

Application Number: 133467/LO/2022

Applicant: Santander UK plc

Agent: None

Location: Alliance House, 30 Cross St., Manchester

Proposal: LBC for internal refurbishment and internal/external signage scheme.

Ward: Deansgate

Description of Site and Surrounding Area

The application relates to Alliance House, specifically the façade to the ground floor of the building to the St. Ann Street and Cross Street elevations. Alliance House is a four storey building with two stage turret. The building is to the northwest corner of the intersection of King Street and St. Ann Street in the city centre of Manchester. The surrounding area is predominantly midrise office buildings with ground floor retail or similar.

Historic Environment

The building is listed, with the entry at Historic England stating:

Life insurance company offices. 1901, by Heathcote and Rawle; altered. Sandstone ashlar, slate roof. Trapeziform plan on end-of-block site. Eclectic style with French Renaissance elements. Four storeys and attic plus 2-stage turret, with 6-bay facade to Cross Street and 3-bay facade to St Ann Street hinged on an octagonal corner turret, with cornices over the 2nd and 3rd floors and shaped-gable dormers to the attic with parapets and chimneys between them; ground floor altered. The 2nd and 6th bays to Cross Street, and the centre bay to St Ann Street, project slightly through the 1st and 2nd floors, with coupled windows to both floors, carved spandrels to the upper windows and balustraded parapets above; otherwise, all windows on these floors are single-light sashes without glazing bars, those at 2nd floor round-headed; the 3rd floor has coupled round-headed windows with diagonal shafts and recessed sashes, and the attic dormers have sashes with 2-pane lower leaves and enriched gables with finials. The corner has curved sashes set behind free-standing colonnettes, a balustraded parapet over the 2nd floor with carved cresting surmounted by a pedestalled statue displaying a shield; the turret rising behind her has single-light windows to the 2nd stage, a pierced parapet with finials, and a domed cupola. Interior not inspected.

The building is proximate to other listed buildings, including Grade II listed 'National House' to the south and Grade II* listed '25 St. Ann Street' to the west. The building is also located within the St. Ann's Square Conservation Area and adjacent to the Upper King Street Conservation Area

Description of Proposal

The application seeks permission for external alterations/renovation works to the Grade II listed building, consisting of:

Ground Floor

- Increase in number of external ATMs from two to three.
- Formation of new quiet room requiring interventions to separate from main space
- Removal of existing staircase and incorporation into new layout
- Adaptation of existing staircase and incorporation into new layout

First Floor

- Creation of 3.no private rooms requiring interventions to separate from the main space
- Relocation of staff room and toilets to new location
- Removal of existing 3.no private rooms
- Existing staircase to be blocked off to allow repositioning of toilets and staff room
- Removal of plasterboard rafts to allow greater visibility of original cornice detail.
- Installation of baffle/acoustic system below vents
- Grouping and reduction of existing mechanical and ventilation equipment

External

- Installation of 1.no ATM machine and alterations to glass surrounds
- Introduction of 2no. fascia signs (halo-lit individual letters and 2.no hanging signs)

The Listed Building Consent Submission

The application is supported by the following information:

- Application Form
- Location Plan
- Existing and Proposed Plans
- Additional Detail Plans
- Design, Access & Heritage Statement

Publicity LBC

Site Notice/s Posted and Dates: Posted 12/05/22, Expired 02/06/22

Press Adverts Published and Dates: Published 03/05/22, Expired 24/05/22

Neighbour Notification: Notified 27/04/22

Representations Received: None

Consultations

Urban Design & Conservation

- Signage is acceptable. However, the stonework has suffered damage overtime so proposed signage must use existing holes/fixings. Ideally, a discrete rail system should be used instead of affixing individual letters to the stone.

- The suite of plans provided includes reference to a box lit fascia, which is unacceptable and appears to have been included in error.
- Full and final details and dimensions will need to be included for the hanging signs.
- Queries as to what control the LPA would have over interior signage on St. Ann Street elevation.
- Sample of proposed reeded glass manifestation would be required
- Internal alterations generally acceptable. However, ceiling treatments require some attention, particularly with regard to M and E equipment and the rafting systems proposed.

National Amenity Societies

No comments received.

Policy

The Development Plan

The Development Plan consists of: The Manchester Core Strategy (2012); and Saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (1995). The Core Strategy is the key document and sets out the long-term strategic planning policies for Manchester's future development.

A number of UDP policies have been saved. Applications for listed building consent in Manchester must be decided in accordance with the Core Strategy and saved UDP policies as directed by section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document (July 2012)

There are no policies within the Core Strategy that specifically relate to applications for Listed Building Consent. However, the following Core Strategy policies allude or refer to listed buildings and 'development' affecting them:

CC9 – Design and Heritage: Development in Manchester City Centre should preserve or enhance the heritage assets that have been identified, including listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled ancient monuments.

EN3 – Heritage: New developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance, including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas and archaeological remains.

DM1 – Development Management: All development should have regard to specific issues, including by having regard to the character of the surrounding area.

Manchester Unitary Development Plan Document (Saved Policies)

19 – Listed Buildings: In determining applications for LBC, the LPA will have regard to the desirability of securing the retention, restoration, maintenance and continued use of such buildings and to protecting their general setting. In giving effect to this policy, the LPA will:

- Not grant LBC for the demolition of a listed building other than in the most exceptional circumstances, and in any case, not unless it is satisfied that every possible effort has been made to continue the present use or to find a suitable alternative use
- Not permit a change of use to a listed building, where it would have a detrimental effect on the character or appearance of the building
- Not permit any external or internal alteration or addition to a listed building where, in its opinion, there would be an adverse effect on its architectural or historic character
- Seek to preserve and enhance the settings of listed buildings by appropriate control over the design of new development in their vicinity, control over the use of adjacent land, and where appropriate, by the preservation of trees and landscape features
- Permit demolition only where there are approved detailed plans for redevelopment and where there is evidence of a firm building contract
- Not permit alterations to a listed building which would prevent the future use of any part of the building, in particular upper floors or basements, or where poor maintenance is likely to result

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)

The revised NPPF re-issued in July 2021. The document states that the ‘purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The document clarifies that the ‘objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’ (paragraph 7). In order to achieve sustainable development, the planning system has three overarching objectives – economic, social and environmental (paragraph 8).

Section 16 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment – Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance. These 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 – In determining applications, LPAs should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage asset 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. As a minimum, the historic relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, LPAs should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

Paragraph 195 – In turn, LPAs should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including the setting) taking into account 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 assets conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

Paragraph 196 – 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 – In determining applications, LPAs should take account of:

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation
- The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic viability
- The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness

Paragraph 199 – When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to the significance.

Paragraph 200 – Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from alteration, destruction or development within its setting) should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm or loss of Grade II listings should be exceptional, and anything above should be wholly exceptional.

Paragraph 201 – Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm or total loss of significance, LPAs should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss or where:

- The nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable use of the site
- No viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation

- Conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible
- The harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use

Paragraph 202 – Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Paragraph 204 – LPAs should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred

Paragraph 208 – LPAs should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies

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.

Setting of a heritage asset is defined as the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Historic Environment – Any decisions where listed buildings and their settings and conservation areas area factor must address the statutory considerations of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, in particular Sections 16, 66 and 72, as well as applying the relevant policies in the development plan and the NPPF.

Conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change. It requires a flexible and thoughtful approach to get the best out of assets as diverse as listed buildings in everyday use and yet undiscovered, undesignated buried remains of archaeological interest.

In the case of buildings, generally the risks of neglect and decay of heritage assets are best addressed through ensuring that they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation. Ensuring such heritage assets remain used and valued is likely to require sympathetic changes to be made from time to time.

Part of the public value of heritage assets is the contribution that they can make to understanding and interpreting our past. So, where the complete or partial loss of a heritage asset is justified, the aim then shall be to capture and record the evidence of

the asset's significance which is to be lost, interpret its contribution to the understanding of our past, and make that publicly available.

Examples of heritage benefits include sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting, reducing, or removing risks to a heritage asset and securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long-term conservation.

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 66 of the Act requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings. This requires more than a simple balancing exercise and case law has considerable importance and weight should be given to any impact upon a designated heritage asset but in particular upon the desirability of preserving the setting with a strong presumption to preserve the asset.

Section 72 of the Act requires the LPA to, during the assessment for planning permission, exercise due respect to any buildings or other land that falls within a designated conservation area. Special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area.

Equality Act (2010)

S149 (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.

Issues

Impact of Works upon Listed Building

For listed building consent, the issue to consider is whether such works proposed would have either a less than substantial, substantial or total loss of the designated heritage asset. For clarity, each of the key elements of the proposal are addressed below:

External Alterations

The proposed external alterations consist of a replacement signage scheme, the installation of an additional ATM surrounding by glazing. The proposed alterations would have minimal impact on the overall external appearance of the building, with the LPA's Heritage consultee commenting that, subject to appropriate positioning and protection of the building's stonework and supply of a sample of the glass, the proposals are acceptable.

Internal Alterations

The internal alterations consist of the removal of a non-original staircase and reinstatement of fabric, the creation of non-permanent 'quiet rooms', which are to be separated via glazing and the relocation of toilet/staff room facilities. In addition, existing ceiling rafts are to be removed and replaced with lighter weight solutions. As part of the proposal, the applicant has also confirmed their intention to reduce/compact the M&E equipment so that it becomes less intrusive.

Amended and additional information was received by way of email and additional plans confirming and finetuning the proposal, as a response to the Heritage consultee's comments.

Conclusion

In summary, the proposed development is expected to have less than substantial harm to the appearance and character of the listed building, with public benefits derived from the continued occupation by the current occupier and maintenance of the Grade II listed building. As such, the proposal is consistent with Core Strategy policies EN1, CC9, SP1 and DM1 as well as UDP Policies DC19.1. In addition, the proposal is deemed to be consistent with Paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework, in that it would cause overall less than substantial harm to the heritage assets identified with the public benefit of retaining/maintaining the building in a viable use.

Recommendation:

That listed building consent be given subject to the following conditions:

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:

- Location Plan and Block Plan (Drawing Manchester CS (28-34)-SP-LC Revision A dated 28 March 2022) – Received 07 April 2022

- Existing Ground Floor Plan (Drawing Manchester CS (28-34) Existing FF dated 31 October 2022 (sic) – Received 07 April 2022

- Existing First Floor Plan (Drawing Manchester CS (28-34) Existing FF dated 31 October 2022 (sic) – Received 07 April 2022

- Existing Ground Floor Plans, Sections and Details (Drawing Manchester CS- (28-34) Existing RCP GF dated 31 March 2022) – Received 07 April 2022

- Existing First Floor Plans, Sections and Details (Drawing Manchester CS (28-34) Existing RCP-FF dated 13 October 2014) – Received 07 April 2022

- External Signage Details (Sign Type P4 – Construction Details, dated 2020) – Received 07 April 2022
- External Signage Details (Sign Type L2 – Construction Details, dated 2020) – Received 29 June 2022
- Existing and Proposed Front External Elevations and Details (Drawing Manchester 34CS-FR-EL-EX-PR Revision A dated 05 April 2022) – Received 07 April 2022
- Existing and Proposed Side External Elevations and Details (Drawing Manchester 34CS-SI-EL-EX-PR Revision A dated 05 April 2022) – Received 07 April 2022
- Proposed Ground Floor General Arrangement (Drawing Manchester CS_GF_GA dated January 2022) – Received 07 April 2022
- Proposed Ground Floor Reflected Ceiling Plan (Drawing Manchester CS_GF_RCP dated January 2022) – Received 07 April 2022
- Proposed Ground Floor HVAC Services Upgrade (Drawing Cross-HVAC-GF-01 dated 10 March 2022) – Received 07 April 2022
- First Floor General Arrangement (Drawing Manchester CS_FF_GA Revision A dated January 2022) – Received 07 April 2022
- Proposed First Floor Reflected Ceiling Plan (Drawing Manchester CF_FF_RCP dated January 2022) – Received 07 April 2022
- Proposed First Floor HVAC Services Upgrade (Drawing Cross-HVAC-FF-02 dated 10 March 2022) – Received 07 April 2022
- Email Information Received from Santander UK plc dated 30 June 2022 and timed 15:55
- Photographic Information relating to Glass Screening received 30 June 2022
- Ceiling Raft System Information document prepared by Hunter Douglas Architectural – Received 30 June 2022

Reason - To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans. Pursuant to policies EN3, CC9, SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy, saved Unitary Development Plan policies DC18.1 And DC19.1 and Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework.