

Daylight and Sunlight Amenity Impact Assessment Statement

Proposed Extension
27 Byrom Street
Manchester
M3 4PF

Prepared for: CG Recovery Limited

Prepared by: Michael Scanlan BSc (Hons) MRICS

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Directors:

Simon C Hill BSc MRICS
Michael P Scanlan BSc (Hons) MRICS
Darren S Hughes BSc (Hons) MRICS



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Registered office: The Old Post Office, 63 Newton Street, Manchester M1 1ET - Registered in England No. 05544147

0161 835 2101
grayscanlanhill.com
info@grayscanlanhill.com

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1.1 CG Recovery Limited have developed a proposal for the internal remodelling, repair, refurbishment, and localised extension of 27 Byrom Street, Manchester, M3 4PF.
- 1.1.2 Gray Scanlan Hill is appointed to evaluate the daylight and sunlight amenity impact of the Proposed Development on those key parts of the surrounding built environment.
- 1.1.3 This Statement considers the qualitative impact of the Proposed Development with regard to the Site's urban locale, relevant national planning policy, Local Development Plan policies, relevant design guidance and other material considerations.
- 1.1.4 We have referred to the provisions set out in the Building Research Establishment ("BRE") design guidance Site Layout Planning for Daylight & Sunlight: A Guide to Good Practice, which is recognised as the industry standard, technically robust, methodology for appraising daylight and sunlight amenity impact in the built environment.
- 1.1.5 The BRE Guidance primarily seeks to promote the daylight and sunlight impact assessment of neighbouring buildings of residential use; it highlights the consideration of daylight and sunlight to living rooms and daylight to bedrooms and family kitchens.
- 1.1.6 1-16 (evens) Ashill Walk, certain properties on Culvercliff Walk, certain properties on Porchfield Square, and 21 St. John Street are all identified as neighbouring buildings of residential use and are the primary daylight and sunlight receptors considered in this Report. St. John's Gardens to the west of the Site on the opposite side of Byrom Street is also identified as an external amenity space and sunlight amenity receptor.
- 1.1.7 The Ashill Walk and Culvercliff Walk properties will not see the proposed extension, because it is lower than the ridge of the existing building. Accordingly, the extension will have no impact at all on the daylight and sunlight amenity of these properties.
- 1.1.8 The proposed extension will be seen through the windows of certain Porchfield Square properties. However, these neighbouring buildings are some distance away and given the small scale / massing of the proposed extension it is clear that it will have no daylight amenity impact. The Site facing windows of the Porchfield Square properties are not identified as sunlight receptors, because they are north facing.

- 1.1.9 Although 21 St. John Street has Site facing windows through which the rear proposed extension will be seen, it will have a negligible daylight amenity impact on this neighbouring building (see Section 5.2 for a detailed commentary).
- 1.1.10 The Site facing windows of 21 St. John Street are north facing and therefore can have no expectation of sunlight amenity nor do the BRE require them to be sunlight amenity impact appraised (on the basis that they are not oriented within 90° of due south).
- 1.1.11 On the whole, the Proposed Development will have a negligible or non-significant daylight and sunlight amenity impact on those relevant parts of the surrounding built environment.

2. Introduction

2.1 Background and Instructions

- 2.1.1 CG Recovery Limited have developed a proposal for the internal remodelling, repair, refurbishment, and localised extension of 27 Byrom Street, Manchester, M3 4PF.
- 2.1.2 Gray Scanlan Hill is appointed to evaluate the daylight and sunlight amenity impact of the Proposed Development on those key parts of the surrounding built environment.
- 2.1.3 This Statement considers the qualitative impact of the Proposed Development with regard to the Site's urban locale, relevant national planning policy, Local Development Plan policies, relevant design guidance and other material considerations.

2.2 Scope of this Report

- 2.2.1 For reasons explained elsewhere in this Statement, our appraisal is based on the provisions of the Building Research Establishment's ("BRE") *Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A Guide to Good Practice*. The BRE Guidance provides an objective means for evaluating daylight and sunlight amenity impact in the built environment.

2.3 Professional Experience

- 2.3.1 This Statement has been prepared by Mike Scanlan, who is a Director at Gray Scanlan Hill. He has, over the course of the last 18 years, specialised in advising and representing his Clients on various third-party development issues, including rights of light (common law), daylight and sunlight and overshadowing amenity assessments (for Town & Country Planning), the Party Wall etc Act 1996 and access to land / airspace negotiations.
- 2.3.2 He commenced his training at building surveying consultancy, Malcolm Hollis, until August 2005 when he became a founding Director of Gray Scanlan Hill, where he has continued to provide third party development consultancy advice to Clients.
- 2.3.3 He has advised both developers and neighbouring adjoining owners in respect of the impact of proposed developments. He has also accepted instructions to advise Local Authorities on the practical application of the BRE Guidance.

- 2.3.4 A member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (“RICS”), he has frequently lectured on third party development issues to fellow property professionals as part of numerous regional CPD programmes and conferences.

2.4 The Site

- 2.4.1 27 Byrom Street is a mid-terrace, three storey (plus basement) pitched roofed building of traditional construction and of Heritage interest (being of Listed status).
- 2.4.2 On appearances, the original building has been subject to some degree of internal remodelling but remains largely intact. A single storey flat roofed extension has also been constructed to the rear, occupying the majority of the footprint of the rear yard area.

2.5 The Proposed Development

- 2.5.1 The interior of the original building will be subject to repair, refurbishment and some remodelling. This building work will not, however, alter the mass of the Site.
- 2.5.2 The rear ground floor extension will be demolished. A new flat roofed ground floor extension will be added, occupying the full footprint of the rear yard. The building will be locally extended at 1st and 2nd floor levels (within the footprint of the ground floor extension).

2.6 Information Relied upon and Site Specific Limitations

- 2.6.1 We have inspected the Site and walked its surroundings and in so doing have identified the window provision of the neighbouring buildings that overlook the Site (to the extent that such windows are capable of being observed from the adjacent public highways).
- 2.6.2 Access to the gated ginnel to the rear of the Site was not obtained. Our understanding of the physical relationship between the Site and the buildings to the rear is based on what we could observe through the upper floor rear elevation windows of 27 Byrom Street.
- 2.6.3 Our understanding of the Proposed Development is based on the following drawings prepared by Jonathan Woodward Architects, which form part of the Planning Application:
- Location & Existing Site Plan (Dwg. 27_0001);
 - Existing Floor / Roof Plans (Dwgs. 27_0010-0014 inclusive);
 - Proposed Demolition Plans (Dwgs. 27_0021-0023 inclusive);

- Proposed Floor / Roof Plans (Dwgs. 27_0100-0104 inclusive);
- Existing Elevations (Dwgs. 27_0200 and 0201);
- Proposed Elevations (Dwgs. 27_0250 and 2051);
- Existing Site Sections (Dwgs. 27_0300-0303 inclusive); and
- Proposed Site Sections (Dwgs. 27_0350-0353 inclusive).

2.6.4 The neighbouring buildings have not been inspected, we have also had to make assumptions as to their use and function. Our assumptions are primarily influenced by observations made during our Site inspection. We have also researched whether the neighbouring buildings are of residential use, through reference to Valuation Office Agency records – neighbouring buildings with a Council Tax Band being of residential use.

2.6.5 To obtain a better understanding of the internal configuration of the neighbouring building known as 21 St. John Street, we have downloaded plans from Manchester City Council's Planning public access portal under Application Reference 118614/FO/2017.

2.7 Around the Site

2.7.1 The Site is located in Manchester City Centre in the area known as "St Johns".

2.7.2 Given the proposed increase in mass of the Proposed Development, in daylight and sunlight amenity appraising the Proposed Development, it is not necessary to look beyond the immediate Site's surroundings, which comprises the following:

The terrace of buildings of which the Site forms part, comprising 29, 27, 25 and 29-31 Byrom Street.



Byrom Street facing
(north) towards
Manchester City Centre.



The public external
amenity space known as
St. John's Gardens,
located on the opposite
side of Byrom Street and
to the west of the Site.



Camp Street (facing east)
located to the south of the
Site.



The Site and its immediate surroundings to the rear from Camp Street (facing north west).



The gated “ginnel” to the immediate rear of the Site (running the full length of the terrace of which 27 Byrom Street forms part).



The rear of properties fronting St. John Street, located to the east of the Site.



2-16 (evens) Ashill Walk is a residential building, located on the opposite side of Byrom Street to the west of the Site.



Culvercliff Walk is a terrace of residential buildings, located to the south west of the Site beyond Camp Street.



Porchfield Square is a residential complex, located to the south / south east of the Site beyond Camp Street.



To the immediate east of the Site the neighbouring 21 St. John Street has been converted to residential use.



To the immediate east of the Site the neighbouring 21 St. John Street has been converted to residential use.



To the immediate east of the Site the neighbouring 21 St. John Street has been converted to residential use.



25 Byrom Street is located to the immediate north of the Site. This building is of commercial office (solicitor) use.	
Also to the north of the Site (beyond 25 Byrom Street) the rear elevations of 25 St. John Street face towards the Site. Again, this is a building of commercial office use.	

- 2.7.3 From this it is apparent that the Site's immediate surroundings is of mixed use, comprising some commercial office space and some buildings of residential use and occupation.

3. Standards

3.1 National Planning Policy

- 3.1.1 There are no national planning policy guidelines that directly govern daylight and sunlight amenity in terms of sufficiency and acceptable impacts.
- 3.1.2 It is, however, acknowledged that the National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”) 2021 confirms the Government's objective to conserve and enhance the natural and local environment in the planning system. The availability of daylight and sunlight are, of course, natural resources that can enhance an environment.

3.2 Local Planning Policy and Guidance

- 3.2.1 Manchester City Council's Core Strategy was adopted on 11th July 2012 and is the key Development Plan Document in the Local Development Framework (“LDF”).
- 3.2.2 It describes Manchester today and outlines the Council's vision for Manchester in 2027 along with the planning policies which will be used to deliver that vision.
- 3.2.3 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) provide more detail to policies in the Core Strategy. Manchester adopted its 'Guide to Development in Manchester SPD and Planning Guidance' in April 2007. We understand that it has yet to be updated to reflect the adopted Core Strategy and the saved Policies from the UDP.
- 3.2.4 The Council do, however, acknowledge, in Policy CC6 – City Centre High Density Development - of the Core Strategy that development in the City Centre will generally be “high density” and that the scale, massing and height of development in the City Centre will significantly exceed what is appropriate elsewhere in the City.
- 3.2.5 Policy DM1 – Development Management – confirms that all developments should have regard to a number of issues, such as the effects on amenity, including light.
- 3.2.6 Neither the above mentioned National Planning Policy or Local Planning Policy and Guidance contain a specific or bespoke “daylight and sunlight” policy regarding development in the City Centre. Further, no guidance is provided on how daylight and sunlight amenity impact might be measured and evaluated in practice.

- 3.2.7 Accordingly, it is necessary to consider and administer the design guidance available from the Building Research Establishment and in particular their Guidance Note “*Site Layout Planning for Daylight & Sunlight: A Guide to Good Practice*”.

3.3 The BRE “Site Layout Planning for Daylight & Sunlight”

- 3.3.1 The BRE Guidance was produced following extensive consultation with architects, planning officers, consultants, professional institutions and Government officials.
- 3.3.2 The Guidance was first published in 1991 and superseded the Department of the Environment Guidance “Sunlight and Daylight Planning Criteria and Design of Buildings”. The current edition of the BRE Guidance was published in 2011.
- 3.3.3 Its overall purpose is to assist in evaluating the relationship between new and existing buildings to ensure that each retains the potential to achieve a “fair share” of available daylight and sunlight given their relative siting, height and mass.
- 3.3.4 The BRE Guidance is technically robust and has become the industry standard methodology for assessing daylight and sunlight amenity in the built environment.
- 3.3.5 The provisions of the BRE Guidance are not mandatory and the BRE have taken steps to confirm that it should not be read as an instrument of planning policy:

‘The guide is intended for building designers and their clients, consultants and planning officials. The advice given here is not mandatory and this document should not be seen as an instrument of planning policy. Its aim is to help rather than constrain the designer. Although it gives numerical guidelines, these should be interpreted flexibly because natural daylight is only one of many factors in site layout design’.

- 3.3.6 It is important to note that the BRE Guidance was principally developed for use in the assessment of low density suburban environments and should, therefore, be applied flexibly for developments in urban City Centre sites, or commercially influenced areas.
- 3.3.7 The BRE targets should not, therefore, be seen as absolute and immovable targets when applied in a town or City Centre or other high-density built environment.
- 3.3.8 To facilitate the flexible application of the BRE Guidance, it promotes the setting of alternative target values for use in built-up urban areas, such as a City Centre, which have different characteristics to lower density suburban areas.

4. The BRE Tests

4.1 Daylight

- 4.1.1 The BRE Guidance confirms that its daylight provisions are intended for use for rooms in neighbouring dwellings where daylight is required, which would include living rooms, kitchens and bedrooms. It goes on to confirm that windows serving bathrooms, toilets, store rooms, circulation areas, and garages need not be analysed.
- 4.1.2 There are several different methods of measuring daylight amenity.
- 4.1.3 The BRE recommend that the Vertical Sky Component (“VSC”) test is used (rather than the Average Daylight Factor test) when considering the impact that a new development will have on the daylight amenity of an existing neighbouring building.
- 4.1.4 The VSC is a unit of measurement that represents the amount of visible sky that is capable of being received at the external face of a window. Daylight is derived directly from the sky. On that basis, the more unobstructed sky or sky visibility available to a window, the potential daylighting capability of the room served by it will increase.
- 4.1.5 The unit is expressed as a percentage, as it is the ratio between the amount of visible sky available to the window being tested, compared to that available from a totally unobstructed sky. To put this unit of measurement into perspective, the maximum percentage VSC value of a window located in a vertical plane is 50%, but in practice the VSC values do not typically exceed 40%, because of projecting window reveals and window heads which lessen / reduce the angles of measurement.
- 4.1.6 The BRE Guidance for daylight confirms that: “... daylighting of an existing building may be adversely affected ... if ... the VSC measured at the centre of an existing ... window is less than 27%, and less than 0.8 times its former value”
- 4.1.7 In this regard, an aspirational target of 27% VSC is established for each window.
- 4.1.8 However, if a window already receives less than 27% VSC, then a reduction in the existing value of up to 20% (i.e. 0.8 x) is accepted as permissible on the basis that such a reduction is unlikely to be noticed by the room’s occupants.

- 4.1.9 We would stress that should a window's VSC value be reduced by more than 20%, this does not mean that the room will ordinarily be left with inadequate levels of daylight; it simply means that the reduction in light will be more noticeable to the occupants.
- 4.1.10 The BRE Guidance confirms that the daylight distribution of an existing building can be found by plotting the No Sky Line ("NSL") for each main room, which would include living rooms, dining rooms and kitchens (bedrooms are considered less important).
- 4.1.11 The NSL is measured at an internal working plane within a room and divides those parts of it which can and cannot see the sky through its window provision.
- 4.1.12 Those parts of a room beyond the NSL usually look dark and gloomy, compared with the rest of the room, because they receive no direct daylight.
- 4.1.13 The BRE Guidance confirms that the area of a room within the baseline NSL can be reduced by 20% (or 0.8x) without being noticed by the room occupants.

4.2 Sunlight to Buildings

- 4.2.1 Unlike daylight, which is not influenced by orientation and assumes that light from the sky is uniform, the availability of sunlight is dependent upon compass orientation.
- 4.2.2 As the United Kingdom is in the northern hemisphere, sun is only received from the south, rising in the east and setting in the west. The availability of sunlight is therefore dependent upon the orientation of the window being tested relative to due south.
- 4.2.3 The BRE Guidance for sunlight concludes that:

"If a living room of an existing dwelling has a main window facing within 90° of due south and any part of the new development subtends an angle of more than 25° to the horizontal, measured from the centre of the window in a vertical section perpendicular to the window, the sunlighting of the existing dwelling may be adversely affected".

- 4.2.4 Sunlight, therefore, only needs to be considered for windows serving living rooms, which is in contrast to the daylight test that applies equally to kitchens and bedrooms.
- 4.2.5 The BRE Guidance goes on to conclude that sunlight will be adversely affected if the living room window "...receives less than 25% of annual probable sunlight hours, or less than 5% of annual probable sunlight hours between 21 September and 21 March".

- 4.2.6 September – March are acknowledged as the “winter months”.
- 4.2.7 Again, the BRE confirms that where the APSH values are not met in the existing condition, a reduction of up to 20% (i.e. 0.8 x) the existing value would be acceptable, on the basis that the reduction is unlikely to be noticed by the building occupants.
- 4.2.8 We would, again, stress that reductions of more than 20% should not ordinarily be interpreted as a window being left with insufficient levels of sunlight amenity; it simply means that the reduction is more likely to be noticed by the building occupants.

4.3 Sunlight to Open Spaces

- 4.3.1 As well as ensuring that living rooms receive a good level of sunlight, it is also important that open spaces between and around buildings such as gardens, are suitably sunlit.

- 4.3.2 The BRE recommend that the availability of sunlight should be checked for all open spaces where it will be required and this would normally include:

- Gardens, usually the main back garden of a house
- Parks and playing fields;
- Children’s playgrounds;
- Outdoor swimming pools and paddling pools;
- Sitting out areas, such as those between non-domestic buildings / public squares;
- Focal points such as monuments or fountains.

- 4.3.3 The BRE Guidance concludes that:

“It is recommended that for it to appear adequately sunlit throughout the year, at least half of a garden or amenity area should receive at least two hours of sunlight on 21 March. If, as a result of new development an existing garden or amenity area does not meet the above, and the area which can receive two hours of sun on 21 March is less than 0.8 times its former value, then the loss of sunlight is likely to be noticeable”.

- 4.3.4 This ultimately means that 50% of any garden or external amenity space must be capable of receiving two hours of sunlight, and by implication be free from any permanent overshadowing, on 21 March. A 20% reduction of the existing value is accepted by the BRE on the grounds that it is unlikely to be noticed by the occupants / users.

5. Commentary

5.1 Context

- 5.1.1 It is clear that the BRE Guidance emphasises the daylight and sunlight amenity impact review of neighbouring buildings of residential use, and in particular, the “habitable” room uses – living rooms, kitchen, and bedrooms. Non-habitable rooms, (bathrooms, stairs, landings, etc.) do not need to be evaluated even where they exist in a domestic setting.
- 5.1.2 On this basis, we would identify the neighbouring buildings known as 2-16 (evens) Ashill Walk, properties forming part of Culvercliff Walk, properties forming part of Porchfield Square, and 21 St. John Street as the daylight and sunlight amenity receptors around this Site.
- 5.1.3 We would also identify St. Johns Gardens to the west of the Site as an external amenity sunlight receptor for which a sunlight amenity impact should be reviewed.
- 5.1.4 The BRE Guidance does suggest that it can be applied to existing non-domestic buildings where the occupants have a reasonable expectation of daylight - they suggest schools, hospitals, hotels / hostels and specialist workshops by way of example.
- 5.1.5 In our opinion, none of the neighbouring commercial office buildings are considered to have a particular special need for daylight and with all commercial office space having minimum design standards for artificial lighting, the need for natural light in the City is a nice to have, rather than an absolute requirement. On this basis they are not considered to be sensitive to changes in daylight levels – they will continue to be used and function as they do currently through their high degree reliance on artificial and task lighting.
- 5.1.6 On this basis, we would discount the windows of the neighbouring commercial buildings in the vicinity of the Site, to include 25 St. John Street, 25 Byrom Street, and 29-31 Byrom Street, as key or sensitive daylight and sunlight receptors.

5.2 Daylight Amenity

- 5.2.1 The daylight amenity of 1-16 (evens) Ashill Walk will not be impacted through the construction of the Proposed Development. Because the proposed extension is to the rear of 27 Byrom Street and will not be taller than the ridge of the roof, the extension will not be seen through the Site facing windows of this neighbouring building. The extension will not influence the daylight amenity of this neighbouring building moving forward.
- 5.2.2 The same can be said for the Culvercliff Walk properties, for the same reason – the extension will not be seen through any windows of this neighbouring property.
- 5.2.3 Arguably, the proposed rear extension will be seen by certain windows of the Porchfield Square properties to the south of the Site. However, the proposed extension at upper floor levels is small and the spacing to height ratio between it and these neighbouring buildings means that they are too remote to have their daylight amenity materially affected. Add to this, that the Site facing windows of these neighbouring buildings do not rely upon the Site exclusively for their daylight amenity – daylight from the east will remain unfettered.
- 5.2.4 21 St. John Street has windows in its west facing elevations, through which the proposed extension may be seen. Based on the plans that we have downloaded under Planning Application Reference 118614/FO/2017, we would comment as follows:
- There are no Site facing windows at basement floor level.
 - At ground floor level there is a single window serving a dining room. This does not, however, overlook the Site / proposed extension directly and the impact that the extension will have on its daylight amenity will be negligible.
 - There is also a window at ground floor level serving a lounge. This window is largely obstructed by the wall of the adjacent external courtyard (forming part of the same property), limiting its daylighting capacity. The proposed extension will have negligible impact on this window and the rooms daylighting amenity.
 - At 1st floor level, there is a window that serves what is referred to as a “flexible” room – potentially a current or future habitable room. This window does not, however, overlook the Site / Proposed Development directly and the impact that the proposed extension will have on the daylight amenity of this window / room will be negligible.

- At 1st floor level, there is also a window that serves a mini bar. This is not a habitable room use and is not therefore identified as daylight sensitive.
- Also at 1st floor level, there is a window serving a master bedroom. This room is dual aspect and is served by windows in the north / Camp Street facing elevation. The proposed extension will not prejudice the daylight amenity of this room.
- At 2nd floor level, there is a window that serves a bedroom use. This window does not, however, overlook the Site directly and at this floor level the window is almost higher than the extension. Accordingly. The proposed extension will have a negligible impact on this room's daylight amenity.
- There is a further window at 2nd floor level, that faces towards the Site and through which the proposed extension will be seen. This window does, however, serve a bathroom (which is a non-habitable room use and not daylight sensitive). Further, this room is dual aspect, served by a window in the south / Camp Street facing elevation.

5.2.5 On this basis, the daylight amenity of 21 St. John Street will not be materially prejudiced through the construction of the proposed rear extension.

5.2.6 On the whole, in our opinion, the proposed extension will have a non-significant impact on the daylight amenity of the neighbouring residential properties in the vicinity of the Site.

5.3 Sunlight Amenity

5.3.1 The sunlight amenity of the Site / east facing windows of 2-16 (evens) Ashill Walk will not be affected through the construction of the Proposed Development / rear extension. Because the extension is not taller than the ridge of the existing building, it will not be seen through the Site facing windows, nor will it have any influence on their sunlight amenity.

5.3.2 This is also the case for the Culvercliff Walk properties.

5.3.3 The Site facing windows of the Porchfield Square properties to the south of the Site are north facing. On this basis, they are not identified as sunlight receptors. They can have no realistic expectation of sunlight. Further, the BRE Guidance would not require them to be appraised, on the basis that they do not face within 90° of due south.

- 5.3.4 The Site facing windows of 21 St. John Street are north west facing. On the basis that they are not oriented within 90° of due south, they can have no expectation of sunlight amenity and the BRE do not consider them as sensitive receptors requiring impact review.
- 5.3.5 This neighbouring building does have some south facing windows through which the proposed extension will be seen once constructed. However, the extension will not have any material impact on the sunlight amenity of these windows, as a direct consequence of (1) the windows not overlooking the proposed extension directly, and (2) the extension not being higher than the ridge of the existing building. Further, the rooms are, based on the plans that we have downloaded from Manchester City Council's Planning public access portal, bedrooms which are not considered to be a primary sunlight receptor in any event.
- 5.3.6 The proposed extension will have no impact on the sunlight amenity of St. John's Gardens, on the basis that the extension will be no higher than the ridge of the existing building. The proposed extension will not therefore pose as an obstruction to sunlight from the east.
- 5.3.7 On the whole, in our opinion, the proposed extension will have a non-significant impact on the sunlight amenity of the neighbouring residential properties in the vicinity of the Site.