

PLANNING STATEMENT

Proposed New build apartments

207 to 209 Bury Old Rd, Prestwich. Bury.

M25 1JF

Description

The proposal relates to a vacant area of land between 205-211 Bury Old Road, Prestwich and backs onto the grounds of a three storey block of flats at Infant Street. The area is level and grassed with 1 no. trees located centrally within the site. The site is fronted by the adopted highway and footway and immediately fronted by a bus shelter and separate public bench. There is no dropped kerb crossing serving the site.

The site is flanked by traditional two storey terraces to the south, with commercial units at the ground floor and some residential units at first floor. A single storey commercial unit is located to the north. To the west of the site there are blocks of residential apartments, with Heaton Park located to the east. The site is located in an area allocated as a Local Shopping Centre under Unitary Development Plan Policy S1/4.

Planning permission is sought for the erection of a two storey building comprising of 7 no. apartments, with accommodation provided within the roof space. The proposal would seek to provide 3no. 1 bed flats and 4 no. 2 bed flats. The proposed site plan shows parking for 4 vehicles within the site with a communal garden, bin storage and bike storage to the rear of the site.

Relevant Planning History

11582 - Outline application - 2 storey doctor surgery - Approve with Conditions 21/05/1981
02699/E - Twelve new build apartments above a ground floor commercial unit - Enquiry Complete.

Places for Everyone

The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document (PfE) is a joint plan covering nine of the ten Greater Manchester districts, including Bury, and is intended to provide the overarching framework to strategically manage growth across the boroughs.

PfE was published in August 2021 and subsequently submitted to the Secretary of State in February 2022. Inspectors have been appointed to carry out an independent examination of the Plan with the hearing sessions commencing in November 2022 and were concluding in July 2023. The examination of the plan is on-going.

Given the advanced stage in the preparation of PfE, it is already considered reasonable that the Plan should be given weight in the decision-making process in line with paragraph 48 of the National Planning Policy Framework. PfE policies will therefore be relevant in the subsequent consideration of any planning application. The weight attached to these policies will be dependent on the stage reached at that time and full weight will be given to the policies once the Plan is adopted.

Principle (Residential)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) should be treated as a material planning consideration and it emphasises the need for local planning authorities to boost the supply of housing to meet local housing targets in both the short and long term. The Framework maintains the emphasis on identifying a rolling five year supply of deliverable housing land. Bury's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment sets out the latest housing supply

position, which is made up of sites that have an extant planning permission and sites that have potential to obtain planning permission in the future. This shows that there are a number of sites within the Borough with the potential to deliver a significant amount of housing. However, not all of these sites will contribute to the five year supply calculations as many sites will take longer than five years to come forward and be fully developed. As such, latest monitoring indicates that the Council is unable to demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing land and this needs to be treated as a material factor when determining applications for residential developments.

The National Planning Policy Framework also sets out the Housing Delivery Test, which is an assessment of net additional dwellings provided over the previous three years against the homes required. Where the test indicates that the delivery of housing was substantially below (less than 75%) of the housing requirement over the previous years, this needs to be taken into account in the decision-taking process.

The latest results published by the Government show that Bury has a housing delivery test result of less than 75%, and therefore, this needs to be treated as a material factor when determining applications for residential development.

Therefore, in relation to the proposed dwellings, paragraph 11d) of the National Planning Policy Framework states that where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, planning permission should be granted unless:

- i. The application of policies in the Framework that protect areas, or assets of particular importance, provides a clear 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 the Framework, taken as a whole.

Therefore, in this case the 'titled balance' applies and planning permission should be granted unless the above points Para 11(d) i or ii apply.

Policy H1/2 states that the Council will have regard to various factors when assessing a proposal for residential development, including whether the proposal is within the urban area, the availability of infrastructure and the suitability of the site, with regard to amenity, the nature of the local environment and the surrounding land uses.

The NPPF states that decisions should support the role that town centres play by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation by allowing them to grow and diversify in a way that can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries and allows a suitable mix of uses (including housing) to reflect their distinctive characters.

There are other residential uses within the vicinity of the site including flats at first floor within the row of terraced properties to the south, and blocks of residential apartments to the west of the site. As such it is considered that the proposed development would not conflict with the surrounding land uses and would be located in a sustainable location with regard to public transport and services.

Given the above, the principle of the proposed development at the site would be acceptable.

Design and Layout

Policy H2/1- The Form of New Residential Development requires all new residential development to make a positive contribution to the form and quality of the surrounding area.

Policy H2/2 –

The Layout of New Residential Development seeks to ensure that new residential development will be acceptable in terms of layout in order to provide a good quality residential environment. In addition to this, Policy EN1/2 - Townscape and Built Design seeks to ensure that any proposals would not have an adverse impact on the particular character and townscape of an area.

The design of any new building within the context of this street scene needs to be carefully considered, especially when reviewing the most recent updates to the NPPF with it's focus on design and the National Design Guide. The NPPF makes it clear that creating high quality buildings and places is fundamental with Paragraph 126 stating "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."

This is further supported by the National Design Guide. The National Design Guide, published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in 2019 states that well designed new development is influenced by " an appreciation and understanding of vernacular.....including existing built form, landscape and local architectural precedents." In terms of layout the Design Guide states that a well designed place is unlikely to be achieved by focusing just on appearance, materials and detailing of buildings and that layout, including the grain pattern of development, blocks and lots needs to be considered and relate to one another to create spaces, open spaces and buildings.

The immediate street scene is depicted by two storey terraces, and detached single and two storey properties. The footprints of properties, and their associated plots have lead to a regular pattern of development and established building grain. To the rear of the site there are three storey blocks of apartments however these are set back from Bury Old Road and due to the gap provided by the site do not appear overly dominant in relation to the properties that directly front this stretch of highway. The site itself is an important gap in this built environment that equally adds to the visual amenity and character of the area. The proposal site would be viewed in relation to an established row of build development along Bury Old Road and it is considered that it is these properties that should be used to inform the scale, massing and design features of the proposal. The proposed development, at 2 storeys reflects the scale and massing of the existing terraces. The proposal has a good relationship with Bury Old Road, the window fenestration is in line with the neighbouring terraced properties. The proposed roof details tie in to the roofs on the

neighbouring properties. The terrace to the south of the site in particular has an established rhythm of openings and scales within the elevation that fronts Bury Old Road that are replicated within the proposed scheme and acknowledges this.

It should also be noted that the proposed street scene seems to suggest that the existing flats to the rear of the site (Roden Court) are 5 storeys tall, and much more dominant than they are on proposed on Bury Old Road.

Amenity

Neighbouring Amenity

UDP Policy H1/2 states that the council will have regard to various factors when assessing a proposal for residential development, including whether the proposal is within the urban area, the availability of infrastructure and the suitability of the site, with regard to amenity, the nature of the local environment and the surrounding land uses. This is further supported by Policy H2/1 that requires an assent of the impact of developments on residential amenity and the position and proximity of neighbouring properties. There are no adopted aspect standards for new build residential properties however, Supplementary Planning Document 6 provides guidance on aspect standards between residential properties and as such, would be a reasonable guide in this case.

For clarity the following aspect standards have been considered:

- 20 metres between directly facing habitable room windows;
- 13 metres between an existing habitable room window and a proposed two storey blank wall
- 6.5 metres between an existing habitable room window and a proposed single storey blank wall
- 7 metres between a proposed first floor habitable room window and a directly facing boundary with a neighbouring property.

Amenity for future occupiers

The proposed flats have been assessed to ensure that they would all comply with the minimum gross internal floor area requirements and associated minimum bedroom dimensions of the 'Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard'

Access and Parking

UDP Policy EN1/2 - Townscape and Built Design requires the consideration of the design and appearance of access, parking and service provision. This is further supported by UDP Policy H2/2 - The Layout of New Residential Development that requires proposals to demonstrate adequate car parking provision, access for both vehicles and pedestrians, and provision for public transport and the existence of any public rights of way, and UDP Policy HT6/2 - Pedestrian/Vehicular Conflict that requires developments to reduce pedestrian/vehicular conflict.

Environment Section

CONTAMINATED LAND

The site is currently an area of open space between two shops. Current uses in the surrounding area include residential properties, retail units and Heaton Park. Previous uses at the site have included buildings, possibly retail or commercial, which were present from prior to 1893 until at least 1974. Following the demolition of these buildings, the site has remained vacant. Previous uses in the surrounding area have included allotment gardens, a railway line and a pump house thought to be associated with Heaton Park reservoir. The site is not located within 250m of a known landfill site and is not in close proximity to any major surface watercourses. The site is situated over glaciofluvial sand and gravel deposits over the Sherwood Sandstone Group Principal Aquifer. As the site has previously been developed it is likely that deposits of made ground are present on the site.