



Change of use from a photography studio (Use Class E) to a mixed-use venue (Sui Generis) which includes a bar, record shop, music and event space, co-working area and studio space. Installation of new front door and additional air conditioning unit (with relocation of two existing units) and emergency access stair to rear elevation.

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1. Introduction

1.1 - This Heritage Statement accompanies a planning application for a proposed development at 45-47 Thomas Street, Manchester, M4 1NA. The building is presently unoccupied; however, it has a recent history of commercial use, having been occupied by The Thomas Street Photography Studio from 2014 until its vacancy in December 2023. This Heritage Statement meets the requirements of the NPPF and provides sufficient information in regards to heritage considerations, as detailed below

1.2 - The proposed development seeks to revitalise the premises by establishing a music focused bar with a record shop retail element on the ground floor, creating a multi-use yoga studio and events space on the first floor, and providing financially accessible co-working creative spaces on the second floor. This approach aims to bring renewed purpose to the property, ensuring its active contribution to the local economy and streetscape.

1.3 - In order to provide a clear understanding of the proposed scheme and its relationship with the surrounding area, this statement includes:

- A description of the application site and surrounding area.
- A review of the application site's planning history.

- An overview of the proposal.

- A review of the relevant national and local planning policy guidance.

- An appraisal of the proposal against its planning policy context.

1.4 - The application is supported by the following information:

Existing Plans

Proposed Plans

Heritage Statement (This document).

Design and Access Statement

2. The Application Site and Surrounding Area

2.1 - The application site comprises of a three-story property, this property forms part of a terrace located on the east side of Thomas Street. It has a single street frontage, with the west elevation fronting Thomas Street. There is a rear yard which backs onto Kerschicks shoe shop (Edge Street)' only separated by the rear garden area. The site address is 45-47 Thomas Street, Manchester, M4 1NA.

2.2 - The site is bounded to the north by 'Terrace NQ' (a bar) and 'Cain and Grain' (a bar) to the south.

2.3 - The application building has red brick elevations to Thomas Street and the rear of the building. The building was constructed in the late 1970's and comprises of machine-made brick. The roof comprises part slate pitch roof to the street frontage and a flat roof to the rear area. The ground floor frontage to Thomas Street comprises of glazed shopfronts with timber framed windows, UPVC doors, and two roller shutters.

2.4 - The site lies within the Northern Quarter area of the City Centre which is characterised by a broad mix of uses. Food and drink, retail, office uses are particularly established within the Northern Quarter have been successful in bringing activity and vibrancy to the area and providing vacant buildings with active uses. Thomas Street already comprises of the following businesses 'Rivet & Hide', 'Fierce & Beer', 'Smithfield Social', 'Cane & Grain', 'Terrace NQ', 'The Bay Horse Tavern', 'Cathedral Jewellers', 'Clark Brothers', and 'Wolf at the door'.

2.5 - The site lies within the Smithfield Conservation Area. The building is not nationally listed and was constructed in the late 1970s as noted above. Despite this the building contributes to the character and appearance of the conservation area, comprising the uniform street wall to Thomas Street.

3. Planning History

3.1 - Planning history research using the Council's planning application database identified a number of planning applications associated with the site and neighbouring properties on Thomas Street. These are set out in the table below for reference:

Planning Reference	Location	Description of development	Decision	Decision Issued date
F00646	28, 32, 36, 38, 40 & 42 Edge Street	Alterations to front elevations of vacant shop premises	Approved	Fri 27 Sep 1974
F05652	45 – 47 Thomas Street	Proposed rebuilding of a double unit, consisting of 3 storeys and a basement for use as a wholesale ware-house.	Approved	Wed 02 Mar 1977
F/AD01625	45 – 47 Thomas Street	Non-illuminated sheet advertisement boards situated on existing fence on vacant land.	Approved	Tue 14 Mar 1978
F09791	45 – 47 Thomas Street	Erection of a 3 storey building to form a retail shop at ground and 1st floor level and storage at 2nd floor level.	Approved	Tue 16 Jan 1979
F12537	45 – 47 Thomas Street	Construction of a shop front	Approved	Tue 04 Mar 1980
098120/FO/2011/C2	43 Thomas Streett	Change of use of vacant A1 to mixed Sui Generis Class A3 (cafe /restaurant), Class A4 (bar), Class B1 (Business), D1 (Community gallery) and D2 (cinema) Use and elevational alterations.	Approved	Thu 16 Feb 2012
109072/FO/2015/C2	43 Thomas Street	Use of roof area as roof garden for eating and/or drinking by up to 20 patrons at a time	Approved	Fri 28 Aug 2015
		from 10.00 to 21.00 daily in association with and ancillary to the Restaurant, bar, business, community gallery and cinema (Sui Generis) within 43 Thomas Street		
126496/FO/2020	43 Thomas Street	Change of use of ground floor vacant area to mixed use Sui Generis Class A3 (cafe/restaurant), Class A4 (bar), Class B1 (Business), D1 (Community gallery) and D2 (cinema); and extension of opening hours for whole of ground floor unit	Approved	Mon 07 Sep 2020

4. The Proposal

4.1 – The application proposal is for the renovation and change of use of 45-47 Thomas Street, Northern Quarter.

4.2 - The application proposal does not involve any external structural alterations to front of the building. The only structural change to the building will be to create a wider emergency exit at the front of the building to accomodate an increased capacity on the upper floors and the relocation of existing double door exit and the ground floor shopfront is proposed to be replaced with a new painted timber frame glazing and doors to reflect the current shopfront in style. A new signage zone will replace the existing signage box. The new signage will consist of new unit numbers to differentiate that there are three separate units.

4.3 - On advice from fire safety officers the proposal includes the addition of a metal emergency access fire escape to the first floor of the rear elevation. The finish of the staircase will be in matt black to create the least amount of impact possible and tie in with the surrounding area. It is not over looked by any local residents and terminates in a communal courtyard. The existing air conditioning units will be relocated to accomodate the new staircase. An additional air conditioning unit is to be installed at the rear of the premises alongside the 2 existing units. This also cannot be seen from any adjacent locations.

4.4 - The current windows comprise a hardwood frame and external beads and single glazed units. The principal elevations contain stone cills which will all be retained and stripped of existing white paint.

The current windows appear to be a mix of single and double glazed installed circa late 1970s. We propose to retaining all the windows frames and sanding back and varnishing to expose a bare hardwood finish. All ground floor glazing will be replaced with laminated double glazed glass as per recommendations in the crime impact statement. Additionally on the first floor we propose the installation of secondary glazing for sound insulation purposes. These will be timber frame and be acoustic specifictation double glazing.

4.5 - Internally all three floors will have, new stores, w/c's. Additionally the ground floor will have a bar, cellar and stock room. This will provide all floors with the amenities needed for operation.

4.6 - In essence the external visual impact of the proposal will leave the publicly visible front elevation largely unchanged, the key change will be a newly formed entrance to suit the ground floor. The new ground floor shopfront will replace the existing UPVC doors with a bare timber installation and new metal finish double doors. The stall riser will remain as part of the proposal which is in keeping with the current situation but will have a varnished bare timber finish inline with the rest of the design.

4.7 - The proposed opening hours of the premises applied for reflect those of other retail premises in the area and are 8am – 1am Sunday - Wednesday, 8am - 2am on Thursday and 8am - 3am Friday and Saturday.



5. National and Local Planning Policy Context

5.1– Planning policy guidance of relevance to the proposed scheme, and which provides the context for its assessment, is set out within the following documents:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- The Development Plan for Manchester

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5.2 - The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. A revised NPPF was published July 2021 and last updated September 2023. The document states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It seeks to achieve this objective by:

- Recognising that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and advising that they should be conserved in a matter appropriate to their significance (Paragraph 197).

- Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:

(a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

(b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;

(c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness;

(d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place. (Paragraph 196)

- Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal. (Paragraph 201)

- In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

(a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

(b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and

(c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. (Paragraph 203)

- The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. (Paragraph 209)

- Setting out that there is a need for the planning system to perform a number of roles, including an economic role, social role and environmental role. The economic objective relates to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy and ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places. The social objective seeks to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities. The environmental objective seeks to protect and enhance the natural, built and historic environment and make effective use of land, and minimise waste and pollution (Paragraph 8).

- Requiring that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible (paragraph 47).

- Ensuring that planning decisions help create conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be expected to consider the City's heritage and continue the rich pattern of activity in the core area.

- Policy EN 3 'Heritage' sets out that new developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving/enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance including conservation areas.

Saved Policies of the Unitary Development Plan for Manchester (July 1995)

5.5 - The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was superseded by the Core Strategy. However, a number of UDP policies have been 'saved'. Extant policies contained within the UDP which are relevant to the proposed scheme include:

- Policy DC18.1 'Conservation Areas' seeks to protect, preserve and enhance the character of the city's conservation areas.

- Policy RC20 Area 4 'Swan Street/Shudehill/Tib Street/Church Street' This policy describes the area in 1995 and is of little relevance today. the policy confirms that investment in existing buildings will be encouraged.

