

NXQ

# Lever Street, Manchester

Planning Statement

Revision 01 \_ April 2024



Howells

SOLLER

# Planning Statement

Proposed Office Development at NXQ, Lever Street, Manchester  
Soller Nine

April 2024

# Contents

|     |                                                            |    |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 1.  | Introduction .....                                         | 1  |
| 2.  | The Site and Surroundings.....                             | 3  |
| 3.  | Context to the Proposed Development.....                   | 9  |
| 4.  | The Proposed Development.....                              | 14 |
| 5.  | Pre-Application Consultation.....                          | 28 |
| 6.  | The Planning Policy Context .....                          | 34 |
| 7.  | Assessment of the Principle of Development .....           | 47 |
| 8.  | Assessment of Technical Considerations .....               | 54 |
| 9.  | Framework Construction Environmental Management Plan ..... | 74 |
| 10. | The Planning Balance .....                                 | 79 |
| 11. | Conclusion .....                                           | 83 |

# Appendices

- Appendix I    Application Submission Schedule
- Appendix II    Application Site Boundary

# Document Details

**Report title:** Planning Statement  
**Prepared by:** NL/LF  
**Status:** Final  
**For and on behalf of AshtonHale Limited**

# 1. Introduction

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by AshtonHale Ltd ("AshtonHale") for Soller Nine ("the Applicant") in support of a full planning application submitted to Manchester City Council ("MCC") for an office-led development (to be known as "NXQ") at Land Bound by Lever Street, Great Ancoats Street, Little Lever Street and Houldsworth Street, Manchester ("the Site").

1.2 The full description of development as stated on the application form is:

*"Full planning application for part-retention, conversion and extension of existing buildings; selective demolition; the erection of a ground floor + 17 storey building comprising new office space (Use Class E) with ground floor reception area and ancillary uses; supporting infrastructure and ancillary facilities, roof top plant enclosures, and landscaping."*

1.3 Full details of the proposed development are provided in the submitted Design and Access Statement and on the planning application drawings prepared by Howells architects.

1.4 This application is accompanied by a comprehensive suite of supporting technical reports, the scope of which was agreed in advance with planning officers at Manchester City Council ("MCC"). These are listed at **Appendix I** and this Planning Statement should be read alongside the supporting plans and technical documents.

1.5 The purpose of this Planning Statement is to provide a detailed description of both the application site and development proposals, assessing the proposed development against all relevant policies of the Development Plan and other material considerations.



## Report Structure

1.6 The following chapters of this Planning Statement are structured as follows:

- **Chapter 2: The Site and Surroundings** - this chapter provides a description of the application site and the local context, including any known environmental constraints and relevant planning history;
- **Chapter 3: Context to the Proposed Development** - this chapter sets out the considers the regeneration of the area and how the scheme has evolved in this context;
- **Chapter 4: The Proposed Development** - this chapter provides a description of what planning permission is being sought for;
- **Chapter 5: Pre-Application Consultation** - this chapter summarises pre-application engagement undertaken by the Applicant with MCC, the public and other key stakeholders;
- **Chapter 6: The Planning Policy Context** - provides a summary of relevant planning policy, and other material considerations;
- **Chapter 7: Assessment of the Principle of Development** - discusses the proposed uses and compliance with relevant planning policy through consideration of the key issues posed by the Development Plan and other material considerations;
- **Chapter 8: Assessment of Technical Considerations** - sets out a summary of the technical work undertaken to support the planning application and compliance with relevant policies;
- **Chapter 9: Framework Construction Environmental Management Plan** - provides a framework for the CEMP that will be produced at the construction stage.
- **Chapter 10: Planning Balance** - the chapter brings together all the factors to be put into the planning balance to consider whether, when looked at as a whole, the scheme represents a sustainable form of development;
- **Chapter 11: Conclusion** - this chapter provides a summary of each of the above chapters and reaches the firm conclusion that the scheme is appropriate for full planning permission to be granted.



## 2. The Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 This chapter provides a description of the site and its surroundings. For further detail (and to avoid repetition), please also refer to the submitted Design and Access Statement ("DAS") which has been prepared by Howells Architects.

### Site Location and Surroundings

- 2.2 The extent of the application site edged red is shown on the Site Location Plan enclosed at **Appendix II** and the existing site at **Figure 1** below.



**Figure 1:** Existing Site Layout (application boundary roughly in red)

- 2.3 The application boundary extends to a total of 0.16ha (1,640 sqm) and is bounded by Great Ancoats Street, Lever Street, Houldsworth Street and Little Lever Street. There is no vehicle access to the buildings on site and no on-site car parking.
- 2.4 Within the Site is a collection of buildings, shown at **Figure 2**.

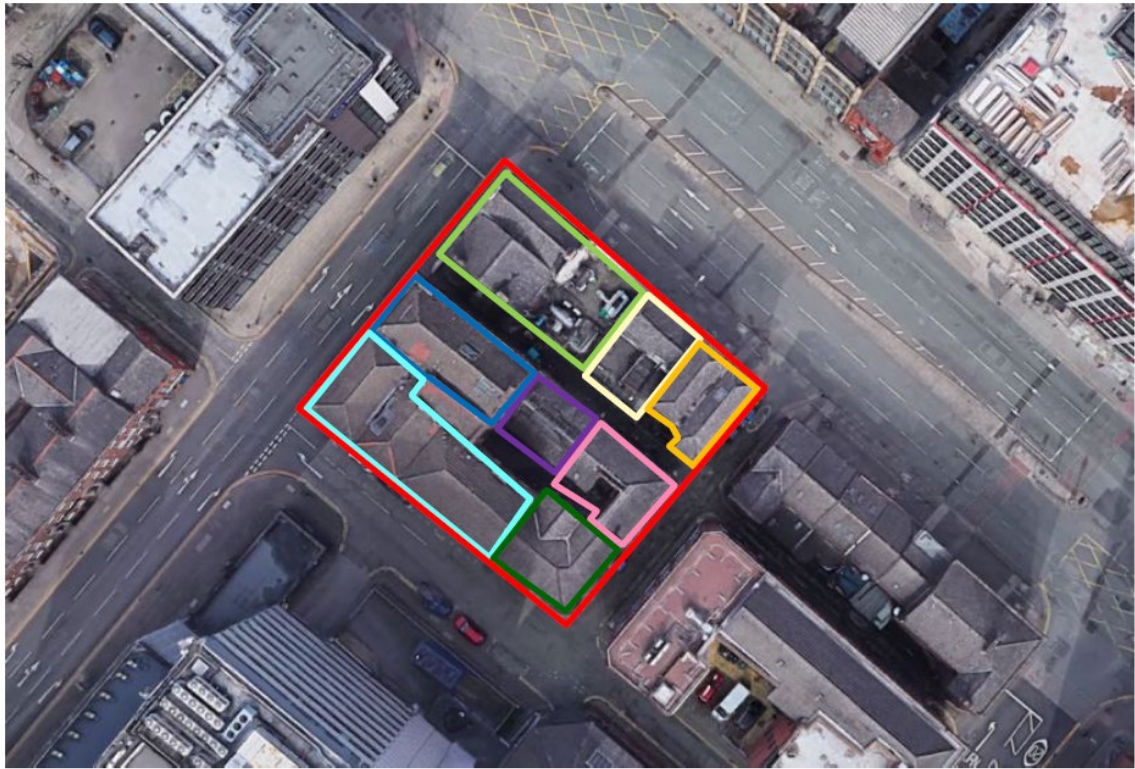


**Figure 2:** Existing Buildings on the Application Site

2.5 The existing buildings can be summarised as follows:

- **Building 1** - 32 Great Ancoats Street, Former Land O' Cakes Hotel and currently in use as Bem Brasil restaurant (**Green**)
- **Building 2 & 3** - 36-38 Great Ancoats Street (**Yellow**)
- **Buildings 4 & 5** - 40-42 Great Ancoats Street (**Orange**)
- **Building 6** - 58 Lever Street (**Blue**)
- **Buildings 7 & 8** - 56 Lever Street and 25 Houldsworth Street (**Light Blue**)
- **Building 9** - Former Bakery, Little Ancoats Street (**Purple**)
- **Building 10** - 65-67 Lever Street (**Pink**)
- **Buildings 11 & 12** - 27 Houldsworth Street and 63 Little Lever Street (**Dark Green**)

2.6 As described above, the existing buildings currently house a variety of commercial uses including the Bem Brasil Restaurant, smaller takeaway restaurants along Great Ancoats Street and Houldsworth Street, as well as small commercial premises.

- 2.7 The site is located on the north-eastern edge of the Northern Quarter and also on a key intersection between Lever Street and Great Ancoats Street. Both the Northern Quarter and Great Ancoats Street (and beyond into Ancoats) contribute to the surrounding context of the site. The buildings adjacent to the site predominantly range from 5 - 7 storeys, with more recent developments along Great Ancoats Street near the site extending to 11 storeys and rising to upwards of 30 storeys as you head further east and west.
- 2.8 Ground floor uses in the surrounding area include commercial, leisure, food & beverage, retail and residential uses. Along Lever Street there is predominantly commercial and retail unit, whereas along Great Ancoats Street there is a variety of residential, commercial and retail uses.

## Planning History

- 2.9 From a review of Manchester City Council's Public Access System, the site is not subject to any planning applications from the last five years.
- 2.10 Historically, applications relate to the use of the various existing buildings and associated signage and elevational alterations. There have not been any applications for the comprehensive redevelopment.

## Heritage Context

- 2.11 The site does not contain any statutory designated listed buildings and is not located within a conservation area.
- 2.12 Whilst not within a conservation area itself the site is, however, situated close to both the Ancoats and Stevenson Square Conservation Areas. Stevenson Square Conservation Area forms a significant area of the city centre in which the majority of the Victorian building stock remain, capturing the identity of Manchester City Centre. The Ancoats Conservation Area is situated just outside of the City Centre, where the principal buildings are predominantly large mills located adjacent to Rochdale Canal, where its identity is focused around its industrial past. Within the



conservation areas there are several Listed Buildings within proximity to the application site on Lever Street.

2.13 The NPPF identifies that heritage assets include both designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing). There are no designated heritage assets within the Site.

2.14 Historic England's guidance on 'Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment' (2015) states that:

*"Non-designated heritage assets include those that have been identified in a Historic Environment Record, in a local plan, through local listing or during the process of considering the application."*

2.15 MCC does not hold a list of local heritage assets. The Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record (HER) was consulted in January 2023 and there were no entries within the Site. Notwithstanding, the buildings within the Site have a degree of local architectural and/or historic interest; the nature and extent of which has been assessed at Appendix 1 of the submitted Heritage Assessment prepared by Turley. National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) provides the following guidance from the Government on the identification of non-designated heritage assets:

*"A substantial majority of buildings have little or no heritage significance and thus do not constitute heritage assets. Only a minority have enough heritage significance to merit identification as non-designated heritage assets."*

2.16 Taking the above guidance into account, the following buildings within the Site have been identified within the submitted Heritage Assessment as having potential to be considered non-designated heritage assets:

- Former Land O'Lakes / Bem Brasil
- 58 Lever Street
- 56 Lever Street and 25 Houldsworth Street
- 40-42 Great Ancoats Street
- 27 Houldsworth Street and Little Lever Street

2.17 Whilst the buildings had different functions and are not wholly contemporary, they do have a degree of group value as a surviving, grouping of late 18<sup>th</sup> and



19<sup>th</sup> century within an urban block which provides an understanding of the area's growth and development during that period. The extent and limited quality of alterations limit their value as a historic townscape.

2.18 Due to the extent of alteration, the following buildings within the Site are not concluded to have sufficient significance to be identified as non-designated heritage assets:

- 36-38 Great Ancoats Street
- 65-67 Lever Street

2.19 Full details of designated and non-designated heritage assets within and in close proximity of the site are provided with the submitted Environmental Statement.

## Accessibility

2.20 The site is located 130m (less than 2-minute walk) from the bus stops on Great Ancoats Street and Lever Street, 550m/7-minute walk from Piccadilly Gardens Interchange and 650m/8-minute walk from Shudehill Interchange. Piccadilly Gardens Interchange is served by 29 different bus services and Shudehill Interchange is served by 16 different bus services.

2.21 The nearest tram/Metrolink stops are located at Piccadilly Gardens (550m/7-minute walk), Shudehill (650m/8-minute walk) and Piccadilly Station (800m/10-minute walk). Metrolink tram services connect the site to other areas of the City Centre, Altrincham, Eccles, East Didsbury, Media City, Ashton, the Airport, Rochdale, Bury, Salford Quays and the Trafford Centre.

2.22 The site is 800m (10-minute walk) from Manchester Piccadilly Station, which can be used to access mainline trains offering comprehensive service coverage of Greater Manchester and beyond. Piccadilly Station is served by over 30 train services per hour during peak hours.

2.23 The site has a GMAL of 8 (score: 114.03), which is the highest level of accessibility in Greater Manchester.



## Summary

- 2.24 In summary, the form of the existing Site, its various buildings and the heritage context of the surrounding area has been fully considered when developing the proposals. The Site is in a highly accessible location within easy reach of a number of sustainable transport nodes.



### 3. Context to the Proposed Development

#### The Applicant

- 3.1 Soller Nine Ltd is a real estate investment and development company, operating across multiple asset classes in the UK. Soller Nine Ltd (Soller Nine), based in London have a portfolio GDV over £750,000,000 across different uses, including student housing and office developments throughout major cities in the UK.
- 3.2 Soller Nine Ltd has assembled the application site over a number of years to enable the comprehensive and high-quality redevelopment of this important site. The lack of historic investment in the existing buildings by others has led to many of the existing buildings falling into severe disrepair, the Applicant's vision is to give this city block a new lease of life and transform it into a vibrant mixed-use destination, which responds to its urban and historic context, with a bold and dramatic approach to massing which will positively contribute to Manchester's skyline.

#### **Manchester Experience**

##### ***Oxford Road***

- 3.3 In late 2019, Soller Nine acquired the development site with planning permission. A former Barclays Bank building will be transformed into luxury apartments. The site has a prime location between University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester Royal Infirmary and Manchester Science Park, and sits on the Oxford Road Corridor - one of the North of England's most important commercial areas. This scheme will provide upwards of 10 flats, which have already gained significant interest from overseas accommodation providers.

#### **Other Experience**

##### ***Port Dundas Road Glasgow***

- 3.4 In May of 2023, Dundas Square secured planning permission for a 357-apartment development. Designed by Mosaic Architecture + Design, the development will

include studio, one and two-bedroom apartments, also rooftop terraces, co-working spaces, a gym, and retail and office spaces.

### ***Leadworks, Birmingham***

- 3.5 In Mid-2021, Soller Nine Ltd exchanged on an exclusive option to purchase this prime development site adjacent to Broad Street in Birmingham, subject to planning. Since, they have submitted a 198-unit Aparthotel scheme to Birmingham City Council in 2021.

## **The Site and Proposal**

- 3.6 Regeneration is an important planning consideration. Over the past fifteen years the City Council has successfully regenerated areas such as Piccadilly, Spinningfields, the commercial core around Manchester Central, the Northern Quarter, the Civic Quarter and Castlefield. This is an ongoing process, and much remains to be done if the City Centre is to continue being competitive. Manchester City Centre is the primary economic driver in the City Region and is crucial to its longer-term economic success. It is essential therefore that the City Centre and surrounding areas continue to grow and provide new development that is supportive of regeneration principles, including providing new commercial and office facilities as part of a mixed used neighbourhood.
- 3.7 Sitting strategically as one of the main arterial routes into the City Centre, the site is located on the junction of Lever Street and Great Ancoats Street and sits in close proximity to New Islington, Stevenson Square, Piccadilly Gardens, and existing regeneration areas such as New Cross, Piccadilly Basin, and the former Central Retail Park.
- 3.8 Comprising numerous buildings, it is currently only partially occupied by restaurants and has lacked significant investment for some time. This historic lack of investment has led to many of the existing buildings falling into severe disrepair, and a fundamental aspect of the development is the considered retention of key buildings or facades within the block, which have both historical and architectural townscape value.



- 3.9 The vision is to give this city block a new lease of life and transform it into a vibrant mixed-use destination which responds to its urban and historic context, with a bold and dramatic approach to massing which will positively contribute to Manchester's skyline. At ground floor, the vision is to deliver an active ground floor providing a mix of flexible uses, to offer significant community value for Northern Quarter residents.
- 3.10 The recently adopted Places for Everyone (PfE) plan makes clear that economic growth is central to the overall strategy for Greater Manchester. Paragraph 6.14 states that we (Greater Manchester) need to continue to invest in the sites and critical infrastructure that will make our boroughs even more attractive places for businesses to invest, bringing high-value, well paid jobs to our area, and supporting the continued progress towards a low-carbon economy. Measures to support this include enhancing the supply of employment opportunities at a variety of skill levels throughout the boroughs and, as set out at Policy JP-J1, maximising the potential of the key growth locations to deliver inclusive growth across the sub-region by ensuring that employment growth opportunities are well connected and accessible to all residents.
- 3.11 PfE Policy JP-J3 (Office Development) states that at least 2,019,000sqm of accessible new office floorspace will be provided in the Plan area over the period 2022-2039, with a focus on the City Centre primarily, accounting for more than half of all new office floorspace in the sub-region, taking advantage of existing and proposed public transport connectivity.
- 3.12 Research undertaken by Knight Frank<sup>1</sup> shows that the availability of Grade A space in Manchester City Centre fell by 8% during 2023. This total is 5% above the five-year average, however it is important to note that this includes 2019 (a different pre-covid market).

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://content.knightfrank.com/resources/knightfrank.com/ukcities/uk-cities-slides---manchester-final.pdf>

3.13 Savills research<sup>2</sup> from February 2024 states that Grade A and Prime availability currently stands at 1.1 million sqft, which is a 9% decrease on Q3 2023. Figure 2 also shows a continually decreasing total supply (including Grade B and C) from 2021.

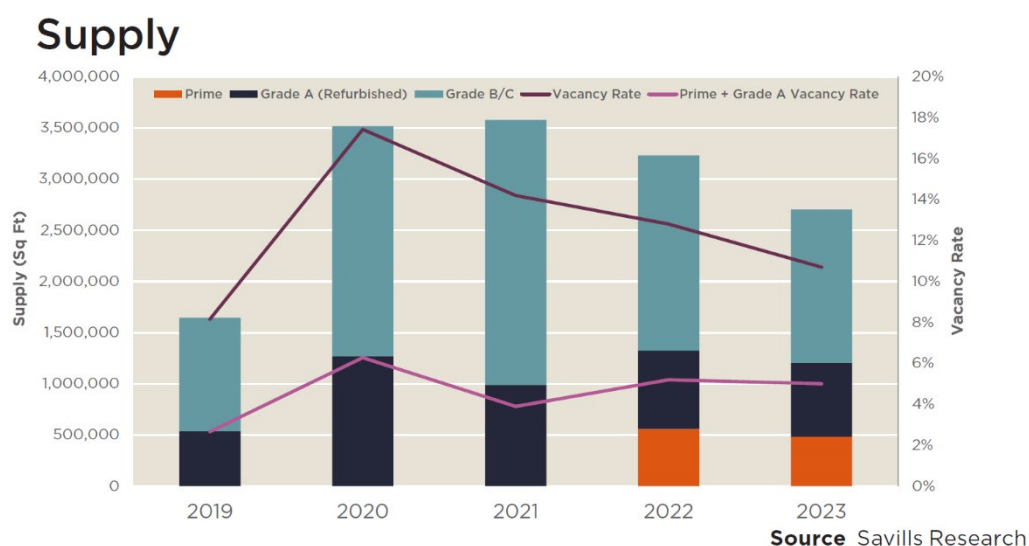


**Figure 3:** Manchester Office Supply (2019-2023)

3.14 The total vacancy rate currently stands at 10.7%, 80 basis points below the Q3 2023 figure. Prime and Grade A vacancy has also decreased by 10 basis points to 5%. Prime market in Manchester is still considered to be undersupplied with just 1.0 years of supply based on average Grade A demand. Knight Frank's view is that as they continue to see a month-on-month increase in the number of employees returning to the workplace, the 'office first' approach to hybrid working will keep demand buoyant.

3.15 The current lack of Grade A office space available in the Northern Quarter has resulted in many employers relocating to other areas within the city. Over the past decade, there has been very little local development of new build offices except for The Hive on Lever Street. In its opening in 2012, The Hive achieved maximum occupation in just under 24 months and the availability of new space spearheaded the re-location of The Arts Council to the area.

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.savills.co.uk/research\\_articles/229130/357179-0](https://www.savills.co.uk/research_articles/229130/357179-0)

3.16 To conclude, there is a clear need and demand for Grade A office space in Manchester City Centre and this area in particular. The site is in need of considered redevelopment, and it is in this context that Soller Nine are progressing a commercial-led redevelopment of the site, including the part-retention, conversion and extension of existing buildings.



## 4. The Proposed Development

- 4.1 This Chapter of the Planning Statement provides a summary of the proposed development. A Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Howells and had been submitted in support of this application and should be read alongside this Statement.

### Description of Development

- 4.2 The description of development is as follows:

*“Full planning application for part-retention, conversion and extension of existing buildings; selective demolition; the erection of a ground floor + 17 storey building comprising new office space (Use Class E) with ground floor reception area and ancillary uses; supporting infrastructure and ancillary facilities, roof top plant enclosures, and landscaping.”*

### Selective Demolition

- 4.3 The vision for the design has been to take a ‘heritage-led’ approach to the existing buildings on-site, exploring the significance and value of each individual non-listed building with the aspiration to retain and refurbish those with the greatest value as part of a new vibrant mixed-use destination that responds to its urban and historic context, with a bold and dramatic approach to massing which will positively contribute to Manchester’s skyline.
- 4.4 As discussed in detail in the submitted Development Options Appraisal (ref: March 2024), a number of development options were explored by the Applicant in formulating its preferred scheme. An assessment is provided of the existing buildings on the site, their heritage value and structural integrity, and the various levels of intervention tested during the extensive pre-application design process to formulate the final proposals, including varying degrees of full and partial retention of existing buildings on the site. The main aim has always been to find appropriate and viable uses for the existing buildings before considering any demolition or redevelopment.



- 4.5 When the financial viability of the various options has been tested, Option 6 (the application proposals) represents the most appropriate viable proposal, and one that the Applicant is committed to deliver. This option necessitates the demolition of certain existing buildings at the site, the conservation or façade retention of others that are deemed to have the greatest significance, and a new build development to make the overall scheme viable. Notably, however, the buildings fronting Lever Street can be retained either in full or their facades, refurbished and re-used. It is these buildings that are of the most historic and architectural significance and their long-term future would be secured as a result of the proposed development.
- 4.6 In summary, the Bem Brasil building (32 Great Ancoats Street) is to be retained alongside the facades of nos. 56 and 58 Lever Street. 32 Great Ancoats Street will be pivotal to the ground floor experience and has the opportunity to become a destination within itself, reinstated to its former glory worthy of this important corner site opposite the Express Building. The other buildings (36-38 Great Ancoats Street, 65-67 Lever Street) will be demolished. This is shown in detail on the submitted Demolition Plans and in the Design and Access Statement prepared by Howells.

## Use and Amount

- 4.7 The proposed development will incorporate:
- A standalone new Food & Beverage (“F&B”) offer in the retained Bem Brasil building (549 sqm GIA) (Use Class E) (referred to as “The Heritage Hub”)
  - A private ground floor courtyard;
  - A new-build office-led development (16,989 sqm GIA) (Use Class E) including:
    - The Tech Hub (New-Build)
      - Grade A office space (Use Class E) across flexible floorplates;
      - Amenity space and shower rooms;
      - Back of house facilities and circulation space;
      - A south-west facing terrace (on top of the Creative Hub); and
      - A Business Lounge and event space.
    - The Creative Hub (New-Build Set Behind Retained Façade)



- Ancillary F&B uses; and
- Informal working space.
- External landscaping improvements.

## Layout

4.8 The site is surrounded by streets in four sides, allowing for multiple pedestrian accesses into the various parts of the development, as shown at **Figure 4**. The main entrance into the Tech Hub and Creative Hub is located on Lever Street via the new courtyard, with cycle access located along Houldsworth Street. The Courtyard is at the heart of the proposal, linking No. 32 Great Ancoats Street (“The Heritage Hub”), and the “Tech” and “Creative” Hubs within the new office development.

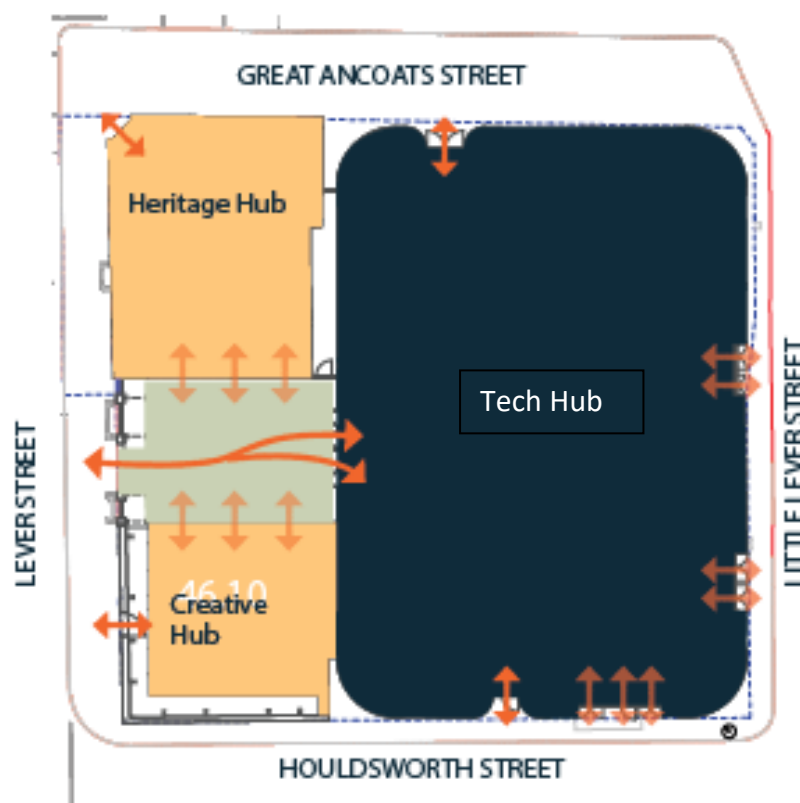


**Figure 4:** Proposed Development Access

4.9 The entrance to No. 32 is located on the corner of Lever Street and Great Ancoats Street to clearly mark the original building’s entrance. A mixture of F&B spaces are provided on the ground floor looking upon the central courtyard. Gated

access is provided between the Tech Hub and No.32, with access from the Courtyard provided for security.

- 4.10 The ground floor of the Creative Hub offers a café space overlooking the courtyard with its primary access from the Tech Hub. The retained façade of 58 Lever Street is being kept by the retaining structure along both Houldsworth Street and Lever Street. The Courtyard is open to the elements with a feature tree central to the space. Spill out space into the Courtyard is provided to accommodate for all users during all seasons.
- 4.11 The entrance into the Courtyard is located on the west elevation, along Lever Street. The entrance is gated and provides security during closed hours. The main entrance to the Tech Hub is located within the Courtyard, with cycle access provided on the south elevation, along Houldsworth Street.



**Figure 5:** Proposed Courtyard CGI - Retained Façade View



**Figure 6:** Proposed Courtyard CGI – Tech Hub Entrance View

4.12 Back-of-house facilities are located on the ground floor at the rear of the proposed new-build office building, along Houldsworth Street and Little Lever Street, optimising the feature space on the ground floor of the Tech Hub. A soft-core welcomes visitors to the main entrance space with access by gated control into the main core, where lifts provide access to the upper floors of the building.



**Figure 7:** Ground Floor Layout

- 4.13 The second floor has been designed to provide flexible working space to accommodate a variety of needs depending on the tenancy. The two main office spaces are located in the Creative Hub and the Tech Hub. The Tech Hub office space aims to be flexible for future tenants, whilst the Creative Hub offers tenants a prime space for collaborative working while being flexible to accommodate breakout spaces for future users.
- 4.14 The Third Floor has a variety of spaces including a Business Lounge, Terrace and Office space. The spaces offer opportunities for breakout spaces, events and collaborative working. The Business Lounge and Terrace are accessible to all users of the Tech Hub and accessed from the central core.
- 4.15 The floorplates of the Tech Hub office space above Third Floor level, which increase in size the higher you go (see **Figure 8**), are designed to be flexible working spaces which can accommodate single or multiple tenants with opportunities in the slabs to create voids to connect multiple floors together, depending on tenancy demands. All typical floors are accessed from the core by lifts.



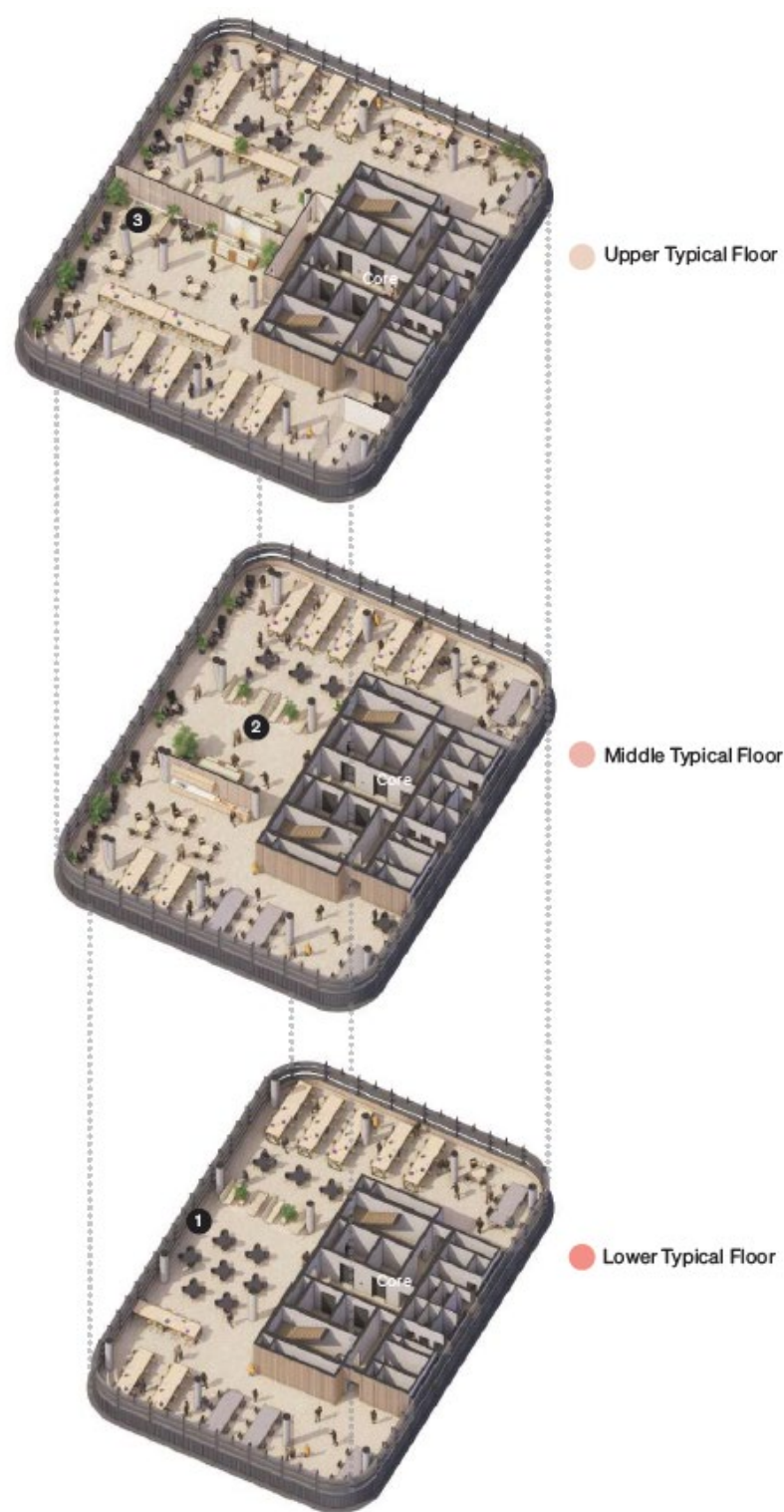


**Figure 8:** Proposed Typical Floor Axonometrics

## Scale and Massing

- 4.16 The new office development has been articulated to act as a new landmark building for this part of the City Centre fronting onto Great Ancoats Street, standing at GF+17-storeys, with two cantilevers to provide theatre to the emerging skyline, and rooftop plant enclosures, as shown at **Figure 9**.



**Figure 9:** *Proposed Site Section*

- 4.17 The building has been developed to minimise its impact on the setting of listed buildings within the vicinity, such as the Express Building. A distinct solid brick base (2-storeys) is proposed for the Tech Hub to re-establish the original datum of the existing buildings situated along Great Ancoats Street, Houldsworth Street and Little Lever Street. The 2-storey tall base and recessed entrances will create a human scale street scene. The articulation of the Tech Hub has been designed to be read as four elements; the 2-storey base, cantilevered typical floors and crown to create an elegant silhouette on the skyline. In addition, the curved edges of the Tech Hub echo the architectural fenestration of the Grade II\* Express Building and provide a sense of playfulness to the main elevations.

- 4.18 To ensure the architectural and urban fabric of Lever Street is preserved, No. 32 Lever Street will be preserved in its scale and massing alongside the retained facades of 19<sup>th</sup> century warehouse buildings on No. 56 & 58 Lever Street. Retaining both No. 32 and retaining the facades of No. 56 & 58 is seen as being vital to maintaining the distinct Northern Quarter architectural character of the site along Lever Street.



**Figure 10:** Great Ancoats Street CGI

## Appearance

- 4.19 The application looks to preserve the local area's distinct warehouse typology through the retention of the key buildings and facades along Lever Street and Houldsworth Street. The retained facades of No. 56 & 58 Lever Street will be achieved through an articulated exposed steel work. The steel retaining structure will look to be recessive in appearance so not to detract away from the main proposed building sitting behind the retained facades.
- 4.20 The first and second floor facades of No. 32 Lever Street, (the current Bem Brasil building) are intended to be retained and restored to its original 1930's faience terracotta appearance, subject to its condition when exposed. Faience terracotta

was commonly used to clad public houses and is synonymous with 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century pubs and the effect can be seen at **Figure 10**. By restoring the former terracotta façade, the design looks to preserve the identity of the old Land O' Cakes pub; retaining it as a key local landmark along Lever Street.

- 4.21 The Ground Floor is designed to provide a contrast to the upper floors with a darker faience terracotta face with traditional plinth detailing and reinstating the openings seen in the 1930's renovations of the former public house. This will create a distinct difference to the upper floors and aid in celebrating the Ground Floor experience of the restaurant.
- 4.22 The arrival space in the courtyard has been designed to be a calm space with a clean, articulated glazed façade. The glazed façade will provide a sense of space and provide clarity between the retained elements and the new buildings.
- 4.23 The base of the new-build office development is designed to be solid, to reflect the robustness of the traditional 19<sup>th</sup> century brick buildings of the past and is articulated by a regular rhythm of openings to echo the 19<sup>th</sup> century warehouse rhythm of openings alongside brick corbelling along the apex.



**Figure 11:** Office Building Base CGI

- 4.24 The Grade II\* Listed Express Building is a significant heritage asset which fronts onto Great Ancoats Street opposite the application site. The design of the typical floors of the office building have been articulated to echo the prominent glazing banding and horizontality of the 1930's landmark and are designed to be a mixture of glazing and metal, as can be seen at **Figure 12**. The cantilevered soffits are intended to be backlit to provide a drama to the streetscape during the evening and include the potential for incorporating local artwork.

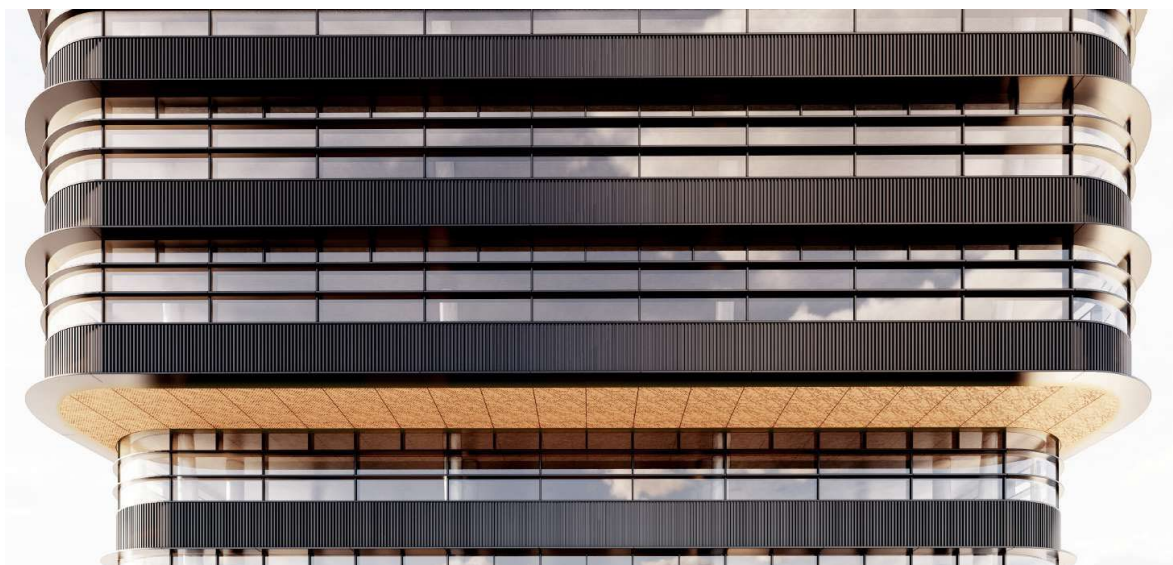


**Figure 12:** Office Building Typical Floor CGI

## Landscaping

- 4.25 To deliver a high-quality public realm finish to the existing footpaths surrounding the development, the design maintains the generous pedestrian routes along Great Ancoats Street and Lever Street, while enhancing further through the stepping backs of the building facade.
- 4.26 The proposed high-quality finishes in both the public and private spaces are tying the site to the heritage of the Northern Quarter and the adjacent Ancoats area. The heritage approach is strengthened by using reclaimed materials.
- 4.27 Existing footpaths are retained and resurfaced along the other streets, and all redundant vehicle access points are closed and reinstated as continuous footway in Little Lever Street. Pedestrian crossings are retained on the Lever Street and Great Ancoats Street corner. New dropped kerb crossing point is introduced in

Lever Street at the corner of Houldsworth Street. As discussed within the Design and Access Statement, unfortunately the footpaths are unsuitable for street tree planting due to the extensive below ground services that exist below all footpaths.

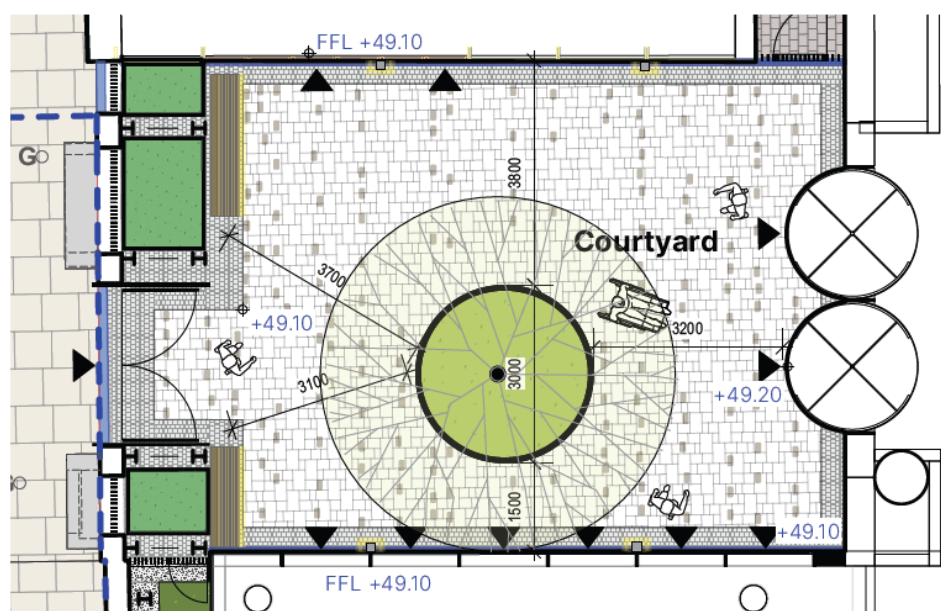


**Figure 13:** *Courtyard Landscaping Proposals*

- 4.28 While providing a spacious route to the new office building's principal entrance, the courtyard is to create a lush, green enclosed space for visitors to meet and socialise. Given sufficient legibility of the frontages around the courtyard, the design approach is to create an elegant tapestry, rather than to mark-up routes. The light-coloured natural stone surface incorporates heritage elements from Little Ancoats Street. The light-colour-scheme generates more reflected light, providing better environmental conditions for the plantings. The centrepiece of the courtyard is a Japanese maple feature tree. At the perimeter of the space bespoke timber seatings and raised on-ground planters are proposed to create a stylish backdrop in front of the support system for the retained façades of No. 56 & 58 Lever Street.
- 4.29 The courtyard proposes biodiverse, low-level mixed planting underneath the large feature tree and raised planters containing a variety of pollenating herbaceous plants with evergreen species throughout. Planters are located along the perimeter of the space, between the vertical beams of the retained façade's

support structure. Their positions enable plant climber shrubs growing on the steel support structure, producing a lush vertical greenery for the courtyard.

- 4.30 Deep-shade tolerant perennials and shrubs are proposed for the 'hidden greenery' area and in ground plantings are proposed between the retained façade and the Creative Hub street-side elevations.
- 4.31 On the plant roof level of the Tech Hub, a biodiverse extensive living roof is proposed to create various habitats.

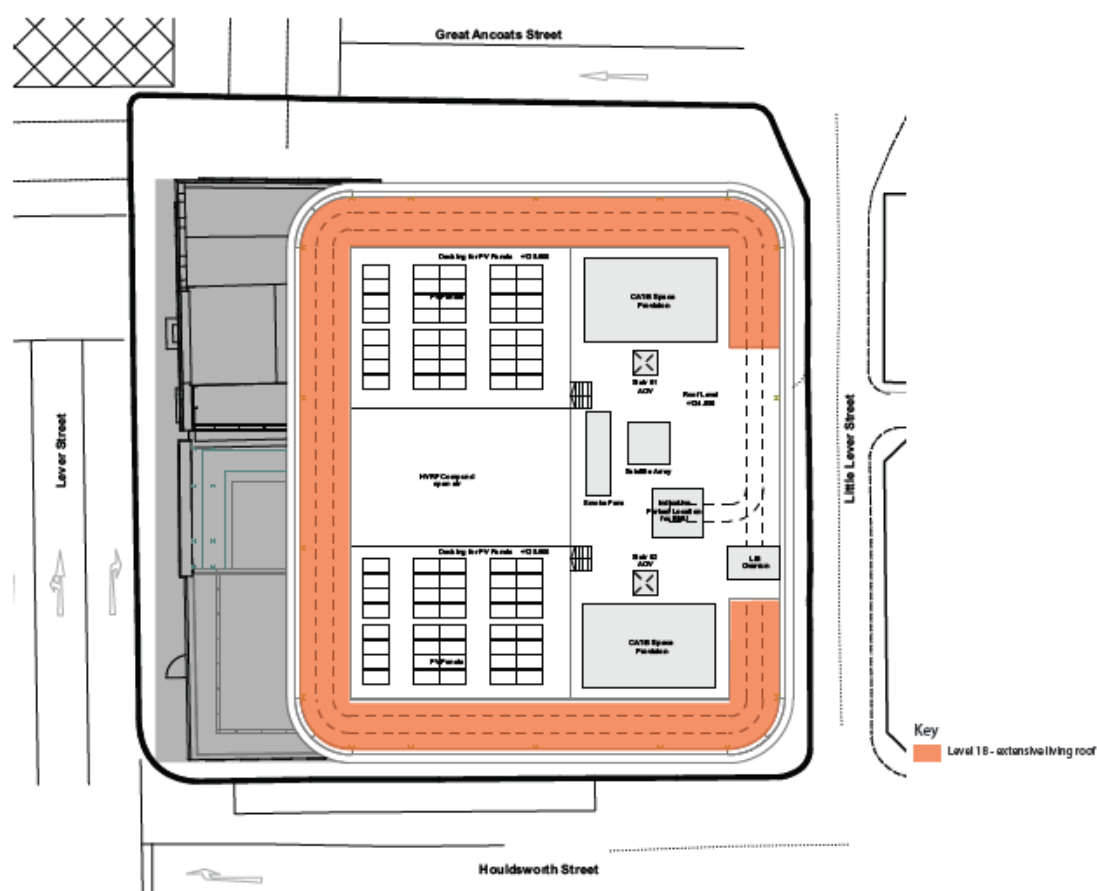


**Figure 14:** Living Roof Extent

## Access and Servicing

- 4.32 MCC considers parking in the city centre on a case-by-case basis, and MCC frequently accepts car-free developments in the city centre in locations, such as the site, which have high levels of public transport access. On this basis, the site is car-free to acknowledge its highly sustainable location.

- 4.33 Cycle storage is provided at basement level with appropriately sized lifts allowing access from ground floor. A total of 112 cycle parking spaces and 12 showers are provided in the basement, in addition to lockers, in line with policy requirements.
- 4.34 Servicing activity will continue to be focused on the Houldsworth Street and Little Lever Street frontage for the new office building. This is in line with current arrangements for adjacent properties (including the buildings the new office building will replace). It is proposed to modify the TRO on Houldsworth Street to remove the 11m single yellow line and provide a 10m loading bay in its place. The 10m taxi bay and two Pay & Display bays will be retained as existing. The modifications will be funded by the Applicant as part of the Section 278 Agreement works.
- 4.35 The main bin store is located on the Little Lever Street frontage. Refuse collection will be undertaken by private contract. Refuse collection for No. 32 Lever Street will continue as per the existing arrangements.

## 5. Pre-Application Consultation

- 5.1 This Section provides an overview of the pre-application consultation process with the Council, other statutory bodies and the local community prior to the submission of the planning application.

### Planning Policy and Legislative Context

- 5.2 The following local and national planning policy and guidance has been considered in developing a consultation strategy:

- 'Statement of Community Involvement', Manchester City Council (adopted in June 2018);
- The Localism Act, House of Commons (November 2011); and
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

### **Manchester Statement of Community Involvement**

- 5.3 Manchester City Council's ('MCC') Statement of Community Involvement ('SCI') was adopted in June 2018, the purpose of this document is to let residents, businesses, the voluntary sector and other stakeholders in the area know how they can get involved in planning activity.
- 5.4 Section 9 of MCC's SCI regards commenting on planning applications. This Section states that for significant development proposals MCC encourages developers to consult with the community before they submit a planning application. The decision on whether a proposal will need more in-depth consultation will be based on its nature or scale and will be made by MCC planning officers in conjunction with regeneration teams, ward co-ordinators and local community groups where appropriate. Developers should be mindful that the Council will need to satisfy its public sector equality duty when making planning decisions, so as well as consulting with the public, MCC will encourage developers to consult with various parties, which could include equalities groups, as well as with specific infrastructure and service providers who can advise



developers on any need for increased provision of services etc. This will be done on a case-by-case basis depending on the nature of the application.

5.5 The SCI states pre-application consultation is beneficial to both the community and the developer as it allows the developer to design a proposal which takes on board the opinions of the community. This will mean that there are likely to be fewer objections once an application is submitted.

5.6 It is suggested that pre-application discussions with the Council can help to determine the scope of consultation needed. The following methods of consultation are listed within the SCI to be used when appropriate:

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

5.7 Representations received will be considered and will be summarised in the officer's report when making decision on applications.

5.8 Appendix 1 of MCC's SCI contains guidance on developer-led early engagement. The Appendix states early engagement has significant benefits to improve both the efficiency and the effectiveness of the planning system for all parties, including the potential outcome for the community. Developers are, therefore, encouraged to engage with stakeholders, including local communities, at an early stage in the production of masterplans, planning frameworks or before submitting a planning application. This guidance includes best practice principles and a good practice case study for community involvement.

5.9 The best practise principles include the following points:

- Consideration of how best to identify all stakeholders;
- Utilising ward member's knowledge of local community groups;
- Using a range of consultation methods;
- Ensuring consultation venues and documents are accessible; and,
- Providing information to stakeholders about timescales.

## **The Localism Act**

5.10 In November 2011 the Localism Act received Royal Assent. This is the Government's method of devolving greater powers to Councils and neighbourhoods in order to give local communities more control over planning decisions. It is a material consideration in the determination of this application.

5.11 Paragraph 122 of the Localism Act introduces a new requirement for developers to consult local communities on a wider range of developments before submitting planning applications. Developers must consider any responses received before proposals are finalised and show how they have been taken into account when submitting applications. It is hoped that this will give local people a chance to comment when there is still genuine scope to make changes to any draft proposals.

## **The National Planning Policy Framework**

5.12 In December 2023, the Government published the most recent iteration of the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF'). The NPPF aimed to simplify the planning system in the UK by reducing over 1,000 pages of national policy and guidance into just over 50 pages. It is this newfound accessibility which aims "to put unprecedented power in the hands of communities" directly affected by development.

5.13 NPPF Paragraph 39 states how early engagement can "improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties" therefore leading to "better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community".



- 5.14 Paragraph 40 further states that whilst a Local Planning Authority (LPA) cannot require that a developer engages with them before submitting a planning application, they should nevertheless encourage take - up of any pre-application services they do offer. Furthermore, and where deemed to be beneficial, the LPA should "encourage any Applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community before submitting their applications". This is to ensure that any potential issues are resolved as early in the planning process as possible.
- 5.15 The approach to community and stakeholder involvement undertaken by the Applicants has fully aligned with the consultation requirements set out in MCC's SCI, and it is proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposed development. Furthermore, the community consultation exercise fully accords with the requirements of the NPPF and Localism Act. This is further expanded upon below.

## Engagement with Manchester City Council

- 5.16 Extensive pre-application discussion with MCC planning officers have occurred on the emerging proposals. These have included the following topics:
- The principle of redeveloping the site;
  - The relationship with the existing buildings on the site;
  - The extent of demolition;
  - The proposed land uses and their role in addressing both strategic city-wide and local needs;
  - The height, scale and massing of the proposed buildings, including options for how the required quantum of development to deliver the office development can be accommodated on the site;
  - The detailed design and architecture of the proposals;
  - The public consultation strategy and the responses to comments received.
- 5.17 The proposed development submitted as part of this planning application has benefitted considerably and reflects the pre-application consultation with MCC and has sought to address the key comments made from officers.

## Historic England

- 5.18 Two pre-application meetings have been held with officers at Historic England on the emerging proposals in August 2022 and 19 January 2024. Historic England raised no concerns in principle around redevelopment of Site, massing proposed, impact on Grade II\* Express Building, or long-range views.
- 5.19 In its formal written response on the latest proposals, received on 27 February 2024, Historic England confirmed:

*“Historic England’s involvement in the development of this site is focussed on the impact of the development on the setting of the nearby Daily Express Building. Providing the design and materiality is executed to high standards and is in-line with the proposal CGI drawings provided, then we do not have an objection to the principle of what is proposed. Sensitive redevelopment of the retained facades of the historic buildings, and incorporation of heritage themes and property names will add authenticity to the design and will maximise the public benefits of the scheme, which can also help to balance the small degree of harm that will be caused.”*

## Engagement with Local Councillors

- 5.20 Engagement took place with Local Councillors in both the Piccadilly and Ancoats and Beswick wards in September and October 2002 on the principle of development and the forthcoming public consultation proposals. Meetings were held with Councillors Jon-Conor Lyons (Piccadilly) and Irene Robinson (Ancoats and Beswick), who were both supportive of the principle of development and the heritage-led approach to design and emerging scale.

## Public Consultation

- 5.21 A public consultation event was held on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2022 within the Express Building opposite the application site. This was held in-person, but a website and email response option was made available for those unable to attend.
- 5.22 The public consultation boards, which can be views within the submitted Design and Access Statement, contained information on the following:

- Overview of the scheme;

- The site location;
- The site's heritage;
- The site today;
- The initial options study for redeveloping the site;
- The heritage-led option;
- The ground floor experience;
- The emerging scale and massing; and
- The economic benefits and proposed project timeline.

5.23 Eleven formal responses were received to the public consultation. 82% were either supportive (6) or partially supportive (3), with a single response being not supportive and one being undecided.

5.24 Comments received included supporting an improvement to the currently neglected site and the retention of heritage elements, whilst there were some concerns raised about construction impacts and the proposed height.

## Summary

5.25 The Applicant has carried out a comprehensive programme of pre-application consultation in keeping with a development of this scale and nature. This has included consultation on the proposals subject to this planning application as well as other heritage-led options for redeveloping the site.

5.26 The proposed development submitted as part of this planning application has benefitted considerably and reflects the pre-application consultation with MCC officers and Historic England and has sought to address the key comments made. The Applicant is pleased that the emerging proposals were generally supported by the local community and local councillors, with over 80% of respondents supporting the proposals.



## 6. The Planning Policy Context

- 6.1 This chapter of the Planning Statement summarises relevant local and national planning policies which are relevant to the application proposals.

### The Development Plan

- 6.2 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that decisions should be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For the purpose of this application the Development Plan comprises of:

- Places for Everyone (adopted March 2024);
- Manchester's Core Strategy 2012 - 2027 (adopted July 2012); and
- The 'saved' policies of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan (adopted July 1995).

- 6.3 The Manchester Interactive Proposals Map illustrates that the site falls within the City Centre (Policies CC1 - CC10) and the Regional Centre (Policy EC3).

- 6.4 Key policies within the Development Plan are considered below. Other planning policy documents relevant to the proposal which could be deemed "material considerations" will also be taken into account in this Planning Statement, including any relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and guidance (SPGs).

### Places for Everyone

- 6.5 The Places for Everyone (PfE) plan is a Joint Development Plan for 9 of Greater Manchester's Planning Authorities, including Manchester City Council. The Plan was formally adopted by Manchester City Council on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

- 6.6 The Spatial Strategy seeks to deliver sustainable, inclusive growth through 4 key spatial elements, point 1 being particularly relevant to this application:

- ***Significant growth in jobs and housing at the core - continuing development in that part of the 'core growth area' encompassing the city centre and beyond to***



***the Etihad in the east, through to the Quays, Trafford Park and Port Salford in the west. The majority of commercial employment growth is proposed in this area;***

- *Inner Area Regeneration of those parts of Manchester, Salford and Trafford surrounding the Core Growth Area. Together with the Core Growth Area, around 50% of overall housing supply is found here;*
- *Boosting the competitiveness of the northern districts – addressing the disparities by the provision of significant new employment opportunities and supporting infrastructure and a commitment that collectively the northern districts meet their own local housing need;*
- *Sustaining the competitiveness of the southern districts – supporting key economic drivers, for example around Wythenshawe hospital and the Airport and realising the opportunities offered by national infrastructure investment, e.g. Northern Powerhouse Rail whilst recognising the important green infrastructure assets in the area.*

6.7 A strong focus in the Plan is directing new development towards previously-developed sites within the existing urban area, which seeks to address existing dereliction and poorly used sites, whilst reducing the need to release greenfield and Green Belt land for development.

6.8 **Policy JP-Strat1 (Core Growth Area)** states that the economic role of the Core Growth Area will be protected and enhanced, with sustainable development supporting major growth in the number of jobs provided across the area providing opportunities to create jobs for local communities.

6.9 **Policy JP-Strat2 (City Centre)** sets out that the role of the City Centre as the most significant economic location in the country outside London will be strengthened considerably; development will generally be high density; and a broad range of commercial accommodation will be delivered, helping the City Centre to capture growth across key economic sectors.

6.10 PfE makes clear that economic growth is central to the overall strategy for Greater Manchester. Paragraph 6.14 states that we (Greater Manchester) need to continue to invest in the sites and critical infrastructure that will make our boroughs even more attractive places for businesses to invest, bringing high-value, well paid jobs to our area, and supporting the continued progress towards

a low-carbon economy. Measures to support this include enhancing the supply of employment opportunities at a variety of skill levels throughout the boroughs and, as set out at **Policy JP-J1**, maximising the potential of the key growth locations to deliver inclusive growth across the sub-region by ensuring that employment growth opportunities are well connected and accessible to all residents.

- 6.11 **PfE Policy JP-J3 (Office Development)** states that at least 2,019,000sqm of accessible new office floorspace will be provided in the Plan area over the period 2022-2039, with a focus on the City Centre primarily, accounting for more than half of all new office floorspace in the sub-region, taking advantage of existing and proposed public transport connectivity.

## **Core Strategy**

- 6.12 The Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2012-2027 ("the Core Strategy") was adopted by the City Council on 11 July 2012. It is the key document in Manchester's Local Development Framework. The Core Strategy sets out the long-term strategic planning policies for Manchester's future development. A number of UDP policies have been saved until replaced by further development plan documents to accompany the Core Strategy. Planning applications in Manchester must be decided in accordance with the Core Strategy, saved UDP policies and other Local Development Documents.
- 6.13 Key policies within the Core Strategy that are particularly relevant to the determination of this planning application are summarised below.
- 6.14 **CS Policy SP1 (Spatial Principles)** provides the key spatial principles that will guide the strategic development of Manchester to 2027. The policy encourages the centre to be a focus for economic and commercial development, retail, leisure and cultural activity. Policy SP1 also states that the City Centre is covered by regeneration areas and development should have regard to the character, issues and strategies set out in the prospective plans. This policy also encourages development to minimise emissions, and to reduce the need to travel by locating development close to jobs, services, education and open space.

- 6.15 **Policy CC 1 (Primary Economic Development Focus: City Centre and Fringe)** states that the City Centre is a strategic economic location and focus of employment growth in the City and City Region. The City Centre is expected to accommodate 33ha and the City Centre Fringe 25ha of office or similar employment development and these locations are considered suitable for the considerations of high-density buildings and commercially led mixed use schemes. The focus for employment growth will be in B1a high density offices and the Council will give particular encouragement and support for such development.
- 6.16 **Policy CC 7 (Mixed Use Development)** emphasises that the City Centre presents the most viable opportunities for mixed-use development and, in general, these will be promoted as a means of using land as efficiently as possible. Active ground floor uses are stated to be appropriate in locations which have an established public function or as part of a development that will create such an environment.
- 6.17 **Policy CC 8 (Change and Renewal)** states that the approach to development, and redevelopment, in the City Centre will welcome large-scale schemes. The policy emphasises that developments which make significant contributions to the City Centre's role in terms of employment and retail growth, or which improve the accessibility and legibility of the Centre will be supported, subject to the proposal's impact on key aspects of the City's heritage and character. Within areas identified for large-scale redevelopment proposals, they will be expected to be prepared within an approved development framework.
- 6.18 **Policy CC9 (Design and Heritage)** expects the design of new buildings to be of the highest standard in terms of appearance and function. It states:
- "Development in Manchester City Centre should preserve and enhance the heritage assets that have been identified, including list buildings, conservation areas and scheduled ancient monuments".*
- 6.19 Furthermore, the policy states that the Council will support high density development in the City Centre, but developers must recognise the specific design challenges that must be overcome to ensure complementarity of function

and form. The 14 Conservation Areas and numerous listed buildings in the City Centre are essential to the City's sense of place, providing aesthetic quality and strong references to the City's past. Developments will need to enhance the appearance and use of the City Centre and not compromise its environmental quality.

- 6.20 **Policy CC10 (A Place for Everyone)** states the City Centre will develop as a location which appeals to a wide range of residents and visitors. Development which promotes this objective will be supported, particularly through uses which increase the diversity of activity in the city centre and high standards of accessibility to buildings and across spaces in the city centre.
- 6.21 **Policy EC 1 (Employment and Economic Growth in Manchester)** states that in addition to the employment land allocated within the Strategy, the Council will support other significant contributors to economic growth and productivity including health, education, retailing, cultural and tourism facilities and other employment generating uses.
- 6.22 **Policy EN 1 (Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas)** states that all development in Manchester will be expected to follow the seven principles of urban design, as identified in national planning guidance and listed above and have regard to the strategic character area in which the development is located. In terms of the City Centre Character Area, developers will be expected to consider the City's heritage and continue the rich pattern of activity in the core area.
- 6.23 **Policy EN 3 (Heritage)** relates to heritage and states that the Council will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of the City Centre. The policy requires new developments to be designed so that they preserve, or enhance the historic environment, character, setting and accessibility of listed buildings and conservation areas. It is expected that an appropriate appraisal will be carried out by developers of issues relating to heritage assets.

- 6.24 **Policy EN 4 (Reducing CO2 Emissions)** this policy targets the reducing of CO2 emissions through the following of the energy hierarchy, firstly reducing the need for energy through efficient design measures, followed by clean energy and lastly, the application of renewable or LZC technologies. In addition to this point, MCC state within this policy all new development is required to use building materials that have low embodied carbon.
- 6.25 **Policy EN9 (Green Infrastructure)** states that new development will be expected to maintain existing green infrastructure in terms of its quantity, quality and multiple function. Where the opportunity arises the Council also encourages developers to enhance the quality and quantity of green infrastructure, improve the performance of its functions and create and improve linkages to and between areas of green infrastructure.
- 6.26 **Policy DM 1 (Development Management)** states that all development should have regard to the stated specific issues, including appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail; impact on the surrounding areas in terms of design, scale and appearance of the proposed development; community safety and crime prevention; and refuse storage and collection.

### ***Other Relevant Core Strategy Policies***

- 6.27 The following additional Core Strategy policies are relevant to this planning application:
- Policy CC5 – Transport
  - Policy T1 – Sustainable Transport
  - Policy T2 – Accessible areas of opportunity and need
  - Policy EN6 – Target Framework for CO2 reductions from low or zero carbon energy supplies
  - Policy EN8 – Adaptation to Climate Change
  - Policy EN15 – Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
  - Policy EN16 – Air Quality
  - Policy EN19 – Waste



## **Saved UDP Policies**

- 6.28 **Policy 18.1 (Conservation Areas)** – seeks to preserve and enhance the character of its designated conservation areas.
- 6.29 **Policy 19.1 (Listed Buildings)** – seeks to preserve and enhance the settings of listed buildings by appropriate control over the design of new development in their vicinity, control over the use of adjacent land, and where appropriate, by the preservation of trees and landscape features.
- 6.30 **Policy RC20 (City Centre)** – the site lies in Area 10 (Oldham Street/Lever Street/Newton Street) where the Council intends to retain existing activity and encourage further additions to the mixture of uses.

## **Other Material Considerations**

### ***National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)***

- 6.31 The updated National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”) was published in December 2023 and contains the Government’s most up-to-date planning guidance. The NPPF sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF is a significant material consideration in the determination of this application. The overall emphasis of the NPPF is to reiterate the Government’s key objectives of facilitating economic growth and securing sustainable development.

### **The Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development**

- 6.32 Central to the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the need for the planning system to support economic growth.
- 6.33 Paragraph 8 of the Framework states that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

- a) **an economic objective** – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- b) **a social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and
- c) **an environmental objective** – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy

6.34 Paragraph 11 of the Framework sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the application of the policy for decision making states:

*“Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking this means:*

*c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or*

*d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, of the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*

*i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*

*ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.”*

6.35 For the avoidance of doubt and as discussed later in this Statement, we consider that the proposals are in accordance with the Development Plan.



**Building a Strong and Competitive Economy**

- 6.36 The NPPF confirms that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Paragraph 85 states that *“significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development”*.

**Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres**

- 6.37 Town centre policies are dealt with at section 7 of the NPPF. Paragraph 91 states:

*“Main town centre uses should be located in town centres, then in edge of centre locations; and only if suitable sites are not available (or expected to become available within a reasonable period) should out of centre sites be considered”*.

- 6.38 Main town centre uses are defined within Annex 2 of the NPPF as: retail development, leisure, entertainment facilities, more intensive sport and recreation uses (including restaurants), offices, arts, culture and tourism development (including hotels).

**Promoting Sustainable Transport**

- 6.39 The NPPF sets out that significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.

**Making Effective Use of Land**

- 6.40 Paragraphs 123 sets out that decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.
- 6.41 Paragraph 124 states that planning decisions should:



*c) give substantial weight to a number the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land.*

*d) promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively (for example converting space above shops, and building on or above service yards, car parks, lock-ups and railway infrastructure)*

6.42 Paragraph 127 states that Local Planning Authorities should take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific purpose in plans, where this would help to meet identified development needs. It goes on to state:

*"In particular, they should support proposals to:*

*a) use retail and employment land for homes in areas of high housing demand, provided this would not undermine key economic sectors or sites or the vitality and viability of town centres, and would be compatible with other policies in this Framework."*

### **Achieving Well Designed Places**

6.43 Paragraph 131 states that the creation of high-quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

6.44 Paragraph 139 sets out that in determining applications, significant weight should be given to:

*a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or*

*b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.*

**Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment**

6.45 Chapter 16 of the NPPF regards conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraph 200 states that in determining applications local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, the level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance.

6.46 Paragraph 203 states:

*"in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*

*a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*

*b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*

*c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness."*

6.47 Paragraph 208 states: "Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use."

6.48 Paragraph 209 states: "The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset."

**Guide to Development in Manchester SPD and Planning Guidance (2007)**

6.49 Part 1 of the SPD sets out the design principles and standards that the City Council expects new development to achieve, such as high-quality developments that are safe, secure and accessible to all. The document summarises the main development principles in Manchester and encourages developers and investors to apply these consistently. The document also

provides details regarding the delivery of achievable and financially viable approaches to all aspects of sustainability.

### ***The Manchester Strategy***

- 6.50 The Manchester Strategy sets out a long-term vision for the city following a period of consultation in 2015. The vision includes the objective to 'be a beacon for sustainable design' in order to be a thriving and sustainable city. The planning process is identified as being a facilitator in delivering these objectives. The proposed development of the Site will clearly align with the overarching programmes being promoted by the Manchester Strategy and has being designed alongside the principles contained within this strategy.

### ***Manchester Climate Change Strategy 2017-50***

- 6.51 This document represents the most up to date Climate Change Strategy for Manchester which sits as a key part of the overarching policy framework 'Our Manchester', the city's strategy for 2016-25.
- 6.52 This document provides a strong vision for 2050 with Manchester playing a full part in limiting the impacts of climate change, locally and globally. It sets out key objectives for achieving the targets set out within local, national and global policy, relating to key areas such as transport, education and engagement, waste, green spaces, energy efficiency and buildings, and provides implementation, monitoring and reporting guidelines to ensure that progression is made.
- 6.53 The proposals have been considered fully in line with Manchester's climate change targets, taking into account the latest Climate Change Emergency motion approved by the Council, and throughout the design process ways to enhance energy efficiency and sustainable design have been implemented. Further details of this is provided within the Environmental Standards Statement which has been submitted in support of this application.

### ***Green and Blue Infrastructure***

- 6.54 The Manchester Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy and Action Plan (July 2015) aims to build on investment to date and create a high quality, well



maintained green and blue spaces which are integral part of neighbourhoods. The objectives of the Strategy include using appropriate infrastructure to create successful neighbourhoods and support the city's growth.

### **City Centre Strategic Plan (2015-2018)**

- 6.55 The Economy Scrutiny Committee on 24 February 2016 and the Executive Committee on 2 March 2016 both agreed to approve the publication of the final City Centre Strategic Plan 2015-2018.
- 6.56 The Strategic Plan seeks to update the vision for the City Centre within the current economic and strategic context, outline the direction of travel and key priorities over the next few years in each of the City Centre neighbourhoods, and describe the partnerships in place to deliver those priorities.

### **National Planning Practice Guidance**

- 6.57 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) was introduced in March 2014 and replaced a significant amount of former guidance, in the form of Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Planning Policy Statements. The NPPG provides further detail regarding a range of issues, building upon the principles of the NPPF.
- 6.58 Guidance on the process for determining higher density development is provided in the Planning Practice Guidance. Paragraph 004 (Reference ID: 66-004-20190722) states:

*"when planning for a range of considerations should be taken into account in establishing appropriate densities on a site or in a particular area. Tools which can assist include accessibility measures, characterisation and design studies, environmental and infrastructure assessments and assessments of market or site viability."*

## Summary

- 6.59 This chapter has identified a series of Development Plan Documents and other material considerations to be taken in to account in the determination of this application.

## 7. Assessment of the Principle of Development

- 7.1 This chapter appraises the proposed development against the Development Plan. Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

### Regeneration Context

- 7.2 Regeneration is an important planning consideration. Over the past fifteen years the City Council has successfully regenerated areas such as Piccadilly, Spinningfields, the commercial core around Manchester Central, the Northern Quarter, the Civic Quarter and Ancoats. This is an ongoing process, and much remains to be done if the City Centre is to continue being competitive. Manchester City Centre is the primary economic driver in the City Region and is crucial to its longer-term economic success. It is essential therefore that the City Centre and surrounding areas continue to grow and provide new development that is supportive of regeneration principles, including providing new commercial and office facilities as part of a mixed used neighbourhood.
- 7.3 Sitting strategically as one of the main arterial routes into the City Centre, the application site is located on the junction of Lever Street and Great Ancoats Street and sits in close proximity to New Islington, Stevenson Square, Piccadilly Gardens, and existing regeneration areas such as New Cross, Piccadilly Basin, and the former Central Retail Park.
- 7.4 As described in Chapters 2 and 3 of this Statement, comprising numerous buildings, the Site is currently only partially occupied by restaurants and has lacked significant investment for some time. This historic lack of investment has led to many of the existing buildings falling into severe disrepair, and a fundamental aspect of the development is the considered retention of key buildings or facades within the block (where possible), which have both historical and architectural townscape value, alongside new-built development.



- 7.5 A Development Options Appraisal has been prepared by AshtonHale and is submitted with this application. The document includes an assessment of the existing buildings on the site, their heritage value and structural integrity, and the various levels of intervention tested during the extensive pre-application design process to formulate the final proposals, including varying degrees of full and partial retention of existing buildings on the site.
- 7.6 When the financial viability of the six options assessed has been tested, Option 6 represents the most appropriate yet viable proposal, and one that the Applicant is committed to deliver. This option necessitates the demolition of certain existing buildings at the site, the conservation or façade retention of others, and significant new build development to make the overall scheme viable. Notably, however, the buildings fronting Lever Street can be retained either in full or their facades, refurbished and re-used. It is these buildings that are of the most historic and architectural significance and their long-term future would be secured as a result of the proposed development.
- 7.7 The document also provides a summary of the main urban design considerations which have informed the final massing, scale and design of the proposal once the preferred option established.
- 7.8 The conversion and redevelopment of the existing buildings, complemented by the development of a new office building, would fully accord with Policy CC8 (Change and Renewal) of the Core Strategy, MCC's wider regeneration policies, and the Places for Everyone strategy to grow employment opportunities in the Core Area. It is also supported by paragraph 124c of the NPPF which requires that planning decisions should give substantial weight to the use of brownfield land to meet the need for homes and other identified needs.

## City Centre Office-Led Development

- 7.9 The proposed development will result in the high-quality redevelopment of an existing commercial site to create high quality new Grade A workspace in this area of the City Centre and will increase the retail and food and beverage offer at this important juncture of Northern Quarter / Great Ancoats Street.



- 7.10 As set out by the Manchester Economy and Employment Space Study which was used to inform the Core Strategy for Manchester, the City Centre, located at the heart of the Regional Centre, is crucial to the prosperity of the local economy. The City Centre is known for containing significant amounts of office development, including strong concentrations of high value industries such as financial and professional services and media and creative industries, all of which drive economic activity and produce economic benefits for the City.
- 7.11 MCC recognise within the Core Strategy that the City Centre is the key economic driver largely due to the location of key assets within the City Centre including good road accessibility and access to a skilled labour force. It provides the highest proportion of jobs in Greater Manchester and forecasts indicate that during the life of the Core Strategy, growth will be disproportionately higher in Manchester than in other Greater Manchester authorities, with The Greater Manchester Forecasting Model indicating that the City will have the greatest increase in job numbers in Greater Manchester over the Core Strategy period.
- 7.12 More recently, PfE sets out the clear case for considerably strengthening the City Centre's economic role through a number of measures, including delivering a broad range of commercial accommodation, which will generally be high density. PfE states that at least 2,019,000sqm of accessible new office floorspace will be provided in the Plan area over the period 2022-2039, with a focus on the City Centre primarily, accounting for more than half of all new office floorspace in the sub-region, taking advantage of existing and proposed public transport connectivity.
- 7.13 Clearly, the need to provide additional office floorspace within Manchester City Centre will therefore be crucial to the continued growth of the employment sector throughout the City and the realisation of trends set for job numbers. There is a clear need to further expand and diversify the City's office stock to help compete with other major cities and greater levels of floorspace will allow for greater levels of inward investment from businesses.
- 7.14 The requirement for new employment floorspace within the City Centre is addressed by Policies JP-Strat1 (Core Growth Area), JP-Strat2 (City Centre), JP-

J1 (Supporting Long Term Economic Growth) and JP-J3 (Office Development) of PfE. Policy EC 1 (Employment and Economic Growth in Manchester) of the Core Strategy also recognises that providing a portfolio of employment premises, across a range of employment sites, will be important to the continued economic growth of Manchester. This Policy, alongside Policy EC 2 (Existing Employment Space) seeks to protect and enhance employment floorspace within the City Centre and particularly focuses on the growth of office floorspace whereby it is noted that there has considerable increase in this type of employment space over the years which is anticipated to continue in this manner over the Core Strategy period.

- 7.15 These policies are supported by Policies EC 3 (The Regional Centre) and CC1 (Primary Economic Development Focus: City Centre and Fringe) which further substantiate that the City Centre will remain the focus for office development. These policies identify the need for employment growth within the form of B1a high density offices (now covered by Use Class E), for which the Council state there is particular encouragement for and explain that the City Centre is the most suitable location for regional and sub-regional office growth in terms of agglomeration and ability to attract inward investment.
- 7.16 The provision of office floorspace as a result of the proposed development would not only bring the vacant parts of the site back into economic use but would also result in an increased quantum of high-quality workspace at the site, addressing the demand and need referenced earlier in this Statement, and therefore contributing positively towards meeting the objectives of Places for Everyone and the Core Strategy.
- 7.17 The principle of the food and beverage uses is already clearly established in this location by virtue of the existing uses on the site. The provision of a high-quality mix of uses in the City Centre is also supported by the adopted Core Strategy Policies CC1, CC2 and CC7.
- 7.18 The NPPF states that 'significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity', taking into account the national business needs and wider opportunities for development.



## High Quality Design

- 7.19 The DAS prepared by Howells provides full details of the proposed development and its context, the approach to architecture and the quality of the new buildings. The design has evolved through consultation with MCC, Historic England, Local Ward Members, key local stakeholders and public consultation. A summary of the architectural approach is provided below with fuller details contained in the DAS.
- 7.20 The buildings in their current form and condition detracts from the quality of the built environment in this area of the City Centre. The proposal will therefore improve visitor's perceptions of the site and this important part of the City Centre by improving the frontages and quality of uses along Lever Street / Great Ancoats Street, both of which are key pedestrian routes.
- 7.21 The proposed delivery of a high-end office building that incorporates both existing and new buildings will complement the neighbouring context and provides an opportunity to visually strengthen the streetscape through good design and completely re-imagined façade treatments. The building will increase activity at ground floor level and will remove the failings of the existing buildings that are vacant which currently block out visitors and creates an unfriendly environment.
- 7.22 The uses at ground floor level will also draw people and businesses to this location and the office development will create footfall for both the uses at ground floor level as well as other local retail, restaurants and leisure uses within the local area. The proposals will, therefore, not only be beneficial for the site itself but will create wider benefits which will seep into the surrounding area and provide improved accessibility and connections between other parts of the City Centre.
- 7.23 The proposal aims to echo the architectural identity of the Northern Quarter through its materiality, tone and proportion. The prosperity of the many industries, such as weaving and milling brought wealth to the area which was reflected in the materials and ornamentation in the architecture. The architectural



vernacular of the Northern Quarter includes red and blue brick facades, used in a mixture of English Bond, Stretcher Bond and Flemish Bond.

- 7.24 Part retention of existing non-designated heritage assets forms a significant role in retaining the architectural character along Lever Street and Houldsworth Street. Along both streets, No.56 & 58 Lever Street, former vacant warehouse buildings, are currently situated and in extremely poor structural condition. The proposed design aims to retain the facades whilst removing the derelict buildings behind, which will be achieved by a number of structural strategies. This will look to preserve the Northern Quarters' distinct warehouse typology, part of the area's former industrial heritage. The retained façades will be achieved through an articulated exposed steel work. The steel retaining structure will look to be recessive in appearance so not to detract away from the main proposed buildings sitting behind the retained facades.
- 7.25 The Tech Hub base is designed to be solid, to reflect the robustness of the traditional 19th century brick buildings of the past. The base is articulated by a regular rhythm of openings to echo the 19th century warehouse rhythm of openings alongside brick corbelling along the apex of the Tech Hub 2-storey base.
- 7.26 The design of the typical floors of the Tech Hub have been articulated to echo the prominent glazing banding and horizontality of the 1930's Grade II\* Listed Express Building situated along Great Ancoats Street. The typical floors of the Tech Hub are designed to be a mixture of glazing and metal in reference to the Express Building. The cantilevered soffits are intended to follow the materiality of the Tech Hub's typical floors with an articulated perforated metal, with the intention to provide an opportunity to be backlit to provide a drama to the local streetscape during the evening.
- 7.27 The first and second floor façades of No. 32 Lever Street, (formerly Bem Brasil) are intended to be retained and restored to their original 1930's faience terracotta appearance, subject to its condition. Faience terracotta was commonly used to clad public houses and is synonymous with 19th and early 20th century pubs. By restoring the former terracotta façade, the design looks to preserve the

identity of the old Land O' Cakes pub. The Ground Floor is designed to provide a contrast to the upper floors with a darker faience terracotta face with traditional plinth detailing and reinstating the openings seen in the 1930's renovations of the former public house.

- 7.28 Overall, the proposed development has been designed to be of an exceptional architectural quality and due consideration has been given to the use of materials to ensure that the proposal responds positively to the surrounding and emerging context. The DAS prepared by Howells fully explains the architectural and design details. The Ventilation Statement prepared by Atelier Ten sets out the proposed ventilation strategy for the development.

## Summary

- 7.29 It has been demonstrated that the principle of development is wholly acceptable when considered against the Development Plan and the NPPF. Indeed, the principle of the proposed uses has been agreed during pre-application discussions.
- 7.30 The following Chapter considers the proposed development against the design and technical policies in the Development Plan.

## 8. Assessment of Technical Considerations

- 8.1 This Chapter of the Statement summarises the findings of the individual technical assessments which accompany the detailed planning submission and demonstrates that the proposal fully accords with both national and local planning policy criteria.

### Environmental Impact Assessment

- 8.2 A full assessment of any potentially significant impacts of the development is included in the Environmental Statement ('ES'), which also recommends any mitigation measures that may be required as a result of the development. The ES Addendum assesses the following topics:

- Townscape and Visual Impact;
- Built Heritage;
- Climate Change;
- Socio-Economics;
- Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing;
- Wind; and
- Human Health.

- 8.3 The findings of the above assessments are covered within the main chapters and technical appendices of the ES and are summarised in the Non-Technical Summary which should be read in conjunction with this Planning Statement. A summary of the EIA undertaken is set out below.

- 8.4 A comprehensive assessment of the potential effects of the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development has been undertaken as part of the EIA to establish the environmental changes associated with the development. The Proposed Development has been designed in accordance with the findings and recommendations of the EIA. Any adverse effects identified through the assessment have been minimised as far as possible through the design process or the application of appropriate mitigation measures. Those effects associated with the construction activities will be controlled by a CEMP.



## **Townscape and Visual Impact**

### ***Townscape Summary***

- 8.5 The Proposed Development will introduce townscape effects to 9 Townscape Character Areas (TCA), which have been identified and evaluated within the baseline study. The predicted townscape effects of the Proposed Development are highly varied, ranging from Negligible to Moderate-Major.
- 8.6 TCAs 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 are anticipated to experience Negligible effects to the existing townscape on account of the Proposed Development, during both the construction and operating periods. This is largely due to the distance of the TCAs from the proposed development, and these areas having mixed urban characters or precedents of other similar developments within the TCA.
- 8.7 TCA 3 is expected to experience Minor effects and TCA 4 is expected to experience Minor-Moderate effects throughout the operational period, but these are likely to be of a Neutral nature. Taking into account cumulative effects, the perceived change to the townscape in TCA 4 will be reduced to Negligible. Both these TCAs are expected to experience Negligible effects during the construction period.
- 8.8 Significant effects are those which are predicted to be Moderate and above. TCAs 1 and 2 are anticipated to experience Moderate-Major Adverse effects on account of the Proposed Development. These areas incorporate high levels of Conservation Areas and listed buildings, with more distinctive sense of place and urban fabric in comparison to their neighbouring area. Both TCA 1 and TCA 2 are anticipated to experience Moderate Adverse effects throughout the construction period. The effects during the construction period are anticipated to be lower on account of the volume mass during construction; being relatively less pronounced and obtrusive in these areas than the completed development. Both TCA 1 and 2 sit in close proximity to the Proposed Development, increasing the severity of the impact once built. The baseline conditions of these areas are also in notable contrast to the scale of the Proposed Development, comprising generally low to mid rise developments, largely of a historic variety.

**Visual Summary**

- 8.9 The Proposed Development will introduce visual effects to 13 verified views which have been identified and evaluated within the baseline study. The predicted visual effects during operation of the Proposed Development range from Negligible to Moderate-Major Adverse.
- 8.10 Viewpoints B, I and L will experience Negligible effects during both the construction and operational periods. Viewpoint H will experience Minor Neutral effects, during both the construction and operational phases, on account of the distance from the Proposed Development, and the capacity of the existing view to accommodate such developments and construction sites according to its baseline.
- 8.11 Viewpoint K will experience Minor-Moderate Adverse effects (downgraded to negligible when considering cumulative development). Within Viewpoint K the Proposed Development and its construction site will be visible above a conservation area, but these will not be substantially out of keeping with the overall baseline view.
- 8.12 Viewpoint M will experience Minor-Moderate Neutral effects throughout both phases (downgraded to Minor when considering cumulative development). Viewpoint M has a layered urban fabric which largely obscures impacts of the Proposed Development.
- 8.13 The effects on viewpoints B, H, I, L, K and M will not be considered significant.
- 8.14 Significant effects are those which are predicted to be Moderate and above. During operation and construction of the Proposed Development, viewpoints A and E will experience Moderate Adverse effects. Viewpoint E downgrades to Negligible when considering cumulative development.
- 8.15 Viewpoints C and J will experience Moderate Neutral effects. Viewpoints A, C and J all show Conservation Areas, with Viewpoint E showing a number of listed buildings along a key public heritage path, increasing the visual sensitivity of these viewpoints.

- 8.16 Viewpoints D, F and G will experience Moderate-Major Adverse effects during both the construction and operational periods of the Proposed Development. Viewpoints F and G are both close range views towards the site (<250m) and demonstrate the scale of the Proposed Development will bring a change to the nature of its immediate streetscape.
- 8.17 Viewpoint D has a High-Medium sensitivity, on account of its high proportion of conservation areas and listed buildings within the frame. The nature of the Proposed Development, both in scale, mass and architectural aesthetic strongly contrasts with this setting of the existing view. In viewpoints D, F and G Proposed Development is considered uncharacteristic of the view as existing, as well as being easily noticed by the observer.

### **Overall Summary**

- 8.18 The DAS, supporting plans, and TVA demonstrate that the proposal has been designed with significant consideration to its effect on context, with regards to natural topography, scale, height, urban grain, streetscape and built form, open spaces, rivers and waterways, important views, prospects and panoramas, and the effect on the skyline. It is nonetheless recognised that the proposals, by their nature, will have an impact on the local townscape. However, it is considered that impacts on the local townscape have been kept to a minimum, whilst still needing to support the objectives of the MCC policy and address the market for delivering Grade A office space in this location.
- 8.19 As outlined in 'Embedded Mitigation' of the ES Chapter (from 6.107 onwards), the design of the development has been subject to extensive pre-application discussions to refine its form and appearance. Through this process, potential adverse townscape and visual effects have been identified, and eliminated or reduced, and positive effects enhanced. Mitigation of adverse townscape and visual effects is therefore embedded in the Proposed Development, and no "applied" mitigation or enhancement measures are proposed, however, the high-quality nature of the design and the retention of key heritage features are recognised in the assessment.

- 8.20 The scheme will also deliver significant social, economic and environmental benefits which have been outlined further in Section 13 of this Statement submitted in support of this application, which are considered to outweigh any townscape or visual harm caused by the development.
- 8.21 The proposal is consequently considered to accord with the relevant policies of the NPPF, the policies in Manchester City Council's Local Plan Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2012) insofar as they relate to townscape and the historic environment and the relevant aspects of the CABE and English Heritage Guidance.

### **Built Heritage**

- 8.22 The Site is located at a key intersection with the Northern Quarter and Stevenson Square Conservation area located to the west, NOMA to the North, Ancoats to the east and the Piccadilly Basin to the South. There are a number of listed buildings within the surrounding area including the grade II\* Daily Express Building diagonally opposite the Site on Great Ancoats Street.
- 8.23 In determining the submitted full planning application MCC has a statutory duty under s66(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the special interest and setting of listed buildings. The setting of conservation areas is not protected by primary legislation; the NPPF does however state that the setting of a designated heritage asset (including conservation areas) can contribute to its significance.
- 8.24 The Site was developed from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century as part of the development of the part of Manchester, which is now known as the Northern Quarter, laid out on a grid pattern. By 1819 the Site was fully developed with a mixture of residential and commercial development. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century properties on the Site were changed and adapted, most notably with the addition of the tin plate manufactory as well as the late 19<sup>th</sup> century warehouses on the corner of Lever Street and Houldsworth Street, which remain extant today. The change from residential to commercial industrial development, often related to the textile industry, reflected wider changes within this part of Manchester.



- 8.25 Into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Site and its surrounding context continued to evolve. The 1930s Daily Express Building with its Streamline Moderne architecture and curtain walling marked a step change in height and scale on Great Ancoats Street and a move away from traditional construction. The Threlfalls Brewery also sought to update the Griffin Public House on the corner of the Site at Lever Street and Great Ancoats Street at this time, which was extended and clad in faience.
- 8.26 The post-war period and late 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the redevelopment and amalgamation of plots adjacent to the Site with Griffin House and the Travelodge, to the south and west respectively, dating from this period. The surrounding context has continued to evolve and today provides a varied urban environment. The buildings within the Site are in varying condition and uses with some, including the two warehouses, in a derelict state.
- 8.27 It is concluded that the Proposed Scheme will result in a degree of harm to the significance of a number of designated heritage assets. The following designated heritage assets will experience a reduction in their historic context arising from the demolition of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings within the Site which contribute to their significance to varying degrees depending on the strength of the visual and physical relationship between the assets and the Site and their group value or historic associations. In each case the effect on significance of the following heritage assets is negligible or slight; limited by intervening distance/separation and the altered state of the buildings to be demolished:
- Derros House (grade II listed building)
  - Former Doctor's Surgery (grade II listed building)
  - 69 -77 Lever Street (including 10 Bradley Street) (grade II listed building)
  - 4, 6 and 8 Bradley Street and attached screen walls (grade II listed building)
  - Crown and Kettle Public House (grade II listed building)
  - 72 to 76 Newton Street (grade II listed building)
  - The City Public House (grade II listed building)
  - Stephenson Square Conservation Area
  - Ancoats Conservation Area
  - Smithfield Conservation Area



8.28 An adverse effect is also identified in relation to the following designated heritage assets arising from the effects of the completed and operational phase of development:

- Daily Express Building (grade II\* listed building)
- Brownsfield Mill (grade II\* listed building)
- Rochdale Canal Warehouse (grade II\* listed building)
- Sedgwick Mill including Sedgwick New Mill (grade II listed building)
- Decker Mill and Old Mill (grade II\* listed building)
- Upper Lever Street Group (all grade II listed buildings)
  - Watts Brothers
  - 25 and 27 Dale Street
  - 22 Dale Street
- The following buildings from the Newton Street Group (all grade II listed buildings)
  - 45 & 47 Newton St
  - 29 & 31 Dale St
  - 49 Newton St
- The following buildings from the Back Piccadilly Group (all grade II listed buildings)
  - Gardens Hotel and shops
  - Clayton House, 59 Piccadilly and 61 Piccadilly
  - St Margarets Chambers
- Stevenson Square Conservation Area
- Ancoats Conservation Area

8.29 In all cases, the level of harm is concluded to be 'less than substantial' and within that category to be on a scale between negligible and minor. Accordingly, Paragraph 208 of the NPPF is engaged which states the following:

*"Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use."*

8.30 The NPPF is also clear that in applying 'great weight' to the conservation of heritage assets, the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be, irrespective of the level of harm.

8.31 Planning Practice Guidance confirms that public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental objectives as described in NPPF Paragraph 8. It also states that public benefits may include heritage benefits such as:

- Sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting.
- Reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset.
- Securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long-term conservation.

8.32 The following heritage benefits, arising from the Proposed Development, have been identified:

- Enhancement of the aesthetic value of Bem Brasil and maintaining its communal value as a place of gathering.
- Bringing 56 and 58 Lever Street back into use, enhancing their townscape and aesthetic value and allowing their architectural character of their principal elevations to be revealed and more readily appreciated.

8.33 In relation to non-designated heritage assets, demolition of 40-42 Great Ancoats Street and 27 Houldsworth Street and 63 Little Lever Street, along with a number of other buildings within the Site dating from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, is proposed. This would result in the complete loss of the local significance of 40-42 Great Ancoats Street and 27 Houldsworth Street and 63 Little Lever Street (non-designated heritage assets). It would also affect the townscape and group value of Bem Brasil, 58 Lever Street and 56 Lever Street (non-designated heritage assets) with which the buildings form a complete historic block and have a degree of townscape value. There will also be loss of historic fabric in relation to 56 and 58 Lever Street, albeit in weighing the impact of such changes it should be noted that the interiors of the buildings are not protected. The impact is limited given the extent of alteration the buildings proposed for demolition have undergone. To a lesser degree given the separation, it would also result in some erosion of historic context which contributes to the significance of the Hudson Buildings (non-designated heritage asset) which is situated opposite the Site on Great Ancoats Street.



- 8.34 The NPPF clearly differentiates between designated and non-designated heritage assets and the proportionate way they should be addressed within the planning process. The impact on the local significance of the above assets is a material consideration to be given limited weight in the planning balance in accordance with NPPF Paragraph 209.
- 8.35 In summary, Paragraph 208 requires a weighing exercise to be carried out by the decision maker where less than substantial harm is identified to the significance of a designated heritage asset. Paragraph 209 of the NPPF requires a balancing judgement having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of any direct or indirect impacts on non-designated heritage assets. In such circumstances the identified harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
- 8.36 Given the conclusions in the Built Heritage Assessment, it is accepted that there will be 'less than substantial' harm (and within that category to be on a scale between negligible and minor) to designated heritage assets, and the proposal would have a limited impact on non-designated heritage assets. These impacts should be afforded limited weight against the application proposals. In addition to the heritage benefits outlined above, a number of economic, social and environmental benefits would be delivered with the proposal, outlined in Chapter 10 of this Statement. In applying the necessary balancing judgement, it is considered that the public benefits would readily outweigh any identified harm, and as such the proposed development meets the relevant policy tests.

## **Climate Change**

- 8.37 In line with IEMA guidance, an assessment of the resilience of the Proposed Development to climate change; and the influence of the Proposed Development on climate change.
- 8.38 No significant effects are expected in relation to the resilience of the Proposed Development to climate change during either the construction phase or the completed and operational development.



## **Socio-Economics**

- 8.39 Construction of the development will support 921 person years of construction related employment, with GVA of £20.7m per year for 3 years. This is assessed as a Moderate Beneficial short-term effect on the wider area.
- 8.40 The development will create approximately 11,600 sq m of office space and 550 sqm of restaurant space creating 1,224 direct and indirect jobs in relevant sectors and GVA per year of £53.4m. Deducting the 180 direct and indirect jobs and GVA of £8.5m on the existing site gives a net impact of 1,044 jobs and GVA of £33.9m per year.
- 8.41 The Proposed Development will contribute to Manchester's economic prosperity providing sought after office accommodation to the benefit of Greater Manchester and the Northwest. It will increase the revenues to Manchester City Council through business rates in the order of £1.85m per year.
- 8.42 Given this context, the Proposed Development is regarded as having a positive and lasting effect in the area. This is assessed as a Moderate Beneficial overall rating.

## **Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing**

- 8.43 The effect of the Proposed Development on the daylight and sunlight amenity of the neighbouring receptors has been assessed.
- 8.44 Following an inspection of the Site and the buildings in the vicinity, a number of neighbouring buildings have been identified as relevant receptors for effect assessments. A 3D model has been created and technical analysis undertaken within it to establish the levels of daylight and sunlight amenity as they currently exist (the baseline condition) and following the Proposed Development (the proposed condition). Analysis of the daylight and sunlight levels following construction of the Proposed Development has also been undertaken, to also include other development sites that are in the proximity of the properties surrounding the Site. This is to establish the cumulative impact on the surrounding properties.



- 8.45 A total of 477 windows facing the Site serving 235 rooms within 11 buildings were assessed for VSC and NSL (daylight) and 77 rooms were assessed for APSH (sunlight) within the 8 buildings which are material for consideration in sunlight terms, i.e. their windows are orientated to within 90 degrees of due south.
- 8.46 The majority of the receptors that were assessed will experience, overall, negligible or minor adverse effects impacts on their daylight and/or sunlight amenity. These impacts are Not Significant.
- 8.47 44 Great Ancoats Street and 40 Little Lever Street will experience moderate adverse effects on their daylight amenity, and negligible effects on their sunlight amenity.
- 8.48 No mitigation measures are proposed for these significant effects on the basis that the relationship between the Site and its neighbours is commensurate with that of other proximate sites that have recently been developed and, as such, the identified effects and daylight levels are to be expected and have, evidently, previously considered acceptable.

## **Wind**

- 8.49 A Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) based wind assessment was performed of the Proposed Development with both existing and cumulative surrounds. No embedded or additional wind mitigation measures were required.
- 8.50 Wind conditions were suitable for all thoroughfares, roadways, proposed entrances, off-site entrances, proposed ground level amenity and proposed terrace level amenity. All wind effects are negligible.

## **Human Health**

- 8.51 An assessment of the proposals on Human Health is included within the ES. It states that there are human health effects associated with the proposed development principally in relation to Townscape and Visual receptors and daylight and sunlight effects to 44 Great Ancoats Street and 40 Little Lever Street, as summarised earlier in this Chapter.

8.52 However, these effects need to be balanced against the positive effects of the development. Referring back to the Citywide challenges identified in the Development Plan, the assessment has demonstrated the following with respect to human health:

- **Reducing worklessness and deprivation** - The proposed development creates jobs and opportunities during the construction and operational phase. This will also increase spending in the local economy, thus supporting jobs in the local area indirectly. The creation of jobs will upskill residents and help to tackle the causes and challenges associated with deprivation.
- **Improving the skills of residents to meet the job opportunities** - As per above, and the Applicant has committed to a Local Labour Agreement which include key targets to source employment locally, thus providing opportunities for upskilling and various apprenticeship opportunities.
- **Reducing contribution to and mitigating effects of climate change** - The proposed development delivers a highly energy efficient development in a highly sustainable location. This replaces a series of poorly performing buildings whilst retaining key cultural heritage elements.
- **Creating neighbourhood focus, facilities and identity** - The development provides a blend of uses and spaces to support the needs of the growing economy and the existing community to create a positive and successful mixed-use neighbourhood.
- **Removing health inequalities and enabling more healthy lifestyles** - The development will encourage future site users to walk, cycle or commute via public transport. The creation of jobs in a sustainable location will help address health inequalities in the local area.
- **Improving access to employment and education** - The site provides employment opportunities during construction and operational in a highly sustainable location, with walking, cycling and public transport genuinely realistic alternatives to private car use.
- **Reducing congestion on the roads, improving the reliability of public transport and reducing overcrowding** - The development is car-free and will be a long-term positive step to reduce congestion on the highways network.
- **Improving the quality of air and water** - As above. In addition, the drainage strategy will implement a series of sustainable drainage strategy measures to treat surface water prior to discharging into the network.



- **Reducing the area of contaminated land and facilitating the re-use of previously developed land** – The site comprises previously development land in need of regeneration. The proposals will remediate any contaminated land and re-use a brownfield city centre site.
- **Continuing to ensure that development is of a consistently high quality** – The design is clearly of the highest quality and is the product of an extensive engagement process with the Council and a series of key stakeholders.

## Summary

8.53 Overall, the scheme comprises a high-quality purpose-built development providing new commercial uses. Although there are anticipated to be some significant adverse impacts as a result of the proposed development, it is considered to be outweighed by the overarching benefits of the scheme, which include the considerable enhancement to its immediate setting through the introduction of new high-quality buildings in place of the low-quality existing buildings, and the injection of a sustainable and active use into the Site in a highly accessible area of the City Centre.

## Non-EIA Technical Considerations

8.54 A summary of the environmental and technical considerations outside the scope of the ES is provided below:

- Blue and Green Infrastructure;
- Ecology;
- Highways and Transport;
- Crime and Safety;
- Noise;
- Air Quality;
- Flood Risk and Drainage;
- Ground Conditions;
- Digital Infrastructure; and
- Archaeology.

## **Blue and Green Infrastructure**

- 8.55 The Manchester Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy and Action Plan aims to build on investment to date and create a high quality, well maintained green and blue spaces which are integral part of neighbourhoods.
- 8.56 The Strategy identifies a number of actions, including embedding green infrastructure as part of residential development and within city centre developments. The Strategy recommends that Developers should consider how green and open space can work best to achieve this and form an integrated part of the overall scheme.
- 8.57 Due to the utilities present in all pavements surrounding the site (see the Design and Access Statement for further detail), the application site is somewhat restricted, which has prevented street tree planting being incorporated into the landscaping proposals. However, as described in Chapter 4, the proposals have taken all available opportunities to maximise green infrastructure on the site including the courtyard landscaping, the terrace and the living roof.
- 8.58 The proposed development accords with CS Policy EN9 (Green Infrastructure).

## **Ecology**

- 8.59 Ecology surveys were undertaken in January 2024 and are documented in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal prepared by E3P, to understand the ecological constraints and opportunities onsite. The following conclusions were made:
- Building 1 (B1), Building 3 (B3), Building 5 (B5) and Building 6 (B6) were assessed as having High bat roosting potential.
  - Building 2 (B2), Building 4 (B4) and Building 7 (B7) were assessed as having Low bat roosting potential.
  - There is a potential presence of nesting birds within the on-site buildings.
  - Mitigation measures have been recommended, in addition to further bat surveys.
- 8.60 The development will be exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) as no habitats are present on-site.



- 8.61 The ecological assessments undertaken and submitted in support of this proposed scheme meets the requirements of local planning policy, specifically CS Policy EN15.

## **Highways and Transport**

- 8.62 SK Transport have prepared a Transport Statement ("TS") and a Framework Travel Plan ("FTP") to advise on the transport and highways baseline and impacts of the proposed redevelopment.
- 8.63 The TS confirms that the site occupies a highly accessible location which provides opportunities for staff to access by active and sustainable modes. It is also shown that the existing routes are suitable to serve the development. The site is also shown to have a very high level of accessibility by public transport, with a GMAL of 8 and there are various opportunities for public transport access to the site from numerous interchange points. Measures are included in the proposal to support active and sustainable living practices, including a high level of cycle parking, showers and lockers, localised pedestrian route enhancements, and a Travel Plan.
- 8.64 Appropriate infrastructure is provided to enable the site to be serviced and to accommodate refuse collection. A service and delivery strategy is set out in the Travel Plan.
- 8.65 The assessment confirms that the site is a suitable location for car-free development. In the unlikely event that a parking space is required the TS shows that the site is well served by numerous public car parks, some of which provide disabled and EV parking facilities. Blue Badge holders are permitted to park without charge or duration limits in street parking bays, and the TS also shows that there are dedicated disabled street parking bays located close to the site.
- 8.66 A traffic assessment has been undertaken and this shows that the proposal will be associated with an insignificant level of trips during the peak hours. It is also shown that there are no accident hotspots on the site frontage.



8.67 The transport assessments undertaken and submitted in support of this proposed scheme meets the requirements of local and national planning policy, specifically CS Policies CC5 and T1, and paragraphs within Chapter 9 of the NPPF.

## **Crime and Safety**

8.68 A Crime Impact Assessment ("CIS") has been produced by Greater Manchester Police, Design for Security, in order to reduce the opportunities for crime and the fear of crime. The layout of the proposed scheme is considered to be acceptable.

8.69 The CIS has provided an assessment of crime impacts of the proposed development and is therefore considered compliant with CS Policy DM1 and Paragraphs 96 and 135 of the NPPF.

## **Noise**

8.70 A Noise Impact Assessment has been prepared by BWB Consulting, which includes an environmental sound survey at the site undertaken in February 2024. The results of the assessments were analysed and reviewed in line with the aims and advice contained within the relevant planning policies and recognised standards and guidance.

8.71 The assessment shows that, with consideration of appropriate glazing and façade construction, an appropriate level of protection could be afforded to future noise sensitive receptors on the site.

8.72 For retained spaces within the development, recommended internal noise level criteria are predicted to be achieved with existing façade design.

8.73 For proposed construction within the development, recommended internal noise level criteria are likely to be achieved with double glazing which would need to provide a minimum performance of Rw + Ctr 25 dB.

8.74 Noise limits have been set at nearby receptors to which any fixed plant items and other applicable commercial noise should meet, based on the results of the baseline noise survey and requirements of BS 4142:2014+A1:2019.



- 8.75 The assessment undertaken and submitted in support of this proposed scheme meets the requirements of local and national planning policy, specifically CS Policy DM1 and Paragraph 191 of the NPPF.

### **Air Quality**

- 8.76 An Air Quality Assessment has been prepared by BWB Consulting to determine baseline conditions, consider site suitability for the proposed end-use and assess potential impacts as a result of the scheme.
- 8.77 The site is located within the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Air Quality Management Area which was designated for exceedances of the annual mean nitrogen dioxide objective.
- 8.78 A qualitative construction phase dust assessment was undertaken in accordance with Institute of Air Quality Management guidance and measures were recommended to minimise emissions during construction activities. With the implementation of these mitigation measures the impact of construction phase dust emissions was considered to be 'not significant' in accordance with Institute of Air Quality Management guidance.
- 8.79 The proposed development trip generation was screened using the Institute of Air Quality Management and Environmental Protection UK two stage screening process, to determine whether a detailed road traffic emissions impact assessment was required. Consideration was also given to the MCC Air Quality and Planning Technical Guidance. The proposed development trip generation did not exceed the relevant screening criteria and therefore detailed dispersion modelling of development-generated road traffic was not undertaken.
- 8.80 Based on the assessment results, the impact of the proposed development on local air quality was considered to be not significant. Mitigation measures were, therefore, not required but measures included in the development which may be beneficial to air quality include cycle storage, photovoltaic panels and the provision of a Travel Plan.

- 8.81 The assessment undertaken and submitted in support of this proposed scheme meets the requirements of local and national planning policy, specifically CS Policy DM1 and Paragraph 192 of the NPPF.

### **Flood Risk, Drainage and Utilities**

- 8.82 A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy has been prepared by AKT II.
- 8.83 The site lies entirely within Flood Zone 1 - an area assessed as having a less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding (<0.1%). In accordance with the NPPF, all proposed land uses are acceptable within Flood Zone 1 and therefore the site passes the Sequential Test.
- 8.84 Surface water will be disposed of to the public sewer by gravity at greenfield rate using either an existing connection or a new sewer connection if the existing connection locations do not fit with the proposed layout. An attenuation tank will be provided within the basement and may require to be pumped depending upon the outcome of the survey of the existing sewer network.
- 8.85 Foul water will be disposed of to the public sewer using either an existing connection or a new sewer connection if the existing connection locations do not fit with the proposed layout. It is assumed that all foul water from ground floor level and above will drain by gravity and that the two basement levels may require to be pumped to high level within the basement before also draining by gravity.
- 8.86 The flooding risk assessment has been prepared and submitted in line with local and national planning policies, specifically CS Policies DM1, EN08, EN14 and EN17 and Chapter 14 of the NPPF.
- 8.87 The submitted Utilities Statement prepared by Atelier Ten demonstrates the work complete and ongoing with regards the existing and required utilities to facilitate the development.



## **Ground Conditions**

- 8.88 A Phase 1 Desk Study Report has been prepared by SoilTechnics to assess potential risk associated with contamination with respect to the redevelopment of the site.
- 8.89 Potential risks from contamination have been identified which would require further investigation to progress the development through planning. Whilst potential risks have been highlighted, these are typical of most brownfield sites.
- 8.90 The assessment conclusions and the recommendations proposed following the ground investigations meet the requirements of local and national planning policy, specifically CS Policy EN18, and Paragraphs 189 and 190 of the NPPF.

## **Digital Infrastructure**

- 8.91 A TV and Radio Reception Impact Assessment and Broadband Connectivity Assessment have been prepared by GTech Surveys and submitted in support of the application. Neither raise any issues that would prevent planning permission being granted.

## **Archaeology**

- 8.92 An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment has been prepared by Orion Heritage and submitted in support of the application. The assessment provides an overview of the below ground archaeological potential of the subject site.
- 8.93 Based on the information within the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record, supplemented by historic mapping and documentary research, the study site is considered to have a low potential for archaeological remains of prehistoric to medieval date and a high potential for archaeological remains of post-medieval to modern date. It is considered that any previously unrecorded archaeological remains would be of up to low/local significance.
- 8.94 The statement submitted in support of the proposed scheme meets the requirements of local and national planning policy, specifically Paragraph 200 of the NPPF.

## Summary

- 8.95 It has been clearly demonstrated that the proposals fully accord with the relevant policies of the Development Plan, including on technical matters, and as such should be approved without delay in accordance with Paragraph 11 of the NPPF.



## 9. Framework Construction Environmental Management Plan

- 9.1 The purpose of this section is to provide a framework for the preparation of the Construction Environmental Management Plan ("CEMP") which will be prepared prior to construction and delivered via a planning condition. The CEMP will provide details of how the proposed scheme will be managed during the construction.
- 9.2 A Construction Phase Plan is required by The CDM 2015 Regulations for any construction work carried out by contractors. This CEMP will be prepared to satisfy these regulations.
- 9.3 The CEMP will be enforced by the Contracts/Project Manager on receipt of client pre-construction information. The CEMP will be checked by the client team or his appointed Principal Designer for accuracy and robustness before commencement of site works. Following agreement of the Plan, this will be issued to the construction team and be updated/maintained on site by the site manager.

### Objectives of the CEMP

- 9.4 The objectives of the CEMP are to:
- Define the existing and proposed ground levels specific to the proposed development.
  - Provide information on any environmental and sensitive local receptors relating to the construction of the development and associated infrastructure;
  - Set out actions required to manage the specified environmental risks, through consideration of design requirements, monitoring schemes and appropriate method statements.
  - Define the requirements for communication of the CEMP to the project team, environmental training and awareness, stakeholder liaison.
  - Define the processes for updating the CEMP - management reviews, incident reporting and investigation, etc.



- 9.5 The key function of the CEMP is to highlight and manage the specific environmental effects of the construction phase and to ensure that the significant negative effects are mitigated, and where practicable that additional environmental enhancements are delivered through completion of the proposed works.

## Perceived Environmental Risk from Construction Activities

- 9.6 The perceived and potential risks which the CEMP will set out to address are:
- Contamination of soils, surface waters and groundwater through spills, run-off etc;
  - Production of dust from construction activities;
  - Management of construction traffic;
  - Production of noise and vibration from construction activities;
  - Production of construction waste from construction activities and;
  - Damage to habitats (including flora and fauna and watercourses) from construction activities.
  - Lighting to site boundaries
  - Visual effects
  - Protection of retained facades
- 9.7 The following sets out the framework and structure of the CEMP.

## Chapter 1: Project Method Statement

- 9.8 The section will provide a detailed description of the proposed approach to the enabling and construction programme and set out the following:
- The construction process - sets out the programme and key construction operations such as setting up of compounds, access, any remediation required, changes in levels etc. At this preliminary stage. It is anticipated that the entirety of the construction process will take 156 weeks to complete;
  - Hours of operation - for the avoidance of doubt, the construction working hours will be 07:30 - 19:30 Mondays to Fridays and 08:00 to 13:00 on Saturdays. No construction work shall take place on Sundays or Bank Holidays.



## Chapter 2: General Site Management

9.9 The project delivery team structure, roles and responsibilities for the overall development of the site will be presented. Roles include:

- Environmental Manager
- Ecological Liaison Officer
- Principal Contractor
- PCs Contract Manager
- Design Manager
- Sub-Contractors

9.10 Site induction procedures will be set out which will include instruction on emergency procedures and any training required for site-based staff. The project goal is zero reportable or major accidents and dangerous occurrences during construction.

9.11 Other items covered under this section of the CEMP include:

- Selection criteria for contractors and designers
- Security and fencing/hoarding
- Offices and cabins
- Welfare facilities
- Emergency incidents and management
- Fire and emergency evacuation
- Lighting
- Protection of retained facades

## Chapter 3: Arrangement for Controlling Significant Site Risks

9.12 Material placement, delivery, removal and waste management will be set out and measures to ensure that site services are protect and maintained.

9.13 Consideration of adjacent land uses and protecting the public to ensure activities will not create unnecessary safety issues will be undertaken. All works will be planned to protect the public and adjacent site workers from the site's activities



associated with construction site movement, deep excavations and movement of materials.

9.14 Preventing of falls is considered to be one of the highest control priorities and measures will be set out to control working at height. Fuelling and hazardous liquids has the most potential for environmental impact to surface and ground water and will be tightly controlled through measures set out in this chapter.

9.15 A subsection within this part of the CEMP will set out measures to control deliveries and vehicle movement:

- Parking
- Deliveries
- Site access and vehicle movement
- Road Cleanliness

## Chapter 4: Environmental Considerations and Management Measures

9.16 This section will set out the key environmental issues such as soil contamination and how any contaminated material will be handled, removal of any asbestos material, ground gas and set out techniques that will minimise noise and vibration. In addition to reduce the impact of dust and air emissions measures such as dust suppressants, stockpile management and speed limits on site will be considered. Management of extreme weather events and stormwater management will be set out.

9.17 The site management team will ensure that all site personnel are appropriately briefed on any ecological issues at the site. Specific site related issues will be set out here.

## Chapter 5: Health and Safety

9.18 This chapter will set out the information that will be required, by the Principal Designer, for inclusion in the Health and Safety File.



- 9.19 The above sets out the framework for the CEMP. The applicant invites the requirement for a CEMP to be a condition to the planning consent.

## Summary

- 9.20 In summary, this chapter of the Planning Statement has described various components of the CEMP. This CEMP will be prepared prior to construction and delivered via a planning condition. The final CEMP once issued will provide details of how the proposed scheme will be managed during the construction.



## 10. The Planning Balance

- 10.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Planning Act 2004 states that decisions should be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. As demonstrated in this Statement the application proposals accord with the relevant policies of the Development Plan when read as a whole.
- 10.2 Notwithstanding the above, if the Council does identify conflict with any policies of the Development Plan, the potential harm arising (in addition to other harms identified below) is clearly outweighed by the significant economic, social and environmental benefits set out below. Economic and social benefits have been informed by a thorough analysis undertaken by socio-economic experts at Brookdale Consulting, and the full analysis is included within the Environmental Statement.

### Harm

- 'Less than Substantial' Harm to designated and non-designated heritage assets; and
- Adverse townscape and visual effects.

### Benefits

#### Economic

- **An Economic Catalyst:** The Proposed Development would secure direct investment of approximately £77m into the local economy by improving the area's aesthetics and thereby, along with committed development in the local area, catalysing the regeneration of this location creating an attractive environment for future investors;
- **Contribution of Construction Phase to Economic Output:** The Proposed Development could generate an estimated £20.7m of gross value added (GVA) per year for the three-year construction period;
- **Increase in Business Rates:** The Proposed Development will increase the revenues to Manchester City Council through business rates in the order of £1.85m per year;



- **Contribution of Permanent Employment to Economic Output:** It is estimated that once completed and fully occupied, additional annual GVA generated by the Proposed Development will equate to around £33.9m (£53.4m gross);
- **Direct and Indirect operational employment:** The Proposed Development will support an estimated additional 1,044 FTE jobs in relevant sectors compared to existing development (1,224 gross); and
- **Direct and Indirect Construction-related Employment:** The Proposed Development could support 921 “person years” of construction-related employment.

## Social

- **Reducing Worklessness and Deprivation** – As above, the proposed development creates jobs and opportunities during the construction and operational phase. The creation of jobs will upskill residents and help to tackle the causes and challenges associated with deprivation;
- **Improving the Skills of Residents** – The Applicant has committed to a Local Labour Agreement which include key targets to source employment locally, thus providing opportunities for upskilling and various apprenticeship opportunities;
- **Improving Access to Employment and Education** – The site provides employment opportunities during construction and operational in a highly sustainable location, with walking, cycling and public transport genuinely realistic alternatives to private car use.
- **Removing Health Inequalities and Enabling Healthy Lifestyles** – The development will encourage future site users to walk, cycle or commute via public transport. The creation of jobs in a sustainable location will help address health inequalities in the local area.
- **Creating Neighbourhood Focus, Facilities and Identity** – The development provides a blend of uses and spaces to support the needs of the growing economy and the existing community to create a positive and successful mixed-use neighbourhood.

## Environmental

- **Regeneration of an Under-Utilised Site:** The Proposed Development would deliver the regeneration of previously developed site, which will have significant



environmental benefits for the area and enhance the physical appearance of the local area;

- **Efficient Use of Land:** The Proposed Development would ensure efficient use of previously developed land by maximising its development potential whilst taking into account key site opportunities and constraints, in accordance with Chapter 11 (Making effective use of land) of the NPPF;
- **Practical and Innovative Design:** The Proposed Development has been designed to ensure that it can function effectively from an operational perspective whilst also reinforcing an exciting, high quality, and innovative design;
- **An Energy Efficient Development:** the proposal has been designed to be as energy efficient as possible. The key elements of the Energy Strategy for the development is as follows:
  - U-values beyond those required for compliance
  - Reasonable glazing ratios and solar control glazing
  - Air permeability of 3 m<sup>3</sup>/h.m<sup>2</sup>@ 50Pa
  - High-efficiency HVRF to the office spaces
  - Ventilation with heat recovery to the majority of the core spaces
  - SFPs of 1.6W/l/s for supply & extract systems
  - High lighting efficacy and controls
  - DHW via ASHP for the shower block
  - A PV array with circa 100 m<sup>2</sup> total panel area
  - The project also targets BREEAM certification under BREEAM UK New Construction 2018 to address the wider sustainability issues. The BREEAM Pre-assessment is included in the planning application submission; the project achieves 6 credits under Ene01, exceeding the minimum requirement for 'Excellent';
- **Reducing Congestion on the Roads** - The development is car-free and will be a long-term positive step to reduce congestion on the highways network, improving the reliability of public transport and reducing overcrowding; and
- **Improving the Quality of Air and Water** - In addition to the above, the drainage strategy will implement a series of sustainable drainage strategy measures to treat surface water prior to discharging into the network.

## Heritage

- **Sustaining or enhancing** the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting; and



- **Reducing or removing** risks to a heritage asset.

## Summary

- 10.3 In summary, the proposed development represents a highly sustainable form of development on a previously developed site which will deliver additional state of the art workspace for Manchester City Centre. The scheme proposals fully accord with the Development Plan and associated supporting planning guidance.
- 10.4 The identified harms are clearly outweighed by the substantial economic, social, environmental and heritage benefits of the scheme set out above. It is therefore considered that the planning balance weighs in favour of the application proposal in respect of Paragraphs 208 and 209 of the NPPF, and it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted without delay in line with Section 38(6) and Paragraph 11 of the NPPF.



## 11. Conclusion

- 11.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by AshtonHale Ltd (“AshtonHale”) on behalf of Soller Nine (“the Applicant”) in support of a full planning application submitted to Manchester City Council (“MCC”) for an office-led development (to be known as “NXQ”) at Land Bound by Lever Street, Great Ancoats Street, Little Lever Street and Houldsworth Street, Manchester (“the Site”).
- 11.2 The proposals represent a comprehensive and high-quality scheme undertaken in line with best practice guidance that will meet both planning policy aspirations and market demand and, importantly, are deliverable in the current economic climate. The proposals have been designed by an award-winning design team with due regard due regard to the heritage context of the site, the technical assessments undertaken by the Applicant’s project team, and the feedback during consultation with MCC, key stakeholders, and the public.
- 11.3 The design incorporates a striking new aesthetic that balances the conversion and re-use of existing buildings onsite with the requirements of a new-build high-end office development. The building will offer facilities including a new reception lobby and rooftop terrace alongside, new ground floor retail/ food and beverage uses which will increase the attractiveness of the site and draw in businesses.
- 11.4 This Planning Statement has identified a series of Development Plan Documents and other material considerations to be taken into account in the determination of this application. It has clearly been demonstrated that the principle of an office development in this location can be robustly justified and are in complete accordance with planning policy and the Council’s economic and regeneration strategies. The proposals will result in a new high end, office floorspace which will add to the offer within the City Centre of Manchester and will be supported by ground floor commercial uses, both of which are in line with relevant local and national planning policies.



- 11.5 Furthermore, the proposed development constitutes sustainable development in accordance with the NPPF when taken as a whole. The development will deliver significant positive economic, social and environmental benefits which should be afforded considerable weight in the determination of this planning application. It is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted without delay.

# Appendix I

## Application Submission Schedule



## Application Submission Schedule - NXQ

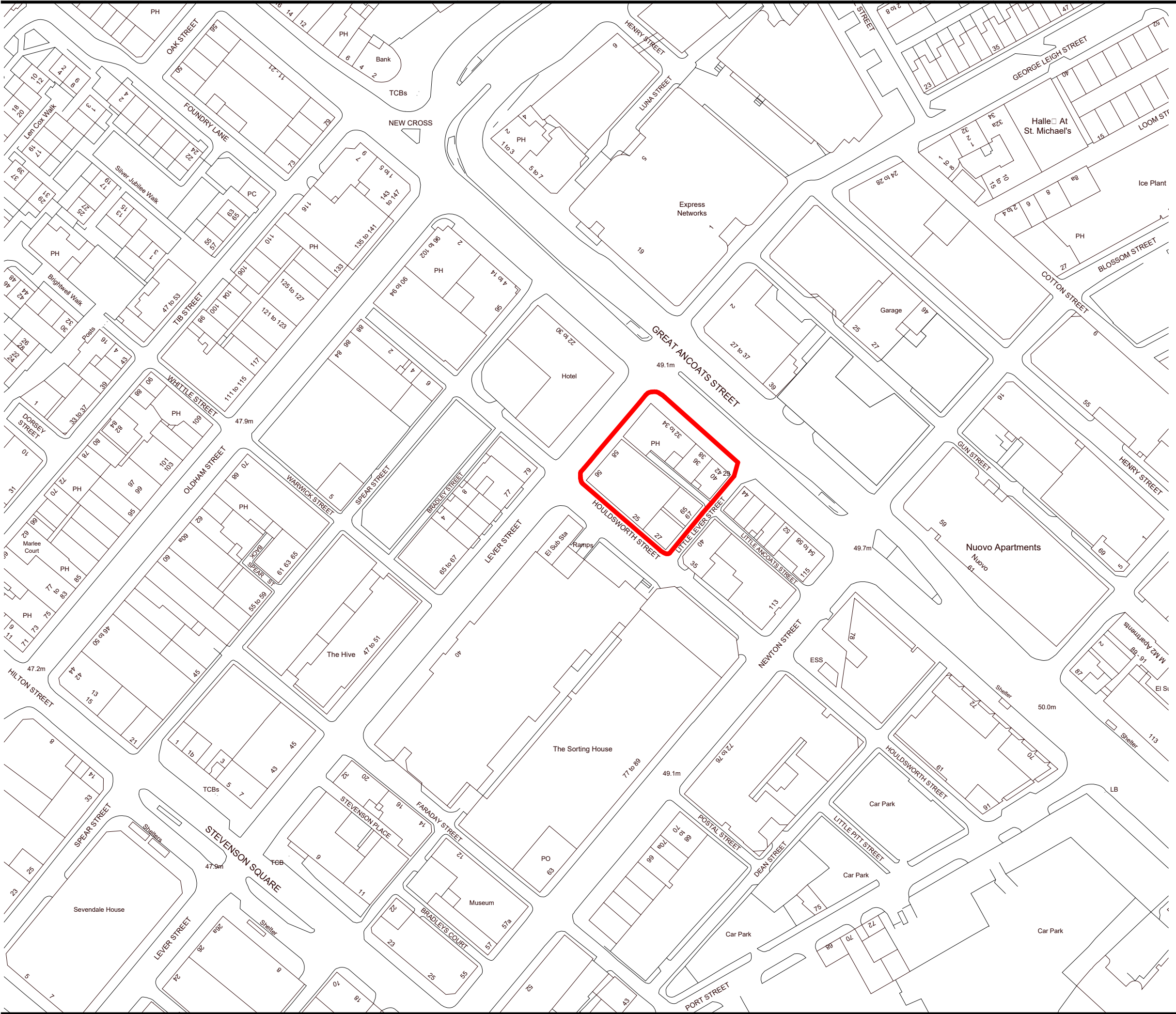
| Document                                     | Reference                 | Author  |
|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------|
| <i>Plans</i>                                 |                           |         |
| Existing Plans                               |                           |         |
| <i>Site Information</i>                      |                           |         |
| Site Location Plan                           | 2510-HWS-XXX-XX-D-A-05050 | Howells |
| Existing - Site Plan                         | 2510-HWS-XXX-XX-D-A-05051 | Howells |
| Existing - Site Section & Elevations Sheet 1 | 2510-HWS-XXX-ZZ-D-A-05055 | Howells |
| Existing - Site Section & Elevations Sheet 2 | 2510-HWS-XXX-ZZ-D-A-05056 | Howells |
| <i>Demolition</i>                            |                           |         |
| Demolition - Site Plan                       | 2510-HWS-XXX-00-D-A-05052 | Howells |
| Demolition - 32 Great Ancoats St             | 2510-HWS-XXX-00-D-A-05062 | Howells |
| Demolition - Elevations Sheet 01             | 2510-HWS-XXX-ZZ-D-A-05065 | Howells |
| Demolition - Elevation Sheet 02              | 2510-HWS-XXX-ZZ-D-A-05066 | Howells |
| Demolition - Elevation Sheet 03              | 2510-HWS-XXX-ZZ-D-A-05067 | Howells |
| Demolition - Elevation Sheet 04              | 2510-HWS-XXX-ZZ-D-A-05068 | Howells |
| Proposed Plans                               |                           |         |
| <i>GA Plans</i>                              |                           |         |
| Proposed - Ground Floor Site Plan            | 2510-HWS-XXX-00-D-A-05070 | Howells |
| Proposed - Basement Plan B02                 | 2510-HWS-XXX-B2-D-A-05098 | Howells |
| Proposed - Basement Plan B01                 | 2510-HWS-XXX-B1-D-A-05099 | Howells |
| Proposed - Ground Floor Plan                 | 2510-HWS-XXX-00-D-A-05100 | Howells |
| Proposed - 1st Floor Plan                    | 2510-HWS-XXX-01-D-A-05101 | Howells |
| Proposed - 2nd Floor Plan                    | 2510-HWS-XXX-02-D-A-05102 | Howells |
| Proposed - 3rd Floor Plan                    | 2510-HWS-XXX-03-D-A-05103 | Howells |
| Proposed - 4th-6th Floor Plan                | 2510-HWS-XXX-04-D-A-05104 | Howells |
| Proposed - 7th-12th Floor Plan               | 2510-HWS-XXX-07-D-A-05107 | Howells |
| Proposed - 13th-17th Floor Plan              | 2510-HWS-XXX-13-D-A-05113 | Howells |

| Document                                             | Reference                        | Author              |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Proposed - 18th Floor Plan                           | 2510-HWS-XXX-18-D-A-05118        | Howells             |
| Proposed - Roof Plan                                 | 2510-HWS-XXX-18-D-A-05120        | Howells             |
| <i>GA Sections</i>                                   |                                  |                     |
| Proposed - Section 01 - North-South                  | 2510-HWS-XXX-ZZ-D-A-05301        | Howells             |
| Proposed - Section 02 - North-South                  | 2510-HWS-XXX-ZZ-D-A-05302        | Howells             |
| Proposed - Section 03 - East-West                    | 2510-HWS-XXX-ZZ-D-A-05303        | Howells             |
| Proposed - Section 04 - East-West                    | 2510-HWS-XXX-ZZ-D-A-05304        | Howells             |
| <i>GA Elevations</i>                                 |                                  |                     |
| Proposed - Great Ancoats Street - North Elevation 01 | 2510-HWS-XXX-ZZ-D-A-05401        | Howells             |
| Proposed - Houldsworth Street - South Elevation 02   | 2510-HWS-XXX-ZZ-D-A-05402        | Howells             |
| Proposed - Lever Street - West Elevation 03          | 2510-HWS-XXX-ZZ-D-A-05403        | Howells             |
| Proposed - Little Lever Street - East Elevation 04   | 2510-HWS-XXX-ZZ-D-A-05404        | Howells             |
| <i>Bay Studies</i>                                   |                                  |                     |
| Typical Bay 01 - Tech Hub Facade                     | 2510-HWS-XXX-ZZ-D-A-05501        | Howells             |
| Typical Bay 02 - Great Ancoats Street elevation      | 2510-HWS-XXX-ZZ-D-A-05502        | Howells             |
| Typical Bay 03 - Little Lever Street elevation       | 2510-HWS-XXX-ZZ-D-A-05503        | Howells             |
| Typical Bay 04 - Houldsworth Street elevation        | 2510-HWS-XXX-ZZ-D-A-05504        | Howells             |
| Typical Bay 05 - Lever Street elevation 01           | 2510-HWS-XXX-ZZ-D-A-05510        | Howells             |
| Typical Bay 06 - Lever Street elevation 02           | 2510-HWS-XXX-ZZ-D-A-05511        | Howells             |
| Typical Bay 07 - Courtyard Studies 01                | 2510-HWS-XXX-ZZ-D-A-05512        | Howells             |
| Typical Bay 08 -Courtyard Studies 02                 | 2510-HWS-XXX-ZZ-D-A-05513        | Howells             |
| <i>Landscape</i>                                     |                                  |                     |
| Landscape GA                                         | 3217-PLA-00-GF-DR-L-0001 Rev P04 | Planit              |
| Hardworks                                            | 3217-PLA-00-GF-DR-L-1000 Rev P04 | Planit              |
| Softworks                                            | 3217-PLA-00-GF-DR-L-2000 Rev P04 | Planit              |
| Site Levels                                          | 3217-PLA-00-GF-DR-L-3000 Rev P04 | Planit              |
| Furniture and Lighting GA                            | 3217-PLA-00-GF-DR-L-4000 Rev P02 | Planit              |
| <i>Documents and Reports</i>                         |                                  |                     |
| Application Forms and Certificates                   | 28 <sup>th</sup> March 2024      | AshtonHale          |
| Covering Letter                                      | 28 <sup>th</sup> March 2024      | AshtonHale          |
| Planning Statement                                   | April 2024                       | AshtonHale          |
| Tall Building Statement                              | April 2024                       | AshtonHale          |
| Local Labour Agreement                               | April 2024                       | AshtonHale          |
| Development Options Appraisal                        | April 2024                       | AshtonHale          |
| Design and Access Statement                          | Rev 01                           | Howells             |
| Crime Impact Statement                               | April 2024                       | Design for Security |

| Document                                                       | Reference            | Author                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Preliminary Ecological Appraisal                               | February 2024 Rev 02 | E3P                   |
| Environmental Standards Statement                              | March 2024 Rev P01   | Atelier Ten           |
| Energy Statement                                               | March 2024 Rev P01   | Atelier Ten           |
| Utilities Statement                                            | March 2024 Rev P01   | Atelier Ten           |
| Ventilation Statement                                          | March 2024 Rev P01   | Atelier Ten           |
| Flood Risk Assessment                                          | March 2024 Rev 01    | AKT II                |
| Drainage Assessment                                            | March 2024 Rev 01    | AKT II                |
| Transport Statement (inc Travel Plan)                          | March 2024 Rev 02    | SK Transport          |
| Air Quality Assessment                                         | March 2024 Rev 01    | BWB Consulting        |
| Noise Impact Assessment                                        | March 2024 Rev 02    | BWB Consulting        |
| Circular Economy Statement                                     | April 2024 Rev 02    | BWB Consulting        |
| Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment                           | January 2024 Rev 01  | Orion Heritage        |
| Ground Conditions Phase 1 - Desk Study Report                  | March 2024           | SoilTechnics          |
| Broadband Connectivity Assessment                              | March 2024 Rev 1     | GTech Surveys Limited |
| Television and Radio Impact Assessment                         | March 2024 Rev 1     | GTech Surveys Limited |
| <b>Environmental Statement</b>                                 |                      |                       |
| Non-Technical Summary                                          |                      | RJK Consulting        |
| Main Text                                                      |                      |                       |
| <i>Chapter 1 - Introduction</i>                                |                      | <i>RJK Consulting</i> |
| <i>Chapter 2 - Approach</i>                                    |                      | <i>RJK Consulting</i> |
| <i>Chapter 3 - Site Description</i>                            |                      | <i>RJK Consulting</i> |
| <i>Chapter 4 - Alternatives</i>                                |                      | <i>RJK Consulting</i> |
| <i>Chapter 5 - The Proposed Development</i>                    |                      | <i>RJK Consulting</i> |
| <i>Chapter 6 - Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment</i>      |                      | <i>Reform</i>         |
| <i>Chapter 7 - Built Heritage</i>                              |                      | <i>BWB Consulting</i> |
| <i>Chapter 8 - Climate Change</i>                              |                      | <i>BWB Consulting</i> |
| <i>Chapter 9 - Socio-Economics</i>                             |                      | <i>Brookdale</i>      |
| <i>Chapter 10 - Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing</i>       |                      | <i>GIA</i>            |
| <i>Chapter 11 - Wind</i>                                       |                      | <i>GIA</i>            |
| <i>Chapter 12 - Human Health</i>                               |                      | <i>RJK Consulting</i> |
| <i>Chapter 13 - Summary of Mitigation and Residual Effects</i> |                      |                       |
| Appendices                                                     |                      | -                     |

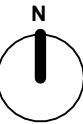
# Appendix II

## Application Site Boundary



Dimensions are not to be scaled from on this document. Notify Howells of discrepancies affecting the information shown. This drawing is copyright of Howells, the trading name of Glenn Howells Architects Limited.

LEGEND



 Planning Boundary  
(Total site area 0.16 Ha/1,640 m<sup>2</sup>)

DOCUMENT REFERENCED IN THIS DRAWING  
OSMAP - LICENCE NUMBER 100022432  
TOPO - 36876\_01-03\_TE\_REV0



Location:

Status:

PLANNING

|                   |                      |             |    |
|-------------------|----------------------|-------------|----|
| Revision History: |                      | Checked: AD |    |
| P01               | Planning First Issue | 24/04/2024  | DJ |

Project & Client:  
Lever Street Manchester working with Soller Group

File Title: Scale: 1 : 1250 @A3

Site Location Plan

File ID: Revision:  
2510-HWS-XXX-XX-D-A-05050 P01

