

**List 1
(LATE REPRESENTATIONS)**

Planning and Highways Committee Thursday 11th February 2010 **Plans List No. 1**

Application Number 090348/FO/2009/S1 **Main Agenda No. 7**

Ward HULME

Description and Address

Erection of a part 4, part 5, storey building comprising 119 student bedrooms in 20 flats with associated car parking spaces (4) and landscaping

The Arch Bar, 20 Stretford Road, Hulme

1. Local Residents

8 further letters of objection have been received. Comments are summarised as follows:

- (i) It is still believed that the proposed building is too high and too dense. It is also believed that the proposed building would obscure natural light and living space and bedrooms will be overlooked by 35 living and study room windows on the Wilmott Street elevation.
- (ii) There are too many large student buildings in Hulme.
- (iii) The plan to include just four parking spaces for disabled people in unrealistic and whilst the scheme will include a clause to prevent car ownership, this does not preclude visitors from parking.
- (iv) There are concerns about noise pollution, parking problems and dangers to pedestrians.
- (v) 5 Stories is too high and the building is out of character with the area.
- (vi) One half of the Wilmott Street elevation has been set back, the other half is exactly per the original application. The length of this elevation has been extended by 2 metres. Three quarters of the development is now 5 storeys.

- (vii) Many of the existing student bedrooms in the area are not occupied out of term. With the subsequent loss of informal surveillance, there is a marked increase in the opportunity for and fear of crime.
- (viii) A synopsis of local policy has been provided which makes a case against the development proposal.
- (ix) The existing building and its garden is unique and should not be replaced with more bland, cheap build student flats. The area needs more local businesses or community uses.

2. South Manchester Regeneration

The recently adopted Student Strategy confirms that the development of new, managed student halls will be encouraged in the Corridor Manchester area and Birley Fields, Hulme.

The site is situated with the boundaries of Corridor Manchester and in close proximity to the higher education precinct on Oxford Rd and the site of the proposed MMU campus at Birley Fields. The development seeks to create purpose built accommodation for students in an area that is easily accessible to the University campus. The area surrounding the application site has benefited from a 'residents parking scheme' that will be enhanced by the S.106 contribution by the prospective developer.

The site is currently in a dilapidated and derelict state, having been used previously as a public house. The previous use had knock on consequence for nearby residents who were seriously affected by noise and disturbance. Further, serious criminal activity forced the closure of the public house and since then the building has been used by rough sleepers and anti-social behaviour.

The current application presents an opportunity to develop a scheme in accordance with the Student Strategy.

3. Ward Member – Cllr. Nigel Murphy

Councillor Nigel Murphy objects to the latest plans and reiterates the comments of many local residents. It has also been pointed out that only half of the Wilmott Street elevation has been set back 2.4 metres, with the block on the corner of Stretford Road remaining the same. The increased footprint of these plans and the five storey elevation will dominate the surrounding two and three storey residential properties on Wilmott Street.

In addition to the above, Councillor Nigel Murphy considers that there is a serious parking problem in the area and whilst the proposal to prohibit car

ownership whilst students are resident at the development, it is not seen how this can be enforced. Moreover, the influx of student accommodation has led to an imbalance in the local population which conflicts with the Central Manchester Strategic Regeneration Framework which states that it is important to ensure that one type of accommodation does not dominate a neighbourhood and lead to tensions between for example, students and elderly residents.

Finally, it is believed that the speed that the new plans have been submitted without consultation between the applicant, local residents and Ward Members, show that the developer has no interest in how the development will impact upon the local community.

4. Head of Planning

The Head of Planning would like to point out that the Committee report incorrectly states that the whole of the Wilmott Street elevation has been set back 2.4 metres whereas the report should state that only the rear half of the building fronting Wilmott Street frontage has been set back 2.4 metres. Despite this, it is still considered that the scheme is satisfactory and the amendments serve to reduce the impact upon nearby residential occupiers as a consequence of the scale and mass of the building.