

Comments for Planning Application 142652/FO/2025

Application Summary

Application Number: 142652/FO/2025

Address: Chorlton Square Shopping Centre Barlow Moor Road Manchester M21 9AQ

Proposal: Erection of 6 no. residential buildings of 10, 8, 6 and 4 storeys in height to provide up to 262 residential dwellings (Use Class C3) with ground floor commercial uses (Use Class E (a-e)); infrastructure works including electric substation and associated utilities works, basement and ground level car parking, service yard, vehicular and pedestrian accesses; together with public realm works and hard/soft landscaping following the demolition of the existing buildings and structures on site.

Case Officer: Robert Griffin

Customer Details

Name: Not Available

Address: Not Available

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of the Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: The proposal represents a dominating and unrelenting mass of red brick frontages unrelieved by either colour or texture unlike the mainly Victorian and Edwardian buildings in the immediate area. The proposed buildings all take the same basic form and present no variety in the new streetscape.

The height and massing of the proposed buildings is completely inappropriate to their setting. The larger buildings in the immediate area are mostly three or occasionally four storeys, with the wider surrounding area comprising mostly two- and three-storey houses. This is clearly demonstrated by the map on p38 of the Design and Access Statement (DAS). Whilst a four or five storey elevation might be suitable for the principal street frontage at Barlow Moor Road, the scale of the eight- and ten-storey buildings proposed will overwhelm the street space and the proposed small public areas. There is no coherent explanation of how the design relates to its context; one of the principal purposes of a Design and Access Statement. The Mansion Block precedents illustrated on p80 of the DAS are not in any way typical of Chorlton, with the examples being from different parts of the country. The Street Block precedents illustrated on p82 are not even examples of street blocks but of parts of buildings. The proposed ten-storey block A is located due south of and will overshadow the junction of Barlow Moor Road and Nicholas Road and the potential small public space in front to the funeral parlour. A public space at this road junction is implied in the DAS p93. There may be a case for a feature 'landmark building' at this junction, but a building that simply repeats the same elevational treatment as the rest of those on the site and does nothing

special to mark the corner and does not remotely achieve this. There is no conceivable justification for buildings up to ten storeys in this location. The only part of the site suitable for a tall building is the location of Block D and perhaps also Block C, in the centre of the site. A tall building here would not dominate the existing streetscape and would be largely hidden from the view of pedestrians on the main retail streets by existing buildings in the way that Graeme House is currently.

The form of the 'part hexagon' bay windows typically found in the area has been applied as a design theme in an illogical way and is clearly not appropriate for multi storey buildings. As seen on p40 of the Design and Access Statement (DAS) these "familiar current forms" in the shape of two storey bay windows are typically seen only on ground and first floors with an upper floor set back on the main building line. These common typologies also extensively use stone string courses, lintels and other detailing, as well as large areas of glass that break up the dominant material (usually but not always red brick). The rooflines of the buildings that the DAS refers to as "familiar current forms" are typically articulated, usually with gables, half timbering, or gabled or teardrop dormers. Where the articulation is only through dormers there is usually a pronounced eaves line. The proposal is dominated by the red brick with only very modest articulation by the underwhelming bay fenestration, and no use of other materials or modelling of the elevation other than by these bays. The string courses of 'soldier course' brickwork fail to relieve the dominance of the red brick either by colour or texture in the way that the stone lintels and string courses typically do in the area (DAS pp40,78,110,111). Despite the DAS identifying the need for articulation of the top of the building (pp 48,108) the proposal utterly fails in this respect. The roofline is a bland horizontal with no articulation or definition other than by the termination of the bays at the penultimate storey.

The vast majority of the proposed flats are of single aspect layout including many that are northeast facing. This form of residence is widely deemed to be unacceptable for anything other than small units such as studios and one bed flats, as they lack through ventilation and are prone to overheating in hot weather. The ground floor flats do not have front doors onto public space, reducing not only their potential utility but the degree of activity at street level and the feeling of security that such activity creates. Furthermore, these ground floor dwellings have no private space whereas at least many of the upper-level flats do have (in most cases very small) balconies.