Comments for Planning Application 143025/LO/2025

Application Summary

Application Number: 143025/LO/2025
Address: Sister Plot C Former Umist Campus Altrincham Street Manchester M1 7JA
Proposal: Listed building consent for alterations to Sculptural Wall (Hollaway Wall), to encapsulate the all within new office building (C2 Building), as part of mixed-use development proposals comprising offices use (Class E) and flexible commercial and community uses (Class E, F2 and/or Sui Generis- drinking establishment).
Case Officer: Jennifer Atkinson

Customer Details

Name: Not Available
Address: Not Available

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of the Public
Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application
Comment Reasons:
Comment:Subject: Objection to Planning Application 143025/LO/2025 - Listed Building Consent for Alterations to Sculptural Wall (Hollaway Wall)

I am writing to formally object to the planning application 143025/LO/2025, which seeks listed building consent for alterations to the Sculptural Wall (Hollaway Wall). My objection is based on the following material planning considerations, in accordance with Manchester City Council's guidelines on "How to comment on a planning application."

1. Effect on Listed Buildings and Archaeology .

(Loss of Amenity and Public Appreciation of a Listed Artwork; and the Importance of Retaining Twentieth Century Built Heritage)

The Hollaway Wall is not merely a structure but a designated Grade II listed artwork, an integral and celebrated part of our public realm and cultural heritage. The application proposes the removal of large elements of this significant piece, and enclosing part of the structure inside a new building (affecting around 30% of the whole). Such a drastic intervention would constitute a fundamental and irreparable alteration to a listed building of artistic merit, thereby causing substantial harm to its special architectural and historic interest. The very essence of its listing is tied to its sculptural integrity and artistic expression. Removing significant portions would diminish, if not destroy, the artist's original intent and the very reason for its heritage designation.

This proposed removal directly impacts the public's ability to appreciate this listed artwork. A key aspect of "amenity" in a public space, particularly concerning a listed artwork, is the ability for the public to engage with and understand its intended form and significance. By removing substantial elements, the application would directly lead to a profound loss of amenity for the public. The artwork, as it currently stands, offers a unique visual experience and narrative. Fragmenting it would reduce its legibility, aesthetic impact, and historical context, thus preventing current and future generations from fully appreciating its artistic and heritage value.

It is particularly pertinent to highlight that the proposed alterations to the Hollaway Wall come at a time when there has been considerable loss of twentieth-century built heritage, particularly due to the proposed demolition of associated buildings on the former UMIST Campus. In this context of diminishing examples of significant post-war architecture and artistic integration, the retention of the Hollaway Wall in its complete and original form becomes even more critical. It stands as an increasingly rare and valuable example of its kind, offering a tangible link to a specific period of architectural and artistic development. To permit the dismemberment of this listed artwork now would further exacerbate the loss of this vital stratum of our city's history, reducing a rare survivor to a mere fragment.

Justification for Alterations and the Irreversibility of Harm:

For a listed building, especially one that is a unique artistic creation, alterations should only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where they are demonstrably necessary for the building's preservation, or for an appropriate and justified adaptive reuse that respects its special interest. The application must provide an overwhelmingly compelling justification for the proposed removal of "large elements.Without such a justification, the irreversible harm caused to the artwork's integrity and the public's ability to appreciate it is unacceptable. Less intrusive alternatives should be thoroughly explored and presented, demonstrating that the proposed removal is the only viable option, which I highly doubt for a sculptural work.

To echo Historic England as quoted in the STATEMENT OF CONSULTATION. "We have some concerns over the extent of sections of the wall proposed for
removal, and do not feel that this is fully justified. Removing extensive sections of the wall will reduce it legibility and its prominence as a robust and impermeable barrier, causing harm to its significance." And the Twentieth Century Society who state that the wall "should be understood as a complete piece and not broken apart". Despite such recommendations, the STATEMENT OF CONSULTATION indicates no intention to adapt its plans to remove large parts of the wall and instead makes spurious claims that this, along with enclosing part of the wall inside a new building, will improve the public's ability to appreciate the artwork.

I strongly urge the planning department to refuse application 143025/LO/2025. The proposed removal of significant elements of the Hollaway Wall represents an unacceptable and irreversible loss to a vital listed artwork, severely impacting its heritage value and the public's rightful amenity

to appreciate it in its complete form, especially given its increased rarity as a surviving example of twentieth-century built heritage.

Yours faithfully,

[redacted]