



# Blue and Green Infrastructure Statement

Deansgate, Manchester

May 2025



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## Deansgate, Manchester

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### Quality Assurance Approval Status

This document has been prepared and checked in accordance with Ensphere Group Ltd.’s Quality Management System.

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# Report Outline

## Contents

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|                                    |     |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| Executive Summary.....             | iii |
| 1. Introduction .....              | 1   |
| Site and Surroundings .....        | 1   |
| Proposed Development.....          | 1   |
| Report Objective.....              | 1   |
| 2. Planning and Wider Context..... | 2   |
| National Context.....              | 2   |
| Local Context .....                | 2   |
| 3. Objectives.....                 | 4   |
| Objective 1.....                   | 4   |
| Objective 2.....                   | 4   |
| Objective 3.....                   | 4   |
| Objective 4.....                   | 5   |
| Appendices .....                   | 6   |
| A. Proposed Site Plan.....         | 7   |
| B. General Notes .....             | 8   |

## Executive Summary

This Blue and Green Infrastructure Statement presents the environmental improvements associated with a proposed development at Church House, 90 Deansgate, Manchester.

The proposals are for the refurbishment and conversion of the above site from office to a hotel, reutilising the existing building.

Consideration has primarily been given to 'Manchester's Great Outdoors – A Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester 2015-2025', and specifically the headline actions needed to reach the strategy's objectives.

Overall, the proposals for the scheme are in line with the overarching principles of Manchester's Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy, with the scheme contributing to the green infrastructure of the local built environment.

The proposals are for an internal fit out project only and therefore whilst no new green or blue infrastructure is proposed, the change of use to a hotel will contribute to Implementation Plan's objectives 3 and 4. Visitors to the city will benefit from the proximity to green spaces and Irwell River, which will help to promote the benefits of green and blue infrastructure, as well as help to raise the profile of existing parks and green spaces such as Parsonage Gardens.

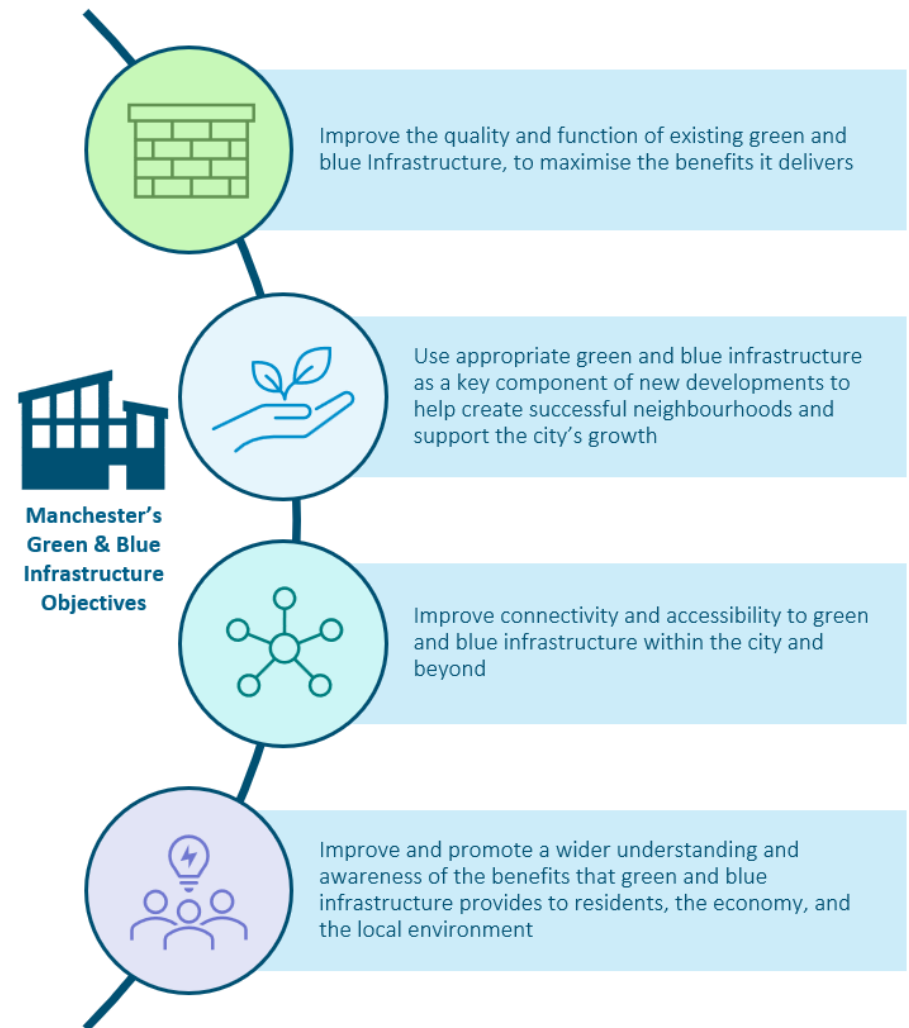


Figure ES.1 – Objectives Detailed within the Manchester Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy

# 1. Introduction

Ensphere Group Ltd was commissioned by Criterion Capital to produce an Blue and Green Infrastructure Statement for a proposed development at Church House, 90 Deansgate, Manchester.

## Site and Surroundings

The application site (the 'Site') is located in the northern area of Manchester City Centre. The building is situated on Deansgate, a main road (A56) within the city centre, which includes retail, restaurants, and services.

The immediate surroundings are commercial, with a mix of restaurants and shops. Green spaces and recreational facilities, including parks and community centres, are located in the wider surrounding area.

The site has a Greater Manchester Accessibility Level (GMAL) rating of 8, indicating high public transport accessibility. Two bus stops are located within a 10-minute walk on Deansgate and Bridge Street, serving over 10 bus routes. Salford Central and Manchester Victoria Railway Stations are also within a 10-minute walk, providing rail connections via TransPennine Express and Northern lines.

## Proposed Development

The proposals are for the refurbishment and conversion of the above site from office to a hotel, reutilising the existing building.

## Report Objective

The aim of the Blue and Green Infrastructure Statement is to outline how the scheme aligns with the objectives of the 'Manchester's Great Outdoors – A Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester 2015-2025'.



Figure 1.1 – Map Showing the Location of the Proposed Development

## 2. Planning and Wider Context

The importance of green infrastructure is referenced throughout planning policy, with consideration given to relevant local policies, legislation and guidance, as per summarised in this section.



Figure 2.1 – Tiers of Key Relevant Planning Policy

### National Context

#### National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), last updated in December 2024, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. The framework identifies the following as key for the setting of strategic policies:

*"conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation."*

#### Planning Practice Guidance (2016; updated 2024)

- Climate Change – Advises how planning can identify suitable mitigation and adaption measures in plan-making and the application process to address the potential for climate change.
- Design - Design affects how people interact with places and can affect a range of economic, social and environmental objectives. The guidance states that planning policies and decisions should seek to ensure that the physical environment supports these objectives.
- Natural Environment - Explains key issues in implementing policy to protect biodiversity, including local requirements.

#### The Environmental Act (2021)

The aim of the Act is to:

*"make provisions about targets, plans and policies for improving the natural environment; for statements and reports about environmental protection; for the Office for Environmental Protection; about waste and resource efficiency; about air quality; for the recall of products that fail to meet environmental standards; about water; about nature and biodiversity; for conservation covenants; about the regulation of chemicals; and for connected purposes."*

#### Defra's 25 Year Environmental Plan (2018)

'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment', sets out government action to help the natural world regain and retain good health. It aims to deliver cleaner air and water in our cities and rural landscapes, protect threatened species and provide richer wildlife habitats. It includes the aim to improve existing green infrastructure by encouraging more investment while making sure there is a presumption for sustainable development.

### Local Context

#### Manchester Core Strategy (2012)

The Manchester City Council Core Strategy was adopted in 2012 and covers a 15-year period up until 2027. This is the key document in the Manchester Local Plan and the purpose of the document is to set out the Councils' vision for Manchester's future development through setting out long term strategic policies.

Some policies of the Core Strategy (CS) have been partially replaced by policies from the 'Places for Everyone (Pfe) Joint Development Plan for Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan 2022 To 2039' which was adopted in March 2024. As such, the Core Strategy must be read alongside the Addendum to Manchester Core Strategy 2024, which outlines these changes.

The following policy is considered most relevant to this report:

- **Policy EN9 (Green Infrastructure)** – New development will be expected to maintain existing green infrastructure in terms of its quantity, quality and multiple function. 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. This includes the encouragement of green roofs, green walls, tree planting and other forms of green infrastructure to allow for the adaption to climate change in heavily urbanised areas.

#### Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document for Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan (2024)

The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document sets out the development pathway for nine of the ten Greater Manchester boroughs from 2022 to 2039 to support their sustainable growth. It provides a strategic framework for local plans and supports the delivery and protection of key infrastructures and environmental assets.

As noted in section 4.5, a range of policies from the guide replace sections from the Core Strategy, and the most pertinent policy to this report is:

- **Policy JP-G2 (Green Infrastructure Network)** – Wherever practicable, opportunities to integrate new and existing green infrastructure into new development will be taken to protect, enhance and expand the green infrastructure network. Where new or improved green infrastructure is delivered as part of a development, the developer should make appropriate provision for its long-term management and maintenance.

#### Guide to Development in Manchester (SPD) (2007)

The Guide to Development in Manchester (SPD) sets out the required documents and format that should accompany planning proposals in Manchester. Whilst written in the context of the former Unitary Development Plan, the guide remains an adopted document and gives reference to environmental standards, particularly in relation to energy efficiency and renewable energy.

References are made Existing green links across the site should be maintained and the opportunity taken to create new links as appropriate. Landscaping and new planting should include species appropriate for the proposed development that will encourage wildlife.

#### Manchester's Great Outdoors – A Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester 2015-2025 (2015)

Building on the investment to date in the city's green infrastructure and the understanding of its importance in helping to create a successful city, the vision for green and blue infrastructure in Manchester over the next 10 years is:

*By 2025 high quality, well maintained green and blue spaces will be an integral part of all neighbourhoods. The city's communities will be living healthy, fulfilled lives, enjoying access to parks and greenspaces and safe green routes for walking, cycling and exercise throughout the city. Businesses will be investing in areas with a high environmental quality and attractive surroundings, enjoying access to a healthy, talented workforce. New funding models will be in place, ensuring progress achieved by 2025 can be sustained and provide the platform for ongoing investment in the years to follow.*

Four objectives have been established to enable the vision to be achieved:

1. Improve the quality and function of existing green and blue Infrastructure, to maximise the benefits it delivers
2. Use appropriate green and blue infrastructure as a key component of new developments to help create successful neighbourhoods and support the city's growth
3. Improve connectivity and accessibility to green and blue infrastructure within the city and beyond
4. Improve and promote a wider understanding and awareness of the benefits that green and blue infrastructure provides to residents, the economy and the local environment

Headline actions have been established for each objective, providing a framework for all stakeholders in the city, from the Council and other large organisations, to developers, to residents and communities to identify how they will be able to contribute to the city's green infrastructure. The strategy is accompanied by a separate stakeholder implementation plan which was updated in 2022.

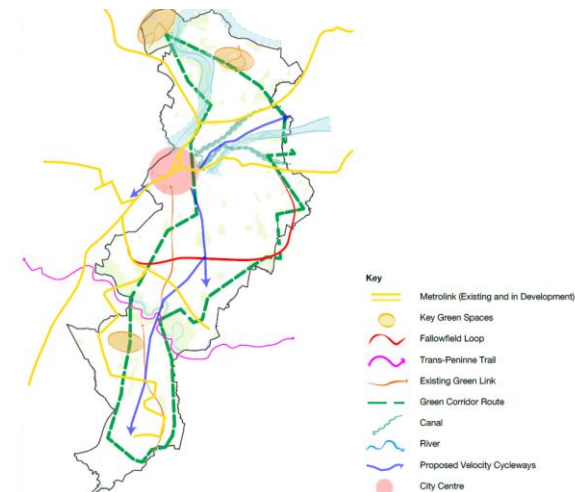


Figure 2.1 – Connectivity and Accessibility (Taken from Manchester's Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy)

### 3. Objectives

This section outlines how the proposals align with the objectives of 'Manchester's Great Outdoors: A Green Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester (MGO)' which are detailed in the figure below:

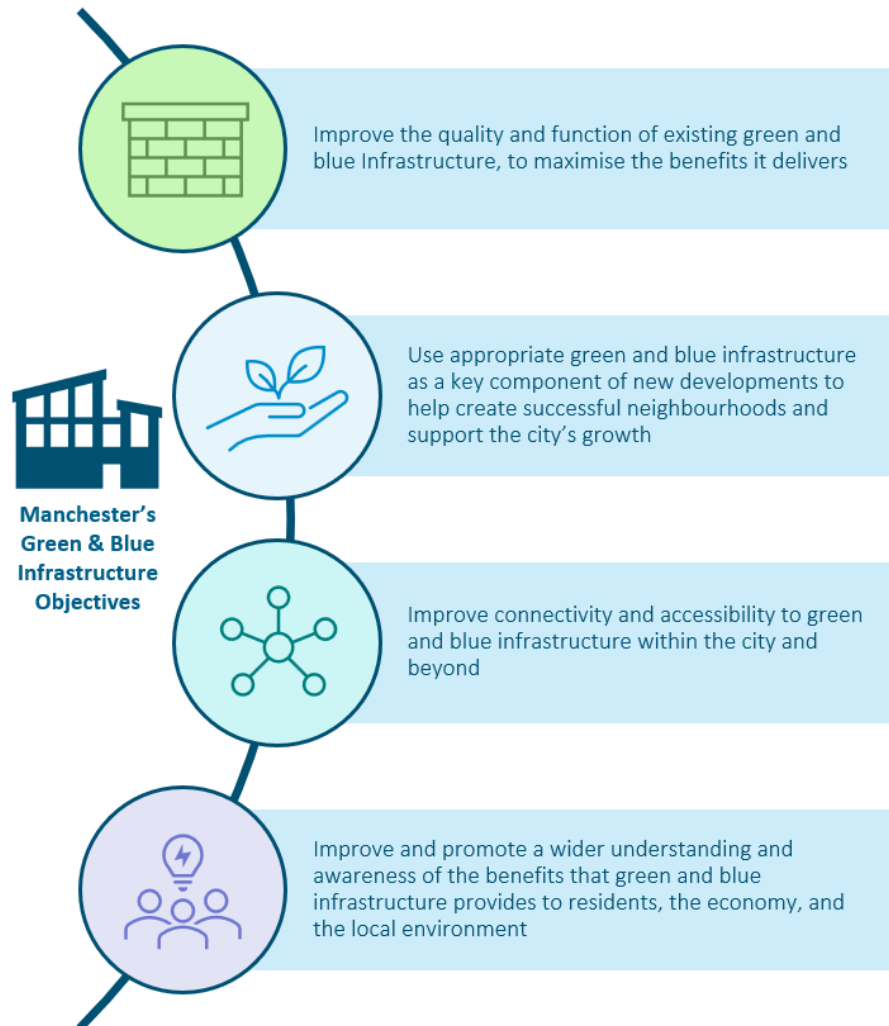


Figure 3.1 – Objectives Detailed within the Manchester Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy

#### Objective 1.

**Improve the quality and function of existing green and blue Infrastructure, to maximise the benefits it delivers**

The existing site comprises building and hardstanding, and the proposed change of use and internal fit out works is not expected to have an impact on any vegetation.

A Biodiversity Net Gain Statement, as well as an Ecology Assessment and Bat Survey, have been undertaken for the development. These recommend the implementation of a Construction Ecological Management Plan to ensure measures are in place for the prevention of pollution and to ensure no impacts occur to Parsonage Gardens.

The opportunity to introduce retrofit green/blue infrastructure as part of the proposed development is limited due to the constraints associated with the retention of the existing building and due to this being an internal fit out project only.

#### Objective 2.

**Use appropriate green and blue infrastructure as a key component of new developments to help create successful neighbourhoods and support the city's growth**

The opportunity to introduce retrofit green/blue infrastructure as part of the proposed development is limited due to the constraints associated with the retention of the existing building and due to this being an internal fit out project only.

#### Objective 3.

**Improve connectivity and accessibility to green and blue infrastructure within the city and beyond**

The Site is not in close proximity to any corridors identified as part of the green blue infrastructure strategy. Since the Site will be converted to a hotel, its visitors will be in a very close proximity to the Parsonage Gardens, which contain trees, amenity grassland and shrubs. The Irwell River is also nearby. This means a high level of accessibility to the local green infrastructure for visitors' enjoyment, as well as contributing to health and wellbeing.

The central location of site is highly accessible by foot. The GMAL 8 rating also indicates a high accessibility to existing public transport which can increase linkages to other green/blue infrastructure in Manchester.

#### Objective 4.

Improve and promote a wider understanding and awareness of the benefits that green and blue infrastructure provides to residents, the economy and the local environment

The refurbishment and conversion of the Site from office to a hotel will allow access to existing green infrastructure in Parsonage Gardens visitors to the city.

This contributes to the promotion of the benefits of green and blue infrastructure not only to visitors to the new development but also employees, raising the profile of Parsonage Gardens as per Manchester's Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy and the figure below.

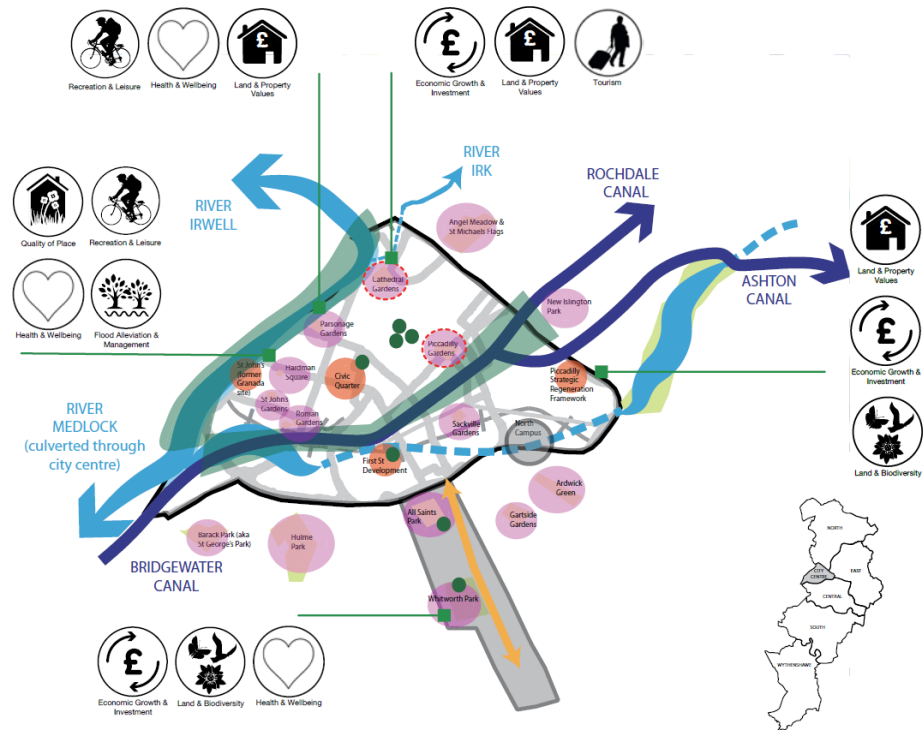


Figure 3.2 – Manchester City Centre (including Oxford Road Corridor) (Taken from Manchester's Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy)

## Appendices

## A. Proposed Site Plan



Figure Appendix A-1. – Proposed Site Plan (Provided by Buttress)

## B. General Notes

The report is based on information available at the time of the writing and discussions with the client during any project meetings. Where any data supplied by the client or from other sources have been used it has been assumed that the information is correct. No responsibility can be accepted by Ensphere Group Ltd for inaccuracies in the data supplied by any other party.

The review of planning policy and other requirements does not constitute a detailed review. Its purpose is as a guide to provide the context for the development and to determine the likely requirements of the Local Authority.

No site visits have been carried out, unless otherwise specified.

This report is prepared and written in the context of an agreed scope of work and should not be used in a different context. Furthermore, new information, improved practices and changes in guidance may necessitate a re-interpretation of the report in whole or in part after its original submission.

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