

Proposed extensions to
existing Safestore self-
storage unit

202 – 208 Cheetham Hill
Road Manchester, M8 8LW

PLANNING STATEMENT

On behalf of Safestore Ltd

March 2025

Prepared by
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Proposed extensions to existing Safestore self-storage unit, Cheetham Hill Road, Manchester

Planning Statement

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Vincent and Goring has been commissioned by Safestore Ltd to prepare a planning application for an extension to the existing Safestore self-storage unit at Cheetham Hill Road, Manchester.
- 1.2 This application constitutes the submission of an amended scheme to a previous application refused by the Council as set out below.

Planning Application – January 2024

- 1.3 Following pre-application advice and community engagement, an application was submitted in January 2024 (Ref: 139182/FO/2024) for the extension to the existing self-storage unit in use class B8 and erection of new free standing external access self-storage units in use class B8 with reconfiguration of parking and yard layout.
- 1.4 Local businesses were informed of the application and no representations were received.
- 1.5 A decision notice was issued on 28 March 2024 with the following two reasons for refusal:

1. By reason of the design siting, amount of built form and proposed materials, the proposed development would not preserve or enhance the Grade II designated heritage asset (Manchester Jewish Museum), causing less than substantial harm that cannot and has not been outweighed by public benefit, and is therefore considered to be contrary to Section 66 of (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990; Section 16 (Conserving and enhancing the Historic Environment) of the National Planning Policy Framework; the Core Strategy for the City of Manchester policy EN3 (Heritage); saved policy DC19.1 (Listed Buildings) of the Unitary Development Plan for the City Of Manchester; and, policy JP-P2 'Heritage' of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document.*

2. The proposed development, by reason of its design, siting, appearance and materials, would result in a poor quality development that would represent an incongruous feature within the street scene, that would not be sympathetic or beautiful, adversely affecting views along a gateway route, to the detriment of visual amenity within the area. For these reasons, the proposed development is considered to be unacceptable and inconsistent with Policies DM1 and SP1 of the Core Strategy and section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Places For Everyone Joint Development Plan Document policy JP-P1 'Sustainable Places'.

- 1.6 An appeal has been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) Ref: APP/B4215/W/24/3352551, and the formal start letter was issued on the 29 October 2024. The timetable sets out that by 3 December 2024 PINS will send the LPAs statement along with any comments received from other interested persons or organisations.

- 1.7 While it is considered the appeal scheme is acceptable, this application comprises an amended scheme which addresses (some of) the Council's comments on the appeal scheme to reserve our client's position. Whereas the previous application proposed new cladding for the existing pitched roof element and a parapet roof for the extension, the revised design breaks up the massing of the proposal by retaining the pitched roof element of the existing building and proposing a pitched roof for the extension. The proposed extension footprint and site design is unchanged. Design amendments are detailed further in **Section 3**.

About Safestore

- 1.8 Safestore is the UK's largest and Europe's second largest operator of self-storage solutions. The Company has 161 stores, comprising 131 stores in the UK and 55 stores in Paris, Netherlands, Belgium and Spain. The Group provides storage to around c. 95,000 personal and business customers.
- 1.9 Safestore currently employs approximately 750 people across its business both in stores and head office.
- 1.10 As discussed further below, there are also a number of indirect employment opportunities created by Safestore with a new store opening or an expansion as proposed here. Nationwide, about 42% of Safestore's storage space is occupied by business occupiers which represent approximately 23% of the customer base. These businesses are wide and varied and range from national accounts, which make up 13% of the total business customers, to small businesses including many "start-up" businesses who take advantage of the flexible storage option.
- 1.11 The proposal will therefore positively contribute, both directly and indirectly, to the Council's employment and economic objectives.

Pre-Application Advice

- 1.12 A pre-application submission was made to Manchester City Council in November 2021, with verbal advice from planning officer Janine Renshaw-Livesey on 30 November 2021 confirming the acceptability in principle of the proposals. Written feedback was also obtained from MCC Highways.
- 1.13 At that time, Safestore were considering two options; either, expansion to the north on to the adjoining car valet operation, or expansion within their own site to the east and south. Discussions were undertaken with the neighbouring landowner but acquisition of the site proved not to be possible. Hence, the proposals are now limited to expansion within the Safestore site only.
- 1.14 The Decision Notice for the refused planning application ref. 139182/FO/2024 was based on conclusions set out in the Delegated Officer's Report, which was prepared by the Design Officer without consultation from a conservation or design officer. Historic England were not consulted. As part of the pre-application process for this revised application, the applicant's heritage consultant (Montagu Evans) sought consultation advice from Historic England in a letter dated 6th February 2025. Historic England responded on 21st February confirming that they did not feel it necessary to offer pre-application advice in this instance.

Pre-application community engagement

- 1.15 On 29 November 2023, Safestore wrote to site neighbours to notify them of its intention to submit a planning application to extend the premises on Cheetham Hill Road. The letter contained contact details and invited questions and comments from the local community. On 30 November, Safestore wrote to the three local ward councillors, representing Cheetham, to outline its engagement with site neighbours and to offer an opportunity to discuss the plans. Safestore had not received any feedback from either site neighbours or local politicians prior to the submission of application outlined below.

Structure of this statement

- 1.16 The remainder of this Statement is set out as follows:
- Section two provides a description of the site and its context
 - Section three explains the planning application proposals.
 - Section four summarises the relevant planning policy context for the proposals.
 - Section five examines the conformity of the development proposals with the determining and relevant planning policies and other material considerations.
 - Section six provides a summary and conclusion.

2.0 Site assessment

- 2.1 The site comprises an existing Safestore self-storage facility including an area of hard surfacing to the south that is used for vehicle storage by a third party.

Site location

- 2.2 The site of the is located on Cheetham Hill Road, in Cheetham Hill, to the north of Manchester City Centre.

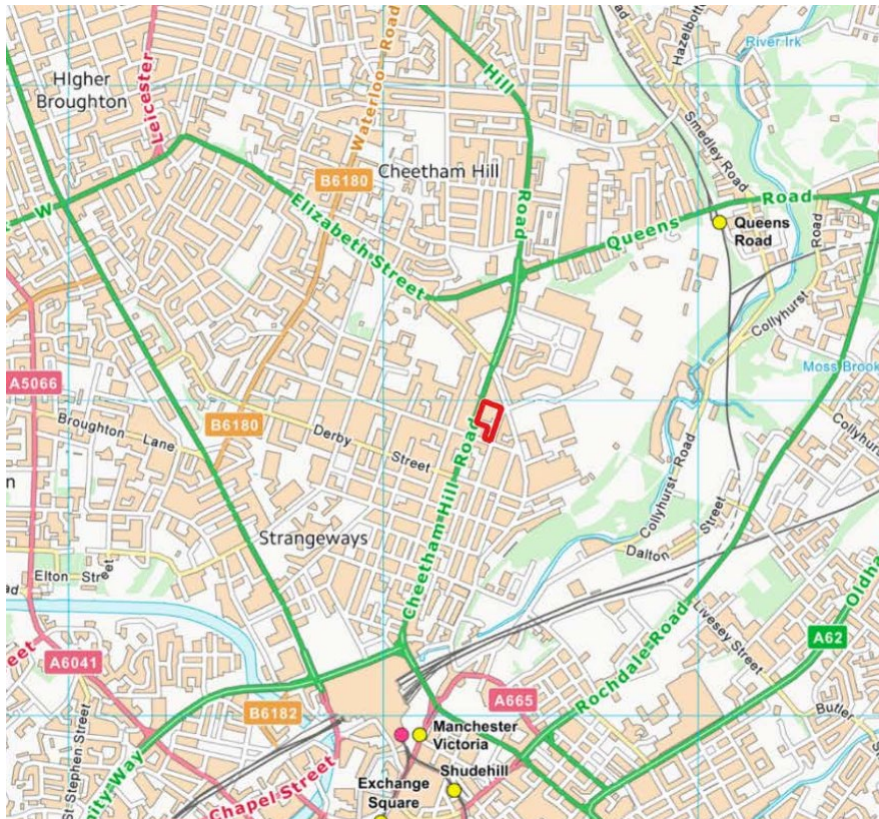


Figure 1 : Site Location

Land ownership

- 2.3 The existing Safestore site is owned freehold by Safestore themselves.

Site definition

- 2.4 The existing Safestore is bounded to the north by a car valeting operation beyond which is Manchester Fort retail park which contains a mix of food and non-food retail and restaurants. To the east the Safestore is bounded by Stocks Street and further industrial uses. To the west the site has a frontage to Cheetham Hill Road, beyond which is a three storey office/showroom building with parking to the front.

- 2.5 To the south of the existing Safestore unit is a Jewish Museum which has recently been extended. It is a Grade II* Listed Building and is considered in detail in the Heritage, Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment that is submitted with the planning application.

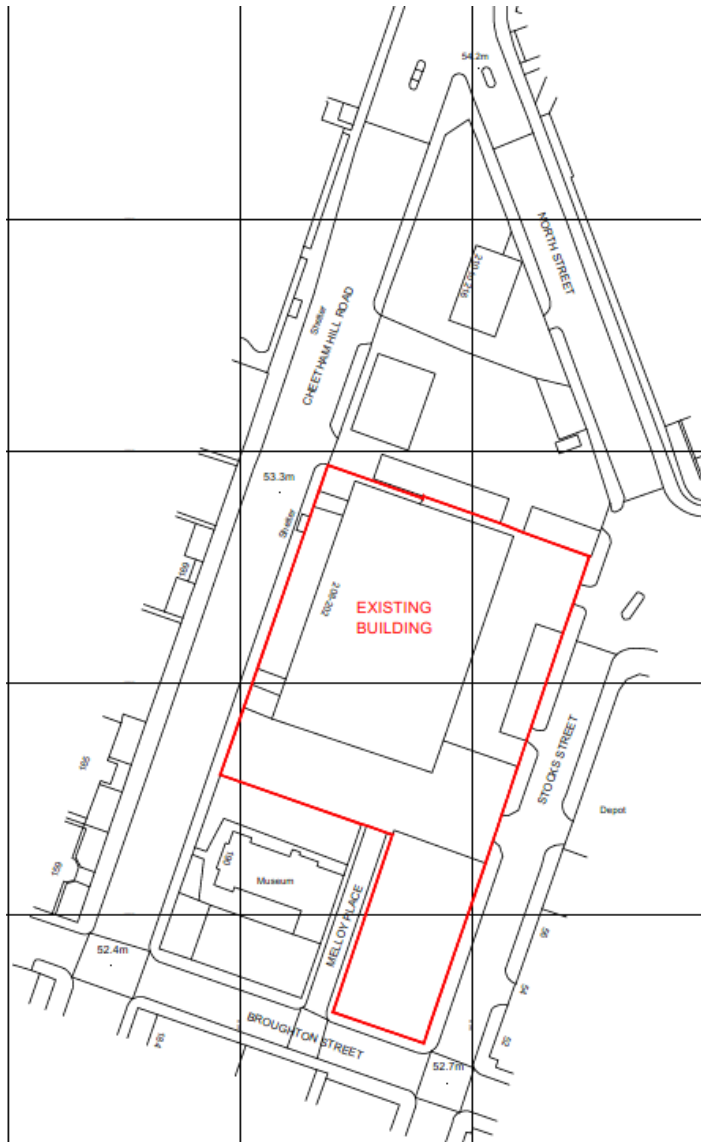


Figure 2 : Existing Site Plan

Buildings and uses

- 2.6 The existing Safestore comprises a former cash and carry warehouse building with a brick built former office building along the western boundary and an attached warehouse. The building was converted into a self-storage facility by virtue of a planning permission granted in 2000. A number of external storage units are located along the eastern boundary of the site. The footprint of the current building is 1,891sq.m.

- 2.7 There is a nib of land to the south, east of the Jewish Museum, that is presently used for the storage of cars by a third party.



Figure 3 : View of the site from Cheetham Hill looking south with the Jewish Museum on the right

Topography

- 2.8 Ground levels within the site are relatively flat throughout.

Vegetation and ecology

- 2.9 The only area of the site with any vegetation is a verge along the western boundary of the Safestore site.
- 2.10 An Ecological Assessment of the site has been undertaken and is submitted with the planning application. This concludes that on the basis of current evidence, the site is of negligible ecological interest. Furthermore, survey work has suggested that protected species are likely absent from the site.

Flood risk and drainage

- 2.11 The Environment Agency's Flood Map indicates that the site falls within Flood Zone 1 with a low risk of flooding. Some risk of surface water flooding is present on North Street and Cheetham Hill Road.

Rights of way

- 2.12 There are no rights of way through or immediately adjacent to the site.

Access, circulation and parking

- 2.13 The Safestore is accessed from Stocks Street, to the east of the site and south of the warehouse. This gives access to around 30 vehicle parking spaces some of which are next to loading doors on the eastern elevation of the building.
- 2.14 Access from Stocks Street has formerly been taken via two further bell mouths, which are located to the north of the existing access. The northernmost of the former accesses is gated, but is locked and not in operational use, as several parking bays block the access. The other access is fully blocked off by kerbs and fencing.



Figure 4 : Site Access on Stocks Street

Recent Planning History

- 2.15 As noted above the use of the Safestore site for self-storage purposes was permitted by application reference 059805 in 2000. Application reference 067192 permitted the erection of the external single storey lock up units adjacent to Stocks Street in April 2003. Recladding of the building was permitted in October 2012 under reference 099837.

3.0 Description of development proposals

Proposed Use

- 3.1 Safestore propose to extend their existing self-storage operation on the site to meet increased demand. Self-storage falls within use class B8. The proposed description of the development is as follows:-

'Extension to existing self-storage unit in use class B8 and erection of new free standing external access self-storage units in use class B8 with reconfiguration of parking and yard layout'

- 3.2 The proposed site plan is shown below in Figure 5

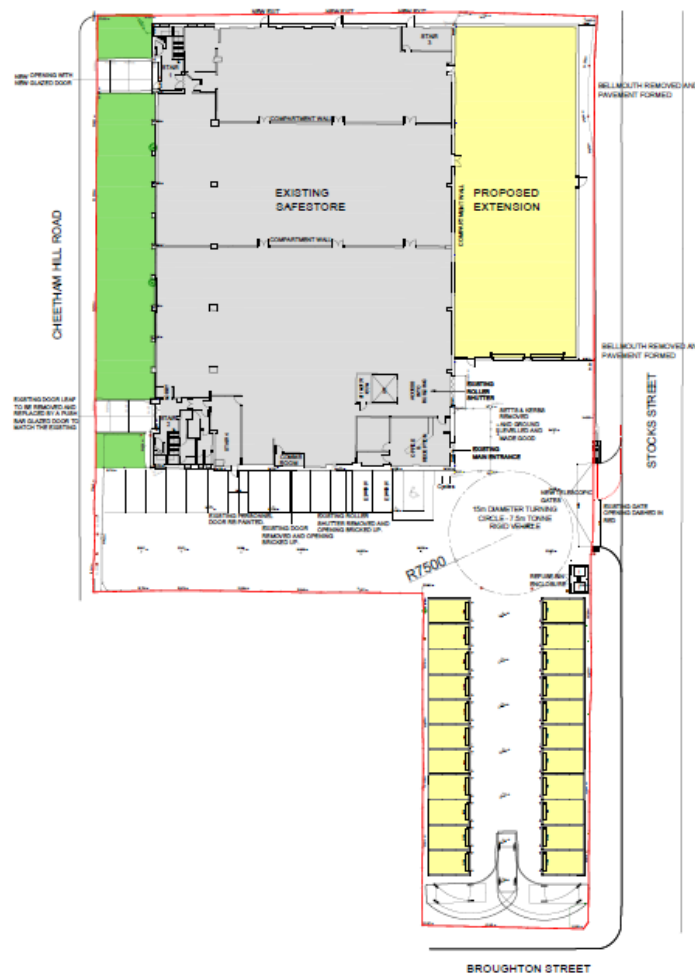


Figure 5 : Proposed layout showing extension and proposed drive up external units

Amount of development

- 3.3 The total amount of floorspace being applied for amounts to 908.30sqm comprising the extension to the new building (585.60sq.m.) and the external drive up units (322.70sq.m.)
- 3.4 However, the building is designed so it is possible to install mezzanine floors for storage purposes on two upper floors. These would be internal alterations that do not constitute 'development' as defined in section 55(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. However, the maximum internal floorspace of 2,078.5 sq.m. in the extension has been taken into consideration in the accompanying Transport Statement, which sensitivity tests the worst-case scenario of all potential additional floorspace at mezzanine level in terms of traffic generation and car parking accumulation.

Layout

- 3.5 The proposed extension will be to the north east of the existing building and will extend towards the eastern boundary of the site.
- 3.6 The main entrance will be kept at its existing location on the south east corner of the existing building.
- 3.7 New Telescopic Gates will be installed on the eastern boundary of the site.

Scale of the development

- 3.8 It is considered that the scale of the previously proposed extension was acceptable in the surrounding context. However, whereas the previous application proposed new cladding for the existing pitched roof element and a parapet roof for the extension (flat roof), the revised design breaks up and reduces the massing of the roof elements by retaining the pitched roof of the existing building and proposing a pitched roof for the extension. This will decrease the mass of the extension and will maintain the current mass of the existing building and its relationship with the closer surroundings. In addition, the ridge height of the extension has been lowered by 455mm in respect of the former parapet height.
- 3.9 The proposed extension will be approximately 7.75m in length and 3.1m in width, with a height of approximately 10.5m.

Appearance of the development

- 3.10 The extension has been designed as part of minor refurbishment of the existing building and other improvements to the site.
- 3.11 The existing building is two storeys. It consists of two elements: a masonry brick building with a flat roof and a metal clad building with a pitched roof. The only proposed changes to the existing brick element are: the removal of the existing north fire exit and the creation of a new opening with a glazed fire exit, the replacing of the existing lazuli blue cladding panel with silver gray panels and making the current glazed entrance a fire exit door only.

- 3.12 The proposed 22 external units are the same (in terms of massing and layout) as in the former application. These units are proposed on an area that was occupied by cars facing Stock Street. They are articulated with metal panels for walls and roof. Revisions from the original scheme include a brown colour panel, recalling the Jewish Museum for the walls, and a darker tone of brown for the roof and the roller shutters. These are low scale buildings only visible at the rear of the Museum.
- 3.13 We consider the revised proposal is an improvement on the appeal scheme and helps to enhance the proposed scheme and the street scene in terms of the heritage and townscape impacts.
- 3.14 These themes are assessed further in the supporting Design and Access Statement and Heritage, Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

Landscaping

- 3.15 A landscape strategy has been prepared to support the planning application. This proposes enhancement of the grass verge along the Cheetham Hill frontage to provide a mix of shrubs that will encourage biodiversity.

Vehicular and pedestrian access and parking

Access

- 3.16 Access to the site will be maintained in existing position from Stocks Street. It will be widened to 10 from the existing 6m to allow easier access. There will be no changes to the existing pedestrian access arrangements.
- 3.17 The former accesses to the site along Stocks Street will be fully closed off with full height kerbs reinstated. The closure of both former accesses will reduce the various points of conflict that traffic exiting the site could potentially have with traffic travelling along Stocks Street. Additionally, the applicant agrees to meet the costs of reviewing and implementing amendments to the Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) in the vicinity of the site on Stocks Street, which would alleviate the existing on-street parking which occurs should the TRO be successful.

Parking

- 3.18 Although Safestore customers normally access the site by car, a swept path analysis for 7.5t (8m) box van and pantechicon vehicle is provided to ensure there is no need to egress the site except in a forward gear.
- 3.19 In terms of parking provision, the layout proposes a total provision of 14 parking spaces within the yard area, including 1 disabled bay close to the reception entrance. Due to the nature of the use, virtually all Safestore customers travel by car. Parking accumulation surveys from other Safestore facilities have been used to inform the correct level of car parking for the site.

- 3.20 Customers to Safestore facilities typically visit the site for between 10 and 30 minutes. On this basis, the TS demonstrates by reference to data from other Safestore sites that the proposed parking provision is more than adequate to accommodate the frequency and length of stay by visitors. Parking accumulation data as applied to the existing and additional floorspace suggests that a maximum of two customer cars will be in the customer car park at any one time.
- 3.21 Two of the spaces will be active electric vehicle charging (EVC) points. It is expected that most Safestore customers would be on-site for only a short period of time, so most are unlikely to benefit from the use of EV charging points. Notwithstanding this, two of the 14 car parking spaces to be retained on site will be equipped with electric vehicle charging infrastructure to ensure that EV charging is available for customers/staff.
- 3.22 The proposals will provide two long-stay cycle parking spaces for staff members within the building, and four secure short-stay cycle parking spaces at the front of the building.

Trip Generation

- 3.23 Safestore have comprehensive data from other stores that indicate that the level of traffic movements associated with a Safestore is considerably less than other commercial and industrial uses.
- 3.24 Trip generation from the proposed extension and drive up units and this has been compared against amount of floorspace. It is concluded that the additional vehicle trips in the AM and PM peak hours will be negligible at 2 two-way movements compared to less than one at the present time.

Drainage Strategy

- 3.25 Although the proposed development is not considered to be Major Development (as it is less than 1000sq.m.) a surface water drainage strategy has been developed and has been designed to comply with the MCC requirements. A Drainage Statement is submitted with the planning application.
- 3.26 This indicates that the existing site (5060m²) is mostly impermeable (94%/ 4775m²) and the formally drained areas, including the roof and parking spaces are assumed to discharge directly into the sewer network. An outline of the proposed surface water drainage system has been developed and designed based on the principles of sustainable drainage as set out in the CIRIA SuDS Manual, PPG and the Manchester City Council Guidance.
- 3.27 The proposed drainage strategy aims to attenuate site runoff to the equivalent greenfield runoff rate for the relevant rainfall event, factoring in climate change. It will restrict the discharge rate to 2 l/s for up to and including the 100-year plus climate change event. The resulting discharge rate represents a 91%, 97% and 98% reduction in the discharge rates from the site for the 1-year, 30-year and 100-year rainfall events, respectively.

- 3.28 The design integrates Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) with the development, following the discharge and SuDS hierarchies. It involves using crated storage and connecting to the existing site drainage network to minimize peak runoff, ensuring a significant reduction in runoff post development. There are no public surface water sewers in the vicinity of the site. Therefore, the drainage proposal for the site is to connect to the on-site drainage network, which ultimately discharges via a combined adopted lateral to the combined sewer in Stocks Street. The proposed drainage strategy includes 467sqm of permeable paving to drain a regraded area of the site and the new storage buildings to the south of the site. The proposed building extension roof also drains to a tanked crated system to achieve these reductions in run-off.

Sustainability

- 3.29 An Energy Efficiency & Sustainable Development Report has been prepared and is submitted with the planning application. This document details commitment to both CO2 and environmental impact reduction at the proposed extension. It demonstrates how the proposed scheme far exceeds the current requirements of the energy and sustainability policies of Manchester City Council, by achieving a predicted reduction in regulated CO2 emissions in excess of 100% against the new Part L Building Regulations 2022 Target Emission Rate compliant baseline through the use of energy efficiency measures and renewable energy roof mounted PV array.

Operational hours

- 3.30 The main hours when the reception area is staffed are 8am – 6pm on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, 8am – 8pm on Thursdays and 10am – 4pm on Sunday. However, key holding customers that pay a premium are permitted to access their self storage units by swipe card access on a 24/7 basis. Safestore operate numerous stores in this way throughout the UK, many in very close proximity to residential properties, without causing any detriment to the amenity of the locality. It is fundamental to Safestore's business to allow 24/7 operation as a small number of business customers will always require access out of the hours that the reception is open.

4.0 Planning policy assessment

- 4.1 This planning policy assessment sets out the adopted local and national planning policies which are relevant to this site and all planning application for new employment uses.

National planning policy guidance

Achieving sustainable development

- 4.2 The Government's policies on planning are contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024).
- 4.3 The NPPF, at paragraph 11, states that the "*presumption in favour of sustainable development*" is at the heart of the planning system, and that:

"For decision-taking this means:

c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination ."

- 4.4 The NPPF comprises a number of sections containing policy that is relevant to this planning application, namely:

Section 4 Decision Making

Section 6 Building a Strong Competitive Economy

Section 9 Promoting Sustainable Transport

Section 11 Making Effective Use of Land

Section 12 Achieving Well Designed Places

Section 16 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Decision making

4.5 Paragraph 48 states that:

“Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible, and within statutory timescales unless a longer period has been agreed by the applicant in writing.”

Building a strong competitive economy

4.6 Paragraph 85 of the NPPF states that:

“Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.”

Promoting sustainable transport

4.7 The promotion of sustainable transport is dealt with in section 9. At paragraph 117 it states that within this context, applications for development should:

“a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;

b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;

c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;

d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and

e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.”

Making efficient use of land

4.8 The amendments to the NPPF (2024) strengthens the emphasis of effectively utilising ‘previously development’ or ‘brownfield’ land. When it comes to decision making, the threshold to the level of acceptable harm has been increased. Specifically, paragraph 125 c) states that:

125. Planning policies and decisions should:

c) give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, proposals for which should be approved unless substantial harm would be caused, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;

Achieving well designed places

4.9 The government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment, and this is dealt with in section 12 of the NPPF. Design is considered to be one of the key aspects of sustainable development.

4.10 Paragraph 135 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 visually 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”

Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

4.11 Section 16 of the NPPF considers the historic environment. Paragraph 210 sets out how local planning authorities should determine applications involving heritage assets:

a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and

c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

- 4.12 Paragraphs 212 to 221 set out how a local planning authority should consider the potential impacts on designated heritage assets.

Development plan

- 4.13 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that:

“If regard be had to the development plan for the purpose of determination under the planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations dictate otherwise”

- 4.14 The Development Plan for Manchester City consists of:

- Core Strategy 2012 – 2027, adopted on 11 July 2012
- Saved Policies of the Manchester City UDP
- Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan for Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan 2022 to 2039. Adopted in 2024.

- 4.15 The land is covered by the following key site designations

- EC4 North Manchester policy area
- The land is also within the Strangeways Employment Area
- The southern ‘nib’ of the site (where the Pod building is proposed) is also within an Economic Improvement Area.

Core Strategy 2012 – 2027 (Adopted July 2012)

- 4.16 The policies most relevant to the proposal are set out as follows.

- 4.17 Policy SP1 Spatial Principles sets out key principles that will guide the strategic development of Manchester. The policy states that the Regional Centre will be the focus for economic and commercial development. It states that development in all parts of the City should make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods, including through the creation of ‘well designed places that enhance or create character.’

- 4.18 Policy EC 1 Employment and Economic Growth in Manchester sets out a requirement for a minimum of 200 ha of employment land to be developed between 2010 and 2027 for offices (B1a), research and development (B1b), light industrial (B1c), general industry (B2) and distribution and warehousing (B8), including in the City Centre fringe areas.

- 4.19 Policy EC 2 Existing Employment Space sets out a general presumption in favour of retaining employment floorspace.

- 4.20 Policy EC3 The Regional Centre states that development within the Regional Centre that generates employment, including offices and other commercial development, will be encouraged.

- 4.21 Policy CC 1 Primary Economic Development Focus : City Centre and Fringe which sets out the focus for development including in the City Centre Fringe extending into the Strangeways Employment Area within which the site is located. It states that “Developments which lead to the more intensive use of employment land (in terms of floorspace provided) will be supported.”
- 4.22 Policy CC 9 Design and Heritage which requires that the design of new buildings will need to be of the highest standard in terms of appearance and function.
- 4.23 Policy EC 4 North Manchester which indicates that North Manchester is expected to provide approximately 14ha of employment land. It indicates that significant existing employment and economic development is found in Strangeways Employment Area, an area suitable for retention and growth of general industry, warehousing and distribution.
- 4.24 Policy DM1 Development Management sets out principles for development to which design should have regard. This includes appropriate ‘siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and details’ and ‘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.’
- 4.25 Policy EN1 Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas sets out a number of strategic character areas within Manchester, and corresponding design principles that should be followed.
- 4.26 Policy EN 3 Heritage stipulates new developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance, including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas and archaeological remains.
- 4.27 Policy DC19.1 Listed Buildings states in determining applications for listed building consent or planning applications for development involving or having an impact on buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, the Council will have regard to the desirability of securing the retention, restoration, maintenance and continued use of such buildings and to protecting their general setting.
- 4.28 Policy JP-P1 Sustainable Places - Places For Everyone Joint Development Plan sets out how development should create beautiful, healthy and varied places.
- 4.29 Policy JP-P2 Heritage - Places For Everyone Joint Development Plan states that the Council will work together to positively conserve, sustain and enhance the historic environment and heritage assets and their settings.
- 4.30 Other relevant policies are:-
- Policy EN 4 Reducing CO2 Emissions by Enabling Low and Zero Carbon Development
- Policy EN 8 Adaptation to Climate Change

- 4.31 Saved Core Strategy Policy E3.3 is also relevant and states that the Council will upgrade the appearance of the City's major radial and orbital roads and rail routes. This will include improvements to the appearance of adjacent premises; encouraging new development of the highest quality; and ensuring that landscape schemes are designed to minimise litter problems.

5.0 Planning appraisal and conformity with planning policies

- 5.1 This section of the statement addresses the acceptability of the proposals and their conformity with the adopted development plan.
- 5.2 The key planning considerations in respect of the proposed extensions to the existing Safestore are :-
- The principle of the use
 - The relationship of the proposal with surrounding land uses and buildings;
 - Design considerations
 - The acceptability of the proposal in respect of highways and parking
 - Other environmental considerations

Principle of the use and employment benefits

- 5.3 The proposal seeks to provide self-storage (B8) accommodation at a site that is already in self-storage use. Moreover, Core Strategy policies CC 1 and EC 4 seek to enhance employment opportunities in this location.
- 5.4 New self-storage floorspace will have positive employment consequences for the local area, given that a significant proportion of customers will be small businesses.
- 5.5 Detailed studies were undertaken in 2018/19 of the value of Safestore's facilities to businesses from which a database of business customers across the stores has been developed. This provides information on :-
- what store the business customer used;
 - How much space the business customer rented at the store;
 - Length of time since the start of the agreement;
 - Reason for storage;
 - The business customer postcode.

Number of units in each store rented by business

- 5.6 On average, 100 units are rented to business customers at each store with the amount of floorspace rented to business customers at each store being some 14,000 sqft (or 140 sqft per business customer).

Why businesses use Safestore

- 5.7 Where the purpose of use is known from the database, approximately 40% use the space to store stock. These are likely to therefore be typically small traders, many of whom will operate on-line. A further 25% of business use the space to store equipment and a further 20% use the space while moving between premises. Finally, 15% use

the space for archiving.

Proximity of businesses to Safestore

- 5.8 Analysis of post codes of business customers show that the majority are located in close proximity to the store they use. This emphasises that a new store will directly benefit the local economy. A sample of stores that have been surveyed is shown in the table below.

Safestore Location	Average Distance (km)
Bath	2.6
Bournemouth	3.1
Camden Town, London	2.8
Cardiff	13.4
Exeter	5.6
Glasgow	5.2
Manchester Old Trafford	3.2
Nottingham	2.0
Sunderland	7.8
Winchester	7.0
Average	5.3

Source: Safestore customer database, 2018¹

Table 1 : Average distance of business customers to stores

¹ This survey uses the post code of the customer as a proxy for their location. In some cases that post code may be a head office whereas the a local branch of the company is located closer to the store. if anything, these distances are, therefore, likely to be greater than the distance between the actual operation and the store.

Size of companies using Safestore

- 5.9 A questionnaire survey of business customers was undertaken to obtain more information on the nature of the business use. This questionnaire resulted in 697 responses and was therefore a reasonable sample size.
- 5.10 The questionnaire sought to identify the size of the companies using Safestore's storage facilities. The results are shown in the graph below.

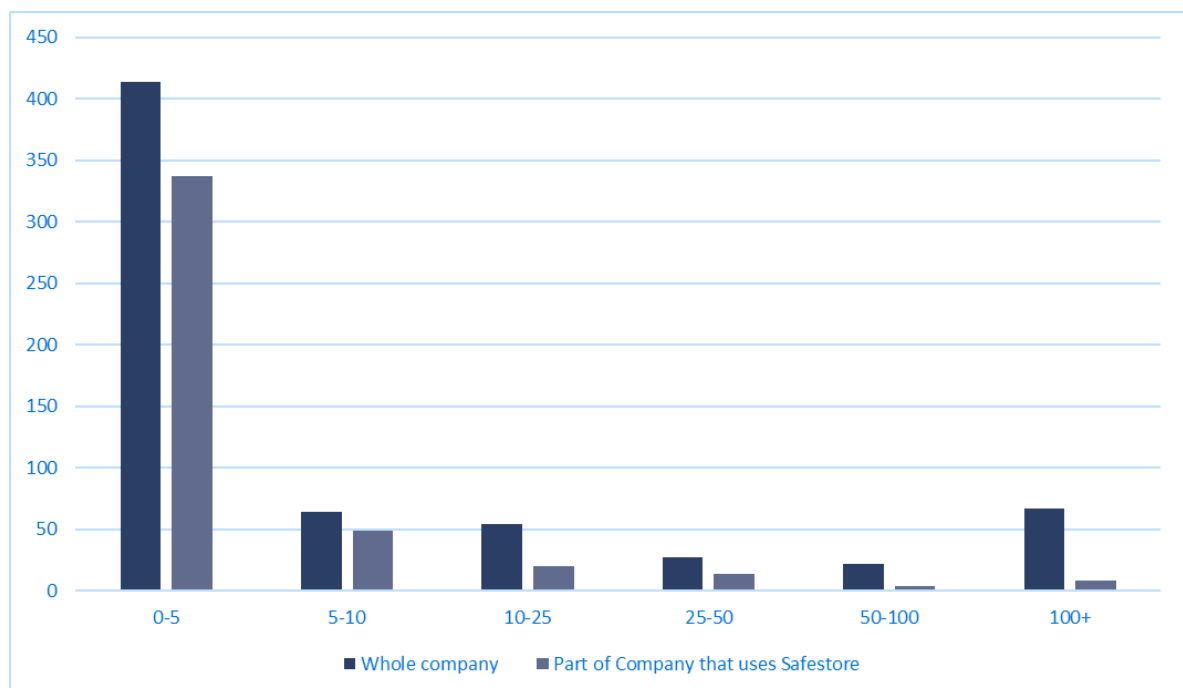


Figure 6 : size of companies using Safestore (Source: Safestore Business Survey, 2019)

- 5.11 As can be seen, the majority of customers are micro/small businesses, employing 0-5 people. A small proportion of customers are part of larger organisations that employ 100+ people (10%).

Type of businesses using Safestore

- 5.12 The questionnaire sought to identify the type of business using the stores. Approximately 28% specified that they were involved in the sale of 'other consumer goods,' some 10% were 'office based' companies, 7% were in the clothing/textile trade.
- 5.13 The largest response was for 'other' activities (44%) which covered a wide range of activities. Where respondents provided further details the largest consistent response was the building/construction trade, followed by the charity sector. There was significant variation in the other responses, indicating that the spaces are used by a wide variety of companies, from 'Yacht designer', to 'Supply of elevator spare parts' to 'Aviation consultancy'.

- 5.14 When the responses were reviewed in more detail and grouped together, companies involved in some form of wholesale, retail and/or manufacturing operations amounted to a total of 46% of all business customers in the survey.

Size of units rented by businesses

- 5.15 The survey results indicated that the majority of customers rent between 50 and 250 sqft of storage space (67%). The median size of unit is 110 sqft and the average size is 200 sqft.

Length of time businesses rent from Safestore

- 5.16 Most customers have continuously used Safestore for 2-5 years (41%). Nearly a third of customers have been using the units between 0-1 years (31%). Over a quarter of customers have been using Safestore for more than 5 years (26%).

Frequency of visit

- 5.17 The majority of business customers are active users of the space, and access it more than once a week (56%), with a significant proportion accessing their unit(s) most days of the week (35%). From this information it is clear that for many businesses, using a Safestore is integral to their operational model.

Alternatives if Safestore was not available

- 5.18 The questionnaire also asked about the alternatives that customers would consider if Safestore or other self-storage facilities were not available. Most customers would have to use other business premises (44%). Clearly this would add cost to these businesses and could undermine their success or ability to grow. The next most popular option was to store the goods at home (24%). The response in particular indicates clearly that a large proportion of the business customers surveyed are operating as home-based entrepreneurs, using the self-storage unit as a space within which to store stock. A further 23% said they would need to lease new premises (23%).

Overall economic contribution and policy compliance

- 5.19 The information provided above sets out clearly that Safestore's self-storage units perform an important function for micro and small-medium sized enterprises.
- 5.20 The majority of customers are micro/small businesses, employing 0-5 people (64%). Providing space for these businesses is crucial for the economy, as it provides the opportunity for entrepreneurs to test out new ideas, for businesses to start and grow.
- 5.21 It is estimated that businesses that use Safestore employ at least 12,000 people. This is an average of at least 100 employees of business customers per store. Accordingly, whilst direct on-site employment at a typical site is normally around 3 or 4 employees, the in-direct employment that is supported by a new or extended store is significant, with a high percentage of these jobs in small businesses or sole traders.
- 5.22 On average businesses use 14,000 sqft of space per store. If this space were to be re-provided at a single-storey warehouse, applying standard plot ratios (40%), it would account for a separate new development of around 1 acre (0.3 ha).

- 5.23 The most popular reason that customers like Safestore is location and most customers are located in close proximity to the store they use. Hence, extending the store at Cheetham Hill Road will be beneficial to the immediate locality. This could include people who work from home in residential areas within the vicinity of the site and businesses in the surrounding commercial area.
- 5.24 Given the above research findings, the new Safestore will accord with the overall economic and regeneration objectives for this area. Extending the store will help facilitate new employment by providing storage space that will be used by small and growing businesses in the locality, with significant indirect employment generation potential. The proposal is fully consistent with the NPPF and with the Council's overall employment strategy and is in accordance with Core Strategy policies that encourages economic growth and job creation.

Relationship to surrounding uses

- 5.25 The site is within the designated Strangeways Employment Area. The proposed extension and external access units are consistent with the adjoining uses which are primarily employment and retail uses.
- 5.26 There are no residential properties within close proximity of the site such that extending the property would have any impact on residential amenity. The site of the proposed external access units does adjoin a Synagogue. However, the nature of self-storage use is such that it does not create any particular noise and is therefore considered entirely compatible with this religious use.
- 5.27 In terms of scale of development, the proposed extension will not be out of keeping with the general scale of commercial and retail uses within the vicinity of the site. There will be no impact on daylight or sunlight on any surrounding properties.

Heritage and Design considerations

- 5.28 The proposals will involve new build elements that will significantly improve the appearance of the site.
- 5.29 The impact of the scheme on the setting of the Grade II* Listed synagogue is considered in detail in the Heritage, Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (HTVIA) provided with the application, in accordance with the requirements of paragraphs 207 and 208 of the NPPF.
- 5.30 The analysis in the HTVIA concludes that the proposals preserve the significance of the listed Jewish Museum. The listed building's modern setting is significantly different to the context in which it would have historically been experienced and does not contribute to its significance, or an appreciation of its significance.

- 5.31 The proposed extension would be located to the northeast of the listed building and would be largely screened in views from Cheetham Hill Road by the existing Safestore unit. Where glimpsed, the extension would be experienced as part of an existing context of large scale commercial and light industrial units that characterise the area. It would appear as a peripheral element in views of the principal façade of the listed building, but off to one side and largely occluded by the existing Safestore unit. Its simple form and design would ensure the Jewish Museum remains the most prominent feature in the immediate streetscape and would not detract from an appreciation of its special interest.
- 5.32 The introduction of a hipped roof to the proposed extension, and the removal of the blue banding which forms part of the Appeal scheme proposals, would be consistent with the existing setting of the listed building. The hipped roof of the extension adds a referential element that nods to the form of the listed building.
- 5.33 The proposed single-storey externally accessed units would replace an unattractive car park, improving the appearance at the rear of the listed building. They would not be visible in principal views of the listed building from Cheetham Hill Road and therefore would not impact the way in which the building is currently experienced and appreciated. Its special interest would be preserved.
- 5.34 The revised proposal is an improvement on the appeal scheme and enhances the proposed development in terms of the heritage and townscape impacts.
- 5.35 The proposals therefore comply with local and national policy and guidance including Local Plan Policies EN3 and SP1.

Highways and parking

- 5.36 The Transport Statement that is submitted with the application demonstrates the proposals would result in a small increase of two two-way vehicle movements in the AM peak and two two-way vehicle movements in the PM peak. Hence, the proposed development's impact on the local highway network will be imperceptible and is not considered to cause a severe cumulative impact in the context of paragraph 116 of the NPPF. This includes taking into account the potential installation of mezzanines in the future.
- 5.37 Based on the user-specific trip generation calculations, associated parking accumulation figures and Safestore's experience of parking requirements at other stores, the Transport Statement demonstrates that more sufficient car parking spaces will be provided to meet demand.

Other environmental considerations

- 5.38 There are no other environmental considerations that would weigh against the approval of the application.
- 5.39 As noted above, the site has very limited ecological value. The Ecological Assessment sets out a number of measures to achieve Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). Improved planting along the Cheetham Hill Road frontage provides an opportunity to enhance biodiversity and the appearance of the locality.

A BNG assessment is submitted with the application. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric was used to calculate the pre-development baseline units. 0.07 baseline habitat units are present on-site pre-development. The proposed development would result in an increase of 0.08 habitat units, which corresponds to a 121.33% increase from pre- to post-development, well in excess of the 10% requirement.

6.0 Summary and conclusions

- 6.1 The extension of the existing Safestore self-storage store at Cheetham Hill Road will allow for an increase in the amount of space offered and be directly beneficial to the economic and regeneration objectives of this area of Manchester.
- 6.2 This application comprises an amended scheme which addresses the Council's scale and massing comments on the appeal scheme.
- 6.3 In all other respects the design is considered acceptable.
- 6.4 Whilst the proposed external self-storage units adjoin Melloy Place, a lane that provides rear access to the adjacent three buildings including the Jewish Museum, the Heritage, Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment demonstrates that there will be no harm to the significance of this asset by this development within its setting compared to the existing situation.
- 6.5 It is considered that the revised proposal has evolved from the appeal scheme and enhances the proposed development in terms of the heritage and townscape impacts.
- 6.6 The Transport Statement demonstrates that the additional floorspace, taking into account potential future mezzanines, will have no adverse impact on the local highway network and that the number of car parking spaces is sufficient to meet the needs of the extended store.
- 6.7 No other environmental consequences will arise as a result of the development.
- 6.8 The proposals accord with the development plan and there are no other material considerations that would outweigh this compliance such that planning permission should not be granted. The scheme is commended to the Council on this basis.

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