



Paul Butler Associates

Planning, Development & Heritage Consultants

Etec Group

Wythenshawe Park Sports Hub

Planning Statement

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Paul Butler Associates on behalf of our client, Etec Group, in support of a proposed development at the existing sports facility located within Wythenshawe Park, Wythenshawe, Manchester, M23 0AB. The proposals are for:

'Reconfiguration of existing playing field and recreational facilities to provide 2x AGPs, 1x MUGA; construction of a pavilion comprising shower and change facilities, a café, cycle hub, and a GP clinic with Innerva Suite and community rooms (use class F2 and E(b)(d)(e)); widening of vehicular access and creation of pedestrian access; demolition of the existing weightlifting facility and reconfiguration of the existing car parking area to provide a total of 167 parking spaces; erection of new fencing and floodlighting; landscaping and BNG provision; a substation; and, other associated works'.

- 1.2 To provide a clear understanding of this application proposal, this Statement includes:

- A description of the application site and surrounding area;
- A description of the proposed scheme;
- A review of national and local planning policies of relevance to the scheme;
- An appraisal of the scheme against relevant planning policies; and
- A conclusion summarising the case for granting planning permission.

2. The Application Site and Surrounding Area

- 2.1 The application site is located within the western portion of Wythenshawe Park, and is split into two areas including the existing playing field to the north of Baguley Brook which is bounded by woodland to the north, east and west, residential development to the west, and by existing baseball pitches to the south. A separate roughly triangular parcel of land is included within the application site to the south of Baguley Brook. The overall site area is 6.06 hectares in area.
- 2.2 The land to the north is occupied by athletics track, a tarmac car park with a single storey building that is used as a weightlifting facility, and two recently constructed cycle tracks – a pump track and a learn to ride area, and areas of amenity grassland. Located centrally between the athletics track and the cycling facilities is a single storey modular changing block, and a series of storage containers. The parcel of land to the south of the brook comprises disused sports pitches and are now typically used by dog walkers or other informal recreational visitors to the park.
- 2.3 Access to the playing field to the north is via a single-way vehicle route from the north off Wythenshawe Road. Access to the southern parcel of land is via various entry points from within the park or access points on Bideford Drive.



Figure 2.1: Proposed site plan identifying the site boundary.

- 2.4 The site is set within a wider area of open parkland comprising woodlands, open grasslands and meadows. To the east of the site is Wythenshawe Park and Gardens which is Grade II listed. There are four Grade II listed buildings within the park (Wythenshawe Hall, the north lodge to the Hall, a former Stables block, and Oliver Cromwell statue). The adjoining areas of woodland (Gib Lane and Nan Nook Woods) are designated as areas of Special Biological Interest. The site is within Flood Zone 1, however land immediately adjacent to Baguley Brook bordering the site to the south is in Flood Zone 3.

The Surrounding Area

- 2.5 Beyond the boundary of Wythenshawe Park the surrounding land use is primarily residential, comprising typically two storey housing. To the east there is commercial development

including retail and offices, Brooklands Library, and Dixons Brooklands Academy and associated playing pitches.

Planning History

2.6 In accordance with good practice the planning history for the site has been reviewed. The relevant planning history has been identified in the table below.

Application Ref and Address	Proposal	Decision and Date
131615/VO/2021 Athletics Track Wythenshawe Park Wythenshawe Road Manchester M23 0AB	CITY COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT Installation of modular changing room block and re-siting of existing storage container following removal of existing changing block (also discharge of various planning conditions attached)	Approved 04 Nov 2021
130542/VO/2021 Wythenshawe Park Wythenshawe Road Manchester M23 0AB	Creation of outdoor cycling facilities, including perimeter trail, learn-to-ride area, and skills areas (also discharge of various planning conditions attached)	Approved 21 Oct 2021
CDN/21/0900	Discharge of conditions 8 (Biodiversity) 10 (Bat Inspection) and 13 (Tree Protection) attached to planning permission 130542/VO/2021	Approved 9 Feb 2022
CDN/21/0974	Partial discharge of condition number 3 (surface water drainage) from planning approval reference 130542/VO/2021	Approved 28 Jan 2022
CDN/22/0047	Discharge of Condition 3a (surface water drainage) attached to planning permission 130542/VO/2021	Approved 19 April 2022
CDN/22/0106	Discharge of Condition 11 (storage) attached to planning permission 130542/VO/2021	Approved 3 March 2022
CDN/22/0365	Discharge of Condition 5 (travel plan) and 6 (car park management) attached to planning permission 130542/VO/2021	Approved 22 August 2022
CDN/22/0600	Discharge of condition number 4 (surface water maintenance and management) from planning approval reference 130542/VO/2021	Refused 18 July 2023
CDN/24/0146	Discharge of Condition 4 (drainage) attached to planning permission 130542/VO/2021	Refused 16 April 2024
CDN/25/0372	Discharge of Condition number 4 (surface water maintenance and management) from planning approval reference 130542/VO/2021	Approved 24 July 2024
CDN/24/0371	Discharge of Conditions 1 (Time Scale), 2 (Specified Plans) and 3 (Materials) attached to planning permission 135049/LO/2022	Approved 24 May 2024
138740/VO/2023	City Council Development – The Provision of land drains to 2 no. football pitches and associated below ground infrastructure	Approved 12 April 2024

3. The Proposed Scheme

3.1 The application proposals are for the improvement and reconfiguration of existing sport facilities located in the northwestern portion of Wythenshawe Park, and the creation of a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) area on land to in the south western portion of the park. The proposals are part of a wider package of works which will also include reconfiguration of the baseball pitch and provision of a 9v9 turf kickabout space. The works requiring planning permission and for which consent is sought includes:

- Reconfiguration of the existing playing field to provide 2x new full size AGPs with sports lighting, 1x new MUGA (PlayZone), and a skatepark.
- Relocation of the existing storage containers and construction of a single storey pavilion (use class E(b)(e)) comprising shower and change facilities, a café, cycle hub, and a GP clinic with Innerva Suite and community rooms;
- Resurfacing of athletics track and removal of the long throws and pole vault facilities; relocation of the small throws and jumps area within the perimeter of the track, relocation of lighting columns.
- Demolition of the existing weightlifting facility and reconfiguration of the existing car parking area to provide 167 car parking spaces;
- Widening of vehicular access and creation of separate pedestrian access;
- Erection of new ball stop fencing, sports floodlighting and landscaping;
- A new GRP substation located adjacent to the car park; and,
- Creation of a BNG area.

Playing Pitches and Skate Park

3.2 In December 2017, the council adopted the Manchester Playing Pitch Strategy (2017-2021) which sets out the framework for investment into playing pitch and outdoor facility improvements. The updated Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy 2022-2031 (PPOSS) builds upon the preceding strategy and provides the evidence to help inform planning, investment, and sport development initiatives. Subsequent annual monitoring and assessments have identified shortfalls in provision for various sports, including football,

basketball and netball. Various stakeholder engagement has identified Wythenshawe Park as the preferred site to address these shortfalls. The proposed development will enhance the existing sports facility, which currently has changing facilities in modular buildings and the existing baseball pitches suffer from drainage issues. The proposed reconfiguration of the pitches to provide AGPs and a MUGA will provide an improved sports facility which allows for the growth and expansion of local clubs, and also allows for usage throughout the year.

- 3.3 The AGPs and MUGA will have associated perimeter fencing, hardstanding access paths and a storage container. The MUGA will be served by 4x 8m high fence mounted floodlights, while each AGP will be served by 6x 13m high floodlighting columns.
- 3.4 A skate park is proposed to the east of the existing cycle pump track.

Pavilion

- 3.5 The existing site lacks in ancillary facilities to support the playing pitches, with storage and change facilities being accommodated within a series of shipping containers and a modular building. The proposals will be for a new pavilion which will provide shower and change facilities, an on-site café, and bike rental and repair facility.
- 3.6 The pavilion will also accommodate a General Practice (GP) surgery which will be operated by NHS North Moor Medical Practice. The existing surgery operates from a converted house located just north of the vehicle access to the site, on Wythenshawe Road. The surgery is at capacity; the proposed new surgery will relieve the existing capacity issues and provide an enhanced facility which includes community rooms which will be used for Primary Care Network (PCN) educational events, group training and consultations, and community engagement events. The facility will also include an Innerva Suite, which is power assisted exercise equipment designed for older adults, rehabilitation and those with long-term health conditions. The proposed GP facility will have a symbiotic relationship with the sports element of the pavilion, with both supporting objectives of improving health and social wellbeing in the community.

- 3.7 The pavilion building will be single storey with a rectangular footprint. It will be sited centrally within the site, adjacent to the athletics track, car park, the existing learn to ride and pump track, and the proposed northernmost AGP. It will be constructed of brickwork and charred timber to the elevations, which has been informed by a review of the surrounding context and its setting within a park in proximity to woodland.
- 3.8 To accommodate the new pavilion the existing modular buildings and storage containers will be relocated to the south of the athletics track with associated hardstanding.

Car Park and Access Arrangements

- 3.9 The existing car park will be reconfigured to provide additional car parking, increasing from 89 (81 standard and 8 accessible) to 167 parking spaces. This will include 124 standard bays, 17 accessible, 8 minibus bays, 4 EV bays, and 14 EV future enabled EV bays. The proposals also include for 28 cycle parking spaces, 5 motorcycle spaces and an ambulance bay. The existing weightlifting facility is currently located centrally within the existing car park. This building has reached the end of its lifespan and is no longer fit for purpose. The weightlifting facility is to be relocated to the Wythenshawe Sports Ground which is located approximately 1km from the application site.
- 3.10 The existing vehicle access will be widened to 5.5m to enable two way vehicle movements. A separate pedestrian route is proposed to connect to an existing path within the park, which will allow users to access the park away from moving traffic on the access road. An additional access point into the park from Wythenshawe Road will be created further to the east, allowing people to access the park from the location of the bus stop on the southern side of Wythenshawe Road. Alternatively, they will have the option to travel along the existing unadopted track on the southern side of Wythenshawe Road, which is in line with the existing situation. Footpaths will be constructed of robust materials which will be suitable for pedestrians, wheelchairs, prams and other wheeled modes of transport. At two locations on Wythenshawe Road, dropped kerbs with tactile paving will be provided to assist people crossing the road and to encourage sustainable modes of transport.
- 3.11 The existing car park at the application site will be closed during construction of the development, therefore proposals for a temporary car park elsewhere within the park are

currently being worked up. This car park will be applied for under a separate planning application. The temporary car park will be made available for use by the public prior to the closure of the existing car park at the application site.

Landscaping

- 3.12 A site wide landscaping proposal has been prepared, this includes for generous provision of soft landscaping including substantial tree planting. Removal of seven trees is required to facilitate the development; however the quantum of proposed tree planting will compensate for this well beyond MCC's 3:1 replacement ratio.
- 3.13 An area 1.3ha to the south of Baguley Brook will be dedicated to landscaping to achieve the 10% BNG required by planning legislation. Landscaping proposals for this area have been submitted and include grassland enhancement areas, proposed mounding, proposed native tree planting, and a mown grass path to allow a route across. Use of this area should be limited and it is envisaged that signage will be erected to request that people do not walk on this land or allow pets on this land so that the planting and biodiversity can flourish.

Pre-application Discussions

- 3.14 Prior to the submission of the planning application, the project team have engaged in pre-application discussions with various stakeholders including MCC planning, highways and arboricultural officers, Sport England, the NHS, site user groups and local sports clubs, and local residents and businesses. Please refer to the statement of community involvement for further details of the pre-application consultation process and details of how the proposals have evolved in response to this.

4. Planning Policy Context

Introduction

- 4.1 This section of the statement sets out the local and national planning policy context of relevance to the determination of this planning application. An appraisal of how the proposal relates to the key planning considerations relevant to the site is set out in 5 of this statement.

The Development Plan

- 4.2 Section 38(6) of the Town and Country Planning Act 2004 states that applications for development must be made in accordance with the Development Plan, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. This establishes the Development Plan as the primary decision making document when considering planning applications. In this instance the development plan is the Manchester Development Plan (comprising of the Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan, Saved Policies of the Unitary Development Plan for Manchester and Supplementary Planning Documents) and the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (2024). Due consideration in the determination of the application will also need to be afforded to national policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which represents a significant material consideration.

National Planning Policy (NPPF)

- 4.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was most recently updated in February 2025 and sets out the government's planning policies and how these are expected to be applied. It replaces the Framework published in December 2023, however a presumption in favour of sustainable development continues to be at the heart of the NPPF which ensures that development is pursued in a positive way.
- 4.4 Development proposals that accord with an up-to-date Development Plan should be approved without delay. Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the

policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, permission should be granted unless:

- The application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the proposed development; or
- Any adverse impact of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

4.5 Paragraph 8 confirms that there are three dimensions to sustainable development; economic, social and environmental. To achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be pursued in mutually supportive ways through the planning system.

Delivery Sustainable Development

4.6 The NPPF explains that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area. These sustainable objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in the framework. The NPPF is split into 17 chapters, the chapters of relevance to this development are discussed below.

4.7 Ensuring the vitality of town centres (Chapter 7) - Planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation.

- 4.8 Promoting healthy and safe communities (Chapter 8) - the planning system should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe communities. Planning decisions should aim to achieve places which promote, amongst other things, safe and accessible developments, where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion.
- 4.9 Promoting sustainable transport (Chapter 9) - to protect and exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes, development should be located and designed to give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements and have access to high quality public transport facilities.
- 4.10 Paragraph 116 advises that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.
- 4.11 Making effective use of land (Chapter 11) – the NPPF recognises the need for the planning system to promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or ‘brownfield’ land. Paragraph 125 (a) states the planning system should encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation. Further, sub-section (c) explains that the planning system should specifically give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, proposals for which should be approved unless substantial harm would be caused.

- 4.12 The chapter goes on to discuss how appropriate densities can be achieved. Paragraph 129 sets out that the planning system should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account the following:
- a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;
 - b) local market conditions and viability;
 - c) the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;
 - d) the desirability of maintaining an area’s prevailing character and setting or of promoting regeneration and change; and
 - e) the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.
- 4.13 Achieving well-designed places (Chapter 12) - this chapter sets out at paragraph 135 that planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:
- a) Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development.
 - b) Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.
 - c) Are sympathetic to local character and history including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation.
 - d) Establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit
 - e) Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development and support local facilities and transport networks.

- f) Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being.

- 4.14 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change (Chapter 14) - this chapter emphasises the importance of securing reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimising vulnerability and providing resilience to the impacts of climate change; and, in terms of flooding, development should be made safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere.
- 4.15 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment (Chapter 15) - the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services and minimising impacts of biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible. It should also prevent new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability.
- 4.16 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment (Chapter 16) - the NPPF builds upon the provisions of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and requires at paragraph 207 that 'In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting'.
- 4.17 Paragraph 215 states 'Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use'.
- 4.18 Paragraph 216 states 'The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced

judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset’.

- 4.19 Decision making – guidance in paragraph 39 states that local planning authorities should approach decisions in a positive and creative way, making use of the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants. Decision-makers at all levels should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

Planning Practice Guidance

- 4.20 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was published in March 2014 and collates guidance previously published in a number of separate documents. The guidance in the PPG has been taken into consideration in formulating development proposals for the redevelopment of the Application Site.

The Development Plan for Manchester

- 4.21 The Development Plan for Manchester comprises policies of the Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document (July 2012), Saved Policies of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) for the City of Manchester (adopted 1995), and Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (adopted 2024). These documents are discussed in further detail below.

Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document (July 2012)

- 4.22 The Core Strategy was adopted in July 2012 and sets out the long term strategic policies for Manchester’s future development. The site is located within the ‘Wythenshawe’ policy area. Policies relevant to the site and proposals are outlined below:
- Policy SP 1 ‘Spatial Principles’ states that development should aid the creation of neighbourhoods of choice by creating well designed places that enhance or create

character; protect and enhance the built and natural environment; minimise emissions and reuse previously developed land wherever possible; and, improve access to jobs and services.

- Policy T 1 'Sustainable Transport' states that the Council will support proposals that deliver a sustainable, high quality, integrated transport system to encourage a modal shift away from car travel to public transport, cycling and walking, to support the needs of residents and businesses and to prepare for carbon free modes of transport.
- Policy T 2 'Accessible Areas of Opportunity and Need' seeks to ensure that new development is easily accessible by walking/cycling/public transport; provided with an appropriate level of car parking; and, should have regard to the need for disabled and cycle parking.
- Policy EN 1 'Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas' sets out that opportunities for good design to enhance the overall image of the City should be fully realised, particularly on major radial road routes.
- Policy EN 3 'Heritage' states that new developments must preserve or enhance the character and setting of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance.
- Policy EN 4 'Reducing CO2 Emissions by Enabling Low and Zero Carbon Development' states that wherever possible new development and retrofit projects, including energy generation plant, must be located and designed in a manner that allows advantage to be taken of opportunities for low and zero carbon energy supplies.
- Policy EN 6 'Target Framework for CO2 Reductions from Low or Zero Carbon Energy Supplies' requires applications for residential development of 10 or more units and all other development over 1,000 sqm to meet a minimum target.
- Policy EN 8 'Adaption to Climate Change' requires that developments are adaptable to climate change in terms of design, layout, siting and function of buildings and external spaces.

- Policy EN 9 'Green Infrastructure' states that the Council will encourage developers to enhance the quality/quantity of green infrastructure, which will include green spaces, green roofs and tree planting.
- Policy EN 14 'Flood Risk' states that development should be directed away from sites at the greatest risk of flooding and towards sites with little or no risk of flooding; and, that new development should minimise surface water run-off.
- Policy EN 15 'Biodiversity and Geological Conservation' states that new development will be expected to identify and implement reasonable opportunities to enhance, restore or create new biodiversity.
- Policy EN 16 'Air Quality' states that developers should take measures to minimise and mitigate the local impact of emissions from traffic generated by the development, as well as emissions created by the use of the development itself.
- Policy EN 17 'Water Quality' states that development should avoid any adverse impact on water quality, and minimise surface water run-off and ground water contamination.

4.23 Policy DM 1 'Development Management' sets out various issues that development should have regard to, including: appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail; impact on the surrounding areas; effects on amenity; accessibility; community safety and crime prevention; adequacy of internal accommodation and external amenity space; refuse storage and collection; vehicular access and car parking; effects relating to biodiversity, landscape, archaeological or built heritage; and, green infrastructure including open space.

4.24 The detailed assessment of the scheme within the following planning appraisal section confirms that the proposal accords with the above Core Strategy policies.

Saved Policies of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) for the City of Manchester (adopted 1995)

4.25 The UDP was superseded by the Core Strategy. However, a number of UDP policies have been 'saved'. Extant policies contained within the UDP which are relevant to the proposed scheme include:

- Policy WW12 'Leisure And Recreation': The Council will work with the private sector to provide a greater range of recreational activities within Wythenshawe Park. These activities will be confined to the western half of the Park as identified on the Proposals Map. In considering proposals for improving existing facilities or extending their range the Council will ensure that the prime function of the Park in providing open spaces for informal recreation is fully protected, in particular, Baguley Brook and its corridor. Reason: This part of the park represents the most appropriate location for new recreational facilities to serve the residents of Wythenshawe. It is considered that any development to the east of this road would detract from the historic landscape and character of the park, and should be resisted.
- Policy DC26.1 'Development and Noise' states that the Council intends to use the development control process to reduce the impact of noise on people living and working in, or visiting, the City. In giving effect to this intention, the Council will consider both: a. the effect of new development proposals which are likely to be generators of noise; and b. the implications of new development being exposed to existing noise sources which are effectively outside planning control.

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document 2024

4.26 The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document took effect and became part of the statutory development plan for each of the nine PfE authorities on March 21st 2024. The following policies are relevant to the determination of a planning application:

- Policy JP-S1 Sustainable Development: To help tackle climate change, development should aim to maximise its economic, social and environmental benefits simultaneously, minimise its adverse impacts, utilise sustainable construction techniques and actively seek opportunities to secure net gains across each of the different objectives.
- Policy JP-S2 Carbon and Energy: The aim of delivering a carbon neutral Greater Manchester no later than 2038, with a dramatic reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, will be supported through a range of measures including:
 - (1) Promoting the retrofitting of existing buildings with measures to improve energy efficiency and generate renewable and low carbon energy, heating and cooling;
 - (2) Promoting the use of life cycle cost and carbon assessment tools to ensure the long-term impacts from development can be captured;
 - (3) Taking a positive approach to renewable and low carbon energy schemes, particularly schemes that are led by, or meet the needs of local communities;
 - (4) Increasing the range of nature-based solutions including carbon sequestration through the restoration of peat-based habitats, woodland management, tree planting and natural flood management techniques;
 - (5) An expectation that new development will, unless it can be demonstrated that it is not practicable or financially viable aim to be net zero carbon and meet the heat and energy standards.
- Policy JP-S3 Heat and Energy Networks: The provision of decentralised energy infrastructure is critical to the delivery of our objectives for low carbon growth, carbon reductions and an increase in local energy generation.
- Policy JP-S3: Heat and Energy Networks: Within the identified “Heat and Energy Network Opportunity Areas”, unless it can be demonstrated that there are more effective alternatives for minimising carbon emissions or such connection is not practicable or financially viable, it is expected that: a. New residential developments

that are '10 dwellings or more' or other developments over 1,000 m² floorspace shall:

i. Connect to an existing or planned heat/energy network or be designed to enable future connection (where within 500m of such a network); and/or ii. Install a site-wide or communal heat/energy network solution.

- Policy JP-G7: Trees and Woodland: This policy advises how tree cover will be increased and woodland will be protected and enhanced. In respect of development it advises that where development would result in the loss of existing trees, requiring replacement on the basis of two new trees for each tree lost, or other measures that would also result in a net enhancement in the character and quality of the treescape and biodiversity value in the local area, with a preference for on-site provision; and protecting trees and woodland during the construction phase of development.

- Policy JP-G8: A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity: This policy sets out how a net enhancement in diversity will be achieved. It states that: Development will be expected to: a. Follow the mitigation hierarchy of: i. Avoiding significant harm to biodiversity, particularly where it is irreplaceable, through consideration of alternative sites with less harmful impacts, then ii. Adequately mitigating any harm to biodiversity, then iii. Adequately compensating for any remaining harm to biodiversity b. Avoid fragmenting or severing connectivity between habitats; c. Achieve a measurable net gain in biodiversity of no less than 10% d. Make appropriate provision for long-term management of habitats and geological features connected to the development; e. Where appropriate, development should: mitigate air pollution impacts on Manchester Mosses SAC; mitigate urban edge, functionally linked land and recreation disturbance impacts on the South Pennine Moors SAC/SPAs; and assess and potentially mitigate boat movement, water pollution, and light spillage and shading impacts on the Rochdale Canal SAC; and f. Development proposals should be informed by the findings and recommendations of the appropriate biodiversity/ecological assessment(s) in the PfE evidence base and/or any updated or appropriate biodiversity/ecological assessments submitted as part of the planning application process.

- Policy JP-P6: Health: Improvements in health facilities will be supported, responding to the changing needs and demands of both existing and new residents, including through: 1. Requiring, where appropriate, the provision of new or improved health facilities as part of new developments proportionate to the additional demand that they would generate; 2. Enabling the continued enhancement and successful operation of our hospitals; and 3. Facilitating greater integration of health and social care, and the provision of integrated wellness hubs, including the co-location of health, community and wellness services.

- Policy JP-P7: Sport and Recreation: This policy sets out how a network of high quality and accessible sports and recreation facilities will be protected and enhanced. Amongst other things it states this will be done by:
 - Requiring new development to provide new and/or improved existing facilities commensurate with the demand they would generate. The provision of sports facilities will be determined by individual local authorities through an evidence based approach;

 - Locating and designing recreation facilities in relation to housing so as to ensure that they are accessible but also minimise the potential for complaints due to disturbance to residential amenity from recreational activity.

5. Planning Appraisal

5.1 Having regard to the relevant planning policy guidance in the previous section, the key material considerations against which the proposed scheme should be considered, and which are discussed in this section, include:

- Principle of Development
- Impact on Playing Fields
- Design and Heritage Consideration
- Neighbouring Amenity
- Highways and Parking
- Ecology, Trees and Biodiversity Net Gain
- Drainage and Flood Risk
- Land Contamination
- Air Quality
- Sustainable Development

Principle of Development

5.2 The Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study and Playing Pitch Strategy (Nov 2022) notes that the following works are recommended to Wythenshawe Park in the Short-Term Action Plan (see table 3): *'Improve pitch quality through enhanced maintenance. Explore the opportunity to replace current changing block with a new purpose built facility to service all sports. Reinstate disused pitches. Explore the feasibility for the site to be developed to alleviate 3G issues in coordination with Trafford Council.'*

5.3 The proposed development is for the improvement of sports facilities located at an existing outdoor sports and recreation facility in Wythenshawe Park. The provision of new and reconfigured playing pitches will enhance the existing facility which includes a disused throws field and an athletics track which is in need of upgrade. The proposed pavilion will provide enhanced and improved ancillary facilities including shower and change and a café facility. The demolition of the existing changing block which accommodates the weightlifting facility is acceptable as this building is of not heritage significance and is at the

end of its lifespan. The weightlifting facility will be relocated to an alternative site in Wythenshawe prior to demolition of the building. This element of the proposal is in accordance with Saved UDP WW12 which seeks to provide a greater range of recreational activities to the western half of the park. The provision of enhanced sports facilities would also be in accordance with Core Strategy Policy EN1, and paragraph 96 of the NPPF.

- 5.4 The proposed pavilion will also include a GP surgery. This use will have a symbiotic relationship with the sports use of the site, supporting objectives to improve health and wellbeing of the local community. Northern Moor Medical Practice is an NHS surgery which currently operates from a converted house on Wythenshawe Road located directly opposite the vehicle access to the application site. The practice is at capacity and will therefore be relocated to the new purpose-built facility within the pavilion building. This is considered acceptable given the scale of the GP use, and since it will be accommodated within a building associated with the playing field use of the site. Moreover, the GP surgery will remain in a sustainable and accessible location, in close proximity to surrounding residential development. This element of the proposal is consistent with PfE policy JP6, and Chapter 8 of the NPPF.

Impact on Playing Fields

- 5.5 The application site is classed as a playing field. The proposals will impact the existing playing pitches and the wider playing field provision as a result of the proposed pavilion building, relocation of the existing storage containers, creation of the AGPS. A Playing Field statement has been submitted in support of this application, which provides an assessment against Sport England's Playing Field Policy. It concludes that the proposals are acceptable in relation to Sport England policies based on the various policy criterion.
- 5.6 The proposals are deemed to be in accordance with Core Strategy Policy EN10. This policy supports proposals which improve the quality of accessible sport and recreation, and enhance biodiversity in the local area. For proposals which relate to existing recreation facilities, these will be permitted where the development is ancillary to the sport or recreation facility and complements the use. The proposed pavilion, car parking and landscaping provides a function ancillary to the sports use of the site. The weightlifting facility will be

relocated to a nearby site in Wythenshawe. The small throws area and jump facility is to be relocated within the athletics track perimeter, and this has been agreed with England Athletics. The long throw facility will not be re-provided at this site, as all long throws will occur at Manchester Regional Arena which is to be maintained at full World Athletics Standard for all major competitions. This approach has been agreed with England Athletics. The relocation of the storage containers and modular building is considered acceptable since this is ancillary and these structures are existing.

- 5.7 The creation of a BNG area on the disused football pitches is considered to be acceptable since this land has not been used for formal sports for a considerable period of time. This area was originally used as 3 football pitches until the 1990's when they were taken out of use due to poor drainage. They were briefly back in use in the late 2000's but quickly fell out of use again for the same reason. Since then, the site has had little formal use, it's a popular cut through for local people and is often used by dog walkers. The site remains very wet, in 2024 a raised stone path and new bridge entrance was installed to improve year-round access to the park entrance nearest to the tram stop, in keeping with the Traffic and Transport plan for the park. Without this addition, this area of the park is frequently inaccessible after heavy rain due to amount of standing water.
- 5.8 Bringing this part of the site back into use as a formal playing pitch is constrained by drainage and viability issues. An agronomy report undertaken by STRI in 2021 to assess the viability of bringing the area back into use demonstrates significant cut, fill and drainage works are required to bring this land into functional use as playing field. Therefore, the focus has been directed to enhancing the sports facilities to the north. This land is therefore considered to be the most appropriate area of the provision of BNG within the park when taking into account the types of habitats required to off-set the shortfall resulting from the development proposals.
- 5.9 NPPF paragraph 104 advises that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields and formal play spaces, should not be built on unless certain policy exceptions apply. The proposed pavilion is regarded to meet exception part (c) which states that the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use. While the proposed

GP facility does not strictly fall under 'sport and recreation' it is linked with the wider health objectives for the sport and recreational use of the site, and there is a clear synergy between the two uses. The relocation of the existing weightlifting facility is in accordance with exception part (b) which states that the loss resulting from a proposed development will be replaced by an equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location.

Design and Heritage Consideration

- 5.10 The proposed pavilion building will be single storey, with elevations constructed in brickwork and charred timber cladding, and having aluminium framed windows and doors. The building is of an appropriate design for its setting within a park. A Heritage Statement prepared by BWB has been submitted in support of the application to assess any potential for impact upon the significance of the registered park and garden and the listed assets located within the eastern portion of the site. The report identifies that co-visibility between the site and the registered park and garden is screened by the dense woodland between the two, primarily by trees within Fir Coppice. Please refer to the submitted report for further details.

Neighbouring Amenity

- 5.11 The proposed new pavilion building and relocated modular buildings and shipping containers will not be constructed in proximity to any sensitive neighbouring properties or uses. The proposed lighting scheme has been designed to ensure there is no loss of amenity to neighbouring residential properties located to the west of the site. Details of the proposed flood lighting scheme, including specifications, lux levels, hours of lighting operation, a spillage comparison with the existing floodlighting, and mitigation measures have been submitted as part of the application. Please refer to the 'Sports Lighting Statement' prepared by SSL for details; this statement concludes that directional luminaires, low tilt angles, and strict operational controls eliminate adverse lighting effects on neighbouring properties. No unacceptable glare or overspill is predicted.

- 5.12 A Baseline Noise Survey and Noise Impact Assessment prepared by Pace Consult has been submitted in support of the planning application. This report considers potential noise impact from proposed mechanical and electrical plant and from the sports pitches upon residential occupiers on Wythenshawe Road to the north and Lawnhurst Avenue to the west.
- 5.13 With regard to plant noise, the initial calculation indicates a potential partial exceedance of the daytime noise limit. However, a detailed modelling of the plant noise will be undertaken at a more advanced stage of the design development, and the initial assessment does not account for screening or attenuators fitted to the plant equipment. It is also noted that the exceedance is fairly low and only a small reduction would be required to meet the criterion.
- 5.14 With regard to the noise break out from the sports pitches, the report notes that the impact would be negligible.

Highways and Parking

- 5.15 A Transport Statement prepared by Local Transport Projects has been submitted in support of the application. This report is informed by details provided by the operator and a traffic survey of the existing vehicle movements to provide a trip generation projections for the development. Overall, based on the assessments within the Transport Statement, the report concludes that the proposed development would not be expected to have a severe impact on the operation of the local highway network. The proposals are therefore in accordance with paragraph 116 of the NPPF.
- 5.16 A Travel Plan has also been prepared by Local Transport Projects and submitted in support of the application. The Travel Plan provides a strategy for encouraging users of the site to travel by sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing. It is envisaged that implementation of a travel plan will be dealt with via planning condition.
- 5.17 The existing car park at the application site will be closed during construction of the development, therefore proposals for a temporary car park elsewhere within the park are

currently being worked up. This car park will be applied for under a separate planning application. The temporary car park will be made available for use by the public prior to the closure of the existing car park at the application site.

Ecology, Trees and Biodiversity Net Gain

Ecology

- 5.18 An Ecological Impact Assessment was undertaken in March 2025. This report concluded that the existing weightlifting facility building (B1) offers moderate suitability for roosting bats due to its deteriorating structure and availability of crevices. Bat activity was judged to be unlikely in the modular changing block (B2), and the auxiliary metal shipping containers (BA). A bat re-emergence survey was undertaken to assess potential for bat activity at B1. Two roosts were identified and therefore a European Protected Species License (EPSL) will be required to lawfully demolish the building. This can be applied for after planning permission is granted and within 3 months of the demolition, and before the start of the next bat survey season (i.e. May 1st 2026). The proposed lighting scheme has been designed to be a low impact lighting strategy in line with advice from the project ecologist.

Trees

- 5.19 An Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been undertaken by Arbtech Consulting and is submitted in support of this application. The proposal requires the removal of 7 No. individual trees (4x class B trees and 3x class U trees). Mitigation tree replacement planting forms part of the landscaping proposal.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 5.20 A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment and metric prepared by Arbtech Consulting has been submitted in support of the planning application. This identifies the level of biodiversity net gain achieved as part of the proposed development and confirms the area of land required to provide additional biodiversity enhancements in order to meet the 10% required

in accordance with legislation. An area of land to the south of Baguley Brook has been proposed to accommodate landscaping to achieve the 10% BNG requirement. This area will be subject of a management plan as per the BNG legislation.

Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage

- 5.21 A Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared by BWB consulting and is submitted in support of this application. The report considers various sources of flood risk and deems this to be low for all types of flooding. The report identifies a medium probability of groundwater flood risk, and therefore recommends mitigation in the form of finished floor levels of the proposed pavilion being raised to a minimum of 150mm above ground levels. Isolated areas of surface water ponding at topographical low spots across the site are to be mitigated through upgrades to the drainage infrastructure to ensure it will have capacity for the 1 in 100 year storm event plus climate change. This report demonstrates that the proposed development is not at significant flood risk. In compliance with the requirements of the NPPF and the PPG, and subject to the mitigation measures proposed, the development could proceed without being subject to significant flood risk. Moreover, the development will not increase flood risk to the wider area subject to the suitable management of surface water runoff discharging from the site.
- 5.22 A Sustainable Drainage Statement has been prepared by BWB Consulting. This report sets out the proposed drainage strategy for the site which aligns with the drainage hierarchy. Please refer to the submitted report for details.

Land Contamination

- 5.23 A Phase 1 and Phase 2 Geo-Environmental Assessment have been carried out by BWB consulting. In terms of potential for ground contamination, the reporting confirms that when the results were screened conservatively against standards for a “residential with no uptake” use all of the contaminant concentrations were recorded below the screening criteria.

Air Quality

- 5.24 An Air Quality Assessment has been prepared by Rappor and is submitted as part of the planning application. This assessment considers air quality impacts from the construction and operational phase. The assessment identified that the proposed development will have a negligible impact on local air quality in accordance with guidance, and all pollutant concentrations at identified existing receptor locations were below the current relevant air quality objectives.

Sustainable Development

- 5.25 The application is supported by a Renewable and Sustainability Report prepared by CGP. The report outlines how the development has sought to minimise carbon consumption through passive measures such as improved building fabric and building orientation. In addition, energy efficient measures such as heat pumps and PV array have been proposed to ultimately reduce carbon emissions.
- 5.26 The above will assist in tackling climate change and objectives for environmentally sustainable development. The proposals will also contribute to economic and social sustainability through supporting and encouraging healthy, active lifestyles and the overall health and wellbeing of the local community.

6. Conclusion

6.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Paul Butler Associates on behalf of Etec Group Ltd in support of an application for planning permission for the redevelopment of existing sports facilities and pitches at Wythenshawe Park.

6.2 The proposed development will result in a number of benefits including:

- Improved sports facilities through upgraded pitch provision and a high quality pavilion building with associated facilities and a café. This will enhance the experience for users of the sports facility, encourage increased participation in sport and physical activity, and enable existing sports clubs to grow and expand.
- Provide a home to local community clubs, groups, education partners, and leagues supporting huge growth with over 120 new community football teams generated from junior to adults, including women and girls and disability football.
- Provision of a GP clinic and Innerva Suite which will address capacity issues at the existing Northern Moor Medical Practice, and also provide a symbiotic relationship with the sports use of the site and wider objectives to encourage healthy lifestyles and improve the wellbeing of the local community.
- Upgrade to the surface water drainage at the site addressing issues of boggy pitches.
- Access improvements and improved highways safety through the widened access road and separate pedestrian access.
- Job creation during the construction and operational period.
- Construction of a building which uses low carbon technologies and has been designed to minimise carbon consumption and emissions.

6.3 This statement has assessed the application proposals against local and national planning policy. It is judged that the proposals are acceptable when appraised against planning policy and will deliver a significant level of planning benefits.

Appendix 1: Outline Green and Blue Infrastructure Statement

Manchester's Great Outdoors – A Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester 2015-2025' (G&BIS) sets out objectives for environmental improvements within the City within the context of objectives for growth and development and there is a need to explore opportunities for such improvements as part of development proposals.

Action 2 of the strategy is to 'Enhance existing parks': Parks are an important and iconic part of the city's landscape. They are at the heart of vibrant neighbourhoods, often with potential for further improvements to access and usage. Realising this potential, with regular and active participation from local communities, will be a key part of the city's success over the next 10 years.

The proposed development seeks to improve and enhance the existing sport and recreational function of the site, while also delivering the 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG) requirement. The BNG area will provide a pedestrian route through allowing users of the park to have an enhanced experience of nature and biodiversity. The proposals will meet the vision in the strategy for 'Our green spaces, both permanent and temporary, work harder, providing multiple social, economic and environmental benefits to the city' and will meet the four objectives set out at section 3.2 of the strategy to:

1. Improve the quality and function of existing green and blue Infrastructure, to maximise the benefits it delivers.
2. Use appropriate green and blue infrastructure as a key component of new developments to help create successful neighbourhoods and support the city's growth.
3. Improve connectivity and accessibility to green and blue infrastructure within the city and beyond
4. Improve and promote a wider understanding and awareness of the benefits that green and blue infrastructure provides to residents, the economy and the local environment.