

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Statement is prepared to support a planning application which seeks to secure a retrospective permission for the change of use of a disused public convenience to offices (Class A2) together with the erection of a single storey front extension and remodelling of roof at Lightbowne Road, Moston, Manchester, M40 0DF. The aim of the statement is to briefly describe the history of the site, explain the proposal in detail and highlight the design principles which have been taken into consideration in preparing the scheme. The statement also demonstrates how the proposal relates to the overarching principles of the adopted national and local planning policies.

1.2. In addition to this Statement, the planning application accompanies the following supporting documents:-

- Site Location Plan shown as edged in red.
- Proposed Site layout plan
- Proposed internal layout of the ground floor of the building
- Proposed front, rear and side elevations of the building

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 Planning application ref.111387/FO/2016/N1 for change of use of public convenience to create 2 x retail units (Class A1) together with the erection of a single storey front extension and remodelling of roof was granted planning permission, subject to conditions, on 22 July 2016. The applicant, the new owner of the site, believes that the previous owner of the site did initiate the commencement of the approved works within 3 years from the grant of planning permission as required by the approval. As a consequence, although the majority of the building works have been carried out, all the permitted works have not been fully implemented in compliance with the conditions of approval. The applicant believes that the approval of permission ref. 111387/FO/2016/N1 is alive and active. However, in order to satisfy the Council with regard to the current status of planning permission, unfortunately the applicant has not been able to secure appropriate evidence/witness



in this respect. Under these circumstances, the applicant has no option but to re-apply for planning permission

3. THE SITE

3.1 The application site comprising a single storey building is located on the southerly side of Lightbowne Road, close to the junction of Nuthurst Road/ Lightbowne Road, Moston. The current building comprising partly the former public convenience and partly the newly built single storey extension to front is located on the edge of Broadhurst Park fronting Lightbowne Road. The part of the building comprising disused public convenience has been repaired/reinstated with internal cavity walls and the extension to front constructed with internal cavity walls and block work construction facing walls. The building is covered with unfinished concrete slab mono roof.

3.2 Currently parts of the building are boarded up as the construction works remain unfinished. The former disused public convenience, approximately 9.5m wide, 4.5m deep and 3.2m high was surrounded on sides and rear by an approximately 1.5m wide pathway enclosed with a 1.5m high metal rail fencing. There are some mature trees overhanging the pathway around the building.

3.3 The application site fronts onto Lightbowne Road (B6393), a dual carriageway, linking Manchester city with communities of Moston to the north. It is surrounded on sides and rear by Broadhurst Park, a main recreation facility in the area. To the immediate rear, the site abuts a children play area forming part of the park. To the front beyond Lightbowne Road, lies the south-westerly part of Broadhurst Park.

3.4 There is no vehicular access available to the site. However pedestrian access to the sides and rear of the building can be gained via the existing pathway around the building. A regular bus service runs along Lightbowne Road.

4. THE PROPOSAL

4.1 The proposal involves change of use of the disused public convenience to an office (Class A2) together with the erection of a single storey front extension and remodelling of roof to mono pitched roof.



4.2 It is proposed that the former public convenience approximately 9.5m wide, 4.5m deep and 3.3m high would be extended to the front by 2.6m. The existing external brick walls of the public convenience would be retained whilst the extension would be constructed with block work external walls. It is proposed that the exterior walls of the building would be render finished in white. The building would be covered with a mono pitched roof increasing the height of the front elevation by approximately 1.5m. To the rear, the height of the roof would increase 0.2m.

4.3 The roof would be constructed with grey coloured slates/tiles. The existing windows and doors of the public convenience would be replaced and the entire building provided with new windows/doors fitted in aluminium framing. The external surfaces around the building would be treated with paving slabs and concrete to fall for disabled ramps.

4.4 It is proposed that the office will be opened between 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday only. It will be closed for business on weekends and Bank Holidays. It is anticipated that the proposed development would create employment opportunity for two staff members

5. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

5.1 The following applications are considered relevant.

Planning application No. 086305/FUL/2008/N1: Change of use of former toilet block to offices (A2) including elevational alterations to install three windows and new door on Lightbowne Road elevation. Approved on 24 July 2008

Planning application No.111387/FO/2016/N1: Change of use of public convenience to create 2 x retail units (Class A1) together with the erection of a single storey front extension and remodelling of roof. Approved on 22 July 2016.

6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

6.1 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.

6.2 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 EC1 looks to ensure priorities for economic growth; the Council will support significant contributors to economic growth and productivity including health, education, retailing, cultural and tourism facilities, and other employment generating uses.

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. Design and Access Statements submitted with proposals for new development must clearly detail how the proposed development addresses the design principles, reinforces and enhances the local character of that part of the City and supports the achievement of the Core Strategy Strategic Objectives.



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.

6.3 Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester

Policy E3.3 states:

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.

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

Policy T2.4: States that outside the City Centre, the City Council will expect development to make adequate provision for their car parking requirements. In deciding whether the level of car parking associated with any development is acceptable, the Council will have regard to the environment capacity of the site both in terms of the physical appearance of the car parking and its effect on neighbouring activities and also the ability of the local road network to accommodate the traffic generated by the development.

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. Policy T2 requires that appropriate car parking and cycle storage is provided.



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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.

7. PLANNING APPRAISAL

Principle/Sustainable development



7.1 Policies DM1 of the core strategy and the NPPF encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed (brownfield land). The application site is a previously developed land (disused public convenience) located on the edge of a main recreation area fronting on a main traffic corridor linking Manchester City Centre with different communities in Moston. The disused public convenience, due to lack of maintenance, neglect and vandalism, presents not only a visually unattractive and oppressive feature in the street scene but also has a detrimental impact on the character of the area. To improve the character of the area and the street scene, it is necessary that the fabric of the building is improved and the building brought back into a suitable use. It is considered that the site is well placed in a sustainable location for the proposed use which if developed, would result in re-investing, bringing back the building into a use and injecting some employment into the area in accordance with the main thrust of both the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and policies of the Manchester Core Strategy. In view of these considerations, it is considered that the proposed change of use of the disused public convenience, subject to the consideration of other policies, is appropriate and sustainable. It should be pointed that suitability/appropriateness of the re-use of the building for offices (Class A2) and 2 retail units (Class A1), by virtue of the planning permissions ref. 086305/FUL/2008/N1 & 111387/FO/2016/N1, has already been acknowledged by the Council.

Design/scale/appearance

7.2 The proposal involves an extension to the existing building to the front by 2.6m. The resulting building would therefore be 9.5m wide, 7.4m deep and 4.5m high in front and 3.5m high to rear. The exterior walls of the proposed extension would be constructed with breeze blocks and the disused building reinstated utilising the existing exterior brick walls. The existing windows and doors in the disused building would be boarded up and new windows/doors fitted in aluminium frames inserted in the extended building. The front elevation would consist of glazed façade and glazed doors. The frontage of the building would be mounted with security roller shutters which would be used during out of opening hours. The exterior walls of the building would be render finished coloured in white. The extended building would have a new mono pitched roof covered with grey coloured slates. Internally, the ground floor of the building would be laid out as one large office as shown on the submitted



drawings. It is considered that due to its design and appearance, the proposed building would present a befitting feature in the street scene which would help make a positive contribution towards enhancing the street scene and character of the area in accordance with policies of NPPF and SP1 of the Core Strategy.

Neighbourhood amenity

7.3 The site is situated on the edge of Broadhurst Park close to the intersection of Nuthurst Road and Lightbowne Road. The nearest residential properties are situated on the opposite side of Nuthurst Road, approximately 50m away from the site. Due to the separation distance between the site and nearest dwellings at Nuthurst Road and the nature of the proposed use/activity, it is considered highly unlikely that the proposed development would have a detrimental impact, in terms of noise, disturbance, overlooking/loss of privacy etc, on the residents of the neighbouring properties. As such the proposal is considered to be in compliance with the requirements of the NPPF policies DM and SP1 of the Core Strategy.

Landscape treatment

7.4 As stated above, there are a number of mature trees scattered around/outside the site. Although some of the trees overhang the site, however, due to the proposed height of the roof, no pruning of trees is necessary. The site is surrounded by metal fencing on three sides and in order to enhance the visual appearance, it is proposed that the existing pathway around the site would be treated with paving slabs.

Car parking/Highway safety

7.5 It is clear that the site is limited in size and cannot provide on-site parking within it. Hence no parking provision has been proposed in the submitted scheme. It is also acknowledged that due to the parking restrictions and traffic management measures undertaken by the Council along Lightbowne Road and within close proximity of the site, on-street parking close the site is restricted and limited. In view of these considerations, the applicant has tried his best to secure a parking area/facility in close proximity of the site to be used in connection with the proposed development. This however has not been successful.



7.6 It should be realised that the proposal involves the creation of “one office unit” which, the applicant points out, would be run and managed by one person only. The office would be used for website designing and the business conducted on-line. Indeed, the applicant points out that he has a tenant who is prepared to sign a 5 years lease contract to occupy the office for this purpose. Since the business would be carried out on-line, it is anticipated that very few customers would visit the office on a daily basis. The site is located in a high access area to public transport and is well served by public transport. In view of the parking restrictions on the nearby roads and the lack of on-site parking, the occupier of the office/customers would be strongly advised to either use public transport or cycle/walk whilst visiting the site. Necessary notices would be also displayed on the building to that effect.

7.7 With regard to the delivery of goods/services, it is intended that the delivery vehicles would be parked within the safe and unrestricted part of the nearby roads (i.e. Lightbowne Road/Nuthurst Road) and the goods brought to the office manually. It is anticipated that due to the nature of the business involved, the delivery of goods would take place once or twice a month.

Refuse Storage

7.8 It is proposed that the refuse bins would be stored to the rear of the proposed building and that bins would be brought out of the premises on to Lightbowne Road for collection by the Council. It is considered that the storage of refuse bins to the rear of the proposed office would remain visually hidden from public using Lightbowne Road and would therefore neither affect the visual amenity of the users of the road nor the street scene. It is considered that the proposals accord with the requirements of saved policy EN19 of the UDP.

8. CONCLUSION

a) The disused public convenience, due to neglect and vandalism, is in a derelict state and presents an unpleasant/depressing feature along a busy traffic route (Lightbowne Road) on the edge of a main recreation area (Broadhurst Park). To improve and enhance the character of the area and the street scene, it is necessary that the site is re-instated/re-furbished and brought back into a suitable use.





ARCH DESIGNS

b) It is considered that the proposed use of the disused public convenience including the proposed extension to offices (Class A2) is appropriate and sustainable. It is considered that the proposal would make a positive contribution towards strengthening the economy and creating employment opportunities in the area.

c) In terms of its scale, design and appearance, the proposal is considered to be in compliant with the main thrust of the national and local policies.

