

26 June 2023

Planning Department
Manchester City Council
PO Box 532
Town Hall
Manchester
M60 2LA

FAO David Lawless

Dear David,

Application for Prior Notification to determine if prior approval is required for the installation of photovoltaic equipment on the roofs of Manchester Metropolitan University Birley Fields Campus student accommodation

Please find enclosed an application for prior notification to determine if prior approval is required for the installation of photovoltaic (PV) equipment on the roofs of student accommodation buildings at Manchester Metropolitan University's Birley Fields Campus ('the Proposed Development'). The Applicant is Manchester Metropolitan University ('the Applicant').

The Site is in four parts and currently comprises the roofs of the student accommodation within the Birley Fields Campus of the Manchester Metropolitan University: Dale House; Naylor Halls; Vine House; and Warde Halls.

The Description of Development is as follows:

"Prior notification application for the installation of photovoltaic equipment to the roofs of existing student accommodation."

Site Location and Description

The Site is located at the Manchester Metropolitan University Birley Fields Campus within the Oxford Road Corridor in Central Manchester. The Birley Fields Campus is in Hulme and comprises several university buildings including the Brooks Building, the Energy Centre, the Birley Fields multi-storey car park and several student accommodation buildings. Princess Road bounds the Birley Fields Campus to the east.

Beyond the immediate environs of the Birley Fields Campus, there are several residential uses, including to the north of Stretford Road of between 2 and 4 storeys, west of Royce Road rising between 3 and 8 storeys, and south of George Parr Road and west of Ormsgill Street of between 4 and 6 storeys.

The Site comprises the following student accommodation buildings within the Birley Fields Campus as outlined in the Site Location Plan submitted in support of this Application:

1. **Dale House:** Located in the northwest corner of the Site, bounded by Stretford Road to the north, Bonsall Street to the south, and a pedestrian route and public realm separating Dale House from Royce Road to the west. The student accommodation comprises three buildings rising to 4 storeys and comprising both pitched and flat roofs.
2. **Naylor Halls:** Located south of Dale House and Bonsall Street, bounded by Royce Road to the west, public realm to the east, and George Parr Road to the south. The student accommodation comprises four buildings in total, three of which form part of the Site, rising to 4 storeys and comprising both pitched and flat roofs.
3. **Vine House:** Bounded by Stretford Road to the north, Princess Road to the east, and the Brooks Building (Manchester Metropolitan University Education Building) to the south. Public realm separates Vine House from Dale House to the west. The student accommodation building rises to 6 storeys and comprises a flat roof.
4. **Warde Halls:** Located to the south of the Site, Naylor Halls is bounded by George Parr Road to the north, Ormsgill Street to the west, Archway to the east, and a commercial office building to the south. The student accommodation comprises three buildings, rising to 4 storeys and comprising both pitched and flat roofs.

Proposed PV Equipment

This application for prior notification relates to the installation of solar PV equipment on the roofs of the student accommodation buildings listed above, as detailed within Table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1 Details of Solar PV Equipment

Halls of Residence	Minimum distance to roof edge (m):	Maximum protrusion from roof, where installed on pitched roof (m):	Where installed on a flat roof, maximum protrusion above the highest part of the roof (excluding any chimney) (m).	Capacity of the proposed solar PV equipment(kW):
Dale House - Retrospective application for prior notification for the installation of solar PV equipment on the roofs of all three blocks.				
East Building	1.25	0.1	N/A	43.5
North Building	1.25	0.1	0.31	27.75
Southwest building (not yet installed)	1.25	0.1	0.31	12

Halls of Residence	Minimum distance to roof edge (m):	Maximum protrusion from roof, where installed on pitched roof (m):	Where installed on a flat roof, maximum protrusion above the highest part of the roof (excluding any chimney) (m).	Capacity of the proposed solar PV equipment(kW):
Naylor Halls - Installation of solar PV equipment on the roof of three of the four blocks, excluding the block to the far east of the student accommodation cluster.				
North building	1.25	0.1	N/A	12.75
West building	1.25	0.1	N/A	22.88
South building	1.25	0.1	0.31	22.88
Vine House - Installation of solar PV equipment on the roof of the building				
Vine House	1.25	N/A	0.3	22.5
Warde Halls - Installation of solar PV equipment on the roof of all three blocks				
North building	1.25	0.1	N/A	10.5
East building	1.25	0.1	0.3	15
South building	1.25	0.1	0.3	12.75

The Regulations

Class J, Part 14 of Schedule 2, of *The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) Schedule 2*, outlines the permitted development rights for the installation or alteration etc of solar equipment on non-domestic premises, which includes the following:

“The installation, alteration or replacement of—

(a) microgeneration solar thermal equipment on a building;

(b) microgeneration solar PV equipment on a building; or

(c) other solar PV equipment on the roof of a building, other than a dwellinghouse or a block of flats.”

Class J development is permitted subject to the condition that before beginning the development the developer must apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to the design or external appearance of the development, in particular the impact of glare on occupiers of neighbouring land.

Class J outlines several criteria where the permitted development rights do not apply. Table 1.2 outlines these criteria to evidence that permitted development rights under Class J apply to all proposed PV equipment on all buildings.

Table 1.2 Applicant's Response to Development not permitted under Class J (as defined in J.1, J.2, and J.3)

Applicant's Response	
J.1 a)	As evidenced in Table 1.1, where the solar PV equipment is proposed to be installed on pitched roofs, it would not protrude more than 0.2 metres beyond the plane of the roof slope when measured from the perpendicular with the external surface of the roof slope.
J.1 b)	As evidenced in Table 1.1, where the solar PV equipment is proposed to be installed on flat roofs, the highest part of the solar PV equipment would be lower than 1 metre above the highest part of the roof (excluding any chimney).
J.1 c)	As evidenced in Table 1.1, the solar PV equipment is not proposed to be installed within 1 metre of the external edge of the roof.
J.1 d)	The solar PV equipment is not proposed to be located on any article 2(3) land.
J.1 e)	The solar PV equipment is not proposed to be installed on a site designated as a scheduled monument.
J.1 f)	The solar PV equipment is not proposed to be installed on a listed building or on a building within the curtilage of a listed building.
J.2 a), b), c)	The solar PV equipment is not proposed to be installed on a wall.
J.3	The capacity of the solar PV equipment installed (together with any solar PV equipment installed under Class J(b)) to generate electricity does not exceed 1 megawatt.

Site Specific Considerations

The following further conditions also apply to Class J permitted development rights and are addressed in further detail below:

- a) *"the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment must, so far as practicable, be sited so as to minimise its effect on the external appearance of the building and the amenity of the area; and,*
- b) *the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment is removed as soon as reasonably practicable when no longer needed."*

The solar PV equipment is proposed to improve the sustainability and efficiency of the Applicant's estate, supporting Manchester City Council in their targets to reach net zero carbon by 2038.

The equipment has been specifically designed and located to adhere to the permitted development rights and associated criteria and conditions under Class J of the *Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 Schedule 2*. The proposed solar PV's have all been designed to step-back from the edge of the roofs and have been specifically designed to avoid unnecessary protrusion from the face of the roof slope or beyond the highest part of the roof where flat.

The solar panels are proposed at roof level and will not be positioned on any walls. Where possible, the equipment is proposed to be installed on flat roofs and thus will not be visible from street level. Where equipment is installed on pitched roofs, they would have the potential to be visible from long-distance views, but not in the immediate context of the Site. To protect visual amenity in the limited circumstances where equipment would be visible, principally when viewed from above from nearby taller buildings, the equipment has been carefully and neatly arranged.

The application is supported by a Solar Glare Report, prepared by Proximity. It outlines that the proposed solar PV equipment would not cause any unacceptable impacts on solar glare and reflected sunlight to highways or neighbouring properties. In line with the regulations, should they be no longer needed, the solar PV equipment would be removed as soon as reasonably practicable.

Summary and Conclusions

This covering letter accompanies an application for prior notification to determine if prior approval is required for the for the installation of photovoltaic equipment on the roofs of Manchester Metropolitan University Birley Fields Campus student accommodation buildings. The Site is in four parts and currently comprises student halls of residence, namely Dale House, Naylor Halls, Vine House, and Warde Halls.

Equipment has been carefully designed to minimise the effect on the external appearance of the building and the amenity of the area, including in terms of glint and glare, and adhere to the permitted development rights and associated criteria and conditions under Class J of the *Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 Schedule 2*, as evidenced in Tables 1.1 and 1.2.

As such, the proposed solar PV equipment is deemed to be suitable and appropriate for the Site and should be considered to fall under the definition of permitted development within Class J, Schedule 2 of the *Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015*.

Application Submission

This prior notification application has been submitted via the Planning Portal (Reference PP- 12023753), alongside the requisite application fee in the sum of £96.

This Covering Letter forms the supporting statement submitted in support of this Application and should be read in conjunction with the following documentation:

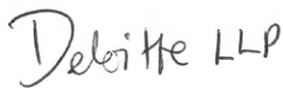
- Site Location Plan, prepared by Castle Owen;
- Detailed Design Summary Documents, prepared by HelioScope, comprising:
 - Detailed Design Summary Dale House;
 - Detailed Design Summary Naylor Halls;

- Detailed Design Summary Vine House;
- Detailed Design Summary Warde Halls;
- Dale House Mounting Report;
- Naylor Halls Mounting Report;
- Vine House Mounting Report;
- Warde Halls Mounting Report; and
- Solar Glare Report, prepared by Proximity.

The list of supporting documentation was agreed during pre-application discussions with a planning officer at Manchester City Council (MCC) on 29 July 2022.

We look forward to validation of the Application in due course. Please do not hesitate to contact my colleague Jennifer Chatfield (jchatfield@deloitte.co.uk / 0161 455 8084) should you have any questions.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deloitte LLP". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

For Deloitte LLP

Encl.