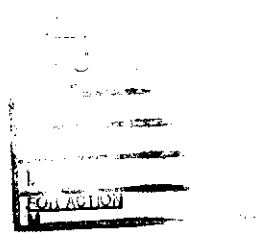
Planning & Law

Statement in Support of Planning Application

Application for Change of Use from Offices to Use As a Karaoke Bar

Application by Chi Yip Group Ltd

Premises at 52-56 George Street, Manchester M1



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Introduction

1. This practice is instructed by the Chi Yip Group Limited to submit an application for a change of use in respect of 52-56 George Street, Manchester M1. The premises' lawful use is currently offices, although the premises have been vacant for a short time. The intended use is as a karaoke bar.

Existing Building

2. The building constitutes a building with ground, first, second, third and fourth floors together with basement car parking. The basement car parking serves the entire building. The ground and first floors are taken up with a restaurant, The New Emperor Restaurant. The application for a change of use involves only the second, third and fourth floors. Access to the proposed karaoke bar will be by way of the existing access to the stairwell and lift which services the building as a whole. Parking will remain as present in the basement, and does not form part of this application. There will be no external works to the building as part of the conversion to form a karaoke bar.

Design and Access

3. As the application is for a change of use there is no statutory requirement for a design and access statement. However, in respect of design, as noted above, there would be no external works to the building pursuant to the proposed change of use. Access to the building would remain as present with the main access to the front onto George Street and with secondary access to the rear on to Back George Street. Access to the car park remains from the rear off Back George Street.
4. With regard to disabled access, access is available via a lift from ground level to all the relevant floors.

The proposal

5. The following plans are supplied as part of the application:
    - CY01/AS01 - Existing Ground, Second, Third and Fourth Floor Plans
    - CY01/AL01 – Proposed Ground, Second, Third and Fourth Floor Plans
6. As can be seen from the existing plan the three floors show a generally open character with some limited internal partitioning.
7. The proposal is for a karaoke bar: that is, a bar with the primary function of providing for karaoke in a number of different ways. This is a concept that is not widespread in the UK where karaoke often forms only an ancillary part of the activity in a normal bar or restaurant.
8. This specific use has an effect on the partitioning of the proposed floors by way of internal works only. In the plan showing the second-floor bar options three alternative internal arrangements are shown for the main karaoke bar. They are all very similar in nature, involve only internal works and would have no external visual impact whatsoever. This floor shows a more open character to the upper floors, although there are some private karaoke facilities. On the third and fourth floors by contrast the layouts are broken up to form individual karaoke rooms with some toilet and bar facilities on each floor. The concept is to provide a variety of facilities, and facilities in which customers may enter the main karaoke bar and have a drink before retiring to their private rooms for private karaoke entertainment.
9. Although food will be available to customers it is not intended that it will be cooked or prepared in the karaoke bar itself, but rather would be brought in from outside establishments, and possibly from the Chinese restaurant forming part of the main premises (but not part of this application).

Specific Issues

10. **Listed Building / Conservation Area Considerations** - The proposal lies within a conservation area and is also adjacent to a listed building. However, as the proposal involves no external works in its self there is no direct effect on either the conservation area or the listed building. In terms of activity it is submitted that the proposal is in conformity with the types of uses in this area and that therefore the use will have no detrimental effect. The issue of advertising and signage is the subject of a separate regime, and in any event is capable of control by condition in the context of this application. If projecting signs are not considered to be acceptable there is sufficient flexibility to provide signage opportunities at ground and upper floors behind existing windows. This application does not include any application for advertisements or signage.
11. **Disabled Access** - As noted above disabled access is available throughout the building.
12. **Refuse Disposal** - Refuse disposal will be as existing, and opportunities exist for off street storage within the basement car park.
13. **Fume Extraction** - As noted above there will be no food preparation within the application premises, but it is nevertheless envisaged that this is a matter that will need to be controlled by condition. It is suggested that a suitable condition would be one that events at the preparation of food on the application premises unless a scheme of odour extraction has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
14. **Acoustics** – Provided with this application is a copy of a letter dated 28 February 2007 to this firm from ADC Acoustic Design and Control. The Report considers the impact of the proposed use on adjacent property, including the possibility of noise breakout via party walls and floors, and the effect of any mechanical plant (if any), in addition to the effect of patrons leaving. It concludes that there would be no detrimental effects, but that because detailed design of the internal layout has not been finalised it would be prudent to impose a condition requiring a scheme of sound attenuation to be agreed, and that condition could also deal with music noise limits to cover all realistic eventualities for music noise. The condition should also include reference to plant and equipment (if any). The report is clear in identifying the fact that there can be complete confidence that there will not be issues with noise, and against this background a condition can be properly imposed that will allow the detail of any attenuation to be agreed pursuant to that condition.
15. **N.B -The planning application forms have been completed on the basis that there need be no restriction on hours of operation as there is no restriction at present. However, if it is considered that it is necessary to restrict hours of operation the applicants will, on request, provide details of restricted hours following discussion with the Local Planning Authority.**

Conclusions

16. On the basis of the above it can be concluded that the proposal is acceptable in land use terms, and respects the character of the area, thus preserving the Conservation Area. Therefore the applicant respectfully requests your Council to grant planning consent for the proposal.

17. Should you have any further queries regarding the application, or require any further information please do not hesitate to contact Simon Richardson of this firm.