28th August 2026
Delivered via Email

Angela Leckie
Manchester City Council
Town Hall
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Dear Angela

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 2017 (AS AMENDED) REQUEST FOR SCREENING OPINION

On behalf of Plymouth Grove Residential LLP, we hereby request a Screening Opinion is adopted by Manchester City Council pursuant to Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the Regulations) in respect of the proposed redevelopment of Octagon House, Hathersage Road, Manchester.

The application site extends to approximately 1.34 hectares and comprises previously developed land occupied by Octagon House and associated surface parking.

The proposed development comprises the partial demolition of existing structures and the refurbishment and extension of Octagon House and the erection of three new buildings ranging from 4 to 11 storeys to accommodate:

- 455 Purpose Built Student Accommodation bedspaces;
- 211 key worker accommodation units;
- 16 residential dwellings;
- 2,568 sqm healthcare floorspace, including retention and expansion of the existing NHS renal dialysis facility;
- 394 sqm commercial/community floorspace; and

The proposal also includes the provision of associated access, public realm, landscaping, parking, servicing and infrastructure works.

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The proposal constitutes Schedule 2 development under paragraph 10(b) (Urban Development Projects) of Schedule 2 of the Regulations. The Site is not located within a 'Sensitive Area'[1] within the meaning of the EIA Regulations.

As outlined in Planning Practice Guidance[2], exceedance of a Schedule 2 threshold does not automatically determine that a proposal is 'EIA Development', but rather indicates that "*the proposal needs to be screened by the local planning authority to determine whether significant effects on the environment are likely and hence whether an Environmental Impact Assessment is required*".

The proposal represents the comprehensive regeneration of a previously developed and under-utilised site within the general environs of the Oxford Road Corridor and in an area characterised by a broad mix of uses.

A comprehensive suite of technical assessments has been prepared in support of the planning application, covering a range of topics including transport, flood risk and drainage, air quality, noise, daylight and sunlight, archaeology, ecology, arboriculture, sustainability, health, socio-economic effects, telecommunications, crime prevention and heritage and townscape impact.

None of the technical assessment identifies environmental effects of a scale, extent, complexity or duration capable of being characterised as likely significant effects in the context of the EIA Regulations having regard to the site context and characteristics of the development proposal.

Location of the Development

The site comprises previously developed land within a densely developed urban context characterised by residential, healthcare, educational and student accommodation uses. The site is situated within the general environs of the Oxford Road Corridor located in central Manchester and which accommodate a concentration of higher education and healthcare uses and supporting economic and commercial uses and a diverse range of residential accommodation.

The site lies wholly within Flood Zone 1 and is not located within or adjacent to any statutory ecological designation. Technical assessments confirm that environmental constraints associated with flood risk, drainage, ecology and biodiversity can be appropriately managed through embedded mitigation measures and standard planning controls.

The site lies within the setting of a number of heritage assets, including Victoria Baths (Grade II*) and Victoria Park Conservation Area. A detailed Heritage, Townscape and Visual Statement has been prepared to assess the significance of those assets and the likely effects arising from the proposed development.

Characteristics of Potential Effects

In the context of the site's location and a consideration of its characteristics, both in built form and operationally, the submitted technical evidence confirms that the development would not give rise to likely significant environmental effects by reason of its nature, scale or location.

In particular:

[1] Sensitive Areas comprise: Sites of Special Scientific Interest, European Sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Ramsar sites), National Parks, the Broads, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, World Heritage Sites and Scheduled Monuments

[2] Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph: 017 Reference ID: 4-017-20170728

- Transport effects are not anticipated to be severe and the site benefits from excellent accessibility by sustainable transport modes.
- Air quality effects are assessed as insignificant.
- Noise effects are capable of mitigation through established design measures.
- Flood risk and drainage matters can be safely managed through the proposed drainage strategy and sustainable drainage measures.
- Ecological impacts are limited and capable of mitigation, with biodiversity net gain achieved through a combination of on-site and off-site measures.
- Daylight, sunlight and residential amenity effects have been assessed and are considered to be within acceptable limits within the context of the site's urban location.
- The Health Impact Assessment concludes that no adverse impacts on health and wellbeing have been identified which cannot be effectively mitigated**.**

Cumulative Effects

Particular consideration has been given to cumulative effects arising from the proposed development in combination with other committed development in the surrounding area, most notably the consented Victoria Point redevelopment immediately adjacent to the east of the site.

The Heritage, Townscape and Visual Statement expressly considers the interaction between both schemes. It concludes that the principal cumulative consideration relates to the setting of Victoria Baths (Grade II*). Whilst a very low level of harm is identified arising from the appearance of Block C within the background of certain views towards Victoria Baths, the assessment concludes that this effect would be reduced through implementation of the consented Victoria Point development, which would introduce intervening built form and a graduated transition in building height.

The wider townscape and visual assessment concludes that cumulative effects are beneficial, neutral or negligible in nature. The assessment identifies no significant adverse cumulative townscape, visual or heritage effects and concludes that the scheme integrates appropriately with the emerging townscape character established by recent and consented development.

The submitted evidence therefore demonstrates that cumulative effects have been fully considered and do not result in likely significant environmental effects for the purposes of the EIA Regulations.

Schedule 3 Considerations

In accordance with Schedule 3 of the Regulations, consideration has been given to:

- The characteristics of the development, including its size, design, use of natural resources, production of waste, pollution and nuisances, risk of accidents and risk to human health;
- The location of the development, having regard to the sensitivity of the receiving environment; and
- The characteristics of likely effects, including their nature, magnitude, geographical extent, duration, reversibility, probability and cumulative interaction with other committed development.

The accompanying Schedule 3 Assessment Matrix demonstrates that the proposal would not result in likely significant environmental effects when assessed against the statutory criteria. No topic area has been identified where significant effects are likely to arise.

Environmental Factors

In accordance with Regulation 4(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, consideration has been given to the potential effects of the proposed development on:

- Population and human health;
- Biodiversity;
- Land and soil;
- Water;
- Air;
- Climate;
- Material assets;
- Cultural heritage; and
- Landscape and townscape.

These matters have been comprehensively assessed through the technical reports prepared in support of the proposed development.

As summarised at Appendix B, the submitted assessments demonstrate that:

- The development would deliver positive socio-economic and health effects through the provision of student accommodation, key worker accommodation, healthcare facilities and public realm improvements;
- Ecological impacts are capable of mitigation and biodiversity net gain can be secured;
- Flood risk, drainage, air quality and noise effects are appropriately mitigated and do not give rise to significant environmental effects;
- No significant effects arise in relation to climate, energy or resource use;
- Heritage, townscape and visual effects have been comprehensively assessed, including cumulative interaction with the consented Victoria Point redevelopment; and
- No environmental factor identified in Regulation 4(2) is likely to experience significant environmental effects either individually or cumulatively.

Conclusions

Having regard to:

- the characteristics of the development;
- the urban location of the site;
- the findings of the supporting technical assessments;
- the localised and limited nature of identified effects; and
- the assessment of cumulative effects, including interaction with the consented Victoria Point redevelopment,

it is respectfully submitted that the proposal is not EIA Development and is unlikely to give rise to significant environmental effects within the meaning of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended).

We would therefore be grateful if Manchester City Council would issue a Screening Opinion confirming that an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Bickerdike
Director, Head of Planning North

[redacted]

Appendices:

Appendix A: Schedule 3 Assessment Matrix

Appendix B: Regulation 4(2) Receptor Matrix

Appendix C: Schedule of Supporting Documents

Appendix D: Site Location Plan

Appendix A : Schedule 3 Assessment

Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended)

Site: Octagon House, Hathersage Road, Manchester

Proposed Development: Refurbishment and extension of Octagon House and erection of three buildings of up to 11 storeys to provide PBSA, key worker accommodation, residential units, healthcare floorspace, commercial/community uses and associated infrastructure.

1. Characteristics of the Development

Schedule 3 Criteria	*Assessment*
Size and design of the whole development	The proposal comprises the regeneration of a 1.34ha previously developed site through refurbishment and extension of Octagon House together with three new buildings ranging from 4 to 11 storeys. The development forms part of a wider urban regeneration area associated with the Oxford Road Corridor.
Cumulation with other existing and approved development	The principal cumulative interaction is with the consented Victoria Point development immediately to the east. The submitted Heritage, Townscape and Visual Statement (HTVS) expressly assesses the combined townscape, visual and heritage effects of both schemes and concludes that effects are beneficial, neutral or negligible. In relation to Victoria Baths, the HTVS concludes that implementation of the consented Victoria Point development would reduce the perceived impact of the proposed development through intervening built form and a graduated height transition.
Use of natural resources	Previously developed land is re-used and the existing Octagon House structure retained and refurbished. The Energy Strategy adopts a fabric-first approach and incorporates low-carbon technologies including heat pumps and photovoltaic panels.
Production of waste	Construction and operational waste management arrangements have been prepared and waste impacts are capable of management through standard planning controls and operational practices.
Pollution and nuisance	Air quality, noise, transport, drainage and construction effects have been assessed through specialist technical work. Effects are localised and capable of mitigation. No likely significant environmental effects have been identified.
Risk of major accidents and disasters	No unusual processes or hazardous activities are proposed. The site lies within Flood Zone 1 and flood risk can be effectively managed through the proposed drainage strategy.
Risks to human health	The submitted Health Impact Assessment concludes that no adverse impacts on health and wellbeing have been identified that cannot be effectively mitigated and identifies a range of positive health outcomes.

2. Location of the Development

Schedule 3 Criteria	*Assessment*
Existing and approved land use	The site comprises previously developed land occupied by Octagon House and associated surface parking within an established and highly accessible urban area.
Relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources	The site is predominantly hardstanding and developed land with limited ecological value. Redevelopment enables more efficient use of land and existing built assets.
Absorption capacity of the natural environment	The site is not located within an environmentally sensitive landscape and contains no statutory ecological designation. Biodiversity effects are limited and capable of mitigation and enhancement.
Historical, cultural or archaeological significance	The HTVS concludes that the significance of all assessed heritage assets would be sustained with the exception of a very low level of harm to the setting of Victoria Baths (Grade II*). This effect is assessed as very low and reduced by implementation of the consented Victoria Point scheme.
Densely populated areas	The site lies within a densely developed urban area. Technical assessments demonstrate that environmental effects are capable of being appropriately addressed through the planning process.

3. Characteristics of Potential Effects

Schedule 3 Criteria	*Assessment*
Extent and spatial scale	Effects are principally localised to the site and surrounding streets. The urban context substantially limits wider visibility and influence.
Nature of effects	The majority of identified effects are beneficial, neutral or negligible. The only identified heritage harm is a very low level of effect upon the setting of Victoria Baths.
Transboundary nature	No transboundary effects arise.
Intensity and complexity	The development gives rise to effects typical of urban regeneration proposals and no unusual environmental interactions have been identified.
Probability	Effects are well understood and have been comprehensively assessed through supporting technical evidence.
Duration, frequency and reversibility	Construction effects are temporary. Operational effects are either beneficial, neutral or limited in nature and capable of management through planning controls.
Cumulative effects	Detailed assessment confirms that cumulative interactions with Victoria Point do not result in significant townscape, visual or heritage effects.

Appendix B – Regulation 4(2) Receptor Matrix

Regulation 4(2) Environmental Factors Assessment

Environmental Factor	*Technical Evidence*	*Screening Conclusion*
Population and Human Health	Health Impact Assessment; Socio-Economic Regeneration Impact Statement	No likely significant adverse effects identified. Positive effects associated with accommodation provision, healthcare expansion and regeneration benefits.
Biodiversity	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal; Biodiversity Gain Plan; Bat Surveys	Effects capable of mitigation. Biodiversity Net Gain to be delivered. No likely significant effects.
Land and Soil	Site investigations and technical assessments	Previously developed urban site. No likely significant effects identified.
Water	Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy	Site located within Flood Zone 1. Effects appropriately managed. No likely significant effects.
Air	Air Quality Assessment	Effects assessed as insignificant. No likely significant effects.
Climate	Energy Strategy; Environmental Standards Statement	Low-carbon design incorporated. No likely significant climate effects identified.
Material Assets	Planning Statement; Infrastructure Assessments	Re-use of existing building and investment in healthcare and public realm infrastructure. No likely significant adverse effects.
Cultural Heritage	Heritage, Townscape and Visual Statement; Archaeological Assessment	Very low level of harm identified to the setting of Victoria Baths. No likely significant environmental effects. Cumulative effects with Victoria Point assessed.
Landscape / Townscape	Heritage, Townscape and Visual Statement	Effects assessed as beneficial, neutral or negligible. No likely significant effects identified.

Appendix C: Schedule of Supporting Documents

The following documents have informed the request for a Screening Opinion and demonstrate that the environmental effects associated with the proposal are understood and capable of assessment through the normal planning application process:

Document	Author
Planning and Tall Building Statement	Turley
Heritage, Townscape and Visual Statement	Turley
Design and Access Statement	Hodder + Partners
Transport Assessment	SLR Consulting
Framework Travel Plan	SLR Consulting
Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy	Ridge
Energy Strategy Report	Ridge
Approved Document Part O and Thermal Comfort Report	Ridge
Environmental Standards Statement	Ridge
BREEAM Pre-Assessment Report	Ridge
Circular Economy Statement	Ridge
Air Quality Assessment	Hoare Lea
Planning Noise Report	Sandy Brown
Daylight and Sunlight Assessment	EB7
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal	United Environmental Services
Biodiversity Gain Plan	United Environmental Services
Bat Scoping Survey	United Environmental Services
Bat Presence / Absence Survey	United Environmental Services
Ground Level and Aerial Tree Assessment	United Environmental Services

Document	Author
Arboricultural Impact Assessment	LUC
Archaeological Assessment	Civic
Crime Impact Statement	Greater Manchester Police / Design for Security
Health Impact Assessment	Turley
Socio-economic Regeneration Impact Statement	Turley
Waste Management Strategy	SLR Consulting
Broadband Connectivity Assessment	GTech
Television and Radio Reception Impact Assessment	GTech
Operational Management Plan	Octagon Accommodation Management Team
Fire Statement	Sedrow Fire Engineering
Local Labour Method Statement	Turley

Appendix D: Site Location Plan

