom, a 1950s Portland stone building. Through careful manipulation of light, space and volume the architects have created a church that not only celebrates the Christian faith, but also promotes an open relationship with the public realm. Well thought-out and exquisitely detailed, a project with a difficult brief has resulted in a spiritually uplifting new church that possesses an architectural integrity on a par with David Chipperfield's First Church of Christ the Scientist.



## Free Trade Hall

Windmill Street, 1856

**Architect[s]:** [Edward Walters Manchester City Architect](#); [L. C. Howitt](#)

**Area[s]:** [Central](#)

**Theme[s]:** [Late Georgian and Victorian](#)

Located on the site of the 1819 Peterloo Massacre, the Free Trade Hall commemorates the repeal of the Corn Law in 1846. The current building is the result of a marriage of two eras. The main façade to Peter Street is an elaborate and dignified essay in the Renaissance. Deeply modelled, its 9 bays are comprised of a square columned arcade slightly raised above street level, surmounted by a piano nobile of framed pedimented windows set within one and a half storey arches on coupled Ionic columns. Between the arches are roundels with a band of carved garlands topped by a deep cornice and balustrade. There are numerous references to the Free Trade and Anti-Corn Law Movement with allegorical carvings in the arcade and in the tympana of the first floor arches. The main façade continues for three bays into South Street where economy presides, the remainder being in a primitive Classical style.

Following WW2 bombing the interiors and rear elevation were rebuilt by the City Architect in a Civic Neo-Scandinavian Classical style, eight carved figures on the rear elevation representing activities in the Free Trade Hall's past (1952). In the mid 1990's the Hallé Orchestra moved to the Bridgewater Hall prompting a heated debate about the building's future. Following vigorous public campaigns two schemes to turn the building into a twenty storey hotel were thwarted but the fate of the Free Trade Hall seemed set. The scheme currently on site (2003) by Stephenson Architecture is in the process of transforming this once public building into a luxury hotel, a tower replacing the rear elevation to Windmill Street, polite Neo-Modern language used to counterpoint the drama of the original front façade which is retained.

## Friends Meeting House

Mount Street, 1828

**Architect[s]:** [Richard Lane](#)

**Area[s]:** [Central](#)

**Theme[s]:** [Grade II Listed](#) [Late Georgian and Victorian](#)

Suggesting the importance of nonconformism in the developing industrial town, the scale of this block has subsequently been dwarfed by its neighbours. Still partly in use by the Quakers, the building has survived many attempts at redevelopment. Its front is raised up from street level on a podium with broad steps. These lead to an engaged Ionic portico in ashlar, with a much plainer brick building behind. It is a reticent but sturdy building befitting its congregation. Fortuitously, the classical frontispiece has been enhanced as a piece of townscape by the deference shown to it by E. Vincent Harris's design of Library Walk of 100 years later



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## Highland House

Central, 1966

**Architect[s]:** Leach, Rhodes and Walker

**Area[s]:** Central

**Theme[s]:** 1960's Modern

An essay in repetition, Highland House is a precursor to Aldine House in its bold use of sculptural concrete pre-cast modules. The majority of the two primary facades 23 storeys are composed of repeated elements that refer to the form of advanced technology of the period. Constructed using the latest sliding shuttering techniques for the internal structure the pre-cast panels support the outside edge of the floor plates. The rounded shapes of the main façade elements have the space age feel of Couréges clothing or the suits worn by Apollo astronauts.

## HSBC Bank

100 King Street, 1929

**Architect[s]:** Sir Edwin Lutyens with Winney & Son and Austin Hall

**Area[s]:** Central

**Theme[s]:** Early Modern (Interwar) Grade II Listed

One of a number of banks produced for this client in the 1920s; here Lutyens plays with a ziggurat motif in the mathematical setbacks he also employed for the Thiepval Arch and the unfinished Metropolitan Cathedral in Liverpool. Sheer ashlar walling separates classical motifs at the apex and base where he employs a characteristic device of a pilaster disappearing into rustication. The exterior form is geometrically composed with a large amount of unadorned wall space. Internally, the banking hall uses the Delhi Order with its suspended bells which the architect had invented for the contemporary Viceroy of India's House.

## Lewis's Department Store (Primark)

Market Street / Mosley Street, 1915

**Architect[s]:** J.W.Beaumont

**Area[s]:** Central

**Theme[s]:** Early Modern (Interwar)

The bulk of J.W. Beaumont's scheme dates from 1915 with an earlier 1870 part fronting onto Piccadilly Gardens and a subsequent extension to the rear also by Beaumont. Facing Fairhurst's Rylands Building (now Debenhams) the scheme is interesting in that it was originally conceived as a department store, rather than being a later conversion as in the case of the Rylands Building. Externally the use of Portland Stone does not disguise the untidy nature of the composition, an exercise in Neo-Baroque. The main façade faces Market Street with pseudo pilasters created by recessing the bays of glazing. The entrance is defined by a central three bay wide articulation of with arched pediment over. Wreaths decorate the spandrel panels of the third floor windows, above which is a denticulated cornice and pilastered attic storey. Stub towers produce chamfered corners that address the triangulated site geometry.



## Lloyd's Bank - Cross Street

Cross Street, 1915

**Architect[s]:** [Charles Heathcote](#)  
**Area[s]:** [Central](#)  
**Theme[s]:** [Manchester Edwardian](#)

One of a number of commercial schemes by Heathcote in the city centre an opposite his Eagle Star House (1911) at 62-68 Cross Street this is a flamboyant and expressive work of Baroque revival. Executed in Portland Stone a heavily rusticated base supports a columned second and third floor beneath an elaborate denticulated cornice. The corner between Cross Street and King Street is chamfered and elaborated with a balcony at first floor level topped with an arched pediment. Corner emphasis and façade termination is achieved through the use single bays of rusticated pilasters with inset triangular pedimented windows at second floor surmounted by arched pediments at cornice level. The attic storey is composed of bulls eye windows and leads up to a steeply pitched roof with chimneys that restate the rustication of the base

## Manchester International Convention Centre

Windmill Street, 2000

**Architect[s]:** [Stephenson Bell](#)  
**Area[s]:** [Central](#)  
**Theme[s]:** [Contemporary Buildings](#)

The Convention Centre lies neatly in between two massive monuments to Victorian enterprise – G-Mex and the Great Northern Warehouse. G-Mex was the key driver for the development of the Centre, with the two facilities operating in tandem, with the 2,400 seat auditorium of the nearby Bridgewater Hall as a possible venue, programming permitting, for exceptionally large conferences.

Nowadays, every significant city in the UK needs a convention centre; Birmingham, Glasgow, London and Cardiff, therefore Manchester had to have one to. The specification for the Manchester facility took account, however of the existence of the nearby concert hall and exhibition centre.

The main auditorium is, at 800 seats, relatively modest in scale, its form acoustically tailored to speech – not music. The other key space in the facility is a multi-purpose hall that encompasses over 2000 sq metres for car launches or car shows but however is not intended to compete with its far larger neighbour nearby.

In essence, the Convention Centre is a robust and contextually sensitive new development in what otherwise could be considered a difficult site to succeed.



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## Manchester Law Library

14 Kennedy Street, 1885

**Architect[s]:** [Thomas Hartas](#)  
**Area[s]:** [Central](#)  
**Theme[s]:** [Education](#) [Grade II Listed](#) [Late Georgian and Victorian](#)

A sensitive and delicate infill building for the dense and thriving city, the Law Library is an essay in mid-19th century Venetian Gothic, and is the most elaborate façade in a series of interesting examples along Kennedy Street. Three storeys are divided into three bays which themselves have three divisions. This playfulness continues with the deep carving of the window surrounds and tracery elements, and these recessions promote the dematerialisation of the façade with its pierced entrance screen in the lower right-hand corner and centrally placed projecting oriel window.

## Manchester Reform Club

King Street, Spring Gardens., 1871

**Architect[s]:** [Edward Salomons](#)  
**Area[s]:** [Central](#)  
**Theme[s]:** [Bars and Cocktail Lounges](#) [Late Georgian and Victorian](#)

At the heart of Manchester's financial district, and rubbing shoulders with high fashion (Giorgio Armani, DKNY and Joseph) is the Manchester Reform Club. Founded in 1867 by a group of businessmen, the former politician's club was home to the Liberal Party. Designed by Edward Salomons in 1871, the building is an eclectic rendition of the Venetian Gothic style. The grandeur of its form, with tall arched windows, foliated capitals, and gargoyles, combines both Flemish and Venetian influences, also reflected in its pitched roofs and angular turrets. The former dining room, richly detailed in aged pine panelling, has now been brashly converted into the Reform Bar and Restaurant by Bernard Carroll. On entering, deep-purple walls and a sweeping oak staircase announce the grotesque make-over to come. The whole scene is salacious and decadent, with materials including red velvet, tiger and leopard prints. Purple and red walls highlight the existing timber and are accompanied by gilded mirrors and custom-designed chandelier-like fittings.

## Memorial Hall

14 Albert Square, 1865

**Architect[s]:** [Thomas Worthington](#)  
**Area[s]:** [Central](#)  
**Theme[s]:** [Grade II Listed](#) [Late Georgian and Victorian](#)

Funded by the proceeds of the public collection for the Albert Memorial, this building forms a corner of Albert Square. It memorialises a nonconformist secession of clerics of 1662, hence the use of that date on the façade. It exemplifies the influence of John Ruskin, especially his promotion of Venetian Gothic architecture as a model for 19th century mercantile cities. Polychrome brickwork, contrasting voussoirs,



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stone tracery and compositional asymmetry form a foil to a grander range of stone buildings on this side of the square. Its original users would probably be dismayed by its current use as a pub.

### Midland Hotel

Peter Street, 1903

**Architect[s]:** [Charles Trubshaw](#)

**Area[s]:** [Central](#)

**Theme[s]:** [Grade II Listed](#) [Manchester Edwardian](#)

A confection in reddish brown terracotta, red brick and polished granite, this elaborately decorated pile was built to provide hotel accommodation for the adjacent Central Station to which it was linked by a covered, glazed canopy. The exterior reflects the quality of the facilities within, which originally included a Winter Garden, Palm Court, Theatre, Concert Hall, and Continental restaurants. The architecture oozes unrestrained opulence to the detriment of its overall composition. This is a building as an assemblage of details, eclectically raiding and adapting styles as necessary. These include the muses overlooking Lower Mosley Street, an octagonal corner tower with lion's rampant holding shields, a side entrance of volutes and heavily embellished Ionic column supporting a vaulted roof, Neo-Dutch gables and Art Nouveau iron work.

### Mr Thomas's Chophouse

Cross Street, 1901

**Architect[s]:** [Woodhouse and Willoughby](#)

**Area[s]:** [Central](#)

**Theme[s]:** [Bars and Cocktail Lounges](#) [Manchester Edwardian](#)

If there was a category for the best real ale public house's in Manchester, the Chophouse would be by far at the top of the list. The Chophouse almost stands alone next to its taller neighbours, cutting an extraordinary figure on the cityscape. The corner entrance, two storey oriel and elaborate crowning gable combine with lively effect. A stripped chimney creeps up the exposed side of the neighbouring building towards the sky. This part of the building was originally a shop and offices. The Chophouse was the part behind facing onto St Ann's churchyard also dated 1901. The same pale terracotta, the detail different but still Art Nouveau. Some of the original scheme of pale green, dark green and cream glazed tiles remains inside.



## National Museum of Labour History

103 Princess Street, 1854

**Architect[s]:** [J.E. Gregan](#)

**Area[s]:** [Central](#)

**Theme[s]:** [Civic Grade II Listed](#) [Late Georgian and Victorian](#) [Museums and Galleries](#)

A fine Victorian palazzo. The main red brick and buff sandstone elevation to Princess Street has three major storeys and a blind attic storey above cornice level. The use of the palazzo model can be seen in the treatment of the windows. First floor piano nobile windows are highly elaborated with segmental arched pediments. The main entrances are emphasised by arched elaboration and a small projecting first floor level canopy. The composition skillfully maximises the façade to Princess Street and disguises the lozenge-shaped site. Side elevations step back and are more three-dimensionally expressive than the main façade. In stark contrast, the rear of the building is austere in stock and white glazed brick with functionally placed windows and minimal decorative expression. The building is notable for being the site of the first meeting of the Co-operative Insurance Company (now CIS) in 1867 and of the first Trades Union Congress in 1868.

## One Central Street

1 Central Street, 2002

**Architect[s]:** [JudgeGill Associates](#)

**Area[s]:** [Central](#)

**Theme[s]:** [Bars and Cocktail Lounges](#) [Contemporary Interiors](#)

Located in a basement on Central Street is the latest project by Judge Gill – One Central Street. Bar cum restaurant, it is a welcome addition to the ever-growing bar scene. In essence, the aesthetic could be described more as ‘sophisticated sleaze’ largely due to the combination of sensual materials and rich subdued colours, more akin to a 19C Parisian brothel than a Mancunian bar. Clear demarcation between the bar and eating area offers clear symmetry to the interior providing both balance and harmony. The bar area doubles up as a dance floor later in the night, which at times can make getting served quite difficult. Nonetheless, One Central is an excellent destination for good food; beautiful people and a wonderful interior space.



## Pacific

58 George Street, Chinatown, 2000

**Area[s]:** [Central](#)  
**Theme[s]:** [Contemporary Interiors](#)

Designed on two floors: first 'China' and then 'Thailand', each with their own style and furniture, Pacific is a fairly unique concept. The fact that it feels like a 'concept', looks so spacious and modern, and that it's about 10% more expensive than its closest competitors may well put you off, but don't let it.

The plan was to offer a new style of cooking in a new style of venue and Pacific has delivered in pure 'design' style. When you step out of the elevator from Chinatown's George Street, you can choose from Chinese on one floor or Thai on the level above – two restaurants, two kitchens and one concept. Pacific was the first to offer Manchester diners this kind of choice and it does it in stunning contemporary surroundings with wooden floors, whitewashed walls, vivid artworks, Philippe Stark chairs plus some modern Oriental touches.

## Peoples History Museum

Bridge Street, 1994

**Architect[s]:** [OMI Architects](#)  
**Area[s]:** [Central](#)  
**Theme[s]:** [Contemporary Interiors](#) [Museums and Galleries](#)

This museum is dedicated to 'Britain's first Industrial Working Class'; from the battle for factory reform in Lancashire's cotton mills in the eighteenth century to the ambulance-workers' dispute of 1989, it documents working people's lives and narrates their fight for democracy. Relocated from Limehouse Town Hall in east London, this conversion, next to the River Irwell in Manchester's only remaining Edwardian pumphouse, provides a permanent site for the collection whose exhibits include the largest assortment of trade union banners, Labour Party papers and domestic artefacts. The architect's approach to the brief has demonstrated the same amount of confidence as the construction of the existing building – which supplied hydraulic power to much of Manchester's industry until its closure in 1972 - shows. This confidence has been achieved by working respectfully with the masonry and steel fabric of the building while giving solid expression to the new insertions.



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## Rylands Buildings [Debenhams]

Market Street, 1931

**Architect[s]:** [Harry S. Fairhurst P.G Fairhurst](#)  
**Area[s]:** [Central](#)  
**Theme[s]:** [Early Modern \(Interwar\)](#) [Warehouses](#)

Originally designed as the largest textile warehouse in central Manchester the dominant feature of this building is the sheer size of its 70m (230ft) frontage. Critical to the design was the intention to produce a coherent reading of the whole from any aspect. This is achieved through the use of slightly recessed corner towers sitting at 45° to the main facades and the use of a simple Stripped Classical language realised in Portland Stone throughout. The building was designed to have shop units at street level prior to the building's conversion into a department store with unification of individual units being achieved by the use of a bronzed metal and glass ground floor façade. This differentiates the street level from bulk of the whole building above where fenestration is united by a horizontal band at first floor with the further four floors of accommodation treated as a simple non-corniced punched plane which hints at the 'Modern Style'.

## The Restaurant

John Dalton Street, 2001

**Architect[s]:** [Stephenson Bell](#)  
**Area[s]:** [Central](#)  
**Theme[s]:** [Bars and Cocktail Lounges](#) [Contemporary Interiors](#)

The Restaurant occupies the ground and first floor level of an existing building on a prominent corner site in the heart of Manchester. The ground floor was formerly Lloyd Davies designer furniture retail shop, which has since moved into the basement level. The existing space for the restaurant was long and narrow and the design accentuates this linearity. The entrance to the restaurant is off John Dalton Street under a glass canopy projecting over the pavement.

At first floor level the space has been enlarged with a new roof top structure perched on the pre-existing podium on John Dalton Street. A simple folded plane of pre-patented copper defines the new space and cantilevers over Ridgefield to announce the restaurant. Full height frameless glazing contains the space around the perimeter offering the experience of dining off the street. Articulated rooflights in the copper roof canopy allow daylight into the centre of the space, ensuring maximum transparency from the street.

## Town Hall Extension

St Peter's Square, 1938

**Architect[s]:** [E. Vincent Harris](#)  
**Area[s]:** [Central](#)  
**Theme[s]:** [Civic Early Modern \(Interwar\)](#) [Grade II Listed](#)



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## CUBE CENTRE FOR THE URBAN BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Successfully resolving the difficult conundrum of style and space between Waterhouse's triangular Town Hall and Harris's earlier cylindrical Central Library, the building defines two streets of contrasting character. Lloyd Street is a canyon animated by bridges linking the Town Hall and its extension. Library Walk is a dramatic unfolding space which frames Lutyens's Cenotaph in St. Peter's Square and the Ionic temple front of the Friends' Meeting House on Mount Street. The architectural clarity of the Rates Hall, internal counterpart to Library Walk, has been lost with the introduction of a bürolandschaft office plan attempting to 'humanise' a previously clearly hierarchical space.

### Trinity Court

16 John Dalton Street, 1992

**Architect[s]:** [Edward Salomons Stephenson Bell](#)

**Area[s]:** [Central](#)

**Theme[s]:** [Grade II Listed Warehouses](#)

Trinity Court is neatly situated in a back street, off the main Deansgate route into Manchester. The dramatic Italianate facade, signifying the building's grade-2 listed status, disguises the retail and office spaces discretely housed inside. The facade is all that remains of the original building, built in 1865 as warehouse and office space. The new building is inserted behind the original facade, gracefully marrying old and new. A rich mixture of materials gives the interior space a dignified appeal, with a combination of limestone and sandstone finishes adding quality and durability. The budget was slightly more than average for this type of building, but with the fine selection of materials combined with car parking space, Trinity Court is no ordinary office development.

### UMIST Chemical Engineering Pilot Plant

Whitworth Street (Main Campus), 1966

**Architect[s]:** [Harry S. Fairhurst](#)

**Area[s]:** [Central](#)

**Theme[s]:** [1960's Modern Education](#)

Externally expressive of its functions this scheme uses an austere language of engineering brick, metal framed glazing and concrete. Offices, smaller laboratories and teaching spaces form one half of the scheme and are defined by brick and expressed concrete floor slabs with a rooftop penthouse. Four storeys of fully glazed façade define the area where student designed test rigs can be constructed and tested. Above this area expressively configured cooling units elaborate the roof line.



## UMIST Main Building

Whitworth Street (Main Building), 1902

**Architect[s]:** Bradshaw, Gass & Hope Spalding and Cross

**Area[s]:** Central

**Theme[s]:** Early Modern (Interwar) Education

Originally The Municipal School of Technology the main façade fronts onto Sackville Street. Spalding and Cross's (1902) flamboyant red brick and terracotta exercise in Loire inspired Neo Baroque resonates civic pride. The composition is organised to increase the building's apparent size, octagonal corner towers and an elaborate central arch with jettied gable over, frame a portal leading to an impressive entrance hall flanked by large light wells. Facing Whitworth Street is an observatory cupola donated by Frances Godlee. A large internal courtyard separates the earlier building from Bradshaw Gass and Hope's large extension to the Main Building. This is a surprising anachronism. Taking its stylistic cues from the earlier scheme and Norman Shaw a seven storey plus attic block runs perpendicular to Whitworth Street fronting it with a four storey terracotta bay at its north end. Lower four storey ranges of building define the street edges. The extension (Bradshaw Gass and Hope) uses the same materials as the earlier scheme but here the effect is stodgy rather the flamboyant with the building looming over its surroundings. The extension is literally a building out of its time being designed in 1927 only to be finished in 1957 a mere five years before it neighbour, the starkly Modern Reynolds Building by Cruikshank and Seward.

## UMIST Students Union Barnes Wallace Building / Wright Robinson Hall of Residence

Whitworth Street (Main Campus), 1963

**Architect[s]:** Cruikshank and Seward (W.A.Gibbon)

**Area[s]:** Central

**Theme[s]:** 1960's Modern Education

With the Renold Building the Barnes Wallace Building defines a Modernist reinterpretation of a university 'Quad'. The pristine quality of this space is exaggerated when one approaches from the north, passing under the Victorian railway viaduct that bisects the UMIST campus and entering the grassed space by a dramatic flying stair. The podium explores the use of different ribbons of articulation as the scheme rises, columnar at ground level, a ribbon of windows at first floor surmounted by an unadorned concrete plane and topped of with expressive in-situ concrete canopies floating above a glass plane. Behind this rises the Wright Robinson Hall of Residence. The repetitive module of the bedrooms forms the bulk of the 15 storeys, counter-pointed with an expressive 'quiffed' circulation tower.