RR Planning Ltd
Town Planning & Development Consultants
82A Otley Road, Headingley, Leeds, LS6 4BA
Tel: 0113 274 9422
enquiries@rrplanning.co.uk

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24th December, 2012

Manchester City Council,
Planning Department,
PO Box 532,
Manchester,
M60 2LA

Dear Sir/Madam,

Proposed change of use from vacant A1 (travel agent) to A2 (betting office), together with alterations to the shopfront, mount air-conditioning units and satellite dish to the rear and Advertisement Consent for illuminated signage at 304-306 Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9NS

We act as planning consultants to Ladbrokes Plc.

Ladbrokes are seeking Planning Permission and Advertisement Consent to open a new licenced betting office in the vacant former Delta Travel unit at 304-306 Oxford Road. These premises have lain vacant since Delta Travel relocated in February 2012. We have included a Design and Access Statement in this letter which explains the associated alterations to the property.

In terms of planning policy, the subject application should be assessed having regard to two documents, the adopted Core Strategy and the saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan.

The Core Strategy was adopted on 11th July 2012 and contains the broad development policies and principles for Manchester. Policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy are general policies which cover almost all development in the city. Policy DM1 is the more prescient of the two policies and states:-

> **All development should have regard to the following specific issues for which more detailed guidance may be given within a supplementary planning document:-**
>
> - **Appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail.**

- **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.**
- **Effects on amenity, including privacy, light, noise, vibration, air quality, odours, litter, vermin, birds, road safety and traffic generation. This could also include proposals which would be sensitive to existing environmental conditions, such as noise.**
- **Accessibility: buildings and neighbourhoods fully accessible to disabled people, access to new development by sustainable transport modes.**
- **Community safety and crime prevention.**
- **Design for health.**
- **Adequacy of internal accommodation and external amenity space.**
- **Refuse storage and collection.**
- **Vehicular access and car parking.**
- **Effects relating to biodiversity, landscape, archaeological or built heritage.**
- **Green Infrastructure including open space, both public and private.**
- **The use of alternatives to peat-based products in landscaping/gardens within development schemes.**
- **Flood risk and drainage.**
- **Existing or proposed hazardous installations.**

As you can see, there are no restrictions on A2 uses or betting offices in Policy DM1. The proposed change of use to betting office would be compatible with the character of the surrounding area. This is a commercial frontage which is within the boundaries of the city centre and is where one would expect to find an A2 uses. The frontages adjacent and opposite also contain a wide mix of commercial uses, with the majority of the convenience shopping provided by Morrisons Local and the Sainsbury's mini-markets. Further, convenience shops are found in the frontage to the south of the subject premises such that the day to day needs of local residents are well met. Please note, that this would be the only betting office in the area. As such, the change of use would add to the range of uses on offer and provide a brand new leisure facility along Oxford Road.

The unit does not provide any A1 retailing function to the area and has not done so for almost one year. It presents poorly in the street scene with a tired shopfront. Compare and contrast this with the proposed use by a national multiple such as Ladbrokes who will ensure the long term viable use of the premises. Betting offices are in fact one of the busiest of A2 uses. In particular, they generate trade all year round, in the evenings as well as in the daytime, which is a unique feature. Typically other A2 uses such as banks and building societies close on Saturday afternoons and do not open on Sundays nor of course on Bank Holidays. Ladbrokes are a viable alternative and will invest heavily in the fabric of the property.

In the Unitary Development Plan, the city centre has been split into 31 small identifiable areas. This area is identified as '*Area 30 The University*'. Saved Policy

RC20 explains that the predominant land use in the area is the Universities and student accommodation. It also notes that the shopping precinct at the junction of Oxford Road and Booth Street serve the daily needs of the student population. We would add that the recent developments along Grafton Street, opposite the application premises, and the introduction of a new Morrisons Local also provides for a large proportion of the daily shopping needs of the local population. The Unitary Development Plan does not place any restrictions on the introduction of an A2 betting office at this location.

A modern betting office trades particularly well and generates high footfall. Footfall or pedestrian flow is the single most important indicator of vitality. Typically, a modern betting office of the type proposed will attract high visitation rates with far more customers than a shop of similar size. In addition, at least 70% of customers will have already or will go on to make other purchases in the locality thereby creating spin-off trade. Nowadays betting offices open until 10.00pm each day of the week, all year round, except Christmas Day. In this way they bring trade to an area outside normal shopping hours. Since 1994, with the changes in betting and gaming legislation, betting offices are no longer closed in the sense that you can't see into or out of them. They are therefore bright and busy and represent a picture of activity in the street scene. In this way they contribute to the vitality of the area in the most positive manner.

There will be no adverse impacts on traffic generation or parking. Class A2 uses are appropriate uses in this city centre location. Betting offices are highly localised, essentially walk-to-uses. They require no servicing. Therefore the vehicular traffic generation is often less than a normal shop.

Design

Whilst the application for the principle of the change use to Class A2 use does not require a Design and Access Statement, the proposal for the alterations to the shopfront and air-conditioning units does. Ladbrokes intend to install a new entrance to the left-hand side of the shopfront. The existing central entrance will be replaced with a window. The new entrance and window will match the existing window frames and be powder-coated off-white (RAL9002). The Delta Travel signage will be replaced with the Ladbrokes fascia sign and projecting sign above. Both signs will be internally illuminated using white LEDs.

To the rear, two new air-conditioning units will be mounted at first floor level. A technical specification sheet for this model (Daikin RZQ100) of air-conditioning unit has been included in this submission. Also to the rear is a proposed satellite dish, mounted on a side wall at first floor level.

Access

A new recessed entrance will be installed to the left of the shopfront. This will achieve a level gradient into the unit and allow easier access for the less able.

Internally, there is adequate manoeuvring space between fittings. While an accessible customer toilet will also be provided. We confirm that a separate application under the Building Regulations will be submitted such that the layout of the shop complies with Part M and DDA requirements.

If you have any queries relating to this application please do not hesitate to contact these offices in the first instance.

Yours sincerely,

GRAHAM WHITEFORD