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Dear Angela

New Century House, NOMA

Listed Building Consent for minor works to facilitate use of Basement Level 2 as ancillary storage

Please find enclosed an application for Listed Building Consent relating to minor works required to facilitate the use of the Basement Level 2 of the Grade II Listed New Century House for ancillary dry storage. The Applicant is NOMA (GP) Ltd.

This letter and its enclosures sets out the context and rationale for the proposals, assess the proposal against relevant planning policies, and address Manchester City Council's planning application validation requirements.

Site

New Century House is bound by New Century Hall to the west, Miller Street to the north, Sadler's Yard to the south and Dantzic Street to the east. The site is located toward the western end of Miller Street which is a key arterial route to the city. The site benefits from close proximity to a range of amenities including Victoria Station and is on a prominent pedestrian route into the Northern Gateway, Northern Quarter and other parts of the city.

Background

In November 2019, Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent (LPA reference 124348/FO/2019 and 124349/LO/2019), was granted for the refurbishment of the building to facilitate the delivery of a mixed use scheme comprising of A3 (restaurant and café), A4 (drinking establishment), D1 non-residential (creative school), D1 (flexible events and conference facilities), and D2 (music/performance space). The refurbishment of New Century Hall will provide mixed uses whilst restoring its original use as a music venue; helping to meet an identified demand in the market for a niche educational offering in the form of a creative college.

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In order to facilitate the efficient and viable operation of the approved scheme, in particular the A3/A4 uses at ground floor, there is a requirement for additional dry storage. An options appraisal has been undertaken which considered the following:

- a) Locating the food store within the ground floor itself; however due the number of restaurant covers required to ensure the viability of the food hall, it was considered that a food store within the ground floor would take up additional floorspace which would impact the overall feasibility of the ground floor food hall operation.
- b) Using off site provision within the NOMA estate; however due to the various lease agreements with existing tenants, it would be impractical to utilise space in other surrounding buildings.
- c) On this basis, Basement Level 2 of New Century House was identified as the most practical option due to ease of access and ability to accommodate the food store. In addition, the basement area of the building has historically been used as a back of house/ ancillary storage space and is of low significance.

A soft strip of the Basement of New Century House was agreed with Manchester City Council on 27 June 2019. The soft strip related to the removal of non-original and non-significant items, including plant installations and other items which would not affect the character or special architectural or historic interest of the building.

Following on from the soft strip, this Listed Building application seeks consent for the installation of Mechanical and Electrical services (M&E), replacement of existing doors and associated works within Basement Level 2, to facilitate the use of this space for dry food store. In doing so, these works will allow the basement area to meet fire and safety regulations, allowing for the safe operation of this space.

Description of Development

The description of development, as stated on the Application Form, is as follows:

“Listed Building Consent for internal works to Basement Level 2 of Grade II New Century House, comprising; installation of M&E; replacement of existing doors and associated works.”

Proposals

The proposed works are considered necessary to support the efficient use of Basement Level 2 as a food store, linked to the operation of the approved food hall in New Century Hall. Careful consideration has been taken in preparing the associated works so as to limit any impact to the special architectural and historic significance of the building. The proposed works will comprise the following:

Filling in of openings

A number of openings, both pre-existing, and those left by the strip out works will be filled in to meet modern fire regulation requirements. This will not negatively impact the appearance of these walls, and is considered to offer aesthetic improvement overall. These works include:

- Filling of openings left by previously removed services. The majority being less than 300mm in diameter and within brick walls, which can easily be repaired.

- Two larger openings with louvres require fire stopping. A shaft wall type plasterboard system will be used to retain the louvres in place while closing up the opening for fire protection.
- Filling of regular openings in the lift shaft with same plasterboard system and therefore on a like-for-like basis.

M&E services improvements

It is proposed to install new ductwork and extract fans to support the use of the basement for dry food storage. In addition, mechanical smoke vents and a sprinkler system, lighting and fire alarm as shown in Dwg 1457-B2-5301, will allow coverage of the basement to meet fire and safety regulations.

Replacement of fire doors

The existing doors within Basement Level 2 do not currently comply with current safety standards and comprise a total of 5 no. doors, 3 of which form the entry to the storage spaces, and 2 onto the escape stair lobby. The doors are also in varying states of disrepair. It cannot be confirmed whether these doors are original, although it is considered likely. They are however considered to be of low significance. This application seeks to remove and replace all the identified doors on a like-for-like basis.

Accordance with Planning Policy

The proposals have been assessed in the context of planning and heritage policies at national and local level. The primary consideration for the proposals is their adherence to Planning Policy in regard to the historic environment, and local amenity.

Paragraph 185 of the NPPF states 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.

Paragraphs 193-196 place great weight on the conservation of designated heritage assets, emphasising the need to avoid "substantial harm" unless that harm is clearly justified (via four specific tests) or there are substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits.

The proposed works are very minor in scale, and will not impact any elements that contribute to the special significance of the heritage asset. The works are all within the basement of the building which is low significance and will not affect the special interest of the building.

A Heritage Statement has been prepared by Stephen Levrant Heritage Architecture states that the Basement Level 2 area of the building is an ancillary space of low significance to the buildings architectural and artistic interest, however the area does reflect the original design intent of the building's original design and original fabric survives, albeit in poor condition.

In conclusion, the Heritage Statement notes that the proposed works have an overall negligible adverse heritage impact on the significance of the heritage asset. The proposed works results in negligible direct impact of the designated heritage asset which results in the removal of a minor, original fabric component, but avoids diminishing its character and its special architectural or historic interest.

Mitigation for the adverse impacts are provided by the fact that the proposed works will enable the ancillary space to be put back into active use with minor alterations to historic fabric. The proposals also provide additional fire protection to a high risk area of the building which will help safeguard the building from potential fire risk.

In determining planning applications, Local Planning Authorities should take account of:

- “...the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.”

This approach is reflected in Policy CC9 – Design and Heritage within the adopted Manchester Core Strategy (2012). This policy states that development in Manchester City Centre should protect or enhance the heritage assets that have been identified, including listed buildings.

The Council's approach to Development Management is intended to ensure that new developments contribute to the overall aims of the Core Strategy - this includes protection of amenity and local character. Policy DM1 outlines that development should have regard to issues including:

- Impact on the surrounding areas in terms of the design, scale and appearance of the proposed development. Development should have regard to the character of the surrounding area.

Summary

The proposed works are necessary to support the requirement for a food store associated with the approved food hall within New Century Hall and therefore support the viable refurbishment and future use of the building.

Collectively, the proposed works are considered to be beneficial in supporting the approved scheme for New Century Hall and will neither diminish the character of the building nor result in any unmitigated or significant harm to its historic fabric. The proposals have been designed to be respectful of the building's listed status and are in accordance with relevant planning policy as detailed above.

Supporting Documentation

This application for Planning Permission is accompanied by the following plans and documents:

- Application Form for Listed Building Consent prepared by Deloitte Real Estate;
- Design and Access Statement - New Century House Basement Levels Assessment prepared by Sheppard Robson Architects;
- Heritage Statement - prepared by Stephen Levrant Heritage Architecture;

- Basement (B2) Mechanical and Electrical Services Specification - prepared by Crookes Walker Consulting; and
- Mechanical Services Layout drawings prepared by Crookes Walker Consulting.

We trust that you will find this application in order and we look forward to receiving written confirmation of registration.

If you require any further details please contact my colleagues Katie Wray (kawray@deloitte.co.uk / 0161 445 6350) / Eithne Fitzgerald ([eithnefitzgerald @deloitte.co.uk/0161 455 6963](mailto:eithnefitzgerald@deloitte.co.uk/0161%20455%206963)).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J Cooper'.

John Cooper

For and on behalf of Deloitte LLP

Encs: