



Manchester City Council,
Town Hall Extension,
Albert Square,
Manchester,
M60 2LA

Our Ref: 70095956

11 July 2022

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Sir/Madam,

577 Barlow Moor Road, Change of Use Prior Notification

This Planning Statement has been prepared to support a prior approval application for the change of use of a former bank into two residential apartments at 577 Barlow Moor Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester, M21 8AE. The proposal seeks planning permission for the following:

“Change of use of the first floor of a vacant former high-street bank (use class E(c)i) to two residential dwellings (use class C3)”

This Planning Statement is structured as follows:

- The Site.
- Current Use.
- Proposed Use.
- Principle of Development.
- Policy.
- Planning Considerations.
- Conclusion.

THE SITE

The site involves the first floor (middle-floor) of 577 Barlow Moor Road, M21 8AE. 577 Barlow Moor Road can be found within the Chorlton District Centre, governed by Manchester City Council.

The site forms part of a three-storey end-of-terrace building on the Barlow Moor Road B-road, fronting onto a mixed-use community. Barlow Moor Road is lined with leisure, grocery and retail stores on the ground-floor, typically with residential apartments situated above. To the north, the site is bound by Silverwood Avenue, a small cul-de-sac lined with three-storey industrial era terraced houses.

Whilst the land to the south, east and north along Barlow Moor Road is largely occupied by commercial, and mixed-use buildings, the land to the west is largely residential in character, featuring streets occupied by a combination of terraced and semi-detached housing.

The site benefits from an exceptional level of access to public infrastructure, with Groby Road bus stop located less than 50 metres from the site on Barlow Moor Road, facilitating regular and sustainable transport to Manchester City Centre, Stockport and the Trafford Centre. Meanwhile, Wilbraham Road bus stop is also found approximately 150 metres to the north-west of the site

providing further regular services to the Trafford Centre, Stockport and Gorton. In addition to the bus infrastructure, Chorlton Tram Stop is only a 4-minute walk from the site to the north-east, serviced by the Navy Line and Pink Line, the tram facilities allow easy, affordable and sustainable access to Manchester City Centre, Manchester Airport, Rochdale and beyond.

The site also benefits from nearby greenspace to facilitate recreation and exercise, most notably the extensive Ivy Green Park is located approximately 700 metres to the south-west of the site, hosting playing fields, allotments and significant amounts of greenspace for future residents to enjoy. In addition, the smaller but still significant Chorlton Park is only a 13-minute walk to the south of the site along Barlow Moor Road, whilst Beech Road Park is only 8-minutes in the same direction. Finally, the Fallowfield Loop begins approximately 700 metres to the east, providing access to a 5.4-mile off-road walking, running and/or cycling route through Southern Manchester, allowing pleasant, recreational and safe cycle/walk/running routes to destinations from Chorlton to Debdale Park.

As a high-street development, the site naturally benefits from its proximity to retail and grocery provision, whilst also being less than a ten-minute walk from three pharmacies along Wilbraham Road with Chorlton Health Centre also being only being a 4-minute walk to the north.

CURRENT USE

The site is currently vacant, having formerly operated as the upper floor of the TSB Bank which has been closed since 2020. The site hosted bank offices, staff welfare facilities and toilets which assisted in the running of TSB Bank.

The ground floor, which was also formerly part of TSB Bank until its closure in 2020, has recently been let to Rudy's Pizzeria, the conversion of the ground floor to accommodate a pizzeria, equipped with a pizza oven flue, retractable awnings and a rear extension was approved as part of application 131058/FO/202 on Thursday the 07th of October 2021. The restaurant will have a separate entrance to the apartments above.

The second floor (top-floor) has always been let as an apartment separate to the ground and first floors of the building, with the current tenant having let the existing second-floor flat for at least 12 years. The second floor flat is accessed via a door to the rear of the building, which will be utilised by the proposed flats in this application.

PROPOSED USE

This proposal is for the first-floor of the building to be converted into two apartments, which will include a one-bedroom apartment and a two-bedroom apartment, both equipped with kitchen, living and bathroom space.

The one-bedroom apartment will be accessed via the main door located on Silverwood Avenue. Meanwhile the two-bedroom apartment will be accessed via the rear staircase, which is shared with the existing second-floor apartment. All rooms with exception to the two-bedroom apartment's bathroom benefit from external facing windows and natural light.

The proposals involve no external alterations, leaving the gothic pillars and expressive sculptures lining the primary elevation untouched.

PRINCIPAL OF DEVELOPMENT

The principle of development is established by Class MA of the Town and Country Planning Order (General Permitted Development) Amendment of 2021. Class MA relates to the conversion of commercial, business and service uses to dwelling houses. This is relevant for this application as it concerns the change of use of a now vacant former bank to two dwellings.

The proposal fully accords with the conditions of the GPDO as the site has been vacant for over 3 months, the cumulative floor space of the existing building changing use does not exceed 1,500 square metres and the building/area is not limited by any existing designations.

POLICY

In addition, The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) promotes an effective use of land in meeting the needs for homes, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously developed land. The NPPF also advocates for planning policies and decisions that promote “*social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments*”. The end result of this development would result in a mixed-use building, with a restaurant on the ground floor and residential dwellings on the upper floors. Residential development above high-street stores represents a practice that is long established and acceptable in planning terms.

The Manchester City Council Core Strategy was adopted on the 11th of July 2012 and outlines the Council’s vision for Manchester in 2027, listing policies to achieve said vision. The Core Strategy details that the site falls within the Chorlton District Centre. The site is also bound by Barlow Moor Road to the west which is listed as a “Major Road Rail Improvement Corridor” however, the site is currently “white-land”, meaning it is unallocated for any type of development.

‘Policy SP 1 Spatial Principles’ sets out the key principles to guide strategic development in the city, the proposals conform with this policy by promoting residential development in a strategic location that benefits from the proximity to public transport infrastructure and being strategically located to be within walking/cycling distance to Chorlton District Centre and necessary services.

‘Policy CC 3 Housing’ established Manchester City Council’s vision and priorities for housing development, in addition ‘Policy CC 7 Mixed Use Development’ sets out the Council’s desire to promote “active ground floor uses” where appropriate, creating mixed used environments. The site’s position on Barlow Moor Road, with a commercial ground floor use approved makes it a suitable location for a mixed-use building, with residential dwellings situated above high-street facilities being common across this community. Furthermore, ‘Policy CC 8 Change and Renewal’ explains that the Council will support applications that contribute to the promotion of the improvement of the social, economic or environmental well-being of Manchester, this proposal should be supported as it contributes towards the revitalisation of Chorlton by converting vacant property that isn’t desired by the new ground-floor use into dwellings.

Planning Considerations

RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

The apartments are fully NDSS compliant, with the 1-bedroom apartment occupying 53.1 m² whilst the 2-bedroom apartment occupied 65.2 m², well above the NDSS requirements of 39 and 61 square

metres respectively. In addition, the apartments also exceed space standards established in the Interim London Design Guide, which stipulates that the apartments should be a minimum of 50 and 61 square metres, the importance of also following this guide is emphasised within the Manchester Residential Quality Guidance (2017). The apartments also enjoy access to natural light in every room with exception of the bathroom in the 2-bedroom apartment on the front elevation, this bathroom will be equipped with an extraction fan which will provide ventilation going through the downstairs store. Crucially, every habitable room in both apartments will have external facing windows allowing plenty of natural light.

In addition, the proposals make space for 8.2 m² of internal communal space. Due to the dwelling's nature as apartments and situated immediately fronting the high-streets, the apartments do not have any external amenity space however, the apartments benefit from an excellent local provision of green space and outdoor sport provision, with Ivy Green Park, Longford Park and Chrolton Park all being found within 1km of the site and Beech Road Park being only 300m south of the site.

ACCESS

As can be seen in the Proposed Layout Plan (drawing ref: 20/21-216-01), access to the site will be facilitated through two-separate points, with apartment one accessed through the main door on Barlow Moor Road. Meanwhile, apartment two is accessed via the rear entrance, located in the communal alleyway in the rear of the property, this access would be shared with the existing dwelling on the top-floor, the rear entrance has been used as the primary (and only) access by the existing dwelling for over 20 years. The Proposed Layout Plan shows that apartment two's front door will be located within a communal corridor, which also hosts a staircase leading to the top-floor.

WASTE

It is proposed that bins will be stored in the rear yard, providing for both recycling and general waste. This form of waste management is consistent with both residential and commercial buildings lining Barlow Moor Road.

FUME EXTRACTION AND CONTAMINATION RISK

This site benefits from little-to-no contamination risk as it is situated in the centre of an established residential and commercial area, with no waste management or industrial processes in the site's vicinity. In addition, the site's previous use as a bank, and the ground floor's future use as a Pizzeria do not generate any concerns regarding pollution and contamination.

The future ground-floor use as a Pizzeria was approved on the 07th of October 2021 as part of application 131058/FO/2021 and involves the conversion of the majority of the first-floor and basement of 577 Barlow Moor Road. As part of this application, details were submitted regarding the installation of a flue, accompanied by an Odour Risk Assessment. The Odour Risk Assessment finds a low to medium risk of impact from odour as a result of the use as a pizzeria, which is acceptable for nearby housing, especially given the application was accepted despite a dwelling already existing on the second-floor.

Application 131058/FO/2021 also details that a 250mm flue will be installed in the centre of the southern boundary of the building and protrude through the roof, this flue will be accompanied by an 'exodraft chimney fan RSVG' to encourage the dispersal of fumes and odours away from any dwellings and areas of human activity. The flue will originate in the ground floor by the pizza oven

and travel upwards through the building near the centre of its southern boundary, therefore traversing through the communal corridor on the first-floor. Due to the limited size of the flue, we find that this will create little physical and visual disturbance and therefore, would not limit the viability of the upstairs floor for residential habitation.

PARKING AND TRANSPORT

The proposals include no provision of on-site parking, due to the small-scale nature of the proposals on the already developed high-street. There is a precedent set by surrounding residential and commercial infrastructure, as few buildings have on-site parking with most utilising street parking, there is sufficient local street parking capacity to facilitate two further apartments along Barlow Moor Road and Silverwood Avenue.

In addition, the need for private vehicular transport within this community is low, as previously mentioned, the area benefits from excellent access to public transport infrastructure including buses and trams. Finally, the urbanised and compact nature of the site, and its proximity to Manchester City Centre makes it suitable for cycling, meaning the site is sustainably located to allow for a lower dependency on private vehicular transport.

FLOOD RISK

The site exists entirely within Flood zone 1 and is not within 200 metres of any watercourses therefore, we find that the site benefits from little-to-no flood risk. In addition, the absence of external works means that the proposals will not have any adverse impact on the surrounding community with respect to flood risk.

HERITAGE

There are no designated or non-designated heritage on the site or within the setting of the site.

NOISE

Please see attached noise assessment.

Conclusion

This Planning Statement has been prepared to support a prior approval application for the change of use of a former bank into two residential apartments at 577 Barlow Moor Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester, M21 8AE. The proposal seeks planning permission for the following:

*“Change of use of the first floor of a vacant former high-street bank (use class E(c)i)
to two residential dwellings (use class C3)”*

The changes are being sought in order to revitalise a building which has been vacant for two years, and to promote a mixed-use community in South Manchester contributing towards the creation of vibrant and social communities.

From the information provided, it can be understood that there will not be an unacceptable impact on highways safety or the residential and commercial amenity of Silverwood Avenue and Barlow Moor Road due to this development.



Overall, the development fully accords with the Manchester Core Strategy and the NPPF, the principle of development in this location is acceptable in line with section 11 of the NPPF and should be approved without delay, unless material considerations dictate otherwise.

Yours faithfully

Benedict Sacarello
Graduate Town Planner

B.S.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'BS', followed by a horizontal line.



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wsp.com