

## **Planning**

## **Growth & Development**

### **Delegated officer report for planning application**

**Application no.** 137035/LE/2023

**Date registered valid:** 5 June 2023

**Proposal:** Use of property as a small House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4)

**Address:** 2 Crofton Street, Manchester, M14 4DX

**Ward(s):** Moss Side Ward

**Applicant:** Wakmoor (Assets) Limited

**Agent (if any):** Mr Paul Chandler-King Iceni Projects

**Case officer:** Robert Tyrer  
Tel: 0161 234 4068  
Email: [robert.tyrer@manchester.gov.uk](mailto:robert.tyrer@manchester.gov.uk)

**Recommendation:** Grant

**Date of recommendation:** 28 July 2023

## 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: 16 June 2023      Expired: 7 July 2023

### 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 and area

The application relates to a two storey end terrace property on Crofton Street in close proximity to Rusholme District Centre, Oxford Road and Whitworth Park.

**Listed building:** Not applicable

**Conservation area:** Not applicable

**Tree Preservation Order:** Not applicable

## Description of development

Use of the property as a House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4)

## Consultations & Notification Responses

Notification letters were sent to the properties and addresses listed in appendix 1.

One representation was received objecting to the proposal due to concerns with the maintenance of the property and the behaviour of previous tenants.

Raised that the property may not have been used a HMO.

## 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 then 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.

**Planning History** – There have been no planning applications at this address.

### **The Application**

This application is pursued under subsection (1) of section 191 which provides for an application to determine whether a specified existing use, operation, or failure to comply with a planning condition or limitation, which has already been carried out on land is lawful for planning purposes.

**Evidence** – The following evidence has been submitted for consideration:

1. A site location plan edged in red.
2. Redacted Tenancy Agreements
3. Redacted Landlord Licence

#### 4. Existing Floor Plans

#### 5. Supporting Planning Statement

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 C4) commenced more than ten years prior to the date of the application (i.e. by 19th May 2013) 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.

2 Crofton Street is a 5 bedroom end-terraced two storey red brick built dwelling house with a blue/grey slate tiled roof property. The property has a small enclosed front garden and rear garden, the application form states that from the 24<sup>th</sup> August 2011 the property became a C4 use.

The documentation provided show that there has been consistently 4 to 5 persons occupying the property from September 2010 to August 2023 (tenancy began September 2022). For the years September 2011 to August 2017, the statement shows that this was a rolling contract. 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 Council have no evidence to raise any doubt to this claim. The objection raised concerns that a couple resided at the property in 2020, the tenancy agreements from the time show 5 persons at the property, therefore even if a couple lived in the property with 3 other tenants this would not have resulted in a change of use back to a C3 dwellinghouse as it would have remained within the definition for a C4 Use.

Therefore, on balance of probability and without any evidence to the contrary the properties have been in use a small house in multiple occupation and the certificate should be granted.

#### **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**

1 Crofton Street, Manchester, M14 4DX  
338 Great Western Street, Manchester, M14 4DS  
332 Great Western Street, Manchester, M14 4DS  
326 Great Western Street, Manchester, M14 4DS  
157 Acomb Street, Hulme, Manchester, M14 4DY  
4 Crofton Street, Manchester, M14 4DX  
3 Crofton Street, Manchester, M14 4DX  
342 Great Western Street, Manchester, M14 4DS  
340 Great Western Street, Manchester, M14 4DS  
334 Great Western Street, Manchester, M14 4DS  
330 Great Western Street, Manchester, M14 4DS  
328 Great Western Street, Manchester, M14 4DS  
324 Great Western Street, Manchester, M14 4DS  
322 Great Western Street, Manchester, M14 4DS  
161 Acomb Street, Hulme, Manchester, M14 4DY  
159 Acomb Street, Hulme, Manchester, M14 4DY  
6 Crofton Street, Manchester, M14 4DX  
5 Crofton Street, Manchester, M14 4DX

## **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  
Regulation 7 Direction (Control Advert) - Control Of To Let Boards (Moss Side)  
Area Team Boundary - Name: SOUTH AREA