

Planning & Access Statement.

**Unit 21 Upper, The Printworks, 27 Withy Grove, Manchester,
M4 2BS.**

On behalf of Leisure Television Rights Ltd.

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Author: ET/CF



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Contents.

- 1. Introduction.....3
- 2. Site, Surroundings and Context4
- 3. Planning History.....7
- 4. Proposed Development.....8
- 5. Planning Policy Context10
- 6. Planning Assessment.....12
- 7. Conclusions.....15

1. Introduction.

- 1.1. This Planning and Access Statement has been prepared by Pegasus Group on behalf of Leisure Television Rights (hereinafter 'the Applicant') in support of an application for Full Planning Permission, relating to Unit 21 Upper, The Printworks, 27 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS ('the application site').
- 1.2. The application is for the following proposed development:

"Change of use from a live escape rooms gaming experience (Class E) to an entertainment facility, serving food and drinks (mixed Class E / Sui Generis), plus associated rooftop flue."
- 1.3. This Planning and Access Statement is structured as follows:
 - **Section 2** – Site, Surroundings and Context.
 - **Section 3** – Planning History.
 - **Section 4** – Proposed Development.
 - **Section 5** – Planning Policy Context.
 - **Section 6** – Planning Assessment.
 - **Section 7** – Conclusions.
- 1.4. This Statement sets out the planning rationale that underpins the proposed development, to demonstrate its acceptability in planning terms, and how all peoples will be able to access it. It should be read in conjunction with the other supporting application material which inform the planning application (refer to Cover Letter).

2. Site, Surroundings and Context

- 2.1. The application site comprises the ground floor lobby area and first floorspace (650 sqm) of Unit 21, located in the north-eastern part of the Printworks. The Printworks is a modern commercial centre located within Manchester city centre which incorporates a number of entertainment, leisure and hospitality based occupants and operators.



Figure 1: Aerial photo identifying The Printworks (red line area)

- 2.2. The application site was formerly occupied and operated as a live escape room gaming experience (Use Class E), but has been vacant since January 2022. As well as the ground floor stair and lift access off the Pump Yard throughfare, the unit benefits from access to the dedicated service and delivery area within the basement of The Printworks. Photos of the application site and the wider Printworks are below.



Figure 2: Pump Yard Throughfare



Figure 3: Access to the Printworks from Withy Grove



Figure 4: Unit 21 Upper, First Floor

- 2.3. The character of the surrounding area is commercial due to the proximity to the city's primary shopping area where the majority of retail operators are located.
- 2.4. According to the Environment Agency's Flood Risk Map for Planning, the application site is located entirely within Flood Zone 1, which indicates the lowest risk of flooding.
- 2.5. The application site does not comprise a statutory nor locally Listed Building.
- 2.6. The site is located within the Shudehill Conservation Area, which was designated in 1987 and features a wide range of commercial premises.
- 2.7. The application site is approximately 200m from Manchester Victoria Train Station. Furthermore, the site is accessible by various bus stops on Corporation Street and at the Manchester Shudehill Interchange.
- 2.8. The Printworks APCOA car park is located approximately 180m north-east of the application site which hosts 777 spaces and is open 24 hours a day.

3. Planning History.

- 3.1. In June 1992, planning permission (ref. 040501) was granted for the 'Development of a shopping centre, residential apartments, craft workshops, offices and civic squares with related car parking facilities and station after demolition of certain buildings'.
- 3.2. The wider Printworks site has an extensive planning history relating primarily to external alterations, the display of advertisements and various change of uses within the existing units. Concerning Unit 23 (the application site), planning permission (ref. 117909/FO/2017) was most recently granted in December 2017 for the following development:
- "Change of use from a nightclub (sui generis) to a live 'Escape Rooms' gaming experience (D2)."*
- 3.3. Indoor recreation Class D2 uses such as escape rooms now fall within Use Class E¹.

¹ Schedule 2, Part A, The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020

4. Proposed Development.

- 4.1. This application seeks Full Planning Permission for the following development:

"Change of use from a live escape rooms gaming experience (Class E) to an entertainment facility, serving food and drinks (mixed Class E / Sui Generis), plus associated rooftop flue."

Use

- 4.2. The site will be occupied by the applicant and will provide a social, interactive entertainment and leisure function, comprising of quiz booths ('Chase Bases') in the format of 'The Chase' television programme. The unit will also incorporate a kitchen on the new mezzanine and bar in order to serve hot food and drinks, including alcoholic drinks.
- 4.3. Since neither the entertainment (Class E) or bar with expanded food provision (Sui Generis) dominate the function and character of the proposed use, there is no 'primary purpose' and therefore, the proposal is for a mixed (Sui Generis) use².
- 4.4. The only external alterations include the installation of rooftop flue that will serve the kitchen. Whilst the demised area for the flue is shown in the accompanying drawings, the design of it is currently unknown. The applicant is seeking to deal with flue details via a suitably worded planning condition, where such details are to be approved by the local planning authority, and the flue to be installed prior to the commencement of the use.

Access, Servicing & Facilities

- 4.5. The primary access off the Pump Yard will be retained as is the stair core and lift access to the first floor.
- 4.6. The application site facilitates access to the first floor by the reuse of the existing ground floor lift which is suitable for a wheelchair users and others with disabilities.
- 4.7. The existing basement servicing and delivery arrangements will also be retained (as seen in Figure 4 below), and goods, refuse and recycling will be transport to and from the unit and basement via the internal service corridors. Full details are prescribed within the accompanying Waste Management Strategy.

² Para 13, Circular 03/2005



Figure 4: Servicing and delivery area accessed from Withy Grove

- 4.8. The proposal includes the installation of 8 x two tier bicycle rack spaces (16 x bicycle spaces total) located in the ground floor lobby area.

Operations

- 4.9. The proposed opening hours of the facility are as follows:
- Monday – Friday: 10:00 – 02:30
 - Saturday: 10:00 – 02:30
 - Sunday / Bank Holiday: 10:00 – 00:30
- 4.10. The above opening hours are consistent with the existing licence in place at the application site, and the new premises licence will control the hours for the sale of alcohol and other operations.
- 4.11. The proposed use will deliver 45 full-time equivalent members of staff.

5. Planning Policy Context.

- 5.1. In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), planning application should be determined in accordance with the development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2. The Development Plan for Manchester City Council comprises of The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document (DPD) (March 2024) the Manchester Core Strategy (July 2012) and the saved (2007) policies of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP).
- 5.3. The Core Strategy is the key document in Manchester's Local Development Framework and replaces significant elements of the Unitary Development Plan as the document sets out the long strategic planning policies for Manchester's future development. The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document (March 2024) provides a strategic plan and policies for nine out of the ten boroughs which make up Greater Manchester
- 5.4. Relevant policies from the Development Plan are summarised below.
- 5.5. Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document
- 5.6. **Policy JP-Strat12 (Main Town Centres)** states that the role of the main town centres as local economic drivers will continue to be developed, providing the primary focus for office, retail, leisure and cultural activity for their surrounding areas. Development here will offer a significant opportunity to reduce levels of poverty and deliver inclusive growth.
- 5.7. **Policy JP-C8 (Transport Requirements for New Development)** states that development must be located and designed to enable and encourage walking, cycling and public transport use, to reduce the negative effects of car dependency, and help deliver high quality, attractive, liveable and sustainable environments.

Core Strategy (July 2012)
- 5.8. **Policy C1 (Centre Hierarchy)** states Manchester City Centre is the regional focus for commerce, culture, leisure and tourism development, with retail development being directed towards the Primary Shopping Area.
- 5.9. **Policy C10 (Leisure and the Evening Economy)** states 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 the following considerations:
 - Cumulative impact – where a concentration of bars, takeaways or other night-time uses are proving detrimental to the character or vitality and viability of the centre, there will be a presumption against further facilities.
 - Residential amenity – the proposed use should not create an unacceptable impact on neighbouring uses in terms of noise, traffic and disturbance.
 - Balance – new uses in Manchester centres should support both the day-time and evening/night-time economies whilst not undermining the role of the primary shopping area.

- 5.10. **Policy CC4 (Visitors – Tourism, Culture and Leisure)** states the City Centre will be the main focus for culture and leisure in the City Region and development which improves facilities for visitors, including Manchester residents, will be promoted.
- 5.11. **Policy CC5 (Transport)** requires all development to include adequate parking provision for cars and bicycles.
- 5.12. **Policy CC9 (Design and Heritage)** states that all new buildings must be of the highest standard in terms of appearance and function, and that development in Manchester City Centre should preserve or enhance the heritage assets that have been identified.
- 5.13. **Policy CC10 (A Place for Everyone)** sets out that the Council will support uses which will appeal to a wide range of people, including those that support daytime activities to attract a wider range of visitors.
- 5.14. **Policy DM1 (Development Management)** requires development to take into account impacts upon amenity as well as the need to prevent crime and storage waste appropriately.
- 5.15. **Policy EN1 (Design Principles and Strategic Character Area)** states that all development in Manchester will be expected to follow the seven principles of urban design, as identified in national planning guidance. Within the City Centre, development is expected to consider the City's heritage, and rich pattern of activity in the core area.
- 5.16. **Policy EN19 (Waste)** states the Council will require developers to demonstrate how the sustainable waste management needs of the end user will be met.

Saved Unitary Development Plan Policies (2007)

- 5.17. **Saved Policy DC10.1 (Food and Drink Uses)** requires development for food and drink uses to have regard to the following:
- the general location of the proposed development, including any reference to the area in other policies in the Development Plan;
 - the effect on the amenity of neighbouring residents;
 - the availability of safe and convenient arrangements for car parking and servicing;
 - ease of access for all, including disabled people; and
 - the storage and collection of refuse and litter.

6. Planning Assessment.

- 6.1. Having reviewed the planning position at a national and local level, and applied these policies to the application proposal, the key issues in the determination of this application are summarised below.

Principle of the Change of Use

- 6.2. The proposed change of use does not involve the loss of any retail floorspace within the Primary Shopping Area (PSA) and as such, does not trigger any Development Plan policies concerning this matter.
- 6.3. The proposed mixed entertainment, leisure and hospitality use is a 'main town centre use' as defined by the NPPF, and its location within Manchester City Centre is in accordance with Manchester's spatial strategy prescribed under **Core Strategy Policy C1** as well as the **Places for Everyone DPD Policies JP-Strat2 & P4e**.
- 6.4. It is also worth identifying that the proposed interactive game experience will help diversify the entertainment and leisure value of the City Centre. As such, it will enhance footfall and the visitor economy, including during the day and night-time, in accordance with **Core Strategy Policies CC4 and CC10**.
- 6.5. Furthermore, the proposed change of use will result in the refurbishment of a vacant unit within a sustainable location as well as the delivery of various employment benefits, including 45 full-time equivalent employees. This is in accordance with the NPPF and the Core Strategy, which prioritise bringing vacant sites back into a viable use.
- 6.6. **Core Strategy Policy C10** confirms development proposals that support the evening economy and a socially inclusive evening / night-time economy will be supported. However, this is subject to three criteria which the applicant has responded to individually below.
1. Cumulative impact upon the vitality and viability of the centre – The Printworks [website](#) lists 16 (84% of total) occupants offering a use / function that is covered (either in whole or in part) by 'The Chase' concept, most of which also include a bar with expanded food provision. However, it is important to note that these types of uses characterise The Printworks and the site predominantly comprises first floorspace, not ground floor shopping frontage.

Therefore, it is not considered The Chase concept would result in an overconcentration of such uses that would harm the vitality and viability of the City Centre. It would, conversely, enhance the character and vitality of The Printworks without conflicting with the wider City Centre commercial function.
 2. Residential amenity – The Printworks is designed to accommodate late / night early morning operating hour, with some units operating until 03:00 (application ref. 078786/JO/2006/C1). The nearest residential premise are the flats at 33-39 Withy Grove, approximately 60m south of the site. However, the accompanying Noise Impact Assessment identifies the unit is well-insulated and the nature of the operations means that noise experienced by residents will be to very low levels. Therefore, the proposed use and opening hours will not harm residential amenity.

There are no nearby residential premises that rise above The Printworks and as such, the fumes expelled from the proposed rooftop flue will not be experienced by residents. The accompanying Odour Assessment confirms the odour impact / risk is 'low to medium' and thus does not require any mitigation in order to preserve residential amenity.

Overall, the proposal will preserve residential amenity in accordance with this criterion as well as **Core Strategy Policy DM1**.

3. **Balance of uses** – As noted above, the proposal will contribute to both the day and night-time economies and do not result of development within the PSA. The proposed mixed use will cater to a wider variety of locals and visitors alike, thus helping to enhance the vitality and viability of the City Centre.

- 6.7. Overall, it has been demonstrated that the proposal will enhance the vitality and viability of the City Centre by providing a mixed use that will contribute to the day and evening economies, without conflicting with its wider shopping function nor detrimentally changing the character of the area. As such, the principle of the proposed change of use is acceptable.

Design & Heritage

- 6.8. The only external development involves the installation of the rooftop flue. This is appropriately located with other plant within the rooftop area. Its modest size ensures it will visually amalgamate well with the existing plant and will not be visible from the public realm as well as wider, important views from within the Shudehill Conservation Area.
- 6.9. As such, the proposed flue will result in 'no harm' (as per the prescribed levels of 'harm' in the NPPF) to the Conservation Area, and is in accordance with **Core Strategy Policies CC9** and **EN1**.

Transport and Accessibility

- 6.10. **Core Strategy Policy CC5** seeks to ensure that development proposals include adequate parking provision for cars and bicycles. **Policy JP-C8 (Transport Requirements for New Development)** of the Places for Everyone Document requires new development to be designed to enable and encourage walking, cycling and public transport use and reduce the negative effects of car dependency.
- 6.11. Both the PfED and the Core Strategy emphasise that the City Centre is the most sustainable location for economic, entertainment, commercial, leisure and cultural activity. This is as a result of excellent access to public transport, in addition to access to other services and facilities within the City Centre.
- 6.12. As aforementioned, Manchester Victoria Train and Metrolink Station is located approximately 200m to the north-west of the site and a variety of bus stops are located to the west of the site on Corporation Street and furthermore the Manchester Shudehill Bus Interchange is located 150m to the east of the site which offer a wide range of services, including night bus services.
- 6.13. In light of the application site's inherently sustainable location and the planning policy position, the proposed 'car free' development is supported.

- 6.14. A total of 16 cycle parking spaces are provided in the form of double stackers within the ground floor lobby area for use by customers and staff.
- 6.15. The utilisation of the existing private service and delivery arrangement at The Printworks is appropriate, as it does not require on-street parking by vehicles and allows for the convenient transport of goods, refuse and waste to and from the site using the dedicated service corridors. Therefore, there will be no additional traffic nor pedestrian impact with the servicing and delivery arrangement. Full details are prescribed within the accompanying Waste Management Strategy, as required by **Core Strategy Policy EN19**.
- 6.16. The primary access to the application site within The Printworks is off the Pump Yard, which will be retained as part of the development proposals. The ground floor area of the application site contains a stair core and lift.
- 6.17. **Core Strategy Policy DM1** sets out the importance of accessibility within new developments, seeking to ensure that the needs of disabled people are met. The proposals facilitate access to the first floor for all type of people, including disabled, through the reuse of the existing lift.

Other Matters

- 6.18. The accompanying Operating Schedule and Management Strategy details how antisocial behaviour and crime will be prevented in accordance with **Core Strategy Policy DM1**. The Strategy incorporates a range of security measures, including those that are already afforded to The Printworks, including a 24-hour security team, CCTV and alarms. Staff will be encouraged to use the lockers provided within The Printworks.
- 6.19. The dispersal of customers, sale of alcohol and other operational matters related to crime prevention and amenity will be controlled through the premises licence.

7. Conclusions.

- 7.1. This Planning and Access Statement has considered the key principles of the proposed development against the relevant national and local planning policies and guidance.
- 7.2. The application site offers an opportunity for sustainable development in an appropriate location which will enhance the vitality and viability of the City Centre. This is by providing a mixed use that will contribute to the day and evening economies, without conflicting with its wider shopping function nor detrimentally harming the character and amenity of the area.
- 7.3. For the reasons set out above, it is considered that the proposals accord with all relevant planning policies and guidance in all respects. As such it is concluded that the proposal is acceptable in planning terms and should be granted planning permission.

Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

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