

Comments for Planning Application 142535/FO/2025

Application Summary

Application Number: 142535/FO/2025

Address: 140 Great Ancoats Street Manchester M4 6DU

Proposal: Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 2no. new buildings providing up to 758 apartments (Use Class C3), Class E floorspace (comprising flexible office accommodation (Use Class Eg(i)) and Class Ea and b) and associated hard and soft landscaping (including works within the public highway), formation of vehicle accesses and servicing access together with associated works.

Case Officer: Lucy Harrison

Customer Details

Name: Not Available

Address: Not Available

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of the Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: We understand that The Manchester Residential Quality Guidance provides the baseline minimum requirements and mandatory standards that all new residential proposals will be required to satisfy or exceed in order to be considered sustainable development. It requires developers, throughout the planning and development process, to help identify and articulate the contribution of their development towards the neighbourhood, the block and the home.

writing to object to the Proposed Development (Planning Ref. 142535/FO/2025) for 50-storey and 26-storey residential towers on the Stockton's Furniture site off Great Ancoats Street. The Proposed Developer is undermining residents' quality of life in the neighbourhood. They violate the baseline minimum requirements and mandatory standards as required in the Manchester Residential Quality Guidance. Our objections focus on:

1. Tremendous reduction of daylight
2. Loss of privacy
3. Traffic congestion
4. Wind

Each of the above concerns is elaborated below with supports by peer reviewed research articles and official documents. (List of reference is attached at the end of this writing.) I urge the Council to turn down the application in its current design.

1. Substantial reduction of daylight

We noted the Planning and Tall Building Statement by Turley (Mar 2025) and the Supplementary Daylight Report by GIA (22 Apr 2025). According to the documents, it is unquestionable that the Proposed Development has an enormous daylight impact on Oxygen Tower.

In the Planning and Tall Building Statement P.56 and P.86, they clearly state that there are "major adverse effects identified". However, the report ignores the concern and does not address the issue.

Also, in the GIA Supplementary Daylight Report (22 April 2025) paragraph 1.5, it has acknowledged that "overall magnitude of daylight change on Oxygen will be high". In here, they try to address the issue. They quote a less stringent baseline purporting to adopt BRE document "Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight- A guide to good practice". We noted the full BRE document and find that the GIA report is quoting something totally irrelevant. It is extracted below the two paragraphs H6 and H7 in Appendix H - Environment impact assessment which GIA used :

"H6: Where the loss of skylight or sunlight does not meet the guidelines in this document, the impact is assessed as minor, moderate or major adverse. Factors tending towards a minor adverse impact include:

- only a small number of windows or limited area of open space are affected
- the loss of light is only marginally outside the guidelines
- an affected room has other sources of skylight or sunlight
- the affected building or open space only has a low-level requirement for skylight or sunlight
- there are particular reasons why an alternative, less stringent, guideline should be applied, for example, an overhang above the window or a window standing unusually close to the boundary."

We can see from the above that all impacts assessed as minor do not apply to Oxygen Tower. In other words, the impact to Oxygen Tower is not minor. The so-called alternative, less stringent guideline quoted by the GIA Report "a window standing unusually close to the boundary" is actually unrelated to the situation.

It is also extracted below the BRE document listing out the major adverse impacts:

"H7: Factors tending towards a major adverse impact include:

- a large number of windows or large area of open space are affected
- the loss of light is substantially outside the guidelines
- all the windows in a particular property are affected
- the affected indoor or outdoor spaces have a particularly strong requirement for skylight or sunlight, e.g. a living room in a dwelling or a children's playground."

We can see that all the major adverse impacts in H7 apply to the effect of the Proposed Development on Oxygen Tower. After reading the BRE document, we are very convinced that the

overall magnitude of daylight change should be considered as a significant adverse effect on Oxygen Tower. That is, there will be severe daylight reduction to Oxygen Tower residents.

Many research has shown that reduction in daylight will adversely affect our health, either physiological e.g. headache, activity level, heart attack, insomnia and cancer or psychological e.g. depression, burn-out, SAD, mental distress and suicide (Aries, Aarts, & Hoof, 2015). Moreover, the substantial reduction in daylight of neighbourhood is against the principal of planning policies on amenity, well-being, and sustainable development. In Manchester Residential Quality Guidance (Mar 2017) P. 112, it explicitly states that "New development should seek to minimise loss of daylight to neighbouring residential properties, complying with statutory requirements and best practice". Obviously, the Proposed Development has not complied with the guideline. This our first reason for objection.

2. Loss of privacy for Oxygen Tower residents

Oxygen Tower is a residential development. It is a home for many. In the UK, home is widely viewed as a space that offers individuals privacy away from the public. According to Manchester Residential Quality Guidance (Mar 2017) P.107 "A home is a very personal place; it is where we spend our time with loved ones or enjoy in private". Home and privacy are not only related but it is assumed that we should have privacy at home. Privacy is an important aspect of culture and has been shown to have an impact on peoples' mental health (Evans et al., 1989; Asgarzadeh, Lusk, Koga, & Hirate, 2012). There are many ways to define privacy. According to Lindsay, Williams, & Dair (2010), overlooking has been identified as an important intrusion of privacy at home. Our home should be protected from overlooking that allow us to relax. It is a place of retreat after a day's hard work. Research by Zarghami, Karimimoshaver, Ghanbaran, & SaadatiVaghar (2019) suggests that tall buildings on each side of the road should have a distance of 30meter or above.

The Proposed Development plans to construct residential units with windows facing Oxygen Tower. Store Street is just a narrow 2-lane street. Residents in both developments would look directly into each other's home. The effect is amplified with the building design of Oxygen Tower - the living room and the bedroom are facing in the same direction. That is, residents are exposed to the neighbours' eyes 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. This is a kind of psychological invasion.

The Planning and Tall Building Statement by Turley (March 2025) has identified that the nearest residential properties are those within the Oxygen development on Store Street. However, the report has ignored the issue. This is our second reason for objection.

3. Traffic congestion

According to the Non-technical Summary (March 2025) by Turley, paragraph 2.15 states that "the existing 40 car parking spaces will be removed from Site, and no spaces will be provided within the Proposed Scheme. It is expected that the majority of trips to and from the Site will be made by modes other than the private car". Although the proposed development is located within the city centre, in an accessible location for walking, cycling and public transport, it is beyond imagination

that a development with 758 apartments proposes no on-site car parking. People still want a car in holidays to tour other parts of the country, visit their relatives and friends, or just enjoy driving through the beautiful scenery in country side. According to the Car Ownership: Evidence Review (June 2024) by National Centre for Social Research, it states that "Households in Great Britain and England with access to one or more cars has steadily increased, from 52% in 1971 to 78% in 2022. Over this period, the proportion of households with one car has remained at around 45% and the proportion with two or more vehicles has increased from 8% to 34%". With these numbers, it is unrealistic to assume that all 758 households would not own any cars. Since the Proposed Development will not provide car park, those vehicles will seek space in surrounding areas or other developments. This overspill parking will create big problem to the already heavily parked and congested neighbourhood. It will lead to illegal parking and cause safety problem for pedestrians and other citizens. This does not meet the requirement in National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) when considering a development proposal. The Council should turn down an application that leads to potential safety problem of citizens.

4. Wind

Construction of the two tall buildings will change wind flow patterns around the Proposed Development. It is necessary to conduct computer modelling and other testing to determine how winds would move around the buildings and how it affects the safety and comfort of people in the neighbourhood.

In the Non-technical Summary (March 2015) by Turley, paragraph 5.17 identifies that "In the vicinity of the taller elements of the Proposed Scheme (Building A), where wind speeds could reach levels that could have significant effects on the safety of pedestrians; and where wind speeds could reach levels that could have significant effects on the pedestrian comfort when walking /sitting around the site". Even with the implementation of additional design measures, the Proposed Development is considered to have a significant and adverse wind comfort effect at Ducie Street i.e. there will be some discomfort from stronger wind conditions when walking in this location at times during winter. Similar conclusion has been drawn in the Wind Microclimate Report (12 March 2025) by ArcAero. On P.3, it states that some areas still exceed comfort criteria during windier seasons, primarily in winter. This adverse effect on neighbourhood violates The Manchester Residential Quality Guidance. This is our fourth reason for objection.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this proposal in its present form would have tremendous adverse effects on the surrounding area and community. The enormous scale of the towers significantly impact existing residents' privacy and daylight, and the lack of on-site parking in such a huge development would lead to traffic congestion, parking chaos, and safety issues in the city-centre. These are all material planning considerations that conflict with local and national policy.

We are the first owner who bought the apartment through an estate agent in Hong Kong directly from the developer. The spectacular view of oxygen was one of the major factors featured by the

developer which they are still doing on their Facebook. Now it seems like a trap for overseas investors like us. This will certainly affect the goodwill and reputation of UK developments of high-rise buildings and deter the growing demands from overseas purchasers from Hong Kong who are particularly interested in buying apartments.

We sincerely ask Manchester City Council to refuse planning permission for application 142535/FO/2025.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

References

Aries, M., Aarts, M., & van Hoof, J. (2015). Daylight and health: A review of the evidence and consequences for the built environment. *Lighting Research & Technology* (London, England: 2001), 47(1), 6-27. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1477153513509258>

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Non-technical Summary (March 2025) by Turley. https://pa.manchester.gov.uk/online-applications/files/98FD424AAD4D4E9AFFF4E102F0AC8DFF/pdf/142535_FO_2025-ES_VOL_4_NON-TECHNICAL_SUMMARY-2673978.pdf

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https://pa.manchester.gov.uk/online-applications/files/8F19CF8F1D94DCCB40F2501ABE1C11F8/pdf/142535_FO_2025-PLANNING___TALL_BUILDING_STATEMENT-2673979.pdf

Wind Microclimate Report (12 March 2025) by Architectural Aerodynamics Ltd (ArcAero).

https://pa.manchester.gov.uk/online-applications/files/1D83BDFCA7BCAF751766B0152F29BE9B/pdf/142535_FO_2025-ES_VOL_2_APPENDIX_9.1_WIND_MICROCLIMATE_REPORT-2673981.pdf

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