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**Land between Manor Street and Cakebread Street adjacent to Mancunian Way:
Installation of upcycled freight container accommodation for flexible workspace (Class E).
Associated covered cycle storage, parking. January 2022**

Planning History.

The site had been used for contract parking prior to the pandemic although demand has significantly reduced in light of moves to homeworking and subsequently back to public transport. Previous planning applications have focused on the large, internally illuminated signage panels located at either end of the site 099795/AOH/2012/N2, upheld at appeal.

Planning Policy.

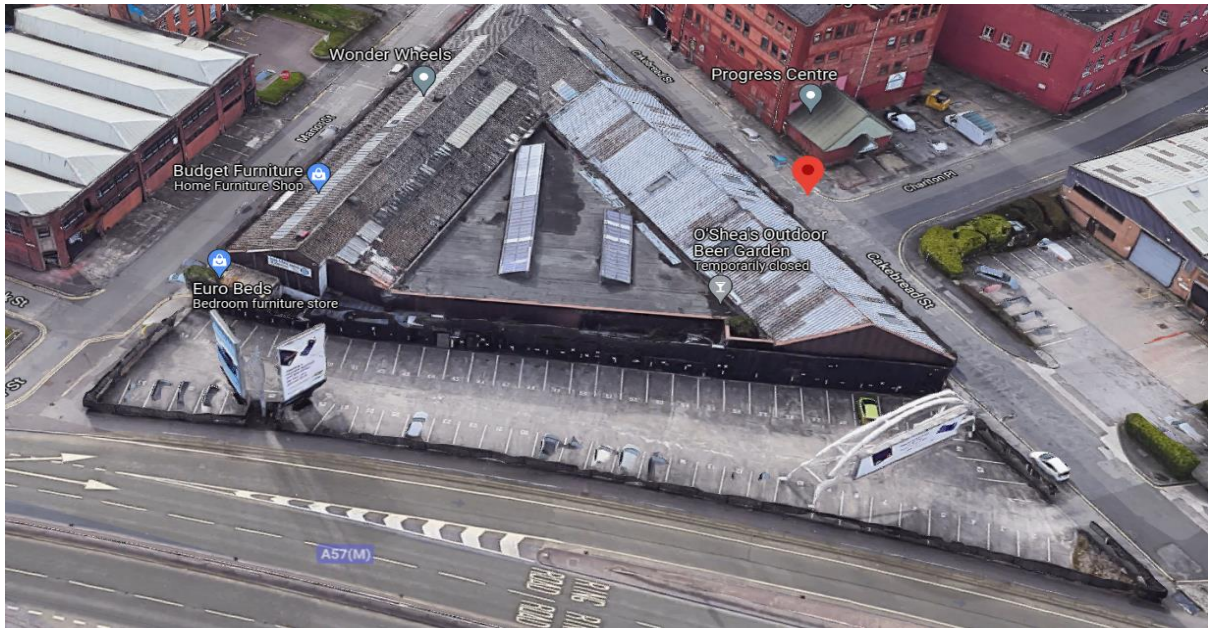
Under the current proposals map (Manchester Core Strategy 2012 to 2027), the site falls under "Central Manchester, Policy Numbers: EC8, H5"

Policy EC8 (Central Manchester) seeks to deliver 14 hectares of employment land and hence the proposal accords with this Policy.

Policy H5 (Central Manchester), states that over the lifetime of the Core Strategy, the area will accommodate around 14% of new residential development. The proposal would provide easy access to the workforce who live around the City Centre with an emphasis on travel through alternatives to car use.

Moreover, the proposal accords with the vision established in the draft Adwick Green Neighbourhood Development Framework (NDF) which encompasses the site:

- 4.5 Supporting the aims and ambitions of the passionate local community through continued engagement and participation when bringing forward development proposals, which will grow as the area develops over time.
- 4.6 Plans recognise the need for community infrastructure to come forward as part of any new development proposals as well as the need to protect, reinforce and diversify the existing workplaces and burgeoning creative industry in the area. All development ought to deliver or enhance environmental improvements and community infrastructure.



Aerial view from the north.

The site

The area is characterised by employment uses albeit in easy walking distance of the nearest housing. The site is bounded to the south, east and west by a 1.8m high timber boarded fence and a 5m timber fence to the south separating the neighbouring industrial area. There are existing vehicular entrances at either end; the proposal would seek to introduce a one-way system with entry off Cakebread Street and exit into Manor Street. Covered cycle storage for 70 bikes would also be provided along the northern fence-line.



Covered cycle storage

Bin storage would be located adjacent to Manor Street within a fenced enclosure to match the perimeter fence (see also waste pro-forma).



Entrance from Manor Street



Entrance from Cakebread Street

The site clearly benefits from high visibility and the strategy is to construct a wall of upcycled, containerised modular accommodation along the rear fence-line tapering from 3 storey at either end and rising to four storey in the centre. These would be accessed via 2m wide walkways with a central staircase. Self-contained toilet facilities would be provided in bespoke containers located towards the western end of the site (where there is an existing water supply and drainage).



View from Mancunian Way

The proposal

This would be to offer Class E accommodation typically ranging from offices, small workshops and ancillary services. The business model has been successfully proven throughout the UK as it emerges from the pandemic with lengthening waiting lists for small,

flexible workspace potentially harming economic growth. Aside from being a cost-effective alternative, storage container workspace offers a range of advantages: they are easily adaptable to the needs of a growing business since the modular nature enables them to accommodate growing or shrinking workforces.

Moreover, comparable inner-city projects quickly develop a strong sense of community and rapidly become home to a vibrant, entrepreneurial culture.

They are also ideal for businesses which only require workspace during seasonal periods (usually Christmas or summer) where temporary accommodation might be beneficial. The containers can be hired without long-term commitment and reflect a significant local demand for such as service. Moreover, the container providers guarantee to buy them back hence creating a circular economy.



View towards Manor Street.



View towards Cakebread Street

Design



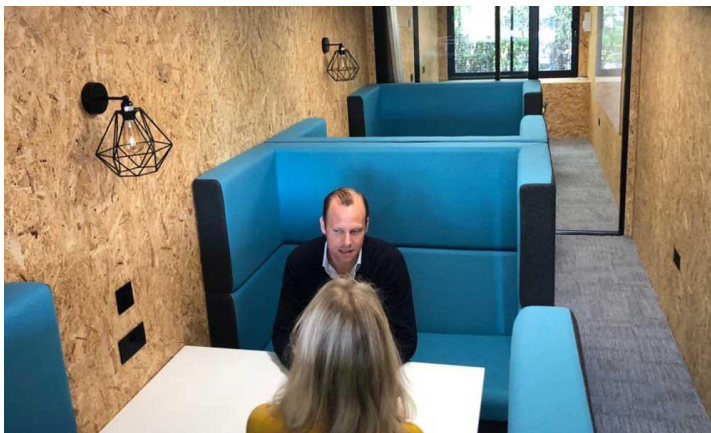
Central staircase

Whilst the interior of the units can be fitted out to suit tenant requirements, an overall uniform appearance will be imposed through colour (black) with an aluminium framed glazed frontage. A uniform signage zone would be positioned across the opening. Chequer-plate walkways with metal balustrades complement the industrial aesthetic.

Some of the units would be bespoke such as the toilets with accessible facilities offered at ground floor level. In addition to their own “pod”, tenants will also have access to a communal break-out pod and bookable conference room pod.

In total, there would be a total of 66no. 20’ freight containers of which 4 would be wide-fronted (on the “wings”) 8 would be doubled-up units and 2 bespoke toilet facilities.

A 200mm deep concrete raft plinth would provide a secure base for the containers with level access for ground floor accommodation.



Communal pod

Conclusion

- The proposal would help solve a growing demand for modular, flexible workspace within the city. It would bring employment and life back into the area post-pandemic.
- Comparable developments in urban locations quickly develop a strong sense of community and become lively, desirable destinations.
- Whilst there will remain 14 car-park spaces within the site, it will be strongly encouraged that tenants and visitors arrive by public transport, cycle or walk (covered storage for 70 bikes will be provided). Moreover, being centrally located, the site is in a highly sustainable location (Piccadilly Station is a 5min walk, Piccadilly Gardens and Chorlton Street Coach Station are both around ten minutes walk and the A6, a major arterial bus-route is a few minutes away).
- There is significant demand and lengthening waiting-lists for comparable accommodation elsewhere.
- The proposal would maximise the potential of a highly visible location.

