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8-10 and 12 John Dalton Street, Manchester: Proposed Bill's Restaurant

Design and Access Statement

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1 Introduction

1.0 This Design and Access Statement supports an application made by Bill's Restaurants Limited to Manchester City Council for Planning Permission for the change of use of Ground Floor Units 8-10 and 12 John Dalton Street from A2 (Financial and Professional Services) and A1 (Shops) to A3 (Restaurant and Cafes) use and associated works including; the formation of an outdoor seating area, the installation of new windows, doors and other external alterations including awnings to the front and rear; and ventilation and extraction plant. Advertisement consent for the associated restaurant signage is also sought.

1.1 The Statement identifies the rationale and context for the proposed development and its suitability for John Dalton Street. This Statement has been drafted to meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Development Management Procedure Order 2010.

Site Description

1.2 The proposed restaurant will be located within the ground floor units of 8-10 and 12 John Dalton Street, which constitutes part of John Dalton House, an eight storey purpose built commercial building. John Dalton House is bound by John Dalton Street to the north, Mulberry Street to the south, Ridgefield to the east, and Deansgate to the west.

1.3 The adjacent ground floor units which are the subject of this proposal both front onto John Dalton Street. 12 John Dalton Street is situated on the corner of John Dalton Street and Ridgefield.

1.4 A mix of uses are found at ground floor level within John Dalton House including a newsagents, a hot food takeaway and a restaurant, with commercial office space on the upper floors. To the rear of the building is a servicing yard, accessed via Mulberry Street. Within the surrounding area, a mix of commercial uses are found including; retail, restaurants and cafes, office space and drinking establishments.

1.5 The site is located within the Albert Square Conservation Area, as extended in 1985.

Existing Use

1.6 8-10 John Dalton Street is currently vacant and has been without an occupant for a number of years. The unit was last used as an estate agents falling within the A2 use class. 12 John Dalton Street is currently in A1 retail use, occupied by Adolfo Dominguez.

2 Design and Access

2.0 This section of the Statement describes the proposals and their 'design' and 'access' aspects, by reference to the Development Management Procedure Order: namely use and amount, layout, scale, external appearance, landscaping and access. The heritage context of the application site is also considered.

The Proposals

2.1 The application proposal is for the change of use of the ground floor Units 8-10 and 12 John Dalton Street from A1 (retail) and A2 (financial and professional services) uses to A3 restaurant use, plus associated external works.

2.2 The proposal involves the amalgamation of the two adjacent ground floor units, forming a single, larger and more commercially attractive, commercial space.

2.3 The description of development as found on the Application Form is as follows:

"Change of use of Ground Floor Units 8-10 and 12 John Dalton Street from A2 (Financial and Professional Services) and A1 (Shops) to A3 (Restaurant and Cafes) and associated works including; the formation of an outdoor seating area, the installation a new windows and doors and other external alterations including awnings to the front and rear and ventilation and extraction plant".

2.4 Internal alterations are proposed facilitating the formation of a single ground floor commercial unit. External seating areas are proposed directly adjacent to the premises both at the front and rear of the restaurant.

Use and Amount

2.5 8-10 John Dalton Street currently provides 76.8 sqm (GIA) of Class A2 (Financial and Professional Services) floorspace. 12 John Dalton Street currently provides 227.5 sqm (GIA) of Class A1 (Shops) floorspace.

2.6 The application seeks the amalgamation of these two units to create 304 sqm (GIA) of Class A3 (restaurants and café) floorspace.

2.7 The model employed by Bill's for its restaurants also includes a retail element, with a range of Bill's food and homeware products displayed for sale throughout the floorspace. This element is ancillary to the proposed restaurant use and can be seen on the proposed floor plan, largely contained within the main entrance area of the unit and therefore of prominence to customers approaching the restaurant.

Layout

2.8 The proposals will lead to an alteration in the current layout of the ground floor level of John Dalton House. Units 8-10 John Dalton Street and Unit 12 John Dalton Street would be amalgamated forming a single, larger unit.

2.9 External seating areas are also proposed both at the front and rear of the premises. These will be cordoned off with barriers which will clearly define the space. The proposed outdoor seating areas and layout are shown on the submitted plans (drawing no.4411/201/A). These will be removed at the close of business every evening.

Scale and Massing

2.10 The proposals will not result in any changes to the height or massing of John Dalton House. The proposals do, however, include the provision of external seating areas on the John Dalton Street frontage, as well as to the rear of the property on Mulberry Street.

Heritage Context

2.11 The application site lies within the Albert Square Conservation Area, as extended in 1985.

2.12 The proposal does not involve any alterations to a Listed Building and will not impact upon the setting of any Listed Buildings which are found in the area.

2.13 The closest Listed Building to the site is the Queens Chambers building, located on the northern side John Dalton Street. The proposal will not impact on the setting of this Listed Building, with the highway of John Dalton Street providing a clear visual division.

2.14 The proposed external alterations to John Dalton House have been carefully developed so as to be in keeping with the nature of the surrounding premises within the Conservation Area.

2.15 John Dalton House itself is not considered to contribute to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. It is a seven-storey office building above ground of fairly typical 1970's design with grey brickwork to the end stair cores and linear bonds of slate interspersed with framed glazing at each level.

2.16 The introduction of painted timber cladding to the frontage in question is not felt to be of detriment to a building which already offers little to the area's character. In fact, it is felt it will enhance what is currently a non-descript façade, creating visual interest and a unit of distinction.

2.17 There is an existing distinction between the ground floor frontages of number 8-12 John Dalton Street and the remainder of the frontage occupied by Centre News, Bryon Burgers and a hot food takeaway. The creation of a single unit at 8-12 John Dalton Street will extend the unit glazing to full height, with signage applied by individual lettering to the slate façade directly above. Numbers 2-6 John Dalton Street instead incorporate signage zones across the full width of the unit, creating a reduced glazing height and leaving the slate above clean of any lettering. It is therefore considered that the application proposals will create an appropriate distinction in the frontage between 8-12 John Dalton Street and the remainder of John Dalton Street through the implementation of a timber cladding system.

Appearance

2.18 The application proposal includes some alterations to the exterior of the building. The existing design and form of John Dalton House is respected, with the required facilitating alterations to be achieved with limited required changes to the existing window openings. The supporting columns which divide the existing shop windows at ground floor level will be retained, continuing the structural lines of the building. Bi-folding doors to be installed within the front façade will provide an open feel to the restaurant space when retracted.

2.19 Timber cladding, painted in a dark green is proposed to be introduced to the external surfaces of the premises. This over-cladding method would allow for the original fabric of the building to be revealed should this be required at a future point in the life of the building.

2.20 Awnings are to be installed to the front and rear elevations. These will align with the glazing beneath and be well proportioned in respect to the host building. The awnings will be of a traditional retractable design, with a low angle of slope. Awnings of a comparable design can be found at a number of premises in the surrounding vicinity.

2.21 The proposed advertisement signage is positioned on the proposed timber cladded fascia. The lettering required is modest in size and can be considered suitable for the proposed use and commercial setting. Raised steel letting is proposed for the Bill's logo signs to the north, south and west elevations. Advertisement Consent is sought for the proposed signage concurrently with the planning application.

2.22 The outdoor seating areas will provide improved levels of activity and vitality to the setting. At present the building frontage does not have a positive impact on the street scene. This is in part due to no.8-10 remaining vacant, and the rear of the unit, to Mulberry Street, currently functioning as nothing more than a service route and occasional through-pedestrian route to Brazennose Street.

2.23 The seating area in front of the building is to be formed on part of the existing expanse of pavement, without the need to cause any restriction on pedestrian movement. Outdoor seating is utilised at a number of neighbouring businesses, most notably Byron Burgers, also located within John Dalton House, located at the corner of John Dalton Street and Deansgate. Outdoor seating is also utilised at the neighbouring 'Mr Chips' within John Dalton House and Katsouris Deli found at 113 Deansgate. In this context the introduction of an outdoor seating element on John Dalton Street is considered appropriate for the setting and the not opposed to the existing character of the area.

2.24 At the rear of the building the seating area proposed is to be located on an existing open paved area which is currently largely dormant and under-utilised. By introducing seating in this location an active use can found for this space, which will help increase connectivity between Mulberry Street and the pedestrian street of Queen Street and perceptions of safety in this area.

2.25 A high quality restaurant interior is proposed through the re-fit of the entire premises. This will include the creation of a bar area located centrally within the premises, a range of seating arrangements and new toilet facilities.

Landscaping

2.26 The public realm surrounding John Dalton House will be enhanced through the provision of areas of external seating on John Dalton Street and of the creation of the courtyard area at the rear of the restaurant. These areas are to be defined by barriers with the Bill's Restaurant logo as well as awnings providing cover for those dining outside. It is also proposed that planters will be provided throughout the outdoor seating area.

2.27 The proposed seating will have a positive impact in terms of creating new activity at street level, enlivening the whole environment.

2.28 No permanent public realm fixtures are proposed under this application; the tables and chairs used for the seating will be moveable and will be moved inside overnight.

Access

2.29 Policy CC10 of the Manchester Core Strategy sets out the City Council's approach to access. It states that the City Centre will develop as a location which appeals to a wide range of residents and visitors, with high standards of accessibility to buildings and spaces in the City Centre.

2.30 The Core Strategy also sets out that developers are to promote a high standard of internal design and space standards in new developments by encouraging developers to adopt the standards set out in Design for Access 2 (2003), which sets out best practice guidance of inclusive design standards.

2.31 The proposed restaurant will be fully DDA compliant, and will therefore be fully accessible by all. The restaurant is accessed at street level with no steps or ramp required up to the restaurant entrance.

2.32 Internally, ramps are to be employed where there is a change of levels, which occurs between the two distinctive sections of restaurant at the front and the rear. WC facilities, including a separate accessible WC, are provided at ground floor level.

2.33 The proposed restaurant is also in a highly accessible location, and is easily accessible by sustainable transport modes including on foot, by bicycle and by a range of public transport. No additional car or public cycle parking spaces are proposed within this application.

3 Conclusion

3.0 The change of use application is in keeping with the character of the surrounding area, and can serve to improve the local environment and vitality of the street. The external alterations proposed preserve the fundamental qualities of the building, while updating the visual appearance of the unit and the John Dalton Street frontage.

3.1 The scale of the development and use proposed is compatible with the surroundings and will not detract from the qualities of the Conservation Area.

3.2 The necessary measures have been taken to ensure that the proposed scheme will be accessible to everyone.

Appendix 1: Images of Bill’s Restaurants

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