

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no. 140072/FH/2024
Date registered valid: 5 December 2024
Proposal: Retention of external wall insulation with render finish
Address: 25 Woodland Avenue, Manchester, M18 7HT
Ward(s): Gorton & Abbey Hey Ward

Applicant: Miss Maisie Sinclair
Agent (if any): Mrs Jamie-Louise Riley EON
Case officer: Katie Raw
Tel: 0161 234 4164
Email: katie.raw@manchester.gov.uk

Recommendation: Refuse
Date of recommendation: 29 January 2025

Application details

Type of application: Full Householder Application

Development type: Householder

Date of site visit: 3 December 2024

Standard consultations:

Printed: 11 December 2024

Expired: 4 January 2025

Neighbour notifications

Printed: 11 December 2024

Expired: 4 January 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

The application site relates to 25 Woodland Avenue within the north Manchester ward of Gorton & Abbey Hey. The application site relates to a mid-terraced, two storey Victorian dwellinghouse. At the time of the site visit, the property was covered in a grey coloured external wall insulation to the front and rear elevation, which has resulted in the loss of ornate detailing above the recessed front door, sill detailing and architectural detailing above the windows. The property does not benefit from any amenity space to the front of the property, however to the rear the property benefits from a rear courtyard with outbuilding to the rear.

Photos of the site prior to submission were provided by the agent for review and showed a front elevation with red painted brickwork and a cream coloured rendered rear elevation.



Photo 1



Photo 2

Description of area

The surrounding area is residential in context. The property sits to the east of the Fallowfield Loop and sits to the south of Hyde Road and Gorton Reservoir.

Description of development

The current application seeks consent for the retention of external wall insulation with render finish. As stated on the application form, the development started on 27 October 2021 and work was completed on 29 October 2021. The property has been covered in a Wetherby Episwall external wall insulation system with 90mm enhanced EPS insulation and WBS HECK Silicone 'K' 1.5 mm textured finish. The render has been finished in a grey colouration.

The application was accompanied with a Building Regulations Certificate of Completion, granted on 18 November 2021.

Negotiations during the Course of the Application

The agent was asked to confirm the thickness of the EWI used and this information was supplied by the agent with a product specification. The agent was advised that the application could not be supported by the LPA. In this instance, there were no amendments to the scheme, or conditions which could reasonably have been imposed, which could have made the development acceptable. The agent was advised of the LPA's intentions to recommend the application for refusal.

Planning History

065113/VO/NORTH2/02- alleyway between Woodland Rd & Friendship Ave- CITY COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT Erection of 2.1m high gates at ends of alleyways (rear of 2- 14 Woodland Road, 23-39 Woodland Avenue and 24-46 Friendship Avenue.
Approved 10 July 2002.

Consultations & Notification Responses

Local Residents

Local residents were consulted and no responses were received.

Highway Services

Highway Services were consulted on the application and confirmed they had no objection to the proposal.

Issues

POLICY

The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)

The document sets out the Government's Planning Policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development in terms, "For plan-making" and "For decision-taking", (paragraph 11). Paragraph 8 - Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

- a) an economic objective
- b) a social objective and
- c) an environmental objective.

The following specific policies are considered to be particularly relevant to the proposed development:

- i. Chapter 8. Promoting healthy and safe communities.
- ii. Chapter 12. Achieving well-designed places.

The Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2012-2027 ("the Core Strategy") was adopted by the City Council on 11th July 2012, updated March 20-24 following adoption of Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan.

The Core Strategy is the key document in Manchester's Local Development Framework. It 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. Of relevance are:

Policy DM1 (Development Management)

Policy SP1 (Spatial Principles)

Policy EN1 (Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas)

Policy EN4 (Reducing CO2 Emissions by Enabling Low and Zero Carbon Development)

Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies

Large elements of the UDP have been superseded by the Core Strategy. The following saved policies are of relevance in the consideration of this application:

DC1.1 states that in determining planning applications for extensions to residential properties, the Council will have regard to:

- a. The general character of the property;
- b. The effect upon the amenity of the neighbouring occupiers;
- c. The desirability of enabling people to adapt their houses in appropriate ways to meet changing household needs;
- d. The overall appearance of the proposal in the a street scene;
- e. The effect of the loss of any on-site car parking.

DC1.2 states that extensions to residential properties will be allowed subject to compliance with other relevant policies of the Plan and the following criteria:

- a. They are not excessively large or bulky (for example resulting in structures which are not subservient to original houses or project out too far in front of original buildings);
- b. They do not create undue loss of sunlight, daylight or privacy;
- c. They are not out of character with the style of development in the area or the surrounding scene by virtue of design, use of materials or construction details.

d. they would not result in the loss of off-street car-parking, in a situation where there is so severe an existing on-street parking problem that unacceptable additional pressures would be created.

Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance, Adopted April 2007.

The Guide 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. These are: character and context, continuity and enclosure, ease of movement, quality of the public realm, diversity, legibility, and adaptability. It advises that high quality design is a vital attribute of successful neighbourhoods. Of relevance are paragraph 2.7, paragraph 2.14 and paragraph 2.16.

Places for Everyone (2022-2039)

Places for Everyone is a long-term plan of nine Greater Manchester districts for jobs, new homes, and sustainable growth. It has been published by the GMCA on behalf of the nine districts and took effect and became part of the statutory development plan on March 21, 2024. The Plan and its policies are now a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications. The Plan and its policies must therefore be given full weight in the planning balance.

The following policies are relevant:

i.JP- S1- Sustainable development

ISSUES

The current application seeks permission for the retention of external wall insulation with render finish.

It is acknowledged that external wall insulation benefits residential properties, by improving the thermal qualities of the property and as such accords with the broad thrust of the Council's policies aimed at reducing carbon emissions, economy and health and well-being including DM1, SP1 and EN4 of Manchester's Core Strategy (2012) and the NPPF. However, in this instance, the visual harm to the property and the wider area outweighs the benefits of thermal efficiency to the applicant property and as such, the principle of development is not considered acceptable in this instance. For this reason, the LPA cannot support the application and the reasoning will now be discussed.

Visual Amenity

The application site relates to a mid-terraced, two storey Victorian dwellinghouse. Prior to the application of the grey finished EWI system, the property had a red brick primary elevation which had been painted in a bright red colouration. The rear elevation appears to have been covered in a cream coloured render.

The properties along the east side of Woodland Avenue are characterised by a row of terraced properties and are all characterised with ornate detailing above the recessed front door, sill detailing and brick patterned detailing above the windows. It is noted that the properties to the west of Woodland Avenue are slightly different in character, with the feature of box bay windows at ground floor level. Woodland Avenue is characterised by either red brick materials or the painting of such properties with a red colouration. Any variation to the colouration of the front elevation of the properties have been achieved with the application of paint, including no.38 Woodland Avenue.

The application of a EWI 90mm system with a grey finish has adversely altered the characteristics of the applicant property, this includes the ornate brick detailing above the entrance of the property, loss of brick detailing above the windows and loss of window sills. The proposal has resulted in a PVC cap below the eaves in a white colouration which exaggerates the thickness of the product. The finished photos and site photos show the loss of several original architectural features of the host property due to the poor application of the render and thickness. The loss of these features are regrettable. The proposal does not positively enhance the aesthetics of the property as the points of emphasis/interest including detailed brickwork are lost creating flat elevations with little architectural interest. This is further exaggerated by the terraced nature of the property with the EWI system projecting onto the adopted footpath, given there is no front amenity space to help set the proposal back from the streetscene, in order to mitigate adverse visual harm.

The colour finish of a grey render is out of keeping with the existing colour pallet of Woodland Avenue, which consists of red brick and painted brick properties with a red colouration, with the occasional application of cream painted render to gable and rear elevations. This is to the detriment of visual amenity to those surrounding properties to both Woodland Avenue and the properties to the rear looking onto the back of the proposal, from Friendship Avenue, in addition to the applicant site. The grey colouration is also out of keeping with many properties in the surrounding area, including Woodland Avenue which is characterised mainly by a red colour pallet.

The use of render would also contrast the surrounding area in terms of common materials for external elevations, especially evident along front elevations. The two elements together (grey colouration and render finish) would be considered to be out of keeping with the visual appearance of development in the immediate area and act as an incongruous feature. As the property is mid-terraced, the adverse impact is exaggerated as the grey finished render disrupts the rhythm of colouration, materiality and profile in the streetscene, as well as being highly evident from view points along Woodland Avenue.

It is acknowledged that the application of the EWI system to the rear of the property plays a less important role to the character of the area given it is largely hidden and this elevation already benefits from the use of cream colouration. However, the grey colouration contrasts the existing cream colouration and the agent has not provided any justification as to why the cream colouration of render could not be applied to the rear elevation of the property and the EWI product and so this elevation would not require consent. Even to the rear elevation where the existing use of render is present, the grey colouration does not respond positively to the colour pallet and so does not positively enhance the character of the area.

In turn, the proposal creates harm to the applicant site, the amenity of the applicant site and neighbouring properties and negatively impacts the surrounding character and streetscene, contrary to the City Council's Core Strategy Planning Policies SP1, DM1 and EN1, JP-S1 of Places for Everyone, Policy DC1 of the Unitary Development Plan and Section 8 and 12 of the NPPF.

Design and Appearance

A product specification of the Wetherby Episwall external wall insulation system with 90mm enhanced EPS insulation and WBS HECK Silicone 'K' 1.5 mm textured finish was provided by the agent for review during the course of the application. Whilst the product is considered to be acceptable in principle, the colour finish, thickness and poor application in combination in this setting is not considered to respond positively in terms of design and appearance, therefore contrary to Policy DC1 of the UDP and Core Strategy policies EN1 and SP1.

Permitted Development

The proposal is for the application of render in a contrasting colouration to both the red painted brick front elevation and cream colour rendered rear elevation and therefore an application for planning permission and the assessment of the works is required. Further, as the EWI system extends onto the projected highway this results in the need for formal consent. In this instance, there is not a permitted development fallback to consider.

Conclusion

In short, the Local Planning Authority does not support the application for the retention of external wall insulation with render finish. The development is out of character in terms of colour and materiality to the host property and the thick profile and poor application exaggerates the incongruous design feature. In turn, the proposal produces an alien feature within the streetscene and detrimentally harms the aesthetic qualities of the street and wider area. As such the proposal is contrary to the City Council's Core Strategy Planning Policies SP1, DM1 and EN1, JP-S1 of the Places for Everyone, Policy DC1 of the Unitary Development Plan and Section 8 and 12 of the NPPF.

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

The proposal was assessed with regards to policies outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework, Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies, Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan and other material considerations. In this instance officers have worked with the applicant in a proactive manner, but there were no amendments to the scheme, or conditions which could reasonably have been imposed, which could have made the development acceptable and it was therefore not possible to approve the application.

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

- 1) The retention of external wall insulation with render finish, by reason of its colouration, materials, application, profile and projection forms an incongruous design feature to the dwellinghouse. The proposal harms the quality of the building in visual terms, and adversely affects the visual amenity and character of the area. As such the proposal is contrary to the City Council's Core Strategy Planning Policies SP1, DM1 and EN1, JP-S1 of Places for Everyone, Policy DC1 of the Unitary Development Plan and Section 8 and 12 of the NPPF.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Highway Services

27 Woodland Avenue, Manchester, M18 7HX
46 Woodland Avenue, Manchester, M18 7HF
28 Friendship Avenue, Manchester, M18 7HJ
24 Friendship Avenue, Manchester, M18 7HJ
23 Woodland Avenue, Manchester, M18 7HT
26 Friendship Avenue, Manchester, M18 7HJ
52 Woodland Avenue, Manchester, M18 7HF
50 Woodland Avenue, Manchester, M18 7HF
48 Woodland Avenue, Manchester, M18 7HF

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
Historic Landfill Site 250m Buffer -
Area Team Boundary - Name: NORTH AREA