Former St. John's Ambulance Headquarters, Fallowfield
Planning and Consultation Statement

PLANNING AND
BUILDING CONTROL
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Planning and Consultation Statement

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Appendix 1 – Site Layout Plan

1. Introduction

1.1. This Statement is submitted to Manchester City Council by the Watkin Jones Group, in connection with a planning application for residential development at the site of the former St John's Ambulance Headquarters at Egerton Road and Clifton Avenue, Fallowfield. A site location plan is submitted with the application, which identifies the application site.

1.2. The proposal comprises a residential development of 17 four-bedroom and 5 three-bedroom residential properties with car parking, landscaping and access road. The proposed residential properties are intended as family homes, falling within Class C3 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended).

1.3. This application follows two previous Watkin Jones proposals for residential development on the site and a further proposal submitted by the St John's Ambulance (the former owner of the site). The St John's Ambulance proposal (ref. 067950) was submitted in May 2003 and was for residential development in form of self-contained flats. This was approved by the Council in July 2003 and confirmed the acceptable principle and suitability of the site for residential development. The Watkin Jones Group submitted a residential apartment-led development (ref. 077511) in November 2005 and this was approved by the Council in December 2006, further confirming the suitability of the site for residential development. The third application was submitted by Watkin Jones Group in October 2010 (ref. 094446) and proposed residential development in the form of town houses. This application was refused in April 2011 by the Council and was the subject of a planning appeal (ref. APP/B4215/A/11/21/S), which was dismissed in September 2011 by the Planning Inspectorate. The reasons for dismissal relate to the provision of 'cramped' development, details of which are provided letter and has resulted in a decreased number of dwellings within this application.

1.4. The proposal involves a high quality bespoke design, which has been produced to reflect the suburban character of the local area. The frontages of the houses have been designed to face both Clifton Avenue and Egerton Road, to contribute to and enhance the street scene. Further details of the design and evolution of the proposed development are set out in the Design and Access Statement.

1.5. The purpose of this statement is to provide an introduction to the proposed development, explaining the policy context within which this application has been prepared and to present the case for redevelopment, explaining why the proposed development is acceptable. More detailed technical issues are dealt with through individual reports submitted as part of this application to which reference should be made, and which for completeness are listed and summarised below:

- A Design and Access Statement, prepared by the Watkin Jones Group, which describes the design principles and access requirements which have evolved to create the proposed design. The Statement provides details of the key characteristics which have provided the basis for format of the proposed dwellings, for example:
    - Building height, scale and mass – typically three storeys;
    - Character of the area – typically tree lined residential streets with properties set back from the pavement to create private front gardens;
    - Use – typically residential uses with some commercial uses on Wilmslow Road;

- Materials – a simple palette of materials comprising facing brickwork, slate roofing and with some rendered and timbered elevation;

- An Arboricultural Implication Study prepared by ACS Consulting. Further details are set out in Section 4.

- A Crime Impact Statement prepared by Greater Manchester Police, which identifies that the scheme provides 'excellent design' from a security perspective. The proposed development receives the support of the Police, subject to the implementation of the points raised in the report.

- An Ecological Assessment prepared by Trevor Bridge Associates. This advises of the presence of Japanese Knotweed within the site and the potential for the presence of breeding birds and bats. The report suggests suitable mitigation measures, and recommends that further surveying is undertaken in respect of bats and birds.

- A Flood Risk Assessment prepared by Betts Associates. This identifies that the application site is located in Flood Zone 1 and that as such it is at a low risk of flooding, and sequentially preferable in flood risk terms. This has been justified by Tier Consult, who have prepared comparison calculations of the property and impermeable areas prior to demolition and against the proposed development. This has shown that the proposed development would reduce discharge volumes to the existing United Utilities apparatus within Clifton Avenue.

- A Supplementary Site Investigation prepared by Tier Consult. This was prepared to supplement the Phase 1 Desk Study Report and Phase 2 Ground Investigation Report prepared by Betts Associates. This was prepared as part of the previous application, prior to the demolition of buildings associated with the former St John's Ambulance use. The report highlighted that there is potential for contamination associated with the demolition of previous residential uses on the site and the presence of a major aquifer beneath the site. Whilst the report identified no significant visual signs of contamination on site during the intrusive investigations undertaken, the ground investigations were not undertaken on the site of the former buildings. The report recommended that further investigations are required, together with a series of remedial measures.

- A PPS5 Assessment prepared by Savills, and considering any impact upon the Grade II listed buildings known as 'Norton Place', 359-363 Wilmslow Road, adjacent to the western boundary of the application site. Further details are set out in Section 4.

- A Transport Statement prepared by Singleton Clamp and Partners. This advises that the site is located in a sustainable location, benefitting from being located within easy walking distance of a number of shops and services predominantly located in the Fallowfield district centre, located close to a number of cycle routes, and close to bus stops on Wilmslow Road (within 250 metres) and the railway station at Mauldeth Road (within one kilometre). The report notes that there will be a minimal increase in vehicle movements on the local highways network which it considers is acceptable.

- A Level 3 Code for Sustainable Homes Assessment prepared by the Watkin Jones Group. This identifies that through the incorporation of Mechanical Ventilation Heat Recovery combined with Gas saver technology and enhanced thermal specification to the fabric of the properties; can achieve a 25% improvement in 'Dwelling Emission Rate (DER) and Target Emission Rate (TER). Overall the scheme can achieve a score of 58 and therefore be complaint with the requirements of Code Level 3.

1.6. Section 2 of the statement provides an overview of the planning background to the proposed development, with a description of the site and surrounding area and a more detailed

description of the development proposals. This section also provides details of: the relevant planning history relating to residential development at the application site; details of the pre-application consultation methods undertaken; and considerations in respect of planning obligations.

1.7. Section 3 provides a commentary on the relevant planning policy Section 4 analyses the key planning considerations setting out a case for redevelopment. Section 5 provides conclusions.

2. Planning Background

Site and Surrounding Area

2.1. The 0.47 hectare site is almost square in shape and is located at the corner of Egerton Road and Clifton Avenue. It is currently derelict; all of the buildings in relation to the site's previous use as the St John's Ambulance Headquarters have been cleared.

2.2. The site contains a number of trees at its perimeter, as indicated and described in the Abroricultural Implication Study. It is understood that two trees located in the north of the site are the subject of a Tree Preservation Order, and these are also highlighted in the study.

2.3. The site lies in a predominantly residential area and is approximately 100 metres from the Fallowfield District centre on Wilmslow Road, and approximately 700 metres from Withington District Centre. The Fallowfield District Centre offers a variety of different shops and services including, amongst others: a Sainsburys supermarket; other convenience stores (e.g. Tesco Express, Premier); restaurants and take aways; cafes and sandwich shops (e.g. Subway, Starbucks); pharmacies; estate agents; betting shops; a nursery; and a hotel.

2.4. The site is easily accessible by car and bus, due to the proximity of Wilmslow Road, which has high frequency buses to Manchester City Centre.

2.5. There is a three storey block of flats to the south-west of the site, large three storey semi-detached Victorian houses to the south-east of the site and two storey semi-detached and terraced houses to the west of the site. To the north, on the opposite side of Clifton Avenue there are two storey houses and three storey flats, while on the opposite side of Clifton Avenue there are two storey semi-detached houses.

Description of the Proposed Development

2.6. The proposal seeks full approval for a residential development of 22 residential properties comprising 17 four-bedroom houses and 5 three-bedroom houses. The dwellings will be a mixture of formats comprising 11 three storey, 8 two-and-a-half storey and 3 two storey properties.

2.7. All properties have been designed in accordance with Manchester's Design for Access 2 and will comprise:

- Lounge, kitchen, dining and a WC at ground floor;
- Two bedrooms and bathroom at first floor; and
- Two bedrooms at second floor level. 11 dwellings will include an additional bathroom at this level.

2.8. Parking will be provided within the curtilage of each of the dwellings. Direct vehicular access can be taken from Egerton Road to the houses fronting the highway, with further direct access available to three plots fronting Clifton Avenue. The remaining houses can be accessed on a new vehicular road located within the site, which is entered from Clifton Avenue. A mix of one and two car parking spaces will be provided with each dwelling.

2.9. Bin storage will be provided both at the front and to the rear of properties. In each case, an enclosure will be constructed to provide screening of the bins.

2.10. The design of the proposed townhouses is influenced by the Victorian villas in the local area, albeit in a modern format. The scale and massing of the dwellings will be in keeping with the

character of the area and surrounding properties (i.e. typically two and three storeys, and grouped in two of three properties to replicate the scale of the local Victorian villas). The materials used will be a mix of brick and render with a slate roof, reflecting the materials used within the existing buildings in the area.

Relevant Planning History

Recent Planning Consents

2.11. There is a large amount of relevant planning history relating to the application site, which is appropriate to describe in full. This includes several apartment permissions from several years ago, together with a more recent town house application.

2.12. In brief, the planning history is as follows:

- Outline planning permission (ref. 067950) was granted in July 2003 for 32 self-contained flats in two two-storey blocks. All matters were reserved and therefore no drawings were submitted with this application to indicate siting, design or means of access.
- Full planning permission (ref. 077551) was granted in December 2006 for 33 flats in three blocks, with a mixture of three and four storey elements (ref. 077551). The permission has been implemented, but the construction of the apartments has not been completed.
- A planning application (ref. 094446) for a town house scheme comprising of 28 four bedroom two and three storey residential properties was refused in April 2011, despite an officer recommendation for approval.
- A subsequent planning appeal relating to the aforementioned scheme (ref. APP/B4215/A/11/2153499) was dismissed on 12 October 2011 by the Planning Inspectorate on the basis of a cramped form of development which resulted in unacceptable private amenity space being provided by virtue of overlooking and over shadowing.

2.13. A detailed description of the above is set out below.

Outline Planning Permission (ref. 067950) (Approved July 2003)

2.14. The approval of the above application for outline consent for 32 flats in two two-storey blocks established the acceptable principle and suitability of the site for residential development. As the consent was outline, the detailed design, scale, massing and bulk of the development was not considered as part of the application.

Full Planning Permission (ref. 077551) (Approved December 2006)

2.15. The acceptable principle and suitability of the site had been secured under the 2003 outline consent. It is upon the basis of the residential suitability that an application was approved by the Planning and Highways Committee on 27 July 2006. In respect of this, the committee report states:

"Though close to a commercial centre and with no residential uses on one side, the site is essentially located within a residential area, and therefore the principle of developing the site for residential purposes is acceptable."

2.16. The officer's report to committee set out the following relevant points:

- The scheme layout provided an appropriate balance of tree retention and development to reflect the existing built character in the local area, in line with the Guide to Development in Manchester 2.
- The scale and mass of the proposed development were considered to be acceptable.

- The contemporary design was acceptable, employing a traditional pallet of materials.
- The loss of 12 trees at the site was mitigated by the replacement of these 23 new trees, providing a net gain of 11 trees.
- It was considered that there was no potential for loss of privacy or overlooking from the proposed scheme and that the scheme itself provided natural surveillance of the adjoining roads as well as the private areas within the development.
- It was confirmed that the proposed scheme would not have an adverse affect on the character or setting of the nearby listed buildings at 359 and 361 Wilmslow Road.

2.17. The consideration of the above points further secured the acceptable principle and suitability of the site for residential schemes, as well as confirming that the development provided an acceptable scale, bulk, massing, design and layout.

2.18. The completion of the development is no longer achievable for the following reasons:

- The change in people's attitudes towards apartment developments, and the requirement for traditional housing. This results from the negative perceptions of apartment developments (e.g. lack of defensible space, amenity problems associated with living in a communal building);
- The associated tightening of funding available for the development and construction of apartment developments;
- The very high cost associated with the construction of the development, which included an underground car park, which results in an unviable scheme; and
- The increased requirement for family housing in the local area.

Planning Application (ref. 094446) (Refused April 2011)

2.19. An application for 28 residential town house properties was submitted in October 2010. Whilst the application was recommended for approval by officers at the Council, it was refused at committee on 7 April 2011 for the following reasons:

- *"The proposed development by reason of the design fails to provide adequate privacy amenity space for the use of the future occupiers of the proposed family accommodation. The proposed development therefore represents an overdevelopment of the site contrary to the provisions of national planning policy PPS3 and policies H2.2 and H2.7 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and the provisions of the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD.*
- *The proposed development by reason of the design means that the close proximity of some of the proposed dwellings to each other would result in an unacceptable level of overlooking and overshadowing to the detriment of the amenity of the future occupiers of the properties. The proposed development is therefore contrary to the provisions of national planning policy PPS3 and policies H2.2 and H2.7 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and the provision of the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD.*
- *Having regard to the historic pattern of development found in the area the proposed development by reason of its small plot size constitutes an overdevelopment of the site. The proposed development is therefore contrary to national planning policies PPS1 and PPS3 and the provisions of policies H2.2 and H2.7 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and the provisions of the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD.*
- *The proposed development of the site with 28 family houses would result in the over intensive use of the site to the detriment of the amenity of the occupiers of nearby and adjoining residential properties. The proposed development is therefore contrary to PPS1 and PPS3 and the provisions of policy H2.2 and H2.7 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and the provisions of the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD.*
- *The design of the proposed development fails to integrate it with or complement the*

neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally in terms of scale, density and layout. The proposed development is therefore contrary to PPS1 and PPS3 and the provisions of policy H2.2 and H2.7 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and the provisions of the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD."

2.20. Despite this decision, the following points from the officer's report are of relevance:

- The principle of residential development at the site had been established by previous permissions. The Council seeks the development of family housing in preference to apartments outside of the city centre and local centres. The proposed development is in line with current planning policy.
- It was considered that the site layout was acceptable, meeting with the requirements of the Guide to Development in Manchester. The attributes of the layout were:
    - Properties front the highway;
    - Parking is located, where practicable, behind the building line to reduce its impact on the street scene;
    - The layout retains as many trees as possible; and
    - The introduction of a cul-de-sac into the site ensures that the gardens are not excessively large or that large areas of incidental open space are created.
- The levels of amenity space vary greatly across the proposed development. The Council does not have a standard for amenity space. Consequently, the overall levels of amenity space were considered acceptable.
- The proposal was not considered to be overdevelopment. The immediate area has developed over a number of years and it is not possible to identify a clear pattern of development in terms of plot and building size.
- The proposed traditional style of dwelling which incorporates details from neighbouring properties and surrounding styles, whilst using a traditional pallet of materials, is considered appropriate.
- The scale and massing of the proposal reflects the diverse nature of the varying number and heights of dwellings found in the surrounding area and is therefore appropriate.
- The proposed development is located to the rear of a terrace of three Grade II listed buildings. It is not considered that the development of townhouses at the application site would have any significant impact on the setting of these buildings.
- The Council confirmed that there was no requirement for affordable housing at the application site.

2.21. The officer concluded his report as follows:

"The proposed development is considered to be of a high standard that will make a positive contribution to the street scene, particularly with the proposed environmental works. The provision of family houses in lieu of flats is in line with the Council's current policies. Overall it is believed that the proposed development would make a positive contribution to revitalisation of the area."

<u>Planning Appeal (ref. APP/B4215/A/11/2153499) (Dismissed September 2011)</u>

2.22. Following the refusal of planning application ref 094446, an appeal was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in July 2011. The appeal was dismissed on 12 October 2011 for the following reasons:

- The development would be cramped in terms of its layout.
- The effect of this cramped form of development is that there would be an unacceptable level of overlooking of garden space in some of the proposed development, which would result in a loss of privacy. As the development provides family housing (i.e. with a requirement for the gardens to be used by children), a greater level of privacy would be required.

2.23. The appeal decision did define a number of factors which are important in the consideration of the proposed development. These are summarised below:

- The Council does not define the level of private amenity space which is appropriate for development.
- Some overlooking of gardens is a characteristic of housing in building up areas.
- There are local parks and other amenity space which is accessible to the occupiers of the proposed development.
- The site is located in a predominantly suburban residential area which houses and flats that very in style, age and layout.
- The proposal would not result in the overdevelopment of the site.
- The proposed dwellings had been carefully designed to reflect the style and appearance of some properties in the local areas. It was confirmed that the overall scale, mass, pattern of fenestration, front building line, height, roof format and materials were all acceptable.
- The scheme would regenerate a derelict site, making an efficient use of land in a sustainable and accessible location for new housing.
- The proposal would preserve the setting of the listed villas on Wilmslow Road.
- The proposal would not place a significant burden on local services, infrastructure (including drainage) or facilities, nor generate activity in and around the site that would cause material harm to local residents.
- In transport terms, the development would be accessed safely with adequate visibility for its users and would not unduly add to local traffic problems.

Pre-Application Consultation

2.24. The previous application (ref 094446) was the subject of pre-application consultation, which is reported within the accompanying documentation for that application. This comprised the following methods:

- Pre-application discussions with Roger Hall, Jennifer Connor and Dave Morris at Manchester City Council;
- A dedicated scheme of consultation to local residents groups, namely: Fallowfield and Rusholme Civic Society; Withington Civic Society; and South East Fallowfield Residents Group; and
- A public exhibition undertaken on 13 September 2010, to which over 150 local residents and businesses were invited.

2.25. An overview of the update to consultation which has been undertaken in advance of this application is set out below.

Pre-Application Discussions with the Local Planning Authority

2.26. A pre-application meeting was undertaken with Jennifer Connor and Dave Morris of the Council on 10 November 2011. At the meeting, a scheme comprising of 23 dwellings was presented. A layout plan for the scheme is contained at **Appendix 1**.

2.27. Within the meeting it was confirmed that the scheme was generally acceptable subject to the removal of four semi-detached dwellings and replacement with two detached dwellings and some other minor amendments, resulting in a total of 21 dwellings.

2.28. It was confirmed that all other matters relating to the proposed development were acceptable and that no further pre-application discussions were required.

Discussions with Local Amenity Groups

2.29. The Fallowfield Residents Committee was contacted by email on the 29th November 2011 with a copy of the proposed scheme. Dr Bowers confirmed receipt of our proposals on the 5th December 2011 and at the time of preparation of this report, no feedback has been provided.

Public Consultation

2.30. The public consultation undertaken in September 2010 demonstrated the following:

- It is considered that there is a need to redevelop the site;
- It is considered that family housing is an appropriate use for the site;
- 93% of respondents were happy with the design and appearance of the scheme;
- Some concern was raised regarding tree removal, which has subsequently been undertaken; and
- Concern was raised regarding the use of housing for students, despite an agreement for a Section 106 Agreement restricting the use of the properties as houses in multiple occupations.

2.31. Given that the majority of responses received were positive, it was considered that there was no requirement for any additional public consultation.

Other Consultation

2.32. Ward Councillors Paul, Jones and Wheale were presented with scheme proposals on the 29th November 2011, to inform them of our intended proposals for redeveloping the site.

Planning Obligations

2.33. As part of permission ref 077551, a planning contribution of £20,000 was paid by the Watkin Jones Group in connection with improving and maintaining highways and highways safety in the local area, specifically the Wilmslow Road Quality Bus Corridor. This was the subject of the Section 106 Agreement dated 20 December 2006.

2.34. The contribution was never utilised towards local highway improvements. As such, it was been agreed that the monies will be utilised for environmental improvements, including tree planting, in the local area. It has also been confirmed that no further contributions will be sought.

Financial/ Economic Characteristics of the Proposed Development

2.35. Following the dismissal of the recent appeal, the Watkin Jones Group in agreement with the freehold owner of the site (Manchester City Council) has agreed to an extension of the time period for the commencement of development at the site. Commencement is required by summer 2012.

2.36. Whilst Watkin Jones had obtained planning permission for an apartment led scheme and it had been the intention to fully implement the scheme, such a scheme cannot be implemented given the reasons set out at paragraph 2.18 above.

2.37. Watkin Jones has sought to find an alternative, suitable and viable use for the application site. Given the residential character of the local area, it was stated within a pre-application discussion on 15 March 2010 that any redevelopment of the site would need to be residentially focussed.

2.38. The proposed development mix has followed research undertaken by Watkin Jones to assess the type of housing for which there is a requirement in the local area.

2.39. A Financial Appraisal has been prepared by the Watkin Jones Group and accompanied the previous application, albeit in a private and confidential manner. The purpose of the Appraisal was to highlight the financial characteristics of the proposed development and to illustrate that the purpose of the development is to recover a significant investment made in the site and to seek to recompense the costs which have been made, and which will be made.

2.40. The Financial Appraisal illustrated the following:

- There is no further flexibility within the scheme to reduce the number of dwellings as the proposed development is expected to make a marginal loss. Nevertheless, the Watkin Jones Group is committed to ensuring that the site is redeveloped, to recover investment and expenditure already undertaken; and
- On this basis, the scheme cannot substantiate the provision of any affordable housing or further financial contributions over and above those already paid to the Council.

2.41. The dismissal of an appeal has resulted in the financial viability of the scheme being weakened due to a reduced number of dwellings that will be built at the site. The result is that the development will make a loss and cannot sustain the provision of affordable housing or any other financial contributions. Nevertheless, the contractual obligation means that the Watkin Jones Group are committed to commencing development. An approval of permission will allow the Group to commence development immediately after receiving planning permission.

3. Planning Policy

National Planning Policy

3.1. Several national planning policy statements are relevant to the consideration of the proposed development. These are described in more detail below.

PPS1 'Delivering Sustainable Development' (2005)

3.2. PPS1 sets out the Government's overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system. The general approach laid out in paragraph 27 of PPS1 is to ensure the planning system delivers sustainable development and that in preparing development plans local authorities should:

- Promote urban and rural regeneration to improve the well being of communities, improve facilities, promote high quality and safe development and create new opportunities for people living in those communities;
- Promote communities which are inclusive, healthy, safe and crime free, whilst respecting the diverse needs of communities and special needs of particular sectors of the community;
- Bring forward sufficient land of a suitable quality in appropriate locations to meet the expected needs for housing, taking into account issues such as accessibility, sustainable transport needs and the provision of essential infrastructure;
- Provide improved access for all jobs, health, education, shops, leisure and community facilities, open space, sport and recreation, by ensuring that new development is located where everyone can access services or facilities on foot, bicycle or public transport rather than having to rely on access by car;
- Reduce the need to travel and encourage accessible public transport provision to secure more sustainable patterns of transport development; and
- Promote the more efficient use of land through higher density, mixed use development and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings. Planning should actively seek to bring vacant and underused previously developed land and buildings back into beneficial use.

PPS3 'Housing' (2010)

3.3. PPS3 aims to help to deliver high quality housing that is well designed and built to a high standard. It requires a sufficient quantity of housing to be provided, taking into account need and demand and seeking to improve choice.

3.4. Housing developments should be located in suitable and sustainable locations, which offer a good range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure. A flexible and responsive approach to the supply of land should be achieved, which is managed in such a way to ensure an efficient and effective use of land, including a priority towards the re-use of previously developed land.

3.5. PPS3 considers design quality in detail and lists matters which should be considered when assessing the extent to which the proposed development:

- Is easily accessible and well connected to public transport and community facilities

and services, and is well laid out so that all the space is used efficiently, is safe, accessible and user friendly.

- Provides, or enables good access to, community and green and open amenity and recreational space (including play space) as well as private outdoor space such as residential gardens, patios and balconies.

- Is well integrated with, and complements, the neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally in terms of scale, density, layout and access.

- Facilitates the effective use of resources, during construction and in use, and seeks to adapt to reduce the impact of, and on, climate change.

- Takes a design led approach to the provision of car parking space, that is well integrated with a high quality public realm and streets that are pedestrian, cycle and vehicle friendly.

- Creates or enhances a distinctive character that relates well to the surroundings and supports a sense of local pride and civic identity.

- Provides for the retention or re-establishment of the biodiversity within residential environments.

3.6. With respect to deliverability, the policy advises authorities to identify deliverable sites in the first five years of the adopted development plan. To be considered deliverable sites should be:

- Available – the site is available now.

- Suitable – the site offers a suitable location for development now and would contribute to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities.

- Achievable and deliverable – there is a reasonable prospect that the housing will be delivered within five years.

PPS5 'Planning for the Historic Environment' (2010)

3.7. PPS5 sets out the Government's objectives for the historic environment and heritage assets. The overarching aim is that the historic environment and its heritage assets should be conserved and enjoyed for the quality of life they bring to this and future generations. Paragraph 7 further highlights the Governments objective to conserve England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, investigated to a degree proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset, used in an appropriate manner consistent with their conservation, making a positive contribution to the local character and sense of place.

3.8. PPS5 sets out in Annex 2 the heritage asset criteria. The application site lies adjacent to and within the setting of a Grade II listed building. The development site should therefore be considered in this context with the significance meriting consideration in planning decisions (Policies HE7.2, HE7.5 and HE8.1).

3.9. PPS5 sets out a number of development management policies to be considered by the Council in determining applications that affect heritage assets. Policy HE6 states that local planning authorities should require an applicant to provide a description of significance of the heritage asset and the contribution of their setting to that significance. The level of detail should be proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset. This information should be set out in the design and access statement, which has informed the design concept.

3.10. All proposals that concern heritage assets are to be determined by local planning authorities in the context of Policy HE7, HE5 and HE9, to consider the desirability of sustaining and

enhancing the heritage asset and the positive contribution its conservation makes to place shaping and sustainable communities. New development should make a positive contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the historic environment including, scale, height, massing, alignment, materials and use (HE7.5).

3.11. Policy HE9 states the presumption in favour of the conservation of designated heritage assets and the more significant the asset, the greater the presumption in favour of its conservation. If substantial harm or loss is caused, local planning authorities should refuse permission unless the harm is outweighed by substantial public benefit.

3.12. Policies HE9.1, HE9.4 and HE10 apply to elements that do contribute to significance. Where an element does not positively contribute to its significance, local planning authorities should take into account the desirability of enhancing or better revealing the significance of the heritage asset. This should be seen as part of the process of place-shaping.

3.13. Policy HE10 states that proposals that preserve the setting should be treated favourably and where they do not, local planning authorities should weigh any harm against the wider public benefits of the application. HE10.2 highlights that local planning authorities should identify opportunities for changes in the setting to enhance or better reveal the significance of a heritage asset. Such opportunities should be seen as a public benefit and part of the process of place-shaping.

PPG13 'Transport' (2011)

3.14. PPG13 provides advice on how local planning authorities should integrate transport and land use planning. The key aim is to reduce reliance on the private car, reduce growth in the length and number of motorised journeys, and encourage alternative means of travel, which have less environmental impact. The general aim of promoting development on previously developed sites and promoting sustainable development also underpins PPS13, with key objectives including the promotion of sustainable transport choices for people.

Planning for Growth and Draft National Planning Policy Framework (2011)

3.15. The Minister of State for Decentralisation (Greg Clark MP) issued a statement on 23 March 2011 setting out the steps the Government expects local planning authorities to take with immediate effect to ensure that he planning system does everything it can to help secure a swift return to economic growth. As reforming the planning will take further time to be delivered, the Government's clear expectation is that the answer to development and growth should wherever possible be 'yes', except where this would compromise the key sustainable development principles set out in national planning policy.

3.16. The draft National Planning Policy Framework was published in July 2011, supporting the Planning for Growth Ministerial Statement. The key points arising from the draft Framework, in addition to the points made in the Ministerial Statement, are set out below:

- Development management is to foster the delivery of sustainable management, not to hinder or prevent development.
- Local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems in their approach to development management and attach significant weight to the benefits of housing growth.
- Housing should be developed in sustainable locations, deliver a wide range or high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership, and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities.
- Development should be considered in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development as the benefits outweigh any demonstrable adverse impacts and planning permission should be granted where relevant policies are out of date.

- Local planning authorities should plan for a mix of housing to meet the needs of different groups (such as families with children), reflecting local demand.

- Planning decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles.

Local Planning Policy

The Manchester Unitary Development Plan (1995, comprising Saved Policies (2007))

3.17. The site is not allocated in the adopted plan, but a number of policies have a bearing on the re-use of the site for residential purposes.

3.18. Although the site is close to Fallowfield, it falls within Area 14 'Withington and Burnage' in the UDP. In this area, Policy WB1 states that the Council will aim to ensure that the area remains an attractive location in which to live and work. The Council will also seek to retain the primarily residential character of the area.

3.19. Policy H1.2 seeks to ensure that the housing stock contains a wide enough range of housing to meet the needs of people who want to live in Manchester.

3.20. Policy H2.1 states that the Council will encourage environmental improvements to make residential areas safer and more attractive.

3.21. Policy H2.2 states that the Council will not allow development which will have an unacceptable impact on residential areas by reason of scale, appearance, and its impact in terms of noise, vibration, traffic generation, road safety and air pollution. Policy H2.7 states that new housing should be of a high standard of design and should make a positive contribution to the City's environment. They should not create areas of incidental open space outside the curtilage of dwellings unless there are proper and enduring arrangements for its maintenance.

3.22. Policy E1.5 states that the Council will contribute to energy conservation by: ensuring that new major development is located where it can be easily served by public transport; and encouraging high standards of energy efficiency in new development.

3.23. Policy E2.4 states that the Council will ensure that the effects upon wildlife are taken fully into account when considering development proposals.

3.24. Policies E2.6 and DC16.1 encourages the retention of existing trees unless they are in poor health, together with the encouragement of the planting of new trees.

3.25. Policy E3.2 states that the Council will encourage redevelopment on small derelict sites.

3.26. Policy T2.4 states that the Council will expect developments to make adequate provision for their car parking requirements.

3.27. Policy D7.1 states that the Council will endeavour to make development accessible to all and new housing should be accessible at ground floor level to disabled people. All new developments containing family homes will be expected to be designed so as to be safe areas within which children can play and, where appropriate, the Council will also expect play facilities to be provided.

Other Guidance Documents

Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance (2007)

3.28. The SPD provides guidance to applicants specifically in the preparation of Design and Access Statements. The first part of the SPD provides guidance on the development principles throughout the City, and the second section provides additional guidance on the character of the various areas of the City.

3.29. The areas of guidance within the first section of the document are: design; accessibility; environmental standards; street hierarchy; parking guidelines; housing density; promotion of a safer environment; design for health; and internal design principles. Further guidance on each of these principles is provided in the Design and Access Statement submitted with the application. An overview of some key principles is provided below.

3.30. The committee report for the previous application (ref. 077511) clarified that the site is located within an area constructed principally in the 'Victorian era', although there have been more recent building constructed in the area, of different types, style and ages. The SPD provides guidance on residential development constructed in the 'Victorian era' and notes:

- The areas will continue to sustain medium to high densities;
- The introduction of a broader choice of housing is important; and
- Infill sites and conversions should respect and enhance the simple urban character of the area, whilst at the same time introducing choice, variety and interest, although pastiche, or poorly considered new developments or extensions will be discouraged.

3.31. Paragraph 2.7 states that the layout of development and the design, scale massing and orientation of buildings should achieve a unified urban form which blends in with, and links to, adjacent areas. Increased densities may be appropriate where it is necessary to reinforce community identity, promote a more economic use of land, increase demand for local facilities and contribute to safer policed street. Density levels must be informed by the character of an area and the specific circumstances of a proposal.

3.32. Paragraph 2.26 states that where cul-de-sacs are provided, they should be attractive in appearance and not be dominated by excessive vehicle turning circles.

3.33. Paragraph 2.36 encourages the retention and planting of broad leaved trees.

3.34. Paragraph 4.7 states that residential developments should obtain a Code for Sustainable Homes rating of Level 3.

3.35. Paragraph 6.2 states that car parking should be located so not as to dominate the street scene and should, ideally, be provided to the rear, side of, or beneath the building.

3.36. Paragraph 7.2 states that development should be informed, both in terms of design and layout, by the wider context of the local area.

3.37. Paragraph 7.4 states that there has been a loss of family housing in favour of flats. This process should be reversed to provide a range of family housing.

3.38. Paragraph 10.9 highlights that all residents should enjoy usable private amenity space.

<u>Providing for Housing Choice Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance (2008)</u>

3.39. The SPD provides guidance on the mix of new housing provision required in Manchester to meet the requirements of the City's planning policies and guidance within PPS3, dealing specifically with the provision of affordable housing through the planning system. The SPD was written in a period when the market was buoyant, and both extant planning permissions for residential development and units under construction were numerous.

3.40. The SPD clarifies that affordable housing can take two forms:

- Social rented – this is rented housing owned by local authorities and registered social landlords for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime.

- Intermediate – this is housing at prices and rents above those of social rent, but below market prices and rents. They can be shared equity products, other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent. The Council places a strong emphasis on encouraging assisted home ownership options.

3.41. The guidance proposes that 20% of new housing should be affordable housing, the threshold is 15 dwellings or 0.3ha. This proportion needs to be considered alongside other regeneration objectives and an estimate of what the current housing market conditions can deliver upon sites in Manchester, taking into account land values and high remediation costs. The Council is determined that the demand for new development remains strong and that any affordable housing target should not deter investment. The specific housing needs will be considered on a site-by-site basis, and an exclusion to the provision of affordable housing is where this, alongside other planning obligations, would affect scheme viability.

3.42. The Council has experienced an increase in smaller accommodation over recent years, and therefore is keen to promote larger dwellings (i.e. two bedrooms or above). The types and sizes of housing provision suitable for each site will vary and should take account of the requirements of the local area, the location of the site relative to services, facilities and public transport; and the type and form of development appropriate to the character of the area.

3.43. Affordable housing units should be visually indistinguishable from other housing units.

Emerging Policy Documents

Draft Core Strategy (2011)

3.44. The Draft Core Strategy was submitted to the Secretary of State in July 2011 and has recently been the subject of an examination in public which was undertaken in November 2011. It is expected that the Core Strategy will be adopted in March 2012.

3.45. An overview of some of the key policies contained within the draft Core Strategy are set out below:

- Policy H1 – 90% of residential development will be on previously developed land.
- Policy H6 – South Manchester will accommodate about 5% of new residential development. High density development will generally be appropriate within the district centres, including Fallowfield Outside of district centre, priorities will be for housing which identified shortfalls, including family housing.
- Policy H8 – this confirms that an exemption from, or lower provision of, affordable housing can be provided where it would affect scheme viability. An assessment of the financial viability of development will be required.

Other Documents

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

3.46. The Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2009) highlights that the site has planning permission (ref. 077551) for residential development. This confirms that the site is available and deliverable for residential development in the short term (i.e. five years).

4. Planning Appraisal

4.1. The main issue with respect to this proposal is the number of residential properties located on the site. During both the appeal and application processes it had been determined that 28 townhouse properties on the site represented a cramped form of development, which would result in an unacceptable level of overlooking of private amenity space for the proposed family housing. The appeal also defined that the site is located in a residential area (also confirmed by Policy WB1 of the UDP) and confirmed that a number of elements of the dismissed scheme were acceptable (e.g. design, mass, scale, fenestration, building line, roof format, materials).

4.2. Following the dismissal of the appeal, the applicant has undertaken further discussions with the local planning authority to define an appropriate level of development. It was agreed that this level will be 22, as proposed by this application.

4.3. The main planning issues for development of residential properties at the site remain:

- Appropriateness of the site for residential use and for townhouses;
- Impact on character of the area, residential amenity and heritage matters;
- Access and accessibility; and
- Affordable Housing.

4.4. Additional matters relating to the following matters are considered in the accompanying application documents and summarised at Section 1 of this Statement:

- Design and access;
- Crime;
- Ecology;
- Trees;
- Flood risk;
- Ground contamination;
- Transport, traffic and highways matters; and
- Sustainability measures incorporating a Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 Pre-Assessment.

Appropriateness of the Site for Residential Use and for Townhouses

4.5. The proposed development seeks to regenerate a previously developed and derelict site, a fundamental requirement of Policy E3.2 of the UDP and Policy H1 of the Draft Core Strategy, the latter of which seeks to secure 90% of residential development on previously developed land. The site is located in a typically residential area, in which Policy WB1 seeks to retain such a character. Whilst unallocated for any specific use; the principle of a residential use has been established through previous planning permissions at the site, through pre-application discussions with the Council and within the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. As highlighted above and in Section 2, the information provided by the Council and Planning Inspectorate during the refusal and dismissal of the previous scheme has confirmed that the site is appropriate for residential development. The development proposed, namely the provision of family housing, is also supported by the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD, the Providing for Housing Choice SPD and Policy H6 of the emerging Core Strategy.

4.6. The application site is located in a sustainable and accessible location, close to the shopping, services and community facilities located within the Fallowfield District Centre (see paragraph 2.3) which are within a short walking distance (100 metres) of the site. The site is also located close to the Wilmslow Road 'bus corridor' providing regular bus services to

Central Manchester, again a short walk from the site.

4.7. The proposed development seeks to make an effective and efficient use of a sustainably located site, through the development of a family orientated townhouse development. This will result in a density of development which replicates the character of the local area, and is also in line with the requirements of existing and emerging planning policy for residential developments located in accessible locations, close to district centres.

4.8. The design principles of the proposed development are expanded in detail in the Design and Access Statement, but for completeness, are included below and these have provided the basis on which the proposed design has evolved:

- The requirement to set back residential properties to maintain large front gardens and replicate the existing building line;
- The need to retain and promote substantial planting along street frontages and to ensure that the 'leafy' nature of the area is kept;
- The requirement to provide a comprehensive landscaping scheme which retains (where possible) and provides new planting, both trees and general shrubbery enhancing the ecological value of the site (as sought by Policies E2.4, E2.6 and DC16.1 of the UDP) and the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD).
- The requirement to create de-cluttered street frontages along Egerton Road and Clifton Avenue, and to locate as much parking as possible to the side/ rear of properties, as specified in the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD;
- To provide a complementary house type to those found in the local area, to add to the mix of dwellings in the local area which has a mix of apartments and houses, both small and large;
- To avoid pastiche, providing modern designs which are influenced by the traditional design in the area, for example through the use of a typical palette of materials (e.g. brick and slate) found in the local area, meeting the requirements of Policy H27 of the UDP and the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD;
- To provide variety in the streetscene. This has included ensuring that the scale and massing of the properties reflect the surrounding residential properties, for example by grouping the proposed dwellings to reflect the character and size of Victorian villas in the local area;
- The requirement to provide development to contribute to energy conservation (required by Policy E1.5 and the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD), by locating the development in an accessible location and ensuring that high standards of energy efficiency are achieved. Details of such measures are set out in the Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 Assessment submitted with the application, which includes: mechanical ventilation heat recovery; gas saver boilers & an enhanced insulation specification to the fabric of the properties. Such measures will result in a 25% improvement in the Dwelling Emission Rate and Target Emission Rate;
- To provide a development which is safe and increases safety for the local area, for example created by natural surveillance from the development, as required by Policy H2.1 of the UDP;
- To provide development which is accessible by all, sought by Policy D7.1 of the UDP;
- The requirement to provide an efficient re-use of the site given its highly accessible location, but to ensure that the development does not result in a cramped form of

development; and

- To provide a suitable level of private amenity space for children living with the proposed family housing, required by the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD, increasing the amount and quality provided in the previous townhouse scheme, and ensuring that the impact of the development is acceptable both for the occupiers of the development and neighbouring properties, as required by Policy H2.2 of the UDP.

4.9. In PPS3 terms and as per the requirements of existing and emerging local planning policy, the application site is therefore suitable for the development proposed. Furthermore, the site is available for development now having been cleared of its previous buildings and Watkin Jones is committed to ensuring that the development will be delivered in a short period of time, enhanced by the contractual obligations outlined in Section 2.

Impact on Character of the Area, Residential Amenity and Heritage Matters

4.10. The local area is predominantly residential, with a mix of housing types and styles, including detached, semi-detached, terraced properties and flats. The proposal thus accords with the character and diversity of the area, and enhances the broad range of residential properties in the local area, specifically providing family homes.

4.11. The proposed townhouses have been set back from the perimeter roads, to provide large front gardens. The townhouses also follow the existing building line on Egerton Road and Clifton Avenue, thereby maintaining the established street frontages and ensuring that the development will integrate with the existing character of the street scene and of surrounding properties.

4.12. Furthermore, the design of the dwellings includes variations to reflect with the mixed character of residential properties in the local area. The scale and massing fits in with the urban grain and character of the surrounding area, by stepping properties back typically in pairs to reflect the large Victorian semi-detached properties to the south, whilst making an efficient use of an accessible and suitable site, a fundamental requirement of planning policy.

4.13. The buildings will primarily front onto Egerton Road and Clifton Avenue with several dwellings located within the subject site fronting onto the internal access road to the site from Clifton Avenue, thereby promoting informal natural surveillance.

4.14. The redevelopment of the site will not result in the loss of any trees as a number of trees have previously been removed from the site. The proposal has been designed to ensure no loss of trees, but to ensure an overall increase in the number of trees on site. 17 new trees are proposed, which will comprise semi-mature specimens (i.e. between 3m and 4.25m). It is proposed to plant 17. The provision of new trees will help to retain and enhance the quality of the street scene, retaining the 'leafy' nature of the local area, meeting and exceeding the requirements of Policies DC2.6 and DC16.1.

4.15. In order to ensure that the proposed development does not impact upon Grade II listed buildings located at Norton Place, 359-363 Wilmslow Road and as requested by the Council, an assessment of the impact of the proposed development on this heritage asset has been prepared by Savills. In brief, the report highlights that:

- The architectural features of significance are associated with the front façade of Norton Place facing Wilmslow Road and not with the rear elevation facing the application site;

- There is no relationship between the boundary of the application site and the rear of Norton Place, which has been physically separated since the original construction of Norton Place and of Norton House, the latter of which was previously located at the application site;

- Planning permission has previously been granted for residential development at the application site. This has previously determined that the site has no particular significance to the setting of Norton Place; and

- The setting between Norton Place and the application site is a back-to-back relationship separated by former rear gardens and an access road. The proposal retains this back-to-back nature of development, replicating the former relationship of Norton Place and Norton House.

4.16. The PPS5 Assessment also notes that the site makes little contribution to the setting of Norton Place. The proposal development will re-establish the back-to-back relationship with houses and gardens, reflective of the site's history. As such, the Assessment concludes that the proposed development will enhance the setting of Norton Place, being set back from the boundary and with the active residential nature of the site with rear domestic gardens, landscaping and trees.

4.17. The aforementioned characteristics of the proposed development will contribute more strongly than the previous use of the site by the St Johns Ambulance, and the derelict use of the site, to create a development which adds to the streetscene and creates a sense of place.

Access and Accessibility

4.18. As stated previously, the site is well-served by public transport as it is within easy walking distance of Wilmslow Road which is a major corridor for public transport to the University and city centre.

4.19. Pedestrian access to the site will be taken from Egerton Road and Clifton Avenue, together with from the new access road from Clifton Avenue. Similarly, vehicular access will be undertaken in the same manner.

4.20. The site provides at least one car parking space for each property, located predominantly at the side of properties and in line with the requirement of the Guide to Developments in Manchester SPD. This is in order to provide vigilance for the security of cars, rather than providing remote parking which is vulnerable to damage and theft.

4.21. The internal layout of the properties will be 'Design for Access 2' in accordance with Policy D7.1 of the UDP, allowing level access into each of the properties, allowing ease of movement throughout the ground floor, and providing space for lifts and stair-lifts if required. As such, the scheme will provide a high standard of access for disabled people.

Affordable Housing

4.22. As set out at paragraphs 2.35 to 2.41, no affordable housing is proposed as part of the proposed development. This is on the basis that the proposal seeks to recover the substantial investment made by Watkin Jones in the site prior to the recession, and the requirement for Watkin Jones to seek to create a 'break even' situation if possible. A Financial Appraisal was submitted with the previous application, to demonstrate the costs of the land, development and any other costs which should be taken into account when considering the viability of a development. Given the reduction in the number of units, the viability of the scheme has decreased but Watkin Jones is committed to delivering housing at the site, in line with its contractual requirements with the City Council as freehold owner of the site.

4.23. Whilst the application falls above the threshold (15 dwellings/ 0.3 hectares) above which a 20% proportion of affordable housing is sought, the Financial Appraisal highlights that it is not financially viable for affordable housing to be sought from this development. This is recognised within the Providing for Housing Choice SPD which was published in 2008, at a time when the housing market was buoyant, although close to collapse. This is also

replicated in the Draft Core Strategy. The SPD recognises that the proportion of affordable housing should be taken into account alongside other regeneration objectives and an estimate of what the current housing market conditions can deliver upon sites in Manchester, taking into account matters such as land values and high remediation. Affordable housing should be considered on a site-by-site basis.

4.24. The remainder of the report illustrates the principles, objectives and benefits of the proposed development, which includes the redevelopment and regeneration of a derelict and currently 'stalled' site. Given the current economic climate with no forecasted improvement in the immediate future, the development would not be viable if affordable housing was required.

5. Conclusion

5.1. The proposed development fully accords with planning policy at all levels and the redesign has carefully addressed the concerns raised by both the Council and the Planning Inspectorate during the application determination process and the subsequent appeal.

5.2. It will provide a high quality development on a sustainable urban site in a residential area and with good transport links.

5.3. The site fully accords with the requirements of PPS3, as well as other national and local planning policy. The proposed development represents the efficient re-use of an urban, previously developed site, accessible by non-car modes of transport and located close to the Fallowfield District Centre with a range of shopping facilities and services. Without the development proposed, the application site is likely to remain vacant and derelict.

5.4. The site is therefore available, and the proposed development is both achievable and deliverable.

5.5. The principle of the proposed development is therefore entirely appropriate, and the submitted Design and Access Statement sets out in more detail the principles which have evolved to create the proposed design.

5.6. Under the provisions of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004, planning permission should be granted.

APPENDIX 1 – SITE LAYOUT PLAN