

55 princess street manchester

category Commercial
client CTP Ltd.
value £9m
date 2006

This 78,400ft² Grade A office building, for developers CTP, is opposite Waterhouse's Grade I Town Hall on Princess Street. It sits astride two conservation areas and engages with Kennedy Street to the rear.

Conceptually, each elevation seeks to respond compositionally and materially to the respective street walls. The building may be seen to be enclosed by a unitised limestone external wall whose height varies to make scale relationships to the differing nature of each defining street. To Princess Street, a zinc clad 'box' above ground floor level projects over the footway, and offers a memory of 45-51 Princess Street which it replaced whilst imparting

a more appropriate civic scale to this street.

The upper levels are set back and are more horizontal in character. They are also of a more transparent construction than the street wall below, reducing the apparent mass and forming external terraces with city views. The south core signals the entrance off Princess Street and manages the transition of back pavement to 57-63 Princess Street that prevailed historically. This vertical element seeks to become a visual 'anchor' within the streetscape and form a dialogue with the vertical elements of the Town Hall opposite. The reception area may be seen as an extension of the street into which the external materials extend.

The retained facades to 36 and 38-40 Kennedy Street are seen as a continuation of the enclosing veneer of external wall. They are clearly expressed as retained, being articulated from the highly glazed elevation of the new construction which acts as a foil to their exuberant detail. The floor plates do not extend to the retained facades, the resultant light well emphasising their articulation, whilst at a practical level avoiding clashes with existing window heights.

