

Comments for Planning Application 127300/FO/2020

Application Summary

Application Number: 127300/FO/2020

Address: 8 Birch Polygon Manchester M14 5HX

Proposal: Erection of a single storey rear extension and conversion of property to provide 5 no. self contained apartments with associated elevational alterations, car parking and landscaping

Case Officer: Dave Morris

Customer Details

Name: Not Available

Address: Not Available

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: Objections to Planning Application, Resubmission 127300/FO/2020, 8 Birch Polygon, Rusholme.

With reference to the Manchester Core Strategy 2012 to 2027, I note that Policy H11 has the expressed desire to 'Maintain sustainability of neighbourhoods by controlling new HMOs' (page 129). And specifically (page 125), I note that 'designations of HMO would be permitted only where the accommodation to be provided is of a high standard and where it will not materially harm the character of the area, having particular regard to the criteria in policy DM1.'

Despite what is set out in the resubmitted planning application, it remains my understanding, as a resident in Rusholme of some 37 years that no. 8 does not have the legal status of a house in multiple occupation. On the contrary, the house at no. 8, along with its neighbours at no. 6 and 10, have never been in multiple occupation, although it has been suggested that lodgers may have been a feature at number 8. Neither is there any evidence of previous planning applications requested as evidenced in the Property History section of the Council's web-based planning documentations archive.

My objections centre on the likely future harm that will accompany the expansion into multiple occupancy and the accompanying failure to meet with the aspirations set out by the Council in the Core Strategy. In particular the loss, yet again, of a family dwelling house in this neighbourhood. There is already a high concentration of houses in multi-occupation in the area and the applicant's plea that this submission is another one of the same is not justified. The fact that there are more of the same in the area is no justification for yet another one; on the contrary, it argues for refusal of planning permission and maintenance of the status quo.

The applicant makes the case that the proposal accounts for suitable space allocation for a family. For a family occupying the flat, let us be clear, this is a reduction in available space. Were the whole house available for occupation by a family, this would provide a much more sustainable family living space, provided to a high standard and not would not materially harm further the character of the area. Whole house occupation by a family would also allow greater attention to be paid to the ecological and social benefits accruing to a family and the neighbourhood were the external areas returned to a garden inhabited by trees, flowers, grass replanting, birds and wildlife. It provides a more friendly alternative to extensive car parking and both encourages and supports the council's renewed promotion and emphasis on cycling and walking.

HMOs are permitted when the accommodation 'to be provided is of a high standard'. However, the history of landlords in the local area is not promising. Many properties are neglected and both the landlords and tenants have very little interest in maintaining the 'look and feel' of a traditional family property; nor does this encourage community engagement and community respect. It also chronically inhibits the development of a family oriented age and community demographic profile.

No. 8 has no history of noise and disturbance. It is situated in a quiet neighbourhood rarely exposed to the full vigour of noise and disruption that usually accompanies student and multiple house occupants. Properties in multiple occupation, on Dickenson Rd or, for a more immediate example, no. 18 Birch Grove, have a history of nuisance and noise.

An increase in occupancy makes it more likely that neighbours will witness an increase in noise, nuisance and disturbance. This is particularly the case where students are recruited as a friendship group. Their resultant collective activity (e.g. all night/day parties, garden drinking sessions) with invitations to large numbers of friends will see an increase in anti-social mayhem.

That such anti-social mayhem occurs in what is largely a quiet residential street is both disruptive and undesirable.

I respectfully request that the revised and resubmitted planning application also be refused.