

**Town and Country Planning Act
1990**

**Planning, Design & Access
Statement**

**Full, Advertisement & Listed
Building Applications @ former
Pizza Express**

**St George's House, 56 Peter
Street, Manchester, M2 3NQ**

Statement prepared by:

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February 2022

**Adams Planning + Development
Ltd**

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

**For and on behalf of Grade A
Alternative Ltd**

**Planning, Design & Access
Statement**

**St George's House, 56 Peter
Street, Manchester**

February 2022

Ref: 2021-19d

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Russell Adams', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Russell Adams - Director

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Figure 1 – St. Peter's Square Conservation Area

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of the owners, Grade A Alternative, in support of a listed building and advertisement application that are being submitted simultaneously for the proposed new signage, shopfront improvements and external seating areas at the former Pizza Express.
- 1.2 Grade A Alternative have extensive experience of sensitively redeveloping and improving buildings of historical importance both in Manchester and the wider UK. Within Manchester they have sensitively refurbished Manchester's Old Law Library (Grade II Listed), Lightwell, Parsonage Chambers, the Boardwalk, The Mission and 56 Princess Street (see: <https://www.gradeaalternative.co.uk>) and more recently the neighbouring HAUNT wine bar, all of which make exemplary contributions to the character and appearance of the built heritage and the economy of Manchester City Centre.
- 1.3 The Applicant are also submitting separate Premises Licence and Street Licensing applications, the contents of which will be consistent with the information contained within the planning application.
- 1.4 This planning application is seeking advertisement consent for the installation of two replacement illuminated signs, new entrance treatments and new outside seating areas with associated infrastructure and ancillary facilities.
- 1.5 This Planning, Design and Access Statement provides a framework to explain how the proposed development is an appropriate use for the City Centre site and responds to the Conservation Area setting. This Statement also demonstrates that the proposed use will function in an appropriate manner. A separate Heritage Statement has been submitted to assess the Heritage impacts upon the Grade II Listed Building.
- 1.6 This assessment has been prepared taking into account the advice and information contained within:
 - The National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021).
 - The National Planning Practice Guidance
 - Manchester Core Strategy 2012 to 2027 (July 2012).
 - The extant 'saved' Unitary Development Plan Policies 2012.
 - Historic England Guidance GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017)
 - The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990.
- 1.7 This Planning, Design and Heritage Statement provides a detailed consideration of the positive impacts the proposals will have on St Peter's House and the wider Conservation Area. It takes into consideration relevant planning policy guidance and evidences the technical deliverability of the scheme.

Relevant Planning History

- 1.8 St George's House has an extensive planning history comprising for alterations to the internal and external appearance of the Listed Building, including new shop fit outs and external signage and seating areas. The former Pizza Express restaurant had extensive external and signage alterations approved at the subject property that are still in situ. More recently, the planning applicants submitted a Change of Use (Ref: 130120/FO/2021), Advertisement (Ref: 130121/AO/2021) and Listed Building application (Ref: 130114/LO/2021) for the neighbouring HAUNT wine bar.

- 1.9 These recent planning approvals at HAUNT, which is the only other commercial premises on the ground floor of 56 Peter Street, are a strong material consideration in the determination of this adjoining premises. The Officer Report, Decision Notice and correspondence has subsequently been thoroughly reviewed by the Applicants' development team, and has informed the design and planning application approach for this Hannah Beswick restaurant application.
- 1.10 St George's House was completely gutted internally in 1995 thus leaving no internal historic fabric. This position was accepted within the relatively recent Café Nero planning consent (Ref: 101560/LO/2013/C1) consented in March 2013 and the recent approvals of the HAUNT wine bar. This position was also confirmed by a heritage consultant at a site visit pre-submission and the aforementioned recent planning consents within the same building.

2.0 Site Context

- 2.1 St George's House is located on the southwestern corner of St Peter's Square Conservation Area in Manchester city centre. The Conservation Area contains a mixture of commercial, cultural and civic buildings.
- 2.2 The main characteristic of St Peter's Square conservation area is primarily one of civic grandeur, but it also contains some commercial property. It has been designated to include a more extensive area than just the square described above, in order to include several distinguished buildings. The Peace Garden, although laid out after the designation and therefore not a part of the St Peter's Square conservation area, is regarded as an important element of the same urban space.
- 2.3 The name of the Conservation Area derives from St. Peter's Church, which stood in the centre of St Peter's Square from 1788 to 1907 and was designated in December 1973. A Map of the full extent of the Conservation Area (outlined in red) is provided in Figure 1 below.

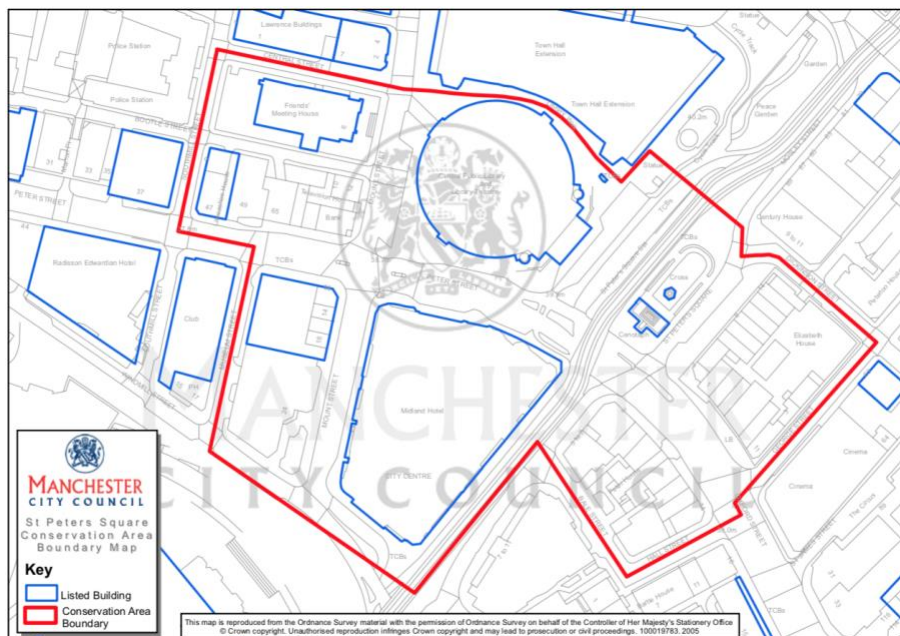


Figure 1 – St Peters Square Conservation Area

- 2.4 Manchester City Council's Conservation Area guidance identifies that:

"Development control is aimed at encouraging development which enhances the prosperity of the area whilst paying attention to its special architectural and visual qualities."

The urban design context is vital and proposed buildings should take account of the character of the whole conservation area rather than evolving designs which could be located anywhere in Manchester or indeed in any other city."

- 2.5 St George's House is a former YMCA building, on the corner of Peter Street and Mount Street. The building is five-storey building faced in thick terra cotta, which is brown to the ground floor and buff above, with most of the intricate, moulded decoration confined to the third and fourth floors. Whilst the building historically accommodated a running track, gymnasium and swimming pool, which led to an interesting early experiment in the use of reinforced concrete to the swimming pool to be located near the top of the building, it is accepted by Manchester City Council within their Conservation Area guidance that none of

these internal features have been retained when the building was refurbished over the first to fifth floors as office accommodation. As such, the only potential heritage impacts relate to any external alterations or additions to the building's fabric that are considered in detail within Section 3.0 of this Statement.

3.0 Proposed Development

- 3.1 The change of use will replace the former Pizza Express, a national chain, with Hannah Beswick restaurant, a bespoke restaurant that will be managed by Grade A Alternative's management team in order to provide an exemplary and unique dining experience that will complement both the day and night time economy at the heart of the City Centre, adjacent to key leisure destinations such as Manchester Central Convention Complex, The Bridgewater Hall, The Great Northern, The Opera House amongst others.
- 3.2 When the building that previously occupied 56 Peter Street was demolished to make way for the former YMCA building the mummified body of Hannah Beswick (aka 'the Manchester Mummy') an eccentric 'Grey Lady' was discovered. The Hannah Beswick name of the proposed restaurant is inspired by the site's historical link to this unusual part of Manchester's history.

Use, Amount and Layout

- 3.3 The external advertisements have been designed in such a manner to enhance the special character and appearance of the Listed Building and the vibrancy of the wider City Centre Conservation Area.
- 3.4 The Location Plan (Drawing No. 401/PD/9001) identifies that the Hannah Beswick restaurant will occupy the former Pizza Express restaurant area that is an open plan restaurant capable of accommodating in the region of 200 covers. The premises lies on the western side of the YMCA's ground floor with public access being achieved off the existing Museum Street entrance. Museum Street will also accommodate the proposed new outside seating areas in place of 5 on-street car parking spaces.
- 3.5 The Existing Site Plan (Drawing No. 401/PD/0001) illustrates the full extent of the ground floor demise at 56 Peter Street which currently includes the vacant Pizza Express, the Peter Street entrance and foyer to the office accommodation on the upper floors and the HAUNT wine bar and the car park and servicing entrance on Mount Street.
- 3.6 The Existing Elevations – External Plan (Drawing No. 401/PD/0002, Rev. A) illustrates the existing treatments and materials of the Pizza Express with inlaid photographs. The Existing Elevations – Signage & Frontages Plan (Drawing No. 401/PD/0003, Rev. A) provides more detailed specifications and photos of the existing signages appearance, materials and colour scheme.
- 3.7 The Proposed Site Plan (Drawing No. 401/PD/1001) illustrates the layout and specification of the external seating areas that will be positioned along the Peter Street and Museum Street frontages. The Peter Street frontage will accommodate 26 x Adico chairs and 7 tables with branded barriers at either end of the seating to demark the seating area. Museum Street will accommodate 12 chairs and 6 tables positioned tight to the buildings frontage in tables of two to ensure a sufficient width of pavement is maintained for passing pedestrians. The new seating is provided by the same manufacturer as that approved external seating at the HAUNT wine bar. The specification of the containers and their associated lighting, heaters and shelter are detailed on the plans.
- 3.8 The Proposed Elevations - External Plan (Drawing No. 401/PD/1002, Rev. A) provides an accurate illustration of the materials, colour and appearance of the proposed new seating and portable containers and the proposed colour scheme that will refresh the existing windows, louvres and doors with a colour scheme that matches in with HAUNT. The Proposed Elevations - Signage & Frontages Plans (Drawing No. 401/PD/1003, Rev. A &

401/PD/1004, Rev. A) provide all specifications of the signage and fixtures and fittings with inlaid photographs in order to provide MCC with a clear understanding of the proposed improvements.

- 3.9 The colour scheme and signage appearance chosen to fit with the Hannah Beswick historic link and the YMCA building's existing external treatments. The replacement projecting / hanging sign will use the existing swinging sign frame that lies on the southern side of the main entrance so that this non-contentious from a heritage perspective.
- 3.10 The main entrance framework will introduce new surface treatments to increase the definition and visual appeal of the entrance and replace the damaged existing entrance tiles. The existing roller shutter is retained in the recessed entrance way, behind the new fascia sign so that it is not discernible when open and/or fixed to the historic fabric of the building. The existing recessed spot light within the external entrance lobby will be replaced by ceiling light that is specified on Drawing No. 401/PD/1004, Rev. A.
- 3.11 New tiling is proposed in place of the existing damaged tiling and antique bronze stair nosing has been introduced to improve pedestrian safety and enhance the appearance of the entrance. The colour scheme and signage appearance have been chosen to fit with the Hannah Beswick historic link and the YMCA building's existing external treatments.
- 3.12 All external seating areas and/or movable structures will be taken inside at the end of each day in accordance with the Operating Statement and Dispersal Policy enclosed with this planning application.
- 3.13 The preservation and refurbishment of the building will provide a public benefit by increasing the building's contribution to the surrounding streetscape; provides an active long-term use with secure ownership who, as owners of the entire 56 St George's House, have a vested interest in operating in a considerate manner. The introduction of a bespoke restaurant brand unique to Manchester that celebrates its heritage will enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation area and provide new economic vitality within the central commercial core of the city.
- 3.14 The works are considered non-contentious from a heritage perspective given that there is no material effect to the Listed Building's fabric given the re-use of existing fittings and fixing and the minor improvements to the tiles within the external foyer and steps. The proposed reintroduction of a restaurant use will provide an improvement to the character and appearance of the Grade II Listed Building and the contribution it makes to the St Peter's Square Conservation Area.

Scale and Appearance

- 3.15 The scale of the building is unaffected by the proposals given that there are no proposed extensions or demolition works that affect the floor area of the premises.
- 3.16 The proposed reintroduction of the restaurant use will enhance the appearance of the Listed Building. The rebranding provides a subtle link to the site's heritage and the increase in the external seating areas provide an active frontage on to both the Peter Street and Museum Street elevations, improve the aesthetic appearance of the building, and affording the general public the opportunity to visit and dine at the premises and take in the special character of the building and the wider St Peter's Square Conservation Area.

4.0 Planning Policy Considerations

- 4.1 The proposed change of use is fully supported by adopted Development Plan and National Planning policies.
- 4.2 The Manchester Core Strategy (2012 to 2027) is the key Development Plan document.
- 4.3 Policy SP1 identifies Manchester City Centre as the Regional Centre that will be the focus for economic and commercial development, retail, leisure and cultural activity, alongside high quality city living. Policy SP1 sets out the Core Development Principles for development in all parts of the City. It identifies that development should:-

"Make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice including:-

- creating well designed places that enhance or create character.*
- making a positive contribution to the health, safety and wellbeing of residents*
- considering the needs of all members of the community regardless of age, gender, disability, sexuality, religion, culture, ethnicity or income.*
- protect and enhance the built and natural environment.*
- Minimise emissions, ensure efficient use of natural resources and reuse previously developed land wherever possible.*
- Improve access to jobs, services, education and open space by being located to reduce the need to travel and provide good access to sustainable transport provision."*

- 4.4 Policies EC3 'The Regional Centre', CC 1 'Primary Economic Development Focus : City Centre and Fringe' and Policy EC8 'Central Manchester' reinforce Policy SP1 by identifying that all forms of commercial development in the Regional Centre will be supported.
- 4.5 Policy CC 7 'Mixed Use Development' identifies that the City Centre presents the most viable opportunities for mixed-use development, and in general these will be promoted as a means of using land as efficiently as possible. A range of uses should be considered for all sites. Active ground floor uses (shops, food and drink and leisure) will be appropriate in locations which have an established public function, or as part of a development which will create such an environment.
- 4.6 Policy C1 'Centre Hierarchy' looks to support the development of a vibrant employment location attractive to businesses, employees and visitors to the City Centre.
- 4.7 Policy C 10 'Leisure and the Evening Economy' is the key planning policy to the proposed wine bar use. This clarifies that:

"New development and redevelopment that supports the evening economy, contributes to the vitality of district centres and supports a balanced and socially inclusive evening/night-time economy will be permitted, subject to the following considerations:

- 1. Cumulative impact – in areas where there is already a concentration of bars (A4), hot food takeaways (A5) and other night-time uses which are detrimental to the character or vitality and viability of the centre, there will be a presumption against further facilities.*
- 2. Residential amenity – the proposed use should not create an unacceptable impact on neighbouring uses in terms of noise, traffic and disturbance.*
- 3. Balance - new uses in Manchester centres should support both the day-time and evening/night-time economies whilst not undermining the role of the primary shopping area.*

When considering the impact of a proposed bar or hot food take away regard will be had to the above policy and also:

- *The existing number of similar establishments in the immediate area and their proximity to each other;*
- *The type and characteristics of other uses, such as housing, shops and public houses;*
- *The existence of vacant shop units and the condition of the unit;*
- *The importance of the location for local shopping, and the number, function and location of shops that would remain to serve the local community;*
- *The character of the centre and its frontage, and the nature of the use proposed;*
- *The potential impacts of the proposal on the wider community; and*
- *Any known unresolved amenity, traffic or safety issues arising from existing uses in the area."*

APD Analysis:

- 4.8 The Core Strategy Development Plan policies are consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) guidance, which identifies that restaurant uses should be encouraged in City Centre locations to add vitality to the vitality of the day time and night time economy, diversify the mix of uses and offer choice and competition that will add to the Conservation Area's unique sense of place.
- 4.9 The proposed change of use delivers on all of the City Council's Core Development Principles by regenerating a vacant City Centre site with a bespoke restaurant offer that will create additional employment for the City Centre.
- 4.10 The restaurant will provide both a meeting and social venue for the Office accommodation at St George's House as well as the surrounding leisure, office and commercial venues.
- 4.11 There is evidently not an adverse cumulative impact resulting from the reintroduction of the restaurant and there are no nearby noise sensitive receptors (i.e. such as residential properties) that could be affected by the opening hours in this City Centre location. APD have secured restaurant consents within the City Centre that have longer opening hours than the proposals in this instance.
- 4.12 The proposals do not lead to the loss of A1 retail given the current Class E use, and the frontage has been improved and been made more active through the introduction of additional outside seating and improved signage. As such, it is evident that the proposals should be supported in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development subject to ensuring that all Environmental Considerations (see Section 6.0) are appropriately considered and controlled.
- 4.13 The Heritage-related policies are reviewed in the separate Heritage Statement that accompanies the listed building and advertisement applications.

5.0 Environmental Considerations

- 5.1 This section conducts a concise review of all environmental considerations to demonstrate that the restaurant will operate in a considerate manner.
- 5.2 The owners of St George's House, Grade A Alternative, have a vested interest in ensuring that the restaurant operates in an exemplary manner to attract interest in their office accommodation at St George's House, and to ensure that it fits in with the standards achieved with their wider property portfolio in Manchester.

Acoustic Considerations

- 5.3 The proposed restaurant will operate in accordance with the controls detailed within the Premises Licence. The Operating Statement and Dispersal Strategy (Ref: 2021-19f) cover all noise-related issues arising from potential customers and the day-to-day operation of the restaurant and its associated external seating areas.
- 5.4 The external elevations plan illustrates that the existing ventilation louvres will be used for both the kitchen and toilet ventilation system. The adjoining neighbour to the south comprises of recently refurbished Office space and the building on the western side of Museum Street has a blank façade. As such, there are no noise sensitive receptors that could be affected by the proposals. There are no noise-sensitive receptors near to the external seating areas, and no noise assessment of the external seating areas of the neighbouring HAUNT was required to accompany the planning application following consultations with MCC's Environmental Health Department.

Waste & Servicing Strategy

- 5.5 The Proposed Delivery and Waste Management Strategy Plan (Drawing No. 401/PD/1005) provides full details of the waste disposal that will be undertaken by the Applicant's current service provider, Veolia, alongside the refuse collection service they already operate for both HAUNT and the office accommodation at the site.
- 5.6 As an additional safeguard, the Applicants agree to Condition 6 of the neighbouring HAUNT's recent Decision Notice (Ref: 130120/FO/2021), which restricts waste collections as follows:

"Deliveries, servicing and collections, including waste collections shall not take place outside the following hours: 07:30 to 20:00, Monday to Saturday, no deliveries/waste collections on Sundays/Bank Holidays. Where Sunday/Bank Holiday deliveries etc. are permitted the times shall be confined to 10:00 to 18:00."

Security

- 5.7 The premises will retain the existing roller shutters that are incorporated behind the fascia sign so that they are indiscernible aside from when they are closed during the late night/early morning hours outside of the proposed opening hours. The premises will, however, be alarmed and the existing CCTV will be used and monitored within the existing secure office located within St George's House. The premises will be operated in accordance with the Design for Security Measures that were attached to the HAUNT planning permission as an advice note.
- 5.8 St George's House also has a central reception area for the offices at ground floor level that will offer further security and surveillance of the premises.

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement provides evidence of the considered approach Grade A Alternative have taken to the listed building and advertisement applications.
- 6.2 The replacement of the former Pizza Express with a bespoke restaurant with the ground floor of the Grade II Listed St George's House helps preserve and reinforce the significance of the historical asset within the context of the Conservation Area. The introduction of additional external seating areas help to add vitality to Museum Street and improve the opportunity to dwell at and enjoy the heritage significance of St. George's House and will enhance the vibrancy and vitality of the City Centre location.