

HOLME PLANNING

Partnership

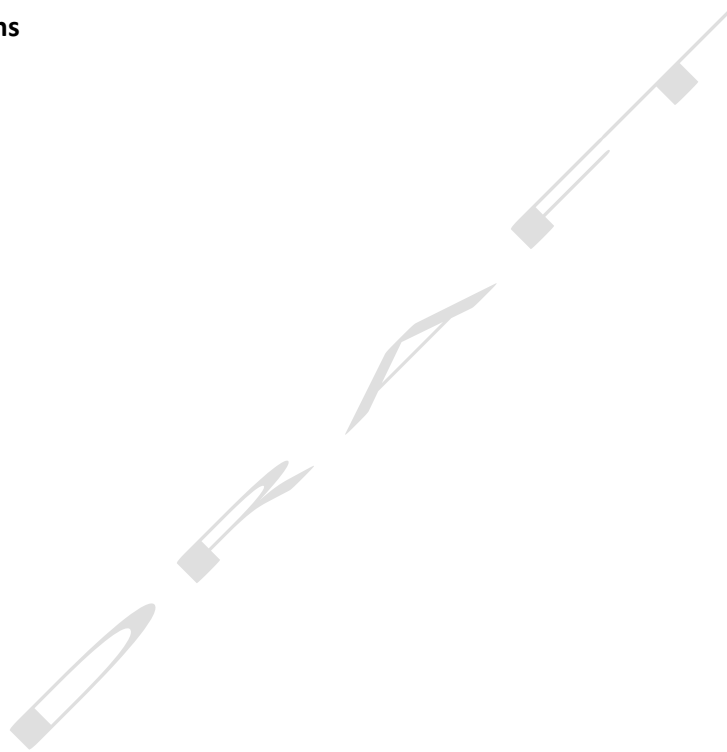
Planning Statement

**1520 Ashton Old Road
Manchester
M11 1HN**

Change of Use to 6 Bed Class C2 Care Home

November 2024

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1.0 Introduction

Background

- 1.1 Holme Planning Partnership Ltd have been instructed by First Steps Together, to prepare a planning statement to support a detailed planning application for the following development, namely:

“Use of 1520 Ashton Old Road, Manchester as a Class C2 Care Home for up to 6 children.”

- 1.2 This statement will address the relevant national and local planning policies that deal with the principle of the proposed development, and the pertinent planning matters associated with the scheme. This will be addressed as set out below:

Section 2 - Application Site Context
Section 3 - Planning History
Section 4 - Relevant Planning Policy – National Planning Policy Framework
Section 5 - Relevant Planning Policy – Manchester Development Plan
Section 6 - Other Material Considerations
Section 7 – Operational Statement
Section 8 - Conclusions

Principle of Development

- 1.3 The National Planning Policy Framework is supportive as a matter of principle of the efficient and effective use of land and buildings, and the delivery of new homes and facilities to meet identified needs, especially when such delivery is associated with the conversion of existing buildings.
- 1.4 It is our view that the development subject of this application is compliant with the core principles of local and national planning policy. Further, that there are other material considerations which also weigh in favour of the grant of consent, and we would therefore kindly request that this application be approved without delay.

Submitted Documentation

- 1.5 This application is supported by the following documents and drawings:
- Existing and Proposed Floor Plans;
 - Site Layout Plan (Existing and Proposed);
 - Location Plan; and
 - Planning Statement.

2.0 Application Site Context

- 2.1 The site is currently vacant but is understood to have historically comprised of 5 bedsits, a flat and a further bedroom, spread over four floors of this mid terrace property (including basement and rooms in the roofspace). However, following extensive works undertaken on site in 2021 and 2022, the property has now been converted and has been in use (albeit for a limited time and without consent) as 10 bedroom House in Multiple Occupation.
- 2.2 The site benefits from an off street parking area on the site frontage, with space for bin and cycle storage, and a large garden to the rear to secure the provision of outdoor amenity space.
- 2.3 The property is located on a main thoroughfare into Manchester City Centre, but is located within an area which is mixed commercial and residential in character, with dwellings understood to be located to the north, east and south. A guest house is understood to neighbour the property to the west. The proposed use of the site is therefore consistent and compatible with the character of the locale.
- 2.4 The site is located within walking distance of local services and facilities to the east on Ashton Old Road including petrol station, shops, food establishments, doctor's surgery, education establishments, places of worship etc. There are also noted to be bus stops located within walking distance of the site, and Fairfield train station is also close by. The site is therefore deemed to be sustainably located.
- 2.5 The property is not understood to be listed, and is not located within a defined Conservation Area. There are no other listed buildings in close proximity of the site.
- 2.6 From a review of the Environment Agency flood map, the site is located within flood zone 1 and is therefore at low probability of flooding.

Proposed Development

- 2.7 The development subject of this application comprises the change of use of the existing building to create a 6 bedroom Class C2 Residential Care facility for children aged 11+, with on site communal and staff facilities. The proposed accommodation will be laid out as follows:

Basement

- Large hallway
- Staff Office with toilet and washing facilities; and
- Utility/storage room.

Ground Floor

- Entrance Hallway;
- Living Room with toilet facilities;

- Staff Bedroom with en suite facilities (for those on a sleeping shift);
- Communal kitchen/lounge and utility area; and
- Access to rear garden area

First Floor

- Three bedrooms with en suite and kitchenette facilities;
- A nurture/recreation/meeting room with toilet facilities

Second Floor

- Three further bedrooms with en suite and kitchenette facilities

- 2.8 The external fabric of the existing building will remain unchanged from the current arrangement, with no proposed additional external alterations being proposed within this application. All previous external works carried out were either undertaken on the basis of permitted development rights or as approved under previous approvals.
- 2.9 Works on site to facilitate the proposed change of use will therefore be simply limited to internal redecoration as required by the Applicant.
- 2.10 Further details of the proposed use, the Applicant, and how the facility will operate, has been included at Section 7 of this report.

3.0 Planning History

- 3.1 From a review of the site planning history we are aware of the approval of a previous certificate of lawfulness for proposed development associated with the rear dormer and insertion of rooflights to the front roof plane. It is noted that this application was approved in November 2021 under application reference 131389/LP/2021 and works completed on site.
- 3.2 We are not aware of any additional applications on this site which could be deemed determinative to this application.
- 3.3 We are also aware of the fact that there is another 7 bedroom care facility at 1524 Ashton Old Road (which has been operated by the Applicant for the last three years). Whilst this development is noted to be in close proximity, we do not consider this to result in a proliferation of such uses within the local area to a degree as to raise concern, or harm the character and amenity of the local area.
- 3.4 In addition, since opening and operating the facility at 1524, the Applicant has had no issues or complaints either from neighbours or other statutory bodies. The fact that the Council's own social services team have been engaged on this further application in advance of submission, and deemed there to be a need, further supports the case that this proposal represents the right development in the right location.

4.0 Relevant Planning Policy and Legislation – National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.1 The development subject of this detailed application needs to be assessed against the provisions of the Development Plan which comprises the Revised National Planning Policy Framework and the adopted Manchester Development Plan. This section of the report will focus on the national planning policy position, with local policies addressed at Section 5.

Revised National Planning Policy (NPPF) December 2023

- 4.2 The Revised National Planning Policy Framework was last updated in December 2023, and sets out the Government's planning policies for England, and how these are expected to be applied. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF is a material consideration in the decision-making process, and a summary of paragraphs considered material to the evaluation of this proposed development read as follows:

Section 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development

***"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 – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
- b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and*
- c) an environmental objective—to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy."*

***"Paragraph 10:** So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development."*

***"Paragraph 11:** Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking this means:*

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

“Paragraph 12: The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.”

Section 4 - Decision Making

“Paragraph 38: Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.”

“Paragraph 47: 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.”

Section 5 - Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes

“Paragraph 60: To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. The overall aim should be to meet as much of an area’s identified housing need as possible, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community.”

Section 8 – Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities

“Paragraph 96: Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places and beautiful buildings which:

- a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages;*
- b) are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of attractive, well-designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high*

quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and

c) enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.”

“Paragraph 97: *To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:*

a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;

b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community;

c) guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community’s ability to meet its day-to-day needs;

d) ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and

e) ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.”

Section 9 - Promoting Sustainable Transport

“Paragraph 108: *Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that:*

a) the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;

b) opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;

c) opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;

d) the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains; and

e) patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places.”

“Paragraph 114: *In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:*

a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location;

b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users;

- c) the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code; and
- d) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.”

“Paragraph 115: Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.”

“Paragraph 116: 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.”

Section 11 - Making Effective Use of Land

“Paragraph 123: Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or ‘brownfield’ land.”

“Paragraph 124: Planning policies and decisions should:

- a) encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside;
- b) recognise that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, cooling/shading, carbon storage or food production;
- c) give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate

opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;

d) promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively (for example converting space above shops, and building on or above service yards, car parks, lock-ups and railway infrastructure); and

e) support opportunities to use the airspace above existing residential and commercial premises for new homes. In particular, they should allow upward extensions where the development would be consistent with the prevailing height and form of neighbouring properties and the overall street scene, is well designed (including complying with any local design policies and standards), and can maintain safe access and egress for occupiers.”

“Paragraph 128: Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:

a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;

b) local market conditions and viability;

c) the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;

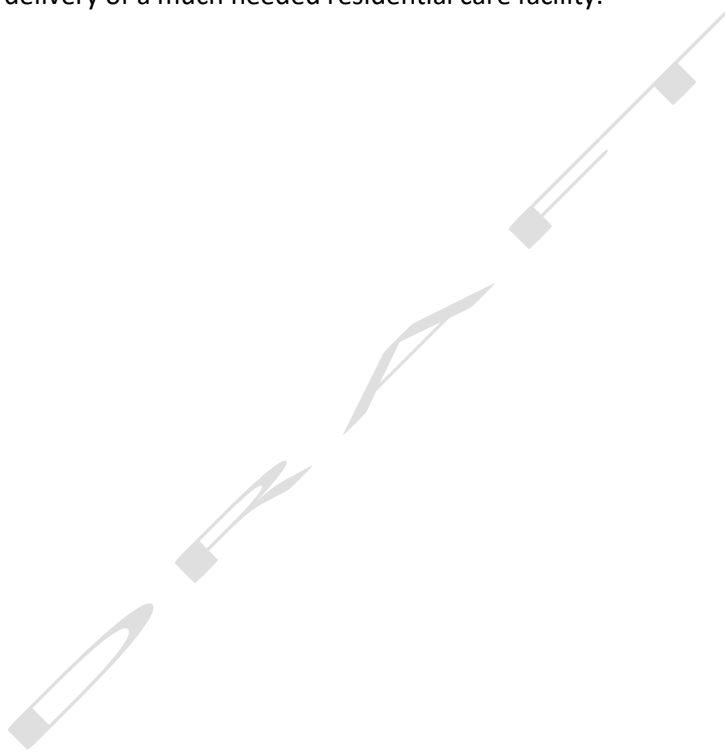
d) the desirability of maintaining an area’s prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and

e) the importance of securing well-designed and beautiful, attractive and healthy places.”

- 4.3 **Summary:** The scheme as proposed seeks to secure planning permission for the change of use of this current and longstanding vacant building, and the creation of a Class C2 care facility for up to 6 children aged 11+. The site will deliver a much needed care facility, with good amenity standards for proposed residents, on a suitable site in a highly sustainable location, with on site opportunities for social interaction.
- 4.4 Whilst the scheme results in change, it is important to acknowledge that the site has now been vacant for a protracted period of time, and in advance, was in longstanding use as a bedsit. The scheme does not therefore in our view result in the loss of family housing, and is not seeking to contribute a use to the site which would be out of character for the wider local area.
- 4.5 This is a scheme focussed on change of use and conversion of the existing internal built fabric, without proposed alterations to the external built envelope. The scheme as submitted has therefore been designed to respect and reflect the character of the existing site, and the wider street scene, and represents an effective and efficient use of the application site. The building is clearly suitable for the use proposed, and the proposals are

therefore clearly compliant with national guidance. The scheme is therefore deemed to be acceptable and appropriate as a matter of principle.

- 4.6 The site is also suitably and sustainably located to service the needs of the development and to support access to immediate and wider public transport connections. In addition, there is provision for on site car parking at the site frontage, and as laid out in more detail at section 7, there are procedures in place to seek to limit the need for staff and visitors to access the site by private car.
- 4.7 It is clear therefore for the reasons set out above, that the development proposed is in accordance with the paragraphs and requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework. Therefore, in line with the provisions of paragraph 11 of the Framework, we would kindly request that the Council seek to support the development as currently proposed, and to work with us towards a positive determination of this application and secure the delivery of a much needed residential care facility.



5.0 Relevant Planning Policy – Manchester Development Plan

- 5.1 The Development Plan currently comprises of the Greater Manchester Places for Everyone Plan (adopted March 2024), the Manchester Core Strategy (adopted July 2012), extant policies of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan, and the provisions of a number of Supplementary Planning Documents.
- 5.2 It is understood from a review of the local authority Proposals Map, that the site subject of this application, is located within the main built up area, and within the development sub area known as 'East Manchester'. The site is not however understood to be allocated for a specified form of use or development.
- 5.3 Included below is a list of the adopted key determinative development plan policies of relevance to the assessment of this application:

Greater Manchester Places for Everyone

- Policy JP-Strat1- Core Growth Area;
- Policy JP-S1 – Sustainable Development;
- Policy JP-P1 – Sustainable Places;
- Policy JP-P6 – Health;
- Policy JP-C6 – Walking and Cycling; and
- Policy JP-C8 – Transport Requirements of New Development;

- 5.4 Given the nature of development being proposed within this scheme, particular attention is drawn to the provisions of policies JP-Strat 1, JP-P1 and JP-P6 which are noted to read as follows:

***“JP-Strat 1:** The economic role of the Core Growth Area will be protected and enhanced, with sustainable development supporting major growth in the number of jobs provided across the area providing opportunities to create jobs for local communities.*

Complementary to, but not at the expense of, its economic function it will see a significant increase in the number and range of homes in areas with good connections to employment, training and education facilities.

Infrastructure provision will support the growth and continued capacity of the Core Growth Area.”

***“JP-P1:** We aim to become one of the most liveable city regions in the world, consisting of a series of beautiful, healthy and varied places, each having the following key attributes that all development, wherever appropriate, should be consistent with:*

1. *Distinctive, with a clear identity that:*

- A. Conserves and enhances the natural environment, landscape features, historic environment and local history and culture;*
 - B. Enables a clear understanding of how the place has developed; and*
 - C. Respects and acknowledges the character and identity of the locality in terms of design, siting, size, scale and materials used*
- 2. Visually stimulating, creating interesting and imaginative environments which raise the human spirit through the use of green space, public art and quality design*
- 3. Socially inclusive:*
 - A. Responding to the needs of all parts of society;*
 - B. Enabling everyone to participate equally and independently;*
 - C. Providing opportunities for social contact and support; and*
 - D. Promoting a sense of community*
- 4. Resilient, capable of dealing with major environmental events*
- 5. Adaptable, able to respond easily to varied and changing needs and technologies*
- 6. Durable, being built to last and using robust materials that reflect local character, weather well and are easily maintained*
- 7. Resource-efficient with:*
 - A. A low carbon footprint;*
 - B. Efficient use of land;*
 - C. Minimised use of new materials;*
 - D. High levels of recycling*
- 8. Safe, including by designing out crime and terrorism, reducing opportunities for anti-social behaviour and by ensuring that developments make appropriate provision for response and evacuation in the case of an emergency or disaster.*
- 9. Supported by critical infrastructure, such as energy, water and drainage and green spaces*
- 10. Functional and convenient, enabling people and uses to act efficiently with minimal effort, and responding to needs relating to servicing, recycling facilities, refuse collection and storage*
- 11. Incorporating inclusive design within all spaces with support for tackling inequality and poverty to form part of creating sustainable places*
- 12. Legible, being easy to understand and navigate, with the protection and enhancement of key views and new development well-integrated into the place.*
- 13. Easy to move around for those of all mobility levels, particularly by walking and cycling, with enjoyable routes free from obstacles and disorienting stimuli, and with places to rest*
- 14. Well-connected to other places, particularly by public transport and digital infrastructure enabling everyone to take advantage of the employment, cultural and leisure opportunities across Greater Manchester and beyond*
- 15. Comfortable and inviting, with indoor and outdoor environments:*

- A. Offering a high level of amenity that minimises exposure to pollution; and
 - B. Addressing microclimate issues such as sunlight, indoor air quality, overheating, shade, wind and shelter
16. Incorporating high quality and well managed green infrastructure and quality public realm, with:
- A. Opportunities for recreation and outdoor play for children, and interaction between the generations;
 - B. Public and private spaces clearly distinguished;
 - C. Development clearly defining, and promoting activity within, public spaces;
 - D. High quality landscaping with schemes
17. Well-served by local shops, services and amenities, including education and health facilities.”

“JP-P6: To help tackle health inequality new development will be required, as far as practicable, to:

- A. Maximise its positive contribution to health and wellbeing, whilst avoiding any potential negative impacts of new development;
- B. Support healthy lifestyles, including through the use of active design principles making physical activity an easy, practical and attractive choice; and
- C. Be supported by a Health Impact Assessment for all developments which require to be screened for an Environmental Impact Assessment, and other proposals which, due to their location, nature or proximity to sensitive receptors, are likely to have a notable impact on health and wellbeing.

Improvements in health facilities will be supported, responding to the changing needs and demands of both existing and new residents, including through:

1. Requiring, where appropriate, the provision of new or improved health facilities as part of new developments proportionate to the additional demand that they would generate;
2. Enabling the continued enhancement and successful operation of our hospitals; and
3. Facilitating greater integration of health and social care, and the provision of integrated wellness hubs, including the co-location of health, community and wellness services”

5.5 **Comment:** The development subject of this application seeks to secure the effective and efficient use of an existing building within an area deemed compatible with residential uses. The scheme will deliver much needed additional children’s care facilities in a highly sustainable location. The proposal will not result in the loss of former family housing, and will importantly help to reduce education, health and care inequality, by supporting children and young people in need of care to thrive and be successful.

- 5.6 The proposed scheme given the proposed scale and layout is not felt to result in harm to the amenities of neighbouring properties, and no greater impact on the wider local environment, street scene and wider local centre than the existing arrangement. The site is well located for access to public transport connections, and whilst there is limited on site car parking provision, there is sufficient parking spaces on site and in the wider local area to service the needs of the development. The scheme also secures on site provision of cycle parking and a facility use electric vehicle to service the needs of the development. The scheme is therefore deemed to be acceptable in highway terms.
- 5.7 In our view, the site is deemed to be suitable and appropriate for the scale and form of development proposed, and meets the policy tests laid out within the Greater Manchester plan. The proposal is therefore observed to be consistent with the provisions and principles of the regional 'Places for Everyone' Plan.

Manchester Core Strategy (2012)

- Policy SP1 – Spatial Principles;
 - Policy CC5 – Transport;
 - Policy CC10 – A Place for Everyone;
 - Policy H4 – East Manchester;
 - Policy H10 – Housing for People with Additional Support Needs;
 - Policy T1 – Sustainable Transport
- 5.8 Of the policies listed above specific attention is drawn to the provisions of Policies SP1 and H10, which are noted to read as follows:

"Policy SP1: The key spatial principles which will guide the strategic development of Manchester to 2027 are:

The Regional Centre will be the focus for economic and commercial development, retail, leisure and cultural activity, alongside high quality city living.

The growth of Manchester Airport will act as a catalyst for the regional economy, and will also provide the impetus for a second hub of economic activity in this part of the City.

Beyond these areas, the emphasis is on the creation of neighbourhoods of choice, providing high quality and diverse housing around district centres which meet local needs, all in a distinct environment. The majority of new residential development in these neighbourhoods will be in the Inner Areas, defined by the North Manchester, East Manchester and Central Manchester Regeneration Areas.

The City is covered by regeneration areas including the City Centre. All development should have regard to the character, issues and strategy for each regeneration area as described in the North, East, Central and South Manchester and Wythenshawe Strategic Regeneration Frameworks and the Manchester City Centre Strategic Plan. The City's network of open spaces will provide all residents with good access to recreation opportunities. The River Valleys (the Irk, Medlock and Mersey) and City Parks are particularly important, and access to these resources will be improved.

New development will maximise the potential of the City's transport infrastructure, in particular promoting walking, cycling and use of the public transport. The extension to the Metrolink network through the Oldham and Ashton lines will create key corridors for new development.

Core Development Principles

Development in all parts of the City should:-

Make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice including:-

- *creating well designed places that enhance or create character.*
- *making a positive contribution to the health, safety and wellbeing of residents considering the needs of all members of the community regardless of age, gender, disability, sexuality, religion, culture, ethnicity or income.*
- *protect and enhance the built and natural environment.*
- *Minimise emissions, ensure efficient use of natural resources and reuse previously developed land wherever possible.*
- *Improve access to jobs, services, education and open space by being located to reduce the need to travel and provide good access to sustainable transport provision."*

"Policy H10: Proposals for accommodation for people with additional support needs will be supported where:-

- *There is not a high concentration of similar uses in the area already.*
- *Where it will contribute to the vitality and viability of the neighbourhood.*
- *Where there would not be a disproportionate stress on local infrastructure such as health facilities."*

- 5.9 **Comment:** The adopted Core Strategy would appear to set out clear support for care facilities such as that proposed, where a need can be justified and where the amenities of the local area can be retained. In our view the scheme will not lead to a concentration of similar uses within the local area, will secure the viable, effective and efficient use of a longstanding and under used building in a suitable and sustainable location.
- 5.10 The scheme delivers much needed care facilities for children in need, with the application also understood to be supported by the Council's own Social Services team. The development has been shown to promote and support sustainable principles, including, through action on reducing traffic and parking demands, promotion of recycling, and being more self-sustaining in relation to on-site fruit and vegetable growing.
- 5.11 The scheme has been shown to be managed by an established and well respected care provider who can show a proven track record of supporting children and managing education and care facilities. The accommodation to be provided is of a high standard, and will not materially harm the character of the area. Furthermore, given the location of the application site and the character of the wider local area and associated mix of uses, it is our view that the scheme, if approved, would not result in any harm on the character of the area. In fact, one could argue that the scheme would represent an enhancement in that regard, given that it secures the reuse of a longstanding vacant property which if continued to be left, would no doubt create other amenity and visual harms in time.

- 5.12 It is therefore our view that the development as proposed is compliant with the provisions of the Development Plan.

Unitary Development Plan (1995)

- 5.13 Much of the previously adopted Unitary Development Plan has now been replaced by either the Core Strategy or the Greater Manchester Places for Everyone. There are however understood to be a limited number of saved UDP policies forming part of the statutory Development Plan. Of the policies listed on the Council website as remaining in force, specific attention is drawn to the provisions of Policy 2 which deals with Class 2 care homes. The policy is understood to read as follows:

“DC2.1 In determining planning applications for rest homes, nursing homes and other uses within Class C2 of the Use Classes Order, the Council will have regard to:

- a. the effect of the operation of the business on the amenity of neighbouring residents;*
- b. the standard of accommodation for the intended occupiers of the premises, including the availability of private outdoor amenity space;*
- c. the effect of the proposals on visual amenity;*
- d. the availability of adequate, safe and convenient arrangements for car parking and servicing;*
- e. the ease of access for all, including disabled people;*
- f. the desirability of avoiding an over-concentration of special needs or housing in any one area of the City; and*
- g. the desirability of broadly maintaining the existing character of a residential street or group of adjoining streets.*

DC2a.1 Planning permission will be refused when it cannot be demonstrated that development proposals will contribute to the achievement of the following objectives for the City's local communities:

- (i) to ensure a more even spread of "special needs" accommodation within local areas and across the City as a whole, in order to encourage provision closer to where needs arise and avoid the need for people to move from their local community to find the accommodation they require;*
- (ii) to ensure the protection of the residential character and amenity of family housing within established communities;*
- (iii) to avoid the unnecessary loss of the bigger dwelling houses available for larger and extended families;*
- (iv) to help local communities accommodate a range of special needs without the risk of social stress;*
- (v) to avoid stigmatising a particular neighbourhood or a particular type of accommodation.;*

(vi) to create and retain a positive perception of all areas of the City as a contribution towards the goal of maintaining stable and self-sustaining communities;

(vii) to attempt to sustain the vitality and viability of local economies, by encouraging a wide diversity of social groups to live within all parts of the City;

(viii) to avoid creating disproportionate stress on local services, such as health and education;

and

(ix) to avoid additional pressure on primary and secondary health care provision in parts of the City where there are already identified concerns about adequacy of services.”

5.14 **Comment:** The scheme will deliver a high quality of accommodation for the proposed residents and staff, and to a standard which will help to protect the amenities of neighbouring properties. There are no proposed external alterations and therefore no harm to visual amenity, and the scheme can deliver the provision of two off street car parking spaces to service the needs of the development; alongside on site cycle parking and good access to public transport connections.

5.15 Whilst we are aware of other care facilities in the local area, this additional facility is not in our view deemed to result in an over concentration or proliferation of comparable uses in the local area. The Council’s Social Services Team are noted to have confirmed a need for the development, and are therefore understood to be supportive of the application. The children housed within the facility will access their educational needs either on site (if appropriate and in their best interests) or will be educated within one of the Applicant’s own special educational needs facilities, and the proposal will not therefore result in any additional pressures on local education establishments.

Other Relevant Policy Documents

5.16 In addition to the adopted planning policies referred to above, there are noted to be a number of adopted Supplementary Planning Documents in Manchester. These documents include the Guide to Development in Manchester, and an advice note on Special Needs and Supported Housing, approved in 1998.

5.17 The SPG defines that:

“People with special needs may include the single homeless, the elderly, those with mental health problems, women who have experienced domestic violence, people with a long term debilitating illness, people who suffer drug or alcohol addiction, young people with specific support needs, and travellers and people with learning or sensory disabilities.”

5.18 The SPG goes on to confirm that:

“The Council welcomes the development of appropriately designed accommodation which enables people with special needs to maintain an independent lifestyle, and supports the work of housing associations and other agencies in this respect. However, the Council wishes to maintain an appropriate balance between different kinds of residential uses within local area and will seek to use its powers as local planning authority to assist in achieving the corporate objective of ensuring that the various communities which go to make up the City remain, or become more, sustainable in economic and social terms.”

- 5.19 The SPG appears to seek to secure a more even spread of care type developments across the authority area, to protect residential amenity and to prevent the loss and change of use of family homes. We understand that the scheme subject of this application can be seen to meet these tests and is therefore deemed to be acceptable as a matter of principle.
- 5.20 The scheme is not felt to contradict or undermine the provisions of the other supplementary planning documents, and is therefore considered to be compliant with the provisions of the Development Plan when read as a whole.

Development Plan Summary

- 5.21 For the reasons set out above, it is our view that the development subject of this application represents an acceptable and appropriate form of development given it relates to the conversion of an existing structurally sound building in a suitable and sustainable location. The scheme will secure the effective and efficient use of an existing building, and will secure the delivery of much needed high quality care accommodation for children in need. The nature and scale of use will also be commensurate with the wider local area, and will not result in an over concentration of care uses, nor result in harm on traffic and parking.
- 5.22 The proposed use of the application site is therefore deemed to be compliant with the provisions of the Development Plan, and there is therefore a legitimate expectation that the Council will be supportive of the scheme as a matter of principle.

6.0 Other Material Considerations

6.1 Section 70(2) of the 1990 Act requires that the authority, in dealing with the application, shall have regard to the provisions of the Development Plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. It has been demonstrated above that the proposed development is in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Development Plan, including national and local plan policy. In addition to this, material considerations exist that weigh further in favour of the development, including:

- **Sustainable Development:** The scheme as submitted represents a sustainable form of development given it comprises of the effective and efficient use of an existing building to deliver accommodation and care to children in need. Furthermore, the proposals will secure a viable and suitable use in a property which has historically been vacant for a significant period of time and had started to fall into disrepair prior to works in 2021/2022. Given the site's planning history, the property has in effect continued to be vacant despite the works to invest in and enhance the property. The proposed design of the scheme has been developed to respect the character, form and use of materials of the existing building and to ensure the protection of the privacy and amenity of the proposed residents, neighbouring residents and the visual amenities of the street scene.
- **Character of the Area:** The application site given its position on a main thoroughfare into Manchester City Centre is located within an area characterised by a mix of commercial and residential uses. The development is therefore deemed to be consistent with the use and character of the locale, and will not harm the amenities or character of the local area.
- **Social Benefit:** The site will deliver much needed additional high quality living accommodation, care and support to young people in need in a suitable and sustainable location. The scheme will enhance social interaction and social integration through links with the local community, and will provide accommodation and employment to additional residents and staff who can further support existing social and community uses and organisations in the wider local area.
- **Family Housing:** The policy framework is supportive of care uses on sites that will not result in the loss of family homes, will not result in a proliferation of care uses in a local area, and can be seen to be meeting an identified need. In this instance, it is clear that this property was not in use as a single family home prior to conversion works taking place on site previously, nor is the site in use as family housing currently. The fact that there is therefore no loss of family housing is, in our view, material to the determination of this application. The fact that the site has been shown to have been in a former communal living use, also weighs heavily in favour of approval of this application.

- 6.2 As such, whilst we remain of the view that the development proposed is compliant with the policies, provisions and principles of the Development Plan when read as a whole, there are also a number of clear material benefits to the development which weigh heavily in favour of the grant of consent, and which cumulatively justify approval of this application. There is therefore a legitimate expectation that consent will be granted for this application.



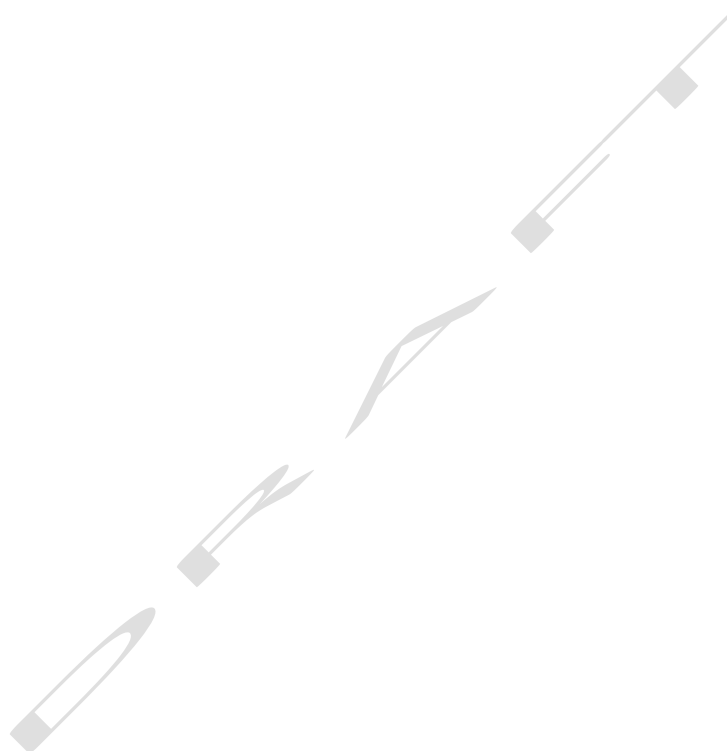
7.0 Operational Statement

First Steps Together

- 7.1 The Applicants, First Steps Together, are a well-established and well respected provider of education to children and young people and are now moving into care. The organisation seeks to build confident and resilient individuals with life long skills, and to deliver the highest standards of support and care for those children in need.
- 7.2 The facility proposed at 1520 Ashton Old Road will provide care and support to up to 6 children aged 11+ at any one time. As per their company ethos, each child will be treated and cared for as an individual, and will have a bespoke care plan to address their personal, social, care and emotional needs. The proposal, whilst being a Class C2 care facility, will in reality offer the children a homely environment with private bedroom and ensuite bathroom facilities, their own kitchenette to seek to promote independence (when age appropriate), and on site staff and communal facilities including kitchen, lounge, therapy spaces etc available 24 hours a day.
- 7.3 The application site benefits from a large rear garden area for outdoor amenity, and within which the applicant is installing a vegetable garden, with the staff on site responsible for assisting the young people to grow their own fruit and vegetables, which they will then use together to cook meals.
- 7.4 The facility will employ in the order 12 members of staff. The staff will work on fixed rota patterns to offer round the clock care and support. Staff change overs will generally take place at 4pm and 11pm in order to minimise disruption in the local area.
- 7.5 There will be in the order of 6 staff on site at any one time, with 3 during evening hours, with space on site for staff to work either a sleeping or non-sleeping shift as required (there will of course always be at least one member of staff on an awake overnight shift). In order to seek to support the wider community, the Applicant will be focusing on employing local staff, with all staff encouraged and supported to car share and utilise the local public transport network as appropriate, to limit the need for parking. The facility will also include space for cycle parking on the site frontage (see proposed site plan) to further support staff accessing their place of work by alternative modes of travel. To further limit traffic impact, the care home will purchase and operate a hybrid or electric family sized car to take residents to and from school and appointments as necessary.
- 7.6 Any staff meetings will be held off site at the Applicants Head Offices, and any additional meetings or visits from families and third parties will be encouraged to take place virtually or at the Applicants offices (where appropriate), to further assist in reducing traffic and parking demands associated with the development.
- 7.7 With regards to refuse collection, the Applicant can confirm that space has been made available on the site frontage for bin storage as shown on the proposed site layout plan. The Applicant proposes to simply use normal household refuse bins, with a focus on promoting and teaching recycling and composting, as well as educating residents to consider packaging

when they are assisting staff on shopping trips to further limit the waste generated by the development. The Applicants will also be taking out a contract with a reputable local refuse company and will manage and address collections as required.

- 7.8 The Applicants will work with the relevant authorities to deliver care, support, and other specialist services which, whilst offering the best value, will ensure the best possible outcomes for each young person. The Applicant has already begun this process by engaging with the Council Social Service department in advance of submission of this application, to discuss the scope of the development, to assist in meeting identified care needs for children within Manchester, and to secure the relevant support from the commissioning staff at the Council in advance of the submission.



8.0 Conclusions

- 8.1 It has been demonstrated throughout this submission that the development subject of this application accords with the relevant statutory duties and the Development Plan when read as a whole. The proposed development is acceptable in principle, by virtue of the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Manchester Development Plan. Furthermore, there are other material considerations which further weigh in favour of the grant of consent, and these have been dealt with in detail above.
- 8.2 Section 70(2) of the Planning Act 1990 and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that where an application accords with the relevant Development Plan and material considerations are in favour, applications should be determined positively. As such, based on the above principles, we would therefore kindly request that the Council seek to support this proposal in principle, and to work with us on a positive determination.
- 8.3 Should you require any further information in advance of validation of the application, or during the assessment process, please do not hesitate to contact us.