14 September 2020
Delivered by Planning Portal

Ref: HENM3002

Jennifer Atkinson
Manchester City Council
PO 532
Town Hall
Manchester
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Dear Jennifer

FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR ELEVATIONAL CHANGES & APPLICATION FOR ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT | MANCHESTER FORT SHOPPING PARK, CHEETHAM HILL, MANCHESTER

On behalf of Nuveen Real Estate (the Applicant), I am pleased to enclose two applications for works to Manchester Fort Shopping Park ('Manchester Fort').

Application 1 – Full Planning Permission for Elevational Changes

The first application seeks full planning permission for amendments to the elevational treatment of all retail units at Manchester Fort. The description of development is as follows:

"An application for full planning permission to materially change the external façade of retail units, Manchester Fort Shopping Park"

The application is submitted via the Planning Portal (ref: PP-08936557) and comprises the following documents:

- Application forms and certificates
- This covering letter, prepared by Turley
- Detailed scheme drawings, prepared by Harris Partnership:
  - 14847-100A - Location Plan
  - 14847-101 - Existing Elevations - Main Retail Parade
  - 14847-102 - Existing Elevations - B&Q
  - 14847-103 - Existing Elevations - Small Retail Terrace
  - 14847-104 - Existing Elevations - Halfords
  - 14847-111 - Proposed Elevations - Main Retail Parade
  - 14847-112 - Proposed Elevations - B&Q
  - 14847-113 - Proposed Elevations - Small Retail Terrace
  - 14847-114 - Proposed Elevations - Halfords
  - 14847 - Manchester Fort Design and Access Statement

In addition, the requisite application fee (£1,404) has been paid to Manchester City Council.

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Application 2 – Advertisement Consent for Retail Signage

The second application seeks advertisement consent for amendments to and replacement of existing signage.

The application is also submitted via Planning Portal (ref: PP-08936622) and comprises the following documents:

- Application forms and certificates
- This covering letter, prepared by Turley
- 14847-1000 Location Plan – Signage, prepared by Harris Partnership
- 14847 Manchester Fort Signage Proposal SP02C, prepared by Vector Design Concepts.

In addition, the requisite application fee (£462) has been paid to Manchester City Council.

Site Background

Manchester Fort is located in a prominent position adjacent to Cheetham Hill Road to the north of Manchester City Centre. Following its original establishment as a bulky goods shopping destination, investment and continued evolution has seen Manchester Fort Shopping Park become one of the largest and most successful retail parks of its kind. The Park complements the established district centres of North Manchester and contributes significantly to the economy, social wellbeing and employment of both the Cheetham Hill Area and wider City.

As owners of the Park, Nuveen is looking to continue its long term investment and is committed to ensuring that the Park plays its part in the continued regeneration, revitalisation and growth of North Manchester. As part of this work a draft Development Framework, was issued to MCC Executive for endorsement in March 2020, prior to a period of public consultation. The draft Development Framework seeks to establish a long-term vision, which will provide clarity to help advance significant investment decisions. This Framework seeks to position the Shopping Park as an integrated retail and leisure destination of choice, achieved through an enhanced offer, the redevelopment of the northern section of the Park, improved public realm, and the creation of a new gateway into the Park offering improved connectivity.

Whilst the Development Framework represents the long term regeneration ambitions for the site, the Applicant wishes to maintain the visual quality of the site in the short term through proposed minor elevational enhancements and improved signage.

Proposed Development

The proposed development reflects the ambition of the Applicant to create an attractive and well maintained retail environment. The proposals will not change the existing use of the site (i.e. A1 retail) or generate any additional floor space. It does not seek to alter the general layout of the buildings or amend the pedestrian and servicing access points or car parking facilities.

Application 1 – Elevational Changes

Application 1 seeks full planning permission to amend the elevational treatment of the retail units, which has been designed to support the visual enhancement of the retail park and to align with the latest Manchester Fort Shopping Park branding.

The elevation upgrades are proposed to the existing blue cladded areas throughout the park. This includes the blue pilasters along the main parade and the cladded areas to the B&Q, small retail terrace along Cheetham Hill Road and the Halfords. These areas are to be re-sprayed in anthracite grey (RAL 7016). The anthracite will work harmoniously with the existing metallic silver cladding, modernising Manchester Fort and creating a more attractive retail park for customers.

Full details of the proposed elevations can be found on the accompanying application drawings and Design & Access Statement, prepared by Harris Partnership.

Application 2 – Signage

Application 2 seeks advertisement consent for the amendments to existing retail signage, including:

- Amendments to existing triangular tenant totem (7000mm H x 2000mm W x 2000mm D), including the removal of white vinyl strips (top and bottom) and respraying of the sign in anthracite grey (RAL 7016), with addition of red vinyl strip to one side to reflect Manchester Fort branding. Totem to be internally and externally illuminated with static lighting.

- Amendments to existing doubled-sided tenant totem (7000mm H x 2000mm W x 150mm D), including the removal of white vinyl strips (top and bottom) and respraying of the sign in anthracite grey (RAL 7016), with addition of red vinyl strip to one side to reflect Manchester Fort branding. Totem to be internally and externally illuminated with static lighting.

- Amendments to existing curved tenant totem (3000mm H x 2200mm W x 300mm D), including respraying of the sign in anthracite grey (RAL 7016) and addition of Manchester Fort branding. Totem to be internally and externally illuminated with static lighting.

- Replacement of 1 no. existing sign with new double sided tenant totem (3000mm H x 1500mm W x 150mm D). This sign will be anthracite grey (RAL 7016) to match other signs with red vinyl strip to match Manchester Fort branding. Totem to be internally and externally illuminated with static lighting.

- Replacement of 2 no. existing signs with new double sided tenant totem (10000mm H x 2900mm W x 240mm D). This sign will be anthracite grey (RAL 7016) to match other signs with red vinyl strip to match Manchester Fort branding. Totem to be internally and externally illuminated with static lighting.

Full details of the proposed signage can be found within the accompanying Manchester Fort Signage Proposals prepared by Vector Design Concepts. An illuminance level limit of 600cd/sqm will be set, in accordance with ILP Technical Report 5 – The Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements.

Planning Policy Context

As required by Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), the following section appraises the proposed development in the context of relevant planning policy and guidance.

Manchester City Council's ("MCC") Development Plan comprises the adopted Manchester Core Strategy ('CS') (2012), the 'saved policies of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan (1995), Greater Manchester Joint Waste Plan and Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Plan.

In accordance with the provisions of Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisement) Regulations 2007 ('the Regulations'), the advertisement application should be assessed by having regard to the interests of amenity and public safety, taking into account provisions of the Development Plan, in so far as they are material and any other material factor.

A summary of the policies relevant to the determination of this application is provided below.

Policy C1 of MCC's adopted Development Plan identifies that in order to maintain the vitality and viability of its centre's, development of town centre uses will be prioritised in the identified centres (City Centre, District Centres and Local Centres). Whilst the proposed site does not fall within the identified centres, the supporting text identifies that there are five main out of centre retail locations in Manchester, this includes Manchester Fort. It is identified that development in these locations will be supported where they offer the opportunity to refurbish or provide replacement facilities to improve the retail environment.

Policy C9 provides further guidance on retail development in out-of-centre locations. This includes identifying the need to ensure that development proposals are of an appropriate scale and function relevant to its location. The policy also reiterates that development that improves the environment of an existing out-of-centre facility or its relationship with the surrounding areas will be supported if it accords with other guidance in the policy. The policy's supporting text confirms that a basis to support out-of-centre development will be provided if the proposed development is intended to improve the experience of visitors or neighbours, rather than increase the role of the location.

Furthermore, the contribution of Manchester Fort to the existing employment and economic developments in North Manchester is identified in Policy EC4.

Policy EN1 requires that all development proposals in the City should maximise opportunities for good design to enhance the overall image of the City ensuring the highest standard of appearance and function are incorporated into development proposals.

'Saved' Policy 15 of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan (UDP (July 2012) identifies that, in accordance with the advertisement regulations, the Council will take account of a number of matters when determining applications for advertisement consent. This includes the effects on visual amenity and public safety.

Policy Appraisal

The development proposal seeks to refurbish the façade of retail units at Manchester Fort. This will help to ensure the ongoing use of the units and help to sustain the vitality and viability of the shopping park by improving the experience of visitors and the overall retail environment. The proposed development is therefore in accordance with Policies C1, C9 and EC4.

It is considered that the proposed design is of high quality in terms of appearance and function and is therefore consistent with Policy EN1 and deemed appropriate to the existing retail nature of the shopping park.

In line with national and local planning policy, the proposed signage is considered not to have a detrimental impact on amenity or safety. The signage is to be located within an existing retail environment and has been designed and positioned to minimise any impacts on amenity or safety, whilst being sufficiently visible to perform its intended function.

In light of this, the proposal will help to contribute to the existing nature and economic role of the site and is therefore considered to be consistent with the aforementioned policies of the Development Plan.

Summary

The proposed façade amendments to the external elevations of the retail units and the proposed signage are beneficial because they will ensure the continued visual quality of the Manchester Fort Shopping Park and improve the experience of retail customers. Furthermore, the proposed development is of a high quality design which is appropriate to the existing nature of the shopping park.

The proposal is, therefore, consistent with the policies in the Development Plan and planning permission should be granted without delay.

We look forward to receiving confirmation that the application has been validated in due course. In the meanti me, if you have any queries or seek further clarification; please do not hesitate to contact me or my colleague Steve Bell (stephen.bell@turley.co.uk).

Yours sincerely

Thomas Lord
Assistant Planner

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