FOCUS TRANSPORT PLANNING

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Our Ref: J000168_KG_MCC
Your Ref: 129020/FO/2020

04 March 2021

MCC Highway Services
Manchester City Council
Town Hall
Manchester
M60 2LA

Dear Sir/Madam

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: ***Watkin Jones***

We write in response to your consultation comments relating to the above application. We note that you have suggested a series of conditions be attached to any planning consent for the scheme, the majority of which we consider suitable.

We would, however, query the relevance of a condition requiring an off-site highway safety review and associated improvements at the Moseley Road / Wilmslow Road signal junction. We acknowledge that there have been 12 accidents recorded at this junction over the most recent 5-year period for which data is available (01/11/2014 – 31/10/2019), 11 of which involved cyclists. Whilst all accidents are regrettable, it is important to recognise that this is a busy, urban signalised junction, which accommodates a high level of vehicular and cycle traffic.

Closer review of the accident records identifies that contributory factors are listed for 7 of the accidents which involved cyclists, with no contributory factors listed for 4 of the incidents. Of those records which include contributory factors, failing to look properly was cited as a likely possible cause of 6 of the incidents, along with distraction in vehicle, defective lights/indicators, failed to sign/misleading signal, careless/reckless/in a hurry and failed to judge other person's path/speed listed as other possible causes in some of the incidents. One incident was listed as being due to a cyclist disobeying a traffic signal.

Based on this more detailed review, it appears that those incidents for which detailed information is available were a result of driver or rider error, rather than an issue with the junction itself. Furthermore, the junction already includes infrastructure for cyclists including advance cycle stoplines and toucan crossings of all arms.

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It is expected that the proposed development would generate additional cyclists – the forecast mode share of the Owen's Park student campus identifies that cyclists comprise 5% of the mode share, with pedestrians and public transport users comprising 94% of the mode share (extracted from the TA for the Owen's Park redevelopment). This is considered a reasonable proxy for cycle movements for the application site given its close proximity. Even if the Travel Plan for the application site were to result in say a doubling of cyclist mode share (i.e. to 10%), this would represent a relatively small number of cycle movements. Additionally, it is expected that the vast majority of cycle movements associated with the site would be to/from the Universities / city centre (i.e. north along Wilmslow Road), therefore avoiding the Moseley Road / Wilmslow Road junction). It is also expected that a reduction in vehicle movements through the Moseley Road / Wilmslow Road junction could be expected as a result of the redevelopment, which would remove the existing office use of the site. The Transport Statement identifies that the office use has potential to generate circa 44-55 two-way vehicle movements per hour in the traditional AM and PM peak periods alone.

Based on the above, we consider that the suggested condition to review the layout of the Moseley Road / Wilmslow Road junction and fund measures to improve safety at the junction for all users and particularly cyclists is unnecessary and not commensurate with the proposed development scheme.

We note that you have also queried whether any consideration has been given to the provision of signalised pedestrian crossing facilities across Wilmslow Road in the vicinity of the site. The Transport Statement submitted to support the Planning Application for the scheme identifies that numerous signal-controlled crossing points of Wilmslow Road are currently available, including a toucan crossing south of Langley Road and controlled crossing facilities at the Wilmslow Road / Moseley Road junction. Furthermore, review of the accident data for Wilmslow Road does not identify any accidents involving pedestrians. It is therefore considered unnecessary to provide further signal crossing points along Wilmslow Road.

In light of the above we request that the suggested conditions relating to the review of off-site highway safety at Mosely Road junction and pedestrian crossing at Wilmslow Road are removed.

For clarity, the applicant does not have any issues with the propose highways conditions relating to cycle parking, Student Management Strategy including Move in/out procedure, Servicing Management Plan, reinstatement of redundant site access points to footway, CMP, Travel Plan, Car Club Bay and ELV.

Should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Kayley Goulbourne
Director
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CC: Robert Griffin - Case Officer