

Comments for Planning Application 129020/FO/2020

Application Summary

Application Number: 129020/FO/2020

Address: Oakley 188 Wilmslow Road Manchester M14 6LJ

Proposal: Erection of 1 no. 13 storey building and 1 no. part 4 and part 5 storey building to form purpose built student accommodation together with a single storey side and rear extension to the retained and refurbished Oakley Villa and conversion to form amenity and communal space together with associated landscaping, cycle parking, car parking and associated works following the demolition of existing office accommodation on the site

Case Officer: Robert Griffin

Customer Details

Name: Not Available

Address: Not Available

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of the Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: As someone who has lived in Birch in Rusholme for over forty years, I am very concerned about the proposed development which continues a trend in the development of student housing that threatens the sustainability of the area as a mixed community.

The past thirty years or so have seen the transformation of the area bounded by Albion Road, Langley Road, Mabcross Road and Wilmslow Road from an attractive residential area into a concentration of rented student accommodation with the attendant problems of noise, nuisance, student targeted crime, traffic proliferation, and littering from overflowing wheelie bins. I accept that the proposed development is likely to be better managed than houses mismanaged by negligent private landlords, but use of the USDAW site student accommodation in a 13 storey building will further extend the student presence along Wilmslow Road. It is disingenuous of the developers to suggest that their project will lessen the spread of student HMOs. It is more likely to add to the attraction of Fallowfield as a student hub, thus driving more families away from the area. Surely, if there is need for yet more student accommodation in Manchester (and the case for this needs to be proved), it would be better sited in the areas adjacent to University sites. From the point of view of permanent Manchester residents, the need must be to stop this process of student ghettoisation of Fallowfield: the refusal of planning permission for this ill-conceived project would be a significant step in this direction.

Apart from its impact on local housing, the proposed development will also threaten amenity and environment. Platt Fields acts as an important part of the lives of many people in this part of south

Manchester. It is very well used and its significance as a place of peace, exercise and community interaction has been especially emphasised during the pandemic. This vital amenity is under threat from the proposed development: the number of users is likely to increase; light, trees and animal habitat will be lost; and the skyline will be blighted by a tower that is not in keeping with the rest of the area.

For the many people who live in south central Manchester, the area is a wonderfully mixed and engaging place to live. It has its problems, often wrought by poverty and unemployment, but there is, I think, a genuine desire among the many different groups and individuals who have made their homes here to work together to foster and develop community. Students are, of course part of that community and the enthusiasm and vitality they can bring to the neighbourhood is to be welcomed. But we must guard against the homogenisation of Fallowfield as a student enclave, and there can be no justification for this development which ignores the needs, hopes and aspirations of the wider community.