

Julie Roscoe
Director of Planning , Building
Control & Licensing Telephone:
+44 (0)161 234 4524
sue.wills@manchester.gov.uk
PO Box 532 Town Hall Manchester
M60 2LA

Ms Ellie Philcox,
Euan Kellie Property Solutions,
Neo,
9 Charlotte Street,
Manchester.
M1 4ET

Our reference: Crabtree Lane screening

Your reference: Date 14th February 2025

Dear Ellie Philcox,

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT)
(ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2017 FORMAL SCREENING REQUEST FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT 'SCREENING' UNDER PART 2
REGULATION 6**

Former Crabtree Forge site, Land at Crabtree 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 content of the request for a screening opinion document, and of the time extension agreed by the planning agent until 19th February 2025 to consider the screening opinion request.

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 2017, as the development includes more than 150 dwellings.

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. These criteria which must be taken into account in determining whether a development is likely to have significant effects on the environment. The criteria are 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 the proposed residential development with new vehicular accesses from an upgraded Crabtree Lane together with associated works at the site.

CONTEXT

The proposed development site relates to the former Crabtree Forge site on land at Crabtree Lane to the south of the Ashton Canal.

The site covers an area of approximately 2.8 ha, and comprises industrial buildings, hard surfaced areas and large areas covered with self-seeded vegetation, including trees.

To the north of the site is the Ashton Canal which is a Grade A Site of Biological Importance. The canal is separated from the site by a towpath and a haul road, which served the former waste transfer site, which forms part of the proposed development site.

The wider area comprises a mix of uses, including commercial/industrial sites, and retail stores to the north and northeast of the site beyond the Ashton Canal, the Strawberry Duck public house to the northwest of the site, and industrial and warehouse premises and open land to the west of the site. An allotment site, Higher Openshaw Community School and open land lie to the east of the site with residential development to the south. The above details demonstrate the character of the area within which the works would be situated.

It is understood that the demolition of the existing buildings on-site is due to take place imminently, following the positive determination of the prior approval for demolition application reference: 141725/DEM/2024 on 8th January 2025.

The application to which this screening opinion relates, would involve the development of 194 dwellings (Class C3) with new vehicular accesses from an upgraded Crabtree Lane and associated works.

ASSESSMENT

As detailed above, an assessment is provided, based on the three criteria within Schedule 3 of the regulations.

Characteristics of Development

The proposed development site relates to the former Crabtree Forge site at Crabtree Lane to the south of the Ashton Canal and would involve the erection of 194 dwellings (Class C3) with new vehicular accesses from an upgraded Crabtree Lane and associated works. The scheme comprises a mix of both apartments (70 no.) and dwellinghouses (124 no.). This includes 1 bed and 2 bed apartments across 4 no. apartment blocks comprising 4 storeys; and 2 bed, 3 bed and 4 bed dwellinghouses of two and three storeys. The proposed four apartment blocks are shown as being sited alongside the Ashton Canal, with the remainder of the site comprising dwellinghouses fronting onto existing and new highways. The layout also includes an area of open space.

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 assessing 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 located in an area of change. A development of 6 no. units (Use Classes E(g) (iii) B2 and B8) with access and servicing arrangements, car parking, landscaping and associated work is proposed to the north of the Ashton Canal on the former Walkers Printworks site on Crabtree Lane. Within the area there are also likely to be other developments taking place in proximity to each other, but these are localised and impacts arising are predictable and not significant in nature and therefore does not require consideration by an EIA.

Use of natural resources

The site is not a known area containing any natural resources. In addition, given the scale of the development, it is not believed that this would require the excessive usage of any natural resources in the development process. There would be some use of water (for dust suppression within the site and on the adjacent highway), and fuel for vehicles associated with the development, but this is not considered to be of a level which would have serious environmental impacts and is only temporary for the duration of the development process.

Production of waste

The development element of the project is likely to produce an amount of waste, but this is expected to be limited and could be mitigated through the potential for recycling and re-use of materials. Whilst there is an amount of waste to be generated at the site, it is not considered that the levels would give rise to a significant environmental impact as a result of the development, would be localised

in nature and predictable, and is likely to be of no more than local significance, and therefore does not require consideration by an EIA.

Pollution and nuisances

The development process will produce dust, noise and vibration from the works and use of machinery. Additional traffic will be present on the highway network from vehicles associated with the construction process, particularly heavy goods vehicles, resulting in noise and emissions in the immediate area which would give rise to disruption to local residents and businesses for the duration of the construction period. However, these impacts will be temporary, and intermittent, but predictable in duration during the period of works.

An Air Quality Assessment has been undertaken to assess potential impacts associated with fugitive dust emissions during the construction phase of the proposed development; assess potential impacts associated with road transport emissions during the operational phase of the proposed development; and identify any requirement for relevant mitigation measures. It is considered that the use of the identified site-specific control measures would provide suitable mitigation for a development of this size and nature and reduce potential impacts to an acceptable level.

Potential impacts during the operational phase of the proposals would be in relation to road traffic exhaust emissions associated with vehicles travelling to and from the development. The assessment, however, suggests that air quality impacts as a result of traffic generated by the development were not predicted to be significant at any sensitive location in the vicinity of the site.

Some noise impacts will inevitably occur through the construction period, and in association with the commercial/ industrial uses to the north and west of the site, and with the potential for school playground noise from the south. Noise associated with the construction period can be managed and mitigation through an appropriately worded construction environmental management plan and is considered to be localised in nature. In regard to the proposed development, it is considered that the noise in the locality is not so significant that mitigation measures could be incorporated within any future development to enable appropriate internal noise levels to be achieved.

As such, the effects not considered to be significant in this context particularly due to urban and suburban character of areas around the site. Such impacts are therefore not considered to be of a scale which is more than local significance and therefore do not warrant consideration as part of an EIA.

Risk of accidents

As the site is accessed by nearby roads and footways, there is potential for accidents from falling debris and moving vehicles. Furthermore, whilst in general terms the area is not considered to be environmentally sensitive, the Ashton Canal which lies adjacent to the site is a Grade A SBI, and there is potential for impacts from falling debris into the Ashton Canal, due to the limited separation distance. It is, however, considered that this can be managed to avoid any hazardous effects

through management of development activities and surface water run-off, and this matter is localised in nature. Given the scope of works and the above measures, it is considered that potential risks have been appropriately considered, and an EIA would not be required.

Location of development

Existing land use

The buildings on site have been there for some time and have little architectural merit. The buildings are not Listed and do not fall within a Conservation Area. In addition, there are no Tree Preservation Orders on the site and the site is not known for its ecological, biodiversity or archaeological value.

Furthermore, the site is on a low-risk area of flooding (Flood zone 1). There should be no excessive surface water run-off from the development process.

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the site has been undertaken, together with an Extended Phase One Habitat Survey and a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment of all buildings, a nocturnal survey for bats.

The site has been identified as being located adjacent to a landfill site, and given the former use of the site is likely to have contaminants within the ground, however these are not expected to be complex in nature, or to be beyond levels expected for a brownfield site of this nature. On that basis, the development site is not considered to be an environmentally sensitive site.

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 for its ecological or biodiversity value. On this basis, the impact of the development will be limited, in the long term, on the local environment.

Characteristics of the potential impact

The potential significant effects of the demolition must be considered in relation to criteria set out within Schedule 3 of EIA Regulations 2017 and discussed below:

- i. Magnitude and spatial extent of the impact - In this instance, the extent of the impact is considered to be localised only and not of significance. Construction impacts including noise, dust, vibration and vehicular activity would be limited to the site and surrounding area.
- ii. The nature of the impact - The impacts of the proposed development are outlined below:
The development site is considered to be previously developed land. The development site is formed of industrial buildings, areas of hardstanding and self-seeded trees and grass.

The former industrial buildings are not listed or located within a conservation area. The site is not the subject of any tree preservation orders.

The existing ancillary buildings within the site have very limited or negligible architectural merit, and on balance it is not considered that any visual impact would be significantly harmful to visual amenity to require consideration through an EIA.

With respect to impacts on ecology, the site has limited ecological value. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the site has been undertaken, and the site was subject to an Extended Phase One Habitat Survey and a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment of all buildings. In addition to the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, a nocturnal survey for bats has been carried out which identified two foraging bats, but with no bats were identified emerging and/or re-entering the buildings at any of the vantage points. The risk of harm or disturbance to bats is therefore limited. Precautionary mitigation measures are recommended within the Appraisal to mitigate any potential impacts on ecology during the works.

The impact on site from general construction noise and traffic may result in short term, but predictable, disruption to habitats for birds and foraging bats, but it is considered such impacts can be managed as part of the process and will therefore not require consideration by an EIA. It is considered that any impacts to ecology would be of a localised nature and not give rise to any significant effects on the environment requiring consideration through an EIA.

Whilst the proposed development works would have the potential to result in increased construction traffic, dust pollution, noise and vibration, all impacts would be medium-term, limited and appropriately managed and mitigated through working hours and practices.

On balance, taking account of all of the above considerations, it is considered that any impacts would be of a localised nature and not give rise to any significant effects on the environment requiring consideration through an EIA. The proposed development would have some impact on air quality in respect of construction work and related vehicle movement that may affect residential properties in relatively close proximity to the site. However, it is considered that the proposal would have a manageable impact on local air quality through the provision of dust suppression measures during the implementation of works with a limited scope and duration.

The site has no apparent archaeological value.

The site is located in Flood Zone 1 and is therefore not within an area with a significant risk of flooding. There should be no excessive surface water run-off from the construction process. Through a the use of Construction Environmental Management Plan, it is expected that noise, and dust can be

appropriately managed. The nature of the site means that it is likely to have historical land contamination, i.e. gas and ground conditions. It is not expected that the ground conditions would be unusual or complex, and it is not anticipated that there would be ground contamination risks arising from the proposal which would be significant in nature and would not preclude development taking place. On this basis, the development site is not considered to be environmentally sensitive site.

The site is not known to contain any natural resources that would be affected by the development. As has been detailed above the site does not lie within any site that has been allocated for its ecological or biodiversity value.

On this basis, the impact on the local environment would be limited and, on this basis, an EIA is not considered necessary.

- iii. Transboundary nature of the impact - Transboundary impacts will be limited to the transportation of material from the site. These movements will not result in significant impacts on the local highway network and would be temporary in nature. Given the scale and nature of the development, transboundary impacts would be localised and predictable, and an EIA on this basis is not required.
- iv. Intensity and complexity of the impact - As detailed within the submission, the impacts associated with development have been thoroughly assessed and understood. Through appropriate best practice measures and successful mitigation, an EIA will not be required.
- v. Probability of Impact - Through assessment of the submitted information, any impact is understood and considered to be of a localised nature. Through appropriate best practice measures and mitigation, the impacts are considered acceptable and therefore do not require assessment through an EIA.
- vi. Expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of impact - Any impact as a consequence of the above is likely to be medium term or temporary. On this basis, it is not considered that an EIA will not be required.
- vii. Cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved development - As stated in addition to small scale development in the locality, with more substantive development referenced earlier due to be implemented imminently, and impacts would be localised in nature. An EIA is not therefore required on this basis.
- viii. Possibility of effectively reducing the impact - Reducing the impact is possible through the implementation of best practice measures, effective protocols

and mitigation as outlined within the documentation. An EIA will not therefore be required.

- ix. Expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of impact – The buildings would be permanent and non-reversible in that it would change the visual character of site and how it is viewed in the urban landscape. However, the site is not considered to be environmentally sensitive, and an EIA is required to assess these issues.

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

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. It states 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 sq. metres 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).
- iv.

The redevelopment of the site for residential purposes would create some degree of additional traffic movements along the surrounding roads. However, taking account of the information provided for consideration in regard to this matter it is not considered that the development would result in significant effects to the environment and any effects would be localised in nature.

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/ character – The proposed development contains industrial buildings. It is not envisaged that demolition, associated mitigation works and subsequent development process warranting consideration by EIA would be required;

- Heritage and archaeology – The development is located in an area where there are no conservation areas, and other non-designated heritage assets in close proximity to the site. Whilst the lock on the Ashton Canal at the end of the southern section of Crabtree Lane (Lock 13) has Grade II listed status it is 13m to the northwest of the site, it is noted that a Heritage Statement to set out the significance of the heritage assets and assess whether the proposed development is likely to have any impact on this significance , together with a Archaeology Desk Based Assessment would accompany a future application submission. It is considered that any impacts would be of a localised nature, and therefore it is not envisaged that mitigation works warranting consideration by EIA would be required.

- Ecology and biodiversity – Given the nature of the proposed works, whilst it is considered that there may be some potential to impact on the ecology on the site, that this would be limited and localised impact.

- Traffic and access – The access to the site would from Crabtree Lane. Anticipated vehicular movements would be set out in a Transport Statement to accompany a future application submission. It is considered that any impacts would be of a localised nature, and therefore it is not envisaged that mitigation works warranting consideration by EIA would be required.

- Air quality and pollution – There are likely to be impacts on air quality during the demolition works and subsequent development of the site. When the development is complete any impact to air quality would be limited and localised in nature.

- Use of resources including water – The proposal will not utilise any resources which are in short supply. Measures can be adopted during the demolition and subsequent development process to minimise the impact on resources being used in a sustainable manner such as water.

- Creation of waste – The proposal will create a degree of waste. Through careful waste management arrangements during the course of the proposal, the impacts of

waste generation can be minimised which should also include efforts to recycle waste.

- Land contamination – The land is not complex in this regard. The nature of the site means that it is likely to have historical land contamination, i.e. gas and ground conditions risks. It is considered ground contamination risks arising from the proposal, would not be so significant as to prevent the demolition of the industrial buildings, and subsequent development of the site.

- Noise – During the construction phase the development is likely to generate a degree of disturbance from comings and goings in the local area.

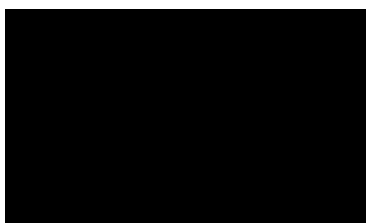
- Cumulative impacts – The development site is located in an area of significant change where there are likely to be other developments taking place in close proximity to each other. The effects of this are not considered to be of more than local significance.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above, it is concluded that the proposed redevelopment of the site would have some local impacts on the surrounding area. However, these impacts have been assessed, and it has been concluded that there would not be significant enough to be of more than local importance and therefore does not 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. This screening opinion relates to the requirements of an Environmental Impact Assessment only and does not inform in any way that the demolition is acceptable, and that prior notification would be granted.

The City Council as Local Planning Authority reserves the right to seek an Environmental Impact Assessment of any future planning submission on this site.

Yours sincerely,



Derek Jones
Strategic Planning and Projects Lead