

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no. 139710/LO/2024
Date registered valid: 4 April 2024
Proposal: Installation of wifi
Address: Farm Centre, Heaton Park, Middleton Road, Manchester, M25 2SW
Ward(s): Higher Blackley Ward

Applicant: Mr Finlay Walker Manchester City Council
Agent (if any): Mr Finlay Walker Manchester City Council
Case officer: Janine Renshaw-Livesey
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Recommendation: Approve
Date of recommendation: 30 May 2024

Application details

Type of application: Listed Building Consent

Development type: Listed building alteration

Date of site visit: 22 April 2024

Standard consultations:

Printed: 16 April 2024 Expired: 8 May 2024

Neighbour notifications

No neighbour notifications have been printed and sent.

Site notice

Posted: Expired:

Press advert

Published: 23 April 2024 Expired: 7 May 2024

Departure from Development Plan: No

Environmental Statement: Not required

Description of site/building

Listed building: Grade II

Conservation area: No

Tree Preservation Order: No

This application relates to the installation of Wi-Fi wiring in a former stables. Heaton Park is registered as a Grade II landscape under the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 within the Register of Historic parks and Gardens by Historic England for its historic interest. Within the park landscape there are nine listed structures of Grade I, Grade II* and Grade II status.

The Former Stables, dating to 1777 and designed by the renowned Samuel Wyatt, stand as a testament to the elegant designs of Georgian architects. Constructed primarily of red brick in Flemish bond with sandstone dressings and hipped slate roofs, the building exhibits a refined symmetry and attention to detail characteristic of its time. The Former Stables form an integral component of the iconic Heaton Hall complex, contributing to the overall historical significance of the site.

The extended U-shaped plan, with its central entrance block flanked by receding wings, establishes a harmonious relationship with the surrounding grounds, enhancing the historic quality of the landscape. Preserving and respecting this heritage significance is at the core of the proposed works, ensuring that the building continues to stand as a symbol of Manchester's architectural and cultural heritage.

Description

Scope of Works

The proposed works include the installation of Cat6a cables from the ground floor communications cabinet across the complex's office space, café, and classroom, utilising existing penetrations throughout the building.

Five Wi-Fi access points would be installed on the ground floor, with an additional one on the first floor, ensuring coverage and the buildings continued functionality.

A total of six access points are to be dispersed throughout the complex, the locations of which are shown on the plans accompanying this application.

Access points mounted to fabric of historic significance within the building will utilise industrial Velcro, minimising the potential damage done to the building should the device be removed (for example AP1 mounted to an original beam in GF015 Café). The remainder of access points would be mounted using steel brackets.

Steel brackets have been decided upon as the principal mounting method for access points due to their invisibility once an AP has been fixed, their longevity and the minimal damage caused by their installation. Each Steel Bracket will require the use of three screws with a length of 19mm and a diameter of 4mm.

Plans detailing the exact locations of the access points and cable runs as well as their installation methods and statements regarding their heritage impact are provided in the accompanying documents with reference to the photographic method statement.

To improve the networks speed and capacity, Cat6a cables will be installed throughout the building. These will link the network switch in the comms cabinet to the access points and allow them to broadcast MCC networks. These cables utilize existing cable runs and wall penetrations.

Consultations & Notification Responses

The occupiers of the surrounding properties were consulted, and no representations were received.

Design and Conservation- raised no objection to the proposal.

Issues

Policy

Places for Everyone

Places for Everyone

The Inspectors' Report on the examination of the Places for Everyone plan was published on 15 February 2024. The Inspectors' Report sets out and justifies their recommendations in relation to the plan, and they have concluded that all legal requirements have been met and that with the recommended main modifications set out in the appendix to their report, the Places for Everyone plan is 'sound'. The nine constituent local authorities will now consider the Inspectors'

Report and the adoption of Places for Everyone. The first Council meetings to approve the plan will be Salford and Wigan (28 February). The plan was considered at the Full Council meeting in Manchester on 20 March 2024, and was subsequently approved on 21st March 2024.

Given the stage the Plan has reached, the Plan and its policies is now a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications. The Plan and its policies must therefore be given significant weight in the planning balance.

However, policies identified within the documents relevant to this proposal are.

JP-P2 of the Places for Everyone.

National Planning Policy Framework - This sets out the Government's Planning Policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It states that the planning system should perform:

Section 16 of the NPPF outlines the Governments objectives in terms of conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

6. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

189. Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

190. Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account: a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

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

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

d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place This scheme has been designed to respect the character and appearance of nearby heritage assets and is in broad accordance with the requirements of NPPF. The proposed Core Strategy

The Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2012 -2027 ("the Core Strategy") was adopted by the City Council on 11th July 2012. It is the key document in Manchester's Local Development Framework.

The Core Strategy replaces significant elements of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) as the document that sets out the long-term strategic planning policies for Manchester's future development. A number of UDP policies have been saved until replaced by further development plan documents to accompany the Core Strategy.

Planning applications in Manchester must be decided in accordance with the Core Strategy, saved UDP policies and other Local Development Documents.

The following specific policies are considered to be particularly relevant to the proposed development:

Policy EN 3 (Heritage) - this states that throughout the City, the Council will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods, including those of the City Centre. New developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance, including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas and archaeological remains. 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 DM1 of the Core Strategy sets out that development should have regard to:

- Appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail.
 - Impact on the surrounding areas in terms of the design, scale and appearance of the proposed development. Development should have regard to the character of the surrounding area.
 - Effects on amenity, including privacy, light, noise, vibration, air quality, odours, litter, vermin, birds, road safety and traffic generation.
- This could also include proposals which would be sensitive to existing environmental conditions, such as noise.

Policy SP1- Spatial Principles Policy SP1 advises that the emphasis is on the creation of neighbourhoods of choice, providing high quality and diverse housing around district centres which meet local needs, all in a distinct environment.

Policy EN 13 - Green Belt Policy EN13 states that the extent of Green Belt in Manchester will be amended in the vicinity of Manchester Airport, in accordance with policy MA1.

Otherwise, there are no amendments to the Green Belt boundary to be affected through the Core Strategy. This does not preclude further consideration of sites currently within the Green Belt through subsequent Development Plan Documents. The whole of Heaton Park falls within the Green Belt.

Given the nature of the proposed development being a minimal physical intervention. Therefore, it is considered that the scheme would not detract from visual amenities of the Green Belt.

Unitary Development Plan - saved policies Saved UDP policy DC19.1 (Listed Buildings) states that in determining applications for listed building consent or applications for development involving or having an impact on buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, the Council will have regard to, amongst other things, protecting their general setting. The Council will seek to preserve and enhance the settings of listed buildings by appropriate control over the design of new development in their vicinity.

The proposed Wi-Fi would provide enhanced staff and visitors experience with minimal impact on the listed buildings and structures within the park. For the above reasons, the proposal is considered to be acceptable and consistent with policies EN3 and DM1 of the Core Strategy and saved policies DC19.1 of the Unitary Development Plan

Assessment of Impact

The building under consideration is a Grade II listed asset, located within the Grade II Registered Heaton Park and within the curtilage and setting of the Grade I listed Heaton Hall. These were constructed in 1777 to the designs of Samuel Wyatt for Thomas Egerton.

The proposal is for new Wi-Fi to the premises. As the proposed works are internal, these would only affect the Grade II listed building under consideration, with no impact on the registered park & garden or other listed buildings within its setting.

The principle of the works is supported, as these works would upgrade the existing services on site and ensure the continued use of the premises.

Whilst the proposed works would cause some harm to the Grade II listed asset, through new penetrations into original/historic fabric and new cabling throughout, the harm has been minimised and mitigated through the careful positioning and design of the proposed new interventions, overall considered to be on the lowest scale of the less than substantial harm, outweighed by the public benefit that the works would deliver.

Contingent on the proposed AP presented on Figure 7 [Office 014] being located to the corner of the room, in order to minimise the visual impact of the new intervention and the quantum of the proposed new exposed steel conduit, and any exposed metal conduit being painted to match existing finishes, the proposals would be acceptable on heritage grounds.

The applicant provided a method statement containing details of these minor amendments and safeguards such as painting of the steel conduit. The works would now comply with Policy EN3 of the Core Strategy, JP-P2 of the Places for Everyone, saved UDP Policy 19.1 and the guidance within Section 16 of the NPPF, in particular consideration of paragraphs 195, 205, 206 and 208.

Conclusion

The installation of the Wi-Fi equipment has been designed in a way which is sympathetic to the historic fabric. It is deemed that the proposals will not materially affect the special architectural and historic interest of the Heaton Park former stables, or the character and appearance of Heaton Park. Therefore, the works are considered to be acceptable and in accordance with saved policy DC19; of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and policies SP1, EN3 and DM1 of the Core Strategy and Section 16 of the NPPF.

Other Legislative Requirements Equality Act 2010

Section 149 (Public Sector Equality Duty) of the Equality Act 2010 requires due regard to the need to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act and; Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a

protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The Equality Duty does not impose a legal requirement to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment. Compliance with the Equality Duty involves consciously thinking about the aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making.

Human Rights Act 1998 considerations

This application needs to be considered against the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. Under Article 6, the applicants (and those third parties, including local residents, who have made representations) have a right to a fair hearing and to this end the local planning authority must give full consideration to their comments.

Protocol 1 Article 1, and Article 8 where appropriate, confer(s) a right of respect for a person's home, other land and business assets. In taking account of all material considerations, including Council policy as set out in the Core Strategy and saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan, the Director of Planning, Building Control & Licensing has concluded that some rights conferred by these articles on the applicant(s)/objector(s)/resident(s) and other occupiers and owners of nearby land that might be affected may be interfered with but that that interference is in accordance with the law and justified by being in the public interest and on the basis of the planning merits of the development proposal. She believes that any restriction on these rights posed by the recommendation given is proportionate to the wider benefits of and that such a decision falls within the margin of discretion afforded to the Council under the Town and Country Planning Acts.

Recommendation: Approve

Article 35 Declaration

In assessing the merits of an application officers will seek to work with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner to seeking solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with the application. In this instance this has included ongoing advice about the information required to be submitted to support the application and to address issues.

Condition(s) to be attached to decision for approval OR Reasons for recommendation to refuse

1) The development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason - Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings and documents:

Drawing Pack titled, 'Low Level Plan', Location Plan, Design and Access Statement, Heritage Statement, stamped as received on the 4 April 2024, and the Photographic Method Statement, received electronically on the 9 May 2024.

Reason - To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans. Pursuant to policies SP 1 and DM 1 of the Core Strategy.

3) The permission hereby approval shall be completed fully and only in accordance with the Photographic Method Statement, received electronically on the 9 May 2024 by the city council as local planning authority (in particular regard to the location of proposed Access Point shown on Appendix 7, and that all exposed steel conduits will be painted to match the existing wall finishes).

Reason - In the interests of visual amenity and because the proposed works affect a building which is included in the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest so careful attention to building work is required to protect the character and appearance of this building in accordance with policies SP1, EN1, EN 3 and DM1 of the Adopted Core Strategy for the City of Manchester, the Design and Principle of the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD and saved policy DC19.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Heritage & Urban Design

Appendix 2 – Planning constraints

Article 4 Direction - Removal Of PD Rights Change Of Use From Class C3 To Class C4

Aircraft Safeguarding Zone - Aircraft Safeguarding - Not Affected

Coal Authority - Development Low Risk - Name: DEVELOPMENT_LOW_RISK_AREA

Green Belt Land - Green Belt Area (LDF)

Green Belt Land - Greater Manchester Green Belt Local Plan 1984

Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -

Area Team Boundary - Name: NORTH AREA