G | T | P
Garner Town Planning

9 AMHERST ROAD, FALLOWFIELD, MANCHESTER, M14 6UG

CONVERSION OF PROPERTY FROM A 13-BEDROOM HMO INTO TWO FLATS

PLANNING STATEMENT

PLANNING PORTAL APPLICATION REFERENCE PP-02819276

AUGUST 2013



GTP Ltd
PO Box 138
Stockport
Cheshire
SK6 8WT

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This statement is submitted on behalf of Mr A Roiter to accompany the planning application submitted to Manchester City Council for the conversion of the existing three-storey plus basement building from its existing large-scale 13-bedroom HMO into two more manageable flats each containing six bedrooms at 9 Amherst Road in Fallowfield. This document sets out a description of the site and its surroundings, and the existing and proposed floor layouts, before reviewing the national and local planning policies for the area, and putting forward a conclusion that the scheme is entirely appropriate.

1.2 This statement should be read in conjunction with the Design and Access Statement and accompanying plans which were submitted as part of the planning application by the agent Igloo Architecture on 8 August 2013 on behalf of Mr Roiter.

2 THE SITE

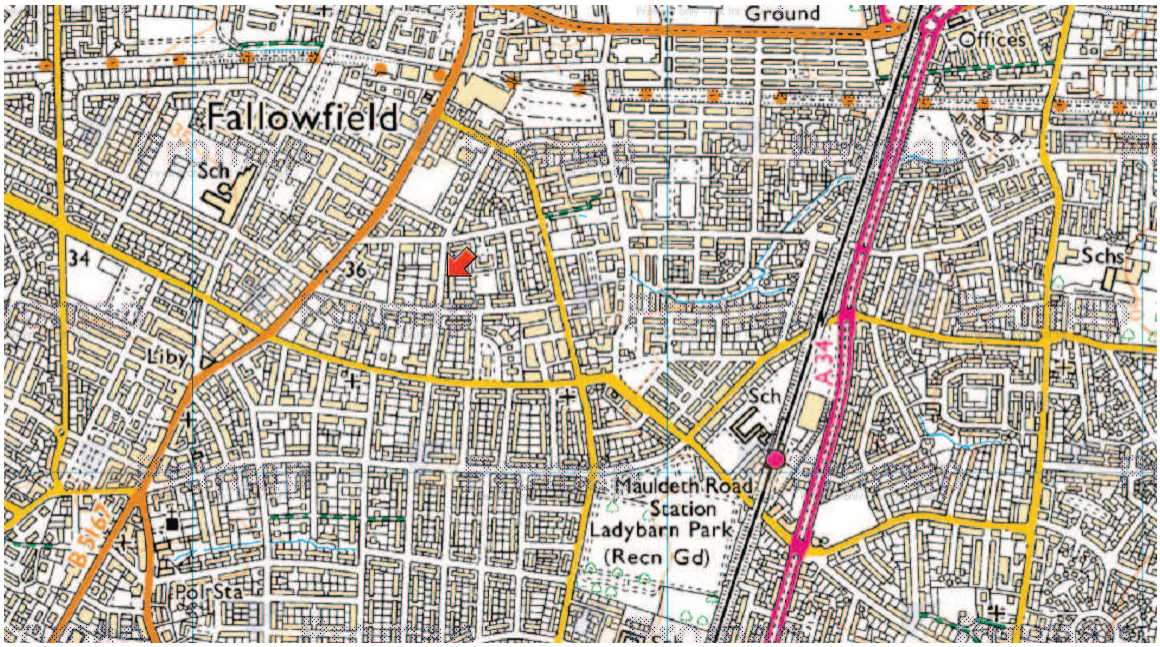
2.1 The extent of the subject site is shown edged by a red line on the plan on the cover of this statement. The property stands due south of the main District Centre of Fallowfield and is set within a residential suburb which contains a variety of older buildings that are in use as a mixture of flats and HMOs. The appearance of the site from the road is shown in the photograph at Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: The Subject Property



2.2 The property lies in a highly sustainable location within easy walking distance of the defined centre with its local shops, services, sources of employment and frequent public transport links provided by bus services. In addition, the station at Mauldeth Road to the east provides easy access to rail and tram services and recreational space is also close by at Ladybarn Park to the south east, as indicated in the plan of the area at Figure 2 on page 3 of this statement.

Figure 2: Plan of the Area



2.3 The property is currently a long-standing HMO which contains one kitchen and one lounge/dining room with a bedroom on the basement level along with four bedrooms for each of the upper three floors making 13 bedrooms in total. Each floor also has a wc/toilet with a basin in each room (other than the basement) and a shower or bathroom on the upper three floors. The existing floor layouts for the property are shown in the plans below at Figure 3.

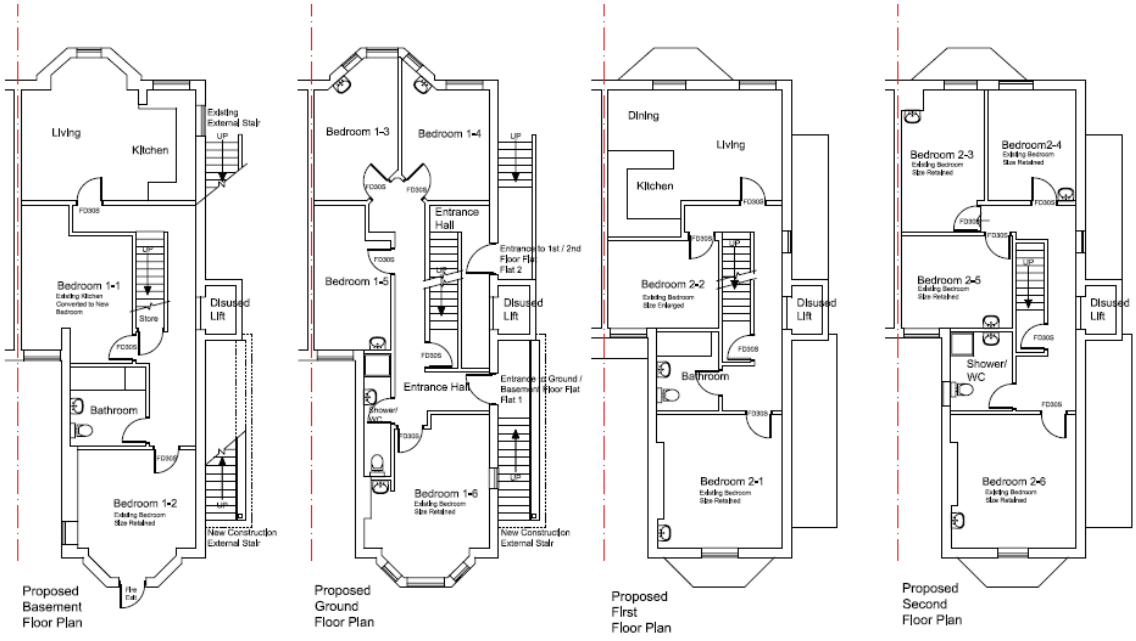
Figure 3: Existing Floor Layouts



3 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 The basis of the submitted application is to remove a large-scale 13-bedroom HMO and replace it with two flats to allow for improved facilities for the tenants. The first unit will occupy the basement and ground floor levels with the second unit contained on the first and second floors. Each of the units will have six bedrooms and will have a living area/kitchen together with two bathrooms. This leads to fewer people sharing the facilities and therefore improved space around the units and a higher quality of living. The proposed floor layouts are shown below at Figure 4.

Figure 4: Proposed Floor Layouts



3.2 The only external change proposed is to improve the side entrance area by extending the existing canopy to allow for the rear entrance to the lower flat with the upper floor flat retaining the existing front entrance. This will present a more uniform and balanced appearance to the side elevation which will enhance the property. The change proposed is shown in the plan below at Figure 5.

Figure 5: Proposed External Changes



4 PLANNING POLICIES

National Policies

4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) of March 2012 was issued by the coalition government with the aim to simplify the planning system and to facilitate development. The document has a strong presumption in favour of sustainable development (such as the subject scheme) at its heart and to allow a mixture of uses to encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban areas (paragraph 17) as one of its core principles.

4.2 A further aim of the NPPF is set out in paragraph 23 as being to ensure the vitality of town centres, which includes recognising that residential development can play an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and the NPPF encourages residential schemes in sustainable locations such as the application site. Paragraph 37 informs that planning policies should aim for a balance of land uses so that people can be encouraged to minimise journey lengths for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities. The subject application adheres to these aims by providing a form of residential development close by to the Fallowfield District Centre with easy access to public transport links and local shops/services.

Local Policies

4.3 In terms of local planning policies it is noted that the City Council are utilising the Core Strategy as adopted in July 2012 along with the saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan of July 1995, together with the Supplementary Planning Document 'Guide to Development in Manchester' which was published in April 2007. The relevant policies of these documents are considered as follows.

Core Strategy (CS)

4.4 Policy H 11 of the CS relates to HMOs and is therefore not strictly of relevance to the subject application which seeks to replace a current 13-bedroom HMO with two smaller self-contained units. As such, the scheme effectively proposes to greatly improve the existing situation and is therefore endorsed by the Council's current stance aimed at reducing the number of large-scale HMOs in its area and in south Manchester in particular.

4.5 The scheme will result in a decrease in the level of occupation and therefore fully complies with the wording of Policy H 11 which seeks to avoid any increased population. Furthermore, the scheme will improved the character of the area by replacing a large-scale HMO and again this complies with the aims and objectives of Policy H 11 and represents a development proposal which the Council should support.

4.6 Policy DM 1 of the CS establishes a list of 15 development management criteria to which new development should seek to adhere. The conversion scheme proposed has paid due regard to all relevant criteria of Policy DM 1 and as such the scheme is in full accord with the policy.

Unitary Development Plan (UDP)

4.7 Policy DC 5 of the UDP relates to flat conversions and sets out seven criteria to which the Council will have regard in making decisions on such schemes. As the submitted application is to reduce occupation numbers and to change from a HMO to two self-contained smaller units the proposed development is considered to satisfy all stated criteria of Policy DC 5.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

4.8 Section 7 of the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD relates to housing density and mix, where it is stated that the Council will look to promote regeneration by creating sustainable communities. The emphasis is placed on seeking a range and diversity of type and size of housing to provide quality accommodation and aims to achieve an overall lower density of occupation. Converting the existing 13-bedroom HMO with two smaller units will assist in this stated aim by reducing the overall occupation of the property.

5 CONCLUSION

5.1 The application proposes to lower the existing density of development at the site by converting an existing 13-bedroom HMO with two smaller units. Such a development is completely in line with the guidance of the NPPF and local planning policies CS H 11, CS DM 1, UDP DC 5 and the advice of the SPD. The Council should therefore view the submitted scheme positively as it will assist in reducing the number of large-scale HMOs in the locality.

5.2 Accordingly, it is trusted that the Council will look favourably on this proposal given the supporting information supplied in this statement along with the submitted planning application package and grant planning permission accordingly.

5.3 However, if any issues are identified these should be raised with the agent for the application at an early stage in the determination process to allow for discussion and agreement.