



Project: Viadux Site, Phase 2 - Office Development, Manchester

Memo: Technical Note – Built Heritage

From: Heritage Architecture Ltd.

Date: 29th March 2022

To: Deloitte

Introduction

This Note has been prepared by Heritage Architecture Ltd in relation to an application to vary the planning permission for Viadux as approved by the LPA on 27 July 2017 (Application Reference: 115871/FO/2017) in light of minor amendments proposed by the Applicant. These are explained in full within the application documentation, which will be submitted under a Section 73 (minor material amendments) application and Section 19 (listed building consent amendments) which will be submitted alongside a Section 96A (non-material amendments) application.

The site comprises the former 'Bauer Millet' showroom, which is situated within the late-19th century railway viaduct which passes over Great Bridgewater Street and originally connected the train line to the former Central Station (now Manchester Central Convention Centre). The viaduct structure and undercroft are listed at Grade II. The site is bound by the Grade II* Manchester Central Station to the north, Albion Street to the east, the rear service courtyard to Beetham Tower to the west, and Castlefield Deansgate Tram stop and Deansgate Locks to the south.

The current, revised proposals are largely in keeping with the approved scheme (115871/FO/2017), which was granted consent on 27 July 2017. The original proposals for the site broadly consisted of a new 40-storey residential tower and 14-storey office building at the Former Bauer Millet Site (now known as the 'Viadux site'). The following note relates to the office building only (Phase 2), as the works for the residential tower (Phase 1) are currently underway (Planning ref: 126868/JO/2020 (main consent), 127260/FO/2020 (drop-in consent for new staircase arrangement) and Listed Building Consent 129168/JO/2021).

Summary of updates to Proposed Office

The following section provides a high-level summary of the changes proposed to the office development, with particular focus on built heritage impacts. Please refer to the schedule of changes document for full detail.

- The office core has been rotated through 90 degrees and an additional passenger lift added to improve the performance / waiting times. The goods lift has also been updated to include a double sided opening car at ground floor with direct access to back of house for servicing. The rotation of the core will reduce the impact and extent of demolition to the listed viaduct.

- The number of columns passing through the service yard at level 01 and listed viaduct have been reduced and repositioned to improve the circulation and manoeuvrability within Man Central service yard.
- The main servicing of the office has been moved from Level 01 (Man Central service yard) to Trafford Street, thereby enabling the viaduct arches to become front of house areas (coffee shop) and celebrating their architectural appearance. It is however noted that the combined width of the coffee shop service corridor and office escape and firefighting access route to Great Bridgewater Street will result in the need to increase the size of opening through the listed Viaduct arch. The resultant loss of fabric would be negligible and suitably balanced by the improvements to the core (which will retain a greater deal of historic fabric).
- The position on the South East façade assists with solar control and provides uninterrupted views to the surrounding streetscape. The approved office building height is +108.300m AOD and the proposed office building height will be +110.350m AOD (c.205m). The additional floor offsets the omission of the pavilion building office floors, together with the provision of amenity space and green rooms to the main office floors.
- Glass louvres have been introduced to naturally ventilate the green rooms / winter gardens.
- The repositioned upper roof terrace is fronted by a full height clear balustrade as a continuation of the façade. This runs the full length of the East facade, reduces the area of opaque glazing and provides more visual interest to the top of the building.

ES Conclusions (2017) – Planning Ref (115871/FO/2017)

The following section provides a summary of the conclusions outlined within the 2017 ES Chapter (9 – Built Heritage) which was submitted alongside the original Planning Application for the site.

Paragraph 9.122 stated that ‘the physical impact assessment has demonstrated the Proposed Development will result in limited instances of minor adverse impact, as a result of the removal of historic fabric, to the Grade II Listed Castlefield Viaduct’ and goes on to state in **paragraph 9.123** that ‘the visual impact assessment has demonstrated that the Proposed Development will result in a minor-to-moderate adverse impact to the identified heritage assets overall; however, the Proposed Development will result in a major-to-moderate adverse impact on the Grade II* Manchester Central’.

The ES Chapter concludes within **paragraph 9.126** that ‘overall, the significance of effect of the Proposed Development on the identified Heritage resource as a whole is considered to be minor adverse and will result in less than substantial harm (as defined in the NPPF)’.

It should be highlighted the instance of major-to-moderate adverse impact relates to the residential tower only (Phase 1) and does not relate to the current proposals for the office (Phase 2). The visual impact of the office development was demonstrated to incur a minor adverse visual impact.

Summary of changes and conclusions

The initial Heritage Impact Assessment (issued 22 March 2017) demonstrated that the development would result in localised instances of minor adverse impact upon the Grade II listed Castlefield Viaduct. It will be clear that the revised proposals to the office core will amount to a **reduction in direct heritage impact** from the consented in the extant Planning and Listed Building Consents (MCC Planning references: (Ref. 115871/FO/2017 and 115872/FO/2017). Thereby resulting in a more sustainable and therefore beneficial approach, regarding heritage impact.

Having reviewed the 2017 Visual Impact Assessment (Section 2) it will be clear the proposed changes to the overall height / façade will incur any additional visual impact on the settings of designated heritage assets in the surrounding area. The impact conclusions summarised within the 2017 report will therefore remain unchanged.

In light of the proposed amendments there are no changes to the original report/s produced by Kirsten McKnight and Sarah Stirling, as follows:

- 2017 Heritage Visual Impact Assessment
- ES Chapter

The national policy context has evolved since the original consent was granted (principally an update to the NPPF, 2021). These changes will not however, result in any material change to the conclusions outlined within the original statement and so do not necessitate an update to the ES. In summary, the nature of the changes will **not cause any additional significant effects** upon the Grade II listed viaduct and the wider built historic environment.

This Note should be read in conjunction with the Covering Letter prepared by Deloitte and its enclosures submitted as part of this application.