Phase 2 New Victoria: Office Development

Manchester

Heritage Impact Assessment

May 2023

Consultancy for the
Historic Built Environment

KMHeritage

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1 Introduction

1.1 This report has been prepared to support the application for the construction of a 12 storey office building including ground, basement and mezzanine, comprising up to 21,267 (GEA) of office accommodation, ground floor commercial unit, roof terraces, plant, cycle parking, hard and soft landscaping, access and servicing and other associated works. This is further to the previously consented scheme on the site 134092/FO/2022.

Purpose

1.2 The purpose of the report is to set out the history and heritage significance of the area and consider the impact of the proposed scheme on key views.

1.3 This report should be read in conjunction with documentation prepared as part of the application including the Design & Access Statement and the Townscape Visual Impact Assessment.

Structure of Report

1.4 This introduction is followed by a description of the site and background history of the area. Section 3 analyses the heritage significance of the site and its context. Section 4 sets out the national and local policy and guidance relating to the historic built environment that is relevant to this matter. An assessment of the scheme on a series of townscape views is provided in Section 5 followed by a consideration of the scheme's compliance with policy and guidance in Section 6.

Author

1.5 The drafting of this statement was undertaken by Nick Collins BSc (Hons) MSc MRICS IHBC. Nick has been a Principal Inspector of Historic Buildings & Areas in the London Region of English Heritage. Prior to working with KM Heritage Nick was a Director of Conservation at Alan Baxter & Associates. Nick has extensive experience in dealing with proposals that affect the historic environment and also has a background in research, in policy analysis and in understanding historic buildings and places.

2 The site and background history to the area

2.1 The Site is located on Corporation Street, just next to Manchester Victoria Station. It comprises hardstanding and a small number of temporary cabins, supporting Phase 1 of New Victoria. Phase 1 is currently under construction, to the north of the site, comprising two residential buildings, along with ground floor commercial space, parking and other associated works.

2.2 Manchester Victoria railway station (Grade II) occupies the majority of the area to the west and south west of the site, with the Manchester Arena beyond. To the south is access to Manchester Victoria Station, and the site and surrounding area are a key entrance point to the city with regeneration and redevelopment works around NOMA, Victoria Station and The Green Quarter.

2.3 To the east of the site on the other side of Corporation Street are Hanover Building, Old Bank Building and New Century House and Hall. All four of these buildings are Grade II Listed. There is also an area of public realm outside New Century House, adjacent to Corporation Street.

2.4 To the north, beyond the emerging residential towers, across the Cheetham Hill Road railway bridge, lies an area of surface level car parking and the former Parker's Hotel (Grade II listed) which is currently occupied by a Dental Clinic.

Historical Development

2.5 Manchester was unlike some of its contemporaries in that it followed a different pattern of growth evolving from a much older settlement. 'Manchester and Salford were twin towns separated by the River Irwell, a tranquil stream in the middle Ages when the manorial boundaries were drawn, but a flood of liquid manure in early Victorian England'[1] and each retained buildings and traditions of an earlier age. The part of Manchester around the Cathedral forms what was the medieval heart of the city – where the Rivers Irwell and Irk converged.

[1] Briggs, Asa, *Victorian Cities – a Brilliant and Absorbing History of their Development*, 1968, Penguin, p29

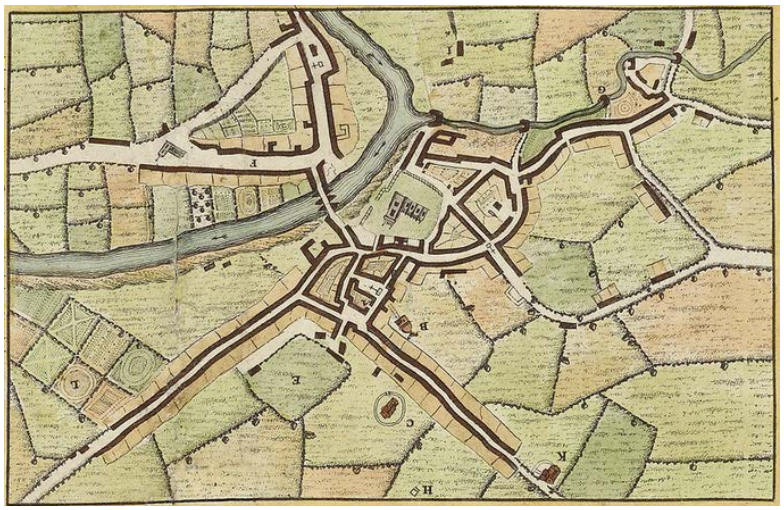


Figure 1: Map of Manchester, 1650 – originally drawn with south at the top, so show here upside down. Houses line the road then known as Mill Gate; note the allotments, or crofts, as well as rural fields beyond.

2.6 It is almost impossible to obviously 'read' the layout of the medieval settlement now other than remnants of Long Millgate and the (now) Cathedral building.

2.7 What is now Chetham's Hospital on Long Millgate (and is now on the western side of Cathedral Gardens, south west of the site) was established by Thomas de la Warre in 1422, subsequently converted after the Dissolution for use as a town house by the Earl of Derby. The building is the oldest public library in the English-speaking world and was sequestrated during the Commonwealth before its purchase by Humphrey Chetham's executors for adaptation as a charity school (known as a hospital) with library. As the medieval town spread, other roads were established: Ashley Lane, dates to 1506; Millers Lane, now the junction of Corporation Street and Cheetham Hill Road was named in 1564 – to the north of the site.

2.8 Long Millgate was, in the late 18th century, a meandering lane in Manchester's former medieval core, gradually being relegated to the northern periphery of the growing industrial city. Its remnants run just to the north west of the site. Bordered by domestic and industrial edifices, almost all of which have since gone, leaving what is now a modern metropolitan landscape of varying structures and styles, Long Millgate was characterised by the buildings of the north west vernacular: medieval timber framed structures displaying the patterns of the region which would be consumed as Britain was transformed from a pre-industrial to an industrial economy.

Figure 2: Gibraltar, off Long Millgate in 1877: A group of houses which stood on the banks of the Irk, near Scotland Bridge in a court off the lower end of Long Millgate. A date of 1668 was found on a beam; demolished in 1889. Manchester City Council – Local Image Collection (m80003)

2.9 The catalyst which precipitated Manchester's growth was the construction of St Ann's Church, opened in 1709 to the south of the old town. This 'opened new regions: a new Square was formed from existing corn fields and about 1735 the garden ground of the inhabitants was encroached upon by buildings, which now form the lower end of King-street, not then communicating directly with Deansgate', but it was not until the 1770s that Old Millgate, then a mere 'lane, sufficient for only one carriage to pass, was widened.'[2] St Ann's, a superb example of the work of either Christopher Wren, or one of his pupils, survives. This classical church, displaying the motifs of the English Baroque, is the second oldest church in the city.

2.10 Manchester, which became a city in 1853, is now defined by its commercial and industrial character, representing a broader pattern of Victorian civic design, yet incorporating disparate architectural elements rarely seen elsewhere. Unlike most other manufacturing cities which are epitomised by the classicism of the 19th century, Manchester is a fusion of the neo-Gothic, the Edwardian Baroque and the Art Nouveau. Although 'lacking specific historical precedent, the ambitious town halls of industrial England, like that of Leeds by Cuthbert

[2] Wheeler, James, *Manchester: its Political, Social and Commercial History*, 1836

Broderick from the 1850s, gave their towers an impressive classicism... the Gothicists had their day in places like Manchester'[3]. This eclecticism is 'displayed, often ostentatiously, not only in individual Victorian buildings but in Victorian city streets'.

2.11 Victoria Station, constructed in 1844, was built on land bought at Hunts Bank (by reputation thought to have been medieval hunting grounds) in 1838 by the vice-Chairman of the Manchester-Leeds Railway Company. Designed by George Stephenson, the renowned civil and mechanical engineer, referred to as the 'Father of the Railways', Victoria Station would change the landscape of Long Millgate irretrievably and, along with the construction of Corporation Street just four years later in 1848, cutting through medieval streets, was about to be transformed into a commercial gateway. A single-storey wing using Doric elements, although modest in design, first used by the Liverpool and Manchester Railway would become the headquarters of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway. The initial design of the station was based on a single platform, covered with iron roof, with dining rooms, waiting rooms and booking office, the whole laid out along a west-east axis with the rails necessitating the partial demolition of the Workhouse.

2.12 Further extensions of the Station took place in 1865 and then again in 1884 which involved the acquisition and demolition of the Workhouse and the connecting of Long Millgate to Hunts Bank, creating the station approach. The lavishness of this building's initial design has been lost: what is still referred to as 'cigar alley', an exit from the Station onto Long Millgate, once housed a bank for city gents arriving in the metropolis. Expansion throughout the 19th century lead to the purchase of Walkers Croft on the north side of the Irk for new platforms and offices; in 1884 further offices were added to the Hunts Bank side of the building.

2.13 The period following the First World War, and into the 1930s would see the decline of the Station – but the Second World War inflicted much damage structurally, including the loss of a large portion of the roof. Many improvements were made to Station out of necessity in the 1940s including an entrance on New Bridge Street, repairs to the concourse and the creation of Air Raid shelters in the basement. Alterations which took place in the 1960s and 1980s would, however, cover over a portion of

[3] Kostof, Spiro, *The City Shaped: Urban Patterns and Meanings through History*, 1991, Thames & Hudson, p305

Long Millgate, and change the urban landscape around the buildings.

2.14 Developments were pursued in the mid-20th century in an attempt to improve the area between Corporation Street, Withy Street and Market Street, described as 'a shabby district... due for large-scale commercial development... We shall have to lose some attractive little courts, some narrow twisting streets... and some historic and charming old pubs. But it has happened before. Manchester's Second Town Plan of 1821 was founded on the widening of Market Street.'[4]

2.15 New Century House epitomised the status of the Co-operative Group, built between 1959-63 by GS Hay with Gordon Tait of Sir John Burnet, Tait and Partners.

2.16 More recently Victoria Station, just to the west of the site, has been substantially altered, with the covering of the Metrolink and enhanced linkage through to the Manchester Arena beyond.

[4] Parkinson-Bailey, John, J., *Manchester – An Architectural History*, 2000, p209

3 The heritage significance of the site and its context

3.1 This section of the report describes the heritage significance of the site and its surroundings.

The heritage context of the site

3.2 The site is located in the angle formed by two conservation areas: to the south and west the Cathedral Conservation Area and to the south and east the Shudehill Conservation Area. These two conservation areas (described in more detail later in this section) share a boundary along the portion of Corporation Street between Withy Grove and Balloon Street.

3.3 There are no listed buildings within the Site but there are a number of listed buildings in close proximity:

- Manchester Victoria Station (Grade II)
- City Buildings, 67 Corporation Street (Grade II)
- The Co-operative Wholesale Society, Corporation Street (Hanover Building) (Grade II)
- The Co-operative Wholesale Society, Corporation Street (Old Bank Building) (Grade II)
- New Century House, Corporation Street (Grade II)
- Parkers Hotel, 109 Corporation Street (Grade II)
- The Co-operative Insurance Society (CIS) Buildings, Miller Street (Grade II)
- South East Wing and School Block to Chetham's Hospital (former Manchester Grammar School) (Grade II)
- Chetham's Hospital & Attached Wall (Grade I)
- Cathedral Church of St Mary (Manchester Cathedral) (Grade I)
- Detached Block for Schoolroom approximately 20 metres south of Chethams Hospital, Long Millgate (Grade II)
- Former Corn & Produce Exchange (Grade II)
- Co-operative Society Buildings, 29 Dantzic Street (Grade II)
- Holyoake House, Hanover Street (Grade II)
- Co-operative Society Buildings, Redfurn Street (Grade II)
- Former Synagogue, 19 Cheetham Hill Road (Grade II)

There are a number of locally listed buildings within the area, including 52-60, 65-69, 88-92 & 91 Chapel Street, Salford although these are not affected by the proposals.

The heritage significance of the site and its context

The relevant heritage assets

3.4 The conservation areas and nearby listed buildings are 'designated heritage assets', as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF). Locally listed buildings are 'non-designated heritage assets'.

3.5 'Significance' is defined in the NPPF as 'the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic'. The Historic England 'Planning for the Historic Environment Practice Guide' puts it slightly differently – as 'the sum of its architectural, historic, artistic or archaeological interest'. 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment' (English Heritage, April 2008) describes a number of 'heritage values' that may be present in a 'significant place'. These are evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal value.

3.6 The old part of the city of Manchester is little known – so much of it has been destroyed by 19th century and later developments, much of which has been industrial and commercial in nature. Long Millgate was the main thoroughfare into the medieval town from the north and east and developed in the 15th and 16th centuries. It is advocated that Manchester's success was derived from its very early textile production – a result of the immigration of highly specialised workers – a pattern which continued throughout the rest of its history. The Long Millgate area was marginalised, if not debilitated, as it lost out to more 'organised' industrial development of the 18th and 19th centuries, much of which was purpose-built on more accessible sites, but it became home to transient populations, again immigrant Jewish and Irish families, who nevertheless brought with them the entrepreneurial spirit, making use of the older, usually timber-framed buildings which could not be readily adapted to industrial use. Long Millgate became the centre of trade in jewellery and other specialised imported and exported goods: and this was a significant factor in the construction of Victoria Station.

Conservation Areas

3.7 The site is located just beyond the boundaries of the Cathedral Conservation Area and the Shudehill Conservation Area (see Appendix A), the latter of which is demarcated by the south east side of Corporation Street, following the line of Withy Grove southwards. The Hanover Building and the Old Bank Building, standing opposite Victoria Station, and both listed Grade II, are included in the Conservation Area. Shudehill was designated an area of importance on account of this cluster of 20th century buildings of merit as well as older and smaller structures to the east, many of which have been demolished because of 'low levels of occupancy, neglect and lack of investment'[5]. Buildings of particular merit include The Castle and Falcon public house; 29, Shudehill, and an unusual three-sided building which may have been a shoe factory.

3.8 The Cathedral Conservation Area incorporates the oldest part of the city which has existed since the Roman period. A Saxon settlement was established here at a location important because of its meeting point between two rivers – the Irwell and Irk – and a church (the site of the later Cathedral) and Manor were recorded at Domesday. This was the heart of the medieval town which thrived on the textile trade even during the 14th century and was the locus of Manchester's expansion throughout the 16th and 17th centuries. It became extremely dilapidated at the Industrial Revolution when the population grew rapidly, but the Corn Exchange, Chetham's School and the Cathedral, with a nave wider than York Minster, are considered buildings of significance, the latter two considered of sufficient importance to be listed Grade I.

Other Listed Buildings

3.9 Listed buildings in proximity to the site include the Grade II-listed New Century House, including its Conference Hall and abstract concrete relief. The designation of this steel-framed rectangular tower dating to 1962, built to plans by Sir John Burnet, Tait and Partners with G.S. Hay, is unusual: mid-20th century design is rarely of sufficient merit to list, yet in this instance is considered a 'design of discipline and consistency which forms part of a group with the Co-operative Insurance Society, Miller Street'[6].The Grade II-listed Parkers Hotel,

[5] Manchester City Council, Shudehill Conservation Area

[6] English Heritage Listing No 1255052, November 1995; quoting Nikolaus Pevsner, South Lancashire

formerly a commercial building, standing rather unhappily on its own at the eastern end of Corporation Street, is an example of the vigorousness of the municipal Edwardian neo-Baroque architecture[7]. Employing a variation on colour and material in the red brick and cream Portland stone, and an illustration of the Empire or 'Grand Style' of the early 20th century, the architect of Parkers Hotel has employed bold detailing including fluted giant pilasters and swags. Domed towers, inspired by Wren's version at Greenwich, were also often replicated – and here the structure is topped with a copper translation of the 17th century style.

3.10 Also on Corporation Street, as well as within the boundary of the Shudehill Conservation Area, is the Co-operative Wholesale Society Building, granted Grade II status on account of its early 20th century design by F.E.L. Harris. Harris was involved with both the Society and the Co-operative Union devising schemes for a number of other structures including Holyoake House completed in 1911, similarly Grade II-listed. The Co-operative Wholesale Society Building is an earlier example of the architect's work, having been begun in 1905 and finished in circa 1909, comprising offices and a warehouse designed in the ebullient and confident Neo-Baroque of the period, making use of the contrasting textures and colours of red brick, polished granite and sandstone. Here, Harris has also made use of the Corinthian and Doric Orders in the giant colonnades to the second and third storeys, with the former, the more decorative, given predominance emphasising the second floor. Carved sandstone reliefs and detailing alludes to the Art Nouveau; the huge arched doorway to the ground floor synchronises the arcade with the attic storey, the whole structure a declaration of Edwardian aplomb. An additional floor was destroyed during bombing in the Second World War.

3.11 Its neighbour, the Co-operative Wholesale Society Building at the junction with Hanover Street, is abstemiously sober, less opulent, reflecting a later 1920s construction date. Designed by W.A. Johnson in 1928, the structure is in the Neo-Classical style and is of five storeys with channelled rustication to the ground and first floors, although the second and third storeys are, again, emphasised here with a giant pilastrade, complementing Harris's design to the south. Also listed at Grade II, this geometrical building, with Mansard roof, anticipates the Art Deco, while incorporating classical motifs such as the dentil

[7] English Heritage Listing No 1208963, June 1994

cornice and round-headed entrance arch. Both Co-operative buildings, along with others nearby, demonstrate the commercial style of the early 20th century. Other unlisted buildings nearby are testament to the piecemeal developmental evolution of the area in proximity to Victoria Station incorporating the redundant, the early industrial and the very modern.

3.12 Railroad terminals were an 'unprecedented, exclusively modern institution, built as the new gates of cities they took to imposing design'. The original Victoria Station, the whole given Grade II-listed status in 1988, was, however, more modest: initially a single-storey building built in 1844 for the Manchester and Leeds Railway Company to designs by George Stephenson, it was extended in 1909 by William Dawes for the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company. The Italianate simplicity of the initial building is somewhat eclipsed by the later structure: a vast Edwardian demonstration of the power of the railways spanning thirty one bays, yet the design contains pronounced and unusual details of quality such as the names of destinations in Art Nouveau lettering to a glass canopy and a stained glass dome.

3.13 Listed buildings on Cheetham Hill Road include the Grade II-listed former Synagogue (No 19), originally constructed as a Methodist Chapel in 1840, but subsequently altered to suit the changing demographics of mid-19th century Manchester as German and Russian Jews fled poverty: Cheetham Hill became their informal ghetto, but with increasing prosperity, they moved out to Prestwich and other suburbs. The Knowsley Hotel at No 95 is also dated to the mid-19th century: a composition in red brick with sandstone quoins, its construction represents the need for accommodation in the city after the opening of Victoria Station in the 1840s. Later 19th century structures on Cheetham Hill Road embrace the unusual: the New Synagogue, listed at Grade II*, built for Portuguese and Spanish populations in 1889 to designs by Edward Salomons, displays Saracenic motifs in the facade, while the Crumpsall and Cheetham District Library of 1909-1911 by Henry Price, the City Architect, is another example of the confident Edwardian Neo-Baroque. This colossal edifice makes use of the contrasting red brick and white limestone, a semi-spherical roof and is distinguished by cartouches lettered with the great names of literature: Scott, Milton, Shakespeare and Dickens. The Billiard Hall of 1906, listed Grade II, is eclectic, combining the styles of the Neo-

Baroque with the Art Nouveau and, with its original interior fittings, is considered 'an unusual survival of its type and date'[8].

Significance of the Site and Area

3.14 The listed and unlisted buildings and structures of any discernable quality, their relationship to one another and to the conservation areas, illustrate the evolution of Manchester. What happened to this part of the city through the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries is highly illustrative of how the city, along with Salford, developed through its commercial success and might. The nearby buildings – offices, public buildings and railway structures – all illustrate the city's evolution and tell us about its transformation, the mechanics of development in the mid-19th century and about the architectural preferences of the period.

3.15 The aesthetic and architectural significance of the site and immediate area has been much reduced in recent years, and probably more so than in the 19th century. Few, if any, of the original vernacular buildings survive and the road layout has been lost, covered over by the Corporation Street developments of 1848 onwards. Buildings, such as the Manchester Arms, have been demolished (survived until the 1980s) and what remains is predominantly commercial. Of the buildings in proximity, the two Co-operative structures built in the early 1900s, albeit with twenty years in between, are impressive and important representatives of the confidence of the Edwardian era in Manchester – as well as social reforms and ideologies instigated by Robert Owen, among others, and who is commemorated in a statue at Balloon Street. Owen was considered the 'Father of British Socialism' who founded the co-operative movement.

3.16 Major re-invention and a boldness for change is an inherent and important part of Manchester's historic development – with less sentimentality than perhaps some other cities in its desire to evolve and 'go forwards'.

[8] English Heritage Listing 1283066

4 The policy context

4.1 This section of the report briefly sets out the range of national and local policy and guidance relevant to the consideration of change in the historic built environment.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

4.2 The legislation governing listed buildings and conservation areas is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (‘the Act’).

4.3 Section 16(2) says that 'In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses'.

4.4 Section 66(1) of the Act says that ‘In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.’

4.5 Section 72(1) of the Act requires decision makers with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area to pay 'special’ attention ‘to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area'.

The National Planning Policy Framework

4.6 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was first published in 2012 with the most recent update being published on 20 July 2021.[9]

4.7 Chapter 12. of the National Planning Policy Framework ‘Achieving well-designed places’ deals with design: It begins:

> ‘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

[9] First published on 27 March 2012 and updated on 24 July 2018, 19 February 2019 and 20 July 2021. Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2021) Revised National Planning Policy Framework. Online: www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework

aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process' (paragraph 126).

4.8 Paragraph 130 advises that 'planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

4.9 Chapter 16 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' deals with Heritage Assets describing them as 'an irreplaceable resource' that 'should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations' (paragraph 189).[10]

Proposals affecting heritage assets

[10] The policies set out in this chapter relate, as applicable, to the heritage-related consent regimes for which local planning authorities are responsible under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as well as to plan-making and decision-making.

4.10 ‘In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation’ (paragraph 194).

4.11 ‘Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal’ (paragraph 195).

4.12 ‘Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision’ (paragraph 196).

4.13 ‘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’ (paragraph 197).

4.14 ‘In considering any applications to remove or alter a historic statue, plaque, memorial or monument (whether listed or not), local planning authorities should have regard to the importance of their retention in situ and, where appropriate, of explaining

their historic and social context rather than removal' (paragraph 198).

Considering potential impacts

4.15 Paragraph 199 advises local authorities that 'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.'

4.16 Paragraph 200 continues, 'Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;

b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.'[11]

4.17 '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' (paragraph 202).

4.18 In considering the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, either directly or indirectly, the local authority should employ a 'balanced judgement' in regard to 'the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset' (paragraph 203).

4.19 Paragraph 204 requires that 'Local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.

4.20 Where a heritage asset is to be lost, the developer will be required to 'record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part)

[11] Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.

in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible' (paragraph 205).[12]

4.21 In terms of development within the setting of heritage assets, paragraph 206, advises that 'local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

4.22 It goes on however that 'Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 200 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 201, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole (paragraph 207).

Planning Practice Guidance

4.23 Planning Practice Guidance[13] provides streamlined guidance for the National Planning Policy Framework and the planning system. The section entitled 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment' gives guidance on matters relating to protecting the historic environment under the following headings:

- Overview: historic environment;
- Plan making: historic environment;
- Decision-taking: historic environment ;
- Designated heritage assets;
- Non-designated heritage assets;
- Heritage Consent Processes and;

[12] Copies of evidence should be deposited with the relevant historic environment record, and any archives with a local museum or other public depository.
[13] Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2019). Revised National Planning Policy Framework. Online: www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment

- Consultation and notification requirements for heritage related applications.

The Manchester Local Plan

4.24 Manchester's Core Strategy was adopted on 11 July 2012 and is the key document in the Manchester Local Plan. Policy EN3 deals with heritage, and says that:

> Throughout the City, the Council will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods, including those of the City Centre.
>
> New developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance, including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas and archaeological remains.
>
> Proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets will be encouraged where they are considered consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.

4.25 Some former UDP policies have been saved and form part of the Local Plan. They include Citywide Development Control Policies relating the heritage matters. Policy DC19.1 deals with listed buildings and says:

> DC19.1 In determining applications for listed building consent or planning applications for development involving or having an impact on buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, the Council will have regard to the desirability of securing the retention, restoration, maintenance and continued use of such buildings and to protecting their general setting. In giving effect to this policy the Council will:
>
> a) not grant Listed Building Consent for the demolition of a listed building other than in the most exceptional circumstances, and in any case not unless it is satisfied that every possible effort has been made to continue the present use or to find a suitable alternative use;
>
> b) not permit a change of use of a listed building, where it would have a detrimental effect on the character or appearance of the building;

c) not permit any external or internal alteration or addition to a Listed building where, in its opinion, there would be an adverse effect on its architectural or historic character;

d) seek 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;

e) permit demolition only where there are approved detailed plans for redevelopment and where there is evidence of a firm building contract;

f) not permit alterations to a listed building which would prevent the future use of any part of the building, in particular upper floors or basements, or where poor maintenance is likely to result.

4.26 Policy DC19.1 deals with conservation areas, and says:

The Council will give particularly careful consideration to development proposals within Conservation Areas.

a) The Council will seek to preserve and enhance the character of its designated conservation areas by carefully considering the following issues:

i) the relationship of new structures to neighbouring buildings and spaces;

ii) the effect of major changes to the appearance of existing buildings;

iii) the desirability of retaining existing features, such as boundary walls, gardens, trees, (including street trees);

iv) the effect of signs and advertisements;

v) any further guidance on specific areas which has been approved by the Council.

b) The Council will not normally grant outline planning permission for development within Conservation Areas.

c) Consent to demolish a building in a conservation area will be granted only where it can be shown that it is wholly beyond repair, incapable of reasonably beneficial use, or where its removal or replacement would benefit the appearance or character of the area.

d) Where demolition is to be followed by redevelopment, demolition will be permitted only where there are approved detailed plans for that redevelopment and where the Council

has been furnished with evidence that the development will be undertaken.

e) Development proposals adjacent to Conservation Areas will be granted only where it can be shown that they will not harm the appearance or character of the area. This will include the protection of views into and out of Conservation Areas

4.27 This national and local policy context, where relevant, will be considered and assessed in both Sections 5 & 6 of the report.

5 The proposed scheme and its impact on heritage significance

5.1 This section of the report briefly describes the proposed scheme and analyses the impact of the proposed scheme on heritage significance. As well as a detailed understanding of the historical and contextual significance of the area, the proposals have been tested in a number of the key views that form part of the Townscape Visual Impact Assessment and agreed with Officers in the course of pre-application discussions.

5.2 The proposed scheme is illustrated and described in more detail in the drawings and documentation prepared by the scheme archtiects.

5.3 This proposal seeks to replace the originally proposed and consented scheme which comprised an 10 storey commercial office development. This new proposal, amongst other things, reflects changes to the design of the office building in order to better address current market requirements.

The proposed scheme

5.4 The proposals approved in October 2022 were designed by Piercy & Company and sought to deliver an office building with the highest levels of sustainable construction, operation and design with a commitment to achieving a BREEAM rating of 'Outstanding'.

5.5 The building was designed with flexibility in mind to support a range of business types and sizes, particularly responding to the post-pandemic office requirements and occupiers focus of ESG.

5.6 A robust architectural approach to the design of the building, taking into consideration the surrounding context, was established. Visually the building is proposed to be constructed of textured pigmented concrete, terracotta in colour. Landscaping will visually connect to the surrounding emerging development.

5.7 The ground floor has been activated with a retail unit fronting Corporation Street, in addition, the main entrance to the office space is located on the corner of Corporation Street, addressing a key visual connection to both the city centre and NOMA.

5.8 Landscaped terraces are provided on the upper levels for the enjoyment of occupiers. A cycle hub is located on ground level

5.9 and waste and servicing requirements are provided for in the basement.

The current proposal seeks a 12 storey building (inc. (Ground + Mezzanine) + 11 storeys, basement and roof terrace and plant)

5.10 The revised proposal inserts two typical levels into the consented scheme to increase the overall level of office floorspace, resulting in a more elegant and well proportioned scheme.

5.11 The scheme proposed to maintain the high architectural quality represented by the texture precast concrete façade treatment, helping it to sit comfortably into its surrounding built environment. Furthermore, it is proposed to create a slightly more enclose roof terrace helping to ensure the environment is more protected from the elements and therefore increase comfort.

5.12 Overall, the building and its materials have been carefully considered with an awareness of the impact on the surrounding historic environment with an emphasis on contextualism and high quality. Designed to ensure that the building does not dominate its surroundings.

5.13 Whilst slightly taller than the consented scheme, the building's height and massing still reflects the sensitive location opposite the Co-operative Wholesale Society listed buildings. The contemporary, yet contextual approach will both give the building its own character whilst still sitting comfortably within its context of surrounding historic buildings.

5.14 The following views consider the proposals in the context of its surroundings from various points around the city.

5.15 Prior to submission of the original consented scheme (which included the adjacent residential towers) a number of views were identified as particularly sensitive from a heritage perspective, including with regards the Grade I listed Cathedral and Shambles Square – both of which lie within the Cathedral Conservation Area.

5.16 In reality, this element of the original scheme – and this newly proposed one – does not have the same impact on such a wide variety of heritage assets due to its considerably lower scale than the two permitted (and emerging) residential towers. Therefore the number of heritage assets potentially impacted is much reduced.

5.17 The following images demonstrate that the proposals will have no impact on any heritage assets within these views. The proposal is identified by the orange wireline:

View VP02: Looking north east towards the west front of Grade I Manchester Cathedral

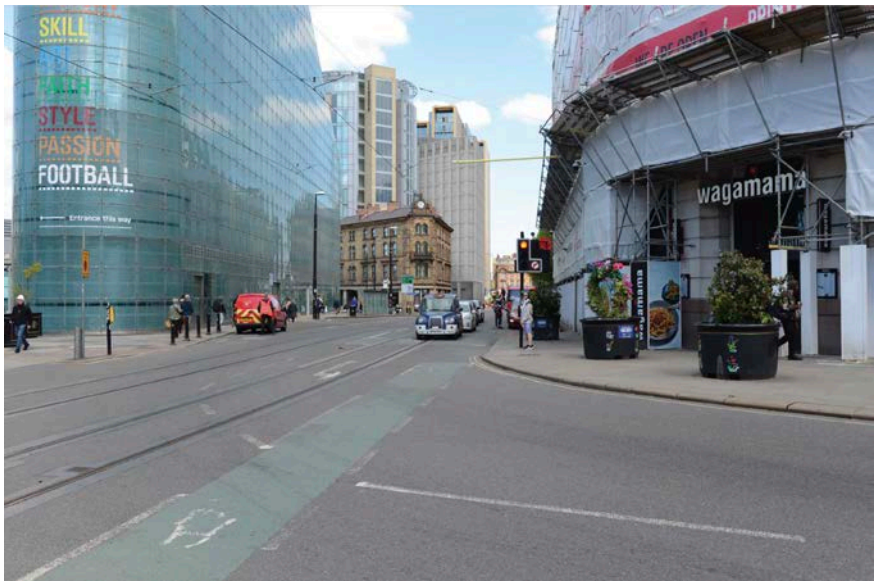
View VP02A: Looking north east towards Manchester Cathedral, Grade II New Century House in the background

View VL03: Looking north towards Shambles Square

5.18 The images also demonstrate that the proposals will have no impact on the Cathedral Conservation Area in these views either.

5.19 Of more direct impact from a heritage perspective, the view looking north along Corporation Street (VP04) shows how the proposed building will sit within the context of the Grade II listed City Buildings, which itself sits behind the National Football Museum in views along the street.

Existing View VP04 : looking north along Corporation Street



Proposed View VP04: View looking north along Corporation Street

5.20 The image shows that the massing and form of the proposed building will sit comfortably behind the listed building and tucked behind the Hotel Indigo – mediating between the listed building and the taller residential towers behind but lower than the adjacent hotel building.

5.21 The rhythm of the building's facades and the clean lines of its silhouette will mean that it does not compete with the listed building in the foreground.

5.22 Whilst the image does not show the proposed materials, the images in the Design & Access Statement illustrate that the proposed tonality and detailed design will also sit comfortably – contrasting but not jarring with the listed building in the foreground.

5.23 The buildings on the left (including City Buildings) lie within the Cathedral Conservation Area, those to the right within the Shudehill Conservation Area. The setting of neither of the conservation areas will be detrimentally impacted by these proposals in this view for the same reasons as those given above – the proposals are entirely in keeping in terms of massing, scale and form.

Existing View VP06: Looking west along Hanover Street

Proposed View VP06: Looking west along Hanover Street

5.24 Another key view from a heritage perspective is from the junction of Hanover Street and Dantzic Street, looking north west along Hanover Street towards Corporation Street (VP06). In the immediate foreground are Holyoake House and a Co-operative Society Building, whilst beyond them are the 'Old Bank' and 'Hanover Building' Co-operative Wholesale Society Buildings.

5.25 All of the buildings in the foreground of the view are listed Grade II. The buildings on the left of Hanover Street fall within the Shudehill Conservation Area.

5.26 The proposed development will appear at the end of Hanover Street, between the tram interchange at Victoria Station and Corporation Street. In this view, the development sits comfortably around the height of the existing buildings and appears as a 'glimpsed' view at the end of the street. Whilst the image does not show the material palette the chosen tonality will further ensure that the proposals will cause no harm to the setting of any of the listed buildings or conservation area in this view.

5.27 Overall, and in comparison to the consented scheme, the proposals will sit comfortably and contextually having regard the surrounding listed buildings and conservation areas.

5.28 Whilst the proposed building is slightly taller than the consented scheme this will not fundamentally alter its relationship with the surrounding buildings and the more sympathetic and contextual approach to the building's materials and façade treatment should enhance its relationship with the surrounding heritage assets including the setting of both listed buildings and conservation areas.

6 Compliance with policy and guidance

6.1 This report has provided a description and analysis of the significance of the area and its heritage context, as required by Paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework. In addition, the report also describes how the proposed scheme will affect that heritage significance. The effect is positive, and for that reason, the scheme complies with policy and guidance.

The level of 'harm' caused by the proposed scheme

6.2 As outlined in Section 4, the NPPF identifies two levels of potential 'harm' that might be caused to a heritage asset by a development: 'substantial harm…or total loss of significance' or 'less than substantial'. Both levels of harm must be caused to a *designated* heritage asset – in this instance the Cathedral and Shudehill Conservation Areas and nearby listed buildings and their settings.

6.3 The proposed scheme, in our considered view, on balance, preserves the setting of the conservation areas and the setting of the nearby listed buildings, and thus complies with S.66(1) and S.72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. It does not lead to 'substantial' harm or any meaningful level of 'less than substantial' harm to the setting of the conservation areas, or any other heritage assets. The proposals form part of the high-quality regeneration of the city centre. Part of Manchester's historical evolution has involved massive regeneration and re-invention and this forms part of its modern-day incarnation. The scale and materiality of the proposed development has been carefully considered to ensure that whilst the setting of a number of heritage assets is changed, it is not harmed.

6.4 The only potential for 'less than substantial' harm would be the loss of something that had a direct relationship to what is central to the special character of appearance of the conservation area or the setting of nearby listed buildings. The proposals taken individually or cumulatively, do not reach the threshold of harm that would cause the scheme to fail to preserve the special interest of any listed building or conservation areas. Manchester is a constantly evolving city and the juxtaposition of old and new buildings across the city recognises this.

The National Planning Policy Framework

6.5 In respect of Paragraph 197 of the NPPF, the proposed scheme can certainly be described as 'making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

6.6 The proposed scheme complies with Paragraph 201 of the NPPF - it certainly does not lead to 'substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset'. It also complies with Paragraph 202 for the reasons given in detail earlier in this report – the scheme cannot be considered to harm the setting of the conservation areas or the setting of listed buildings, but rather alters it in a fashion that has a relatively small effect on overall heritage significance. The core special character of the conservation areas and the architectural and historic interest of nearby listed buildings and other heritage assets remains entirely intact in the proposal.

Manchester's Local Development Framework

6.7 In positively addressing the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, the works also meet the policy requirements of the Manchester City Council's Core Strategy (2012) relevant to the historic built environment and design.

6.8 With regard to Policy EN3, the proposals 'enhance the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas…of acknowledged importance', in particular through the carefully considered approach to materiality, form and detailing.

6.9 The proposals 'preserve and enhance the settings of listed buildings' nearby through the considered approach to materiality and the mass and form of the proposed building in the context of nearby listed buildings on Corporation Street as required by Policy DC19.1.

6.10 Likewise, this contextual approach to the proposal's surroundings ensures that the proposals will 'not harm the appearance or character of the area. This includes the protection of views into and out of…conservation area.'.

7 Summary and conclusions

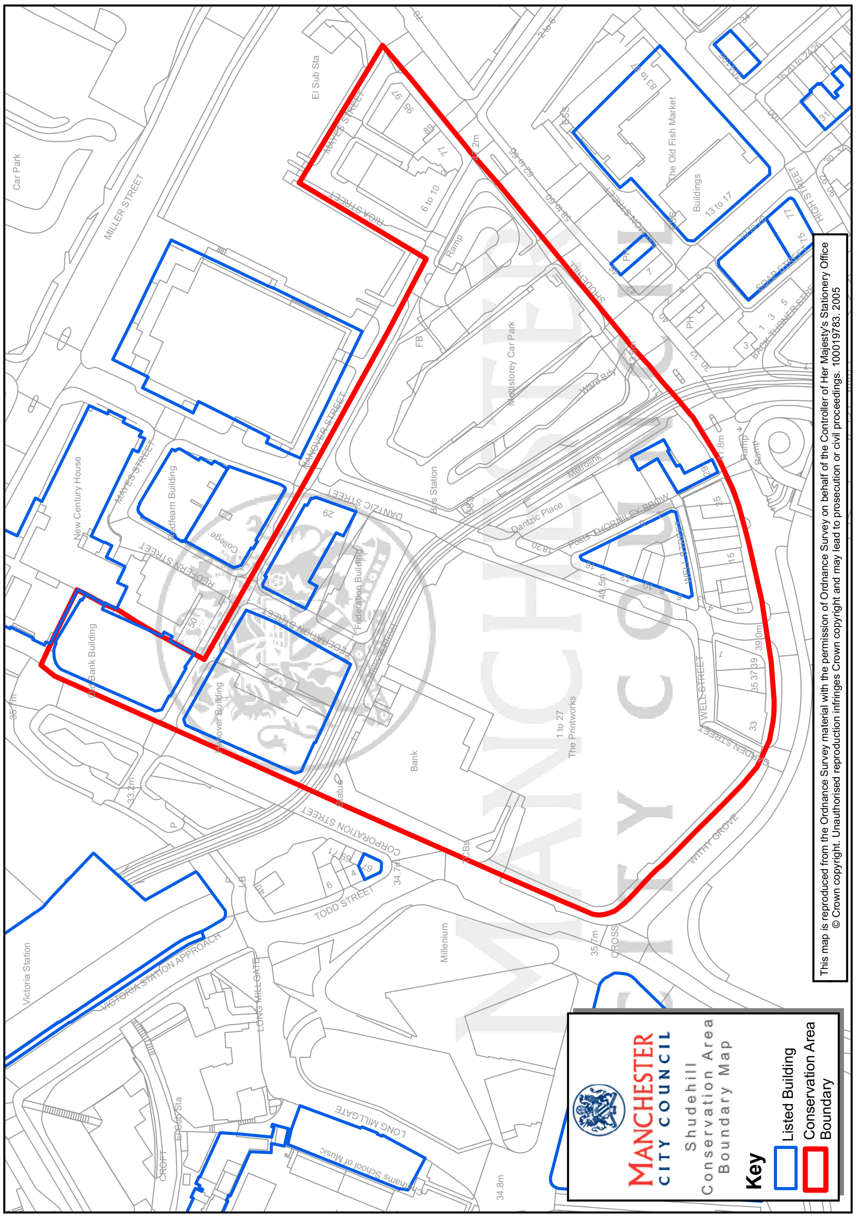
7.1 The proposed development site is located close to the medieval centre of Manchester, which has been considerably altered and mostly lost during the industrial revolution. Further change took place with the arrival of the railway and Victoria Station and the building of Corporation Street in the 19th century. During the 20th century industrial decline followed by post-war regeneration and even more recently further redevelopment and regeneration has transformed the area

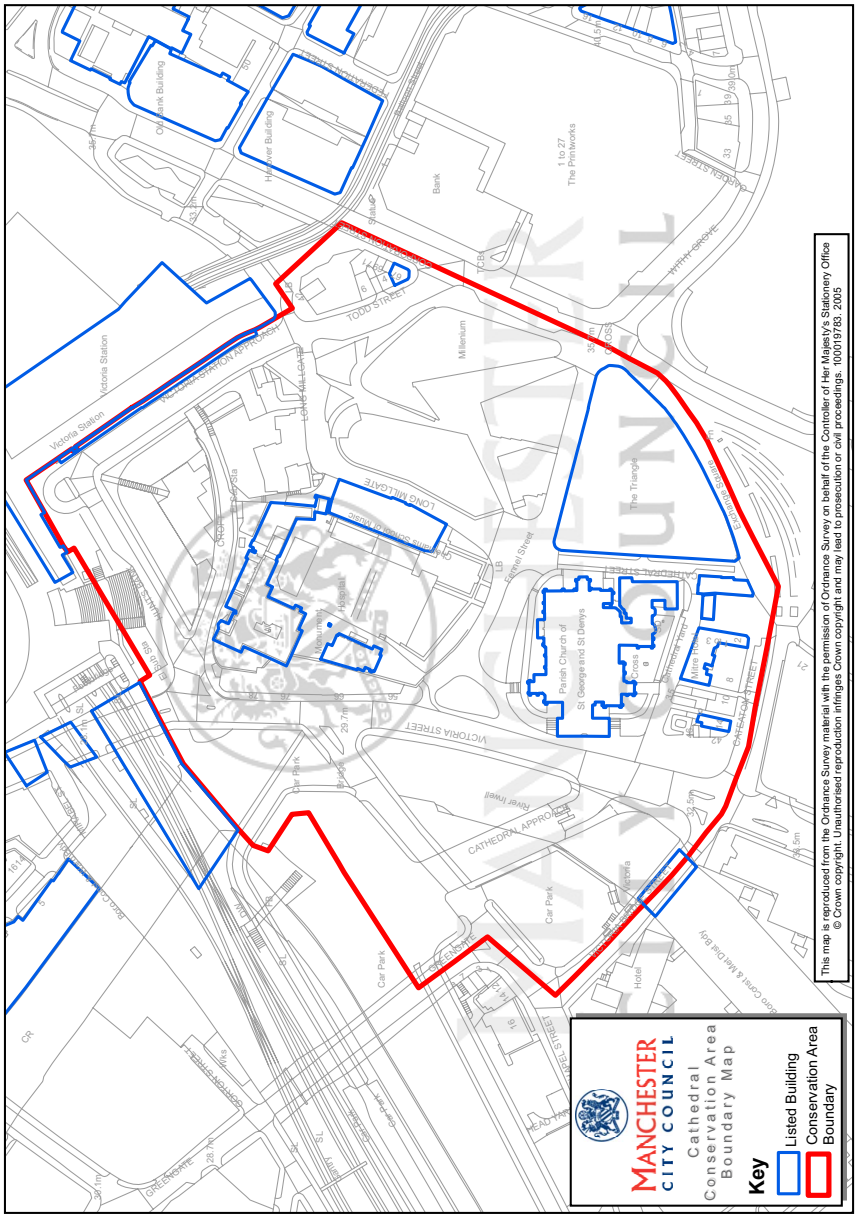
7.2 The proposals have been developed following the previous consent. The scheme has been assessed from a series of key viewpoints and whilst the scheme will change the setting of a number of heritage assets it is not believed this will cause any harm. This should also be considered in the context of the regenerative and economic benefits that the new development will bring to this part of the city.

7.3 It will preserve the setting of heritage assets, sitting comfortably and contextually within its surroundings and will deliver clear regenerative public benefits for Manchester.

7.4 For these reasons the proposed scheme complies with the law, and national and local policies and guidance for urban design and the historic built environment.

Appendix A – Conservation Area Maps




MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL
Cathedral
Conservation Area
Boundary Map
Key
Listed Building
Conservation Area
Boundary
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