

Supporting Planning Statement

**Red Bank Neighbourhood, Victoria North,
Manchester**

**Creation of Future Development Platforms and Green
Infrastructure**

March 2022

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Reviewed By: NL

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For and on behalf of Avison Young (UK) Limited

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Supporting Planning Statement (SPS) has been prepared by Avison Young (AY) on behalf of Manchester City Council (MCC) (the Applicant), in support of a full planning application proposing new preparatory infrastructure works and green infrastructure which benefit from £51.6m Government funding through the Homes Infrastructure Fund (HIF), to prepare the land at Red Bank for new strategic residential-led development. The proposals include the creation of development platforms, formation of a new spine road (Phase 1), and new utilities and services connections that will allow for future residential-led development (to be applied for in a future planning application), together with new and improved green infrastructure, including the revitalisation of St Catherine's Wood as part of the City River Park at Red Bank, Victoria North, Manchester.
- 1.2 This full application relates to part of Victoria North (formerly referred to as Northern Gateway), a regeneration scheme which aims to deliver up to 15,000 new homes and social and physical infrastructure on approximately 155 hectares of land between Victoria Station and Queens Park. Seven interconnected neighbourhoods are proposed as part of the Victoria North regeneration project and the proposed development relates to land controlled by the Joint Venture (JV) Partnership between MCC and its investment and delivery partner, Far East Consortium (FEC) within the emerging Red Bank and New Town neighbourhoods, located to the north-east of Victoria Station, to the south of Red Bank road, and immediately adjacent to Manchester City Centre (hereafter referred to as 'the Site').
- 1.3 The works proposed by this application form a crucial role in the delivery of a new residential neighbourhood within Victoria North, unlocking £51.6m of Government Funding through the HIF. The funding will be used to address a series of up-front requirements to support the delivery of approximately 5,500 new homes including:
- Delivering improvements to the River Irk to enhance the river environment, with naturalisation measures to help reduce the risk of flooding.
 - Securing and clearing undeveloped brownfield land, including the removal of invasive plant species and contaminated ground.
 - Connecting the development sites to electricity, water and drainage.
 - Delivering road upgrades and connecting development sites to the existing highways network.
 - Improvements to St Catherine's Wood which will form part of the City River Park.
- 1.4 These critical infrastructure works are subject to a strict spend programme under the terms of the Government funding arrangements which requires the HIF monies to be spent by March 2024.

- 1.5 This is the second planning application submitted by the Applicant at the site, following the grant of planning permission (Ref: 132252/VO/2021) on 23 December 2022 for advanced enabling works also funded by the HIF funding, including tree and vegetation removal, creation of a temporary haul road and demolition of the Creamline Dairies buildings.
- 1.6 This application represents the next step in the delivery of the strategically important Victoria North project, which will deliver transformational regeneration on an unprecedented scale in Manchester and help to fulfil its potential as a truly innovative, sustainable, and world-class city.
- 1.7 The works applied for by this application will prepare the site for future residential led development. A separate planning application proposing a residential led scheme for approximately 4,000 new dwellings and supporting community infrastructure will be made by FEC on land controlled by the JV later in 2022. The works proposed to prepare the land for residential led development within the Red Bank and New Town neighbourhoods include: the creation of development platforms, formation of a new spine road (Phase 1), and new utilities and services connections that will allow for future residential-led development (to be applied for in a future planning application), together with new and improved green infrastructure, including the revitalisation St Catherine's Wood as part of the City River Park.
- 1.8 The description of development for the preparatory works proposed by this full planning application is:

"City Council Development for the creation of development platforms, including remediation and earthworks, and change in site levels, to allow delivery of future residential-led development at the Red Bank Neighbourhood, together with the construction of a new road and priority junction from Red Bank, new drainage infrastructure, utility and services connections and diversions, street works for new utilities including ducting up to the Queens Park substation, preparatory tree and shrub clearance, and demolition of certain existing structures, along with the creation of new and improved green infrastructure and landscaping including the improvements of St Catherine's Wood to form part of a City River Park, and other associated works."

Environmental Impact Assessment

- 1.9 Regulation 6 of the 2017 EIA Regulations makes provision for a developer to request a 'Screening Opinion' from the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to ascertain whether an EIA is required if a development is classed as a Schedule 2 development. This decision is based on the likelihood of significant environmental effects arising in relation to the development proposals.

- 1.10 The proposed development falls within Schedule 2, Category 10 Subsection (b) 'Urban Development Projects'. The threshold for which EIA could be triggered is whether the area of works exceeds one of the following criteria:
- The development includes more than 1 hectare of urban development which is not dwelling house development; or
 - The development includes more than 150 dwellings; or
 - The overall area of the development exceeds 5 hectares.
- 1.11 The proposed development covers an area of approximately 15.74ha. As such, the proposed development falls above the threshold for EIA in respect of Schedule 2, Category 10 of the EIA Regulations.
- 1.12 The surpassed development threshold and potential for significant effect, in addition to the need for a robust assessment approach, are full justification as to the requirement for EIA. Additionally, the proposed development is in fact part of a wider project which would otherwise be EIA development, no matter whether or not it meets the screening criteria. As such, it has been agreed with MCC that an EIA is submitted to accompany this planning application.

Supporting Documents

- 1.13 The following documents are submitted in support of this full planning application:
- i. Covering letter prepared by Avison Young;
 - ii. Application form, relevant land ownership certificate (duly signed) and relevant planning application fee;
 - iii. Full set of planning and landscape drawings, prepared by Arup/BAM and Planit (as detailed within the Drawing List enclosed at **Appendix I**). It is important to note that certain plans are submitted for illustrative purposes only and are not for approval, as identified on the Drawing List;
 - iv. Lighting Strategy prepared by Arup;
 - v. Project Execution Plan (Construction Management) prepared by BAM
 - vi. Crime Impact Statement prepared by Greater Manchester Police;
 - vii. Demolition Method Statement prepared by BAM;
 - viii. Tree Replacement, Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain Mitigation Strategy (including updated BNG metric) prepared by Avison Young/ TEP;

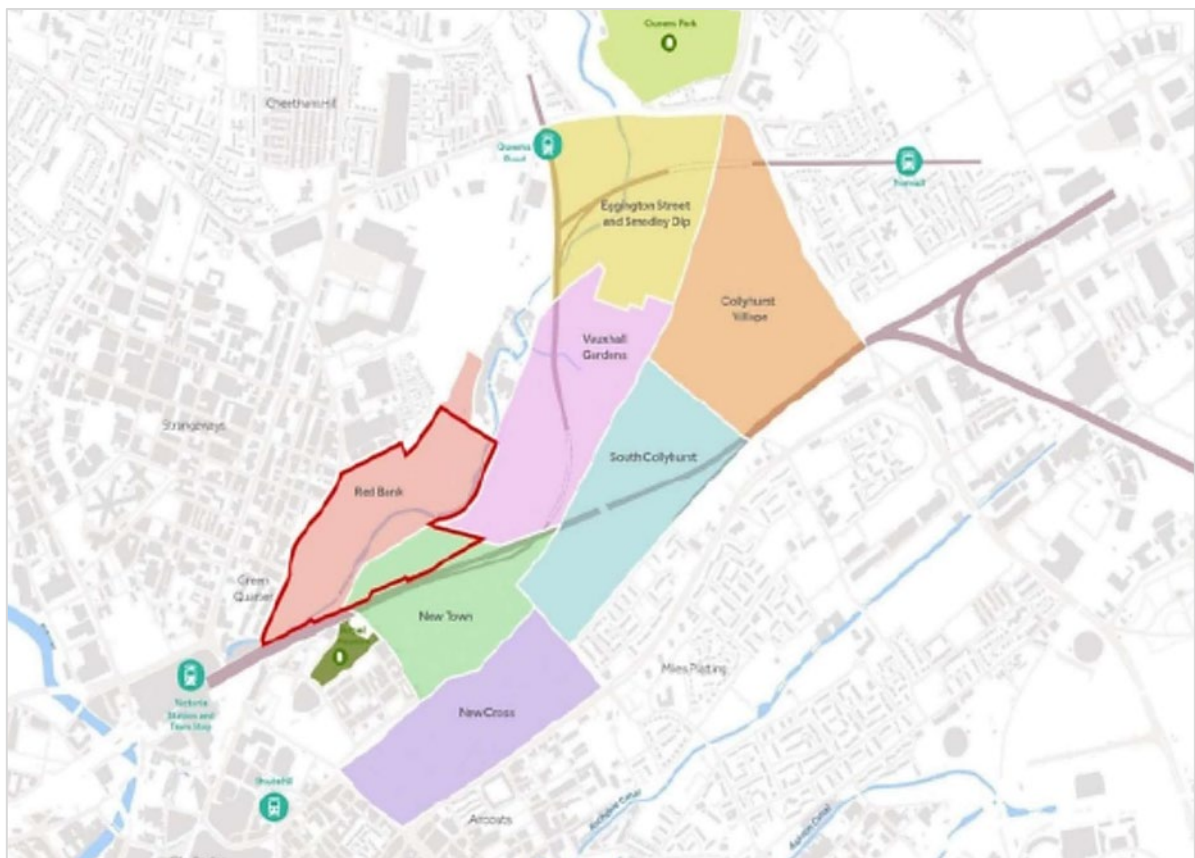
- ix. Design and Access Statement prepared by Plan-it;
- x. Landscape Management Plan prepared by Plan-it;
- xi. Local Labour Agreement prepared by Avison Young;
- xii. Planning Statement prepared by Avison Young;
- xiii. Social Value Summary prepared by MCC/ Avison Young;
- xiv. Statement of Community Involvement prepared by Counter Context; and,
- xv. Environmental Statement prepared by Avison Young, including the following technical chapters:
 - a. Ecology and Trees
 - b. Archaeology and Heritage
 - c. Ground Conditions
 - d. Flood Risk and Drainage
 - e. Townscape and Visual
 - f. Transport and Access
 - g. Air Quality and Dust
 - h. Noise and Vibration
 - i. Waste
 - j. Health
 - k. Socio-Economics
 - l. Climate Change

2. Strategic Regeneration Context

- 2.1 This section details the strategic regeneration context that underpins the proposals and the infrastructure funding that has been secured by MCC to deliver critical works to prepare the land for future residential led development within the Red Bank Neighbourhood.

Victoria North

- 2.2 In April 2017, MCC appointed FEC as its Joint Venture investment and delivery partner, to accelerate the delivery of the Victoria North opportunity. This appointment was the conclusion of an international marketing exercise that commenced in April 2016. Since making this appointment, MCC has approved the Northern Gateway Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF), which provides an updated vision, core objectives and development framework to guide the regeneration of Northern Gateway (now known as Victoria North), with a focus on the provision of housing and supporting infrastructure investment. In February 2019, MCC Executive approved the Northern Gateway SRF as a material consideration in the determination of all future planning applications relevant to the area.



Source: Northern Gateway SRF (MCC, 2019), Figure 16 (Northern Gateway neighbourhoods)

- 2.3 Victoria North is a unique opportunity to deliver transformational regeneration on an unprecedented scale in Manchester and helps to fulfil its potential as a truly innovative, sustainable, and world-class city. The regeneration of this area to the north-east of the city centre has the potential to unlock significant residential-led development that will positively contribute to the growth of Manchester and the wider city region. Victoria North is one of the UK's largest residential-led regeneration schemes and a unique opportunity to deliver 15,000 new homes and a world-class City River Park for Manchester.



Figure 2: Visuals showcasing the vision for Victoria North from the SRF

- 2.4 Figure 1 presents the extent of the area related to the Victoria North initiative, inclusive of the seven inter-connected neighbourhoods identified within the SRF and an 'Initial Development Area' (the red line imposed on Figure 1). This Initial Development Area comprises land owned/ controlled by MCC, FEC and third-party landowners, and has been identified by the JV as having the potential to deliver an estimated 5,500 residential units across 21 housing development plots, of which c. 4,000 units will be delivered on land owned/ controlled by the JV. The Initial Development Area shown is inclusive of the infrastructure enabling works and the subsequent built development.
- 2.5 The development project envisaged on land owned / controlled by the JV is known as the "Red Bank Neighbourhood", which will form a significant first phase of delivering the wider SRF vision. It comprises an area of approximately 20 hectares (ha) and is located within the Lower Irk Valley. Presently, the location is affected by the legacy of more than 150 years of industrial uses and Victorian / pre-Victorian infrastructure, with modified waterways; significant operational and redundant rail infrastructure; limited sewerage, water, electricity and gas infrastructure; and contaminated sites associated with textile manufacturing and other heavy industries. As a result, a comprehensive programme of infrastructure investment is required to facilitate development where works cannot be taken forward on a piecemeal, site by site basis, and are not viable for the private sector to fund in isolation.
- 2.6 Concurrent to the delivery of the key elements of the neighbourhood to be delivered by the HIF money, namely the creation of development platforms, formation of a new spine road (Phase 1), and new utilities and services connections that will allow for future residential-led development, together with new and improved green infrastructure, the JV will focus on plot development and housing delivery on land controlled / owned by the JV, which will form part of a future planning application for residential led development by FEC.

Infrastructure Funding

- 2.7 The JV has secured £51.6 million from the Government's HIF to help unlock the potential at Red Bank. The funding will be used to address a series of up-front infrastructure requirements to support the delivery of the new homes and green spaces within the Initial Development Area:
- Delivering improvements to the River Irk to enhance the river environment, with naturalisation measures to help reduce the risk of flooding.
 - Securing and clearing undeveloped brownfield land, including the removal of invasive plant species and contaminated ground.
 - Connecting the development sites to electricity, water, and drainage.
 - Delivering road upgrades and connecting development sites to the existing highways network.

Summary

- 2.8 The site forms part of the Victoria North initiative. The Victoria North initiative is one of the largest regeneration projects in the UK and comprises an area of approximately 155ha to the north of Manchester City Centre and Victoria Station offering an opportunity to deliver approximately 15,000 new homes over the next 15-20 years, along with a range of employment, social, community, cultural and ancillary uses.
- 2.9 In April 2017, MCC appointed FEC as its JV investment and delivery partner, to accelerate the delivery of the Victoria North opportunity. To unlock the full potential of the area, MCC has secured £51.6m of Government Funding through the HIF to deliver critical works to prepare the land for future residential led development within the Initial Development Area at the future Red Bank and New Town Neighbourhoods.

3. Red Bank Neighbourhood

- 3.1 As detailed in Section 2, MCC and FEC are developing proposals for a major phase of development at Victoria North. The plans include the transformation of its landholdings to create the new “Red Bank Neighbourhood”: a sustainable residential-led neighbourhood which reinvigorates the green spaces along the River Irk Valley and brings nature into the city.



Overview of Red Bank Neighbourhood

- 3.2 The emerging proposals for Red Bank Neighbourhood being promoted on land owned by the JV include:
- Approximately 4,000 homes, across a range of tenure types and sizes, including affordable homes, set within high quality public realm;
 - New community facilities;
 - 5 hectares of new or improved green space, including the revitalisation of St Catherine's Wood;
 - New walking and cycling routes to improve connections between neighbouring communities;

- Improvements to the River Irk to enhance the river environment, including measures to help prevent flooding; and,
- Low carbon neighbourhood that delivers development in a sustainable way.



3.3 The JV's proposals for the Red Bank Neighbourhood are envisaged as a single development project, including the HIF infrastructure and enabling works, and the residential led plot development associated with FEC's future planning application, which will deliver approximately 4,000 of the 5,500 new homes envisaged for the Red Bank Neighbourhood. In order to meet the HIF funding requirements, and the resulting programme implications, a series of planning applications will be submitted to MCC for approval as follows:

Application No. *	Description of Proposals	Applicant	Timescale for Submission	Timescale for Delivery
1	Advance HIF Enabling Works	• MCC	Nov '21	June '22
2	Main HIF Infrastructure Works	• MCC	Q1 '22	March '24
3	HIF Flood Defence and Alleviation Measures	• MCC	Q3 '22	March '24
4	Red Bank Neighbourhood Application	• FEC	Q2/Q3 '22	'23 - '33

* note that the application numbering does not necessarily refer to the sequencing of submissions

- 3.5 The key components of each application are briefly summarised below to give an overview of the overall project.

Advance HIF Infrastructure Enabling Works (Application 1)

- 3.6 A key condition of the HIF funding that has been secured by MCC is that the spend availability only runs until March 2024, by which time the infrastructure and enabling works must be completed. Therefore, as discussed in the preceding sections of this Statement, the infrastructure works required at the site will be split into multiple planning applications to allow an early start on site.
- 3.7 The enabling works were the subject of Application 1 (LPA reference: 132252/VO/2021), which was granted planning permission on 23rd December 2021, for the following development:
- The demolition of Creamline Dairies including partial demolition of the c. 5m high retaining wall between the Dairies site and former railway line to the immediate south-east;
 - Tree and shrub clearance to facilitate the construction of a temporary haul road; and,
 - The construction of the temporary haul road.
- 3.8 This planning application comprised the HIF enabling works and will facilitate an early start on site and clear a path for the main HIF works proposed by this application, flood works (application 3) and, ultimately, residential led development (application 4) proposed by successive prospective planning applications at the site.

Future Development Platforms and Green Infrastructure (Application 2)

- 3.9 The creation of development platforms, formation of a new spine road (Phase 1), and new utilities and services connections that will allow for future residential-led development (to be applied for in a future planning application), together with new and improved green infrastructure, including the revitalisation St Catherine's Wood as part of the City River Park, are the subject of this planning application. The works are summarised below.

Permanent Green Infrastructure and Landscaping

- 3.10 The permanent landscaping works comprise:
- The enhancement of St Catherine's Wood park to deliver c. 4.5ha of the City River Park, including vegetation planting, lighting and security, and a new circulation route access for pedestrian and cyclists leading from St Catherine's Wood bridge, including some minor reprofiling of slopes to the rear of the park and tree and shrub clearance; and

- The creation of new public realm areas in the form of Red Bank Terraces, and Union Waterfront at the southern-most extent of the site, and connecting pedestrian and cycling circulation routes.

Preparatory Works to Create Development Platforms for Future Residential Development

3.11 The preparatory works comprise:

- Demolition of sections of retaining wall. Three sections of the existing river wall adjacent to the northern banks of the River Irk are proposed for removal to facilitate the proposed earthworks and landscaping in these areas.
- Tree and shrub clearance to facilitate the construction of the residential led development platform (Red Bank Plateau) and as part of the park area/ proposed landscape improvements.
- The reclamation of the development platform at Red Bank Plateau, Red Bank Terraces and the circulation route to Union Waterfront comprising.
 - Cut and fill and remediation to the Red Bank Plateau and Red Bank Terraces, including the regrading/reprofiling of existing slopes and changing the Red Bank Plateau platform levels.
 - The reprofiling of stretches of the northern bank of the River Irk and the erection of a bund to assist with flood alleviation.

Highway Works

3.12 The highway works comprise:

- The formation of a new spine road (Phase 1) (Plateau Avenue) on Red Bank Plateau. This application is seeking planning permission for Phase 1 of the new road at Plateau Avenue. This road will be constructed with sacrificial highway and footpath finishes for Phase 1, which will be upgraded by FEC's residential led development. The detail of the road will be agreed through future reserved matters applications pursuant to FEC's prospective outline planning application (Application 4).
- The creation of a circulation route leading from 'Red Bank Terraces' and 'Union Waterfront', at the western extent of the site, to the Packaging Products access bridge, at the eastern-most point of the site, which will also be for emergency access.
- The formation of the new priority junction at Red Bank road.

Utilities Works

3.13 The utilities works comprise:

- New drainage installation including the creation of SuDS, including drainage for the future development plots (to be applied for by FEC as part of Application 4).

- Utilities and services connections for all new development plots and park/landscape/public realm areas and highways.
- Utilities diversion and new installations on Dantzic Street and new drainage installation.
- Street Works for new utilities incorporating two trenches for HV ducting from Queens Park substation to the north-east of the site, and additional utilities needs within existing streets local to the Initial Development Area.

Temporary Works

3.14 The temporary works comprise:

- Temporary construction access from the eastern-most point of the site, adjacent to the Packaging Products site.
- Temporary site security including gates and fencing to be erected during construction works.

3.15 The proposed development is detailed fully at Section 5 of this Statement.

HIF Flood Defence and Alleviation Works (Application 3)

3.16 The restoration of the River Irk and the delivery of flood alleviation initiatives is key for the success of the Red Bank and New Town Neighbourhoods. Although there have been significant improvements in water quality over the years, its re-naturalisation is fundamental for habitat creation and the return of life in and around the River Irk, as well as allow for new residential development to be built in the area.

3.17 Application 3 will focus on providing new flood alleviation as well as improvements to the river's water quality and bringing life back to the river. Key aims include:

- Making the river more naturalistic and less engineered in order to improve and create habitats, but also make access better for people.
- Delivering positive environmental change will increase biodiversity, benefiting many species.
- The trout could be used as a flagship species for the river, along with other species – a powerful metaphor for positive change.
- Parts of the river are dominated by invasive species – Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam – and there is a long term commitment to keep the invasive species under control.
- Comprehensive measures to achieve flood resilience to safeguard new and existing homes.

3.18 Subject to the agreement of flood mitigation works, Application 3 may also include new and/or improved bridges to the south of the St Catherine's Wood park providing new/ improved connections over the River Irk.

Red Bank Neighbourhood Application (Application 4)

3.19 The emerging vision for the residential led development to be applied for by FEC on JV controlled land is to deliver:

- Approximately 4,000 new homes (of the 5,500 envisaged for the Initial Development Area) across a range of tenure types and sizes, including affordable homes, set within high quality public realm;
- New community facilities; and,
- Low carbon neighbourhood that delivers development in a sustainable way.

3.20 The below diagram sets out some of the initial thoughts and ideas that have been developed for the Red Bank Neighbourhood, including how the potential residential development plots (shown as indicative locations in white on the below diagram) will sit alongside the regeneration of St Catherine's Wood, the Red Bank Viaduct, and surrounding green streets and spaces.



Summary

- 3.21 The Red Bank Neighbourhood forms part of the Initial Development Area, which has been identified as the first significant phase of delivering new residential neighbourhoods and public realm pursuant to the approved SRF for Victoria North. The Initial Development Area is intended to be transformed into a sustainable residential-led neighbourhood that can deliver approximately 5,500 new homes (including approximately 4,000 new homes to be applied for by FEC's residential-led Red Bank Neighbourhood, i.e. 'Application 4'), together with new community facilities, improved green space, new walking and cycling routes, improvements to the River Irk, and low carbon development.
- 3.22 MCC has secured £51.6m of Government Funding through the HIF to deliver critical infrastructure and enabling works within the Initial Development Area. However, a key condition of the funding is that the spend availability period runs until March 2024. Planning permission was granted for the initial advanced HIF infrastructure enabling works (Application 1) on 23rd December 2021 (LPA reference: 132252/VO/2021).
- 3.23 Planning permission is now sought for preparatory infrastructure works to create future development platforms and green infrastructure (Application 2), which will form a vital component of the proposals to ready the site for the future residential-led development proposals.

4. Site Context

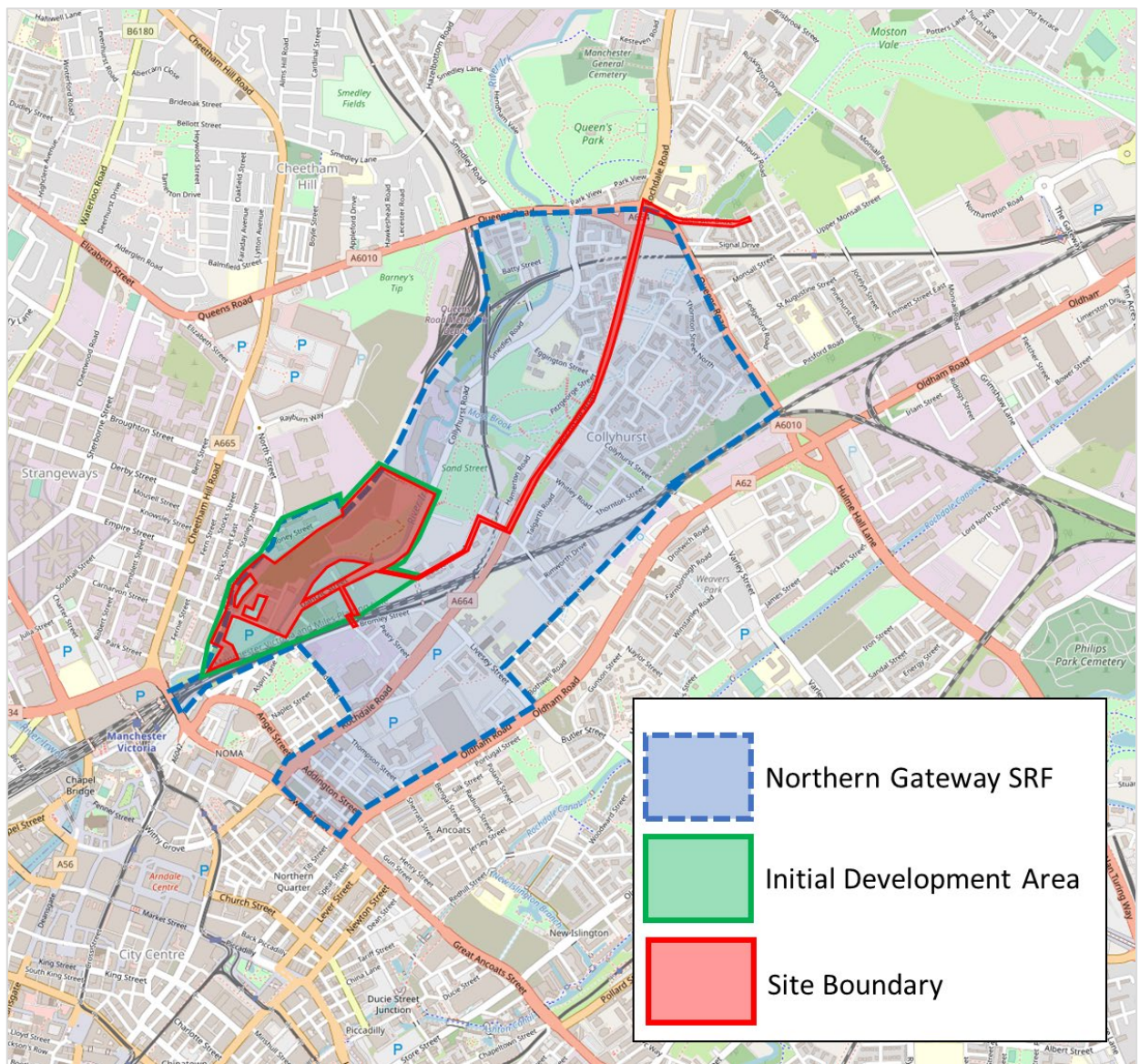
- 4.1 This section sets out the historic context and provides a detailed description of the site subject to this planning application and its surrounding area.

The Site

- 4.2 The application site extends to approximately 15.74ha and comprises an irregular shaped parcel of land to the south of Red Bank Road, Manchester. A Site Location Plan is shown below outlining the extent of the application red line boundary. The majority of the works proposed will be undertaken in Red Bank. The red line has also been extended to the north-east to cover the utility works/ new ducting required in the street up to the Queens Park substation.



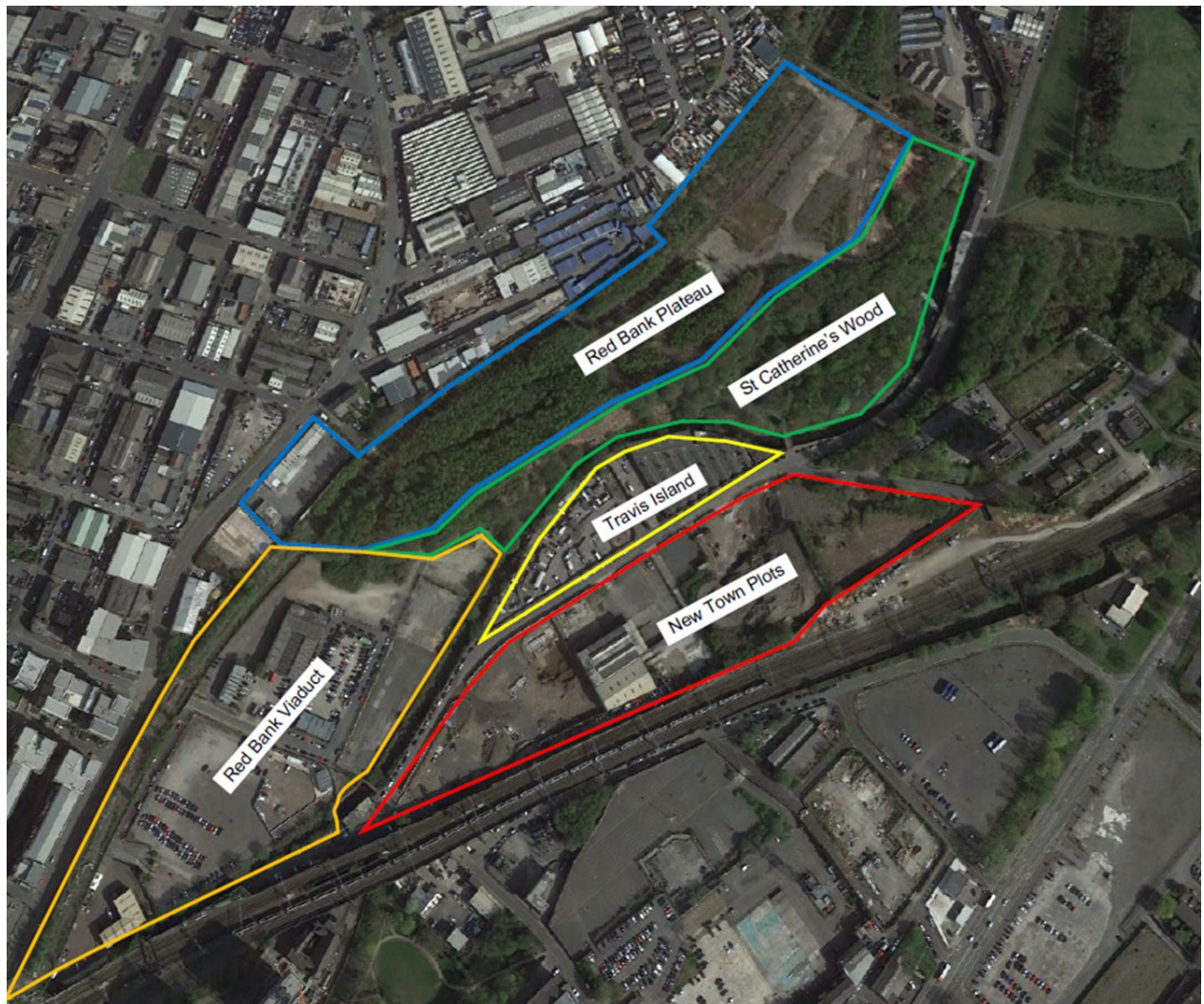
- 4.3 As noted in Section 2, the site is located within the Initial Development Area of the Northern Gateway SRF, and within the Red Bank and New Town neighbourhoods proposed by the SRF. Figure 7 below shows the application site boundary (shown in red) in the context of the wider SRF.



4.4 For the purposes of this Statement, the Initial Development Area (including the Red Bank Neighbourhood), is divided into the following areas:

- Red Bank Plateau;
- St Catherine's Wood;
- Red Bank Viaduct;
- Travis Island;
- New Town Plots.

4.5 Figure 8 below shows the extent of these areas:



- 4.6 The Red Bank Neighbourhood stretches from the edge of the Green Quarter in the south-west up to Collyhurst Road in the north-east. It includes the old Red Bank railway viaduct, the land either side of Dantzic Street, and St Catherine's Wood. The River Irk is an important asset running through the area but is largely hidden from view. The site has limited public access, and antisocial behaviour is an issue in the area owing to its sheer scale, dearth night-time uses/ activity and associated lack of surveillance.
- 4.7 It should be noted both the Travis Island and New Town Plots areas, as well as parts of the Red Bank Viaduct area, are excluded from this application's site area and therefore a description of Travis Island and New Town Plots is not provided. Additionally Figure 8 does not show the area where the utilities works are proposed in the road extending to the north-east, to cover the new ducting required up to the Queens Park substation. The areas that are the subject of these works are included within the planning application red line boundary.

Site Overview/ History

- 4.8 The Victoria North site has a legacy of more than 150 years of industrial uses and Victorian and pre-Victorian infrastructure, with modified waterways; significant operational and redundant rail infrastructure; limited sewerage, water, electricity, and gas infrastructure; and contaminated sites associated with textile manufacturing and other heavy industries.
- 4.9 Historically the area was used as railway sidings, following the route of the former Prestwich Branch of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, which started at Victoria Station to the south-west before heading north-west. This is now disused and forms a plateau above the River Irk valley to the south-east. Historical mapping shows how the River Irk was manipulated to create multiple waterways for its industrial usage to power Mills. However, the artificially created waterway disappeared in the late 19th century as the neighbouring railway was developed. In the mid to late 20th century, residential and school buildings were developed on the site.
- 4.10 We understand the use of the railway line ceased in the 1950s or early 1960s and the site has been vacant and unused for a significant period of time. Following the demolition of the railway sidings, industrial and residential buildings that once occupied the site, self-seeded vegetation took hold and screened the site's past from view.

Red Bank Plateau

- 4.11 The north of the site is characterised by Red Bank viaduct and former railway sidings. It comprises a cleared post-industrial site, which became dominated by self-seeded birch trees, a natural pioneer species, and some areas of species rich grassland (Figure 9). To the north-east of the site is extensive open hardstanding (Figure 10). Red Bank Plateau is bounded to the east by Barny's Steps.

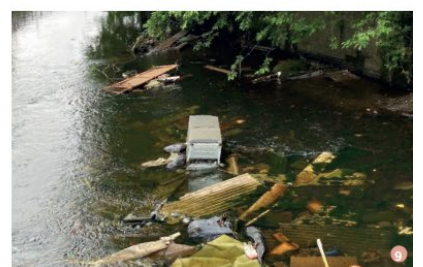
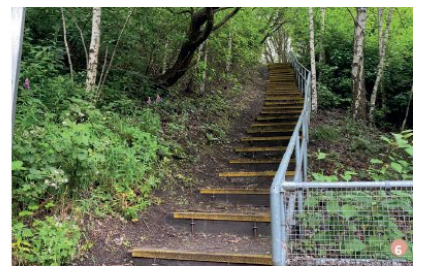
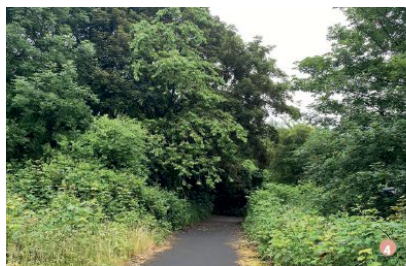




St Catherine's Wood

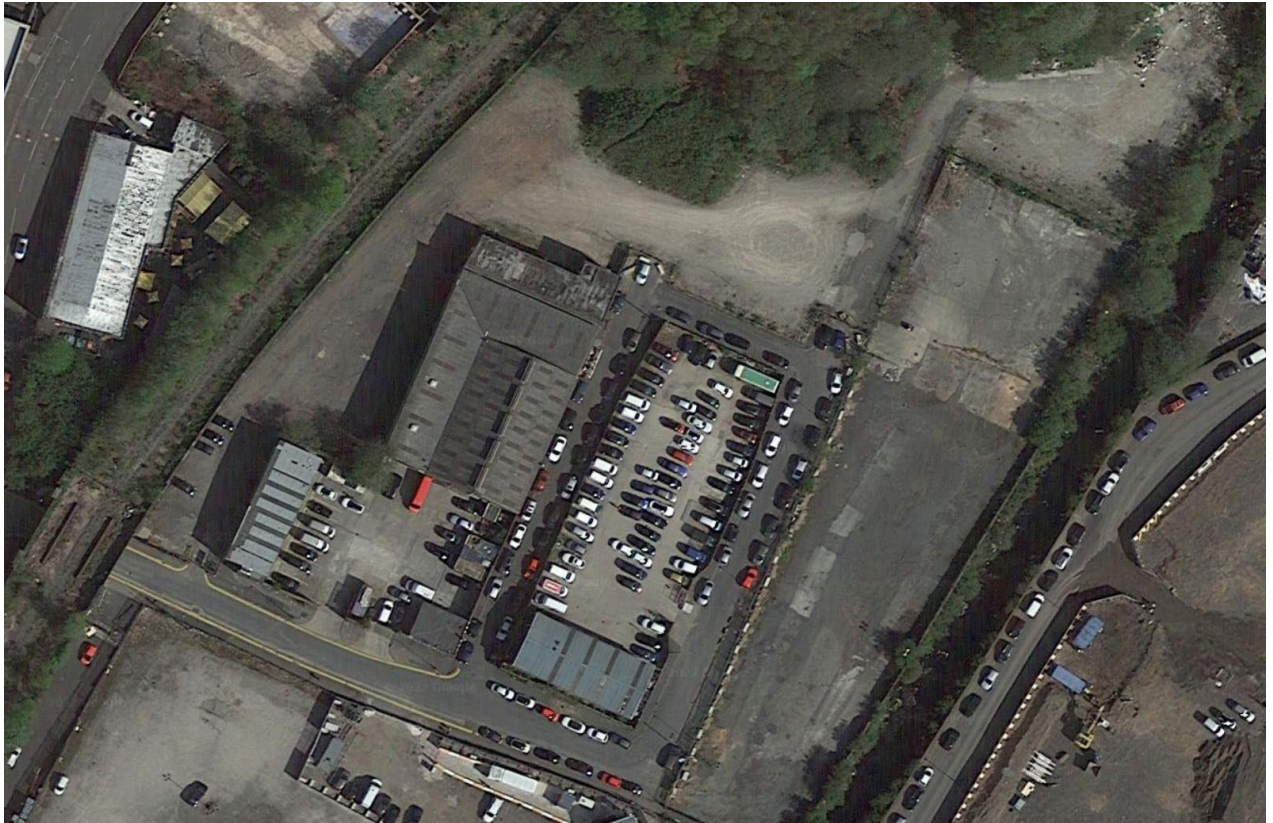
- 4.12 To the south of the site is St Catherine's Wood, which is on the site of the former Travis Isle Mill and house and St Catherine's School and Church, from whom it takes its name. The majority of the woodland is of planted origin; however, it is a locally extensive habitat and provides habitat value in the local context. There is a dominance of non-native species, such as sycamore, and dense areas of bracken are present in the south of the site. Invasive species, such as Japanese Knotweed and Indian Balsam are locally dominant along the river.
- 4.13 There are significant level changes in this area with steep embankments across dense areas of bracken. There are no formal footways across this area which is disconnected from its surroundings presently. The area also feels unwelcoming, is known for anti-social behaviour, is unmanaged and has been subject to fly-tipping and vandalism.
- 4.14 St Catherine's Wood is bound by the River Irk to the south. There is also very little/ only restricted access to the River Irk frontage. Inaccessible or incomplete footpaths are overgrown or have had access blocked completely by falling trees, vegetation or other obstacles.

- 4.15 The Grade II Listed Union Bridge is located at the southern boundary of the site, spanning the River Irk between Dantzic Street and Roger Street. However, it should be noted that the bridge is outside the planning application boundary.



Red Bank Viaduct

- 4.16 To the south-west of the site is the Red Bank Viaduct area. In its current form this area is characterised by surface car parking and hardstanding. There are also some commercial units in this area, as shown below. However, it should be noted units occupying the western area of Red Bank Viaduct, which sit outside of the JV's ownership are excluded from this application site boundary.



Statutory Designations

- **Ecology** - The site is not within, nor does it contain, any ecological designations including sites of specific interest (SSSI), sites of biological importance (SBI) or special protection areas (SPA). There is one internationally designated site for nature conservation within 10 km of the development site – Rochdale Canal Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is 4.4 km north-east of the development site. There are no statutory designated sites within 2 km of the development site and there are four non statutory local designated sites within 2 km the closest of which is Rochdale Canal Stotts Lane - Ducie Street Basin SBI. Two regionally important ecological features have been identified on-site comprising semi-natural and plantation woodland.
- **Flood Risk** - The site is located in Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3. The site is also situated within the Manchester, Salford and Trafford Critical Drainage Area (CDA). The Cheetham Hill Junction Drain (an ordinary watercourse) also runs through the site.

- **Trees** – there is a significant level of tree cover across the site, predominantly on Red Bank Plateau and St Catherine’s Wood, including semi-natural broadleaved woodland and plantation broad-leaved woodland, with tree specimens of varying age and quality. Based on the Environmental Statement (ES) submitted with the application, none of the trees on site are subject to Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).
- **Landscape** - The site is not located in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) or any other area designated for its landscape value.
- **Heritage** - The development site is not located within a Conservation Area and the site does not contain any listed buildings. There are 16 Grade II listed buildings and 1 Grade II* listed building within 500m of the site, the closest of which is the Grade II Listed Union Bridge, located on the south-eastern boundary of the site.
- **Air Quality** - The development site is not located within the Greater Manchester Combined Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). The AQMA is 150 metres from the development along Cheetham Hill Road.

Surrounding Area

- 4.17 The site is bounded by commercial and industrial uses to the north and west. To the east the site is bound by the River Irk, beyond which are existing commercial units located along Collyhurst Road and Dantzic Street. To the immediate south is further surface car parking, south of Roger Street, beyond which is the former Red Bank Viaduct.
- 4.18 As detailed at Section 2 of this Statement, the site sits within a wider strategic regeneration context, being part of the Victoria North initiative; one of the largest regeneration projects within the UK. Over the next 15 to 20 years, the surrounding area will be the subject of substantial change, with the delivery of approximately 15,000 new homes, in addition to employment, social, community, cultural and ancillary uses set to come forward.

Planning History

- 4.19 A summary of the available planning history for the site, based upon a search on MCC’s planning application database, is detailed below.
- 132252/VO/2021 - City Council Development for enabling works including tree and vegetation removal, creation of a temporary haul road and demolition of the Creamline Dairies buildings in association with the future delivery of the new Red Bank Neighbourhood. – Approved 23/12/2021
 - 088693/FO/2008/N1 - Application for temporary consent for up to 3 years for office accommodation associated storage containers and enabling works in association with Queens Road Metrolink depot operations – Temporarily Approved 15/05/2009
 - 080765/VO/2006/N1- CITY COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT erection of temporary caravan park to provide alternative accommodation for existing caravan parks for an 18 month period – Approved 22/12/2006

- 064544/FU/NORTH1/02 - Change of use of land from vehicle breakers to car park. Retention of palisade boundary fencing. – Approved 14/06/2002
- 063265/FO/NORTH1/01 - Construction of a single storey steel portal frame building – Approved 16/11/2001
- 052458/FO/NORTH1/97 - Construction depot for temporary use in connection with Manchester Victoria Railway infrastructure – Approved 10/09/1997
- 044486/OO/NORTH1/93 - Redevelopment of former railway sidings for Light Industrial Purposes (class B1) with part of the site to be retained as open land, incorporating a linear pedestrian/cycle path. – Not proceeded with 25/03/1996
- 027230 - CITY COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT Landscaping of railway embankments involving tree and shrub planting, re-surfacing of a footpath and repairs to fences – Approved 08/10/1986

Summary

- 4.20 The application site extends to approximately 15.74ha and comprises an irregular shaped parcel of land adjoining Manchester City Centre, to the north-east of Victoria Station. The site has a long history of industrial uses, but, today, the site predominantly comprises previously developed land characterised by self-seeded trees and vegetation along Red Bank Plateau, St Catherine's Wood occupies the eastern area of the site and is heavily tree-covered, whilst the south-western area of the site (Red Bank Viaduct) is characterised by surface car parking, hardstanding and industrial units.
- 4.21 Significant change and regeneration are planned for the surrounding area as presented in the Northern Gateway SRF. This planning application proposes new green space and infrastructure works which benefit from £51.6m Government funding through the HIF, to prepare the land in the Initial Development Area for new strategic residential-led development. The proposals include the creation of development platforms, formation of a new spine road (Phase 1), and new utilities and services connections that will allow for future residential-led development (to be applied for in a future planning application), together with new and improved green infrastructure, including the revitalisation St Catherine's Wood as part of the City River Park.

5. Proposed Works

- 5.1 This section provides a description of the proposals for which planning permission is sought. The application seeks full planning permission for:

“City Council Development for the creation of development platforms, including remediation and earthworks, and change in site levels, to allow delivery of future residential-led development at the Red Bank Neighbourhood, together with the construction of a new road and priority junction from Red Bank, new drainage infrastructure, utility and services connections and diversions, street works for new utilities including ducting up to the Queens Park substation, preparatory tree and shrub clearance, and demolition of certain existing structures, along with the creation of new and improved green infrastructure and landscaping including the improvements of St Catherine’s Wood to form part of a City River Park, and other associated works.”

- 5.2 A key condition of the HIF funding that has been secured by MCC is that the spend availability only runs until March 2024, by which time the infrastructure and enabling works must be completed. Therefore, the new landscaping, enabling, preparatory and flood and river works required at the site are being split into multiple planning applications. Planning permission for the initial HIF infrastructure advanced enabling works was granted in December 2021. Planning permission is now sought for green infrastructure including 4.5ha of the City River Park, creation of future Development Platforms, new spine road, and associated preparatory infrastructure works ('Application 2').
- 5.3 A high-level overview of the infrastructure works applied for by this planning application is provided at Section 3 of this Statement. The proposed Landscape General Arrangement HIF Delivery Plan (for approval) is presented below, followed by a more detailed description of each component of the works.



Permanent Landscaping

Revitalisation of St Catherine's Wood

- 5.4 St Catherine's Wood at present is a part planted, part self-seeded mixed woodland on the site of the former Travis Isle Mill and house and St Catherine's School and Church, from whom it takes its name. This character area will retain its woodland identity yet with appropriate management in place in order to secure safety and enhance its benefits to wildlife.
- 5.5 The proposals for new and improved green infrastructure include the revitalisation of St Catherine's Wood to deliver approximately 4.5ha of landscaped green space as part of the new City River Park, which is proposed as part of the Northern Gateway SRF. The proposals for St Catherine's wood comprise:

Fully accessible walking and cycling routes

- 5.6 St Catherine's Wood drops c. 10m in level from Red Bank Plateau down to the River Irk. A fully accessible 1 in 21 or greater slope is proposed within the woods for pedestrians and cyclists, that winds its way up the slope through the woodland, with shorter more direct stepped routes also available.
- 5.7 A riverside walk is proposed to run the entire length of the woodland, from Union Waterfront to meet the Red Bank Plateau development plots. As noted below some areas the existing river wall are proposed to be removed and the land reprofiled. This will allow wildlife to move freely between the river and woods, underneath a raised metal board-walk.
- 5.8 To create the circulation route and vision through St Catherine's Wood, access into the existing park will be temporarily created from the Red Bank Plateau through an area of low quality and lower density vegetation adjacent to future Plot RB04. Plots are indicatively illustrated on the Landscape General Arrangement HIF Delivery Plan (Figure 14). This will allow the riverbank wall to be removed in two short sections and the bank reprofiled to improve connectivity with the river. The excavated material will be retained within the park and used to reprofile the slope forming the circulation route through the park. The temporary access will be reinstated once the wood works have been completed.

Play space

- 5.9 Woodland play and artwork are proposed, with a focus on timber structures that will integrate within the existing trees and topography to provide interactive play elements for a wide range of child ages.
- 5.10 Equipment will be installed with sensitivity around the existing trees and with an aim to encourage children's appreciation of nature. Water play will provide a different type of engagement and a sense of connection to the River Irk.

Lighting and security

- 5.11 Lighting will be applied to the primary route through the woodland connecting the Plateau and Dantzic Street. Low intensity lighting to some areas of play will allow passive surveillance for night-time use. Areas of darkness away from the routes will be preserved for the benefit of ecology.

Existing woodland management

- 5.12 There will be some selected tree removal and management techniques utilised to open up the woodland and accommodate new accessible footways. However, the majority of trees are to be retained and sensitively integrated within the design. There will also be new tree planting in areas

where there is space in the tree cover, and tree species and planting will be introduced to increase diversity and habitat benefit.

New habitat and landscape planting

- 5.13 Informal seating terraces are proposed where there is currently a clearing in the centre of the woodland. Here orchard trees are proposed with areas of open wild-flower meadow beneath to offer a change of aesthetics and habitat and a space for people to gather.

Removal of riverbanks

- 5.14 The existing river wall will be removed along the northern bank of the River Irk, to the east of Union Bridge (which will be unaffected by the works), and reprofiled with terraces and steps, providing a new piece of engaging public realm with strong connectivity to the river. The mitigation measures for the removal of the existing river wall are detailed later in this section.
- 5.15 The existing topographical slope which is present between future Plots RB02 and RB03 and the River Irk will be regraded to address slope stability. In addition, the ground level future Plots of RB02 and RB03 will be reduced from current ground levels on the plateau to maximise the development footprint of these plots (taking consideration of the reprofiled slope). The 10m level change will be reprofiled in a series of steps and is referred to as Red Bank Terraces.

Seating areas

- 5.16 Informal seating terraces are proposed to nestle into the existing contours where there is currently a clearing in the woodland.
- 5.17 A variety of seating will be provided to suit all user groups, including options with backrests, as well as benches, and picnic tables.
- 5.18 The proposals for St Catherine's Wood are shown on the planning drawings submitted for approval as part of this planning application, including (among others): St Catherine's Wood Detailed Area Plan (Dwg reference: VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-1002) and St Catherine's Wood Sections (Dwg reference: VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-3006).



Figure 15: St Catherine's Wood Detailed Area Plan – For Approval (Dwg reference: VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-1002 P02.05)

Red Bank Terraces

- 5.19 Red Bank Terraces will see a new fully accessible cycle and pedestrian route up through the site from the River Irk alongside stepped more direct routes and informal play. The 10 metre level change between the River Irk and the development plots on the Red Bank Plateau above is currently pinched in at the point of the proposed feature steps. This significant drop is elongated out towards the river to allow for a route for both pedestrians and cyclists with a central more direct stepped route up through the centre.
- 5.20 Although most existing trees will struggle to be maintained here due to topography and engineering issues, the terraces will be heavily planted with a wide range of species. Planting will flow throughout this area of the site with several new trees of a variety of species proposed.
- 5.21 This character area also incorporates the upper and lower existing viaduct areas which will be transformed into new destination areas of public realm. Secondary, more meandering routes of

perforated metal cantilevered steps will provide a less formal means of access and allow for planting to flow beneath them.

- 5.22 A linear park will link directly into the top of the feature steps and can also be accessed via steps from the south. The form of the space is planned to be retained as much as possible as an attractive raised green and destination public realm.
- 5.23 Lighting will be applied to the winding pathways and stairs, seating areas and soft landscaping. Enhanced levels of light will be provided to changes in level at ramps and stepped routes. The Viaduct route from the top of the terraces into the city will have low level lighting to allow the sky and surrounding cityscape to take precedent.



Figure 16: Red Bank Terraces – Detailed Area Plan – For Approval (Dwg reference: VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-1013 P02.04)

- 5.24 The proposals for Red Bank terraces are shown on the planning drawings submitted for approval as part of this planning application, including (among others): Red Bank Terraces – Detailed Area Plan

(Dwg reference: VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-1013), Red Bank Sections 1 of 2 (Dwg reference: VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-3004) and Red Bank Sections 2 of 2 (Dwg reference: VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-3005).

Riverside / Union Waterfront



Figure 17: Union Plaza – Detailed Area Plan – For Approval (Dwg reference: VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-1012 Rev P02.04)

- 5.25 Riverside consists of those areas immediately adjacent to the River Irk. The river is at present neglected, largely walled along its length within the site and seemingly devoid of wildlife. With the removal of the river wall in places, clearance of rubbish and introduction of new river banks, rip rap boulders and planting it is hoped that wildlife will soon return to this ex industrial length of the river.
- 5.26 The influence of Red Bank Terraces will make its way to the river's edge with terraced seating steps and standard steps allowing access down towards the river. The removal of the existing high river walls and the introduction of new river banks and planting will allow wildlife to populate the water's edge.
- 5.27 Seating terraces and steps will create informal routes down to the water's edge and allow for small groups to congregate and enjoy being by the reinvigorated River Irk. The river banks will be cleaned

and planted with a range of biodiverse species to encourage life back to the river and allow wildlife to reach its banks.

- 5.28 It is envisaged that a bridge could be delivered (albeit this is yet to be determined) as part of the HIF River Works (Application 3) and would allow pedestrian and cycle access from Dantzic Street and the associated new development plots along its route, over the Irk and into the site. At its entry point a new open plaza would be created with links along the new riverside walk to St Catherine's Wood or to the viaduct linear park and northern development plots via Red Bank Terraces.
- 5.29 The proposals for Riverside/ Union Waterfront are shown on the planning drawings submitted for approval as part of this planning application, including (among others): Union Plaza – Detailed Area Plan (Dwg reference: VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-1012) and Union Plaza Sections (Dwg reference: VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-3003).

Preparatory Works Including Creation of Development Platforms

Demolition of Sections of Retaining Wall

- 5.30 The demolition of the Creamline Dairies buildings was approved in December 2021 under planning permission 132252/VO/2021.
- 5.31 The proposed development includes the demolition of sections of the existing river wall adjacent to the northern banks of the River Irk. The Demolition Plan (Dwg reference: VNIF-ARP-00-YYY-DR-CS-0002) outlines the location of the structures to be demolished (see Figure 18).
- 5.32 Access into the existing St Catherine's Wood will be temporarily created from the Red Bank Plateau. This will allow the riverbank wall to be removed in two short sections and the bank reprofiled to improve connectivity with the river. The excavated material will be retained within the Site and used to reprofile the slope forming a circulation route through the park. The temporary access will be reinstated once the wood works are complete.

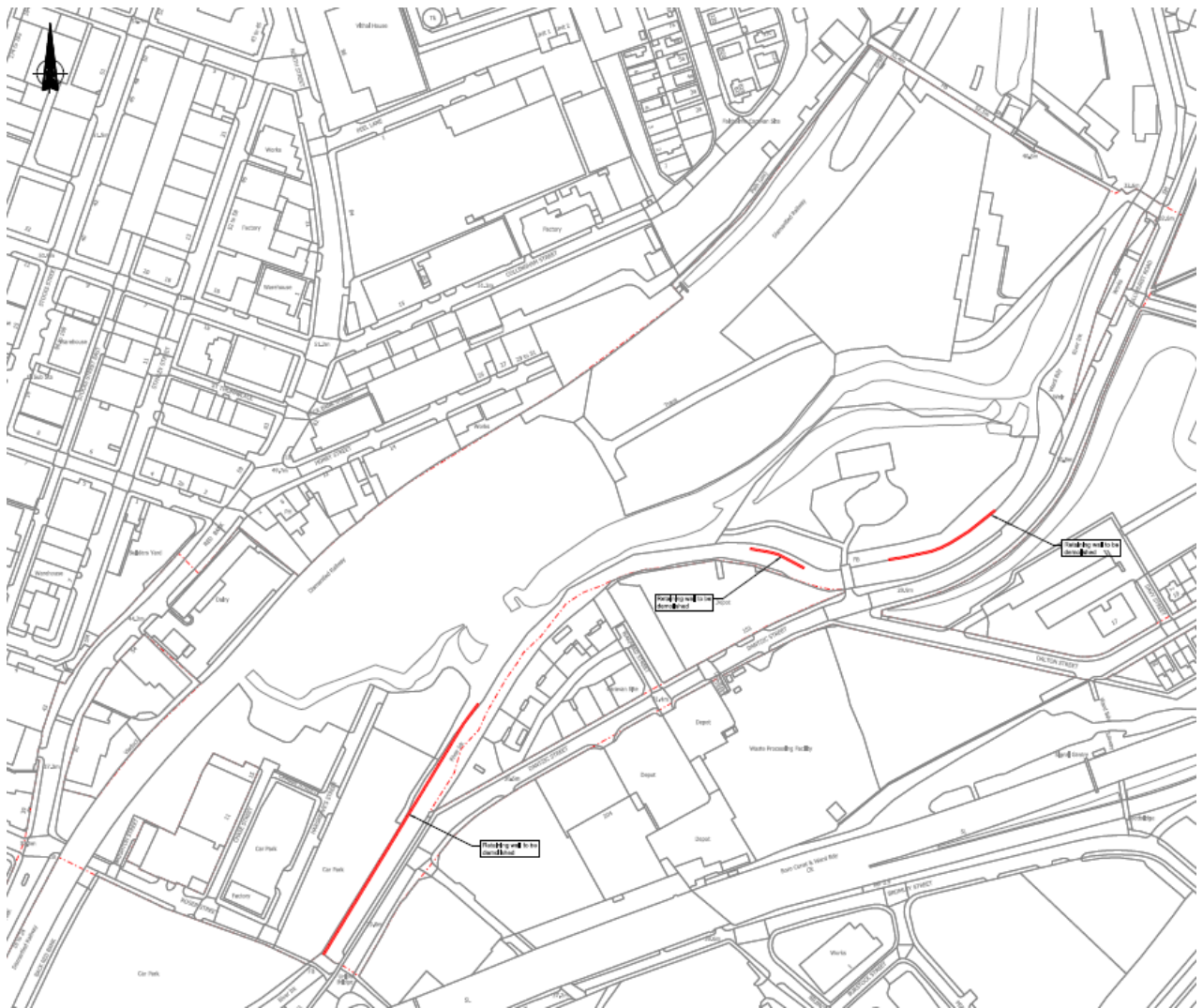


Figure 18: Demolition Plan (Dwg reference: VNIF-ARP-00-YYY-DR-CS-0002_P02)

- 5.33 The proposed removal of the wall upstream of Union Bridge will result in a slight increase to flooding levels to the south-west of the site (around Scotland Street). Therefore, mitigation measures are required with this application in order not to worsen the existing condition. Consequently, a bund is proposed to be constructed within Plot RB07 with a crest height of the 1 in 100-year event plus 40% and including 100mm freeboard. The proposed bund would be a similar length to the existing wall to provide sufficient restriction to the flows. The ultimate requirement for this bund will be reviewed in future applications for the flood alleviation works (Application 3) and for the residential-led development (Application 4) if and when additional flood alleviation works are known.

Tree and Shrub Clearance

- 5.34 Tree and vegetation clearance will be undertaken, predominantly on Red Bank Plateau and in St Catherine's Wood, to allow for the delivery of the proposed terraced routes, the formation of new development platforms and development plots. The area of vegetation to be removed on Red Bank

Plateau is largely of poor quality in ecological terms, due to its self-seeded nature, young age, lack of species diversity and poor ground flora.

- 5.35 In St Catherine's Wood, and on slopes associated with Red Bank Plateau, the scheme will look to enhance existing vegetation, and tree clearance will be limited to individual tree removal where required or appropriate to enhance the quality of the woodland.
- 5.36 Due to the level changes in St Catherine's Wood, in order to create accessible and compliant pedestrian routes a number of trees will have to be felled as the changes in contours will negatively impact their root protection areas too greatly. There are also several trees in poor condition or dead which will also be removed. Where possible, it is proposed that felled timber from the site is used within the design; for artwork, seating and log piles to act as habitats and as informal fence lines to discourage people accessing areas of the site designated as ecological / habitat zones.
- 5.37 The Tree Removal Plan below shows the existing trees / tree groups to be removed shaded red (approximately 20,560sqm) and the existing trees / tree groups to be retained shaded green (approximately 15,516sqm).

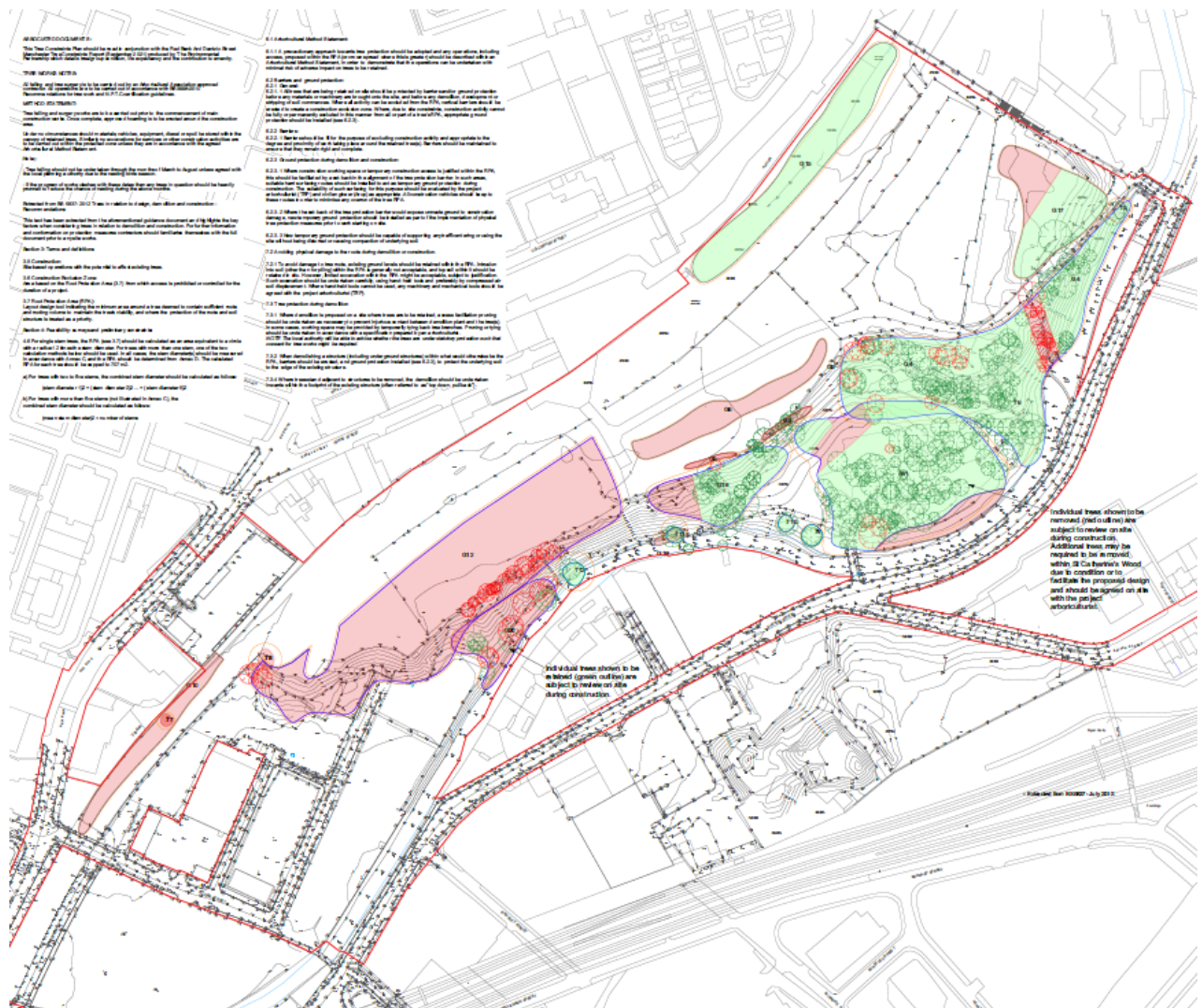


Figure 19: Tree Removal Plan (Dwg reference: VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-1006 Rev P02.06)

Reclamation of Development Platforms, Cut and Fill and Remediation

Red Bank Plateau and Circulation Route to Union Waterfront

- 5.38 The proposed development comprises the creation of a development platform within the Red Bank Plateau.
- 5.39 The Red Bank Plateau area will have obstructions removed to a depth of 2m and the site turned over to a depth of 500mm over the main Red Bank Neighbourhood area, including future Plots RB01 to RB05b and RB12b. This strategy will also be applied to the circulation route between Red Bank Terraces and the Union Waterfront and along the Public Realm area of Union Waterfront between future Plots RB07 and PB06 and the River Irk. The remediation requirements are likely to be limited to addressing any localised contamination hotspots or soft spots through excavation. Any hazardous waste will be removed from the site.

Red Bank Terraces

- 5.40 The 10m level change between the lower area adjacent to the River Irk and the upper plateau is clearly evident at the Red Bank viaduct area where the contours tighten creating a steep embankment with no access. This significant drop is elongated out towards the river to allow for a fully accessible route (1 in 21 slope) for both pedestrians and cyclists with a central more direct stepped route up through the centre.
- 5.41 The Red Bank Terrace area has been designed to primarily provide accessible water-fronting and cycling routes connecting the Red Bank Plateau area with the bottom of the bank and Union Waterfront, also creating a terraced public realm. Red Bank Terraces will be created on the existing slope through a cut and fill exercise and a series of small retaining walls aiming to minimise surplus material. A retaining wall up to 4m in height will be created to address changes in ground level between the new access adjacent to RB12b and Red Bank Terrace.

Highway Works

Construction of Plateau Avenue and New Priority Junction

- 5.42 A new circulation road is proposed (i.e. 'Plateau Avenue') which will be a private (non-adopted) highway. Plateau Avenue would run from a new priority junction on Red Bank to the west of the Site, which would be adopted by MCC.
- 5.43 For the purposes of this application the proposed road will be constructed with sacrificial highway and footpath finishes which will be upgraded in future by FEC's residential led development. The detail of the road will be agreed through future reserved matters applications pursuant to FEC's prospective outline planning application (Application 4).
- 5.44 The road is proposed to traverse the northern area of the Site along Red Bank Plateau. The initial bend has a carriageway width to allow two large vehicles to pass. Once on the plateau the carriageway width is reduced to 6.0m, which allows two wide vehicles to pass with caution. A one-way loop would encircle plot RB05a with a width of 4.5m, which allows enough space for a vehicle to pass a stationary car.
- 5.45 The avenue has been designed/ dimensioned such that it could accommodate future on-street parking bays, with parking dispersed along the full length of Plateau Avenue, the detail of which will be provided in reserved matters applications pursuant to FEC's prospective outline planning application (Application 4).
- 5.46 Street tree planting is proposed as part of this planning application between areas allocated for future parking and loading to break up the space. A sacrificial highway finish is being applied for within this

planning application, with the permanent highway finishes being delivered as part of future applications and are not therefore applied for by this particular planning application.

Creation of Circulation Routes

- 5.47 As part of the Circulation Strategy, an active travel route has been incorporated within the design along the edge of Red Bank Plateau, overlooking St Catherine's Wood and the wooded embankment. This will also provide emergency access provision from the P&P bridge and Town Square to the rear of the Plots RB01 to RB05.
- 5.48 To the river's edge along the north bank there will be a pedestrian circulation route that connects the Union Waterfront public realm with the new park at St Catherine's Wood.
- 5.49 As noted above, a fully accessible 1 in 21 slope route is proposed through Red Bank Terrace. Steps will provide a shorter route option for those who prefer, these are to be fully compliant with handrails and tactile paving to the top and bottom. Seating options will be provided along this route to allow people to rest.
- 5.50 Stepped routes, like at Red Bank Terraces, provide short cuts through the twisting 1 in 21 sloped route that traverses the level change between the plateau and central St Catherine's Wood area. Whilst St Catherine's Wood can be circumnavigated via smoothed surfaced shallow routes the centre of the woodland and play area is to be surfaced in narrower bark paths so as to be fully permeable and more suited to a wildlife habitat.
- 5.51 An existing 1 in 9 slope located to the north-east of St Catherine's Wood is set to be retained and resurfaced as part of the proposals as without significant re-levelling and tree felling a 1 in 21 slope could not be achieved here down to meet the existing bridge and the sloped route will offer a potentially important pedestrian and cycle link north.



Figure 20: Access and Movement Plan (for illustrative purposes only)

Drainage and Utilities Works

New Drainage Installations including SuDS

- 5.52 The proposed development includes the provision of drainage for the new highway and drainage connections for future residential development Plots RB01 to RB05b and RB12b. The drainage output for the HIF Infrastructure Works will be a series of sustainable drainage networks, which will collect the required surface and foul water from the site.
- 5.53 A large area of the site is proposed to be expansive areas of planting or permeable hard materials such as bark paths or metal grated and composite decking paths that will be elevated above the planted terrain below. These elevated paths will allow for the protection of existing tree roots and allow water, vegetation and wildlife to pass freely beneath them.

- 5.54 Alongside areas of hard landscaping, such as the road, service routes and plazas, SuDS will provide a vital tool for absorbing surface water runoff as well as an attractive and urban cooling landscape feature.
- 5.55 The surface water will discharge at a restricted rate to the River Irk in three locations. The excess water will be stored in a series of SuDS throughout the site with the primary aim of controlling and storing at source. These SuDS will be in the form of mainly permeable paving but also swales and tree pits. There will be additional SuDS storage for the main run through the site in the form of a detention basin.
- 5.56 Foul water will be collected and passed through a proposed network to one of two proposed connection points to the existing combined network (the combined sewer passing through the centre of site or the combined sewer that is present in Roger Street to the west of site).
- 5.57 The steep 10m gradients from the plateau down to meet the River Irk will be retained yet softened in places and form a dramatic level change through the site, unusual for Manchester. Planting will help absorb much of the storm-water on its way down to the river.
- 5.58 Along the river's edge new planting banks will be introduced to help reinvigorate the Irk as well as helping with future flood prevention.

Utilities and Services Connections

- 5.59 New utilities networks are proposed within the site, including telecoms, drainage (surface water and foul), electricity (HV&LV) and water. These are routed along the proposed Plateau Avenue, within the proposed parkland, and include upgrades to existing assets within existing streets (Red Bank, Roger Street, Chase Street, Hargreaves Street and Dantzic Street). Utility networks constructed along existing carriageways will be undertaken as Street Works.

Dantzic Street Works and Utility River Crossings

- 5.60 New electricity HV network expansion and a new surface water sewer are proposed along Dantzic Street. A new river crossing is proposed to enable utility network expansions. This will be a buried 'u-tube' crossing installed in a trench across the bed of the river. The trench crossing is positioned approximately 50m upstream of Union Bridge to minimise interaction with the downstream river restoration works associated with the prospective Application 3 (HIF Flood Defence and Alleviation Works), which is detailed at Section 2 of this Statement. The 'u-tube' will be a ducted solution with a chamber on either side, one along Dantzic Street and the other on Union Waterfront.

Street Works to Queens Park Substation

- 5.61 The new HV ring mains to supply electricity to the site will be fed from Queens Park primary substation, approximately 2km north of the site. It is anticipated that two trenches may be required for this cable routing due to spatial constraints with existing assets. They are likely to be routed along Dalton Street and Rochdale Road. This HV network will be installed as Street Works, in accordance with the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991.

Temporary Works

- 5.62 The proposed development also includes for temporary works comprising: temporary construction access from the eastern-most point of the site, adjacent to the Packaging Products site; and temporary site security including gates and fencing to be erected during construction works.
- 5.63 Pedestrian pathways between the waterfront and Red Bank terraces and Plateau will be lit using temporary equipment, to provide safe routes during construction periods.

Summary

- 5.64 This section has described the HIF main infrastructure works proposed as part of this full planning application which will be undertaken to prepare the area for future phases of the Red Bank Neighbourhood development, which will be the subject of a separate planning applications submitted to MCC in due course.

6. Community Consultation

6.1 This section is structured into a number of sub-sections and aims to:

- Provide an overview of national and local policy that is relevant to pre-application community engagement in Manchester;
- Summarise the public consultation for the proposed development undertaken; and,
- Outline the comments received during the pre-application consultation and how these have informed the final proposals.

Planning Policy and Legislative Context

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

6.2 The NPPF sets out that the purpose of the planning system is to help deliver sustainable development and in doing so should be a collective enterprise. The NPPF specifically promotes pre-application engagement and the frontloading of consultation, the purpose being to identify issues that can be resolved at the pre-application stage enabling the planning system to function more effectively and efficiently.

6.3 As set out in this section, comprehensive stakeholder and community consultation has taken place prior to the submission of the planning application in full accordance with guidance set out within the NPPF.

Localism Act (2011)

6.4 The Localism Act provides the context within which the planning system operates. The Localism Act was given Royal Assent on 15 November 2011, setting out the Government's intention of shifting power from central Government back into the hands of individuals, communities and Councils. The Localism Act introduced a number of changes to government policy including:

- Decentralisation and strengthening local democracy;
- Community empowerment; and,
- Re-booting of the planning system including neighbourhood planning.

6.5 This Act places a responsibility on applicants to:

- Consult communities, having regard to any advice that their local planning authority may provide;
- Consider any responses before they finalise proposals and submit their applications; and,

- Account for how they have consulted the local community, what comments they have received and how they have taken those comments into account.

Manchester City Council's Pre-Application Engagement Expectations

- 6.6 On 11th June 2018 the Council adopted a refreshed Manchester Statement of Community Involvement ('MSCI') which sets out how residents and other stakeholders can get involved in the preparation of planning policies, frameworks, and neighbourhood planning processes in Manchester.
- 6.7 For significant development proposals, the MSCI encourages developers to involve the community prior to the submission of the planning application. The responsibility is placed upon the developer to ensure that appropriate pre-application consultation is carried out.
- 6.8 The Applicant's approach to pre-application consultation was underpinned by the general principles set out within the MSCI. A summary of consultation activities undertaken by the Applicant is set out in the remainder of this section of the Planning Statement.

Consultation with Key Stakeholders and the Community

- 6.9 There has been extensive consultation with key stakeholders and the local community on the wider vision and emerging proposals for Victoria North during the preparation of the SRF, including the principles for development in Red Bank, new public realm, and the new City River Park.
- 6.10 The Applicant's consultation strategy seeks to draw together the different aspects of the scheme being progressed through separate planning applications in order to create a cohesive and easy-to-follow consultation process to ensure local communities and interest groups can genuinely influence the development of the plans.

Phase One Community Consultation: October 2021

- 6.11 This first phase of consultation was open from Thursday 21st October until Thursday 4th November 2021.
- 6.12 The consultation introduced the project in the context of the wider vision for Victoria North, as well as outlining the movement strategy, the vision for public spaces and placemaking and proposals for restoring the River Irk. Due to the complexity of the regeneration proposals at the Red Bank Neighbourhood, the consultation material made it clear that a series of planning applications would be proposed to set out the infrastructure, park, flood alleviation, river enhancements and residential ambitions for the neighbourhood and provided a consultation timeline. It was clearly stated that from October 2021 and continuing into mid-2022, persons will have the opportunity to provide their views

and influence the plans at several different stages. Timescales for future consultation were outlined, and consultees were encouraged to submit feedback to help shape the proposals at this early stage, and to sign up for future updates.

- 6.13 The consultation comprised a consultation website with all the latest news, consultation documents and feedback questionnaires in an accessible format (www.redbank-regeneration.co.uk) went live on Thursday 14th October 2021. Consultation leaflets were distributed to 3,126 properties. The leaflet included details of the proposals, the consultation website and the consultation events being held. Two consultation events were also hosted at GRUB, 50 Red Bank, Manchester, M4 4HF, a commercial space on Red Bank, on 21st and 22nd October 2021.
- 6.14 This initial stage of consultation saw a total of 20 responses. This included 13 responses through the online survey form, 3 paper forms collected at events and 4 emails. Most respondents were individuals who identified as local residents. Feedback was generally positive, with support for the vision for the Red Bank Neighbourhood and the City River Park, and improvements to the area more generally. There was also strong support for each of the proposals for restoring the River Irk and the uses and activities listed in relation to the park - particularly nature trails, seating and cycle lanes. In terms of movement and connectivity, there was particular support for new and enhanced cross valley links, including new bridges over the river.
- 6.15 A small number of comments expressed concern about noise, light pollution and other disturbance as a result of construction works, as well as tree loss from St Catherine's Wood.

Phase Two Community Consultation: December 2021

- 6.16 A further phase of consultation was undertaken in December 2021 presenting further information on the updated plans for the Red Bank Neighbourhood, as well as more detailed design for the City River Park and other aspects of the masterplan.
- 6.17 The following communication methods were employed to publicise the Phase 2 community consultation:
- Consultation Postcard – Consultation postcards were distributed to an area of 3,126 residential and commercial properties on 1st December 2021. The postcard provided details of the consultation process and the two drop-in information events taking place during the consultation process.
 - Media Coverage - A press release was issued on Monday 6th December 2021 by MCC and was included on their website.

- Print / Online Media - The press release issued by FEC was picked up by several news outlets who then issued their own articles, including: Business Live, About Manchester, The Manc, Insider Media, The Business Desk, and Place North West.
- Social Media - Information about the consultation process was also posted on social media by MCC's Neighbourhood team accounts and by FEC.
- Consultation Events - Two events were held at different times of day, allowing people to attend at a time that suited them: Wednesday 8 December 2021, 3pm until 7pm, at GRUB (50 Red Bank, Manchester M4 4HF) and Thursday 9 December 2021, 4pm until 7.30pm at Abbott Community Primary School (Livesey St, Collyhurst, M40 7PR).

6.18 A total of 34 responses were received during this phase of consultation of which four were received via the project email address, 18 via the online feedback form, and 12 via the paper feedback forms completed at events.

6.19 Feedback to the consultation was generally positive. At this stage, respondents expressed support for the vision for the Red Bank Neighbourhood, the detailed proposals for part of the City River Park, and the proposals to include of a new primary school (proposed as part of the FEC masterplan in Application 4). There was also support in the feedback for the various non-residential uses proposed as part of the FEC masterplan, particularly retail, service and cultural facilities. Respondents also put forward a number of suggestions, for example, around signage, prioritising active travel routes, the accessibility of these routes and the provision for different the groups within the park.

6.20 The second stage of consultation closed on 7th January 2022. Section 9 of the submitted SCI presents the consultation feedback by thematic area and provides the Applicant's response to each issue or concern raised.

Consultation with MCC Officers

6.21 As part of the Phase 1 consultation process, pre-application meetings were held with MCC Planning Officers on 27th August 2021 and 13th October 2021 to discuss the proposed planning strategy, the acceptability of phased, linked planning applications, the intended content of each of the planning applications and the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) associated with each.

6.22 A further pre-application meeting was held with MCC Planning Officers on 25th January 2022 relating specifically to this application for the future development platforms, new spine road, and associated infrastructure works, as well as the new and improved green infrastructure including revitalisation of St Catherine's Wood. An overview of the proposed works was provided, and the Biodiversity Net Gain Strategy and landscaping proposals were discussed. An update on the public consultation undertaken to date was also provided to Officers.

Consultation with Key Stakeholders

Elected Political Representatives

- 6.23 Political representatives were engaged with ahead of and throughout the consultation period to obtain their thoughts on the proposals and how best to engage with their constituents. The political representatives engaged with included the: Executive Member for Housing and Employment, Executive Member for Environment, and Local Ward Councillors for Cheetham, Piccadilly, Harpurhey, and Miles Platting and Newton.

Community Groups

- 6.24 The Applicant identified and engaged with a number of organisations, ensuring that they were made aware of the proposals and given the opportunity to provide feedback, including:
- **Friends of St Catherine's Wood** - Online meeting with design team on 16th November 2021.
 - **Manchester Green Infrastructure Group** - Presentation to Manchester Green Infrastructure Group on 30th November 2021.
 - **MCC Parks Service Age Friendly Steering Group** - Presentation on Designs for the Red Bank Park on 8th December 2021.
- 6.25 A full list of the community groups, and education and health organisations is provided in the accompanying SCI prepared by Counter Context. Local businesses were also consulted and invited to comment on the proposals and/or attend one of the consultation events.

Technical Consultees

- 6.26 Various consultation meetings have also taken place with other key stakeholders and technical consultees about the application strategy and wider Red Bank Neighbourhood project including the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) and the Environment Agency (EA).
- 6.27 Meetings were held with GMEU in November 2021 to discuss specifically the HIF infrastructure enabling works, but also the wider strategy for ecological mitigation within the wider Red Bank Neighbourhood including the phased submission of planning applications. GMEU accepted the strategy in principle and considered that appropriate mitigation could be secured through the four planning applications envisaged for the Red Bank Neighbourhood project as a whole.
- 6.28 Various key stakeholders/ consultees have been consulted at pre-application stage, including discussions around key planning matters and also feedback in response to the submitted EIA Scoping

Exercise. Comments have been received from the following consultees in preparing the planning application:

- Manchester Airport Group;
- Environment Agency;
- Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council (Ecology);
- MCC Environmental Protection;
- MCC Lead Local Flood Authority;
- Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS);
- MCC Highways;
- Historic England;
- Natural England; and,
- Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM).

6.29 Table 2.1 of the ES provides a detailed summary of the comments received from the above consultees regarding the EIA scope.

Summary

6.30 The Applicant has sought to work proactively with MCC, key stakeholders and the local community through early pre-application discussions regarding the proposed HIF works and the wider Red Bank Neighbourhood proposals.

7. Planning Policy Framework

- 7.1 This section sets out the relevant national and local planning policy and other material considerations that the proposed development will be assessed against.

Development Plan

- 7.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to determine planning applications in accordance with policies contained within the Statutory Development Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. In this case the Development Plan for MCC comprises:

- The Manchester Core Strategy (adopted July 2012) and Proposals Map; and,
- Saved policies from the Unitary Development Plan (2004).

Manchester Core Strategy

- 7.3 The Manchester Core Strategy was adopted by the City Council on 11 July 2012. It is the key document in Manchester's Local Development Framework. The Core Strategy sets out the long-term strategic planning policies for Manchester's future development. A number of UDP policies have been saved until replaced by further development plan documents to accompany the Core Strategy.
- 7.4 The Manchester Core Strategy divides the city into five regeneration areas in addition to the City Centre. The site is located within the North Manchester Regeneration Area. The site is also identified as being within an 'Inner Area' (Policy SP 1).
- 7.5 **Policy SP 1 – Spatial Principles** - provides the key spatial principles that will guide the strategic development of Manchester to 2027. The majority of new residential development will be in the Inner Areas, defined by the North Manchester, East Manchester and Central Manchester Regeneration Areas. All development should have regard to the character, issues and strategy for each regeneration area as described in Strategic Regeneration Frameworks and the Manchester City Centre Strategic Plan.
- 7.6 **Policy H 3 – North Manchester** - states that North Manchester, over the lifetime of the Core Strategy, will accommodate around 20% of the new residential development in Manchester. Priority will be given to family housing and other high value, high quality development where this can be sustained. Paragraph 9.18 of the justification text states that much of the land in North Manchester is of low value or in need of remediation.

- 7.7 The above policies provide the context for residential development at the wider Victoria North area including the Red Bank Neighbourhood site, which the proposed HIF infrastructure works are a critical part of.

Other Relevant Core Strategy Policies

- 7.8 **Policy EN 8 – Adaptation to Climate Change** – directs that all new development will be expected to be adaptable to climate change and should have regard to (among others), the opportunity to provide linked and diverse green space to enhance natural habitats which will assist species adaptation.
- 7.9 **Policy EN 9 – Green Infrastructure** – states that new development will be expected to maintain existing green infrastructure in terms of its quantity, quality and multiple function. It states that where the opportunity arises, and in accordance with current Green infrastructure Strategies, the Council will encourage 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.
- 7.10 **Policy EN 10 – Safeguarding Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities** – states that the Council will seek to retain and improve existing open spaces, sport and recreation facilities to the standards set out above and provide a network of diverse, multi-functional open spaces. Proposals will be supported that: improve the quality and quantity of accessible open space, sport and recreation in the local area; provide innovative solutions to improving the network of existing open spaces, increase accessibility to green corridors, and enhance biodiversity; and, improve access to open space for disabled people.
- 7.11 **Policy EN 11 – Quantity of Open Space, Sport and Recreation** – states that the Council will seek the provision of new open space, sport and recreation facilities. It is further stated that new open spaces should be interconnected, to allow for better links for disabled people, pedestrians and cyclists both across and between sites and to enhance the biodiversity of the City.
- 7.12 **Policy EN 12 – Area priorities for Open Space, Sport and Recreation** – states that in the north area the priority is to ensure that new development will deliver improvements to the quality of existing provision.
- 7.13 **Policy EN 14 – Flood Risk** – requires a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment in line with national guidance.
- 7.14 **Policy EN 16 – 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 at Manchester Airport.

- 7.15 **Policy EN 17 – Water Quality** – states that development should avoid any adverse impact on water quality, including during the construction phase, and wherever possible should seek to enhance water quality, both chemical and ecological. Development should minimise surface water run-off from development and associated roads, and maximise the use of appropriate sustainable drainage systems, to minimise groundwater contamination, and to avoid pollutants reaching watercourses.
- 7.16 **Policy EN 18 – Contaminated Land and Ground Stability** – states that the Council will give priority for the remediation of contaminated land to strategic locations as identified within the Core Strategy.
- 7.17 **Policy DM 1 – Development Management** – states that all development should have regard to specific issues including, inter alia:
- Effects on amenity, including privacy, light, noise, vibration, air quality, odours, litter, vermin, birds, road safety and traffic generation;
 - Vehicular access and car parking;
 - Flood risk and drainage; and,
 - Existing or proposed hazardous installations.
- 7.18 **Policy T 1 – Sustainable Transport** – seeks 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 carbon free modes of transport.

Relevant Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Policies

- 7.19 The Manchester UDP was adopted by the Council in July 1995. The Manchester Core Strategy replaces significant elements of the UDP.
- 7.20 **Citywide Development Control Policy DC20.1 – Archaeology** – states that the Council will give particular careful consideration to development proposals which affect scheduled Ancient Monuments and sites of archaeological interest, to ensure their preservation in place.
- 7.21 **Citywide Development Control Policy DC26.1 – Development and Noise** – states that the Council intends to use the development control process to reduce the impact of noise on people living and working in, or visit, the City.
- 7.22 **Part 1 Environmental Improvement and Protection Policy E3** - states that the Council will create a network of safe and attractive major linear recreational open spaces by linking and making better use of river valleys, canals, disused railways and other appropriate areas of open space.

Material Planning Considerations

7.23 There are a series of other planning policy guidance documents at a local and national level that are relevant to the determination of this application, including:

- Regeneration Frameworks;
- The National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') (July 2021); and,
- Planning Practice Guidance (last updated June 2021).

7.24 A summary of the documents listed is set out below.

Regeneration Frameworks Manchester

Northern Gateway Strategic Regeneration Framework (2019)

7.25 The Northern Gateway SRF was endorsed by MCC at the City Council's Executive on 13th February 2019 and is a material consideration for all relevant planning applications within the Northern Gateway (now known as 'Victoria North'). The SRF proposes seven interconnected neighbourhoods which comprise: Collyhurst; New Cross; New Town; Red Bank; South Collyhurst; Vauxhall Gardens; and Eggington Street and Smedley Dip.

7.26 The regeneration of the Northern Gateway will need to effectively integrate these neighbourhoods, providing critical connections and achieving high-quality place making, to ensure comprehensive regeneration in the north and east of the city. The SRF sets out a vision to deliver approximately 15,000 homes supported by social and physical infrastructure including a new City River Park which will connect Queens Park and Angel Meadow.

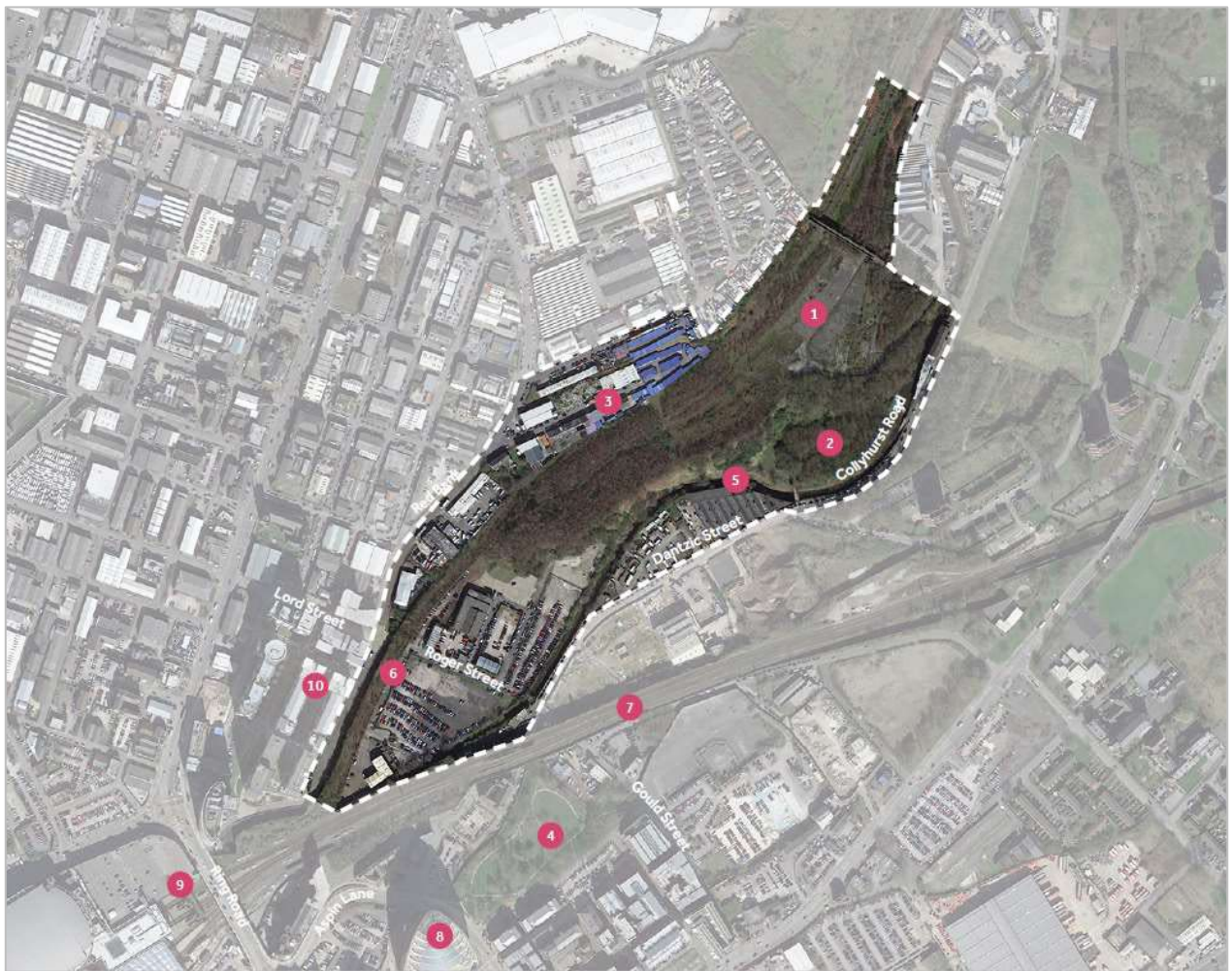


Figure 21: Red Bank Site Diagram from Northern Gateway SRF

- 7.27 According to Figure 16 ('Northern Gateway neighbourhoods') of the SRF, the site is located predominantly within 'Red Bank', but also extends to the south into 'New Town'. The SRF states that, *"Red Bank will be a residential-led neighbourhood, where the unique topography and river setting will make it a suitable location for high-density development, set in a green valley that is punctuated with industrial heritage and an extensive, but currently under-utilised landscape"* (p.129).

Lower Irk Valley Neighbourhood Development Framework (2016)

- 7.28 This Neighbourhood Development Framework ('NDF') has now been replaced by the Northern Gateway SRF. In 2016, the NDF was prepared to guide the future development of the Lower Irk Valley in order to ensure a quality of new development and supporting public realm, highways and other community infrastructure that will result in a safe, accessible, vibrant, unique and sustainable residential-led neighbourhood.

North Manchester Strategic Regeneration Framework (2012)

- 7.29 The North Manchester Strategic Regeneration Framework ('NMSRF') seeks to guide the future regeneration and development of North Manchester. It provides an updated analysis of the physical (Place) and socioeconomic (People) characteristics of the area and sets out the strategic context and policy framework that will underpin future activity in the six Wards of Charlestown, Cheetham, Crumpsall, Harpurhey, Higher Blackley, Moston and the South Collyhurst neighbourhood area of Miles Platting & Newton Heath.

SRF Context Summary

- 7.30 In summary, there is a comprehensive and positive strategic regeneration context which underpins and supports the redevelopment of Victoria North to provide high quality, high density residential-led development at the Red Bank Neighbourhood site.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 7.31 The National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') was first published on 27th March 2012. On 24th July 2018, the Government published updated NPPF guidance. This has since been updated further in February 2019 and, most recently, in July 2021. The NPPF is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

- 7.32 **Paragraph 11** of the NPPF relates to sustainable development and states that:

"Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development... For decision-taking this means:

- approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date¹, granting permission unless:
- the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed², or

¹ 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 74); 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.

² 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 181) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined

- 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.”

7.33 **Paragraph 60** of the NPPF relates to delivering a sufficient supply of homes and states that,

“To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.”

7.34 **Paragraph 98** states that access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change.

7.35 **Section 11** of the NPPF seeks to make efficient use of land and Paragraph 119 states that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment.

7.36 **Paragraph 111** states that 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.

7.37 **Paragraph 169** states that major developments should incorporate sustainable drainage systems unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate.

7.38 **Paragraph 174** deals with the natural environment and states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by (among others) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity and helping to improve local environmental conditions.

7.39 **Paragraph 183** states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that: a) a site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination.

Planning Practice Guidance

7.40 On 6th March 2014 the Department for Communities and Local Government launched the online Planning Practice Guidance (‘PPG’) as a web-based resource to further simplify and bring together

as Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 68); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.

planning practice guidance for England in an accessible and usable way. The PPG is regularly updated and is intended to assist practitioners and provide further guidance on the interpretation of national planning policy within the NPPF. It is therefore a significant material consideration in the determination of the application.

Other Material Considerations

7.41 Other material considerations relevant to the determination of this application, include:

- The emerging Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document;
- A Strategy for revitalising Manchester's River Valleys and Urban Waters 2021-2030; and
- Emerging Manchester Local Plan.

Emerging Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document

7.42 Places for Everyone is a long-term plan of nine Greater Manchester districts (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan) for jobs, new homes, and sustainable growth. It has been published by the GMCA on behalf of the nine districts. The Plan was considered at the Places for Everyone Joint Committee on 20 July 2021 and was subsequently approved by each of the nine districts for publication under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) England Regulations 2012.

7.43 The Plan is the result of a process that began as the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework ('GMSF') in 2014 and has been informed by the feedback received from residents, businesses and the development industry to previous consultations on that Plan. The nine districts decided to continue to produce a joint plan following the withdrawal of Stockport Council from the GMSF during 2021.

7.44 Consultation on the Publication Stage Plan took place between 9th August and 3rd October 2021. The Plan will now be submitted to the Secretary of State for examination ahead of its intended adoption in 2023. The Plan seeks to focus significant growth and delivery of new residential homes on brownfield land, such as Victoria North.

A Strategy for revitalising Manchester's River Valleys and Urban Waters 2021-2030

7.45 A Strategy for revitalising Manchester's River Valleys and Urban Waters 2021-2030 ('the Strategy') was published in December 2021. The Strategy is the most comprehensive re-assessment and appraisal of Manchester's three main river valleys ever undertaken. The development of this Strategy was undertaken by consultants TEP in partnership with the Groundwork Trust and Mersey Rivers Trust.

- 7.46 The Strategy refers to the City River Park and states that the character of the river will form the centrepiece of the area's regeneration. The Strategy also states that Red Bank viaduct will contribute to an iconic public realm, whereas St Catherine's Wood will be tranquil, with reflective waterside spaces. It is recognised that, with regard to the City River Park Plan, opportunities such as this – a river valley on the edge of the most vibrant and dynamic city centre in the UK – are few and far between.

Emerging Manchester Local Plan

- 7.47 MCC is beginning a review of the Core Strategy and the saved policies from the Unitary Development Plan. The first stage of consultation on the Local Plan Issues document was recently consulted on between 7th February and 1st May 2020. Given that the new Local Plan is at a very early stage and there are currently no draft policies to assess, it can be afforded no weight in the decision-making process at this time.

Summary

- 7.48 This Section of the SPS has identified a series of Development Plan Documents and other material planning considerations to be considered in the determination of the application. The proposals are for infrastructure works that will prepare the site for residential development in accordance with adopted planning policies and guidance and a comprehensive and positive strategic regeneration context.

8. Appraisal of the Proposals

8.1 This section of the SPS assesses the proposed development against the relevant policies of the Development Plan and other material considerations described in Section 7 of this SPS.

8.2 The following key considerations are addressed:

1. Strategic Regeneration Context
2. Principle of Development
3. Green Infrastructure and City River Park
4. Highways Works
5. Trees and Ecology
6. Drainage and SuDS
7. Utilities and Services
8. Scheme Benefits

1) Strategic Regeneration Context

8.3 Regeneration is an important planning consideration and one of MCC's stated priorities for ensuring continued economic growth is the continued social, economic and environmental regeneration of the City (Policy EC 1). Over the past fifteen years MCC has successfully regenerated areas such as Piccadilly, Spinningfields, Manchester Central, the Northern Quarter, the Civic Quarter and Castlefield. Victoria North is now a strategic regeneration priority for MCC, being a unique opportunity to deliver transformational regeneration on an unprecedented scale in Manchester, helping to fulfil its potential as a truly innovative, sustainable, and world-class city, and having the potential to unlock significant residential-led development that will positively contribute to the growth of Manchester and the wider city region.

8.4 Planning permission was granted in December 2021 for the first stage of the delivery of the future Red Bank and New Town Neighbourhoods, comprising the HIF advanced enabling works (LPA reference: 132252/VO/2021) including demolition of Creamline Dairies, creation of a construction haul road and select tree/ vegetation removal. This second planning application for the creation of development platforms and associated preparatory infrastructure that will allow for future residential-led development (to be applied for in a future planning application), as well as new and improved green infrastructure, including the revitalisation St Catherine's Wood as part of the City River Park, represents the next crucial step in delivering the wider project. It will help to facilitate one of the first major phases of delivering the Victoria North vision through a new sustainable, residential-led neighbourhood, which

reinvigorates the green spaces along the River Irk Valley and brings nature into the city. The prompt start and early delivery of this phase of development will, therefore, be fundamental to delivering the strategic vision for Victoria North.

- 8.5 At present, the Red Bank area suffers from a legacy of former industrial uses, has poor access routes and very limited water and electricity supply. Therefore, a comprehensive programme of investment is required to prepare the site and facilitate the nature and quantum of development proposed within the Initial Development Area, which MCC will deliver having secured £51.6m of HIF funding.
- 8.6 The proposals will build on the consented enabling works, delivering the next phase in the regeneration of the Red Bank Neighbourhood and preparing the site for successive phases of residential led development, thus contributing positively to the continued social, economic, and environmental regeneration of the City. This is in accordance with Core Strategy Policy EC 1, and the delivery of new and improved green space and critical infrastructure to enable the future delivery of residential led development, is in line with the aspirations of the SRF.

2) Principle of Development

- 8.7 The proposed development comprises important preparatory works, in addition to the provision of green infrastructure, including 4.5 hectares of new or improved green space, including the revitalisation of St Catherine's Wood as part of the new City River Park. The works are an essential part of the vision for the future Red Bank and New Town Neighbourhoods, to prepare the site for redevelopment and facilitate the future residential led development, including the creation of development platforms and plots, which will ultimately deliver approximately 5,500 new homes on a previously developed site in a highly sustainable location, on the edge of Manchester City Centre, in accordance with the strategic regeneration framework for the area.
- 8.8 It is acknowledged in Policy H3 of the Core Strategy that the land in North Manchester is generally of low value and in need of remediation to allow for future residential development. In particular, the site is within an area affected by the legacy of more than 150 years of industrial uses and Victorian/ pre-Victorian infrastructure, with modified waterways; significant operational and redundant rail infrastructure; limited sewerage, water, electricity and gas infrastructure; and contaminated sites associated with textile manufacturing and other heavy industries. As a result, a comprehensive programme of investment is required to prepare the site and facilitate development where works cannot be taken forward on a piecemeal, site by site basis, and are not viable for the private sector to fund in isolation.

- 8.9 The proposed development includes significant green infrastructure, 4.5 hectares of new or improved green space, including the revitalisation of St Catherine's Wood as part of the new City River Park. The extensive green infrastructure works proposed will significantly enhance open space/recreation provision for the public in this area of North Manchester, providing high quality, safe and accessible open spaces. and delivering substantial improvements to the existing provision, in accordance with Core Strategy Policy EN 12.
- 8.10 The proposed development also includes preparatory works to create development platforms and ready the site/create development plots to accommodate the future residential led development in the Initial Development Area. The delivery of the preparatory and infrastructure works is a critical element of the overall vision for Red Bank. Importantly, these works need to be undertaken by March 2024 (the spend availability period for the HIF), and, ultimately, to enable the delivery of the wider Red Bank Neighbourhood project envisaged on land in control of the JV. Given the adopted policy and SRF context for Victoria North, the principle of undertaking preparatory and infrastructure works at the site, to facilitate future residential led development, is acceptable.
- 8.11 Furthermore, the creation of new and improved green infrastructure including the revitalisation of St Catherine's Wood to deliver c. 4.5ha of the proposed new City River Park, will form the centre piece of the new neighbourhood, transforming the currently underutilised riverside into a welcoming, accessible space for both people and wildlife, in accordance with Core Strategy policies EN10, EN11 and EN12, Saved UDP Policy E3.4, and MCC's strategies, such as the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy 2015-2025 and the Strategy for Revitalising Manchester's River Valleys and Urban Waters 2021-2030. Therefore, the proposed green infrastructure works are wholly acceptable in principle and accord fully with the adopted Development Plan for MCC, subject to addressing any relevant technical matters.

3) Green Infrastructure and New City River Park

- 8.12 The proposed development includes the provision of significant green infrastructure, including 4.5 hectares of new or improved green space, including the revitalisation of St Catherine's Wood as part of the new City River Park. The proposals form part of the City River Park Vision set out in the Northern Gateway SRF. The City River Park will cover circa. 46 hectares and will become one of Manchester's largest City Centre green spaces. St Catherine's Wood, Red Bank Terraces and their immediate associated landscape will comprise the southern-most extent of this larger integrated network of green space along the River Irk.
- 8.13 The key role that green infrastructure plays in delivering sustainable economic prosperity and providing benefits for residents, workers, investors and visitors to the City is made clear in the Core Strategy. Paragraph 12.51 of the Core Strategy explicitly states that, *"the attractiveness of the environment is in part*

what determines where firms choose to locate, and where the workforce choose to live; workers with access to green infrastructure also tend to be healthier and more productive." Furthermore, it is widely recognised that there is a link between green space and well-being, with paragraph 92 of the NPPF (2021) acknowledging that accessible green infrastructure has the ability to enable and support healthy lifestyles.

- 8.14 New public realm will be created as part of the proposed development in the form of Town Square on Red Bank and Union Waterfront. The importance that high-quality public realm has played in the regeneration of the City Centre is recognised in the Core Strategy (paragraph 8.45). The Economic Recovery and Investment Plan places further emphasis on investing in and improving the City's public realm, and promotes the benefits that come from public realm, including "attracting businesses, attracting visitors, improving productivity, increasing land/property values, increasing tourism, promoting pedestrian linkages, and an enhanced image"³. The green infrastructure proposed by this application has been designed to be accessible to all user groups via a network of flat and shallow sloped routes, creating a high standard of accessibility to the site (Core Strategy Policy CC 10). Additionally, Red Bank Terraces will see a new fully accessible cycle and pedestrian route up through the site from the River Irk, alongside stepped more direct routes and informal play, creating an attractive environment for both pedestrians and cyclists.
- 8.15 The proposed development will ensure that St Catherine's Wood retains its woodland identity, whilst also establishing a greater level of management to secure safety and enhance its benefits to wildlife. The woodland will be enhanced with native understorey plants and the river re-naturalised, encouraging life to return to the River Irk, enhancing the biodiversity of the area (Core Strategy Policy EN 10 and paragraph 174 of the NPPF). Where there is a currently a clearing in the centre of the woodland, informal seating terraces, orchard trees and open wild-flower meadow are proposed, offering a change of aesthetics and habitat, and creating a space for people to gather, which will improve the accessibility of this existing green infrastructure asset (Core Strategy Policy EN 9).
- 8.16 Overall, the delivery of 4.5 hectares of new or improved green space, including the revitalisation of St Catherine's Wood as part of the new City River Park will deliver a number of social and environmental benefits, including the: delivery of substantial improvements to the quality of the existing green infrastructure provision in this area of the City; delivery of c. 4.5ha of the City River Park, which will connect to a wider network of parks and provide better links for people and wildlife; provision of greater access to high-quality open space within an inner city location; creation of new public realm, which will be accessible to all and enable persons to gather in an attractive setting, thus promoting social

³ Powering Recovery – Manchester's Economic Recovery and Investment Plan, 2020, p.26

interaction; and, enhancement of the existing woodland and re-naturalisation of the River Irk, which will considerably improve the area's biodiversity.

- 8.17 The proposed development therefore accords with Core Strategy policies EN 10, EN 11 and EN 12, and paragraphs 8, 74 and 98 of the NPPF (2021).

4) Highway Works

- 8.18 The proposed development includes the construction of a new road (Plateau Avenue), a new priority junction from Red Bank road, and the creation of a circulation route leading from Town Square to the Packaging Products access bridge (eastern-most extent of the site), which will also cater for emergency access vehicles. Primary construction vehicle access will be from Red Bank via the existing junction used during the enabling works (former Creamline Dairies site). A secondary access onto Collyhurst Road will also provide construction vehicle access for short periods of construction.
- 8.19 The creation of Plateau Avenue and a new priority junction from Red Bank road are necessary to allow access to the site for construction traffic. Importantly, these elements also form a critical element of the infrastructure works which are required to accommodate future traffic associated with the wider residential proposals for the site, which will result in the delivery of new homes, and residents at the Red Bank Neighbourhood. However, whilst these elements are being designed to accommodate the future levels of development at the site, as there are no buildings proposed by this particular application there will be no increase in operational transport demand arising from these works. Accordingly, there are no anticipated increases in traffic generation on completion of this application, and no changes required/ proposed to the surrounding highway network.
- 8.20 The Transport Statement presents an assessment of the potential impact of the proposed development on the local transport networks. The analysis reveals that there are no major 'accident blackspots' which indicate underlying issues within the layout of the surrounding highway network, and no existing highway safety issues which would be likely to be exacerbated by an increase in traffic due to the construction of the proposed development.
- 8.21 During the construction of the proposed development, construction traffic would be generated and the movement of HGVs and construction workers to the site would result in additional vehicle movements on the highway network. To minimise traffic impacts associated with the proposed development, several measures will be implemented by the contractor through the Project Execution Plan (PEP), including: definition of any permitted and prohibited routes for HGVs; appropriate provision of contractor parking (using an existing surface car park); advanced notification and sensitive routing of any abnormal loads; and, good site practice regarding the use of HGVs to minimise the transfer of dirt

and debris to the highway. Details of these would be agreed between the contractor and MCC prior to the commencement of the works through the PEP.

- 8.22 The proposed highways works are a critical element of the HIF infrastructure works that will enable the future residential led development of the site. The transport impacts of the works have been robustly assessed and will not give rise to any highways impacts which cannot be suitably mitigated. Accordingly, the proposed highways works are acceptable in accordance Core Strategy Policy T 1 and NPPF paragraph 111.

5) Trees and Ecology

- 8.23 An Ecology Desk Study, Phase 1 Habitat Survey, Bat Surveys and an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) have been undertaken and are appended to Chapter 6 of the submitted ES. A Tree Replacement, Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain Mitigation Strategy (including Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment) has also been prepared and is submitted with the planning application.

Arboricultural Impact Assessment

- 8.24 As part of the AIA, 12 individual trees (T1-T12); 20 groups of trees (G1-G20); and 1 woodland (W1) were recorded within influencing distance of the application site. The tree population comprises mainly areas of young to middle age self-set silver birch and willow with very occasional larger individuals.
- 8.25 The AIA confirms there are no Tree Preservation Orders; no trees within a Conservation Area; no ancient woodland; no veteran trees; and no arboreal Habitats of Principal Importance. All trees on site are located within the Manchester City of Trees Community Forest.
- 8.26 To facilitate the proposed development, 3 individual trees and tree groups comprising approximately 1.7595ha, and 0.1849ha of woodland, would be removed to accommodate the proposals. None of these are outside the application boundary. The AIA concludes the development would give rise to no adverse effects that cannot be mitigated.
- 8.27 New planting is proposed as part of this application, which covers preparatory works to facilitate the delivery of the wider residential-led development.
- 8.28 Details of additional replacement planting as part of the overall development project will be detailed in the residential proposals to be applied for within Application 4.

Ecology Assessment

- 8.29 The potential for disturbance effects and unintended habitat loss or damage resulting from clearance, demolition and construction activities has been considered within the ES which concluded that the

majority of disturbance effects and unintended habitat loss or damage can be avoided through mitigation measures, including the production of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEP), Landscape Ecological Management Plan (LEMP), invasive species mitigation strategy, lighting strategy and tree protection measures.

8.30 Negative impacts from increased public usage of the site in operation can be avoided through mitigation measures, including the LEMP, and through the embedded mitigation of introducing formalised foot and cycleways. Furthermore, given the commitments within the Northern Gateway Biodiversity Plan, there would be an overall positive effect on woodland habitat, quality/ quantity of bat foraging and commuting habitat and quantity/ quality of breeding bird habitat in the long-term.

8.31 Habitat loss has been minimised as far as possible and new planting provided as part of the permanent landscaping, but some loss is unavoidable. This will include the loss of relatively young semi-natural and plantation woodland. MCC has, however, committed to ensure that at least a 10% BNG will be achieved across the entire Red Bank Neighbourhood development project to be delivered by MCC and FEC. The negative impacts on scattered trees, bat foraging/commuting, breeding birds and the River Irk associated with this application will all be adequately mitigated. Regarding the River Irk specifically, there will be significant positive effects in the short-term. The enhancement of retained woodland blocks, both semi-natural and plantation, will also generate significant positive effects.

Ecological Enhancement Strategy

8.32 The proposals form an integral part of the wider Red Bank Neighbourhood development project that will include sufficient landscaping measures, including habitat creation and enhancement, to compensate for any negative impacts resulting from the wider proposed development.

8.33 As detailed below, this planning application (Application 2) will deliver 4.5 hectares of new or improved green space, including the revitalisation of St Catherine's Wood as part of the new City River Park.. Furthermore, this planning permission, and any successive planning permissions at the site, will secure a commitment to a detailed Tree Replacement, Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain Strategy for the Red Bank Neighbourhood including the overall commitment to BNG of at least 10% across the holistic development project.

8.34 Each application submitted by the JV partners as part of the Red Bank Neighbourhood project will deliver various elements of the overall strategy for removal of existing features on the site (where required) and delivering new replacement ecology, tree planting, and habitat creation. This is broadly summarised in the table below, with the various aspects of these works described in more detail within

the Tree Replacement, Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain Mitigation Strategy submitted with this application:

Application No. *	Description of Proposals	Extent of Ecological Works	Timescale for Submission	Timescale for Delivery
1	Enabling Infrastructure Works	HIF • Removal of trees and habitat to plateau area	Nov '21	June '22
2	Main Infrastructure Works	HIF • Removal of trees and habitat to plateau area and embankments • Delivery of 5ha of the wider City River Park • New tree planting and ecological enhancements to St Catherine's Wood	Q1 '22	March '24
3	HIF Flood Defence and Alleviation Measures	• River naturalisation and ecological enhancement	Q3 '22	March '24
4	Red Bank Neighbourhood Application	• New ecological enhancements with new tree planting, greening and enhancements to new streets.	Q2/Q3 '22	'23 - '33

* note that the application numbering does not refer to any particular sequencing of submissions

8.35 As stated above, as part of the ecological enhancement strategy the JV are committed to an increase in Biodiversity Net Gain across the completed Red Bank Neighbourhood development of at least 10% in line with the Environmental Act. MCC and its appointed Ecologists (TEP) have used a series of assumptions based on the current condition of the site (the baseline) and the emerging designs for the Red Bank Neighbourhood across the four separate planning applications and applied this to the recognised Biodiversity Metric. This has allowed the baseline position to be set and the requirements identified to achieve at least a 10% BNG, with an indication provided as to how this could be delivered within the Red Bank Neighbourhood and on off-site locations. A BNG Report prepared by TEP is included with the submitted Tree Replacement, Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain Mitigation Strategy.

Securing the Mitigation Strategy

8.36 Through planning conditions secured as part of the enabling works planning permission (Ref: 132252/VO/2021), MCC made the following commitments to be delivered as part of the overall Red Bank Neighbourhood development project:

- Submission of a 'Tree Replacement, Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain Mitigation Strategy' prior to commencement of the enabling works, including a mitigation and implementation strategy (including a commitment to 10% biodiversity net gain) across all phases of the Red Bank Neighbourhood.
- A monitoring, management and verification strategy to ensure that the mitigation is achieved across the four phases of development (and/or within the Northern Gateway SRF area).

- A requirement to submit an updated 'Tree Replacement, Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain Mitigation Strategy' for approval with the planning application for each subsequent phase of the Red Bank Neighbourhood development. This will provide any updates required to reflect the detailed design proposals contained within that phase, and any subsequent updates to the ecological assumptions required to meet the overall target of 10% biodiversity net gain.
- Prior to first use of each phase a verification report must also be submitted conform to the recommendations of the approved Strategy for that phase, including its contribution towards the 10% biodiversity net gain.

8.37 It is also anticipated that the following additional mitigation measures are secured through this planning application (i.e. Application 2 of the Red Bank Neighbourhood):

- If the redevelopment of the wider Red Bank Neighbourhood does not take place within a certain period of time of the completion of the HIF preparatory works proposed in this application, the habitat loss relating solely to the those works in Application 2 will be mitigated in line with a strategy submitted for approval in writing by the City Council. The strategy will outline measures in order to ensure no biodiversity net loss relating to Application 2.

8.38 In accordance with the strategy agreed as part of Application 1, and the requirements of condition 14 attached to that permission, an updated Tree Replacement, Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain Mitigation Strategy (TREBNGM Strategy) is submitted. The TREBNGM Strategy reiterates the JV's commitment to significant ecological and biodiversity improvements within the Red Bank Neighbourhood, and sets out how it will be secured, monitored and verified through each phase of the overall development project.

6) Drainage and SuDS

8.39 A Drainage Strategy has been prepared by Arup and is enclosed at Appendix 9.2 of the ES. The existing drainage on and around site consists of combined sewers, in addition to infiltration and runoff to the River Irk in the non-developed areas. In line with the drainage hierarchy, and with consideration of the potential for contamination, the proposed surface water drainage strategy is to discharge to the River Irk as the primary mechanism.

8.40 SuDS are proposed across the site including permeable paving, swales, and a detention basin to provide storage. Owing to potential contamination, all SuDS features are designed with impermeable linings to prevent infiltration. The sitewide SuDS will drain highways and public realm only, attenuation for the future residential plots will be achieved on-plot. The SuDS features will drain to a carrier pipe system, which also connects with the plot surface water drainage. A new foul network will be installed to drain the plots, this will connect to the existing combined sewers in and around the site. Foul water generation has been calculated based on the proposed building uses, and a peak flow rate is applied for both residential and non-residential land uses.

- 8.41 The drainage infrastructure works proposed as part of this planning application will deliver significant new clean and foul drainage systems at the site including SuDS, which will minimise surface water runoff by incorporating sustainable drainage systems, in accordance with paragraph 169 of the NPPF and policies EN 14 and EN 17 of the Core Strategy. Furthermore, runoff for the 100-year storm will include a 40% allowance for climate change, which will ensure that the proposed development is adaptable to climate change in accordance with Core Strategy Policy EN 8 and paragraph 154 of the NPPF.

7) Utilities and Services Works

- 8.42 The proposed development includes the abandonment of assets within existing streets, which will no longer be required by the proposed scheme, and the diversions of some assets to enable the installation of new river crossings. As the majority of the existing carriageways are to be retained by the proposed development, most of the assets on the site can be retained.
- 8.43 Upgrades are being progressed at primary substation level to increase electricity capacity to support the proposed development. The proposed development will include the installation of 6.6kV ring mains from Queens Park primary substation around the HIF site to support the future development.
- 8.44 To support the net-zero carbon aspirations of the site, a new gas network will not be installed within the scheme. However, existing gas mains, such as along Roger Street and Dantzie Street, which are adjacent to proposed future development plots, will be retained, providing the opportunity for those proposed development plots to connect in the future.
- 8.45 Overall, the proposed utilities and services works are necessary to prepare the site for future residential-led development, which will be the subject of forthcoming planning applications, as detailed further at Section 3 of the Statement. The proposed utilities and services works will ensure that there is sufficient availability and capacity of infrastructure and services to accommodate the site's future redevelopment. Furthermore, in line with the site's net-zero aspirations and the emphasis in local and national planning policy on reducing CO₂ emissions (Policy EN 4 of the Core Strategy and paragraph 154 of the NPPF (2021), a new gas network will not be installed within the scheme.

8) Scheme Benefits / Sustainable Development

- 8.46 The overarching policy objective of the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The NPPF at Paragraph 8 indicates that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. An assessment of the proposal against the three dimensions of sustainable development as defined in the NPPF is provided below:

Economic

8.47 The proposed development will contribute to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy. In particular, the economic benefits include:

- Supporting new job creation which will comprise of temporary construction employment for the duration of the works, with opportunities for local employment to be set down within a Local Labour Proposal, to be agreed with the LPA.
- The preparatory and infrastructure works are a critical phase of the Red Bank Neighbourhood project which benefits from HIF funding, and are necessary to facilitate the significant residential-led regeneration planned for the site that will, in turn, deliver substantial economic benefit.
- The works will act as a catalyst for future phases of development at the site, and the for the wider regeneration of the Victoria North area.
- Enhancing the attractiveness of the area, which will in turn stimulate economic investment and contribute positively to the City's growth.

Social

8.48 The proposed development will support the creation of a strong, vibrant and healthy community. In particular, the proposed development will:

- Promote social interaction by creating new areas of high quality public realm that is accessible to all, which can be enjoyed by local people and visitors to the City.
- Deliver 4.5 hectares of new or improved green space, including the revitalisation of St Catherine's Wood as part of the new City River Park. which will be the centre piece of the area's regeneration and connect to a wider network of parks, providing better links for people and wildlife.
- Encourage active travel by incorporating a fully accessible pedestrian and cycle routes.
- Deliver preparatory and infrastructure works which represent an important step/ phase in the delivery of high quality new residential at the site, which could deliver approximately 5,500 new homes.

Environmental

8.49 The proposed development will support the creation of a strong, vibrant and healthy community. In particular, the proposed development will:

- Remediate the site to deal with historic contamination to ready the land for residential led development .
- Mitigate and adapt to climate change by, for example, making allowances for climate change in the drainage strategy for the site and by planting trees.

- Improve biodiversity by representing an important phase in delivering an increase in Biodiversity Net Gain across the completed Red Bank Neighbourhood development of at least 10% in line with the Environmental Act.

Summary

8.50 This chapter has assessed the proposed development against the relevant planning policy considerations and has demonstrated how the proposals are in accordance with relevant policies of the statutory Development Plan, and fully align to the strategic regeneration context, which identifies the site for wholesale redevelopment to provide a residential-led development including 4.5 hectares of new or improved green space, including the revitalisation of St Catherine's Wood as part of the new City River Park.. The works proposed by this application represent a critically important step in delivering the SRF aspirations for the site.

9. Other Technical and Environmental Considerations

- 9.1 The compliance of the proposals against environmental and technical-based planning policies is considered within the comprehensive suite of individual technical reports undertaken and submitted in support of the planning application. A number of technical matters have been robustly assessed and the acceptability of the proposals in this regard is summarised below.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 9.2 A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been prepared by Arup and is included as an appendix to Chapter 9 of the Environmental Statement (ES). The primary flooding mechanisms are identified as fluvial and surface water. The site is also classified as a Critical Drainage Area, which indicates historical cases of surface water flooding, this could be a result of sewers in the area having low capacity and so flooding from public sewers is also identified as a risk.
- 9.3 The fluvial flood risk varies across the site as a result of the topography. The Plateau area sits wholly in flood zone 1, and so does most of the 4.5 hectares of new or improved green space, including the revitalisation of St Catherine's Wood as part of the new City River Park.. The lower zones to the south of the river and north of Union Bridge are in areas of flood zones 2 and 3a. The HIF works will not include any work within plot boundaries in areas of flood zones 2 or 3. The FRA outlines measures which should be taken to mitigate flood risk on-plot in the future, which will be covered in a future planning application. This should include evaluation of finished floor levels within flood zone 2 and locating less vulnerable land uses in flood zone 3. However, the measures suggested in the FRA may not be relevant with the implementation of the works that will be proposed under Application 3.
- 9.4 The impacts of the proposed development on flood risk have been shown by the 2021 interim hydraulic model to generally have a negligible effect. However, there are localised issues which will require mitigation. Increased flood depths and extents, originating from the removal of a river wall to the upstream right bank of Union Bridge, are identified both on and off the site. A bund within the proposed RB07 plot boundary has been proposed to replicate the current wall which will reduce the flow from the River Irk during extreme events and prevent additional flooding beyond the site boundary. The ultimate requirement for this bund will be reviewed in future applications for the flood alleviation works (Application 3) and for the residential-led development (Application 4) if and when additional flood alleviation works are known.
- 9.5 The HIF works are considered water compatible development. An integrated surface water management strategy will restrict the discharge from the site to greenfield rates and will discharge all

surface water to the River Irk. SuDS features will also be implemented to achieve the required discharge rate to mitigate the risk of worsening fluvial flood risk.

- 9.6 Overall, provided the suggested mitigation measures are followed, the proposed development is acceptable in terms of flood risk, in accordance with Core Strategy Policy EN 14 and paragraphs 167 and 169 of the NPPF.

Crime Impact

- 9.7 A Crime Impact Statement has been prepared by Greater Manchester Police ('GMP') Design for Security. The Statement assesses the proposed development using the principles of 'Crime Prevention through Environmental Design' (CPTED) in order to identify any opportunities for crime and the fear of crime.
- 9.8 The scheme has been found generally acceptable in terms of layout, albeit with a series of recommendations provided which should be implemented where feasible to enhance the security of the development against potential threats, including for example, the provision of bicycle and scooter parking, and implementation of appropriate signage and lighting in the park to prevent to allow easy navigation and minimise threats. The Applicant's design team has considered the recommendations provided by Design for Security and has implemented GMP's recommendations where possible.
- 9.9 Design for Security conclude that the proposals will improve the current offering at St Catherine's Woods, which, it is stated, *"on the day of visiting didn't appear well used or feel very welcoming"*.
- 9.10 Overall, the proposed development has been designed to be safe and secure for prospective users and has incorporated the measures recommended by GMP where possible to contribute to the prevention of and fear of crime, in accordance with Core Strategy Policy DM 1 and paragraph 130 of the NPPF (2021).

Ground Conditions

- 9.11 A Ground Conditions Desk Study and Ground Investigation Report have been prepared by Arup and are included as appendices to Chapter 8 of the ES. Baseline conditions have been assessed and the information presented is based on the results of two phases of intrusive site investigation, the results of which are presented in the Ground Investigation Interpretative Report (GIR) prepared by Arup and submitted alongside this planning application.
- 9.12 A number of geological, hydrogeological and contaminated land related impacts have been identified, of which the main points of focus are related to potential for contamination in the soils beneath the site and potential for migration of contaminants into groundwater and the River Irk.

- 9.13 The effect of the potential impacts has been assessed in the context of the construction phase and operational phase. A number of risks have been identified associated with the ground conditions and the potential for contaminated land. However, mitigation measures have been recommended to reduce these risks.
- 9.14 A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be produced and implemented during the construction phase. The plan will outline how adverse effects on the environment will be avoided or mitigated during construction in accordance with current environmental legislation. During construction, any previously unidentified areas of contamination that are considered to present a demonstrable risk will need to be addressed by removal or treatment.
- 9.15 Overall, with the implementation of the recommended mitigation measures, no adverse residual effects have been identified during the construction or operational phases of the proposed scheme. Therefore, subject to following the recommendations made within the GIR, the proposed development is acceptable with regard to ground conditions, in accordance with Core Strategy Policy EN 18 and paragraph 183 of the NPPF (2021).

Townscape and Visual

- 9.16 Chapter 7 of the ES identifies and assesses the anticipated effects of change resulting from the proposed development on the character and features of the townscape, and on people's views and visual amenity within the Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment Study Area. The assessment includes the worst-case scenario with 'empty' future development plots without the full mitigation.
- 9.17 Overall, there are no significant townscape or visual effects predicted during the construction phase of the proposed development. There are predicted to be permanent significant beneficial effects on public open space and woodland and site character during the operational phase as a result of the proposed development. Therefore, the proposed development accords with Core Strategy Policy DM 1 and paragraph 130 of the NPPF (2021).

Archaeology and Heritage

- 9.18 Chapter 7 of the ES assesses the likely significant effects of the proposed development on the historic environment. In particular, it considers effects that may arise as a result of the proposed development on designated and non-designated heritage assets and potential below-ground archaeology which may survive at the site.

Archaeology

- 9.19 There are no designated archaeological assets within the site, but there is potential to encounter non-designated archaeology. Accordingly, additional mitigation to record potential archaeological deposits at the site and to collect paleo-environmental data is recommended. Proposed archaeological and paleo-environmental investigation at the site would be designed and agreed with GMAAS. Dependent on the results of the proposed additional archaeological mitigation, and in consultation with GMAAS, further archaeological investigation may be required.
- 9.20 It is concluded that the residual effects on archaeology arising from construction and on completion of the development would be neutral, and any impacts could be appropriately mitigated.

Heritage

- 9.21 There are no designated built heritage assets within the site, however the Grade II listed Union Bridge is immediately adjacent to the southern site boundary. Within the application site boundaries are the non-designated low value Lowry Footbridge, River Irk walls and the negligible value northern retaining walls.
- 9.22 The River Irk walls and the northern retaining walls will experience partial removal of or alterations to sections of their length. Additional mitigation is proposed in the form of a Level 2 descriptive historic building record of the historic river walls and retaining walls at the site prior to any alteration, which will allow for the historic wall sections to be seen, described and photographed.
- 9.23 It is concluded that the residual demolition and construction effects on built heritage would be neutral effects, and that the residual effects from the completed development on the settings of built heritage within the site would be neutral to minor beneficial effects.
- 9.24 Overall, on the basis that the recommended mitigation is implemented, the proposed development would accord with Policy EN 3 of the Core Strategy, Saved UDP Policy DC20.1 and paragraphs 194, 197, 199, and 203.

Air Quality

- 9.25 Chapter 12 of the ES assesses the likely significant effects of the proposed development on local air quality. In particular, it considers the potential effects of the construction and demolition phase of the proposed development on traffic emissions, dust and air quality at identified existing receptor locations.

- 9.26 A qualitative assessment of the potential impacts on local air quality from construction activities for the proposed has been carried out using the Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) methodology. This identified medium to high risk for dust soiling and low risk for health impacts. However, with the appropriate best practice mitigation measures in place, as defined in the ES, the residual effect from the dust-generating activities on site is likely to be 'not significant'.
- 9.27 Following review of the current monitoring and Defra predicted background data, it is likely that the proposed development would be in compliance of all relevant air quality objectives based on the most recent published data. Furthermore, come the likely opening year of the development, it is likely concentrations will have fallen further due to national trends.
- 9.28 Overall, the proposed development accords with Core Strategy Policy EN 16 and paragraph 186 of the NPPF (2021).

Noise and Vibration

- 9.29 Chapter 13 of the ES assesses the likely significant effects of noise and vibration from the proposed development on the surrounding area. The assessment considers noise and vibration impacts associated with the following activities: construction site noise; construction site vibration; and, construction traffic noise.
- 9.30 Noise and vibration impacts associated with the completed development are scoped out of the ES assessment. This is because there are no significant built elements associated with the works in question that are capable of generating notable levels of noise and vibration on a long-term basis. Future related applications (such as Application 4 for the residential-led Red Bank Neighbourhood, and applications associated with the wider SRF) will need to consider operational noise and vibration impacts associated with increased road traffic on the existing highway network, new transport infrastructure, and fixed plant.
- 9.31 Overall, the assessment of noise and vibration from the preparation and construction works associated with the proposed development has identified no residual significant effects once the proposed mitigation measures have been employed. Therefore, the proposed development accords with Core Strategy Policy DM 1, Saved UDP policies DC26.1 and DC26.2, and paragraph 174 of the NPPF (2021).

Waste

- 9.32 Chapter 14 of the ES assesses the likely significant environmental effects associated with the generation and management of solid waste with respect to the construction and operational phases of the proposed development.
- 9.33 It is concluded that environmental effects on all categories of landfill during construction and operation will be slight or neutral for the proposed scheme in isolation, and when considered in association with Applications 1, 3 and 4. This conclusion is based on the development achieving industry standard landfill diversion rates, and that future ground investigation data does not identify extensive contamination not previously detected.
- 9.34 It is considered that the proposed development plus Applications 1, 3 and 4 and the wider SRF area will not exceed negligible impact thresholds on available landfill capacity during construction, through the implementation of mitigation via careful design, and development of Site Waste Management Plans throughout.
- 9.35 Therefore, provided that the recommended mitigation is implemented, the proposed development will be acceptable in terms of waste, including Core Strategy Policy EN 19 and paragraph 8c of the NPPF (2021).

Climate Change

- 9.36 Chapter 17 of the ES assesses the climate change effects of the proposed development. Two aspects of climate change assessment are considered in the ES, comprising the impact of the project on climate (Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions assessment), and vulnerability of the project to climate change (Climate Change Risk (CCR) assessment).
- 9.37 The assessment) concluded that the demolition and construction phase would result in estimated GHG emissions of 5,230tCO₂e, and the completed and operational phase would result in estimated net GHG emissions of 1,437tCO₂e. Overall, these emissions were considered unlikely to impact the UK Government's ability to meet the relevant UK Carbon Budget.
- 9.38 In terms of the vulnerability of the project to climate change, it was concluded that, provide mitigation measures are implemented, there would not be a significant effect on the vulnerability of the development to climate change. Therefore, the proposed development accords with Core Strategy Policy EN 8 and paragraphs 8c and 154 of the NPPF (2021).

Summary

- 9.39 A series of technical assessments have been undertaken relating to flood risk and drainage, ground conditions, townscape and visual, air quality, archaeology and heritage, noise and vibration, waste, and climate change, which are submitted as part of the ES in support of this planning application. This information demonstrates that there are no technical or environmental considerations which cannot be overcome, mitigated against or suitably addressed by planning conditions.

10. Conclusion

- 10.1 This Supporting Planning Statement (SPS) has been prepared by Avison Young (AY) on behalf of Manchester City Council (MCC) (the Applicant), in support of a full planning application proposing new preparatory infrastructure works and green infrastructure which benefit from £51.6m Government funding through the Homes Infrastructure Fund (HIF), to prepare the land at Red Bank for new strategic residential-led development.
- 10.2 The proposals include the creation of development platforms, formation of a new spine road (Phase 1), and new utilities and services connections that will allow for future residential-led development (to be applied for in a future planning application), together with new and improved green infrastructure, including the revitalisation St Catherine's Wood as part of the City River Park at Red Bank, Victoria North, Manchester.
- 10.3 The site sits within the Victoria North development area (formerly referred to as 'Northern Gateway'). Victoria North is one of the largest regeneration projects in the UK and comprises an area of approximately 155ha to the north of Manchester City Centre and Victoria Station offering a unique opportunity to deliver approximately 15,000 new homes over the next 15-20 years, along with a range of employment, social, community, cultural and ancillary uses.
- 10.4 In April 2017, MCC selected Far East Consortium International Ltd (FEC) as its Joint Venture (JV) investment and delivery partner, to accelerate the delivery of the Victoria North opportunity. MCC has since approved the Northern Gateway Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) in February 2019, which provides a vision, core objectives and development framework to guide the regeneration of Victoria North, with a focus on the provision of housing and supporting infrastructure investment.
- 10.5 The Red Bank Neighbourhood is one of the first new neighbourhoods to be delivered within Victoria North and is being brought forward by the JV partners on land in their control. It forms part of the larger Initial Development Area that will be transformed into a sustainable residential-led neighbourhood and deliver around 5,500 new homes, together with new community facilities, improved green space, new walking and cycling routes, improvements to the River Irk, and low carbon development.
- 10.6 MCC has secured £51.6m of Government Funding through the HIF to deliver critical infrastructure and enabling works within the Red Bank Neighbourhood. The funding will be used to address a series of up-front infrastructure requirements to support the delivery of the new homes and green spaces in the Initial Development Area:

- Major improvements to St Catherine's Wood and the banks of the River Irk, which will comprise delivery of c. 4.5ha of the City River Park.
- Delivering improvements to the River Irk to enhance the river environment, with naturalisation measures to help reduce the risk of flooding.
- Securing and clearing undeveloped brownfield land, including the removal of invasive plant species and contaminated ground.
- Connecting the development sites to electricity, water and drainage.
- Delivering road upgrades and connecting development sites to the existing highways network.

10.7 A key condition of the HIF funding is that the spend availability period runs until March 2024.

10.8 Whilst the Red Bank Neighbourhood is envisaged as a single development project a series of planning applications are being submitted to MCC for approval. On 23rd December 2021, planning permission was granted for advanced HIF enabling works, which comprised the first planning application prepared in relation to the site ('Application 1') (LPA reference: 132252/VO/2021). The delivery of the consented enabling works is due to commence on site in the first quarter of 2022.

10.9 Further development at the site is being brought forward in the following phased planning applications:

- Green infrastructure including 4.5ha of the City River Park, Future Development Platforms, New Spine Road, and Associated Infrastructure Works (i.e. this planning application, 'Application 2').
- HIF Flood Defence and Alleviation Measures (referred to hereafter as 'Application 3'). To be submitted by MCC.
- Red Bank Neighbourhood Application (referred to hereafter as 'Application 4'). To be submitted by FEC.

10.10 This planning application is 'Application 2' and seeks full planning permission to create the development platforms, new spine road, and associated infrastructure delivery, together with new and improved green infrastructure, which are required to deliver the future Red Bank Neighbourhood. The works will deliver 4.5 hectares of new or improved green space, including the revitalisation of St Catherine's Wood as part of the new City River Park., new design features and permeability, and new ecological mitigation and habitat creation.

10.11 In summary, the works applied for by this application will play a crucial role in the delivery of the first new residential neighbourhood within Victoria North, unlocking £51.6m of HIF funding to delivery much needed infrastructure, around 5,500 new homes, and 4.5ha of the wider City River Park, alongside new public realm, permeability, and habitat creation.

10.12 These critical infrastructure works are subject to a strict programme under the terms of the Government funding arrangements which requires the HIF monies to be spent by March 2024. The

application needs to be read in the context of the wider Red Bank Neighbourhood development project as a whole and will secure the significant commitments to ecological enhancements and Biodiversity Net Gain that will then be delivered in the future applications for this new neighbourhood. We, therefore, respectfully request that planning permission is granted for this development.

Appendix I

Planning Drawing List

Drawing Schedule (07/03/22)

Creation of Development Platforms and Green Infrastructure (Application 2)

LINE NO.	DRAWING REFERENCE	DRAWING NAME
SITE-WIDE PLANS		
1.	VNIF-ARP-00-YYY-DR-G-0009_P05	Location Plan
2.	VNIF-ARP-00-YYY-DR-CU-0001_P05	Existing Site Wide Utilities & Drainage
PLANS FOR APPROVAL		
3.	VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-1011 Rev P02.08	Landscape General Arrangement HIF Delivery Plan
4.	VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-1002 Rev P02.05	St Catherine's Wood Detailed Area Plan
5.	VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-1005 Rev P02.03	Red Bank Plateau Detailed Area
6.	VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-1006 Rev P02.06	Tree Retention and Removal Plan
7.	VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-1007 Rev P02.04	Proposed Levels General Arrangement Plan
8.	VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-1008 Rev P02.04	Planting & Habitats Plan
9.	VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-1009 Rev P02.01	Kerbs and Edges Plan
10.	VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-1010 Rev P02.04	Hardworks General Arrangement Plan
11.	VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-1012 Rev P02.04	Union Plaza – Detailed Area Plan
12.	VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-1013 Rev P02.04	Red Bank Terraces - Detailed Area Plan
13.	VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-1014 Rev P02.03	Boundary Treatments Plan
14.	VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-1015 Rev P02.02	River Embankment Detailed Area
15.	VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-3001 Rev P02.03	Riverside Sections 1 of 2 St Catherine's Wood
16.	VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-3002 Rev P02.03	Riverside Sections 2 of 2 St Catherine's Wood

17.	VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-3003 Rev P02.03	Union Plaza Sections
18.	VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-3004 Rev P02.03	Red Bank Sections 1 of 2
19.	VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-3005 Rev P02.03	Red Bank Sections 2 of 2
20.	VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-3006 Rev P02.03	St Catherine's Wood Sections
21.	VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-4000 Rev P02.04	Furniture Plan
22.	VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-4001 Rev P02.02	Signage & Wayfinding Plan
23.	VNIF-ARP-00-YYY-DR-CH-0001_P06	Highway General Arrangement
24.	VNIF-ARP-00-YYY-DR-CH-0002_P05	Plateau Avenue General Arrangement
25.	VNIF-ARP-00-YYY-DR-CS-0002_P02	Demolition Plan
26.	VNIF-ARP-00-YYY-DR-CD-0001_P02	Existing Surface Water Catchments
27.	VNIF-ARP-00-YYY-DR-CD-0002_P05	Proposed Surface Water General Arrangement
28.	VNIF-ARP-00-YYY-DR-CD-0003_P04	Proposed Foul Drainage General Arrangement
29.	VNIF-ARP-00-YYY-DR-CD-0010_P04	Proposed Surface Water Drainage Sheet 1 of 2
30.	VNIF-ARP-00-YYY-DR-CD-0011_P04	Proposed Surface Water Drainage Sheet 2 of 2
31.	VNIF-ARP-00-YYY-DR-CD-0012_P04	Proposed Surface Water Drainage Dantzic Street
32.	VNIF-ARP-00-YYY-DR-CD-0018_P04	Proposed Exceedance Routes Sheet 1 of 2
33.	VNIF-ARP-00-YYY-DR-CD-0019_P05	Proposed Exceedance Routes Sheet 2 of 2
ILLUSTRATIVE PLANS (NOT FOR APPROVAL)		
	Drawing Reference	Drawing Name
34.	VNIF-PLA-ZZ-YYY-DR-L-1000	Landscape General Arrangement (Aspirational Masterplan)
35.	VNIF-ARP-00-YYY-DR-CE-0003_P02	Indicative Cut and Fill Volumes
36.	VNIF-ARP-00-YYY-DR-CU-1004_P03	Proposed Utilities Sections
37.	VNIF-ARP-00-YYY-DR-CU-1001_P06	HIF Utilities & Drainage Diversions Site Wide

38.	VNIF-ARP-00-YYY-DR-CU-1002_P04	Proposed Electrical Demands & 6.6kV Circuits
39.	VNIF-ARP-00-YYY-DR-CU-1003_P06	Proposed HIF Potable Water Network Upgrade
40.	VNIF-ARP-00-YYY-DR-CU-1006_P06	Proposed HIF Telecoms Network

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