



**MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL**

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27 March 2025

Dear Mr Oliver Timmins

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT)
(ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2017 (AS AMENDED)**

**FORMAL SCREENING REQUEST FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
'SCREENING' UNDER PART 2 REGULATION 6**

**PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AT NEW QUAY STREET, QUAY STREET,
LOWER BYROM STREET AND BYROM STREET.**

SCREENING OPINION ADOPTED BY MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Thank you for your letter dated 7 March 2025 respect to your request for a screening opinion at the above site.

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 your letter, the site location plan and the supporting appendices.

I have now had a chance to consider your screening request and I outline my response below.

The proposal type is listed in category 10 (f) Construction of Roads of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England) Regulations 2017. The proposal would include works covering an area that exceeds 1 hectare, which is the threshold set out in Schedule 2 Category 10 (f) of the EIA Regulations, and, as such, the development is likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location.

Your letter of the 7 March 2025 asks the question if an EIA is required or not.

Within the Planning Policy Guidance (PPG), 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).

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

CONTEXT AND PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The site is within the St John's area of Manchester City Centre and the development involves the provision of an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order Scheme (ETRO). The works are proposed as this area has been identified as a site of poor traffic flows, rat running and an area of poor quality.

TfGM have carried out future traffic and air quality modelling within this area which shows the site is forecast to exceed the UK limits for Nitrogen dioxide emissions (NO₂) in the near future.

The total site area affected by the changes is considered to cover 7.5 hectares (ha). The roads related to the development are New Quay Street, Quay Street, Lower Byrom Street and Byrom Street.

The site is located in the Manchester Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). There are no statutory or non-statutory designations for nature conservation at the development site or in the immediate vicinity.

The proposal is outlined as follows:

- Camera enforced prohibition of driving restriction except for buses, hackney carriages and permit holders to section along Lower Byrom Street
- Road closure on Byrom Street through use of modal filter (planters) allowing only pedestrians and cycles

Through the implementation of the proposed measures, this should provide improvements to the local air quality of the area. The works are for a temporary period and the air quality will be monitored during this period.

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

- Traffic and Transport
- Visual Impact
- Heritage & Archaeology
- Air Quality
- Ecology
- Noise and Vibration

- Ground conditions
- Water resources and drainage
- Cumulative effects

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

Characteristics of Development

Size of Development

The site covers an area of approximately 7.5h hectares (ha) and the size of the development exceeds the threshold of 1 hectares. The works will result in the restriction of vehicle use (except buses & taxis/permit holders) to a section along Lower Byrom Street and also modal filter to Byrom Street to only allow pedestrian and cyclist through.

The works are considered to reduce traffic flow within the area and improve air quality which would benefit local residents, cyclists and pedestrians. Whilst this would result in modifications to the highway network these are not more than local significance and would not warrant consideration by an EIA.

On this basis, whilst a proposal of this scale and nature would have some impacts it is considered that this would not be of more than local significance and would not be of a scale of 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.

At this present time, there is a low level of development activity in the area and the construction process related to these proposed works is likely to be for a short period of time. Therefore, it is not anticipated that there will be cumulative impacts from construction traffic, noise and air quality during the construction phase.

Use of natural resources

The site is not known to contain any natural resources. In addition, given the scale of the development, it is not believed that a development of this nature would require any excessive use of natural resources in the construction process that are in short supply.

It is therefore considered the use of natural resources would not be significant in respect of this development and therefore does not warrant consideration by an EIA.

Production of waste

The construction process is likely to generate waste such as concrete, tarmac and soil. However, this is considered to be minimal due to the small scale and nature of the works.

Any waste will be removed from site in accordance with the relevant regulations in relation to the disposal and treatment of waste (particularly contaminated waste).

It is considered the production of waste would not be significant, localised in nature and predictable and therefore do not require consideration by an EIA.

Pollution and nuisances

The construction process is not likely to give rise to any pollutants which are hazardous, toxic or noxious. However, it is acknowledged there would be dust, noise, vibrations and traffic from the construction phases which requires consideration.

In terms of the construction phase, there would be dust, noise and vibrations from the breaking of the ground and site excavation along with the use of plant and machinery in association with the installation of a CCTV column/pole.

In addition, construction vehicles would generate traffic with HGVs using the local highway network. This would result in noise and disturbance in the local area which could give rise to disruption to nearby residents.

Vehicles would need to travel along main routes which contain a mixture of commercial and residential developments. Vehicle movements are likely to be noticeable to local residents and businesses in these areas. The characteristics of the local highway network provide direct access onto the main routes minimising disruption in the local area.

The supporting information indicates that works will take place during normal working hours between 9am and 5pm.

Such effects would only be temporary in nature for the duration of the construction period and therefore predictable and do not require consideration by an EIA.

In terms of the operational phases of the development, the control of traffic flow along Lower Byrom Street and prioritising pedestrian/cyclists to Byrom Street, once adopted will minimise traffic and air pollution.

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

The main risks in terms of a development would be in respect to contamination of land and/or water to the river from spillages and leak.

It has been identified that a historic underground canal tunnel runs beneath the site, from the Bridgewater Hall to the River Irwell. The breaking of ground to install associated CCTV measures is not anticipated to be at such depth that would result in any impact to this structure.

Additionally, it is not considered that the construction or the operational stages of the development pose a significant risk given the existing conditions at the site and the substances that are likely to be used, particularly in the construction process.

It is considered that given the scale and nature of the development, such impacts are not likely to be of more than local significance, short in duration and predictable. In

addition, the development is not likely to give rise to any risks to human health from dangerous substances.

Location of development

Existing land use

The development site is considered to be previously developed land and is in use as a highway.

There is no known archaeology at the site. As such, it is considered that it is of no more than local significance and therefore does not warrant consideration by an EIA.

The site is located within Flood Zone 1 which is an area of low risk of flooding. The works are not anticipated to result in any additional impact on surface water run off compared to the existing situation.

It is considered there could be land contamination at the site. The supporting information indicates that precautions will be taken on site to limit the risk of this happening. The development proposal does not warrant consideration by an EIA on this basis given that the contamination levels are no more than local significance and suitable mitigation can be prepared.

The works are limited to the highway and there will be no impact on biodiversity.

It is therefore considered that the impacts on the natural environment will not be of more than 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.

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

The sites are not designated for its ecological interest and there are no international or nationally protected sites near to the development site.

The proposal would not see the removal of street trees. The site is not known for its ecological value and therefore such impacts can be managed as part of the process and would therefore not require consideration by an EIA.

The development site falls within the Manchester City Centre Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Whilst the construction phase is likely to generate vehicles movements that would release emissions into the atmosphere, along with dust from the construction process, it is not considered that this would be significant and detrimental to the environment in the long term with such impacts being predictable and manageable.

In terms of the operational phase, following the implementation of measures, the traffic flow within this area will be lessened. This is targeted to minimise any significant impacts on local air quality conditions within this area.

Overall, it is considered that the impacts on the natural environment would be of no more than local significance from the operational aspects of the development and the impacts from the construction phase 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

The erection proposed development, would result in a temporary change to the appearance of the sites whilst the ETRO takes place. The visual impacts of the new development, particularly from the scale, would alter the visual amenity of the sites and how they are viewed and used in the local area. However, it is considered that such changes are of no more than local significance with the development being small scale within the context of the scale, height and form of buildings in the local area.

There would be noise, vibrations and traffic from the construction phase of the development. However, I consider these impacts are not of a magnitude of more than local significance and therefore do not warrant consideration by an EIA.

The construction activities would be short term, predictable and temporary in nature. When the development is complete there would be a minor temporary change in the visual amenity of the area which could only be reserved if the development was not to be made permanent.

On that basis, I do not consider that impacts from the development would be of more than local significance and therefore do not require consideration by an EIA.

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 significant 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).

The development does not meet this relevant criteria.

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:

- Traffic and Transport
- Visual Impact
- Heritage & Archaeology
- Air Quality
- Ecology
- Noise and Vibration
- Ground conditions
- Water resources and drainage
- Cumulative effects

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

- Traffic and Transport – Traffic and highway implications from the construction aspects of the site can be mitigated through a highway management plan being implemented for the duration of the construction works. There would be minimal impact from the operation of the development as there would be local parking restrictions, thereby reducing vehicular traffic through the local area.
- Heritage and archaeology – The application site borders numerous listed buildings and neighbours the St Johns Conservation Area to the west. The nature of the proposed works is not considered would fundamentally alter the setting or significance of said heritage assets and as such any impact would be minimal highway improvements.
- Air quality – Mitigation can be put in place to minimise impact on local air quality during the construction through a dust suppression strategy and reducing vehicle emissions through not leaving construction vehicles idle. The impact on local air quality would be minimised during the operation of the development by reducing vehicle traffic flow in the area.
- Noise and vibration – The proposal would generate a degree of noise from comings and goings in the local area both during the construction and operations of the development. Mitigation can be put in place during the construction in the form of a construction management strategy.
- Ground conditions – The land is not complex in this regard and mitigation can be put in place in the form of a remediation strategy to deal with any contamination found.
- Ecology – The site is not known to have any ecological value of note.
- Water resources – The proposal would not utilise any resources which are in short supply. There is also an existing drainage strategy for the site which would ensure that surface water is managed effectively as part of the development.

CONCLUSION

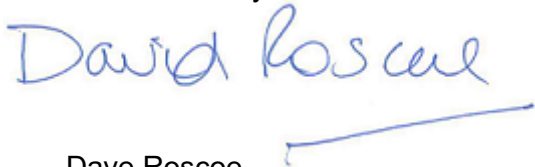
This response is based on the letter of the 7 March 2025 from Mr Oliver Trimmins of MCC Highways.

It is concluded that this development would have some impact on the surrounding area. However, it has been judged that these would 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 and does not imply or confer any approval of such a proposal.

I trust this information is of some assistance to you. Should you require anything further please do not hesitate to contact **James Bridgman**.

Yours sincerely



Dave Roscoe
Deputy Director of Planning