

15 February 2024
Sunlight House Covering Letter - Louvre



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For the Attention of Jennifer Atkinson

Submitted via Planning Portal PP-12803238

Dear Sir / Madam

**Application for Ground and Basement Works to Sunlight House
Sunlight House, Quay Street Manchester, M3 3JZ**

Introduction

We write on behalf of our client, Kinrise (Sunlight Limited) to apply for Planning and Listed Building Consent for installation of single decorative metal louvre in a ground floor window facing onto Quay Street elevation of the above building to serve a reception area cafe.

The description of development is as follows:

Planning and Listed Building Consent for installation of 1 .no decorative metal railing in ground floor window facing onto the Quay Street elevation to serve louvre to reception area cafe.

The supporting Design and Heritage Statement fully details the proposed works and how they fit into the wider strategy for ventilating the ground floor units across the building. The internal works associated with refurbishing the reception space were granted permission by Manchester City Council (MCC) under Listed Building Consent Reference 136161/LO/2023 (dated 24 July 2023). These works comprise Phase 1 of the refurbishment of Sunlight House by the new owners.

Background

Sunlight House is located on the corner of Quay Street and Little Quay Street in the city centre of Manchester. The part of the building which relates to this application fronts Quay Street and incorporates part of the ground floor, basement and sub-basement.

Sunlight House is a Grade II listed building completed in 1932 by Joseph Sunlight, architect and developer, as the headquarters for his property business, with offices and shops to let. At the time, it was Manchester's tallest building.

The building is within the Deansgate Conservation Area, with other listed buildings including the Manchester Opera House on Quay Street, Royal London House at the junction of Deansgate and Quay Street and the former County Court building on Deansgate, which are all Grade II Listed and the former County Court building on Quay Street, which is Grade II* Listed.

Offices and associates throughout the Americas, Europe, Asia Pacific, Africa and the Middle East..

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Sunlight House has been extensively modernised throughout including refurbishment works previously throughout the building since its original construction and much of the original fabric and floorplan have been lost. As such there are clear opportunities to further remodelling of the building and better revealing and sensitively restoring the surviving original features.

The application forms part of the wider refurbishment of the building following a new ownership. Recent permissions have been secured to refurbish the upper floors of the building into flexible high quality office accommodation, as well as improvements to the office entrance and reception space (136161/LO/2023).

Proposals

Listed Building Consent for the refurbishment of the upper floor offices and reception space has previously been granted (MCC Planning Reference: 136161/LO/2023). During the formal consideration of this application, the proposed café louvre was removed from the proposals to allow further review of how the café ventilation would coordinate with the wider ventilation strategy for the other ground floor commercial units within the building. As part of this review, a number of other MEP options were also tested.

Following on from the above, this application seeks planning and listed building consent for a single louvre panel to serve the cafe reception space. The café is to be delivered as part of the Phase 1 works and as such approval is sought ahead of the other works to the ground floor units (which will form phase 2 of the refurbishment).

The proposed design is for decorative panel to use the spiral pattern evident in the historic imagery but introduce a third run in order to create more of a feature and minimise the louvres behind.

The panel uses the same colour metal as the existing window frames. The louvres would then be set behind and just be read as a shadow to the metal panel.

The proposal is outlined in detail on the enclosed plans and within the supporting Design and Access Statement prepared by Anomaly. This Statement also explains the alternative options that have been assessed to provide ventilation and it also explains how this café louvre will coordinate with the wider ventilation strategy for the building when it comes forward s part of the Phase 2 works.

The office accommodation entrance and proposed café to the corner will activate the relationship between Quay Street and Little Quay Street and forms part of separate live application (MCC Planning Reference: 136161/LO/2023).

The design team have limited the amount of necessary interventions, where possible, in order to protect and enhance the historic fabric of the building.

Submission Package

The application comprises this covering letter and a number of documents, namely:

- Site Plan - SLH-ANO-B0-XX-DR-A-05001-P1
- Existing Elevation Quay Street - SLH-ANO-P0-XX-DR-A-02401-P1
- Proposed Elevation Quay Street - SLH-ANO-P0-XX-DR-A-05401-P1
- Cafe Window Layout - SLH-ANO-P0-XX-DR-A-21601-
- Design & Heritage Statement prepared by Anomaly, Savills Heritage and Flat Consulting

The requisite application fee has been paid over the Planning Portal.

Pre-application Engagement

The proposed louvre has been subject to pre-application engagement with Manchester City Council's Planning and Heritage teams.

Officers requested a full options analysis is completed which assesses a number of options for ventilation for the reception café space. In addition, officers requested that the café louvre be considered as part of the wider ventilation strategy for the building. The submitted Design & Heritage Statement addresses these requirements.

Whilst this application is solely for a single window panel, the supporting Statement sets out the holistic approach to the strategy which will form part of the wider ground and basement floor works (known as phase 2) to the whole of the Quay Street frontage.

The client and design team have been keen to engage Officers from the outset of the project and have had a number of positive discussions to present and take on board officer feedback prior to submission.

Planning Policy

Section 38(6) of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act requires that all planning applications are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Development Plan for Manchester comprises the Core Strategy that was adopted on 11 July 2012 together with the saved policies from the Manchester UDP and the Proposals Map. The adopted Manchester Core Strategy sets out the City Council's Vision for Manchester to 2026.

The Strategy identifies the Site as falling within the 'City Centre'. Key policies relevant to the site are as follows:

Policy	Description
Policy SP1 Spatial Principles	Details the key spatial principles which will guide the strategic development of Manchester to 2027. The policy states that the Regional Centre of Manchester will be the focus for economic and commercial development, retail, leisure and cultural activity, alongside high quality city living.
Policy EC1 Employment and Economic Growth in Manchester	Priorities for ensuring continued economic growth include demonstrating that employment generating development has fully considered opportunities to provide jobs for local people, through construction or use; and ensuring the continued social, economic and environmental regeneration of the City.
Policy EN1 Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas	All development in Manchester will be expected to follow the seven principles of urban design (character, continuity and enclosure, public realm, ease of movement, legibility, adaptability and diversity) and have regard to the strategic character area in which the development is located.
Policy EN3 Heritage	Throughout the City, development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods, including those of the City Centre will be encouraged. New developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving and enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance, including listed buildings, and conservation areas. Proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets will be encouraged where they are considered consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.
Policy CC1	The city centre is a strategic economic location and focus of employment growth in the City and City Region. Within the city centre and the fringe a variety of high quality

Manchester City Centre	accommodation types, sizes and foot-plates will be encouraged to boost investment by local, national and international businesses. The city centre and fringe will be considered a suitable location for the consideration of high density buildings and commercially led mixed use schemes. The policy states that <i><u>“Developments which lead to the more intensive use of employment land (in terms of floorspace provided) will be supported”</u></i> .
Policy CC4 Visitors – Tourism, Culture and Leisure	Policy CC4 posits a focus on the City Centre as a hub for culture and leisure in the City Region. As such, proposals which improve the appearance, use and accessibility of all cultural and visitor attractions and associated facilities will be supported.
Policy CC9 Design and Heritage	Development in Manchester City Centre should preserve or enhance the heritage assets that have been identified, including listed buildings and conservation areas. The Council will support high density and mixed use development in the City Centre, but developers must recognise the specific design challenges that must be overcome to ensure complementarity of function and form. New development must support the range of uses the Council expects in the City Centre and contribute to a coherent and integrated physical environment.
Policy CC10 A Place for Everyone	The City Centre will develop as a location which appeals to a wide range of residents and visitors. Development which promotes this objective will be supported, particularly through increasing the diversity of activity in the City Centre and high standards of accessibility to buildings and across spaces.
Policy DM1 Development Management	All development should have regard to the specific issues including: effects on amenity such as noise, privacy, light, air quality, road safety and traffic generation; accessibility; community safety and crime prevention; vehicular access; and, green infrastructure.

Heritage

The proposals have been assessed against policies EN3 (Heritage) and CC9 (Design and Heritage) to ensure that the works respect the listed building.

A variety of options for the proposed louvre design have been tested as part of the design process, as requested by MCC. The heritage impact of each option has been carefully considered as part of this testing, with both the physical and visual impacts on the listed building reviewed in the accompanying Design and Heritage Statement.

Following this appraisal, and detailed discussions with both the architects and MEP consultants, the proposed Option 1 is clearly the most suitable solution with regard to impact on the listed building.

The location of the louvre adjacent to the café space ensures that the extent of the pipework required is limited, minimising both fabric and visual impact as a result of the proposals. The other options presented require extract to be located at a position removed from the café, thereby creating additional unnecessary pipework across the ground floor space; as shown in the accompanying drawings this requires additional fabric impacts here, as well as introducing unsympathetic plant to key spaces such as the main atrium or central lightwell.

For the creation of a new riser (the only other option which provides an extract adjacent to the café) this fabric impact is particularly impactful, as new openings will be required across all floors of the building as well as unsightly venting into the lightwell.

The preferred Option 1 is the only option which avoids such adverse material and visual impacts to the listed building, with the subtle way in which louvres can be incorporated into the façades shown through the existing Schofields example.

The proposed louvre design seeks to improve further on this precedent, by directly referencing the pattern of the decorative grating historically situated within these windows.

This high quality louvre design will therefore form part of the overall strategy for improving the street level façades of Sunlight House, and will sensitively screen the plant behind, whilst allowing the café to be effectively and efficiently vented with no adverse impact on the listed building as a result.

The proposals have been assessed against policies EN3 (Heritage) and CC9 (Design and Heritage) to ensure that the refurbishment works and improvements respect the listed building

Other Considerations

Ventilation and Mechanical Electrical and Plumbing (MEP)

The café will be located at ground floor reception level serving coffee, pre-cooked, pre-made type food. The level of cooking envisaged as being light, predominantly reheating of sandwiches within grilles and/or baked goods in the microwave. No deep fat frying or gas appliances will be installed.

Ventilation Strategy

It is intended the Café will be provided with a mechanical ventilation and heat recovery system to provide background ventilation to the space. No commercial kitchen or canopy-based extract system is required or proposed.

Careful consideration has been given to the ventilation strategy as can be demonstrated in the accompanying sketches.

The air intake is located at high level ground floor, located so as to not pull into the space contaminated air from vehicles, etc.

The air exhaust is located at high level ground floor located such that the exhaust does not cause any nuisance to neighbours.

Odour, Grease and Dust Control

As the Café preparation area is of a small scale, it is intended that it will mainly be used for preparation of sandwiches and hot/cold drinks. No hob cooking or frying is envisaged that would require any odour or grease control.

Dust control for the mechanical supply and extract ventilation systems is achieved through the incorporation of panel filters with the ventilation units.

Noise

The fans will be located within the mechanical ventilation and heat recovery unit. These units shall be located at high level within the café space. The fans are of small scale considering the size of the tenancy and it is not envisaged that noise breakout from the systems to the external will be a nuisance as any noise will be well below ambient noise levels in this part of the city centre.

The Design and Heritage Statement provides further information regarding the MEP and the proposed louvres.

Planning Context

Sunlight House is located on the corner of Quay Street and Little Quay Street where it occupies an important strategic location, immediately adjacent to the Spinningfields district of Manchester City Centre. The location is

within walking distance of all the services and facilities offered by Manchester City Centre. It has direct connectivity to the City's Inner Ring Road and the M62, M61, M60 motorway. Manchester City Centre is also a public transport hub providing accessibility to a range of modes of sustainable transport including rail, bus and tram services. The site is served by the free City Centre Metroshuttle service, which provides frequent and fast connections to the four major rail hubs: Piccadilly, Oxford Road, Victoria and Salford Central stations (closest train station being Deansgate approximately 0.5 miles from the site), as well as destinations across the City Centre.

Manchester City Centre is a strategic economic location and focus of employment growth in the City and City Region (as identified within Manchester's adopted Core Strategy, 2016). The Core Strategy confirms that in the City Centre and the fringe a variety of high quality accommodation types, sizes and foot-plates will be encouraged to boost investment by local, national and international businesses. The City Centre and fringe will be considered a suitable location for the consideration of high density buildings and commercially led mixed use schemes.

Spinningfields has become established as a world class office destination, characterised by new build office buildings aimed at the financial and professional services sector and wide mix of uses including high quality civic, residential, hotel, leisure and retail space in a carefully planned and managed environment offering very high quality public realm. The St John's area is located to the south (along Quay Street) at a key gateway to the city centre. Formerly home to Granada TV St John's is being transformed into a new unique city centre neighbourhood where people both live and work.

The building is therefore very well established in its commercial location and has the potential to play a key role in the provision of a unique high quality commercial office floor space with ancillary food and drink / leisure uses that fully complements regeneration initiatives across the City Centre.

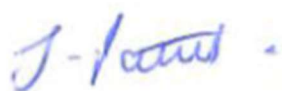
Conclusions

This proposal will help activate this part of the ground floor as part of the wider works to refurbish Sunlight House to create a high quality office use which celebrates and enhances the unique details from Sunlight's original proposal.

The design has carefully considered and minimised harmful intervention. The proposed works will fulfil the building's economic contribution to the City in line with adopted planning and regeneration policy. The proposed development will contribute to the economic, social and environmental improvement of the city.

Should you have any questions please do contact me using the details above.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. Patel".

Jay Patel

Director