Planning Statement

30 Trenchard Drive, Manchester



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CHANGE OF USE OF FORMER HOTEL TO

DAY NURSERY AND TWO DWELLING HOUSES

AT

30 TRENCHARD DRIVE, MANCHESTER

PLANNING STATEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Higham & Co is instructed by Acamba Systems Ltd, to seek planning permission for the change of se of a former hotel to a day nursery and two dwelling houses at 30 Trenchard Drive, Manchester.

1.2 This statement is submitted in support of the planning application and follows discussions with the Council's planning officers. It sets out the nature of the proposed use and development proposals and assesses the planning policy framework to support the grant of planning permission.

2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2.1 The site comprises a vacant building which was formally used as a guest house. The building has been extended twice in the past. The first extension was a two storey extension to the northern elevation and the second extension was then erected on the northern elevation of the first extension and consists of a single storey building with dormers and accommodation in the roofspace.

2.2 The building and its extensions are situated towards the rear of the site. In front of the building is a large area of hardstanding which is divided into two areas by a close boarded

fence which runs from where the building meets the two storey extension to Trenchard Drive. Along the Trenchard Drive frontage there is a row of Scots Pines which are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). The site also has a frontage along Emerald Road which comprises medium size trees and other vegetation.

2.3 The site is located in a residential area with properties situated to the east, west and south with a former builder's yard situated to the north east. To the north west is open countryside. No. 1 Emerald Drive abuts the eastern boundary of the site while No.'s 2/4 Emerald Road face the southern boundary of the site and No.'s 27/29 Trenchard Avenue face the Scots Pines which are adjacent to this frontage.



3. PROPOSALS

3.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the change of use from the former hotel to a day nursery, the conversion of the residential element into two dwellings, a single storey rear extension, the erection of a 1 metre high fence, creation of five parking spaces and a drop off area for parents and the provision of a play area.

3.2 The proposed nursery is to accommodate up to 20 children. Four car parking spaces for staff would be provided adjacent to the boundary with the residential element. The play area would be located on the corner of Emerald Road and Trenchard Drive. The play area would be secured by a security fence running along both frontages and an inner fence to prevent children entering the vehicle manoeuvring area. In the south east of the site there would be the provision of one car parking space for visitors and a drop off/pick up area for parents to avoid on-street parking. The manoeuvring area would be of a significant size to allow parents to enter the site if the drop off area was occupied.

3.3 The nursery would cater for two groups of children, firstly the 1-4 year olds who would arrive at staggered intervals between the hours of 0730 to 0900 and would leave again at staggered times between the hours of 1700 to 1830. The nursery would not be open weekends or bank holidays. The parents of these children would be told that the drop off and pick up area would be within the site and on no account should they drop or pick up the children from the road. The second group of children would be aged 4 to 11 and would attend after school activities. These children would arrive and leave in a minibus. The number of staff running the nursery would be seven, however they would work on a shift basis from 0730 to 1300 and 1300 to 1830. As a result the number of staff at any one time would be four. With regard to the use of the play area this would be limited by the weather, however if the weather was dry the outside play area would be used for one hour in the morning and one hour in the afternoon.

3.4 The second aspect of the proposal would be the conversion of the residential element into two dwellings. The single storey extension with the dormer windows would form 'house 1'. This property would have two car parking spaces and a large curtilage to the side and in front of the dwelling. A row of trees would be planted along the north eastern boundary adjacent to the existing palisade fencing. 'House 2' which comprises the two storey extension would have two car parking spaces and an amenity space in front of the dwelling. The proposal also includes a single storey extension which would run the full length of the residential element and would include a small portion of the rear of the nursery element.

4. PLANNING POLICY

4.1 Government Guidance

NPPF: National Planning Policy Framework.

4.1.1 The Government published the NPPF in March 2012 with the aim of making the planning system less complex and promoting sustainable growth. The framework replaces the previous Planning Policy Statements and Guidance Notes with one single document.

4.1.2 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 14 advises that, for decision makers, this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay.

4.1.3 The relevant policies of the Local Plan are expanded further, however of particular relevance is Policy DC25. This Policy relates to determining planning applications for day nurseries and advises that there will be general presumption in favour of developments of this kind in residential areas.

4.1.4 As described in the NPPF in paragraph 7, there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. We consider that the proposal accords with all three aspects.

4.1.5 Firstly, for reasons we develop in this statement, the application proposal meets an **economic role** by making a positive contribution to the local economy through the provision of jobs at this time of record unemployment, particularly amongst young people. The proposal is also likely to generate demand for local goods and services, also helping the local economy.

4.1.6 Associated with this, paragraph 18 of the NPPF states the Government is committed to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity and that planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth. This is an objective to which the proposals are clearly aligned.

4.1.7 Secondly, the proposal fulfils a **social role** by supporting a strong, vibrant and healthy community by providing day care facilities for children. Also the proposal would provide high quality housing.

4.1.8 Thirdly, an **environmental role** will be achieved by protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment. This vacant building has fallen into disrepair and been the victim of continued vandalism and anti-social behaviour. Granting this application would result in investment which would improve its appearance and contribution to the community. The investment would also safeguard the protected trees to the front of the site which play a key role in the character of this locality.

4.1.9 The NPPF continually pushes a positive approach in a number of areas, and goes further than the previous guidance, which the framework replaces. Section 4, which relates to Promoting Sustainable Transport states that 'development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe'.

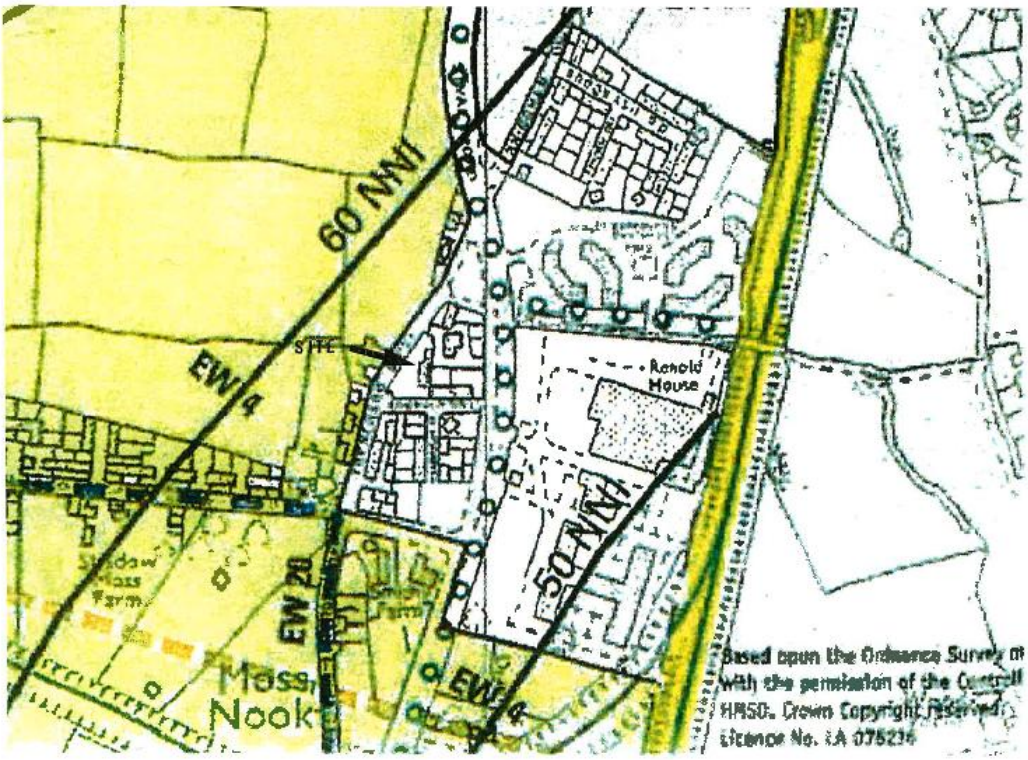
4.1.10 Paragraph 17 sets out the Core Planning principles of the NPPF which should underpin both plan making and decision taking. Of these principles we consider the proposed development complies with four of them. In particular planning should:

- proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs.
- promote mixed use developments, and encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas.
- actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable; and
- take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs.

4.1.11 The NPPF therefore provides a supportive framework for the application proposals.

4.2 Development Plan

4.2.1 The Manchester UDP which was adopted in 1995 is the current development plan for the area. The site as shown overleaf is within the built settlement and is not allocated for any particular purpose. To the north west of the site are open fields which forms part of the Greater Manchester Green Belt.



4.2.2 Policy H2.1 of the Council's UDP states that the Council will encourage environmental improvements to make residential areas safer and more attractive. In giving effect to this Policy H2.2 states that the Council will not allow development which will have an unacceptable impact on residential areas. The matters which the Council will consider in coming to such decisions will include the scale and appearance of the development and its impact in terms of noise, vibration, traffic generation, road safety and air pollution. This statement will demonstrate that the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on the neighbouring residential area and is dealt with in detail in paragraph 7.10 of this report.

4.2.3 Policy E1.4 of the Council's UDP states that the Council will control noise levels by three criteria. The last two criteria are not considered to be relevant, however criterion a) states

that 'ensuring that new development involving high noise levels is not permitted where it would be likely to cause a nuisance to occupiers of nearby properties'. This issue is dealt with in more detail in paragraph 7.14 of this report and it will demonstrate that the proposal would not cause a nuisance to nearby residents.

4.2.4 Policy E2.6 requires that the Council will prevent wherever possible the loss of existing trees and, in addition, will encourage extensive broadleaved tree planting schemes especially as a means to enhance informal recreational areas and to improve the appearance of built up areas. The proposal shows that the row of nine Scots Pines along the frontage adjacent to Trenchard Drive which are protected by a Tree Preservation Order would not be affected by the development and the applicant would accept a condition requiring that all works in the vicinity of the trees to be carried out by British Standards. Elsewhere the proposal would include the retention of the remaining trees within the site including three Ash to the rear of the site and adjacent to No 1 Emerald Road and an Ash and a Birch situated on the corner with Trenchard Drive. Furthermore there is scope within the residential part of the site for landscaping within the amenity areas of both dwellings. Overall we consider the proposed retention of the existing trees together with additional landscaping would improve the appearance of the site and accordingly the proposal accords with Policy E2.6.

4.2.5 Policy E3.2 requires that the Council will reduce the problem of derelict small sites, including derelict buildings, where shape and location would discourage proper maintenance for open space, by encouraging redevelopment. The site is partially vacant and its redevelopment as proposed would enhance the visual appearance of the site and the locality. The proposal would therefore accord with Policy E3.2.

4.2.6 Policy T2.4 considers that outside the City Centre the Council will expect developments to make adequate provision for their car parking requirements. In deciding whether the level of car parking associated with any development is acceptable, the Council will have regard to the environmental capacity of the site both in terms of the physical appearance of the car parking and its effect on neighbouring activities and also the ability of the local road network to accommodate the traffic generated by the proposed development. The proposed layout plan provides parking provision for both the nursery and the residential element. This issue is dealt with in more detail in section seven of this report.

4.2.7 Policy EW1 is more specific to the local area in East Wythenshawe where the Council will have regard to the general policies in Part 1 of the Plan in order to a). achieve the right balance between protecting its character as an attractive area in which to live and realising its potential in terms of its location for commercial development and b). protect and improve of the quality of both the built and the open environment. The proposal would have a significantly beneficial impact on the built environment and would protect the residential character of the area. We contend that the proposal accords with Policy EW1.

4.2.8 The proposed development includes the provision of a rear single storey extension to run the length of the residential element and part of the nursery aspect. Policy DC1.1 of the UDP is of relevance which states that in determining planning applications for extensions to residential properties, the Council will have regard to:

a) the general character of the property;
b) the effect upon the amenity of neighbouring occupiers;
c) the desirability of enabling people to adapt their houses in appropriate ways to meet changing household needs;
d) the overall appearance of the proposal in the street-scene;
e) the effect of the loss of any on-site car parking

4.2.9 The proposed extension is single storey in scale as well as located to the rear of the property and would therefore have little impact on the character of the property. Accordingly the proposal complies with criterion ‘a’. The proposed extension to the nursery element projects close to the boundary with No 1 Emerald Road, however the extension is low in profile, is situated to the side of the neighbouring properties and the windows would comprise obscure glass in the rear elevation which would prevent overlooking into the neighbouring property. We therefore consider the proposal would not have a detrimental effect upon the amenity of neighbouring residents and therefore it accords with criterion ‘b’. The more modern part of the building is narrow in size and therefore the proposed extension provides more scope to provide a much improved living environment and therefore the proposal complies with criterion ‘c’. Given the proposed extension is situated to the rear of the building it would have only a limited impact from Emerald Road and therefore accords with criterion ‘d’. The proposed extension would not

result in the loss of car parking and therefore complies with criterion 'e' and Policy DC1.1 in the round.

4.2.10 Policy DC1.2 further refers to extensions to residential properties which states that they will be allowed subject to compliance with other relevant policies of the Plan and the following criteria:

a) they are not excessively large or bulky (for example, resulting in structures which are not subservient to original houses or project out too far in front of the original buildings);
b) they do not create an undue loss of sunlight, daylight or privacy;
c) they are not out of character with the style of development in the area or the surrounding street scene by virtue of design, use of materials or constructional details;
d) they would not result in the loss of off-street car-parking, in a situation where there is so severe an existing on-street parking problem that unacceptable additional pressures would be created.

4.2.11 The proposed extension is relatively small in scale and subservient to the original building and therefore complies with criterion 'a'. The proposal given its limited size and position would not result in a loss of sunlight or daylight and given as already stated the windows are to be obscure glaze it would not result in a loss of privacy. Accordingly the proposal complies with criterion 'b'. The proposed extension would be of a 'lean to' design and therefore would not be out of character with the existing building or the wider area. Furthermore as previously mentioned the proposal would not result in the loss of any existing off street car parking. The proposal therefore complies with policy DC1.2.

4.2.12 With regard to the nursery element of the proposal Policy DC25.1 is of relevance to this proposal. The policy states that in determining planning applications for day nurseries, the Council will have regard to:

a) the suitability of the site or building proposed;
b) the availability of safe and convenient arrangements for the dropping off and collection of children and for staff car parking;

c) the adequacy of the local traffic circulation system and prevailing local traffic conditions;
d) the adequacy of outdoor play areas;
e) ease of access for all, including disabled people;
f) the effect on the amenity of neighbouring residents.

4.2.13 The criteria attached to this policy will be addressed later in this supporting statement at paragraph 7.1.

4.2.14 Policy DC26.1 considers that the Council intends to use the development control process to reduce the impact of noise on people living and working in, or visiting, the City. In giving effect to this intention, the Council will consider both:

a) the effect of new development proposals which are likely to be generators of noise; and
b) the implications of new development being exposed to existing noise sources which are effectively outside planning control.

4.2.15 Policy DC26.3 states that developments likely to result in unacceptably high levels of noises will not be permitted:

a) in residential areas;
b) near schools, hospitals, nursing homes and similar institutions;
c) near open land used frequently for recreational purposes.

4.2.16 Both of these policies refer to potential noise. The officer's report on the previous planning application made reference to increased noise and disturbance from people and vehicles using the proposed nine bedroom house. However this part of the proposal has now been amended to include two dwellings which would result in a less intensive use of this part of the site. Consequently the level of noise and disturbance from these two properties would be significantly reduced and would not be detrimental to neighbouring residential amenity. In addition the play area for the nursery has been moved away from the boundary shared with No. 1 Emerald Road. It has already been stated that the outdoor

play area would be used up to a maximum of two hours a day which we consider would not be detrimental to the residential amenity of neighbouring residents.

5. PLANNING HISTORY

5.1 Planning permission was granted in January 2011 for five dwellings (ref 094493/FO/2010/S2) comprising two pairs of semi-detached dwellings and a detached dwelling. Of note the plan shows two access points onto Emerald Road where the current proposal is for one.

5.2 Planning permission was refused for a change of use of the former hotel to a day nursery and the provision of a nine bedroomed dwelling house (ref 097614/FU/2011/S2) in February 2012. This application was refused on the following grounds:

1) The proposal to create a 9 bedroomed residential property and 20 place nursery, at the application site, would constitute an overly intensive use of the site and property resulting in inadequate standard of accommodation for the occupants of the residential property and unacceptable impacts due to its location in a primarily residential area. There would be increased activity in terms of "comings and goings" and traffic movement from a development of this nature resulting in unacceptable levels of noise and disturbance. These matters will cause unnecessary harm to the existing residential amenity for those who live on Trenchard Drive and Emerald Road. The proposal is therefore contrary to policies H2.1, H2.2, E1.4, DC25, DC26 and EW1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (1995), the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD (2007) and PPS1.

2) The proposal will result in inadequate provision of car parking for the 9 bedroomed property and 20 place nursery (plus 7 staff). The lack of parking provision will result in on street parking problems. This will be particularly acute during peak times at the nursery due to inadequate `pick up and drop off arrangements for the nursery. Insufficient information has been submitted in respect of trip generation created from the site. The proposal will result in unacceptable harm to the residential amenity of the surrounding residential properties, particularly along Emerald Road and

Trenchard Drive. The proposal is therefore contrary to policies H2.1, H2.2, T2.4 a DC25 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (1995), the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD (2007) and PPS1.

3) The proposal will result in inadequate provision for private amenity space for the 9 bedroomed property which will be detrimental to the residential amenity of the occupants of the dwelling. In addition, the location of the private amenity for the nursery will be located immediately adjacent to 1 Emerald Road. This will result in noise and disturbance for this property which will cause unacceptable harm to residential amenity. The proposal is therefore contrary to policies H2.1, H2.2, DC25 and EW1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (1995), the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD (2007) and PPS1.

4) The boundary treatment which has been erected along Emerald Road and Trenchard Drive is inappropriate in terms of its siting, scale and appearance within a residential area. This has caused unnecessary harm to the visual amenity of the residential area and is therefore contrary to policies H2.1, H2.2 and EW1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (1995) and the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD (2007).

5.3 This current submission is in response to the previous refusal of planning permssion and we will demonstrate within this statement that the reasons for refusal can be overcome.

6. MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of development

6.1 The proposal is a mixed use for a nursery and residential use comprising two dwellings. Given the site is situated within a residential area the conversion of part of the building into two dwellings will complement the surrounding area. With regard to the nursery use Policy DC25 of the UDP seeks to encourage nurseries within residential areas subject to a number of criteria which are addressed later in this statement. However the use of a

building in a residential area for a nursery is acceptable in principle and has been accepted in the Planning Officer's report on the previous planning application.

Use of the site

Dwellings:

6.2 The Council raised concerns with the previous planning application primarily because of their perceived opinion that the use of the site was too intensive. The previous proposal included the provision of a nine bedroomed house which also comprised two lounges and a kitchen/dining area. The concerns were that the accommodation provided was of a sub-standard nature and the comings and goings of the occupants would be greater than the average residential property.

6.3 Consequently the residential aspect of the proposal has been re-assessed and now comprises two dwellings. The smaller dwelling comprises a lounge and kitchen/dining room on the ground floor and two bedrooms with a bathroom on the first floor. The larger dwelling comprises a lounge and kitchen/dining room on the ground floor and two bedrooms with a bathroom on the first floor. Both dwellings have their own identified curtilage with separate amenity space, parking and access points. Accordingly the number of bedrooms has been reduced and the residential part of the proposal has been split into two modest sized dwellings. Given the amendments to the proposal we consider that the comings and goings from the site would be of a similar scale to that proposed by the previous application for residential development.

6.4 The proposed dwellings would have their own separate access points, parking provision and amenity space. The smaller dwelling which comprises two bedrooms would have two parking spaces located in front of the dwelling and its amenity space would be situated between the dwelling and the parking space. We consider that the parking provision is sufficient to serve the dwelling particularly as the site is easily accessible by bus from both Ringway and Styal Road and Heald Green railway station is situated within walking distance of the site. The amenity space although situated in front of the dwelling would be obscured from public view by the retention of the existing hedge adjacent to Trenchard Drive, the retention of the boundary fence between the dwelling and the proposed nursery and the provision of a new fence between the two residential properties.



6.5 The photograph above shows the current situation with the area in front of the smaller dwelling. The proposal would include the provision of a new gate to provide a feature that is more keeping with the residential area.

6.6 With regard to the larger dwelling the proposal would include the provision of two car parking spaces in front of the dwelling and amenity space to the side and front of the dwelling. The amenity space would be significant in size and given the hedge adjacent to Trenchard Drive would be retained this would provide the amenity space with a significant degree of privacy.

Nursery:

6.7 Turning to the nursery part of the proposal, this involves the change of use of the older building. The Council have raised concerns with the size of the curtilage and the comings and goings of staff and parents which would disturb the neighbouring residents together with the potential noise from outside play. In this regard Policy DC25 of the UDP is of relevance to this proposal and we shall address each criterion individually. However it is noted that in the amplification text of the policy at paragraph DC25.2 there is a general

presumption in favour of such developments in residential areas and the policy also reflects the general view of the Council that there is a need for accessible and well- run nurseries throughout the City. It is further indicated they are particularly valuable to families with young children who wish to increase their income by taking jobs, and they can also therefore make a useful indirect contribution to the local economy.

Criterion a: the suitability of the site or building proposed

6.8 The building is of a considerable size with four sizeable rooms on the ground floor and four similar size rooms on the first floor. The Planning Officer's report on the previous application accepted that the standard of accommodation and room sizes appeared to be acceptable. Given the size of the building and its layout we consider the building is suitable for the proposal and accords with criterion 'a' of Policy DC25.

Criterion b: the availability of safe and convenient arrangements for the dropping off and collection of children and for staff car parking;

6.9 The amplification text of Policy DC25 refers to this issue where despite the presumption in favour of nurseries in residential areas this can be subject to the location and scale of the proposed nursery which could lead to danger to children or others as a result of poor arrangements for handling the vehicular access. The proposed layout has been amended to take on board the concerns expressed in the previous planning application. One significant issue that emerged was that the original survey plan was not to scale and therefore the curtilage on the plan was significantly smaller than the actual area. The total area in front of and to the side of the proposed nursery comprises 870 square metres. Within this area the proposal is for a vehicular access to be taken from Emerald Road and a pedestrian access from Trenchard Drive. By dividing the access points this will avoid conflict between people on foot and vehicles when they enter and leave the site. The proposal includes the provision of four staff car parking. Although seven people will be employed at the nursery only four will be there at any one time due to working shifts. The staff car parking is to be located adjacent to the northern boundary of the site abutting the residential element of the proposal. To the side of the property and visible from Emerald Road the proposal includes a drop off and pick up area for parents and a visitors parking space. Parents would be told that when children are to be dropped off and picked

up they have to enter the site and use this area on the grounds of safety and convenience. Adjacent to this area is the visitors parking area. Between these two areas and in front of the building the proposal includes a large manoeuvring area which is of a sufficient size to accommodate parents if the drop off area is occupied. Overall these arrangements for the dropping off and collection of children together with the staff parking are considered to be safe and suitable. The original concern was that no details had been provided which could potentially result in on street parking congestion at peak times. However we consider these arrangements overcome these concerns and accordingly we consider the proposal complies with criterion 'b' of Policy DC25.

Criterion c. the adequacy of the local traffic circulation system and prevailing local traffic conditions;

6.10 With regard to the proposed nursery it is anticipated that the building can accommodate up to 20 children on a full and part time basis. Due to childcare regulations, this requires circa 4 members of staff each shift (7 in total). From our experience of such proposals and as confirmed by the potential operator the majority of staff will live within close proximity to the site and/or are too young to drive and would therefore use public transport or walk to work rather than travel by private car. Should the building be operated as a day nursery it would be open Monday to Friday between 7.30am and 6.30pm. Due to different working patterns and childcare requirements there will be a steady stream of parents dropping off and picking up their children. The perception that 20 parents and children will arrive at the property by car at the same time is totally unrealistic. Furthermore some parents may have more than one child attending the nursery or live close by and walk. The operation of the building as a children's nursery is therefore unlikely to result in any peak time traffic demands. Therefore the dropping off and picking up area which includes the manoeuvring area within the car park is more than adequate to serve the needs of a small number of parents dropping off and collecting their children by car at any one time.

The following table provides an overview of the likely trip generation for a typical day

Trip generation	***Movements***
0730 four members of staff enter the site	4
0730 – 0900 20 parents visit the site to drop children off	20
1300 four staff leave the site and another four enter the site	8
1700- 1830 20 parents visit the site and pick up children	20
After school one minibus enters and leaves the site	2
Residential properties: 3 parking spaces x 4 vehicle movements/day	12

Total - 66 over a period of 11 hours which equates to 6 vehicle movements per hour.

6.11 In contrast the approved residential scheme for five dwellings provided 10 car parking spaces which have a potential to generate 40 vehicle movements per day. Furthermore the original hotel would have generated significantly more vehicle movements than the proposed nursery and this is a factor which needs to be weighed in favour of the current proposal. Accordingly we consider the proposal would not be detrimental to highway safety and it accords with criterion 'c' of Policy DC25

Criterion d. the adequacy of outdoor play areas;

6.12 The Council previously expressed concern with the size and location of the amenity space to serve the nursery on the previous application and the amplification text of policy DC25 states noise from outside play can be a problem for neighbours in some circumstances, and this is one reason why the Council would consider limiting the size of a nursery operation. The applicant would have no objection to the imposition of a condition restricting the number of children to 20. The previous play area was located adjacent to the southern elevation of the building and in close proximity to 1 Emerald Road. It is important to note there is currently no requirement for day nurseries to provide outdoor play space for children. However we have reassessed the proposal and have relocated the play area to the corner of Emerald Road and Trenchard Drive well away from residential properties. Furthermore the size of the play area has been increased from approximately 80 square metres to 320 square metres. We accept that some of the proposed play area may not be that usable given its close proximity to the trees along Trenchard Drive, however its usable area is of a significant size and will easily cater for the number of children proposed. In reality the play area would only be used when the weather was dry

and the outside play time would be limited to one hour in the morning and one hour in the evening. Given the size, location and the limited usage of the outside play area we do not consider the proposal would lead to problems of noise to the detriment to neighbouring residents. Accordingly the proposal complies with criterion 'd' of Policy DC25.

Criterion e. ease of access for all, including disabled people;

6.13 The topography of the site is flat which allows easy access for disabled people, however part of the proposal includes the provision of a disabled ramp at the entrance to the building which the planning officer in assessing the previous application considered was suitable. The proposal therefore accords with criterion 'e' of Policy DC25.

Criterion f. the effect on the amenity of neighbouring residents.

6.14 As previously mentioned the site is situated within a predominantly residential area. To the east of the site is No 1 Emerald Road, No's 2/4 Emerald Road directly face the site from the south and there are properties situated on Trenchard Drive to the west which face the front of the site. However the proposed amendments are considered to be a significant improvement on the previous refusal. The play area has been relocated away from No 1 Emerald Road and is also some distance from neighbouring properties, the parking arrangement has been amended so that parents can now drop and pick up their children within the confines of the site, the staff parking can be accommodated within the site and the residential element of the proposal has been reduced in scale. Concern was expressed by the planning officer at the pre-application meeting in respect of the 0730 start. However in my assessment many nurseries appear to commence at 0730. One example of this is 63-65 Palatine Road, Didsbury (ref 088415/FO/2008/S2) which allowed operating hours of between 0730 hours and 1830 hours. Furthermore by allowing an opening time of 0730 hours this will in effect extend the time for parents to visit the site to fit in with the work schedules and would increase the level of stagger between parents arriving at the site. Overall it is considered these changes would not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents. Accordingly the proposal complies with criterion 'f' of Policy DC25 and the policy in the round.

Boundary treatment

6.15 The Council raised concerns with the previous planning application on the grounds that the boundary treatment to the site was not considered to be suitable within a residential area. The boundary treatment is now proposed to be reduced to 1m in height which is Permitted Development.



Disabled access

6.18 The disabled access to the nursery has already been dealt with. With regard to the dwellings the proposal would include a disabled access to both dwellings

Refuse area

6.19 The proposed refuse store has been relocated to the right of the vehicle entrance. The refuse area would comprise of a small enclosure consisting of fencing on three sides. We consider given the modest size of the refuse area it would not be an intrusive structure

when viewed from Emerald Road. The applicant is content to accept a condition requiring details of the enclosure.

Security

6.20 The previous planning application raised no issues of security other than the need for a crime prevention plan for the development. The applicant would be content with a condition requiring the submission of a plan.

Other issues raised by residents in respect of the previous application

6.21 A number of objections were received with respect to the previous planning application. The previous application for a change of use to a nursery and a nine bedroomed dwelling attracted six letters of objection and a petition of 20 signatures from local residents. In response to these objections other that which has dealt with above we would comment as follows:

Covenant on the site preventing access onto Emerald Road

6.22 The planning officer for the previous planning application stated this was a separate legal matter and should be dealt with elsewhere. Planning permission has already been granted for two accesses onto Emerald Road as part of the approved residential scheme and this proposal reduces these access points to one on this road.

Commercial business in a residential area

6.23 It is accepted that the area is residential in character, however many nurseries are situated in residential areas and we contend that as discussed above the proposal complies with the Council's UDP policies and the use is acceptable in principle. Furthermore the building was previously used as a hotel which is also a commercial use.

Parking in the local area is already problematic from people using the road due to the proximity with Manchester Airport.

6.24 We accept that Manchester airport is in close proximity to the site and the area is attractive to people parking their car and using the airport. However for the reasons set out above we consider that the demand for car parking can be accommodated within the site and there is no need for on-street parking. We would also point out that during the day from our site inspections there appears to be little on street parking in the area as evidenced by the photographs below.





The building is unsafe and should not be re-used

6.25 Enquiries were made to Manchester Fire Service and there were reports of three fires since 2002. One fire related to a car on the site, a second referred to a bin on fire and the third in 2006 related to the building. However the fire was not deemed serious and given the building appears to be in good structural condition there can be no objection to the re-use of the building.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 The proposal has been significantly amended from the previous refusal of planning permission and more information in respect of the nursery use has been submitted. We contend that the proposed uses would not constitute an overly intensive use of the site and would not cause unnecessary harm to the existing residential amenity to those who live on Trenchard Drive and Emerald road.

7.2 The proposal provides sufficient car parking provision and manoeuvring area which would ensure that the proposal does not result in on street parking in the vicinity of the site.

7.3 The proposal includes sufficient amenity space to serve the proposed two dwellings and the amenity space for the proposed nursery is in a location that would not result in noise and disturbance to the neighbouring residents on Emerald Road.

7.4 The proposed boundary treatment erected along Trenchard Avenue and Emerald Road would not cause harm to the visual amenity of the area.

7.5 The proposal complies fully with the Council's UDP policies and the key principles set out in the NPPF. Accordingly we contend that the planning application should be approved.

Higham & Co

25 July 2012