

Whitworth Street

The Whitworth street corridor is currently undergoing significant redevelopment. It links Deansgate to Piccadilly to the east of the city centre, providing a major corridor of traffic through to the city centre. It is home to the popular Deansgate Locks group of bars and clubs, which is a vibrant on most weekend evenings. The site of the Hacienda once stood on the corner of Whitworth Street and Albion Street, which now has since disappeared, now being currently turned in a major block of apartments.

Baa Baa

Deansgate Locks, 2001

Architect[s]: [Original Architect Unknown](#)

Area[s]: [Whitworth Street](#)

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

Baa Bar is a Liverpool institution, started 9 years ago in the "creative quarter" of the city, it offered Liverpudlians their first taste of European style bars, late licenses, and style and glamour normally reserved for London. With further expansion in the Merseyside city, the next obvious choice was to move elsewhere – and Deansgate Locks was an ideal choice.

The ceiling is strung with huge glitter balls, around 30 of them, which spin and refract light throughout the interior creating at times a surreal effect. Low level comfy seating is pushed to the walls creating intimate drinking spaces and taking away possible congestion near the bar area. The bar detail consists of an idiosyncratic feature that needs to be seen – but it does create an interesting focal and talking point whilst waiting. In essence, a good example of robust interior design.

Bridgewater House

Whitworth Street, 1912

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

Area[s]: [Whitworth Street](#)

Theme[s]: [Manchester Edwardian](#) [Warehouses](#)

Bridgewater House was built for Lloyd's Packing Warehouses Ltd in 1912-14 and was a typically ambitious piece of business architecture of its time; granite below, white faience above, with a ripple of canted bays. Eight storeys with attics and basements. Arguably the most advanced building of its type when completed. If you look carefully, you can still see the company monogram high-up on the side elevation.

British Council Headquarters / BT Building

Medlock Street, 1991

Architect[s]: [Building Design Partnership](#)

Area[s]: [Whitworth Street](#)

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

Located on the site of the former Gaythorn gasworks, this scheme was constructed in response to the relocation of the British Council from London. Set amid extensive uninspired landscaping, the building meets the functional needs of the brief through a simple, grey-clad, square doughnut in plan, with offices overlooking a central atrium. This features artworks and installations by major contemporary British artists such as Patrick Heron. The surrounding landscaping coupled with the building's location relative to Whitworth Street railway viaduct isolates the building as an object from the dense urban pattern to the north.

Cambrian Buildings

Whitworth Street, 1905

Architect[s]: [J D Harker](#)

Area[s]: [Whitworth Street](#)

Theme[s]: [Manchester Edwardian Warehouses](#)

Cambrian Buildings was built in 1905-7 for R. Jones Ltd. It was constructed at the heart of the concentration of Lloyd's packing Warehouses Ltd and later became part of Lancaster House. The warehouses were built in response to the boom in trade and confidence following the opening of the Manchester Ship Canal in 1894, when easy access and efficient loading facilities were essential. The huge buildings are steel framed and built to high-quality fireproof specifications. Terracotta and faience fronts contrast with the rear elevations where the steel frame is exposed and glazed.

Cornerhouse Arts Centre

70 Oxford Street, 1985

Architect[s]: [David Chipperfield](#) [The Millard Partnership & Fletcher Priest Architects](#)

Area[s]: [Whitworth Street](#)

Theme[s]: [Contemporary Buildings](#) [Museums and Galleries](#)

The Cornerhouse, with its galleries and cinema, is located in two buildings facing each other over Oxford Road Station Approach. Together they are an early example of the creative reuse of existing buildings for the arts in Manchester, in this case a former department store and cinema. The main building is an Edwardian flat iron building into which a ground floor bar, two basement cinemas, upper levels of galleries and a first floor restaurant were inserted in a non-descript style. Externally, a rather

bulky white pressed metal signage band and new windows were added. The cinema opposite has been refitted since the original refurbishment. David Chipperfield Architects have introduced a dramatic façade of glass planks with a bright double-height yellow and white foyer space behind. The scheme now acts as a beacon on the junction of Whitworth Street and Oxford Road, defines the cinema entrance and adds an appropriately modern image to Manchester's most innovative independent cinema

Lancaster House / India Buildings

67 – 71 Whitworth Street, 1906

Architect[s]: [Harry S. Fairhurst](#)
Area[s]: [Whitworth Street](#)
Theme[s]: [Grade II Listed Manchester Edwardian](#)

Lancaster House is notable for its decoration and compositional inventiveness. Supported by a steel frame, this huge building fully exploits the modelling possibilities offered by brown terracotta and brick. Above a stone basement plinth, the Edwardian Baroque façade successfully hides the bulk of the construction behind. Terracotta is used to provide vertical emphasis to the entrances and stairs and a variety of window shapes and frame details. The corner tower to Princess Street is remarkable, rising through 12 levels of increasing elaboration to a terminating belvedere. Lancaster House shares a common plinth and eaves with its contemporary neighbour, India House (also by Fairhurst and converted into flats), this connection being reinforced by an ornate two storey high circular Art Nouveau wrought iron gate with pendant lamp.

Loaf

Deansgate Locks, 1999

Architect[s]: [Raw Design](#)
Area[s]: [Whitworth Street](#)
Theme[s]: [Bars and Cocktail Lounges](#) [Contemporary Interiors](#)

Loaf was a large gamble for Bass Leisure and despite what must have been a substantial cash investment in the design of the bar (£1.2m), it seems to have paid off. Situated at the top end of Deansgate Locks, it is one of many well designed bars competing for the 'beautiful people' clientele of Manchester.

Upstairs on the ground floor is neatly divided between the main bar area and a restaurant, whilst downstairs holds another bar and club area. It has a capacity for 1200 people which at the weekends is easily surpassed, so don't be surprised that you may have to queue. The use and combination of materials employed throughout the interior are robust and intelligently applied. Select designer furniture provides a sleek feel to the place – which further adds that sense of exclusivity and panache.

Refuge Assurance/Palace Hotel

Oxford Street, 1891

Architect[s]: [Alfred Waterhouse](#) [Paul Waterhouse](#)

Area[s]: [Whitworth Street](#)

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

The cutting of Whitworth Street in the 1890s resulted in a series of large self-confident buildings along it. A monument to insurance, the mammoth Refuge building exploits the full possibilities of architectural ceramics. Its interior employs white glazed brick for the former office space, but the exterior exploits the potential of terracotta for insistent repetitive ornament over large surfaces. Articulated frames to the high windows culminate in barley-sugar columns, while the great brick tower is a landmark in many directions. The porte cochere beneath it, with its glazed dome and memorial to the company's war dead, is now the reception for the Palace Hotel which currently occupies this dramatic and robust building

Sugar Lounge

Deansgate Locks, 2001

Architect[s]: [Original Architect Unknown](#)

Area[s]: [Whitworth Street](#)

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

The Sugar Lounge aims to fill the 'exclusive' bar niche when Mash and Air left Manchester two years ago. Situated right at the end of the locks, the bar has received many mixed reviews – some good; some not-so good. Divided over two levels, the compact ground floor is dedicated to drinking with expensive seating offering a sense of opulence and exclusivity. Rich fabrics and muted colours coupled with low lighting, it is highly reminiscent of the 'lounge lizard' aesthetic. The upstairs mezzanine is dedicated to both drinking and dancing complete with a relatively small dance floor. Towards the weekends it gets very busy and often difficult to get in, otherwise an excellent drinking destination.

The Green Room Theatre (Phase 2)

Whitworth Street West, 1996

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

Area[s]: [Whitworth Street](#)

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

For more than ten years the Green Room Theatre has occupied two arches beneath a busy railway line near the Cornerhouse Arts Centre. Acclaimed for its experimental productions, this fringe theatre is an integral part of Manchester's cultural scene. A significant amount of Lottery funding in 1995 enabled the client to refurbish the theatre space and cafe-bar. On arrival at the theatre, you can choose between two entrances, to the box office to the left or the cafe-bar to the right. Both facades use stainless-steel panels and slate-grey windows that contrast boldly with the surrounding brickwork. The lightweight steel mezzanine level adds much-needed floorspace to the cafe-bar. The imaginative use of signage and interactive artwork add richness and a sense of play to the interior. The compact auditorium, seating

more than 120, is tucked behind the foyer area; greatly improved acoustics and a new seating arrangement together provide a remarkable theatre space.

The Hacienda

Whitworth Street, 2004

Architect[s]: [Stephenson Bell](#)
Area[s]: [Whitworth Street](#)
Theme[s]: [Contemporary Buildings](#) [DesRes](#)

Situated on the site of the former Hacienda nightclub, The Hacienda development is the latest scheme by Altrincham based Crosby Homes. The scheme offers high specification living accommodation, with each room hosting a variety of the latest technological wizardry that includes DVD's in each room; internet access and so forth.

The development fully utilises its tight corner site, employing a multitude of spatial gymnastics to maximise floor space, whilst at the same time retaining an innate sense of elegance. The generous use of brickwork bind the development to its immediate setting plus the combination of a rich and varied palette of textures creates a striking landmark. Again, having said that quality living accommodation of this nature doesn't carry a cheap price tag.

Due for completion Spring 2004.

The Lock Building

Whitworth Street, 2004

Architect[s]: [Mills Beaumont Leavey Channon](#)
Area[s]: [Whitworth Street](#)
Theme[s]: [Contemporary Buildings](#) [DesRes](#)

The Lock Building is an apartment scheme of 154 units and 100 car parking spaces with live and work units and a small deli/café at ground floor. The design is striking and contemporary with the two building blocks sitting either side of an internal street with suspended accessways.

Located within the city centre and close to Oxford Road station the site is within the new, emerging residential, and leisure sector of Manchester. The arrangement of the apartments allows maximum light into the central space and provides spectacular South facing balconies to the upper floors.

The Lock should be completed by early Spring 2004.

UMIST Campus - Renold Building

Whitworth Street, 1962

Architect[s]: [Cruikshank and Seward](#) [Harry S. Fairhurst](#)
Area[s]: [Whitworth Street](#)

Theme[s]: 1960's Modern Education

UMIST Campus is characterised by work that embodies the spirit of Harold Wilson's 'White Heat of Technology' yet also is the site of the most anachronistic of all Manchester's higher education buildings. Amazingly only five years separates Bradshaw Gass and Hope's large extension to the Main Building (finished in 1957 but designed in 1927!) with its terracotta and finials and the stark Brasilia inspired modernity of Cruikshank and Seward's Renold Building (1962). The Main Building extension takes its cues from the first building on the site (for the Municipal School of Technology) by Spalding and Cross, a flamboyant exercise in Loire inspired Neo Baroque realised in red brick and terracotta and finished in 1902. South of the railway viaduct the campus is Manchester's representation of the 1960's brave new world of education made concrete. Largely the work of two long established Manchester commercial practices, Cruikshank and Seward (est.1923), and H.S.Fairhurst and Son (est. 1895) the campus reflects growing international and Modernist influence on mainstream architects of the period, the majority of building work being completed between 1962-68.

The campus' Southern boundary is defined by the A57 (M) Mancunian Way from which the dynamic and cinematic qualities of the buildings are best appreciated. Unfortunately the confidence that inspired the earlier work on the campus is lost by the time the Weston Building by Downs and Variava was completed in 1991 with its equivocal use of stripy neo-vernacular post-modern language.

Cruikshank and Seward:

Renold Building 1962
Chandos Hall of Residence 1964
Barnes Wallace Building and Wright Robinson Hall of Residence 1964
Mathematics and Social Sciences Building 1968
Ferranti Building 1968

H.S. Fairhurst and Son:

Pariser Building 1963
Chemical Engineering Pilot Plant 1966
Paper Science Building 1966
Faraday Building 1967
George Begg Building 1974

UMIST Renold Building

Whitworth Street (Main Campus), 1962

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

Area[s]: Whitworth Street

Theme[s]: 1960's Modern Education

Conceived as the first centralised lecture theatre building in Britain, a single hall for 500, two for 300, six for 140 and further smaller seminar spaces are contained in this slab and podium composition. The larger spaces are contained in the foyer that is still perfectly of its time. Large sculptural columns define generous circulation spaces. Adorning the wall of the lower foyer '*Metamorphoses*' (1968) an abstract mural by the leading British Modernist artist Victor Pasmore completes the cool scene. A slim-line

transparent stair tower counter-weights the main slab, demonstrating a control of modelling that is only compromised by the rather wilfully folded east façade. The Renold Building and its counterpart, the Barnes Wallis Building reflects influences of Oscar Neimeyer and Brasilia.