

Design

20 storeys will dominate the area and be out of keeping with the surrounding buildings, as well as encourage further high rise buildings. No higher than 15 stories;

The rationale for a building of 20-storeys on the Site is detailed within the planning submission. In accordance with Core Strategy Policy CC6, the proposals will ensure that the City Centre Site is used to maximum efficiency to deliver a 154 room hotel development that meets an established demand in this location.

The Proposed Development has been examined and evaluated for its suitability as a tall building on the Site by undertaking a Heritage Assessment, Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment as well as Daylight and Sunlight Assessment. These have been prepared in accordance with the relevant legislation and guidance.

An utterly mediocre and forgettable design, using grey bricks which do not age well or look appealing in the UK climate.

This is a subjective comment. The proposals have been designed by an architect and design team with exemplary track record of delivering high quality buildings within Manchester. A grey brick palette has been chosen to provide contrast between the contemporary proposal and the orange / red brick palette of the existing adjacent building. Using a material which is common to the area whilst differentiating the proposal from the existing fabric. The grey brick provides a contemporary appearance and enables the depth and articulation of the façade to be expressed, with potential for a glazed finish to subtly reflect light across the surface and to contrast with the textured brick solution introduced to the high level elevation facing East. The final brick choice will ensure a high quality product, that alongside a robust cleaning and maintenance strategy will ensure quality is maintained in the long term.

Huge blank wall facing Great Ancoats Street. The proposal also does nothing to cover up the blank wall on the eastern elevation of the apart-hotel on Laystall Street adjacent. This proposal also prejudices development of the site immediately to the south of the red line boundary (on Laystall St/Great Ancoats St) by having windows on what would be the party wall. This goes against creating a well-defined urban street form for the area, creates a dead space at ground level, and restricts further development of the area.

The narrow elevation facing Great Ancoats Street includes an articulated facade grid and hotel bedroom windows found on the primary elevations up to and including level 11. The ground and level 01 façade includes full height glass curtain walling to provide active frontage on this elevation. Levels 12-19 incorporate a textured brick finish to the façade where no bedrooms face east. These upper floors are set back from the building form below and expressed as a cut away section in the overall massing, providing a sense of scale and proportion to the proposal in the streetscape. The high-level façade also provides space for hotel signage facing East.

The orientation of the building ensures that views of the proposal from Great Ancoats Street travelling North and South are of the primary hotel room building elevations.

The proposal abuts the currently exposed gable end and lightwell of the apart-hotel on Laystall Street, entirely obscuring a little over half its length in plan. The remaining existing wall remains exposed, given this area sits to the rear of the adjacent vacant corner plot which is not within the Applicant's ownership to develop. It is envisaged that if proposals are brought forward for the adjacent vacant plot this will naturally obscure what remains of the apart-hotel façade, but this remains outside of the influence of this application.

The proposal does not prejudice delivery of the adjacent plot. The design process has paid particular attention to how the development will interact with the plot, both in its current undeveloped state and considering how a viable proposal could be brought forward on the vacant plot in the future.

In the undeveloped condition the inclusion of windows and active frontage to the proposal is key to ensuring a high quality and permanent design solution faces Great Ancoats Street when viewed from the south.

Should the adjacent site be developed, the size and distribution of windows in the proposed hotel have been coordinated to ensure no fire spread issues would compromise the delivery of a scheme on the adjacent plot or for that matter impact the hotel proposal. Furthermore, by setting back the façade of the hotel by over 1m from the adjoining boundary there will be no party wall condition above ground should the adjacent site be developed. The ground level access from Great Ancoats Street to the back of house access / egress of our proposal would remain secure and uncompromised regardless of proposals on the adjacent site.

The application proposals will significantly prejudice an optimal development of the wider area within which the application site lies and fail to meet Core Strategy Policy.

Outline planning permission (LPA Ref 081355/00/2006/C3) was granted on a wider site than subject to this application in 2008 for the erection of a 14 storey building comprising a mixed development of; a 145 bed hotel with ground floor commercial units fronting onto Great Ancoats Street (shops, professional services, restaurants, drinking establishments, or business use) and 30 onsite parking spaces on 2 levels of basement. Access to the onsite parking and hotel servicing was to be taken off Lomax Street. The officers report advised that the combined site; is an important and prominent site fronting the Inner Relief Route, representing another opportunity for the continued regeneration of the Great Ancoats Street Corridor.

Since the above application was approved in 2008, substantial new development and refurbishment has been undertaken, or is underway, or has the benefit of extant planning permission, along and to either side of the Great Ancoats Street Corridor. In addition, there have been a number of area based studies and regeneration

frameworks, prepared by the City Council, that have highlighted and consolidated the status of that combined site as an important and prominent site, in locational, visual and functional terms.

As a result, the previously combined site is not just to be considered as another opportunity, it is a vital piece of the overall jigsaw that is the ongoing regeneration along and adjoining the Great Ancoats Street Corridor. It is therefore, essential that the Local Planning Authority ensure that the objectives and opportunities in securing the optimum development of this site are not undermined by its piecemeal development. A necessity underpinned by Core Strategy Policies **CC6**, and **CC7** which respectively, advise that; this is a location where land should be used to maximise its efficiency, that City Centre land is a limited resource, that it is essential that development is managed to make the most efficient use of it as possible, and that a range of uses should be considered for all sites. In addition, Core Strategy Policy **CC8** refers to the need for a partnership approach recognising, that few developments are straightforward in terms of land ownership, end users and other stakeholders, and partnership will be essential alongside a broad policy context. The development proposals approved in 2008, demonstrated how to achieve an optimal development of this important and prominent site that would be entirely in accordance with the Core Strategy.

Moreover, it is clear from the development that has occurred since 2008, particularly in relation to the Council's development policies in the City Centre, and thereby the construction of tall buildings, that the combined site is capable of accommodating a tall building of similar dimensions to that approved in 2008, but in excess of the 14 stories. This general conclusion would also be supported by the tall buildings assessment prepared by the applicants to justify a building on the application site of 20 stories, in respect of the application proposals.

Therefore, on this simple point alone, it can be seen that the piecemeal development of this important and prominent site will fail to maximise the efficiency of the combined site in terms of; providing a more accommodating footprint. the applicants acknowledge that, the design development has been largely driven by the optimization of a small site (i.e. the application site), with the scale, massing and permeability of the proposed development and its relationship to the surrounding context largely driven by the brief on a small footprint. This has inevitably led to significant compromises in terms of the overall objectives and requirements of key Core Strategy Policies. Compromises that would not have been necessary were the applicant's not relying on a single name user with a very specific development brief, with the added constraints of a small site and the need to pay some consideration to the development potential of the adjoining site.

The supporting information submitted with the application assessment makes no attempt to assess the development proposals against the wider and very specific objectives of; making the most efficient use of sites within the City Centre, of creating mixed-use development and optimising development potential by seeking partnership developments.

The pre application consultation did acknowledged the need to consider the

development potential of the remainder of the wider site granted approval in 2008 and how it might be affected by the proposed development. However, it was confined to illustrating how that wider site could be developed in terms of building mass, general form and height. Simply indicating a single block of development with a maximum height to 7 stories in order to; help ground the proposed development on the application site, to avoid introducing an uncomfortable and visually competing mass and obscuring the upper parts of the tower and its facade. The documents submitted with the application make passing reference to this issue of prejudice but provide no detailed assessment.

What is clear is that the proposal will significantly reduce the amount of floor space that could be achieved on the remainder of the wider site if, as it is indicated in the limited assessment provided, the height of any development would be restricted to 7 stories. Moreover, the overall impact of the proposed development on the application site is likely to significantly depress the commercial interest in the development of the remainder of the wider site, and piecemeal development on the application site is unlikely to act as a catalyst.

The Proposed Development is located within a strategic location within Manchester City Centre and therefore falls within Policy CC6 of the Core Strategy which states that within this location, development will be high density and should maximise its efficiency. The City Centre is also subject Policy CC7 which identifies the City Centre as suitable for mixed-use development with an emphasis on active ground floor uses. As stated above, the proposals have maximised the efficient use of the site by delivering a high-density 20 storey, 154 bedroom hotel development within a highly constrained site. The lower levels of the building (include a café open to the public) which will be glazed to allow visual interaction at street level onto the public realm, improving the surrounding environment.

The proposals meet the requirements of one of the most recognisable and highly thought-of hotel operators, the Hilton Group, who are looking to debut one of their new Motto by Hilton brand into the UK. This is a significant opportunity for Manchester's tourism and leisure industry which is set for grow within the next couple of years and will require high quality accommodation to meet demand.

Policy CC8 states that MCC will welcome large schemes which make significant contributions to the City Centre's role in terms of employment, retail growth and accessibility and legibility. The proposals meet with this policy objective.

The Proposed Development has been specifically designed from the outset to make the most efficient use of the site whilst not comprising any development on the adjacent site, and also maintaining a quality finish in the interim period prior to such adjacent development coming forward. This has been a significant technical challenge, particularly when balanced with Hilton's exacting standards, which the design team has addressed through an extensive iterative design process with officers.

The building footprint is maximised and set back or cut into only where required to articulate the proposals and / or to respect the constraints or opportunities afforded by the adjacent site. At ground, first and mezzanine floors where back of house and amenity functions are located, the building footprint is optimized to fill the majority of the site, only set back from the vacant boundary at the south to enable non fire rated glazing to be included, and so as not to inhibit development opportunities on the adjacent land. The preliminary massing showed a 7-storey form on the adjacent site; however, the

height of any adjacent proposal is not limited in any way by the Proposed Development. The height of development on the adjacent site would be subject to the usual planning review.

As such, the Proposed Development is considered to be wholly in accordance with Policy CC6, CC7, CC8 and EN2 of the Core Strategy and the will contribute significantly to the ambitions set out by the HS2 Piccadilly SRF.

The application proposals do not provide any on site car parking

It is noted that the size and configuration of the application site makes the provision of any onsite parking impractical. In addition, any vehicular access onto the site off either Great Ancoats Street or Laystall Street, would be unacceptable in highway terms because of the status of the former and the proximity to the signal controlled junction of the latter.

The 2008 permission on the combined site demonstrated how a meaningful amount of onsite parking could be provided taking access off Lomax Street.

The development of the combined site would provide a significant increase in the overall floor space and the opportunity to provide a mixed use development, as well as a significant amount of onsite parking and more comfortable servicing arrangements.

There are no minimum car parking standards for hotel development. The Site is located in an area highly accessible by sustainable modes of transport, with several public transport opportunities within acceptable walking distance of the site and a good walking and cycling infrastructure. This will be supported by a number of initiatives such as generous secure and covered cycle parking. For guests who choose to travel by car, there are several publicly available car parks within a 500m walking distance. A new on-street accessible parking bay is also proposed in the immediate vicinity of the Site. The parking strategy is entirely appropriate to the scale, location and nature of the development, and has been agreed in principle with highways officers at MCC.

Reconfiguration of Laystall Street Junction

The highway information submitted with the application does not appear to include any assessment of the impact of closing the right turn lane onto Great Ancoats Street, or whether the reconfigured junction will be left turn out of Laystall Street only. Laystall Street is an important and well used link from Piccadilly to the Inner Relief Road (Great Ancoats Street) and as such the potential impact is clearly a material consideration and appropriate information should be submitted.

The reduction to a single lane was discussed and agreed with both MCC Highways and TfGM during the pre-app stage of the project. It was also agreed that no assessment would be needed.

Notwithstanding, a queue length survey was conducted during routine road works in order to assess the performance of the Laystall Street signalised junction with a single operating lane. The road works at this junction had reduced Laystall Street to just the left lane (right turn lane removed), therefore providing a representative display of the junction's performance with a single lane along Laystall Street.

The Queue Length Survey was carried out by Curtins during Monday 23rd January at both the AM (0800-0900) and PM (1700-1800) peaks. During this survey the number of cycles, time, length of queue, and number of vehicles turning right were recorded.

The average number of PCUs queuing at the red-light cycle during the peaks was low, with only 3 vehicles on average observed during the AM peak and 6 on average during the PM peak. The maximum observed queue length during the survey was 11 vehicles, during the PM peak. Notwithstanding, all 11 vehicles cleared the junction within the following green light period.

The results of this survey indicate that traffic in the vicinity of the site would not be negatively impacted with the removal of the right-turn lane at the Laystall Street arm of the junction.

Pre-Application Consultation

The applicant has failed to engage in a meaningful way with adjacent land owners to facilitate the comprehensive development of combined vacant sites in the area. There was a meeting to discuss this in April 2021 but subsequent to that an adjacent landowner only became aware of the intention to submit an application for a standalone scheme when the applicants undertook the public, pre application consultation in late 2021. It has always been and remains the intent of the owners of adjacent land to secure its sale and development to enable a combined development of adjacent sites.

This statement is incorrect. The Applicant pro-actively sought to engage with the adjacent landowner at length from 2021 and into 2022. It was only when correspondence from the landowner received in February 2022 was clear that reaching a realistic agreement would not be possible that the Applicant has progressed with a standalone scheme. This correspondence can be shared with officers in commercial confidence if requested. Having resolved to progress with a standalone scheme, the development's interaction and relationship with the adjacent site has been a central component of the design process as detailed above.