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: Neighbour
Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application
Comment Reasons:
Comment:I am writing to comment on the full planning application for the demolition of the existing structures and the erection of six residential buildings with ground-floor commercial uses at the former Chorlton Shopping Centre.

I am broadly in favour of the redevelopment of this key site in the centre of Chorlton. The proposal to bring a vacant site back into use with the provision of much-needed new housing is a positive step for the area. The plans for enhanced public realm and landscaping will also be a welcome improvement.

However, I have a significant objection to the drastic reduction in retail floorspace proposed in this application. The plans detail a reduction from the existing 3218 square metres of retail space to just 976 square metres. I do not believe there is a strong justification for such a substantial loss of commercial space in what is designated as a District Centre.

My objection is based on the following points, which I believe are in line with both national and local planning policies:

Maintaining the Vitality of Town Centres: The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) places great importance on "ensuring the vitality of town centres".It states that planning policies should "promote the long-term vitality and viability of town centres by allowing them to grow and diversify

in a way that can respond to changing consumer demands". A reduction of over two-thirds of the retail space in a central location like this seems to run counter to this objective.

Manchester's Own Policies: Manchester City Council's Local Plan designates Chorlton as a District Centre. The "Guide to Development in Manchester" supplementary planning document emphasizes the creation of sustainable communities through a "balanced mix of uses". While the introduction of residential properties contributes to this mix, the significant loss of retail space could create an imbalance and undermine the centre's role as a vibrant hub for the community. The Chorlton Public Realm Plan also notes that an improved public realm will benefit the local commercial and retail offer, an aim which is undermined by a significant reduction in that offer.

Serving the Community: A thriving local shopping area is essential for the existing community and for the new residents who will occupy the proposed 262 dwellings. While the plans mention flexible commercial space, the significantly reduced quantum of this space raises concerns about the range and number of shops and services that can be accommodated. The developer's own consultation feedback indicated that some people "wanted to see more shops at the site". A report on a Neighbourhood Plan for Chorlton also previously recommended a limit on non-retail uses to protect the retail offer in the district centre.

While I appreciate the need for new housing in Manchester, I believe that a more balanced approach could be taken on this site. It should be possible to deliver a significant number of new homes while also retaining a greater proportion of the retail floorspace. This would better serve the needs of both existing and future residents and ensure that the redevelopment contributes positively to the long-term vitality of Chorlton's District Centre.

I would urge the planning committee to seek a revised proposal from the applicant that addresses this issue and provides a more appropriate level of retail space to support a thriving and sustainable community in Chorlton.