

## Planning

## Growth & Development

### Delegated officer report for planning application

**Application no.** 139615/LE/2024  
**Date registered valid:** 9 April 2024  
**Proposal:** Use of property as a small House in Multiple Occupation (Class C4)  
**Address:** 58 Ashford Road, Manchester, M20 3EH  
**Ward(s):** Old Moat Ward

**Applicant:** Mr Ben Thorns  
**Agent (if any):** Farhan Rama Archirama Ltd  
**Case officer:** Robert Tyrer  
Tel: 0161 234 4068  
Email: robert.tyrer@manchester.gov.uk

**Recommendation:** Grant  
**Date of recommendation:** 3 June 2024

## **Application details**

**Type of application:** Certificate Lawful Development Existing

**Development type:** Certificates of lawfulness

**Date of site visit:** Not Required

### **Standard consultations:**

No consultations have been printed and sent.

### **Neighbour notifications**

Printed: 10 April 2024      Expired: 1 May 2024

### **Site notice**

No site notice has been produced

### **Press advert**

No press advert had been published

**Departure from Development Plan:** No

**Environmental Statement:** Not required

## **Description of site/building**

The application relates to a semi-detached two storey dwellinghouse, the property has a small enclosed front garden with a driveway and a rear garden which contains a large single storey rear extension.

**Listed building:** Not applicable

**Conservation area:** Not applicable

**Tree Preservation Order:** Not applicable

## **Description of area**

Application site is located within a predominantly residential area, close to Withington District Centre.

## **Description of development**

The certificate of lawful existing use or development (CLEUD) that is the subject of this application relates to the use of the property as a small House in Multiple Occupation (Class C4)

## **Consultations & Notification Responses**

**Publicity** – Notification letters were sent to nearby residential properties (see appendix 1 for the list of properties).

**Local residents/public opinion** – No objections, comments or representations in support of the application have been received.

## **Planning History**

There has been one previous planning application at this address.

### **104029/PDE/2013/S1**

Erection of single-storey rear extension projecting 4.3 metres to rear, maximum eaves height of 2.7 metres and maximum ridge height of 4 metres.

## **Issues**

Sections 191 and 192 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provide for anyone (not just a person with a legal interest in the land) to apply to the local planning authority (LPA) for a lawful development certificate (LDC). A certificate is a statutory document certifying:

(1) in the case of an application under section 191, the lawfulness, for planning purposes, of existing operations on, or use of land, or some activity being carried out in breach of a planning condition; or

(2) in the case of an application under section 192, the lawfulness of proposed operations on, or use of land.

The onus of proof in regard to (1) is firmly on the applicant and the issue of a certificate will depend on the on factual evidence provided about the history and planning status of the building or other land and the interpretation of any relevant planning law or judicial authority. The relevant test of the evidence in this matter is “the balance of probability” and the applicants own evidence does not need to be corroborated by independent evidence. If the LPA have no evidence to contradict the applicants version of events or make them less than probable, there is no good reason to refuse the issue of a certificate.

In regard to (2), this provides that, if the LPA are supplied with information satisfying them that the use or operations described in the application would be lawful, if instituted or begun at the time of the application, they shall issue a certificate to that effect; and, in any other case, they shall refuse the application.

In short, the purpose section 192 is to enable any person who wishes to find out whether any proposed use or operations would be lawful to apply to the LPA for that purpose.

The application needs to describe the proposal with sufficient clarity and precision to enable the LPA to understand (from a written description and plans) exactly what is involved in the proposal; and to submit whatever supporting information or legal submission that are to be relied upon in order to satisfy the LPA that a certificate should be granted for the proposal.

In making their decision on an application under section 192, the LPA ask themselves the hypothetical question - "If this proposed change of use had already occurred, or if this proposed operation had commenced, on the application date, would it have been lawful for planning purposes?" In doing so, the LPA will not only consider whether the proposal would involve "development" requiring an application for planning permission, but whether it would involve a breach of any existing condition or limitation imposed on a grant of planning permission which has been acted upon, and which therefore constrains what can be done on the land. The LPA will not make a proposal fit a scenario; the only question is whether the proposal made by the applicant is lawful at the time of submission.

## **The Application**

In a case of this type, the onus is on the applicant to substantiate his or her case, on the balance of probability. The applicant needs to demonstrate that the use of property as a small House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4) commenced more than ten years prior to the date of the application (i.e. by 14 March 2014) and continued without a significant break for ten years.

Class C4 is defined in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, as amended, as "Use of a dwellinghouse by not more than six residents as a "house in multiple occupation". This latter term is as defined in S.254 of the Housing Act 2004.

The property is a semi-detached brick built dwelling house with a blue/grey slate tiled roof property. The property has a partially enclosed front garden and a rear garden, the application form states that from the 01 January 2010 the property became a C4 use.

The Planning Practice Guidance points to the need for evidence to be sufficiently precise and unambiguous to justify the grant of a certificate on the balance of probability.

The applicant has provided copies of the electoral register history, tenancy agreements and HMO Licences both current and previous ones that demonstrate that from 2013/14 to 2023/24 the property has been rented between 5 to 6 persons at the property for the previous 10 years. There are gaps in tenancy agreements which the applicant explains are due to contracts rolling over and this is made clear within the tenancy agreements provided.

The Planning Practice Guidance points to the need for evidence to be sufficiently precise and unambiguous to justify the grant of a certificate on the balance of probability.

Therefore, on balance of probability and without any evidence to the contrary the properties have been in use as a small house in multiple occupation continuously for over 10 years.

## **Other Legislative Requirements**

### **Equality Act 2010**

Section 149 (Public Sector Equality Duty) of the Equality Act 2010 requires due regard to the need to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act and; Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The Equality Duty does not impose a legal requirement to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment. Compliance with the Equality Duty involves consciously thinking about the aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making.

### **Human Rights Act 1998 considerations**

This application needs to be considered against the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. Under Article 6, the applicants (and those third parties, including local residents, who have made representations) have a right to a fair hearing and to this end the local planning authority must give full consideration to their comments.

Protocol 1 Article 1, and Article 8 where appropriate, confer(s) a right of respect for a person's home, other land and business assets. In taking account of all material considerations, including Council policy as set out in the Core Strategy and saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan, the Director of Planning, Building Control & Licensing has concluded that some rights conferred by these articles on the applicant(s)/objector(s)/resident(s) and other occupiers and owners of nearby land that might be affected may be interfered with but that that interference is

in accordance with the law and justified by being in the public interest and on the basis of the planning merits of the development proposal. She believes that any restriction on these rights posed by the recommendation given is proportionate to the wider benefits of and that such a decision falls within the margin of discretion afforded to the Council under the Town and Country Planning Acts.

**Recommendation:** Grant

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

1) From the evidence available, and with reference to the relevant planning legislation, Manchester City Council is satisfied that the use is lawful by reason of the said use having been in existence for a period of 10 years up to the date of this application.

## **Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified**

87 Old Moat Lane, Manchester, M20 3EJ  
85 Old Moat Lane, Manchester, M20 3EJ  
83 Old Moat Lane, Manchester, M20 3EJ  
57 Ashford Road, Manchester, M20 3FH  
55 Ashford Road, Manchester, M20 3FH  
60 Ashford Road, Manchester, M20 3EH  
56 Ashford Road, Manchester, M20 3EH

## **Appendix 2 – Planning constraints**

Article 4 Direction - Removal Of PD Rights Change Of Use From Class C3 To Class C4  
Aircraft Safeguarding Zone - Aircraft Safeguarding Zone - All Exceeding 90M  
Area Team Boundary - Name: SOUTH AREA