Design & Access Statement

Rodney Court, Butler Street, Ancoats, Manchester.

Prepared on behalf of Rowlinson Construction Ltd for Housing Capital Trust **REV B**

Project Summary

This Design and Access Statement supports a Detailed Planning Application under the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.

Supporting Information

This statement should be read in conjunction with the information listed below:

Drawings	
Information references	**Sheet Name and Description**
P3453/03-200B	Proposed Site Plan
P3453/03-202F	Proposed Elevations sheet 1
P3453/03-203F	Proposed Elevations sheet 2
Survey & Reports	
Manchester Enterprise calculation	

1.00 Introduction

Pozzoni LLP are pleased to submit this statement in support of the proposed Rodney Court, Butler Street, Ancoats, Manchester.

Please note this submission is for the extension to the ground floor of the tower bock and the revised site proposals, as such this should also be read conjunction with the approval reference 102891/FO/2013/N1 – Granted on 15 August 2013.

This document describes the design approach employed by Pozzoni and highlights the drivers that informed this. The following pages should be read in conjunction with the submitted drawings and reports.

Appraisal:

The site area is approximately 3312 sq/m. The building is an existing 13 storey tower block within its own site surroundings with a planning approval for over cladding works, internal remodeling and external site re-modelling/bin Store. Access to the block is gained through the ground floor entrance leading from the shared communal area beyond the site boundary.

Generally the existing site topography presents a level site with a mixture of hard standing and grassed areas with localised self-seeded trees.

Rodney Court is an existing pre-cast concrete panel construction, 13 storeys in height, constructed circa 1950's using through slab and shear wall construction, overlain with a flat roof. The main elevation frontage, addresses the area of Miles Platting and beyond. The building's immediately surrounding the site are predominantly a mixture of low rise domestic scale residential housing. Neighbouring buildings beyond are predominantly residential housing contained in low/medium rise new build and refurbished buildings, a small number of which have been converted into small business units.

2.00 Design

2.01 The Process

Project Brief:

The project brief was assembled through a joint venture between Housing Capital Trust and Rowlinson Construction Ltd. Both parties have identified a demonstrable accommodation need that the Saltford, Chippenham and Rodney Court buildings can provide (see separate application for Chippenham and Saltford Court) and alongside site specific regeneration this would allow the derelict building and grounds to provide new life through the much needed rentable housing market.

A client lead feasibility study has established the need to retain all three existing tower blocks, and their facades to be re-elevated. This will be attained by a complete refurbishment of the apartment internals, a complete window replacement and full building insulated rainscreen and render system over cladding. A new and welcoming entrance pod, set within a full external landscaping scheme, and new site boundary treatments will complement the building proposals. Renovating these disused buildings from their current condition, aligns with the client's and local resident's aspirations for local regeneration.

Assessment:

The aspiration for this scheme is that it will integrate well into the community and create a positive 'ripple effect' impact. There is a significant opportunity to create a new landmark site with the Ancoats area. A new and inspirational Rodney Court will be a welcome catalyst for wider regeneration. Animated elevations, with high design content and quality, the building and its site will be a clear expression of investment and confidence in this deprived area of Manchester.

The accommodation provided within the scheme is to complement the profile of those already found locally, not to compete with them. The apartments are to be designed to the current government building regulation standards.

Physical Context – The 0.33 hectare site is in Ancoats, off Butler Street, between the A62 Oldham Road to the North West and the Ashton Canal to the South East. The vehicular access to the site is from Butler Street. Pedestrians can access the site from both these points. Two storey 1970's houses generally dominate the immediate area surrounding the site.

Environment Agency and Flood Zone issue do not apply within this context but please see separate maps associated with this application.

The site is well located for public transport. A bus route passes close to the site along Oldham Road and Butler Street into the centre of Manchester approximately ¾ mile away. Pedestrian routes to the city centre where the Piccadilly Railway station is located is approximately ¾ mile away. The local New Islington tram stop is approximately 300 metres to the South.

Social Context – This housing block has been fallow since 1994 when it was closed by the Local Authority. It presently sits as a very negative social statement within the urban context. Such inactivity brings with it a complexity of cause and effect social issues. The site is presently C3 class use which was retained under the previous submission.

The revised scheme will provide an enhancement significantly improved urban environment, create local employment and it is anticipated that the resulting proposals will be a valuable asset to the community.

Economic Context – Through a joint venture between Housing Capital Trust and Rowlinson Construction Ltd. funding and financing for this development has been secured. A Green Deal grant is also providing funding based on BREEAM sustainability inclusions. It is intended that HCT will rent the

properties. This development is an essential ingredient in creating a significantly improved environment for existing local residents and the community.

Planning Policy – This can be detailed and compiled as an appended Planning Statement as required, highlighting and detailing relevant supporting National, Regional and Local planning policy. Please also refer to the Manchester City Council website for supporting planning policy information.

Involvement

Pre-application consultations have taken place with Manchester City Council Planning Department for the changes over and above the approved planning scheme.

In Summary the advice was to submit a planning application to cover the Ground floor extension and alterations to the site layout.

The remaining planning conditions would still be dealt with under planning application 102891/FO/2013/N1 – Granted on 15 August 2013 with any conditions covered under this planning approval considered discharged under the previous approval.

Design

Scale, Character and External Appearance:

The building entrance location has been retained as the approved scheme, in principle as the existing building with a proposed pod designed to articulate the current entrance. Cladding to the elevations has been updated to use the Woods range in lieu of the chameleon range (refer to drawings for locations) will be formed from Rockpanel Woods range panel (or similar approved). Rockpanel has a transparent coating that makes the boards self-cleaning, so that it is naturally washed away by rainwater. In addition, the coating improves the UV resistance of the board, further extending the colourfastness.

Visually, it is proposed, that all the materials will provide a modern, clean and crisp and light appearance to the dominant form of the tower. All the boards will be mechanically fixed back to cladding rails with new face fixed wall insulation, behind the boards.

> "The Rockclad panel is manufactured from Basalt (Volcanic Rock). This makes the panel as durable as stone 100% weather, temperature and UV proof and maintenance free. The colours remain stable and the material is insensitive to delamination and rotting".
> (Extract from manufacturer's literature 'Rockpanel product selector').

The cladding as a material will maintain its longevity, is resistant to temperature and weather influences, and low-maintenance. The colour will remain stable, the board material maintaining its original freshness and appearance over time.

New polyester powder coated aluminium windows (colour to be confirmed), will be installed to all elevations. This element is intentionally included to all elevations along with staggering the openings where possible to reduce the impact of a horizontal ribbon window. It is proposed, to visually alter the individual windows dimensions and introduce separating panels as indicated on the proposed drawings.

The internal planning of the building is simple and straightforward to navigate. The more public areas of the scheme remain located closest to the car park and in line with the vehicular entrance to the site. The entrance is clearly visible from both the pedestrian and vehicular approaches and marked by a distinctive wrapping canopy and full height glazed screens. There are no secondary entrances or exits form the building.

The Biomass installation, which contributes most to the BREEAM enhancements, has been considered at length and, through additional design development, the proposal is to include the biomass installation within the a Ground Floor single storey extension – extended from the existing plant/bin storage areas.

We considered a stand-alone biomass building, although when designed this required a building some 16m in length, 10m in width and 4.5m in height plus flue. We have worked extensively the proposed biomass manufacturer and have been able, by relocating the system against the existing tower block, to reduce the size of enclosure needed and integrate into a much more sympathetic and better designed solution.

The detached combined Bin Store has also been re-sized following further guidance from Manchester Enterprise and will house the required refuse and recycling bins required to meet Manchester City Council and BREEAM guidelines.

2.02 Use

As planning approval reference; 102891/FO/2013/N1.

Secure By Design:

As part of the process in obtaining Planning Permission, a consultation with the local area Secure by Design Officer will be undertaken. The new proposed windows will be PAS 24 accredited and will meet the respective Secure by Design Standards.

Accommodation

As planning approval reference; 102891/FO/2013/N1.

2.03 Amount

As planning approval reference; 102891/FO/2013/N1.

2.04 Layout

Site
The site offers opportunities to retain the existing footprint and overall massing without disturbing the established urban context. The proposals have been designed to respect quality high value trees (tree survey not yet complete). The main entrance is East facing overlooking Butler Street, but it is particularly important to elevate and treat all elevations with equal importance when considering their impact over some distance on the surrounding urban context.

The orientation of the site and building is clearly fixed and there are no upper floor footprint proposal modifications.

The approach to the building from Butler Street has been kept as open as possible and the routes to the entrances made clear and accessible to all. Visitor and wheelchair accessible car parking are positioned close to the entrance. Parking provision has been maximised within the space available and the bin storage area is located close to the site entrance for easy collection.

Highway consultations have taken place during and since the determination of planning approval reference; 102891/FO/2013/N1, we understand this will be addressed again during the determination process.

Building
The building is rectangular in footprint and the entrance is located so that it can be easily seen on entering the site, but it will also be visible from the car park.

The apartments are spread over 13 floors with fewer units on the ground floor because the ancillary and service support functions are located here.

Design Standards
The following documents have been referred to and complied with during the preparation of the design:

- The Building Regulation 2000 Part M (2004 Edition)
- BS8300:2001 Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people
- There have also been preliminary works completed by the Energy Council with aspirations towards a BREEAM refurbishment standard.

2.05 Scale

The retained mass of the building has been carefully re-elevated, to enhance the existing local vernacular. The language of the building has been kept domestic by the retention of apertures which reflect the use behind. The elevations are uncomplicated and the proposed palette of materials reflects this.

The door and window patterns work with and not against the existing proportions, massing and overall scale. This has been enhanced by the introduction of frames and surrounds which add interest. The window and door openings have been sized to be appropriate to the mass of the building. The head height of both the doors and the windows has been set appropriately with consideration to maximise the light entering the building. Features have been added to articulate the elevations – framing around the entrances with feature panels, surrounds to windows to give the elevations rhythm, and accent panels to the adjacent elevations to provide aesthetic relief.

The nearest properties directly facing the site are on Butler Street and are 23 metres as an approximate average.

2.06 Landscaping

The proposed soft and hard landscaping is integral to the design. The site and parking area planting will complement the architectural backdrop and will create an amenity for residents to enjoy. Low maintenance, year round trees and planting will be planted to compensate for the limited numbers that have been lost and to create structure and scale within the car park area.

There will be garden spaces created around the building which we have increased in area since the previous approval, with the majority of the landscaping adjacent to the building laid to lawn with pathways.

All external pathways will be suitable for all levels of ability using level, non-slip materials. This facilitates passive surveillance.

Lower floor apartments benefit from an outlook of the gardens; upper floor apartments enjoy an uninterrupted view of the Manchester skyline.

2.07 Appearance

When considering the appearance of the building the Manchester City Council Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance (SPD) has been used.

It is intended that this development will integrate to the context, will be a significant improvement on the original, complementing the character and grain of the area as a whole, but also reflecting the domestic nature of the scheme. It will be a home as well as a community. To achieve this, the form, siting, proportion, colour, texture, materials and features have been carefully considered to compose a

well-proportioned building. The building will be distinctive and enhance the building types within the neighbourhood.

Cohesion has been created in the elevations through the use of a small pallet of high quality materials, features and fenestration patterns. The windows and doors are designed primarily to create pleasant internal spaces but the composition of the elevations has been driven by the existing structure and proportion, fused with the internal function of the proposed apartments. Further coordinated design tuning refines the external aesthetic.

The mass of the elevations have been broken down using accent materials and staggered window positions. This helps reduce the impact of the fenestrations. Features have been added to give rhythm and identity.

The glazing is appropriately sized for its use as well as its elevational presence as it encompasses the entrance.

The building solution is quite simple. Many precedents around Manchester were investigated in order to arrive at the external treatment illustrated in the proposals.

Materials
The woods range and staggered windows on the elevations are contemporary, but will sit comfortably within the context of the neighbourhood. The surrounding area mainly comprises 1970's one and two storey houses with tiled pitched roofs. The materials selected have been chosen to assist with the softening of the building and creation of a local landmark building. The windows and doors will be grey and are to be set back into the reveals. Framing features have been included surrounding key doors and on some windows to create interest. These will be clad in polyester powder coated metal – colour and texture to be agreed. The materials have been chosen with maintenance and longevity in mind.

Lighting
The communal areas of the scheme and the communal garden will be lit at night. As the building will **not** be staffed 24/7, common areas will be lit at night and lighting around the entrance and car park will be on throughout the night. The final lighting scheme is still to be designed.

2.08 Sustainability

The nature of this development promotes a diverse, and sustainable, community. The site is sustainably situated as it is close to the centre of Manchester and has good public transport links.

The supporting energy information outlines how we intend to meet this requirement. We may also propose a BREEAM refurbishment standard (possibly Very Good). Whichever method of accreditation is used the intension is that CO_2 emissions will be reduced by increasing the building fabric insulation, to achieve low U Values, reducing air leakage and thermal bridging. Low energy light fittings with PIR controls where appropriate will be specified, and water consuming appliances with low flow rates will further reduce the energy demand of the dwellings. The materials used in the main building elements will be responsibly sourced and where possible, locally sourced. They will also be as recyclable as possible; please see extract below:

"Basalt is a natural material which is readily available. 400 M/Sq of panels are produced from 1 M/Cu of basalt. All Rockpanel products are 100% recyclable and at least 30% of the final products comprise of materials that are going into their second life phase without loss of quality".

(Extract from manufacturer's literature 'Rockpanel product selector').

3.00 Access

3.01 Vehicular and transport links

The building sits within a suburban/urban context in the existing topography and housing masses. The parking is located as you enter the site off Chippenham Road. This area is the public face of the building at ground level. There is a defined boundary to all sides of the car park enclosing the garden area associated with the block.

Parking
The site is ideally located to take advantage of the local bus service and amenities within the urban context and therefore accords with current planning guidance which encourages development in sustainable locations. The residents of this scheme are however less likely to have cars and cycles, but are 53 car parking spaces proposed, of which 2 are disabled accessible.

This represents a slight reduction from the planning approved scheme, but still exceeds the current parking provision on the site.

The reasons for the reduction is the increased area required for the biomass and bin store and an alternative biomass delivery vehicle route recommended by Manchester City Council Highways department.

Emergency Services Access
It is anticipated that fire appliances will pull into the space in front of the entrance where the inlets for connecting to the dry risers in each staircase are located. Dry risers are necessary to each staircase because of the horizontal travel distances within the building design. Ambulance and emergency vehicles will also make use of this space adjacent to the entrance.

Cycle Storage and Refuse
10 cycle storage spaces are to be provided for residents within a secure cycle store. These spaces will be covered and will be incorporated alongside, or be part of the external Refuse Store and Plant energy centre within the car parking area. This is easily accessible for convenient collection by a refuse vehicle and general building servicing vehicles.

3.02 Inclusive access

Gradients
The site is relatively flat. Navigating around the building on the footpaths and from the disabled parking spaces in a wheelchair will be easy. Within the site, car parks and footways there will be ramping at a gradient not in excess of 1:20 and all doorways will have level thresholds.

The whole building has well defined routes with generous circulation space, wide doors, making all spaces inclusive and accessible to those with mobility and visual impairment.

Entrances
The entrance to the building is evident because of its locations and the architectural massing which gives directional cues. The lighting and signage around the scheme will reinforce this.

The entrance door will have automatic opening doors leading into the communal area with a reception desk and seating areas evident when you enter.

4.00 Conclusion

In conclusion, we feel that the proposals enhance the scheme already approved under Planning reference 102891/FO/2013/N1.

We believe we have designed a high quality housing scheme that makes effective use of land and existing resource. It welcomes residents who will be able to relate to the size, scale and ambience of the spaces created.