

Julie Roscoe

Director of Planning, Building
Control and Licensing

Growth and Development
Directorate

PO Box 532
Town Hall
Manchester M60 2LA

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**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT)
(ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 2011**

**FORMAL SCREENING REQUEST FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
'SCREENING OPNIONS' UNDER PART 2 REGULATION 5**

PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF PLOTS C, D, G, H, and I AT GREY MARE LANE

SCREENING OPINION ADOPTED BY MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

In coming to a formal opinion on whether an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required to support the proposed development, Manchester City Council, as Local Planning Authority, has taken into account the supporting information contained within the prior notification for demolition application (143752/DEM/2025).

Demolition works fall within the scope of the EIA Directive and therefore it is now necessary to consider whether the demolition project is likely to have significant environmental effects.

The proposal type is listed in category 10 (b) Urban Development Projects of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2011. A threshold exceeding 1 hectare of development other than a dwellinghouse is defined as a development likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location.

Within the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG), general considerations relating to the need for an EIA for Schedule 2 developments is identified within paragraph 18 of the guidance. This references the selection criteria in relation to Schedule 3 of the Regulations. This criteria which must be taken into account in determining whether a development is likely to have significant effects on the environment. The criteria is as follows:

- I. Characteristics of Development (e.g. its size, use of natural resources, quantities of pollution and waste generated);
- II. Location of Development (e.g. environmental sensitivity of geographical areas);
- III. Characteristics of the potential impact (e.g. its magnitude and duration).

The Secretary of States view is that, in general, an EIA will be needed for Schedule 2 developments in three main types of cases, namely:

- I. For major developments which are of more than local importance;
- II. For developments, which are proposed for particularly environmentally sensitive or vulnerable locations;
- III. For development with unusually complex and hazardous environmental effects.

Below is a consideration as to whether an EIA is required to support a planning application for the above development.

CONTEXT

The development site comprises five plots (C, D, G, H and I) of Grey Mare Lane in Beswick.

Plot C is bounded by Pratt Walk to the north, Rouse Close and a car park associated with the Church of the Resurrection & St Barnabas to the east, cleared land to the south and Turnpike Walk to the west. The plot is occupied by two terraces situated parallel to each other, each with three dwellings (six dwellings in total). The dwellings are two storeys in height with a pitched roof and a pale red brick (at ground floor) and pebble dash façade (on the first floor).

Each dwelling has a porch on the principal elevation and a private garden to the rear. The gardens are enclosed by a red brick wall. Several bushes/small trees are located within the curtilage of the dwellings. Randall Walk separates the two terraces. All of the dwellings are vacant.

Plot D comprises flats 1-19 and maisonettes 101-119 at Newcombe Close and is a rectangular shaped plot bounded by Newcombe Close to the north and east, Hopedale Close to the south and a footpath extending the full length of the flats/maisonettes to the west.

The plot is occupied by nine flats and ten maisonettes, with the maisonettes located on top of the ground floor flats forming one linear residential block. The northernmost ground floor unit includes a former newsagent. The residential block is three storeys in height with a pitched roof and a pale red brick (at ground floor) and pebble dash façade (on upper floors). All of the flats and maisonettes have their own front door, and the maisonettes are accessed via a communal walkway at first floor level on the principal elevation. A staircase is located at the centre of the residential block which provides access to the communal walkway.

There are 3no. trees (2no. Category B and 1no. Category C) and 1no. group of trees (Category C) located on, or directly adjacent to Plot D. within Plot C (Category U and C), one of which will be removed to facilitate the demolition and the other is to be retained. 1no. tree and the group of trees are to be removed as part of the demolition.

Plot G is located at the corner of Grey Mare Lane and Howarth Close and is bounded by Howarth Close to the north, Penfair Close and terraced housing to the east, Hornsea Walk to the south and Grey Mare Lane to the west.

The plot is occupied by two residential blocks, one fronting onto Howarth Close and the other Grey Mare Lane. The former includes six flats and six maisonettes, with the maisonettes located on top of the flats as with Plot D.

A ramp is situated at the corner of Howarth Close and Penfair Close and provides access to the communal walkway serving the maisonettes on the first floor. This raised

walkway continues around the corner onto Grey Mare Lane and serves those maisonettes too.

The residential block fronting onto Grey Mare Lane has been split into two for demolition purposes but it in fact stretches as far south as Sledmere Close. That part of the residential block north of Hornsea Walk forms part of Plot G whilst the section to the south forms part of Plot H.

Plot H comprises two residential blocks, one fronting onto Grey Mare Lane (that section south of Hornsea Walk) and the other Sledmere Close. The residential block fronting onto Grey Mare Lane includes six flats and six maisonettes. The ground floor flats each benefit from private front and rear gardens and the maisonettes are accessed via a raised walkway on the principal elevation. Sheltered steps leading up to the raised walkway are situated at the corner of Grey Mare Lane and Sledmere Close as well as a bin store.

The residential block situated along Sledmere Close includes six flats and six maisonettes. The flats are accessible via the front and rear whilst the raised walkway which provides access to the maisonettes is located on the rear elevation. These maisonettes use the same sheltered steps to access the raised walkway as those on Plot G. The ground floor flats benefit from semi-private greenspace fronting onto Sledmere Close (the greenspace itself is fenced off to the public albeit there are no fences partitioning the space for each dwelling). Both the residential blocks within Plot H are three storeys in height with a pitched roof and a pale red brick (at ground floor) and pebble dash façade (at upper floors). All of the dwellings within Plot H are vacant.

There are 12no. trees located within Plots G and H – all of which will be retained.

Plot I is located to the south of Sledmere Close in Beswick and includes three irregularly shaped parcels of residential land. Plot I is bound by Sledmere Close to the north, residential development to the east, school grounds associated with St Brigid's R.C. Primary School to the south and further residential development to the west.

The plot is occupied by two low-rise apartment blocks each containing six flats as well as semi-detached dwellings (4 and 6 Sledmere Close). Both the apartment blocks and dwellings are two storeys in height with a pitched roof and a pale red brick (at ground floor) and pebble dash façade (at first floor) albeit each of the apartment blocks also contain circulation space at their centre with a brown brick finish. Each dwelling has a porch on the principal elevation. All of the dwellings within Plot I are vacant.

All of the trees located within or directly adjacent to Plot I will be retained.

The surrounding area is a mixture of residential and commercial developments which form part of the Grey Mare Lane estate.

The City Centre is within a 20 minute walk of the site providing access to amenities and public transport facilities

It is considered that the potential impacts from the development of this nature are as follows:

- Visual/landscape character;
- Heritage and archaeology;
- Ecology and biodiversity;
- Traffic and access;

- Air quality and pollution;
- Use of resources including water;
- Creation of waste;
- Land contamination;
- Noise/dust/emissions from construction and operations of the development; and
- Cumulative impacts.

This assessment will determine whether any of the above impacts are significant in nature and warrant consideration by an EIA.

ASSESSMENT

As detailed above, an assessment will now take place based on the three criteria within Schedule 3 of the regulations.

Characteristics of Development

Size of Development

The site contains a former residential buildings which occupies 0.42 ha. The buildings are currently vacant. The size of the site is below the threshold for an EIA as prescribed in the regulations.

It is noted that the demolition works will take place within the application site boundary.

The majority of the waste material will be taken off site to a waste disposal centre where the waste will be separated and elements which can be recycled will be, particularly steel.

The scale of the demolition, given the limited size and scale of the building, will take up to 26 weeks which is not considered to be a lengthy demolition process. Whilst this will lead to some short term disruption to local residents, the impacts are considered to be temporary, predictable and of no more than local significant. As such, the demolition does not warrant consideration by an EIA.

Cumulation with other development

A screening opinion should be adopted on its own merits, and on the basis of what is being proposed, however, in judging whether the effects of a development are likely to be significant, regard should be had to the possible cumulative effects with any existing or approved development.

The development site is situated within the Grey Mare Lane masterplan area and plans have been developed to guide future regeneration activity in the area.

At this present time, however, there is a low level of development activity in the area.

Given the relatively short duration of the construction process it is unlikely to coincide with any major redevelopment proposals in the area.

Use of natural resources

The site is not known to contain any natural resources. In addition, given the scale of the demolition, it is not believed that this would require the excessive use of any natural resources in the demolition process.

All existing services will be terminated prior to the demolition and whilst water will be used for dust suppression and diesel for demolition vehicles this is not considered to be of a level which would have serious environmental impacts and is only temporary for the duration of the demolition process.

Production of waste

The demolition project is likely to produce waste in terms of rubble, metal, timber and other products.

Within the supporting information submitted with the application it is considered that the amount of waste generated is modest and can be managed appropriately in order to minimise any environmental impacts. Scrap metal, timber and cardboard will all be taken off site to be recycled. As such, the impacts are likely to be localised in nature and predictable and therefore do not require consideration by an EIA.

Pollution and nuisances

The main implications from the demolition process will be from vehicle movements, dust from the demolition material and noise from demolition process and machinery.

Given the modest extent of the demolition works, it is not considered that there will be excessive dust from the process. However, jet washes and other techniques will be used should the dust suppression measures become necessary.

In terms of noise, the supporting information indicates that the demolition will take place Monday to Friday 08:00 to 17:00.

Given the short demolition period and the operating hours, it is considered that whilst there will be some localised impacts from noise and dust, these impacts will be short in duration and predictable for the duration of the temporary period. As such, the impacts will be of no more than local significance and therefore not require consideration by EIA.

Risk of accidents

As the site is in close proximity to residential properties there is potential for accidents from falling debris and moving vehicles.

The site will be enclosed by a hoarding which prevent road users and pedestrian from coming too close the site, and the demolition activities, and to prevent any unauthorised access when the site is closed.

Location of development

Existing land use

The buildings have been used for residential purposes.

The buildings are not listed and do not fall within the Conservation Area. The buildings are not considered to be architectural or historical interest and are in a poor condition having fallen into disrepair.

There is vegetation on the site in the form of trees the majority of which would be retained and would not be affected by the demolition process. Two trees require removal to facilitate the demolition.

The site is also not known for its ecological or archaeological value. The supporting information submitted indicates that whilst the building has been surveyed for bats and birds, none were present at the time of the survey. There were, however, opportunities for bats and birds to be present but there present, and provided the building is demolished in the next 18 months, the bat and bird potential is considered to be low and therefore there will be no significantly impacts on ecology as a result of the demolition.

The demolition process will remove the slab but will not involve and significant breaking of ground which would require any ground conditions to be dealt with at the site.

On this basis, the demolition site is not considered to be an environmentally sensitive location and therefore the demolition process does not require consideration by an EIA.

Relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area

The site is not known to contain any natural resources that would be affected by the development.

Absorption capacity of the natural environment

As has been detailed above the site does not lie within any site that has been allocated or known for its ecological or biodiversity value. However, the site has the potential to support bats and birds but the potential to impact on them is considered to be low at this present time.

In terms of air quality, the demolition process will create dust and emissions from vehicle movements. It is considered that whilst there will be emissions into the atmosphere, it is not considered that this will be of a significant level that will be detrimental to the environment and will not be of more than local significance.

There will be a requirement to close the footway in front of the demolition site for some or all of the demolition. This is in order to make the local environment safe. This may cause some short term localised disruption but the impact is considered predictable and does not require consideration by an EIA.

It is therefore considered that the impacts on the natural environment will not be of more local significance and the impacts of the construction can be carefully managed to minimise any impacts on and nearby sensitive receptors. On that basis the development is unlikely to give rise to any significant impacts and therefore consideration by an EIA is not considered necessary.

Characteristics of the potential impact

There will be no transfrontier impact as a result of the development.

The loss of the buildings will be permanent and non-reversible in that it would change the visual character of site. It is anticipated that the site will be redeveloped at some point in the future.

There will be noise and traffic from the proposed demolition works which will cause some localised impacts in terms of traffic congestion on the local highway network and noise from the plant and machinery. However, I consider that these impacts are not of a magnitude that warrant consideration by an EIA.

In terms of the duration, frequency and reversibility of the impacts, it is acknowledged that demolition activity will have impacts for the duration of the process. However, this will be limited with the majority of the waste being taken off site or recycled to repair the building.

Paragraph 58 of Appendix 2 of the NPPG (Screening Checklist)

Paragraph 58, contained within appendix 2 of the NPPG, provides a screening checklist as to which types of cases in which an EIA is more likely to be required for particular types of developments.

This goes on to state that an EIA is unlikely to be required for the redevelopment of land unless the new development is on a significantly greater scale than the previous use, or the types of impact are of a markedly different nature or there is a high level of contamination.

For sites which have not previously been intensively developed the following criteria is relevant:

- (i) area of the scheme is more than 5 hectares; or
- (ii) it would provide a total of more than 10,000 m² of new commercial floorspace; or
- (iii) the development would have significant urbanising effects in a previously non-urbanised area (e.g. a new development of more than 1,000 dwellings).

Given that the site has been previously intensively developed, and is currently vacant, there will be a marked change in the scale of activities taking place at the site and their nature. However, the demolition works are significantly below the thresholds above.

The levels of traffic and noise from the demolition process will be of a different nature to the residential use of the surrounding area and there will be noise from the machinery and plant throughout the day. This will also place additional traffic on the highway network and general noise in the local vicinity for a temporary period. That said, whilst there will be noise and disturbance from the site, it is considered that this is not of a scale significantly greater than the previous use and therefore not require consideration by an EIA.

Mitigation if development is not EIA development 'General Provisions relating to Screenings' Under Part 2 Regulation 5

Regulation 5 (5) (b) and paragraph 18 of the NPPG states "if it is determined that proposed development is not EIA development, state any features of the proposed development and measures envisaged to avoid, or prevent what might otherwise have been, significant adverse effects on the environment".

As detailed above it is considered that the potential impacts from a development of this nature are as follows:

- Visual/landscape character;
- Heritage and archaeology;
- Ecology and biodiversity;
- Traffic and access;
- Air quality and pollution;
- Use of resources including water;
- Creation of waste;
- Land contamination;
- Noise/dust/emissions from construction and operations of the development; and
- Cumulative impacts.

It is considered that whilst some there will be environmental impacts associated with this development, these can be suitably mitigated against. This is detailed below:

- Visual amenity/landscape character – The site development does not contain any significant green infrastructure of vegetation and is characterised by a poor quality building. The proposal seeks to demolish the building and level the site. The clearing of the site will have a neutral impact on the local area until the site is developed. The changes to the visual amenity of the local area are modest in the context of the site and do not warrant consideration by EIA.
- Heritage and archaeology – The site is not located in an area known for its heritage assets or below ground archaeology. On this basis, consideration by an EIA is not considered necessary.
- Ecology and biodiversity – It is considered that there will be limited impact on the ecology. The buildings have a low potential to support bats and birds. Should any be found during the demolition process, suitable mitigation can be introduced to protect them. Overall, the proposal will result in a neutral impact on local ecology and biodiversity thereby not warranting consideration by EIA.
- Traffic and access –The proposal will not have any significant impact on traffic flows or car parking in the local area. The short duration of the demolition process will mean there would be some localised impacts on the highway such as the closure of the footway and availability of on street parking. However, such impacts can be managed through careful management of the highway during this time. The proposal will ensure that the highway remains suitable from an operational perspective.
- Air quality and pollution – There will be cars and demolition vehicles present at the site which will generate emissions together with dust from the demolition process. However, such impacts can be carefully mitigated through appropriate management and dust suppression measures. In any event, the emissions from the site are considered to be short term for duration of the temporary period.
- Use of resources including water – The proposal will not utilise any resources which are in short supply.
- Creation of waste – The proposal is not considered to generate any unnecessary waste and any waste that is generated can be recycled.

- Land contamination – The land is not complex in this regard and there will be no excavation or removal of soil from the site.
- Noise – Noise and disturbance can be carefully managed at the site within the reasonable hours proposed for the demolition process together with management and use of appropriate equipment to minimise noise.
- Cumulative impacts – The development site is located in an area of significant change. However, there is no known level of activity in the area which would have a cumulative impact with this development at this present time.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that this development will have some impact on the surrounding area. However, it has been judged that these will not be significant to warrant a formal Environmental Impact Assessment. Therefore, the opinion of the City Council, as Local Planning Authority, is that an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required in this instance.

This screening opinion relates to the requirements of an Environmental Impact Assessment only.

There is no known development proposals for the site if demolition is to take place. Any future proposal will clearly need to be the subject of a separate screening for EIA.