

Comments for Planning Application 143413/FO/2025

Application Summary

Application Number: 143413/FO/2025

Address: Land Bound By Longford Road, Peveril Crescent, Rye Bank Road And Longford Park (commonly Referred To As Ryebank Fields) Manchester M21 9WW

Proposal: Change of use of former university playing fields to community woodland and meadow.

Case Officer: Robert Griffin

Customer Details

Name: Not Available

Address: Not Available

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of the Public

Stance: Customer made comments in support of the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I am writing in strong support of planning application 143413/FO/2025, submitted by the Ryebank Fields Community, which proposes the retention of Ryebank Fields as a publicly accessible green space. This application reflects a thoughtful and forward-looking vision for urban land use, rooted in ecological stewardship, community wellbeing, and climate resilience.

Ryebank Fields has long served as a biodiverse, naturally rewilded green space in the heart of Manchester. It has been protected and enhanced by a conscientious local community group, offering recreational, educational, and ecological value to residents and visitors alike. The site was originally covenanted by Manchester City Council to the former Manchester Polytechnic for recreational use—a designation that remains relevant and appropriate today.

The proposal aligns with several key planning principles and national policy frameworks:

Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

Ryebank Fields supports a rich variety of flora and fauna, contributing to urban biodiversity and ecological connectivity. Research from the University of Sheffield highlights the value of rewilded urban spaces in enhancing biodiversity and supporting pollinators and native species. Natural England's Green Infrastructure Guidance also emphasises the importance of preserving semi-natural green spaces for public health, ecological resilience, and climate adaptation.

Flood Risk and Climate Resilience

Parts of Ryebank Fields are identified by the Environment Agency as being at risk of surface water flooding. Preserving the site as permeable green space helps mitigate this risk. DEFRA's guidance on Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) warns that replacing greenfield land with hard surfaces increases flood vulnerability. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for Manchester advises against development on sites with poor drainage history unless robust mitigation is demonstrated—an issue not adequately addressed in previous proposals for the site.

Urban Planning and Land Use

Manchester's Core Strategy (2012) identifies a deficit of natural green space in South Manchester. Retaining Ryebank Fields directly addresses this shortfall and supports the city's broader goals for sustainable development and climate action. The Greater Manchester Combined Authority's Housing Land Supply Assessment confirms that sufficient brownfield land exists to meet housing targets, reducing the need to develop ecologically sensitive greenfield sites.

Community Stewardship and Public Benefit

The Ryebank Fields Community proposal exemplifies inclusive, community-led urban planning. It offers a model for how local groups can steward land for the benefit of all, enhancing civic engagement and public access to nature. This approach is consistent with the UK Government's National Planning Policy Framework, which encourages the protection of valued open spaces and supports community involvement in shaping local environments.

In conclusion, planning application 143413/FO/2025 represents a responsible and visionary use of urban land. It protects a vital green space, supports biodiversity, mitigates flood risk, and enhances community wellbeing. I urge Manchester City Council to approve this application and secure Ryebank Fields as a permanent community resource.