

Design & Access Statement

For

**Apartment 2 at
349-351 Wilmslow Road
Manchester
M14 6XS**

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By

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Background

This statement accompanies the planning application for the change of use of flat 2 on the first floor level of 349-351 Wilmslow Road from residential (C3) to estate agent office use E(C2)ii.

This planning statement is set out in the following format:

1. Site Description
2. Planning History
3. Description of development proposals
4. Reasons for Development Proposals
5. Planning Case

2. Site Description

The application site comprises only flat No 2, the rest of the building contain other 20 flats which are mostly occupied and not part of this application. The building has its own car parking facilities to the rear of the properties accessed off Wilmslow Road. Spaces in rear car park are allocated by the company and strictly adhered to maximum spaces are 21 controlled by a private company and monitored remotely by form of CCTV, front car park is not part of this application.

The ground floor is currently in E(C2)ii Professional services office use by Leaders estate agent and Nando's restaurant class use E.

The site is located within the Southern district of Manchester and as such the surrounding land use is predominantly retail units, in addition to some offices and residential dwellings.

It is understood that there are no listed buildings within the immediate vicinity of the site. The site is within Flood Risk Zone 1 which is deemed to be believed low probability of flooding. The site is not known to be constrained by any other designations, environmental or ecological factors.

Planning History

Previous Applications:

- Ref: 070793/FO/2004/S1 – 'Erection of a 5 storey building comprising shops, offices and food and drink (A1, A2, A3 uses) on ground floor with 21 self-contained flats above, with separate parking areas for retail units and flats'. Approved. 15 April 2004.
- Ref: 079164/AO/2006/S1 – 'Erection of a 3 metre high double sided internally illuminated totem sign on forecourt'. Refused. 27 June 2006.
- Ref: 079532/AO/2006/S1 – 'Installation of internally illuminated fascia sign'. Approved. 18 July 2006.
- Ref: 086637/AO/2008/S1 – 'Erection of an internally illuminated 3 metre high totem sign'. Approved. 13 August 2008.

3. Description of Development Proposal

The proposal is for the change of use of flat 2 from residential (C3) to estate agent office use E(C2)ii. The change of use of flat 2 represents a minor application.

It is proposed that no building works will be carried out once consent is obtained as the current flat layout and toilet provision is adequate for the new relocated business (Richmond Property Management & Lettings Ltd). It is also important to note the owner of Richmond Property Management & Lettings Ltd is also the building owner of 349-351 Wilmslow Road therefore the same owner of Wilmslow Road Limited, and the 349-351 Wilmslow Road is managed by Richmond Property Management & Lettings Ltd and therefore the newly proposed office will be ancillary to this property.

The application does not seek any alterations to the existing access arrangements, services, fire strategy, or car park which will be unaffected by the proposals.

4. Reason for Development Proposals

Our client is a well-established firm in property management with over 300 properties in their portfolio. The company currently employs approximately 3 No full time and 1 No part time office staff having expanded significantly in the past decade. As a business of this size, Richmond Property Management & Lettings Ltd represents a good example of thriving small local business in the local area, particularly within the district of south Manchester.

Current market conditions are very challenging and therefore the business is eager to move to this location to operate in a better way and to move out from its current location in Didsbury. Given the requirement of a smaller office space desired by the company due to new operating method of hybrid working arrangement and also to remain in the vicinity area of its current portfolio it was considered appropriate to make use of this residential space that is in the same ownership.

The proposed change of use would make a positive impact to the working environment for existing staff and allow for the retention of a valuable employer for the local area.

5. Planning Cases

At its heart the case here is the balance of the needs of a very successful, local employer seeking to improve the working environment of its employees against the loss of one-bedroom flat. Richmond Property Management & Lettings Ltd bring expenditure and activity into the area, supporting the vitality and viability of Manchester. This particular one-bedroom flat is located in close proximity of the lobby and considered low quality and low demand as accommodation. It is considered and set out below that policy and the planning balance firmly supports the needs of the business over the retention of the three flats.

Adopted policy is set out in the Core Strategy (2012) and the saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan (1995). The UDP proposals map was updated with the creation of the Core Strategy to incorporate the updated policies. So far principles are engaged at the local level the national policy represented by NPPF (2012) and PPG is also relevant.

Policy C2 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. As such the proposed use of this flat for Class E(C)ii Use as property management office is policy compliant and contributes positively to the purpose of the district centre and the in terms of demands for this office which outweigh the disadvantages of the loss for this unpopular one-bedroom flat.

In this instance the one-bedroom flat is accommodated in first floor is accessed via an existing staircase from the car park. Security and access is an existing provision for all the flats is already established and secure. The development proposals will not adversely impact or harm the visual amenity of nearby residents given there are no alterations to be made. Indeed, arguably there will be improvement from the reduced movement of residents on the external staircase access.

The development will have a negligible impact on noise impacts upon residents. Indeed, the use of the space will be more limited in evenings and weekends. Additionally, Richmond Property Management & Lettings will ensure its staff are at all times professional and respectful of neighbouring residents, minimising disruption as it the current practice. It is also worth noting that there will be only max 3No office staff at one time and only 2No on Saturdays. Working hours are as follows:

Monday to Friday 9:00am to 6:00pm
Saturday 9:00am to 2:00pm
Sunday and Bank Holidays: Closed

The car park to the rear of the property is currently allocated to management and visitor spaces with restrictions placed on employees parking along the high street. To prevent overspill parking from burdening local residents, Richmond Property Management & Lettings keeps a record of all employee vehicle registration numbers and monitors the parking spaces to ensure staff are not parking in inappropriate in locations and keep their use of the parking limited to 2No spaces, there are currently 21No car parking spaces and the existing building residents do not occupy more than 8No at one time (according to recent site visits). The proposals will lead to no material change in existing arrangements.

The office space will benefit from internal waste and recycling bins and will make use of the existing refuse storage for the building. As a commercial property, Richmond Property Management & Lettings make use of private contracts for waste removal that will be extended to the new converted space and remove the domestic waste needs of the 1No flat, moreover Richmond Property Management & Lettings has recently started paperless policy therefore it is anticipated that office waste will be kept to the minimum.

Any residual impact on residential amenity of the extended office space is considered as truly minor or negligible. It is committed to continuing to take the required actions to create a cohesive local environment and maintain a positive and respectful relationship with local neighbours. The proposals are therefore compliant with Core Strategy Policy DM1.

We must also stress that previous and similar applications withing close proximity have been approved and I list a few references for your information:

- Approved Application ref 090561/FU/2009/S1 Change of use of first floor vacant flat to office (A2) at 248A Wilmslow Road, Fallowfield, Manchester, M14 6LD.
- Approved Application ref 114229FO/2016 Change of use from first floor flat to form office accommodation (Class B1) and associated elevational alterations together with installation of steel stairwell to rear courtyard to form fire escape at 1A Lapwing Lane, Manchester M20 2NT.

- Approved Application ref 115838/FO/2017 Change of use of first and second floor from flats (Class C3) to ancillary seating area/office in conjunction with ground floor Class A5 use and installation of new shop front at 100 Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8FA.
- Approved Application ref 115948/FU/2017 Change of use from residential flats to solicitors offices (Class A2) at 317 Palatine Road,, Manchester M22 4HH.

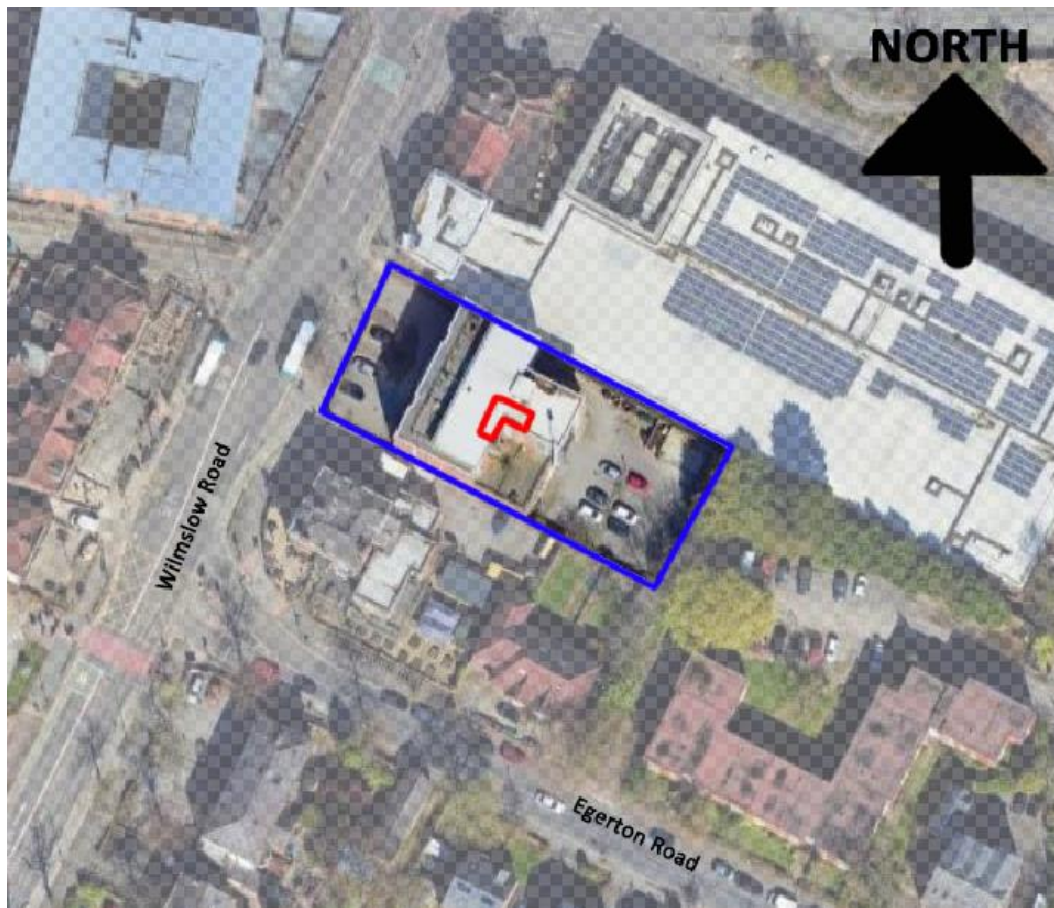
Approved Application ref 125547/FU/2019 Retrospective application for change of use from first floor flat (C3) to offices for Estate Agent (B1) at 128A Burton Road, Manchester, M20 1JQ.

Documents included with this application:

1. Completed Application Forms
2. Site Location Plan scale 1:200
3. Location Plan scale 1:1250
4. Existing floor plan (original As Built plan).

Conclusion

The applicant has made every effort to comply with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework for Manchester City Council. The proposal will have minimal impact upon the surrounding environment and building amenity. There is no building work proposed as part of this application. It is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission should be granted. We hope that the submitted application with the supporting documents will meet your approval, if however, Officers may have any concerns with the proposal it is requested that they contact the agent. We do not anticipate a building regulation application is required, however the Fire Risk Assessment will be updated once the consent is granted and the office move take place.



Aerial view of the area with the application site (Flat 2) edged in red and the rest of the site owned by the applicant edged in blue (not part of this application).