

17th November 2023

REF: 349/CC

Simon James

120 Grosvenor Street

Manchester M1 7HL

By email only: simonjamesarq@gmail.com

Dear Simon,

**PLANNING APPLICATION SUBMISSION CONVERSION TO 8 APARTMENTS (USE CLASS C3)
AND ASSOCIATED WORKS**

398 WILBRAHAM ROAD, CHORLTON, MANCHESTER

Further to your request I write to provide consideration of pre-application officer queries raised and a planning summary of compliance against key relevant policies of the adopted Development Plan, to support the planning application at the above property.

Background

The property formerly operated as a vet practice with associated space, prior approval was sought and obtained from the local planning authority as to the acceptability of the conversion to residential under permitted development under reference 138628/P3/MA/2023. This allows the conversion of the ground, first and second floors to eight, 1-bedroom apartments, the layout incorporates existing external amenity and hard standing areas but the layout does not formally include a specific number of car parking spaces and without exterior development works could accommodate in the region of only four vehicles.

The property does also include a large basement area, identified under the prior approval scheme as storage.

The property is set within a corner plot that extends to 531sq.m. The property is a semi-detached building that benefits from significant light and window opportunities due to the corner positioning. The property is located in a highly sustainable location in the urban area and popular district of Chorlton-cum-Hardy.

The owner/ applicant approached the local planning authority following the issue of the prior approval allowing the conversion of the building to eight apartments to seek guidance on the opportunity to seek to deliver a far superior development of eight larger apartments taking greater advantage of the merits of the property, its grounds, the location and better serving the local market.

The Applicant

The applicant's business Armistead Property <https://www.armisteadproperty.co.uk/> has been delivering high quality apartments of a C3 use class in south Manchester for the last 20 years. The applicant is an established investor and award-winning developer having delivered between 400-500 apartments and retaining around 70, all owned and managed as C3 use class residential apartments he does not have any Houses of Multiple Occupation and that is not the intention for the application site.

The applicant's award-winning developments include Carlton Terrace, 198-200 Upper Chorlton Road, Whalley Range- United Kingdom Property Awards Best Northwest Renovation 2016-2017 and Denbigh Villas, 57-59 High Lane, Chorlton- United Kingdom Property Awards Winner 2017-2018. Several examples of his renovated properties to apartments are included as Appendix 2 to this supporting statement. The applicant is therefore well placed to understand the needs of the local market and able to deliver outstanding developments, befitting of the area.

Furthermore, the applicant for decades has been a custodian of the local built infrastructure, with significant investment bringing characterful buildings to life, enhancing their longevity and productive use, providing homes for potentially 1000's of residents supporting Manchester City Council in delivering their housing needs.

Pre-application Advice

The local planning authority provided helpful feedback to inform the evolution of the design opportunity presented by the property. The pre-application submission set out the opportunity to deliver larger apartments, remaining still at only eight apartments but instead of eight, 1-bedroom apartments to allow the delivery of eight, 2-bedroom apartments.

The pre-application response from officers highlighted the principle of eight apartments had been established by the prior approval now in place. This is a significant material consideration when considering a new planning application. The officer highlighted that the key consideration therefore the application would be the increase in potential density arises from 1-bedroom apartments to 2-bedroom apartments, alongside the assessment of Development Plan policy. The officer encouraged the application to provide specific family friendly design measures, in turn that the apartments would be attractive to young families.

The Proposed Scheme

The application as submitted provides for eight 2-bedroom apartments, it is worthy of note that the second bedroom is a single bedroom, thus more akin/ attractive to use as a nursey, child's bedroom or even a home office/ study too. The design wholly consistent with the applicant's business model to provide high quality homes for professional couples looking for more space to start a family. The apartments will be a 'step-up' from a 1-bedroom starter home (that could currently be delivered in the property).

The proposed apartments have been designed with the local market needs at the forefront. The officer's pre-application design considerations are indeed aligned to the applicant's aspirations, the apartments will be aimed at and will enable young professionals who might work and commute to Manchester City Centre to remain longer in the highly sustainable suburb of Chorlton if there is accommodation available to service their lifestyle aspirations (such as homes that can accommodate children/future children), rather than moving further away or to neighbouring authorities of Trafford and Stockport. The retention of such residents in the suburbs of Manchester is also a material consideration as these young families ultimately support local facilities in a different way through their shopping and service needs and demands and in turn support the retention and operation of local schools and nurseries as there then continues to be demand for child places.

In addition, there is market evidence of the increased demand for 2-bedroom apartments in Chorlton compared with 1-bedroom apartments; according to current research of available data on rightmove.com. Appendix 1 to this summary statement includes current data of those 1-bedroom apartments on the market and 2-bedroom apartments, this demonstrates that of the 30, 1-bedroom apartments (in Chorlton) on the market 17 are sold subject to contract, 56%, whereas of the 96, 2-bedroom apartments on the market 74 are sold subject to contract some 77% . Accompanying the planning application is a letter from Jordan Fishwich, a local long term leading estate agent in the area, that sets out that the market for homes for professional couples pre-family is very much in demand and that there are insufficient available and on the market, in turn they have a waiting list of couples seeking these desirable family friendly 2-bedroom apartments. This market evidence is in turn a further material consideration officers are urged to take account of in considering the acceptability of eight 2-bedroom apartments within the property.

The revised scheme provides the opportunity to utilise the basement space and create a far superior living environment through a small extension and reconfigured internal layouts. Care and consideration is given to pram storage areas and baby changing stations in bathrooms as detailed on the submitted plans.

In addition, significant consideration has been afforded to the re-masterplanning of the parking area, this scheme now providing for seven spaces, in turn accommodating larger disabled provision / spaces and the design able to accommodate larger baby friendly car parking spaces that enable greater ease for parent residents. Secure cycle parking is provided for 8 cycles, private amenity space for several of the apartments provides further outdoor space an attraction for young families, to allow children to play in a private outdoor space. However, more unusual, and an exemplary aspect of provision for the scheme, is the re-landscaped garden areas provided as a communal garden and play areas, planting provided will be bird friendly with flowering bushes and bird and bat boxes to the trees to encourage wildlife as a subsidiary educational aspect for young families, with seating for parental supervision and a vast improvement and amenity area.

Indeed, such design aspects will undoubtedly enhance the bio-diversity net gain at the property and within this local urban area.

The property already benefits from numerous windows to allow the internal reconfiguration and thus the greatest elevational change to allow the 2-bedroom apartments relates to a small rear extension and new lightwells to the basement, without greater impact of overlooking implications, thus whilst an intensification of the potential occupancy of the building internally, there is limited impact externally to the elevations and to the immediate surrounds.

Planning Policy Review

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), advocates that development control decisions must be taken in accordance with the adopted Development Plan, unless material consideration indicate otherwise. For the purpose of this planning application the Development plan includes:

- Manchester City Council Core Strategy Development Plan (adopted July 2012);
- Extant remaining Manchester City Council Unitary Development Plan Documents (UDP) (1995);
- Greater Manchester Joint waste Strategy (adopted July 2012); and
- Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Strategy (April 2013).

Consideration of those most relevant is given here.

The property is located within the urban area of Manchester within the suburb of Chorlton. There are no direct notable Development Plan designations applicable to the site. It should be acknowledged the property is located within an existing residential area and benefits from an acknowledged prior approval to utilise permitted development rights to convert the property to eight 1-bedroom apartments. The area is covered in general terms by Policy H6 South Manchester that advocates 5% of all new developments over the lifetime of the Core Strategy shall be provided here. High density development will generally be appropriate within the district centres. The application is not seeking to increase the number of apartments but it is acknowledged the potential increase in occupancy could arise as each of the apartments meet the minimum floor spaces standards for three persons.

Policy H8 affordable housing requests affordable housing shall be provided within developments of 15 or more units and on sites over 0.3ha, This is not relevant to the application therefore.

Policy S06 seeks to protect and enhance the natural and built environment of the city and to ensure the sustainable use of natural resources. The application is considered compliant with the aspirations of this policy. The application seeks to make better use of an existing building, the high-quality reconfigurations and care and attention to detail through design measures will allow for many built fabric and energy enhancement improvements.

Policy EN4 seeks to reduce CO2 emissions by enabling low carbon and zero carbon development. The regeneration of the property to a high standard that requires an internal reconfiguration also enables greater consideration of the fabric of the building and the ability to introduce consideration of the following:

- Provision of low flow fittings with aerators to showers and taps;
- Inclusion of water efficient appliances;
- Dual flush and limited volume toilet cisterns;
- Energy efficient internal lighting;
- Draft proofing, more efficient boiler(s) and loft insulation;
- Seek to secure building materials locally; and
- Opportunities for thermal efficiency and energy reduction.

Policy DM1 Development Management advocates that all development should have regards to a number of matters, those of relevance are listed below, with corresponding consideration.

- Appropriate siting, layout form, massing materials and detail.

The substantial nature of the building can accommodate the development with ease with just a minor extension and provision of lightwells to deliver modern day living opportunities attractive to a broader market including as set out professional couples looking for space in advance of starting a family or families with small children.

- Impact on the surrounding areas in terms of the design, scale and appearance of the proposed development. Development should have regard to the character of the surrounding area.

The property is located within an existing residential area, the extended property will continue to nestle within the grounds, with basement lights a common occurrence to such properties in the area, where window replacements or new insertions are required and the minor extension provided the materials will be provided that are consistent with the existing.

- Effects on amenity, including privacy, light, noise, vibration, air quality, odours, litter, vermin, birds, road safety and traffic generation. This could also include proposals which would be sensitive to existing environmental conditions, such as noise.

The design of the property retains trees and provides an enhanced landscaping scheme to encourage wildlife.

- Accessibility: buildings and neighbourhoods fully accessible to disabled people, access to new development by sustainable transport modes.

The existing nature of the building does not allow for complete disabled access but this has been considered for ambulant disabled enhanced by disabled parking spaces.

- Community safety and crime prevention.

This has been considered with access arrangements and secure cycle parking areas with windows overlooking the parking and play areas.

- Design for health.

The application is supported by a Travel Plan. This evidences that the property is located within a highly sustainable area where local facilities are within walking distance and secure cycle storage area is provided to encourage cycle ownership/use.

- Adequacy of internal accommodation and external amenity space.

The apartments more than meet minimum space standards dictated by MCC.

- Refuse storage and collection.

The Proposed Site Plan demonstrates adequate on-site refuse storage can be provided, in a secure and accessible area.

- Vehicular access and car parking.

The vehicle access is enhanced to provide for further off street car parking provision provided for residents, in turn parent friendly spaces are provided too, it is acknowledged that seven compared to the design guidance preferred eight are

provided however this is a material increase of the permitted scheme for the same number of apartments and thus is a material consideration. In turn the applicant has provided a Travel Plan to encourage residents sustainable travel choices.

- Effects relating to biodiversity, landscape, archaeological or built heritage.
The application provides the opportunity to create a far better use of an existing building in Chorlton, along with significant investment resulting in aesthetic enhancement trees are retained and managed to allow continued longevity. A communal amenity area is provided for residents, with enhanced landscaping of flowing shrubs to encourage birds and bees, bird and bat boxes to encourage wildlife, and a children's play area enabling a potential increase in biodiversity in the urban area.
- Green Infrastructure including open space, both public and private.
The lower ground floor flats have access to private amenity space and there is a significant enhancement of the remainder of the site to provide communal garden area, including children's play areas. Trees will be retained.
- The use of alternatives to peat-based products in landscaping/gardens within development schemes.
This can be considered.
- Flood risk and drainage.
This has been considered during the evolution of the design as an existing building it will connect to the existing foul drainage network and the landscaped areas enable sustainable drainage matters to be promoted.

In this instance all the criteria of policy DM1 can be met and achieved by the proposed application. The regeneration of the building with the potential intensification of persons with a nominal footprint increase to provide for homes that are also attractive and suitable for young families through key design approaches as evinced on the submitted plans are also a material consideration to the determination of this planning application.

Policy DC1.1 and DC1.2 residential extensions, allows for extensions to residential properties where they meet a number of criteria. The application is considered to comply the small extension is not overbearing nor large or bulky in scale.

Policy DC5.1 relates to flat conversions and is therefore of relevance. This policy identifies a number of factors of relevance the design evolution has taken account of each matter and the application provides for a more than adequate standard of accommodation, indeed it is presented these apartments will be exemplary in their design. The new apartments meet the minimum national building requirements. Installation will be required as per building

regulations standards and thus prevent noise from travelling through floors and walls, there will be a positive impact on the character of the neighbourhood through the investment, refurbishment and reuse of the building. Adequate outdoor amenity space for the residents is provided that in turn reflects different residents' potential needs.

Summary

The application seeks approval for eight apartments that are laid out in a 2-bedroom format along with the external improvements and associated external car parking and landscaped area reconfigurations.

The conversion of the property to eight 2-bedroom apartments is provided against the backdrop of the current permitted development and with prior approval right to convert to eight 1-bedroom apartments, the principle use of the building is for residential is not in question, the local planning authority's key considerations therefore centre on the proposed changes and potential increase of occupation of the building and whether any material impacts are likely to arise and indeed whether there are in addition other material considerations afforded to the consideration of the application.

It is presented to the authority the applicant is an established investor and developer of high quality C3 use class apartments, particularly in the south Manchester area. The applicant proposes a high-quality development that whilst may potentially increase the occupancy of the building there are unlikely to be material impacts on the local area. The application is promoted with a Travel Plan to encourage sustainable travel methods and the design principally focuses on the market needs and demand as evidenced in the submission for 2-bedroom apartments that in turn are family friendly, the approach to the proposed accommodation in turn enabling such family's greater accommodation options and in turn the ability to support a variety of local shops and services.

I encourage the local planning authority to consider the application favourably and grant planning permission.

Yours sincerely,



CAROL CLARKE

Planning Director

FOR AND ON BEHALF OF BRAMHALL TOWN PLANNING LIMITED

Enc Rightmove Sales Evidence and Applicant previous development examples