

Our Ref: 21523.MS/gc
Your Ref: PP-10507498 & PP-10507524
Email: mshearman@firstplan.co.uk
Date: 16 December 2021

Planning, Building and Licensing
Manchester City Council
PO Box 532
Town Hall
Manchester, M60 2LA

Dear Sir/Madam

**PLANNING, LISTED BUILDING AND ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT APPLICATIONS FOR
SHOPFRONT ALTERATIONS AND SIGNAGE
DOG BOWL, WHITWORTH STREET WEST, MANCHESTER, M1 5WW**

We have been instructed by our client, Dog Bowl, to submit the enclosed retrospective planning, listed building and advertisement consent applications online via the Planning portal (PP-10507498 & PP-10507524) for the installation of a new timber shopfront and signage at the above address.

The shopfront was installed within the arch on the side Whitworth Street elevation approximately a year ago by the applicant in order to enhance the appearance of the railway arch frontage to the benefit of the streetscene. It was installed in good faith with the objective of transforming and improving the appearance of the unsightly run down and rusty old gates that filled the arch previously; however, the applicant was unaware that planning permission, listed building consent or advertisement consent would be required for its installation.

In November 2021 our clients received a letter from Adam Roche in the Council's enforcement team, identifying the works to the railway arch as being unauthorised. Firstplan were subsequently instructed to provide planning advice on the matter, and discussed the works in question with Adam Roche setting out that we would be applying retrospectively for the unauthorised elements, and it was agreed that Manchester CC would hold off from further enforcement action should applications for the unauthorised works be submitted in the forthcoming weeks.

These applications therefore seek consent to regularise the works. They are seeking permission for a revised version of what has been installed, with the elements which the Council raised concern with, such as the takeaway hatch, having been removed from the proposals so that the unit complies fully with Manchester policies.

The following documents have been provided in support of the application in accordance with national and local validation requirements:

- Completed Application Forms;
- Completed CIL Form;
- Planning and Heritage Statement – included within this letter;
- Site Location Plan;

- Existing Plans, Elevations and Sections (drawing no. 1089-L400);
- Proposed Plans, Elevations and Sections (drawing no. 1089-L401);

The requisite planning and admin fee of £366 + £28 has been paid online via the planning portal. The remainder of this letter sets out our supporting statement regarding the application proposals.

Site Background and History

The application site is a longstanding bar, bowling alley and restaurant known as “Dog Bowl”. It is located on the corner of Whitworth Street West and Great Marlborough Street in Manchester City Centre, within railway arch ‘57’, which sits below the South Junction railway line as it approaches the grade II listed Oxford Road Station. The site sits directly below the platforms for Oxford Road station and is therefore deemed to be within the curtilage of the listed building.

The unit was originally granted consent as a bowling alley and bar (Sui Generis Use) in 2012 under applications 098187/FO/2011/C1 & 098188/LO/2011/C1. These consents allowed for the internal fit out as well as shopfront works and signage along the main Whitworth Street frontage. Following on from this, permission was granted in March 2013 to vary the original consent at the site in order to allow for extended opening hours. Most recently, permission was granted in 2016 to vary the original planning and listed building consents in order to allow for revisions to the main shopfront of the building (refs: 101434/JO/2013/C1 & 101435/JO/2013/C1), and for external seating to the front of the premises (ref: 102292/FO/2013/C1). There is no history relating to the side elevation fronting Great Marlborough Street where this application relates.

Dogbowl have operated from the premises for approximately 10 years during which time customer access has always been attained through the primary Whitworth Street frontage, however the applicant recently opened up one of the arches within the side Great Marlborough Street elevation to create a new, alternative access point at the other end of the building. This arch was previously in a dilapidated poor state of repair used only for bin storage and some servicing. The applicant therefore sought to freshen up the appearance within this part of the site through installing a more formalised shopfront with signage in place of the rusty gates, allowing customers to purchase the food on offer within their unit. Both the previous arrangement and current layout can be seen below at images 1 and 2.



Image 1 & 2: Previous view of frontage (left) and recently installed shopfront (right)

The applicant was unaware that permission would be required for the works to the unit meaning applications were never submitted. It was only recently brought to their attention that consent would be required when Adam Roche from the Council's enforcement team wrote to them identifying the unauthorised works and requesting that the arch be reinstalled to its original state. After discussing this with Adam, it was agreed that we would apply for a shopfront and signage in this location, removing the contentious elements that the Council are not happy with and that Manchester would hold off from any further enforcement action whilst the applications are ongoing.

Application Proposals

Permission is sought to regularise the unauthorised works to the rear (furthest left) arch on the side Great Marlborough Street elevation. Specifically, consent is sought for the following:

- Replacing the rusty gates with an infill timber façade with graffiti style graffiti applied;
- Provision of a lockable timber door in the centre of the arch'
- Placement of a Neon '9 Cut' sign above the main entrance door;

The openable hatch for takeaway sales which was highlighted as being appropriate has now been omitted from the proposals. Instead it is proposed to include a centralised door forming a less obtrusive frontage, whilst still including graffiti art to add interest and increase the presence of the unit along the side access.

The proposals therefore comprise of a 'revised version' of what has been installed as opposed to a retrospective application.

Planning Policy

The Manchester Local Plan comprises of the Core Strategy (2012), Proposals Map (2012), Extant Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (1995, saved 2012), Greater Manchester Joint Waste DPD (2012) and Greater Manchester Joint Minerals DPD (2013). The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019), and the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and other SPGs are also of relevance to the application.

The Manchester Proposals Map designates the site as within the City Centre Primary Shopping Area, City Centre and St. Ann's Square Conservation Area. The site is also a Grade II Listed Building.

i) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021)

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies and requires that a presumption be given in favour of sustainable development, which includes building a strong competitive economy, supporting vibrant communities, and contribution to the enhancement of the natural built and historic environment.

The document emphasises the presumption in favour of sustainable development; Section 12 discusses the importance of achieving well designed places whereby a high standard of amenity should be maintained. Section 16 requires proposals affecting heritage assets to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected in a manner proportionate to their importance.

ii) Core Strategy (adopted 2012)

Policy SP1 confirms that the regional centre, in which the application site is located, is the focus for economic and commercial development, retail, leisure and cultural activity.

Policy EC1 seeks to support the City's economic growth. Similarly, Policy EC3 confirms that commercial development will be encouraged in the regional centre.

Policy CC9 relates to design and heritage. Development should preserve or enhance heritage assets and ensure complementary function and form. The proposed fit-out of the unit is considered to be complementary to the function and form of the building and wider area.

Policy EN1 sets out that all development in Manchester should have regard to the strategic character area in which the development is located. This policy requires development within the city centre to consider the City's heritage and enhance the existing street scene.

Policy EN3 includes the policies for heritage assets. Development should preserve or enhance the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance. Proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets will be encouraged where they are considered consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.

iii) Extant UDP (adopted 1995, saved 2012)

Policy DC10.1 mirrors policy C10 of the Core Strategy. Food and drink uses should not have an impact on the surrounding amenities, and access should be ensured for all.

Policy DC18.1 relates to conservation areas. Development should pay regard to the existing character of the conservation area and seek to preserve or enhance the setting.

Policy DC19.1 sets out that development to listed buildings should not have an adverse impact on the special architectural or historic interest in the building.

Planning and Heritage Assessment

Permission is sought to regularise the unauthorised works at the site and deliver a high-quality frontage within the rear arch. The key planning and heritage considerations relate to the impact the shopfront will have on the setting of the adjoined Grade II listed building, and the implications of the alterations and signage on surrounding amenity.

With regards to heritage, it is noted that the application site (Arch 57) is one of 224 arches that form the multi-span brick railway viaduct that carries the South Junction railway line from Manchester Piccadilly railway station through elevated Manchester Oxford Road and Deansgate railway stations to Ordsall Lane. The viaduct was constructed between 1846 and 1849 and now forms a key landmark within the southern part of the city centre.

The Grade II listed Manchester Oxford Road railway station is elevated immediately above the application site. The station's listing description relates to the station's 1960s main building and its platform structures; however the application site is understood to be within its curtilage. Its proximity to Manchester Oxford Road railway station suggests that Arch 57, like the majority of the arches within this part of the viaduct, was probably used to stable horses from the time of its construction until the early to mid twentieth century. As this use became obsolete, the arches in the area were typically converted for ad hoc car parking or used for vehicle repair workshops or storage. The robust and repeated arched openings are an important character in the historic appearance to this particular part of the city centre.

There is no reference within the stations listing to the side elevation fronting Great Marlborough Street, which is essentially a bland brick façade comprised of small archways of varying forms and sizes. There is no uniform pattern between the arches, with the only common feature being their poor state of repair, either with dilapidated rusty gates or being boarded/bricked up. The applicant has sought to add vibrancy to the rear arch through replacing the rusty gates with a timber façade with bright graffiti graphic applied. This adds

colour and interest to the otherwise dull and uninspiring arch, improving the visual appearance within this part of the underpass.

In this regard, it is considered that the design proposals are suitably sensitive to the grade II listed Oxford Road station and its wider setting. It is considered that the application proposals aid in enhancing the dull and dingy character of the tunnel. Overall, it is considered that the application proposals comply with policies CC9, EN1 and DC19.1 are acceptable in design and heritage terms.

With regards to amenity, it should be noted that the proposals are for a revised version of the originally built out façade, with the previously installed hatch proposed to be removed. Instead, it is now proposed to include a central locked door to be used for access only as per the previous, run-down gated access arrangements. A neon sign is proposed above the entrance door in order to increase the units presence within this side elevation. Being positioned within the underpass, this will not be overlooked by any sensitive residential receptors and as such the principle of a neon sign in this location is considered to be acceptable.

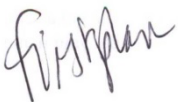
As such, it is considered that there will be no impact on the surrounding amenity in line with relevant Manchester City policies C10, Policy DC10.1 and DC26.1.

Conclusion

The proposals should be considered acceptable as they fully comply with the relevant national and local planning policies. They will ensure a clear, rational layout is provided within the rear arch, improving the appearance of the Whitworth Street elevation. Furthermore, the proposals will not harm the Grade II listed Oxford Road station in anyway and should therefore be welcomed.

I trust that the information enclosed is sufficient to enable this application to be registered, and supported, however should you require anything further or have any questions about the proposed layout/management plan, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours faithfully,



MARK SHEARMAN
Director