

Winners Chapel, Blackley

Statement of Community Involvement

Prepared by Counter Context Ltd

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1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

This Statement of Community Involvement has been prepared by Counter Context Ltd on behalf of Winners Chapel International Manchester, hereby referred to as 'the Applicant'. It provides:

- An account of the pre-application consultation undertaken with local residents, local community groups, local councillors and other key stakeholders about the proposals.
- A summary of the feedback received from these consultees.
- Evidence that this feedback has been considered in the development of the proposals.

The pre-application community consultation strategy was designed to reflect guidance within Manchester City Council's Adopted Statement of Community Involvement (2018) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023).

1.2 Site Location

The proposed site is located at 114 Chain Road in Blackley, Greater Manchester, on the land between St Euphrasias Care Home and Meade Hill School.

The site is 5.7 acres, and the new church will sit on the part of the site where the current building also sits and takes up approximately a quarter of the site.



Figure 1: Site location image

1.3 Description of the Proposal

The proposed multi-functional community church will comprise of a new chapel, a youth development centre, multipurpose community hall, administration spaces, a training and development centre, and a café for the congregation and garden areas.

The church's congregation has grown over the years and Winner's Chapel current site in Salford is no longer fit for purpose, prompting the proposal of a new church on Chain Road in Blackley. They are currently located in an old industrial unit and want to relocate to be better located for the current congregation within a purpose built building that can properly cater for the church.

1.4 Policy Requirements

Conducting an early and transparent pre-application consultation is consistent with the guidance within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023).

Paragraph 39 of the NPPF states that:

Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.¹

The NPPF goes on to state that:

[Local Authorities] should also, where they think this would be beneficial, encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community and, where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees, before submitting their applications.²

...

Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals. Early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests. Applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot.³

This Statement of Community Involvement also fulfils a formal recommendation of the Local Planning Authority to provide people with an opportunity to feed into the design process of a scheme at an early stage.

Manchester City Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (2018) sets out 'how developers can ensure that there is an effective opportunity for people to comment and steer development'.⁴

¹ Secretary of State for Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, National Planning Policy Framework, 2023, paragraph 39.

² Secretary of State for Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, National Planning Policy Framework, 2023, paragraph 40.

³ Secretary of State for Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, National Planning Policy Framework, 2023, paragraph 132.

⁴ Manchester City Council's Planning and Development Statement of Community Involvement, June 2018, page 33.

In providing guidance to developers on how they should carry out pre-application consultation, Manchester City Council's Statement of Community Involvement provides recommendations on the types of methods that developers can adopt as part of their pre-application consultation strategy.

Pre-application consultation is beneficial to both the community and the developer as it allows the developer to design a proposal which takes on board the opinions of the community...

...The format of the consultation that the developer uses is likely to be discussed with us as part of pre-application discussions, to help ensure that there is an effective opportunity for people to comment and steer development. The following methods are likely to be suitable and should be used as appropriate:

- *Letters sent to residents and businesses in nearby streets telling them what is proposed, how they can get more information and how they can give the developer their views*
- *Public exhibition in an accessible location close to the development (e.g. library or supermarket) which tells the public about what is happening and gives them an opportunity to make comments*
- *A website set up by the developer*
- *Leaflets distributed to nearby streets and placed in facilities near the proposed developments which have a tear off slip for comments*
- *Social media used by the developer to advertise the development and associated consultation events...*

...We can't require developers to carry out pre-application consultation using the methods set out above, but it is encouraged. Where developers have not engaged with local residents and businesses, it is possible that an application could generate more objections once submitted. This could result in the developer having to amend their application to address the objections which could delay the decision-making process.⁵

In addition to the requirement for pre-application community consultation set out by national and local authorities, the Applicant recognises that local people can make a valuable contribution to the proposals by offering their local knowledge and raising issues that may not have been considered, in many cases resulting in a stronger set of proposals.

2. Pre-application Public Consultation Activities

2.1 Introduction

This section of the Statement of Community Involvement sets out the range of activities undertaken as part of the pre-application consultation with local residents, businesses, community and interest groups. The pre-application public consultation period will run from Monday 2nd September to Sunday 29 September 2024.

The key aspects of the consultation activity plan are outlined below.

2.2 Pre-application Engagement with Political Representatives

The Applicant contacted Councillor Julie Connolly, Councillor Olusegun Ogunbambo and Councillor Paula Sadler, who represent the Higher Blackley ward in which the site is located to provide notice in advance of the consultation opening.

⁵ Manchester City Council's Planning and Development Statement of Community Involvement, June 2018, pages 33-34.

An invitation to the consultation event was offered to discuss the proposals in more detail, which was accepted by Councillor Julie Connolly and Councillor Olusegun Ogunbambo who visited the consultation event on Thursday 12 September 2024.

2.3 Pre-application Engagement with Local Stakeholders

The Applicant contacted neighbouring site stakeholders, St Euphrasia's Care Home, Our Lady's Roman Catholic High School, and Meade Hill School, in advance of the consultation opening.

An invitation to meet ahead of the consultation opening was offered to the stakeholders and invitations were accepted by Our Lady's Roman Catholic High School and St Euphrasia's Care Home.

The Applicant met with Our Lady's Roman Catholic High School on Wednesday 12 June 2024 and the Applicant also met with St Euphrasia's Care Home on Thursday 27 June 2024.

Both stakeholders were supportive of the positive benefits the church would bring to the local community, and there were discussions around using the care home and school car parking facilities for busy periods for the church. The care home emphasised the importance of ensuring access is maintained to the care home.

2.4 Publicising the Consultation

2.4.1 Consultation Postcard

A consultation postcard was issued to local residents and businesses on Monday 2 September 2024 to ensure it was received in line with the consultation launch. The postcard provided an introduction to the proposals and invited people to engage with the consultation via the online feedback form or through email.

The consultation postcard was distributed to 1091 addresses within the consultation boundary, as shown below.

The postcard is included as **Appendix 1**.



Figure 1: Postcard distribution area.

2.4.2 Consultation Website

A dedicated consultation website went live at the start of the consultation period. The website (<https://www.winnerschapelblackley-consultation.co.uk/>) provided information on the proposals and vision of community organisation Winners Chapel.

The website featured an online consultation questionnaire, which opened on Monday 2 September 2024, was available for people to complete until Sunday 29 September 2024. The website also promoted a drop-in event on Thursday 12 September 2024 held at a local community centre, where individuals could speak directly with the project team to share feedback or ask further questions on the proposals.



Welcome Introducing Winners Chapel Our Proposals Have Your Say

Welcome

Winners Chapel is bringing forward proposals for a new sustainable community church on Chain Road in Blackley.



Winners Chapel is excited to bring forward proposals to revive the currently disused site at 114 Chain Road in Blackley, Manchester.

As a Christian Faith Charity, Winners Chapel has been serving the Greater Manchester community since our Salford church was inaugurated in 2010.

However, our current facilities are no longer fit for purpose and we now need a new space to continue to make a positive contribution to the community.

We plan to demolish the existing unoccupied buildings to create a modern and sustainable church with extensive community facilities.



Introducing Winners Chapel

Winners Chapel is a Christian Faith Charity that has been a cornerstone of the Greater Manchester community since we opened our Salford church on Broughton Lane in 2010. We are deeply committed to community service and have been actively involved in numerous initiatives aimed at improving the lives of those around us.

From organising food drives and supporting local food banks to providing educational programs and youth mentorship, our church is dedicated to making a positive impact. We offer various support services, including counselling and job training, and regularly host community events that bring people together. Our outreach programs extend to helping the homeless and running charity events to raise funds for local causes.

Our congregation has grown significantly over the years, prompting us to propose a new church on Chain Road in Blackley. This new site will allow us to expand our services and facilities, enabling us to better serve our growing community and continue our extensive community work.

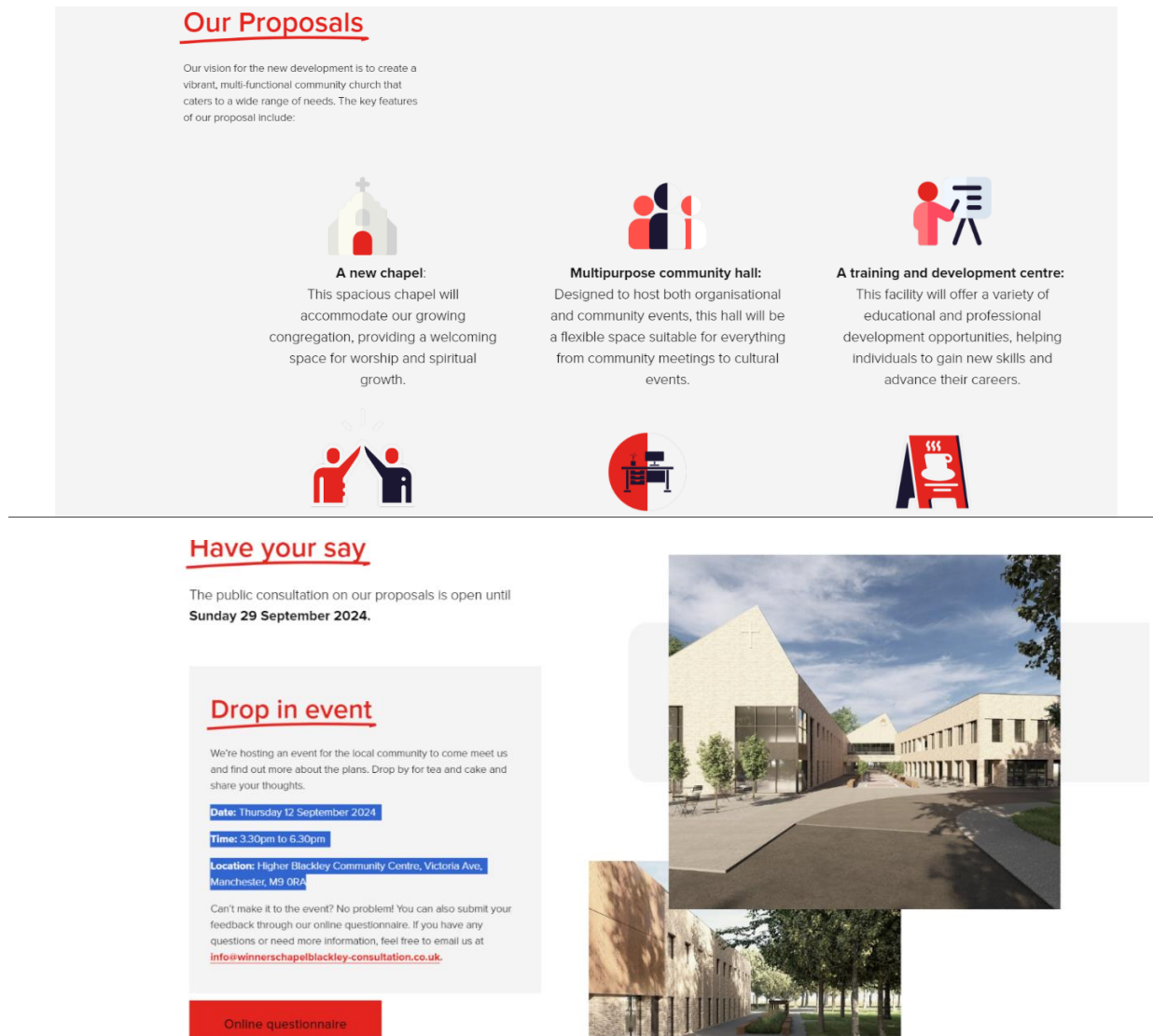


Figure 2: Screenshots of the consultation webpage.

Throughout the consultation period, the website received a total of 540 visits from 460 unique visitors.

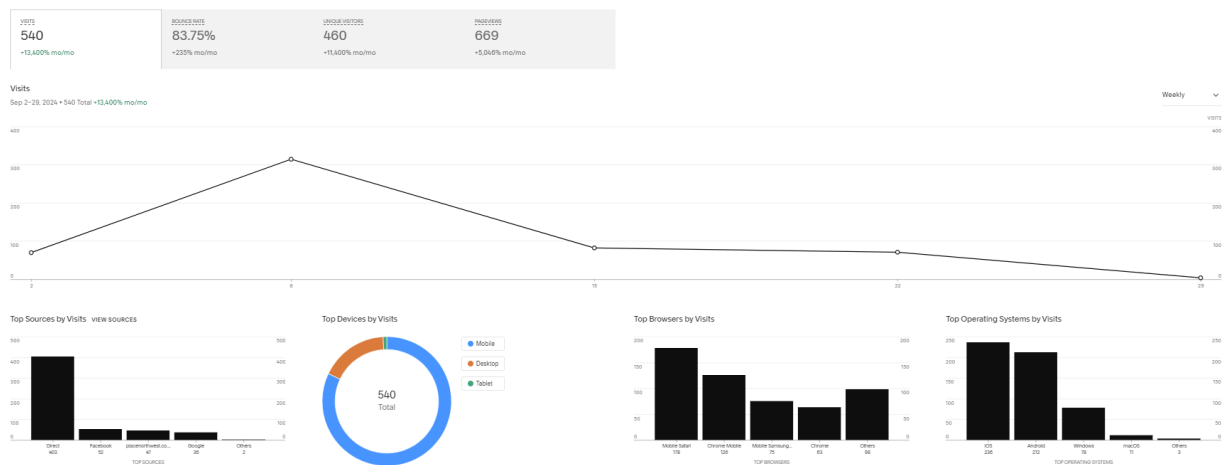


Figure 3: Graph showing the website activity during the consultation period.

2.4.3 Press Release and Media Coverage

A press release was issued (at the start of the consultation period) on Monday 2 September 2024. It provided information about the proposals and how people could provide feedback. An article subsequently appeared in:

- [Place North West](#)



Figure 4: Screenshot of article that appeared in the media.

2.4.4 In-Person Consultation Event

An in-person drop-in session was held as part of the consultation. The event was held on Thursday 12 September 2024 between 3.30pm and 6.30pm at Higher Blackley Community Centre (Victoria Ave, Manchester, M9 0RA).

A total of 16 people attended the session.

The event display is provided as **Appendix 2** and the feedback form as **Appendix 3**.

2.5 Methods for Receiving Feedback

2.5.1 Online Feedback Form

An online feedback form was accessible from the consultation website. This questionnaire included a combination of closed and open text questions allowing further comment and explanation.

2.5.2 Email address

The project email address (info@winnerschapelblackley-consultation.co.uk) was publicised on the website and press release, allowing people to submit feedback or ask additional questions.

3. Pre-Application Consultation Feedback

3.1 Summary of Feedback Received

In total, 90 responses to the pre-application consultation were received via the following channels:

Response Type	Number
Online feedback form	85
Email	1
Paper feedback form	4
Total	90

All responses received during the pre-application consultation period have been logged and comments have been considered by the Applicant's team.

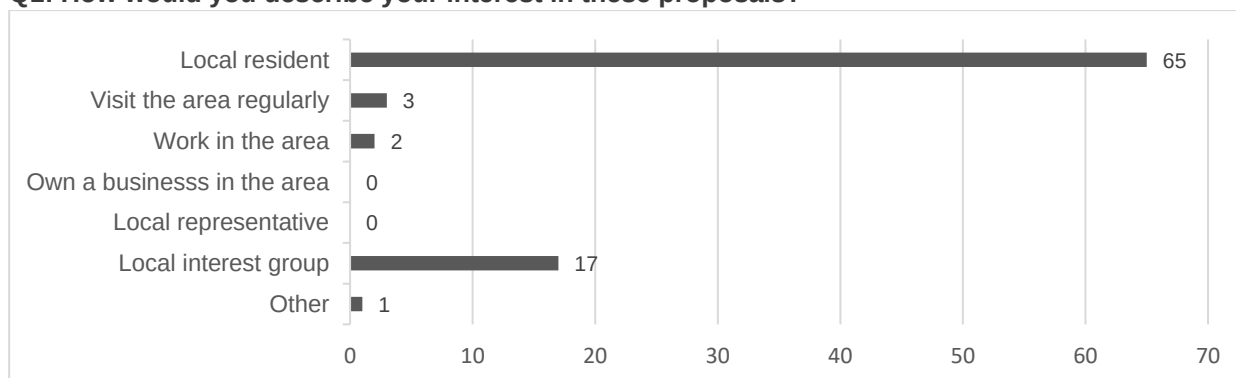
3.2 Feedback from Closed Questions

The consultation questionnaire included a series of closed (multiple-choice) questions and open questions about the proposals. Here follows a summary of the answers received through the multiple-choice questions asked within the feedback form.

Comments received through open questions in the feedback forms and by email are summarised and addressed in the table in Section 3.2.2.

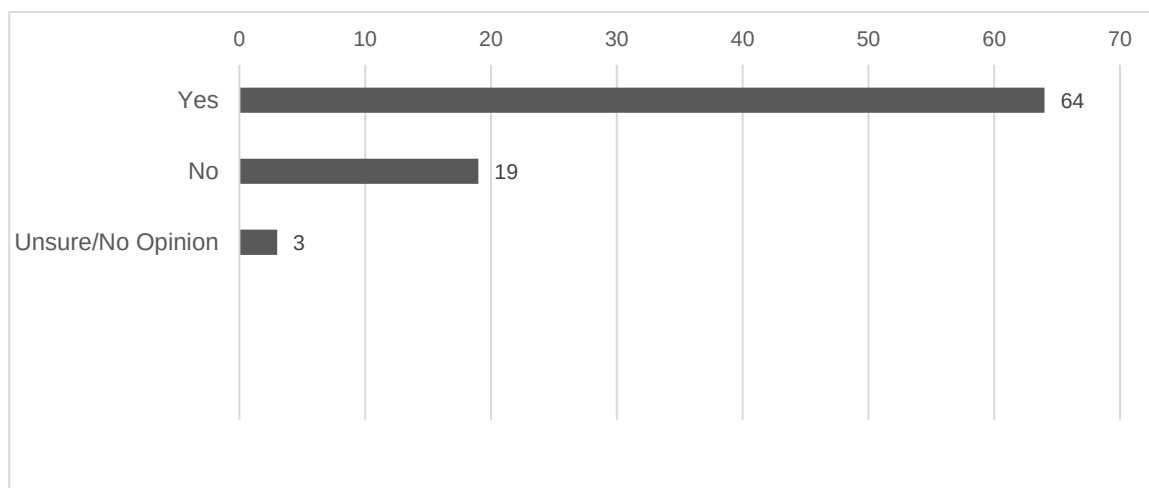
3.2.1 Responses to Closed Questions

Q1: How would you describe your interest in these proposals?



As the chart above shows, the majority of those who responded to the questionnaire identified as local residents. A relatively high number also indicated that they belonged to a local interest group (respondents could select multiple options in response to this question).

The one respondent who ticked 'Other' stated that their house is close to the area.

Q2. Based on what you've seen so far, do you support proposals to create a new community church in Blackley?

The majority of those who responded via the consultation questionnaire indicated that they were supportive of the proposals. Reasons given by those who elaborated on their support or opposition through open text comments are summarised in the next section.

3.2.2 Responses to Open Text Questions

The following table provides a comprehensive summary of the issues raised by respondents through the open-response field questions in the feedback form and those who submitted feedback via email, along with an explanation of how each issue was considered and addressed.

Topic	Applicant Response
Principle of proposals for Winners Chapel	
Expressions of support for the proposals, including: - Comments expressing enthusiasm for the proposals. - Comments expressing the positive impacts for the community. - A comment expressing that the chapel will bring development and employment to the area. - A comment expressing fondness for the community gardens.	The Applicant notes these comments and is pleased that the consultation generated such a positive response to the proposal of the church, in particular the positive impact its development will have on the community.
Location	
A comment expressing concern for the lack of available land for the chapel. A comment expressing concern regarding the scale of the chapel.	The Applicant appreciates the concerns raised regarding the potential impact of the proposed chapel on local views and the overall aesthetic of the area. The church's design has been thoughtfully developed to complement the neighbouring care home and landscape of the area.

	The new church will sit on the part of the site where the current building also sits and takes up approximately a quarter of the 5.7 acre site.
Sustainability and biodiversity	
A comment expressing concern regarding the sustainability of shrubbery and green spaces. A comment concerned about harm to squirrels that live in the currently present trees.	The Applicant states they are committed to sustainability and biodiversity, with the church gardens inclusive of native plants that support local biodiversity, reduce water usage, and provide habitats for wildlife. As per recent BNG legislation, the Applicant has undertaken a baseline review of the site in terms of its existing habitats and, through work with Tyler Grange, will illustrate how the required 10% gain in habitats will be achieved through the submission of the planning application.
Noise pollution	
Comments expressing concern about increased noise in the area.	A Noise Assessment has been undertaken and submitted alongside this application. The Applicant has also stated that the retaining mature trees that sit in between the proposed building and the nearby residents was key to try and ensure as much screening as possible – both visually and in terms of potential noise disturbance. Neighbours will also be kept informed about the development and when construction work will start.
Parking and traffic	
Comments concerned about the lack of parking availability. Comments concerned about crowd control of attendees. Comments concerned about traffic control.	The Applicant states that they are providing 192 parking spaces for congregants and visitors, including 20 spaces with electric vehicle (EV) charging stations and 12 accessible spaces for those with disabilities. Additionally, the Applicant has stated that many congregation members are expected to travel via public transport or use the church's bus services, helping to reduce the overall traffic impact. These measures aim to make vehicular access smooth and minimise congestion. The Applicant states that they will enforce strict measures regarding large-scale loitering around the vicinity before and after sermons or large gathering occasions.

	The Applicant has confirmed that the access road to the church will be widened to improve traffic flow and safety.
Timeframe	
A comment concerned about the timeframe of the project.	Pending planning approval, Winner's Chapel is expected to begin construction in 2025.
Necessity	
A comment expressing concern regarding the necessity of the project due to existing Christian churches in the area. Comments expressing concern regarding the financial intentions of the church. A comment suggesting that there is a need for a school or mental health hospital as oppose to a church.	The Applicant appreciates that other Christian places of worship are currently present in the area. The Applicant has stated that the chapel's missions are different to that of existing places of worship, with a dedicated training and development centre to aid employability for local residents, a youth development centre to support young people, administration spaces, and a café and garden area. The church will also be in close proximity to 3 schools who will be able to benefit from the church's facilities. Winners Chapel is a charity registered by the Charity Commission for England and Wales, whereby trustees must run the charity in a way that complies with their charity's governing document and the law. Previous accounts and annual returns submitted by Winners Chapel are available to the public via the Commission's website.
Anti-social behavior	
Comments regarding the church's potential to foster anti-social behaviour and youth gangs.	The Applicant strongly opposes any form of anti-social behaviour or youth gang activity. One of the core focuses of the church is to provide educational programs, activities and youth mentorship and is dedicated to making a positive impact – measures that actively discourage and tackle anti-social behaviour and criminal activity.
Church practices	
Concerns that the church supports conversion therapy. A comment concerned that the church discriminates against LGBT individuals and white people.	The Applicant states that the does not support or practice conversion therapy. The church's mission is to provide a welcoming, inclusive, and supportive environment for all, regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender identity.

4. Influence of Consultation on the Proposals

The consultation which has been undertaken is in accordance with both the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023) and with Manchester City Council's Statement of Community Involvement (2018). This document fulfils the requirement for a consultation supporting statement that summarises the methods used, the representations received, and the changes made to the proposals because of feedback submitted.

The consultation demonstrated a considerable level of support for the proposed development, with 74% of respondents stating support for the proposals based on what they had seen so far.

The comments received during the pre-application consultation have been considered by the Applicant's team on an ongoing basis to ensure that the issues raised could be addressed during the development of the proposals. The responses to the detailed comments received can be seen in the table within Section 3.2.2.

The Applicant would like to thank all those who have provided their feedback during the pre-application consultation and looks forward to further constructive dialogue throughout the development process

5. Appendices

5.1 Appendix 1: Consultation Postcard

We Want To Hear Your Views

On proposals for a new sustainable community church on Chain Road in Blackley.

Winners Chapel is excited to bring forward proposals to revive the currently disused site at 114 Chain Road in Blackley.

As a Christian Faith Charity, Winners Chapel has been serving the Greater Manchester community since our Salford church was inaugurated in 2010. As a church, we have continued to support our community with various community initiatives such as donations to other charitable causes, food bank, community clean ups, Christmas projects including reaching out to the elderly people in care homes, homelessness projects, as well as walk-in centre for youth and family counselling etc.

However, our current facilities are no longer fit for purpose and we now need a new space to continue to make a positive contribution to the community.

We plan to demolish the existing unoccupied and dilapidated buildings to create a modern and sustainable church with extensive community facilities.

Our proposed development includes:

- New chapel
- Multipurpose community hall
- A training and development centre
- Youth development centre
- Administration spaces
- Community café and community garden areas

We would like to invite you to view our proposals and share your thoughts.



Get Involved

Our consultation will be open from Monday 2 September to Sunday 29 September 2024.

All of the information about our proposals can be found by visiting our consultation website:

www.winnerschapelblackley-consultation.co.uk

Here, you'll also find a link to an online questionnaire should you wish to provide feedback on our plans.

Alternatively, you can also provide feedback or request further information by emailing us at:

info@winnerschapelblackley-consultation.co.uk or calling us on **0161 669 5035**.

Come along to our drop-in event

We're hosting an event for the local community to come and meet us and talk about our plans. Drop by for tea and cake, and provide feedback on our plans.

Date: Thursday 12 September 2024

Time: 3.30pm to 6.30pm

Location: Higher Blackley Community Centre, Victoria Ave, Manchester, M9 0RA

Return address:
Jactin House,
24 Hood Street,
Ancoats,
Manchester,
M4 6XW



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5.2 Appendix 2: Consultation event display

Welcome

Winners Chapel is bringing forward proposals for a new sustainable community church on Chain Road in Blackley.

Winners Chapel is excited to bring forward proposals to revive the currently disused site at 114 Chain Road in Blackley, Manchester.

As a Christian Faith Charity, Winners Chapel has been serving the Greater Manchester community since our Salford church was inaugurated in 2010. Our congregation has steadily grown, and we now need a new space to continue to make a positive contribution to the community.

We plan to demolish the existing unoccupied buildings to create a modern and sustainable church with extensive community facilities. As part of the plans, there will also be a community gardens for both church members and members of the public to enjoy.



While our plans are taking shape, we want to consult with the local community to seek your views on our vision. We value your feedback as we strive to create a church that positively contributes to the community and environment.

About Winners Chapel

Winners Chapel is a Christian Faith Charity that has been a cornerstone of the Greater Manchester community since we opened our Salford church on Broughton Lane in 2010.

We are deeply committed to community service and have been actively involved in numerous initiatives aimed at improving the lives of those around us.



From organising food drives and supporting local food banks to providing educational programs and youth mentorship, our church is dedicated to making a positive impact. We offer various support services, including counselling and job training, and regularly host community events that bring people together. Our outreach programs extend to helping the homeless and running charity events to raise funds for local causes.



Our congregation has grown significantly over the years, prompting us to propose a new church on Chain Road in Blackley. This new site will allow us to expand our services and facilities, enabling us to better serve our growing community and continue our community work.



The site

Located on Chain Road in Blackley, the site consists of buildings that have been unoccupied for many years and were previously used as a convent.



The site provides great access to public transport links and the local network, allowing members of the public to easily access the church.



A new modern and sustainable community church

Our vision for the new development is to create a vibrant, multi-functional community church that caters to a wide range of needs.



The key features of our proposal include:

New chapel chapel: This spacious chapel will accommodate our growing congregation, providing a welcoming space for worship and spiritual growth.	Multipurpose community hall: Designed to host both organisational and community events, this hall will be a flexible space suitable for everything from community meetings to cultural events.	A training and development centre: This facility will offer a variety of educational and professional development opportunities, helping individuals to gain new skills and advance their careers.
A youth development centre: Focused on activities and programmes for young people, this centre will provide a safe and engaging environment where youths can learn, grow, and thrive.	Administration spaces: These will be available for the church's use as well as for potential hire by local groups and businesses.	A community café and garden areas: These spaces will be open to everyone, offering a place to relax, socialise, and enjoy the outdoors, thereby enhancing community wellbeing.



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Landscaping and ecology

Our vision is to create a serene, beautiful, and eco-friendly environment that enhances the spiritual and communal experience for all who visit. This landscaping plans include a children's play area, lush gardens, and an inviting outdoor seating area for our café.



Our vision for the space



A tranquil environment:
Our goal is to create a peaceful sanctuary where congregants and visitors can connect with nature, relax, and reflect. The landscaping will feature a variety of plant and tree species.



Community engagement:
The design of the outdoor spaces encourages connection and community engagement. The café seating area will provide a welcoming spot for conversations, meetings, and enjoying refreshments in a natural setting.



Children's play area:
We're incorporating a safe, fun, and engaging play area for children. It will be thoughtfully designed to blend with the natural environment while offering play equipment.



Sustainable and eco-friendly:
Our plans prioritise sustainability and biodiversity. The gardens will include native plants that support local biodiversity, reduce water usage, and provide habitats for wildlife.

Transport and access

Our goal is to ensure that Winners Chapel Church is easily accessible to all visitors, whether arriving on foot, by bike, car, or public transport.



192 car parking spaces

We are providing 192 parking spaces for congregants and visitors, including 20 spaces with electric vehicle (EV) charging stations and 12 accessible spaces for those with disabilities.

40 cycle storage spaces

We are offering 40 secure cycle storage spaces to encourage visitors to cycle to the church.

Excellent transport links

The church is well-connected by local bus services, with regular services to and from Manchester city centre and surrounding neighbourhoods.

Mini-bus/ coach drop-off facility

A dedicated drop-off facility will accommodate the church's own mini-buses and coaches, many of which are electric vehicles (EVs), making it easier for groups, including children and elderly visitors, to arrive together.

Proposed widened access

The access road to the church will be widened to improve traffic flow and safety.

Associated landscaping

The transport facilities will be complemented by landscaping to create a welcoming and pleasant environment.



Site plan

Get involved

The consultation on our proposals for Winners Chapel will be open from Monday 2 September to Sunday 29 September 2024 and we are keen to hear your thoughts on our proposals.

You'll find all the information presented here on our website at: www.winnerschapelblackley-consultation.co.uk where you can also have your say. Alternatively, you can fill out a paper copy here at the event – just ask a member of the team.

Once the consultation has closed, the project team will consider all of the feedback received before finalising the proposals and submitting a planning application.



If planning is approved, we will be looking to start work on site in 2025.



5.3 Appendix 3: Consultation questionnaire

Winners Chapel Consultation Questionnaire

As part of our consultation process, we want to hear your views on these proposals.

How would you describe yourself? (Select as many options as apply)

- ☐ I'm a local resident ☐ I work in the area ☐ I own a business in the area
- ☐ I visit the area regularly ☐ I'm part of a local interest group ☐ Other: _____

If you are part of a local interest group(s), please tell us the name of the group(s):

Based on what you've seen so far, do you support proposals to create a new community church in Blackley?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure/ no opinion

Is there anything you would like us to consider before we finalise our plans and submit a planning application?

About you

You do not have to supply personal details; however, we would like to keep you updated on news and activity regarding the proposals. Your personal details will be stored in compliance with the GDPR and will not be shared with third parties.

I can confirm I am happy for you to contact me by email. ☐

Please tell us your name: _____

What is your email address? _____

Please tell us your postcode: _____

The deadline for feedback submission is **Sunday 29 September 2024**.

