

Application Number/s: 133239/FO/2022

Applicant: NatWest Group

Agent: Cushman & Wakefield

Location: 1 Spinningfields Square, M3 3AP

Proposal: Alteration of entrance doors

Ward: Deansgate

Description of Site and Surrounding Area

The application relates to 1 Spinningfields Square, a predominantly office building in Manchester City Centre.

Building

The application building is a large, purpose-built office building constructed from steel and glass. The building varies in height from around 8 storeys to 6 storeys, with a large, curved roof. The building is surrounded by high quality public realm. There are various ground floor retail/leisure uses to the building.

Surrounding Area (including Conservation Area)

1 Spinningfields Square comprises a 9-storey building occupied by NatWest. The building comprises commercial uses at the ground floor level with offices above. Natwest are proposing refurbishment works to ensure the building better meets their requirements and to improve its energy efficiency.

The building is located within the Spinningfields area of the City Centre and the Deansgate Conservation Area. The building is not listed but is located close to a number of listed buildings including the John Rylands Library (Grade I listed) to the north, largely separated by an intervening building; Elliot House (Grade II listed) to the south-east; and 184 and 186 Deansgate (Grade II listed) to the south.

Description of Proposal

The proposal comprises the replacement of the existing entrance on the Deansgate elevation of the building, which provides access to the reception area for the office floors above. The current sliding doors will be replaced with a pair of revolving doors. A non-revolving door will be retained to the left hand side for wheelchair users.

2no. 'Boon Edam' 2400mm diameter revolving doors with 400mm deep canopy above. In addition, there will be 1000mm wide pass door to the side for accessible entry. The door height is to be 2400mm with a total height of 2800mm when including the 400mm canopy above.

The Planning Submission

The application is supported by the following information:

- Application Form

- Covering Letter
- Location Plan
- Existing and Proposed Plans

Publicity LBC

Site Notice/s Posted and Dates: Posted 20/04/22, Expired 11/05/22

Press Adverts Published and Dates: Not Required

Neighbour Notification: Notified 30 March 2022.

Representations Received: None.

Consultations

Policy

The Development Plan

The Development Plan consists of: The Manchester Core Strategy (2012); and Saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (1995). The Core Strategy is the key document and sets out the long-term strategic planning policies for Manchester's future development.

A number of UDP policies have been saved. Planning applications in Manchester must be decided in accordance with the Core Strategy and saved UDP policies as directed by section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document (July 2012)

Policy SP1 'Spatial Principles' – Development in all parts of the city should make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice, which includes:

- Creating a well-designed place that enhances or creates character
- Makes a positive contribution to the health, safety and wellbeing of residents
- Considers the needs of all members of the society
- Protects and enhances the built and natural environment
- Minimises emissions, ensures efficient use of natural resources and previously developed land
- Improves access to jobs, services, education and open space by being located to reduce the need to travel and provides access to sustainable transport

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' – The City Centre will develop as a location which appeals to a wide range of residents and visitors. Development that promotes this objective will be supported, particularly through, amongst other things, high standards of accessibility to buildings and across spaces in the City Centre.

Policy EN3 ‘Heritage’ – 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 scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas and archaeological remains.

Policy EN4 ‘Reducing CO2 Emissions by Enabling Low and Zero Carbon Development’ – All development must follow the principle of the Energy Hierarchy and be designed to, amongst other things, reduce the need for energy through design features and reduce the need for energy through energy efficient features, such as improved insulation and glazing.

Policy DM1 ‘Development Management’ – All development should have regard to a variety of specific issues, which include:

- Design (Siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail)
- Impact on surrounding impact in terms of design/appearance and character
- Effects on amenity (Privacy, light, noise, vibration, air quality, odours, litter, vermin, birds, road safety, traffic generation)
- Accessibility (disabled access, public transportation)
- Community safety and crime prevention
- Design for health
- Adequacy of internal accommodation and external amenity space
- Refuse storage and collection
- Vehicular access and parking
- Biodiversity, landscaping, archaeological and built heritage
- Green infrastructure, including open space (public and private)
- Flood risk and drainage
- Existing and proposed hazardous installations
- Sustainable construction techniques (BREEAM)

Saved Policies of Manchester Unitary Development Plan

Saved Policy 18 ‘Conservation Areas’ – The LPA shall give particularly careful consideration to development proposals within Conservation Areas. The LPA shall seek to preserve and enhance the character of its designated conservation areas by carefully considering issues surrounding:

- The relationship of new structures to neighbouring buildings and places
- The effect of major changes to the appearance of existing buildings
- The desirability of retaining architectural features (including trees)
- The effect of signs and advertisements

The LPA will not normally grant outline consent within conservation areas. Consent to demolish a building in a conservation area will only be granted where it is wholly beyond repair, incapable of reasonable beneficial use or where removal or replacement would benefit the appearance or character of the conservation area.

Where demolition is to be followed by redevelopment, demolition will only be permitted where there are approved detailed plans for redevelopment.

Development proposals adjacent to Conservation Areas will be granted only where it can be shown that they will not harm the appearance or character of the conservation area. This will include protection of views into and out of Conservation Areas.

Other Material Considerations

The Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance (Adopted 2007)

This document provides guidance to help develop and enhance Manchester. In particular, the SPD seeks appropriate design, quality of public realm, facilities for disabled people (in accordance with Design for Access 2), pedestrians and cyclists. It also promotes a safer environment through Secured by Design principles, appropriate waste management measures and environmental sustainability. Sections of relevance are:

Chapter 2 ‘Design’ – Outlines the City Council’s expectations that all new developments should have a high standard of design making a positive contribution to the City’s environment.

Chapter 3 ‘Accessibility – Design for Access 2’ – Outlines the City Council’s design aims to encourage fully inclusive and accessible standards.

Chapter 4 ‘Environmental Standards’ – Outlines the City Council’s commitment to making Manchester ‘the Greenest City in Britain’, including by encouraging energy efficient design and reduction in energy demand.

City Centre Strategic Plan 2015-2018 (March 2016)

On the 2 March 2016 the City Council’s Executive approved the City Centre Strategic Plan which seeks to provide an up-to-date vision for the City Centre within the current economic and strategic context along with outlining the key priorities for the next few years for each City Centre neighbourhood. This document seeks to align itself with the Manchester Strategy (January 2016) along with the Greater Manchester Strategy. Overall the City Centre plan seeks to “shape the activity that will ensure that the City Centre continues to consolidate its role as a major economic and cultural asset for Greater Manchester and the north of England”.

Manchester Strategy (January 2016)

The strategy sets the long-term vision for Manchester’s future and how this will be achieved. An important aspect of this strategy is the City Centre and how it will be a key driver of economic growth and a major employment centre. Furthermore, increasing the centre for residential is fundamental along with creating a major visitor destination.

National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)

The revised NPPF re-issued in July 2021. The document states that the ‘purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The document clarifies that the ‘objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of

future generations to meet their own needs' (paragraph 7). In order to achieve sustainable development, the planning system has three overarching objectives – economic, social and environmental (paragraph 8).

Section 4 – Decision-making – States that local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed developments in a positive and creative way, making use of pre-application discussions etc. In addition, applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance, the proposal will be assessed on up-to-date development plan and any other material considerations. The applicant made use of pre-application discussions and a site visit.

Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places – Planning decisions should ensure that developments will:

- Function well and add to the overall quality of the area for the lifetime of the development
- Are visually attractive because of good architecture, layout and appropriate/effective landscaping
- Are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape settings and not prevent or discourage appropriate innovation or change (such as increased density)
- Establish a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinct places to live, work and visit.
- Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks
- Create places that are safe, inclusive, accessible, healthy and promote wellbeing with high standards of amenity for existing and future users and where crime, disorder and fear of crime do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience. (Paragraph 130)

Section 14 – Planning for Climate Change – New development should be planned for in ways which, amongst other things, can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design (Paragraph 154).

Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment – LPAs should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset should be treated favourably (Paragraph 206).

Not all elements of a Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance (Paragraph 207).

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Climate Change – There are many opportunities for LPAs to help shape appropriate strategies and decisions in line with climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Amongst other things, the LPA should promote low carbon design approaches to reduce energy consumption in buildings.

Historic Environment – Any decisions where listed buildings and their settings and conservation areas are a factor must address the statutory considerations of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (in particular Sections 16, 66 and 72) as well as applying the relevant policies in the development plan and NPPF.

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 66 of the Act requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings. This requires more than a simple balancing exercise and case law has considerable importance and weight should be given to any impact upon a designated heritage asset but in particular upon the desirability of preserving the setting with a strong presumption to preserve the asset.

Section 72 of the Act requires the LPA to, during the assessment for planning permission, exercise due respect to any buildings or other land that falls within a designated conservation area. Special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area.

Equality Act (2010)

S149 (Public Sector Equality Duty) of the Equality Act 2010 requires due regard to the need to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act and advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The Equality Duty does not impose a legal requirement to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment. Compliance with the Equality Duty involves consciously thinking about the aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making.

Conservation Area Declaration

The Deansgate/Peter Street conservation area lies within the city centre of Manchester and is contiguous with other designated areas covering a substantial part of the Victorian city centre. For this reason, only part of Deansgate is included in this area, most of the rest of the street being incorporated into Castlefield, Parsonage Gardens, St Ann's Square, Albert Square and Cathedral conservation areas.

The designation was made by the City Council on 26 June 1985, when several city centre conservation areas were designated, and existing ones extended. It includes much of the area surrounding Peter Street and the junctions of Deansgate with both Quay Street and Bridge Street.

Issues

Principle of Development

The proposed alterations to the east elevation main entrance to the building would be minimal and would retain the overall character and appearance of the building and

area, despite being in a prominent location. It is understood that the new entrance doors would minimise emissions, as the doors would reduce draughts in the building's reception area. In addition, the entrance doors would be designed to ensure easy access for those with mobility limitations. As such, the proposal is consistent with Policy SP1 of the Core Strategy and is acceptable in principle.

Impact on Conservation Area

The application building is a modern landmark building within the Deansgate Conservation Area. Although an important building, it is not considered that the building contributes to the historical context and character of the conservation area. As such, as per paragraph 207 of the NPPF, the building does not contribute to its significance directly.

The proposed alterations would cause neutral/less than substantial harm to the character of the conservation area. The proposal would have public benefits through improving accessibility for all (consistent with Policy CC10 of the Core Strategy) and contribute to the reduction in emissions (consistent with Policy EN4 of the Core Strategy) and would thus preserve the character of the Deansgate Conservation Area (consistent with Policy EN3 of the Core Strategy). It is not considered that the type of development proposed is relevant to saved UDP Policy DC18.1, given its modest scale.

In summary, it is considered that the less than substantial harm to the conservation area that the proposal would lead to is outweighed by public benefits and is therefore acceptable.

Design

The application has been accompanied by detailed design, cross-section information and includes details of proposed materials. The proposed entrance scheme would not have a significant or material impact on the overall appearance and character of the building and is acceptable, consistent with Policy DM1 of the Core Strategy and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Amenity

Conclusion

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Human Rights Act 1998

This application needs to be considered against the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. Under Article 6, the applicants (and those third parties, including local residents, who have made representations) have the right to a fair hearing and to this end the Committee must give full consideration to their comments.

Protocol 1 Article 1, and Article 8 where appropriate, confer(s) a right of respect for a person's home, other land and business assets. In taking account of all material

considerations, including Council policy as set out in the Core Strategy and saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan, the Director of Planning, Building Control & Licensing has concluded that some rights conferred by these articles on the applicant(s)/objector(s)/resident(s) and other occupiers and owners of nearby land that might be affected may be interfered with but that that interference is in accordance with the law and justified by being in the public interest and on the basis of the planning merits of the development proposal. She believes that any restriction on these rights posed by the of the application is proportionate to the wider benefits of and that such a decision falls within the margin of discretion afforded to the Council under the Town and Country Planning Acts

Recommendation:

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions.