

8 BIRCH POLYGON

MANCHESTER

GROUND OF APPEAL

**ERECTION OF SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION AND CONVERSION
OF PROPERTY TO CREATE FIVE SELF CONTAINED APARTMENTS
WITH ASSOCIATED ELEVATION ALTERATIONS, CAR PARKING AND
LANDSCAPING**

SEPTEMBER 2020

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This appeal has been submitted following the decision of Manchester City Council to refuse to grant planning permission for the erection of a rear extension at and the conversion of No.8 Birch Polygon to create five new apartments.
- 1.2 The application was submitted on 29 June 2020, validated and given the Council reference 127300/FO/2020.
- 1.3 After initial review by the case officer the application was discussed at an internal meeting of senior officers and on 4 August 2020 the Applicant was advised that the application was to be refused.
- 1.4 The decision notice was released on 27 August 2020 and comprised four 'reasons for refusal'. These are:

1) The creation of the 5 no. self-contained residential flats would result in the loss of a residential property suitable for use as larger family accommodation, thereby reducing the availability of family housing and undermining the formation of sustainable communities. The proposal would therefore be contrary to the provision of policies SP1, H1, H5, and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy (2012), the Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document (2007) and the National Planning Policy Framework (2019).

2) The cumulative impact of the creation of a further car parking area to the rear of properties on Birch Polygon would erode the landscape setting of the building which would unduly harm the character of the area in which the building is located to the detriment of visual amenity contrary to policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy and saved UDP policy DC5.1.

3) The enlargement of the first floor side windows would result in the increased overlooking of the adjoining property with a consequential loss of privacy, both real and perceived. The proposed development would therefore have a detriment impact on the amenity of the occupiers of the adjacent property. The proposed development is therefore contrary to the provisions of Core Strategy policy DM1.

4) The proposed car park in the rear garden would by reason of the noise, fumes and activity associated with the comings and goings of vehicles have a detrimental impact on the amenity of the occupiers of adjoining properties. The proposed development is therefore contrary to the provisions of Core Strategy Policies SP1 and DM1.

- 1.5 This statement provides the Appellants grounds of appeal in response to the refusal reasons. In very brief summary:

1. The existing property is not a single family dwelling it has been an HMO since the mid 1960's and a nursing home prior to this. It was last used as an HMO in 2014 after which the owner resided in one of the HMO rooms for a period prior to her death in 2017. It is laid out as an HMO with eleven separate letting rooms. It would require substantial renovation to convert it for single family use. Concern regarding the loss of a single family are therefore unfounded.

However, and notwithstanding this, the application proposes to deliver a three bedroom family home at ground floor level with its own private garden. It therefore provides, rather than results in the loss of, a family home whilst delivering the benefit of four additional homes into the housing stock.

2. Car parking to the rear of the properties in Birch Polygon is characteristic of the area. Other properties have had the whole of their rear gardens converted. This proposal only provides three spaces retaining more than half the garden for amenity purposes. Notwithstanding this it is unclear how the Council considers the cumulative impact of this would be harmful. Due to boundary walls and fences and the separation generally between these parking spaces they would never be read visually together such that a cumulative impact could be appreciated. In this regard it is relevant to note that in the officers delegated report it is set out that the Council is satisfied that the proposed refuse stores located at the side / rear of the property would not be intrusive and are considered to be acceptable. The three car parking spaces are set behind the refuse area and would be even less visible and intrusive, in reality they would not be perceived.
3. It is respectfully submitted that refusal reason 3 is a non-issue. The proposal actually removes an existing window which is located to the western end of the southern elevation and so in that respect offers a significant benefit as it is from that window that more direct views across the rear of the neighbouring house can be gained. The enlarged windows simply replace existing and in reality, would potentially reduce overlooking as those to the bedroom would more directly face the neighbouring gable. The one window to the kitchen could remain as existing, be obscured or removed completely as the room has large windows facing west into the garden. This matter could be readily conditioned.

4. It is relevant to note that the proposed driveway to the rear of the property already exists and there was a garage at the rear used historically in association with it. It is not therefore the case that this proposal would introduce a wholly new element i.e. a drive and parking into an area where there previously wasn't any.

Only three car parking spaces are proposed to the rear, this would not therefore result in intensive un-neighbourly activity. It is noted that when a recent appeal was considered at the nearby property No.10 (whilst this was dismissed for other reasons) a proposal for four car parking spaces at the rear was considered acceptable by the Inspector and was also noted as a matter which could be acceptably accommodated by the Council. We consider the Council's concerns in this regard to be significantly over-stated.

1.7 This statement is set out as follows:

- 2.0 Relevant Background & Context
- 3.0 Policy Referenced in the Refusal Reasons
- 3.0 Grounds of Appeal
- 4.0 Summary & Conclusions

2.0 RELEVANT BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

- 2.1 As discussed in Section 2 of the submitted Planning, Design & Access Statement the area surrounding the Appeal site is of mixed character comprising flatted development, HMO's, bedsits, sheltered housing and some more traditional family homes. The extract below provides a general overview of the uses surrounding No.8.

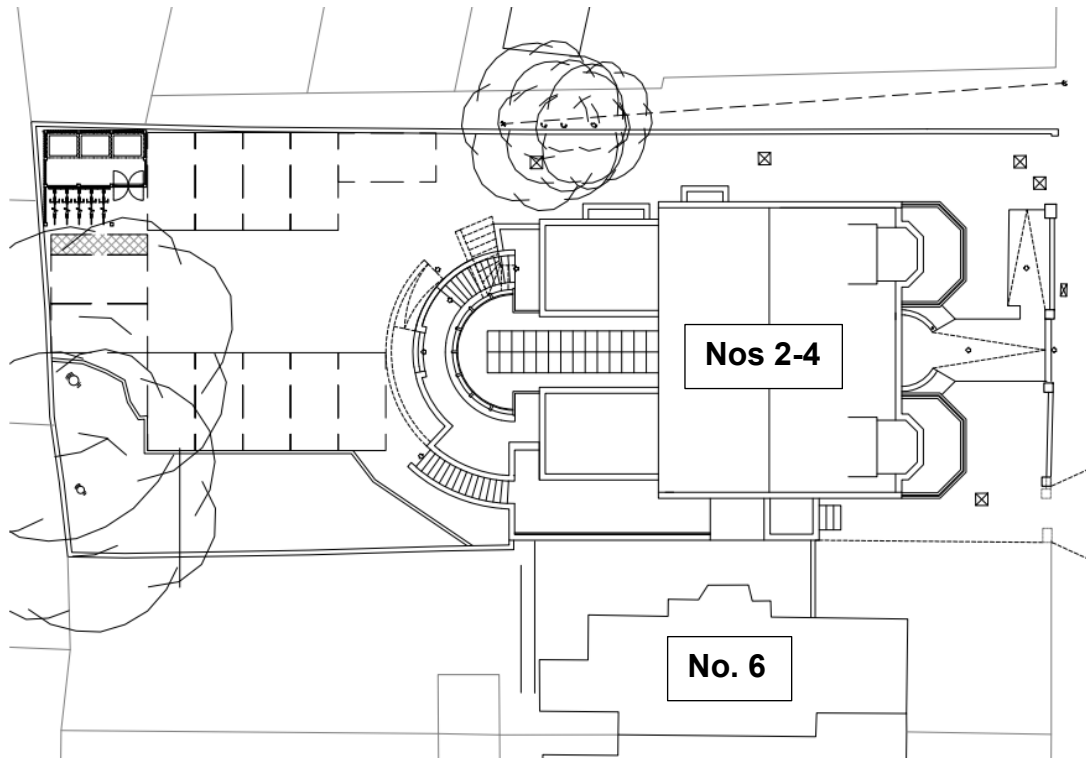


Land use plan

- 2.2 A review of the planning history of the surrounding area is also relevant in terms of context. We highlight the following elements.

Nos. 2-4 Birch Polygon

- 2.3 This property has been converted to form 13 self-contained apartments with the garden area to the rear providing 12 car parking spaces and a small external amenity space.



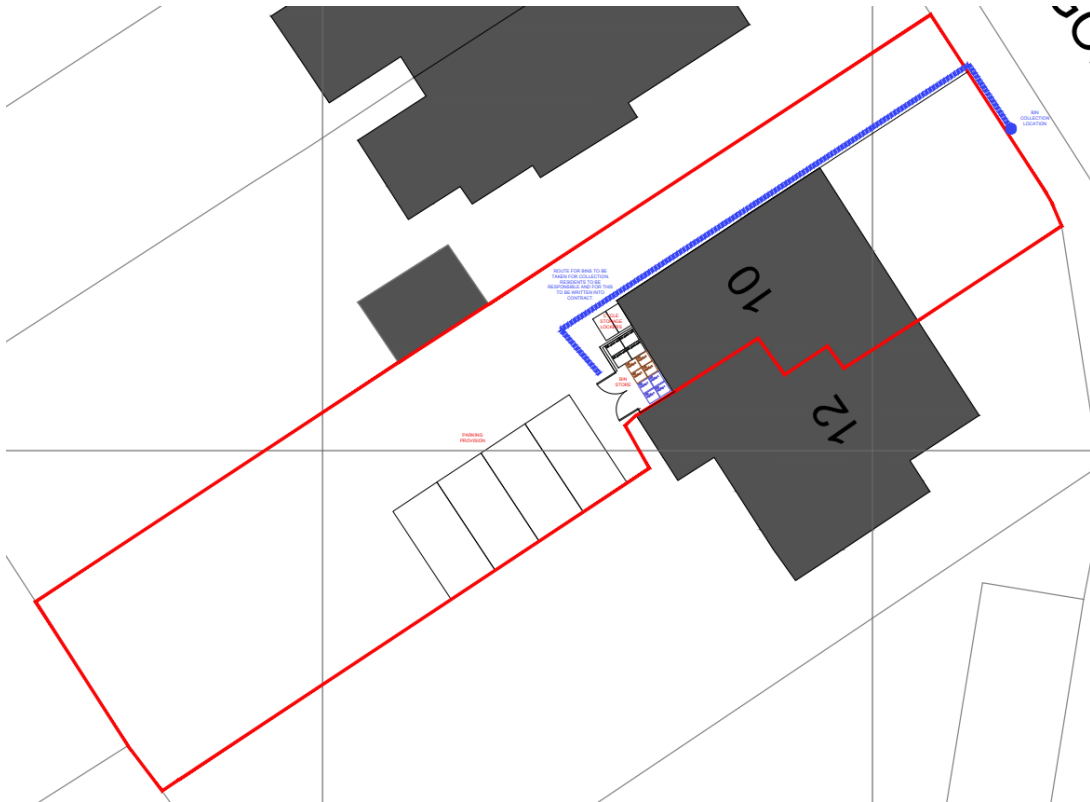
Plan extract from 2017 showing the site layout at Nos 2- 4

No. 10 Birch Polygon

- 2.4 In 2019 an application was submitted seeking extension and alteration works at No. 10 including the conversion of the house to form four apartments with new parking spaces within the rear garden. Permission was refused for five reasons including a similar reason to refusal reasons 2 and 4 in this case i.e. car parking at the rear and the impact that this would have on the character of the area and neighbouring residents.
- 2.5 The rather basic site plan showing the four car parking spaces that were proposed is included on the following page. Whilst the Appeal was dismissed on other grounds the Council's concerns regarding the parking provision were not upheld with the Inspector reasoning as follows:

*"8. It is proposed to locate 4 parking spaces to the rear of the property which would be accessed via a driveway to the side. Although the access along the driveway would not be of excessive width, nothing within the evidence suggests that the resultant gap would restrict the spaces from being accessed. **Although the evidence indicates that significant tree and shrub clearance has occurred, the spaces would be tucked to the rear so that they would not have any significant impact on the character of the neighbourhood and were I minded to allow the appeal it would be possible to require a landscaping scheme via condition.** Therefore, with regard to this particular*

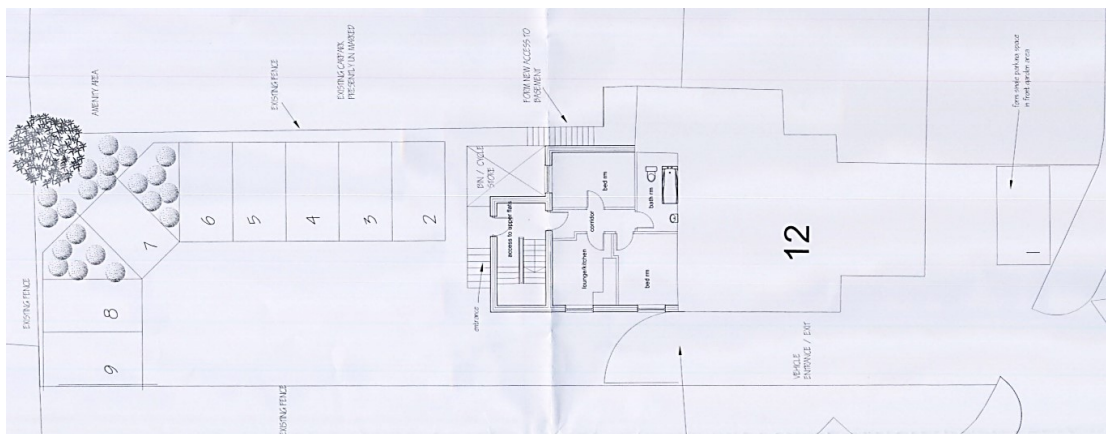
matter, the proposal would not conflict with Policies SP1 or DM1 of the CS nor saved Policy DC 5.1 of The Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (UDP) (1995) which amongst other things seek to limit the effects of flat conversions on the character of neighbourhoods.



Car parking proposed in the appeal at No.10 which the Inspector did not consider harmful

No.12 Birch Polygon

- 2.6 In 2014 the Council granted permission to add a further 4 flats to the 11 bedsits already present at No. 12 to create 15 units in total. The rear garden area was remodelled to provide the parking layout as shown below.



Approved site plan for No.12 Birch Polygon

- 2.7 No concerns were raised regarding the parking. Rather the officers report commented as follows:

“This is a large property occupying a substantial site and it is considered that it can accommodate the proposed extension without having a significant impact on the amenity of existing residents in terms of comings and goings, and noise and general activity associated with flat conversion.”

- 2.8 In summary the Council and / or Inspectors have not raised concerns regarding much more extensive rear car parking at Nos 2-4, 10 and 12 Birch Polygon noting that this has little or no impact upon the street scene as it is tucked to the rear, away from any significant viewpoints.

No.8 Birch Polygon – The Appeal Property

- 2.9 As is explained in Section 3 of the submitted Planning, Design & Access Statement this application follows an earlier application (reference 124997/FO/2019) which had proposed the conversion of the property to provide nine new 1 bedroom flats and included a two storey rear extension.
- 2.10 The author of this statement was not involved in the preparation and submission of that application but was asked to review it when the Applicant received confirmation from the case officer that it was to be refused.
- 2.11 Upon review advice was provided to the Applicant (now Appellant) that the proposal was very unlikely to succeed at Appeal and that the application should be withdrawn to enable a more appropriate, less dense proposal which could meet relevant national minimum space standards, parking and other relevant guidance to be met. This advice was accepted by the Appellant and the application was withdrawn in November 2019.
- 2.12 Four units were removed from the scheme thereby ensuring space standards could be met, a better balanced housing mix including a three bed family apartment could be provided with communal garden at the rear for the flats. Parking standards could be met and appropriate refuse and cycle storage provision included. The two storey extension which would have resulted in adverse impacts upon No.6 to the north was also removed in favour of a single storey addition.

2.13 The application, now appeal was therefore resubmitted on the basis of seeking to work with the Council to address its previous concerns and on the basis that it was an appropriate response to the issues previously raised which should have enabled Council Officers to support the application.

3.0 POLICY REFERENCED IN THE REFUSAL REASONS

Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Adopted July 2012)

- 3.1 Policy SP1 states that the key spatial principles which will guide the strategic development of Manchester to 2027 include: the 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.
- 3.2 Policy H1 sets out the overall housing requirement across Manchester. Amongst other aspects it highlights the need to diversify housing stock in mono-tenure areas by increasing the availability of family housing. It also encourages the re-use of vacant housing, including the renewal of areas characterised by poor quality housing. The Policy states that new developments should take advantage of existing buildings where appropriate through refurbishment or rebuilding works.
- 3.3 The supporting text at paragraph 9.1 advises that there is a need to renew old stock, and provide homes which are affordable, particularly to first time buyers. Paragraph 9.2 explains that the Council wishes to maintain a flexible approach to the delivery of housing.
- 3.4 Policy H5 states that over the life of the plan Central Manchester, will accommodate around 14% of new residential development. Priority will be given to family housing and other high value, high quality development where this can be sustained.
- 3.5 Paragraph 9.19 advises that the Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2010 (Arc4) shows there is a need for 3-4 bed family housing. Paragraph 9.25 states that there will therefore be an emphasis on increasing the availability of family housing and diversifying the housing stock in mono-tenure areas, preserving and improving the quality of the existing housing stock and the management of areas where HMOs predominate.
- 3.6 Policy DM1 'Development Management' advises that all new development should have regard to:

- Appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail.

- Impact on the surrounding areas in terms of the design, scale and appearance of the proposed development. Development should have regard to the character of the surrounding area.
- Effects on amenity, including privacy, light, noise, vibration, air quality, odours, litter, vermin, birds, road safety and traffic generation. This could also include proposals which would be sensitive to existing environmental conditions, such as noise.
- Accessibility: buildings and neighbourhoods fully accessible to disabled people, access to new development by sustainable transport modes.
- Community safety and crime prevention.
- Design for health.
- Adequacy of internal accommodation and external amenity space.
- Refuse storage and collection.
- Vehicular access and car parking.
- Effects relating to biodiversity, landscape, archaeological or built heritage.
- Green Infrastructure including open space, both public and private.
- The use of alternatives to peat-based products in landscaping/gardens within development schemes.
- Flood risk and drainage.
- Existing or proposed hazardous installations.
- Subject to scheme viability, developers will be required to demonstrate that new development incorporates sustainable construction techniques.

Saved Unitary Development Plan

- 3.7 Policy DC5.1 states that 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.

4.0 GROUNDS OF APPEAL

Response to Refusal Reason 1

4.1 Refusal reason 1 alleges that the creation of 5 self contained flats would:

- Result in the loss of a residential property suitable for use as family accommodation;
- Reduce the availability of family housing and so undermine the formation of sustainable communities;
- As a result, be contrary to Policies SP1, H1, H5 and DM1 of the Core Strategy, the Manchester Supplementary Planning Document 2007 and the NPPF.

Result in the loss of a residential property suitable for family housing

4.2 It is respectfully submitted that the Council's position on this matter is unreasonable and not borne out by objective analysis.

4.3 Firstly, the property was in use as a nursing home between 1925 and 1948. Then between 1964 and 2014 it was run as an HMO with 11 separate letting rooms. (A separate appeal is running which seeks the grant of a lawful development certificate for the existing use of the building as an HMO). As the Inspector will see very clearly when undertaking the Appeal site visit the building is physically laid out as an HMO with individual coin operated electricity metres in each room with mortis locks and numbers on each door.

4.4 As a matter of fact, other than for a short period of approximately two years from the end of 2014 when the elderly owner occupied a room in the building prior to her death in 2017, the premises has never in living memory provided single family accommodation.

4.5 The conversion as proposed would not therefore lead to the loss of family housing nor would it lead to the loss of a property which is suitable for occupation as family housing as to convert the property for single family accommodation would require extensive work and simply would not be viable.

4.6 Notwithstanding these facts and perhaps almost of greater importance, is that the Appeal proposal seeks to create family housing in the form of a three bedroom apartment whilst also delivering additional residential units to the local housing stock.

4.7 It is respectfully our submission that this proposal is exactly the kind of proposal which the Core Strategy seeks to encourage. In summary:

- It would deliver a 3 bed unit with its own private garden. 3 bed housing is acknowledged to meet the definition of family accommodation in paragraph 9.19 of the Core Strategy.
- It would provide diversity in the housing stock (1 x 3, 2 x 2 and 2 x 1 bed units) as is encouraged by Policy H1.
- It would re-use a vacant building (vacant since 2017) and deliver more affordable homes for first time buyers as advocated in paragraph 9.1.

Reduce the availability of family housing and so undermine the formation of sustainable communities

4.8 As above, far from reducing the availability of family housing and so undermining the formation of sustainable communities this proposal delivers a family home in the shape of a 3 bed ground floor apartment with its own private garden.

4.9 At the present time there is no family accommodation of any kind available at the property nor has there been since at least 1925.

4.10 The Council appears to have adopted the position that despite the history and the fact that the property has never provided family accommodation the Appellant must now convert the property to a single property. Further that provision of a family unit as part of its redevelopment is insufficient. We consider this approach unfounded.

As a result be contrary to Policies SP1, H1, H5 and DM1 of the Core Strategy, the Manchester Supplementary Planning Document 2007 and the NPPF

4.11 It is unclear which elements of the SPD and NPPF the Appeal proposal is deemed to run contrary to. If the Council expands upon this in its Appeal Statement a response will be provided.

4.12 Notwithstanding the fact that this proposal does not result in the loss of family housing and rather would create a family home as explained above, Policy SP1 does not suggest that planning permission should be refused even if that was the position.

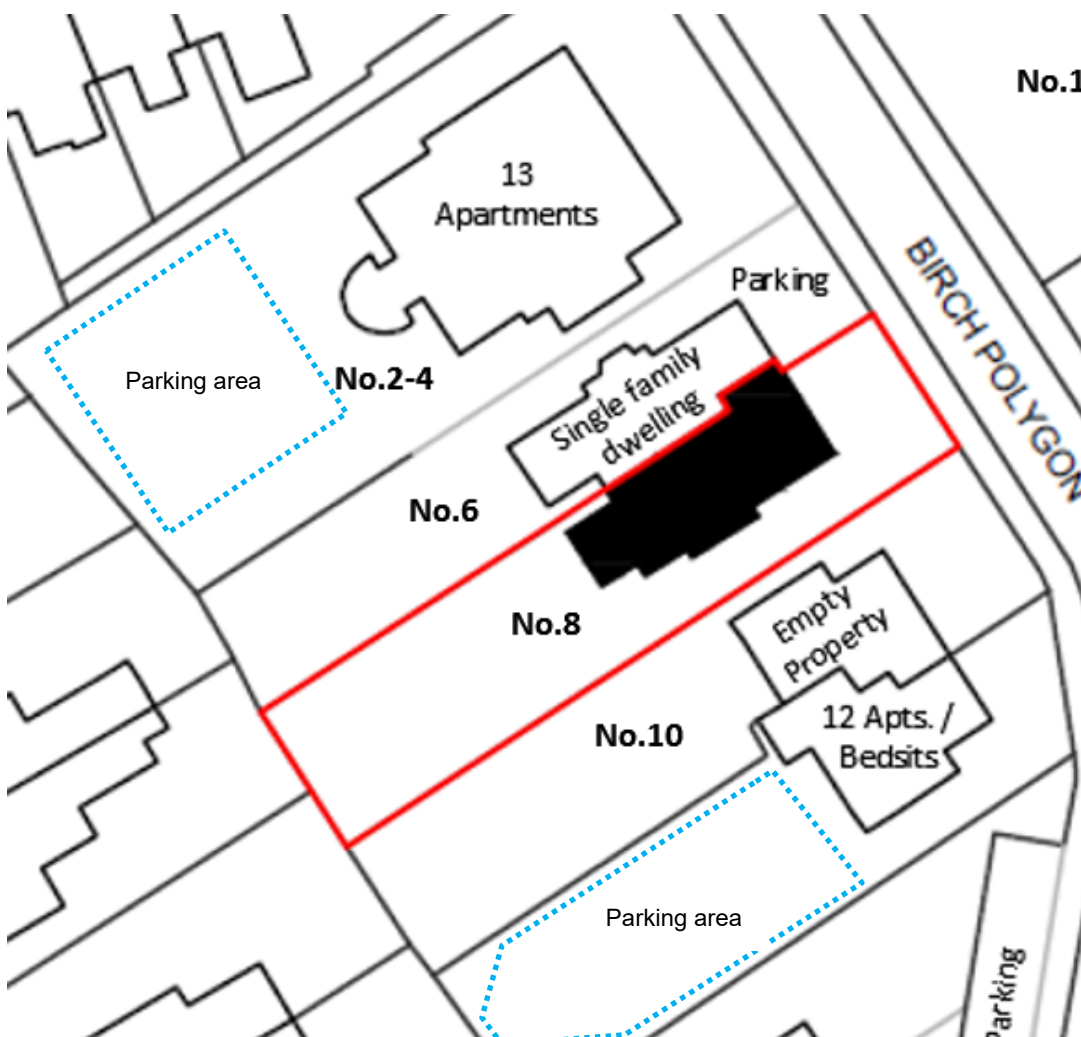
- 4.13 The policy simply states that the Council places an emphasis on the provision of family housing whilst also seeking diversity in provision and high quality new homes.
- 4.14 Similarly Policy H1 seeks the provision of diversify in the housing stock and the re-use of vacant housing, including the renewal of areas characterised by poor quality housing. The proposal does not run contrary to any of this.
- 4.15 Policy H5 advises that “priority” will be given to family housing and other high value, high quality development where this can be sustained. Again, the proposal meets these aims.
- 4.16 Policy DM1 is a criteria based development control policy which seeks to ensure that new developments are of appropriate scale, design, do not adversely impact amenity, provides sufficient amenity space, refuse facilities, parking etc. It is unclear why its included in refusal reason 1 and may have been added in error. Again, should the Council elaborate on this and DM1 is considered relevant to refusal reason 1 the Appellant will provide comment.
- 4.17 In summary, in terms of refusal reason 1, the proposal would not result in the loss of family housing, it would provide it where none has existed since at least 1925. The proposal provides a reasonable mix of one, two and three bed properties utilising / re-using a run-down property which has been vacant since 2017 and currently serves no beneficial purpose. It is respectfully submitted that the proposal is exactly the kind of development that is advocated by national and local planning policy and should be readily supported.

Response to Refusal Reason 2

- 4.18 Refusal reason 2 alleges that:
- The cumulative impact of further car parking to the rear would erode the landscape setting of the building.
 - It would be harmful to the character of the area.
 - Contrary to Policies SP1, DM1 and DC5.1

Cumulative impact would erode the landscape setting of the building

- 4.19 The use of the term 'cumulative' suggest that the Council is concerned about the impact of the proposed car parking, not in isolation but when assessed alongside other existing rear car parks in the area as described in Section 2 of this statement.
- 4.20 It is assumed the reference to 'cumulative' impact has been used as in isolation the Council and the Inspector who considered the recent appeal at No.10 have all accepted that car parking at the rear would not be harmful and subject to reasonable landscaping would be acceptable.
- 4.20 However, we respectfully submit that this suggestion that there would be a "cumulative impact that would erode the landscape setting of the building" is simply not valid under any reasonable assessment of the actual position that would exist.



Plan showing existing areas of rear parking broadly outlined in blue

- 4.21 The existing rear parking which exists is removed from the Appeal site by the garden of No.6 to the north and No.10 to the south. There is visually no connection for any 'cumulative' impact to be appreciated. It is unclear why the Council considers that existing parking areas separated from the site by existing walls and gardens on both sides could have a bearing on the "landscape setting of the (appeal) building". This is a matter for the Inspectors judgement when visiting the site but the Appellant submits that there would be no cumulative impact and no other impacts as alleged.
- 4.22 Further we highlight that in the existing cases at Nos 2-4 and No.12 the entire rear gardens are taken up by parking (12 in the case of 2-4 and 9 in the case of No.12), this is a very different scale and intensity of parking than is proposed at the Appeal site where only 3 spaces would be located at the rear as shown.



Rear garden area showing the proposed parking layout

- 4.23 There is already a driveway to the south side of the property and previously a garage was situated at the rear which could be accessed by vehicles. The change proposed here is minimal and less than the four spaces which the Inspector considered would be acceptable at No.10 adjacent should that Appeal have been allowed.

4.24 The Council's reference to the "landscape setting of the building" being harmed is greatly overstated. The building does not currently benefit from a landscaped setting. This may be more readily described as a 'setting of weeds and hardstanding' as shown opposite.

4.25 In contrast the Appeal proposal would provide a private garden area directly behind the building and also a larger communal garden beyond thereby greatly enhancing not harming the landscape setting of the building.



Harmful to character of the area

4.26 In addition to the cumulative impact upon the landscape setting of the building the Council alleges that there would be harm to the wider area. We again respectfully disagree, there would be no such impacts.

Existing view of the rear setting at No.8

4.27 Firstly there would be no change to the driveway access to the rear which already exists and the parking would be set behind the proposed garden for the ground floor property. It would not be visible from the frontage or any other public vantage points in the same way that the parking at Nos. 2-4 and No.12 is not visible.



Nos. 2-4



No.12

- 4.28 It is respectfully submitted that the provision of 3 rear parking spaces would not be readily apparent and would not compromise the character of the area. As the Inspector noted when considering a similar point at No.10, with the spaces tucked behind the building and subject to appropriate landscaping there would not be any harm.

Contrary to Policies SP1, DM1 and DC5.1

- 4.29 These policies seek to ensure high quality development which respects the character of the area. As above it is the Appellants submission that the three parking spaces would have no adverse impacts upon character and so do not run contrary to these policies.

Response to Refusal Reason 3

- 4.30 Refusal reason 3 alleges that the enlargement of the first floor side windows would:

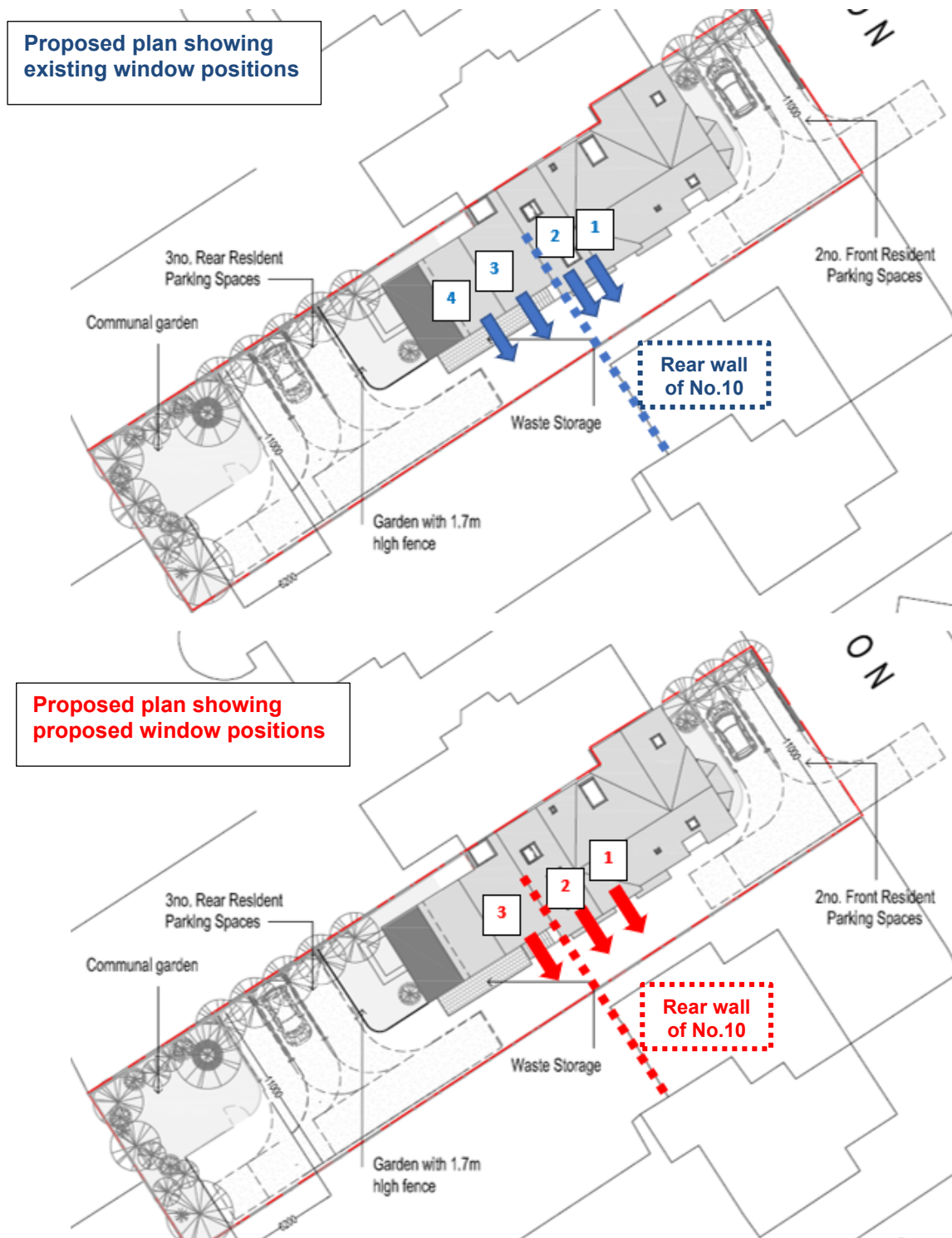
- Result in increased overlooking of the adjoining property;
- With a consequential loss of privacy thereby harming amenity; and
- As a result, run contrary to Policy DM1

Result in increased overlooking

- 4.31 The Appellant respectfully submits that the Appeal proposal would not result in additional overlooking and rather would result in less / less direct overlooking of the garden of No. 10 Birch Polygon.
- 4.32 As shown on the following elevation comparison there are currently four first floor windows at the western end of the southern elevation and the Appeal proposal would reduce this to three.
- 4.33 It is acknowledged that there is an increase in size of the windows proposed but these are set in locations which provide far less opportunity for overlooking down to the rear of No.10.
- 4.34 A plan comparison view is also provided. In the case of the existing situation the windows are labelled 1 – 4 and in the case of the proposed 1-3 as one is removed.



- 4.35 As is readily appreciable, whilst windows 1 and 2 are larger they are set further to the east of the southern elevation more directly facing the gable of No.10 not its garden. In the Appeal scheme window 1 is actually moved east so as to improve the relationship with No. 10.
- 4.36 Window 3 is not made materially larger in the Appeal scheme, rather its orientation is changed so that it is a taller window but less wide. It is also therefore moved marginally to the east so as to improve the relationship with No. 10. Existing window 4 which has the most potential to overlook the rear of No.10 is removed altogether thereby offering a substantial improvement.



4.37 Again as is apparent there would be only one window (No.3) remaining forward of the rear wall of No.10 but in a slightly improved position i.e. slightly further east than existing.

4.38 It is respectfully submitted therefore that overall, the Appeal scheme would not result in increased overlooking.

Loss of Privacy / Harm to Amenity

- 4.39 For the above reasons it follows that the proposal would not result in any harmful impacts as alleged.
- 4.40 However, should the Inspector consider it appropriate, the position could be enhanced further with the removal of window 3 from the proposed scheme or its alteration to form a high level opening only. Window 3 serves the kitchen part of the rear first floor apartment which is open plan and also benefits from two larger rear windows which are west facing (into the garden) and so it is well lit already. The sill of window 3 could be raised to for example 1.7 metres above internal floor level so as to allow outlook from the kitchen and some 'sky' views but prevent views towards No.10. This could be readily secured by condition.
- 4.41 Whilst it is difficult to see how windows 1 and 2 could be considered harmful for the reasons set out, again if the Inspector held any concerns these serve a bedroom only and could be reduced in size and / or obscured up to 1.7 metres above finished floor level. Again, this could be secured by condition.

Contrary to Policy DM1

- 4.42 As it is submitted that the proposals would improve not harm the relationship with No.10 it follows that there is no conflict with DM1 which seeks to protect neighbour amenity. Should the Inspector hold any concerns these can be addressed through the use of conditions.

Response to refusal Reason 4

- 4.43 Refusal reason 4 alleges that the proposed car parking at the rear of the property would:
- by reason of noise, fumes and activity associated with comings and goings, have a detrimental impact upon the amenity of adjoining properties;
 - As a result, run contrary to Policies SP1 and DM1.

Noise, fumes and activity – detrimental to neighbours

- 4.44 It is relevant to note that the existing property benefits from access to the rear via an existing driveway. There was historically a garage at the rear and so it would not therefore be un-reasonable to assume that this could already be used by vehicles.

4.45 Further (although as set out in this statement the property is not and has not been since at least 1925, a single family home), if it was, it is not unreasonable to consider that a rear garage may be utilised by the occupants.

4.46 This Appeal proposal would provide three car parking spaces at the rear of the house and so clearly not an intensive use of the space and certainly not of the scale present at Nos 2-4 (12 spaces) or No. 12 (9 spaces) both of which were granted permission by the Council.

4.47 Indeed, when granting permission to add a further four flats to the 11 bedsits already in existence at No. 12 in 2014 the case officer commented that:

“This is a large property occupying a substantial site and it is considered that it can accommodate the proposed extension without having a significant impact on the amenity of existing residents in terms of comings and goings, and noise and general activity associated with flat conversion.”

4.48 No.12 does not occupy a plot which is materially larger than No.8 but contains 15 units.

4.49 Similarly when considering the Appeal at No.10 which would have resulted in 4 car parking spaces to the rear in similar circumstances to that proposed in this case no amenity concerns were raised by the Inspector.

4.50 It is respectfully submitted that the Council's concerns regarding this element of its case are significantly overstated and should not lead to the withholding of planning permission in this case.

Contrary to Policy DM1

4.51 If the Inspector accepts that the three parking spaces as proposed would not be so harmful as to impact the amenity of adjoining occupiers it follows that the proposal does not contravene policy DM1.

5.0 SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 This Appeal seeks planning permission for the extension and conversion of No.8 Birch Polygon to provide five self contained apartments.
- 5.2 The premises were utilised as a nursing home between 1925 and 1948 then as an HMO between 1964 and 2014. It has been vacant for a number of years following the death of the owner of the HMO. It is in a poor state of repair. Internally the building is set out with 11 letting rooms with their own sinks and basic services and with access to a shared kitchen and bathroom. A significant level of investment will be required to bring the property up to a reasonable standard for modern habitation.
- 5.3 This proposal offers such an opportunity and would also greatly enhance the external appearance of the building and its curtilage.
- 5.4 It would deliver a three bedroom unit of family accommodation at ground floor level with access to its own private garden and four further apartments (2 x two bedroom and 2 x 1 bedroom) above so as to provide a balanced mix of new housing which accords with the aims and objectives of Council and national planning policy.
- 5.5 Contrary to the stated refusal reasons the proposal would not result in the loss of family housing it would deliver it. There would be no material harm to the character of the area nor to neighbouring residents.
- 5.6 We respectfully suggest that there are no reasonable grounds to withhold the grant of planning permission in this case and so ask that this Appeal is allowed.