



Paul Butler Associates
Planning, Development & Heritage Consultants

**University of Manchester (Directorate of
Estates and Facilities Project Group)**

Energy Centre, Sackville Street

Planning Statement

07 November 2024

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1. Introduction

Purpose of this Statement

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Paul Butler Associates on behalf of the applicant, University of Manchester (Directorate of Estates and Facilities Project Group). The statement is submitted in support of a full planning application in relation to the development of a new Energy Centre building on Sackville Street which will service the North Campus.
- 1.2 The application site lies immediately to the south of the John Garside building and to the north of Sackville Street and lies within the boundary of Manchester City Centre. The Energy Centre will be a four storey building equipped with air source heat pump technology at roof level on a screened open plant deck. Enabling works are proposed to relocate existing gas storage away from the development site prior to commencement of construction of the Energy Centre.
- 1.3 The application seeks planning permission for the *‘Construction of a new above ground Energy Centre and associated below ground plant, landscaping, revised access road, boundary treatments and building illumination. The Energy Centre building and site compound shall house mechanical and electrical services equipment for the production of heat and hot water’*.
- 1.4 The works are proposed as part of the University of Manchester building decarbonisation programme with buildings across the University estate programmed to benefit from retrofitting measures to improve energy efficiency. The new Energy Centre will assist the University of Manchester decarbonise their estate and support their long-term goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2038 across all areas of their operation. The driver for this project is maximising long term carbon savings for the North Campus estate with immediate benefits being delivered to John Garside building and George Begg building. Thereafter the Energy Centre can be linked to other retained buildings within the North Campus.

- 1.5 This planning statement will provide an overview of the development proposals, and assess the proposals against adopted national and local planning policy.

Documents submitted with the Planning Application

- 1.6 The planning application is accompanied by the following information:

Supporting Documents

- Cover letter;
- Location Plan, MEC-WMA-XX-DR-A-00-001 D2 Rev P05 prepared by Wilson Mason;
- Design and Access Statement prepared by Wilson Mason: The University of Manchester, North Campus Energy Centre, Document No. 7228 Revision (02), October 2024
- Planning Statement prepared by Paul Butler Associates, including Framework Construction Management Plan and Framework Local Labour Agreement, dated October 2024
- Flood Risk Assessment prepared by WML Consulting – The University of Manchester, North Campus, Energy Centre Report Reference: 11263-WML-00-XX-RP-C-0001 – Rev 02, May 2024
- Sustainable/Energy Statement, Report UoM – North Campus Energy Centre, Revision 01, prepared by Tetra Tech Consulting Engineers October 2024;
- Plant Sound Assessment Report, North Campus Energy Centre, University of Manchester, Report Reference no. 1200/PSA1 Revision 1, prepared by Lighthouse Acoustics, 3rd October 2024;
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Method Statement, The University of Manchester ID North Energy Centre Project, Report Ref: 24/AIA/MAN/39 prepared by Tree Solutions, August 2024.
- Air Quality Assessment North Campus Energy Centre, University of Manchester Report Reference: 8569r2, prepared by Redmore Environmental, 22nd October 2024.

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal for University of Manchester ID North Energy Centre Project prepared by CGO Ecology, March 2023.
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment 2024, University of Manchester, North Energy Project, Report Reference RHE.4297, prepared by Rachel Hacking Ecology.
- Biodiversity Net Gain Plan, Proposed Landscape Areas, Untitled, prepared by Rachel Hacking Ecology prepared by Rachel Hacking Ecology.
- Biodiversity Spreadsheet 'Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessments University of Manchester'.
- Biodiversity Spreadsheet 'The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool -Macro disabled tool 23.07.2024, Energy project Recom Final'.
- General Arrangement First Floor Plan, Drawing Ref MEC-WMA-XX-FF-DR-A-10-101 D2-P07, prepared by Wilson Mason.
- General Arrangement Ground Floor Plan, Drawing Ref MEC-WMA-XX-GF-DR-A-10-100 D2-P08, prepared by Wilson Mason.
- Plant Deck General Arrangement Plan, Drawing Ref MEC-WMA-XX-PD-DR-A-10-111 D2-P07, prepared by Wilson Mason.
- Roof General Arrangement Plan, Drawing Ref MEC-WMA-XX-RL-DR-A-10-110 D2-P07, prepared by Wilson Mason.
- General Arrangement Second Floor Plan, Drawing Ref MEC-WMA-XX-SF-DR-A-10-102 D2-P07, prepared by Wilson Mason.
- Temporary NMR Gas Storage Site Plan, Drawing Ref MEC-WMA-XX-XX-DR-A-00-013 D2-P02, prepared by Wilson Mason.
- Existing Site Plan, Drawing Ref MEC-WMA-XX-ZZ-DR-A-00-002 D2-P04, prepared by Wilson Mason.
- Proposed Site Plan, Drawing Ref MEC-WMA-XX-ZZ-DR-A-00-003 D2-P04, prepared by Wilson Mason.
- Temporary Gas Storage Plan and Elevations, Drawing Ref MEC-WMA-XX-ZZ-DR-A-10-103 D2-P02, prepared by Wilson Mason.

- Proposed Elevation General Arrangement – North, Drawing Ref MEC-WMA-XX-ZZ-DR-A-20-100 D2-P07, prepared by Wilson Mason.
- Proposed Elevation General Arrangement, East Drawing Ref MEC-WMA-XX-ZZ-DR-A-20-101 D2-P07, prepared by Wilson Mason.
- Proposed Elevation General Arrangement – South, Drawing Ref MEC-WMA-XX-ZZ-DR-A-20-102 D2-P07 prepared by Wilson Mason.
- Proposed Elevation General Arrangement – West Drawing Ref MEC-WMA-XX-ZZ-DR-A-20-103 D2-P07, prepared by Wilson Mason.
- Proposed Sections General Arrangement- Sheet 1, Drawing Ref MEC-WMA-XX-ZZ-DR-A-20-110 D2-P07, prepared by Wilson Mason.
- Proposed Sections General Arrangement Sheet 2, Drawing Ref MEC-WMA-XX-ZZ-DR-A-20-111 D2-P07, prepared by Wilson Mason.
- Proposed Sections General Arrangement - Sheet Drawing, Ref MEC-WMA-XX-ZZ-DR-A-20-112 D2-P06 – 3, prepared by Wilson Mason.
- Site Sections, Drawing Ref MEC-WMA-XX-ZZ-DR-A-20-200 D2-P02, prepared by Wilson Mason.
- Landscape Drawings: Landscape Masterplan, Drawing Ref MEC-ITE-XX-XX-D-L-900001 P02, prepared by Iteriad.
- Trees Retained/Removed, Drawing Ref MEC-ITE-XX-XX-D-L-900002 P01, prepared by Iteriad.
- Proposed Landscape Arrangement, Drawing Ref MEC-ITE-XX-XX-D-L-900101 P04, prepared by Iteriad.
- Landscape Boundary Treatment Plan, Drawing Ref MEC-ITE-XX-XX-D-L-900110 P01, prepared by Iteriad.
- Proposed Landscape Planting Plan, Drawing Ref MEC-ITE-XX-XX-D-L-900201 P01, prepared by Iteriad.
- Proposed Landscape Levels Plan, Drawing Ref MEC-ITE-XX-XX-D-L-900301 P05, prepared by Iteriad.

- Existing and Proposed Landscape Levels Plan, Drawing Ref MEC-ITE-XX-XX-D-L-900303 P01, prepared by Iteriad.
- Proposed Landscape Sections Sheet 1 of 2, Drawing Ref MEC-ITE-XX-XX-D-L-900401 P02, prepared by Iteriad.
- Proposed Landscape Sections Sheet 1 of 2, Drawing Ref MEC-ITE-XX-XX-D-L-900402 P01 prepared by Iteriad.
- Carrier Illustrative Plant details, Carrier 39188-1 Revised Heat Pump Specification including DHW -AUG 29th supported by three technical annexes.

Structure of this Statement

1.7 The remainder of this statement is structured as follows:

- Section 2 provides a description of the application site and surrounding area including a review of the planning history;
- Section 3 presents the proposed development for which planning permission is sought;
- Section 4 briefly outlines the pre-application engagement with the local planning authority;
- Section 5 sets out the planning policy relevant to the site and the proposed development;
- Section 6 provides an assessment of the scheme against the development plan and considers the material planning considerations; and
- Section 7 provides a summary of the overall case for granting planning consent.

2. Application Site and Surrounding Area

Application Site

- 2.1 The application site lies immediately to the south of the John Garside building and to the north of Sackville Street (see Figure 2.1). The site area is 1,330 square metres. Access to the site is from Sackville Street via Drover Lane which is part of the University of Manchester estate.

The Surroundings

- 2.2 To the north and east of the site the land lies within the University of Manchester Estate and forms part of North Campus. The buildings here are in educational use and include John Garside building to the north and George Begg building to the north-east. Further to the east is Faraday Tower which has been vacated by the Chemistry Department. To the south of the application site beyond Sackville Street is the Mancunian Way flyover which is accommodated on a raised roadway aside a landscaped area. To the west of the site on Princess Street is the NCP Circle Square Car Park above which is a Premier Inn Hotel.

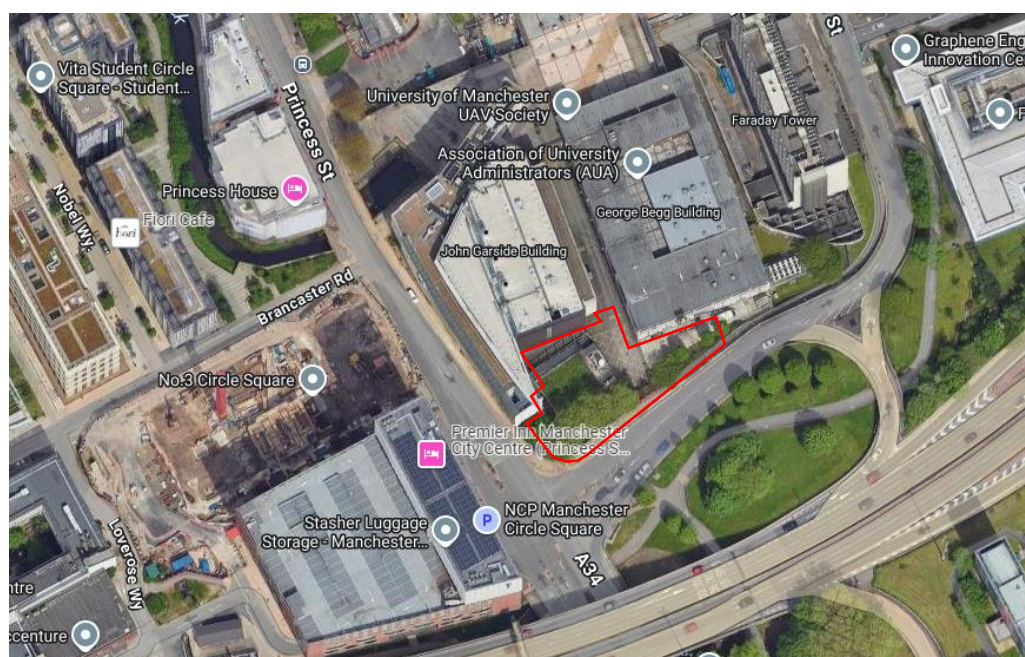


Figure 2.1: Aerial view of application site (outlined in red).

The site is understood not to be subject to any Tree Preservation Orders. There are no listed buildings or Conservation areas nearby which might be impacted by the proposal.

2.3 Flood Risk Mapping shows the building to be part Flood Risk 1 land and part Flood Risk 2 land. Flood risk 1 land has less than 0.1% annual probability of river flooding. Flood risk 2 land has between a 1% and 0.1% annual probability of river flooding. The proposal is accompanied by a flood risk assessment prepared by WML which demonstrates compatibility with the Flood Zone 2 designation.

2.4 The application site is located within the designated City Centre and Regional Centre, as identified on Manchester City Council (MCC)’s interactive proposals map.

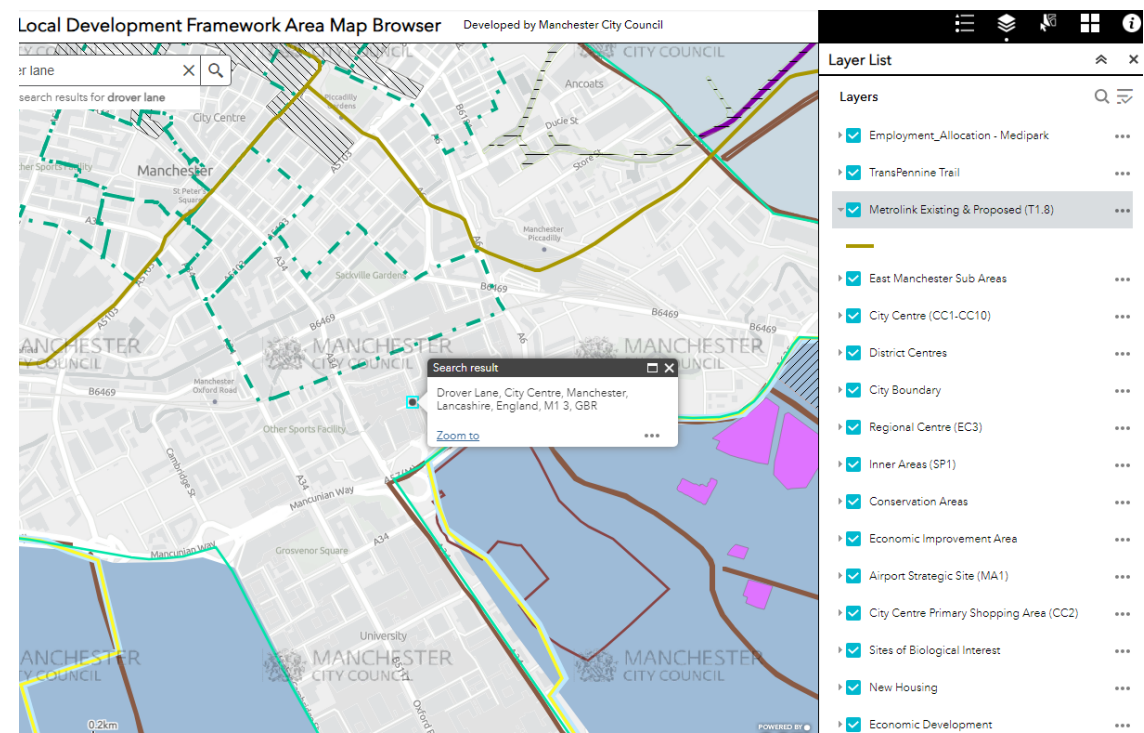


Table 2.1: Local Development Framework Area Map Browser

Planning History

2.5 Further to a review of Manchester City Council’s Planning Application Database, the planning history relating to the site and its immediate surroundings, and which is of note is provided in the table below.

2.6 The proposal lies to the south of the John Garside building, a contemporary building with prominent glazed façade along Princess Street. Planning history noted online was:

Reference	Address	Proposal	Decision
101192/FO/2012/C1	Manchester Interdisciplinary Bio-Centre, 131 Princess Street, Manchester, M1 7ND.	The installation of two chillers, and one process chiller to replace two redundant existing chillers, and one existing dry air cooler.	Approved April 2013.
066430/FO/CITY2/02	University Car Park, Princess Street, City.	Erection of 5-6 storey building, including plant room at 6th floor level for research facility for UMIST with associated landscaping and a new public space link to the raised podium deck of George Begg Building.	Approved December 2002.
055968/FO/CITY2/99	University Car Park, Princess Street, City.	Erection of life sciences research building on six floors incorporating laboratory space, support areas, office accommodation, meeting and seminar rooms	Approved January 1999.

Table 2.2: Planning History

3. Description of Development

The Proposed Scheme

- 3.1 The buildings forming part of North Campus are predominantly serviced and connected by an underground district service distribution network which supplies gas, water, electricity and steam via a tunnel ring main running below the campus. This ring main lies predominantly below that part of the Northern Campus due to be transferred to facilitate the 'ID' joint venture project being progressed with Bruntwood.
- 3.2 To facilitate the ID project and provide network services to the University retained buildings of John Garside Building, Georg Begg Building, Masdar Building, Faraday Tower and Ferranti Building, a new Energy Centre is required to provide for site distribution services. The opportunity is to be taken to ensure the existing system to be replaced is significantly upgraded to provide sustainable power, heating and hot water services to the retained buildings and to contribute towards the University Net Zero Carbon goal as well as improving site infrastructure.
- 3.3 The application seeks full planning permission for the *'Construction of a new above ground Energy Centre and associated below ground plant, landscaping, revised access road, boundary treatments and building illumination. The Energy Centre building and site compound shall house mechanical and electrical services equipment for the production of heat and hot water'*.
- 3.4 The Energy Centre will serve the John Garside Building and George Begg Building whilst having the capability to accommodate additional plant in the future for other parts of the retained North Campus estate including potentially Faraday Tower, Masdar Building and Ferranti Building. The Energy Centre is designed to accommodate up to eight roof mounted air source heat pumps, however, to meet the immediate needs of the University only four of the eight heat pumps will be installed to serve the George Begg and John Garside buildings. The intent is to allow for a doubling in capacity at later point in time and as such the Energy

Centre is designed to be expandable to offer further carbon savings / renewable technology capability beyond supporting just the George Begg and John Garside buildings. Additional plant could be applied for as necessary and added during future phases of extension.

- 3.5 The works proposed are associated with the University of Manchester building decarbonisation programme with buildings across the University estate programmed to benefit from retrofitting measures to improve energy efficiency. The new Energy Centre will complement this initiative and assist the University of Manchester decarbonise their estate and support their long-term goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2038 across all areas of their operation. The Energy Centre will help maximise long term carbon savings for the North campus estate through new technologies including primarily air source heat pumps. In addition to the new plant proposed the Energy Centre will also integrate with enhanced Building Management Systems designed at making buildings smarter including optimised energy consumption, reduced operational costs and improved safety and comfort.
- 3.6 A Sustainability/Energy Report prepared by Tetra Tec submitted in support of the application notes that overall, the impact of the development has the potential to secure an 82% reduction in operational carbon emissions from the John Garside and George Begg buildings, equating to a saving of 1,148 tonnes of carbon each and every year.
- 3.7 The proposed building is to have a split level arrangement at its ground floor level to accommodate plant and level access. The habitable area is to have an FFL of 34.15m AOD, whilst the non-habitable area is to have an FFL of 33.37m AOD. The new energy centre will not be occupied on a full time basis with operatives onsite only for routine monitoring and maintenance operations as and when required, estimated to be two staff present for one hour per day, for five days per week.
- 3.8 Please refer to the submitted Design and Access Statement and architectural drawing pack prepared by Wilson Mason for full details of the proposals including images showing how the building will appear within the streetscape post development.

4. Pre-Application Consultation

Overview

- 4.1 Pre-application discussions have played an important role in shaping the design of the proposed Energy Centre development. Paragraphs 39-42 of the National Planning Policy Framework sets out the benefits of early engagement, including consideration of all fundamental issues associated with a proposal, which enables timely decisions to be made and reduces costs / delays to the applicant; and, enables agreement on the information required to accompany an application.
- 4.2 The applicant and design team have held a series of meetings with MCC Planning Officers prior to the submission of this application. During discussions with MCC Officers, the siting, scale, massing and materiality of the building has been agreed together with the level of supporting information that would be required to validate the planning application. The advice received from MCC Officers has guided this submission in terms of design and the scope of the submission.

5. Planning Policy Context

5.1 Planning policy guidance of relevance to the proposed development, and which provides the context for its assessment, is set out within national and local planning policy guidance. This includes:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); and,
- The Development Plan for Manchester.

National Planning Policy Guidance

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

5.2 Section 38(6) of this Act states that the determination of planning applications must be made in accordance with the Development Plan, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. This establishes the Development Plan as the primary decision-making document when considering planning applications. In this instance the development plan is the Manchester Development Plan (comprising of Places for Everyone, Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan, the Saved Policies of the Unitary Development Plan for Manchester and Supplementary Planning Documents).

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was most recently updated in December 2023 and sets out the government's objectives for achieving sustainable development. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which ensures that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way.

5.4 Development proposals that accord with an up-to-date Development Plan should be approved without delay. Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, permission should be granted unless:

- The application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the proposed development; or
- Any adverse impact of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

5.5 Paragraph 8 confirms that there are three dimensions to sustainable development; economic, social and environmental. To achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be pursued in mutually supportive ways through the planning system.

Delivering Sustainable Development

5.6 The NPPF explains that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area. These sustainable objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in the framework. The NPPF is split into 17 chapters, the chapters of relevance to this application are discussed below.

5.7 Promoting healthy and safe communities (Chapter 8) - the planning system must aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe communities. Planning decisions should aim to achieve places which promote, amongst other things, safe and accessible developments, where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion.

- 5.8 Making Effective Use of Land (Chapter 11) – para 124 emphasises that planning policies and decisions should promote and support the development of under-utilised land which the site is.
- 5.9 Achieving well-designed places (Chapter 12) - this chapter sets out at paragraph 135 that planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:
- Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development.
 - Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.
 - Are sympathetic to local character and history including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation.
 - Establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit.
 - Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development and support local facilities and transport networks.
 - Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being.
- 5.10 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change (Chapter 14) - this chapter emphasises the importance of securing reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimising vulnerability and providing resilience to the impacts of climate change; and, in terms of flooding, confirms development should be made safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

- 5.11 Decision making – guidance in paragraph 38 advises that local planning authorities should approach decisions in a positive and creative way and work proactively with applicants. Decision-makers at all levels should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
- 5.12 The proposed development scheme has been designed in accordance with the policies and provisions of the NPPF.

Planning Practice Guidance

- 5.13 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was published in March 2014 and collates guidance previously published in a number of separate documents. The guidance in the PPG has been taken into consideration in formulating development proposals for the redevelopment of the application site.

Local Planning Policy Guidance

Development Plan for Manchester

- 5.14 The Development Plan for Manchester comprises the following documents:
- Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document (March 2024);
 - Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document (July 2012);
 - Saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan for Manchester (July 1995); and
 - The Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Guidance (April 2007);

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document 2024

- 5.15 The recently adopted Places for Everyone DPD introduces a number of new policies in respect of energy and sustainability which introduce a carbon neutrality target by 2038 and require all new development to be net zero carbon by 2028.
- 5.16 Policy JP-S1: 'Sustainable Development' advises that 'To help tackle climate change, development should aim to maximise its economic, social and environmental benefits simultaneously, minimise its adverse impacts, utilise sustainable construction techniques and actively seek opportunities to secure net gains across each of the different objectives'.
- 5.17 Policy JP-S2: 'Carbon and Energy' advises that '*The aim of delivering a carbon neutral Greater Manchester no later than 2038, with a dramatic reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, will be supported through a range of measures including: 1) Promoting the retrofitting of existing buildings with measures to improve energy efficiency and generate renewable and low carbon energy, heating and cooling*'; and '*3) Taking a positive approach to renewable and low carbon energy schemes, particularly schemes that are led by, or meet the needs of local communities*'. Connections to low carbon energy/heating/cooling networks are encouraged since these are identified to have the potential to achieve significant emissions reductions .
- 5.18 Policy JP-S3: 'Heat and Energy Networks' supports the provision of decentralised energy infrastructure which is regarded to be '*critical to the delivery of our objectives for low carbon growth, carbon reductions and an increase in local energy generation*'.
- 5.19 Policy JP-S5: 'Clean Air' promotes measures to support improvements in air quality.
- 5.20 Policy JP-S6: 'Resource Efficiency' promotes the '*achievement of a circular economy and a zero-waste economy will play a key role in meeting Greater Manchester's ambition of becoming a leading green city region by 2038*'. It encourages the use of sustainable design and construction techniques to reduce carbon emissions, adapt and future proof to the impact of climate change, reduce and recycle waste and minimise water use.

- 5.21 Policy JP-P5: 'Education, Skills and Knowledge' advises that *'Significant enhancements in education, skills and knowledge to benefit existing and new residents will be promoted, including by: Supporting the continued growth and success of the university sector, such as through: (a) Enhancing the existing campuses and developing new ones; (b) Strengthening the world-leading research capabilities and promoting opportunities for business spin-offs; and (c) Continuing to help develop Greater Manchester as the UK's best destination for students'*.
- 5.22 Policy JP-G7: 'Trees and Woodland' aims to significantly increase tree cover, protect and enhance woodland, and connect people to the trees and woodland around them.
- 5.23 Policy JP-G8: 'A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity' advises that through local planning and associated activities a net enhancement of biodiversity resources will be sought. All development will be expected to achieve a measurable net gain in biodiversity of no less than 10%.
- 5.24 Policy JP-S4: 'Flood Risk and the Water Environment' states that an integrated catchment-based approach will be taken to protect the quantity and quality of water bodies with reference to the North West River Basin Management Plan and managing flood risk.

Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document (July 2012)

- 5.25 The Core Strategy, adopted in July 2012, sets out the long-term strategic policies for Manchester's future development. The Core Strategy recognises that climate change and its impact on the environment both urban and natural is one of the most significant challenges facing Manchester. The Core Strategy advises that it is essential that the way in which Manchester develops over the plan period and beyond is set within the context of mitigating the impacts of climate change and adapting to its effects on the local environment. The document recognises that this challenge affects all areas of the city.

5.26 The Core Strategy makes several references to climate change which is a thread throughout the document and additionally sets out specific policies aimed at increasing local decentralised energy and reducing carbon emissions and the impacts of climate change:

- Spatial Objective SO6: 'Environment' seeks to protect and enhance the natural and built environment of the city, ensure the sustainable use of natural resources, and secure a high standard of design in all development proposals.
- Policy EN 4: 'Reducing CO2 Emissions by Enabling Low and Zero Carbon Development' notes that the Council will seek to reduce growth in CO2 emissions through a variety of actions including:
 - Wherever possible new development and retrofit projects, including energy generation plant, must be located and designed in a manner that allows advantage to be taken of opportunities for low and zero carbon energy supplies.
 - Where possible new development and retrofit projects will be used as a mechanism to help improve energy efficiency and provide low and zero carbon energy supplies to existing buildings.
 - Where appropriate new development and retrofit projects will be required to connect to and/or make contributions to low carbon energy schemes and/or to incorporate provision to enable future connection to any existing/potential decentralised energy schemes.
- Policy EN 5: 'Strategic Areas for low and zero carbon decentralised energy infrastructure' advises that within Manchester it is considered that strategic areas will have a major role to play in achieving an increase in the level of decentralised, low and zero carbon energy supplies. The Regional Centre, which the application site is within, is identified as a strategic policy area for low carbon energy infrastructure.

- Policy EN 1 'Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas' sets out that opportunities for good design to enhance the overall image of the City should be fully realised, particularly on major radial road routes.
- Policy DM1: 'Development Management' sets out various issues that development should have regard to, including: appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail; impact on the surrounding areas and effects on amenity.

Saved Policies of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) for the City of Manchester (adopted 1995)

5.27 The UDP was superseded by the Core Strategy. However, a number of UDP policies have been 'saved'. Extant policies contained within the UDP which are relevant to the proposed scheme include:

- Policy DC26.1: 'Development and Noise' states that the Council will use the development control process to reduce the impact of noise on people living and working in, or visiting, the City. In giving effect to this intention, the Council will consider the effect of new development proposals which are likely to be generators of noise. Policy DC26 'Development and Noise' aims to minimise the adverse impact of noise on noise-sensitive developments.

Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document 2007 (SPD)

5.28 This document aims to support and enhance the on-going shaping of the city by providing a set of reasoned principles which will guide developers, designers and residents to the sort of development that everyone wants to see in Manchester. The sections of the guide that have been considered in the development of the proposed scheme include:

- Section 2 'Design' notes urban design characteristics which together create successful places.

- Section 4 'Environmental Standards' promotes energy efficiency

5.29 The detailed assessment of the scheme within the following planning appraisal section confirms that the proposal accords with the policies noted.

6. Assessment of the Proposed Development

Introduction

- 6.1 It is a requirement of section 38(6) of the Town and Country Planning Act 2004 that where a development plan contains policies relevant to an application, the decision must be made in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.2 The statutory development plan therefore relating to the application site consists of the Places for Everyone Plan (adopted March 2024), the Manchester City Council Core Strategy (adopted 2012) and the saved policies of the UDP. Material considerations relating to the application site include the National Planning Policy Framework, Planning Practice Guidance and Supplementary Planning Documents prepared by Manchester City Council.
- 6.3 The remainder of this section will examine the principle of development proposed for this site, followed by an appraisal of the scheme against all other relevant planning and environmental considerations. Having regard to the above planning policy guidance, the main material considerations against which the proposed scheme should be considered, and which are discussed in this section, include:
- Principle of Development;
 - Design;
 - Potential Impact on Amenity;
 - Noise;
 - Flooding/Drainage;
 - Trees/Ecology/Biodiversity Net Gain;
 - Highways;
 - Temporary Re-siting of Gas Storage Compound; and
 - Crime and Security Issues.

Principle of Development

- 6.4 The application site lies within Manchester City Centre and within the North Campus area of the University of Manchester. The North Campus is characterised by a high number of buildings in varying educational, office, research and complementary uses. The area to the south of the application site is characterised by highway infrastructure associated with Mancunian Way. Opposite the site is recent redevelopment including the NCP Circle Square Car Park with Hotel accommodation built above. The immediate area is judged to be well suited to accommodating the proposed Energy Centre subject to there being no detrimental impacts on neighbouring uses.
- 6.5 The proposal would provide an environmentally sustainable Energy Centre to serve existing University buildings and the selected site is the optimum location as it is intended to serve the two adjacent buildings of John Garside and George Begg with potential to provide heat and energy in the future to additional buildings which also form part of the wider Northern Campus including the Ferranti, Faraday Tower and Masdar buildings.
- 6.6 The scheme will help meet an identified need for reducing CO2 emissions by enabling low carbon development in Manchester. The application is supported by an Energy Statement prepared by Tetra Tech. Their report findings confirm that the systems being replaced are currently inefficient, dated and in need of significant overhaul/upgrade in order to help achieve the Universities ambition of a Zero Carbon estate by 2038. The Sustainability/Energy Report prepared by Tetra Tec and submitted in support of the application notes that overall, the impact of the development has the potential to secure an 82% reduction in operational carbon emissions from the John Garside and George Begg buildings equating to a saving of 1,148 tonnes of carbon each and every year. As such, it is clear that the installation will achieve a significant carbon reduction over the present operational position. The principle of the Energy Centre deploying decarbonising technology is wholly acceptable in principle and is supported by Places for Everyone Policies JP-S1, JP-S2, JP-S3, JP-S6, JP-P5 and Core Strategy policies SO6, EN4, and EN5 which seek to reduce CO2 emissions by enabling low carbon development.

- 6.7 Whilst the above demonstrates that the principle of development is acceptable when considered against local planning policy, the NPPF is also a material consideration carrying significant weight and as such an assessment of the principle of development against the framework is required. The NPPF outlines a presumption in favour of sustainable development, whereby development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.8 Having regard to the paragraph 11 of the NPPF, it is considered that the principle of the development is appropriate. Furthermore, it is also demonstrated that the proposed development constitutes sustainable development when assessed against the other relevant policies in the Framework as a whole. There are no other policies in the NPPF that in our view would restrict the development proposed and any adverse impacts of granting planning permission would not significantly or demonstrably outweigh the environmental benefits of the proposal.
- 6.9 The following policies confirm that the principle of development is consistent with national planning policies in the NPPF, specifically the following guidance with which there is compatibility:

Para 8c) The planning system should respond positively to proposals *'mitigating and adapting to climate change, including by moving to a low carbon economy'*.

Para 157) *'The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources.....and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure'*.

Para 160) Encourages the planning system to *'identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems'*.

Para 163) states that *'When determining planning applications for renewable and low carbon development, local planning authorities should: a) not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy, and recognise that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions; and b) approve the application if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable.*

Para 164) states that *'In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should give significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings, both domestic and non-domestic (including through installation of heat pumps where these do not already benefit from permitted development rights).'*

- 6.10 The remainder of this Appraisal section evidences that the proposed Energy Centre has been shown to be within a suitable and sustainable location, with no known adverse impacts arising from the development that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh its benefit. The application scheme is considered to be in full compliance with the adopted policies of Places for Everyone, the Core Strategy and Saved UDP. It is our view that no material planning considerations exist that would justify a refusal of planning permission. Consequently, the proposals are considered to constitute sustainable development as defined by the NPPF and the presumption in favour of sustainable development should apply in the determination of this application.

Design Considerations

- 6.11 The siting, footprint and scale of the building are primarily determined by the primary function of the building and the plant proposed to be accommodated. This is then wrapped in an aluminium shroud which provides a high-quality finish to all four elevations whilst also performing an essential ventilation function. The shroud allows the elevational finish to be regarded as a high quality architectural proposition.

- 6.12 Height, scale and massing are confirmed to be appropriate within the townscape context. Whilst the building is a functional addition to the North Campus area, the architect has recognised that the site occupies a prominent corner location and has sought to deliver a high-quality external envelope which responds to the visibility of the site by wrapping the building in a perforated anodised cladding. The lightweight cladding ('shroud') is used to form a vertical channel between itself and the composite cladding of the building envelope to direct air flow to the ASHP deck. This clever system of interlocking hexagonal panels provides the elevation with modelling and interest across each and every elevation.
- 6.13 The high quality architectural finish proposed gives the building a character and identity which allow the building to hold the corner, sit well with surrounding buildings and have architectural form and interest. The submitted plans and DAS prepared by Wilson Mason show, in our view, a well-mannered building which works well in design terms.
- 6.14 The air source heat pumps must be located at high level and exposed to the external environment. The height of the 'shroud' is therefore extended upwards to conceal the roof top plant which would otherwise be exposed. The roofscape of the building therefore integrates with the façade and ensures ASHPs are screened.
- 6.15 The DAS submitted as part of the application demonstrates the visual appearance of the new building has been carefully considered and the illustrates how the building will appear in street context. The document confirms this new addition to be a considered design response which responds to and integrates with the existing streetscape context.
- 6.16 The proposed building is confirmed to be an appropriate addition to North Campus and overall, the proposed Energy Centre is considered to be acceptable and consistent with Core Strategy and saved Unitary Development Plan policies relating to design, and chapter 12 of the NPPF.

Potential Impact on Amenity?

- 6.17 Core Strategy policy DM1 advises that all development should have regard to impact on amenity, including privacy, light, noise and vibration, amongst other things. The proposed new building will not result in any loss of amenity to neighbours by way of overlooking, overbearing impact, loss of light or vibration. Noise is considered in further below.

Noise Climate

- 6.18 The proposed air source heat pump units have the potential to operate at any time during the 24 hour period. The number of units operating and duty of the units will vary depending on ambient temperature conditions. With this in mind a report has been prepared by Lighthouse Acoustics specifically to consider the acoustic implications of development. The aim is to ensure the new energy centre plant is compatible with the nearest sensitive receptors which include in this area residential accommodation, teaching accommodation/offices and hotel accommodation.
- 6.19 The Lighthouse Acoustics report is informed by an environmental noise survey carried out using automated environmental sound measurements undertaken from 11:00 hours on Wednesday 29 May 2024 to 11:00 hours on Thursday 30 May 2024. During this three day period the L_Amax, L_Aeq and L_A90 sound pressure levels were measured continuously over 15 minute periods. The report identifies that the Premier Inn bedrooms at approximately 6th floor level to the south west of the site (above the Circle Square Multistorey Car Park) are the nearest sensitive receptor to the ASHP plant deck being roughly 40m from the proposed development.
- 6.20 The assessment indicates that atmospheric plant sound emissions from the proposed 4No. air source heat pump units are likely to have a low impact at the nearest noise sensitive receptor and achieve the requirements of the Local Authority during the daytime period. The assessment indicates that atmospheric plant sound emissions from the proposed 4No. air source heat pump units are likely to have a low impact at the nearest noise sensitive

receptor and achieve the requirements of the Local Authority during the night-time period at 36% duty which is expected for 194 days per year. The assessment indicates that atmospheric plant sound emissions from the proposed 4No. air source heat pump units are likely to have a low impact at the nearest noise sensitive receptor and achieve the requirements of the Local Authority during the night-time period at <36% duty which is expected for 194 days per year.

- 6.21 The report notes that given the background noise levels measured and design of the nearest sensitive premises, it is expected that the occasional minor expected exceedances of the night-time criterion may be deemed acceptable. Based on the findings of the Lighthouse Report, it is concluded that the proposed development is consistent with CS policy DM1, UDP policy DC26 and the relevant provisions of the NPPF with regard to acoustic considerations.

Flooding/Drainage

- 6.22 WML Consulting Ltd were commissioned to provide a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) including a Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment (SSFRA) to support the application. Having regard to NPPF guidance the proposed development has been classified by WML Consulting Ltd as a 'less vulnerable' form of development which is considered appropriate in Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3a.
- 6.23 The Flood Risk report confirms that flood mapping provided by the EA shows that the site is located on the boundary of Flood Zone 2 (medium risk) and Flood Zone 1 (low risk). Flood Zone 2 means that this area has a chance of flooding of between 1% to 0.1% (1 in 100 to 1 in 1,000) each year. Whilst Flood Zone 1 means that this area has a chance of flooding of less than 0.1% (1 in 1,000) each year. The flooding shown on the EA flood map in the vicinity of the site, appears to be generated by the River Medlock, which lies around 80m to the north of the proposed development site. The information provided by the EA included flood modelling data from two model sources. Both sources provide flood water levels and flood flow volumes at various node locations on the line of the River Medlock in the vicinity of the site. A comparison between the flood water levels provided by the EA and the proposed

development's FFLs, indicate that the FFL of the habitable area of the proposed facility will be above the worst case 1 in 1,000 year flood scenario, and that whilst the FFL of the non-habitable area will be below the worst case flood level, the safe operating of the plant in this area will not be affected. Given the above, WML consider that the risk to the proposed development from fluvial flooding is low. It is also confirmed that the development is not at significant risk of flooding from tidal waters, surface water, reservoirs, sewers, groundwater or from other sources. Given the above it is considered that the development is appropriate.

- 6.24 The surface water drainage proposals for the development will incorporate the principles of the NPPF and the SUDS manual. Ground conditions are not anticipated to support the use of infiltration techniques, and there are no watercourses in the vicinity of the site. Therefore it will be necessary to discharge the surface water runoff generated by the proposed development to the existing public drainage system. The surface water drainage proposals will be designed to ensure that the proposed runoff rate does not exceed the generally accepted practical minimum discharge rate of 5 l/sec for all storm events up to and including the critical 1 in 100 year event plus a 45% climate change allowance.
- 6.25 Given the above it is considered that the proposed development should not be at risk from flooding nor will it increase flood risk to elsewhere. The development is deemed to be compliant with NPPF flood risk policy including the provisions of Para 173 since the development is appropriately flood resistant and resilient such that, in the event of a flood, it could be quickly brought back into use without significant refurbishment.

Trees/Ecology/Biodiversity Net Gain

Trees

- 6.26 The site contains several existing trees which are impacted by the development. The application is supported by a 'Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Method Statement' prepared by Tree Solutions. Their report provides an appraisal of trees on the site and considers any potential impact on trees associated with the development. Twelve

individual trees (T1-T12) were surveyed by Tree Solutions and mapped on a tree constraints plan which accompanies the application. None of the trees were the subject of a Tree Preservation Order. Seven trees were initially identified for removal although this has subsequently been reduced to four with the retained trees being incorporated into the new landscaping scheme proposed. Removals proposed include four Category B trees (Trees of moderate quality) T6/T7/T8/T9 which are a linear group of London Plane planted as heavy standards in around 2008 and which now form a closed canopy along the southern boundary. The most visually prominent tree is T5 (Tree of 'Good' quality) in the south west corner of the site and this is retained as part of the development thereby not affecting the visual amenity of the area. The removals will be mitigated by on site native planting and off site compensation planting.

- 6.27 The report confirms that there is only very minimal encroachment into root protection areas by the proposed development which is considered insignificant and would not be expected to cause any significant harm to the long-term health and viability of the retained trees. The report sets out measures to protect tree root protection areas during the development phase such as protective fencing identified to certain trees.
- 6.28 Overall the scheme is acceptable in terms of the relationship with trees and mitigation measures identified within the 'Site Tree Appraisal' report which can be secured through planning condition as deemed necessary. On this basis the development is in accordance with Policy JP-G7 and Section 15 of the NPPF.

Ecology

- 6.29 The application is supported by an Ecological Appraisal prepared CGO Ecology Ltd in March 2023. The report establishes that site has a negligible level of ecological interest. Ecological features of interest include the trees on the site only, and as surveyed above. No evidence of bat activity was noted and the mature trees offered no potential roosting features. No evidence of other protected species was found on the site. No further survey effort or protected species mitigation is recommended at this time. For the above reasons the development is in accordance with PFE Policy JP-G8 and relevant provisions of the NPPF

Biodiversity Net Gain

6.30 National Planning Policy seeks a 10% uplift in ecological value post development. The development is supported by Biodiversity Net Gain Reporting prepared by Rachel Hacking Ecology which advises that *'The baseline habitat units within the redline development are 0.27. Post-development habitat units within the redline development are 0.17(-36.57%). The proposed development is predicted to result in a net loss in habitat units on site. To achieve 10% net gain on or off-site, 0.13 habitat units are required. Of which, 0.11 units need to be provided through the provision of 'woodland; other broadleaved' to satisfy the trading rules. There is no feasible scope on site for further mitigation'*.

6.31 The applicant has two options are available:

- Scenario A: the University are subsequently able to secure local compensatory habitat creation on land within their ownership; OR.
- Scenario B: the University is unable to find local compensatory habitat in which to invest and instead pay for their units through a biodiversity unit offsetting market. This could be The Environment Bank, the LPA or a third-party landowner.

6.32 Both scenarios can be accommodated by an appropriately worded planning condition, thereby complying with PfE Policy JP-G8 and Paragraphs 180 and 186 of NPPF.

Highways and Servicing

6.33 The site is accessed through an existing internal road network with an established vehicular route between the John Garside and George Begg buildings. This route is not open for public use and access is restricted to University vehicles and personnel.

6.34 Improvement works to the end section of Drover Lane are proposed, by extending the southern end of the road within the University site which will allow for service vehicles to

make a 3-point turn to enable exiting the site in forward gear. It is noted that the proposed Energy Centre does not need regular service deliveries and requires no raw material to operate and produces no waste. The operational and servicing requirements of the use are therefore limited and servicing requirements are accommodated on University land without impacting on the public highway.

Temporary Re-siting of Gas Store Compound

- 6.35 The development requires the relocation of an existing Gas Store and standby generator which serve the John Garside building to a temporary location to the north of the building to facilitate development. MCC Planning have been consulted regarding the temporary relocation of the compound and are supportive of the use of a temporary compound with fencing during the works. The use of a temporary gas store can be conditioned accordingly.

Crime and Security Issues

- 6.36 The development is proposed to be protected by fencing thereby preventing the potential for crime or security issues associated with unauthorised access. The site will be supervised by University Security staff as it is presently and the proposals are acceptable from a security perspective and will be in accordance with the provisions of local and national policies which seek to achieve well designed, safe places.

7. Planning Balance and Conclusions

- 7.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared University of Manchester (Directorate of Estates and Facilities Project Group) in support of an application seeking full planning permission for. *‘Construction of a new above ground Energy Centre and associated below ground plant, landscaping, revised access road, boundary treatments and building illumination. The Energy Centre building and site compound shall house mechanical and electrical services equipment for the production of heat and hot water’.*
- 7.2 The development proposed by this application will achieve a significant carbon reduction and will clearly help meet an identified need for reducing CO2 emissions by enabling low carbon development in Manchester.
- 7.3 This statement has provided an assessment of the various planning impacts associated with the proposals, supported by technical reporting where relevant. This assessment has successfully demonstrated that there are no technical reasons that would warrant refusal of planning permission.

Summary of contribution to Sustainable Development

- 7.4 In summary, set against the three dimensions of sustainable development identified at paragraph 8 of the NPPF, the proposed development would fulfil all of the following:

Economic role: In the short term, job opportunities associated with the construction and procurement will be created. Furthermore, the reduction in annual carbon emissions will be associated with lower energy costs, enabling the applicant to make long term savings on maintaining the estate.

Social Role: The proposals will immediately improve building services for the John Garside building and Georg Begg Building providing an appropriate operational environment for

students and staff using these buildings thereby improving the delivery of education and providing social benefits.

Environmental: The proposed works have potential to secure an 82% reduction in operational carbon emissions from the John Garside and George Begg buildings equating to a saving of 1,148 tonnes of carbon each and every year. As such, it is clear that the installation will achieve a significant carbon reduction over the present operational position. The proposals will therefore achieve a significant reduction in carbon emissions, and represent meaningful progress in the applicant's transition to a Zero Carbon estate by 2038.

- 7.5 In light of the need to balance the benefits of allowing the proposed development against any adverse impacts that may arise as a result, we conclude that the benefits outlined above would not be significantly and demonstrably outweighed by any perceived adverse impacts if planning permission was granted. The proposals are therefore considered to constitute sustainable development as defined by paragraph 8 of the NPPF and consequently the presumption in favour of sustainable development should apply in the determination of this application.

Appendix 1: Framework Construction Management Plan

This appendix to the Planning Statement provides initial details in respect of how it is envisaged the construction phase will be managed. At the planning submission stage of the process, in advance of a contractor being appointed it is not feasible to submit a detailed construction management plan. A construction management plan is usually produced by the main contractor as they will have their own 'in house' procedures and regulations in place to manage the construction phase. The appointment of a contractor typically takes place once planning permission has been approved, and therefore this matter is usually the subject of a pre commencement planning condition in the Manchester City Council administrative area.

RECOM, heading the Project Team, has opened discussions with the University Estates Dept during the pre-application stage and have gained an insight into the various issues which may face staff and students in nearby buildings. RECOM and their appointed contractor will continue to work closely with the University Estates Dept to ensure that construction activity is managed effectively to minimise potential impacts on occupants of the surrounding buildings.

RECOM are keen to manage this process proactively and this may include the site manager liaising with building managers/staff/students so they have a 'point contact' should they need it. It is also envisaged that the contractor will hold a consultation session with the building managers of surrounding buildings prior to construction commencing. As mentioned above the construction management plan is usually the subject of a planning condition and will likely include information with respect to the items listed below:

- Establishing a point of contact for staff/students prior to construction works commencing on site.
- Identified construction compound.
- Identified vehicular access points into the site for all construction traffic, staff vehicles and heavy goods vehicles.
- Defined access and egress routes for demolition and construction traffic, including staff, delivery and construction vehicles, including HGVs.
- Details of dust suppression measures and measures to control dust and mud on the surrounding public highway network.
- Methodology for the undertaking of clearance and demolition, including any asbestos identified to be removed by a licensed contractor.

- Specified working hours for the site including hours for the delivery of materials.
- Identified measures for the management of on-site construction vehicles and plant machinery in order to reduce noise/emissions.
- Measures for securing the site, including on site security and lighting.

RECOM will work proactively with the Council through the post planning approval in order to formalise the effective management of the construction phase.

Appendix 2: Framework Local Labour Agreement

University of Manchester and their appointed contractor will ensure that the project adds value to the local economy by maximising employment and training opportunities for residents of the surrounding neighbourhoods.

It is recommended that a Local Labour Agreement is the subject of a planning condition as most contractors have their own 'in-house' staff such as Learning & Development Officers and Engagement Officers who support apprentices, work placements and trainees and engage with local stakeholders to identify opportunities for collaborative working.

Paul Butler Associates have liaised with Westley Robinson in the Work and Skills Team at Manchester City Council previously with regard to planning submissions. Westley Robinson has confirmed previously that a detailed Local Labour Agreement is not required for application validation, but that their recommendation would be for a suitably worded planning condition to be applied to any grant of planning permission.

The applicant is in agreement to such a condition being applied and is committed to working with the Work and Skills Team to ensure that employment opportunities resulting from this development are made available to Manchester residents.