

City Centre Growth and Infrastructure

Comments on Ancoats Mobility Hub – Planning Application 130627/FO/2021

The Ancoats mobility hub is a key component in the further sustainable development of the area at the back of Ancoats. The proposal aligns with the strategic objectives of the Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework (NDF) and the City Centre Transport Strategy to 2040 and the promotion of and contribution to the creation of low car use neighbourhoods. This supports pedestrian and cycling as alternative modes of transport for city centre locations such as the Poland Street zone in the Ancoats neighbourhood. The modal shift away from car ownership and the move towards zero carbon development will take some time to comprehensively achieve, but the mobility hub will facilitate a compelling new vision for a more livable place. It will also help alleviate the current problems that residents face with rat running and commuter parking.

Concurrent to the mobility hub, and in order to achieve the strategic aims of the NDF, the City Council is developing a complementary public realm strategy to support the delivery of the vision for the area (as articulated within the Poland Street Zone NDF update) and the creation of a high-quality public realm that keeps pace with and underpins development activity.

Whilst not part of the public realm strategy, the Ancoats mobility hub is being proposed as a key piece of neighbourhood infrastructure. The public realm strategy is being developed cognisant of the hub and will provide the local regulatory context within which the hub can operate.

The mobility hub proposal enables residential developments in the locality to amalgamate both parking and deliveries in a central hub, thus allowing greater density of development to be brought forward on other sites in the area, enabling a larger number of residential units to be delivered both in the area and as a contribution to the City's targets around housing delivery and associated public realm and open spaces.

With social facilities, bike hire and storage, parcel delivery, electric vehicle rentals and electric vehicle charging points this hub is a key component not just in Ancoats but for the next stage of the growth of homes and jobs in East Manchester. Moreover, centralised parking and delivery at this location will provide greater opportunities for developers to bring forwards schemes that can contribute to the creation of active street frontages that are integral to the functioning, social life, safety and success of neighbourhoods of choice.

Sustainable modes of transport are crucial to the City's ambitions in relation to traffic management and zero carbon and this proposal is key in providing a step change in approach to both how residential parking and deliveries can be managed within an area. The opportunity to centralise services in one location with a clear strategy for deliveries, EV charging, cycle hire, and associated facilities will serve to ensure that the Poland Street Zone can be developed as a pedestrian and cycle friendly neighbourhood, supported by a public realm strategy that seeks to minimise car movements through the area, promotes walking and cycling and creates a user-friendly and calm environment that enhances residents experience of living in the area and adds value to the developments within the area.

As well as being a critical step in sustainable placemaking, the hub is also a key component in achieving air quality targets.