

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no. 143958/FO/2025
Date registered valid: 11 September 2025
Proposal: Installation of acoustic housing to existing mechanical plant at rear of premises
Address: Aldi Foodstore Ltd, 674 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 2DN
Ward(s): Didsbury West Ward

Applicant: Aldi Stores Limited
Agent (if any): Miss Kate Wilson, Avison Young
Case officer: David Lawless
Tel: 0161 234 4543
Email: david.lawless@manchester.gov.uk

Recommendation: Approve
Date of recommendation: 7 January 2026



Application details

Type of application: Full Application Consent

Development type: Minor Other

Date of site visit: 3 October 2025

Standard consultations:

No consultations have been printed and sent.

Neighbour notifications

Printed: 22 September 2025

Expired: 13 October 2025

Site notice

Posted: 3 October 2025

Expired: 24 October 2025

Press advert

Published: 30 September 2025

Expired: 21 October 2025

Departure from Development Plan: No

Environmental Statement: Not required

Description of site/building/area

This application relates to the Aldi supermarket located at the northern end of the Didsbury District Centre. The property is also located within the Blackburn Park Conservation Area.

To the north of the site there is a landscaped area, as well as the rear garden of no. 41 Pine Road. To the west lies nos. 43 and 45 Pine Road, while to the south lies the carpark associated with Emmanuel Church.



Listed building: No
Conservation area: Blackburn Park Conservation Area 1979
Tree Preservation Order: No

Description of development

The applicant is proposing to install acoustic housing to the existing mechanical plant at the rear of the premises in the area annotated below:



Consultations & Notification Responses

Local Residents – One letter of objection has been received, the comments are summarised below:

- The resident notes that current noise levels from Aldi's plant are significant and exceed WHO guidelines, as referenced in the conclusions and comments provided. They observe that the recommendation by Spectrum to install a high-performance acoustic enclosure does not appear in the submitted report.
- This issue has been ongoing since 2012, when Aldi first installed plant equipment behind the resident's property. Over the past 13 years, numerous complaints have been made, and council officers have visited and confirmed that the noise is unacceptable. Although a statutory notice was never issued, the intention has always been to require Aldi to mitigate the noise through appropriate acoustic measures or fencing. These requirements have never been satisfied.
- The resident expresses serious concern regarding the latest application to re-site fans behind their property, fearing that they will once again be subjected to unacceptable noise levels.

Environmental Health – Environmental Health have reviewed the submitted acoustic report and raise no objections to its findings. They recommend that, should the application be approved, a

condition requiring acoustic insulation measures be imposed to ensure compliance with the report's conclusions.

Policies

Draft National Planning Policy Framework (December 2025) – The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. A draft revised NPPF was published for consultation on 16 December 2025. The consultation period runs for 12 weeks and will close on 10 March 2026.

The draft NPPF proposes significant changes to the structure and content of national policy. These include a move to Local Plan-style policy sections, a clearer distinction between plan-making and decision-making policies, and the reintroduction of strategic planning through Spatial Development Strategies. Other notable changes include an expanded presumption in favour of sustainable development, policies promoting higher densities around transport hubs, and support for small and medium-scale housing schemes through a new "medium development" category. The draft also integrates National Development Management Policies, strengthens climate change and biodiversity policies, and introduces measures to encourage clean energy and critical minerals development.

Once adopted, the revised NPPF will replace the current framework and form a key part of national planning policy. At this stage, as the document is subject to consultation and has not yet been finalised, while still a material consideration, it can only be afforded limited weight in the determination of planning applications. In this instance, the relevant sections are outlined below:

Policy DM3 (*Determining development proposals*) – When considering development proposals, local planning authorities should:

- a) Work with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner, where necessary seeking solutions to problems arising from initial proposals, to enable a timely decision;
- b) Take a proportionate approach to the consideration of the planning matters raised by the proposals, in a way that reflects their scale, complexity and potential impact;
- c) Take account of planning matters raised during any pre-application engagement, including any positive responses to this engagement, as well as representations on the proposals;
- d) Consult statutory or internal consultees only where it is necessary to do so. Decisions on development proposals should not be delayed in order to secure advice from a statutory or internal consultee beyond their statutory deadlines unless there is insufficient information to make the decision or more detailed advice may enable an approval rather than a refusal;
- e) Consider whether otherwise unacceptable development proposals could be made acceptable through the use of planning conditions or planning obligations; and
- f) Not refuse applications for development which should clearly be approved, having regard to its accordance with the development plan, the policies in this Framework and any other material considerations.

Policy P3 (*Living conditions and pollution*) in Section 17 (Pollution, public protection and security) – This policy states that development proposals should not give rise to unacceptable levels of air, noise, artificial light, water, soil or other forms of pollution on or beyond the site.

The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) – The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, i.e. the Core Strategy Development Plan

Document and accompanying policies, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework is a material consideration in planning decisions.

Paragraph 11 states that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which for decision-taking means:

- c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

Paragraph 12 states that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. 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.

In addition to the above, Section 16 (*Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*) is of relevance:

Paragraph 210 in Section 16 states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraph 212 states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Paragraph 213 states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.

Paragraph 214 states that where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and

- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

Paragraph 215 states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

The Places for Everyone Plan – This plan was adopted on 21 March 2024, as such the Plan and its policies are now a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications. The Plan and its policies must therefore be given significant weight in the planning balance. The relevant policy is set out below:

Policy JP-Strat9 (Southern Areas) – This policy states that the economic competitiveness, distinctive local neighbourhood character and environmental attractiveness of the southern areas will be protected and enhanced. There will be a strong emphasis on making as much use as possible of suitable previously developed (brownfield) land and promoting the roles of the areas' town centres and its other key assets.

Policy JP-P2: Heritage (Heritage) – This policy states that the member authorities will proactively manage and work with partners to positively conserve, sustain and enhance their respective historic environments, heritage assets and their settings.

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 SP1, *Spatial Principles*, - Development in all parts of the City should make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice including creating well designed places that enhance or create character and protect and enhance the built and natural environment.

Policy DM1, *Development Management* – This policy states that all development should have regard to a number of specific issues, of which the following are of most relevance:-

- Appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail.
- Impact on the surrounding areas in terms of the design, scale and appearance of the proposed development. Development should have regard to the character of the surrounding area.
- Effects on amenity, including privacy, light, noise, vibration, air quality, odours, litter, vermin, birds, road safety and traffic generation. This could also include proposals which would be sensitive to existing environmental conditions, such as noise.
- Community safety and crime prevention.
- Design for health.
- Vehicular access and car parking.
- Effects relating to biodiversity, landscape, archaeological or built heritage.

- Flood risk and drainage.

Policy EN3, *Heritage* – Throughout the City, the Council will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods, including those of the City Centre.

New developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance, including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas and archaeological remains.

Proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets will be encouraged where they are considered consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.

Saved UDP Policies – Policy DC18, *Conservation Areas* – Policy DC18.1 states that the Council will give particularly careful consideration to development proposals within Conservation Areas by taking into consideration the following:

- a) The Council will seek to preserve and enhance the character of its designated conservation areas by carefully considering the following issues:
 - i. the relationship of new structures to neighbouring buildings and spaces;
 - ii. the effect of major changes to the appearance of existing buildings;
 - iii. the desirability of retaining existing features, such as boundary walls, gardens, trees, (including
 - iv. street trees);
 - v. the effect of signs and advertisements;
 - vi. any further guidance on specific areas which has been approved by the Council.
- b) The Council will not normally grant outline planning permission for development within Conservation Areas.
- c) Consent to demolish a building in a conservation area will be granted only where it can be shown that it is wholly beyond repair, incapable of reasonably beneficial use, or where its removal or replacement would benefit the appearance or character of the area.
- d) Where demolition is to be followed by redevelopment, demolition will be permitted only where there are approved detailed plans for that redevelopment and where the Council has been furnished with evidence that the development will be undertaken.
- e) Development proposals adjacent to Conservation Areas will be granted only where it can be shown that they will not harm the appearance or character of the area. This will include the protection of views into and out of Conservation Areas.

Policy DC26, “Development and Noise” – Policy DC26.1 states that the Council intends to use the development control process to reduce the impact of noise on people living and working in, or visiting, the City. In giving effect to this intention, the Council will consider both:

- a) the effect of new development proposals which are likely to be generators of noise; and
- b) the implications of new development being exposed to existing noise sources which are effectively outside planning control.

Policy DC26.2 states that new noise-sensitive developments (including large-scale changes of use of existing land or buildings), such as housing, schools, hospitals or similar activities, will be permitted subject to their not being in locations which would expose them to high noise levels from existing uses or operations, unless the effects of the noise can realistically be reduced. In giving effect to this policy, the Council will take account both of noise exposure at the time of receiving a planning application and of any increase that may reasonably be expected in the foreseeable future.

Issues

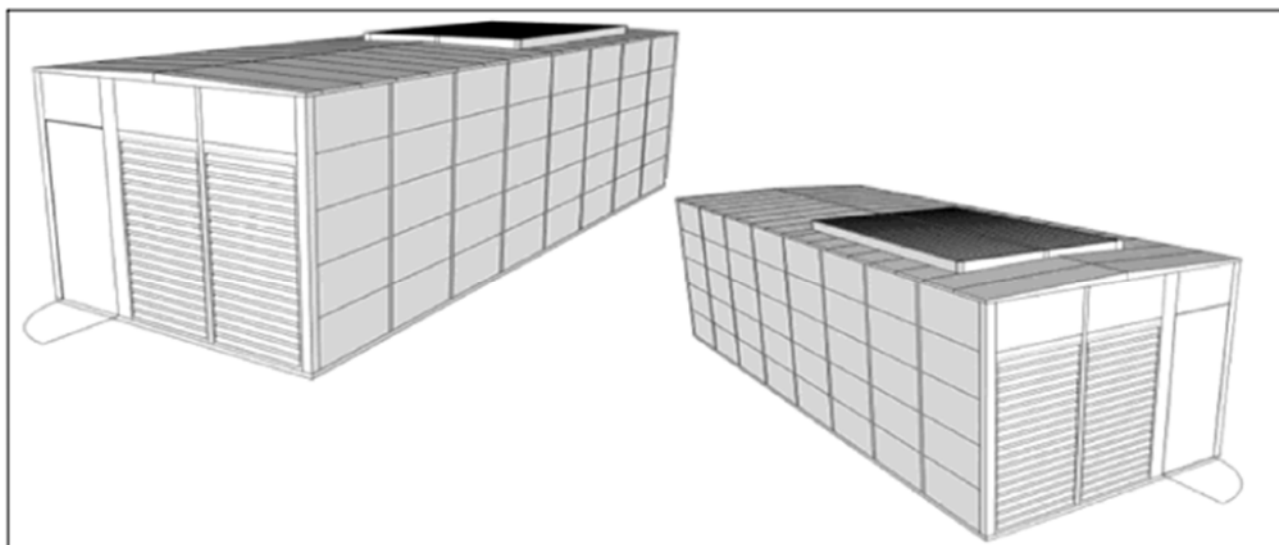
Principle of the Proposal – It is acknowledged that noise issues associated with the mechanical plant to the rear of the Aldi supermarket have persisted for several years and that Environmental Health have been actively engaged in efforts to resolve the matter. In this context, there is no objection in principle to the applicant's proposal to erect acoustic housing around the plant as a means of mitigating noise and addressing these longstanding concerns.

Notwithstanding this, it remains necessary to assess the impact of the proposal on residential amenity, visual amenity, and the character and appearance of the Blackburn Park Conservation Area to ensure that the development is acceptable in planning terms.

Residential Amenity – The submitted acoustic report has been reviewed by Environmental Health, who raise no objections to its findings. They have recommended that, should the application be approved, a condition be imposed requiring the implementation of acoustic insulation measures to ensure compliance with the report's conclusions.

The proposed installation of the acoustic enclosure is expected to significantly reduce noise emissions from the plant and address longstanding concerns raised by local residents, which have been the subject of previous investigations. On this basis, it is considered that the development would not result in any adverse impact on the levels of residential amenity enjoyed by the occupants of the nearest dwellings.

Visual Amenity – The acoustic housing from be constructed from 1.5mm, 2.0mm & 3.0mm Magnelis Steel and composite *Sonus* acoustic cladding panels and acoustic louvres to aid airflow. It would be of a functional design and reminiscent of the scale and massing of a modest shipping container.



It would be located at the rear of the premises and as a result it would be well screened from public viewpoints on Wilmslow Road. In addition, given the presence of landscaping along the rear boundary it is considered that the structure would be screened from the residents of the adjoining dwellings on Pine Road. It is therefore considered that the proposal would not result in any material harm to the levels of visual amenity enjoyed along Wilmslow Road or to the outlook enjoyed by the occupants of the dwellings on Pine Road.

Notwithstanding the above, it is still considered prudent to attach a materials condition (condition no. 3) given the variety of *Sonus* cladding panels that are on the market.

Impact on the Character of the Blackburn Park Conservation Area – Lying close to the centre of Didsbury, five miles south of the city centre, is the residential area known as Blackburn Park. It was designated a conservation area by the City Council in December 1979 and comprises the area bounded by Barlow Moor Road, Palatine Road, Lapwing Lane and Wilmslow Road. Blackburn Park is principally an area of large family houses with spacious gardens, arranged along tree-lined roads which criss-cross the level ground of the park. Building materials and styles are very varied. The older houses generally have textured light red or buff brick walls with blue slate roofs, and in some cases brick or stone dressings in contrasting colours are used even for window mullions. The later houses are predominantly smooth red brick, though render, half-timbering and decorative tile fringing are extensively used. Red tile and occasionally green slate are used for roofs and vertical cladding. All houses have pitched roofs, some of them steep, and there are a variety of gables, hips and half hips topped with interesting finials.

The requirement to preserve or enhance the Conservation Area is a key requirement within policy EN3 of the Manchester Core Strategy and saved UDP policy DC18, along with the objectives of the NPPF. As such, any new development must seek to retain the character of the area through careful detailing and, where appropriate, the use of compatible materials.

In terms of this proposal, the acoustic housing would be constructed from a proprietary cladding system designed to limit noise impact on local residents. While this a more modern material, given its location at the rear of the premises and out of public view, it is not considered the use of this material would have an unduly detrimental impact upon the character of the Blackburn Park Conservation Area.

Paragraph 208 states that where a development proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. Given the design, scale and siting of the acoustic housing it is considered that any harm to the overall character of the Blackburn Park Conservation Area would be at the very low end of less than substantial. In addition, when weighed against the public benefit of providing improved acoustic insulation to the benefit of local residents, what little impact there would be upon the character of the conservation area is considered acceptable in this instance

Ecology – The installation of the acoustic housing around the existing mechanical plant is a localised mitigation measure designed solely to reduce noise emissions. This intervention does not involve undue ground disturbance, vegetation clearance, or any alteration to habitats. As such, it would have no impact on any known ecological features. The works are confined to the immediate footprint of the plant equipment and do not extend into areas that support biodiversity or ecological value.

Conclusion

The acoustic enclosure is expected to significantly reduce noise emissions, thereby improving residential amenity without causing harm to visual amenity. Its simple, functional design and discreet siting at the rear of the premises, combined with existing landscaping, ensure that it will not materially affect views from Wilmslow Road or adjoining properties.

Although the use of modern composite materials introduces a contemporary element within the Blackburn Park Conservation Area, the structure's location out of public view and its modest scale mean that any harm to the character of the area would be at the very low end of "less than substantial." When weighed against the clear public benefit of mitigating noise impacts, this limited harm is considered acceptable under national and local heritage policies.

Other Legislative Requirements

Equality Act 2010 – Section 149 (Public Sector Equality Duty) of the Equality Act 2010 requires due regard to the need to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act and; Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The Equality Duty does not impose a legal requirement to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment. Compliance with the Equality Duty involves consciously thinking about the aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making.

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 a right to a fair hearing and to this end the local planning authority 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 policies 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 recommendation given 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: Approve

Article 35 Declaration

Officers have worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner based on seeking solutions to issues arising from the consideration of this application.

Condition(s) to be attached to decision for approval OR Reasons for recommendation to refuse

1) The development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason - Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings and documents received on 11 September 2025:

- a) Proposed Elevations (ref: 19999-THP-XX-EL-DR-A-0005-P02)
- b) Site Location Plan (ref: 19999-THP-XX-EL-DR-A-1001-P02)
- c) Proposed Layout Plan (ref: 19999-THP-XX-EL-DR-A-1003-P02)
- d) Proposed Plant Layout (ref: 24-BOL-56-06 Rev A)
- e) Mechanical Services Plant Noise Impact Assessment (RK3914/24125/Rev 1 - Spectrum Acoustic Consultants)

Reason - To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans. Pursuant to policies SP1 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy.

3) Notwithstanding the details contained within the approved drawings and documents listed in condition no. 2, no above ground construction works shall take place until details/samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby approved have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details/samples.

Reason - In order to ensure a satisfactory appearance in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policies SP1, DM1 and EN3 of the Manchester Core Strategy and the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

4) a) The development hereby approved shall be acoustically insulated in accordance with the findings of the Mechanical Services Plant Noise Impact Assessment (RK3914/24125/Rev 1 - Spectrum Acoustic Consultants), received on 11 September 2025.

b) Prior to the first operation of the development hereby approved, a verification report, which will include post-completion testing, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to validate that the development achieves a rating level of 5dB (LAeq) below the typical background (LA90) level at the nearest noise sensitive location.

c) In the event of non-conformity with a rating level of 5dB (LAeq) below the typical background (LA90) level in each octave band, then any measures/changes required to achieve conformity shall be carried out. Any required measures/changes and verification shall continue until conformity has been achieved and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, before operation of the development can commence.

Reason - To minimise the impact of the development and to prevent a general increase in pre-existing background noise levels around the site, pursuant to Policies SP1 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy and saved Policy DC26 of the UDP.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Environmental Health

Home Cafe, St James and Emmanuel Church, Barlow Moor Road, Manchester, M20 6TR
8A Barlow Moor Road, Manchester, M20 6TR
Ground Floor, 6 Barlow Moor Road, Manchester, M20 6TR
St James And Emmanuel Church, Barlow Moor Road, Manchester, M20 6TR
First Floor, 6 Barlow Moor Road, Manchester, M20 6TR
Weaver House, 10 Barlow Moor Road, Manchester, M20 6TR
Ground Floor Flat, 6 Barlow Moor Road, Manchester, M20 6TR
Flat 14, Weaver House, 10 Barlow Moor Road, Manchester, M20 6TR
Flat 13, Weaver House, 10 Barlow Moor Road, Manchester, M20 6TR
Flat 10, Weaver House, 10 Barlow Moor Road, Manchester, M20 6TR
Flat 8, Weaver House, 10 Barlow Moor Road, Manchester, M20 6TR
Flat 6, Weaver House, 10 Barlow Moor Road, Manchester, M20 6TR
Flat 3, Weaver House, 10 Barlow Moor Road, Manchester, M20 6TR
43 Pine Road, Manchester, M20 6UZ
6 Barlow Moor Road, Manchester, M20 6TR
45 Pine Road, Manchester, M20 6UZ
41 Pine Road, Manchester, M20 6UZ
Flat 12, Weaver House, 10 Barlow Moor Road, Manchester, M20 6TR
Flat 11, Weaver House, 10 Barlow Moor Road, Manchester, M20 6TR
Flat 9, Weaver House, 10 Barlow Moor Road, Manchester, M20 6TR
Flat 7, Weaver House, 10 Barlow Moor Road, Manchester, M20 6TR
Flat 5, Weaver House, 10 Barlow Moor Road, Manchester, M20 6TR
Flat 4, Weaver House, 10 Barlow Moor Road, Manchester, M20 6TR
Flat 2, Weaver House, 10 Barlow Moor Road, Manchester, M20 6TR
8 Barlow Moor Road, Manchester, M20 6TR
Flat 1, Weaver House, 10 Barlow Moor Road, Manchester, M20 6TR

Appendix 2 – Planning constraints

Article 4 Direction - Removal Of PD Rights Change Of Use From Class C3 To Class C4
Conservation Area - Blackburn Park Conservation Area 1979
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (More) -
Area Team Boundary - Name: SOUTH AREA