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19th January 2023

Anthony Mitchell
Planning
Manchester City Council
Town Hall Extension
Manchester
M60 2LA

Dear Tony,

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED).
PLANNING AND LISTED BUILDING APPLICATION FOR FAÇADE TREATMENT TO PROPOSED HOTEL
EXTENSION
PLANNING PORTAL REFERENCE: PP-11862940
FORMER LONDON ROAD FIRE STATION, LONDON ROAD, MANCHESTER M1 2PH**

Planning and listed building applications have been submitted on behalf of Allied London Fire Station Limited. These constitute 'drop in' applications which will effectively achieve alterations to the wider consented scheme. These changes relate only to the treatment of the consented hotel façade.

This approach is considered to be fully appropriate by the Council and applicant. The principles arising from the case of Hillside Parks Ltd v Snowdonia National Park Authority [2020] EWCA Civ 1440 have been taken into account. The new consents will be capable of standing alongside the existing consents, and will not affect their ability to be implemented. Additionally, the changes proposed are not material in the context of the wider scheme.

The original full planning and listed building consent applications were granted on 17th April 2020 for the following, respectively:

Refurbishment, restoration, reconfiguration and extension of former London Road Fire Station site to create a mixed use development comprising of hotel (Use Class C1), workspace/office (Use Class B1, D1), commercial floorspace for shop and food and drink uses (Use Classes A1, A3 and A4), residential apartments (Use Class C3) and leisure (Use Class D2), together with access and highways works, servicing, rooftop plant and associated works; and

LISTED BUILDING CONSENT for internal and external works in association with refurbishment, restoration, reconfiguration and extension of former London Road Fire Station site to create a mixed use development comprising of hotel, workspace/office, commercial floorspace for shop and food and drink uses, residential apartments and leisure, together with access and highways works, servicing, rooftop plant, landscaping and associated works

These were subsequently amended by applications 127817/JO/2020 and 127818/JO/2020; and later applications 132633/JO/2022 and 132634/JO/2022. These altered the consented plans but retained the same descriptions of development.

Proposed Amendments

The proposed change is limited to the appearance of the hotel façade within the courtyard. There are no changes to the quantum of the built form.

The previously consented drawings of the scheme incorporated a relatively bright gold coloured material on the hotel extension with a random pattern of fenestration. Whilst consented, the client team, architect and other stakeholders have never been fully convinced by the approach. The material and window placement potentially detracted from an appreciation of the historic building, which itself has a more regular, aligned courtyard elevation.

The design team has rationalised the vertical pattern of cladding panels and glazing. The dimensions of panels have been simplified to a single 600mm panel width. The glazing in the façade has been brought into vertical alignment and the widths are multiples of the same 600mm unit. This creates a simple, elegant pattern of division. This focus is in line with the approach to the simplification and rationalisation of the new balcony steelwork, which is felt to be more complementary to the historic building.

Research into the cladding material has concluded that the TECU brass product already consented, with a hand applied artisan finish is a darker brown than indicated on the drawings, with a pleasing patina. A sample of the specifically selected finish is available to view on site. Alternative copper products were discounted as the weathering patterns were extremely unpredictable and in some areas could discolour to a green. Corten was discounted due to the risk of staining from rainwater runoff.

The façade will be presented in a combination of solid and perforated panels which echoes the consented scheme, albeit perforations will be paired back to a simpler pattern. The perforated panels will wrap around the windows and add an impression of depth to the elevation.

An additional benefit is that the hierarchy of the new build element is reduced, ensuring that it does not detract from an appreciation of the historic building and its heritage significance.

On balance, the approach is found to be acceptable in planning and heritage terms.

Heritage Impact

The proposals are consistent with the requirements of the NPPF and Historic England guidance. The alterations align with the principles which have been established throughout the project to date. They constitute minimal changes; minimise the loss of fabric; and uphold the significance of the asset.

Overall, the proposed alterations will not change the cumulative impact assessment undertaken in the 2019 SLHA Heritage Statement that there will be a positive heritage impact on the London Road Fire Station. As such, the works are appropriate in heritage terms, and comply with the necessary legislation and policy.

A Design and Access Statement produced by Purcell Architects is submitted as part of this application.

The proposed changes are limited and are minor in nature. Works follow the principles of design and heritage established through the previous grants of consent and discharge of conditions. The amendments have arisen from a review of the practicalities of the consented approach.

The amended scheme will maximise use of the London Road Fire Station whilst securing its optimum viable use for the future. Works are found to be appropriate from a heritage standpoint. The amendments uphold the high quality and conservation-led principles of the consented scheme, which was recognised as delivering transformative regeneration to this part of Manchester, and securing the future of an important Grade II* listed building. This remains a sustainable form of development that complies with the relevant national and local policies.

I trust the submitted application is satisfactory and I look forward to acknowledgement of its receipt. Should you wish to discuss the proposals or have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "DBB", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Deborah Baker Barnett
Associate Director