

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no. 143007/FO/2025

Date registered valid: 15 July 2025

Proposal: Change of use from office and storage space to form 1no. 1 bedroom flat (C3 use) with associated elevational alterations

Address: 2-4 Thorp Road, Manchester, M40 5BQ

Ward(s): Miles Platting & Newton Heath Ward

Applicant: Mr H Razzaq

Agent (if any): Holborow And Ormesher

Case officer: Ian Jarvis
Tel: 0161 234 4079
Email: ian.jarvis@manchester.gov.uk

Recommendation: Refuse

Date of recommendation: 30 September 2025

Application details

Type of application: Full Application Consent

Development type: Minor Other

Standard consultations:

Printed: 24 July 2025 Expired: 14 August 2025

Neighbour notifications

Printed: 24 July 2025 Expired: 14 August 2025

Site notice

No site notice has been produced

Press advert

No press advert had been published

Departure from Development Plan: No

Environmental Statement: Not required

Description of site/building

Listed building: Not applicable

Conservation area: No

Tree Preservation Order: No

This application relates to part of a site used by Manchester Plumbing Supplies, which has entrances on Thorp Road and Cutland Street. Attached to the property, on Cutland Street is a two-storey building, which is a residential unit, and to the side of this is a gate, leading to a yard area, apparently used for storage/servicing purposes, by Manchester Plumbing Supplies.

The surrounding area is mixed use in nature. To the west, north west and north of the site are commercial and business uses, including The Sharp Project and Central Park. The area to the east and south of the site is primarily residential in nature.

At the rear of the site is some vacant office and storage space and it is proposed to convert this into a one bedroom living unit, which the applicant states is for security staff. A small area of amenity space is provided, in the rear yard area, which is combined with the bin storage area, and the applicant has indicated that a car parking space is available, on an unmarked piece of land, opposite the site, which lies outside the site edged red.

Some minor external alterations are proposed, comprising a new door and windows on the side and rear elevations of the premises.

Consultations & Notification Responses

Local residents/adjoining occupiers - Comments have been made, by an adjoining occupier, which disputes the identified boundary, between the two properties. The applicant, however, states that the indicated boundary is correct.

Highway Services - Makes the following comments:

TRIP GENERATION AND JUNCTION CAPACITY:

Given that the proposal relates to the creation of 1no. apartment (1-bedroom) it is considered that the proposal will not generate any significant new trips. o Therefore, it is accepted that no highway concerns in terms of safety or capacity are considered likely to arise.

SITE ACCESSIBILITY:

The site is reasonably accessible. Bus stops are located within walking distance from the site.

PARKING AND ACCESS:

Observation indicates that there is a car park to the rear of the site, accessed from Thorp Road. Clarification is sought on whether any car parking spaces is to be provided for the proposed apartment. Further information is required on the car parking arrangement for the existing apartment at the site.

PEDESTRIAN ACCESS:

Pedestrian access to the apartment will be provided from a new entrance door located adjacent to the service access road - Confirmation is required.

It should be ensured that doors open internally to ensure no conflict with passing pedestrians.

CYCLE PARKING

In line with MCC Residential Guidelines, secure and sheltered cycle parking provision should be made, within the curtilage of the site, at a provision of one-per-unit. o 1no. cycle parking space is to be provide and located within the lobby of the apartment.

Highways are happy with this approach and there are no concerns with this arrangement.

REFUSE AND SERVICING:

Internal refuse stores will be provided for the apartment.

Plans indicate that a sheltered external refuse store will be provided to the rear of the site.

Records indicate that the location of the proposed external refuse store does not fall under the applicant's ownership, therefore verification is required. The applicant should confirm that they have a formal written agreement to guarantee rights of access over any land which falls outside of the site's red line.

It is understood that refuse collection will take place kerbside on Cutland Street.

Clarification is required on the route that the resident will take to the external bin store and waste collection point. This should be shown on an updated dimensioned plan.

BOUNDARY TREATMENT:

The site plan within the waste management strategy indicates that a new gate is to be provided adjacent to the service access gate.

Records indicate that the location of the gate does not fully fall under the applicant's ownership, encroaching into the ownership of the adjacent neighbouring site to the north, therefore verification is required. The applicant should confirm that they have a formal written agreement to guarantee rights of access over any land which falls outside of the site's red line.

Strategic Area and Citywide Support Manager - Recommends that conditions are attached, to any permission, in relation to acoustic controls, refuse and air quality.

Greater Manchester Police - No comments received.

Issues

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) - Sets out the Government's Planning Policies for England and how these should be applied. It states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It states that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has 3 overarching objectives:

An economic objective - to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land, of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

A social objective - to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

An environmental objective - to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy

It states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) 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;
- b) are visibly attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible, and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users, and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

Section 12 'Achieving Well Designed Places' states that 'the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants. Communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process (paragraph 131).

The Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2012 -2027 ("the Core Strategy") was adopted by the City Council on 11th July 2012. It is the key document in Manchester's Local Development Framework. The Core Strategy replaces significant elements of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) as the document that sets out the long term strategic planning policies for Manchester's future development. A number of UDP policies have been saved until replaced by further development plan documents to accompany the Core Strategy. Planning applications

in Manchester must be decided in accordance with the Core Strategy, saved UDP policies and other Local Development Documents.

Policy SP1 identifies the City Council's Core Development Principles and states that 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 wellbeing 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 efficient use of natural resources and reuse previously developed land wherever possible.

Improve access to jobs, services, education and open space by being located to reduce the need to travel and provide good access to sustainable transport provision.

Policy EC1 relates to Employment and Economic Growth in Manchester. The policy emphasises the need to improve 'the portfolio of employment premises, by providing a range of employment sites and premises for small, medium and large businesses' and to 'create business destinations by enhancing the primary business use with ancillary commercial facilities'. To secure these objectives it is important that the future supply of employment land is sufficient and capable of responding to positive changes in the economy so that opportunities for investment and business expansion can be met on a long term basis.

Policy EC2 relates to existing employment space and states that the Council will seek to retain and enhance existing employment space and sites. Alternative uses will only be supported on sites allocated accordingly, or if it can be demonstrated that:

- i. The existing use is un-viable in terms of business operations, building age and format;
- ii. The existing use is incompatible with adjacent uses;
- iii. The existing use is unsuitable for employment having had regard to the Manchester-Salford - Trafford SFRA; or
- iv. On balance, proposals are able to offer greater benefits in terms of the Core Strategy's vision and spatial objectives than the existing use.'

The Council wishes to ensure there is provision of a wide selection of business space, types, sizes, quality and cost. Although the Council values employment land, there are circumstances where it will be appropriate to support alternative uses. These circumstances are outlined in the policy, and broadly aim to acknowledge situations in which it would be unproductive to protect the land for employment uses, either because:

- Employment is un-viable, particularly if the site has remained empty or vacant for a period of time although it has been marketed and the employment space no longer serves the needs of businesses due to its age and the conditions of the property; or,
- An alternative use would bring more benefits to the City, either because the employment use is not the optimum use for the site or because any harm is outweighed by the benefits of the new use. Judgements on the net value of such benefits will be based on the key strategic objectives in the Core Strategy.

Policy H3 relates to sites in North Manchester, and states that over the lifetime of the Core Strategy, will accommodate around 20% of new residential development. Priority will be given to family housing and other high value, high quality development where this can be sustained.

High density housing will be permitted within or adjacent to the parts of North Manchester that fall within the Regional Centre (Strangeways and Collyhurst area) and within Cheetham Hill and Harpurhey district centres as part of mixed-use schemes as well as along high frequency public transport routes.

Policy EN19 relates to waste and states that the Council will require all developers to submit a waste management plan to demonstrate how both construction and demolition waste will be minimised and recycled on site wherever possible and how the sustainable waste management needs of the end user will be met.

Policy T2 states that outside the City Centre all new development should provide appropriate car parking facilities, taking account of the guidance in Appendix B (of the Core Strategy). In all parts of the City proposals should have regard to the need for disabled and cycle parking, in line with appendix B (this indicates maximum car parking standards for various uses).

Notwithstanding the above, Policy T2 requires that consideration is given to the particular circumstances of each proposal to determine the appropriate levels of car parking that may be required. Policy T2 requires the provision of proportionate Traffic Impact Assessments and Travel Plans for all major applications and for any proposals where there are likely to be access or transport issues.

Policy DM 1 states that all development should have regard to the following specific issues for which more detailed guidance may be given within a supplementary planning document:-

- Appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail.
- Impact on the surrounding areas in terms of the design, scale and appearance of the proposed development. Development should have regard to the character of the surrounding area.
- Effects on amenity, including privacy, light, noise, vibration, air quality and road safety and traffic generation. This could also include proposals which would be sensitive to existing environmental conditions, such as noise.
- Accessibility: buildings and neighbourhoods fully accessible to disabled people, access to new development by sustainable transport modes.
- Community safety and crime prevention.
- Design for health.
- Adequacy of internal accommodation and external amenity space.
- Refuse storage and collection.
- Vehicular access and car parking.
- Effects relating to biodiversity, landscape, archaeological or built heritage.
- Green Infrastructure including open space, both public and private.
- Flood risk and drainage.
- Existing or proposed hazardous installations.

Unitary Development Plan - The property lies in the Cheetham Hill District Centre boundary, as identified in the plan

Saved Development Control policy DC26, of the Unitary Development Plan, relates to development and noise and states that the council intends to use the development control process to reduce the impact of noise on people living and working in, or visiting, the city. In giving effect to this intention, the council will consider both:

- a. the effect of new development proposals which are likely to be generators of noise; and
- b. the implications of new development being exposed to existing noise sources, which are effectively outside planning control.

Manchester Residential Quality Guidance 2016 sets out the direction for the delivery of sustainable neighbourhoods of choice where people will want to live and also raise the quality of

life across Manchester and was approved by the Executive at its meeting on 14 December 2016. The ambitions of the City are articulated in many places, but none more succinctly than in the 'Manchester Strategy' (2016). The guidance has been produced with the ambition, spirit and delivery of the Manchester Strategy at its heart. The delivery of high-quality, flexible housing will be fundamental to ensuring the sustainable growth of Manchester. To achieve the City's target of carbon neutrality by 2050, residential schemes will also need to be forward thinking in terms of incorporating the most appropriate and up to date technologies to significantly reduce emissions. It is therefore essential for applicants to consider and integrate the design principles contained within the draft guidance into all aspects of emerging residential schemes. In this respect, the guidance is relevant to all stages of the development process, including funding negotiations, the planning process, construction and through to operational management.

The guidance sets standards for securing high quality and sustainable residential development in Manchester. The document includes standards for internal space within new dwellings and is suitable for applications across all tenures. It adopts the nationally described space standards and this has been applied to an assessment of the size and quality of the proposed houses. In relation to one bedroom, one person, units the minimum standard of accommodation is set at 37 square metres (35 metres where a shower room is proposed), and for one bedroom, two person units, the standard is 50 square metres.

The Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance was formally adopted in April 2007, and is therefore relevant in this case. At that time, Planning Policy Statement 3 'Housing' stated that to facilitate efficient delivery of high quality development, Local Planning Authorities should draw on relevant guidance and standards and promote the use of appropriate tools and techniques, such as Design Coding alongside urban design guidelines, detailed masterplans, village design statements, site briefs and community participation techniques.

In the City of Manchester, the relevant design tool is the Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance. This guidance aims to help to develop and enhance a unique and positive sense of place within Manchester and its neighbourhoods. The guidance is grouped under seven key principles recognised by CABI as being those urban design characteristics which create successful places, that is character and context, continuity and enclosure, ease of movement, quality of the public realm, diversity, legibility, and adaptability.

The guidance advises that high quality design is a vital attribute of successful neighbourhoods, the design of streets should promote neighbourliness and design should respect and be informed by location. The guidance also advises that buildings should relate well to each other and building heights should be carefully considered. In terms of ease of movement, cul-de-sacs are discouraged, the street network should contribute to the character of the area, safe routes for cyclists and pedestrians will be promoted, and public transport should be easy to use. Places with attractive and successful public areas are encouraged with open spaces reflecting and accommodating future uses with children and young people being considered in the design and location of open spaces. Neighbourhoods should contain a mix of housing, safety and security are vital elements of the urban area, the impact of parking areas should be minimised and new developments should maximise access for disabled people.

Point 10.9 relates to external space and states that all residents should enjoy useable private amenity space wherever they choose to live in the City. All new developments should be designed to provide on-site amenity space which is fit for purpose and which is informed by, and relates to, the character of the area. Simply this means the provision of gardens that perform well as multi-functional space. Gardens are valuable within any development by contributing the following:

- A safe play area for children
- Additional storage outside the house
- The provision of outside drying area for clothes which additionally assists the environmental sustainability of a development
- Space in which to relax which helps the overall sense of well-being
- An increased amount of planting which enhances the quality of the natural environment
- The space to provide home grown food which benefits the health of the local community.

Places for Everyone - The approved Places for Everyone Plan is a Joint Development Plan Document, providing a strategic plan and policies, for nine of the 10 boroughs which make up Greater Manchester.

The Plan identifies the essential aspect of the efficient and effective use of land with the preference to be given to making as much use as possible of suitable previously developed brownfield land and vacant buildings when meeting development needs. Securing higher densities in the most accessible locations is identified as helping to maximise the ability of people to travel by walking, cycling and public transport and reduce the reliance on the car.

Relevant policies of PfE in this instance are:

JP-S1: Sustainable development

JP-C8: Transport Requirements of New Development

JP-P1: Sustainable Places

Principle - In the case of this application, the principle of the proposed change of use is not considered acceptable as it is in conflict with the policies and associated guidance indicated above.

Although there is a residential unit, adjacent to the site on Cutland Street, the site is a commercial property with associated storage yard area, and which adjoins other commercial uses. It is considered that the introduction of a residential use, would be incompatible with its surroundings. Whilst the applicant says that the unit is for security staff, it is nevertheless an independent living unit, which needs to be assessed in that way. Also, although it is only part of the site, it would lead to the loss of some employment generating space

On this basis, the development is considered to conflict with policies DM1, SP1, EC1, EC2 and H11 of the Manchester Core Strategy, and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Loss of employment land - The site lies in an area which contains a significant number of commercial/industrial premises, and the site itself is in commercial use. Policy EC2 of the Core Strategy seeks to retain and enhance existing employment space and sites, but does state that alternative uses will be considered in accordance with the criteria listed above. No justification has been submitted to support the loss of the office/storage element of the use in an area where the ambition, of the Council is to increase employment and investment. It is therefore considered that the applicant has failed to demonstrate that a residential conversion is an appropriate use of this accommodation.

Standard of accommodation - It is considered that the standard of accommodation is of a poor quality, being just above minimum standards and with a small amount of amenity space provided that lies in the existing yard/storage area, and which does not appear to be useable, given that it has an area of just 9-10 square metres, which is shared with bin storage, and which sits in part of the servicing/storage yard for the main commercial use of the site.

Whilst the applicant states that the unit is for security staff, it remains the case that it is the creation of a living unit, and good quality accommodation is required, which is not provided in this case. The means of access to the unit is also considered to be poor. The unit has no direct

road frontage and would be accessed through the yard storage area, leading to potential conflicts between the occupiers, of the flat, and the operation of the commercial unit, and potential security risks in accessing a living unit, at the rear of the site where there is no natural surveillance.

Car parking - The applicant has indicated that one car parking space is proposed, but this lies outside the site edged red, on an unmarked area of land, that appears to be used by the main commercial unit. This application does not therefore guarantee that this space would always be available for the occupiers of the flat.

Site boundary - Both the adjoining occupier, and Highway Services, have questioned the indicated site boundary, but the applicant maintains that all indicated boundaries are correct.

External alterations - These are of a relatively minor nature, comprising a new door and windows, which would not be easily viewed from outside the site.

Conclusion - Overall, taking into account the existing characteristics of the site, it is maintained that the proposed use is incompatible with the operation of the wider site and does not provide a satisfactory standard of living accommodation.

Other Legislative Requirements

Equality Act 2010

Section 149 (Public Sector Equality Duty) of the Equality Act 2010 requires due regard to the need to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act and; Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The Equality Duty does not impose a legal requirement to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment. Compliance with the Equality Duty involves consciously thinking about the aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making.

Human Rights Act 1998 considerations

This application needs to be considered against the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. Under Article 6, the applicants (and those third parties, including local residents, who have made representations) have a right to a fair hearing and to this end the local planning authority must give full consideration to their comments.

Protocol 1 Article 1, and Article 8 where appropriate, confer(s) a right of respect for a person's home, other land and business assets. In taking account of all material considerations, including Council policy as set out in the Core Strategy and saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan, the Director of Planning, Building Control & Licensing has concluded that some rights conferred by these articles on the applicant(s)/objector(s)/resident(s) and other occupiers and owners of nearby land that might be affected may be interfered with but that that interference is in accordance with the law and justified by being in the public interest and on the basis of the planning merits of the development proposal. She believes that any restriction on these rights posed by the recommendation given is proportionate to the wider benefits of and that such a decision falls within the margin of discretion afforded to the Council under the Town and Country Planning Acts.

Recommendation: Refuse

Article 35 Declaration

Officers have communicated their concerns about this proposal to the applicant during the course of the planning application, and invited the withdrawal of the application, but the

applicant did not take up this option and the applicant was not able to satisfactorily address indicated concerns. The proposal is considered to be contrary to the development plan and therefore refused in a timely manner.

Condition(s) to be attached to decision for approval OR Reasons for recommendation to refuse

1) The site forms part of a long established commercial use, and therefore lies outside of an established residential area. The development is therefore incompatible with the associated building/use, and would result in potential conflicts between the residential and commercial uses. There would also be consequential increase in the levels of noise and disturbance from associated activity and associated comings and goings, noise levels, waste generation and demand for on street parking, outside of the normal operating times, of the commercial use, and would result in an unsustainable occupation of the premises, to the detriment of neighbouring occupiers. The development would thereby be contrary to policies DM1, H3 and SP1 of the Manchester Core Strategy and guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

2) The development results in an unacceptable standard of living accommodation for the intended occupiers of the premises, due to the location of the unit, within commercial premises, the lack of an area of useable amenity space, means of access to the flat and the lack of natural surveillance and potential conflicts between the residential and commercial uses. The development is therefore contrary to the provisions of policies SP1 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy, the Manchester Residential Quality Guide and guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

3) The development would lead to the loss of commercial space, in a commercial building, in a predominantly industrial/commercial area, where the loss of employment generating units would be detrimental to the nature of the area, as a business destination, and its attractiveness to future businesses/commercial uses, and which would thereby be detrimental to future regeneration efforts in the area. The proposal is therefore contrary to policies SP1, DM1, EC1 and EC2 of Manchester's Core Strategy and guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Highway Services
Environmental Health
Greater Manchester Police

Flat 3, 2A Thorp Road, Manchester, M40 5BJ
Flat 2, 2A Thorp Road, Manchester, M40 5BJ
Flat 1, 2A Thorp Road, Manchester, M40 5BJ
1 Thorp Road, Manchester, M40 5BJ
879 Oldham Road, Manchester, M40 2EE
First Floor Flat, 881 - 883 Oldham Road, Manchester, M40 2EE
1 Cutland Street, Manchester, M40 2EA
881 - 883 Oldham Road, Manchester, M40 2EE

Appendix 2 – Planning constraints

Article 4 Direction - Removal Of PD Rights Change Of Use From Class C3 To Class C4
Coal Authority - Development Low Risk - Name: DEVELOPMENT_LOW_RISK_AREA
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (More) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (More) -
Area Team Boundary - Name: NORTH AREA