

RMLA

8021 – Bremont Acresfield Planning Statement, 18th October 2021

Site Address:

Unit 1, Acresfield, 8 Exchange Street, Manchester. M2 7HA.

Introduction:

This supporting statement accompanies the advertisement application on the above property and assesses the impacts of the proposals on the St Anns Square conservation area.

Acresfield House is a late 20th century building on the corner of St Anns Square and Exchange Street and is not a listed building.

Site Description & History:

The area around St Anns Square was originally known as Acresfield. It was used to hold an annual fair for the farming communities of Lancashire and Cheshire on the eve and feast of St Matthew. The first Exchange opened in the area in 1729 and second in 1809. The third Exchange building was built in 1874 and at that time had the largest trading floor in the country.

The area around St Anns Square gradually grew into a fashionable shopping area and commercial district. In the Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian periods buildings were constructed with increasing architectural grandeur for the purpose of banks, shops and offices. This period within the conservation area was marked by the Barton Arcade and the current Exchange building.

More recently, the area was badly damaged in the 1996 IRA bomb which devastated a large part of the city beyond the conservation area whilst badly damaging historic buildings within. As a result of the extensive rebuilding works, the site of Acresfield House sits within a juxtaposition of the old and new areas of the city centre.

Acresfield House, 8-10 Exchange Street which is situated in Manchester City Centre between within the St Anns Square conservation area and adjoins the listed building of "Barton Arcade" and is within proximity to the "Royal Exchange Theatre" although is not facing the later address.

The Acresfield building neither relates to the historic buildings of St Anns square nor the recently built structures around the Arndale Centre. The building was constructed in the late 20th Century (80's) and is regarded as being of postmodern design. The building elevations were designed in reference to the classical style, with elements such as pediments and pilasters re invented. As with other buildings of this period, regulation and restraint of the classical style is abandoned and in its place is the use of colour to windows and basic shapes used as decoration.

Whilst the surrounding buildings within the conservation area are predominantly of natural stone with a high level of craftsmanship. The Acresfield façade is formed from reconstituted 1980's artstone and is of similar colour to the surrounding, however, is a much lesser quality to that seen within any of the historical buildings in the area. The material is of a heavy quality with little work undertaken to lighten the mass as it approaches street level.



Proposal Description:

The application seeks permission for new Internal curved fascia sign with halo illuminated 3D lettering over main entrance and secondary internal fascia sign to Barton Street elevation.

Please refer to the drawings accompanying this application for further details.

The proposed signs are of a high-quality design and construction. The signs are located internally to the glazed shop front which is in keeping with the building, local area, and previous Tenants signs on this unit.

National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF):

Section 12 – To ensure the proposals do not detract from the local character and history of the area, internal signs of high-quality design and construction have been utilised. They are to be constructed of suitable materials and be of appropriate proportions to the space they will occupy.

Section 16 – Whilst the Acresfield building is not a listed building itself, we consider the internally located signs with the subtle illumination to be sympathetic to the historic environment in the surrounding area. There are no proposed alterations to existing exterior façade of the building which will remain unaffected by the proposals.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the proposals will have minimal impact on the conservation area will not detract from the significance of other historic assets nearby. The proposals are therefore compliant with national and local planning and conservation policy.