



Alpha Planning Ltd.

**Planning and Design and
Access Statement**

Conversion and change of use of
building from swimming pool to one
two-bedroom bungalow, including
single storey side extension and
external alterations.

At:

No. 31 Grosvenor Street, Prestwich,
Manchester M25 1ES

On behalf of:

GMPE Property Ltd.

APL Ref: APL/00474/RAM

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This planning and design and access statement is prepared by Alpha Planning Ltd. in support of a planning application for the conversion and change of use of a building from swimming pool to one two-bedroom bungalow at No. 31 Grosvenor Street, Prestwich, Manchester M25 1ES.
- 1.2 The application is submitted on behalf of GMPE Property Ltd. to Bury Borough Council as the Local Planning Authority (LPA).

2.0 Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site is situated on the southern side of Grosvenor Street – at its junction with Randlesham Street – and comprises an existing single-storey building last used as a swimming pool. The surrounding area is almost entirely residential in composition.

3.0 The Proposal

Amount

- 3.1 The proposed development comprises the creation of one two-bedroom dwellinghouse.

Layout

- 3.2 There would not be a change in the relationship shared between the building and either the extent of the site or the relationship shared with adjoining properties.
- 3.3 The proposal would retain the existing access point at the front of the existing building. This would lead to an entrance hall/sunroom area that would open up into the open-plan living/kitchen area. At the western-end of the building would be the main double-bedroom, with a second bedroom provided at the eastern-end of the building, directly adjacent to the property's toilet and shower-room. Both bedrooms would be served by built-in storage, with a dedicated provision of storage for the property offered at its western-most-end, accessed from the primary bedroom.
- 3.4 Externally, the dwelling would benefit from the provision of both secured and covered cycle and refuse and recycling storage.



Scale

- 3.5 As mentioned above, the application promotes the creation of one additional residential unit. This is overwhelmingly achieved through conversion of the existing building, however, does also include the addition of a very small extension to the existing storage areas to the west.

Appearance

- 3.6 The proposal would not give rise to significant change to the appearance of the existing building, which would, therefore, retain its prevailing character. The small extension would match the visual appearance of the existing storeroom.

Landscaping

- 3.7 Given the constraints of the site, there is only limited opportunity for landscaping interventions. The site is currently covered by hard surfacing. It is not currently proposed to change that.

Access

- 3.8 Access arrangements to the site would be unchanged, continuing to rely on the existing pedestrian access taken from Grosvenor Street. There would be no provision of off-street parking, however, two covered and secured cycle parking spaces would be installed.
- 3.9 Full fibre internet connection is available within the area and is currently provided to the existing property on the site (No. 31). As a part of the proposed conversion, a full fibre connection will be introduced to the new dwelling, as well.

Sustainability

- 3.10 As the building already exists and the site is constrained, immediate opportunities to enhance sustainability are limited. The proposal would, however, include:
- Building Fabric: High-performance insulation in walls, roof, floors, and windows to improve thermal performance.
 - Water Efficiency: Low-flow fixtures, dual-flush toilets, and water-efficient appliances will reduce water demand by 20%.

4.0 Planning History

- 4.1 The existing building was first approved in 1992 (LPA ref: 92/27174), with the front conservatory approved two years later in 1994 (LPA ref: 94/29646).



- 4.2 In July 2024, an application for the change of use of the main dwellinghouse adjacent to the application site, together with the application building, to a 10-bedroom HMO was refused (LPA ref: 70742). There were seven reasons for refusal, though notably, the principle of the loss of the use of the swimming pool did not feature.
- 4.3 Subsequently, an application for a certificate of lawfulness for proposed development (LPA ref: 71567) was granted in March 2025. This confirmed that the change of use of the main property adjacent to the application site from a single dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to an HMO (Use Class C4) for up to six residents, together with associated internal alterations, was lawful and did not require planning permission.

5.0 Planning Policy

- 5.1 The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in December 2024, sets out the Government's planning policies for England.
- 5.2 The NPPF provides guidance for local planning authorities both in drawing up plans and in determining applications. The NPPF states that decision-makers "should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible" (paragraph 38).
- 5.3 Bury is situated within Greater Manchester and is, therefore, covered by the 'Places for Everyone' (PfE) Joint Development Plan 2022-2039 (adopted 2024). As a strategic document, it broadly operates at a high-level to guide the principles of development and regeneration. Relevant policies of the Plan include:
- Policy JP-C6: Walking and Cycling – generally promotes lower dependency on the private car;
 - Policy JP-C8: Transport Requirements of New Development – broadly encourages sustainable modes of transport;
 - Policy JP-H3: Type, Size and Design of New Housing – requires development to be consistent with the nationally described space standards; and
 - Policy JP-S2: Carbon and Energy – as relevant to the proposed development, supports the retrofitting of existing buildings.
- 5.4 The Bury Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was adopted in 1997. In 2007, saved policies from this Plan were confirmed by the Secretary of State. With the adoption of the PfE in 2024, a

number of other policies were superseded by this strategic document. Relevant policies from those currently saved from the UDP (as of 2024) include:

- Policy H1/2: Further Housing Development – directs unallocated housing towards the existing urban area and has regard to the availability of infrastructure, the need to avoid the release of open land, the spatial, amenity and character suitability of a site, and other policies within the Development Plan;
- Policy H2/1: The Form of New Residential Development – supports new residential development that positively contributes towards the surrounding area in terms of design, amenity, living environments of adjoining properties, and the materials used;
- Policy H2/2: The Layout of New Residential Development – seeks to ensure an acceptable layout for new residential development;
- Policy H2/4: Conversions – refers only to the conversion to two or more residential units, however, generally speaks to good design and principles of appropriate accommodation;
- Policy EN1/2: Townscape and Built Design – promotes good and sympathetic design; and
- Policy HT2/4: Car Parking and New Development – requires consistency with the Council's parking standards.

5.5 The PFE and UDP comprise the existing Development Plan within the Borough, however, the Council is in the process of developing its new Local Plan. The Council consulted on the Regulation 18 draft of its emerging Local Plan between March and May 2025. At this stage, limited weight can be attributed to the policies therein, however, they do give a good indication of areas of priority and general direction within the Borough. Relevant policies include:

- Policy LP-CC1: Climate Change – encourages a proactive approach to tackling climate change;
- Policy LP-H2: Windfall Housing Development – allows for residential development outside of allocated areas where the land is previously developed, the site is not protected in policy terms or at risk of flooding, the site is suitable in land use terms, and would not conflict with any overarching spatial strategy;
- Policy LP-H3: Housing Mix – promotes a healthy mix of housing that responds to the character of the site and surrounding area;

- Policy LP-H10: Residential Conversions – refers only to the conversion to two or more residential units, however, generally speaks to good design and principles of appropriate accommodation;
- Policy LP-TR1: Sustainable Transport – supports a modal shift away from private car usage and towards sustainable modes of transport;
- Policy LP-TR2: Walking, Wheeling and Cycling – as relevant to the proposal, encourages the provision of cycle parking facilities;
- Policy LP-TR6: Parking Provision and Drop-Off Facilities – requires consistency with the Council’s parking standards; and
- Policy LP-W4: Water Efficiency – supports water efficiency through application of the optional requirement of Building Regulations Requirement G2: Water Efficiency for future updates.

5.6 In support of the policies discussed above, the Council has also produced a number of supplementary planning documents (SPDs) that provide further advice and guidance.

5.7 The first that is relevant to the proposal is SPD 15: Residential Conversions. SPD 15 states that premises should be suitable for residential conversion – for instance, not being located in areas at risk of flooding, preserved for industrial use, or being too small to accommodate the proposed residential use. It is also noted that conversions should not be detrimental to the character and appearance of either the area or the existing building. SPD 15 goes on to advise that landscaping should be incorporated where appropriate, and parking standards should be complied with where possible. Importantly, it is noted that where off-street parking cannot be provided, the effect of the development upon parking in the vicinity will be carefully considered to ensure that there will be no significant adverse impact upon residential amenity or highway safety. It is also noted that the provision of amenity space for residents can be contextual. Lastly, the SPD records that bin storage will need to be provided, and that



proposals must not significantly impact the amenities of adjoining properties, through overlooking or otherwise.

- 5.8 The second is SPD 11: Parking Standards in Bury, which indicates that the site would be in Zone 4 (Rest of Borough), meaning that it is a case of one-space per dwelling. Additionally, one secured, covered cycle space is required per bedroom.

6.0 Planning Assessment

Provision of Housing

- 6.1 The application principally proposes the conversion and change of use of an existing vacant building into one two-bedroom dwelling. The former use of the building comprised a small swimming pool (6.5m in length), which was previously publicly accessible, however, has been closed for a number of years and has fallen into disuse. Not being a recognised community asset or benefitting from any particular policy allocation within either the existing or emerging development plans, it is not considered that the use benefits from any degree of policy protection. Indeed, this was confirmed by the Council in refusing planning application ref: 70742/FUL, where neither the delegated report nor the decision notice referred to the loss of the swimming pool being unacceptable. The principle of the loss of the former use as a swimming pool is not, therefore, considered to be at issue.
- 6.2 Being situated outside of any area allocated for housing development, the proposal would constitute ‘windfall’ development. First. Policy H1/2 directs unallocated housing to the urban area and making use of previously developed land. The development would be situated in the urban area of Prestwich and inherently comprises previously developed land. This policy also seeks to ensure that new residential development should benefit from access to infrastructure and be suitable in land use terms with regard to amenity and surrounding uses. The surrounding area is almost entirely residential, meaning that the proposal would be fully consistent with the amenities and character of the surrounding area. Being located within an existing residential area, the site inherently benefits from the same access arrangements to green space, services and infrastructure as all of the existing properties within the locality. It is, therefore, considered that the development is consistent with Policy H1/2 of the UDP.
- 6.3 Policy LP-H2 of the emerging Local Plan carries forwards these same principles, meaning that the development would be appropriate under either policy context.

- 6.4 Cumulatively, it is considered that the development plan supports the principle of the proposed development and, subject to other material considerations to be discussed below, that planning permission should be granted.

Design and Character

- 6.5 In terms of design, the development proposes only limited and minor changes. This means introducing residential-appropriate window openings, closing others, and slightly extending the existing store to the west of the building by approximately 1.5sq.m. The latter would not be prominent from within the public domain. Overall, it is, therefore, considered that the proposal would be consistent with the character and appearance of the existing building.
- 6.6 In terms of character and general amenity, the surrounding area is almost entirely residential, ensuring that the proposed use would be fully consistent with the prevailing context. Given the limited and sympathetic changes that are proposed to the existing building, which would bring it more in line with a typical residential property, it is held that the proposal would respect the character and amenities of the surrounding area. On that basis, the proposal would be consistent with Policies H1/2, H2/1, H2/2, H2/4 and EN1/2 of the UDP.

Living Environment for Future Occupiers

- 6.7 The proposed dwelling would offer a good living environment for future occupiers, satisfying the requirements within the nationally described space standards and ensuring that all habitable rooms would benefit from excellent levels of light penetration and outlook.
- 6.8 Internally, the unit would be logically arranged and make best-use of the existing building's unusual shape. The proposal would retain the existing access point at the front of the existing building. This would lead to an entrance hall/sunroom area that would open up into the open-plan living/kitchen area. At the western-end of the building would be the main double-bedroom, with a second bedroom provided at the eastern-end of the building, directly adjacent to the property's toilet and shower-room. Both bedrooms would be served by built-in storage, with a dedicated provision of storage for the property offered at its western-most-end, accessed from the primary bedroom.
- 6.9 Externally, opportunities for provision of private amenity space are highly limited owing to the constraints of the site. It is not, however, considered that this would be inappropriate in this location, with St Mary's Park a seven-minute walk to the west, and Heaton Park a 10-

minute walk to the east. It is acknowledged that private amenity provision is stipulated by policy, however, SPD 15 does note that some flexibility may be appropriate in specific circumstances, such as where a development is in close proximity to local parks. In this instance, the site would be well-located relative to large provisions of public open space and the proposal would make use of an otherwise vacant building.

- 6.10 The development is acceptable in all other terms relevant to the living environment that it would provide and, cumulatively, it is considered that the proposal would offer an appropriate living environment for future occupiers. The development is, therefore, consistent with the requirements of Policy H2/2 of the UDP.

Amenities of Adjoining Occupiers

- 6.11 The proposal principally comprises a conversion, with the only substantive change to the scale of the building being a minor single storey extension of approximately 1.5sq.m in area – enhancing the existing storage component at the west of the building. In light of the foregoing, it is not considered that any surrounding properties would be materially affected by virtue of loss of light, loss of outlook or visual intrusion.
- 6.12 The development also relates to an existing single storey building with established relationships shared with all of its surrounding properties. Furthered by the subtle land level changes, established boundary treatments, removal and/or reduction of existing windows (and lack of new openings) and existing distances of separation, it is not considered that any surrounding properties would be materially affected by either loss, or the perception of loss of privacy.

Provision of Parking

- 6.13 Owing to the constraints of the site, it is not possible to provide off-street parking to serve the proposed development. Policy encourages consistency with SPD 11, which sets a target for the proposal to provide one space per dwelling within this zone, as well as a total of two secure and covered cycle parking spaces.
- 6.14 It is first noted, however, that the lawful use of the property was as a communally accessible swimming pool. This means that lawful operation of the site as it presently exists would see a significantly greater demand for parking (that could also not be accommodated on-site), as well as a significantly greater number of vehicle movements and comings and goings. In

comparison, the residential use of the property for up to three people would generate significantly less movement, disturbance and general demand.

- 6.15 Further, there are currently no waiting restrictions within either Grosvenor Street or Randlesham Street. It is also noted that both of these roads are well-subscribed due to limited opportunities for off-street parking within the locality. It is accepted that the proposed development would contribute further to this local subscription, however, it is asserted that this would be by one additional parking space only. This is not held to be materially significant, and policy does stipulate that an under provision could be acceptable in certain circumstances. Aside from compelling planning reasons that outweigh this under provision (as discussed in other sections of this Report), the site would provide a fully compliant provision of cycle parking space and is within comfortable walking distance of bus stops to the west, east and south. Aldi is also a 14-minute walk to the west, and this is located at the southern end of Prestwich town centre. Finally, Prestwich tram stop is a 17-minute walk to the north-west.
- 6.16 Finally, it is also considered that the under provision of one parking space is not disproportionate, given that virtually no other properties in the vicinity can provide an off-street provision either, and that includes dwellings of significantly greater size than the proposed unit.
- 6.17 Taken in the whole it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in terms of parking and cycle provision.

7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1 In light of the above assessment, the proposal would provide a good quality environment that would be consistent with the qualities and appearance of the surrounding area. Future occupiers would benefit from a good living environment, whilst those properties surrounding the application site would not be materially harmed by the proposal.
- 7.2 It is accepted that the proposal cannot provide off-street parking or a typical amount of private amenity space, however, for the reasons articulated within the preceding sections of this Report, it is not considered that these matters render the proposal unacceptable. It should not be forgotten that this building sits vacant, as it has done for a number of years, and that if an alternative use that is appropriate for the area cannot be secured, then this will remain the case in perpetuity.



- 7.3 It is, therefore, considered that the use of the building for residential purposes is by far the most appropriate in this location and that, in the planning balance, the assessment of the material considerations weigh strongly in the favour of the development.
- 7.4 With that said, however, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in policy terms and comprises a rational and logical use for an otherwise vacant building. Cumulatively, on and on that basis, it is considered that the proposal would accord with the policies and requirements of the NPPF and both the existing and emerging development plans, and that planning permission should be granted.