Transport for Greater Manchester

**Transport for Greater Manchester**

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Your ref: PLA-2026-000312
Our ref: MAN/26/194

Manchester City Council
Planning
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22nd June 2026

Location: **Charles Street Multi-Storey Car Park Plot H Sister Charles Street Manchester M1 7AR**

Development: **Erection of three interconnected blocks (T1, T2 and T3) of 8, 10 and 38 storeys including ground, plus basement and plant, comprising purpose-built student accommodation with ancillary internal amenity space (Sui Generis) together with flexible commercial uses (Use Class E); landscaping works, highways, access, servicing, infrastructure and other associated works**

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for consulting Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) on the above planning application. The following comments are offered as advice on transport issues for you to balance against other factors and are made in the context of TfGM's role in the planning process, as set out in the footnote below.

Background

Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the above application for the redevelopment of the former multi-storey car park at Plot H, Charles Street.

[1]TfGM does not have any planning powers and is not a statutory consultee in the planning process. The purpose of the advice offered is to suggest the best way to improve land use / transport integration through the development proposals. Advice is based on the information provided by the applicant, and it is not TfGM's role to undertake detailed verification unless specifically commissioned to do so. [2]TfGM control and manage the traffic signals in Greater Manchester, as such any schemes that alter signalised junctions need to be agreed with TfGM. Additionally, where developments impact on signalised junctions, TfGM have a duty of care to ensure that these impacts are satisfactorily mitigated as part of the planning process.

The application seeks approval for the erection of 1041 student residential units alongside 600sqm of flexible commercial uses (Use Class E) on the ground floor and supported by 64 resident cycle parking spaces and 26 visitor cycle parking spaces within the public realm.

TfGM supports the principle of redeveloping a former city centre car park for a high-density, car-free student accommodation scheme in a highly accessible location. In principle, this aligns with the adopted Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040 'Right Mix' objective to increase the proportion of trips made by walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport, and with the City Centre Transport Strategy ambition for 90% of morning peak trips to the Regional Centre to be made by sustainable modes by 2040. The application is supported by a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan.

However, TfGM considers that further refinement is required in relation to cycle parking and move-in / move-out arrangements to demonstrate that the development will support mode shift and operate without adverse impact on the surrounding city centre transport network.

Development Impact

Colleagues from within TfGM HFAS (Highways Forecasting Analytical Services), TfGM UTC (Urban Traffic Control), TfGM Strategic Planning and TfGM Active Travel have reviewed the Transport Assessment (TA) issued in support of the development proposals and have provided comments in respect of the relevant sections.

I. Cycle Parking

TfGM notes that the application proposes 64 long-stay cycle parking spaces for residents (including 6 accessible spaces) and 26 short-stay spaces in the public realm. The submitted Travel Plan states that this equates to 1 cycle space per 16 bedrooms (c.6.2% provision), with resident parking located in the basement and accessed via a lift, and visitor parking provided within the public realm.

TfGM considers the proposed cycle parking provision to be low relative to the scale, density and highly accessible location of the development, and the submission does not yet demonstrate that likely long-term demand has been adequately planned for. Whilst the application highlights proximity to university campuses, strong public transport accessibility and cycle hire, TfGM does not consider that these factors justify a reduced level of provision in a city centre location where walking, wheeling and cycling should be supported as realistic options for a broad range of day-to day

journeys. By comparison, a recent 1,224-bedroom student accommodation scheme in Manchester City Centre provided circa 452 cycle spaces in total, comprising 417 secure long-stay spaces and 35 short stay/public realm spaces. This equated to around 37% provision overall and provides a useful benchmark when considering whether the proposed level of cycle parking is sufficient for a development of this scale and city centre location.

TfGM also notes that cycle parking demand may extend beyond residents and visitors to include staff associated with the commercial uses and day-to-day operation of the development. In addition, the proposed short-stay provision may need to serve visitors to the ground floor units and potential future activity within the railway arches on Altrincham Street.

The application should therefore revisit the quantity, distribution and usability of cycle parking provision and demonstrate more clearly that it is sufficient to meet likely demand over the lifetime of the development.

II. Active Travel Proposals

- Charles Street cycle route provision

TfGM Active Travel agree with the proposed on-carriageway cycle provision on Charles Street. Given that existing and forecast traffic volumes are below 2,500 vehicles per day and speeds are limited to 20mph, the street provides an appropriate low-traffic, low-speed environment for mixed traffic operation, consistent with the principles set out in Streets for All and LTN 1/20 for on-carriageway cycling.

- Sackville Street cycle route provision

Traffic volumes on Sackville Street reach up to approx. 6,000vpd which exceeds recommended levels appropriate for on-carriageway cycling within LTN 1/20 and Streets for All (2,500vpd). Either protected cycle infrastructure or measures to reduce traffic volumes would be required to align with Streets for All design guidance. In this context, Manchester City Council may wish to seek developer contributions to support future enhancements to Sackville Street for cycling, particularly given that the wider Sister Manchester development proposals are expected to increase cycling demand in the area.

- Sackville Street crossing proposals

Streets for All promotes the provision of safe, direct and convenient crossings on desire lines, with an emphasis on supporting pedestrian movement and reducing severance. In this context, the Altrincham Street alignment represents a clear desire line, and with over 5000vpd, Streets for All design guidance (Table 3.2) supports the provision of a formal controlled crossing at this location to accommodate current and future pedestrian demand. It is acknowledged, however, that the existing access arrangements on the eastern side of Sackville Street do not currently allow for the delivery of a safe and compliant controlled crossing. Notwithstanding this constraint, provision for a controlled crossing should be safeguarded, with appropriate consideration given to its future delivery. It is recommended that a controlled crossing is planned and funding identified, to enable implementation in conjunction with the redevelopment of the site to the east of Sackville Street, when site access arrangements can be rationalised.

III. Move-In / Move-Out and Operational Impacts

TfGM notes that the application includes an outline approach to managing move-in and move-out activity, including the use of loading bays on Charles Street, pre-booked time slots and on-site management arrangements. The Planning Statement also refers to the implementation of a management strategy to minimise disruption during these peak periods.

TfGM considers that the move-in / move-out management approach should include clear mitigation and contingency arrangements. In practice, move-in activity is unlikely to operate to standardised timescales, and the cumulative effect of circa 1,000 students moving into the development over a short period could exceed the limited capacity of the immediate area. Alternative arrangements, such as use of nearby off-street parking or other managed overflow arrangements, should therefore be explored to ensure that footways remain free of parked vehicles and that the wider public transport network is not adversely affected.

TfGM supports the principle of the proposed development. However, further refinement is required in relation to cycle parking provision and move-in / move-out arrangements to ensure that the scheme is aligned with the strategic transport objectives for Greater Manchester and the Regional Centre. TfGM welcomes the opportunity to continue working collaboratively to address these matters.

IV. Travel Plan

It is noted that a Framework Travel Plan has been submitted, which is welcomed.

TfGM recommends that a full Travel Plan is produced for the development, with the objective of reducing reliance on the private car, particularly single occupancy use. The Travel Plan should be designed to raise awareness of opportunities for reducing travel by car and should feature a range of measures and initiatives promoting a choice of transport mode, and a clear monitoring regime with agreed targets.

In order to encourage sustainable journeys to mitigate the traffic impact of the development, through the Travel Plan, incentives should be offered to encourage users of the site to use public transport and active travel modes through measures such as discounted bus fares, discounted cycles, journey planning etc.

V. Other

A robust Construction Traffic Management Plan should be employed as part of the development.

I hope you find these comments useful in the determination of this planning application. Should you wish to discuss any matter further please do not hesitate to contact the Landuse team via the details below.

Yours faithfully

Landuse Team
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