

BLUECHIP ARCHITECTS

Design, Access & Planning Statement



for

Mr B Doveton
Appledale croft Ltd
2 Vincent Avenue
Chorlton
M21 9GR

May 2021

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1. THE APPLICATION

- 1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared to accompany an application submitted seeking planning permission by Appledale Croft Ltd for the alterations and basement conversion of the existing property located at 2 Vincent Avenue, Chorlton, Manchester M21 9GR. The existing Property is a large three storey Cheshire semi detached Victorian property which interlocks with 3 Oswald Road. The Property is split into six self-contained flats accessed via a single front door. The scheme proposed is to extend an existing ground floor studio flat into the basement to create a duplex two bedroom apartment and to create a further two bedroom apartment in the remainder of the basement as shown in the scheme design drawings.
- 1.2 This statement comprises an appraisal of the design, access and planning issues of the proposal including the potential impact in respect of the Property's location in the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation area and an assessment of the impact of the proposed works on the neighbouring properties.
- 1.3 Planning permission was granted on 8 December 1964 to convert the Property from a guest house into seven self-contained flats. In subsequent years, two of the flats were combined into one, giving six self-contained flats.
- 1.4 An application was made in 2012, on application (Application number 098087/FO/2011/S1) to obtain planning permission for two apartments in the basement. The application was not approved by the Council. My client has considered the issues and reduced the additional number of apartments from two to one. We believe that the current proposal addresses a significant number of the previous objections.
- 1.5 Access to the new basement apartment would be from the existing main existing entrance.
- 1.6 There is an existing private amenity area located at the rear of the building. The bin storage area to the side of the Property would be expanded to accommodate the new apartment.

2. CONTEXT

- 2.1 The site is located on a leafy residential road close to the centre of Chorlton. The street is lined with Victorian properties of similar designs and periods.
- 2.2 The site is located within the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area.
- 2.3 Chorlton district centre is within an easy walking distance of the application site.
- 2.4 The site is in a sustainable location, just 3 miles from the city centre and along one of the main bus and tram transport corridors through the area and in close proximity to schools, shops and employment opportunities.

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- 2.5 The nearest bus stop is 500 metres from the Property. Chorlton is very well serviced by the bus network both east-west via Wilbraham Road and north-south via Barlow Moor Road into the City.
- 2.6 The nearest tram station is Chorlton which is 0.3 miles from the Property. The Property is also close to a second tram line, Altrincham-Bury which is serviced closest by Stretford Tram Station on Edge Lane (1.2 miles from the Property)
- 2.7 The development proposes the best use of the land whilst also respecting the character of the area.

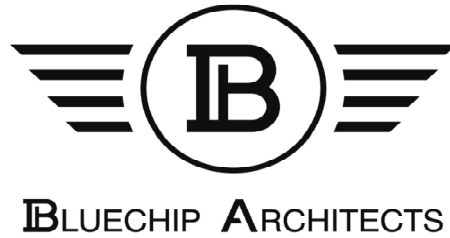
3. DESIGN

- 3.1 The existing access driveway and front garden will be unaltered.
- 3.2 Location of the existing drainage, water and gas are to be unaltered.
- 3.3 The design of the proposed works utilises the existing Victorian building and its constraints, and there will be no increase in the external size of the building.
- 3.4 Detailed plans of the elevations are included; the lightwell brickwork, railings and windows will match existing. We are aware that the site is within the Conservation area, therefore the design will be in keeping with the character of the traditional style. All works are to be carried out sympathetically and in keeping with the Property's architectural features and where possible match existing materials and period features.
- 3.5 The original construction of the Property had two basement windows to the front. The windows were bricked up many years ago. The brickwork at the base of the bays is different and newer than the brickwork of the main Property.
- 3.6 The proposed reinstatement of two lightwells to the front of the Property are required to provide daylight, ventilation and serve as a means of egress in the event of fire to the spaces. The lightwells will be formed from with brickwork retaining walls. The only part of the lightwells which will be visible externally will be Victorian style wrought iron or steel fences painted traditionally black. The black paint is intended to match the existing front steps balustrade and the existing black painted top floor balcony and rainwater goods, visible on the exterior of the Property. The proposed reinstatement of the two lightwells at the front of the Property will take up a small proportion of the existing front garden. This will not impact greatly on the existing planting, however, and the existing form of landscaping to the front and side of the Property will be maintained.
- 3.7 The number of proposed windows facing the neighbouring property has been kept to a minimum, and given the location and aspect of the windows it is not considered that the proposal would have any significant impact upon the amenity of the neighbouring properties.
- 3.8 The proposal includes the retention of the existing 2m high hedges to the front. As a result, the appearance of the property when viewed from the highway and neighbouring properties would remain virtually unchanged. At present only limited views of the application site can be gained from Vincent Avenue.

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- 3.9 Due to the head height of the basement level, no underpinning is required.
- 3.10 The proposed external alterations are small scale and have been designed to be low key and subservient to the main building.
- 3.11 The development will leave the character and appearance of the Property unharmed. The proposed reinstatement of the basement windows would return the exterior appearance of the property back to its original design. The proposed development will maintain the character of the area.
- 3.12 Four out of five of properties on the same side of Vincent Avenue have windows in their basements facing onto Vincent Avenue. A number of properties on the other side of Vincent Avenue have blocked up cellar windows.
- 3.13 There are a significant number of basement conversions and basement flats within the Conservation area.
- 3.14 The basement currently consists of a large void space, that has a tendency to attract vermin and is prone to damp due to a lack of heating.
- 3.15 Additional weatherproof secure bicycle storage will be provided.
- 3.16 The size of extended apartment will increase from 24.5m² to 77.5m². The size of the new apartment will be 58.4m². The proposed changes will provide a fuller range of accommodation to meet the needs of the community and move away from smaller cramped accommodation in the existing flat.
- 3.17 Both flats will have access to the communal gardens to the rear of the Property

4. HERITAGE STATEMENT

- 4.1 The Property was built in 1890s.
- 4.2 The Property is a semi-detached Victorian property which also reflects the attributes of local properties of the Edwardian era.
- 4.3 The majority of the buildings on Vincent Avenue were built at the same time. Two properties on the road, 11 and 13 Vincent Avenue have been built more recently.
- 4.4 The Property is situated within the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane Conservation Area conservation Area which was originally designated in September 2005.

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4.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (published in March 2012) sets out national policy on conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Section 12 of the NPPF sets out the key issues relating to the proposed conversion and alteration works as follows:-

- 4.5.1 PARAGRAPH 189 - Local planning authorities should require an applicant to provide a description of the significance of the heritage assets affected and the contribution of their setting to that significance. The level of detail should be proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset & no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the significance of the asset.
- 4.5.2 PARAGRAPH 192 - In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of: - the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; - the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and - the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 4.5.3 PARAGRAPH 193 - When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.

4.6 Conserving the historic environment - The proposed works detailed above will have no significant impact on the historic features of the building and are believed to be sympathetic both to the existing building and its context within the Conservation Area.

5. PLANNING POLICY

5.1 The proposals have been formulated with careful consideration of the Manchester Core Strategy (CS) adopted in 2012, and the National Planning Framework (the Framework') that came into effect also in 2012.

5.2 The CS sets out Core Development Principles which include:

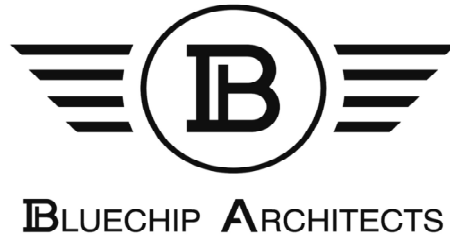
- 5.2.1 high quality homes that are well designed and built to a high standard.
- 5.2.2 a mix of housing to support a wide variety of households.
- 5.2.3 housing developments in suitable locations which offer a good range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure, and makes efficient and effective use of land.

5.3 The CS sets out Core Development Principles Development which include:

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- 5.3.1 Make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice including:-
 - 5.3.1.1 creating well designed places that enhance or create character.
 - 5.3.1.2 making a positive contribution to the health, safety and wellbeing of residents considering the needs of all members of the community.
 - 5.3.1.3 protect and enhance the built and natural environment.
- 5.3.2 Minimise emissions, ensure efficient use of natural resources and reuse previously developed land wherever possible.
- 5.3.3 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.
- 5.4 It is considered that the availability of public transport will mean that the proposal will have no material impact on the existing local highway network.
- 5.5 The CS refers to how the sustainable development of the City can contribute to halting climate change, minimise emissions, ensure efficient use of natural resources and reuse previously developed land where possible. A number of considerations both in respect of the proposed building work and the subsequent residential space are relevant:
 - 5.5.1 The shell of the proposed additional space is already in place reducing the need for building materials to build the new space.
 - 5.5.2 The unheated and well ventilated basement space leads to heat loss in the current ground floor flats.
 - 5.5.3 The new basement floor space will seek to achieve high levels of thermal efficiency and energy reduction.

6. PLANNING HISTORY

- 6.1 Planning application for the Conversion of basement into two self-contained flats (Application number 098087/FO/2011/S1) was refused on 19 January 2012. The planning appeal (Ref APP/B4215/A/12/2172891) was dismissed on 20 September 2012. The primary four reasons for refusal are set out below:
 - 6.1.1 Creation of two further flats was considered to represent an over intensive use of the property.
 - 6.1.2 The proposed parking arrangement in combination with front basement light-wells would lead to the substantial loss of the front garden.

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- 6.1.3 The proposed development does not include sufficient arrangements for the parking of vehicles within the curtilage of the site.
- 6.1.4 Access to the basement flat would be by way of a new entrance and side steps. Concerns were raised as to noise disturbance from comings and goings to the new side entrance. Concerns were also raised that the side entrance would increase the security risk for occupants because surveillance from the street would be more difficult.
- 6.2 The current owner has owned the Property for 19 years. Over this period the owner has seen a declining demand for parking due to good public transport options in Chorlton. The owner no longer believes it is necessary to increase off street parking provision.
- 6.3 These reasons for refusal have been considered in the evolution of the development now proposed. The current application is considered to overcome the majority of the previous reasons for refusal.

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The applicant considers the proposed project is well suited to the site in particular;
 - 7.1.1 The proposal represents an efficient use of an existing site in a suitable location close to all amenities and services.
 - 7.1.2 The form of housing would provide an additional range and mix for the local area.
 - 7.1.3 The site is situated in a sustainable location, close to shops, services and employment opportunities and also has excellent public transport links.
 - 7.1.4 Privacy distances between existing and proposed dwellings comply with the Council's usual standards.
- 7.2 In the event that the local planning and/or highways authorities have concerns about any aspect of the proposals, BlueChip Architecture would welcome the opportunity to enter into discussions with them prior to a decision being made.
- 7.3 In conclusion, the proposals are considered to be acceptable. The development has been carefully considered and sensitively designed so not to appear out of keeping with the local area. The proposals are considered to be in accordance with national and local planning policy.

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