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PLANNING

2.1 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that decisions should be made in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The relevant adopted Development Plan Documents for Manchester City Council (MCC) include:

- The Manchester Core Strategy (2012); and,
- The saved policies of the MCC Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (1995).

Other material considerations to be taken into account in the determination of this planning application include the NPPF (2019), Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), and Supplementary Planning Documents/Guidance (SPDs/SPGs). Full details of relevant planning policy are provided in the submitted Supporting Planning Statement prepared by Avison Young.

As defined by the Proposals Map, the site is located within the City Centre and Regional Centre boundaries. The application therefore takes account of all relevant City Centre and Regional Centre policies in the Core Strategy, heritage policies from the UDP and relevant extracts from the NPPG, PPG and MCC's Guide to Development in Manchester SPD and Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy.

As set out in the Supporting Planning Statement, regeneration is an important planning consideration. Over the past fifteen years the Council has successfully regenerated areas such as Piccadilly, Spinningfields, the commercial core around Manchester Central, the Northern Quarter, the Civic Quarter and Castlefield. This is an ongoing process and much remains to be done if the City Centre is to remain competitive. Manchester City Centre is the primary economic driver in the City Region and is crucial to its longer term economic success. It is essential therefore that the City Centre continues to grow and existing assets are upgraded in order to deliver regeneration.

Manchester Arena is located on an important strategic gateway within the centre of the City Centre siting in the middle of the three important strategic regeneration areas of Great Ducie Street, the former Boddingtons Brewery, and the Northern Gateway, and immediately adjacent to one of the primary transport interchanges. The city centre has and continues to be a focus for major public and private investment in developing public transport.

The proposed development is supported in principle by both the City Centre Strategic Plan 2015 - 2018 and the Greater Manchester Destination Management Plan: The Visitor Economy Action Plan 2014 - 2017.

Tourism is a critical part of the economy for the Greater Manchester city region. Clearly, the continued high-quality operation of Manchester Arena will be critical to ensuring the continued growth of the cultural and tourism sector throughout the city over. There is a clear need to improve the existing experience and facilities to help it compete for events on a global stage in the future.

Overall, the proposed development will considerably improve the use and accessibility of a critical City Centre asset, indeed the second best arena in the world, by improving the current ingress and egress routes that will significantly increase the customer experience, safety, and help to facilitate elements of the wider internal transformation of the Arena including an increased standing floor capacity and new concourses.

The submitted Supporting Planning Statement prepared by Avison Young, in addition to the supporting reports and drawings, demonstrates that the proposal accords with the principles of sustainable development and the relevant Development Plan policies. The proposal makes efficient use of previously developed land and will deliver significant benefits to the local area. On this basis, the presumption in favour of sustainable development as identified within the NPPF is engaged and planning permission should be granted without delay.



2.2 PUBLIC CONSULATION & STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

The design development of the proposed interventions was informed by public consultation and engagement with key stakeholders.

The client & design team has met with **Manchester College, Chetham's School of Music, Network Rail and Historic England**. Current feedback from all has been very supportive of the proposals

In addition a significant and extensive public consultation has been undertaken both on line and through traditional methods. Give My View (poll) an innovative digital community engagement platform proven to connect with a much larger and more representative audience than typically engaged was used to great effect.

A total of 6,833 people voted from predominantly the Greater Manchester area but also widely across the United Kingdom. Of those who submitted answers, 62% lived in Manchester, 27% visited Manchester for leisure, 10% visited Manchester for work and 1% studied in Manchester.

Of the people who voted on line, 94% of the people that voted feel very positive about the new proposals: a highly encouraging statistic, which reveals how much pride & importance the community place in Manchester Arena's role in live music with in the City. Give My View (poll) asked the respondent what they would prioritise for an improved arrival experience at the Arena. Of the four possible answers, they were ranked as follows:

1. Safety and security
2. Queueing efficiency
3. Weather-proofing/shelter
4. Pre-gig atmosphere
5. Accessibility
6. Sustainability

This feedback from the **Give My View** (poll) has been incorporated and amplified within the design, including:

- Safety & Security: Enhance security was identified as a key priority from this consultation. The design responds to this aspiration with better crowd processing off the street, and enhanced entrances.
- Queuing Efficiencies: The design incorporates a VIP-Fast track line, and the latest mass crowd scanning equipment.
- Weather-proofing/shelter: The new ramp on Hunts Bank has an integrated feature canopy to provide protection from the weather. Whilst the Trinity Way Egress/Entrance proposes a retractable canopy for any utilization on event nights.
- Pre-gig atmosphere: The design of the ramp incorporates opportunities for buskers and preshow entertainment.
- Better accessible access to the venue: The design incorporates new and approved accessible ramps, and better access to exiting lifts.
- Sustainability: Sustainability was seen as a positive driver and the poll revealed that initiatives around public transport links were ranked the highest priority for sustainability. The design incorporates key sustainable features and celebrates and enhances the link to the station and sustainable transport links. (See sustainability section)

2.3 RED LINE BOUNDARY

The following drawing indicates the red line for the development.



