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DESIGN, ACCESS & PLANNING STATEMENT



7 Bury New Road, M8 8FW

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Cedar Planning has been instructed by Virtual Property Solutions to produce a Planning Statement to support a planning application for the conversion of the upper floors to 3 x residential flats, the erection of a rear extension and insertion of roof lights ('the Proposal') at 7 Bury New Road, Manchester, M8 8FW ('the Site').

Scheme overview:

- 1.2. The Proposal consists of the following elements:
- Retention and improvement of ground floor commercial unit;
 - Conversion of upper floors to three residential flats (2 x 4-bedroom flats and 1 x 3-bedroom flats).
 - Three storey rear extension to provide additional residential accommodation at the Property;
 - Four roof lights on the rear elevation to provide additional natural light; and
 - Refurbishment of the exterior of the Property.
- 1.3. The Proposal provides a wide range of benefits in the form of providing much needed new housing in a sustainable location, as well as making an effective use of land alongside regenerating the Site and area.
- 1.4. This Planning Statement demonstrates that the proposed development complies with the relevant guidance provided in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as well as the policies contained within the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan 2022 to 2039, the Manchester Core Strategy 2012 – 2027 and the saved policies of Unitary Development Plan (UDP).

2. Location, Site and Planning History

- 2.1. The Site consists of an existing four storey property, with an additional basement. The property forms part of a terrace of similar properties, with a commercial unit located on the ground floor of the Property, with the upper floors being vacant. The Property is currently in a poor state of repair, and the Proposal presents an opportunity to refurbish the site and bring it into its optimal use.
- 2.2. The Site is located to the west of Bury New Road to the north of Manchester City Centre. The character of the area comprises of a mixture of residential, commercial uses and surface car parks. Nearby land uses offer future residents with significant employment opportunities within walking distance of the Site.



Figure 1 – Site Location Plan

- 2.3. Amenities in the area include convenience stores, supermarkets, restaurants, fast food outlets, hotels, employment opportunities, education facilities, religious buildings, leisure facilities and the AO Arena.
- 2.4. Furthermore, the Site is within easy walking distance of the City Centre where there are many public transport connections. This includes both Victoria Station and Shudehill Interchange which are

located within walking distance of the site. Numerous bus stops are also located on Bury New Road, offering a regular and reliable service to nearby locations. The Site is also well served by key strategic roads, with the A6042 Ring Road, a main arterial road which provides direct access on to the outer ring road of Manchester City Centre.

- 2.5.** The wider area is undergoing a period of regeneration, with many major developments either planned or being constructed. This includes 'The Hallmark' on Cheetham Hill Road which ranges from 10 to 15 storeys high, and One Park Place which has been granted planning permission for a part 25-storey and part 15-storey residential building to provide 154 residential units.
- 2.6.** Closer to the Site, other buildings within the terrace of properties have been granted planning permission for the change of use to residential uses as well as rear extensions. This includes the following:
- No. 3 Bury New Road – Conversion to 2 x residential flats (Ref: 138252/P3GPA/2023) & four storey rear extension and rear dormer (Ref: 141343/FO/2024).
 - No. 5 Bury New Road – Conversion to 2 x residential flats (Ref: 139624/P3GPA/2024).
 - No. 7 – 11 Bury New Road – Conversion to 6 studio apartments (Ref: 140269/P3MAP/2024).

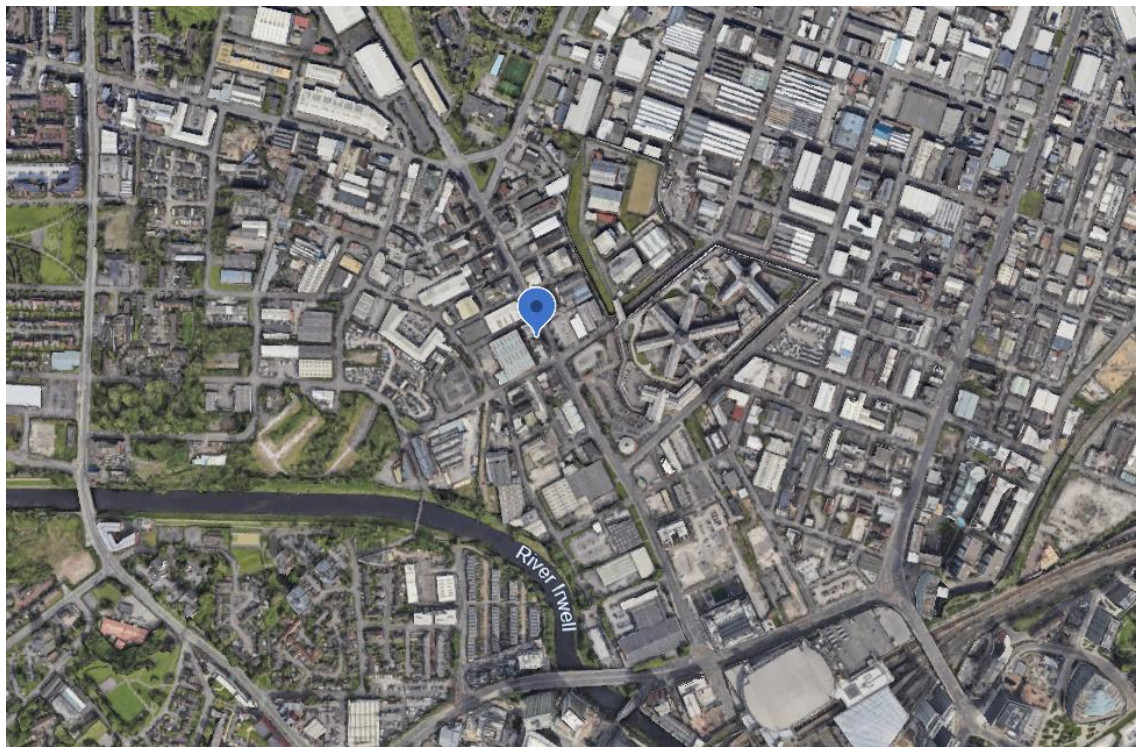


Figure 2: Aerial Image of Site and its surroundings (Source: Google Maps)

- 2.7. A review of the Council's Planning Register has identified that the Site benefits from Prior Approval for the conversion of the first and second floors from retail use to studio apartments (LPA Ref: 140269/P3MAP/2024). The Prior Approval scheme was approved on 19 July 2024, and can fully be implemented by the Applicant. As such, the Prior Approval position offers a realistic 'fallback' position for this Proposal, which is explored later on in this Planning Statement.

3. Proposal

- 3.1. The Proposal seeks to convert the upper floors to provide residential uses. As previously stated, the property benefits from Prior Approval to provide studio apartments. This Proposal seeks to provide a rear extension, as well as a different internal layout, which will enable the Site to provide a better mixture of residential apartments (3 bedroom and 4-bedroom units).
- 3.2. At ground floor level, the commercial unit will be retained and refurbished. Separate accesses will be used for the ground floor commercial unit and the proposed residential units on the upper floors. At the rear of the building a bin store will be located which can be easily accessed by residents. Access will be provided to the rear of the building, where residents can use an alleyway to wheel the bins to Sherborne Street for collection day. A similar arrangement is in place with adjoining properties which have been granted Prior Approval for the conversion to residential uses.
- 3.3. At first floor level, the Proposal will provide a 4-bedroom, 6 person 102 sqm residential flat. Two bedrooms will be provided at the front of the property, with a further two to the rear. A kitchen, dining and living room, storage and bathroom complete the living accommodation. At second floor level, the same layout is proposed to provide another 4-bedroom, 6 person 102sqm residential flat.
- 3.4. The third floor will provide a 3-bed 5 person 88sqm residential flat. At the front of the property a living, dining and kitchen area will be located, with three bedrooms located to the rear. A shower room and storage area completes the residential accommodation.
- 3.5. All extensions and alterations to the property will use materials that complement the property and its surroundings. Through the development of this Proposal, care and attention has been given to ensure that any harm to neighbouring properties is minimised. This includes the use of building heights that complement neighbouring dwellings. Furthermore, the Proposal offers an opportunity to refurbish and regenerate the building and area.

- 3.6.** As previously stated, the Site already benefits from a recent granting of planning permission, via Class MA of the GDPO. This application seeks to extend and alter the already approved dwellings to provide additional living accommodation.

4. Planning Policy

- 4.1. Planning law requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the policies of the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the area consists of the following documents:
- The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (adopted 2024);
 - Manchester Core Strategy (adopted 2012); and
 - The saved policies of the Unitary Development Policies (UDP).
- 4.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and acts as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 4.3. The Council's Planning Map confirms that the Site is **not** located within a Conservation Area, nor is the Property statutorily listed. It also confirms that there are no Tree Preservation Orders within the Site.

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan

- 4.4. The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan is a long-term plan for jobs, new homes and sustainable growth across Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan. The plan was adopted in March 2024 and seeks to:
- Maximise the use of brownfield land and urban spaces;
 - Protect greenbelt land;
 - Release some sites for housing and employment in key locations; and
 - Ensure new developments are integrated into Greater Manchester's transport network.
- 4.5. **Policy JP-S1: Sustainable Development.** This policy requires development to address climate change by delivering economic, social and environmental benefits together, while minimising adverse impacts. It states that the relevant local planning authorities should make as much use as possible of suitable previously-developed (brownfield) land and vacant buildings to meet development needs.

- 4.6. ***Policy JP-H1: Scale, Distribution and Phasing of New Housing Development.*** The Places for Everyone Plan seeks to deliver a minimum of 175,185 new dwellings over the plan period, and specifically for the City of Manchester area identifies a requirement for 3,533 dwellings per annum, which results in 60,061 new dwellings over the plan period.
- 4.7. The policy also requires that the new homes will be of good quality and design, adaptable, supported by the necessary infrastructure and amenities and their distribution will support the Plan's overall strategy, which will reduce the need for people to travel.
- 4.8. ***Policy JP-H3: Type, Size and Design of New Housing.*** This policy states that residential development should provide an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes reflecting local plan policies, guidance and relevant local evidence. It also states that all new dwellings must comply with the nationally described space standards, and be built to 'accessible and adaptable' standard in Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations.
- 4.9. ***Policy JP-H4: Density of New Housing.*** Policy JP-H4 states that new housing development should be delivered at a density appropriate to the location, reflecting relative accessibility of the site by walking, cycling and public transport and the need to achieve efficient use of land and high-quality design.
- 4.10. ***Policy JP-P1: Sustainable Places.*** This policy seeks to ensure that Manchester becomes one of the most liveable city regions in the world, consisting of a series of beautiful, healthy and varied places. It states that development should be distinctive, visually stimulating, socially inclusive, resilient, adaptable, durable, resource-efficient, safe, supported by critical infrastructure, functional and convenient, incorporating inclusive design, legible, easy to move around for all, well-connected to other places, and well served by local shops, services and amenities.
- 4.11. ***Policy JP-P6: Health.*** This policy seeks to ensure that development can help tackle health inequality, by maximising its positive contribution to health and wellbeing and supporting healthy lifestyles.

- 4.12. **Policy JP-S4: Flood Risk and the Water Environment.** This policy states that an integrated catchment-based approach will be taken to protect the quantity and quality of water bodies. It also states that development will be located and designed so as to minimise the impacts of current and future flood risk. In respects of water usage, the policy states that as a minimum, residential development should meet the mandatory water efficiency standard of 125 litres/person/day as set out in the Building Regulations.

The Manchester Core Strategy 2012 - 2027

- 4.13. The Manchester Core Strategy was adopted by the Council in July 2012, and sets out the long-term strategic planning policies for Manchester's future development. Following the adoption of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan, a number of policies have since been superseded.
- 4.14. **Policy SP1 – Spatial Principles.** This policy sets out the key spatial principles which guide the strategic development of Manchester to 2027. This includes a number of Core Development Principles which development should consider.
- 4.15. **Policy CC3 – Housing.** This policy states that the City Centre will see the most intensive development of housing in the City, with other key locations comprising of Castlefield, Piccadilly, the Southern Gateway and the Northern Quarter. In other parts of the City Centre, residential development will be considered to be appropriate in line with Policy CC7.
- 4.16. **Policy CC9 – Design and Heritage.** Policy CC9 states that development should preserve or enhance the heritage assets, and be of the highest standard in terms of appearance and function.
- 4.17. **Policy DM1 – Development Management.** This policy requires that development has regard to the following specific issues:
- *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.*

The Saved Policies of the Unitary Development Plan

- 4.18. The Unitary Development Plan ('UDP') was adopted in July 1995. Following the adoption of the Core Strategy in 2012, and the Places for Everyone Plan in 2024, significant proportions of the UDP have been replaced; however, some policies were saved on 11 July 2012 and remain extant.
- 4.19. ***Policy DC26: Development and Noise.*** This policy seeks to use the planning process to reduce the impact of noise on people living and working in, or visiting, the City. In giving effect to this intention, the Policy states that the Council will consider both: a. the effect of new development proposals which are likely to be generators of noise; and b. the implications of new development being exposed to existing noise sources.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 4.20. As previously stated, the NPPF is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 4.21. Through paragraph 39 of the NPPF, Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should approach decisions in a positive and creative manner, working proactively and collaboratively with applicants to secure developments that provide social, economic and environmental benefits.
- 4.22. Paragraph 48 of the NPPF confirms that planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.23. Paragraph 55 advises that Local Planning Authorities should consider whether otherwise unacceptable development can be made acceptable through the use of conditions. Paragraph 56 goes on to advise that conditions should be kept to a minimum where they are necessary, relevant to planning and to the development proposed, enforceable and reasonable in all other respects.
- 4.24. Paragraph 7 of the NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, including the provision of homes, commercial development and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner. At paragraph 8 it goes on to state that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives. In respect of a social objective, the NPPF states:

“to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being.”

- 4.25. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF advises that decisions should apply a ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’. For decision-

making this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay, or where the most important policies for determining the application are 'out-of-date', granting planning permission unless:

- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

4.26. Paragraph 61 of the NPPF reinforces the Government's objective to significantly boost the supply of homes, with the overall aim of meeting an area's identified housing need. Paragraph 73 of the NPPF recognises that small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are also vitally important for Small and Medium Enterprise housebuilders.

4.27. Paragraph 124 of the NPPF requires planning decisions to promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.

4.28. Paragraph 128 highlights that planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:

- *The identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;*
- *Local market conditions and viability;*
- *The availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to*

promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;

- *The desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and*
- *The importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.*

4.29. Section 12 of the NPPF seeks to achieve well-designed places through the planning system. Paragraph 134 of the NPPF states that high quality design is fundamental to good planning and is a fundamental element of sustainable development. Paragraph 135 of the NPPF requires development to:

- Add to the overall quality of the area over the lifetime of the development;
- Be visually attractive through good architecture, layout and effective landscaping;
- Be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment; and
- Establish a strong sense of place to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit.

5. Use, Amount, Scale and Layout

- 5.1. The property is currently in lawful use as a commercial (retail) unit on the ground floor. The upper floors were previously used for retail purposes (Use Class E), however Prior Approval has been granted for the conversion to studio apartments (Use Class C3).
- 5.2. The Proposal will provide an additional floorspace to the rear of the property to provide additional living space in this highly sustainable location. The alterations and extensions will provide additional commercial space at ground floor level, as well as residential accommodation on the upper floors. The rear extension ensures that a greater mix of dwellings can be provided at the property (3 and 4 beds), with the adjoining property retaining its permission for use as studio apartments.



Figure 3: Proposed elevations

- 5.3. In total the Proposal will provide the following accommodation / floorspace:
- **Commercial ground floor unit** – 73 sqm, with an additional 56.1 sqm storage at basement level.
 - **First floor residential flat** – 102 sqm, 4 bedroom, 6 person residential flat;

- **Second floor residential flat** – 102 sqm, 4 bedroom, 6 person residential flat;
- **Third floor residential flat** – 88 sqm, 3 bedroom, 5 person residential flat.

5.4. As identified above, all of the respective flats will comply with, and exceed, the Government's minimum space standard. In addition to the above, a 10 sqm bin store will be located to the rear of the property.

5.5. From the public realm, views of the Proposal will be extremely limited. Views from the rear of the property are largely blocked due to the scale and massing of neighbouring buildings. From Bury New Road, the alterations are considered to provide a positive effect on the streetscene as it will contribute to the refurbishment of the property and adjoining buildings.

6. Planning Assessment

- 6.1. The following section of this Statement provides an overview of the main planning considerations of the Proposal.

Principle of development

- 6.2. The Site benefits from Prior Approval for the conversion of the upper floors of this property, and the adjoining property (No. 9 Bury New Road) into 6 studio apartments (LPA Ref: 140269/P3MAP/2024).
- 6.3. The Prior Approval scheme was approved on 19 July 2024 and can fully be implemented by the Applicant. In accordance with established case law, the Prior Approval position offers a realistic fallback position, which it is considered acts as a significant material consideration for the determination of this application.
- 6.4. Notwithstanding the above, both local and national planning policies (such as Policy SP 1 of the Manchester Core Strategy) place a heavy emphasis on providing new housing in sustainable locations. The Site is located in a highly sustainable location with a number of amenities for future residents located within walking distance. This includes Manchester City Centre, bus stops, convenience stores, supermarkets and leisure and sports uses. Accordingly, residential uses in this location will minimise the need for residents to travel by private motor cars.
- 6.5. The Site in its current use is making an efficient use of land. A ground floor commercial unit with an additional three floors above (likely to be used for storage) is unlikely to be an attractive commercial property for potential tenants due to the upper floors likely being underused. It is noted that many similar properties in the terrace area are also vacant, and are currently a negative contributor to the local environment and street scene in terms of its visual appearance. The Proposal offers an opportunity to make an efficient use of land, as well as contributing to the improved external appearance of the building and terrace of properties.
- 6.6. Furthermore, the Proposal will help the Council in its aim to meet 90% of housing needs on brownfield land, and in accordance with paragraph 125c) of the NPPF significant weight should be afforded

to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes. Paragraph 125c) of the NPPF goes on to state that such proposals should be approved unless they cause substantial harm. Any harms associated with the Proposal are considered to be negligible, and therefore the Proposal complies with paragraph 125c of the NPPF.

- 6.7. In addition to the above, a number of nearby premises have also been granted planning permission for residential uses. This confirms the acceptability of residential uses in this area, and also identifies that residential uses are commonly located above the commercial uses at ground floor level.
- 6.8. As such, it is considered that the principle of development is acceptable.

Design

- 6.9. The front elevation (facing Bury New Road) will not feature any alterations, however as part of the refurbishment of the building its visual appearance will be improved. Therefore, it is considered that the Proposal will benefit the character of the area.
- 6.10. The majority of the proposed alterations are to be located to the rear of the property where views are extremely limited owing to setting and scale of neighbouring buildings. As such, it is considered that there would be no harm to the character or appearance of the area.
- 6.11. The proposed alterations to the roof form will not raise the existing ridge height at the property. The use of external materials that match those of the existing property will ensure that the extensions complement the host property. Collectively, these design measures ensure that the proposed extensions are subservient and subordinate to the host property.
- 6.12. Having regard to the above, it is considered that the design of the Proposal is acceptable, and accords with the relevant policies of the development plan.

Residential Amenity

Amenity of Neighbouring Occupiers

- 6.13.** The use of the upper floors for residential purposes is not considered to result in any harm to the residential amenities of neighbouring occupiers. In respect of the proposed rear extension, as illustrated by the figure below, none of the adjoining premises have windows on the rear elevations. Consequently, it is not possible for the Proposal to cause harm to residential amenity by way of overlooking, or a loss of daylight / sunlight.



Figure 4: Rear Elevation of Site and Neighbouring Properties
(Source: GoogleMaps)

- 6.14.** Notwithstanding the above, the proposed rear extension is minimal in scale and massing when compared to the existing and neighbouring properties. As such, the Proposal is not considered to create an overbearing impact on neighbouring properties, nor would it cause a loss of light if any windows were to be provided on the rear elevation.

Amenity of Future Occupiers

- 6.15.** Saved Policy DC26 of the UDP seeks to use the planning process to reduce the impact of noise on people living and working in, or visiting, the City.

- 6.16.** As previously stated, the Site benefits from Prior Approval to use the upper floors of the property for residential uses (LPA Ref: 140269/P3MAP/2024). Condition 3 of the permission requires submission to, and written approval by, the City Council prior to occupation of the dwellings. As this Proposal largely seeks to provide the same form of development (residential on the upper floors) it is considered that the same approach should apply to this application. Such an approach would comply with the NPPF which encourages the use of planning conditions to make development acceptable. It is also noted that a similar condition has been used for neighbouring properties also seeking to convert the upper floors into residential uses.
- 6.17.** As illustrated by the relevant floorplans, each respective flat will be provided with sufficient Gross Internal Area (GIA) as well as storage space to comply with the Government's Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standards. All habitable rooms would benefit from appropriately sized windows, including roof lights, providing adequate natural light.
- 6.18.** Having regard to the above, it is considered that the Proposal provides a high standard of living for future occupants, as well as maintaining the residential amenity of neighbouring occupants. The Applicant would welcome a suitably worded planning condition in respects of noise pollution mitigation measures.

Highways and Car Parking

- 6.19.** As previously stated, the Site benefits from Prior Approval to provide residential uses in the upper floors of the property. No on-Site car parking was proposed with the previous proposal, which was found to be acceptable in principle by the Council and the Local Highways Authority. It is considered that the same conclusion should be reached here.
- 6.20.** As set out in previous sections of this Planning Statement, the Site is located in a highly sustainable location, with a number of regular bus services located along Great Ducie Street which provides connections to Burnley, Oldham Mumps, Accrington, Picadilly Gardens and Manchester City Centre. Furthermore, a number of

services and amenities are located within walking distance of the Site, as is Manchester City Centre. Therefore, it is considered that future residents will be able to make use of sustainable modes of transport, which in turn will reduce the demand for parking spaces / car ownership. Therefore, it is considered that the Proposal is acceptable in relation to highways and car parking.

Housing Mix

- 6.21.** The Site currently benefits from Prior Approval for conversion of the upper floors into studio apartments. The additional floorspace provided by a rear extension as well as external alterations allow for the creation of 3-bedroom and 4 bedroom dwellings. Neighbouring properties have secured Prior Approval to convert the upper floors into small residential units (1 bedroom or studio apartments) and it is considered that the use of 3- and 4-bedroom properties through this Proposal provides for an appropriate mix in the area.

Refuse and Cycle Storage

- 6.22.** As illustrated by the relevant planning drawings, the Proposal seeks to provide a bin store to the rear of the property at ground floor level. Future residents will then wheel their bins to Sherborne Street on collection day. It is noted that this arrangement was found to be acceptable by the Council in granting Prior Approval at the Site, and adjoining buildings, and it is not considered that there is any justifiable reason to depart from this judgement.

Flood Risk

- 6.23.** Policy EN14 states that, as part of the assessment of applications, the potential increased risk of flooding should be considered. It is acknowledged that the Site is located within Flood Zone 3. However, as clearly illustrated by the relevant planning drawings, the residential elements of the Proposal will be set over the first, second and third floors at a floor level well above any potential flood waters.
- 6.24.** As previously stated, the Site benefits from Prior Approval for use of the upper floors for residential purposes. The Officer's Report for that application (LPA Ref: 140269/P3MAP/2024) confirms that the

use of the upper floors for residential purposes is acceptable, and that an informative would be applied to the permission to advise residents to sign up for Environment Agency flood risk warnings. The rear extension is to be set over an existing area of hardcore, and as such the Proposal would not increase flood risk elsewhere. Subject to the application of this informative, it is considered there is no reasonable justification for reaching a different conclusion in this case.

Waste

- 6.25. As illustrated by the relevant planning drawings, the Proposal seeks to provide a bin store to the rear of the property at ground floor level. Future residents will then wheel their bins to Sherborne Street on collection day. It is noted that this arrangement was found to be acceptable by the Council in granting Prior Approval at the site, and adjoining buildings, and it is not considered that there is any justifiable reason to depart from this judgement.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1. This Planning Statement sets out that the Proposal accords with the development plan for the area, and that the specific circumstances of the site and the use of important design features mean that harm to the character of the area is minimised.
- 7.2. The Proposal will provide a number of significant benefits which are summarised below.

Benefit	Weight
Social	
Net increase of 3 dwellings in a highly sustainable location.	Substantial weight
Provision of larger residential flats to complement smaller dwellings nearby	Significant weight
Economic	
Increased footfall for local businesses.	Significant weight
Contribution to refurbishment of property, improving its appearance and providing an active use.	Significant weight
Provision of small site well suited to local SME builders.	Significant weight
Creation of jobs during construction, and supply chain.	Moderate weight
Environmental	
Making an efficient use of land.	Significant weight
Development located within a highly sustainable location, reducing demand for private vehicle use.	Significant weight

- 7.3. The table above demonstrates that the Proposal provides a number of wide ranging benefits, many of which are substantial and significant. Consequently, it is considered that the Proposal when viewed on its own accords with the development plan and NPPF and should be granted planning permission.
- 7.4. In addition to the above, the Property currently benefits from Prior Approval to convert the upper floorspace into residential uses. The Prior Approval scheme represents a realistic fallback for the Applicant, and as such should be afforded significant weight in the decision making process. Thus, any concerns relating to the loss of commercial space at the upper floors of the site should not weigh

against the Proposal. It is also noted that other 'above-shop' premises in the local area have been granted planning permission, including those without the use of Permitted Development Rights. In those cases, the Council has determined that the loss of commercial space above the ground floor is acceptable, and given the current poor state of the site and neighbouring buildings, it is considered that the same conclusion should be reached here.

- 7.5.** The location of the site within Flood Zone 3 is noted, however as the residential uses are proposed to be on the upper floors it is not considered that there are any concerns in this regard. Furthermore, it is noted that no significant concerns were raised as part of the previous application at the site or neighbouring properties.
- 7.6.** Having regard to the above, it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted for this Proposal without delay.