Victoria Point
Manchester

Empiric Student Property PLC
Block 2 and 6 Reclad
- Design & Access Statement

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Introduction

Executive Summary

This design and access statement has been prepared to support an application to the existing ‘Block 2’ and ‘Block 6’ at Victoria Point.

The changes being proposed are as follows:

- Improvements to external fabric and appearance

This application is independent of the consented application 139987/FO/2024.

The existing block 2 and block 6 have an external envelope constructed from white brick with areas of High Pressure Laminate cladding integrated with the window assemblies. The windows are fixed with tall side hung ‘vents’ that provide ventilation to the units. The roof and car park roof have no parapet and recent investigations have identified the following issues:

- Both roofs have reached the end of their serviceable life and are therefore no longer performing to an acceptable standard. As a result, they currently require frequent and increasingly extensive remedial works, including repeated deep repairs and recoverings, which are neither cost-effective nor sustainable in the long term. Given the ongoing deterioration and the likelihood of continuing issues, full replacement has been strongly recommended as the most practical and economical solution.
- There are systemic leaks that require remediation. Refer to the document titled “ESP_ MVP_EWS Blocks 2&6 Works rationale”
- The fire risk assessment has identified ‘intolerable’ risks to the external facade construction and requires short term attention under the BSA 2022 regulations

Given the condition of the existing blocks, ESP wish to bring forward changes to these blocks alone to remediate these conditions.

As such, this application is proposing:

- A new external envelope that will achieve thermal improvements that exceed Building Regulation requirements. Existing windows will be retained and lightly refurbished to accommodate interfaces with the proposed new external envelope.
- A new, thermally improved roof condition with a slightly taller parapet condition.



Key

Wider Victoria Point Site

Block 2 and Block 6 Site Boundary

Project Brief and Aspiration

Victoria Point Proposal Context

Victoria Point was originally constructed in 2009. The original scheme incorporated 6 self-contained C3 use apartment buildings each with semi-basement car parking with retrospective approval subsequently obtained to convert to Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA).

Empiric Student Property acquired the site in 2017, following which planning approval was obtained for the reconfiguration of Block 5 to increase the quantity of studio bedrooms and convert the basements of buildings 3, 4 and 5 to provide student amenity space.

The re-configuration work and interventions by Empiric Student Property have temporarily addressed shortfalls in the buildings but, following further investigations, it is now necessary for a more comprehensive refurbishment and re-development of the site to be undertaken for it to be sustainable in the long term in respect of student experience, fire safety, technical and environmental considerations.

A design brief was established in early 2023. Belll Phillips Architects were initially appointed to develop the masterplan, with 5plus architects later being appointed to develop Blocks 5 and 6, with Blocks 1-4 developed by Bell Phillips. LUC were also appointed for development of the landscape proposals.

Block 2 and 6 Technical Context

The application covering the Block 2 and Block 6 of the Manchester Victoria Point Site is predicated on the basis that external wall system does not meet the minimum requirements for surface spread of flame for a building of this type and height.

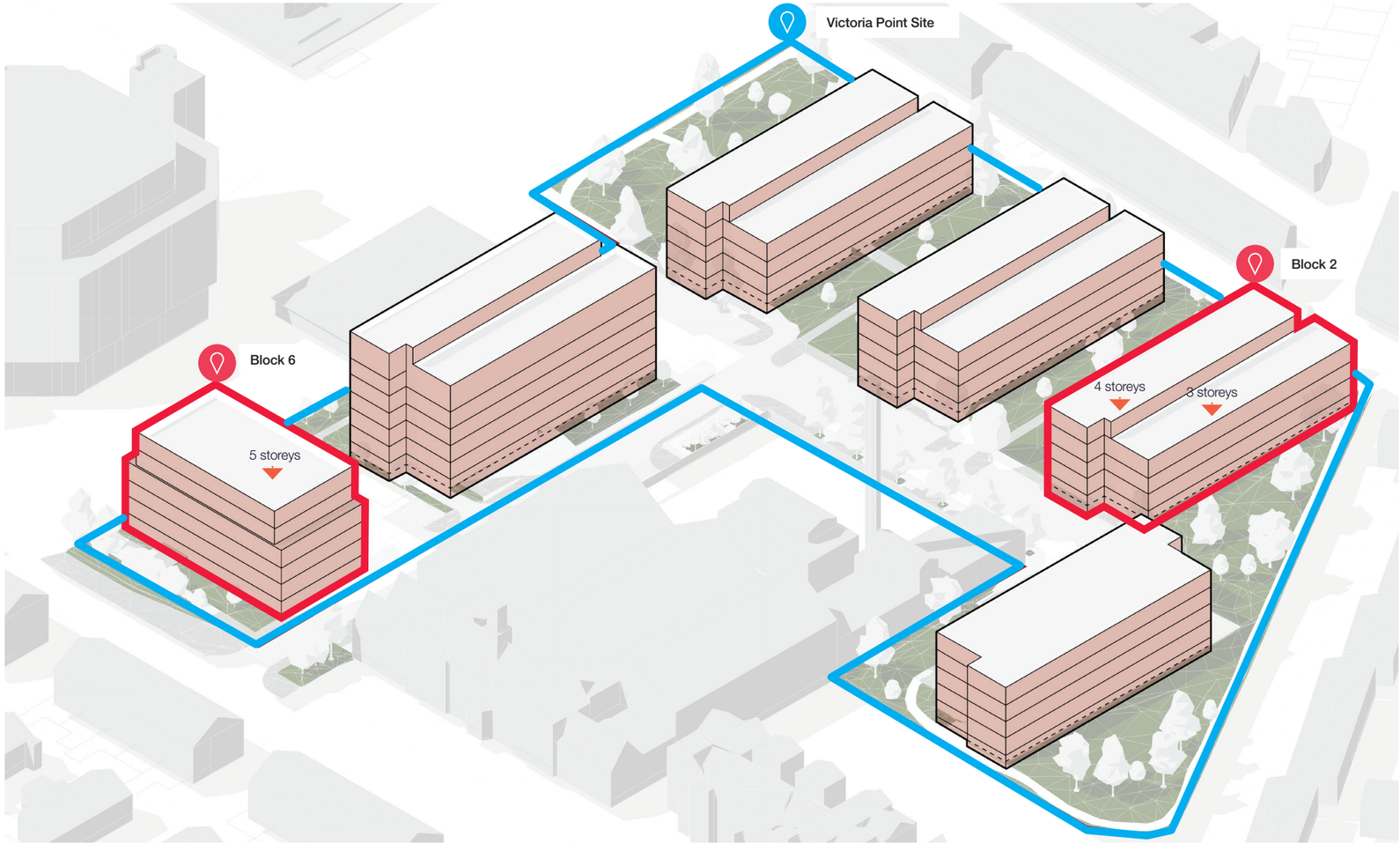
Recent external wall surveys carried out on Blocks 2 & 6 in accordance with PAS 9980 identified the risk appraisal shows that overall building fire safety levels were “Intolerable” and should be addressed with immediate effect. On this basis, the recommendation of the measures set out in this planning application are introduced to bring the risk down to a “Medium-low” level.

Block 2 and 6 are prioritised due to their existing condition and are set to be delivered during the later phases of the masterplan.

Block 2 and 6 Reclad Project Brief and Aspiration

Given the existing context above, the following project brief has been established for the reclad of block 2 and 6 as a priority:

- External wall improvements to meet fire requirements
- External roof improvements to meet drainage requirements
- Minimal disruption to existing resident students
- Significant design uplift in design quality appropriate to the existing and emerging context in the prevailing development consent, to support a betterment during the meanwhile masterplan delivery period.
- Implementation of circular material principles to minimise waste and promote reuse both within the scheme and at the end of life of these buildings.





Key

Wider Victoria Point Site

Block 2 and Block 6 Site Boundary

Site and Situation

Existing Site
Surrounding Area

Victoria Point Location

Victoria Point is located in the South-East of the city within the Victoria Park area of the city. It is located to the east of Manchester Royal Infirmary and Manchester University and is a short walk from Whitworth Park.

The site is located approximately 2km from Manchester City Centre to the North-West. Its nearest railway station is Ardwick which is located approximately 1km to the North-East and has regular services into Manchester Piccadilly and a number of commuter towns to the East of Manchester including Glossop, Hyde and New Mills Central.

It is served by the number 50 bus along Anson Road to the West and the number 192 along Stockport Road to the East. The immediate site is characterised to the South by 2-3 storey red brick residential terraced streets and to the East by 2 storey residential terraced housing built in the late 1980's or 1990's.

The site is primarily marked by the Grade 2* Listed Victoria Baths, located to the south of the site. This Victorian structure fronting Hathersage Road has an intricate design of red brick and cream stone bands, highlighting its history as a former public building. Today, it serves as a venue for events and filming. Built in 1906, Victoria Baths offered three swimming pools and Turkish baths to the public for 86 years until Manchester City Council closed them in 1993. The building showcases red brick with buff terracotta accents, steep slate roofs with skylights, and an entrance area parallel to Hathersage Road. The entrance block has a symmetrical arrangement of five bays with windows in a pattern of 3:2:1:2:3. The main entrance hall boasts a 2-bay screen and a staircase made of dark green glazed terracotta in a Baroque style. Original changing cubicles remain beneath the galleries for Pools 1 and 3. Given Grade II* listing in 1983, the baths were placed on English Heritage's Heritage at Risk Register in 2009. Currently, the building functions as an arts venue, filming site, and event space. The empty pools have hosted activities like pop-up cinema and the Manchester 360º rave. The Victoria Baths Trust aims to eventually open at least one of the pools to the public

The other dominant presence in the area is the neighbouring Octagon House. This 8 storey equivalent building is used as the Central Manchester Dialysis Unit.

The site is currently occupied by 6 blocks of 3-6 storeys which comprise of 566 bedspaces.

This application relates to Block 2 and Block 6 within the wider Victoria Point site.

Key

- Wider Victoria Point Site
- Block 2 and Block 6 Site Boundary



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Historic Context
Victoria Park Conservation Area

General Character, Location and Uses
The conservation area is located to the south of the Site and encompasses a large expanse of urban townscape extending from Daisy Bank Road in the north to Oxford Place, Kent Road East and Rusholme Grove in the south. To the west it extends to Oxney Road and to the east to Anson Road, Laindon Road and Langdale Road.

Principal roads bisect the area north to south including Anson road in the east of the designated area and Lower and Upper Park Road to the west. The conservation area was originally predominantly residential in character but today contains a mix of uses, including housing and institutional uses, many of which are associated with Manchester University.

Historic Interest
In 1836 the architect Richard Lane was commissioned to design Victoria Park in the then independent township of Rusholme to the south of Manchester, with eight prominent men founding a company (later known as the Victoria Park Company) to purchase the land required. Victoria Park was one of the earliest planned gated residential estates in the country and the first in Manchester.

The 70-acre estate was planned to incorporate formal crescents and circular parklands, and to integrate detached and semi-detached villas set in large plots. By 1837 entrance lodges, boundary walls, roads and planting had been completed and by 1848 much of the estate was completed. By the late 19th century the growth of the area had slowed and some of the remaining plots to the east had been developed as traditional suburban streets. During the 20th century the area changed and the original layout and consistency of the scheme was partially eroded by infill and redevelopment of plots.

Victoria Baths Summary of Significance
The Site is adjacent to the grade II* listed Victoria Baths. Plans to provide 'baths' for this area of Manchester were first considered by the Baths and Wash Houses Committee of Manchester Corporation in 1897 and land for Victoria Baths was acquired in 1899. It was built between 1903 to 1906 and was designed by the City Architect of the time, Henry Price, based on earlier designs of the City Surveyor. It is described in the Pevsner Architectural Guide for Lancashire: Manchester and the South-East as "The most opulent Edwardian municipal baths to survive anywhere in England."

The building is eclectic in style and is in striped, red Ruabon brick and pale terracotta. It is symmetrical in massing and outline to Hathersage Road, with steep shaped gables with swan-neck pediments and tourelles, a lower central gable with a projecting canted bay at ground floor, and two lower flanking wings. Stained glass windows exist throughout, in arched openings at ground floor and in square headed openings at first floor – all are in deep reveals. A tall central clock tower rises from the roof in the form of a cupola. It is a well-preserved example of a public baths from the period, retaining its plan form (with each class of user having a dedicated entrance from Hathersage Road), ancillary buildings and forecourt with walls, gates and a tall chimney on an industrial scale. It has a surviving interior decorative scheme of ornate stained glass, decorative tiling, mosaic floors, conserved pool halls and suites of Turkish and Russian Baths. It now operates as a visitor attraction and commercial venue.


Historic view of Victoria Baths and former villa within site


View of Victoria Baths from Naburn St


Octagon House, Hathersage Rd - NHS dialysis unit


Victoria Bath, Hathersage Rd - Grade II* listed


Victoria Baths between Block 5 and 6


Victoria Baths chimney


Victoria Baths Window and Stone Details


View from Bax Road outside Block 6


Rear of Baths