Application Number	Date of Appln	Committee Date	Ward
129020/FO/2020	23 Dec 2020	2 Sept 2021	Fallowfield Ward

Proposal Erection of 1 no. 13 storey building and 1 no. part 4 and part 5 storey building to form purpose built student accommodation together with a single storey side and rear extension to the retained and refurbished Oakley Villa and conversion to form amenity and communal space together with associated landscaping, cycle parking, car parking and associated works following the demolition of existing office accommodation on the site

Location Oakley, 188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M14 6LJ

Applicant USDAW, Watkin Jones Group Ltd & Wilmslow Road Manchester Ltd, C/o Agent

Agent Miss Jenny Fryer, Turley, 1 New York Street, Manchester, M1 4HD

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The proposal is for the erection of 1 no. 13 storey building and 1 no. part 4 and part 5 storey building to form purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA) to provide 425 bedroom spaces together with the refurbishment of number 188 Wilmslow Road (Oakley House) and the demolition of existing extensions. There have been 246 objections to the statutory notification process together with objections from a number of local Civic Societies and residents' groups. Councillors Ali Ilyas, and Zahra Alijah have also objected together with Withington Councillors Chris Wills, Becky Chambers and Rebecca Moore.

Key Issues

Principle of use and contribution to regeneration - The development is not considered to meet the tests of Core Strategy Policy H12 which relates to Purpose Built Student Accommodation.

The site, whilst not in close proximity to the University Campuses, is located along Wilmslow Road which provides a high frequency public transport corridor serving the University Campuses.

The proposals would result in a high density development adjacent to domestic scale developments within Fallowfield, the height, scale and massing of the building would form an over-obtrusive feature within the street scene and the wider area. It is considered that the proposed 13 storey building would have a poor relationship with the retained Oakley House, a non-designated heritage asset.

Residential Amenity - The development would have a direct impact on the amenities of existing residents on Langley Road in terms of increased built form in close proximity and would give rise to an increase in activity and comings and goings throughout the day, seven days a week.

It is considered that there would be wider impacts on the area as a result of up to 425 additional student occupiers that would not contribute in a positive way to the areas vibrancy and would increase pressure on existing neighbourhood services to the detriment of existing residents. It is also the case that the proposed scheme would not deliver any significant regeneration benefits to justify the development and to outweigh the identified harm caused.

The proposals would retain the non-designated heritage asset Oakley House and re-purpose it for support accommodation for the wider redevelopment.

A full report is attached below for Members' consideration.

Description

The application site comprises the original early-19th century villa, known as "Oakley", along with three large office extensions constructed for the current occupiers, USDAW, in the late 1930s, c.1950s and the 1970s. The supporting information indicates that the first known record of the property being in occupation was 1837. The original villa is the last surviving of a number of large 19th century villas that were constructed on the western side of Wilmslow Road. The applicant has prepared a heritage statement to accompany the planning application and this confirms that the original building is considered a non-designated heritage asset, the Council is in agreement with this assessment of the building which retains a number of important original internal features.

View of the front of 188 Wilmslow Road, with later extensions on the left

To the centre, north and east of the site are remaining open grounds dating to the original residential use of the site, including stone and brick boundary walls and the remains of an early-20th century garden potting shed. There are a number of

substantial trees within the car parking area located to the Wilmslow Road frontage of the site that contribute towards the verdant feel of this section of Wilmslow Road between the northern edge of Fallowfield District Centre and the Southern edge of Rusholme District Centre. Since the submission of the application proposals and following the recommendation of the City's arborist a number of the trees on the site have been made subject of a Provisional Tree Preservation Order.

View east along Langley Road towards Wilmslow Road with the late 1930s extension to 188 Wilmslow Road fronting the street and the University of Manchester Owens Park Tower in the background

The site is currently in use as the head office for USDAW, a non-profit organisation providing advice and representation to businesses in a number of different industries including road transport, dairy and food shopping as well as major retailers. The USDAW Fallowfield Office is the head office of a wider network of 19 offices across the UK and the supporting information indicates that it employs circa 180 staff. The site was purchased by USDAW in the 1920's and have occupied it since then.

View south from Platt Fields Park towards the application site the original Villa to the left highlighted in the red box and later three storey extensions to the right

View south and east towards the rear of the application site with the two storey rear extension to 188 Wilmslow Road centre beyond the boundary wall and the Owens park Tower identified in the background with the red box.

Beyond the application sites boundaries to the north and east lies Platt Fields Park, to its south on Langley Road and beyond is an area of terraced housing and to the east on the opposite side of Wilmslow Road is the University of Manchester Fallowfield halls of residence. To the south extending along Wilmslow Road is the Fallowfield district centre that contains commercial activities and businesses.

The application site edged red

Proposal

The application proposals are for the erection of 1 no. 13 storey building and 1 no. part 4 and part 5 storey building to form purpose built student accommodation (425 bedroom spaces) together with a single storey side and rear extension to the retained and refurbished Oakley Villa and conversion to form amenity and communal space together with associated landscaping, cycle parking, car parking and associated works following the demolition of existing office accommodation on the site.

The proposals seek the reinstatement of the existing villa, this would involve the demolition of the twentieth century extensions together with the erection of modern contemporary single storey side and rear extensions. The villa would then be converted to be used for amenity and communal space to support the student accommodation proposed elsewhere on the site.

Proposed front elevation of refurbished and extended Oakley Villa

The demolition of the extensions would allow the redevelopment of the remainder of the site and this would be in the form of: 1 no. part four and part five storey building located on the southern side of the site facing onto Langley Road and wrapping around the western boundary of the site with Platt Fields park; and, a 13 storey building being sited along the northern boundary of the site with Platt Fields Park. The eastern part of the site currently containing hardstanding for car parking and landscaping including substantial trees would be converted to a landscaped area with the trees retained. The proposed buildings would wrap around the boundaries of the site and retain a central landscaped courtyard to provide outdoor amenity area for occupiers of the development.

The proposed part 4/part 5 building as viewed from Langley road – the extended Oakley Villa is on the right

The proposed part 4/part 5 building looking eastwards from Platt Fields Park with the proposed 13 storey building in the background to the left

The proposed 13 storey building (centre) looking southwards from Platt Fields Park with Oakley Villa to the left and the other proposed building to the right

Consultations

The application was subject of advertisement in the Manchester Evening News, by way of notices on site, and neighbour notification letters to 2049 addresses in the locality. As a result of this notification 246 objections were received together with representations from a number of residents groups local councillors and councillors of nearby constituencies.

Cllr Zahra Alijah - As a local councillor, I have seen the negative impact of high density student housing in the local area. I believe the proposal contravenes Core Strategy Policies H12 and H6 for those reasons. The proposed 13 storey structure overshadows an important park and streets of terraced housing. Platt Fields Park is a vital resource in this urban community: it is a park of historical significance, environmental importance and an essential health resource for local people. Additionally, the lack of on-site parking in the development will have a considerable impact in local streets where parking is already a problem.

Councillor Ali Ilyas - I am writing as the Councillor for Fallowfield Ward regarding the above planning application.

USDAW have always been a very positive presence in my ward, and myself and residents are sad about them leaving as they have a long history in the area.

However, I understand their offices are no longer suitable for them and it is hoped they can get a good return on the property and leave a legacy in the area the community can celebrate. However, I do not believe the current proposals will assist USDAW in their wishes to leave a positive legacy behind and it would unfortunately go against the councils and residents policies and ambitions for the area. In which our aims to create a more balanced community with mixed tenure of housing, rather than an area where there is a monoculture of single tenure and high density accommodation.

Any more high-density developments in the area would exacerbate existing issues in the ward, with the planning department and committee being aware of the policies

and strategies the council has put in place to re-balance the community. Alongside the monoculture of single tenure housing, there are many on-going issues with ASB, crime, community tensions and litter and pressure on services linked to high density accommodation. There is also a concern about parking, the developer states tenants will be encouraged to not have cars and use bikes and public transport. However, I don't believe this will be enforceable practically and will only add to parking pressures in the area.

The proposed development runs counter to Policy H6 of the Council's Core Strategy.

This states that "High density development in South Manchester will generally only be appropriate within the district centres of Chorlton, Didsbury, Fallowfield, Levenshulme, and Withington, as part of mixed-use schemes." Clearly this development does not meet this requirement. Nor does it meet the other requirement of this policy: "Outside the district centres priorities will be for housing which meets identified shortfalls, including family housing and provision that meets the needs of elderly people, with schemes adding to the stock of affordable housing."

The proposed development also goes against the councils policy on building more PBSA on and near the campuses around the City Centre and Oxford Road Corridor. As such, it also goes against Policy H12 of the Council's Core Strategy. Any proposed PBSA must meet a number of clauses. In particular, the proposed development does not meet the following clauses in the policy:
a. "High density developments should be sited in locations where this is compatible with existing developments and initiatives, and where retail facilities are within walking distance. Proposals should not lead to an increase in on-street parking in the surrounding area."
b. "Proposals that can demonstrate a positive regeneration impact in their own right will be given preference over other schemes. This can be demonstrated for example through impact assessments on district centres and the wider area. Proposals should contribute to providing a mix of uses and support district and local centres, in line with relevant Strategic Regeneration Frameworks, local plans and other masterplans as student accommodation should closely integrate with existing neighbourhoods to contribute in a positive way to their vibrancy without increasing pressure on existing neighbourhood services to the detriment of existing residents."
c. "Proposals should be designed to be safe and secure for their users, and avoid causing an increase in crime in the surrounding area."
d. "Consideration should be given to the design and layout of the student accommodation and siting of individual uses within the overall development in relation to adjacent neighbouring uses. The aim is to ensure that there is no unacceptable effect on residential amenity in the surrounding area through increased noise, disturbance or impact on the street scene either from the proposed development itself or when combined with existing accommodation."

There is a real potential for USDAW to leave a positive legacy for the community as the site does present an opportunity for the provision of affordable housing, social housing, and retirement housing. There is a real shortage of all of the mentioned types of housing in South Manchester, none of which appears to have been properly explored by the developer.

Furthermore, there is also concerns about the environmental impact to Platt Fields park, and the trees on and surrounding the property, as well implications for Oakley Villa which is a 19th Century villa and is disappointingly not a listed building but for all intents and purposes should be.

In summary, I do not believe the application in its current form is appropriate and therefore ask that the application is refused.

Withington Councillors Chris Wills, Becky Chambers and Rebecca Moore –
While the proposed development is in Fallowfield ward, the site is very near to the north west border of our ward. If approved, it would have a significant impact on our shared district centre, local amenities, public services and most importantly on many residents in the South-East Fallowfield part of Withington ward.

The Councillors have always had a positive relationship with USDAW. Their presence in Fallowfield has been a real positive for over a century. While sad to hear they were leaving their site on Wilmslow Road, it is fully appreciated that their existing offices are no longer fit for purpose, and that they need to seek appropriate renumeration for the site. Securing good value for their members should of course be a priority for USDAW. This is understood and would reiterate that USDAW's ambition to leave a positive legacy in the local area is appreciated. However, these proposals put forward by the developers are wholly unsuitable for the local area.
Our main concerns are as follows:

1) The proposed accommodation is for 425 student bedrooms. This is a high-density development that would exacerbate existing imbalances in the local community. The Planning Department and Committee will be very familiar with the issues our communities face due to imbalance, and be familiar with the policies and strategies that the council has put in place to mitigate over-studentification.

2) The height of the proposed tower block would make it by far the tallest building in the local area, once the existing Owens Tower is demolished. This would have a negative impact on visual amenity for nearby residents. It would also impact on visual amenity for users of Platt Fields Park.

3) The high density of this development would have a detrimental impact on local residential amenity and public services - including transport, parks and primary care facilities.

4) There is very minimal parking provision on site. While the developer states that this is to encourage tenants to use sustainable transport, the reality is that it will cause pressure on existing parking, with overspill onto residential roads, which already face traffic blight from student properties and local schools.

5) As Councillors, we are acutely aware of ongoing issues with crime, antisocial behaviour, litter, and community cohesion caused by over-studentification. All of these risk being exacerbated by the addition of this high-density new development. We are by no means anti-student. We strongly value the contribution that students make to our city. But our communities must be sustainable and more balanced.

Furthermore, the potential for increased noise and antisocial behaviour is not acknowledged in the Noise Impact Assessment.

6) The proposed development runs counter to Policy H6 of the Council's Core Strategy. This states that "High density development in South Manchester will generally only be appropriate within the district centres of Chorlton, Didsbury, Fallowfield, Levenshulme, and Withington, as part of mixed-use schemes." Clearly this development does not meet this requirement. Nor does it meet the other requirement of this policy: "Outside the district centres priorities will be for housing which meets identified shortfalls, including family housing and provision that meets the needs of elderly people, with schemes adding to the stock of affordable housing."

7) The proposed development also goes against the established trend of students moving away from Fallowfield and Withington, towards purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA) on and near the campuses around the City Centre and Oxford Road Corridor. The site is nowhere near the Oxford Road Corridor, the south boundary of which ends at Whitworth Park.

8) For this reason, it also goes against Policy H12 of the Council's Core Strategy. Any proposed PBSA must meet a number of clauses. In particular, the proposed development does not meet the following clauses in the policy:
a) "High density developments should be sited in locations where this is compatible with existing developments and initiatives, and where retail facilities are within walking distance. Proposals should not lead to an increase in on-street parking in the surrounding area."
b) "Proposals that can demonstrate a positive regeneration impact in their own right will be given preference over other schemes. This can be demonstrated for example through impact assessments on district centres and the wider area. Proposals should contribute to providing a mix of uses and support district and local centres, in line with relevant Strategic Regeneration Frameworks, local plans and other masterplans as student accommodation should closely integrate with existing neighbourhoods to contribute in a positive way to their vibrancy without increasing pressure on existing neighbourhood services to the detriment of existing residents."
c) "Proposals should be designed to be safe and secure for their users, and avoid causing an increase in crime in the surrounding area."
d) "Consideration should be given to the design and layout of the student accommodation and siting of individual uses within the overall development in relation to adjacent neighbouring uses. The aim is to ensure that there is no unacceptable effect on residential amenity in the surrounding area through increased noise, disturbance or impact on the streetscene either from the proposed development itself or when combined with existing accommodation."

9) Councillors and the residents that we represent want to see a more balanced community, with former HMOs going back into family ownership. The developers have claimed that students would move into the PBSA from existing HMOs in Fallowfield. However, the proposed rents for these flats are significantly greater than the rent that students are currently paying in HMO accommodation. There would therefore be no incentive for them to move to the PBSA. What might instead be seen, however, would be a drift back into Fallowfield from students currently living in PBSA

in the City Centre. This would thereby reverse the positive trend we want to see continue.

10) Fundamentally it is believed that a mixed tenure would be far more suitable. The site does present an opportunity for the provision of affordable housing, social housing, and retirement housing. There is a chronic shortage of all of these types of housing in South Manchester. Disappointingly, none of these alternatives appears to have been properly explored by the developers.

11) There is concern regarding potential environmental damage that would be caused to established mature trees at the boundary with Platt Fields Park: both in terms of damage to the roots, and the blocking of sunlight caused by the tallest building in the development. There is also a lack of clarity regarding the impact of these proposals on both tree numbers, and on the boundary of Platt Fields Park.

12) The development would cause harm to the setting of Oakley Villa. The last surviving example of a number of 19th century villas, it is not currently a listed building. However, it should be seen as a local heritage asset. Under these proposals it would be overshadowed, and overwhelmed, by the surrounding development.
In summary, the application in its current form is not appropriate and ask that the application is refused.

Afzal Khan MP - I am writing with respect to the above planning application for the site of the former USDAW Central Office at Oakley Villa adjacent to Platt Fields Park. I have been asked by constituents to write to you to ask that the Planning Committee, on determining the application:
1. To take appropriate and fair consideration of the views submitted to them by all local residents as well as representative organisations and institutions, and to consider whether appropriate consultation has been undertaken.

2. To consider, based on evidence submitted, the balance of the community in the Fallowfield and Rusholme wards in my constituency, and specifically within the immediate area of the Fallowfield Brow.

3. To consider the impact on Platt Fields Park (particularly with respect to the area round Shakespearean Gardens and to trees within the Park) and whether appropriate action has been taken to mitigate any impact on park users.

4. To come to a decision, taking into account all views and evidence, that is in accordance with the law and Manchester City Council’s planning policies.

A summary of the responses received from residents is set out below:

The proposed development will create harm for the users of Platt Fields Park. The proposed high rise tower block will overshadow the park and spoil the visual amenity of natural tree lines which surround the park.

Concerned that many of the mature trees around the perimeter will be damaged during construction and this loss would have a detrimental effect on biodiversity for insects, birds and wildlife. Platt Fields is known to have many species of bats and

consider that the light and noise pollution from the proposed accommodation blocks will cause considerable environmental harm to wildlife.

The additional 425 students will add to the congestion on transport routes and thus contribute to more air pollution. This number of students is equivalent to six full double decker bus loads of extra people to be transported along the heavily congested bus route. Extra bus demand created by more students at Oakley will add to air pollution levels.

Oakley Villa is a heritage asset, one of few remaining in this area. Whilst it is not a listed building it has many fine Victorian features and is set in gardens which have provided calm to this area. In contrast the 13 storey tower and 4/5 building around the perimeter will not enhance the setting.

The demolition and large mass of buildings proposed to be highly energy intensive and costly to the environment in terms of carbon emissions. A significant reduction in carbon emissions could be achieved by upgrading rather than demolishing.

This site would be ideal for mixed housing, with the Villa itself converted into luxury accommodation. In this way, USDAW would leave a legacy of benefit to the neighbourhood and provide much needed family housing which would not harm the community or Platt Fields Park whilst also preserving the heritage of an important Victorian Villa.

The Villa is also set close to the boundary of the Park and it is considered that the tower in particular will spoil the views from Wilmslow Road and within the park. The tower block is particularly out of character to the surrounding area and would create an overbearing structure on nearby Platt Fields.

The building along Langley Road would cause harm to immediate residents on Langley Road and other neighbouring streets by the height and the number of student bedroom windows from which noise is bound to emanate (day and night).

The height of the tower contravenes the Tall Buildings Policy and is considered an incongruous feature in the street scene that would have an adverse impact on the visual amenity of the area.

The applicant suggests that whilst there might be a small dip in University student numbers due to the pandemic, the demand for PBSA will continue to rise in coming years. This is very speculative and likely to be very inaccurate. The pandemic is having long lasting consequences and it is likely that there will be profound changes to working practices.

The Owen’s Park Redevelopment under construction is providing an additional 1 148 bed spaces (+ 64 at Chancellor’s Hotel) to PBSA in Fallowfield which will add incredible strain to this area already under stress. Adding a further 425 student bed spaces next to Fallowfield Brow residential housing would create harm to the amenity of residents near the site as well as those in the wider area.

Students are not contained on campus and will spill into the community adding more noise, anti-social behaviour and attracting more criminal activity.

The height of the tower will also ruin what is currently a complimentary tree-lined boundary to the park, being much to the original design of the park when it was purchased over one hundred years ago.

Loss of trees on the boundary inside Platt Fields particularly six mature sycamores. The height and proximity of the proposed buildings to these trees will likely lead to their loss. A building of such size will have deep and damaging foundations which will cut through the root ball of those trees, and failing that the loss of light from a building so close and over twice the height will block out too much sunlight.

There are trees on the site which should be considered for TPOs

Noise and disturbance resulting from the use, the future occupiers will dominate the area immediately around the development where there is currently little infrastructure to provide for it.

Much of the site grounds will be developed and built on, offering only a small “Garden Courtyard” with very little light, occupiers will go to the park for use of outdoor space and dominate the area to the detriment of the existing park users.

The tallest block is extremely close to the boundary with the park. The siting of such a tall building in such a location is contrary to policy and will cause significant visual intrusion and harm to the visual amenity of the public from this and surrounding wards.

The 13-storey tower will blaze with light across the park disrupting the peaceful enjoyment of the park as well as foraging grounds for local wildlife (including badgers as noted in the report.) The appraisal also notes that light pollution is a significant issue for bats and will have a significant effect on mating and nesting activity (even if bats are re-located in the required manner), which is likely to lead in reduced diversity and public amenity.

Photographic montages provided by the applicant over-emphasise a comparison with Owens Tower at Fallowfield Campus (which is in any event threatened with demolition) and do so from a distance in an attempt to minimise the impact and place an inappropriate context of height on the development, which is as a matter of fact, overwhelmingly low-rise.

Holy Innocents Church – Our Parish has one of the largest populations in the Manchester diocese, of that population, nearly 75% are only present for 9 months or less of the year and change each year. The buildings they live in stand empty for the rest of the time. In the meantime, there are new and existing members of our church who cannot afford to live anywhere in the parish. This situation reflects the wider issue about rent rates and housing and the tolerance of speculation and rent profiteering.

Apart from Sainsburys and a new food store about to open, there are no shops selling basic goods. Instead, the Council appears to encourage suppliers of expensive low quality fast food and alcoholic drink to students.

There is a safety concern where students in the area attract gangs into the area to target them which impacts on other members of the community.

The Usdaw offices added unsightly additions to a once dignified house, instead of a creative re-think, the suggested development adds a tower block and other large light blocking buildings to the area and offer little positive contribution to the local community.

Withington Girls School – Are proud of our links to Fallowfield and Withington communities. They believe that this development would have a negative impact on our neighbours in the local community and our school. With such a dense development would come a significant increase in traffic both of cars that the students would inevitably bring and in terms of additional demand on buses, pavements and cycle lanes. This would increase journey times for our pupils and additional risks to them as pedestrians.

An additional 400 plus students would increase noise and anti-social behaviour, both of which have already increased exponentially with the development of new halls at the University of Manchester Fallowfield campus.

St James C of E Primary School - Object to the current plan in place for 188 Wilmslow Road which runs counter to Policy H6 and H12 of the Council's Core Strategy which protects district centres from high density development and prioritises student housing in the city centre rather than district centres. With such dense development, would come a huge increase of traffic which the area cannot support. The development itself provides very little parking, students would then be forced to park cars on surrounding streets, leading to congestion and increasingly hazardous roads. An additional 400 plus students would increase noise and anti-social behaviour, both of which have already increased exponentially with the development of Unsworth and Uttley behind Owen's Park. There would also, sadly, be increased litter in the area, leading to further issues of pest infestations, such as rats. There would be a huge impact on local infrastructure- buses, medical facilities, supermarkets, parkland, all of which are already pressured from the imbalanced community in Fallowfield and would become more so. The school is aware that families are increasingly struggling with the journey to and from school due to an increase in traffic volume from both students and parents taking their children by car to both of the Manchester Grammar Schools. Finally, they are very concerned about any effect this development would have on Platt Fields park. As children in a high density city, our children needs access to open green spaces. The development would mean that 400 students would have a piece of the park as their garden instead. The development would further imbalance the community, would have detrimental impact on trees, noise levels, traffic, infrastructure, and is at odds with the Council's core strategy

Friends of Platt Fields Park – Object to the proposals for the following reasons:

Loss of light and overshadowing - The proposed tower is more than double the height of the trees in the park on the northern boundary of the site. This will seriously overshadow the park grounds and deprive the vegetation of light to the detriment of the gardens and existing trees.
Loss of trees on the boundary - inside Platt Fields particularly six mature sycamores.
Noise and disturbance resulting from use. The Design Landscape Development cites the opportunity for residents to use the park as an open outdoor space, but it is our concern that the residents will dominate the area immediately around the development. There is no assessment of the noise pollution from the proposed buildings over what is currently a quiet and peaceful secluded area of the park.
Contrary to Core Strategy Policies H6, H12 and EN2
Loss of public amenity - The 13-storey tower looms over the park and especially the very immediate parts of it.
Heritage impact. -The additional height proposed along Langley Road (plus a steeply pitched and high roof) and the 13-storey tower rising immediately behind the villa would create a backdrop that would fundamentally compromise the setting of a designated asset
Sustainable development. The proposed development offers minimum compliance with Manchester City Council Core Strategy (2012) and Guide to Development in Manchester (SPD) (2007) regarding net improvements to the environment or progress towards sustainable development. We note particularly a lack of green infrastructure, mitigation to climate change, carbon efficiency, opportunities to enhance, restore or create new biodiversity, or adequate sustainable urban drainage schemes (SuDS). Environmentally, there is nothing sustainable regarding the development. Socially it contravenes council policy aiming for a greater mix of residents in Fallowfield.
Traffic generation - By deeming the development "car free" the developers seem to have washed their hands of this problem by not providing parking spaces. It is our belief that residents will simply park their cars on already crowded nearby residential streets, affecting parking availability for the existing residents and access for visitors to the park.
These above points contravene the objectives of the Friends.

Rusholme and Fallowfield Civic Society - there is no public or economic benefit to outweigh the very considerable harm that this proposal would do Platt Fields Park and the Environment, to the setting of Oakley Vila as a designated heritage asset and perhaps even more particularly, to the diversity and sustainability an otherwise already threatened local community.

The harm to the park and the environment – the erection of such tall buildings in close proximity to trees on the boundary with the park will do irrevocable damage not only to the trees themselves but also to the visual amenity and enjoyment of the park by the general public.

The harm to the setting of the villa - Oakley Villa is one of the diminishing number of fine villas for which the area is known. As with all such heritage assets, its setting is as important as the building itself. Given the recent history of the site, any redevelopment is an opportunity to maintain and enhance the character of the villa’s setting and such an opportunity should not be lost. Rather than enhance the setting, these proposals will do major harm by dominating the villa both at great height to

the northern boundary and from behind on Langley Road.

The very significant harm to the local community – where City Council housing policy prioritises the creation and maintenance of stable and sustainable communities in predominantly family-base accommodation, the presence of a further so many more additional students in the area would threaten the local community on Langley Road and the streets behind with further and unsustainable imbalance from an increasingly transient population.

South East Fallowfield Residents Group - Endorse the comments submitted by the Rusholme and Fallowfield Civic Society. The primary issue with the application which relates to the harm this new student development will cause to our, already fragile, community. Although Fallowfield has been popular with students since Victorian times, the level of student density in the last 20 odd years has dramatically increased and there is now a situation where 64% of the local population are students in M14 6/M14 7 postcode and our neighbourhood has become highly unbalanced. SEFRG would like to emphasise at this point that they are not anti-students per se (many of us have been students ourselves and many of us have children who have been/are/will be students).SEFRG know that a neighbourhood involving a certain proportion of students can bring great benefits in terms of diversity and vibrancy but it is the sheer volume of students in our area which is causing the problems.

Many UK students actually choose to live in HMOs because it fits their idea of student life. PBSAs are seen as something you do in your first year because you are in an unfamiliar place and you want to meet loads of new people. In any event, the price point of £160pw is still more expensive than almost all the HMOs in this area. It is not common for UK students to spend their whole degree course in PBSA. Once students move into the area (either in the first or second years) a significant number will continue to stay here and move into the local HMOs in subsequent years.

The applicants' planning application states that because an average HMO in Fallowfield housed 4.1 students in 2011 this will mean that 100 houses will be freed up for local families. This assumes that every student moving into this new development will free a room in an HMO and that no other students will move into the area in their stead! The two universities alone have circa 75000 people and living in an HMO in Fallowfield has taken on an almost legendary status. As the applicants' themselves point out, demand for accommodation in Fallowfield is very high and if there's spare capacity, some, if not all of it, will be filled. Therefore, without specific action by the council (or the universities), there will not be any meaningful reduction in HMOs and there will be a net increase in the number of students in our area. Fallowfield is now so unbalanced that any increase at all would not be acceptable. In fact only a decrease in overall numbers will start to create the 'balanced' community needed.

The applicants assume that all these apparently empty HMOs will automatically turn back into family houses. This is highly unlikely. Since the advent of Airbnb landlords have turned student houses into Airbnbs because the yield is sometimes higher than with student occupation. Airbnbs cause many of the same problems as HMOs and go no way towards redressing the imbalance in our community.

The assumption that students living in PBSAs will not cause a problem to the community. Students living in PBSAs obviously live in the community too this means that an extra 425 young people will be regularly socialising in the area. The bars and takeaways have extremely late licensing hours in our area - many are open until 2/3am, 7 nights a week and some are open much later (There were 38 licensed premises in the district centre at our last count October 2020). This causes untold misery to local people.

The spotlight on local student halls during the pandemic has shown that, even with heavy security and on university land, it isn't always possible to control behaviour on site when large numbers are involved.

The 'high street' offering on Wilmslow Road is extremely poor in terms of both the quality and the variety of retail options; there are a proliferation of poor quality takeaways, bars, clubs and letting agents many of which have been linked to illegal activities. These establishments are 'fed' by the student pound and the more students , the more they will thrive. This, in turn, really affects local residents' lives - who feel increasingly alienated on our local high street. It is not normal for people in their 50s to be asked for their ID when they go for a drink in a bar, or for a local person in their early 20s to be told they cannot enter a bar if they're not a student, but this happens in Fallowfield. Moreover in the summer months, when the students leave, many local places actually shut shop. During the holiday periods, the area resembles a forlorn, out of season, seaside resort...but without the sea.

Some of the residents along Langley Road currently have a view of the 2 storey 1930s extension to Oakley Villa. The new development will, by contrast, be 2/3 storeys taller and run the entire length of the street. This will make Langley Road quite oppressive and gloomy. The sunlight reports in the planning application, mention the fact that there will be a reduction in sunlight to the terrace but state that this is within 'acceptable' limits when there is 'an efficient use of land'. This will harm the residents' enjoyment of their houses. Langley Road and half of Mabfield Road will be blighted by a huge 13 storey tower and a large L-shaped wrap around building in what is, a residential neighbourhood.

There will be 56 large windows on the new building on Langley Road. These are student bedrooms so it is very likely that the lights will be on for many hours. There will therefore be a combined total of 154 windows overlooking this small terrace, where there are currently 35 windows of varying sides on the old USDAW 1930s extension. This will obviously adversely affect the residents on Langley Road and will be especially disruptive at night when they are trying to sleep and result in a loss of privacy to the existing residential properties.

The level of proposed on site car parking is totally inadequate and SEFRG know, from experience that a lot of students (especially 2nd and 3rd years) bring their cars to university. They don't tend to use them much because of the very frequent bus services so they are left parked on residential streets for days on end. This lack of parking will severely impact on local residents many of whom already struggle to park because of the numbers of student households in the area. Moreover the applicants car parking 'solution' to the beginning and end of year pick-ups and drops-offs is derisory; allocating a few extra spaces and 20 minute time slots with marshalls to

supervise. How will this work? Parents will be queuing all around the residential streets and possibly even on Wilmslow Road, it will cause major disruption and really affect local residents and possibly even the wider traffic flow.

425 extra students walking to and from the development at all times of night and day. This will impact on the wellbeing of local residents - to be woken up night after night is extremely debilitating and it is becoming increasingly clear that sleep disruption can lead to various health problems. Residents who live near Owens Park have mentioned the increasing amounts of noise since the building of Unsworth Park and the proximity and sheer density of this development, is bound to have a similar, if not greater, effect.

The applicant has one presented two very poor options for the site, either one of dereliction or one of redevelopment for student accommodation. There are plenty of flats in the immediate vicinity which are largely occupied by long term residents; Appleby Lodge (0.4 miles from Oakley Villa) and Thorne House (0.3 miles from Oakley Villa) are just two examples. these developments are very fair comparisons to Oakley Villa. They are on the opposite side of the road from Oakley Villa i.e. on the same side as the Owens Park campus but they are only a short walk away. If Oakley Villa and the surrounding land was sympathetically developed . SEFRG think this would be very attractive to a variety of purchasers, especially bearing in mind its location, near the park.

Schuster Road and Park Range Residents Association - The Rusholme and Fallowfield Civic Society have submitted a detailed objection to the proposed development at Oakley Villa in Fallowfield. The submission reiterates many of the points raised by other residents association in particular impacts on: the local community; a sustainable community; environmental, and traffic considerations .

Manchester Urban Diggers and Platt Fields Market Garden- Can see no benefits to this development on the border of the park, only significant loss of amenity to the fabric, ecology, and users of Platt Fields.

Withington Civic Society - Withington Civic Society strongly opposes the application. Fallowfield has a disproportionate amount of student accommodation and, as a consequence, a limited retail and leisure offer, whilst also suffering a high incidence of anti-social behaviour, noise and public realm impacts. An additional 425 student homes will further erode the lack of diversity already present in Fallowfield.

Core Strategy H1 recognises the city centre as a suitable location for student accommodation and the need to expand the range of housing options in many areas. Fallowfield is over-represented with student accommodation, both purpose-built and shared houses, and has a shortage of affordable family homes.

There is no on-site provision for resident parking and this will inevitably surcharge on-street capacity in the surrounding area, thus reducing the amenity of local residents.

The large, transient student population is one of the principal factors in Fallowfield requiring multiple strategic and policy interventions in order to create conditions in which a sustainable community might begin to grow. More student accommodation

will only make this challenge greater. It will have a negative regeneration impact, not positive.

The Oakley Villa is retained in the proposals but is nevertheless dwarfed by the huge newbuild element.

Even acknowledging that design quality and appropriate locations are subjective, the proposal will clearly fail to deliver against many of the tall buildings' criteria laid out in Core Strategy policy EN2. The height of the proposed buildings demonstrably does not relate to the local context as explicitly require by the policy.

The proposal fails to celebrate the character of the existing built-environment and will detrimentally affect the adjacent park.

Fallowfield & Withington Community Guardians – Have submitted a detailed objection with supporting evidence indicating that the proposals would give rise to harm to the community. They indicate that students make up 64% of the population of Fallowfield in M14 (sub postcodes 6 & 7); there are existing problems of anti social behaviour in student accommodation on campus and that there would be further impacts on the general residential community as a result of the proposed additional 425 bed spaces; They are of the view that more Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) will not free up family homes and there are existing environmental problems impacting on the community.

Moon Grove Residents Association - Object to this planning application. They can see no benefits to this development on the border of the park, only significant loss of amenity to the fabric, ecology, and users of Platt Fields and residents of the local area. They would anticipate further significant numbers of students using the already overloaded public transport system along the bus route to the University - this will be seriously detrimental to local residents who very often have to struggle to travel during peak hours. MGRA also state that the proposals do not accord with Core Strategy Policies H6 , H12, and EN2. The 13-storey tower contravenes Council Tall Buildings Policy in many regards, including height relative to local buildings, location, and local microclimate. The harm to the park and the environment - the 13-storey tower dominates the park. The wooded skyline and parkland outlook will be lost. The tower looms over the park and users.

Currently the student population maybe displacing in the order of 17,000 residents from potentially affordable homes. The issue is recognised by council, who limit HMO and in December 2020 have effectively directed Planning Officers to consider PBSA in the City Centre, the Oxford Road Corridor, and certain other excepted areas only. Oakley Villa does not fall into any of these areas.

Chorlton Voice - Object to this proposal, which is considered to be over-development of the site. In particular, the proposed tower block will unduly dominate views from and across Platt Fields Park. The overlooking of the Park from so many elevated dwellings in such close proximity will detract from the user experience of the eastern end of the Park.

The University of Manchester - A copy of a letter provided to the applicant from the UoM has been submitted to the Council in response to the notification process. This confirms that the applicant has been working with the University for a number of months prior to the submission of the planning application and that: Overall the proposed scheme is situated in a sustainable, convenient location close to our Fallowfield Campus with excellent public transport links. It will offer students a good environment to learn and live in, benefitting from a high level of accessibility, the broad spectrum of local amenities and close to the pastoral support they deliver through the Fallowfield Campus.

<u>Statutory consultee responses</u>

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit -Bats- Buildings and trees on site were surveyed by an experienced consultancy, for bat roosting potential and one emergence survey, late in the survey season carried out on one building. No evidence of bats was found with all buildings proposed for demolition assessed as having negligible bat roosting potential, with the building for retention assessed as moderate risk, downgraded to low risk following the emergence survey owing to a high level of external lighting. In addition, as this building with low to moderate potential is to be retained, reasonable avoidance measures can be applied. GMEU recommend a condition is applied to any permission.

In addition, three trees proposed for removal were assessed as having low bat roosting potential and requiring further survey. Labelled as BT4 a semi-mature yew, BT5 a holly and BT7 a semi-mature yew, in the ecological report. Given they are low risk further and based on the photographs GMEU are content for further assessment to occur via condition.

Nesting Birds - Trees and shrubs will be lost as a result of the development, potential bird nesting habitat. All British birds' nests and eggs (with certain limited exceptions) are protected by Section 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, as amended. GMEU recommend a condition be applied to any permission.

Mammals - Habitats on site were assessed as providing potential nesting habitat for hedgehog and grey squirrel dreys were recorded in some of the trees on the site. Hedgehog are a UK Biodiversity priority species and therefore a material consideration. GMEU recommend a condition is applied to any permission.

Invasive Species - Rhododendron was recorded on the site. Rhododendron ponticum is included within schedule 9 part 2 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, as amended. It is an offence to introduce or cause to grow wild any plant listed under this schedule.

It is quite probable that the Rhododendron on site are ornamental varieties not included under schedule 9 part 2. They are also unlike japanese knotweed unlikely to propagate from plant fragments or to have a seed bank within the soil like himalayan balsam, plus it is not illegal to grow rhododendron on a site such as this. GMEU are therefore satisfied that the risks of an offence are very low and can be covered by an informative applied to any permission.

Contributing to and Enhancing the Natural Environment - Section 170 of the NPPF 2019 states that the planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. The main ecological impacts are loss of trees, loss of associated bird nesting habitat and loss of associated bat foraging habitat. (The site had high levels of common pipistrelle activity associated with the trees). Replacement tree planting should therefore be provided to mitigate for tree loss and in the long term restore bat foraging and bird nesting habitat.

Significant levels of new tree planting are proposed along the boundaries, as well as other planting that will be an improvement ecologically even if ornamental on the existing habitats on site. The proposals are likely to be adequate to mitigate and enhance the site in the long term and includes some native species such as beech and field maple. GMEU would however recommend that the ecological value is improved further by substituting non-native birches with silver birch (B. pendula).
In terms of the short-term mitigation whilst the trees mature, GMEU recommend provision of bird boxes on mature retained trees for typical urban/suburban species and to enhance the site for foraging bat by ensuring that any new external lighting has less unnecessary impacts than the existing external lighting on the retained trees and retained building. The details can be conditioned via a landscape condition and a separate external lighting strategy condition.

MCC Neighbourhood Services (Arborists) - The applicant has proposed to retain a majority of the highly visual Cat A trees within this site development; however, to ensure the future safety of the trees during the proposed development it is recommended that these trees are TPO'd. The trees meet all the necessary criteria for TPO status.

There are some concerns regarding the excessive shading to the offsite tree stock positioned within Platt Fields Park, however, as the trees are of mature stature, it is considered that although this would have some negative impact on the trees (which are used to mostly direct sunlight) it would not cause the trees to fail.

The trees listed for removal within the site grounds would not be considered for TPO due to their suppressed form as a result of being positioned so close to each other and lack of prominence within the site.

There are no objections to the proposed development, however, we would seek to TPO the category A tree stock.

It is requested that an arboricultural consultant be embedded into the project to oversee any excavation works which could potentially affect the trees

MCC Highway Services - A high level of on-street parking has been observed on Langley Road during University term time, associated with the terraced properties. The route is subject to a 20mph speed limit, there are junction protection restrictions at Langley Road's junction with Wilmslow Road.

Access - Vehicular access to the Application Site is currently afforded via Langley Road. A new emergency access vehicular access point is also proposed to be provided to Langley Road.

The existing service vehicle access off Langley Road that services the office building would be closed and reinstated to footway. The dropped kerb adjacent to bus stop that previously allowed egress from the site should also be reinstated. Any changes to the adopted highway including reinstatements and new dropped crossings should be taken forward via a suitable highway agreement (S278). Dropped kerbs and tactile paving should be provided across the vehicle access points.

Any proposed gates should open inwards and not impact adopted footway. Barrier controls should be located a minimum 5m from the edge of the carriageway so waiting vehicles do not impede through traffic.

At the point of vehicle egress, any boundary treatment should be visually permeable from 600mm upwards.

Highway Safety - The accident information provided covered the most recent five-year period available from the database (01/11/2014 - 31/10/2019).

There have been a notable number of accidents involving cyclists in the area. There are 12 recorded incidents at the junction of Moseley Road and Wilmslow Road.

The proposed development will be adding additional cycle trips to the local network. It is recommended that the applicant review the layout of this junction in light of this high accident rate and fund measures to improve safety at the junction for all users and particularly cyclists. This should be conditioned.

Trip generation - The existing site operates as an office with circa 180 staff and 53 on-site parking spaces. The TRICS database has been used to predict that the existing office use has the potential to generate circa 55 two-way vehicle movements during the AM peak hour and 44 two way during the PM peak hour.

The information provided has been reviewed by TfGM and they have not raised any concerns regarding predicted trips.

Car Parking - Eight car parking spaces are proposed on-site
- 3 accessible spaces for students and staff
- 4 standard bays with electric vehicle charging points
- 1 standard bay.

The standard bays should be minimum 2.4m wide x 4.8m length and the accessible bays should be 3.6m wide x 6.0m length - bays should be separated by a 6m aisle width.

Car club bay - As there is no on-site car parking facility for student residents it is recommended that a car club bay is located nearby to the development and this is funded by the Developer. This will discourage car ownership and also assist residents who may require occasional use of a vehicle.

Student Parking Management Strategy - It is noted that a strategy is proposed so Students would not be permitted to bring their own cars to the site (or to the

University) as a condition of their tenancy, this is welcomed. This strategy should be conditioned.

Move-in/out Procedure - It is noted that all on-site car parking would be made available for students moving into/out of the site at the start/end of term time and demand for on-site parking during move-in /move-out events would be managed by the site operator. It is recommended that a Condition is attached to any subsequent Planning permission requesting that an Operational Management Plan is submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority, prior to first occupation of the development.

Pedestrians - It is proposed that the existing site access from Wilmslow Road would be used by pedestrians. An additional new pedestrian access point is proposed at the south-eastern corner of the Site off Langley Road, close to its junction with Wilmslow Road. It is recommended that all pedestrian routes are minimum 2m wide.

Public Realm/Materials - Commuted sums are required for any non-standard materials, street trees etc used on the adopted highway. To be agreed with MCC Highways S278 team as required.

Cycle Storage - Cycle stores for circa 172 cycles are proposed within the basement with access from the main pedestrian access off Wilmslow Road. A further 42 spaces are proposed close to the Wilmslow Road access. This represents a 50% allocation. The applicant should monitor usage of the cycle storage and provide additional as required - this should be included in the conditioned Travel Plan.

It is also recommended that the Developer promotes additional schemes to encourage sustainable travel such as bicycle hire etc.

Taxi pick up and drop off - No detail has been provided regarding this activity, details of a suitable location and how this will be managed should be included in the site management plan.

Waste/Servicing - It is proposed that servicing would be undertaken on-street on Langley Street and also within the car parking area.

Swept path assessments of refuse collection / delivery vehicle manoeuvres are provided which are acceptable in principle, to ensure servicing is appropriately managed it is recommended that a servicing management plan is conditioned.

Travel Plan - A draft Interim Travel Plan has been prepared to accompany the planning application. This is acceptable in principle, and it is recommended that a Condition is attached to any subsequent planning permission requesting that a Travel Plan is submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority, prior to first occupation of the development.

CMP - A construction management methodology plan has been submitted with the application. This will require on-going discussion and agreement with the MCC Network Resilience team. It is recommended that a CMP is suitably conditioned.

The applicant is also advised that any requirements for licensing, hoarding / scaffolding and any associated temporary traffic management arrangements will need discussion and agreement with the council's Highways Applications and Network Resilience teams via Contact Manchester .

Dilapidation surveys are also requested and the applicant should include photographs and commentary on the condition of carriageway / footways on construction vehicle routes surrounding the site.

MCC Flood Risk Management Team - Have recommend conditions be attached to any approval relating to the submission and approval of a surface water drainage scheme and its ongoing maintenance and management.

GMP Design for Security - Recommend that a condition to reflect the physical security specifications set out in section four of the Crime Impact Statement should be added, if the application is to be approved.

United Utilities – Recommend conditions to cover drainage.

Environment Agency - Provided a commentary note directing the local planning authority to the EAs published Guiding Principles for Land Contamination which outlines the approach they would wish to see adopted to managing risks to the water environment from this site and consult.

MCC Environmental Health – Make recommendations in terms of conditions to be attached too any approval relating to: Construction Management; delivery and servicing times; lighting scheme to be agreed; acoustic insulation of the building; acoustic insulation of external plant and equipment; refuse storage (particularly as the proposals for the tower block element appear to be undersized); and, contaminated land remediation and verification.

Policies

Section 38 (6) of the Town and Country Planning Act 2004 states that applications for development should be determined in accordance with the adopted development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The adopted development plan consists of the Core Strategy (adopted 2012) and the saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan. Due consideration in the determination of the application will also need to be afforded to national policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which represents a significant material consideration.

Core Strategy Development Plan Document

The Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2012 -2027 ("the Core Strategy") was adopted by the City Council on 11th July 2012. It is the key document in Manchester's Local Development Framework. The Core Strategy replaces significant elements of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) as the document that sets out the long term strategic planning policies for Manchester's future development. A number of UDP policies have been saved until replaced by further development plan documents to accompany the Core Strategy. Planning applications in Manchester

must be decided in accordance with the Core Strategy, saved UDP policies and other Local Development Documents.

Relevant policies in the Core Strategy are detailed below:

Policy SP 1 Spatial Principles – The proposal would be contrary to policy SP1 as it would not contribute towards the creation of a balanced neighbourhood of choice and would not create a high quality neighbourhood for residents to live in.

Policy H1 Overall Housing Provision – This site within South Manchester is not considered appropriate for PBSA as it would not meet the requirements of Policy H12.

Policy H 6 identifies High density residential development in South Manchester will generally only be appropriate within the district centres of Chorlton, Didsbury, Fallowfield, Levenshulme, and Withington, as part of mixed-use schemes. The proposals are in an area identified as having a constrained supply of housing land but would not contribute towards the City's housing provision. The scheme is of a high density but does not contain a mix of uses.

Policy H12 Purpose Built Student Accommodation - the provision of new PBSA will be supported where the development satisfies the criteria below. Priority will be given to schemes which are part of the universities' redevelopment plans or which are being progressed in partnership with the universities, and which clearly meet Manchester City Council's regeneration priorities.
1. Sites should be in close proximity to the University campuses or to a high frequency public transport route which passes this area.
2. The Regional Centre, including the Oxford Road Corridor, is a strategic area for low and zero carbon decentralised energy infrastructure. Proposed schemes that fall within this area will be expected to take place in the context of the energy proposals plans as required by Policy EN 5.
3. High density developments should be sited in locations where this is compatible with existing developments and initiatives, and where retail facilities are within walking distance. Proposals should not lead to an increase in on-street parking in the surrounding area.
4. Proposals that can demonstrate a positive regeneration impact in their own right will be given preference over other schemes. This can be demonstrated for example through impact assessments on district centres and the wider area. Proposals should contribute to providing a mix of uses and support district and local centres, in line with relevant Strategic Regeneration Frameworks, local plans and other masterplans as student accommodation should closely integrate with existing neighbourhoods to contribute in a positive way to their vibrancy without increasing pressure on existing neighbourhood services to the detriment of existing residents.
5. Proposals should be designed to be safe and secure for their users and avoid causing an increase in crime in the surrounding area. Consideration needs to be given to how proposed developments could assist in improving the safety of the surrounding area in terms of increased informal surveillance or other measures to contribute to crime prevention.
6. Consideration should be given to the design and layout of the student accommodation and siting of individual uses within the overall development in

relation to adjacent neighbouring uses. The aim is to ensure that there is no unacceptable effect on residential amenity in the surrounding area through increased noise, disturbance or impact on the streetscene either from the proposed development itself or when combined with existing accommodation.
7. Where appropriate proposals should contribute to the re-use of Listed Buildings and other buildings with a particular heritage value.
8. Consideration should be given to provision and management of waste disposal facilities that will ensure that waste is disposed of in accordance with the waste hierarchy set out in Policy EN 19, within the development at an early stage.
9. Developers will be required to demonstrate that there is a need for additional student accommodation or that they have entered into a formal agreement with a University, or another provider of higher education, for the supply of all or some of the bedspaces.
10. Applicants/developers must demonstrate to the Council that their proposals for PBSA are deliverable.

The development is considered to be contrary to policy H12 for the reasons set out in the Issues section of this report.

Policy T1 Sustainable Transport – The development would provide low levels of on site car parking which would assist in encouraging a modal shift away from car travel to more sustainable alternatives.

Policy T2 Accessible Areas of Opportunity and Need – The proposed development is in a highly sustainable location with good pedestrian,cycle and public transport provision.

Policy EN1 Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas - The proposal is considered to be of a height that would have a detrimental impact on the retained Oakley House, Platt Fields Park and the residential area to the immediate south.

EN2 Tall Buildings – Proposals for tall buildings will be supported where it can be demonstrated that they
- Are of excellent design quality,
- Are appropriately located,
- Contribute positively to sustainability,
- Contribute positively to place making, for example as a landmark, by terminating a view, or by signposting a facility of significance, and
- Will bring significant regeneration benefits.

A fundamental design objective will be to ensure that tall buildings complement the City's key existing building assets and make a positive contribution to the evolution of a unique, attractive and distinctive Manchester, including to its skyline and approach views.

Suitable locations will include sites within and immediately adjacent to the City Centre with particular encouragement given to non-conservation areas and sites which can easily be served by public transport nodes.

It will be necessary for the applicant/developer to demonstrate that proposals for tall buildings are viable and deliverable.

The development is considered to be contrary to policy EN2 for the reasons set out in more detail within the Issues section of this report.

Policy EN3 Heritage – It is considered that the building would have a detrimental impact on the setting of the retained Oakley House. This is discussed in more detail below.

Policy EN4 Reducing CO2 Emissions by Enabling Low and Zero Carbon Development - The proposals follows the Energy Hierarchy and the buildings' fabric shall be constructed to a high-performance standard, achieving high levels of thermal insulation and low air permeability. Energy efficient lighting and appropriate controls shall be employed throughout the development.

Policy EN6 Target Framework for CO2 reductions from low or zero carbon energy supplies – The development would comply with the CO2 emission reduction targets set out in this policy through the inclusion of air source heat pumps.

Policy EN 8 Adaptation to Climate Change - The energy statement sets out how the building has been designed to consider adaptability in relation to climate change.

Policy EN9 Green Infrastructure – The development incorporates a landscaping scheme and retention of category class A trees on the site.

Policy EN14 Flood Risk – The site falls within Flood Zone 1 and is at low risk of flooding. A Flood Risk Assessment and drainage strategy has been prepared.

EN15 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – The development would provide an opportunity to secure ecological enhancement for fauna typically associated with residential areas such as breeding birds and roosting bats.

Policy EN 16 Air Quality - The proposal would not be reliant on cars and would therefore minimise emissions from any traffic generated by the development. An air quality assessment has been submitted alongside the application.

Policy EN 17 Water Quality - The development would not have an adverse impact on water quality. Surface water run-off and grounds water contamination would be minimised.

Policy EN 18 Contaminated Land and Ground Stability - A ground investigation report, which identifies possible risks arising from ground contamination has been prepared.

Policy EN19 Waste – The development would be consistent with the principles of waste hierarchy. The application is accompanied by a Waste Management Strategy although it is noted that Environmental Health would require a condition to agree the final details and space available for waste storage and disposal.

Policy DM 1 Development Management – This policy sets out the requirements for developments and outlines a range of general issues that all development should have regard to. Of these the following issues are or relevance to this proposal:
• appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail;
• design for health;
• adequacy of internal accommodation and amenity space.
• impact on the surrounding areas in terms of the design, scale and appearance of the proposed development;
• that development should have regard to the character of the surrounding area;
• effects on amenity, including privacy, light, noise, vibration, air quality and road safety and traffic generation;
• accessibility to buildings, neighbourhoods and sustainable transport modes;
• impact on safety, crime prevention and health; adequacy of internal accommodation external amenity space, refuse storage and collection, vehicular access and car parking; and
• impact on biodiversity, landscape, archaeological or built heritage, green Infrastructure and flood risk and drainage.
The application is considered in detail in relation to the above issues within the Issues section below.

Saved Unitary Development Plan Policies

DC26.1 and DC26.5 Development and Noise – A noise assessment has been prepared to accompany the application. The noise impacts of the proposal are discussed in more detail below.

Relevant National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) sets out Government planning policies for England and how these are expected to apply. The NPPF seeks to achieve sustainable development and states that sustainable development has an economic, social and environmental role. The NPPF outlines a “presumption in favour of sustainable development”. This means approving development, without delay, where it accords with the development plan and where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.

The following specific policies are considered to be particularly relevant to the proposed development:

Section 5 (Delivering a sufficient supply of homes) – High-density student accommodation is not considered appropriate on this site and would have a negative impact on the land available for delivering a sufficient supply of homes for the general population.
Section 6 – (Building a strong and competitive economy) - The proposal would create jobs during construction and occupation would support commercial premises within the local area.

Section 8 (Promoting healthy and safe communities) – The introduction of 425 additional students to this area may cause issues of noise and disturbance to the wider established residential community.
Section 9 (Promoting Sustainable Transport) – The proposal is in a highly sustainable location, albeit some distance from the main University campuses, the site is on a direct public transport routes to the University corridor.
Section 11 (Making Effective Use of Land) – The proposal would not make effective use of land as it would use land that would not assist in creating a balanced and sustainable community
Section 12 (Achieving Well-Designed Places) – It is not considered that the proposals reflect the local character or spaces adjacent the site and would not achieve a well-designed place.
Section 14 (Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change) – The proposal would seek to achieve an 'Excellent' BREEAM rating. A sustainability statement indicates that the development would be designed and constructed to:
-Be a highly thermally efficient building fabric;
- Incorporate Air Source Heat Pumps for hot water heating;
- Include highly efficient lighting;
- Contain water saving sanitary fittings and appliances to deliver a water efficient development;
- Use materials with a low lifecycle environmental impact and embodied energy;
- Be of an efficient construction and operational waste management;
The site is within Zone 1 of the Environment Agency flood maps and has a low probability of flooding.
Section 15 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment) – The documents submitted with this application have considered issues such as ground conditions, noise and the impact on ecology and demonstrate that the proposal would not have a significant adverse impact in respect of the natural environment.
Section 16 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment) - The proposal, due to its height and siting is considered to have an adverse impact on the settings of the non-designated heritage asset of Oakley House.

<u>Other material considerations</u>

Report to the City Council's Executive on PBSA
The Council's Executive endorsed a report regarding PBSA on 9 December 2020 following the outcome of a public consultation exercise with key stakeholders, on PBSA in Manchester. The report was endorsed by the Executive to help guide the decision-making process in advance of a review of the Local Plan. It was requested by the Council's Executive that the report on PBSA in Manchester be considered as a material planning consideration until the Local Plan has been reviewed.

The report sets out that Core Strategy Policy H12 retains relevance in how PBSA is developed in Manchester. It sets out that the location of new PBSA should be close to University facilities. The report also highlights how location is a key factor in ensuring the quality, security, sustainability and wellbeing benefits in the provision of accommodation. The report confirms that accommodation should be located in the areas immediately adjacent to the core university areas, principally the Oxford Road Corridor area.

The PBSA report sets out numerous reasons why location is a significant consideration in determining the acceptability of new PBSA developments, such as how:
- New stock in appropriate locations represents an opportunity to deliver an improved student experience;
- The location of accommodation close to University facilities is a critical issue in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of students; and
- Given the current climate emergency and Manchester's commitment to be carbon neutral by 2038, it is increasingly important that the location of student accommodation in Manchester should continue to be driven by proximity to university campuses.

Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance (April 2007)

This Supplementary Planning Document supplements guidance within the Adopted Core Strategy with advice on development principles including on design, accessibility, design for health and promotion of a safer environment. The design, scale and siting of the proposed development is considered in more detail within the issues section of this report.

Manchester Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy 2015
The Manchester Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (MGBIS) sets out objectives for environmental improvements within the City within the context of objectives for growth and development.

Manchester Residential Quality Guidance (July 2016) (MRQG) – This document provides specific guidance on what is required to deliver sustainable neighbourhoods of choice where people will want to live and also raise the quality of life across Manchester. The proposal is not considered to be consistent with contributing towards the creation of a sustainable residential neighbourhood in this area.

Residential Growth Strategy (2016) – This recognises the critical relationship between housing and economic growth. There is an urgent need to build more new homes for sale and rent to meet future demands from the growing population. Housing is one of the key Spatial Objectives of the Core Strategy and the Council aims to provide for a significant increase in high quality housing at sustainable locations and the creation of high quality neighbourhoods with a strong sense of place as confirmed within other policies of the Core Strategy. It is considered that the proposed development would undermine achieving this growth priority.

Climate Change

Our Manchester Strategy 2016-25 – sets out the vision for Manchester to become a liveable and low carbon city that will:
- Continue to encourage walking, cycling and public transport journeys;
- Improve green spaces and waterways including them in new developments to enhance quality of life;
- Harness technology to improve the city's liveability, sustainability and connectivity;

- Develop a post-2020 carbon reduction target informed by 2015's intergovernmental Paris meeting, using devolution to control more of our energy and transport;
- Argue to localise Greater Manchester's climate change levy so it supports new investment models;
- Protect our communities from climate change and build climate resilience.

Manchester: A Certain Future (MACF) – This is the city wide climate change action plan, which calls on all organisations and individuals in the city to contribute to collective, citywide action to enable Manchester to realise its aim to be a leading low carbon city by 2020. Manchester City Council (MCC) has committed to contribute to the delivery of the city's plan and set out its commitments in the MCC Climate Change Delivery Plan 2010-20. Manchester Climate Change Board (MCCB) Zero Carbon Framework - The Council supports the MCCB to take forward work to engage partners in the city to address climate change. In November 2018, the MCCB made a proposal to update the city's carbon reduction commitment in line with the Paris Agreement, in the context of achieving the "Our Manchester" objectives and asked the Council to endorse these new targets.

The Zero Carbon Framework – This outlines the approach that will be taken to help Manchester reduce its carbon emissions over the period 2020-2038. The target was proposed by the Manchester Climate Change Board and Agency, in line with research carried out by the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change, based at the University of Manchester. Manchester's science-based target includes a commitment to releasing a maximum of 15 million tonnes of CO2 from 2018-2100. With carbon currently being released at a rate of 2 million tonnes per year, Manchester's 'carbon budget' will run out in 2025, unless urgent action is taken. Areas for action in the draft Framework include improving the energy efficiency of local homes; generating more renewable energy to power buildings; creating well-connected cycling and walking routes, public transport networks and electric vehicle charging infrastructure; plus, the development of a 'circular economy', in which sustainable and renewable materials are re-used and recycled as much as possible.

Legislative requirements

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 provides that in the exercise of all its functions the Council must have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between person who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not. This includes taking steps to minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a protect characteristic and to encourage that group to participate in public life. Disability is a protected characteristic.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 provides that in the exercise of its planning functions the Council shall have regard to the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder.

<u>Issues</u>

Principle

It is considered that the principle of the redevelopment of the site and retention, refurbishment and re-use of Oakley House is in general acceptable. In this instance the proposals seek the sites redevelopment to provide 425 bedroom spaces for Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) in the form of two buildings, one 13 storeys in height and the other a part 4 and 5 storey building. An assessment of the proposals against Core Strategy policy H12 relating to PBSA development is set out in full below, however the proposals are not considered to accord with the criteria contained within it.

The proposals would introduce a building of height in a part of Fallowfield that has historically been of a more domestic scale with the tallest building being the Church of the Holy Innocents, it is acknowledged that 20th Century developments to the east have introduced taller buildings into the wider area and consideration of this is set out in more detail below. However, it is considered that the principle of the redevelopment of the site in the form proposed is unacceptable in this location.

Core Strategy Policy H12
Proposals for purpose built student accommodation (PBSA) are subject to compliance with Core Strategy Policy H12 'Purpose Built Student Accommodation.'

CS policy H12 sets out a number of criteria that proposals for PBSA should meet in order for them to be acceptable. The policy was introduced to ensure that proposals for student accommodation could be managed effectively, to ensure that they were located appropriately to support the Council's regeneration priorities and also to ensure that the provision of further bed spaces in purpose built student accommodation would assist in encouraging students to choose managed accommodation over HMOs.

In order for a proposal to be acceptable it is expected to satisfy all the criteria of the policy which are set out in full within the policy section of this report. The proposal has been assessed against each point of the policy as follows:

The site is not in close proximity to the University campuses but is adjacent a high frequency public transport route which passes through the University area. The Core Strategy defines 'in close proximity' as within 500m (easy walking distance). The application site is approximately 1500m from the
University of Manchester Main Campus, Manchester Metropolitan University Oxford Road campus.

The report to the City Council's Executive of 9 December 2020 reinforces the importance of locating new PBSA close to University facilities and highlights how location is a key factor in ensuring the quality, security, sustainability and wellbeing benefits in the provision of accommodation. The report confirms that accommodation should be located in the areas immediately adjacent to the core university areas, principally the Oxford Road Corridor area. The proposal site is distant from the core university areas. It is acknowledged that the site is immediately adjacent the high frequency bus route along Wilmslow Road serving the University. A number of respondents to the notification process have highlighted current issues with the high demand on this bus route and some of the issues faced by school pupils and other

residents in using these routes and that these issues would worsen if the proposals were approved.

The proposed development has been designed to address the requirements of planning policy with regards to energy use and carbon reduction. The application is accompanied by a BREEAM pre-assessor that outlines that the development would be designed to achieve an ‘Excellent’ rating.

It is considered that the application proposals would not be compatible with existing developments of this area and would contribute towards existing on-street parking problems that are identified by Highway Services. There have been a number of developments of PBSA on the University of Manchester owned Fallowfield Halls of residence with the first phases recently being completed. In addition, the recent conversion of Chancellors from a hotel and conference facilities has added further student bedspaces into the location. As such the immediate area has seen an increase in PBSA, the application proposals would lead to a further concentration of PBSA within this part of Fallowfield.

Regeneration is an important planning consideration against policy H12. The site falls within an area that currently contains high levels of PBSA and Houses in Multiple Occupation with student occupiers. As described by residents this has put pressure on the area in a number of ways including the provision of local services and anti-social behaviour. It is considered that the proposals would add to these pressures and would not have a positive regeneration impact on Fallowfield. It is acknowledged that the proposals would retain, refurbish and re-purpose Oakley House a non-designated heritage asset and would create jobs through the construction phase, however such benefits are not considered to outweigh the harm set out within this report.

The proposal could achieve adequate security measures with appropriate conditions, and it would increase the surveillance of the area. However, as confirmed in responses from local residents and ward members, the area is subject to targeted crime as a result of high levels of students residing in the area and also anti-social behaviour. The submitted Crime Impact Statement also confirms that the area, when compared with other neighbourhoods within Manchester, has a significantly higher than average number of crimes. It identifies high levels of burglary, those involving the use or threat of violence, robbery and theft, particularly bicycle theft in the neighbourhood.

It is considered that the proposal could lead to unacceptable noise and disturbance to neighbouring residential properties due to the comings and goings of students. In addition, the scale of the building in close proximity to residential properties on Langley Road would result in overlooking and would have an overbearing impact on the residents of those properties.

Oakley House is considered a non-designated heritage asset. Its retention, refurbishment and re-purposed use is a benefit of the proposals. The building is the only remaining Victorian Villa constructed on the western side of Wilmslow Road in this area. However, the proposed construction of a 13 storey building in close

proximity is considered to give rise to harm to its setting and its appreciation within the area.

A waste management strategy has been submitted that would fall short of the standards for City Council in terms of its size. It is considered that if the proposals were considered acceptable in principle this matter could have been successfully resolved.

The applicant has not carried out a study on student need but has submitted a Market Student Demand Study and has identified the issue of need within a supporting Planning Statement, which indicate that a 2.2 student to bed ratio in Manchester suggests a deficiency in provision of PBSA. The University of Manchester provided a letter to the applicant prior to the submission of the current application and the University have forwarded this letter to the Council as their response to the notification process. This outlines that the University has been involved in discussions with the applicant prior to the submission of the application and are satisfied their comments have been taken on board.

For the reasons outlined above it is considered that the application proposal does not satisfy all criteria set out in Core Strategy Policy H12 as is required.

Core Strategy Policy EN2 'Tall Buildings'
The proposed development includes a building of 13 storeys in height. This is significantly taller than the predominant context of the area in which the site is located, as such the proposals are required to be considered against the adopted Core Strategy policy on tall buildings (EN2) the NPPF, and reference has also been taken to the advice contained within Historic England's published Advice Note 4 'Tall Buildings' (10 December 2015).
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The effect of the proposal on key views, open space, listed buildings, scheduled Ancient Monuments, and Oakley House as a non-designated heritage asset has been considered, the application is supported by a Design and Access Statement, Heritage Statement and a Townscape and Visual Assessment of the proposal.

Sections 66 and 72 of the Listed Building Act 1990 provide that, in considering whether to grant planning permission for development that affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses, and in determining planning applications for land or buildings within a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. Section 16 of the NPPF establishes the criteria by which planning applications involving designated and non-designated heritage assets should be assessed and determined.

Where a development proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals.

The site is not within a conservation area and is not in close proximity to a conservation area. The following listed buildings are potentially affected by the proposal:

- Platt Chapel (Grade II) – 110 metres to the north
- Hollings Building at Manchester Metropolitan University (Grade II) – 170 metres to the north east
- Behrens Hall (originally 'The Oaks') (Grade II) – 130 metres to the north east
- Ashburne Hall (Lees, Mary Worthington, Ward and Central block), including the Alice Barlow memorial gates to Wilmslow Road and Ashburne Hall Lodge (Grade II) 160 metres to the east
- 256 Wilmslow Road (Grade II) – 220 metres to the south
- Church of the Holy Innocents (Grade II) – 240 metres to the south
- The Holy Trinity Church on Platt Lane (Grade II*) - 580 metres to the north west
- Platt Hall (Grade II*) – 550 metres to the north west

There is one Scheduled Ancient Monument approximately 90 metres to the north of the site, which is Nico Ditch a section of an early medieval boundary ditch.

The site is identified as having a low potential for archaeology.

Platt Fields which lies immediately to the sites northern and western boundary is a major park serving Fallowfield and surrounding wards, it was formally opened in 1910 and forms one of Manchester's major outdoor event sites, the park has three dedicated show fields with a supported infrastructure for large scale national and small scale and local events. The grounds contain the Grade II* listed Platt Hall, home to Manchester's Costume Gallery. Given the location of the application site and the scale of proposed development there is the potential for there to be impacts on views into and from the park. Directly to the north and north east boundary of the application site is a belt of trees within the park (which includes the Shakespeare Garden) that extend east-west from Wilmslow Road towards the boating lake.

The trees to the front of the application site are significant and provide a verdant boundary to the site, with a continuation of large trees lining the western and eastern sides of Wilmslow Road which extend northwards towards the southern end of the Rusholme District Centre. Following advice of the City's arborists a provisional TPO has been placed on the category A trees to the Wilmslow Road frontage of the site.

The applicant has presented a number of key views within the submitted Townscape and Visual Impact Appraisal that presents a number of pre and post development views. It is considered that in relation to the identified designated heritage assets set out above the proposals impacts would be limited as a result of the distances involved, topography of the area and intervening built form.

Oakley House is identified as the last remaining Victorian Villa constructed on the western side of Wilmslow Road, it dates from the first half of the 19th Century and as a result of having the same custodians since the 1920s has been extended to provide additional office space required as part of its ongoing use. However, despite these 20th Century additions the original Villa does retain a number of key internal

and external features of interest whilst the extensions retain a similar height to the main house which have assisted its assimilation into the local context.

The Villa has a historical connection to Platt Fields Park beyond and is of a height similar to the residential area to its immediate south comprising of later Victorian terrace properties. To the east of the site on the opposite side of Wilmslow Road are the more institutional buildings associated with the Halls of Residence of the University of Manchester including listed buildings and more contemporary buildings including the 19 storey high Owens Park Tower that sits approximately 120m from Oakley House.

Visualisation provided by the applicant with the retained Oakley House to the right and the new blocks to the left and rear

Northern elevation of the proposed Tower with the retained and refurbished Oakley House to the left

The proposals would have a direct visual impact on Oakley House, a non-designated heritage asset. These impacts would arise from the proposed footprint of development of the site, the scale of buildings proposed on the site and the positioning of these elements in close proximity to Oakley House. Given this proposed relationship it is not considered that the proposals complement a non-designated building asset. It is acknowledged that the proposals would retain Oakley House and repurpose it to enable its ongoing use.

In terms of the design quality of the proposals Architectural Quality consideration of a building's scale, form, massing, proportion, materials and relationship to other structures is required. The Core Strategy policy on tall buildings (EN2) seeks to ensure that tall buildings complement the City's existing buildings and make a positive contribution to the creation of a unique, attractive and distinctive City. Proposals for tall buildings will be supported where it can be demonstrated, amongst other things, that they are of excellent design quality; are appropriately located; and contribute positively to place making.

Part of the application proposal is for the development of a 13 storey tower, this building would be set behind but have a close physical and visual relationship with the retained Oakley House and the more domestic scaled residential properties on Langley Road and to the south. It is considered that whilst the applicant proposes a high quality, sustainable buildings the proposed scale and massing would not make a positive contribution to place making and would appear as a dominant feature within a lower scale environment. Whilst large-scale towers doe lie to east and north east of the site, the application site lies within an area of lower scale buildings.

The proposals seek the redevelopment of an existing employment site which provides the national headquarters for USDAW. Whilst there would be some direct benefit through construction jobs it is not considered that the proposals would generate significant regeneration benefits that would outweigh the identified harm identified above.

Given the above, it is considered that the proposal would have a scale, form, massing that is unacceptable and would be contrary to Policy EN2. Tall buildings Assessment.

Visual Amenity
There would be visual impacts on the character and street scene along Langley Road and residential properties to the south of the site. The proposed built form on Langley Road is four storeys in height with bedroom spaces within the roof with the front elevation being set back approximately 2 metres from the front boundary of the site.

The applicant has provided a number of images depicting pre and post development views some of these are in the vicinity of the building, those relating to the immediate environment are set out below.

View northwards along Riga Road towards the existing Usdaw offices

CGI of the View northwards along Riga Road towards the proposed development

The existing rear extensions to Oakley House are of two and three storeys in height with flat roofs and whist having a close relationship to its Langley Road frontage the built form does not extend the full length of this road frontage. This provides a visual relief and break between the existing built form, the park beyond and residential properties opposite.

View west along Langley Road – USDAW offices to the right and residential properties to the left

Rear of Usdaw offices as viewed from Langley Road

The application proposals would see the development of the Langley Road frontage with a break of approximately 5m of the L shaped block from the retained Oakley House and a 5m gap with the rear boundary with Platt Fields Park, the built form at four storeys would extend for 50 metres along the road frontage. It is considered that

given the height, siting and extent along Langley Road the proposed built form fronting Langley Road would have a detrimental impact on the visual amenity of the area and the character of the streetscene. Given the relatively close relationship to the residential properties on the southern side of Langley Road it is considered that the proposed building would have an overbearing impact on these properties particularly those located to the western end of Langley Road.

The current rear extensions to the Usdaw offices are of a low scale and a low visual impact on the streetscene and Platt Fields Park. To the rear of the site the extensions are set in off the rear boundary wall to the park by 17 metres at the southern end and 12 metres towards the northern edge, these elements of built form are two storeys in height and have a width of 12m presenting a relatively narrow gable end to the northern boundary with the park. The applicant has presented a number of pre and post development images within the Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment that show the visual impacts of the development on visuals from the park, these are presented below.

Pre development view from the Shakespeare Garden with Platt Fields Park towards the rear extensions of the Usdaw offices, with the roofs of the terraced properties on Langley Road to the centre right

Post development view from the same viewpoint

Pre development view looking east towards the two storey rear extension of Usdaw (centre left)

Post development view from the same viewpoint

Pre development view from the Platt Fields park boating lake towards the application site (Owens Park tower is centre left)

Post development view with proposed tower to the left of the Owens Park tower

It is considered that given the scale of development in close proximity to the boundaries to the park this would give rise to impacts on the visual amenity and character of the area, this would lead to a greater urban character and experience to users of the Park particularly those elements of the park closer to the application site. Mitigation through the landscaping of the site is not considered to overcome the impacts on the wider area and character of the park. The proposals would introduce

unsympathetic and uncharacteristic development into this established residential street that fails to respect the established pattern and character of development.

Trees
The mature trees and gardens contribute to the character of the site and date back to the residential uses of Oakley Villa. The mature trees provide some containment to the site to the north, east and west and contribute to the leafy appearance of Wilmslow Road. The category A trees to the front of the site are all subject to the recently made TPO due to their high visual amenity value, the highly prominent position on Wilmslow Road and their contribution to the street scene and wider urban landscape character of the area. A further Sycamore tree, located to the northwest corner of the site has also been included in the TPO in all 12 trees are subject to the provisional TPO.

The application has been accompanied by a Tree Survey and arboricultural impact assessment. The City Arborist does not object to the proposals but do raise concerns on impacts on existing trees within Platt Fields park from excessive overshadowing from the proposed development, the closest trees are identified as a Group of Category A trees and are of high amenity value. This issue has been raised by a number of objectors to the proposals. The City Arborist has advised that they do advise against planting young trees in complete shade on new developments. They along with the Council's specialist ecologists at Greater Manchester Ecology Unit are not aware of a test that would give a definite answer due to the sheer number of variables to take into consideration such as soil conditions, species, age and past pruning etc. They do acknowledge that a lack of natural light would have some negative impact, but how much of a negative impact is difficult to determine at this point. Given the relative lack of research on this matter it is unclear what impact a tall building in close proximity to the south of existing mature trees would have. If there were no other overriding objections to the applications proposals, further information would be requested from the applicant to address this matter to provide assurances on impacts. The age, and high visual amenity provided by the belt of trees within this part of the to these trees park is significant, the uncertainty of impacts on them is considered to be a substantial concern.

Residential Amenity
As indicated in other sections within this report, the proposed built form is considered to give rise to impacts on residential amenity particularly on residents of Langley Road from the scale and proximity of the built form proposed.

Whilst residential properties facing each other across a street is a character of many residential areas, including the terraced streets in this part of Fallowfield, the proposals would introduce significant numbers of windows serving bedroom spaces facing towards existing residential properties. Given the nature of the occupancy of the proposed bedroom spaces the perception of overlooking and loss of privacy of existing residential properties is considered to be significant.

Proposed Langley Road elevation

The existing residential properties on Langley Road are relatively modest in scale with one window at ground and first floor and ground floor entrance. The introduction of built form as set out in the proposed development would introduce a significant street frontage with a substantial element of glazing and this is considered to give rise to a real and perceived loss of privacy and overlooking of the existing established residential properties on Langley Road.

The proposed occupation of the site by 425 students would give rise to an increase in the activity to and from the site throughout the day and week. The use of natural ventilation of rooms and spaces within the buildings would also add to the potential noise on the street. The proposals incorporate three pedestrian accesses from Langley Road via access controlled gates and further accesses from Wilmslow Road. Testimonies from ward members, residents and residents' groups have indicated the issues faced in the local area in respect of student accommodation and impacts on residential amenity. It is recognised that a vibrant and active student population does have the opportunity to positively contribute to a local area, however, it is also noted that a concentration of student occupation in an area does give rise to impacts on residential amenity through noise, anti-social behaviour and other negative impacts on a neighbourhood. In this instance it is considered that the addition of a further 425 students within this neighbourhood would give rise to unacceptable impacts on the residential amenity of the area and would fail to support adopted Core Strategy policy SP1 which seeks development to make a positive contribution towards the creation of neighbourhoods of choice.

Car Parking
The immediate area around the site is identified as having on-street car parking issues. This is as a result of limited off street parking available to the existing housing stock in the area and the existence of multi-occupancy dwellings.

The application proposals include off street parking of the order of 3 accessible spaces plus 4 spaces with electric vehicle charging points. The applicant proposes a restriction on tenancies that would not permit the ownership of a car on the site. It is indicated that this model reflects similar ones in place for the Halls of Residence of the University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University. It is considered reasonable to expect, given the level of proposed occupation, that a proportion of occupiers would have access or ownership of a car irrespective of the sustainability of the location. Such demands would have to be almost exclusively accommodated on the public highway around the development.

Ecology
The application is accompanied by an Ecological Appraisal which has been assessed by the Council's specialist ecology advisors at the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit who raise no significant objections to the proposals on ecological grounds save for a number of matters that could be resolved by way of conditions attached to a planning approval.

As discussed above there is some uncertainty on the impacts on category A trees within Platt Fields Park from the proposed development. These are noted within the Ecological Appraisal as being a habitat of principle importance and contain features suitable for roosting bats although it is noted they were not accessed for surveying. The uncertainty of whether the trees within the Park would be negatively impacted could have other implications on the ecology of the area, if the proposals were considered acceptable this matter would require further consideration and investigation to understand the full implications on ecology.

Impact on the area
The core development principles set out in the Core Strategy expect development to make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice including creating well designed places that enhance or create character; and make a positive contribution to the health, safety and wellbeing of residents.

It is recognised that Fallowfield has a long association with providing residential accommodation for students in purpose built accommodation, halls and within private sector rental properties. There is also a long recognised impact that this has had on the social and physical fabric of the area. Planning policies and other mechanisms such as the Article 4 direction removing permitted development rights for residential properties to convert to Houses in Multiple Occupation without planning permission have been put in place to ensure that an appropriate balance can be reached. Whilst there have been developments for student accommodation such as at the University of Manchester's Fallowfield Halls of Residence, these have accorded with adopted polices that envisaged such developments being brought forward.

Other impacts arising from a detrimental mix within the community, alluded to by residents, is in the provision of services and facilities within the District Centre. Again policies have sought to ensure that where the planning system can intervene such as through adopted policy on the night time economy and supplementary policy on hot food take away.

The provision of further purpose built student accommodation reinforces the imbalances present in the area and impacts on the ability to ensure overriding policy objectives are met. As outlined in previous sections of this report it is not considered that the proposals would make a positive contribution to the creation of neighbourhoods of choice and therefore fail to accord with adopted planning policies in place.

Regeneration Benefit
The applicant has provided an economic impact assessment and Planning Statement alongside the application which set out the benefits that could be derived from the

application proposals. These detail the potential monetary expenditure captured within the local economy as a result of increase student occupation, jobs created through the construction and operational phase, the retention of Usdaw staff within Manchester and Greater Manchester, and the potential for the re-occupation of HMOs in Fallowfield to residential uses. In addition to this the development would retain and refurbish the non-designated heritage asset of Oakley House and repurpose it. These identified benefits are acknowledged, however, the proposals would not address an identified need for additional residential housing in South Manchester and as set out in this report are not considered to outweigh the identified harm that the proposals would give rise to identified within this report.

Conclusion
The proposal is on a site that is not in close proximity to the University campuses as defined in policy H12 but is located on a high frequency public transport route which passes through them. The applicant has relied on the Council executive report of December 2020 indicating a need for Purpose Built Student Accommodation in the City and a market demand assessment. The application documents indicate there is no formal agreement in place with the Universities although the University of Manchester has been involved in discussions with the application prior to the submission of the application and have offered their written support. The applicant has relied on their schemes delivered elsewhere in the country to demonstrate that their proposal for PBSA are deliverable. The proposal does not demonstrate a positive regeneration impact in its own right and as indicated in this report is not considered to positively contribute towards neighbourhoods of choice. Given the low level of on-site provision for car parking to service the development it is considered that the proposals would give rise to an increase in demand and requirement for on street car parking in the vicinity of the development in an area already experiencing high levels of on-street car parking.

The development would adversely impact upon the amenity of residents in the area , the visual amenity and character of the area it is located, and, is therefore considered, for the reasons set out in this report, to be contrary to policies SP1, H12, EN2, and DM1 of the Core Strategy for the City of Manchester and the NPPF.

The proposal is for a tall building adjacent to smaller scale residential buildings and non-designated heritage asset, which it would tower above with very little separation distance, having an overbearing impact on existing residents and providing a significant urbanising effect on the edge of Platt Fields Park. It would form an over-dominant feature within the street scene and area, which would have a detrimental effect on visual amenity. It is therefore considered to be contrary to policies SP1, EN1, EN2, EN3 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy, guidance contained in the Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Guidance and the NPPF.

Due to the height of the proposal there is the potential for the development to overshadow adjacent trees that form an important habitat and have a high visual amenity within Platt Fields Park. In the absence of evidence that the development would not adversely impact on adjacent trees, it is considered that the proposed building, by reason of its scale and height, could have a detrimental impact on

existing adjacent trees contrary to policy EN9, EN15 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy.

Given the above, it is considered that the proposal for PBSA within a tall building on this site would be inconsistent with national and local planning policy and should be refused for the reasons set out below.

Human Rights Act 1998 considerations – This application needs to be considered against the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. Under Article 6, the applicants (and those third parties, including local residents, who have made representations) have the right to a fair hearing and to this end the Committee must give full consideration to their comments.

Protocol 1 Article 1, and Article 8 where appropriate, confer(s) a right of respect for a person's home, other land and business assets. In taking account of all material considerations, including Council policy as set out in the Core Strategy and saved polices of the Unitary Development Plan, the Director of Planning, Building Control & Licensing has concluded that some rights conferred by these articles on the applicant(s)/objector(s)/resident(s) and other occupiers and owners of nearby land that might be affected may be interfered with but that that interference is in accordance with the law and justified by being in the public interest and on the basis of the planning merits of the development proposal. She believes that any restriction on these rights posed by the of the application is proportionate to the wider benefits of and that such a decision falls within the margin of discretion afforded to the Council under the Town and Country Planning Acts.

Recommendation REFUSE

Article 35 Declaration

Officers work with applicants in a positive and proactive manner based on seeking solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with planning applications. However, in this instance the proposals are not considered to accord with adopted planning policies and the applicant has been advised that the local planning authority does not consider this to be an appropriate location for purpose built student accommodation or an acceptable proposed development for the location

Reasons for recommendation

1) The proposal would not give rise to a positive regeneration impact or address the requirement for housing in the area. The proposals do not contain a mix of uses that would support Fallowfield District Centre, would not closely integrate with existing neighbourhoods and are considered to give rise to unacceptable impacts by reason of the density of development and level of proposed occupation. As such the proposals are not considered to accord with policies H6 and H12 of the Core Strategy.

2) The applicant has not demonstrated a formal agreement is in place with a University, or another provider of higher education for the supply of all or some of the proposed bed spaces, or that there is a need for additional student

accommodation within this location, as such it is not considered that the proposals satisfy policy H12 of the Core Strategy.

3) The scale and massing of the proposed development in close proximity to lower scale residential buildings and the non-designated heritage asset of Oakley House, would give rise to an overbearing visual impact and provide a significant urbanising effect on the edge of Platt Fields Park. It would form an over-dominant feature within the street scene and area, which would have a detrimental effect on visual amenity and character of the area. It is therefore considered to be contrary to policies SP1, EN1, EN2, EN3 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy, guidance contained in the Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Guidance and the NPPF.

4) Due to the height of the proposal there is the potential for the development to overshadow adjacent trees that form an important habitat and have a high visual amenity within Platt Fields Park. In the absence of evidence that the development would not adversely impact on adjacent trees, it is considered that the proposed building, by reason of its scale and height, could have a detrimental impact on existing adjacent trees contrary to policy EN9, EN15 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy.

5) The proposed development would introduce up to 425 students into an area already experiencing high levels of student accommodation and occupation. It is considered that this provision would give rise to unacceptable impacts on the residential amenity of nearby residential occupiers by reason of noise, disturbance and general activity associated with the comings and goings and occupation of the proposed development contrary to policy H12 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

6) The windows within the south facing elevation of the proposed development would result in overlooking over a short distance to the living room windows of existing residential properties on Langley Road to the detriment of the reasonable amenity and privacy of the occupiers. As such the proposal is contrary to policies SP1, DM1 and H12 of the Core Strategy.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

The documents referred to in the course of this report are either contained in the file(s) relating to application ref: 129020/FO/2020 held by planning or are City Council planning policies, the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester, national planning guidance documents, or relevant decisions on other applications or appeals, copies of which are held by the Planning Division.

The following residents, businesses and other third parties in the area were consulted/notified on the application:

Highway Services

Environmental Health
Neighbourhood Team Leader (Arboriculture)
Parks & Events
MCC Flood Risk Management
Greater Manchester Police
United Utilities Water PLC
Transport For Greater Manchester
Greater Manchester Ecology Unit
South East Fallowfield Residents Association
Rusholme, Fallowfield & Moss Side Civic Society
Environmental Health
Manchester Metropolitan University
University Of Manchester
Environment Agency

A map showing the neighbours notified of the application is attached at the end of the report – To follow

Representations were received from the following third parties:

MCC Highway Services
MCC Environmental Health
MCC Neighbourhood Team Leader (Arboriculture)
MCC Flood Risk Management
Greater Manchester Police
United Utilities Water PLC
Greater Manchester Ecology Unit
South East Fallowfield Residents Association
Rusholme, Fallowfield & Moss Side Civic Society
University Of Manchester
Environment Agency

Relevant Contact Officer : Robert Griffin
Telephone number : 0161 234 4527
Email : robert.griffin@manchester.gov.uk