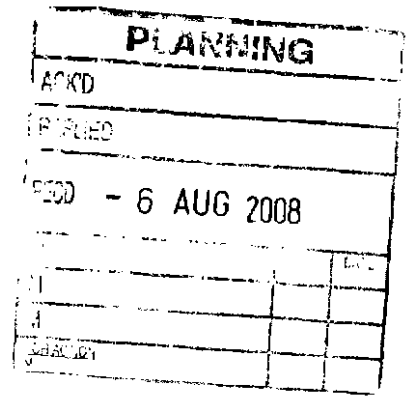


Access Statement

Unit 5 Bishops Corner, 321 Stretford Road Manchester

To support planning application number 084164

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This access report has been prepared by Q's Consulting for Abdul G. Mohammed in support of a planning application for change of use from A1/A2 to A5 at Unit 5, Bishops Corner, 321 Stretford Road, Manchester M15 4UW.

1.2 The main purpose of the report is to outline the measures that have been employed in order to ensure inclusive access throughout the proposition. The report will form a link between the outline permission and the consideration of reserved matters.

1.3 The application site is located on land bounded by Stretford Road, Old Birley Street and Tomlinson Street.

1.4 The proposed site comprises approximately 66 sq metres of floor space at ground level.

1.5 Access for disabled people to the built environment, services, employment, transport and education is playing an ever increasingly important role in the development of new buildings. Legislation, regulation and planning requirements are continually changing and expanding.

1.6 The design team have adopted an approach which will incorporate measures to facilitate access and use by all people of the proposition including disabled people with mobility, sensory and cognitive impairments.

1.7 Key concerns in developing the plan have been:

- To ensure that the building is able to be accessed by all potential visitors, regardless of age, gender or any disabilities that they might have;
- To ensure that external building environment, including the location and orientation of the entrance, will be legible and not act as an impediment to any potential users;
- To ensure that the internal building environment can be successfully and safely used by all potential users of the building;
- To ensure that, where possible, opportunities are taken to utilise colours, materials, textures, and the treatment of space to assist in the legibility and aesthetic value of the building and to improve design standards overall.

1.8 This report accompanies the application for planning permission and considers the measures that have been utilised in order to achieve a fully accessible development taking into account national legislation as well as guidance at the local level in the form of Design for Access 2. This document should be read in conjunction with the submitted application drawings and application documents.

1.9 This is set out in the following sections of the report:

- Section 2 – sets out relevant legislation and guidance relating to inclusive access
- Section 3 – considers the measures that have been employed to secure an accessible building.
- Section 4 – summary and conclusions

2.0 Relevant Accessibility Guidance

National Guidance

2.1 Statutory regulations at the national level on the provision of disabled access are set out in Building Regulations Part M (2004 edition), British Standard 8300, relevant sections of British Standard 5588 and with reference to the Disability Discrimination Act 2004.

2.2 It should be noted that the proposition complies fully with all requirements of these documents.

Design for Access 2

2.3 Design for Access 2 (DFA2) is Manchester City Council's (MCC) best practice guidance on inclusive design standards. These standards are based upon a Social Model of Disability (explained below) and in some areas they go further than current Government guidance and regulations. The manual has been drafted in consultation with disabled persons, drawing on their knowledge and experience.

2.4 The document states that it should be applied to all buildings and projects where Manchester City lead or are the client.

2.5 Where this is not the case, for example in relation to this application, the document is to be considered as best practice and designers and developers are encouraged to embrace the document where possible. This reflects the approach of the design team in developing the proposals, which has been to embrace the DFA2 guidance in as far as is practicable. It should be noted that whilst the document has been endorsed by the City Council, it has not been subject to public consultation and does not form part of the Council's adopted planning policy.

2.6 On this basis, if it is not possible or reasonable to meet the standard identified within the DFA2 document, where it exceeds the minimum standards of part M and BS 8300, the requirement is to revert to the requirements of statutory regulations.

The Social Model

2.7 In preparing Design for Access 2 MMC adopted the social model of disability. The model requires the instead of grouping disabled people into categories such as deaf and blind people or wheelchair users, solutions should be sought for individuals to the common barriers which exclude disabled people from mainstream activities and services – which can generally be grouped under three main headings:

- Physical - Steps, stairs, inadequate signs
- Organisational – the systems and processes that exclude disabled people.
- Attitudinal – i.e. the traditional view of disabled people as passive and dependant.

3.0 Accessibility Considerations

3.1 The proposed development has been designed to embrace the principle of access for all and to assist with Manchester City Council's stated aim – for Manchester to be recognised as Europe's most accessible city. Principally, as set out in detail below, this extends to the street level access to the ground floor area as well as full access and ease of use within the proposed development. This is demonstrated within the comprehensive planning application documentation that accompanies this report.

3.2 It is clear that the access for disabled people has been considered as an integral element of the design process and will be central to the design process at all stages in the development and construction of the proposed building, as well as during its subsequent operation.

3.3 Consideration will be given to to floor surfaces, wall colours, height of door handles, height of counter etc to meet the requirements of blind, deaf and ambulant disabled occupants.

3.4 The building will be designed to be legible and easy to navigate and accessible to all users with mobility, hearing and visual impairments. This will be assisted through the lighting design and the use of signage and colour in the building.

3.5 All hand controls such as buttons, lavatory flushes, grab rails, and taps will be size and shape that ensures maximum usability.

3.6 Fire exit doors will be provided with a one way push action not exceeding the recommended force.

3.7 Direct level access will be provided at the ground floor level. The entrance will into the Unit will be level with the external pavement.

3.8 A spacious customer area, easily accommodating a wheelchair turning circle and with an unobstructed approach, will be provided. The counter and seating area will be designed for ease of use by wheelchair users and the area will be continuously staffed, helping to aid convenient access to the floor space for both members of staff and customers who may be disabled.

Refuge Collection Site Access.

The application site is located on land bounded by Stretford Road, Old Birley Street and Tomlinson Street. There is access to the rear of the property via a private car park. Here there is a separate refuge area sealed of from the main car park which will be used for bins. This will be collected by a private contractor ensuring that no common problems associated with the storing or disposing off waste does not occur. The bins will be rodent proof and vandal proof. We will ensure that the highest standards are maintained at all times.

4.0 Summary and Conclusions

4.1 The scheme complies fully with the requirements of Statutory regulations at the national level on the provision of disabled access as set out in Building Regulations Part M (2004 edition) and British Standards 8300, with reference to the Disability Discrimination Act 2004.

4.2 Maximising accessibility throughout the development has been an important consideration during the design process to date and will continue to be so as the design evolves through to construction and fruition. The following points summarise, in brief, the accessibility considerations of the proposed building.

- The proposed development is situated within a truly accessible location, in the heart of Hulme within close proximity to public transport facilities.
- The business will be designed to be legible, easy to navigate and accessible to all users. This will be assisted through the lighting design and signage and colour used.

4.3 In summary, an inclusive design has been developed which merits the support of the City Council.