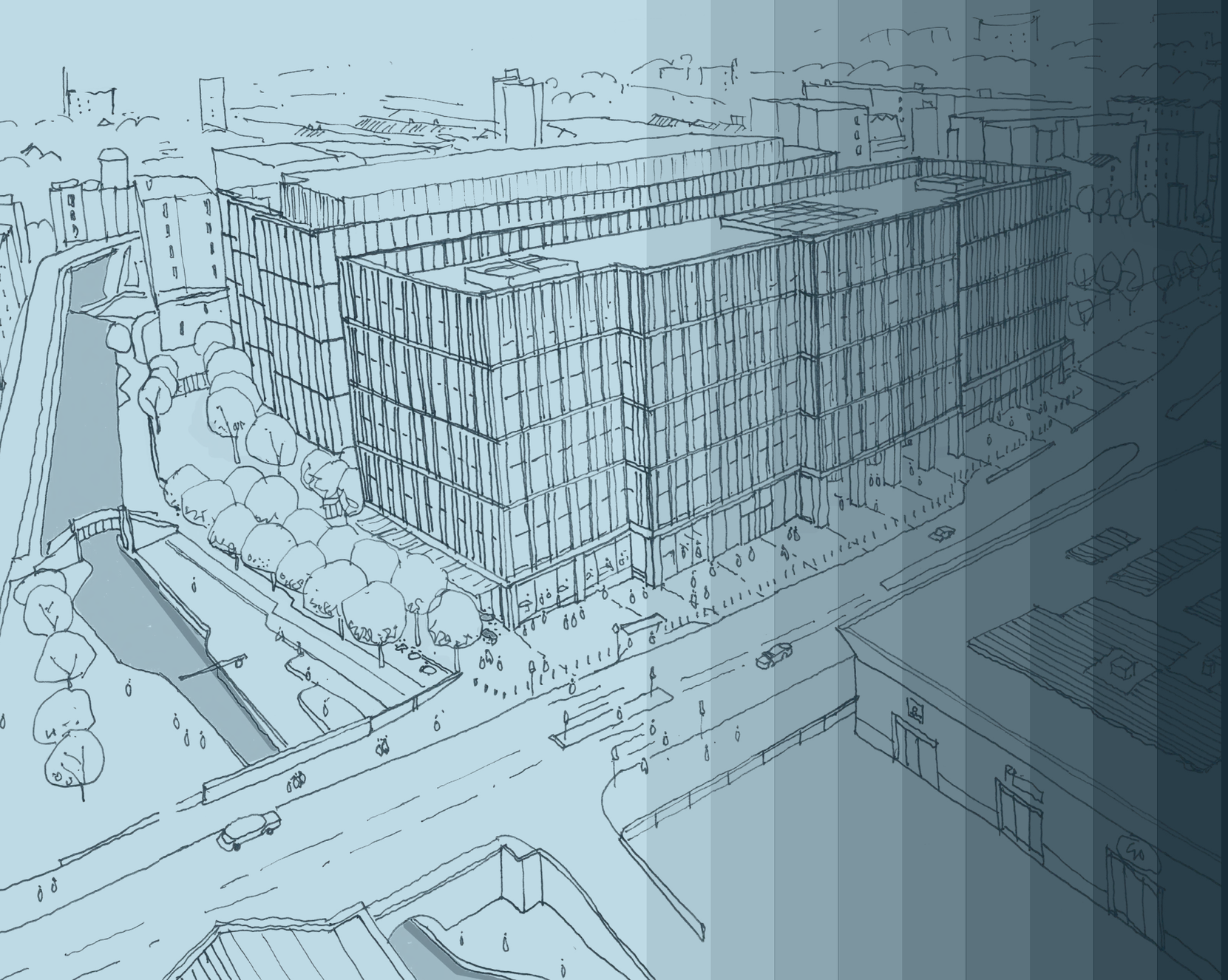


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MANCHESTER DIGITAL CAMPUS

Environmental Statement

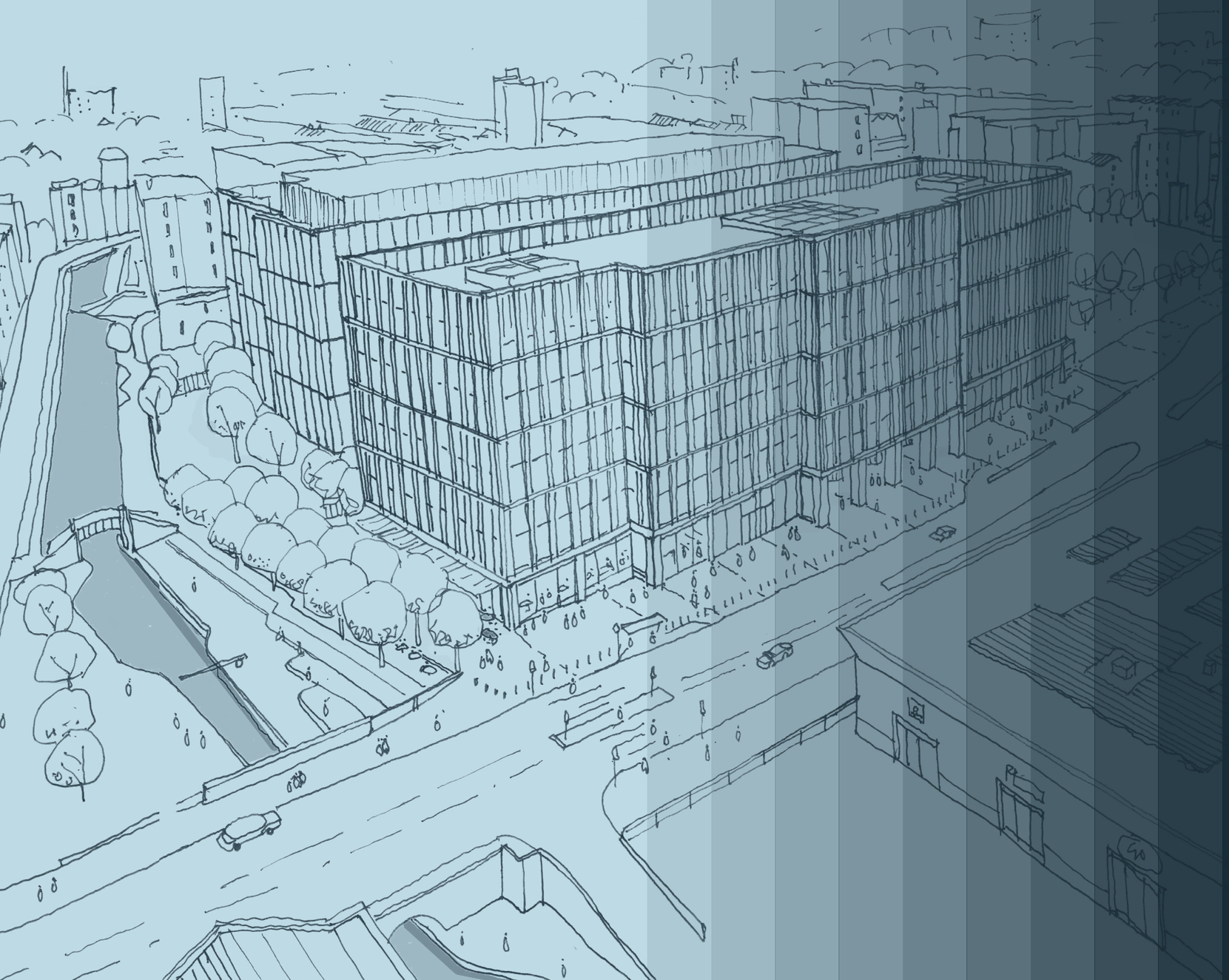
Volume 4 - Appendix 5.1:

Design and Access Statement

NOVEMBER 2024

Government Property Agency

AtkinsRéalis



MANCHESTER DIGITAL CAMPUS

Design & Access Statement

MDCX-ATR-XX-XX-RP-A-000001

NOVEMBER 2024

AtkinsRéalis

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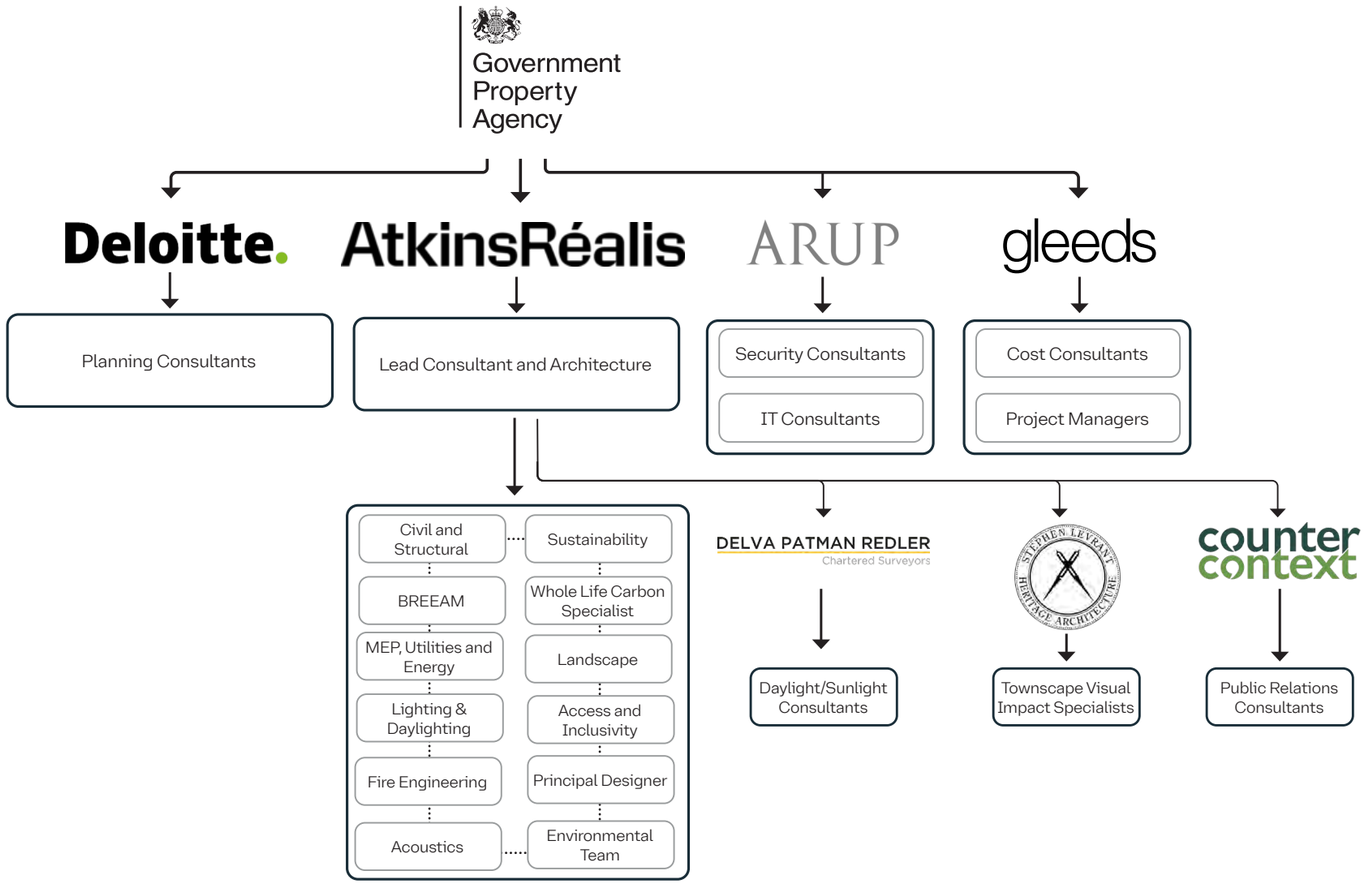
The Design and Access Statement cross-references to technical assessments but should not be relied upon independently. It should be considered alongside the Environmental Impact Assessment submitted in support of this application, which contains the detailed technical assessments relevant to this planning application.

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Executive Summary

Introduction

This Design and Access Statement relates to an application for Full Planning Permission for Manchester Digital Campus, a new flagship office development brought forward by the GPA and focussed on digital skills. It provides the first phase of the regeneration of a derelict site formerly occupied by Central Retail Park prior to its demolition and represents a significant opportunity to regenerate a key brownfield site in Manchester City Centre to deliver socio-economic benefits for local communities and act as the catalyst for wider redevelopment of the site and further investment in Manchester.

The Proposed Development comprises the development of a new city centre commercial office campus, delivered as a single phase comprised of the following elements:

- Development of a new civil service campus across two buildings with ground floor commercial offer, alongside the creation of new areas of public realm, including improved pedestrian access along Great Ancoats Street/the Rochdale Canal towpath and through the Site (via a new boulevard).
- Enabling earthworks to be carried out by the GPA to create the new site levels for the future development of a new park on the part of the wider FCRP SRF Area.

Document Aims

This Design and Access Statement has been produced by AtkinsRéalis on behalf of the Government Property Agency (GPA) in support of the planning application for Manchester Digital Campus (MDC) on part of the former Central Retail Park site ("the Site"), New Islington, Manchester.

This document describes the Proposed Development in detail, explaining the constraints of the site, the design thinking, and rationale behind the proposal. It also includes information about the way in which people could access and use the buildings and public realm areas, and the benefits that the proposal could bring to the wider Manchester area. This Design and Access Statement should be read in conjunction with the complete set of Planning Application documents and drawings, as listed in the Planning and Tall Building Statement.

Note: Drawings contained in this document are not shown to scale. For scaled drawn information, refer to the planning drawings submitted with this application.

Proposal

Urban Regeneration

The Site (outlined in red on page 9) forms part of the Former Central Retail Park, the redevelopment of which is a long-standing strategic priority for Manchester City Council (MCC).

The Site presents a strategically important location for the city with the potential to create a new commercial, office led district of real ambition focused on digital skills. There is also the opportunity to improve links, connectivity and permeability across the Site and between the surrounding districts which the former retail park had always turned its back on.

A Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) for the Site, prepared by MCC with input from the GPA, was endorsed by MCC's Executive Committee in March 2023. The SRF sets out an ambition for the Site to create a high-quality, sustainable office district with an attractive public realm at its centre and establishes a series of key development principles.

These proposals form the first phase of redevelopment - for two new civil service buildings and enabling works to create new site levels to facilitate future development on part of the wider SRF site.

7,000 government jobs

This development has a proposed gross internal area of approximately 82,500 sqm. It has the potential to deliver a modern workplace for circa 7,000 full-time employees, brought forward as part of the 'Government Hubs Programme'. The project presents an exciting opportunity for the government to invest in infrastructure, innovation and people through large-scale infrastructure and capital investments in cities other than London. Sustainability is at the heart of the design, promoting modern and flexible ways of working which make the building adaptable for future generations.

Identity

The proposal is named Manchester Digital Campus as a statement to the ambitions of the GPA in creating a thriving part of the city focused around digital and technology government jobs in Manchester. Several government departments will be represented on the Site.

Public Consultation

Public consultation was held for the SRF in January 2023 and then for these detailed plans in September 2024 and these are summarised in Section 11 of this report.



The Manchester Digital Campus Government Hub at the Ancoats site

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01 Introduction & Context

Site Location

Site Boundaries

Planning Policy Context

Planning Policy Background

Enabling Works

Wider Masterplan

01 Introduction & Context

01.1 Site Location

The location is a major brownfield site in Manchester. It is on the north side of the city, just within the limits of the city centre.

The Site has been vacant for several years and has huge potential to enhance the urban environment and the lives of locals, bringing more jobs, amenities, and high-quality, sustainable public realm to this part of the city.

The Site is at the intersection of several neighbourhoods, all of which are key areas of recent and historic regeneration. The Site is the missing puzzle piece and will act as the keystone which will connect all of these city quarters.



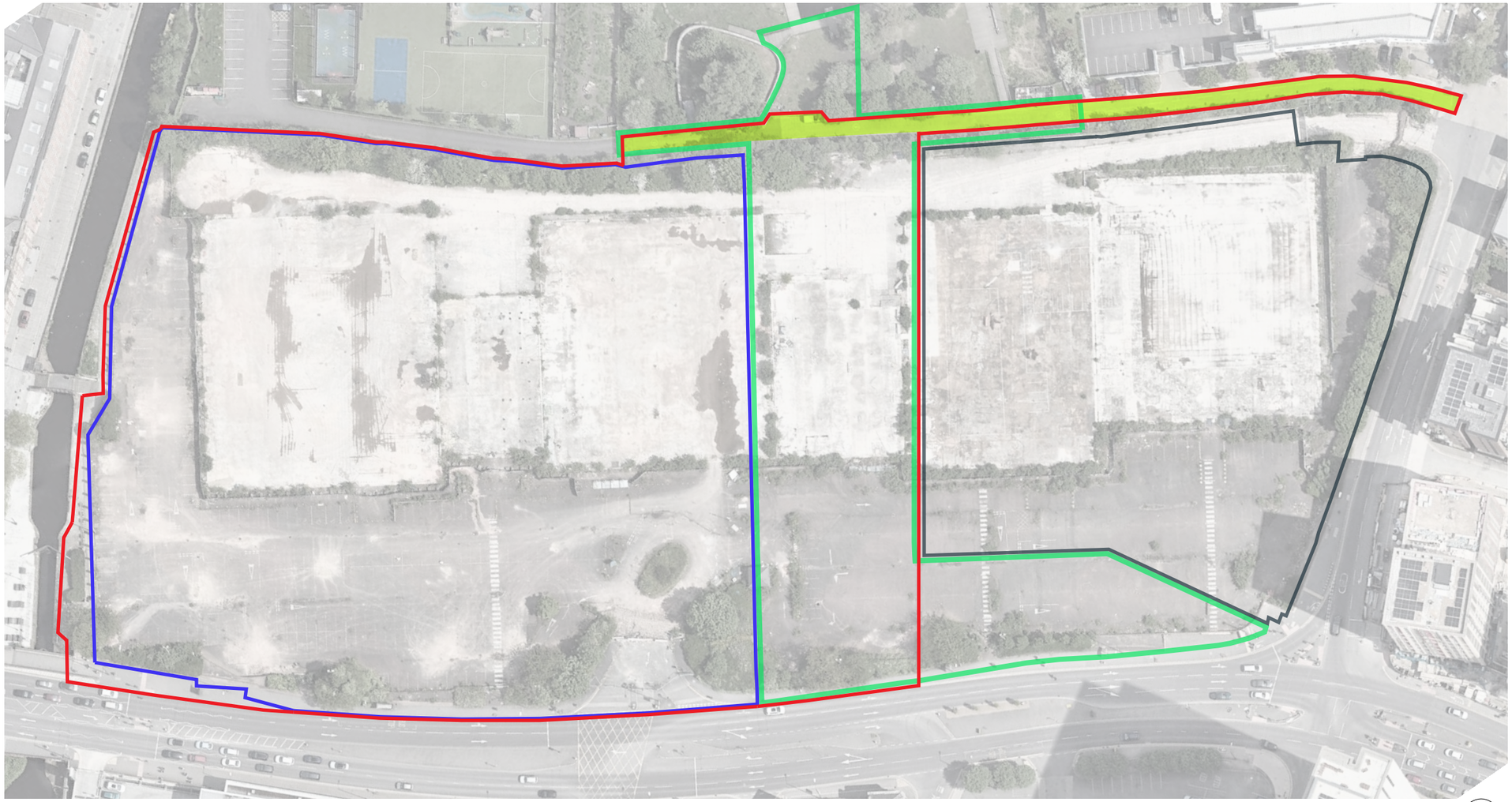
3D view of the site
Image Credit: Google Earth

01 Introduction & Context

01.2 Site Boundaries

The Site is roughly rectangular, with the following boundary edges (see red line on map opposite):

- Northwestern boundary - the edge of the Rochdale Canal , including the towpath (to be maintained and resurfaced), up the inner edge of the stone canal edge blocks.
- Northeastern boundary - the boundary with Coop Academy New Islington (a primary school), along external face of the school fence line, and the edge of Hugh Oldham Way, a private road providing access to the school. Proposals include for emergency vehicle access via Hugh Oldham Way.
- Southeastern boundary - the boundary with the rest of the Former Central Retail Park, for future Phase 2 development, with a proposed new park in between the two phases of development.
- Southwestern Boundary - Great Ancoats Street, at the kerb edge, the pavement being resurfaced and furnished with benches and other street furniture



Planning Application Boundary

Land being acquired by the GPA to develop Manchester Digital Campus

The Park

Hugh Oldham Way emergency vehicle route - no works required

Phase 2 Boundary

Site Boundaries Diagram

01 Introduction & Context

01.3 Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the national framework for local authorities to develop their local plans. In order to achieve a sustainable development, the planning system has three overarching objectives – economic, social and environmental.

The NPPF includes provisions relating to accessibility, inclusive design, health and well-being, and also emphasises the need for developments to prioritise sustainable travel options such as walking, cycling and the use of public transport which can reduce car dependency in urban office developments.

The NPPF requires applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan (the adopted local plan) unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The NPPF is currently being reviewed and consultation was recently carried out from 30th July to 24th September 2024.

Manchester Local Plan

The Manchester Local Plan (previously called the Local Development Framework) consists of the planning documents below, which guide development within Manchester.

- Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan (adopted in March 2024)
- Core Strategy 2012 - 2027
- Extant Unitary Development Policies (UDP)
- Supplementary planning documents (SPD)

Manchester's Core Strategy was adopted on the 11 July 2012 and is the key document in the Manchester Local Plan. A series of Strategic Spatial Objectives form the basis of the Core Strategy policies, and help to create inclusive sustainable communities with a focus on access, active transport, climate resilience and community safety.

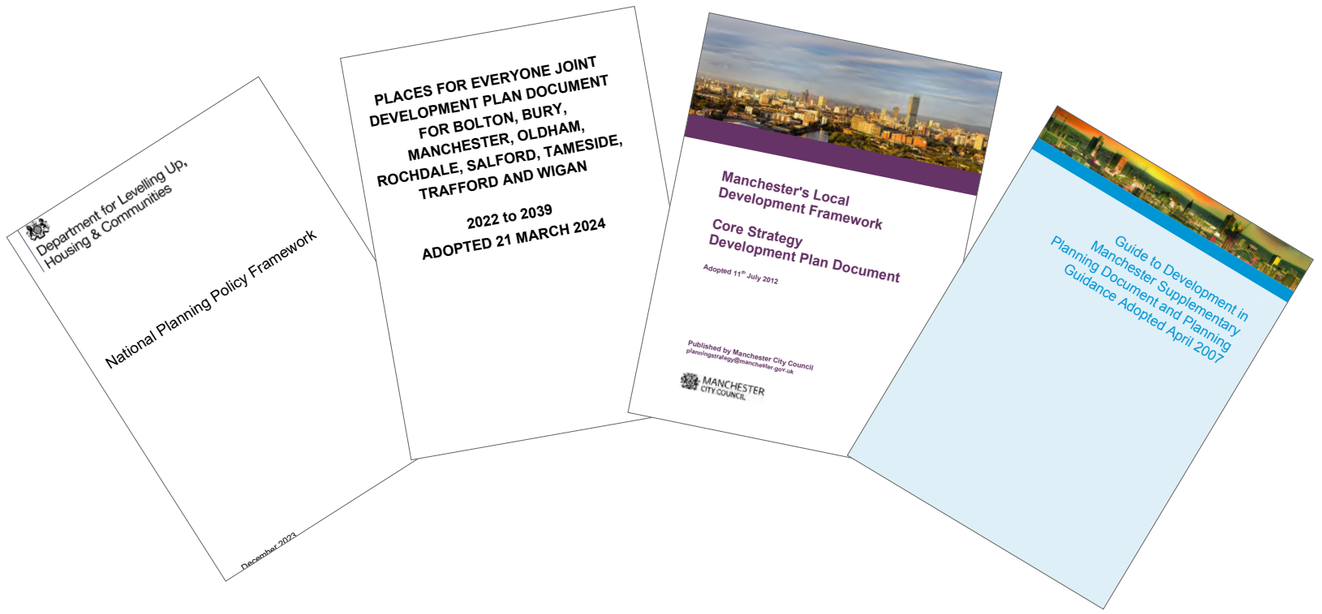
In Manchester's Core Strategy and Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Local Plan, policies addressing inclusivity and accessibility are embedded in various sections to ensure equitable development and planning.

Proposed Development

Manchester Digital Campus is part of a highly sustainable commercial district with a fully accessible green space at its heart, that will contribute positively to this part of the city centre, attract new businesses and create job opportunities. The location of the development is easily accessible via multiple public transport modes and the use of sustainable and active travel is promoted via a variety of different measures.

- Improvements to the pedestrian experience along Great Ancoats Street providing permeability through high-quality public realm spaces, helping to improve connections of parts of East Manchester to the City Centre.
- Significant secure cycle store provision for 320 bicycles, with the potential to increase this over time in response to wider cycle infrastructure improvements.
- Focus on public transport use with limited on-site parking which is only provided for staff with increased accessibility needs and 50 spaces dedicated to this demographic.
- A detailed travel plan that will be monitored and managed throughout the life of the building to support and encourage sustainable travel.

For more information refer to the 'Planning and Tall Building Statement'.



NPPF, Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan, Core Strategy, Supplementary planning documents (SPD)

01 Introduction & Context

01.4 Planning Policy Background

Strategic Regeneration Framework

The 2023 Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) for the 'Former Central Retail Park' site was prepared by AtkinsRéalis for Manchester City Council (MCC) alongside the GPA, to guide the future development of a key long-term strategic regeneration site in the city centre.

The 2023 SRF set out a clear agenda for delivering an entirely commercial office led district of real ambition, positively responding to the need to provide more purpose-built offices within the city centre and supporting MCC's aspirations to drive economic growth through the provision of new high-quality Grade-A offices to attract new companies to Manchester. It aligns with the goals of the Places for Everyone Plan (March 2024), the joint regional development plan which applies to nine out of the ten boroughs of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority.

Role of the SRF

Following public consultation and endorsement by MCC's Executive Committee, the SRF now provides material consideration in the determination of all future planning applications relevant to the SRF area and has paved the way for this planning application in-line with GPA requirements. Whilst the SRF does not form part of the city's Development Plan, it was prepared to be consistent with the policies of the Council's adopted Development Plan. The 2023 SRF replaced the non-statutory regeneration frameworks where they are relevant to the SRF area, including the Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework (2016), the Central Retail Park Development Framework (2015), and the Central Retail Park Development Framework (2020).

SRF Vision

The vision was to create a new high-quality, sustainable office district with attractive public realm at its centre. The overarching plan was for two phases of office development, one to the West of the site and another to the East, separated by a central green space that would also connect to the existing 'Cotton Fields Park' to the North.

The SRF also identified the locations of vehicle access onto the site and describes the opportunities for prioritizing pedestrians by minimising car parking and utilising public transport.

The SRF acknowledged the existing neighbours and the established neighbourhoods that surround the Site as well as the listed buildings and conservation area adjacent.

The SRF also included for the large quantum of office accommodation to be supported by ancillary retail and leisure accommodation at ground floor level, providing attractive new facilities for the working population of the Site as well as local people who live and work in the area.

The proposals within this planning application are aligned to the principles established within the SRF, and provide the detail for the realisation of this vision.



SRF Site Location Sketch



SRF Public Consultation (January 2023)



SRF Public Consultation Boards

01 Introduction & Context

01.5 Enabling Works

The Development Proposals include a package of enabling works including reduced level dig, stockpiling materials for reuse in the main works, forming permanent and temporary boundaries, removal of redundant services, highways alterations and other associated works.

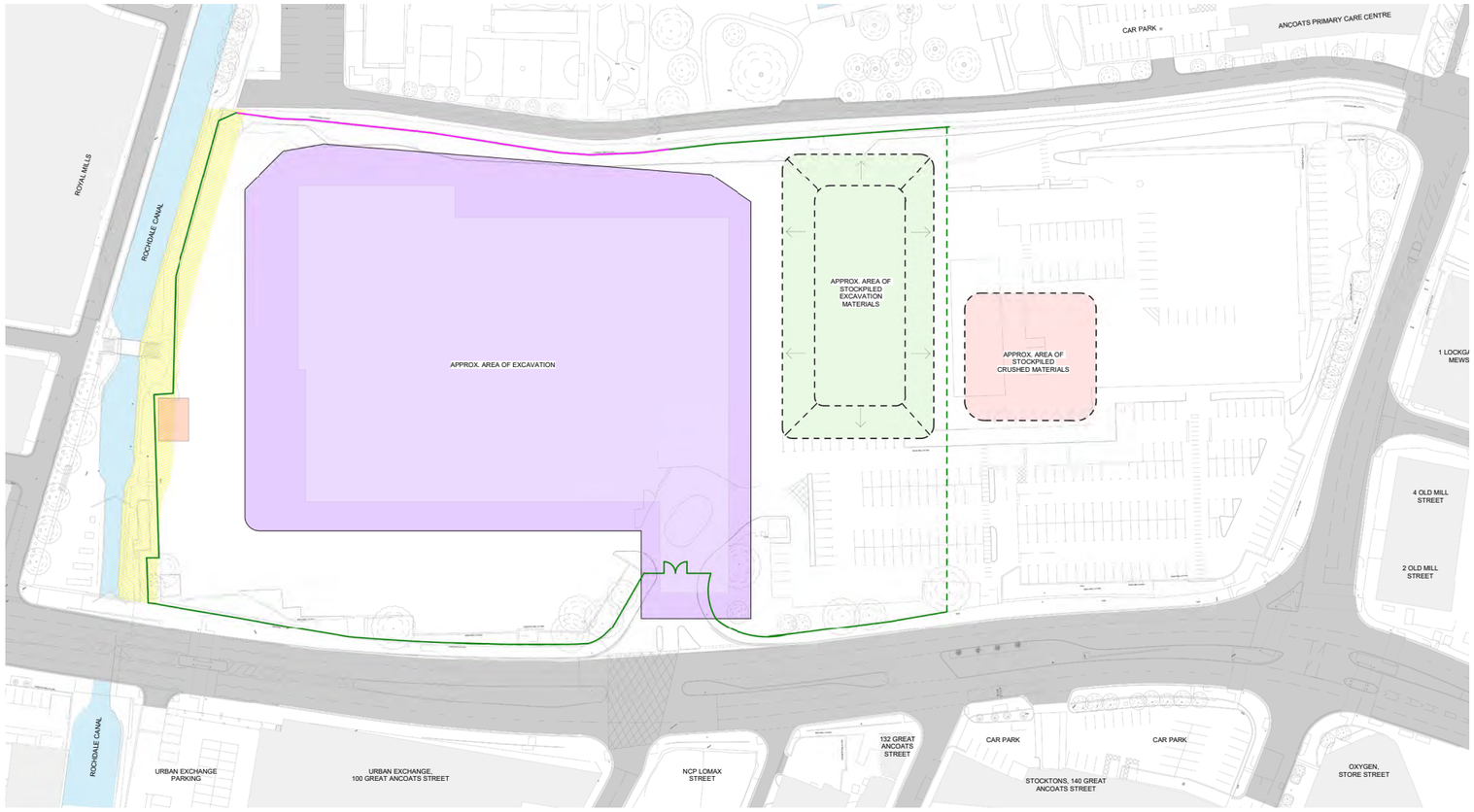
In an effort to reduce material use and lower embodied carbon existing concrete slabs and car park paving will be crushed and stored in a designated area (yellow) for reuse during the early stages of the main works, such as for the piling mat.

Also, the excavated ground materials forming the basement levels (area in purple), will be stored on-site in a separate designated area (green) and then reused to shape the new landscape levels around the development, including the future park.

Temporary boundaries will be established to keep the site safe and secure for the duration of the works, and in an effort to minimise disruption to the school a permanent boundary wall will be constructed along the school.

Archaeology for the site will be monitored and recorded during the excavation works.

Other enabling works will involve the general removal or diversion of redundant site services, and the setup of a temporary substation to facilitate the main works.



Red line boundary

Area of excavation

Approx. storage zone for stockpiling of materials to be reused for forming new park levels

Approx. location for the crushing of materials and storage for reuse within the main works construction

10m. buffer away from the canal during main construction works

GPA site hoarding

Permanent wall

01 Introduction & Context

01.6 Wider Masterplan

Land Ownership and Collaboration

At the time of the 2023 SRF publication, MCC was the owner of the whole Former central Retail Park site. As the owner, the Council will be working with development partners to bring this vision to life. The first development partner to come on board is the Government Property Agency (GPA), which has exchanged contracts to purchase circa half of the site to create a new digitally-focused civil service hub.

The GPA and MCC have collaborated on an illustrative concept masterplan. The Plan to the right shows the proposed Phase 1 footprint in the context of the wider illustrative masterplan.

This Application - Site Extents

This application proposal comprises over half of the site, including the area of land being acquired by the GPA, and the main central green space identified in the SRF as the new park. The GPA development will create the new site levels for the park and the design and delivery of the park is being brought forward by MCC under a separate planning application which will be submitted by MCC in tandem with this application. The new park aims to provide a cohesive public realm creating attractive, green and accessible new public space in Manchester city centre.

KEY

- This Planning Application (Phase 1)
- Area of Phase 1 site level works for the new park
- Proposed Park Area (separate planning application)
- Phase 2 future works



Updated illustrative landscape masterplan

Phase 1:
This Application:

- GPA's proposals for Manchester Digital Campus.
- Site level works to achieve the desired Park levels.

The Park:
Manchester City Council's proposals for a new public park at the heart of the site.

Phase 2:
MCC Future Development Site to meet the demands of the local commercial office market.

02 Vision

Project Vision

Brief

Design Principles

02 Vision

02.1 Project Vision

The Manchester Digital Campus will be a flagship development for the GPA.

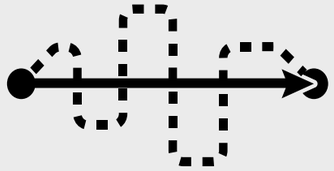
The campus will set new standards with flexibility, function and collaboration at its core. The design for the MDC has been driven forward around 6 pillars as shown opposite and described below, in pursuit of:

- An office campus that is **high quality**. Not simply in terms of materials and finishes, but rather in terms of performance and conveying a civic pride.
- An office campus that is **lean and efficient**, and adopts systems that operationally are best value.
- An office campus that is pushing **sustainability performance** boundaries, that will seek to push forward new standards in both its build and operation.
- An office campus that is **flexible and adaptable**, and can change to meet the needs of future demands on space and working arrangements.
- An office campus which is **respectful of its neighbourhood** and community responding to its context positively.
- An office campus that puts **people at the heart of design**, championing inclusion, offering optimum amenities and varied working environment to enable a highly productive community.

Ambitious parameters for a high-quality design, sustainability, well-being and collaboration guide the building strategies.



Flagship Design



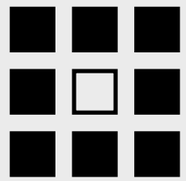
Efficient



Sustainable



Resilient



Contextual



Human Centred

02 Vision

02.1 Project Vision



Proposed Development in context - West Elevation

Our vision is the creation of a new, dynamic and diverse City Quarter. The Manchester Digital Campus will deliver a range of exemplary and innovative workplaces, promoting inclusivity, health and well-being. It will provide buildings that are high-quality, sustainable, resilient, adaptable, reliable and simple to operate. They will create environments for the diverse communities to collaborate and perform to their highest potential.

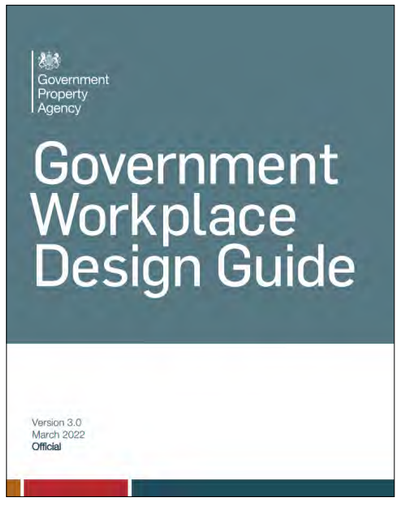
02 Vision

02.2 Brief

"The creation of major multi-departmental government hubs across the UK will provide cutting-edge, innovative working environments for our people. This will help recruit the best talent, improve productivity and deliver a more diverse and inclusive, modern civil service that can work in a smarter, more flexible way than ever before "

The GPA's Government Workplace Design Guide "establishes a benchmark in aspirations, space standards, look and feel, corporate identity and, importantly, a consistent design approach to all government office workspace." It informs designers in how the GPA intends to create "modern, digitally enabled, shared workspaces for the UK Civil Service."

- Quotes from the Government Workplace Design Guide v3.0 2022



Home to circa 7,000 civil servants

Multiple Government Departments

5 ½ Acre Site

BREEAM Excellent

84,000m² Floor Area (GIA)

NABERS 5*

Health & Wellbeing

British Council of Offices Best Practice

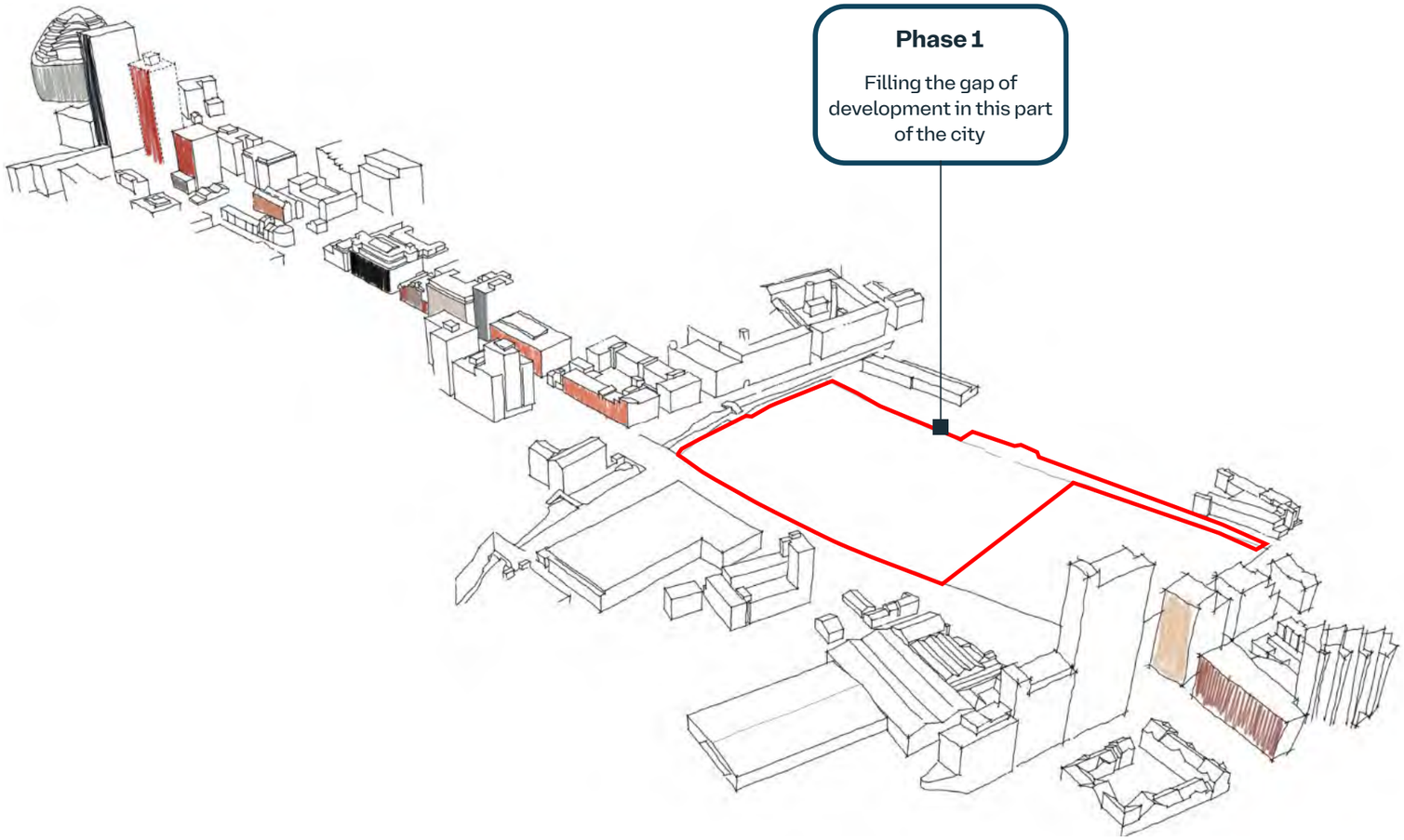
Low and Net-Zero Technologies

Lean & Efficient Construction

02 Vision

02.3 Design Principles

- Civic scale and appearance
- Bold simple forms
- Reactivation of Great Ancoats St
- Responding to the detailed needs of government



Design Drivers:

1. **Identity**
2. **Connectivity & Inclusivity**
3. **Legibility, Order, Form**
4. **Urban Integration: Site Response**
5. **Active Spaces: Public Realm**
6. **Diversity of Places and Spaces**
7. **Resilience & Efficiency**
8. **Safety**

03 Site Assessment & Character

City Neighbourhood Context

National Context

Urban Regeneration Context

The Site

Immediate Context - Character & Neighbourhoods

Historic Context

Site History

Land Use and Public Transport

Future Surrounding Heights

Site Topography

Site Constraints

Site Opportunities

03 Site Assessment & Character

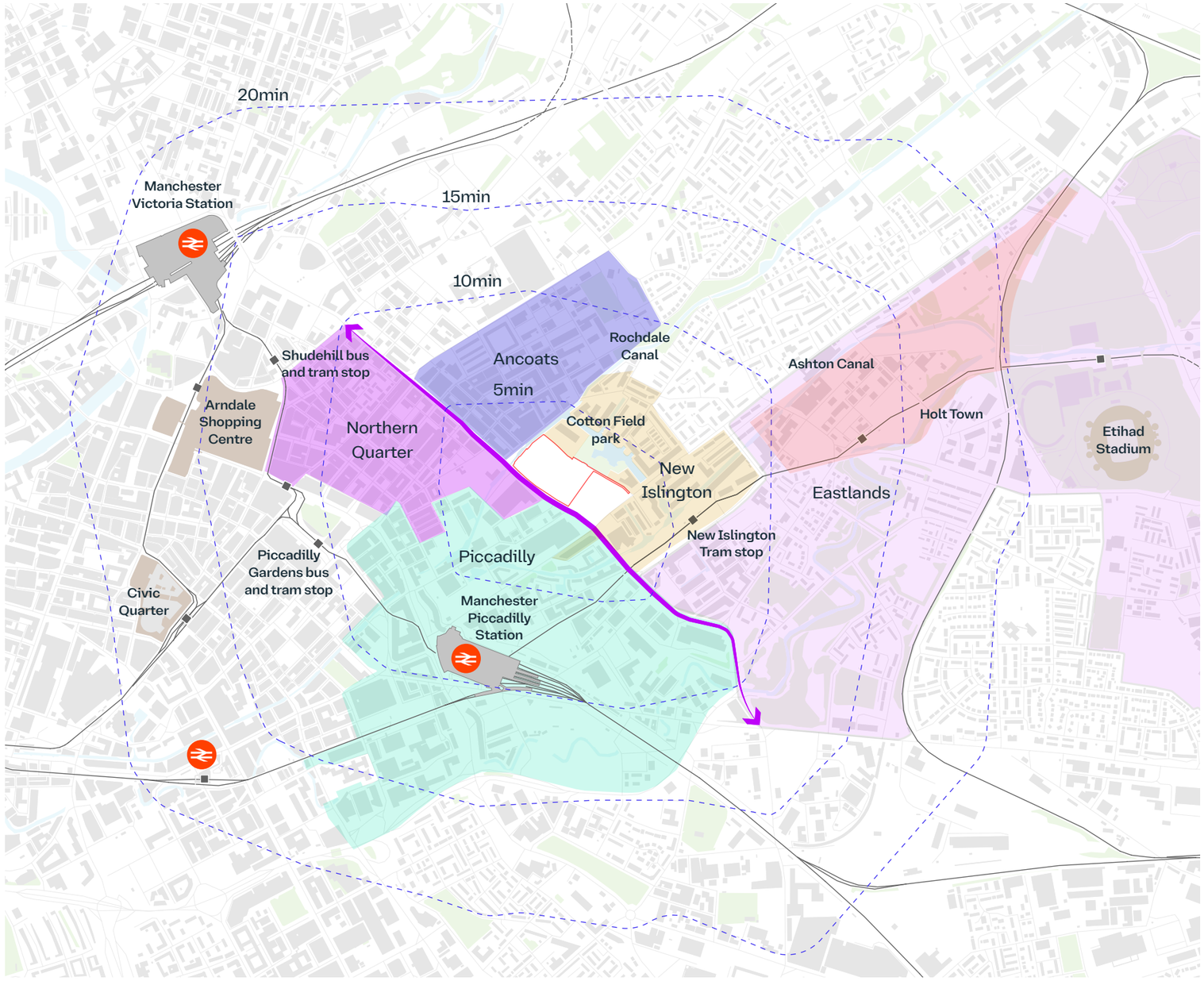
03.1 City Neighbourhood Context

The Site sits at the corner of the New Islington neighbourhood, and is at the junction of three other neighbourhoods all of different character - Ancoats, the Northern Quarter, and Piccadilly.

The Site is set within Manchester's vibrant city centre and is approximately a 10-minute walk from Piccadilly Gardens and Piccadilly station. The Site has excellent transport connections, including the Metrolink station at New Islington which was added in 2013 and increases access to Piccadilly from the north.

The Site sits adjacent to the Rochdale Canal, which runs through the city, and provides strong connectivity along its path. On its northern boundary the Site is bounded by New Islington which includes the marina and Cotton Field Park. The canal, the park and marina have proven to be very popular and successful external spaces, providing opportunities for entertainment and leisure. New Islington is an attractive asset that has opened up opportunities for future development and businesses.

The Former Central Retail Park (FCRP) site is the last major piece of the regeneration jigsaw in this part of the city. The Manchester Digital Campus application will be the anchor and catalyst for the rest of the FCRP.



Wider City Context and Neighbourhoods Plan

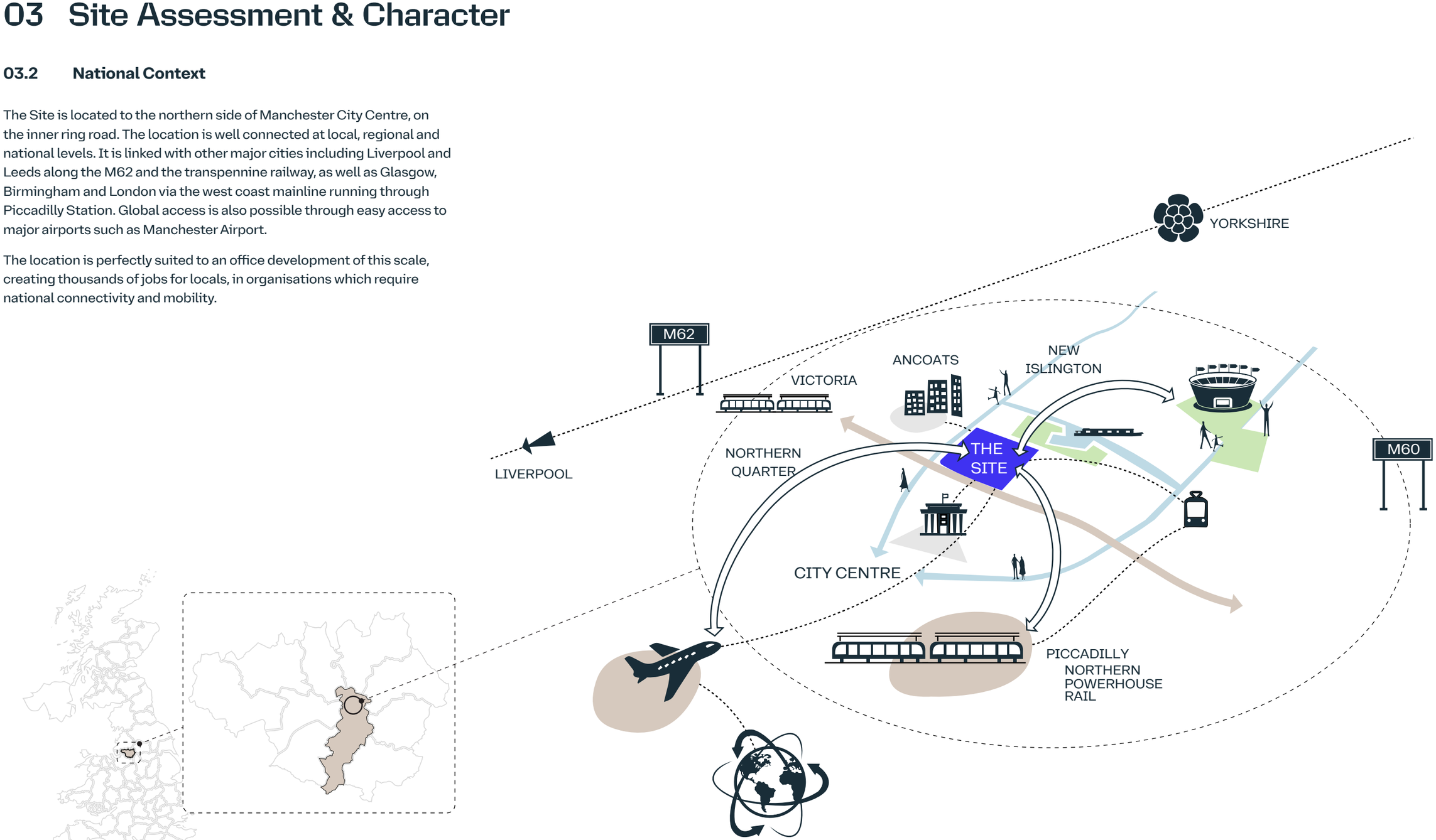
- Site
- Existing key destinations
- Existing green spaces
- New Islington Marina
- Great Ancoats Street
- 5 to 20m walking isochrones from point A

03 Site Assessment & Character

03.2 National Context

The Site is located to the northern side of Manchester City Centre, on the inner ring road. The location is well connected at local, regional and national levels. It is linked with other major cities including Liverpool and Leeds along the M62 and the transpennine railway, as well as Glasgow, Birmingham and London via the west coast mainline running through Piccadilly Station. Global access is also possible through easy access to major airports such as Manchester Airport.

The location is perfectly suited to an office development of this scale, creating thousands of jobs for locals, in organisations which require national connectivity and mobility.



Greater Manchester

Central Manchester

Local, Regional, National & Global Connections

03 Site Assessment & Character

03.3 Urban Regeneration Context

Manchester has undergone a dramatic transformation over the past 25 years, changing from an underutilised post-industrial landscape to a vibrant, dynamic and, diverse city.

"Our vision is to make Greater Manchester one of the best places in the world to grow up, get on and grow old"

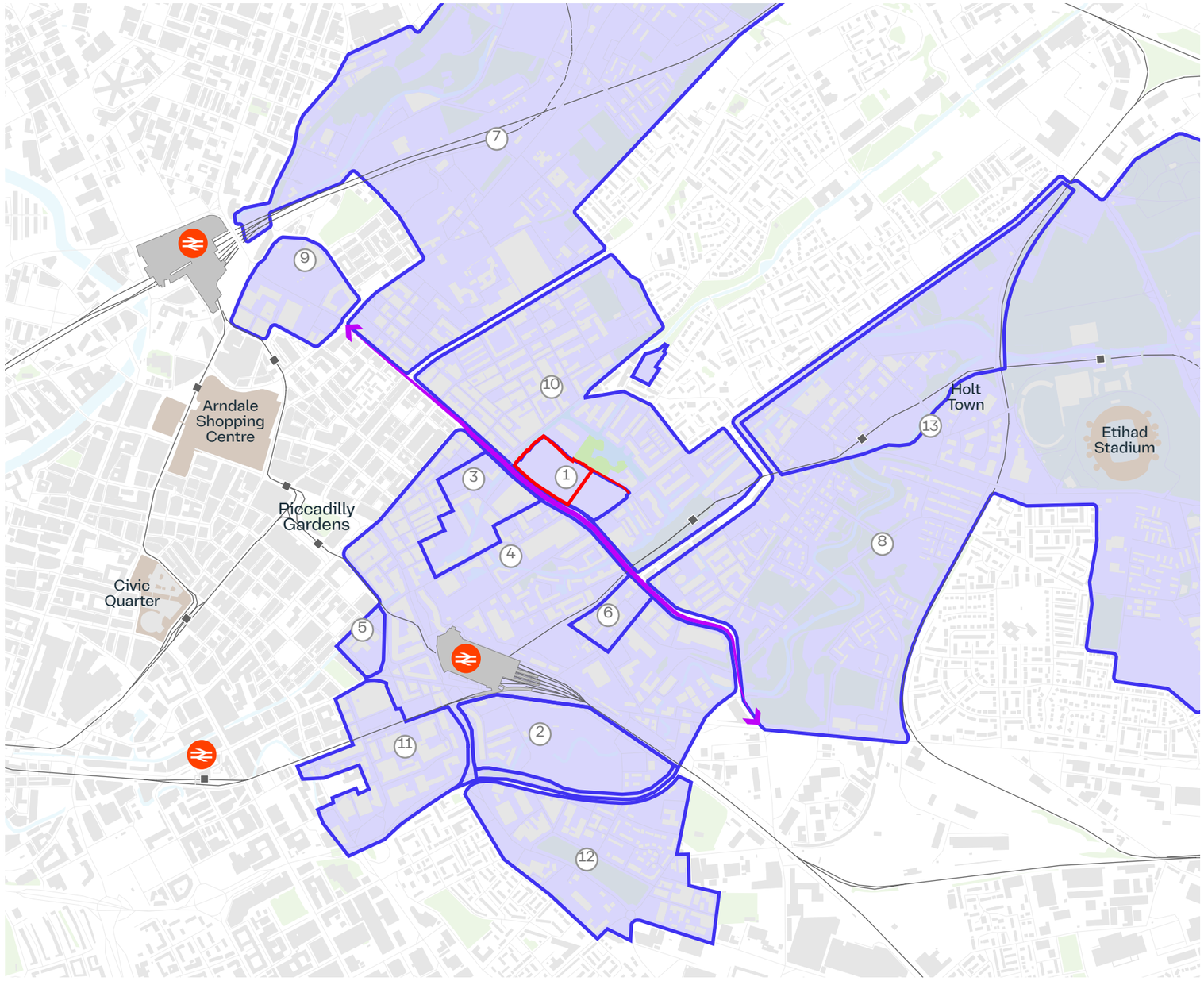
- Quote from 'Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan 2022 to 2039'.

This side of the city in particular has multiple Strategic and Neighbourhood Regeneration Frameworks in place within ongoing MCC Planning Policy, as shown on the map opposite.

The scheme has the opportunity to capitalise on its ideal location and its proximity to other successful key areas of urban regeneration, such as the Ancoats and New Islington neighbourhoods and the mixed-use quarter of Manchester Piccadilly SRF.

The Site is the north-western half of the land described in the Former Central Retail Park Strategic Regeneration Framework (2023). It is also positioned within the boundaries of the 2016 Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework, within Character Area 4 - Great Ancoats Street Frontage.

- Site
- Regeneration projects (planning policy)
- 1 Former Central Retail Park SRF - March 2023
- 2 Mayfield SRF - May 2018
- 3 Piccadilly Basin SRF - October 2016
- 4 HS2 Manchester Piccadilly SRF - January 2014
- 5 Aytoun Street "Kampus" SRF - August 2015
- 6 Portugal Street East - April 2017
- 7 Northern Gateway SRF - February 2019
- 8 Eastern Regeneration Framework - February 2017
- 9 NOMA Strategic Regeneration Framework - November 2020
- 10 Ancoats and New Islington NDF Update 2016
- 11 Innovation District SRF - December 2023
- 12 Ardwick Green NDF - November 2020
- 13 Holt Town NDF - August 2024
- Existing green spaces
- New Islington Marina
- ⟷



City Context - Regeneration Areas

03 Site Assessment & Character

03.4 The Site

The Site, and the adjacent land up to Old Mill Street, was formerly the Central Retail Park, with big-box style retail units present from the late 1980s until they were demolished in 2019. Since then the Site has been vacant; a barren void in the city fabric with unfulfilled potential. It was acquired by MCC in 2017 with aspirations to bring forward an office-led business district. MCC commissioned two subsequent SRFs for the wider site, one in 2020 for a mixed-use scheme, and the current 2023 document which was completed in collaboration with the GPA for a predominantly office-based scheme with some retail, food & beverage at ground floor level. Both SRFs include an extension to Cotton Field Park stretching down towards Great Ancoats Street.

The Site has a main vehicular access off Great Ancoats Street and a secondary access point off Old Mill Street, formerly used for deliveries and waste collections.





Proposed Vehicle acces from main street

Secondary emergency access

Access to New Islington Co-op Academy and Medical Centre

03 Site Assessment & Character

03.4 The Site

Site Photos

These images show the existing conditions of the Site and its immediate surroundings.

The ground plane of the Site is dominated by the concrete ground floor slabs of the previous retail buildings, and paved car parking areas.

Great Ancoats Street forms a hard edge to the southern extent of the Site. A clear landscape boundary is formed by existing vegetation and low brick walls. A narrow footpath along with a bus stop sits in between the landscape edge and the road.

The eastern extent of the Site forms a soft edge with the canal side, along with existing public realm across the canal. This edge is currently formed by a fenced wall with a gate and some self-seeded vegetation.

KEY

01 View of Canal side public space

02 View of the Site from Redhill Street Bridge

03 View of the Site across Great Ancoats Street

04 View across the Site towards the Great Ancoats Street, Oxygen building on the left

05 Vehicular access to the Site from Old Mill Street

06 Self seeded vegetation within the Site

07 View across the Site towards the Ancoats Conservation Area

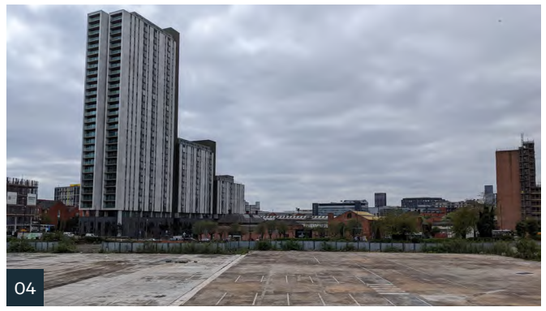
08 View from Old Mill Street across the Site towards the Ancoats Conservation Area

09 View from the historic bridge into the Site. Oxygen building on the right







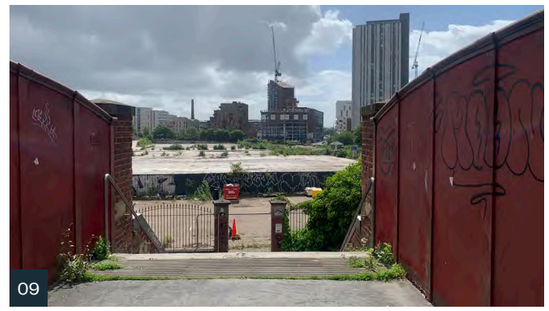


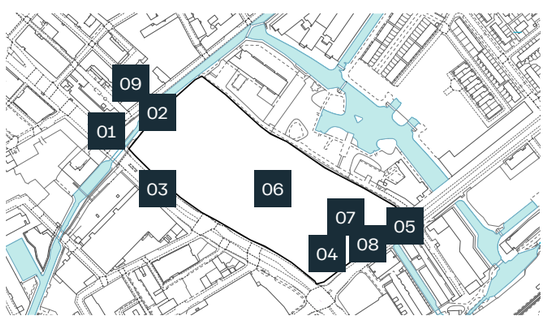












03 Site Assessment & Character

03.5 Immediate Context - Character & Neighbourhoods

Around the location of the Manchester Digital Campus (MDC), there are six distinct zones that the proposals should respect and respond to:

- Ancoats Conservation Area
- Coop Academy New Islington
- New Islington Medical Practice
- New Islington community
- Old Mill Street
- Great Ancoats Street



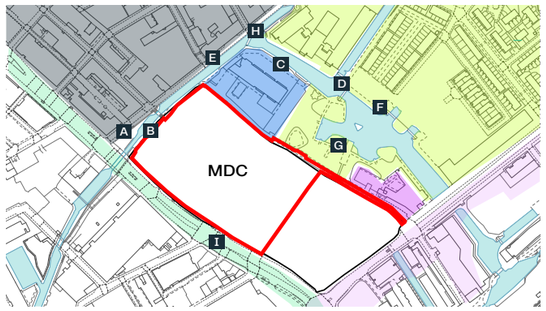












Ancoats Conservation Area

Coop Academy New Islington

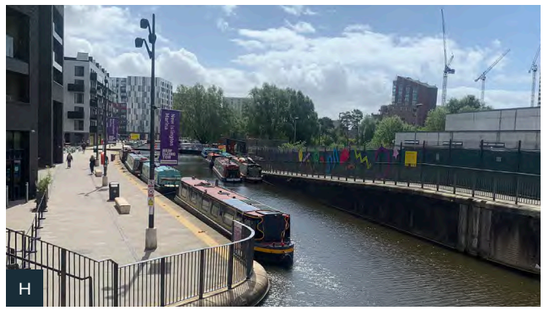
New Islington Medical Practice

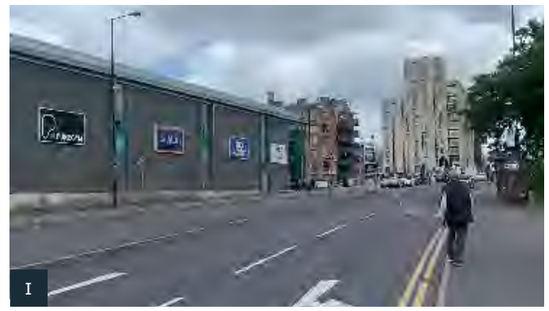
New Islington community

Old Mill Street

Great Ancoats Street







03 Site Assessment & Character

03.5 Immediate Context - Character & Neighbourhoods

Over recent years the area around the Site including Ancoats, New Islington and Great Ancoats Street, has established itself as a destination with its own identity. This area is no longer seen as the city fringe but part of the city centre. As shown by these photos, the character of the area is embodied by large scale residential mid-rise developments some of which are the large scale mill buildings that have been converted into flats. There is now a large population of local residents in the area, with young professionals more predominant closer to the Site and family housing further to the north.

The area also features a diverse range of commercial spaces, including modern offices within the historic mill buildings, along with restaurants, cafés, and retail stores creating a vibrant hub for work and leisure.

The Oxygen building to the east of the Site is a high-rise residential development. Other emerging high-rise residential developments include Islington Wharf Locks on Old Mill Street and Victoria House on Pollard Street.



Halle St. Peter's



Royal and Sedgwick Mills



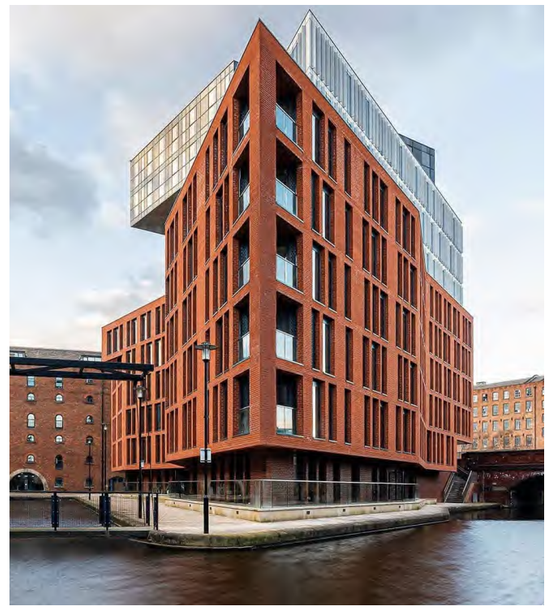
Murray's Mill



The Astley



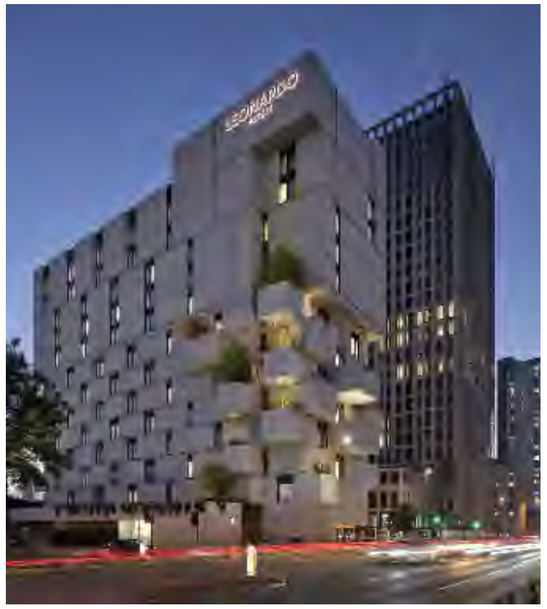
Oxid House



Burlington House

03 Site Assessment & Character

03.5 Immediate Context - Character & Neighbourhoods



Leonardo Hotel



Victoria House



Islington Wharf Locks



Oxygen building



Islington Wharf



Blossom Street



Brownsfield Mill



Cotton Field Wharf Marina

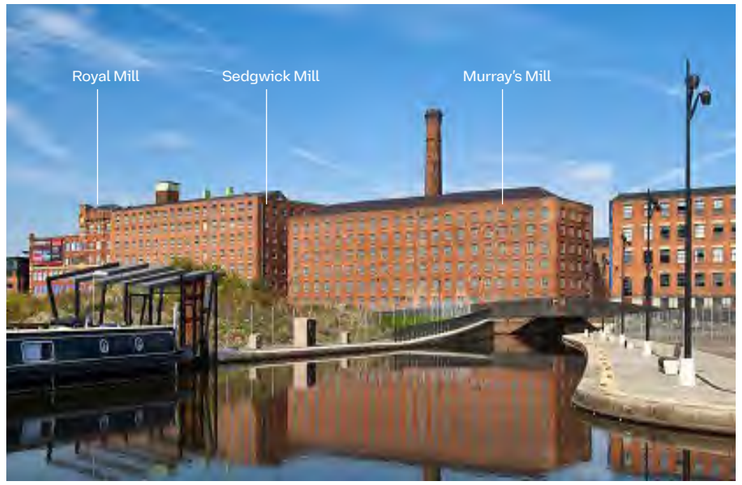
03 Site Assessment & Character

03.6 Historic Context

Ancoats Conservation Area

A key consideration for the future of the Site is its location immediately adjacent to a number of key heritage assets including Ancoats Conservation Area. Ancoats was once one of the most densely developed industrial landscapes. During the 18th century it was home to textile mills and was the centre of manufacturing of machinery, glass, and newspapers. During the second half of the 20th century, the district saw a decline with factories closing down and communities leaving the industrial areas for the suburbs. The area includes several Grade II and Grade II* listed buildings, many of them facing Rochdale Canal. The Ancoats Conservation Area boundary reaches the western edge of the Site.

The area has gone through significant investment. The successful and sensitive regeneration has maintained the special character of the area and has made Ancoats a popular destination. Businesses have capitalised on the popularity of the area and have helped it grow.



View from Cotton Field Park towards Ancoats Conservation Area.



Mills at Rochdale canal in 1820

The Rochdale Canal

Alongside the historic buildings in the city the canal infrastructure is a key defining feature of Ancoats, with two major waterways crossing the area:

- The Rochdale Canal, defining the west boundary of the Site
- The Ashton Canal, to the east of Old Mill Street.

Canals were the essential prerequisite to the area's industrial development as they allowed transporting materials at a much cheaper rate than using roads. Smaller branches from the major waterways used to serve the major industrial sites within Ancoats and New Islington, creating a local network of waterways.

The Rochdale canal dates back to 1804, and the first mills defining its frontage go back beyond that. An example of that is Old Mill, which dates back to 1798. The mills alongside the west side of the Rochdale Canal have historically presented an impressive frontage to what is now the designated Ancoats Conservation area.

The locks, which sit to the southwest of the Site and the canal wall define the west of the canal, are also protected assets.



Long Mill and Old Mill defining the frontage of Rochdale canal in 1913

Source: *'Ancoats. Cradle of industrialisation.'* English Heritage



Mills at Rochdale canal in 1835

03 Site Assessment & Character

03.7 Site History

The site has undergone major developments over the years.

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the area became home to the newest generation of industrial revolution mill developments. These were huge monolithic blocks, innovative at the time in their use of steam, gas and later electric power instead of animals and water, and their pioneering use of fireproof construction and cast iron structures. The mills that still stand today to the north of the Site in Ancoats Conservation Area are unapologetically function-driven, their massive scale, simple forms and consistent façades lending them a sense of civic grandeur which is a strong influence on the surrounding area.

The Site itself was occupied by terraced workers housing, some back-to-back, smaller mills, and community buildings such as a church, a school and pubs. There was a network of streets offering good connectivity from north to south and east to west.

By the first half of the 20th century, some rows of houses had been demolished and replaced with small scale industrial buildings and some pockets left empty. Industry was changing, with many cotton mills being converted to clothing production rather than raw materials processing. The urban grid is a little less coherent but still present.

The second half of the 20th century saw widespread slum clearances, with very nearly all of the terraced housing disappearing and many of the mills also. New housing estates were built in the 1970s onwards to the north of the site, the most notable being the Cardroom estate which spanned between the Rochdale and Ashton Canals. Many of the remaining mills were left derelict, and the city centre was an underpopulated and often unsafe place to live.

In the late 1980s the Central Retail Park was built, with four big-box style retail units and associated car parking creating an out-of-town style shopping centre in the middle of the city.

In the 2000s part of the Cardroom Estate was demolished and the marina was constructed to kick-start the regeneration of the New Islington area, an ambitious project which saw a new health centre, school and new apartments built around the marina and Cotton Field Park as a focal point.

In 2017 Manchester City Council acquired the Site. The retail units were closed and demolished in 2019 ready for redevelopment of the Site in order for it to meet its full potential as a key part of the city's fabric.



The Plot in 1819

Dense urban fabric with good permeability from Great Ancoats Street to the wharves, north of the site. The wharves define the south-western edge of Great Ancoats Street.



The Plot in 1923

New buildings start to appear on the wharfs to the south-west of Great Ancoats street.



The Plot in 2000

The former historic urban grain has been replaced by a large retail space and surface parking, with 1970s housing estates to the north.



The Plot in 2024 (existing condition)

Huge regeneration has taken place. The empty Central Retail Park site is a barrier to permeability from south to north, cutting off New Islington from the city centre.

03 Site Assessment & Character

03.8 Land Use and Public Transport

Land Uses

The Site is surrounded by a diverse mix of uses including commercial, residential and retail. The north and north-western borders are characterised by the historic mill buildings, now converted to residential, office space, and some ground floor retail units. The Coop Academy New Islington sits along the northern boundary of the Site and New Islington Medical Practice to the east. Towards the south, across from Great Ancoats street, there is a retail development which includes a gym space and a supermarket (ALDI). The southern aspect is currently defined by various warehouses and the recently built 32-storey 'Oxygen' building. There is a key open space, Cotton Field Park, to the north-east of the Site.

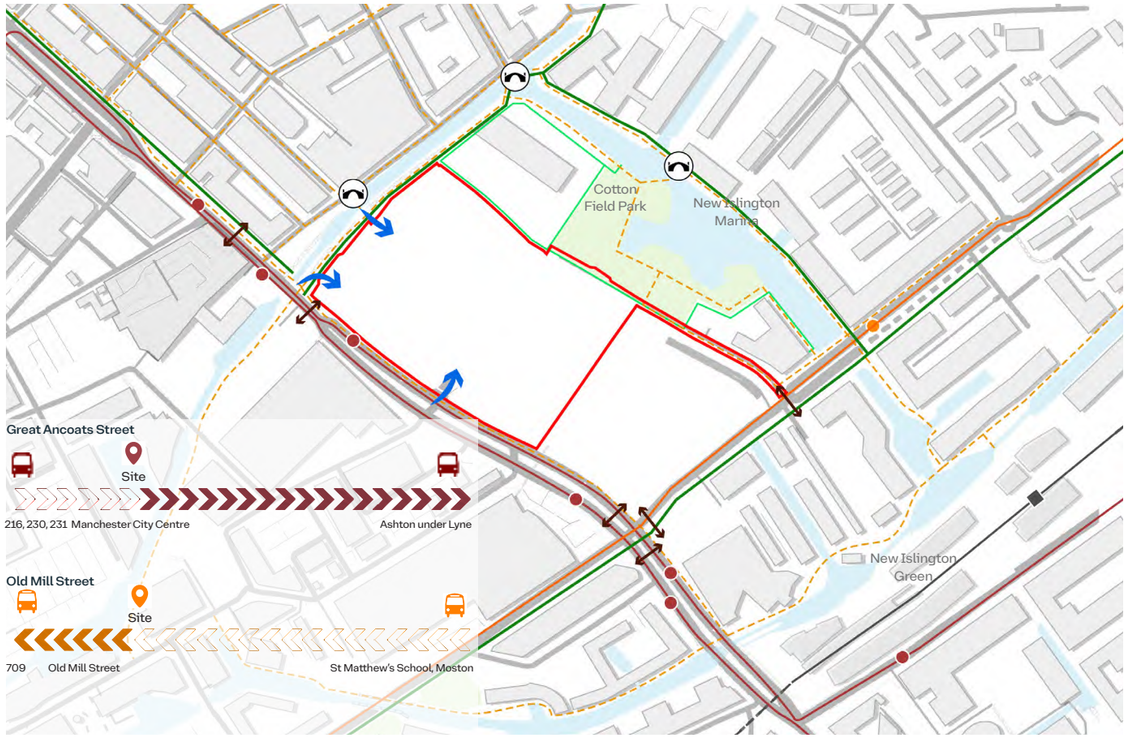


Key

- Site Boundary
- Residential
- Hotel
- Mixed Use
- Commercial
- Retail
- Educational
- Health Care
- Industrial
- Green / Open spaces
- Water

Public Transport

Buses run along Great Ancoats Street and Old Mill Street, with a frequency of 15 to 30 minutes. The Site is also in close proximity to key transport points, such as New Islington tram stop which is a 7-minute walk, and key transport hubs, such as Piccadilly train station which is a 10-minute walk. There are cycle routes surrounding the Site as part of the Transport for Greater Manchester cycle network. However, none of these routes have an allocated cycle path, instead they are classified as on-road routes or shared surfaces with pedestrians. The Site is also within easy walking distance of much of the city's amenities. Walking distances can be seen on the map on page 20.



Key

- Site boundary
- Pedestrian Links
- Existing pedestrian access to site (currently fenced)
- Existing pedestrian crossings
- Existing bridges
- Existing fences around Cotton Field park
- Bus routes and stops (230, 216, 231)
- Bus routes and stops (709)
- Existing cycle routes, part of the TfGM cycle network
- Green / Open spaces

03 Site Assessment & Character

03.9 Future Surrounding Heights

There are several sites with planning permission for significant developments near the Site.

These buildings, mostly significantly taller than the historic context, add to the picture of a varied cityscape with a trend towards densification generally and taller buildings facing onto Great Ancoats Street specifically.



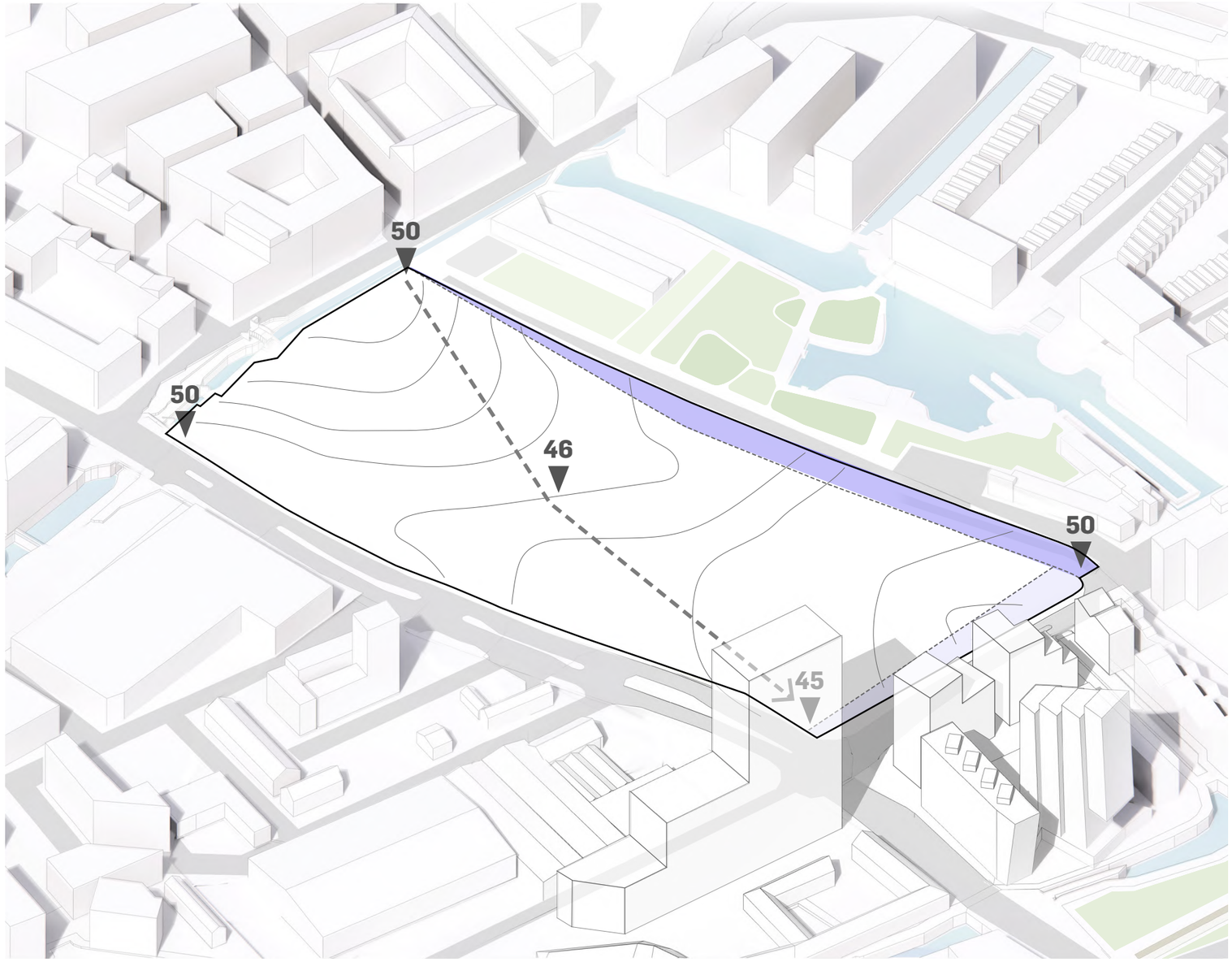
3D View of the Site and its Surroundings

03 Site Assessment & Character

03.10 Site Topography

There is a significant level change across the wider SRF site. There is a 5-metre difference between its two northern edges, along the canal side and the boundary to the school and park, and the south corner at the junction of Great Ancoats Street and Old Mill Street. The lowest point is close to this junction, along the edge of Great Ancoats Street. The centre of the Site is depressed nearly to the level of the southern corner, taking the form of a gentle slope up to the canal edge and parallel with it, which creates a retaining wall along the boundary with the park, tapering off along the school fence line to nothing at the northern corner.

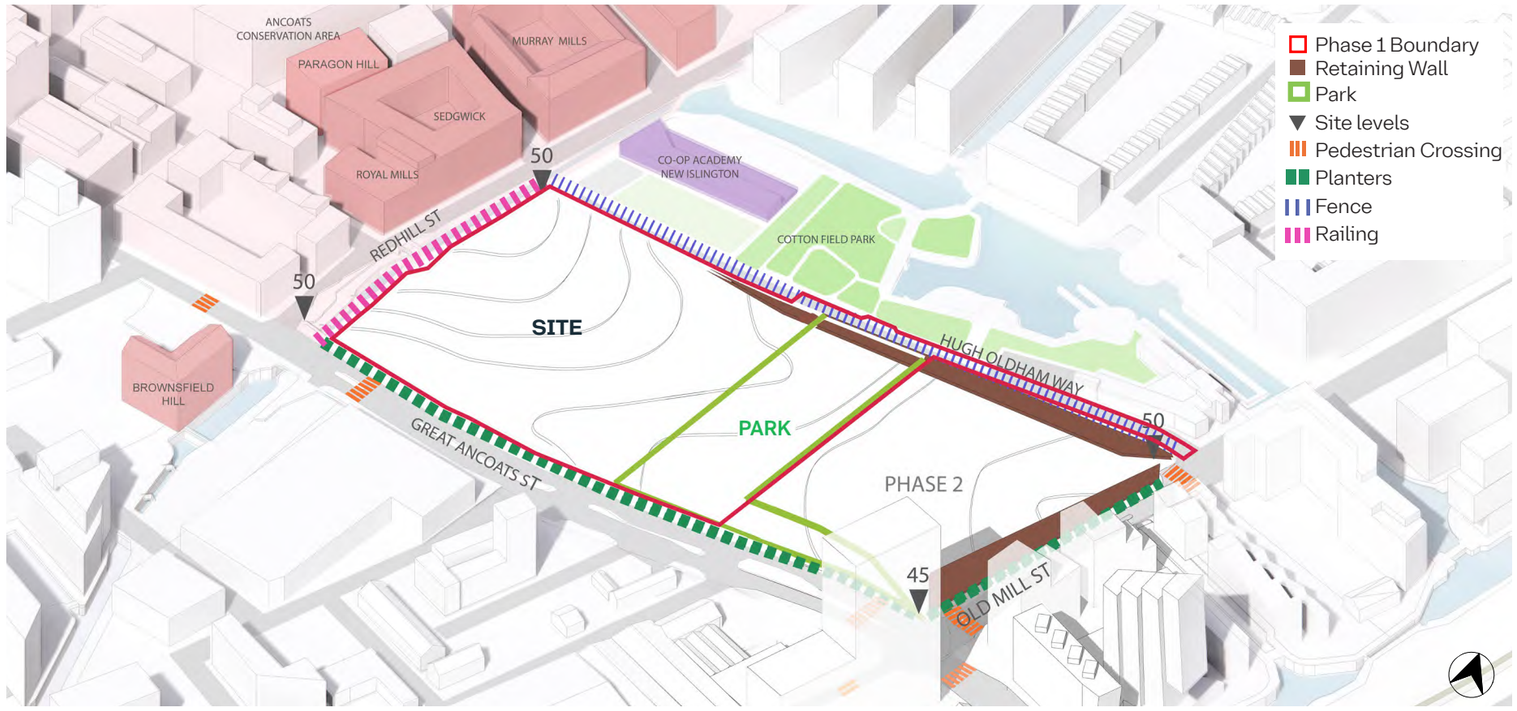
The north-west (Canal) and south-west (Great Ancoats St) edges of the site tie into the surrounding pavement & towpath levels, whereas the northeast edge (the school and park boundary) does not. The proposals have been designed to coordinate with the ground levels on all sides, and with the future extension to Cotton Fields Park along the south-east edge, This approach seeks to tie the Site into the city fabric aligning with the principle set out in the SRF.

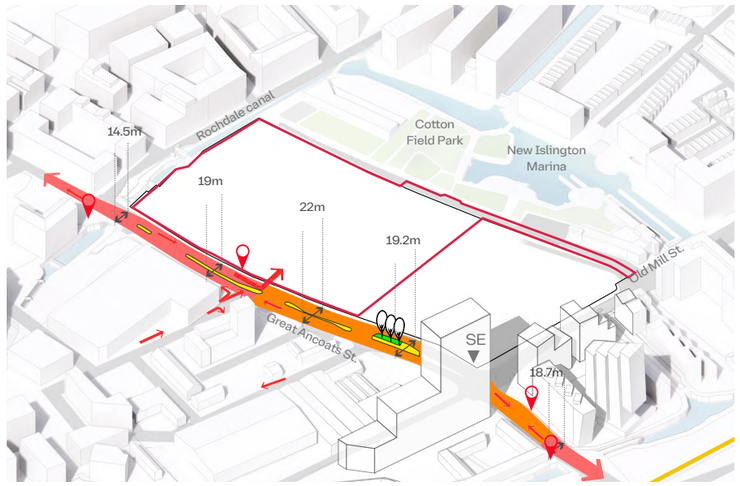


03 Site Assessment & Character

03.11 Site Constraints

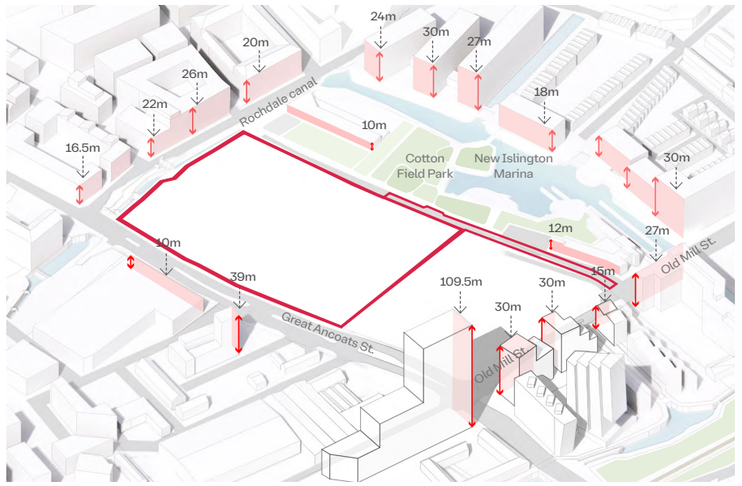
- **Impermeable boundaries** - in the form of Great Ancoats Street, Hugh Oldham Way and the Canal edge, with existing fenced boundaries
- **Large retaining walls** - to the northern and southern edges of the Site, remnants of the previous development forming a step level change along these boundaries.
- **Change of level across the site** - a 5m level change from the north and eastern corners of the wider site down to the southern corner. This represents a significant 4m level change within the application site itself.
- **Adjacent school -** The site shares its northern boundary with the site of Coop Academy New Islington and requires consideration of issues such as overlooking, sunlight, daylight and overshadowing.
- **Proximity to conservation area & listed buildings** - the western boundary fronts onto Rochdale canal side and Ancoats Conservation area containing several heritage listed mills including Royal, Sedgwick and Murray Mill now in residential use.
- **Noise and pollution from major road** - as Manchester 4 lane inner ring road Great Ancoats Street, presents challenging environmental conditions with poor air quality and acoustics as well as forming an unwelcoming barrier to pedestrian movement aside from 2 crossing points at one at each end.





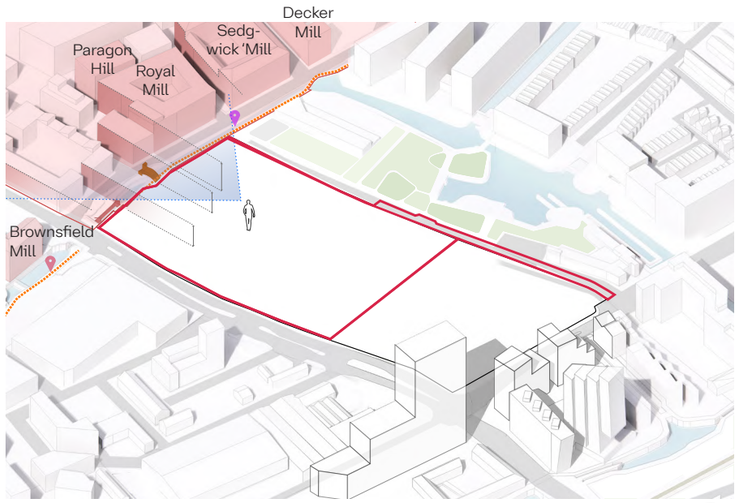
Great Ancoats Street

- Site boundary
- Central median
- Road width
- Bus stops
- 3x2 Lane
- 2x2 Lane



Contextual Building heights

- Building heights



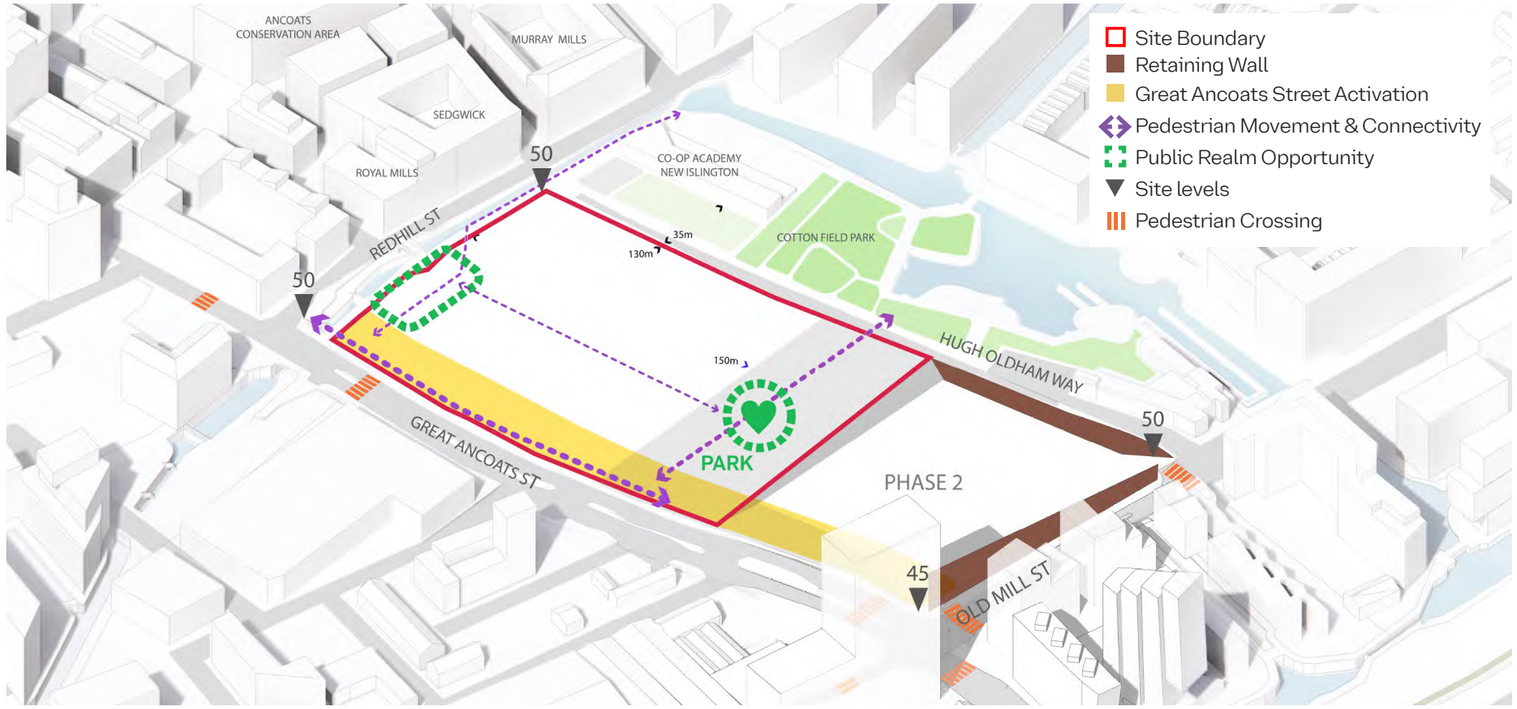
Conservation Area

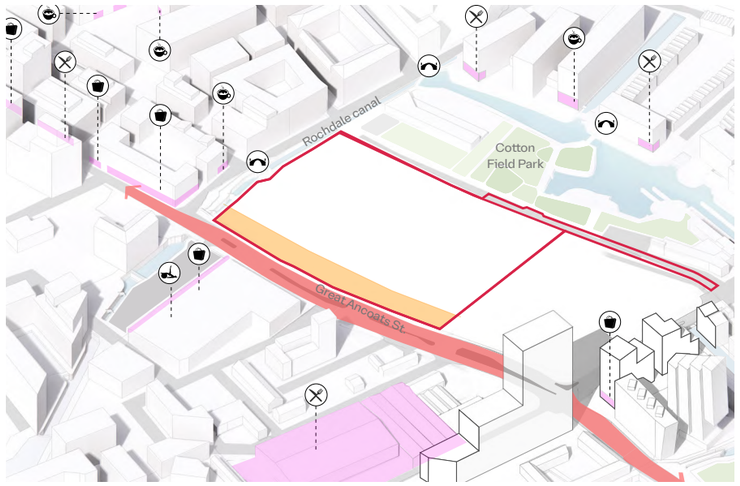
- Site Boundary
- Conservation Area
- Listed Buildings
- Listed Lock
- Historic Bridge
- Tow Path
- Views from Site to Conservation Area
- Listed Canal Towpath and Associated Features
- Listed Canal Retaining Walls

03 Site Assessment & Character

03.12 Site Opportunities

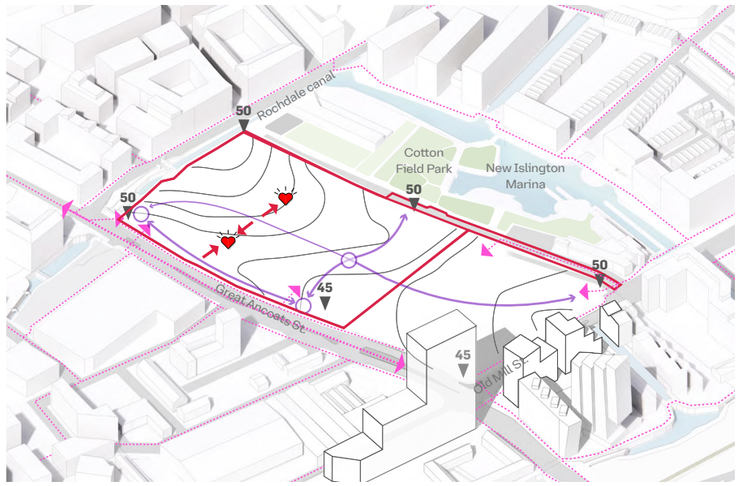
- **New connections across the Site** - enhancing links between key arrival points and destinations including canal side and park, and Great Ancoats Street and New Islington Marina.
- **Create active frontage along Great Ancoats Street** - to reactivate the streetscape, repairing and transforming this gap in the city fabric
- **New canal side public realm** - creating a sense of arrival at a key entry point to the Site from the centre of the city
- **New retail, food and beverage offer** - to both support the workforce within the development and enhance the local amenity offer for the wider community.
- **Large site for significant quantum of development** - opportunity to provide high quality workspace at a scale befitting of the ambition of the GPA and MCC.
- **Use of existing levels** - to form new basements with less excavation, utilising these levels to benefit of the proposal.
- **Significant offset distances to neighbours** - aiding privacy whilst also respecting function, environment and character of the area.
- **New green space or Park** - adjacent and to the east of the Site, and connecting Cotton Field Park with the proposed and wider development. This space will form the heart of the wider site accessible to all.





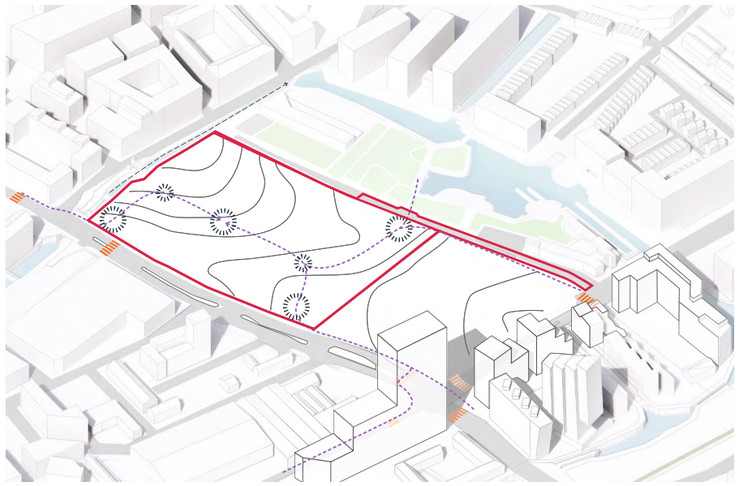
Repair of Great Ancoats Street

- Site boundary
- Existing Retail /F&B
- Great Ancoats Street
- Activation Zone



New Connections Across the Site

- Site boundary
- Existing pedestrian connections
- Site Levels
- Pedestrian movement through and around the site
- Main Building Entrances



Civic presence & Sense of Arrival

- Site boundary
- Proposed arrival points

04 Development Proposal

Masterplan Principles

Site Layout and Uses

Public Realm Areas and Ground Floors

Upper Floors

Roof Plan

Basement and Undercroft

Building Sections

Site Sections

Proportion and Scale

Local Scale and Massing

04 Development Proposal

04.1 Masterplan Principles

Design Principle 1

Existing Vacant Site - A Gap in the City's Urban Fabric

This vacant site and missing piece of urban grain provides the opportunity to deliver modern new offices to meet the Council's policy to support business growth and consistent with the adopted SRF. A high quality scheme on this site will continue the regeneration of Ancoats and strengthen the local economy.

Design Principle 2

Indicative Masterplan and Public Realm Spaces

Prior to confirmation of the end user, the endorsed SRF showed indicative office plots together with new public realm, including activating Great Ancoats Street with retail accommodation, and a new Canal Plaza providing canal side public realm, enhancing the setting of the Conservation Area and the listed mill buildings.

Design Principle 3

Meeting the Requirements of the GPA

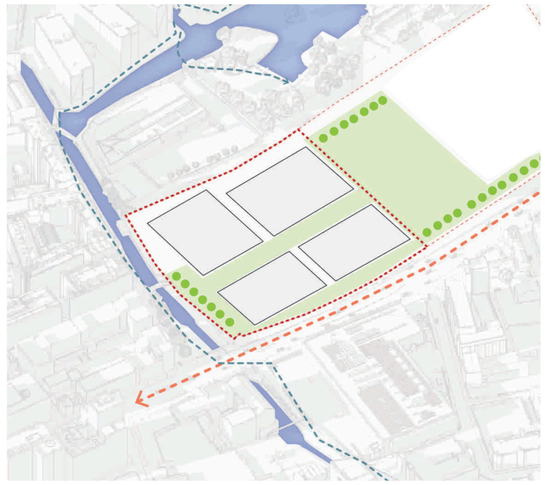
Two buildings are required to meet the needs of the Civil Service and provide modern and efficient offices. The footprints and massing are consistent with the principles set out in the adopted SRF and the overall building heights - of between 7 and 9 storeys - are lower than in the SRF showing sensitivity to the neighbours.

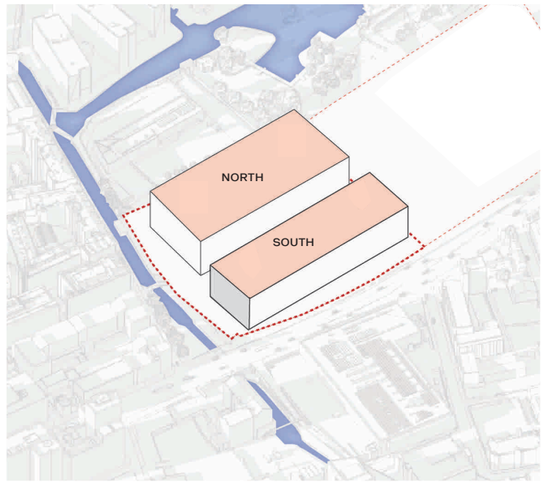
Design Principle 4

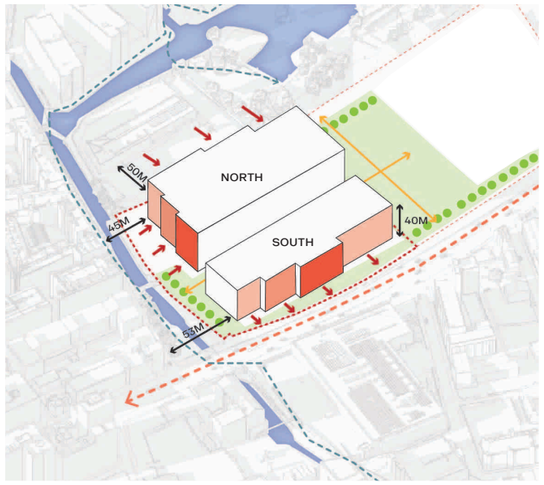
A Civic Campus

The proposals are for a high quality modern civic campus to meet the needs of the Civil Service. Stepping of the building frontages helps to re-establish the street frontage to Great Ancoats Street and also maintain respectful distances from the mill buildings and school.









04 Development Proposal

04.2 Site Layout and Uses

The proposal relates to clearance of the Site and redevelopment to provide high quality offices, ground level retail space on Great Ancoats Street, along with new public realm and supporting ancillary facilities.

The development comprises of two distinct volumes:

North Building - located adjacent to and set back from the northern and western boundaries of the Site, fronting on to Rochdale Canal and site of Coop Academy New Islington to the north.

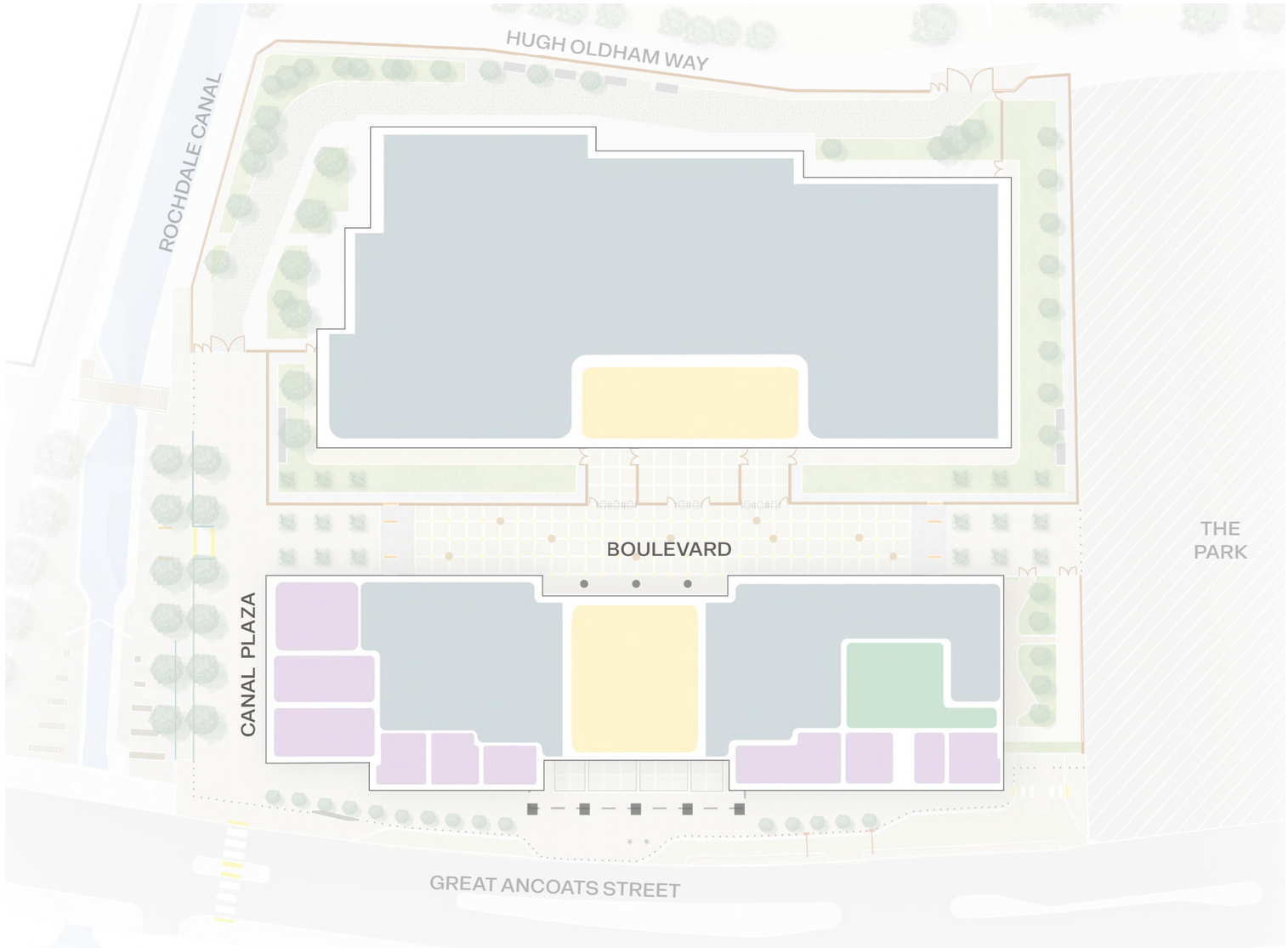
South Building - located adjacent to and set back from the southern and western boundaries of the Site, addressing a new public realm and Rochdale Canal to the west and Great Ancoats Street to the south.

The building forms are composed of simple bold volumes nine storeys in height that reflect their civic nature and respect the elegant and crafted character of the mill buildings within the Ancoats conservation area.

Both buildings have been set back from their respective boundaries allowing both privacy to their immediate neighbours whilst providing the opportunity for high quality public realm addressing the canal in the form of the 'Canal Plaza' and also along Great Ancoats Street. A further area of public realm known as the 'Boulevard' forms the space between the two buildings affording access to the primary building entrances and connection to the wider site beyond.

A number of retail/food and beverage units are located along the west and southern edges of the South Building providing activation and interface with the public realm.

A service road and lay-by to the south of the South Building allow access to basement level parking as well as access to the lay-by for service vehicles.



Site Plan demonstrating ground floor uses

KEY

- Retail / F&B
- Office
- Office Reception
- Cycle Store

04 Development Proposal

04.3 Public Realm Areas and Ground Floors

The Manchester Digital Campus will introduce a significant quantum of high-quality public realm spaces to be used by the new building users and the wider community.

An extended retail frontage will help to repair the frontage along Great Ancoats street. This will be fronted by a generous, high-quality pavement which will incorporate required government security measures in the form of a line of bollards.

The Canal Plaza space forms a key interface between the Ancoats conservation area and it will be a key movement space as well as a destination. The design includes large tree planting and abundant seating with high-quality hard surfacing which create a lively and engaging streetscape.

The Boulevard will be formed by a formal hard paved solution contained by a small grid of trees at each end. A strong threshold will define the space with sculptural gateway features and a grid of lights will animate the space, giving it a strong sense of identity. Further details on the public realm spaces can be found in Section 9.

South Building

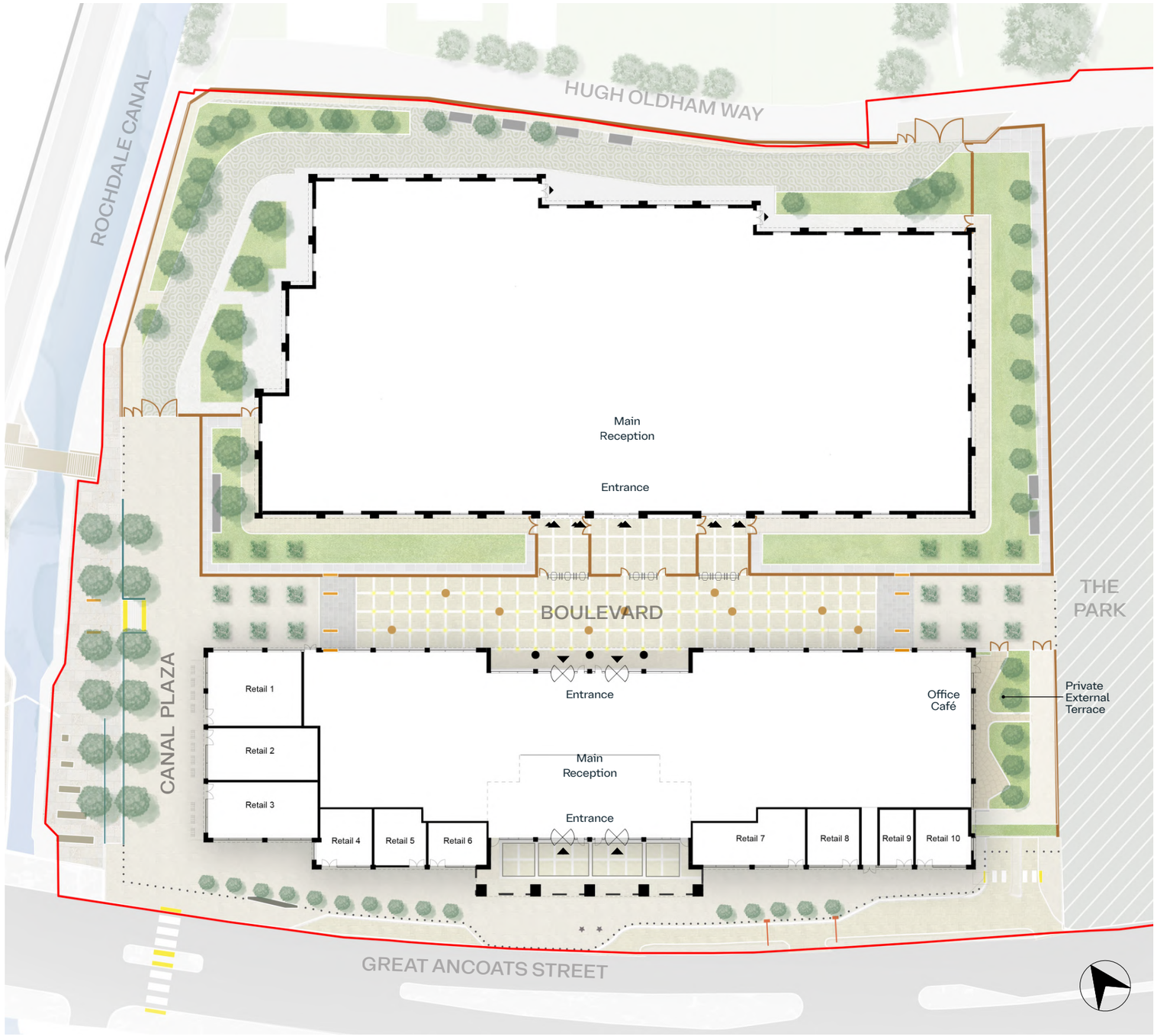
As the main frontage to the development, the South Building will convey the civic purpose and presence of the campus and be the front door from the city. The main ground floor entrance foyer can be accessed from both the Boulevard and from Great Ancoats Street.

The open plan nature of the ground floor entrance foyer allows for visual connection between the two entrances and acts as a community centric space that develops a strong social sense of belonging. At the eastern edge of the building there is a private external terrace, which will further enhance the vibrancy of the proposed green space beyond.

The integration of ground floor retail along the western and southern edges of the building activates the street frontage along Great Ancoats street and is further enhanced with the generous and high-quality canal plaza.

North Building

The ground floor includes a range of workspaces from enclosed and cellular, to open and shared working areas, creating a mix of private and social zones tailored to the requirements of a diverse and inclusive workforce. The interior design is tailored around comfort and wellbeing, with human-centred design and aims to create a welcoming atmosphere, fostering collaboration, productivity and a healthy work environment.



04 Development Proposal

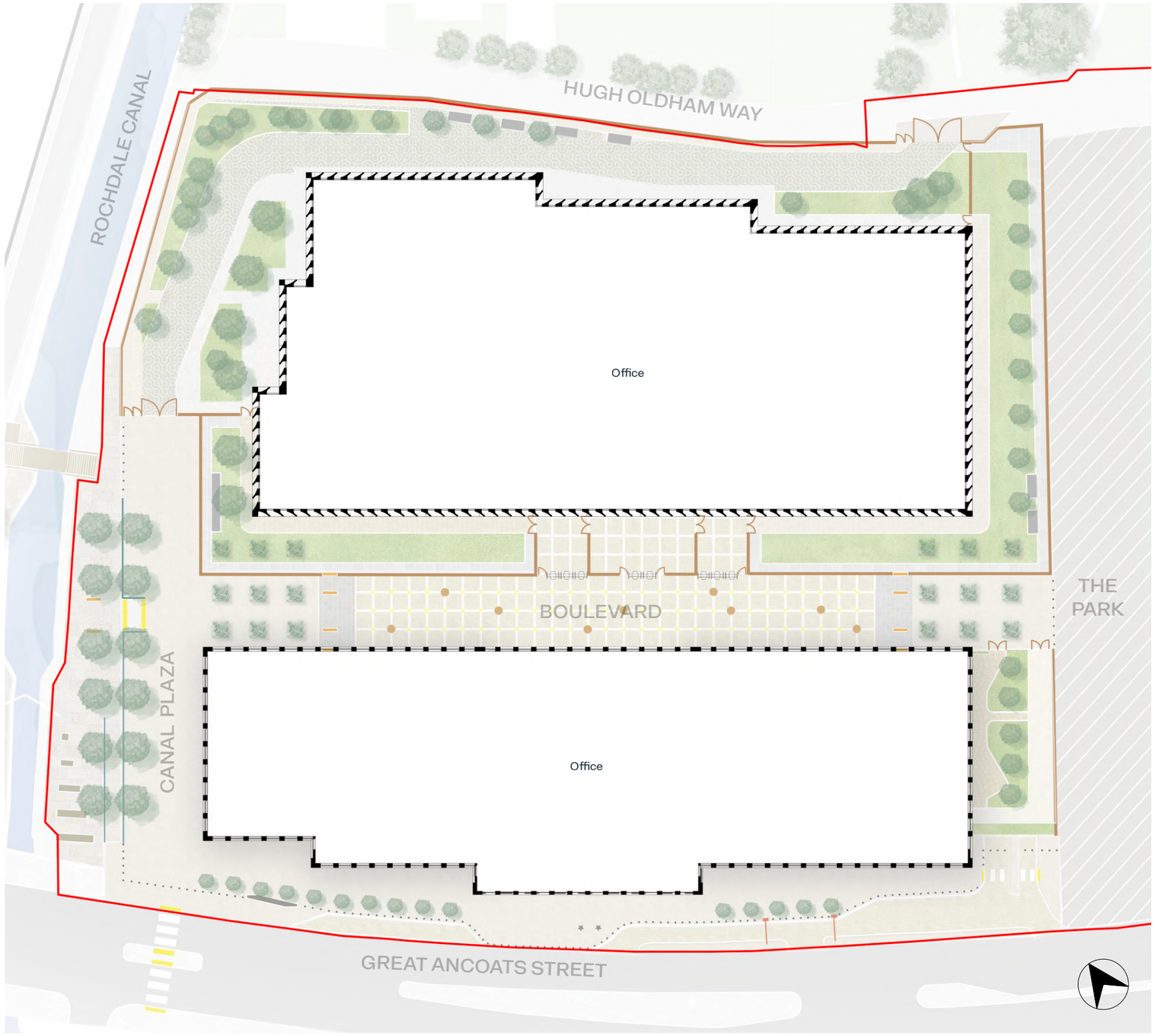
04.4 Upper Floors

The MDC campus will deliver a range of exemplary, innovative workplaces. The new buildings will promote inclusivity, and health and well-being. They will be high-quality, sustainable, resilient, adaptable, reliable and simple to operate.

The adjacent plan shows a sample office floor plan. The offices have been designed to allow for ease of access and to meet the servicing requirements. The floorplates are rational and efficient shapes to meet the office requirements and keep the floor plates as compact as possible.

The buildings benefit from good natural daylight penetration from the façades and atriums, which positively impact on well-being and productivity. The quality of space created by the atrium provides a positive working environment where people are connected to one another and the outside world.

With key focus on flexibility, wellbeing and sustainability the building drive lean, efficient design, with low embodied carbon, and low operational energy demands.

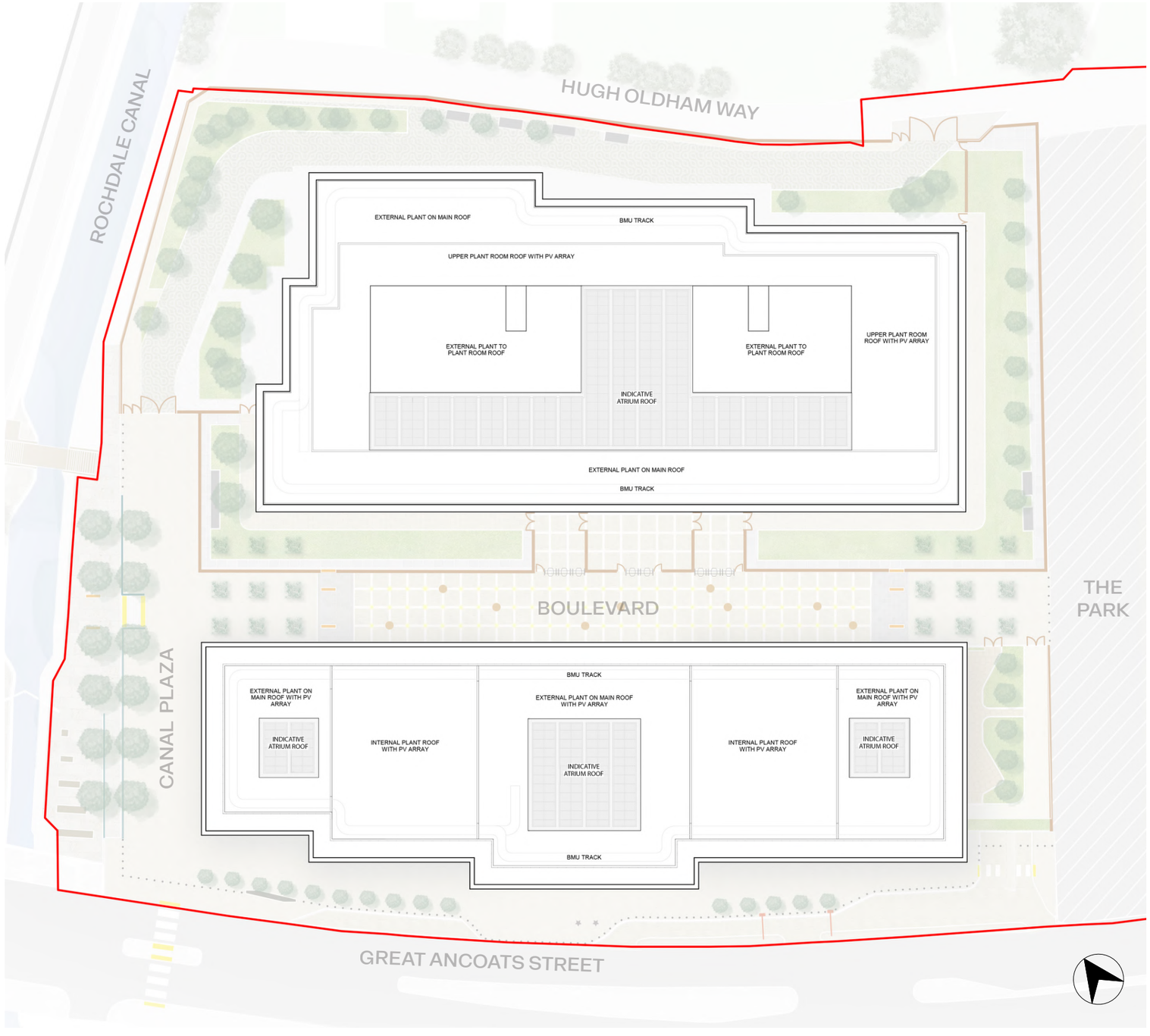


04 Development Proposal

04.5 Roof Plan

The roof levels of each building house both internal and external plant for adequately servicing the functions within. They also provide a platform for a tracked Building Maintenance Unit (BMU) allowing access for cleaning and maintenance of the building envelope.

The atriums terminate at this level with rooftop glazing allowing natural light to permeate deep within the building core. In addition to this an extensive array of PV panels to the upper most roof levels of each building provide a key source of renewable energy contributing to the overall power requirement of the buildings as a whole



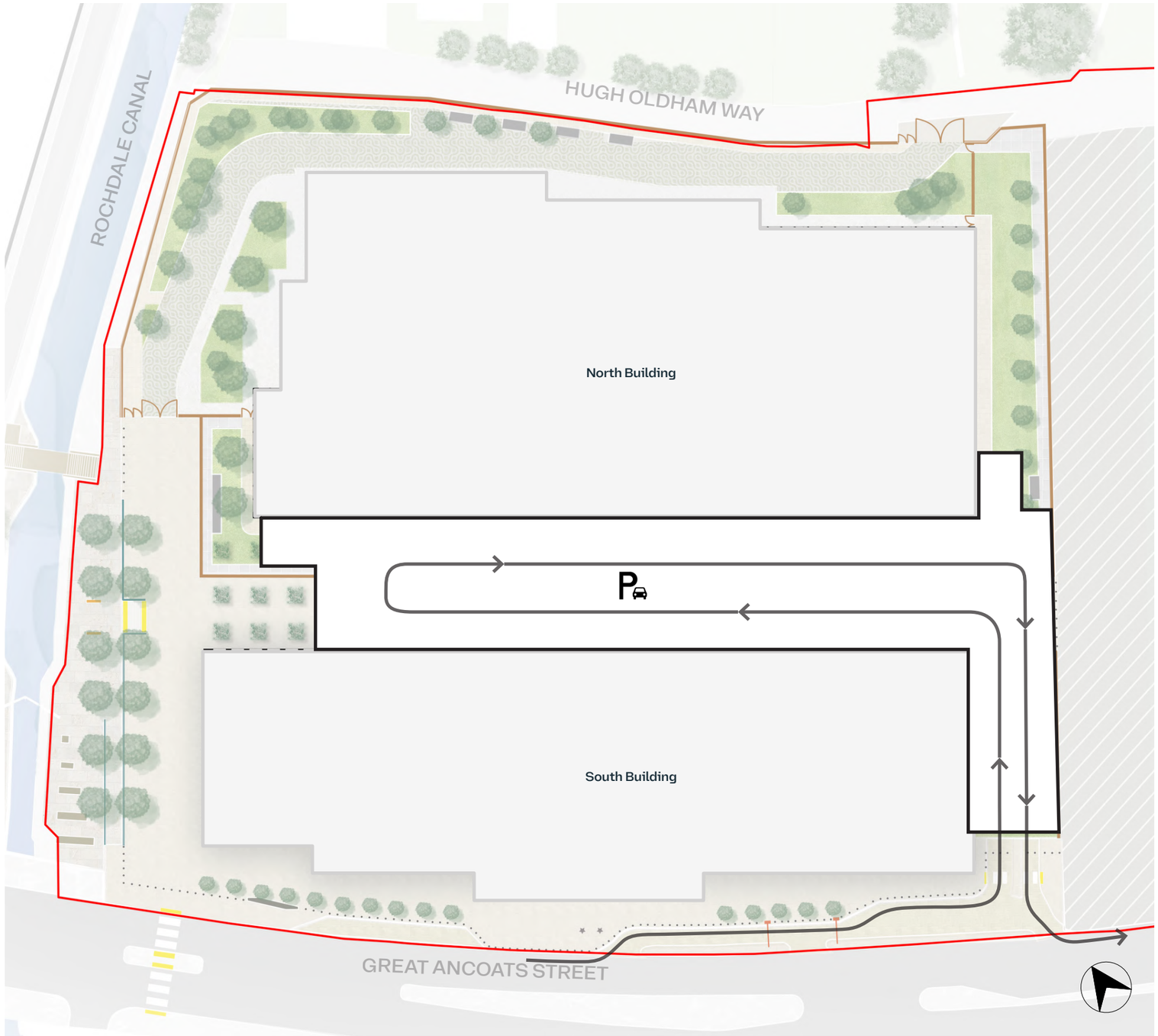
04 Development Proposal

04.6 Basement and Undercroft

Allowance to be made for deliveries and accessible parking for 50 accessible spaces / blue badge holder staff users (plus 5 spaces associated with facilities management and operations).

P Undercroft Car Park

Vehicle entrance / exit for accessible parking, servicing and deliveries



Undercroft extents plan

04 Development Proposal

04.7 Building Sections

Site Levels

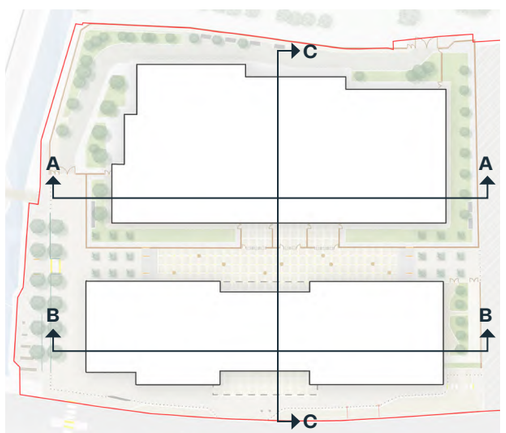
The 'Above Ordnance Datum' (AOD) heights for the Undercroft Level, Ground Floor Level and Roof Level are shown on the adjacent diagrams.

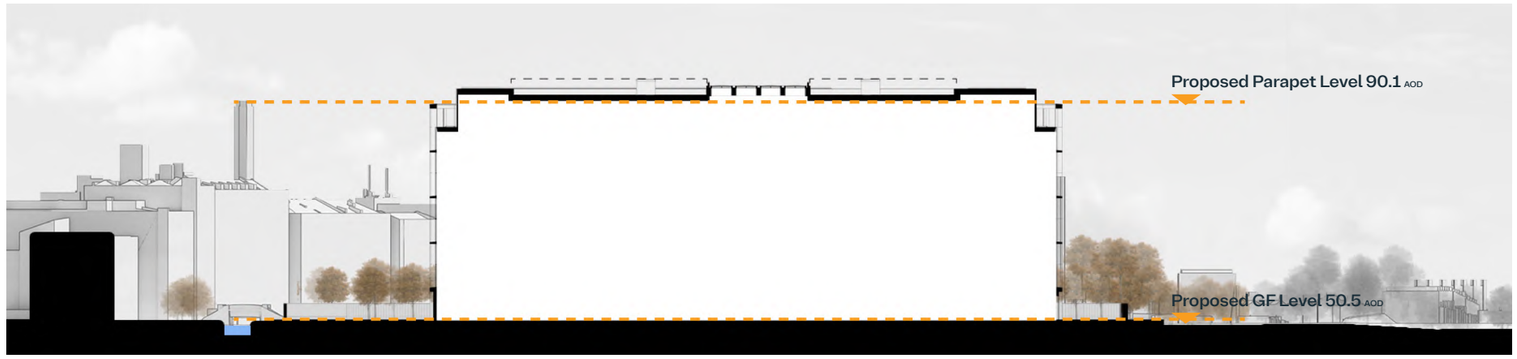
The significant level change of approximately five metres across the Site has sensitively been incorporated into the public realm design. The Site's redevelopment necessitates raising the ground level and creating a largely flat deck level which is helpful for accessibility and a step-free environment.

Along the Great Ancoats Street frontage where the site level changes notably from west to east, public realm gradients which match to the building entrances are kept to as shallow as feasible to avoid steps or ramps.

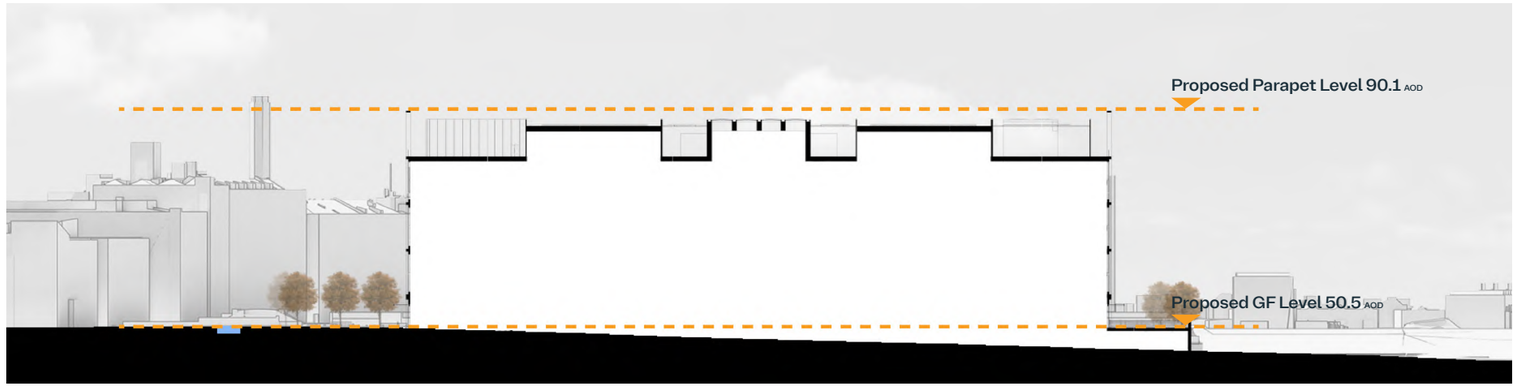
Along the canal side frontage, the elevation change of between 0.5m – 1.0m is envisaged in a series of steps with appropriate non-stepped access routes as alternatives.

Section Key Plan

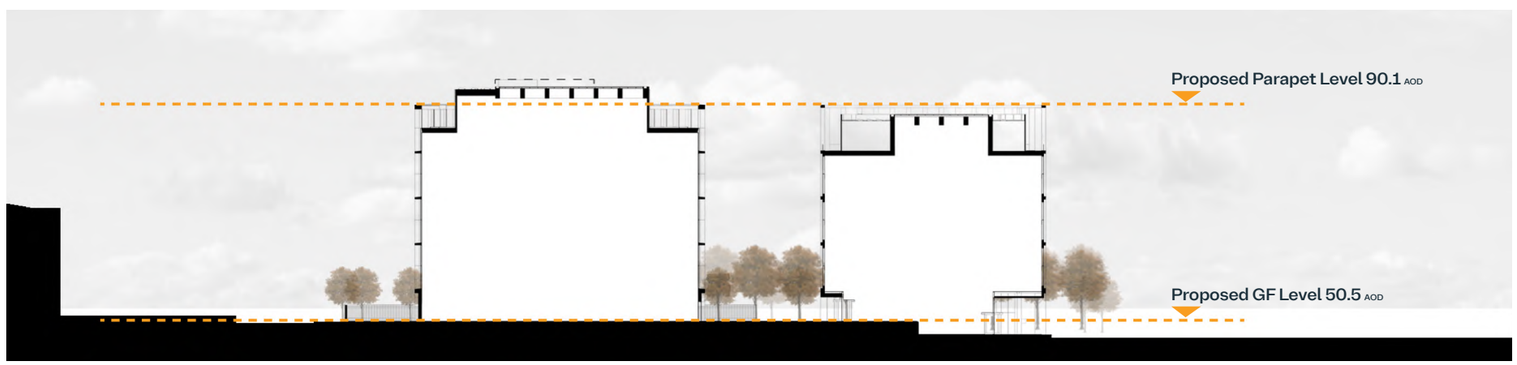




North Building - Long Section A-A



South Building - Long Section B-B



Cross Section C-C

04 Development Proposal

04.8 Site Sections

There is a notable variation in the existing topography across the Site, with an approximate five-metre level change from the northern corners and southern areas to the centre and southwest of the development. Due to these level differences, an existing retaining wall of varying heights runs along Old Mill Street and Hugh Oldham Way.

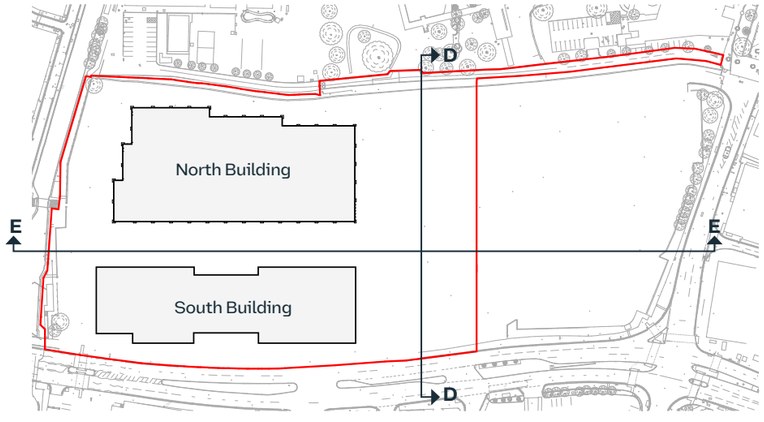
The natural topography makes it feasible to create a serviced undercroft/ basement with minimal site excavations. Where site excavations are required these materials will be utilised for the establishment of new site levels of the future park development, which is being developed by MCC.

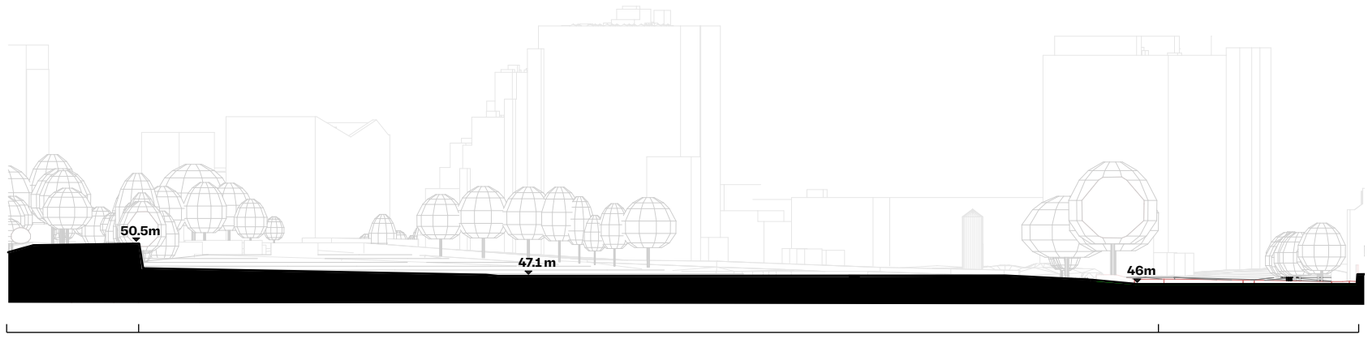
The redevelopment of the Site necessitates raising the ground levels to create a mostly flat surface, which enhances accessibility by providing a step-free environment. Along the Great Ancoats Street frontage, where the site level changes significantly from west to east, the public realm gradients are kept as shallow as possible to match building entrances, minimising the need for steps or ramps.

On the canal-side frontage the existing elevation change of 0.5 to 1.0 metres will be addressed through a series of new ramps and steps, with a choice of non-stepped access routes provided to enhance accessibility provision.

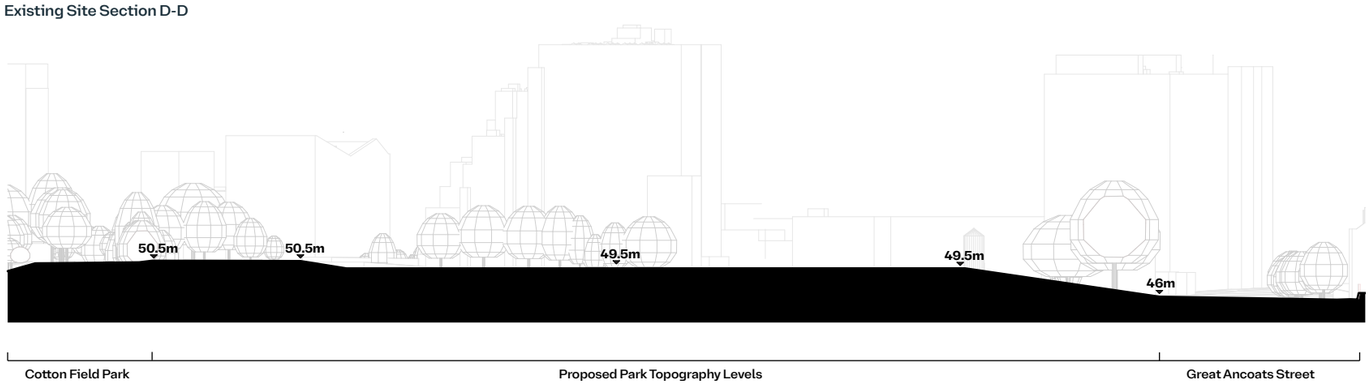
The GPA development will create the new site levels for the proposed park and the design and delivery of the park is being brought forward by MCC under a separate planning application. The proposed park topography levels have been agreed with MCC and are as indicated on sections D-D and E-E opposite.

Section Key Plan

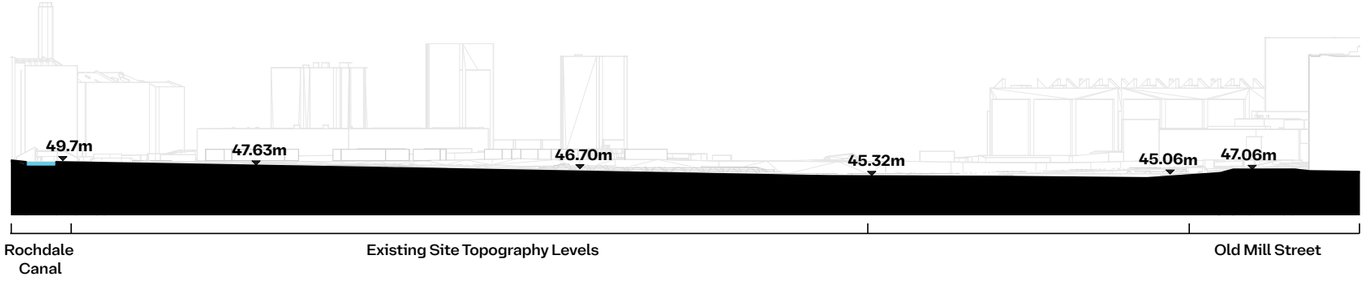




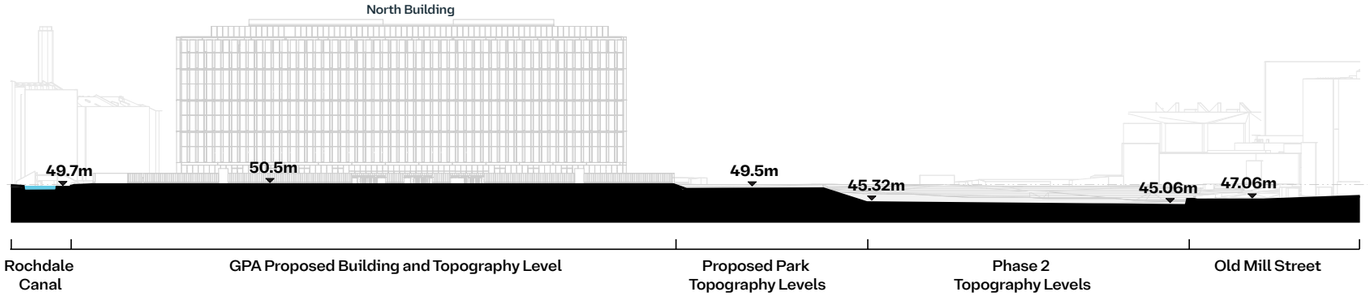
Existing Site Section D-D



Proposed Site Section D-D



Existing Site Section E-E



Proposed Site Section E-E

04 Development Proposal

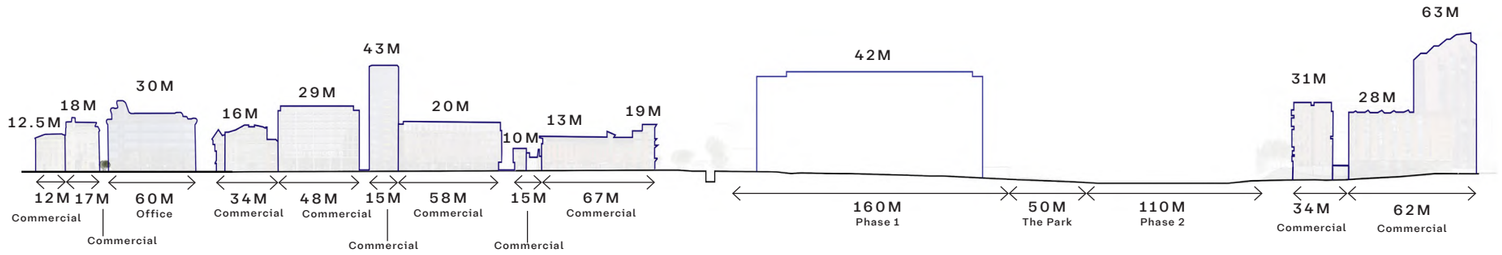
04.9 Proportion and Scale

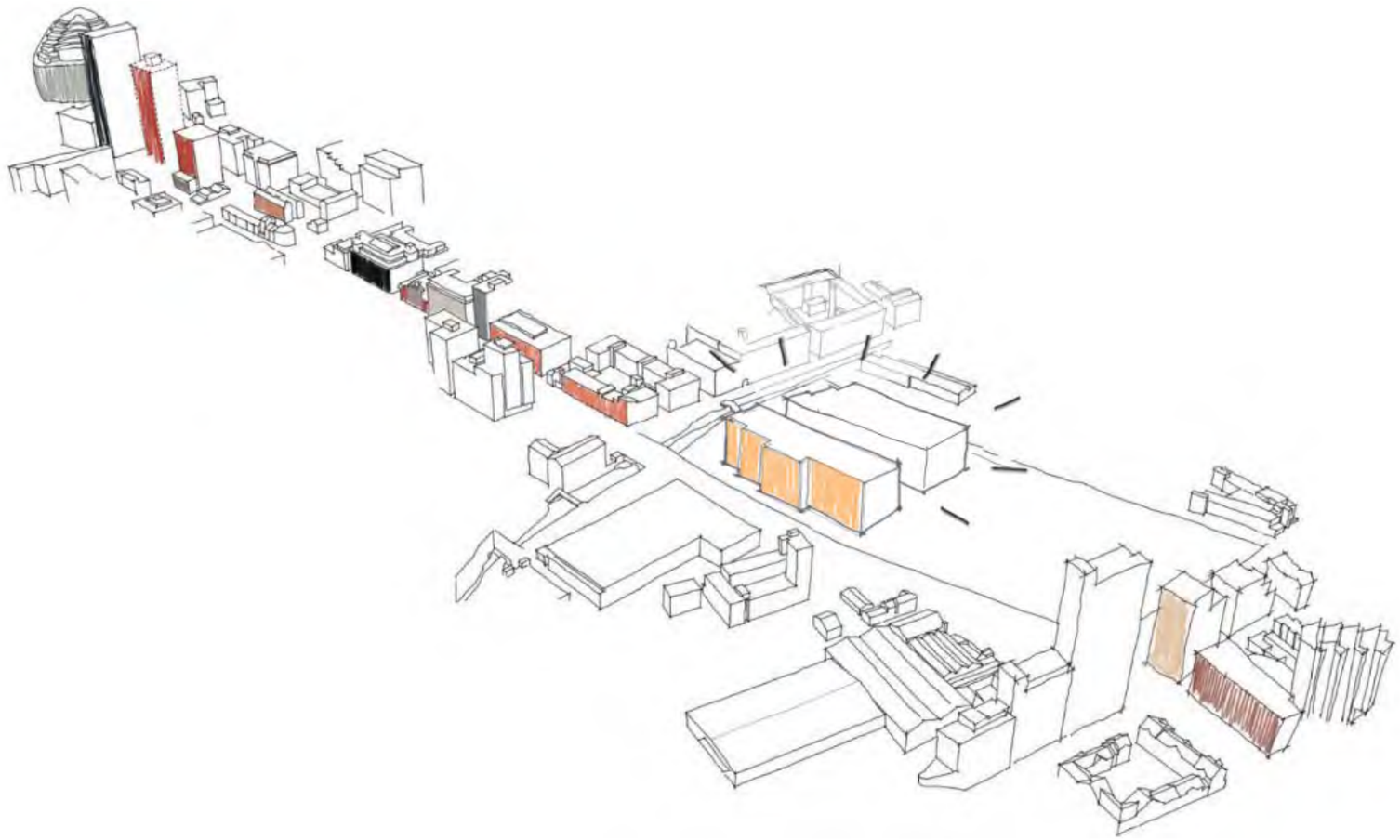
Urban Repair

The size of the proposed buildings is one that should be viewed on a city scale.

The regeneration of the Ancoats conservation area and the proliferation of New Islington are both successful examples of development within the city. The gap that has been left by the demolition of the former retail park is what this scheme seeks to repair.

Viewed against the context of the entirety of Great Ancoats Street, and the large volumes of the Victorian warehouses, the proposed buildings of phase one can be bold and create a sense of landmark, worthy of it's civic status.







04 Development Proposal

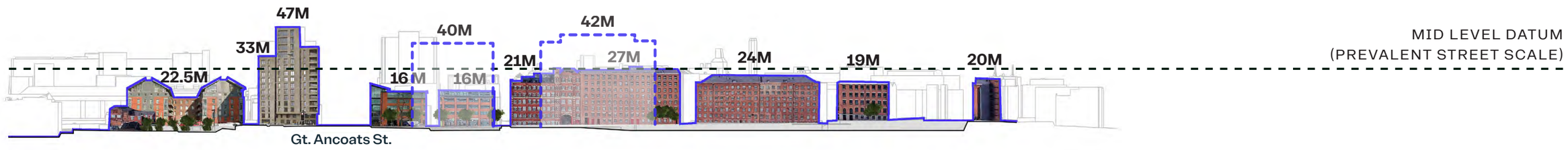
04.10 Local Scale and Massing

The buildings in this part of the city have a range of heights and block sizes.

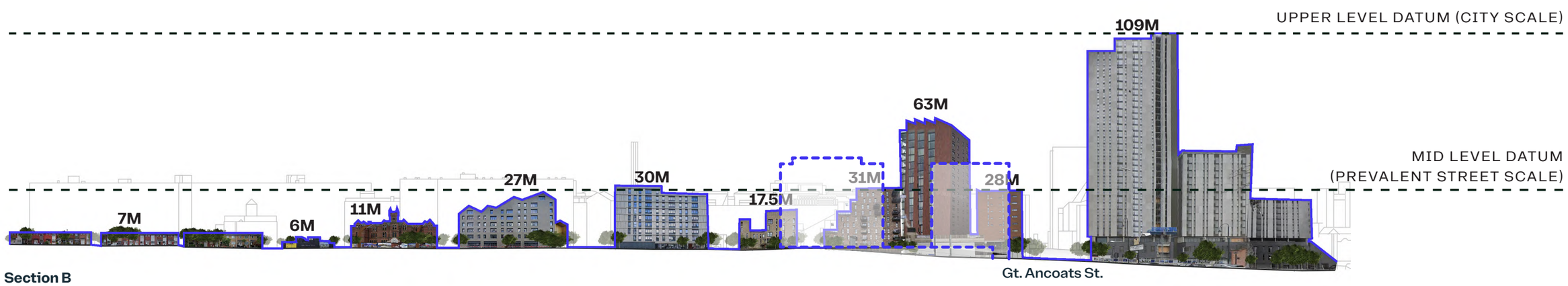
To the north-west edge of the Site (Section A), there is a prevailing average building height which is set by the height of the highest mill buildings, around 27m. Buildings along Great Ancoats Street are more variable, with the majority of more recent developments being considerably taller than the mills. This is most evident in the south-east streetscape (Section B) where the Oxygen building reaches 109m.

The taller developments respond to the scale and function of Great Ancoats Street, forming landmarks and framing the main interchanges along this key route.





Section A



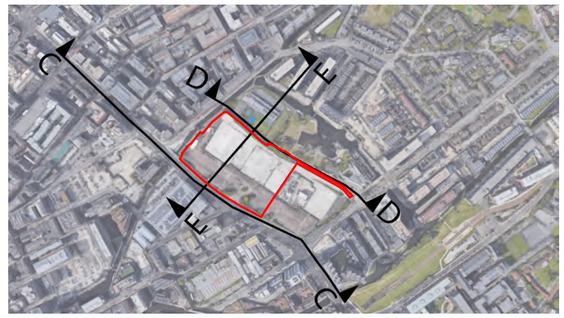
Section B

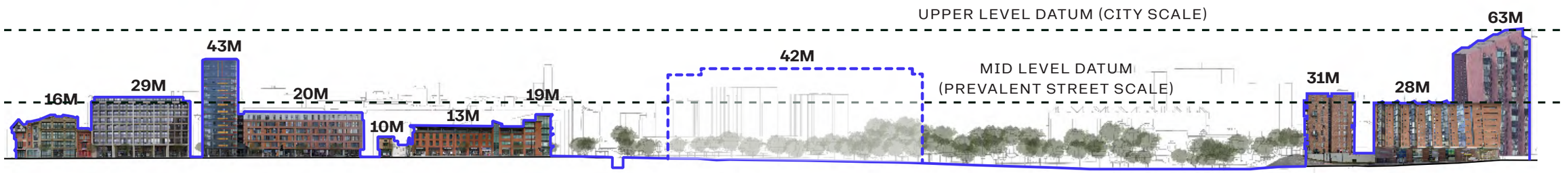
04 Development Proposal

04.9 Local Scale and Massing

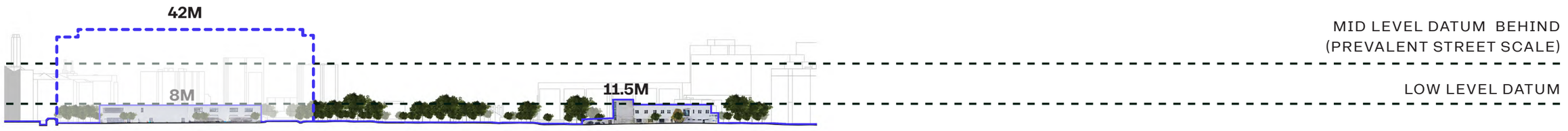
To the north of the Site, the immediate context is the low-rise 2-storey school and 3-storey medical centre, which sit between the Site and the marina. Across the marina there are contemporary apartment blocks which are significantly taller, similar in scale to the historic mills. (See Section E).

The variety of heights around the Site means that the development has some flexibility for determining appropriate heights for the proposed buildings, whilst respecting the historic mills nearby.

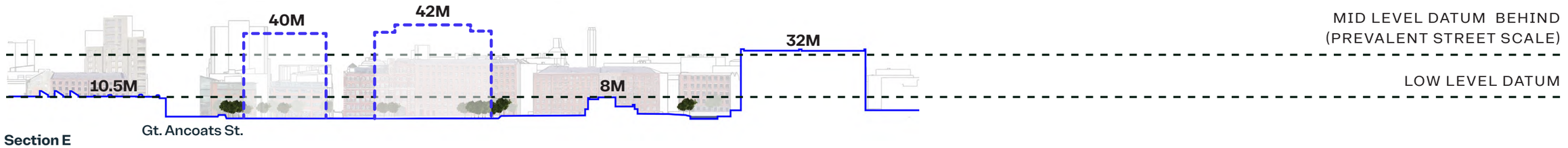




Section C



Section D



Section E

05 Envelope Design

Proposed Development in Context

Building Design Drivers

Elevation Principles

Shared Language

Facade Composition

Material Palette

North Building Bespoke Pattern Glazing

Typical Bay - North Building

Ground Floor Bay - North Building

Typical Bay - South Building

Ground Floor Office Bay - South Building

Ground Floor Retail Bay - South Building

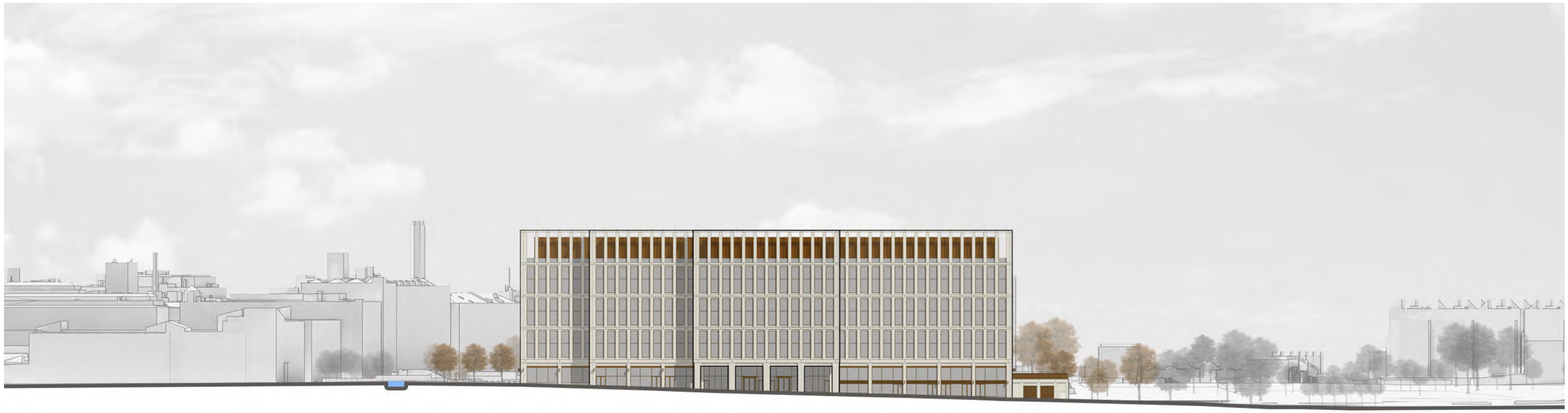
Proposed Elevations

Manchester Precedents

Materiality Precedents

05 Envelope Design

05.1 Proposed Development in Context



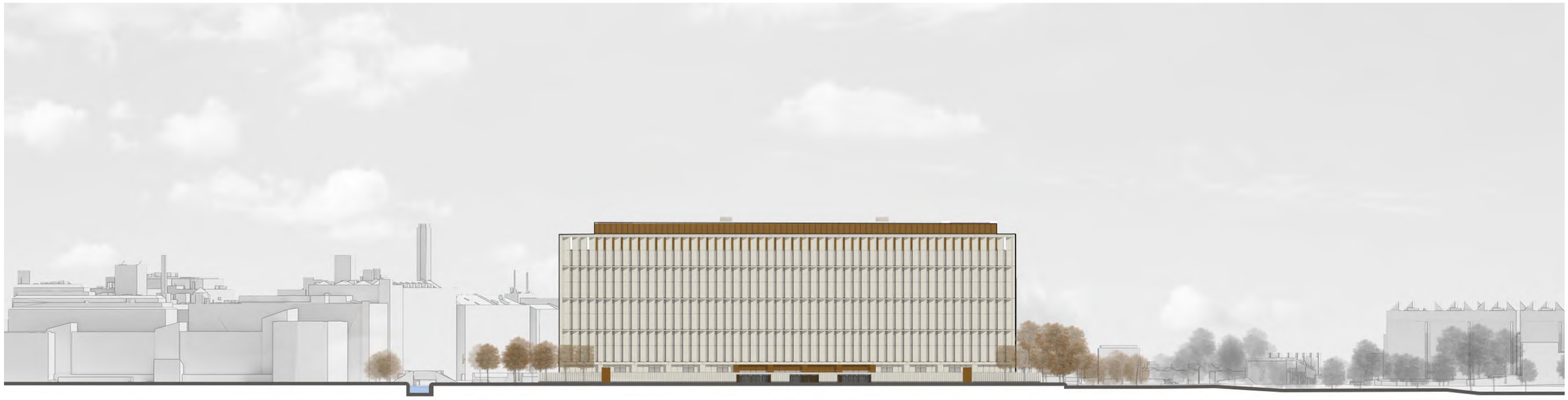
South Building - South Elevation



South Building - North Elevation

05 Envelope Design

05.1 Proposed Development in Context



North Building - South Elevation



North Building - North Elevation

05 Envelope Design

05.1 Proposed Development in Context



East Elevation



West Elevation

05 Envelope Design

05.2 Building Design Drivers

Conceptual Approach

The massing of both buildings is simple and calm, reflecting the Ancoats warehouses and lower lying residential buildings that surround the New Islington Marina.

The first principle speaks to the articulation of the massing. The massing of both buildings is split horizontally into three classical elements of building form: base, middle & upper sections. Each element includes a vertically orientated double floor bay and subtly reflects the internal uses.

The ground floor facade differs between the two buildings due to the nature of the functions they perform. The North Building is solid in nature, whilst the South Building is much more open and welcoming, to reflect it's public use / retail function. The middle floors allow a level of directed transparency, and the upper elements are seen as a consistent crown that envelops various setback roof elements across both buildings

Dividing the massing in a simple way allows the form to be read easily, reflecting the civic nature of the buildings.

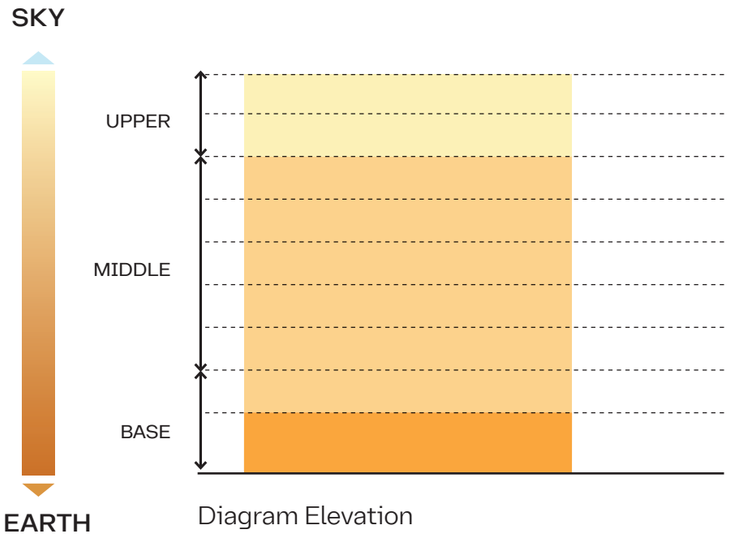
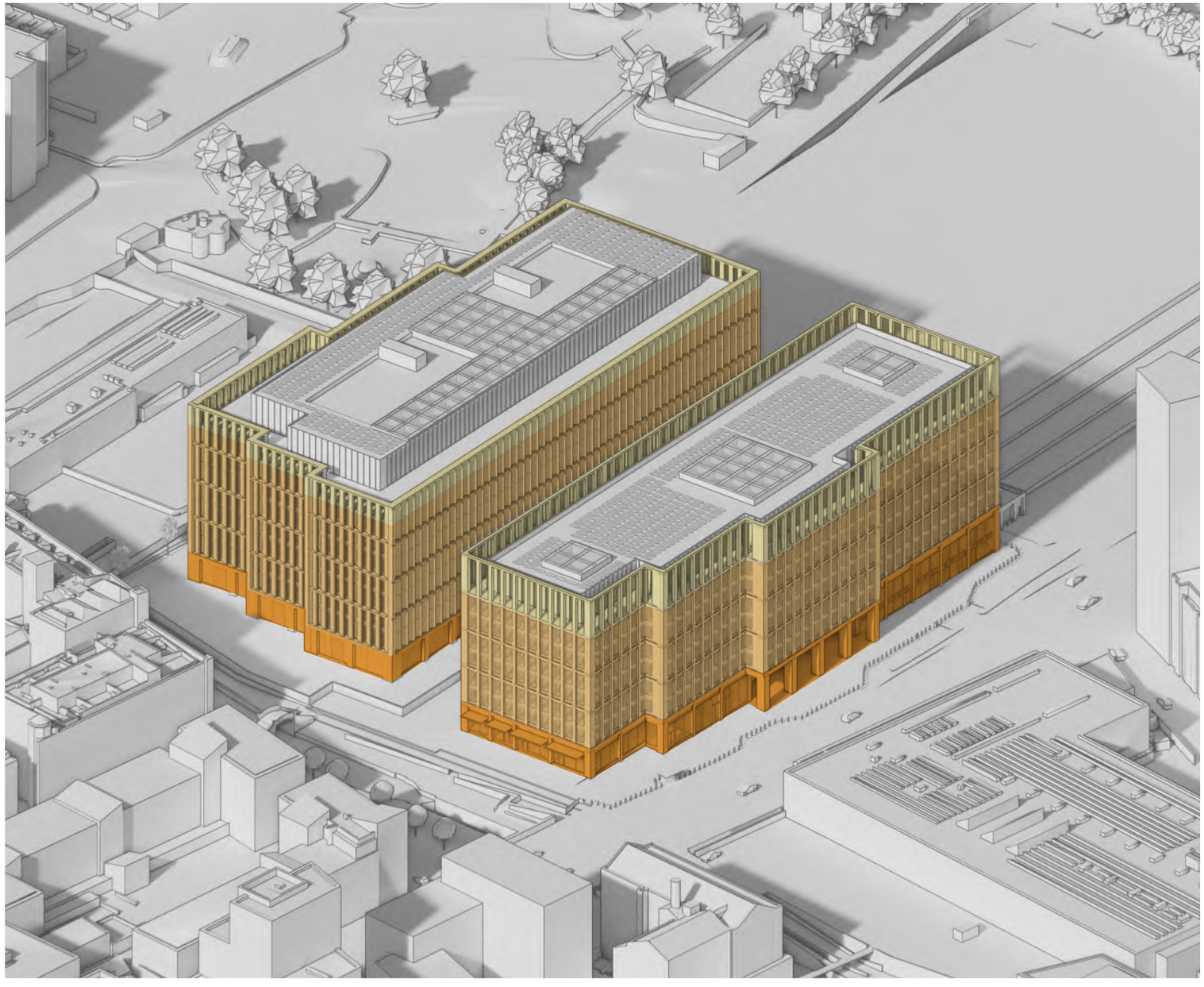


Diagram Elevation



High level view of Manchester Digital Campus on site

05 Envelope Design

05.3 Elevation Principles

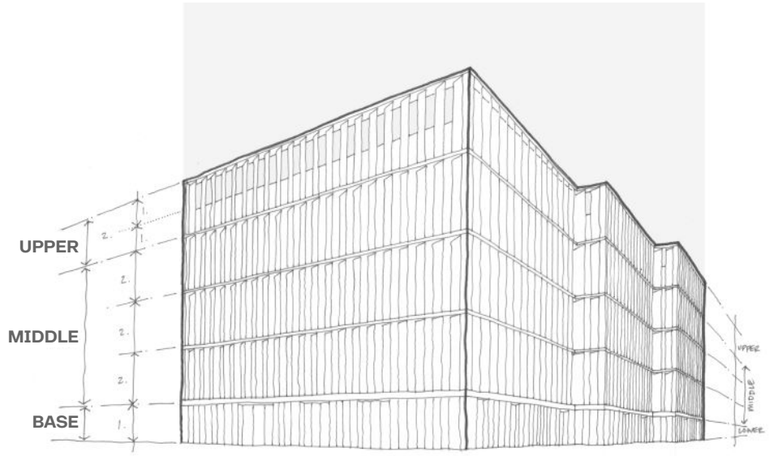
Grid Hierarchy

The facade principles have been developed to reflect three key elements:

1. The building massing

2. The structural grid

3. Regular facade bay



Massing

The façades of both buildings are stepped to break down the visual mass and reflect both the warehouse and residential buildings opposite.

The other façades are monolithic - a calm, simple and civic response to the new Boulevard and park.

Applied Structural Grid (9m)

Each building generally consists of a repetitive 9m x 9m structural grid to ensure its use can remain flexible and adaptable.

The massing and façades of both buildings also respond to that grid.

Applied Design Grid (3m)

The typical upper floor facade is read as a simple, repetitive facade bay that sits within the structural grid. Each bay is 2.25m wide by 8.4m high, with each double height bay separated by a consistent horizontal sill.

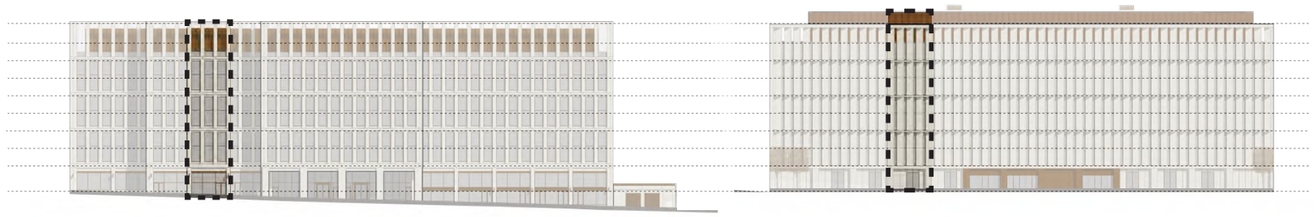
The ground floor reflects this composition but is simpler and more solid in nature. The crown extends beyond the typical floor facade allowing clear views through to the sky, making the top of the building appear taller and helping to conceal the plant space on the roofs.

05 Envelope Design

05.4 Shared Language

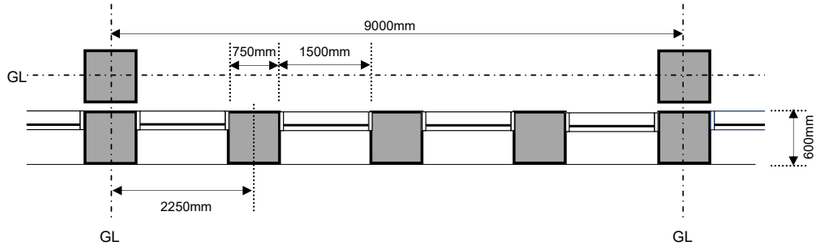
The design of both the North and South Buildings is based on the same foundational principles.

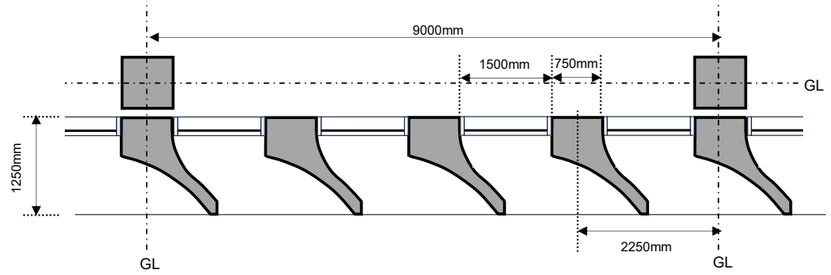
Both buildings share a common setting out, however the South Building, facing Great Ancoats Street, differs from the North Building, which features a sculptural fin design. This design aims to direct views toward the park, avoiding the overlooking of the nearby school and residential buildings. The bay studies below illustrate this shared design language, employing the same grid of elements and principles.



South Building - South Elevation

North Building - South Elevation





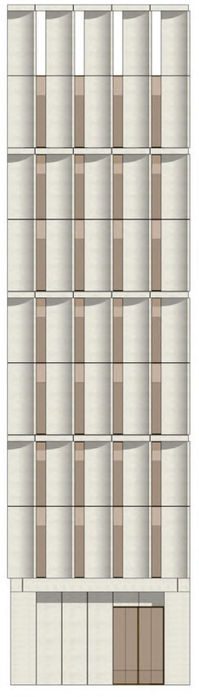


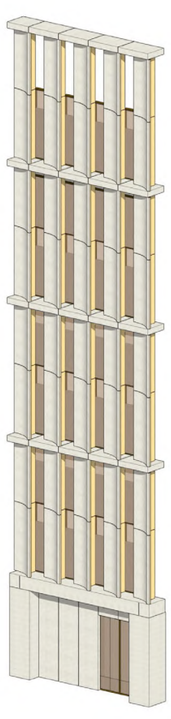




South Building







North Building

05 Envelope Design

05.5 Facade Composition

The themes of hierarchy, fenestration and depth are all visible in the facade. The diagrams below seek to illustrate how.

Hierarchy

The façade hierarchy organises elements to emphasise key features and create a clear visual order. This enhances functionality, guides movement, and contributes to the building's overall aesthetic coherence.

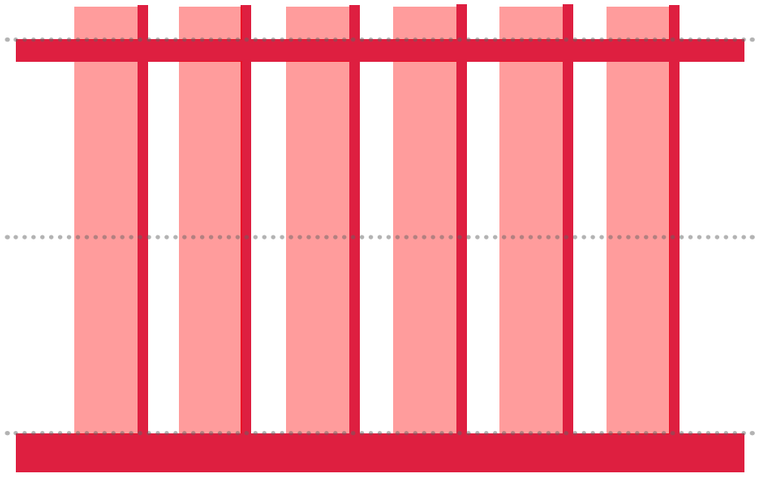
Fenestration

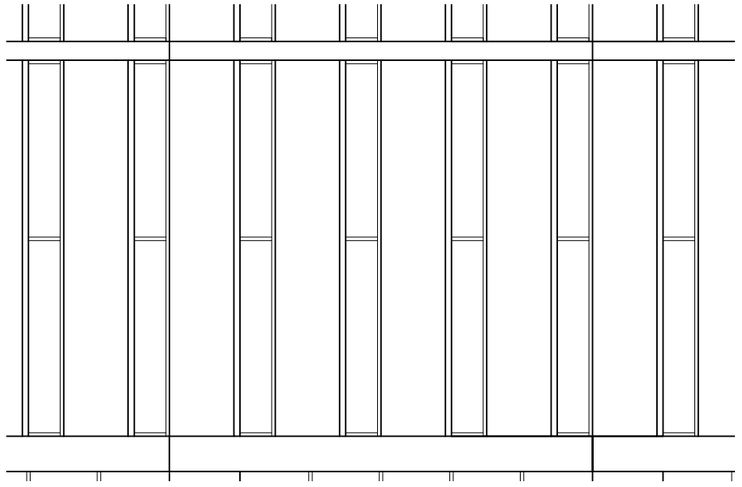
Fenestration influences natural light, ventilation, and energy efficiency, ensuring a comfortable and well-lit interior environment. It also impacts the building's aesthetic appeal and helps to enhance views and privacy.

Volume and Depth

The façade's volume and depth help improve energy efficiency and functionality, reducing cooling costs and enhancing indoor comfort whilst creating visual interest through dynamic lighting effects.

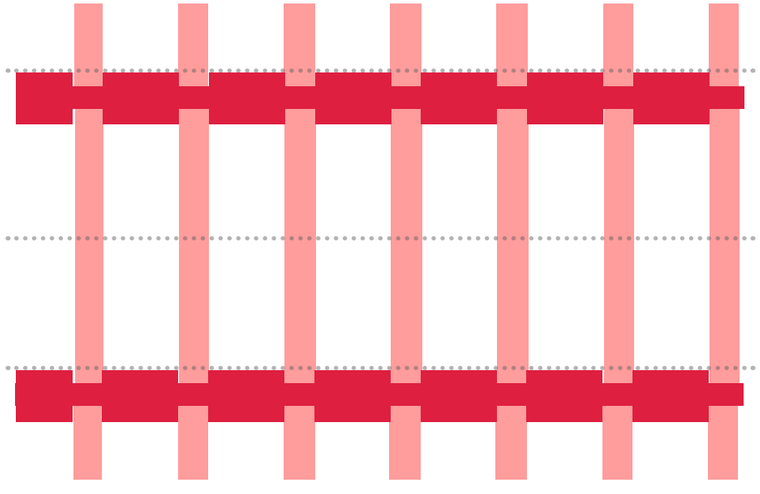
North Building

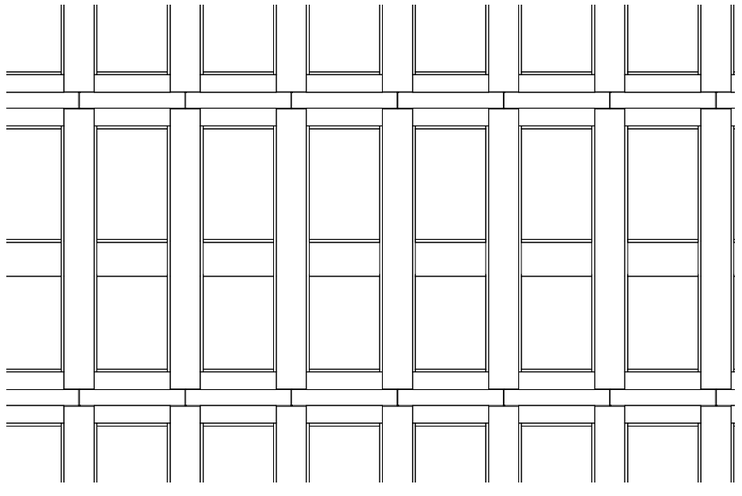


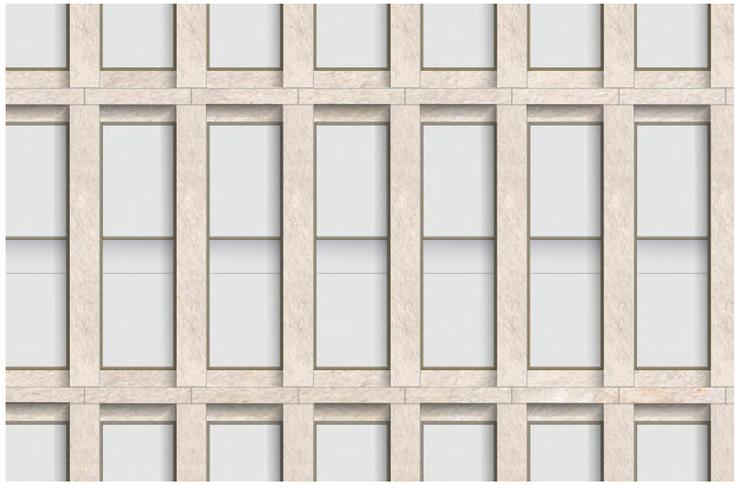




South Building



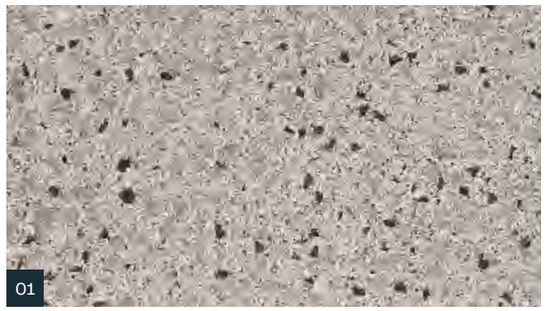




05 Envelope Design

05.6 Material Palette

The images opposite show the proposed material palette chosen for this scheme. The materials have been chosen that befit the scheme's intended civic nature, and reflect similar buildings across the city. The materials are of a high quality, responding to the high-quality design intent.



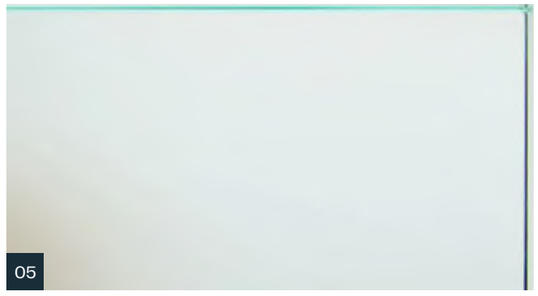






A prototype of the Light Bronze curved aluminium panel, designed for the rear of the curved concrete fins, has been produced.





KEY

01 Grit Blast Precast Concrete

02 Dark Bronze Anodising (Anolok 543)

03 Light Bronze Anodising (Regency 2)

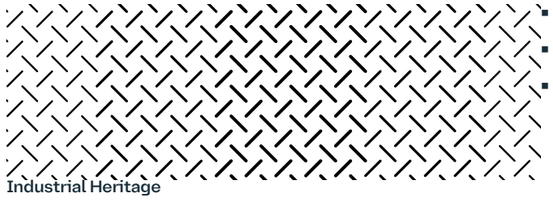
04 Clear Glass

05 Obscured Glass

05 Envelope Design

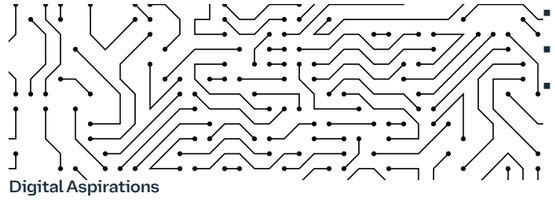
05.7 North Building Bespoke Pattern Glazing

The images below show the proposed bespoke patterned glazing chosen for the North Building windows. The obscuration of the glazing aims to further reduce overlooking to the nearby school and residential buildings. The pattern has been developed to represent both the industrial heritage of the site and digital nature of the campus, with representative graphics of these merged together.



- Fabric Pattern
- Tyre Tread
- Sheet Metal

Industrial Heritage

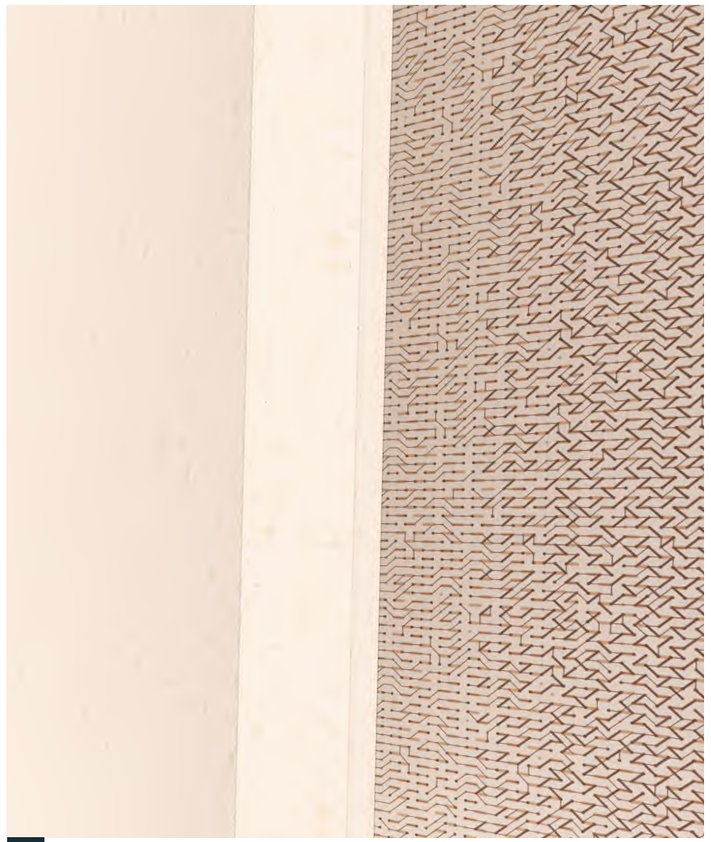


- Connections
- Circuitry
- Algorithms

Digital Aspirations



01



02



03

KEY

01 Bay Study Render (close up)

02 Obscure Glass Pattern Render

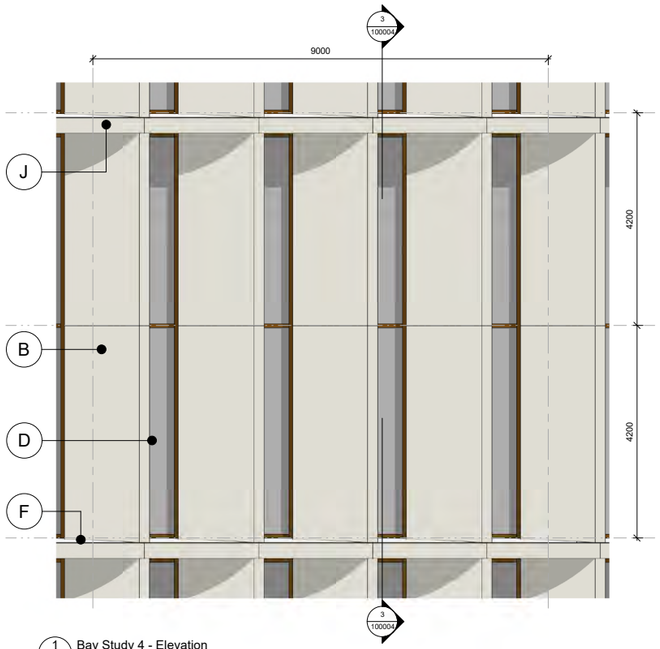
03 Bay Study Render

05 Envelope Design

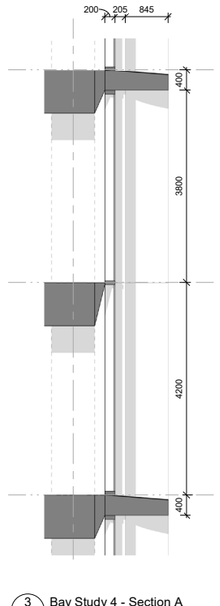
05.8 Typical Bay - North Building

LEGEND:

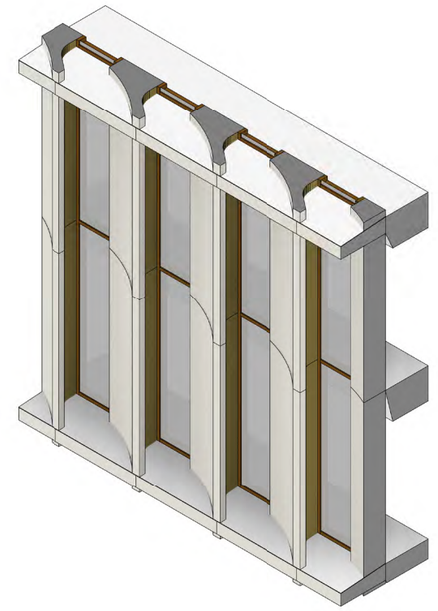
- (A) Precast concrete panel - Light concrete with exposed aggregate textured finish
- (B) Precast concrete fin - Light concrete with exposed aggregate textured finish - Polished metal panel to rear face, light bronze finish
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- (D) Anodised aluminium curtain walling system - Dark bronze finish, bespoke patterned glazing
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- (F) Anodised aluminium sills, natural finish
- (G) Anodised aluminium profiled panels, dark bronze finish
- (H) Glazed balustrade
- (J) Recessed 10mm panel joint (+/- 2mm) - as shown only



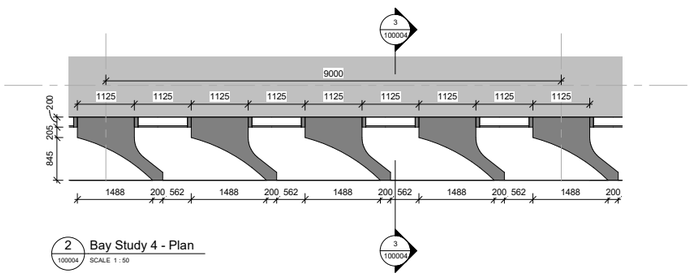
1 100004 Bay Study 4 - Elevation
SCALE 1 : 50



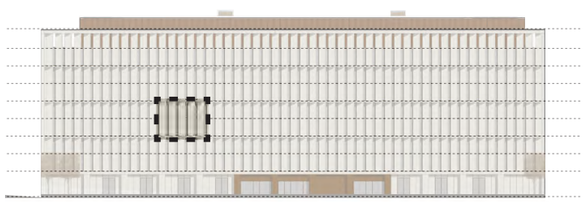
3 100004 Bay Study 4 - Section A
SCALE 1 : 50



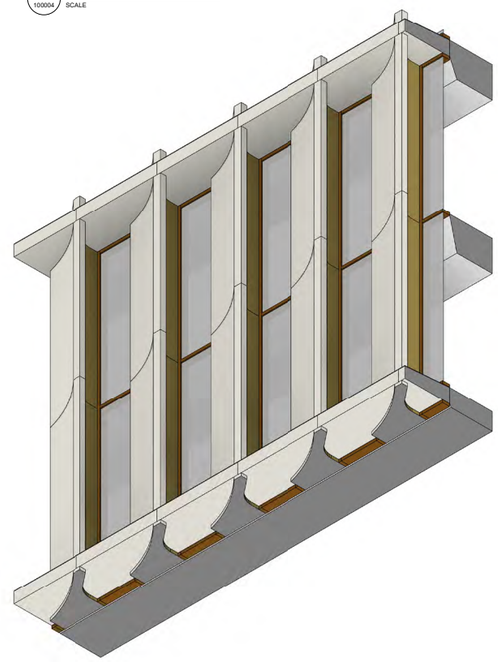
4 100004 Bay Study 4 - 3D View 1
SCALE



2 100004 Bay Study 4 - Plan
SCALE 1 : 50



North Building - South Elevation



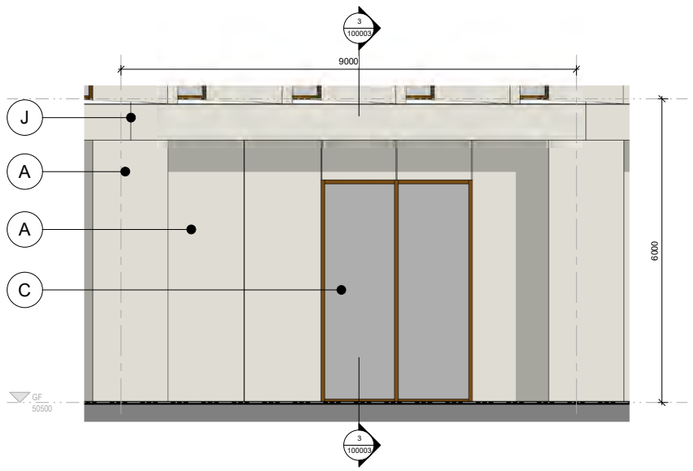
5 100004 Bay Study 4 - 3D View 2
SCALE

05 Envelope Design

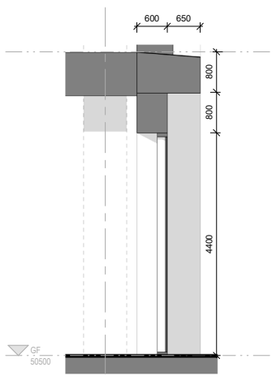
05.9 Ground Floor Bay - North Building

LEGEND:

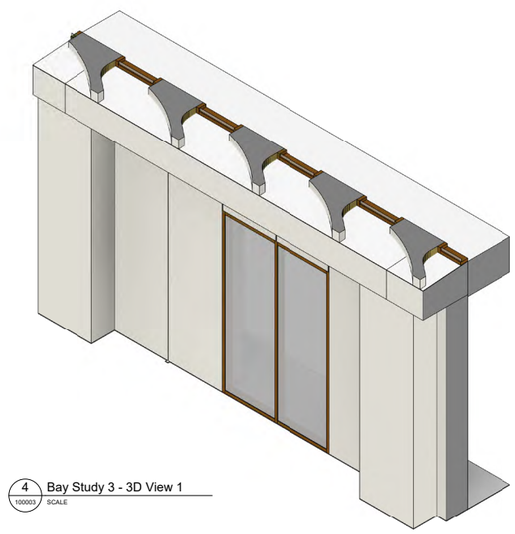
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- (H) Glazed balustrade
- (J) Recessed 10mm panel joint (+/- 2mm) - as shown only



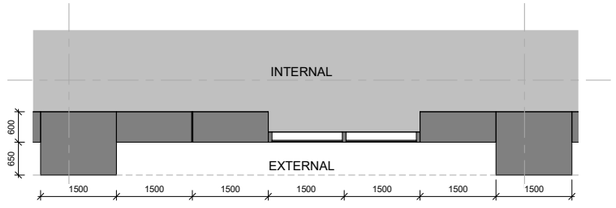
1 100003 Bay Study 3 - Elevation
SCALE 1 : 50



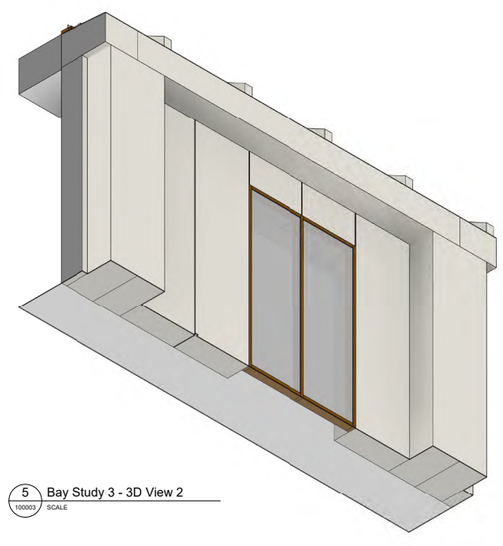
3 100003 Bay Study 3 - Section B
SCALE 1 : 50



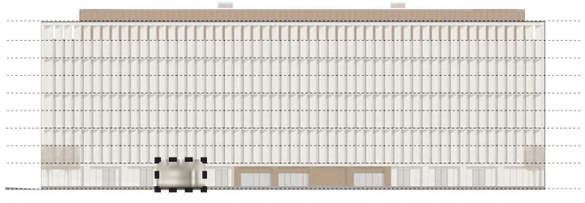
4 100003 Bay Study 3 - 3D View 1
SCALE



2 100003 Bay Study 3 - Plan
SCALE 1 : 50



5 100003 Bay Study 3 - 3D View 2
SCALE



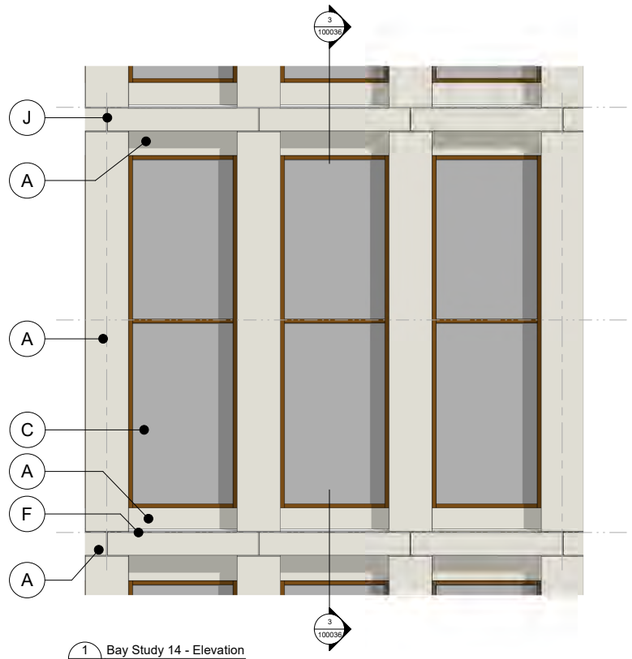
North Building - South Elevation

05 Envelope Design

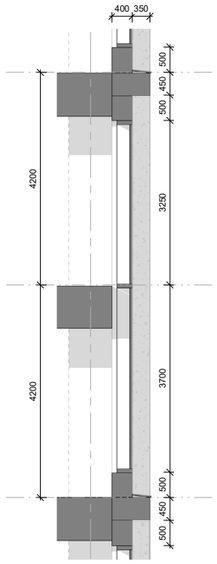
05.10 Typical Bay - South Building

LEGEND:

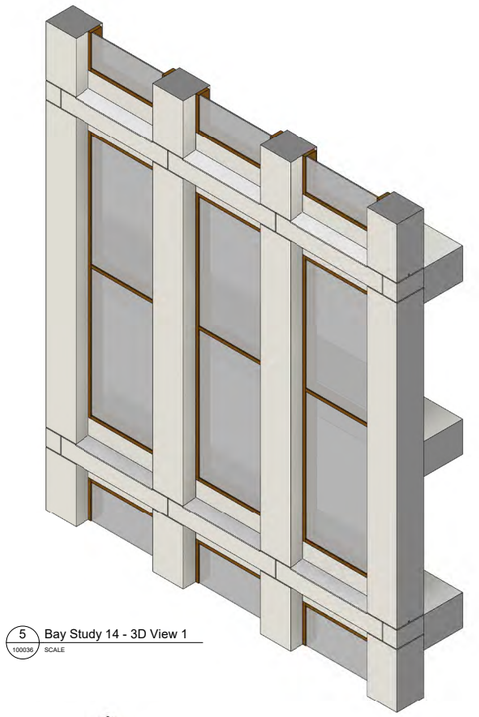
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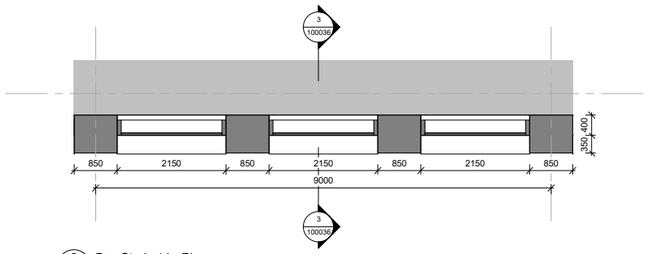
1 100036 Bay Study 14 - Elevation
SCALE 1 : 50



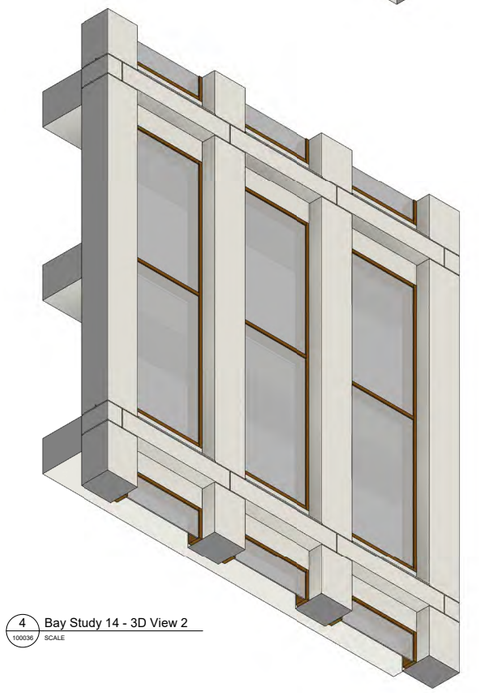
3 100036 Bay Study 14 - Section
SCALE 1 : 50



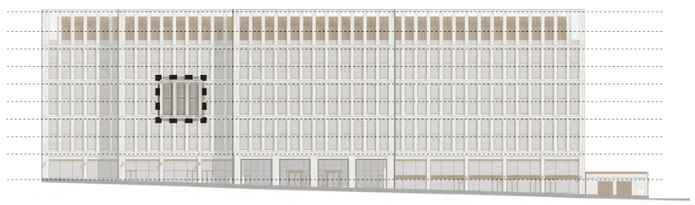
5 100036 Bay Study 14 - 3D View 1
SCALE



2 100036 Bay Study 14 - Plan
SCALE 1 : 50



4 100036 Bay Study 14 - 3D View 2
SCALE



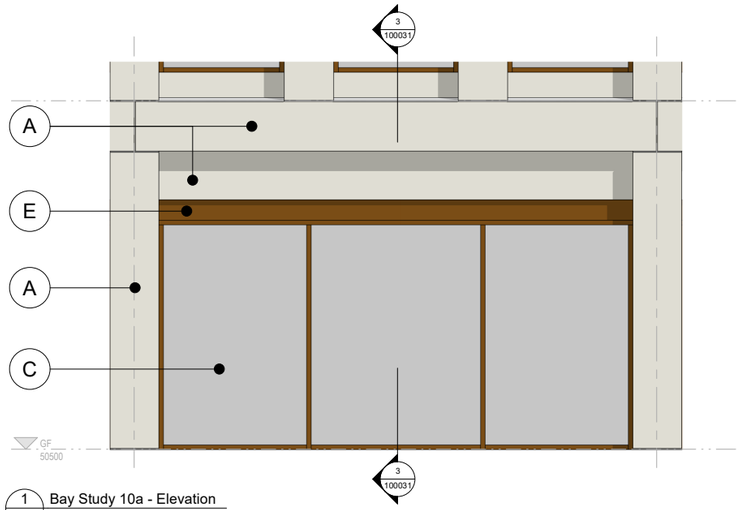
South Building - South Elevation

05 Envelope Design

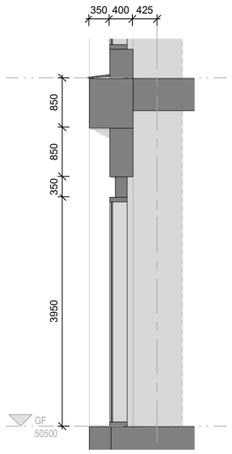
05.11 Ground Floor Office Bay - South Building

LEGEND:

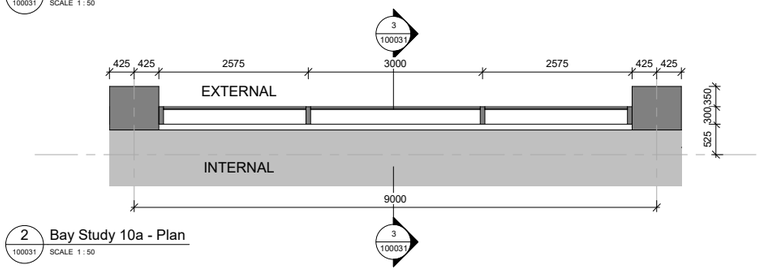
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- (F) Anodised aluminium sills, natural finish
- (G) Anodised aluminium profiled panels, dark bronze finish
- (H) Glazed balustrade
- (J) 10mm precast panel joint
- (K) Retractable canvas awning on a metal frame with metal face plate, all coloured bronze or similar to match
- (L) Projecting 'bus stop' sign
- (M) Main signage to shopfront - Internally mounted individual 3D letters set back from glazing internally illuminated as required



1 / 100031 Bay Study 10a - Elevation
SCALE 1 : 50



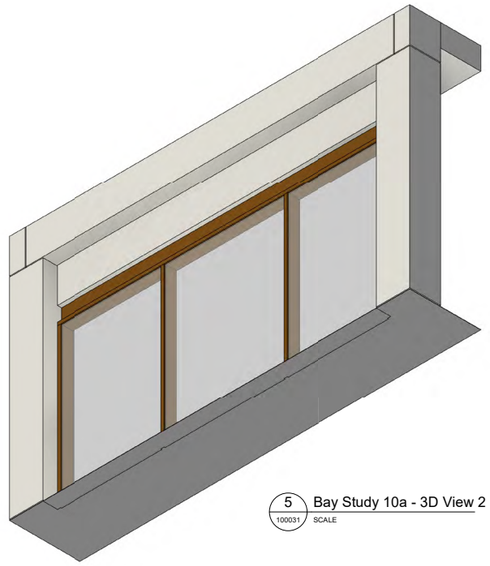
3 / 100031 Bay Study 10a - Section
SCALE 1 : 50



2 / 100031 Bay Study 10a - Plan
SCALE 1 : 50



4 / 100031 Bay Study 10a - 3D View 1
SCALE



5 / 100031 Bay Study 10a - 3D View 2
SCALE



South Building - North Elevation

05 Envelope Design

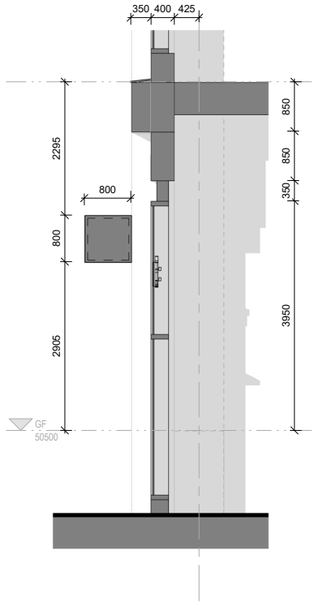
05.12 Ground Floor Retail Bay - South Building

LEGEND:

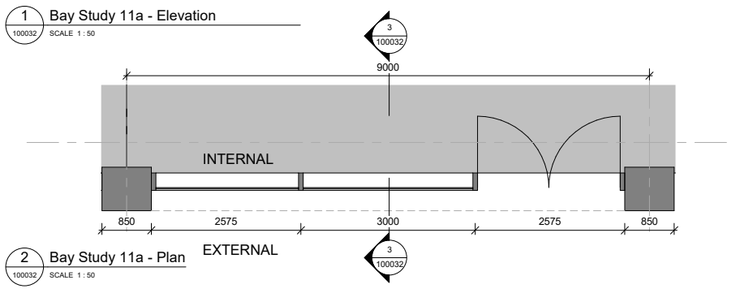
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- (J) 10mm precast panel joint
- (K) Retractable canvas awning on a metal frame with metal face plate, all coloured bronze or similar to match
- (L) Projecting 'bus stop' sign
- (M) Main signage to shopfront - Internally mounted individual 3D letters set back from glazing internally illuminated as required
- (N) Concrete Stall



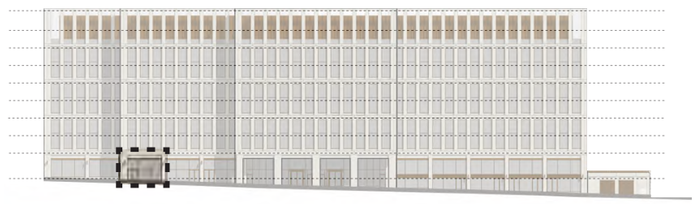
1 100032 Bay Study 11a - Elevation
SCALE 1 : 50



3 100032 Bay Study 11a - Section
SCALE 1 : 50



2 100032 Bay Study 11a - Plan
SCALE 1 : 50



South Building - South Elevation



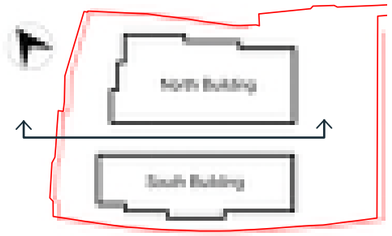
4 100032 Bay Study 11a - 3D View 1
SCALE



5 100032 Bay Study 11a - 3D View 2
SCALE

05 Envelope Design

05.13 Proposed Elevations



North Building - South Elevation



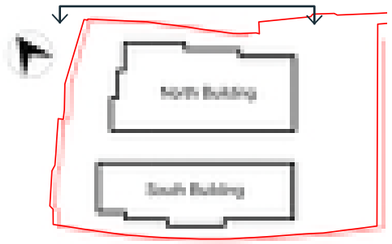
Main Facade Types:

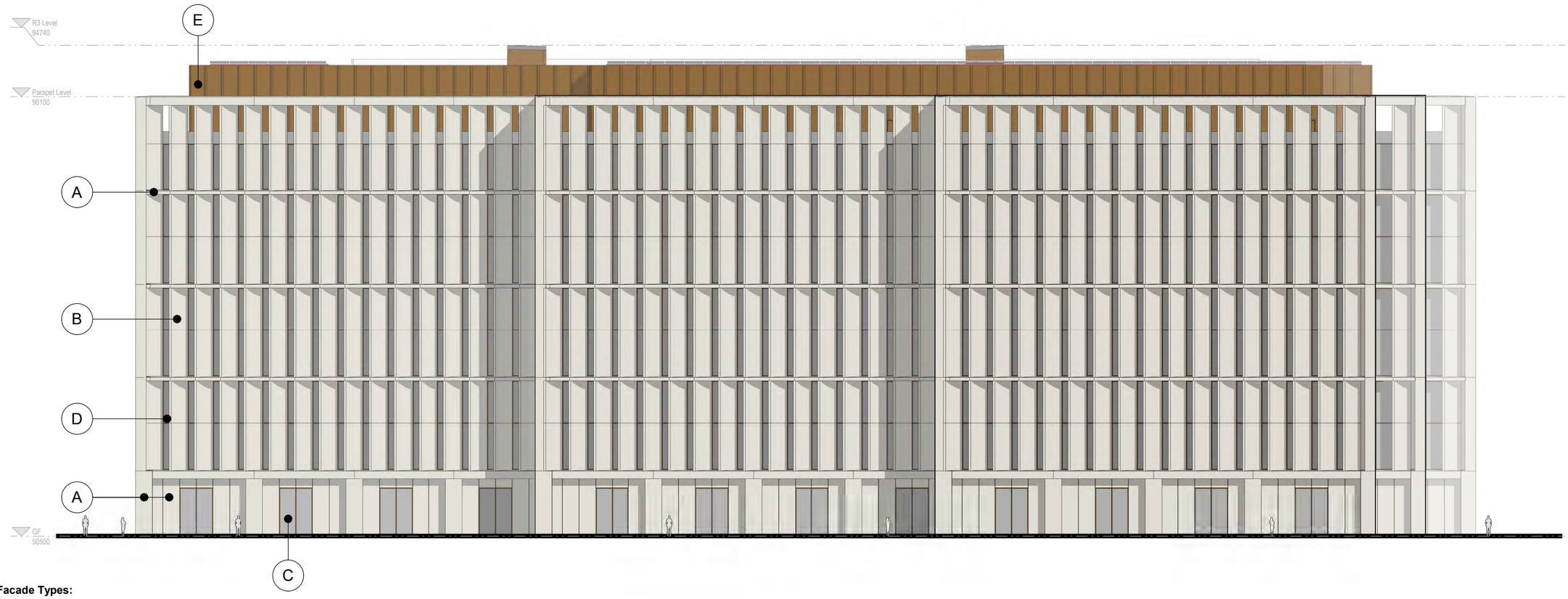
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- (E) Anodised aluminium panels, dark bronze finish
- (G) Anodised aluminium profiled panels, dark bronze finish
- (H) Glazed balustrade

05 Envelope Design

05.13 Proposed Elevations

North Building - North Elevation





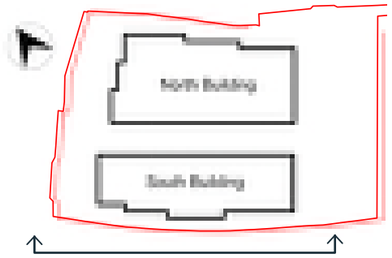
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- (H) Glazed balustrade

05 Envelope Design

05.13 Proposed Elevations

South Building - South Elevation





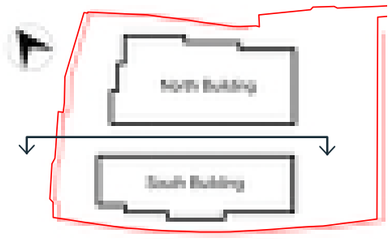
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05 Envelope Design

05.13 Proposed Elevations

South Building - North Elevation





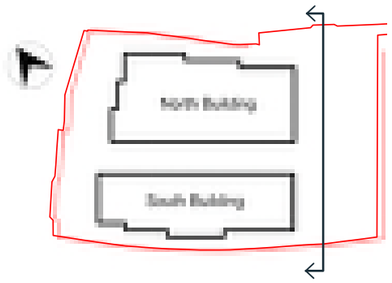
Main Facade Types:

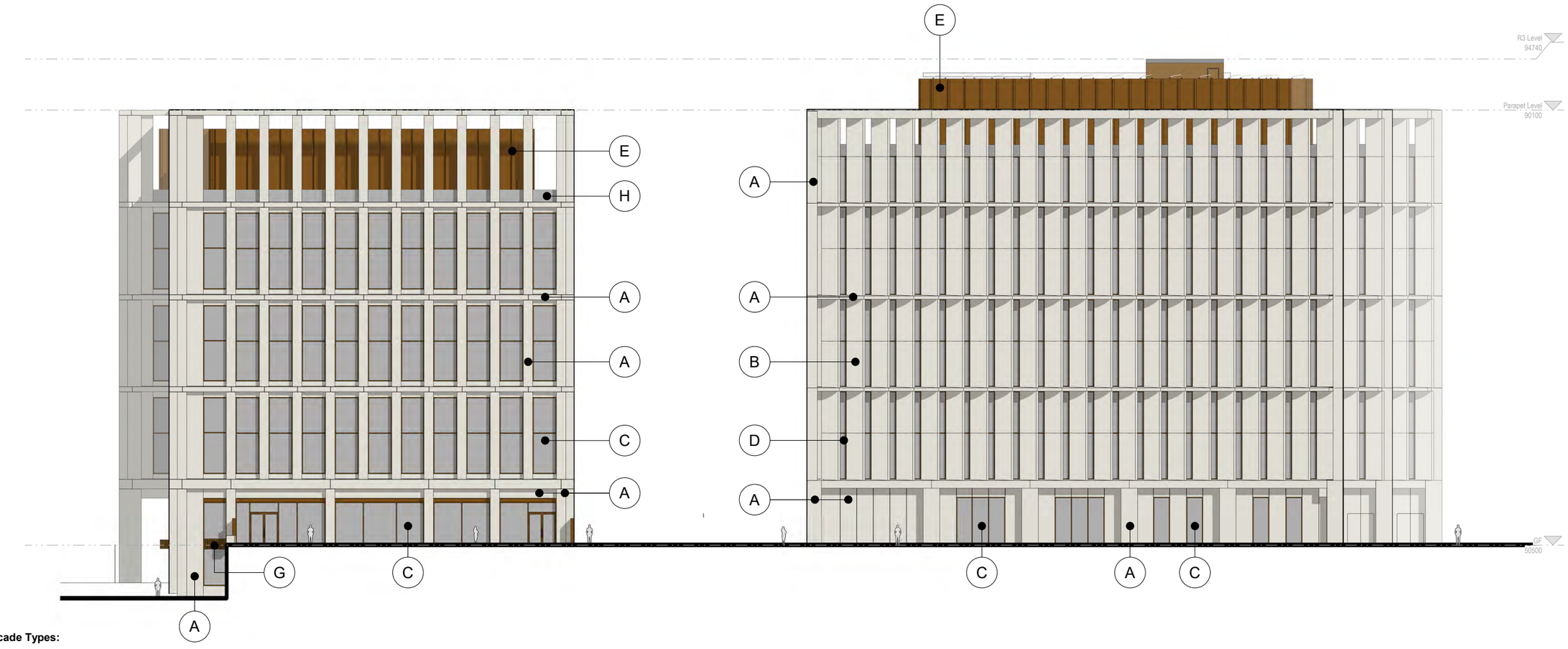
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- (E) Anodised aluminium panels, dark bronze finish
- (G) Anodised aluminium profiled panels, dark bronze finish
- (H) Glazed balustrade

05 Envelope Design

05.13 Proposed Elevations

Both Buildings - East Elevation





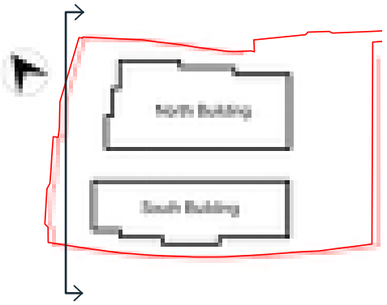
Main Facade Types:

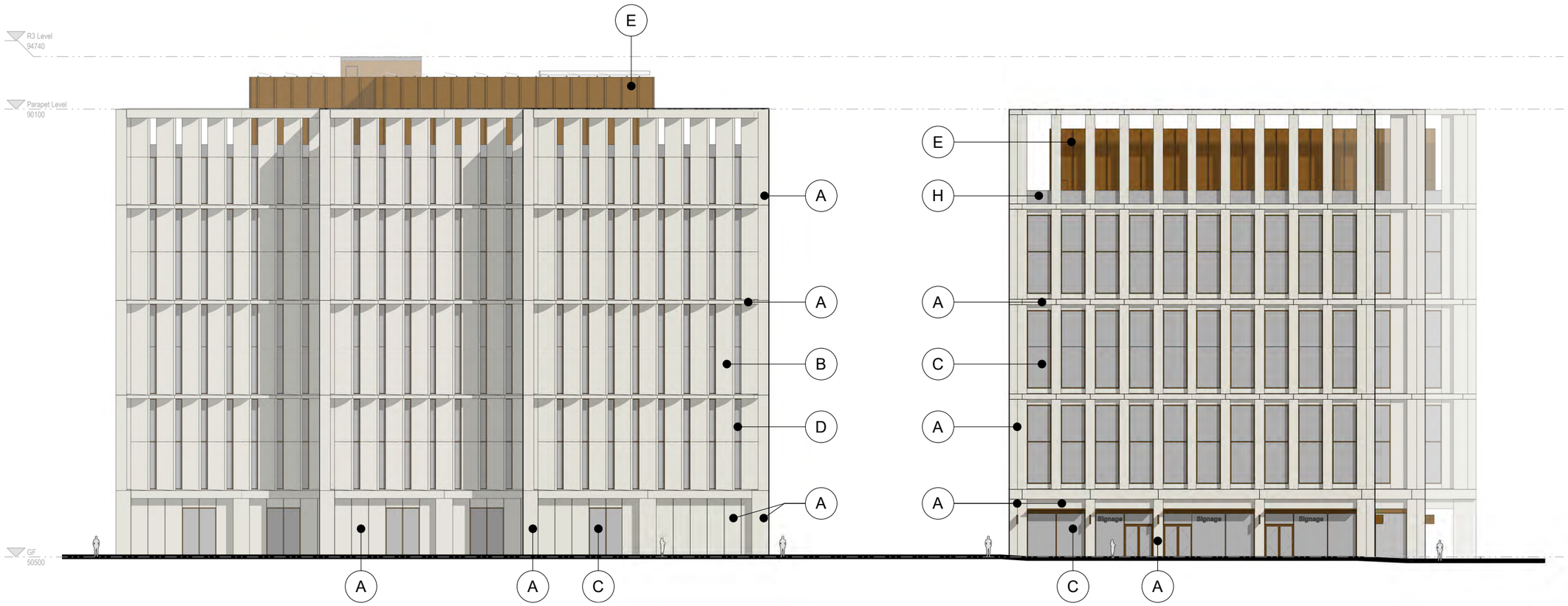
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- (E) Anodised aluminium panels, dark bronze finish
- (G) Anodised aluminium profiled panels, dark bronze finish
- (H) Glazed balustrade

05 Envelope Design

05.13 Proposed Elevations

Both Buildings - West Elevation





Main Facade Types:

- (A) Precast concrete panel - Light concrete with exposed aggregate textured finish
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- (D) Anodised aluminium curtain walling system - Dark bronze finish, bespoke patterned glazing
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- (G) Anodised aluminium profiled panels, dark bronze finish
- (H) Glazed balustrade

05 Envelope Design

05.14 Manchester Precedents



125 Deansgate: Articulation



126 Deansgate: Bay Study



No.4 Angel Square: Order



New Square: Interplay



One St. Peter's Square: Form



One St. Peter's Square: Civic

05 Envelope Design

05.15 Materiality Precedents



Finsbury Square | London, UK



The Bryant Building | New York, USA



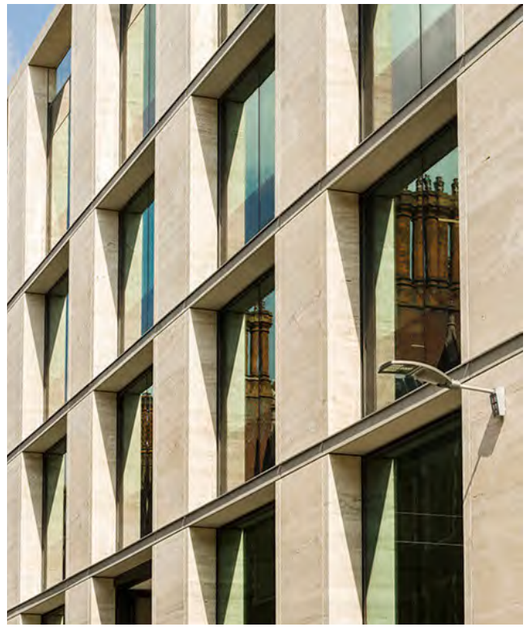
One St. Peter's Square | Manchester, UK



10 Lewis Cubitt Square | London, UK



Zayed Centre | London, UK



40 Chancery Lane | London, UK

06 Technical Summaries

Signage & Retail / F&B Frontages

South Building Name Signage - Great Ancoats Street

South Building Name Signage - Boulevard

North Building Name Signage - Boulevard

Wayfinding

Daylight, Sunlight and Wind

Crime and Safety

Lighting Strategy

Servicing and Deliveries

Environmental Impact Assessment

Construction & Environmental Management Plan

06 Technical Summaries

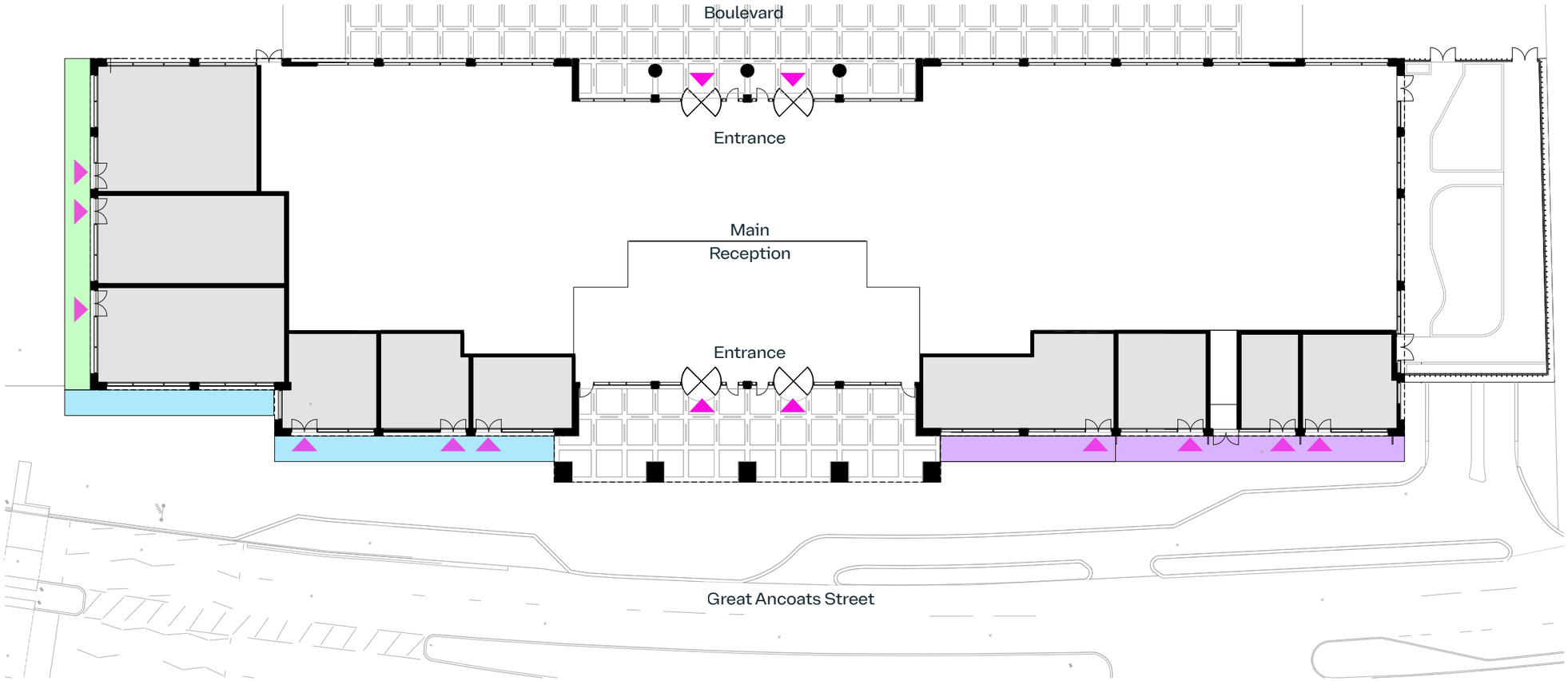
06.1 Signage & Retail / F&B Frontages

In addition to the office spaces, the Manchester Digital Campus proposes numerous retail units that envelop the ground floor of the Southern Building on two sides.

It is intended that these retail units will be able to host several different types of vendor. There will be food and beverage vendors to supply the catering needs of the new office occupants, alongside shops catering for the needs of both the office staff and local residents. The retail is designed to allow units to be combined to respond to tenant demand.

Drawings included with this application set out design guidelines for these new retail units, dictating the shopfront and signage requirements which will be adopted by the new retail tenants.

The strategy seeks to determine the quality and consistency of all of the signage across the units, to engender a character befitting the civic nature of this new city campus.



NOTE:

Retail unit layout shown opposite is indicative. Some of the retail units may be combined or sub-divided differently.

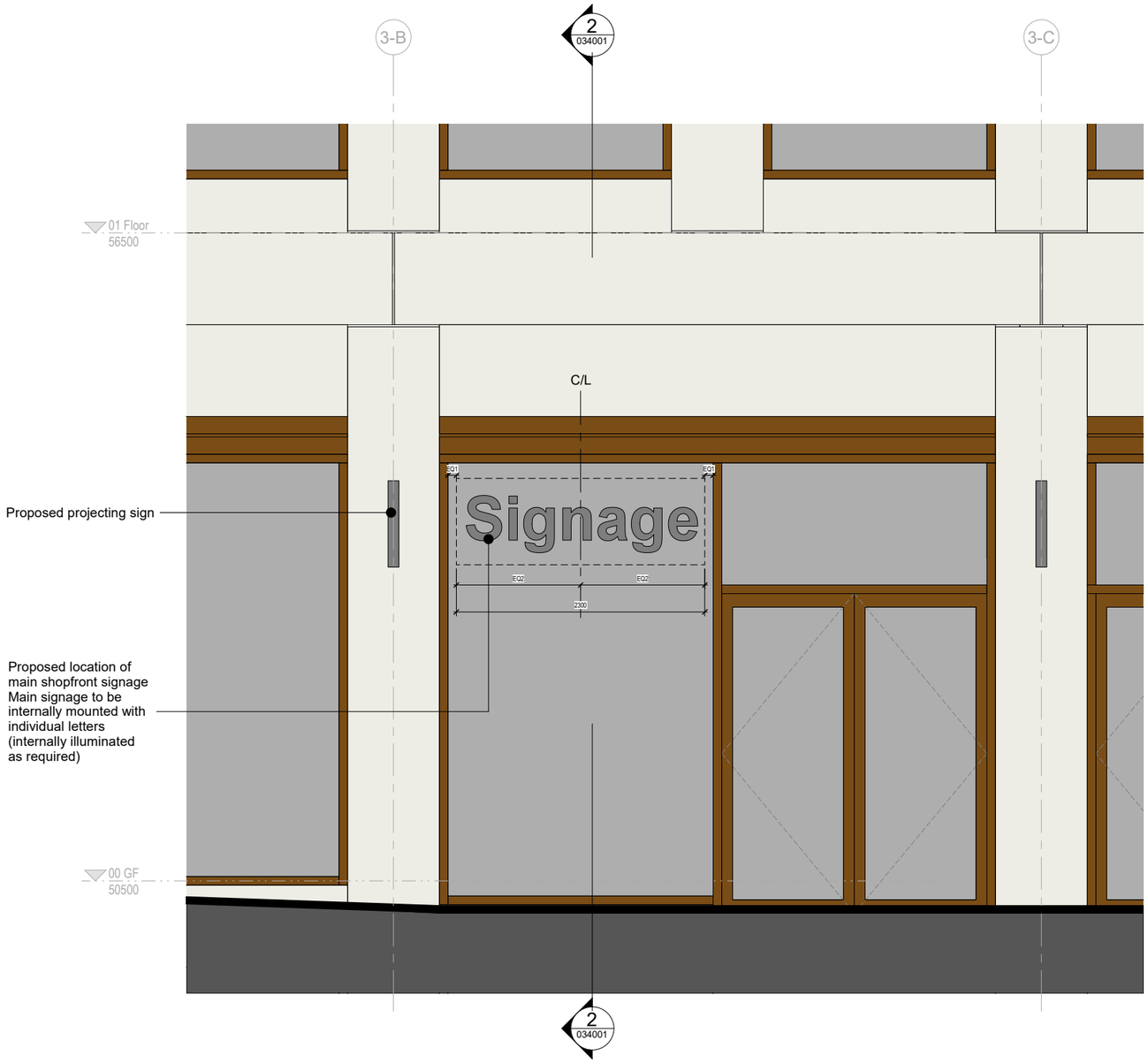
- Shopfront and Signage Type 1
- Shopfront and Signage Type 2
- Shopfront and Signage Type 3
- Retail Spaces

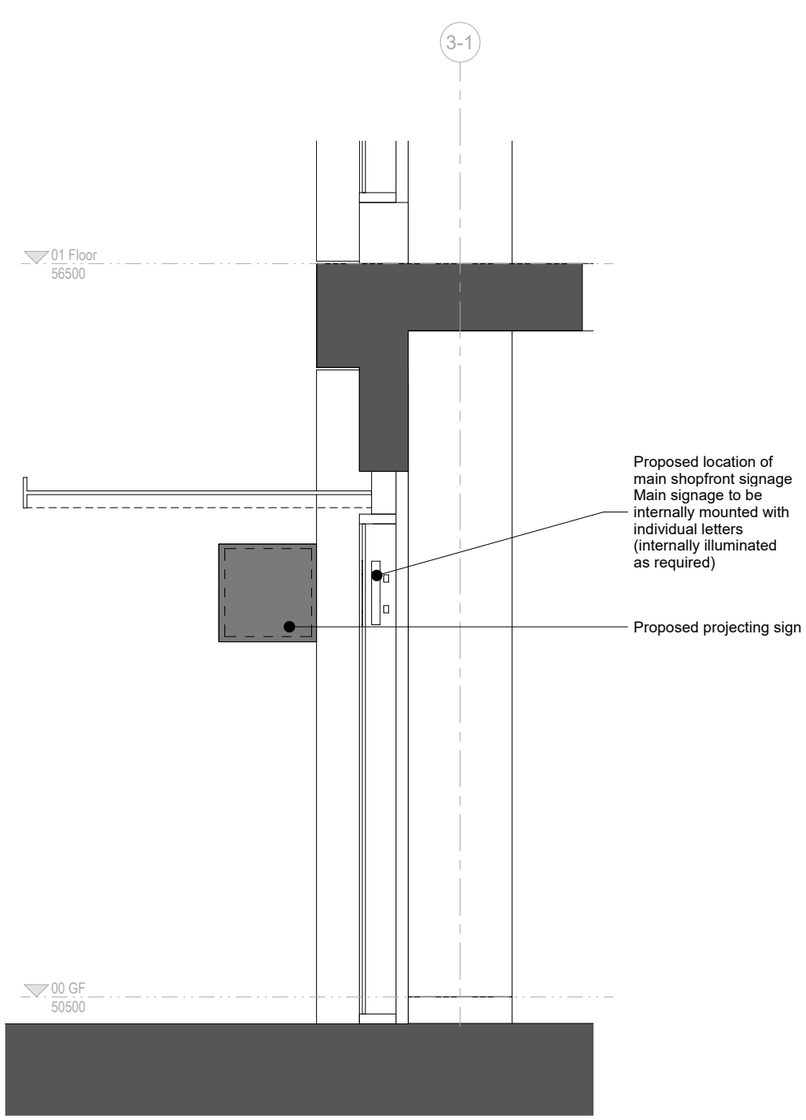
Entrance

06 Technical Summaries

06.1 Signage & Retail / F&B Frontages

See below Signage Type 1. For details on all signage types see drawings 100032 - 100034.





All signage will be subject to separate advertisement consent application at a later date (by others)

06 Technical Summaries

06.2 South Building Name Signage - Great Ancoats Street

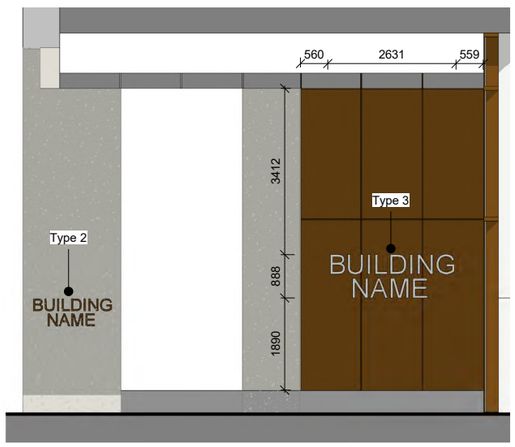
Type 1: Bronze 3D lettering offset from concrete panel.

Type 2: Recessed lettering engaged into concrete and with bronze inlay.

Type 3: Back-lit white transparent acrylic lettering cut-out of bronze panels.

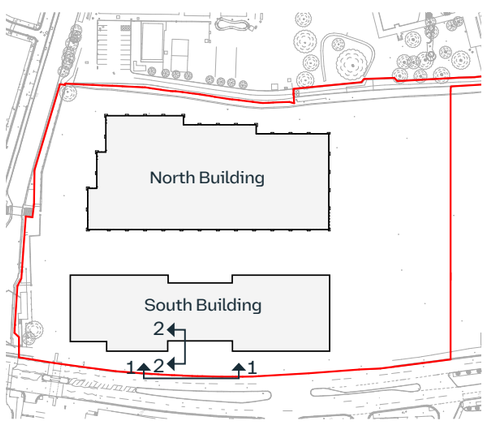


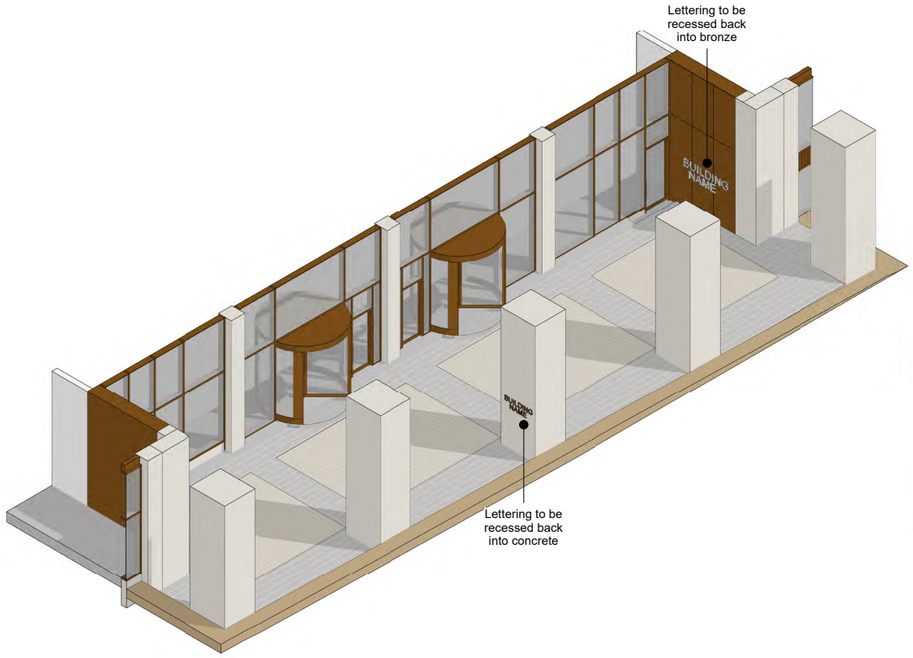
1 South Building Entrance on Great Ancoats Street - Front Elevation
034010 SCALE 1 : 50



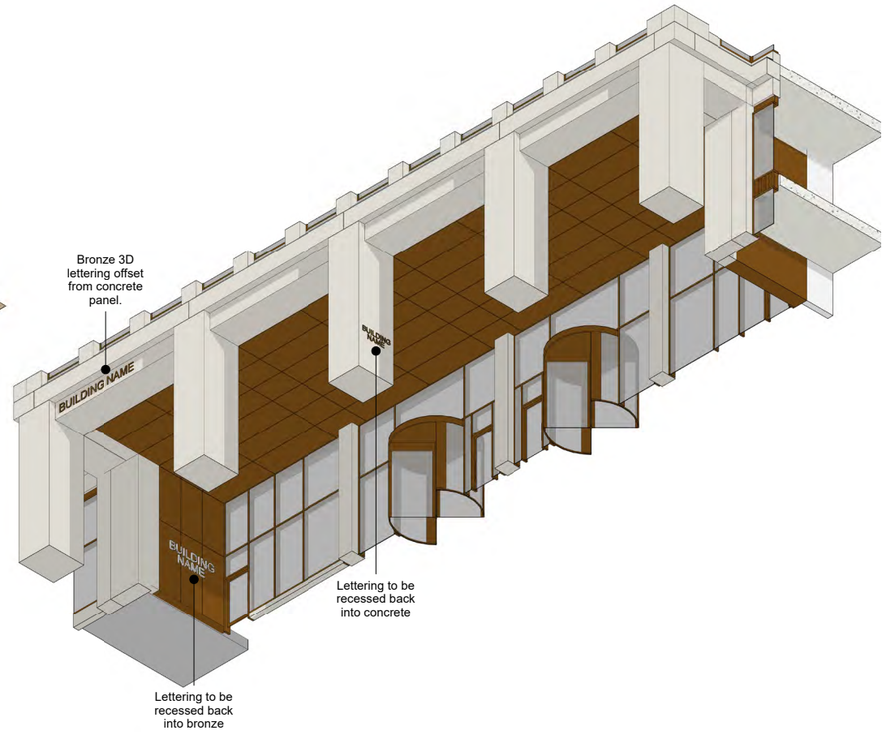
2 South Building Entrance on Great Ancoats Street - Side Elevation
034010 SCALE 1 : 50

Section Key Plan





3 South Building Entrance on Great Ancoats Street - 3D View 1
034010 SCALE



4 South Building Entrance on Great Ancoats Street - 3D View 2
034010 SCALE

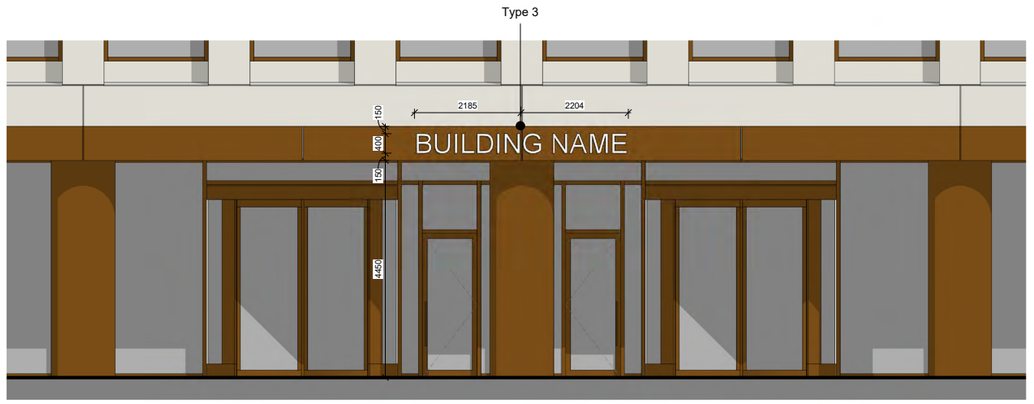
06 Technical Summaries

06.3 South Building Name Signage - Boulevard

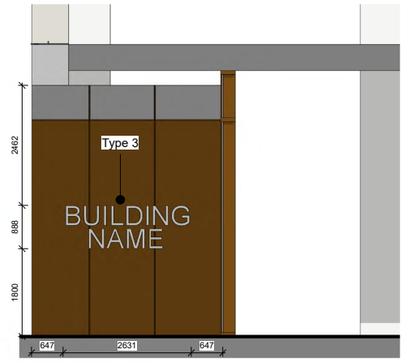
Type 1: Bronze 3D lettering offset from concrete panel.

Type 2: Recessed lettering engaged into concrete and with bronze inlay.

Type 3: Back-lit white transparent acrylic lettering cut-out of bronze panels.

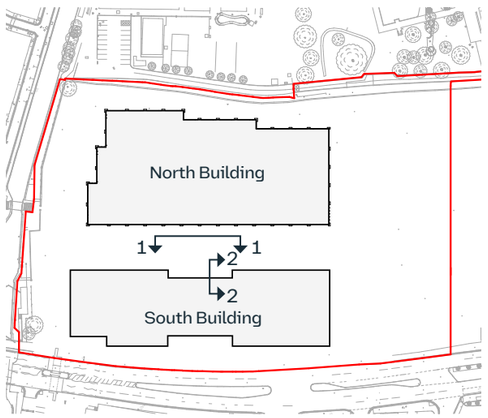


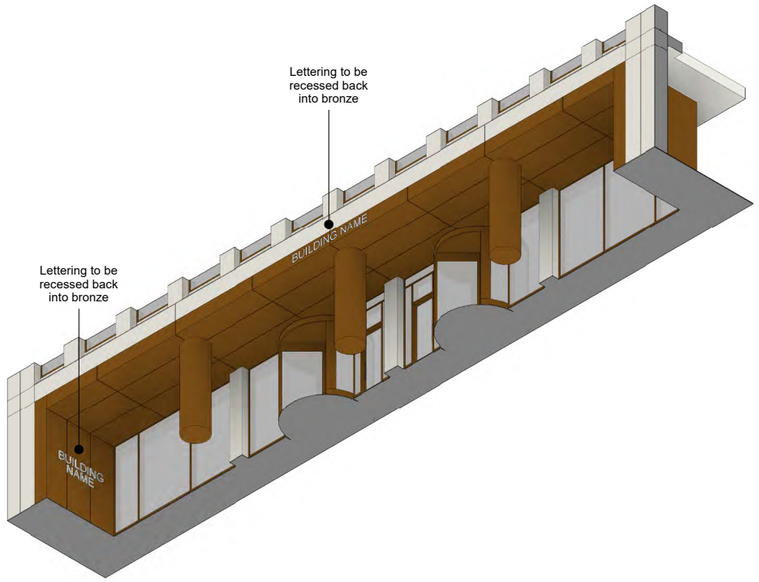
1 South Building Entrance on The Boulevard - Front Elevation
034011 SCALE 1 : 50



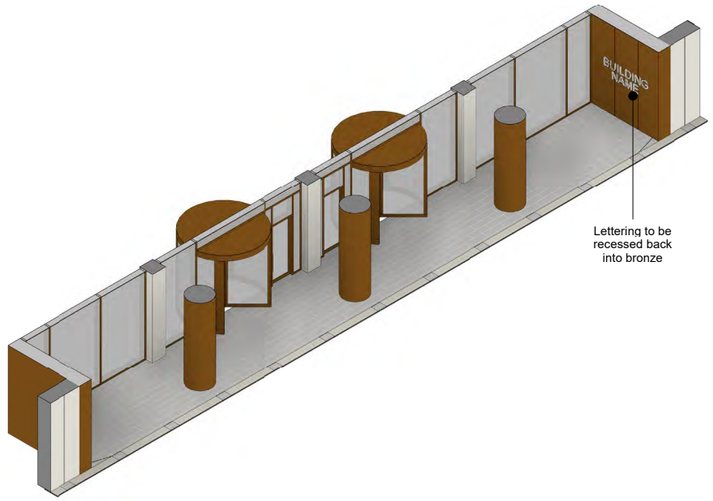
2 South Building Entrance on The Boulevard - Side Elevation
034011 SCALE 1 : 50

Section Key Plan





3 South Building Entrance on The Boulevard - 3D View 1
034011 SCALE



4 South Building Entrance on The Boulevard - 3D View 2
034011 SCALE

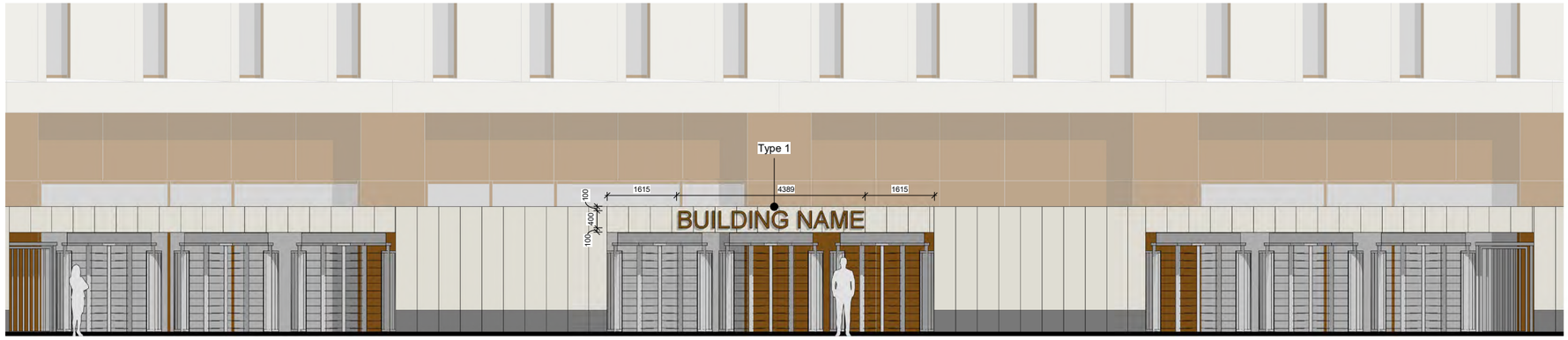
06 Technical Summaries

06.4 North Building Name Signage - Boulevard

Type 1: Bronze 3D lettering offset from concrete panel.

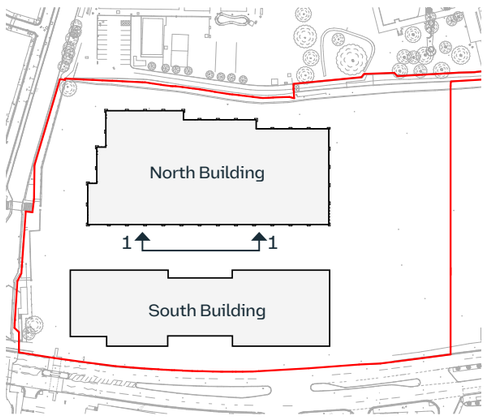
Type 2: Recessed lettering engaged into concrete and with bronze inlay.

Type 3: Back-lit white transparent acrylic lettering cut-out of bronze panels.



1 / 034012 North Building Entrance on The Boulevard - Front Elevation
SCALE 1 : 50

Section Key Plan



06 Technical Summaries

06.5 Wayfinding

The most prominent element of wayfinding design is signage. The signage proposed across the MDC campus will be a carefully crafted communication system. The strategy for signage is to be:

- Clear and concise, ensuring that visitors can easily understand directions and information
- Consistent in style and colours, creating a cohesive visual identity accessible to those with colour vision deficiencies
- Visible from the proper distance, ensuring that they effectively guide visitors without causing confusion
- Placed at decision points, creating a seamless and user-friendly navigation experience

The key locations identified for signage have been marked onto the Landscape Drawing that reflect decision points on the campus. These are; entry onto the Canal Plaza from Great Ancoats Street, each end of the Boulevard and the arrival point from the pedestrian footbridge over the Rochdale Canal. There is a mix of totems, monolith information signage including heritage interpretation, and fingerposts proposed. These will enable visitors to easily locate building entrances and confidently explore the MDC campus.

The overall design principles of the campus will enhance wayfinding by incorporating features like sightlines that make important destinations visible, lighting that subtly reveals direction, flooring patterns that indicate direction and memorable landmarks that provide reference.

The MDC campus wayfinding will be inclusively designed to accommodate various disabilities, providing access for all users through:

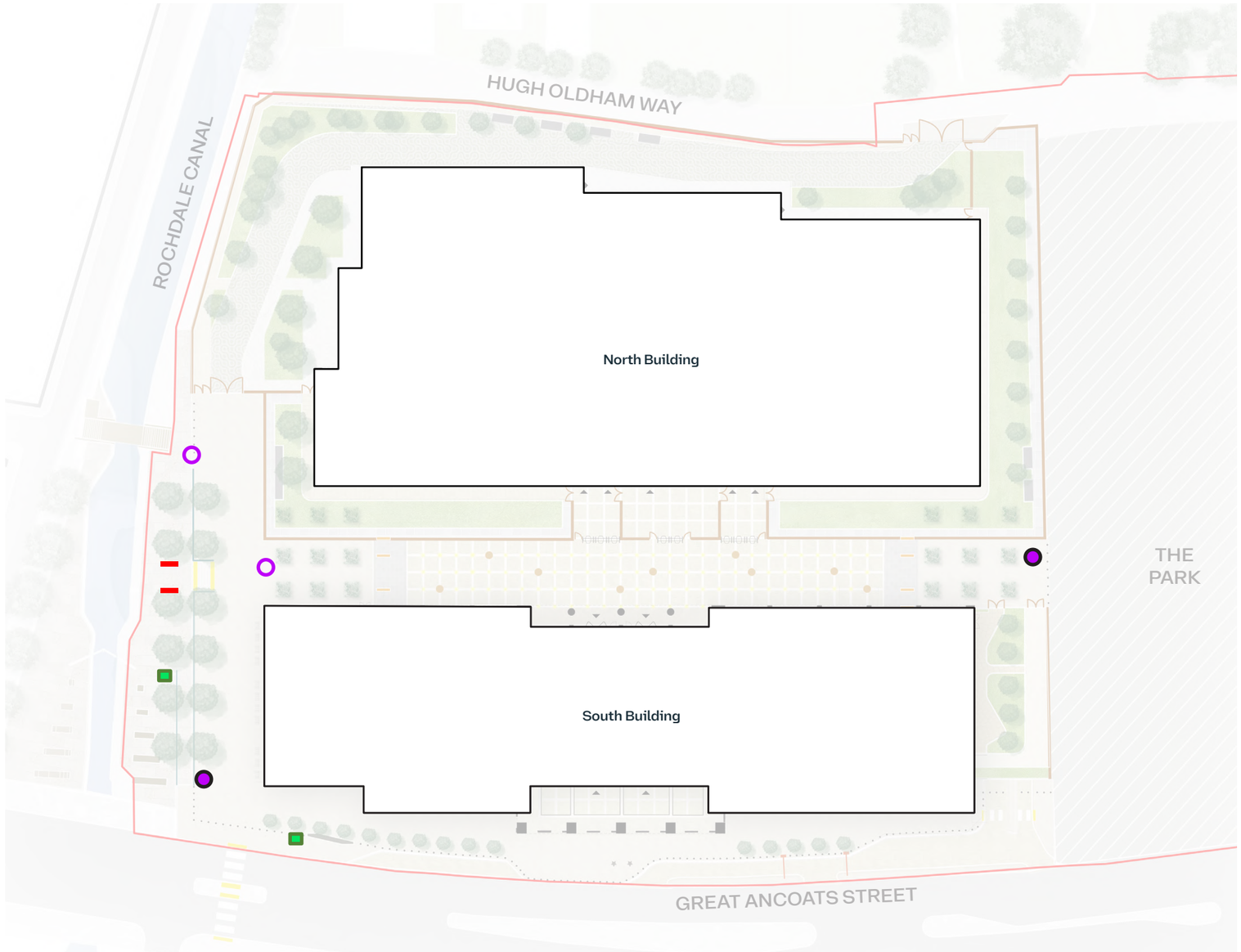
- Tactile elements to the totem signage for visually impaired users
- Clear, high-contrast visuals for partially sighted users
- Simple, clear language for cognitive disabilities
- Consideration of reach ranges and sightlines for wheelchair users.



Totem sign



Point sign



Site Plan

KEY

- Totem sign providing directions and campus information
- Point sign providing directions
- Heritage interpretation panels
- Bins

06 Technical Summaries

06.6 Daylight, Sunlight and Wind

Daylight & Sunlight

Analysis of the development's effect on daylight and sunlight to neighbouring buildings has been undertaken using detailed 3D modelling of the surrounding relevant buildings and the design proposals. This analysis took place during the design development and subsequently in preparation for this planning application. The details of this analysis are contained within the Environmental Statement MDCX-ATR-XX-XX-RP-Z-000002.

The following text provides a summary of the daylight and sunlight assessment;

Existing daylight and sunlight levels were assessed to all relevant residential rooms, back gardens, school classrooms and school playground using a methodology aligned with the Building Research Establishment (BRE) guidance.

The BRE methodology was then used to assess the likely daylight, sunlight, overshadowing and solar glare effects of the completed development on specific neighbouring buildings and spaces. The results have then been compared with those of the existing scenario. Impacts have been quantified on an absolute and a relative scale, except for overshadowing, which has been plotted graphically.

Daylight and Sunlight results summary:

Daylight to Existing Surrounding Buildings

The impact on daylight levels to rooms in surrounding buildings has been analysed in depth, taking into account the size and shape of windows, the size and depth of the rooms beyond and the uses of those rooms.

Some of the residential buildings around the development will experience lower daylight levels in some of the rooms, mostly at lower levels. The majority of these affected spaces are subject to a minor adverse effect only, and still have good results for an urban area.

Coop Academy New Islington, the primary school next to the Site, has been analysed in terms of daylight to all its classroom areas. Some of the results to these classrooms demonstrate a moderate to high impact on daylight levels, but it is very important to note that the levels are still good for a school in an urban area, and the daylighting levels are already low due to existing canopies over affected windows.

Sunlight to Existing Surrounding Buildings

The modelling has shown that the effect on sunlight on surrounding buildings is generally negligible, with one building likely to experience minor adverse effects in three rooms, but still maintain good sunlight levels for a building in an urban area.

Wind

The wind analysis undertaken informed the design team in making decisions on how to use external spaces, identifying the level of comfort and discomfort, and enabling optimisation of street and building orientation. Wind can create both positive and negative comfort conditions, enhancing pedestrian comfort during high temperatures or decreasing pedestrian comfort if too strong. The level of comfort depends on the types of activities performed for example, higher wind speeds are generally tolerated for active spaces like walkways, while lower ones are comfortable for spaces allocated for sitting and resting.

An example Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) wind analysis using the digital 3D model of the proposals is shown below. The wind modelling has demonstrated that all areas will be comfortable for pedestrians. For more analysis and evaluation see the Wind and Microclimate Report Appendix of the Environmental Statement.

For more analysis and evaluation see the MSIP-ATK-XX-ZZ-RP-O-000006 Wind and Microclimate Assessment Report.

A	2 m/s	< 5%	Outdoor Dining
B	4 m/s	< 5%	Pedestrian Sitting
C	6 m/s	< 5%	Pedestrian Standing
D	8 m/s	< 5%	Pedestrian Walking
E	10 m/s	< 5%	Business Walking
U	10 m/s	> 5%	Uncomfortable



Lawson LDDC Pedestrian Comfort Map – Plan view of the Proposed Scenario - from Wind & Microclimate Report. Showing suitability of areas around the retail units for table seating, and general good pedestrian comfort levels.

06 Technical Summaries

06.7 Crime and Safety

Secured by Design (SBD), a British police initiative rooted in Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), provides guidance on building design to reduce crime and enhance safety. For Phase 1 of this development, the most relevant guidance can be found in the SBD *Commercial Guide* document that outlines security recommendations with regards to burglary, theft, arson, vehicle crime and assault specifically adapted for commercial buildings.

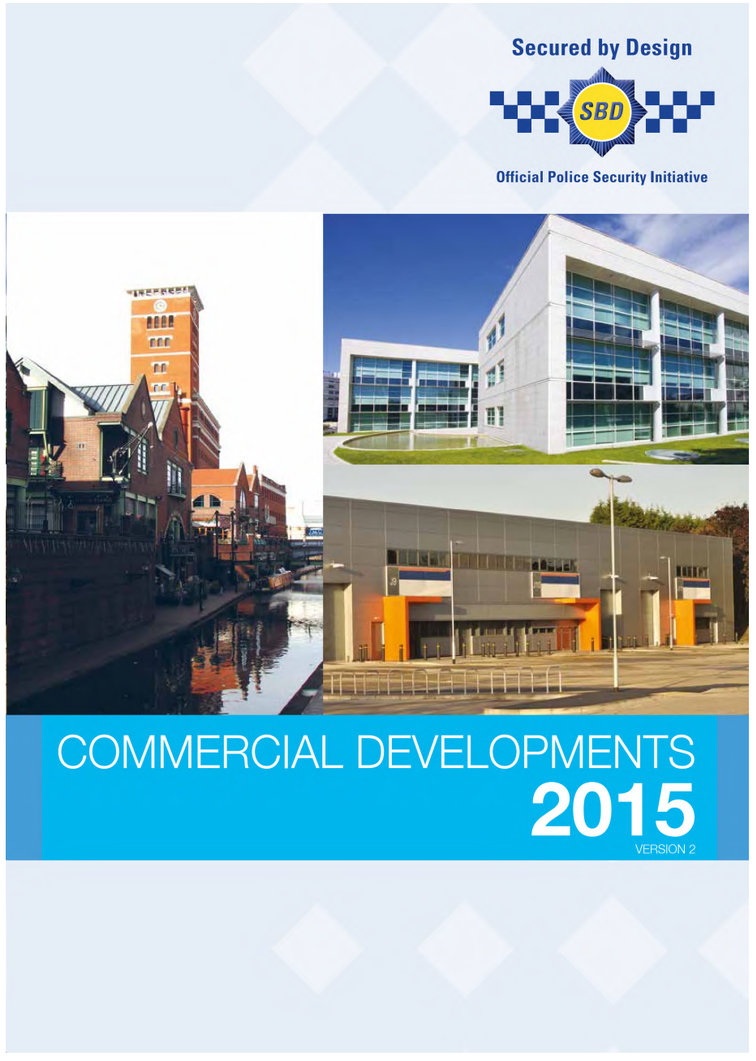
This guidance is designed to be integrated early in the design process to avoid costly retrofits, offering tailored, adaptable security recommendations rather than a strict set of requirements, recognizing the diversity of commercial buildings.

Sustainable communities can reduce crime and anti-social behaviour by incorporating seven key design attributes:

- Access and movement: Well-defined, frequently used routes and entrances that enable easy movement while maintaining security.
- Structure: places that are structured so that different uses do not cause conflict.
- Surveillance: places where all publicly accessible spaces are overlooked.
- Ownership: places that promote a sense of ownership, respect, territorial responsibility, and community.
- Physical protection: places that include necessary, well-designed security features.
- Activity: Places with appropriate human activity that reduce crime risk and promote a sense of safety at all times.
- Management and maintenance: Properly managed and maintained spaces, with clear usage definitions, encourage ownership and responsibility, reducing crime and fostering community safety.

SBD advice aims to integrate key design characteristics in new and existing developments. Although it is yet to be confirmed if official SBD accreditation is being sought for the project, its principles are incorporated into the design of the proposed development. The SBD requirements have also been considered when developing the baseline physical security measures for the project.

For more information see the separate Crime Impact Statement MSIP-ARP-ZZ-XX-RP-Y-000005.



06 Technical Summaries

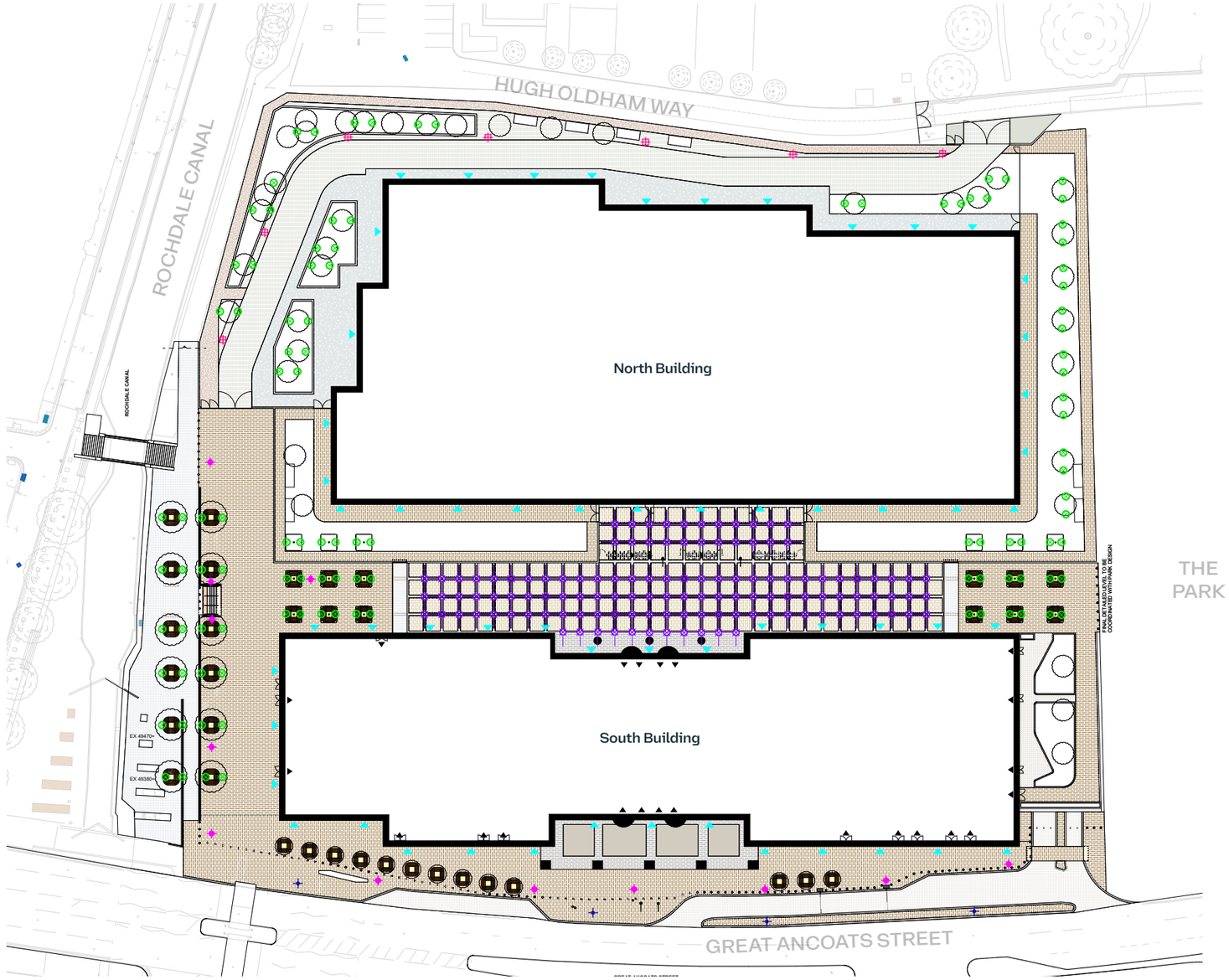
06.8 Lighting Strategy

The lighting strategy for the development is thoughtfully designed to enhance both the architectural prominence of the buildings and the quality of the surrounding public realm. By illuminating key structural features, the lighting will create a striking civic presence that adds to the night-time skyline of Manchester, and subtly integrate the building into the urban landscape. The carefully positioned lighting creates an inviting atmosphere, defining and highlighting the new public realm spaces, like the Canal Plaza, Great Ancoats Street, and the Boulevard. The Boulevard features an enhanced lighting scheme that celebrates the digital nature of the campus. The lighting plan prioritises safety and security, ensuring well-lit paths and gathering areas to promote a safe and welcoming environment for all who visit, work, or pass through these transformative spaces.

An Obtrusive Light Assessment has been carried out to evaluate the proposed lighting conditions of the development and to determine any potential obtrusive light effects on the surrounding environment, including adjacent residential buildings and ecological habitats, specifically addressing the potential impacts on these.

The assessment demonstrated that the proposed lighting design successfully meets the relevant national and local standards for obtrusive light. The use of advanced lighting techniques, including LED luminaires, allows for energy-efficient and ecologically considerate illumination while minimising obtrusive effects on the surrounding environment, especially residential properties. The proposed lighting in most areas within the proposed development delivers the right amount of light in the right place and time to create a healthier, safer, and greener network.

For more information see the Concept Lighting Plan MDCX-ATR-ZZ-ZZ-DR-L-2310010 and separate Obtrusive Light Assessment Report MDCX-ATR-HLG-EO-RP-N-000001.



Site Plan showing the proposed lighting strategy

06 Technical Summaries

06.9 Servicing and Deliveries

The main vehicular site access is from Great Ancoats Street, and forms an elongated left-in and left-out arrangement replacing the existing access formally used for the Site's former retail park use, complemented by a 4-bay layby further west. This main access is not signalised and the entry and exists are either side of the Laystall Street junction.

On entering, the first section of the access point allows for deceleration off Great Ancoats Street and for vehicles to be checked with those that are expected on site to continue, whereas those who are not booked in will be rejected returning back onto Great Ancoats Street.

Those that continue can either pull into a lay-by for servicing the site or turn left into the undercroft. Vehicles leaving the site will filter back onto Great Ancoats Street, after the Laystall Street junction.

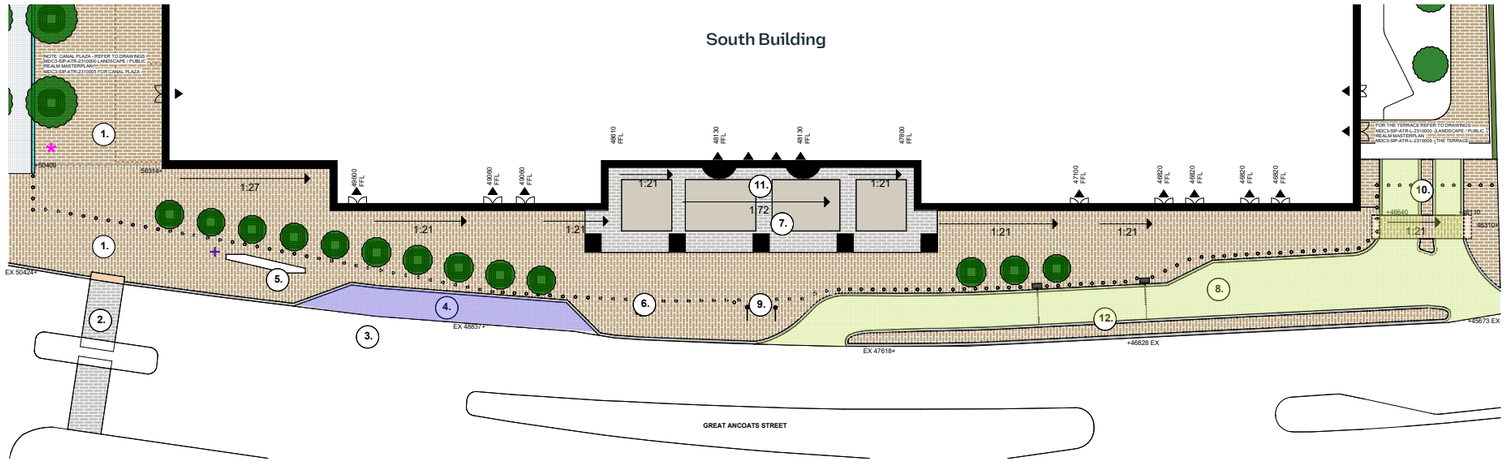
The west lay-by is designated for taxis and general traffic drop-offs and pick-ups, in particular to avoid such movements on the local highway network in residential areas.

Standard calculations predict approximately 25 taxis will serve the Site in the morning peak hour. Conservative assumptions made regarding their pattern of movement include a peak of taxis arriving every 20 seconds (rather than spread evenly over the hour) and assume an arrival-dwell-departure time of 1 minute and 20 seconds, which has resulted in 4 bays being proposed for the west lay-by.

Servicing, which includes deliveries and refuse collection, will take place in the evening, after the peak hour from 6pm and before 10pm; some might take place early in the morning after 6am but before the morning peak period at 7am. Based on the standard methodology for calculating traffic movements, there are likely to be approximately 94 Light Goods Vehicles making these trips and 12 Heavy Goods Vehicles each weekday which has a negligible impact on Great Ancoats Street. In practice it is anticipated that the number will be much lower due to operational approach to deliveries and the use of consolidated deliveries.

A variety of vehicles are expected to facilitate the servicing and deliveries for the campus. These will range from small vans up to a 7.5 tonne single axle lorry. Additionally, the main site access layout has been developed to accommodate a standard refuse collection vehicle.

For more information see the separate Transport Assessment MDCX-ATR-XX-XX-RP-Z-000045.



East lay-by: main site access point for services and deliveries for the offices and eastern retail units

West lay-by: taxi drop-off and deliveries for western retail units

06 Technical Summaries

06.10 Environmental Impact Assessment

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has been prepared as a systematic process to identify and assess the potential significant environmental impacts of the proposed development, with options for minimising these impacts presented in an Environmental Statement (ES) accompanying this planning application.

The purpose of the EIA is to provide the competent authority with the necessary information to assess the potential significant environmental effects, both positive and negative, determine their acceptability, and, if needed, implement mitigation measures to minimise adverse impacts before granting the relevant consents.

The main chapters of the EIA are presented in Volumes 1 to 3 of the ES, and include the following:

- Non Technical Summary
- Introduction chapters
- Construction phasing and methodology
- Air quality
- Biodiversity
- Climate vulnerability
- Effects on climate
- Daylight, sunlight, overshadowing and solar glare
- Ground conditions and contamination
- Historic environment
- Human health
- Materials and waste
- Noise and vibration
- Socio-economics
- Transport
- Water resources and flood risk
- Wind and microclimate
- Major accidents and disasters
- Cumulative effects
- Residual effects and conclusions
- Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment

In addition to these chapters, a range of technical studies and appendices are included in Volumes 4 and 5, providing further detailed analysis and supporting information.

For more detailed information on the methodology used and the key findings of the EIA refer to the separate Environmental Statement Chapters.

06.11 Construction & Environmental Management Plan

An Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (OCEMP) has been developed to summarise the proposed approach to the construction of the scheme, how the construction risks will be managed and how to mitigate any construction impact associated with the proposed development.

The objective is to build out the scheme in a safe and efficient manner, whilst minimising any negative impacts on the surrounding receptors and roadways. This will be achieved by adhering to best practices during construction and ensuring effective communication and collaboration between the contractor, project team, and local community.

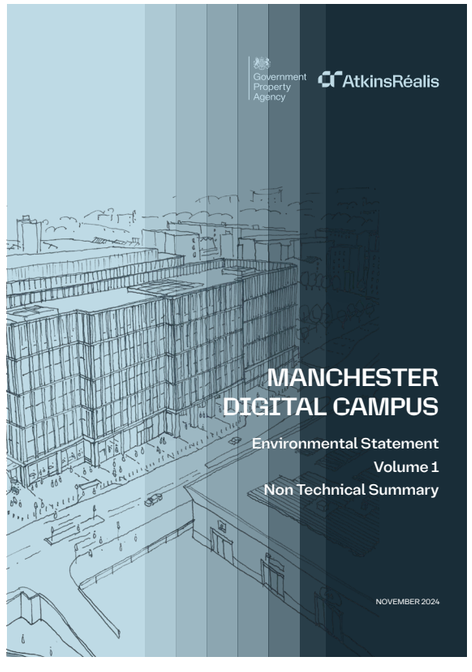
The purpose of the OCEMP is to:

- Outline how construction works will be controlled and managed during the construction phase to minimize potentially adverse impacts.
- Provide a document that supports the planning process by defining the obligations of the Contractor.
- Ensure that construction industry best practice standards are adopted throughout the project.

The scope of this OCEMP covers the management and control measures necessary to complete the enabling phase works, including forming the levels of the new park, the construction and fit-out of both buildings and all other on site works to deliver the scheme.

In due course, the Principal Contractor (once appointed) will take overall responsibility for managing the delivery of all works on site including managing the Specialist Package Contractors. They will also be responsible for ensuring that the safe and efficient delivery of the works and operation of the highway network is not disrupted by construction traffic.

For more detailed information refer to the separate OCEMP document MDCX-ATR-XX-XX-RP-Z-000026.





07 Access & Inclusivity

Access to the Buildings - Pedestrian & Cycles

Access to the Buildings - Vehicular

Service Access

Accessible Parking

Inclusive Amenities

Inclusivity Strategy

07 Access & Inclusivity

07.1 Access to the Buildings - Pedestrian & Cycles

Transport and Access

MCC planning policies along with the former Central Retail Park SRF set out a clear ambition to create a low carbon commercial district, making the most of this sustainable city centre location.

MDC is being designed to support these clear aspirations through promoting the use of sustainable and active travel via a variety of different measures highlighted below:

- Improvements to the pedestrian experience along Great Ancoats Street.
- Significant secure cycle store provision for bikes, showers, changing and lockers for staff.
- Limited on-site car parking (c. 50 accessible spaces) designated for those with increased accessibility needs only.
- An active travel plan promoting the use of sustainable transportation options for building occupants.

Site Access & Circulation

The Site can be approached and accessed by pedestrians and cyclists from a number of directions, with the arrangement of the buildings and public realm promoting movement and permeability.

City Centre: Access from western corner of the site via the Canal Plaza Great Ancoats Street and Port Street.

Victoria Station and Green Quarter: Access from the western corner of the site via Canal Plaza and route along Great Ancoats Street to the west.

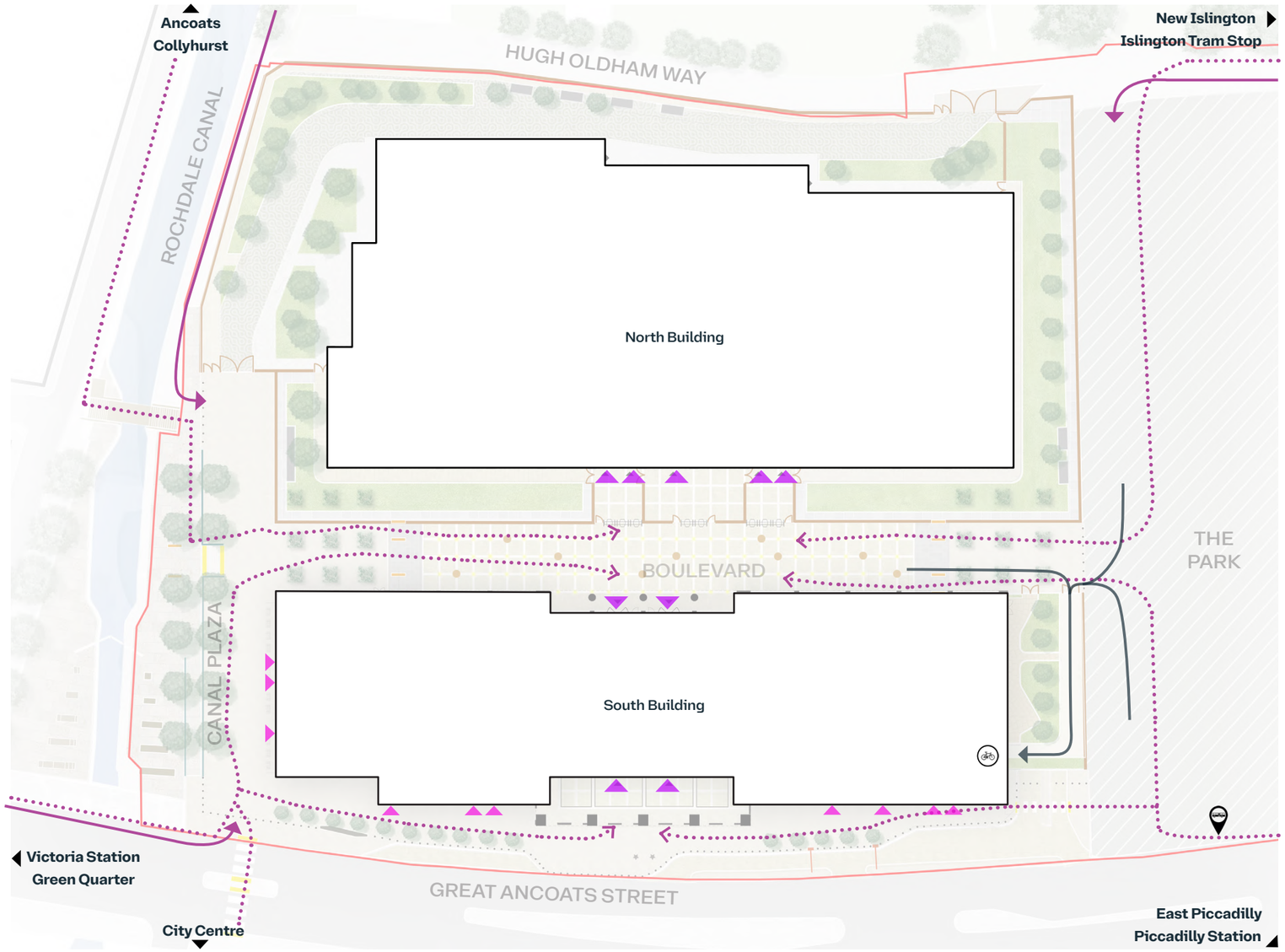
Piccadilly Station: link to and from Piccadilly Station is provided from the south east corner of the Site.

New Islington Tram Stop: Access to and from the New Islington tram stop is gained from the north-east corner of the Site. This allows further connection to the wider Manchester tram network.

Proposed Building Entrances

Building entrances to both buildings are located centrally within the Site with access being provided via the public realm. The South Building also has an entrance fronting Great Ancoats Street underneath the portico.

Entrances to the retail units have been distributed along Great Ancoats Street and the Canal Plaza as required.



Site Plan with Landscape Proposals

KEY

- Pedestrian Path
- Cycle Route (linked to existing cycle network)
- Cycle Entrance Route
- Office Entrances
- Retail Entrances
- Proposed Bus Stop
- Proposed Cycle Store

07 Access & Inclusivity

07.2 Access to the Buildings - Vehicular

Cycle Parking

A large cycle parking facility will be provided in the South Building, for staff in both buildings to use. It comprises an indoor cycle store with parking for 320 bicycles, in excess of baseline numbers required in MCC planning guidance - Manchester Core Strategy 2012, and circa 320 lockers and 32 showers. The number of showers also exceeds the required minimum in the WELL building standards.

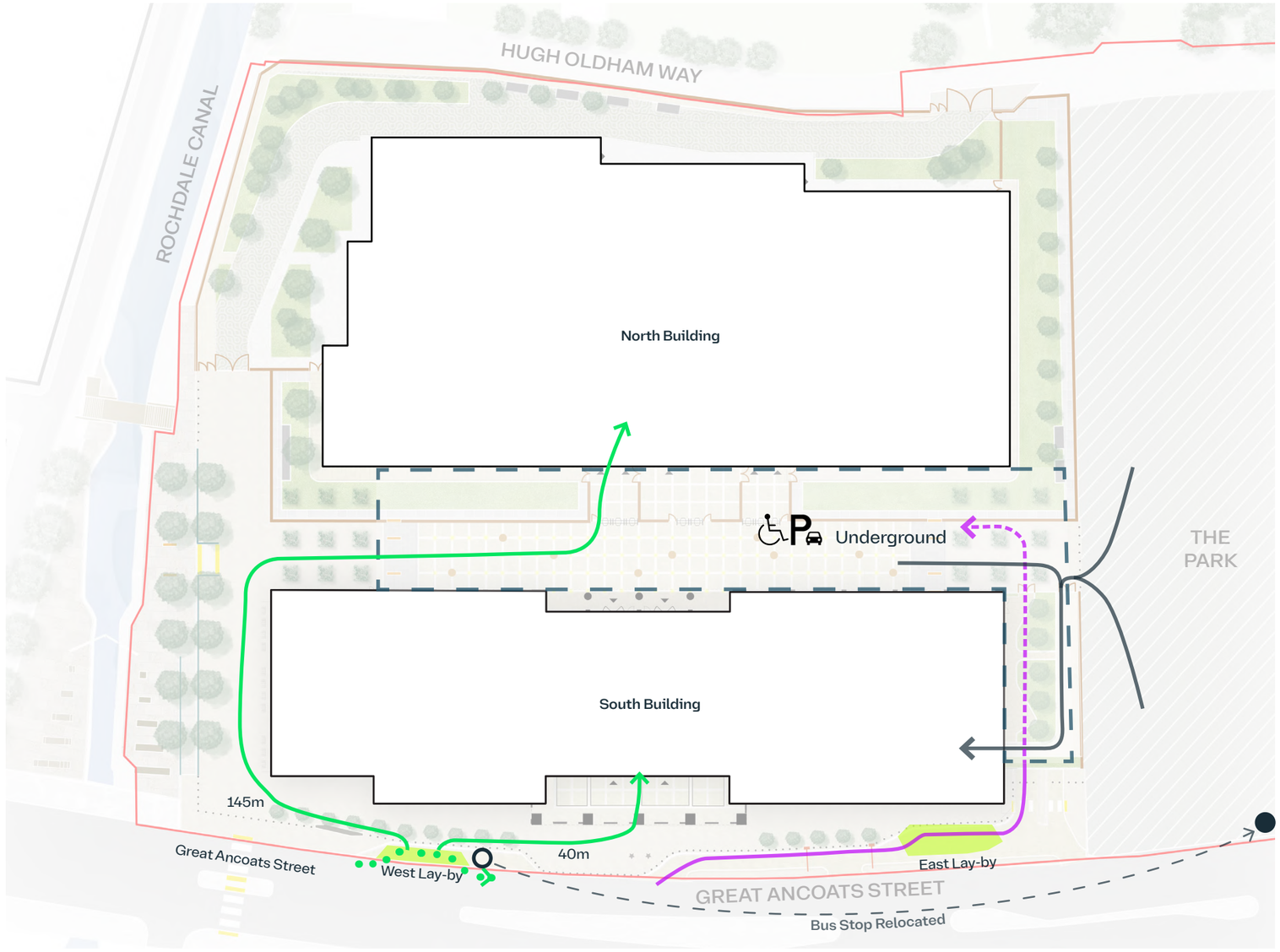
Cyclists entering the campus will be required to dismount at designated points along the campus edge. These areas will be marked with signposts to prioritise the pedestrian movement, helping to maintain a safe and accessible environment for all campus users.

Drop Off

The western lay-by is reserved for dropping off pedestrians. The eastern lay-by is for access into the undercroft parking area and for deliveries, refuse and maintenance vehicles. This separation improves pedestrian safety and reduces congestion.

Bus Stop

Another highways safety improvement which will be carried out as an enabling works to the proposals is the moving of the existing bus stop circa 100m along Great Ancoats St, to align with the new park and avoid the vehicle lay-bys.



Site Plan with Undercroft Layout

KEY

- Pedestrian route from drop off lay-by
- Cycle entrance route
- Accessible car parking entrance route
- Lay-by
- Undercroft Car Park

07 Access & Inclusivity

07.3 Service Access

Servicing

The servicing and logistics of the MDC will all be managed and controlled via Great Ancoats Street.

The South Building will be serviced through a dedicated service corridor from Great Ancoats Street at ground level that affords access to specific basement areas. Occasional vehicle access will be provided into the undercroft for servicing both buildings services plant rooms.

All servicing of the North Building will be through the undercroft. Access to the undercroft is proposed to be from a new vehicle arrangement accessed off Great Ancoats Street to minimise potential disruption. A lay-by has been included as part of the vehicle entrance area to allow for activities such as deliveries and collection of refuse.

Office Deliveries

Deliveries for the North Building are expected to be taken directly into the undercroft and then through to its basement. Deliveries for the South Building are to be undertaken from the east lay-by. Deliveries will be carefully planned and managed and wherever possible occur during 'out-of-hours' periods to avoid peak traffic times.

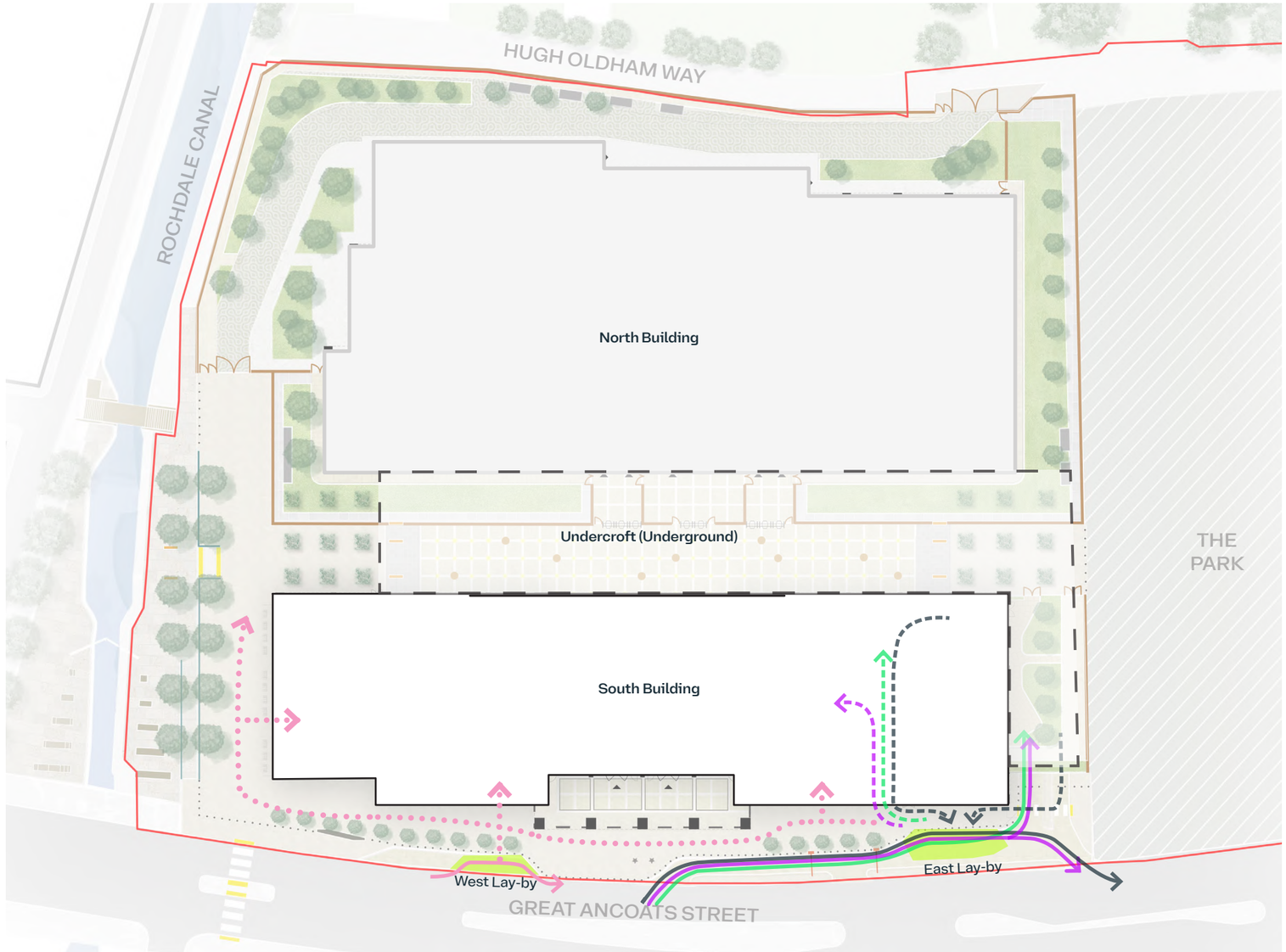
Office Refuse

Refuse collection is to be undertaken from the east lay-by to eliminate the need for larger refuse vehicles to enter the undercroft. The refuse stores within each buildings' basement have ramped access routes out onto Great Ancoats Street. It is anticipated that the FM team will move refuse bins up to the east lay-by, by means of an electric tow. Following this, refuse collection vehicles will pick up the waste from the lay-by during 'out-of-hours' periods to avoid peak traffic times.

A study has been carried out to determine the required number of bin collections based on MCC guidelines and to consider the proposed time frames throughout the week to avoid disruption to Great Ancoats Street. Five collections per week will be taking place from the east lay-by and during night time hours for a minimal impact. The bin stores in each building have been sized that they can accommodate minimum three days of waste in case of missed collections.

Retail

Retail access for deliveries and refuse collection is to be undertaken from either the east or west lay-bys predominantly during 'out-of-hours' periods to avoid peak traffic times. This is to be managed by the GPA FM team and scheduled to allow for capacity of the lay-bys.



Site Plan with Undercroft Layout

KEY

- Servicing Route - Vehicular Access
- Servicing Route - Pedestrian Access
- Refuse Collection Route
- Refuse Movement for Collection - FM Team
- Deliveries - Vehicular Access (incl. Retail)
- Deliveries - Pedestrian Access
- Retail Deliveries - Vehicular Access
- Retail Deliveries - Pedestrian Access
- Lay-by

07 Access & Inclusivity

07.4 Accessible Parking

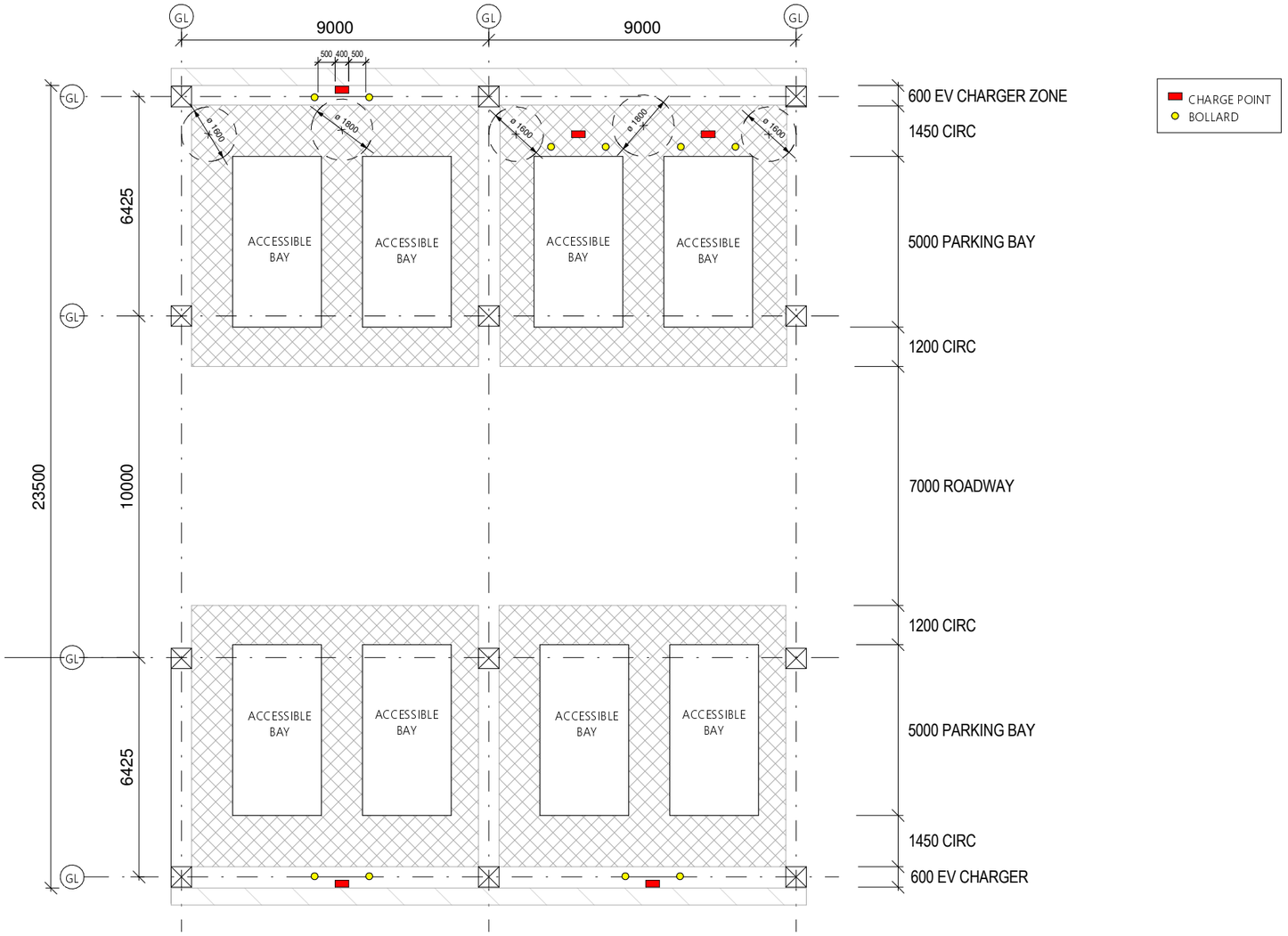
Parking

As the development is highly sustainable, most staff will be using public transport, or living locally and walking, or cycling. Therefore, only accessible parking for staff is being provided, and no other staff parking is being provided on site.

The GPA have undertaken their own assessment of numbers of accessible spaces they require, based on the known needs of their staff. This is 50 accessible parking spaces. Note, there are 5 additional spaces associated with facilities management and operations.

Accessible Parking Area

- Under cover in site undercroft, accessed from Great Ancoats Street
- Pedestrian access via lifts inside buildings
- Includes accessible electric charging points
- Design of spaces aligned with Approved Document S, BS8300 and PAS1899



Parking Bay Setting Out Plan

07 Access & Inclusivity

07.5 Inclusive Amenities

The design shall provide spaces in each building, or shared between them, spaces which support the wellbeing of a diverse staff community, examples of which (not a prescriptive or exhaustive list) are described below.

Well-being room

A Well-being room shall provide a quiet, neutral space away from the office environment for people to take time out from the workplace. Comfortable and neutral enclosed space, with soft furnishings to provide a calm and private space away from the office environment to aid rest, recuperation or when seeking a quiet place.

Recovery rooms

A recovery room shall provide a quiet, restful space away from the office environment for people to go to when they are feeling physically or mentally unwell. The recovery rooms shall be furnished in neutral and/or natural materials.

Reflection rooms

A reflection room shall provide a quiet, private space away from the office environment for people to spend time taking part in structured or unstructured meditation, reflection or prayer, either individually or in a group. The space shall be neutral and muted and will have no decoration that would indicate any particular activity, religion or faith.

Do Not Disturb Zone

On each work floor a dedicated zone with work settings to provide space in which individuals can concentrate, consider and work with complex information without being distracted or disturbed. The do not disturb zone also supports neurodiverse people by providing a work place with neutral finishes, minimal distractions and user controlled lighting.

Changing room with lockers and clothes drying room

Changing room full-height, self contained changing spaces, sports lockers and separate clothes drying room. Located close to showers and toilets.

Universal showers with integral changing area

A suite of individual, self-contained shower rooms with full height walls and doors. Integral dry changing area. Separate changing room, clothes drying rooms and toilets to be located close by.

Accessible WCs

Accessible facilities - Ambulant accessible and wheelchair accessible WCs - are to be provided in every toilet block in every building core. The number of WCs are aligned with British Standards guidance and all workspaces are within 40m of a wheelchair accessible WC, as per BCO guidance.

Core:

Ambulant toilets

The cores shall provide ambulant WCs to each floor.

Wheelchair accessible WCs

Each core provides wheelchair accessible WCs.

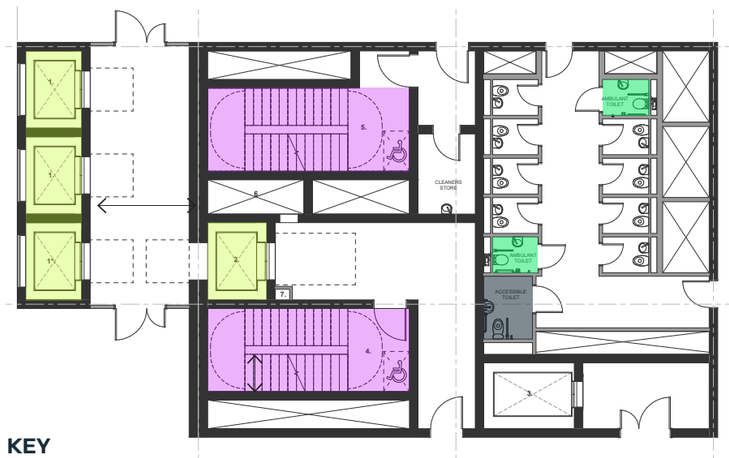
Lifts

The lift provision shall include evacuation lifts to all levels.

Stairs

The core stairs shall adopt the BS 8300 guidance for accessibility and inclusivity.

Example Core

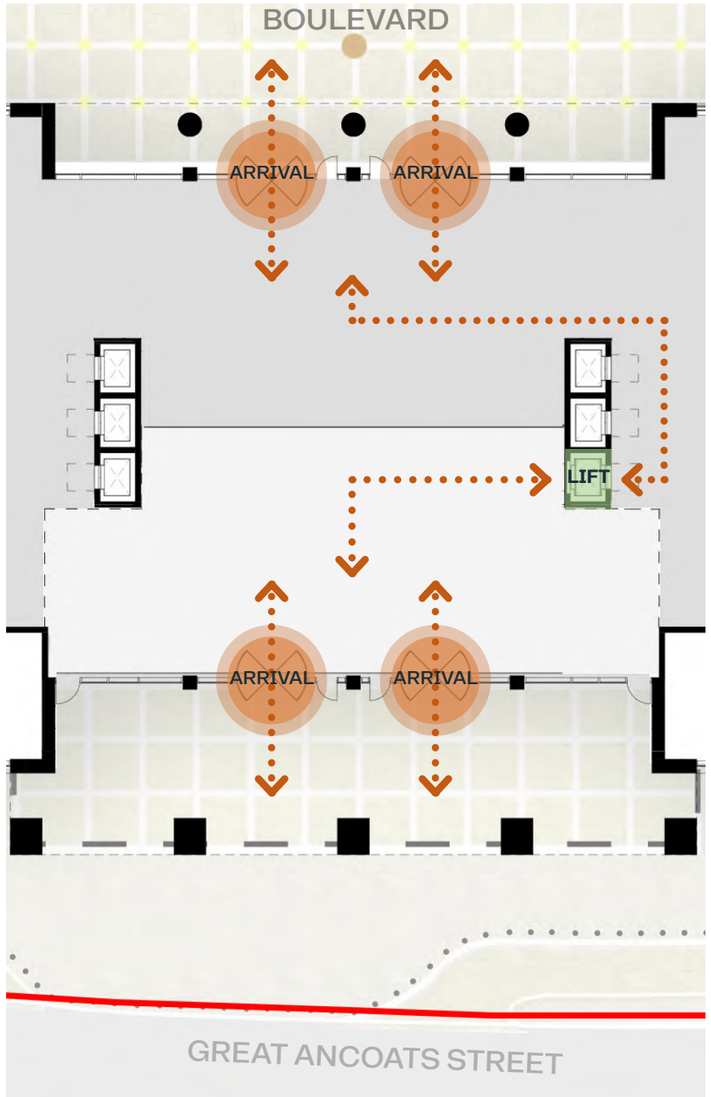


KEY

- Core
- Ambulant Accessible WCs
- Wheelchair Accessible WCs
- Lifts
- Stairs

Split level building access for wheelchair users

The building's split-level design responding to the site level strategy across the site has been effectively addressed by incorporating a lift that connects the lower ground floor to the upper ground floor, ensuring seamless accessibility for wheelchair users and individuals with mobility impairments. Clear signage, spacious interiors, and user-friendly controls, will enable easy navigation between levels.



07 Access & Inclusivity

07.6 Inclusivity Strategy

MDC will be designed to class-leading inclusive and accessible design standards to ensure it can be easily used by a wide and diverse range of people. This aligns with the GPA design guide aspiration to:

- Go beyond meeting minimum standards or legislative requirements wherever possible as detailed in the Inclusive Design Standards.
- Create buildings, spaces and places that are accessible to as many people as possible, including those with visible and non-visible disabilities, without the need for workplace adjustments or assistance.
- Provide space and facilities that are convenient, avoid unnecessary effort, separation or segregation.
- Recognise that everyone benefits from improved accessibility.
- Be responsive to different ways of working adopted by individuals and teams.

Inclusive Government Workplaces

The GPA has clearly set out their intent to deliver inclusive environments within their vision for great places to work. The vision is built on 10 topics, one of which is that premises will be inclusive as indicated by the following extracts below:

“I am confident my workplace is inclusive.”

“Inclusive. Used easily by everybody.”

“We help our diverse workforce realise their full potential.”

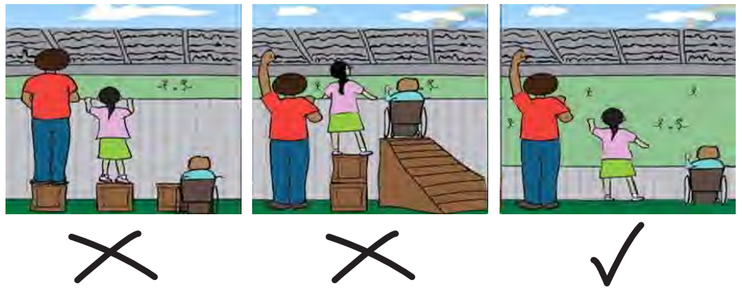
- Page 10 of GPA Design Guidance V3.0

Inclusive Environment Definition

“An inclusive environment recognises and meets the needs of the people who use it. It enables equal, intuitive and dignified use by everyone. It does not physically or socially separate, discriminate or isolate. It readily accommodates and welcomes diverse user requirements, across all ages and abilities and embracing every background, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion or belief, and culture. It helps people to live and work independently and participate fully in all aspects of life.

Creating an inclusive environment means going beyond minimum legislative requirements and creating buildings, spaces and places that are as accessible as possible, to as many people as possible, without the need for reasonable adjustments or assistance. It is about ‘designing-out’ barriers to access so everyone can just turn up and use the whole of the building, space or place without having to plan ahead”

- Government Workplace Inclusive Design Standards



Technical Standards

Development of an inclusive environment requires a clear client-led strategy from the earliest stages of a project. In this instance the inclusive design strategy is set out in the Government Workplace Inclusive Design Standards March 2020 (V1.0).

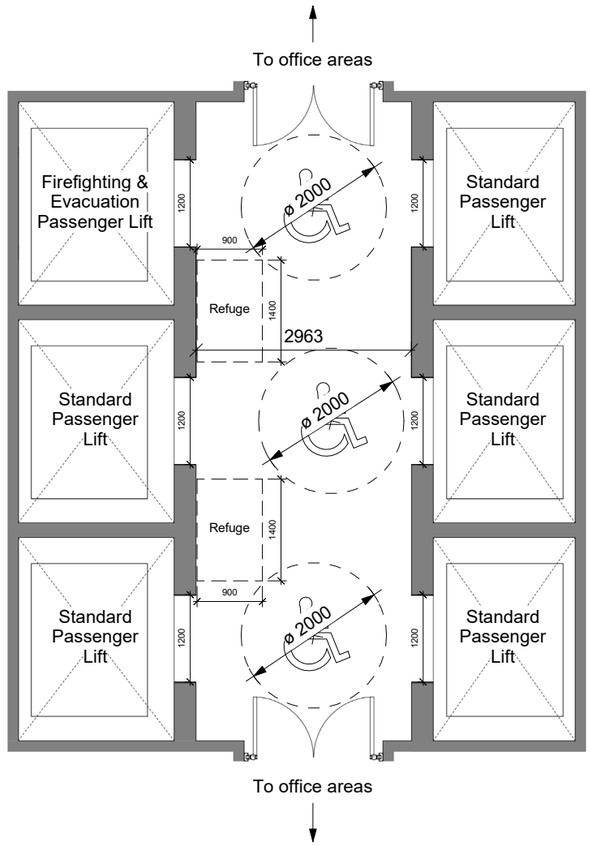
The technical inclusive design requirements applied to this development are set out and inherent in the GPA’s Government Workplace Design Guide and its Inclusive Design Standards. The primary technical standards referred to within the GPA requirements are:

- BS8300-1:2018. Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment. Part 1: External environment – Code of practice.
- BS8300-2:2018. Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment. Part 2: Buildings – Code of Practice.
- Building Regulations 2010. Access to and use of the buildings. Approved Document M Volume 2 – buildings other than dwellings. 2015 edition incorporating 2020 amendments.
- Other than the GPA’s Inclusive Design Standards, BS8300-1:2018 and BS8300-2:2018 are considered by GPA as their baseline, rather than the minimum requirements of Approved Documents when it pertains to accessibility and Inclusive design.
- Other technical guidance and research as needed

The GPA standards go above and beyond what is included in the MCC 2003 guidance document Design for Access 2.

External Access Principles

- Smooth, level external floor surfaces
- Level access on all door thresholds
- Retail unit floor levels to match external ground levels
- Choice of ramp and stair routes to navigate level changes in the public realm
- Using the shallowest possible gradients
- Improved environment for pedestrians (including people using wheelchairs and other mobility aids) along great Ancoats Street and canal towpath



The turning circle for all spaces has been increased by 2 meters, exceeding the minimum required standard of 1.5 meters, as part of GPA’s commitment to going beyond the minimum requirements.

08 Sustainability

Sustainable Design Principles

Sustainable Development

08 Sustainability

08.1 Sustainable Design Principles

1. Facade & Net Zero Carbon

MDC has sustainability and wellbeing embedded into its design from first principles and will be market leading in terms of sustainability.

The design proposal for MDC is first rate when it comes to its energy in use performance. The client brief is to deliver a building that is best in class for sustainability and tenant wellbeing. The design and performance of the building will be appraised, monitored, and refined by using BREEAM and NABERS UK which is a sustainability rating system that looks specifically at energy in use.

In order to meet these sustainability levels, the physical characteristics of the building fabric have evolved as follows:

- The solid façade will be made from a natural material; precast concrete has been chosen for its inherent reduction in embodied energy. Use of this material will provide significant savings in the energy used to construct the building. It will also improve the airtightness of the façade resulting in less energy escaping from the building.
- Minimising the number of facade system types and materiality variations helps leverage the advantages of repetition and optimisation of components during production and installation. This can improve material efficiency, thus helping reduce embodied carbon in production, transportation, and installation.
- The glazing allows natural daylight which lowers energy consumption by lessening the need for artificial lighting in office floorplates.
- Incorporating photovoltaic (PV) solar panels transform the structure into an energy-generating entity, reducing reliance on non-renewable energy sources and lowering carbon footprints.
- Deep external reveals used in south facing windows help to reduce solar gain, which in turn reduces the need for air condition and other cooling methods, leading to lower energy consumption.

2. External Landscape

Ground floor private external landscape areas that incorporates plants and greenery are provided, contributing to the site's biodiversity, helping to manage rainfall runoff whilst also improving the occupants' well-being and productivity.

3. Cycle Hub

The development will benefit from a generous cycle hub facility allowing for the storage of 320 cycles, 320 lockers, 32 showers, a drying room and cycle maintenance facilities. Cyclists will enter the building via a dedicated access point into the cycle hub. The inclusion of the cycle store promotes alternative transportation methods that are environmentally friendly and reduce carbon emissions. Cyclists contribute to reducing traffic congestion and air pollution, thereby improving air quality and public health. Additionally, cycling infrastructure encourages physical activity and supports a healthier lifestyle.

4. Wellness

The buildings include areas such as wellbeing and recovery rooms, reflection rooms, large cycling facilities, and visible reception staircases to encourage use. The interior of the building has also been designed around wellbeing and comfort. Strategies such as biophilic design have been implemented to ensure access and views to greenery and natural daylighting to enhance user's experience. This sustainability and wellness strategy across the building ensures the scheme is environmentally responsive and meets market demands.

5. EPC/ BREEAM/NABERS

The buildings will be designed and built to achieve a BREEAM excellent accreditation, an EPC A rating and NABERS UK (DfP) 5 stars which will ensure that the scheme is on a net zero carbon trajectory in operation.

Energy efficient services and renewable technologies will provide betterments over the building regulations to meet occupier demands.

CODE FOR A SUSTAINABLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT
BREEAM

NABERS
UNITED KINGDOM

08 Sustainability

08.2 Sustainable Development

1. Environment - Biodiversity & Ecology

Improvements to site ecology encapsulated into landscape proposals with overall 10% biodiversity net-gain.

2. Resources - Circular Economy & Embodied Carbon

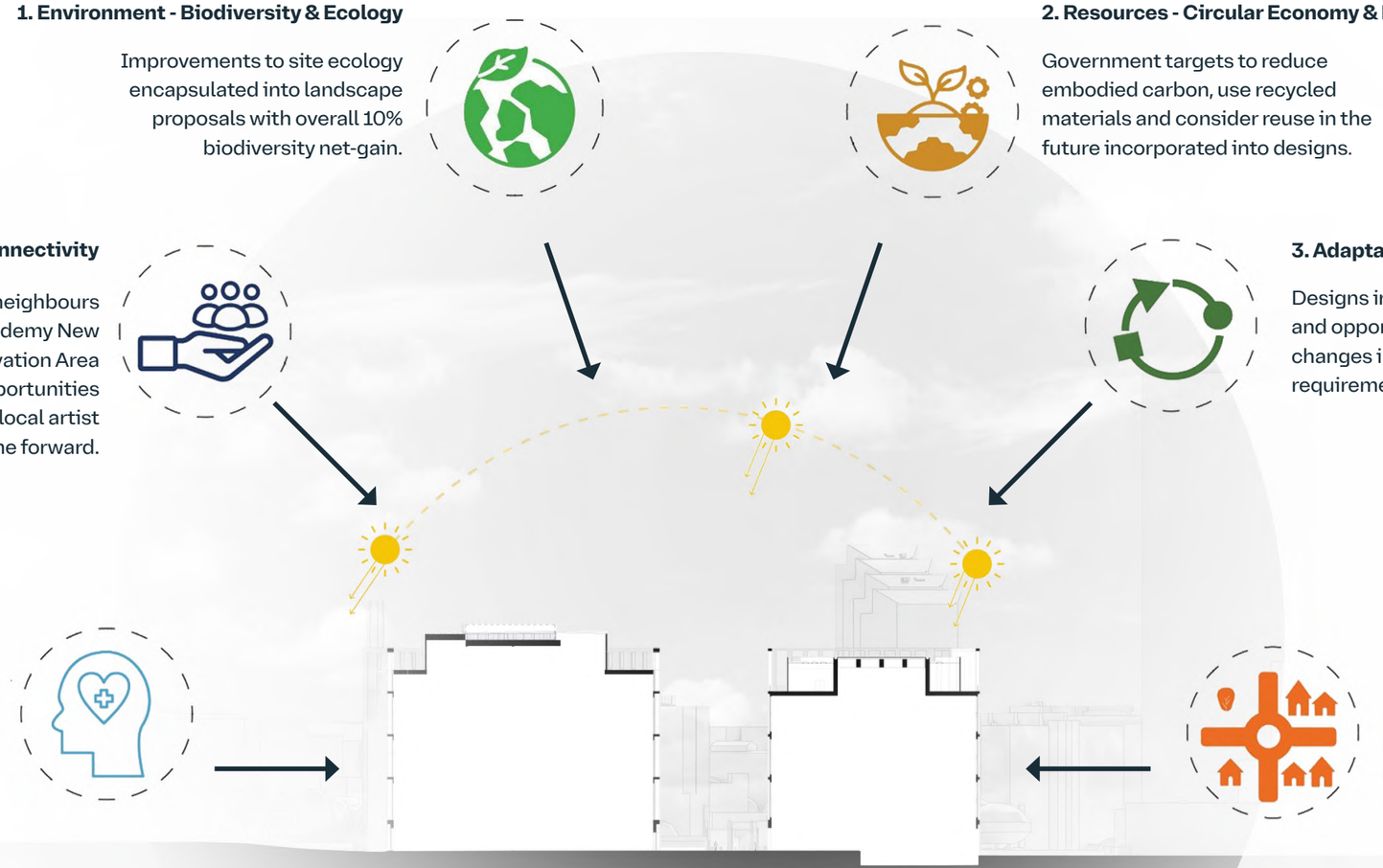
Government targets to reduce embodied carbon, use recycled materials and consider reuse in the future incorporated into designs.

8. Community - Connectivity

Considerations of neighbours including Coop Academy New Islington, Ancoats Conservation Area and Listed Buildings. Opportunities for community and local artist engagement to come forward.

3. Adaptation - Resilience & Retrofit

Designs incorporating flood resilience, and opportunities to flex spaces to meet changes in government department requirements.



7. Wellbeing - Human Centred Design

User-focused designs of spaces and places provided across the campus considering psychological and physiological impacts.

4. Connectivity - Physical Infrastructure

Site permeability enhanced with new public realm spaces improving use and connectivity between east Manchester and the city centre.

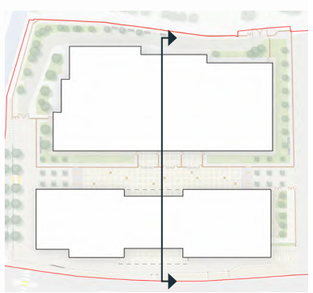
6. Energy & Carbon - Operational

Sustainable design approach developed to reduce overall energy demand for the buildings to achieve NABERS 5*.

5. Economics Sustainability

Socio-economic benefits including opportunities for jobs within the area associated with construction, government departments, operations and management on the site, as well as retail provision.

Section Key Plan



09 Landscape

Existing Trees

Design Strategy

Site Masterplan

Character Areas

Boundary Conditions

Circulation, Access & Site Levels

Fire Access

Hard Landscape Materials

Soft Landscape

Character Areas

09 Landscape

09.1 Existing Trees

Existing vegetation / tree survey

A full site walkover and tree survey was undertaken in September 2022 when trees were still in leaf. The survey identified 33 individual and groups of trees and shrubs, with the trees predominantly located along the boundaries of the Site.

The plan opposite shows the locations of existing vegetation on the Site. Tree spreads vary from 3m to 12m averaging 5-6m with heights varying from 4m to 12m averaging 6-7m. Typical species include willow, ash, sycamore and cherry.

It is not possible to retain any of the existing vegetation as part of the proposed new development. Much of the existing tree canopy is located along the northern Site boundary to the school, but has self sown around various boundaries and retaining walls. The requirement to adjust the levels significantly in this area of the Site, along with the need to ensure the security and safeguarding of the school, has resulted in the need to remove this vegetation. The vegetation along the southern perimeter is also affected by the new levels required for access or to accommodate the new building footprint.

Careful consideration has been given to the replacement of trees on the site and also the size of proposed trees. The majority of the trees will be specified at 30cm+ girth semi-mature as shown within the planting schedules which contributes to biodiversity net gain.





Existing trees on site



Site Plan with Existing Trees

09 Landscape

09.2 Design Strategy

Strategic landscape development

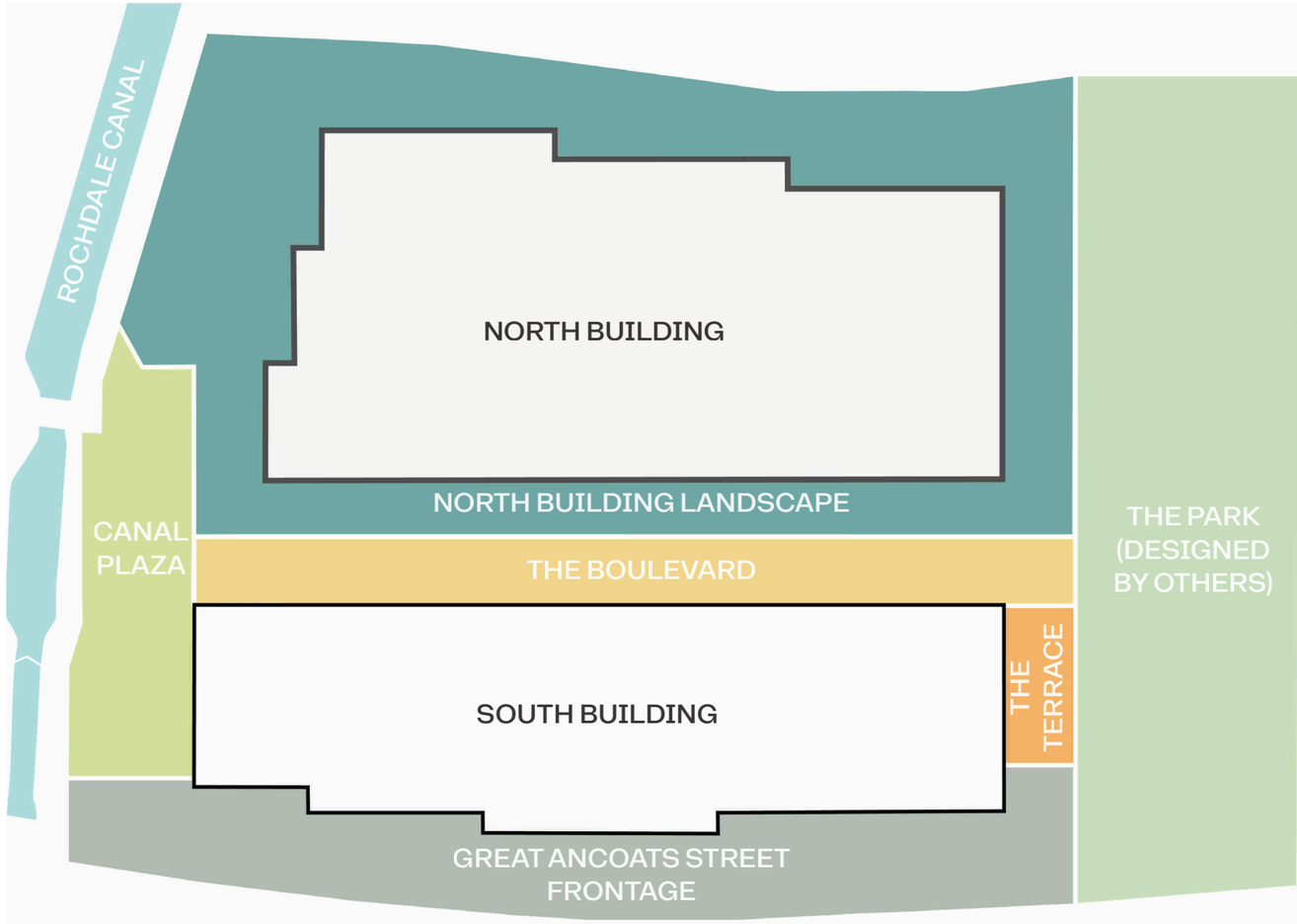
The diagram opposite identifies the key public realm spaces within the masterplan, associated with the two proposed buildings:

- North Building Landscape
- The Boulevard
- Canal Plaza
- Great Ancoats Street Frontage
- The Terrace

Key design drivers

The icons below illustrate the key design drivers that have been at the heart of the design process throughout the development of the design. This links closely with the brief and the specific requirements of this site and the aspiration to bring these challenges and opportunities together through the design of this unique campus to create a world class workplace setting.

The design of the external campus should reflect the design principles and ambition of the organisation to create an exciting, welcoming and secure campus that supports the organisation to attract and retain a world-class workforce.





09 Landscape

09.3 Site Masterplan

The masterplan illustrates a unified and comprehensive concept design. This has been achieved through a coordinated multi-disciplinary approach to deliver functional and attractive external spaces.

The goal is to create a high-quality public realm and a series of attractive engaging and distinctive spaces which also accommodate demanding security and accessibility requirements for an anticipated workforce of several thousand staff.

Site neighbours have also influenced the design proposals. These include a new park, a school, residential buildings with an historic envelope and a busy highway.

The landscape proposals have been coordinated with the design of the Park prepared by others and being brought forward concurrently as a separate planning application.



Site Masterplan

KEY

1. North Building landscape
2. Footbridge connection to Ancoats Conservation Area
3. Northern, school facing boundary
4. The Boulevard
5. Eastern, park facing boundary
6. Canal Plaza
7. Great Ancoats Street frontage
8. The Terrace

09 Landscape

09.4 Character Areas

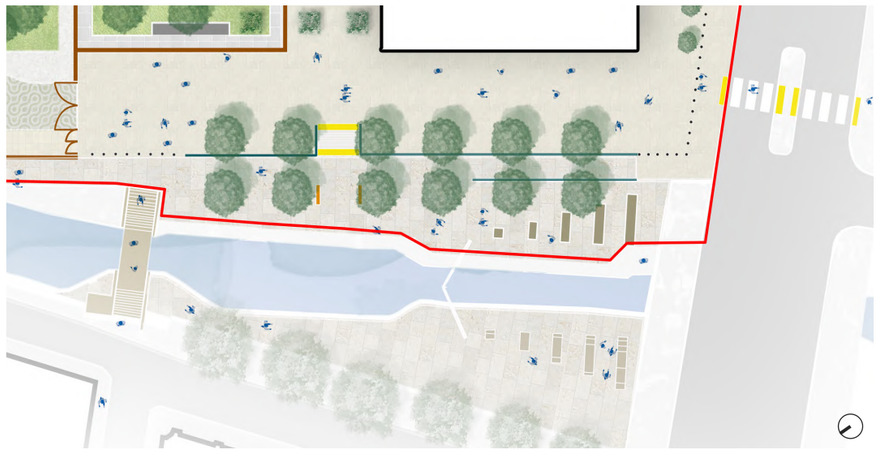
Canal Plaza

This space forms a key interface with the Ancoats conservation area and it will be both a key movement space as well as a destination.

Historic England has also noted the potential for enhancement of the public realm along the canal frontage at this location. The design here will mirror the treatment on the Redhill Street side of the canal with the introduction of large specimen tree planting of the same species (Acacias) found on the Redhill side of the canal, set on a high-quality natural stone pavement. This will create a new "joined up" canal plaza space. Trees will be set within high quality corten steel tree surrounds. Seating here will capitalise on a sunny west facing position. A generous pavement caters for the expected movement of pedestrians through this space coming from the canal towpath, Great Ancoats Street and the Henry Street facing bridge crossing and on to it. This pavement will also allow escape for Fire Engine and emergency scenarios onto Great Ancoats Street via series of drop-bollards.

A space for outside retail use seating is provided to the immediate west of the South Building facing the lines of planting with the backdrop of the historic mills behind delivering an attractive and desirable location. Retaining walls and balustrades form the edge to this space along the canal frontage providing a gentle sloped access from the plaza to the canal side edge. A short flight of steps aligned to the boulevard form access further to the north.

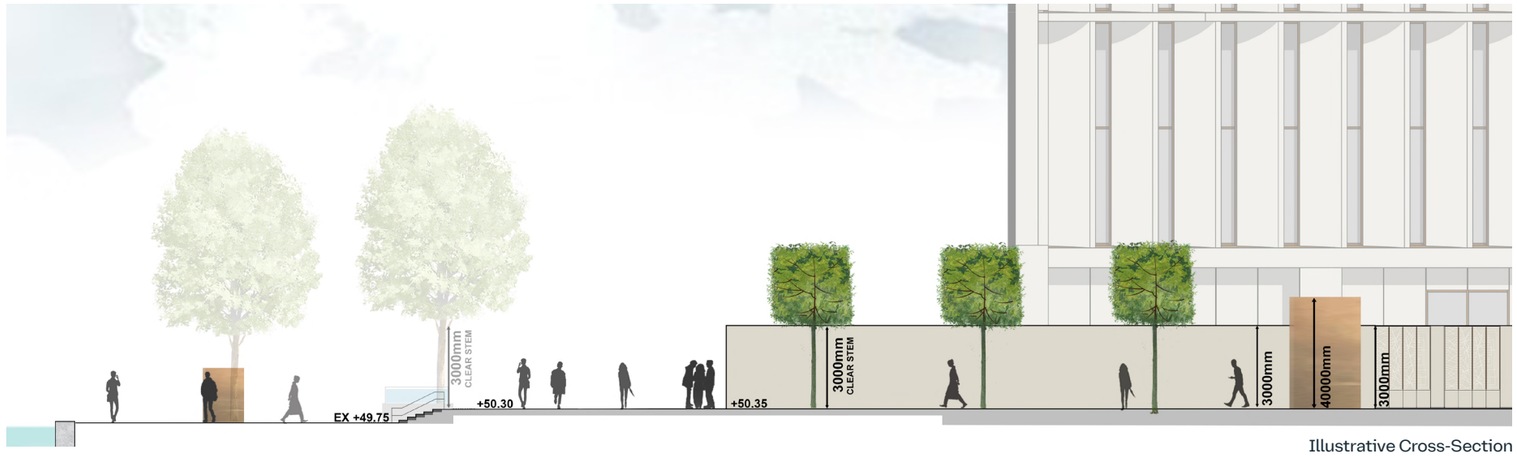
Overall, a high-quality public realm will be created comprising mature trees set within natural stone paving, with low key changes in level and generous seating. This will unify the two sides of the canal, providing a high-quality civic backdrop to both the conservation area and the new buildings of the Digital Campus.



Plan View



3D View



Illustrative Cross-Section

Precedent images



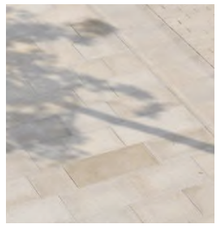
Large specimen tree planting



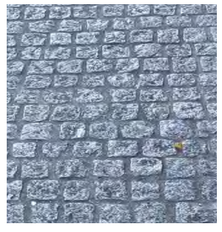
Corten steel tree grilles



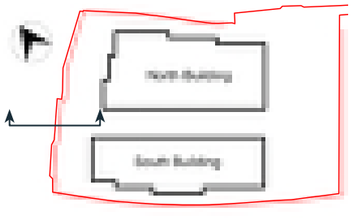
Natural stone steps



Natural stone paving to Canal Plaza



Grey granite sett paving to canal edge to match existing



Section Location Plan

09 Landscape

09.4 Character Areas

The Boulevard

This is a key access space for the building occupants which will be characterised by a formal hard paved space with a grid of pleached (clipped box headed) trees at each end. The trees will help to form a strong threshold and will define the space at each end of this 120m long route. The threshold will also be accentuated by three 5m high vertical sculptural gateway features with a ground level change in material and colour to further highlight the transition. The space beyond will be paved in natural stone with a Cartesian grid pattern formed between each threshold creating a generous pavement and arrival arena to each of the two main building entrances lying between. The entrances are located to the north and south, more or less opposite each other. The northern building will have turnstiled access points.

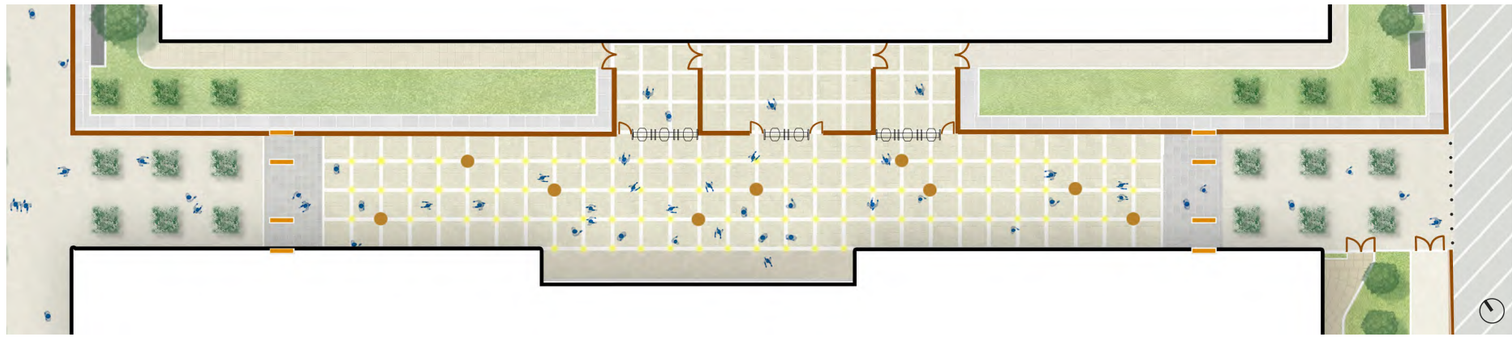
A ground plane of recessed lights will be incorporated into the central pavement including:

- Spotlights placed at the intersections of the cartesian grid, these can be either on or off depending on a flexible programme to achieve varying effects.
- A grid of linear lights placed along the cartesian grid, these can be either on or off depending on a flexible programme to achieve varying effects.
- The lighting system will be programmed so that spotlights and grid lights can form different patterns/ effects if required.
- Nine brass plaques will be incorporated into the cartesian grid, each one reflecting a person or date relevant to the "Digital" nature of the campus, celebrating Manchester's history in digital/ technological developments.

The wall enclosing the North Building will form the northern boundary to the space. This will be a 3m high concrete wall which will be adorned with artwork and embossed patterns holding a digital theme.

The Boulevard will cater for large scale pedestrian movement to the key building entrances and cyclists that will access the South Building via the Terrace.

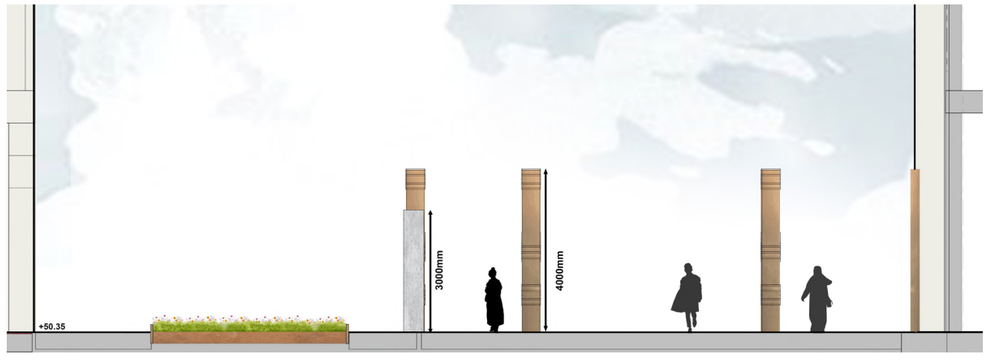
The design intent of this space is as a high-quality pedestrian movement space with flexible lighting and artwork celebrating the digital nature of the Campus.



Plan View



Illustrative Cross-Section



Illustrative Cross-Section

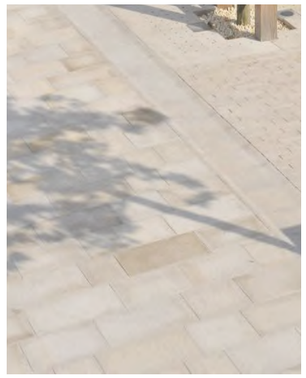


Section Location Plan

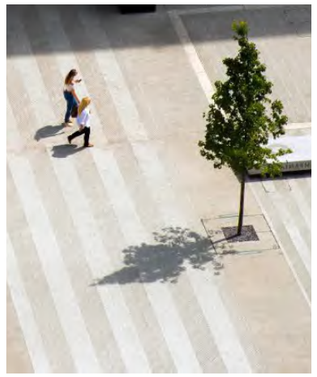
09 Landscape

09.4 Character Areas

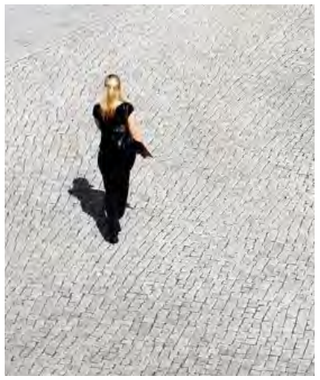
Precedent Images



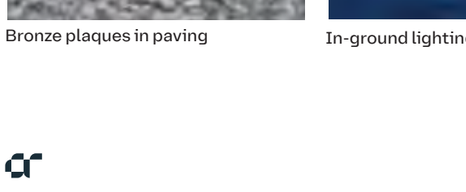
Natural stone paving



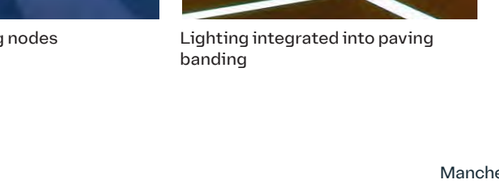
Contrasting paving banding



Grey granite setts to the Boulevard thresholds



Small grids of trees to define each end of The Boulevard



Corten steel tree grilles



Bronze plaques in paving

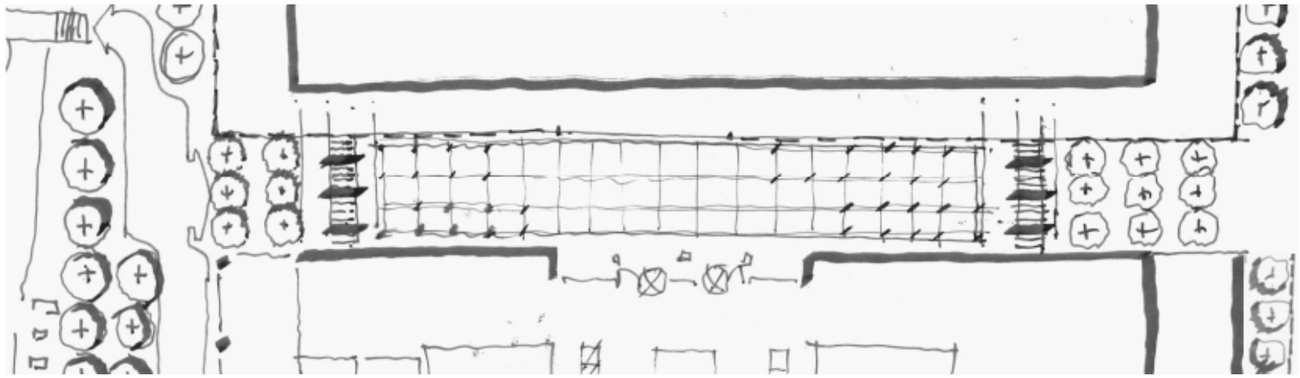


In-ground lighting nodes



Lighting integrated into paving banding

Visualisations



Sketch development



3D View

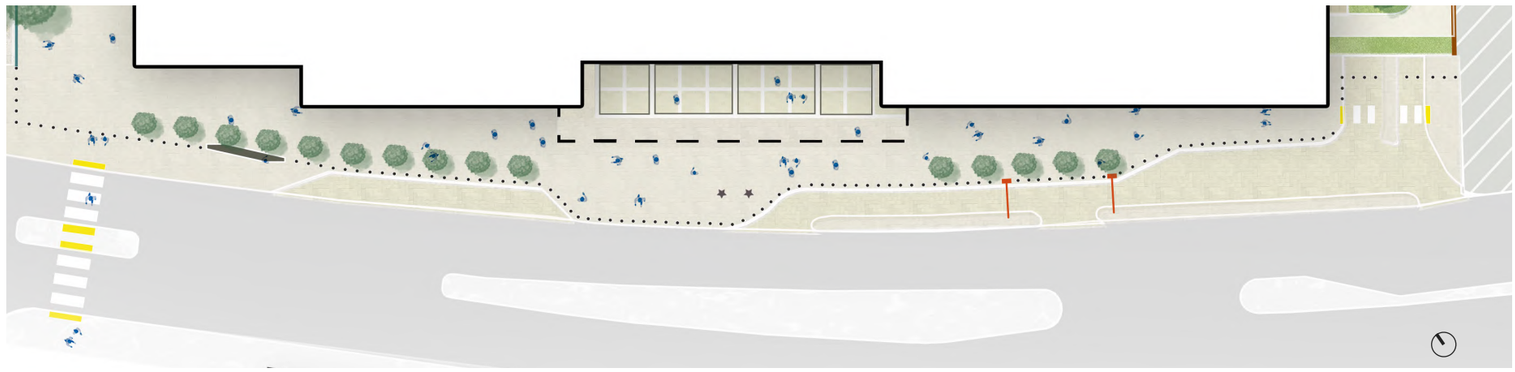
09 Landscape

09.4 Character Areas

Great Ancoats Street Frontage

The form and massing of the proposed South Building will help to repair the frontage along Great Ancoats Street, providing an extended retail frontage for an additional 120m length. This will be served by a generous high-quality natural stone pavement with gentle gradients delivering access for all, to promote movement along the retail frontages of the elevation, creating a safe and civic space away from vehicular traffic. The design frames the key entrance to the building with intensified paving in a grid of small unit pavers to help highlight the arrival space, which also lies under a high-level canopy. A pair of flag poles will adorn this area to reinforce the importance of the entrance / arrival space.

Vehicular access for deliveries and approved secure access into the undercroft is also provided within this space via a vehicle lay-by and pull in space with contrasting kerbs for the partially sighted. The use of this pull in space will be regulated and is not for general use. A large bespoke bench will provide seating along Great Ancoats Street with age-appropriate detailing. A line of robust bollards set back from the road edge will provide protection along the entire elevation.



Plan View

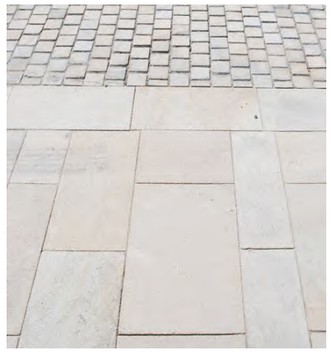


Illustrative Cross-Section



Section Location Plan

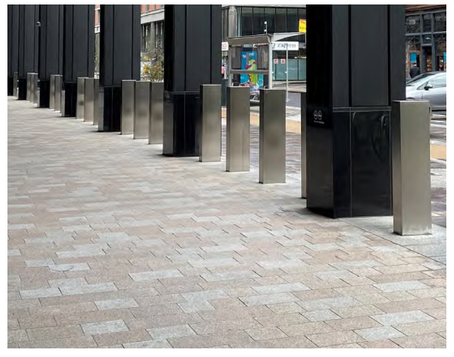
Precedent images



Natural stone sett paving (200 x 100 nm)



Natural stone paving to lay-by (100 x 100 mm)



Bollards to provide a secure line



Drop bollards

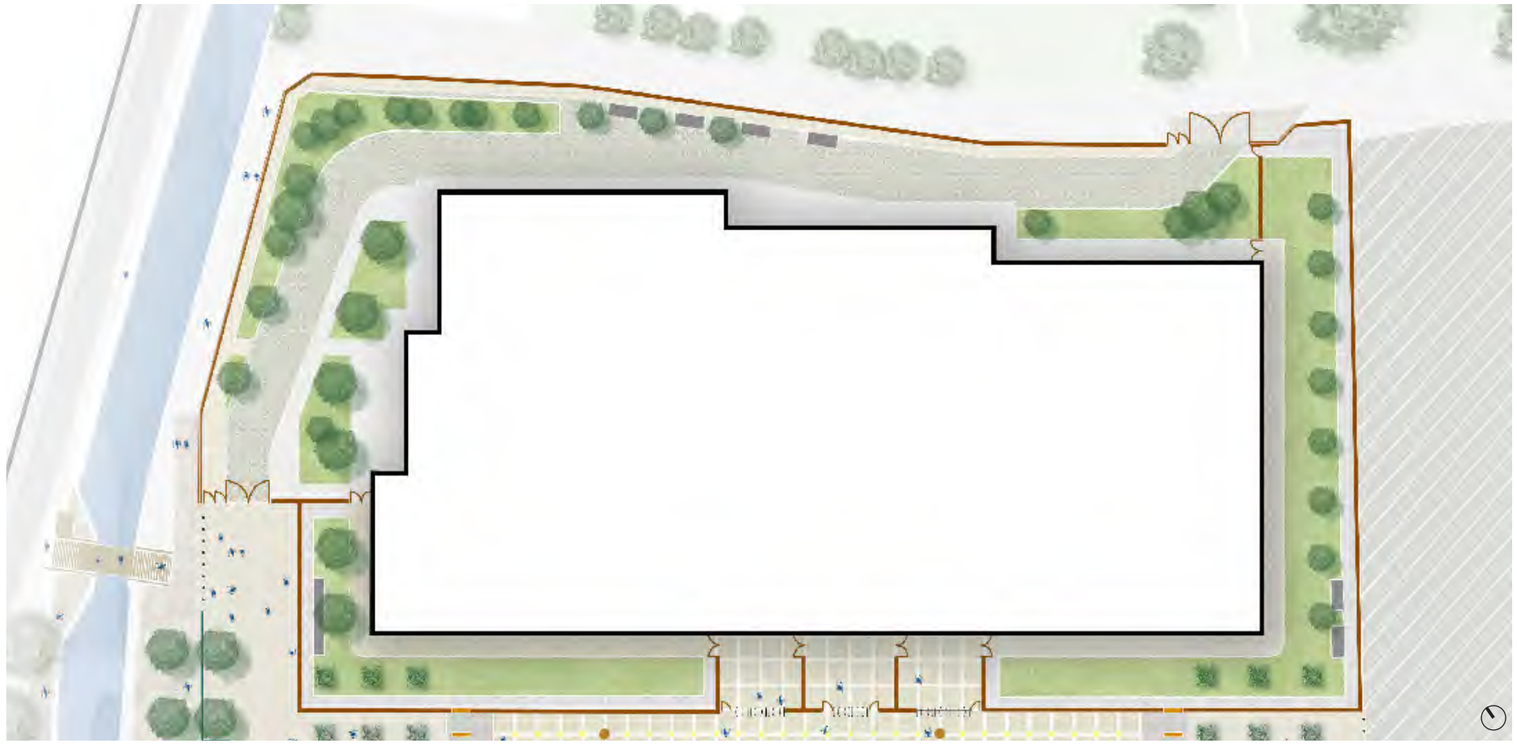
09 Landscape

09.4 Character Areas

North Building Landscape

The North Building sits to the north of the Boulevard and is enveloped by its own landscape setting which faces the school to the north, the boulevard to the south and the park and conservation area at each end both west and east facing. The design of this space will provide an attractive planted setting and a green apron which will envelope the building, delivering welcome views onto green space from within the building. Access to the perimeter of this building is restricted so this space cannot be accessed by the public. A concrete perimeter wall forms the boundary of this space with the treatment of this wall varying on each elevation responding to the context beyond.

The canal side boundary will incorporate artwork reflecting the history of the Ancoats Conservation Area, the historic mills and Rochdale Canal. The boundary with the school will be embellished through artwork that will be agreed with the school. The Park boundary will respond to the greener environment picking up on its more naturalistic neighbour with motifs representing the flora and fauna / history of the park. The Boulevard will embrace the 'digital theme' of the campus and will be enriched through coding pattern embellishment. Some of the wall sections will remain as blank panels. The planted spaces will comprise of low species and specimen trees of varying heights and species some of which will reflect those found in the park such as Pine and Cherry. A dedicated fire access route will wrap around the building to the north and western sides. This will be formed from grasscrete lending a predominantly green appearance to the surface.



Plan View

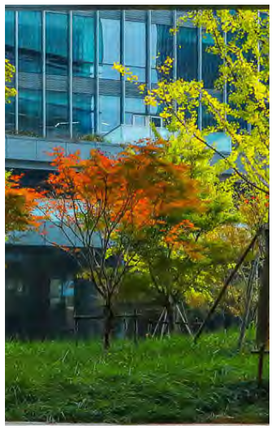
Precedent images



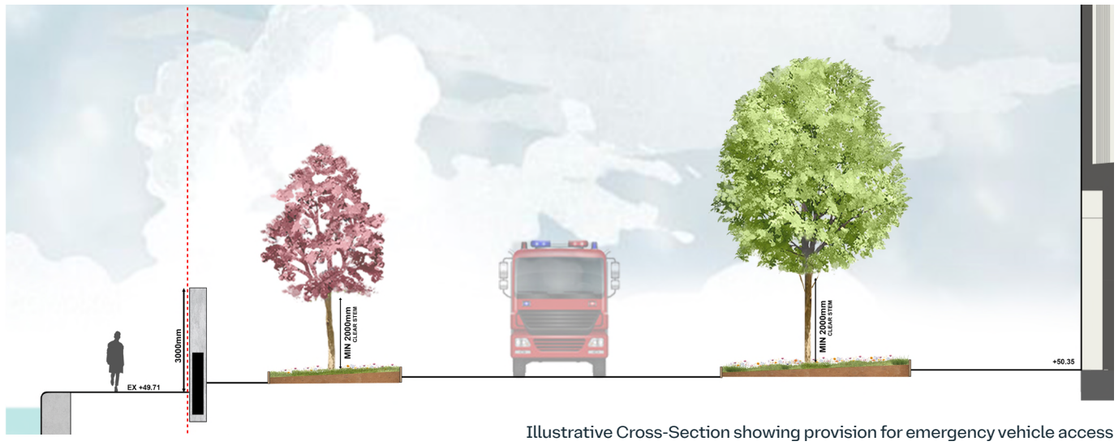
Grasscrete



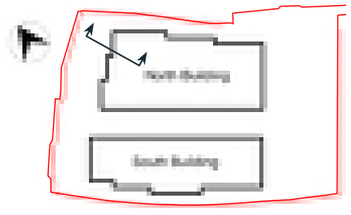
Low level planting and groundcover



Small specimen trees to provide seasonal interest



Illustrative Cross-Section showing provision for emergency vehicle access



Section Location Plan

09 Landscape

09.4 Character Areas

Park Interface

Upon completion of the initial development, the park site will feature a levelled, grassed surface, providing a clean and open space that integrates smoothly with the surrounding development. This will serve as a temporary solution while detailed park works by MCC are being prepared, ensuring the area is both functional and visually appealing during this transitional phase.

The GPA MDC design team and MCC park design team have collaborated on the design development of each scheme, giving careful consideration to the interfaces of the boundaries of the two schemes, ensuring that they blend seamlessly into one another.

The two schemes overlap in a number of areas. To the north the boundary will be formed by the concrete wall which will be faced by planting on the park side and will be embossed by plant motifs over this section to reflect its parkside setting. The planting on the park side will over time partly obscure this wall. Where the two sites join at grade and interface where the Boulevard joins the park, the materials will flow into each other and provide complementary colours and tones along this boundary.

Progressing south from this interlinked arrival point, the park steps down in a series of planted terraces and the boundary with the Digital Campus site is once again formed by a concrete wall of varying exposed height as it drops down to Great Ancoats Street level. The wall will vary in exposed height and will become obscured over time as planting in the park side matures.

There will be a private terraced planted space above the wall in this lower section, this is described in more detail below. The pavement at the lower end of the park will join that at the undercroft entrance on Great Ancoats Street.

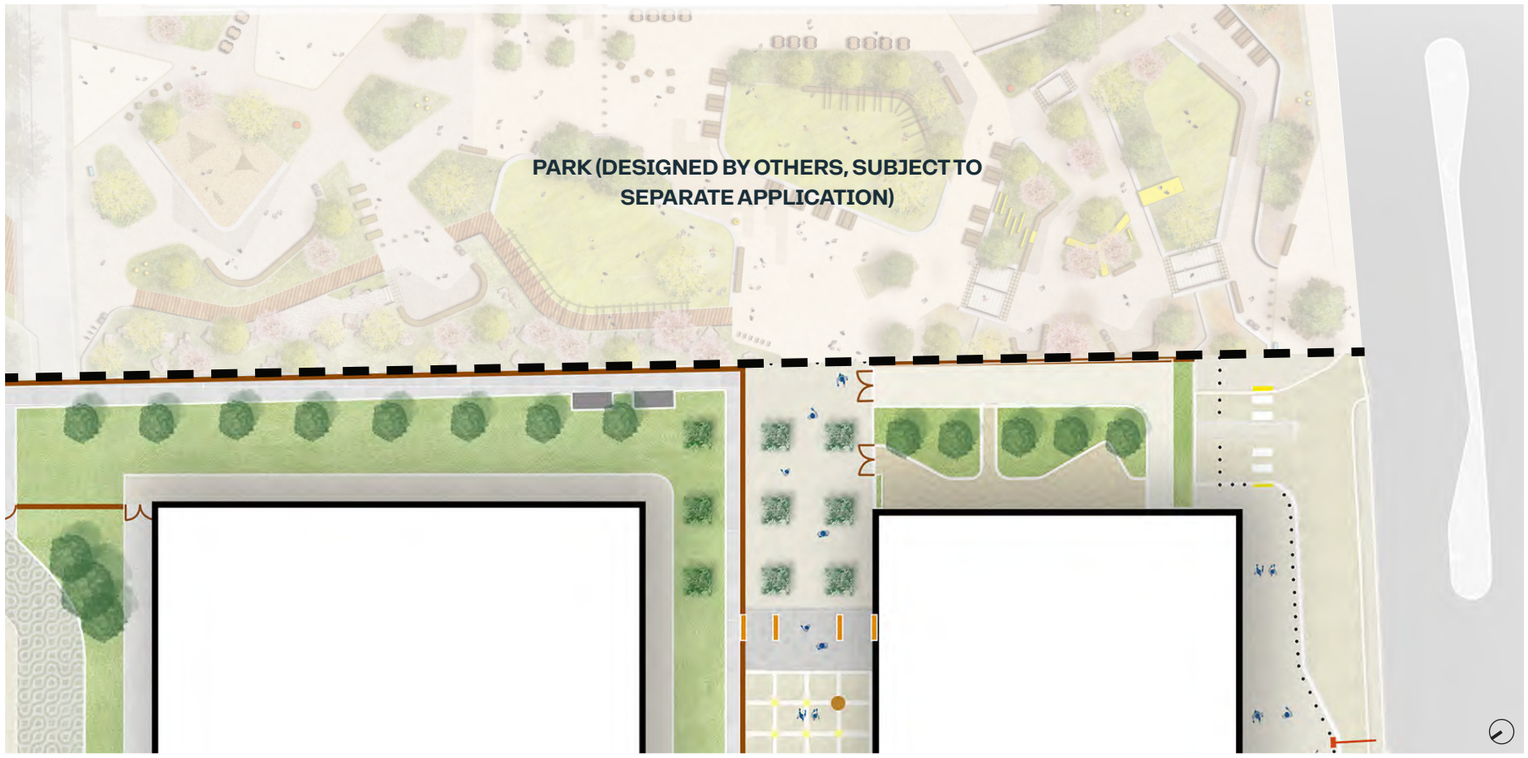
The Terrace

This space occupies the eastern end of the phase 1 development site and will overlook the park. It will be a gated space providing access for cycle arrivals into the southern building and a generous planted garden space which will mirror the language of the park in terms of its hard and soft landscape detailing, which it overlooks to the east. The space will be protected by a balustrade as there will be a change in level at this location. This space will form visual relief and contribute to the biodiversity / net gain of the site with abundant planting in raised planters which will sit on the podium deck forming the access to the undercroft beneath it.

Precedent image



Bespoke corten steel planter to the Terrace area



Plan View

09 Landscape

09.5 Boundary Conditions

The design of each boundary to the Site has been very carefully considered in order to help integrate the new campus into the fabric of the city.

Southern Boundary - Great Ancoats Street. An important element of the scheme from the outset was to repair the street frontage along Great Ancoats Street. The proposed new building will extend the retail offering by 120m with some spill out space and seating. A generous high quality natural stone pavement will provide a civic setting to the new building.

Western Canal Boundary - The Canal Plaza will open up the waterfront setting to the campus and provide waterside seating opportunities adjacent to the canal. The design will reflect the language of space on the existing side of the canal with large tree planting and natural stone set surfacing. This will create a strong identity and deliver a more coordinated public realm on each side of the canal which it currently lacks.

Northern Boundary - this important boundary will feature a boundary wall designed to minimize noise and dust during construction whilst also preventing long-term overlooking to the school. On the school side, it will showcase painted artwork that appeals to children and enhances the school environment.

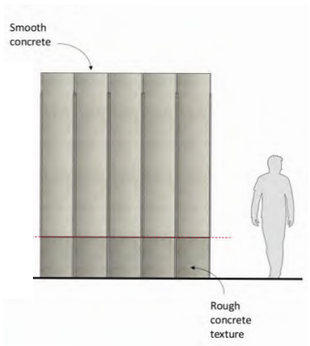
Eastern Boundary - to the east sits The Park which will form the green heart to this new campus. Continuity between hard and soft materials will ensure that the schemes read as a co-ordinated campus.



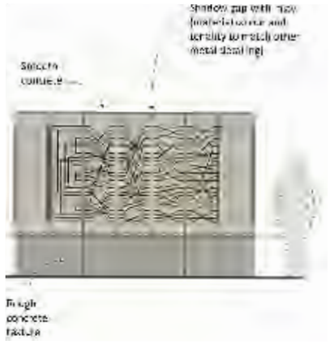
View from school car park

Wall finish options

1. Panel wall



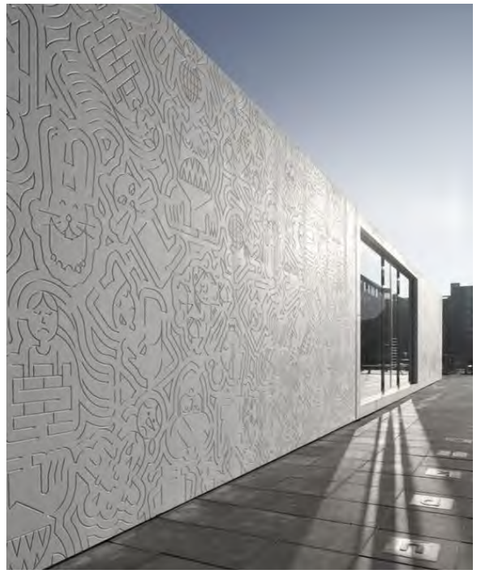
2. Wall with artwork etching



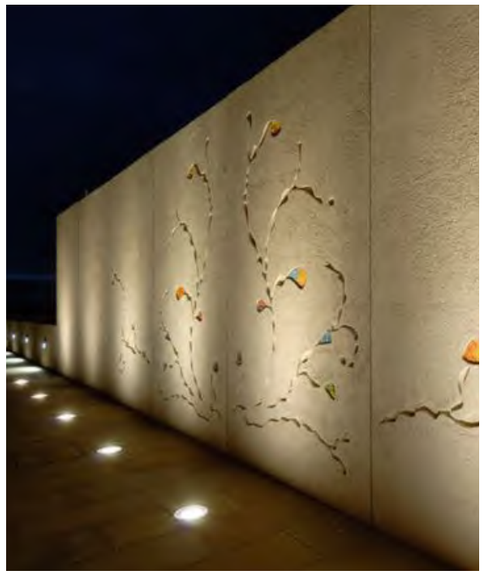
Concrete Wall - Elevations



Embellishment within the concrete



Digital reference to concrete wall



Embossing and setting materials within the concrete

09 Landscape

09.6 Circulation, Access & Site Levels

This is largely a car free pedestrian friendly site where movement is encouraged to connect the campus into the local neighbourhood and the wider city environs at key points via generous arrival spaces provided off Great Ancoats Street, Rochdale Canal and the Park.

Generous pavements are provided around both buildings to obvious and numerous entrance points. These will also provide for deliveries along Great Ancoats Street which will also be ramp and step free.

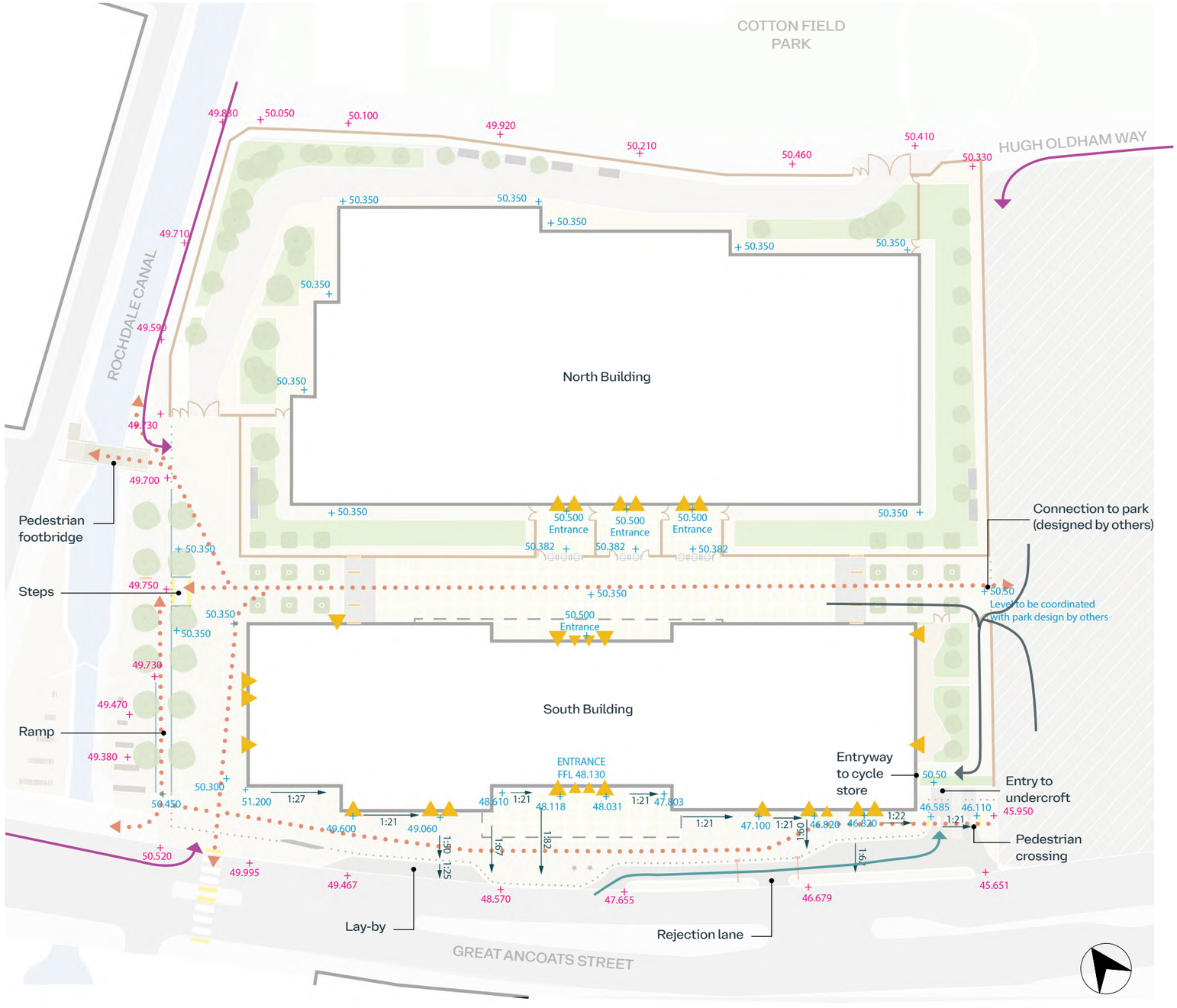
Vehicle access is restricted to a dedicated and controlled pull in-lay by via barriers and a rejection lane into a secure undercroft area. An additional pull-in lay-by for taxi drop off is provided on Great Ancoats Street.

Site levels and materials have been carefully considered to provide comfortable step and ramp free access throughout the Site.

For further details refer to Section 4.

There is a significant level change across the site that has been sensitively incorporated into the public realm design. The outline strategy for levels has been developed to set out principles across the Site for comfortable access throughout:

- In general, the Site's redevelopment necessitates raising the ground level and creating a largely flat deck level which is helpful for accessibility and a step-free environment;
- Along the Great Ancoats Street frontage where the site level changes notably from west to east, public realm gradients which match to the building entrances are kept to as shallow as feasible to avoid steps or ramps;
- Along the canal side frontage, the elevation change of between 0.5m – 1.0m is envisaged in a series of steps with appropriate non-stepped access routes as alternatives.



Note: All levels are indicative only and subject to change at detailed design stage

KEY

- Building entrance
- Pedestrian circulation
- Cycle Route (linked to existing cycle network)
- Cycle Entrance Route
- Vehicular access
- 1:21 Proposed gradient
- +49.590 Existing levels
- +49.590 Proposed levels

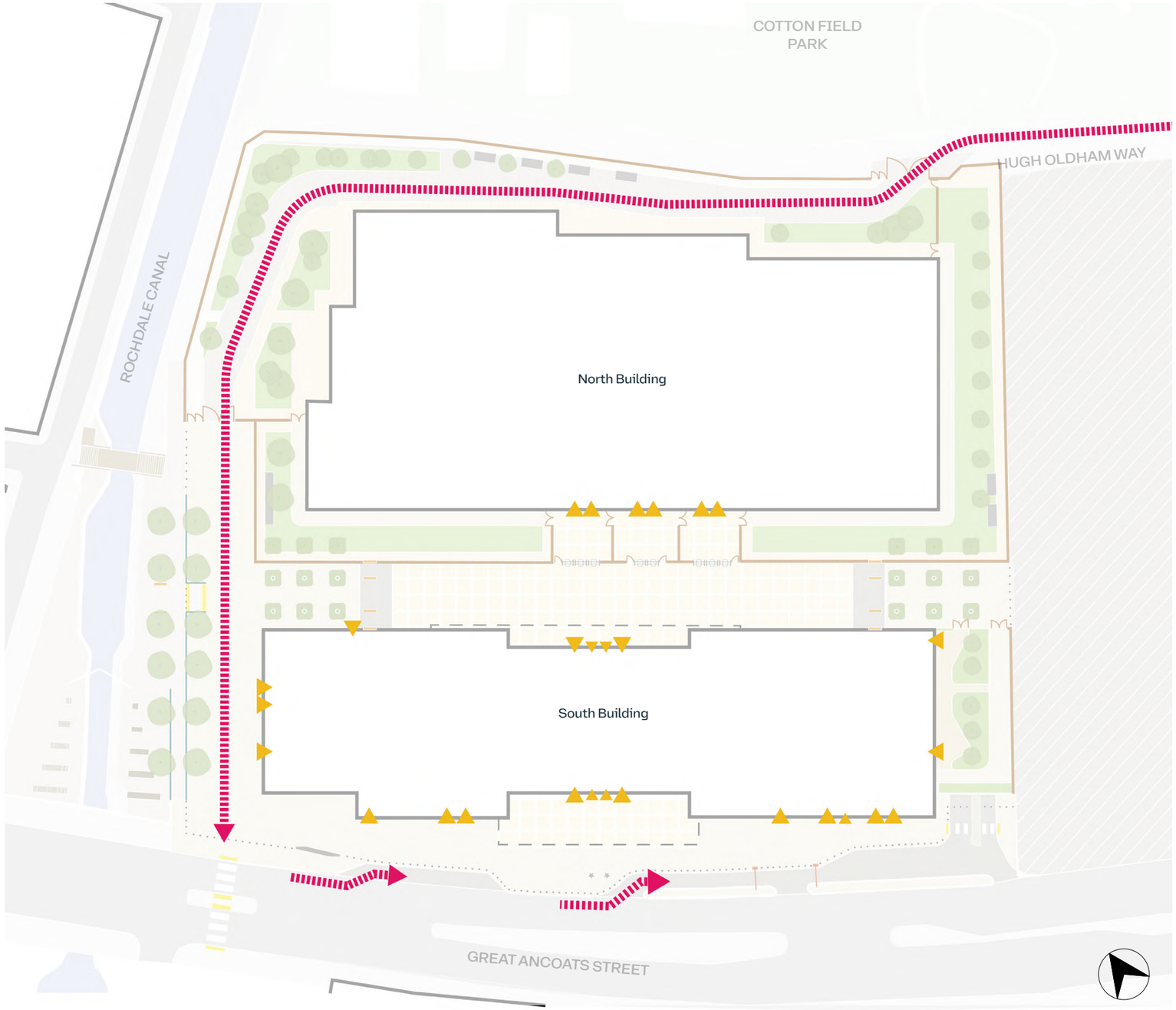
09 Landscape

09.7 Fire Access

The design has been developed in co-ordination with emergency access requirements. The diagram opposite illustrates the fire tracking for access from Hugh Oldham Way to the north, exiting through the Canal Plaza and onto Great Ancoats Street.

The route via Hugh Oldham Way is for emergency access and will only be used in exceptional circumstances providing fire access to the North Building.

Fire access to the South Building will be provided from the proposed lay-by spaces on Great Ancoats Street



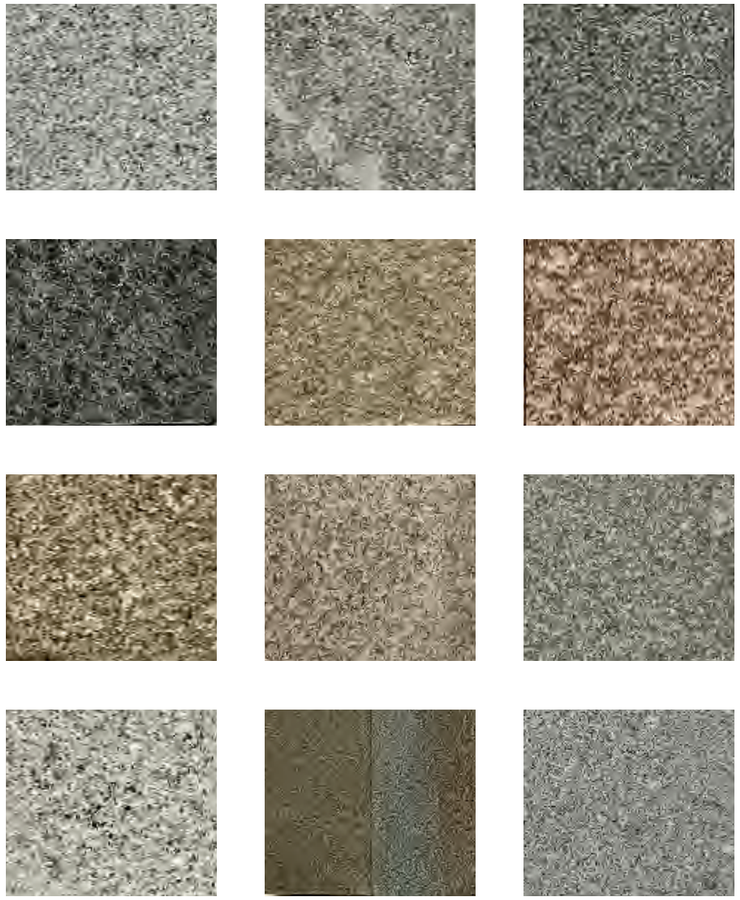
09 Landscape

09.8 Hard Landscape Materials

A palette of high-quality materials has been developed to support the ambitious place making aspirations for the new campus. Materials have been selected to meet design, access, loading and security requirements and to be appropriate visually for the place and setting.

For the site drainage strategy refer to the drainage report MSIP-ATK-XX-XX-RP-C-000004. In principle the drainage of the hard paved areas will be covered by a network of unobtrusive steel slot drains which will be sensitively incorporated into the paving patterns and grids. These will be linked to a series of below ground attenuation tanks to “slow the flow” into the wider network, in accordance with Manchester City Councils current sustainable drainage directives.

Landscape Material Palette

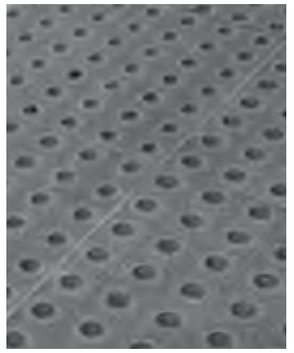




Incorporating access routes



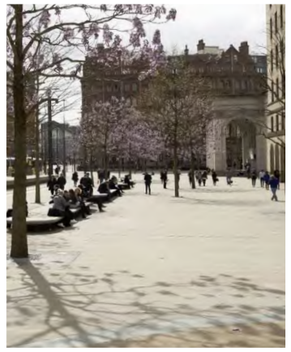
Varying paving pattern and unit size



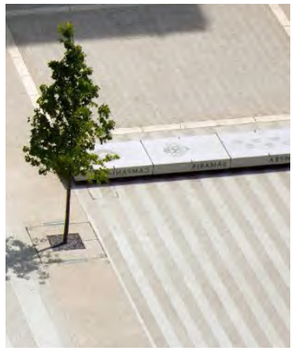
Granite tactile paving



Green paving to emergency access route



Natural sandstone paving in warm buff tones



Space defined through high quality paving and street furniture



Tree grilles to be in keeping with overall design and materiality



Stainless steel bollards to provide secure line



Drop bollards to be provided where access is required



Concrete boundary wall



Slot drainage incorporated into sett paving



Metal turnstiles and provision of accessible gates



Granite steps and stainless steel handrails

09 Landscape

09.9 Soft Landscape

Planting proposals have been carefully considered. The planting will create an attractive public realm, introduce vertical scale, provide seasonal interest, improve biodiversity as well as provide numerous wider environmental benefits, such as shade, shelter and support with rainwater management.

A good portion of the site is set on podium construction, including that at ground level public realm. The planting of these areas will be informed by green roof implications, but are still envisaged to take advantage of reasonable planting depths to include larger-scale planting.



Reflecting local character through planting

Trees



Small grids of trees to define each end of The Boulevard



Larger trees to be planted on the Canal Plaza



Providing small specimen trees with seasonal interest within the North Building Landscape

Shrubs



Low level planting to ensure surveillance is maintained



Incorporated tree and shrub planting into the design where possible

Green Paving



Green paving to emergency access route

09 Landscape

09.10 Character Areas

Pleached trees to The Boulevard



Carpinus betulus

Trees to Canal Plaza



Robinia pseudoacacia



Acer campestre 'Streetwise'

Trees to North Building site



Pinus sylvestris



Acer campestre 'Elsrijk'



Acer palmatum 'Fireglow'



Acer rubrum 'Karpick'



Amelanchier arborea 'Robin Hill'



Betula utilis var jacquemontii

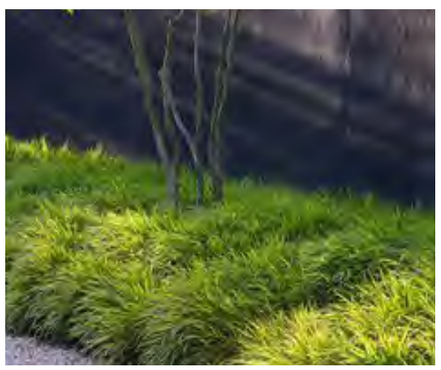


Pyrus calleryana 'Chanticleer'

Low level shrub planting to North Building



Ajuga reptans



Hakonechloa macra



Pachysandara terminalis



Polystichum acrostichoides



Vinca minor

NOTE: Final species to be agreed with the GPA and MCC

10 Verified Views

Visual Impact

Verified Views

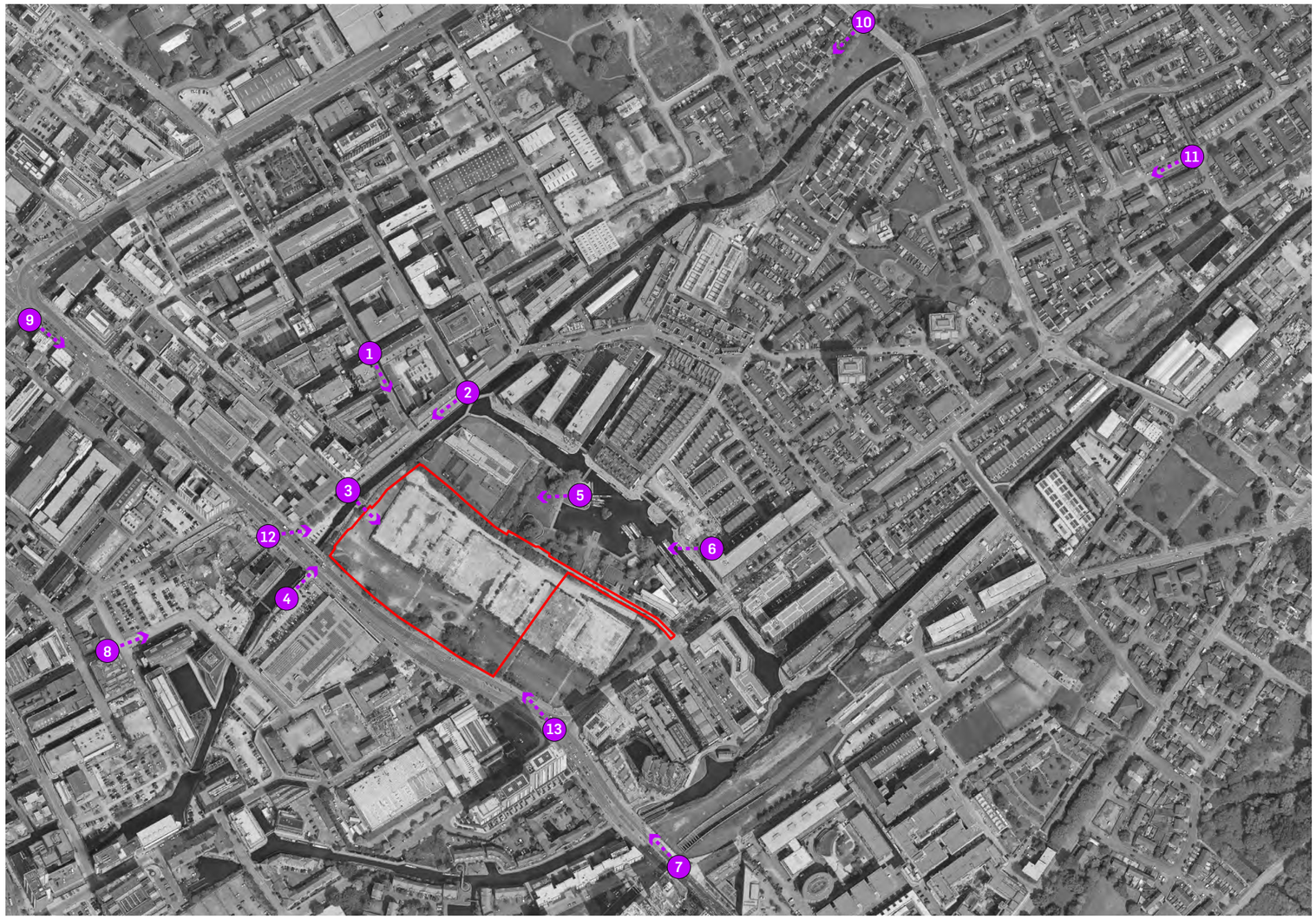
10 Verified Views

10.1 Visual Impact

The following pages show the locations for the verified views for the scheme which were agreed with the MCC Planning Officers. They are fully verified to ensure that they accurately portray how the buildings will look in the existing surroundings.

The views show the baseline images and the same view with the MDC proposals. The outline of committed development in the vicinity is included where relevant. The views have been selected following a scoping exercise, including visiting the Site and surrounds. The views proposed are proportionate to the scheme and its potential heritage and townscape impact.

For further information, refer to the Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (TVIA) document MDCX-ATR-XX-XX-RP-Z-000021.



Site plan with Verified View reference points

10 Verified Views

10.2 Verified Views



Viewpoint 01 Summer - Existing View
Looking south-east towards the Site from the junction of Jersey Street and Murray Street



Viewpoint 01 Summer - Proposed View
Looking south-east towards the Site from the junction of Jersey Street and Murray Street

KEY

- Proposed Development
- Under Construction / Recently Completed
- Planning Permission Granted

10 Verified Views

10.2 Verified Views



Viewpoint 02 Summer - Existing View
Looking south-west along Redhill Street at its junction with Bengal Street, taking in the historic street elevations



Viewpoint 02 Summer - Proposed View
Looking south-west along Redhill Street at its junction with Bengal Street, taking in the historic street elevations

KEY

- Proposed Development
- Under Construction / Recently Completed
- Planning Permission Granted

10 Verified Views

10.2 Verified Views



Viewpoint 03 Summer - Existing View
Looking south-east directly into the Site from the junction of Henry Street and Redhill Street



Viewpoint 03 Summer - Proposed View
Looking south-east directly into the Site from the junction of Henry Street and Redhill Street

KEY

- Proposed Development
- Under Construction / Recently Completed
- Planning Permission Granted

10 Verified Views

10.2 Verified Views



Viewpoint 04 Summer - Existing View
Looking north-east toward the Site from the Rochdale Canal towpath, taking in the side elevation of Brownsfield Mill



Viewpoint 04 Summer - Proposed View
Looking north-east toward the Site from the Rochdale Canal towpath, taking in the side elevation of Brownsfield Mill

KEY

- Proposed Development
- Under Construction / Recently Completed
- Planning Permission Granted

10 Verified Views

10.2 Verified Views



Viewpoint 05 Summer - Existing View
Looking south-west towards the Site from open area of public realm in Cotton Field Park



Viewpoint 05 Summer - Proposed View
Looking south-west towards the Site from open area of public realm in Cotton Field Park

KEY

- Proposed Development
- Under Construction / Recently Completed
- Planning Permission Granted

10 Verified Views

10.2 Verified Views



Viewpoint 06 Summer - Existing View
Looking south-west towards the Site from public realm at New Islington Marina Prom.



Viewpoint 06 Summer - Proposed View
Looking south-west towards the Site from public realm at New Islington Marina Prom.

KEY

- Proposed Development
- Under Construction / Recently Completed
- Planning Permission Granted

10 Verified Views

10.2 Verified Views



Viewpoint 07 Summer - Existing View
Looking north-west across the Site from the south-east corner along Great Ancoats Street



Viewpoint 07 Summer - Proposed View
Looking north-west across the Site from the south-east corner along Great Ancoats Street

KEY

- Proposed Development
- Under Construction / Recently Completed
- Planning Permission Granted

10 Verified Views

10.2 Verified Views



Viewpoint 08 Summer - Existing View
Looking north-east towards the Site at the junction of Tariff Street and Brewer Street



Viewpoint 08 Summer - Proposed View
Looking north-east towards the Site at the junction of Tariff Street and Brewer Street

KEY

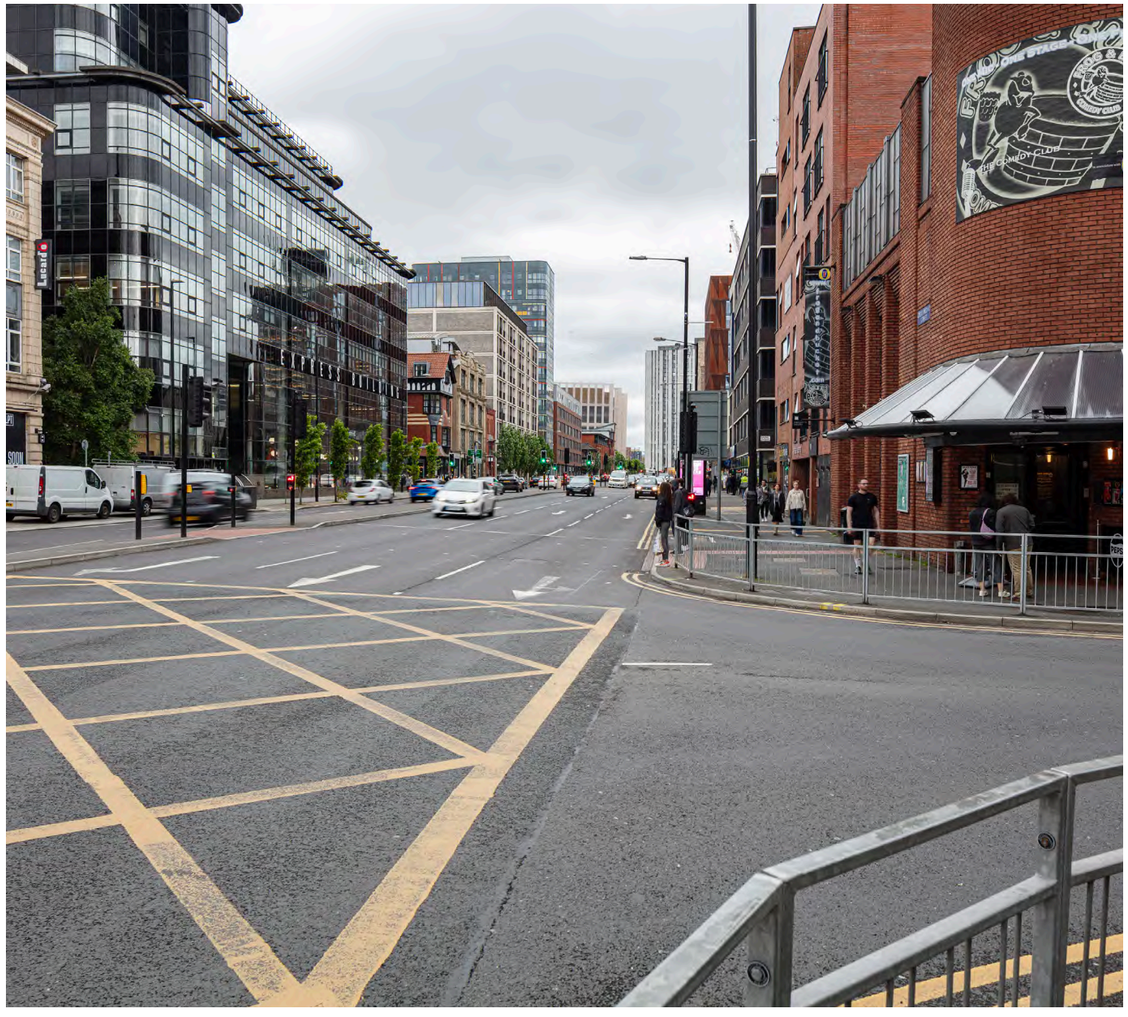
- Proposed Development
- Under Construction / Recently Completed
- Planning Permission Granted

10 Verified Views

10.2 Verified Views



Viewpoint 09 Summer - Existing View
Looking south-east towards the Site from the south pavement of Great Ancoats Street near junction with Higher Oswald Street.



Viewpoint 09 Summer - Proposed View
Looking south-east towards the Site from the south pavement of Great Ancoats Street near junction with Higher Oswald Street.

KEY

- Proposed Development
- Under Construction / Recently Completed
- Planning Permission Granted

10 Verified Views

10.2 Verified Views



Viewpoint 10 Summer - Existing View
Looking south-west towards the Site from junction of Lower Vickers Street and Butler Street



Viewpoint 10 Summer - Proposed View
Looking south-west towards the Site from junction of Lower Vickers Street and Butler Street

KEY

- Proposed Development
- Under Construction / Recently Completed
- Planning Permission Granted

10 Verified Views

10.2 Verified Views



Viewpoint 11 Summer - Existing View
Looking south-west towards the Site from junction of Ridgeway Street and Layton Street



Viewpoint 11 Summer - Proposed View
Looking south-west towards the Site from junction of Ridgeway Street and Layton Street

KEY

- Proposed Development
- Under Construction / Recently Completed
- Planning Permission Granted

10 Verified Views

10.2 Verified Views



Viewpoint 12 Summer - Existing View
Looking east into the Site from the south pavement of Great Ancoats Street, adjacent to entry to Binns Place.



Viewpoint 12 Summer - Proposed View
Looking east into the Site from the south pavement of Great Ancoats Street, adjacent to entry to Binns Place.

KEY

- Proposed Development
- Under Construction / Recently Completed
- Planning Permission Granted

10 Verified Views

10.2 Verified Views



Viewpoint 13 Summer - Existing View
Looking north west into the Site from Great Ancoats Street, from the junction of Old Mill street and Store street.



Viewpoint 13 Summer - Proposed View
Looking north west into the Site from Great Ancoats Street, from the junction of Old Mill street and Store street.

KEY

- Proposed Development
- Under Construction / Recently Completed
- Planning Permission Granted

11 Consultation & Engagement

Pre-application engagement

Public Consultation

11 Consultation & Engagement

11.1 Pre-application engagement

The proposal has enjoyed extensive engagement with the Manchester City Council team over a period of many months prior to this application, since the publication of the Former Central Retail Park Strategic Regeneration Framework in early 2023.

For the duration of the design development and leading up to the planning application submission there has been extensive discussions with the planning officers at the Manchester City Council along with the relevant design and technical advisors. Those meetings sought to discuss the emerging massing, scale, materiality, and ground floor uses of the Proposed Development. The team held open conversations regarding design development and heritage impact. The proposals were presented to the council planning team on a regular basis and feedback incorporated into the designs.

Pre-application engagement has allowed emerging issues to be resolved openly with all interested parties, impacts of the development to be understood in-depth, and mitigations applied before this application was submitted.

The following meetings were conducted over the course of twelve months, facilitating a thorough and rigorous design process:

28.07.2023	19.12.2023	24.04.2024	19.06.2024	18.09.2024
09.08.2023	24.01.2024	22.05.2024	26.06.2024	28.10.2024
23.08.2023	20.03.2024	29.05.2024	03.07.2024	14.11.2024
18.10.2023	27.03.2024	05.06.2024	24.07.2024	
06.12.2023	10.04.2024	12.06.2024	21.08.2024	

The latest programme of meetings, relating to the application deliverables is listed below:

- Pre-application Meeting 01 (22/05/2024) - Design Evolution
- Pre-application Meeting 02 (29/05/2024) - Highways & Transport
- Pre-application Meeting 03 (05/06/2024) - Landscape Session 01
- Pre-application Meeting 04 (12/06/2024) - Landscape Session 02
- Pre-application Meeting 05 (19/06/2024) - South Building bay studies
- Pre-application Meeting 06 (26/06/2024) - North Building bay studies
- Pre-application Meeting 07 (03/07/2024) - Planning pack review

11.2 Public Consultation

Overview

This consultation followed a public consultation on the Draft SRF for Former Central Retail Park site in January 2023. Information presented as part of this previous consultation outlined a refreshed vision and a comprehensive approach to the future redevelopment of this key site in Manchester City Centre. It introduced the GPA's involvement in the site and plans to deliver government offices on the site as part of a first phase of development, as well as the key areas of public realm proposed: namely the Canal Plaza and The Boulevard.

In-person Public Consultation Session

As detailed in the Statement of Community Involvement, the in-person public consultation and exhibition was held to introduce the Proposed Development, facilitate open discussion with consultees, update on design development and gather feedback on the design.

Two public drop-in events were held as part of the public consultation at Hallé St Peter's venue in Ancoats, Manchester on 10/09/2024. Members of the design team including the GPA and Manchester City Council were in attendance to field questions and facilitate discussion.

As part of the consultation process, local residents, businesses and stakeholders were invited to attend the in-person community consultation event and to review the plans online following the public event. Throughout the consultation period, the public have the opportunity to ask questions and share feedback through online channels via online questionnaires.

The public consultation was open from 27 August to 23 September 2024, during which a dedicated website allowed people to view the emerging plans for Manchester Digital Campus on consultation boards. For further information on the feedback received, refer to the Statement of Community Involvement.



Consultation Boards (August 2024)





Public Consultation (September 2024)

12 Conclusion

Conclusion

Conclusion

12 Conclusion

12.1 Conclusion

The design for MDC, seeks to deliver upon the aims as outlined in the executive summary, and create ***a flagship development for the GPA.***

Delivering a building which will set the standard for new building hubs through this decade and beyond. It will do so with flexibility, function and collaboration at its core.

The Manchester Digital Campus will bring to the city of Manchester:

- Substantial economic benefits on the back of the GPA investment, during both construction and operation.
- A dynamic hub for employment, accommodating up to 7,000 civil servants, offering new job opportunities within the retail sector, and creating circa 6,000 construction jobs.
- Safe and attractive new connections across the former retail park, improving permeability across the site through high quality new public realm that promotes a greater sense of community for all users and local neighbourhoods.
- Repairing the 'gap' in Great Ancoats Street, with new retail units which will provide amenities for local residents and workers.
- Enabling the new park through the GPA investment, by undertaking early site works, contributing to the design, and future maintenance costs.
- Providing the catalyst for wider redevelopment of the site and further investment in Manchester, to create a more vibrant and connected city where people live, work and visit.

The design of MDC has been undertaken with dedicated effort and focus producing comprehensive proposals that deliver the GPA brief, the technical requirements, and the vision for a world-class 21st Century workplace rooted in its location and context.

The proposed MDC development is of considerable scale and occupancy, which is testament to the desire from the GPA to create a new regional base in Manchester focused around digital skills and technology.

The design has been developed in close engagement with MCC and is aligned to the 2023 Strategic Regeneration Framework for this site. It sits within a proposed high quality public realm context allowing a harmonious connection between MDC, its streetscape, the new park, and the future Phase 2 development.

Standing at 9 storeys, the MDC buildings have been crafted in form and are connected with a consistency of massing and materials, each with a unique character that establishes its own identity and civic presence that will be enjoyed by all those who work, visit and pass through; this will offer a bespoke beautiful workplace in the centre of Manchester.



View of Proposed Development from Great Ancoats Street



View of Canal Plaza from Great Ancoats Street



View of Proposed Development from Cotton Field Park



View of retail/F&B units and Canal Plaza

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