



**Land Adjacent Newall Green Farm,
Whitecarr Lane, Wythenshawe**

Planning, Green Belt and Heritage Statement

On behalf of Abbeyway Commercial Ltd

May 2022

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1 Introduction

Purpose of the Planning Statement

- 1.1 This Planning, Green Belt and Heritage Statement has been prepared by Q+A Planning Ltd ('Q+A') to support a full planning application for the development of a new supported living scheme (sui generis) comprising 8 units set over two storeys on land off Whitecarr Lane, Newall Green. The new unit will be developed by Abbeyway Commercial Ltd with Zeno Ltd as the registered support provider.
- 1.2 The purpose of this Statement is to provide details of the application proposals; describe the site and surroundings; identify key benefits of the application; review the planning policy framework; and to consider the overall 'planning balance' of the scheme.
- 1.3 Detailed research and investigations have been carried out by a professional team of consultants on behalf of the Applicant. Various documents are submitted in support of the planning application, in accordance with the relevant national and local validation requirements, and these are summarised in Table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1 Application Documentation

Document	Author
Planning, Green Belt and Heritage Statement	Q+A Planning
Design and Access Statement	Corstorphine & Wright Architects
Arboricultural Impact Assessment	Ascerta
Extended Phase 1 Ecology Survey	Ascerta
Phase 1 Contaminated Land Report	GeoSmart
Sustainable Drainage Assessment	GeoSmart
Crime Impact Statement	Design for Security
Transport Statement	Highways Advice
Desk Based Archaeological Assessment	Allen Archaeology
Refuse Strategy Proforma	C+W
Solar PV Specification Brochure	PowerMax

- 1.4 Table 1.2 below lists plans that have been prepared by Corstorphine & Wright to accompany the application.

Table 1.2 Application Drawings

Plans	Drawing Reference
Site Location Plan	18421-CWA-XX-A-0301 Rev P02
Existing Site Plan	18421-CWA-XX-A-0302 Rev P03
Proposed Site Plan	18421-CWA-XX-A-0303 Rev P03
Proposed Site Plan and Extant Development Proposals	18421-CWA-XX-A-0304 Rev P02
Site Area, Floorspace and Volumetric Details	18421-CWA-XX-A-0305 Rev P02
Proposed Ground Floor Plan	18421-CWA-XX-A-0101 Rev P02
Proposed First Floor Plan	18421-CWA-XX-A-0102 Rev P02
Proposed Roof Plan	18421-CWA-XX-A-0103 Rev P02
Proposed Sections	18421-CWA-XX-A-0121 Rev P01
Proposed Landscaping Plan	18421-CWA-XX-A-0341 Rev P02
Proposed Boundary Treatments Plan	18421-CWA-XX-A-0342 Rev P03
Proposed Refuse Strategy Plan	18421-CWA-XX-A-0343 Rev P03
Proposed Building Elevations 1 of 2	18421-CWA-XX-A-0131 Rev P02
Proposed Building Elevations 2 of 2	18421-CWA-XX-A-0132 Rev P02
Proposed Site Elevations	18421-CWA-XX-A-0331 Rev P02
Proposed Site Sections – Adjacent Buildings	18421-CWA-XX-A-0332 Rev P02
Concept 3D Perspectives	18421-CWA-XX-A-0401 Rev P-02

- 1.5 The proposals represent the next phase of development at the site which covers the adjacent Newall Green Farm complex providing a home to 27 individuals through supported living accommodation (Application Ref: 103283/FO/2013/S2 and subsequently varied Ref: 106276/JO/2014/S2):

‘Conversion of vacant farmhouse (block A) to form a registered care home; conversion of a vacant barn (block B) to form 2 supported living dwelling units on the ground floor with 5 independent living dwelling units above; conversion of a vacant barn (block C) to form 4 supported living dwelling units; erection of a 430 sq. m office building (Block D); erection of a 6.5m high horse riding arena with associated stable block and livestock building with associated parking and landscaping and new vehicular access off Whitecarr Lane.’

- 1.6 As part of the extant consent, permission was approved for the erection of an office building, referred to as ‘Block D’ and the erection of a horse-riding arena with associated stable block. Neither element has been built out, however the remainder of the development provides care accommodation for 22 people living in shared accommodation, and a further 5 living in self-contained single occupancy apartments.

- 1.7 The proposed development relates to the 'Block D' site. The applicant no longer requires a dedicated office / administration building and instead wishes to contribute towards meeting the acute demand identified from the Greater Manchester Complex Care Framework for additional bed spaces, meeting the specialised needs of individuals with learning disabilities and Autism who exhibit complex behaviours.
- 1.8 For the purposes of the current proposals, the extant permission should be considered a material fall back insofar as the quantum and scale of development approved that remains unimplemented within the Green Belt.

Structure of our Statement

- 1.9 The remainder of the Statement is structured as follows:
- Section 2 provides details of the application site, surroundings, and relevant planning history;
 - Section 3 provides details of the proposed development, the general design principles and concepts which have been applied, and describes the key benefits of the application scheme;
 - Section 4 sets out the planning policy context, having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the development plan and other material considerations;
 - Section 5 considers the principle of the development in the context of the Green Belt;
 - Section 6 provides a proportionate heritage assessment in recognition of the site lying within the setting of Newall Green Farm (designated heritage asset);
 - Section 7 assess the compatibility of the scheme with the requirements of the NPPF and relevant development plan policy, demonstrating that the proposal accords with those policies;
 - Section 8 considers the scheme's 'planning balance'; and
 - Section 9 provides our overall summary and conclusions.

2 The Application Site

Application Site and Surrounding Area

- 2.1 The application site extends to approximately 0.64ha in size and is located approximately 1km to the south of Wythenshawe Hospital and 1.5km to the north of Manchester Airport.
- 2.2 The site comprises vacant scrubland associated with the adjacent Newall Green Farm care complex. The site falls within the Metropolitan Green Belt on the built-up residential edge of Wythenshawe.

Figure 2.1 Application Site and Surrounding Area



- 2.3 Newall Green farmhouse and its accompanying original outbuildings are Grade II listed and have recently been fully refurbished as part of their conversion to provide supported living accommodation for people with complex needs within the autism spectrum (see Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2 Newall Green Farm Development



Source: Google

- 2.4 The northern boundary of the site is screened by mature tree planting, beyond which lies playing fields associated with Newall High School and open greenfield land. To the immediate south lies vacant land which benefits from extant consent for the erection of a riding arena, stable block and associated horticultural area.
- 2.5 The main complex of Newall Green Farm to the northeast is accessed directly from Newall Road, whilst the application site, which accommodates an informal car parking area and grassland, is accessed via an existing vehicular access point onto Whitecarr Lane. Pedestrian access between the application site and adjacent development is provided via two separate access control gates.

Planning History

- 2.6 A copy of relevant planning history is provided at Table 2.1 below:

Table 2.1 Planning History

Planning Application and Description	Date of Decision
106276/JO/2014/S2 Variation of condition no.2 to planning permission 103283/FO/2013/S2 to allow elevational alterations, addition of plant room to ground floor and 6 solar thermal panels to roof to block D.	Approved 12.09.14
103283/FO/2013/S2 Conversion of vacant farmhouse (block A) to form a registered care home; conversion of a vacant barn (block B) to form 2 supported living dwelling units on the ground floor with 5 independent living dwelling units above; conversion of a vacant barn (block C) to form 4 supported living dwelling units; erection of a 430 sqm office building (block D); erection of a 6.5 metre high horse riding arena with associated stable block and livestock building with associated parking and landscaping and new vehicular access off Whitecarr Lane.	Approved 18.03.14
103898/LO/2013/S2 LISTED BUILDING CONSENT for the alteration and extension of vacant farm outbuildings to form two supported living dwelling units on the ground floor with five independent living dwelling units above Barns, Stable and Shippon.	Approved 18.03.14
103901/LO/2013/S2 LISTED BUILDING CONSENT for the alteration and extension of vacant farm outbuildings to form four supported living dwellings above Cart House and Stables.	Approved 18.03.14

- 2.7 Table 2.1 clearly illustrates that the Council have previously accepted the principle of care development at the site. The latest proposals intend to build upon the established development framework.

3 The Proposed Development

An introduction to Zeno

- 3.1 Zeno is a specialist independent provider of innovative and dynamic services for adults with a learning disability and associated development impairments. They provide a complete life approach, from supporting young people in their family home through to adults of all ages within community settings. Zeno support individuals across the whole spectrum of developmental impairments, including autism and associated mental health issues by providing both supported living and residential care placements.
- 3.2 At the core of their operation is the importance placed upon the individual, striving to deliver individualised evidence-based care. The service focuses on developing person-centred strategies that support people to improve their quality of life and reduce behaviours that challenge others.
- 3.3 What makes Zeno unique is the fact that it is a young, dynamic company with an enthusiasm for the delivery of individualised centred care. This is led and delivered by a management team with significant industry experience who bring knowledge, clinical expertise, quality services, good governance, and operational efficiency to all their services.

Model of Care and Resident Profile

- 3.4 The service has been developed and designed in line with the principles and values that underpin the 'Registering the Right Support' and other best practice guidance. This ensures that people who use the service can live as full a life as possible and achieve the best possible outcomes. The principles reflect the need for people with learning disabilities and autism to live meaningful lives that include control, choice, and independence. People using the service receive planned and co-ordinated person-centred support that is appropriate and inclusive for them.
- 3.5 Residential care provides a robust model for those requiring a controlled environment with defined boundaries. Successful developments are typically formed of a small number of individuals in order to reduce the potential of compatibility conflicts that can often occur when dealing with individuals and their complex care needs.
- 3.6 Zeno's foundation is in providing a truly flexible model of care to create a tailor-made package for service users that is unique to their circumstances. Two of the evidence based strategic employed in Zeno's residential care service are Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) and Active Support. PBS is used to understand and resolve the challenging behaviour of individuals. PBS offers a holistic approach that considers all factors that have an impact on a person's behaviour.

- 3.7 Active Support encompasses a range of approaches which aim to provide enough help to engage individuals to participate successfully in activities and relationships. Service users subsequently gain more control over their daily lives, developing independence and become more included and valued members of their community. Active Support focuses on the skills of staff in enabling engagement and on the capacity of the service to provide accessible opportunities in a structured environment.
- 3.8 The development is expected to build upon the success of Newall Green Farm and provide a 'homely' service that does not feel like a hospital, traditionally what many residential care services can resemble. This makes the service distinctly different and helps with adjustment as they continue with their recovery and eventual discharge back into the community. Furthermore, Zeno offer shorter lengths of stay and this is routinely suggested, where appropriate, to promote and incentivise individuals being able to move back home as quickly as possible.
- 3.9 It is intended that the facility would provide a local service, building upon Zeno's reputation for individualised care and a close relationship with commissioners in the region who have expressed their support for the development. Newall Green Farm is striving to be a local service for local people and aims to take regional patients before those out of area placements. The service acts as part of the care pathway for regional provision enabling patients to step down from higher levels of security and also for people to step up from the community should their needs not be met at home.
- 3.10 The benefits of step down are clear in that Zeno will be able to provide continuity of care and a positive motivation to succeed, ensuring that individuals can achieve the best outcomes in a familiar environment with greater peer support. Notably, there would be no requirement for a period of general assessment or having to build therapeutic relationships between the individual and the care team, which often increases the length of time they are in care in other unfamiliar locations.
- 3.11 In addition, step down offers patients the opportunity to enhance and develop living and coping skills, fostering independence so that they have a greater chance of being able to cope with life back in the community. The care team can use this time to identify any 'unmet needs' or issues that might not have presented in more of the structured environment that they have transferred from.
- 3.12 The provision of additional beds at existing residential care services also helps in trying to reduce 'revolving door patients' where an individual is discharged back into the community when they are not quite ready and as a result will need to return at some later date. This has an adverse impact on the individual and presents as an additional financial cost to the health service.
- 3.13 Zeno are aware of more than 10 individuals who have been identified through the Greater Manchester Complex Care Framework who require this type of accommodation. Similarly, there are approximately 32 Manchester residents inappropriately placed in more secure hospital settings. As one of three care providers selected to deliver care for the Framework, the proposed expansion at Newall Green was presented during the framework selection process and it was agreed to be an idealised setting.

- 3.14 In other circumstances, individuals who require step down rehabilitation sometimes face being moved to a different geographical area altogether due to the lack of bed spaces available more locally. The stresses and strains on both the individual and their families are clear, and this is something that can be alleviated through provision of an expansion to existing services in a nurtured and comfortable setting.
- 3.15 The proposed development seeks to replicate the successful operation at the existing facility in line with regional demand and commissioning support (see Appendix 1). The accommodation is expected to be an ideal fit to meet the needs of residents who are currently placed 'out of area'.

Development Details

- 3.16 The development proposes a form of specialist residential accommodation in the form of a two-storey block, comprising 8 no. 2 bedroom apartment units alongside associated staff support facilities, car parking and landscaping on vacant scrubland. Each apartment includes an independent staff sleep room ensuring that care support is on hand 24/7 as and when required.
- 3.17 The development is designed to be sympathetic to the surrounding historic buildings and follows the material palette and fabric of the existing farm estate. In addition, the proposal sensitively incorporates contemporary and contrasting elements so that legibility and prominence of the heritage assets can be appreciated. The materials palette includes replica reclaimed brickwork, larch board timber cladding and aluminium framed glazing.
- 3.18 The existing access off Whitecarr Lane is to be used, leading to 24 designated parking spaces for visitors and staff. An additional 2 disabled bays are provided close to the building entrance, thus providing a total of 26 spaces (including 2 EV charging points). Secure and undercover cycle parking is provided adjacent to the building. A drop off zone within the car park is also proposed and kerbs will be used to delineate space between pedestrian and cycle paths within the site. An enclosed refuse store is proposed adjacent to the parking in the north eastern corner of the site. The submitted Transport Statement includes vehicle tracking to demonstrate how servicing movements would take place safely.
- 3.19 The development will sit within a landscaped environment with much of the existing trees and soft landscaping and boundary treatments retained wherever possible. A number of new trees will be added to provide the necessary privacy given the proximity to the existing buildings. This will enhance the feeling of enclosure and seclusion, particularly to the south of the site at the private resident amenity space. The extent of hard landscaping is deliberately limited, instead a softer palette including gravel and CellPaving is proposed in order to set the proposal within its green belt context.
- 3.20 With regards to boundary treatment, it is proposed that much of the existing metal security fencing be retained. Existing manual access-controlled gates separating 'Block D' with 'Blocks A and C' will also be retained, alongside maintenance access to the north of 'Block C'.

3.21 Further details can be found in the submitted Design and Access Statement and accompanying drawings.

Scheme Benefits

3.22 The development will deliver several important benefits, namely the provision of a new, high quality residential care facility that serves to address very specific and identified needs. It will do so in a sustainable location and without any unacceptable impact in material considerations such as access, amenity, landscape, and biodiversity. The key benefits of the proposed development are briefly set out below:

- The need for specific accommodation to prevent adults being placed in facilities out of area and away from their families and support networks;
- The regional commissioning support shown for facilities of this nature, designed to address deficiencies in providing supported accommodation;
- The fact that the application site lies immediately adjacent to the established Newall Green Farm development which presents clear advantages in terms of a pooling of resources;
- The provision of a new, state of the art facility that reflect the latest expert design guidance and specifications for modern healthcare provision;
- The environmental sustainability benefits generated by the use of sustainable building materials and solar PV; and
- The creation of 16 new jobs and the creation of construction jobs during the building of the development, which will have economic benefits along the supply chain.

4 Planning Policy

Introduction

- 4.1 This section describes the relevant adopted local planning policies as well as national planning policy and other material considerations which the decision taker should have regard to.
- 4.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 require that planning applications must accord with the provisions of the adopted Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2021) represents a material consideration. The NPPF advises that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that development in accordance with the development plan should be granted without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise (paragraph 11).
- 4.4 Manchester City Council's adopted development plan for the area comprises the Core Strategy 2012 – 2027 (adopted July 2012) and the remaining saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan (1995).

National Planning Policy

- 4.5 The NPPF (2019) is a key material consideration in all planning decisions and sets out the overarching policy priorities for the planning system against which local plans will be prepared and decisions made on planning applications.
- 4.6 Paragraph 7 of the NPPF confirms that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 adds that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives; economic, social, and environmental which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways.
- 4.7 Further, paragraph 11 notes that at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which for decision-taking means:
 - approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; and
 - where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - 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

- 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.
- 4.8 In terms of decision-making, the document advises at paragraph 38 that local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive, creative way. They should work with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social, and environmental conditions of the area and in particular, approving applications for sustainable development where possible.
- 4.9 Paragraphs 39-46 encourage early engagement and pre-application discussions to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning system and outcomes for the community.
- 4.10 The NPPF considers over several chapters how the Government's objectives will be achieved. Of particular relevance to the current proposal are chapters 5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 which are discussed in more detail below.

Section 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

- 4.11 At paragraph 62 the NPPF advises that the housing needs of different groups in the community should be assessed, including but not limited to families with children, older people and people with disabilities.

Section 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy

- 4.12 Paragraph 81 advises that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand, and adapt. National policy advances that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, considering both local business needs and the relative need for different land uses to support sustainable local communities.

Section 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities

- 4.13 Paragraph 92 encourages planning policies and decisions to '*promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages*'.
- 4.14 Additionally, at paragraph 93 the NPPF encourages the provision of social, recreational and cultural facilities and services that the community needs. Pertinently planning policies and decisions should:

- *'Plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;*
- *Take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community;*
- *Guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs;*
- *Ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and*
- *Ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.'*

Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport

- 4.15 The NPPF emphasises that transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development and in contributing to wider sustainability objectives.
- 4.16 When considering development proposals, paragraph 111 makes clear that *'development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.'*
- 4.17 Within this context, paragraph 112 encourages development applications to *'give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use.'*

Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

- 4.18 Paragraph 126 advises that the creation of high-quality 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.
- 4.19 Paragraph 130 advises that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:
- *'Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
 - *Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
 - *Are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change;*

- *Establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- *Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- *Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.*

4.20 Paragraph 132 goes on to state that design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals. It acknowledges that early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests.

Section 13 – Protecting Green Belt land

4.21 Paragraph 137 of the NPPF stipulates that the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts and that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts being their openness and permanence.

4.22 Paragraph 138 sets out the five purposes of Green Belt designation:

- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

4.23 In terms of the control of development in the Green Belt, paragraph 147 says that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in 'very special circumstances'. Paragraph 148 expands on that, setting out that when considering any planning application, LPAs should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Section 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

- 4.24 Section 14 outlines that the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk. It should help to: *‘shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.’*
- 4.25 In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should expect new development to:
- Comply with any development plan policies on local requirements for decentralised energy supply unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable; and
 - Take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption.’

Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

- 4.26 Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by *‘minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecology networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.’*

Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

- 4.27 Section 16 of the Framework considers conserving and enhancing the historic environment at paragraphs 189 to 208 ensuring assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.
- 4.28 The Framework defines ‘heritage assets’, in Annex 2, as:
- “A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage assets include designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).”*
- 4.29 Paragraphs 194 to 198 deal with the general development management covering all heritage assets. Paragraph 194 places a duty on the LPA to require applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal to a proportionate level of detail to enable an understanding of the potential impacts of the proposed development on the significance of heritage assets. Paragraph 195 requires local planning authorities to identify and assess *‘the particular significance of any heritage asset’*. This should be taken into account when considering the impact of a proposal.

4.30 The Framework defines heritage 'significance', in Annex 2, as:

"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting."

4.31 In accordance with paragraph 197, a number of considerations should be taken into account by the LPA, first of which is the (relative) desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation. It also requires the positive contribution that the conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities and their economic viability to be considered, and finally, the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Conclusions in relation to the NPPF

4.32 National policy places a firm emphasis on the need to support economic growth, taking account of local business needs and makes clear that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

4.33 The role of housing plays an important part in the overall quality of life for those living with physical and mental health issues. Planning provides an opportunity to ensure there is sufficient choice of suitable and appropriate housing that meets the varying levels of need that these individuals have. National planning policy and guidance requires planning authorities to plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends and the needs of different groups in the community, including older people and those with disabilities.

The Development Plan

4.34 The Manchester Core Strategy was adopted in 2012 and covers the period 2012 to 2027. It sets a vision for the long-term future of the city, bringing together a number of strategic planning processes into one place. Key policies considered relevant to the application proposals are addressed in detail below.

4.35 The plan includes a number of spatial objectives. One such objective is S03 - Housing which seeks to provide for a significant increase in high quality housing provision at sustainable locations throughout the City to both address demographic needs and to support economic growth.

Policy H10 – Housing for people with additional support needs

4.36 Policy H10 states that proposals for additional support needs will be supported providing it does not compromise 3 requirements:

- There is not a high concentration of similar uses in the area already;
- where it will contribute to the vitality and viability of the neighbourhood.

- where there would not be a disproportionate stress on local infrastructure such as health facilities.

4.37 In the explanation to the policy, it is noted that the Council welcomes the development of appropriately designed accommodation which enables people with additional support needs to maintain an independent lifestyle and supports the work of housing associations and other agencies in this respect. The policy acknowledges that people with additional support needs may include homeless people, elderly people, people with mental health problems, people who have experienced domestic violence, people with a long-term debilitating illness, people who suffer drug or alcohol addiction, young people with specific support needs and people with learning or sensory disabilities.

Policy H7 – Wythenshawe

4.38 Outlines the strategy for new development within Wythenshawe and highlights that development proposals and planning applications should have regard to ensuring the delivery of low and zero carbon decentralised energy schemes and strong connections to the new Metro link which lies north of the site.

Policy T2 – Accessible areas of opportunity and need

4.39 Policy T2 advises the Council will manage the pattern of new development to ensure it is located with good access to the main economic drivers, is accessible by walking cycling and public transport connecting residents to jobs, centres, health, leisure open space and educational opportunities. The policy also confirms that car parking standards are maximums and cycle, and accessible parking are minimum standards.

Policy EN1 – Design principles and strategic character areas

4.40 Policy EN1 highlights the need for development to consider the strategic character area in which the development is located and requires Design and Access Statements to detail how the proposed development addresses the design principles, reinforces, and enhances the local character of that part of the City.

Policy EN3 – Heritage

4.41 Policy EN3 Heritage states that Historic sites and areas of heritage value should be both safeguarded for the future and, where possible, enhanced both for their own heritage merits and as part of wider heritage regeneration proposals.

4.42 The policy goes on to state that *“New developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance.”*

Policy EN4 – Reducing CO2 emissions by enabling low and zero carbon development

- 4.43 Policy EN4 specifies how the Council seeks to reduce the growth in CO2 emissions through design features that provide passive heating, natural lighting, and cooling to reduce the need for energy. The policy encourages features such as improved insulation and glazing, the use of low or zero carbon energy generating technologies and the use of building materials with low embodied carbon.

Policy EN8 – Adaptation to climate change

- 4.44 Policy EN8 requires all new development to be adaptable to climate change and advises developers to have regard to issues including minimisation of flood risk by appropriate siting, drainage, and treatment of surface, and the need to control overheating of buildings through passive design.

Policy EN13 – Green Belt

- 4.45 Policy EN13 highlights The Core Strategy's approach to the growth of Manchester's Green Belt and amendments that will be made surrounding Manchester Airport to accommodate this growth.

Policy EN15 – Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

- 4.46 Policy EN15 states that the Council will seek to maintain or enhance sites of biodiversity and geological value and that developers will be expected to identify and implement reasonable opportunities to enhance, restore or create new biodiversity, either on-site or adjacent to the site.

Supplementary Planning Documents / Other Material Considerations

Guide to Development in Manchester SPD (April 2007)

- 4.47 This SPD advises that the scale of new developments should be informed by the local area and states that a high-quality environment should be created by buildings which reflect their purpose and respect the place in which they are located.
- 4.48 The SPD advises that infill sites should respect and enhance the simple urban character of the area whilst at the same time introducing choice, variety and interest, although pastiche, or poorly considered new developments or extensions will be discouraged. There will be a need to ensure that new developments and conversions respect and enhance the historic context, in particular the size, scale and elevational detail of the existing "villas". The relationship of buildings to site boundaries, the rhythm and proportion of buildings within their own sites, the scale of streets and properties enclosing them, and retaining the level of tree coverage, are key elements to be considered.

Emerging Policy

4.49 The Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan Document for the nine local authority areas within Greater Manchester was submitted for independent examination in February 2022 by the GMCA. The submitted Plan was the version that had been published under regulation 19 for consultation between August and October 2021.

4.50 Whilst limited weight is attributed to emerging policy at this stage, the PfE Plan nonetheless provides an important strategic direction for Greater Manchester and how future developments will be assessed.

4.51 Key emerging policies include:

Policy JP-H3 – Type, size and design of new housing

4.52 Development across the plan area should seek to incorporate a range of dwelling types and sizes. Where appropriate, this should include incorporating specialist housing for older households and vulnerable people.

4.53 Innovation in housing development will be supported where it is consistent with the principles of good design and contributes to local distinctiveness.

Policy JP Allocation 3.1 Medipark

4.54 The PfE Plan advises that development of this area will take advantage of its well-connected location to create a new living and working experience providing new homes, jobs and training opportunities to the benefit of both new and surrounding communities through two important allocations:

- Medipark; and
- Timperley Wedge.

4.55 The application site falls within the southern tip of a key strategic allocation which it is envisaged will:

- Deliver approximately 86,000 sq. m of office focused floorspace;
- Development should be configured to take advantage of transport infrastructure in the area;
- Facilitate improvements to the surrounding road networks;
- Complement the wider Roundthorn Medipark development and the development proposed in Timperley Wedge;
- Ensure development within the site does not adversely impact the listed buildings of Newall Green or the adjoining playing field;
- Incorporate suitable site mitigation to account for the historic landscape features within the site; and

- Reflect the sequential approach to flood risk management.

4.56 Based on the above, the application site is proposed to be removed from the Green Belt upon adopted of the PfE Plan. The implications of this are discussed at Section 5 of this Statement.

Summary

4.57 This section has identified a series of development plan documents and other material considerations, including national policy to be considered in the determination of this application.

4.58 A full assessment of the scheme's compliance with policy, including the principle of development, is carried out in the following sections.

5 Principle of the Development and Impact on the Green Belt

Introduction

- 5.1 As previously described, the application site currently lies wholly within the Green Belt, as defined in the Manchester Core Strategy (Policy EN13). This section deals with the planning issues pertinent to the consideration of this application comprising the following key matters:
- Principle of residential care development (*sui generis* use);
 - Green Belt Context (including consideration of the relevant evidence base);
 - Impact on the Green Belt; and
 - Very Special Circumstances.
- 5.2 In all respects, the starting point for the assessment is compliance with the Development Plan (in accordance with Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004)), and any other material planning considerations.

The Principle of Residential Care Development

- 5.3 As outlined in Section 4 above, paragraph 149 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should regard the construction of new buildings as *'inappropriate'* in the Green Belt, save for those developments which meet the criteria of a closed list of seven exceptions.¹ Establishing whether a proposed development in the Green Belt is *'inappropriate'* or *'appropriate'* is an important first step for the decision-maker (as is confirmed in paragraph 7 of the Court of Appeal Judgment in respect of *R (on the application of) Heath and Hampstead Society v Vlachos & Ors* [2008] EWCA Civ 193, where this is described as a *'threshold question'*).
- 5.4 The proposed development involves the construction of a new building and associated hardstanding within the Green Belt; it is for a form of development that does not meet any of the prescribed 'exception' tests set out within paragraph 149 and 150 of the NPPF and is therefore by definition *'inappropriate development'* under the terms of paragraph 147.
- 5.5 This section of the statement focuses specifically on guidance contained within paragraphs 147 and 148 of the NPPF, which state:

'Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.'

¹ There is a further closed list of exceptions set out at paragraph 150 of the NPPF, but the current application proposal would not fall into any of the categories listed in that paragraph.

When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the Proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.'

Green Belt Context

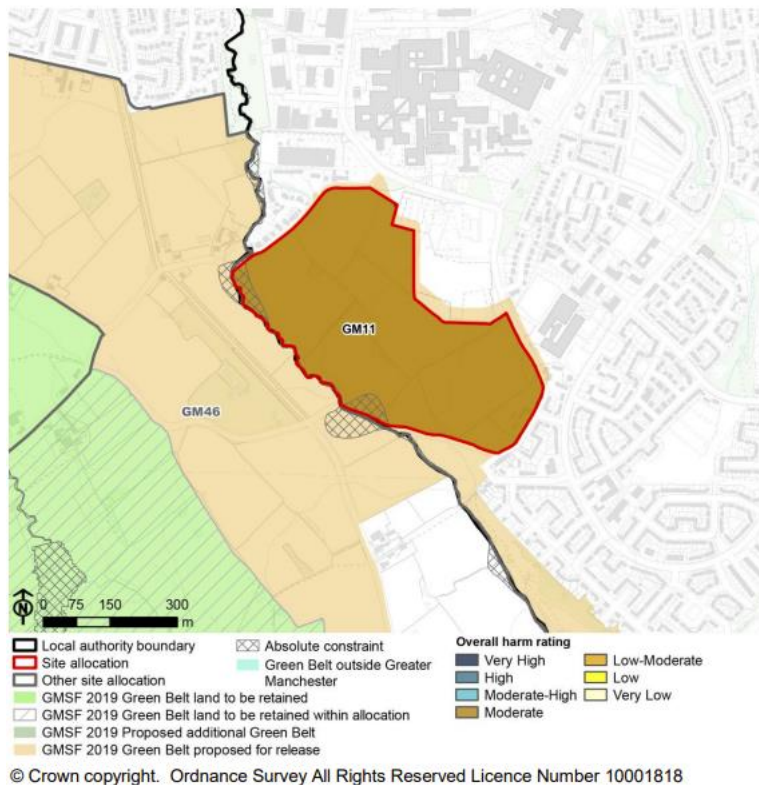
- 5.6 In undertaking our assessment of the principle of the development, it is helpful to first set the context for Green Belt policy in Manchester and as part of the emerging Places for Everyone Plan (PfE).
- 5.7 The PfE is a joint plan of nine local authorities providing a spatial interpretation of the Greater Manchester Strategy for the majority of the conurbation, which will set out how the joint plan area should be developed over the next two decades up to 2037. Among its purposes it will:
- Identify the amount of new development that will come forward across the nine districts;
 - Ensure that there is an appropriate supply of land to meet this need;
 - Protect important environmental assets across the conurbation;
 - Allocate sites for employment and housing outside of the urban area;
 - Support the delivery of key infrastructure; and
 - Define a new Green Belt boundary.
- 5.8 Initially referred to as the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF), the first draft of this document was published for consultation in late 2016/17. Following substantial re-drafting, a further consultation on the revised draft took place between January and March 2019.
- 5.9 Notwithstanding a decision by Stockport Council in December 2020, the nine remaining districts considered the rationale for the preparation of a Joint Development Plan Document (DPD) remained. In response the PfE was developed during 2021 though it follows that it is in effect the same plan as the GMSF (albeit without one of the districts). Whilst its content has changed over time through the iterative process of plan making, its purpose has not.
- 5.10 A comprehensive evidence based was assembled to support the policies and proposals in the GMSF 2020. Given the basis on which the Plan has been prepared, this evidence base remains the fundamental basis for the PfE 2021. The evidence base has been reviewed and updated in light of the change, and where appropriate addendum reports have been produced.

Green Belt Evidence Base

- 5.11 A Stage 1 Assessment was produced by LUC in July 2016 with the aim of providing an objective, evidence-based and independent assessment of how the GM Green Belt contributes to the five purposes of Green Belt as set out in the PPG.
- 5.12 The parcels were rated against five policy ratings of 'Strong', 'Moderate', 'Weak', 'No Contribution' and 'N/A'. The parcel ratings were presented in the report on a district-by-district basis with supporting justifications and maps provided.
- 5.13 Within the Stage 1 Assessment the site is designated as part of Parcel Ref: MA13 located in the south-western urban edge of Newall Green, part of the larger Wythenshawe urban area. LUC considered that the parcel exhibited a strong rating in respect of the following relevant purposes:
- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
 - To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.
- 5.14 A Stage 2 Greater Manchester Green Belt Study (2020) was prepared by LUC which provided a detailed assessment of the 'harm' to the Green Belt purposes that would result from the proposed development allocations in the PfE.
- 5.15 The assessment of harm covers 47 of the 51 proposed GMSF Allocations that lie entirely within the Green Belt. It considers the extent to which the release of land within each proposed site allocation would reduce the contribution to Green Belt purposes, through both the loss of openness of the released land and the resulting impact that this could have on the adjacent Green Belt. Each allocation and sub-area received a 'harm' rating of 'Very High', 'High', 'Moderate-High', 'Moderate', 'Low-Moderate', 'Low' or 'Very Low'.
- 5.16 As part of the Stage 2 Greater Manchester Green Belt Study² the application site is considered as part of the 'Roundthorn Medipark Extension' allocation (Ref: GM11, 21.5ha) and noted as having a 'Moderate' amount of Green Belt harm (see Figure 5.1 below). The allocation is contiguous with GM Allocation 46 to the south west. The presence of Fairywell Brook defining the allocation's western boundary provides some limited distinction from adjacent land within GM46 to the west and the retained Green Belt land beyond.

² Assessment of Proposed 2019 GMSF Allocations (September 2020)

Figure 5.1 GM11 – Roundthorn Medipark Extension



- 5.17 The accompanying text assessment advises that the allocation comprises of open farmland and playing fields. The surrounding urban edge creates a sense of urbanising containment, particularly to the south where the application site is since Fairywell Brook and intervening lanes and field boundaries create some distinction between the allocation and retained Green Belt land within and adjacent to GM46. The release would have a negligible bearing on the strength of retained Green Belt land to the south
- 5.18 It was concluded that release of the allocation would constitute sprawl and encroachment on the countryside, and a moderate impact on preventing the merger of towns. However, it would constitute only a negligible weakening of retained Green Belt land. Harm from the release of the allocation was therefore assessed as moderate.
- 5.19 The Stage 2 Greater Manchester Green Belt Study was updated to reflect the changes proposed under the PfE in 2021. There was no consequential change to the MediPark allocation (PfE Allocation Reference: JPA3.1).

Landscape Character Assessment (2018)

- 5.20 PfE Allocation JPA3.1 is located within the Urban Fringe Farmland Landscape Character Type (LCT), as identified within the Greater Manchester Landscape Character Sensitivity Assessment³. It is further defined within 'LCA 41: Altrincham and Hale'. The predominant landscape characteristics of the wider allocation parcel include a rolling, elevation farmland landscape with small to medium irregular shaped fields, remnants of parliamentary enclosure. Parts of the landscape are influenced by large scale industrial and commercial developments. Recreational pursuits including golf courses are evident, as are pockets of woodland associated with settlement edges, road and stream corridors. It is noted that there is a scattering of listed buildings, mainly comprising manor houses and historic farmhouses
- 5.21 The Landscape Character Assessment concludes that the sensitivity of areas within the Urban Fringe Farmland LCT tends to be relatively lower than other areas in the study and is considered "*more sensitive to commercial/industrial development than residential development*". Areas on the immediate urban edge and adjacent to main roads and motorways, such as the application site, conclude that they have a lower sensitivity to development.
- 5.22 Relevant guidance and opportunities to consider within this LCT include:
- Avoid siting development on highly visible skylines;
 - Ensure that the sense of separation the landscape provides between distinct settlements is retained; and
 - Ensure any development is in keeping with the mainly rural character of the landscape in terms of form, density and vernacular.
 - Existing historic boundaries and associated features should be retained, and actively maintained and relict field boundaries restored or reinstated to enhance the legibility of historic landscapes. Such locations should be enhanced with native hedgerow planting.

Case for Exceptional Circumstances (July 2021)

- 5.23 Paragraph 139 of the NPPF requires that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are evidenced and fully justified. The supporting Case for Exceptional Circumstances to amend the Green Belt Boundary⁴ sets out the case for seeking the proposed release of Green Belt to bring forward the allocations in the plan. The exceptional circumstances cases takes the form of a strategic and local level case.
- 5.24 The case for reviewing Green Belt boundaries at the strategic level includes consideration of several factors:

³ Greater Manchester Combined Authority (2018) Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment

⁴ Greater Manchester Combined Authority (2021) Places for Everyone. Green Belt Topic Paper and Case for Exceptional Circumstances to amend the Green Belt Boundary

- The need to identify an appropriate growth and spatial option having considered other reasonable alternatives;
 - The need to identify sufficient employment land to meet the overall economic growth strategy;
 - The need to identify sufficient land to meet the local housing need;
 - The site selection process for identifying strategic allocations in the PfE;
 - An assessment of the overall harm caused by the releases from the Green Belt;
 - Opportunities to help increase the beneficial use of remaining Green Belt, including interventions that meet green infrastructure and biodiversity net gain objectives.
- 5.25 The key driver for the strategic case is the need to deliver inclusive growth across the city region, with everyone sharing in the benefits of rising prosperity and the need to meet the objectively assessed need for both employment and housing.
- 5.26 PfE advise that despite steps being taken, insufficient land can be identified either within the urban area, or within neighbouring authorities to meet the Objectively Assessed Needs.
- 5.27 The selected release of Green Belt land has been informed by a site selection process. The strategic allocations in the Green Belt are, or are capable of being well served by public transport, take advantage of key assets, maximise economic opportunities, deliver inclusive growth, support town centres and have significant impact on their regeneration and enable wider community benefits.
- 5.28 Two of the priorities in the Greater Manchester Strategy relate to creating neighbourhoods of choice and making an 'age-friendly' city region. Promoting inclusion is a key theme of the spatial strategy in the PfE and so both priorities feed into emerging policy on Sustainable Places, which requires new developments to contribute to successful places with a clear identity.
- 5.29 Alongside the strategic case is a set of local exceptional circumstances specific to each proposed allocation to be released from the Green Belt, split under five columns. With reference to Allocation JPA3.1 Medipark:
- The site meets locational specific selection criteria and is viewed as a significant opportunity based on its proximity to University Hospital South Manchester and the wider Roundthorn Medipark Enterprise Zone. By attracting investment from knowledge-based industries to a high quality development, this area can provide a major boost to the economy of the city and wider region;
 - As previously described, the Green Belt harm assessment identifies that the allocation site plays a relatively significant role in respect of checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas; a moderate contribution for preventing neighbouring towns from merging; and a relatively significant role in preventing encroachment on the countryside;

- Release of the allocation would not increase the containment of any retained Green Belt land, recording a negligible impact. In terms of cumulative harm, the site is contained by the existing inset edge;
- Release would have a negligible bearing on the strength of retained Green Belt land to the south and west;
- Mitigation measures are not considered necessary to demonstrably reduce the harm of this allocation.

5.30 In summary, the application site forms part of a wider emerging employment allocation (Ref: JPA3.1) proposed to be removed from the Green Belt as part of the adoption of the PfE Plan. The evidence base concludes that notwithstanding moderate Green Belt harm the removal is justified under the exceptional circumstances test outlined at paragraph 139 and the clear need to identify sufficient land to meet the overall economic growth strategy of the plan.

Impact on the Green Belt

5.31 Notwithstanding the emerging policy position, the site's current inclusion within the Green Belt (alongside heritage matters) has been a key consideration for the Applicant throughout the preparation of the scheme to bring forward residential care development at Newall Green Farm. From initial concept, through to establishing the design and layout of the proposals, consideration has been given to the site's location with the Green Belt and regard to its purpose and characteristics has directed project design decisions. Clearly, the adjacent development and associated extant permission remain important material considerations which we will go on to address later in this Section.

5.32 The NPPF at paragraph 137 states that there are two essential characteristics of the Green Belt, namely 'permanence' and 'openness'. In addition, the Framework sets out five purposes of including land within the Green Belt, these are to:

- Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- Prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
- Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- Assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

5.33 The Framework defines those developments and uses that are considered 'appropriate' within the Green Belt. As previously described, it is recognised that the development proposed for the site does not fit within the identified exceptions and is therefore 'inappropriate'. As a consequence, paragraph 147 requires 'very special circumstances' to be demonstrated. In this context, the Framework states:

'Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.'

5.34 By reason of the developments ‘inappropriateness’ there is therefore ‘definitional’ harm caused to the Green Belt and this must be given substantial weight. The Court of Appeal⁵ has found that ‘other harm’ in this context relates to both the Green Belt and other environmental issues.

5.35 To consider the VSCs it is therefore firstly necessary to consider the extent of the harm to the Green Belt that results from the development. As a consequence, an appraisal of the characteristics of the proposed development against the impact on ‘permanence’, ‘openness’ and the five Green Belt purposes is set out below. This assessment has regard to two main issues, the wider strategic purposes and local more site-specific purposes. The former is as important as the latter as Green Belt is ultimately a strategic spatial designation that deals with issues at a high level.

5.36 The ‘other harm’ to wider environmental matters is considered in relation to the development plan policies in Section 6 and 7 of this Statement.

Harm to Permanence

5.37 Having regard of harm to the permanence of the Green Belt, it makes little sense to ask whether developing a Green Belt site would affect its ability to remain permanently open; it would of course entirely negate that ability. Rather, the issue of ‘permanence’ is relevant to whether there would be harm to the purposes of the Green Belt and to whether there might be consequential affects on the remaining Green Belt in the area were the parcel in question lost to the Green Belt.

5.38 It is firstly important to consider whether there is any prospect of the Green Belt boundary being amended. In this context, and as set out elsewhere within this Section, there is a real prospect of change, namely:

- The site forms part of a wider emerging allocation within the PfE Plan to deliver circa 86,000 sq. m of ‘office focused’ floorspace. The opportunity that this area offers because of its proximity to Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust (Wythenshawe Hospital) and the wider Roundthorn Medipark Enterprise Zone development is significant.

The PfE Plan advises that by attracting investment from knowledge-based industries to a high-quality development, this area can provide a major boost to the economy of the city region. This is a singular location close to a major hospital and with improvements to local transport infrastructure, including Metrolink, it can play its full part in maximising future economic growth. The proposed arrival of HS2, including the airport station a short distance to the south, will provide a further stimulus to economic activity in this area. In response, a large parcel of land is proposed to be removed from the Green Belt.

- In relation to employment the need to identify sufficient land to meet the overall economic growth strategy of the plan;

⁵ [2014] Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government, Reigate & Banstead BC and Tandridge DC v. Redhill Aerodrome Ltd [EWCA 1386]

- In relation to housing, additional land beyond that required in absolute terms is necessary to meet local housing needs due to the need for flexibility, balanced and inclusive growth required by the spatial strategy in the PfE, robustness in the face of contingencies and a Green Belt boundary that will ensure beyond the plan period;
- The release is assessed as being justified against the PfE spatial strategy.

5.39 Secondly, it is considered that the application site (as part of a wider allocation parcel) represents the best site for release since it would have a negligible bearing on the strength of retained Green Belt land to the south and west. This is due to the fact that Fairywell Brook and intervening lanes and field boundaries create some distinction between the allocation and retained Green Belt land. The site is therefore ideally placed to help meet identified development need without harming 'permanence'.

5.40 In the context of the planning application, it is noted that the proposed removal of the site from the Green Belt and proposed allocation for development remains somewhat from adopted policy. In these circumstances it is necessary to consider the development impact of the application. The proposals will provide a firm, clear and defensible boundary in this location in the form of retained hedgerow and landscaping to the north and existing and extant residential care development to the south and east. It is therefore considered that they will have a limited impact in relation to 'permanence' when judged against the Green Belt purposes.

Harm to Openness

5.41 Case law has established that perceptions of 'openness' can be visual as well as spatial (see, in particular, *Turner v SSCLG & East Dorset Council* [2016] EWCA Civ 466). Openness is the absence of development. Whilst clearly the proposals will harm openness, however the degree to which this is affected is largely ascertainable by objective means but also necessitates an assessment of more subjective issues such as the visual and spatial effect of the proposal. In this context there are two issues to consider, namely: (a) the openness of the wider Green Belt; and (b) the openness of the site.

Openness of the Wider Green Belt – Visual Openness

5.42 It is important to have consideration for the effects the proposed development will have on the visual openness of the Green Belt including impacts on long distance views, visual links to the wider Green Belt and inter-visibility between settlements.

5.43 The site is characterised as a vacant field parcel located in an urban edge setting within Newall Green, Wythenshawe and contained to the south by existing residential development off Newall Road. To the immediate north east of the site, Newall Green Farm exists which is a complex of three original buildings which were for a long time vacant and now provide residential care to adults with learning disabilities. South of the application site, within the same field parcel, development has been approved relating to the erection of an indoor riding arena with associated stable block and livestock building, with parking and landscaping. This element remains extant by virtue of the wider development at Newall Green Farm having been implemented.

5.44 Notwithstanding the site falling as part of a much wider draft allocation, in the context of the wider Green Belt, the site is largely viewed as separate from the adjoining parcel to the north. Instead, the site is considered to be intrinsically related to the adjacent development at Newall Green Farm in both a functional and visual capacity for the following reasons:

- **Functionality:** Access to the site is obtained via Whitecarr Lane which comprises a tarmac driveway leading to an area of car parking that is currently used by existing staff and visitors to Newall Green Farm. This is as per the extant development and therefore previously found to be acceptable;
- **Visual:** An existing landscaped boundary, comprising mature trees and hedgerow forms a natural barrier to the wider (northern) Green Belt parcel beyond. The site is secured by a 2m high green paladin mesh security fencing which was approved as part of the extant development. Glimpsed views of the site from Newall Road and Whitecarr Lane illustrate the extent of containment and visual relationship with the adjacent care home. The site is not visible from wider long-range views.

Moreover, the proposed building must also be read in the context of the approved riding arena and associated activity that will be developed on land immediately to the south of the application site.

5.45 On account of the above, the development of the site will not reduce the visual openness of the wider Green Belt. A fact clearly found acceptable when the previous application was considered.

Openness of the Site – Spatial Openness

5.46 In terms of the impact the proposed development will have on the spatial openness of the Green Belt, it is acknowledged that the development proposals will introduce a new building on the site and thereby reduce openness. This however should be considered against the extant position. A comparison of the extant and proposed development is set out below at Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Extant and Proposed 'Block D' Development Key Details Comparison

	Extant 'Block D' Development	Proposed 'Block D' Development	Variance
Area (m²)			
<i>Ground Floor</i>	278.31	469.83	+191.52
<i>First Floor</i>	251.36	456.17	+204.81
Total	529.66	926.17	+396.51
Volume (m³)			
-	1,958.44	3,779.08	+1,820.64
Height (m)			
-	8.18	10.20	+2.02

- 5.47 Whilst Table 5.1 demonstrates that the proposed development would be materially larger than that approved, it is not considered that this would constitute additional harm to the openness of the Green Belt than that already assessed and previously found to be acceptable by virtue of very special circumstances.
- 5.48 The development must also be viewed in the context of the approved 6.5m high riding arena, stable yard, and associated activity to the south of the new two storey building. The proposals will ultimately sit within a strong landscape framework which whilst is primarily concentrated around the perimeter of the wider development as per the extant landscaping scheme, there are pockets of new tree planting to the south of the new building and around the proposed outside amenity area. This will further assist in screening the spatial impact of the development when viewed from key vantage points.
- 5.49 Guidance contained within the PPG includes advice on what factors can be taken into account when considering the potential impact of development on the openness of the Green Belt. It is stated that the degree of activity likely to be generated, such as traffic generation should be considered. It is not considered that there will be an impact in terms of highways, as demonstrated within the supporting Transport Statement.
- 5.50 In summary, when assessing impacts of development to the openness of the Green Belt, both visual and spatial, whilst it is acknowledged that the proposed development will impact the spatial openness of the site, the overall harm is limited when consideration is had for the visual openness of the site, viewing the proposed development in the context of existing and extant built form.

Harm to Green Belt Purposes

- 5.51 The extent to which the Green Belt designation of the site meets the national policy purposes set out in the Framework is relevant to the degree of 'harm' caused to the Green Belt.

Impact on Unrestricted Urban Sprawl

- 5.52 It is not considered that the proposed development will contribute to the unrestricted sprawl of a large built-up area. It is accepted that the proposals involve the construction of a building on land beyond the existing settlement boundary. However, the site runs contiguous with the settlement boundary to the south and is therefore largely contained by existing built development. In addition, the development would be read in accordance with the adjacent care home at Newall Green Farm, and the approved development on the vacant land to the immediate south. Moreover, the mature landscaped and secured boundary to the north represents a firm, defensible boundary that will ensure there is no further encroachment associated with this development.

Impact on Merging of Neighbouring Towns

- 5.53 It is not considered that the proposed development will significantly impact on the merging of neighbouring towns. As previously described the site is for the most part contained by existing development and a secure boundary to the north. As a consequence, the prospects for any further extension beyond the defined red line site boundary are limited.

Impact on the Encroachment of the Countryside

- 5.54 Whilst the wider site allocation parcel plays a relatively significant role in preventing encroachment on the countryside, the application site itself is not located within a landscape setting which is open or generally rural in character. Whilst the site does not currently include any built form it is influenced by surrounding urbanising uses, activities and built form and benefits from planning permission to develop. It is therefore considered that the degree to which the application site assists in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment is limited.

Protection of Historic Towns

- 5.55 The requirement to preserve the historic character of towns is not relevant in this instance.

Impact on Urban Regeneration

- 5.56 It is clear from the Council's evidence base, and the sites inclusion within a wider draft allocation within the emerging PfE Plan, that there are limited alternative sites outside of the Green Belt (or immediate are) capable of accommodating the quantum of employment development proposed associated with the expansion of Medipark.
- 5.57 The proposals represent an important investment in the wider area and unique opportunity to build upon the established success of the adjacent care development at Newall Green Farm.
- 5.58 Overall, when considering the key planning issues, it is accepted that the proposals will result in a degree of harm to the Green Belt. However, this harm is substantially mitigated as required by the Framework.

Very Special Circumstances

- 5.59 As noted previously, Paragraph 148 of the NPPF states that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. In order for '*very special circumstances*' to exist and thus a grant of planning permission to be warranted, it is necessary to determine that the potential harm to the Green Belt, by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the Proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

5.60 Guidance on how this form of appraisal can be carried out has been provided by the Courts. We note, for example, the findings in *Wychavon District Council v SSCLG* (2008) EWCA Civ 692. Case law establishes that a combination of factors, which while individually may be commonplace, in combination can constitute ‘very special circumstances’; and that the appraisal is a qualitative process and is a matter of planning judgement for the decision-maker.

5.61 There is extensive case law relating to the assessment of ‘*very special circumstances*’. However, the correct approach remains that set out in paragraph 70 of the High Court Judgment in *Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council v Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions* [2002] J.P.L. 1509:

‘Given that inappropriate development is by definition harmful, the proper approach [is] whether the harm by reason of inappropriateness and the further harm, albeit limited, caused to the openness and purpose of the Green Belt was clearly outweighed by the [countervailing benefit arising from the development] so as to amount to very special circumstances justifying an exception to the Green Belt policy’ (emphasis in original).

5.62 Although the *Doncaster* Judgment was decided in the context of the national Green Belt policy set out in the now-superseded PPG2, there has been very little change to the wording of national Green Belt policy since this time. Indeed, the recent High Court Judgment in the case of *Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council v Secretary of State for Housing, Communities, and Local Government* [2021] EWHC 1082 (Admin), made on 7th May 2021, confirmed, in paragraph 59, that:

‘...the approach applicable under PPG2 paragraph 3.2 and paragraphs 87 and 88 of the former version of the NPPF remains applicable in respect of paragraphs 143 and 144 of the current version of the NPPF... the approach enunciated by Sullivan J in the Doncaster case... remains good law.’

5.63 Since this Judgment, there has been a further update to the NPPF, and the relevant paragraphs for the interpretation of the ‘*very special circumstances*’ test are now paragraphs 147 and 148. However, there has been no change to the wording of the policy, and therefore we consider that the case law outlined in this section still applies.

5.64 Further clarification on the correct approach to the ‘*very special circumstances*’ test was provided in paragraph 29 of the High Court Judgment in respect of *R (on the application of) Wildie v Wakefield Metropolitan District Council & Anor* [2013] EWHC 2769 (Admin), which reads:

'Thus, in considering whether to allow development in the Green Belt, the decision maker must consider, first, the "definitional" harm arising from the inappropriate development as well as such further harm to the Green Belt as is identified as being caused by the development in that case, and then secondly consider countervailing benefits said to be served by the development; and then consider whether those benefits clearly outweigh the harm so as to amount to very special circumstances. Secondly, in order to qualify as "very special", circumstances do not have to be other than "commonplace" i.e. they do not have to be rarely occurring. Thirdly, the test is not one of whether the harm to the Green Belt (definitional or specific) is "significant or unacceptable", either of itself or following the balancing exercise' (emphasis in original).

5.65 In our assessment, there are several factors supporting the application proposals which, individually and in combination, amount to 'very special circumstances' and which significantly outweigh the harm arising from 'inappropriate' development. These are:

- The healthcare need for the proposal;
- Locational considerations and benefits;
- The extant planning permission;
- The emerging development plan allocation; and
- Other material considerations.

5.66 We consider each factor in turn below.

The Need for the Proposal

5.67 At the outset, we return to the adopted development plan where Core Strategy Policy H1 (Overall Housing Provision) states that proposals for new residential development should take account of the need to contribute to creating mixed communities by providing house types to meet the needs of a diverse and growing Manchester population, including elderly people, disabled people, and people with specific support requirements. Crucially, the supporting text at paragraph 9.8 states that:

"There is a shortage of housing for elderly and disabled people. The number of elderly people is growing and there is likely to be a disproportionate increase in the number of disabled people as the population becomes older. To meet this need, additional housing is necessary, which is or can be adapted."

5.68 Moreover, Policy H10 (Housing for people with additional support needs) confirms that such proposals will be supported where:

- There is not a high concentration of similar uses in the area already;
- Where it will contribute to the vitality and viability of the neighbourhood; and
- Where there would not be a disproportionate stress on local infrastructure such as health facilities.

5.69 Specifically at paragraph 9.41 of the Core Strategy it is noted that:

“The Council welcomes the development of appropriately designed accommodation which enables people with additional support needs to maintain an independent lifestyle, and supports the work of housing associations and other agencies in this respect.”

5.70 Further guidance on specialist housing is provided in the Council's Special Needs and Supported Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance (April 1998). This identifies that the application site lies within a 'Category C Area', which is an area with below average provision but high 'unsustainability' as measured by the Council Tax rebates and population turnover. In such areas the SPG states that proposals need careful consideration in the light of local circumstances but could still be supported where there is clear evidence of unmet need. It is important to note that this SPG is based on data that is now over 20 years old. Given the considerable changes that can take place in the social and economic characteristics of an area in that time, little weight should be afforded to the SPG categorisation of the area.

5.71 As part of the updated evidence base prepared to support the PfE Plan, the Housing Topic Paper (July 2021) advises that the Greater Manchester Housing Strategy identifies safe, decent, and affordable housing as a priority for the city region so that homes fit the needs and aspirations of current and future citizens. It sets strategic actions at a city region level, designed to maximise the impact of collective efforts and to complement work and investment underway at a district and neighbourhood level. The strategy is built on understanding the connections between housing, people and place, the need to invest in the homes that they already have, and the importance of building new homes that are needed. An ageing population will necessitate a renewed emphasis on ensuring that a diverse range of housing is available to meet the needs of older people and households. This will require new dwellings to be more adaptable, and designed with potential care needs in mind.

5.72 NPPF guidance states that local planning authorities should plan for a mix of housing, which takes account of the care needs of different groups in the community (such as older people, people with disabilities and supported housing).

5.73 The Greater Manchester Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (April 2021) presents a clear, evidence picture of the housing market in the region. The document shows how the housing market is changing and provides an assessment of the future needs for both market and affordable housing, whilst also exploring the housing needs of different groups over a 20 year period. The Council advise that it is difficult to assess the total number of units of supported housing in Greater Manchester from official datasets.

5.74 The 2011 Census defines a limiting long-term illness or disability (LLTI) as:

“(a condition) that limits a person’s day-to-day activities and has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months. This includes problems that are related to old age. People were asked to assess whether their daily activities were limited a lot or a little by such a health problem, or whether their daily activities were not limited at all.”⁶

- 5.75 Analysis contained within the SHMA (2021) confirms that Greater Manchester has a similar proportion of people with a self-reported LLTI compared to the North West, though a smaller proportion reporting an issue that limits their daily activities ‘a little’. However, both Greater Manchester and the North West have a greater share of people with a LLTI than England as a whole (17.8% vs 17.6%). There is a relative concentration of people living with a LLTI living in the social rented sector in Greater Manchester, which given the specialist and supported housing offered by the sector, this is to be expected.
- 5.76 At 9.4%, Manchester has a higher proportion of residents whose daily activities are limited ‘a lot’ when compared to the national figure of 8.3%. However, at 8.3% the proportion of Manchester’s residents whose daily activities are limited ‘a little’ is lower than the national average of 9.3%. This suggests that interventions to assist with short-term or lower-level conditions or impairments are effective.
- 5.77 Yet Manchester’s percentage of people with day-to-day activities that are limited a lot is notably higher than the national average, suggesting that the proportion of people with high level/assessed needs is greater in the city than nationally.

Legislation and Healthcare Guidance

- 5.78 As a result of the Autism Act (2009), there are clear duties and expectations on local authorities and the NHS to plan and commission appropriate services for autistic adults and their families. Reflecting the remit of the Autism Act 2009, the strategy focuses on autistic adults, but also includes young autistic people in transition.
- 5.79 The Equality Act (2010) is a major piece of legislation that brings together and strengthens the various existing pieces of anti-discrimination legislation that have been passed since the 1970s. The Act covers three areas: employment, provision of goods and services, and property. It describes ‘prohibited conduct’, which includes direct and indirect discrimination, harassment victimisation and disability discrimination, and sets out the ‘protected characteristics’ covered by the legislation – including disability. It also describes a general equality duty for public bodies to have due regard to the need to.
- 5.80 The Care Act (2014) made a number of significant changes to how local authorities assess, commission and deliver a more holistic and personalised range of adult social care services. There is a much greater emphasis on wellbeing, and local authorities now have a duty to promote wellbeing in the specific areas below:

- Personal dignity, including treating people with respect

⁶ ONS, 2011 Census: Glossary of Terms, (May 2014)

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guidemethod/census/2011/census-data/2011-census-data/2011-first-release/2011-census-definitions/2011-censusglossary.pdf>

- Physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Protection from abuse and neglect
- Control by the individual over day-to-day life, including choice and control over how their care and support is provided.
- Participation in work, education, training, or recreation
- Social and economic wellbeing
- Domestic, family, and personal relationships
- Suitability of living accommodation
- The individual's contribution to society

5.81 More locally, Manchester's Autism Strategy (2019) has been developed in partnership with autistic people, their families and practitioners. It is informed by questionnaires, surveys and a series of engagement events where the Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership asked individuals what needs to change to make Greater Manchester autism friendly.

5.82 As a result of the Autism Act, there are clear duties and expectations placed on local authorities and the NHS to plan and commission appropriate services for autistic adults and their families.

5.83 Since the ground-breaking Autism Act 2009, and the publication of the first national strategy for autism, progress has been made in improving support for autistic adults. In line with the strategy, most local authorities now have a dedicated adult diagnosis service and a designated lead for the development of adult autism services. As a result, autistic people are increasingly engaged in planning and designing services.

5.84 The devolution of health and social care within Greater Manchester provides an opportunity to look at how the core elements of the Autism Act, as well as the wider duties and expectations of the act can be delivered through joint working. In developing and enacting the strategy, it is important to ensure that the following key principles are followed:

- A place where all children are given the best start in life and young people grow up inspired to exceed expectations;
- A place where people are proud to live, with a decent home, a fulfilling job;
- A place where people live healthy lives and older people are valued; and
- A place where all voices are heard.

5.85 The last Autism Self-Assessment Framework (SAF) identified that most of the areas in Greater Manchester struggled to engage housing in partnership boards or consider them in the training delivered. Furthermore, wider access to the community for individuals and their families was described as equally important. Many Greater Manchester local authorities were identified as needing to do more to engage with communities that are severely under represented in terms of diagnosis and access to support.

- 5.86 Manchester's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment – Social Model Disability (2022) contains a broad profile of the health needs of the population living in the areas covered by Manchester's Health and Care Commissioners, and some of the factors that contribute to these.
- 5.87 Many disabled people and carers reported that they live in homes which do not meet their needs to live independently or to provide care, or that they have needed to make significant adjustments to their homes to meet accessibility requirements. There is therefore a clear need to provide housing to meet accessibility and care needs.
- 5.88 Data from the Quality and Outcomes Framework shows that, in 2020-21, there were 4,762 people recorded as having a learning difficulty on GP patient registers in Manchester, an average of 56 people per practice. In the previous year (2019-20), there were 3,246 people recorded as having a learning difficulty (an average of 38 people per practice). The big increase in the number of people recorded is considered to be due to improvements in data quality linked to COVID.
- 5.89 Evidence from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment confirms that many disabled people are not receiving in-home support, and in turn are losing independent, choice and control in their daily lives. In turn, social housing and support staff are not facilitating the independence they potentially could, which means that some disabled people lack confidence in becoming key members of the community in which they live.
- 5.90 The Greater Manchester Disabled People's Manifesto includes several relevant recommendations in respect of independent living. This includes:
- Disabled people having the opportunity to choose their place of residence and where and with whom they live on an equal basis with others and are not obliged to live in a particular living arrangement;
 - Disabled people have access to a range of in-home, residential, and other community support services, including personal assistance, necessary to support living and inclusion in the community, and to prevent isolation or segregation from the community;
 - Community services and facilities for the general population are available to disabled people on an equal basis and are responsive to their needs; and
 - All commissioned and contracted providers should fulfil the Equality Act duties and demonstrate a proven track record and continuing commitment to providing accessible and inclusive services.
- 5.91 In response it is recognised that Manchester is embarking on a radical programme of work to change the lived experiences for disabled Manchester citizens. The ambition is for Manchester to be a fully accessible city that puts disabled people at the front of change projects and creates an inclusive and co-productive approach as a default.

- 5.92 Work to improve the lives of disabled people is complementary to the work to improve the health and wellbeing of Manchester residents as set out in the Manchester Locality Plan. Disabled people who face a range of barriers cannot equally access appropriate and timely health and social care services and are therefore disadvantaged through no fault of their own.

Locational Considerations

- 5.93 As previously described, there is a clear need for additional provision within Greater Manchester for individuals who have a learning disability, Autism and other complex behavioural requirements. Furthermore, for the reasons explained below, the application site is uniquely well-placed to meet the existing deficiency in supported accommodation for adults with complex learning behaviours in the area. The combination of these site-specific advantages and benefits represents compelling very special circumstances that weigh in favour of the proposal in the planning balance.
- 5.94 The fact that the application site lies immediately adjacent to the recently established assisted living facility at Newall Green Farm means that there will be opportunities for both sites to share resources or site cover where required. The applicant, and care provider, intends to create a blended workforce that combines the skills and experiences of existing staff. Whilst the applicant will seek to develop dedicated resources for the proposed new development, it is an important advantage of the application site that it will be within reach of shared care coordination and joint working across the team. The sharing of staff, and other resources, will ensure valuable consistency in care for the residents whom the proposal seeks to serve.
- 5.95 The proximity of the application site to the existing services at Newall Green Farm will offer unique opportunities for staff training and development. The care provider plans on developing expertise across its various teams, with rotational options available which will:
- Ensure that the service is not standalone; and
 - Provide staff with a much more rounded understanding of patients complex needs.
- 5.96 Importantly, the location of the application site, which is secluded but not isolated, is ideal for providing a calm space for residents and staff. The Department of Health's Building Note 03-01 offers detailed 'best practice' guidance on adult mental health units and notes that the key challenge in the design and specification of a new or refurbished mental health facility is creating a calm, comfortable and non-institutional atmosphere, while meeting the functional requirements for the unit.
- 5.97 Although the effectiveness of security measures will largely be determined by operational staff, the design of the site and internal construction and building layouts can contribute in a significant way to promote the efficacy of these measures, and to avoid the requirement for additional staffing. Access to fresh air and outdoor spaces and the opportunity for reflection and social engagement, all play a significant role in supporting well-being and recovery. The external spaces accessed from the unit is viewed as a functional and therapeutic part of the service. The amenity area to the south west of the building will provide residents with this important opportunity.

- 5.98 The new facility will offer ensuite bedrooms and segregated staff sleep accommodation. Each apartment will include kitchen, lounge and dining facilities enabling residents to live as independently as possible with on-site support as and when they require. The internal layout of the development has been designed in consultation with commissioners across Greater Manchester who confirm that it is an ideal configuration for this cohort of residents. Finally, the new building will reflect the need for environmentally sustainable building practices and a reduction of carbon emissions through provision of solar PV panels on the roof.
- 5.99 The application proposal will secure regeneration benefits through the re-use of a vacant site with an attractive, modern facility. Construction of the proposed facility can begin immediately (following planning approval), which is an important benefit given the clear need for such facilities across Greater Manchester.

Extant Planning Permission

- 5.100 As set out elsewhere within this Statement, the development sits in the same location of a previous approval for a two-storey office building associated with the wider assisted living development proposals implemented at Newall Green Farm. Whilst the proposal occupies a larger footprint, it is not considered that this would constitute additional harm to the openness of the Green Belt than that already assessed and previously found to be acceptable by virtue of very special circumstances. The previously consented access and parking provision has similarly been implemented and is to be relied upon as part of the proposed scheme. The extant permission represents a material fall back.
- 5.101 On this basis the Council clearly considers development of the site acceptable. As part of the previous application, officers were comfortable that the definitional harm to the Green Belt could be outweighed by a suite of very special circumstances. The extant development covered a previously forecast administrative need which is now no longer required. The current proposals arguably seek to address a more meaningful need for supported care accommodation.

Emerging Development Plan Allocation

- 5.102 The site forms part of a wider emerging allocation within the PfE Plan to deliver circa 86,000 sq. m of 'office focused' floorspace. The opportunity that this area offers because of its proximity to Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust (Wythenshawe Hospital) and the wider Roundthorn Medipark Enterprise Zone development is significant.
- 5.103 The PfE Plan advises that by attracting investment from knowledge-based industries to a high-quality development, this area can provide a major boost to the economy of the city region. This is a singular location close to a major hospital and with improvements to local transport infrastructure, including Metrolink, it can play its full part in maximising future economic growth. The proposed arrival of HS2, including the airport station a short distance to the south, will provide a further stimulus to economic activity in this area. In response, a large parcel of land is proposed to be removed from the Green Belt.

5.104 The application proposal provides a modest contribution to the strategic aims and objectives of this important draft allocation.

Other Material Considerations

5.105 As noted earlier in this section, case law has established that '*very special circumstances*' do not have to be rarely occurring. Indeed, they can be '*commonplace*'. With this mind, we note that the application proposal will also result in further benefits which, in combination with the other factors outlined above, amount to '*very special circumstances*' that outweigh the very limited harm to the Green Belt caused by the proposal. These benefits are:

- The creation of approximately 16 new jobs, with high quality training opportunities offered for staff due to the potential for staff sharing with the adjacent Newall Green Farm;
- The creation of construction jobs during the building of the development, which will have economic benefits along the supply chain; and
- A sustainable development.

Summary

5.106 The correct approach to the '*very special circumstances*' test involves the consideration of '*definitional*' harm (by reason of inappropriateness) and any '*further*' harm that would be caused by the proposed development. In order for '*very special circumstances*' to exist, the harms must be clearly outweighed by the countervailing benefits arising from the development.

5.107 '*Very special circumstances*' do not have to be rarely occurring; indeed, they can be '*commonplace*'. In the context of this application, the factors amounting to '*very special circumstances*' comprise:

- The need for specific accommodation to prevent adults being placed in facilities out of area and away from their families and support networks;
- The regional support shown for facilities of this nature, designed to address deficiencies in providing supported accommodation;
- The fact that the application site lies immediately adjacent to the established Newall Green Farm development which presents clear advantages in terms of a pooling of resources;
- The provision of a new, state of the art facility that reflect the latest expert design guidance and specifications for modern healthcare provision;
- The environmental sustainability benefits generated by the use of sustainable building materials;
- The creation of 16 new jobs and the creation of construction jobs during the building of the development, which will have economic benefits along the supply chain.
- The fact that the Council have previously considered development of the site acceptable; and

- The proposed removal of the site from the Green Belt, and wider employment led allocation.

5.108 The accumulation of these factors that weigh in favour of the proposal in the planning balance clearly outweigh the limited harm to the Green Belt caused by the proposal, so as to amount to '*very special circumstances*'. The application therefore complies with local and national Green Belt policy and should be approved, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

6 Heritage Statement

- 6.1 In recognition of the application site's location within the setting of three Grade II listed buildings associated with Newall Green Farm, the planning application is supported with a proportionate Heritage Statement.

Legislative and Policy Framework

- 6.2 There are several designated heritage assets that fall within the vicinity of the application site. Therefore, in determining the proposals, Manchester City Council, the local planning authority (LPA), has a 'statutory duty' under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the importance of built heritage and listed buildings. Section 66 of the Act states that:

"In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses".

- 6.3 In addition, Section 72 of the Act emphasises the value of Conservation Areas in built heritage planning. In relation to the duties and powers of the LPA, it provides that:

"With respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area".

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021

- 6.4 Section 16 provides policy on 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment'. Planning decisions have to be made from a position of knowledge and understanding with respect to the historic environment. Paragraph 194 states:

"In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impacts of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation".

- 6.5 In paragraph 197, it is made clear that a balance must be sought on the one hand sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and the positive contribution that they can make to communities, and on the other in considering the positive contribution that a new development could make to local character and distinctiveness.
- 6.6 The impact on a heritage asset should be assessed in terms of the significance of that asset; the greater the significance, the greater weight should be given in that assessment. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated asset should require clear and convincing justification. Where substantial harm or loss is predicted, approval should be given only in exceptional circumstances for Grade II listed buildings, parks or gardens. For heritage assets of higher importance (Grade II* & I listed buildings and parks & gardens, scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields and World Heritage Sites) approval for proposed developments that cause substantial harm should be 'wholly exceptional' (paragraph 200). In all cases the harm must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal – including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use – as set out in paragraph 202.

Non-Statutory Guidance

English Heritage Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance (April 2008)

- 6.7 English Heritage Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance defines the setting of historic assets as:

“the surroundings in which a place is experienced, its local context, embracing present and past relationships to the adjacent landscape”.

- 6.8 Historic England draws a distinction between 'setting' and 'context' (paragraphs 76 and 77) and the document makes it clear that whereas 'setting' involves a localised area, 'context' is a wider concept involving *“any relationship between a place and other places, relevant to the values of that place”*.

- 6.9 Heritage values are considered under four main headings:

- Evidential value derives from the potential for a place to yield evidence about past human activity;
- Historical value derives from the ways in which past, people and events can be connected through a place to the present;
- Aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place; and
- Communal value derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it.

Local Policy Guidance

Policy EN3 (Heritage)

- 6.10 Policy EN3 of Manchester's Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document of 11th July 2012 (hereinafter referred to as the 'Core Strategy') confirms that the Council will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods. Figure 12.2 in the explanatory wording to Policy EN3 shows that the application site is not located within any of Manchester's Conservation Areas.
- 6.11 The policy goes on to state that new developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, and the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance, including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas and archaeological remains.

Policy DM1 (Development Management)

- 6.12 Policy DM1 of the Core Strategy states that all development should 'have regard' to, amongst other things, built heritage. The policy notes that more detailed guidance might be given in supplementary planning documents.

Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance (adopted April 2007)

- 6.13 This supplementary planning guidance actually pre-dates the Core Strategy, and hence it refers to Unitary Development Plan Policies which are now superseded. Nonetheless, we note that the guidance states that:

'The rich urban heritage of Manchester and the distinctive qualities of its different neighbourhoods and buildings help to create a strong sense of place and should be respected in new development, to promote high quality environments that combine good design with the best architectural traditions of the City.'

Heritage Assets

- 6.14 There are three designated heritage assets in close proximity to the application site, these being the following Grade II Listed buildings on Newall Road:
- Newall Green Farmhouse (List Entry Number: 1197897), which is known as 'Block A' in the extant permissions (refs: 103283/FO/2013/S2 and 106276/JO/2014/S2);
 - Outbuildings to the north of Newall Green Farmhouse (List Entry Number: 1220351), known as 'Block B' in the extant permissions; and
 - Outbuilding approximately 15 metres North-West of Newall Green Farmhouse (List Entry Number: 1291017), known as 'Block C' in the extant permissions.

6.15 Table 6.1 sets out the listings information for these adjacent listed buildings on Newall Road. The heritage significance of all three asserts was assessed as part of the earlier planning application to convert the Newall Green Farm complex from vacant farmhouses/barn to C2 caring uses (ref: 103283/FO/2013/S2, as subsequently varied by permission ref: 106276/JO/2014/S2).

Table 6.1: Listing Descriptions

Heritage Asset	Listing Description
Block A Farmhouse – Newall Green Farmhouse	Grade II – Number 1197897 Listed 25th February 1952 amended 6th June 1994 698/1/11/491 SJ88NW NGR. SJ8076387266 Farmhouse. Dated 1594 on porch; altered. Handmade red brick with sandstone quoins, slate roof. E-plan. Two storeys, a 3 window main range with central porch and projected wings, symmetrical; with stone quoins and moulded 3 course brick band. The 2 storey gabled porch has a basket-arched outer doorway with chamfered surround and lintel inscribed “1594”, a 1st floor window with flat-arched head and top hung casement openings, and a shaped gable with the stump of a former finial; the flanking bays have similar windows (the upper smaller); and the gables of the wings also have similar windows on each floor (that at ground floor to the right doubled), and an oculus in each gable. Ridge chimney to main range at junction with right hand wing. Left return of left wing blind; right hand return of right wing has doorway and 3 windows at ground floor 2 windows at first floor. Rear and interior not inspected.
Block B Barn to North of Newall Green Farmhouse	Grade II – Number 1220357 Listed 3rd October 1974 amended 6th June 1994 698/1/11/490 SJ88NW NGR. SJ8078087298 Barn, stables, shippons, etc., C18, altered. Handmade brick, slate roofs. L-plan formed by 4 bay main range on north south axis with 3 bay wing projecting to east at north end. Two storeys; main range has wooden lintel of former wagon entrance at right hand end, segmental headed doorways (d) and windows (w) d-w-w-w-w-d-w-d, and 2 square loading doors at first floor; wing has similar openings at ground floor, w-d-d-w-d-w-d, and 3 square loading doors alternating with diamond pattern breathers on first floor. Rear and interior not inspected.

Block C Outbuilding 15m North West of Newall Green Farmhouse	Grade II – Number 1291017 Listed 6th June 1994 698/1/11/492 NGR. SJ8075287289 Farm building, perhaps cart house and stable. Probably mid C18; altered. Handmade red brick, slate roof. Rectangular plan. Two storeys and 4 bays; small segmental headed wagon doorway to 4th bay, now blocked and a door and window inserted; segmental headed window and doorway at left end, 2 similar windows in centre; 3 loading doorways at first floor (the first square and the others rectangular); lean to addition and chimney at right hand gable. Forms part of group. Included for group value.
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Source: National Heritage List for England

- 6.16 In considering the historic development of the buildings we have had regard to the previously submitted Heritage Assessment⁷ used to support the extant development.

Newall Green Farmhouse (Block A)

- 6.17 There are differing views on exact dates of the original building; however, there is a common view that the brick building seen externally is an envelope to an earlier timber framed building. The archaeological report can only identify an ownership/tenancy around 1652 but concludes that one may have existed before this.
- 6.18 The footprint (plan view) was that of an 'E' with all external elevation and gable walls built with handmade bricks in an English garden wall bond. All elevation wall corners had quoins of pale yellow sandstone. The roof had been rebuilt during the late 19th to mid-20th century with the reconstruction of a shallower pitched blue slate roof which probably had replaced a steeper pitch grey slate (stone) roof. Internally, the ground floor central hall area had two smaller rooms inserted so forming three rooms. Both wings appear to have retained much of their original layout.
- 6.19 The historic development of the L shape group of barns is considered to be comparatively easier to trace.

Barn to Newall Green Farmhouse (Block B)

- 6.20 This farm building range was located north-east of the farmhouse. The range had an 'L' footprint built at two floor levels through-out, and a large, cobbled area within the 'L' layout formed the farmyard area.

⁷ Heritage Statement: Philip Milson Associates Ltd (Revised August 2013)

- 6.21 The building range had been built in two building phases, the first was the north western range which was the shippon, hayloft & cart shed and built originally as a threshing barn circa mid-18th century in English garden wall bond. The north eastern range was built onto the north western range north eastern gable of the shippon as a stable range with a Dutch barn at first floor level this range was built circa 1830 in Flemish bond to the farmyard elevation. The whole building was built with handmade bricks of two distinct types.

Outbuilding to Newall Green Farmhouse (Block C)

- 6.22 This building was located further to the northwest than the main range. A brick built rectangular building with a lean-to extension at the north eastern gable. The shippon and hayloft were built with handmade bricks in English garden wall bond. The date is circa 1830/50. Externally there was no fenestration or doorways, but there was a single square hay door central to the first floor level.
- 6.23 There are no other known designated or non-designated heritage assets located either within, or in the vicinity of, the application site. Indeed, the next nearest heritage assets are the Davenportgreen Farmhouse, Barn and Paddy's Hut, all on Roaring Gate Lane, which are situated over 700m from the application site, as the crow flies, and not visible from it.

Historic Development

- 6.24 During the late medieval period the site of Newall Green Farm lay within the manor of Baguley which in the 12th, 13th and early 14th centuries was held by the Baggily family. In the mid-14th century, the lordship passed by marriage to the Legh family of Booth, near Knutsford, and passed again to the Allen family in the 17th century. However, much of the lands of the manor appear to have been sold after the mid-14th century creating several freehold properties. Four freeholders are recorded in 1666 (Geffrey Cartwright gentleman, William Gibbon, Widow Tarvin and Thomas Worseley; Ormerod 1882, 550-1), although it is unclear which of these families, or indeed the Allens, held Newhall Green Farm during this period.
- 6.25 Additional information as to the origin and date of the farmhouse might be found in the place name 'Newall Green', This does not appear in the records until the mid-17th century when Newhall or Newhalle Green in Baguley first occurs in the Bowden parish registers (1652 and 1653, MRIAS, 2006). Shercliff suggests that the name 'New Hall' may have been given to distinguish it from the nearby medieval Baguley Hall (Shercliff 1974, 142). If so, then the hamlet or green was named after the farmhouse.

- 6.26 A will and inventory for Richard Vaudray of *Newhalle Greene*, who almost certainly was living or rented Newall Green Farm, survives from 1669. This is an important document for three reasons. Firstly, it ties the Vaudray family to Newall Green and provides a cross reference for the parish entries of 1652 and 1653 which also describe the family as being of Newhall Green. Secondly, the will seems to suggest that Richard was renting a tenement and by implication within the will this was probably from Edward Legh, the lord of the manor. Thirdly, the inventory lists a house with seven rooms (Closset, Great Parlour, Hall, Little Parlour, Chamber over the Great Parlour, Kitchen, Dairy) suggesting a fairly large property. Such a large property may be reflected in the hearth tax returns for 1664 for Baguley where Richard Vaudray held one hearth whereas his brother Henry had seven hearths. This compared with 13 hearths at Baguley Hall. The precise meaning of these entries is unclear since Richard's house in his will of 1669 appears to have been bigger than one hearth. However, Richard's will makes it clear that he was in dispute as to the true ownership/tenancy of his estate with his brother Henry so it is possible that his brother was in residence at Newhall Green Farm at this time.
- 6.27 It appears clear that the Vaudray family, originally from Riddings Hall in Timperley, were tenants at Newall Green Farm in the 1650s and 1660s if not before. Whether they were responsible for building the property is unclear but what can be said is that the farmhouse appears to have been built as a large yeoman tenanted structure around this time or slightly before.
- 6.28 The history of the farm in the late 17th and 18th centuries is also not clear. However, three advertisements in the Manchester Mercury newspaper, from 1757 (29/03/1757 & 12/04/1757) and from 1763 (March 1763) show that an estate of 65 Cheshire acres (137 statute acres) called Newhall Farm was up for sale. This was in the tenancy of John Lamb in 1757, but when the property was advertised once more in 1763 it was described as being in his possession (Shercliff 1974, 142). This property can only have been Newall Green Farm since it was described in the first advertisement as 'an extraordinary good house with very good outbuildings'; Newall Green Farm was the only farmstead around the green that could be described in this way. Furthermore, on the 1839 tithe map Newall Green Farm was the largest tenancy at c. 120 acres in the Newall Green area, again suggesting it was the most important holding in this part of Baguley. By 1839 the farmhouse and its outbuildings were in the tenancy of William Lamb, whilst the holding was owned by Thomas William Tatton (CRO EDT 34).

6.29 In 1855 the farm, then called Newhall Green Hall, was tenanted by James Brown, who is also attested here in 1896, 1902 and 1911 (Balshaw 1855; Kelly 1896, Kelly 1902; Slater 1911). In 1914 the farm was in the tenancy of William Pimlott (Slater 1914). The Shenton family took up the tenancy in the 1930s and were still in residence in 1974 (Deakin 1984, 188). In 1901 there were just 834 people living in Baguley but in 1927 the Tatton Family sold their estates in Baguley, including Newall Green Farm, to Manchester City Council and in 1931 Baguley, along with several other areas of northern Cheshire, became part of the City of Manchester in the new district of Wythenshawe. Between 1931 and 1939 thousands of new houses were built so that at the out-break of the Second World War there were more than 35,000 living in the new town. After 1945 building resumed and by the mid-1980s the population of Wythenshawe was around 66,000 (Deakin 1984), 47). Newall Green Farm ceased to function as a farm after 1974 and the City Council sold the farm and its outbuildings in 2006.

Significance

Block A Significance

6.30 This is a significant building notable for its early use of brick. The re-building of the timber frame house is according to the archaeological report 1694, not 1594. The re-use of timber framework from the original building is evident, particularly in internal walls and roof structure. The significance is also in its E shape, and that the majority of the fabric of the 1694 has been retained.

6.31 The building forms part of a group of farm buildings, which, have been sensitively altered as part of their conversion to provide residential care accommodation.

Block B Significance

6.32 The building has medium significance, retaining several features and reflects traditional agricultural developments from the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries.

6.33 The building forms part of a group of farm buildings, which, have been sensitively altered as part of their conversion to provide residential care accommodation.

Block C Significance

6.34 The building is not significant in itself, but as a group, is a fine example of the history of agricultural development.

6.35 The building forms part of a group of farm buildings, which, have been sensitively altered as part of their conversion to provide residential care accommodation.

Proposed Scope of Works

- 6.36 There will be no removals, additions, or alterations to the historic fabric of the three listed buildings at Newall Green Farm.

Impact Assessment

- 6.37 Manchester's exceptional heritage dates from all eras of the city's development and reflects the areas differing roles as a business and commercial centre, and as home to diverse residential communities. These assets positively contribute to the city's wide appeal. New development is expected to respond positively to this context through high-quality design and architecture as the city continues to evolve to meet the needs of future generations in the context of providing care accommodation to adults with learning disabilities.

- 6.38 In the context of the above, the proposed development has been assessed in accordance with relevant legislation, national and local planning policies. With respect to designated heritage assets, the NPPF at paragraph 202 directs that:

"Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use."

- 6.39 As previously described, no works are proposed to the historic fabric of the listed buildings. We consider that the heritage value of the three buildings is derived from a series of attributes which would all remain unaffected by the proposed development. For example, neither the historic value of Block A as an early example of the use of brick as a building material, nor its communal value as a specialised care facility for adults with developmental impairment, would be affected by the application proposal. Similarly, the heritage significance of Blocks B and C, as a group of farm buildings reflecting the history of agricultural development, would be unaltered by the development of a further supported living scheme on the application site.

- 6.40 The proposed development would not affect the ability to appreciate the aesthetic and historical value of the three buildings as a good example of agricultural development from the 18th to 20th centuries which has been sensitively converted into residential care accommodation. The form, grandeur and materiality of the buildings would remain intact and unaltered as key elements of the structure.

- 6.41 Notwithstanding, the setting of the existing Newall Green buildings would clearly change, and this needs to be considered from a heritage impact perspective.

- 6.42 The proposed development represents new construction to the immediate west of the three buildings, in a similar location to the two-storey office building, known as 'Block D', which the Council approved in March 2014 under ref: 103283/FO/2013/S2. The consented Block D building was also intended to be a new build, with the Design & Access Statement which accompanied that application explaining that it was designed to *'coordinate with the proposals for the rear of Block C and bring together the old and new elements of the site'*. In granting the earlier permission, the Council recognised that new build development can be acceptable in principle in this location, provided that it is sensitively designed to respect the adjacent heritage assets.
- 6.43 With regards to the new development proposed in the application, the form, choice of materials and detailing of the proposed elevations have taken inspiration from the original building and its characteristic architectural details. The development is designed to be sympathetic to the surrounding historic buildings and follows the material palette and fabric of the existing farm estate. In addition, the proposal sensitively incorporates contemporary and contrasting elements so that legibility and prominence of the heritage assets can be appreciated. The materials palette includes replica reclaimed brickwork, larch board timber cladding and aluminium framed glazing.
- 6.44 The scale of the proposed Block D responds to the existing Farmhouse building levels and morphology. Floor to floor levels is similar to adjacent Blocks A and C and the external brick walls preserve a common height by keeping in line with the roof eaves levels. The cruciform layout with the protruding central volume is a reference to the historic configuration of the Farmhouse's two storey pitch, therefore avoiding a monolithic form (Figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1 Existing Block A and C Scale



Block A



Block C

- 6.45 The submitted proposals include a fully co-ordinated soft and hard landscaping scheme designed to create, and contribute to, a sensitive environment, a unique sense of place that affords a high degree of privacy and seclusion that is necessary for the end user. The effect of this produces an appropriate response to the adjacent heritage assets.
- 6.46 For all of the reasons outlined above, the proposed support facility will not lead to substantial harm to the setting of the three listed buildings at Newall Green Farm. As noted above, in cases where a development proposal will lead to *'less than substantial harm'* to the significance of a designated heritage asset, paragraph 202 of the NPPF directs that *'this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use'*.
- 6.47 The key public benefits of this development proposal relate to the provision of much-needed specialist support accommodation for adults with learning disabilities and autism, to prevent disabled people being placed in facilities 'out of area' and away from their families and support networks. Section 3 of this Statement explains the applicant's strong track record in providing residential care and community care to people with developmental impairments. There is a very high level of both regional demand and commissioning support for the new service provision, as demonstrated by the email contained at Appendix 1. We consider that the delivery of care accommodation of the type proposed in the application is a substantial social benefit that should be afforded significant weight in the planning balance.
- 6.48 The proposed facility, as well as being of an attractive and high-quality design, will be truly 'state of the art', reflecting the latest expert design guidance and specifications for modern healthcare provision. Moreover, its construction will unlock a range of environmental benefits through the use of sustainable building materials, modern methods of construction and photovoltaic panels to generate solar energy.
- 6.49 Another important public benefit is the creation of 16 new jobs, together with further construction jobs during the building of the development, which will have economic benefits along the supply chain.
- 6.50 We also consider that the location of the proposal, immediately adjacent to the established Newall Green Farm development, helps to continue to secure its *'optimum viable use'* as a specialist care facility. The proximity to neighbouring support accommodation presents clear advantages in terms of pooling of resources, which will allow the new facility to operate efficiently and effectively.
- 6.51 Overall, we consider that the clear and substantial public benefits of the new supported living scheme significantly outweigh the *'less than substantial harm'* to the setting of the three listed buildings at Newall Green Farm. The application is therefore fully in accord with Section 16 of the NPPF and with Manchester Core Strategy Policies EN3 and DM1.

7 Planning Assessment Other Considerations

- 7.1 As noted in the preceding section of this report, under Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 7.2 In the preceding section of the Statement, we summarised the significant benefits that the application proposal will bring, and we identified the presence of '*very special circumstances*' which justify the grant of a planning permission for perceived inappropriate development on Green Belt land. It is now necessary to consider whether there is any other harm arising from the proposal.
- 7.3 The effects of the development have been thoroughly considered in a series of studies which form part of the application. Considering the national and local planning policy context outlined in Section 4 of this Statement, we regard the other key issues relevant to the determination of the application are as follows:
- Accessibility and highways;
 - Design, appearance and building sustainability;
 - Ecology and arboriculture;
 - Drainage; and
 - Ground conditions.
- 7.4 We summarise the scheme's effects in relation to each below. We then continue, in Section 7, to set out the planning balance of the proposal and provide our summary and conclusions in Section 8.

Accessibility and Highways

- 7.5 The application is supported by a Transport Statement prepared by Highways Advice.
- 7.6 Using typical office trip rates, the approved 'Block D' could generate up to 45 vehicle movements per day. Based on the applicants travel assumptions data, the proposed 8 supported living apartments would (as a worst-case scenario) generate approximately 12 arrivals and 12 departures per day. The proposals would therefore deliver a significant reduction in traffic compared to the 45 trips generated by the approved office scheme.
- 7.7 In addition, a Framework Travel Plan is provided as part of the Transport Statement. Ongoing implementation of a Travel Plan will ensure sustainable transport modes are promoted in perpetuity for the lifetime of the development.

- 7.8 On this basis, it is concluded that the proposed development is acceptable in highways and transport terms. There are therefore no justifiable transport reasons why planning approval should be withheld. The development is considered in accordance with national planning policy and adopted development policies.

Design, Appearance and Building Sustainability

- 7.9 The submitted plans and accompanying Design and Access Statement demonstrate that the proposed building will be sympathetic to its context and the surrounding historic buildings. The cruciform layout with protruding central amenity block is a reference to the historical configuration of the farmhouse's two storey porch along with the dual pitched roofs and gable elements.
- 7.10 The building is set back from the road frontage and behind the existing farmhouse. Its scale and mass sits comfortably in the setting, responding to the building levels of adjacent farmhouse building. Floor to floor levels are similar to the blocks on the adjacent site and the external brick walls preserve a common height keeping in line with the roof eaves levels.
- 7.11 The proposed building will be more traditional in design terms than the extant office building with materials which follow the palette of the farm buildings and extensive areas of replica reclaimed bricks and natural slate roofing. Contemporary contrasting elements are also introduced comprising larch board timber cladding and dark grey aluminium window frames.
- 7.12 The building will be set within a soft landscape which aims to retain and supplement the existing trees and boundary treatments with some new planting to reflect the Green Belt setting of the site.
- 7.13 In addition, the DAS sets out the principles for the use of sustainable building methods and materials to be adopted as part of this development. The applicant is committed to using one or more of the seven genres of MMC (Modern Methods of Construction) in the construction and other features have also been incorporated including the installation of electric vehicle charging points, the introduction of a rainwater harvesting system and the use of water saving products in the specification of sanitary fittings within the accommodation.
- 7.14 Significantly, the development will seek to utilise energy from renewable sources in providing heating and power. The proposal aims to incorporate renewable technologies in building design in an innovative and unobtrusive way. A solar voltaic specification is submitted to accompany the proposals and the proposed array is illustrated on the roof plans and in the Design and Access Statement.
- 7.15 The development is therefore considered to be compliant with adopted policies EN1 and EN4.

Ecology and Arboriculture

- 7.16 The application is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA)
- 7.17 The PEA comprised a desk study and biological records search, as well as a site walkover survey. The report concludes that although habitats are likely to be lost to the proposals, these are small in area and not of high ecological value. It further states that the impacts are likely to be low and the proposals will not adversely affect the ecological value of the wider area.
- 7.18 A series of measures to mitigate the loss and protect species are recommended during the works in addition to:
- The retention and enhancement of the northern and western site boundaries through appropriate landscape planting that includes native, species rich hedgerows, trees and areas of wildflowers
 - The provision of integrated bat and bird features within newly constructed buildings;
 - The production of the Defra Metric Biodiversity Small Sites Net Gain Calculations to minimise impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains in biodiversity; and
 - The production of a Management Plan to ensure long-term commitments to manage the planting which could be covered by way of a planning condition.
- 7.19 With regards to the Arboricultural Impact, a tree survey was undertaken to identify the impact of the proposed development of the site on trees, both within and immediately adjacent the site.
- 7.20 The report finds that the proposals will not result in the loss of any trees. Although one poplar tree is recommended for removal due to its poor condition. This tree is outside of the red edge of the application site.
- 7.21 Mitigation measures are recommended in the form of protective fencing during construction, planting of trees shrubs and hedges as part of a landscape scheme and the introduction of a mixture of native and ornamental species where those species are suited to the site and local landscape.
- 7.22 In summary there are no arboricultural impacts raised by the proposed development and conditions could be imposed to secure appropriate landscaping and features to accommodate wildlife within the development to mitigate the minor loss of habitat.

Drainage

- 7.23 The application is accompanied by a Sustainable Drainage Assessment by GeoSmart Information Ltd. The proposed strategy comprises a rainwater harvesting butt, permeable paving and a soakaway for surface water run off. The SuDS features would provide some water quality benefits (interception and filtration) prior to infiltrating to ground.. A secondary strategy has also been proposed in the event that infiltration SuDS are deemed unsuitable.
- 7.24 The proposed SuDS strategy would ensure surface water runoff is stored on-Site in SuDS features for the 1 in 100 year event including a 40% allowance for climate change and will not cause flooding to the proposed development in accordance with DEFRA's non-statutory technical standards (DEFRA, 2015).
- 7.25 The proposed measures are considered to comply with the requirements of Policy EN14 which seeks to minimise surface water run-off, including through Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) and the appropriate use of Green Infrastructure.

Ground Conditions

- 7.26 The planning application is supported by a Phase 1 Contaminated Land Assessment that has been undertaken by GeoSmart. The report confirms that the underlying superficial geology consists of Till, Devensian which is classified as a Secondary Aquifer and the bedrock geology consists of the Bollin Mudstone Member which is classified as a Secondary Aquifer. The site does not lie within an identified coal mining area and is therefore unlikely to be affected by related ground stability or mine gas issues.
- 7.27 Overall, the preliminary risk classification of the site in relation to the proposed development is considered to be 'Low to Moderate/Low'. Notwithstanding, given the likely presence of imported material at the site, there is the potential for contamination to be present. The report makes recommendations that a proportionate programme of site investigation and monitoring works be undertaken in order to establish the presence or absence of contamination and to enable a quantitative assessment of the associated environmental risks. GeoSmart advise that the follow up Phase 2 report can be conditioned upon any forthcoming approval.

8 Planning Balance

8.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Section 70(2) of the T&CPA 1990 confirms that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

8.2 The development constitutes 'inappropriate' development in the Green Belt. In these circumstances, the NPPF states, at Paragraph 148, that:

'When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt'

8.3 However, the Framework also requires that a balancing exercise is carried out to establish whether 'very special circumstances' exist. Paragraph 148 continues to state that:

'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.'

8.4 In this Statement, and in the supporting material that forms part of the planning application, a wide range of important benefits that will be delivered by the application scheme have been identified, which when considered together constitute 'very special circumstances' needed to justify the grant of planning permission. These include:

- The need for specific accommodation to prevent adults being placed in facilities out of area and away from their families and support networks;
- The regional commissioner support shown for facilities of this nature, designed to address deficiencies in providing supported accommodation;
- The fact that the application site lies immediately adjacent to the established Newall Green Farm development which presents clear advantages in terms of a pooling of resources;
- The provision of a new, state of the art facility that reflects the latest expert design guidance and specifications for modern healthcare provision;
- The environmental sustainability benefits generated by the use of sustainable building materials;
- The creation of 16 new jobs and the creation of construction jobs during the building of the development, which will have economic benefits along the supply chain.
- The fact that the Council have previously considered development of the site acceptable; and
- The proposed removal of the site from the Green Belt, and wider employment led allocation.

- 8.5 The proposed development would give rise to Green Belt harm by reason of a loss of openness in spatial terms. This is deemed to be limited when consideration is given to the visual openness of the site, viewing the proposed development in the context of existing and extant built form.
- 8.6 There would also be some limited non-Green Belt harm with a minor loss of habitat for which can adequately be addressed by mitigation measures, and development within the setting of heritage assets. Section 6 of this statement fully sets out the clear and substantial public benefits of the new supported living scheme which will significantly outweigh the 'less than substantial harm' to the setting of the listed buildings.
- 8.7 The Proposal fulfils the social, environmental, and economic objectives of sustainable development when reading the Framework as a whole. On balance, any harm by reason of inappropriateness, including non-Green Belt harm, is clearly and substantially outweighed by other considerations.

9 Summary and Conclusions

- 9.1 This Planning, Green Belt and Heritage Statement supports a full planning application for the development of a new supported living scheme (sui generis) comprising 8 units set over two storeys on land off Whitecarr Lane, Newall Green. The new unit will be developed by Abbeyway Commercial Ltd with Zeno Ltd as the registered support provider.
- 9.2 This Statement has described the application site and the proposed development and demonstrated how the proposals accord with relevant national and local planning policies. It has been shown that the site is appropriate for the proposed use, that all technical constraints can be overcome and that any adverse impacts can be adequately mitigated.
- 9.3 The application scheme will deliver significant benefits in providing new supported living apartments to meet an identified need. Any harm arising will be limited both in nature and scope. The benefits, taken cumulatively, constitute 'very special circumstances' which, on balance, clearly and substantially outweigh the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of 'inappropriateness', and any other non-Green Belt harm.
- 9.4 Accordingly, and for the reasons set out within this Statement and other supporting documents, the NPPF presumption in favour of sustainable development should be applied. Manchester City Council is therefore respectfully requested to approve this application without delay so that this valuable service can be delivered as soon as practically possible.

Appendix One

Tom Hallett

Subject: Planning application Newall Green Farm / Clay Lane, M23 - SNMG support.

From: David Lawless <david.lawless@manchester.gov.uk>
Date: 1 February 2022 at 11:06:03 GMT
To: Catherine Campbell <catherine.campbell@manchester.gov.uk>
Cc: andrew@zenoltd.co.uk, LMansfield@cw-architects.co.uk
Subject: Re: Planning application Newall Green Farm / Clay Lane, M23 - SNMG support.

Many thanks

regards

David Lawless,
Senior Planner,
Development Management South,
Planning, Building Control and Licensing
Growth and Development Directorate
Manchester City Council,

0161 234 4543

Manchester City Council
Planning
PO Box 532
Town Hall
Manchester
M60 2LA

Web address: www.manchester.gov.uk

From: Catherine Campbell <catherine.campbell@manchester.gov.uk>
Sent: 01 February 2022 08:18
To: David Lawless <david.lawless@manchester.gov.uk>
Cc: andrew@zenoltd.co.uk <andrew@zenoltd.co.uk>; LMansfield@cw-architects.co.uk <LMansfield@cw-architects.co.uk>
Subject: Planning application Newall Green Farm / Clay Lane, M23 - SNMG support.

Dear Dave

I am pleased to confirm that the Supported Needs Monitoring Group supported the proposal for 8 specialist units supported living scheme on 18/11/2021.

Kind regards
Catherine.

Catherine Campbell
Commissioning Development Officer

Learning Disability Commissioning Team
Manchester Local Care Organisation
Mob: 07970-857 148

Location:

Manchester City Council,
Level 4, Town Hall Extension

Postal Address:

PO Box 532, Town Hall,
Manchester, M60 2LA.

Catherine.Campbell@manchester.gov.uk

(My working week is Monday to Thursday)

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