Contents

1. INTRODUCTION 1

2. SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION 2

3. PLANNING HISTORY 3

4. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS 4

5. POLICY ASSESSMENT 6

6. CONCLUSION 16

1. Introduction

1.1 This statement is produced to support a planning application for the change of use from the existing warehouse building to an indoor electric go karting track at 230A, 230B, and 234 Briscoe Lane, Newton Heath, Manchester, M40 2XG.

1.2 This planning statement will cover the background to the application and provide the necessary information to enable its determination by officers at the Council. It will consider the proposal in light of relevant planning policies and other material considerations. The conclusion reached is that key material considerations and the wider objectives of National and Local planning policy support the grant of permission.

1.3 In addition to this planning statement, the application is accompanied by the appropriate planning application forms and ownership certificate, duly signed and completed, and the following documents prepared by :

- 1:2500 Site Location Plan
- 1:500 Block Plan
- 1:200 Site Plan

1.4 The relevant application fee will be submitted by the applicant separately.

2. Site Location and Description

2.1 The application site is situated within Arkady Industrial Estate located close to the junction with Briscoe Lane and Riverpark Road and adjacent to where two railway lines converge.

2.2 The site is located on the northern side of Briscoe Lane and adjoined by industrial premises to the north and west, whilst an open storage yard is located to the east. Philips Park lies opposite the site on the south side of Briscoe Lane.

2.3 From a slightly wider perspective, The Etihad Stadium is located 0.4 miles (15-minute walk) to the south of the site alongside the Manchester Tennis and Football Centre and Co-op music and sport arena.

2.4 The irregular shaped site area (approx. 0.45 hectares) was formerly occupied by an industrial premises, which following extensive fire damage, was demolished.

2.5 The building that previously occupied the site is shown below.

2.6 The building has been replaced, subject to application 123295/FO/2019, in which a new 3251sqm light industrial and

storage and distribution (use class Sui Generis) building was constructed with associated car parking.

2.7 The site is not located within the Green Belt, a conservation area, nor do listed buildings or TPO's impact the site.

2.8 The site is located in Flood Zone 1 ensuring there is no impact on flooding.

3. Planning History

3.1 F01550: Extension at 1st floor level of workshops and storage premises to form additional office accommodation and alterations to the height of the existing stores building

3.2 F12477: Extensions to existing food processing factory

3.3 123295/FO/2019: Erection of a light industrial and storage/distribution building (Sui Generis) (3251 Sqm) with associated car parking and boundary treatment.

3.4 The above history denotes that the site has been used for commercial/industrial uses, alongside office space for over 50 years.

4. Development Proposals

4.1 The proposal is for the Change of Use of the existing Sui Generis building to an indoor Go Karting track with an ancillary soft play child provision.

4.2 Regarding the requirements of NPPG Paragraph: 029 Reference ID: 14-029-20140306 in respect of Design and Access Statements, the proposal is described as follows:

4.3 **Use and Amount:** The application proposes a change of use to an indoor electric Go Karting track, with ancillary soft play. The proposed change of use will include a large vacant area in which projectors will be used to project a go karting track onto the floor.

4.4 Toilet facilities will be provided adjacent to the track itself. Another toilet, storage area, staff room (including kitchen), safety briefing room, changing rooms, and a small arcade and reception area will be provided as per the accompanying plans.

4.5 The company seeking to utilise the building subject to this application is Battle Kart. Battle Kart is a global company with circa 65 circuits in over 11 different countries. 4 centres are currently operational in the UK, with these being located within St Albans, Sittingbourne, Sheffield, and Gateshead.

4.6 The company is a large and well-known provider with a growing brand; it is experienced in providing electric indoor go karting facilities to a high standard.

4.7 The proposed use seeks permission for the following opening hours:

- 11:00-22:00 on Monday - Thursday
- 09:00-23:00 on Friday - Saturday.

- 09:00 – 22:00 on Sunday

4.8 2 full time and 2 part time members of staff will be located on site at any given time to ensure that the operation of the proposed use can take place. Additional staff, including cleaners, potential electrical engineers, and external admin will also be employed on site on a more ad-hoc basis.

4.9 Visitors to the site will be controlled with an online booking system which will allocate visitors their time slots for visiting the premises. The time slots are staggered with 15 minutes intervals to ensure that customers leave and arrive on site at different times to minimise highways impacts.

4.10 The site is secure by 2.00 m high palisade metal security fencing rising to 2.50 in areas that surround the site. These boundary treatments will be retained an un-altered.

4.11 **Layout and Scale:** The proposal utilises the existing warehouse on site to support this application. The overall footprint will not increase whilst there will be no changes to the elevations of the building.

4.12 Externally the building will remain identical to the existing building, with only minor advertisements and branding people placed on the perimeter of the site. However, permission for advertisements and branding is not sought at this stage.

4.13 A parking plan has been provided which highlights how the outdoor space will be utilised to provide parking. Section 5 of this statement explores Manchester's Parking requirements in line with the provision and at the application site and the proposed intensity of the use.

4.14 **Landscaping:** The proposal will utilise existing landscaping measures and no further landscaping will be required.

4.15 No additional hardstanding will be provided as the proposal will seek to utilise the existing hardstanding for parking, and the existing building for the proposed use.

Appearance: The site will keep its existing brick and grey clad appearance from Briscoe Lane. No external changes are proposed.

5. Policy Assessment

5.1 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 38 of the NPPF states that "Local planning authorities should approach decision on proposed development in a positive and creative way" and "at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible". Paragraph 119 of the NPPF comments that planning should "make effective use of land" in "meeting the need for homes and other uses, whilst safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions".

5.2 **Principle of Development:** Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.3 The site is located within the regional centre in which Policy SP1 states that '*economic and commercial development, retail, leisure, and cultural activity*' will be prioritised. Therefore, the site is located within a regional centre which seeks to enable different varieties of commercial uses.

5.4 In principle, the provision of an indoor go karting track within the regional centre is suitable.

5.5 Policy EC2 confirms that the Council will seek to retain and enhance existing employment spaces. However, the proposed change of use seeks to alter the existing commercial Sui Generis use, to a different Commercial Sui Generis use.

5.6 It is acknowledged that there will be a slight difference in that the historical industrial and storage use will be altered to a leisure provision; however, both of these uses are commercial in nature, generate employment, and are acceptable uses which generate employment and are classed as employment spaces.

5.7 Therefore, as there is no loss of employment space or a commercial use, just a change to another similar use, Policy EC2 is complied with.

5.8 However, furthermore, the existing building is currently unviable for storage and warehousing. Due to the building being reconstructed subject to the previous permission, the standard of the building was significantly high, and no tenant wants to rent the building subject to the rent that is now requested. The unit was up for sale for circa 8 months with no interest prior to the applicant seeking to utilise the space for an indoor go karting facility.

5.9 The indoor electric go karting requires a building with significant height, to ensure that the relevant projectors can work. This limits the buildings in which this proposed use can be located within. This building is perfect as is it recently constructed, has parking, and has the relevant height and open layout to support such use.

5.10 There are benefits to the in-door go karting use in this location, as currently other leisure uses are located in close proximity to the site. The site is in close proximity to the Etihad Stadium, Manchester

Tennis and Football Centre, the Co-op Live Arena, and the Regional Arena. This is an area in Manchester where there is footfall in which these commercial uses attract.

5.11 Policy EC3 of the local plan specifically focusses on regional centres. Policy EC3 states that '*The Regional Centre is an appropriate location for large scale leisure uses, for which City Centre sites are unsuitable'*.

5.12 The proposed development is for an indoor Go-Karting course, and this requires a large building which cannot be found within the city centre. The proposal requires a building of at least 18m in height so the projectors can be placed to project the track onto the floor. Any suitable building also needs a large square floorplan to ensure that a suitable space can be provided for such use.

5.13 Therefore, a building of significant height, and of significant size must be utilised to facilitate the proposed go karting use. Alternate sites were sought within the town centre prior to the purchase of this site; however, no sites with a suitable size and height were located.

5.14 It would not be possible to provide the go karting track within the town centre currently, due to no suitable buildings being available to accommodate the proposed use.

5.15 Furthermore, the subtext to Policy EC3, specifically paragraph 8.15, where it is states that leisure development within the regional centre is desired specifically in the Eastlands area. This is due to the accessibility of the location and the existing sports and leisure infrastructure that is currently in place. The core strategy states that in regard to the Eastlands regional centre, there is '*a clear focus for additional development of a similar type.'*.

5.16 In essence, this area is already a sporting and leisure hub to some extent, and Manchester City Council seeks to expand on this hub to

provide a desirable number of activities and uses which will drive traffic to this part of the city.

5.17 The core strategy is clear in which the Eastlands regional area is the perfect location for large leisure uses, confirming that the Council should support the provision of such uses in this location.

5.18 Furthermore, Policy EC5 of the Core Strategy also discusses that the Eastlands area of the regional centre should be utilised as a '*major leisure visitor destination'*. Paragraph 8.65 also alludes to the importance of supporting start-up businesses within this location.

5.19 Policy EC7 also confirms that '*Land around the City of Manchester Stadium, including the "Collar Site" to the east and further land to the north and west. The "Collar Site" provides an opportunity for a leisure, recreation and entertainment visitor attraction of national significance.'.* This highlight's that this area should look to support such uses.

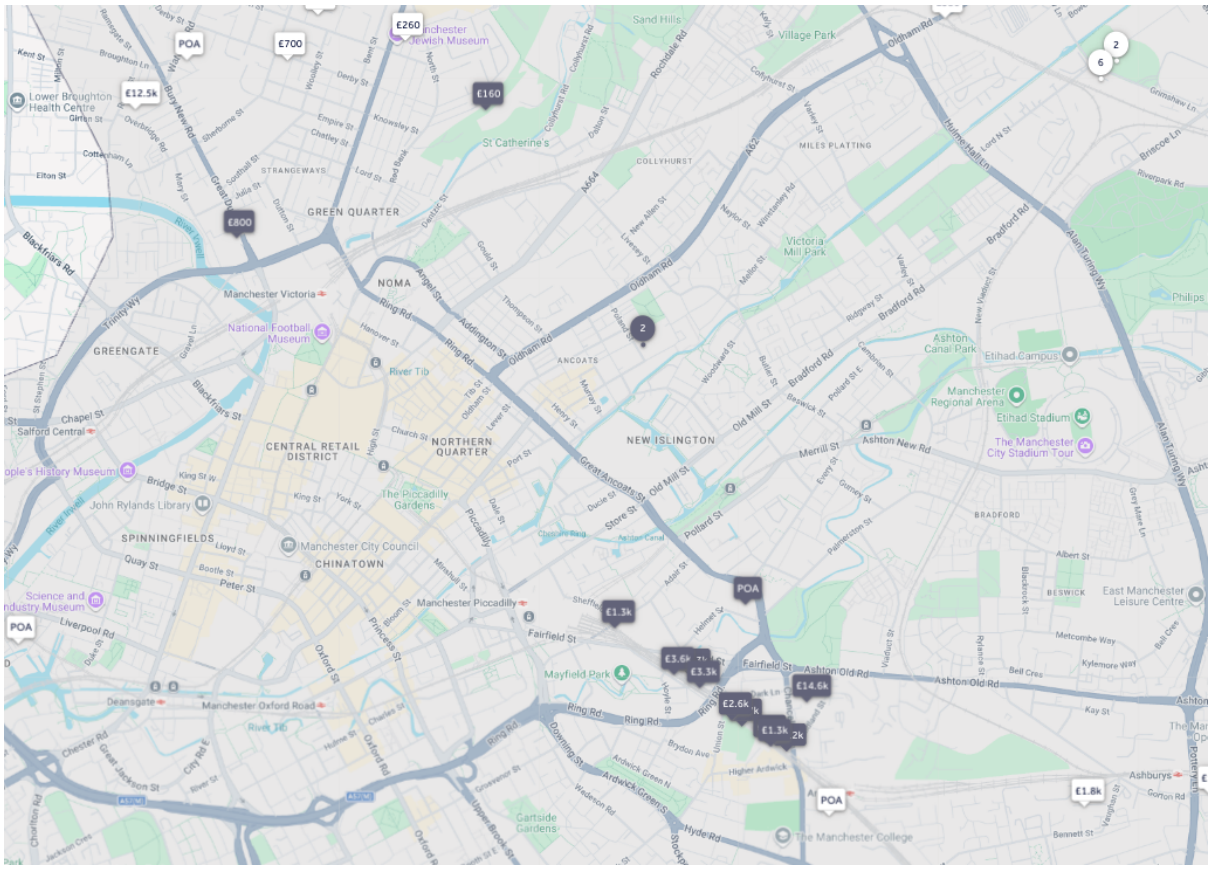
5.20 Therefore, the change of use of this site to provide an indoor go karting track is seen to comply with Policy SP1, EC2, EC3, EC5, and EC7 of the core strategy.

5.21 Due to the specific requirements of the relevant building, and the building's location within the regional centre which supports the proposed use, it is not seen that a sequential approach is required in this instance.

5.22 However, the below maps highlight a Rightmove search for alternative sites, in which every available commercial site within the whole borough was assessed to ascertain is a suitable alternative in a more central location could be found.

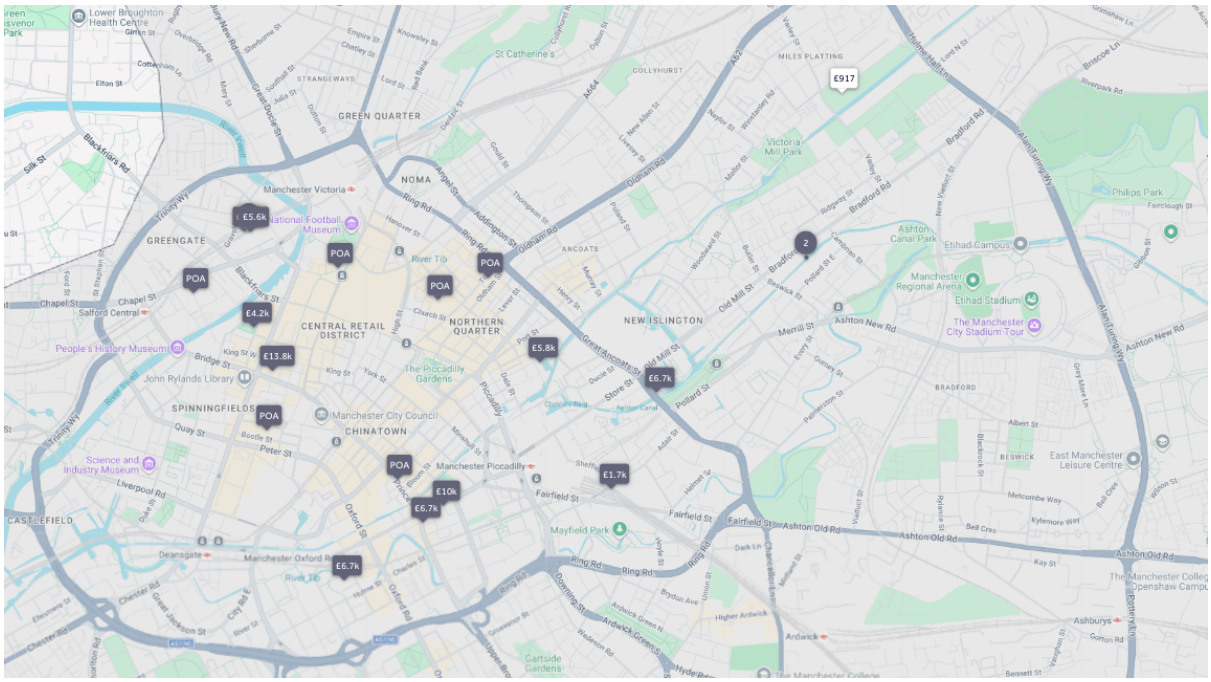
5.23 The first map shows the available warehouse and industrial sites available currently and, as can be seen, there are no sites located within the town centre.

5.24

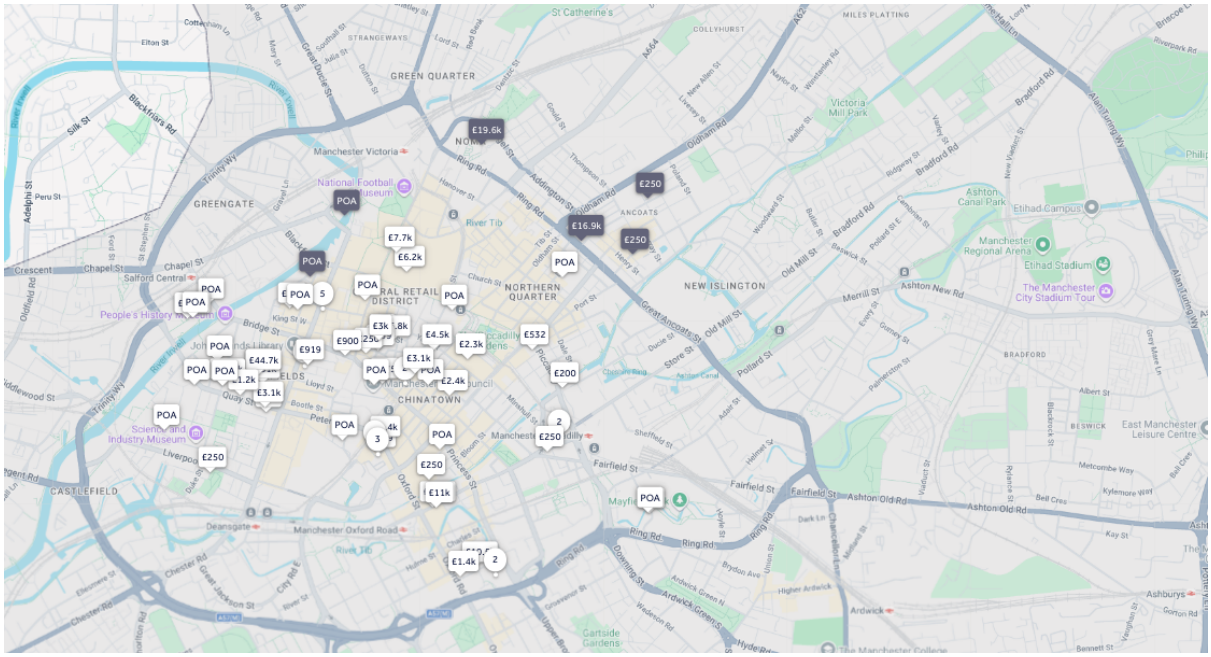


5.25 The below map shows Leisure and Hospitality units that were available. Some units were located in a more central location, but all of these units were either ground floor gyms with low ceilings or restaurant and café facilities. Therefore, they would not be able to accommodate the proposed use.

5.26 Please do refer to appendix 1 in which the sites are listed and clearly can be seen to not be suitable.

5.27 

5.28 Finally, the map for retail and office spaces is provided below. Albeit there are locations within the town centre but there are for shops and offices blocks which do not have the internal size/make up with high ceilings to accommodate the proposed use. The only way to utilise such an office block would be to demolish two floors of the building, which contractually isn't really possible, whilst this approach is also most certainly not viable.

5.29 

5.30 Therefore, no suitable sites would be available and located in the city centre. The specific needs of the proposed use are clear and justify the use of a large warehouse type facility to accommodate the proposal.

5.31 **Character and Appearance of the Area:** The proposal does not seek to change the external appearance of the existing building, nor does it seek to extend the building subject to this change of use application.

5.32 As such, visually there would be little to no impact on the character and appearance of the area. The wider site is a business park, ensuring that commercial uses are located in this area. As confirmed above, the proposed use is desirable within the regional centre and complies with the relevant locational policies.

5.33 Therefore, it is clear that such use would not be out of character when it is compared to the adjacent uses or the wider surrounding area.

5.34 **Residential Amenity:** The site is located within an industrial and commercial area, ensuring that no residential development is located within a 300m radius of the site.

5.35 The closest residential development are the dwellings located on roads that extend off Hooton Street whilst the A6010 lies between these dwellings and the site.

5.36 Crucially, the use is for electric karts ensuring that they are significantly quieter than petrol karts. The karts are also quieter than the vast majority of large machinery which would be associated with the existing use, as well as surrounding uses.

5.37 The surrounding uses are storage, a marquee storage and hire service alongside a metal manufacturing facility. These services will not be impacted by the proposed change of use in regard to noise.

5.38 The noise climate in the vicinity of the proposed development site is most attributable to road traffic noise in the local area. Additional noise is attributable to surrounding commercial uses and vehicle movements, alarms, and loading/unloading activities.

5.39 Due to the proximity away from any residential uses and the fact that the noise generated will be equal, if not less, then the existing manufacturing use and the machinery utilised with this use; it is argued that there will be no impact on noise and amenity.

5.40 The surrounding employment area already contains a mix of uses. It is not considered the proposed development would impact adversely on the residential amenity of the occupiers of nearby residential properties, or adversely impact upon neighbouring uses, beyond that which would be expected from the current lawful light industrial use.

5.41 **Transport and Parking:** 7 bus stops are located within a 1-mile radius of the site, with all of these public bus routes (74, 76 and 76A) being within walking distance and given direct access to Manchester City centre.

5.42 The site has access to the wider road network, being located adjacent to the A6010. Etihad campus train station is located within a 15-minute walk of the site.

5.43 Alongside application 123295/FO/2019, parking and swept path analysis was provided for 12 parking spaces. These spaces are supported by six cycle spaces, and associated shower facilities.

5.44 In addition, within application 123295/FO/2019, it was concluded within the officer report (appendix 2) that there is a good level of off-street parking to the side of the building. Therefore, this public parking can also be utilised, alongside the above public transport, for visitors to utilise this site.

5.45 The proposal will seek to increase the parking layout to provide 33 spaces, with the existing parking spaces being larger to support larger vehicles previously associated with an industrial use. As car parking spaces can be reduced to 2.4m x 2.0m, more spaces can now safely be provided on site.

5.46 The proposal also includes disables parking and electric charging points, all of which can be enforced by condition to be retained after construction and maintained.

5.47 It is proposed that there will be a maximum of 45 visitors on site every half an hour, with this including a maximum of 15 people on track, 15 people preparing to be on track and 15 people leaving/ arriving on site. Every 30 minutes these groups will rotate with the booking system ensuring that arrival times move in this format to ensure that a suitable number of car parking spaces are provided.

5.48 It is also noted that with such a use (indoor go karting), the majority of end uses will be couples, friends or family. It would be extremely rare for 45 people to all be visiting the site in 1 single car each.

5.49 It is fair to assume that at least 5% of visitors will be utilising public transport (4/45) whilst the average car visiting the site would contain at least 2 people on average, with couples and families often visiting such facilities.

5.50 Consequently, 20 car parking spaces is more than adequate for the site to accommodate the proposed number of customers, given the type of

5.51 The proposal complies with Policy CC5 of the Core Strategy which seeks to ensure that the proposal has no impact on the borough's highway network whilst Appendix B denotes that car parking standards for the borough.

5.52 It is confirmed that for 'other leisure' facilities under D2, 1 space is required per 22sqm in out of centre locations. Therefore, the parking standards state that circa 147 car parking spaces should be provided. This is clearly excessive as it is only sought that 45 people could locate the site, at once, at any given time.

5.53 The requirement for 147 car parking spaces is not justifiable as the vast majority of the ground floor area is a large go karting track which can only accommodate a maximum of 15 people at once. Therefore, this requirement in relation to floor area is unjustified in this instance and a requirement in relation to the number of customers is more suitable and evidenced to have no impact.

5.54 As such, the proposal doesn't comply with the parking standards, but the parking standards are not specific to such a use that is proposed on site.

5.55 As per paragraph 116 of the NPPF, for development to be prevented on highways grounds there needs to be a '*severe*' impact on the road network. It is clear in this instance due to the parking spaces provided, and the wider parking provision on site, that the proposed use can be accommodated within this location.

5.56 **Drainage and SuDS:** The site seeks to change the use of an existing building. Information regarding SuDS and drainage was provided within application 123295/FO/2019 when the building obtained planning permission.

5.57 The building was constructed in accordance with building regulations and ground surveys that took place. The proposed use will utilise the existing building and any internal changes will not impact the existing drainage provision that is suitable on site.

5.58 **Arboriculture & Ecology:** The proposal seeks to obtain permission for a change of use. No additional built form is sought to be proposed and, thus, no loss of any habitat areas will take place.

5.59 The proposal does not seek to prune or remove any existing trees, nor does it look to plant any vegetation on site

5.60 Therefore, the proposal will not have any impact on trees or ecology, whilst the application will not trigger a biodiversity net gain requirement.

5.61 **Affordable Housing:** The proposal seeks to obtain permission for a change of use. No additional built form is sought to be proposed and, as such, no contribution to affordable housing is required.

5.62 **Community Infrastructure Levy:** Manchester City Council does not have a community infrastructure levy (CIL) charging schedule and does not seek contributions via this metric. As such no contribution is required.

6. Conclusion

6.1 This statement has demonstrated that the proposed development is acceptable in principle and makes an efficient use of land.

6.2 Material planning considerations have been carefully considered and analysed, as evidenced in section 5 of this statement and the supporting plans and documents. It is considered the proposed development would have no effect on the character of the area or the amenity of neighbouring residents.

6.3 It is considered that the proposed scheme complies with relevant Development Plan Policies and is further supported by National

Guidance. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.

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