



**MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL**

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Ellie Philcox

Via email only

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18th November 2022

Our reference: SOUTH/EIA/DidsburyPointSouthwayHousingTrust

Dear Miss Philcox,

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

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

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

**A RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT COMPRISING: Erection of a Part 8 and
Part 6 storey building to form 76 no. residential apartments (Class C3)
with ground floor medical centre use (Class E(e)) with associated car
parking provided on a two tiered decked car park, landscaping and
infrastructure**

SCREENING OPINION ADOPTED BY MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Following the submission of the planning application for the above proposed development, the Council has assessed the submission in respect of the above regulations in order to come to a formal EIA screening opinion.

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 application submission and supporting documents submitted for the Council's consideration on the 19th October 2022.

The EIA Screening process is used to determine whether the proposed development is likely to have any significant effects on the environment. The Council as local planning authority have now had a chance to consider the planning application submission against the EIA regulations and the response is outlined below.

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) Regulations 2017. It is indicated that consideration should be given by the local planning authority to potential significant effects on the environment where:

- (i) The development includes more than 1 hectare of urban development which is not dwellinghouse development; or*
- (ii) the development includes more than 150 dwellings; or*
- (iii) the overall area of the development exceeds 5 hectares*

The application submission indicates that the site area is 0.3 hectares and would provide 76 residential dwellings and ground floor commercial floorspace in the form of a medical centre and would not fall within the thresholds set out within the EIA regulations. Nevertheless, it is considered good practice to assess the proposals against the EIA regulations and the criteria in Schedule 3 of the regulations which is set out in the remainder of this letter.

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 0.3 hectares in size and comprises of previously developed land associated with the former Withington Hospital site, the majority of which has been redeveloped over the last two decades. The application documents set

out that the site is bordered by residential development to the east, whilst to the south is the four storey Didsbury High School building and associated external play areas and car parking; to the west is the part four/part five storey office building known as One Didsbury Point; to the north is a four storey building comprising ground floor commercial uses and upper floor residential apartments and to the east of the site are residential properties comprising three storey houses and part three, part four storey apartment building. Further west of the site beyond Didsbury High School and One Didsbury Point lies the A5103 Princess Road.

The site is located within Flood Zone 1 and is not subject to any environmental designations. There are no listed buildings located within the site boundary, nor is the site located within or adjacent to a Conservation Area. It is noted that the boundary of Albert Park Conservation Area is situated approximately 300 metres to the east of the application site with the closest Listed Building being the Grade II Former Withington Hospital Building on Nell Lane located approximately 210 metres to the south east of the application site, a further Grade II Listed Building at 14 Albemarle Avenue is located 480 metres to the north east and the Grade II Registered Park at Southern Cemetery is located 220 metres to the south west. Southern Cemetery also contains a number of designated heritage assets including the Grade II Listed Chapel North; Chapel West (Non-conformist); Chapel East (RC); 214 Barlow Moor Road; and, 210 Barlow Moor Road. The site is not subject to any statutory landscape designations, such as SSSIs, SACs etc. A number of trees within the demise of Didsbury High School to the south are subject of Tree Preservation Orders as are a number to the frontage of the office building to the west of the site at One Didsbury Point. The site is identified as being comprised of formally developed land colonised by poor semi-improved grassland, scrub, ruderal habitats, scattered trees and treeline within the accompanying preliminary ecological appraisal report.

The site is not identified as sensitive in terms of heritage, environmental or landscape matters.

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

- Visual/landscape character;
- Traffic and access;
- Air quality and pollution;
- Use of resources including water;
- Creation of waste;
- Land contamination; and
- Noise/dust/emissions from construction and occupation of the development;

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 application submission sets out that the proposed development is for the erection of a part eight, part six storey building to comprise 76 no. residential apartments and a ground floor medical centre, with associated car parking, cycle parking and landscaping.

The Council does not consider that the proposed development would involve the intensification of land and the characteristics of the development would not have a significant urbanising effect, with the site being located in a part of urban Manchester that has undergone regeneration and redevelopment following the closure of the former Withington Hospital on the site in the 2000s.

The site lies adjacent to existing areas of residential and commercial development and the proposals are considered to be of a type consistent with other existing residential and commercial properties in the area.

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 to 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 site lies within an area that has undergone a long period of redevelopment, the application site being one of the remaining plots of land in the area. The site has been subject of historical planning approvals for development for both commercial and supporting uses for other proposals that have been considered in the past. The closest site subject to a planning application is for the development of part of the land at the Siemens site located off Nell Lane to the south of the application site. No determination of these proposals have yet been made but the proposals are for a form of development comprising commercial office development and associated car parking on the site.

Whilst it is considered likely that there would be some cumulative impacts in relation to traffic, noise and air quality during the construction phase, these impacts are considered to be predictable and localised in nature and can be suitably mitigated through careful management of the highway network during this time.

In terms of the operational phases of the development, it is considered that the impacts would not be significant. It is considered that given the nature of the proposals the proposed development would fit within, and complement, the existing residential dwellings within this part of Manchester.

Use of natural resources

The site is not known to contain any natural resources. The impact of the design and construction of the scheme in terms of natural resources should be considered as part of a holistic approach to sustainability. It is anticipated that the sourcing, manufacturing and transportation of construction materials would minimise impacts as part of this approach.

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

Developments of this scale would inevitably create waste both in the construction and operational phases of the development.

The proposed development will generate waste during the demolition and construction phase and once occupied. Demolition and construction waste would need to be suitably managed in accordance with best practice. It is noted that the application has been accompanied by a Construction & Environmental Management Plan which would be expected to be carried out as part of the development.

Once complete, the proposed development would generate predominantly household / commercial municipal waste, for which the method of treatment is commonplace and which would not give rise to potential significant effects. The residential units would be provided with waste storage facilities to segregate waste in accordance with local policy, minimising the amount of residual waste generated.

The production of waste would, therefore, not be significant, localised in nature and predictable and therefore does not require consideration by an EIA.

Pollution and nuisances

The construction phase of the scheme would produce dust, noise and vibrations from the works and use of machinery. Additional traffic will be present on the highway network from construction vehicles, particularly heavy goods vehicles, resulting in noise and emissions in the immediate area which would give rise to disruption to local residents, the adjacent school and businesses for the duration of the construction period. These matters are considered within the submitted Construction and Environmental Management Plan submitted alongside the application.

The site is located close to the Greater Manchester Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) declared by Manchester City Council due to exceedances of the annual mean Air Quality Objective for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂).

During construction there is the potential for dust emissions and exhaust emissions from machinery/vehicles however these would be temporary short-term impacts. Any impacts would be managed in accordance with standard best practice measures, and is not anticipated to generate significant adverse effects. The completed development has the potential to give rise to additional vehicular traffic movements to and from the development and measures to mitigate such impacts are set out within the associated technical documents accompanying the planning application.

It is considered that effects would only be temporary in nature and predictable. and such impacts are not of a scale which is of more than local significance and therefore do no warrant consideration as part of an EIA.

Risk of accidents

The main risks in terms of a development of this nature are the contamination of land and/or water from spillages and leak. However, it is not considered that the construction or the operational stages of the development pose a significant risk in this regard given the existing conditions at the site and the substances that are likely to be used, particularly in the construction process.

The area is not considered to be environmentally sensitive and 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.

Visual and Heritage Effects

The site does not contain any statutory or non-statutory listed buildings and is also not within a conservation area. The closest such designated heritage asset is the Grade II Listed Building of the Former Withington Hospital and Albert Park Conservation Area. The Grade II Register Park at Southern Cemetery and

the associated listed buildings within the Cemetery are located to the south-west of the application site across Princess Road. Given the distance from the site, the intervening urban fabric, highway network and existing residential properties it is not considered that impacts on visual amenity or heritage assets would be so significant that would warrant the preparation of an EIA.

Location of development

Existing land use

The site comprises previously developed land. The land is not environmentally sensitive.

There are no Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) on the site although it is noted that trees within the school site to the south are subject to TPO, the site is located within flood zone 1 '*low risk to flooding*'. The scheme is not expected to have an impact on local sources of flooding.

Whilst it has been identified that the site is of generally moderate risk to human health and that significant mobile contamination was not encountered and the risk to controlled waters is low it is considered that such contamination would not warrant consideration by an EIA on this basis given that the contamination levels are not expected to be significant beyond what would be reasonably expected on a site such as this.

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 site contains no areas of statutory nature conservation and there are no such sites within the immediate vicinity of the Site.

The proposal would not physically affect heritage assets through its demolition, construction, or operation and it is not envisaged that the effects on townscape character would be significant.

Overall, it is considered that the impacts on the natural environment would be of no more than local significance and the impacts from the construction phase can be carefully managed to minimise any impacts on any 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 would be no transfrontier impact as a result of the development and impacts of the development are local in nature, not complex and are predictable and well understood.

The implementation of the proposed development, would result in a permanent change to the appearance of the area which would only be reversed if the development were to be removed. The visual impacts of the new development, particularly from its scale, would alter the visual amenity of the area and how the site is viewed in the local area. However, it is considered that such changes are of no more than local significance.

The development is not considered to be located in a sensitive area, as such, the development would not result in any significant impacts on surrounding heritage assets that are of more than local significance that would therefore warrant consideration by an EIA.

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

In terms of the duration, frequency and reversibility of the impacts, it is acknowledged that the scale of the construction activity, along with the operational phases, would have a local impact on the area. However, the construction activities would be short term, predictable and temporary in nature. When the development is complete there would be a permanent change in the visual amenity of the area in the vicinity of the site which could only be reversed if the development were removed.

On that basis, it is not considered 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).

Given that the site is located within an urbanised area of Manchester the proposed development is not of a type where impacts are of a markedly different 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;
- 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 there would be some environmental impacts associated with the works, these can be suitably mitigated against. This is detailed below:

- Traffic and access – The development is not considered to give rise to significant impacts on traffic and transport. Matters relating to impacts from construction vehicles can be mitigated through the submission of a Construction Environmental Management Plan.
- Air quality and pollution – There are likely to be impacts on air quality during the construction phases of the development. There are likely to be short term impacts during the construction which can be suitably mitigated against during the construction through a CEMP. Longer term

impacts from the occupation of the site may arise due to increases in vehicle movements to and from the site and measures to address these are set out within the planning submission.

- Use of resources including water – The proposal would not utilise any resources which are in short supply. Measures can be adopted during the construction phase to minimise the impact on resources being used in a sustainable manner such as water and the choice of materials to ensure that impacts from the sourcing, manufacturing and transportation of these is minimised.
- Creation of waste – The proposal would 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. In addition through its operational phase this would be subject to a waste management strategy submitted alongside the planning application.
- Land contamination – The land is not complex in this regard. Provided that soil and waste is deposited and treated in accordance with relevant regulations this should minimise any effects in this regard.
- Noise – During the construction phase the development is likely to generate a degree of disturbance from comings and goings in the local area. These effects can be minimised and through the submitted CEMP. The operational phase is not considered to give rise to specific or significant impacts with regards to noise. The development would be expected to include suitable mitigation to ensure future occupiers were protected from the noise environment in which it is located.
- Cumulative impacts – The development site is located in an area that has undergone change over a period of two decades, the proposals are not considered to give rise to significant cumulative impacts with existing or proposed developments within the locality.

CONCLUSION

This response is based on the planning application as submitted on the 19th October 2022.

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.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D W Jones', written on a light grey rectangular background.

Derek Jones
Section Planning Manager