



29 September 2025

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Dear Jack,

Citylabs 4.0, Hathersage Road – Application for full planning permission for four external gas stores

On behalf of our client, Bruntwood SciTech Limited ('The Applicant'), please find enclosed a Full Planning application relating to the construction of four external gas stores around the perimeter of the Citylabs 4.0 building, which is located on Hathersage Road as part of the Citylabs Campus within Manchester's Oxford Road Corridor (the 'Site').

The formal description of development, as stated within the application forms is as follows:

"Provision of 4 no. gas stores ancillary to the existing use of Citylabs 4.0 and relocation of an existing vehicular access gate."

Background and Site Context

The development proposal relates to Citylabs 4.0 which was granted planning permission ref. 125592/FO/2019 (the 'Permission') dated 20 March 2020 for:

"Erection of a seven storey building comprising flexible Office (Use Class B1a), Research and Development (Use Class B1b) and Educational Space (Use Class D1), together with ground floor ancillary Retail uses (Use Classes A1 and A3), in addition to associated cycle parking, accessible car parking, landscaping, provision of plant and servicing and related access and highway's works, and other associated works."

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The Site is strategically located on the northern edge of Central Manchester, within the City's 'Inner Area' and the City Centre Fringe, as defined by the Manchester Core Strategy (2012). It lies immediately to the south of the City Centre and Regional Centre boundary, which runs along Hathersage Road. More specifically, the Site is situated within the Old Saint Mary's Hospital Campus, on the southern edge of the Oxford Road Corridor.

This location is guided by the Oxford Road Corridor Strategic Spatial Framework (2018) (SSF), which was endorsed by Manchester City Council in March 2018. The SSF recognises the vital importance of the private sector in strengthening the Corridor and sets out several strategic and regeneration objectives. These include securing a much higher growth rate in key sectors, such as biomedical and health innovation. Notably, the Site lies within an area specifically identified for health innovation and well-being, encompassing the commercialisation of health research and innovation, with opportunities for increased density.

The Site is located within Ardwick Ward and is precisely bounded by Hathersage Road to the north, Melrose Apartments to the east, Saint Gabriel's Hall and Devell House to the south, and the NHS' Winnicott Centre to the west.

While the Site itself is not located within a Conservation Area, the Victoria Park Conservation Area borders its southern boundary. Furthermore, the Grade II Listed St Mary's Hospital Building is situated to the north-west of the Site.

The site location plan is shown below.

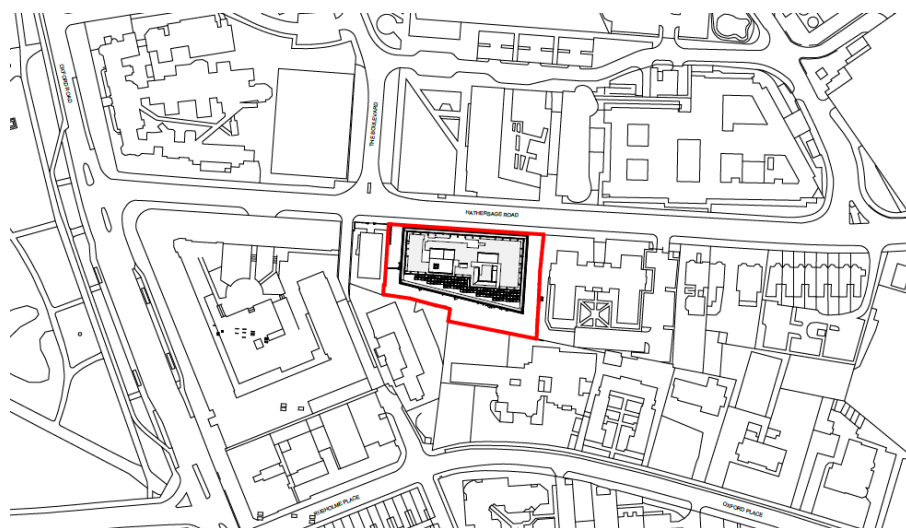


Figure 1: Site Location Plan

Commented [TY1]: To be amended when received

Commented [EB2R1]: Do we have this now?

Proposed Development and Consultation

Following the recent practical completion of Citylabs 4.0, the Applicant has successfully secured an in-principle agreement with a major life science research and development organisation to establish its operations within the building. To accommodate the occupier's specific operational requirements, it is essential to provide safe and secure on-site gas storage facilities. These facilities will be designed to house various piped gases and liquid gases, contained within cylinders and tanks as appropriate. The proposed locations for these stores, strategically positioned adjacent to the existing building façade, have been meticulously selected. This selection process involved a rigorous assessment of relevant industry guidance and comprehensive site analysis, ensuring that the proposals not only meet the occupier's functional needs but also prioritise the safety of all occupants and neighbouring residents, while simultaneously minimising any potential visual impact. As consequence of the proposals, it has also been necessary to provide a minor adjustment to the location of an existing gate to accommodate the stores.

As part of pre-application discussions, the Applicant met with the Local Planning Authority on 19 August 2025, who supported the principle of the proposals, whilst requesting that following information be provided (as addressed in this planning submission):

- Provide a full risk assessment to demonstrate the safety of the proposed installation; and
- Consider any impacts on the setting of the Victoria Park Conservation Area.

Planning Policy Context

The determination of planning applications is governed by Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. This statutory provision requires that decisions must be made in accordance with the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Adopted Development Plan

The adopted Development Plan for this area comprises the following documents:

- Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (2024)
- Manchester Core Strategy (2012)
- Saved Policies of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan (2005)

Other Material Considerations: National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024)

While not formally part of the statutory Development Plan, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) is a significant material consideration in planning decisions. It sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

The NPPF promotes a presumption in favour of sustainable development, as outlined in Paragraph 10, which states that sustainable development should be pursued in a positive way. Paragraph 85 underscores the Government's commitment to ensuring the planning system actively supports economic growth rather than impeding it. It specifically highlights the need for Local Planning Authorities to foster conditions where businesses can invest, expand, and adapt, placing significant weight on supporting economic growth and productivity, considering both local business needs and broader development opportunities. Furthermore, Paragraph 87 advises that planning decisions should acknowledge and address the specific locational

requirements of diverse sectors, including creative or high-technology industries, and facilitate the provision of new, expanded, or upgraded facilities and infrastructure necessary for their growth.

In terms of design quality, Paragraph 135 stipulates that decisions should ensure good design by requiring developments to:

Function effectively and enhance the overall quality of the area, not just in the short term but throughout the development's lifespan.

Be visually attractive through good architecture, thoughtful layout, and appropriate, effective landscaping.

Be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, without hindering appropriate innovation or change.

Establish or maintain a strong sense of place by using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types, and materials to create attractive, welcoming, and distinctive environments for living, working, and visiting.

Create places that are safe, inclusive, and accessible, promoting health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for both existing and future users.

Contribute to environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (2024)

This plan identifies the 'Core Growth Area' as offering optimal conditions to enhance Greater Manchester's role as a Global City. Paragraph 2.11 notes that this area is home to numerous global businesses and continues to attract high-profile companies seeking investment, benefiting from high rates of productivity, innovation, and global competitiveness. Policy "JP-Strat2: City Centre" designates the city centre as the primary focus for business, retail, leisure, culture, and tourism activity in Greater Manchester, alongside an increasing residential role, and prioritises investment in development and infrastructure within this area.

Manchester Core Strategy (2012)

The Core Strategy sets out broad development requirements and spatial allocations for new development over its plan period. It specifically identifies the City Centre Fringe as a major economic driver and a key centre for employment. The strategy emphasises the critical importance of the City Centre Fringe in expanding the City's economic performance and its role in distributing the benefits of economic growth. Key priorities for ensuring continued economic growth include improving the portfolio of employment premises by providing a diverse range of sites and premises suitable for small, medium, and large businesses.

Key Considerations

Design

The proposed gas stores are approx. 2m in height and are located around the base of the building on the east, south and western edges. The stores are located within the service bay and will be behind a secure service bay gate.

The proposed gas store locations and design have been developed to meet the operational requirements of a future life sciences occupier within the purpose built Citylabs 4.0 building. The requirement to safely

and securely store gas has directly influenced the design strategy and location of the stores. The gas stores have also been located in positions to minimise visibility from both the street and the Conservation Area.

The design approach for the Proposed Development is discussed in further detail within the Design and Access Statement.

To address the visual nature of these stores, the outward facing elevation with access doors will receive an additional treatment of an expanded mesh cladding which will be consistent with the upper-level cladding of the existing building.

To the rear of the proposed gas stores, the existing glass opaque panels will be replaced with panels to reduce the risk of damage arising from servicing operations associated with the gas storage and to allow penetrations & service fixings.

At second floor a small section of glass opaque panel is required to obscure the low-level internal blockwork as part of the associated fire safety strategy. It is not proposed to introduce a horizontal curtain wall mullion here that would break the glass line and interrupt the smooth effect the existing complete glass panels achieve. When viewed from Hathersage Road, the new small opaque sections will have minimal visibility.

A horizontal services run is required above the existing service doors to connect the gas stores, which will be clad to match the existing doors and the proposed replacement metal panels. The gas stores are proposed to be a proprietary steel frame with a finish that matches the proposed metal panels.

The front of the gas stores, including the access doors, will be overclad with expanded mesh panels to ensure a consistent design approach with the existing building. The profile of the expanded mesh will closely match that of the mesh to the existing building above.

The relocated vehicular entrance gate will be of the same style and finish as the existing retained vehicular exit gate.

Health and Safety

A Health and Safety Statement accompanies this application which has been informed by advice from a mechanical consultant and fire engineer, as well as an expert from Trade Association British Compressed Gases Association (BCGA).

The separation distances between flammable and non-flammable gases between site boundaries exceeds those stated in the BCGA guidelines. These guidelines state that non-flammable gases must be a minimum of 3m, and flammable gases must be to a minimum of 5m from neighbouring properties. The nearest Gas Store to a neighbouring property is 6m. As such, the locations are compliant and will not pose a safety risk to the neighbouring residents.

The proposed development has been designed in accordance with Functional Requirement B4 of Schedule 1 of the Building Regulations, which requires that external walls adequately resist the spread of fire both over their surfaces and between buildings, taking into account the building's height, use and position. The gas stores are constructed of a steel frame with wide mesh panels for ventilation. All four sides and the top are used for ventilation.

Overall, all relevant BCGA guidance has either been met or exceeded in terms of safeguarding the existing building and surrounding buildings.

Ground Contamination Risks and Mitigation Measures

The proposed Gas Stores at Citylabs 4.0 will require ground to be broken to install shallow foundations and utility trenches. The Statement on Ground Contamination Risks & Mitigation Measures that accompanies this application summarises the contamination risks and associated mitigation measures.

With regards to contamination, the human health risk assessment from the original application (ref. 125592/FO/2019) concluded that there was an overall low risk to construction workers and a very low risk to future site users. Excavation works required within the site for the proposed gas stores are expected to be minor and carried out within the depth of ground previously turned over during the recent development. Therefore, no new contamination risks are expected provided standard health and safety measures are implemented during the works.

Despite the negligible risk of contamination a series of mitigation measures are recommended to manage residual risks. These involve the protection of construction workers, the testing of any unforeseen materials that are encountered during excavation, the appropriate disposal of any excavated soils, and installing compliant (DS-1 and AC-1 classifications) buried concrete.

The statement concludes that provided that the mitigation measures are implemented, there is no new risk of contamination associated with the proposed shallow foundation works.

Heritage

A Heritage Statement has been prepared to accompany the proposed development. The purpose of the Heritage Statement is to assess potential visual impact the proposals may have on the settings of nearby heritage assets and on the character and appearance of the Victoria Park Conservation Area.

The Site is only intervisible with the Conservation Area when standing in the private, rear spaces of the St Gabriel's residential development, where the upper floors of the new Citylabs building are visible.

Due to the existence of tall, perimeter fencing between the Site and the St Gabriel's development the proposed locations of the new gas store structures at ground floor level are unable to be viewed from the Victoria Park Conservation Area and therefore will not result in any changes to the character and appearance of the Victoria Park Conservation Area.

The proposals are considered to have a neutral impact upon the settings of designated heritage assets identified within the report thereby resulting in 'no harm'.

Transport and Servicing

The proposals have been considered by the appointed transport consultant to establish the extent to which there would be any impact of the external gas stores on the existing access strategy or operation of the surrounding highway network.

The gas stores will be serviced via the existing one-way vehicular route. A vehicle will enter the Site and approach the gate to access the electronic communication call button. The gate is positioned to allow the vehicle to be within the site and not obstruct the pavement crossing. The vehicle will proceed along the existing route, filling or replacing the gases as required, and exit the Site via the existing security gate.

The stores sit on the existing perimeter hard landscaping. To enable access and filling, dropped kerbs will be introduced where required. Vehicular collision bollards will also be provided to each store location.

It is proposed that deliveries would be coordinated with the servicing/waste management team to ensure that vehicle movements around the Site do not conflict.

It is understood that gas deliveries would be completed only two times per week. The number of deliveries would be accommodated within the existing servicing strategy and coordinated so that vehicles arriving on Site do not conflict with other operations. The scheme would therefore have no adverse impact on Site operations or the operation of the local highway network.

Construction Management

A Construction Management Plan has been prepared to accompany the Application.

Site operating hours will comply with any planning condition requirement. An initial policy will be set; Monday to Friday 07:30 - 18:00 each week, and Saturday between 09:00 and 14:00 from time to time. There will be no work on Sunday and Bank Holidays.

A Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) will be developed and published prior to commencement.

Due to the sequencing of the works, there will be a period of time where the existing security gate is removed to the east of the site. During this time security will be briefed and an onsite security guard will monitor the building. CCTV and Access Control to the building will remain active.

All materials will be stored near the site accommodation to the southeast, obscured from view from Hathersage Road.

With regards to access, the existing one-way system will be maintained during the works. An element of the work involves trenching to the new gate location. During the entirety of these works the road will remain open as 3m is all that is required during this time due to limited extent of work.

With regards to noise and vibration, the demolition element of these works includes a soft / mechanical strip of the building's existing facade which will not generate vibration and limited noise. Excavations to the access road will generate vibration and noise. These works are limited in nature and will only be undertaken mid-afternoon to avoid disturbing nearby residents.

Summary

Overall, the proposed development will support the adaption of the existing Citylabs 4.0 building to meet the specific operational requirements of a new life sciences occupier, which is entirely aligned with the Applicant's long term strategy for the Citylabs campus and, in doing so, will directly meet the City's strategic objectives for the continued growth of sectors within the Corridor, which are driving the future shape of medicine and healthcare.

The proposals have been carefully considered in terms of their location, design and strict accordance with health and safety regulations. The development proposal has been designed in a way that that the gas stores and fire safety measures will have negligible impact on the overall design of the building or any views from Hathersage Road. With regards to safety, all BCGA measures have been met or exceeded. Finally, the presence of the gas stores will not result in any changes to the character and appearance of the Victoria Park Conservation Area and will have no impact on the existing transport network. The potential impacts of the proposals have therefore been assessed and there are no identified impacts that would require any mitigation strategy.

The proposals are in accordance with, and positively contribute to, the aims of planning policy at national and local levels when taken as a whole. This includes the National Planning Policy Framework, Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the Manchester Core Strategy and will be critical in securing a major occupier to help drive growth of a strategically important sector within the Corridor.



The proposal therefore merits the support from the Local Planning Authority and the grant of Planning Permission.

Application Submission

In addition to this cover letter, this application includes the following documents:

- Application Fee;
- Application Form;
- Site Location Plan;
- Existing Site Plan;
- Proposed Site Plan;
- Existing North Elevation (10205 SRA ZZ XX DR A 02111);
- Existing East Elevation (10205 SRA ZZ XX DR A 02112);
- Existing South Elevation (10205 SRA ZZ XX DR A 02113);
- Existing West Elevation (10205 SRA ZZ XX DR A 02114);
- Proposed North Elevation (10205 SRA ZZ XX DR A 02211);
- Proposed East Elevation (10205 SRA ZZ XX DR A 02212);
- Proposed South Elevation (10205 SRA ZZ XX DR A 02213);
- Proposed West Elevation (10205 SRA ZZ XX DR A 02214);
- Typical Gas Store Arrangement (10205 SRA ZZ DR A 02501);
- Gas Cylinder Store Site Plan (ref: 26979-HML-XX-00-DR-N-012002);
- Design and Access Statement;
- Health And Safety Statement;
- Statement on Ground Contamination Risks & Mitigation Measures;
- Construction Management Plan;
- Heritage Statement; and
- Highways Note

I would be grateful for written confirmation of the receipt and registration of this application. Should you require any further information please contact Ed Britton (edbritton@deloitte.co.uk / 0161 455 6169), or Tom Young (tomryoung@deloitte.co.uk / 020 7007 1007).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deloitte LLP". The signature is written in a cursive, stylized font.

Deloitte LLP