OMI Architects

METHODIST CENTRAL HALL, MANCHESTER
INTERIM TRAVEL PLAN

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Planning Policy – Travel Plan

Interim Travel Plan

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1 Introduction

1.1 This Interim Travel Plan is to support the plans for the repair and upgrade of Methodist Central Hall located in the city centre of Manchester .

Development Proposal Summary

1.2 The proposal will repair, upgrade and extend the existing building which is classified as a Place of Worship (class F).

1.3 The main entrance to the building is maintained from Oldham Street with secondary entrances from Dale Street and Spear Street.

1.4 A cycle store is to be provided with space for 12 bikes. Access to the cycle store is provided directly from Spear Street. Showers and changing facilities are also proposed.

1.5 Due toit's city centre location no car parking is either currently available on site or proposed for the development, the appropriateness of this is examined later in this report. On street Disabled parking spaces are provided within the Northern Quarter on Brick Street (3 bays). Table 2.1 also highlights car parks with disabled parking bays within the NQ.

1.6 Deliveries and refuse collection will be concentrated from Spear Street in line with the existing provision.

Travel Plan Process

1.7 The Interim Travel Plan draws on the following guidance and best practice:

- Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation (2019), Better planning, better transport, better places
- Department for Transport (2002), Making Travel Plans Work
- Department for Transport (2008), Essential Guide to Travel Planning
- Department for Transport (2020), Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge
- Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2016), Planning Practice Guidance
- Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2021), National Planning Policy Framework

1.8 Page 72 of NPPF[1] states that a Travel Plan is:

'A long-term management strategy for an organization or site that seeks to deliver sustainable transport objectives and is regularly reviewed.'

1.9 A Travel Plan is a tool for managing access to a site that sets out a management strategy that seeks to promote sustainable travel choices and reduce single occupancy car use to achieve stated objectives. It should contain a package of measures designed to meet the objective to reduce single-occupancy car use generated from the site by supporting sustainable modes of transport, where practicable.

1.10 A Travel Plan should include a mixture of site infrastructure measures and marketing measures to assist the plan to meet defined objectives. NPPF advises that the measures proposed should be commensurate with the scale, location and type of development.

1.11 Within a Travel Plan there is a need to set objectives, targets and indicators, the purpose of which is to monitor change and review policies overtime to allow it to meet the needs of the users of a site.

1.12 The Plan outlines the existing accessibility of the site, infrastructure measures proposed as part of the development, and management and policy measures for adoption upon occupation of the site to promote use of existing infrastructure and infrastructure to be delivered as part of the development. The Travel Plan also sets out measures that will be used to manage and monitor the Plan over time.

Travel Plan Pyramid

1.13 Department of Transport (DfT) states that it is helpful to:

> '... view the Travel Plan as a pyramid of measures and actions, some of which may form the foundations of the Travel Plan and part of which will be outcomes from the Transport Assessment.'[2]

1.14 The DfT pyramid (shown in Figure 1.1) views the Travel Plan process as a series of considerations that is constructed from the ground up, with each new layer building on the last within the context of objectives sought.

1.15 At the bottom of the pyramid is the location of the site and at this stage characteristics of access to the site by all modes of travel. This is set out in Section 2 of the Plan.

1.16 At the next level the physical aspects of the proposed development are set out to allow acknowledgement of that some Travel Plan measures are built-in to the layout to influence travel. These measures include pedestrian access facilities, car parking level, cycle parking proposals and complementary measures, such as noticeboard, shower facilities, etc. This information is as set out above in Section 1 and also in Section 4.

1.17 The remaining levels outline the management, promotion and soft measures that are to be adopted as part of the travel plan to reinforce the site location, infrastructure proposals and access opportunities. DfT research has consistently demonstrated that investment in soft or SMART travel planning measures, when coupled with marketing interventions, can have an impact upon influencing travel behaviour. These are set out in Sections 3 to 4 of the Plan. Section 4 also sets out the Travel Plan Action Plan.

1.18 Section 5 sets out the monitoring plan which details how and when the travel plan will be reviewed. This includes how and when surveys will be undertaken, and the targets that will be set to meet the stated objectives.

Travel Plan Benefits

1.19 Travel plans result in a variety of health, financial, environmental and site operation benefits, which are set out below.

1.20 Reduced levels of single occupancy car use can lead to an improvement in air quality both surrounding the site and across the wider area. In addition, increases in active travel have very real impact on staff health as moderate physical activity can help prevent obesity, mental health issues, cancer, high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease.

1.21 The financial benefits of Travel Plans include personal cost savings from using more cost- effective modes of travel and indirect and wider cost savings relating to reduced illness and reduced accident rates.

1.22 The environmental benefits of Travel Plans include reduced carbon emissions and air quality issues.

1.23 Travel Plans also bring benefits to organisations and employers, including reduced demand for parking, reduced sickness absence and a happier and healthier work force.

Travel Plan Aim

1.24 The aim of the Travel Plan is to maximise trips to and from the site by active and sustainable modes of travel and to reduce the need to travel by private car, particularly by single occupancy trips.

Travel Plan Objectives

1.25 The aim of the Travel Plan will be achieved through the delivery of the following objectives:

Objective 1: to raise awareness of the travel options available
Objective 2: to provide travel information on the site's website
Objective 3: to investigate measures to promote the use of alternative modes of travel
Objective 4: to periodically evaluate the transport needs of site users
Objective 5: to periodically update site users to make sure they have all relevant travel information

2 Accessibility Audit

Site Location

2.1 The site is bounded to the north by Dale Street, to the west by Oldham Street and to the east by Spear Street. The site sits in the Stephenson Square Conservation Area.

2.2 The site sits in the city centre, a short walk from the local amenities in the core of the city centre, bus station and train station.

Local Highway Network

2.4 There is limited vehicle access to the site and no site car parking. Pedestrian access points were historically provided from all highway frontages.

Public Car Parks

2.5 Table 2.1 shows the car parks serving the town centre.

Car park	Distance (m)	Walk Time (min)	Total Spaces	Disabled Spaces	EV Spaces
Northern Quarter	160	4	685	Yes	Yes
Piccadilly Gardens	500	8	712	Yes	Yes
Piccadilly Plaza	400	8	160	Yes	
Arndale	320	7	1487	Yes	
Port Street Central	320	7	76		
Major Street	500	8	130		
Dale Street	500	8	285	Yes	

2.6 Table 2.1 shows that there are over 3,535 public parking spaces within an 8-minute walk of the site.

Walking

2.7 The footways bounding the site provide suitable provision for access to the main entrance to the building and connections to other town centre uses.

2.8 Two-thirds of all journeys in the UK are under-five miles and short distance trips offer the greatest opportunity for changes in travel behaviour. DfT best practice guidance states that walking has the potential to substitute for car trips under 2km.

2.9 The Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (CIHT) provides further advice on suitable walking distances these are set out in Table 2.2.

Destination	Walk Distance (m)	Walk Time (mins)**
Commuting/Education	2000	25
Local Centre/Local Retail	800	10
Other*	1200	15

*Other includes personal business and leisure destinations, such as banks, pharmacies, and open spaces **Walk times based on leisurely speed of 80m /min

2.10 An assessment has been made of the accessibility of the site based on the distances in Table 2.2. This shows that the site is less than 500m (6-minutes) of the retail facilities in the core of the town centre. This means that opportunities exist for workers to access local amenities and services during the course of the working day, such as for lunch. It also shows that residential areas surrounding the town centre are within a 2km walk of the site, meaning that workers living in these locations could travel to work on foot.

2.11 The assessment shows that the site is well located in terms of pedestrian trips and meets the guidance set out by the CIHT.

Public Transport

2.14 The nearest bus stops to the site are at Piccadilly Gardens, 150m / 2-minutes from the site. The bus stops include shelters, timetable information and seating, and are illuminated by street lights. Table 2.3 provides a summary of the services stopping at Piccadilly Gardens.

No		Frequency (buses per hour/by direction)		
		AM Peak	Daytime	PM Peak
15	Flixton to Piccadilly Gardens	3	3	3
35	Leigh to Piccadilly Gardens	1	2	2
37	Bolton to Piccadilly Gardens	5	5	5
43	Manchester Airport to Piccadilly Gardens	5	5	5
59	Oldham to Piccadilly Gardens	5	5	5
83	Sholver to Piccadilly Gardens	3	3	3
86	Chorlton to Piccadilly Gardens	5	5	5
101	Wythenshawe to Piccadilly Gardens	4	4	4
112	Middleton to Piccadilly Gardens	4	4	4
135	Bury to Piccadilly Gardens	6	6	6
142	East Didsbury to Piccadilly Gardens	5	5	5
216	Stalybridge to Piccadilly Gardens	2	2	2
231	Ashton-under-Lyne to Piccadilly Gardens	5	4	4
250	Trafford Centre to Piccadilly Gardens	5	5	5
255	Partington to Manchester Piccadilly	4	2	2
263	Altrincham to Piccadilly Gardens	2	3	2

2.15 The nearest train station to the site is Piccadilly Station, located 750m / 10-minutes walk to the south of the site. The station is a major transport hub for the north providing direct access to all major cities in England.

2.16 The assessment shows that the site is well served by public transport.

3 Travel Plan Co-ordinator

3.1 An effective Travel Plan needs a clear hierarchy of responsibility and Travel Co-ordinators play an important role in developing, implementing, and managing Travel Plans. A Travel Co-ordinator for the site will be identified prior to occupation of the development.

3.2 The Co-ordinator will form the main point of contact for site staff, the local community and MCC. The Co-ordinator will also be responsible for raising awareness, marketing the Travel Plan and implementing the measures. The Co-ordinator will also be responsible for surveying the Plan's effectiveness and assessing this against the stated objectives and targets.

3.3 In summary, the Travel Co-ordinator's general role and responsibilities will include:

- Implementing the Plan measures
- Providing a point of contact for site staff and the local community
- Organising regular site Travel Plan meetings
- Publicising and raising awareness of local and national initiatives
- Maintaining website / travel noticeboard

- Providing regular updates to staff on changes to local services and facilities
- Monitoring and surveying travel patterns

3.4 Should the Travel Plan Co-ordinator change the responsibility for the Travel Plan will be handed over to the successor. Contact details for the successor will be provided to the Council in a timely manner to allow the Travel Plan to continue uninterrupted at the site.

3.5 The applicant is committed to the implementation and successful delivery of the Travel Plan's measures to meet the stated objectives. To achieve these the applicant will make available necessary funding and resources to the Travel Plan Co-ordinator.

4. Measures Toolkit & Action Plan Promotion & Marketing Measures

4.1 Good communication is a vital component of the Travel Plan to ensure that staff, hotel guests and visitors are fully aware of the options available to them. The Travel Plan Co-ordinator will be responsible for marketing and promoting the Travel Plan and providing information for the site users that can be disseminated to occupiers and site users.

4.2 The following measures will be used to promote and market the Travel Plan:

1. Provision of a site travel noticeboard
2. Provision of travel information on the website

4.3 The following are suggested information sources that could be included on the website / noticeboard.

1. Travel Plan Co-ordinator contact details
2. Local area map showing cycle routes and public transport nodes
3. Information on site cycle parking, shower and changing facilities
4. Details of the benefits of active travel and weblink to fun resource such as the NHS's Active10 walking tracker app
5. Website links to Bee Network Journey Planner
6. Website links to Traveline on-line and phone app journey planning software
7. Website links to Bee Network bus route information
8. Website links to cycle route maps
9. Website links to local cycle training and maintenance sessions
10. Information on city centre car-sharing schemes

4.4 The information will be prepared prior to occupation of the development.

Information Dissemination

4.5 Information will be disseminated to site users via the website and / or noticeboard. Periodic emails could also be sent to site users to update them on any changes to local routes and services, and to the Travel Plan measures.

Walking & Cycling Measures

4.6 Walking is simple, free and the easiest ways to get more active and feel healthier. Section 2 shows that the site is well located for access on foot to other destinations in the city centre and for access to residential areas surrounding the town centre.

4.7 Cycling is an excellent mode of travel which is healthier, cheaper, and more enjoyable than driving. Cycling has the following benefits:

1. Builds physical strength and develops healthy bones and muscles
2. Lowering blood pressure and reducing the risk of heart attacks, strokes and diabetes
3. A moderate cycle ride burns 400 calories per hour and is a great way to control weight

4.9 To support walking and cycling, the proposal includes a main entrance orientated towards key routes to town centre destinations, cycle parking, showers / changing facilities and Travel Plan measures.

4.10 The marketing strategy for the Travel Plan includes the provision of information on the website and via the noticeboard.

4.11 It is recommended that any operators at the site who employ staff consider the introduction of Government's Cycle to Work scheme to assist staff with the purchase of bikes.

4.12 In addition to maps providing details of existing public transport routes, the website and travel noticeboard will include information relating to phone app and on-line journey planning information. Information will be provided regarding season ticket arrangements.

4.13 The Travel Plan Co-ordinator will use MCC (Bee Networks) preferred car sharing scheme at the site.

https://tfgm.com/roads/cars-and-driving

The car sharing scheme will be promoted on the website and on the noticeboard.

Action Plan

4.14 An Action Plan has been developed that summarises the key actions from the Travel Plan. This will be reviewed and updated as part of each monitoring period.

4.15 The Action Plan has been split into four key output periods based on the following:

- Short (S) – can be achieved within 12 months of occupation
- Long (L) – can be achieved within 3 years of occupation
- Ongoing (O) – no set timescales as will be regularly reviewed and updated

General	• Appointment of the Travel Plan Co-ordinator (S) • Agreement of Travel Plan budget (S) • Collection of latest travel information and update briefing (S) (O) • Introduction of identified firm measures (S) • Review and discussion of identified possible measures, such as Cycle to Work scheme, and visitor travel measures (L)
Marketing	• Official launch of the Travel Plan (S) • Preparation of website and noticeboard (O) • Staff travel focus groups (O) • Promotion of national campaigns (O) • Preparation of material to update noticeboard with any service changes (O)
Infrastructure	• Provision of secure cycle parking • Provision of showers and changing facilities (S) • Provision pedestrian site access facilities (S) • Provision of disabled, car sharing and EV parking (S) of secure cycle parking (S)
Monitoring	• Baseline travel survey (S) • Review and update of targets (S) • Periodic travel surveys (O) • Preparation of periodic monitoring reports (O)

5. Baseline Travel Patterns, Monitoring & Target Mechanisms

Data Collection & Analysis

5.1 Travel surveys will be undertaken within six months of the site being occupied and the results from the survey will be then used to set the targets for the Travel Plan and to update the measures, as required.

5.2 The surveys will collect the following information:

1. Place of residence
2. Usual mode of travel
3. Car and cycle ownership
4. Initiatives that would encourage a change in mode

5.3 The Travel Plan will be updated to include the surveys and updates will be made to the targets / measures, where required. The updated Travel Plan will be issued to MCC within three months of the survey.

5.4 Following the baseline survey, surveys will be undertaken biennially for a period of five years. After five years, further surveys will be undertaken if found to be required by MCC.

Monitoring Plan

5.5 Regular monitoring of the Travel Plan is important to allow an understanding of whether the measures set out are achieving the stated objectives. To do this a regular monitoring will be undertaken, including further staff travel surveys, as set out in Table 5.2.

Exercise	Key Information	Frequency	Responsibility
Preparation of information for website / noticeboard	To the baseline travel survey to be distributed and for staff to understand travel choices from day 1	On occupation and with regular updates to information	Travel Plan Co- ordinator
Baseline staff survey	The data to inform the development of the full Travel Plan and allow appropriate targets to be set	Within 6 months of occupation (Year 1 – baseline)	Travel Plan Co- ordinator
Monitoring survey	Staff travel information	Years 3 and 5	Travel Plan Co- ordinator

Targets

5.6 Travel Plans should include targets against which the success of the Plan can be monitored over time. Targets should be ambitious yet realistic. There are two main types of targets that are applicable to Travel Plans: action targets and quantitative targets.

5.7 Action-based targets are based on the Travel Plan reaching set milestones or indicators. Action targets include the commitment to deliver a package of measures to help promote and encourage sustainable travel. The following action targets have been set for this stage in the Plan.

- Appoint the Travel Plan Co-ordinator
- Prepare information for website and noticeboard
- Survey staff travel patterns within 6 months of occupation

5.8 Further action-based targets and milestones will be identified when the monitoring reports are prepared following the travel surveys.

5.9 The Travel Plan will be in operation for a period of five years and will be monitored for the first five years to establish whether the targets are achieved. If by year five the Travel Plan targets have not been achieved, the measures will be reviewed, and further surveys and monitoring periods will be undertaken at appropriate intervals through agreement with MCC.

Parking Provision

The proposal is car-free in line with the historic situation at the site and its highly accessible location. Given this and the convenience the site location offers, it is anticipated that, in reality, a high proportion of workers at the site will access by sustainable modes, particularly public transport.

Should a worker choose to drive to the site there are over 3535 public parking spaces within an 8-minute walk of the site. NPPF states that car sharing is a sustainable mode of travel. Workers who drive will be asked to consider car sharing using the measures are proposed in the Travel Plan.

Parking controls are in place around the site with Pay & Display short-stay parking controls which will prevent nuisance overspill parking from the development.

Section 2 shows that a number of the public car parks provide disabled and EV charging spaces. Disabled spaces are also provided on-street on Brick Street in the NQ.

Policy Compliance

Paragraph 111 of NPPF states that developments should only be prevented on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or where residual cumulative impacts would be severe. The assessment shows that the proposal will not have a severe impact on highway operation or unacceptable effects on road safety.

Accessibility Assessment

Walking

The footpaths bounding the site provide suitable provision for access to the main entrance to the building and connections to other town centre uses.

The proposal maintains the existing building entrance on Oldham Street, which has appropriate footway widths and crossing facilities providing connections to routes to core areas of the town centre. The proposal also includes changing and shower facilities for workers to use. Travel Plan measures are proposed to support journeys on foot.

Cycling

To support cycle access to the site, the proposal includes cycle parking, showers / changing facilities and Travel Plan measures.

The site is well served by public transport. Measures are proposed in the Travel Plan to support access by public transport.

Policy Compliance

Paragraph 93 of NPPF states that planning decisions should ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services. This is further supported by paragraphs 105 and 106, which support developments in sustainable locations

which have a mix of uses across an area to minimise the number and length of journeys needed. The proposal is in line with NPPF policy.

Conclusions

Opportunities exist for future staff and visitors to access the site by sustainable modes and that the site relates well to very local amenities and services in the centre of Manchester. The public transport accessibility of the site is very good. The proposal includes measures to support sustainable trip making including a main entrance located on suitable pedestrian routes, cycle parking, showers and lockers, and a Travel Plan.

No parking is proposed at the site, which is appropriate given its highly accessible location. Should a worker or visitor require a parking space the site is located a short walk from numerous public car parks.