

# Friends of Carrington Moss



## Objection to Planning Application 107534/FUL/22

Whilst the improvement of the Manchester United training facilities is welcomed, the Friends of Carrington Moss object to the lack of sustainable travel options within this planning application.

The application proposes to increase car parking spaces, and, whilst paragraph 6.22 (Planning and Green Belt Statement) suggests that “*the proposal will not raise any material highway issues*”, creating new car parks (rather than catering for other, more sustainable forms of transport) will encourage more people to travel to the area by car. We note with interest that, in addition to the 30 space car park to the East of the Academy building, the Transport Statement mentions a change of use application for a further car park opposite the main entrance of Carrington Training Centre (CTC), offering 100 car parking spaces.

We would expect a “*world leading football club*” such as Manchester United to be at the forefront of sustainable practices, with aims to support the reduction of carbon emissions (carbon neutrality is not just about the way we construct new buildings) and address the climate emergency (the proposed permeable surface of the planned car park is applauded). So, investment in and commitment to sustainable transport should be a key feature of any planning application to ensure radical reductions in carbon emissions are a standard outcome of the development (paragraph 152, NPPF).

It is acknowledged in the Transport Statement (paragraph 5.1.4) that the majority of visitors travel to and from the CTC by car. We would dispute that a “*significant number of vehicles have multiple occupants*”, many are observed to have only the driver.

We welcome the suggestion that staff will be encouraged to cycle to work but no real effort appears to have been made to reduce car journeys to the site. There is no mention, for example, of working with Trafford and other local businesses to upgrade the surrounding cycling and walking routes. No mention of the potential to use cycling buses to bring multiple children to their training sessions and no mention of secure cycle shelters. In fact, we understand that Manchester United has no secure cycle shelters at Old Trafford itself (very poor for a “*world leading football club*” which should be encouraging active travel). We believe many supporters would cycle to the ground on match days if they knew their bike was in a secure lockup. The same would apply to those travelling to the training ground.

Paragraph 6.15 (Planning and Green Belt Statement) says “*car parking could not be provided in an alternative location*” but does not say why. In relation to paragraph 149 of the NPPF, whilst the upgrading of the sports facilities may be acceptable on green belt (especially given the previous use of the land), the provision of additional onsite car parking is not. There **ARE** alternative options, such as extending existing Academy Transport or establishing minibuss services to and from various locations (for example Urmston Railway Station, Sale Water Park Metro Station, Altrincham Bus Station, etc).

Trafford’s Core Strategy (L4) suggests that “minimum levels of car parking are used to promote sustainable transport choices. The Transport Statement paragraph 3.1.13 asserts that the request for 30 additional car parking spaces is “*not in response to an anticipated increase in future staff or visitors*”. So, whilst there may be inconvenience in relation to car parking, until alternative arrangements are made, we do not believe it is justifiable to create more car parking spaces, which will reduce the incentives for staff and visitors to car share or travel by alternative means. Contrary to paragraph 6.21 (Planning and Greenbelt Statement), this approach **IS** likely to result in increased traffic in the area.

It is also recognised in Trafford’s Core Strategy, and in more recent documentation, that public transport in the area is poor and Trafford believes the surrounding road network is so congested that it is planning to construct a dual carriageway across Carrington Moss, in the vicinity of the site. This would suggest that the cumulative impact of additional vehicle traffic near to the site would indeed be severe (paragraph 111, NPPF).



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In fact, 4 major new roads are planned on and across Carrington Moss, along with 5,000 homes and 350,000 m<sup>2</sup> employment space. These roads will significantly increase vehicle traffic in the area due to the lack of alternative options to be provided for residents, employees and freight. The resulting air, noise and light pollution will significantly impact the health and wellbeing of local residents and users of Carrington Moss (including professional athletes and sports trainees), together with the birds and wildlife that breed and feed there. Encouraging yet more vehicle traffic to travel to the area is not a sustainable solution.

Furthermore, the cars that do use Birch Road already travel too fast and many have little consideration for other users of the route.

With the points above in mind, we believe the plan should be modified to invest in and commit to some sustainable passenger transport options.

One final point, we would like to see the tree replacement strategy being at a ratio of at least 2 for 1.

Should any clarification be required on any aspect of the above, please contact our Chair, Marj Powner by email ([friendsofcarringtonmoss@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofcarringtonmoss@gmail.com)).