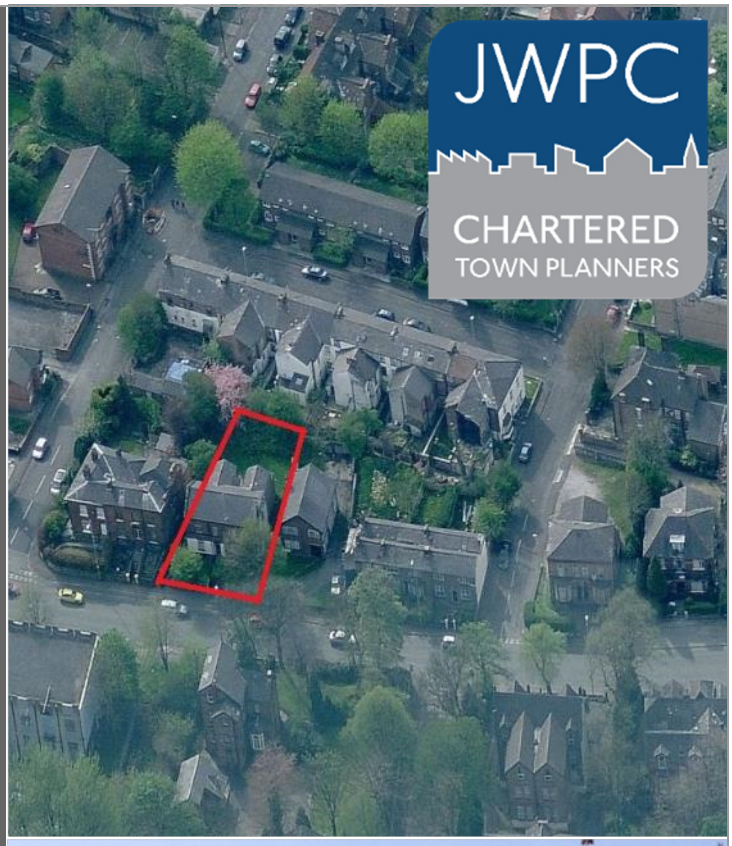
11–13 Middleton Road
Crumpsall
Manchester
M8 5DT

Subdivision of Existing Units into 4 No. Apartments





Client:
Western UK Property Group

Planning, Design & Access Statement

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1. Introduction

1.1 This Statement has been prepared on behalf of Western UK Property Group in support of a retrospective planning application for the subdivision of two existing residential units at Nos. 11-13 Middleton Road, Crumpsall, Manchester.

1.2 The development proposal is set out in respect of the site context and prevailing planning policies to justify why planning permission should be granted. Additionally, the document incorporates a Design & Access Statement, which also refers measures included to reduce the potential for crime.

1.3 The Statement should be considered alongside the Planning Application Forms, Plans and Heritage Asset Statement which have also been submitted for consideration of the LPA.

2. Site Characteristics

2.1 The planning application site comprises 2 No. two storey semi-detached residential units, situated along Middleton Road, Crumpsall. Middleton Road forms part of the A576 which approximately 30 to 40m south of the site, joins with the A665 to form an arterial route into Manchester City Centre. As such, the site is highly accessible via bus, with a number of stops within a short walking distance. The Crumpsall Metrolink station is also located approximately 500 metres to the east of the site, providing frequent services to the centre.

2.2 The site forms part of a residential area, which extends to the north and west, although a number of businesses also front the A567. Shops, services and leisure facilities are within a close proximity at the District Centre along Bury Old Road to the south-east, and a Sainsbury's superstore is located approximately half a mile to the north.



Figure 1: Photograph of application site prior to alterations

2.3 The buildings subject to this application are of a Victorian character, with the position of a former fireplace / chimney to the northern gable of No. 13 indicating they once formed part of a larger terrace. Like other properties fronting Middleton Road, the units are set back from the highway. Due to an increase in ground levels between the public footway and the units, they appear prominent in the street-scene.

2.4 Although benefitting from a small front garden, the units have never featured off-street parking. The units each have spacious rear gardens and access to the back-street is pedestrian only.

2.5 When acquired by the Applicant the units were in a poor state of repair, having been vacant for a number of years. A review of the Council's online records has shown no recent planning history, although it is understood that No. 11 had previously formed a number of bedsits and No. 13 was utilised as a single residential unit.

3. Design & Access Statement

Use

3.1 The proposal involves the regeneration of Nos. 11-13 Middleton Road for continued residential use (Use Class C3).

Amount

3.2 Works involve the sub-division of the two units to create 4 No. two bedroom self-contained apartments.



Figure 2: Photograph of front elevation during conversion works (taken 27/03/2014)

Layout

3.3 Each apartment will be accessed via a common lobby from the ground floor. The ground floor units incorporate the basement which has been converted to form additional accommodation. All bedrooms feature en-suite bathroom facilities. The apartment layout also includes a kitchen / dining area and lounge.

3.4 The rear gardens will form a single communal area for the occupants. This will be maintained via a service charge applied to occupants of the site. Immediate access will be available to this space for occupants of the ground floor apartments, where rear doors will lead out into the garden. Occupants of the first floor accommodation will be required to access the garden via the graded paths by the side of the building.

Scale

3.5 No extensions are proposed to the existing building and the scale of the development will remain the same. A lean-to roof is proposed to the ground floor en-suite associated with the bedroom at No. 11 (Apartment 1).

Landscaping

3.6 No landscaping is proposed as part of this development. Although there will be improvements to the garden areas, which have been in a poor visual state since the vacancy of the building.

Appearance

3.7 Alterations have been required to improve the appearance of the building, in order to bring it back into a functional state. This has included extension of the white render to the front elevation to cover both units. Windows and doors are of white UPVC, however the original cills and lintels will be retained.

3.8 The existing boundary wall, which was assessed to have been in a poor condition will be replaced with painted metal railings and gates.

Access

3.9 The proposed building works comply fully with Approved Document M of the Building Regulations, which is the governing document regarding disabled access.

Crime and Safety

3.10 The doors and windows will be to a high quality which discourage break-ins. Access to the service ginnel to the rear of the property is pedestrian only, and can only be accessed from Catherine Road or Moxley Road by occupants with a key.

3.11 The re-use and occupation of the building will help to also discourage criminal activity in the locality.

4. Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

4.1 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking. For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with the Development Plan without delay.

4.2 Chapter 6 (Delivering a Wide Choice of High Quality Homes) sets out the Government's aim to "*boost significantly the supply of housing*" and at Paragraph 49, the NPPF makes clear that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption of sustainable development. Furthermore local planning authorities should identify and bring back into residential use empty housing and buildings (Paragraph 51).

4.3 Within Chapter 7 (Requiring Good Design), the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is regarded as a key aspect of sustainable development, that is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.

4.4 At Paragraph 58 the NPPF clarifies how planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:

- Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- Establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;
- Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses and support local facilities and transport networks;
- Respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;
- Create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion; and
- Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.

Local Planning Policies

4.5 Manchester City Council adopted their Core Strategy Development Plan Document on 11th July 2012, with policies superseding many of those previously utilised in the determination of planning applications within the Unitary Development Plan. Although a number of the Unitary Development Plan policies remain extant, the Core Strategy is the most relevant document for assessing the current proposal.

4.6 Under the associated Core Strategy map, the planning application site is identified as part of the City's Inner Area, located within North Manchester and forming part of the Crumpsall Lane Conservation Area. Policies relevant to the determination of the proposal are detailed below:

4.7 **Policy SP1 (Spatial Principles)** sets out the principles which will guide the strategic development of Manchester to 2027. It states that beyond the city centre and regional centre, emphasis will be towards the creation of neighbourhoods of choice, providing a diverse range of housing around district centres which meets local needs, all in a distinct environment. The majority of new development in these neighbourhoods will be in the Inner Areas, defined by the North Manchester, East Manchester and Central Manchester Regeneration Areas.

4.8 New development will maximise the potential of the City's transport infrastructure, in particular promoting walking, cycling and the use of public transport. 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 well-being 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 sufficient use of natural resources and re-use of previously developed land where ever possible;
- Improve access to jobs, services, education and open space to reduce the need to travel.

4.9 Through **Policy H1 (Overall Housing Provision)**, the Council will seek to deliver approximately 60,000 new dwellings within Manchester between March 2009 and March 2027. This equates to an average

of 3,333 units per year. New housing will be predominantly in the North, East, City Centre and Central Manchester, these areas falling within the Regional Centre and the Inner Areas of Manchester.

4.10 The Policy clarifies how the re-use of vacant housing, including the renewal of areas characterised by poor quality housing will be prioritised. New developments should take advantage of existing buildings by appropriate refurbishment or rebuilding works.

4.11 In addition to the Core Strategy, there are also a number of 'Saved' Policies of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan (UDP) that are specifically relevant to the conversion of existing properties into flats / apartments.

4.12 Through **Policy DC5.1** (Flat Conversions), the Council will have regard to the following criteria in the determination of applications to convert property to flats:

a) The standard of accommodation for the intended occupiers of the premises;
b) Effects on adjoining houses as a result of noise from flats passing through party walls and affecting adjoining houses;
c) Adequacy of car parking, off-street car parking being normally required where practicable, and essential where there is so severe an existing on-street parking problem that unacceptable additional pressures would be created;
d) General effects on the character of the neighbourhood, including the extent to which flat conversion schemes are a new or an established feature of the immediate area, avoiding the loss of front gardens and the retention of existing trees and shrubs;
e) Adequate private outdoor amenity space;
f) The desirability of achieving easy access for all, including disabled people (as a minimum, access for disabled people will normally be required in conversions of ground floor accommodation);
g) The satisfactory provision of refuse storage and collection facilities.

4.13 Furthermore, under **Policy DC5.2**, there will be a general presumption in favour of flat conversions within residential areas, on the upper floors of businesses within commercial areas and in properties on main road frontages, subject to other relevant policies of the Plan. They will be particularly welcome where large, old, difficult to re-use properties are involved, and where proposed schemes provide investment enabling the retention and improvement of housing stock.

5. Planning Considerations

Principle of Development

5.1 The planning application relates to a site within the Inner Area of the City and part of North Manchester, which is located to an arterial route into the city and is highly accessible via a number of modes of public transportation. It is furthermore within close proximity to local amenities, shops and services, reducing the need for occupants to travel. As such, the site is considered highly sustainable and an ideal location for continued residential use. It will contribute positively to the Council's housing targets for the delivery of new homes set through Core Strategy Policy H1.

Regeneration Benefits

5.2 When acquired by the Applicant, the site was in a poor state of repair having been vacant and boarded up for a number of years. Planning approval for the conversion of the building into 4 No. self-contained apartments would bring this prominent Victorian building back into active use. This would have a positive effect on the character of the neighbourhood, which also forms part of a conservation area. Occupation would also deliver benefits for reducing instances of crime in the locality.

3.12 Intended occupiers would benefit from a good standard of accommodation and level of private outdoor amenity space, which would be maintained through a service charge. Due to the building's historic qualities it is difficult to incorporate substantial works to improve disabled access. However the regeneration has been undertaken in accordance with Approved Document M of the Building Regulations, which is the governing document regarding disabled access.

5.3 The proposal is therefore consistent with the aims and intentions of Core Strategy Policies SP1 and "Saved" UDP Policies DC5.1 and DC5.2, which recognise the benefits of converting single household properties in this area into flats.

Design Qualities

5.4 A Heritage Asset Statement has been prepared which analyses the proposal in context of the Crumpsall Lane Conservation Area. However, the works to regenerate the building ensure it appears both attractive to prospective occupiers, respectful of the building's Victorian qualities and the wider historic setting.

5.5 Additionally, the use and maintenance of communal external areas will help to promote the attractiveness of the wider setting.

6. Summary

6.1 The current planning application intends to bring a prominent but vacant building back into viable use as 4 no. apartments (Class C3). The site is within close proximity to transport links, shops and services, making this a highly sustainable place to live.

6.2 When purchased by the Applicant the building was in a poor state of repair, with an appearance that had a negative impact on the locality. The subdivision includes a number of minor works to improve the front boundary wall and extend an area of white render to the lower part of the front elevation. Windows and doors which were previously boarded up are of white UPVC, yet no alterations are proposed to the cills or lintels, maintaining the building's Victorian character.

6.3 Not only would the proposal make a positive contribution towards Manchester City Council's targets for the delivery of new homes set under Core Strategy Policy H1, but the improvements and re-occupation of the building would increase its attractiveness in the street-scene. The subdivision of existing residential units is encouraged through UDP Policies DC5.1 and DC5.2, with the change of use and alterations consistent with the criteria of Core Strategy Policy SP1.

6.4 The planning application should be considered positively in line the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out through the NPPF.

JWPC Ltd

April 2014