

Introduction

This statement accompanies the planning application for a conversion of existing building with ground floor extension (side and rear) at 215 Middleton Road, Manchester, M8 4LR. The proposal seeks permission to use the site as a ritual bath house, and a ground floor rear extension to cater for its new proposed use.

This statement provides information on the history of planning applications for this site; and the due consideration taken in the creation of these plans in order to be compliant with all requirements. This letter also provides information on the proposed extension and the application is accompanied by existing and proposed drawings and elevations.

- GSS24208.1 - 215 Middleton Road - 002 - Existing Plans
- GSS24208.1 - 215 Middleton Road - 003.3 - Proposed Plans
- GSS24208.1 - 215 Middleton Road - 004.2 - Existing and Proposed Elevations
- GSS24208.1 – 215 Middleton Road – 502 – Site Plan

Site

The site is located at 215 Middleton Road, M8 4LR. The site is currently vacant and has previously been in use as a used-car sales centre selling approved used cars. The neighbouring properties on Middleton Road are commercial and include convenience stores and eateries. The houses on the opposite side of the road, and on the surrounding roads, are residential. The site is in close proximity to local amenities, such as shops and has very strong access to public transport links, with Bowker Vale Met Stop adjacent to the site, and many bus services running along Middleton Road.

Existing

The property currently comprises of a ground floor and a first floor. It is a currently a used car sales showroom and garage.

The ground floor houses a reception area to the front and a car workshop, small staff kitchen and WC, to the rear.

The first floor has been used as storage and currently only the front half of the first floor is usable, the back half already forms part of the roof.

Planning History

There is no relevant planning history of any applications for this site.

Proposal

The current application seeks permission for a side/rear extension at the ground floor level, internal reconfiguration and a change of use from Car Sales Sui Generis to Sui Generis (ritual bath house). The side extension is to be on the right elevation and is proposed to be 2.8m in width and to extend back 12.1metres . The rear extension is proposed to be 6.3metres in length, and 6.3 metres wide.

The internal reconfiguration has been designed to allow this site to function as ritual bath-house for members of the local Jewish community who reside on the streets surrounding the site. The newly configured rooms, corridors and bathrooms are all of a high quality design which will enable smooth usage of the site.

The Mikva (ritual bath house) will house 4 bathrooms and 1 shower room which will be used by service-users to prepare for the ritual bathing in the ritual Mikva. The site will also house one Mikva (ritual bath) and all the ancillary plumbing, pits and water well which ensure that the Ritual Mikva Bath conform with religious law to ensure that this ritual bath is in order.

The layout of the site will comprise of a reception area where service-users are welcomed in, a corridor on the left hand side allowing them to access the entrances to the bathrooms, and an additional corridor on the right hand side of the bathrooms allowing the service-users to exit the bathrooms and enter the ritual Mikva, and then again to allow service-users to exit to the reception area once they have completed their ritual service.

The upstairs storage area will be utilised by staff only with a small staff kitchen and lounge.

Justification

This Mikva – Ritual Bath House – is designed and intended to be a Women Only Bath House. The Mikva is a requisite religious need for female members of the Jewish Community. Women who are married, are required to visit the Mikva (Ritual Bath House) once a month, only whilst experiencing their menstrual cycle.

This ritual bath house is intended for use by members of the local Jewish community who reside on the streets surrounding the site. Each area with a significant amount of Jewish Residents aims to have its own Mikva (Ritual Bathhouse) to serve the nearby residents. There are other Mikvas in the Crumpsall/Salford/Prestwich area, each designed to serve the local inhabitants (See Map at the end of the document). Now that there are a significant number of Jews in the area around Middleton Road, the community have invested funds in the creation of its own Ritual Bath House.

This being the case, there is not anticipation of increased traffic to the area and heavy usage of the site. The intention of the creation of the bath house is purely to serve those who live in the immediate surroundings and not attract people from others area (as the other area are serviced by their own Ritual Bath House).

To further impress this point, it is important to understand that many women of the local area will arrive by foot at the Ritual Bath House. This is for various reasons but mainly due to the fact that many women of this community do not drive and secondly because on Sabbath and Festivals, the Jewish community refrain from using their cars in accordance with Jewish Law. Currently, the closest existing Mikva is located on Tetlow Lane (47 Tetlow Ln, Salford M7 4BU) which a significant distance for women to walk at times when car use is prohibited (Friday Nights etc.)

Furthermore, according to Jewish Law, the allowed time for immersion is a small window of time between sunset and a few subsequent hours following sunset. Therefore this site will only be in use for a few hours each day.

Lastly, privacy is a core element of the Jewish Communities usage of the Womens Bath House and therefore a strict booking system is in place to ensure that there is no heavy overlap of women intending to use the site. There are 4 proposed bathrooms and 1 proposed shower room and therefore the booking system will allow a maximum of 5 service users to be present on the site at any one time.

There are four proposed on-site parking spaces which will cater for those arriving by car when it is not Sabbath or a festival. However it is anticipated that many will arrive on foot especially as all intended service users live locally. The site is also located adjacent to the Bowker Vale Tram Stop and both the Middleton Road Bus Stop and Blackley New Road Bus Stops are located a two minute walk from the site, with many services running towards Manchester City Centre, Piccadilly Gardens, Oldham and Sale

Being located so close to the recent Anti-Semitic Terrorist Attack on Yom Kippur, October 2nd 2025, at Heaton Park Shul (84 Middleton Road), the approval of this planning application will be supportive and understanding of the Jewish Community's needs, which will be very much appreciated at this very vulnerable time.

Conclusion

This planning application seeks permission for the essential conversion and ground floor extension of the vacant building at 215 Middleton Road, M8 4LR. The proposal involves a change of use from Car Sales Sui Generis to Sui Generis (ritual bath house) to create a vital Women's Ritual Bath House (Mikvah), which will serve the growing local Jewish community.

The proposed side/rear extension, designed to be proportionate to the site's boundaries, and the internal reconfiguration have been carefully planned to facilitate the function of the ritual bath house, including the necessary preparation areas and the Mikvah itself, all while ensuring compliance with religious law.

Crucially, the proposal is justified by a genuine religious and community need for a local ritual bath house for female residents in the immediate area. Usage is anticipated to be low-impact, with most users arriving on foot due to local residency and religious observance preventing driving on Sabbaths and Festivals. A strict booking system further ensures minimal simultaneous use (maximum of five service users at any time) and maintains the privacy essential to the community. Furthermore, use of the site will be restricted to a short window of time each evening, between sunset and a few hours later.

Given the strong access to public transport, the local nature of the intended service-users, the limited hours of operation, and the controlled usage, the proposal will not lead to an increase in traffic or negatively impact the surrounding residential and commercial area. The approval of this application is respectfully requested as a necessary and considered provision for a key religious need of the local community. See Map on following page.

Map of Existing and Proposed Mikvahs in the Area

Existing Mikvah – Black Stars (435 Bury New Road M7 4ED, 47 Tetlow Ln, Salford M7 4BU and Sedgley Park Road Prestwich, M25 OAL)

Proposed Mikvah at 215 Middleton Road – Red Star

