

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004

PLANNING AND
DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

B&M STORE
AND
FORMER BUZZ BINGO
HARPURHEY SHOPPING CENTRE
ROCHDALE ROAD
UNITS 9A, 9B, 10 & 11
MANCHESTER
M9 4DH

PREPARED ON BEHALF OF
B&M RETAIL LTD

August 2023

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 MWA has accepted an instruction by B&M Retail Ltd (the 'Applicant') to submit a full planning application in respect of the existing B&M Store (Unit 11)¹ together with the adjoining unit former Buzz Bingo outlet (Units 9A, 9B and 10):

- The change of use from a bingo hall (*sui generis*) to Class E(a)² together with facilitating internal and external alterations;

1.2 The following plans are submitted with the planning application:

Drawing	Reference	Scale
Site location plan	-	1: 1,250 @ A4
Existing block plan	-	1: 500 @ A4
Existing internal layout	BM-116-0-001	1: 200 @ A3
Existing elevations	BCC-HH-002	1: 300 @ A3
Proposed floor plan and elevations	BM-HPY-003 A	1: 500 @ A1

1.3 Section 2 describes the proposed development and the operational needs of B&M Retail Ltd.

1.4 Section 3 sets out the relevant planning policies contained within the development plan and NPPF.

1.5 Section 4 addresses the main issues raised by the proposal while in Section 5 we summarise our overall conclusions.

¹ The front portion of the existing B&M store will be subject to a separate application to sub-divide it into 3 smaller shop units with new shop fronts and does not form part of this application.

² For the display or retail sale of goods other than hot food, principally to visiting members of the public.

2.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

1. B&M Retail Ltd

- 2.1 B&M Retail Ltd operates in excess of 700 stores in 2021/22, with annual revenues of more than £3bn, and provided employment to over 28,000 people. The company is a general variety retailer specialising in household goods including DIY, hardware, garden centre items and provides customers with a limited assortment within each of its product ranges in order that they can access the best-selling items at value retail prices. Products are normally sourced directly from manufacturers together with leading brand household names. B&M's direct sourcing and simple low-cost approach enables it to provide customers with great bargains on everyday household and grocery products. Its business model involving a range of limited assortment products enables each category to be refreshed continuously, at attractive prices within an attractive shopping environment.
- 2.2 The company is seeking the provision of at least 950 stores in the UK and its business model enables it to deliver between 40-50 stores per annum, despite challenging market conditions. The company prides itself on maintain its core values: simplicity, trust, fairness, and pride in its service to customers. Customers typically shop in B&M Homestores for purchases, with 80% of customers visiting a store on a planned basis. The targeted grocery range compliments the general merchandise goods comprising homewares, DIY, and kitchen items. Customers also take the opportunity to make impulse buys. Only bestselling lines are maintained with new and seasonal products added to meet the changing demand of customers all year round.
- 2.3 In this context the ability of companies such as B&M Retail Ltd to sell a limited but important range of ancillary items, is critical in maintaining a viable and attractive store. There is in addition, a clear and urgent need to secure a sustainable, long-term future of the former bingo hall.
- 2.4 Seasonal goods including the ability to stock of range of DIY and garden centre products are also a critical component of the company's adaptive and highly flexible business model.

2. The proposed development

- 2.5 Table 2.1 summarises the proposed floorspace within the B&M Home Store.

Table 2.1: Proposed gross and net floor areas

Area	Existing sq.m.	Proposed sq.m. ³
Gross internal floor area	1,702	3,760
Net floor area	1,320	2,769
Warehouse	215	364
Amenity/staff	167	97

- 2.6 In order to facilitate the change of use the following external work is also proposed:
- New sliding entrance/exit doors in relation to the former Buzz Bingo unit to provide access to the B&M store as enlarged
- 2.7 In relation to the proposal and design and access considerations we comment as follows.

(i) Use

- 2.8 The bingo hall comprises a *sui generis* use. The proposed use of the premises by B&M Retail would fall within Class E(a). The application seeks to enable the use of the building former bingo hall for retailing.

(ii) Amount and scale

- 2.9 The B&M Store would increase in size from 1,702 sq.m. gross to 3,760 sq.m. gross. There would be no external enlargement of the premises.

(iii) Layout and landscaping

- 2.10 The internal layout within the existing B&M store and former Buzz Bingo unit will be altered to facilitate the change of use. These all largely involve internal changes. The warehouse within the existing store will be re-configured to provide staff facilities and storage space. No additional landscaping is planned.

(iv) Appearance

- 2.11 The building would remain largely unaltered apart from the new store entrance. Any additional signage would be subject to a separate application.

³ This excludes the 3 shop units to be created in the front half of the existing B&M store in Unit 11.

(iv) Access and car parking

- 2.12 Access will be achieved from the rear service yard. There will be no change to the car parking associated with the shopping centre.

3. Benefits

(a) Colleague numbers and benefits associated with working for B&M Retail Ltd

- 2.13 In terms of the number of new colleagues employed, the scheme will deliver a further 25 employment opportunities. The company's existing store employs 25 colleagues.
- 2.14 In terms of benefits available to colleagues these principally comprise:
- 28 days paid holidays per annum (pro rata for part time and inclusive of Bank Holidays)
 - Long service awards
 - Free Colleague uniform (where applicable)
 - 10% Colleague discount (includes family members living in the same household)
 - Pension scheme
 - Share Incentive Plan (SIP)
 - Training and development programmes
 - Childcare Voucher Scheme
 - Free parking for Support Centre, Distribution Centre, and most stores
 - Free eye tests for Colleagues that use PCs as part of their role on a daily basis
- 2.15 In terms of remuneration, general associates are paid £7.83 per hour. However, management and supervisory roles would be recruited on a salary basis, and these range from £18,000-£35,000 per annum. A store of the size proposed will have approximately 20 supervisory roles for the different product departments and distinct functions (e.g., cash office).
- 2.16 All additional roles would be advertised and recruited locally. As a growing retailer opening a new store on average every week, B&M offers exceptional career progression and opportunities within the store and at Area Management level. Each year the company provides on average 600 colleagues who progress through apprenticeships, NVQs and at Step Up Academy programmes. All of these benefits will be made available to colleagues within the proposed B&M Homestore.

(b) Appropriate and sustainable long-term use of existing retail space

- 2.17 The proposal would continue to make the most efficient use of the site located within a designated 'Town Centre', and which enables the Applicant to expand its business operation to the benefit of the local community.

(c) Contribution to sustainable economic growth

- 2.18 The proposal would generate significant community benefits through creating a number of new jobs and generating earnings. A report by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills: Retail (2012) confirms the importance of the retail sector to the UK economy. The proposal will make a positive contribution to economic growth and prosperity and accords with the Council's agenda to promote development that results in economic growth.
- 2.19 A range of new and additional jobs will be secured from management and supervisor staff level to clerical, administrative and service positions. Retail jobs are socially inclusive by providing the range of jobs in both full and part-time positions. Reducing barriers of entry to employment positions is a key part of the enabling social progress, which is encompassed within the economic and social roles that the planning system performs. The need for private sector investment has been significantly increased as a consequence of the impact of Covid-19.
- 2.20 The increase in earnings is a significant positive benefit. The increase in earnings will generate associated wider benefits for the local economy through increased spending power of residents, which in turn will help support other businesses in the locality.
- 2.21 There remains an urgent need to create job opportunities now particularly given the scale of shop closures nationally, both within town centre and in out of centre locations. Private investment is needed to secure employment growth and the government is relying on private sector investment to stimulate the economy. The government wants the private sector to invest now. Accordingly, the requirement for economic investment is a national imperative. This continues to be the case even though the economy shows signs of improving.

(d) Reducing social exclusion

- 2.22 The general area has a customer base which comprises some less affluent households which are attracted to products that are offered at discount prices. However, B&M Retail Ltd also

appeals to more affluent households. This proposal is at a scale and format which will complement provision within the town centre and enhance its vitality and viability.

(e) Improving the choice of shopping

- 2.23 The company operates a range of stores in the wider sub-region which occupy in and out of centre locations. This proposal will provide further investment in Harpurhey extending the range and quality of shopping facilities in a very sustainable, town centre location.

(f) Meeting government objectives

- 2.24 It is considered that the proposal complies with the following relevant principles at a national level:

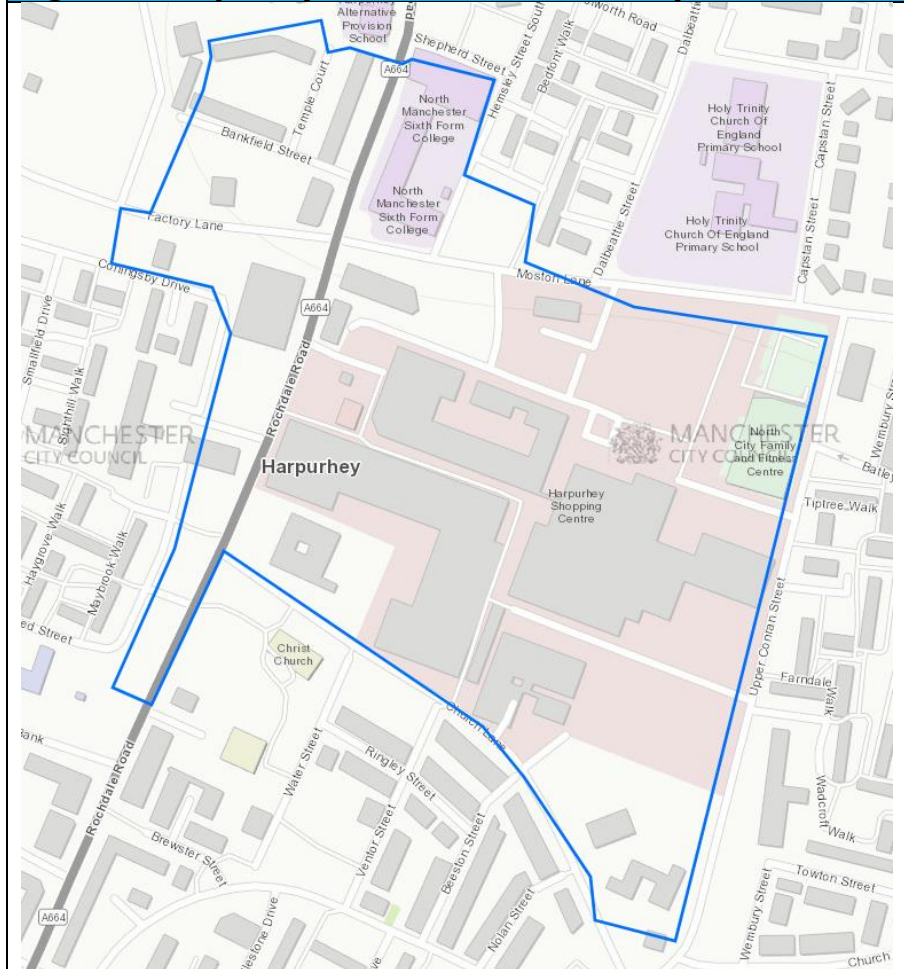
- Proactively driving and supporting sustainable economic development within existing town centres and main urban areas.
- Seeking to secure high quality design and good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land buildings
- Promoting the vitality of Cramlington Town Centre.
- Supporting the transition to a low carbon future
- Contributing to reducing pollution by reducing the need for shoppers to travel further afield.
- Making maximum beneficial use of land that has been previously developed within a town centre
- Actively managing patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking, and cycling and focus development in locations which are or can be made sustainable.

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

A. The development plan

- 3.1 The development plan comprises the 'saved' policies within the Manchester UDP (1995) and the Core Strategy (July 2012).
- 3.2 The objective of the **UDP** in respect of shopping is to enhance existing shopping provision especially in the City Centre and in the district centres, the latter being a major social and economic asset. Harpurhey is defined as a 'District Centre' within which the Council will encourage private sector investment. It also confirms that Harpurhey is one of the district centres which will be prioritised for new investment including enhancing its overall viability and environment quality.
- 3.3 The **Core Strategy** confirms that Harpurhey lies within North Manchester. The district of Harpurhey has experienced decline but this the CS notes improved from 2003. Paragraph 10.23 notes that Harpurhey is a large, broadly rectangular centre approximately 4 miles north of the City Centre. Recent investment the CS notes includes a new market, shops and leisure centre. Figure 1 provides an extract from the Proposals Map which confirms the boundary of the district centre. The B&M Store and former Buzz Bingo outlet lie wholly within this boundary.
- 3.4 Policy EC 4 relating to North Manchester confirms that Harpurhey district centre offers opportunities for mixed-use proposals and an ability to provide local employment opportunities.
- 3.5 Policy C 3 confirms that within the North Manchester district centres of Cheetham Hill and Harpurhey there is capacity for approximately 1,000 sq.m. of convenience and 4,000 sq.m. of comparison retail space. It confirms that the focus on delivering such additional space should be Harpurhey. The policy confirms that redevelopment within Harpurhey district centre has the potential to increase retail floorspace alongside additional uses. Paragraph 10.23 confirms that new floorspace will also provide for qualitative needs contributing to the centre's overall health.

Figure 1: Harpurhey District Centre boundary



B. National planning policy

- 3.6 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in 2021 and sets out the Government's overarching planning policies. There is no requirement to demonstrate that there is a need for a retail proposal set out in the NPPF.
- 3.7 Paragraph 87 states that LPAs should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses that are not in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan. Suitable sites include those which are likely to become available within a reasonable period although the latter is not defined. In this context the site lies within the district centre boundary for Harpurhey. On this basis there is no policy requirement to undertake a sequential assessment because the site occupies an 'in centre' location.

- 3.8 Paragraph 90 of the NPPF sets out the circumstances under which an Impact Assessment should be undertaken to accompany proposals for retail, leisure, and office development outside of town centres⁴, which are not in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan. Planning authorities should require an Impact Assessment if the development is over a proportionate locally set floorspace threshold. Again, the site forms part of district centre and therefore no impact assessment is required.

C. NPPG 'Ensuring the vitality of town centres' (March 2014)

- 3.9 Paragraph 009 ID: 2b-009-20190722 advises that a sequential test should be applied to main town centre uses. The preference is for town centre locations which are available followed by edge of centre sites followed by out of centre locations. In respect of this application the scheme delivers a 'town centre first' approach to retail development.

⁴ This includes city, town, district and local centres.

4.0 THE MAIN ISSUES

1. The principle of development

- 4.1 The site lies within the district centre of Harpurhey. The UDP confirms that Harpurhey is one of the district centres which will be prioritised for new investment including enhancing its overall viability and environment quality. The consistent approach to encouraging new investment and retail uses within the centre is confirmed in Policies EC 4 and C 3 of the Core Strategy, the latter affirming the capacity of the centre to accommodate additional retail space.
- 4.2 Consistent with the 'town centre first' approach to main town centre uses, the proposal will make effective and beneficial use of vacant space within the district centre which is supported by the NPPF and accords entirely with the development plan.

2. Sequential and impact tests

- 4.3 Since the site lies within the defined district centre there is no requirement under national or local policy for the proposal to be subject to the sequential and impact tests. These do not apply where a site is located within an existing centre.

3. Servicing

- 4.4 The amalgamation will not impact on the ability to service and store goods within the building. The amenity block and warehouse will be reconfigured internally to facilitate the delivery and storage of goods.

5.0 OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

5.1 In summary our overall conclusions are as follows:

- i. B&M Retail Ltd are wishing to make a significant investment in Harpurhey District Centre. This will be achieved by enabling the company to re-occupy and refurbish the vacant former bingo unit.
- ii. In order to enable beneficial occupation full planning permission is sought for the change of use to Class E(a) (shop) together with concomitant minor external changes.
- iii. The premises form part of the district centre as defined in the UDP and CS. It will therefore function as part of the town centre in accordance with local and national policy to adopt a 'town centre' first approach.
- iv. It will secure existing jobs in addition to creating new employment opportunities which will be available to local residents.
- v. It will make beneficial and effective use of land within a sustainable, district centre location.