

Development Management
Manchester City Council
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Our ref EKPS/221103/ESK/PG

Submitted via the
Planning Portal

17 June 2024

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Dear Sir or Madam,

Proposed Change of Use of 4 Oldham Road, Manchester, M4 5AD: Application for Full Planning Permission

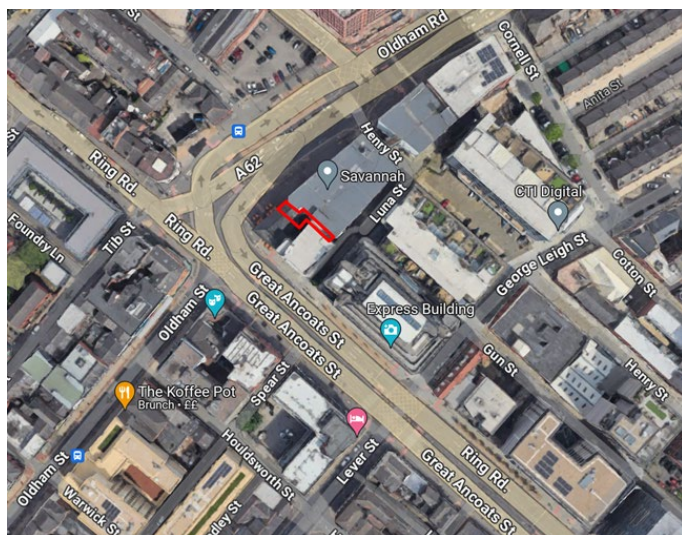
On behalf of our client, Future Cultures Limited ('the Applicant'), we are pleased to enclose a full planning application to change the use of the building at 4 Oldham Road in Ancoats, Manchester, to create a new, 'sui generis' drinking establishment, with external alterations. The application has been submitted via the Planning Portal (Ref. PP-12970354).

The Applicant: Future Cultures Limited

The team at Future Cultures Ltd. have over 20 years of experience in award winning hospitality projects, contemporary art sales, creation & curation. This is evidenced by the team's post-Covid revival of the Crown and Kettle PH, next door, which was the only Greater Manchester pub to be honoured in the prestigious County Winner: North-West category at the 2023 National Pub and Bar Awards. Future Cultures will apply their industry experience to transform this dilapidated period property into a thriving commercial venture.

The Site and its Surroundings

The Site is situated on Oldham Road (A62) in Ancoats, in-between a modern six-storey building (with commercial units at street level and apartments above) and the Crown and Kettle Public House. The Pub is Grade II listed and also occupies the street corner with the A665 - Great Ancoats Street (See **Figure 1**, below).



^ Figure 1: Site Location (Taken from Google Maps)

The property itself is relatively narrow, and of brick-built construction (See **Figure 2**, overleaf). It comprises of a basement plus four floors above, including a small amount of accommodation within the attic space. Each level is made up of a single room, plus a staircase to the rear.

The Site's ground-floor level benefits from a shopfront facing Oldham Road. To the rear, access to Luna Street, is possible via a covered seating area (shared with the adjoining Public House) and a gated passageway.



^ Figure 2: Site's Oldham Road frontage (taken from Google Maps)

It is understood that the Site was occupied by an interior design studio between circa 2021-2023, however the premises are now vacant.

The Site is situated just outside of the 'City Centre' boundary, as defined by the Manchester Core Strategy and its associated Proposals Map. It does, however, fall within the boundary of the 'Regional Centre', as well as 'East Manchester'. 4 Oldham Road also sits within the extended boundary of the City Centre, as defined within the City Centre Strategic Plan, which was approved by the City Council's Executive on the 2 March 2016.

The Site is located within the 'Ancoats Conservation Area'. Whilst the neighbouring Public House is Grade II listed, the Site is not covered by any formal designation.

The character of the surrounding area is mixed, with a range of commercial uses operating at ground floor level along Oldham Road, often with residential accommodation above.

The Site is in a highly sustainable location, with major transport interchanges accessible within easy walking distance, that provide train, tram and bus services across the City Centre and beyond.

The Proposed Development

Future Cultures Ltd. have identified a fantastic opportunity to bring the Site back to life and create a commercial venture that will complement, and add to, the existing offer available within Ancoats.

The description of development that is proposed by the planning application is as follows:

'Proposed use of the ground floor of the premises as a drinking establishment (sui generis). External alterations to include a new shop front and retractable awning serving an outdoor seating area.'

Key elements of the Proposed Development include the following:

- Introduction of a bar use on the ground floor of the premises, to operate until 23:00hrs Sunday – Thursday and midnight on Friday's and Saturdays. The main bar area would be positioned at ground-floor level, with the basement used as back-of-house and storage space.
- Linked to the above, an external seating area would be created immediately outside the Site's Oldham Road frontage.
- The existing shop front will be adjusted to incorporate bi-fold doors that can be opened during clement weather.
- A Victorian-style, awning would be added to the Oldham Road frontage to provide patrons sitting outside with an element of shade / protection from the elements. This will be of traditional appearance and retractable, to reflect the character of the existing 19th century building.
- The upper floors of the premises would remain unused / vacant. There is an aspiration to introduce a gallery space at first floor and above, in association with the proposed bar, however this would be covered by a separate application in future.

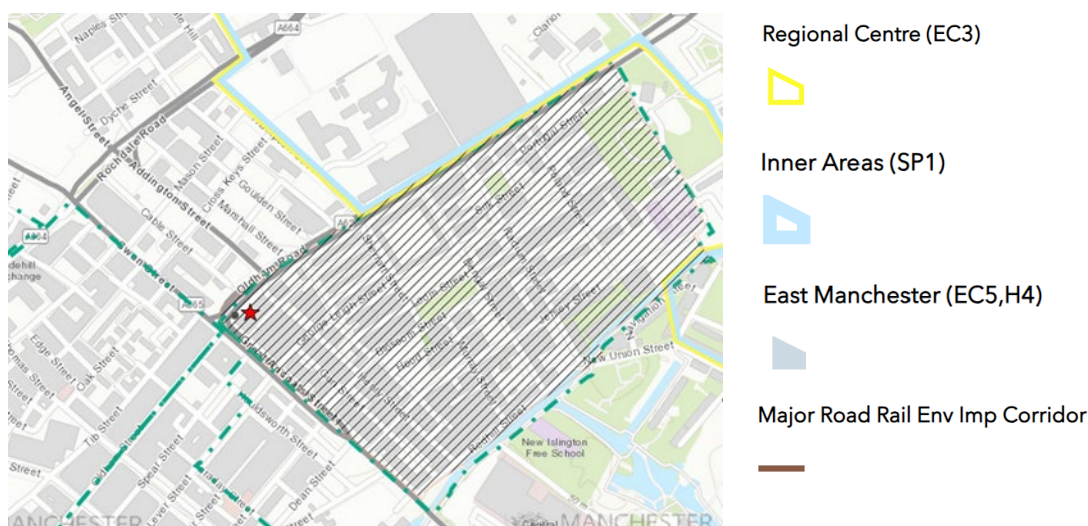
Relevant Planning Policies

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning decisions to be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Development Plan

The relevant Development Plan in this instance comprises the MCC Core Strategy 2012-2027, which was adopted on 11 July 2012, and the 'saved' policies of the Unitary Development Plan ("UDP") and Places for Everyone (2024).

In terms of site-specific planning policy allocations, **Figure 3** below indicates that the Site (demarcated with a red star) is located within the 'Regional Centre' (Policy EC3), the 'Inner Area' (SP1), East Manchester (EC5, H4) and along a Major Road Rail Environmental Improvement Corridor.



^ Figure 3: Extract from the Council's Core Strategy Policies Map

The Key Core Strategy Policies of relevance are summarised overleaf, along with other relevant local guidance documents.

Manchester Core Strategy

Core Strategy Policies:

- **Policy SP1 (Spatial Principles)** states that the Regional Centre will be the focus for economic and commercial development, retail, leisure and cultural activity, alongside high quality living.

The City is covered by regeneration areas including the City Centre. All development should have regard to the character, issues and strategy for each regeneration area.

Development in all parts of the City should make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice including:-

- creating well designed places that enhance or create character.
- making a positive contribution to the health, safety and wellbeing of residents
- **EC3 (The Regional Centre)** states that within the Regional Centre, development for employment generating uses, including offices and other commercial development will be encouraged.
- Housing will also be an appropriate use within the Regional Centre, although this should complement the development of mixed use employment areas.
- **EC5 (East Manchester)** states that the Council will promote development which has regard to listed buildings and conservation areas, including Ancoats, and the industrial heritage of the area.
- **C10 (Leisure and the Evening Economy)** states that new development and redevelopment that supports the evening economy, contributes to the vitality of district centres and supports a balanced and socially inclusive evening / night-time economy will be permitted, subject to considerations regarding: i) cumulative impact; ii) residential amenity; and a balance of uses.

Saved Policies of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan

East Manchester Policies:

- **EM8 (Sub-Area 4: Ancoats)** states that within the Ancoats area development will be permitted which includes:
 - A diverse mix of residential uses in terms of type, size and tenure;
 - The conservation and enhancement of the built heritage and character of Ancoats involving the reuse and restoration of mills and warehouses;

Other Relevant Local Policies and Guidance

Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework Update 2016 ("NDF")

Area specific guidance, covering the 'Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework' has been produced by MCC. The document represents a material consideration in determining all planning applications located within the Study Area.

Section 5 of the NDF identifies a series of Core Development and Urban Design Principles. In particular, Section 5.4 identifies a series of 'Core Design Principles', which should be at the heart of any development proposals in the Ancoats and Islington area. These include a need the following:

- Whilst regeneration of the framework area will be residential led, opportunities for a wider mix of uses including office, workspace, retail, leisure and community uses should be sought that combine to create a distinctive sense of place and neighbourhood, ensuring life and vitality on weekdays and evenings.
- Given that the Ancoats and New Islington neighbourhoods will be predominantly residential in

character, late night uses including bars and nightclubs will generally not be appropriate or supported where there would be a potential conflict with residential amenity. No licences will be granted after 11pm

- The quality of the wider mix of uses in the area should be carefully managed. **Start-up businesses and independent operators should be encouraged** [our emphasis].
- New development should not be considered in isolation but contribute towards a coherent experience across the neighbourhood with character areas, streets and spaces feeling intuitively part of a wider whole, supporting a high quality of life.
- New buildings should be designed to support active streets. This may be in the form of ground floor active commercial uses – ensuring that such uses are compatible with the primary residential character of the area and will not create conflict with residential amenity – or where commercial uses are not appropriate or indeed there are concerns regarding viability, through appropriate design, e.g. the position of residential front doors and windows, which will provide enhanced animation to the street scene.
- New development should promote a form of development to the edges of Great Ancoats Street and Oldham Road which respond to the environmental conditions of these heavily trafficked streets, encourage improved integration across the expanded city centre, and, promote a quality of design that is appropriate to what are key points of entry into the Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhoods as well as the heart of the City.

The NDF goes on to identify the following key Urban Design Considerations for the Ancoats area, which are of relevance to the Proposed Development:

- Where the ground floor is intended to contain commercial or retail uses at street level it should incorporate active frontages to promote street life and provide visual interest for pedestrians.
- Facades should contribute to street life through the use of elements such as appropriately proportioned windows and doors.
- Storage for refuse should be enclosed and contained within the perimeter block avoiding any impact on key elevations and the street-frontage

With regards to Character Area 1 – Great Ancoats Street and Oldham Road Frontage (which the Site is situated within), the following guidance is of relevance to this application:

- Section 6.6 states that, in relation to ‘Land Use’, due to the busy, heavily trafficked nature of the Oldham Road frontage, it offers the potential to provide a wider range of commercial uses than those that may be appropriate within character areas 2 and 3.
- Section 6.10 states that exemplary design quality of the building form is required in relation to the Oldham Road frontage. The high quality required is commensurate with what is an important gateway into Manchester City Centre and point of entry into Ancoats. In most cases it is likely to be delivered either through comprehensive refurbishment to a very high standard or comprehensive redevelopment. This will depend upon individual site circumstances.
- Section 6.12 explains that Conservation Area status sets a **general presumption in favour of retaining heritage buildings, including non-listed buildings, where they make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of Ancoats. These buildings will continue to play a major role in maintaining the distinctive character of the area, and retention and conversion will help to nurture a strong sense of place** [our emphasis].

Ancoats Conservation Area

Guidance regarding ‘The ‘Control of Development’ within the Ancoats Conservation Area is provided on MCC’s website. This states that: **“the use of unused and under-used buildings and spaces for appropriate purposes will generally be considered as a priority in order to ensure continued**

activity in the area and its local economy [our emphasis].”

National Planning Policy

- The revised National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”) was published by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (“DLUHC”) in December 2023 and is a material consideration in planning decisions.
- The policies of most relevance to the determination of the application include the following:
- **Section 2: Achieving sustainable development** – Paragraph 8 of the NPPF identifies three overarching objectives for the planning system, namely an economic objective (to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy), a social objective (which aims to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, and to foster well-designed, beautiful and safe places with accessible services) and an environmental objective (aimed at protecting and enhancing the built and historic environment, including making effective use of land, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy).
- **Presumption in favour sustainable development (Paragraph 11)** – states that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking this means:
 - c) ‘approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
 - d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework when taken as a whole.’
- **Section 6: Building a strong, competitive economy** – states that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future (paragraph 85).
- **Section 7: Ensuring the vitality of town centres** – states that planning decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation, and promoting their vitality and viability (paragraph 90).
- **Section 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities** – promotes planning decisions which plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as public houses) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments (paragraph 97).
- **Section 11: Making Effective Use of Land** – states that planning decisions should promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings (paragraph 124).

Justification for the Proposed Development

Having introduced the Applicant, the site and surroundings, the proposed development and the relevant local and national planning policies, it is now important to present the justification for the proposals.

Principle of Development

The proposed development would bring a vacant character building back into use as a bar / drinking establishment (*sui generis*). With the exception of a short period of use between 2021 and 2023, this has historically been a long-term vacant unit in need of further investment, as demonstrated within the Design and Access Statement produced by E3 Architecture.

Whilst a number of other commercial units exist along the wider stretch of Oldham Road, they are occupied by a wide range of uses (including solicitors, a world-food supermarket, a hair salon, beauty salon, laundry, and medical / dental practices), a number of which contribute to the area's daytime economy. Notwithstanding the area is not considered to be of particular importance for 'shopping' and it is noted that other vacant units exist, including premises between Cornell Street and Bengal Street. The introduction of the Proposed Development will bring life and activity to a currently vacant unit, close to a prominent corner in Ancoats, across both the daytime and evening time.

Whilst there are other drinking establishments within the vicinity of the Site, including The Crown and Kettle PH next door, the creation of a bar at 4 Oldham Road would not lead to an overconcentration of such night-time uses. Rather, the Proposed Development will contribute towards the creation of a balanced and socially inclusive evening economy in this part of Ancoats, that will positively enhance its vitality and character. Consequently, the Proposed Development would contribute to the economy of the City Centre and Regional Centre, in accordance with the objectives of Core Strategy policies **SP 1**, **EC 3** and **C 10**.

The Proposed Development would align with the objectives of the Ancoats and New Islington Development Framework area, by promoting further activity and vibrancy within the local neighbourhood, including on evenings, further strengthening its distinctive sense of place.

The proposal also derives support from the NPPF, which highlights the need to take account of local business needs, to promote the vitality and viability of town centres and to promote the development of under-utilised buildings.

In view of the above, it is considered that the principle of the development proposed is entirely acceptable in planning terms.

Impact on Amenity

Noise Impact

The Proposed Development seeks to introduce a drinking establishment into a mixed-use area that includes a number of other commercial uses at ground floor level, including the Crown and Kettle PH immediately to the south-west. The closest residential properties to the Site are the apartments located on the upper four floors of the adjacent building to the north-east – 6 Oldham Road. Accordingly, a Noise Impact Assessment ("NIA"), produced by Sol Acoustics, has been produced and submitted with the application.

The Assessment considers the environmental noise impact as expected at nearby noise sensitive residential housing, as arising from patrons and background music during the proposed hours of operation, and concludes as follows:

- The numerical assessment of entertainment noise egress through the open bifold doors indicates that music played at a background level is likely to be below the maximum permissible internal level before the external criteria are exceeded.
- A contextual assessment of the impact of the patron noise associated with the external seating or internal seating when the bifold doors are open concludes that the applicant has already demonstrated this as viable without giving rise to noise nuisance as their neighbouring Crown and Kettle pub has well established the use of the immediate surroundings for outdoor seating.

Opening hours for the bar will be limited to 23:00hrs, apart from Friday and Saturday evenings which will be extended to 00:00hrs. This aligns with other drinking establishments in the area and MCC's approach to licensing, as referenced in the Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework.

The planning application is also supported by a proposed Operating Schedule and Smoking Policy, which contains additional measures aimed at minimising potential noise generation. These include directing smokers to the rear of the premises, within its yard area, further away from residential windows. Notices will be displayed

close to the exit of the establishment to encourage patrons leaving the building to be considerate of neighbouring residents.

Given all of the above, the Proposed Development is not anticipated to generate unacceptable levels of noise and is therefore considered to be in compliance with Core Strategy Policy DM1.

Accessibility

The Site relates well to other areas of the City Centre and, importantly, to public transport infrastructure that can be used by patrons and by staff when travelling to work.

Manchester Victoria Station is within an 800m (12 minute) walk of the Site, which provides public transport links via rail and tram. The Market Street tram stop is located 650m (9 minute walk) to the south-west. Regular bus services operate along both Great Ancoats Street and Oldham Road, providing links to a range of destinations within Greater Manchester (including Droylsden, Ashton-under-Lyne, Miles Platting, Newton Heath, Failsworth, Oldham). Cycling facilities are available along Oldham Road, with good crossing facilities for both pedestrians and cyclists.

The Proposed Development comprises of uses that are likely to attract people who already live and work in the area, or are visiting the city centre, thus reducing the need to travel specifically to visit the premises.

The building benefits from a level access off Oldham Road, together with accessible seating areas and an accessible WC / changing room at the ground floor level.

Refuse Management

The existing servicing strategy is to the rear (southern) elevation of the property. The rear courtyard is shared with the Crown and Kettle pub and will adopt the same strategy in which a private just in time approach is formed. Refuse will be separated into recycling, bottles and general waste within the building and bags and be brought up to the shared courtyard to commercial waste bins to be collected by a private service from Luna Street.

Heritage / Visual Impacts

The Site is positioned next to the Grade II listed Crown and Kettle PH and within the Ancoats Conservation Area. As such it is relevant to consider the impact of the proposed external alterations on the significance of these designated heritage assets.

Policy Context

Paragraph 194 of the NPPF states 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 195 of the NPPF 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.

Paragraph 199 of the NPPF explains that 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.

Paragraph 200 of the NPPF states that 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. Paragraph 202 goes on to explain 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.

Significance

The Ancoats area developed and grew out of the economic and industrial expansion of Manchester, in the late 18th century. This was a result of a need for new housing, to serve a rapidly growing population, and sites for

the construction of mill buildings that were utilising new forms of technology (following the advent of the steam engine).

Today the Conversation Area is principally characterised by its remaining historic mill buildings, close to the Rochdale Canal and Radium Street and by its former workers housing between Oldham Road and George Leigh Street.

The Site is positioned at the western corner of the Conservation Area and is predominantly surrounded by modern residential and commercial development of moderate scale. It is however positioned next to the Grade II Crown and Kettle PH, a late 19th century construction, whilst the application premises itself is a former commercial building dating from a similar period. Together, the two premises are reminders of the commercial ventures and community facilities that developed in the Ancoats area to support its mill workers and residents. Their buff brick facades contrast with the material palette associated with many of the other historic buildings in Ancoats, although a mixture of styles and materials are now evident in the immediate vicinity of the Site.

Whilst the street structure has changed little over the last 200 years, the modern Oldham Road is dominated by vehicular traffic, with six lanes of highway at the point it diverges off to create Great Ancoats Street and the Ring Road.

The Crown and Kettle PH is understood to have existed on its present site since c.1774, however the current premises is of late Victorian construction. The listing description associated with it suggests that its significance is derived from the architectural quality of its street-facing elevations, but also by its interior (which includes an unusual ceiling and large Gothic pendants) and its historical use as a courtroom associated with a former market. The significance of its internal decoration and its historic use will not be affected by the proposed external alterations.

Externally, the Crown and Kettle is constructed from buff brick with stone dressings below a hipped slate roof. Its Oldham Road elevation comprising of tall ground floor two-light windows with Gothic tracery and linked hoodmoulds. The central doorway includes arched fanlights.

Impact on Significance

The Site is of comparable height and age to the Crown and Kettle and is also constructed in a similar buff brick. Consequently, it is held to have some group value, in combination with the listed public house. However, the design and proportions of their respective Oldham Road facades are quite different. In particular No.4 presents a much simpler and more architecturally restrained elevation onto the street, which includes a shop front across its narrow elevation and casement windows of different proportions to the pub. Consequently, the amendments and additions to the Site façade would not automatically diminish or detract from the significance of the Crown and Kettle, providing that they are appropriately designed.

The proposed awning is of traditional appearance, being constructed from canvas on a metal frame and incorporating a hand-operated retracting mechanism. It has been positioned so that it sits comfortably within the frontage of the premises and does not obscure any architectural features. Similarly, the shop front alterations are simple in their design and align with the appearance and opening of the existing shop front. Importantly though, bi-fold doors have been incorporated that allow patrons to move more freely in and out of the premises during warm weather.

Fundamentally, the proposed external works are designed to improve the prospects of a viable and successful venture operating from this unit, as part of a wider package of internal refurbishment works that will breathe new life into an unused building. The awning and updated shop front are good quality features that will generate activity and vibrancy on this key corner in Ancoats (which includes the Crown and Kettle PH with its outdoor seating area), enhancing the character and feel of the conservation area as a result.

Whilst the proposed awning and shop front represent the addition of non-original features to a building that contributes positively to the character of the conservation area, they have been appropriately designed using materials that respect the significance of the area. As a result, it is considered that they will have a neutral impact on both the significance of the neighbouring Crown and Kettle PH, and the Ancoats Conservation Area more widely. Therefore, the Proposed Development is considered to be in accordance with the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF along with Core Strategy Policy EN3 and Saved UDP Policies DC18.1e and 19.1d.

Pre-Application Consultation

Council Officers confirmed their agreement to the principle of converting 4 Oldham Road into a bar during pre-application correspondence that has taken place via email. Following amendments to the external alterations, Officers also offered support for the design of the retractable awning and updated shop-front. The submitted documentation takes full account of the points that were raised by Officers during this pre-application process.

The scope of the planning application submission has also been agreed with Officers in advance of the application being submitted.

Summary and Conclusions

The principle of bringing this vacant premises back into use as a commercial venture within Ancoats would be acceptable and there are no technical considerations which should restrict the Proposed Development.

The proposed development would enable Future Cultures Limited to develop their business operations and continue to encourage economic growth in the area – a local and national planning priority.

Supporting Plans and Documents

In addition to this covering letter, the planning application is supported by the following plans and documents:

- Planning Application Forms, Certificates and fee¹;
- Red-edged site location plan;
- Existing and Proposed Floorplans;
- Existing and Proposed Elevations;
- Design and Access Statement prepared by E3 Architecture;
- Noise Impact Assessment prepared by Sol Acoustics;
- Proposed Operating Schedule and Smoking Policy;
- Completed MCC Waste Proforma.

I trust the submitted information is sufficient, however should you have any questions or require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me by email or telephone (07300 806 110).

Yours faithfully,



James Ketley
Associate Director
james@euankellie.co.uk

¹ The required fee of £578 (+ £70.00 service charge) has been paid via the Planning Portal