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Northern Pathology Development, Christie Hospital

Response to the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester

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1. Introduction

1.1. This 'Response to the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester' ("the Statement") accompanies an application to Manchester City Council (MCC) for Full Planning Permission for the redevelopment of the existing temporary Derek Crowther Building (Block 29), on Wilmslow Road to build a new Pathology Centre with integrated clinical facilities (the "Proposed Development") at the Christie Hospital (the "Christie") in Withington, Manchester.

1.2. The Applicant is Northern Pathology Developments Limited (the "Applicant").

1.3. The Statement sets out how the Proposed Development responds to the vision and objectives set out in the Manchester Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy 2022 (and in turn, Core Strategy Policies EN9 Green Infrastructure and EN15 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation). It should be read in conjunction with the Design and Access Statement submitted in support of the application.

A Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester

1.4. Manchester's Great Outdoors: A Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester 2015-25 was adopted by MCC in July 2015 and subsequently updated in 2022, highlighting approaches, challenges and projects that will help bring the Strategy to life over the coming years.

1.5. MCC recognises that green and blue infrastructure is an essential part of creating a successful, livable city. Parks, river valleys, gardens, street trees, green roofs, canals and many other components all form part of a rich network that is integrated with the built environment in the world's most popular cities.

1.6. The overarching vision for the Strategy remains as follows:

"By 2025, climate-resilient well-maintained green and blue spaces remains an integral part of all neighbourhoods. The city's communities will be living healthy, fulfilled lives, enjoying access to parks and green spaces, and safe green routes for walking, cycling and exercise throughout the city. Green and blue infrastructure will be supporting Manchester's growth."

1.7. Four objectives have been established to enable the vision to be achieved:

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

1.8. Section 3 of the updated Strategy outlines the progress to date and noted that the Strategy has acted as catalysts for some of the most groundbreaking environmental projects Manchester has ever taken. The Strategy has encouraged collaboration, bringing together organisations in order to deliver bold, innovative action that will benefit Manchester for many years to come.

1.9. Section 3.4 of the Strategy recognises that Manchester is a growing city, with plans for significant growth and development over the coming decade. High quality, green and open space that is appropriate to its location, well designed and well maintained will be an important and integral part of creating successful developments and supporting the city's growth.

1.10. The Strategy provides initial guidance on how developers can achieve this and recognises that different approaches will be required for different types of development and that different solutions, appropriate to the location, will be needed on each scheme. By considering green infrastructure from the beginning of the design process, developers will be able to understand the surrounding landscape, opportunities to enhance and link to it, and the types of green and open space that could be incorporated within and add value to the development itself.

The Site

1.11. The Application Site (the "Site") comprises the existing temporary Block 29, Derek Crowther Building of the Christie Hospital in Withington, which currently hosts clinical and non-clinical facilities associated with the Christie. The total site area is 1,565sqm. Please refer to the Site Location Plan submitted in support of this application.

1.12. The Site is located to the northeast of the existing Christie estate in Withington.

1.13. The Site is bound by a private access route for the Christie to the south, residential development to the west, and local amenities and retail units to the north. Wilmslow Road borders the Site immediately to the east, which includes a partially segregated cycle lane.

1.14. The Christie is a major land use within the area, albeit located within a principally residential area. There are a range of uses within the vicinity of the Site.

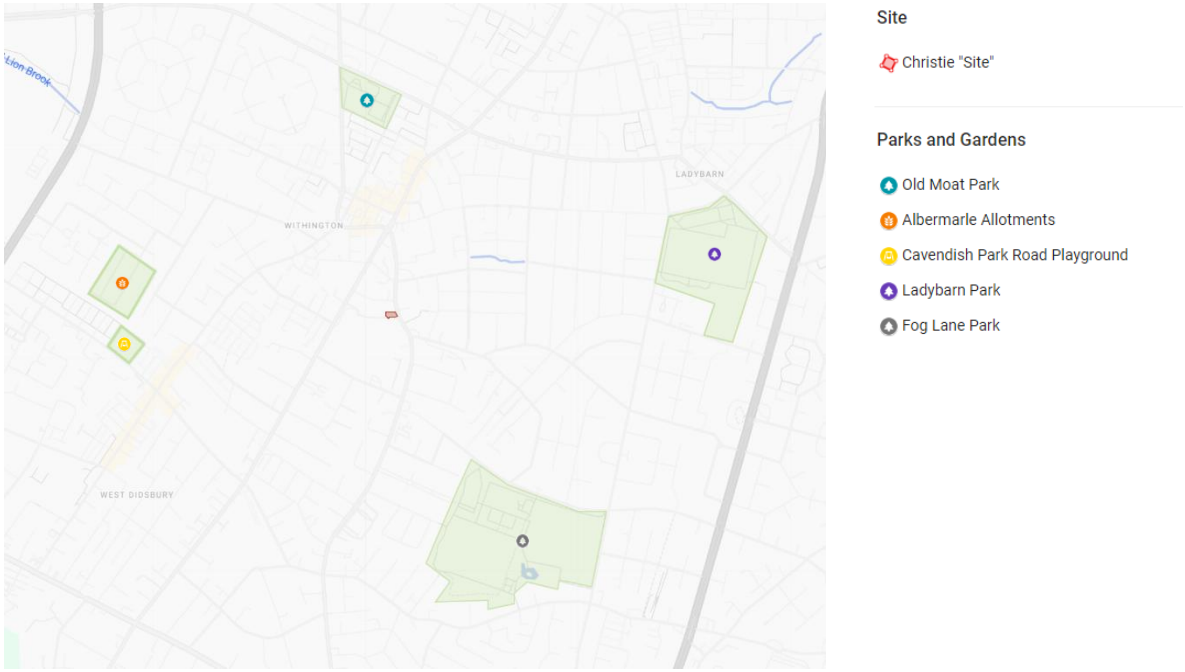
1.15. To the north of the Christie Hospital comprises local amenities, with retail units lining Wilmslow Road between the Site and the Grade II Red Lion pub. Beyond this, Wilmslow Road leads towards Withington District Centre.

1.16. To the west of the Site is a multi-storey car park serving the Christie, along with a residential nursing and dementia care home. Beyond Palatine Road, terraced housing and small pockets of public realm are interspersed. To the east of the Site and Wilmslow Road comprises Withington Dental Care Centre and Manchester Muslim Preparatory School and associated playgrounds and surface car parking. Beyond this, the area comprises relatively low density two storey residential properties. To the south of Cotton Lane comprises the Manchester Cancer Research Centre.

1.17. The surrounding green infrastructure around the Proposed Development, consist of the following parks and gardens as shown in Figure 1.1 below:

- Fog Lane Park – 590 metres
- Old Moat Park – 650 metres
- Albermarle Allotments - 810 metres
- Ladybarn Park – 946 metres
- Cavendish Road Park – 910 metres

Figure 1.1: Surrounding parks and gardens located near to the Site (source Google Maps, 2025)



Proposed Development

1.18. The Proposed Development comprises a three-storey building with additional essential plant equipment located on the central area of the roof, which will be appropriately screened. A link bridge is proposed at the first floor, which will connect into the existing Christie Hospital. A stair core and lift are proposed to the southeast of the Proposed Development, raising three storeys, forming the primary circulation route. A secondary service stair core is proposed to the southwest of the Proposed Development, with access to all internal storeys and the roof. A green area is proposed to provide additional planting between the existing neighbouring properties and proposed layby.

1.19. The Proposed Development will support the redevelopment of the Site, as it seeks to deliver accommodation to meet current and future functional needs of the Applicant. It will provide a new Pathology Development facilitating the relocation of existing pathology services currently held within Blocks 19 and 20, as these existing facilities are outdated in terms of infrastructure, are spatially inadequate and not fit for purpose. The Proposed Development will enable the co-location of laboratories with clinical services to ensure rapid sample transfer, ultimately enabling faster diagnostic turnaround times crucial for patient treatment.

1.20. The Site is part of the wider Christie Hospital Estate and therefore will contribute to the wider Green and Blue Infrastructure vision for the Christie Hospital.

1.21. The Proposed Development will result in the removal of five trees along the northwestern Site boundary, adjacent to the Christie Hospital service road, however, it includes an indicative landscaping scheme, which includes the planting of ten new trees and areas of mixed native understorey planting. This results in a 1:2 replacement ratio, in compliance with Places for Everyone Policy JP-G7.

1.22. Seven of the new trees will be planted in the vicinity of those lost and three street trees will be planted in the along Wilmslow Road, all new trees are proposed to be planted in the ground. The areas of mixed understorey will contribute positively to the treescape and improve the overall species and structural diversity of green infrastructure in this location. The planting along Wilmslow Road also offers enhancement to the street scene where tree cover is currently lacking. The current strategy is considered suitable to compensate for the tree loss proposed.

1.23. The proposed landscaping seeks to continue the language and materiality of the newly introduced public realm adjacent to the Paterson Building, and public realm proposed as part of the adjacent Advanced Scanning and Imaging Centre Development ("ASICD"). The plant species will be carefully selected to match the existing species in the area.

Description of Development

1.24. The description of development as stated on the Application Form for Full Planning Permission is:

"Redevelopment of the temporary Block 29 building (Derek Crowther Building) for a new Pathology Development and associated clinical accommodation (Use Class C2), link bridge connecting to the existing Christie Hospital, landscaping and other associated works"

2. Assessment of the Proposed Development

2.1. This section outlines the vision and objectives of the Manchester Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy 2022 and details how the Proposed Development responds to these and, in turn, Core Strategy Policies EN9 'Green Infrastructure' and EN15 'Biodiversity and Geological Conservation'.

Green and Blue Infrastructure Objectives

2.2. As set out in Section 1, the Strategy establishes four objectives to enable the vision to be achieved. Table 2.1 below considers the Proposed Development against these objectives.

Table 2.1 Proposed Response to Green and Blue Infrastructure Objectives

Objective:	Responses:
1. Improve the quality and function of existing Green and Blue Infrastructure to maximise the benefits it delivers.	The Site is a brownfield site which currently comprises existing buildings, hardstanding and an area of landscaping which includes 11 existing trees. As set out in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment submitted in support of this application, 7 trees are surveyed as Category C (low arboricultural value), whilst two trees are assessed as Category B (moderate arboricultural value) and one as Category U. It therefore only makes a very minor contribution to Manchester's existing green and blue infrastructure. The Proposed Development provides the opportunity to enhance the green infrastructure available on-site and in its immediate context. The Applicant has worked hard to ensure that the starting point for the Proposed Development and associated landscaping was to retain the existing trees on-site. However, for the reasons detailed in the Design and Access Statement and Arboricultural Impact Assessment submitted in support of the application, 5 trees were proven to be unfeasible to retain. To mitigate against the impact, ten new trees as well as areas of mixed native understorey planting will be provided on the Site. Seven new trees will be planted in the vicinity of those lost and three street trees will be planted along Wilmslow Road. All trees are proposed to be planted in the ground. In acknowledgement of the importance of ensuring a green street scene and to re-establish and retain the tree cover on-site, new trees are proposed to be located on-site alongside shrubs and planting. The landscape design and species will reflect the high-quality palette and aesthetics of the recently installed planters in front of the nearby Paterson Building as well as the adjacent proposed ASICD scheme. An Ecological Impact Assessment, including a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, has been prepared by Tyler Grange and is submitted in support of the application. This evidences that the

Objective:	Responses:
	Proposed Development will deliver a biodiversity net gain of 24.06% in habitat units, and 21.50% in hedgerow units, in compliance with national planning policy and legislation. It is therefore considered that the Proposed Development will improve green infrastructure on-site and within the surrounding context.
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.	As mentioned above, the Proposed Development includes an area of improved landscaping along Wilmslow Road through relocating existing trees and new tree and shrub planting.
3. Improve connectivity and accessibility to Green and Blue Infrastructure within the City and beyond.	An area of the new proposed area of planting immediately addresses Wilmslow Road and will be visible to all, including staff, visitors, and passersby. It increases tree cover and biodiversity, whilst creating a consistent landscaping design along Wilmslow Road, creating a consistent public realm language with that at the nearby Paterson Building as well as the adjacent proposed ASICD scheme.
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.	An area of the proposed new high-quality landscaping will be highly visible and accessible to all given its location along Wilmslow Road. It builds upon the high quality landscaping delivered at the Paterson Building, and that which is proposed at the adjacent ASICD scheme, and thus acts to promote the importance of public realm, through providing areas for people to dwell and enjoy the space.

Relevant Core Strategy Policies

EN9 Green Infrastructure

2.3. Core Strategy Policy EN9 sets out that new development will be expected to maintain existing green infrastructure in terms of its quantity, quality and multiple function. Where the opportunity arises and in accordance with current Green Infrastructure Strategies the Council will encourage developers to enhance the quality and quantity of green infrastructure, improve the performance of its functions and create and improve linkages to and between areas of green infrastructure.

2.4. As set out in Table 2.1, the Proposed Development has taken the opportunity to enhance the green infrastructure of the Site through the provision of high-quality landscaping which provides opportunity for biodiversity, the formation of habitats and also a place in which people can enjoy and relax.

2.5. In particular, it is envisioned that the landscaping and public realm proposals will link with the existing surroundings to enhance the Site's green infrastructure provision. The soft landscape strategy includes a range of enhancement measures including planting of new trees and mixed native understorey.

2.6. The proposed improved area of public realm along Wilmslow Road will create an inviting and welcoming space at an entrance of the Christie Hospital. The proposed strategy for the relocation of existing trees and planting of new trees will significantly improve the tree cover and green infrastructure along Wilmslow Road and will increase the biodiversity at the Site and the wider area.

EN15 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

2.7. Core Strategy Policy EN15 states the Council will seek to maintain or enhance sites of biodiversity and geological value throughout the City and that developers will be expected to identify and implement reasonable opportunities to enhance, restore or create new biodiversity, either on-site or adjacent to the site, contributing to linkages between valuable or potentially valuable habitat areas where appropriate.

2.8. The landscaping section of the Design and Access Statement details how the Proposed Development contributes to biodiversity. In summary, the proposed landscaping will provide:

- Planting of 6 new trees on-site; and
- Planting of areas of mixed native understorey planting on-site.

Greater Manchester NHS Green Plan (2025-28)

2.9. The Greater Manchester NHS Green Plan aspires to deliver a sustainable health care system which promotes the health and wellbeing of residents within Greater Manchester. The plan seeks to achieve health equity whilst also minimising environmental impacts and ensuring climate resilience.

2.10. To reach this vision, three overarching goals have been set:

- Achieve a net zero NHS GM Integrated Care Carbon Footprint by 2038, with an ambition to deliver an 80% reduction by 2028-2032;
- Net Zero Carbon Footprint Plus by 2045, for the emissions we can influence, with an ambition to reach an 80% reduction by 2036-2039.; and
- An NHS that is climate-adapted, actively supports nature and health related activities, and promotes interventions that reduce air pollution.

2.11. To meet the targets set out under the GM NHS Green Plan, ten specific focus areas have been outlined. The focus areas, and associated actions which are relevant to Green and Blue Infrastructure are as follows:

- Nature for Health – to maximise the opportunities presented by the healthcare estate to support nature-based interventions. The GM NHS Green Plan aims to support the delivery of the GM Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the enhancement of green spaces across the NHS estate, maximising the impact of mechanisms such as Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

2.12. As noted above, the landscaping and public realm proposals will link with the existing surroundings to enhance the Site's green infrastructure provision. The soft landscape strategy includes a range of enhancement measures including planting of new trees and mixed native understorey, which will contribute to the enhancement of green spaces within the NHS estate.

2.13. Furthermore, the Proposed Development will deliver a biodiversity net gain of a gain of 13.13% in habitat units, and 407.5% in hedgerow units, in compliance with relevant national planning policy and legislation.

3. Summary

3.1. As described in this Statement, the provision of an improved environment and green infrastructure on site (and within the wider Christie Hospital) have been integral to the Proposed Development. This will contribute to the delivery of GM NHS Green Plan and MCC's ecology and biodiversity policy.

3.2. The Proposed Development will contribute to biodiversity and enhance wildlife habitats at the Site as part of the wider Christie estate. It is acknowledged that there is a requirement to remove five existing trees on-Site. However, the proposed landscaping scheme includes the provision of ten new trees to be planted on-Site, alongside understorey planting, which will result in a 1:2 replacement ratio, demonstrating compliance with Places for Everyone Policy JP-G7. Opportunities to enhance and create new biodiversity within the Proposed Development, such as increased tree planting and native planting, have therefore been designed into the scheme, which will upgrade the quality of nearby green infrastructure and improve both the street scene along Wilmslow Road, but also the area between the western Site boundary and the terraced housing beyond.

3.3. The Proposed Development therefore accords with the vision and objectives of the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester and the Development Plan policies.

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