



Chartered Town Planners & Architectural Technicians

DESIGN AND ACCESS / PLANNING STATEMENT

Outdoor covered seating area, and associated works.

Property Address: 310 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M14 6XQ.

August 2024

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Design and Access / Planning Statement is submitted on behalf of the applicant in respect of a planning application for an outdoor covered seating area to the front curtilage of the premises known as Nest, 310 Wilmslow Road. This Statement should be read in conjunction with other drawings and documents accompanying the planning application.

1.2 This Statement comprises:

- A description of the application property and surrounding area;
- A description of the proposed development;
- A summary of relevant planning history; and,
- An assessment of the proposed development against relevant planning policy.

2.0 APPLICATION PROPERTY AND SURROUNDING AREA

2.1 The existing premises is a two storey end of terrace / corner entertainment and hospitality venue. The premises has a large outdoor curtilage area.

2.2 Surrounding properties are of differing scale, form and appearance.

2.3 The site is located within a predominantly commercial character area. There is a wide variety of land uses nearby. There is a wide variety of building scale and architectural style in the surrounding area.

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 The proposed works comprise the erection of steel support posts on top of which would be a toughened glass roof. The covered structure would cover a portion (approx. half of the front curtilage area) which has long been used by customers in mostly fine weather conditions albeit without any permanent shelter. On occasions large moveable umbrellas were used but these present storage and safety issues. There existed previously for a short period of time a timber & polycarbonate covered structure but this was removed following planning enforcement proceedings.

3.2 The proposed structure has a high quality appearance to complement the existing building. Its purpose is to encourage greater use of the outdoor curtilage to the betterment of neighbouring street-life. The structure is to enable the business to function outside in all weather conditions (i.e. rain, wind, sun).

3.3 The proposed structure seeks to facilitate changing hospitality habits which includes increasing demand for outdoor spaces. To use outside space it is necessary for some degree of shelter from the elements.

It is requested that the Planning Authority take a pragmatic approach to continued genuine efforts by the applicant to facilitate greater use of outside space through a modest size covered structure. The structure will help safeguard existing employment, and hopefully lead to more employment.



Figure 1 – Current outdoor curtilage arrangement.



Figure 2 – Type of structure envisaged (image for illustrative purposes only).

4.0 PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 The applicant sought planning permission to retain a covered seating area (timber & polycarbonate structure) covering the whole of the front curtilage in 2022 – Ref. No. 132914/FO/2022. This was refused permission by the local authority and a subsequent appeal was dismissed (appeal Ref. No. APP/B4215/W/22/3299582). The Report of the Planning Inspectorate addresses a number of important points / findings relevant to this proposal:

*“However, due to its prominent corner plot alongside other forecourts that are largely free from built form, it reads as sizeable and dominant in the streetscene” – **In this revised application, the covered area has been reduced by approx. half that of the scheme dismissed in appeal. In addition, the covered structure is to be sited towards the south of the curtilage and away from the corner.***

*“While other shopfronts feature wooden elements, the covered seating area is the first example of a timber structure of this scale and nature along the front elevation. Combined with the polycarbonate roof, a material that is not common within the setting, the design overall fails to harmonise with the host property or the surrounding development, appearing incongruous” - **In this revised application, the structure is to be made of steel posts and have a toughened glass roof. These materials are considered more sympathetic to the host property. As noted the covered area has been reduced by approx. half that of the scheme dismissed in appeal.***

“In this context, noise generated by the proposal would not appear out of place. It would not be experienced in isolation so as to result in undue levels of disturbance to nearby occupiers but would assimilate with the noise generated by surrounding uses, including late into the evenings. The appellant is also agreeable to a condition restricting the use of amplified music, which would further limit the noise impacts and ensure the proposal does not result in undue disturbance above that to be expected in such mixed surrounds.

*“For the reasons given I find that, subject to the imposition of the conditions referred to above, the development would not have a significant adverse effect on the living conditions of surrounding residents, with particular regard to noise and disturbance” – **The Planning Inspectorate definitively concluded that there would be no adverse impacts to neighbours arising from use of the outdoor curtilage. Notwithstanding we emphasise that the front curtilage is used extensively at present, and that the covered area has been reduced by approx. half that of the scheme dismissed on appeal.***

*“The covered seating area allows the appellant to maximise outdoor space, enabling the business to function in all weathers. I am also mindful of the changing nature of high streets and the opportunity for these to become social hubs, in addition to the changes to hospitality because of the COVID-19 pandemic, which the proposal seeks to address. This weighs in favour of the proposal. However, I consider that the same benefits could be addressed in an alternative manner that would not result in such harm to the character and appearance of the surrounds” – **The Planning Inspectorate acknowledged the changing nature of high streets and the opportunity for these to become social hubs, in addition to the changes to hospitality. The Planning Inspectorate explicitly stated that an alternative option could address concerns and this is exactly what this application sets out to do.***

5.0 PLANNING POLICY

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (2023)

5.1 Para. 135 of the NPPF seeks to ensure a high quality of design in new developments. Point c) in particular seeks to ensure developments that:

“are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.”

The proposed development is a modest high quality solution to achieving more efficient use of an outdoor area.

Manchester Core Strategy (2012) and UDP Saved Policies (2017)

5.2 As per the Manchester Proposals Map, the site is within the Fallowfield District Centre. Policy C2 of the Core Strategy is of relevance. It states that:

“Development will support thriving district centres, with distinct local character, providing a good range of accessible key services, including retail, health facilities, public services, leisure activities and financial and legal services

“Development in District Centres should:

Prioritise delivery of key 'visitor' services, including retail, public and commercial services and food and drink. The Council will ensure... that provision is made in District Centres for commercial and service uses, leisure and community facilities and other uses which make a positive contribution to vitality and viability of centres”.

5.3 Policy C6 deals specifically with the Fallowfield district centre and it is stated ‘*In Fallowfield and Withington development which creates more diverse centres will be supported*’

The proposed structure very much aligns with the above Core Strategy policies in that it will enable enhanced and flexible use of a hospitality premises. The premises has a long established use and is in the vicinity of other food / drink businesses. The area has an established commercial character, much of it derived from food / drink businesses, and in this context the proposed structure would not at all look out of place.

5.4 Policy CC9 (Design and Heritage) states that design of new buildings will need to be of the highest standard in terms of appearance and unction.

The proposed structure is a modest addition that does not fundamentally alter the scale and proportions or visual impact of the overall premises. It would be seen in the context of much larger built-form nearby. The structure provides for side openings thereby maintaining an active frontage and views to / from the premises. The structure will add visual interest to the streetscene and bring activity to the front curtilage area which will also enliven the streetscene. We note the premises is not in a conservation area and there are no listed buildings nearby. No. 306 Wilmslow Road on the opposite side of Wynnstay Grove is a very large scale more recent addition to the area.

5.5 Section 26 of the UDP deals with development and noise. It is not considered the proposed structure would be contrary to any UDP policies. The front curtilage has long been used as part of the business for use by customers. If anything the structure is likely to better contain any slight noise that might exist through normal day to day use of the front curtilage. The applicant is amenable to conditions regarding use of amplified music and noise levels when the structure is in use. The Planning

Inspectorate definitively concluded in appeal Ref. APP/B4215/W/22/3299582 that there would be no adverse impacts to neighbours arising from use of the outdoor curtilage at this premises.

6.0 PRECEDENT

6.1 There is much precedent for structures of the nature proposed in the wider area including but not limited to the following:

- Folk: 169-171 Burton Rd, West Didsbury, Manchester M20 2LN.
- Brewski: 537-539 Wilbraham Rd, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester M21 0UE.
- Laundrette: Chorlton, 32 Beech Road, m21 9el Manchester.
- 256 Fallowfield: 256 Wilmslow Rd, Fallowfield, Manchester M14 6LB.
- Volta Didsbury: 167 Burton Rd, West Didsbury, Manchester M20 2LN.
- Various bars: Barlow Moore Road, Chorlton.

(Refer to Figures 3-6 below)





Figure 3 – Outdoor covered structures in wider vicinity of premises.



Figure 4: Outdoor eating/drinking area to Abduls at 324-326 Wilmslow Road.



Figure 5: Outdoor eating/drinking area to Mc Donalds at 336 Wilmslow Road.



Figure 6: Outdoor eating/drinking area to The Friendship Inn at 353 Wilmslow Road.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 The proposed development is considered to be in compliance with policies / guidance set out in the Manchester Core Strategy and UDP.

7.2 The works are modest additions/alterations to the existing premises. It is not considered there would be any adverse visual impacts or adverse impacts to the residential amenities of neighbouring properties. Canopies / shelter structures are a necessary feature of hospitality premises with external curtilage space.

7.3 The works are necessary to adapt the existing business and help it to grow by facilitating external eating and dining. It is hoped more employment can be created and that there will be a spin-off for neighbouring businesses. The works are also sought as a result of Covid 19 which has, and will continue to, significantly reduce the amount of persons that can be catered for internally at any one time. It is thus vital that more efficient and intensive use is made of outdoor spaces and this necessitates a degree of shelter from the elements (i.e. shelter from sun, rain and wind).

7.4 The appellant is amenable to conditions addressing such matters as hours of noise, and restricting use of amplified music.

7.5 It is considered the current scheme comprehensively addresses the issue of concern in appeal Ref. APP/B4215/W/22/3299582. The steel and glass structure, on approx. half of the curtilage, is sympathetic to the host property.