

Planning Statement

For Kempton Homes Ltd | 24-423

Proposed reconfiguration of commercial units (revised submission) -
Land off Oldham Street and Spear Street Manchester, M4 1LF



Project: 24-423
Site Address: Land off Oldham Street and Spear Street Manchester, M4 1LF
Client: Kempton Homes Ltd
Date: Friday, March 14, 2025
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Kempton Homes Ltd in support of a full planning application for the reconfiguration of the existing commercial units at The Quarters, Manchester to provide two units in each of the buildings comprising the development (four units total). The changes comprise a simple internal reconfiguration which does not increase the commercial floor space or the total number of commercial units across the site and associated elevational alterations.
- 1.2 A planning application for the subdivision of units 1 and 2 and associated elevational alterations was refused on 5th December 2024 (141034/FO/2024) for a single reason relating to the impact of the external elevational alterations to Block A on the rhythm of the building and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 1.3 This revised planning application proposes amended elevational alterations to overcome the reason for refusal designed by Stephenson Hamilton Risley Studio and follows pre-application advice from the Local Planning Authority.
- 1.4 This Statement addresses the planning policy context and demonstrates that the proposals are in accordance with the development plan and should be approved without delay.



2. The application

- 2.1 This application seeks full planning permission (part retrospective) for the reconfiguration of commercial units as approved by planning permission ref. 139580/JO/2024. Condition 30 on planning permission indicates that the development relates to:
- Block A: Three commercial units
 - Block B: One commercial unit
- 2.2 It is proposed to reconfigure the units as outlined below:
- Block A: Two commercial units
 - Block B: Two commercial units
- 2.3 Block A would become two units (rather than 3 as per condition 30). Unit 2 Block A is occupied by Sainsburys. Unit 1 would occupy part of the ground floor and the basement. The intended occupier of unit 1 is anticipated to be a leisure operator.
- 2.4 The subdivision of Block B into two units (rather than one as shown in condition 30) has been completed and both units are occupied following the discharge of relevant conditions. Unit 1 is occupied by Campanio, a successful Manchester bakery business. Unit 2 is occupied by Federation gym, again a successful Manchester based business. Both units are trading well.
- 2.5 The application does not propose to alter the total number of commercial units available across the site. However, there is a minor reduction in total commercial floorspace as a result of internal walling, Block A basement party wall resolutions and internal adjustments made to comply with building control, which do not require planning permission.
- 2.6 In terms of external changes, new sliding doors and fire doors are proposed to Units 1 and 2 of Block A on Oldham Street and Spear Street respectively. The request for sliding doors is to accommodate the requirements of Sainsbury's and is consistent with other Sainsbury's stores within the city centre.
- 2.7 No external amendments are proposed to Block B.
- 2.8 The proposed changes provide a more varied floor space for the commercial units, making them more attractive to local businesses. When marketed at the approved unit size/configuration, the spaces received no interest. Notwithstanding this, the site is within the city centre where commercial units should be supported regardless of their configuration.



- 2.9 It is not considered that the proposed reconfiguration would negatively impact the amenity of the local residents and businesses as the total number of units is not subject to change, therefore any perceived cumulative impacts would remain the same and have previously been assessed and approved by the Council.
- 2.10 Any business specific amendments would be dealt with directly by the occupiers through the discharge of conditions process or submission of a separate application for any specialised requirements.



3. Context

Site location and description

- 3.1 The site is located centrally in Northern Quarter, Manchester and consists of two buildings known as Block A and Block B. The blocks are bound by Oldham Street, Spear Street, Bradley Street, Warwick Street and Houldsworth Street.
- 3.2 The ground and lower ground floors of both blocks are reserved for commercial units relating to Class E uses, whilst the upper levels comprise apartments (C3).
- 3.3 The site is located within the Stevenson Square Conservation Area.

Relevant planning history

- 3.4 The site benefits from planning permission ref. 110074/FO/2015/C2 for a mixed use development comprising two blocks of residential apartments and commercial units. The application was approved on 30 August 2016. The original description reads as follows:

“Demolition of existing building and site structures and construction of 2no. mixed use buildings (Buildings A and B). Building A - Part 4, part 5, part 6 and part 8 storey building including ground floor and plus basement with ancillary facilities services and commercial use (A1, A3, B1) at ground floor and basement levels, 72 residential apartments (C3) above and 2 green roofs. Building B - Part 3 and part 5 storey building including ground floor and plus basement with 100 cycle parking spaces, building services and commercial space at basement level and 9 car parking spaces, ancillary facilities and services and commercial space (A1, A3, B1) at ground floor level and 28 residential apartments (C3) above and 1 green roof.”

- 3.5 The development has since been subject to amendments through Section 73 applications, the latest being planning permission ref. 139580/JO/2024 which comprises the implemented scheme. Condition 30 states:

“This permission relates to a development comprising:-

- Residential development of 2no. buildings - Building A and Building B:

Building A comprises:

- 33 number one bedroom, 33 number two bedroom and 6 number three-bedroom apartments;
- 3 number commercial units (Unit 1- 741.9 sq.m, Unit 2 - 866.9 sq.m, Unit 3 - 871.5



sq.m) as identified on drawings L(--)B1 rev A and L(--)000 rev A for uses falling within use classes A1, A3 and B1 of The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 as amended.

Building B comprises:

2 no. one bedroom and 26 no. two bedroom apartments.

- 1 number 741.9 sq.m commercial unit as identified on drawings L(--)B1 rev A and L(--)000 rev A for uses falling within use classes A1, A2 and B1 of The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 as amended.

No commercial unit within Building A or Building B as identified on the approved drawings shall be combined with another or subdivided unless planning permission is specifically granted." (Our emphasis)

Pre-application

- 3.6 The draft proposals were submitted to the Council for comment by Stephenson Hamilton Risley Studio in February 2025. The response confirmed that a submission proposing four equal panes of glass on Oldham Street with no frosted film on the glazing on Oldham Street would be acceptable.



4. Policy context

- 4.1 Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) is a material consideration in planning decisions.

Development plan context

- 4.2 The Manchester Local Plan consists of the following:

- Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan (adopted March 2024).
- Core Strategy (adopted July 2012 and amended in March 2024).
- Saved Unitary Development Policies.

Places for Everyone

- 4.3 The following PfE policies are considered to be relevant:

- JP-Strat2 City Centre
- JP-S1 Sustainable Development
- JP-P1 Sustainable Places
- JP-P2 Heritage

Core Strategy

- 4.4 The following Core Strategy policies are considered to be relevant:

- SP1 Spatial Principles (as amended by PfE Policy JP-S1)
- DM1 Development Management
- EN1 Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas
- EN3 Heritage (as amended by PfE Policy JP-P2)
- EC3 The Regional Centre
- CC7 Mixed Use Development
- CC9 Design and Heritage
- CC10 A Place for Everyone



Saved UDP policies

4.5 The following saved policies are considered to be relevant:

- DC14 Shop Fronts and Related Signs
- DC18 Conservation Areas
- DC26 Development and Noise
- RC20 Area 10 Oldham Street/Newton Street/Lever Street

National planning policy and guidance

4.6 The Framework was adopted in March 2012 and subsequently amended, with the latest revision having been published in December 2024 (subject to minor amendments made in February 2025). It sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

4.7 The following sections are considered relevant:

- 4. Decision Making
- 6. Building a strong, competitive economy
- 7. Ensuring the vitality of town centres
- 12. Achieving well-designed and beautiful places
- 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Other material considerations

4.8 The Guide to Development in Manchester - Supplementary Planning Document and Guidance (SPD) was adopted in April 2007.

4.9 The Shopfront and Signage Design Guide was adopted in 2024.



5. Planning considerations

Principle of development

- 5.1 The principle of commercial units at the site has already been established through planning permission ref. 139580/JO/2024. Once completed in accordance with a planning permission, the internal re-configuration of commercial units such as this would not be development (assuming no external alterations are required). However, condition 30 of the extant planning permission states that any combining or subdivision of commercial units will require planning permission.
- 5.2 Policy SP1 of the Core Strategy states that The Regional Centre will be the focus for economic and commercial development, retail, leisure and cultural activity, alongside high quality city living. The site is within the designated Regional Centre area as identified on the adopted Policy Map. Policy EC3 further reinforces the aspirations set out in the spatial strategy and encourages commercial development in The Regional Centre.
- 5.3 Policy EN1 sets out the principles for the City Centre Character Area. It highlights that the core area presents a dense environment, accommodating a wide and closely integrated range of uses including commercial, civic and residential activities.
- 5.4 Policy CC7 of the Core Strategy encourages active ground floor uses, which will be considered appropriate in locations which have an established public function. Paragraph 8.47 states:
- “Active ground floor uses are particularly important, as they help to animate the City Centre, emphasise the sense of place and improve security. Developers will be expected to demonstrate that they have made all reasonable efforts to ensure that proposed active uses will be delivered and occupied, and in particular there is an expectation that the approach to leasing and management will be flexible to accommodate a range of users, including those from the independent sector.”
- 5.5 Policy CC10 requires high standards of accessibility to be present throughout buildings in the City Centre.
- 5.6 As stated above, the principle of the commercial use has already been established and the policies of the Core Strategy are supportive of commercial development in the City Centre. The application does not propose to introduce any new commercial floor space, nor does it seek to change the use of the commercial units which already benefit from planning permission for Class E uses. The proposed reconfiguration retains the existing number of commercial units, whilst providing varied sizes to suit a wider range of businesses.



- 5.7 The commercial units were placed on the market in 2022. No interest was shown for the units at the approved sizes. However, during this time our client's estate agent received a number of enquiries regarding the potential to rent reasonable floor space which differs from that approved. Repeated requests were made to lease units which varied in terms of the size and configuration and as a result, the units were offered at the now proposed measurements and two tenants were secured shortly after, who now occupy Units 1 and 2 in Block B. A further tenant is seeking to occupy Unit 2, Block A and enquiries are being considered in relation to Unit 1, Block A.
- 5.8 The change in the marketing strategy and the proposed applications are in accordance with the Policy CC7 of the Core Strategy and reflect our client's efforts and flexibility to ensure that the units are occupied without delay. The proposed reconfiguration further strives to accommodate a range of users through provision of varied commercial floor space offers. Indeed, the two units in Block B are now occupied by independent businesses following a number of enquiries requesting smaller units in Block B.
- 5.9 The existing and proposed configuration is shown in the table below. Please note that the origin of the floor figures listed in condition 30 is unknown and does not appear to reflect the floor plans (and unit divisions shown) also listed within the condition. We therefore provide re-measured existing floor figures on the basis of the approved commercial units layout/division.

Block	Figures listed in condition 30	Existing (as divided on plans in condition 30)	Proposed
Block A	- Block A Unit 1 – 741.9sqm - Block A Unit 2 – 866.9sqm - Block A Unit 3 – 871.5sqm	- Block A Unit 1 – 422sqm - Block A Unit 2 – 427sqm - Block A Unit 3 – 913sqm	- Block A Unit 1 – 1,364sqm - Block A Unit 2 – 380sqm
Block B	Block B Unit 1 – 741.9sqm	Block B Unit 1 – 782sqm	- Block B Unit 1 – 192sqm - Block B Unit 2 – 602sqm

- 5.10 It is not considered that the proposals will lead to an intensification of development/use in the area as the total number of units across the development and their approved use (Class E) will remain the same. There is some variation between the total figures which are reduced in the proposed units due to internal walls, Block A basement party wall resolutions and internal adjustments to comply with building control.
- 5.11 Ultimately, the use and number of businesses across the existing development will be the same and the only material amendments relate to the elevational updates to Block A to provide additional entryways and fire exits. This matter, alongside other technical considerations, is discussed in the sub-sections below.



Façade alterations

- 5.12 Saved policy 14 of the UDP requires proposals for shop fronts to be in keeping with the character of the building, adjoining buildings and their shopfronts (where appropriate) and of the local area. It further states that shopfronts should allow full access for people whose mobility is impaired.
- 5.13 We can confirm that lifts within the buildings are to be retained and level access would be retained from the street into each unit in Blocks A and B, in accordance with policy 14.

Block A

- 5.14 Two new entryways are proposed from Oldham Street, one for each unit. The façade design has been amended by Stephenson Hamilton Risley Studio following discussions with the local planning authority and comprises a change from 5 to 4 glazed panes per archway across the entire elevation. It is proposed to install fully automatic glazed single sliding doors in place of existing glazing, which would be accessible to people with disabilities. The change represents a minor amendment to the building façade in comparison to the approved scheme and maintains views through to the unit. The proposed amendments would not materially affect the external appearance of the building and would maintain the symmetrical nature and overall alignment of the existing elevation. The changes therefore respond positively to the architectural expression and proportions of the building in accordance with the Shopfront and Design SPD.
- 5.15 We can confirm that the curtain walling would achieve U-values of 2.0 W/m²K when glazed with a 1.2 W/m²K double glazed unit and the door leaf would be 3.5 W/m²K. Building regulations¹ advise that high-usage entrance doors are exempt from the U-value calculation. These are defined as:
- “High-usage entrance door means a door to an entrance primarily for the use of people that is expected to experience large traffic volumes, and where robustness and/or powered operation is the primary performance requirement. To qualify as a high-usage entrance door, the door should be equipped with automatic closers and, except where operational requirement preclude, be protected by a lobby.”
- 5.16 The proposed doors on the Oldham Street elevations would meet this definition, therefore no U-value is necessary.
- 5.17 It is also proposed to introduce new rear exit/fire escape doors to the rear of the units, exiting onto Spear Street. Due to the nature of the doors, these will be required to open outwards. The new exits are incorporated into the existing glazed areas. Again, the design of the doors has been amended since the previously refused application.

¹ L2B Conservation of fuel and power in existing buildings other than dwellings



- 5.18 The material and colour of all proposed doors would match existing openings (anodised bronze) to ensure they are in keeping with the design and character of the existing development and the surrounding area.
- 5.19 The proposed new entryways would also assist with the creation of an active frontage onto Oldham Street which is busy in character, while maintaining the existing visual appearance and aesthetic of the building. A Google streetview extract is shown below and shows the busy context within which the new entrances would be located.



- 5.20 In accordance with the Core Strategy, the amendments would further promote active ground floor uses, assist with animating the City Centre and emphasise the sense of place on Oldham Street.

Block B

- 5.21 No changes are proposed to the elevations of Block B. The proposed subdivision of the commercial space is designed in such a way to align with existing entryways and exits so that no external alterations are required.

Heritage

- 5.22 Policies EN3 of the Core Strategy and JP-P2 of the PfE encourage development which complements and takes advantage of distinct historic and heritage features of the area. Policy Jp-P2 further sets out to positively conserve, sustain and enhance the historic environment and heritage assets and their settings.
- 5.23 Policy CC9 of the Core Strategy requires development in Manchester City Centre to preserve or enhance the heritage assets that have been identified, including listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled ancient monuments.



- 5.24 The site is located within the Stephenson Square Conservation Area (CA). Saved Policy 18 of the UDP seeks to preserve and enhance the character of its designated conservation areas by carefully considering the effect of major changes to the appearance of existing buildings.
- 5.25 It is not considered that the proposals comprise major changes due to the limited scope of external amendments. Notwithstanding this, the proposed amendments to the existing elevations would preserve the character of the conservation area through use of matching materials and maintenance of the glazed façade along the main frontage onto Oldham Street, which were previously found to be acceptable by the LPA. A similar approach is adopted relating to the new fire exit doors on Spear Street through the use of matching materials along this elevation. The proposed amendments are in keeping with the existing building fabric and the surrounding area, would not negatively impact the historic value of the Conservation Area and are therefore in accordance with the development plan.

Waste

- 5.26 The waste strategies for Unit 2 of Block A and Units 1 and 2 of Block B have been reviewed, deemed acceptable and discharged for each unit through applications CDN/24/0404, CDN/24/0306 and CDN/24/0070.
- 5.27 In relation to Unit 1 of Block A, it is proposed to provide a commercial bin store within the unit. The Unit 1 bin store would be attached to the residential bin store, allowing access through the unit and the existing bin store through to the lifts. Please note that detailed waste strategies for Unit 1 of Block A is required to be submitted by condition 31 of planning permission 139580/JO/2024 and will be provided by future tenants through a discharge of condition process relating to that scheme.

Plant & ventilation

- 5.28 The risers remain as existing and were designed, and subsequently approved, to accommodate the same amount of commercial floor space and can comfortably accommodate the reconfiguration of the commercial units.

Block A

- 5.29 The number of units in Block A is proposed to be reduced from 3 to 2, therefore the existing plant and extraction should not be affected by the combining of two units. An additional duct from Unit 1 to Unit 2 of Block A is proposed and shown on the submitted drawings. No other amendments are proposed to the existing ventilation system or plant as both proposed units benefit from an individual riser.



Block B

- 5.30 Having regard to Block B, the ventilation/plant can accommodate two units as shown through details which have already been reviewed, deemed acceptable and discharged by the LPA for each of the two proposed units through applications CDN/24/0306, CDN/24/0070 and CDN/23/0842.

Noise

- 5.31 Saved UDP policy DC26 states that regard will be given to the effect of new development proposals which are likely to be generators of noise.
- 5.32 The existing residential and commercial units have previously been assessed in unison and the principle of their use and location, having regard to noise generation, has been established. The proposed reconfiguration of the units would not increase the number of businesses operating across the site and as such, the overall levels of noise would not be altered. The internal amendments to commercial units will not impact previous assessments or noise insulation of the commercial spaces.
- 5.33 Where individual units are concerned, the approved use (Class E) also remains the same. The noise associated with the subdivided units in Block B was also assessed through the discharge of condition 8 in relation to each unit, which required the submission and approval of acoustic insulation details and plant/equipment noise relating to the building and external equipment. The approved details and decision notices are enclosed for reference at Appendices EP3 and EP5.
- 5.34 As mentioned in the Plant & Ventilation section above, a new duct is proposed to the riser in Unit 2, Block A. The submitted Noise Report prepared by Noise Solutions Ltd demonstrates that the noise levels associated with the new plant would be acceptable or could be mitigated through an acoustic enclosure or screen. Details of any other external plant required in relation to Block A remain controlled through condition 8 of the original consent, which will be discharged by future tenants.
- 5.35 In light of the above, the proposals would not have a negative effect on the surrounding area and therefore comply with saved policy DC26 of the UDP.

Security

- 5.36 The extant development benefits from Secured by Design Certification which was submitted and approved by the Council on 27 July 2022 (application ref. CDN/22/0315).
- 5.37 The new entryways in Block A would be double safety glazed with a hook lock as shown on the detailed sliding door drawing. The proposed fire doors would only open from the inside using a push bar. Any



additional security measures would be dependent on the nature and operation of the occupying business and will be dealt with by tenants if they require planning permission.

Servicing

- 5.38 No amendments are required to the servicing of both Block A and B as the total number of commercial units remains the same. All technical details previously approved remain as such unless otherwise stated in this Statement.

Loading areas

- 5.39 No changes are proposed to the loading areas.

Heat insulation

- 5.40 This will remain as existing and will not be affected by the proposed reconfiguration.

Other matters

- 5.41 Any other future amendments would relate to specific and varied needs of the tenants, not as a result of the reconfiguration of the commercial units and will therefore be dealt with separately by tenants as the need for changes arises.



6. Summary and conclusions

- 6.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the reconfiguration of existing commercial units from three commercial units in Block A and one in Block B, to two in each Block and associated elevational changes. It is not proposed to increase the amount of commercial floor space, the total number of commercial units, or change their approved use. Two entryways and two fire exits are proposed to Block A.
- 6.2 The amendments are submitted in light of the demand for the commercial space sizes now proposed. Condition 30 attached to planning permission 139580/JO/2024 also requires the submission of a full planning application for subdivision or combining of any existing commercial units.
- 6.3 The drawings showing the revised elevational alterations have been prepared by Stephenson Hamilton Risley Studio to overcome the reasons for refusal on the earlier scheme (141034/FO/2024).
- 6.4 It has been demonstrated that the existing commercial spaces can be appropriately reconfigured without any major technical interventions or impact on the amenity of the area or residents.
- 6.5 The new entryways provide an active frontage while maintaining the character of the building through retention of glazing where possible and use of high-quality matching materials and finishes. Overall, the proposed changes to the Oldham Street and Spear Street elevations are minimal, not visually intrusive and in keeping with the Conservation Area and design of the building.
- 6.6 The proposals are considered to comply with the development plan and on this basis, we request that planning permission be granted without delay.



