

Planning Statement and Historic Assessment for retaining awning at Bar San Juan, 56 Beech Road, Chorlton, Manchester M21 9EG. February 17th 2025

Background Bar San Juan is an established Spanish Tapas Bar with a first class reputation serving authentic tapas to locals and visitors from further away in Manchester. The premises are small, like many authentic tapas bars, and very popular which means that the small outdoor area at the front of the restaurant, is often used, even in inclement Manchester weather. The owner wants to make the area more weather proof in the winter by installing removable transparent drop awnings, very much like those seen on the continent in similar locations, and becoming more prevalent in the UK. Site and Surroundings The site is in an established and popular local centre that is also within the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane (Extension) Conservation Area. As such the property has the status of being a heritage asset and any scheme needs to have regard to the NPPF and whether or not any adverse impacts are outweighed by benefits to the community. The forecourt to the premises is wholly within the demise of the bar and there is no infringement onto the highway adjacent. Existing scheme. The plan is to keep installed and retain the already erected canopy which had been given planning permission.

This premises have always had an awning on the front elevation, since they first opened in 2011. This scheme allows drop awnings to be fitted when the weather is inclement. The structure of the canopy is a wood finish so that it did not 'stand out' in visual terms from the street scheme. There is a pole supporting the canopy at the western end of the site, located behind the existing lamppost. This pole gives stability to the canopy and allows the drop awnings to be easily fitted and removed. It also allows the discharge of surface water from the canopy into the existing drain. The clear drop awnings are transparent and durable.

Assessment

In terms of the structure it will have no impact from the existing awning. The structure will be made of a wood finish and varnished, rather than metal and painted bright yellow. As such it will be resistive in the street scene and not 'stand out' or appear out of place. The provision of the prop awnings will allow the premises to trade effectively throughout the year and this will bring benefits in terms of life and vitality, but, more importantly, economic ones in that it will secure the operation of the premises all year around and result in 2 full time jobs being created. As such, while the development will impact on the heritage asset the public benefits of the new jobs being created and the sustainability of the business mean that these impact are outweighed.

Summary

The applicant engaged with the planning department and local Councillors in designing the scheme and is happy to continue to work with the Council to retain the development that will secure the future for the business while enhancing the area.