

Development Management
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Our ref EKPS/191103/KD

Submitted via the
Planning Portal

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Dear Sir or Madam,

Application for Listed Building Consent: Reconfiguration and Introduction of an Internal Doorway Between 2-4 Booth Street and Massey Chambers (6 Booth Street) at Basement Level - Massey Chambers, 6 Booth Street, Manchester

On behalf of our client The Hut Group Ltd ("THG"), I am pleased to confirm an application seeking Listed Building Consent has been submitted to the Planning Portal (PP-08637828) in respect of proposed works to the Basement of Massey Chambers, 6 Booth Street, Manchester.

The application submission comprises:

- Planning Application Form, Certificates and fee¹;
- Architectural Plans (prepared by EPR; and,
- Heritage Statement (prepared by Stephen Levrant Heritage Architecture).

In addition, this covering letter describes the application site and the proposed development. It also assesses the degree to which the proposals accord with the Development Plan and the weight to be attached to other material considerations.

The Applicant

THG Ltd is one of the world's leading online beauty and wellbeing retailers, home to premium brands such as lookfantastic, ESPA, GlossyBox, and Myprotein; all of which are powered by their industry-leading and award-winning technology platform, THG Ingenuity.

With a £1bn investment plan being delivered over the next 3 years THG expect to scale many times over as they establish themselves as a true global player. As part of the expansion plans, THG Ltd has acquired a number of City Centre properties including, King Street Townhouse (8-10 Booth Street) and the Former 1761 & Lily's Bar (2-4 Booth Street).

These acquisitions represent a continuation of The Hut Group's commitment to substantial investment in infrastructure to support the growth and durability of its core online Health and Beauty businesses.

¹ The required fee of £462 (based on the material change of use of a building or land), has been paid via the planning portal.

Background to the Proposals

An application was submitted in March 2020 to Manchester City Council (MCC) in with regards to the change of use of the property at 2-4 Booth Street from a Restaurant / Bar, to a Gym and Spa (126310/FO/2020). The proposed Gym and Spa facilities will be available for guests of the King Street Townhouse (8-10 King Street) and members only.

Following this application, the opportunities to connect the King Street Townhouse Hotel (which includes the basement of Massey Chambers²) and the proposed facilities at 2-4 Booth Street have been explored, to allow both staff and hotel guests to move more easily between the Hotel and the Gym and Spa facilities.

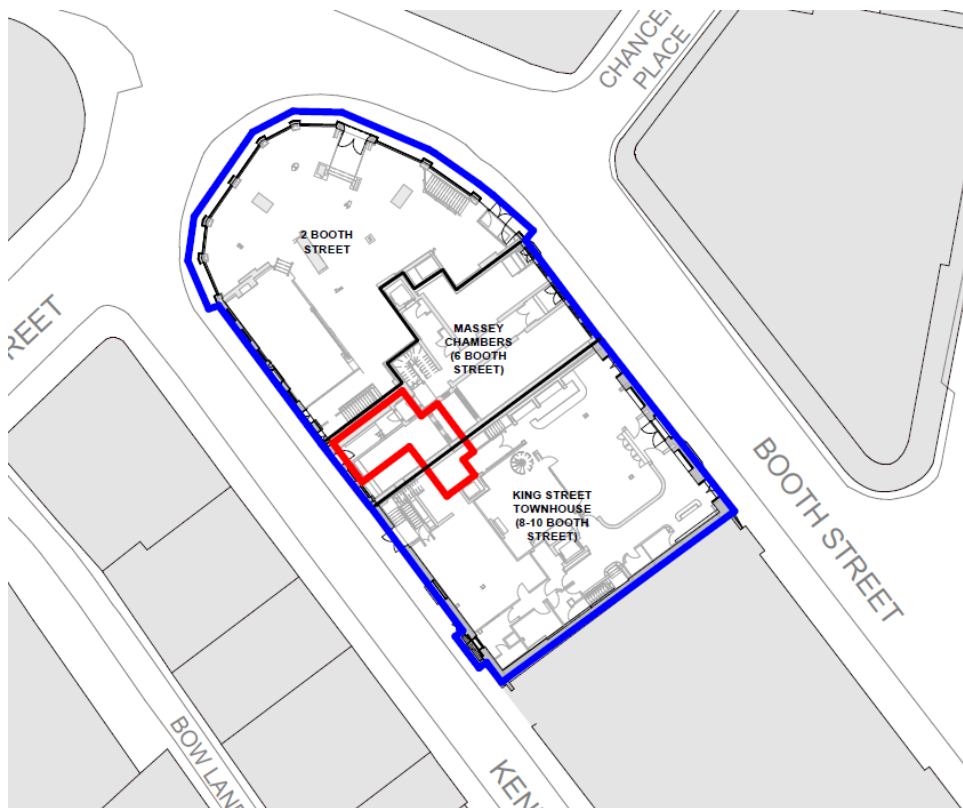
Site and Surroundings

Massey Chambers is located on Booth Street within the Upper King Street Conservation Area.

The property is bounded by 2-4 Booth Street, and King Street Townhouse (8-10 Booth Street). Both Massey Chambers and King Street Townhouse (8-10 Booth Street) are Grade II listed.

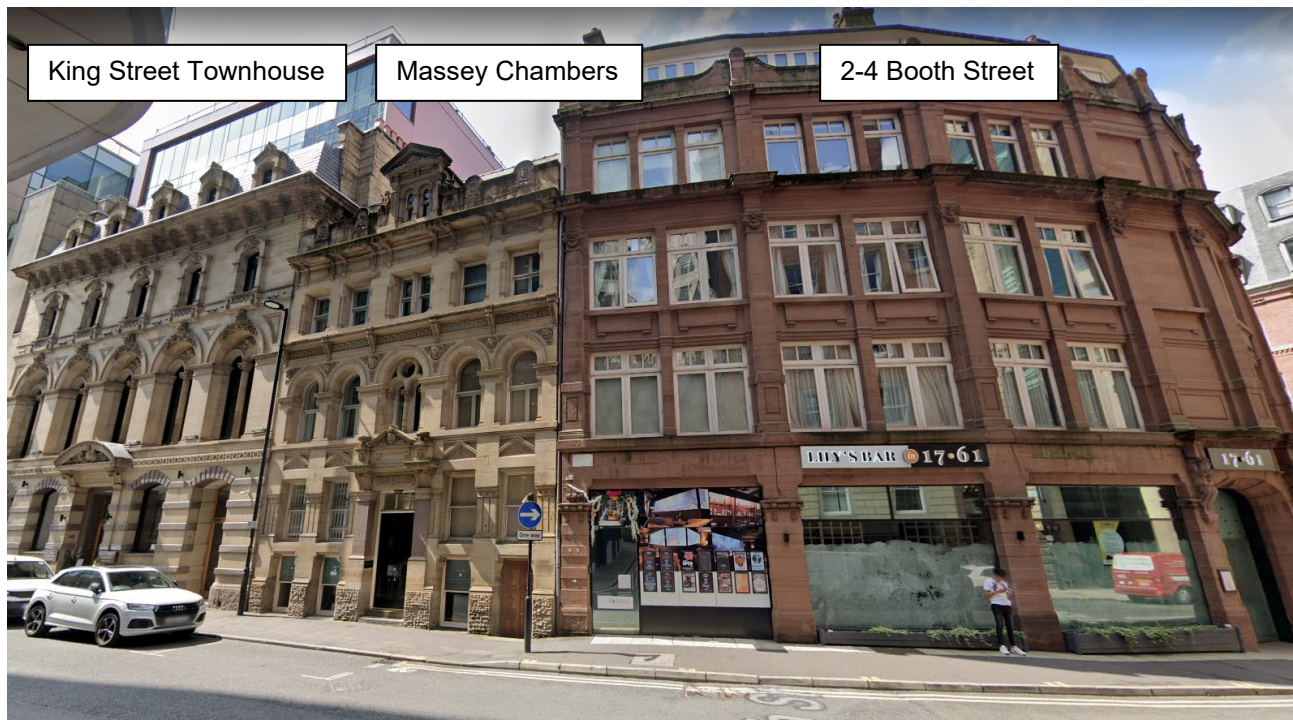
The basement of Massey Chambers was converted in 2015 to form part of the King Street Townhouse facilities (at 8-10 Booth Street) and currently provides additional facilities for the King Street Townhouse Hotel in the form of a private dining room and private screening room.

Figure 1 below shows the site boundary in relation to both King Street Townhouse and 2-4 Booth Street, whilst **Figure 2** overleaf provides the street view of the buildings (taken from Google Streetview).



^ Figure 1 – Site Location

² The basement of Massey Chambers was converted in 2015 to form part of the King Street townhouse facilities (at 8-10 Booth Street) (110085/LO/2015/C1)



^ Figure 2 – View of King Street Townhouse and Massey Chambers from Booth Street

Application Proposals

With consideration to the preceding sections, this application therefore seeks Listed Building Consent permission for:

“Insertion of a doorway between basement level of the Grade II listed Massey Chambers, No. 6 Booth Street, Manchester, and the adjacent, non-listed No. 2-4 Booth Street and the removal and insertion of new modern partition walls.”

It should be noted that there will be no external alterations as part of the proposed development and a separate application for the Change of Use of the property at 2 Booth Street has been submitted separately (Application Reference: 126310/FO/2020).

Relevant Legislation

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires a Local Planning Authority, when making a decision on an application for development that affects a listed building or its setting, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting, or any features of special architectural or historical interest which it possessed. This obligation applies to all decisions concerning listed buildings.

Planning Policy Context

The adopted Development Plan for Manchester City Council (“MCC”) comprises the MCC Core Strategy 2012-2027 (“CS”) which was adopted on 11 July 2012’ and the ‘saved’ policies of the Unitary Development Plan (“UDP”).

Manchester City Council Core Strategy:

Policies of most relevance to the determination of the listed building consent application are as follows:

- **Core Strategy Policy EN3 'Heritage'** states that throughout the City, the Council will encourage development that complements and take advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods and 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 listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas and archaeological remains.

Saved Policies of the Unitary Development Plan:

- **Saved UDP Policy DC18.1e 'Conservation Areas'** states that 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 area. This will include the protection of views into and out of the Conservation Area.
- **Saved UDP Policy DC19.1d 'Listed Buildings'** notes that the Council will seek to preserve and enhance the settings of listed buildings by appropriate control over the design of new development in their vicinity, control over the use of adjacent land, and where appropriate, by the preservation of trees and landscape features.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), within Section 16, also provides policies for the protection and enhancement of heritage assets, which includes historic building and conservation areas. Designated heritage assets are afforded a greater weight of consideration in any proposal affecting their fabric and setting.

Appraisal

Whilst the application site is located within the Upper King Street Conservation Area, there would be no external alterations and therefore there would be no impact upon the Conservation Area as a result of the proposals or the surrounding listed buildings.

With regards to the consideration of impacts upon the listed building itself, Stephen Levrant Heritage Architecture (SLHA) have prepared a Heritage Statement which has been submitted with the application.

The assessment of the proposed works concludes that the removal of a small section of basement wall result in an isolated example of minor works to the historic fabric, which although will affect a small area of high significance original brick basement wall, this level of significance only lies in the original 1870s date and fabric authenticity of the basement structure, and not to any highly decorated building fabric.

It is therefore considered that the application proposals will not result in any unmitigated "harm" to the character, fabric, or appearance of the listed building within the terms of the NPPF and local planning policy. The report therefore concludes that the works result in a neutral impact on the special interest of the Grade II Massey Chambers and the alterations do not detract from the ability to understand and appreciate the heritage values of the building.

The proposed development therefore accords with Core Strategy Policy EN3 and UDP Policies DC18.1e and DC19.1d in addition to the provisions within Section 16 of the NPPF.

Conclusions

It is considered that the proposed works would not result in any unmitigated harm to the designated Heritage asset, and consequently the proposal comply with local and national policy, and the provisions of Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. It is therefore respectfully requested that Listed Building Consent be granted.

I trust the submitted information is sufficient, however should you have any questions, or require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me by email or telephone (0161 485 5025).

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie Daniels". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'K'.

Katie Daniels MRTPI
Senior Planner
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