



**MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL**

**Capital Programmes & Procurement,
Growth & Development Directorate**



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DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT MANCHESTER CHRISTMAS MARKETS 2025



August 2025

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1 INTRODUCTION

The following statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the temporary change of use of 8nr. sites across Manchester City Centre, as detailed on the applications attached location plans, areas hatched, and plans edged in red. The application is for a period of 46 days from 7th November 2025 to the 22nd December 2025 at Corn Exchange, Exchange Square, King Street, Market Street, New Cathedral Street, St Ann's Square, Exchange Street, and Piccadilly Gardens, and for a period of 59 days from Friday 7th November 2025 to Sunday 4th January 2026 at Albert Square and for a period of 73 days from Friday 24th October to Sunday 4th January 2026 at Cathedral Gardens.

This statement has been compiled with reference to prior markets within these locations and similar markets within the City Centre. This has been formed at the planning stage by input from Manchester Specialist Markets, Greater Manchester Police (GMP), Showsec, Manchester City Council (MCC) Health and Safety, MCC Neighbourhood Services, with reference to the guidelines of the Event and Safety Guide (commonly known as the 'Purple Guide') and Understanding Crowd Behaviours Volume 1 and 2, (Cabinet Office, TSO Publications).

The Manchester Christmas Markets are a popular and important attraction that have been in operation for a number of years and the aim of this application is to formalise that. The event organisers, Manchester Specialist Markets are a team of competent persons with experience in the delivery of this and other outdoor events and are familiar with the requirements when designing and managing events in City Centres.

The applications relate to 8nr. sites across the city centre for the purpose of temporary Christmas Markets, and accordingly this statement covers issues of access, operation and management of the Manchester Christmas Markets 2025. The design and layout of the markets are also covered, however, being temporary installations with no permanent fixings, the emphasis is on the actual running of the Christmas Market and its operational impact on the surrounding areas.

The outline and scope of the event is detailed in this statement, with particular reference to the issues of public safety within the Market areas. As agents responsible for the market areas, Manchester Specialist Markets, via the designated Market Managers, have used the planning and organisation stages of the event management process to ensure the safety of the general public, contractors and traders to minimise hazards and prevent accidents and to minimise nuisance and disruption to nearby businesses and other users of the market environment.

2 OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTION OF THE MARKETS

The Manchester Christmas Markets are a series of temporary markets that are designed to add value to the shopping experience of Manchester City Centre.

The key objectives of the Christmas Markets are:

- To enhance the retail offer of the city.
- To draw in local, regional, national and international visitors to the city centre, to promote the city's facilities.
- Enhance the city's reputation as a host to quality, cultural markets offering a diverse and complimentary retail product.
- To deliver against key Manchester Markets' criteria through high customer satisfaction, media profile and brand fit.

Manchester Christmas Markets are a Manchester Specialist Markets event. The Specialist Markets team are responsible for all aspects of the Christmas Markets.

The target audience is made up of shoppers, visitors to the city and people who work in the city seeking an alternative venue for lunch/ dinner. The timing of the markets are set to attract existing city centre users and draw market specific attendees and coincides with the trading hours of city centre shops and stores.

- Marketing and PR for the markets will be co-ordinated by Manchester Specialist Markets and the Communications Team.
- The layouts of the markets are designed to keep maximum access and egress around the market areas and to preclude risks from overcrowding.
- To deliver these markets, the construction will take place over eighteen days pre-market and removal over three days post-market. Market personnel will be present during the construction period and removal days, and security will be on site overnight.
- Contractor's deliveries and collections will be supervised and when possible, arranged for "out of hours" when minimum disruption will be caused to members of the public and local businesses.

3 OPENING HOURS

Market Trading Location, Dates and Times:

	Location	Dates	Opening Times
1	King Street	7 November – 22 December	Food & Drink – 10.00am - 9.00pm (6.00pm on final day) Craft & Gift - 10.00am – 8.00pm (6.00pm on final day)
2	St Ann's Square & Exchange Street	7 November – 22 December	Food & Drink – 10.00am - 9.00pm (6.00pm on final day) Craft & Gift - 10.00am – 8.00pm (6.00pm on final day)
3	New Cathedral Street	7 November – 22 December	Food & Drink – 10.00am - 9.00pm (6.00pm on final day) Craft & Gift - 10.00am – 8.00pm (6.00pm on final day)
4	Corn Exchange & Exchange Square	7 November – 22 December	Food & Drink – 10.00am - 9.00pm (6.00pm on final day) Craft & Gift - 10.00am – 8.00pm (6.00pm on final day)
5	Piccadilly Gardens	7 November – 22 December	Food & Drink – 10.00am - 9.00pm (6.00pm on final day) Craft & Gift - 10.00am – 8.00pm (6.00pm on final day)
6	Market Street	7 November – 22 December	10am – 8pm 10am – 6pm (Sunday's)
7	Cathedral Gardens	27 October – 4 January 2026	10.00am – 8.00pm (27 th October to 06 th November) 10.00am – 9.00pm (07 th November to 23 rd December) Festive Hours Christmas Eve - 10.00am - 5.00pm

			Christmas Day - CLOSED 26 th December to 04 th January 2026 - 10.00am - 5.00pm
8	Albert Square	7 November – 4 January 2026	10am to 9pm – 7 th Nov to 23 rd Dec (10am to 5pm Christmas Eve) (10am to 6pm - 26 th Dec to 04 th Jan 26) (10am to 12.30am New Year's Eve)

4 SITE DESIGN

The layout for each of the 8 sites for the Manchester Christmas Markets has been agreed in consultation with Manchester Specialist Markets, Greater Manchester Police (GMP), and MCC neighbourhood services with input from the access audits that have been undertaken for each site.

The Manchester Christmas Markets will be a temporary feature with all associated works being easily reversible without damage to the surfaces and materials of streets or buildings. None of the units will be attached to buildings and all cabling runs will be over the ground and clearly marked.

The layouts of each of the sites have been designed to accommodate pedestrian movement around the site whilst respecting the surrounding buildings and businesses.

The majority of the units generally consist of two designs, a 'walk-in' unit and a counter top service unit, which are generally purpose built wooden structures that are easily erected and dismantled. To complement these, there is also a number of larger, bespoke units across each of the sites (locations detailed on layout plans) that are again generally purpose built wooden structures.

5 LOCATIONS

Manchester Specialist Markets have undertaken access audits on all market sites to identify any physical barriers that might exist in the environment and the proposed market layout plans that may prevent access, particularly to disabled people. Where possible these barriers have been removed. The market spaces will be managed to overcome any potential barriers.

5.1 King Street

King Street has been used for the Christmas Market in prior years, providing a link between St Ann's Square. The product offer will consist of a designated alcohol area, hot food and a range of wooden craft and gift houses.

The market layout has been approved by Manchester Fire Service, who have indicated that there is sufficient room at each end of the market for fire engine access and to run hoses from.

5.2 St Ann's Square

St Ann's Square has been used for the Traditional German Market in prior years. The product offer will consist of a "beer garden", hot food and a range of wooden craft and gift houses.

St Ann's Square is split into two distinct areas:

1. The outer access pedestrianised road (red cobbles & York paving).
2. The inner paved areas used to accommodate the market infrastructure.

Emergency services access will be maintained around the market area on the red cobbles and York paving.

5.3 Exchange Street

Exchange Street has been used as a site for the Arts and Craft Christmas Markets in previous years. The product offer will consist of pasta and beer bar and foods. The houses are sited along the edge of the pedestrianised street.

The layout of the market allows adequate access for emergency vehicles.

5.4 New Cathedral Street

New Cathedral Street has been used as a site for the Christmas Markets in prior years. The product offer will consist of a covered beer & food house and wooden craft and gift houses.

The market layout does not affect any emergency access routes.

5.5 Exchange Square

Exchange Square has been used as a site for the Christmas Markets in prior years. The product offer will consist of a "beer garden", hot food stalls and craft and gift houses.

The market layout does not affect any emergency access routes.

5.6 Corn Exchange

The Corn Exchange has been used as a site for the Christmas Markets in prior years. The product offer will consist of craft and gift wooden houses opposite the Corn Exchange shopping centre.

The market layout does not affect any emergency access routes.

5.7 Market Street

Market Street is a paved retail street which runs through the heart of the city and has been a venue for the Manchester Christmas Markets since 2016. The product offer will consist of a range of craft and wooden gift houses as well as a coffee house.

The market layout does not affect any emergency access routes.

5.8 Cathedral Gardens

Cathedral Gardens has been used as a site for the Christmas Markets in prior years. The product offer will consist of hot food stalls, windmill bar and craft and gift houses.

The market layout does not affect any emergency access routes.

5.9 Piccadilly Gardens

Piccadilly Gardens has been a venue for the Manchester Christmas Markets since 2019, with various changes to the site each year. The product offer will consist of a beer garden, hot food stalls and craft and gift houses.

The market layout does not affect any emergency access routes.

5.10 Albert Square

Albert Square has not been used as a venue for the Manchester Christmas Markets since 2019 due to the Old Town Hall Refurbishment project. The product offer will consist of food, beverage and craft alongside high end fairground attractions.

The market layout does not affect any emergency access routes.

6 MANAGEMENT, SECURITY AND STEWARDING

The responsibilities of the parties involved in the event for matters affecting health, safety and welfare are:

Manchester Specialist Markets

Manchester Specialist Markets are the market organisers and owners of the event with responsibility for the overall markets planning, operation and management. The Specialist Markets are responsible for the overall safety and planning of the organisational and operational elements of the markets. The Specialist Markets have overall responsibility for the entire operation including the safety of employees, contractors, traders and public visiting the market.

The Specialist Markets are responsible for:

- Planning and co-ordination between all parties during the planning of the event.
- Liaison with the Police and Fire Service.
- Decision making in emergency situations and evacuations on the advice of GMP and Showsec.
- Ensuring all temporary structures (the houses and stalls) are safe and stable to operate and that they do not pose a hazard to traders, contractors, staff or members of the public.
- Conduct inspections of the houses, stalls and market infrastructure (water, electrics) during bump-in/bump-out and regularly throughout the market. Take any remedial action necessary to ensure the market operates effectively and safely.
- Take remedial action when required to ensure structures are safe and if necessary arrange for their removal from site.
- Advise traders on and identify risks and actions to be taken to eliminate health and safety risks regarding their stalls and houses. Ensure actions are completed.
- Building control agreement.
- Conducting site health, safety and welfare inspections.

- Scrutinising health and safety policies and risk assessments submitted by traders.
- Scrutinising health and safety policies and risk assessments submitted by contractors.
- Monitoring the activities of contractors and traders to ensure that safety procedures and control measures documented in safety policies and risk assessments are followed.
- Ensuring all stalls and infrastructure are located as per site plans.
- Ensuring all key market staff are available on mobile phones at all times. Providing all traders with relevant contact numbers prior to the market operation.
- Advising traders on and identify risks and actions to be taken to eliminate health and safety risks regarding their stalls and their operation.
- Advising on issues relating to the health, safety and welfare of traders, staff, contractors and members of the public within the market area.
- Logging all significant incidents in the Christmas Market Day Book.
- Investigating, logging and reporting accidents.
- Providing First Aid first response on the market.
- Undertaking Quality Assurance evaluations of trader's stalls and houses.
- Ensuring Manchester Market Environmental Operatives, Security staff and contractors undertake their responsibilities.

Manchester Markets General Manager / Alcohol Sales Licence

Responsible for:-

- Designated Premises Supervisor for the sale of alcohol - all sites.

Showsec Security

Showsec are responsible for the security, and vehicular access during the markets.

During the market, Showsec responsibilities will also include:

- Showsec will be on all market sites 24 hours per day and will monitor all public and trader access to the sites.
- Showsec staff will secure the market sites in the evenings and open in the mornings as appropriate.
- All traders are supplied with the Market Management mobile phone numbers.
- Manchester Specialist Markets staff have received Welcome All Training.
- All Manchester Specialist Markets and Showsec staff will be identified by corporate dress.
- Provide information about facilities such as public toilets, accessible parking etc.
- Investigating and reacting to any disturbances or incidents and Inform the Police of disturbances.
- Respond to emergencies and liase with emergency services in the event of an emergency.
- All Showsec stewards are SIA certificated and all Manchester Markets managers are NCFE trained.
- Security of the market sites, houses and market infrastructure.
- Maintaining a safe environment for members of the public, traders and all persons attending the market.
- Crowd control measures - Plans are in place to make dynamic risk assessments on site to extend the crowd footprint and close entrances to ease congestion if and when needed.
- Complying with all relevant health and safety legislation with reference to the guidelines laid out in the 'Purple guide'.
- Provide competent stewards.
- Provide communication equipment for Showsec staff and radios for Manchester Markets Managers.
- Provide Store-net radios.
- All staff must be briefed on the market, site layout, emergency procedures and other site-specific information.

- Ensuring compliance with MCC bylaws regarding the sale and consumption of alcohol in the city centre.
- Provide assistance to traders and the public by giving information about emergency aid, toilets and other facilities.
- Monitoring and reacting to crowd densities
- Responding to emergencies.
- Liaison with emergency services in the event of an emergency.

7 CROWD CONTROL

King Street, St Ann's Square, Exchange Street, New Cathedral Street, Exchange Square, Corn Exchange, Market Street, Cathedral Gardens, Piccadilly Gardens and Albert Square will remain as public spaces whilst the markets operate, therefore no specific crowd control measures are deemed necessary.

Crowd control to the bar areas on King Street, St Ann's Square, Exchange Street, New Cathedral Street, Exchange Square, Cathedral Gardens, Piccadilly Gardens and Albert Square will be managed by the SIA trained Showsec steward assigned to each entrance.

All bar areas in all sites will remain open until 9pm.

8 VEHICLE CONTROL

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and 9am. Access will be managed by Showsec.

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9 MARKET OFFICE, RECYCLING AND STORAGE UNIT

Parking bay dispensations have been applied for on South King Street for the location of the traders' storage units. Additionally on Fennel Street and Piccadilly Gardens will be the market office and the security office.

Recycling – Paper, Glass, Plastic, Tin Cans.

Recycling – Cardboard, Refuse, and Food Waste.

Rubbish compounds can be found on South King Street, St Ann's Street, Cathedral Gardens and Piccadilly Gardens.

10 LOCAL BUSINESSES

Local businesses in the vicinity of King Street, St Ann's Square, Exchange Street, New Cathedral Street, Exchange Square, Market Street, Cathedral Gardens, Piccadilly Gardens and Albert Square have been informed of the plans for the Christmas Markets 2025.

11 TOILET PROVISION

Public toilets are located within the Town Hall Extension and will remain open for visitors to the Christmas Markets between 10am – 9.15pm each day.

Toilets are located on Piccadilly Gardens and Cathedral Gardens.

Customers on all other sites will be made aware of the 'City Loos scheme' enabling them to use the toilets of participating shops in the area. The large retailers such as McDonald's, Marks and Spencer and the Arndale are part of our 'City Loos' scheme.

An accessible single toilet will be provided on St Ann's Square for staff only.

A Mobiloo is to be installed and will be available at Piccadilly Gardens providing an accessible disabled facility.

12 WASTE MANAGEMENT AND RECYCLING

The waste management plan for the Christmas Markets has been developed with city centre contractor Biffa and complies with the authority's guidelines on event waste management and sustainability.

Excess waste is prevented through the use of re-usable mugs and hard plastic glasses on all sites of the market.

Recycling Policy – all traders are required to provide recycled / bio-degradable plates, forks and/or spoons for food on the market.

Waste Management – all collection points agreed with Biffa prior to the market opening;

- King Street – refuse container on South King Street
- St Ann's Square and Exchange Street – refuse trailer on St Ann's Street
- New Cathedral Street, Exchange Square, Corn Exchange and Cathedral gardens – refuse trailer on Cathedral Street
- Market Street – Pall Mall (down the side of Boots)
- Piccadilly Gardens - rubbish compound with a fronting wooden door adjacent existing street food market stalls.
- Albert Square – refuse container on Central Street

Manchester Specialist Markets will provide additional bins in the market areas, which will be serviced by the contracted cleaning contractor and the Christmas Market cleansing contractors.

Recycling

Wood – pallets will be collected by Manchester Markets staff and recycled at New Smithfield Market.

All other sites – a daily collection of all recycling materials will be made from each house each morning.

13 SALE OF ALCOHOL

The Manchester Markets General Manager is the Personal Licence holder for all market sites in the city centre.

13.1 Consumption on Site

All traders and their managers selling alcohol for consumption on site are required to:

- Hold a BIIAB Level 2 National Certificates and Personal Licence.
- Attend the Manchester Specialist Markets Alcohol Safety briefing.
- Display appropriate signage including names of employees nominated to sell alcohol.

When alcohol is sold for consumption on site, appropriate SIA Door Safe trained Showsec staff will be on site during alcohol trading times.

Audience profile - due to the nature of the market operation; opening times and premium rates charged for alcohol, excess alcohol/abuse is not a high risk; crowd disturbance/violence has not been a common occurrence on previous markets. Should a situation arise, trained Showsec stewards are competent to deal with incidents.

No glass receptacles permitted on site. Only stalls authorised by Manchester Markets will be permitted to sell alcohol.

Signage will be displayed throughout the markets warning that no alcohol is to be taken off the market sites.

13.2 Off Licence Sales

All traders selling alcohol are required to:

- Hold a Personnel Licence
- Not to open any bottles or containers on site. • To advise customers that alcohol is for consumption off site only.

14 COOKED FOODS ON SITE – CAFÉ TRADERS

This will be approved and monitored by Manchester Specialist Markets and Environmental Health.

All cafe traders are required to:

- Complete a Manchester Specialist Markets Catering Management Plan;
- Provide a Fire Risk Assessment;
- Provide two means of extinguishing a fire;
- Provide a first aid kit;
- Provide a risk assessment for their operation;
- Adhere to Food Hygiene Standards.

15 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH – FOOD HYGIENE RATINGS

Manchester City Council Environmental Health Officers will be rating food stalls (produce and catering) trading at the Christmas Markets. The assessment will then be converted into a Hygiene Rating and traders will be given a certificate to display (it will be a condition of trading on the Christmas Markets that the certificate must be displayed).

16 SAFETY MESSAGES AND INFORMATION TO THE PUBLIC

Showsec and Manchester Markets staff will be the point of contact for information dissemination.

Megaphones will be utilised for public messages. These will be located at:

- St Ann's Square, Exchange Square, Cathedral Gardens, Piccadilly Gardens: 1 in each bar area.

17 MARKET CONTROL

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18 FIRST AID AND ACCIDENT REPORTING

First Aid provision includes a trained paramedic on site each trading day from 11am to 9pm.

They are provided by Central Ambulance and have a blue light vehicle and essential lifesaving kits. All event managers and security supervisors are first aid trained.

Manchester Specialist Event Market Managers are all certified in the provision of First Aid at work. First Aid equipment is located:

- The Security Hut – St Ann's Square
- The Round Coffee House – Cathedral Gardens

Defibrillators – Manchester Specialist Market managers are trained to use defibrillators; they are located at:

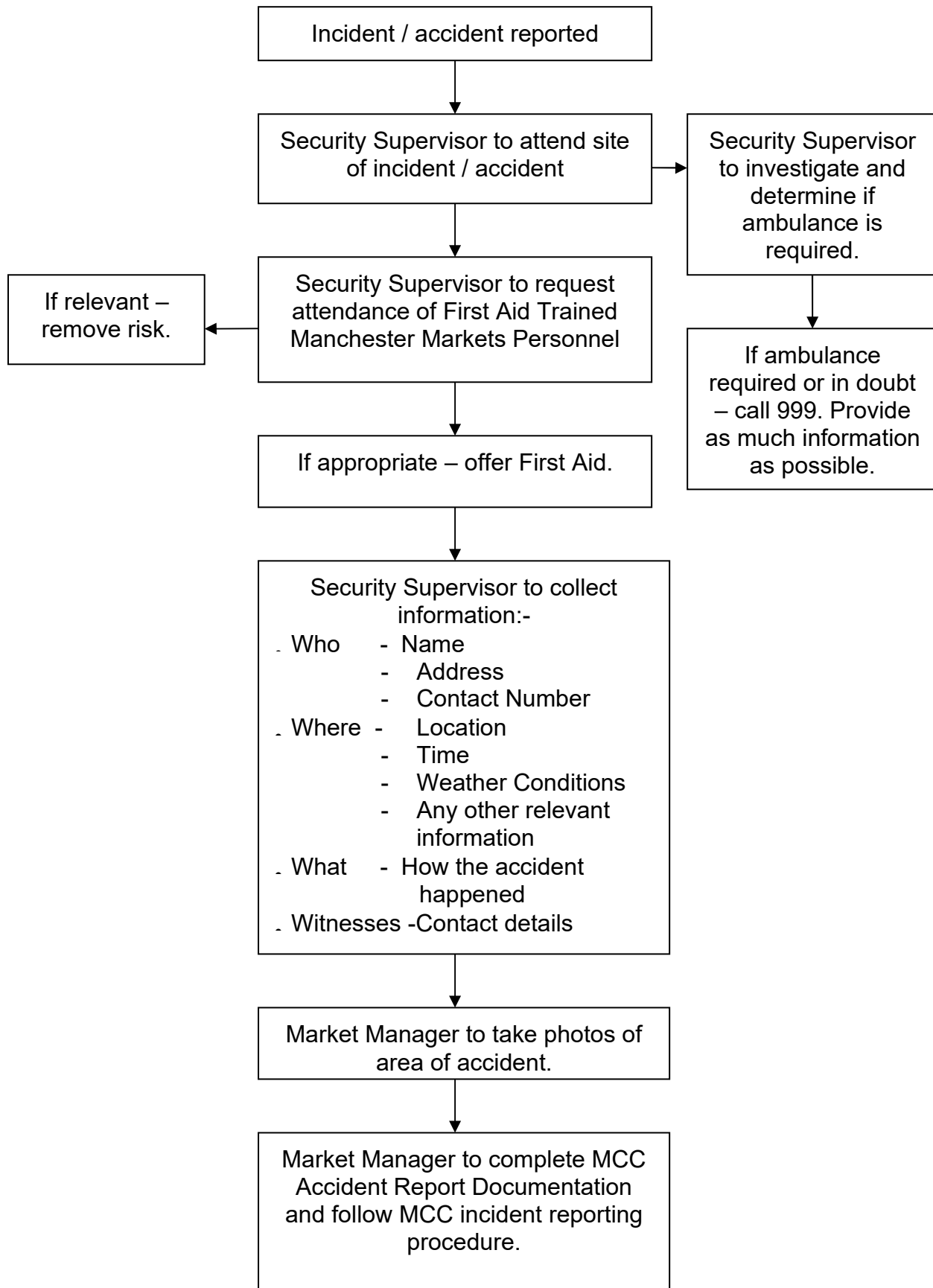
- King Street
- New Cathedral Street
- Exchange Square
- Market Street,
- Piccadilly Gardens
- St Ann's Square (Bar area)

Any accidents or injuries that occur should be reported to the Market Manager(s), Environmental Operatives or Showsec staff who will telephone for an ambulance to attend.

The Specialist Markets Manager, in consultation with Manchester Markets and the MCC Health and Safety Team is responsible for notifying the HSE of any event that is reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations.

In total there will be x3 teams of 2 first aid contractors. Each pair will have x1 healthcare professional and x1 FREC3 responder. Each team will have their own ambulance unit available. All site managers are first aid response trained.

Report of an Accident / Medical Emergency



19 FIRE SAFETY

Access in case of emergency will be managed by Manchester Specialist Markets and Showsec staff – Blue light routes will be stewarded to allow prompt access for emergency vehicles.

Portable firefighting equipment will be provided by Manchester Markets in each of the generator compounds. Additionally, all traders supplying hot food are required to bring their own appropriate portable firefighting equipment (minimum an appropriate fire extinguisher and a fire blanket) and complete a Fire Risk Assessment.

Procedures for Manchester Markets & Showsec staff.

- On discovering a fire, raise the alarm immediately. Call the emergency services on 999. Inform the Market Manager and Showsec Supervisor.
- Only attempt to use a firefighting appliance if you are trained and it is safe to do so.
- Do not put yourself or others at risk.
- Evacuate the site – assist members of the public to disperse to a place of safety.
- Leave the site by the nearest and safest available escape route.
- Move quickly but do not run.
- Direct traders to the Fire Assembly Point.
- Markets staff report to the duty Market Manager.
- Showsec staff report to the Showsec Supervisor.
- Do not remain in or return to site to collect personal belongings.
- Where relevant, the on-site duty Market Manager and Showsec Supervisor are to inform the Town Hall of any incidents, including fire that may affect visitors and staff working in the Town Hall / Town Hall Extension, either by telephoning the Town Hall, Lloyd Street Reception Desk, or if it is safe to do so sending a steward to the Lloyd Street Reception.

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21 MAJOR INCIDENTS - EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

21.1 General Principles

If there is a major incident in the City Centre, an issue of overcrowding or terrorist related threat, GMP are to take control with assistance from Manchester Markets and Showsec staff.

The decision to cancel or cease the event is taken by:

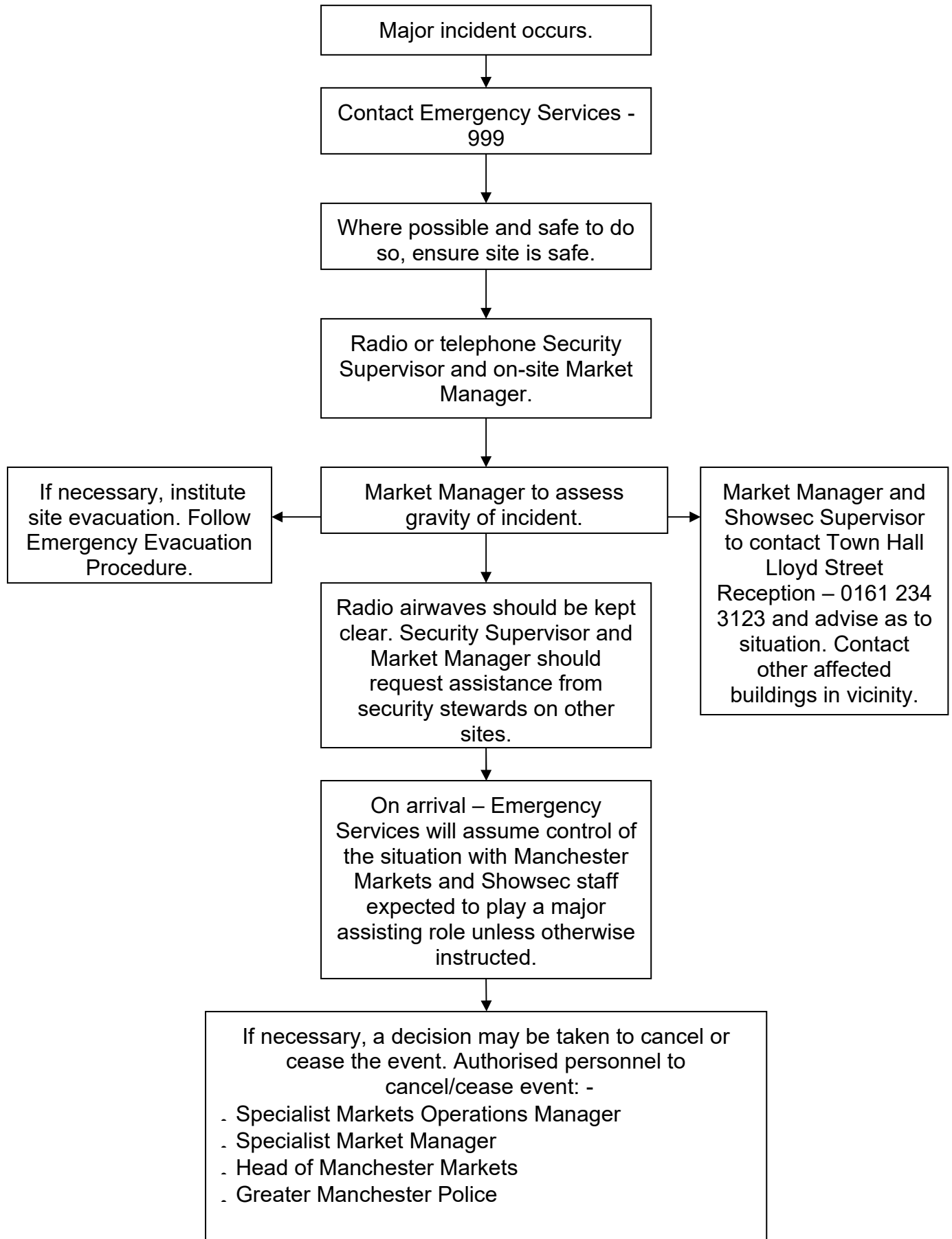
- Manchester Specialist Markets Operations Manager
- Specialist Market Managers
- Greater Manchester Police

21.2 Emergency Services

In the event of an emergency all sites have been designed to maintain normal levels of access at all times. GMP is aware of the Specialist Markets.

In the event of the emergency services requiring access to a market site, where it is safe and appropriate to do so, Showsec stewards will ensure that blue routes and other access areas are clear of any obstruction.

Major Incident – Actions and Responsibilities



22 COMMUNICATIONS

All Manchester Markets and Showsec stewards will have radios to maintain full communications with all sites both day and night.

Showsec Supervisor will carry a Store-net / Night-net radio for communicating with the city centres CCTV operations.

Showsec are supplied with an emergency contact number for the Specialist Market Managers, one of these will be manned 24 hours throughout the event.

23 CONCLUSION

The submitted planning application formalises the use of 8nr. sites across the city centre for a temporary change of use that has been carried out for a number of years in these locations. The Christmas Markets will have a visual impact on the 8 locations; however this will be for a temporary period, and all are located in appropriate retail areas, thus leading to an increase in foot traffic for other local businesses.

The markets will draw in additional local, regional, national and international visitors to the city centre, promoting the city's facilities and enhancing the city's reputation as a host to quality, cultural markets offering a diverse and complimentary retail product. The retail offer of the city during the Christmas Markets will be enhanced.

The operation of the markets will be carried out in accordance with environmental health legislation and appropriate management strategies are in place to ensure the smooth and efficient running of the Christmas Markets.

The proposed temporary change of use of the 8nr. locations are appropriate and will not have a detrimental effect on the character or appearance of the area, the operation of local businesses or the public.