# Land off Bower Street and Ten Acres Lane, Manchester

## EIA Screening Report

**August 2026**

Neo
9 Charlotte Street
Manchester
M1 4ET

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| Draft | FINAL |
|---|---|
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# 1. Introduction

1.0 This Environmental Impact Assessment ("EIA") Screening Report has been prepared by Euan Kellie Property Solutions on behalf of our client Latos Manchester Limited ('the Applicant'). It is submitted to Manchester City Council ("MCC") to support a formal request for an EIA Screening Opinion to determine whether an EIA is required in respect of their proposals for land bound by Bower Street, Ten Acres Lane, and the Rochdale Canal, Newton Heath, Manchester (herein referred to as 'the Site'). A Location Plan is included at **Appendix 1**.

1.1 The proposals include the erection of a new data centre development comprising two commercial units (Sui Generis) with associated external plant, substations, boundary fencing, landscaping, highway access works and all ancillary infrastructure (hereafter referred to as "the Proposed Development"). Further details in respect of the Site and the proposals are set out within **Chapters 2 & 3** respectively.

1.2 This request is submitted under Regulation 6 of The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (referred to hereafter as "the EIA Regulations"). Guidance on EIA as set out within the National Planning Practice Guidance resource ("NPPG") which provides guidance on the application of EIA in England, has also been consulted.

1.3 The structure of this Report is as follows:

- **Chapter 2** provides details of the Site and its context;
- **Chapter 3** comprises a summary of the Proposed Development;
- **Chapter 4** summarises the requirement for an EIA of the Proposed Development having regard to the EIA Regulations and other relevant guidance;
- **Chapter 5** provides an assessment of the potential significant environmental effects which may result from the Proposed Development;
- **Chapter 6** provides a summary of this EIA Screening Report.

## Contact Details

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# 2. Site Description and Context

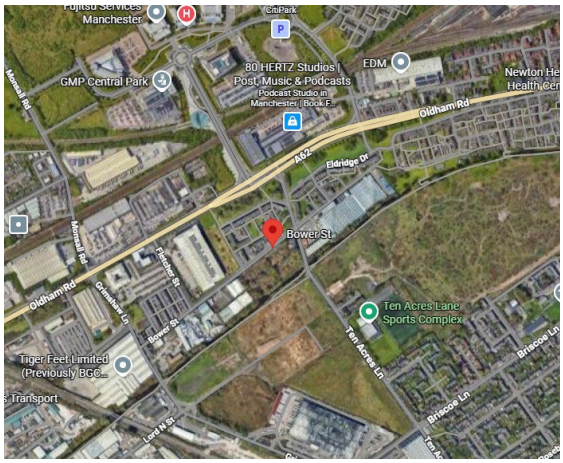
## The Site

2.1 The Site falls within the administrative boundary of Manchester City Council ("MCC"), located within the Miles Platting & Newton Heath Ward in East Manchester. The Site is 1.23 Ha in size.

2.2 The Site is bound by Bower Street and Ten Acres Lane, with the Rochdale Canal forming its south-eastern boundary. To the south-west, the Site adjoins a small trading estate, while a terrace of eight residential properties backs onto the Site at the junction of Bower Street and Ten Acres Lane.

2.3 The Site is presently undeveloped and is predominantly characterised by grass, shrubs, and mature trees. Remnants of hardstanding are evident across parts of the Site, indicative of previous development.

2.4 The Site location is shown in **Figures 2.1 and 2.2** (both taken from Google Maps).




^ Figure 2.1




^ Figure 2.2

## Surroundings

2.5 As set out above the Site is surrounded by a mix of land uses including commercial/industrial uses (to the north east and south west), as well as residential uses (to the north/north east) located on Ten Acres Lane, Bower Street, Thompson Street, Limerstone Drive, Mansford Drive and Packford Drive. To the south/ south east of the Site is the Rochdale Canal, beyond which is the Lowry Park industrial estate.

## Relevant Designations

## Heritage

2.6 The Site does not contain any listed buildings or structures, nor is it within a conservation area.

## Flood Risk

2.7 Having consulted the "GOV.UK" website the Site does not appear to be at risk from flooding as it is within Flood Zone 1. A small area of the Site appears to be at risk of surface water flooding.

# Planning Policy Designations

2.8 The purpose of this section is to introduce the key planning policy designations.

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## Adopted Planning Policy

2.9 The Site is located within the jurisdiction of MCC and is within East Manchester. The Planning Policy documents relevant to the development of the Site are listed below.

2.10 A summary of the relevant policies within these documents is within **Appendix 2**.

### The Development Plan

- The Manchester Core Strategy (Adopted 2012)
- Saved Policies of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan (UDP Adopted 1995, relevant Policies 'Saved in 2012)
- Places for Everyone (Adopted 2024)

### Supplementary Planning Documents and Planning Guidance

- Guide to Development in Manchester SPD (Adopted 2007)

### Other Relevant Planning and Regeneration Documents

- Eastlands Regeneration Framework (Updated 2019 and a 'Material Consideration' in planning decisions)

2.11 **Chapter 3** of this Screening Report will now set out details of the Proposed Development.

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# 3. Proposed Development

## What is a data centre?

3.1 Data centres are the secure physical facilities that store, process and run large amounts of data and software which power everyday online services, from banking and streaming to cloud storage and AI tools.

3.2 Many of us interact with a data centre hundreds of times a day, such as when we make a bank transaction, stream a film or video game, shop online, send emails and texts, or use an app to control our central heating. Every time someone saves a photo or document to the cloud, it is being stored in a data centre.

3.3 As Manchester's digital and technology sectors continue to expand, resilient, locally based digital infrastructure is increasingly important.

## The Proposals

3.4 The application proposals present an opportunity to deliver two data centres, in a sustainable location in East Manchester.

3.5 The Applicant's new Manchester Data Centre will be a Neural Edge Data Centre – a new type of facility designed to handle the fast-growing demand for digital services and artificial intelligence.

3.6 Neural Edge data centres are designed to be compact, efficient and future-ready, delivering high performance without unnecessary scale. They are carefully engineered to bring computing power closer to where it is needed, helping digital services run faster and more smoothly.

3.7 The design also places a strong emphasis on energy efficiency, using intelligent cooling and modern technology to reduce energy use while maintaining high performance standards.

3.8 The description of development is as follows:

***"Erection of a new data centre comprising two commercial units (Sui Generis) with associated external plant, substations, boundary fencing, landscaping, highway access works and all ancillary infrastructure"***

3.9 The Proposed Development will comprise the following:

- Two data centres, comprising two steel framed buildings with a total floorspace of 2,465sqm, including an external plant pod;
    - 8 car parking spaces (including 1 accessible space), all with access to EV charging;
    - 10 cycle storage spaces;
    - Two new substations;
    - An improved access off Bower Street, with the widening of the existing site access to provide vehicular and pedestrian means of access;
    - Hard and soft landscaping to provide an attractive and welcoming environment for the new development, including significant tree planting.

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- A new security fence will be erected around perimeter of the site, with landscape planting behind it for additional screening. The Proposed Site Plan is shown in **Figure 3.1** below.




^ Figure 3.1: Proposed Site Plan (Ref: LD01BS-CAL-SW-XX-DR-A-01-11- Rev P2)

## Use

3.10 The intended use for this development is as a data centre facility. The majority of the Proposed Development will be designated to outside modular plant space. The Site will also include two high quality steel frame commercial units that will be used mainly as space to house a data facility but will also include ancillary spaces consisting of customer and staff offices, and welfare facilities.

3.11 The Site allows for the space that the Applicant requires, it is located in an area of land that is dedicated for this type of use, near businesses of a similar type, and also allows good access for their customers and operations via close proximity to the A62.

## Scale

3.12 The design of the Proposed Development has taken into careful consideration the positioning of the buildings and associated external plant to have minimal daylighting, sun-lighting and acoustic effects on the neighbouring residential sites.

3.13 The massing is essentially two neighbouring blocks of the same height. A simple form allows for a decorative facade without the design becoming too elaborate.

3.14 By separating the data halls into two buildings it allows daylight through the Site and the street side massing doesn't become overbearing.

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3.15 The scale of the building reflects the function of the internal space. The double height element of the massing accommodates the data hall and its height ensures adequate servicing and ventilation of the space. The front of house is only required to be single storey as it holds small office spaces, so the internal height of the space is proportionate to its function.

3.16 The data halls have been positioned to provide an acoustic separation between the associated plant and surrounding residential areas. The buildings will also act as a visual buffer to the neighbouring residential properties.

## Appearance and Design

3.17 Latos' new Manchester Data Centre will be a Neural Edge Data Centre – a new type of facility designed to handle the fast-growing demand for digital services and artificial intelligence.

3.18 Neural Edge data centres are designed to be compact, efficient and future-ready, delivering high performance without unnecessary scale. They are carefully engineered to bring computing power closer to where it is needed, helping digital services run faster and more smoothly.

3.19 The design also places a strong emphasis on energy efficiency, using intelligent cooling and modern technology to reduce energy use while maintaining high performance standards.

3.20 The main massing of the building will sit on a brick plinth base with the double height space cladding above, and living wall acoustically and visually screening the chillers on a raised gantry to the rear of the building.

3.21 The front of house brick facade will extrude out from the plinth, with glazed elements to allow daylight to office spaces.

3.22 The entrance to the building will be accentuated with the use of contrasting brick and branded signage. The customer office will have architectural fins to highlight the corner of the customer zone. Stair wells are expressed externally, further breaking the mass of the Data Halls.

3.23 The geometric pattern of facade is in keeping with the client design guide whilst the choice of material and colour pallet are sensitive to its context. The corners of the building are articulated differently to reduce the visual weight of the data hall.

3.24 The exposed black carrier panel adds depth and interest to the facade whilst the expanded mesh through the timber effect fins to the corners give texture. **Figure 3.2** shows a 3D view from Bower Street of the proposed data centre.



^ Figure 3.2: Proposed 3D View of Data Centre

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3.25 The chosen materials and colour pallet are representative of Latos, branding, and include a colour pallet which is predominately monochrome. As such the chosen materials reflect this approach:

- A black brick plinth will create a heavy base to help to ground the building.
- The timber effect cladding will be a more lightweight wrapping the building.
- The entrance will be white glazed brick with backlit black face-fixed Latos signage.
- Sleek architectural metal fins will dress in front of the glazing to one of the offices. This will highlight minimal black frames to glazing and aluminium coping trims will keep the high quality finish.
- The black carrier panel creates the secure, fire rated, whether tight line of the external wall build up and offers a depth in and contrasting to the applied timber effect fin cladding. The materials are robust, recyclable or reusable.
- The front of house brick facade is punctured with large glazed elements to allow daylight to office spaces, and create an active frontage to Bower Street. The feature contrasting brick will denote the entrance with the Latos Brandmark above.

## Layout

3.26 The overall GEA of the proposed buildings, substations & high voltage rooms (power pods) is 2645m$^2$ / 28471ft$^2$. The remainder of the Site will consist of external modular plant, parking, landscape and service route.

3.27 The data hall accounts for 33% of the proposed building. The remainder will accommodate customer, personnel and ancillary staff, with all their welfare needs and internal plant and ancillary spaces.

## Access

3.28 Pedestrian access to the Site is controlled using the main Data Centre site access point, with a gated through route.

3.29 Cycle access is also provided using the main Data Centre site access point, with external cycle storage via secure Sheffield hoops located adjacent to the main building entrance. To further encourage the use of cycling, walking or jogging to work, the building includes shower facilities and lockers within the bathrooms.

3.30 Vehicle access is a single point of entry via Bower Street.

## Landscaping

3.31 In response to the nature of the Proposed Development, the landscape strategy focuses on delivering a robust native planting scheme that enhances biodiversity, strengthens ecological value, and helps filter views of the Site from surrounding receptors.

3.32 The design approach prioritises the retention of as many mature existing trees as possible, with the majority located along the Site boundaries where they provide established structure and screening.

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3.33 To reinforce this framework, new native hedgerows are proposed around the Site perimeter, together with approximately 120 new native trees to supplement and strengthen the existing tree cover. These elements will be set within approximately 2,200m$^2$ of species-rich wildflower meadow, designed to increase habitat diversity, support pollinators and provide a low maintenance ground layer across the Site. The illustrative landscape plan is shown in **Figure 3.3** below.

3.34 To further enhance biodiversity across the Site, a range of ecological interventions are proposed. These include the reuse of felled timber to create hibernacula and habitat piles, as well as the installation of bird and bat boxes along the canal corridor to support local species and encourage habitat connectivity.



ˆ Figure 3.3: Illustrative Landscape Plan

3.35 Further details of the Proposed Development are provided within the Design & Access Statement prepared by Create Architecture.

3.36 **Chapter 4** of this Screening Report will provide details of the Screening Assessment undertaken.

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# 4. Screening Assessment

## Requirement for an EIA

4.1 The need for a Screening Opinion has been considered in the context of the following Regulations / Guidance:

- European legislation under Directive 2011/EU.
- The Town and Country Planning (England) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the "EIA Regulations").
- National Planning Practice Guidance.

4.2 The EIA Regulations outline thresholds for what are described as Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 Projects. EIA is mandatory for "*Schedule 1*" projects. An EIA is required for "*Schedule 2*" projects if, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, they are likely to give rise to "significant effects" on the environment.

4.3 In determining whether the Proposed Development constitutes EIA development, the following are to be taken into consideration:

- Whether the Proposed Development is of a type listed in Schedule 1;
- If not, whether it is listed in Schedule 2;
- If so, whether the Proposed Development:
    - is within, partly within, or near a 'sensitive area' as defined by Regulation 2 of the EIA Regulations;
    - meets any of the relevant thresholds and criteria set out in Schedule 2; and/or
    - is likely to give rise to significant effects, with regards to Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations.

## Schedule 1 Projects

4.4 An EIA is mandatory for projects listed in Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations. The Proposed Development is not of a type listed in Schedule 1.

## Schedule 2 Projects

4.5 The Proposed Development is considered to be Schedule 2 development under Category 10 "Infrastructure Projects", of EIA Regulations. Sub-section (b) relates to "Urban Development Projects".

### *Sensitive Area*

4.6 Certain designated sites are defined in regulation 2(1) as sensitive areas. Within these areas, the thresholds and criteria relating to Schedule 2 developments are not applied, and all developments in, or partly in, such areas are required to be screened. These are:

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest and European sites;
- National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; and

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- World Heritage Sites and scheduled monuments.

4.7 With consideration to the above it can be concluded that the Site does not lie within a sensitive area.

### *Thresholds and Criteria*

4.8 NPPG provides thresholds and criteria for the identification of Schedule 2 development requiring Environmental Impact Assessment and indicative values for determining significant effects.

4.9 In respect of 'Industrial estate development projects' the Schedule 2 criteria and threshold includes:

> *"The area of the development exceeds 5 hectares".*

4.10 In respect of 'Urban Development Projects' the Schedule 2 criteria and threshold includes:

> *"(i) The development includes more than 1 hectare of urban development which is not dwellinghouse development; or (ii) the development includes more than 150 dwellings; or (iii) the overall area of the development exceeds 5 hectares".*

4.11 It is also stated, however, that "Environmental Impact Assessment is unlikely to be required for the redevelopment of land unless the new development is on a significantly greater scale than the previous use, or the types of impact are of a markedly different nature or there is a high level of contamination."

*4.12* The Proposed Development exceeds the threshold set out in Schedule 2 10 (b) of the EIA Regulations as it includes site area larger than 1 hectare.

4.13 The requirement for an EIA is therefore dependent on the potential for significant environmental effects to arise as a result of the Proposed Development.

### *Schedule 3 Criteria*

4.14 In deciding upon the potential for environmental effects and the associated significance of these effects, it is necessary to refer to the selection criteria set out in Schedule 3 of the Regulations which are relevant to the Proposed Development.

4.15 Regulation 5(4) states:

> *"Where a relevant planning authority or the Secretary of State has to decide under these Regulations whether Schedule 2 development is EIA development, the relevant planning authority or Secretary of State must take into account in making that decision—*
>
> *(a) any information provided by the applicant;*
>
> *(b) the results of any relevant EU environmental assessment which are reasonably available to the relevant planning authority or the Secretary of State; and*
>
> *(c)* ***such of the selection criteria set out in Schedule 3 as are relevant to the development****." (our emphasis).*

4.16 The Schedule 3 Criteria for Screening requires regard to be given to:

1. The characteristics of development, including:

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(a) the size and design of the whole development;

(b) cumulation with other existing development and/or approved development;

(c) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;

(d) the production of waste;

(e) pollution and nuisances;

(f) the risk of major accidents and/or disasters relevant to the development concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge;

(g) the risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution).

2. Location of development, including:

(a) the existing and approved land use;

(b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground;

(c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas—

(i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;

(ii) coastal zones and the marine environment;

(iii) mountain and forest areas;

(iv) nature reserves and parks;

(v) European sites and other areas classified or protected under national legislation;

(vi)areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards, laid down in Union legislation and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure;

(vii) densely populated areas;

(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.

- Types and characteristics of the potential impact, taking into account—

(a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);

(b) the nature of the impact;

(c) the transboundary nature of the impact;

(d) the intensity and complexity of the impact;

(e) the probability of the impact;

(f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;

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(g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved development;

(h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

4.17 Consequently, **Chapter 5** will now consider the potential for significant environmental effects to occur as a result of the Proposed Development with regards to the characteristics of the development; the location of the development and the type and characteristics of the potential impacts.

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# 5. Assessment of Environmental Effects

5.1 In line with the relevant legislation and policy set out in **Chapter 4**, consideration has been given to the potential for significant environmental effects to arise as a result of the Proposed Development. The following potential effects (EIA topic areas) have been considered and further details are set out within this chapter.

(i) Ecology and Biodiversity

Human Health: a) Air Quality; b) Ground Conditions;, c) Noise; d) Daylight & Sunlight; and e) Human Health

(ii) Transport

(iii) Flood Risk & Drainage

(iv) Socio Economic

(v) Townscape and Visual

5.2 These matters are considered in the following sections of this chapter.

## Ecology and Biodiversity

### Introduction

5.3 E3P has been instructed to undertake a screening assessment of the Proposed Development in relation to anticipated environmental impacts relating to Ecology.

5.4 This assessment has been undertaken by Lowri Thomas, Senior Ecologist BSc (Hons), MIEnvSc, ACIEEM. Lowri holds a Field Identification Skills Certificate (FISC) Level 3, holds Natural England great crested newt and bat licences (Class 1) and Natural Resources Wales newt Licence, and has experience undertaking Environmental Impact Assessments across the UK.

5.5 For the purpose of this EIA screening, the CIEEM (2018) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine version 1.2. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester are relevant.

### Location of Development

5.6 The Site is located in Newton Heath, East Manchester. Bower Street forms the Site's northern boundary; the Rochdale Canal forms the southern site boundary. Industrial development is located along the southwestern boundary of the Site. The canal provides foraging and commuting opportunities for a variety of local fauna. Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land Priority Habitat are located within 1 km of the Site. The closest is located approximately 20 m south of the Site. Such habitat comprises brownfield land that, due to previous disturbance and modification, supports a notable diversity of habitats within close proximity. Several areas of Deciduous Woodland BAP Priority Habitats were located within 1 km of the Site boundary, the closest of which is located approximately 300 m east of the Site boundary.

### Are the works taking place within a sensitive area?

5.7 The Site is located within 1 km of Clayton Vale Local Nature Reserve (LNR). The LNR is located approximately 950 m southeast of the Site.

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5.8 The Site is also located within the impact risk zone of the Rochdale Canal Special Site of Scientific Importance (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Rochdale Canal SSSI and SAC is located 2 km northeast of the Site. The Site is designated as an SSSI as it comprises important habitat for aquatic plants and emergent vegetation. The Site is designated as an SAC as it supports Annex II species floating water plantain (*Luronium natans*).

5.9 It is not anticipated that the Proposed Development would have an impact on Clayton Vale LNR, Rochdale Canal SSSI and SCA due to the small size of the Site, urban nature of the wider area which offers limited ecological connectivity and distance from the designated sites. The Site is also located downstream of the Rochdale Canal SSSI and SAC and as such it is not anticipated that the designated site and qualifying Annex II species would be impacted by pollution events.

5.10 Furthermore, as per the criteria listed on MAGIC (accessed January 2026) which shows the Site will not require further consultation with Natural England to proceed in relation to the SSSI. This indicates that the Proposed Development is unlikely to have a harmful effect on the Rochdale Canal SSSI and SAC. As such, a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) will not be required in relation to the SAC.

5.11 Two Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs) were identified within 1 km of the Site boundary. These comprise the following: Rochdale Canal – Stott's Lane to Ducie Street Basin SBI is located adjacent to the southern site boundary. The Site comprises floating, emergent and marginal flora. Bank Bridge Meadow SBI is located 890 m southeast of the Site. Mitigation and compensation methods be followed for the SBIs. As such, the Proposed Development is not anticipated to have any significant impacts on local ecology.

## Is the proposal likely to have 'Significant Effects' on the Environment?

5.12 The Site was found to comprise developed land; sealed surface, ruderal/ephemeral, other neutral grassland, mixed scrub, bramble scrub, individual trees and broadleaved woodland.

5.13 The Site was found to comprise the following ecological constraints:

- Opportunities for common amphibians are present within the scrub, other neutral grassland, individual trees, ruderal/ephemeral, and woodland habitats.
- Some, but limited, value for foraging bats within the onsite habitats such as the individual trees, woodland, and scrub. Commuting and foraging potential for bats within the adjacent Rochdale Canal.
- Potential presence of badgers within the local area and suitable foraging and sett-building opportunities on site.
- Potential presence of hedgehogs within the understorey of individual trees, scrub, and woodland habitats.
- Opportunities for nesting birds within the individual trees, scrub, and woodland.

5.14 It is not anticipated there will be a significant impact on the habitats or the notable species, as the majority of habitats are being retained, with mitigation and compensation incorporated.

### *The Characteristics of the Development*

5.15 The development will comprise a data centre. Habitats will be removed during the construction stage, and there are determined to be limited impacts in the operation of the data centre. The mitigation detailed in paragraph 5.22 is determined to be sufficient to ensure there are no significant adverse impacts.

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*Use of Natural Resources*

5.16 The development will require the removal of habitats on-site including the other woodland; broadleaved, scrub, other neutral grassland, ruderal/ephemeral and individual trees.

*Pollution and Nuisance*

5.17 The scheme is located adjacent to the Rochdale Canal – Stott's Lane to Ducie Street Basin SBI. The mitigation including pollution prevention as well as a vegetated buffer between the Site and the canal, as detailed in paragraph 5.22 is determined to be sufficient to ensure there are no significant adverse impacts.

*Risk to Human Health*

5.18 Not applicable in terms of ecology.

*Potential Effects*

5.19 Habitats are to be removed on-site, though compensation planting will be incorporated and offsite habitat units will be secured to achieve a 10% gain prior to on-site works. Opportunities were identified for common amphibians, badgers, hedgehog, commuting and foraging potential for bats. Low numbers of these notable species may utilise the Site on occasion. The majority of these habitats will be retained, with mitigation and compensation incorporated for the notable species where required. As such, the Proposed Development is not expected to have a significantly adverse impact during the construction phase or operational phase.

*Cumulative Impacts*

5.20 There are no cumulative impacts anticipated due to the limited ecological value currently present on site.

*Proposed Methods of Mitigation*

5.21 The following mitigation and compensation will be employed to minimise any potential impacts.

**Habitats**

5.22 Rochdale Canal SBI is located adjacent to the southern site boundary. To ensure the designated site is not negatively impacted by the development, all best practice guidance relating to pollution will be adhered to. This will include best practice use of refuelling machinery to avoid fuel spills. Site drainage will need to be considered to ensure that no highly silted or polluted run-off from the Site workings will enter the ground. It is also recommended that a minimum 5 m vegetated buffer will be maintained along the canal. Best practice protection measures as detailed within PPG5 Pollution Prevention Guidelines (2007) are to be put in place to protect the SBI. The following control measures would be required during any ground works and during the construction phase to ensure there are no impacts on the designated sites or any wildlife utilising them:

- All operational plant will be kept well maintained.
- Turning off plant when not in use.
- Dampening of the operational areas will be regularly undertaken during dry weather conditions to avoid dust. Dust management will be extended to cover the plant and all operational areas and will be complied with throughout the period of development.

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- Measures to prevent pollutants from entering ground and surface water is standard construction practice through the use of a bunded fuel storage and refuelling area at a discrete distance from any watercourses. These measures should be underwritten by spill management equipment being kept on-site and capable of being effectively utilised by trained operatives to contain any accidental spillage within any part of the operational area.

- A toolbox talk should be completed by a qualified ecologist to ensure contractors are aware of the designated site and its ecological importance.

- During night hours, no lighting is to be located facing the designated sites to ensure no wildlife are deterred from using them.

- A 'Site Tidy' protocol is to be put in place on-site. All litter is to be appropriately controlled, whilst on-site materials are to be adequately stored over-night.

- Where possible, all excavations will be battened at a 45-degree angle, or a ramp installed, to allow escape should animals become trapped.

5.23 Due to the nature of the development, which comprises the development of a data centre, a significant increase in visitors to the SBI is not anticipated as a result of the Proposed Development.

5.24 Where possible, the individual trees, scrub and broadleaved woodland will be retained and protected through development. Prior to the commencement of the construction works, a 10% gain in habitat and watercourse units will be achieved through on-site planting and offsite credits. This will mitigate the loss of habitat in terms of Biodiversity Net Gain. Any retained habitats within the Site and the adjacent habitats will be protected throughout the construction works with fencing installed to preserve these habitats and protect the root protection zones associated with the retained areas of broadleaved woodland and scattered trees

**Common amphibians**

5.25 If common amphibians are encountered, they will be moved by hand away from the construction activities to areas of retained habitat, such as the hedgerows and woodland.

**Bats**

5.26 Due to the small size of the Site, it is not anticipated that the habitats on site provide significant foraging resources for bats. As such, further bat surveys are considered exhaustive. However, the Rochdale Canal located adjacent to the southern site boundary is anticipated to form a valuable foraging and commuting feature for bats. As such, habitat along the canal and bankside vegetation are to be retained and protected throughout the development. Furthermore, any lighting during and post construction should be appropriately placed to avoid being directed at the canal. To reduce the potential lighting impacts for bats, the following recommendations are advised for the lighting strategy:

- Lighting should be pre-fixed on any proposed structures or buildings, to ensure impacts on the Rochdale Canal are diminished.

- Warm white tones are preferable to blue toned lights (3000k).

- LED lights are preferable as they produce minimal UV.

- To avoid light spill skyward, ensure lights face downward.

- Make use of vegetation to block light spill into dark areas

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5.27 Lighting will follow the protocols outlined in The Institute for Lighting Engineers document "Guidance for the Reduction of Obtrusive Lighting" (2005) and The Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP) (2023). "Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night. Guidance Note GN08/23".

5.28 Planting within the Site be of native fruiting/flowering species in order to enhance the Site for foraging bats post-completion. Bat boxes will be installed throughout the Site post-construction to enhance the Site for the species group.

**Badger**

5.29 No badger setts were located on Site during the survey, though the habitats on site were identified as being suitable for the species. Badgers are highly mobile and can create new setts in a short period of time. It is recommended that an updated site walkover prior to the development is carried out to identify any new badger setts. If a badger sett is located, a stand-off distance may be required as well as precautionary working methods. If the sett requires closure, a Natural England Badger Licence would be required. Please note that badger licences can only be obtained between July and November each year to avoid potential impact on pregnant females. The following precautionary working methods will be adhered to during the construction phase to ensure that no badgers within the local area are impacted by the Proposed Development:

- All site operatives will be inducted to the presence of the species and their working limits and legal responsibilities.
- All site operatives will be inducted as to identifying potential badger setts and should be vigilant if they suspect they locate a new sett during works and inform the project ecologist immediately.
- All excavations will be battered at a 45-degree angle, or ramps will be installed, to allow the escape should animals become trapped. Alternatively, excavations will be covered overnight.
- All site machinery and materials will be appropriately stored to avoid harm to the species, notably between July and November each year when extra care is needed to avoid potential impacts on pregnant females.

5.30 It is not anticipated that the development will have a significant negative impact on badgers within the local area.

**Hedgehog**

5.31 The Site was assessed as providing suitable refuge, foraging and hibernation opportunities for hedgehogs within the understorey of individual trees, scrub habitats, and broadleaved woodland. These habitats will be retained around the boundaries of the Site. Where vegetation requires removal, it should be checked for the presence of hedgehog prior to removal. If any vegetation is too dense to be fully inspected, it should be strimmed to 50 cm and checked for hedgehog before being cleared to ground level. If trees are removed, their bases should be checked, prior to removal, for sheltering hedgehogs. It is recommended that any clearance takes place outside of December-March to avoid impacting hibernating hedgehogs.

**Nesting birds**

5.32 Where any vegetation requires removal, soil needs stripping, or buildings need demolishing, these works should be carried out outside of nesting bird season. Breeding bird season occurs between March and September (inclusive). If this is not possible, a suitably qualified ecologist should inspect the area no more than 48 hours prior to the removal. Should any nests, or nests in construction, be located, a suitable stand-off distance should be maintained until the young have

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fledged. The ecologist will advise on suitable stand-off and provide a toolbox talk to all Site contractors regarding their working limits and legal implications.

### Conclusions

5.33 Habitat removal will be compensated through on-site planting and offsite units will be secured to achieve a 10% gain prior to on-site works. Opportunities were identified for common amphibians, badgers, hedgehog, commuting and foraging potential for bats. Though only low numbers of these notable species may utilise the Site on occasion.

5.34 The majority of these habitats will be retained, with mitigation and compensation incorporated for the notable species where required. As such, the Proposed Development is not expected to have a significantly adverse impact during the construction phase or operational phase.

5.35 It is therefore considered that there are not likely to be any significant environmental effects arising from the Proposed Development in respect of Ecology and Biodiversity.

## Human Health

## Air Quality

### Introduction

5.36 Merebrook Consulting Ltd (Merebrook) has been instructed to undertake an assessment of the Proposed Development in relation to anticipated environmental impacts relating to Air Quality.

5.37 A standalone Air Quality Assessment (AQA) has been prepared by Merebrook to assess the potential air quality impacts of the Proposed Development during its construction and operation. The assessment has been overseen by Kat Johnson, a Chartered Scientist and full member of the Institution of Environmental Sciences and Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM), with over 15 years' experience in air quality assessment.

5.38 The assessment has been undertaken in accordance with all relevant legislation, policy and guidance including Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) Technical Guidance (TG22) and guidance published by the IAQM.

### Location of Development

5.39 The Site is not situated within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and is not located adjacent to any major roads.

### Are the works taking place within a sensitive area?

5.40 The area surrounding the Site is predominantly in industrial use or comprises undeveloped land with relatively low sensitivity to air quality impacts. However, pockets of residential use exist in the locality including residential properties immediately adjacent to the northeast corner of the Site and to the north on the opposite side of Bower Street.

5.41 No sensitive ecological sites have been identified in close proximity to the Site.

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## Is the proposal likely to have 'Significant Effects' on the Environment?

### *The Characteristics of the Development*

5.42 The Proposed Development comprises two large data centres with associated car parking and landscaping.

### *Use of Natural Resources*

5.43 Not relevant to the topic of air quality.

### *Pollution and Nuisance*

5.44 Baseline concentrations of air pollution at the Site are expected to be close to urban background levels and well below the relevant AQO.

### *Risk to Human Health*

5.45 Developments can introduce new receptors into an area of poor air quality. They can also increase emissions of air pollutants during their construction and operational phases and/or create a building configuration that inhibits effective pollution dispersion.

### *Potential Effects*

5.46 Future users of the proposed data centre are considered to be of relatively low sensitivity to air pollution. Notwithstanding this, baseline concentrations of key air pollutants are expected to close to urban background levels. The Site is therefore considered to be suitable for the proposed use in air quality terms without the requirement for mitigation measures to reduce future users' exposure.

5.47 During the construction phase, the Proposed Development has the potential to result in short-term, temporary dust soiling and an increase in suspended particulate matter at sensitive receptors in the vicinity.

5.48 The risk of dust soiling during construction has been assessed as 'medium' and the risk of human health impacts has been assessed as 'low' in the absence of mitigation.

5.49 The scheme is not expected to result in a significant increase in vehicle movements on the local road network. In addition, it is understood that recovered heat from the data centre will be re-used for water and space heating within the buildings.

5.50 The data centre will include ten emergency generators to provide back-up power in the event of a power outage. The generators are intended to be fuelled using hydrogenated vegetable oil (HVO) but may have a secondary fuel option (gas or hydrogen).

5.51 There is potential for nearby residential receptors to experience short-term, elevated concentrations of air pollution during testing of emergency generators. However, the total testing duration for the emergency generators will not exceed 18 hours per year therefore the short-term Air Quality Objective for nitrogen dioxide (which allows up to 18 exceedances per year) will not be exceeded and the risk to human health is not considered to be significant.

### *Cumulative Impacts*

5.52 No major developments have been identified within 500 m of the Site with the potential to result in significant cumulative dust impacts. In any case, dust control measures will be required for all sites as secured via planning condition.

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5.53 The Proposed Development will not result in a significant increase in vehicle trips therefore the potential for cumulative impacts is considered to be limited. Due to the limited hours of operation, testing of emergency generators is unlikely to contribute significantly to ambient levels of air pollution in the local area.

*Proposed Methods of Mitigation*

5.54 The risk of dust impacts during construction can be mitigated using appropriate management and dust suppression techniques commensurate with the level of risk and secured via planning condition. Suggested measures are outlined within the AQA.

5.55 The impact of the operational development is not expected to be significant. Notwithstanding this, a Travel Plan will be implemented at the Site.

5.56 Testing of emergency generators will be kept to a minimum.

### Conclusions

5.57 During the construction phase, the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures secured via planning condition will ensure that the residual dust effects can be considered 'not significant'.

5.58 The Proposed Development is not expected to result in a significant increase in traffic flows on the local road network. Space heating and hot water demand will be addressed using recovered heat from the data centre operation. Although emergency generators are to be installed as a back-up in the event of a power outage, testing hours for the generators will be restricted to minimise the potential impact on local air quality.

5.59 It is therefore considered that there are not likely to be any significant environmental effects arising from the Proposed Development in respect of Air Quality.

## Ground Conditions

### Introduction

5.60 RWO Associates (Geotechnical) has been instructed to undertake an assessment of the Proposed Development in relation to anticipated environmental impacts relating to Ground Conditions. This assessment has been undertaken by Christopher Rudd, a Fellow of the Geological Society of London with 25years+ experience in the geotechnical and contaminated land industry.

5.61 This assessment has been informed by a Preliminary Geoenvironmental Investigation, comprising a Phase 1 Desk Study and Site Walkover Survey. This assessment has been undertaken in accordance with current best practice guidance and industry standards, including BS10175:2026 *Investigation of Potentially Contaminated Sites*, CIRIA Report C552 *Contaminated Land Risk Assessment: A Guide to Good Practice*, and the Environment Agency's Land Contamination Risk Management (LCRM) framework. The Phase 1 Desk Study included a review of historical mapping, environmental data and geological and hydrogeological information.

5.62 This assessment has been undertaken by a suitably qualified geoenvironmental consultant with experience in contaminated land risk assessment, geotechnical appraisal and conceptual site model development.

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## Location of Development

5.63 The Site is located off Bower Street, Manchester (NGR SD870002) and covers an area of approximately 1.22 hectares. The Site comprises an overgrown parcel of land with areas of hardstanding and is bounded by Bower Street to the north, Ten Acres Lane to the east, commercial/industrial uses to the west and the Rochdale Canal to the south.

## Are the works taking place within a sensitive area?

5.64 The Site is not located within or in close proximity to any designated environmentally sensitive areas. This includes statutory and non-statutory designations such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA), or Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

## Is the proposal likely to have 'Significant Effects' on the Environment?

5.65 Likely significant effects with regards to ground conditions are limited. The Site is underlain by a secondary undifferentiated aquifer overlying a principal aquifer. The desk-based assessment classified groundwater vulnerability for the Site as low. The Site lies within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore classed as not at risk from flooding from land or sea.

### *The Characteristics of the Development*

5.66 The Proposed Development comprises commercial buildings and associated infrastructure. Groundworks are expected to include site clearance, excavation, foundation installation and potential earthworks.

### *Use of Natural Resources*

5.67 The development will likely require the use and management of natural resources, including the excavation, handling, reuse, and/or off-site disposal of soils. Construction activities will also involve the importation and use of building materials such as aggregates and concrete. There is potential for interaction with groundwater during excavation works.

### *Pollution and Nuisance*

5.68 Potential sources of pollution and nuisance during the construction phase may include the disturbance of soils, leading to the generation of dust and the possible mobilisation of contaminants. There is also the potential for the presence of ground gas, depending on underlying ground conditions.

### *Risk to Human Health*

5.69 Risk to human health with regards to ground conditions include direct dermal contact with potentially contaminated soils, ingestion of soil or dust, inhalation of airborne particulates or vapours or exposure to hazardous ground gases where present. These risks are primarily associated with construction workers, although there may also be limited potential for exposure to future site users if not appropriately managed.

### *Potential Effects*

5.70 The potential environmental effects associated with ground conditions are anticipated to be of low magnitude, localised in extent, and largely confined to the construction phase of the development. With the implementation of appropriate standard mitigation and control measures, these effects are considered to be manageable and unlikely to result in significant adverse impacts.

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### *Cumulative Impacts*

5.71 No significant cumulative impacts are anticipated.

### *Proposed Methods of Mitigation*

5.72 Mitigation measures include undertaking a targeted intrusive ground investigation to further characterise site conditions, implementing a Materials Management Plan (MMP) to ensure the appropriate handling, reuse, or disposal of soils, and adopting dust suppression measures during construction. Where required appropriate ground gas protection measures will be incorporated into the design. Foundation design will be appropriate based on site-specific ground conditions.

## Conclusions

5.73 It is therefore considered that there are not likely to be any significant environmental effects arising from the Proposed Development in respect of ground conditions.

# Noise

## Introduction

5.74 Sol Acoustics has been instructed to undertake an assessment of the Proposed Development in relation to anticipated environmental impacts relating to Noise and Vibration.

5.75 This assessment has been undertaken by Joe Sinker, who has over 10 years of experience and a Member of the Institute of Acoustics (MIOA).

5.76 **Table 5.1** sets out the national or industry standards and guidance that have been identified to form the basis of determining the magnitude of potential environmental effects:

| Effect | Phase | Standards & Guidance |
|---|---|---|
| Construction Noise and Vibration | Construction | BS 5228-1:2009+A1:2014<br>BS 5228-2:2009+A1:2014 |
| Construction Road Traffic | Construction | LA111 – Noise and Vibration (2020)<br>Calculation of Road Traffic Noise (1988) |
| Plant Noise Impact | Operation | Manchester City Council Planning and Noise Technical Guidance (2022)<br><br>BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 |
| Operational Noise Impact | Operation | Manchester City Council Planning and Noise Technical Guidance (2022)<br><br>BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 |
| Road Traffic | Operation | LA111 – Noise and Vibration (2020)<br>Calculation of Road Traffic Noise (1988) |

^ Table 5.1 – Summary of relevant national or industry standards and guidance

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## Location of Development

5.77 The Site is an area of brownfield land accessed from Bower Street in Manchester within a residential and industrial area. The Site is bordered by Bower Street to the north, industrial premises to the west, a row of residential dwellings and Ten Acres Lane to the east, and the Rochdale Canal to the south.

## Are the works taking place within a sensitive area?

5.78 There are a number of nearby residential receptors, the closest of which are as follows:

- Two storey housing on Bower Street, located c.15 metres to the north
- Two storey housing on Ten Acres Lane, located c.10 metres to the northeast
- Two storey housing on Makkah Close, located c.140 metres to the southeast
- There are also a number of commercial and industrial premises located close to the Site.

## Is the proposal likely to have 'Significant Effects' on the Environment?

### *The Characteristics of the Development*

5.79 The Proposed Development comprises two (twin) buildings with internal office space and external plant installations.

5.80 The key items of external plant comprise air cooled chillers, containerised modular power units, a substation, and emergency generator sets. The air cooled chillers, containerised modular power units, and substation will run continuous during normal operation. The emergency generator sets will switched on only during emergency conditions or for short periods of testing, which will be conducted during normal working hours Monday to Friday only and limited to less than 18no hours per annum.

5.81 It is anticipated that there may also be very infrequent use of HGV access to the Site to facilitate maintenance such as replacement of external plant units, this would occur only during daytime hours (07:00 – 23:00), and is not expected to necessitate more than 1no HGV within any one day.

5.82 There are no anticipated significant sources of vibration associated with the operation of the Site.

### *Use of Natural Resources*

5.83 Not applicable to this discipline.

### *Pollution and Nuisance*

5.84 Introduction of new noise sources to the local environment at the Site has the potential to give rise to noise pollution.

### *Risk to Human Health*

5.85 Prolonged exposure to excessive noise and vibration can negatively impact the health of local residents by means of disturbing sleep etc.

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*Potential Effects*

5.86 **Table 5.2** summarises the potential environmental effects arising from the Proposed Development that **are not** expected to be significant:

| Effect | Phase | Discussions |
|---|---|---|
| Demolition/Construction Noise and Vibration | Construction | At approximately 20 metres from the Site boundary, the nearest noise and vibration sensitive receptors will experience short-term construction noise and vibration effects. These effects can be suitably managed and minimised through a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), such that no significant environmental effects are expected. |
| Construction Road Traffic | Construction | |
| Plant Noise Impact | Operation | Although a significant amount of external plant is proposed, this plant will be designed such that the noise output does not exceed the standard requirements of MCC for normally operating plant, and a typically accepted relaxed criterion for emergency plant which will only operate for short duration testing and in emergency conditions. |
| Operational Noise Impact | Operation | The only operational noise sources, other than external plant, anticipated are infrequent HGV access to the Site for maintenance purposes. Potential noise impacts from these HGV movements will be short duration and occur only very occasionally, furthermore the context of the Site is that it sits amidst other industrial premises where similar HGV movements already occur. |
| Road Traffic | Operation | The anticipated number of trips associated with the Site during operation are very low and as such are not expected to give rise to an observable difference in road traffic noise on the surrounding road network. |

^ Table 5.2 – Summary of noise and vibration effects anticipated to not be significant

5.87 **Table 5.3** summarises the potential environmental effects arising from the Proposed Development that **may be** expected to be significant:

| Effect | Phase | Discussions |
|---|---|---|
| Demolition/Construction Noise and Vibration | Construction | At approximately 20 metres from the nearest centre building mass, the nearest noise and vibration sensitive receptors will likely experience short-term construction noise and vibration effects. These effects can be suitably managed and minimised through a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), such that no significant environmental effects are expected. |
| Construction Road Traffic | Construction | The need to bring equipment and materials on and off site during the demolition and construction phase will impose a short-term increase on the number of HGV on the surrounding road network and |

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| Effect | Phase | Discussions |
|---|---|---|
| | | may also result in temporary changes to the road layouts. |

^ Table 5.3 – Summary of noise and vibration effects not expected to be significant

*Cumulative Impacts*

5.88 Given the scale of the development and relatively short duration of the construction phase no significant cumulative impacts are anticipated.

*Proposed Methods of Mitigation*

5.89 Construction noise and vibration impacts should be managed using Best Practicable Means (BPM), i.e. the use of all reasonable measures to minimise construction noise and vibration.

5.90 The noise and vibration control measures to be implemented on-site should be captured within a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)

5.91 It is anticipated that implementation of an approved CEMP and BPM would provide suitable construction phase mitigation.

### Conclusions

5.92 The environmental effects associated with the operational phase of the development are not expected to be significant as discussed in **Table 5.2** above.

5.93 The environmental effects associated with the construction phase of the development are not expected to be significant as discussed in **Table 5.3** above.

## Daylight and Sunlight

### Introduction

5.94 GIA have been instructed to undertake an assessment of the Proposed Development in relation to anticipated environmental impacts relating to Daylight & Sunlight. This assessment has been undertaken by Edward Portlock, associate director at GIA with 12 years surveying experience, and 5 years specialising in the field of Daylight & Sunlight.

5.95 There is no legislation that governs Daylight & Sunlight. As such, this assessment has been undertaken by reference to the guidance within The Building Research Establishment (BRE) 'Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight – A Guide to Good Practice', Third Edition, 2022 (the BRE guidelines)

### Location of Development

5.96 The Site is bounded by Bower Street to the north, with residential properties beyond, residential properties to the east, Rochdale Canal to the south, and existing industrial units to the west.

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## Are the works taking place within a sensitive area?

5.97 The BRE guidelines state that residential, habitable rooms are primarily considered sensitive to changes in Daylight and Sunlight. There are no sensitive residential receptors to the south or west. There are sensitive residential receptors to the north on the far side of Bower Street, and to the east on Ten Acres Lane.

## Is the proposal likely to have 'Significant Effects' on the Environment?

### *The Characteristics of the Development*

5.98 The Proposed Development is comprised of 2 data centre buildings and external e-pods, encompassing a total of 2,645sqm. The massing of the Proposed Development is weighted towards the south and west of the application site, and the Proposed Development is 11.115 metres in height at the parapet.

### *Use of Natural Resources*

5.99 Not relevant for Daylight and Sunlight considerations.

### *Pollution and Nuisance*

5.100 Not relevant for Daylight and Sunlight considerations.

### *Risk to Human Health*

5.101 The Site is currently clear, and so the introduction of any massing will result in a change in the surrounding Daylight and Sunlight conditions. Notwithstanding, there are only a limited number of sensitive receptors in the immediate area, and they are located at a reasonable distance from the Proposed Development relative to its height and massing.

### *Potential Effects*

5.102 As such, whilst there would be changes in the light conditions of the surrounding area, no significant Daylight, Sunlight or Overshadowing effects are anticipated.

### *Cumulative Impacts*

5.103 There are no relevant cumulative impacts anticipated.

### *Proposed Methods of Mitigation*

5.104 The primary means of mitigating Daylight and Sunlight effects is through design, however no significant effects are anticipated based on the current design.

## Conclusions

5.105 It is therefore considered that there are not likely to be any significant environmental effects arising from the Proposed Development in respect of Daylight and Sunlight.

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# Human Health

## Introduction

5.106 King Street Planning has been instructed to undertake an assessment of the Proposed Development in relation to anticipated environmental impacts relating to human health. This assessment has been undertaken by Jamie Lynch MRTPI, MRICS, MISEP, CEnv, BA, MSc.

5.107 The assessment has utilised a suite of policy and guidance documents to inform the assessment:

- National Planning Policy Framework.
- Planning Practice Guidance.
- Manchester's Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Adopted 11 July 2012).
- Places for Everyone (2024).
- Spatial Planning for Health: An Evidence Resource for Planning and Designing Healthier Places (2017).
- HUDU Planning for Health: Healthy Urban Planning Checklist (April 2017).
- HUDU Rapid Health Impact Assessment Tool (October 2019).
- IEMA: Effective Scoping of Human Health in Environmental Impact Assessment (November 2022).
- IEMA: Determining Significance for Human Health In Environmental Impact Assessment (November 2022).

## Location of Development

5.108 The Site is broadly rectangular in shape, bound by residential properties and Ten Acres Lane to the east; the Rochdale canal to the south; employment uses to the west; and Bower Street to the north, beyond which is further residential properties. The Site itself comprises a mixture of scrub and hardstanding.

5.109 The area surrounding the Site is characterised by a mix of residential, industrial and commercial uses.

5.110 The nearest residential houses are as follows:

- Two storey housing on Bower Street, located c.15 metres to the north of the Facility.
- Two storey housing on Ten Acres Lane, located c.10 metres to the northeast of the Facility.
- Two storey housing on Makkah Close, located c.140 metres to the southeast of the Facility.

5.111 The receptor groups identified include:

- Construction workers.

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- Existing off-site residents.
- Future site users.

### Are the works taking place within a sensitive area?

5.112 The Site itself is not sensitive to the Proposed Development, nor is the proposed use a sensitive end use. However, the Proposed Development is located adjacent to residential receptors and commercial uses, both of which comprisehuman health receptors which could be affected during the construction and operational phases of development.

### Is the proposal likely to have 'Significant Effects' on the Environment?

5.113 Due to the nature of the Proposed Development, effects are anticipated during the construction and operational phases.

5.114 During construction, the majority of technical assessments undertaken in support of the planning application demonstrate no significant effects, subject to the implementation of best practice mitigation secured via a CEMP. This will include measures associated with noise, dust, air quality, lighting, townscape and drainage. There could be short term elevated noise levels due to specific operations during construction but this is commonplace across constructions sites and is not considered necessary for inclusion within an EIA.

5.115 Due to the nature of human health impacts, these are reliant upon a suite of technical surveys undertaken by other specialists in support of the planning application. These assessments have been set out in detail elsewhere within the Screening Report and summarised below.

5.116 During operation, the principle effects associated with a data centre development are noise, lighting, energy and climate change, traffic, and risk of major accidents. Each of which is summarised below.

- Noise: A noise assessment has been undertaken by SOL Acoustics. This demonstrates that suitable internal and external noise climates can be achieved for existing residential receptors during normal and emergency operating procedures for the data centre. Mitigation will be secured through approval of the application plans and via planning condition. No significant noise effects are anticipated.
- Lighting: A sensitive lighting strategy will be conditioned and agreed with the Council at the appropriate stage of the development. Due to standard best practice measures being employed, and the urban nature of the local area, it is not anticipated there will be significant lighting effects to existing human health receptors.
- Traffic: A Transport Statement has been prepared by SK Transport in support of the planning application. The construction phase traffic movements will be managed by a Construction Traffic Management Plan. This will ensure access and egress of all construction vehicles, protecting pedestrians and cyclists throughout the construction phase. During operation, the traffic movements are anticipated to be minimal and, therefore, the traffic related health effects are not anticipated to be significant.
- Air Quality: An Air Quality Assessment has been prepared by Merebrook Consulting in support of the planning application. During the construction phase, dust and air quality nuisance effects would be controlled by best practice measures established by the IAQM. The construction phase effects have been identified as

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not significant. During operation, the air quality effects have been modelled and determined and no significant effects are anticipated.

*Cumulative Effects*

5.117 The technical assessments have undertaken a cumulative effects assessment. This has confirmed that the Proposed Development in combination with other cumulative schemes would not result in significant human health effects, such that they need to be assessed within an EIA.

### Conclusions

5.118 It is therefore considered that there are not likely to be any significant environmental effects arising from the Proposed Development in respect of Human Health.

## Transport and Movement

### Introduction

5.119 SK Transport Planning Limited (SK) has been instructed to undertake an assessment of the Proposed Development in relation to anticipated environmental impacts relating to Transport and Movement. SK has also prepared the Transport Statement and Travel Plan that will be submitted with the planning application.

5.120 This assessment has been undertaken by Lesli Speers a Director at SK. Lesli is a qualified transport consultant with an MSc in Transport Engineering and Planning and is a member of the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (CIHT) and of the Institute of Logistics and Transport.

5.121 The Transport and Movement assessment and Transport Statement have been prepared in line with the following policy and technical guidance:

- Institution of Environmental Management and Assessment (2023) Environmental Assessment of Traffic and Movement (Rev07)
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2025) National Planning Policy Framework
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2014) Planning Practice Guidance
- Transport for Greater Manchester (2013) Transport for Sustainable Communities
- TRICS (2025) TRICS Good Practice Guide

### Location of Development

5.122 In the vicinity of the Site, Bower Street is 7.4m wide with 3.1m wide footways on the northern side of the road and 2.8m footways on the southern side of the road. Bower Street is subject to a 20mph speed limit.

5.123 At its eastern end, Bower Street meets Ten Acres Lane at a priority arrangement. Travelling north on Ten Acres Lane provides access to the A62 (Oldham Road). The Oldham Road/Ten Acres Lane junction is a priority arrangement with uncontrolled crossings. To the west of the junction a signalised junction is in place with controlled crossing features.

5.124 At its western end, Bower Street meets Grimshaw Lane at a priority arrangement. Travelling north on Grimshaw Lane provides access to Oldham Road. The Oldham Road/Grimshaw Lane is a signalised arrangement with controlled crossing features.

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5.125 Department for Transport (DfT) data shows that a total of 2047 vehicles (39 HGV) use Bower Street on an average day. Observations of the operation of the highway network in the AM and PM peak hours on Bower Street and junctions at either end do not indicate any capacity issues.

5.126 A review of road safety data shows that during the past five-years there has only been one collision (classified as slight) on Bower Street and that there have been no collisions at the Bower Street/Grimshaw Lane or Bower Street/Ten Acres Lane junctions.

5.127 In terms of pedestrian and cycle routes, Bower Street is a 20mph street which has footways with widths over 2m wide which provides connections to pedestrian infrastructure on the Oldham Road corridor. Access to the formal cycle network can be gained via the traffic free route along the Rochdale Canal and on road routes on Oldham Road.

5.128 The nearest bus stops to the Site are located on Oldham Road, 300m away. The nearest bus stops have flag poles, shelters, seating and timetable information. Controlled crossings are in place on Oldham Road to provide access to eastbound services. The bus stops are served by 10 buses per hour (each way).

5.129 The nearest tram stop to the Site is Central Park, 700m away. The tram network provides access to Greater Manchester and operate with a turn-up-and-go frequency during the week.

5.130 A Greater Manchester Accessibility Level (GMAL) assessment has been undertaken and this shows that the Site has a GMAL of 6, which is a good level of accessibility in a suburban area.

5.131 A DfT Connectivity Tool assessment has been undertaken and this shows that the Site has a workplace score of 76% which is a high level of accessibility.

### Are the works taking place within a sensitive area?

5.132 The highway network serving the Site is located close to existing commercial uses and the adjacent highway network is suitable for its use by a mix of vehicles (including large vehicles). The assessment confirms that the adjacent highway network does not have a road safety issue and that Bower Street and the junctions are either end operate without significant issue.

5.133 Bower Street has wide footways on both sides (above 2m required), has street lighting and is subject to a 20mph speed limit. Pedestrian crossings features are provided at the junctions at either end of Bower Street. Based on the daily traffic flows, daily HGV flows and speed limit the road has a ‘small’ fear and intimidation level (the lowest level).

5.134 The Site is not located close to a concentration of vulnerable users, retail areas, recreational areas or tourist attractions.

5.135 Based on the above, the Site is not considered to occupy a sensitive area.

### Is the proposal likely to have ‘Significant Effects’ on the Environment?

5.136 The Proposed Development will deliver a total of 2,645sqm of floor space and will employ a maximum of six people.

5.137 The scope of the Transport Statement has been agreed with Manchester City Council and this is based on the use of TRICS to generate the future development traffic flows. This assessment shows that the Proposed Development will generate a total of 38 vehicles across the day, of which 2 will be HGV. A maximum peak hour generation of 6 vehicles is forecast, with no HGV.

5.138 The method for assessing the environmental effects of a development is based on the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) ‘Environmental Assessment of Traffic and Movement’ guidance published in 2023.

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5.139 IEMA (now ISEP[1]) recommends that two broad rules of thumb as criteria to assist in delimiting the scale and extent of the environmental assessment.

5.140 Rule 1: include highway links where traffic flows will increase by more than 30% (or the number of HGV will increase by more than 30%)

5.141 Rule 2: include any other specifically sensitive areas where traffic flows will increase by 10% or more

5.142 IEMA recommends that as a starting point, a 30% change in traffic flow represents a reasonable threshold upon which to base a decision on whether to assess environmental effects of Transport and Movement in an EIA. The assessment confirms that the Proposed Development will increase total traffic on the highway network by 1.9% and will increase HGV traffic on the highway network by 5.1%. This level of increase is not significant when considered in line with IEMA thresholds.

5.143 Changes to peak hour driver delay and junction operation will also be minimal, with an increase of less than 1 vehicle every 10 minutes. This will be imperceptible to other transport network users and will not impact on highway operation.

5.144 The change in traffic is also of a level that it will not create effects to fear, intimidation or levels of amenity.

5.145 EIA in Greater Manchester are required to assess the impact on Holcroft Moss. Holcroft Moss is located circa 27km from the Site. Based on this, and the low level of traffic that will be generated by the Proposed Development, it is concluded that it will not result in an increase in traffic at this location that meet IEMA significance thresholds.

### *The Characteristics of the Development*

5.146 Vehicle access to the Proposed Development will be gained from a new priority junction on Bower Street. The junction has been designed in line with required standards and provides sufficient space for all mode manoeuvres and suitable visibility requirements (with double yellow lines to reinforce). Pedestrian infrastructure is provided at the vehicle access including footways of required widths and uncontrolled crossing provision. The applicant will also fund the reinstatement of redundant access points as continuous footway and the resurfacing of the footways bounding the Site.

5.147 A Road Safety Audit has been undertaken of the above vehicle access works and this confirms that there are no issues with the proposed arrangements.

5.148 8 cycle parking and 8 car parking spaces are provided in the Site. The level of cycle parking is in line with adopted standard and the level of car parking is in line with local commuter mode share data requirements. All of the car parking spaces are to EV standard.

5.149 The Proposed Development will generate servicing and refuse collection movements and the areas set aside for these have been designed based on large vehicle tracking.

5.150 A Travel Plan has been prepared and will be adopted at the Proposed Development to support active and sustainable travel patterns.

### *Use of Natural Resources*

5.151 The Proposed Development will generate vehicle trips which will use natural resources. However, the Site provides EV charging for the car parking spaces to allow more efficient vehicles to be

[1] IEMA officially rebranded to the Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP) on 17 July 2025

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accommodated. Measures are also included in the Proposed Development to support sustainable staff travel – including pedestrian access proposals, cycle parking and a Travel Plan.

5.152 As noted above, the level of traffic generated by the Proposed Development is not significant.

### *Pollution and Nuisance*

5.153 The Proposed Development will generate vehicle trips which are associated with pollution and nuisance. However, the Site provides EV charging for the car parking spaces to allow more efficient vehicles to be accommodated. Measures are also included in the Proposed Development to support sustainable staff travel – including pedestrian access proposals, cycle parking and a Travel Plan.

5.154 As noted above, the level of traffic generated by the Proposed Development is not significant.

### *Risk to Human Health*

5.155 Increases in road traffic can be associated with risk to human health in terms of road safety. However, the Proposed Development includes access arrangements that have been designed in line with required standards and a Road Safety Audit has been undertaken. It is also noted that there are no road safety issues currently on the adjacent highway network and the level of traffic generated by the development is not significant.

### *Potential Effects*

5.156 As demonstrated above, the Proposed Development will be low in terms of increases in traffic and is shown to be well beneath IEMA significance thresholds. The level of hourly change in traffic is also well beneath DfT significance thresholds (30 vehicles per hour).

### *Cumulative Impacts*

5.157 The Transport Statement includes consideration of a committed development located to the east of the Site (cash and carry unit). The planning application has been reviewed and this shows that the committed development will generate a maximum of 6 vehicles in the peak hour. This is a negligible change in traffic on the network and when combined with the Proposed Development peak hour trips, the cumulative impact does not reach DfT significance levels.

### *Proposed Methods of Mitigation*

5.158 In addition to the access arrangements that will be delivered to serve the Site (as outlined above), once operational the Proposed Development will be underpinned by a Travel Plan.

5.159 During the construction phase a Construction Management Plan will be adopted and the measures included in this will be agreed with the Council prior to start on site.

## Conclusions

5.160 The assessment confirms that there will be no environmental effects from the Proposed Development relating to Transport and Movement.

5.161 Notwithstanding the above, the transport effects will be assessed in the Transport Statement prepared for the planning application, the scope of which has been agreed with Manchester City Council. The Transport Statement includes consideration of local transport conditions and infrastructure and shows that the Site offers opportunities for sustainable and active travel access. The development layout has been designed to enable safe access by all modes and a Road Safety Audit has been undertaken. Measures are included in the layout, such cycle parking, EV parking and pedestrian access proposals, and the Site will be underpinned by a Travel Plan. A Construction Management Plan will be adopted at the Site.

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5.162 It is therefore considered that there are not likely to be any significant environmental effects arising from the Proposed Development in respect of Transport and Movement.

# Flood Risk and Drainage

## Introduction

5.163 RWO has been instructed to undertake an assessment of the Proposed Development in relation to anticipated environmental impacts relating to Water Resources. This assessment has been undertaken by Ross Oakley, Managing Director of RWO Associates, with 25 years' experience in engineering consultancy.

5.164 This assessment has been informed by a Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy (report reference RWO/FRADS / RWO/25202). This section considers the potential impacts of the Proposed Development on the water environment including flood risk, drainage and water resources. A Flood Risk Assessment and Sustainable Drainage Statement, inclusive of a foul and surface water drainage strategy, form the primary technical appendices to the chapter, with information drawn from other relevant disciplines where appropriate.

## Location of Development

5.165 The Site is located off Bower Street, Manchester (NGR SD870002) and covers an area of approximately 1.22 hectares. The Site comprises an overgrown parcel of land with areas of hardstanding and is bounded by Bower Street to the north, Ten Acres Lane to the east, commercial and industrial uses to the west, and the Rochdale Canal to the south.

5.166 The Site is brownfield in character and is located within an urban setting. The Rochdale Canal, which lies immediately to the south, is the principal surface water receptor associated with the Proposed Development and is a key consideration in the drainage strategy.

## Are the works taking place within a sensitive area

5.167 The Site is not located within or in close proximity to any designated environmentally sensitive areas in relation to flood risk, drainage or water resources.

5.168 In accordance with Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations, consideration has been given to whether the Proposed Development is located within a sensitive area. The Site lies within Flood Zone 1 and is not within a statutory landscape, ecological, hydrological or groundwater protection designation that would elevate the likelihood of significant effects for this topic.

## Is the proposal likely to have significant effects on the environment

5.169 The Site is underlain by a Secondary Undifferentiated Aquifer overlying a Principal Aquifer. The desk-based assessment classified groundwater vulnerability for the Site as low. The Site lies within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore classed as being at low risk from flooding from rivers or the sea.

5.170 The Flood Risk Assessment identifies low or manageable risk from fluvial, pluvial, groundwater, sewer and artificial sources of flooding. Surface water flooding is limited to localised ponding and can be addressed through site levels, positive drainage and attenuation design. Consequently, likely effects are considered to be low magnitude, localised in extent and capable of mitigation through standard design and construction controls.

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### *Characteristics of the Development*

5.171 The Proposed Development comprises commercial buildings and associated infrastructure. Groundworks are expected to include site clearance, excavation, foundation installation and potential earthworks.

5.172 The development will introduce new impermeable areas, building footprints, access routes and service areas. Without mitigation, such changes could increase runoff rates and volumes; however, the drainage strategy has been developed specifically to avoid any increase in flood risk on or off site.

### *Baseline Water Environment*

5.173 The baseline environment includes surface water represented by the Rochdale Canal, low groundwater risk, and existing sewer infrastructure. Urban runoff may contain sediments and hydrocarbons.

5.174 Environment Agency mapping confirms that the Site is located within Flood Zone 1. Surface water mapping indicates some localised ponding within the Site and flow routes associated with Bower Street, although these do not enter the Site. Existing public sewers are present in the vicinity and foul drainage is proposed to connect to the public sewer network, subject to statutory undertaker approval.

5.175 Infiltration drainage is not considered feasible based on available ground information, and the preferred discharge route for surface water is therefore to the adjacent canal, subject to the necessary approvals and consents.

### *Pollution and Nuisance*

5.176 Construction activities may also create a risk of sediment-laden runoff, accidental spills of fuels and oils, washout from construction materials and temporary blockage of drainage pathways if unmanaged. During operation, potential pollutant sources are expected to be limited primarily to surface water runoff from hardstanding and parking areas, these will be managed and treatment provided via SuDS and proprietary systems such as a Hydro Downstream Defender.

### *Risk to Human Health*

5.177 From a water resources perspective, unmanaged contamination or flooding could indirectly affect human health through unsafe working conditions, poor surface water quality or standing water. Given the low baseline flood risk and the proposed mitigation, these risks are considered low.

## Potential Effects

5.178 Potential effects during construction include temporary increases in sediment runoff, localised water quality impacts, disturbance to existing drainage patterns and small-scale pollution incidents. During operation, potential effects relate principally to runoff from impermeable surfaces and drainage discharge to the receiving canal. The incorporation of attenuation, flow control and treatment measures significantly reduces these risks.

### *Cumulative Impacts*

5.179 No significant cumulative impacts are anticipated.

5.180 Given the scale of the development, the low baseline flood risk, the absence of particularly sensitive water receptors, and the proposed drainage and pollution control measures, cumulative

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effects in combination with other nearby development are not expected to be significant for water resources.

*Proposed Methods of Mitigation*

5.181 Water resources mitigation will also include the implementation of a sustainable drainage strategy with discharge restricted to the greenfield runoff rate, on-site attenuation for critical storm events, permeable paving where appropriate, treatment through a suitable proprietary device, and adoption of construction-phase pollution prevention measures such as bunded storage, spill response procedures and temporary interception drainage.

5.182 Finished floor levels are proposed to be set above surrounding ground levels, and exceedance flows will be managed on site. These measures will ensure that the Proposed Development does not increase flood risk elsewhere and remains resilient over its design life, including allowance for climate change.

### Conclusions

5.183 It is therefore considered that there are not likely to be any significant environmental effects arising from the Proposed Development in respect of water resources and related ground conditions.

5.184 The Site is located within Flood Zone 1, baseline groundwater risk is low, and the proposed drainage strategy provides an appropriate and policy-compliant framework for the management of foul and surface water. With the implementation of embedded design measures and standard construction controls, effects on water resources are assessed as not significant.

## Socio Economic

### Introduction

5.185 Brookdale Consulting has been instructed to undertake an assessment of the Proposed Development in relation to anticipated environmental impacts relating to socio-economics.

5.186 This assessment has been undertaken by Donald Webb, BSc, MBA, Managing Director of Brookdale Consulting. Donald is an economist with over 30 years experience.

### Location of Development

5.187 The Proposed Development comprises a new data centre on Bower Street in Manchester. In socio-economic terms, the Site is located within a major urban area forming part of the Manchester and wider Greater Manchester economy. Manchester is a substantial employment centre with an extensive labour market, established business base and strategic role within the city-region's digital economy.

5.188 The location of the Proposed Development is relevant to this screening appraisal because the city and wider region are well placed to absorb construction and operational employment associated with the development. The urban context also means that the Proposed Development would be located within an area characterised by existing economic activity, established infrastructure and access to labour and services.

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## Are the works taking place within a sensitive area?

5.189 For socio-economic screening purposes, sensitive areas include locations where development could be expected to give rise to adverse effects through substantial displacement of existing businesses or employment uses, significant pressure on housing or community infrastructure, accessibility impacts on local communities, or effects on particularly vulnerable or isolated populations. the Proposed Development is not considered likely to interact with unusually sensitive socio-economic receptors in a way that would give rise to likely significant environmental effects.

## Is the proposal likely to have 'Significant Effects' on the Environment?

5.190 There are likely to be beneficial effects on the working age population and the economy through employment opportunities and spending. There are not likely to be significant effects.

### *The Characteristics of the Development*

5.191 The Proposed Development is a new data centre development. Construction is expected to cost £35m and it is estimated that the construction phase would support 495 jobs and generate £34.5m of Gross Value Added (GVA) over the construction period. Of this, approximately 318 jobs and £22.4m of GVA are estimated to be captured within the Greater Manchester City Region.

5.192 Once operational, the Proposed Development is expected to generate an annual running cost of approximately £15m, supporting 175 jobs and £14.4m of GVA on an annual basis. It is estimated that 156 jobs and £12.8m of GVA would be captured within the City Region.

5.193 These effects are beneficial in socio-economic terms. They indicate that the Proposed Development would make a positive contribution to employment and economic output during both construction and operation. However, the available information does not indicate that these effects would be of such magnitude, concentration or geographic extent as to give rise to likely significant environmental effects in EIA terms.

### *Use of Natural Resources*

5.194 Use of natural resources is not considered a primary socio-economic issue for the purposes of this screening appraisal. Accordingly, no likely significant socio-economic effects are identified under this heading.

### *Pollution and Nuisance*

5.195 During construction there is potential for temporary disturbance, including construction traffic, noise and general activity. However, in socio-economic terms, such effects would only be material where they substantially affected access to businesses or local trade. There is no basis to conclude that any such effects would be likely to amount to significant environmental effects in socio-economic terms.

### *Risk to Human Health*

5.196 No likely significant socio-economic effects on human health are identified. For socio-economic screening purposes, human health effects would typically arise only where development causes substantial and sustained adverse effects on living conditions, access to services, housing availability or community cohesion. No evidence has been provided that the Proposed Development would lead to such effects. The main identified socio-economic effects are beneficial employment and output effects.

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*Potential Effects*

5.197 The construction effects would be temporary and beneficial. Although the number of jobs supported during construction is notable, the effects would be spread across the construction period and within the context of Manchester's labour market. The proportion of benefits estimated to be retained within the City Region indicates a meaningful local economic benefit, but not one that is likely to amount to a significant environmental effect requiring standalone ES assessment. Operational effects would be longer-term and beneficial. The estimated support for 175 jobs and £14.4 million annual GVA, including 156 jobs and £12.8 million annual GVA within the City Region, is positive and material in planning and economic development terms. These effects are not considered likely to be of sufficient scale, or sensitivity to warrant assessment as a standalone ES chapter.

*Cumulative Impacts*

5.198 Manchester is a major regional centre with a large and diverse economy, broad labour market catchment and significant existing business base. There is no evidence that the Proposed Development, either alone or in combination with other known development, would give rise to likely significant cumulative socio-economic effects. Any cumulative beneficial effects associated with continued digital sector investment would align with the strategic economic direction identified in Greater Manchester policy, including the Infrastructure Framework and Local Industrial Strategy.

*Proposed Methods of Mitigation*

5.199 Mitigation of the negative impacts of construction will be included for as part of a construction management plan. Other impacts are likely to be beneficial so no mitigation will be required.

### Conclusions

5.200 The Site is currently degraded and not in active use. It is in need of regeneration. The Proposed Development is an opportunity to contribute to local regeneration, employment, plus wider beneficial effects to the economy of Greater Manchester in supporting growth in Artificial Intelligence and the wider digital sector.

5.201 During the construction phase a Construction Management Plan will ensure that any negative effects are mitigated. There will be beneficial effects on the local workforce during construction and operation including a commitment to workers from within the area. There will be beneficial effects on the economy through increased spending. Any effects are not likely to be significant in respect of socio-economics.

## Townscape and Visual

### Introduction

5.202 CW Studio Ltd has been instructed to undertake an assessment of the Proposed Development in relation to anticipated environmental impacts relating to Townscape and Visual. This assessment has been undertaken by Chantelle Schulz CMLI BSc (Hons) MLA.

5.203 The following guidance is relevant to and will be used to inform the assessment of Townscape and Visual matters:

- Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013). Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition.

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- Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note LITGN-2024-01 Published August 2024
- Landscape Institute (2021). Technical Guidance Note 02/21, Assessing landscape value outside national designations.
- Landscape Institute (2019). Technical Guidance Note 06/19, Visual Representation of Development Proposals.
- Natural England (2014). An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment. Second Edition.

5.204 Chantelle Schulz is a Chartered Landscape Architect (CMLI BSc (Hons) MLA) with 17 years' experience in landscape and visual assessment across a broad range of development sectors. She has significant experience preparing LVIAs for EIA, including mixed-use, residential, infrastructure and renewable energy projects.

## Location of Development

### *Settlement and Land Use*

5.205 The Site is located off Bower Street, Manchester, within an established urban environment characterised by light-industrial and commercial land uses. The surrounding townscape comprises a mixture of low-rise industrial units, warehouse-style buildings, service yards, trade premises and areas of hardstanding. The street pattern is relatively tight and enclosed, defined by historic industrial plots associated with the wider former manufacturing and canal-side employment area.

5.206 To the north, the Site is in proximity to Oldham Road (A62), which functions as a primary arterial route between Manchester City Centre and the northeastern suburbs. This corridor is characterised by large-format commercial buildings, vehicle service uses and associated forecourts. To the south, the Ashton Canal forms a notable linear townscape and landscape feature, although its influence is locally contained by boundary walls, vegetation and adjacent industrial premises.

5.207 Residential neighbourhoods lie to the north and east, comprising predominantly late-19th and 20th-century terraced and semi-detached housing of a finer grain, smaller plot structure, and lower building scale than the surrounding industrial environment.

### *Access and Rights of Way*

5.208 There are no public rights of way crossing the Site itself. However, footpaths along the adjacent road infrastructure offer pedestrian access throughout the surrounding area.

5.209 National Cycle route 66 is located adjacent the southern boundary of the Site, aligned with Rochdale Canal. There is a further National Cycle route (60), located approximately 900m southwest of the Site.

### *Topography and Hydrology*

5.210 The Site occupies relatively level land adjacent to Rochdale Canal, with only minor variations in topography across its footprint. The surrounding landscape is gently undulating, with a subtle fall in landform towards the watercourses to the south (River Medlock) and the west (River Irk).

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## Are the works taking place within a sensitive area?

### *Designations*

5.211 The Site does not lie within any statutory national or local landscape designations. No qualitative landscape designations are present within the 2km Study Area.

5.212 Whilst not specifically related to landscape and visual matters, other designations can indicate value of a landscape. The LI's Technical Guidance Note 02/21 builds on GLVIA3 and identifies a range of factors that can assist in the identification of valued aspects of the landscape such as landscape condition, perceptual (scenic quality), distinctiveness (rarity and representativeness), natural heritage (landscape features with ecological, geomorphological, or physiological interest), cultural heritage (archaeological, historical or cultural interest), associations (artists, writers, poets or historical events and traditions), and recreational value (publicly accessible via Public Rights of Way (PRoW) or Open Access Land).

## Is the proposal likely to have 'Significant Effects' on the Environment?

### *The Characteristics of the Development*

### *Published Landscape/Townscape Character*

5.213 The following published character descriptions are of relevance:

- National Character Areas:
    - National Character Area (NCA) Profile 55: Manchester Conurbation
- Greater Manchester Landscape Character Assessment:
- The Site is not located within land assessed as part of the Greater Manchester Landscape Character Assessment.

### *Local Townscape Character*

5.214 The Site is not located within any published local or district level Townscape Assessment, however there are not anticipated to be any significant impacts on Local Landscape Character.

### *Visual Context*

5.215 An initial due diligence site visit has been undertaken. This identified the following visibility within a 1km initial study area:

- Localised sections of the Ashton Canal towpath where screening is limited.
- Bower Street, from which the Application Site is directly visible at close range.
- Select points along Oldham Road (A62), although views are largely filtered by intervening commercial premises.
- Ten Acres Lane and several adjacent industrial streets, where views are oblique, intermittent, and constrained by the urban form.

5.216 A preliminary suite of visual receptors likely to experience changes in visual amenity as a result of the Proposed Development have been identified, including:

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- Towpath users and pedestrians along the Ashton Canal;
- Local residents on streets north and south of Oldham Road (filtered views only);
- Workers and visitors within surrounding commercial/industrial sites;
- Motorists, cyclists and pedestrians travelling along Bower Street, Oldham Road and Ten Acres Lane.

5.217 No strategic, panoramic or locally designated views are located within the study area. Long-distance views are highly restricted by the continuous pattern of low-rise industrial development.

***Use of Natural Resources***

5.218 During construction, the principal resource use will include:

- Land and soils: Localised excavation and groundworks will be required for foundations and service installation. Any soils present are anticipated to be of low agricultural and ecological value and will be managed in accordance with best practice, with opportunities for reuse on-site where suitable.
- Construction materials: The development will require typical building materials (e.g. concrete, steel, aggregates), the sourcing of which will be managed through standard procurement practices, with increasing emphasis on sustainable sourcing and material efficiency.
- Water resources: Water will be required during construction for activities such as dust suppression and general site operations. During operation, water demand will be associated with the end use of the development and will be supplied via the existing mains network.
- Energy resources: Energy will be consumed during both construction and operation; however, the Proposed Development is expected to incorporate energy-efficient design measures in line with current Building Regulations.

5.219 In terms of biodiversity, opportunities may exist as part of the development to introduce enhancement measures, such as landscaping or planting, which could result in a minor net gain in biodiversity value.

5.220 Overall, the use of natural resources is considered to be typical of urban redevelopment and will be managed through standard design, construction and operational controls. No significant Townscape and Visual effects are anticipated in this regard.

***Pollution and Nuisance***

5.221 Potential sources of pollution and nuisance include:

- Noise and vibration associated with construction activities, plant and vehicle movements;
- Dust and air quality effects arising from demolition (if required), earthworks and construction traffic;
- Surface water runoff and pollution risk from construction activities, including accidental spills of fuels or oils;
- Construction traffic, which may give rise to temporary increases in local traffic movements and associated disturbance

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5.222 Given the Site's location within an established commercial/industrial area, the surrounding environment is already influenced by similar activities. As such, the Proposed Development is not expected to introduce atypical or significant sources of pollution or nuisance.

5.223 Overall, with the implementation of standard mitigation measures and compliance with relevant regulations, no significant Townscape and Visual adverse effects relating to pollution or nuisance are anticipated.

#### *Risk to Human Health*

5.224 Potential risks to human health during construction may include:

- Exposure to dust and airborne particulates;
- Noise and vibration effects on nearby receptors;
- Health and safety risks to construction workers and the general public

5.225 These risks will be managed through adherence to construction health and safety legislation, including the implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and compliance with CDM Regulations. Standard industry controls (e.g. dust suppression, PPE, site hoarding, traffic management) will ensure that risks are appropriately controlled and minimised. No significant Townscape and Visual adverse effects relating to pollution or nuisance are anticipated.

## Potential Effects

#### *Construction Phase Effects*

5.226 The construction phase will temporarily introduce construction hoardings, plant, cranes, scaffolding, site cabins and construction traffic into and around the Application Site. These elements will be most visible from Bower Street and nearby canal-side locations, reducing rapidly with distance due to the enclosure provided by surrounding industrial buildings.

5.227 Construction effects on townscape and visual receptors are expected to be short-term, reversible and of low to medium magnitude. Mitigation measures—such as high-quality hoarding, controlled night-time lighting, and construction management procedures secured by a CEMP—would further minimise effects.

5.228 No significant townscape or visual effects are anticipated during the construction phase.

#### *Operational Phase Effects*

5.229 The Proposed Development will introduce new built form and associated hard and soft landscaping to the Site, resulting in a direct change to the character of the townscape in which the Site is located. The development form, massing and land use are expected to be compatible with the prevailing industrial/commercial character of the area.

5.230 Indirect townscape effects may occur in adjacent areas including the residential areas and canal corridor; however:

- The Proposed Development will be viewed within the context of similar-scale industrial and commercial premises;
- The surrounding townscape is robust, utilitarian and of relatively low sensitivity;

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- The proposed retention and enhancement of the existing mature vegetation to the northern, eastern and southern boundaries of the Site will serve to screen and soften views of the Proposed Development;

- Visual receptors are limited and often transient (e.g., canal users, pedestrians, road users);

- Opportunities exist to improve the townscape quality through enhanced boundary treatments, improved materials and structured landscaping, reducing the dominance of hardstanding.

5.231 Visibility of the development will be highly constrained by the existing built form and the proposed retention of the existing mature vegetation along the Site boundaries. Where visible, it will not appear incongruous or result in notable changes to the character or composition of views.

5.232 Operational townscape and visual effects are predicted to not be significant.

#### *Cumulative Impacts*

5.233 Given the limited visual envelope of the Site, as identified through the preliminary Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), and the enclosed nature of the surrounding townscape, the potential for cumulative visibility with other developments is considered to be very limited. Intervening built form and the fragmented pattern of development further reduce the likelihood of combined or sequential views.

5.234 In addition:

- The baseline townscape is of low to medium sensitivity, reflecting its utilitarian industrial character;

- Visual receptors are generally localised and transient, including road users, canal towpath users, and workers within the area;

- The Proposed Development is expected to be compatible in scale, form, and land use with the surrounding built environment.

*5.235* On this basis, any cumulative effects—whether during the construction phase (e.g. overlapping construction activities) or operational phase (e.g. combined visibility of built form) are predicted to not be significant.

## Proposed Methods of Mitigation

#### *Primary Mitigation - Demolition and Construction*

- Adherence to a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

- Existing vegetation retention: The retention of existing trees and hedgerows where possible, in order to retain key landscape features and maintain boundary screening. This includes the majority of the boundary vegetation.

- Protection of the retained landscape features: Protective fencing / hoarding will be installed around retained tree features, in accordance with industry standard guidance BS5837:2012 (note: updates to BS5837 are forthcoming and currently at draft stage).

- Boundary treatments: The use of visual screenings such as hoardings for more sensitive visual receptors in close proximity to the Site, including occupiers of dwellings that have the greatest potential to be affected by the Proposed Development.

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*Operation*

- Existing vegetation retention: The retention of existing trees and hedgerows as defined by the Parameters Plan.
- Protection of retained vegetation.
- Enhancement of retained vegetation: Strengthening of retained trees and hedgerow, to secure the longevity of existing habitats, increase GI connectivity and support BNG on site.
- Extents of Built Development: Built development is restricted to enable the retention of existing boundary vegetation.
- New Planting: The use of native species where appropriate in order to maximise the opportunities to contribute to local landscape character, reinstate green infrastructure and wildlife habitat opportunities.

## Conclusions

5.236 It is therefore considered that there are not likely to be any significant environmental effects arising from the Proposed Development in respect of Townscape and Visual matters.

5.237 **Chapter 6** will now provide a summary of this EIA Screening Report.

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# 6. Summary

6.1 The Proposed Development involves the construction of a data centre on a site at Bower Street, located in Miles Platting and Newton Heath Ward. The Site is in an urban location and is not considered to be a sensitive area for the purposes of the EIA Regs.

6.2 The Proposed Development is not of a type listed in Schedule 1, however the Proposed Development could be considered to be Schedule 2 development under Category 10 "Infrastructure Projects", of EIA Regulations. Sub-section (b) relates to "Urban Development Projects".

6.3 The Proposed Development is not considered to be of more than local significance, is not located in an environmentally sensitive area and is considered to be comparable to other types of development in the Regional Centre.

6.4 A suite of technical consultants have assessed the proposed scheme development with regards to the characteristics of the Proposed Development; the location of the Proposed Development; and the types and characteristics of the potential impacts of the Proposed Development, and have concluded that there are no likely significant environmental effects arising from the scheme that would warrant an EIA.

6.5 Consequently, it is not considered that an EIA will be required in this instance, however we would be grateful if you could provide a Screening Opinion for the Proposed Development.

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# List of Appendices

Appendix 1: Red Line Plan – Site Location Plan

Appendix 2: Summary of Relevant Planning Policies

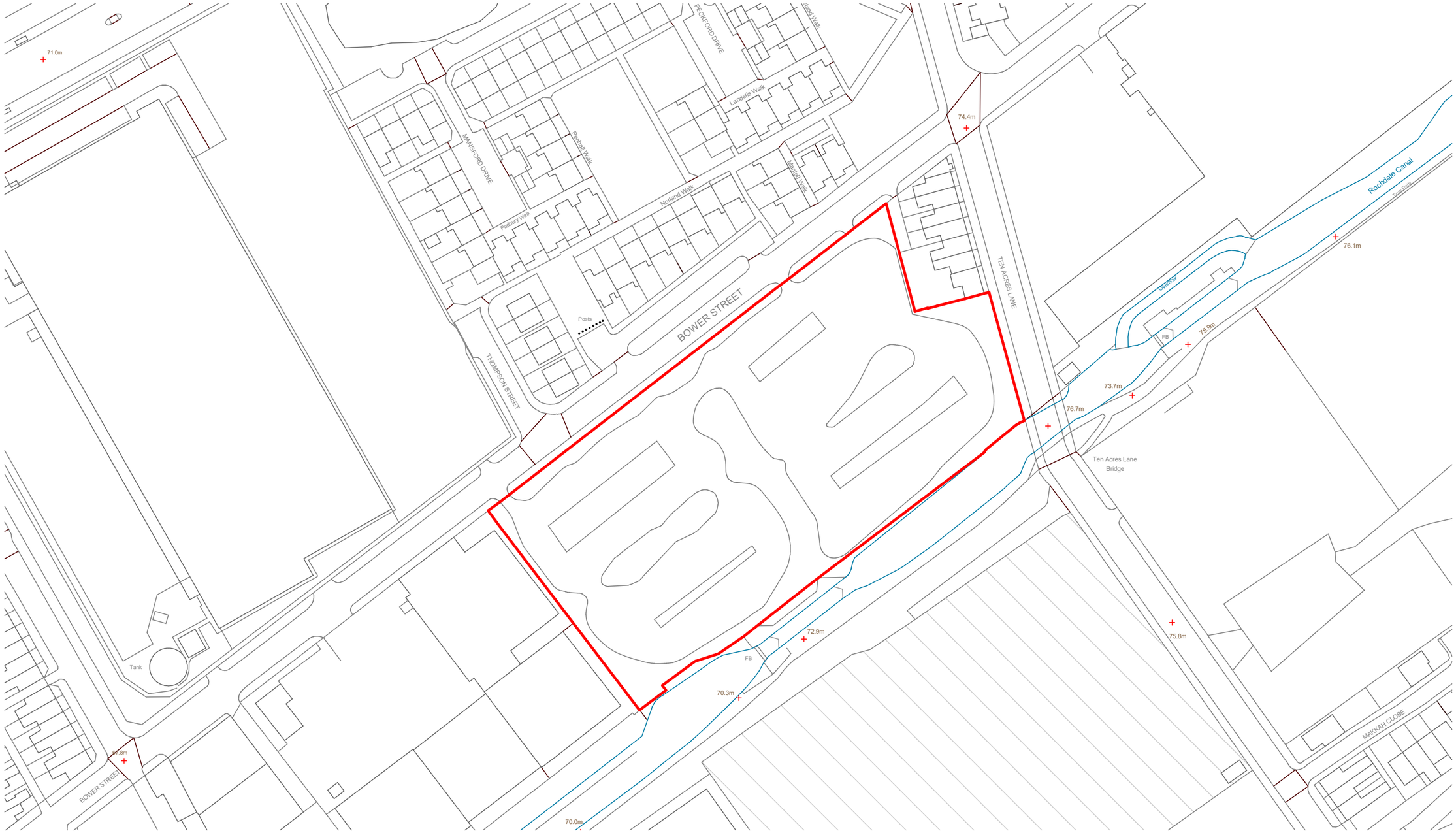
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# Appendix 1 Red Line Plan

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# Location Plan

1 : 1250

0 10m 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 110 120 130m
1:1250

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| Revision: | Description: | Date: |
|---|---|---|
| P2 | Planning Issue | 17.04.26 |
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Latos Manchester East
Bower Street
Manchester

CAL Project No: 25-015

Client: Latos

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# Appendix 2 Summary of Relevant Planning Policies

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## Relevant Policies from the Manchester Core Strategy

| Policy | Summary |
|---|---|
| Spatial Objective 1: Spatial Principles | Promotes the sustainable development of the City, which can contribute to halting climate change. |
| Spatial Objective 2: Economy | Seeks to support a significant further improvement of the City's economic performance and spread the benefits of this growth across the City, to reduce economic, environmental and social disparities, and to help create inclusive sustainable communities. |
| Spatial Objective 6: Environment | Seeks to protect and enhance both the natural and built environment of the City and ensure the sustainable use of natural resources. |
| Policy SP1: Spatial Principles | States that the Regional Centre will be the focus for economic and commercial development, retail, leisure and cultural activity, alongside high-quality city living. Notes that the majority of new residential development in these neighbourhoods will be in the Inner Areas, defined by the North Manchester, East Manchester and Central Manchester Regeneration Areas. |
| Policy EC1: Employment and Economic Growth in Manchester | A minimum of 200 ha of employment land will be developed between 2010 and 2027 for offices (B1a), research and development (B1b), light industrial (B1c), general industry (B2) and distribution and warehousing (B8).<br>Key locations for major employment growth showing indicative distribution figures will be:<br>Regional Centre:<br>• Manchester City Centre 33ha<br>• City Centre Fringe (including Strangeways, Collyhurst, Ancoats, New Islington<br>• and Manchester Science Park) 25ha<br>• Central Park and Eastlands 65ha<br>Development proposals should have regard to:<br>Climate change resilience demonstrating how CO2 emissions will be minimised with an aim of zero carbon emissions, through energy efficiency, renewable energy and contributing to low and zero carbon decentralised energy infrastructure;<br>Ensuring design makes the best possible use of a site or building in terms of efficient use of space, enhancing the sense of place of the wider area and minimising detrimental impacts on adjacent uses, considers the needs of users/employees of a site/building |
| Policy EC2: Existing Employment Space | This policy states that the Council will seek to retain and enhance existing employment space and sites. Alternative uses will only be supported on sites allocated accordingly, or if criteria outlined in the policy can be met. |
| Policy EC3: The Regional Centre | States that within the Regional Centre, development for employment generating uses including offices and other commercial development will be encouraged. It goes on to state that housing will also be an appropriate use within the Regional Centre and, subject to site and location details, this will generally be a location where higher density residential development is appropriate. |
| Policy EC6: Central Park Strategic Employment Location | Central Park is a large scale employment location in East Manchester suitable for 60ha of employment uses. A range of employment types will be encouraged across the whole of the Central Park area including B1 (b) and (c), B2, B8 and sui generis employment uses, with ancillary commercial services supporting the creation of a sustainable employment destination.<br>The key sectors will be within creative and media and manufacturing. B1 (a) offices will also be acceptable on the part of the Site located to the north of Oldham Road alongside other employment uses. Development in this area should contribute to the creation of an attractive environment for |

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| Policy | Summary |
|---|---|
| | offices.<br>It offers the potential for a range of accommodation types from low density to high density floor-plates and small to large scale business accommodation. It can accommodate training and incubator facilities, spin-off businesses associated with the higher education sector and offers opportunities in digital and creative media businesses.<br>Proposals will be expected to show how development will:<br>• ensure the Site is accessible to the East/North Manchester communities by a choice of sustainable and public transport provision;<br>• consider wider design and layout objectives, taking advantage of important frontages such as Alan Turing Way and Oldham Road;<br>• take advantage of the existing infrastructure on site and proposed improvements such as Metrolink and digital infrastructure;<br>• incorporate the Rochdale Canal in creating a sense of place;<br>• contribute to decentralised low and zero carbon energy infrastructure in the Regional Centre as set out in the energy policies in the Core Strategy. |
| Policy DM1: Development Management | All development should have regard to the following specific issues for which more detailed guidance may be given within a supplementary planning document:-<br>• Appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail.<br>• 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.<br>• 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.<br>• Accessibility: buildings and neighbourhoods fully accessible to disabled people, access to new development by sustainable transport modes.<br>• Community safety and crime prevention.<br>• Design for health.<br>• Adequacy of internal accommodation and external amenity space.<br>• Refuse storage and collection.<br>• Vehicular access and car parking.<br>• Effects relating to biodiversity, landscape, archaeological or built heritage.<br>• Green Infrastructure including open space, both public and private.<br>• The use of alternatives to peat-based products in landscaping/gardens within<br>• development schemes.<br>• Flood risk and drainage.<br>• Existing or proposed hazardous installations. |
| Policy T1: Sustainable Transport | Explains that to deliver a sustainable, high quality, integrated transport system to encourage modal shift away from car travel to public transport, cycling and walking, to support the needs of residents and businesses and to prepare for |

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| Policy | Summary |
|---|---|
| | carbon free modes of transport, the Council will support proposals that:<br>• Promote regeneration and economic viability by relieving traffic congestion and improving access to jobs and services, particularly for those in need and for those without a car.<br>• Improve access to transport services and facilities in order to enable disabled people and people with mobility impairments to participate fully in public life.<br>• Facilitate modes of transport that reduce carbon emissions e.g. by incorporating charging points for electric vehicles subject to appropriate design and location.<br>Would reduce the negative impact of road traffic e.g. congestion, air pollution and road accident casualties. |
| Policy EN1: Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas | States that all development in Manchester will be expected to follow the seven principles of urban design and have regard to the strategic character area in which the development is located. The Site is located within the City Centre Character Area, where developers will be expected to consider the City's heritage and continue the rich pattern of activity in the core area. While there will be opportunities to create landmark buildings, development should also contribute positively to the experience of all at street level. Wherever possible the opportunity should be realised to enhance existing and provide new areas of meaningful open space, and the maintenance and improvement of the City's permeability should be considered in all proposals. |
| Policy EN4: Reducing CO2 Emissions by Enabling Low and Zero Carbon Development | States that the Council will seek to reduce fuel poverty and decouple growth in the economy, growth in CO2 emissions, and rising fossil fuel prices. Specifically, wherever possible, new development must be located and designed in a manner that allows advantage to be taken of opportunities for low and zero carbon energy supplies. |
| Policy EN5: Strategic Areas for Low and Zero Carbon Decentralised Energy Infrastructure | This Policy identifies the Regional Centre as a Strategic Area, which has a major role to play in achieving an increase in the level of decentralised, low and zero carbon energy supplies available. As such, new development will be expected to take place in the context of more detailed proposals for decentralised low and zero carbon energy infrastructure in the form of energy proposals plans. |
| Policy EN6: Target Framework for CO2 reductions from low or zero carbon energy supplies | States that applications for all development over 1,000 sq m will be expected as a minimum to meet the targets set out in this Policy, unless this can be shown to be not viable. This should be demonstrated through an energy statement. This energy statement will be expected to set out the projected regulated energy demand and associated CO2 emissions for all phases of the development. |
| Policy EN8: Adaptation to Climate Change | States that all development will be expected to be adaptable to climate change in terms of design, layout, siting and function of buildings and external spaces. |
| Policy EN9: Green Infrastructure | Encourages 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. |
| Policy EN14: Flood Risk | States that development should be directed away from sites at the greatest risk of flooding, and towards sites with little or no risk of flooding. Also states that all new development should minimise surface water run-off, including through Sustainable Drainage Systems ('SUDS') and the appropriate use of lands Infrastructure. |
| Policy EN15: Biodiversity and | States that the Council will seek to maintain or enhance sites of biodiversity and geological value throughout the city. Developers will be expected to identify and |

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| Policy | Summary |
|---|---|
| Geological Conservation | implement reasonable opportunities to enhance, restore or create new biodiversity, either on-site or adjacent to the Site, contributing to the linkages between valuable or potentially valuable habitat areas. |
| Policy EN16: Air Quality | States that the Council will seek to improve the air quality within Manchester, and particularly within Air Quality Management Areas, located along Manchester's principal traffic routes and Manchester Airport. Developers will be expected to take measures to minimise and mitigate the local impact of emissions created by the use of the development itself. When assessing the appropriateness of locations for new development the Council will consider the impacts on air quality, alongside other plan objectives. This includes cumulative impacts, particularly in Air Quality Management Areas. |
| Policy EN17: Water Quality | States that development should avoid any adverse impacts on water quality and minimise surface water run-off from development and associated roads, and minimise groundwater contamination, and to avoid pollutants reaching watercourses. |
| Policy EN18: Contaminated Land and Ground Stability | This Policy promotes the remediation of contaminated land and required any proposal for development of contaminated land to be accompanied by a health risk assessment. |
| Policy EN19: Waste | States that the Council will require all developers to demonstrate the proposals consistency with the principles of the waste hierarchy. All developers will be required to submit a waste management plan to demonstrate how both construction and demolition waste will be minimised and recycled wherever possible and how the sustainable waste management needs of the end user will be met. |
| Policy PA1: Developer Contributions | Where needs arise as a result of the development, the Council will seek to secure planning obligations in line with Circular 5/2005, Community Infrastructure Levy regulations or successor regulations/ guidance. The nature and scale of any planning obligations sought will be related to the form of development and its potential impact upon the surrounding area. |

## Relevant Saved Policies of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan

| Policy | Summary |
|---|---|
| **DC26: Development and Noise** | States that the Council will 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:<br>a. The effect of new development proposals which are likely to be generators of noise; and<br>b. The implications of new development being exposed to existing noise sources which are effectively outside planning control.<br>New noise-sensitive developments such as housing 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. |

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## Relevant Policies of Places for Everyone

| Policy | Title |
|---|---|
| JP-S1 - Sustainable Development | The Policy seeks to help tackle climate change, development should aim to maximise its economic, social and environmental benefits simultaneously, minimise its adverse impacts, utilise sustainable construction techniques and actively seek opportunities to secure net gains across each of the different objectives.<br><br>In bringing forward previously developed sites for development, particular attention will be paid to tackling land contamination and stability issues, ensuring that appropriate mitigation and remediation is implemented to enable sites to be brought back into use effectively. |
| JP-S2 - Carbon and Energy | Development proposals should set out how this has been achieved in an energy statement in accordance with the energy hierarchy, which in order of importance seeks to:<br>i. Minimise energy demand;<br>ii. Maximise energy efficiency;<br>iii. Use renewable energy;<br>iv. Use low carbon energy; and<br>v. Utilise other energy sources.<br>From 2025 any residual carbon emissions that cannot be fully mitigated on-site should be offset, in agreement with the relevant local planning authority through a financial contribution to a carbon offset fund.<br>a. As an interim measure, development should be consistent with the 2022 Part L Building Regulations unless superseded by changes to building regulations and/or national or local planning policies.<br>b. Incorporate adequate electric vehicle charging points, in line with Part S of the Building Regulations, unless superseded by relevant Local Plan policies, to future proof for the likely long-term demand, taking account of the potential maximum energy demand for the Site;<br>c. Where practicable, prioritise connection to a renewable energy/heating/cooling network in the first instance or a low carbon energy/heating/cooling network that is adaptable to non-fossil fuels at a later date;<br>d. In residential developments, achieve energy demand reductions in terms of space heat demand; hot water energy demand and the delivery of on-site renewable energy generation, |
| JP-S4 - Flood Risk and the Water Environment | An integrated catchment-based approach will be taken to protect the quantity and quality of water bodies with reference to the North West River Basin Management Plan and managing flood risk, by:<br>1. Returning rivers to a more natural state, where practicable;<br>2. Working with natural processes and adopting a natural flood management approach to slow the speed of water drainage and intercept water pollutants;<br>3. Locating and designing development so as to minimise the impacts of current and future flood risk, including retrofitting or relocating existing developments, infrastructure and places to increase resilience to flooding;<br>4. Expecting developments to manage |
| JP-S5 - Clean Air | A comprehensive range of measures will be taken to support improvements in air quality, focusing particularly on locations where |

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| Policy | Title |
|---|---|
| | people live, where children learn and play, where there are impacts on the green infrastructure network and where air quality targets are not being met. |
| JP-J1 – Supporting Long Term Economic Growth | A thriving, inclusive, and productive economy will be promoted across all boroughs by:<br>Maintaining strong economic diversity;<br>Supporting high-value clusters in sectors including advanced manufacturing, digital and cyber, health innovation, low-carbon industries, business and professional services, and logistics;<br>Maximising the potential of key sub-regional assets.<br>Economic growth will be supported by:<br>• Leveraging research assets, graduate talent, and productive businesses;<br>• Capitalising on existing and proposed transport infrastructure, including Manchester Airport, the Ship Canal, public transport, motorways, and Northern Powerhouse Rail;<br>• Harnessing opportunities from the transition to a low-carbon economy;<br>• Providing high-quality, sustainable living environments to attract and retain skilled workers;<br>• Promoting local employment through labour and training agreements with developers and employers;<br>• Maximising key growth locations (JP-Strat1–12) to ensure inclusive, well-connected employment opportunities across the sub-region. |
| JP-J2 – Employment Sites and Premises | A varied supply of employment sites and premises—new and existing—will be provided across the Plan area to support businesses of all sizes, from start-ups to major investors, and to reduce inequalities. Important employment areas will be protected, enhanced, and made more accessible to maintain a strong, competitive, and diverse economic base, including both local and key growth locations. |
| JP-S6 - Resource Efficiency | The achievement of a circular economy and a zero-waste economy will play a key role in meeting Greater Manchester's ambition of becoming a leading green city region by 2038. The following measures will help achieve this:<br>1. Development and implementation of the Zero Waste Strategy for Greater Manchester which promotes overall reduction in the level of waste produced and supports resource efficiency within the Plan area in order to gain the maximum value from the things we produce;<br>2. Recognition of the role of existing infrastructure in managing our waste and protecting such facilities to ensure adequate waste management capacity is maintained; and<br>3. Using sustainable design and construction techniques to reduce carbon emissions, adapt and future proof to the impact of climate change, reduce and recycle waste and minimise water use. |
| JP-G6 – Urban Green Space | Development should be designed to support the positive use of nearby green spaces, such as by offering a high-quality setting, providing |

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| Policy | Title |
|---|---|
| | natural surveillance, and facilitating easy access by walking and cycling. |
| JP-G8 - A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity | Development will be expected to:<br>a. Follow the mitigation hierarchy of:<br>i. Avoiding significant harm to biodiversity, particularly where it is irreplaceable, through consideration of alternative sites with less harmful impacts, then<br>ii. Adequately mitigating any harm to biodiversity, then<br>iii. Adequately compensating for any remaining harm to biodiversity<br>b. Avoid fragmenting or severing connectivity between habitats;<br>c. Achieve a measurable net gain in biodiversity of no less than 10%<br>d. Make appropriate provision for long-term management of habitats and geological features connected to the development;<br>e. Where appropriate, development should: mitigate air pollution impacts on Manchester Mosses SAC; mitigate urban edge, functionally linked land and recreation disturbance impacts on the South Pennine Moors SAC/SPAs; and assess and potentially mitigate boat movement, water pollution, and light spillage and shading impacts on the Rochdale Canal SAC; and<br>f. Development proposals should be informed by the findings and recommendations of the appropriate biodiversity/ecological assessment(s) in the PfE evidence base and/or any updated or appropriate biodiversity/ecological assessments submitted as part of the planning application process. |
| JP-P1 - Sustainable Places | This Policy outlines the aim to become one of the most liveable city regions in the world, consisting of a series of beautiful, healthy and varied places, each having the following key attributes that all development, wherever appropriate, should be consistent with:<br>1. Distinctive, with a clear identity that:<br>A. Conserves and enhances the natural environment, landscape features, historic environment and local history and culture;<br>B. Enables a clear understanding of how the place has developed; and<br>C. Respects and acknowledges the character and identity of the locality in terms of design, siting, size, scale and materials used<br>2. Visually stimulating, creating interesting and imaginative environments which raise the human spirit through the use of green space, public art and quality design<br>3. Socially inclusive:<br>A. Responding to the needs of all parts of society;<br>Enabling everyone to participate equally and independently;<br>C. Providing opportunities for social contact and support; and<br>D. Promoting a sense of community<br>4. Resilient, capable of dealing with major environmental events<br>5. Adaptable, able to respond easily to varied and changing needs and technologies<br>6. Durable, being built to last and using robust materials that reflect local character, weather well and are easily maintained<br>7. Resource-efficient with:<br>A. A low carbon footprint;<br>B. Efficient use of land; |

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| Policy | Title |
|---|---|
| | C. Minimised use of new materials;<br>D. High levels of recycling<br>8. Safe, including by designing out crime and terrorism, reducing opportunities for anti-social behaviour and by ensuring that developments make appropriate provision for response and evacuation in the case of an emergency or disaster.<br>9. Supported by critical infrastructure, such as energy, water and drainage and green spaces<br>10. Functional and convenient, enabling people and uses to act efficiently with minimal effort, and responding to needs relating to servicing, recycling facilities, refuse collection and storage<br>11. Incorporating inclusive design within all spaces with support for tackling inequality and poverty to form part of creating sustainable places<br>12. Legible, being easy to understand and navigate, with the protection and enhancement of key views and new development well-integrated into the place<br>Easy to move around for those of all mobility levels, particularly by walking and cycling, with enjoyable routes free from obstacles and disorienting stimuli, and with places to rest<br>14. Well-connected to other places, particularly by public transport and digital infrastructure enabling everyone to take advantage of the employment, cultural and leisure opportunities across Greater Manchester and beyond<br>15. Comfortable and inviting, with indoor and outdoor environments:<br>A. Offering a high level of amenity that minimises exposure to pollution; and<br>B. Addressing microclimate issues such as sunlight, indoor air quality, overheating, shade, wind and shelter<br>16. Incorporating high quality and well managed green infrastructure and quality public realm, with:<br>A. Opportunities for recreation and outdoor play for children, and interaction between the generations;<br>B. Public and private spaces clearly distinguished;<br>C. Development clearly defining, and promoting activity within, public spaces;<br>D. High quality landscaping with schemes<br>17. Well-served by local shops, services and amenities, including education and health facilities |
| JP-P6 - Health | To help tackle health inequality new development will be required, as far as practicable, to:<br>A. Maximise its positive contribution to health and wellbeing, whilst avoiding any potential negative impacts of new development;<br>B. Support healthy lifestyles, including through the use of active design principles making physical activity an easy, practical and attractive choice; and<br>C. Be supported by a Health Impact Assessment for all developments which require to be screened for an Environmental Impact Assessment, and other proposals which, due to their location, nature or proximity to sensitive receptors, are likely to have a notable impact on health and wellbeing. |

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| Policy | Title |
|---|---|
| JP-C1 - An Integrated Network | This Policy supports delivering a pattern of development that minimises both the need to travel and the distance travelled by unsustainable modes to jobs, housing and other key services, including healthcare, education, retail, recreation and leisure facilities, green space and green infrastructure.<br><br>Development and transport investment should ensure that they fully consider the needs of all people and those modes which make most efficient and sustainable use of limited road space, by following the hierarchy set out below (highest priority first):<br>a. Pedestrians (and people using mobility aids);<br>b. Cyclists, powered two-wheelers, and public transport users;<br>c. People doing business or providing services (such as taxis/private hire, deliveries or waste collection)<br>d. People in personal motorised vehicles |
| JP-C2 - Digital Connectivity | The Policy requires all new development to have full fibre to premises connections, unless technically infeasible and/or unviable, and to incorporate multiple-ducting compliant with telecoms standards, to facilitate future-proof gigabit-capable network connections. It is expected that internet connections will be operational and immediately accessible to network providers when occupiers move into new properties. |
| JP-C5 - Streets for all | Streets will be designed and managed to make a significant positive contribution to the quality of place and support high levels of walking, cycling and public transport. Targeted improvements to the highway network will be supported through studies and scheme development, where they complement the aim of securing a significant increase in the proportion of trips made by walking, cycling and public transport. |
| JP-C6 - Walking and Cycling | In order to help deliver a higher proportion of journeys made by walking and cycling, we will support a range of measures, including:<br>1. Creating safe, attractive and integrated walking and cycling infrastructure, connecting every neighbourhood and community with reference to national and locally adopted design guidance;<br>2. Ensuring routes are direct, easily navigable and integrated with the street and public transport network;<br>3. Creating active neighbourhoods and street networks which are more permeable to walking and cycling than to the private car, creating an incentive to walk and cycle;<br>4. Creating, where needed, dedicated separate space for people walking and cycling, with pedestrians and cyclists given priority at junctions and crossings;<br>5. Increasing the capacity and quality of walking and cycling infrastructure in locations where significant growth in the number of short journeys is anticipated, and where quality of place improvements are proposed;<br>6. Utilising and enhancing green infrastructure, including canals, parks and recreation grounds, to create opportunities for walking and cycling. |
| JP-C8 - Transport Requirements of New Development | New development is required to be located and designed to enable and encourage walking, cycling and public transport use, to reduce the negative effects of car dependency, and help deliver high quality, attractive, liveable and sustainable environments. |

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| Policy | Title |
|---|---|
| JP-D2 - Developer Contributions | The Policy requires developers to provide, or contribute towards, the provision of mitigation measures to make the development acceptable in planning terms. These will be secured through the most appropriate mechanism, including, but not limited to, planning conditions, Section 106 planning obligations, agreements made under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1990 (as amended), or CIL (or any subsequently adopted planning gain regime).<br>If an applicant wishes to make a case that a development is not viable, they should provide clear evidence at the planning application stage, identifying the specific issues and/or changes in circumstance which would create barriers to delivery in a transparent manner and reflecting national guidance.<br>Where it is accepted that viability should be considered as part of the determination of an application, the Local Planning Authority should determine the weight to be given to a viability assessment alongside other material considerations. |

## Key Policies of the Guide to Development SPD

| Key Principle | Summary |
|---|---|
| **Areas of change should promote a sense of place** | In areas of significant change or regeneration, the future role of the area will determine the character and design of both new development and open spaces. It will be important to ensure that the development of new buildings relates well to, and helps to enhance, areas that are likely to be retained and contributes to the creation of a positive identity |
| **New developments should maximise access for disabled people** | The Council will expect developers to comply with the standards detailed in its "Design for Access 2" Manual, and to produce an access statement, with identifies their philosophy and approach to inclusive design. |
| **Quality of the Public Realm** | Successful open spaces play a vital role within the City. Successful open spaces encourage use and ownership by local people, stimulating neighbourliness and pride, and contributing to people's sense of wellbeing. |
| **Construction Management** | Appropriate measures should be put in place to limit environmental impacts during the construction of new developments, specifically to manage and control the waste generated, the amount of water and energy used, and any potential releases to water, land and air. Use of the Considerate Constructor scheme is recommended. |
| **Biodiversity** | Developments should result in no net loss in overall biodiversity value and maximise opportunities to meet and exceed our target to achieve a 10% net increase in tree cover across new developments. Existing green links across the Site should be maintained and the opportunity taken to create new links as appropriate. Landscaping and new planting should include species appropriate to the Proposed Development that will encourage wildlife. |
| **Community Safety and Crime Prevention** | Design and Access Statements should demonstrate how crime prevention measures have been considered in the design of the proposal. Informal surveillance should be promoted and crime prevention measures should be included in designs. |

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| Key Principle | Summary |
|---|---|
| **Design for Health** | The Council wants to ensure that development works to improve the health of Manchester's residents. This is encourage through ten objectives, including (inter alia):- Encourage active lifestyles; Build opportunities for social interaction; Ensure accessibility for all; Promote safety and a sense of safety; Promote social inclusion; Improve the quality of the natural environment; and, Improve the quality and aesthetics of the built environment |
| **Environmental Standards** | The Council is committed to making Manchester 'the Greenest City in Britain' so developers are expected to submit a Statement on how their proposal will achieve the environmental standards required. |

## Key Paragraphs of the National Planning Policy Framework

*Background*

The revised National Planning Policy Framework ("NPPF") was published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government ("MHCLG") on 12 December 2024 and is a significant material consideration in planning decisions.

**Introduction (Section 1: ¶ 1 to 6)**

The NPPF Introduction (Section 1) 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. The policies in the Framework should be taken into account in dealing with applications from the day of its publication [paragraph 231].

The NPPF is set out over 17 Sections along with Annex 1, Implementation; Annex 2, Glossary; and Annex 3 Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification, and covers 243 paragraphs. Paragraph 3 states that 'the Framework should be read as a whole (including its footnotes and annexes)'.

It is relevant to note that the NPPF goes on to outline in paragraph 6 that other statement of government policy may be material when preparing plans or deciding planning applications, such as relevant Written Ministerial Statements and endorsed recommendations of the National Infrastructure Commission.

**Achieving Sustainable Development (Section 2: ¶ 7 to 14)**

***Three Overarching Objectives***

Paragraph 7 of the NPPF informs that the United Kingdom, as a member of the United Nations, has agreed to pursue the 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development in the period to 2030.

The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and, achieving this means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that objectives can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives. These objectives are defined as follows:

a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

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b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed, beautiful and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

Importantly the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in so doing "take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area".

***Presumption in favour of sustainable development***

Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking this 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* [in line with Footnote 8]*., granting permission unless:*

*i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance* [in line with Footnote 7]. *provides a 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* [in line with Footnote 9]*."*

Footnote 7, Footnote 8 and Footnote 9 relates to the provisions of paragraphs 11d (i) and 11d and respectively; they state:

*"Footnote 7: The policies referred to are those in this Framework (rather than those in development plans) relating to: habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 189) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, a National Landscape, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 75); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.*

*Footnote 8: This includes, for applications involving the provision of housing, situations where: the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites (with the appropriate buffer as set out in paragraph 78); or where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was substantially below (less than 75% of) the housing requirement over the previous three years. See also paragraph 227.*

*Footnote 9: The policies referred to are those in paragraphs 66 and 84 of chapter 5; 91 of chapter 7; 110 and 115 of chapter 9; 129 of chapter 11; and 135 and 139 of chapter 12. "*

**Decision-Making (Section 4: ¶ 39 to 60)**

Section 4 of the NPPF provides guidance regarding the decision-making process. It states, in paragraph 39, that Local Planning Authorities should approach decisions on Proposed Development 'in a positive and creative way', and should look to use the full range of planning tools to secure developments 'that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.'

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***Pre-application engagement and front-loading***

The NPPF promotes pre-application engagement and front-loading and states that *"early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties"*.

***Determining applications***

Paragraph 49 of Section 4 provides guidance regarding the weight that should be given by LPAs when determining applications against emerging plans; it states:

*"a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);*

*b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and*

*c) the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)* [in line with Footnote 23].

***Planning conditions and obligations***

Paragraphs 56 to 59 of Section 4 provide guidance regarding the use of planning conditions and obligations, along with the submission of viability assessments.

Paragraph 58 provides guidance on when planning obligations should be sought, stating that this is only necessary where they meet the following tests:

*"a) Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;*

*b) Directly related to the development; and*

*c) Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development"*

**Building a strong, competitive economy (Section 6: ¶ 85 to 89)**

Section 6 of the NPPF states that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development (paragraph 85). Furthermore, it states that planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors (paragraph 87).

**Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities (Section 8: ¶ 96 to 107)**

Section 8 seeks to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:

*"a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages;*

*b) are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and*

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*c) enable and support healthy lives, through both promoting good health and preventing ill-health, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs and reduce health inequalities between the most and least deprived communities – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling."*

In order to provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services that community needs, the NPPF states that planning policies and decision should plan positively for the provision of shared spaces, community facilities (including local shops, sports venues, open spaces, and other meeting places including public houses and places of worship) and other local services. It also seeks to guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, and ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and be modernised and retained for the benefit of the community (paragraph 98).

It also sets out a requirement to ensure that a sufficient choice of school places available to meet the needs of existing and new communities (paragraph 100).

Specifically:

*"100. It is important that a sufficient choice of early years, school and post-16 places are available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should:*

*a) give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter early years, schools and post-16 facilities through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications; and*

*b) work with early years, school and post-16 promoters, delivery partners and statutory bodies to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.*

Paragraph 104 is also relevant as it discusses open space and recreation, specifically stating that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings should not be built on unless:

*"a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or*

*b) the loss resulting from the Proposed Development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or*

*c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use".*

Paragraph 106 to 108 provides guidance on Local Green Spaces, including the merits for their designation and policies for managing development within a Local Green Space.

**Promoting sustainable transport (Section 9: ¶ 109 to 118)**

Section 9 seeks to ensure that sustainable transport modes are promoted through both the plan making process as well as in the determination of planning applications.

Paragraph 109 states that transport issues should be considered at the earliest stage of plan making, and paragraph 110 advises that the planning system should actively manage patterns of growth, including limiting the need to travel, offering a genuine choice of modes, as well as helping to reduce congestion and emissions to improve air quality and public health.

Paragraphs 112-113 provide guidance in relation to car parking policies, and confirms that local set standards should take account of accessibility; type, mix and use of the development; availability of public

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transport; local car ownership levels; and the need for adequate spaces where electric cars can be charged.

In terms of decision-making, paragraph 110 confirms that proposals should be assessed on the basis that sustainable transport modes are prioritised, safe and suitable access can be achieved for all users, and that any significant impacts on the highway network or on highways safety can be cost effectively mitigated.

Importantly paragraph 116 states:

*"Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios."*

In light of this, paragraph 117 states that development should: give first priority to pedestrian and cycle movements as well as high quality public transport; address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility; create places that are safe, secure and attractive; allow for the efficient delivery of goods and access by emergency service vehicles; and, be designed to allow for electric cars to be charged.

Paragraph 118 also requires all developments that will generate significant amounts of movement to provide a travel plan, and be supported by a vision-led transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed and monitored.

**Making Effective Use of Land (Section 11: ¶ 124 to 130)**

Section 11 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that "makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or 'brownfield land' [in line with Footnote 49]".

Paragraph 125 is noteworthy and states that planning policies and decisions should:

*"a) encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside;*

*b) recognise that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, cooling/shading, carbon storage or food production;*

*c) give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, proposals for which should be approved unless substantial harm would be caused, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;*

*d) promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively (for example converting space above shops, and building on or above service yards, car parks, lock-ups and railway infrastructure)50; and*

*e) support opportunities to use the airspace above existing residential and commercial premises for new homes. In particular, they should allow upward extensions – including mansard roofs – where the development would be consistent with the prevailing form of neighbouring properties and the overall street scene, is well-designed (including complying with any local design policies and standards), and can maintain safe access and egress for occupiers. A condition of simultaneous development should not be imposed on an application for multiple upward extensions unless there is an exceptional justification. "*

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Guidance in respect of 'achieving appropriate densities' in set out in paragraphs 129 and 130 of Section 11; the latter stating that planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land.

Paragraph 130 specifically states that *"area-based character assessments, design guides and codes and masterplans can be used to help ensure that land is used efficiently while also creating beautiful and sustainable places. Where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for 37 meeting identified housing needs, it is especially important that planning policies and decisions avoid homes being built at low densities, and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site. In these circumstances".*

**Achieving Well-Designed Places (Section 12: ¶ 131 to 141)**

Section 12 of the NPPF explains that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities (Paragraph 131).

Paragraphs 133 and 134 provides guidance for Local Planning Authorities in terms of creating local design guides and codes. The NPPF advises that design guides *"can be prepared at an area-wide, neighbourhood or site-specific scale"* and that *"landowners and developers may contribute to these exercises but may also choose to prepare design codes in support of a planning application for sites they wish to develop*".

Paragraph 135 is noteworthy and states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the Site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

Paragraph 136 outlines the importance of tree contributing to character and quality of urban environments, as well as mitigating and adapting to climate change. Specifically it states that "planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined [in accordance with footnote 52]" and applicants and local planning authorities should work with tree officers to ensure this.

Paragraph 139 outlines that *"significant weight should be given [when determining applications] to a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes;*

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*and/or b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings".*

**Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change (Section 14: ¶ 161 to 186)**

Section 14 sets out guidance for ensuring the planning system supports the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking into account flood risk and coastal change. This specifically includes supporting the transition to net zero by 2050, encouraging the re-use of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings, and supporting renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

***Planning for climate change***

Paragraph 162 expects new development to take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating and drought from rising temperatures.

It is advised that new development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to impacts arising from climate change; incorporating green infrastructure and sustainable drainage systems; and reduce greenhouse gas emissions including through location, orientation and design.

Paragraph 167 requires Local planning authorities should also give significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings, both domestic and non-domestic (including through installation of heat pumps and solar panels where these do not already benefit from permitted development rights).

Paragraph 168 also requires that in determining planning applications, local authorities give significant weight to the benefits associated with renewable and low carbon energy generation and the proposed contribution to a net zero future.

***Planning and flood risk***

Paragraph 170 states that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future) noting where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

Paragraph 173 states that a sequential risk-based approach should also be taken to individual applications in areas known to be at risk now or in future from any form of flooding with the aim of the test being to steer new development to areas with the lowest risk of flooding from any source.

To this end paragraph 174 confirms that development should not be allocated or permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the Proposed Development in areas with a lower risk of flooding, and that the strategic flood risk assessment will provide the basis for applying this test.

Where having applied the sequential test, if it is not possible for development to be located in areas with a lower risk of flooding (taking into account wider sustainable development objectives), the exception test may have to be applied dependant on the need for the exception test will depend on the potential vulnerability of the Site and of the development proposed.

**Conserving and enhancing the natural environment (Section 15: ¶ 187 to 201)**

Paragraph 187 introduces Section 15 and sets out that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. This paragraph goes on to explain that one way in which this should be achieved is through minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.

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Paragraph 187 goes to state that planning decisions should be preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should also be remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

*Habitats and Biodiversity*

The NPPF states at Paragraph 193(a) that if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.

Paragraph 195 also states that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where theplan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.

*Ground conditions and pollution*

In terms of ground conditions and pollution the NPPF states in paragraph 196 that planning policies and decisions should ensure that a 'site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination. This includes risks arising from natural hazards such as mining, and any proposals for mitigation including land remediation (as well as potential impacts on the natural environment arising from that remediation)'.

Paragraphs 197 goes on to state that where a site is affected by contamination or land stability issues, responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner.

More generally, the NPFF reports that planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location, taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health and the quality of life, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the Site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development (Paragraph 198).

Paragraph 199 states that planning policies and decisions should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones, and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local areas.

Similarly paragraph 200 is relevant:

*"Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities (such as places of worship, pubs, music venues and sports clubs). Existing businesses and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established. Where the operation of an existing business or community facility could have a significant adverse effect on new development (including changes of use) in its vicinity, the applicant (or 'agent of change') should be required to provide suitable mitigation before the development has been completed."*

**Conserving and enhancing the historic environment (Section 16 ¶ 202:221)**

Paragraph 207 of the NPPF sets out that an applicant should describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

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Paragraph 210 is also of relevance to this application and states that in determining 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.*

***Considering potential impacts***

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 212).

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.

Linked to the above, Paragraph 214 states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

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