

Deansgate

One of Manchester's oldest thoroughfares it remains a key city artery through prime retail and offices, linking Castlefield, the central area and Victoria. Now the focus of major area redevelopment at the Great Northern Warehouse and Spinningfields; Deansgate also functions as the city's processional route for its returning heroes. Significant buildings that can be found along Deansgate include Deansgate Quay by Stephenson Bell; John Rylands Library and No.1 Deansgate by Ian Simpson Associates.

201 Deansgate

Deansgate, 1998

Architect[s]: [Holford Associates](#)

Area[s]: [Deansgate](#)

Theme[s]: [Contemporary Buildings](#) [DesRes](#)

Deansgate is one of the city's main arterial routes, carrying a heavy volume of traffic throughout the day. This office development is halfway down Deansgate as you enter Manchester from the south. The mixed-use ground floor of the building promotes diverse activity at street level, in keeping with planning policy, and five upper floors total 6350 square metres of high-quality office space. Car parking for more than 90 vehicles is at basement and ground levels. An additional 700 square metres is taken up by archive space for tenants in the lower basement. The building has a robust character; it takes its vertical form from the surrounding urban landscape, signalling a strong architectural presence to its neighbours. A delightful atrium, creating a light and airy atmosphere, overwhelms the visitor on entry. Spectacular views deep into the building further emphasise its verticality, and create a link to street activity. The use and combination of materials - red sandstone, steel, glass and red brick - are its most remarkable feature, giving a contemporary feel to the building, while respecting the city's architectural legacy. The finished building, already a noted part of the Deansgate skyline, is a tribute to the collective energy of the participants.

Barton Arcade

51-63 Deansgate, 1871

Architect[s]: [Corbett, Raby & Sawyer](#)

Area[s]: [Deansgate](#)

Theme[s]: [Grade II Listed](#) [Late Georgian and Victorian](#) [Urban Spaces and Parks](#)

The epitome of commercial architecture in 19th Century Manchester, the façade to Deansgate fails to indicate the quality of the technologically advanced construction behind. Based around twin domes, the cast iron and glass roof covers a set of galleried spaces which house offices above ground level shops. Although the detail is delicate and traditional, the clear construction of the glass roof has a more organic character. Glimpses of the domes from St. Ann's Square and Ridgefield set a high standard for urban and architectural design which few subsequent commercial spaces in the city have emulated.

Circle Media Club

13 Barton Arcade, 2002

Architect[s]: [Total Architecture](#)

Area[s]: Deansgate

Theme[s]: Bars and Cocktail Lounges Contemporary Interiors

The Circle Media Club is offered as an antidote to the usual crowded, noisy and dated bar environment. To counter this, the bar features a neutral and timeless backdrop that can be modified over time through use of varying displays, lighting and projections.

There are clearly defined spaces for the three main areas of bar, lounge and restaurant, which are independent but also part of a much larger space. In this context the ceiling becomes the primary method of both defining individual space and providing continuity between spaces through the use of backlit fabric panels set out in bays corresponding to the existing structural grid.

A limited number of elements and palette of materials reduces the visual 'noise' associated with bars and restaurants. Natural slate and timber are used for the floor finishes and are extended to cover the bar and counter; giving a textural quality that is in contrast to the translucent surfaces in the ceiling and walls, which are internally illuminated to provide a delicate, diffuse glow that acts as a defining feature of the space.

Crown Square

Crown Square, 1962

Architect[s]: Manchester City Architect; L. C. Howitt

Area[s]: Deansgate

Theme[s]: 1960's Modern Civic

Crown Square and its surrounding buildings are the result of the radical 1945 City of Manchester Plan for the creation of an extended civic axis based on the Town Hall clock tower (although the tower itself was to have been replaced). The square is bordered by civic and judicial buildings, all constructed within a decade of each other. The earliest building in this grouping is the Portland stone clad Crown Court, a stripped Modern interpretation of Classicism. Its uninspiring composition features a raised central entrance with a particularly effete eagle-bedecked canopy, with the courts behind visible through double height glazing. The Magistrate's Court by YRM sits on a raised plinth and generous forecourt above layers of parking, a service yard and a cafeteria. The Modernist tiled white frame encloses a dark glass box in a minimalist cubic composition that reflects the spatial organisation within. The courts are in the middle of the building, surrounded by double height spaces and single storey administrative offices. The blind top storey houses the cells and servicing plant. The building authoritatively closes the space on the southern side of Crown Square. The east side of the square is defined by Cumberland House, home of several local authority departments. A polite composition of dark brick and steel framed bays over a white stone plinth, the building edges an empty public space between Crown Square and Spinningfield. On the north side is Manchester House, a white 8 storey square tower of offices on a two storey podium in a commercial Modernist style, and the Crown Court extension. This Late Modern composition of splayed windows in Portland stone is redolent of the dying days of the Property Services Agency as an arm of government.

Deansgate Quay

Deansgate, 2001

Architect[s]: [Stephenson Bell](#)
Area[s]: [Deansgate](#)
Theme[s]: [Contemporary Buildings](#) [DesRes](#) [Regeneration](#)

Deansgate Quay is situated near the Knott Mill bridge adjacent to the city's main arterial route. It is located in an area surrounded by a decaying infrastructure undergoing rapid redevelopment. Prior to its development, significant obstacles had to be overcome; firstly it is split by the nearby bridge and a canal passing underneath; a busy railway line on one side and the main Deansgate road on the other.

Deansgate Quay provides 102 apartments with a high degree of specification. Materials employed throughout the scheme are sensitive and detailed well on both the interior and exterior providing full height windows to the north and south which overlook the city.

Originally car parking was provided for in underground spaces, however due to high demand from buyers more spaces were required. Consequently, to satisfy this extra demand a rather bland car parking deck was built. Nonetheless, other than this, the development has won many housing awards in recognition for its design ingenuity and attention to detail.

Great Northern Company's Goods Warehouse

Watson Street, 1896

Architect[s]: [A. Fox and W.T. Westlee](#) [Leslie Jones Architects](#)
Area[s]: [Deansgate](#)
Theme[s]: [Late Georgian and Victorian](#) [Regeneration](#) [Urban Spaces and Parks](#) [Warehouses](#)

Major refurbishment: Leslie Jones Architects [2000]

Originally designed as a goods storage building and built at the level of the railway infrastructure in this part of the city, a monumental base of black engineering brick supports four storeys of storage above in red brick with black brick and stone details. Internally steel stanchions support fireproof brick arched floors that were intended to support massive loadings. Picked out in white glazed brick the building's name is the only ornament to the bulk of this industrial beast. The building lay empty for many years until its incorporation into a leisure based scheme by Leslie Jones Architects. This entailed the removal of the large carriage ramp and viaducts that formed the original access to the building. The Peter Street end of the long range of frontage buildings onto Deansgate was demolished to reveal the bulk of the warehouse. This area was then opened up to create a weak bar fringed public space. At the other end of the scheme a new cinema and multi storey car park feed off a raised pedestrian space. Although adopting an industrial aesthetic the new work around the warehouse fails to respond effectively to its context and looks over elaborate in comparison to the sublime presence of the original building.

Kendal's

98-116 Deansgate, 1939

Architect[s]: [J. S. Beaumont](#)
Area[s]: [Deansgate](#)
Theme[s]: [Early Modern \(Interwar\)](#) [Grade II Listed](#)

Modelled on German department stores of the early 1930s by architects such as Erich Mendelsohn, Kendal's utilises modern materials such as glass block and Portland stone cladding to produce a clean and simple modernist exterior. This contrasts with the neo-classical style of its contemporaries in Manchester such as Lewis's on Piccadilly. Internally, the store has been extensively refitted so that customers are unaware of the innovative use of materials on the façade. Two banks of lifts sit beside escalators to the rear of the store. The entrances off Deansgate are characterised by their aroma, coffee in the delicatessen, and perfume in the main store. These contrast with the labyrinthine 5th floor entrances via the multi-storey car park to the rear, where wealthy customers have their cars valeted while they shop

No.1 Deansgate

Deansgate, 2002

Architect[s]: [Ian Simpson Architects](#)
Area[s]: [Deansgate](#)
Theme[s]: [Contemporary Buildings](#) [DesRes](#)

No.1 Deansgate, a £20m residential and mixed use development for Crosby Homes, forms part of the overall Shambles redevelopment, a central element of the Manchester City Centre rebuilding strategy proposed by the practice following the bomb explosion on 15th June 1996

The fully glazed residential tower is 'lifted' above the retail podium by a raking transfer structure. The tower houses 84 apartments on 14 floors including both duplex and triplex penthouses with terraces allowing views across the city. Each apartment has access to a semi-external space formed between the inner and outer skins of the glazed cladding.

Opera House

Quay Street, 1912

Architect[s]: [Richardson & Gill with Farquarson](#)
Area[s]: [Deansgate](#)
Theme[s]: [Grade II Listed](#) [Manchester Edwardian](#)

Designed as a new front to the pre-existing New Theatre, the exterior displays the imperial confidence of its date. Still in use as a theatre today, the Opera House is surmounted by a large pedimented gable. Stucco is used throughout the elaborate Classical language of the façade, unusual in having full height rustication. Giant order Ionic engaged fluted columns define a large central bay with the legend 'the play mirrors life' beneath a relief of Apollo on his chariot. Between the columns are inscribed the names of famous playwrights. The entrance canopy level is defined by a band of roses within a torus moulding. The pastel fancifulness towards Quay Street contrasts sharply with the simple red brick Byrom Street elevation.

Royal Exchange & Royal Exchange Theatre

St Ann's Square, 1921

Architect[s]: [Bradshaw, Gass & Hope](#) [Levitt Bernstein](#)
Area[s]: [Deansgate](#)
Theme[s]: [Early Modern \(Interwar\)](#) [Grade II Listed](#)

Structurally damaged in the I.R.A. bomb, the Royal Exchange is the former home of the cotton trade in Manchester. It was built on the original marketplace and its present exterior masks the piecemeal story of its growth. A substantial stone base is topped by a gigantic engaged Corinthian order with an attic above. One of the two glass roofs was destroyed during World War 2, while reduced trade continued beneath the other until the mid-1960s. 10 years later the lunar module-inspired theatre was introduced and a successful new life for the building was achieved. Within the ornate classical interior, the Hi Tech auditorium is supported off the concealed steel structure and integrates very well despite the radical differences in style. The post-bomb refurbishment has introduced a vivid colour scheme.

Rylands Library

150 Deansgate, 1899

Architect[s]: [Basil Champneys](#)
Area[s]: [Deansgate](#)
Theme[s]: [Education](#) [Urban Spaces and Parks](#)

Now owned by the University of Manchester, the library was built by Enriqueta Augustina Rylands as a memorial to her husband, the local textile manufacturer John Rylands. The last significant flowering of Gothic in the city, the library reworks a religious theme with a soaring nave to impress visitors and intimate panelled reading alcoves occupying the aisles. This space is reached from a generous stair hall featuring compressed ranks of slender columns and tantalising views through distant lanterns. Constructed of deep red sandstone, the quality of metalwork and joinery is superb. The nostalgia of the detail conceals the fact of the library's technological sophistication, with heating and ventilation fully integrated into the design, and readers assisted by early electric work lights and chandeliers. However, the character of the building is generally monastic, reflecting the theological basis of Rylands's own collection of books and manuscripts around which the library was formed.

St Ann's Church

St Ann's Square, 1712

Architect[s]: [Alfred Waterhouse](#) [John Barker](#)
Area[s]: [Deansgate](#)
Theme[s]: [Civic Grade II Listed](#)

John Barker 1712, Alfred Waterhouse 1891

St. Ann's has twofold significance: as part of an urban ensemble with St. Ann's Square, and as Manchester's oldest surviving Classical building. As such its distinguishing features include the round arched windows, the applied two-storey Corinthian pilasters, the semi-circular apse with giant order and the columned and pedimented doorways. The Baroque North Door was added by Waterhouse, who also remodelled the interior. Its galleried interior conforms to the pattern of churches of the 18th Century, although most of the furnishings are 19th century, including the stained glass salvaged following I.R.A. bomb damage in 1996. Originally crowned by a tiered timber spire above the tower, much of the charm of the church itself derives from the patched quality of the sandstone and the sharpness of its details.

St Anns Square

Area[s]: [Deansgate](#)

Theme[s]: [Urban Spaces and Parks](#)

St Ann's Square is one of the oldest public spaces in Manchester's Centre. Fronted onto by a number of significant buildings including St. Ann's Church by John Barker (1712), J.E.Gregan's palazzo derived Royal Bank of Scotland (1848) and the rear of the Bradshaw Gass and Hope's Royal Exchange (1921). It now forms the southern end of a route that connects to Exchange Square via New Cathedral Street (1999). The square form the setting to a range of statuary including Richard Cobden (Marshall Wood, 1867), the Boer War Memorial (Hamo Thorneycroft, 1907) and more recently a giant cotton bud (P.Randall-Page, 1995) which formed the centre piece of a weak pedestrianised landscape scheme (rewarded by the Civic Trust).

St George's House (YMCA)

56-58 Peter Street, 1909

Architect[s]: [Austin Strzala Turner Woodhouse, Corbett & Dean](#)

Area[s]: [Deansgate](#)

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

Conversion Austin Strzala

Important as an element in the sequence of Peter Street, this building survives now as an example of façade retention. This large terracotta block embodies the muscular Christianity of its original patrons, with taut horizontal bands of decoration controlling the dramatic asymmetries of the large entrance archway and shallow projecting bays. The roof structure (introduced when the building was gutted for office use) is unobtrusive from close views but protrudes to an unfortunate degree when seen from a distance. One is left nostalgic for the discretion with which the upper level swimming pool was treated by the original architects.

Sunlight House

85 Quay Street, 1932

Architect[s]: [Joseph Sunlight](#)

Area[s]: [Deansgate](#)

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

The modern age is prefigured in this building, which was the first in Manchester to be taller than the Town Hall. Its elements are stretched in an aspirational upward thrust from a muted classical base to an exaggerated mansard roof. Domed corner towers anchor the composition and provide access to layers of office accommodation above. Internally, the basement swimming pool beneath the lightwell is indicative of the glamorous lifestyle offered to the building's occupants and the aspirations of the architect. A convincing anecdote has it that Sunlight, an émigré, adopted his name from the popular soap brand of the same name on disembarking in Liverpool.

The Hilton

Deansgate, 2006

Architect[s]: [Ian Simpson Architects](#)

Area[s]: [Deansgate](#)

Theme[s]: [Bars and Cocktail Lounges](#) [Contemporary Buildings](#) [DesRes](#)

Designed by Ian Simpson Architects, the designers of Urbis, the development will feature a striking, slender glass tower - the tallest structure in the city centre at 157m high with a glass 'blade' increasing the height of the building to 171m. Currently the tallest building in Manchester is the CIS building, which stands at 118m and the tallest residential building in the UK is the Barbican in London, which is 128m.

The tower will also feature a 285-bed, five star hotel to be run by Hilton International. As part of the development, Hilton will provide a destination 'sky bar' on the 23rd floor, which will offer dramatic views across Manchester and beyond. There will be underground car parking for residents and hotel guests and the development also includes conference and function facilities, incorporating a 650-person ballroom within the Hilton hotel, a health and fitness centre, shops, restaurants, a café and bar facilities.

Trinity Bridge

St Mary's Parsonage, 1996

Architect[s]: [Dr Santiago Calatrava](#)

Area[s]: [Deansgate](#)

Theme[s]: [Bridges](#) [Contemporary Buildings](#) [Urban Spaces and Parks](#)

The cities of Manchester and Salford, traditional rivals divided by the River Irwell, agreed this bridge as an opportunity to present a new partnership through the design of a flagship footbridge. Spanish engineer Calatrava produced an elegant tour de force. A single raking strut on the Salford side supports the Y-shaped bridge and ramp by tension cables. Sculpturally elegant, the bridge represents an aspiration for the development of the area as a business district. Its alien form is enhanced by a curiously arbitrary landscape design at the riversides, bearing no relation to the bridge or the wider context.