MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no.	144782/LP/2025
Date registered valid:	20 February 2026
Proposal:	Conversion of basement into habitable living space.
Address:	25 Churchwood Road, Manchester, M20 6TZ
Ward(s):	Didsbury West Ward
Applicant:	Dr Maxwell Barton
Agent (if any):	
Case officer:	Robert Tyrer Tel: 0161 234 4068 Email: robert.tyrer@manchester.gov.uk
Recommendation:	Grant

Date of recommendation: 7 April 2026

Application details

Type of application: Certificate Lawful Development Proposed

Development type: Certificates of lawfulness

Date of site visit: Not Required

Standard consultations:
No consultations have been printed and sent.

Neighbour notifications
No neighbour notifications have been printed and sent.

Site notice
No site notice has been produced

Press advert
No press advert had been published

Departure from Development Plan: No

Environmental Statement: Not required

Description of site/building

Application site relates to a part two, part three storey end terraced dwellinghouse, located within a predominantly residential area close to Wilmslow Road and Didsbury District Centre.

Listed building: Not applicable

Conservation area: Not applicable

Tree Preservation Order: Not applicable

Description of development

The applicant is seeking a certificate of proposed lawful development to allow the conversion of a basement into habitable living space.

Consultations & Notification Responses

None Required - There is no statutory requirement to consult third parties including neighbours; views expressed by third parties on the planning merits of the case, or on whether the applicant has any private rights to carry out the operation, use or activity in question, are irrelevant when determining the application.

Planning History

There have been no previous planning applications at this address.

Legislative Issues

Sections 191 and 192 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provide for anyone (not just a person with a legal interest in the land) to apply to the local planning authority (LPA) for a lawful development certificate (LDC). A certificate is a statutory document certifying:

> (1) in the case of an application under section 191, the lawfulness, for planning purposes, of existing operations on, or use of land, or some activity being carried out in breach of a planning condition; or
>
> (2) in the case of an application under section 192, the lawfulness of proposed operations on, or use of land.

The onus of proof in regard to (1) is firmly on the applicant and the issue of a certificate will depend on the on factual evidence provided about the history and planning status of the building or other land and the interpretation of any relevant planning law or judicial authority. The relevant test of the evidence in this matter is “the balance of probability” and the applicants own evidence does not need to be corroborated by independent evidence. If the LPA have no evidence to contradict the applicants version of events or make them less then probable, there is no good reason to refuse the issue of a certificate.

In regard to (2), this provides that, if the LPA are supplied with information satisfying them that the use or operations described in the application would be lawful, if instituted or begun at the time of the application, they shall issue a certificate to that effect; and, in any other case, they shall refuse the application.

In short, the purpose section 192 is to enable any person who wishes to find out whether any proposed use or operations would be lawful to apply to the LPA for that purpose

The application needs to describe the proposal with sufficient clarity and precision to enable the LPA to understand (from a written description and plans) exactly what is involved in the proposal; and to submit whatever supporting information or legal submission that are to be relied upon in order to satisfy the LPA that a certificate should be granted for the proposal.

In making their decision on an application under section 192, the LPA ask themselves the hypothetical question - *"If this proposed change of use had already occurred, or if this proposed operation had commenced, on the application date, would it have been lawful for planning purposes?"* In doing so, the LPA will not only consider whether the proposal would involve "development" requiring an application for planning permission, but whether it would involve a breach of any existing condition or limitation imposed on a grant of planning permission which has been acted upon, and which therefore constrains what can be done on the land. The LPA will not make a proposal fit a scenario; the only question is whether the proposal made by the applicant is lawful at the time of submission.

The Application

This application is pursued under subsection (1) of section 192, which provides for an application to determine whether any proposed use of buildings or other land (s192(1)(a) or operations proposed to be carried out in, on, over or under land, (s192(1)(b) would be lawful for planning purposes.

The applicant states that the existing use falls under: “*C3 – Dwellinghouses”* and in response to the question “Why do you consider that a Lawful Development Certificate should be granted for this proposal?”, the applicant has responded with;

"A Lawful Development Certificate should be granted as the proposed works do not constitute development requiring planning permission

under Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

The proposal involves internal alterations and improvement to the existing basement within a lawful single dwellinghouse (Use Class C3).

There is no material change of use, no increase in floorspace beyond the existing building envelope, and no external alterations that would affect the appearance of the building.

The use of the basement space remains ancillary to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse and does not result in the creation of a separate planning unit.

Accordingly, the proposed works are lawful and fall within permitted development or are not considered development for the purposes of planning control.".

Basement Conversion

Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 set out the meaning of development and new development.

Section 55(2)(a) states that the "*following operations or uses of land shall not be taken for the purposes of this Act to involve development of the land —*

(a)the carrying out for the maintenance, improvement or other alteration of any building of works which

(i)affect only the interior of the building, or

(ii)do not materially affect the external appearance of the building,"

In this case, the applicant has confirmed that the works involves only the interior of the property and there are no external works.

As the works affect only the interior of the building and do not materially affect the external appearance of the building then proposal would not constitute development requiring planning permission.

Other Legislative Requirements
Equality Act 2010
Section 149 (Public Sector Equality Duty) of the Equality Act 2010 requires due regard to the need to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act and; Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The Equality Duty does not impose a legal requirement to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment. Compliance with the Equality Duty involves consciously thinking about the aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making.

Human Rights Act 1998 considerations
This application needs to be considered against the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. Under Article 6, the applicants (and those third parties, including local residents, who have made

representations) have a right to a fair hearing and to this end the local planning authority must give full consideration to their comments.

Protocol 1 Article 1, and Article 8 where appropriate, confer(s) a right of respect for a person's home, other land and business assets. In taking account of all material considerations, including Council policy as set out in the Core Strategy and saved polices of the Unitary Development Plan, the Director of Planning, Building Control & Licensing has concluded that some rights conferred by these articles on the applicant(s)/objector(s)/resident(s) and other occupiers and owners of nearby land that might be affected may be interfered with but that that interference is in accordance with the law and justified by being in the public interest and on the basis of the planning merits of the development proposal. She believes that any restriction on these rights posed by the recommendation given is proportionate to the wider benefits of and that such a decision falls within the margin of discretion afforded to the Council under the Town and Country Planning Acts.

Recommendation: Grant

Condition(s) to be attached to decision for approval OR Reasons for recommendation to refuse

Alterations that affect "only the interior of the building" are not development by reason of section 55(2)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as the conversion of basement into habitable living space relates to the interior, the proposal would not require planning permission.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Appendix 2 – Planning constraints

Article 4 Direction - Removal Of PD Rights Change Of Use From Class C3 To Class C4
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Area Team Boundary - Name: SOUTH AREA