Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 January 2026

by R Gravett BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29th January 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/B4215/W/25/3375608
Polish & Glow Car Wash, Redgate Lane, Manchester M12 4RY

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mr Bilal Khan against the decision of Manchester City Council.
- The application Ref is 142656/FO/2025.
- The development proposed is siting of hot food huts (catering trailer, food truck, container and/or gazebo hut) within existing car parking area.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The postcode in the above address is taken from the Council's Decision Notice. Whilst this is different to the one used on the application form, I am satisfied that it accurately reflects the location of the appeal site. The description of development in the banner heading above has also been taken from the Decision Notice as it is a more succinct, accurate description of the development before me than the one provided on the application form. It is also the description used by the appellant on the appeal form.

3. A revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework was published for consultation during the course of this appeal. Having regard to its content and the nature of the disputed matters, I am satisfied that no prejudice would arise to either party by proceeding to issue this decision without seeking comments.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on a) the vitality and viability of Gorton District Centre; b) the character of the surrounding area; and c) car parking provision, and highway and pedestrian safety.

Reasons

Vitality and Viability

5. The appeal site is currently used for various car related uses, including a car valet, sales and storage, with large areas of hardstanding that wrap around the existing building, accessed off Redgate Lane. I observed that there is also a café under the under-croft at the north-east corner of the building.

6. The proposal does not include any physical building works. Rather, it is proposed to site a row of food vendors on an area of land currently used for car parking

along the rear boundary of the appeal site. This would comprise structures such as mobile or modular catering trailers, food trucks, containers and/or gazebos. The submitted plans show the area of land as around 70m wide by 25m deep but does not show the proposed number of food vendors. The appellant does not dispute the Council's evidence that the stated number would range between 13 and 30 food vendors. While I acknowledge that the offer would be demand driven, even at the bottom end of this range, the number of vendors would be significant.

7. Policy C1 of the Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2012) (CS) states that development of town centre uses will be prioritised in identified centres, to maintain the vitality and viability of its centres, provide services as locally as possible and minimise the need to travel by car.

8. The appeal site is not within an identified centre. Gorton District Centre is around 1.3km away and is identified in CS Policy C1 as having an essential role in providing key services to the City's neighbourhoods, including shopping, commercial and leisure functions, ensuring that residents can access such services easily. Although I acknowledge not within easy walking distance for employees of the appeal site, I observed that Gorton has several restaurants and take-aways which are directly comparable in food offer to the appeal proposal.

9. The appellant's evidence is that there are typically around 220 visitors to the site a day, but I have very little information before me to demonstrate how many of these use the existing café, or the number of customers each of the food vendors would expect to serve. Therefore, while I appreciate there is a significant quantum of commercial floorspace close-by, I am not satisfied that the proposal would have an ancillary function to these existing uses. The siting of several vendors in this location would likely attract new customers to the appeal site, particularly given the current popularity of this type of food offering. Moreover, the proposed development could become a 'destination' should it be used as a place for car enthusiasts to meet and socialise, as suggested by the appellant.

10. For these reasons, while I appreciate the number of food vendors would not necessarily be static, the proposed development would be of a scale which would have a significant impact beyond the immediate locality of the appeal site and surrounding area. It would have a much wider attraction than asserted by the appellant and, given the comparable food offer, would likely draw customers from the existing restaurants and take-aways in Gorton District Centre. This would be to the detriment of footfall in this centre and consequently its vitality and viability.

11. I note that the appellant is amenable to conditions including a limit on the number of food trucks/food operators on the site at any one time. However, in the absence of any proposed maximum number of vendors, I cannot be certain that such a condition would make an otherwise unacceptable development acceptable.

12. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would have a harmful impact on the vitality and viability of Gorton District Centre. It would conflict with CS policies C1, C9, and SP1 and saved Policy DC10 of the City of Manchester Unitary Development Plan (1995) (UDP). Together, these seek to prioritise identified centres and where town centre uses are proposed outside an identified centre, they should not have an unacceptable impact on vitality and viability, and all development should reduce the need to travel. In so far as it would fail to

contribute to the vitality of a district centre, the appeal proposal would also conflict with CS Policy C10.

13. Policy 1 of the 'Hot Food Takeaway Supplementary Planning Document' (2017) (SPD) refers to proposals for hot food takeaways in district and local centres and is not therefore relevant to the proposed development before me.

Character

14. The proposed siting of the food vendors would form a small part of a much larger commercial site which is used for various car related uses. The surrounding area is characterised by other commercial and industrial uses including British Car Auctions and a large materials recovery facility.

15. For the reasons given above, the siting of several vendors in this location would attract new customers to the site, creating a 'food destination'. This would inevitably lead to a change in the way the site operates and a greater level of activity in the evenings. However, I have no compelling evidence before me to demonstrate that such activity would be incompatible with the commercial and industrial character of the area.

16. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would not cause harm to the character of the surrounding area. It would accord with CS policies SP1 and C10 in so far as they require new development to have regard to character and, where it supports the evening economy, consideration is given to the type and characteristics of other uses. As CS policies C1 and C9 and saved UDP Policy DC10 do not relate to the character of an area, they are not determinative to this main issue.

Vehicle parking and highway safety

17. The existing plans show 40 parking bays along the rear boundary of the site, the majority of which would be replaced with the proposed food vendors. A further 22 spaces are shown adjacent the main building under the under-croft. On my site visit, I observed a significant number of parked cars, including along the length of the rear boundary, but there was nevertheless some capacity across the site. No car parking spaces associated with the proposals are shown on the proposed plan.

18. While I acknowledge that the landowner would not allow activity which may jeopardise the smooth running of the existing business, I have very little evidence before me in respect of the number of trips, or customers likely to be generated from the proposed food vendors and how many parking spaces would be required. Nor do I have any convincing evidence that customers of the proposals would all be employees or already visiting existing businesses in the area.

19. Therefore, it has not been demonstrated that sufficient parking associated with the proposed development could be accommodated on the site, alongside parking required for the existing businesses. Redgate Road has no kerbside restrictions and during the day I observed it to be busy with parked cars and heavy goods vehicles. Any significant increase in demand for on-street parking on Redgate Road would have a detrimental impact on highway safety, resulting from drivers circling the area to find a space or manoeuvring in the highway to park.

20. There are three points of access to the appeal site from Redgate Lane. The route to the food vendors from the closest access in the north-west corner would be

straightforward. However, from the other two points of access the route would be through the existing car sales area and across the forecourt of the car valet business. The plans show two-way traffic in these areas and there would likely be numerous car movements associated with these businesses, which in the absence of any identified safe routes could cause conflict with pedestrians.

21. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would not provide adequate car parking provision and consequently it would have a harmful effect on highway safety, and on pedestrian safety. It would conflict with CS policies DM1 and SP1 which require all development to have regard to the effects of road safety and traffic generation and promote walking.

Other Matters

22. I note that the appellant refers to an absence of objections to the proposal from interested parties, but this does not mean an absence of harm.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

23. The proposed development would provide a varied food offering for which there appears to be demand and would help attract customers to an established business, in an existing commercial area which is separate from residential uses. However, while benefits of the proposal, these matters are not sufficient to outweigh the harm that I have found above.

24. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

R Gravett

INSPECTOR