

Memo

Date: 26 June 2026

To: Manchester City Council – Highways Department

From: Michael Percival

CC: Ian Harrison (Downing)

Subject Holcroft Moss Construction Traffic

The Holcroft Moss assessment presented in this Note has considered the effects of Plot C First Street South during the construction period. The construction assumptions have been prepared with input from Downing and their preferred contractor, based on construction activity for the previous phases of First Street South. Operational traffic is consistent with the approach taken for the planning application and specifically the Transport Statement (TS) prepared by Sandersons.

This Note therefore first summarises the relevant SPD thresholds, before assessing the Proposed Development's construction traffic and considering whether the updated cumulative construction context alters that conclusion.

Holcroft Moss SPD

Paragraph 1.9 of the Holcroft Moss Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)^[1] states:

“As set out in Policy JP-C8 of the PfE Plan, where planning applications are required to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment, they will need to consider air quality impacts on Holcroft Moss, within the Manchester Mosses Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Any proposals that would result in increased traffic flows on the M62 past Holcroft Moss of

^[1] Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations Joint Supplementary Planning Document (Adopted from effect 08 May 2025).

more than 100 vehicles per day or 20 Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) per day must devise a scheme-specific range of measures to reduce reliance on cars, reduce trip generation, promote ultra-low emission vehicles, and provide a contribution towards restoration measures at Holcroft Moss. (emphasis added)”

This confirms that the SPD applies project-level thresholds of 100 vehicles per day or 20 HGVs per day, above which mitigation measures and a financial contribution would be required. These SPD thresholds provide a precautionary project-level trigger for contributions. The Air Quality Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) study for the Greater Manchester “Places for Everyone” Plan (AQHRA) also refers to a higher trigger for project-level air quality modelling, stating the following at page 29:

*“There is also the need to ensure that project-level analysis of potential air quality impacts (and if necessary, project-level mitigation) is undertaken for significant sources of additional traffic past the M62 at Manchester Mosses SAC. This will require particular projects that are likely to result in a substantial increase in traffic flows to devise project-specific mitigation beyond the strategic air quality improvement measures being included in the Local Plan. **If the change in flows on the M62 past Manchester Mosses SAC due to a given scheme is likely to exceed 200 Heavy Duty Vehicles per day or 1,000 Average Annual Daily Traffic then this would be the trigger for project-level air quality modelling and, depending on the outcome of that modelling, the need for scheme-specific mitigation.** Warrington Borough Council incorporated this text to Policy ENV8, as a policy mechanism to enable the delivery of measures associated with new development to ensure that any contribution to atmospheric nitrogen deposition (and thus acid deposition) is minimised.”*

The relevant question for this Note is therefore whether construction traffic routed past Holcroft Moss associated with the Proposed Development would exceed the SPD thresholds.

Construction Traffic Generation

Based on construction traffic data from comparable city-centre development projects, including the first three buildings at First Street South, it is estimated that there could be up to 125 total light vehicle trips and 30 heavy vehicle trips on an average day.

This is based on a maximum of 200 workers per day, with some living locally, some travelling by public transport and the remainder sharing a journey. The distribution of construction vehicle trips will depend on various factors, including the residential locations

of the construction workforce and the locations of suppliers. Nonetheless, an initial assessment of the distribution of construction vehicle trips is included below.

A worst-case scenario has been assumed whereby all construction traffic, including light and heavy vehicles, would access the SRN via the shortest route, which is the M602 to the west of Manchester city centre.

Without knowing the exact locations of construction materials and equipment suppliers, an even distribution has been assumed at the next junction on the SRN, which will be the M62 Junction 12/ M60 Junction 12/ M602 Junction 1:

- 34% to M62
- 33% to M60 (clockwise); and
- 33% to M60 (anti-clockwise).

The number of construction vehicle trips passing Holcroft Moss is therefore forecast to be 41 light vehicle trips and 10 heavy vehicle trips per day, with the highest number of movements expected during the early part of the programme for concrete deliveries.

On this basis, the Proposed Development's construction traffic would fall below the SPD thresholds before any further consideration of the wider cumulative construction context.

Cumulative Construction Context

The wider construction context in Manchester has also been reviewed, as the overall level of construction activity has reduced since the previous Holcroft Moss note and associated environmental assessment work were prepared. A number of schemes which previously informed the baseline or cumulative construction scenario have now completed construction, including First Street South Plots A, B and D, the Manchester Metropolitan University Science and Engineering Building, Havelock, Viadux, Staycity Deansgate, The Blade and Three60, Plot 10b First Street, Great Jackson Plot F, Vision and Deansgate South. These schemes would therefore no longer be expected to generate construction traffic as active contributors to the current cumulative construction scenario.

On an equivalent-project basis, the completion of these schemes represents a substantial reduction in the potential cumulative construction traffic environment. If each completed scheme were assumed to have generated construction traffic broadly comparable to the Proposed Development, this would equate to the removal of up to approximately ten Plot C-scale construction projects from the active construction scenario.

Applying the Proposed Development's indicative construction traffic assumptions as a sensitivity, this could represent an indicative reduction of up to approximately 410 light vehicle trips and 100 HGV trips per day in the equivalent cumulative construction traffic scenario relevant to Holcroft Moss, before allowing for routing, programme overlap or the likelihood that not all schemes would have generated peak construction traffic at the same time. While this is not intended to represent a precise traffic calculation, it provides a reasonable qualitative sense-check that the completion of these schemes has materially reduced the potential cumulative construction traffic environment since the previous assessment was undertaken.

One Medlock Street has also commenced construction and, although it may continue to generate some construction traffic during its remaining construction period, it is now more appropriately treated as part of the evolving baseline rather than as a wholly additional future cumulative scheme.

The newly identified cumulative schemes comprise Viadux Phase 2, Great Northern and the Manchester Metropolitan University Library proposals. Even if those schemes were assumed, on a conservative basis, to generate a broadly comparable level of construction traffic to the Proposed Development, the reduction in active construction activity associated with the completed schemes listed above means that the overall cumulative position is unlikely to be exceeded and is reasonably expected to remain below that previously assessed.

This review provides useful supporting context but does not alter the principal SPD test, which is whether the Proposed Development itself would increase traffic flows on the M62 past Holcroft Moss above the relevant vehicle or HGV thresholds. As set out above, the construction traffic forecast for the Proposed Development is 41 light vehicle trips and 10 heavy vehicle trips per day past Holcroft Moss, which remains below the SPD thresholds. The updated cumulative position therefore supports the conclusion that there is no new or materially worsened construction traffic scenario attributable to the Proposed Development which would justify scheme-specific mitigation or a financial contribution towards Holcroft Moss.

Conclusion

This Note has assessed the potential traffic impact of the Proposed Development on Holcroft Moss, having regard to the relevant SPD thresholds, the likely routing of construction vehicles past the Manchester Mosses SAC and the updated cumulative construction context.

Based on the methodology adopted in the submitted TS, the operational traffic forecasts passing Holcroft Moss are found to be within the SPD thresholds.

The construction traffic forecasts are also within the SPD thresholds. The updated review of completed, commenced and newly identified schemes further indicates that the wider construction position has reduced overall and is not expected to result in a materially worse cumulative construction scenario than previously assessed.

On this basis, no scheme-specific mitigation or financial contribution is required in relation to the Proposed Development's traffic impacts on Holcroft Moss.