13 April 2021
Delivered via Planning Portal

Anthony Mitchell
Planning and Building Control
Manchester City Council
Level 6, Town Hall Extension
St Peter's Square
Manchester
M2 5HD

Ref: MANM3013

Dear Tony

APPLICATION FOR ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT AND LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR INSTALLATION OF BANNER SIGNAGE TO MAIN ENTRANCE OF THE GROSVENOR BUILDING (FACULTY OF ARTS & HUMANITIES), MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY.

On behalf of Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU), I am pleased to enclose applications for advertisement consent and listed building consent to enable the display of three banner signs to the front of The Grosvenor Building portico façade (Grade II Listed), which is home to the University's Faculty of Arts & Humanities, located at the All Saint's Campus, central Manchester.

The applications have been submitted via Planning Portal (refs. PP-09734125 and PP-09734176), and comprise electronic copies of the documents:

- Completed Application Forms and Certificates
- This covering letter, including Heritage Assessment
- Design and Access Statement (dated April 2021), prepared by Allies and Morrison
- Site Location Plan (drawing ref. MMTAAM-XX-RF-07-AR-0082)
- Portico Existing Elevation (drawing ref. MMT-AAM-XX-ZZ-07-AR-0700)
- Portico Banner Interventions (drawing ref. MMT-AAM-XX-ZZ-07-AR-0701)
- Portico Proposed Elevation (drawing ref. MMT-AAM-XX-ZZ-07-AR-0702)
- Portico Banners Proposed Fixings (drawing ref. MMT-AAM-XX-ZZ-07-AR-0703)

The requisite application fee of £132 for the advertisement consent application has been paid online via Planning Portal (ref. PP-09734125). There is no fee for a listed building consent application.

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BACKGROUND

As the Council is aware, full planning permission for the erection of a new arts and media building including the retention of the former Chorlton-on-Medlock Town Hall façade, to provide theatre, poetry library, exhibition and performance space, café / restaurant / bar, social space including roof terrace, University teaching, studio and office accommodation and associated storage, plant and operational floorspace was granted on 26 July 2017 (LPA Ref: 115648/FO/2017). An associated application for Listed Building Consent for alterations to the Town Hall façade was also approved in July 2017 (LPA Ref: 115649/LO/2017).

An application for advertisement consent, associated with the installation if internally illuminated, integral building signage - comprising two MMU logos to the north and south elevation and one MMU individual letter sign to the east elevation, was approved in July 2019 (LPA ref. 123662/AO/2019).

THE APPLICATION PROPOSAL

The Grade II listed Façade of the Former Chorlton-on-Medlock Town Hall has recently been integrated and restored as part of the new Arts & Humanities department for MMU, now known as 'The Grosvenor Building', which was completed in 2020. The Portico provides the main entrance to the building and it is essential to the success of the project that this is clearly legible. Since its opening for the start of the academic year in September 2020, there has been feedback from the university that students are struggling to identify 'The Grosvenor Building' within the campus, with there currently being little building signage on the exterior of the building.

This application therefore supports proposals to further enhance the status of the Portico as the primary entrance to 'The Grosvenor Building', and seeks advertisement consent and listed building consent for the installation of three fabric banners between the existing columns, to help advertise the name and faculty of the building, as well as promote the range of cultural and civic events taking place at the site.

The proposal is therefore for three separate banners to be suspended between each set of columns, with a size of 3m tall by 1.2 m wide, positioned centrally within the column. The proposal is that they will be located at the top half of the portico such that they are clearly visible from below, and up Oxford St/Cavendish Square, as well as being high enough to be well above the top of the fanlight over the main central entrance door. These will be fixed to the Portico via stainless steel anchors with resin fixing into the stone soffit and columns.

Full details are set out within the Design and Access Statement, prepared by Allies and Morrison.

ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT APPLICATION

Legislative and Policy Context

The considerations upon which the advertisement consent application needs to be assessed are detailed within the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007, Saved Policy DC15 (Advertisements) of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan 1998 (UDP), the National Planning Policy Framework ("the Framework") and associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). Examination of these documents indicates that the material planning considerations for this application relate to amenity and public safety.

Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations (2007)

The Regulations requires Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to assess applications for advertisement consent against the issues of public safety and amenity.

With regards to public safety, LPAs are expected to have regard to the effect of signage upon the safe use and operation of any form of traffic or transport on land (including the safety of pedestrians). This will include consideration of matters such as the likely behaviour of drivers of vehicles who see the advertisement and possible

confusion with any traffic sign or other signal. LPAs should also bear in mind adverts can positively benefit public safety by directing drivers to their destination. The key consideration, in assessing an adverts' impact, is whether the advertisement itself, or the location, is likely to be so distracting or confusing, that it endangers people in the vicinity who are taking reasonable care for their own and others' safety.

In terms of amenity, LPAs should have regard to an adverts' effect on the appearance of the building or on visual amenity in the immediate neighbourhood/surroundings where it is to be displayed. The relevant considerations for this purpose are the local characteristics of the neighbourhood, including scenic, historic, architectural or cultural features, which contribute to the distinctive character of the locality.

Saved UDP Policy DC15 (Advertisements, Hoardings and Posters)

Saved Policy DC15 of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan (UDP) relates to advertisements and confirms that, in assessing the interests of amenity and safety, the Council will ensure that adverts do not harm the character of architectural features of a building, nor interfere with its proper use, they should be in scale with the locality and relate properly to the site on which they stand, they should be unobtrusive and should not intrude into residential neighbourhoods and areas of high amenity value. The policy confirms that a proposal which would be injurious to public safety or adversely affect the flow of traffic, by reason of its position, size, or design will not be permitted.

National Planning Policy Framework & Planning Practice Guidance

A revised Framework was published in February 2019. In relation to advertisements, Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places) confirms that the location of proposed advertisements are to be fully considered to ensure signage does not have a negative impact on the appearance of the built and natural environment. The Framework states that control over outdoor advertisements should be efficient, effective and simple and reaffirms that advertisements can only be subject to control in the interests of public safety and amenity, taking account of cumulative impact.

Planning Practice Guidance[1] updated in July 2019, references both the advert regulations and the Framework, whilst reiterating the same advertisement guidance in respect of amenity and public safety.

Planning Analysis

The proposed sign is consistent with the key objectives of adopted local and national planning policy. A summary of the key planning considerations is provided below.

Amenity

The proposed banners are located away from the highway and positioned in a way that ensures impacts on visual amenity are kept to a minimum have been designed to respect and complement the historic portico and its immediate surroundings. The proposed banners will not be overly prominent or visually obtrusive and the size, location, positioning and nature of the advertisements are compatible with their location such that they will not adversely affect the visual amenity of the area. People likely to see the banners will be entering the building and as such the logo will assist with wayfinding.

Safety

The main safety considerations relate to the siting of the signs and the potential for the signs to distract drivers. In this respect, the signs visible from the public highway are minimal in appearance, with the colouring and lettering being non-obtrusive. Furthermore, the banners are at a height which will not be immediately visible to road users and so will not cause undue distraction.

The sign is located in a prominent location at the principle access point to 'The Grosvenor Building' and will be able to be 'read' at a glance, and not distract drivers. Indeed, the signs have been designed to be visible from a distance,

[1] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/advertisements

such that they are legible from across Cavindish square or from the pavement on Oxford Road, but do not obstruct light passing into the building or detracting from the scale of the Portico. Furthermore, the signs are not proposed to be independently illuminated so there will be no issues of public safety around flashing / backlit signage – the existing up-lights at the base of the Portico will provide illumination when switched on.

Conclusion on Advertisement Consent
In conclusion, it is considered that the proposed banners are in line with the provisions of the advertisement regulations, saved UDP Policy DC15 and the Framework. The careful location, positioning and design of the banners results in there being no impact upon amenity or safety and the proposal is considered acceptable in principle.

LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

The relevant planning policy and guidance is contained in:

- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- The National Planning Policy Framework (2019)
- Manchester Core Strategy (2012)
- Manchester Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Saved Policies (1995)

The Heritage Statement included at Appendix 1 provides a proportionate assessment of the proposed works in the context of the above planning policy and legislative context. Overall, it is considered that the proposed signage will not affect the significance of the Façade of the Former Chorlton-on-Medlock Town Hall. These works will be sensitively fixed to the structure and will help signpost the main entrance and name/ faculty of the wider building, as well as promote the range of cultural and civic events taking place at the site.

For these reasons the proposed works fully addresses s.16 and s.66 of The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The proposed works are also consistent with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework. In particular, paragraph 192 which requires that local planning authorities should take into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets. The assessment describes the significance of the heritage assets affected. The proposal sustains the significance of the heritage assets affected as required by paragraph 193. The works to the listed building are also considered to be in accordance with the saved policies of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan (1995) and Manchester Core Strategy (2012).

CONCLUSION

This covering letter supports applications for advertisement consent and listed building consent associated with the installation of three banner signs within the Portico entrance of 'The Grosvenor Building'. I trust that you have everything you require to validate and determine these applications, though please do not hesitate to make contact if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely,



Thomas Lord
Planner

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Appendix 1: Heritage Statement

Heritage Statement

Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Turley Heritage in relation to an application for listed building consent for new signage banners to the grade II listed façade of the former Chorlton upon Medlock town hall, Cavendish Street, Manchester.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty upon the Local Planning Authority in determining applications for development affecting listed buildings to pay special regard to the desirability of preserving the special interest and setting of a listed building.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides the Government's national planning policy on the conservation of the historic environment. In respect of information requirements for applications, it sets out that: *'In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance"*[2].

This statement firstly identifies the relevant heritage assets that may be affected by the proposed works followed by an assessment of the significance of these assets; proportionate to both the importance of the asset and the likely impacts. This assessment is undertaken on the basis of published information, archival research and on-site visual survey.

The report concludes with an assessment of the impact of the proposed works, in light of the statutory duty of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, national policy set out in the NPPF, and local planning policy for the historic environment.

Heritage Assets

The NPPF defines a heritage asset as: *"A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest."*

Designated heritage assets are those which possess a level of heritage interest that justifies designation and are then subject to particular procedures in planning decisions that involve them.

The Façade of the Former Chorlton upon Medlock Town Hall was originally included on the statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest at Grade II on 25 February 1952 and later amended on 06 June 1994. The list description states the following:

Town hall, facade to Polytechnic Refectory at the time of listing. 1830-1, by Richard Lane; recently demolished and rebuilt except the facade. Sandstone ashlar. Greek Revival style. Two storeys, 1:2:3:2:1 bays, symmetrical, with outer bays breaking forwards very slightly and 3-bay portico to the centre, channelled rustication to ground floor, pilasters to the end bays, entablature with plain frieze, cornice and parapet. Tetrastyle portico of fluted Doric columns with four paterae on the frieze, mounted on a base of three steps; central doorway with moulded architrave, panelled double doors, and rectangular 2-pane overlight; smaller doorways to the 2nd and 8th bays, in similar style; 12-pane sashed windows to both floors with plain reveals. Forms group with the former Manchester Polytechnic School of Art to the right (q.v.).

[2] MHCLG (2019) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – para. 189

Significance of the Heritage Assets

The NPPF defines the significance of a heritage asset as:

"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting."[3]

The following assessment of significance is proportionate to both the significance of the identified heritage asset and sufficient so as to understand the impact of the Proposed Development, given its nature and extent. The assessment has been undertaken on the detailed archival research and on-site visual survey.

Façade of the Former Chorlton upon Medlock Town Hall (Grade II Listed)

Architectural Interest

The Former Town Hall Façade (Figure 1) dates to the early to mid-19th century (c.1831) and was designed in the Greek Revival architectural style by the Manchester-born architect Richard Lane[4]. Only the front elevation of the building remains following a façade retention scheme in the mid to late 20th century.



Figure 1: Former Town Hall Façade (2020)

The building is two storeys and carefully proportioned to nine bays wide, constructed from sandstone ashlar with banded rustication to the ground floor. It is symmetrical in its design and execution with a centralised Greek Doric tetrastyle portico of three bays, supported by fluted tapered Doric columns. The severity of the portico is relieved by the paterae to the frieze. Sandstone steps up to a platform to provide the plinth for the portico. A simple entablature with plain frieze and cornice extend across to the flanking three bays, which are decorated with pilasters and a raised parapet. Behind this is an outdoor terrace area with glass balustrading, linked to the wider

[3] MHCLG (2019), National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - Annex 2: Glossary

[4] Pevsner, N, Hyde, M & Hartwell, C (2004) The Buildings of England. Lancashire: Manchester & South East

Arts and Humanities building. At the centre is the main entrance into the Arts and Humanities building with secondary entrances via the second and eighth bays.

The building has recently been refurbished with new windows and doors installed and the stonework repaired/cleaned and missing features reinstated.

Historic Interest

The Former Town Hall Façade was commissioned in 1830 by the Police Commissioners of Chorlton Row as the Town Hall for Chorlton on Medlock. It was later completed on 14 October 1831[5]. As aforementioned, the building was designed in the Greek Revival architectural style by the Manchester-born architect Richard Lane (1795-1880). Lane was appointed Surveyor to the Police Commissioners and Chorlton Town Hall is one of his earliest works, following the Salford Town Hall of 1825.

Lane was born in London but practised exclusively in the north west from his office in Manchester. He has been described as the leading Manchester architect of the early nineteenth century, who designed many public buildings and a number of churches and chapels[6]. Lane worked in a range of styles from Gothic to Classical, but especially favoured the Greek Revival style of his contemporaries Smirke, Cockerell, Alexander Thompson and John Dobson.

The building had only a short life as a town hall, but it also served as the home of the Chorlton-on-Medlock Poor Law Guardians Dispensary, which had been established in 1825 as a welfare and medical charity to meet the needs of the growing working class population. By 1842, the area was transferred to the newly formed municipal Borough of Manchester and the Town Hall was reduced to a support role as a local jail; a two storey Police Parade Room was added in 1849-63. It is believed that the additional entrances were added to the building during this time.

Assessment of Impact

Summary of Legislation and Planning Policy

Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Manchester City Council, in determining the submitted application for listed building consent, has a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their setting or any features of special interest they may possess. The meaning of 'preservation' in this context, as informed by case law, is taken to be the avoidance of harm.

The key heritage issue to be taken into consideration is therefore the effect of the proposed signage works upon the special interest and significance of the listed building. In accordance with paragraph 189 of the NPPF, the significance of the listed building has been proportionately assessed above.

Paragraph 192 states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, putting them into viable uses consistent with their conservation, as well as the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraph 193 requires when considering the impact of a proposed works on the significance of a designated heritage asset that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. 'Conservation' is defined by the NPPF as 'the process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance'[7].

[5] Pevsner, N, Hyde, M & Hartwell, C (2004) The Buildings of England. Lancashire: Manchester & South East
[6] Pevsner, N, Hyde, M & Hartwell, C (2004) The Buildings of England. Lancashire: Manchester & South East
[7] MHCLG (2019) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – Annex 2: Glossary

Proposed Works

As set out earlier, the Grade II listed Façade of the Former Chorlton-on-Medlock Town Hall has recently been integrated and restored as part of the new Arts & Humanities building for MMU, which was completed in 2020. The Portico provides the main entrance to the building and it is essential to the success of the project that this is clearly legible. Since this time, improved signage is required to help identify the main entrance and the function/faculty of the building for students and visitors.

The proposals therefore involve the installation of three fabric banners between the existing columns of the listed building to help advertise the name/faculty of the building, as well as promote the range of cultural and civic events taking place at the site.

Impact on the Significance and Special Interest of the Former Town Hall Façade

Each of the proposed banners will be 3m tall by 1.2 m wide, positioned centrally within the columns of the listed façade so they are not in shadow below the pediment and also can utilise the existing uplighters. The proposed location of the signage in-between the columns has been carefully considered, exploring precedents to other listed buildings with similar facades found elsewhere in Manchester and other cities across the UK. These include Manchester Central Library, Manchester Art Gallery and the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool (illustrated further within the Design and Access Statement prepared by Allies and Morrison). The proposed positioning allows for the architectural detailing and overall design of the building to remain appreciable and is considered to be a sensitive and contextually appropriate design solution to apply signage to the listed building.

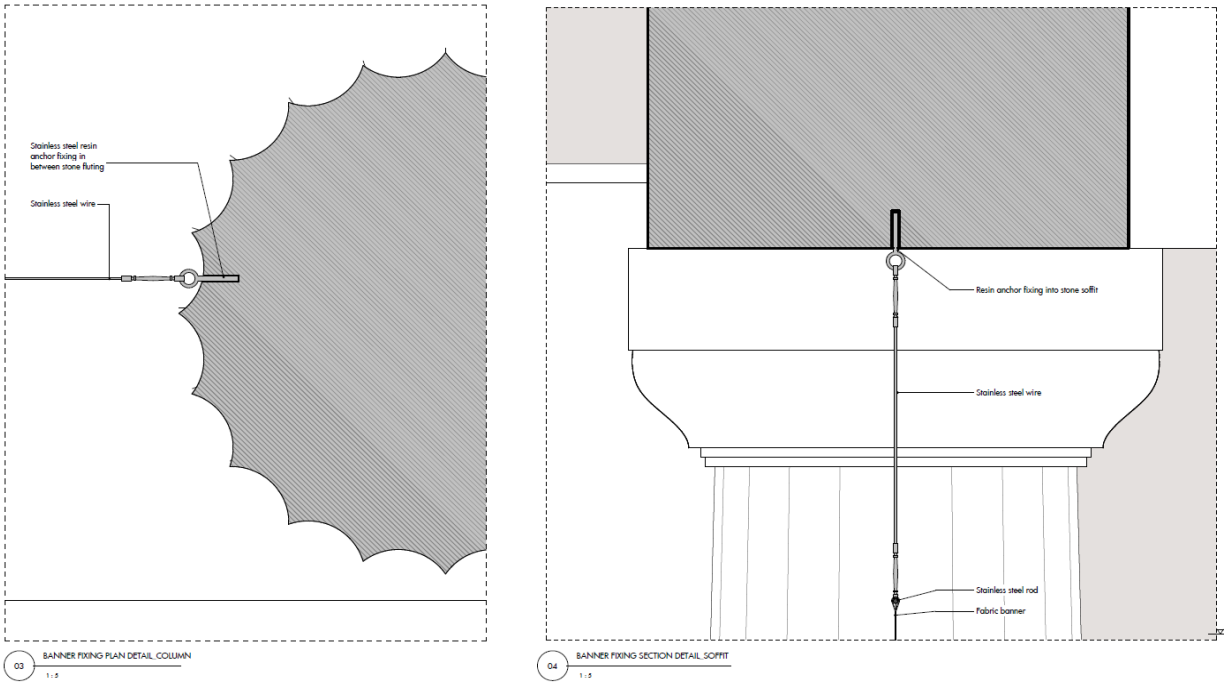

Figure 2: Fixing detail to columns (Extract from Drawing Ref: MMT-AAM-XX-ZZ-07-AR-0703)

The proposed banners are proposed to fixed to the columns via stainless steel anchors with resin fixing into the stone soffit and columns, as detailed on accompanying drawing (ref: MMT-AAM-XX-ZZ-07-AR-0703) and included at Figure 2. As set out in the Design and Access Statement, various other options for the fixings were considered (based on the precedents elsewhere) but were discounted due to the impacts they may cause, both to the fabric and visually.

The proposed fixings are proposed to be centred within the depth of the fluting on the column rather than the outer ridge of the flute to prevent potential damage to the stonework. From these fixings, tensioned, thin-profile,

stainless steel wires can be suspended by which the fabric banners can be fitted. The approach to the fixings involve limited alterations to the existing fabric of the building and allow for the fabric banners to be easily replaced without altering the fixings. The proposed material for the banners themselves will differ to permanent and temporary signage and is detailed further within the supporting Design and Access Statement.

Statutory Duty and NPPF Policy

Overall, it is considered that the proposed signage will not affect the significance of the Façade of the Former Chorlton-on-Medlock Town Hall. These works will be sensitively fixed to the structure and will help signpost the main entrance and name/ faculty of the wider building, as well as promote the range of cultural and civic events taking place at the site.

For these reasons the proposed works fully addresses s.16 and s.66 of The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The proposed works are also consistent with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework. In particular, paragraph 192 which requires that local planning authorities should take into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets. The assessment describes the significance of the heritage assets affected. The proposal sustains the significance of the heritage assets affected as required by paragraph 193.

Local Policy

The proposed works are in keeping with the provisions of Policy DC19.1 of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan, which states that "*the Council will have regard to the desirability of securing the retention, restoration, maintenance and continued use of such buildings …. [and] will not permit any external or internal alteration or addition to a listed building where, in its opinion, there would be an adverse effect on its architectural or historic character*".

The works are also in keeping with Policy CC9 of the Manchester Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy, which states that development in Manchester City Centre should preserve or enhance heritage assets and new development must support the range of uses the Council expects in the City Centre.