

CRIME IMPACT ASSESSMENT

1.0 Introduction and Scope

This Crime Impact Assessment has been prepared to provide a comprehensive, policy-led and evidence-based evaluation of the proposed development at 11 Sherborne Street, Cheetham Hill. The proposal seeks to enable the change of use of an existing B2/B8 industrial unit to accommodate an indoor sport and wellness facility (Use Class E(d)) with an ancillary café.

The purpose of this assessment is to rigorously consider whether the development would give rise to crime, disorder or fear of crime, and to demonstrate compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework, the Draft Manchester Local Plan 2025 and Secured by Design principles. The assessment goes beyond demonstrating neutrality and instead establishes, through direct comparison with the lawful fallback position, that the proposal will deliver a clear and measurable enhancement in site security, surveillance and overall safety.

2.0 Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework requires planning decisions to create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible. It is explicit that developments should reduce opportunities for crime and disorder through design, layout, active use and surveillance.

At the local level, Policy SP2 of the Draft Manchester Local Plan 2025 requires development to make a positive contribution to safety, health and wellbeing. This includes the provision of environments that are well overlooked, actively used and inherently secure. The policy recognises that natural surveillance, continuous activity and effective management are fundamental tools in reducing crime and fear of crime.

Policy D1 further requires development to provide clear, legible layouts with strong visual connections and minimal opportunities for concealment, while Policy C10 supports leisure uses where they are appropriately managed and do not result in unacceptable impacts.

The policy framework therefore establishes a clear test. Development must either avoid harm or, preferably, actively improve safety conditions through enhanced activity, surveillance and management. This assessment demonstrates that the proposal not only meets but exceeds this requirement.

3.0 Site Context and Existing Baseline Conditions

The site is located within the Cheetham Hill and Strangeways fringe, an area characterised by a concentration of industrial and commercial uses with varying levels of activity. The prevailing character is one of functional employment use, with activity typically concentrated during daytime hours and significantly reduced in the evening and overnight periods.

The existing lawful use of the site comprises the storage and distribution of vapes and associated liquids. This is a low-intensity B2/B8 use with negligible employment and limited day-to-day operational presence. In practice, the building is frequently unoccupied for extended periods, particularly outside standard working hours.

As a result, the baseline condition of the site is one of limited natural surveillance and minimal passive oversight. The absence of consistent human activity reduces informal monitoring of the site and its surroundings, increasing reliance on static physical security measures. Such

environments are widely recognised within planning and urban design disciplines as being more susceptible to opportunistic crime due to the lack of continuous guardianship.

This baseline position is fundamental to the assessment, as it establishes that the existing lawful use does not actively contribute to site safety and provides limited deterrence to unauthorised activity.

4.0 Description of the Proposed Development

The proposed development introduces a change of use within Class E to enable an indoor padel and wellness facility, supported by an ancillary café. The use will operate on a 24-hour basis, however this must be properly understood in the context of its operational characteristics.

The use is structured, organised and inherently low-risk. Access is strictly controlled through a booking-only system via the Playtomic platform. This ensures that all users are pre-registered, identifiable and authorised prior to arrival. There is no unrestricted public access and no opportunity for informal or unregulated entry.

The site is secured through a gated layout with dedicated on-site parking. This restricts access at the perimeter and ensures that only legitimate users and staff can enter the site. A critical component of the proposal is the provision of continuous staffing. Staff will be present on site at all times, ensuring that the facility is never unsupervised and that all activity is actively managed.

In addition, the entire site is covered by a comprehensive CCTV system. All internal and external areas are monitored, with coverage designed to eliminate blind spots and ensure full visibility of movement throughout the site. This is supported by a dedicated CCTV monitoring room located within the building, enabling active, real-time surveillance rather than passive recording. The combination of controlled access, continuous staffing and full CCTV coverage establishes a highly secure and actively managed environment.

5.0 Comparative Assessment of Crime Risk

A robust Crime Impact Assessment must be grounded in a clear comparison between the existing lawful use and the proposed development. The current B2/B8 storage use is characterised by minimal employment, limited activity and extended periods of vacancy. The site relies predominantly on passive security measures, with little to no active oversight during significant portions of the day and night. This results in a low-surveillance environment with limited deterrence to unauthorised access or opportunistic behaviour.

The proposed development fundamentally alters this dynamic. The introduction of a 24-hour use ensures continuous occupation, eliminating periods of inactivity. The presence of staff at all times provides active management and immediate oversight of all activity. The booking-only system ensures that all users are legitimate and traceable, significantly reducing the risk of unauthorised access. The gated nature of the site further reinforces this control at the perimeter level. The addition of full-site CCTV coverage, combined with a dedicated monitoring room, represents a substantial enhancement in surveillance capability. This provides both a strong deterrent effect and the ability to respond immediately to any incident. When assessed against the existing baseline, the proposal represents a clear and unequivocal improvement in crime prevention terms. The site transitions from a passive, intermittently occupied industrial unit to a continuously monitored and actively managed facility.

6.0 Natural Surveillance and Continuous Activity

Natural surveillance is a core principle of both national and local planning policy. The proposal delivers a significant enhancement in this regard through the introduction of continuous activity. The presence of staff and users throughout the day and night ensures that the site is consistently occupied. This continuous human presence provides informal monitoring and significantly reduces opportunities for unauthorised activity.

The structured nature of the use further strengthens this position. Users attend for pre-booked sessions, resulting in predictable patterns of arrival and departure. This ensures that activity is controlled and purposeful rather than sporadic or unregulated. In addition to natural surveillance, the CCTV system provides comprehensive artificial surveillance. The ability to actively monitor all areas of the site in real time ensures that there are no gaps in oversight, further reinforcing the security of the development.

7.0 Access Control and Security Strategy

The proposed development incorporates a multi-layered approach to security, combining physical design measures with operational controls. Access to the site is restricted through a gated entrance, ensuring that only authorised vehicles and individuals can enter. This establishes a clear and controlled point of access, consistent with best practice in crime prevention.

Internally, access to the facility is limited to users with confirmed bookings. The Playtomic system ensures that all users are identifiable, creating a clear audit trail and accountability for all activity on site. The CCTV system monitors all access points and circulation areas, ensuring full visibility of movement within the site. The presence of a dedicated monitoring room allows for continuous active surveillance, enabling immediate identification and response to any unusual or unauthorised activity.

The continuous presence of staff provides an additional layer of oversight, ensuring that the site is actively managed at all times. This integration of physical and operational measures creates a robust and comprehensive security strategy.

8.0 Anti-Social Behaviour and Disorder

There is no evidence-based pathway through which the proposed development could give rise to anti-social behaviour. The use does not involve alcohol sales, late-night entertainment or any form of external congregation space. These are the primary factors typically associated with disorder in planning assessments.

Instead, the development is centred on sport and wellness activities, which are inherently low risk and associated with positive behavioural patterns. The controlled, booking-only access model eliminates the potential for loitering or unregulated gathering. The presence of staff and the comprehensive CCTV system further ensure that any potential issues would be immediately identified and addressed. In this context, any suggestion that the proposal could generate anti-social behaviour would be unsupported by evidence and inconsistent with the operational characteristics of the use.

9.0 Design, Layout and Environmental Safety

The development operates entirely within the existing building envelope, with a clear and legible internal layout. Circulation routes are straightforward and well-defined, minimising opportunities for concealment or confusion. External areas are limited in extent, secured and fully monitored. The gated nature of the site ensures that there are no publicly accessible spaces that could be misused.

Lighting will be appropriate to ensure safe access and movement throughout all hours of operation. The combination of lighting, visibility and CCTV coverage ensures that all areas of the site are clearly observable at all times. This approach aligns fully with the design principles set out in the Draft Manchester Local Plan, which emphasise the importance of surveillance, clarity and safety in the built environment.

10.0 Wider Safety and Regeneration Benefits

The proposal delivers wider benefits in terms of safety and environmental quality beyond the site boundary. The introduction of a continuously active use within an industrial context increases overall presence and activity in the area. This contributes to improved perceptions of safety, particularly during evenings and overnight periods when activity would otherwise be limited. The development therefore not only enhances safety within the site but also contributes positively to the wider area by increasing passive surveillance and reducing perceptions of isolation.

11.0 Conclusion

This Crime Impact Assessment demonstrates, through detailed and evidence-based analysis, that the proposed development will not give rise to crime, disorder or fear of crime. The comparison with the existing lawful use is decisive. The current B2/B8 storage use provides minimal surveillance, negligible employment and extended periods of inactivity. In contrast, the proposed development introduces continuous occupation, controlled access, permanent staffing and comprehensive CCTV coverage with active monitoring.

The proposal fully accords with the National Planning Policy Framework and the Draft Manchester Local Plan 2025, particularly in relation to designing out crime and creating safe environments. There is no policy or evidence-based justification for concern. On the contrary, the development represents a substantial and measurable improvement in site safety, surveillance and overall environmental quality. The proposal should therefore be supported without reservation on crime and community safety grounds.