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24.2015/190924/lac

48 King Street, Manchester, M2 4LG
Application for advertisement consent for the installation of signage

Introduction

On behalf of our client, Belstaff International Ltd, please find attached an application for Advertisement Consent for the installation of retail signage at 48 King Street, Manchester, M2 4LG. The proposal will comprise of illuminated lettering reading 'Belstaff' at the front elevation of the building above the entrance. Additionally, a flag sign is proposed above the entrance with the Belstaff logo. Belstaff is a British modern heritage fashion brand and the company is due to open their new Manchester store on King Street imminently. The proposed signage will attract potential customers and inform of the shop's presence.

In order to provide a clear understanding of the proposal, this letter provides a brief background to the application site and its surroundings; includes a description of the proposed signage; sets out the planning policy guidance of relevance to the proposal; and, assesses the proposed signage against the relevant planning policy context.

The Application Site and Surrounding Area

The application relates to the ground floor elevation of 48 King Street (see figures 1 and 2 below). The surrounding area is characterised by commercial and retail uses.

The application property is bounded by King Street to the north and King Street South to the south. The building is Grade II listed (LEN 1197938) and lies within the St Anns Square Conservation Area. The building was constructed in the c.1870 on a narrow regular plot in red brick with sandstone dressings. The building is three storeys in height, with a number of features of interest including at ground floor ornate carved pilasters with moulded cornice, and stylised columns and spandrel panels. Above ground floor, features of interest include original neo-Gothic carving, elegant cast iron balconies and tall sash windows.

Figure 1: Aerial view of 48 King Street.

Figure 2: Existing front elevation of 48 King Street.

The building is likely to have been developed in the late nineteenth century as a purpose-built shop built in gothic style using redbrick with stone embellishment. It lies within the St Anns Square Conservation Area. The MCC Conservation Area leaflet for the area advises *'It is important that the narrow-fronted character of the older buildings is retained in any new development'.* With regard to signage the note states that *'Signs and canopies should be carefully designed so as not to compete with or conceal architectural details of buildings'.*

The Application Proposal

This application is for advertisement consent for the installation of signage to the groundfloor elevation being fixed externally.

The fascia signage will read 'Belstaff' and comprises illuminated white fascia box lettering with black edges. The 'Belstaff' lettering will measure 240cm x 25cm with a 3cm depth. The illumination of the 'Belstaff' lettering will be 6500k comprising a cool white LED. The lettering will be wall fixed with a screw fixing.

A flag sign will also project over the main entrance of the building with an illuminated top. The flag sign will comprise a steel box, attached with 2 suspension bars to a steel baseplate and steel box frame. A white acrylic Belstaff logo will be installed onto the flag sign. The flag sign will measure 70cm x 51cm. The flag sign will be illuminated with a trough light, not exceeding 300 cd/m and fixed to the wall with a screw fixing. The lettering and flag sign will be wall fixed with a screw fixing.

Planning Policy Context

Planning policy guidance of relevance to the proposal is contained within the Town and Country Planning (Control of Signage) (England) Regulations 2007; the National Planning Policy Framework (2021); National Planning Practice Guidance; Manchester's Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2012); Saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan for Manchester (July 1995); and, the Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance (2007).

Town and Country Planning (Control of Signage) (England) Regulations 2007

Government Circular 03/2007 Town and Country Planning (Control of Signage) (England) Regulations 2007 requires local planning authorities to exercise their powers in relation to impact on amenity or public safety only, taking into account relevant development plan policies so far as they relate to amenity or public safety.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

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 in September 2023 and updated most recently in December 2023. The document states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Of relevance to the application proposal it seeks to achieve this objective by:

- 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 (paragraph 8).

- Requiring that planning decisions should ensure that developments: will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short-term but over the lifetime of the development; are visually attractive as a result of good architecture; are sympathetic to local character and history including the surrounding built environment; maintain a strong sense of place; and, create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible (paragraph 135).

- The quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. A separate consent process within the planning system controls the display of advertisements, which should be operated in a way which is simple, efficient and effective. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts (paragraph 141).

- Section 16 of the NPPF deals with conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraph 195 states that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

- Paragraph 200 advises that 'In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance'.

- Paragraph 201 states that '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 203 states '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 205 states 'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is

irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance'.

- Paragraph 206 states 'Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

    a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;
    b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional'.

- Paragraph 207 states that 'Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:
    a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
    b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
    c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
    d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

- Paragraph 208 states that 'Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use'.

- Annex 2 of the NPPF provides a glossary of key terms which are relevant to the application. 'Significance' is defined as: 'The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting'.

- 'Setting of a heritage asset' is defined within Annex 2 as 'The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral'.

National Planning Practice Guidance

The government published guidance on advertisements via the National Planning Practice Guidance website on 6 March 2014 (Reference ID: 18b).

The guidance states: '*Advertisements are controlled with reference to their effect on amenity and public safety only, so the regime is lighter touch than the system for obtaining planning permission for development*'.

The guidance goes on to state that '*local planning authorities [should] control the display of advertisements in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking into account the provisions of the development plan, in so far as they are material, and any other relevant factors'*.

The Core Strategy Development Plan Document (July 2012)

The Core Strategy was adopted in July 2012 and is the key Development Plan Document. Relevant policies within the Core Strategy include:

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.

Policy DM 1 'Development Management': states that all development should have regard to the following specific issues:-

- Appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail.
- Impact on the surrounding area in terms of the design, scale and appearance of the proposed development. Development should have regard to the character of the surrounding area.
- Effects on amenity.

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

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

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

Policy DC14 'Shop Fronts and Related Signs' seeks to ensure that the frontages and signage of commercial premises are in keeping with the character of the building and the surrounding area.

Policy DC15 'Advertisements, hoardings and posters': states that the Advertisement Regulations require that applications for advertisements be considered only in the interests of amenity and public safety. The Council will take account of the following matters in assessing these interests:

a) The general location of the proposed development and the effect on visual amenity;
b) The scope for posters and hoardings to make a positive contribution to the locality;

c) The design of the structures, and the relationship with any premises on which they are located;
d) The effect of the proposal on permanent redevelopment of the land;
e) Public safety resulting from the positioning of the design of the display;
f) The ease with which the structure is capable of being satisfactorily maintained;
g) The use of hoardings to screen vacant sites or buildings during development, or where development is known to be imminent;
h) The number of advertisements in the locality and their cumulative effect on visual amenity.

The Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance (2007)

Guidance contained within this document of relevance to the proposal includes:

Chapter 2 'Design': which states new development, whether for residential, industrial, commercial or retail purposes, should have a high standard of design making a positive contribution to the City's environment.

For the reasons identified below, it is considered that the proposal accords with the above planning policy guidance.

Planning and Heritage Appraisal

The material considerations against which the proposed signage should be considered include: effect on amenity; and, effect on public safety. The relationship of the proposed signage with the host building and its conservation area location are also material.

Principle of Signage

The application proposal involves the installation of branded retail signage to the shopfront of the building. The 'Belstaff' lettering will be illuminated and fixed centrally to the external façade of the building over the main entrance. The flag sign will be fixed to the left side of the façade and display the Belstaff logo with the top illuminated. The signage is essential to promote the new retail shop in order to attract customers and ensure the business can compete with neighbouring business all of whom display established signage schemes. It is important that the signage is illuminated in order to advertise the shop and to confirm when the unit is open for business.

The site is located in part of the City Centre which is characterised by retail and commercial premises. Existing businesses display a variety of signage, branding and lighting, thereby confirming that the principle of retail signage is acceptable in this location.

Design, Visual Appearance, and Effect on Amenity?

In accordance with national and local planning policy it is necessary to consider the impact of the proposed signage in terms of design and visual appearance, whilst the grade II listed status of the building and its conservation area location further emphasises the importance of ensuring a proposal of high quality and sensitive design.

The proposed lettering will be applied above the front entrance and the flag sign will be installed to the left of the front elevation. The location of the signage has been carefully considered, taking into account the listed status of the building and the conservation area location. No historic features are covered over by the installation. The 'Belstaff' lettering will be fixed centrally over the entrance onto fabric which is understood to be modern. The flag sign will be fixed using self-tapping screws. An electrical cable will provide the power for illumination. This will pass from inside the building through the modern fascia ensuring there is no wall mounted cabling.

The branded signage is bespoke and is designed to fit into the architectural proportions of the existing shopfront fascia ensuring a visually appropriate appearance is achieved. The design itself is subtle and understated. The white fascia box lettering and flag sign is not dissimilar to others on King Street therefore respecting the local context. The illuminated aspect of the lettering and flag sign will make the entrance to the building more attractive, whilst remaining subtle.

In summary, the proposed signage is considered to be high quality. It will complement the appearance of the building and will be consistent with relevant provisions of the NPPF; Core Strategy Policy SP 1, CC 9, EN 3 and DM 1; Saved UDP policies DC14 and DC15; and, the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD.

Effect of Signage on Public Safety?

Planning policy guidance states that new signage should not present any risk to highway or public safety.

The proposed signage will be installed on the external façade of the building in a pedestrianised area. As shown by the submitted drawings the signs will be installed at a height / projection which will ensure there will be no obstruction to pedestrians.

There are a variety of existing signs located on buildings / premises neighbouring the property and it is noted that the signage proposed replaces the signage of the previous occupier which also did not represent a risk to highway safety. The provision of gentle illumination around the building's entrance is considered to be beneficial in terms of public safety.

For the above reasons the proposal will not have an adverse impact on public safety and is consistent with provisions of the NPPF and Core Strategy Policy DM 1.

Relationship of Proposed Signage to the Building and St Anns Square Conservation Area

As noted previously, the proposed signage is of a carefully considered, high quality design and signs are appropriately positioned. They will respect the traditional character and significance of the building, and its location within the St Anns Square Conservation Area. Similarly, the proposed signs will not have an adverse impact on the setting of any listed heritage asset in proximity to the site. The signage will be carefully installed to the building, ensuring that there will be no material adverse impact to the façade. The 'Belstaff' lettering and flag sign will be installed and fixed to contemporary fabric using M5 screws / self drilling screws with minimal fixing, whilst the 'Belstaff' lettering electricity connection will run internally ensuring no external cabling is required. The trough sign will be fixed to the steel projecting arm, therefore not harming the building's fabric.

The overall purpose of the new signage is to market the Belstaff retail shop that is opening on King Street. The signage will ensure that the entrance to the retail shop can be readily seen helping customers to locate the premises, as well as attracting passing trade. This will contribute to the overall success of the retail shop and King Street generally.

In summary, due to the proposed location and design of the signage the proposal will not have an adverse impact on the building or the character and appearance of the buildings fabric or the St Anns Square Conservation Area. It will also not adversely affect the setting of any nearby listed buildings. The proposal is therefore consistent with provisions of the NPPF; Core Strategy Policies CC 9 and EN 3; Saved UDP Policy DC19 and, the Guide to Development in Manchester.

In conclusion, the proposed signage will not have an adverse impact on amenity or public safety. It will assist in marketing the new retail shop and ultimately contribute to its success by helping to attract customers. This will have a positive impact for both the building itself, and the St Anns Square Conservation Area by supporting the reuse of a vacant building. As a result, the proposal is in accordance with relevant national and local planning policy guidance.

Submission Information

The following information has been submitted in support of the applications:

- Completed Application Forms for Advertisement Consent

Drawing No.	Rev	Drawing Name	Scale	Papersize
23069-S100	-	Site Location Plan & Site Plan	1:1250/1:500 @ A3	A3
23069-F200	F	As Proposed External Façade (incl. signage detailing and sections).	1:100/1:10 @ A3	A3

The above information has been submitted alongside the application forms via the planning portal. The application fee (amounting to £165) will be paid during submission of the application.

We look forward to receiving confirmation that the application has been validated. In the meantime, if you require any further information in order to determine the application please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely

James Walkington

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