

Comments for Planning Application 144717/JO/2025

Application Summary

Application Number: 144717/JO/2025

Address: Parrs Wood High School Wilmslow Road Manchester M20 5PG

Proposal: Variation of Condition 2 attached to Planning Permission 136137/FO/2023 to allow for amendments to the siting and design of the previously approved fencing.

Case Officer: David Lawless

Customer Details

Name: Not Available

Address: Not Available

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I strongly object to the proposed amended application to reinstate 2.4 metre fencing around the school playing fields adjacent to the River Mersey. This objection is based on clear and substantial material planning considerations, in particular flood risk, public safety, and conflict with national planning policy.

The playing fields lie immediately adjacent to the River Mersey and function, both historically and practically, as a flood plain. On 1 January 2025 the River Mersey flooded to its highest recorded level. During this event, the previously erected 2.4 metre fencing was severely damaged and destroyed, and nearby residential properties were severely affected. Crucially, the fencing trapped debris and obstructed the natural conveyance of flood water, preventing the river from promptly or safely spreading into the fields, and instead initially forcing flood water around the obstruction and towards nearby residential properties. This resulted in a clear increase in flood risk to neighbouring homes and placed residents in danger.

Re-erecting fencing of the same height and nature, even with a marginal setback of a few metres, fails to address this fundamental issue. The proposal continues to obstruct flood flow and debris movement and therefore directly conflicts with the National Planning Policy Framework, which requires that development must not increase flood risk elsewhere and must be informed by the best available evidence.

No convincing justification has been provided to demonstrate why such extensive fencing is necessary on land that has long been safely used and respected by the community. In the absence of any clear operational or safeguarding necessity, the proposal represents a disproportionate and unnecessary form of development that causes identifiable harm without

corresponding planning benefit. The proposed amendment does not meaningfully mitigate the known and evidenced flood risk. Moving the fence by a few metres does not alter its function as a physical barrier during extreme flood events, nor does it prevent the accumulation of debris or redirection of water flow.

Reinstating infrastructure that has already demonstrably failed and worsened flooding conditions shows a failure to properly assess risk, adapt design, or learn from recent and severe flood events. This is contrary to principles of sustainable and resilient development. This proposal therefore raises serious concerns regarding public safety. Planning decisions must take into account the safety of existing residents, particularly in the context of increasing extreme weather events. Any development that worsens flood behaviour in a high-risk location is fundamentally unsound.

I also expect that the Environment Agency is a statutory consultee for any developments affecting flood risk. I await evidence that they are consulted on this amended proposal, given the known flood risk of the site, the extreme flood event of 1 January 2025, and the demonstrated failure of the previous fencing during that event. Proceeding without their input undermines the credibility of any flood risk assessment and is contrary to both national planning guidance and good administrative practice.

For the reasons set out above, the proposal is an inappropriate development in a sensitive flood risk location that conflicts with national planning policy, fails to mitigate known harm, and places neighbouring residents at increased risk. The amendment does not resolve these issues and should therefore be refused.

I urge the planning authority to give significant weight to the real and recent flooding impacts experienced by the local community and to prioritise public safety and sound flood risk management.