

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: Neighbour

Stance: Customer made comments in support of the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment:1) Loss of an irreplaceable Greenfield nature space. Manchester Council should not approve the destruction of a semi-natural rewilded space to be destroyed, when there are decades worth of Brownfield sites yet to be developed within walking distance in Chorlton, Old Trafford and Stretford. The Manchester Core Strategy highlighted the deficit of natural and semi natural green spaces in the south of the city over a decade ago, and Manchester Council's own Housing Land assessment identifies double the amount of brownfield land in Manchester required to meet government targets for housing need.

2) Amenity and importance to the community. Around 25,000 residents live within a 15 minute walk of Ryebank Fields (with this number set to increase significantly). Thousands of those people support the campaign to Save Ryebank Fields. The Local Plan consultation in 2020 received an overwhelming response from 100s of residents that Ryebank Fields should be protected as a Local Green Space, and council officers agree that it meets the required criteria of being 'demonstrably important to the local community on the grounds of its beauty, history, recreation, tranquillity, and wildlife value'. The plans also propose building a road over the much loved and well used community garden at Rye Bank Road. The garden was built by residents and is registered as an Asset of Community Value.

3) Traffic and road safety. The roads at the South end of Ryebank Fields are narrow, very long, and become very congested at peak times - especially school drop off/pickup, parkrun events and other athletic meets, football and cricket match days at Old Trafford. Cars park along each side of the roads, and on Longford Road this prevents vehicles or cyclists passing and causes frequent conflict and at times even angry scenes especially at school run time. St John's Primary school is immediately adjacent to the Fields on one side and entrances to Longford Park on the other, and

Longford Road is marked in the Chorlton Infrastructure Framework as a connecting cycle route to the 'Busy Beeway' which starts at that same Park entrance. Ward Councillors and council officers have explored solutions over the years but have been unable to implement them because of budgetary and logistical constraints. Traffic worsening at peak times would increase the existing risks and unpleasantness for pedestrians, including children in buggies, and cyclists.

4) Air pollution. The streets surrounding these Fields are already above the 85th percentile for pollution in the UK and exceed multiple WHO air pollution limits. A development on Ryebank Fields would result in increased congestion on these long narrow roads and worsen this issue, whilst reducing the vegetation which has a mitigating effect. This is concerning for residents and for parents of the children who attend the two nearby schools of St John's and Oswald Road. There is also concern that the process of development would unearth and expose toxic gas, dust, and other hazardous materials.

5) Heritage. The historic Nico Ditch, elsewhere in the City registered with Historic England as a scheduled monument, is believed to run through the fields, its importance was even recognised in the 2017 Development Framework for Ryebank Fields. The proposals do not fulfil the requirements to 'enhance the Nico Ditch' but instead will destroy it.

6) Flooding. Houses and leisure areas near Ryebank Fields are already subject to flooding when there is heavy rainfall. Ryebank Fields provide a natural flood defence, and I am concerned that the large scale removal of this flood sink will worsen this existing issue.