



11 York Street
Manchester
M2 2AW

T: +44 (0)8449 02 03 04
F: +44 (0)121 609 8314

avisonyoung.co.uk

Our Ref: 04C201917
Your Ref: PP-12028256



5th April 2023

Planning Building Control and Licensing
Manchester City Council
PO Box 532
Town Hall
Manchester
M60 2LA

Dear Sir/Madam,

SUBMISSION OF A FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR CHANGE OF USE FOR TEMPORARY EDUCATIONAL USE AND RETAINING EXISTING OFFICE USE AT SECOND AND ONE OF THE UPPER FLOORS, BOULTON HOUSE, 17-21 CHORLTON STRET, MANCHESTER, M1 3HY.

On behalf of Palace Capital plc ("the Applicant") Avison Young ("AY") are pleased to submit a full planning application which proposes the following at Floor 2 and upper floors of Boulton House, 17-21 Chorlton Street, Manchester, M1 3HY ("the Site"):

"Full planning permission for the temporary change of use of Floor 2 and only one of the upper floors from Offices (Use Class E(c)) to an Educational facility (Use Class F1(a)) and Offices (Use Class E(c))."

The application documentation has been submitted via the Planning Portal (Ref. PP-12028256) and includes:

- Covering Letter prepared by Avison Young
- Application Forms prepared by Avison Young
- Site Location Plan (Ref. 21036-FUS-XX-XX-DR-A-0000)
- Existing Floor Level 2 Floor Plan (Ref. 21036-FUS-XX-02-DR-A-0002)
- Existing Upper Floor Plan (Ref. 21036-FUS-XX-05-DR-A-0005)
- Proposed Level 2 Floor Plan (Ref. 21036-FUS-XX-02-DR-A-2002)
- Proposed Upper Floor Plan (Ref. 21036-FUS-XX-05-DR-A-2005)
- Manchester City Council Waste Proforma

The Development Site and Context

The Site is located within Manchester City Centre, situated on Chorlton Street in an area between the city centre's prime core area and Piccadilly. An aerial image showing the Site location with an indicative application boundary is provided at Figure 1 below.

Boulton House stands 9 storeys tall fronting onto Chorlton street with a stepped 6 storey section to the rear of the building fronting on to Major Street. There is a surface level car park to the east. The building has partly undergone some refurbishment in recent years however the floors which are the subject of this application are vacant and have been since 2015. Boulton House was built in the 1970s and has served as office space since opening.

The surrounding area is comprised of a mix of employment generating uses, including offices, hotels and food and drink outlets, all encompassing a range of city centre uses. Manchester Piccadilly Train Station is located approx. 400m from the site and Manchester Coach Station is located directly opposite Boulton House. Boulton House is also located within short walking distance of a number of city centre tram stops, which situate Boulton House in a highly accessible location.

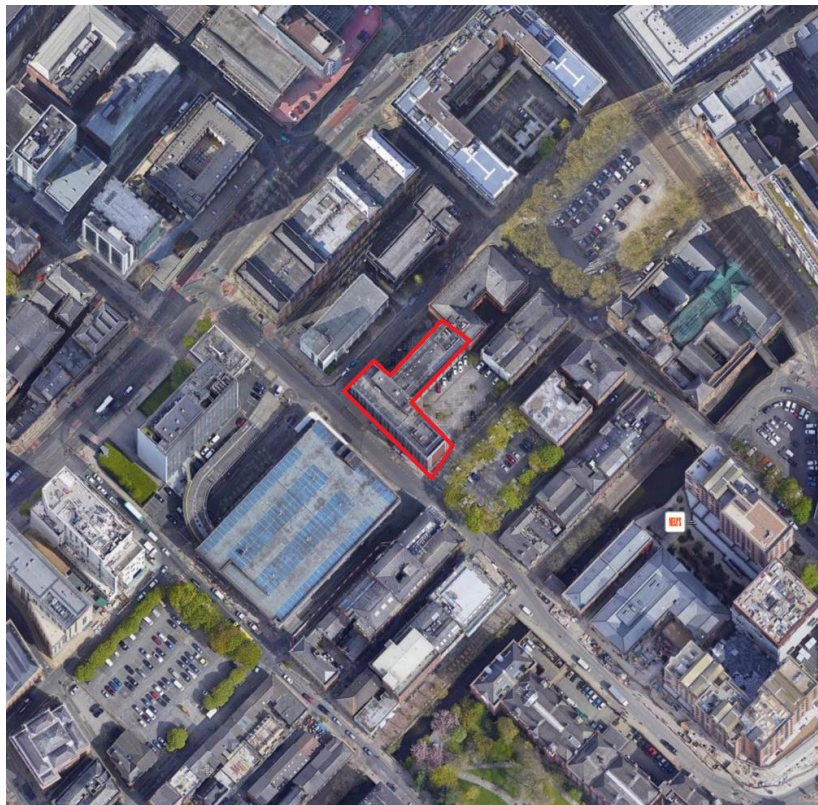


Figure 1: Site Location outlined in red

Planning History

There have been a number of minor applications for Boulton House following a search of the Council's online planning public access, relating to works undertaken regarding the maintenance and associated ongoing operations of Boulton House.

Two recent applications provide the most relevant insight into the planning history and assess the planning considerations for Boulton House:

Planning Application Ref. 107905/FU/2015/C2 – This application sought consent for “A change of use of premises on the ground floor from B1 to D1 for primary use as a language school”. The application was granted permission in April 2015.

This solidifies the acceptance of the principle of educational use on this site of Boulton House.

Planning Application Ref. 121810/FO/2018 - This application sought consent for *Permitted Development for the Change of use to a flexible use of a Non-residential institution (Use Class D1) or Office (Use Class B1(a)) with no more than 1 floor occupied as Non-residential institution (Use Class D1) at any time* at Boulton House. This application was granted permission in March 2019.

The development site covered the upper floors of Boulton House and was separate to the D1 use of the ground floor of the site.

The Proposed Development / Rationale for Development

The proposal comprises the temporary change of use of the 2nd floor and one of the upper floors at any time to implement the use as an educational facility with the flexibility to also use the existing permitted use, offices.

As the floors are currently vacant, the applicant is looking to achieve maximum flexibility to attract a variety of potential occupiers to use the space. The applicant has been in discussions with an educational tenant who are seeking to expand their educational offering due to an appetite for demand for this type of service in the city centre. The proposal would facilitate this end user and their anticipated minor increase in growth. The temporary consent being sought for approval would provide some additional floorspace for the occupier, whilst retaining the ability to use the space for offices if/and when there is a shift in demand for the varying uses.

The applicant acquired the site in 2015 and the site has been vacant since this time. This is due to the outdated fitout of the floors acquired. The constantly evolving market demands and the availability of superior office space in the surrounding area have rendered the current condition of the floors largely unattractive for office use currently. It is imperative that a site and floorspace to this extent does not lay vacant any longer and that the best opportunity for it to be occupied is provided.

As previously referenced, the floor is EPC D79 rating, and this poor energy rating proves unattractive for modern business office use. In addition to the poor energy rating, the M&E for the floor only has a 3-4-year life expectancy.

Regarding the amenity of neighbouring uses and buildings/occupiers, the proposal would not be a significant change to the existing use of the subject floors. There would be no material change in operational hours of the floors for use as an educational facility, furthermore, no external changes are proposed to the building as part of this proposal.

Principle of Development

The Development Plan

The Development Plan for the Site currently comprises:

- The Manchester Core Strategy (adopted July 2012) and Proposals Map; and,
- Saved policies from the Unitary Development Plan (2004).

As defined by the Proposals Map, the Site is not allocated for a specific use, however it is located within City Centre and therefore policies CC1-CC10 of the Core Strategy are relevant to site. There are several of the city centre policies that are of specific relevance to the development proposal. Furthermore, there are two Conservation areas nearby to the site however they do not directly bound the site.

The Manchester Core Strategy was adopted by the City Council on 11 July 2012. It is the key document in Manchester's Local Development Framework. The Core Strategy 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. The following policies from the Core Strategy are considered of relevance for the determination of this application:

- **Policy CC1 - Primary Economic Development Focus: City Centre and Fringe** – this identifies the site as within a city centre area defined as Piccadilly. It states that the city centre is a strategic economic location and focus of employment growth in the City and City Region. It states that the focus of development will be employment related proposals.
- **Policy CC5 – Transport** – sets out that the Transport Strategy for Manchester City Centre will be delivered to ensure that transport is managed in a way which supports the projected growth of the City Centre.
- **Policy CC8 – Change and Renewal** – states that the council has identified the types of development and approach to development which is considered most likely to deliver the vision for the City Centre and development which reflects elements of this will generally be supported.
- **Policy CC10 – A Place for Everyone** – outlines that the city centre will develop as a location which appeals to a wide range of residents and visitors. Developments which promote this objective will be supported, in particular uses which increase the diversity of activity in the City Centre, and also, high standards of accessibility to buildings and across spaces in the City Centre.
- **DM1 Development Management** – states that all development should have regard to specific issues including siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials as well as impact on amenity and surrounding land uses.

The Manchester UDP was adopted by the Council in July 1995. The Manchester Core Strategy replaces significant elements of the UDP. The 'saved' policies from the UDP considered of relevance for the determination of this application include:

City Centre area 17 as per UDP city centre small areas. Policies DC26.1 – DC26.6 regarding Development and Noise are most relevant for this proposal.

- **Policy DC26.1** – outlines that the council intends to use the development control process to reduce the impact of noise on people living and working in or visiting the city. The policy sets out two considerations that will bring this to effect: 1) the effect of new development proposals which are likely to be generators of noise, and 2) the implications of new development being exposed to existing noise sources which are effectively outside planning control.
- **Policy DC26.2** – states that new noise sensitive developments, that includes large-scale change of uses, will be permitted subject to their not being in location which would expose them to high noise levels from existing uses or operations, unless the effects of the development can realistically be reduced.
- **Policies DC26.3 to DC26.6** – demonstrate that the council that will not support development that would have an adverse noise impact on surrounding neighbouring uses. There are several specific provisions regarding noise impact that proposals have to comply with if there is a potential for them to have a noise impact on the amenity on neighbouring uses.

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It sets out the vision for future growth of the country. The NPPF must be taken into account in the preparation of the local plans and is a material consideration in planning decision. The overall emphasis of the NPPF is to reiterate the purpose of the planning system of securing sustainable development as the country looks to develop and change physically over time.

Chapter 2 outlines sustainable development and policies for both plan-making and decision-making. The objective is to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Ensuring the environmental objective is met is a key aspect of this and a vital part of the environmental objective is making effective use of land.

Chapter 11 outlines how planning policies and decision should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses. Paragraph 123 continues "*Local Planning Authorities should also take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific purpose in plans, where this would help meeting the identified development needs.*"

As aforementioned, the intention of this application is to utilise a vacant part of the building, to avoid its decline into disrepair until such time that it can be redeveloped to serve a greater need in accordance with local policy. The principle of which is clearly supported at a national planning policy level.

Overall, the NPPF makes it clear that Local Planning Authorities should look for solutions rather than problems, and decision-takers should seek to approve applications for sustainable development.

Policy Summary

The overarching vision for the NPPF is to look to facilitate sustainable development. As outlined in the sections above, the policy position of the NPPF looks to first utilise existing developed land/buildings to serve current needs. The aim also is to serve these current needs without having an effect on future generations ability to do so. As this proposal looks to make use of an existing building that is currently vacant and with no external changes necessary, the proposal fully complies with the relevant policies of the NPPF which specifically include Chapter 2 and 12 as outlined above.

The local policy position, as set out by Manchester City Council, sets out some specific policies for the development of the city centre. Using a vacant site within an existing building in the city centre for a use that would have negligible impact on the surrounding uses and buildings, fully aligns with all city centre policies. There is specific compliance in relation to CC1, CC5, CC8, CC10 and DM1 of the Core Strategy. Additionally, in relation to the impact the proposal would have, the scheme fully complies with policies DC26.1, DC26.2 and DC26.3 to 26.3 of the UDP as it would have negligible impact on its surrounding, with no material changes and no external changes to what is already in place.

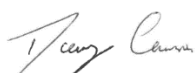
Conclusion

The local and national planning policy context is heavily supportive of utilising previously developed sustainable land for identified development needs. This application plays a small but important short-term role in line with the existing uses in the area, and will in no way impede delivering the Council's long term ambitions and objectives for this part of Manchester.

The scheme would bring about a meaningful use to a vacant unit in an existing building, within a core city centre location. The proposal benefits from excellent transport access and the proposed temporary change of use have negligible impact on its surroundings. This is a prime opportunity to re-use an existing vacant site that complies fully with national and local level policy, which clearly demonstrates proper planning and sustainable development.

I trust that this is satisfactory for the Council to enable swift validation of the application. We would welcome continued positive dialogue with the Officers during the determination of the application. In the meantime, should you require any further information or wish to discuss the application then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Danny Cremen
Graduate Planner
0161 956 4066

Danny.cremen@avisonyoung.com



For and on behalf of Avison Young (UK) Limited