

New Healthcare Facility at Moseley Road

Response to the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester

October 2025



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This 'Response to the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester' ("the Statement") accompanies an application to Manchester City Council (MCC) for Full Planning Permission for the development of land to the north of Moseley Road to construct a new health facility (Use Class E (e)) in Fallowfield, Manchester.
- 1.2. The Statement sets out how the Proposed Development responds to the vision and objectives set out in the Manchester Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy 2022 (and in turn, Core Strategy Policies EN9 Green Infrastructure and EN15 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation). It should be read in conjunction with the Design and Access Statement submitted in support of the application.

A Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester

- 1.3. Manchester's Great Outdoors: A Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester 2015-25 was adopted by MCC in July 2015 and subsequently updated in 2022, highlighting approaches, challenges and projects that will help bring the Strategy to life over the coming years.
- 1.4. MCC recognises that green and blue infrastructure is an essential part of creating a successful, livable city. Parks, river valleys, gardens, street trees, green roofs, canals and many other components all form part of a rich network that is integrated with the built environment in the world's most popular cities.
- 1.5. The overarching vision for the Strategy remains as follows:

"By 2025, climate-resilient well-maintained green and blue spaces remains an integral part of all neighbourhoods. The city's communities will be living healthy, fulfilled lives, enjoying access to parks and green spaces, and safe green routes for walking, cycling and exercise throughout the city. Green and blue infrastructure will be supporting Manchester's growth."
- 1.6. Four objectives have been established to enable the vision to be achieved:
 - Improve the quality and function of existing green and blue infrastructure;
 - Use appropriate green and blue infrastructure as a key component of new developments to help create successful neighbourhoods and support the city's growth;

- Improve connectivity and accessibility to green and blue infrastructure within the city and beyond; and
 - Improve and promote a wider understanding and awareness of the benefits that green and blue infrastructure provides for residents, the economy and the local environment.
- 1.7. Section 3 of the updated Strategy outlines the progress to date and noted that the Strategy has acted as catalysts for some of the most groundbreaking environmental projects Manchester has ever taken. The Strategy has encouraged collaboration, bringing together organisations in order to deliver bold, innovative action that will benefit Manchester for many years to come.
- 1.8. Section 3.4 of the Strategy recognises that Manchester is a growing city, with plans for significant growth and development over the coming decade. High quality, green and open space that is appropriate to its location, well designed and well maintained will be an important and integral part of creating successful developments and supporting the city's growth.
- 1.9. The Strategy provides initial guidance on how developers can achieve this and recognises that different approaches will be required for different types of development and that different solutions, appropriate to the location, will be needed on each scheme. By considering green infrastructure from the beginning of the design process, developers will be able to understand the surrounding landscape, opportunities to enhance and link to it, and the types of green and open space that could be incorporated within and add value to the development itself.

Relevant Development Plan Policies

- 1.10. Core Strategy Policy EN9 sets out that new development will be expected to maintain existing green infrastructure in terms of its quantity, quality and multiple function. Where the opportunity arises and in accordance with current Green Infrastructure Strategies the Council will encourage developers to enhance the quality and quantity of green infrastructure, improve the performance of its functions and create and improve linkages to and between areas of green infrastructure.
- 1.11. Core Strategy Policy EN15 states the Council will seek to maintain or enhance sites of biodiversity and geological value throughout the City and that developers will be expected to identify and implement reasonable opportunities to enhance, restore or create new biodiversity, either on-site or adjacent to the site, contributing to linkages between valuable or potentially valuable habitat areas where appropriate.

The Greater Manchester NHS Green Plan

- 1.12. The Greater Manchester NHS Green Plan (2025) aspires to deliver a sustainable health care system which promotes the health and wellbeing of residents within Greater Manchester. The plan seeks to achieve health equity while minimising environmental impacts and ensuring climate resilience
- 1.13. To reach this vision, three overarching goals have been set:
- Achieve a net zero NHS GM Integrated Care Carbon Footprint by 2038, with an ambition to deliver an 80% reduction by 2028-2032;
 - Achieve Net Zero Carbon Footprint Plus by 2045 for the emissions that can be influenced, with an ambition to reach an 80% reduction by 2036-2039.; and
 - Create an NHS that is climate-adapted, actively supports nature and health related activities, and promotes interventions that reduce air pollution.
- 1.14. To meet the targets set out under the GM NHS Green Plan, ten specific focus areas have been outlined. The focus areas relevant to Green and Blue Infrastructure are as follows:
- Nature for Health – to maximise the opportunities presented by the healthcare estate to support nature-based interventions. The GM NHS Green Plan aims to support the delivery of the GM Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the enhancement of green spaces across the NHS estate, maximising the impact of mechanisms such as Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

The Site

- 1.15. The Site comprises approximately 0.7 acres (2,833 sqm) of land located on the north side of Moseley Road, Fallowfield, approximately 3.5 miles south of Manchester city centre. The Site is bound by the University of Manchester Armitage Sports Centre and playing fields to the north and west, with residential properties along Birchfields Road to the east. The Site fronts Moseley Road to the south, where there are existing bus stops and pedestrian footways.
- 1.16. Currently, the land forms part of the wider curtilage of the Armitage Sports Centre but does not comprise formal sports pitches or play facilities. The Site is currently unused and is enclosed by fencing.
- 1.17. The Site lies within a well-established urban area with a mix of residential, educational, and commercial uses. To the west lies the Fallowfield Campus and a large area of formal sports

pitches, whilst to the east and south are dense residential neighbourhoods with strong access to local services, including supermarkets, pharmacies, and public transport connections.

- 1.18. The locality benefits from excellent accessibility by sustainable transport modes. Several bus routes operate along Moseley Road and Wilmslow Road, providing frequent services to Manchester city centre and the wider urban area. The Site is also well connected to the local pedestrian and cycle network, including routes through the University's sports grounds.
- 1.19. In terms of open space provision, the Site is directly adjacent to a large concentration of high-quality sports and recreation facilities, including the Armitage Sports Centre (indoor and outdoor facilities), the University playing fields, and nearby public parks such as Platt Fields Park, located around 600m to the north-west.
- 1.20. Further details of open space provision within the wider area are provided in the Open Space Assessment submitted as part of the full planning application.

Proposed Development

- 1.21. The Proposed Development seeks full planning permission for the development of a single storey Class E medical centre accommodating a range of primary care services, including clinical and associated support spaces. The proposed development would replace the existing Hawthorn Medical Centre, located c. 100m to the east of the site.
- 1.22. The Proposed Development will result in the removal of eight trees within the Site boundary. However, it includes a landscaping scheme that proposes the planting of twenty-three new trees and areas of shrub planting. This results in a replacement ratio greater than 1:2 exceeding the requirement set out in the Places for Everyone Policy JP-G7.

2. Assessment of the Proposed Development

2.1 This section outlines the vision and objectives of the Manchester Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy 2022 and details how the Proposed Development responds to these and, in turn, Core Strategy Policies EN9 'Green Infrastructure' and EN15 'Biodiversity and Geological Conservation'.

2.2 As set out in Section 1, the Strategy establishes four objectives to enable the vision to be achieved. Table 2.1 below considers the Proposed Development against these objectives.

Objective:	Response:
1. Improve the quality and function of existing Green and Blue Infrastructure to maximise the benefits it delivers.	The Site is located at the northern edge of the South Manchester regeneration area and is identified as an outdoor sports facility in the City Wide Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation Study (2009). However, on-site observations and supporting evidence indicate that the Site is privately enclosed, lacks formal sporting provision, and does not function as an accessible open space. Therefore, its designation does not reflect its current use and its role as an open space provision. The Site primarily consists of common grassland and is currently fenced off by a boundary wall and functions as ancillary land to the nearby Armitage Sports Centre. It is not actively used as an outdoor sports facility or for recreation and is therefore considered surplus to outdoor sports facility requirements. While outdoor sports facilities in the local area are generally sufficient, there is a noted shortfall in Amenity Green Space within the wider area's open space provision. The Proposed Development provides the opportunity to enhance the green infrastructure available on-site and in its immediate context. Due to the Site constraints and the operational requirements of the proposed facility, it was unfeasible to retain the trees on site and deliver the required development.

	To mitigate against the impact, twenty-three new trees as well as areas of mixed native and ornamental planting will be provided on the Site. Eight new trees will be planted along Moseley Road. At present the development site is bound by a red brick wall of some height. The development proposes to demolish this wall thus opening up the site. This provides an opportunity to connect with the landscaping within the site. An Ecological Impact Assessment, including a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, has been prepared by Arbtech and is submitted in support of the application. While the landscaping strategy includes new tree planting and ecological enhancements, these measures fall short of meeting the statutory BNG target. To ensure compliance with national and local policy, the shortfall will be addressed through the purchase of off-site biodiversity credits, secured via an appropriate legal mechanism. This approach aligns with the Environment Act 2021 and relevant guidance, ensuring the development delivers the required net gain in a measurable and enforceable manner. In line with the Greater Manchester NHS Green Plan we will proactively collaborate with key partners to identify and deliver the priorities and actions contained within Greater Manchester's Local Nature Recovery Strategy and assess whether local credits can be purchased.
2. Use appropriate green and blue infrastructure as a key component of new developments to help create successful neighbourhoods and support the city's growth.	As noted above, in recognition of the importance of a green street scene and the need to re-establish and retain tree cover on-site, new trees are proposed alongside shrubs and planting.
3. Improve connectivity and accessibility to Green and	The Proposed Development incorporates areas of planting both within the Site and along its southern boundary fronting Moseley

Blue Infrastructure within the City and beyond.	Road. This approach ensures that the green infrastructure is clearly visible to staff, visitors, and passersby, enhancing the visual amenity of the street scene. The scheme increases tree cover and biodiversity while contributing to a cohesive and high-quality landscaping design along Moseley Road.
4. Improve and promote a wider understanding and awareness of the benefits that Green and Blue Infrastructure provides to residents, the economy and the local environment.	The Proposed Development has been designed to promote the value of Green and Blue Infrastructure through visible, accessible, and functional landscaping. The proposed scheme includes high-quality planting along Moseley Road, enhancing the public realm and creating a welcoming environment for staff, patients, and the wider community. This prominent frontage not only improves the aesthetic quality of the area but also serves as a tangible demonstration of the role green infrastructure plays in urban wellbeing. In addition, the inclusion of staff seating areas and biodiverse planting within the site encourages interaction with nature, supporting health and wellbeing outcomes aligned with the GM NHS Green Plan. By integrating green infrastructure into the design of a public-facing healthcare facility, the development helps raise awareness of its environmental, social, and economic benefits, contributing to a broader understanding of its importance in creating resilient and liveable urban spaces. An area of the proposed new high-quality landscaping will be highly visible and accessible to all given its location along Moseley Road. An area of seating will be provided for staff members to the rear of the site.

2.3 The Proposed Development delivers a range of benefits that contribute positively to the local environment, community wellbeing, and urban resilience:

- **Enhanced Biodiversity:** The development includes the planting of twenty-three new trees and areas of mixed native and ornamental vegetation, increasing biodiversity on-site and contributing to habitat creation.
- **Improved Visual Amenity:** Landscaping along Moseley Road enhances the street scene, creating a more attractive and welcoming environment for staff, patients, and the wider community.
- **Accessible Green Space:** The removal of the existing boundary wall opens up the site, improving visibility and access to green infrastructure and encouraging interaction with nature.
- **Support for Health and Wellbeing:** The inclusion of seating areas and green spaces within the site supports the NHS Green Plan's goals by promoting nature-based interventions that benefit physical and mental health.
- **Contribution to Strategic Objectives:** The scheme aligns with Manchester's Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy and the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy, supporting wider city and regional goals for climate resilience and sustainable growth.
- **Biodiversity Net Gain:** An Ecological Impact Assessment and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment have been prepared to ensure the development delivers measurable environmental improvements, even where tree loss is unavoidable.

3. Summary

- 3.1 The Proposed Development delivers a range of benefits that contribute positively to the local environment, community wellbeing, and urban resilience.
- 3.2 As described in this Statement, the provision of an improved environment and green infrastructure on site have been integral to the Proposed Development. This will contribute to the delivery of GM NHS Green Plan and MCC's ecology and biodiversity policy.
- 3.3 The Proposed Development will contribute to biodiversity and enhance wildlife habitats at the Site. It is acknowledged that there is a requirement to remove existing trees on-Site. However, the proposed landscaping scheme includes the provision of twenty-three new trees to be planted on-Site, alongside planting, which will result in the 1:2 replacement ratio, demonstrating compliance with Places for Everyone Policy JP-G7.
- 3.4 Opportunities to enhance and create new biodiversity within the Proposed Development, such as increased tree planting and native planting, have therefore been designed into the scheme, which will upgrade the quality of nearby green infrastructure and improve the street scene along Moseley Road.
- 3.5 The Proposed Development therefore accords with the vision and objectives of the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester and the Development Plan policies.