Mercedes-Benz Retail Group UK Ltd

Land West of Rowsley Street

Mercedes-Benz Manchester Central

Ashton New Road, Manchester M11 3RR

Design & Access Statement

March 2013

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Town Planning and Urban Design

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.01 This Design and Access Statement, is submitted on behalf of Mercedes-Benz Retail Group UK Ltd (MBRG) in support of a detailed planning application on their Mercedes-Benz Manchester Central site on Ashton New Road. The proposal is for the:

Extension of the existing vehicle storage area, demolition of part of the existing wall, erection of fencing, lighting, CCTV and landscaping.

1.02 MBRG have a current dealership located immediately to the south of the site accessed from Ashton New Road. The success of the dealership requires an expansion of the facility to allow a greater number of vehicles to be stored on site. The proposals comprise the use of the vacant land immediately north of the existing car dealership.

1.03 The statement is submitted in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (Amendment) (England) Order 2006 and DCLG Circular 01/2006. The statement illustrates the process that has led to the development proposals, and explains and justifies the proposal in a structured way.

1.04 The Design and Access Statement is one element of the planning application package and should be read in conjunction with other information submitted, as listed below and referred to in the subsequent text.

DOCUMENTS AND PLANS SUBMITTED WITH THE APPLICATION

Covering letter

Forms

Certificates

Planning Application Fee

Application drawings:

- Location Plan
- Site Plans
- Elevations

Design and Access Statement

2.0 LOCATION

2.01 The site is located off Rowsley Street. To the east lies the Manchester Regional Arena. Running along the sites western boundary is the railway line, beyond which lies industrial units on Philips Park Road and Edwin Road. Directly to the south is Mercedes-Benz' Manchester Central showroom and vehicle servicing centre. To the north lies Philips Park Road which acts as a bridge over the railway.

2.02 The site itself comprises a small triangle of vacant land. The south eastern boundary adjoins the existing Mercedes-Benz' Manchester Central site and the short Baslow Street 'dead-end'.

2.03 The land is believed to have comprised part of the now historic railway sidings. These have long since been removed leaving the land to become overgrown with self seeded scrub vegetation. Part of the former railway retaining wall lies within the site on a site lacking in any significant characteristics.

2.04 The site boundary with Rowsley Road is defined by a low brick wall which fronts the public footpath for half of the site. Approximately half way up the Rowsley Street frontage the brick wall turns into the site. The remaining site boundary is defined by mesh fencing fronting the remaining stretch of footpath.

Figure 1: Site and its surrounding context

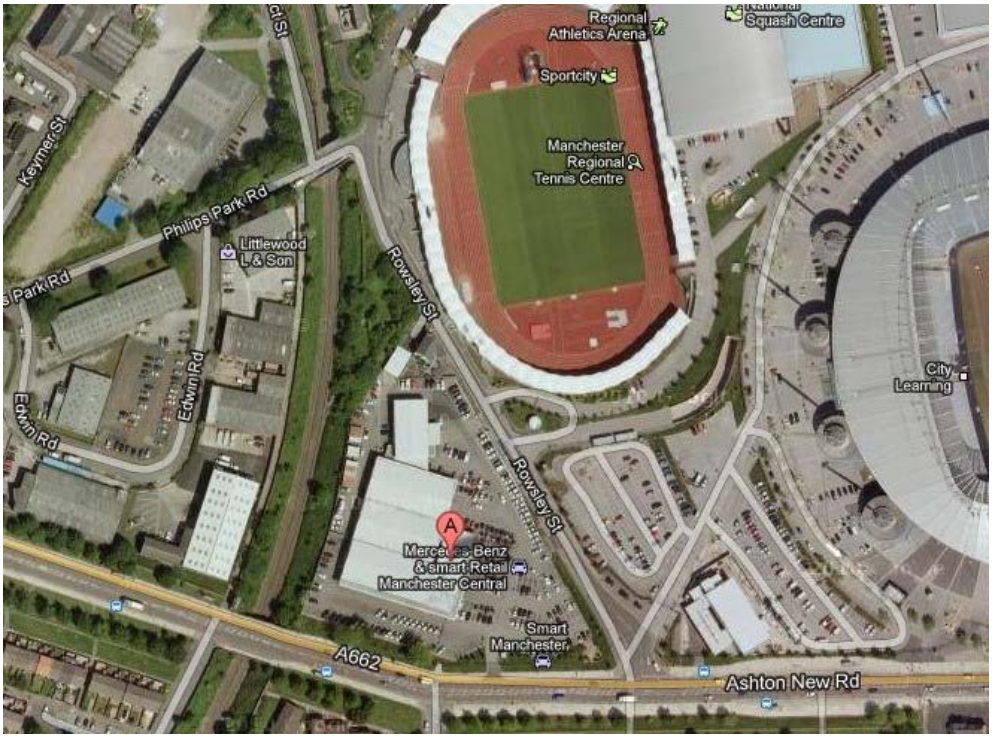
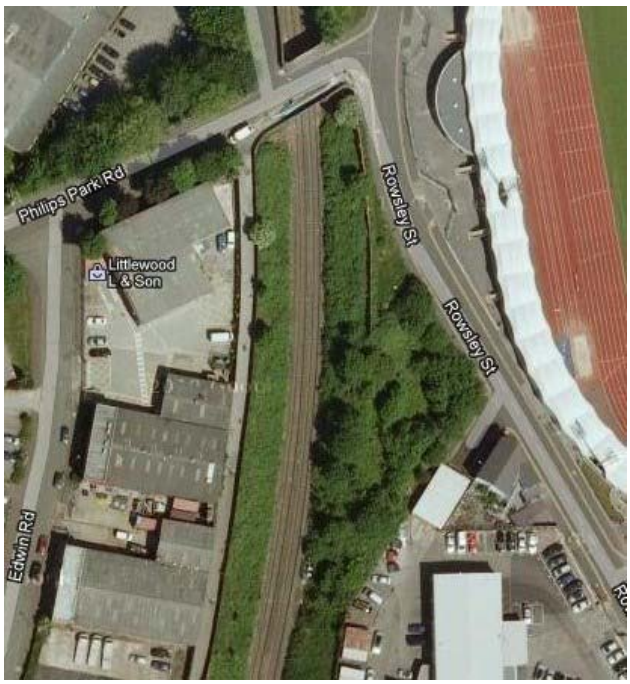


Figure 2: Site



USE

Existing Use

2.05 The site is vacant and overgrown with shrubs and vegetation. It is owned by Manchester City Council and comprises a poor setting for the nationally important sports facilities in Eastlands.

PROPOSED USE

2.06 The proposals that form this application seek to extend the existing Mercedes-Benz Manchester Central site. The existing Mercedes-Benz site comprises a highly successful car showroom and servicing centre accessed from Ashton New Road. Additional vehicle storage space is required. The application site represents a logical area to expand into. Vehicles will be stored in this location in the same way as vehicles are stored on the existing site.

2.07 The existing facility will remain intact. Access to the planning application site will be via a gate into the existing Mercedes-Benz site. There will be no direct access to the highway.

2.08 The application seeks to remove part of an existing brick wall and Codi mesh fencing that runs across the site and around part of its boundary. This would be replaced by new Codi fencing and part of the existing brick wall to ensure site security.

2.09 Given the value of the goods located within the site, additional security will be provided by lighting and CCTV on the site. Proposed siting is shown on drawing P-01 Rev A and elevations on S-01 Rev A.

2.10 Lighting will be designed and installed to provide a maintained luminance of 20 lux and will follow the recommendations of CIBSE Lighting Guide LG6 The Outdoor Environment.

2.11 Landscaping is proposed on eth sites western and northern boundary.

LAYOUT

2.12 A gate on the southern boundary of the planning application site will provide access to the existing Mercedes-Benz facility. Vehicles will access the site visa the existing entrances on Ashton New Road or Rowsley Street with vehicles travelling off the

highway to reach the site. There will be no direct access to the public highway from the application site.

Landscaping

2.13 The vegetation currently on the site is of poor quality and lacks maintenance. It is however recognised that landscaping can provide environmental and amenity benefits. In response the planning application proposals seek to retain and maintain an area of vegetation along the site's western boundary with the railway, as defined on drawing number P-01 A. In addition a new area of planting is proposed on the northern part of the site. A scheme for this area may be subject of a condition.

2.14 Together these elements are considered to be of significant positive benefit in improving the landscape offer in this location. It will be a significant improvement from the self-seeded and unmaintained vegetation that currently characterises the site.

2.15 The car storage area would have a tarmacadam surface providing a suitable material on which to park vehicles related to the main showroom operations. Drainage will be provided via that which currently serves the existing Mercedes-Benz facility. The existing foul drainage connection is adjacent to the valet unit immediately south of the application site. This benefits from an interceptor unit to protect water quality.

SCALE

2.16 Please see the planning application plans for full details of fence, lighting and CCTV sizes.

3.0 ASSESSMENT OF CONTEXT

PHYSICAL

3.01 The site is located off Rowsley Street. To the east lies the Manchester Regional Arena. Running along the sites western boundary is the railway line, beyond which lies industrial units on Philips Park Road and Edwin Road. Directly to the south is Mercedes-Benz' Manchester Central showroom and vehicle servicing centre. To the north lies Philips Park Road which acts as a bridge over the railway.

SOCIAL & ECONOMIC

3.02 Eastlands is a major focus for regeneration activity on previously developed land within the heart of East Manchester. It is a strategic location with excellent infrastructure links. The successful delivery of the 2002 Commonwealth Games has become a symbol of the renaissance of East Manchester and acted as a catalyst for comprehensive regeneration of Eastlands. The area remains a major focus for national and regional sporting events.

3.03 The area is being developed as a major mixed use area stretching from Ashton New Road to the Alan Turing Way and the Ashton Canal. However, despite this success, parts of the area remain underutilised and lacking care, detracting from those sites where there has been significant investment and success. The application site is one example. It holds a prominent location next to the Regional Athletics Centre but in its current state undermines the profile of the area. The application proposals would address this issue.

3.04 Manchester City Council recognises that challenges remain in the area. Paragraph 2.56 of the adopted Core Strategy (page 18) states that these challenges include:

- the need to further develop East Manchester as a major commercial location;
- strengthening Eastlands and creating opportunities for employment and;
- establishing a high quality environment.

3.05 The planning application proposals seek to assist in meeting these challenges by:

- Expanding the successful Mercedes-Benz operation, meeting it's demand for additional storage space and strengthening the commercial core of the wider area;
- Ensuring Mercedes-Benz can continue to operate efficiently in this location.
- Improving the setting of the Regional Athletics Stadium, through a landscaped and maintained site.

Planning Policy

3.06 The Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (the UDP) was adopted by the Council on 21 July 1995 as the statutory document which set out guidelines for all development in Manchester and provided a framework from which to base decisions about planning applications.

3.07 However, Manchester 's Core Strategy was adopted on 11th July 2012 which is the key Development Plan Document in the Local Development Framework. It replaces significant elements of the UDP as the document that sets out the long term strategic policies for Manchester's future development and will form the framework that planning applications will be assessed against.

- Policy EC 7 Eastlands Strategic Employment Location of the Core Strategy includes the application site on its western extreme. The policy seeks to encourage major sports and leisure visitor destination and complementary commercial development. It focuses on continuing to deliver social, economic and physical regeneration of East Manchester.
- Policy EM11 is a saved policy from the UDP. It makes reference to Sportcity as a major focus for regeneration on previously developed land. It encourages "further commercial development to complement the nature and scale of facilities…" (iii).

3.08 Planning policy is entirely supportive of the planning application proposals.

4.0 INVOLVEMENT

PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATIONS

4.01 Pre-application discussions have been held with Rob Griffin, Planning Officer to discuss issues arising from the planning application proposals.

5.0 EVALUATION

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

5.01 The site is constrained by its size and shape. The land forms a triangle making its most acute northern corner unsuitable for storing vehicles. This provides an opportunity for additional planting in this location, providing an amenity and environmental benefit and softening the site's approach from the north.

5.02 The railway on the western side of the site requires a suitable setback and fencing in order to meet Health and Safety requirements from Network Rail. This too provides and opportunity to retain existing landscaping.

KEY DESIGN INFLUENCES

5.03 The storage area is designed to match the existing compound. Where possible the existing brick wall forming the boundary will be retained and augmented where required by high quality Codi fencing.

5.04 Sensitive lighting proposals are proposed.

LANDSCAPING

5.05 Vegetation is to be retained adjacent to the railway. Additional, new planting is proposed in the northern par of the site. A landscaping scheme can be agreed with the Council. The species to be chosen will need to ensure that they do not damage vehicles through shedding branches or sap falling onto vehicle paintwork.

6.0 ACCESS

6.01 The application proposals do not compromise existing footpath connections.

6.02 No direct access onto Rowsley Street is proposed from the application site. Instead the site can be accessed via a gate into the existing Mercedes—Benz compound. Vehicles will then access the highway via existing vehicular entrances onto Ashton New Road or Rowsley Street. There will be no direct access to the public highway from the application site.

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