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Environmental Impact Assessment

Applicant:

ML Design on behalf of Al-Raza Foundation,
8-16 Park Grove,
Manchester,
M19 3AQ

Agent:

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Application Site

8-16 Park Grove
Manchester,
M19 3AQ

Application Details:

Application for the erection of building to form place of worship with ancillary education facilities (Class D1) to include access, appearance, layout and scale following demolition of existing building.

This report takes into account the particular
Instructions and requirements of our client.
It is not intended for and should not be relied
Upon by any third party and no responsibility
Is undertaken to any third party.

Job number 54

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1.0 Introduction

This is the non-technical summary for an Environmental Statement (ES) which has been prepared on behalf of ML design Ltd to accompany a full planning application for a community development at 8-16 Park Grove, Levenshulme. The application is for:

Application for the erection of building to form place of worship with ancillary education facilities (Class D1) to include access, appearance, layout and scale following demolition of existing building.

This document is a summary of the ES that has been submitted as part of the full planning application. This statement has been prepared having regard to the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999 and summarises the environmental impact assessment that has been undertaken to identify and mitigate the potential impacts of the proposals within and around the application site. The ES has therefore sought to address the comments made in order to provide a robust assessment of environmental impact.

ML Design Ltd is proposing to develop the site for community purposes. ML Design Ltd is proposing that the development to be known as Al Raza Foundation will be a high quality community development, which seeks to make the most of the topography and its location. Working with the topography, the scheme will create development platforms across the site which will allow for the creation of a distinctive character area. Overall, the scheme will work with the topography and natural features and create a distinctive place which is consistent with good urban design practice.

2.0 Site Description

The site is located on Park Grove which is primarily a residential area but has some commercial overspill from Stockport Road. The existing property which we wish to demolish and rebuild is currently vulnerable to unauthorised access, as such areas can provide easy access/escape routes that usually benefit from little/no natural surveillance.

The derelict side of the existing building is in a poor state of disrepair and the surrounding alleyway is overgrown. There are a number of signs of disorder, including damage, graffiti and fly-tipping. Such unattractive and accessible sites can often attract abuse. Crime and anti-social behaviour are more likely to occur if an offenders presence does not attract attention and a place feels like it is not under supervision. If graffiti and damage are not removed/rectified, they can give the impression that an area is not cared for and that crime and disorder is tolerated.

The site is overlooked from the east by Stockport Road. The surrounding area as already mentioned is primarily residential in nature, however Stockport Road is largely commercial.

The following descriptions are based on the character area plan, layout, landscaping masterplan and phasing plan. The plans show the approach taken to deliver the development. The character area plan describes the context for each zone.

The planning application will be submitted in full and will include details of the following:

- 1) Means of access
- 2) Appearance
- 3) Layout
- 4) Scale
- 5) Landscaping

3.0 Project Description

The following descriptions are based on the character area plan, layout, landscaping masterplan and phasing plan which are attached at the appendix. The plans show the approach taken to deliver the development. The character area plan describes the context for each zone.

The planning application will be submitted in full and will include details of the following:

- Means of Access
- Appearance
- Layout
- Scale
- Landscaping

4.0 Phasing

There will be significant earth works to establish suitable development platforms. Once complete, there will be four principle development platforms. The earthworks will comprise stripping and stockpiling of topsoil, which will predominantly be stored in the east of the site as the development proceeds. The site compound, car parking and welfare facilities will be established within the car park of the site. It is expected that construction vehicles will utilise Park Grove as access.

It is expected that works will commence with the formation of a temporary bund in the south of the site to 'shield' adjacent properties from the works. Earthworks will progress around the site from the south in a clockwise direction, although materials will be stockpiled temporarily in the east as works progress.

5.0 Summary of Environmental Impacts

The following chapters provide a summary of the environmental impacts which have been assessed in full within Part 2 of this environmental statement. These assessments are based on significant research, ranging from desk based assessments through to physical site investigations. These assessments are therefore highly technical in places and therefore aimed specifically for decision makers and regulators who specialise in the relevant field. The role of this summary is to provide an overview of the impacts of the development for non-specialists.

The aim of this environmental statement is to provide an objective assessment of the impacts posed. This is done by defining criteria against which the impacts will be assessed. The agreement of these criteria with the decision makers removes subjective conclusions and opinions from the assessment. It allows readers to fully understand the magnitude of effects and how mitigation can be used to minimise, negate or even enhance the current situation.

The environmental effects that have been subject to Environmental Impact Assessments are focused across seven topics as follows:

Geology and Ground Conditions (addressing contamination)

Water Environment (drainage and flooding)

Biodiversity and Conservation (wildlife and plants)

Traffic and Transportation (highways)

Cultural Heritage (archaeology)

Landscape and Visual (effects upon views out of and into the site)

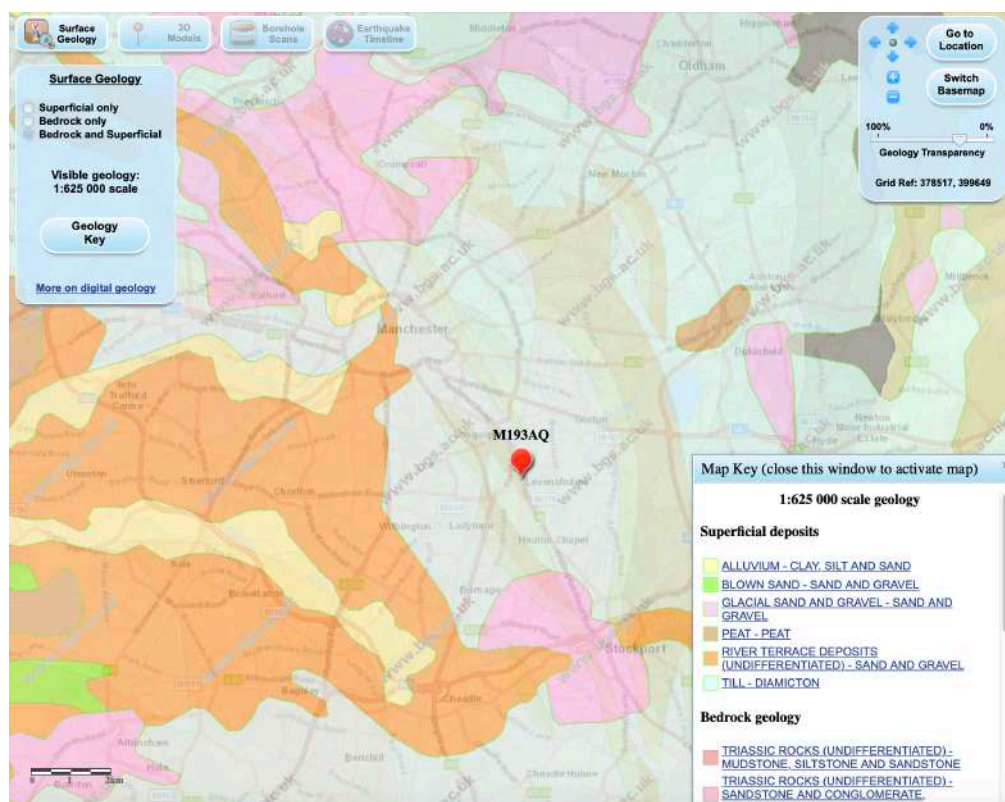
Socio Economic (jobs, homes, schools etc)

In addition this non-technical summary will include an overview of the sustainability of the scheme and design considerations. This application is for a full application which details the design of the scheme, including building types and appearance, layout, access and landscaping.

6.0 Geology and Ground Conditions

This Technical Paper assesses the likely significant effects of the proposed development in terms of geology and ground conditions. The site is located off Stockport Road to the east, approximately 4km north-west of Manchester City centre. Historically no significant development has taken place at the site.

In relation to the published geology the site comprises local alluvial strata, predominantly silt and red flags (sandstone) with a soft bed called underlying the rest of the site. There is the possibility of made a card (possible reworked Sunstone) in the east of the site. However, it is unlikely that the main ground is extensive. During construction there is the potential for air emissions through the creation of dust. However through the appropriate mitigation measures including dust suppression techniques air emissions are considered to be negligible. Other mitigation measures required during site development works will include protection of watercourses, noise and vibration monitoring and safe site working practices to prevent spillages/leakages of contaminants.



7.0 Water Environment, Biodiversity and conservation

During the operation of the development there is the potential for surface water run-off from areas of hard standing however, an appropriate drainage strategy incorporated into the development will prevent excessive surface water run-off into the existing drain network. After undertaking an Environmental Impact Assessment on the water resources of the proposed development and reviewing all of the potential impacts during both the construction and operational phase, any impact would either be negligible or high beneficial in nature once mitigation has been incorporated into the development.

The site occupies an area largely surrounded by residential development but with links to some open Greenland to the north and west. The site is not close to, and its development would not directly impact on any sites protected or designated for their ecological value. As with much grassland in the UK, the area has been significantly affected by its built environment. Intensive building has led to the loss of many grassland plant species.

The site has not been found to support protected or otherwise notable species. This assessment has been informed by bat surveys carried out during the previous application

The site currently occupies a large area of brownfield providing generally poor quality habitat, lacking in structure, number of species and habitat connecting through the site. Whilst development will see the creation of a newly built congregation centre over much of the Site, it does present the opportunity to create new areas of garden and tree habitat which will extend through and around the site and address the current low ecological baseline. The development will enhance the current natural environment in accordance with national, regional and local policy and overall will have a moderate beneficial impact on ecology in the area.

8.0 Traffic and Transport

The proposed development will increase traffic movements and change travel patterns on the local highway network. Furthermore the proposed infrastructure improvements on the highway network will alter the conditions for existing road users.

The impact is assessed for both the construction phase and the operational phase, and is assessed under two main headings as follows:

Construction Phase

Operational Phase

The Construction Phase considers disruption during construction and assesses the likely increase in large vehicular traffic and potential routing. The Construction Phase concluded that any adverse impacts associated with construction traffic would be negligible with the mitigation measures comprising of the Construction Management Plan and routing of large construction vehicles.

The Operational Phase considers the likely increase in vehicular traffic to and from the development on the local road network indicated above as well as two junctions on the Strategic Road Network (SRN). The assessment concludes that, whilst the increase in vehicle traffic would result in some increases in traffic levels only one road (Park Grove) will experience an increase above normal fluctuation in daily traffic flows. The development would enhance local travel patterns, and those of the local path network.

9.0 Landscape and Visual Impact

Listed buildings

The site is close to three grade II listed buildings comprising churches of 17th and 18th. The fabric of the buildings will be unaffected by the proposed development so any effects will be restricted to the setting of the buildings. The settings of St Peters Church, St Andrews Church and St Marks Church will not be significantly affected by the proposed development because

Construction phase impact & mitigation measures

During the construction phase impacts include the re-grading of the site, impact on the listed buildings, loss of vegetation, visual impact of building works and the storage of materials. However, through measures including the creation of landscape buffers, protective bunds and hoardings, these impacts can be mitigated.

Operational phase impact & mitigation measures

The impact of the proposal is considered to be a moderate adverse impact. However, through measures including a careful selection of materials and landscaping the impact can be mitigated. Other effects include the impact on the listed buildings, new road infrastructure and nighttime views, which can be addressed through mitigation measures including sensitive use of lighting and a careful selection of materials and landscaping.

Overall, potential impacts arising from the operational phase are assessed as having a negligible to minor adverse significance, with the new landscape works, public footpath and the buffer zone all having a minor benefit.

Conclusion

The mitigation measures, including a comprehensive landscape scheme will successfully reduce the landscape and visual impact of the proposals. After the mitigation measures only the loss of vegetation and tree coverage during construction works remain moderate adverse, which is a temporary short-term affect. Once construction works are completed, the sites landscape treatment raises this impact to a minor benefit.

The extent of the proposal is deemed to be in keeping with the other existing commercial and congregational buildings to the urban fringe of Levenshulme therefore the proposals would have only a slightly minor adverse impact on the character area and the wider study area.

10.0 Socio Economic

The regeneration effects of the proposal are considered to be minor beneficial due to the range of positive impacts the scheme will have on employment levels, economic growth (Gross Value Added) and education. The proposal will bring a series of regeneration benefits to the Levenshulme area. The following benefits are generated as a result of redevelopment of the site:

1) Employment opportunities for the local population will be provided through the proposed scheme. It is expected that the scheme will deliver a number of temporary direct jobs (construction) and a range of spin off jobs. The proposed

development generates additional demand for local services which would have a potential positive impact on the employment of additional staff by existing businesses in the locality.

3) In order to mitigate any potential impacts of traffic which could cause concern to residential amenity, a Travel Plan should be provided as part of the application package. Sustainable development is essentially about finding a way to improve quality of life for present and future generations by breaking the link between economic growth and environmental degradation or social exclusion.

11.0 Sustainability Statement

Sustainable development is essentially about finding a way to improve quality of life for present and future generations by breaking the link between economic growth and environmental deflation or social exclusion.

Current Sustainability Commitments

The proposal will contribute towards sustainability in a number of ways:

- 1) The provision of the proposed community facility will meet a pressing need for such a facility and its uses in the community.
- 1) Good accessibility via bus links and footpath / cycle networks
- 2) Provision of a public open spaces within the proposal grounds will offer a mix of formal and informal recreational opportunities
- 3) Provision of areas of open space, green infrastructure, and planting, will enhance the natural environment around the proposal and improve the ecological habitats on the site.
- 4) Provision of sustainable drainage solutions will manage and reduce the risk of flooding, making the new development more resilient to climate change impacts than might otherwise be the case

Design Considerations

Key considerations incorporated into the proposal include optimising daylight within the congregational hall and side offices, orientating buildings to improve the performance of the usability of the hall, improving the thermal performance of the proposal, minimising wind chill through landscaping and tree/ shrub barriers, assessment of renewable energy options and achieving surface water runoff rates no greater than existing runoff rates.

12.0 Interaction of Effects

It is important as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment process to consider the interaction of environmental effects. This is summarised diagrammatically in Tables 1 and 2 below and show construction and operation phases respectively:

Construction Impacts



Table 1: Construction Phase

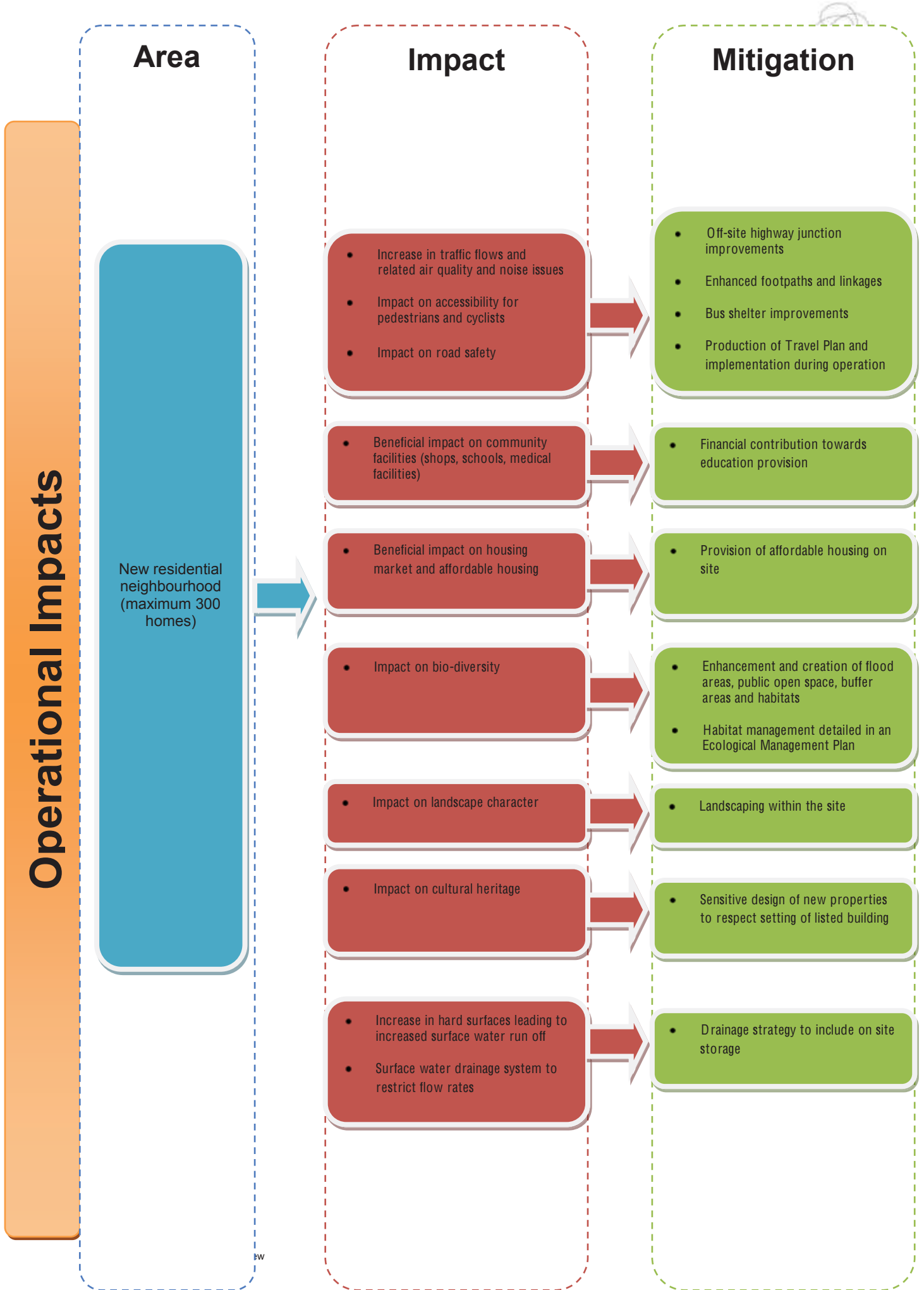


Table 2: Operational Phase

13.0 Cumulative Environmental Impacts

An assessment of the cumulative effects has been undertaken. A comprehensive framework document has been produced which indicates how the employment UDP allocations can be developed comprehensively in accordance with UDP Policy and footnotes. The comprehensive masterplan for the employment allocations is attached at Appendix 9. However, it is considered that with a scheme of suitable mitigation resolved through a method statement and Construction Management Plan that the effects will generally be minor adverse to negligible.

During the short and medium term it is expected that the cumulative development will provide a variety of temporary jobs including opportunities for local people. The influx of workers is likely to have a positive impact on local services and facilities within the area. In the longer term, many positive benefits will result from the development. The proposed residential and Data Centre drainage strategies will provide betterment and a high beneficial impact. The drainage strategy will therefore benefit the wider catchment area in the long term.

The provision of employment development within close proximity to the proposal will offer significant employment opportunities to existing and future residents within the area. Overall, it is concluded that the cumulative development would have an overall beneficial effect due to the local and borough wide benefits which would be delivered.

14.0 Conclusions

This document presents a non-technical summary of the environmental effects assessed in relation to the development proposals. The main purpose of the environmental statement is to provide an objective assessment of the environmental impacts.

It should be noted that the information submitted for this planning application is extensive given the nature of the site, however, the detailed mitigation strategies will be controlled via the use of planning conditions.

The construction phase holds the greatest potential for impacts. However, it is considered that these issues can be resolved through the adoption of best practice in construction techniques and the implementation of the mitigation package. This should be fully detailed in a Construction Management Plan which would be held and maintained by the Principal Contractor.

There is the potential for land/contamination and water quality effects to interact during construction. The net effect of the development on local ecology will be moderate beneficial through the landscaping strategy, habitat creation and enhancement. These areas will be retained and managed through an Ecological Management Plan.

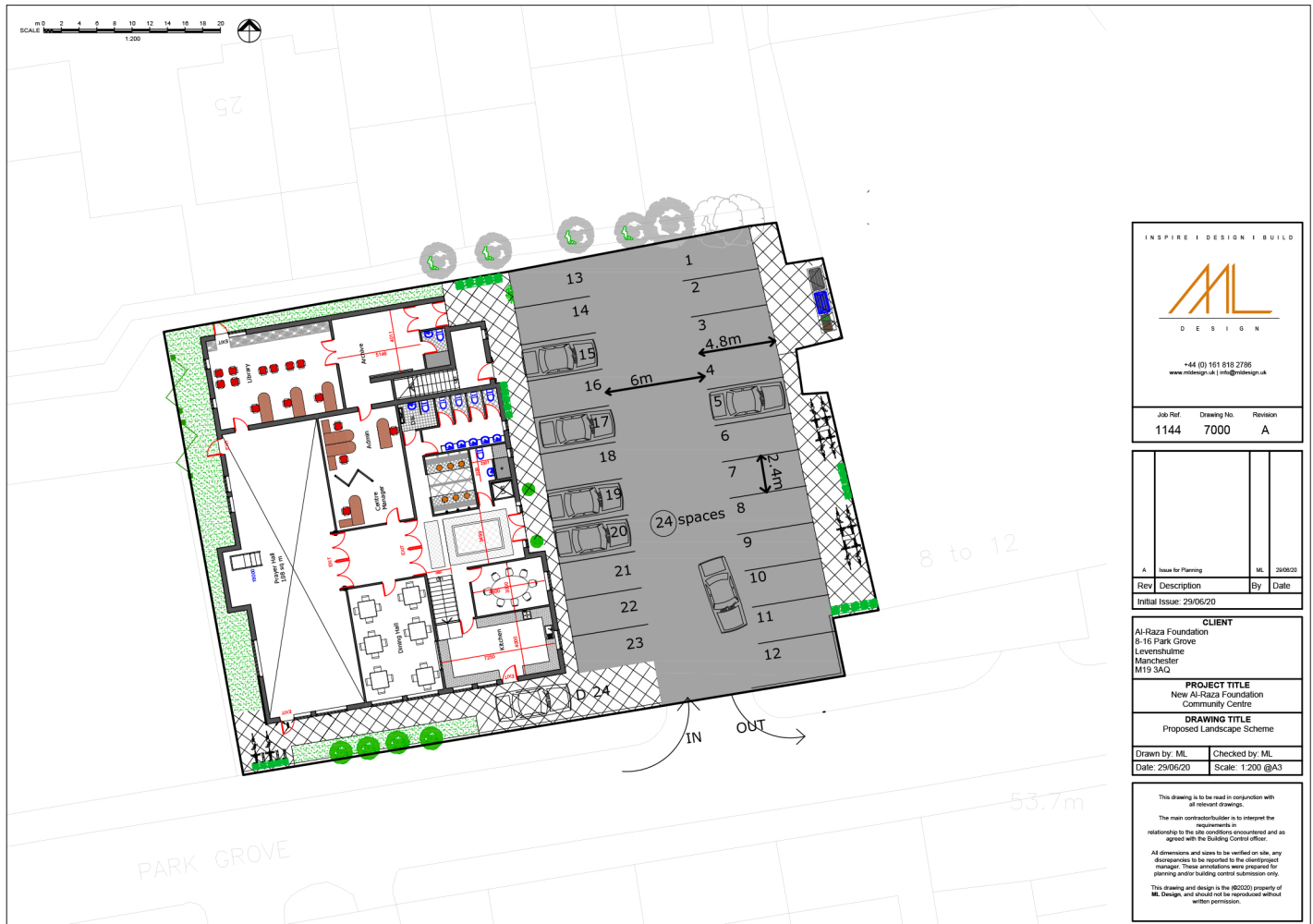
The impact of traffic associated with the residential uses will start to impact after construction and there will be an increase in the amount of traffic on the local road network. However, this will be mitigated through off-site junction improvements, enhanced footpaths and linkages, and the implementation of Travel Plan initiatives to reduce the use of vehicular traffic. Bus stops near to the site will have to be improved.

The amount of hard surfaces will increase as a consequence of the proposal. However, the drainage strategy will store surface water runoff on site limiting the potential risk to the wider area. The drainage strategy will incorporate oversized pipes, land drainage features and permeable paving where appropriate. It is expected that phase that the drainage strategy will be a high beneficial impact.

Although there will be some adverse environmental impacts during the construction period, there will be counterbalancing socio-economic benefits. New jobs will become available in the construction sector and there will also be positive impact on employment for local services and facilities as more demand is generated.

this visual intrusion and the sympathetic design of the proposal will help to This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment report has been set out according to current best practice, and provides a thorough assessment of the current conditions, as well as the potential environmental impacts of the development. It then offers mitigation measures to improve these impacts to offset the minor overall impact of the proposed development on their setting.

Appendix 1: Location plan



Appendix 2: Aerial Photograph





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