



Design & Access Statement

2nd Floor, Wellington House, 39 Piccadilly, Manchester

on behalf of

MC Academy

Prepared by
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CONTENTS PAGE

1.0	Introduction	2
2.0	Site and Context	3
3.0	Application Proposals	5
4.0	Conclusion	6

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Design & Access Statement has been prepared by Sixteen Real Estate for MC Academy in support of a full planning application to Manchester City Council (MCC).
- 1.2 The planning application is for the change of use of the second floor of Wellington House, with the description of development as stated on the application form as follows:

“Change of use of 2nd floor from offices (Use Class E) to a language school (Use Class F1).”
- 1.3 The MC Academy is a language school which has operated in Manchester city centre since 2005, providing year-round English language courses to adults and children.

2.0 Site and Context

Physical Context

- 2.1 Wellington House is located at 39 Piccadilly, in the heart of Manchester City Centre.
- 2.2 The building consists of a six-storey mixed-use property, with the second floor subject to this application being former offices which have been vacant for at least three years.
- 2.3 To the ground floor there is an amusement centre, while the third and fourth floors have most recently been occupied by Rathbone Training under Use Class F1. There is also a basement car park access from Back Piccadilly to the rear.
- 2.4 The second floor subject to the change of use has a floorspace of 365.7sq.m and is served by ground floor access from the main frontage onto Piccadilly.

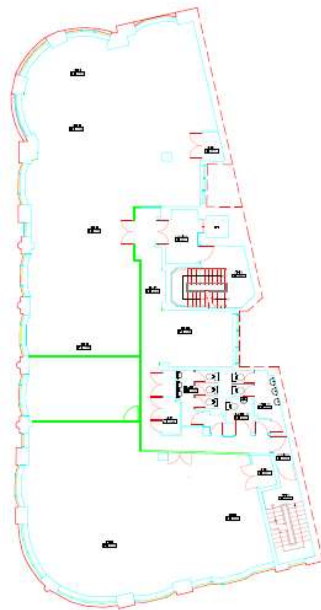


Image 1: Existing floorplan

- 2.5 The property sits within an area that contains buildings with a variety of uses, predominantly being retail, leisure and other commercial uses.
- 2.6 The building is bounded by Piccadilly to the south, Back Piccadilly to north and Lever Street to the east. The adjoining buildings to the west contain restaurant and retail uses to the ground floors and a Travelodge to the upper floors.
- 2.7 It is also located within the Stevenson Square Conservation Area which was designated in 1987. There are numerous Listed Buildings within this area, however Wellington House is not listed.

Relevant Planning History

2.8 The following previous planning applications are relevant to the proposal:

- **Change of use of 3rd and 4th floors from offices (B1) to non-residential education and training centre (D1)** (ref: 102844/FU/2013/C2) – Application approved 10th September 2013.
- **Change of use of the second floor from Use Classes B1a (Offices) to Use Class D1 (Non-Residential Educational Institution)** (ref: 126768/FU/2020) – Application withdrawn 15th July 2020.

Planning Policy Context

Local Policies

2.9 The following policies from the *Manchester Core Strategy* and the *Saved Policies of Unitary Development Plan (UDP)* have been considered in relation to the proposal:

- **Policy SP1:** Spatial Principles
- **Policy CC1:** Primary Economic Development Focus: City Centre and Fringe
- **Policy CC9:** Design and Heritage
- **Policy EC8:** Central Manchester
- **Policy EN3:** Heritage
- **Policy DM1:** Development Management
- **Policy DC18.1:** Conservation Areas

National Policy

2.10 The *National Planning Policy Framework* sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied.

2.11 Section 6 relates to "***Building a strong, competitive economy***" and states that decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and take account of local business needs.

2.12 Section 7 relates to "***Ensuring the vitality of town centres***" and emphasises the need to allow them to diversity in a way that can respond to rapid changes.

3.0 Application Proposals

Use

- 3.1 The proposed development seeks the change of use of the vacant second floor offices of Wellington House to a language school. The language school will be operated by the MC Academy, the applicant.
- 3.2 The description of development as stated on the application form is as follows:

“Change of use of 2nd floor from offices (Use Class E) to a language school (Use Class F1).”

Design and Appearance

- 3.3 There will be no changes to the external elevations as a result of the development. There will therefore be no harm caused by the change of use upon the significance of the Conservation Area or the setting of any listed buildings.
- 3.4 The proposals are therefore in accordance with the requirements of Policy CC9 and EN3 of the Manchester Core Strategy, the NPPF and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Scale

- 3.5 The proposed change of use relates to the entire second floor which incorporates 365.7sq.m of floorspace.

Layout

- 3.6 Internally, minor changes are the proposed to the layout to enable it to operate as a language school for the MC Academy. These changes will not result in the alteration of the internal structure of the property.
- 3.7 The proposed floorplan shows a reception area, classrooms, a student breakout room, teacher's room, staff offices and prayer room. The layout has been informed by the position of existing windows, stairwells and toilets.

Access

- 3.8 The existing pedestrian access at the frontage onto Piccadilly will be utilised to provide access to the language school and no alterations are required to this.



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- 3.9 The building is within a highly accessible location in the city centre and therefore most students and staff are expected to travel by foot or public transport.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 This Statement has explained the principles and concepts applied to the proposed works and demonstrates the steps taken to appraise the context of the development.
- 4.2 The development will deliver planning benefits to the area, including bringing back into use a space that has been vacant for several years within a prominent location and providing job opportunities for local people.
- 4.3 The proposed change of use does not include any external alterations to the elevations, minimising any impact upon the locality, including upon the significance of heritage assets such as the Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings.