

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no. 138839/LO/2023

Date registered valid: 15 December 2023

Proposal: Listed Building Consent for internal alterations.

Address: Cobbett House, Manchester Royal Infirmary, Oxford Road,
Manchester, M13 9WL

Ward(s): Ardwick Ward

Applicant: Mr Luke Harrison c/o Manchester University Hospital NHS Foundation
Trust

Agent (if any): Mr Martyn Wilshaw Finlason Partnership Limited

Case officer: Max Gibson
Tel: 0161 219 6359
Email: maximillian.gibson@manchester.gov.uk

Recommendation: Approve

Date of recommendation: 03/05/2024

Application details

Type of application: Listed Building Consent

Development type: Listed building alteration

Date of site visit: 20 December 2023

Standard consultations:

Printed: 20 December 2023 Expired: 13 January 2024

Neighbour notifications

Printed: 20 December 2023 Expired: 13 January 2024

Site notice

Posted: 20 December 2023 Expired: 13 January 2024

Press advert

Published: 2 January 2024 Expired: 23 January 2024

Departure from Development Plan: No

Environmental Statement: Not required

Description of site/building

The site relates to the reception and former cafe at the Grade II-listed Cobbett House, which forms part of a group of buildings listed together as the Royal Infirmary. Designed by ET Hall and John Brooke, the buildings were listed in 1989 and derive much of their significance from their materiality and architecture, including colonnades, turrets and rusticated lower storeys. Many original features survive internally, including large amounts of wood panelling including that in the reception area considered under this application. The building's upper floors have undergone extensive renovation in recent years, with the new MEP services to futureproof the building, new glazed partitions to create office spaces and refreshed decorative finishes.

Listed building: Grade II

Conservation area: n/a

Tree Preservation Order: n/a

Description of area

The area relates to the Manchester Royal Infirmary campus, the site of one of Manchester's major hospitals. The character of the area comprises mainly medical and related ancillary uses, with some drinking, residential, retail and educational uses. The area is not covered by a conservation area but there are a number of listed buildings on the campus, including Cobbett House which is the subject of this application.

Description of development

The development relates to refurbishment of the ground floor reception space and cafe area to create a new office for the Trust Charities Department. The existing cafe fit out would be removed to create a new flexible open plan office and ancillary storage, smaller office, entrance doors and meeting areas together with a light touch refurbishment of the more significant wood-panelled reception area. To the rear courtyard area, a large amount of redundant plant would be

removed and three air source heat pumps installed and a louvre inserted into a window opening that currently acts as a ducting route.

Consultations & Notification Responses

Publicity - a notice was displayed on site informing passers-by of the development. An advertisement was placed in the local press advertising the works as those affecting a listed building. Letters were sent to surrounding occupiers notifying them of the development. No representations have been received as a result of this publicity.

Issues

The main policies that relate to this application are SP1 (Spatial Principles), DM1 (Development Management), EN3 (Heritage), CC9 (Design and Heritage) and CC10 (A Place for Everyone) of the Manchester Core Strategy (2012) (MCS), saved policy DC19 (Listed Buildings) of the Unitary Development Plan for Manchester (1995) (UDP) and Section 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Principle

The application seeks listed building consent for a refurbishment of a ground floor reception area and cafe space of Cobbett House to provide office space for the Trust Charities office. The main proposed office area has previously served as a cafe for hospital staff but has been disused for some time. The proposal is to remove the fit out associated with cafe use to provide a flexible open plan office, with some small meeting rooms, storage, kitchenette and ancillary office. The reception area would undergo a light touch refurbishment to improve the finish and state of repair without any interventions into this significant space.

The works, which involve the repurposing of the listed structure to allow the hospital trust to better utilise its existing assets, whilst also providing an opportunity to better maintain historic features of the listed building are considered acceptable. The principle is, therefore, supported pursuant to policies EN3 and CC9 of the MCS, DC19 of the UDP and paragraphs 196 and 206 of the NPPF, which support works to listed buildings which better preserve or enhance their special character and appearance and bring them into uses which are consistent with their heritage.

Office area works

Meeting room

The greatest degree of less than substantial harm to the listed building would come from the introduction of a meeting room into the large open plan area of the cafe that is to become the flexible off space. The meeting room would comprise a solid partition perpendicular to the rear wall, with a glazed, crittal-style door and partition opening on to the main office space. This would alter the arrangement of the space, obscuring its proportions by creating an L-shaped main space.

On balance, the harm is accepted as it is recognised that private meeting spaces are essential characteristic of any office and that otherwise the space would not have the features necessary to make it a usable space. The use of a crittal- style product is an anachronistic addition to the space that jars somewhat with the character of the building but is accepted as it is a high-quality product which provides a high level of visual permeability and is consistent with previous refurbishment of upper floor areas, thereby creating an overall cohesive design approach. The final details of this screen would be agreed by condition.

Toilets, storage and kitchenette

There would be a rearrangement of the rear service area of the cafe that houses the kitchen and storage. Owing the previously installed back of house service fit out, the space is of less

significance and has the necessary service points to accommodate new toilets. The works would involve new subdivisions to create toilets and storage, together with the installation of a kitchenette to the open plan office space. The subdivision would, again, create a moderate degree of less than substantial harm but on balance, it is accepted on the basis that the provision of toilets is necessary for a usable office space.

Services

The works would see the installation of new service trays and trunking to accommodate M&E services. These would follow the same approach as throughout the rest of the building, with drop down trunking to outlets and switches that curve over any features, such as cornices without touching them and are coloured black to provide contrast with the paintwork. Similarly, service trays are coloured black in contrast with the white ceilings.

As clearly modern, incongruous elements within the listed building, there is a medium level of less than substantial harm created, but this is considered to be outweighed by the benefit of providing the hospital with flexibility to run services through the building, as the M&E requirements of a hospital are clearly complex and may increase significantly over time. The final product specifications would be agreed via condition.

The new ventilation equipment would require two louvres to be inserted, one to the rear elevation and another to a window within this elevation. These would be inserted in place of existing plant openings associated with existing ductwork that is to be removed, and hence no original fabric would be removed by these works. Whilst entailing a moderate degree of less than substantial harm, this element of the works is accepted on the basis that it avoids more intrusive works to the building and would not be visible from within the street scene.

Other works

There would be a new glazed doorway, in the same style of that as the meeting room, installed to a rear small office. Again, in the context of other pre-existing installations to the building, the glazed door is supported to provide a consistent design language across the renovated office spaces.

There would be a general redecoration of the space, including new paintwork and light fixtures, the final details of which would be agreed by conditions to ensure they are visually and materially consistent with the heritage of the building.

Reception works

Works to 'nib'

There is a secret door within the wood panelling of the reception area, known as a nib. This entranceway would be used as the main entrance to the office, with the historic doors secured open during opening hours and modern doors provided internally in the office to ensure adequate control of access into the space.

To secure the nib open, metal goods would be discretely installed to the door. This would entail a small instance of less than substantial harm as there would be direct intervention into the fabric a significant historic feature. The full and final details of this installation are to be agreed by condition, to minimise the damage caused to this feature.

This element of the works is considered to be acceptable as it secures the retention of a significant feature whilst also providing the security necessary for a hospital office.

Finishes

The walls and panelling in this area would be refinished to ensure the space is in a good state of cosmetic repair. There would be no intrusive works to the wood panelling, but a light touch refurbishment would be undertaken. The full and final methodology for the works to the panelling, by far the most significant feature affected by the works, would be agreed by condition to ensure that the techniques and products used are sensitively applied and do not cause damage to this element of the building.

Plant works

Removal of redundant plant

There is a large quantity of plant installed to the rear of the building associated with the fit out of the former cafe. It is proposed to remove this plant, which is considered to be heritage benefit which would remove incongruous elements on the elevation and improve the appearance of the listed building. A method statement pertaining to the repair of damage caused by the installation and removal of this plant is to be agreed by condition to ensure the elevation is made good.

New air source heat pumps

There would be 3no. new air source heat pumps installed to the rear of the building in the existing service area from which the plant is to be removed. Whilst these would be read as clearly modern interventions to the listed building, on balance they are supported as the proposal will help to minimise CO2 emissions in Manchester. The installation of low and zero carbon energy sources is supported by policy EN4 of the Manchester Core Strategy (2012), which encourages retrofit projects that would help improve energy efficiency and provide low and zero carbon energy supplies to existing buildings. Furthermore, the pumps would be sited in a less significant area to the rear of the building, which would not be visible from public vantage points with the street scene.

Conclusion

The works proposed under this application would allow for the refurbishment of a significant reception area whilst also allowing the hospital to repurpose part of its historic estate. The works would help preserve significant elements for future generations whilst also futureproofing it for use as a hospital administrative building. The installation of heat pumps would also help support Co2 reductions and improved the sustainability of the building.

Given the above, the works are supported pursuant to policies SP1 (Spatial Principles), DM1 (Development Management), EN3 (Heritage), CC9 (Design and Heritage) and CC10 (A Place for Everyone) of the Manchester Core Strategy (2012) (MCS), saved policy DC19 (Listed Buildings) of the Unitary Development Plan for Manchester (1995) (UDP) and Section 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) of the National Planning Policy Framework (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

Officers have worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner based on seeking solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with the planning application.

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 - Proposed 100101 DEMOLITION GF PLAN
- Drawing - Proposed 320102 INTERNAL DOOR SCHEDULE
- Drawing - Proposed 740101 SANITARYWARE SCHEDULE
- Drawing - Proposed 763101 RECEPTION DESK
- Drawing - Proposed 763103 HIGH LEVEL STORAGE UNIT
- Drawing - Proposed 763104 KITCHENETTE
- Drawing - Proposed 77-0001 OFFICE PLANS AND ELEVATIONS
- Drawing - Proposed 77-0003 PRINT AREA PLANS AND ELEVATIONS
- Drawing - Proposed 77-0009 STORE ELEVATIONS
- Drawing - Proposed 77-0010-01 CIRCULATION ELEVATION
- Drawing - Proposed 77-0011 WC ELEVATIONS
- Drawing - Proposed 77-0012 WC ELEVATIONS
- Design & Access Statement DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Received by the City Council, as Local Planning Authority, on 15/12/2023

- Drawing - Proposed 77-0004 REV D MEETING ROOM PLANS AND ELEVATIONS
- Drawing - Proposed 320101 REV C Proposed Internal Glazed Screen Schedule

- Drawing - Proposed 13392-SIS-XX-00-DR-E-6001
- Drawing - Proposed 13392-SIS-XX-00-DR-E-6002
- Drawing - Proposed 13392-SIS-XX-00-DR-E-6201
- Drawing - Proposed 13392-SIS-XX-00-DR-E-6301
- Drawing - Proposed 13392-SIS-XX-00-DR-E-6401
- Drawing - Proposed 13392-SIS-XX-00-DR-E-6801
- Drawing - Proposed 13392-SIS-XX-00-DR-M-5001
- Drawing - Proposed 13392-SIS-XX-00-DR-M-5201
- Drawing - Proposed 13392-SIS-XX-00-DR-M-5301
- Drawing - Proposed 13392-SIS-XX-00-DR-M-5501
- Drawing - Proposed 13392-SIS-XX-00-DR-M-5701

Received by the City Council, as Local Planning Authority, on 30/04/2024

- Drawing - Proposed 120101 REV D GF PLAN
- Drawing - Proposed 200102 REV D GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
- Drawing - Proposed 202101 REV B PROPOSED GA SECTIONS
- Drawing - Proposed 220101 REV D INTERNAL PARTITION TYPE PLAN
- Drawing - Proposed 350102 REV E REFLECTED CEILING PLAN
- Drawing - Proposed 350301 REV A CEILING RAFT DETAILS
- Drawing - Proposed 350302 REV B TYPICAL CEILING DETAIL
- Drawing - Proposed 421001 REV C FLOOR FINISHES
- Drawing - Proposed 421002 REV D WALL FINISHES PLAN
- Drawing - Proposed 670101 REV D FIRE STRATEGY
- Drawing - Proposed 700101 REV E LOADED LAYOUT
- Drawing - Proposed 760101 REV D JOINERY LOCATION PLAN
- Drawing - Proposed 763102 REV D LOW LEVEL STORAGE UNIT
- Drawing - Proposed 763105 REV A 4 PERSON BOOTH
- Drawing - Proposed 763106 REV B DOUBLE UNIT WITH RECYCLING
- Drawing - Proposed 77-0002-00 REV D OPEN OFFICE AREA PLANS AND ELEVATIONS
- Drawing - Proposed 77-0002-01 REV D OPEN OFFICE AREA PLANS AND ELEVATIONS
- Drawing - Proposed 77-0005-01 REV C FLEXIBLE SPACE PLANS AND ELEVATIONS
- Drawing - Proposed 77-0006 REV C KITCHENETTE PLANS AND ELEVATIONS
- Drawing - Proposed 77-0007-01 REV B RECEPTION PLANS AND ELEVATIONS
- Drawing - Proposed 77-0013 REV C BOOTH ELEVATIONS
- Heritage Statement HERITAGE STATEMENT

Received by the City Council, as Local Planning Authority, on 03/05/2024

Reason - to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans pursuant to policies DM1 and SP1 of the Manchester Core Strategy (2012)

3) Prior to the application of any of the internal finishes listed below, material samples shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council, as Local Planning Authority. This shall include the provision of product specification, physical samples and scaled drawings as appropriate of the following:

- a) any new joinery including the reception desk and any junction with walls or panelling
- b) doors including fixtures and fittings
- c) light fixtures
- d) paintwork
- e) plasterwork
- f) sanitary finishes
- g) floor finishes
- h) heating goods
- i) trunking and service trays

j) ductwork

The approved materials shall be implemented in full as part of the development unless otherwise agreed in writing by the City Council, as Local Planning Authority.

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 saved policy DC19.1; of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and policies SP1, EN3 and DM1 of the Core Strategy

4) Prior to the installation of the glazed screen to the meeting room as identified in the approved drawing (Drawing - proposed 77-0004 REV D MEETING ROOM received by the City Council, as Local Planning Authority, on 30/04/2024), details of method of affixing, product specification and a sample of the glazed screen shall be submitted to an approved in writing by the City Council, as Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be implemented as part of the development.

Reason - 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 saved policy DC19.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and policies SP1, EN3 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

5) Prior to the installation of any metal goods to the hidden door in the reception area, full and final details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council, as Local Planning Authority. This shall include a detailed methods statement, scaled drawings and cross sections, fixing details, product specifications and samples of metal goods. The approved details shall be implemented in full as part of the development.

Reason - 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 saved policy DC19.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and policies SP1, EN3 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

6) Prior to any repair works and the application of any finished to the wood panelling and hidden door in the reception area, full and final details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council, as Local Planning Authority. This shall include a detailed methods statement, details of repair techniques, product specifications and samples of finishes. The approved details shall be implemented in full as part of the development.

Reason - 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 saved policy DC19.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and policies SP1, EN3 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

7) Prior to the installation of any new external plant to the rear of the building, any damage to the listed building created by the removal of redundant plant shall be made good according to a method statement submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council, as Local Planning Authority. The method statement shall include a survey of damage, repair techniques, product specifications, samples of repairs and a schedule of implementation. The approved details shall be implemented in full as part of the development.

Reason - 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 saved policy DC19.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and policies SP1, EN3 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

8) Prior to the removal or installation of any plant to the rear of the building, full and final details of the works to this elevation, together with the plant to be removed and installed, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council, as Local Planning Authority. This shall include scaled drawings (elevations, cross sections and plans) and product specifications of the heat pumps and elevational alterations (louvres and vents). The approved details shall be implemented in full as part of the development.

Reason - 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 saved policy DC19.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and policies SP1, EN3 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Heritage & Urban Design

Whitworth Institute, Oxford Road, Manchester, M15 6ER

Chest Clinic, 352 Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9NL

Appendix 2 – Planning constraints

Article 4 Direction - City Centre PD Restriction - Class B1(a) To C3

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

Aircraft Safeguarding Zone - Aircraft Safeguarding Zone - All Exceeding 90M

Coal Authority - Development Low Risk - Name: DEVELOPMENT_LOW_RISK_AREA

Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -

Area Team Boundary - Name: CENTRAL