
Singleton Court, Bury Old Road, Manchester M25 0FW

Design and Access Statement

Full Planning Application for the conversion of the existing lower ground floor garages to create 4no 1bedroom Self-Contained studio flats. Associated refuse and bike storage.

December 2021



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Introduction

This Design and Access statement is intended to support a full application for the conversion of the existing storage garages at the blocks of flats known as Singleton Court to create 4no 1bedroom bedsit flats. This application is being submitted independently of the recently approved application at the site for the *‘Conversion of roof space to create 5 no. 1 bed self-contained flats with front and rear dormers and new enclosed external stairwells. Associated refuse and bike storage’* at this site (App Ref: 67168).

This document contains a detailed description of the revised proposal and should be read in conjunction with the accompanying revised drawings produced by Goldsketch Studios Ltd.

Planning History

- Application Reference: 65846/FUL – A full planning application for the *‘Conversion of roof space to create 5no 2bed 3person self-contained units with front and rear dormers and new enclosed external stairwells. Associated refuse and bike storage’*. Refused, Decision date: 18-Jan-2021.
- Application Reference: 86/18359 – A historical application for the *Change of use: garages to flats* in relation to Garages 1 & 2 Singleton Court, Bury Old Road, Prestwich was submitted to the council in May 1986 and was subsequently approved by the Council on 26-June-1986.

Principle of Development

The existing flat buildings are located within a sustainable urban area comprising a mix of commercial and residential properties. There is sufficient existing infrastructure in place to facilitate the development and the proposed residential use would be compatible with the character of the area.

Historically, Garages 1 and 2 were converted to residential flats in circa 1986. Planning permission for the conversion was granted in May 1986 under (App Ref: 18359/86) an application for the *‘Change of Use: Garage to Flat’*. This application seeks to convert the majority of the remaining garages into similar residential flats.

In the delegated report for the recently approved development for 5 additional flats at this site, the council indicated their support for the development of additional flats to the existing buildings. The report stated “In terms of providing additional residential accommodation in existing buildings of flats, the proposed development would be acceptable in principle and comply with UDP Policies H1/2 and the principle of sustainable development in the NPPF.”

Site and Surrounding Area

The application site is located on the corner of Bury Old Rd and Singleton Road. The site comprises a row of 3 separate buildings arranged in a split level formation. Each of the buildings is two storeys along the eastern frontage facing Bury Old Road and three stories along the western (rear) which includes additional garages at basement level opening out directly to the rear yard/car parking area. The site benefits from a large rear yard area which provides ample parking spaces to support the flats

The existing buildings comprise a total of 16 flats comprising a mix of one and two bedrooms flats across the three levels. The lower ground floor at the rear of two of the buildings is used as garages/storage with residential accommodation on the upper two floors of the buildings. The former garages below the south eastern most building were converted into 3no residential flats in circa 1986.

The application site is located in a highly accessible location and close proximity to key public transport links and local amenities. The site is located along Bury Old Road, a primary arterial route into Manchester City Centre along which the 135 Bus route travels from Bury to Manchester at frequent intervals of not more than 10 minutes during peak traffic hours and every 20 minutes outside of peak traffic times. There is a bus stop conveniently located directly outside the development site on Bury Old Road.

The site is not located in a conservation area and there are no listed buildings on or adjacent to the site.

Vehicle access to Singleton Court is via an open ungated entrance point located at the corner of Bury Old Road and Singleton Road. Vehicle access is not restricted and it is not envisaged that the proposed redevelopment on the site will have an adverse impact on the existing highway network.

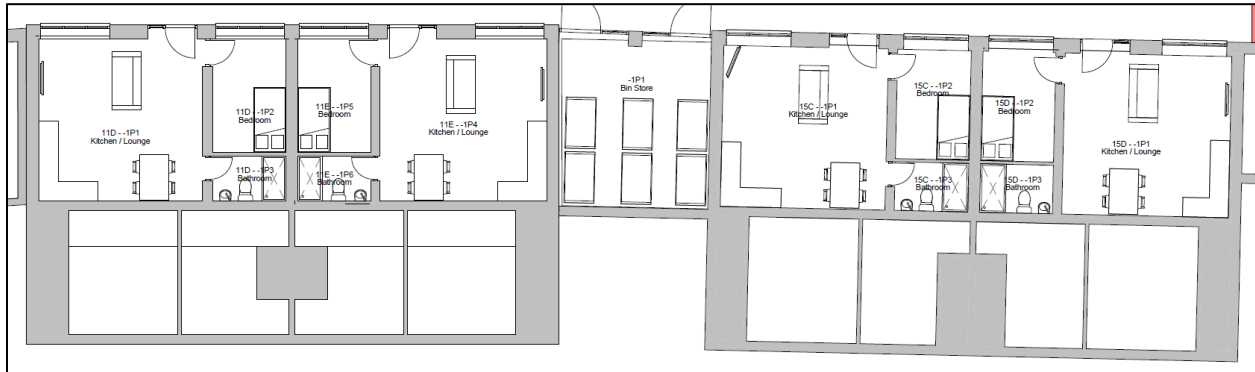
Proposal

The former garages below the south eastern most building (closest to the junction at Singleton Road and Bury New Road) have already been converted to residential flats under a historic planning permission. This application proposes the conversion of the remaining garages/storage below the other two buildings into 4no 1bedroom bedsit flats. The scheme includes the provision of associated refuse and bicycle storage and parking.

The proposed scheme would be limited to the conversion of the existing garages to residential flats and all of the necessary structural and configuration works required to facilitate the conversion. The proposal would not result in any changes to the existing site layout arrangement. The upper ground and first floors of the buildings will remain as existing and will not be affected by this proposal.

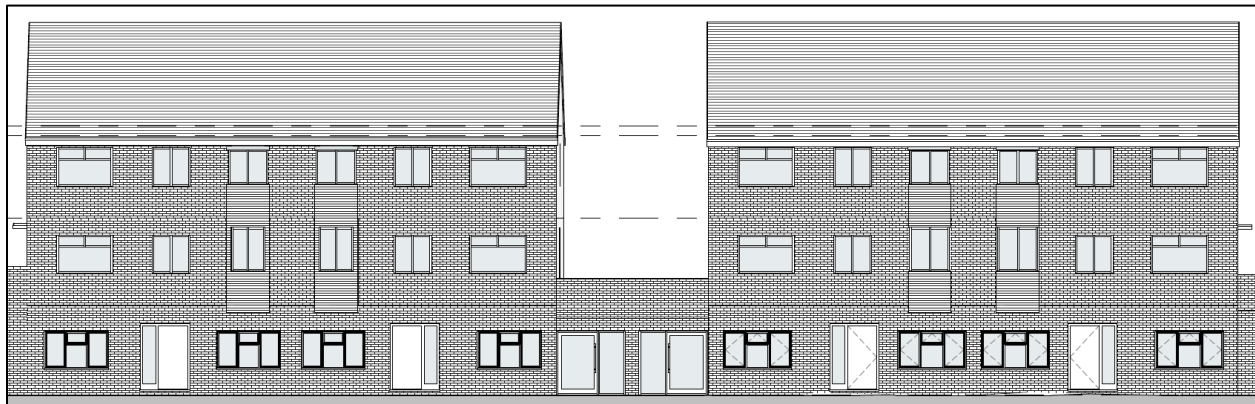
Layout, Character and Appearance

Each of the proposed flats will have an enclosed bedroom and a bathroom, and an open plan living/dining/kitchen space providing a good standard of accommodation of an appropriate scale to the existing development.



Proposed layout of the lower ground floor converted garages. Note the bin storage area located in between the flats.

The proposal will include the replacement of the existing garage doors with new external walls with cavities for new windows and access doors. Each of the proposed flats will have a large three section window in its kitchen/lounge/dining room area and a similar large three section window in its bedroom (see proposed front elevation plan below). The front doors to each of the flats will also have full height sidelight windows allowing for additional natural light to flow into the flats. The bathrooms will all be mechanically ventilated. These windows will allow for a good level of natural light to flow into the proposed flats.



Proposed rear elevation showing the new windows, doors and sidelight windows to the proposed flats at lower ground level.

The proposed flats will all be located within the converted garages space. The flats will not be visible from the street scene along Bury Old Road or Singleton Road and will have very little impact on the surrounding area. The proposal will improve the overall appearance of the rear façade of the building which like many garage/storage areas has been forgotten and has not been well maintained.

The scheme includes the conversion of the middle two garages located below the gap in between the buildings as a bin storage area for the proposed flats. The upwards opening garage doors will be replaced with a new side opening doors allowing easy access into the bin storage area.

Scale of Development

The total floor area of the proposed four studios is 156m².

Flat 1 (1 bedroom, 1 person flat) – 39m²

Flat 2 (1 bedroom, 1 person flat) – 39m²

Flat 3 (1 bedroom, 1 person flat) - 39m²

Flat 4 (1 bedroom, 1 person flat) - 39m²

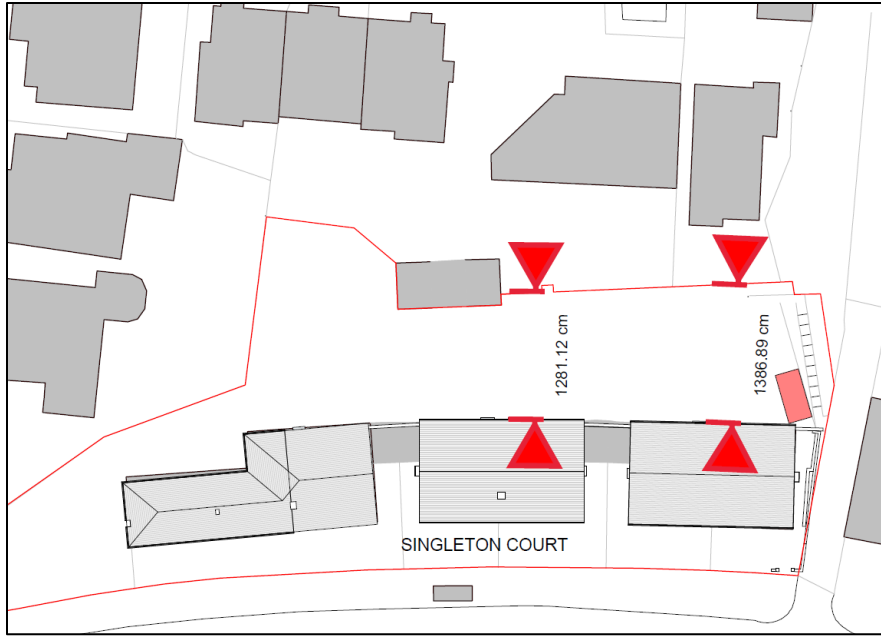
Each of the proposed flats comply with the minimum floor areas for a 1bed 1person single storey flat, as required by nationally described space standards.

Outlook and Privacy

(In relation to Ainsdale Avenue)

This proposal does not create any issues of increased overlooking or loss of privacy to the rear of the properties along Ainsdale Avenue. This proposal does not include an increase to the height of the buildings and the existing separation distances between the rear of the building and the rear site boundary as well as to the rear of the dwellings along Ainsdale Avenue should be acceptable

The existing buildings are positioned a distance of 13.8m at the northern most building and a distance of 12.5m at the middle building, from the rear site boundary. On the same note, the existing buildings are positioned a distance of 19.6m at the northern most building and a distance of 23.8m at the middle building, from the rear of the properties along Ainsdale Avenue. The proposed basement flats will retain the same separation distance as the upper ground and first floor flats. The habitable room windows will in any case be screened from the properties along Ainsdale Avenue by the existing boundary fence separating the site from the adjacent properties.



Site plan showing the separation distances between the rear of the existing buildings and the rear site boundary.

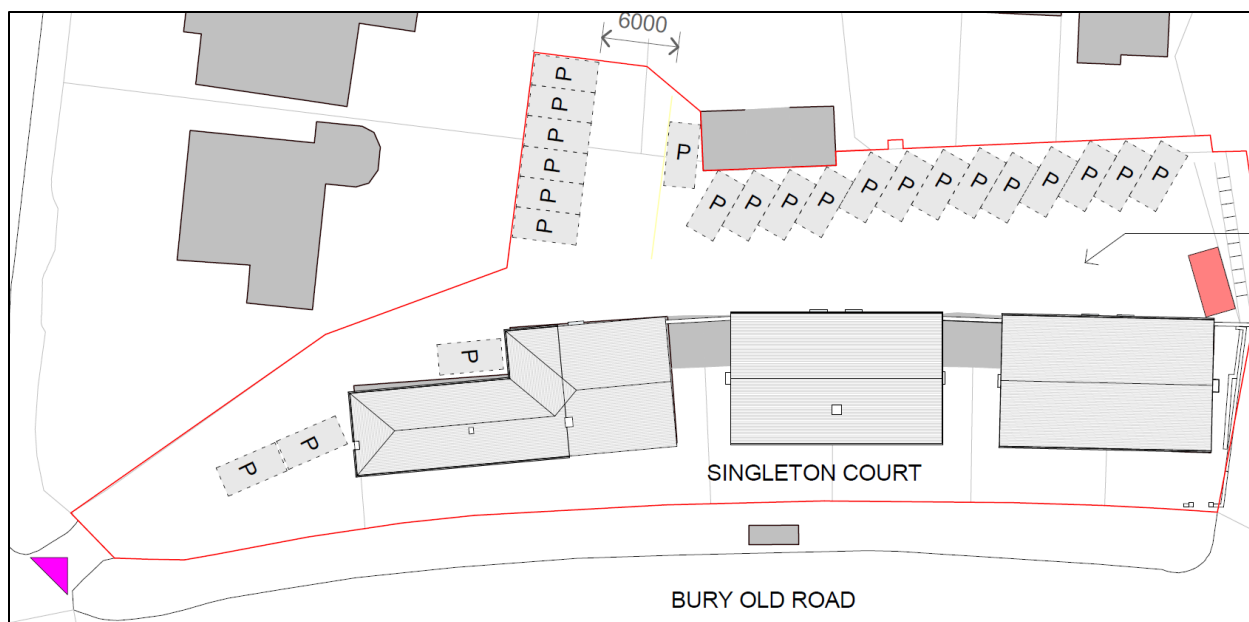
Access and Parking

Access to the proposed flats would be via the rear yard car parking area. This area is accessed via a large ungated access point located at the top of Singleton Road. Pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles would descend the sloping access road leading down to the rear of the building to gain access to the proposed flats.

The site benefits from a large rear car parking area which in its current form has 21 car parking spaces. The existing car parking area is not demarcated. The existing rear yard area has sufficient car parking spaces for the existing flats. The required maximum provision of car parking for the existing 16 flats is 21.5 spaces, for which there is already adequate parking.

This proposal is for a total of 4 no 1 no bedroom flats. Policy SPD11 of Burys Supplementary Planning Document 6, which provides guidance on car parking standards states that the Maximum Standards for car parking provision in High Access Areas is 1 space per 1 bedroom dwelling (C3). Accordingly, the proposal will only require an additional 4 no car parking spaces (requiring a total of 25.5 spaces). The proposal includes a revised parking layout which will demarcate the parking provision and provide a total of 23 no car parking spaces (see proposed parking plan below).

Given the 23 car parking spaces proposed, the proposal will only have a shortfall of 2.5 car parking spaces which is not significant. The application site is located in a sustainable location and a high access area with good access to public transport links and this shortfall should be acceptable. In addition, it should be noted that the figures mentioned in SPD11 are Maximum car parking standards and fewer car parking spaces are always desirable.



Proposed Parking Plan showing twenty three car parking spaces in the rear yard area.

Whilst strictly speaking the planning guidance documents require 21.5 car parking spaces for the existing flats, we understand from the applicants the existing residents are not all car owners and the anticipated tenants will also not all be car owners. The applicants have advised that from their knowledge and experience of maintaining and managing the site, the car park is undersubscribed and underutilised and in practice has more than enough capacity for 4 additional 1no bedroom flats.

Vehicle Access and Highway Safety

Primary vehicle access to the site is from the corner of the junction of Bury Old Road and Singleton Road which is a fairly busy junction. In the delegated report for the alternative loft scheme this site, the planning officers noted that the access point to the car park is fairly narrow and can only accommodate a single vehicle at one time. The planning officers primary concern was that given the under provision of car parking within that proposal, this could result in cars reversing back down the access road or alternatively onto the highway, causing amplified highway safety issues at the junction.

We are confident that this concern will not be an issue in this application given that this proposal is limited to the creation of 4no smaller 1 bedroom flats which requires a lower number of additional car parking spaces than the alternative loft scheme at the site.

Notwithstanding the above, it should be noted that there is a layby area directly adjacent to the access road leading up/down to the car park which is often used by cars entering/exiting the site if there is another car approaching. The layby area allows for two cars to be positioned on the access ramp at any time and should alleviate any concerns of cars reversing back down the access road or onto the highway (see picture of layby area to the side of the access ramp below). It is not considered that the proposed

additional flats will significantly alter or be detrimental to the existing access arrangements and highways network.



Picture showing layby area to the side of the access ramp which allows for cars to wait on the side of the access road whilst other cars approach.

Amenity Space

Due to the sites limitations, the proposal does not include the provision of any private amenity space for the proposed flats however given the nature of the proposed bedsit flats and the sites highly accessible location with access to nearby parks and open spaces (e.g. the local Broughton Park and nearby Heaton Park) and all local amenities, this is considered to be acceptable. In the delegated report for the approved loft conversion scheme at this site, the planning officers commented that given the sites limitations and constraints the lack of private amenity provision would be acceptable.

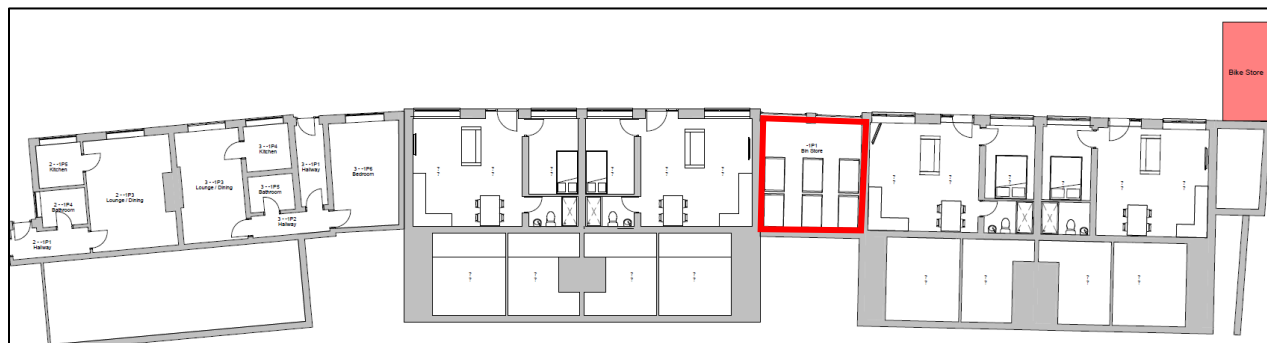
Bicycle Storage

The provision of bicycle storage for the flats will be on the northern end of the car parking area as shown on the parking plan shown above on pg. 8. The rear yard car parking area is a large open area which has sufficient space to accommodate the provision of a large bicycle storage shed on its northern edge to accommodate the new flats. The storage shed will be located to the side of the habitable room windows of the northern most basement flat and will not block the windows of this flat.

The car parking area is overlooked by the existing flats which provide natural surveillance of the rear car parking area. The proposed bicycle shed will provide storage for at least 1 bike per flat in accordance with SPD 6, Development Control Policy Guidance Note 11 - Parking Standards in Bury which states that the minimum standards for bicycle parking in flats and apartments in High Access Areas 1 space per 5 dwellings. Minimum of 4 spaces.

Bin Storage and Handling of Waste

The proposal includes the conversion of two of the lower ground floor garages to the rear of the buildings into waste and recycling storage areas for the new basement flats (as shown on the lower ground floor plan below). The converted garages have the advantage of being completely enclosed and new access doors will be installed in place of the existing pull up garage doors. These garages are located between the separating gap between the buildings and are not directly below any habitable room windows.



Lower ground floor plan showing the location of the proposed bin storage area in between the proposed converted flats.

The conversion of these two garages into bin storage area will ensure that the bins are kept neat and tidy, away from the street and do not block circulation or manoeuvrability in the car parking area. The proposed bin collection point for the new flats will also be from along Bury Old Road. The bin storage areas will provide sufficient waste and recycling storage space in accordance with the council's guidelines.

Policy Considerations

This proposal has been designed in accordance with the relevant national, regional and local planning policies as detailed below:

NPPF – (Revised) National Planning Policy Framework (19 February 2019)

The proposed development project is in accordance with several policies mentioned in the NPPF (2018)

Chapter 2 Achieving sustainable development. -

This policy states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and that at the heart of the framework is presumption in favour of sustainable development which should be adopted by plans and decisions. The NPPF as a whole constitutes the Government's view of what sustainable development means in practice for the planning system. It is considered that the proposed development is in in accordance with the view of sustainable development as a whole and will help in promoting the aims of the NPPF and the Local Plan in relation to sustainable development in the town.

Chapter 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes.

Paragraph 59 - To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land 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 proposed development to create 5 residential flats will support this objective.

Paragraph 63 states that 'in determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which help raise the standard of design more generally in the area'.

Chapter 8 Promoting healthy and safe communities

Paragraph 91

Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places.

Paragraph 93.

Planning policies and decisions should consider the social, economic and environmental benefits of estate regeneration. Local planning authorities should use their planning powers to help deliver estate regeneration to a high standard.

Chapter 11 Making effective use of land

Paragraph 117. Planning policies and decisions should 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. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously developed or 'brownfield' land.

Paragraph 122. Achieving appropriate densities

Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:

- a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;
- b) local market conditions and viability;
- c) 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;
- d) the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and
- e) the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.

Adopted Bury Unitary Development Plan Policies

H1/2 Further Housing Development

The Council will have regard to the following factors when assessing proposals for housing development on sites not identified on the Proposals Map:

- the need to direct development towards the urban area;
- the availability of infrastructure;
- the need to avoid the release of peripheral open land, unless this can be shown to be consistent with urban regeneration;
- the suitability of the site in land use terms with regard to amenity, the nature of the local environment and surrounding land uses;
- other policies and proposals of the Plan.

H2 - Housing Environment and Design

The Council will encourage good design in all residential development

H2/1 The Form of New Residential Development

All new residential development will be expected to make a positive contribution to the form and quality of the surrounding area. Factors to be considered when assessing proposals will include:

- the height and roof type of adjacent buildings;
- the impact of developments on residential amenity;
- the density and character of the surrounding area;
- the position and proximity of neighbouring properties;
- the materials to be used in proposed developments, especially their colour and texture.

H2/2 The Layout of New Residential Development

New residential development will be required to demonstrate acceptable standards of layout. Factors to be considered when assessing proposals will include:

- car parking provision;
- access for both vehicles and pedestrians, and provision for public transport;
- the possible need for traffic calming measures;
- density;
- space about and between dwellings;
- landscaping and screening;
- protection/provision of trees and hedgerows;
- open space/children's play areas;
- design for safety and security;
- access/facilities for the disabled;
- the existence of any public rights of way

H2/3 Extensions and Alterations

Applications for house extensions and alterations will be considered with regard to the following factors:

- the size, shape, design and external appearance of the proposal;
- the character of the property in question and the surrounding area;

- the amenity of adjacent properties;
- visibility for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers of motor vehicles.

EN1 - Built Environment

The Council will seek to protect, preserve and enhance the character, appearance and amenity of the Borough's built environment.

EN1/2 Townscape and Built Design

The Council will give favourable consideration to proposals which do not have an unacceptable adverse effect on the particular character and townscape of the Borough's towns, villages and other settlements.

Factors to be considered when assessing proposals will include:

- the external appearance and design of the proposal in relation to its height, scale, density and layout;
- the relationship of the proposal to the surrounding area;
- the choice and use of materials;
- access and other design features for the mobility impaired;
- the design and appearance of access, parking and service provision;
- landscaping, including the use of natural landscape features, and open space provision;
- the use of lighting.

EN1/3 Landscaping Provision

Development proposals will be required to make provision for incidental open space and landscaping to the Council's satisfaction.

EN1/5 - Crime Prevention

The Council will encourage development proposals which include environmentally sensitive design features aimed at discouraging crime. In assessing development proposals particular attention will be paid to the:

- use and creation of defensible space;
- creation of opportunities for natural surveillance;
- location and design of street lighting;
- location of footpaths and access points;
- location and design of parking facilities;
- design of landscaping

HT2 - Highway Network

The present highway network of roads, footpaths and associated infrastructure will be maintained and selectively improved. In particular, preference will be given to improvement schemes which seek to:

- improve road safety;
- improve the operation and therefore the attractiveness of the public transport network;
- improve or protect the economic viability of the Borough or local area;

- improve the flow of traffic;
- improve or protect the environment.

HT2/4 Car Parking and New Development

The Council will require all applications for development to make adequate provision for their car parking and servicing requirements in accordance with the Council's car parking standards.

HT6 - Pedestrians and Cyclists

The Council will seek to provide new and improved facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.

HT6/1 - Pedestrian and Cyclist Movement

The Council will seek to ensure that pedestrians and cyclists are able to move safely and conveniently.

HT6/2 Pedestrian/Vehicular Conflict

The Council will take action, as appropriate, to reduce pedestrian/vehicular conflict through measures which include:

- pavement widening/realignment.
- pedestrianisation schemes;
- improved pedestrian crossing facilities;
- proposals designed to reduce traffic speed;
- provision of clearly signed pedestrian routes.

Other Relevant Planning Documents

SPD6 Supplementary Planning Document 6: Alterations & Extensions to Residential Properties (January 2020)

Section 3 General Guidance for all domestic extensions

Domestic extensions will be required to achieve a high standard of design and complement the original building by reflecting its design, massing, scale and finishing materials. Specific features, such as doors, windows and roof style and eaves, should particularly reflect the dwellings original shape, size, alignment and architectural integrity;

Section 3.12 Aspect Standards to Protect Privacy and Residential Amenity

The separation between aspects of dwellings and new dwellings is an important consideration in maintaining adequate privacy distances and avoiding overbearing relationships. The council will seek to ensure that extensions maintain adequate privacy standards by minimising overlooking into adjacent neighbouring properties from new windows, balconies and areas of raised decking. As such there should be a minimum distance of 7m between first floor habitable room windows of any extension and a directly facing boundary with a neighbouring property; and

Section 7 Garages, Parking and Access

Extensions and alterations should not result in the loss of existing off-street parking provision unless it can be demonstrated that alternative provision can be made elsewhere within the domestic curtilage, without causing detriment to amenity or highway safety.

SPD11 Parking Standards in Bury (May 2007)

This SPD was used to guide the proposal in terms of design safety, layout and amenity principles including considerations towards appropriate security and lighting, highway safety, amenity of occupiers of surrounding properties, cycle Parking and pedestrian access and permeability.

a) Type of Development	b) MAXIMUM Standards for car parking provision (excluding disabled parking)	c) MINIMUM Standards for car parking provision for those who are disabled	d) MINIMUM standards for cycle parking provision	e) MINIMUM standards for TWMVs parking	f) Additional Considerations
10a. Dwelling Houses (C3)	High Access Area	Low Access Area			
1 bed	1.0	2.0 per unit	Where parking is located centrally for flat and apartment developments, at least 5% of parking should be for disabled persons.	Flats and apartments – 1 space per 5 dwellings. Minimum of 4 spaces. Must be provided in a secure long stay secure compound or locker.	Individual consideration
2 bed	1.5	2.5 per unit			
3 bed	2.0	3.0 per unit			
4 bed and above	3.0 per unit				

Table 2. Excerpt from Development Control Policy Guidance Note 1, Section 5 Table 2 (Required Parking Standards).

Conclusion

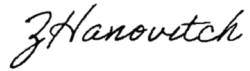
This proposal for the conversion of the (remaining) lower ground floor garages to the rear of two of the buildings to create 4no. 1bedroom studio flats. This proposal follows the principle of the historically converted lower ground floor garages at the site. Planning officers have expressed their agreement to the principle of increased residential dwellings at this site in response to the approved loft scheme at this site. This proposal is smaller in scale than the previously submitted scheme for the conversion of the roof space into 5no. 1bedroom flats and should be acceptable.

The new development does not increase the buildings' footprint and the scheme will have very little impact on the scale and appearance of the host buildings. The proposal includes alterations to the rear lower ground floor façade of the flat buildings which will not be visible from the public realm. The proposal is proportionate to the scale of the host properties and is unimposing on the existing character of the surrounding area

The proposed development adheres to national and local policies and will make a positive contribution to the Borough of Bury through the provision of additional dwellings and housing choice.

The proposal is a good example of positively increasing the development capacity of already developed land within the borough. The site is in a highly sustainable location which supports an optimised housing density in a well-connected location. The site's unique characteristics and prime location make it an ideal opportunity for an increased number of dwellings.

We trust that you will find this proposal acceptable and grant approval accordingly. Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at office@eatownplanning.co.uk or 0330 221 0449.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Z. Hanovitch'.

Zalman Hanovitch MSc

Town Planner

EA Town Planning LTD