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Jubilee Church, 384 Hyde Road, Manchester, M12 4SA

Planning application for retrospective permission for change of use of an existing building as a church, and for permission for alteration and extension of the building with associated external works, parking and service access arrangements.

Planning Statement

30 July 2013

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Contents

1. Introduction

2. The Application Site and Surrounding Area

3. The Proposed Scheme

4. National and Local Planning Policy Context

5. Planning Appraisal

6. Conclusion

1. Introduction

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Paul Butler Associates on behalf of Jubilee Church (RCCG) Manchester which is currently using the existing, former business premises as a place of worship without the benefit of planning permission. It identifies the application site's national and local planning policy context and considers the planning issues relating to the proposal.

1.2 Following discussions with the City of Manchester Council over the unauthorised use of the premises, the current scheme seeks planning permission to continue use of the existing building as a place of worship and to alter and extend it with a new entrance to include: a main auditorium with stage, a multi-function hall, an activity room, a café with service kitchen, meeting rooms, accommodation for church officers and administration, and associated toilet and storage areas. Improvements to the appearance and layout of external site areas to include parking and service access are also proposed.

1.3 This statement is structured as follows:

- A brief description of the application site and its surrounding area;
- A description of the proposed scheme;
- A review of relevant national and local planning policy guidance, and;
- An appraisal of the proposed scheme against its planning policy context and relevant planning issues.

1.4 The planning application is supported by a series of planning drawings and reports with which this planning statement should be read in conjunction. This complementary information includes:

- Transport Statement and Travel Plan, Paul Butler Associates Ltd, 26 July 2013
- Design and Access Statement, OMI Architects, July 2013
- Waste Management Proforma, OMI Architects, July 2013
- Crime Impact Statement, Version A, Design for Security, Greater Manchester Police, 1st July 2013
- L001A Location Plan, OMI Architects

- L100 Existing Ground Floor Plan, OMI Architects
- L101 Existing First Floor Plan, OMI Architects
- L102 Existing Roof Plan, OMI Architects
- L103 Ground Floor Demolition Plan, OMI Architects
- L104 First Floor Demolition Plan, OMI Architects
- L105 Roof Demolition Plan, OMI Architects
- L200 Existing NE Elevation, OMI Architects
- L201 Existing NW Elevation, OMI Architects
- L202 Existing SW Elevation, OMI Architects
- L203 Existing SE Elevation, OMI Architects
- L204 Existing Street Elevation, OMI Architects
- L1000B Proposed Ground Floor Plan, OMI Architects
- L1001B Proposed First Floor Plan, OMI Architects
- L1002B Proposed Roof Plan, OMI Architects
- L1003B Proposed Boundary Treatment, OMI Architects
- L1004B Proposed Waste Strategy, OMI Architects
- L1600B Proposed Street Elevation, OMI Architects
- L1601B Proposed NW Elevation, OMI Architects
- L1602B Proposed SE Elevation, OMI Architects
- 3804/Da SK L View 1, Sketch Perspective 1, OMI Architects
- 3804/Da SK L View 2, Sketch Perspective 2, OMI Architects
- 3804/Da SK L View 3, Sketch Perspective 3, OMI Architects
- 3804/Da SK L View 4, Sketch Perspective 4, OMI Architects

2. The Application Site and Surrounding Area

The Application Site

2.1 The application site was previously used for car sales with the associated building used for showroom and ancillary purposes. It is located at the junction of Hyde Road with Redgate Lane, Ardwick, and is approximately 0.362 hectares in extent. The existing building is substantially single-storey, with very limited accommodation in the central roof space, and is located roughly in the centre of the site. As a consequence the building sits back from the site's street frontages and the land surrounding it is hard surfaced and generally used for car parking. Vehicle access to the site is taken off Redgate Lane. The overall amenity and appearance of the site at present, notwithstanding its active use, is poor.

The Surrounding Area

2.2 The site lies within the area designated as the Central Manchester Regeneration Area by the City Council within its Core Strategy. Hyde Road is a major entry route into the Regional Centre and is heavily trafficked and an important public transport route. North of Hyde Road is the East Manchester Regeneration Area. The nearest district centres to the application site are at Longsight and Gorton. The area in the past has been important for its significant industrial and commercial activity and although that has diminished the area around the application site still retains some such uses and character. At the opposite side of Hyde Road to the application site, the setting is largely housing with a diversity of ethnic backgrounds being a characteristic of its population.

Planning History

2.3 A planning history search for the site was undertaken using the City of Manchester Council's Public Access website. It identified an extensive planning history associated with the land, which is set out below in chronological order, starting with the most recent:

Application Reference: 100006/FU/2012/N2.

Proposal Description: Retrospective application for continued use of building as a place of worship with ancillary cafe area and offices (Class D2).

Decision: Refused 11 October 2012.

Application Reference: 080872/FO/2006/N2.

Proposal Description: Change of use from car showroom to food wholesale warehouse (trade only), with ancillary landscaping and erection of single storey cold storage facility to rear of site.

Decision: Approved 5 April 2007. Not implemented.

Application Reference: 075019/FU/2005/N2.

Proposal Description: Change of Use from vacant car showroom to community building comprising worship, teaching, rehabilitation drop in and child care facilities.

Decision: Refused 11 October 2005.

Application Reference: 066549/RO/NORTH2/02.

Proposal Description: Renewal of outline planning permission (057824) for leisure development with retail and car parking after demolition.

Decision: Approved 28 February 2003. Not implemented.

Application Reference: 057824/OO/NORTH2/99.

Proposal Description: Leisure development comprising 7-storey 200 bedroom hotel, conference centre, casino, nightclub, cafe diner restaurant with A1 retail and formation of new vehicular access and car parking after demolition of existing buildings.

Decision: Approved 3 February 1999. Not implemented.

Application Reference: 057053/OO/NORTH2/99.

Proposal Description: Retail development comprising A1 and A3 uses with associated access, servicing and parking and landscaping after demolition of existing buildings.

Decision: Application withdrawn.

Application Reference: 051208/AO/CENTL2/96.

Proposal Description: (a) 2 x 96 sheet free standing advertisement hoardings and (b) 7 x 48 sheet free standing advertisement hoardings.

Decision: Refused 10 February 1997.

Application Reference: 047758/FO/CENTL2/95.

Proposal Description: Installation of showroom windows to motor hall on the Hyde Road elevation.

Decision: Approved 19 June 1995.

Application Reference: 046926/AO/CENTL2/94.

Proposal Description: Various illuminated signs.

Decision: Approved 6 February 1995.

Application Reference: 046569/AO/CENTL2/94.

Proposal Description: Various illuminated signs to motor showroom .

Decision: Approved 29 November 1994.

Application Reference: 044601/FO/CENTL3/93.

Proposal Description: Erection of a car showroom and workshop, and alterations to existing building to form a used car hypermarket.

Decision: Approved 1 February 1994.

Application Reference: 043102/FO/CENTL3/93.

Proposal Description: Removal of one existing lighting column plus erection of 13 floodlighting columns and 8 floodlights mounted on the building.

Decision: Approved 2 June 1993.

Application Reference: 40779.

Proposal Description: Various illuminated and non-illuminated signs to motor showroom

Decision: Approved 19 February 1992.

Application Reference: 27937.

Proposal Description: Change of use of and alterations and extension to existing industrial buildings to form car hypermarket with vehicle auctions, new petrol filling station, fast food restaurant and car parks.

Decision: Approved 17 December 1986.

Application Reference: 25234.

Proposal Description: Use of premises for the storage of liquefied petroleum gas (up to 100 tonnes), in association with the manufacture of industrial aerosols, including the erection of storage tank.

Decision: Application withdrawn.

Application Reference: 30064.

Proposal Description: Alterations to the existing buildings and use of the site for vehicle auction, car hypermarket and car wash.

Decision: Approved 3 December 1987.

Application Reference: F08870.

Proposal Description: Erection of a single storey building for production and warehousing purposes.

Decision: Approved 3 January 1979.

3. The Proposed Scheme

The Proposed Scheme

3.1 This is a full detailed planning application that seeks retrospective consent for use of the site as a place of worship, and seeks consent to physically alter and extend the existing building for worship and community-based activities. The scheme would improve the appearance of the building, the site and the site boundaries.

3.2 The current building has a floor area of 1,166 sqm and the scheme would enlarge this to a total 1,450 sqm. Accommodation to be provided within the building is;

- an auditorium with stage;
- a multi-function hall;
- lobby entrance areas;
- meeting rooms;
- café, including a service kitchen;
- accommodation for church officers and church administration; and
- ancillary toilet and storage areas.

3.3 Externally there would be new landscaped amenity, seating and play areas, as well as space for 41 cars (including 3 disabled spaces), 2 motorcycle spaces and cycle parking for 10 bicycles, and a bin store area.

3.4 Vehicle access would continue to be from Redgate Lane and a new main pedestrian entrance off Hyde Road is proposed.

3.5 Jubilee Church is one of over 700 parishes of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) in the United Kingdom. RCCG has thousands of parishes all over the world with a presence in over one hundred and twenty countries. In Manchester, Jubilee Church started at the Odeon Cinema in Manchester City Centre and later moved to the AMC Manchester (Great Northern, Deansgate). Neither venue was convenient or appropriate in terms of internal specification. High rentals at AMC Manchester led to the Pastorate

taking the decision to acquire a building for the Church and after a three year search, 384 Hyde Road, which had been suggested by members, was acquired. It is an ideal location since the majority of members come from the local community.

3.6 The church accommodates daily activity with the main events being two services on a Sunday (refer to Transport Statement and Travel Plan document for details). The Church Office is open on weekdays from 10 am-3 pm for administrative purposes.

3.7 The locally-orientated activities taking place at Jubilee Church are of great benefit to the local community. At the time of submitting this application, the church employs 6 full time staff and hopes to increase the number to 12 full time equivalent positions (10 full time and 6 part time) if the proposed use and investment in better facilities is permitted. In addition to paid staff, the Church has local volunteers who are assisted with transportation, training and lunch money.

3.8 Whilst the main function of the Church is to cater for the religious needs of the people who attend from the local community, the Church also conducts marriages on the site under their licence. This meets the requirements of members of the local congregation who wish to have a Church wedding; although currently the reception and catering facilities are poor. The lack of adequate kitchen provision will be addressed by the planning application proposal. The Church provides free assistance with pre- and post-marital counselling for couples, with qualified counsellors, working to ensure marriages are carefully thought through and disputes are resolved to give long-lasting relationships. This creates a need for private meeting rooms.

3.9 The Church administrative office accommodates administrative staff and is based on the first floor of the existing building and operates 5 days per week. The current office accommodation is restricted and cramped but would be replaced as part of the new investment proposed. A receptionist is employed to supervise the entrance lobby and security staff look after the site at night. This would continue under the application proposal.

3.10 The Church has good linkages with the wider community and annually hands out over 150 free Turkey hampers to less privileged local people at Christmas. Beneficiaries have included people living at the Limes Homeless Hostel, Ardwick Terrace, Elizabeth Yarwood Court, Richmond Court, Gorton Parks Nursing Home and also persons in need identified via Brunswick Parish Church.

3.11 The Church has specific youth projects and activities for those aged 12-19 years old to keep them active and stimulated. Activities have included video camera training, vocal training, cooking, pool, badminton and camping to name a few. The Church believes this helps ensure local youths don't get involved in drug and gang-related activity. The Church provides welfare facilities for over 60 single mothers and widows. They also hold bi-annual seminars on lifestyle, health, career improvement and business with guest speakers from the NHS, HMRC and entrepreneurs etc. These activities appeal to a range of local people. The on-going plan is to extend the community work of the Church, to organise more activities and to employ more people.

3.12 The Church can give interest-free loans to members and monetary gifts to local people experiencing financial difficulties. They are considering stepping up their food bank operation. They also do charity giveaways from members' old clothes etc.

3.13 The Church would like to be permitted to develop the site into a contemporary facility, enhanced with a new entrance, café, offices, kitchen, with better halls and storage spaces that work to meet their needs. Key short-term aims are to improve the attractiveness of the building, make it safer, open new windows and improve passive surveillance. Investment is also needed in the external areas which are currently poor.

3.14 The improved internal layout will allow use of the cafe, activity room and multipurpose hall for a variety of community and support activities including, for example: a quiet study room; adult and youth training; IT training; an improved after-schools club; a daily mother, baby and toddler crèche, a new parenting session and childcare. The cafe area will also encourage the building to be used as a drop-in and meeting place which should prove popular, particularly with older local residents. The kitchen will allow proper catering for

Weddings and Conferences. With the kitchen, hiring out rooms to local people/the community becomes a more viable proposition. Advice and counselling services could also be accommodated better within the revised accommodation.

3.15 Initial job opportunities will include an Accountant position in the office (immediate start) and an Administrator (immediate start). Other employment opportunities are anticipated to follow in IT, Childcare, Food Preparation and in Project, Event, and Premises Management.

3.16 Over the long term, the Church has aspirations to acquire and invest in other vacant and disused property for social enterprise or employment purposes. If realised such plans have the potential to create new employment and training opportunities. There are sites nearby which could be make suitable investment opportunities and the Church would liaise closely with Manchester City Council before acquiring any further property in the City. The Church can quite adequately act as an investor. They report assets of over £1 million, a turnover approaching £800,000 pa and are part of a much larger international organisation comprising 700 churches in the UK and Ireland and many more abroad.

3.17 In the short-term, the Church is making this application to rationalise its current accommodation and make the site work properly. The layout of the new building and its overall form includes the retention of the existing main building floor plan with its extension, by single storey flat roofed elements, towards Hyde Road. These elements would provide new administration offices, an entrance hall, a café and kitchen and a screened bin store area. The visual result would be to place the overall development much closer to Hyde Road and to create the sense of a back of pavement development when viewed from this major route. To the north west and west of the main auditorium, in the site area near the junction of Hyde Road with Redgate Lane and adjacent to Redgate Lane, a screened playground and hard paved area are proposed. These areas would be accessible from the main auditorium, activity room and via a pathway leading to the car park.

3.18 Elevationally the building is described fully in the Design and Access Statement that is submitted as part of the proposal. Externally the car parking and hard surfaces are rationalised. Each new car parking space can operate independently of the others: this is in contrast to the current tandem parking arrangements. The proposals include a new tower to Hyde Road which will act as a local landmark to the site in line with the Manchester Design Guide. Secure means of enclosure and decorative security screens will ensure the proposal operates safety and achieves Design for Security recommendations.

3.19 Access arrangements are comprehensively planned for as discussed in the Design and Access Statement and Transport Statement and Travel Plan which are submitted as part of this application. Three of the 41 car parking bays are designed for use by disabled people. With 7% of spaces available for use by disabled people, the 5% disabled minimum provision sought by the City Council is exceeded. The disability spaces are located close to the main entrance of the building from the car park.

3.20 Landscaping treatments include; a café terrace, a landscaped entrance from Hyde Road flanked by raised planters and low planting; a landscaped break-out/play area and a landscape buffer zone between the southern elevation of the Church and the car park. The application proposal will allow the building to project a much stronger presence onto Hyde Road thereby allowing the positive uses that are currently taking place to be recognised from outside the site by passers-by.

Pre-application discussions

3.21 Prior to the submission of this application, three meetings were held with Planning and Regeneration Officers from Manchester City Council. On 28 February 2013, the applicant met with Manchester City Council officers (Des Jones, Ian Jarvis, Anne Taylor, Andy Wilson and Harriet Aidoo) to discuss the future use of the building and to provide the Council with information about the use, including an explanation of how the Church had come to acquire and invest in the premises.

3.22 The planning history of the site was reviewed and discussed. The Council Officers accepted that the church use served local communities but noted that this had not been conveyed by a previous retrospective change of use application which had been refused. The potential to submit a revised planning proposal was discussed. Officers advised that future use as a church would need to contribute positively to the appearance and character of Hyde Rd. Creating a new relationship with Hyde Road was judged to be important, for example, by using a new entrance and landscaping the external parts of the site.

3.23 On 25th April 2013, the Design Team met with Des Jones and Ian Jarvis. A preliminary design was presented to the Officers. They were generally receptive to the new entrance, subject to some changes, and validation requirements were agreed. On 23rd May 2013 the Design Team met with the planning officers to present the evolved design and to discuss any matters arising from the previous meeting. It was agreed that the application would be based on the drawings presented, which the present submission is.

4 National and Local Planning Context.

Introduction

4.1 The national and local planning policy context for the proposed scheme is set out within the following documents:

- National Planning Policy Framework, 2012 (NPPF);
- Manchester Core Strategy 2012 – 2027;
- Saved policies of Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester;
- Ardwick Local Plan 2007; and
- Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

4.2 Published in March 2012, the NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It seeks positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment as well as improving people's quality of life by:

- Encouraging economic activity (Section 1).

- Recognising communities, promoting their vitality and viability and allocating suitable sites to meet their needs for retail, commercial, office, community and leisure uses (Section 2).

- Promoting and maximising sustainable transport solutions by: reducing the need to travel; giving priority to pedestrian and cycle movements and access to high quality public transport facilities; creating safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts

between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians; considering the needs of people with disabilities (Section 4).

- Achieving high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings and public and private space. Developments should: function well and add to the overall quality of the area; establish a strong sense of place using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to work and visit; support local facilities and transport networks; and create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder and the fear of crime do not undermine quality of life and; be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping (Section 7).

- Facilitating social interaction and creating healthy and inclusive communities by: promoting opportunities for meetings between members of the community who might not otherwise come into contact with each other and by providing and encouraging the use of community facilities such as meeting places (Section 8).

- Securing reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimising vulnerability and providing resilience to the impacts of climate change (Section 10).

- Encouraging the re-use of previously developed/brownfield land (Section 11).

Manchester Core Strategy 2012 – 2027

4.3 Adopted in July 2012, the Manchester Core Strategy 2012 - 2027 forms the key Development Plan Document (DPD) in Manchester City Council's Local Development Framework (LDF) and sets out long term strategic policies for Manchester's future development.

4.4 The Core Strategy identifies five regeneration areas that, along with the city centre, cover the entire city. Each area has different issues, challenges and opportunities. The application site is located within the 'Central Manchester Regeneration Area'. This

regeneration area extends from the Inner Relief Road and southern fringes of the city centre out to the edges of the university campus at Fallowfield in the south and from Hulme in the west, through to Manchester's border with Stockport in Levenshulme. The area includes the five wards of Hulme, Ardwick, Longsight, Rusholme and Moss Side, which represent the inner ring of suburbs to the south of the city centre.

4.5 The Core Strategy notes that whilst Central Manchester has many positive attributes, it also has a range of physical and social problems that must be tackled in order for the area to meet its potential. The key challenges facing the area are noted as:

- High levels of worklessness;
- Deprivation concentrated by neighbourhood, rather than whole wards;
- Limited housing choice in some areas;
- Limited scope for physical change, and;
- Congestion along key arterial routes into the City Centre.

4.6 Specific Core Strategy (CS) policies of particular relevance to the proposal are:

- Policy SP 1 'Spatial Principles' which aims to create high-quality neighbourhoods of choice outside the Regional Centre. The policy states that these neighbourhoods should provide a good mix of housing and sustainable access to local services and facilities for people of all ages and with differing needs. The policy aims to focus the majority of new residential development in the Inner Areas, including the Central Manchester Regeneration Area.

- Policy EC 2 'Existing Employment Space' which states the Council will seek to retain and enhance existing employment space and sites but that alternative uses will be considered where:

  - The existing use is un-viable in terms of business operations, building age and format;

- The existing use is incompatible with adjacent uses;
- The existing use is unsuitable for employment having had regard to the Manchester-Salford-Trafford SFRA; or
- On balance, proposals are able to offer greater benefits in terms of the Core Strategy's vision and spatial objectives than the existing use.

- Policy EC 8 'Central Manchester' which aims to improve provision of and access to employment uses within the Central Manchester Regeneration Area, including improving public transport, walking and cycling connectivity between residential neighbourhoods and employment locations. Hyde Road is considered a suitable location for employment generating development as part of a mix of uses. Development associated with Hyde Road has design opportunities to exploit main road locations.

- C9 'Out of Centre Development', which confirms that a church use is not a main town centre use as defined by NPPF Annex 2. The site at 384 Hyde Road is a suitable location (refer to Transport Statement and Travel Plan) for such a local community which generates employment opportunities.

- Policy T1 'Sustainable Transport' which aims to encourage a modal shift away from car travel to public transport, cycling and walking for example, improving pedestrian routes and the pedestrian environment and improving and developing Manchester's cycle network.

- Policy T2 'Accessible Areas of Opportunity and Need' which aims to ensure that new development is easily accessible by walking, cycling and public transport connecting residents to jobs, centres, health, leisure, open spaces and educational opportunities.

- Policy EN1 'Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas' which expects all new development in Manchester to achieve good design and reinforce and enhance the local character of the area in which it is located. The application site lies within the 'Central Arc Character Area' where the Core Strategy advises the opportunity exists

for large scale development using innovative urban design solutions to regenerate the social housing estates which dominate the arc area. This policy also advises that, if possible, future development should be located at or close to public transport (Refer to Transport Statement and Travel Plan).

- Policy DM1 ' Development Management' which considers the impact of development on, amongst other things; the character of the surrounding area, effects on amenity, accessibility, vehicular access and car parking and crime prevention.

Saved Policies of Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester

4.7 Saved City of Manchester UDP policies of relevance to the proposed development include:

- Policy DC26 which states the Council will use the development control process to reduce the impact of noise on people living and working in, or visiting the city.

- Policy E3.3 which aims to upgrade the appearance of the City's major radial and orbital roads and rail routes by encouraging improvements to the appearance of adjacent premises and development of the highest quality.

- The application site is located in 'Area 8 - Ardwick, Brunswick and West Gorton' of the Saved Manchester UDP, which amongst other things aims to improve the area as a place to live by upgrading housing stock and enhancing communal areas, improving the access of local people to jobs both locally and within the wider context of the City and increase the attractiveness of the local environment.

Ardwick Local Plan

4.8 Adopted in 2007, the Ardwick Local Plan sets out a 10 – 15 year strategy to address the area's social, economic and physical needs. The application site does not fall within an

area where location specific guidance, via a Neighbourhood Action Plan, exists. However general policies and strategic guidance that is relevant includes;

- reducing the negative impact of Hyde Road as a major route on adjacent activity;
- create well designed schemes and areas; and
- churches can form an important part of the social network offering various services to the community at a secular level and can also provide space for community and voluntary groups.

Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance

4.9 Adopted in April 2007, the Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Guidance document reflects the recognition of the importance of attractive, well-designed and well-maintained neighbourhoods in supporting sustainable development. The Guide aims to support and enhance the shaping of Manchester by providing a set of principles to guide future development. It advises that buildings should front onto streets, contribute positively to local character, help sustain local neighbourhoods, promote an appropriate sense of place, and add positively to the character of an area.

5 Planning Appraisal

5.1 Drawing on the application site's national and local policy context, the principal considerations against which the application should be considered are set out below.

Regeneration and benefits of the scheme

5.2 The site is a former commercial premises and its lack of active use over recent years reflects the general decline in industrial and commercial activity within the broader Ardwick area. Its main road location on Hyde Road has not been sufficient, on its own, to attract new activity or investment. Whilst there are important regeneration initiatives being promoted elsewhere, and particularly to improve housing and the district centre provision on the opposite side of Hyde Road, the site's importance lies in how it can contribute positively to those initiatives whilst not being directly part of them.

5.3 The NPPF states that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that applications for planning permission should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. It seeks positive improvements in the quality of the built, environment, as well as in peoples' quality of life, including replacing poor design with better design. The core planning principles which should guide planning decisions include securing high quality design, effective use of land by reusing previously developed sites and focusing development in sustainable locations.

5.4 The scheme would reuse a 'brownfield' site and would create an active use on a major entry route to the city centre. Complimentary to the active use is the quality of the layout and appearance of the scheme which reinforces the positive image of the scheme when viewed from Hyde Road, and the appropriateness of limiting vehicle access to Redgate Lane. In combination with the scheme's other positive attributes, identified in the following sections, it is believed that it would not conflict with the specific regeneration initiatives in the area, but would add to the area's stock of activity accessible to the local

community in a way that improves the image, environment and usability of the area and of this part of Hyde Road.

5.5 The objectives of the NPPF are supported locally by Manchester Core Strategy policies SP1 and EC8 that give priority to an appropriate mix of developments associated with identified regeneration areas, including the area within which the application site is located, which make a positive contribution to the use and character based on major routes such as Hyde Road.

5.6 It is considered that the proposed development would be consistent with the above policies. The site has previously been developed, is accessible from local facilities and housing areas, and is accessible by public transport.

Economic and neighbourhood impact

5.7 The direct impact of the proposal relates to support to the building industry during development work and then through employment of those who administer the church. The applicant identifies that a total of 12 jobs (full-time equivalent) may result from implementation of the planning application proposal. This level of employment would be expected to be similar to that associated with a car showroom, perhaps in excess. Indirectly the proposal will have longer term management requirements and will bring numbers of people into the local area where other facilities and services are available for use. One of the priorities for development in Central Manchester is to focus investment in existing employment and development areas such as along Hyde Road. The Core Strategy recognises that such employment will be part of a mix of uses and the scale of the current proposal is consistent with this approach. Importantly it can also be seen not to be counter to the higher profile strategic regeneration activity based in the nearby District Centre and at Eastlands, and proposed for the City Centre Fringe area.

5.8 For the above reasons it is considered that the current proposal will add positively to the regeneration of the broader East Manchester area and would not impact on specific regeneration proposals being promoted within the area. In this context the provision of a

church with obvious community-based activities can be seen to strengthen neighbourhood character and the sustainability of the neighbourhood and associated community.

5.9 Policy EC2 of the Core Strategy establishes that other uses will be considered on employment land if it can be adequately demonstrated that the proposal is able to offer greater benefits in terms of the Core Strategy's vision and spatial objectives than the existing use. The use of the building as a church which serves the needs of the local community is considered to be a significant benefit which accords with the vision and spatial objective of the Core Strategy. In particular the church use will provide an essential and much valued community facility in a sustainable and accessible location. The church will also help deliver a fundamental objective of the Core Strategy through the creation of 'neighborhoods of choice' which make a positive contribution to the wellbeing of residents and consider the needs of all members of the community regardless of age, gender, disability, sexuality, religion, culture, ethnicity or income.

5.10 The scheme would therefore be consistent with sections 1, 2 and 4 of the NPPF and CS policies SP1, EC2 and EC8.

Building layout, density, massing and appearance

5.11 The proposal retains the general location and pitched roof height of the existing building but modifies it with the introduction of single storey accommodation closer to the line of Hyde Road. This is important as the overall form of the building when viewed from the principal Hyde Road frontage will be seen as more characteristically to be at 'back of pavement' than is currently the case. Overall this increases significantly the visual interest of the building which is then allied to good design detail in the choice of elevation materials and appearance. The inclusion of a higher 'tower' like element at the end of the building nearest the Hyde Road, Redgate Lane junction further emphasises this visual interest. The appearance and form of the building and its location closer to the site's Hyde Road frontage will develop a sense of place, which is important on a corner site such as this one, while adding to the range and mix of activities that are appropriate for a

main road frontage. For these reasons the scheme is considered to be consistent with CS policies EN1 and DM1 and with the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD.

5.12 The materials to be used in the development include brickwork, aluminium framed glazed windows and a clear, glazed entrance box. The detail within the Hyde Road elevations is principally generated by the new entrance feature and tower. The plans show how the materials and details above reinforce the positive modelling described above (and in detail in the Design and Access Statement) to produce a church building with street presence and a sense of quality. The current lack of interface with the streetscape is resolved as is the external negative appearance of the site which currently detracts from Hyde Road. The proposal offers a contemporary character which is fitting and suitable in the local context. For these reasons the scheme is considered to be consistent with CS policies EN1 and DM1 and with the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD.

Environmental quality and impact

5.13 As well as improving the overall form and siting of the building on the site the scheme realises the opportunity to improve site boundaries and promote environmental improvements to the site, including landscaping. While the proposed playground and amenity areas are associated directly with the use of the building, the environmental planting to the Hyde Road frontage and to the Redgate Lane boundary, allied to the improved pedestrian access off Hyde Road, will significantly increase the environmental quality of the site, including its bio-diversity, and will create a very positive visual impact within the adjacent street scenes. For the reasons the scheme is considered consistent with CS policy EN1, Saved UDP policy E3.3 and with the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD.

Compliance with Design for Access 2

5.14 There is flat and level access within the car park, into the building and from the new entrance into the street. Internal arrangements allow for wheelchair movements. The

disabled parking spaces are sufficient in number, will be provided solely for disabled people, and are located close to the church entrance to improve accessibility.

Crime impact statement

5.15 The proposal will increase public safety and reduce potential for crime, as such it is considered the proposal accords with sections 7 and 8 of the NPPF and CS policies EN1 and DM1 and the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD. The proposal will increase passive surveillance both within the site and the immediate surrounding area particularly along the frontage with Hyde Road and overlooking the car park area. Landscaping will significantly improve the appearance of the site, which presently has a fortified and uninviting feel, thereby reducing the capacity for fear of crime.

Traffic and access associated with the scheme

5.16 This planning application is accompanied by a Transport Statement and Travel Plan prepared by Paul Butler Associates. It is identified that the church fundamentally serves the local population with 71% of members living less than three miles from the church. The Transport Statement and Travel Plan also demonstrated that current travel patterns to the church are sustainable with only 16% of people making single occupancy car journeys; nevertheless it is intended to further reduce car use and initiate a modal shift in toward more sustainable forms of travel.

5.17 The proposal will provide a new, dedicated pedestrian-only entrance from Hyde Road. This will separate pedestrian and vehicular traffic flows. The Hyde Road footways benefit from good levels of street lighting. The proposed pedestrian entrance to the site and the associated new entrance to the building beyond have been designed to be legible to pedestrians and will give the church improved street presence, which it does not currently enjoy. The entrance will also improve passive surveillance, thereby improving personal safety for the congregation and for people walking past on the footway outside the Church. The new entrance will also improve the appearance of the building and streetscene along Hyde Road – a key arterial route.

5.18 The proposal includes a new dedicated area for secure cycle parking. This will provide secure parking for 10 cycles and 2 powered two wheelers (or alternatively parking for 14 cycles). Cyclists will access the area from the existing entrance to the car park from Redgate Lane.

5.19 The proposal will not be associated with any changes to bus stops (or bus services) but will improve the accessibility of the site to bus passengers by providing a direct pedestrian access between the building and the bus stops located on Hyde Road. This will reduce journey times for existing users (who will no longer have to walk along Redgate Lane at the rear of the site to gain access to the site). The new entrance will also improve the passive surveillance of the existing bus stop adjacent to the building which will be overlooked by the new office accommodation proposed. The new entrance will be more convenient, safer and will accommodate full disabled access for bus (and rail) passengers.

5.20 In relation to traffic and access to the proposed scheme it is considered that the proposal is consistent with Section 4 of the NPPF and CS policies T1 and T2.

6 Conclusion

6.1 This planning statement has been prepared by Paul Butler Associates to accompany an application for retrospective permission for change of use of an existing building as a church, and for permission for alteration and extension of the building with associated external works, parking and service access arrangements.

6.2 This planning application has established that the church is meeting the needs of the local community and that the use of the site as a church is of significant benefit to the community so as to outweigh the loss of the site as a redundant car showroom, while not conflicting with or hindering wider regeneration objectives of the City Council in this area. As a result it is considered that this application fully accords with the provisions of the NPPF and the development plan for Manchester.