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Design and Access Statement

Rodmill Court, Wilbraham Road, Manchester, M14 6JU

Refurbishment and Extension of 16 Flats
Creation of 6 New Flats in the Roofspace

HISTORY

A detailed planning application was made on 12th July 2006, and approved on 29th August 2006. Ref. 080026/F/2006/S1.

A new application in 2012, identical to the above in terms of the proposals, was approved on 28th March 2012.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Rodmill Court is a two storey building comprising 16 no. one-bedroom flats, accessed by 2 communal entrance blocks each containing stairs, meters, post boxes etc.

The building is in need of reroofing and the structure of the roof is showing signs of movement. Existing painted windows and doors are rotten and need complete replacement. Brickwork needs re-pointing as well as substantial remedial work and chimneys need rebuilding or removal.

While refurbishing the existing property it is proposed to make alterations to the existing entrance blocks. The entrance is not accessible for disabled people, and the stairs are not suitable for the ambulant disabled.

The new pathways will be ramped to the new entrance blocks to allow full disabled access to the ground floor apartments, and new stairs suitable for the ambulant disabled will be installed.

AMOUNT

The roof needs replacement and it is proposed to incorporate 6 additional flats within the new roof space. They will be two bedroom apartments, so the range of affordable rentable accommodation on offer will be widened. The refurbished Rodmill Court will appeal to 1, 2 and 3 person households who may require to live centrally and in an area with good public transport accessibility.

LAYOUT AND LANDSCAPING

The new building 'footprint' will be the same as before but with a higher density (because of the extra flats). It is proposed to comprehensively re-landscape the site while providing 100% off-road car parking, including 2 disabled access spaces. The site will also benefit from a new communal refuse store. There is no store at present, resulting in unsightly piles of overflowing rubbish.

PLANNING AND BUILDING CONTROL
09 AUG 2012

Pedestrian, vehicular and wheelchair access from Wilbraham Road, from parking areas (including disabled parking spaces), from dropping off point (on bend) will be channelled safely along the pathways indicated and ramped to the two main entrance blocks. At present the building sits in an indeterminate mass of tarmac and concrete, and there is no defined path or gradations of space from public to private.

It is proposed to improve the view of Rodmill Court from Wilbraham Road with increased soft landscaping and reduced hard surfaces in the foreground. The large and unsightly car parking area stretching across the front of the building is to be removed. The proposed brick dwarf walls and gating at the front of the building will improve security, by defining private space, and give the perimeter of the building better definition.

At the rear of the building the unsightly metal fire escape stairs will be removed and the dark 'insets' which offer potential hiding places for criminals will be removed by infilling the gaps (and thus enlarging the kitchens).

SCALE

The main ridge height will be maintained at the height of the existing roof, some 600mm below the previous approved scheme. This has been achieved by providing a mansard roof. As previously stated the footprint is the same, so the scale of the building will be very similar to the existing one, although it will be understood visually as a 3-storey dormer roofed building rather than a 2-storey pitched roof building.

APPEARANCE, THERMAL PERFORMANCE

The existing building will be comprehensively refurbished externally. This will include replacement of windows with upvc, re-pointing of brickwork, retiling of vertically tiled bays etc. The superior performance (and fit) of the new double glazing and the proposed additional insulation of external walls and roof will greatly improve the thermal performance of the building, thereby cutting tenants' heating bills and reducing CO2 emissions.

The existing tiled roof will be replaced with roof tiles of similar appearance but with a slightly steeper pitch, and the proposed dormers will give more interest to the elevations.

CONTEXT

Rodmill Court is dominated by the Mayfair Building which is a full 3 storeys in height and runs close to and parallel with Wilbraham Road, obscuring much of the view of and from Rodmill Court. The Mayfair building is more modern and more brightly coloured. To the rear of Rodmill Court is Platt Fields Park. The other buildings on either side are 3 and 4 storeys high with residential and childcare nursery uses, but with very limited side aspects.

The proposed additions and modifications to Rodmill Court as described above will give it more interest and a more attractive and inviting aspect from Wilbraham Road by virtue of the soft landscaping, walling and gating in the foreground, and will generally bring it up to date and up to standard with buildings around it, in particular with the Mayfair building.