7 Clearwater Drive West Didsbury M20 2ED

Planning Statement

In support of Householder application for change of use of garage to study and utility.

Prepared by SR Miles Ltd - Chartered Architect

on behalf of Mr & Mrs Fisher

Date 15.01.2024

Introduction:

7 Clearwater Drive is a 3 bed 3 storey semi detached dwelling built circa 2003.

The existing Ground floor arrangement has an integral garage with driveway for a vehicle and path to the front door screened by coniferous hedging.

The kitchen living area, accessed via the Hall, looks onto an enclosed rear garden.

Refuse storage is to the side of the house. Cycle storage is available to the rear of the house.

The area is predominantly residential in character and is a relatively modern estate with a mix of house types and styles consisting of terraced and semi-detached residential properties and benefits from its proximity to public outdoor amenity and green spaces.

Requirement:

To seek formal consent to convert the existing garage into a study with window facing the road, and a utility between study and kitchen/living area. The external materials to replace the garage door will match those present on the front elevation.

The proposal requires planning permission due to permitted development rights (regarding garage conversions) being removed from this estate under permission 073030/MO/2004/S1

Policies:

Policy DM1 seeks to protect the amenity of residents from the adverse impact of development. Unitary Development Plan - The relevant saved policy is DC1 .1, DC1 .2

DC1 .1 In determining planning applications for extensions to residential properties, the Council will have regard to:

a. the general character of the property;

b. the effect upon the amenity of neighbouring occupiers;

c. the desirability of enabling people to adapt their houses in appropriate ways to meet changing household needs;

d. the overall appearance of the proposal in the street-scene;

e. the effect of the loss of any on-site carparking.

DC1 .2 Extensions to residential properties will be allowed subject to compliance with other relevant policies of the Plan and the following criteria:

a. they are not excessively large or bulky (for example, resulting in structures which are not subservient to original houses or project out too far in front of the original buildings);

b. they do not create an undue loss of sunlight, daylight or privacy;

c. they are not out of character with the style of development in the area or the surrounding street scene by virtue of design, use of materials or constructional details;

d. they would not result in the loss of off-street car-parking, in a situation where there is so severe an existing on-street parking problem that unacceptable additional pressures would be created.

The Manchester Core Strategy – Development Plan Document 2012-2027 ("the Core Strategy") was adopted by the City Council on the 11th of July 2012:

- Policy DM1 – Development Management

- Policy SP1 – Spatial Principles

- Policy EN1 – Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas

- Policy EN19 – Waste

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021)

- Chapter 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places

Justification:

Policy DC1 .1 and DC1 .2 establishes the principle of extending a property to meet the changing needs of the occupiers.

The principle of converting an internal garage together with elevational alterations in order to provide additional living accommodation for a family dwellinghouse, is acceptable given that many individuals prefer to extend and alter their homes to meet changing household needs, rather than move. The principle of the proposal therefore accords with policy DC1 of the UDP; however, consideration must be given to the development's siting, scale, and massing, appearance, and impact upon visual amenity, residential amenity, waste storage, and parking.

The modern family car has increased in size in recent years, and the garage dimensions limit the range of vehicles capable of being parked in the garage.

it is common for garages to be used as additional storage, utility rooms, home working areas, gymnasiums, workshops. and numerous dwellings in the area no longer park a car in the garage.

The garage at no.7 Clearwater Drive has not been utilised as a car space for at least 5 years. The current occupants have fitted out the internal space as a study area, complete with Building Regulations completion certification available on request.

This long-standing use provides further evidence that a single off road car space per dwelling does not create an adverse impact in terms of street parking, and also highlights the ineffectiveness of the previously implemented condition. There is no compunction on a resident to park their car in the available garage.

Design and visual amenity:

The design of the 'infill' section to replace the garage door with facing brickwork and a an aluminium framed window reflects the design of the original building and would not detract from the character of the properties or the visual amenity of the street scene. - The choice of materials for infilling the garage door are such that it would blend with the rest of the property, there are a mix of properties that as part of the overall estate design did not incorporate garages in the first instance, with the parking provision being in the form of an off- road parking space to the front of the property. Therefore, it will not be detrimental in appearance when viewed in the context of the property itself and the wider estate.

The overall design, scale, and appearance of the proposal is considered acceptable given that the garage conversion would not result in any physical enlargement of or addition to the host dwellinghouse with its only visible element being the replacement window located to the front of the property.

As such the proposal would not result in an ‘excessively large or bulky’ addition to the property, nor would it have a significant impact upon the visual and residential amenity of the area. The proposal therefore accords with policies DM1 and SP1 of the Core Strategy.

Waste storage: the current waste storage arrangements would be unaffected by this proposal.

Parking:

Given the applicants have not used the garage to park a car for some 5 years, the application to seek formal change of use of the original garage proposal would effectively result in no change to the premises other than a window to the front rather than a garage door. Sufficient space (at least 2.4m by 4.8m) is retained on the property’s existing driveway for at least one car. Therefore the change is not considered detrimental. Furthermore, the government guidance of 1 parking space per residential unit is still provided and there are no highway parking restrictions.

In relation to the proposal’s potential to result in a loss of garden space / green amenity at the site it should be noted that the property does not currently feature a front garden space, instead featuring a tarmac driveway and paved pathway.

Precedent:

Recent similar planning applications have been approved in the locality at:

175 Georgia Avenue Manchester M20 1LY ref:133711/FH/2022 dated 04.07.2022.

21 Houseman Crescent Manchester M22 2JD ref: 133967/FH/2022 dated 05.08.2022

175 Georgia Avenue Manchester M20 1LY ref 138189/FH/2023 dated 23.11.2023

Sustainability:

It should be noted that since this development was constructed the local public transport network has expanded, with bus routes along Princess Parkway, Nell Lane and Burton Road, together with the Metrolink Tram network having stations at West Didsbury and Withington.

An apartment development recently approved at a site bound by The Boulevard, The Avenue, Didsbury for 76 apartments was supported by only 35 car spaces. Ref:135235/FO/2022 dated 26.01.2023

Conclusion – given the above issues, the proposal is acceptable in terms of its principle, siting, scale and massing, appearance and visual amenity, residential amenity, waste storage and parking as it complies with policy DC1 of the UDP, policies DM1, SP1, EN1 and EN19 of the Core Strategy and chapter 12 of the NPPF.

The historic and continued use of the existing garage for additional living accommodation without changes to the external façade prove there is no detriment to the local amenity, and therefore the application should receive a consent.