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Planning,
Manchester City Council,
PO Box 532,
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15th April 2014

Dear Sirs

PLANNING APPLICATION FOR CLADDING OF RAILWAY ARCHES FLEXISPACE SELF STORAGE, 40 - 46 ASHTON OLD ROAD, ARDWICK, MANCHESTER, M12 6LP

I am pleased to submit an application for the cladding of railway arches at the Flexispace self storage site, Ashton Old Road, Ardwick.

A previous planning application, reference 104813/FO/2014/N2, was refused planning permission on 1st April 2014. This application revises the proposal by reducing the coverage of the proposed cladding to the arch openings only. Please note that, notwithstanding this application, the applicant considers the previous refusal to be unjustified.

The proposal is to clad both elevations of the arches with metal cladding, to enclose them to facilitate their use for storage, ancillary to the existing use of the Flexispace site. The cladding to the elevation facing to the south east would be grey; that to the elevation facing the car park would be yellow. The latter elevation would be punctuated with personnel and storage doors. In

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the case of both elevations, the cladding would be confined to the arch openings only. The brick structure would remain wholly visible.

The Flexispace site is located on the south side of Ashton Old Road in a predominantly industrial/commercial area. The arches are located to the south east of the site. They are not prominent when viewed from Ashton Old Road. The arches are currently used for some ancillary vehicle storage etc, although they are largely under-utilised.

Flexispace offer flexible accommodation for self storage or workspace to business and personal customers. The proposal would enable Flexispace to improve its offer of storage/workspace accommodation at the site. It would enable Flexispace to utilise the site in a more efficient manner and bring an under used structure back into more productive use. The proposal would not necessitate any change to the existing access, servicing and car parking arrangements. Access to the arches would be achieved in a satisfactory manner without adverse impact on the operation of the site or the local highway network.

The proposal involves physical alterations to the arches and this would have no impact on residential amenity. It should however be noted that the railway arches are located to the south eastern part of the site, that is further away from the nearest residential properties (located some distance away to the east of Holly Street) than other parts of the site. It should be noted that the Council raised no concerns regarding impact on residential amenity in respect of the earlier, refused proposal.

The cladding of the arches would greatly improve on their current rather rundown appearance, improving the overall physical appearance of the

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site, to the benefit of the general appearance of the area. It is clear from the decision notice for planning application 104813/FO/2014/N2 , that the Council did not object to the principle of cladding the arches but to the extent of cladding then proposed. It can therefore easily be inferred that the Council would have no objection to the proposal as now revised. Indeed, this was the design solution proposed by the case officer dealing with the earlier application. It should be noted that the arches are not listed, have no specific architectural or heritage value and could be demolished without the need for planning permission; all of which are material considerations in the determination of this application.

By bringing the arches into more beneficial use, contributing to increased commercial activity, economic growth and improving the appearance of the site, the proposal would contribute to the ongoing regeneration of this part of East Manchester, thereby being consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework and relevant Core Strategy Development Plan Document and saved Unitary Development Plan (UDP) policies, in particular Core Strategy Policies SP1, DM1, EC1, EC2 and EC5 and UDP Policy EM17 or to the guidance contained within the adopted Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Guidance and Planning Document and to the regeneration objectives for Ashton Old Road contained within the East Manchester Strategic Regeneration Framework.

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