
Fw: Planning Ref 143413/FO/2025

From Planning [REDACTED]
Date Thu 10/09/2025 09:52
To Robert Griffin [REDACTED]

Information, Delivery & Support Team
Planning, Building Control & Licensing
Growth & Development Directorate
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Sent: 09 October 2025 09:36
To: Planning [REDACTED]
Subject: Planning Ref 143413/FO/2025

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Dear Planning Committee Members,

Planning reference 143413/FO/2025.

I am against this planning application for the following reasons:

1. The area needs more housing
2. The lack of housing in the area is driving prices up to levels where only wealthy people can afford them.
3. Children who grew up in Chorlton can not afford to buy in the area through lack of housing.
4. The area is little used – it was barely used at all until the application for housing went in.
5. The previous application for housing seemed very balanced
6. There is a large park next door with a variety of outdoor space
7. This planning reference is really just stating no change and the area will once again become little used

Please acknowledge the receipt of this email

Your sincerely

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
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Julie Roscoe
Director of Planning, Building Control & Licensing
Manchester City Council Planning
PO Box 532
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M60 2LA

26th September 2025



Professional Services
Legal & Governance
Ormond Building,
Lower Ormond Street,
Manchester,
M15 6BX, UK

Dear Sirs

OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION: 143413/FO/2025:

Change of use of former university playing fields to community woodland and meadow

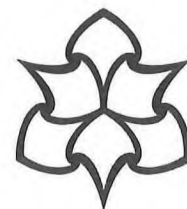
Manchester Metropolitan University (the “**University**”) objects to the above planning application (the “**Application**”) related to the site known as Ryebank, Chorlton, submitted by Ryebank Fields Community Group Limited (the “**Applicant**”) for the reasons set out below.

1. Housing Need and Housing Policy

The country faces a housing crisis and government policy prioritises a significant need to build more houses. This need is reflected in the National Planning Policy Framework and the associated National Planning Policy Guidance. With its growing population, Manchester has its own imperative to build more housing, including affordable and specialist housing.

The City Council approved a Development Framework for the site in 2019 (the ‘Ryebank Road Development Framework’) to define the broad parameters for its future development, with the intention that it would become a material consideration in the Council’s decision making as a Local Planning Authority. The Development Framework promoted a development of up to 120 homes, including affordable housing and also provided for open space and enhanced community use of that space. As such, the University maintains that the planning application from the Applicant, which proposes no housing development, does not accord with the Council’s vision for the site, as reflected in the Development Framework and is counter to the Council’s aim to increase housing provision in the City.

2. Land Ownership



The land that is subject to the application is registered at Land Registry, Fylde Office under title number GM603008 and is in the private ownership of the University. The University owns the Freehold legal estate with absolute title.

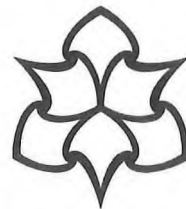
The University has identified the site as surplus to its needs and because it is legally established as an exempt charity has a legal duty to secure “best value” from the disposal of any of its assets. The University is promoting its separate development proposals and has contracted with developers/housebuilders and has submitted a planning application which aligns to the Council-approved Development Framework.

The University has no intention of transferring ownership of the site other than to its identified development partners or other parties to secure its “best value” obligations.

It is noted that whilst the Applicant fulfilled its statutory duty to formally notify the University of their Application on submission, there has been no pre-application consultation with the University or discussion over transfer of ownership; or any discussions regarding the Applicant’s proposals. In our view, this is a fundamental flaw and contrary to the Applicant’s assertion, made at paragraph 1.16 of the submitted Planning Statement that “wide ranging efforts” have been made to consult on its Application.

Further, since summer 2020 the University has closed the site to access by the public. This decision was made following the discovery by a member of the public of surface asbestos on the site. A member of the public physically picked up and removed a quantity of asbestos from the site putting himself and others at risk in doing so. We extensively leafleted the community at the time to advise them of its closure and we regularly place signs on the site informing the public of this fact. From the content of the Application, it is clear the Applicant, and some of its consultants involved in preparing the Application, have entered the site. They have done so without the University’s permission and without any necessary and agreed working arrangements, risk assessments, method statements or insurance. This is an unlawful act of trespass. Coupled with the behaviour the University has encountered over the past years from the Applicant, this further underlines the fact that the Applicant is not fit to responsibly manage the site such that the safety of the public is prioritised.

As owner of the site, the University will not allow the land to be used in line with the Application and will take all steps open to it as a landowner to stop such use. It would



be contrary to the public interest to grant planning permission for a proposal which has no chance of being implemented.

3. Public Access to Green and Open Space

The Planning Statement for the Application makes the case for retention of the whole site as open space. Given the adjacent Longford Park and Turn Moss playing fields, there is evidently no shortage of accessible open space in this area of Chorlton/Stretford. This is particularly so when it is acknowledged that the University owned site is private land and that no public access is technically allowed. The University maintains that the site can deliver enhanced and fully accessible and useable public open space to a wider proportion of the community, whilst still meeting the objectives for housing development as outlined in the Council-approved Development Framework.

4. Site Remediation

As a result of its previous use, the site contains hazardous materials and contaminants. This is acknowledged by the Applicant. The University has a much deeper understanding of the challenges of such contamination and potential solutions due to its extensive investigations as part of the application submitted by the University and its development partners.

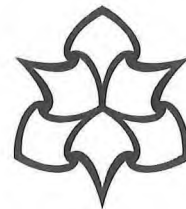
The University maintains that a comprehensive development of the site is required to fully address the contamination on the site and to make it safe for use, either for housing or in providing safe and useable public open space.

The Applicant's Application does not address how the site will be fully remediated as to make it safe. The Application as initially logged on the portal presented inadequate information about how all the contamination associated with the site is to be addressed. As a minimum, further studies and information are needed and a comprehensive plan presented as to how the site is to be made safe. This is of further importance given their Application proposes to permit public use of the site.

We note that the supporting information on site condition and remediation has been removed from the portal. We assume this recognises the inadequacy of the material and also the means by which it has been derived (see our comments at Appendix 1 paragraph o)). Clearly a comprehensive and fully funded remediation strategy is fundamental to making the site safe for increased public use and the application cannot be further considered or approved without this.



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As mentioned already, the University acknowledges that some contamination is repeatedly being exposed on the surface of the site. It is being exposed due to both animal activity and human (and dog walking) use. This is particularly so in periods of extended hot weather and we have experienced two occasions already where members of the public have physically picked up and removed asbestos themselves from the site and then notified us of this after the event. It is not inconceivable that this will occur again in the future or that any asbestos being exposed by human or animal behaviour could be spread into the neighbouring Longford Park if it is not regularly monitored. The University is using expert advisors to monitor potential contaminants and when identified is using specialist contractors to remove contaminants from the site. This is done at a cost to the University of around £11,500 per annum. The Applicant also acknowledges this contamination but presents no comprehensive, funded plan as to how it will be addressed or managed.

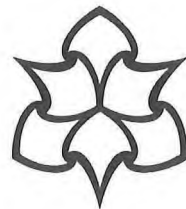
The Applicant is a newly incorporated private company limited by guarantee. It has no filed accounts and 3 individual guarantors who are each guaranteeing the liabilities of the company in the sum of £1 each. The Applicant's current fundraising activity has raised £6,731: <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/deirdre-lewis-2>. It does not have the financial covenant or resources to either remediate or manage the contaminants on the site in the long term. This is of particular concern to the University given references in the Application to future plans requiring more intrusive work such as the installation of new paths and future plans to install boards to facilitate self-guided education.

The University maintains that the Applicant has not demonstrated how the site would be remediated to make it safe for increased public use or to address wider contaminants. The University's expert advice is that contamination needs extensive intervention and is not "addressed" by a minimal intervention approach which appears to be what the Applicant is proposing. These comments are made notwithstanding that the supporting material on this issue seem to have been removed from the portal.

5. Future Management

The Applicant has not established adequately how the site will be managed in future. It does not address the transfer of ownership. Further, the Application does not present a comprehensive management or business plan and does not identify how the management of the site would be funded.





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The presence of contaminants on the site is acknowledged and it therefore has associated liabilities. The Applicant refers to “light touch conservation and management approaches” being adopted. The proposed use, however, will require extensive management, including relevant insurances, security, etc and will require significant financial resource to cover the liabilities associated with the site. The University has not been allowed to manage the site as it should properly be managed over the last decade due to the actions of the Applicant. However, we carry out yearly tree surveys and associated works, inspections and respond to incidents when notified by the community. We have been called upon when travellers have established themselves on the site in the past and paid the costs of their removal. We have responded to incidents, for example, when trees on the site damaged a garage in Peveril Crescent during a storm in 2025.

More active land management and more regular pruning of trees is needed than the University has been allowed to do to date to ensure that the site poses no issues for properties in its vicinity.

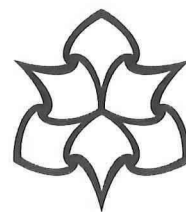
The Applicant has not demonstrated that it is capable of managing the site in the future nor has it demonstrated that it has sufficient financial strength, resources and expertise to keep all users of the site, and the properties bordering the site, safe. An Operational Statement has been submitted as part of the Application, which states that the long-term management and maintenance of the site (including funding arrangements) can be secured by planning condition. There is no prospect whatsoever of the University as landowner permitting the land to be managed and maintained in line with the necessary Operational Statement that has been submitted, and so it would be wholly inappropriate and contrary to law to impose a planning condition which will be impossible to implement. Further, the University as landowner would not enter into a section 106 obligation relating to the Operational Statement, and so a valid obligation could not be created. Without the ability to impose a condition or obligation requiring the necessary Operational Statement to be delivered, the development would be unacceptable in principle.

6. Errors and Omissions in the Application

In addition to the above concerns of principle, the University, its development partners and advisors maintain that there are a number of errors in fact and omissions in the Application as submitted. These are so extensive and material that the University is surprised that the Application passed the threshold to be registered. A list of some (although not necessarily all) of these errors/omissions is provided as an Appendix to this document.



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Summary

Notwithstanding that the University believes that the Application is inadequate in fact and should not be considered without, as a minimum, changes and additional information being requested by the Council, the University believes that the Application should be refused on principle:

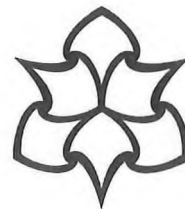
- The Application does not conform to the Council's approved Ryebank Road Development Framework and runs counter to the Council's ambition to deliver much needed housing in the City, in this part of the conurbation and on this site. As recognised by the Framework, the site can meet both a housing need and provide accessible, high quality public open space and protect existing ecology of highest value.
- The Applicant has not demonstrated that their proposals will address the site's acknowledged contamination and that the site will be safe for public use.
- The Applicant's proposals for the long-term management of the site are inadequate. They have not demonstrated a plan to manage the site and its liabilities over the longer term. They do not have access to the financial resource and expertise to manage the site whilst maintaining public safety. As a matter of planning law, without the willing involvement of the landowner, no effective obligations can be imposed on the Applicant to deliver the long-term management and maintenance of the site.

There has been no dialogue between the University and the Applicant about the future use of the site. The University has no intention of transferring ownership or other interest in the site to the Applicant. The Application is not capable of implementation and is not viable. For this reason, and because of the points of principle raised above, the Council should refuse the Application.

Your sincerely

Caroline Hilton
Director of Legal & Governance

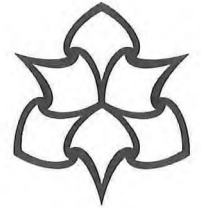




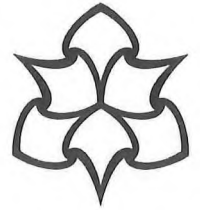
Appendix 1

Errors and Omissions in the Application

- a) The Applicant has ticked the application form to state that they should be approached to give access to the site if a site visit is needed. This is incorrect. They are not the registered owners of the site and have no authority to authorise access to the site. It is the University who should be approached for permission for any site visit to be undertaken in connection with this Application.
- b) The Applicant has incorrectly stated in its application form that the site is abandoned and has become an area of open green space. The site is owned and actively managed by the University and since summer 2020 has been closed to access by the public. It is not “abandoned”.
- c) The red line application boundary does not match across the various documents and is different in the documents than the application drawing 25_007_001 and 25_007_002. E.g. heritage research document figures 2 and 3 and flood maps.
- d) The planning statement refers to the drawings as 25_007_001 and 25_007_0002 but the drawings are both Revision A.
- e) The tree survey does not pick up all the trees and the masterplan would remove some of the trees so would require some BNG – the application forms state there is no removal and no BNG.
- f) The masterplan proposes new footpaths and “labyrinth” where there are badger setts.
- g) Section 1.7 suggests the site is within Flood Zone 2 due to surface water flood risk and not fluvial flood risk. This is incorrect as the flood zone designations are based on fluvial and coastal flooding only.
- h) Section 1.9 suggests a small area of hardstanding is proposed but no information is provided of how surface water run-off will be managed.
- i) The report makes no reference to the Longford Brook that the LLFA are requesting we investigate further to establish whether it crosses the site.
- j) Section 3.1 incorrectly states the site is within Flood Zone 2 due to surface water flooding.



- k) Section 3.3 incorrectly states there are no fluvial flood risks. The EA product 4 data shows the site is at risk from fluvial flooding for the 1 in 100 year +CC event.
- l) Flooding from other sources (i.e. sewers, groundwater and reservoirs) does not appear to have been considered.
- m) Section 4.3 incorrectly states the Flood Zone 2 designation is a result of surface water flood risk.
- n) It doesn't appear that the presence of the United Utilities CSO or Gas main have been considered.
- o) Following our review of the submitted Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Report, we must raise fundamental concerns that render the document unsuitable for use within the context of a planning application:
 - The report has no named competent author, qualifications, or independent technical review. The Environment Agency's Land Contamination Risk Management (LCRM) guidance makes clear that assessments must be prepared by a competent person, with transparent quality assurance and clear acknowledgement of uncertainties and limitations. **This standard has not been met.**
 - The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires applicants to demonstrate that land contamination can be suitably and safely remediated to make the site appropriate for its intended use. This cannot be achieved through a desk study alone for moderate to high-risk sites. Suitable intrusive investigation, risk assessment, and competent interpretation are essential to discharge this requirement, none of which are adequately provided in the submitted document.
 - The report reproduces and re-analyses investigation datasets and technical reporting prepared by the University's Developer's consultants (E3P) without permission. This constitutes unauthorised use of intellectual property and must be rectified. The document should not contain or rely upon data prepared by E3P unless formal written consent is obtained.
 - The report contains a number of substantive failings, including:
 - Mis-citation of standards (e.g. "BS885" in place of BS 8485/BS 8576)



- Inconsistent referencing of previous reports and figures, indicating poor control and review.
- Inadequate treatment of soil chemistry data, where “outliers” are dismissed rather than properly considered using LCRM-compliant statistical methods (e.g. 95% UCL).
- Under-developed assessment of ground-gas risk, despite reported methane concentrations of up to 91% v/v, with no proper consideration of confined space or service-entry pathways.
- No uncertainties and limitations register, no climate change considerations, and no robust conceptual site model – all explicitly required under LCRM.

Given these deficiencies, the report in its current form is not compliant with LCRM, BS 10175, or the requirements of the NPPF. We therefore respectfully request that this report be withdrawn immediately. It should not be relied upon by the regulator, the Local Planning Authority or the Applicant unless and until it is reissued by a demonstrably competent person, subject to independent QA, stripped of all E3P material, and revised to align with LCRM-compliant methodology and national policy requirements.

In addition to the above, we make the fundamental point that sufficient information and evidence must be provided to demonstrate that the **pollution risk** is known and understood, and a suitable remediation strategy will be developed. This report does not meet this standard and therefore cannot be submitted as part of a planning application.



RE: Planning application 143413/FO/2025 consultation - Land Bound By Longford Road, Peveril Crescent, Rye Bank Road And Longford Park

From [REDACTED]

Date Fri 10/24/2025 10:35

To Robert Griffin [REDACTED]

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Dear Rob

Thanks for your email.

We've reviewed the revised Ground Condition information which has been submitted in support of this application.

We note that the report now removes reliance on information produced by e3p and in doing so acknowledges the objection we made that they did not have the intellectual property rights to rely on e3p's information. In all other respects, the objections to this information set out in our letter of 26th September remain.

Leaving to one side the fact that the consultant who produced the report did not have our consent to access the site to undertake a walk over and was trespassing in doing so, our view is that there are fundamental concerns with this Ground Condition information which renders the document unsuitable for use within the context of a planning application.

Lack of competence and QA

The report has no named competent author, qualifications, or independent technical review. The Environment Agency's Land Contamination Risk Management (LCRM) guidance makes clear that assessments must be prepared by a competent person, with transparent quality assurance and clear acknowledgement of uncertainties and limitations. This standard has not been met.

Failure to comply with national planning policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires applicants to demonstrate that land contamination can be suitably and safely remediated to make the site appropriate for its intended use. This cannot be achieved through a desk study alone for moderate to high-risk sites. Suitable intrusive investigation, risk assessment, and competent interpretation are essential to discharge this requirement, none of which are adequately provided in the submitted document.

Technical errors and contradictions

No uncertainties and limitations register, no climate change considerations, and no robust conceptual site model – all explicitly required under LCRM.

Given these deficiencies, the report in its current form is not compliant with LCRM, BS 10175, or the requirements of the NPPF.

██████████ | Director of Legal & Governance | Legal & Governance | Manchester Metropolitan University

Principal Planner
Development Management South
Planning, Licensing and Building Control
Manchester City Council

e: [REDACTED]

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