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Manchester City Council
Planning and Development Control
PO Box 532
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12 December 2013

Dear Sir/Madam

Existing Surface Car Park, located on the southern side of Ducie Street, west of The Place Hotel and north of Store Street car park.

On behalf of our client Ballymore Group please find enclosed an application for the continued use of the existing surface car park, accessed via Ducie Street, for a temporary period of 3 years.

Background

Planning Permission was granted for the temporary use of the site as a car park on 7 July 2011, providing 23 car parking spaces, under application 095876/FO/2011/C2. This permission has been implemented with the site successfully functioning as a car park, operated by RCP Parking Ltd, since the award of this permission. The temporary consent period provided by application reference: 095876/FO/2011/C2 expired on 20 December 2012. This application therefore seeks a further Planning Permission to allow the site to continue to operate as a car park for a temporary 3 year period.

Prior to the formation of a car park on the site, the land was dormant and unmanaged. Access to the site was prevented by virtue of high steel fencing, with the land overgrown with vegetation.

The land remains in the ownership of Ballymore Group, who also own land found directly to the south of the site, upon which a separate larger surface car park is in operation, accessed via Store Street. Ballymore Group are actively seeking to develop the land in their ownership and bring forward a major mixed-use development across the sites. Planning Permission was previously granted across the sites on 15 February 2005 for a mixed use development including a tall building, (application reference: 074143/FO/2004/C3). Enabling works were undertaken in 2008 however, during 2008 deteriorating economic conditions, particularly in the local residential market, meant that full scale undertaking of the works could not be justified. Market conditions still remain a barrier to the development of the wider site today.

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It was agreed that the use of the site as a car park was one of the least intrusive and most economically viable temporary uses for the site. A car park provides an active use on the site, helping to serve local businesses and the parking needs of the surrounding area, while ensuring that the site is well managed and does not detract from the visual amenity of the area. With a viable development scheme for the wider site in the ownership of Ballymore Group not as yet agreed, a need is required to secure the future use of the surface car park for a period of time which represents a viable business proposition to potential operators.

The long term intensions of Ballymore Group remain to bring forward a high-density mixed use scheme on the site. This represents the most financially beneficial and attractive use of the site. The previously approved scheme (application reference: 074143/FO/2004/C3) for a mixed use development has now expired and does not represent an economically viable development scheme at the current time.

Ballymore Group are actively seeking a viable alternative development scheme for the wider site and have continued discussions with Manchester City Council in trying to realise a potential development option. Given that the current market conditions presently restrict the potential for the major redevelopment of the wider site and that a new development scheme needs to be developed, permission is required for the continued use of the surface car park in the interim period prior to a further development of the site.

A three year time period is required in order to provide a satisfactory degree of security to the car park operator managing the site and consequently retain an active use on the land. It is aspired that market conditions will improve and that a viable development scheme can be advanced during this time, while allowing for an active use to be retained.

The Site

The site is located to the rear of Piccadilly Train Station and is bounded by Ducie Street to the north. The Place Apartment Hotel is located along the eastern boundary of the site. To the west is a car wash business and separate car park at the rear of Gateway House.

The car park provides 23 spaces and has been managed and operated successfully since 2011.

The Proposal

The formal description of the development is as follows:

> *'Use of land as a temporary car park.'*

This application seeks the use of the site as a car park as approved under application reference 095876/FO/2011/C2 for a further 3 year period. It is anticipated that the 3 year consent period can be controlled by a Planning Condition as per the previous consent. No further building works are required, with the car park having been implemented in accordance with the previously approved plans.

It is intended that the car park will continue to operate as at present, being open to the public twenty four hours a day, seven days a week.

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The Future Development of the Site

Permission was granted on the wider site in the ownership of Ballymore Group, principally encompassing the larger car park site directly to the south accessed via Store Street, on 15 February 2005 (ref: 074143/FO/2004/C3) for a major mixed use development. The approved scheme included a tall building and incorporated a hotel, residential apartments and car parking alongside a range of other uses. The economic conditions, particularly with regard to the residential market, prevented the development of the scheme. The previously approved scheme does not represent a viable development opportunity at the current time.

Ballymore Group continues to explore the site's development potential and have actively engaged with Manchester City Council to help realise this. Representatives of Ballymore Group have met with Senior Officers of the Council twice in the past 12 months, including David Roscoe and Pat Bartoli. The last meeting took place on 7 October 2013 with Pat Bartoli and other Council colleagues to discuss the future of the site. Ballymore Group have also discussed with the Council the potential for the site to assist in delivering the regeneration proposals set out within the HS2 Strategic Regeneration Framework document and formally supported the recent Consultation.

It is hoped that through the ongoing dialogue which has been held between Ballymore Group and the City Council a mutual understanding has been achieved of the genuine desire of the land owners to develop the site, maximising its potential, while accepting the difficulties in bringing forward a major development at the present time.

It is anticipated that a 3 year time period, for which permission for the continued use of the land as a car park is sought, will allow for a viable and acceptable development scheme to be formulated for the wider site, which can then be realistically progressed.

Crime Impact

A Crime Impact Statement in support of the use of the site as a car park was provided by Greater Manchester Police on 12 March 2013. An update has been provided with regard to crime and security by Michael Craig on behalf of Greater Manchester Police, by way of an email dated 24 October 2013. The email relates to the Ducie Street car park as well as the separate neighbouring larger car park accessed via Store Street. The correspondence identifies that levels of reported vehicle crime and other disorder incidents on the car parks have not been excessive during the time which they have been in operation. The responses provided by Greater Manchester Police identify the car park as generally consistent with the principles and standards of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design.

Steps have been taken to address the recommendations made by Greater Manchester Police and to limit the potential for crime to occur at the site. Measures taken include; the creation of a suitable layout, a lighting scheme across the site, appropriate signage and regular security patrols. In accordance with the recommendation provided by Michael Craig in an email dated 24 October 2013, a Security and Maintenance Plan which is followed by the car park operator has been provided as part of this application. This management plan appropriately addresses issues of security and maintenance in the management of the car park facility.

Vacant plots provide increased opportunities for anti-social behaviour. In this respect, the continued use of the site for car parking prevents the land being vacant and subsequently helps to limit the potential for crime in the area, providing a well-managed facility.

Planning Considerations

The use of the site as a temporary car park facility has been accepted as appropriate by the approval of application reference: 095876/FO/2011/C2. The car park is currently in operation and no physical works are proposed as part of this application.

All issues relating to; visual and neighbourhood amenity, safety, crime, sustainability and the environment were addressed under the previously approved application to the satisfaction of Manchester City Council.

Accessibility

No highway alterations are required, with vehicle access to remain from the existing entrance point on Ducie Street. The facility provides valuable car parking space within walking distance of Piccadilly Train Station and the amenities of the City Centre. The car park is at ground level, providing level pedestrian access along Ducie Street.

The car park would have no material impact on traffic and the local highway network and raises no significant concerns with respect to transport.

Use

The car park will continue to operate on a pay-and-display basis, served by ticket machines, as has been the case since the operation of the facility began. The car park is well located to serve both the daytime and evening uses within the local area, including Piccadilly Train Station.

The car park has been operating without causing undue noise or nuisance to residents.

Amount

The car park provides a non-intensive use, suited to provide activity on the site for a temporary period, prior to a comprehensive development. The continued use of the site for car parking presents no new concerns for the amenity of the local area.

Layout

The car park provides a safe and open space, well connected to the pedestrian environment on Ducie Street. The existing vehicle entrance and exit point will continue to be used. The car park is well signposted and maintained.

The car park has a capacity of 23 vehicle spaces. It has been demonstrated that the car park does not cause undue disturbance to any neighbouring land uses and can operate safely.

Landscaping

The site is suitably surfaced for parking in a mix of concrete and tarmac. The access point and lighting scheme in place integrate suitably with the surrounding area.

Appearance

No physical works are proposed. The site is not located within a Conservation Area and the continued use of the site for vehicle parking provides an active use for the site, which would otherwise lie dormant and be prone to visual deterioration if left unmanaged.

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Environmental Impact

The use of the site for parking has no detrimental impact on the natural environment. The car park provides an active use on the site, to the benefit of the visual amenity of the area.

Relevant Planning Policy

The decision notice for the previously approved car park application on the site (ref: 095876/FO/2011/C2), approved on 7 July 2011 concluded that the development was in the interests of visual amenity. The car park remains as approved under this previous application, with no physical works proposed.

Policy DM1 of Manchester's Core Strategy (2012) sets out the key issues which regard should be given to all development proposals. Appropriate attention has been provided to and measures taken to address all the relevant issues set out in Policy DM1.

The location of the car park, in close proximity to Piccadilly Train Station and the retail centre of the city accords with the Transport Strategy for Manchester City Centre and Policy CC5 of the Core Strategy, which seeks to; *'..maintain access to the City Centre by all modes.'*[1]

The necessary consideration was given to; neighbourhood amenity, visual impact, crime reduction and access prior to application reference: 095876/FO/2011/C2 being granted, to the satisfaction of Manchester City Council.

There are no planning reasons why the use of land as a temporary car park for a further 3 year period should not be approved.

The Submission

The application comprises the following documents:

- Completed planning application forms;
- Site Location Plan;
- Site Layout Plan;
- Crime Impact Statement, prepared by Greater Manchester Police, dated 12/03/2013;
- Email from Michael Craig on behalf of Greater Manchester Police, dated 24/10/2013;
- Car Park Security and Maintenance Action Plan;
- Planning application fee of £195. A cheque has been issued in the post.

[1] *Manchester City Council - Core Strategy Development Plan Document, (2012), Policy CC 5, p59*

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Summary

I trust that you find this proposal for the continued use of the car park acceptable, and look forward to receiving your written confirmation that the application has been formally registered and validated. If you have any questions, please contact my colleague Peter Campbell on 0161 455 8175.

Yours faithfully



Michele Steel
For Deloitte LLP