

Jennifer Atkinson
Planning - Case Officer
Strategic Development Directorate
Manchester City Council
P O Box 532
Manchester
M60 2LA

30 June 2020

Dear Jennifer,

Re: Application 126431/FO/2020 - Erection of a multi-use arena

I am writing on behalf of Avanti West Coast to support the application for a new arena. Avanti West Coast are the operators of the West Coast Mainline service in the UK, taking over from Virgin Trains as of December 2019.

Avanti West Coast supports the application because the new arena will give a sizable boost to the visitor economy, build confidence in Manchester and the North as a place to invest, and support further investment in rail infrastructure.

The proposed arena is committed to being one of the most sustainable in Europe including plans to encourage sustainable transport at the point of booking tickets. The arena is close (20 minute walk) to the city's busiest and most important station (Manchester Piccadilly) which has 30 million passenger entries each year. This proximity is likely to lead to an increase in train travel particularly given that even the most conservative estimates point to an additional 750,000 tickets being sold.

Furthermore, the proposed venue is seeking to attract audiences from London by increasing the Northern market. This will reverse the current drain of northern leisure spend in the capital and would likely see an increase in south to north train passengers too.

On a more general basis the proposals support the continued regeneration of East Manchester via sports and leisure facilities. When Manchester City play at the Etihad stadium the benefits to rail transportation and the city centre through this regeneration are particularly clear.

Furthermore £350m of private investment will create thousands of jobs in the short-to-medium term and will provide a vital lift in confidence as economies seek to build back better following the coronavirus. In the longer term, the arena is estimated to provide in excess of £1bn GVA to the visitor economy over the next two decades.

This is why Avanti West Coast supports the proposal for a new arena.

Yours faithfully

Charlie French
Regional Growth Manager
Avanti West Coast