DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

AT

2 - 4 BIRCH POLYGON,
RUSHOLME, MANCHESTER
M14 5HX

ON BEHALF OF

MANCHESTER PROPERTIES LTD

MARCH 2013

Job Ref: 10,930/Rev: A

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This planning application is submitted by Howard and Seddon Partnership on behalf of Manchester Properties Ltd, and is seeking full planning permission for the proposed change of use of existing office space (B1) to 6 No residential apartments (C3) at 2 – 4 Birch Polygon, Rusholme, Manchester.

1.2 In support of the application this planning, Design and Access Statement has been produced to demonstrate how the change of use would meet all relevant national and local planning policy.

2. THE APPLICATION

2.1 This application seeks a change of use from existing vacant office space situated at the lower and upper ground floors of 2-4 Birch Polygon, Rusholme, Greater Manchester.

2.2 Within this change of use application the proposal consists of the construction of two Duplex 1 bedroom apartments at lower and upper ground floor level, at the front of the building. The addition of three, 2 bed apartments at lower and upper ground floor level, towards the rear of the building. The forming of an indoor communal area at the rear of the building to improve the amenity space for residents. The relocation and addition of entrance points to improve the accessibility of the building.

3. CONTEXT

Site location and description

3.1 The application site is situated in the centre of Rusholme within the district of Fallowfield, approximately 3 miles South of Manchester city centre. The site lies to the west of Birchfields Park and adjacent to Dickenson Road (A6010)

3.2 The existing site is currently occupied by 6 No apartments located on the first and second floor, comprising of two 1 bedroom, two 2 bedroom and two bed-sit apartments. The lower and upper ground floors currently form vacant office space.

3.3 To the rear of the site there is currently a car parking area comprising of an area of hard core and light vegetation.

3.4 The existing site has one vehicular access point from Birch Polygon.

3.5 The application site is only a short distance (0.4 miles) from Platt Fields Park which runs adjacent to Wilmslow Road (B5117).

The setting of the site

3.6 The application site is situated in the centre of Rusholme in South Manchester. The site lies approximately 0.8 miles from Manchester University's Fallowfield campus and 0.7 miles from Manchester High School for Girls.

3.7 The application site is located off Dickenson Road which runs from Longsight through to Rusholme where it connects with Wilmslow Road. Dickenson Road is a busy arterial route, well served by public transport.

3.8 The surrounding area is predominantly residential and there are a number of public parks within the immediate vicinity.

3.9 The site has good access to the national motorway network; Birch Polygon connects to Kingsway (A34) providing quick access to the M60 motorway.

3.10 The site allows for easy access to and from Mancunian Way via Upper Brook Street providing a route to the nearby Manchester Piccadilly Train Station and Manchester Royal Infirmary.

3.11 Manchester Airport lies just 8 miles to the South of the application site, and is quickly accessed using the M56, offering quick and easy access to national and international air travel.

3.12 Image below shows the approximate boundary of the application site.


Google earth

4. PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 The following planning history is taken from the online record of planning history for the application site.

4.2 2 – 4 Birch Polygon, Rusholme, Manchester.

4.3 **Application No:** F05952

Proposal: Erection of a block of flats after demolition of existing properties.

Date of Application: 13th December 1976

Decision Date: Unknown

Decision: Unknown

4.4 **Application No:** F06228

Proposal: Erection of 3 detached houses with integral garages, after demolition of existing properties.

Date of Application: 8th February 1977

Decision Date: 27th April1977

Decision: Refused

4.5 **Application No:** 34668

Proposal: Conversion of two dwelling houses into office and 7 flats including 2 storey rear extension and car parking at rear for 8 vehicles

Date of Application: 28th June 1989

Decision Date: 17th January 1990

Decision: Application Withdrawn

4.6	**Application No:**	37518
	Proposal:	Installation of temporary project office in connection with proposed renovation and redevelopment of vacant buildings
	Date of Application:	13th August 1990
	Decision Date:	29th November 1990
	Decision:	Application Approved

4.7	**Application No:**	37974
	Proposal:	Erection of a 3 storey building to form offices and 6 flats with associated car parking to the rear.
	Date of Application:	5th October 1990
	Decision Date:	17th January 1991
	Decision:	Application Approved

5. PLANNING GUIDANCE

5.1 Relevant Manchester City Council Local Plan Policies

- SP1 – Spatial Principles
- DM1 – Development Management
- DC5 – Development Control

5.2 The National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27th March 2012 and is the Government's attempt to put in place a clearer, more consistent National Planning Policy Framework which consolidates more than 1,000 pages of national planning policy, in 47 documents, into 1 document. This Framework has replaced all the other national planning policy documents.

5.3 The document has a clear presumption in favour of sustainable development. The Ministerial Foreword sets the tone of the document when it states that, 'Development that is sustainable should go ahead, without delay – a presumption in favour of sustainable development that is the basis for every plan, and every decision.'

5.4 The NPPF outlines that the primary objective of development management is to foster the delivery of sustainable development. Local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems, working pro-actively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of an area.

5.5 It states that, planning must operate to encourage growth and not act as an impediment. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system. There is clear support for economic development within the Framework and Local Authorities are urged to facilitate new development where practical and consistent with the Framework.

5.6 The Framework reinforces the Government's commitment to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity and is committed to ensuring the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth. Therefore significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system.

5.7 The Framework identifies 12 core planning principles which should underpin both plan making and decision taking. Amongst other things planning should:

- Proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs.
- Always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.
- Take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas.
- Encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed.
- Promote mixed use developments.

5.8 With regards to 'Decision Taking', the NPPF makes it clear that, local planning authorities should approach decision-taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development. Local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems and decision-takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible. Local planning authorities should work proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.

5.9 **Manchester's Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document**

Manchester's Core Strategy was adopted on 11th July 2012 and is the key Development Plan Document in the Local Development Framework (LDF). It replaces significant elements of the existing Unitary Development Plan as the document that sets out the long term strategic policies for Manchester's future development and forms the framework against which planning applications will be assessed.

5.10 The Core Strategy identifies a series of regeneration areas across the City. The application site is located within South Manchester. The South Manchester SRF area is an area of great contrast and diversity. Having developed from a series of smaller settlements, the area has gradually expanded to become one of the most sought after residential locations within the city and the wider conurbation.

5.11 South Manchester is a largely residential area and is home to approximately one third of Manchester's population (around 137,000 people). It provides a significant workforce for the City, within easy commuting of the City Centre. It contains some of the most expensive residential property in Manchester, a higher proportion of affluent households than any of the other SRF areas and an above average proportion of the higher educated workforce.

5.12 The six neighbourhoods of Chorlton, Whalley Range, West Didsbury, Didsbury Village, East Didsbury, Levenshulme and the eastern part of

Withington (around Withington district centre) are all high-quality neighbourhoods in South Manchester. They offer good-quality housing, a range of centres and services, and strong areas of heritage value and open space. Housing choice includes larger Victorian semi-detached homes and terraces; large detached houses on tree-lined avenues and some newer apartments.

5.13 The Core Strategy identifies the key challenges for South Manchester as listed below:

- Maintain the character and popularity of the southern neighbourhoods particularly within the conservation areas
- Improve standard of living and reduce levels of deprivation in Chorlton Park, Burnage, Withington and Fallowfield
- Maximise opportunities created through Metrolink extension
- Managing demand for student housing and ensuring that the sustainability and amenity of neighbourhoods are protected
- Improve under-performing centres

5.14 **Policy SP1 – Spatial Principles** identifies the key spatial policies which will guide the strategic development of Manchester to 2027. It outlines that the Regional Centre will be the focus for economic and commercial development, retail, leisure and cultural activity, alongside high quality city living. In addition, new development should maximise the potential of the City's transport infrastructure, in particular promoting walking, cycling and the use of public transport. The extension to the Metrolink network through the Oldham and Ashton lines will create key corridors for new development.

5.15 The policy goes on to outline that, development in all parts of the City should:-

- Make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice including:
- Creating well designed places that enhance or create character.
- Making a positive contribution to the health, safety and wellbeing of residents.
- Considering the needs of all members of the community regardless of age, gender, disability, sexuality, religion, culture, ethnicity or income.
- Protect and enhance the built and natural environment.
- Minimise emissions, ensure efficient use of natural resources and reuse previously developed land wherever possible.
- Improve access to jobs, services, education and open space by being located to reduce the need to travel and provide good access to sustainable transport provision.

5.16 **Policy DM1 – Development Management**

All development should have regard to the following issues:

- Siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail.
- Impact on the surrounding areas in terms of design, scale and appearance. Development should have regard to the character of the surrounding area.
- Effects on amenity, including privacy, light, noise, vibration, air quality, odours, litter, vermin, birds, road safety and traffic generation.
- Accessibility: buildings and neighbourhoods fully accessible to disabled people, access to new development by sustainable transport modes.
- Community safety and crime prevention.
- Design for health.
- Adequacy of internal accommodation and external amenity space.
- Refuse storage and collection.
- Vehicle access and car parking.
- Effects relating to biodiversity, landscape, archaeological or built heritage.
- Green Infrastructure including open space, both public and private.
- The use of alternatives to peat-based products in landscaping/gardens within development schemes.
- Flood risk and drainage.
- Existing or proposed hazardous installations.
- Subject to scheme viability, developers will be required to demonstrate that new development incorporates sustainable construction techniques as follows (In terms of energy targets this policy should be read alongside policy EN6 and the higher target will apply):-

    - Year 2010 – Code Level 3
    - Year 2013 – Code Level 4
    - Year 2016 – Code Level 6

5.17 **Policy DC5 – Development Control**

Principles of the Use - Policy DC5 of the Unitary Development Plan states that there will be a general presumption in favour of flat conversions within residential areas, particularly where the proposals will result in the retention and improvement of the housing stock. The application site lies within a residential area and the proposed residential development would be acceptable in principle if all the relevant policies were complied with.

All development should have regard to the following issues:

- The standard of accommodation.
- The impact of adjoining properties in terms of noise disturbance.

- The adequacy of off street car parking, particularly in areas with recognised ‘on street parking issues'.
- The general effect on the character of the neighbourhood, in terms of the prevalence of the conversion and the potential for loss of front garden areas.
- The provision of disabled access.
- The provision of satisfactory arrangements for the storage and collection of refuse.

6. ACCESS COMPONENT

6.1 As is the case with the existing arrangement of the site off road parking is provided with suitable turning areas. We propose to provide an increase in the onsite car parking capacity to that of the existing.

6.2 The application site offers quick and easy access to the local bus service, with the closet bus stop from the application site being situated approximately 200ft away on A6010 Dickenson Road. Dickenson Road is a busy arterial route, well served by public transport providing easy and regular access into Manchester City Centre.

6.3 The application site is located 1.6 miles from Levenshulme railway station. Levenshulme railway station located on Albert Road provides rail access to Manchester Piccadilly, Alderley Edge, Hazel Grove & Crewe. Manchester and Crewe railway stations provide rail connections to the national rail network.

6.4 The upper ground floor can be accessed via the front entrance doors which maintain a clear opening of 1590mm. The existing paving immediately outside the door will be ramped up to provide a 'level' threshold at the entrance.

7. SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

7.1 This planning application is submitted by Howard and Seddon Partnership on behalf of Manchester Properties Ltd, and is seeking full planning permission for the proposed change of use of existing office space (B1) to 12 No residential apartments (C3) at 2 – 4 Birch Polygon, Rusholme, Manchester, M14 5HX

7.2 The proposed development complies with national and local guidance and development plan policy.

7.3 The proposed development in not in a Green Belt area and would therefore have no adverse affect on the Green Belt. The proposal seeks to retain the existing building, meaning minimal alterations to the overall scale, mass and siting of the building. Therefore the proposal would not have an adverse impact on visual amenities of the surrounding buildings.

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