

# Planning & Heritage Statement



## Proposed Development Comprising:-

Alteration, refurbishment and change of use to part of Grade II listed building for use within Classes A1, A3 and A4 (part alternative to previous consent reference 12F/1898)

## **Applicant:**

DB Limited

## **Application Site:**

Former Royal School for the Blind  
Building, Hardman Street,  
Liverpool L1

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## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This Planning & Heritage Statement accompanies an application for alterations, refurbishment and change of use to a Grade II listed building to facilitate the use of part of the lower ground, ground and upper ground floor, first floor and second floor for dual use bar/restaurant, coffee shop and alterations to facilitate use of rear part of ground floor for restaurant (Classes A1, A3 and A4 of the Town & Country Planning Use Classes Order 1987 as amended).
- 1.2 The joint planning and LBC application is made on the basis that the proposed work is for detailed approval of alterations internal and external to facilitate the prospective tenants – Mew Moon Bar/Grill Company, 92 Degrees Coffee Shop (both fronting Hardman Street) and a restaurant to the wing of the ground floor fronting Hope Street.
- 1.3 The applications are provided to support ongoing conversion and restoration of the listed building. This follows on from a general mixed use planning consent obtained in 2012 to use the building for a variety of commercial purposes within Use Classes A1, A3, A4, B1, C1 and D1 (Liverpool CC consent ref: 12F/1898).
- 1.4 The LBC application relates to the former Royal School for the Blind building (most latterly known as the Trade Union & Resource Centre building, Hardman Street, Liverpool L1).
- 1.5 This Planning & Heritage Statement addresses the planning, technical and heritage issues from the proposed conversion, refurbishment and change of use of the lower ground, ground and upper ground floors, first and second floor of the building. The assessment will address the impact of the alterations to the listed building on the special qualities of the building, its setting and setting within a designated Conservation Area.
- 1.6 The planning and assessment is undertaken having regard to planning, economic and heritage protection policies set down in the NPPF (March 2012), the NPPG (March 2014) and Liverpool Unitary Development Plan.

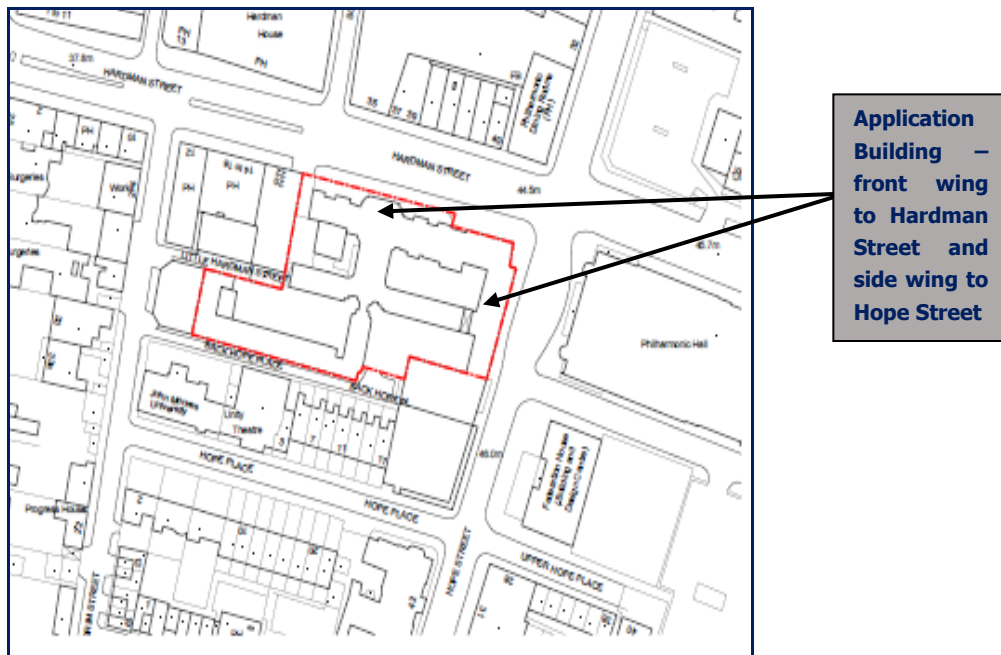
- 1.7 The Heritage section of this Statement is to be read in conjunction with Heritage Statement (May 2012) prepared by Peter de Figueiredo which deals with the historical context and building condition of the former TU listed building (previously was the former Royal School for the Blind).
- 1.8 The May 2012 Heritage Statement is submitted as part of the LBC application documents.
- 1.9 The planning submission is predicated on the fact that there is an extant planning permission for the proposed uses. The previous application was supported by a Transport Statement, Noise Report and Accessibility & Servicing Strategy. These documents are submitted for approval in connection with the current application as they deal with the same issues and considerations that were previously approved with the extant permission ref: 12F/1898.

## **2.0 Site, Proposal & Planning History**

### The Site & Surroundings

- 2.1 The site comprises a large complex of mainly three storey listed building of unique architectural style and quality, although there has been a number of alterations and unsympathetic additions over the years.
- 2.2 The building is listed Grade II and sits within the Canning Street Conservation Area.
- 2.3 The 2012 Heritage Statement shows the building as it exists today and its historical development. The building, although falling into decay and disrepair, presents an imposing character to the corner of Hardman Street and Hope Street.
- 2.4 Adjacent to the building there is the Philharmonic Hall, the Philharmonic Public House and to the rear is the Hope Street Hotel. Along Hardman Street the streetscene is characterised by a mix of building types in a variety of commercial uses including shops, cafes, restaurants, and bars.

- 2.5 Along Hope Street the streetscene is dominated by the scale and presence of the Philharmonic Hall, the Hope Street Hotel and other bespoke designed buildings that provide a wide range of bars, restaurants, leisure, entertainment facilities, hotel, offices and residential uses.
- 2.6 Further beyond Hope Street and Hardman Street Liverpool University campus and the surrounding Georgian Quarter provide contrasting areas of urban design, architectural styles and land use functions.
- 2.7 The building subject to the planning & LBC application is shown in the image below.



#### Summary of Previous Uses of the Listed Building

- 2.8 Over the years since it was constructed the former Royal School for the Blind building (that is presently known as the former Trade Union and Resource Centre building) has had a number of uses including school for the blind, police HQ and latterly, from 1983 as a base/offices for the Merseyside Trade Union and Unemployed Resource Centre.

- 2.9 The wing to the rear, accessed via the main building and from Back Hope Place was used as a music and bar venue – and traded under the name 'Flying Picket'. This section of the listed building is not part of the current planning application.
- 2.10 Whilst the Flying Picket operated a Class A4 use as a bar/music venue, the building remained within the curtilage of the main former TU building and for all intents and purposes, the two uses are part of the same planning unit.

#### The Proposal

- 2.11 The proposal is submitted to create the change of uses to the basement, ground and first floor of part of the building to reflect previous approval for change of use for various commercial purposes (the uses proposed within the current application were previously approved as part of application ref: 12F/1898).
- 2.12 The application also seeks listed building consent for alteration of the listed building by way of internal and external alterations. The full extent of the proposed alterations are shown on the architects plans, with each proposed alteration annotated on the plans.
- 2.13 The proposals are submitted in association with specific requirements of the future operators. The consists of a gastro-pub and fine dining operator (New Moon Co.) and a boutique coffee shop (92 degrees) both of which would occupy the frontage part of the building facing Hardman Street. There will also be a pizzeria restaurant to be situated in the wing along Hope Street.
- 2.14 The schedule of alterations in summary are noted below:-

#### External Elevational Changes

- i. Roof to be overhauled and repaired where appropriate with materials to match existing.
- ii. Existing glazing and windows to be made good, timber repairs, all cracked damaged glass or panels with vents to be replaced. New glass to match existing with pin and putty fixings . Painted finish (white).

- iii. External fabric to be cleaned with appropriate specialist propriety products, tested in less sensitive areas to ensure no permanent damage. Damaged brickwork to courtyard to be replaced using matching imperial gauge facing bricks and mortar colour and pointing.
- iv. New Door (Hope Street elevation) and surround to match existing materials and design.
- v. Hardman Street - Create 2 no. new openings in steel, door and frame to match slender frames and fenestration pattern. Paint finish.
- vi. Hardman Street - new stone steps replacing existing steps.
- vii. Mechanical fume extract vents – 3 no on side elevation serving New Moon Company and 1 no small round vent on Hardman Street elevation (serving 92 degrees coffee shop)
- viii. 4 no air conditioning vents – rear elevations facing courtyard.
- ix. New fire exit ramp and beer cellar ramps – rear elevations.

#### Internal Alterations

- 2.15 Internal Lower ground, ground, first and second floors refurbished and restored to accommodate the proposed coffee shop, pub restaurant and pizzeria restaurant.
- 2.16 New doorway and internal wall openings as noted on the proposed layout plans to meet modern standards for mobility circulation and efficiency of the accommodation for the proposed uses. New openings to height that matches existing doorways to maximum 2400mm.

#### Restoration Works

- 2.17 (i) Carefully removing existing floor boards where required to replace and treat rotten joists. New boards to match existing width and material.
- 2.18 (ii) Tiled floors to staircase areas to be retained and refurbished and protective coating to leave exposed as finish.

- 2.19 (iii) Wall & Ceiling plaster finish to be skimmed to match existing with feature plaster details damaged or missing to be matched and replaced where necessary by specialists.
- 2.20 (iv) Timber stud walls that need to be removed carefully leaving a 200mm downstand to show the original room proportions and features including plaster cornices and roses to be reinstated to match existing.
- 2.21 (v) Fireplaces to be retained and refurbished with flue for use.
- 2.22 (vi) All patching of timber skirting, architraves to match existing.

#### Planning History

- 2.23 Prior to 2012 - review of the planning records on the Council's Explorer does not reveal any planning applications specific to the building. It is assumed that all previous uses have operated within the building through 'long user' and would have established the planning use of the building through use in periods in excess of 10 year. The last known use, being the former Trade Union and Community Unemployed Resource Centre having operated from the site in the period 1983 to 2004.
- 2.24 12F/1898 - change use of premises to uses within A3 (cafe/restaurant with ancillary A1 retail), A4 (bars), B1 (office), C1 (hotel), D1 (education and training) and D2 (leisure) of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987. Application Granted 14 December 2012.

#### History of the Uses of the Building

- 2.25 The original Heritage Statement sets out a detailed history of the use of the building from its first construction in 1818-9 to its closure as the TU and Unemployment Resource Centre in 2004.
- 2.26 For the first 70 years or so of its existence, the building was used as primarily for domicile educational purposes for the Blind, where the role of the school was seen as providing accommodation, education, and technical training that would enable a pupil to become independent and self-supporting. This principle dictated the layout of the premises, which included work rooms, music rooms,

dormitories, exercise grounds and 'Rope Walks', where a shop was operated where items made by the pupils – mats, ropes, baskets – were available for purchase.

- 2.27 The chapel extension which fronted Hope Street was used by both the Blind School and non school religious services in combination with the Liverpool Cathedral situated further along Hope Street to the south. The chapel building was later demolished and replaced by the present extension in the late 1920's to provide accommodation for the pupils.
- 2.28 The site remained in use by the Blind School until it relocated to Wavertree and closed in 1957. The premises were sold to Liverpool Corporation and were used as the city's Police Headquarters.
- 2.29 In 1983, after the police had moved to new premises at Canning Place, the Hardman Street buildings became the Merseyside Trade Union Community and Unemployed Resource Centre, whose facilities included offices, cafe, conference and function rooms, the Flying Picket (a community music venue) and a basement recording studio.
- 2.30 The Resource Centre closed in 2004, since when the buildings have been vacant.

### **3.0 Planning Policy Context**

- 3.1 This section of the Planning Statement deals with the planning policy position covering relevant policy context defined by the development plan (Liverpool Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and policies within the NPPF.

#### Liverpool Unitary Development Plan 2002

- 3.2 One of the primary purposes of the plan is to promote economic development, set out in Policy GEN1. Policy GEN1 identifies the 5 areas of the city where the focus is on economic regeneration. One of these areas is the city centre in which the site is located.
- 3.3 Policy GEN1 of the adopted UDP underpins the city centre economic regeneration area. The policy seeks to encourage economic activity,



investment and employment by promoting mixed use development in appropriate locations; promoting regeneration and providing sites for economic development and investment.

- 3.4 Policy GEN3 – Heritage and design in the built environment seeks to protect the heritage of Liverpool and ensure that new developments respect the quality of listed buildings and their setting.
- 3.5 The site is shown in the UDP Proposals Map as being within an area of mixed use development. The UDP designation reflects the general mixed use character of the area.
- 3.6 Policy E6 of the UDP relates specifically to the mixed use areas within the city and Paragraph 6.17 of the UDP states that in these UDP allocations the mix of complimentary uses can include retail, offices, leisure and residential.
- 3.7 Policy R6 (point 3) states that in assessing development proposals within those Mixed Use Areas and on sites for various types of development which are located in the city centre, the City Council will promote the principle of mixed use development whereby a range of complementary uses will be encouraged, subject to the provision of other relevant plan policies.
- 3.8 The supporting text to policy E6 confirms that in relation to complementary uses the plan permits a range of uses such as residential, employment, community, leisure and retail, can be accommodated within a relatively compact area of the city. This will be applied most notably in the city centre.
- 3.9 Policy E6 at paragraph 6.63 provides the explanatory comments for allowing a mix of uses for the application site located at the junction of Hardman Street/Hope Street. These locations will be of direct benefit to the local community, particularly those without access to private transport, and to a wider area if public transport access is available to serve the development.

City Centre Mixed Use Area Profile;

- 3.10 Under the city centre area profile the UDP confirms that virtually the whole of the city centre, excluding the main office, retail and residential areas, is designated on the Proposals Map as suitable for

mixed development. This allocation reflects the emphasis in the Plan on the fundamental importance of a prosperous, vibrant and safe central area to the economic regeneration of Liverpool and Merseyside. A flexible approach to development (including type of use, design considerations and operating conditions), coupled with environmental and highway improvements and support for the reuse of redundant buildings, is essential to achieving this goal.

- 3.11 Paragraph 6.81 provides additional amplification in relation to mixed use areas within the city centre. It states that within the broad approach, it is recognised that the city centre contains a number of distinct subareas, each characterised by a particular use or activity, such as the education/medical sector, arts/cultural facilities, transport interchange, entertainment etc.
- 3.12 In addition, a number of smaller areas already provide accommodation for a mix of uses. Whilst appropriate consolidation and expansion of these existing uses will be supported, consideration will also be given to suitable alternative or complementary activities.
- 3.13 Policy HD4 of the UDP provides the detailed guidance and policy for ensuring alterations to listed buildings are sympathetic and do not detract from the special character of the listed building. Policy HD5 seeks to ensure the setting and views of listed buildings is protected from new development. The control will be considered in terms of the design and land use of the proposed development, use of adjacent land and impact on important features such as trees and landscape.
- 3.14 Policy HD8 indicates that where a building makes little or no contribution to the character of the conservation area, proposals for demolition will be considered in the light of the alternative proposals for the site and the contribution made to preserving or enhancing the character of the conservation area. Where appropriate, the City Council will not grant consent for demolition unless there are approved detailed plans and evidence that a contract has been let for the full implementation of the development scheme.

3.15 Policy HD11 relates to new development within conservation areas and it seeks to ensure that all new development proposals are properly thought through to ensure that the proposal would meet the policy requirement to preserve or enhance its character. The policy would support planning permission for new developments for new development, which meets the following criteria:-

- i. the development is of a high standard of design and materials, appropriate to their setting and context, which respect the character and appearance of the conservation area;
- ii. the development pays special attention to conserving the essential elements which combine to give the area its special character and does not introduce changes which would detract from the character or appearance of the area;
- iii. the proposal protects important views and vistas within, into and out of the conservation area;
- iv. the proposal does not lead to the loss of open space or landscape features (trees and hedges) important to the character or appearance of the area;
- v. the development does not generate levels of traffic, parking, noise or environmental problems which would be detrimental to the character or appearance of the area; and
- vi. the proposal has a satisfactory means of access and provides for car parking in a way which is sympathetic to the appearance of the conservation area.

3.16 Policy HD18 provides the detailed policy requirements for design. Applications for development are required to comply with specific criteria, where appropriate. In relation to the change of use proposal for the former Trade Union site the key criteria include:-

- The satisfactory development or redevelopment of adjoining land is not prejudiced;
- There is no severe loss of amenity or privacy to adjacent residents; and

- Adequate arrangements are made for pedestrian and vehicular access and car parking.

- 3.17 Policy S9 of the UDP supports shopping provision in neighbourhood centres and parades subject to criteria relating to impact on vitality of other centres, impact on amenity and car parking. The policy does not contain any list of such centres and there are no specific allocations on the proposals map. The explanatory text provides guidance as to what may be considered as a neighbourhood centre or parade.
- 3.18 The area of Hardman Street to the south of the site is considered to fall within this category of shopping area as it displays all the characteristics and retail function of providing the every-day needs for residents in the area around the area of the site. Myrtle Parade to the north of the site is also considered to fall in this category, which gives further support for the site's location to being considered appropriate for neighbourhood level retail provision, particularly in the form of complementary uses which is envisaged by the mixed use policy.
- 3.19 Policy S12 deals with out-of-centre retailing states that out of centre retail development will be allowed only where it complies with specified criteria including the sequential test, impact assessment and need. Whilst the application site is situated in an area of mixed use, it is recognised in both the UDP and by the Council (in dealing with planning proposals for Josephine Butler House site and 2A Myrtle Street site) that the site is in the city centre; in this situation it is revealed under the UDP policies for mixed uses in the city centre that retailing is permissible as alternative uses to existing land uses (see paragraph 3.22 above and paragraph 6.81 of the UDP).

#### The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 3.20 The NPPF sets out the Government's commitment to a planning system that does everything it can do to support sustainable growth. Local planning authorities are expected to plan positively for new development.

3.21 The NPPF sets down a presumption in favour of sustainable development at paragraph 14. This states that where policies are out of date, permission should be granted unless *“any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework.”*

3.22 The NPPF at paragraph 17 sets down a number of over-arching roles that the planning system ought to play, a set of core land-use planning principles should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. In relation to the consideration of the Rocket planning application the key roles are:-

- to proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs.
- always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.
- encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value.

3.23 In relation to heritage issues, paragraph 126 of the NPPF states that local authorities should ensure that heritage strategies that take into account:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

- 3.24 The NPPF defines the significance of a heritage asset as its value *'to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.'*
- 3.25 The NPPF provides a unified approach to the historic environment and removes the previous distinctions between historic buildings, archaeology and designed landscapes. It defines the historic environment in terms of *"heritage assets."*
- 3.26 In determining applications, paragraph 128 of the NPPF states that 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 on their significance.
- 3.27 Para. 129 of the NPPF require local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal.
- 3.28 Policy 131 states that local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of new development sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets; the positive contribution that heritage assets can make to sustainable communities; and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 3.29 Policy 132 sets out policy principles guiding the consideration of impact of development on the significance of a designated heritage asset. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Any harm to or loss should require clear or convincing justification.
- 3.30 Policy 133 provides a series of tests which should be applied in cases where substantial harm to or total loss of significance will be caused. In the case of development proposals which will lead to less than substantial harm, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

- 3.31 Policy 134 states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.
- 3.32 Policy 137 states that local authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.
- 3.33 Policy 141 states that local planning authorities should make information about the significance of the historic environment gathered as part of the development process publicly accessible, and should require developers to record and advance understanding of the heritage asset before it is lost.

National Planning Policy Guidance (PPG - March 2014)

- 3.34 The NPPG starts with a note on defining '*significance*' – referring to the glossary in the NPPF and definitions of significance found in designated heritage assets such as listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments.
- 3.35 Having regard to the requirement to identify significance, in relation to the proposals for Grove Street scheme it is submitted that there is just one heritage asset of significance – this being are three significant assets, these being the character and appearance of the Castle Street Conservation Area.
- 3.36 The NPPG (paragraph 009) advises that heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. Being able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset, and the contribution of its setting, is very important to understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals.
- 3.37 The NPPG advises on the requirement to assess the "setting of a heritage asset". A thorough assessment of the impact on setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the

significance of the heritage asset under consideration and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.

- 3.38 Setting is the surroundings in which an asset is experienced, and may therefore be more extensive than its curtilage. All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not. The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations.
- 3.39 The NPPG also advises that it is important to recognise the vast majority of heritage assets are in private hands. Thus, sustaining heritage assets in the long term often requires an incentive for their active conservation.
- 3.40 The NPPG recognises the importance of putting heritage assets to a viable use is likely to lead to the investment in their maintenance necessary for their long-term conservation.

Liverpool Core Strategy (Submission Draft 2012)

- 3.41 The Liverpool Core Strategy (CS) is at Submissions Draft Stage. However, the Council has taken the decision to not submit this document for examination in public and therefore its weight as a planning policy document is limited.
- 3.42 The CS is not a significant policy document in the consideration of the current planning application. It does not override the UDP policies which support mixed use development of the site.
- 3.43 It is however, acknowledged that the CS is important in setting out the emerging spatial vision for the city and in that context, it is considered appropriate to demonstrate that the grant of planning permission for the listed building for mixed use development purposes is consistent with the spatial strategy of the emerging CS and would deliver some key sustainable development objectives which future development within the city is expected to achieve.
- 3.44 The key issues arising from the nature of the mix of uses applied for are considered against key sustainable development principles as shown in Section 4 below.



English Heritage - The Setting of Heritage Assets (October 2011) & Historic Environment Good Practise in Planning Consultation Draft (2014) – Note 2 'Decision Taking in the Historic Environment and Note 3 'Setting of Heritage Assets'

- 3.45 A number of guidance notes from English Heritage has been considered in helping to identify and understand the heritage assets, significance and setting and how the heritage assets might be affected by the alteration to the listed building and the development of the building within the designated Conservation Area.
- 3.46 The EH guidance notes 2 & 3 (2014) were issued by EH as good practise guides to replace the former PPS5 good practise guide.
- 3.47 The guidance from EH reflects the guidance incorporated into the National Planning Practise Guidance (PPG) issued by Government in 2014.
- 3.48 Having viewed the EH documents it is confirmed that the existing listed building, its special character and setting as well as the setting of the building in the Canning Street Conservation Area are designated heritage assets.
- 3.49 The proposal for the alterations and refurbishment of the listed building will therefore be considered in the light of impact on the special interest and setting of the listed building and in relation to the duty to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Canning Street Conservation Area.

#### **4.0 Planning Application Issues & Assessment**

Principles of Sustainable Development

- 4.1 The site is identified in the UDP as Mixed Use policy area where policy E6 of the UDP relates specifically to the mixed use areas within the city and Paragraph 6.17 of the UDP states that in these UDP allocations the mix of complimentary uses can include retail, offices, leisure and residential.
- 4.2 Policy E6 (point 3) states that in assessing development proposals within those Mixed Use Areas and on sites for various types of

development which are located in the city centre, the Council will promote the principle of mixed use and complementary development subject to the provision of other relevant Plan policies.

- 4.3 The supporting text to policy E6 confirms that in relation to complementary uses the plan permits a range of uses such as residential, employment, community, leisure and retail, can be accommodated within a relatively compact area of the city. This will be applied most notably in the city centre. It is these locations, which includes the application site, that are best placed to be of direct benefit to the local community, particularly those without access to private transport, and to a wider area if public transport access is available to serve the development.
- 4.4 It is reasonable to conclude that by reference to the UDP policies for the location of the site and the nature of the proposed uses, the proposals are eminently sustainable and would command the support of the NPPF as being sustainable development in line with adopted planning policies – this triggers the presumption in favour of the development commanded by policy in paragraph 14 of the NPPF.
- 4.5 The site is located within the urban area of Liverpool, in a highly sustainable location, including accessibility for all forms of transport and walking to local shops and facilities.
- 4.6 The development of the site for mixed use development, with restaurants, bar, and coffee shop accords with the key objectives of the NPPF, particularly the key roles of sustainable development set down in paragraphs 10, 17 and 19 of the NPPF which seeks to promote sustainable economic growth and re-use of brownfield sites and meeting the key three dimensions for sustainable development – the economic, social and environmental roles.
- 4.7 It is also to be recognised that building is in a process of spiralling decay and deprivation and without finding a commercially viable development package for the site, the likelihood is that this prominent listed building will have no realistic prospect of ever being used and its fabric and structure will continue to decline to the detriment of the historic and architectural asset and its value to the city's heritage.

- 4.8 The development of the site for the proposed development would also accord with key aspects of the Submission Draft Core Strategy (CS) by providing much needed economic development that will help the city meet the growth aspirations stated within the CS, particularly to be located in the city centre, which is the focus for future economic growth within the city where it will help to deliver regenerative benefits, growth and fulfil Liverpool's proper role at the heart of the City Region.
- 4.9 The CS seeks to promote a spatial strategy with the emphasis on the city centre and secondly within the Inner Core, where regeneration priorities are at the heart of the CS's strategic policy objectives. The site is on the edge of city centre and is in a highly sustainable location.
- 4.10 The proposal also accords with the CS Strategic Policy 1 – Sustainable Development Principles – where the development of a previously development site in a sustainable location will ensure the development meets aspirations for new development to be located and designed so that resources are used prudently, the local and wider environment is protected, the challenges of climate change are addressed and the needs of the whole community are taken into account.
- 4.11 In particular the proposals would support the key principle of the CS by:-
- Re-use of existing buildings, contributing to preserving and enhancing local distinctiveness and protecting local heritage assets and minimising waste associated with demolitions.
  - Directing retail and leisure investment, and new community facilities to the network of centres will help sustain the vibrancy of these centres.
  - Improvements in health and well-being through the encouragement of travel by sustainable transport modes and reducing reliance on using the car which will also help to improve air quality.

- Strengthened role of the city centre as the Regional Centre and driver of the sub-regional economy.
- Protection and enhancement of the city's historic built and natural assets.

#### Establishing the Planning Uses & Fall-Back Position

- 4.12 The concept behind the proposal to bring forward a mix of uses specific to the parts of the building shown in the application plans. These uses are for bar/restaurant (New Moon Pub Restaurant Co), coffee shop (92 degrees) and a pizza restaurant.
- 4.13 The Council will be aware the proposed uses are already approved in principle through the grant of planning permission in December 2012 (12F/1989). This permission sets the principle of planning approval for the proposed bar/restaurant, pizza restaurant and coffee shop and the existence of the extant planning permission sets a powerful and legal fall-back position against which the current planning application must be considered.
- 4.14 The proposed uses have come forward and will facilitate the refurbishment and restoration of part of the listed building as shown in the detailed plans submitted with the planning and listed building applications submission. The refurbishment scheme for the building is designed to ensure that respective parts of the listed building can be brought back into economic uses, and importantly, in a short timescale since the grant of the 'flexible' permission in December 2012.
- 4.15 The proposed uses, as shown in the Rainhill Design proposed layout plans are all uses that are common to the area and many are already present within the vicinity of Hardman Street and Hope
- 4.16 The existence of a materially relevant 'fall-back' position plays a significant role in the weight to be attached to the decision to approve planning permission in this case. The previously approved uses were determined having regard to accompanying reports for transport, noise and accessibility & servicing.

- 4.17 The previous supporting technical reports, although related to the earlier application are relevant to the current proposal, which is predicated on the fact planning permission exists for the uses in any event. Copies of the previously approved reports are resubmitted for completeness as the information remains valid.
- 4.18 The fall-back position dictates that unless the Council can demonstrate the present application is in some way proposing land uses that are for some materially relevant reason now not considered acceptable in principle, the balance of presumption in favour rests with the current application. This is because the outcomes (in terms of key impacts) arising from the proposed uses are no different (or worse impacts) than the uses already approved in principle under application ref: 12F/1989.

#### Transport Issues

- 4.19 The proposed uses have been previously assessed (and approved) for any impacts in relation to traffic generation and for accessibility, and servicing by way of a comprehensive Transport Statement prepared by Singleton Clamp. The applicant's professional Transport Consultant's report reviewed the traffic generation and existing traffic movements and took into the account the proposed land uses – therefore the report remain valid and relevant to the current planning application.
- 4.20 In terms of traffic generation, the Single Clamp report reviewed and tested the different land use scenarios using the *Trics* database method and set out the multi-model trips by each use given the projected floor area.
- 4.21 Overall, it is shown that the trip generation from the different proposed uses would be low and the site is well located for the proposed uses as they benefit from close proximity to other facilities within the city centre such as retail, education and tourist destinations.
- 4.22 The proposed uses complement each other and complement other uses in the vicinity of the site. In particular there is potential for linked trips and activity to the nearby Philharmonic Hall and Pub, Hope Street Hotel, Everyman Theatre and many other eating and

drinking establishments in the area and the many student related developments that characterise the wider area around Hope Street and the University Quarter.

- 4.23 The Transport Statement confirmed that the proposed development could be accommodated without any upgrading of the existing highway crossings or junctions.
- 4.24 The site is very well located for visitors and staff to take advantage of the public transport available within a short walk of the site.
- 4.25 Pedestrian access into the development will be from the main entrance onto Hardman Street and possibly an entrance onto Hope Street. There will be no on-site parking for any of the proposed uses.
- 4.26 There are a number of options for servicing the development. The proposed use will be serviced from the rear and from the side access off Hardman Street.
- 4.27 The Singleton Clamp report records that there are no traffic generation issues with the proposal for a mix of uses, and that the site is situated in a sustainable location where accessibility by all forms of transport, particularly on foot, cycle and public transport can access the site. This makes the development proposal sustainable in terms of transport and accessibility and accords with policy contained in paragraph 19 of the NPPF and policies GEN1 and HD18 of the UDP.

#### Impact on Amenity

- 4.28 The range of uses applied for are acceptable in land use planning terms and previously approved. The approval of the earlier planning application (ref: 12F/1898) took into account the impact that might arise from the various uses on amenity of residents living in Back Hope Place and the residents elsewhere in the vicinity of the site.
- 4.29 The previous application was supported by a noise assessment prepared by ADC Consultants. This is resubmitted to be taken into account for the current application.

- 4.30 In terms of the impact of the existing noise on the future occupants of the proposed serviced apartments (approved under 12F/1898) which would be the closes 'residents' potentially affected by the operations of the proposed bar/restaurant and coffee shop. The ADC report confirms there would not be any unduly harmful impacts, with the aparthotel section of the listed building (not subject to the current application) being able to be adequately protected from the commercial uses.
- 4.31 The ADC report records that the predicted noise levels from bars and restaurants can easily be conditioned regarding their internal noise generation affecting existing and proposed residential accommodation (including houses that have rear facades facing Back Hope Street) with a combination of internal noise limits and/or sound insulation.
- 4.32 Noise from external congregation of customers (such as smokers and customers comings and goings) is unlikely to have any impact on existing residential on surrounding streets. If necessary, the impact of such sources on inward facing serviced apartment facades can be controlled by conditions relating to the sound insulation of the walls affected between the proposed uses and the previously approved apart-hotel uses.
- 4.33 It is noted that the ADC assessment reveals that the impact from deliveries would have to be at an unrealistically high level to cause any problems on Hardman Street or Hope Street. Deliveries will not use Back Hope Place. Noise from Deliveries using the inner courtyards can be controlled by way of sound insulation conditions to the serviced apartment facades.
- 4.34 It is further noted that the noise report makes recommendations regarding the mechanical services that will need to be installed within the building in due course. Details are not available at this current stage in the planning for the future use of the building. However, it is stated in the ADC report that it should be perfectly feasible to operate under the local authority's standard noise safeguarding requirements, controlled by conditions.
- 4.35 Overall, it can be concluded that the various proposed uses will not have any undue or significant adverse impacts on the amenity of

nearby residents or the amenity of the users of the proposed aparthotel/serviced apartments.

- 4.36 The development does not fall foul of the advice in NPPF regarding noise and it would accord with the criteria in UDP policy HD18 regarding the requirement to protect the amenity of residents.

Mobility & Accessibility

- 4.37 The previous permission (ref: 12F/1898) was approved having regard to a detailed 'Accessibility & Servicing Strategy'. This document is an approved document and as it is consistent with the present uses it is relevant to consider the same document in the determination of the current planning application.
- 4.38 The proposed plans showing new openings within the building confirm that these will be to a min standard to accommodate wheelchair access. Two new external openings are proposed to the front elevation on Hardman Street to facilitate wheelchair access into the New Moon gastro pub areas and the coffee bar. The proposed openings are considered to be necessary and important part of the proposals to ensure that the users of the new facilities will have full access arrangements catered for and they can access all parts of the proposed development.
- 4.39 The Accessibility Statement addresses DDA requirements and confirms access and WC facilities will meet DDA standards.
- 4.40 It is acknowledged that there is a planning balancing exercise to make in terms of the proposed new openings on Hope Street and Hardman Street – balance between limited impacts to the character and quality of the listed building (see heritage impact assessment below) and the need to provide fully inclusive new uses for the listed building.
- 4.41 It is considered the overriding objective is to ensure the building is retained and able to be used by all sectors of the community and the changes to accommodate inclusive access are not significant and do not present significant adverse impacts in heritage terms. The proposal therefore complies with the NPPF, UDP and Supplementary Planning Document 'Access for All'.



## **5.0 Heritage Impact Assessment**

### **Architectural Assessment**

- 5.1 The original Heritage Statement sets down a full and detailed assessment of the architectural interest and qualities of the building both the external and internal plan, layout, structure, detailing and decoration – see Section 3 of the original Heritage Statement prepared by Peter de Figueiredo.
- 5.2 The architectural assessment of the main listed building remains as set out in the original Heritage Statement.

### **Building Condition**

- 5.3 The condition of the building in terms of its physical and visual appearance is set down in Section 4 of the original Heritage Statement.
- 5.4 The building remained the same as that set out in the original Heritage Statement. The main refurbishment works are both necessary to restore the building and will require alterations (assessed below) to the internal layout and modest alterations to the external elevations to support the proposed uses. The building condition survey (see submitted photographic survey) has revealed a major set of urgent and necessary repairs of restoration.

### **Statement of Significance**

- 5.5 The original Heritage Statement provides a comprehensive Statement of the Significance of the listed building identifying that the building is of considerable significance having strong interest achieved by the architectural, historical and cultural value observed through the detailed appraisal set down in Section 5 of the original Heritage Statement.
- 5.6 Reference should be made to the Statement of Significance throughout the assessment of the proposed development and alterations to the listed building.
- 5.7 It is right to note the significance of the Canning Street Conservation Area, which is one of the oldest and most recognised

conservation areas within Liverpool. The building is situated within the Canning Street Conservation Area and contributes positively to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

## **6.0 Impact of the Proposed Development**

- 6.1 The NPPF sets down the presumption in favour of the development unless there are demonstrable and significant adverse impacts arising from the development. It also allows for support to be given to proposals that do have to rely on alterations to listed buildings, so long as the alterations are not considered to significantly damage the heritage asset and there are wider community benefits (policy advice in paragraph 127 and 129 of the NPPF).
- 6.2 The full extent of the proposed alterations, repairs and refurbishment are set down in a detailed appraisal of the works to each floor and each elevation as shown in the Photographic Survey of the building and the architect's plans which annotate the schedule of alterations both internal and external.
- 6.3 For the purposes of the assessment of the impact of the alterations, changes and refurbishment on the heritage assets, the following are considered to be the key components with reference to positive, neutral or negative impacts:-

### Positive Impacts:

- Removal of all partitions and suspended ceilings that are non-original to the building.
- Repair, treat and renew timbers throughout the building.
- Reinstatement & refurbishment of original ceilings and flooring.
- Repair and restore original fireplaces in working order.
- Repair & refurbishment of all existing windows with matching wood material and painting to match.
- Reinstatement and refurbishment of existing roof and lantern
- Repair & refurbishment of walls, skirtings and cornices.

- Restore flagged area to Hardman Street frontage.
- Removal of non-original concrete steps to Hardman Street frontage and replace with stone steps more appropriate to the original building construction.
- Existing railing fence (Hardman Street) to be repaired and missing section replaced. Painted to a colour agreed.
- Repair (where required) and clean of brick and stonework to all elevations.
- Cast iron rainwater and pipework repaired to match originals.
- Overall refurbishment and re-use of listed building for viable economic uses.

Neutral Impacts:

- Altered openings to provide necessary disabled access.
- New internal wall openings to create workable floor area space.
- New external opening on Hope Street to facilitate the proposed pizza restaurant with dedicated access from Hope Street. No other means of external access available.
- New steel door openings on Hardman Street frontage to facilitate disabled access and access to external area.
- New beer ramp to rear elevation within courtyard.

Negative Impacts:

- No negative impacts identified arising from the proposals.

Commentary of the Impacts:

- 6.4 In addition to the beneficial impacts to the building arising from the general repairs required to bring the building back into economic and sustainable use, the applicant and their design team have worked closely with the operators for the building to ensure the

alterations to the listed building are carefully considered and designed such that all works of repair, refurbishment and restoration are carried out with complete sensitivity to the building's historical and cultural values and special qualities.

- 6.5 The proposed new door openings Hardman Street and Hope Street are considered to be modest alterations necessary to support the proposed uses and provide disabled access. The new openings are designed sympathetically and fit neatly into the external façade with matching materials and new door treatment that are considered to not significantly affect the special interest or setting of the listed building or the setting of the building within the Conservation Area.
- 6.6 The internal alterations are necessary to deliver the proposed uses, and have been carefully configured to ensure the original layout of the building remains largely unaltered. The new openings within the internal layout create the floorplate and working spaces required to support the proposed uses, ancillary elements and importantly to comply with disabled access standards.
- 6.7 There is a comprehensive series of restoration and repair works which will bring the listed building up to modern standards, energy efficient and ensure the listed building is maintained and restored for future generations to enjoy.
- 6.8 The alterations proposed to the internal layout as shown in the proposed plans, do not result in the removal of any main parts of the cruciform building structure and do not harm the integrity of the building's special interest or loss of any of the original features of the building.
- 6.9 The proposals will assist the future restoration and re-use of the listed building; if consented, the proposed uses will enable the property to be refurbished properly and provided it with a long term use that is wholly sympathetic to and supportive of its qualities and historical values and enable the building to contribute positively to the Conservation Area.
- 6.10 It is demonstrated that there are no significant adverse impacts, with the external and internal alterations to the building. The

majority of alterations and changes will deliver long term sustainable improvements that have a positive impact in relation to the Heritage Asset.

- 6.11 Some changes, as noted above, will have modest neutral impact and it is considered that there are no negative impacts arising from the proposals.

## **7.0 Conclusion**

- 7.1 The proposed development will breathe new life into a property and will deliver a high quality new uses which are important to bring the listed building back into use and deliver a comprehensive works of restoration and improvement.
- 7.2 The opportunity to reuse the former Royal School for the Blind building is an important and worthy opportunity for the building, which in spite of its history has for a long time been vacant and struggled to find a suitable and viable use.
- 7.3 The proposed restaurant/bar and coffee shop uses will bring about a new and exciting chapter in the building's history, which in this case allows its special and unique architecture and qualities to be enjoyed by customers and visitors throughout the city and in particular help to provide an exciting new visitor destination in the Knowledge Quarter of the City Centre.
- 7.4 The impact of the uses and modest internal and external alterations on the Grade II listed building is negligible, whereas the benefits will be substantial – the building being refurbished and the provision of a long term use that will ensure the building will continue to stand as a landmark building in one of the city's most important and historical Conservation Areas.
- 7.5 The building has a unique history in the life of the city's culture – from being the original Royal School for the Blind, then Liverpool Police HQ and a centre used by Liverpool Trade Unions. Yet it is a private building with no public access. The proposed uses will open up the building to the general public and bring the building's rich history and architecture alive for the enjoyment of the workers, visitors and others coming in to contact with the proposed uses.

- 7.6 The NPPF requires proposals affecting heritage assets must be considered with regard to the damage the proposed development causes to the asset, the significance of the asset and the magnitude of the harm caused to the asset.
- 7.7 In heritage terms, it is considered proposals for the listed building, provide welcome economic uses, delivering urgent repair and restoration of the listed building and bringing many public and community benefits – local investment, jobs, enhanced customer choice in dining and coffee shop experience. The proposed uses provide viable uses that are important to sustain the long term future of the building, providing the funds for major restoration and refurbishment.
- 7.8 The application in heritage impact terms therefore accords with policies GEN1, HD4 and HD11 of the Liverpool UDP and with the statutory requirement to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Canning Street Conservation Area.
- 7.9 The new uses for the special listed building (that has a unique history and architectural significance and cultural value) will deliver wider economic, social and communal benefits and in this regard the proposed development has no adverse impact on the heritage assets comprising the Grade II listed building and the building's presence within the Canning Street Conservation Area.
- 7.10 Overall, the proposal and works to the listed building are considered to meet the policy tests of the UDP and NPPF in relation to protection of heritage assets, respecting the special interest and historical significance of one of the city's most important Grade II listed buildings.
- 7.11 Accordingly the proposal complies with the policy tests of the UDP and paragraphs 127 to 141 of the NPPF regarding protection of heritage assets and preventing irreparable damage to important listed buildings within the city.
- 7.12 There are no planning or technical reasons to oppose the proposed uses for the building, which follow on from previous approval under application ref: 12F/1898. The presumption is in favour of the proposal and the application should be granted accordingly.

