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Planning Application Comments 126431/FO/2020

1 message

6 May 2020 at 16:05

To: "j.atkinson@manchester.gov.uk" <j.atkinson@manchester.gov.uk>

Hi Jennifer

Hope you're well.

Please see attached my comments relating to the above planning application.

Thanks

[Redacted signature block]



Arena Planning Comments, May 2020.docx

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Please see below comments in addition to those previously submitted as part of the consultation process in October 2019, stakeholder ID reference EFF043.

Firstly, I would like to stress that I am not opposed to the development of an arena in general. I am however, rather surprised that there is a genuine business case for the development of yet another arena in Manchester, even more so in this location. The existing Etihad stadium and the supporting infrastructure has recently undergone extensive redevelopment and is often repurposed for entertainment and events likely to be held in an arena.

I am therefore, voicing my opposition to this development on the grounds that the area in which I live is now suffering from over development from the same kind of entertainment venues and the local infrastructure can barely cope with the added traffic and pedestrian footfall as it is. As a resident in this area I currently have to manage my journeys and social life around the events that take place at the stadium, which can often be up to three times per week. For example, I cannot leave or even access my home for approximately one and a half hours following an event as it can take this long for the local roads and transport systems to clear. This is irrespective of the time of day or the day of the week. The local infrastructure just cannot cope with the one arena and the impact of a second arena will compound this further, as there can be no guarantee that there will not be two events running simultaneously.

Despite the Metrolink, there is still a lack of regular public transport which goes from the Eastlands area to other parts of the North West and vice versa. This means that the majority of people will access any new arena by car, which they currently do for the stadium. The only other public transport option is to travel to this area via Manchester City Centre. My argument is that there is already an arena in the city centre, therefore, why would people want to travel into the city to then travel back out again? This then raises further questions:

- Taking all this into account, is it necessary for a new arena to be built here?
- Does this not conflict with Manchester City Council's commitment for Manchester to be a zero-carbon city by 2038?
- Given the current Covid-19 situation and the fact that social distancing may become the norm and change our behaviours forever, is there really actually any demand for more venues that make this impossible to achieve?

I refer to the 'Etihad Campus - Movement and Transport Strategy Transport Assessment', whilst I think it is a good idea to promote 'integrated ticket packages', I don't think that many people will take this initiative up. They cannot expect people to use public transport for a mid-week event, people's behaviour and mindset is that they want to get home as soon as possible for work or school the next day. This system would mean using two or three forms of public transport, prolonging their journey home. People will drive and congest the surrounding roads, which is what happens now. It even happens at the more accessible Manchester Arena in the city centre. Our poor public transport system across the North in general has led to a culture of convenience where people prefer to drive, people's mindsets will not change over night and will not change in time for the development of any new arena until the full transport system has been overhauled.

In conclusion, I have no doubt that the arena will probably go ahead despite objections. I am led to believe you have already appointed a main contractor, Bam Construction, who were in place prior to a planning application even being submitted. However, there needs to be as minimum disruption to the local residents as possible. I would request that once the proposed transport strategy is in place, they are continually assessed to ensure they are adequate.