

Ms Anne-Marie Piedot
Liverpool City Council
Planning
Municipal Buildings
Dale St
Liverpool
L2 2DH

25 July 2014

Dear Mrs Piedot

Listed Building Consent – Lewis’s Liverpool, Ranelagh Street, Liverpool

On behalf of our client, Lewis’s Liverpool LLP, please find enclosed an application for Listed Building Consent for the fit out of Unit L4 within the Lewis’s Liverpool Building to accommodate a retail supermarket (Use Class A1) operated by Lidl UK GmbH.

The Application Site

The Lewis’s Building is located the corner of Renshaw Street and Ranelagh Street, Liverpool City Centre. It has significant frontages extending along both of these streets. The present Building dates from 1947-56 and is Grade II Listed. The Building has seven stories above ground and two basement levels. The first basement, ground, first and second floor were previously used as a department store.

The Building benefits from Planning and Listed Building Consent for its conversion into a mixed use development incorporating a number of leisure and commercial uses including retail, offices and hotel (Liverpool City Council references 11F/0190 & 11L/0191). This includes the creation of a full-height cut through of the structure and the introduction of a new public plaza to the rear of the Building. In March 2013, the Adagio Apart Hotel opened in part of the Lewis’s building (the wing fronting Ranelagh Street).

Achieving active use of the Lewis’s Building is essential to the regeneration of the Lime Street/Renshaw Street area, and will support the development of the wider Central Village area.

Proposals

The proposed works relate to the fit out of part of the ground floor of the Building to accommodate a foodstore operated by Lidl UK GmbH. The supermarket will occupy approximately half the ground floor of the Building fronting Ranelagh Street (Unit L4).

The proposals involve alterations to the existing entrance, the installation of suspended ceilings, partitioning of the rear part of the store, and the removal of the reinforced concrete mezzanine gallery to the Ranelagh Street facade.

The mezzanine at present renders the front part of the unit unusable. The headroom below it is only 1.93 m, which does not meet required safety standards. Without this alteration the proposed use of the unit would not be viable (for any use).

The removal of the mezzanine gallery along the Ranelagh Street frontage does not involve any alteration to the external glazing, or to the staircase at the Ranelagh Street/Fairclough Street corner. Its removal will also allow the recladding of the front row of columns in new matching fluted casings, which will help to animate the space, and provide better views into and out of the store from the street.

The layout of the unit has been designed on a bespoke basis to reflect the heritage status of the Lewis's Building. As with any food-store, the layout of the aisles is intended to form a circulation route around the store leading to the tills and the exit point. Within this unit the aisles have been positioned perpendicular to the street to provide views both into and out of the unit from the street. It should be noted that that this is a significant departure for the operator when compared with their standard linear arrangement.

This will be the only store out of the 93 current stores in the North West to be laid out in this way.

Listed Building Application Documents

The following documents are submitted in support of the Listed Building Application:

- Listed Building Application Forms and Ownership Certificates prepared by Deloitte;
- Red Line Plan prepared by AHR;
- Scheme Plans prepared by NJSR;
- Heritage Statement prepared by Peter De Figueiredo; and
- Design & Access Statement prepared by NJSR.

Conclusion

The National Planning Policy Framework states that where a proposal has a potential harmful impact on the significance of a designated heritage asset which is less than substantial harm, local planning authorities should weigh the public benefit of the proposal (for example, that it helps to secure the optimum viable use of the heritage asset in the interests of its long - term conservation) against the harm.

The conversion and reuse of the Lewis's building, together with the development of Central Village, is one of the most important regeneration projects in Liverpool. Adaptive reuse of the Listed Building is the only option if it is to justify major investment and be restored once again to active use. This process has already begun with the occupation of part of the Building by the Adagio Apart Hotel, however much of the remainder of the Building remains vacant.

The Building is located in a highly accessible location at the junction of Renshaw Street and Ranelagh Street, facing Ranelagh Place and with easy links to Lime Street Station and the wider City Centre. However, the quality of the existing commercial frontage further along Renshaw Street reflects the need for significant investment and improvement to this area.

Finding a user for the important ground floor spaces has been challenging, and the current proposal presents an opportunity to create an active frontage to a significant section of the Building fronting Ranelagh Street.

The occupation of the presently vacant large ground floor unit will add to the vitality of this part of the City Centre, driving footfall, creating employment opportunities and increasing confidence in the area.

On balance the public benefits associated with bringing the ground floor of the building back into use outweigh any harm that may result from the loss of the mezzanine gallery.

I would be grateful if you could please acknowledge safe receipt of the application and confirm that it has been registered as valid.

In the meantime should there be anything further you wish to discuss please do not hesitate to contact Jay Patel (0161 455 6561) or me.

Yours sincerely



Michele Steel
for Deloitte LLP