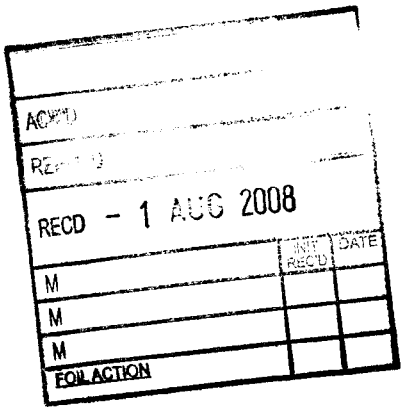
URBAN SPLASH

Our ref: Planning_Letter_01.08.08

1st August 2008



Mr Carl Glennon
Planning Division
Manchester City Council
PO Box 463
Manchester
M60 3NY

Dear Carl,

New Islington – Downley Drive (PLANNING APPLICATION: 085098/FO/2007/N1

Further to our meeting on 2 July 2008, I now enclose 12 copies of the following amended drawings:

(GA)001 Rev P11

P142_5 Rev E
P142_6 Rev D
P142_7 Rev D
P142_8 Rev D
P142_9 Rev C
P142_15 Rev B
P142_16 Rev B
P142_17 Rev B

These drawings incorporate the enhancements and amendments discussed at the meeting, in order to address the concerns raised in yours and Highways letters.

For the avoidance of doubt, I would like to confirm our responses on the various matters discussed, as below:

Waste Strategy
Our shared bin store is located beneath the podium near to the car park entrance. It has been designed so that on collection days the bin lorry can pull up near to the entrance and the operatives can then wheel out bins from the store to the lorry.
We debated at length with Peter Watkiss how the bin lorry should service the development. It was agreed that the lorry would approach the development via the existing Downley Drive public highway. Our amended road layout ((GA) 001 Rev P11) which is enclosed shows how the lorry is expected to manoeuvre local to the bin store. This route serves to reinforce that the current location of the bin store is in fact the most appropriate position for it.
We have discussed travel distances to the bin store. I can confirm that the route from the bin in any of the houses to the bin store in the car park is entirely across private space or privately managed secure common areas. If the route is considered in the same way as it would be in an apartment scheme, our route to the bin store is therefore, we believe, compliant with City policy.
We trust this allows you to avoid the sort of conditioned approach suggested in your email of 17 June.

Car Park Areas
We confirm that we intend to install fob operated roller shutters to the car park entrance and believe that the most appropriate position for them is close to back of pavement (rather than set back into a deep recess, as this recessed area has encouraged anti-social behaviour in other

schemes of which we are aware). The actual shutter is not specified yet, but we would be happy to agree details and specification with you prior to installation. I have spoken to Bradley Hart, the ALO who prepared the Downley Drive Crime Impact Statement, in response to Peter Watkin's comments about fob operated roller shutters close to back of pavement. Bradley stressed that he was keen not to see a recess in front of the roller shutter, and had no knowledge of fobs operated from cars on the highway ever causing any issues.
We confirm that the three sides of the car park facing the street are designed to be enclosed. The long side facing the courtyard garden is however intended to be open. This should allow lots of natural ventilation. Our services engineer will however be checking whether any ventilation grilles are required to the northern elevation to facilitate cross ventilation.
We believe that this reasonably open route between the houses and the car park will encourage passive policing of the car park. To provide a soft buffer between garden and parked cars, the bicycle racks have been positioned close to this open edge of the car park.

Disabled Access
We enclose a revised drawing P142_7 Rev D showing the potential position for a through floor lift to the unit at the intersection of the western and northern elevations.
We enclose a revised drawing P142_7 Rev D showing the potential position for a through floor lift to the unit at the intersection of the eastern and northern elevations.
We enclose a revised drawing P142_7 Rev D showing the potential position for a through floor lift to the unit fronting Downley Drive, between the entrance to the car park and the pedestrian access to the communal garden. As we discussed, this house is effectively accessed from the podium level, from where all habitable rooms can be accessed in accordance with DFA2. This unit does however have a "basement" with access door out onto the street. This basement space was included because the space was available and will no doubt be of use to many potential purchasers. We have shown (Revised drawings P142_5 Rev E, P142_6 Rev D and P142_7 Rev D) how a through floor lift could access all floor levels should this ever be required.

Roof Gardens
We have added notation to drawing P142_8 Rev D to demonstrate that all houses without demarcated ground level gardens have private roof gardens. We confirm that the potential through floor lifts indicated on plans could access this level if required.

Safety Railings
As we discussed, the ramping structure between external lower ground to ground floors is currently shown diagrammatically. This feature is intended to optimise the cut and fill operation within the groundworks to the scheme. Much of this ramp will therefore be made from banked landscaping to soften its appearance. At the top of this bank, a short bridge will be required, over to the podium. We confirm that this bridge will include handrails to both sides.

Highways
In direct response to Derek Jones' letter of 23 June 2008 (enclosed):

i) Further to our discussion at the last meeting, we have checked the drawn information against the measured topographical survey. This has allowed us to propose the arrangement for carriageway / pavement widths shown on revised drawing (GA) 001 Rev P11 (enclosed).

ii) Drawing (GA) 001 Rev P11 shows a swept path analysis at each corner. Given that there are two routes to get to the car park (via Woodward Place or Downley Drive as discussed at our meeting) we believe the proposed road network will allow sufficient access / egress to the development despite any parked vehicles in Woodward Place.

iii) Drawing (GA) 001 Rev P11 has now been revised as enclosed to indicate the visibility splays discussed during the meeting.

iv) There will not be any temporary storage of refuse containers. The shared bin store has been designed so that the bin lorry operatives can access all bins within agreed travel distances and wheel them from the bin store to the lorry and back again after emptying. We confirm that the distance from bin store to carriageway is less than 8m and that the ramp is less than 1:12

v) The gates to the 2 in-curtilage car parking areas open outwards into the zone of "defensible space" around the perimeter of the house. The full pavement width is therefore still available with

the gates open. At our meeting Peter Watkiss confirmed that it was not necessary for swept path analyses to be prepared to show how these spaces would be manoeuvred into.

vi) Drawing (GA) 001 Rev P11 now shows pedestrian permeability and defines how footways link to the surrounding highway network.

vii) We confirm that we intend to install fob operated roller shutters to the car park entrance and believe that the most appropriate position for them is close to back of pavement (rather than set back into a deep recess, as this recessed area has encouraged anti-social behaviour in other schemes of which we are aware). The actual shutter is not specified yet, but we would be happy to agree details and specification with you prior to installation. I have spoken to Bradley Hart, the ALO who prepared the Downley Drive Crime Impact Statement, in response to Peter Watkin's comments about fob operated roller shutters close to back of pavement. Bradley stressed that he was keen not to see a recess in front of the roller shutter, and had no knowledge of fobs operated from cars on the highway ever causing any issues.

viii) Drawing (GA) 001 Rev P11 shows how our proposals link into the surrounding topography and highways network.

ix) It is our understanding that Woodward Place, St Vincent Street and the turning head at the end of Downley Drive are all currently adopted highways. It is our intention that these should remain adopted. The other new roadways which connect into these will be unadopted and maintained through a service charge levied from residents of this development. A clear, surface level demarcation will be built into the public realm to define where the adopted surface ends and the unadopted surface begins. Drawing (GA) 001 Rev P11 shows this relationship.

x) A clear, surface level demarcation will be built into the public realm to define where the adopted surface ends and the unadopted surface begins. Drawing (GA) 001 Rev P11 shows this relationship clearly.

I trust these responses are sufficient to address the various concerns expressed in your email of 17 June 2008 and letter of 23 June 2008.

On a separate but related matter, I have considered the draft conditions proposed. As I explained at our meeting, we intend to deliver this project on a traditional "housebuilder" type basis, with houses / blocks being constructed once they have been reserved. Under this arrangement, we feel that a few of the proposed conditions will become complicated to discharge as currently drafted. I have summarised which ones we feel are affected below:

Condition 6 (Landscaping)
The basic landscaping principles were included in the planning application. The detailed treatment, including finishes and species names etc will be designed for each area in the run up to its construction. We will however be constructing at least three houses for use as showhouses and possibly early occupations before the main garden area / car park is completed. We would therefore request that the condition allows us to commence on a particular phase (if the need arises) with landscaping etc agreed for that phase only.

Condition 7 (Boundary Treatment)
The basic boundary treatment principles were included in the planning application. The detailed treatment, including materials etc will be designed for each area in the run up to its construction. We will however be constructing at least three houses for use as showhouses and possibly early occupations before the main garden area / car park is completed. We would therefore request that the condition allows us to commence on a particular phase (if the need arises) with boundary treatments etc agreed for that phase only.

Condition 10 (Car Park)
Parking is centralised in a single below-podium car park. We will need to construct at least three houses for use as showhouses and possibly early occupations, before the main car park is completed. We would therefore request that the condition requires us (if the need arises) to agree temporary parking arrangements for a particular phase only.

Condition 13 (Play Areas)
A number of different play surfaces and features were included in the planning application, in different locations around the development. We will however need to construct at least three houses for use as showhouses and possibly early occupations, before some other areas are completed. We would therefore request that the condition requires us (if the need arises) to complete play areas associated with a particular phase before occupations take place within that phase only.

Condition 16 (Acoustic Attenuation)
We remain unsure why this condition is included, as the application is for housing only and is surrounded by housing to all sides. We would therefore like to ask if this condition can be omitted.

Condition 17 (Car Park Ventilation)
At the moment, we are hoping that the car park can be naturally ventilated. This will not be verified completely until we are further into detailed design however. In the meantime, we would like to commence on at least three houses for use as showhouses and possibly early occupation. We would therefore request that this condition is adjusted so that any ventilation scheme must be submitted before construction of the car park commences.

Condition 18 (Acoustic Insulation of car Park Mechanicals)
At the moment, we are hoping that the car park can be naturally ventilated. This will not be verified completely until further into detailed design however. In the meantime, we would like to commence on at least three houses for use as showhouses and possibly early occupation. We would therefore request that this condition is adjusted so that the acoustic insulation scheme for any car park ventilation equipment must be submitted before construction of the car park commences.

As a final point, I am pleased to report that we have further developed our thinking for the external cladding to the development. The development will still be dark grey/black in appearance, as shown on drawings and CGI's to date. For reasons of security, resistance to vandalism and general robustness at ground floor level however, we have discounted our early thoughts on using rainscreen cladding however, in favour of a dark brick solution, possibly using dark glazed bricks in certain areas. This is now notated on the elevation drawings enclosed. We will of course be happy to show you samples of the bricks we intend to use, for your approval, prior to any of them being installed.

We trust this is sufficient information for you to be able to process this application. Please do not hesitate to contact me of you require anything further.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Hattan CEng MICE MIStructE
Director of Development
Urban Splash Ltd