

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no. 143665/FO/2025
Date registered valid: 21 January 2026
Proposal: Erection of 3-storey building to form 7no. apartments (Class C3) following demolition of existing semi-detached properties.
Address: 2B Minehead Avenue, Manchester, M20 1FW
Ward(s): Old Moat Ward

Applicant: Mr James Nichols
Agent (if any): Mr Grant Erskine Grant Erskine Architects
Case officer: David Lawless
Tel: 0161 234 4543
Email: david.lawless@manchester.gov.uk

Recommendation: Refuse
Date of recommendation: 18 March 2026



Application details

Type of application: Full Application Consent

Development type: Minor Dwellings

Date of site visit: 9 February 2026

Standard consultations:

Printed: 28 January 2026 Expired: 18 February 2026

Neighbour notifications

Printed: 28 January 2026 Expired: 18 February 2026

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/area

This application relates to the site of nos. 2B and 2C Minehead Avenue, a pair of 2 storey semi-detached dwellinghouses located on the Minehead estate in Withington. There are garden and parking areas located to the front of the properties and larger gardens to the rear. The site is located in a predominantly residential neighbourhood.



Listed building: No

Conservation area: No

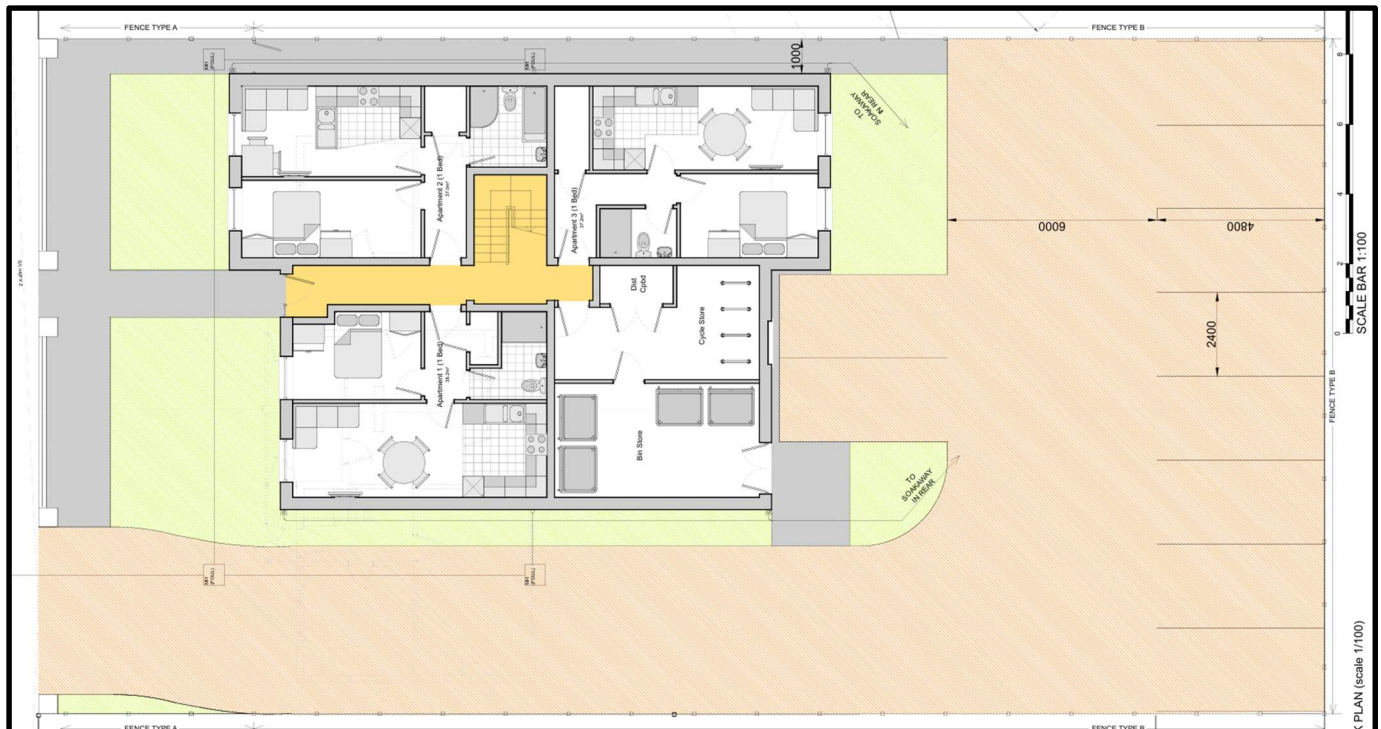
Tree Preservation Order: No

Description of development

The applicant is proposing to erect a 3-storey building to form seven self-contained flats, to be distributed as follows:

- Ground floor – 3 x 1 bed flats
- First Floor – 2 x 3 bed flats
- Second Floor – 2 x 2 bed flats

Ten car parking spaces are proposed at the rear of the proposed building and bin and cycle stores would be situated within the building on the ground floor. The proposed ground floor layout is shown below:



Consultations & Notification Responses

Local Residents/Members of the Public – Five letters of objection have been received, the comments are summarised below:

- The proposal constitutes overdevelopment and would introduce a building of a scale, height and density significantly out of character with the surrounding area, which is predominantly two-storey family housing.
- The proposed development extends beyond the established building line, resulting in a dominant and visually intrusive form.
- There remains a strong local need for family housing, this proposal would result in the loss of two family homes.
- Concerns are raised that further high-density or multi-occupancy accommodation would alter the established residential character of the area. There is uncertainty over the intended use (C3 dwelling versus HMO) of the apartments. The future use of the development as a HMO would have a detrimental impact upon the character of the area.

- The proposal would exacerbate congestion on Minehead Avenue, which is already subject to heavy on-street parking, use as a rat run, and additional weekend traffic associated with nearby sports facilities. Insufficient on-site parking is anticipated to result in overspill onto surrounding streets, obstructing pavements, reducing visibility on bends and junctions, and increasing risks to pedestrians—particularly children. Increased vehicle movements entering and exiting the site are highlighted as a highway safety concern.
- The conversion of the rear garden area into a car park would introduce additional noise, activity and disturbance to an area currently characterised by quiet, shared rear gardens. Vehicle movements, car doors, and general activity close to neighbouring gardens, with limited mitigation shown, such as boundary planting or acoustic buffering, would have an impact on existing amenity levels.
- The development would result in the loss of private garden space which would be replaced by hardstanding and parking areas. This would be harmful to local amenity, character, and environmental quality.
- Due to its height, siting and bulk, the development would have an overbearing impact on neighbouring properties, with potential loss of daylight and sunlight to adjacent windows and rear gardens. No daylight and sunlight assessment has been submitted.
- The proposal would lead to increased surface-water runoff and there is an absence of sustainable drainage measures.
- A large mature tree within the site, together with existing trees and vegetation that support wildlife (including birds, bats and hedgehogs), would be lost. There is insufficient arboricultural and ecological information and it is unclear how Biodiversity Net Gain requirements would be met.
- The level of private amenity space proposed is small given the number of units proposed, this is of particular concern if the flats are to be occupied by families. This would result in sub-standard living conditions for future residents.
- The presence of asbestos within the existing building is a concern, particularly during their demolition.

In addition to these objections a representation has been received requesting that swift nesting boxes be incorporated into the scheme should it be approved.

Withington Civic Society – The Society has raised objections to the proposed development, while acknowledging the intention to redevelop the site for Class C3 residential use. Its concerns can be summarised as follows:

- The proposed building would extend beyond the established building line on Minehead Avenue, creating an overly dominant presence in the street scene. The inclusion of a second-floor front-facing gable is considered incongruous, as the prevailing architectural character of the area is defined by hipped roofs.
- The depth of the proposed building would result in large, blank gable elevations that would have a harmful visual impact on neighbouring properties. In particular, the elevation facing the corner semi-detached property lacks sufficient architectural detailing. The Society considers that windows should include proper reveals set back from the façade rather than being flush, to improve visual quality.
- Insufficient information has been provided regarding floor-to-ceiling heights, which are assumed to be approximately 2.3 metres. The Society is concerned that this may be inadequate, particularly in combination with the small window sizes, which are likely to restrict natural daylight within the units.
- The inclusion of three-bedroom flats at first-floor level is questioned due to the absence of private or shared amenity space. The Society considers such units unsuitable for family occupation, as there would be no outdoor space or play areas for children.

- No measures appear to have been proposed to achieve biodiversity net gain, which the Society considers a significant omission.

Overall, the Society considers that the application should be revised and resubmitted with a design that is more sympathetic to the established architectural character of the surrounding area.

In addition, the Society recommends that any planning permission granted should include a condition restricting the use of the property to a single Class C3a dwellinghouse, excluding use as a house in multiple occupation, in order to safeguard the amenity and living conditions of neighbouring residents in accordance with relevant planning policies.

Highway Services – Highway Services have made the following comments:

- The adjacent highway network can facilitate such additional demands with no highway capacity concerns.
- It is unclear whether parking arrangement for no. 2A Minehead Avenue will be affected by the access to the apartment rear car park, further information is required.
- Ten car parking spaces are proposed to the rear of the site, this is acceptable in principle subject to a car parking management strategy.
- Standard parking bays will be 2.4m x 4.8m, this is in line with MCC requirements. One disabled parking space should be provided at the site.
- Should the planning application be approved, the applicant will be required to enter into a Section 278 agreements for the alterations to the existing highways. This will require the agreement with MCC's Highways Applications and Network Resilience teams via Contact Manchester (Tel. 0161 234 5004). This will be funded at the applicant's expense. Redundant dropped kerbs surrounding the site should be reinstated as part of the highways work.
- Highways will not accept a greater than double dropped kerb for access to the parking spaces.
- There should be a minimum of 10% EV charge points, with cable ducting for all spaces. Charging unit should be minimum 7kW.
- The cycle store provision is considered acceptable.
- It is recommended that all fencing/railings adjacent to the adopted highway are visually permeable from a distance of 600mm upwards to ensure adequate visual permeability for child pedestrians. All gated accesses will need to provide inward opening gates to ensure they do not impact on the adopted footway or highway. A pedestrian visibility splay should be undertaken at the proposed vehicular access.
- The proposed refuse store is considered acceptable.
- Construction should be managed via the standard Council planning condition.

Environmental Health – Suggests the imposition of conditions regarding contaminated land, refuse storage, air quality and construction management.

Neighbourhood Team Leader (Arboriculture) – No tree survey or Arboricultural Impact Assessment or Arboricultural Method Statement has been submitted.

Flood Risk Management – Suggests the imposition of a drainage condition.

United Utilities Water PLC – All options for the sustainable management of surface water must be thoroughly investigated before UU will accept any surface water connections from new development to the public sewer. Where a new surface water connection to the public sewer is proposed, UU will require robust evidence to demonstrate the drainage hierarchy has been fully investigated and there are no more sustainable options available for the management of surface water. UU also suggests the imposition of a drainage condition.

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit – GMEU request that a Preliminary Bat Roost and BNG Metric be submitted in support of the application.

Policies

Draft National Planning Policy Framework (December 2025) – The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. A draft revised NPPF was published for consultation on 16 December 2025. The consultation period runs for 12 weeks and will close on 10 March 2026.

The draft NPPF proposes significant changes to the structure and content of national policy. These include a move to Local Plan-style policy sections, a clearer distinction between plan-making and decision-making policies, and the reintroduction of strategic planning through Spatial Development Strategies. Other notable changes include an expanded presumption in favour of sustainable development, policies promoting higher densities around transport hubs, and support for small and medium-scale housing schemes through a new "medium development" category. The draft also integrates National Development Management Policies, strengthens climate change and biodiversity policies, and introduces measures to encourage clean energy and critical minerals development.

Once adopted, the revised NPPF will replace the current framework and form a key part of national planning policy. At this stage, as the document is subject to consultation and has not yet been finalised, while still a material consideration, it can only be afforded limited weight in the determination of planning applications. In this instance, the relevant sections are outlined below:

Policy DM3 (*Determining development proposals*) – When considering development proposals, local planning authorities should:

- a) Work with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner, where necessary seeking solutions to problems arising from initial proposals, to enable a timely decision;
- b) Take a proportionate approach to the consideration of the planning matters raised by the proposals, in a way that reflects their scale, complexity and potential impact;
- c) Take account of planning matters raised during any pre-application engagement, including any positive responses to this engagement, as well as representations on the proposals;
- d) Consult statutory or internal consultees only where it is necessary to do so. Decisions on development proposals should not be delayed in order to secure advice from a statutory or internal consultee beyond their statutory deadlines unless there is insufficient information to make the decision or more detailed advice may enable an approval rather than a refusal;
- e) Consider whether otherwise unacceptable development proposals could be made acceptable through the use of planning conditions or planning obligations; and
- f) Not refuse applications for development which should clearly be approved, having regard to its accordance with the development plan, the policies in this Framework and any other material considerations.

Policy HO7 (*Meeting the need for homes*) – In applying the policies in this Framework, substantial weight should be given to the benefits of providing accommodation that will contribute towards meeting the evidenced needs of the local community, taking into account any up-to-date local housing need assessment, and other relevant evidence (including the extent to which there is a five year supply of deliverable housing and traveller sites, and performance against the Housing Delivery Test).

Policy L2 (*Making effective use of land*) – Substantial weight should be given to the benefits where a development proposal would achieve one or more of the following:

- a) Remediating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;
- b) Making better use of vacant and under-utilised land and buildings (such as by bringing back into residential use empty homes and other suitable buildings; converting space above shops; redeveloping under-utilised retail sites; and building on or above service yards, lock-ups, car parks and other transport infrastructure);
- c) Making effective use of previously developed land and buildings through temporary uses, in situations where alternative development is anticipated within a reasonable period (including as a result of the land being allocated for an alternative purpose in the development plan);
- d) Creating additional homes within settlements by using the airspace above existing residential and commercial premises, or through sensitive redevelopment or additional development within existing plots (including, but not limited to, the addition of mansard roofs, proposals to fill gaps in the existing roof line, the introduction of higher buildings at street corners and additional units within residential curtilages). Such proposals should:
 - i. be consistent with the overall street scene, other than where it is appropriate to have larger buildings such as at street corners, or where specific changes are provided for through a design code which forms part of a development plan;
 - ii. maintain safe access and egress for occupiers and users, and acceptable living standards for residents and neighbours in terms of access to daylight, sunlight, privacy and external amenity space; and
 - iii. where the development would involve the use of residential curtilages, not occupy more than twice the footprint of the existing building on the site, and retain at least 50% of the non-developed area within the building curtilage.

Policy DP3 (*Key principles for well-designed places*) – To respond to their context and create well-designed places development proposals should:

- a) Context: respond to the history, character and features of the site and its setting, so that it integrates into and enhances its surroundings (such as through the arrangement of development plots and buildings, the use of materials and architectural features, and the restoration, reuse and integration of heritage assets).
- b) Liveability: support healthy, mixed, vibrant and integrated communities, which will function well over the lifetime of the development, by incorporating a range of uses and tenures, employing features which promote social interaction, and which are robust, durable and easy to look after.
- c) Climate: contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation and the transition to net zero, by using building layouts, building orientation, massing, landscaping and materials which conserve energy and other resources, and which minimise risks from the impacts of climate change including overheating.
- d) Movement: provide transport infrastructure and choices which support the design vision for the site, provide good connections to the wider settlement (or those nearby), and prioritise walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport.

- e) Built Form: use the pattern of buildings to define the arrangement of streets, squares and other spaces, promote compact forms of development to optimise the site's potential, distinguish between public and private areas, create focal points and, where appropriate, enhance views into and out of the scheme.
- f) Identity: create visually attractive, distinctive and characterful development to establish or maintain a strong sense of place and pride, including through the use of a coherent palette of materials, design features and planting.

It states further that development proposals that are not well designed should be refused, when assessed against this policy and local design policies, guides, codes and masterplans set out in the development plan. Substantial weight should be given to compliance with these policies when assessing the design quality of proposals.

Policy TR4 (Street design, access and parking) – To contribute to creating well-designed places, transport considerations should be integral to the design of development, e.g. proposals should provide a suitable number of parking spaces where appropriate, reflecting the location and nature of the development, any locally-set standards in the development plan, and including adequate provision of spaces that allow for the charging of plug-in vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.

Policy P3 (Living Conditions) – Development proposals should:

- a) Be appropriate for their location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment.
- b) Provide healthy living conditions for occupiers and users in terms of having adequate access to light and avoiding exposure to levels of air, noise, artificial light or other sources of pollution which could have an unacceptable adverse effect on health and wellbeing; and
- c) Not give rise to, or contribute to, an unacceptable level of access to daylight and sunlight for neighbouring residents and occupiers, or unacceptable levels of air, noise, artificial light, water, soil or other forms of pollution on or beyond the site.

The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) – The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, i.e. the Core Strategy Development Plan Document and accompanying policies, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework is a material consideration in planning decisions.

Paragraph 11 states that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which for decision-taking means:

- c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear 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.

Paragraph 12 states that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.

In addition to the above, Sections 5 (*Delivering a sufficient supply of homes*) and 12 (Achieving well-designed places) are of relevance:

Paragraph 61 in section 5 states that to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. The overall aim should be to meet an area's identified housing need, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community.

Paragraph 73 states that small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, are essential for Small and Medium Enterprise housebuilders to deliver new homes and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should:

- a) identify, through the development plan and brownfield registers, land to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare; unless it can be shown, through the preparation of relevant plan policies, that there are strong reasons why this 10% target cannot be achieved;
- b) seek opportunities, through policies and decisions, to support small sites to come forward for community-led development for housing and self-build and custom-build housing;
- c) use tools such as area-wide design assessments, permission in principle and Local Development Orders to help bring small and medium sized sites forward;
- d) support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes; and
- e) work with developers to encourage the sub-division of large sites where this could help to speed up the delivery of homes.

Paragraph 131 in Section 12 states that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

Paragraph 137 states that design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals.

Paragraph 139 states that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:

- a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or

- b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

The Places for Everyone Plan – This plan was adopted on 21 March 2024, as such the Plan and its policies are now a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications. The Plan and its policies must therefore be given significant weight in the planning balance. The relevant policy is set out below:

Policy JP-Strat9 (Southern Areas) – This policy states that the economic competitiveness, distinctive local neighbourhood character and environmental attractiveness of the southern areas will be protected and enhanced. There will be a strong emphasis on making as much use as possible of suitable previously developed (brownfield) land and promoting the roles of the areas' town centres and its other key assets.

Policy JP-G7: Trees and Woodland – This policy states that the member authorities will work to deliver the aims and objectives of the Greater Manchester Tree and Woodland Strategy, aiming to significantly increase tree cover, protect and enhance woodland, and connect people to the trees and woodland around them. This will be done through local planning and a number of associated activities, but in the case of development as follows:

- Where development would result in the loss of existing trees, requiring replacement on the basis of two new trees for each tree lost, or other measures that would also result in a net enhancement in the character and quality of the treescape and biodiversity value in the local area, with a preference for on-site provision; and
- Protecting trees and woodland during the construction phase of development.

Policy JP-G8: A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity – This policy states that through local planning and associated activities a net enhancement of biodiversity resources will be sought. It states further than in relation to development, proposals would be expected to:

- a) Follow the mitigation hierarchy of:
 - i. Avoiding significant harm to biodiversity, particularly where it is irreplaceable, through consideration of alternative sites with less harmful impacts, then
 - ii. Adequately mitigating any harm to biodiversity, then
 - iii. Adequately compensating for any remaining harm to biodiversity
- b) Avoid fragmenting or severing connectivity between habitats;
- c) Achieve a measurable net gain in biodiversity of no less than 10%
- d) Make appropriate provision for long-term management of habitats and geological features connected to the development;
- e) Where appropriate, development should: mitigate air pollution impacts on Manchester Mosses SAC; mitigate urban edge, functionally linked land and recreation disturbance impacts on the South Pennine Moors SAC/SPAs; and assess and potentially mitigate boat movement, water pollution, and light spillage and shading impacts on the Rochdale Canal SAC; and
- f) Development proposals should be informed by the findings and recommendations of the appropriate biodiversity/ecological assessment(s) in the PfE evidence base and/or any updated or appropriate biodiversity/ecological assessments submitted as part of the planning application process.

Core Strategy Development Plan Document – The Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2012 -2027 ("the Core Strategy") was adopted by the City Council on 11th July 2012. It is the key document in Manchester's Local Development Framework. The Core Strategy replaces significant elements of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) as the document that sets out the long-term strategic planning policies for Manchester's future development.

A number of UDP policies have been saved until replaced by further development plan documents to accompany the Core Strategy. Planning applications in Manchester must be decided in accordance with the Core Strategy, saved UDP policies and other Local Development Documents. Relevant policies in the Core Strategy are detailed below

Policy SP1, Spatial Principles, - Development in all parts of the City should make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice including creating well designed places that enhance or create character and protect and enhance the built and natural environment.

Policy DM1, Development Management – This policy states that all development should have regard to a number of specific issues, of which the following are of most relevance:-

- 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.
- Community safety and crime prevention.
- Design for health.
- Vehicular access and car parking.
- Effects relating to biodiversity, landscape, archaeological or built heritage.
- Flood risk and drainage.

Issues

Principle of the Proposal – The site is situated within a predominantly residential suburban area characterised by low-density development arranged along a network of streets and cul-de-sacs. The prevailing land use is residential, with the majority of surrounding plots comprising semi-detached single dwellings. Building footprints are generally modest and consistent in scale, reflecting the typical built form and plot sizes associated with inter-war social housing estates found across south Manchester.

Plot sizes in the immediate vicinity are largely regular, though not strictly uniform, with dwellings arranged to maintain appropriate separation distances. This results in a spacious and cohesive suburban character. Properties are typically set back from the street, benefitting from modest front gardens and/or driveways, while generous private gardens are provided to the rear.

Although the site is situated within a predominantly residential area, the principle of constructing an apartment block on this plot cannot be supported. The land in question comprises a pair of semi-detached dwellings and their associated garden areas and its proposed redevelopment to accommodate seven self-contained flats is considered wholly inappropriate. The introduction of a building of this size in this location would constitute overdevelopment and result in a marked and incongruous departure from the established pattern of development that characterises the surrounding neighbourhood. In addition, the overly large footprint and number of parking spaces proposed precludes the provision of a satisfactory level of private amenity space for future occupiers.

For these reasons, the principle of erecting a detached, self-contained residential building in this location to form seven self-contained flats is considered unacceptable and contrary to the established pattern of development.

Standard of Accommodation – The Council adopted the Manchester Residential Quality Guidance in December 2016 and within that document reference is made to the use of a combination of the Nationally Described Space Standards and the London Housing Design Guide space standards to form Manchester's space standards for residential developments. The proposed development has been assessed against these standards.

The amount of floor space proposed for each apartment and that required under the guidance is detailed below:

- Apartment 1 – 38.2m² (Standard: 37-50m²)
- Apartment 2 – 37m² (Standard: 37-50m²)
- Apartment 3 – 37.2m² (Standard: 37-50m²)
- Apartment 4 – 83.4m² (Standard: 74m²)
- Apartment 5 – 77.4m² (Standard: 74m²)
- Apartment 6 – 67.9m² (Standard: 61-70m²)
- Apartment 7 – 62.9m² (Standard: 61-70m²)

While the proposal complies with the Council's internal space standards, the quality of the residential environment is significantly undermined by the excessive scale of development relative to the plot size. The disproportionate built footprint, combined with an over-provision of parking, severely constrains opportunities to deliver meaningful, functional private amenity space for a level of occupation that could range from 13 to 22 people. As a result, the scheme fails to provide an acceptable standard of outdoor amenity for future occupiers, contrary to the principles of good residential design and the requirements of adopted planning policy.

Although an area of open space is proposed to the front of the property, it is not believed that this can be reasonably considered private amenity space due to its exposure to the public realm. Such an arrangement fails to provide future occupiers with a secure, usable, and private outdoor area for recreation, relaxation, or domestic activities, an expectation clearly set out in both local and national design guidance. As a result, the development falls short of delivering an acceptable standard of residential amenity and would offer a suboptimal living environment, contrary to the principles of sustainable and high-quality housing design embedded within established planning policy.

Design and Siting – Nos. 2B and 2C Minehead Avenue consists of a simple, continuous roof form and although they were built in the 1950s, they broadly align with the prevailing character of neighbouring dwellings. The replacement apartment building introduces multiple roof elements, i.e. dormers, gables and hips, which creates an unbalanced roofscape that causes the building to stand out awkwardly rather than integrate.

Although narrower in plan, the replacement building has an increased perception of scale and bulk. This is primarily due to the introduction of additional vertical layers, including dormers pushed high into the roof space and a more dominant roof form, which together increase the perceived height and mass of the development. Whereas the existing dwellings present as clearly two-storey buildings, the proposed scheme reads as a three-storey form. This visual increase in scale is inappropriate in the context of the adjoining residential development and results in a building that appears out of proportion with its surroundings.

The prevailing pattern of development along Minehead Avenue is for dwellings to be set close to the street frontage and to follow a consistent and clearly defined building line. This pattern establishes a strong and coherent street enclosure and clearly distinguishes between public-facing spaces at the front of properties, such as gardens and driveways, and private amenity space to the rear. The proposed development departs from this established arrangement. The building extends deeper into the site, reducing opportunities for the provision of meaningful private amenity space and forming a near-continuous wall of development. This would result in an overbearing and enclosing form that would have an adverse impact on the outlook and residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers. Furthermore, part of the proposed building projects forward of the established building line on this side of Minehead Avenue, disrupting the visual rhythm of the street and undermining the cohesive character of the area.

While traditional design cues have been incorporated into the design, overall, the proposed replacement building fails to respond positively to the established character and spatial pattern of Minehead Avenue. Its overly complex roof form, increased apparent scale and departure from the prevailing building line result in a development that is visually dominant, poorly integrated and out of proportion with its surroundings, causing harm to the character of the street scene and the amenities of neighbouring residents.

Residential Amenity – A number of factors have been assessed in order to judge the impact of the proposal upon residential amenity:

Impact on Privacy – The proposed building does not include any windows within the side elevations. Adequate separation distances are maintained between the windows on the front and rear elevations and those of facing neighbouring properties. As a result, the proposal is not considered to give rise to any unacceptable loss of privacy.

Noise – The land to the rear of Nos. 2B and 2C Minehead Avenue is currently used solely as private rear garden space and directly adjoins the rear gardens of neighbouring residential properties, as can be seen in the image below. This arrangement reflects the established residential character of the area and provides a quiet environment integral to the amenity of surrounding occupiers.



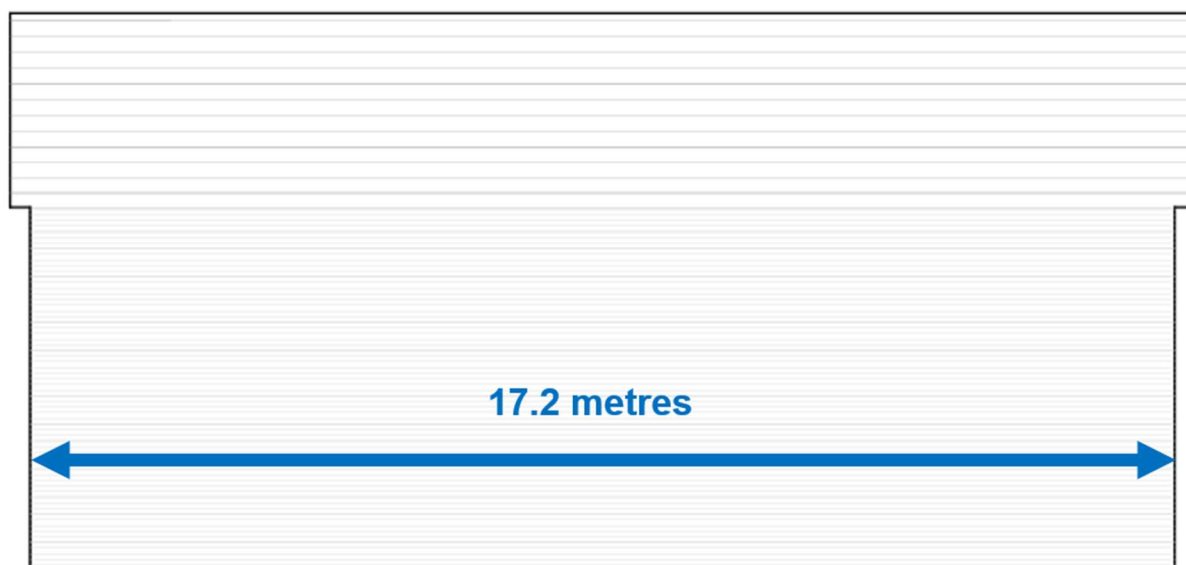
The proposed development would introduce ten car parking spaces within this rear garden area, together with an access driveway and vehicle manoeuvring space. The intensification of use associated with parking multiple vehicles in such close proximity to neighbouring private amenity areas would represent a marked departure from the existing use and character of the land.

It is considered that the frequent comings and goings of vehicles, including engine noise, manoeuvring, door slamming and general activity, would give rise to an unacceptable level of noise and disturbance. As a result, the proposal would cause significant harm to the living conditions of neighbouring residents and would be detrimental to residential amenity.

Daylight/Overshadowing – The side elevation of no. 2B Minehead Avenue is situated approximately 2.2 to 2.5 metres south of the shared boundary with no. 2 Minehead Avenue and extends along a length of around 6.7 metres. Having regard to its position, orientation, and the relatively shallow depth of this two-storey dwelling, it is recognised that it does not result in any unacceptable level of overshadowing or loss of daylight to the adjoining garden area serving no. 2 Minehead Avenue.

The proposed apartment block would be positioned approximately 1 metre from the shared boundary with no. 2 Minehead Avenue. Its side elevation would measure around 17.2 metres in length, with a height of approximately 5.5 metres to the eaves and 8.4 metres to the ridge. Due to the scale, massing and length of this elevation, combined with its very close proximity to the boundary, the development would present as a substantial and continuous wall of built form. It is considered that this proposal would create an unduly overbearing relationship with no. 2 Minehead Avenue, leading to an unacceptable level of overshadowing of both the dwelling and its rear garden. This would result in a material loss of outlook and daylight, causing significant harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring property.

The existing relationship between no. 2B Minehead Avenue (hatched in red) and no. 2 Minehead Avenue and the proposed side elevation (blue line) with no. 2 Minehead Avenue is shown below, along with the side elevation that would face no. 2 Minehead Avenue:



PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION
(scale 1/100)

Overall, while the proposal would not result in an unacceptable loss of privacy, it would nonetheless cause significant harm to residential amenity. The introduction of vehicle parking and associated activity within the existing rear garden area would lead to an unacceptably high level of noise and disturbance to neighbouring occupiers. In addition, the scale, massing and very close proximity of the proposed apartment block to no. 2 Minehead Avenue would create an overbearing form of development, resulting in unacceptable overshadowing and a material loss of outlook and daylight. Taken together, it is considered that these impacts would have a significantly detrimental impact upon the levels of residential amenity enjoyed by the occupants of the adjoining dwellings.

Visual Amenity – The existing dwellings (outlined in blue) are modest two-storey buildings dating from the 1950s. Although they represent a departure from the more prevalent 1930s architecture seen within this estate, they do reflect the prevailing scale, rhythm, and domestic character of the surrounding streetscene. In contrast, the proposed apartment building (outlined in red) would introduce a development of a markedly larger scale and increased height. The additional storey, articulated through the roof form and the inclusion of dormer windows, would result in a noticeably more bulky and visually prominent structure. It is considered that the cumulative increase in height, massing, and footprint would appear incongruous within the established streetscape, disrupting the prevailing pattern of development.



As a result, the proposed building would read as visually dominant, undermining the existing low-density residential character of the area. Furthermore, the increased scale would create an undue sense of enclosure when viewed from neighbouring properties, with particular harm arising to the outlook of occupiers at No. 2 Minehead Avenue, as set out in the preceding section. On this basis, the proposal is considered to result in unacceptable harm to the visual amenity of the area.

Pedestrian and Highway Safety – Although the proposal is not supported, it is considered that the number of units proposed would not, in itself, give rise to a detrimental impact on pedestrian safety or highway safety along Minehead Avenue or the wider highway network.

Drainage – The proposal does not present any drainage issues that cannot be satisfactorily addressed through the application of the standard surface water drainage condition.

Ecology – It is recognised that the applicant submitted the documentation requested by GMEU. Nevertheless, given the significant concerns identified in relation to the overall impacts of the proposal, it was not considered necessary to seek any further comments on ecological matters.

Air Quality – While the application is not supported for the reasons set out elsewhere in this report, it is recognised that the proposed development would not give rise to any detrimental impacts on air quality. During the construction phase there is potential for temporary air quality impacts arising from dust. However, subject to the implementation of appropriate dust suppression and control measures, the significance of any impacts associated with earthworks, construction and track-out activities would be negligible. It is considered that these measures could be adequately secured through a Construction Management Plan, were the development acceptable in principle.

In respect of the operational phase, there is potential for air quality impacts associated with vehicle exhaust emissions generated by residents and visitors to the site. Nevertheless, having regard to the limited scale of the proposal and the number of units proposed, any increase in traffic would be modest and the overall significance of potential air quality impacts is considered to be low. Accordingly, notwithstanding the recommendation for refusal, the proposal would not result in harm to air quality.

Security – Although the proposal is not supported, it is noted that it does not give rise to any security or safety concerns.

Refuse and Cycle Storage – Although the proposal is not supported, it is noted that it does not give rise to any refuse storage or cycle storage concerns.

Conclusion

The proposed development is unacceptable in principle due to its overdevelopment of the site, failure to respect the established character and pattern of development, inadequate provision of private amenity space, and significant harm to residential and visual amenity arising from its scale, massing, siting and associated parking arrangements.

It is noted that the proposals would contribute towards provision of new residential dwellings within an established and sustainable urban area. Whilst these benefits are acknowledged they are not considered to outweigh the harm identified in the previous sections of this report.

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 policies 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: Refuse

Article 35 Declaration

The proposal was assessed against the policies within the Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document and the guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework. The applicant was advised that the proposal would have a detrimental impact upon the existing levels of visual and residential amenity enjoyed within the vicinity of the site. As the nature of the proposal is considered to be unacceptable and the applicant has requested that the proposal be determined in its current format, a solution that was acceptable to both the Local Planning Authority and the applicant could not be reached.

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

1) The proposed development, by virtue of its excessive scale, number of units, design and siting, would constitute an overdevelopment of the site and result in a cramped, incongruous and visually discordant form of development. The scheme fails to reflect the established and historic pattern, grain and character of the surrounding area and would introduce an inappropriate feature within the streetscene. It would therefore be detrimental to existing levels of visual amenity enjoyed on Minehead Avenue. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy JP-H1 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document, the National Planning Policy Framework, the National Design Guide, and Policies SP1 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy.

2) The proposed use of the rear garden for the parking of multiple vehicles, in close proximity to the private amenity spaces and rear elevations of neighbouring dwellings, would introduce a level of vehicular activity that would result in significant harm to the living conditions of existing residents. The associated comings and goings of vehicles, manoeuvring, engine noise, door slamming and general activity would create an unacceptable level of noise and disturbance. As such, the proposal would have a detrimental impact on the existing levels of residential amenity enjoyed by those adjoining the site. The development is therefore contrary to Policy JP-H1 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document, the National Planning Policy Framework, the National Design Guide, and Policies SP1 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy.

3) The proposed development, by virtue of its excessive massing and its close proximity to the common boundary with no. 2 Minehead Avenue, would create an unduly overbearing relationship with that property and result in an unacceptable degree of overshadowing to both the dwelling and its rear garden. This would cause significant harm to the occupiers' outlook and overall living conditions. Accordingly, the proposal would have a detrimental impact on the residential amenity enjoyed by the occupants of no. 2 Minehead Avenue and is therefore contrary to Policy JP-H1 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document, the National Planning Policy Framework, the National Design Guide, and Policies SP1 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy.

4) The proposed development, due to its design and siting, would provide inadequate levels of private amenity space which would lead to the creation of poor living standards. As a result, the proposal would be contrary to the guidance contained within the Manchester Residential Quality Guidance, the National Planning Policy Framework, the National Design Guide, Policy JP-H1 in The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document and Policies SP1 and DM1 in the Manchester Core Strategy.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Highway Services
Environmental Health
Neighbourhood Team Leader (Arboriculture)
MCC Flood Risk Management
Greater Manchester Police
United Utilities Water PLC
Greater Manchester Ecology Unit
Withington Civic Society

St Christophers Church, 13 Moorgate Avenue, Manchester, M20 1HE
3 St Christophers Close, Manchester, M20 1HP
4 Minehead Avenue, Manchester, M20 1FW
7 Minehead Avenue, Manchester, M20 1FP
15 Minehead Avenue, Manchester, M20 1FP
2A Minehead Avenue, Manchester, M20 1FW
9 Moorgate Avenue, Manchester, M20 1HE
5 Moorgate Avenue, Manchester, M20 1HE
11 Moorgate Avenue, Manchester, M20 1HE
3 Minehead Avenue, Manchester, M20 1FP
19 Minehead Avenue, Manchester, M20 1FP
17 Minehead Avenue, Manchester, M20 1FP
13 Minehead Avenue, Manchester, M20 1FP
11 Minehead Avenue, Manchester, M20 1FP
2C Minehead Avenue, Manchester, M20 1FW
7 St Christophers Close, Manchester, M20 1HP
5 St Christophers Close, Manchester, M20 1HP
1 St Christophers Close, Manchester, M20 1HP
8 Minehead Avenue, Manchester, M20 1FW
6 Minehead Avenue, Manchester, M20 1FW
2 Minehead Avenue, Manchester, M20 1FW
12 Minehead Avenue, Manchester, M20 1FW
10 Minehead Avenue, Manchester, M20 1FW
9 Minehead Avenue, Manchester, M20 1FP
5 Minehead Avenue, Manchester, M20 1FP
7 Moorgate Avenue, Manchester, M20 1HE

1 Minehead Avenue, Manchester, M20 1FP

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) -

Area Team Boundary - Name: SOUTH AREA