



Manchester City Council
PO Box 532
Town Hall
Manchester
M60 2LA

Our Ref: Let.002.VW.MCC.70084518
4 August 2021

PLANNING PORTAL:
PP-10063216

Dear Sir/Madam,

Quarter House, 11 Stevenson Square

On behalf of Northern Hospitality (MCR) Ltd (the applicant) we submit a full planning application and advertisement consent via the Planning Portal (ref. PP-10063216) for:

“Installation of two awnings with branding to building elevation”.

The following documents have been submitted alongside this cover letter:

- Signage pack prepared by NoChintz, comprising:
 - Location plan;
 - Site plan;
 - Existing and proposed floor plans;
 - Existing and proposed elevations;
 - Existing and proposed sections; and
 - Details of the canopy including fixing detail and branding dimensions.

The requisite planning application fee of £394 (including admin fee) has been paid via the Planning Portal.

Introduction

This Planning and Heritage Note has been prepared by WSP on behalf of Northern Hospitality (MCR) Ltd (the Applicant) in support of a full application for the installation of two awnings with branding at 11 Stevenson Square, Manchester, M1 1DB (“the Site”).

This statement considers the planning matters associated with the development, including an assessment of the proposals within the Stevenson Square Conservation Area. It demonstrates that the proposal is acceptable for the building and surrounding area and that the proposal is compliant with local and national policy.

To provide a clear understanding of the proposed scheme and its relationship with the surrounding area, this statement includes:

- A description of the application site and surrounding area;
- A review of the application site’s planning history;
- An overview of the proposal;

- A review of the relevant national and local planning policy guidance; and
- An appraisal of the proposal against its planning policy context and heritage context.

Stevenson Site and surrounds

The application site relates to the ground floor unit of 11 Stevenson Square, Quarter House. The building is situated on the corner of Little Lever Street and Stevenson Square. To the rear of the building is Stevenson Place.

The site is in a highly accessible location within the heart of Manchester's Northern Quarter. Several bus routes serve the Northern Quarter, and the area is also easily accessed from the Metrolink network (Market Street / Shudehill / Piccadilly Gardens) and railway stations.

The wider building comprises Fitzgerald bar on the upper floors with Hula bar at basement level.

A site location plan is enclosed with this submission.

The surrounding area is characterised by commercial buildings with retail and food and drinks businesses at ground floor. Stevenson Square has recently been pedestrianised and filled with tables and chairs, creating a bustling environment for diners to enjoy.

The site is located within Manchester's Northern Quarter and lies within the Stevenson Square Conservation Area. A map of the Conservation Area is provided in **Appendix B**. The building is not listed.

Figure 1 below shows the existing building with the ground floor unit to which this application relates outlined in red.



Figure 1. Application site, with the ground floor unit outlined in red. Source: Google maps.

Planning history

An online planning history search has been undertaken using Manchester City Council's online search tool.

The relevant planning history records are summarised in table 1-1 below.

Table 0-1 – Planning History

Reference	Description	Status
130192/JO/2021	Variation of conditions 2 (Specified Plans), 3 (Secure by Design), 4 (plant equipment) to change wording and include additional information and 5 (opening hours) to allow opening hours from 11:00 to 3:30 Monday-Thursday, 11:00 to 05:30 Friday to Saturday, and Sunday 11:00 to 02:30 of planning permission 087316/FO/2008/C2	Not decided
102915/JO/2013/C2	Variation of conditions 3 and 4 attached to application ref no 101920 to allow premises and external seating area to operate from 07.00 to 22.00 Monday to Sunday	Approved 28 Aug 2013
101920/FO/2013/C2	Change of use of the ground floor from retail use (A1) to use as a tea room (A3), elevational alterations and placing of tables and chairs on the public footpath outside the proposed tea room	Approved 12 Jun 2013

Application reference 101920/FO/2013/C2 granted consent for the placing of tables and chairs on the public footpath outside the unit.

The approved opening hours of the external seating area were later extended to 07.00 to 22.00 Monday to Sunday under application reference: 102915/JO/2013/C2.

This application does not seek to vary the opening hours approved or the details of the outdoor seating area.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development comprises:

“Installation of two awnings with branding to building elevation”.

EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS

The external alterations to the building comprise installation of two awnings to the front elevation. The awnings will be fixed directly onto the stonework with brackets as shown in the submitted drawing pack. The awnings will be placed above the window sections on the front elevation of Quarter House at a height of 4m. The two awnings will be situated either side of the entrance to the unit.

The awnings are in keeping with examples nearby and are of a high-quality, modern and sympathetic design appropriate for the Conservation Area.

Both awnings will measure approximately 3950mm (w) and 4000mm (d) when fully extended, they will be predominantly blue in colour and made from a strong, anti-UV durable textile material. They will feature two extending folding arms. Further details are included within the awning specification enclosed as part of the submission.

SIGNAGE

The awnings will feature the company branding which is shown in the image below. The branding comprises white text and a barrel logo applied to the blue fabric of the awning.



Figure 2. Proposed canopy branding

The location and dimensions of the branding is shown in the drawing pack submitted with this application. This application seeks consent for planning permission and advertisement consent.

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

The aim of the following section is to demonstrate that the proposed works meet the requirements of local and national planning policy.

LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

The relevant planning policy is contained in the Manchester Core Strategy (CS) and the saved policies of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (adopted July 1995).

The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) is a material consideration.

ASSESSMENT AGAINST POLICY

Principle of development

The NPPF seeks to build a strong, competitive economy. Paragraph 81 states that planning decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can adapt, expand and invest. Planning should operate to allow areas to build on their strengths, recognising and addressing the specific locational requirements of different sectors (paragraph 83).

CS Policy C1 (Centre Hierarchy) sets out that the City Centre will be the focus for commerce, culture, leisure and tourism. The site is located in the City Centre. Quarter House is a ground floor restaurant, situated in Stevenson Square where there is a mix of commercial and leisure uses.

CS Policy C10 (Leisure and Evening Economy) states that new development that supports both the daytime and evening economy, that contributes to the vitality of district centres and supports a balanced and socially inclusive evening / night time economy will be permitted. Three considerations are provided, namely cumulative impact, residential amenity and balance.

This proposal is for the installation of two awnings to provide shelter to the external seating area. The awnings are required so that the business can provide the option of outdoor dining even in inclement weather, which is key in the context of a global pandemic where there have been restrictions in indoor spaces, government guidance to improve ventilation and customers' desire to sit our doors in well ventilated spaces. The awnings will create a weather protected space that can be used more times of the year and help to provide additional capacity of the premises to off set that lost due to internal restrictions and need to provide more space around customers. The development will therefore support a business which contributes to the daytime and evening economy within an area identified as the focus for culture, leisure and tourism. The proposal therefore fully accords with CS Policies C1 and C10.

Amenity

CS Policy DM1 (Development Management) sets out development management requirements including appropriate siting, layout, massing, materials; impact on surroundings; impact on amenity including light, privacy and noise; accessibility for all; community safety and crime prevention and refuse storage and collection.

This application does not seek to vary the opening hours approved or the details of the outdoor seating area. The space will be continue to be used in accordance with application reference: 102915/JO/2013/C2 which allows the external seating area to operate 07.00 to 22.00 Monday to Sunday.

The number of customers using the shelter is limited by the number of tables and chairs and so it is considered that there would not be an unacceptable intensification of the outdoor seating area as a result of this proposal.

Furthermore, the proposal has been designed to respect the architectural features of the building and is in keeping with other examples of canopies within Stevenson Square.

As such, no adverse impacts have been identified with regards to amenity. The proposal therefore accords with CS Policy DM1 and C10 and saved UDP Policy DC26 which seek to ensure that development would not result in a loss of amenity.

Heritage

Policy CC9 (Design and Heritage) requires that development preserves or enhances heritage assets. The site falls within the Stevenson Square Conservation Area which is a designated heritage asset.

Policy EN3 (Heritage) states that:-

New developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance, including...conservation areas.

Section 16 (paragraphs 189 – 208) of the NPPF is specific to conserving and enhancing the historic environment. In determining applications, the Framework also advises that local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.

In accordance with saved UDP Policy DC18.1, the Council will give particularly careful consideration to development proposals within Conservation Areas and will seek to preserve and enhance their character by carefully considering the effect of major changes to the appearance of existing buildings.

In accordance with local and national policy, a heritage note has been undertaken which assesses the significance of the proposals within the context of the Conservation Area. The assessment concludes that the proposal will preserve and enhance the character of the Conservation Area and therefore is acceptable with regards to Local and National Planning Policy.

Branding

Paragraph 136 of the NPPF states that advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking into account cumulative impacts. It emphasises that the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. It also states that the adverts should not compromise safety and security or obscure highway sightlines and allow free movement along the public highway by all users.

Saved UDP Policy DC15 (adverts, hoardings and posters) states that applications for advertisements must be considered only in the interests of amenity and public safety. To accord with the policy, development should not harm the character or architectural features of the building, nor interfere with its proper use. Signage should be of an appropriate scale and relate properly to the site in which it stands. It must be unobtrusive and must not adversely impact road users or cause harm to pedestrians.

The site is a ground floor unit within the City Centre. The branding proposed will advertise the existing unit occupier, Quarter House.

The proposed branding has been designed to complement the character of the area. The branding will be limited to two awnings which will not appear overly dominant or clutter the façade. The materials, detailing and colour of the proposed branding is modern and simplistic and relates well to the building.

There will be no intermittent light source, flashing lights, moving parts or features. In this regard, the proposed branding will not detract from the quality of the building or visual amenity of the site and surrounding area. The branding on the awning is appropriate to the building and will not adversely impact the heritage significance of the Conservation Area.

With regards to public safety, the building is located within the city centre, and therefore any new branding will be read against that building and city centre context. The awning will extend over the highway (footpath). Passers-by on bicycles will not be distracted by the proposed branding and there will be no impact upon highway safety as Stevenson Square is also currently pedestrianised. The awning proposed will be set at a suitable height to allow for sufficient pedestrian clearance beneath.

On this basis, we conclude that the proposed branded awning would fully accord with the relevant local and national planning policy and legislation.

PLANNING POLICY SUMMARY

Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) states that at the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking, this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay.

As set out within this section, the proposed development will accord with local and national planning policy and therefore should be approved without delay.

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides a specific, “*duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions*”. Consequently, the Council is charged with paying “special attention....to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area”.

OVERVIEW OF HERITAGE

11 Stevenson Square falls within the boundaries of the Stevenson Square Conservation Area, as shown in Figure 4-1 below. The designation was made by the City council in February 1987 and is a designated heritage asset.

The Conservation Area appraisal on the Council’s website identifies that the majority of buildings of architectural or historic interest in the conservation area are Victorian or early-20th century. Most are related to the cotton industry, often warehouses, showrooms or workshops.

There are no listed buildings within the application site, or within the nearby vicinity. The closest listed building is the Grade II listed Former Newton Street Police Station on Faraday Street. Given the distance between the two properties and that there is no direct line of sight between the application site and the Former Police Station, it is anticipated there will be no impacts on the asset as a result of development. The Former Police Station has therefore not been included within this assessment.

The neighbouring building known as Habib House is understood to not be statutorily listed, however, it is generally considered to be a non-designated heritage asset in part due to its architectural style and historic use of the building as a former mill.

There are no other heritage assets which have the potential to be impacted by the proposed development.

Impact on the Stevenson Square Conservation Area

The works proposed are minor in nature and will not harm the setting or significance of the Stevenson Square Conservation Area.

Each are considered in turn below.

Branded Awning

The signage proposed is limited to branding applied to the awning.

The awnings will be attached to the building at a sufficient height above the footpath to give clearance for pedestrians and customers.

The proposed branding is required to provide shelter to customers, which is essential for food and drinks businesses in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. The branding proposed specifically relates to the building itself and will advertise the building's use as a restaurant, directing pedestrians and visitors to the building. The principle of the proposed branding is therefore acceptable and complies with Core Strategy Policy EC1 and Saved UDP Policy DC15.

The branding proposed is suitable and appropriate in this location and will preserve and enhance buildings within the Conversation Area.



Figure 3 – photographs of Flok and Eastern Block with awnings extended.

CONCLUSION ON IMPACT

The above assessment has identified that the significance of the Conservation Area as a whole is considerable and holds evidential, historical and aesthetic value.

The works have been reviewed in the light of the relevant planning policy and guidance relating to the historic environment. This section has demonstrated that these works will not have any adverse impacts on the conservation area. The works are minor in nature and will support a business in the city centre, which is a significant benefit.

The proposals will preserve and enhance the character and appearance of buildings within the conservation area. The proposals will not cause any harm to buildings within the conservation area. Therefore, this assessment concludes that the special architectural and historic interest and character will be preserved.

The proposal represents sustainable development. The works are fully compliant with the relevant historic environment policies of the Unitary Development Plan, Core Strategy and the NPPF, and so in accordance with paragraph 11 of the NPPF, the proposal should be approved without delay.

CONCLUSIONS

A full planning application and advertisement consent application is submitted to the LPA for the installation of two branded awnings to the external elevation of Quarter House. The proposal relates to Quarter House which is the ground floor restaurant at 11 Stevenson Square.

The application site is located in the Stevenson Square Conservation Area, at the heart of the Northern Quarter. Stevenson Square is pedestrianised and is bustling with many outdoor seating areas attached to the neighbouring food and drinks businesses.

The proposed development will preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The external works proposed are minor in nature and are in keeping with the commercial nature of the area. The external awnings respect the architectural features of the building and leave the relevant clearance distances.

The proposal will deliver further economic benefits to this commercial part of the city centre, whilst having no adverse effects upon the environment or residential amenity.

Therefore, the proposed development accords with the Manchester Core Strategy and the saved policies of the UDP and planning permission should be granted without delay.

We look forward to receiving confirmation that the application is valid. However, if you have any queries in the meantime please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully



Victoria Welch
Planner