Planning, Design and Access Statement

Our Ref.	MAN038
InLink Address	Pavement near 17 Great Ducie Street, Opp. Manchester Arena, Manchester
Postcode	M3 1PQ
Lat/Long	53.487826 -2.24541
Project Type	BT InLink
Conservation Area	No
Statutory Listed Buildings	NORTH BRIDGE, Grade II railway bridge just to the south of the site.

InLinkUK is a London-based technology company working in exclusive partnership with BT to deliver a connected-city solution. This solution sees the removal of existing payphones and installation of InLinks that provide a range of free services to enhance the public realm and improve the amenity and digital connectivity of local communities in urban areas.

As part of our collaborative approach to connecting and improving local streets, Full Planning Permission and Express Advertisement Consent is sought for the removal of two (2) existing BT payphones and the installation of one (1) InLink with excess space returned to the community based on the following sites and with the recommended conditions of consent included at the end of this Statement:

Install 1no. InLink – Photomontage of site
Pavement near 17 Great Ducie Street, Opp. Manchester Arena, Manchester



Remove 1No Existing Phone Box: Jcn Sherbourne St and Great Ducie Street, Manchester, M3 1FF	**Remove 1No Existing Phone Box:** Pco Bury New Road, Manchester, M8 8FR
	

To ensure maximum amenity benefit for the local area, the services provided by the InLink will be **available free for everyone** (not just BT customers) as they are funded through the inclusion of static commercial advertising alongside Council and community content on the two digital display screens in the same manner as television stations like ITV and Channel 5. No public funding is involved in the roll out of InLinks or the associated payphone removals within the United Kingdom.

To ensure effective integration with the streetscape the two InLink digital display screens are smaller than most other types of outdoor digital signage and automatically dim at night to 600cd/m^2 in accordance with the levels set for this type and size of screen (those under 10m^2) by the Institute of Lighting Professionals, Professional Lighting Guide 05: The Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements.

At no cost to taxpayers or users, the proposed InLink and associated payphone removals will improve the public realm by reducing clutter and providing everyone in the community with an unprecedented suite of essential urban tools, including free ultrafast Wi-Fi and free phone calls, free council and community advertising, maps and wayfinding, device charging, an emergency 999 call button, public messaging capabilities, and a platform for future technologies like air quality monitoring.

Payphone removals and the installation of an InLink will provide a positive effect on local and visual amenity by reducing the amount of street furniture on pavements in the area and providing free services through a modern and aesthetically pleasing addition that will assimilate well into the street-scene. A range of factors are considered when choosing the site for each InLink. For more information refer to the Site Selection Criteria section below.

We would look to work with the Council to confirm which removals should be conditioned as part of any subsequent planning approvals. A list of proposed condition is included at the end of this Statement that could be used by the Council to further facilitate this as part of any approvals.

This proposal is part of a package of applications submitted to Manchester City Council and aligned to the UK Digital Strategy, the National Planning Policy Framework, and the Local Development Plan.

Further detail is provided in the attached InLink Product Statement and associated documents.

What is an InLink

InLinks are a fully-accessible piece of community infrastructure helping connect and improve local streets in urban areas. At no cost to taxpayers or end users, InLinks provide communities with an unprecedented suite of essential urban tools that are fully detailed in the attached InLink Product Statement, but include:

- **Free ultrafast Wi-Fi with speeds up to 1 Gb per second within 100m** of each InLink. More than 169,000 unique users have already subscribed to the Wi-Fi, which as of September 2018, saw them use enough data to view over 513 million webpages
- **Touchscreen tablets** to access council services, BT's phone book, maps and directions, with more than 50,000 tablet sessions every week
- **Accessible** in design including hearing induction loops, braille embossed and TalkBack functionality in the tablet for those with disabilities
- All InLinks are powered by **100% renewable carbon-free energy** with screens **dimming to 600cd/m^2 at night** in line with the Institute of Lighting Professionals, Professional Lighting Guide 05: The Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements
- Maintenance of InLinks is paid for and undertaken by InLinkUK, and each InLink is **inspected weekly and cleaned every two weeks**, with the ability to rapidly respond on an as-needed basis to feedback and any issues monitored by internal sensors.
- With a **footprint of just 0.22m^2** InLinks are smaller than any comparable street furniture, and the installation of **each will typically facilitate and fund the removal of up to two existing BT payphones** giving back 1.78m^2 for each installed
- **438 hours of council content** are provided for free on each display screen of each InLink per year for the Council to promote local initiatives, news, and events. This equates to 5% of every hour of screen time.
- Direct **access to charities** through the use of the dedicated charity tile on the fully-accessible interactive tablet
- Over 1,000 hours per year of hyper-local content allow each InLink to act as a **community notice board** with the InLinkUK team able to work with local groups to promote nearby events and activities
- Secure power-only USB ports for **rapid device charging**
- **Free phone calls for everyone** provided by BT, including the option to plug in headphones for more privacy, with approximately 50,000 free calls made each week. Unlike payphones, InLinks do not include or require a handset
- **Seeking to improve the sense of safety in an area** and assisting the reporting of crime and disorder by providing a **direct 999 call button** with location sharing and two-press approach to limit accidental activation, with the screens able to be used by groups such as the Police to display emergency and community messaging.
- The opportunity to integrate **additional environmental sensors** in collaboration including on air quality (under trial), noise, and other environmental factors.

All services are provided in accordance with the InLinkUK Terms of Use and Privacy Policy, and are compliant with relevant privacy rules and regulations in the UK.

InLink Design and Technical Information

To assist in improving the overall public realm of the area up to two non-listed BT payphones will be removed for each new InLink that goes in the ground, allowing us to **return hundreds of square meters of valuable pavement space** to the local community while preserving and enhancing the existing pedestrian network in the area.

InLinks themselves are free-standing structures featuring a fully accessible tablet interface and digital display screens on two sides, while the small 'privacy wings' give a sense of personal space without enclosures.

The InLink dimensions are 28cm deep and 89cm wide, with a height of 290cm to maximise the range of the ultrafast Wi-Fi while not dominating the street scene. A narrow 79cm base limits the footprint while ensuring access to wheelchair users and creating a slender appearance.



The InLink digital display screens automatically dim at night to 600cd/m^2 in accordance with the levels set for this type and size of screen (those under 10m^2) by the Institute of Lighting Professionals, Professional Lighting Guide 05: The Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements.

This dimming is based on a predetermined schedule of daylight hours which takes into account seasonal changes, ensuring the InLinks remain in harmony with the streetscape throughout the day and minimise disturbance to local residents during the evening hours.

InLinks are designed so they do not require feeder pillars in relation to their power supply, further limiting any potential impact on the nearby pavement area and pedestrian flows.

Similarly, InLinks are made for urban environments with their structure and foundations able to easily withstand being pushed by individuals or high winds. The overall structure is made to fall slowly should it be involved in a vehicle collision, with internal motion sensors included in each InLink that are designed to send automatic notifications in the event of such an incident.

Accessible for all Types of Users

InLinks have been designed to be accessible to all users, regardless of their physical or technological capabilities, including:

- The tablet interface placed at 121cm and angled at 15 degrees to provide easy access, including for wheelchair users
- Braille embossed information on all key features and the numbered keypad
- Easy touch 999 call button to ensure it can be used regardless of mobility restriction (includes two push approach to reduce the chance of accidental calls)
- High-contrast large type labels help the visually impaired
- TalkBack functionality facilitates full access to the tablet for all users
- Hearing induction loops integrated into each InLink
- The touch screen interface is designed to feel familiar to consumer tablet products.

We will shortly be introducing Next Generation Text Relay on to the InLinks which will further support people with a disability using the InLinks.

Site Selection Criteria

Developed through experience, our Site Selection Criteria are used to find suitable locations for InLinks based on a range of considerations.

We look at, but are not limited to, the following for determining the most suitable location for bringing each InLink into a community:

- **Feedback**, with Councils and other stakeholders invited to give early suggestions
- **Pavement widths**, with preference given to locations with wider pavement areas
- **Street furniture**, with the aim to avoid clutter wherever possible
- **Heritage areas**, with care taken to avoid any negative impact

When determining which existing BT payphones to remove in connection with an InLink, we consider:

- **Feedback**, with potential locations sought from Councils and local stakeholders
- **Heritage significance**, including relevant heritage listings (e.g. K2 red boxes)
- **Pavement width**, with preference given to decluttering narrow pavement areas
- **Street clutter**, with preference given to reducing clutter in busy areas
- **Use and condition**, with underused or damaged payphones prioritised
- **Universal Service Obligation**, where BT is required to maintain payphone services which Ofcom requires

Manchester City Council Rollout

The presence of existing BT payphones are iconic features of many streets throughout the UK. They have been part of lives for decades and to many they go unnoticed as accepted items of street furniture that have always been there. It is appreciated that existing red BT public call boxes (K2 models) play an important role in streetscapes with many being listed, therefore as part of the rollout of InLinks in the authority priority has been given to removal of other types of BT call boxes in association with proposed InLinks. These existing payphones may be found as individual units or in clusters, so wherever possible a new InLink proposal is associated to their decommissioning.

It is appreciated that the siting of existing BT call boxes has long since been established in street scenes throughout Manchester and their rollout grew organically based on a completely different demographic. Furthermore, the surrounding environment immediate to exiting phone boxes has sometimes changed over the years.

InLink is new so the whereabouts of existing BT payphones might not always fit a network that seeks to cater for today's communications needs. In this regard the siting of new InLinks have been seen as an opportunity to improve the street scene and its layout, making places more useable.

In some instances, the pursued position of the new InLink may not always be a direct replacement on the exact same spot as the associated BT call box to be removed. This has resulted in some cases where the proposed InLink has moved away from the site of the old BT call box to a nearby location. Equally some call boxes associated with a new InLink may not be in the vicinity of the proposed InLink site, however there is a commitment by BT to remove two existing call boxes for every one proposed InLink, hence in some case existing call boxes earmarked for removal are some distance away.

For illustrative purposes, the overview map as follows shows the existing BT call boxes earmarked to be removed in association with the proposed InLinks. The second map show the whereabouts of existing InLinks/sites with permission and the location of proposed InLinks as part of this next rollout phase for the authority.

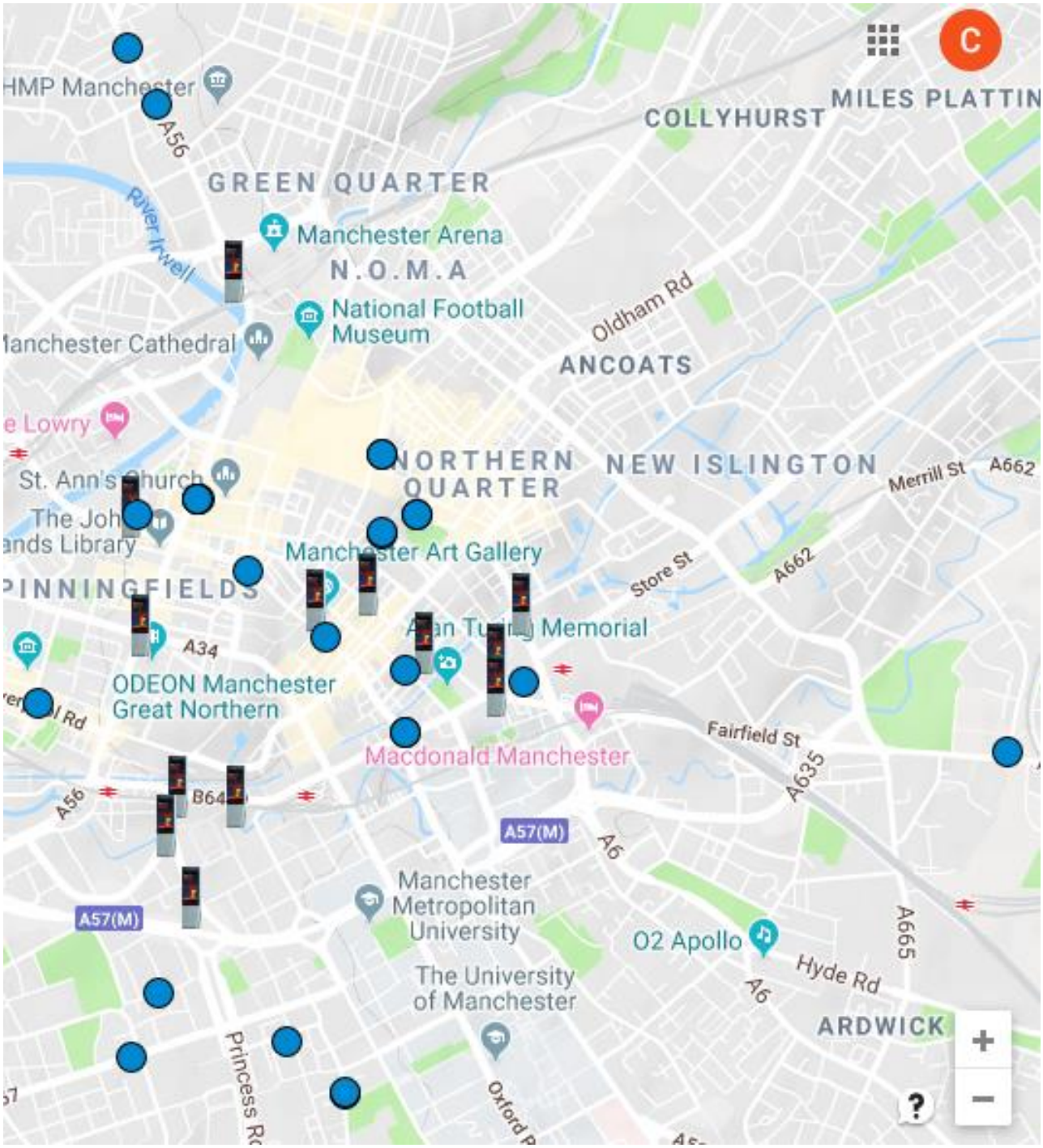
Pre-application Advice

As part of this third batch of sites pursued by Mono Consultants Ltd, 13 new sites for InLinks along with associated removals were introduced to the LPA at the pre-application stage. Christopher Smith, planning officer from Manchester City Council reviewed these options and confirmed in an email response dated 17th May 2019 that they all looked to be '*broadly acceptable*'.

Map of Proposed BT Payphone Removals

As part of this next phase of rollout of InLinks, there will be 26 existing BT payphones removed in association with 13 InLink sites proposed at various locations.

For illustrative purposes only, please see below a map that shows all BT payphones that are to be removed in association with these 13 InLink applications. The removals are noted with the blue dot and the proposed Inlinks are identified with an Inlink symbol. To note, some of the removal are a pair of kiosks, denoted with 1 blue dot due to their proximity.



Aligned with Planning Policy

The application is for full planning permission under section 62 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 [the 1990 Act] and express advertisement consent under regulation 9 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 [the Regulations].

Applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise (Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the 1990 Act).

As per regulation 3 of the Regulations, applications for express advertisement consent must be determined in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking into account (a) the provisions of the development plan, so far as they are material, and (b) any other relevant factors.

Under the advertisement regulations, Express Consent is required for the advertisement element of the InLink. As per regulation 3 of the Regulations, applications for Express Advertisement Consent must be determined in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking into account (a) the provisions of the development plan, so far as they are material, and (b) any other relevant factors.

UK Digital Strategy

Digital connectivity is now a utility, and modern life is increasingly impossible without it. Connectivity drives productivity and innovation and is the physical underpinning of a digital nation.

UK Digital Strategy 2017

Being connected is fundamental to success in our modern world and InLinks provide a cost-free way for communities to get online and take advantage of available opportunities.

Every individual and every business should have the skills and confidence to seize the opportunities of digital technology and have easy access to high-quality internet wherever they live, work, travel or learn.

The Rt Hon Karen Bradley MP Former Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (July 2017-Jan 2018)

InLinkUK from BT is helping close the digital divide that still leaves too many Britons at a disadvantage. For example, 20% of Manchester InLinks will be in the most deprived 30% of local areas nationally enabling residents in these areas to access free wi-fi, as well as the other free services provided from the InLinks.

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (2018) - England

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied and is considered to be a material consideration for both the Full Planning Permission application and the Express Advertisement Consent application.

The NPPF supports the promotion of healthy and safe communities at section 8. The relevant policies are set out below:

Paragraph 91 - Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which: a) Promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other.

Paragraph 92 - To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should: a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.

Paragraph 95 - Planning policies and decisions should promote public safety and take into account wider security and defence requirements by: a) anticipating and addressing possible malicious threats and natural hazards, especially in locations where large numbers of people are expected to congregate. Policies for relevant areas (such as town centre and regeneration frameworks), and the layout and design of developments, should be informed by the most up-to-date information available from the police and other agencies about the nature of potential threats and their implications. This includes appropriate and proportionate steps that can be taken to reduce vulnerability, increase resilience and ensure public safety and security.

The NPPF supports the provision and promotion of sustainable transport at section 9. These relevant policies are set out below:

Paragraph 109 - 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.

Paragraph 110 - Within this context, applications for development should: [...] c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive, which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards.

The NPPF supports the provision of high-quality communications infrastructure at section 10. These relevant policies are set out below:

Paragraph 112 - Advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being. Planning policies and decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full fibre broadband connections. Policies should set out how high-quality digital infrastructure, providing access to services from a range of providers, is expected to be delivered and upgraded over time; and should prioritise full fibre connections to existing and new developments (as these connections will, in almost all cases, provide the optimum solution).

Paragraph 113 - The number of radio and electronic communications masts, and the sites for such installations, should be kept to a minimum consistent with the needs of consumers, the efficient operation of the network and providing reasonable capacity for future expansion. Use of existing masts, buildings and other structures for new electronic communications capability (including wireless) should be encouraged. Where new sites are required (such as for new 5G networks, or for connected transport and smart city applications), equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate.

Paragraph 115 - Applications for electronic communications development (including applications for prior approval under the General Permitted Development Order) should be supported by the necessary evidence to justify the proposed development.

Paragraph 116 - Local planning authorities must determine applications on planning grounds only. They should not seek to prevent competition between different operators, question the need for an electronic communications system, or set health safeguards different from the International Commission guidelines for public exposure.

The NPPF states the following specifically in relation to advertisement control:

Paragraph 132 - The quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. A separate consent process within the planning system controls the display of advertisements, which should be operated in a way which is simple, efficient and effective. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.

Manchester City Council Local Plan Policy

Core Strategy (2012)

The primary planning policy context at a local level is the Core Strategy which was adopted by Manchester City Council on 11th July 2012. It is the key document in Manchester's Local Development Framework and covers a period of 15 years from 2012 to 2027. Proportionate and where deemed applicable to the site and proposal subject to this application, it is considered that the main planning policy contact taken from the Core Strategy that is applicable to this case are stated as follows: -

Policy SP1

Spatial Principles
The key spatial principles which will guide the strategic development of Manchester to 2027 are:

- The Regional Centre will be the focus for economic and commercial development, retail, leisure and cultural activity, alongside high-quality city living.
- The growth of Manchester Airport will act as a catalyst for the regional economy and will also provide the impetus for a second hub of economic activity in this part of the City.
- Beyond these areas, the emphasis is on the creation of neighbourhoods of choice, providing high quality and diverse housing around district centres which meet local needs, all in a distinct environment. The majority of new residential development in these neighbourhoods will be in the Inner Areas, defined by the North Manchester , East Manchester and Central Manchester Regeneration Areas.
- The City is covered by regeneration areas including the City Centre. All development should have regard to the character, issues and strategy for each regeneration area as described in the North, East, Central and South Manchester and Wythenshawe Strategic Regeneration Frameworks and the Manchester City Centre Strategic Plan.
- The City's network of open spaces will provide all residents with good access to recreation opportunities. The River Valleys (the Irk, Medlock and Mersey) and City Parks are particularly important, and access to these resources will be improved.
- New development will maximise the potential of the City's transport infrastructure, in particular promoting walking, cycling and use of the public transport. The extension to the Metrolink network through the Oldham and Ashton lines will create key corridors for new development.

Core Development Principles
Development in all parts of the City should:-

- Make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice including:-
  - creating well designed places that enhance or create character.
  - making a positive contribution to the health, safety and wellbeing of residents
  - considering the needs of all members of the community regardless of age, gender, disability, sexuality, religion, culture, ethnicity or income.
  - protect and enhance the built and natural environment.

- Minimise emissions, ensure efficient use of natural resources and reuse previously developed land wherever possible.
- Improve access to jobs, services, education and open space by being located to reduce the need to travel and provide good access to sustainable transport provision.

Policy DM 1 Development Management
All development should have regard to the following specific issues for which more detailed guidance may be given within a supplementary planning document:-

- Appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail.
- Impact on the surrounding areas in terms of the design, scale and appearance of the proposed development. Development should have regard to the character of the surrounding area.
- Effects on amenity, including privacy, light, noise, vibration, air quality, odours, litter, vermin, birds, road safety and traffic generation. This could also include proposals which would be sensitive to existing environmental conditions, such as noise.

- Accessibility: buildings and neighbourhoods fully accessible to disabled people, access to new development by sustainable transport modes.
- Community safety and crime prevention.
- Design for health.
- Adequacy of internal accommodation and external amenity space.
- Refuse storage and collection.
- Vehicular access and car parking.
- Effects relating to biodiversity, landscape, archaeological or built heritage.
- Green Infrastructure including open space, both public and private. The use of alternatives to peat-based products in landscaping/gardens within development schemes.
- Flood risk and drainage.
- Existing or proposed hazardous installations.
- Subject to scheme viability, developers will be required to demonstrate that new development incorporates sustainable construction techniques as follows (In terms of energy targets this policy should be read alongside policy EN6 and the higher target will apply):
  - a) For new residential development meet as a minimum the following Code for Sustainable Homes standards. This will apply until a higher national standard is required: Year 2010 – Code Level 3; Year 2013 - Code Level 4; Year 2016 - Code Level 6; and
  (b) For new commercial developments to demonstrate best practice which will include the application of the BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) standards. By 2019 provisions similar to the Code for Sustainable Homes will also apply to all new non-domestic buildings.

This case has also been considered against Spatial Objective 2 – Economy and City Centre and the broad principle of the policies contained within this section. Furthermore, the general principle as set out in City Centre Policy CC1 - Primary Economic Development Focus : City Centre and Fringe, City Centre Policy CC4 - Visitors - Tourism, Culture and Leisure and City Centre Policy CC9 - Design and Heritage have been taken into account when progressing this application.

Manchester Unitary Development Plan (1995) Saved Policies

It is recognised that the Core Strategy replaced much of the UDP but some UDP policies are extant and so remain applicable as follows proportionate to this form or development.

15. Advertisements, Hoardings and Posters

"DC15.1 The Advertisement Regulations require that applications for advertisements be considered only in the interests of amenity and public safety. In determining applications for free standing hoardings and wall mounted posters the Council will take account of the following matters in assessing these interests: a. the general location of the proposed development and the effect on visual amenity; b. the scope for posters and hoardings to make a positive contribution to the locality; c. the design of the structures, and the relationship with any premises on which they are located; d. the effect of the proposal on permanent redevelopment of the land; e. public safety resulting from the positioning of the design of the display; f. the ease with which the structure is capable of being satisfactorily maintained; g. the use of hoardings to screen vacant sites or buildings during development, or where development is known to be imminent; h. the use of hoardings as part of a scheme to prevent access by unauthorised users onto land pending development; i. the use of hoardings to disguise or improve the appearance of unsightly features, operations or activities; j. the number of advertisements in the locality and their cumulative effect on visual amenity.

DC15.2 In assessing the interests of amenity and safety the Council will take account of the following criteria: a. developments of this kind should not harm the character or architectural features of a building, nor interfere with its proper use; b. they should be in scale with the locality and relate properly to the site on which they stand; c. they should be unobtrusive and should not intrude into residential neighbourhoods and areas of high amenity value; d. a proposal which would be injurious to public safety or adversely affect the flow of traffic, by reason of its position, size, or design will not be permitted.

DC15.3 Where, having regard to the preceding policies, the Council considers the proposed development to be acceptable in principle, conditions may be imposed in order to protect safety and amenity."

17.Telecommunications

DC17.1 Applications for telecommunications developments will normally be approved if the Council can be satisfied that the development has been sited and designed to minimise its impact on residential amenity and in environmentally sensitive areas. Wherever possible, the Council will expect the potential of existing buildings and masts, including the sharing of such facilities, to be fully explored before agreeing to additional separate development.

19. Listed Buildings

DC19.1 In determining applications for listed building consent or planning applications for development involving or having an impact on buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, the Council will have regard to the desirability of securing the retention, restoration, maintenance and continued use of such buildings and to protecting their general setting. In giving effect to this policy, the Council will:

a. not grant Listed building consent for the demolition of a listed building other than in the most exceptional circumstances, and in any case, not unless it is satisfied that every possible effort has been made to continue the present use or to find a suitable alternative use;

b. not permit a change of use of a listed building, where it would have a detrimental effect on the character or appearance of the building;

c. not permit any external or internal alteration or addition to a Listed building where, in its opinion, there would be an adverse effect on its architectural or historic character;

d. seek to preserve and enhance the settings of listed buildings by appropriate control over the design of new development in their vicinity, control over the use of adjacent land, and where appropriate, by the preservation of trees and landscape features;

e. permit demolition only where there are approved detailed plans for redevelopment and where there is evidence of a firm building contract;

f. not permit alterations to a listed building which would prevent the future use of any part of the building, in particular upper floors or basements, or where poor maintenance is likely to result.

Siting Justification against Planning Policy

Siting

The proposed site subject to this application is located on Great Ducie Street, to the west of Manchester Arena and Victoria Station in Manchester City Centre. From the outset it is a material planning consideration to take into account that the 2no. existing BT payphones (identified on page 2 of this statement) are to be removed which are established features within the city centre street scene. These removals will free up valuable pavement space in the City Centre, as well as tidy-up the general street scape within the city.

The contextual surroundings immediate to the proposed InLink site comprises mainly of commercial type land uses. A mix of uses are evident including office buildings, entertainment premises, commercial businesses, restaurants, and transport infrastructure.

The street scape surrounding the proposed InLink site is characterised by common street furniture given the surrounding land uses, directional and street signage, street lights, bollards, utility cabinets, litter bins and advertising hoardings. The application site is not located in a Conservation Area however the Grade II Listed North Bridge is located close to the site location.

Public highways and pavements in this area are extremely busy owing to the central city location on approach to Victoria Station and the Manchester Arena. Pavements are wide on this stretch of the road and can comfortably accommodate the volume of foot traffic and existing public amenities. The proposed InLink would be sited on the wide section of pavement next to a layby, thereby ensuring there is no adverse impact on pedestrian movement, especially during busy times of the day when people would visit the adjacent land uses and amenities most.

Despite its more modern appearance, the InLink unit is of an uncomplicated design. We believe the siting of this unit at the proposed location will prove to be a harmonious feature within this diverse and busy locale given its siting in line with the existing lineup of the aforementioned common street characteristics. Additionally, the wide nature of the street and large scale building frontages in the vicinity, mixed with the current, prominent advertisements, street furniture and general traffic flow found along this stretch of road will offer a balanced backdrop for the simple unit design, as proposed.

It is concluded that the siting of the proposed InLink can be justified in which it is considered that it is acceptable and in accordance with the applicable national and local planning policies.

Appearance

The proposed InLink unit is an award winning, advanced, modern development which has been designed following significant improvements in technology and digital content over recent years. It has the ability to promote the global image of Manchester as a vibrant, innovative place to work, live, study and visit.

The proposed design is much slimmer and takes a more compact profile than any existing BT payphone kiosks, that the proposed InLinks are immediately or indirectly replacing. The user interface is located at a low level and is a similar height to an existing BT payphone unit so as to ensure that it is accessible to all users.

The proposed materials are of a high-quality durable nature and include robust aluminum superstructure, ribbed paneling to eliminate flat surface prone to vandalism. The design of the structure has a vertical emphasis to reduce the footprint on the ground. The InLink, by reason of its design has a significantly reduced footprint and would give a slender more tasteful appearance than the existing payphone units that are to be removed nearby. We believe the appearance of the general area will be improved by the associated removal of the existing payphone booth and indirect replacement with the new InLink.

The InLink with advertisement panels will be set within a very commercial setting and dominated by both pedestrian and vehicular movements through this busy area of Manchester City Centre. While it is accepted that the InLink advertisements will be more visible during the hours of darkness or in dull conditions, its appearance would not be out of keeping with this stretch of road which is well lit by street lights, window and office frontages, and advertisement panels. In this context an InLink structure would not appear detrimental to the visual amenity of the setting of the nearby Listed Building (Railway Bridge) by reason of the advertisement's size and brightness.

It is concluded that the design of the proposed InLink can be justified and its appearance is of a complimentary design and exterior finish to structures and street furniture against which is will be viewed at this location. Therefore it is considered that the appearance of the proposed InLink is acceptable and fully accordance with national and local planning policies.

Advertisements

When seen in the overarching context of the street scene, it is considered that the location, size and height of the digital advertisement panels will, on balance, be acceptable. As previously discussed, it is believed that the siting and appearance of the InLink would not create significant harm to the amenity of the area that would outweigh the public benefits and other material factors of consideration.

In terms of public safety, the site of the InLink and the display of digital advertisements on its sides will allow for the continued safe movements of motorists and pedestrians. In this regard its presence within the proposed context would not endanger public safety of those people who are taking reasonable care for their own and others' safety.

It is recognised that all advertisements are intended to attract people's attention, however in this case their siting and size would not create an untoward feature within the street scene. The setting of the proposed InLink is to be positioned and the orientation of the advertisements in relation to the road, would not cause unacceptable interference with nearby road signs and/or navigational lights. Viewed within the street scene setting the digital advertisements would be seen by passing motorists but they would not create confusion nor influence the behaviour of drivers to such a degree that they would cause a hazard by reason of their presence. The proposed InLink would not interrupt any visibility splays or sightlines. In this regard viewed within the commercial context of the wider environment the InLink would not appear as a distraction to passing motorists.

In relation to the advertisement element of the scheme, the digital screens and the back-end systems allows InLink to control the content of the screens. In this respect the InLink units offer public benefits, in that the screens can display real-time information from a range of sources, including local weather and transport information. In conjunction with local government, community groups and other public services organisations, InLinks can show localised content. In the event of an emergency or major event, InLinks have the potential to allow the advertising to stop and place urgent and useful messages to members of the public in the local area to alert people to major incidents which may impact them.

The advertising screens would operate within the illuminance limits agreed on existing similar digital screens in the UK and within the levels recommended by the Institution of Lighting Professionals, as per the attached document – Proposed Schedule of Operating Conditions. This document also contains additional information in relation to the mitigation of highway safety impact.

With regards pedestrian safety, the InLink by reason of its unified positioning with the existing street furniture, would not impede pedestrian movements as ample footway width would be retained. Allowing for the orientation of the InLink's user interface in relation to passing motorists, the public safety of those using it would not be put at risk either due to its positioning on the pavement.

It is concluded that the proposal which contains digital advertisements balances key local and national planning policy considerations and is acceptable in the context of amenity and public safety.

Conclusion

InLinks have the potential to significantly enhance the provision of community communications facilities and local services. It is precisely the type of high-speed digital infrastructure that the Government is seeking to support as part of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. It will deliver social, economic, and environmental benefits for Manchester by providing a suite of essential urban tools/services, including free ultrafast Wi-Fi to residents, businesses and visitors.

InLinks are of a high quality, accessible design that would be a significant improvement when compared to the existing payphones that are to be replaced. The proposed InLink would be appropriately sited; the case would reduce street clutter; it would improve available footway widths; it would not affect heritage assets and would not otherwise adversely affect amenity or public safety.

We believe this statement has demonstrated that the proposal is in accordance with local development plan policies and national policy set out in the NPPF and that the application warrants support as we believe there are no material considerations that indicate otherwise.

Recommended Conditions of Consent

To give assurance each InLink will operate as intended and the associated payphone removals will occur, we recommend the following conditions (or a version there of) be included as part of any planning consent:

A. *Within three (3) months of development commencing the existing BT payphones shown above shall be removed in their entirety and the land made good to the same condition as the adjacent land.*

B. *Pavement surrounding the InLink shall be made good to the same condition as the adjacent land.*

C. *The intensity of the illumination of the two digital display screens shall not exceed 600 candelas per square metre (cd/m2) between dusk and dawn in line with the maximum permitted recommended luminance as set out by 'The Institute of Lighting Professional's 'Professional Lighting Guide 05: The Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements'.*

D. *The digital display screens shall not display any moving, or apparently moving, images (including animation, flashing, scrolling three dimensional, intermittent or video elements).*

E. *The minimum display time for each piece of content on the digital display screens shall be 10 seconds.*

F. *The interval between each piece of content on the digital display screens shall take place over a period no greater than one second; the complete screen shall change with no visual effects (including swiping or other animated transition methods) between displays and the display will include a mechanism to freeze the image in the event of a malfunction.*

G. *No content on the digital display screens shall resemble traffic signs, as defined in section 64 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.*

Digital Display Screen Technical Specification

The technical specification of the two digital display screens are as follows.

Screen Panel Type:	LCD
Screen Dimensions:	69cm wide x 121cm high (55 inch in portrait)
Screen Area:	0.835m^2
Resolution:	1920(RGB)×1080 , FHD
Maximum Daytime Brightness:	2500 cd/m² (Typ.)
Maximum Nighttime Brightness:	600 cd/m^2 (Typ.)
Contrast Ratio:	5000:1 (Typ.)
Display Colours:	16.7M (8-bit) , CIE1931 72%
Viewing Angle:	178/178 degrees
Lamp Type:	WLED
Operating Temperature:	0 ~ 50 °C
Sunlight Readable:	Yes

The proposed usage for the screens has been set in accordance with Transport for London's (TfL) policy document 'Guidance for Digital Roadside Advertising and Proposed Best Practice – 2013' [the TfL Guidance].

In addition to the above conditions, each InLink location has been assessed against and would comply with the following additional criteria from the TfL Guidance.

- There would be no conflict with any traffic signs, signals, crossing points, schools, hospitals or low bridges.
- No sightlines or clearances would be affected.
- The TfL guidance states that 'Static digital advertising is likely to be acceptable in locations where static advertising exists or would be accepted.' There are existing traditional advertisement on similar sections of the respective roads in many cases.
- The geometry of the roads are not complicated, and the driving conditions are not considered to be demanding or complicated.
- The advertisements would not be experienced by a driver in conjunction with any other similar digital advertisements.
- As per the TfL guidance, the advertisements would be located as close to the driver's natural eye line as possible and facing as head-on to the traffic as is practical.

The lighting levels noted above are within the levels set for this type and size of screen (those under 10m^2) as set by the Institute of Lighting Professionals, Professional Lighting Guide 05: The Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements.