



Paul Butler Associates

Planning, Development & Heritage Consultants

28 May 2021

Mrs Julie Roscoe
Head of Planning
Planning Department
Manchester City Council
PO Box 532
Town Hall Extension
Manchester
M60 2LA

21.1557/SpaceStudios/ljr01dt

Dear Julie,

Space Studios, Vaughan Street, West Gorton, Manchester, M12 5FQ

Application for prior notification of proposed solar panels - Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)(England) Order 2015, Schedule 2, Part 14, Class J.

Introduction

On behalf of my client, Ameresco Limited, please find an application for 'prior determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to the design or external appearance' of a proposed solar panel scheme at the above location. The proposed scheme comprises the installation of solar panels to the roof of the Space Studios.

Site Location

Space Studios is a purpose built facility for high end TV, film and commercial production (Refer to photographs in Appendix 1). Taken together with its sister facility 'Outer Space Studios', the two facilities combined offer more than 85,000 sq ft of high spec stages plus purpose designed dressing and make up facilities, laundry, prop storage / workshops and extensive parking. There is one stage of 30,000 sq ft, four stages of 11,500 sq ft and a sixth of 9,000 sq ft. The two groups of buildings are arranged to either side of a central dedicated car park. Although enjoying a complementary relationship 'Space Studios' and 'Outerspace Studios' were approved and implemented at different times and evolved as two separate facilities. Planning research has confirmed key planning approvals for 'Space Studios' were 102895/VO/2013/N2 and for 'Outer Space Studios' 112014/VO/2016/N2. 'Space Studios' and 'Outer Space Studios' are each supplied by their own MPAN for electricity. These sites are two separate facilities, each of which benefits from permitted development rights. Space Studios lies to the west of the central parking area and is open 7 days a week with 24 hour access in some areas. The building is not nationally listed or locally listed. The building is not in a Conservation Area. No specific land use designations were identified which relate to the premises.

The Context

Greater Manchester has been awarded over £78m in Central Government funding to support energy efficiency upgrades to more than 150 public buildings across the city-region, helping to cut emissions and create new jobs.

The award was the result of a successful bid from Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and 14 other partners to the Government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme.

Buildings and organisations across the public estate set to benefit from retrofitting measures include Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust, Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service, Transport for Greater Manchester, Greater Manchester Police, the Royal Northern College of Music, the National Cycling Centre, and facilities including leisure centres, schools, and offices.

The measures will include the installation of air source heat pumps for heating, solar panels to generate and create electricity, insulation and LED lighting to improve energy efficiency, and energy monitoring and control systems to ensure these public facilities can accurately measure their energy usage.

The subject application proposal forms a discrete part of this wider initiative and aims to deliver solar pv energy thereby helping to lead the carbon neutral agenda in Manchester. The proposed retro-fitting of solar panels to existing buildings will produce more renewable energy and offer an opportunity to immediately cut emissions.

In total, these 150 projects are expected to support the creation or safeguarding of around 2,000 jobs throughout the city-region, and will support the goals of Greater Manchester's Five Year Environment Plan, including becoming carbon neutral by 2038 – 12 years ahead of the national target.

The Proposals

The Space Studios site has PV installed as part of a Phase 1 solar installation. Existing capacity is 270 kWp on the roof of the Space Studios. The proposed capacity by this application is for 1440 PV panels, each 450Wp giving a peak capacity of 648.00kWp. The proposed additional capacity of 648.00kWp will be sited on the rooves of the Space Studio buildings as shown on the submitted proposals plan.

At Space Studios, it is proposed to fit solar panels in two arrays on the main roof with a third array above the lower flat roof of the prop store building. The table below sets out the proposals:

Building	Panels (Wp)	No of Panels	Power Generation (kWp)
Existing Array (Phase 1): Above Space 1 and 2 Units	N/a	N/a	270.00
Proposed Array (Phase 2): Above Space 3 and 4 Units	450	786	345.54
Proposed Array (Phase 2): Above Space 5 Unit and Space Camp	450	492	229.46
Proposed array (Phase 2) Prop Store and Workshops	450	162	73.00
Total			918.00

These rooves have parapet walls around their perimeters which exceed the height of the solar panels, therefore the panels will not be visible at ground level, and elevational views of the buildings will not be affected.

The Regulations

As per The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 Schedule 2, Part 14 Renewable Energy, Class J, the installation of solar PV equipment on the roof of a building is regarded as 'Permitted development' subject to an application being made to the local planning authority for determination as to whether prior approval is necessary.

On the basis of the scheme being considered as a whole, the proposals do not constitute 'microgeneration' solar PV equipment as power generation output exceeds 50kWp. The proposals can however be considered under the Permitted Development regulations, as the collective power output does not exceed 1MW.

Accordance of Proposals with Regulations

The proposed scheme has been reviewed in the context of the Regulations set out above. The scheme can be considered as 'permitted development' for the following reasons:

- The solar PV equipment would be installed on flat rooves. The highest part of the solar PV equipment would be no higher than 1 metre above the highest part of each roof, and the panels will also sit below each existing roof parapet.
- The solar PV equipment is to be installed entirely on roof areas and no part of the installation will lie within 1 metre of the external edge of each roof.
- The site is not on article 2(3) land, designated as a scheduled monument, nor does it contain any listed buildings.
- The capacity of the solar PV equipment installed to generate electricity at the site will not exceed 1 megawatt.
- The solar PV equipment has been so far as practicable, sited so as to minimise its effect on the external appearance of the building and the amenity of the area. It will sit below the existing parapets of each roof and will not be visible from ground level or any surrounding buildings.
- The solar PV equipment will be removed as soon as reasonably practicable when no longer needed.
- The proposed panels will not result in any impact in terms of glare on occupiers of neighbouring land.

The Submission

The following information has been submitted in support of the application:

- Completed Prior Notification Application Form dated 28 May 2021 prepared by Paul Butler Associates.
- 01 Covering letter prepared by Paul Butler Associates: 21.1557/SpaceStudios/ljr01dt.
- 02 Site Location Plan: Space Studios Red Line Location Plan.
- 03 Existing Roof Plan: Space Studios Phase 2 - 006 - EXISTING ROOF PLAN - Rev1 prepared by Absolute.
- 04 Proposed Roof Plan: Space Studios Phase 2 - 001 - PROPOSAL PLAN - Rev3 prepared by Absolute.
- 05 Longi Solar Panel Datasheets.
- 06 Van der Valk Solar Panel Support Mount Datasheets.
- 07 Solis Inverter Datasheets.
- 08 Indicative Site Construction Plan: Space Studios Phase 2 - 005 - SOLAR PV INDICATIVE CONSTRUCTION PLAN - Rev3 prepared by Absolute.

The application fee (£96) will be paid shortly after submission by Ameresco. I look forward to receiving confirmation that this application has been registered and validated. In the meantime, if you require any further information please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely



David Tye BSc MTPI MRTPI
Director

CC Dipak Shah, Akash Vadher & Liam Pech (Ameresco Ltd)
 Philip Owen (Zero Carbon Estate, Programme Manager, Manchester City Council)

Appendix A - Site Photographs



Space Studios from Kniveton Road looking south



Space Studios from Kniveton Road looking east