

Planning, Design & Access Statement

Alteration to shop front and second floor rear extension to facilitate improved access and layout of existing ground floor Commercial, Business and Service Class E Use and small HMO above

**741 Wilmslow Road, Didsbury
Manchester M20 6RN**

Prepared by Stephen Lamb DipTP MRTPI



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1. Introduction

This statement supports the application for an extension and alterations to an existing ground floor commercial unit with a small House in Multiple Occupation above. The report deal with the planning and heritage issues raised by the development.

2. Site description

The property dates from the late Victorian/Edwardian period, although it has been much altered, with a modern shop front serving the currently vacant commercial unit and a metal staircase to the rear providing access to the upper floors.



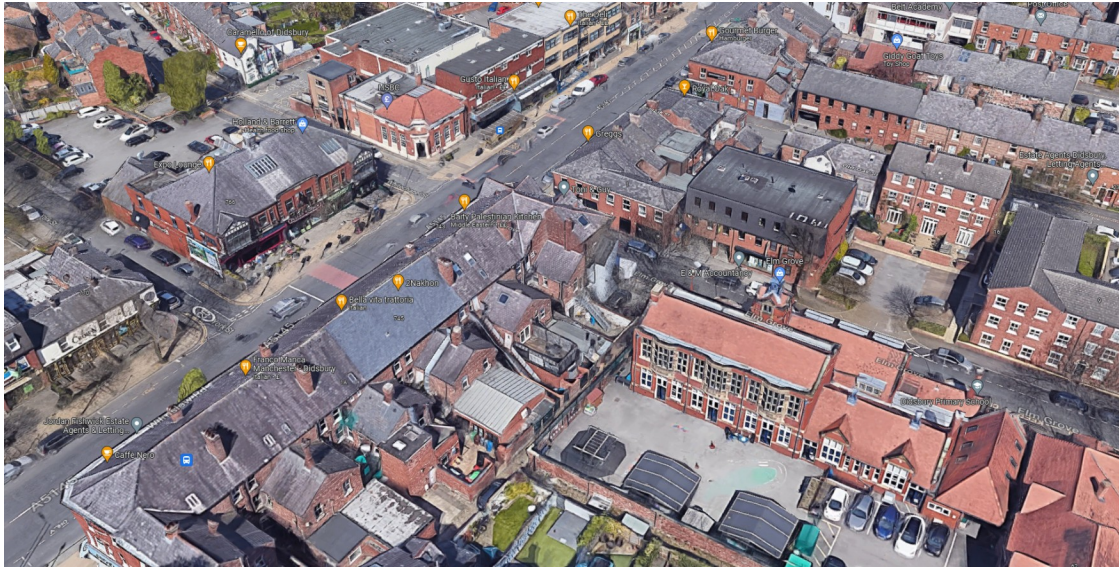
The commercial unit occupies the ground and basement levels and an access door connects to the rear yard which adjoins the communal passageway which links Elm Grove and Grange Lane.



Above the commercial unit, the upper floors are occupied by a 6 bed HMO, which is solely accessed from the rear external staircase.

The rear yard is used jointly by the property occupiers for waste, recycling and cycle storage.

3. Location and Surroundings



Aerial view showing the rear elevation of 739-765 Wilmslow Road and Elm Grove

The site is located within the Didsbury District Centre, which provides a wide range of retail and service activity and is a busy and thriving commercial hub. The premises front Wilmslow Road (A5145) which links to Manchester City Centre 6km to the north.

The site is highly accessible by public transport, being on a high frequency bus route and close to the Didsbury Village Metrolink stop and East Didsbury main line station.

The neighbouring frontage property along Wilmslow Road is entirely commercial, with a variety of upper floor uses which includes residential.

The terrace of property nos.739-765 within which the site is located has seen many alterations and extensions, many of which have covered the rear yards, as can be seen from the aerial image above.

The end property (no. 739) has a return frontage to Elm Grove which has a substantial rear staircase extension as can be seen on the image below.



View of the rear of properties on Wilmslow Road from Elm Grove



Didsbury Primary School is a listed building located on Elm Grove beyond the rear passageway which serves the site.

4. Description and Purpose of the Development

The development comprises the following work:

- Alterations to the shop front to provide a new access door for the HMO
- Second floor rear extension to the HMO

The extension involves the removal of an extraction flue, which is no longer required.

The purpose of the development is to facilitate a qualitative improvement to the layout of the HMO, by the provision of a larger communal lounge at first floor level and a reconfiguration of the second floor to allow one of the bedrooms to have an en suite shower room.

The provision of a frontage access to the HMO will provide a far more attractive, convenient and safe alternative for the residents.

The commercial unit has been difficult to let and the slight reduction in the floorspace and reconfiguration for a public facing office use is more suited to the market and therefore more likely to be occupied.

5. Planning History

The site has no relevant recent planning history, however the ground floor has been used prior to its vacancy as a cafe/restaurant.

The HMO has been in use and licensed since 2008 and is currently occupied. The license has been inspected and renewed, every five years by MCC, without any issue on quality or management. There have not been any neighbour complaints about anti social behaviour or waste management. There are two full time employed property managers designated to manage the tenancies and a team of maintenance staff on hand to deal with any issues arising.

6. Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF)

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It reiterates the legislative provision that development applications should be determined in accordance with the

Development Plan unless there are material considerations which indicate otherwise.

It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system and explains that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

There are three mutually dependent dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental and there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

The NPPF also provides guidance on building a strong competitive economy, good design and protecting the historic environment, all of which are relevant considerations which have been taken into account in formulating the application.

The proposed development meets the test of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF as follows:

Economic role – the proposals will enhance the likelihood of the ground floor unit being occupied and provide employment opportunities. The alterations will facilitate a refurbishment of the property which will generate employment.

Social role – the proposals will create an improvement in the quality of the residential accommodation, which helps to meet an important housing need.

Environmental role – the improvements will meet the current environmental standards set out within the Building Regulations.

The proposals therefore fulfil the NPPF requirement of sustainable development.

The Local Development Framework (LDF)

The LDF comprises the Manchester Core Strategy, the saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and the Guide to Development in Manchester. The relevant aspects of the LDF are set out below and provided in full at Appendix A.

Manchester Core Strategy

The Core Strategy **Policy SO3** supports the principle of high quality housing at the site, as it is located in a highly sustainable location and helps meet housing need and supports economic growth.

Policy EN 1 provides Design Principles and expects development to follow seven principles of urban design (Character, Continuity and enclosure, Quality of the public realm, Ease of movement, Legibility, Adaptability and Diversity.

Policy EN 3 Heritage requires development to preserve and where possible enhance the character of heritage assets including the setting of listed buildings.

Policy EN 8 expects all new development to be adaptable to climate change in terms of the design, layout, siting and function of both buildings and associated external spaces.

Policy H 11 Houses in Multiple Occupation controls the establishment and expansion of HMO uses in certain locations and circumstances. However, as this application does not alter the quantity of accommodation, the policy is not relevant, but is mentioned for completeness.

Policy DM 1 provides a list of Development Management requirements which have been considered in the formulation of the application.

Manchester Unitary Development Plan (UDP)

The UDP has been largely replaced by the Core Strategy, however there are various policies which have been saved including the following which are relevant to this application.

Citywide Development Control Policies:

1. RESIDENTIAL EXTENSIONS DC1.1 – DC1.4

These policies provide detailed criteria against which the proposals have been carefully considered.

Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance

This guidance document was adopted in April 2007 and provides more detailed advice on the form of development expected by the Council.

All of the above policy and guidance has been carefully considered in the formulation of the application, which is considered to be in conformity with the Development Framework. Relevant aspects of the proposals are discussed below.

7. Article 4 Direction

An Article 4 Direction applies across Manchester, which controls changes of use between Class C3 dwellinghouses and Class C4 HMOs which otherwise would be permitted. This is linked to Policy H11 of the Core Strategy (see above) which sets out the criteria for dealing with resulting development applications.

However, in this case the HMO is long-established and there is no increase in the occupancy as a result of the proposal, so the additional controls do not impact on this application.

8. Planning Assessment

The relevant components and issues raised by the application are set out out below.

Design, and Access

The existing layout of the property suffers from a poor access arrangement and has an internal layout of the residential accommodation, which can be improved.

The building is occupied by young professionals in their early 20's and key workers with shift working who need access throughout the night. The alley entrance is has no street lighting and represents a security risk.

New Entrance/Shop Front

The new entrance for the HMO from Wilmslow Road will be both safe and convenient and more befitting of a residential entrance than the current secluded rear access. The entrance door will be incorporated into a new shop front of grey aluminium framed glazing to maintain an active commercial frontage, which is complementary to the commercial location. The introduction of a pedestrian entrance will have minimal impact on the presence of the commercial ground floor unit and the precedent for this arrangement already exists within the centre (including at 743A Willow Road).

The use of the ground floor commercial unit is likely to be for a customer facing office, which is within the permitted use of the unit for class E uses.

Extension

The rear extension takes advantage of an area of existing unused roof void to the rear of the building above the first floor outrigger. The extension raises

the height of the outrigger to provide an additional room, which allows the internal accommodation to be significantly improved.

The exterior of the extension will be clad in slate to match the roof of the property, creating a discrete and complementary addition to the property. The extension will have no adverse impact on either of its neighbours in terms of privacy, daylight or outlook.

Heritage

The adjacent Didsbury Primary School (originally known as Church of England Girls' School) is a grade II listed building (see listing schedule at Appendix B).

The proposed extension has no direct impact on the status of the listed building, but it is necessary to consider whether there are any implications for its setting.

The listing schedule sets out the architectural characteristics of the building which gives it special interest. None of these aspects of the building are in any way impacted by the proposed extension.

The curtilage of the school is clearly marked by strong boundary walls to the site and school buildings. The setting is defined by public highways and the highly urban surroundings of residential and commercial development.

The setting of the school is intrinsically linked to its social purpose of providing education for the local population.

The proposed rear extension is designed to be discrete in size, location and outward appearance, having minimal conspicuity within the urban scene. As such it will have no material impact of the setting of the listed building.

Waste Management

The waste demands of the property will not be increased by the proposed extension and alterations. Provision is made within rear yard for the storage of waste and recycling containers for the commercial unit and HMO. Both have direct access to the yard, so there is no change to the existing situation.

9. Conclusion

The proposal has no adverse planning implications and will result in a qualitative improvement of the HMO accommodation and a refurbishment of the commercial unit.

As such the development is fully in accord with the National and Local Development Framework.

Appendix A – Relevant Planning Policies

Relevant Planning Policies within the Manchester Local Development Framework

Manchester Core Strategy

Policy SP 1 Spatial Principles

The key spatial principles which will guide the strategic development of Manchester to 2027 are:

The Regional Centre will be the focus for economic and commercial development, retail, leisure and cultural activity, alongside high quality city living. The growth of Manchester Airport will act as a catalyst for the regional economy, and will also provide the impetus for a second hub of economic activity in this part of the City.

Beyond these areas, 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 a distinct environment. The majority of new residential development in these neighbourhoods will be in the Inner Areas, defined by the North Manchester, East Manchester and Central Manchester Regeneration Areas.

The City is covered by regeneration areas including the City Centre. All development should have regard to the character, issues and strategy for each regeneration area as described in the North, East, Central and South Manchester and Wythenshawe Strategic Regeneration Frameworks and the Manchester City Centre Strategic Plan. The City's network of open spaces will provide all residents with good access to recreation opportunities. The River Valleys (the Irk, Medlock and Mersey) and City Parks are particularly important, and access to these resources will be improved.

New development will maximise the potential of the City's transport infrastructure, in particular promoting walking, cycling and use of the public transport.

The extension to the Metrolink network through the Oldham and Ashton lines will create key corridors for new development.

Core Development Principles Development in all parts of the City should:-

Make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice including:- creating well designed places that enhance or create character. making a positive contribution to the health, safety and wellbeing of residents considering the needs of all members of the community regardless of age, gender, disability, sexuality, religion, culture, ethnicity or income. protect and enhance the built and natural environment.

*Minimise emissions, ensure efficient use of natural resources and reuse previously developed land wherever possible.
Improve access to jobs, services, education and open space by being located to reduce the need to travel and provide good access to sustainable transport provision.*

The Strategy includes the following specific policy which relates to the area which includes the application site

Policy EN 1 Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas

All development in Manchester will be expected to follow the seven principles of urban design, as identified in national planning guidance and listed above and have regard to the strategic character area in which the development is located. Opportunities for good design to enhance the overall image of the City should be fully realised, particularly on major radial and orbital road and rail routes. Design and Access Statements submitted with proposals for new development must clearly detail how the proposed development addresses the design principles, reinforces and enhances the local character of that part of the City and supports the achievement of the Core Strategy Strategic Objectives.

Policy EN 3 Heritage

*Throughout the City, the Council will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods, including those of the City Centre. New developments must be designed so as 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.
Proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets will be encouraged where they are considered consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.*

Policy DM 1

Development Management

All development should have regard to the following specific issues for which more detailed guidance may be given within a supplementary planning document:-

*Appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail.
Impact on the surrounding areas in terms of the design, scale and appearance of the proposed development. Development should have regard to the character of the surrounding area.*

Effects on amenity, including privacy, light, noise, vibration, air quality, odours, litter, vermin, birds, road safety and traffic generation. This could also include proposals which would be sensitive to existing environmental conditions, such as noise.

Accessibility: buildings and neighbourhoods fully accessible to disabled people, access to new development by sustainable transport modes.

Community safety and crime prevention.

Design for health.

Adequacy of internal accommodation and external amenity space.

Refuse storage and collection.

Vehicular access and car parking.

Effects relating to biodiversity, landscape, archaeological or built heritage.

Green Infrastructure including open space, both public and private.

The use of alternatives to peat-based products in landscaping/gardens within development schemes.

Flood risk and drainage.

Existing or proposed hazardous installations.

Subject to scheme viability, developers will be required to demonstrate that new development incorporates sustainable construction techniques as follows (In terms of energy targets this policy should be read alongside policy EN6 and the higher target will apply):-

- a) For new residential development meet as a minimum the following Code for Sustainable Homes standards. This will apply until a higher national standard is required:*
- b) Year 2010 – Code Level 3;*
- c) Year 2013 - Code Level 4;*
- d) Year 2016 - Code Level 6; and*

For new commercial developments to demonstrate best practice which will include the application of the BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) standards. By 2019 provisions similar to the Code for Sustainable Homes will also apply to all new non-domestic buildings.

Saved Manchester Unitary Development Plan Policy (UDP)

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

- a. the general character of the property;*
- b. the effect upon the amenity of neighbouring occupiers;*
- c. the desirability of enabling people to adapt their houses in appropriate ways to meet changing household needs;*
- . the overall appearance of the proposal in the street-scene;*
- e. the effect of the loss of any on-site car parking.*

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

- a. they are not excessively large or bulky (for example, resulting in structures which are not subservient to original houses or project out too far in front of the original buildings);*
- b. they do not create an undue loss of sunlight, daylight or privacy;*
- c. they are not out of character with the style of development in the area or the surrounding street scene by virtue of design, use of materials or constructional details;*
- d. they would not result in the loss of off-street car-parking, in a situation where there is so severe an existing on-street parking problem that unacceptable additional pressures would be created.*

DC1.3 *Notwithstanding the generality of the above policies, the Council will not normally approve:*

- a. rearward extensions greater than 3.65m (12 ft) in length;*
- b. 2-storey extensions with a flat roof, particularly those which would be visible from the public highway;*
- c. 2-storey extensions to terraced properties which occupy the full width of the house;*
- d. flat roofed extensions to bungalows;*
- e. extensions which conflict with the Council's guidelines on privacy distances (which are published as supplementary guidance).*

DC1.4 *In considering proposals for 2-storey side extensions, the Council will have regard to the general guidance above and also to supplementary guidance to be issued. In particular, the Council will seek to ensure that:*

- a. the development potential of the gap between detached and semi-detached houses is capable of being shared equally by the owners or occupiers of the two properties concerned;*
- b. the actual or potential result of building the extension will not be the creation of a terracing effect, where this would be unsympathetic to the character of the street as a whole;*
- c. the actual or potential result of building the extension will not be the creation of a very narrow gap between the properties, or any other unsatisfactory visual relationships between elements of the buildings involved.*

As a guide, and without prejudice to the generality of this policy, the Council will normally permit 2-storey house extensions which, when built, would leave a minimum of 1.52m (5 ft) between the side wall and the common boundary, and which meet the other requirements of this policy. Proposals which cannot meet these requirements will be judged on their merits, but with weight being given to (a) and (c) above.

14.SHOP FRONTS AND RELATED SIGNS *This policy applies to all retail premises and to other commercial premises which have similar physical characteristics e.g. betting shops, banks, building society offices, opticians premises etc.*

DC14.1 *In determining applications relating to these premises for shop fronts, security grilles, advertisement signs, canopies and awnings, the Council will seek to ensure that proposals are in keeping with the character of the building and adjoining buildings, of adjoining shopfronts, where appropriate, and of the area within which the premises are located.*

DC14.2 *Shopfronts should allow full access for people whose mobility is impaired. The only exceptions which the Council will normally permit are where the cost is unreasonably high or where there are particularly difficult physical constraints, or where the architectural character of a listed building would be damaged.*

DC19. LISTED BUILDINGS

DC19.1 *In determining applications for listed building consent or planning applications for development involving or having an impact on buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, the Council will have regard to the desirability of securing the retention, restoration, maintenance and continued use of such buildings and to protecting their general setting. In giving effect to this policy, the Council will:*

- a. not grant Listed building consent for the demolition of a listed building other than in the most exceptional circumstances, and in any case, not unless it is satisfied that every possible effort has been made to continue the present use or to find a suitable alternative use;*
- b. not permit a change of use of a listed building, where it would have a detrimental effect on the character or appearance of the building;*
- c. not permit any external or internal alteration or addition to a Listed building where, in its opinion, there would be an adverse effect on its architectural or historic character;*
- d. seek to preserve and enhance the settings of listed buildings by appropriate control over the design of new development in their vicinity, control over the use of adjacent land, and where appropriate, by the preservation of trees and landscape features;*
- e. permit demolition only where there are approved detailed plans for redevelopment and where there is evidence of a firm building contract;*
- f. not permit alterations to a listed building which would prevent the future use of any part of the building, in particular upper floors or basements, or where poor maintenance is likely to result.*

Appendix B - Didsbury Primary School Listing Schedule Description

MANCHESTER

SJ89SW ELM GROVE, Didsbury

698-1/8/642 (South side)

20/06/88 Church of England Girls' School

II

School. Dated 1910 on rainwater heads. Red brick with sandstone ashlar dressings, red tiled roofs. Irregular plan including hall with lower entrance range to right, lower range to left, tower at rear right-hand corner of hall and classroom block behind this. Arts and Crafts style. One and 2 storeys; entrance range has round-headed arch with stone surround including parapet lettered "CHURCH OF ENGLAND GIRLS' SCHOOL", flanked by mullioned 4- and 3-light windows, and cross-window under gablet to right; hall has 3 very large 12-light mullion and transom windows breaking the eaves, with moulded cornices and flat roofs; tower has pairs of stone strips rising to small 2-light windows under gablets, and neo-Baroque domed cupola. Low range to left has inter alia a stone canted bay window breaking through eaves. Classroom block has cross-windows.

Interior not inspected.