

Application number: 132447/AO/2021

Proposal: Projection Sigs, fascia sign, internal hanging sign which can be seen from the window and an awning

Location: The Corn Exchange, Unit 11, 37 Hanging Ditch, Manchester. M34 3TR



Design and access and Heritage Statement

Background:

360 Signs Ltd by Individual Restaurants to replace the signage on the above site. The site was previously a Gino D'Acampo Italian Restaurant. The new business will also be an Italian Restaurant called Riva Blu.

The proposed works will not impact the fabric and the setting of the Grade II Listed Corn Exchange. The new tenants are cognisant of the requirement to maintain the appearance of the building and will therefore have asked us to provide like for like signage with only the names and some areas of the colour scheme changing. There will be no additional signage added to the building externally.

It is considered that the current proposals will not have an impact on adjacent listed buildings, within the immediacies of the subject site, and or the character and appearance of the Cathedral Conservation Area.

Assessment of the impact on the heritage assets has been taken into account, and is proportionate to, the significance of the asset and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.

Historical Significance:

The Former Corn and Produce Exchange building was listed Grade II on 30 March 1973 and sits within the southern boundary of the Cathedral Conservation Area. A grocery and provision market has been established in the area since medieval times. A permanent building was first erected in Hanging Ditch in 1837. Construction work on the present building, to meet the growing requirements of the North West's Grocery and Provision Traders, began in 1891 in a piecemeal fashion and continued for a period of 12 years.

The existing building is largely designed by Edward Potts and his various collaborative practices. The 1837 Exchange, which was located on the site in Hanging Ditch, was first extended through to a building on Fennel Street in 1891 by the architects Ball and Elce. Following street widening to the west of the island site, along Cathedral Street (then called Half Street), in 1895, Potts, Dixon and Pickup were appointed architects to the Corn and Produce Company. Property along the remaining west side of Fennel Street and the corner of Cathedral Street was also acquired and Potts, Son and Pickup were commissioned to make the two ranges harmonious, thereby altering Ball and Elce's original design.

Following further street widening to Hanging Ditch, by the City Corporation in 1900, Potts, Son and Henning were then tasked with designing the third frontage to the building. Over the entire

course of construction the markets and trading within the Exchange did not cease; building work took place around the existing buildings within the site.

The building was finally completed in 1903 and contained over 300 offices, shops and warehouses, a 40 bedroom hotel and a central Exchange Hall with a domed glazed roof. In 1922 3 properties to the west of the site were acquired and the Exchange Hall was extended, as was the provision for office and warehouse space.

Following severe bomb damage in December 1940 the interior of the building was largely reconstructed and internally sales offices were added around the periphery of the Exchange Hall.

The interior was completely destroyed following the IRA bomb attack in 1996 and very little original fabric now remains internally. The restoration project was completed in 500 days and a new interior, designed by the Ratcliffe Partnership, provided 55 retail units on three floors. 800 window frames were replaced and 1,700 metres squared of glass was needed for the dome. It was rebranded as 'The Triangle' and opened in 2000.

The building yields evidential and historical values through its association with commercial trading practices dating back to medieval times. The fabric of the building also allows for an appreciation of the former use of the building. Aesthetic and communal values are yielded through the townscape value of the building and its prominent position within the centre of the city.

The building is triangular in plan occupying a large island site. The two areas of public space, south and north of the building, allow the building to be experienced within a setting that includes a number of large standalone buildings; the Cathedral, the south-east wing of the Chetham's School, the Urbis, Victoria Train Station etc. The building can be viewed within more intimate surroundings along Cathedral Street, to the west, adjacent to the Cathedral, where the denser urban grain gives a feeling for the former medieval layout of the area. The continuum of the public realm along Corporation Street, Withy Grove, and New Cathedral Street allows the building to be experienced from more distant views in which it is read as being part of the retail provision of the city centre.

Corn Exchanges, as a typology, are a significant building type as they convey a great deal of information about a town or city's economic and social history. Despite there being over 50 listed Corn Exchanges in England, the Corn Exchange building in Manchester is unusual due to its large size, architectural style and relatively late date.

The building is of historic interest due to the fact that the site has been connected to commercial trade in the City since medieval times. The associated economic and social interest this brings is also of interest and adds to the special interest of the building and its function as a place for trading goods. In modern day history the site is also of interest due to the connection with the IRA bomb attack in 1996, which has become an integral part of the city's and the building's history.

The Corn Exchange largely dates to the early 20th century which makes it a rare example of a building of this type from this period. It is also one of only a few buildings of this type to be designed and built in a debased Baroque style rather than a classical style.

New Signage Proposal:

The current proposals are for:

- Replacement of the projection signs which currently show Gino's to read 'Riva Blu'. The signs will be changed on a like for like basis keeping the current dimensions and made from the same materials (acrylic and aluminium). Existing bracket will remain in situ.
- Existing transom sign to be removed and replaced with a new sign in the same dimensions and material to read 'Riva Blu'
- Existing awning to be replaced with new fabric in the same size and colour to read 'Riva Blu'. The existing fixings will remain in situ.
- Internally and illuminated sign will be hung in the window to the right facing the front door. This sign will be seen through the window and will read 'Pasta, Pizza, Grille, Cocktails'. It will sit within the confines of the window bed.

Impact:

As we will not be removing the fixings which go into the building but re-using what is already in place, there will be no impact on the historic fabric of the external elevations to the building.

The development of the design and location of the signage has been informed by the articulation of the architecture of the building to ensure that it is enhanced, which in turn will allow for an increased understanding and appreciation of the Listed Building. We have ensured that signage is replaced on a like for like basis and there will be no additional fixing into the stonework of the building.