Planning and Affordable Housing Statement

BH Planning & Design

Proposed Mixed Use Development

Bury New Road & Fairy Lane, Manchester

BOI Trading Company Ltd

August 2020 (updated November 2020)

Our Ref: BHPD00083

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Planning & Affordable Housing Statement has been prepared in support of an outline planning application from BOI Trading Company Ltd for a mixed use development on the land adjacent to the junction of Fairy Lane and Bury New Road in Manchester. The proposal would involve the construction of up to 668 sqm of ground floor retail and commercial units (Class E) with up to 141 residential apartments on the upper floors. Access alterations on Bury New Road also form part of the works associated with the proposed development.

1.2 Matters relating to the proposed site layout, scale, appearance, landscaping and means of access are all reserved for subsequent approval although indicative site layout plans, floor plans, elevations and site access alterations have been prepared and submitted with the application to demonstrate how the site could be developed. A detailed Design & Access Statement accompanies the indicative plans explaining the intended design approach to the scheme.

1.3 This document explains the context of the submitted development proposals whilst also presenting an overarching justification for the scheme in the context of all relevant national and local planning policy, guidance and legislation.

1.4 To assist Manchester City Council in its consideration of the application, the following documents have been provided alongside which this Statement should be read:

- Indicative Site Layout Plans & Site Sections
- Indicative Floor Plans & Elevations
- Design & Access Statement
- Sunlight & Daylight Assessment
- Crime Impact Statement
- Tree Survey, Constraints Plan & Arboricultural Impact Assessment
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
- Transport Assessment
- Draft Travel Plan
- Flood Risk Assessment & Outline Drainage Strategy
- Noise Assessment
- Air Quality Assessment
- Phase 1 Land Contamination Report
- UXO Desk Study & Risk Assessment

2.0 Site Description

2.1 The application site is a rectangular shaped parcel of land measuring approximately 0.63ha in area which is located immediately south of the junction between Fairy Lane and Bury New Road in Manchester. Bury New Road (A56) is an arterial route into the centre of Manchester with the application site being located around 1km from the city centre just to the north of Strangeways.

2.2 The site has a frontage facing Bury New Road of approximately 130m in length whilst it has a depth from its western to eastern boundaries of some 50m at its widest point. Historically, the site has been cleared of terraced houses from the early 1900's and is now largely overgrown with shrub, semi mature trees towards its eastern boundary and areas of hardstanding/former roadways. The site is elevated from Bury New Road but generally level with undulations.

2.3 The immediate context surrounding the site, especially along the Bury New Road frontage, is generally dominated by a range of commercial premises with Halfords on the opposite side of the junction with Fairy Lane to the north, Ready Steady Store Ltd and Grosvenor Casino on the opposite side of the A56 to the west, and a terrace of retail units (No's 106-124 Bury New Road) owned by the current applicant BOI Trading Company Ltd to the immediate south of the site. All of these surrounding commercial buildings vary in height between 6.3m and 9.5m to their eaves when measured from pavement level.

2.4 Elevated behind the application site to the east and north east are two storey residential properties on Fairy Lane, Holbeton Close and Sandsend Close. Two residential terraces on Holbeton Close face each other and do not directly overlook the site whilst the houses on Sandsend Close are generally screened by the mature group of trees running along the eastern site boundary, many growing on land supported by retaining structures.

2.5 Bury New Road is a major route into Manchester with a dedicated southbound bus lane. There are bus stops in both directions outside of and directly opposite the site whilst there are also direct public footpath links to Manchester City Centre along both sides of Bury New Road.

2.6 Two gated access points are available onto the site off Fairy Lane to the north and from the A56 (Bury New Road) to the south via a shared access arrangement also serving the adjacent commercial units which are owned by the applicant. Along the rear (eastern) boundary of the site, there is a significant tree canopy that screens neighbouring residents from the site whose properties are situated on substantially higher ground than the application site.

3.0 Planning History

3.1 The site has previously been the subject of three applications for planning permission which were all approved by Manchester City Council. These comprised a range of uses from storage/warehouse facilities to offices, car showrooms, vehicle workshop and a 72 bed hotel and restaurant. Details of the previously approved applications are listed below although none of these consents were ever implemented and the permissions therefore lapsed.

Reference: 071836/OO/2004/N1
Proposal: Outline - Erection of storage warehouse and associated offices and showrooms
Decision: Approved Oct 2004

Reference: 064372/FO/NORTH1/02
Proposal: Construction of car storage, cleaning and preparation buildings to accompany the construction of 8 single storey (with mezzanine) car showrooms, one two storey car showroom with mezzanine and ancillary restaurant, one single storey workshop and parts store with integral two storey office and one single storey combined showrooms, parts store and workshop with the creation of car parking.
Decision: Approved May 2002

Reference: 058789/OO/NORTH1/00
Proposal: Outline - Erection of a 72no. bedroom hotel and restaurant
Decision: Approved May 2000

4.0 Description of the Proposals

4.1 The application seeks outline planning permission for the construction of a mixed use development on the site. The proposal would involve the construction of up to 668 sqm of ground floor retail and commercial units (Class E) with up to 141 residential apartments on the upper floors. Access alterations on Bury New Road also form part of the works associated with the proposed development.

4.2 Matters relating to the proposed site layout, scale, appearance, landscaping and means of access are all reserved for subsequent approval although indicative site layout plans, floor plans, elevations and site access alterations have been prepared and submitted with the application to demonstrate how the site could be developed. A detailed Design & Access Statement also accompanies the indicative plans explaining the intended design approach to the scheme.

4.3 The proposal would result in the comprehensive redevelopment of brownfield land to deliver a stylish and attractive new building that would be supported by a ground level under-croft car park with vehicle manoeuvring/servicing area and perimeter hard and soft landscaping. Vehicular access to the site would be via Bury New Road with modifications to the junction that currently serves the adjacent terrace of commercial units to the south owned by the applicant. The main pedestrian access to the building would be from Bury New Road with an alternative "residents only" access off Fairy Lane to the north in the north eastern corner of the site.

4.4 The proposed building has been designed over five and six storeys which has determined the overall height of the development. Circa 668 sqm of single storey commercial units (Class E) would be provided at street level fronting onto Bury New Rd whilst a total of 141 apartments comprising a combination of one and two bed units of varying sizes would sit above.

4.5 The footprint of the proposed building has been largely dictated by the site proportions and adopted sewers that run along the rear (eastern) site boundary. Hard and soft landscaping measures are proposed within the curtilage of the site together with a residents' podium sitting above the ground floor commercial units and under-croft car park. 108 car parking bays, including four accessible bays, are proposed together with provision for cycle parking. Other ancillary spaces, plant, refuse, safe cycle storage and an apartment reception would be provided within the layout of the new building as illustrated on the indicative plans submitted.

5.0 Legislative & Policy Context

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the "development plan" unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Such material considerations can include Government policy statements, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) of which the most recent version was published by the Government in February 2019.

Local Policy Context

5.2 The application site is located within the administrative area of Manchester City Council whose development plan currently consists of the Manchester Core Strategy adopted in July 2012. The policies and provisions contained within the Core Strategy, by law, provide the starting point for assessing applications for planning permission and those policies relevant to the development proposal in this case are identified in this section below.

5.3 It is noted that the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) are also in the process of preparing a new spatial framework for the area covering Greater Manchester's ten local authorities. This plan will ultimately provide the strategic planning policy framework for ensuring that the right homes are delivered in the right places for people across the city region and that sufficient jobs are created to ensure the future success of Greater Manchester.

5.4 Whilst only limited weight can be attributed to the policies contained within the GMCA's draft new spatial planning framework at the time of submission of this outline planning application, full weight continues to be given to the adopted Manchester Core Strategy which identifies the application site as lying beyond, but immediately adjacent to, the designated boundary of the Strangeways Regional Centre and within North Manchester's defined Inner Area.

5.5 Policy SP1 of the Core Strategy establishes the key spatial principles to guide the strategic development of Manchester up to and including 2027 and this makes clear that identified Regional Centres, including Strangeways, will be the focus for economic and commercial development, retail, leisure and cultural activity alongside high quality city living. Beyond these areas, the emphasis is on the creation of neighbourhoods of choice to provide high quality and diverse housing around District Centres which meet local needs, all in a distinct environment. The policy further states that the majority of new residential development in these neighbourhoods will be in the Inner Areas which, in this case, is defined as the North Manchester Regeneration Area by Policy EC4 of the Core Strategy.

5.6 Paragraph 8.58 of the supporting text to Policy EC4 identifies North Manchester's role as being one of a predominantly residential area providing employees for employment mainly in Strangeways Employment Area, the City Centre, Central Park, Sportcity, Salford Quays and Trafford Park. Access to work is identified as being a key aspect of creating neighbourhoods of choice in North Manchester and planned improvements in public transport such as the Cross City Bus Package, extension to Metrolink and improvements to the open space network along the Irk Valley encouraging walking and cycling are seen as being key to ensuring accessibility to substantial local employment opportunities. Paragraph 8.59 does however recognise that some parts of North Manchester suffer high levels of deprivation with low educational attainment often being a barrier to accessing employment and thus good quality housing opportunities.

5.7 Policy H1 of the Core Strategy sets out the overall housing requirement for the Plan area and this identifies that approximately 60,000 new dwellings will be needed in Manchester between March 2009 and March 2027. This equates to an average of 3,333 units per year although the

policy recognises that the rate of delivery of units will vary across the lifetime of the Plan. High density developments (over 75 units per hectare) are identified as being appropriate in both the City Centre and parts of the Regional Centre given their accessible location. Within the Inner Areas in North, East and Central Manchester densities are expected to be lower but generally around 40 units per hectare with the policy making clear that the type, size and tenure of the housing mix will be assessed on a site-by-site basis and influenced by local housing need.

5.8 Within North Manchester specifically, Core Strategy Policy H3 states that over the lifetime of the Plan around 20% of all new residential development will be accommodated in this area equating to approximately 12,000 dwelling units in total. The policy further explains that priority will be given to family housing and other high value, high quality development where this can be sustained. High density housing will be permitted within or adjacent to the parts of North Manchester that fall within the Regional Centre (Strangeways) as part of mixed-use schemes as well as along high frequency public transport routes.

5.9 Policy H8 of the Core Strategy relates to affordable housing and makes clear that, in line with the Council's Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) *Providing For Housing Choice* or any future published SPD and Planning Guidance, new development will be required to contribute to the City-wide target for 20% of new housing provision to be affordable. Developers are expected to use the 20% target as a starting point for calculating affordable housing provision with 5% of new housing provision envisaged as being social or affordable rented and 15% being intermediate housing aimed at delivering affordable home ownership options.

5.10 Turning to retail and commercial proposals, it is recognised that a key priority for the Council is to safeguard and enhance the City's existing centres. Policy C9 of the Core Strategy deals specifically with out-of-centre proposals and makes clear that the development of town centre uses in locations that are outside of a defined centre will be inappropriate unless it can meet the following criteria:

- There are no sequentially preferable sites, or allocated sites, within the area the development is intended to serve that are available, suitable and viable;
- The proposal would not have unacceptable impacts, either individually or cumulatively with recently completed and approved schemes and having regard to any allocations for town centre uses, on the vitality and viability of the City Centre and designated district and local centres. An assessment of impacts will be required for retail developments of more than local significance; and
- The proposal is appropriate in terms of its scale and function to its location.

National Policy Context

5.11 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development which, for decision-taking, means (unless material considerations indicate otherwise) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or 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 the 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 the Framework taken as a whole.

5.12 In explaining what constitutes sustainable development, paragraph 7 of the NPPF advises that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute towards its achievement. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

5.13 Paragraph 8 goes on to provide the key starting point against which the sustainability of a proposal should be assessed, and this identifies three dimensions to sustainable development - an economic element, a social element and an environmental element - which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. Whether sustainable development would be achieved in this case is therefore dependent on an assessment of whether the proposed development of the site would be sustainable in terms of its economic, social and environmental credentials.

5.14 Importantly in social terms, significantly boosting the supply of housing is a key objective of the Government with paragraph 59 of the NPPF making clear that a sufficient amount and variety of land should come forward where it is needed and that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements should be addressed. The Framework further advises that to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, Local Planning Authorities should plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community. It goes on to state that Local Planning Authorities should identify the range of tenure and range of housing that is required and provide affordable housing in accordance with need.

5.15 With regards to retail and commercial proposals, paragraph 86 of the NPPF requires Authorities to apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan. It states that main town centre uses should be located in town centres, then in edge of centre locations, and only if suitable sites are not available (or expected to become available within a reasonable period) should out of centre sites be considered. Paragraph 87 indicates that when considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference should be given to accessible sites which are well connected to the town centre. It also states that applicants and Local Planning Authorities should demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale so that opportunities to utilise suitable town centre or edge of centre sites can be fully explored.

5.16 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) is also an important material consideration in this context which, whilst supporting the Government's town centre first approach, recognises that the promotion of new development in town centre locations can be more expensive and complicated than developing elsewhere and therefore it encourages Local Planning Authorities to be realistic and flexible in terms of their expectations.

6.0 Assessment

6.1 The following section will undertake an assessment of the proposed development against all of the relevant planning policies and documentation identified in the section above.

6.2 In assessing the acceptability of the proposed development, in principle, the main issues in this case include the extent to which the proposals accord with the adopted development plan for the area i.e. Manchester Core Strategy, and the extent to which it is consistent with the latest version of the NPPF published in February 2019.

Appropriateness of Location

6.3 As explained in Section 5 above, Policy SP1 of the Core Strategy establishes the key spatial principles to guide the future strategic development of Manchester and this makes clear that identified Regional Centres, including Strangeways, will be the focus for economic and commercial development, retail, leisure and cultural activity alongside high quality city living.

6.4 In this case the application site is not located within the defined Regional Centre of Strangeways, however it is located less than 150m from its boundary which begins at the crossroads junction of Waterloo Road and Bury New Road to the south. It is an area that is characteristic of being on the edge of a Regional Centre with a strong mix of commercial and residential properties already existent in the immediate vicinity. Moreover, the site sits within the Inner Area, defined as the North Manchester Regeneration Area by Policy EC4 of the Core Strategy, where policy is clear that this area has a key role to play in providing housing and facilities for employees of the nearby employment areas including Strangeways Employment Area, City Centre, Central Park, Sportcity, Salford Quays and Trafford Park.

6.5 Matters relating specifically to the retail/commercial element will be addressed later in this section. However, with regards to the residential element it is important to recognise that the Core Strategy through Policy H3 envisages the North Manchester area (within which the application site is located) delivering approximately 12,000 new dwellings over the Plan period as part of its contribution towards meeting the overall requirement for Manchester of around 60,000 new homes by 2027 as identified by Core Strategy Policy H1.

6.6 Policy H3 explains that priority will be given to family housing and other high value, high quality development where this can be sustained. High density housing will be permitted within or adjacent to the parts of North Manchester that fall within the Regional Centre (Strangeways) as part of mixed-use schemes as well as along high frequency public transport routes.

6.7 Being located just a very short distance from the defined Regional Centre of Strangeways (less than 150m from its boundary) as well as being located on a key public transport route along Bury New Road, the application site is an appropriate and inherently sustainable location for new development with extremely easy access on foot and by public transport to the wide range of services, facilities and employment opportunities available within both the Strangeways Regional Centre and the defined City Centre of Manchester. Redevelopment of the site, which was previously developed with housing prior to its demolition, would go a long way towards supporting the Council's regeneration objectives for this part of Manchester and would align wholly with Policies SP1 and EC4 of the Core Strategy which both support economic and commercial/retail development alongside high quality city living in and around the area of the application site. Further, the proposal aligns firmly with Core Strategy Policy H3 which permits high density housing within <u>and adjacent</u> to the Regional Centre as part of mixed-use schemes which would clearly be the case in this instance.

Contribution to Addressing Housing Need

6.8 Policy EC4 of the Core Strategy, underpinned by Policy H3, is clear that the defined Inner Area, referred to as the North Manchester Regeneration Area, has a key role to play in providing housing and facilities for employees of the various nearby employment areas. To this end the proposed creation of up to 141 apartments within the development would make a significant contribution towards achieving this objective and ensuring that the overall housing requirement for this part of the City can be met. It is not simply a case of providing generic housing however and instead the proposals have been informed by up-to-date evidence to help ensure that the development would provide a bespoke response to identified local housing need.

6.9 A Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was published by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) in January 2019, the purpose of which was to develop a robust understanding of housing market dynamics and to provide an assessment of future needs for both market and affordable housing and the housing needs of different groups within the population over the next twenty years. It provides an objective assessment of the need for housing within Greater Manchester and sets out evidence to inform the overall housing requirements for the conurbation and the ten individual Local Authorities involved.

6.10 The SHMA recognises that by using the Government's new standard methodology for calculating housing need, there is an overall requirement for Greater Manchester of 10,583 new homes per year from the present day up to 2035. Some of the key population demographics are identified as being a relatively youthful population with over 20% of residents under the age of 30. There is also a fast growing number of people in the older age groups with the SHMA identifying a severe shortfall of sheltered and retirement housing and projected estimates indicating a need to deliver around 9,000 units by 2035

6.11 The SHMA identifies more people living alone than any other type of household across Greater Manchester with an increasing trend to rent homes in the private sector, especially younger people and those from black and minority ethnic communities. According to the SHMA, recent trends suggest that the private rented sector will continue to grow with more households in the constrained renters and lower pay categories. Trends are also suggesting an increase in families now living in private rented accommodation, especially those with just one child, and projected estimates are indicating that 18.1% of all household growth between now and 2035 across Greater Manchester will be households with one child.

6.12 "Lifestyle Renting" in the private rented sector is becoming increasingly popular in Greater Manchester, especially in the young professional (under 35's) category with 51% of all private rented accommodation now occupied by younger people. Standards of accommodation vary significantly but the SHMA does highlight that Greater Manchester overall has fewer apartments than the national average and higher levels of terraced accommodation. Growth in the private rented sector is predicted to continue at pace in the coming years and a need for better quality accommodation is clearly identified.

6.13 From the review of the SHMA, there is clear evidence of both an existing and future need for smaller units aimed at addressing the requirements for students, young professionals, elderly down-sizers and young families with one child. The private rental market is seen as a particular area of future growth across Greater Manchester although it is recognised that there is also a need for smaller properties to purchase, particularly apartments which are in high demand due to the current level of provision being below the national average.

6.14 The proposal to deliver up to 141 one and two bedroom apartments of varying sizes within the scheme is therefore a specific response to the evidence presented in the recent SHMA. The development would make a meaningful contribution towards meeting the growing demand for good quality smaller residential units in the area and, with a mix of private rented and purchase properties, it would be attractive to the majority of those groups identified as being in housing need including young professionals, elderly down-sizers and young families with a single child. The proposal therefore accords fully with Core Strategy Policies H3 and EC4 in these respects as well as aligning with the identified needs and projected future trends set out in the SHMA.

Affordable Housing Provision

6.15 Policy H8 of the Core Strategy relates to affordable housing and makes clear that, in line with the Council's Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) *Providing For Housing Choice* or any future published SPD and Planning Guidance, new development will be required to contribute to the City-wide target for 20% of new housing provision to be affordable. Developers are expected to use the 20% target as a starting point for calculating affordable housing provision with 5% of new housing provision envisaged as being social or affordable rented and 15% being intermediate housing aimed at delivering affordable home ownership options.

6.16 In this case it is confirmed that the proposed development would provide for 20% affordable housing comprising of 29 dwelling units in total. This would comprise of the following:

- 8 apartments for social or affordable rent
- 21 apartments for intermediate housing

6.17 The applicant is prepared to enter into a Section 106 Agreement with the Council to secure the provision of the affordable units within the scheme and to this end the Local Planning Authority is invited to enter into a dialogue with the applicant at the earliest opportunity to discuss the details of the proposed affordable housing delivery and specific make-up of the affordable units.

6.18 Subject to completion of the Section 106 Agreement, the proposed development would deliver a proportion of affordable housing that would satisfy the requirements of Policy H8 of the adopted Core Strategy and further respond to the specific housing needs of the local area.

Retail / Commercial Development

6.19 Turning to the commercial element of the proposal, this would involve the construction of up to 668 sqm of retail and commercial floorspace (Class E) on the ground floor of the building that would front onto Bury New Road. This would be of a scale that would be no more than local significance but it would nonetheless make a meaningful contribution towards enhancing the range of convenience facilities available to residents living in the area surrounding the site and would align entirely with Core Strategy Policy H3 which permits mixed-use schemes within and adjacent to defined Regional Centres which would be the case in this instance.

6.20 It is recognised that a key priority for the Council is to safeguard and enhance the City's existing commercial centres and to this end Policy C9 of the Core Strategy deals specifically with out-of-centre proposals and makes clear that the development of town centre uses in locations that are outside of a defined centre will be inappropriate unless there are no sequentially preferable sites within the area that the development is intended to serve that are available, suitable and viable; and the proposal is appropriate in terms of its scale and function to its location.

6.21 In this case the proposed commercial element of the scheme would be entirely appropriate in terms of its scale and function to its location and, as already explained above, it would be of a

scale that would be of no more than local significance but that would significantly improve the sustainability of the area through providing enhanced facilities for local residents. The area already features a strong mix of commercial uses sitting adjacent to residential properties and this development would add to the range of retail and convenience facilities on offer at a localised scale which would complement rather than seek to compete with existing uses. Moreover, the site constitutes previously developed land and sits immediately adjacent to a run of existing retail units owned by the current applicant and therefore the proposal represents a natural and logical continuation of the commercial frontage along Bury New Road.

6.22 From a search of the area in the vicinity of the application site, including within the defined Regional Centre of Strangeways itself, there are no alternative sites that are currently available that would be suitable for the proposed commercial element of the scheme. Indeed, being located just a very short distance (less than 150m) from the boundary of the Regional Centre, the application site is the next sequentially preferable location that is currently available and should therefore be supported on this basis. Moreover, whilst there is an allocated retail site on Cheetham Hill Road to the north east, the application site is actually more sequentially preferable due to its closer proximity to the defined Regional Centre than the allocated land. It is also the case that development on the allocated site, which is located more than one mile away from the application site, would be extremely unlikely to be used by residents living in the vicinity of Bury New Road and Fairy Lane and therefore it would offer little in the way of enhanced facilities for local residents relevant to this application. Instead, the proposal in this particular case would provide local facilities and enhance the sustainability of the immediate area around the site which would pose no conflict with the site allocation over a mile away.

6.23 The application site, being located on the edge of the Regional Centre and in very close proximity to a wide range of existing shops and services, therefore represents the most sequentially preferable location for the proposed development in this case. There is an absence of any suitable or available alternative premises within or closer to the Regional Centre and the proposal would complement the existing facilities in neighbouring premises, all of which are well-established main town centre uses in their own right. The development would also be of a local scale that would have no impact on the vitality or viability of commercial premises elsewhere thus according with Policy C9 of the Core Strategy.

6.24 The proposal also accords with the NPPF in this respect and would enable new development to be brought forward in the spirit of the Framework which encourages applicants and Local Planning Authorities to work collaboratively in exploring edge of centre opportunities where sites are accessible and well connected to the centres they serve which is clearly the case here.

7. Conclusions & Summary

7.1 The application site is not located within the defined Regional Centre of Strangeways, however it is located less than 150m from its boundary which begins at the crossroads junction of Waterloo Road and Bury New Road to the south. It is an area that is characteristic of being on the edge of a Regional Centre with a strong mix of commercial and residential properties already existent in the immediate vicinity. Moreover, the site sits within the Inner Area, defined as the North Manchester Regeneration Area by Policy EC4 of the Core Strategy, where policy is clear that this area has a key role to play in providing housing and facilities for local employees.

7.2 Being located just a very short distance from the defined Regional Centre (less than 150m from its boundary) as well as being located on a key public transport route along Bury New Road, the application site is an appropriate and inherently sustainable location for new development with extremely easy access on foot and by public transport to the wide range of services, facilities and employment opportunities available within both the Strangeways Regional Centre and the City Centre of Manchester. Redevelopment of the site, which was previously developed with housing prior to its demolition, would go a long way towards supporting the Council's regeneration objectives for this part of Manchester and would align wholly with Policies SP1 and EC4 of the Core Strategy which both seek to support economic and commercial/retail development alongside high quality city living in and around the area of the application site.

7.3 The proposed creation of up to 141 apartments within the development would make a significant contribution towards achieving the regeneration objectives of the Council and ensuring that the overall housing requirement for this part of the City can be met. It is not simply a case of providing generic housing however and instead the proposals have been informed by up-to-date evidence to help ensure that the development would provide a bespoke response to identified local housing need. The development would make a meaningful contribution towards meeting the growing demand for good quality smaller residential units in the area and, with a mix of private rented and purchase properties, it would be attractive to the majority of those groups identified as being in housing need including young professionals, elderly down-sizers and young families with a single child. The proposal therefore accords fully with Core Strategy Policies H3 and EC4 in these respects as well as aligning with the identified needs and projected future trends set out in the SHMA.

7.4 The applicant is prepared to enter into a Section 106 Agreement with the Council to secure the provision of 20% affordable housing within the scheme comprising a mix of rented and discounted market sale units. To this end the Local Planning Authority is invited to enter into a dialogue with the applicant at the earliest opportunity to discuss the details of the proposed affordable housing delivery and specific make-up of the affordable units. Subject to completion of the Section 106 Agreement, the proposed development would deliver a proportion of affordable housing that would satisfy the requirements of Policy H8 of the adopted Core Strategy and further respond to the specific housing needs of the local area.

7.5 The application site, being located on the edge of the Regional Centre and in very close proximity to a wide range of existing shops and services, represents the most sequentially preferable location for the proposed commercial elements of the development in this case. There is an absence of any suitable or available alternative premises within or closer to the Regional Centre and the proposal would complement the existing facilities in neighbouring premises, all of which are well-established main town centre uses in their own right. The development would also be of a local scale that would have no impact on the vitality or viability of commercial premises elsewhere thus according with Policy C9 of the Core Strategy.

7.6 The proposal also accords with the NPPF in this respect and would enable new development to be brought forward in the spirit of the Framework which encourages applicants and Local Planning Authorities to work collaboratively in exploring edge of centre opportunities where sites are accessible and well connected to the centres they serve which is clearly the case here.

7.7 A range of technical reports have been submitted with the application to demonstrate that sustainable development in environmental terms would be achieved. The proposal is also considered to be acceptable in terms of its impact on the character of the area, impact on visual amenity, impact on neighbouring residents and potential impacts on highway safety thus according with all relevant policies of the development plan and the NPPF.

7.8 Overall therefore, it is considered that sustainable development would be achieved in social, economic and environmental terms and that an entirely national and local planning policy compliant scheme would be delivered in this case. The Council is therefore respectfully requested to support the proposals by approving the application without delay in line with the requirements of paragraph 11 of the NPPF.