

PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Statement supports a planning application for change of use of the basement from storage (Use Class B8) to create a self-contained flat (Use Class C3(c) and part retrospective for extension of the retail shop at No. 1143/1145 Rochdale Road, Blackley, Manchester M9 7FW. The proposed development is required to increase floor space of the retail shop at No. 1145 Rochdale Road and to use the basement of the buildings for residential purposes.

1.2 The Statement provides background history of the site and explains reasons/necessity for the proposed development. Furthermore the Statement aims to demonstrate that the proposed development, in terms of scale, massing and design, respects the character of the adjacent buildings and the area and thereby is in accordance with the general thrust of the National Guidance and planning policies adopted by the Council.

1.3 In addition to this Statement, the planning application accompanies the following drawings:-

- A Site Location Plan showing the application site marked as edged red.(Scale 1:1250)
- Drawings showing the existing and proposed internal layout of the shop No. 1145 Rochdale Road Scale (1:50)
- Drawings showing the proposed extension to the shop in front and layout of the proposed flat in the basement.(Scale 1:50)
- Drawings showing the existing and proposed front/rear elevations of the building. (Scale 1: 50)



2. THE APPLICATION SITE

2.1 The application premises comprising a pair of two storey buildings at Nos 1143 and 1145 together with an open single storey storage structure is located within a row of commercial/business terraced properties at Rochdale Road, Blackley, Manchester. The premises consist of a self-contained flat at the first floor, two retail shop units at the ground floor and a vacant/empty basement. The buildings are of red brick construction, with a glazed shop front at ground level.

2.2 The site fronts Rochdale Road (A664) which is a busy arterial route into Manchester. It is a main thoroughfare and operates as a high frequency bus route in the area. There is a public footpath and designated parking lay-by located in front of the row of shops along the western side of Rochdale Road. To the rear, the site is bounded by a mixed use development consisting of industry and housing at Middleton Old Road. Due to the variety of development along Rochdale Road and Middleton Road, it is considered that the site forms part of a mixed use development area.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 As stated above, the application site relates to business/commercial premises comprising a pair of two storey buildings which are currently occupied as follows:

- a) Ground floors of both buildings are used as two independent shops (Laundrette and Beauty Salon).
- b) First floors of the buildings are used jointly as a self-contained two bedrooms flat.
- c) Basement under the buildings including the open storage structure is presently vacant although it has been used for storage purposes in distant past.

3.2 Recently the shop units have been renovated and the metal shutters together with their boxes replaced with new ones. Furthermore, the open storage building attached to the shop at No. 1145 has been enclosed with a new front wall and new roof.



4. THE PROPOSAL

4.1 The Proposal involves:

a) Change of use of the basement from storage (Use Class B8) to a flat (Use Class C3(c)).

It is proposed that the basement spread under the buildings including the former open storage structure would be converted into a self-contained flat comprising two bedrooms, kitchen, dining and lounge facilities. The bed rooms would have floor areas 11.3 and 9.6 square meters. Four light-wells would be installed to the rear of the flat to provide the rooms with natural daylight and make them fully habitable. Access to the flat would be via a door in the rear.

b) Construction of the front wall to the open single storey storage structure and change of use from storage to retail forming an extension to the retail shop at No.1145 Rochdale Road.

The single storey structure adjoining shop No. 1145 was previously enclosed with brick walls on three sides, timber fencing to the front and covered with tiled roof. The front wall of the structure has now been constructed with block work cavity wall and the old roof replaced with corotile lightweight steel metal sheeting.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

5.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The central theme to the NPPF is to achieve sustainable development. The Government states that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: an economic role, a social role and an environmental role (paragraphs 6 & 7).

Paragraphs 11, 12, 13 and 14 of the NPPF outline a “presumption in favour of sustainable development”. This means approving development, without delay, where it accords with the development plan and where the development is absent or relevant policies are out-of-date, to grant planning permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF.



Section 12 'Achieving Well Designed Places' states that 'the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

Para 111 of the NPPF advises that planning policies and decisions should encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value.

Para 127 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should ensure that developments:

- 1) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area
- 2) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping
- 3) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.

5.2 Local Development Framework

The principal document within the Local Development Framework is the Manchester Core Strategy which sets out the spatial vision for the City and includes strategic policies for development during the period 2012 – 2027. The Core Strategy replaces significant elements of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) as the document that sets out the long term strategic planning policies for Manchester's future development. Planning applications in Manchester must therefore be decided in accordance with the Core Strategy, saved UDP policies and other Local Development Documents.

There does not appear to be any site specific policies relating to the application site. However the following city-wide policies of the Core Strategy are considered relevant in respect of this proposal:



Policy SP 1 - Sets out the key spatial principles which will guide the strategic development of Manchester to 2027. Policy SP 1 states, amongst other things, that:

- a) Beyond the regional centre will be the focus for economic and commercial development, retail, leisure and cultural activity, alongside high quality city living. There will be an emphasis is on the creation of neighbourhoods of choice, providing high quality and diverse housing around district centres which meet local needs, all in a distinct environment.
- b) All development should have regard to the character, issues and strategy for each regeneration area, in this case the Strategic Regeneration Framework for Central Manchester.
- c) New development will maximise the potential of the City's transport infrastructure, in particular promoting walking, cycling and use of the public transport.

Policy SP 1 specifies the Core Development Principles for parts of the City. The following principles are considered relevant to the proposed development:

- a) Makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice including the creation of well-designed places that enhance or create character; making a positive contribution to the health, safety and wellbeing of residents, considering the needs of all members of the community regardless of age, gender, disability, sexuality, religion, culture, ethnicity or income and to protect and enhance the built and natural environment;
- b) Minimise emissions, ensure efficient use of natural resources and reuse previously developed land wherever possible.
- c) 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 DM1 -States that all development should have regard to the following specific issues for which more detailed guidance may be given within a supplementary planning document. Relevant considerations are:

- a) Effects on amenity, including privacy, light, noise, vibration, air quality and road safety and traffic generation.
- b) Accessibility: buildings and neighbourhoods should be fully accessible to disabled people with new development providing access to all via sustainable transport modes.
- c) Community safety and crime prevention.
- d) Design for health, including the impact of noise, disturbance and pollution.
- e) Adequacy of internal accommodation and external amenity space.
- f) Refuse storage and collection.

Policy EC3 states that housing will be an appropriate use within the Regional Centre, although this should complement the development of mixed use employment areas. Subject to site and location details, the Regional Centre will generally be a location where higher density residential development is appropriate.

Policy H1 states that the proportionate distribution of new housing, and the mix within each area, will depend on a number of factors. New housing will be predominantly in the North, East, City Centre and Central Manchester, these areas falling within the Regional Centre and Inner Areas of Manchester. The policy goes on to state that the proposals for new residential development should contribute to creating mixed communities by providing house types to meet the needs of a diverse and growing population. Priority should be given to sites which are in close proximity to centres of high frequency public transport routes and to the re-use of previously developed sites in sustainable locations



Policy T2 - Accessible areas of opportunity and need: 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; connecting residents to jobs, centres, health, leisure, open space and educational opportunities.

Within the City Centre, provides a level of car parking which reflects the highly accessible nature of the location, as well as the realistic requirements of the users of the development. Elsewhere, all new development should provide appropriate car parking facilities, taking account of the guidance in appendix B,

Policy EN 1- Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas: Outlines that all development in Manchester will be expected to follow the seven principles of urban design and listed above, as identified in national planning guidance and have regard to the strategic character area in which the development is located. Opportunities for good design to enhance the overall image of the City should be fully realised, particularly on major radial and orbital road and rail routes.

Policy EN19 (Waste): Requires all developers to demonstrate the proposals' consistency with the principles of the waste hierarchy (prevention, reduction, re-use, recycling, energy recovery and disposal). Developers will be required to submit a waste management plan to demonstrate how construction and demolition waste will be minimised and recycled.

5.3 Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester, 1995 (Saved Policies)

The Following policies of the Unitary Development Plan (saved policies) are considered relevant to the appeal proposal:

Policy E3.3: States that the Council will upgrade the appearance of the City's major radial and orbital roads and rail routes. This will include improvements to the appearance of adjacent premises; encouraging new development of the highest quality; and ensuring that landscape schemes are designed to minimise litter problems.



DC5.1 FLAT CONVERSIONS: In determining planning applications to convert property to flats, the Council will have regard to:

- a. the standard of accommodation for the intended occupiers of the premises;
- b. effects on adjoining houses as a result of noise from flats passing through party walls and affecting adjoining houses;
- c. 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;
- d. 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;
- e. adequate private outdoor amenity space;
- f. 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);
- g. the satisfactory provision of refuse storage and collection facilities.

Policy DC26 (Development and Noise): States that where the Council believes -----, or where a new proposal might generate potentially unacceptable levels of noise, it will in either case require the applicant to provide an assessment of the likely impact and of the measures he proposes to deal satisfactory with it. Such measures might include engineering solutions, layout solutions and administrative steps including limiting the operating times of the noise source, restricting activities allowed on the site or specifying an acceptable noise limit. Any or all of these factors will be considered appropriate for inclusion in conditions on any planning permission



Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Guidance:

Recognises the importance of an area 's character in setting the context for new development; New development should add to and enhance the area's distinct sense of place; Each new development should be designed having full regard to its context and the character of the area; Seeks to ensure high quality development through good and inclusive design; Buildings should front onto streets; Site boundaries and treatment should contribute to the street scene; There should be a clear definition between public and private space; The impact of car parking areas should be minimised; New developments will be expected to meet designing out crime principles; The impact of development on the global environment should be reduced.

The scale, position and external appearance of new buildings should respect their setting and relationship to adjacent buildings, enhance the street scene and consider their impact on the roof line and skyline. Buildings should recognise the common building line created by the front face of adjacent buildings.

The Guide to Development in Manchester (SPG/SPD) (2007) - contains core principles to guide developers. The document offers design advice and sets out the City Council's aspirations and vision for future development and contains core principles to guide developers to produce high quality and inclusive design. The principles that development should seek to achieve, include, character and context, continuity, and enclosure, ease of movement, quality of the public realm, diversity, legibility and adaptability.



6. PLANNING APPRAISAL

Principle of development

6.1 The proposal involves an extension to the retail shop to create additional floor space and change of use of the vacant basement to provide a two bedrooms self-contained flat. The site is surrounded by a variety of buildings comprising business, housing and industrial premises at Rochdale Road and Middleton Road. It is clear that the site forms part of a mixed-use development.

6.2 Due to the nature of the proposed development and its compatibility with the use and character of the surrounding buildings, it is considered that the site is well placed within a sustainable location with easy access to public transport and/or for walking/cycling. Furthermore, it is considered that the proposal is in accordance with Policies SP1 of the core strategy and the NPPF which encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed (brownfield land). It is therefore contended that the proposed development should be acceptable in principle and granted permission, subject to the assessment of other issues in terms of the design, appearance, scale, residential amenity etc.

Housing Supply/Need

6.3 Policy H1 of the Core Strategy states that new residential development should contribute to creating mixed communities by providing house types to meet the needs of a diverse and growing population and that priority should be given to sites which are in close proximity to centres of high frequency public transport routes and to the re-use of previously developed sites in sustainable locations. It is considered that the application site is located within a fringe area of Manchester City centre populated by mixed communities requiring a diverse type of housing including flats. Furthermore, the site is situated in a sustainable location along a high frequency transport route and the proposal, it is considered, provides an appropriate opportunity to create a self-contained flat utilising an existing basement (brown-field site) which due to the lack of a business use, has remained vacant for several years. It is considered that the proposed flat, to some extent, would help satisfy the housing need in the area.



Design/Scale/Appearance

6.4 The proposed extension to the shop involves the existing open single storey storage structure located at the end of the application buildings. As stated previously, the structure was enclosed on three sides with brick walls and had a timber fence erected in the front. The front wall has now been constructed with block work cavity wall and a new lean to roof comprising corotile lightweight steel metal sheeting erected. The roof is fitted with two velux vents. The extension is approximately 3 m deep, 3 m wide and 3.3 high to ridge. The extension together with the adjoining single storey building forming part of the shop has been plastered and painted coloured grey. Given the size/ scale/design of the proposed extension, it is considered that the proposed development, by virtue of its texture and appearance, is not only compatible to the character of the adjacent buildings but also helps enhance the street scene and character of the area.

6.5 The proposed flat in the basement would provide two bedrooms accommodation with associated facilities. It would be fitted with four light-wells, three large and one small, to the rear to provide the rooms with natural daylight. Access to the flat would be via a new door in the rear elevation. Due to the size of the bed rooms, it is considered that the flat would provide a standard living accommodation for future residents.

6.6 Currently the rear of the buildings appears untidy and undesirable. It is considered that the proposed glass light-wells to the rear of the proposed flat together with the tidy outlook of the former open storage building, would help improve the appearance of the rear of the site and the street scene. In view of these considerations, it is contended that the proposal, in terms of design, scale and appearance, is in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF, policies SP1, EN1 of the Core Strategy, E3.3 and DC5.1 of the Unitary Development Plan and Manchester Supplementary Planning Guidance.



Residential amenity

6.7 The proposed two bedrooms flat would be confined within the basement of the buildings and would have no windows other than the proposed light-wells in the rear. The nearest residential properties to the proposed flat would be a flat above the shops nos. 1143 and 1145 Rochdale Road and a pair of dwellings to rear on Middleton Road. Due to the separation distance and relationship with each other, it is highly unlikely that the proposed flat would have an unduly detrimental impact on the amenity, in terms of noise, disturbance, privacy etc, of the nearest residents in the area. It is therefore considered that the proposal is in accordance with the requirements of the saved policies DM1 of the Core Strategy and DC5.1, DC26 of the Unitary Development Plan.

Car parking

6.8 As stated previously, the site is bounded by Rochdale Road in the front and Middleton Road to rear. Due to its location and layout closely bounded by the main roads to the front and rear, the application site is restricted in size and has no room to provide on-site parking. Whilst it is acknowledged that the submitted scheme lacks parking provision, it should however be emphasised that:

a) the site lies on a main arterial road which serves as a high frequency bus route in the area. It is considered that the site is situated in an accessible location with facilities available for journeys to be made by public transport. In view of these considerations, it is conceivable that the future residents of the proposed flat may not feel the need to use a private vehicle; thus negating on-site parking. Furthermore, it is the intension of the applicant to make the future residents of the flat aware of the parking difficulties/problems in the area, thus discouraging the use of a private vehicle.

b) there is a dedicated non-restricted parking bay available in the front of the row of shops to be used by the occupiers of the premises and customers visiting the business premises. Whilst it is acknowledged that some parking spaces would be used by customers during the opening hours of the business premises (usually the day time), however some parking space would be available during the night time for the benefit of the occupiers of the properties within the row.



Refuse Storage

6.9. Due to the design of the buildings and layout of the roads in front and rear, it is clear that the site has no rear/back yard. The pavement to rear of the site runs right along the line of the rear elevation of the buildings. As such it is not possible to provide a refuse store within the site. However, in order to continue with the current practices, the waste refuse bins would be stored outside the site as shown on the submitted drawings. They would be collected on a weekly basis by Viridor Waste Management already engaged for the disposal of waste. It is understood that majority of the businesses in this location have engaged a waste management company to collect their refuse in a similar manner.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 In conclusion, it should be pointed out that

- 1) Careful considerations have been given at the design stage to ensure that the proposed scheme, due its siting, scale and design, provides a good quality development with minimal impact on the character of the area and surrounding properties.
- 2) The proposed development, due to its siting, design and appearance, would have little detrimental impact on the street scene and the amenities of the adjacent residents.
- 3) The proposed development would help provide additional retail floor space in the shop and hopefully increase economic generating activities and additional employment in the area.
- 4) The proposed flat in the basement, to some extent, would help contribute towards satisfying the housing need in the area.

