



Paul Butler Associates

Planning, Development & Heritage Consultants

29 September 2022

Mrs Julie Roscoe
Head of Planning
Manchester City Council
Town Hall
Albert Square
Manchester
M60 2LA

FAO Emily Booth

22.1797

Dear Mrs Roscoe,

Blackfriars House, Blackfriars Street, Manchester, M3 2JA
Application for Planning Permission for Installation of Pergola on Roof Terrace

On behalf of our client, Climat, please find enclosed an application for the installation of a pergola on the roof terrace of Blackfriars House.

In order to provide an understanding of the application proposal this letter provides a description of the application site and surrounding area; an overview of the proposal; a review of the national and local planning policy of relevance to the scheme; and, an appraisal of the proposed scheme against its relevant planning policy context.

The Application Site and Surrounding Area

The application site comprises the roof terrace of Blackfriars House, Blackfriars Street, Manchester, M3 2JA (see figures 1 and 2 below).

Blackfriars House is located on the junction of Parsonage and Blackfriars Street and is set at back of pavement. To the north of the site is the River Irwell which forms the boundary between Manchester and Salford. The property is located on the edge of the central retail area and contains a mix of uses including office, residential apartments and leisure uses. Blackfriars House is owned and managed by Bruntwood, a specialist property company. The building comprises multi-tenant office space and a café on the ground floor.

The building is eight storeys in height and the application proposal specifically relates to the roof terrace. Planning permission 121979/FO/2018 was approved in October 2019 for 'Change of use of part of ground floor from office (use class B1) to cafe (use class A3); works to rooftop comprising erection of a rooftop extension for use as a restaurant (use class A3) and refurbishment of roof space to house ventilation equipment and create roof terrace with intensive green roof; works to elevations comprising alterations to ground floor entrance on parsonage elevation, and installation of louvres to windows on River Irwell elevation'. Works to implement this permission have largely been completed with the structure / shell of the restaurant completed and the internal fit out due to commence shortly. The proposed pergola that is the subject of this application will be used in association with the approved rooftop restaurant.

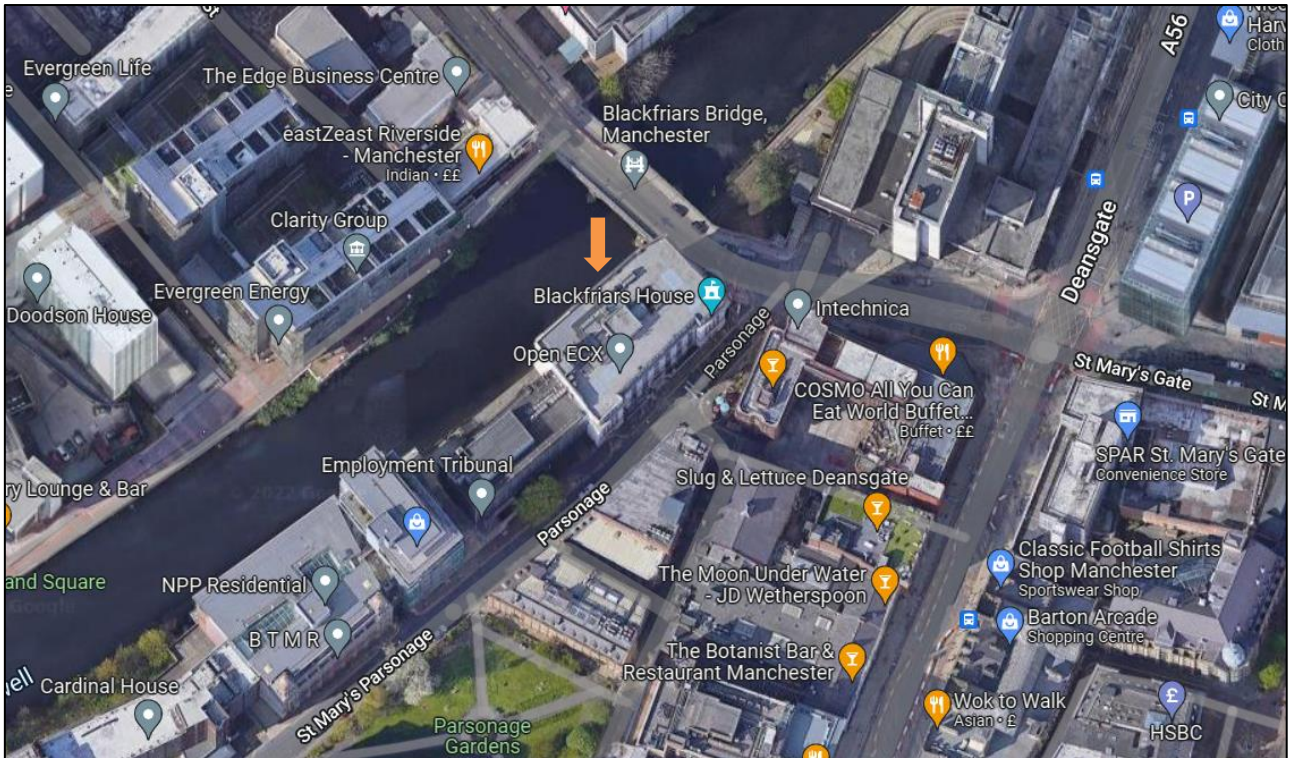


Figure 1: Aerial view of Blackfriars House.

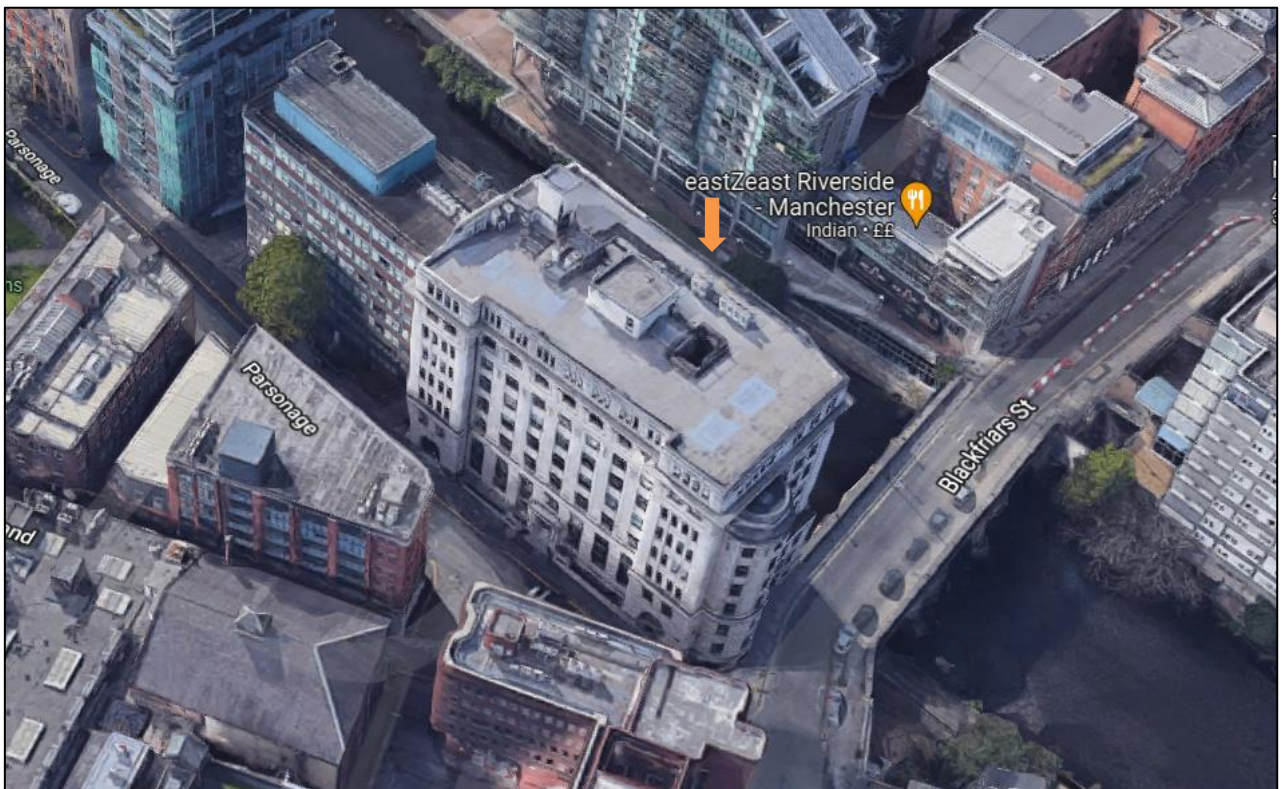


Figure 2: 3D Aerial view of Blackfriars House.

Blackfriars House was designed for the Bleachers' Association by Harry Fairhurst in 1923. Blackfriars House is faced in Portland Stone and is a typical example of inter-war distilled classicism applied to substantial structures. Parkinson-Bailey describes the building as, "Baroque, but the orders are inferred rather than shown". Hartwell & Pevsner (2005) describe the building as being in the

“...crisp classical idiom favoured by [Harry S. Fairhurst] between the wars”. The building has a predominantly vertical rhythm, with regularly spaced metal framed windows offset by surface detailing which bands the building into strata reflecting the proportions of classical order. The main entrance is located centrally on the Parsonage frontage, with a service entrance to the far left-hand of the same elevation. This service entrance has been adapted as part of planning permission 121979/FO/2018 to provide access to the rooftop restaurant.

The site is located in the Parsonage Gardens Conservation Area in Manchester City Centre. No other site specific planning policy designations apply.

The Proposal

The application proposal is for the installation of a pergola on the roof terrace of Blackfriars House. The pergola will be associated with the rooftop restaurant approved under planning permission 121979/FO/2018 which is to be occupied and operated by Climat.

The pergola will be located towards the north east side of the roof terrace, with good access from the internal restaurant area. The pergola will be set back from the edges of the building. It will comprise a ‘Maranza Deluxe Louvered Pergola’ which will measure 5.4m (l) x 3.6m (w) x 2.3m (h). It will have a matt royal grey finish and have a louvre roof which will provide a degree of shelter from the weather, thus allowing for greater use of the roof terrace and providing associated economic benefits.

Planning Policy Context

The application proposal should be considered against national and local planning policy requirements. Planning policy of relevance to the proposal and which provides the context for its assessment is provided within the following documents:

- National Planning Policy Framework (2021);
- Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2012);
- Saved Policies of the Unitary Development Plan (1995); and,
- Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document 2007 (SPD).

National Planning Policy Framework, 2021

Detailed guidance about the legislation is given in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF was first published in March 2012 with the latest version updated in July 2021. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies regarding the conservation of the historic environment. The NPPF is a key part of reforms to make the planning system less complex and more accessible; to protect the environment; and to promote sustainable growth. It replaces previous national planning policy guidance and is a material consideration in planning decisions.

The NPPF places great emphasis on the role of decision makers to promote sustainable development. Paragraph 8 advises that sustainable development has three dimensions: ‘economic, social and environmental’. The following other provisions are relevant to the determination of this application:

- The objective of sustainable development is summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the needs of future generations to meet their own needs (Paragraph 7).

- So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (Paragraph 10).
- Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development (Paragraph 11).
- Applications for planning permission should be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise (Paragraph 47).
- Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity (Paragraph 81).
- Planning should achieve high quality design for all developments. Developments should: function well and add to the overall quality of the area; be visually attractive as a result of good architecture; be sympathetic to local character and history; and, maintain a strong sense of place (Paragraph 130).
- Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location, taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should, amongst other things, mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life (Paragraph 185).

Section 16 of the NPPF deals with conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraph 189 advises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

Paragraph 194 advises that ‘In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance’.

Paragraph 195 states that ‘Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal.’

Paragraph 196 states that ‘Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision’.

Paragraph 197 states ‘In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness’.

Paragraph 203 states that ‘The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset’.

Annex 2 of the NPPF provides a glossary of key terms which are relevant to this application. ‘Significance’ is defined as: ‘The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting’.

Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document, 2012

The Core Strategy, adopted in July 2012, is the key Development Plan Document against which proposals should be judged. Core Strategy objectives and policies of particular relevance to the application for the proposed pergola include:

- Policy SP 1 ‘Spatial Principles’ which states that the Regional Centre will be the focus for economic development and, that development should enhance/protect the built/natural environment, reuse previously developed land wherever possible and enhance or create character.
- Policy CC 9 ‘Design and Heritage’ states that development in the City Centre needs to be of the highest standards in terms of appearance and function and should preserve or enhance conservation areas.
- Policy EN 1 ‘Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas’ which states that all development in Manchester will be expected to follow the seven principles of urban design, as identified in national planning guidance and listed above and have regard to the strategic character area in which the development is located.
- Policy EN 3 ‘Heritage’ which states that developments must be designed to support the council in preserving or, where possible, enhance the historic environment, the character and the setting of conservation areas.
- Policy DM 1 ‘Development Management’ which sets out various issues that development should have regard to, including amongst other things appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail; and, effects on amenity.

Saved Policies of the Unitary Development Plan for Manchester (July 1995)

The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was superseded by the Core Strategy. However, a number of UDP policies have been ‘saved’. The following extant policy is of relevance:

- Policy DC18.1 ‘Conservation Areas’ seeks to protect, preserve and enhance the character of the city’s conservation areas.

Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document, 2007

This document aims to support and enhance the on-going shaping of the City by providing a set of reasoned principles which will guide developers, designers and residents to the sort of development that everyone wants to see in Manchester.

Planning and Heritage Appraisal

Having regard to the planning policy context set out above, the key planning issues against which the application proposal should be considered relate to: the principle of development; design and heritage matters; and amenity. These issues are considered below:

Principle of Development

The application proposal is for the installation of a pergola on the roof terrace of Blackfriars House. The pergola will be associated with the rooftop restaurant approved under planning permission 121979/FO/2018 which is to be occupied and operated by Climat.

The pergola will be bioclimatic with a louvred roof which will provide a degree of shelter from the weather including light rain and strong sun. The pergola will therefore improve the usability of the roof terrace and increase customer numbers. The application drawings indicate that the sheltered area of the pergola could accommodate 18 seats with associated tables. The pergola will therefore be associated with an economic benefit by increasing the availability of seating and customer numbers at Climat. This is consistent with the economic aspect of sustainable development, which is a key aspect of national and local planning policy and has been highlighted within this letter. Taking the above into account the principle of development is therefore acceptable.

Design and Heritage Matters

The proposed pergola will be sited on the existing roof terrace in an area which is set back from the edge of the roof. It will have minimal framing and have an open structure therefore ensuring minimal visual impact. This is particularly the case given the roof of Blackfriars House is eight storeys high meaning views from street level are highly restricted. This can be seen by figures 3 and 4 below.



Figure 3: View looking east along Blackfriars Street. The approximate location of the roof terrace is indicated.



Figure 4: View looking west along Blackfriars Street. The approximate location of the roof terrace is indicated.

Details of the proposed Maranza Deluxe Louvered Pergola have been submitted as part of the application and confirm that it is a high specification installation. It will be finished dark grey which will reflect other elements of the roof top restaurant, as well as other elements of Blackfriars House (ie. dark grey / black windows and railings), thereby ensuring that it will not be prominent. The pergola is not considered to have a material impact on the wider appearance of Blackfriars House and will be viewed within the context of the existing roof top extensions meaning that it will not be visually prominent. For these reasons the proposed pergola is considered acceptable from a design perspective and will not significantly alter the appearance of the building (which can be regarded as non-designated heritage asset) or adversely affect the character and appearance of the Parsonage Gardens Conservation Area.

On the basis of the above, the application proposal will comply with Core Strategy policies SP 1, CC 9, DM 1, EN 1 and EN 3, the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD, and relevant provisions of the NPPF relating to design and heritage.

Amenity

The proposed pergola does not represent a material change of use and can be regarded as an enhancement to the existing / previously approved roof top restaurant. The pergola is set back from the edges of the building in an area where seating was previously approved. The pergola is not associated with any adverse amenity impact in terms of its visual appearance or function. On this basis the application proposal will comply with Core Strategy policies SP 1 and DM 1, EN 3, the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD, and relevant provisions of the NPPF relating to amenity.

Conclusion

Having regard to the above it is concluded that the application proposal is consistent with relevant local and national planning policies. We therefore look forward to working with Manchester City Council in progressing the application to a positive determination.

Submission Documents and Drawings

In addition to this application covering letter, the application is supported by completed application forms and the following drawings prepared by CKB:

Drawing No.	Rev	Title	Scale and Paper Size
100	B	Site Location Plan	1:1250 @ A3
101	B	Existing Roof Terrace Layout	1:150 @ A3
102	B	Proposed Roof Terrace Layout with Proposed Outdoor Pergola	1:150 @ A3
103	B	Proposed Pergola Detail	1:50 @ A3
104	B	Existing Elevation C-C Parsonage	1:200 @ A3
105	B	Proposed Elevation A-A Parsonage	1:200 @ A3
106	B	Elevations B-B – Blackfriars Street Existing and Proposed	1:200 @ A3
107	B	Existing Elevation C-C River Side	1:200 @ A3
108	B	Proposed Elevation C-C River Side	1:200 @ A3

The above information has been submitted alongside the application forms via the planning portal. The application fee (amounting to £234) has been paid online at the time of submission.

We trust that this information is sufficient to enable validation and determination of the application. However, if you require any further information please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Taylor', written in a cursive style.

Ralph Taylor BSc MPLAN MRTPI
Associate Director