

NEXUS PLANNING

Unit 2A, The Printworks Manchester

Planning Statement

On behalf of DTZ Investors

April 2021

Contents

1 Introduction **2**

2 Site Context **4**

The Site 4

Surrounding Area 4

Relevant Planning History 5

3 Proposed Development **6**

4 Planning Policy Context **7**

The Development Plan 7

Manchester Core Strategy 2012 - 2027 (2012) 7

Unitary Development Plan (Saved) Policies (2007) 9

Material Considerations 9

National Planning Policy Framework 9

Emerging Local Plan 10

Emerging City Region Joint Strategy - Places for Everyone 11

Amendment to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 2020 11

5 Planning Appraisal **12**

Principle of Proposed Use 12

Design and Access 13

Design 13

Access 13

Amenity 14

Summary 15

6 Summary and Conclusions **16**

1 Introduction

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Nexus Planning on behalf of DTZ Investors to support a change of use application at Unit 2A, The Printworks, 27 Withy Grove, Manchester City Centre, M4 2BS (hereafter referred to as 'the site'). The following change of use is being applied for:

'The change of use from a nightclub (sui generis) to flexible Class E use'

1.2 The total floorspace within Unit 2A to which the proposed change of use applies measures approximately 818 sq.m and pertains to the former bar and nightclub.

1.3 This application proposes internal alterations to enable the utilisation of the unit as a flexible indoor recreation space for competitive socialising, which will host a number of activities, such as crazy golf, darts and shuffle board, alongside an ancillary bar and food offer.

1.4 The unit is proposed to be operated by Boom: Battle Bar. Boom: Battle Bar focuses on providing locations for competitive socialising, which mixes activities including golf, darts, pool and axe throwing with a food and drink experience and operates from locations across the country. The intended operator is in-keeping with the wider function of the Printworks and will assist in drawing footfall in throughout both the day and evening.

1.5 The applicant acquired Printworks in early 2017 and has subsequently sought to evolve its tenant mix in order that it provides a well-rounded leisure offer, which supports both daytime and evening leisure use. Multi-million-pound investment has already been made under the applicant's management and significant new tenants have been attracted to Printworks in recent years. Investment such as the current application, will help ensure that the complex remains competitive and relevant.

1.6 In this regard, our client has recently received permission under planning applications 125294/FO/2019 and 125295/AOH/2019 for improvements to elevations, entrance features, signage and new LED screens, reflecting the commitment to ensuring the areas future as a high-quality leisure destination which functions for a wider spectrum of the community, from daytime through to night. The refurbishment will create an unrivalled interactive and immersive experience for all ages, and operational changes will expand on existing community links alongside additional events and programmes. The current proposal to enable the occupation of an otherwise vacant unit within the Printworks will contribute towards the applicant's overarching aspirations for the complex, and seek to draw additional footfall to the city centre as a whole.

1.7 This Statement should be read in conjunction with the following additional supporting documents:

- Application Form;
- Land Ownership Certificates;
- Site Location Plan;
- Existing and Proposed Floorplans and Elevations; and
- Printworks Waste Management Strategy.

2 Site Context

The Site

2.1 The site comprises 818 sq.m within unit 2A of the existing Printworks development on the corner of Withy Grove and Corporation Street in Manchester City Centre. The site's most recent use was as a nightclub. The site is located on the ground floor of the Printworks, and benefits from ground floor access off Marks Lane.

2.2 The Printworks is occupied by a number of food and drink outlets, such as Wagamama, Hard Rock Café and Wetherspoons, in addition to existing leisure uses such as Adventure Golf, Grosvenor Casino and Adventure Golf.

Surrounding Area

2.3 The site is in a sustainable location, in close proximity to many retail and town centre uses. Manchester Arndale Shopping Centre is located opposite the site.

2.4 Shudehill Interchange Tram, Bus and Coach Station is located approximately 60m to the east and the Exchange Square tram stop is located approximately 60m to the south west, providing connections to Bury, Altrincham and Rochdale, East Didsbury and Shaw and Crompton. Manchester Victoria train and Metrolink station is located approximately 200m to the north west of the site. The train station provides rail links to a wide range of locations throughout Greater Manchester, the North West and beyond.

2.5 Printworks NCP car park is located approximately 100m to the north east of the site, providing 777 spaces and is open 24 hours Monday - Sunday. Manchester Arndale NCP car park is located approximately 120m to the south east of the site, providing 1383 spaces and is open 24 hours Monday – Sunday. Deansgate NCP car park is located approximately 350m to the south west, providing 340 spaces and is also open 24 hours Monday – Sunday.

2.6 The site lies within the Manchester City Centre and Regional Centre boundaries as defined on the adopted proposals map and is located within the Shudehill Conservation Area.

Relevant Planning History

2.7 Planning permission was granted on 4th June 1992 for the 'Development of a shopping centre, residential apartments, craft workshops, offices and civic squares with related car parking facilities and station after demolition of certain buildings', at the Printworks site (ref: 040501).

2.8 The application site has most recently been in uses as a nightclub. Nightclubs are classified as a sui generis uses under to 2020 Use Classes Order Amendment, and as such the established use of the site is considered to be a sui generis nightclub under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order (2020).

2.9 There is no further relevant planning history related to the site. However, the existing retail, food and leisure uses surrounding the unit as established under the original and subsequent applications are of relevance to the proposed change of use.

3 Proposed Development

3.1 The following change of use is being applied for:

'The change of use from a nightclub (sui generis) to flexible Class E use'.

3.2 This planning application seeks permission for a change of use at Unit 2A at The Printworks from nightclub (sui generis) to enable the utilisation of the unit as a flexible indoor recreation space that will operate as a competitive socialising venue offering indoor leisure activities including activities such as but not limited to shuffleboard, digital darts, axe throwing, pool, marble racing and table tennis with ancillary licensed bar and restaurant all within Class E.

3.3 Boom: Battle Bar operates a number of competitive socialising venues nationwide, which combine a number of indoor leisure activities with a food and drink experience. Consumers hire out an activity for a chosen period of time and can choose to play alone or in groups of up to eight. Boom: Battle Bar is aimed at all age-groups, and welcomes families, however after 7pm only 18's are permitted in the venue itself.

3.4 The existing floorspace of the unit is 818 sqm. The basement level will primarily comprise a number of competitive socialising activities, including shuffleboard, pool, axe throwing and darts.

3.5 The existing bar and bar store will be retained at this level, alongside the existing toilets (male, female and disabled) as illustrated on the proposed basement level plan (ref: 21.002/MPR/101). The proposed kitchens will be situated on the basement level. On the ground floor the existing toilets and bar will also be retained, and further areas for competitive socialising will be provided. The mezzanine floor will accommodate the manager's office and staff facilities. This is illustrated on the proposed ground floor and mezzanine level plan (ref: 21.002/MPR/100).

3.6 Access to the unit is proposed via a door off the primary thoroughfare within the Printworks venue, as illustrated on the submitted proposed floor plan.

3.7 The waste storage arrangement for the site will be consistent with the existing on-site arrangements for the Printworks development.

3.8 It is anticipated that the proposed use will provide employment for approximately 30 full-time equivalent members of staff.

4 Planning Policy Context

4.1 This section of the Planning Statement summarises the planning policy context relevant to the application proposals. Section 5 provides a more detailed assessment of the application proposals having regard to the relevant planning policies.

4.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act requires all planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise.

4.3 The Local Development Plan consists of the Manchester Core Strategy which was adopted on 11th July 2012 and extant (saved) Unitary Development Plan policies which were saved in 2007. Other material considerations relevant to the application are as follows:

- National Planning Policy Framework ("the NPPF");
- Local Plan Review;
- Emerging City Region Joint Strategy - Places for Everyone; and
- Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020.

The Development Plan

4.4 The Local Development Plan consists of the Manchester Core Strategy which was adopted on 11th July 2012 and extant (saved) Unitary Development Plan policies which were saved in 2007.

Manchester Core Strategy 2012 - 2027 (2012)

4.5 Policies in the Core Strategy which are considered relevant to this change of use application are as follows:

- Policy SP1 'Spatial Principles' – states that the Regional Centre will be the focus for economic and commercial development, retail, leisure and cultural activity.
- Policy CC4 'Visitors – Tourism, Culture and Leisure' – the City Centre will be the main focus for culture and leisure in the City Region and development which improves facilities for visitors, including Manchester residents, will be promoted.

- Policy CC5 'Transport' – the council will seek to ensure that all development includes adequate parking provision for cars and bicycles. Furthermore, it is encouraged that developers should work with public transport providers to ensure that all users are able to access development by sustainable means, especially taking into account of times when developments are likely to be busiest.

- Policy CC9 'Design and Heritage'– development in Manchester City Centre should preserve or enhance the heritage assets that have been identified, including listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled ancient monuments.

- Policy CC10 'A Place for Everyone' – sets out that the Council should promote uses which will appeal to a wide range of people. Acknowledging that there is a strong existing evening economy, this policy focuses on the promotion of daytime activities to attract a wider range of visitors. There is a particular emphasis on creating a family-friendly environment.

- Policy C1 'Centre Hierarchy' – confirms that the City Centre is the regional focus for commerce, culture, leisure and tourism.

- Policy C10 'Leisure and the Evening Economy' – redevelopment that supports the evening economy, contributes to the vitality of district centres and supports a balanced and socially inclusive evening/ night-time economy will be permitted, subject to the following considerations:

    - Cumulative impact – where a concentration of bars, takeaways or other night-time uses are proving detrimental to the character or vitality and viability of the centre, there will be a presumption against further facilities.

    - Residential amenity – the proposed use should not create an unacceptable impact on neighbouring uses in terms of noise, traffic and disturbance.

    - Balance – new uses in Manchester centres should support both the day-time and evening/night-time economies whilst not undermining the role of the primary shopping area.

- Policy EC3 'The Regional Centre' – proposals for other town centre uses will be assessed in accordance with policies C1 'Centre Hierarchy' and C9 'Out-of-centre development'.

- Policy T2 'Accessible areas of opportunity and need' – requires that city centre development provides a level of car parking which reflects the highly accessible nature of the location, as well as the realistic requirements of users of the development.
- Policy EN1 'Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas' – within the City Centre Character Area, developers will be expected to consider the City's heritage and continue the rich pattern of activity in the core area.
- Policy EN19 'Waste' – the Council will require developers to demonstrate how the sustainable waste management needs of the end user will be met.
- Policy DM1 'Development Management' – development should have regard to specific issues including design, the character of the surrounding area, amenity, accessibility and refuse storage and collection.

Unitary Development Plan (Saved) Policies (2007)

4.6 The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) for the City of Manchester was adopted by the Council on 21st July 1995, and certain policies were saved in 2007. There are no saved policies which are deemed relevant to these proposals.

Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

4.7 The revised NPPF was published on 19 February 2019. It emphasises the Government's commitment to securing economic growth and building a strong, responsive and competitive economy.

4.8 The policies contained within the NPPF are material considerations which local planning authorities should take into account.

4.9 It identifies at Paragraph 8 that there are three overarching objectives to sustainable development:

- Economic: building a strong, responsive and competitive economy;
- Social: supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities;
- Environment: protecting and enhancing the natural environment and built and historic environment.

4.10 It confirms at Paragraph 10 that a presumption in favour of sustainable development lies at the heart of the NPPF. Paragraph 11 states that for decision-making, this presumption in favour of sustainable

development means approving developments that accord with the development plan without delay. Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole

4.11 Paragraph 38 states that local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

4.12 Of potential relevance to this application are Sections 6, 7, and 9 of the NPPF which we summarise below.

Section 6: Building a Strong, Competitive Economy

4.13 Paragraph 80 requires planning decisions to help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. It also indicates that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.

4.14 Paragraph 82 states that planning decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors.

Section 7: Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres

4.15 Paragraph 85 makes it clear that planning decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation. Paragraph 86 confirms that main town centre uses should be located in town centres.

Section 9: Promoting Sustainable Transport

4.16 Paragraph 104 states that the balance of land uses within an area should act to minimise the number and length of journeys needed for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities.

Emerging Local Plan

4.17 Manchester City Council are within the early stages of reviewing their existing Local Plan, which comprises the Core Strategy (2012) and the saved policies of the UDP (2007), against their needs and

aims out to 2038. The Council completed the first stage of formal consultation on the Issues and Options in May 2020. They are now reviewing the feedback received and will seek to draft a new Local Plan. Previously, the Council planned to consult on a draft Plan in winter 2020-2021, with publication and pre-submission consultation in Autumn 2021. The plan was anticipated to be submitted to the Secretary of State by early 2022, and adopted in Spring 2023. However, it is likely that delays to these timescales have been caused by both the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the set back to the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework observed in late 2020.

Emerging City Region Joint Strategy - Places for Everyone

4.18 The latest draft of the plan, developed by all ten boroughs and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA), was published in late October 2020. The Draft Plan made it clear in Chapter 9 that varied and high-quality retail, leisure and cultural facilities are vital to providing the quality of life that will help to attract people to live in Greater Manchester and in contributing to inclusive places.

4.19 On 3rd December 2020, Stockport council voted against the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) at the final, publication stage following disagreement by Conservative and Liberal Democrat councillors over Green Belt development in the borough. If it had been approved by all 10 Greater Manchester Authorities, the publication plan would have gone through the final stage of consultation in Winter 2020-21. As a result of Stockport Councils withdrawal from the plan, the AGMA executive board have resolved to proceed with a 'Plan of the Nine'.

4.20 Proposed Policy GM-Strat 1 sought to designate a Core Growth Area in which the economic role of the area will be protected and enhanced, whilst proposed Policy GM-e 4 dealt with new retail and leisure uses in town centres and envisioned that the existing hierarchy for retail and leisure uses be maintained and enhanced. Manchester is at the peak of this Hierarchy. Whilst the GMSF will not be progressed in its current form, the vision for Manchester City Centre, and the provision to enhance and protect existing leisure uses is likely to remain the same.

Amendment to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 2020

4.21 On 22 July 2020 the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 was amended. The amendments include revoking Parts A and D and introducing three new use classes (Class E, F1 and F2). This change came into effect from 1st September 2020.

4.22 In 11 parts, Class E more broadly covers commercial, business and service uses previously defined in the revoked Classes A1/2/3, B1, D1(a-b) and 'indoor sport' from D2(e).

5 Planning Appraisal

5.1 This section of the Planning Statement assesses the application proposals against the relevant planning policies having regard to the following matters:

- Principle of the proposed use;
- Design and access; and
- Amenity of surrounding uses.

Principle of Proposed Use

5.2 The site is located within Manchester City Centre, as defined on the Manchester Core Strategy Proposals Map (2012). The proposed change of use is therefore considered acceptable in this location under Core Strategy Policy C1 'Centre Hierarchy', which sets out that commerce, culture, leisure, and tourism uses will be directed towards the City Centre. Furthermore, the application for a change of use from sui generis to D2 accords with Policy CC4 which sets out that the City Centre will be the main focus for culture and leisure in the City Region and that development which supports the improvement of facilities, for visitors to Manchester, will be promoted.

5.3 The proposed change of use will result in the refurbishment of a vacant unit in a prominent location, within a well-established entertainment and leisure venue. National and local policy is clear about the need to promote opportunities to bring vacant sites back into viable use. The site is currently vacant and its most recent use was as a nightclub. The proposed change of use offers a suitable and viable use which is entirely appropriate in this location.

5.4 Core Strategy Policy CC10 establishes a need to offer a wide range of leisure activities in the city centre to encourage a range of visitors, with a focus on creating a family-friendly environment. The proposed opening hours are 10am- 2am Monday to Saturday inclusive and 11am to 11.30pm on Sundays. The proposed leisure use will therefore make a valuable contribution towards both the daytime and evening economy, and so complies with Core Strategy Policy C10, which encourages developments which contribute to the evening economy.

5.5 It is considered that the proposed use is compatible with the surrounding uses within the Printworks venue and would increase the vitality of the centre, in accordance with the aims of Policy C10.

5.6 Taking the above into account, the principle of the proposed use has been established, in accordance with the relevant Core Strategy Policies and the NPPF.

Design and Access

Design

5.7 Briefly summarised, the proposed change of use gives rise to internal reconfigurations to accommodate a number of competitive socialising activities, including shuffleboard, pool, axe throwing and darts, proposed kitchens on the basement level, manager's office and staff facilities on the mezzanine level, alongside the existing bar and bar store toilets (male, female and disabled) as illustrated on the submitted proposed layout plan. The proposals do not result in an increase in floorspace, and are therefore of an acceptable scale in relation to the existing building, complying with Core Strategy Policy DM 1.

5.8 No external works are proposed as part of this application. There will be no alteration to the scale or form of the building and therefore, the proposals will have no impact on the Conservation Area in accordance with Policies CC9 and Policy EN1 of the Core Strategy which require new development to take into consideration the City's heritage.

Access

5.9 Core Strategy Policy DM1 sets out the importance of accessibility within new developments; seeking to ensure that the needs of disabled people are met and that all new developments can be accessed via sustainable modes of transport. The proposed development will be accessed via the existing entrance off the primary access into the Printworks from Withy Grove, within the Printworks venue itself at the ground floor. Therefore, a safe and suitable means of access is provided to serve proposed development in accordance with Core Strategy Policy DM 1.

5.10 Core Strategy Policy T2 seeks to ensure that development within the City Centre is easily accessible, and takes into consideration the realistic requirements of the users of the development.

5.11 The adopted Manchester Core Strategy makes clear that the City Centre is the most sustainable location for retail and leisure development, given the presence of major local, regional and public transport networks within the Centre. Manchester Victoria train and Metrolink station is located approximately 100m to the north west of the site. Exchange Square tram stop and the Shudehill Interchange Tram, Bus and Coach Station are both located within 60m of the site.

5.12 Given the site's sustainable location, it is anticipated that the majority of users will visit the venue via public transport. The proposed use therefore accords with Policy T2.

5.13 There are also number of public car parks in close proximity to the application site; approximately 9 car parks are located within a 500m radius of the site. The nearest to the site, NCP Car Park Manchester Printworks, offers 777 spaces and is open 24 hours Monday – Sunday. Therefore, the proposals ensure access to adequate parking to serve the proposed development in accordance with Policy CC5.

Amenity

5.14 Paragraph 180 of the NPPF outlines that planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should seek to mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life.

5.15 The proposed opening hours are 10am- 2am Monday to Saturday inclusive and 11am to 11.30pm on Sunday. The site has as established late night opening use (the former nightclub) and the proposed opening hours are therefore considered acceptable in light of this. Opening times at the Printworks vary, but are broadly as set out below:

- Monday to Thursday: 06:00 – 02:00
- Friday: 06:00 – 04:00
- Saturday: 07:00 – 04:00
- Sunday: 08:00 – 02:00

5.16 Given the nature of the Printworks development as a late night opening venue, it is not considered that the proposed use will impact upon the amenity of surrounding uses as a result of noise, especially when compared with the established use of the site.

5.17 It is therefore considered that there will be no negative impact upon the amenity of surrounding uses with regard to noise. As such, this accords with paragraph 180 of the NPPF and Core Strategy Policies

C10 and DM1, which require that proposed uses should not create an unacceptable impact on neighbouring uses in terms of noise.

Summary

5.18 This application for a change of use to Class E utilises an existing unit and does not seek to alter the existing scale or form of the building within the Conservation Area. The site is located within a highly sustainable location in the City Centre with realistic opportunities for access by public transport and public car parking provided in the vicinity.

5.19 Therefore, the proposed change of use does not give rise to any issues of design or access and complies with relevant national and local policies.

6 Summary and Conclusions

6.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Nexus Planning on behalf of DTZ Investors to support a change of use application at Unit 2A, The Printworks, 27 Withy Grove, Manchester City Centre, M4 2BS. The following change of use is being applied for:

'The change of use from a nightclub (sui generis) to flexible Class E use'.

6.2 The total floorspace to which the proposed change of use applies is approximately 818 sq.m and pertains to the former nightclub. This application proposes internal alterations to enable the utilisation of the unit, as a flexible indoor recreation space that will host a number of activities, such as crazy golf, darts and shuffle board, alongside an ancillary bar and food offer.

6.3 The Development Plan for Manchester City Council establishes that the proposed use is acceptable in this City Centre location, in accordance with Core Strategy Policy C1 and Annex 2 of the NPPF.

6.4 The proposed use provides an opportunity to utilise a vacant unit in a highly sustainable City Centre location, for a viable use which will contribute to the vitality and viability of the City Centre.

6.5 It has been demonstrated that the proposals represent sustainable development in a highly accessible, City Centre location. The design of the development entails internal alterations to an existing unit and does not alter the scale or form of the building, which will maintain the character of the conservation area.

6.6 There are no other technical considerations which would prevent the proposed change of use to Class E.

6.7 The proposed change of use is therefore strongly supported by local and national planning policy. Accordingly, it is considered that planning permission should be granted without delay, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in the NPPF.

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