

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: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: To: Manchester City Council Planning Department

Subject: Objection to Planning Application 142535/FO/2025 - Proposed Redevelopment of the Stockton's Furniture Site, Great Ancoats Street

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to submit a formal objection to planning application 142535/FO/2025 concerning the proposed redevelopment of the former Stockton's Furniture site on Great Ancoats Street. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] - and I, along with many other residents, will be severely and unacceptably affected by the scheme as currently proposed.

This objection is based on several key material planning concerns, including:

Severe loss of daylight and sunlight to existing homes

Overlooking and serious privacy infringements

Excessive scale and inappropriate massing

Total lack of parking and unsafe street-level impacts

Disruption from prolonged construction and increased post-completion noise

Inadequate disabled access provision

Absence of affordable or social housing

Failure to meaningfully consult with the local community

If approved, this development would prioritise height and yield over liveability and wellbeing, and would result in long-term, irreversible harm to the existing community.

1. Severe Loss of Daylight to Existing Homes

The applicant's own daylight/sunlight assessment (GIA, April 2025) concedes that the impact on Oxygen Tower would be of a "high magnitude", with many windows facing the site seeing their Vertical Sky Component (VSC) reduced to the mid-teens or lower - with some dropping into single digits.

This is well below the BRE Guidelines (2022), which recommend a VSC of at least 27% or no more than a 20% reduction. For many affected homes, the retained VSC would be under 50% of current levels. That represents a drastic and harmful reduction in natural light and is not acceptable in a high-density residential environment.

The developer attempts to justify this impact by comparing it against a hypothetical "mirror building" (BRE Para H6) - a fictional massing scenario that has never existed and which conveniently masks the real extent of loss. Planning decisions should not be based on imaginary constructs, but on actual, observable conditions.

2. Overlooking and Loss of Privacy

The towers - especially the proposed 50-storey block - would be just metres away from homes in Oxygen. Hundreds of new windows and balconies would face directly into existing apartments, terraces, and private spaces across Store Street.

The proposed separation distance is far below acceptable norms for tall buildings in a residential context. This would create a permanent sense of being watched, with residents in Oxygen losing the reasonable expectation of privacy, peace, and quiet enjoyment of their homes.

3. Excessive Height and Inappropriate Design

The proposal exceeds the height cap set out in Manchester's own planning guidance. The East Village Central Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) sets a limit of 45 storeys, yet the developer is proposing 50 storeys, ignoring adopted local policy.

The scale and massing are completely out of character with the surrounding area, which includes Piccadilly Village, Ancoats and New Islington - all defined by a more human-scale built environment. This is speculative overdevelopment, not context-sensitive urban design.

4. Lack of Parking, Unsafe Streets, and Emergency Access Risks

Despite comprising over 750 residential units and commercial space, the development proposes no on-site parking - not even a single space for disabled users. This is highly unrealistic, even in a central location with good transport links.

The absence of parking will force future residents and visitors to use neighbouring streets, adding to already congested conditions. Existing residents already deal with problematic loading, unsafe drop-offs, and illegal parking. This development would worsen the situation significantly - with no credible mitigation strategy proposed.

5. Noise, Disruption, and Overloaded Infrastructure

The construction phase - likely to take several years - will involve constant noise, dust, vibration, and disruption. Many residents in Oxygen work from home, have children, or are vulnerable. The long-term impact on physical and mental wellbeing has not been properly addressed.

Once completed, the scheme will inject over 1,000 new residents and significant commercial activity into the area. There is no clear plan for managing increased demand on local infrastructure, transport, waste management, or public services.

6. Inadequate Provision for Disabled Users

The application includes no step-free drop-off zones or dedicated disabled parking spaces. Instead, the applicant suggests disabled residents or visitors might rely on valet services or off-site provision. This is not only impractical - it is discriminatory.

Manchester has made a public commitment to becoming the most accessible city in Europe. This development fails even the most basic expectations for inclusive design.

7. No Affordable or Social Housing

For a scheme of this size - one of the largest residential applications in Manchester in recent years - the absence of any affordable housing is unacceptable.

This is a luxury-led development, designed purely for investor returns. It contributes nothing to local housing needs or social equity, and sets a dangerous precedent for zero-contribution schemes in the city centre.

8. No Genuine Engagement with Residents

Despite multiple attempts by residents at Oxygen to contact the developer during the consultation process, no meaningful engagement has taken place. There have been no public meetings, no

follow-up responses, and no willingness to address concerns.

This is not in line with the NPPF's emphasis on community consultation or the Council's own expectations around resident involvement in large-scale schemes. Public consultation should not be a box-ticking exercise.

9. These Are Material Planning Considerations

Every point raised above relates to valid, material planning grounds for objection. These include:

Loss of daylight/sunlight (amenity)

Overlooking and loss of privacy

Scale, massing, and visual impact

Inadequate infrastructure and parking

Impact on public realm and local services

Lack of affordable housing

Failure to meet accessibility requirements

Failure of consultation

This is not opposition to development itself - it is a demand for responsible, people-centred planning.

Conclusion: This Scheme Must Be Refused or Radically Redrawn

In its current form, this proposal would cause unacceptable harm to existing residents and offers no meaningful benefit to the local community. It breaches guidance, worsens quality of life, and fails to meet the standards of sustainable or inclusive development.

I respectfully urge the Council to:

Refuse the application outright, or

At minimum, defer the decision and demand a full redesign incorporating:

Reduced height and density

Increased separation from existing buildings

On-site parking and step-free disabled access

Affordable housing contributions

A realistic daylight/sunlight strategy

Genuine community engagement

Manchester residents deserve better - and we ask the Council to protect our homes, our quality of life, and our shared future in the city.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please find supporting images attached.

Yours faithfully,

[Redacted signature block]