

Supporting Planning, Design and Access Statement

Change of Use: Arthur House, Chorlton Street, Manchester

September 2024

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Appendix I Site Location Plan

Report title: Supporting Planning Design and Access Statement

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For and on behalf of Avison Young (UK) Limited

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning, Heritage, Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Avison Young on behalf of Custodian Property Income REIT Plc ('the Applicant') in support of an application for full planning permission for the following change of use at Arthur House, Chorlton Street, Manchester:

"Planning permission for the change of use from education (Use Class F1(a)) on floor 5 and floor 6 (Unit 6c) and office (Use Class E(g)(ii)) on floor 1 to 4 and the remaining part of floor 6 to office (Use Class E(g)(ii)) and/or education (Use Class F1(a))"

- 1.2 This Statement addresses the relevant planning considerations, including national and local planning policy and other material considerations. It provides the planning justification for why the proposal represents policy compliant sustainable development and should be approved.

Supporting Information

- 1.3 The application is accompanied by a suite of supporting documents. The following documents are submitted in support of this application:
- Application form, relevant land ownership certificate (duly signed) and relevant planning application fee;
 - Covering letter;
 - This Supporting Planning Statement;
 - Plans, including;
 - Site Location Plan;
 - Existing Ground Floor Plan;
 - Proposed Ground Floor Plan
 - Operational Management Strategy;
 - Supporting Letter from the Agent; and,
 - Waste Management Plan.

2. Site and Surrounding Area

- 2.1 This chapter discusses the site's location and characteristics of the surrounding area.

The Site

- 2.2 The site comprises a GF + 6 storey office building with basement, located within the administrative boundary of Manchester City Council ('MCC'). The site is located within the heart of Manchester City Centre and fronts Chorlton Street and has a site area of 980m². The site is bound by Silver Street to the north, Gold Street to the east, Major Street to the south, and Chorlton Street to the west. A Site Location Plan is included at **Appendix I**.
- 2.3 Arthur House was built in the 1960's and recently gained consent (in January 2024) under planning application reference 137556/FO/2023 for external alterations associated with its refurbishment, including the installation of a new roof terrace. The approved refurbishment works are currently underway at the site.
- 2.4 The site is not located within a conservation area; however, it is in proximity to a number of listed buildings. The closest of which being the Grade II* listed Britannia Hotel which is located just 10m northwest of the site, on the opposite side of Silver Street.

The Surrounding Area

- 2.5 The surrounding area comprises a mix of uses including offices, hotels, bars, restaurants, cafes and retail units.
- 2.6 The site benefits from excellent transport connections, being just 200m south of Piccadilly Gardens Metrolink and bus interchange. Additionally, there is a bus stop on Chorlton Street, immediately adjacent to the site. This bus stop is served by the number 1 and 197 bus services which provide connections across Manchester City Centre, and out to Stockport via Chorlton, Longsight, Levenshulme, Burnage and Heaton Mersey.
- 2.7 The site represents a highly sustainable location which is well-connected to a range of public transport modes. The site is well positioned within walking distance of all three of Manchester City Centre's major train stations. Manchester Piccadilly Train Station is 425m east of the site, Manchester Oxford Road Train Station is 600m south west of the site, and Manchester Victoria Train Station is 950m north of the

site. The site is also easily accessible by tram with Piccadilly Gardens Metrolink Stop located approximately 200m north of the site.

Existing Use Class

- 2.8 It is Avison Youngs understanding that the entirety of the 5th floor and suite 6c of the 6th floor have extant consent for education use (Use Class F1), under application references 121501/FO/2018 and 088967/FO/2009/C2 (this equates to approximately 7,700sqft education use). It is noted that there are a number of historic change of use applications from the 1990's which were approved for laser/ hair/ health clinic uses relating to the third floor and sixth floor (references: 057325/FU/CITY2/99, 055130/FU/CITY2/98, 052759/FU/CITY2/97). However, it is Avison Young's understanding that all floors, except for the 5th and suite 6c of the 6th have been in office use for a period of over 10 years, meaning their legal use would revert to office (Use Class E) (this equates to approximately 20,500sqft office use). The ground floor and roof terrace are ancillary to both the office and education use at present and equates to approximately (these ancillary spaces equate to approximately 4,700sqft).

Summary

- 2.9 The site comprises a GF +6 storey office building, with basement, and roof terrace located in Manchester City Centre. The site is situated in an accessible location in close proximity to amenities, services and infrastructure, as well as being well-connected to the public transport network. Arthur House is currently in education use (Use Class F1) on the fifth floor and part of the sixth floor, and office use (Use Class E) on the entirety of the first, second, third, fourth, and the remaining part of the sixth floor.

3. Planning History and Surrounding Applications of Note

- 3.1 A review of MCC's online planning register has been undertaken. The site's recent planning history of relevance is outlined below.

Reference	Proposal	Outcome
137556/FO/2023	External alterations associated with refurbishment of existing office space comprising the installation of new roof terrace with pergola; installation of solar panels; installation of new security fencing, creation of access lobby, refurbishment of entrance plaza, new planters, creation of gym with associated changing rooms and studio, cycle store.	Approved January 2024
137599/AO/2023	Installation of 1 x lightbox canopy signage and illuminated individual letter wall signage.	Approved January 2024
121501/FO/2018	Change of use of fifth floor from Office (Class B1) to a flexible use of a language school (Class D1)/office (Class B1) pursuant to Schedule 2 Part 3 Class V of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015	Approved December 2018.
116656/FO/2017	Replacement stairwell windows on the south west elevation (Chorlton Street elevation).	Approved August 2017.
113412/FO/2016	Alterations to the external appearance of the building and works to external areas.	Approved November 2016.
106474/FO/2014/C2	Elevational alterations to replace 84 no. existing windows within Arthur House, Chorlton Street on the Silver Street and Major Street frontages	Approved October 2014.

088967/FO/2009/C2	Change of use of office suite (Use Class B1) to education and training (Use Class D1)	Approved May 2009.
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- 3.2 The site's planning history demonstrates that the site has been subject to several planning application which have resulted in external and internal improvements and modernisation of the building over recent years. This shows that significant investment has been made into the building, not just as part of the current ongoing refurbishments, but also as part of previous improvements of the building.
- 3.3 The site history also demonstrates that a number of change of use applications have been considered acceptable at the site over the years, allowing other uses beside office use.
- 3.4 Beyond the planning history of the site itself, there are a number of case study examples of applications in Manchester City Centre where change of use applications from office to education (and office) have been approved by Manchester City Council. Four of these recent examples are included in the table below:

Address	Reference	Proposal	Outcome
St James Buildings 79 Oxford Street	138217/FU/2023	Change of use of Part of 5th Floor from Office Space (Use Class E) to Flexible Office Space (Use Class E) / Educational College (Use Class F1a) for 10-year period	Approved 21st December 2023
Boulton House, 17 - 21 Chorlton Street, Manchester	136790/FO/2023	Change of use of Floor 2 and one additional upper floor from Offices (Use Class E(c)) to an educational facility (Use Class F1(a)) and Offices (Use Class E(c)) for a	Approved 3rd October 2023

		temporary period of 4 years	
2 Hardman Street, Manchester	137213/FO/2023	Flexible planning permission for change of use of floors 5 and 6 from E(g)(i) (Office) to F1(a) (Education) and/or E(g)(i) (Offices) and associated works	Approved 25th July 2023
8th Floor, City Tower, Piccadilly Plaza, Manchester	135136/FO/2022	Change of use from Office (Use Class E(g)(i)) to Office (Use Class E(g)(i)) and Education use (Use Class F1(a)) at the 8th Floor	Approved 30th November 2022

- 3.5 Additionally, it is recognised that Arthur House itself benefits from similar consent with floor 5 and part of floor 6 having extant consent for education use.
- 3.6 These Case Studies show that Manchester City Council has assessed other applications for change of use from office to education as being compliant with the adopted development plan for Manchester.
- 3.7 For instance, an extract of the Officer's Report assessing the principle of development for the change of use at Boulton House (application reference: 136790/FO/2023) is included below:

"It is considered that if implemented the proposal would bring a sustainable and active use to the building, that would support those wishing to gain an education that are older than typical schooling age, additionally, it would provide space for a business that would generate employment opportunities, thereby helping the regeneration of the City Centre, all in accordance with Core Strategy Policy EC1."

- 3.8 An extract of the Officers Report for Piccadilly Plaza (application reference: 135136/FO/2022) is included below:

“The new educational use is proposed due to the 8th floor being vacant and not being let despite resulting in this floor being vacant since 2018. The educational use proposed is considered to be acceptable in this location as it would complement and enhance the existing commercial offer within the heart of the City Centre, create employment and bring vacant floorspace back into use.”

Summary

- 3.9 In summary, the site itself has been subject to numerous applications over recent years which demonstrates the ongoing investment into the improvement and modernisation of the building. It has also been noted within this Chapter that there are several recent examples of where change of use from office to education in Manchester City Centre has been considered acceptable in principle by the City Council.

4. Relevant Planning Policy Framework

- 4.1 This section of the Statement outlines the relevant adopted and emerging planning policy framework and guidance at a local and national level.

The Development Plan

- 4.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that decisions should be made in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

- 4.3 The relevant adopted Development Plan Documents for the area include:

- Manchester Core Strategy (2012-2027) and 2024 Addendum;
- Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (2022-2039) ('Pfe'); and,
- Extant Unitary Development Plan policies ('UDP') (2004).

Manchester Core Strategy

- 4.4 The Manchester Core Strategy was adopted by the City Council on 11 July 2012. It is the key document in Manchester's Local Development Framework. The Core Strategy sets out the long-term strategic planning policies for Manchester's future development.

- 4.5 As defined by the Proposals Map, the site is located within the City Centre and Regional Centre boundaries.

- 4.6 The key policies of the Core Strategy which apply to the site are summarised below.

- 4.7 **Policy SP1 (Spatial Principles)** advises that development in all parts of the City should:

- protect and enhance the built environment;
- create well designed places that enhance or create character;
- make a positive contribution to the health, safety, and wellbeing of residents;
- consider the needs of all members of the community regardless of age, gender, disability, sexuality, religion, culture, ethnicity, or income;

- minimise emissions, ensure efficient use of natural resources and reuse previously developed land wherever possible;
- improve access to jobs, services, education and open space by being located to reduce the need to travel and provide good access to sustainable transport provision; and,
- maximise the potential of the City's transport infrastructure, in particular promoting walking, cycling and use of the public transport.

4.8 **Policy EC1 (Employment and Economic Growth in Manchester)** states that the Council will support other significant contributors to economic growth and productivity including health, education, retailing, cultural and tourism facilities.

4.9 **Policy EC 3 (The Regional Centre)** states that within the Regional Centre development for employment generating uses including offices and other commercial development will be encouraged.

4.10 **Policy DM1 (Development Management)** advises that all development should be appropriately sited, scaled, formed, massed, and detailed with appropriate layout and materials and should have regard to the character of the surrounding area and effects on built heritage. Effects on amenity, including privacy, light, noise, vibration, air quality, odours, litter, vermin, birds, road safety and traffic generation should be fully considered. Buildings and neighbourhoods should be made fully accessible to disabled people and new development should be sited so that it can be accessed by sustainable transport modes. Community safety and crime prevention should be considered. Refuse storage and collection should be managed.

4.11 **Policy T2 (Accessible Areas of Opportunity and Need)** states that the Council will actively manage the pattern of development to ensure that new development:

- is located to ensure good access to the City's main economic drivers, including the Regional Centre, the Oxford Road Universities and Hospitals and the Airport to ensure good national and international connections; and,
- Is easily accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, connecting residents to jobs, centres, health, leisure, open space and educational opportunities.

4.12 **Policy EN3 (Heritage)** advises that new developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment.

4.13 **Policy CC7 (Mixed Use Development)** states that the City Centre presents the most viable opportunities for mixed-use development, and in general these will be promoted as a means of using land as efficiently as possible.

4.14 **Policy CC 9 (Design and Heritage)** states that development in Manchester City Centre should preserve or enhance the heritage assets that have been identified, including listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled ancient monuments.

Places for Everyone

4.15 **Policy JP-S 1 (Sustainable Development)** aims to help tackle climate change, development should aim to maximise its economic, social and environmental benefits simultaneously, minimise its adverse impacts, utilise sustainable construction techniques and actively seek opportunities to secure net gains across each of the different objectives. Preference will be given to using previously developed (brownfield) land and vacant buildings to meet development needs.

4.16 **Policy JP-P5 (Education, Skills and Knowledge)** states that significant enhancements in education, skills and knowledge to benefit existing and new residents will be promoted, including by:

- Enabling the delivery of new and improved accessible facilities for all ages, such as early years, schools, further and higher education, and adult training to ensure our workforce is ready to benefit from new employment opportunities;
- Enhancing the existing campuses and developing new ones;
- Strengthening the world-leading research capabilities and promoting opportunities for business spin-offs; and,
- Continuing to help develop Greater Manchester as the UK's best destination for students.

Unitary Development Plan

4.17 **Saved Policy DC 19.1 (Listed Buildings)** advises that in determining applications for listed building consent the Council will have regard to the desirability of securing the retention, restoration, maintenance and continued use of such buildings and to protecting their general setting.

Other Material Considerations

4.18 There are a series of other planning policy guidance documents at the national level that are relevant to the determination of this application comprising:

- National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') (December 2023); and,
- National Planning Practice Guidance (March 2014).

4.19 A summary of these documents is provided below.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023)

4.20 The revised NPPF was published in December 2023. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies and guidance and how this can be applied. The NPPF is a material consideration in the determination chapter of planning applications.

4.21 Chapter 6 of the NPPF regards building a strong, competitive economy. Paragraph 85 of this Chapter states planning policies and decisions should help create conditions in which business can invest, expand and adapt. Paragraph 86 states planning policies should address potential barriers to investment, and should be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan.

4.22 Chapter 7 regards ensuring the vitality of town centres. Paragraph 90 states planning policies should promote the long term vitality and viability of town centres by allowing them to grow and diversify in a way that can respond to changes in the retail and leisure industries.

4.23 Chapter 8 regards promoting healthy and safe communities and states that planning policies and decisions should take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social, and cultural well-being for all sections of the community. Paragraph 99 recognises the importance of ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. Paragraph 100 states to ensure faster delivery of public services such as further education colleges, local planning authorities should work proactively with promoters, delivery partners and statutory bodies to plan for required facilities and resolve key planning issues.

- 4.24 Chapter 11 of the NPPF regards making effective use of land. Paragraph 127 of this chapter encourages local planning authorities to take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific purpose in the plans, where this would help to meet identified development needs.
- 4.25 Paragraph 157 of the NPPF encourages the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings.

National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) (2014)

- 4.26 National Planning Practice Guidance ('NPPG') was introduced in March 2014. The NPPG replaced a considerable amount of former guidance comprising Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Planning Policy Statements.
- 4.27 The NPPG provides guidance relating to the 'Historic environment'. With regard to decision-making, the NPPG refers to 'Significance' stating that, in terms of heritage-related planning policy is defined in the Glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework as the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting (Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 18a-006-20190723).
- 4.28 With regard to providing an assessment of the impact of proposals on the significance of affected heritage assets, the NPPG emphasises that the level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on its significance (Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 18a-009-20190723).

Summary

- 4.29 This section has identified a series of Development Plan Documents and other material considerations to be taken into account in the determination of the application.

5. The Proposed Development (Design and Access)

- 5.1 This section demonstrates how the proposed development is a suitable response to the site and its setting and demonstrates that it can be adequately accessed by prospective users.

Scope of Works

- 5.2 As outlined in Chapter 2 of this Statement, the lawful use of Arthur House is currently education use (Use Class F1) for the fifth floor and part of the sixth floor, and office use (Use Class E) for the entirety of the first, second, third, fourth, and the remaining part of the sixth floor. The ground floor and roof terrace are ancillary to both the education and office occupiers. This application is seeking consent for the change of use of the full building to office and / or education use (Use Class E and Use Class F1). The change of use application does not seek any external amendments to the building which would require planning consent.
- 5.3 The application is sought as there is no market interest in the building for office purposes, despite significant marketing. The building is currently undergoing redevelopment to create a high quality, modern workspace with additional amenities including a gym, and roof terrace extension. However, despite these works there is still no office demand for the building.
- 5.4 The building's agents have recently been approached by an education provider, associated with Elizabeth School of London ('ESL') which was founded in 2011 as an English language school and recruiter.
- 5.5 Allowing the building to be used for either office or education uses means it will be available for a wider range of occupiers which will increase the building's likelihood of occupation. It will futureproof the building as it will allow it to be occupied by ESL (who have expressed an interest), other education providers, or to remain in office use, and future applications would not be required for the building to change between office and education occupiers which would increase its likelihood of remaining occupied and futureproof the recently refurbished building by bringing vacant floor space back into use.

Use

- 5.6 The application seeks the lawful use of the full building to be Use Class E and/ or F1. Currently the lawful use of floors 1-4 and part of 6 is office use (Use Class E), and the lawful use of floors 5 and the remaining part of floor 6 is education use (Use Class F1).

Amount

- 5.7 The existing floor space will remain unchanged at approximately 3,946m².

Layout

- 5.8 The layout of the building will remain unchanged. The building will be subject to minor internal alterations to support its use for education; however, these alterations do not require planning permission. Check no changes to ground floor parking etc on receipt of plans.

Scale

- 5.9 No changes are proposed to the scale or height of the building.

Appearance

- 5.10 The appearance of the building will remain unchanged.

Waste and Servicing

- 5.11 The waste storage and management will remain as existing and is detailed in the accompanying Waste Proforma.

Access

- 5.12 The access to the building will remain unchanged and the building will remain DDA compliant.

Summary

- 5.13 The proposal is for the change of use of the building to allow the entirety of the building to be used for either education and/ or office uses (Use Class F1 or Use Class E). The change of use application does not seek any external amendments to the building which would require planning consent.

6. Elizabeth School of London

ESL General Overview

6.1 The Elizabeth School of London (ESL) is a reputable higher education provider committed to offering relevant, high-quality programmes in campuses in major locations such as London – Canary Wharf, London – Holborn, Birmingham, Leeds, and Northampton. As an inclusive organisation, ESL believe in education for all but not one size fits all, which is why they place great emphasis on providing customised opportunities and support for everyone that has an ambition to achieve their true potentials.

6.2 As such:

- ESL are proud to offer a wide range of entry points and flexible delivery methods.
- They believe investing in quality leads to sustainable growth.
- They believe that working in partnership brings benefits for everyone involved.
- ESL are committed to deliver the prospect that all students should leave with the skills, knowledge, and self-confidence they need to take advantage of career and personal opportunities in the future.

6.3 The below provides a general overview of the current student demographics at ESL, highlighting the predominant nationalities, age ranges, and educational levels.

- ESL aims to be an all-inclusive university, accepting undergraduates from all backgrounds and ethnicities.
- Currently, most ESL students come from the UK and European countries.
- A smaller number of students come from Asian and African backgrounds, but ESL is actively working on increasing international recruitment, suggesting that this demographic is likely to change soon.
- Most students enrolled in ESL-provided courses are at the undergraduate level.
- Most applicants fall within the age range of 23-32 years old.

- There is also a portion of applicants aged 18-23 and 32-40 years old.

ESL Manchester

- 6.4 Elizabeth School of London has an existing base in Manchester, located in Wellington House. However, ESL require more space as they cannot accommodate all their students in Wellington House. In addition, Wellington House is a multi-tenanted building, and, in this space, ESL cannot provide the level of quality they would like to provide for their students. The proposed relocation to Arthur House will allow ESL to meet their needs for space in Manchester and will also provide them with high quality, recently refurbished space to provide an attractive, high standard teaching environment for their students.
- 6.5 Following analysis of occupation, we are currently forecasting that across the full building, c.30,000 sq ft, there would be c.500 students with c.70 staff members.

7. Planning Appraisal

- 7.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires all applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 7.2 This section assesses the proposals against the relevant policies of the adopted Development Plan for MCC and the NPPF (2021).

Principle of Development

- 7.3 The current lawful use of Arthur House is office on floors one to four and part of floor six, and education use on floors five and the remaining part of floor six. This application seeks to allow the entire building to be used for either education (Use Class F1) and / or office uses (Use Class E). The proposal would not result in any external alterations to the building.
- 7.4 The change of use is proposed to bring the full building back into use, as despite significant marketing there is no occupier demand for the building to remain in office use. A letter from the leasing agent, Sixteen Real Estate, has been submitted in support of this application. The letter details the significant marketing campaigns that have been carried out over the last 9 years and the very limited uptake that these campaigns have resulted in. In the four years from 2020-2024 a marketing campaign costing approximately £46,000 was conducted. This four-year campaign resulted in just three deals equating to 4,250sqft of the total 30,000sqft building. Sixteen Real Estate has not secured any significant interest in the building for the past three years apart from the whole building interest from ESL. Therefore, this application would bring the full building back into use which would bring significant economic benefits and result in the building being fully occupied. Should this planning application be approved, this deal would represent the largest letting in the Manchester Office Market sub £30sq ft in 2024 which demonstrates what a significant investment this would be.
- 7.5 The principle of the change of use is aligned with the relevant policies of the Development Plan for Manchester. The proposal accords with Policy SP1 of the Core Strategy as it comprises the reuse of an existing building and would provide education within a highly sustainable location in the City Centre which would maximise usage of the City's existing transport infrastructure. This also accords with Core Strategy Policy T2 which encourages a pattern of development that is easily accessible by walking,

cycling and public transport, connecting residents to jobs, centres, health, leisure, open space and educational opportunities.

- 7.6 Core Strategy Policy EC1 states that the Council will support other significant contributors to economic growth and productivity including health, education, retailing, cultural and tourism facilities. As an education use which will generate approximately 70 new jobs this proposal is directly supported by Policy EC1. It will bring a predominantly vacant building back into full use which would provide the opportunity to diversify the offer in the City Centre and will have significant benefits to the viability of the building and vitality of this part of the City Centre. The proposal will therefore have significant direct economic benefits. Furthermore, it will justify the £3million investment into the building made by Custodian Capital which would in turn give them the confidence to roll out office refurbishments across their North West portfolio, therefore having wider indirect economic benefits.
- 7.7 With regards to Places for Everyone, Policy JP-S 1 encourages the development of vacant buildings to meet development needs. Therefore, as a vacant building which would be brought back into use the change of use application is directly supported by this policy. PfE Policy JP-P5 relates to education uses and supports the delivery of new and improved accessible facilities for all ages, including further and higher education, and adult training to ensure our workforce is ready to benefit from new employment opportunities. The proposal which would allow the building to be occupied for education use is therefore in line with the relevant policies of PfE.
- 7.8 As for national planning policy, the proposal will bring significant economic benefits, in accordance with Chapter 6 of the NPPF, and will allow the city centre to diversify in response to need in accordance with Chapter 7. Chapter 8 recognises the importance of taking a positive approach to meeting educational needs and widening the choice available. Chapter 11 encourages the alternative use of developed land where this would help to meet an identified need. Therefore, the proposal is directly supported by national planning policy as it accords with Chapters 6, 7, 8, and 11 of the NPPF.
- 7.9 The application seeks consent for the building's lawful use to be in office and/ or education use. This diversity of uses will allow maximum flexibility to promote tenant uptake within the building. As stated above there is currently interest in the building from Elizabeth School of Language for it to be occupied as an English language school and recruiter, which prompted this pre-app request. However, allowing the entire building to be in education or office use means should an alternative education provider look to occupy all or part of the building in the future, or should the building revert to office use in the future, under Class V of the General Permitted Development Order 2015, additional applications will not be

required which means it will be available for a wider range of occupiers which will increase the building's likelihood of occupation and prevent it from falling vacant in the future. This will therefore futureproof a sustainably located, recently refurbished City Centre building.

7.10 In addition to the above it is noted that there are a large number of comparable applications in Manchester City Centre where it has been assessed by MCC that the change of use from office to education is fully aligned with the development plan. These are listed in Chapter 3 of this Statement. Therefore, a precedent has been set for the acceptability of this change of use and we anticipate that this proposal would be similarly assessed.

7.11 In summary, the change of use of the full building to office and/ or education, from its existing lawful use of office on specified floors and education on specified floors, has been shown to be fully compliant with local and national planning policy. The proposal will bring a vacant building back into use, bring significant economic benefits to the City Centre, and meet an identified education need. Furthermore, it is shown that there is an existing precedent in Manchester City Centre, where the City Council has considered other examples of office to education change of use to be policy compliant. This proposal should therefore be positively considered in terms of the principle of development.

Heritage

7.12 While the site itself does not constitute a listed building, there are listed buildings present within its vicinity, most notably the adjacent Grade II* listed Britannia Hotel which is located just 10m north west of the site, on the opposite side of Silver Street. The site is not located within a Conservation Area. The closest Conservation Areas to the site are George Street Conservation Area, which is approximately 75m west of the site, and Whitworth Street Conservation Area, which is approximately 80m south east of the site.

7.13 While the proximity to a listed building and conservation areas is recognised, the application itself does not propose any external alterations to the building, and as such the proposal will not have any impact on the character or setting of a heritage asset. The proposal therefore accords with Policy EN3 and CC9 of the Manchester Core Strategy and DC19.1 of the UDP.

Amenity

7.14 It is not considered that the proposed change of use would have any impact on the amenity of surrounding occupiers or businesses. The proposed use is for higher education which would be for

students 18 years and older. The purpose of Elizabeth School of London is to provide quality educational experience for students from diverse backgrounds. The nature of the educational offering makes it popular for a more mature cohort of students, who have made the decision to pursue further education from non-traditional backgrounds. As a result, ESL offers a mature learning environment, with its day-to-day operations being more akin to an office use rather than a traditional education use.

- 7.15 As outlined in the management plan, the operational hours of ESL would be from 8:30am- 9pm Monday-Friday, 9am-7pm on Saturdays, and 9am to 5pm on Sundays. This demonstrates that the premise will not operate during anti-social hours, and therefore will have no impact on surrounding occupiers in terms of noise or movement. The further education facility is not considered to substantially differ from the use pattern of the existing office and education occupiers within Arthur House. This is a busy City Centre area and therefore the proposal would have no additional impact compared to what the office use would generate in an already active part of the city.
- 7.16 As the operation of the building will not differ significantly as a result of this change of use, it is not considered that there would be any impacts on amenity. The development is therefore considered to be fully compliant with Policy DM1 of the Core Strategy.

Highways

- 7.17 No changes are proposed to the number of car or cycle parking spaces on site. The site represents a highly sustainable location, a short distance from Piccadilly Gardens which comprises a major tram and bus interchange, and within walking distance of all three of Manchester City Centre's major train stations. Therefore, car parking spaces will not be made available to students, unless required for accessibility purposes. The 15 car parking spaces will be retained for staff members with priority given to those who require the space for accessibility.
- 7.18 As the number of car parking spaces is not proposed to change, it is not considered that there will be any significant impact on the highways network as a result of this application. Furthermore, it is recognised that the consent currently being implemented on site under application reference 137556/FO/2023 results in a reduction in parking from 32 to 15 car parking spaces. Therefore, the site will be naturally subject to significantly less vehicle movements than it has been in recent years due to the reduction in parking. As such there is considered to be no significant highways impacts from the change of use in accordance with Policies T2 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy.

Summary

- 7.19 The principle of development is demonstrated through the application's compliance with policies SP1, T2, and EC1 of the Core Strategy, which in combination encourage a sustainable pattern of development, and support for significant contributors to economic growth which specifically includes education uses. This proposal will bring a vacant building back into use which is in a highly sustainable location, and will bring significant direct and indirect economic benefits, including the creation of 70 new jobs. The proposal is also supported by PfE policies JP-S 1 and JP-P 5 as PfE encourages the reuse of vacant buildings to meet development needs and supports the delivery of new and improved higher education facilities.
- 7.20 As for heritage considerations, while the proximity to a listed building and conservation areas is recognised, the application itself does not propose any external alterations to the building, and as such the proposal will not have any impact on the character or setting of a heritage asset. The proposal therefore accords with Policy EN3 and CC9 of the Manchester Core Strategy and DC19.1 of the UDP.
- 7.21 As the operation of the building will not differ significantly as a result of this change of use, it is not considered that there would be any impacts on amenity. The development is therefore considered to be fully compliant with Policy DM1 of the Core Strategy. Furthermore, the planning appraisal has shown there to be no anticipate highways impacts from the change of use, therefore according with Policies T2 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy.

8. Summary and Conclusions

- 8.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Avison Young on behalf of Custodian Property Income REIT Plc ('the Applicant') in support of an application for change of use at Arthur House, Chorlton Street, Manchester:

"Planning permission for the change of use from education (Use Class F1(a)) on floor 5 and floor 6 (Unit 6c) and office (Use Class E(g)(i)) on floor 1 to 4 and the remaining part of floor 6 to office (Use Class E(g)(i)) and/or education (Use Class F1(a))"

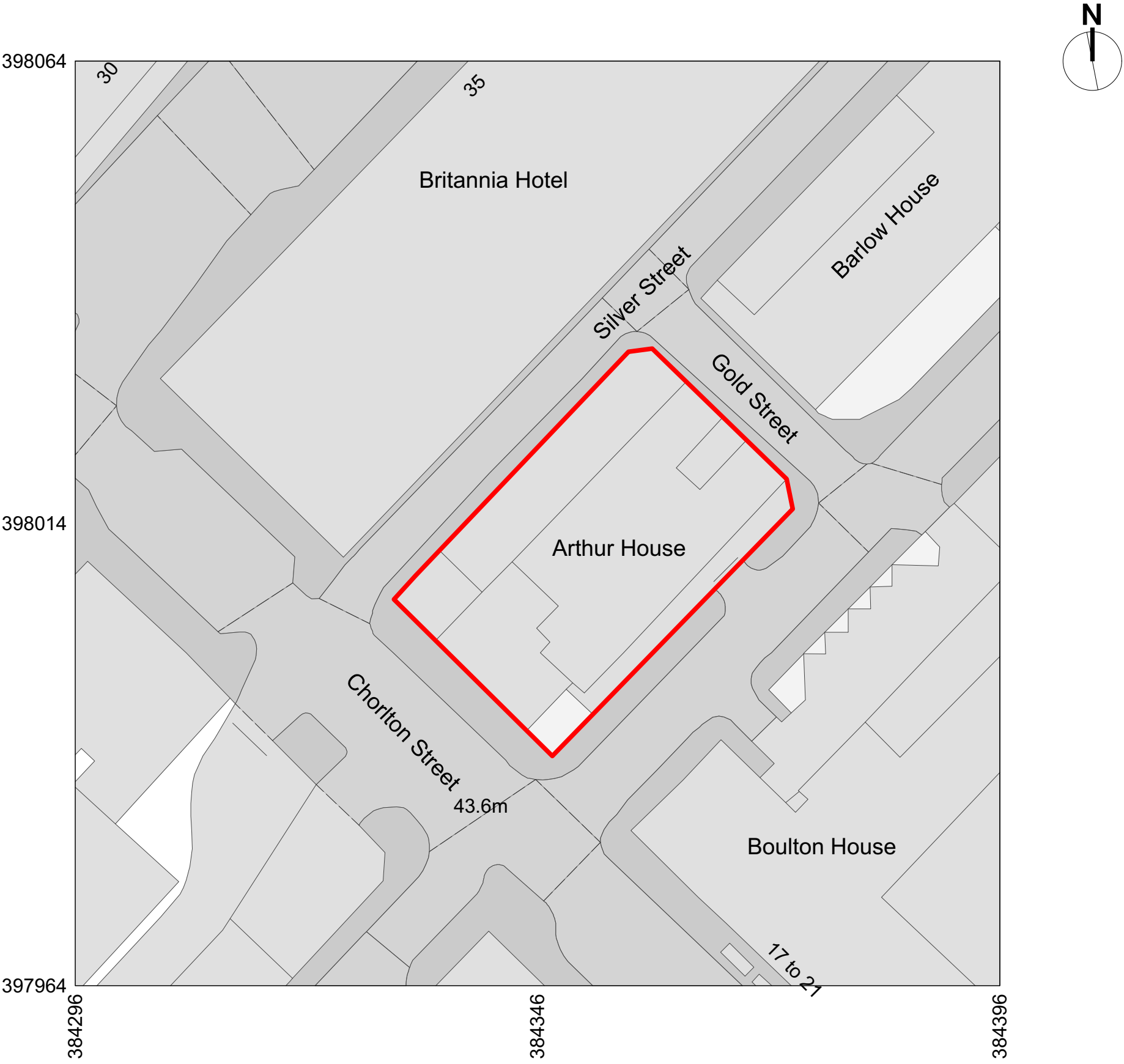
- 8.2 The site comprises a GF +6 storey office building, with basement, and roof terrace located in Manchester City Centre. The site is situated in an accessible location in close proximity to amenities, services and infrastructure, as well as being well-connected to the public transport network. Arthur House is currently education use (Use Class F1) on the fifth floor and part of the sixth floor, and office use (Use Class E) for the entirety of the first, second, third, fourth, and the remaining part of the sixth floor.
- 8.3 The site itself has been subject to numerous applications over recent years which demonstrates the ongoing investment into the improvement and modernisation of the building. The building is currently undergoing redevelopment to create a high quality, modern workspace with additional amenities including a gym, and roof terrace extension. However, despite these works there is still no office demand for the building, despite expensive and lengthy marketing campaigns. It has also been noted that there are several recent examples of where change of use from office to education in Manchester City Centre has been considered acceptable in principle by the City Council.
- 8.4 The proposal is for the change of use of the building to allow the entirety of the building to be used for either education and/ or office uses (Use Class F1 or Use Class E). The change of use application does not seek any external amendments to the building which would require planning consent. The application is coming forward as a result of interest from a reputable education occupier, Elizabeth School of London, who have expressed an interest in occupying the full building to add to their existing well established portfolio and bring investment into this part of Manchester City Centre.
- 8.5 The principle of development is demonstrated through the applications compliance with policies SP1, T2, and EC1 of the Core Strategy, which in combination encourage a sustainable pattern of development, and support for significant contributors to economic growth which specifically includes

education uses. This proposal will bring a vacant building back into use which is in a highly sustainable location, and will bring significant direct and indirect economic benefits, including the creation of 70 new jobs. This is a significant advantage, considering the building at present is largely vacant and showing no signs that it would be occupied by an office end user. The proposal is also supported by PfE policies JP-S 1 and JP-P 5 as PfE which encourage the reuse of vacant buildings to meet development needs and support the delivery of new and improved higher education facilities.

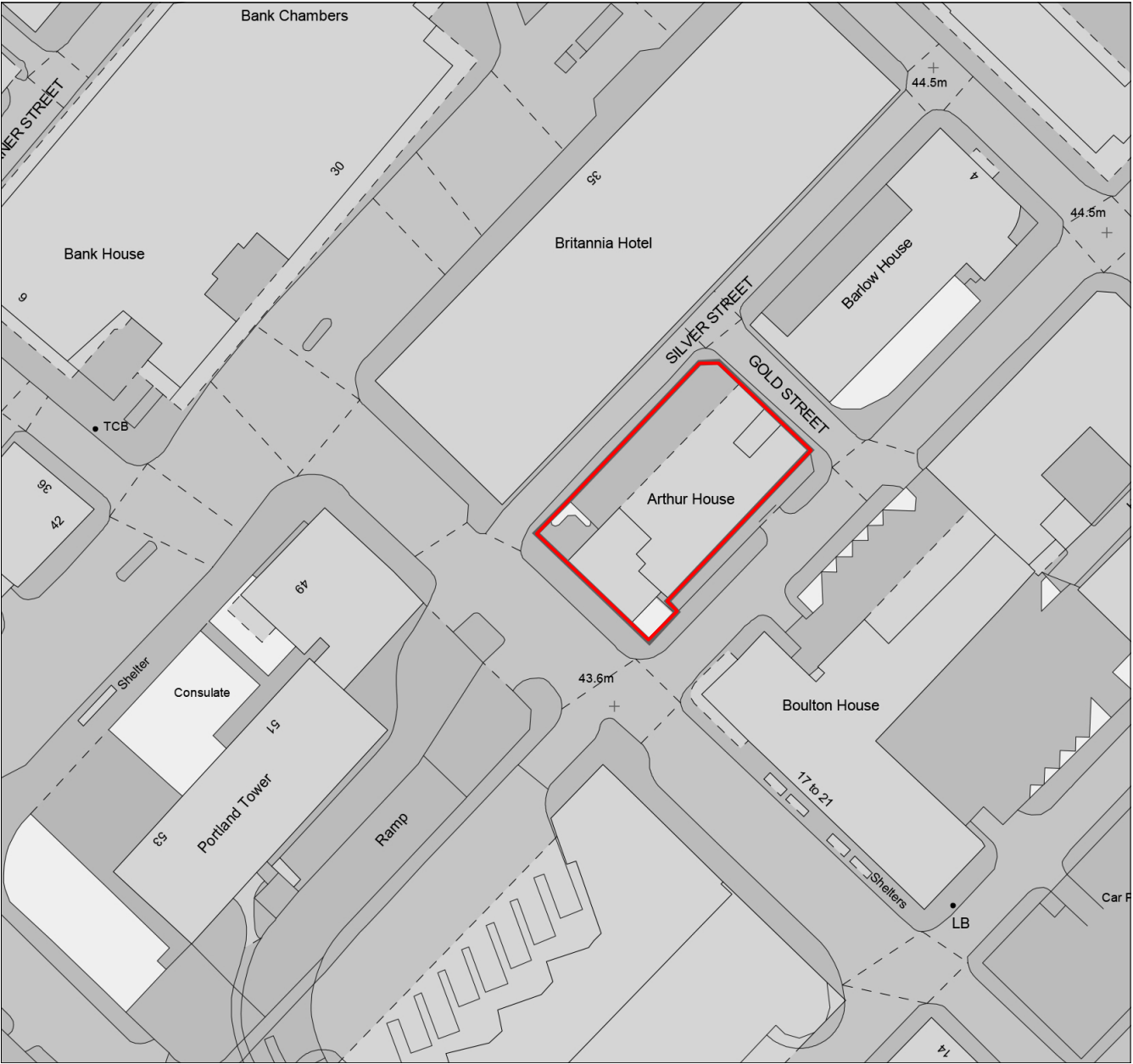
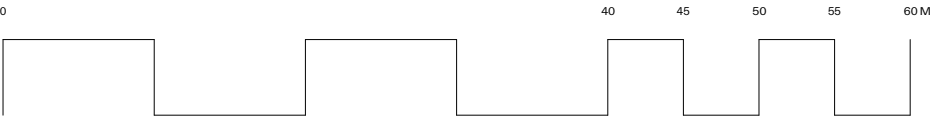
- 8.6 As for heritage considerations, while the proximity to a listed building and conservation areas is recognised, the application itself does not propose any external alterations to the building, and as such the proposal will not have any impact on the character or setting of a heritage asset. The proposal therefore accords with Policy EN3 and CC9 of the Manchester Core Strategy and DC19.1 of the UDP.
- 8.7 As the operation of the building will not differ significantly as a result of this change of use, it is not considered that there would be any impacts on amenity. The development is therefore considered to be fully compliant with Policy DM1 of the Core Strategy. Furthermore, the planning appraisal has shown there to be no anticipate highways impacts from the change of use, therefore according with Policies T2 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy.
- 8.8 Overall, it is considered the proposal fully accords with planning policy both nationally and locally, and as such it is respectfully requested that the application is approved without delay.

Appendix I

Site Location Plan



1 SITE LOCATION
Scale: 1:500



2 SITE CONTEXT
Scale: 1:1000

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31/11/22

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REV.
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