

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

6 February 2026
EP ref: 25-410

For the attention of Jack Naven

Dear Mr Leven

Re: Planning Portal reference: 14666764

Section 73 application for minor amendments to planning permission 142515/FO/2025 seeking additional louvres to Unit 1, Block A, The Quarters, Oldham Street, Manchester, M4 1LF

Please find enclosed an application pursuant to Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) to vary condition 2 on planning permission 142515/FO/2025 at The Quarters, Oldham Street, Manchester. The application comprises this letter, completed application forms and the following drawings:

- Location plan.
- Existing and proposed Spear Street elevation (7708-al(05)221)

The proposals

Planning permission 142515/FO/2025 granted consent for the:

“Retention of louvers and fire doors together with installation, reconfiguration of glazing to shop associated with the reconfiguration of ground floor commercial units.”

This permission has been part implemented in respect of the occupation of Unit 2 by Sainsbury's. The internal subdivision has taken place, and the glazing amendments in respect of Sainsbury's have been implemented.

The proposed occupier of Unit 1, Block A is The Gym Group. The Gym Group do not require any external extraction and as a result there is no requirement for plant on the external facade. However, they do require some natural ventilation to the gym and as a result 6 additional louvres are proposed.

The M&E contractor has advised that the additional louvres have been sized in line with Part F ventilation building regulations for the operation of the gym for 140 people across two floors. The 6 louvres are required to provide

the airflow to the system. Reducing the number of louvres would result in high pressure on the ventilation system and noise issues in the street.

The louvres are proposed to be on Spear Street, a secondary elevation, rather than the primary elevation which fronts onto Oldham Street. The material and colour of the proposed louvres would match the existing openings (anodized bronze) to ensure they are in keeping with the design and character of the existing development and the surrounding area.

The plans which are proposed to be updated are shown in bold below.

Approved plan reference	Proposed
Location Plan	No change
Ground and Lower Ground Unit Plans Block B PL-A-0006 P2	No change
Proposed Lower GF Plans Block A PL-A-1201 P4	No Change
Proposed Spear Street Elevations 7708-al (05)012 P01	Existing and proposed Spear Street elevation 7708-(05)221-P02
Proposed Oldham Street Elevations 7708-1l(05)011 P01	No change
Proposed GF Plan 7708-al(05)010	No change
Existing and Proposed Sections 7708-al(05)020-P01	No change
Existing and Proposed Sections 7708-al(05)021-P01	No change

It is proposed that condition 2 is varied to refer to the amended drawings above instead of those listed on the decision notice.

Planning considerations

Policy SP1 of the Core Strategy states that The Regional Centre will be the focus for economic and commercial development, retail, leisure and cultural activity, alongside high quality city living. The site is within the designated Regional Centre area as identified on the adopted Policy Map. Policy EC3 further reinforces the aspirations set out in the spatial strategy and encourages commercial development in The Regional Centre.

Policy EN1 sets out the principles for the City Centre Character Area. It highlights that the core area presents a dense environment, accommodating a wide and closely integrated range of uses including commercial, civic and residential activities.

Policy CC7 of the Core Strategy encourages active ground floor uses, which will be considered appropriate in locations which have an established public function. Paragraph 8.47 states:

“Active ground floor uses are particularly important, as they help to animate the City Centre, emphasise the sense of place and improve security. Developers will be expected to demonstrate that they have made all reasonable efforts to ensure that proposed active uses will be delivered and occupied, and in particular there is an expectation that the approach to leasing and management will be flexible to accommodate a range of users, including those from the independent sector.”

Policy CC10 requires high standards of accessibility to be present throughout buildings in the City Centre.

The commercial units were placed on the market in 2022. No interest was shown for the units at the approved sizes. Following the subdivision of the units, Sainsbury's occupy Unit 2 and the current proposals are to enable The Gym Group to occupy Unit 1.

The proposals are in accordance with the Policy CC7 of the Core Strategy and reflect our client's efforts and flexibility to ensure that the units are occupied without delay. The proposals would enable the development to accommodate a range of users through provision of varied commercial floor space offers.

The grant of planning permission will enable Block A to be fully occupied with minimal amendments to the elevation facing Spear Street only. It is not considered that this minor amendment would impact on the overall external appearance of the development.

Heritage

Policies EN3 of the Core Strategy and JP-P2 of the PfE encourage development which complements and takes advantage of distinct historic and heritage features of the area. Policy JP-P2 further sets out to positively conserve, sustain and enhance the historic environment and heritage assets and their settings.

Policy CC9 of the Core Strategy requires development in Manchester City Centre to preserve or enhance the heritage assets that have been identified, including listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled ancient monuments.

The site is located within the Stephenson Square Conservation Area (CA). Saved Policy 18 of the UDP seeks to preserve and enhance the character of its designated conservation areas by carefully considering the effect of major changes to the appearance of existing buildings.

It is not considered that the proposals comprise major changes due to the limited scope of external amendments. Notwithstanding this, the proposed amendments to the existing elevation would preserve the character of the conservation area by retaining the Oldham Street elevation as approved and restricting the louvres to Spear Street only. The proposal seeks to retain the symmetry across the building façade as a whole, and the character of the area would be maintained on Spear Street through use of matching materials along this elevation. The proposed amendments are in keeping with the existing building fabric and the surrounding area, would not negatively impact the historic value of the Conservation Area and are therefore in accordance with the development plan.

We understand the position of the City Council as set out in the delegated report for the parent permission is that:

" the City Council generally do not support the retrospective installation of louvres, particularly on a new building that should have properly incorporated louvres into its initial design..

..the removal of glazing elements to be replaced by louvres should be avoided wherever possible and if there were any future proposals to install louvres on this elevation or other elevations, the LPA may determine that a threshold has been passed that would result in too much visual harm by having too many louvres."

Although the building is new, the original planning permission for the building was granted 11 years ago in 2015 and the requirements of the end users were not known. The unit has never been occupied and has sat empty for four years despite being marketed throughout this period. The ventilation is required to enable the building to be occupied and promote a fully active ground floor use which would assist with animating the City Centre and sense of place on Oldham Street and the surrounds.

Application procedure

An application under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 can be used to make a material amendment by varying or removing conditions associated with a planning permission. There is no statutory limit on the degree of change permissible to conditions under s73, but the change must only relate to conditions and not to the operative part of the planning permission (PPG reference ID: 17a-013 20230726). The PPG also clarifies that provisions relating to statutory consultation and publicity do not apply. However, local planning authorities have discretion to consider whether the scale or nature of the change warrants consultation, in which case the authority can choose how to inform interested parties.

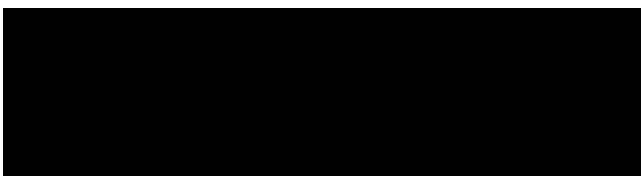
Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 gives an express power to amend or remove conditions on a planning permission for the development of the land. The decision maker must determine whether the proposals differ in such a way from the approved development that they would cause significant harm to interests of planning importance to justify withholding planning permission. Key points to note in this case are:

- The quantum of development would remain the same and the description of development would remain as approved.
- The external changes to the building are minor. The six additional louvres are essential to ensure that Unit 1, Block A can be occupied and operational.
- There is no material change in respect of other matters.
- There has been no change to the development plan context since the grant of planning permission.

The application fee of £586 plus the planning portal fee of £85 has been paid via the Planning Portal. We kindly request receipt and confirmation of validation.

Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me on the enclosed details.

Yours sincerely
Emery Planning



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