

Planning and Affordable Housing Statement

Former Chorlton Leisure Centre,
Manchester Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy

On behalf of Mosscares St. Vincent's Housing Group

April 2023

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Former Chorlton Leisure Centre

Mosscafe St. Vincent's Housing Group

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Prepared by:	Jordan Clark	Jordan Clark	Jordan Clark
Checked by:	Hannah Walker	Hannah Walker	Hannah Walker
Authorised by:	Hannah Walker	Hannah Walker	Client

Barton Willmore, now Stantec
Tower 12
18/22 Bridge Street
Spinningfields
Manchester
M3 3BZ

Tel: 0161 817 4900

Ref: 33169/A5/JC/HW

Email: jordan.clark@bartonwillmore.co.uk

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Background

1.1 This Statement has been prepared by Barton Willmore, now Stantec on behalf of Mosscares St. Vincent's Housing Group (the "Applicant") in support of a full planning application for the demolition of the existing building and the construction of a later living apartment development at the former Chorlton Leisure Centre, Manchester Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy ('the Site').

1.2 The proposed description of development is as follows:

"Demolition of the former leisure centre and the erection of two buildings comprising later living apartments together with ancillary communal facilities and associated access, parking, bin store, amenity space and landscaping."

1.3 The Applicant's vision is to create a highly sustainable affordable residential development which will deliver 50 new apartments, allowing older persons to 'right size' into new high-quality accommodation more appropriate for their needs. Alongside this the proposals include a range of ancillary facilities - community space, communal garden, courtyard, resident lounge and scooter, cycle and car parking.

1.4 The proposals will be built to Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation (HAPPI) living principles. Each apartment will be bright, spacious and adaptable to meet changing needs over time, balconies and shared indoor and outdoor spaces will encourage social interaction and physical activity, storage facilities will provide space for belongings and the development will be highly energy efficient and sustainable in its design.

Mosscares St. Vincent's Housing Group (MSV)

1.5 The Applicant is a community-based landlord who work with their customers to provide homes across a range of tenures including properties for rent, affordable homes for sale, properties for older people including those with specialist needs and assisted supported accommodation for younger people.

1.6 The Applicant owns and manages almost 9,000 properties across Greater Manchester (GM), Lancashire, and West Yorkshire. They aim to deliver a further 1,000 dwellings over the next few years with a focus on delivering homes that are affordable, sustainable and have a positive impact in their community and neighbourhoods.

- 1.7 HAPPI Living principles have been fully embraced in MSV's new later living schemes. Over the last six years MSV have become recognised across Greater Manchester and beyond for their developments and share good practice with many local authority partners, fellow registered providers and social care commissioners. The proposed development will be the Applicant's fifth HAPPI Living scheme.

Purpose of the Statement

- 1.8 The purpose of this Statement is to set out the context of the proposed development and assess its compliance with the development plan and any other material considerations in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004).
- 1.9 More specifically, the Statement provides a description of the Site and its surroundings, the proposed development and the relevant up-to-date policy framework. It then assesses the proposals against the identified policy framework and the key material considerations and sets out the case in support of the proposed development.

Planning Application Package

- 1.10 The planning application is accompanied by a comprehensive range of supporting documents and plans which should be read in conjunction with this Statement. The scope of the planning application was agreed with Manchester City Council ('the Council'), as the local planning authority, during pre-application discussions.
- 1.11 Table 1 identifies each of the submission documents and their author.

Table 1: Planning Application Documents

Drawings	Author
Drawing Pack	Buttress
Landscape General Arrangement	Stephen Martlew
Landscape Sections	Stephen Martlew
Documents	Author
Planning Application Form and Certificates	Barton Willmore, now Stantec
Planning and Affordable Housing Statement	Barton Willmore, now Stantec
EIA Screening Opinion Request	Barton Willmore, now Stantec
Statement of Community Involvement	MSV
Archaeological Desk-based Assessment	Salford Archaeology
Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment	Azymuth Acoustics UK

Air Quality Assessment	Energy Counsel
Energy and Sustainability Statement	Energy Counsel
Daylight and Sunlight Analysis	Energy Counsel
Crime Impact Statement	GMP
Design and Access Statement	Buttress
Heritage Assessment	Buttress
Waste Management Strategy	Buttress
Landscape Design Report	Stephen Martlew
Draft Ecological Survey and Assessment	ERAP
Contractors Methodology	RCL
Arboricultural Impact Assessment	Lally
Arboricultural Method Statement	Lally
Transport Statement Volume 1	SK Transport
Transport Statement Volume 2 (including Interim Travel Plan)	SK Transport
Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy Report	Carley Daines
Phase 1 Preliminary Risk Assessment	Carley Daines

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Request

- 1.12 The Site and the proposals fall below the threshold for EIA development. However, the Applicant is submitting a formal request for a Screening Opinion pursuant to Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended). This is a precautionary measure given the presence of a non-designated heritage asset on the Site.
- 1.13 When considering the potential environmental impacts during the construction and operational phase our screening request concludes that the proposals do not constitute EIA development. This is because it is considered the proposals would not be likely to have a significant effect on the environment. The Council (as the Local Planning Authority) is requested to adopt a screening opinion to confirm that an Environmental Statement is not required.

Pre-Application Engagement

- 1.14 Prior to the submission of this planning application the Applicant has engaged with Officers at the Council, local Councillors, Unicorn Grocery and the local community.

- 1.15 The methods employed include social media engagement with local people, meetings with Councillors and Unicorn Grocery, working project group with Officer's, a pre-application meeting with the Local Planning Authority and a public consultation which was held on 28th February 2023 at Chorlton Library.
- 1.16 An overview of the pre-application engagement and feedback received is set out in the Statement of Community Involvement which supports this planning application.

Statement Structure

- 1.17 The remaining Sections of this Statement are structured as follows:
- Section 2 describes the site and the surroundings.
 - Section 3 outlines the relevant planning history at the Site.
 - Section 4 provides a description of the proposed development.
 - Section 5 summarises the development plan policies relevant to the determination of this application.
 - Section 6 outlines any other material considerations relevant to the determination of this application.
 - Section 7 assesses the proposals against the relevant development plan policies and material considerations.
 - Section 8 sets out the planning balance and provides concluding remarks.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

Site Location

- 2.1 The Site is situated to the east of Manchester Road in Chorlton-cum-Hardy, which lies approximately 4.5km to the south-west of Manchester City Centre.
- 2.2 As shown in Figure 1 below, the Site is bound by Unicorn Grocery supermarket to the south, Manchester Road to the west, Thirlmere Aqueduct to the north, and the Manchester Metrolink tram line and sidings to the east.
- 2.3 The Site lies within Chorlton District Centre as shown on the Council's adopted Proposals Map and is located at the top of the Manchester Road high street.

Figure 1: Site Aerial



Site Description

- 2.4 The Site comprises the former Chorlton Leisure Centre and associated car park. The Site can, therefore, be defined as previously developed land.

- 2.5 The original leisure centre building was constructed in the 1920's and includes single and two storey elements with a red brick and ashlar detailed facade. The original building has undergone many changes since it opened including the removal of the pitched roof over the swimming pool and sports hall, addition of parapet roof, modern single storey side extension to accommodate squash courts and accessibility improvements including an external ramp. The principal elevation fronts onto Manchester Road with a low brick wall along its frontage. The original building also shares a party wall with Unicorn Grocery to the south.
- 2.6 The car park that served the former leisure centre is located on the northern part of the Site. This is accessed off Manchester Road. The car park is enclosed by a paladin fence and gate making it inaccessible to the public. The eastern boundary of the Site is secured by a palisade fence where the land then falls away down to the tram line.
- 2.7 Following the closure of the leisure centre in June 2015 the Site has fallen into a state of disrepair and as shown in the photographs in Figure 2 below, there is evidence of graffiti, flyposting, and self-seeded vegetation in the car park, around the edges of the building, and on the roof. Windows and doors have also been bricked up or secured with shutters and metal panels.

Figure 2: Site Photograph



- 2.8 Internally, the northern wing of the former leisure centre contains the drained swimming pool. The poolside changing rooms have been removed from their original position. The

southern wing contains the former sports hall and the extension to the east the former squash courts. As shown in the photographs at Figure 3 below, the inside of the building has been vandalised and has also been occupied by squatters.

Figure 3: Internal Photographs



Surrounding Area

- 2.9 The surrounding area to the north, south and west and beyond the tram line to the east includes a mix of suburban residential development and town centre uses. Directly opposite the Site is a parade of shops which includes restaurants, an off license, bars, hot food takeaways and other retail uses with residential flats above. Directly to the south of the Site is the Unicorn Grocery supermarket.
- 2.10 The scale of surrounding buildings is typically 2 to 3 storeys. However, 3 storey buildings are more prevalent along Manchester Road and there is a 4-storey building less than 100m to the south of the Site on Manchester Road.

Statutory Designations

- 2.11 The Environment Agency Flood Risk Zone Map confirms that the Site lies within Flood Zone 1 and is at low risk from fluvial flooding. The tram line to the east of the Site is identifying as being within Flood Zone 2 however this is outside the Site boundary and sites at a lower level.
- 2.12 The Site is not within a Conservation Area and there are no designated heritage assets on or close to the Site that would be affected by the proposals. However, the Council has confirmed that the former Chorlton Leisure Centre should be treated as a non-designated heritage asset.
- 2.13 The Manchester Road and Kensington Road junction opposite the Site is within an Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA).

- 2.14 There are no other landscape or environmental designations which affect the Site.
- 2.15 As discussed further in Section 5, as shown on the adopted Core Strategy Proposals Map, the Site lies within Chorlton District Centre and the South Manchester Regeneration Area

Sustainable Location

- 2.16 The Site is in a highly sustainable location. As well as being within walking distance from a variety of shops and amenities in Chorlton District Centre, the Site is approximately a 650m walk from Chorlton tram station which sits on the East Didsbury to Rochdale line and the Manchester Airport to Manchester Victoria line. The station is served by frequent services throughout the week. Cycle parking is provided at the station.
- 2.17 Manchester Road is currently undergoing upgrades as part of the GM "Bee Network" (Chorlton Busy Beeway - area 3) including the provision of a new segregated cycleway which will further improve cycle routes in and out of Chorlton.
- 2.18 The Site is also along a high frequency bus corridor. The nearest bus stops are located on Manchester Road. The northbound stop is retained by the Chorlton Busy Beeway and a new bus stop is proposed to the south of the signalised crossing. From here there are services every 10 minutes (Monday to Friday) between West Didsbury and Piccadilly Gardens (service 86) and services also operate on a Sunday (three per hour) and in the evenings (four services per hour). Wilbraham Road (A6010) to the south of the Site also provides regular bus services to Manchester City Centre (no. 85) and the Trafford Centre (no. 150).
- 2.19 A Greater Manchester Accessibility Level (GMAL) calculation has been undertaken as part of the Transport Statement for the Site. A GMAL is calculated using the interactive tool managed and maintained by TfGM. This tool measures accessibility by public transport of a point of interest and provides a score between 1 and 8, where 1 is a low level of accessibility and 8 is the highest level of accessibility. The site has a GMAL of index of 7, which is a very high level of accessibility.
- 2.20 Overall, it can be concluded that the Site is in a highly sustainable location.

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 This Section provides an overview of the Site's planning history based on the Council's planning application search tool.
- 3.2 A table of the historic planning applications relating to the Site is included at **Appendix 1**. With the exclusion of applications for advertisement consent, we provide a summary of the relevant planning history below.
- 3.3 A planning application for the erection of 2-single storey buildings to form three squash courts to the rear of the swimming baths was approved by the Council on 5th February 1974 (ref. F02040/LA).
- 3.4 On 25th April 1984, the Council approved a planning application which sought to fill in one of the existing swimming pools to form a sports hall, replacement roof to sports hall, and alterations to changing areas to form additional toilets and showers (ref. 021353).
- 3.5 The Council later approved a retrospective planning application for a plant room at the roof of the sports centre which was granted planning permission on the 21st December 2004 (ref. 068949/FO/2003/S1)
- 3.6 The above planning history demonstrates that whilst the Site has been identified by the Council as a non-designated heritage asset, the Site has been subject to several changes over the years which has altered the original form of the building. The Leisure Centre ceased operations in 2015 and is now in a state of disrepair. Openings have been bricked up and secured with metal shutters and panels. Despite this the building has also been occupied by squatters in recent years.

4.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Background Context

- 4.1 The redevelopment of the former Chorlton Leisure Centre would see reinvestment in this longstanding vacant site to provide 50 much needed sustainable, high-quality affordable homes for older persons. The proposed development includes a mix of affordable rent, shared ownership and neighbourhood apartments alongside ancillary facilities including a residents lounge, community space and communal garden.
- 4.2 We understand from the Council that the proposals would be the first scheme to deliver new affordable homes in Chorlton since 2015. This is a substantial period of time, and the lack of delivery is compounded by the prices of open market houses in the suburb rising by 6.5% annually since 2015, and private rents rising by 5.2% annually over the same period. As such, whilst Chorlton is a highly desirable place to live, it has become increasingly unaffordable.
- 4.3 Demographically, we also understand that the population of older residents in Chorlton is also expected to increase by 2.2% per annum for the period to 2030 compared to the younger age profiles which are expected to rise by 1.1% for 35-54, and 0.8% 18-34 respectively.
- 4.4 Set in the context, the redevelopment of the Site to provide affordable homes for older persons will improve the housing choice for residents on lower incomes, help to meet the demand from households on the Housing Register and make an important contribution towards meeting future local housing needs. The proposals will also allow older residents to "right-size" into accommodation more appropriate for their needs. This will help to free up more family housing in Chorlton and the surrounding area by encouraging residents out of under occupied homes.
- 4.5 Full details of the proposed development are set out in the accompanying Design and Access Statement. However, a summary of the proposals is set out below.

Description of Development

- 4.6 The proposed development includes the demolition of all buildings and structures on the Site and the construction of a later living apartment development.
- 4.7 The proposed description of development is as follows:

"Demolition of the former leisure centre and the erection of two buildings comprising later living apartments together with ancillary communal facilities and associated access, parking, bin store, amenity space and landscaping."

Demolition

- 4.8 The former leisure centre and associated structures will be demolished to facilitate the construction of the proposed development. Further details regarding demolition are set out in the Contractors Methodology submitted with the application.

Use and Amount

- 4.9 Following the demolition of the leisure centre and associated structures, the Site will be redeveloped to provide 50no. new affordable apartments split between two buildings.
- 4.10 The development is targeted at older persons and will create a high-quality 'later living' affordable housing option for local people. Priority will be given to residents of Chorlton and Whalley Range who cannot afford an open market home (either working, on Universal Credit or retired) and or require accessible accommodation for health reasons.
- 4.11 The mix comprises 40no. homes for affordable rent, 7no. for shared ownership sale, and 3no. neighbourhood apartments.
- 4.12 The shared ownership dwellings will allow future residents to purchase up to 75% of the property meaning the Applicant retains a management stake and ensure the homes are only occupied by older persons in perpetuity.
- 4.13 The Applicant has a right sizing officer who will work closely with the Council's Housing Options for Council's Older People Officers to allocate the apartments for affordable rent. Following identification of suitable residents any further apartments would be available to those on the Housing Register.
- 4.14 The 3no. neighbourhood apartments will be used by the Council's social care team to provide local people leaving hospital, who are temporarily unable to return home, a place to stay.
- 4.15 A flexible community space will be provided on the ground floor of the western building bookable for local community groups. Other shared facilities will include a resident's lounge, communal garden, landscaped courtyard and scooter and cycle store.
- 4.16 The accommodation schedule for the proposed development is set out in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Accommodation Schedule

Type	Quantity
Affordable Rent	
1B2P Apartment	30
2B3P Apartment	10
Shared Ownership	
2B3P Apartment	7
Neighbourhood	
1B2P Apartment	2
2B3P Apartment	1

- 4.17 All apartments have been designed to meet or exceed the requirements set out in the Nationally Described Space Standards and to Part M4 Category 2 (Accessible Dwelling) principles. Two apartments will also be Part M(4) Category 3 Wheelchair Accessible. These will be located on the ground floor immediately adjacent to the accessible parking bays.

Layout, Scale and Massing

- 4.18 The proposed development will deliver two apartment buildings with a central lift core and external deck walkways on the upper floors as circulation routes between apartments.
- 4.19 At ground floor level the western building includes the 3no. neighbourhood apartments, a community space with its own entrance from Manchester Road. There is also a plant room, cycle and scooter store and residents entrance lobby and stairwell directly accessed from Manchester Road.
- 4.20 The eastern building includes 3no. apartments at ground floor level – two of which will be M4(3) compliant wheelchair apartments, the residents lounge which also benefits from direct access to the communal garden, courtyard and there is also the provision of a maintenance storeroom.
- 4.21 The communal garden will be located within the northern part of the Site and a landscaped courtyard is proposed between the two apartments buildings. The car park will be located on the southern part of the Site accessed from Manchester Road.
- 4.22 The proposed development will be five storeys in height and each floor above ground level will contain a mix of accommodation types with all apartments being dual aspect. A typical upper floor will include 4no. 2 bed apartments and 7no. 1 bedroom apartments.

Appearance

- 4.23 A palette of buff facing brickwork and bronze adonised or PPC aluminium is proposed to be used to soften the mass of the buildings. Dark contrast facing brick will also feature at ground floor level and at upper floors adjacent to windows at an alternative course to add architectural interest which will help to further break up the massing.
- 4.24 Above ground floor level the apartments will have generous balconies on each elevation. The balconies will include vertical flat bar railings and will have a contemporary appearance which reflect the colour of the building. The external deck walkways will include flat bar railings and the piers and beams are proposed to be constructed from a facing brick, GRC or concrete finish.
- 4.25 The main entrance on Manchester Road will consist of glazing on the upper floors. This will be set back to help break up the massing of the principal elevation with the entrance point projecting forward with an aluminium panel cladding surround.
- 4.26 A green wall is also proposed on the ground floor façade fronting Manchester Road. This emerged as a desired design feature from the pre-application engagement. An extract of the submitted northern visual is shown in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4: CGI of the Proposed Development from the North



Sustainable Design Principles

HAPPI Living Principles

4.27 The proposed development has been designed to meet the HAPPI Living principles. These have particular relevance to older persons housing which need to both offer an attractive alternative to the family home but be able to adapt over time to meet changing needs. The following key principles are reflected within the design:

- 1) Generous and flexible internal space.
- 2) Maximise natural daylight.
- 3) Avoids internal corridors and includes balconies and outdoor space.
- 4) 'Care ready' homes to adapt to emerging technologies.
- 5) A layout which encourages circulation and interaction.
- 6) Lively multi-purpose social spaces that serve as a community 'hub'.
- 7) Engages with the street and natural environment.
- 8) Energy efficient and sustainable design.
- 9) Adequate inside and outside storage.
- 10) 'Homezone' design of outside space with pedestrian priority.

Energy Efficiency

4.28 The proposed development will incorporate low carbon and energy efficient technologies to reduce carbon emissions and the occupant's energy costs.

4.29 Based on the 'Be Lean, Be Clean, Be Green' design hierarchy the proposed development will include the following measures:

- 1) Enhanced building fabric to meet the new Building Regulations ADL1 2021.
- 2) Enhanced air tightness and thermal bridging.
- 3) Efficient mechanical ventilation system with heat recovery.
- 4) Heating will be provided by highly efficient electric panel heaters.
- 5) Hot water will be provided by highly efficient air source heat pumps.
- 6) Efficient lighting strategy primarily using CFL or LED type fittings.

4.30 The proposed development will result in a 64% carbon emissions improvement and a 33% primary energy improvement over Building Regulations Part L1 2021.

Parking

- 4.31 The proposed development will include safe and secure internal scooter and cycle store on the ground floor of the western building accessible from the entrance lobby. This will provide space for one bike per apartment (double stacked) and space for 10 scooters for use by residents with charging points.
- 4.32 The car park to the south of the Site will include 19no. car parking spaces (including 2 accessible bays) with facilities available for EV charging for 5no. cars and infrastructure provided to facilitate future connections.

AccessVehicular

- 4.33 The existing access into the car park to the north of the Site will be removed and a new access point will be provided towards the southern part of the Site into the new car park via Manchester Road.
- 4.34 The access will provide a 5.5m width access road with corner radii of 4m. Visibility splays of 2.4m x 33m will be achieved. A gate with a fob access is proposed at the entrance to ensure the Site and car park is only accessible to residents.

Building Access

- 4.35 Pedestrian access for residents will be via the main entrance on Manchester Road via a fob access. The community space will have a separate entrance from Manchester Road which will be managed by the Applicant.

Servicing

- 4.36 The proposed development includes a new secure refuse store within the car park on the southern part of the Site. Residents will have fob access to dispose of waste.
- 4.37 All refuse collection will take place on site and refuse collectors will have access to a fob to gain entry to the Site and store. A turning head is provided within the car park to allow refuse vehicles to safely enter and leave the Site in a forward gear, and without being a hazard to motorists or cyclists along Manchester Road.
- 4.38 Full details relating to servicing can be found within the Waste Management Strategy which supports this planning application.

Landscaping

- 4.39 The proposed development will provide attractive yet functional communal spaces that seek to encourage social interaction, promote health and wellbeing, create new habitats for biodiversity and enhance the overall quality of the place.
- 4.40 The communal garden will be located to the north of the Site and will feature an attractive landscaping scheme that is available for both residents and community groups to enjoy. The communal garden will also include a growing area with raised beds.
- 4.41 The central courtyard will provide secluded spaces for sitting and meeting with residents and family and include the planting of 7no. trees.
- 4.42 Existing trees around the perimeter of the Site will be retained to provide shade and privacy and the proposals seek to plant new trees across the Site to provide an attractive green backdrop to the development. Seating and planting beds will also be provided for users to enjoy in the garden areas.
- 4.43 The frontage of the Site along Manchester Road will also be enhanced by new landscaping features such as trees and shrub planting.

Boundary Treatments

- 4.44 A 2.5m acoustic fence is proposed along the southern, eastern, and northern boundaries of the Site to provide a sense of enclosure and minimise adverse noise impacts associated with Manchester Road and the tram line. A 2.5m high acoustic masonry wall will also be provided along the western edge of the communal garden for privacy and to mitigate noise from the surrounding area. A lower 1.5m tall masonry wall will be provided at the front gardens of the western building and adjacent to the car park access.

Building Management

- 4.45 During the operational phase of development, the Applicant will be responsible for the overall management of the building, its services and grounds within its curtilage including tenancy allocations, tenancy sign-ups, ASB, benefits advice and facilities management.

5.0 THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Legislative Context

- 5.1 For decision-taking, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Development Plan

- 5.2 The statutory development plan for the purposes of determining this planning application comprises:
- *The Manchester Core Strategy (2012).*
 - *The 'saved' policies of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan (1995).*
 - *The Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Development Plan (2013).*
 - *The Greater Manchester Joint Waste Development Plan (2012).*
- 5.3 A summary of the relevant policies from the development plan are set out below.

The Manchester Core Strategy (2012)

- 5.4 The Manchester Core Strategy (herein referred to as the 'Core Strategy') was adopted by the Council in July 2012. The document sets out the strategic framework for growth and development in Manchester up to 2027.
- 5.5 By the end of the Plan period the Council's *Vision* is for Manchester to be a city with a growing economy and neighbourhoods where people choose to live all their lives because they offer a wide range of quality housing and an attractive environment where locally distinctive character is conserved and enhanced.
- 5.6 The Vision is supported by a series of Spatial Objectives. *Spatial Objective 3* aims to:

"Provide a significant increase in high quality housing provision at sustainable locations throughout the City, to both address demographic needs and to support economic growth. The emphasis will be on providing a good range of high-quality housing (in terms of size, type, tenure, accessibility and price) including affordable housing across the City; to create sustainable lifetime neighbourhoods with high quality environments, good local facilities and with easy access to employment opportunities."

- 5.7 The Core Strategy Proposals Map shows that the Site falls within the 'South Manchester Regeneration Area' and most of the Site sits within the boundary of 'Chorlton District Centre'. We consider the relevant policies relating to each of these designations below.

South Manchester Regeneration Area

- 5.8 South Manchester is stated as being an area of great contrast and diversity. Having developed from a series of smaller settlements, the area has gradually expanded to become one of the most sought-after residential locations in the wider conurbation. It contains some of the most expensive residential properties in Manchester and a higher proportion of affluent households than any of the other regeneration area and an above average proportion of the higher educated workforce.
- 5.9 Outside of the regional centre, *Policy SP1 (Spatial Principles)* states the emphasis is on the creation of neighbourhoods of choice, providing high quality and diverse housing around district centres which meet local needs, all in distinct environments. In addition, all new developments should have regard to the character, issues and strategy for each regeneration area as described in the Strategic Regeneration Frameworks (SRF).
- 5.10 Policy SP1 goes on to say that all new developments should promote walking, cycling, and the use of public transport, be well designed, enhance health and wellbeing, consider the needs of all members of the community, minimise emissions and re-use previously developed land wherever possible.
- 5.11 The spatial strategy is supported by *Policy H1 (Overall Housing Provision)*. This seeks to deliver 60,000 new dwellings across the City between March 2009 and March 2027. This equates to an average of 3,333 dwelling per annum (dpa). *Table 9.1* apportiones the overall housing requirement across each of the strategic regeneration areas. The Policy aims to deliver 3,240 dwellings in the South Manchester Regeneration Area over the Plan period.
- 5.12 Policy H1 goes on to say that new residential developments should:
- Take advantage of existing buildings where appropriate through refurbishment or rebuilding works. If this is not possible, development should contribute to new renewal of adjacent areas which contain vacant or derelict buildings. 90% of new residential development should be on previously developed land.
 - Contribute to creating mixed communities by providing house types to meet needs of a diverse and growing population, including elderly people and those with specific requirements. The type, size and tenure of the housing mix should be assessed on a site-by-site basis based on evidence of local need.

- Utilise previously developed land in sustainable locations.
- Have a design and density which contributes to the character of the area. Higher density developments should utilise balconies and shared open spaces. Schemes should also make provision for parking in line with Policy T2.
- Address any existing and future deficiencies in physical, social or green infrastructure that would arise from the development.
- Prioritise sites which are in close proximity to centres or high frequency public transport routes.
- Acknowledge any technical and environmental constraints and statutory designations.
- Be designed with privacy to residents and neighbours borne in mind.

5.13 Paragraph 9.8 which supports Policy H1 specifically acknowledges that there is a shortage of housing for the elderly and to meet this need new housing is necessary which is or can be adapted. This will include the provision of high-quality small units which will encourage older households in under-occupied socially rented houses to move into smaller units in their local area.

5.14 *Policy H6* relates specifically to new housing developments within the South Manchester Regeneration Area. The Policy states:

"South Manchester will accommodate around 5% of new residential development over the lifetime of the Core Strategy. High density development in South Manchester will generally only be appropriate within the district centres of Chorlton, Didsbury, Fallowfield, Levenshulme, and Withington, as part of mixed-use schemes...."

5.15 The supporting text confirms that the small proportion of housing requirement in this area is due to the lack of land available for new residential development. It recognises that:

"There is a need for higher densities in District Centres to meet the need for affordable housing and new or specialist housing in other areas to provide alternative high quality housing for people wishing to downsize."

5.16 In terms of other relevant Core Strategy policies, *Policy H8 (Affordable Housing)* requires all residential development on sites of 0.3 hectares and above or where 15 or more units are proposed to be in accordance with the *Providing for Housing Choice* document (or any future published SPD/SPG).

5.17 Part 1 of Policy H8 states that developers are expected to use the 20% target as a starting point for calculating affordable housing provision. It is envisaged that 5% of new housing

provision will be social or affordable rented and 15% will be intermediate housing. Part 2 says the proportion of affordable units should reflect the type and size of the development as a whole, and Part 3 confirms that affordable housing units should be inclusively designed to reflect the character of development on the site.

Chorlton District Centre

- 5.18 *Policy C1 (Centre Hierarchy)* states district centres have an essential role in providing key services to the City's neighbourhoods. This includes community uses. They are also the focus for the City's residential neighbourhoods, providing an important opportunity to define local character. Development in these centres should primarily respond to the needs of the catchment and recognise the need to support the viability and viability of other centres.
- 5.19 *Policy C2 (district centres)* confirms that housing is considered appropriate within District Centres, providing it supports the vitality and viability of the centre. It goes on to say that the Council will ensure that retail remains the principal use in Primary Shopping Areas, but also ensure that provision is made in District Centres for commercial and service uses, leisure and community facilities and other uses which make a positive contribution to the vitality and viability of centres.
- 5.20 Policy C2 supports the efficient use of land, particularly through considering options for multi-storey development. New development is also expected to respect and enhance the character of the District Centre, and opportunities should be taken to adopt sustainable building design and practises to assist in adapting to climate change.

Other Relevant Policies

- 5.21 In addition to the Core Strategy designations the Council has identified the Site as a non-designated heritage asset. *Policy EN3 (Heritage)* requires new developments to be designed to support the Council in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas and archaeological remains.
- 5.22 There are also several other policies that are relevant to the proposed development but have not been summarised above. These policies are as follows:
- T1: Sustainable Transport.
 - T2: Accessible Areas and Opportunity and Need.

- EN1: Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas.
- EN2: Tall Buildings.
- EN4: Reducing CO2 Emissions by Enabling Low and Zero Carbon Development.
- EN5: Strategic Areas for Low and Zero Carbon Infrastructure.
- EN6: Target Framework for CO2 Reduction from Low or Zero Carbon Energy Supplies.
- EN8: Adapting to Climate Change.
- EN9: Green Infrastructure.
- EN14: Flood Risk.
- EN15: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation.
- EN16: Air Quality.
- EN17: Water Quality.
- EN18: Contaminated Land and Ground Stability.
- EN19: Waste.
- DM1: Development Management.

Manchester Unitary Development Plan – Saved Policies 1995

- 5.23 The Manchester Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was adopted by the Council on 21st July 1995. A significant number of its policies were replaced by policies contained within the Core Strategy. However, several policies have been retained for development management purposes. Those relevant to the proposed development include:

- DC7.1: Accessibility.
- DC20.1: Archaeology.
- DC26.1 and DC26.2: Development and Noise.
- S1.2: District Centres.

The Greater Manchester Joint Waste Development Plan (2012)

- 5.24 The Greater Manchester (GM) Joint Waste Development Plan (Waste Plan) was formally adopted as part of Manchester's Development Plan in April 2012. The document was prepared jointly between the ten Greater Manchester authorities. The Waste Plan is not considered to contain any policies relevant to the proposed development, and so is not considered further within this Statement.

The Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Development Plan (2013)

- 5.25 The GM Joint Minerals Development Plan (Minerals Plan) was formally adopted as part of Manchester's Development Plan in April 2013. Like the Waste Plan, the Minerals Plan was

prepared jointly between the ten GM authorities and identifies how GM will deliver the spatial vision for minerals development to 2027.

- 5.26 Map 22 of the Joint Minerals Development Plan confirms the Site is not located within a Mineral Safeguarding Area. The Minerals Plan is therefore, not considered to contain any policies relevant to the proposed development, therefore, is not considered further within this Statement.

6.0 OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Introduction

6.1 In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, it is necessary to consider any other material considerations which are relevant to the application. In this instance the following documents are considered material:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (2021).
- National Planning Practice Guidance.
- National Design Guide (2021).
- Supplementary Planning Documents:
 - Providing for Housing Choice (2008);
 - Guide to Development in Manchester (2007); and
 - Manchester Residential Quality Guide (2017).
- Submission Draft Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (2021).
- Manchester City Council Authority Monitoring Report (2021).
- Greater Manchester Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2021).
- Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025.
- Manchester Housing Strategy 2022-2032.
- Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020-2025.

6.2 A summary of each document is set out below.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021)

6.3 National planning policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The most recent iteration was published by the Government in July 2021. Paragraph 2 and 219 confirm that the NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions.

6.4 The following key paragraphs are relevant to the determination of this application.

Sustainable Development

6.5 Paragraph 7 states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

6.6 Achieving sustainable development has three overarching objectives. These are defined in Paragraph 8 as:

- *An economic objective* – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- *A social objective* – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
- *An environmental objective* - to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment, including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigation and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

6.7 So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking, this means (paragraph 11):

"c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date⁸, granting permission unless:

i) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

6.8 Paragraph 12 confirms that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not alter the status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Planning Authorities may take decisions which depart from the development plan, only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed. The position is reiterated by paragraph 2 and 47.

Determining Applications

- 6.9 The NPPF makes clear that existing development plan policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of the NPPF. Due weight should be afforded to them according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the Plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater weight may be given) (Paragraph 219).
- 6.10 Paragraph 48 of the NPPF says that weight can be given to relevant policies in emerging plans according to its stage of preparation, the extent of to which there are unresolved objections, and the degree of consistency with policies in the NPPF.

Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

- 6.11 Paragraph 60 of the NPPF is clear that to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, and that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed.
- 6.12 Paragraph 62 states the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies which includes those who require affordable housing, families with children, and older people.
- 6.13 Paragraph 65 of the NPPF expects major residential developments to deliver at least 10% of the total provision to be available for affordable home ownership unless this would exceed the level of affordable housing required in the area, or significantly prejudice the ability to meet the identified affordable housing needs of specific groups.

Promoting healthy and safe communities

- 6.14 Planning policies and decisions should achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social interaction, are safe and accessible, and support healthy lifestyles (paragraph 92).
- 6.15 The NPPF sets out in paragraph 93 that, to provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:

"...c) guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs..."

e) ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services."

Making effective Use of land

6.16 The utilisation of previously developed land is supported, and Local Planning Authorities are encouraged to promote effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions (paragraph 119).

6.17 Paragraph 120 of the NPPF says policies and decisions should:

"...c. give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land.

d. promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively..."

(Highlighted for our emphasis)

Achieving well-designed places

6.18 Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creating better places in which to live and work and helping to make development acceptable to communities. Planning decisions should ensure that new developments will add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive, are sympathetic to local character and history, create places that are safe, and establish a strong sense of place (Paragraphs 126 and 130).

6.19 The provision and retention of trees is supported in paragraph 131 of the NPPF.

6.20 Paragraph 134 gives significant weight to:

a) "development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or

b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings."

Proposals affective heritage assets

- 6.21 Applicants should be required to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting (paragraph 194). The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance.
- 6.22 In determining planning applications, paragraph 197 states local planning authorities should take account of:
- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
 - b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
 - c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*
- 6.23 Paragraph 203 of the NPPF relates to developments which affect the significance of non-designated heritage assets. This states that a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
- 6.24 Other parts of the NPPF that are relevant to the proposed development include:
- Ensuring the vitality of town centres (paragraphs 86).
 - Transport and sustainable travel (paragraphs 104, 105, 110-113).
 - Achieving appropriate densities (paragraphs 124 and 125).
 - Planning for climate change (paragraphs 152, 154 and 157).
 - Flood risk (paragraph 159 and 167).
 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment (paragraphs 174 and 180).
 - Ground conditions and pollution (paragraph 183, 184, 185, and 186).

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

- 6.25 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) is a web-based resource that was first published in March 2012. It is regularly updated to provide guidance on the application of policies contained in the NPPF. The NPPG has been taken into consideration as part of this application as it provides best practice guidance for the technical considerations.

6.26 The most relevant sections of the NPPG to this planning application include:

- Climate change.
- Design: process and tools.
- Supporting more effective use of land.
- Historic environment.
- Housing: optional technical standards.
- Land affected by contamination.
- Affordable housing.
- Natural environment.
- Noise.
- Travel Plans, Transport Assessments and Statements.
- Housing for older and disabled people.
- Town centres and retail.

National Design Guide (2021)

6.27 The National Design Guide was published by the Government in January 2021. It provides guidance on how we achieve well designed places in practice by outlining and illustrating the Government's priorities in the form of ten characteristics. These are context, identity, built form, movement, nature, public spaces, uses, homes and buildings, resources and lifespan. Each of these characteristics has been considered as part of the design principles set out in the supporting Design and Access Statement.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

Providing for Housing Choice (2008)

6.28 The Providing for Housing Choice SPD was adopted by the Council in September 2008. The document sets an identical affordable housing tenure mix to the Core Strategy. However, it recognises that in some circumstances, where there is an identified need, provision of affordable housing will need to address more specific housing needs. This specialist type of provision can be delivered in several ways and the Council would seek to adopt a flexible approach to delivery.

Guide to Development in Manchester (2007)

6.29 The Guide to Development in Manchester SPD was adopted in April 2007 and includes guidance for the preparation of Design and Access Statements. The SPD covers a broad

range of design related issues covering general design, accessibility, environmental standards, streets, parking, and character areas.

- 6.30 Developments in District Centres are expected to enhance the character and quality of the centres and contribute to the upgrading of the public realm.
- 6.31 The Design and Access Statement which supports this Planning Statement has been informed by the guidance contained in the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD.

Manchester Residential Quality Guide (2017)

- 6.32 The Manchester Residential Quality Guide was prepared by consultants and adopted by the Council in March 2017. The document sets out the baseline minimum requirements and mandatory standards that all new residential proposals will be required to satisfy or exceed in order to be considered sustainable development.
- 6.33 The guidance requires residential developments to provide opportunities to bring people together through spaces for social interaction. Communal spaces such as gardens provide opportunities for residents to interact and facilitate safer and more cohesive places. Residential developments should offer the opportunity to bring neighbours together, while respecting privacy and personal territory and avoiding loitering.
- 6.34 The guidance states that development should consider how it might become adaptable in the future, taking into consideration changes in population that might take place in the future.
- 6.35 All developments should be designed to contribute to creating a safe and active street offering opportunities for natural surveillance and observation. The façade of the building should appreciate the existing context and character of the surrounding area, be of an appropriate scale and consider the use of a high-quality materials palette.
- 6.36 For apartment buildings, communal areas that provide an active interrelationship between private spaces between buildings and the public spaces externally is supported whilst also recognising the need for security and defensible space.
- 6.37 In terms of car parking, the guidance recognises the need to balance the provision of sufficient parking with the need to encourage different, more sustainable modes of transport to reduce dependence on the car. It recommends that outside the City Centre new apartment development will be expected to provide 100% parking provision as a starting point. However, it states that there may be scenarios where a reduced on-site provision is justified. This includes where secure cycle parking exceeds 50% provision

relative to apartment numbers or where robust research and evidence demonstrate that lower levels of car parking demand will be appropriate.

- 6.38 Developments which reduce the need for energy through energy efficient features are encouraged, and the guidance supports the incorporation of sustainable design approaches appreciating the solar aspect of façades and window sizes in new developments.
- 6.39 The guidance states bin storage should be carefully considered so that they integrate into the design without having a negative impact on the surrounding environment. The guidance seeks to encourage walking and cycling and suggests storage for cycle parking should be designed so it feels safe with clear unobstructed views into and from the cycle storage.

Submission Draft Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE) (2021)

- 6.40 The submission draft of the Places for Everyone was published in August 2021 and has been produced by Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) to provide a long-term plan for jobs, new homes, and sustainable growth for nine of Greater Manchester's districts. Once PfE is adopted it will form part of Manchester's development plan.
- 6.41 Although PfE is yet to be formally adopted, it has been submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination and so is at an advanced stage and is a material consideration. As such, it should be afforded weight in the determination of the planning application in line with paragraph 48 of the NPPF.

Manchester City Council's Authority Monitoring Report (2021)

- 6.42 The Council's latest Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) covers the monitoring period April 2020 to March 2021.
- 6.43 The Council's AMR confirms the delivery of 461 net affordable dwellings across the city in the year 2020/21, which accounts for only 10% of the total delivery of new homes.
- 6.44 Whilst this is the highest rate of delivery since 2012, the Council has persistently failed to deliver affordable housing in the city since the Core Strategy was adopted. There is, therefore, an urgent need to provide this type of accommodation to address this shortfall.

Greater Manchester Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2021)

- 6.45 The Greater Manchester Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (April 2021) forms part of the evidence base for PfE and provides the most up-to-date published evidence with regards to housing needs across Greater Manchester.
- 6.46 In terms of affordable housing, the SHMA identifies a net annual affordable housing need of 1,810 dwelling in Manchester (Tables 7.14 and 7.15). Table 7.2 also confirms that there is a total of 5,997 households in Manchester on the housing waiting list.
- 6.47 Regarding homes for older persons, Figure 4.7 confirms that for the period 2016 to 2036 the population for all age groups over the age of 55 is projected to significantly increase across Greater Manchester with 65-74 age group increasing by 28%, 75-84 by 44% and the eldest group of over 85 expected to increase by 79%.
- 6.48 Table 6.2 of the SHMA sets out the percentage of one-person households in Manchester by age band. The table demonstrates that, on average, approximately half of the over 55's population in Manchester live alone. However, new one bedroom properties tend to be marketed towards young professionals within the private rented sector. As such, older people in Manchester are occupying larger homes due a lack of a suitable supply. The SHMA also confirms that, of the properties occupied by those over 65's across Greater Manchester, almost half have 2+ spare bedrooms.

Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025

- 6.49 The Our Manchester Strategy document sets out the views from Manchester's residents, businesses, voluntary and community sector, public sector partners and wider stakeholders (3,800 respondents) on what the future priorities for Manchester should be.
- 6.50 Creating a choice of housing in liveable neighbourhoods across all the city and pioneering zero-carbon solutions and improving green spaces are key aims. Creating sustainable, safe, resilient and cohesive neighbourhoods, with more affordable housing is a key priority within the document.

Manchester Housing Strategy 2022-2032

- 6.51 The Housing Strategy sets out how the Council intend to provide the homes that residents want and need. It confirms that there are currently 68,000 social rented homes which is the fewest for 40 years. It also recognises that more homes are needed and sets a target of delivering 36,000 new homes by 2032. 10,000 over the next ten years are proposed to be affordable – with as many social rented homes to be provided as possible.

6.52 The Housing Strategy identifies the four following vision principles:

- 1) Increase affordable housing supply and build more new homes for all residents.
- 2) Work to end homelessness and ensure housing is affordable and accessible to all.
- 3) Address inequalities and create neighbourhoods where people want to live.
- 4) Address the sustainability and zero-carbon challenges in new and existing housing.

6.53 The strategy seeks to ensure that more than 80% of all homes built by 2032 are on brownfield sites close to public transport.

6.54 The Strategy is committed to encouraging and promoting right-sizing across all tenures to release family homes. It confirms that this approach involves providing suitable homes for older residents which enables homes for families to be freed up. This will help to achieve the goal of providing neighbourhoods of choice.

6.55 Regarding sustainability and carbon challenges, and in light of the Council's ambition to be a zero-carbon city by 2038, the Council will adopt an agreed standard to monitor the delivery of low-carbon homes as part of Manchester's residential pipeline and will also explore the opportunities linked to low-carbon Construction methods.

Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020 - 2025

6.56 The Manchester Climate Change Framework (2020-2025) was published in February 2020 and sets out the Council high level strategy for Manchester to be a thriving, zero carbon, climate resilient city.

6.57 The framework is based on the following four objectives:

- 1) Staying within carbon budgets.
- 2) Climate adaptation and resilience.
- 3) Improve Health and wellbeing.
- 4) Inclusive, zero carbon and climate resilient economy.

6.58 To meet these objectives, six priority areas have been identified which include buildings, renewable energy, transport, food, shopping, and green infrastructure.

7.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

7.1 Having regard to the Site's location, background context, the development plan, and other material considerations, we have identified the following considerations that are relevant to the determination of this application:

- Principle of demolition.
- Principle of development.
- Design.
- Archaeology.
- Highways matters.
- Trees.
- Ecology.
- Flood risk and drainage.
- Pollution.
- Waste management.

7.2 Our assessment draws on the findings of the technical documents submitted in support of this application. Each of the above considerations is dealt with in turn below.

Principle of Demolition

Loss of a Former Community Facility

7.3 The proposed development includes the demolition of the former Chorlton Leisure Centre to facilitate the construction of the proposed development.

7.4 Paragraph 93 of the NPPF states to provide the social, recreational, and cultural facilities that communities need decisions should guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs.

7.5 The leisure centre closed in 2015 because the building became too expensive to maintain and due to it being replaced by new more modern facilities at Hough End Leisure Centre. As the Site has not functioned as a leisure centre or had any other active community use for over 7 years the redevelopment of this derelict site for an alternative use would not reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs.

- 7.6 It is understood that the former leisure centre was designated as an Asset of Community Value following its closure. Although this designation has now expired the Applicant and the Council are keen to ensure that any future development on the Site reinstates a civic use that benefits the community. As such, the proposed development includes a bookable community space with access to the onsite communal garden. This will provide a valuable local asset that will serve as a 'hub' for a range of local community groups.
- 7.7 The redevelopment of the Site would also offer other public benefits in terms of meeting affordable housing needs, placemaking, improving the vibrancy and vitality of Chorlton District Centre and through the creation of direct and indirect employment through the construction phase. Set in this context, the principle of the demolition of the buildings on the Site is deemed acceptable in the context of paragraph 93 of the NPPF.

Loss of a Non-Designated Heritage Asset

- 7.8 The former Chorlton Leisure Centre has identified by the Council as a non-designated heritage asset. Core Strategy Policy EN3 seeks to preserve or, where possible, enhance Manchester's historic environment. This broadly aligns with paragraph 197 of the NPPF which states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:
- a) the desirability of sustaining the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable use consistent with their conservation;
 - b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
 - c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 7.9 Paragraph 203 of the NPPF also advises that in weighing applications which would directly affect a non-designated heritage asset, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
- 7.10 A Heritage Assessment has been prepared by Buttress in support of planning application. This aims to provide an understanding of the heritage significance of the asset and assess the potential impacts of the proposed development on this significance. The significance assessment has used recognised criteria to assess the heritage significance of the Site and the conclusions of this are set out below:
- **Architectural & Artistic Interest:** The Heritage Assessment indicates that the building holds some architectural interest due to its good quality art deco design

that is unique to its context and reflective of the era it was constructed. However, the leisure centre has been modernised over time and consequently many of the original external and internal features of the building have been lost. This includes the removal of the pitched roof over the swimming pool and sports hall, addition of parapet roof and modern single storey side extension to provide squash courts, external ramp, blocking up of openings, and replacement of the original red brick boundary wall with a low stone wall. These modifications have made the overall design and form of the building less legible. The architectural interest of the Site is, therefore, considered to be low.

- **Historical Interest:** The Heritage Assessment indicates that the Site derives historic interest from its strong communal value linked to its former use as a swimming bath's. However, its historic interest is limited specifically to Chorlton and the local area and is of no specific regional or national importance. The site also does not specifically relate to any significant historic events or person. The historic interest of the Site is, therefore, assessed as being low.

7.11 Although the Site has local historic interest linked to its former use as a swimming baths the building has been vacant for several years and the reintroducing of this use is not deemed to be a viable option due to costs associated with the refurbishment and future maintenance of the building and given the availability of more modern facilities at Hough End Leisure Centre. As such, the preservation of the building for this use is not a desirable option. However, a community space that can be used by local groups is proposed as part of the development. This ensures the historic communal value associated with the Site is preserved.

7.12 Architecturally the building retains some interest due to its art deco design which reflects the character of the era. However, as set out above, the building has been subject to a number of modern interventions since it opened and many of the original features of the building have now been lost which has eroded its architectural value. The Applicant has considered whether the building could be preserved to accommodate the proposed development. However, as detailed the Design and Access Statement, this is not a viable option for the following reasons:

- 1) The existing finished floor levels of the building is approximately 1.2 metres higher than the street level which prohibits level access thresholds suitable for later living on ground floor units.
- 2) The existing facade does not align with the floorplate height typically associated with residential apartments. Furthermore, the proposed residential development

seeks to maximise this relatively small Site and will consist of five storeys whereas the existing front facade is two storeys which restricts the efficient use of the Site for residential development and limits suitable elevational options above the existing building line and that would be sympathetic to the streetscape and area.

- 3) Viability constraints (due to inflationary pressures arising from Covid-19 and the Russo-Ukraine War) have restricted the opportunity for adaptive re-use and facade retention given the associated retention and adaptation costs. It is more viable to provide a new high-quality apartment scheme for residents that maximises the HAPPI Living Principles compared to adapting a constrained existing building.

7.13 Based on the above, it is not considered viable or desirable to preserve the building for its architectural significance or its historical significance as a swimming baths. However, its local communal value will be preserved through the provision of a bookable community space as part of the proposed development.

7.14 The demolition of the former Chorlton Leisure Centre will result in the total loss of a non-designated heritage asset which is of low heritage significance and is considered to result in a slight adverse impact. However, the slight adverse impact resulting from the loss of this non-designated heritage asset is judged to be outweighed by the significant public benefits associated with the proposed development. Those benefits, and the weight we consider should be attributed to each benefit is as follows:

- The delivery of 50no. later living apartment. This will improve the housing choice for residents on lower incomes, help to meet the demand from households on the Housing Register, contribute towards meeting local and national housing targets, address affordable housing needs and allow older persons to right size into accommodation more suitable for their needs freeing up more family housing in the local area - substantial weight.
- The proposed development includes the provision of a bookable community space that will provide a valuable community asset in keeping with the historic civic use of the Site.- substantial weight.
- Making the most effective use of an underutilised site in a sustainable location to deliver much needed homes and a new community facility that will increase footfall to support the vitality and viability of Chorlton District Centre and reduce the pressure to develop on greenfield land – substantial weight.
- Provision of a high quality and attractive development that will improve the visual amenity of this neglected site and enhance the overall appearance of Chorlton District Centre – substantial weight.

- The redevelopment of the Site and improvements to the environment will address existing anti-social behaviour issues and criminal activity to create a place where existing and future residents feel safe, and the likelihood of crime is reduced – substantial weight.
- Provision of 3 neighbourhood apartments to provide local people leaving hospital, who are temporarily unable to return home, a place to stay will help to reduce pressure on the NHS – moderate weight.
- The redevelopment of the Site to provide an energy efficient and sustainably designed residential development – moderate weight.
- Economic benefits associated with the creation of direct and indirect employment through the construction phase and through the increase in local expenditure in Chorlton District Centre during the operational phase – moderate weight.
- Enhanced landscaping, tree planting, and a net gain in biodiversity - moderate weight.

7.15 The wide range of benefits associated with the proposed development, most of which can be given substantial weight, are considered too far outweigh the slight adverse impact identified from the loss of the non-designated heritage asset. On balance the principle of the demolition of the asset should, therefore, be supported.

Principle of Development

Re-use of previously developed land

- 7.16 The proposed development would see reinvestment in this longstanding derelict site to provide 50 much needed sustainable high-quality affordable homes for older persons in Chorlton District Centre. This accords with Core Strategy Policy SP1 which encourages the re-use of previously developed land and Policy H1 which supports the development of new housing that include the renewal of areas which contain vacant and derelict buildings and utilises previously developed land in sustainable locations.
- 7.17 Core Strategy Policies SP1 and H1 are consistent with paragraph's 119 and 120 of the NPPF. Paragraph 119 promotes the effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and paragraph 120 says substantial weight should be afforded to proposals which utilise brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs.
- 7.18 Based on the above, there is strong support for the redevelopment of this derelict site for housing.

Housing Provision

- 7.19 Core Strategy Policy H1 seeks to deliver approximately 60,000 new dwellings over the plan period up to 2027 (3,333dpa) with circa. 3,240 of these dwellings to be delivered in South Manchester. However, it is acknowledged by the Council that these figures are out of date and the emerging housing requirement, as set out in the Submission Draft PfE, is to deliver 3,533 dwellings per annum in Manchester for the period 2022-2039.
- 7.20 The development of 50no. new apartments on the Site will assist the Council in meeting its future housing needs and in achieving the Government's objective to significantly boost the supply of homes as set out in paragraph 60 of the NPPF.
- 7.21 As shown on the adopted Proposals Map the Site is located within the South Manchester Regeneration Area and most of the Site falls within Chorlton District Centre.
- 7.22 Core Strategy Policy H6 relates specifically to the delivery of new housing developments within the South Manchester Regeneration Area. This support higher density development in District Centres and the supporting text recognises that there is a need for high density development to meet the need for affordable housing in other areas to provide alternative high-quality housing for people wishing to downsize. As the proposal would deliver high density affordable housing in a District Centre the proposals accord with Policy H6.
- 7.23 Core Strategy Policy C2 also confirms that housing is appropriate within district centres where it will support the vitality and viability of the centre. The Site currently offers no benefit to the vitality or viability of Chorlton District Centre. In fact, due to its inactive use and its poor condition, it detracts from it. The residents of the proposed development will increase footfall and expenditure within the centre and the investment in the Site to deliver a high-quality residential development will improve the visual amenity of this neglected site at a key gateway into Chorlton District Centre. These factors will in turn will support the future vitality and viability of centre and the role it plays at the heart of the local community in accordance with Core Strategy Policy C2, paragraph 86 of the NPPF and Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 2b-001-20190722 of the NPPG.
- 7.24 Overall, the proposal will contribute towards meeting future housing needs in the city and the redevelopment of the Site for housing will enhance the vitality and viability of Chorlton District Centre. The development plan provides strong support for the principle of housing on the Site and aligns with Core Strategy Strategic Objective 3 which seeks to significantly increase high quality housing provision at sustainable locations throughout the city. For these reasons, the Council should support the principle of housing development on the Site.

Affordable Housing

- 7.25 As well as providing a valuable contribution towards the delivery of much needed homes within South Manchester and Manchester as a whole, the proposed development will be 100% affordable.
- 7.26 As set out in Section 5, the 2021 AMR recognises that the Council has persistently failed to deliver affordable housing in the city since the Core Strategy was adopted in 2012 and the Greater Manchester SHMA indicates that there is a net annual affordable housing need of 1,810 dwellings in Manchester with 5,997 households on the housing waiting list.
- 7.27 Despite the recent significant increase in apartment developments in the city, very few affordable apartments are being delivered on these sites. This is understood to be related to high land values and services changes. As such, the need for smaller affordable units is also not being met and is highly unlikely to be met in the City Centre in the future. This type of accommodation must, therefore, be delivered in alternative sustainable locations.
- 7.28 It is clear from the above that there is an urgent need for smaller affordable homes across the city to address the current shortfall and future needs. This is further emphasised in the Council's Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025 and the Manchester Housing Strategy 2022-2032. This sets a clear vision to provide 10,000 new affordable homes across the city during this period.
- 7.29 At a local level, we understand from the Council that no new affordable homes have been delivered in Chorlton since 2015. This is a substantial period of time, and the lack of delivery is compounded by the prices of open market housing in the suburb rising by 6.5% annually since 2015, and private rents rising by 5.2% annually over the same period. The Core Strategy also confirms that South Manchester comprises some of the most expensive homes in Manchester and a higher proportion of affluent households than any of the other regeneration area. As a result, it has become increasingly unaffordable.
- 7.30 Set in this context, the redevelopment of the Site to provide 55no. affordable apartments will add to the diversity of housing in Chorlton and across the city, increase housing choice for residents on lower incomes, help to meet the demand from households on the Housing Register and will make an important contribution towards meeting existing and future local needs for affordable housing.
- 7.31 The level of affordable housing provided as part of the proposed development far exceeds the 20% requirement set out in Core Strategy Policy H8 and the 10% requirement set out in paragraph 65 of the NPPF.

- 4.46 The proposed housing mix has been chosen to address the specific housing needs of older persons. To meet the need for smaller affordable homes and to address the demand from households on the housing register most of the proposed apartments (40 dwellings) are proposed to be for affordable rent. To meet the needs of those looking to downsize but wanting to retain an element of ownership 14% (7 dwellings) will be for shared ownership. 6% (3 dwellings) will be designated as neighbourhood apartments. These will be used by the Council's social care team to provide local people leaving hospital, who are temporarily unable to return home, a place to stay. The proposed development will help to meet the different needs of older persons and therefore, the proposed mix is deemed appropriate in accordance with Core Strategy Policy H1.

Housing for Older Persons

- 7.32 The elderly population across the UK has and continues to grow significant, and the rapid increase in the population aged 55 and over will further increase the need for accommodation suited to the meet the needs of older persons.
- 7.33 Consequently, the Government has identified the need to provide housing suitable to meet the needs of older persons as critical. This is reflected in paragraph 55 of the NPPF which requires local planning authorities to significantly boost the supply of homes to meet the needs of different groups such as older persons.
- 7.34 The national increase in the demand for older persons accommodation is reflected in regional and local trends in Greater Manchester and Chorlton. Figure 4.7 of the Greater Manchester SHMA confirms that for the period 2016 to 2036 the population for all age groups over the age of 55 is projected to significantly increase across Greater Manchester with 65-74 age group increasing by 28%, 75-84 by 44% and the eldest group of over 85 expected to increase by 79%. Locally, we understand from the Council that the population of older residents in Chorlton is also expected to increase by 2.2% per annum to the period to 2030 compared to the younger age profiles which are expected to rise by 1.1% for 35-54, and 0.8% 18-34 respectively.
- 7.35 The Greater Manchester SHMA also confirms that, on average, approximately half of the over 55's population live alone, and approximately half of the properties occupied by those over 65 across Greater Manchester have 2+ spare bedrooms.
- 7.36 Core Strategy Policy H1 requires new residential development to take account of the need to create mixed communities and provide types of homes to meet the needs of a diverse and growing population – including elderly people. The 'Providing for Housing Choice' SPD also recognises that in some circumstance, where there is an identified need, the provision

of affordable housing will need to address more specific housing needs and the Council should seek to adopt a flexible approach to delivery.

- 7.37 It is clear the redevelopment of the Site to provide 50no. apartments designed specifically to meet the needs of older persons will make a valuable contribution towards meeting the existing and future needs of this demographic and will also allow older people to 'right size' into accommodation more appropriate for their needs. This will help to free up more family housing in a highly desirable part of the city by encouraging residents out of under occupied homes. This aligns with the Council's Housing Strategy 2022-2032 which promotes and encourages 'right sizing'.
- 7.38 Based on the above, there is clear support for housing for older people in line with Core Strategy Policies H1 and H6. The provision of affordable housing to meet the needs of older people is key benefit of the proposals which should be afforded significant weight.

Community Space

- 7.39 The proposals include the provision of a new community space. This can be reserved by local community groups who will also be able to use the communal garden. This provision will further enhance the vitality and viability of the District Centre by providing a valuable local asset that will serve as a 'hub' for a range of local community groups. This accords with Core Strategy Policies C1 and C2 and saved Policy S1.2 of the UDP which support the improvement and re-development of existing District Centres to ensure that they remain the focus for both shopping and a full range of community facilities.

Summary

- 7.40 The proposed development will make the most effective use of this neglected site in a highly sustainable location to provide 50 much needed affordable homes for older persons. The proposals will improve the housing choice for residents on lower incomes, help to meet the demand from households on the Housing Register, contribute towards meeting local and national housing targets, address affordable housing needs and allow older persons to right size into accommodation more suitable for their needs freeing up more family housing in the local area. The proposals, therefore, accord with Core Strategy Policies SP1, H1, H6 and H8.
- 7.41 The residents of the proposed development will also increase footfall and expenditure in Chorlton District Centre and the investment in the Site to deliver a high-quality residential development that will improve the visual amenity of this neglected site. The proposals also include the provision of a community space for use by local community groups. The

proposals will, therefore, support the future vitality and viability of the district centre and the role it plays at the heart of the local community in accordance with Core Strategy Policies C1 and C2, saved Policy S1.2 of the UDP and paragraph 86 of the NPPF.

- 7.42 Overall, the development plan when read as a whole provides strong support for the principle of development on the Site and ultimately aligns with paragraph 60 of the NPPF which seeks to significant boost the supply of homes, and paragraph 62 which seeks to meet the needs of different groups, in addition to the Council's Housing Strategy and Spatial Objective 3 of the Core Strategy which seeks to provide a significant increase in affordable housing provision at sustainable locations throughout the City, to both address demographic needs and support economic growth.
- 7.43 It is, however, acknowledged the proposed development must also be assessed against other relevant development plan policies and material consideration set out in Sections 4 and 5 of this Statement. Our planning assessment in relation to these matters is set out in below.

Design

- 7.44 The design of the proposed development has been informed by the requirements of Core Strategy Policies DM1, H1, C2, EN1, EN4, EN5, EN6, EN8 and SP1, the Manchester Residential Quality Guide SPD, Guide to Development in Manchester SPD, National Design Guide, NPPG and paragraph 130 of the NPPF. Our assessment of the proposals against the relevant policies relating to layout, scale, massing, appearance, landscaping, sustainability and energy efficiency, and crime prevention is set out below.

Layout

- 7.45 The design of the layout has been influenced by the HAPPI Living principles. The buildings have been laid out to generate dual aspect apartments with external deck walkways on the upper floors to maximise natural daylight into apartments and to encourage social interaction between residents.
- 7.46 The apartments have been designed to exceed NDSS standards and provide generous and flexible spaces that can be adapted to meet the changing needs of residents over time. The eastern building also includes 2no. wheelchair accessible apartments at ground floor level which will provide convenient access for wheelchair users from the accessible car parking bays located directly to the south.

- 7.47 The layout of the buildings ensure the proposed development has an active frontage onto Manchester Road, can accommodate an appropriate level of onsite parking that does not dominate the street scene as well as provide generous outdoor spaces. There will be at least a 24m separation distance between the existing upper floor flats and proposed apartments on Manchester Road and combined with the set back from the northern and southern boundaries the proposal will protect the privacy and outlook of existing and future residents.
- 7.48 The location of the communal garden and courtyard means these areas can be accessed directly from apartments, the community space and residents lounge creating shared spaces that promote social interaction between people that might not otherwise meet. The proposed boundary treatments will provide privacy to those using these spaces. Each of the upper floor apartments will also have a generous sized balcony providing private amenity space for residents and natural surveillance over the street and shared spaces.
- 7.49 The main entrance, stairwell and scooter and cycle store have been purposefully located on the Manchester Road frontage to encourage active travel and movement through the development. The entrance to the community space is also located on Manchester Road to ensure it is highly visible from the high street. The parking and servicing is located in the southern part of the Site to minimise the interaction between vehicles and pedestrians.
- 7.50 Overall, the layout makes the most efficient use of the Site, contributes to the character of the area, meet the needs of its residents, encourages social interaction and active travel and has been designed to protect the amenity of existing and future residents. The proposals, therefore, accord with the relevant policies outlined above.

Scale, Height and Massing

- 7.51 The proposed development will deliver 2no. five-storey apartment buildings on the Site. Although this exceeds the general height of other buildings in the surrounding area, to soften the mass of the buildings a restrained material palette of buff brickwork and bronze anodised or PPC aluminium has been chosen. The horizontal brick banding at ground floor level, recessed windows and entrance with vertical glazing above, decked walkways and landscaping would also serve to soften and break up the mass of the development when viewed from Manchester Road. Set in this context, the scale and massing of the buildings combined with their architectural quality ensures the proposed development contributes positively as a landmark building at the northern gateway to Chorlton District Centre and is of a height that this is appropriate and sympathetic to its district centre location in accordance with Core Strategy Policies H1, H6, C2, EN2 and DM1.

Appearance

- 7.52 The proposals will use a palette of high-quality materials including buff facing brickwork, bronze aluminium to give the development a distinctive and contemporary appearance. The vertical glazing on the principal elevation, contrasting brick banding, balconies and contrasting materials including a green wall at the entrance points will add further visual interest to the development. Overall, the architectural approach to the appearance of the building would deliver an attractive contemporary development that would make a positive contribution within the street scene.

Crime and Security

- 7.53 A Crime Impact Statement has been prepared by Greater Manchester Police in support of this planning application. In summary, the Statement concludes:

- The proposed development will remove anti-social behaviour and criminal activity associated with the Site.
- The proposed development is well designed and has a suitable amount of defensible space around the perimeter to deter anti-social behaviour and unwanted access into the Site.
- The proposed communal entrance to the main building and the proposed car park are suitably located.
- The proposed layout facilitates natural surveillance, and the provision of off-street-parking reduces the risk of the vehicles of residents being targeted by offenders.
- There are clear distinctions between public, semi-private and private space.
- Secure cycle/scooter parking has been included.

- 7.54 The Statement also makes a series of recommendations in relation to window and doors, access controls, boundary treatments, surfacing, lighting and CCTV. These features have either been incorporated into the design of the proposals or, if agreed to be appropriate and necessary, can be secured by a suitably worded condition.

- 7.55 Considering the above, the proposals will provide a safe environment for future users and has been designed to deter future criminal activity in accordance with Core Strategy Policy DM1.

Landscaping and Open Space

- 7.56 The landscaping strategy is driven by the HAPPI Living principles and the need for the proposals to engage with the street and existing natural environment as well as provide meaningful spaces for residents to use and enjoy.
- 7.57 It is recognised that the mature street trees along the Manchester Road frontage and around the perimeter of the Site make a positive contribution to the character of the area. The retention of these trees alongside the planting of new trees and shrubs within and around the edges of the development will provide a high-quality environment that would respond positively to the suburban character of Chorlton.
- 7.58 The communal garden in the northern part of the Site includes a growing area with raised beds, shrub planting, new trees and seating. This will provide an attractive outdoor space that promotes interaction, encourages biodiversity and supports the health and wellbeing of residents. The central courtyard provide a more sheltered outdoor space that is tranquil and quiet and offers residents a place to sit and reflect within a pleasant, landscaped setting.
- 7.59 Overall, the proposed development would create a high quality and attractive landscaped environment that improves the amenity of the area, improves residents' health, stimulates wellbeing and brings positive benefits in terms of biodiversity and climate change. The proposal, therefore, accords with the relevant policies outlined above.

Sustainability and Energy Efficiency

- 7.60 As detailed in the Energy and Sustainability Statement (E&SS), in accordance with Core Strategy Policy EN4, the proposed development includes a range of sustainable design features to minimise carbon emissions based on the 'Be Lean, Be Clean, Be Green' design hierarchy. These measures include enhanced building fabric, enhanced air tightness and thermal bridging, efficient mechanical ventilation system, electric panel heaters, efficient lighting and use of air source heat pumps for hot water. The reason for discounting other low/zero carbon technologies is summarised in Section 9.1 of the E&SS.
- 7.61 As required by Core Strategy EN5 the E&SS considers whether the proposed development could connect into an existing District Heating Network (DHN) or Communal Heating Network (CHN). The E&SS concludes that an existing DHN is not deemed sufficiently close for the Site to connect into and in any event heating and hot water demand from the proposed development is too small to justify connection to a DHN or CHN. On that basis connecting to an existing network is not feasible.

- 7.62 Overall, the E&SS concludes that the use of high efficiency heat pumps will reduce carbon emissions by 64% and provide a primary energy reduction of 33% when compared to the new building regulations Part L 2021. These regs are a 31% improvement on the 2013 regs, which in turn were a 6% improvement on the 2010 regs upon which the targets in Core Strategy Policy EN6 are based. As such, the overall improvement, based on 2010 build regs standards is 101% betterment, which is greater than the requested 15%.

Archaeology

- 7.63 An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment has been submitted in support of this planning application. This assesses the potential and significance of below ground archaeological remain within the Site. The Assessment concludes that there is little evidence to suggest that prehistoric, Roman or medieval remains survive within the Site, especially given the later development. The most likely remains include agricultural soils associated from the post-medieval and industrial period.
- 7.64 Any such below-ground remains that do exist within the Site are likely to be of limited archaeological value and have limited potential to address the research agenda listed in the North West Regional Research Framework. On that basis the Site is considered to have negligible archaeological potential and the proposals is deemed to accord with Core Strategy Policy EN3 and saved Policy DC20.1 of the UDP.

Highways Matters

- 7.65 A Transport Statement (TS) has been prepared in support of this planning application. This provides an assessment of the Site's accessibility by sustainable modes, details the proposed access strategy, includes justification for the proposed parking provision and provides an assessment of the impacts of the proposed development on the local highway network. Each of these matters is considered in further detail below.

Access

- 7.66 The existing access into the car park to the north of the Site will be removed and a new vehicular access point is proposed in the southwestern part of the Site from Manchester Road. The proposed access will be 5.5m wide with corner radii of 4m and visibility splays of 2.4m x 33m to provide good visibility to oncoming traffic. Tactile paving and dropped kerbs are proposed either side of the access to provide safe and convenient access across the junction for all users. On that basis the proposals accord with paragraphs 110 and 112 of the NPPF with regards to providing a safe and suitable access.

Accessibility

Access for All

- 7.67 The proposed development has been designed to provide ease of access for all users, including those with disabilities. Each floor will be consistent, and level and all doorways will be accessible to wheelchair users. The proposed lift core is located centrally adjacent to the communal garden and courtyard areas to provide ease of access between the upper floors and communal areas. All apartments have been designed to Part M4(2) standard and two ground floor apartments in the eastern building have also been designed to M4(3) standards. All apartments will, therefore, be adaptable or accessible to wheelchair users.

Sustainable Location

- 7.68 The TS confirms that all the amenities in Chorlton District Centre are within 500m of the Site and, therefore, are accessible by foot. The existing pedestrian network would provide safe and convenient access for residents to local amenities reducing the need for them to travel by private car. This aligns with Transport for Greater Manchester's '15-minute City' principles which encourages new development to be within a short active travel trip to local services and amenities.
- 7.69 In addition, the Site fronts onto Manchester Road which has recently been upgraded as part of the GM "Bee Network". Once completed this will provide a safe and segregated route for cyclists to local amenities in Chorlton and beyond. To encourage residents to use this mode of travel a secure cycle and scooter store is proposed to be located at the entrance to the proposed development.
- 7.70 Regarding public transport, the Site is located on a high frequency bus route and Chorlton tram stop is also a circa. 8 minute walk from the Site. This provides regular services along the Manchester Airport to Victoria and East Didsbury to Rochdale lines. Using the Greater Manchester Accessibility Level (GMAL) calculation the TS confirms the Site scores 7 out of 8 which further demonstrates that the Site has a very high level of accessibility.
- 7.71 The Site's highly sustainable location offers the opportunity for active travel and public transport to become the natural first choice for daily activities. Notwithstanding this, to

further encourage residents to travel by sustainable modes a Travel Plan will be adopted by the Applicant. An Interim Travel Plan has been prepared by SK which is included at Appendix E of the TS. This sets out the broad principles for a full Travel Plan to be based upon. The Full Travel Plan can be secured via an appropriately worded condition.

- 7.72 In summary, the Site's excellent accessibility along with the implementation of a Travel Plan will encourage residents and visitors to travel by alternative modes to the private car. As such, the proposed development complies with Core Strategy Policies T1 and T2, Guide to Development in Manchester SPD, Residential Quality Guide SPD, and policies contained within the NPPF with regards to accessibility.

Parking

- 7.73 In all parts of the city, proposals should have regard to the need for vehicle and cycle parking in line with Appendix B of the Core Strategy. However, these parking standards do not include guidance for residential developments.
- 7.74 The Manchester Residential Quality Guide recommends that new apartment developments outside the city centre will be expected to provide 100% car parking provision as starting point. However, it states that there may be scenarios where a reduced on-site provision is justified, particularly given the need to balance the provision of car parking with the need to encourage different, more sustainable modes of transport.
- 7.75 The proposed development includes the provision of 19 no. car parking spaces on site (equivalent to 0.38 spaces per dwelling). As detailed in the TS, this lower level of provision is deemed to be justified based on research and studies of similar developments in highly sustainable locations. The provision of 100% secure cycle parking and mobility scooter store, availability of public transport and access locally to the Enterprise Car Club further justifies that the proposed level of on-site car parking is appropriate.
- 7.76 2 of the car parking spaces will be designated as disabled bays to provide convenient and safe access to the two accessible apartments. 5 EV charging points (25%) will be provided within the car park, and charging infrastructure will be installed to support the shift away from petrol and diesel cars.
- 7.77 Based on the above, the proposed parking provision should be considered acceptable in accordance with Core Strategy Policy T2 and the Manchester Residential Quality Guide SPD in relation to parking.

Impact on the Local Highway Network

- 7.78 The TS concludes that the proposals will generate a minimal level of additional traffic with a maximum of six vehicles in the peak hour. As such, the level of traffic generated is not significant and will not have an impact on highway operation or road safety in accordance with Core Strategy Policy T1 and Paragraph 111 of the NPPF.

Trees

- 7.79 The Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) identifies the location and root protection areas of existing trees in and around the Site and assesses the impacts of the proposals on these trees. The AIA shows that most of the existing trees would be retained. However, 3no. trees would need be removed to accommodate the proposed development. One of those trees is classed as Category U (serious/structural defect) and is of a poor quality and the other two trees are assessed as being Category C trees (low quality).
- 7.80 Whilst the loss of any tree is regrettable the landscaping strategy includes the planting of 33no. new trees on the Site alongside shrubs and ornamental planting. This planting will more than mitigate for the loss of the 3no. poor quality trees, will provide a greater diversity of age and class of trees on the Site as well as provide new habitats for wildlife.
- 7.81 The AIA confirms that, subject to careful construction measures, the Root Protection Areas (RPA) of trees can be protected to ensure the Safe Useful Life Expectance of trees on the Site will not be adversely affected. The Applicant will also follow the recommendations contained in the Arboricultural Method Statement which includes protective fencing and best practise demolition and construction measures to protect the trees which are to be retained. This can be secured via an appropriately worded condition.
- 7.82 Overall, following the recommendations contained in the AIA, the proposed development will result in a net gain in trees of a greater quality. We, therefore, consider the proposals comply with Core Strategy Policies EN9, EN15, and DM1, paragraph 131 of the NPPF and the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD which seeks to prevent the loss of trees.

Ecology

- 7.83 An Ecological Survey and Assessment (ESA) is submitted with this planning application. This provides an assessment of potential ecological impacts associated with the proposals. The result of the assessments can be summarised as follows:
- **Habitats** – None of the habitats present on the Site are representative of semi-natural habitats and the NVC communities present are typical of the geographical area. No Priority Habitats within or adjacent to the site were

identified. The trees, ornamental shrubs and area of scrub are of 'site' value only, and the building and hard standing are not considered to hold any importance on a geographical scale. Tree protection measures during the construction phase and soft landscaping are recommended to mitigate any impacts on existing habitats.

- **Invasive Species** - Japanese Knotweed has been detected within the Site. It is considered that the proposals present an opportunity for the eradication of this species as part of the proposed development. It is recommended that a specialist contractor is employed for its eradication/control and that this is completed under a suitable Invasive Species Management Plan. This can be secured by condition.
- **Designated Sites** – The Site is not and does not form part of any statutory or local designated site for nature conservation. The Site does lie within a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zone for Hollinwood Branch Canal SSSI, which lies 10.5 kilometres north-east of the Site. However, the proposals do not meet the criteria which would require the Council to consult with Natural England in respect of likely risks to the statutory designated sites from the proposed development. The Site is also within 2km of five Sites of Biological Interest (SBI). However, the Site is sufficiently small and distant from all designated sites of nature conservation that the proposed development will have no impact upon them.
- **Reptiles** – The habitats within the Site provide poor quality habitat for sheltering, basking and hibernating reptiles and the species-poor habitats are reasonably unlikely to support a large population or a variety of invertebrate prey. The Site is not adjacent or linked to any areas of favourable habitat for reptile species, and there are no records of reptile for the site or the wider area. The presence of reptiles within the Site is reasonably discounted.
- **Bats** – The building is assessed to be of 'moderate' suitability for use by roosting bats. Further surveys are recommended to determine the presence or absence of roosting bats. Subject to the findings of this survey appropriate mitigation could be secured by condition. The tree and scrub lined tramline to the immediate east of the Site provide moderate suitability for foraging and commuting bats. It is recommended that the development incorporates the installation of bat access panels. This mitigation can be secured by condition.
- **Breeding birds** – Several bird species were recorded on the Site. Subject to a condition requiring vegetation clearance to be undertaken outside of breeding bird season (March to August inclusive), there will be no impact on

these species during the construction phase. The installation of bird boxes will also create new habitats for birds on Site.

- **Hedgehogs** – The Site supports habitats which may be suitable for foraging hedgehogs. Securing the implementation of reasonable avoidance measures (RAMs) by way of condition will ensure there is no risk of harm to hedgehogs during the construction phase. To ensure habitat connectivity is maintained as part of the proposed developments gaps within the proposed fencing will allow access for hedgehogs across the Site.

- 7.84 The Assessment demonstrates that the proposed development will not adversely affect directly or indirectly the integrity of designated sites for nature conservation. Subject to the implementation of appropriate mitigation and enhancements as suggested by the ESA, no protected species would be adversely impacted by the proposed development and the biodiversity value of the Site would be enhanced in accordance with the principles of the NPPF and Core Strategy Policies EN9 and EN15.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 7.85 As set out in the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Drainage Strategy Report, the Site lies within Flood Zone 1 and is at the lowest risk of flooding.
- 7.86 The drainage strategy proposes to dispose of surface water via soakaways to prevent any risk from surface water flooding. Other SuDS systems have been assessed but are not deemed suitable or appropriate for the proposed development. In terms of foul water drainage, this will be drained into the public sewers.
- 7.87 Subject to a condition that requires the submission of further design details, the proposals will minimise surface water run-off through the implementation of appropriate drainage techniques which will reduce the risk of flooding and adapt to the impacts of climate change in accordance with Core Strategy Policies EN8, EN14, EN17 and DM1.

Pollution

Contamination

- 7.88 A Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Report has been submitted with the application. The Report concludes that the Site may be subject to potential pollutants which will require further investigation. However, because the Site has not been subject to any historic large scale industrial use, very high to high levels of contamination are not anticipated. At this stage, the contamination is considered to have moderate risk to human health.

- 7.89 The Report recommends that intrusive ground investigations are undertaken to further interrogate the potential pollutant linkages. This would provide sufficient data to identify potential remedial requirements to ensure the Site can be safely developed and occupied. Subject to the attachment of conditions in line with the recommendations in the Report and submission of a verification report demonstrating the completion of works set out in the approved remediation strategy (if deemed to be required) it is considered that the proposals would comply with the requirements of Core Strategy Policy EN18 of the Core Strategy and paragraph's 183 and 184 of the NPPF.

Air Quality

- 7.90 An Air Quality Assessment (AQA) has been submitted in support of this application. This assesses the baseline air quality conditions at the Site and potential effects associated with the proposed development.
- 7.91 The AQA concludes that during the demolition and construction phase, assuming good practice dust control measures are implemented as outlined in the preliminary Contractors Methodology, the residual significance of potential air quality impacts from dust generated by demolition, earthworks, construction and track out activities are not predicted to be significant. During the operational phase, the predicted pollutant levels and road traffic exhaust emissions are also not predicted to be significant and no mitigation measures are required. Based on the conclusions of the AQA the proposed development accords with Core Strategy Policies DM1 and EN16 and paragraph 186 in relation to air quality.

Noise and Vibration

- 7.92 Any potential noise effects resulting from the demolition and construction phase will be managed in accordance with best practice measures, implemented through the Contractors Methodology. Construction will be limited to daytime hours when residents are usually at work and when ambient noise levels in the area are also high.
- 7.93 The Noise and Vibration Assessment (NVA) suggests that during the operational phase, the proposed façades facing directly onto Manchester Road and the Metrolink elevation as well as the communal garden area are the most sensitive to impacts from noise. The NVA goes on to recommend the following mitigation measures to minimise any adverse impacts to future residents:
- 4 MVHR specification ventilation systems for the apartments facing Manchester Road and the tram line to allow for enhanced levels of ventilation without the need to open windows to achieve comfortable internal noise conditions.

- Appropriate glazing types on the Manchester Road and tram line elevations to achieve appropriate noise levels. Internal facing elevations are to include thermal double glazing to achieve ambient noise level targets.
- Sound insulation for external walls and the roof to comply with required noise targets.
- For external areas, to achieve the 55dBA noise level target, a noise barrier wall greater than 4.5m in height on 3 sides of the garden would be required. Clearly this height of noise barrier is impractical and would be unlikely to be acceptable for a variety of reasons (such as resulting in an overbearing visual impact on residents using the communal garden and being visually unattractive within the street scene). Therefore, a noise barrier of 2.1 to 2.5m to reduce noise levels to 57-60dBA is considered a reasonable compromise. The Applicant seeks to provide a 2.5m acoustic fencing and brick wall to address this recommendation.
- Regarding vibration, the proposed apartment building will be set back from the Site boundary, reducing the vibration dose value and bringing the apartments into the low probability zone. Despite this, the Assessment recommends both the proposed ground and first floors are constructed on concrete slabs to reduce vibration.

7.94 Overall, following these mitigation measures, the proposed development would not give rise to any significant or demonstrable amenity impact in terms of noise or vibration. Whilst the communal garden area will be subject to slightly higher noise levels above the guidance, we consider that the proposed acoustic fencing around the gardens and the brick wall along the Manchester Road frontage will provide sufficient mitigation whilst not significant harming the visual appearance of the proposals. Therefore, we consider the proposals to be acceptable in accordance with Policy DM1 of the Core Strategy, 'saved' policy DC26.1 and DC26.2 of the UDP and paragraphs 174 and 185 of the NPPF in relation to noise impacts.

Waste Management

- 7.95 As set out in the Contractors Methodology, a Construction Phase Health and Safety Plan will be prepared, which can be secured via an appropriately worded condition, and will contain information on all matters relating to health and safety including how waste will be managed on site and removed during the demolition and construction phases.
- 7.96 Regarding operational waste, as set out in Section 4, a Waste Management Strategy has been prepared in support of this planning application. This confirms that the proposed development includes a secure refuse store within the car park on the southern part of

the Site. This will be accessed by residents and refuse collectors via a key fob. A turning head will be provided in the proposed car park for refuse wagons which will be compliant with the Council's vehicle requirements.

- 7.97 The above demonstrates that the proposals will comply with Core Strategy Policy EN19 of which sets out the waste hierarchy and requires all developers to submit a waste management plan to demonstrate how both construction and demolition waste will be minimised and recycled on site wherever possible.

Summary

- 7.98 The planning assessment in this Section demonstrates that the proposed development accords with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations that would weigh against the grant of planning permission for the proposed development.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the demolition of the former Chorlton Leisure Centre and the construction of a later living apartment development.
- 8.2 Our assessment in Section 7 demonstrates that the proposed development conforms with the development plan taken as a whole as directed by section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and, where relevant, other material considerations including the NPPF.
- 8.3 The provisions of 50 affordable homes for older persons in this highly sustainable location will improve the housing choice for residents on lower incomes, help to meet the demand from households on the Housing Register, contribute towards meeting local and national housing targets, address affordable housing needs and will allow older persons to right size into accommodation more suitable for their needs freeing up more family housing in an area that is not currently affordable.
- 8.4 The proposals will be built to Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation (HAPPI) living principles. Each apartment will be bright, spacious and adaptable to meet changing needs over time, balconies and shared indoor and outdoor spaces will encourage social interaction and physical activity, storage facilities will provide space for belongings and the development will be highly energy efficient and sustainable in its design.
- 8.5 The residents of the proposed development will support the future vitality and viability of Chorlton District Centre through an increase footfall and expenditure and the proposed community space will provide a new valuable local asset that will serve as a 'hub' for a range of local community groups that is in keeping with the historic civic use of the Site.
- 8.6 In terms of placemaking, the density of development is deemed to be appropriate in this location and the scale and massing of the buildings combined with their architectural quality and the provision of enhanced landscaping will ensure the proposal contributes positively as a landmark development at the northern gateway to Chorlton District Centre. The redevelopment of the Site and improvements to the environment will also address existing anti-social behaviour issues and criminal activity to create a place where existing and future residents feel safe, and the likelihood of crime is reduced.

- 8.7 The proposed development would also deliver other public benefits associated with the creation of direct and indirect employment through the construction phase and enhanced landscaping, tree planting and net gain in biodiversity.
- 8.8 Careful consideration has been given to the impact of the proposed development on the local area and it has been demonstrated that, subject to appropriate mitigation where necessary, that there would be no unduly harmful impacts in relation trees, biodiversity, noise, traffic generation, air quality and contamination.
- 8.9 The proposed development would result in the loss of a former community facility and a non-designated heritage asset. The Site has not functioned as a leisure centre or had any other active community use for over 7 years therefore, the redevelopment of this derelict site for housing would not reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs.
- 8.10 From a heritage perspective, it is not considered viable or desirable to preserve the building for its architectural significance or its historical significance as a swimming baths. However, its local communal value will be preserved through the provision of a bookable community space as part of the proposed development. The wide range of benefits associated with the proposals, most of which can be given substantial weight, are also considered too far outweigh the slight adverse impact identified from the loss of the non-designated heritage asset.
- 8.11 Overall, the proposed development will deliver significant and far-reaching benefits for the Site, Chorlton, and the City. The assessment set out in this Statement demonstrates that the proposals comprise sustainable development that accords with the development plan. Applying the presumption in favour of sustainable development, planning permission should, therefore, be granted without delay.

APPENDIX 1: PLANNING HISTORY TABLE

Application	Description	Decision
F02040/LA	Erection of 2-single storey buildings to form 3 squash courts at rear of public swimming baths.	Granted 05/02/1974
F/AD02319	Non-illuminated individual letter name sign on baths.	'Not Required' 28/12/1979
021353	Filling of one number swimming pool to form sports hall, replacement roof to sports hall, and alterations to changing areas to form additional toilets and showers	Granted 25/04/1984
068949/FO/2003/S1	Retrospective erection of plant room in roof top sports centre	Granted 21/12/2004
076547/AOH/2005/S1	Installation of an externally illuminated 48 sheet advertising hoarding	Refused 06/09/2005
135209/AOH/2022	Installation of non-illuminated hoarding signs for a temporary period	Granted 22/12/2022

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