

Design and Access Statement including a Planning and Historic Assessment in support of the listed building, planning and advertisement regulations applications for an awning, cctv camera, outdoor dining area, various advertisements and internal alterations at the former J Wippell & Co Ltd premises at Northern Assurance Buildings, 9-21 Princess Street, Albert Square, Manchester, M2 4DN



Summary.

The premises have been vacant for over a year and are immediately adjacent to Caffé Grande Piccolino which was originally established as a restaurant, Piccolino, some 14 years ago with frontages on Clarence Street and then extended into Princess Street in 2016, becoming Caffé Grande Piccolino.

Planning, Listed Building and Advertisement Regulations consents have been granted for all of the works at Caffé Grande Piccolino under consent ref:

Planning Permission - 107500

Listed Building - 107501

Advertisement Regulations – 107502

Retrospective applications for the awning, cctv and flue – 111851 and 112639

The applicant is aware of the sites importance in the Conservation Area and it's Listed Building status and as such which is anxious to ensure that the finished development is fully compliant with the planning regime.

The retail premises, formally known as Wippell's, are already conjoined to the restaurant and share interior wall at the side and rear and, once, were a shared space occupied by the Northern Assurance business.

The site.

This has a single main frontage on to Princess Street. As stated above the property has two internal party walls with Caffé Grande Piccolino, an internal party wall with the main entrance lobby to the Northern Assurance Building and a single external party wall with the former Virgin Money premises, now vacant, located at 1 Princess Street.

The interior of Wippell's was laid out in traditional shop style with freestanding display units.

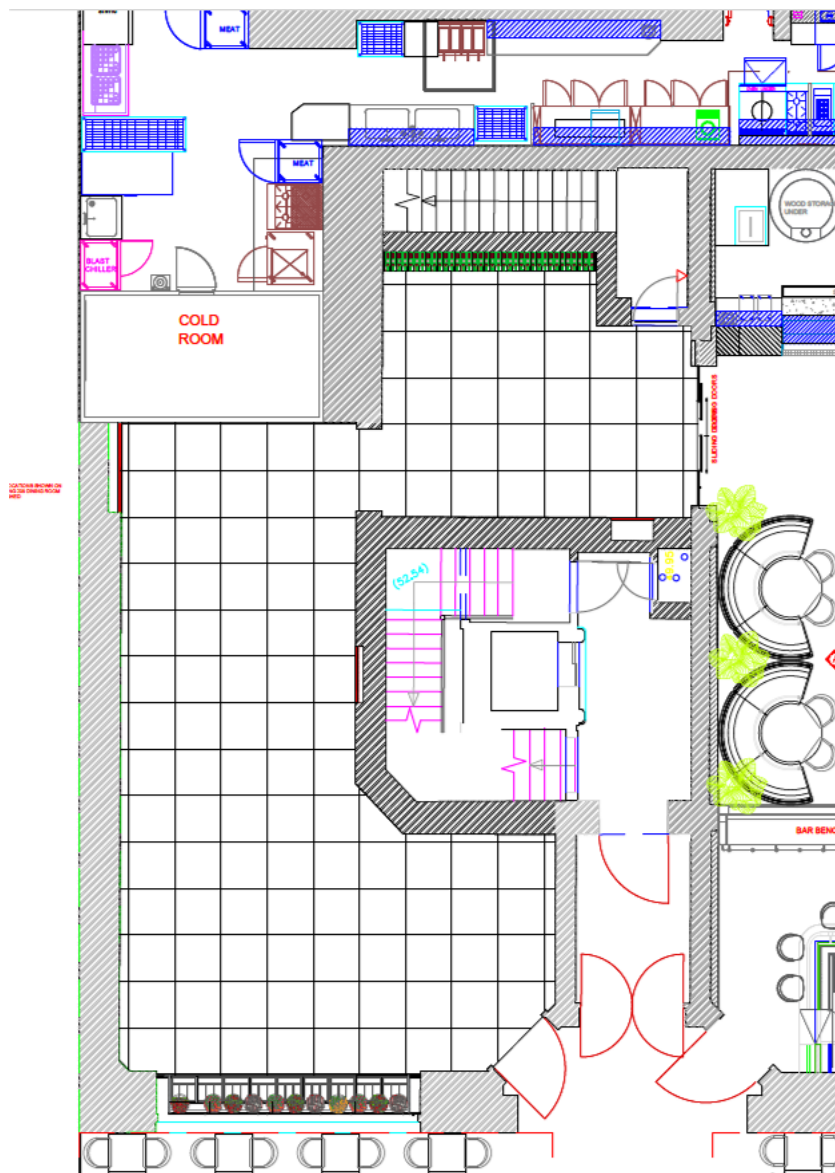
Examples below of units prior to the property being vacated:



The premises also have a basement which is accessed by a door at the rear of the premises and this area is not affected by the proposed alterations.

Since the introduction of the new use classes order in September 2020, both the existing former Wippell's premises and Café Grande Piccolino, fall in Use Class E6 and, as such, permission is not needed to change the use of the premises to an extension of Café Grande Piccolino.

Below is a drawing of the interior layout of Wippell's, in square hatch, with the layout of the existing entrance to the Northern Assurance Building and Caffé Grande Piccolino.



Photographs of interior now that the shop fittings have been removed:



The exterior of the shop is similar to that of Caff  Grande Piccolino fa ade adjacent, and, since being vacated, looks somewhat tired especially with the loss of the gold lettering and formal decoration announcing the shop use.



The property is a listed building and the description is as follows:

Name: NORTHERN ASSURANCE BUILDING
List entry Number: 1270910
GV II

Includes: No.8 CLARENCE STREET. Shops and offices. 1902, by Waddington, Son and Dunkerley; slightly altered. Probably iron-framed, with cladding of sandstone ashlar and some grey granite, steeply pitched slate roofs on several levels. Irregular plan on corner site. Elaborate building in eclectic style with French Renaissance accent. Mostly 5 storeys and attic, but with return side to Clarence Street partly 3 storeys and attic; principal facade of 3 wide bays (windows of 3, 2 and 3 lights) plus a broad curved corner, symmetrical except for this. Panelled frieze over ground floor (interrupted by central entrance arch), 1st and 2nd floors in French Renaissance style with superimposed triangular pilasters surmounted by ball finials, and enriched panels between floors, the centre feature rising to the 3rd floor and finished as a balustrade parapet with ball finials, the outer bays at 3rd and 4th floors recessed and the heads bridged by semi-circular arches with pierced spandrels, string-course over 4th floor with egg-and-dart enrichment, attic windows under richly decorated shaped gables, that in the centre 2-tiered and flanked by octagonal turrets; curved corner similarly treated and finished as a cylindrical turret which has domed roof with corona

and finial, flanked by similar turrets. Central round-headed doorway recessed in a giant round-headed arch which has a 2-light window under the head. Sashed windows without glazing bars, those at 1st and 2nd floors, in centre of 3rd floor, and central gable all recessed behind colonnaded screens; mullion-and-transom windows at 3rd and 4th floors, mullioned windows to attic. Similar fenestration to the corner. Return side to Clarence Street smaller and simpler.

Listing NGR: SJ8387298182

Note: There is no reference to any internal feature in either the existing restaurant or former Wippell's store of being of particular merit.

Development of the scheme.

When the opportunity was presented to the Individual Restaurants (IRC) Ltd, the parent company of Caffè Grande Piccolino, to extend into Wippell's, it was timely, as Covid-19 restrictions have meant a restriction in the number of covers available in the existing premises and it also allowed a further opportunity for outdoor dining.

Internally, an existing partition separating the original clear ground floor, are to be removed to allow access between the existing premises and this is detailed on specifications attached to the application. These are shown on drawing 2651 001 REV O 18.03.21 and 2651 Rev 0 - Piccolino Caffè Grande Clarence St Manchester - Structural Calculations 21.0.

Access will be level between the premises and a level access is available from Clarence Street into the new restaurant area.

The interior will then be fitted out similar to the existing restaurant, as shown on the proposed plans.

There are NO alterations to the main door on the frontage to Princess Street or the 'shop' window, other than the fixing of adhesive signage, which will not damage the window.

The applications include an awning and CCTV camera similar to that already in existence on the Caffè Grande Piccolino that already enjoy the benefit of both planning and listed building consent, as well as an advertisement regulations application for signage similar to that on the restaurant.

The application also delineates an outdoor dining area on the public highways outside the premises. This area will be subject to a

separate licencing application, just as the one outside the existing premisses.

All the new signage, awning and cctv will be installed with minimal impact to the existing façade.

Where possible existing holes in the fascia will be used for fixings and where not the principals set out in Appendix 1 below, will be followed for all interventions to the façade.

Assessment

Internal alterations

These are minimal and principally amount to re-decoration of the premises with a new level access being provided from the existing restaurant. These are fully described on drawings ref: 2651 001 REV O 18.03.21 and 2651 Rev 0 - Piccolino Caffé Grande Clarence St Manchester - Structural Calculations 21.0.

External alterations.

These consist of a single cctv camera being affixed to the fascia together with an awning, identical to that on the existing restaurant, both of which have planning and listed building consent.

The awning 'dresses' the shop front and allows outdoor dining to be facilitated to the front of the property, something that brings life and vitality to the City Centre as well as ensuring a covid-19 secure environment.

Full details of these are shown on the plans supporting the application.

Advertisements.

These reflect those of the existing restaurant and can be considered to be in scale with and appropriate to the property. Fixings are to be used that complies with the latest Historic England specification as outlines in Appendix 1 below.

Policy considerations

Guidance on decision making is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework 2019.

This promotes sustainable development which this is as it is as it is bringing back into use a vacant retail unit. Where heritage assets are involved, which this property is, it is supportive of development that causes less than substantial harm to heritage assets where the benefits clearly outweigh the harm the development causes.

Of relevance are paragraphs 85 to 90 which seeks to ensure that proposals support the vitality of town centres, and paragraphs on Achieving well-designed places, 124 to 132 encourage innovation in good design.

Paragraphs 184 to 202 deals with the impact on significance of a designated heritage asset.

Additional guidance within the government's Planning practice guidance, and in the context of this, it is suggested that works that are moderate or minor in scale are likely to cause less than substantial harm, or no harm at all as outlined in para 196 of the NPPF.

Looking at the key elements:

Firstly, the awning is a similar structure to that approved under the original consents for extensions to Piccolino to create Caffé Grande Piccolino in 2016. The awning is on a traditional style shopfront where it relates well to the main features of the building. Where possible it will be fixed on existing holes that were on the facade of the building before works commenced.

As can be seen from the photos the existing awning relates well to the general massing of the building and, as will the new awning. As such, is considered to cause less than substantial harm to either the listed building itself, or the setting of the building.

Secondly, the CCTV camera will be located on the fascia and is similar to many in the city centre. It is unobtrusive but allows for full observation of the outdoor area and entrance and, as such, plays a valuable role in ensuring security. It will be screened by the awning when that is extended.

Thirdly, the proposed outdoor dining area will bring life and vitality to the street seen and support the creation of a 'vital' city centre.

Fourthly, the internal alteration consists solely of re-opening a wall that was erected to sub-divide the premises and is of no historic interest.

Lastly, the proposed advertising is of a high standard and reflects the signage already approved on the existing Caffé Grande Piccolino. The location of the signage and the scale, colour and general appearance will add to the character of the building.

The existing restaurant has proved to be popular since it opened and has added to both the economy of the City Centre and the vitality of the street scene through its outdoor area.

As such, it can be argued that the incorporation of the vacant premises into the restaurant, with the works causing less than substantial harm to the building, the economic benefits of having a successful business outweigh any harm the minimal alterations to the heritage asset and the application should be supported.

Appendix 1

Fixing specifications for external signage

Guidance on Mortars and stonework repairs are found in Historic England Publications quoted on the references section below and the guidance below is based on these documents and, where relevant, the methodologies specified will be followed.

To this end the following principals will be followed in the fixing of ALL signage.

- Fixing points exposed when the existing signage is removed, will be repaired by a lime based mortar using a colouring agent to match the exiting stone/mortar's colour, as appropriate if they are not to be used for fixing the new signage.
- Existing fixing points will be used where ever possible, for the new signage.
- All new fixings will be located within the existing mortar joints and NO existing stone work is to be drilled.
- All fixings are to be the minimum size needed and bonded into the mortar with an non water permeable adhesive using a rod/dowel and resin adhesive.
- Where power is to be supplied to signage, this will be via existing holes or via new holes drilled in the mortar joints. All holes will be sealed with a suitable non water permeable sealant to prevent water ingress into the joints.
- Photographic records shall be made of each fixing.

References

Historic England Publication

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/repointing-brick-and-stone-walls/heag144-repointing-brick-and-stone-walls/>

<https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/stone-conservation/stone-marketing-spreads.pdf/>

Recommended mortar mix by HE

1 cement, 2 parts lime, 6 parts grey sand, 2 parts sharp sand, 2 parts gravel finely riddled.

Mortars

Supplied by Limetec Ltd or similar

<https://limetec.co.uk/listed-buildings/>