
FW: Proposed Planning Application (Case Ref: MA15954)

[REDACTED]
Date Wed 11/09/2024 14:11

[REDACTED] >

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Hi Lucy

I hope you are well. I know that 137226 and 137227 /FO/2023 have both now been heard by Committee and your recommendation accepted. I was on leave that week and did not see the email received below from a resident pointing to inconsistencies in the planning documents.

Having skimmed your reports – I believe most of these have been addressed there. Nonetheless, I am forwarding for full transparency and in case helpful for future determinations in this area.

Best wishes,

Cllr Marcus Johns
Labour Member for Deansgate Ward
Chair of Economy & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

[REDACTED]
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www.manchester.gov.uk
C/O Members' Services Office, Town Hall, Albert Sq, Manchester M60 2LA

[REDACTED]
Sent: 26 August 2024 23:43
To: Marcus Johns
Subject: Re: Proposed Planning Application (Case Ref: MA15954)

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Dear Marcus,

Thank you for your email.

Have you been able to understand how the Planning Department deals with concerns about information in submitted documents?

I would also like to make you aware of additional observation on the traffic report produced by Curtins which I have listed below.

Firstly, despite the data being available from TRICS, as shown on page 82 of the report, Curtins decided not to use it for their assessment, with no explanation as to why. Curtins may have felt that there is no reason for LGV's to use these streets, but I can assure you there are plenty of 7.5t that use Owen St., either for the delivery of big items like beds to the towers or just simply to bring goods to the retail units.

The impact on local traffic of retail units seem to have been downgraded altogether in the report, despite the fact that every proposed tower will have retail units at the bottom. Another example of that is the TRICS data chosen for the report. These are based on 2 London dwellings which have very little in common with the proposed towers and surrounding areas. For example, one of the dwelling is on Glenthorne Road, and that dwelling does not have any retail units on the development.

Another example of how unrepresentative using a dwelling like the Glenthorne Road dwelling is the proximity to a Tube station. The dwelling is 3 mins walk away from Hammersmith Tube station. So most residents flying out of one of the London hubs or just going on night out will be using the Tube or a Tube/train combination. At Deansgate Square people use a taxi. Remember the bulk of the demographics of the towers is made of wealthy students from the Middle East or the Far East. So a type of demographics which often uses an airport or goes out socialising.

Other examples of the poor quality of the report include omissions and inconsistencies. On page 7 Curtins mention 27 incidents. On page 8, this number has increased to 35. These are not as serious as getting the wrong number of dwellings for four out of five towers previously highlighted in my original letter to you, however it contributes to the lack of trust that should be put into that assessment.

In terms of examples of omissions, Curtins have for some reason not studied the impact of car pick ups, which is a regular occurrence at Deansgate Square, when the turning circle, and at times Owen Street itself, are full with vehicles other than taxis waiting to pick up residents. The report, again referring to the demographics summarised above, also omits the busiest time of pick up or drop off activities for residents, which is between 8 and 11pm. There is no reason to think the demographics of the proposed towers will be any different. In fact, having spoken to the Concierge staff of The Blade and The Circle, two towers build after Deansgate Square, I understand Renaker have managed to market these towers more prominently outside of the UK, and the population is nearly completely made up of wealthy students from the Middle East and Far East, rather than the already heavily skewed proportion we have at Deansgate Square where there are still some families and young professionals who are resisting the forces to relocate and sublet.

Finally, Curtins themselves concede the data used for the report has limitations and further work should be undertaken to accurately understand the impact on traffic. On page 15 of the report, they

concede that 'any additional justification and evidence from recently occupied sites would also be of benefit'.

I hope this is helpful.

[REDACTED]

From: Cllr Marcus Johns

Sent: 20 July 2024 13:39

[REDACTED]
Subject: Proposed Planning Application (Case Ref: MA15954)

[REDACTED]

I'm just following up on the below discussion about what you consider to be poor quality assessments in the application. I have also sought advice from the planning department to understand how they deal with concerns such as these about information included in the documents.

In your email to me, you refer to a number of issues with reports. If any of these issues go beyond what you have set out in your objection letter to Planning already, it would be helpful if you could specify the documents and sections which you consider inaccurate, and I can then raise these with MCC Planning for a response.

Please do let me know what any additional concerns are, and any pointers where the inaccuracies can be found, and I'll gladly raise them.

Any other questions in the meantime, just get back in touch.

Best wishes

Cllr Marcus Johns

Labour Member for Deansgate Ward

Chair of Economy & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

[REDACTED]

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C/O Members' Services Office, Town Hall, Albert Sq, Manchester M60 2LA

[REDACTED]

Sent: 11 July 2024 22:26

[REDACTED]
Subject: Proposed Planning Application (Case Ref: MA15954)

[REDACTED]

Thank you for sharing your objection with Anthony and me. You have three local Councillors – Joan, Anthony,

and me. Because Joan is a member of the Planning Committee, she is precluded from expressing opinions on planning applications before they are heard by the Committee in a formal meeting, so I have excluded her from this email. I have discussed this response with Anthony (copied) and agreed to send a full response to you on both our behalf.

I have a number of observations set out in this email, but I thought it would also be useful to clarify my role in the process for your understanding first, before setting out my own position at this moment in time.

As a local Councillor who does not sit on the planning committee, I am not a decisionmaker in planning applications. As a local Councillor, I am consulted and, like the public, can choose to make representations in response to an application. I can also give guidance to my constituents on how to navigate the process. In the first instance, by submitting your concerns to planning and largely focusing on material considerations – you have done as I would advise at this juncture.

To understand my specific thinking in this case, I thought it would be useful to outline my general view on building housing. As a principle – I am generally in support of building more homes in Manchester for which there is clear demand. Manchester is a city that has, alongside other efforts, used regeneration and improving the housing supply to rebuild our city's economy from serious distress in the 20th century and sees significant housing demand continuing now in 2024. We have become a city where people want to live from one that people were desperate to escape. Nationally, there is a housing crisis which particularly affects young people and which requires local places like Manchester play their role in addressing, especially for building new homes, particularly affordable and social ones. I do therefore support the Council's policy to build 36,000 new homes by 2032 of which 10,000 are to be affordable.

Generally, I do not think it would show honesty or integrity on my part if I were to support those housebuilding targets only to then continuously object to every manifestation of them in terms of developing sites, which would especially be the case for an area which is identified as a clear growth location through an adopted framework (an SRF) by the Council. The city centre – and in particular the Great Jackson Street/New Jackson area are key delivery locations for citywide policy and have such an adopted framework. Therefore, the bar that I set for myself to oppose new residential homes is – as I'm sure you would appreciate – understandably high.

I do understand and have thought through your concerns, namely:

- **traffic congestion** – I note your concerns about congestion particularly from delivery drivers and taxis and hope that mitigations are considered throughout the planning process. As a city we are also seeking to promote sustainable travel modes, ie public transport and active travel, as part of reducing wider congestion and improving our air quality. Significant investment is being made in sustainable travel modes in Manchester. I believe the road is privately owned rather than public and so would encourage you to contact your managing agent about the lack of enforcement on people misusing the red lines and the loading bays—as they should be enforcing this. I can do this on your behalf if you wish?
- **crime and anti-social behaviour** – broadly in my experience new development has largely helped reduced criminal activity with better overlooking and more street activity limiting criminal activity. Moreover, I think the points you make are not, in my view, a relevant issue to whether or not new homes should go ahead, but an argument for better policing which is absolutely something that the Council, Mayor, and now new Government are seeking to achieve. I would encourage the points you make about drug taking and criminal activity to be reported to GMP where appropriate and would be grateful to be contacted about this issue separately – as I think it needs addressing more broadly than through the planning process. Please could you email me again with additional general observations on this issue and how it affects you so that I can think about how best to take it forward?
- **daylight** – I do understand your concerns about daylight and reduced daylight and this is a regular challenge in balancing development in the city centre. Nonetheless, before the first towers were constructed this was clearly – through the SRF – indicated as a location with a density of tall buildings. I note you feel you were misold your home based on this proposal differing to the SRF and, while I do not think this is a valid matter under planning regulations,

would propose you raise that with the developer who is the same developer from whom you bought your home.

- **daylight in green spaces** – as above, I do understand your concerns, though I recall the New Jackson Play Area was brought forward in the knowledge that wide scale development activity would continue in this area. I do not share your view on focusing only within the ‘Deansgate Square environment’ or that there are only two spaces easily accessed, as there is another, very large park a very brief walk away in Hulme too which is enjoyed by many children and is a great green space. Nonetheless, your points about why green space is important are really crucial in the reasons why I, as a local Councillor, work to increase the amount of green space in our city centre through public investment and secured from developments – including the new green spaces included in this application in the courtyard style space. I do think this is one that needs to be considered particularly carefully as the application is assessed by the Planning Officer and the Committee, including wind mitigation and ensuring the provision for further green space included in this application is well designed.
- **daylight in the school** – the application sets out that the school will lose little daylight and, to my knowledge, was located where it is located during the framework’s development and subsequent planning consents in part around maximising this. I have noted your concerns about the play area and morning light, and trust that the planning officer and Committee will consider these in the overall determination. Your points about the validity of the documents like this I have addressed below.
- **privacy** – again I do think this is a valid concern to raise and trust that the planning officer and Committee will consider this in weighing up the pros and cons in the overall determination. Nonetheless, I do not think it is a sufficient argument for me to object to new homes being built. As I have said above – the SRF has made clear this would be a location with a high density of homes built since before the Deansgate Square development was constructed, and residents have since chosen to live in a largely glass building which comes with its own trade-offs that I believe are the decisions of individual residents/future occupiers to consider. Many homes around Deansgate Square lost privacy when this development was built and many of the Deansgate Square apartments are already looked on by longstanding homes.

In addition – you have made points about what you consider to be poor quality assessments included in the planning application. You have correctly raised this with the planning officer whose role is to scrutinise these. I will also seek advice from the planning department to understand how they deal with concerns such as these about information included in the documents.

Overall, while I do acknowledge your concerns – from the information that I have seen to date and on balance between benefits and concerns, I do not intend to object to planning consent to deliver over 1,700 homes. I think that some of your concerns are well made and should be considered throughout the process, which I trust that they will given you have submitted them formally. I will also forward my response to the planning officer so that they can see the issues where I consider there a need for careful thought. I further am disappointed by the lack of on-site affordable homes in this development which I will consider further.

I happen to live nearby and lost both light and privacy during the development of your home – I did not object to your home then. I have not yet seen sufficient justification for why I should object to someone else’s future home. Moreover, in its initial development, I supported the SRF and actively campaigned for the SRF to include medical and educational provision, which we do now have at appropriate catchment sizes – always intended to cover more than just the New Jackson area alone to serve longstanding communities too. This development also sits within that same SRF and the public services which that framework has been able to support in the city centre.

Nonetheless, I would be happy to meet – diary permitting – to hear your thoughts and I am happy to give you any guidance for navigating this process herein.

I appreciate that you may find this response disappointing and I hope that you can understand my reasoning not object, and see how I have considered your points of view in detail.

If you have any questions or thoughts on this please don’t hesitate to get back in touch.

Best wishes,

Cllr Marcus Johns
Labour Member for Deansgate Ward
Chair of Economy & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

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C/O Members' Services Office, Town Hall, Albert Sq, Manchester M60 2LA

Sent: 25 June 2024 23:31

To: Marcus Johns

Subject: Proposed Planning Application

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Dear Marcus,

My name is [REDACTED], I have been a resident of Deansgate Square for the last 4 years and I am also a committee member of one of the two resident associations from Deansgate Square.

I wanted to share with you that on Sunday I wrote to Lucy Harrison to object planning applications 137226 and 137227.

The application breaches ALL THREE of the key pillars of the Great Jackson Development Framework and is also not in accordance with the Greater Manchester Strategy. A selection of objection themes is included in the attached letter which has been submitted to Lucy on Sunday. I also sent to Lucy the two photographs attached.

Picture 20240620_113438 was taken at 11.30am on the longest day of the year, when the sun is at its highest point. It shows how half of the only green space available to New Jackson residents is already in the shade. Should they go ahead, the proposed constructions on plot C, D and E will remove most of the morning sunlight too.

Picture 20240621_104445, taken at 11am on 21/06 out of term time, in one of the quietest periods of the year, shows no less than 6 vehicles parked on double red lines on Owen St. as the loading bays were all already taken. The proposal submitted for Owen St is to:

1. Build and connect an adjacent road with a one-way system INTO Owen St.
2. Narrow a portion of Owen Street
3. Build a car park entrance/exit to a 47 floor tower on Owen St.

But another aspect which is supremely concerning is the quality of the documents which have been supplied for the panel to make decisions on. Research into the documents have revealed evidence of recommendations based on:

- Inaccurate or plainly wrong data
- Out of date information
- Misleading statements
- Omissions of key information
- Incorrect/poor usage of Trics survey data
- Non impartial presentation of information

It is also clear that some of the companies have worked remotely only, and have opted not to send a representative in person to try and understand the estate or its very unique population mix.

The quality of one of the reports is such that I am contacting the company behind it and will request they withdraw the report from the application. Should they refuse to do so, I will be making an official complaint to their regulatory body.

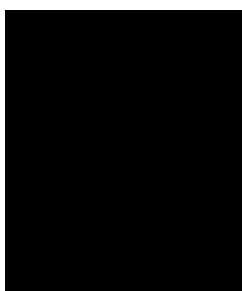
So today I would like to ask if you could also look into the matters raised in this email or in the attached objection letter.

As I mentioned to Lucy, I have spent a lot of time studying the documents that have been submitted, and I am more than happy to work with you, or any other person investigating the matter, should you wish to discuss some of the items raised, or understand how we reached some of the conclusions which have been raised by the local community, of which I am a representative. I am really happy to point you to various sections in the documents, etc. Please do not hesitate.

Although I have not formally asked, I am also convinced that both residents associations would welcome a meeting with you or other interested parties to highlight our concerns or just help you understand the very unique character of the development we are part of.

Following my investigations into this application, I am also really concerned that, on other applications where independent assessments have been carried out by the same companies, Manchester City Council may not be getting the quality or impartiality that it needs to rely on to make the best possible decisions for the future of Manchester and its residents.

Your Sincerely



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