



NEXUS
PLANNING

Apartment at First and Second Floor, 501 Barlow Moor Road

Planning Statement

On behalf of Southway Housing Trust

May 2022

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Nexus Planning on behalf of Southway Housing Trust to support the submission of an application for full planning permission for the subdivision of the apartment on the first and second floors of 501 Barlow Moor Road ('the site').
- 1.2 The application site relates to the apartment on the first and second floors at 501 Barlow Moor Road in Chorlton. The site comprises an end terrace plot at the junction of Barlow Moor Road and High Lane. The building itself is currently vacant, and the ground floor retail unit benefits from prior approval for a change of use from Use Class E to Class C3. This was approved in March 2022 (planning permission reference 132693/P3MAP/2022).
- 1.3 This application seeks permission for the subdivision of the existing single apartment on the first and second floors into 2no. bedsit apartments. The proposals will provide much needed accommodation for Rough Sleepers in Manchester, and the delivery of such schemes is supported by Manchester City Council. Indeed, the proposals have been informed through discussions with Officers at the Council. These discussions have focused on the nature of the Rough Sleeper accommodation proposed, and the need to ensure that the accommodation caters for the specific needs and requirements of this group.
- 1.4 The Rough Sleeper accommodation provides shelter with self-contained amenities. As such, each unit will contain a small kitchenette, toilet and shower.

Application Documentation

- 1.5 This Planning Statement has been prepared alongside a suite of plans and documents that form the planning application submission:
 - Application Form;
 - Location Plan; and
 - Proposed and Existing Site Plans.

Report Structure

- 1.6 The remainder of this Statement is structured as follows:
 - Section 2 – provides a description of application site and the surrounding area;

- Section 3 – provides a summary of the proposed development;
- Section 4 – includes a summary of the relevant national planning policy context;
- Section 5 – provides the assessment of the proposal against the relevant planning policy;
and
- Section 6 – sets out the overarching summary and conclusion in respect of the proposal
and its compliance with planning policy.

2 Site and Surroundings

The Application Site

- 2.1 The application relates to the apartment over the first and second floors at 501 Barlow Moor Road in Chorlton. The site comprises an end terrace plot at the junction of Barlow Moor Road and High Lane. Whilst the building itself is currently vacant, the ground floor retail unit benefits from prior approval for a change of use from Use Class E to Class C3. This was approved in March 2022 (planning permission reference 132693/P3MAP/2022).
- 2.2 501 Barlow Moor Road is a three-storey end of terrace unit, with an additional basement level, with a pitched roof and occupies a broadly triangular plot of land. The building comprises a vacant former commercial unit at ground floor, with an apartment situated on the upper floors. The footprint of the building covers the majority of the site, with the exception of a small area to the rear which is used for storage. The site is located within the defined boundary of Chorlton district centre.
- 2.3 The site is bound to the south and east by existing retail units along Barlow Moor Road. To the west of the site is a mixed retail and residential block, with an Educational Institution further to the west. To the north of the site are further retail units along Barlow Moor Road, and residential units extend along High Lane.
- 2.4 There are no nationally or locally listed buildings and structures within proximity to the site, nor is the site located within a Conservation Area. The site is located within Flood Zone 1.

Surrounding Area

- 2.5 The application site is located within a highly sustainable location, located within the defined boundary of Chorlton district centre and approximately 550 metres walking distance to the south of Chorlton Metrolink station.
- 2.6 The site is located in an area with a number of mixed uses. The site is surrounded by existing Class E Uses, with some local community uses, to the north, south, and east. Further to the east of the site along Sandy Lane and Zetland Road are a number of residential properties. Victorian villas extend along High Lane to the west of the site, alongside more modern buildings such as the four-storey apartment building to the immediate west of the site, which includes ground floor retail uses and 4no. self-contained apartments.

Planning History

- 2.7 The planning history for the site largely relates to the ground floor unit, with no planning applications of relevance identified for the apartment over the first and second floors.
- 2.8 Planning permission was granted in 2012 for the change of use of the ground floor unit from Class A1 to Class A2 to allow the former use of the unit as an estate agent operation (ref. 099151/FU/2012/S1). This application was approved in June 2012.
- 2.9 Further to this, an application for prior approval for a change of use from Use Class E to Class C3 was approved at the ground floor retail unit in March 2022 (planning permission reference 132693/P3MAP/2022).
- 2.10 No further planning history has been identified for the site.

3 The Application Proposals

3.1 The description of development as set out on the application forms is as follows:

“Subdivision of the apartment at first and second floor into 2no. bedsit apartments”

- 3.2 The change of use will result in the provision of 2no. one bed bedsit apartments which will be provided on the first and second floor of 501 Barlow Moor Road. The existing apartment across these two floors will be subdivided to provide these 2no. bedsit apartments. These two units will extend to 26.4 sq.m and 26 sq.m respectively. As a result of this application, no works are proposed to the existing basement or ground floors of the building of the building. Access to the unit will be via the existing entrance to the apartment on the side elevation of 501 Barlow Moor Road.
- 3.3 The proposals will provide much needed accommodation for Rough Sleepers in Manchester, and the delivery of such schemes is supported by Manchester City Council. The Rough Sleeper accommodation provides shelter with self-contained amenities. As such, each unit will contain a small kitchenette, toilet and shower.
- 3.4 Refuse storage will be provided to the rear of the building, and waste collection will take place from the edge of the carriageway of Barlow Moor Road on collection day.
- 3.5 The fire strategy for the building includes sprinklers along with heat and smoke detectors.
- 3.6 There are no external works proposed as part of this application.

4 Planning Policy

- 4.1 This section of the Statement summarises the national and local policy context relevant to the Proposed Development. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires all planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations which indicate otherwise. One such material consideration is the National Planning Policy Framework ("the Framework"). Paragraph 11 of the Framework, the presumption in favour of sustainable development, asks decision-makers to approve development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay.
- 4.2 The adopted development plan for the application site comprises the Manchester Core Strategy (2012-2027) Development Plan Document which was adopted in July 2012; and the saved policies of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan (Saved in 2012).
- 4.3 Other material considerations relevant to the determination of the application are:
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) ('the Framework');
 - The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG); and,
 - Relevant adopted Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD).

Local Development Plan

- 4.4 The current development plan for Manchester is the **Manchester Core Strategy (2012-2027) (adopted July 2012)** and the 'saved' policies of the **Manchester Unitary Development Plan** (UDP) which were saved in July 2012.
- 4.5 The site is not allocated for a particular use on the Core Strategy Proposals Map, although the site is located within the defined Chorlton district centre boundary. The following policies are considered relevant to the application proposals.

Manchester Core Strategy (2012-2027)

- 4.6 **Policy SP1** regarding Spatial and Core Development Principles outlines that development in all parts of Manchester should make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice by creating well designed places that enhance or create character. This policy states that development in all parts of the City should also improve access to jobs, services, education and open space by being located to reduce the need to travel and provide good access to sustainable transport provision.

- 4.7 **Policy C1** outlines the Council's hierarchy of centres for development, and dictates where development, taking account of the different roles and uses across the centres, will be prioritised to maintain the vitality and viability of the centres.
- 4.8 **Policy H1** regarding housing provision in Manchester states that South Manchester, covered by policy H6 will be expected to accommodate 3,240 dwellings over the plan period. **Policy H6** states that South Manchester will accommodate 5% of new residential development over the lifetime of the Core Strategy. The policy states that:
- 'High density development in South Manchester will generally only be appropriate within the district centres of Chorlton, Didsbury, Fallowfield, Levenshulme and Withington. As part of mixed use schemes. Outside the district centres priorities will be for housing which meets identified shortfalls, including family housing and provision that meets the needs of elderly people, with schemes adding to the stock of affordable housing.'**
- 4.9 **Policy EN1** regarding Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas states that all development will be expected to follow the seven design principles identified by the NPPF. The Council also expect all development to have regard to the strategic character area in which the development is located, which for this site is the Southern Character Area. In this area, new development must retain the identity and focus of activity associated with the historic District Centres and where appropriate, development along the radial routes should be commensurate in scale with the prominence of its location.
- 4.10 **Policy T2** regarding accessible areas of opportunity and states that the council will actively manage the pattern of development to ensure that new development is easily accessible by walking, cycling and public transport.
- 4.11 **Policy DM1** regarding development management states that all development should have regard to effects on amenity must be considered, including proposals which would be sensitive to existing environmental conditions, such as noise.
- 4.12 The Core Strategy is currently under review however, at present the Council remain at the early stages of consultation on issues and options for the review. As such, there is no relevant emerging local policy related to this application.

Relevant 'saved' policies of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan (UDP)

4.13 **Saved UDP Policy DC5.1** relates to flat conversions, and states that in determining planning applications to convert property to flats, the Council will have regard to:

- the standard of accommodation for the intended occupiers of the premises;
- effects on adjoining houses as a result of noise from flats passing through party walls and affecting adjoining houses;
- adequacy of car parking, off-street car parking being normally required where practicable, and essential where there is so severe an existing on-street parking problem that unacceptable additional pressures would be created;
- general effects on the character of the neighbourhood, including the extent to which flat conversion schemes are a new or an established feature of the immediate area, avoiding the loss of front gardens and the retention of existing trees and shrubs;
- adequate private outdoor amenity space;
- the desirability of achieving easy access for all, including disabled people (as a minimum, access for disabled people will normally be required in conversions of ground floor accommodation);
- the satisfactory provision of refuse storage and collection facilities.

4.14 **Saved UDP Policy DC5.1** continues that there will be a general presumption in favour of flat conversions within residential areas, on the upper floors of businesses within commercial areas and in properties on main road frontages, subject to other relevant policies of the Plan.

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

4.15 The **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** (July 2021) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The policies contained within the Framework are material considerations which local planning authorities should take into account.

4.16 It identifies at **Paragraph 7** that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and clarifies at **Paragraph 8** that there are three overarching objectives to sustainable development:

- Economic: building a strong, responsive and competitive economy;
 - Social: supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities;
 - Environment: protecting and enhancing the natural environment and built and historic environment.
- 4.17 It confirms at **Paragraph 10** that there is presumption of sustainable development at the heart of the Framework.
- 4.18 **Paragraph 11** states that for decision-making, this presumption in favour of sustainable development means approving developments that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay. Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
- i. **the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or**
 - ii. **any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.**
- 4.19 **Paragraph 38** states that local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
- 4.20 At **Paragraph 60**, the NPPF outlines that to support the objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forwards where it is needed.
- 4.21 **Paragraph 62** states that the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies. This includes housing for groups such as those who require affordable housing.
- 4.22 **Paragraph 119** states that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.
- 4.23 **Paragraph 118d** states that planning policies and decisions should promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified

needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively, for example converting space above shops.

Supplementary Planning Documents

The Manchester Residential Quality Guidance (2016 Draft)

- 4.24 The Manchester Residential Quality Guidance Draft document was published in July 2016 and is referred to as supplementary guidance for planning applications. It has been prepared to be in accordance with both NPPF and Local planning policy. The Guidance explains and provide guidance on how the City Council will interpret its adopted local plan policies relevant to residential development.
- 4.25 The Council will require Applicants to demonstrate how proposals: Fully consider and appreciate the existing context and character; are distinctive and rooted in a sense of place; are well considered and use a high-quality material palette; properly consider how architectural detailing to safeguard the future quality of proposals; and are of an appropriate scale. Proposals should seek to meet the Nationally Described Space Standards. This should not preclude the consideration of approaches that do not meet the standards but yet can demonstrate that they will still be appropriate to user demands, be of the highest quality and benefit the community.

5 Planning Appraisal

5.1 This section considers the proposed development against the provisions of the development plan and other material considerations. In summary, it assesses the following:

- Basis for decision taking;
- Principle of development;
- Relevant Technical Issues;
 - Space Standards

Basis for decision taking

5.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires all planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations which indicate otherwise. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF, the presumption in favour of sustainable development, asks decision-makers to approve development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay.

5.3 The starting point for decision making in this case is therefore the statutory Development Plan, which comprises the Manchester Core Strategy, and relevant Saved Policies from the Manchester Unitary Development Plan along with other Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). It is also important to consider other key material considerations, such as the NPPF.

Principle of Development

Compliance with the Development Plan and other material considerations

5.4 Manchester Core Strategy Policy SP1, which relates to Spatial and Core Development Principles, outlines that development in all parts of Manchester should make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice by creating well designed places that enhance or create character. This policy states that development in all parts of the City should also improve access to jobs, services, education and open space by being located to reduce the need to travel and provide good access to sustainable transport provision. Policy EN1 further states that development should retain the identity and focus of activity associated with the historic District Centres and where appropriate, development along the radial routes should be commensurate in scale with the prominence of its location.

- 5.5 The application site is located over the first and second floors of a residential apartment at 501 Barlow Moor Road. The proposed development will result in the subdivision of the apartment to provide two bedsit apartments. The established use of the site is therefore for residential purposes, and the application proposals would ensure that the unit remained in use for such purposes whilst also providing much needed accommodation for Rough Sleepers.
- 5.6 The application site is located within Chorlton district centre, is well located in respect of public transport services and is located on a key radial route. The proposed subdivision will result in two bedsit apartments which will provide much needed accommodation for Rough Sleepers in Manchester. These proposals, which have been discussed with Officers at Manchester City Council, seek to maximise the use of this sustainably located site, whilst also being respectful of the site's location and issues of amenity.
- 5.7 The proposal accords with policies SP1 and EN1 in that it makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice by providing accommodation much sought after accommodation for a marginalised community in an established district centre commensurate with the scale and prominence of its location.
- 5.8 Saved UDP Policy DC5.1 also provides for a general presumption in favour of flat conversions within residential areas, on the upper floors of businesses within commercial areas and in properties on main road frontages. Whilst it is recognised that the unit is currently one single Use Class C3 dwelling and that the application is not for a conversion per se, the application does seek the subdivision of this unit into two bedsit apartments. Therefore, in practice, this application seeks the conversion of the existing apartment. It is therefore clear that policy is supportive of the subdivision of the apartment in principle, with the site's location on a main road frontage further underlining the suitability of the proposed development.

Other Technical Issues

Space Standards

- 5.9 Saved UDP Policy DC5.1 relates to flat conversions, and states that in determining planning applications to convert property to flats, the Council will have regard to the standard of accommodation for the intended occupiers of the premises. The Manchester Residential Quality Guidance Draft document also sets out that proposals should seek to meet the Nationally Described Space Standards.

- 5.10 Saved UDP Policy DC5.1 clearly sets out that in determining applications the Council will have regard to the standard of accommodation for the intended occupiers of the premises. As set out above, the proposals are informed through discussions with Council Officers. These discussions included confirmation that the units would be non-compliant with the required space standards, but that due to the needs of the intended end client group, smaller unit sizes were preferred. This is due to a number of reasons, including the need for ensuring heating and utility costs are kept low and quality of life concerns (such as instances of hoarding in larger accommodation, or inviting people to stay in the accommodation) which can put tenancies at risk.
- 5.11 Accordingly, in this instance and with reference to the criterion of Saved UDP Policy DC5.1 which give due regard to the standard of accommodation for the intended occupiers of the premises it is submitted that smaller unit sizes are both suitable and appropriate. Furthermore, in order to deliver this much needed accommodation for Rough Sleepers in Manchester, the proposals accord with Paragraph 118d of the NPPF in that they will maximise the use of a currently under-utilised building.
- 5.12 Notwithstanding this, it is acknowledged that the Council are keen to ensure that the proposed two bedsit units do not eventually form part of the wider stock of residential accommodation in the City. Accordingly, the applicant is happy to agree to a condition that should programme funding be removed at a later date, or should an alternative form of funding not be secured (which given the levels of Rough Sleeping in the city is considered to be doubtful), then the two units could not be let out on an alternative basis.

6 Conclusions

6.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Nexus Planning on behalf of Southway Housing Trust to support the submission of an application for full planning permission for the subdivision of the apartment on the first and second floors of 501 Barlow Moor Road ('the site') for:

"Subdivision of the apartment at first and second floor into 2no. bedsit apartments"

6.2 This Statement describes how the application site is a wholly appropriate location for housing. It is highly sustainable, accessible to a range of local facilities including excellent links to public transport networks which provide regular services to other key destinations.

6.3 With reference to the planning merits of the proposals, we highlight the following:

- The proposals are in line with the aspirations of national and local planning policies which seek to focus development within existing settlements and in sustainable locations such as Chorlton district centre;
- The proposals will maximise the use of an existing residential property, whilst also providing much needed accommodation for Rough Sleepers in Manchester; and
- The proposals provide for two bedsit apartments, which are of a required size to suitably meet the needs for Rough Sleepers in Manchester. Whilst it is acknowledged that the unit sizes fall below Nationally Described Space Standards, the two units have been designed to provide for the specific needs and requirements of this group.

6.4 Accordingly, the development proposal complies with all relevant planning policies and therefore, in accordance with the NPPF, the Council should be seeking to approve the application without delay.

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