

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Partial demolition of vacant commercial buildings and replacement with 2 single storey, 1 bedroom studios

Land to the rear of 12 / 12A Standish Road, Fallowfield M14 6NP



Prepared by

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Introduction

- 1.1. This statement provides the supporting information to justify the application for full planning permission for the partial demolition of vacant commercial buildings and replacement with 2 single storey 1 bedroom residential studios.
- 1.2. The proposal is considered to be an appropriate brown field development within a highly sustainable urban location which will secure an efficient use of an otherwise vacant building. The small dwellings are designed as a response to the site and surroundings, the previous planning history and the current and emerging planning policies.
- 1.3. The dwellings will be a sustainable windfall addition to the housing stock, contributing to the Council's housing land supply at a time of acute national shortage and an identified need for a step change change in housing provision.

2. Site and Surroundings

- 2.1. The site measures approximately 31m x 19m and is enclosed by brick walls comprising the remains of a substantial commercial building located to the rear of 12 and 12A Standish Road, which are occupied as two HMOs. The HMOs are split horizontally with the upper property accessed off a staircase along the rear of the building, connecting to the side passageway.
- 2.2. The site is bounded on two sides by pedestrian alleyways linking Ladybarn Road to the south with Carill Drive to the north and returning to Standish Road, from where the pedestrian access to the site and the HMOs is gained.
- 2.3. The application site building was previously used as a workshop, but is presently vacant and the roof has been removed for safety reasons.
- 2.4. To the west of the site, beyond the passageway is a terrace of commercial premises fronting Wilmslow Road. To the south is an attached electricity sub-station beyond which is a Sainsbury Superstore. The site is located within the Fallowfield District Centre and the surrounding area is characterised by a mixture of commercial and residential properties. Images of the site and surroundings are provided at Appendix A.

2.5. The site has been the subject of anti-social behaviour as explained in the following comment by the applicant:

“Whilst every effort has been made to secure the workshop site there has been multiple occasions over the past 5 years where we’ve found access has been gained by homeless people using it for shelter and drug use. Each time we have intervened the matter has been resolved quickly and without further trouble with the squatters moving on without resistance. Further security measures were taken to prevent future access but unfortunately on occasion access has been gained regardless. Drug paraphernalia has had to be cleared from the site several times. This has understandably caused concern for tenants of the occupied HMOs which we have responded promptly with actions to prevent further access being gained and clearing up of the site. There has also been sporadic issues with various vermin / pests including rats who have also found the site tempting. The site has been cleared of rubbish and debris multiple times and pest control measures implemented to remove the issue, but as with any such site until fully cleared or redeveloped these issues are at risk of returning at any point.”

3. Relevant Planning History

3.1. The following applications are of relevance.

- An application for the erection of 3no. three-storey, four bed terraced dwellinghouses (ref:108564/FO/2015/S1) was approved in 2015. The application related to the comprehensive redevelopment of the site of 12 and 12A Standish Road as well as the site of the workshop behind (current application site)|
- An application for prior approval (ref:125614/P3PAP/2019) for the conversion from B1 to three C3 dwellings at the site, was refused in 2020 on the grounds that the LPA was not satisfied that the evidence demonstrated that the building was used solely for light industrial (Class B1(c)) purposes on the 19 March 2014 or when last in use.
- A planning application (ref:129558/FO/2021) for the demolition of workshop building and erection of 2 x 2 bed houses|was withdrawn in 2021.
- A pre-application enquiry for the proposed demolition of the building and replacement with two houses was submitted in September 2020 and a response setting out concerns in relation to the proposed scheme was received by email dated 14 May 2021. The areas of concern included the scale and design of the development which was considered to be out of character with the surrounding area, the relationship with adjoining properties due to its backland location and that the development would involve

unacceptable intensification of the site. The scheme now proposed is significantly reduced in scale and intensity in order to address these issues.

4. Relevant Planning Policies

4.1. The following are the main planning policies which provide the context for consideration of the application.

4.2. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2023

4.2.1. The NPPF (which is currently under review) sets out the Government's over-arching planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied and is therefore a material consideration. It reaffirms the legal principle that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

4.2.2. The NPPF sets out the approach to decision taking at paragraph 11:

*For **decision-taking** this means:*

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

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

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

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

**This includes, for applications involving the provision of housing, situations where: (a) the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply (or a four year supply, if applicable, as set out in paragraph 226) of deliverable housing sites (with a buffer, if applicable, as set out in paragraph 77) and does not benefit from the provisions of paragraph 76; or (b) where the Housing*

Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was below 75% of the housing requirement over the previous three years.

4.2.3. Section 11 deals with **Making Effective Use of Land** and paragraph 124 states that:

Planning policies and decisions should:

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....

NB. The recently elected Labour Government has announced its intention to revise the NPPF with the intention to dramatically boost housing provision, which will have significant implications for Manchester's housing land requirements.

4.3. Manchester's Local Plan

4.3.1. The planning framework for Manchester comprises a number of documents which are explained below.

4.3.2. The Manchester Local Plan guides development within Manchester and includes the following relevant documents:

- **Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan for Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan 2022 to 2039** which was adopted in 2024.
- **Core Strategy adopted 2012** which is read alongside the **Addendum to the Manchester Core Strategy 2024**.
- **Extant (remaining) Unitary Development Plan** policies adopted 1995, many of which were replaced by the Core Strategy.
- In addition, to development plan documents there are supplementary planning documents. These provide further detail on the policies in development plan documents. The relevant supplementary planning document (SPD) is the **Guide to Development in Manchester SPD**.

4.3.3. The relevance of these documents to this application is explained below.

**4.3.4. Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan 2022 to 2039
Adopted with effect from 21 March 2024**

4.3.5. The Places for Everyone Plan is the strategic spatial plan for Manchester and 8 other districts of Greater Manchester, which sets out the planning policy framework and provides "strategic policies". More detailed policies are being developed by the City, through the Local Plan. Being the most up-to-date policy document, this represents the primary consideration in assessing the application.

4.3.6. The plan incorporates at its heart a **Brownfield Preference** for development and explains this at paragraph 1.41, as follows:

1.41 Districts have looked to maximise the contribution of brownfield land by applying higher densities in the most accessible locations, reviewing the employment land supply and seeking to identify more opportunities in our town centres. By working together the nine districts have been able to maximise the supply of the brownfield land at the core of the conurbation and limit the need extent of Green Belt release.

1.42 The majority of development between 2022 and 2039 (the "plan period") will be on land within the urban area, most of which is brownfield land. Within the plan period around 90% of housing, 98% of offices and 51% of industrial and warehousing development is within the urban area.

1.43 National planning policy does not support an explicit 'brownfield first' approach, as Local Authorities are required to be able to provide a 5 year supply of housing sites which are available and deliverable. If we cannot demonstrate that our brownfield land is available, then we are required to identify other land which may be Protected Open Land or Green Belt. We are however adopting a 'brownfield preference' policy – we will do all that we can to make sure that our brownfield sites come forward in the early part of the plan period however to do this we need to continue to press Government for support to remediate contaminated land, to provide funding for infrastructure and to support alternative models of housing delivery.

1.45 Our Strategic Viability Study identifies challenges with a significant proportion of our land supply and this is acknowledged within the plan by the provision of a land supply 'buffer'. The Brownfield Land Fund is targeted at Combined Authorities and begins to help to address viability issues across the conurbation, but it is not enough. We continue to work

with Government to enable the full potential of our brownfield land supply to be realised.

1.46 The plan supports the continuing renewal of our town centres, with an increase in the supply of land identified for housing. Our strategic approach to town centres is complemented by initiatives co-ordinated by the GMCA. Government has also recognised the need to strengthen the role of town centres and several of our towns have been successful in accessing funding through the Future High Street Fund and Towns Fund.

4.3.7. The plan sets out the following issues and approach to Inner Area Regeneration:

4.39 The inner areas of the city region, surrounding the City Centre and the Quays, benefit from a position adjacent to an enormous concentration of economic activity. However, despite this proximity, these inner areas are characterised by high levels of deprivation, with extensive parts being amongst the 10% most deprived neighbourhoods in the country.

4.40 The challenges faced by the inner areas are quite different to most other deprived areas in Greater Manchester. Over the last 15 years, the 22 wards¹⁴ at the heart of the inner area have collectively seen an increase in population of 38% compared to growth of 11% across the rest of the city region, and these wards have been the primary focus for international migration into Greater Manchester. The age profile of this population change has also been distinctive, with increases of 36% in 0-17 year olds, 42% in 18-29 year olds and 37% for 30-44 year olds, compared to figures of 3%, 15% and -7% respectively for the rest of Greater Manchester. In contrast, the area saw a reduction in residents aged 65 and over, whereas the rest of the city region had an increase of more than one-fifth.

4.41 The high growth in population has led to significant development pressures, not just in terms of new build developments but also more intensified use of existing properties such as conversions to houses in multiple occupation (HMOs). The proposed scale of job growth in the Core Growth Area, and the excellent location of the inner areas in relation to them, make it likely that there will continue to be significant pressures from population growth within this part of Greater Manchester.

4.42 Increasing housing provision in the inner areas would enable more people to access easily the opportunities of the Core Growth Area by walking, cycling and public transport and thereby reducing the need to travel. Maintaining a good supply of affordable housing will be especially

important, helping to reduce travel costs for those on lower incomes who need access to the Core Growth Area for employment and services. Over the period 2022-2039, land to accommodate around 175,000 sqm of office, around 86,500 sqm of industry and warehousing and around 35,000 new dwellings has been identified within the inner areas.

4.43 The high levels of deprivation highlight the need for sustained neighbourhood regeneration, with investment in improving the quality of existing housing (including its energy efficiency and access to amenity space) as well as providing a good mix of new homes. Although there is a need for significant levels of development to meet demand and to maximise the use of brownfield land, it will be essential that the network of open spaces and other green infrastructure is improved, contributing to the long-term attractiveness of these neighbourhoods. Raising the quality of these places will depend on tackling issues such as traffic congestion and air quality, which are typically more severe than in many other parts of the city region. There are also quite significant areas of flood risk. Policy JP-Strat5: Inner Areas The continued regeneration of the inner areas will be promoted and will be linked to reducing levels of deprivation and poverty and supporting the improved health and wellbeing of the communities. High levels of new development will be accommodated in this highly accessible and sustainable location. New development will be, predominantly residential and will be integrated with existing communities, enhancing the quality of places and their local character. Infrastructure provision will facilitate the growth and continued capacity of the Inner Area, including high quality open spaces and improved access to the wider green infrastructure network.

- 4.3.8. The plan deals with **Places for Homes** at section 7 and the following extracts are of relevance, starting with **Housing Land Supply**:

7.8 There is a strong focus in this Plan on directing new housing towards previously-developed sites within the existing urban area. This will help to address existing dereliction and poorly used sites, as well as reducing the need to release greenfield and Green Belt land for development. Previously developed sites are often in relatively sustainable locations, close to facilities and served by existing infrastructure, and hence their reuse for housing can support wider objectives. Policy JP-H4 'Density of New Housing' will ensure that the most is made of such sites, particularly in more accessible locations, further reducing the need for additional land release.

7.9 A large number of previously-developed sites suitable for housing have been identified by districts in their Brownfield Registers, Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments and Local Plans.

A further source of housing land supply will be small sites, which are typically not identified comprehensively in brownfield registers and strategic housing land availability assessments. It has been assumed that the supply of new dwellings on small sites will continue at the same rate in each district as has been seen over the last five years.

7.12 Table 7.1 illustrates that, in numerical terms, the existing supply of potential housing sites identified in the districts' strategic housing land availability assessments and small sites is adequate to meet the overall identified need, and demonstrates that brownfield land will be the predominant source of land over the plan period. However, meeting the numerical needs alone, is not enough. We must be able to demonstrate that its land supply has sufficient flexibility within it to demonstrate that it represents a deliverable, viable and robust land supply and will deliver a balanced and inclusive growth, thereby achieving the overall spatial strategy. In light of this and the need to ensure the Green Belt boundary can endure beyond the plan period it has been necessary to identify additional new sites across the city-region, over and above those in the existing land supply. Having considered a number of spatial options, it has been concluded that in order to achieve this, it has been necessary to remove some land from the Green Belt and to allocate this land within this Plan for residential development.

4.3.9. The approach to the **Distribution of New Housing** is explained as follows:

7.14 The population of the PfE plan area is projected to increase in population by 165,600 (6.4%) from 2022 to 2039. The highest levels of population growth across Greater Manchester are projected to be in the two cities Manchester (34,000 increase in residents) and Salford (31,700).

7.15 ... Manchester and Salford will continue to be an appropriate location for the highest levels of new housing due to their central location, good public transport connections, proximity to the main concentrations of employment and leisure opportunities, and ability to deliver very high density developments.

4.3.10. On the **Type, Size and Design of New Housing** the plan includes the following:

7.26 Increasing the supply of affordable homes is an essential component of the overall strategy, but it will be important to ensure that a diverse mix of values and tenures of new housing comes forward so that all households can meet their needs and aspirations.

7.28 A key aim of this Plan is to boost the supply of well designed, adaptable new homes with appropriate access to private space. In some areas this will help to diversify local housing markets that are often dominated by low-cost housing, bring more money into local economies, and deliver more mixed and inclusive communities. It will also help to increase the options for skilled workers looking to move into or within our area.

7.30 A key part of the overall strategy is to maximise the amount of development on brownfield sites in the most accessible locations and minimise the loss of greenfield and Green Belt land as far as possible. In order to deliver the necessary densities, an increasing proportion of new dwellings will be in the form of apartments and town houses, continuing recent trends.

7.31 Smaller households are forecast to account for over half of the growth in households. It is anticipated that this will further strengthen the demand in apartments, particularly given cost pressures and the increased reliance on private rented accommodation.

4.3.11. The plan sets out the following policy for the **Type, Size and Design of New Housing Development:**

Policy JP-H3: Development across the plan area should seek to incorporate a range of dwelling types and sizes including for self-build and community led building projects to meet local needs and deliver more inclusive neighbourhoods. Where appropriate, this should include incorporating specialist housing for older households and vulnerable people. Residential developments should provide an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes reflecting local plan policies, and having regard to masterplans, guidance and relevant local evidence.

Housing provision to accommodate specific groups, such as students and travelling people, will be addressed through district local plans. All new dwellings must:

- 1. Comply with the nationally described space standards; and*
- 2. Be built to the 'accessible and adaptable' standard in Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations unless specific site conditions make this impracticable. Innovation in housing development will be supported where it is consistent with the principles of good design and contributes to local distinctiveness, including the use of modern methods of manufacturing that can help to improve the speed of delivery and increase building standards.*

4.3.12. and on **Housing Densities**:

7.34 Increasing the average density of new housing developments in the most accessible locations is an important part of our overall strategy, providing a number of benefits. It will reduce the amount of land that needs to be used for development, thereby assisting the protection of greenfield and Green Belt land. It will help to minimise the need to travel, enabling more people to live close to shops and services, and increasing the local population necessary to support local facilities and support regeneration. It will also maximise the number of people living in the most accessible places, helping to increase the proportion of trips made by walking, cycling and public transport, and reducing the demand for car-based travel. The approach to housing densities directly supports the objectives of the Mayor's Town Centre Challenge.

7.35 The following definitions and interpretation apply to Policy JP-H4:

- Where more than one density applies to the same part of the site, the highest density should be used.*
- Different densities may apply to different parts of a site. Distances should be measured from the boundary of the designated centre or GMAL area.⁷⁶*
- All distances are measured in a straight line. The designated centres are as defined in district local plans.*

4.3.13. **Policy JP-H4: Density of New Housing** states that:

development should be delivered at a density appropriate to the location, reflecting the relative accessibility of the site by walking, cycling and public transport and the need to achieve efficient use of land and high-quality design.

4.3.14. The policy requires that regard should be had to the minimum densities set out according to location. The thrust and detail of the Places for People Joint Development Plan set out above are very strongly supportive of this application.

4.3.15. The **Manchester Core Strategy** Development Plan Document dates from 2012 and forms part of the development plan and its policies

provide the basis for planning decisions in the City. However, Policies C H1 Overall Housing Provision and CS Policy H2 Strategic Housing Location have been in part superseded by PfE Policy JP-H4 (set out above)

4.3.16. The Core Strategy replaced a large number of policies in the Unitary Development Plan; however, some of the UDP policies remain extant until they are superseded by policies in a future Development Plan Document. The following is summary of the Core Strategy policies of relevance to this application.

4.3.17. **Policy SP1** - sets out the key spatial principles which will guide the strategic development of Manchester to 2027 and states that outside the City Centre and the Airport the emphasis is on the creation of neighbourhoods of choice. It also sets out the core development principles, including:

- creating well designed places,
- making a positive contribution to health, safety and well-being,
- considering the needs of all members of the community, and
- protecting and enhancing the built and natural environment.

4.3.18. **Policy H1 - Housing** – requires proposals for new residential development to contribute to creating mixed communities by providing house types to meet the needs of a diverse and growing population. The design and density of a scheme should contribute to the character of the local area and should include usable amenity space and be designed to give privacy to both residents and neighbours.

4.3.19. **Policy H6 – South Manchester** will accommodate around 5% of new residential development over the lifetime of the Core Strategy. High density development in South Manchester will generally only be appropriate within the district centres of Chorlton, Didsbury and Withington, as part of mixed use schemes.

4.3.20. **Policy T2 - Transport** - The Council will actively manage the pattern of development to ensure that new development is easily accessible by walking, cycling and public transport; connecting residents to jobs, centres, health, leisure, open space and education opportunities.

4.3.21. **Policy EN1 - Design Principles and Strategic Character**

Areas - Development in Manchester will be expected to have regard to the strategic character area in which the development is located.

Opportunities for good design should be fully realised, particularly on major radial routes. In the **Southern Character Area** there is a notable presence of older development (1750-1900) at key junctions and along historic radial routes such as Oxford Road/Wilmslow Road, often associated with District Centres. New development needs to retain the identity and focus of activity associated with the historic District Centres. Development should be commensurate in scale with the prominence of its location.

4.3.22. **Policy DM1 of the Core Strategy (Development**

Management) covers detailed issues and those relevant are considered below in the planning assessment.

4.3.23. The remaining **Unitary Development Plan** policies are as follows:

4.3.24. **Policy DC26, Development and Noise** states that the Council intends to use the development control process to reduce the impact of noise on people living and working in the City.

4.3.25. **Citywide Development Control Policies** of which DC 6. **HOUSING ON "BACKLAND" SITES** sets out the following criteria:

DC6.1 The Council will not normally grant consent for residential development on "backland" sites, that is, sites with limited access to a road because they are surrounded by housing or other uses.

DC6.2 Development will not be permitted unless:

- a. there is no loss of privacy to adjoining dwellings and associated rear gardens;
- b. access and parking arrangements do not significantly increase noise and disturbance for occupiers of existing adjoining dwellings;
- c. the scale and design of the development is compatible with the character of buildings in the surrounding area;

d. there is sufficient space between the proposed and existing dwellings to avoid problems of significant overshadowing or of over-dominant appearance affecting either the existing or the proposed dwellings;

e. the proposal does not involve the loss of important trees or other natural features of high amenity value or the loss of locally important wildlife habitats;

f. the proposed and existing dwellings retain adequate levels of private amenity space; and

g. in the case of development within a Conservation Area, in particular, the built form and the surrounding spaces maintain or enhance the character of the area.

4.3.26. The **Guide to Development in Manchester** promotes the following design attributes for new development:

- A high quality environment which reflects the purpose and place, designed having full regard to its context and the character of the area.
- The main face and pedestrian entrance to be adjacent to the main street, to contribute to its vitality and interest
- Buildings should relate well to each other. The scale, position and external appearance of new buildings should respect their setting and relationship to adjacent buildings, enhance the street scene and consider their impact on the roof line and skyline.

4.3.27. The above policies have been taken into account in the formulation of this application and the resulting issues and assessment are explained below.

5. Planning Considerations

5.1. Principle of Development

5.1.1. The proposed new dwellings meet the test of sustainable development as set out in the **NPPF** as follows:

Economic role – the dwellings will provide an economic benefit by sustaining local employment in construction, providing an efficient use of otherwise vacant land without having to provide new infrastructure.

Social role – the proposal will provide a high quality addition to the housing stock helping to meet a local demand for small dwellings, identified in the Places for Manchester Plan.

Environmental role – the houses will exceed the environmental standards set out in the Building Regulations and will reuse and regenerate a vacant brownfield site within the urban area for the most appropriate use. This will help to protect more important open land elsewhere. The site is located in a highly sustainable location with good transport links and adequate on-site cycle storage.

5.1.2. In accordance with the NPPF, the proposal represents the development of an under-utilised site which will help to meet an identified need for housing where land supply is constrained.

5.1.3. The **Manchester Local Plan** and in particular the up-to-date **Places for People Plan**, prioritise accessible locations for new high density residential development, particularly on brownfield sites. The application meets these policy requirements as it is highly accessible, being within the district centre, close to a wide range of shopping facilities, educational establishments and employment opportunities with very good public transport connections.

5.1.4. The provision of two windfall houses will therefore assist in the achievement of the council's strategic objective of providing for the needs of its growing population in a sustainable location.

5.1.5. The impending changes to the NPPF are likely to dramatically increase the housing land requirements in Manchester, which emphasises the need to make the best use of available land within the urban area and minimise the use of the green belt.

5.1.6. The site is a discrete planning unit, formed by its previous commercial use and is independent from the lawfully occupied HMOs at 12 and 12A Standish Road, the curtilages of which do not extend onto the application site.

5.1.7. As the two HMOs are fully occupied and viable, there is no realistic proposition of the application site being used either in connection with these properties, or alternatively to create a comprehensive redevelopment of the combined sites.

5.1.8. Given the context of the surrounding development, and particularly the presence of the adjacent HMOs, the only practical and realistic use of the site is for a residential purpose. As explained below, the development proposed meets all of the detailed policy requirements within the planning framework and will result in a substantial improvement to the outlook, security and amenity of the HMOs and provide a much needed new use for the site.

5.1.9. The principle of a residential development of this site is therefore fully in accord with the up-to-date Local Development Plan Strategy and supported by the imperative of the national need as identified by the current government.

5.2. Detailed Considerations

5.2.1. Quantum, Scale and Layout

5.2.1.1. Within the walled confines of the site, lies a developable area of approximately 19m x 13m. The proposed layout demonstrates that the site is capable of achieving two one-bedroom single-storey dwellings, with good levels of privacy, outlook and access to a landscaped private courtyard. The density of the development is

reflective of the need to maximise the use of sustainably located urban sites such as this.

5.2.1.2. The site does not strictly fall within the definition of a “backland” development, as it has direct access to a highway. However, the proposals do meet the criteria of UDP Policy DC 6. Housing on “Backland” sites.

5.2.1.3. The dwellings meet the National Minimum Housing Space Standards and provide good daylighting levels through roof lights and windows which face on to the private courtyard and the rear passageway.

5.2.1.4. Apart from the windows in the adjoining rear elevation of 12 and 12A Standish Road, the site is entirely screened from view of adjacent properties.

5.2.1.5. The development will be entirely separated from 12 and 12A Standish Road by the provision of a wall incorporating pleached tree planting to secure an attractive privacy screen between the two sites.

5.2.1.6. The height of the building is substantially reduced from that of the commercial building which partially remains, which greatly improves the outlook from the two adjacent HMOs.

5.2.1.7. The reduction in the height of the buildings behind the existing walls, ensures that they will be inconspicuous from outside the site and will therefore protect the prevailing character of development in the area.

5.2.2. Design and Appearance

5.2.2.1. The dwellings will each incorporate a single storey kitchen/living room, bedroom and shower, with access to an outdoor courtyard, for sitting, cycle storage and recycling containers.

5.2.2.2. The dwellings will retain existing external boundary walls and internally the new building walls will be of matching brickwork,

complemented by a new slate roof. The fenestration and glazing will be of simple contemporary design.

5.2.3. Access and Accessibility

5.2.3.1. The two dwellings will be accessed via a new door from the passageway off Standish Road, adjacent to a separate door serving the 12 and 12A Standish Road. Studio 1 will have a right of way across the courtyard and both studios will have provision within the site for recycling and cycle storage.

5.2.3.2. The passageway is a public pedestrian highway, of adequate width, which provides safe access to and from the site for pedestrians and cyclists.

5.2.3.3. Policy T2 of the Core Strategy seeks to ensure that new development is easily accessible by walking, cycling and public transport; connecting residents to jobs, centres, health, leisure, open space and education opportunities. It does not require the provision of car parking in connection with developments which achieve this, as is the case with this proposal, being in a highly accessible location.

5.2.4. Landscaping, Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain

5.2.4.1. The site is devoid of any significant vegetation, having been predominantly covered by a building. The site therefore meets the de minimis exemption with regard to Biodiversity Net Gain, as explained within the accompanying ecological scoping report.

5.2.4.2. The report confirms that the building is assessed as offering 'negligible' bat roosting potential. No other protected species are considered likely to be present at the site.

5.2.4.3. The design of the development incorporates both hard and soft landscaping to provide an attractive courtyard setting for the dwellings, in addition to a visual screen of pleached trees to separate the site from 12 and 12A Standish Road.

5.2.4.4. The proposals will therefore have no adverse impact on wildlife and the areas of new shrubbery will include suitable nectar sources for insects, as recommended by the ecologist.

5.2.5. Acoustics

5.2.5.1. The site is bounded by substantial walls on all sides, which affords it considerable protection from the only significant nearby source of noise, which is from traffic. In addition, the internal environment of the dwellings will be protected by the insulation of the building fabric.

5.2.6. Drainage and Services

5.2.6.1. All utility service connections are available in the adjacent highway to serve the development.

5.2.6.2. The site is connected to the main drainage system, which will be utilised for foul sewage. A surface water drainage strategy will be designed to manage the surface water drainage in accordance with the national prescribed hierarchy. This can be dealt with by condition of permission.

5.2.7. Flood Risk

5.2.7.1. The site is within the Environment Agency Flood Zone 1 and is not affected by surface water flooding so there is little probability of flooding affecting the development.

5.2.8. Contamination

5.2.8.1. Given the previous use of the site for commercial purposes, it will be necessary to undertake appropriate contamination surveys and deploy any resulting strategy to ensure that the site is safe for the intended development. This can be dealt with by appropriate conditions.

5.2.9. Security

5.2.9.1. The development of the site will address the current security issues, which the applicant has articulated, by bringing it back into beneficial use and providing permanent surveillance.

5.2.9.2. The proposals include the provision of high security entrance gates to the courtyard, with an audio visual entry system and CCTV cameras providing surveillance of the entrance area from the two studios.

6. Overall Conclusion

The proposal is a sustainable form of development which will provide two small studio dwellings on an otherwise unused brownfield site in a highly accessible location.

The development represents windfall housing at a time of acute housing shortage and is of a type with an identified need set out in the Places for People Plan. The proposal must also be considered in the light of the impending changes to the planning system with the aim of boosting housing supply.

The principle of a residential development on this site is not only acceptable within the context of the planning framework, but represents the only form of development which would provide a reasonable beneficial use, without causing adverse effects on the residential neighbours.

The development of this site will greatly improve the local environment and particularly that of the adjacent residents of 12 and 12A Standish Road.

The assessment of the layout and design demonstrates the acceptability against the detailed policy requirements. The proposal will provide two discrete and attractive studio dwellings in a secluded location with a high level of privacy. The development will appear inconspicuously within its setting and will have no material adverse impact on the amenity of the wider neighbourhood.

The development is entirely in accord with the principles and detail of the development framework and should be granted permission.

Appendix A – Images of the site and surroundings



12 and 12A Standish Road



Access passageway to the site



Rear passageway



Internal walls with 12 and 12A Standish Street behind



View site with the rear of property on Wilmslow Road behind



Walled boundary between the site and 12 and 12A Standish Street