

Albert Bridge House, Manchester
Planning and Tall Building Statement

December 2022

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1. Introduction

This report provides a planning and tall buildings assessment of the proposed comprehensive redevelopment of Albert Bridge House ('ABH') and adjoining surface car park ('the Site').

The main purpose of this report is to assess the Proposed Development and its acceptability in the context of the Development Plan and other material considerations such as the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Historic England's Advice Note 4 (2022) and the Manchester City Council endorsed St Mary's Parsonage Strategic Regeneration Framework, within which the Site is located.

The Proposed Development seeks to bring forward a high-quality mixed-use scheme. It will deliver a new 19-storey sustainable office building with roof terraces and supporting ground floor commercial, leisure and food and drinks uses, and a 45-storey residential building with plant above, ground floor commercial uses, with associated car parking, cycle parking, landscaping and public realm ('the Proposed Development').

The term "Proposed Development" used within this Report refers to all stages of demolition, construction and operation of the development.

The 0.89-hectare site is within the St Mary's Parsonage area, in Manchester City Centre. The Site is triangular in shape and is bounded the River Irwell to the north-west, Bridge Street to the south, St. Mary's Parsonage to the east and the Trinity Bridge landing to the north-east.

The Site is currently occupied by Albert Bridge House, two car parks and Albert Bridge Gardens. The current building comprises four parts, an 18-storey building, flanked by a six and a three-storey building and a single storey building fronting the River Irwell. Albert Bridge House was most recently occupied by HMRC; however, they vacated the Site in October 2022.

The Site is identified for redevelopment within the endorsed St Mary's Parsonage Strategic Regeneration Framework ('the SRF'), which will form a material consideration in the determination of all future planning applications within the SRF area. For reasons, that are expanded upon within this Statement, the existing buildings have reached the end of their life. Purpose built in the 1950s as a tax office, Albert Bridge House was not designed with long-term sustainability in mind. Its layout and design do not meet modern office occupier requirements and the existing buildings turn their back on the river and adjoining streets. As such, their retention would ultimately limit the opportunities to open up the Site and improve connections that its redevelopment otherwise allows.

Oval Real Estate Limited

Oval Real Estate Limited is a development, management and investment company based in the UK. It was established in July 2013 as an asset manager of commercial real estate throughout the UK and have grown to a team of over 70 employees operating out of offices in London, Birmingham and, most recently, Manchester. The business develops, manages and invests in buildings throughout the UK across every sector.

Specialising in spaces sometimes overlooked, Oval's mission is to leave buildings and neighbourhoods in a better shape than when they were found. With a big emphasis on design, Oval puts its own stamp on every building. Tapping into expertise from outside the property sector, everything occupiers and visitors see, hear and touch is carefully considered.

Oval is pleased to be bringing forward its first proposals in Manchester. The aim for the proposed redevelopment of Albert Bridge House, is to create a dynamic, sustainable place designed to realise the potential of this gateway location. Oval's brief is for the Site to include:

- a landmark best-in-class sustainable new office building, providing flexible workspace for a range of occupiers in response to increasing demand in this area of the city centre;
- new residential tower providing new homes of a range of different sizes, supported by communal amenity space;

- ground floor retail/food and beverage to activate the surrounding area;
- attractive and welcoming new public space; and,
- new pedestrian routes and connections through the Site, including enhanced access to the river.

Proposed Development

The Proposed Development includes the redevelopment of Albert Bridge House and for the redevelopment of the adjoining council-owned surface car parking area. It will deliver exemplar highly sustainable buildings, providing new, high quality Grade A office space, a new residential tower providing new homes of a range of different sizes, supported by communal amenity space, ground floor flexible commercial space (retail/food and beverage) to activate the surrounding area, new pedestrian routes and connections through the Site, including enhanced access to the River Irwell and attractive new public spaces.

Overall, the Proposed Development will deliver commercial and residential floorspace. The quantum of the Proposed Development is set out below:

- 50,850 sq. m (GEA) (excluding basement) office floorspace (Use Class E (g)) in a 19-storey building with accessible external space;
- 41,036 sq. m residential floorspace (GEA) (Use Class C3) comprising 367 residential units in a 45 storey (plus plant) building;
- 2,569 sq. m flexible commercial space across the two buildings (Use Class E (a/b/c) or Sui Generis); and,
- 4,750 sq. m basement space spread across each building (1,430 sq. m residential and 3,320 sq. m commercial).

Alongside the proposed development, 4,130 sq. m of accessible public space will be created, a significant proportion of the site area - 46%.

The proposals include two principal development components, i.e. an office building and a residential building, which will come forward concurrently. It should however be noted that the proposals have been designed in such a way that they could be separated and delivered independently if required.

Description of Development

For the purpose of the planning application, the Proposed Development can be described as follows:

“Demolition of the existing building complex and the construction of a mixed use development comprising two separate components in the form of an office building of up to 19 storeys with ground floor commercial, leisure, food and drink uses (All Use Class E) and/ or drinking establishment (Sui Generis), and, a residential building up to 45 storeys (Use Class C3) with additional roof top plant, basement car parking, cycle parking, landscaping and public realm, servicing and access arrangements, highway alterations and other associated works”.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening and Scoping

A formal Request for an EIA Screening and Scoping Opinion was submitted by Turley to MCC on 27 September 2022. A formal response was issued on 7 November 2022 confirming that an EIA is required in support of the application and providing details to be considered and addressed in the planning application documentation.

Application Documentation

This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with the following documents, in accordance with Manchester City Council’s application validation checklist.

Table 1.1: List of Application Documents

Document	Prepared By
Application Form and Certificates	Oval Real Estate
Site Location Plan	Studio Egret West
Existing Site Plan	Studio Egret West
Existing and Proposed Plans, Sections, Elevations and Demolition Plans	Studio Egret West
Landscaping Plans	Studio Egret West
Design and Access Statement (including Landscaping)	Studio Egret West
Accommodation Schedule	Studio Egret West
Planning and Tall Building Statement	Oval Real Estate
Statement of Consultation	Counter Context
Archaeology Desk-Based Assessment	University of Salford
Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment and Biodiversity Enhancement Management Plan	Urban Green
Tree Report	Urban Green
Air Quality Assessment	Hoare Lea
Broadband Assessment	Pager Power
Crime Impact Statement	Greater Manchester Police (GMP)
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal	Urban Green
Energy Strategy	Hoare Lea
Environmental Standards Statement	Hoare Lea
BREEAM New Construction 2018 Pre-Assessment Report (appended to ESS)	Hoare Lea
Fire Engineering Brief	Urban Change
Flood Risk Assessment	AKT II
Drainage Strategy Report	AKTII
Green and Blue Infrastructure Statement (appended to the Design and Access Statement)	AKT II
Phase I Desk Study Report	Soiltechnics
Heritage Statement	Oval Real Estate

Document	Prepared By
Local Labour Agreement	Oval Real Estate
Residential and Operational Management Strategy	CBRE
Environmental Noise Survey	Hoare Lea
TV Reception Survey	Pager Power
Technical Aerodrome Safety Assessment	Pager Power
Interim Travel Plan	Curtins
Transport Statement	Curtins
Ventilation Strategy	Hoare Lea
Viability Assessment	CBRE
Waste Management Strategy	Curtins
<u>Environmental Statement Volume 1:</u>	
• Chapters 1-5: Introductory Chapters	Turley
• Chapter 6: Noise and Vibration	Hoare Lea
• Chapter 7: Townscape and Visual	Urban Green
• Chapter 8: Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing	Avison Young
• Chapter 9: Wind Microclimate	AKT II
• Chapter 10: Socioeconomic and Human Health	Ekosgen
• Chapter 11: Climate Change	Hoare Lea
• Chapters 12-13: Concluding Chapters	Turley
Environmental Statement: Non-Technical Summary	Turley
Volume 2: Technical Appendices to Primary Report	Turley
Volume 3: Non-Technical Summary	Turley
Volume 4: Environmental Management Plan	Turley

Pre-Application Stakeholder Engagement / Pre-Application Consultation

Pre-application consultation has been undertaken with regard to the Proposed Development and can be summarised as follows:

- Regular dialogue has taken place with Senior Planning Officers at Manchester City Council throughout the design development process;
- The project team has consulted technical consultees at Manchester City Council including Environmental Health and Highways Officers on the scope and content of their assessments;

- Local Ward Councillors have been sent details of the proposals and the consultation activities planned; and,
- Local residents and businesses within the vicinity of the Site have been invited to attend a consultation event (online and in person events).

Full details are included in the Statement of Consultation.

Document Structure

The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- **Section 2** provides a site description and considers the wider context of the Site;
- **Section 3** sets out the strategic and economic context of the Proposed Development and summarises the contribution of the Proposed Development;
- **Section 4** provides a summary of the proposals and their design evolution;
- **Section 5** details the relevant documents that make up the Development Plan and material considerations;
- **Section 6** assesses the Proposed Development against the policies in the Development Plan and in relation to the relevant material considerations;
- **Section 7** provides a detailed evaluation of the proposals in relation to established tall buildings assessment criteria;
- **Section 8** summarises our assessment of the public benefits associated with the Proposed Development; and
- **Section 9** provides our conclusions on the overall merits of the Proposed Development, with reference to Development Plan policies and other material considerations.

2. Site and Surroundings

This Section includes a description of the Site as well as its context in relation to the surrounding area and suitability for the Proposed Development.

Site Description

The Site covers 0.89 hectares and is located in the City Centre immediately adjacent the River Irwell and in close proximity to the St. Mary's Parsonage Conservation Area.

The River Irwell bounds the Site to the north-west, Bridge Street lies to the south of the Site, St. Mary's Parsonage to the east and the Trinity Bridge landing is located to the north-east.

The Site is identified for redevelopment within the endorsed St Mary's Parsonage Strategic Regeneration Framework ('the SRF'), which will form a material consideration in the determination of all future planning applications within the SRF area.

The Site is currently occupied by Albert Bridge House, two car parks and Albert Bridge Gardens. The current building comprises four parts, an 18-storey office building, flanked by a six and a three-storey office building plus a single storey building fronting the River Irwell. Albert Bridge House was most recently occupied by HMRC; however the Site was vacated in early October 2022.

Albert Bridge House was purpose-built in the 1950s as tax office. By virtue of its scale, the building constitutes a prominent feature at the gateway between Manchester City Centre and Central Salford, adjacent to one of Manchester's prime commercial locations in respect of Spinningfields.

Part of the Site comprises a Manchester City Council-operated public car park. This is accessed and egressed via Bridge Street and contains approximately 65 spaces. Further private car parking can be accessed from St Mary's Parsonage, providing c.72 spaces. This is barrier controlled with a yellow box junction.

Albert Bridge Gardens is located in the north-western corner of the Site. This small area of green space is largely of poor quality and is underutilised. Limited access to the river is offered through the Site, with only Albert Bridge Gardens offering limited accessibility, albeit this is currently an environment littered with evidence of anti-social behaviour.

Whilst the existing Site has very limited urban quality, there are however 3 protected trees (Tree Preservation Orders) located to the south-west of the Site, within the Bridge Street Car Park.

The main pedestrian entrance to the office buildings is located off Bridge Street, although there is also a further pedestrian entrance off St Mary's Parsonage.

Immediately adjacent, east of the Site, and accessed from St Marys Parsonage, is a public pedestrian access route through to the pedestrian footbridge (Trinity Bridge). This provides a key connection between Central Salford and Manchester City Centre. Currently, this existing footbridge is positioned between the Albert Bridge House car park and the adjacent Alberton House service road, which in turn detracts from the quality and security of this route.

Motor Square, an area of public realm, is located to the south-east of the Site. This area forms one of the gateways into the Parsonage Gardens area. Motor Square is currently recognised as a disjointed and underused space and is identified by the SRF as requiring a comprehensive redesign to enhance activity and vibrancy. The existing Albert Bridge House Site does little to animate or enclose this existing area of public space.

Site Context

St. Mary's Parsonage Strategic Regeneration Framework

The Site falls within an area covered by the St. Mary's Parsonage Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) (August 2020)¹, which provides guiding development principles for the future regeneration and development of key sites within this part of the city centre. Further assessment of the Proposed Development's response to the key principles of the Albert Bridge House site, as identified in the SRF, are considered in later sections of this document.

The SRF seeks to refocus the priorities of the area in order to establish St Mary's Parsonage as a clearly definable and cohesive City Centre neighbourhood, with a distinctive character and sense of place. A key underlying principle of the SRF is the retention and celebration of the area's special qualities and assets, including its heritage assets, public spaces and green and blue infrastructure.

The SRF proposes that Parsonage Gardens will build upon its existing asset base, and its positive adjacencies to other parts of the City Centre, to successfully host an eco-system of best-in-class employment – from global businesses to start ups - and other high-quality uses including hotel, retail and leisure.

A number of developments within the SRF area have been permitted over the past couple of years:

- Immediately to the east of the Site on St Mary's Parsonage lies Alberton House. Planning Permission was granted on 10 November 2022 for the redevelopment of Alberton House for a 19-storey mixed-use office-led development;
- The Kendal Milne and Fraser Buildings, to the east of the Site, has planning permission for redevelopment and partial demolition to provide an office-led mixed-use development;
- Arkwright House, also to the east of the Site, has also undergone a number of changes over the past couple of years; and,
- To the southeast is 3 St Mary's Parsonage and Reedham House, both of which are four storey Grade II listed buildings. A planning application for a 14-storey office-led mixed-use development is currently under consideration.

Planning History

A planning history search was undertaken using Manchester City Council's (MCC) public access system. There are no relevant planning applications at the Site.

Site Specific Designations

Environmental Designations

The Site is situated in the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) which is an area where proactive management measures are encouraged to address national air quality objectives.

The Site is not within, nor does it contain, any ecological designations including Sites of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI), Sites of Biological Importance (SBI) or Special Protection Areas (SPA). The Site is located within the impact risk zone for Rochdale Canal Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and SSSI, however the development proposals do not fall within the list of development activities that would result in any impact.

It should be noted that one European Protected Site is within a 10km radius of the Site, Rochdale Canal is classed as a Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), located approximately 6 kilometres to the north-west and designated for its aquatic and emergent flora.

¹ https://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/download/7208/st_marys_parsonage_srf

Protected Species

As part of the Phase 1 Habitat Survey undertaken by Urban Green, a small number of birds were seen, including a skylark and lapwing; however, overall, the Site was found to be unsuitable in terms of supporting ground nesting birds, passerine and birds of prey. It also found to be a negligible suitable habitat for wintering birds.

A Preliminary Roost Assessment was undertaken as part of the Habitat Survey. The report concluded that none of the buildings or trees present on Site were assessed as providing potential to support a bat roost and that the Site would be of low value to commuting and foraging bats due to the presence of trees along the River Irwell, adjacent to the Site, which would more likely be used by bats.

The presence of hedgehogs, water voles and badgers on the Site was not recorded at the time of the survey and is not anticipated, as confirmed by the Ecological Survey. The presence of otters was not recorded on the Site and offers limited suitable habitats of value to the otter.

At the time of the survey, Giant Hogweed was recorded as being present at the Site. This species is listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as an invasive non-native species.

Flood Risk

The Site lies within the Manchester Conurbation Core Critical Drainage Area. The Site, for the majority, is located in Flood Zone 1, and so this portion of the Site is therefore of a low risk of flooding. The northern (riverbank) boundary of the Site is located within Flood Zone 3 as a result of the River Irwell forming this boundary and so is within an area with a high probability of flooding.

Sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDs) are to be implemented as a part of the Proposed Development to alleviate any risk of flooding.

Conservation and Heritage

The Site does not contain any heritage assets that are afforded statutory protection, such as Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, or any Registered Parks and Gardens, and it does not fall within a conservation area.

The Heritage Statement considers the existing Albert Bridge House as a Non Designated Heritage Asset (NDHA). In the absence of a list of locally significant non-designated heritage assets for Manchester City Council, knowledge of the city and professional discretion was utilised to determine assets which are significant. Albert Bridge House was previously assessed by Historic England for listing, however, did not meet the criteria for official designation – yet the response from Historic England did note that the building contains some architectural and historic interest. For this reason, it has been considered a NDHA.

The Site is situated in close proximity to Parsonage Gardens Conservation Area, with the Conservation Area boundary located along St Mary's Parsonage to the east of the Site.

The Site is also located within 30m of the Deansgate/Peter Street Conservation Area, within 200m of St Ann's Square Conservation Area and circa 400m from Albert Square Conservation Area.

The Site is located within 200m of 10 listed buildings, with two listed buildings located directly to the east of the Site, 3 St Mary's Parsonage and 31- 33 King Street West (including 3 Smithy Lane) - which are both Grade II listed buildings. The other eight listed buildings within a 200m radius of the Site boundary are as follows:

- John Rylands Library (and Attached Railings, Gates and Lamp Standards) – Grade I Listed;
- Arkwright House – Grade II Listed;
- Masonic Temple – Grade II Listed;
- Albert Bridge – Grade II Listed;

- Former Hydraulic Power Station (in Grounds of City College) – Grade II Listed;
- Century Buildings (National Buildings), 14 St Mary’s Parsonage – Grade II Listed;
- 98 – 116 Deansgate (Kendals) – Grade II Listed; and,
- Sawyers Arms Public House – Grade II Listed.

For further details please refer to the accompanying Heritage Statement.

Accessibility

The Site is located within the heart of Manchester City Centre, in close proximity to one of its principal thoroughfares (Deansgate) within its Primary Retail Area and adjacent to its Central Business District. It is highly accessible by all forms of transport. The wider SRF area benefits from a range of natural assets including its adjacency to the River Irwell, and proximity to Parsonage Gardens.

Major cross-city routes, including Blackfriars Street, Deansgate and Bridge Street are in close proximity of the Site. These are defined as key commuter corridors and shopping frontages, and provide connections between different parts of the City Centre. The Trinity footbridge located immediately to the east of the Site provides a pedestrian and cycle connection between the cities of Manchester and Salford.

Recent decisions by Manchester City Council to improve walking and cycling in the local area have led to a number of changes to accessibility in the surrounding area of the Site. These are as follows:

- Deansgate between Blackfriars Street and King Street – permanently one way in a southbound direction with a bus gate at the junction of Blackfriars Street and Deansgate for southbound buses, taxis, and cycles;
- Deansgate from King Street to Quay Street - permanently one-way in a southbound direction (with the northbound carriageway closed);
- St Mary's Parsonage - closed to traffic at its northern end to prevent traffic from diverting around the closed section of Deansgate; and,
- Bridge Street - create a bus gate on Bridge Street after its junction with Left Bank, meaning that only buses, taxis, and cycles will be able to travel out of the city centre across the River Irwell into Salford via this route. This bus-only corridor is designed to complement the other measures to support public transport.

Pedestrian

The Site is well connected to key destinations by a comprehensive network of pedestrian routes, typical of a City Centre location.

Key leisure, cultural, business and retail facilities located on Deansgate, King Street, St John Street and within the Spinningfields area, are within a five-minute walking distance of the Site. The ability to cross Deansgate has recently been improved due to the partial pedestrianisation of the road and the Site’s location at the edge of the City Centre, adjacent to both Albert and Trinity Bridge, will improve access to key destinations within Salford.

The Site is also located near to Market Street and the Arndale Shopping Centre (both approximately a 10-minute walk from the Site).

Cycling

The Site is in close proximity to a well-connected cycling network across Greater Manchester. For example, Deansgate joins onto the Bridgewater Canal cycleway, which links the Site to Old Trafford, Stretford, Sale, Altrincham, Trafford Park and Media City.

The Ashton Canal Cycleway is also accessible from Manchester City Centre, which links through to East Manchester, through a dedicated cycle route to this part of the City Centre. National Cycling Route 6 can be accessed from the Liverpool Road junction of Deansgate – this route links the Site to Bury, as well as onto Route 55 to Wigan and Route 85 to Wilmslow.

Moving forward, the Council's Made to Move 'Beelines Strategy' sets out to provide 1,000 miles of walking and cycling routes across Greater Manchester, a number of which are proposed close to the Site, along Deansgate.

Public Transport

Metrolink

Over 43 million Metrolink journeys were made to and from the City Centre during 2019, prior to the COVID-19 health crises impacting use of public transport in the short term², making it the most used light rail system outside of London. The Metrolink has been the subject of significant ongoing investment and expansion of routes in recent years. Recent changes include the introduction of contactless payments in July 2019 and the 'Get Me There' app.

Exchange Square Metrolink stop is 0.6 miles northeast of the Site (approximately 11-minute walk) and St Peter's Square Metrolink stop is 0.5 miles southeast of the Site (approximately 10-minute walk). Both Metrolink stops provide frequent cross-city links within Manchester and provide access to a range of destinations across Greater Manchester.

Rail

Salford Central Station is located directly to the north of the Site and is a three-minute walk away, across Albert Bridge. Salford Central offers rail services to a number of destinations including Leeds, Southport and Kirkby.

Manchester Victoria Station, a major regional interchange, is approximately a 10-minute walk from the Site. It serves a range of destinations, including direct rail services to Liverpool (with a fast service at 36 minutes journey time) and Leeds (approximately 49 minutes journey time).

Manchester Piccadilly Station, the rail hub for the North West, is also located within a reasonable walking distance of the Site (approximately a 20-minute walk). Manchester Piccadilly provides frequent and rapid services between Manchester and to a wide range of locations in the UK.

The Transpennine Express line at Manchester Piccadilly links all major cities in the North of England (and Scotland) including Newcastle, Liverpool and Hull.

Trains to Birmingham run every 30 minutes and there are up to 8-9 services to Manchester Airport every hour. Trains also travel every 20 minutes to and from London between 6am and 9pm daily, with a journey time of approximately 2 hours.

Bus

There are several bus stops located near the Site on Bridge Street / John Dalton Street and Deansgate. These bus stops provide services to other parts of the City Centre including Piccadilly Gardens, Shudehill and Albert Square via the Free Bus, as well as localities further afield via transport providers, such as South Manchester, Worsley, Bolton, Salford, Leigh and Atherton.

The Manchester Piccadilly Gardens Bus Station, Piccadilly Gardens Metrolink stop and Shudehill Interchange are located approximately a 15-minute walk away from the Site. Both bus stations provide regular connections to the wider Greater Manchester region.

The Free Bus service run by Transport for Greater Manchester has three different routes serving most of the City Centre. The Metroshuttle Route 2 has a stop on Deansgate, which provides a route through to Piccadilly Train Station. These free bus routes enhance sustainable connectivity in the city centre and link up connect all of the main transport hubs in Manchester and Salford.

² Source: DfT Light Rail and Tram Survey (June 2020) – Ref IRT0101

Summary

The Site is well connected through public transport links and sustainable modes of transport. The Site is near to all City Centre facilities including retail, cultural and leisure uses and residential development. These features make the Site well placed for the proposed office, residential and commercial uses.

3. Strategic Context

This Chapter details the socio-economic context of Manchester City Centre as a whole and sets out the key drivers of change and development within the City Centre.

Economic and Market Context

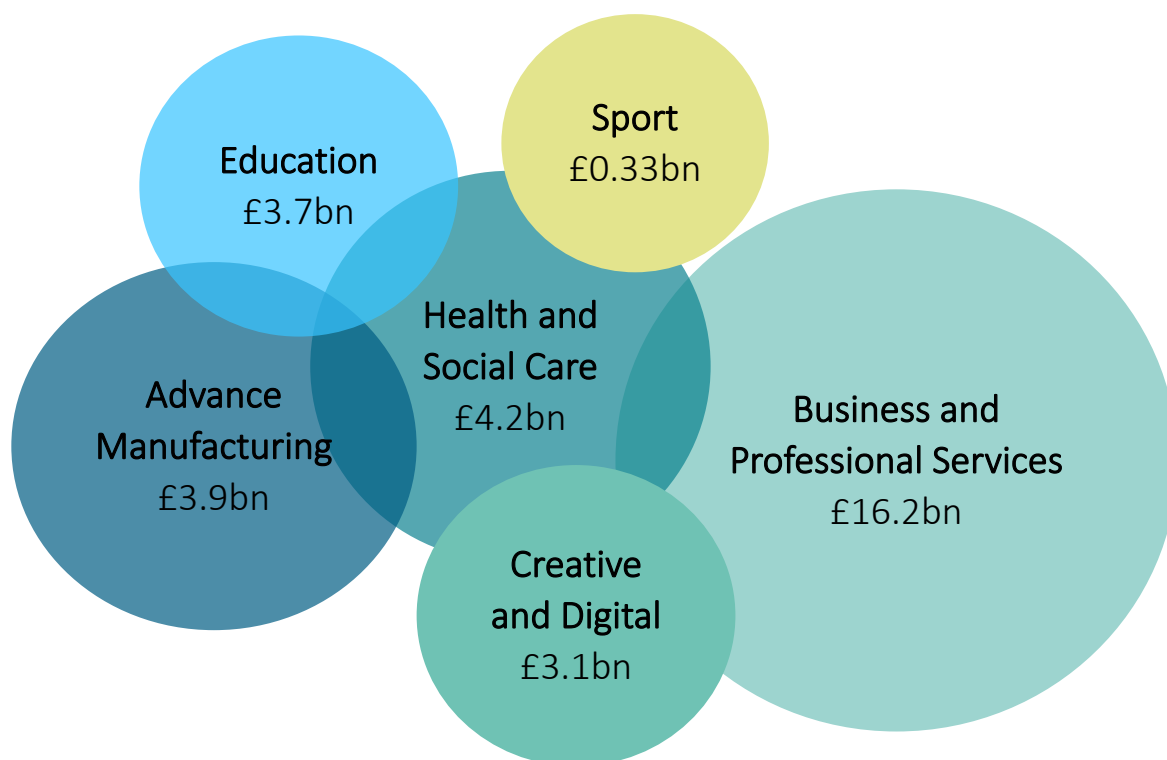
Manchester's Economic Outlook

The City of Manchester is a national engine of economic growth with a population of 555,741³, sitting at the heart of a conurbation of 2.84 million people in Greater Manchester⁴.

The City's economic success has historically been driven by its growing role as the leading professional and business service centre outside of London; global connectivity through Manchester International Airport; and business and leisure visitors, with Manchester the third most visited city in the UK.

The New Economy Greater Manchester Key Facts (2019) highlights that in 2016 the key sectors of the Greater Manchester economy and their contribution towards the annual Greater Manchester GVA.

Figure 3.1: Greater Manchester Economic Outputs (Source: GM Key Facts, January 2019)



Over a thirty-year programme of transformation, Manchester has become recognised as one of Europe's most exciting and dynamic cities. With a diverse population of more than half a million people, the City of Manchester is located at the heart of Greater Manchester, the largest conurbation outside of London. Economic growth has also been supported by Manchester's

³ Office for National Statistics (2021), Estimates of the population for the UK, England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland [Dataset] – Accessed [here](#).

⁴ Ibid.

expanding international connections, centres of excellence in research and higher education, and investment in transport infrastructure, which has deepened labour markets. The Greater Manchester sub-region has a combined Gross Value Added (GVA) of approximately £75 billion and accounts for around two fifth of the North West's economic output⁵. In 2021, almost one third of the £75 billion of GVA generated in Greater Manchester (GM) was produced in the City of Manchester⁶.

Population Growth

Population growth in recent years has been particularly evident in the age bands that are typically considered to fuel economic growth, i.e., those at university-leaving age and above. The number of working age residents, defined as those aged 16 to 64, is forecast to show a modest rise over the next 10 years, before falling back after 2028, and therefore the working age population of GM is forecast to be just under 1.8 million in 2037, similar to the 2017 level⁷. This sector of the population creates demand for new lifestyle choices that offer access to city centre employment and amenities, and sustainable transport networks. This population growth provides a strong labour pool, making the City an attractive place for businesses to invest in.

Manchester's Economic Role

Manchester's economy has developed strongly post-recession and the foundations for further growth are in place. It is clear that much has been achieved in terms of GDP growth and wider development. The economy is becoming more diversified through an increasing amount of GDP growth attributable to new economies including logistics, business, financial and professional services and creative and digital industries. However, there is still a significant amount to be done to continue economic growth within Manchester and ensure that the right development comes forward to support this. This development, if correctly aligned spatially and economically, can help to accelerate growth and address the productivity gap.

The City of Manchester is the acknowledged capital of the north of England and the centre point of a trans-Pennine and pan-northern economy. The City and conurbation are an economic centre, a role which is increasing as investment in transport, innovation and economic infrastructure makes the City more accessible to towns and cities, business and high skilled workers in the Midlands and the North.

According to the 2020 GMCA Economic Forecasts for Greater Manchester Report, GVA is forecast to grow at an average annual rate of 2.4% between 2017 and 2037 (compared to UK average of 1.6%).

Manchester's enhanced economic performance has been underpinned by a move from its traditional manufacturing and industrial role towards a service-based, high growth economy. Importantly, it is this sector of the economy that provides a large proportion of the high skilled and high productivity jobs in the national economy. As a primary driver of economic and employment growth, the City has increased the responsibility to provide the business infrastructure to match its role as an economic centre, capable of providing opportunities for the wider conurbation and beyond.

There are three factors which are changing the role of the City of Manchester and have particular implications for Manchester City Centre. These are:

- The move to a service based and high growth economy, at a time when national economic growth is increasingly driven by professional and financial services, creative and digital industries, science and technology, with key sub-sectors influenced by disruptive innovation;
- Sectors which are influenced by agglomeration, where entrepreneurs, companies, new start-ups and talented workers, from disparate economic growth sectors, are keen to cluster in locations which can provide business and networking opportunities and deep labour markets offering an exceptional range of highly qualified and skilled staff;
- Growth of the creative, digital and tech sectors. According to GMCA, jobs in the Digital Industries are set to increase by 13,000 additional jobs over the period 2017-2047 whilst in the Creative Industry jobs are forecast to grow by 6,000 up to

⁵ Office for National Statistics, Regional Gross Value Added (balanced) per head and income components tables (released 26 May 2021 – Accessed [here](#)).

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Greater Manchester Combined Authority (2020), Economic Forecasts for Greater Manchester February 2020

2037⁸. In regard to GVA, digital industries are the sub-sector that is forecast to grow the fastest by 4.3% per year from 2017 to 2037⁹; and,

- A return to urban living, with many highly skilled younger people and high earners keen to benefit from both the range of education and employment opportunities and the lifestyle offer of city living, with evening and weekend economies offering cultural, entertainment and leisure choices which cannot be matched in smaller towns or cities.

In all of these factors, Manchester City Centre is a location which has a unique contribution to make to the re-balancing of the national economy, and with a constrained city centre and limited other credible high growth locations, there is a need to ensure the city centre can provide the modern economic infrastructure to capture economic and employment growth.

The Manchester Office Market

A Shift in the Way We Work

Despite the considerable impact COVID-19 has had on the office sector and in particular the way we work, more than a third (37%) of developers expect homeworking to have no impact on the demand for leasing. Furthermore, only 24% of UK businesses have expressed an intention to increase homeworking going forward. The proportion of individuals only working remotely has also been falling since the 2021 high of 37% in February, dropping by 12 percentage points to 25% in May 2021¹⁰, and is expected to fall further.

At the same time, 85% of individuals currently working from home have indicated that they would like to use a 'hybrid' approach in the future, combining both home and office working. As such, the way in which office space is used has changed and is likely to continue to change, requiring office buildings to be as flexible as possible¹¹.

In response to these changes, there have been initiatives by corporates and office occupiers to improve the employee experience, to attract the best talent. A survey by Deloitte found that 61% of executives now focus on reimagining work compared to only 29% before the start of the pandemic. Moving forward, we can expect offices to offer more in the way of on-site facilities and amenities to improve employee wellbeing such as gyms, eateries, roof terraces, and collaborative and entertainment space¹².

Manchester City Centre's Office Districts

Manchester has a number of very successful office buildings and districts. Spinningfields, NOMA, and St. Peter's Square in particular have established themselves as such districts offering Grade 'A' floorspace. More recent examples include St. John's and Circle Square which are developing into much sought-after office locations.

It is considered that each of the locations share the same characteristics:

- **Public Realm** – a key element to a successful office location is having high quality public realm within the vicinity of the development. This space aids with permeability but also provides amenity space for occupiers. New office developments can also have a positive impact on existing public realm, introducing activity to an area which was neglected;
- **Connections** – strong connections with other business areas and public transport infrastructure are important. Successful commercial locations are often on a more prominent route across the city centre – e.g., Oxford Road to Spinningfields, or NOMA on the inner-city ring road; and,

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Deloitte, Manchester Crane Survey 2022

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Ibid

- **Business Environment** – each location has a strong commercial identity. This goes beyond just having other office buildings nearby but also includes having a wide range of supporting businesses such as restaurants, shops, and bars that are necessary ingredients in professional life.

Figure 3.2: Manchester Successful Office Buildings and Districts



The Market

Manchester City Centre has one of the largest office centres outside of central London with approximately 3.8 million sq. ft. of office floorspace. The Manchester office market remains highly competitive, building off the strength of the local economy and the desire for businesses to want to locate here for business combined with a growing population.

Land use and the historic nature of much of the prime office core has, in broad terms, led to development of modern high specification buildings with large floor plates. As such most of the new office developments taking place in the outer CBD to satisfy the larger space requirements of some of the major corporate occupational tenants, see for example St. John's and Circle Square. However, the core remains highly active and desirable, especially amongst the professional, financial services and increasingly Creative, Digital and Tech sectors. As of 2022 Manchester has retained its number one spot as the leading tech location, outside London¹³. In addition, and as outlined above in Section 2, the Professional, Financial and Business Services is a vital component of Manchester's economy, contributing to much of the economic growth across all office locations.

The latest figures from the Manchester Office Agents Forum ('MOAF'), released in January 2022 and reporting on 2021, highlight that over 1 million sq. ft. of office floorspace space was leased, a 31% increase in uptake in 2020. MOAF anticipates that this will increase to a c.1.5m sq. ft 10-year average by 2022. The driving force of the increased take-up are smaller lettings, with approximately 75% of all transactions being below 5,000 sq. ft.

As of Q4 2021 there was £309m worth of office investment transactions, an 129% increase on the 10-year average¹⁴. Major transactions during the last quarter include:

- Cloud Imperium Games taking 87,130 sq. ft. at Allied London's **Manchester Goods Yard**;

¹³ CBRE (2022), UK Tech Cities Report 2022

¹⁴ Knight Frank (2022), Manchester Office Market | Research, Q4 2021

- Deliveroo committing to 10,002 sq. ft. at **5 New York Street**; and,
- Accenture taking 25,000 sq. ft. at Bruntwood's Sci Tech's **Circle Square** scheme on Oxford Road.

These figures demonstrate the continued investor appetite for office floorspace in Manchester where there is strong occupier market. The strong uptake of office space has led to a shortage of Grade 'A' office space as demand outstrips supply, with over 50% of the 2022 development pipeline already let and 30% of the 2023 development pipeline already being pre-let. There is now a flight to quality, sustainability and the 'hotel-isation' of office space, with a focus on good quality accommodation and it is clear that occupiers are prepared to pay higher rents for offices that are built to last and that provide the right space at the right location¹⁵.

Within this context, on-going commercial market analysis indicates that over the recent years inward investors have chosen the larger floorplate buildings and the city requires this product to keep it ahead of other regional cities. There are two schemes currently under construction that will provide 20,000 sq. ft floorplates (Viadux and St Michael's) and only two other schemes will deliver floorplates of 20,000 sq. ft or above before 2026 (10a First Street and The Republic, Mayfield).

Occupiers are choosing to move to 'best-in class' new build offices which are rich in outdoor amenity space. As a result, customers are increasingly looking for new office spaces that provide on-site lifestyle and wellness facilities. There is now greater demand for flexible office space, which can adapt to an even greater range of occupier needs than what the market has traditionally been required to address.

Summary

The office market in Manchester remains strong with continued appetite. Complementing this, there has been an increase in demand for flexible working spaces and floorplates. The flexible floorplates allow for a host of tenants as they can be used as one large floorplate, or subdivided into 2-4 different tenancies.

Residential Context

Residential Supply and Demand

Manchester's ongoing economic and population growth will continue to drive the need for new high-quality residential accommodation across a range of tenures. Indeed, the provision of new housing, which supports the attraction and retention of talent, which has helped fuel that growth.

As reported in Deloitte's 2022 Manchester Crane Survey, 14 new residential developments started on-site in 2021 bringing forward the construction of 3,729 new homes. Overall, the number of new homes under construction at year end 2021 was 10,717 across 40 sites, albeit a reduction of 14% in comparison with the 12,322 units across 46 sites at year end 2020. In short, residential demand remains strong, and notwithstanding significant levels of housing delivery, vacancy rates are reported as being very low (data suggests that empty property exemptions from rates of about 1% in the city centre), and take up of new accommodation very strong¹⁶.

The strength of the residential market is underpinned by the City's resilient economic growth, as detailed above. Retail, leisure and world class institutions based in the City Centre support the lifestyle aspirations and further underpins its strength as a place to live¹⁷.

Businesses need staff to support continual growth and there needs to be confidence that future employees can continue to access a ready supply of well-located residential accommodation in proximity to office accommodation. Manchester therefore must continue to provide quality accommodation to support the talent pool that is attracted to the City, including graduates and young professionals, whilst noting that the desire to buy or rent City Centre apartment is not limited to young professionals. Increasingly, single person households and retirees downsizing and moving back from the suburbs are also fuelling demand¹⁸. This is as a result of more people opting to live closer to where they work and socialise benefitting from the wide offering within the City Centre as part of a global move back to downtown living. Current Council Tax data is a useful indicator of residential

¹⁵ Manchester Office Agents Forum (2022), Manchester Office Market

¹⁶ Deloitte, Manchester Crane Survey 2022.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ JLL, How new high-rise apartments are transforming Manchester (2019), [How new high-rise apartments are transforming Manchester \(jll.co.uk\)](https://www.jll.co.uk/insights/property/how-new-high-rise-apartments-are-transforming-manchester)

occupancy and, with empty properties amounting to just 0.65% of total stock in Manchester¹⁹, strong demand for city centre living remains evident.

A prevalent trend in the City Centre's residential market is the delivery of Build to Rent accommodation.

Given Albert Bridge House's strategic location, it is geographically well-placed to play a significant role in satisfying this demand for new homes to support population and economic growth. The City Centre location offers many of the ingredients sought by residents in terms of location, scale, accessibility to public transport and employment. Whilst within an area of the City Centre that is practically self-sufficient as a neighbourhood in terms of its offer to residents, it is also a short walk from the main retail district, Deansgate, Spinningfields and Piccadilly, as well as the rest of the regional centre which provide further cultural, leisure, retail and arts facilities. Building on the success of recently approved applications for development in the surrounding area, such as Alberton House directly to the east of the Site, Albert Bridge House will further help to forge the area as a vibrant neighbourhood.

Strategic Context

This section sets out the Council's vision for the City Centre. It outlines the key documents of relevance to the Proposed Development. The documents outline the strategic context of the Site and surrounding regeneration initiatives.

Delivering the Northern Powerhouse Agenda

The Northern Powerhouse concept is designed to create a competitive northern region that can act as an economic counterbalance to the dominant south-east. A number of key announcements have been made and milestones achieved over the past c. 8 years since the Northern Powerhouse concept was devised:

- In the 2014 Autumn Statement, the Coalition Government reiterated a commitment made during August 2014 to help lay the foundations of a Northern Powerhouse to rival the economic strength of London. In November 2014 it was announced that Greater Manchester would have a directly elected Mayor by 2017, with responsibility for a £300m housing investment fund, devolved and consolidated budgets in transport and health and social care, along with key strategic planning powers, and an additional £7 billion of investment to build the Northern Powerhouse. In May 2017, Andy Burnham was elected as Greater Manchester Mayor with oversight of the health and social care budget, worth £6bn. He also has various Greater Manchester-wide powers and responsibilities including for transport, planning and housing.
- In June 2016 the Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review prepared by SQW Ltd and Cambridge Econometrics was published. This broadly concludes that there is a significant performance gap between the North, measured by GVA per capita, which is persistently averaging about 25% below the rest of England (10-15% when London is removed).
- In April 2018 the Transport for the North ('TfN') was formally enshrined in legislation. The TfN is a partnership of public and private representatives working with the Government and national transport bodies to develop and deliver strategic transport infrastructure across the North of England. Within their scope is the provision of the Northern Powerhouse Rail programme, which aims to deliver a transformed rail network in the North of England and bring new opportunities to millions of people and businesses. As of 2022, following the Government's amended Integrated Rail Plan ("IRP"), TfN is now in a co-partnership role with the government in order to deliver improved rail across the North including the Northern Powerhouse Rail. The Government also included a promise for £17.2bn for a 40-mile high-speed line between Warrington, Manchester and Marsden in Yorkshire within their IRP.
- The February 2022 Levelling Up White Paper pledged funding for the continued provision of development under the British Business Bank ("BBB") Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund, that has already delivered over £1bn of public and private sector debt and equity investment to places across the UK with some of the most acute financial challenges. The next

¹⁹ Manchester City Council – Monthly Economic Update – December 2020.

generation of BBB Regional Investment Funding will include £660m for the Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund, including expansion into the North East of England.

Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Manchester, and the wider Greater Manchester region, is at the heart of the Northern Powerhouse. A forward-looking and collaborative approach between the different Greater Manchester local authorities, under the umbrella of the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA), has led to a ground-breaking agreement with Central Government to devolve certain powers and budgetary responsibility. In April 2011 the Greater Manchester Combined Authority ('GMCA') was formed.

The Greater Manchester Strategy

The Greater Manchester Strategy ('GMS') was originally prepared in 2009 as a response to the MIER – the most robust analysis ever undertaken of a city, led by global experts – before being updated again in 2013. It identified priorities to enable the Manchester City Region to pioneer a new model for sustainable economic growth based around a more connected, talented and greener City Region where the prosperity secured is enjoyed by many.

Since the 2013 publication, significant changes happened in the city that needed further renewed analysis of progress and priorities. This led to the most recent refresh of the GMS in October 2017 which sets out a very clear vision for the city-region, stating that:

“Our vision is to make Greater Manchester one of the best places in the world to grow up, get on and grow old: A place where all children are given the best start in life and young people grow up inspired to exceed expectations. A place where people are proud to live, with a decent home, a fulfilling job, and stress-free journeys the norm. But if you need a helping hand, you’ll get it. A place of ideas and invention, with a modern and productive economy that draws in investment, visitors and talent. A place where people live healthy lives and older people are valued. A place at the forefront of action on climate change with clean air and a flourishing natural environment. A place where all voices are heard and where, working together, we can shape our future”

In order to successfully achieve the vision as set out above, which is in nature people-centric, ten priorities for the region have been identified. These can broadly be placed within a number of themes including supporting young people and children from an early age, providing good jobs that support a dynamic local economy, creating stronger and healthier communities, providing good quality housing, creating an age-friendly city-region, delivering a green city-region with a high-quality culture and leisure offer, and continuing to develop world-class connectivity within Greater Manchester.

The GMS provide a high-level framework for action based on a robust evidence base and the results of public consultation. More detailed plans as identified below, have been developed and led by city-region-wide partnerships, and set out the specific actions, interventions and investment required to deliver the GMS strategic priorities and achieve the GMS vision. These plans are set out below.

Greater Manchester Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (August 2021) – February 2022 Submission Stage ('Places for Everyone')

Places for Everyone is the new long-term joint development plan for nine Greater Manchester districts²⁰. On 14 February 2022, the Plan and supporting documents were submitted to the Secretary of State for examination. It continues on the intentions of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework ("GMSF") following the decision of Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council to cease their involvement in the Framework. The PfE will enable an informed, integrated approach to strategic development planning across the city region. The purpose of the PfE is to enable GM to manage land supply across the city region in the most effective way to achieve the vision set out in the GM Strategy based on a clear understanding of the role of places and the connections between them.

It will provide a framework for the maximisation of the use of brownfield land and urban spaces while protecting Green Belt land from the risk of unplanned development, it will also ensure all new developments are sustainably integrated into Greater

²⁰ Stockport Council only Greater Manchester Council to drop out of joint plan.

Manchester's transport network or supported by new infrastructure. It will ensure GM is able to meet current and emerging occupier demand to support a market-facing strategy for housing and employment growth.

A key tenet to securing sustainable, inclusive and equally distributed economic prosperity throughout the wider region is by maximising the growth potential of a number of key growth locations. The City Centre will be the largest player and is expected to continue to provide a high concentration of jobs, innovation and research activities whilst The Quays will deliver sustained growth as a major business location and internationally important digital and creative cluster. Outside of these areas, the seven main town centres of Greater Manchester (Altrincham, Ashton-under-Lyne, Bolton, Bury, Oldham, Rochdale and Wigan) are also highlighted as opportunities for a stronger focus on local economic activities which may exploit potential future rail linkages.

As the economic core of the sub-region, Manchester City Centre will accommodate more than half of all new office floorspace. This concentration of office space in this location will take full advantage of the existing and proposed public transport linkages including the arrival of HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail, helping to affirm Manchester's position as the premier office location outside of the capital. The PFE states that at least 1,900,000 sqm of accessible new floorspace over the period 2021-2037. This can be facilitated through the refurbishment of existing office accommodation.

The overall picture at a regional level is that a collaborative approach between local authorities is geared towards driving growth in the right places. The focal point of economic growth within GM is undoubtedly Manchester City Centre and delivering positive change that helps the city grow is pivotal to the continued growth of the region. This is best achieved through encouraging development that brings services or facilities which do not currently exist in Manchester and supporting the pivotal growth areas.

Greater Manchester Transport 2040 (2021)

The strategy sets out a vision for *"World class connections that support long-term, sustainable economic growth and access to opportunity for all"* and seeks to address the four critical transport challenges of supporting sustainable economic growth, improving quality of life, protecting the environment and developing an innovative city region. Organised by spatial themes and supported by a five-year delivery plan, the strategy takes a long-term view of transport requirements across GM and the wider North and highlights the priority interventions needed to meet those requirements.

The Greater Manchester Investment Fund (2017)

The Investment Fund supports the implementation of the GM Strategy through investment to create and safeguard jobs, primarily through loans to support development encouraging business growth and investment in property and infrastructure, to maximise the impact of investment over several funding cycle.

The Five-Year Environment Plan (2019)

The Plan sets out the steps that will be taken to become carbon neutral by 2038 and the urgent actions we all need to take in the next five years to help achieve this including investing in our natural environment to respond to climate change and to improve quality of life.

City Centre Strategic Plan (2016)

The vision for the City Centre is well developed through a number of specific Strategic Regeneration Frameworks, which are effective vehicles for place led regeneration, but also through the overarching City Centre Masterplan (2015-2018) endorsed by Manchester City Council's Executive in March 2016.

The purpose of the new plan is to provide an update on progress since 2012; to identify the key drivers that will influence growth and development over the next few years; and to set out the City's planned direction of travel. Additionally, the plan also presents a progress report on key schemes within the City Centre.

The Strategic Plan identifies that the City Centre should act as a driver of economic growth and a major employment centre which is expected to experience further significant employment growth in the coming years with another 15,600 jobs predicted by 2025.

The vision for the City Centre is well developed through a number of Strategic Regeneration Frameworks ('SRF'). Albert Bridge House is located in the St Mary's parsonage SRF area and strategically located in close proximity to a number of key regeneration

areas, including: Spinningfields, the Civic Quarter: Manchester Central and St Michael's (Jackson's Row), The associated SRF documents help to envisage a more connected city centre, with new mixed-use development spread across the city centre with higher levels of accessibility across the City Centre.

Place Making in Regeneration Areas

The Council outlines in the City Centre Strategy Document (2015-2018) that,

"Investment in 'place' will continue to create and maintain a city centre that attracts visitors and is an attractive place to live, invest and work. This will ensure that we have the right local environment and infrastructure, both physical and digital, for all users of the city. Creating an attractive and safe environment through effective street management and security will be essential [...] High quality, well-managed green spaces, trees and waterways will be key features of the city centre within both existing areas and those being transformed over the next few years"

There is therefore an importance placed on the provision of placemaking to ensure the long-term success and growth of the City Centre.

St Mary's Parsonage Strategic Regeneration Framework (2020)

The SRF seeks to refocus the priorities of the area to establish St Mary's Parsonage as a clearly definable and cohesive City Centre neighbourhood, with a distinctive character and sense of place.

The St Mary's Parsonage area will deliver a series of significant regeneration benefits, which will be fully integrated and connected into the wider City Centre and will draw activity and support the further expansion of the City Centre's quality activity into the area. This will make the most of its positive adjacencies to other successful and vibrant parts of the City Centre including Spinningfields, the Primary Retail Area, the Central Business District, and support the growth and enhanced productivity of the City.

The St Mary's Parsonage SRF proposes that Parsonage Gardens will build upon its existing asset base, and its positive adjacencies to other parts of the City Centre, to successfully host an eco-system of best-in-class employment – from global businesses to start ups - and other high-quality uses including residential, hotel, retail and leisure.

A key principle of the SRF will be the retention and celebration of the area's special qualities and assets, including its heritage assets, public spaces and green and blue infrastructure. The SRF sets out a clear vision for the future enhancement and regeneration of this part of the city centre, through the identification of opportunity sites that will catalyse further investment and drive positive change. The Proposed Development is a critical component of this strategy.

The overarching vision for the SRF area is summarised below:

- **A place where people live, work, relax and socialise** – where all Mancunians also have the ability to share in the long-term success of the area;
- **Thriving and sustainable neighbourhood** – embraces Manchester's zero carbon ambitions and delivers jobs and opportunities for all by building on the existing residential and business communities, as well as being a place for enterprise and innovation;
- **Host an eco-system of best-in-class employment** – from global businesses to start-ups and other uses such a residential, hotel, retail and leisure;
- **Fully integrated and connected into the wider city** – this will draw activity into the area from other vibrant parts of the city centre including Spinningfields, the Primary Retail area, the Central Business District and support the growth and enhanced productivity of the city;
- **Conserve and promote the area's qualities and characteristics** – contribute towards raising the city's international profile by delivering appropriate density of development, taking into account the city centre's finite land resources, to ensure the full economic potential of the area is realised;

- **Retention and celebration of the area's special qualities and assets** – including heritage assets, public spaces and green & blue infrastructure; and,
- **Focus on maintaining and enhancing the quality of the environment** – rebalancing the vehicular access, servicing and operational management arrangement for the existing residential and commercial uses in the area, as a well as review of car parking provision.

The Proposed Development has a critical part to play in delivering the SRF through significantly transforming the largest single site within the area. Key to this will be the redevelopment of an outdated, vacant office building; the addition of a critical mass of high-quality city centre uses; and the related investment in public realm and pedestrian routes as part of the public realm and landscaping enhancements.

The Proposed Development will also complement the objectives of adjoining Framework areas and key projects, as set out below.

- **Civic Quarter Framework (2009):** Located c.600m to the southeast of the Site, the Civic Quarter Framework anticipated that the scale of investment proposed in the Civic Quarter would increase the existing floorspace by 67% - to almost 500,000 sq. m - providing first class facilities and Grade 'A' office space to equal the offer of Spinningfields This would, in turn, cater for an estimated 9,000 new full-time jobs. In September 2012 Manchester City Council's Executive Committee endorsed an updated Regeneration Framework for St Peter's Square. This has largely been realised and includes - the public realm around the Central Library and Town Hall Extension, 1 St Peter's Square, 2 St Peter's Square, 24 Mount Street and Peterloo House all ensuring high-quality office accommodation is available within the Civic Quarter. These are supported by excellent transport connections with St Peter's Square Metrolink station and the completion of the Second City Crossing.
- **Spinningfields:** To the south of the Site is Spinningfields, which is Manchester's premier business district. The area has undergone a 20-year transformation, starting with the Masterplan in the mid-1990s. The redevelopment of the retail and commercial core has created a distinctive and contemporary commercial centre. The renewal of the city centre through Spinningfields has brought many benefits to the City and the wider region, with landmark buildings and high-quality new spaces and infrastructure. As a result, it has attracted and continues to retain high profile occupiers such as HSBC, RBS, Barclays, PWC, Shoosmiths, Weightmans, Bank of New York along with a number of other global business organisations. Together, this has created a business community of over 250 different companies operating in the area.
- **St. John's Regeneration Framework (2015, 2017):** St. John's is the next major transformative regeneration project that is being delivered by Allied London, located on the former ITV Granada Studios estate in Castlefield. St John's will be delivering a new commercial zone referred to as Enterprise City - a cluster of interconnected businesses, suppliers and institutions in the creative and tech fields, together with an emerging ecosystem of supporting business, retail and leisure. The commercial concept has been developed to establish a media and tech creative hub within St John's. Enterprise City will comprise a unique offering of multi-studios for TV, film and music recording/production, entertainment, places to start a retail brand, a restaurant or a café, all anchored on 21st Century workspace infrastructure. This is supported by a differentiated residential accommodation by Union.
- **St Michael's:** The proposal began on site in January 2022, with an expected completion date of 2024. Comprising a 40 storey tower will include hotel, office, and residential uses with ground floor retail units. The proposals aim to realise the Jackson's Row SRF vision and create a landmark destination in what is currently an underutilised part of an otherwise vibrant City Centre. It is expected that the development will lead onto knock-on economic benefits for the areas in between, with the agglomeration factor one that should not be underestimated. It will be important to capitalise on this and ensure that the routes between these areas are pleasant and easily traversable to maximise the benefits across the city, fuelling the overall growth of the City and the region.

- **Salford Central:** The Salford Central Masterplan is a 20-year regeneration initiative and is one of the UK's largest development projects, particularly when combined with the activity taking place at Middlewood Locks. The Salford Central Masterplan area is located across the River Irwell. Salford City Council is working with English Cities Fund (ECf), a joint venture company consisting of Muse Developments, Legal and General and the Homes and Communities Agency. The Salford Central Masterplan is made up of two inter-dependent but distinct areas; Chapel Street and New Bailey. The Masterplan is supported by planning guidance and a development framework (adopted by the City Council in 2008/09); Salford City Council's largest ever planning application (a 15-year outline permission across a 17.7-hectare area was granted in 2010) and a Compulsory Purchase Order (confirmed by the Secretary of State in March 2012). Key elements of the project include revitalising Chapel Street and creating New Bailey, which is an exciting extension to Manchester's Central Business District situated in between the River Irwell and Salford Central Station.

The Middlewood Locks strategic site is also situated within the Salford Central Masterplan boundary. The Salford Central Development Framework envisages a vibrant mix of uses for Middlewood, with a large residential element, making the most of the reinstated canal basin for waterside development and establishing connections through the site. Notably, Plots G and H of Middlewood Locks completed in December 2021, delivering over 500 new homes, and planning permission was granted in February 2022 for Plot N and Plots E1 and E2 which will collectively delivery over 900 additional new homes as well as flexible floorspace at the ground floor.

In addition, major transformation works have taken place on Chapel Street that have enhanced the public realm and the placemaking of Salford City Centre. As a result of the investment in the area, this has enabled further residential development to come forward in Salford through a range of private developers bringing forward a range of owner-occupied and build to rent developments to support residential growth.

- **Lincoln Square Masterplan:** A number of development projects have come forward in the Masterplan Area. Heron House, Commercial Union House, John Dalton House have all been subject to refurbishment for office or hotel use; new buildings at 125 Deansgate and the Lincoln, have also completed. The redevelopment of Lincoln Square completed in February 2022. This improved part of the city centre, links in with the City's existing network of open spaces including St. Peters Square, Albert Square, Hardman Square running from east to west. Deansgate Square, Great Northern Square and St. Ann's Square, running north to south. This concerted effort is shaping the city centre and the public realm areas that form a key part of improving connections, a place to work, and live.
- **Ramada Deansgate (2018):** The SRF for the Ramada site was endorsed in March 2018. It sought to guide the future regeneration of land adjoining Blackfriars/Deansgate and the River Irwell. Planning permission was secured for the refurbishment and reconfiguration of the Renaissance Hotel to deliver a new 4-star hotel. A subsequent phase of development for an office building with ground floor flexible uses was approved by Manchester City Council in October 2021. A further phase of development for residential use is also pending planning consideration.

Overall Summary

In summary, this Section has outlined the strategic, economic and regeneration context which the proposed Development sits in. Presently, the Site is underutilised as an outdated vacant office building, which is no longer fit for purpose. The Proposed Development makes best use of the locational characteristics of the Site to deliver a new 'best in class' commercial and residential development that will attract a mixture of occupiers, business and new residents into the City Centre, bringing in new social and economic activity within Manchester, alongside the related investment in public realm and pedestrian routes as part of the public realm and landscaping enhancements.

The Site is located within close proximity to a number of regeneration areas and will contribute significantly towards the wider regeneration initiatives in the area through creating linkages which will help create a cohesive City Centre - thus maintaining Manchester's growing economy and the demand for people to live close to the place they work and places they socialise. Therefore, the Proposed Development will directly contribute to the Council's strategic objectives and will deliver a range of economic, social and environmental benefits which all contribute to the growth and success of the City and City Region.

4. Proposed Development

This Section should be read in conjunction with the drawings and Design and Access Statement produced by Studio Egret West. It provides a summary of description of the key elements of the Proposed Development.

Design Brief

The Proposed Development is the product of an iterative design process. The design team has engaged closely with the LPA and other key stakeholders throughout this period in seeking to best address the key principles of the St. Mary's Parsonage Strategic Regeneration Framework ('SRF') (2020) and deliver an optimised design solution for the Site.

The Site is identified in the SRF as one of the site-specific development opportunities within Zone 2. The St Mary's Parsonage SRF sets out guiding development principles for the Site, notably:

- **Height:** The SRF identified that the existing building stands out as the tallest building within the existing Parsonage area, having been a visual landmark on the Manchester skyline since it was constructed in the 1950s. In this regard, the existing building sets a strong precedent for further height on the Albert Bridge House site due to the existing scale and massing;
- **Permeability:** Identifies importance of Trinity footbridge approach and expectation for landowners to collaborate to deliver improved access, in order to provide a more substantial gateway between Salford and Manchester City Centre;
- **Heritage:** Consideration of surrounding heritage assets, including listed buildings and setting of Conservation Area;
- **Servicing:** Back-of-house servicing expected to be used as part of future proposals, in order to minimise operational and visual impacts, as far as is practical, on the street level;
- **Active frontage:** Seek to maximise active frontage and minimise any servicing impacts on pedestrians and heritage assets. Better engage with Bridge Street and St Mary's Parsonage and seek to include publicly accessible ancillary uses; and,
- **Phasing:** Whilst not specifically prescribed by the SRF, it can be interpreted that the document intends that this part of the SRF would be considered in a comprehensive manner, and this has been subsequently clarified as the preference of Manchester City Council during pre-application discussions with Officers.

In line with the SRF, the design brief seeks to deliver a best-in-class scheme comprising a large scale sustainable office development with the flexibility to respond to market demand and much needed housing; both in landmark, striking buildings. As important to the design brief is the creation of public space and opening up the River Irwell to the public, creating spaces for people to enjoy, relax and socialise alongside flexible commercial space to activate the public realm.

Design Development

The existing Albert Bridge House was purpose built for a single use and particular occupier some 50 years ago. Historic England has acknowledged the existing building possesses some historic and architectural significance; however, it is noted that on 19 May 2019, Historic England determined that the criteria for listing the building were not fully met, stating that the design of the building is typical of a building of that age lacking sophistication of layout and planning, innovative technology or quality artwork. Internally the open plan layout is standard and refurbishment work has resulted in the replacement of internal fixtures and fittings. Furthermore, there has been some internal changes and reconfigurations which means the internal fabric has been altered.

Oval Real Estate has a track record in renovating and reusing old buildings. As such, a detailed analysis of the buildings and Site has taken place, which concludes that the existing building does not offer the potential for successful regeneration in terms of its physical layout and performance and also in terms of the opportunity to open up the Site.

It is very much a building of its time and, as identified in the SRF, it is physically constrained in terms of its layout and therefore does not meet the needs of modern-day occupiers. The building has inefficient floorplates and is environmentally inefficient resulting in substantial operational costs for occupiers. It would be necessary to undertake substantial remodelling and regrading of surrounding land to address the severance and separation experienced between the existing building and St Mary's Parsonage, which would also require major investment.

Therefore, the option to re-use the existing building was discounted early in the design process. The comprehensive redevelopment of Albert Bridge House and adjacent car park provides the opportunity to realise the full potential of the Site.

The design team then reviewed a number of development options, size, quantum and scale of development, detailed fully in the Design and Access Statement, ahead of progressing with the current Proposed Development. The Proposed Development seeks to reinvent Albert Bridge House and create a new destination in the St Mary's Parsonage area, that will take advantage of the riverside location.

Proposed Development

The Proposed Development comprises the full demolition and redevelopment of Albert Bridge House and adjacent car park to deliver a new Grade A office building, a residential building with basement, flexible commercial space, including food and beverage, and significant public realm.

Use and Amount

The proposed floorspace set out in detail in Table 4.1 and 4.2.

Table 4.1: Proposed Development floorspace: Office Building

Use Class	Proposed Floorspace
Office (Use Class E(g(i))) Total GEA (sqm)	c. 54,485 sqm
Office (Use Class E (g(i))) Total GIA (sqm)	c. 46,780 sqm
Office (Use Class E (g(i))) GEA (sqm) <i>excluding basement</i>	c. 50,850 sqm
Office (Use Class E (g(i))) GIA (sqm) <i>excluding basement</i>	c. 43,459 sqm
Flexible commercial (Use Class E (a), (b), (c) and/ or Sui Generis) Total GEA (sqm)	c. 2,407 sqm
Flexible commercial (Use Class E (a), (b), (c) and/ or Sui Generis) Total GIA (sqm)	c. 2,193 sqm
Car Parking – commercial	16 spaces
Cycle Parking – commercial (exc. Public realm)	327
Cycle Parking in public realm	50

Table 4.2: Proposed Development floorspace: Residential Building

Use Class	Proposed Floorspace
Residential (Use Class C3) Total GEA (sqm)	c. 42,608 sqm
Residential (Use Class C3) Total GIA (sqm)	c. 39,243 sqm
Residential (Use Class C3) Total GEA (sqm) <i>excluding basement</i>	c. 41,036 sqm
Residential (Use Class C3) Total GIA (sqm) <i>excluding basement</i>	c. 37,814 sqm
Rooms	367
Flexible commercial (Use Class E (a), (b), (c) and/ or Sui Generis) Total GEA (sqm)	c. 162 sqm
Flexible commercial (Use Class E (a), (b), (c) and/ or Sui Generis) Total GIA (sqm)	c. 146 sqm
Car Parking – Residential	8 spaces
Cycle Parking – Residential	368 spaces

The residential mix is as follows:

- 1 Bed, 2 Person: 118 (32%);
- 2 bed, 3 Person: 49 (13%);
- 2 bed, 4 Person: 157 (43%);
- 3 bed, 4 Person: 28 (8%);
- 3 bed, 5 Person: 5 (1%); and,
- 3 bed, 6 Person: 10 (3%)

Site Layout

There will be two buildings located on the Site, comprising a commercial office block on the eastern section and a residential building on the western section of the Site.

The proposed office building is broadly triangular in shape, reaching up to 19-storeys in height with a unique, stepped design to maximise natural light and views. The office building will front onto the River Irwell and will activate the Site's waterfront location.

The proposed residential building would comprise three conjoined hexagonal towers, stepping from a 34 to 40 to 45-storey building with plant above. The unique shape of the floorplan allows for dual aspect homes that provide panoramic views in all

directions. The residential building is the tallest part of the development and will occupy a prominent position at the western corner of the Site, at the gateway between Manchester and Salford.

The ground floors of both buildings are stepped back offering shelter for spill out space. They will be accessible to residents, workers and visitors. The ground floor of the commercial building is populated by independent cafés, shops and restaurants that can spill out into the public realm. The ground floor of the residential building will also offer active frontages and retail use that can also spill out.

As well as these amenities, much of the Site area will be occupied by large areas of public realm which will increase the permeability of the Site and unlock new attractive, traffic-free routes for pedestrians and cyclists, particularly with the elevated walkway along the River Irwell between Trinity Bridge and Bridge Street.

A conjoined basement is provided serving each building separately. This will contain cycle parking and associated facilities for the office building alongside plant, other back of house facilities and car parking spaces. For the residential building the basement includes car parking, plant and other back of house facilities. Access to the proposed basement will be via Bridge Street and the ramp to the basement will be slightly west of the staggered Bridge Street pedestrian crossing.

Scale and Massing

As referenced above, the Site is identified within the SRF as being an opportunity site for a building of substantial height in this location, whilst noting that any increase in height will need to respect the landmark status of buildings to the south and nearby Conservation Area.

The Proposed Development will redevelop the existing 18-storey Albert Bridge House and associated buildings. This includes the demolition of the existing buildings with the erection of a replacement office at up to 19 storeys and a residential building up to 45 storeys plus plant, both with a basement.

The height and massing of both buildings respond to the context of the emerging skyline in this fast-changing part of the city centre, with the landmark buildings contributing towards its character and sense of place.

The starting point for the office building is to create a building that provides green amenity spaces at every level, whilst offering an array of different size floorplates. A 'sugarcube' concept was established that allowed the shape, massing and appearance of the building to develop - responding to the lower buildings across St. Mary's Parsonage and in the Conservation Area, whilst gradually stepping up to the north and creating link with the Alberton House site to the east and the proposed residential building to the west. This concept also allowed for rational approach to the overall building form, where every expressed cube sits on 7.5m grid, which enables a level of modularity and repetition to save materials and reduce embodied carbon.

In line with the SRF guidance, the taller residential building is situated to the south-west of the Site, celebrating the gateway location as an entrance into Manchester, while minimising the potential impacts on the Conservation Area. The hexagonal, stepped form of the residential building creates interest and a playful approach to design and massing. The unique floorplan shape provides highest quality design aspiration, creating dual aspect homes to provide panoramic views in all directions. From key ground level viewpoints, the profile of the tower presents a slender appearance, helping to limit the visual impact of the tower from key viewpoints and helping sunlight infiltration to ground level spaces within the Site and surroundings.

Layout

Office Building

The ground floor of the office building includes flexible commercial space alongside the office reception. Internally the reception area features a full height atrium space, enhancing the scale and generosity of the office. The ground floor flexible commercial units to the north benefit from riverside views.

Notably, the ground floor is split in two by a double-height public passageway, providing a connection from the public realm at the heart of the Site to the surrounding street network, including Trinity Bridge. Two main entrances to the office are located at the centre and to the west side of the passage.

The first floor is designed to emphasise the public uses on the ground floor, including mezzanine space for these uses.

Floor 2 and above includes office floorspace that is flexible, allowing floors to be taken as whole or subdivided. Accessible terraces are available on all levels. The roof level includes plant and further accessible terrace.

Residential Building

The ground floor of the residential building includes a generous managed lobby with double height entrance along Bridge Street; a cafe / retail space which wraps around the eastern part of the floorplan and the residential bin store.

The first floor is occupied by the double height ground floor lobby and the cycle store. This is accessed by an external shallow staircase with side bike ramp and a set of cycle lifts. Additionally, the first floor offers a zone for bike cleaning and repairing. The facade is wrapped in fritted/opaque channel glass. This material allows for the silhouettes of the bikes and activity of the space to be visible, without revealing the specifics of the stored bicycles.

Residential floors are above, and the typical residential floorplan delivers 10 apartments consisting of:

- 3x 1bedroom 2 people homes;
- 1x 2bedrooms 3 people homes;
- 5x 2bedrooms 4 people homes; and,
- 1 x 3bedrooms 4 people homes.

All apartments meet or exceed the Space Standards set out within the Manchester Residential Quality Guidance.

70% of the apartments are fully dual aspect and 10% are adaptable.

There are three 'belt levels' that include amenity space for the residents. The first 'belt level' occurs at level 10, where part of the facade to the communal space is set back to create a colonnade with terrace access. This level includes six apartments – two duplex apartments and four typical apartments. Level 11 includes the void to the communal unit, the upper levels of the two duplex apartments and four typical apartments.

The middle 'belt level' is located on Level 22 providing double height communal space, five typical apartments and two duplex apartments. Level 23 includes the void above the communal space, the upper levels of the duplex apartments and five typical apartments.

The third 'belt level' is on Level 34. Again, this includes double height communal space, five typical apartments and two duplex. Level 35 follows the same format including the upper levels of the duplex and five typical apartments.

Due to the change of shape of the building at levels 22-23, 34-35, 36-39 and 40-45, there is a different layout on each of these levels which informs the number of apartments delivered at each floor.

The delivery of the largest apartments is at the top of the building, with each level from 40-45 delivering:

- 2x 3 bedroom 6 people homes; and,
- 1x 3 bedrooms 5 people homes.

All homes in the residential building will be provided with private amenity. These will either be in the form of a winter gardens for typical floors or terraces on the belt levels.

Appearance

The appearance and materiality of the Proposed Development responds to the Site's location, taking inspiration from the surrounding historic context and the more modern buildings that sit outside of the conservation areas. The texture and materials of both buildings have been carefully selected to complement the surrounding architectural context, as well as contributing

towards the energy efficiency of both buildings. The approach creates two distinctive buildings with their own identity, making a valuable contribution to the surrounding environment.

Office

The colour palette has been informed by the historic building tonality in the adjacent conservation areas and the contemporary buildings in the locality. A corrugated perforated aluminium and oxidised copper screen back-fixed to insulated wall panel or full height glazing are proposed to be the main elements used for the office building. Each double-height bay will differ in the arrangement and number of solid, glazed and screened panels to create a sense of variation on each elevation. Back-painted glass spandrels have also been incorporated within the design to provide a transition between glazed and solid elements.

Building on this materiality, the design of each elevation has been considered and each elevation has an aesthetic treatment suitable to its location. For example, some of the south facing windows incorporate solar panels maximising the sustainability credentials of the building, whilst the north elevation includes protruding winter gardens to take advantage of the views over the River Irwell.

The proposed materiality concept seeks to deliver a new building that conveys a unique and contemporary aesthetic, which harnesses the Proposed Development as a key landmark building.

Residential Building

The proposed residential building includes three conjoined hexagonal towers. Rusty tones are proposed for the façade panels, inspired by the contextual historic colour palette found in the surrounding area, gradually changing to a lighter tone towards the crown of the building, altering every two stories. The building uses high quality materials including polished and ribbed concrete, GRC banding, anodised aluminium, corrugated and perforated rainscreen panels and glazing.

Overall, the Proposed Development will employ high quality materials which seeks to respond to the Site's history, the historic industrial context therefore enhancing the local streetscape.

Public Realm

The public realm seeks to respond to the opportunities set out in the St Mary's Parsonage SRF, namely:

- Improved streetscape along St Mary's Parsonage and Bridge Street;
- Creating high quality, accessible public realm through careful landscaping, to bring a higher level of activity to the area; and,
- The activation of the waterfront location.

The redevelopment of the public realm surrounding Albert Bridge House offers the opportunity to amplify the character of the River Irwell within the City Centre and create a greener public realm along its banks, which will bring people closer to the river and improve the conditions for wildlife.

The public realm will replace Albert Bridge Gardens, an area of space adjacent to the River Irwell that is currently unmanaged and uninviting, and Motor Square, predominantly consisting of hard materials and Trinity Bridge. The redesigned public realm along the River Irwell and spaces created within the site will create a new typology of open space in the area, with a more verdant character connecting the Site to the existing blue and green network throughout the City.

The public realm is structured as a succession of four character areas, culminating in a public square located on the Site's southwestern boundary, with Bridge Street:

- Albert Bridge Square;
- River Walk;
- Building Interface; and,
- Motor Square Connection.

The design of the character areas has been informed by two overarching themes; woodland glade planting from the northern boundary and riverside ecology, and alpine planting rising up the commercial building on the stepping roof terrace.

Albert Bridge Square is the central space within the Proposed Development, and it provides a setting to accommodate and celebrate a variety of uses that will animate the public realm. The square has been designed to be verdant and multifunctional, and constantly animated by the activities which will take place within it.

The use and location of hard materials and tree planting within the square will help to define the area as the most spatially significant public space within the Proposed Development, with the trees with Tree Protection Orders retained and preserved within the square. The well-considered combination of hard and soft landscaping elements will help to ensure the square possesses a relaxing and sociable atmosphere.

There is an ambition for the natural Portland stone cladding on the existing Albert Bridge House to be re-purposed and re-used as a series of 'broken' tile paving elements to sit in and around the existing TPO trees, recognising the historic use of the Site.

The **River Walk** will be a linear route, linking the western corner of the Site to Trinity Bridge on the Site's eastern edge. The River Walk is punctuated by a series of different elements, which responds to how the ground floor uses of the building are populated.

To the western end of the route, the topography of the riverbank will be remodelled to create a generously proportioned slope which gently leads down to the embankment wall of the river. The slope will be planted with a biodiverse meadow that will encourage wildlife to populate the banks of the river. Adjacent to the slope, a raised walkway will create a safe pedestrian route for the public along the banks of the River Irwell connecting to Trinity Bridge on the Site's eastern extremity.

The raised walkway will extend out over the generously planted slope in two locations, creating viewing platforms that provide views over the River Irwell.

A dining terrace will be located at the eastern end of the River Walk. This will have a verdant character and offer views out towards the River.

The **Motor Square Connection** character area has been designed to allow for unobstructed access to the commercial building and the public square directly to the south of the Site. Formal street planting is proposed adding greenery to the approach along St Mary's Parsonage, while framing the view through to Motor Square for pedestrians approaching from Trinity Bridge. A connection to Trinity Square has also been incorporated into the design of the development.

The public realm at the **building interfaces** with the residential and commercial buildings is an important aspect of the landscape design. The strategy is designed to draw people into the spaces and through the Site. The ground floor of the commercial building is populated by independent cafés, shops and restaurants; therefore, the public realm has been designed with this in mind. There is an ample amount of space to spill out into the public realm, helping to amplify a sense of vibrancy and activity within the public realm spatially defined by a series of seating steps, tree planting and stairs.

Where the residential building meets the square, the ground floor is populated by the lobby entrance and a commercial unit. On this side of the building, there is a generously proportioned area of paving to enable external seating for the unit. A large specimen tree is located adjacent to the residential lobby entrance marking its location and giving it prominence along Bridge Street.

Full details of the hard and soft landscaping are included in the Design and Access Statement prepared by Studio Egret West.

Cycle: Provision and Amenities

368 secure cycle parking spaces (100% per unit) are proposed for the residential element of the proposal and 343 spaces are proposed as part of the office element. Externally, 50 spaces are proposed.

The residential spaces are proposed to be located on the first floor of the building which also offers space for cycle cleaning and fixing. This is accessed by an external shallow staircase with side bike ramp and a set of cycle lifts and is made up of 44 Sheffield stand spaces and 324 double tier spaces.

The office spaces are provided in the basement of the commercial building, alongside showers, changing facilities and lockers. The entrance is at the south termination of the Trinity Bridge, connecting the entry moment within the building to the wider cycle network running along the River Irwell. The spaces will be accessed internally via the cycle lift or cycle stair.

This provision is in line with the Council's cycle parking standards, as set out within Core Strategy Policy T2, which sets out that developments should provide a level of car parking which reflects the realistic requirements of the users of the development.

Car Parking Provision

The Site is located in a highly sustainable location with numerous public transport hubs within reasonable walking or cycling distance. As such, minimal car parking spaces are provided as part of the Proposed Development.

During scoping discussions, both the Council and Transport for Greater Manchester requested consideration of a car-free development, however, this was not deemed to be feasible based on market advice, a desire to provide car club spaces and accessible parking. The level of car parking proposed has been reduced from the originally proposed 36 spaces to 24, in recognition of the Site's excellent accessibility and a desire to minimise vehicular impacts. This has subsequently been agreed in principle with MCC Highways.

The proposed car parking spaces for both the residential and office development will be provided within the basement. The residential spaces will be comprised of the following:

- 4 accessible spaces;
- 3 standard Car Club spaces; and,
- 1 space for deliveries.

The car parking spaces for the office building will be comprised of the following:

- 8 accessible spaces;
- 6 standard Car Club spaces; and,
- 2 spaces for deliveries.

As set out within the Transport Statement prepared by Curtins, there are a number of publicly available car parks situated within a 550 m walking catchment – approximately a six-minute walk from the Site.

Servicing and Access

Five potential interventions to the highway network have been envisaged to enable efficient servicing and refuse collection at the Site. These consist of the following:

- A new access ramp down to the basement car park from Bridge Street;
- A new loading bay on Bridge Street for refuse and servicing of the residential plot;
- A new shared surface access into an area of public realm from Bridge Street to provide fire and maintenance access only;
- A new shared surface access to a sub-station for the commercial building; and,
- A new loading bay on St Mary's Parsonage to accommodate refuse and servicing of the commercial block.

The basement will contain three bays that can be used for deliveries – these will be standard car parking spaces that will only accommodate cars.

The location and layout of the service bays have been subject to options analysis during the design process. Through undertaking an iterative design process, a servicing layout is proposed and management arrangements that maintains pedestrian access as well as streetscape and does not detract from the overall quality of the proposed buildings.

The new loading bay on Bridge Street will predominantly be used for refuse collection, servicing and potentially drop-off and pick-up activities associated with the residential building. The existing footway will be diverted behind the bay and a 3-metre footway will be offered for adoption or rights will be granted. A new loading bay is also introduced on St Mary's Parsonage to serve the office building and associated flexible commercial units.

A new shared surface access from Bridge Street into the public realm area, will be provided to accommodate fire access and substation repair and replacement.

A small, shared surface access will be provided in front of the commercial building for substation repair and replacement – this will rarely be used as substation repair is estimated to take place every 10+ years.

With regards to refuse collection, a management company will be appointed to transfer the waste from the office and residential uses to the bin stores. Occupiers of the amenity and retail units will need to transfer waste from within their units to the bin stores after they close, every day. The management company and staff will be responsible for the movement of the bins from the bin stores to the collection points on collection day.

5. Planning Policy Framework

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning decisions to be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

This section examines the planning policy framework which forms the basis for the consideration of the Proposed Development.

Local Development Plan

Within the context of Manchester, the Development Plan comprises the following documents which are relevant to the Proposed Development:

- Manchester Core Strategy (2012);
- Manchester Proposals Map (2012);
- Saved Policies of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan (2005);
- Greater Manchester Joint Waste Development Plan Document (2012); and,
- Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Plan (2013).

Manchester Core Strategy (2012)

The Core Strategy was adopted on 12 July 2012. It sets the overall strategic direction for planning in Manchester over the plan period from 2012 to 2027. The policies of the Core Strategy establish where major development and other forms of investment should be located in order to be sustainable, meet local needs and take full advantage of opportunities.

In regard to the local economy, the Core Strategy emphasises that the economic priorities for Manchester are to increase productivity, grow the market and labour force, attract investment, improve skills and support businesses. This is identified by Strategic Objective 2 which states:

SO2. Support a significant further improvement of the City's economic performance and spread the benefits of this growth across the City to reduce economic, environmental and social disparities, and to help create inclusive sustainable communities.

The relevant Core Strategy policies are identified and assessed within Section 6 of this Planning Statement.

Saved Policies of the Unitary Development Plan (1995)

The Unitary Development Plan was adopted in July 1995. Coinciding with the adoption of the Core Strategy in 2012 significant proportions of the UDP have been replaced, however, a number of policies were saved on 11 July 2012 and remain extant.

Material Considerations

The following published policies, executive reports and guidance documents are of material consideration relevant to the Proposed Development:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021;
- National Design Guide;
- Draft Places for Everyone (2021);

- Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document (2007);
- Providing for Housing Choice SPD and Guidance (2008);
- Manchester Residential Quality Design Guidance SPD (2017);
- St Mary's Parsonage Strategic Regeneration Framework (2020);
- Manchester Climate Change Framework: 2020-2025 (2020);
- Design for Access 2 (2003);
- Manchester's Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (2015); and,
- City Centre Transport Strategy to 2040 (2021).

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (revised version published July 2021) articulates the priorities of the Plan for Growth within planning policy.

At the heart of the 2021 revised NPPF lies the 'presumption' in favour of sustainable development, which supports proposals that are in accordance with policies in an up-to-date Development Plan. Sustainable development is about positive growth – making economic, environmental and social progress for this and future generations.

The NPPF states that 'the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development' (paragraph 7). It summarises the objective of sustainable development as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The purpose of the planning system is to achieve sustainable development. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF states that to achieve this, there are three overarching objectives, which need to be pursued mutually.

- **Economic** - 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;
- **Social** - 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,
- **Environmental** - 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.

Places for Everyone 2021 (Draft) (Emerging LDF Document)

Places for Everyone is a long-term plan of nine Greater Manchester districts for jobs, new homes, and sustainable growth. It has been published by the GMCA on behalf of the nine districts (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford, Wigan).

The plan is a joint development plan of the nine districts which will determine the kind of development that takes place in their boroughs, maximising the use of brownfield land and urban spaces while protecting Green Belt land from the risk of unplanned

development. It will also ensure all new developments are sustainably integrated into Greater Manchester's transport network or supported by new infrastructure.

The plan is the result of a process that began as the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) in 2014 and has been informed by the feedback received from residents, businesses and the development industry to previous consultations on that Plan. The nine districts decided to continue to produce a joint plan following the withdrawal of Stockport Council from the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework.

A period of public consultation ran between 9 August 2021 and 3 October 2021. Following this, the Places for Everyone Joint Development Document was submitted for independent examination on 14 February 2022. The Inspectors were appointed by the Secretary of State on 1 March 2022. It is anticipated that the plan will be adopted by the local authorities in 2023. Whilst the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan is not adopted it is at the final stage of consultation and so it is considered to carry some weight in the determination of planning applications.

The Draft Plan outlines a target for 56,528 homes to be built within these 9 districts between 2021-2037. Draft Policy JP-H4 outlines that new housing development should be delivered at a density appropriate to the location, reflecting the relative accessibility of the Site by walking, cycling and public transport, in accordance with the minimum densities set out in the Plan. As part of this it notes that Manchester is a key economic driver for the City Region and will be crucial in meeting the region's housing delivery targets. It suggests that Manchester should deliver 3,333 homes per year and recommends that for the City Centre the minimum net residential density is 200 dwellings per ha.

The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan sets out 10 strategic objectives:

1. Meeting our housing need;
2. Create neighbourhoods of choice;
3. Playing our part in ensuring a thriving and productive economy in all parts of Greater Manchester;
4. Maximise the potential arising from our national and international assets;
5. Reduce inequalities and improve prosperity;
6. Promote the sustainable movement of people, goods and information;
7. Playing our part in ensuring that Greater Manchester is a more resilient and carbon neutral city-region;
8. Improve the quality of our natural environment and access to green spaces;
9. Ensure access to physical and social infrastructure; and,
10. Promote the health and wellbeing of communities.

Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document (2007) and Technical Guidance (2015)

The Guide to Development in Manchester - Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance (SPD) was originally adopted on 11 April 2007. The document reflects and provides guidance on the importance of creating attractive, well designed, well maintained neighbourhoods. It includes a set of reasoned principles which will guide developers, designers and residents to the sort of development which is anticipated in Manchester.

In addition, technical guidance for developers was published in December 2015. It is composed of two documents, GD03 Environmental Protection and GD05 Planning and Noise.

The documents reflect and provide guidance on the importance of creating attractive, well designed, well maintained neighbourhoods. It includes a set of reasoned principles which will guide developers, designers and residents to the sort of development which is anticipated in Manchester.

Providing for Housing Choice SPD (2008)

This document provides planning guidance about the mix of new housing provision required in Manchester to meet the requirements of the City's planning policies and government guidance about planning policies for housing provision.

The SPD highlights that a core driver of success will be the creation of "Neighbourhoods of Choice" with truly sustainable communities where people choose to live because of the quality of life on offer:

"It is through the creation of neighbourhoods of choice that (we) will succeed in delivering the household growth needed to underpin the City Region's economic growth potential. The creation of neighbourhoods of choice will demand an integrated and planned approach that can ensure that there are quality public services in the right location, along with quality local amenities, a choice of housing, a quality local environment and low levels of crime and disorder."

One of the central themes in the 'Neighbourhoods of Choice' vision is that there should be wide choice of housing, across tenures, with higher levels of home ownership than currently exist and higher overall property values. The needs of existing residents should also be met Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document (2007) and Technical Guidance (2015).

Manchester Residential Quality Design Guidance SPD (2017)

In addition, Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document (2007) and Technical Guidance (2015) provides design guidance for developers. The Residential Quality Guide to Development in Manchester sets a number of design criteria that should be followed for residential schemes.

The document specifically outlines the considerations, qualities, and opportunities that will help to deliver high quality residential development as part of successful and sustainable neighbourhoods across Manchester.

St Mary's Parsonage Strategic Regeneration Framework (2020)

Please refer to Section 3 for further details on the St Mary's Parsonage SRF, including site specific considerations.

Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020-2025 and Manchester Zero Carbon Framework (2020)

There is increasing evidence of global temperature rises and the prospect therefore of increasing incidences of extreme weather as well as risk of water and food shortages and flooding, all causing increasing insecurity. Whilst Manchester may not feel these effects as severely as other areas globally, there is an identified urgent need for all cities to consider what they need to do to play their full part in addressing climate change.

In November 2018, Manchester City Council made a series of commitments, informed by the Manchester Climate Change Agency's (MCCA) work with the world-renowned Tyndall Centre for Climate Research based at University of Manchester. The key commitments are as follows:

- To becoming zero carbon by 2038, significantly accelerated from the original target of 2050;
- To adopt a carbon budget and emit only a maximum of 15 million tonnes CO₂ for the period 2018-2100. This has been transposed from a global carbon budget which has been calculated as "likely" to maintain global temperature change within 2°C as agreed in the Paris Agreement; and,
- To achieve a 13% year-on-year reduction in citywide CO₂ emissions from 2018 to achieve this carbon budget.

A draft Manchester Zero Carbon Framework has been developed which sets out the City's overarching approach to meeting its science-based climate change targets over the period 2020-38 and draft action plans for the period 2020-22 are being developed by the Council and other strategic organisations and sectors.

On 10 July 2019, a motion asking Manchester City Council to formally declare a climate emergency was unanimously agreed. The motion declares that climate change is a serious risk to Manchester's future and committed to embedding the issue as an integral part of council decision-making – making sure that all key decisions are taken with the city's target of becoming zero-carbon by 2038 in mind.

It further strengthens the emerging Manchester Zero Carbon Framework. In March 2020 the Executive adopted the Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020-2025. The five-year framework sets out measures that MCC will take in order to reduce carbon emissions from its buildings, energy use and transport.

Design for Access 2

The Design for Access Manual was published in December 2003, it provides a practical guidance to inclusive design. It requires developments to be fully inclusive and accessible and the Council's vision is for Manchester to be recognised as the most accessible City in Europe. MCC recognises that inclusive design needs to take account of cross-impairment and community-based issues.

The aim of Design for Access 2 is to provide guidance on best practice. However, it is acknowledged that it may not always be possible to meet all the standards. Design principles that will help to achieve accessible development that are relevant to the Proposed Development include the approach taken to developing inclusive design, the key issues and difficulties of the particular scheme, and the sources of advice and guidance used.

MCC has agreed a hierarchy of road users, which prioritises the needs of pedestrians and disabled people, cyclists, public transport and finally other users. This hierarchy should be respected in the design and layout of all new developments.

Streets should be designed for local people to use. They should be attractive, accessible social spaces, which encourage use by all sections of the local community. Street furniture must be well designed, with clear function and positioned to avoid the creation of obstacles, clutter or confusion.

The Design for Access Manual provides further details and design standards for external areas and for within buildings. These have been considered and incorporated into the development, alongside more up to date statutory accessibility requirements.

Manchester's Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy

Manchester City Council recognises that green and blue infrastructure is an essential part of creating a successful, liveable city. Parks, river valleys, gardens, street trees, green roofs, canals, and many other components all form part of a rich network that is integrated with the built environment in the world's most popular cities.

The vision for green and blue infrastructure in Manchester over the next five years is that by 2025 high quality, well maintained green and blue spaces will be an integral part of all neighbourhoods. The City's communities will be living healthy, fulfilled lives, enjoying access to parks and green spaces and safe green routes for walking, cycling and exercise throughout the City. Businesses will be investing in areas with high environmental quality and attractive surroundings, enjoying access to a healthy, talented workforce. New funding models will be in place, ensuring progress achieved by 2025 can be sustained and provide the platform for ongoing investment in the years to follow.

Manchester's Green and Blue Infrastructure (G&BI) Strategy, together with its Stakeholder Implementation Plan, was approved in July 2015. The strategy is founded on the basis that attractive, multi-functional green and blue infrastructure is a key component of shaping and delivering the quality-of-life people expect and enhancing the City's global image as a place in which to live, work and invest. A detailed summary of how the Proposed Development responds to the strategy is provided in the Design and Access Statement.

City Centre Transport Strategy (2021)

A refreshed City Centre Transport Strategy has been set out by Manchester City Council, following adoption of the original strategy in 2010. The City Centre Transport Strategy needs to support the city's ambition to grow, become carbon neutral by 2038 or sooner, whilst ensuring that it is well-connected to the wider area that it serves.

Consultation on the draft strategy closed in November 2020 and the final strategy has now been updated following 2,400 comments received. The final strategy was published in March 2021 following approval from Salford, Manchester and Greater

Manchester Combined Authorities. This strategy will be reviewed and refreshed periodically but is intended to guide transport-related investment and initiatives in the region through to 2040.

The central aim of the Strategy, for 90% of all trips to the City Centre to be made by sustainable travel before 2040 in the morning peak, is critical to the successful and sustainable growth of the City Centre. The City Centre should be well-connected zero-carbon City Centre at the heart of the North, offering residents, employees and visitors a great place to live, work and visit. The seven core ambitions that support this overall ambition is set out as follows:

Given the high level of support received from the consultation for the overall strategy, the vision for the revised CCTS remains for “a well-connected City Centre at the heart of the North, offering our residents, employees and visitors a great place to work, live and visit”. Similarly, the central aim for 90% of all trips to the City Centre to be made by foot (including people using wheelchairs and with guide dogs), by cycle or using public transport by 2040 in the morning peak remains, as do the seven core ambitions, which are:

- Have a competitive, dynamic and sustainable economy that draws on our distinctive strengths in science, advanced manufacturing, culture, and creative and digital business – cultivating and encouraging new ideas;
- Walking is the main way of getting around the City Centre;
- The City Centre is cleaner and less congested;
- More people choose to cycle to destinations within the City Centre;
- The City Centre benefits from better public transport connections;
- Parking in the City Centre is smarter and integrated with other modes;
- Goods are moved and delivered sustainably and efficiently into and within the City Centre; and,
- Innovation is embraced where it benefits the City Centre and its users.

The CCTS sets the strategic framework for how people will travel into and out of the City Centre, and how they will move within the City Centre. It will set out proposals to further enhance the City’s public transport network and reduce car-based trips over the long term. This will lead to the overall share of public transport, cycling and walking trips increasing as the preferred modes of travel.

Our Manchester Strategy 2016-2025

The Our Manchester Strategy 2016-25 was published by MCC in January 2016 and sets the ambitions for the City for the next decade. The Strategy sets out a vision for Manchester to be in the topflight of world-class cities by 2025, when the City will:

- Have a competitive, dynamic and sustainable economy that draws on our distinctive strengths in science, advanced manufacturing, culture, and creative and digital business – cultivating and encouraging new ideas;
- Possess highly skilled, enterprising and industrious people;
- Be connected, internationally and within the UK;
- Play its full part in limiting the impacts of climate change;
- Be a place where residents from all backgrounds feel safe, can aspire, succeed and live well; and,
- Be clean, attractive, culturally rich, outward-looking and welcoming.

The Our Manchester Strategy also commits to giving the local community and other stakeholders the opportunity to be involved in decision making, with a primary focus on a continuous approach to engagement.

The 'Our Manchester' approach seeks to build a different relationship with residents and communities, recognising that this also means undertaking a different approach to engagement; engagement that is sustainable and driven by the City's communities.

Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance

Planning Practice Guidance

The Planning Policy Guidance ('PPG') was published in March 2012 and is regularly updated. It sets out advice, information and best practice on a wide range of planning issues with the overall objective of becoming a single source for planning guidance which is maintained as a live resource.

The PPG stresses the importance of well-designed places and good design that takes the opportunity to improve the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

National Design Guide

The National Design Guide was published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in 2019. This document forms part of the governments planning practice guidance and was created to outline key characteristics that make well-designed places.

There are 10 characteristics of well-designed places within the National Design Guide:

- Context – enhances the surroundings;
- Identity – attractive and distinctive;
- Built form – a coherent pattern of development;
- Movement – accessible and easy to move around;
- Nature – enhanced and optimised;
- Public Spaces – safe, social and inclusive;
- Uses – mixed and integrated;
- Homes and buildings – functional, healthy and sustainable;
- Resources – efficient and resilient; and,
- Lifespan – made to last.

GD04: Waste Storage and Collection Guidance for New Developments (September 2017)

GD04 is a practical guide to minimum standards to assist in planning and designing systems for the storage and collection of refuse, and for recycling in domestic and commercial properties. It highlights details of the location, volume, management and collection arrangements for domestic and non-domestic waste and recyclable materials must be submitted. It states the MCC encourages all new developments to carefully consider the provision of waste receptacles that encourage recycling.

In summary the GD04 guidance highlights that all new development must include a waste management strategy, which includes the following, as well as a completed waste pro-forma:

- Estimate volumes and types of waste produced by the development;

- Details of internal and external stores for both waste and recycling;
- Location of the proposed collection point and details of the route the collection vehicle will take;
- Details of how waste will be transferred between stores and the collection location; and,
- Details of number and capacity of bins proposed and collection frequency.

Planning and Noise Technical Guidance (June 2022)

The Planning and Noise Technical Guidance aims to provide help and advice in relation to noise in a planning context to encourage good acoustic design. It outlines what is expected in relation to current guidance and policy with the aspiration that new developments achieve the highest possible standards without compromising the health and well-being of people that live and work within Manchester. The document provides guidance concerning the assessment and prediction of environmental noise associated with planning proposals for a particular development.

Summary

The above policy and supplementary planning documents have informed the Proposed Development and are assessed further in Section 6 of this document.

6. Planning Policy Assessment

This Section assesses the proposals against the policies in the Development Plan and in relation to the key planning considerations of relevance to the Proposed Development.

Where material considerations provide additional requirements or detail to the policies of the Development Plan that merit discussion, these are considered.

The following matters are considered relevant in terms of assessing the proposals:

- Contribution to Manchester's Vision and Spatial Objectives;
- Principle of Development and Use;
- Design;
- Sustainable design and construction;
- Affordable housing;
- Archaeology;
- Built heritage;
- Townscape;
- Ecology and biodiversity;
- Arboriculture;
- Air quality;
- Ground conditions;
- Flood risk and drainage;
- Transport;
- Noise and vibration;
- Sunlight, daylight and overshadowing;
- Wind;
- Safety and security;
- Waste and servicing;
- Construction management;

- TV and radio reception;
- Aviation consideration; and,
- Local labour agreement.

Contribution to Manchester's Vision and Spatial Objectives

The Core Strategy sets out Manchester's 15-year vision for the City 2012 - 2027, which sees Manchester at the front rank of cities in Europe and the rest of the world, with a growing economy driven by the strength of the Regional Centre. The vision states that Manchester's knowledge-based economy will flourish within an entrepreneurial community, characterised by a fully skilled, inclusive working population.

To achieve this vision, the Core Strategy sets out a number of Strategic Objectives (SO) for the City. These include:

SO1: Provide a framework within which the sustainable development of the City can contribute to halting climate change.

SO2: Support a significant further improvement of the City's economic performance and spread the benefits of this growth across the City to reduce economic, environmental and social disparities, and to help create inclusive sustainable communities.

SO3: Provide for a significant increase in high quality housing provision at sustainable locations throughout the City, to both address demographic needs and to support economic growth.

SO4: Provide a network of distinctive, attractive and high-quality centres, strengthening local identity, providing essential services close to homes and local access to healthy food.

SO5: Improve the physical connectivity of the City, through sustainable and accessible transport networks, to enhance its functioning and competitiveness and provide access to jobs, education, services, retail, leisure and recreation.

SO6: Protect and enhance both the natural and built environment of the City and ensure the sustainable use of natural resources, in order to mitigate and adapt to climate change, support biodiversity and wildlife, improve air, water and land quality, recreational opportunities and provide networks of high quality green infrastructure, ensuring that the City is inclusive and attractive to residents, workers, investors and visitors.

These objectives have been translated into individual policies within the Core Strategy, against which the Proposed Development has been assessed within this Statement.

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 City Centre will be supported, subject to the proposal's impact on key aspects of the city's heritage and character. New development should fully exploit opportunities to contribute to the improvement of the City Centre in terms of character and function, taking account of other policies in the Core Strategy.

A commitment to good design which takes full cognisance of the sites' setting and character runs through national and local planning policy and guidance. Core Strategy Policy SP1 requires that all development make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice including creating well designed places that enhance or create character.

Response

The Proposed Development is located in a prominent City Centre location, along Bridge Street, a road that links Manchester City Centre to Salford and fronts onto the River Irwell. Redevelopment of the Site provides for two buildings of a unique and exceptional design quality, alongside a significant area of public realm, demonstrating a commitment to good design, in line with the Core Strategy and the St Mary's Parsonage SRF.

The redevelopment of the Site will support the city centre's role as the Region's core focus for economic growth and providing access to job opportunities. It will provide office accommodation within a highly sustainable area, together with a range of commercial opportunities, to deliver the potential for the creation of a wide range of job roles in all sectors and levels of

experience. In addition, the residential element provides high quality units in a range of sizes within the City Centre within easy access to a range of employment opportunities and other social and leisure opportunities the City Centre has to offer.

The landscaping strategy and approach to public realm opens up the Site and importantly the River Irwell to the public. Creating connections through the Site, across to the City Centre and to Salford, alongside creating connections to the existing blue and green infrastructure. This will significantly improve physical connectivity, whilst creating a distinctive space for people to enjoy.

Overall, the Proposed Development is in line with the Core Strategy's vision and spatial objectives. The remainder of this Section assesses the Proposed Development in relation to the relevant policies of the Development Plan.

Principle of Development and Use

Core Strategy Policy SP1 sets out that the Regional Centre will be the focus for economic and commercial development, leisure and cultural activity. Additionally, Core Strategy Policy SP1 states that all development should have regard to the issues and strategy for each regeneration area as described in the Strategic Regeneration Frameworks.

Core Strategy Policy EC1 states that Manchester City Centre is a key location for the most significant employment generating uses. Core Strategy Policy EC1 requires details of Local Employment Agreements should contain a commitment to work with the Work Skills Team to ensure that employment opportunities resulting from development are made available to Manchester residents through existing recruitment offer and allow hard to reach groups equal opportunity to be successful in applying.

Core Strategy Policy EC3 states that employment generating uses including offices and other commercial development will be encouraged in the Regional Centre providing the development is well connected by sustainable transport to both the wider city and surrounding residential areas, and where the scale and type of office does not undermine employment in the City Centre. EC3 also advises that housing will be an appropriate use within the Regional Centre although this should complement the development of mixed use employment areas.

Core Strategy Policy EC8 states that Manchester City Centre is expected to deliver approximately 14ha of employment land and that the Plan promotes development which has regard to ensuring employment within Central Manchester complements those uses.

Core Strategy Policy CC1 supports high density offices and states that the Council will give particular encouragement and support for these uses in the City Centre.

Policy CC7 states 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. Other than specifically identified locations it states that residential development will be supported as part of schemes which include employment.

Core Strategy Policy CC8 identifies the types of development and approach to development which is considered most likely to deliver the vision for the City Centre and development which reflects this will generally be supported.

Core Strategy Policy H1 Overall Housing Provision states that Approximately 60,000 new dwellings will be provided for in Manchester between March 2009 and March 2027. New housing will be predominantly in the North, East, City Centre and Central Manchester. Within the Inner Areas in North, East and Central Manchester densities around 40 units per hectare will be supported. The type, size and tenure of the housing mix will be assessed on a site by site basis and be influenced by local housing need and economic viability. The Policy outlines that 90% of residential development should be located on previously developed land.

The Core Strategy Glossary also notes that brownfield sites are the priority for development over greenfield sites and Manchester City Council is required to build at least 90% of new houses on brownfield sites.

Section 5 of the NPPF emphasises the Government's ambition to significantly increase the supply of homes. It sets that Local Planning Authorities should undertake an assessment of the needs for homes and with strategic policies made based on this assessment. This is reflected above in Core Strategy Policy H1; however, it should be noted that the Places for Everyone Draft at JP H-1 sets out that Manchester should deliver 56,528 new homes between 2021 and 2037 which would equate to 3,533 new homes per annum.

The Proposed Development must also consider the St Mary's Parsonage SRF as a material consideration. The SRF intends the Site (Albert Bridge House site and Council owned car park) to come forward for redevelopment in a comprehensive manner. The implementation and delivery section of the SRF provides indicative timescales in relation to development coming forward on this site and outlines a comprehensive approach across three phases comprising three buildings, two offices and a hotel. The indicative timescales suggest that this is based on a development that comes forward in phases, over a number of years, subject to market conditions.

Response

Proposed Development

The Proposed Development seeks to redevelop Albert Bridge House and create a new destination in the St Mary's Parsonage area, that will take advantage of the riverside location. Fundamentally, this proposal will deliver comprehensive redevelopment in one phase through the development of a 50,850 sq. m (GEA excluding basement) office building, a residential building providing 367 homes, ground floor retail and commercial space, and extensive public realm enhancements. Importantly, the Proposed Development will secure a single phase of major development.

The Proposed Development will deliver a differentiated office proposal to the market, providing a highly sustainable building with inherent flexibility allowing floorspace to be taken as desired by future occupiers. This will support the future growth, enhanced productivity and success of the City. It represents the next phase of development in the St Mary's Parsonage SRF area, creating two landmark buildings including a gateway tall building on Bridge Street signifying the arrival into the City from Salford as envisaged in the SRF.

The Site is located within the Regional Centre, as defined by Policy EC3 of MCC's Core Strategy (2012) and the Site also falls within the City Centre, as defined by Policy CC1 of the Core Strategy. In addition, the Site is included within Zone 2 of the St Mary's Parsonage SRF for redevelopment. Therefore, the principle of development for a high density, commercially-led mixed-use scheme at the Site is established.

The SRF has a vision to create a commercially-led mixed-use neighbourhood that is fully integrated with the rest of the City Centre. It goes on to state that it will be a place where people 'live, work, relax and socialise.' The vision statement states that *'Parsonage Gardens will build upon its existing asset base, and its positive adjacencies to other parts of the City Centre, to successfully host an eco-system of best in class employment – from global businesses to start ups - and other high quality uses including residential, hotel, retail and leisure'*. However, the SRF notes that *"Based on the current market context and identified need, it is not envisaged that new development in this area will bring forward residential uses"* (para 6.16).

It is considered that the Proposed Development will retain this overall vision; as discussed below, the redevelopment coming forward in the SRF area, including the Proposed Development, ensures a commercially-led mixed use neighbourhood is being delivered.

Office Use

The office floorspace proposed is fully in line with the Core Strategy. With regard to policies SP1, EC1, EC3, EC8, CC1 and CC8, the Proposed Development will ensure that the city centre remains the focus of employment generating activities through job creation during both the construction and operational phase of development. This is positioned within a highly sustainable location that promotes high density development to maximise the Proposed Development's contribution to the city's economic development. The Proposed Development will deliver significant employment floorspace within the regional centre, in a location which is highly accessible and connected via sustainable transport modes. Furthermore, in accordance with Policy EC1, with regards to local labour sources, MCC's local labour objectives will be signed up to and addressed in respect of the future construction and operation of the Proposed Development.

The office element is also fully supported in the St Mary's Parsonage SRF.

It is proposed to bring forward the redevelopment of Albert Bridge House and the adjacent car park in one phase of development bringing with it the benefits associated with comprehensive redevelopment. During early feasibility studies detailed options appraisals were undertaken that assessed the appropriate uses at the Site, taking into consideration the strategic policies in the SRF alongside policies in the Development Plan.

Since the adoption of the SRF, a number of office developments are in the pipeline within the SRF area including:

- Redevelopment of House of Fraser to provide office development across floors 1-9 and demolition of adjacent Fraser Building and link bridges and erection of 14-storey office building (Planning Permission Granted);
- Demolition of Alberton House and redevelopment of site to provide an 18-storey office building (Planning Permission Granted); and,
- Redevelopment of Reedham House to create a new 13-storey office building (Planning Application Pending).

The overall vision and aim of the SRF, to create a commercially-led neighbourhood, is therefore being fully realised, particularly when adding 50,850 sq. m of office floorspace (GEA excluding basement) proposed at Albert Bridge House.

There is continued demand for Grade A office floorspace within Manchester City Centre, as outlined in Section 3 of this Statement ('Manchester Office Market'). With the City requiring larger floorplate buildings to keep it ahead of other regional cities. The scale and location of the proposed scheme provides the ideal platform to deliver a 'best-in class' sustainable new build office scheme, with an array of different size floorplates up to 2,754 Net Internal Area. As noted in Section 3 there is strong demand for larger floorplates above 1,858 sq. m (20,000 sq. ft) in Manchester City Centre, evidenced by the past success of schemes such as XYZ, No.8 First Street, Three New Bailey, No.1 Circle Square and Manchester Goods Yard, which were either 100% pre-let, or at least 50% let by practical completion. The majority of the large notable transactions over recent years have been in large floorplate buildings – Booking, Roku, CIG etc. These larger occupiers aim to be over a minimum number of floors.

Over the recent years inward investors have chosen the larger floorplate buildings and the city requires this product to keep it ahead of other regional cities. Albert Bridge House is therefore well positioned to provide much needed sizeable floorplates to meet future occupier demand and is one of the only opportunities within the city to deliver this size of floorplate within an established location in the heart of the city.

The SRF clearly anticipates that office will be the prominent use on the Site and the current proposals reflect this. To achieve the larger plate size required (20,000sq. ft +) and height anticipated for the Site to create a landmark building, one large scale office building is needed. Two office buildings would not provide sufficient floorspace for the larger plate requirement. This has resulted in a high-density office development. The Site allows for a building of a scale and height that cannot easily be located elsewhere in the city centre. The result of this is that the proposed office development is designed in a distinctive way, providing a rational approach to design resulting in a highly sustainable building with an array of floorplates, flexible space and external terraces. An offer unique to this Site.

The Proposed Development has the potential to provide exemplary workspaces within Manchester City Centre. The delivery of premium office space in the city centre will contribute to the economic success of the Greater Manchester Region. Furthermore, as companies are increasing environmental awareness and corporate social responsibility it is anticipated that the sustainability credentials of the building will be of significant appeal. The office element of the Proposed Development not only provides for a deliverable and viable scheme, but it will also set a new benchmark for the quality of commercial office space.

Consideration of SRF Proposed Hotel Use

The SRF also includes provision for hotel at the Site. This use was considered early in the process as an option, however it was determined that an alternative residential use would better achieve the SRF vision for this key gateway site to create a commercially-led mixed-use neighbourhood that is fully integrated with the rest of the City Centre and the SRF Vision to create "a place where people 'live, work, relax and socialise'" and allow for the comprehensive public realm included as part of the Proposed Development.

Including a hotel would reduce the opportunities for site permeability and the provision of an activated and welcoming area of public realm, due to the servicing and access requirements for hotel use, such as increased groundspace, public highways interventions and increased waste collection, deliveries and cleaning associated with the hospitality sector. In addition, an office plus hotel scheme would need to be delivered in two phases, which could more likely undermine the attractiveness of the proposed offices for future occupiers due to the prospect of being located adjacent to a construction site for several years.

Residential Use

As detailed in Section 3 (Residential Context), Manchester's economic and population growth continues to fuel residential demand in the City Centre particularly in Build to Rent accommodation.

Given the Site's strategic location, it is geographically well-placed to play a significant role in satisfying this demand for new homes to support population and economic growth. The City Centre location offers many of the ingredients sought by residents in terms of location, scale, accessibility to public transport and employment. It is a short walk from the amenities of the Spinningfields, St John's Enterprise City, Deansgate, Castlefield and Salford, as well as the rest of the Regional Centre, which provide further cultural, leisure, retail and arts facilities.

Including residential at the Site would help the SRF deliver on its vision to be a place where people 'live, work, relax and socialise.' Residential use will aid viability and contribute to vitality of place in the SRF area. It will add a further emphasis on social and governance components required to create a sense of place - people will make this place – there will be activity and natural surveillance throughout the day and into the evening, providing footfall for supporting leisure and recreation uses, maximising the potential of the public realm and activation of the river. In line with this model, the inclusion of residential to support commercial areas has worked successfully throughout the City in areas such as Circle Square, St John's / Enterprise City and First Street.

In addition, a residential building on the Site allows for a tall building required by this gateway location. The positioning the residential building on the River Irwell and Bridge Street calls for a building of scale. Typically, hotels in the City do not allow for a building of such a scale - the tallest hotel in the pipeline in Manchester is 20 storeys, and this is a dual operated hotel block. Hotels are generally much smaller than this.

Residential use on the Site fully complies with the Local Development Plan and is in line with Policy EC3 that notes that high density housing will be an appropriate use within the Regional Centre where it complements the development of mixed use employment areas. CC7 which supports housing as part of schemes that includes employment and Policy H1 which identifies the City Centre as suitable for housing.

Residential development will bring a number of benefits, notably, the new homes will be split into one, two and three-bedroom apartments to support a mixture of housing types in Manchester, including families which is currently limited. The provision of new homes to cater to the different needs of Mancunians and future residents and which will support the economic growth of the City-Region.

Assuming all residential units are fully occupied and considering the anticipated unit mix, it is estimated the Proposed Development would accommodate up to approximately 1,208 residents (118no. 1B2P, 49no. 2B3P, 157no. 2B4P, 28no. 3B4P, 5no. 3B5P and 10no. 3B6P Homes).

These additional households will support additional household spend, increasing local expenditure including on retail, household goods, food and drink, local transport, recreation and leisure and other expenditure likely to be spent locally. The addition of new homes will also generate additional Council Tax revenue for Manchester City Council.

Summary

Overall, the Proposed Development makes best use of the locational characteristics of the Site to deliver a new 'best in class' commercial-led development that will attract a mixture of occupiers, business and new residents into the City Centre, bringing in new social and economic activity within Manchester. Importantly, it increases the prospects of a comprehensive and viable redevelopment of the Site in one phase, bringing with it the associated benefits of the extensive public realm proposed.

In line with Core Strategy Policy CC3, the proposed residential development forms part of scheme which includes a significant amount of employment development, which has been maximised on this site through a 19 storey 50, 850 sq. m (GEA) building, and will thus contribute positively to the economic regeneration of the City. The provision of a high-quality office building alongside a residential tower contributes significantly towards the regeneration initiatives in the area - thus maintaining Manchester's growing economy and the demand for people to live close to the place they work and places they socialise.

Design

Design Principles, Appearance and Materiality

Core Strategy Policy EN1 (Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas) states that all development in Manchester will be expected to follow the seven principles of urban design (character, continuity and enclosure, public realm, ease of movement, legibility, adaptability and diversity) and have regard to the strategic character area in which the development is located.

Core Strategy Policy CC9 (Design and Heritage) requires the design of new buildings in the City Centre to be of the highest standard whilst preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance.

Chapter 12 of the NPPF (2021) emphasises the great importance placed on the creation of high-quality buildings and places; 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. A number of factors help to ensure that developments are contributing to the creation of well-designed places:

- Function well and add to the overall quality of the area, over the lifetime of the development;
- Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- Are sympathetic to local character and history;
- Establish or maintain a strong sense of place to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places;
- Optimise the potential of the site and support local facilities and transport networks; and,
- Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being.

Other relevant material considerations, as listed in Section 5 are Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document (2007) and Technical Guidance (2015); The Manchester Residential Quality Guide (2017); Design for Access 2; and the St Mary's and Parsonage SRF.

Response

The Proposed Development has been designed by a highly experienced design team, led by Studio Egret West. The core design team has undertaken an extensive contextual analysis of the Site and surroundings and recognise the high-profile nature of the Site. In this respect, a significant amount of time has been spent developing the proposal through multiple design stages to deliver a high-quality development that not only secures the viable future for the Site, but also delivers demonstrable enhancements and regeneration benefits to the surrounding area.

The Proposed Development has been through a process of close consultation with the LPA and key stakeholders including statutory and non-statutory consultees, Ward Councillors and the general public. The proposed design is therefore a considered response, which provides a best in class development that will positively contribute to the local streetscape and wider built environment. The Proposed Development will improve the public realm and connectivity around the Site, and provides new, high quality office space, complemented by commercial space opening out onto the river, as well as a large number of residential dwellings.

Through the design development, the layout and scale of the Site has been refined to particularly respond to Policy EN1 so that the Proposed Development provides the optimum, viable design solutions, whilst providing high-quality additions to Manchester's built environment.

The Proposed Development is compliant with Core Strategy Policy CC9 through the delivery of a high quality scheme. As detailed in Section 4 of this Statement, the Proposed Development will include a palette of high-quality materials that complements the surrounding built context whilst responding to the local and site-specific industrial heritage. Importantly it will also deliver significant public realm enhancements, improving connectivity within the River Irwell, the St Mary's Parsonage area and throughout the City and Salford.

The layout, scale, massing and appearance of the Proposed Development have been assessed within the TVIA and Heritage Assessments undertaken in relation to the Proposed Development in line with Policy CC9. These assessments have concluded that the Site has an existing relationship with the surrounding areas of Manchester and Salford which contain a number of existing and emerging vertical elements, and that on balance, the Proposed Development will sit within the existing townscape character at the regional and district level.

The existing site is under-utilised in its current condition; the Proposed Development will reinforce and complement the surrounding and emerging context, including responding to the design principles set out within the St Mary’s Parsonage SRF.

Table 6.1 below provides details of how the Proposed Development responds to the guiding principles set out within the SRF in relation to Albert Bridge House.

Table 6.1: Proposed Development Response to St Mary’s Parsonage SRF Principles

Guiding Design Principles for Albert Bridge House	
SRF outlines that Albert Bridge House is located within the south west part of the SRF area and is considered to have the capacity to accommodate taller buildings, which could act as a landmark and improve legibility in the City Centre.	The context of the SRF area has been considered when assessing the height of the Proposed Development. The Proposed Development will deliver a high-quality mixed-use scheme, including a new 19-storey sustainable office building with supporting ground floor commercial, leisure and food and drinks uses, and a 45-storey residential building in the southwest of the SRF area. These landmark buildings signify the entry to the City.
Identifies importance of Trinity footbridge approach and expectation for landowners to collaborate to deliver improved access.	A key aspect of the Proposed Development is to open up the Site’s interaction with the Trinity Bridge walkway. The large areas of active frontage proposed within the development, will improve the pedestrian environment and enhancing accessibility and connectivity between Bridge Street, St Mary’s Parsonage and Trinity Bridge.
Sets out opportunities to enhance the public realm, through improving the streetscape along St Mary’s Parsonage and Bridge Street, creating high quality, accessible public realm through careful landscaping and activating the waterfront location through design.	The context of the SRF has been carefully considered within the design of the public realm. An integral part of the Proposed Development is the public realm enhancements, comprising four different character development areas, that will cater for a variety of spatial programmes. Key to this is the River Walkway opening up the River Irwell to the public. Further detail of the design of these areas are provided within the Design and Access Statement produced by Studio Egret West.
Consideration of surrounding heritage assets, including listed buildings and setting of Conservation Area.	Heritage and TVIA assessments have been undertaken in relation to the Proposed Development. The proximity of the surrounding heritage assets, including Parsonage Gardens Conservation Area and a number of listed buildings have been considered during the design development process and a public benefits assessment is included in Section 8 of this Statement.

Guiding Design Principles for Albert Bridge House

Off-street servicing expected to be continued as part of future proposals.

Two new loading bays are proposed. One is provided along St Mary's Parsonage to allow easy servicing of the office building and one along Bridge Street for refuse and servicing of the residential element. The location and layout of the service bays have been subject to options analysis during the design process. Through undertaking an iterative design process, a servicing layout is proposed and management arrangements that maintains pedestrian access as well as streetscape and does not detract from the overall quality of the proposed buildings.

Seeks to maximise active frontage and minimise any servicing impacts on pedestrians and heritage assets. Better engage with St Mary's Parsonage and seek to include publicly accessible ancillary uses.

Any servicing impacts on the pedestrian environment and nearby heritage assets have been suitably considered as per the above.

The landscaping proposed will improve the pedestrian, cyclist and city user experience, particularly along St Mary's Parsonage and Trinity Bridge walkway.

Accessible food and beverage floorspace is proposed at the ground floor level, activating the street scene and enabling the creation of an improved relationship with the street. Alongside this, the ground floor office entrances will create further activation and provide place-making benefits.

Overall, the Proposed Development will enhance the local streetscape, including St Mary's Parsonage through public realm and landscaping enhancements, the delivery of a high-quality landmark building and the addition of active frontages.

Scale and Density

Core Strategy Policy CC6 focuses high density development in the City Centre whereby land should be used to maximise efficiency. Scale, massing and height will significantly exceed what is appropriate elsewhere in the City and will have regard to the council's policy on tall buildings (EN2). The appropriate scale, massing and height of development in the City Centre will significantly exceed what is appropriate elsewhere in the City.

Core Strategy Policy DM1 (Development Management) states that development should have regard to appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail. In addition, Policy DM1 states that regard should be given to the *"impact on the surrounding area in terms of the design, scale and appearance of the Proposed Development"* and *"development should have regard to the surrounding area."*

The St Mary's Parsonage SRF identifies the opportunity to accommodate taller buildings within the southwest part of the SRF area, whilst delivering improved permeability and enhanced public realm. This area of the SRF relates to Bridge Street, River Irwell and St Mary's Parsonage, including Albert Bridge House.

The SRF specifically identifies that there is an opportunity for a development of scale in the Site's location. In this regard, it notes that the scale and massing of the existing building sets a strong precedent for further height on the Site, alongside a number of other factors including: its adjacency to Spinningfields; the absence of any listed buildings; location on a key arterial route into the city centre; its accessibility by a choice of modes of transport; the extensive river frontage; existing public realm; and the large size of the development Site.

Response

The scale and form of the Proposed Development responds to the surrounding built context and regeneration context with regards to height and massing. Site specific considerations have informed the design, including the location and accessibility of the Site, relationship with the River Irwell (to the north), the relationship with the existing built and historic context, including the Parsonage Gardens Conservation Area.

The Proposed Development is therefore of scale, whilst also grounded within extensive areas of high-quality public realm, enhanced by ground floor activity. The Proposed Development seeks to bring forward a high-quality mixed-use scheme, to deliver a new 19-storey sustainable office building and a 45-storey residential building both with supporting ground floor commercial, leisure and food and drinks uses, with associated car parking, cycle parking, landscaping and public realm.

The provision of the taller building fronting Bridge Street has been directly influenced by the SRF, Core Strategy Policy CC6 and EN2. With the scale of development stepping down as part of the office element as the Site gets closer to the Conservation Area.

Full details of layout scale and massing are included in section 4 of this Statement and within the Design and Access Statement.

Overall, taking into account the Proposed Development's layout, scale and massing, the scheme is considered to be compliant with the relevant policies of the Development Plan and National Planning Policy, including Core Strategy Policy DM1 which notes that schemes should have regard for the surrounding area.

Compliance with Core Strategy EN2 and Historic England's Guide to Tall Buildings is further detailed in Section 7 of this report.

Inclusive Design

Core Strategy Policy CC10 A Place for Everyone states that developments will be supported where they promote high standards of accessibility to buildings and across spaces in the City Centre. Core Strategy Policy DM1 Development Management also states that buildings and neighbourhoods should be fully accessible to people with disabilities.

Design for Access 2 is also relevant. This document provides guidance on measures that should be incorporated into schemes to increase their accessibility. Information of how the Proposed Development has been designed to respond to the requirements of Design for Access 2 is contained within the Design and Access Statement prepared with regard to the Proposed Development.

Section 12 of the NPPF sets out the need for developments to be inclusive and accessible for existing and future users.

Response

The Proposed Development has been designed to apply inclusive design principles to the internal spaces, creating a safe and secure environment which respond to the needs of all users. The design has been developed in full consideration of national legislation. This includes the provisions of BS8300: 2001 and The Building Regulations Part M (2015 edition incorporating 2016 amendments). The design also reflects the importance of complying with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and emerging Equality Act 2010 (Amendment) Bill 2015-16.

The considerations seek to ensure that people are not discriminated against regardless of disability, age or gender. These extend from accessing the new buildings and the public realm within the Site through to moving around the internal parts of the buildings and accessing information, including signage and contact details.

Consideration has also been given to the requirements of MCC Design for Access 2. The design team has endeavoured to develop the detailed design of the scheme to comply with DFA2 standards, whilst meeting the client brief. Further information on the measures incorporated is found within Section 7 of the DAS.

The public realm has also been designed to be inclusive and provides step-free access to the River Irwell, as well as across the rest of the public realm more generally. There are plenty and regular seating opportunities to also provide areas to pause as needed.

The Proposed Development has been designed to include step-free access to all upper floors and use.

The residential element has been designed taking into consideration the Residential Quality Guidance and 10% of the units comply with Approved Document Part M and are adaptable. There are also four accessible parking spaces.

Furthermore, the Proposed Development will improve safety and security, with the final design proposals also having been informed by consultation with GMP. The redevelopment of the Site will strengthen local streetscape, enhancing local character and sense of place through the delivery of a key distinctive, landmark building. It will generate vitality and animation making a further positive contribution to local streetscape.

The approach to design has been reviewed by Design for Security to ensure that the Proposed Development does not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

In summary, the Proposed Development has been designed in accordance with regulatory guidance ensuring it promotes the principles of inclusive design.

Affordable Housing

Core Strategy H8 Affordable Housing states that new development for all residential developments on sites of 0.3 hectares and above or where 15 or more units are proposed should contribute to the City-wide target for 20% of new housing to be affordable. Either an exemption from providing affordable housing or a lower proportion of affordable housing may be permitted where either a financial viability assessment is conducted and demonstrates that it is viable to only deliver a proportion of the affordable housing target or where material considerations indicate that intermediate or social rented housing would be inappropriate. These circumstances include:

- There is a high level of affordable housing in the immediate area;
- There is either a high proportion of social rented, or low house prices in the immediate area compared to average incomes;
- Affordable housing would be prejudicial to the diversification of existing housing mix;
- The inclusion of affordable housing would prejudice the achievement of other important planning or regeneration objectives which are included within the SRF, planning frameworks or other Council approved programmes;
- It would financially undermine significant development proposals critical to economic growth;
- The financial impact of the provision of affordable housing, combined with other planning obligations would affect scheme viability; and,
- There is a need for additional housing provision for older or disabled people either as affordable or market housing dependent on the results of a financial viability assessment of the scheme.

Response

Given the significant financial implications attributed to the delivery of new public realm and wider regeneration and public benefits (as summarised in Section 8 of this Statement), and the overall quality of the scheme, affordable housing contributions cannot be made either on Site or off Site as part of this development.

The Viability Statement produced by CBRE in respect of the Proposed Development demonstrates that a policy compliant scheme (incorporating 20% affordable housing (in the form of Affordable Private Rent ('APR') units at 80% of the local market rent)) fails to generate a profit sufficient to meet the target minimum risk adjusted developer's return on cost. Therefore, the Proposed Development is not financially viable on this basis.

CBRE has subsequently run a sensitivity test on the implications on financial viability of a scheme without any affordable housing provision, which demonstrates that the financial viability remains challenged in this scenario, but that the viability deficit is significantly reduced.

On this basis, the recommendation is that the Proposed Development does not incorporate any affordable housing units (or a payment in lieu of on-site provision) and any sums toward planning obligations.

This Viability Appraisal will be assessed by Manchester City Council and independently verified by a 3rd Party Assessor during the determination period in order to confirm that the assumed costs, profit margin and development value are robust and accurate.

Sustainable Design and Construction

Paragraph 153 of the NPPF (2021) states that plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures.

In respect of climate change, Paragraph 152 of the NPPF (2021) advises that the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change.

Paragraph 153 also states that policies should support appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts.

Further to this, Paragraph 154 states that new developments should be planned in ways that:

- Avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change; and,
- Can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design.

Paragraph 155 of the NPPF goes on to state that to help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should:

- Provide a positive strategy for energy from these resources, that maximises the potential for sustainable development, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily;
- Consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy resources, and supporting infrastructure; and,
- Identify opportunities for development for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.

The NPPG sets out guidance on climate change and it states:

“effective spatial planning is an important part of a successful response to climate change as it can influence the emission of greenhouse gases. In doing so, local planning authorities should ensure that protecting the local environment is properly considered alongside the broader issues of protecting the global environment. Planning can also help increase resilience to climate change impact through the location, mix and design of development.”

Core Strategy Policy EN4 encourages the reduction on CO2 Emissions through following the Energy Hierarchy principles:

To reduce the need for energy through design features that provide passive heating, natural lighting and cooling.

To reduce the need for energy through energy efficient features such as improved insulation and glazing to meet residual energy requirements through the use of low or zero carbon energy generating technologies.

Core Strategy Policy EN6 seeks CO2 reductions from low or zero carbon energy supplies and includes the following targets:

- A CHP/district heating anchor or connection, or where not feasible; and,
- A 15% increase on Part L 2010.

Policy EN8 Adaptation to Climate Change of the Core Strategy sets out that all new development will be expected to be adaptable to climate change in terms of design, layout, siting and function of buildings and external spaces.

The 2013 edition of Approved Document L1A: Conservation of fuel and power in new dwellings gives guidance for compliance with Building Regulations for building work carried out in England.

The supplementary planning document, Guide to Development in Manchester (2007) also details the environmental standards developments in Manchester are expected to achieve, including energy efficiency, renewable energy, and environmental design.

Draft Policy JP-S 2 Carbon and Energy of the Places for Everyone JDP (Publication / Submission Plan) reinforces the aim of delivering a carbon neutral Greater Manchester no later than 2038, with a dramatic reduction in greenhouse gas emissions which will also be supported through a range of measures, including an expectation that new development that all new dwellings should seek a minimum 19% carbon reduction against Part L of the 2013 Building Regulations.

Response

An Environmental Standards Statement (ESS) and Energy Strategy have been prepared by Hoare Lea. The documents assess the potential for incorporating renewable and low or zero carbon (LZC) technology and sets out how the Proposed Development will incorporate sustainability measures, including energy efficiency and environmental design.

Environmental Standards Statement (ESS)

The Proposed Development is intended to deliver a “best in class” sustainable development in support of Greater Manchester’s target to be net zero by 2038 and Oval Real Estate’s own ESG objectives. It is expected to contribute to sustainability in a broader sense through provision of:

- A high-density, well connected city-centre development;
- Minimal on-site parking and high-quality cycle facilities;
- High-quality accessible public realm and landscaping, re-activating the area and providing opportunity for improvements to local biodiversity through the retention of existing trees and planting of additional trees; and,
- Integration of sustainable urban drainage (SuDS) to mitigate flood risk.

The ESS summarises the measures incorporated into the Proposed Development to achieve this aspiration, as outlined below:

- A high-level analysis of embodied carbon has been completed to provide an initial estimate of embodied carbon and an indication of potential carbon hot spots. This suggests that the project is on track to align with Manchester’s Roadmap to Net Zero Carbon, with the initial estimation of upfront embodied carbon emissions being less than 600kgCO₂e/m²;
- The Proposed Development will source timber from sustainable sources accredited by the FSC and materials specified highly from the Green Guide to Specification and products certified with ISO14001 and BES6001. Robust materials will also be specified to enable a long life with low maintenance. Where feasible, the Proposed Development will endeavour to source materials locally. This will assist in reducing the embodied carbon of the materials by limiting transportation related emissions and will support the local economy;
- A pre-demolition audit of the existing building will be conducted prior to its demolition to identify any materials that could be salvaged for re-use on site or elsewhere and reduce the requirement for virgin materials to be used for aggregates and other such applications;
- The Proposed Development will be energised solely from electricity which will benefit from grid decarbonisation;
- The Proposed Development will be water efficient, incorporating measures to reduce potable water consumption through efficient fixtures, and careful management strategies. This will include implementing the following measures: dual flush cisterns; flow rate taps and showers; a leak detection system capable of detecting a major water leak on the main water supply; and installation of water meters on the mains water supply for each dwelling and retail unit; and,
- In addition, the proposed office is targeting a minimum NABERS 5* rating with an aspiration to achieve a 6* rating, a minimum BREEAM rating of “Outstanding” (under the BREEAM 2018 New Construction scheme (shell and core), which

requires a score of at least 85%) and a Platinum 'enabled' building for the core/base build as a minimum through adopting the principles of the WELL Building Standard, with consideration being given to full certification during the next stage.

Energy Strategy

The Energy Strategy provides details of how the development will be implemented in line with both local and national policy. The energy assessment that has been carried out to benchmark the proposed energy strategy and evaluate its performance against the relevant policies. The Energy Strategy also provides details on passive design elements, energy efficiency measures and low and zero carbon energy delivery systems.

The Energy Strategy has been developed by following the energy hierarchy; Be Lean, Be Clean and Be Green. and indicates that the Proposed Development achieves a reduction, over the Part L 2021 baseline, of 19.50% and 70% for the commercial and residential building respectively. As such, the Proposed Development, far exceeding the requirements of Core Policy EN6, of which requires a 15% improvement over Part L 2010. The Proposed Development also complies with Policy EN4 with its all-electric approach that includes air source heat pumps as heat source and a low carbon energy system.

Health Well-Being and Comfort

A WELL assessment is set out within the Environmental Standards Statement, prepared by Hoare Lea, as a method of evaluating the health and well-being of the office building occupants. The Statement establishes potential credits that are available to the Site - the design incorporating these credits, where practical. The Proposed Development will be designed to enhance occupancy health, wellbeing, and productivity, in compliance with the WELL Building Standard principles.

Ventilation

A Ventilation Strategy has been prepared by Hoare Lea. The Report summarises the ventilation strategies to ensure compliance with Building Regulations Approved Documents B and F to maintain air quality and provide adequate occupant comfort levels. Any impact on the surrounding buildings and accessible areas have been mitigated.

Within the office floorplates, the ventilation strategy is based on a displacement ventilation system which provides very good air quality and occupant comfort. This will operate in sympathy with a mixed mode strategy when the external conditions permit the openings within the façade to be operated. Fresh air will be distributed via the floor void and exhausted at high level. Local air handling units will be installed on each floor. The units will be ducted to fresh air intake and exhaust louvres at the perimeter of each floor level. The design parameters for these areas are based on a summer design temperature of 24 degrees, plus or minus 2 degrees, and a wider design temperature of 21 degrees, plus or minus 2 degrees.

The residential apartments will have ventilation provided by continuous mechanical supply and extract ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR) units located in utility cupboards. Each apartment will meet the continuous ventilation requirements of the Building Regulations Approved Document F, whilst delivering the thermal efficiency required to comply with Building Regulations Approved Document L1A.

The entrance/reception area for both buildings will be naturally ventilated by the transfer of air via the main entrance doors.

Local ventilation units located at high level within the toilet area on each floor will supply fresh air to the wash hand basin and lobby areas, and extract air from the urinal and WC areas. Fresh air intake and exhaust will be via perimeter louvres with heat recovery from the extract air.

The basement car park will be mechanically ventilated. Extract fans will be located in a dedicated plant room, extracting air from the car park through louvres in the façade. Air movement will be promoted across the car park by low-profile soffit-mounted jet fans, ensuring there are no areas of the car park where air remains stagnant.

The commercial areas in both buildings will be ventilated through the use of local air handling units (with heat recovery). These units will serve the areas with fresh air intake and exhaust via perimeter louvres at that level.

A dedicated extract system (design based on 10ACH) will remove air from the refuse stores in both buildings and will supply air to the space via louvred doors.

Plant rooms in both of the buildings will be ventilated via mechanical ventilation or louvres in the façade depending on the plantroom location. The main heat rejection plant will be installed at roof level in order to maximise plant efficiency.

The Ventilation Strategy, as summarised above, suitably responds to Core Strategy policies, including Core Strategy Policy DM1 Development Management which sets out that all development should have regard to effects on amenity. For further details please refer to the Ventilation Strategy prepared by Hoare Lea.

Other Environmental Considerations

The Proposed Development is supported by a number of technical and environmental assessments, which consider the potential impacts of the Proposed Development during the construction and operational phases, including in relation to air quality, daylight and sunlight, and noise and vibration. Please refer to the relevant parts of this Section for further details.

Archaeology

Chapter 16 of the NPPF (2021) states that:

“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)

Core Strategy Policy DM1 Development Management sets out that all development should have regard to effects relating to archaeological heritage.

Response

An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment has been undertaken by the University of Salford, Manchester. The conclusions of the assessment are summarised below:

- The Site is of archaeological interest and has the potential to contain buried remains dating to the post-medieval period to industrial period;
- The Site most likely contains non-statutory archaeological remains of low and medium significance;
- The Site has limited potential to contain garden soils and blind-back houses that would be of low (local) significance. It also has moderate potential to contain various 18th and early 19th – Century buildings, Manchester Gas Works and a landing stage that are considered to be of low to medium significance. The police station may be considered as negligible; and,
- The Assessment demonstrates that the Site has the potential to retain buried remains of post-medieval garden soils, various late 18th and early 19th century buildings, Albert Mill, Manchester Gasworks and a landing stage.

In accordance with Policy DM1 the Proposed Development has considered effects relating to archaeological heritage. It should be noted that further investigation of the Site will be determined by the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS).

Built Heritage and Townscape

The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out the general duty on decision makers in exercising their planning functions with respect to heritage assets. Section 66 requires:

“In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the LPA 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...”

Section 72 sets out the corresponding duty in relation to conservation areas, it requires:

“In the exercise, with respect to any building or other land in a conservation area, of any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area...”

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF notes that one of the key dimensions to sustainable development is protecting and enhancing our historic environment. Paragraph 199 requires that when considering the impact of the Proposed Development on the significance of the asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation, the more important the asset the greater the weight should be.

Paragraph 201 states: *Where a Proposed Development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss...*"

Paragraph 202 of the NPPF states that: *"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."*

Core Strategy Policy DM1 states that development should have regard to appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail; and to impact on the surrounding areas in terms of the design, scale and appearance.

Core Strategy Policy EN1 Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas states that all development in Manchester will be expected to follow the seven principles of urban design (character, continuity and enclosure, public realm, ease of movement, legibility, adaptability and diversity) and have regard to the strategic character area in which the development is located. In addition, it explains that within the City Centre, developments will be expected to consider the City's heritage and continue the rich pattern of activity in the core area.

Core Strategy Policy CC9 Design and Heritage requires the design of new buildings to be of the highest standard.

Core Strategy Policy EN3 Heritage highlights that throughout the City, MCC will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods. New developments must be designed so as to support MCC in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance. Proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets are encouraged where they are considered consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.

Core Strategy Policy CC9 Design and Heritage references that development in Manchester City Centre should preserve or enhance the heritage assets that have been identified, including listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled ancient monuments. Policy CC9 also requires the design of new buildings to be of the highest standard.

The St Mary's Parsonage SRF highlights that heritage analysis is required to fully consider development options for future planning applications, in relation to Albert Bridge House.

Response

A Heritage Statement has been prepared in relation to the Proposed Development. The Site does not contain any heritage assets that are afforded statutory protection, such as Scheduled Monuments, listed buildings, or any Registered Parks and Gardens, and it does not fall within a conservation area. The Heritage Statement considers the existing Albert Bridge House as a Non Designated Heritage Asset (NDHA).

The Proposed Development is within close proximity to Parsonage Gardens Conservation Area.

The Site is also located within 30m of the Deansgate/Peter Street Conservation Area and within 200m of St Ann's Square Conservation Area and 400m of Albert Square Conservation Area.

As outlined in Section 2 of this Statement, there are 10 listed buildings within 200m of the Site, including six listed buildings within 150m. The Site is within the setting of a number of listed buildings, with two listed buildings located directly to the east of the Site, 3 St Mary's Parsonage and Reedham House, which are both four storey Grade II listed buildings.

The Heritage Statement has undertaken a detailed analysis of the significance of the assets, particularly their contribution to the setting. 50 Listed Buildings, 2 Non-Designated Heritage Assets and 10 Conservation Areas have been assessed in total within the Statement and 23 key views.

The Heritage Statement concludes that the Proposed Development will cause less than substantial harm to the architectural or historical interest of 31 identified heritage assets, minor benefits to five assets and no harm to the remaining 26. The NPPF (Paragraph 202) states that 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.

On the basis of the above, Section 8 of this Statement outlines the public benefits of the Proposed Development, which are considered to comfortably outweigh the less than substantial harm that has been identified.

A Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been undertaken as part of the EIA. A total of 41 views have been considered in the ES Chapter and accompanying appendices. The assessment concludes that following the introduction of the Proposed Development:

- There is moderate beneficial impact on open space within the Site;
- There is a minor-moderate adverse impact on townscape character within the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) and in close proximity to the Site;
- There is a minor to moderate beneficial impact on existing building height within the Site;
- In relation to the impact on the residential visual receptors within the ZTV in close proximity to the Site a total of 6 views are identified as relevant all of these result in a minor adverse impact; and,
- In relation to the impact on receptors using public open space within the ZTV in close proximity to the Site a total of 3 views are identified as relevant all of these have result in a minor adverse impact.

The above impacts are all not significant in EIA terms. As detailed in Section 4 and earlier in this Section, the Proposed Development will redevelop a series of buildings that have come to the end of their operational life. The Proposed Development includes two buildings of exceptional design quality, opening up the Site and River Irwell to public with the introduction of a significant amount of public realm. The redevelopment of the Site will positively contribute to the surrounding environment.

Ecology and Biodiversity

Chapter 15 of the NPPF (2021) relates to conserving and enhancing the natural environment. In particular it states that,

“Minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures” (paragraph 174(d)).

Core Strategy Policy EN15 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation outlines that the Council will seek to maintain and enhance Sites of ecological value throughout the City. Particular consideration should be given to Sites with international or national designations for their biodiversity value, and other Sites of biological value. Developers are required to demonstrate that they have assessed and taken account of the potential effect of the Proposed Development on biodiversity including European, national and locally priority species such as the great crested newt, pipistrelle bats and certain bird species.

Core Strategy Policy EN9 Green Infrastructure highlights that new development will be expected to maintain existing green infrastructure in terms of its quantity, quality and multiple function. It continues by stating that the Council will seek to protect existing street trees and promote new planting, whilst also recognising the continued network of green spaces, water bodies, canals, paths and cycleways as a key feature of Manchester’s green infrastructure.

Core Strategy *Policy EN17 Water Quality* states that development should avoid any adverse impact on water quality, including minimising groundwater contamination and to avoid pollutants reaching the watercourse.

Manchester’s Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (2015) has the overall vision of:

“By 2025 high quality, well maintained green and blue spaces will be an integral part of all neighbourhoods. The city’s communities will be living healthy, fulfilled lives, enjoying access to parks and greenspaces and safe green routes for walking, cycling and exercise throughout the city...”.

The Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy also sets out a number of objectives to enable the vision to be achieved:

- Improve the quality and function of existing green and blue Infrastructure, to maximise the benefits it delivers;
- Use appropriate green and blue infrastructure as a key component of new developments to help create successful neighbourhoods and support the City’s growth;
- Improve connectivity and accessibility to green and blue infrastructure within the City and beyond; and,
- Improve and promote a wider understanding and awareness of the benefits that green and blue infrastructure provides to residents, the economy and the local environment.

The Places for Everyone JDP (Publication Plan) is yet to be adopted, however it is at an advanced stage. Policies in the Submission Plan Draft (2021) that are considered relevant are set out below:

- Draft Policy GM-G 2- Green Infrastructure Network: the green infrastructure network will be designed, managed, protected, and enhanced to help deliver benefits which involve enhancing biodiversity, by expanding, improving, and connecting habitats;
- Draft Policy GM-G 7- Trees and Woodland: in making planning decisions, Greater Manchester’s authorities will work to deliver the aims and objective of the GM Tree and Woodland Strategy, by encouraging habitat diversity through conserving and managing existing woodland, as well as targeting tree-planting at the areas of greatest need where the GI benefits can be maximised, whilst avoiding the loss or harm to other priority habitats;
- Draft Policy GM-G 8 – Standards for a Greener Greater Manchester: The GMSF indicates Standards for a Greener Greater Manchester including access to greenspace; and,
- *Draft Policy GM-G 9 – A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity*: The policy considers the requirement for Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity through following the mitigation hierarchy of avoiding harm, mitigating locally or otherwise compensating for loss.

Response

An Ecological Assessment has been undertaken by Urban Green and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment has been undertaken by Tyler Grange in relation to the Proposed Development.

The Ecological Assessment concludes the following:

- No sites that form part of the National Site Network were located within 5km of the site boundary. No statutory sites or non-statutory designated sites are located within 1km of the Site;
- The Site falls within the Impact Risk Zone of Rochdale Canal Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). This site is located approximately 6.2km east of the Site. This site is designated for the significant populations of floating water-plantain (*Luronium natans*) and diversity of pondweed species (*Potamogeton* sp.) supported within the predominantly mesotrophic waters, based on consultation with MAGIC;
- The Report concludes that the Site comprises habitats that were found to be widespread within the local area, although it does contain value for wildlife such as bats, birds, and terrestrial mammals. The scattered broadleaved trees are of highest

value within the Site and should be suitably protected during the construction phase to avoid damage to the longevity of these important ecological features;

- Generally, the protection measures of retained trees will be through the use of temporary protective demarcation fencing to protect the trees. The fencing will extend outside the canopy of the retained trees and will remain in position until development is complete to ensure protection is provided throughout the construction phase. The fencing will be in accordance with BS 5837:2012;
- Any vegetation removal will be undertaken outside of the breeding bird season (March to September, inclusive). If this is not possible, a suitably experienced ecologist will check the habitat for breeding bird activity no more than 48 hours before clearance. If nesting activity is found, nests will be left in situ until the young have fledged;
- As part of the development, the mature trees present within the car park and along the border with the River Irwell are to be retained;
- The Site itself is of negligible value to commuting or foraging bats due to a lack of suitable habitat present on site and the density of built surfaces present. However, the River Irwell is immediately adjacent to the Site and this river has potential to be of value to bats as a commuting route across the city. As such, the lighting on Site will be kept to a minimum to ensure any bats present on or adjacent to the Site, will not be impacted by the development;
- The banks of the River Irwell provide limited suitable habitat to support otter, and no signs of this species were observed at the time of survey. The implementation of a CEMP will control for any indirect impacts to the watercourse;
- No non-native invasive flora species were identified during the site walkover; and,
- The Assessment concludes that no further surveys are required to facilitate the project.

The Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment concludes the following:

- The Proposed Development would result in a 48.54% net gain in biodiversity value of the Site, post-development, which equates to 0.14 bio-diversity units, in line with DEFRA 3.0 Biodiversity Metrics;
- The Assessment concludes that the Proposed Development will achieve a measurable net gain in biodiversity value.
- A landscape ecological management plan (LEMP) will be produced via condition, to detail how the units will be delivered through the creation and management of proposed habitats; and,

Therefore, overall, the Proposed Development will generate a positive impact on the amenity value of the surrounding area, whilst delivering biodiversity and ecological enhancements, in compliance with Core Strategy Policy EN15.

Arboriculture

Core Strategy Policy EN9 Green Infrastructure highlights that new development will be expected to maintain existing green infrastructure in terms of its quantity, quality and multiple function. It continues by stating that the Council will seek to protect existing street trees and promote new planting.

Section 12 of NPPF also highlights the important contribution which trees make to the character and quality of urban environments. It goes on to state that decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible. Applicants and local planning authorities should work with highways officers and tree officers to ensure that the right trees are planted in the right places, and solutions are found that are compatible with highways standards and the needs of different users.

Response

A Tree Survey is submitted with the application and the Landscaping Section with the Design and Access Statement provides details of the trees to be retained and removed alongside new planning proposed. There are 32 existing trees on site. Two trees are Category U and are to be removed. 13 trees are to be removed due to the development and 32 new trees planted in the public realm alongside 69 trees in raised planters. The three TPO trees will also be retained. The existing mature trees to be retained will be supported by additional trees that are commonly found in British woodlands, with species chosen to reflect the trees position within the Landscape strategy.

Air Quality

The NPPG states that action to manage and improve air quality is largely driven by EU legislation, in particular the 2008 Ambient Air Quality Directive that sets legally binding limits for concentration in outdoor air of major air pollutants that impact public health.

The NPPG continues by highlighting that whether or not air quality is relevant to a planning decision depends on the Proposed Development and its location. When deciding whether air quality is relevant considerations could include whether the development would:

- Significantly affect traffic in the immediate vicinity of the Proposed Development Site or further afield;
- Introduce a new point sources of air pollution;
- Expose people to existing sources of air pollutants;
- Give rise to potentially unacceptable impact during construction for nearby sensitive locations; and,
- Affect biodiversity.

Core Strategy Policy EN16 Air Quality states that “the Council will seek to improve the air quality within Manchester, and particularly within Air Quality Management Areas, located along Manchester’s principal traffic routes and at Manchester Airport. Developers will be expected to take measures to minimise and mitigate the local impact of emissions from traffic generated by the development, as well as emissions created by the use of the development itself, including from Combined Heat and Power and biomass plant.”

Paragraph 12.81 continues, “other policies within the Core Strategy will guide the location of development in order to reduce the need for private transport and encourage the use of decentralised and renewable energy and green infrastructure to reduce both emissions and their impact still further.”

Developers will be expected to take measures to minimise and mitigate the local impact of emission from traffic generated by the development, as well as emissions created by the use of the development itself, including Combined Heat and Power and biomass plant.

When assessing the appropriateness of locations for new development the Council will consider the impacts on air quality, alongside other plan objectives. This includes cumulative impacts, particularly in Air Quality Management Areas.

Response

An Air Quality Assessment has been undertaken by Hoare Lea. The Air Quality Report presents the findings of the assessment, which addresses the potential air quality impacts during both the construction and operational stages of the Proposed Development.

A qualitative assessment of construction and operational phase impacts has been carried out. This concludes that:

- Through good practice and implementation of appropriate mitigation measures, it is expected that the release of dust would be effectively controlled and mitigated, with resulting impacts considered to be ‘not significant’; and,

- All dust impacts are considered to be temporary and short-term in nature and therefore not significant. An air quality screening assessment of the air quality impacts of traffic generated by the Proposed Development has undertaken and the effects are not predicted to be significant, therefore further assessment is not required. Energy provision for the Proposed Development will be all-electric via ASHP, with life-safety generators used for back-up purposes only. As such, the air quality impacts from the energy provision of the Proposed Development are not expected to be significant and a detailed assessment is not required.

A site suitability assessment has been undertaken to assess the suitability of the Site for the Proposed Development. The modelling assessment of concentrations at proposed receptors at the façade of the Proposed Development on all floors has shown that there are no predicted exceedances of the NO₂ annual mean and 1-hour mean, 24-hour mean and annual mean PM₁₀ or the annual mean PM_{2.5} AQOs and therefore no mitigation is required, and windows can be openable.

Based on the findings of the assessment, it is considered that air quality should not be viewed as a constraint to planning and the Proposed Development conforms to the principles of National Planning Policy Framework and the MCC Local Plan.

For further details please refer to the Air Quality Assessment prepared by Hoare Lea in relation to the Proposed Development

Ground Conditions

Core Strategy Policy EN18 Contaminated Land and Ground Stability sets out that the Council will give priority for the remediation of contaminated land to strategic locations.

Paragraph 183 of the NPPF (2021) requires that planning policies and decisions should ensure that Sites are suitable for any proposed use by taking account of ground conditions and land instability, including from natural hazards or former activities such as mining, pollution arising from previous uses.

Response

Soiltechnics have carried out a Desk Study Report, which is submitted in relation to the Proposed Development.

The ground conditions encountered and identified as having significance within the development are summarised below:

The British Geological Survey (BGS) map (1:50,000, Solid & Drift edition) and online records indicate the Site is underlain by bedrock geology comprising Chester Formation - Sandstone. Whilst no superficial deposits are recorded at the Site, information from the locality indicates that clays may be present due to proximity to the River Irwell. Made Ground is not indicated to be present on publicly available mapping, although considering historic and current land uses on-Site it is anticipated to be present in the Site.

The historical land uses at the Site include a gas works reserve station, mills, gun works, living accommodation and hotels. In the vicinity of the Site, potential contamination sources are associated with previous land uses and current activities, including waste management facilities, manufacturers, dry cleaners and photographic processors. Given this, the potential contamination sources within the Site include heavy metals (lead, cadmium, nickel, arsenic and chromium) and hydrocarbons and tar. Asbestos is also confirmed to be present within Albert Bridge House.

Due to the presence of Made Ground and former uses, there may be sources of ground gas present at the Site (both permanent hazardous gases and non-permanent gases).

There is a potential for below-ground foundations, vaults and other structures associated with buildings previously on-site to be present.

The Site is situated in a coal mining reporting area. However, there are no recorded mine entries, past shallow coal mine workings or probable shallow coal mine workings within the Site or in the immediate vicinity. The Site is not located within a Minerals Safeguarding Area.

The UK Health Security Agency website indicates that the Site lies within an area where less than 1% of homes are above the 'Action Level'.

The Report concludes that the Preliminary Risk Assessment did not highlight any potential contaminant linkages which could pose as a significant possibility of significant harm under the current land use.

In terms of the Proposed Development scheme, a minimal risk approach applies, and PCLs have been identified which require further consideration – particularly as a result of the industrial heritage of the Site. The Report recommends further intrusive investigation works to further refine the assessment and to determine if any remedial measures are necessary.

The Report concludes that the Site is at a moderate/low risk from ground gases migration associated with potential deep Made Ground on Site. Further intrusive investigation works are recommended to further refine the assessment and to determine if any remedial measures are necessary.

The Report concludes that there is a low risk in regard to Radon gas accumulation at the Site. However, verification monitoring will be required post-occupation under the Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999).

In regard to the Geo-Technical Appraisal, the Report concludes that potential engineering considerations at the Site have been reviewed and it has been concluded that intrusive investigations are carried out to support the assessment.

For further details relating to contamination and ground conditions, please refer to the supporting Desk Study Report, prepared by Soiltechnics.

Flooding and Drainage

Chapter 14 of the NPPF (2021) provides policy guidance on climate change, flooding, and coastal change. Paragraph 159 explains the basic principle that inappropriate development in the areas at risk of flooding should be avoided. This is achieved through applying a Sequential and Exception Test as governed by Paragraphs 161-165. This provides the tests that must be met to allow development on land at risk of flooding and is explained in detail further within this section.

Core Strategy Policy EN14 Flood Risk outlines that development should be directed away from Sites at the greatest risk of flooding, and towards Sites with little or no risk of flooding; this should take account of all sources of flooding identified in the Manchester- Salford- Trafford Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA).

In addition to the requirements for Site-specific Flood Risk Assessments (FRAs) set out in PPS25, an appropriate FRA will also be required for all development proposals, including changes of use, on Sites greater than 0.5ha within Critical Drainage Areas (CDAs) and Canal Hazard Zones identified in the SFRA.

All new development should minimise surface water run-off, including through Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) and the appropriate use of Green Infrastructure. Developers should have regard to the surface water run-off rates in the SFRA User Guide. In CDAs, evidence to justify the surface water run-off approach / rates will be required.

Core Strategy Policy EN17 Water Quality sets out that following elements a development must consider in relation to water quality:

- Avoid any adverse impact on water quality, including during the construction phase;
- Minimise surface water run-off, maximise the use of appropriate sustainable drainage systems, and minimise groundwater contamination; and,
- If close to a watercourse the development should ensure waste and litter cannot enter the watercourse.

Draft Policy JP-S 5 Flood Risk and the Water Environment of the Places for Everyone JDP (Publication/ Submission Plan) outlines that an integrated catchment based approach will be taken to managing flood risk in a number of ways, including:

- Locating and designing development so as to minimise the impacts of current and future flood risk;

- Expecting developments to manage surface water runoff through sustainable drainage systems and as close to source as possible;
- Conserving water and maximising water efficiency in new development; and,
- Ensuring that sustainable drainage systems:
 - Are designed to provide multifunctional benefits wherever possible;
 - Are delivered in a holistic and integrated manner, including on larger sites split into different phases; and,
 - Are managed and maintained appropriately to ensure their proper functioning over the lifetime of the development.

Response

A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Drainage Strategy (DS) has been prepared by Akt II Ltd in relation to the Proposed Development.

Flood Risk

The FRA provides information on the nature of flood risk at the Site and outlines the drainage requirements. The assessment considers the risk from different types of flooding to the Proposed Development and the risk of flooding from the Proposed Development, taking into consideration climate change as well as how flood risks should be managed. This includes consideration of fluvial (rivers and streams), tidal, reservoir, canal, groundwater, public sewers or highway drainage flooding, as well as surface water flooding to the Site and from the Site.

The Site lies within the Manchester Conurbation Core Critical Drainage Area. The Site, for the majority, is located in Flood Zone 1, and so this portion of the Site is therefore of a low risk of flooding. The northern (riverbank) boundary of the Site is located within Flood Zone 3 as a result of the River Irwell forming this boundary and so is within an area with a high probability of flooding.

The main conclusions of the FRA are outlined below:

- The majority of the Site is considered to have a very low probability of flooding from fluvial or tidal sources, the riverbank is considered to have a low to medium probability of flooding from fluvial or tidal sources;
- All developable land is located within Flood Zone 1, with no built development to take place within Flood Zone 3;
- The Site has a low probability of flooding from groundwater provided that a suitable waterproofing strategy is implemented as a part of the Proposed Development, as recommend in the FRA;
- The Site has a low probability of flooding from artificial sources as it is situated at a considerable distance away from artificial water features;
- The Site has a low probability of flooding from sewers and the local drainage network, as long as they continue to be adequately maintained and non-return valves are included at the proposed outfall drainage points of the scheme;
- The Site has been assessed as being at low risk from surface water flooding provided that the recommendations included in the FRA are implemented;
- The Site does not currently cause flooding to adjacent sites and SUDs measure are proposed, therefore, the risk to adjacent properties will be limited; and,

- The Proposed Development has an acceptable flood risk within the terms and requirements of National Planning Policy Framework.

Drainage Strategy

The Drainage Strategy prepared by AKT II Ltd provides details of the separate foul and surface water system proposed. A number of sustainable drainage systems are also included as part of the Proposed Development.

Foul Water Drainage

The proposed foul flow rates from the Site will be higher than the existing. As such, a pre-planning enquiry has been submitted to United Utilities to confirm capacity within their sewer network and their confirmation is yet to be received.

It is assumed that any foul water drainage from ground floor level and above will be drained by gravity in order to minimise the amount of pumping required.

Until the levels of the existing connections and public sewers are confirmed, it is unclear whether the basement level will need to be pumped, although this appears to be likely. As such, it is recommended that an allowance is made at this stage for pumping foul water from below the basement level slab, up to high level in the basement to allow it to discharge by gravity to the public sewer.

Flows will be agreed with United Utilities, once known, and final details are expected to be submitted to MCC through the inclusion of a planning condition on any decision notice.

Surface Water Drainage

The drainage strategy follows the standard hierarchy of drainage solutions, with consideration firstly given to the discharge of surface water runoff by sustainable modes, such as infiltration. The options process concludes that infiltration is not possible due to the fact that Sandstone is likely to be present to a significant depth, based on British Geological Society maps of the Site, which has is generally classified as having low permeability. Therefore, infiltration is not considered to be a viable solution.

The United Utilities record plans indicate that there are five surface water or combined public sewers in close proximity to the Site. It is believed that all surface water from the building currently discharges directly to one of these public sewers without any form of attenuation. However, a CCTV survey of the existing site drainage network needs to be undertaken to confirm the location and size of all existing connections from the Site.

On this basis surface water will discharge to the River Irwell subject to agreement with Manchester Ship Canal Company Limited. Discussions with MSCCL are currently underway and it has been confirmed that discharging at unrestricted rate into the River Irwell could be possible, subject to this discharge being documented within a license agreement.

At present, there is no licence agreement in place with MSCCL and as such, it is assumed that the Site will be required to restrict the discharge rate to 5.3 litres/sec.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

A number of SuDS have been considered, including infiltration systems, green/ blue roofs, swales, wetlands and attenuation ponds, permeable paving, rain gardens and drained soft landscaping and greywater consultation. The options testing concluded that the following SuDS measures will be included as part of the Proposed Development:

- Green roof on the commercial building;
- Below ground attenuation; and,
- Localised soft landscaping within the public realm.

Conclusion

On the basis of the above, the Proposed Development is considered to comply with local and national planning policy and guidance in that it will not increase the risk of flooding at the Site or elsewhere.

Transport

Core Strategy Policy T1 Sustainable Transport sets out to deliver a sustainable, high quality, integrated transport system in order to encourage modal shift away from car travel to public transport, cycling and walking, to support the needs of residents and businesses and to prepare for carbon free modes of transport.

Core Strategy Policy T2 accessible areas of opportunity and needs sets out that developments should provide a level of car parking which reflects the realistic requirements of the users of the development. Regard should also be given to the need for disabled and cycle parking provision.

Core Strategy Policy CC5 Transport outlines that developers should work with public transport providers to ensure that all users are able to access development by sustainable means, especially taking account of times when developments are likely to be busiest.

Chapter 9 of the NPPF focuses on promoting sustainable transport. Paragraph 105 of the NPPF (2021) states 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 health.

One of the key elements of national and local planning policy is to ensure that safe and suitable access to a development can be achieved by all users. Paragraph 112 of the NPPF (2021) states that applications for development should:

- Give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements;
- Address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;
- Create places that are safe, secure and attractive;
- Allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and,
- Be designed to enable charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.

Response

A Transport Statement and an Interim Travel Plan have been prepared by Curtins. A review of baseline conditions and highway safety in the vicinity of the Site has been undertaken and concludes that there are no existing safety issues that are likely to be exacerbated by the Proposed Development.

It is proposed that the development would provide 24 parking spaces in a shared basement, as follows:

Office Building

- 8 accessible spaces;
- 6 standard Car Club spaces; and,
- 2 spaces for deliveries.

Residential Building

- 4 accessible spaces;

- 3 standard Car Club spaces; and,
- 1 space for deliveries.

A total of 12 accessible spaces are delivered as a part of the Proposed Development. There are a number of existing features which ensure safe, convenient and aided access for those Site users who are disabled and / or visually impaired. These features consist of dropped kerbs and tactile paving on some of the crossings in the vicinity of the Site.

The Proposed Development is predominantly traffic-free with the provision of very limited amounts of car parking. The Proposed Development will result in a loss of existing car parking spaces (circa 72 spaces), which will generate a net reduction in the number of vehicle movements accessing the Site daily, therefore representing a net benefit in traffic terms.

The Site is accessible by sustainable modes of transport. The surrounding area exhibits good levels of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, and there are several public transport opportunities within acceptable walking distance of the Site. The Statement concludes that any vehicular impact would be negligible on the surrounding area in terms of highways, traffic and transportation, based on the trip generation forecasts using TRICS data and 2011 Census Journey to Work data have demonstrated that there is a decrease in vehicular trip generation for the proposed uses of the Site compared to the existing development. This is because the development is car limited in nature, and the typical demographic of staff and residents are expected to favour travel by public transport, walking, cycling, or flexible working / working from home on certain days of the week. The Interim Travel Plan contains appropriate measures to promote sustainable travel and includes an assessment of access over the wider area, the Travel Plan's objectives and associated measures and details on the implementation, administration and monitoring of the Travel Plan. The Plan concludes by providing an Action Plan that summarises the next steps.

Future employees at the Site are less likely to commute by their own cars due to proposed measures in the accompanying Interim Travel Plan to increase the level of walking, cycling and public transport use to and from the Site, and to reduce reliance on the private car.

It is considered that this parking provision is in accordance with the transport policies set out in the Manchester Core Strategy, with respect to the nature of the Site and realistic needs of the end users, and the proximity of the Site to sustainable modes of transport. In summary, a review of relevant local and national transport planning guidance has been undertaken and it is considered that the Proposed Development conforms to policy as set out above.

Noise and Vibration

Chapter 15 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should prevent both new and existing developments from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of noise pollution.

UDP Policy DC26 Development and Noise outlines the Council intends to use the Development Control process to reduce the impact of noise on people living and working in, or visiting, the City. In giving effect to this intention, the Council will consider both:

- the effect of new development proposals which are likely to be generators of noise; and,
- the implications of new development being exposed to existing noise sources which are effectively outside planning control.

In addition, Core Strategy Policy DM1 Development Management sets out that all development should have regard to effects on amenity, including noise.

BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound (BS 4142) provides a method for assessing noise from items such as building services plant against the existing background sound levels at nearby noise sensitive premises. BS 4142 suggests that if the noise level is 10 dB or more higher than the existing background sound level, it is likely to be an indication of a significant adverse impact. If the level is 5 dB above the existing background sound level, it is likely to be an indication of an adverse impact. If the level does not exceed the background level, it is an indication of having a low impact.

MCC provides guidance in relation to plant noise emissions in their Planning and Noise Technical Guidance document dated December 2015. The following is stipulated: 'Externally mounted ancillary plant, equipment and servicing shall be selected and/or acoustically treated in accordance with a scheme designed so as to achieve a rating level of 5dB (LAeq) below the typical background (LA90) level at the nearest noise sensitive location.'

Response

A Noise and Vibration Chapter is included as part of the EIA and an Environmental Noise Report has also been prepared by Hoare Lea. This assesses the impact of the Proposed Development during the construction and operation phases of the development

Construction Phase

During the construction phase of the development there will be impacts in terms of noise and vibration from construction related activity which is to be expected. The Construction stage works will include the demolition of Albert Bridge House and construction of the new buildings and associated infrastructure and landscaping.

A Construction Environmental Management Plan is included at Chapter 4 of the ES. Additional mitigation measures are also proposed including:

- Addition to or modification of methodology / protocols / procedure within a CEMP;
- A separate standalone method statement of working; and,
- A formal Section 61 Notice under the CoPA.

The Noise and Vibration ES chapter concludes that there will be instances of significant and not significant effects on surrounding receptors.

The impacts during construction are temporary and the ES considers a worst-case assessment, in reality the construction activities will be spread across the Site and will take place at differing times of the day. However, the management and monitoring mechanisms are designed to identify any situations of significant noise and vibration exceedances in a swift manner and action would be taken to either reduce the magnitude so it is not prolonged or resolve the matter directly with the sensitive receptor.

The impacts are therefore considered acceptable given the nature and location of the Proposed Development.

Operational Phase

Existing Road and commercial premises noise impact on the Proposed Development

During the noise survey carried out on the Site it was determined that the dominant noise sources observed at the Site during the survey were from road traffic, predominantly from Bridge Street.

The nearest sensitive receptor is the Proposed Development and other surrounding receptors have been identified.

An assessment of the residential building envelope acoustic performance is provided within the report and indicates the ventilation strategy allows for future residents to close windows if they choose to do so. Short periods of opening a door or window would be acceptable, such as required for rapid ventilation.

The report concludes that the proposed office building is exposed to noise levels where a mixed mode of ventilation could be possible. Further details of the ventilation strategy will be development but in essence, the use of attenuated openings in the facades should be possible to help ventilate the building whilst maintaining a suitable internal noise climate.

Introduction of new residents on operational noise practices of existing late night entertainment premises (including music venues)

The Proposed Development introduces a new sensitive receptor, residential, to entertainment noise. An assessment of surrounding entertainment noise has therefore been undertaken. Observations made during the night noise measurement

survey indicate that amplified music noise from Carnival Street Food and The Oast House Bar and Restaurant is the dominant low frequency noise emissions of the local entertainment premises affecting Bridge Street.

The analysis takes into consideration the façade design of the residential building and the use of mechanical ventilation and concludes that it is very unlikely that the internal noise conditions would invoke a cause for complaint from a reasonable person of normal hearing ability.

Impacts from the Proposed Development

In line with MCC Guidance, during the daytime and night-time noise monitoring, the combined building services plant noise emission contribution limit advised is 45 dB(A) and 39 dB(A) respectively, one metre from the nearest residential façade. This applies to both the residential and office buildings.

There are retail, F&B and restaurant uses within the Proposed Development. They are situated at ground and first floor within the office building and ground floor within the residential building. Noise breakout from these spaces has been considered and an assessment undertaken to reflect the criteria set out in MMC guidance for development document. On the basis that the nearest noise sensitive residential property is approximately 20 metres from the proposed restaurant (the proposed residential development) the noise generated within the restaurant minus the façade noise reduction shall be sufficient to meet the MMC guidance, with particularly reference to the 63Hz and 125Hz octave bands.

For further details please refer to the Noise and Vibration EIA Chapter and Environmental Noise Report prepared in relation to the Proposed Development.

Sunlight, Daylight and Overshadowing

Saved UDP Policy H2.1 states that the Council will not permit development which will have an unacceptable impact on residential areas.

Core Strategy Policy DM1 Development Management outlines that all development should have regard to effects of amenity including privacy and light.

Paragraph 125, part C of the NPPF (2021) stipulates that “...local planning authorities should refuse applications which they consider fail to make efficient use of land, taking into account the policies in this Framework. In this context, when considering applications for housing, authorities should take a flexible approach in applying policies or guidance relating to daylight and sunlight, where they would otherwise inhibit making efficient use of a site.”

Response

A daylight, sunlight and overshadowing assessment has been prepared in relation to the Proposed Development.

Daylight and Sunlight

The EIA includes an assessment of the alterations to daylight and sunlight levels within sensitive neighbouring properties as a result of the Proposed Scheme. The sensitive receptors are identified as:

- New Century Building;
- 2-18 Leftbank Apartments;
- 29 New Bailey Street;
- 32 Quay Street; and,
- The Bridge, 40 Dearmans Place.

Means of Assessment

To assess the surrounding existing properties, the BRE Guidelines provide two main methods for assessing daylight: 'Vertical Sky Component' (VSC) and 'No Sky Line' (NSL).

The VSC method measures the amount of light available on a vertical wall or window following the introduction of barriers such as buildings.

The NSL method is a measure of the distribution of daylight at the 'working plane' within a room (i.e. a horizontal 'desktop' plane of 0.85 metres (m) in height). The NSL divides those areas of working plane in a room which receive direct sky light through the windows from those areas of the working plane which cannot. Where all the windows meet the VSC and all the rooms meet the NSL criteria within a property the effect is considered to be negligible.

Sunlight is measured using a sun indicator which contains 100 spots, each representing 1% of APSH. Therefore, where no obstruction exists the total annual probable sunlight hours would amount to 1486, and each spot equates to 14.86 hours of the total annual sunlight hours.

The number of spots is calculated for the Baseline and Proposed Development scenarios during the year and also during the winter period, and a comparison made between the two. This provides a percentage of APSH for each of the time periods for each window assessed.

Baseline Assessment

An assessment of the existing baseline for these buildings concludes a total of 1,049 windows, serving a total of 823 rooms were assessed for daylight, with 1,062 windows assessed for sunlight, within the five identified neighbouring properties.

In relation to daylight, 809 (77%) of the 1,049 windows assessed for VSC have a baseline equal to or greater than the 27% VSC outlined in the 2022 BRE Guidelines.

793 (96%) of the 851 rooms assessed for NSL have a baseline daylight distribution of at least 80% or more of the total room area.

With regard to sunlight, 872 (89%) of the 977 windows meet the BRE criteria for winter APSH in the baseline and 871 (89%) windows meet the BRE criteria for annual APSH in the baseline condition.

Therefore, the baseline daylight and sunlight results indicate that the majority of windows and rooms within the identified neighbouring properties currently enjoy BRE compliant levels of light. Many of the existing values in certain buildings are particularly high given the separation from any other buildings, and smaller existing obstructions on the Site directly opposite.

Alterations to daylight and sunlight levels within sensitive neighbouring properties as a result of the Proposed Scheme

Century Buildings

Century Buildings is located to the east of the Site along St. Marys Parsonage and contains residential flats. Only five windows serving two rooms need to be assessed for daylight. All 5 windows (100%) pass the VSC, NCL and ASPH assessments.

2 – 18 Left Bank Apartments

2 – 18 Left Bank is a mixed use block west of the Site with residential apartments located from the first floor upwards. A total of 157 windows serving 74 rooms have been assessed for daylight.

120 (76%) of the 157 windows assessed would meet the 2022 BRE Guidelines for VSC and experience a negligible change. 26 of the remaining 37 windows have existing VSC levels of 12% or less. Of this number, 15 windows achieve single digit VSC values in the existing baseline conditions. Therefore, the larger VSC percentage reductions to these windows can be partially attributed to low existing levels of VSC, rather than a significant alteration in absolute VSC.

63 (85%) of the 74 rooms assessed would meet the 2022 BRE Guidelines for NSL and experience a negligible change. Seven of these 11 rooms will experience alterations between 20% – 30% (small adverse magnitude).

The remaining four rooms record greater relative reductions, of which two will be between 30% – 40% (medium adverse magnitude) and two would be in excess of 40% (large adverse magnitude). Of the two rooms experiencing large adverse alterations one is a bedroom (which has a lower requirement for daylight – see 2022 BRE Guidelines 2.2.10), and the other room is for Living/Kitchen/Dining use (LKD) with a low existing level of daylight distribution (NSL) of 36%, and therefore the percentage change suggests a more significant alteration in light, then is likely in absolute terms.

The APSH results indicate that 74 (87%) of the 85 windows tested would meet the 2022 BRE Guidelines for annual sunlight, while 85 (100%) of 85 windows would meet the 2022 BRE Guidelines for winter sunlight (i.e. experience a change which is considered to be negligible).

The windows not meeting the criteria have low existing sunlight levels and the overall compliance is high. Therefore, there is likely to be a direct, permanent, long-term adverse effect which is considered to be minor.

29 New Bailey Street

29 New Bailey Street is located to the north of the Site on the opposite side of the River Irwell. A total of 512 windows serving 447 rooms have been assessed for daylight.

408 (80%) of the 512 windows assessed would meet the 2022 BRE Guidelines for VSC and experience a negligible change. Of the remaining 104 windows, 97 will experience a relative reduction of between 20% – 30% (small adverse magnitude) and seven will experience reductions of between 30% – 40% (medium adverse magnitude). These seven windows retain an average of 24% VSC, which is marginally below the 27% recommendation in the 2022 BRE Guidelines.

All 447 (100%) of the 447 rooms tested would meet the 2022 BRE Guidelines for NSL.

The APSH results indicate that 509 (99%) of the 512 windows tested would meet the 2022 BRE Guidelines for annual sunlight, while 510 (99%) of 512 windows would meet the 2022 BRE Guidelines for winter sunlight (i.e. experience a negligible change).

All three windows that do not meet the 2022 BRE Guidelines criteria for annual sunlight serve bedrooms and will experience reductions of 25% (small adverse magnitude).

Therefore, there is likely to be a direct, permanent, long-term adverse effect which is considered to be minor.

32 Quay Street

32 Quay Street is located to the north of the Site on the opposite side of the River Irwell. A total of 274 windows serving 242 rooms have been assessed for daylight.

67 (24%) of the 274 windows assessed would meet the 2022 BRE Guidelines for VSC and experience a negligible change. Of the remaining 207 windows, 24 will experience a relative reduction of between 20% – 30% (small adverse magnitude). 122 windows will experience reductions of between 30% – 40% (medium adverse magnitude). The remaining 61 windows will experience reductions in excess of 40% (large adverse magnitude). The average retained VSC across the 61 windows that experience a large adverse reduction is 18% VSC, which is consistent with the VSC found in many urban / City Centre locations, as acknowledged by the 2022 BRE Guidelines in paragraph F2, Appendix F.

97 (40%) of the 242 rooms tested will meet the 2022 BRE Guidelines for NSL and therefore experience a negligible change. 44 rooms will experience alterations between 20% – 30%, which is considered to be small adverse magnitude.

The remaining 101 rooms record greater relative reductions, of which 52 will be between 30% – 40% (medium adverse magnitude) and 49 will be in excess of 40% (large adverse magnitude). Of these 49 rooms, 20 relate to bedrooms which the BRE considers less important than other uses (see 2022 BRE Guidelines, paragraph 2.2.10).

For the 29 remaining rooms, all relate to deep single aspect living areas. Such single aspect rooms that are deeper than 5m (as it is assumed here) will often see a greater movement of the NSL when developing opposite, as acknowledged by the BRE in paragraph 2.2.12. Nevertheless, most rooms would retain a view of sky to circa 50% or more of their total area, with virtually all receiving direct skylight extending into the rear half of the room.

Therefore, there is likely to be a direct, permanent, long-term adverse effect which is considered to be moderate.

The APSH results indicate that 214 (78%) of the 274 windows tested would meet the 2022 BRE Guidelines for winter sunlight, while 264 (96%) of 274 windows would meet the 2022 BRE Guidelines for annual sunlight (i.e. experience a change which is considered to be negligible).

Of the 60 windows that fall below the 2022 BRE Guidelines criteria for winter sunlight, one will experience a relative reduction of between 20% – 30% (small adverse magnitude). The remaining 59 windows will experience reductions in excess of 40% (large adverse magnitude). 15 of these 59 windows have winter sunlight levels below the recommended 5% in the existing and therefore any change in winter sunlight to these windows will result in a large percentage alteration. However, what is of most relevance is that 48 of these 59 windows serve bedrooms which the BRE states need not be considered for analysis in most cases (see paragraph 3.2.3). The remaining 11 windows serve LKDs.

All 10 of the windows that fall below the BRE criteria for annual sunlight, will experience reductions in excess of 40% (large adverse magnitude). However, all 10 of these windows serve bedrooms.

The sensitivity of the receptor is high. In consideration of the above, the overall magnitude of change in respect to sunlight amenity within this neighbouring building is considered to be medium. However, the majority of windows serve bedrooms which are less sensitive. Therefore, there is likely to be a direct, permanent, long-term adverse effect which is considered to be moderate.

The Bridge, 40 Dearman Place

The Bridge, 40 Dearman Place is located to the north of the Site on the opposite side of the River Irwell. A total of 101 windows serving 58 rooms have been assessed for daylight.

14 (14%) of the 101 windows assessed would meet the 2022 BRE Guidelines for VSC and experience a negligible change. Of the remaining 87 windows, 52 will experience a relative reduction of between 20% – 30% (small adverse magnitude). 29 windows will experience reductions of between 30% – 40% (medium adverse magnitude). The remaining six windows will experience reductions in excess of 40% (large adverse magnitude).

It should be noted that the majority of the windows and rooms in this property sit beneath overhanging balconies which limits the ingress of daylight and sunlight, particularly the ability for the sky / sun to see the centerpoint of the windows below the balconies (i.e. the point of VSC and APSH calculation). This is acknowledged by the BRE in paragraph 2.2.13, which states that – ‘Because the balcony cuts out light from the top part of the sky, even a modest obstruction opposite may result in a large relative impact on the VSC’. This paired with the obstruction caused by 32 Quay Street to the south-west will limit its peripheral view and further reduce its daylight and sunlight availability. Therefore, these alterations are in part due to the massing in the area and the property’s inherent architectural composition.

57 (98%) of the 58 rooms tested will meet the 2022 BRE Guidelines for NSL. The remaining room will experience a 21% alteration which marginally pushes it into the small adverse magnitude category, which is a 20% – 30% change.

The APSH results indicate that 74 (73%) of the 101 windows tested would meet the 2022 BRE Guidelines for winter sunlight, while 71 (70%) of 101 windows would meet the 2022 BRE Guidelines for annual sunlight (i.e. experience a change which is considered to be negligible).

Of the 27 windows that fall below the BRE criteria for winter sunlight, all 27 will experience reductions in excess of 40% (large adverse). As internal layouts have not been obtained for this property, these room uses have been allocated as unknown. However, it is assumed a large portion if not a majority of these windows will serve less sensitive bedrooms.

Of the 30 windows that fall below the BRE criteria for annual sunlight, 15 will experience a relative reduction of between 20%-30% (small adverse magnitude). 14 windows will experience an alteration between 30%-40% (medium adverse magnitude). The remaining window will experience a reduction in excess of 40% (large adverse magnitude). As internal layouts have not been obtained for this property, these room uses have been allocated as unknown. However, it is assumed a large portion if not a majority of these windows will serve less sensitive bedrooms.

The presence of balconies should also be acknowledged. Balconies do restrict the ability of sunlight to hit the centrepiece of windows (i.e. the point of APSH calculation). This is recognised by the BRE in paragraph 3.2.11, which states – ‘Balconies and overhangs above an existing window tend to block sunlight, especially in summer above south-facing windows. Even a modest obstruction opposite may result in a large relative impact.’

In consideration of the above, the overall magnitude of change in respect to sunlight amenity within this neighbouring building is considered to be medium. However, the majority of windows serve less sensitive bedrooms and balconies are present. Therefore, there is likely to be a direct, permanent, long-term adverse effect which is considered to be moderate.

However, it is noted that the baseline levels for this building are high as it enjoys an open context for a city centre site, albeit one that has been identified as a regeneration priority so is subject to change. The practical effect of the Proposed Development is a major adverse change, exacerbated by overhanging balconies which block access to sunlight and daylight resulting in relatively small changes having more significant impacts. Whilst the degree of change in this context is major, and clearly this will impact residents; their overall residual sunlight and daylight amenity is still well within the range typically experienced in a city centre context.

Summary

With regard to the daylight alterations to existing sensitive receptors, it is considered that the Proposed Scheme would result in a variety of effects, ranging from: negligible for one (20%) of five receptors; minor adverse for two (40%) of the five receptors; and moderate to major adverse for two (40%) of five receptors.

With regard to the sunlight alterations to existing sensitive receptors, it is considered that the Proposed Scheme would result in a variety of effects, ranging from: negligible for one (20%) of five receptors; minor adverse for two (40%) of the five receptors; and moderate for two (40%) of five receptors.

The effect is considered to be **Not Significant** for The Century Buildings, 2 – 18 Left Bank Apartments and 29 Bailey Street.

The effect is considered to be **Significant** for 32 Quay Street and The Bridge, 40 Dearmans Place.

However, the majority of windows and rooms tested would satisfy the default values in the 2022 BRE Guidelines, despite the Site’s contextual constraints. Furthermore, the majority of the daylight effects that fall beyond the recommended BRE criteria broadly fall into one or more of the following categories:

- They would retain VSC levels of circa 20% and above (which is considered ‘good’ for an urban context);
- They sit beneath overhanging balconies;
- The NSL criteria for the associated room is satisfied; or
- The windows / rooms serve bedrooms, which the BRE recognise as less important than other uses.

For sunlight, the majority of the effects recorded represent a minor deviation of the absolute loss and/or retained value targets and many relate to bedroom use which is considered least important for sunlight.

Over Shadowing

Owing to the southerly location of the sun path, only outdoor amenity / spaces sufficiently close to the Site and located from north-west through to north-east are relevant for consideration.

There are four existing sensitive receptors close enough and oriented in such a way as to be potentially affected by the Proposed Scheme:

- Public Amenity Space 32 Quay Street;
- Public Amenity Space Clermont-Ferrand Square;

- Public Amenity Space Motor Square; and,
- The River Irwell.

Sun Hours on Ground (SHOG)

The SHOG test, compares the proportion of an amenity area receiving at least 2 hours of sun on ground on the 21st of March in the current baseline and with the Proposed Scheme in place. An amenity space may be adversely affected if less than 50% of its total area receives 2 hours of sun on ground and is reduced to less than 0.8 times its former value, following development.

The overshadowing results show that the public amenity at 32 Quay Street and Motor Square and the River Irwell meet the 2022 BRE Guidelines.

Public amenity space, Clermont-Ferrand Square is located to the north-east of the Site in front of the Lowry Hotel on the other side of the River Irwell. In the existing baseline, 98% of the area receives at least 2 hours of direct sunlight on 21st March. This reduces to 28% with the Proposed Scheme in place, which equates to an alteration in excess of 40% (large adverse magnitude). However, this area's location makes it very sensitive to changes in massing on the Site.

A further detailed SHOG assessment has been undertaken for this area on June 21st to understand how much sunlight it will receive in the summer months when the sun is higher in the sky. The sunlight levels significantly increase in summer with the area receiving over two hours of direct sunlight to 97% of its area on 21st June. The availability in the summer months is a key consideration as there is a higher expectation for sunlight and outside spaces are most likely to be fully utilised.

Transient Overshadowing

The assessment covers three key dates in the year: 21st March 21st June and 21st December. The key date for consideration is 21st March, which is the focus of the commentary below.

The transient analysis shows that due to the larger massing and increased density the Proposed Development some additional transient overshadowing on the 21 March will occur at the public amenity at 32 Quay Street and Motor Square and the River Irwell. However, the impact of this is considered to be negligible.

Public Amenity Space, Clermont-Ferrand Square however, will experience a large magnitude of change. Despite this it will experience good levels of sunlight in the summer months when outdoor space is likely to be fully utilised.

Summary

The effect is considered to be **Not Significant** for Public Amenity Space at 32 Quay Street and Motor Square, and the River Irwell. More significant effects have been identified within Clermont-Ferrand Square; however, it is noted that this public space provides very little external seating and from our observation, it is a hard space that people generally pass through rather than dwell.

Wind

Core Strategy Policy EN2 Tall Buildings states that, "by their very size tall buildings can have a significant impact on the local environment and its micro-climate. It is therefore expected that this impact be modelled and that submissions for tall buildings also include appropriate measures to create an attractive, pedestrian friendly local environment."

Paragraph 12.14 goes on to state, "it is for these reasons that it is considered particularly important that they are designed to the highest quality, both in terms of appearance and their impact on the functioning of surrounding space."

In addition, under Section 12 of the NPPF (2021) paragraph 130 it sets out the Proposed Development should create a place with a high standard of amenity for both existing and future residents.

Response

A wind microclimate assessment has been undertaken and is included in the EIA. To identify the likely effect of the Proposed Development on the pedestrian level wind environment, a 3D CFD model of the Proposed Development and surrounding Site was created.

The wind assessment concludes the following after the introduction of the Proposed Development:

- Wind conditions for off-Site thoroughfares are suitable for 'sitting' or 'standing' activities during the winter season, which is suitable for the intended use;
- Wind conditions for off site entrances are suitable for sitting or standing, which is suitable for the intended use;
- Wind conditions for bus stops are suitable for sitting or standing, which is suitable for the intended use;
- Off-Site seating areas, Motor Square and Clermont-Ferrand Square, are suitable for 'sitting' activities during the summer season. In addition, conditions at Motor Square in the winter are improved from standing' to 'sitting' activities. All are suitable for the intended use;
- Wind conditions for off site pedestrian crossings are suitable for sitting or standing, which is suitable for the intended use;
- Wind conditions at the public amenity space proposed at Alberton House will be suitable for the intended use;
- Wind conditions at the proposed on site entrances are suitable for sitting or standing, which is suitable for the intended use;
- Wind conditions for the proposed ground-level pedestrian passageway through the office building are suitable for standing activities, with local areas suitable for 'strolling', and therefore suitable for the intended use;
- Secondary mitigation is required to the Atrium terrace of the Office Building For the Atrium terrace - soft mitigation measures are proposed, including a mixture of 1.6m high solid planters and 75% open railings. Planters and a pergola are also introduced to the Atrium terrace to improve the wind conditions; and,
- Secondary mitigation is required for the private terraces on the residential building - 1.8m solid balustrades with solid screens are to be implemented. Planters and solid screens both with 1.5m height are to be placed at various locations to mitigation the wind impact. In addition, as a private terrace, the impact can be more controllable than one for public use, the building management strategy will limit the pedestrian access to these locations during windy days.

The wind conditions in and around the Site are therefore suitable for the intended use.

Safety and Security

Core Strategy Policy DM1 Development Management outlines that all development should have regard to the specific issues including community safety and crime prevention.

Response

The Proposed Development will deliver high quality buildings with contemporary office space and residential space, with extensive amenity space. A key part of the Proposed Development is the opportunity to create an open and inviting ground floor entrance which enhances public realm and connectivity. To support this the ground floor will provide publicly accessible commercial uses along the key pedestrian route linking with Trinity Bridge and the River Irwell frontage, generating vitality and an active frontage along a largely underutilised, inactive route.

A Crime Impact Statement ('CIS') has been prepared by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) Design for Security in relation to the Proposed Development.

The CIS outlines a number of attributes of the scheme, including:

- The extensive public realm proposed as part of the scheme;
- The 100% cycle parking for the residential tower;
- The riverside location and the impacts of this on natural surveillance;
- The need to ensure that the external lifts are safe and secure; and,
- General maintenance of the area, such as the removal of litter and graffiti etc, will improve the safety and security of the area, once buildings are in operation.

The CIS includes a number of measures that should be incorporated into the Proposed Development to achieve Secure by Design accreditation. These recommendations have been incorporated into the Proposed Development where appropriate and further consideration will be given to these at the detailed design stage to meet the policy requirements, and to achieve Secure by Design accreditation. As set out within the DAS, the design development has responded to these issues in the following ways:

- CCTV to be provided at key entrance moments and access areas for cyclist arrival to both the commercial and residential buildings;
- Overlooking available to both internal and external spaces from the lobby reception areas in both the residential and commercial buildings;
- Lines of security from public entrances to the private environments within the building;
- Lighting provided within areas of the public realm that do not benefit from overlooking;
- Street furniture located adjacent to, but away from the building, to avoid opportunities for climbing up to access upper level apartments or commercial areas;
- Bollards (drop-down) installed within the ground level public realm to control access into the central public realm area of the Site, and also the basement car park ramp;
- Public realm lighting design to ensure well-lit environments and lines of visibility through the public realm environments within the Site, while ensuring light pollution is avoided onto riverside ecological habitat;
- Scenic lifts provided for step-free access to the residential cycle storage space at first floor, to enable visibility to the cycle entry and arrival space (fob security control to access the lifts and opening to the store area at first floor to also be provided); and,
- Clear lines of sight maintained within the public realm, landscape, to ensure that tree canopies do not obstruct visibility across the Site.

Overall, the Proposed Development will provide an investment into public realm which will encourage further investment into the area and its wider transformation, consistent with the St Mary's Parsonage SRF.

For further information please refer to the Crime Impact Statement prepared by GMP Design for Security in relation to the Proposed Development.

Site Waste Management Strategy

Core Strategy Policy EN19 Waste requires all developers to demonstrate the proposals consistency with the principles of the waste hierarchy. All developers will be required to submit a waste management plan to demonstrate how both construction and demolition waste will be minimised and recycled wherever possible and how the sustainable waste management needs of the end user will be met.

MCC has prepared a Waste Storage and Collection Guidance Note (GD04) which contains minimum standards to be considered for the storage and collection of waste. This guidance follows the recommendations set on the Waste Management Plan for England, strongly encouraging and promoting high levels of quality recycling.

The note states that all planning applications for new developments and conversions must include a Waste Management Strategy that includes:

- An estimated storage area for the waste produced by the development, including residential, F&B and retail uses;
- Details of internal and external stores for both waste and recycling; and,
- Location of the proposed collection point and details of the route the collection will take.

Response

A Site Waste Management Strategy (WMS) has been prepared by Curtins which includes Manchester City Council's Waste Proforma. The Site WMS considers the potential refuse and recyclable waste volumes of the Proposed Development, including organic waste and for all uses of this development. It also provides details of the collection arrangements.

The uses at the development are anticipated to be served by different collection schedules. These are as outlined below:

- Residential – Council schedules collections;
- Office Use – 3 times a week;
- Commercial Use (Retail) – 3 times a week; and,
- Commercial Use (F&B) – 5 times a week

The collection frequency is subject to be updated following occupation, as typically the waste generated by both the office and commercial uses varies significantly based on the final occupier.

It is envisaged that the refuse and servicing would take place from two new loading bays – adjacent to the residential building along Bridge Street and adjacent to the commercial and office uses along St Mary's Parsonage.

The proposed loading bays have been agreed in principle with MCC Highways Officers.

Swept path analysis of a large refuse vehicle utilising the proposed loading bays has been undertaken with respect to both commercial/office and residential uses.

For further details please refer to Section 3.4 of the Transport Statement, and the Site Waste Management Strategy, both prepared by Curtins in relation to the Proposed Development.

Office Use

The office element of the Proposed Development includes a waste storage room at ground floor level, which has been sized accordingly to provide space for circa. 34 1,100 litre bins.

It is envisaged that at least 60% of the bins in the waste store room would be dedicated to recycling, but this could be increased at any point, based on actual recycling rates.

The management company would be in charge of monitoring the recycling rates and promote actively high recycling rates within the employees of the different commercial uses.

The waste storage areas will be well lit and ventilated, including access to a water feed, and adequate drainage will be provided.

The building management would also be responsible for keeping the waste storage facilities clean and safe, as well as ensuring that bins are replaced and cleaned on a regular basis.

It is envisaged that a private contractor would be appointed to collect the waste for all office uses. As different uses are expected at the Proposed Development, this could be provided by different companies. As such, it is considered that the frequency of these collections will be arranged after occupation, based on the actual waste generation volumes.

The management company and staff of the office uses will be in charge of monitoring bin usage and adjusting the collection frequency accordingly and would be responsible for moving the bins to and from the collection point along St Mary's Parsonage.

Residential Use

The residential element of the Proposed Development includes a waste storage room at the ground floor level, located in the vicinity of the building core. The size of the bin store room has been determined accordingly, whilst consideration to segregation and recycling has been given with 50% of the bins in the waste stores proposed to be dedicated to recycling. It is envisaged that the management company will be in charge of monitoring the recycling rates.

The waste storage areas will be well lit and ventilated and adequate drainage will be provided. The management company would be responsible for cleaning the bins on a regular basis and arranging for the replacement of damaged bins when necessary.

The residential waste store is conveniently located near the collection point along Bridge Street. The management company would collect the bins from the waste store and transport them to the collection point, where Council operatives loading the bins into the refuse vehicle. 4.6.5 Once the bins have been emptied, containers would be carried immediately back to the bin stores by the management company.

Flexible Commercial Use

The commercial elements of the Proposed Development will benefit from an independent waste store at ground floor level, conveniently located at the southern commercial hub.

The commercial waste store would have the capacity to accommodate four 1,100 litre bins and eleven 240 litre wheelie bins.

It is envisaged that initially at least 60% of the bins in the waste store for the F&B uses and 50% for the retail uses would be dedicated to recycling, with the ability to increase this at any point, in line with actual recycling rates.

The waste storage areas will be well lit and ventilated, including access to a water feed, and adequate drainage will be provided.

The building management would also be responsible for keeping the waste storage facilities clean and safe, as well as ensuring that bins are replaced and cleaned on a regular basis.

It is envisaged that a private contractor would be appointed to collect the waste for all commercial uses. As different uses are expected at the Proposed Development, this could be provided by different companies. As such, it is considered that the frequency of these collections will be arranged after occupation, based on the actual waste generation volumes.

The management company and staff of the commercial uses will be in charge of monitoring bin usage and adjusting the collection frequency accordingly and would be responsible for moving the bins to and from the collection point along St Mary's Parsonage.

Summary

In summary, the proposed Site Waste Management Strategy highlights that the provision complies with waste standards, in terms of storage, recycling and management.

Construction Management

Core Strategy Policy DM1 states that development should have regard to effects on amenity, including noise, air quality, road safety and traffic generation. Policy SP1 Spatial Principles, states that developments should minimise emissions.

Response

The Construction Methodology and Programme Chapter of the Environmental Statement (Volume 1 – Chapter 5) has been prepared by Sir Robert McAlpine, a Tier 1 contractor with significant experience delivering major developments within Manchester City Centre. Whilst some local impacts will, unfortunately, be unavoidable, the contractor will seek to minimise these as far as is practical. The ES Chapter outlines the demolition and construction process, including measures to minimise the impact on the environment and residential amenity and this has informed the assessments within the ES technical chapters.

Continued engagement with the local community prior to and throughout construction will be a key component of the construction method and further details of the construction management plan will be required to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of works on-site. This will include measures to liaise with other developers and schemes coming forward within the SRF area, in relation to the potential impact on St Mary's Parsonage and access for construction vehicles, to ensure any potential cumulative impacts are mitigated.

As part of the construction management plan, a detailed traffic plan will be prepared. It is envisaged that all construction traffic will access/egress the Site from Bridge Street, and traffic will be routed to / from the Site via Bridge Street onto Chapel Street to the A6 or Inner Ring Road.

It is therefore considered that the Proposed Development complies with Core Strategy Policy DM1 with regards to effects on amenity and Policy SP1 on minimising emissions.

TV and Radio Reception and Broadband

Under MCC planning guidance, any development over four storeys require a TV reception impact assessment. The report should assess the possible interference created by the Proposed Development on TV and radio reception within the area. In addition, there is a requirement to ensure that new residences have access to superfast broadband download speeds (understood to mean a minimum of 24 Mbps) to ensure future occupants can obtain sufficient broadband services.

Response

Television

Residences in the area surrounding the Proposed Development receive television services from the Winter Hill transmitter. The strength and quality of the signal in the residential areas is generally moderate to good.

A large proportion of the shadow zone (up to 1.5km from the Proposed Development) extends over non-residential areas, where the presence of television aerials is less likely.

Low level receiving aerials in the Proposed Development's shadow, within approximately one kilometre, may experience degradation of terrestrial television reception quality.

Residences where the aerials extend above the Proposed Development's shadow, or are at greater distances, are unlikely to experience noticeable impacts in practice.

Radio

The area surrounding the Proposed Development receives radio services from the numerous transmitters, including Winter Hill. The strength and quality of the signal from Winter Hill near the Proposed Development is variable.

Degradation of the radio signal at close range to the Proposed Development is likely. The effects are unlikely to be noticeable in practice due to the variability of services in an urban environment

On the basis of the above no requirement for pre-emptive mitigation has been identified. However, in the event that effects are reported, it is recommended that a reception measurement is undertaken (post-construction) to investigate the likely

cause of the interference. For further details please refer to the Television and Radio Baseline Survey and Report prepared by Pager Power in relation to the Proposed Development.

Broadband

A separate Broadband Assessment has been prepared by Pager Power. The availability of broadband services and the associated speeds has been determined based on:

- Openreach coverage checker – which is available via the Openreach website and identifies available speeds in any area within the UK;
- Crosschecks with three of the main UK broadband providers; and,
- Investigation of the process for obtaining superfast broadband to the premises.

The assessment concludes

- Suitable superfast broadband download speeds, understood to mean a minimum of 24 Mbps, is not currently available at seven of nine assessed addresses checked near to the Proposed Development location. Therefore, superfast services may not currently be available to the Proposed Development under baseline conditions;
- Openreach typically provide Fibre To The Cabinet (FTTC) infrastructure, and this is leased by BT and Sky who provide internet services, amongst other retail providers. Fibre services are not available at eight of the nine addresses near to the Proposed Development location. Therefore, FTTC infrastructure may not currently be available for the Proposed Development from Openreach. The review has shown that for majority of the assessed addresses near to the Proposed Development location, there is no superfast services from BT and Sky; and,
- Virgin Media provide superfast services with of an average download speed of up to 1130Mbps; however, information was unavailable for seven of the nine addresses and was confirmed as unavailable at one of eight addresses near to the Proposed Development location. The remaining address did have access to superfast services from Virgin Media. Consultation with Virgin Media previously has indicated that the Virgin Media network is available throughout the centre of Manchester.

The Proposed Development consists of more than 19 plots. Therefore, Fibre To The Premises (FTTP) infrastructure is available free of charge for this development subject to application to Openreach. This would ensure internet speeds are maintained and is recommended for the Proposed Development. If the installation of FTTP were to be pursued, the application must be done at least six months before provision of the service to the first property is provided.

The Proposed Development may benefit from superfast services from Virgin Media. Consultation with Virgin Media previously has indicated that the Virgin Media network is available throughout Manchester. If Virgin Media are contacted within a sufficient time frame and notified of the site plan it is possible that the Proposed Development will benefit from either FTTP or cable broadband supplied by Virgin Media. Other internet service providers can be contacted in advance. Provided one or more of these processes are followed, superfast services can be made available for the Proposed Development

Aviation Consideration

Paragraph 20 of the National Planning Practice Guidance on Consultation and Pre-Decision Matters refers to the need for additional consultation to take place in specific local circumstances. This process, 'consultation direction' includes the consideration of Proposed Development in the vicinity of existing facilities, including airports.

Response

An Aviation Safety Assessment has been prepared by Pager Power to investigate the potential impact of the Proposed Development upon aviation infrastructure in the surrounding area, namely operations at Manchester Airport.

The assessment concludes the following:

- The key aviation risk identified was the potential impact upon the Secondary Surveillance Radar (SSR) at Manchester Airport. The secondary risks identified include the obstacle limitation surfaces (OLS) for Manchester Airport, their Instrument Flight Procedures (IFPs), and the aviation lighting requirement (specifically for crane usage);
- The Proposed Development will be visible to the SSR at Manchester Airport. NATS may have concerns regarding this visibility. It is unlikely that the impact upon the radar would be a 'showstopper' if mitigation is implemented which would be payable to NATS; and,
- The Proposed Development will not infringe the OLS at Manchester Airport. Aviation lighting is not required for either building due to their height above ground level and no infringement of the OLS. A lighting requirement for the cranes during construction is however predicted. No impact upon the Manchester Airport's IFPs was identified based on a high-level review.

For further details please refer to the Aviation Safety Assessment in relation to the Proposed Development.

Local Labour Agreement

Core Strategy Policy EC1 Employment and Economic Growth in Manchester requires Local Employment Agreements to contain a commitment to work with the Work Skills Team to ensure that employment opportunities resulting from this development are made available to Manchester residents through existing recruitment offer and allow hard to reach groups equal opportunity to be successful in applying.

Response

A Local Labour Agreement will be entered into as part of the proposed construction process for the Proposed Development.

Planning Assessment Summary

This section of the Planning Statement provides a summary of how the Proposed Development has been comprehensively assessed in relation to the Development Plan and other material considerations. This has taken place during an extensive process of consultation and technical due diligence including the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment and other technical reports. The conclusion of that process is that the proposals are in accordance with the Development Plan when taken as a whole and positively address the material planning considerations such that they merit the support of the Local Planning Authority.

7. Tall Building Evaluation

As detailed in Section 2, the St Mary's Parsonage SRF identifies the opportunity for tall buildings on the Site and this is reflected in the Proposed Development.

Unless addressed elsewhere in this Statement, this Section presents a detailed evaluation of the tall buildings proposed as part of the scheme in line with the relevant policies and guidance contained in Manchester's Core Strategy and Historic England Guidance on Tall Buildings.

Policy and Guidance Summary

The Manchester Guide to Development SPD states that "it will always be important for the City to be able to accommodate new interest and activity in its different forms, including tall buildings" (p.46).

Manchester's Guide to Development SPD states that the Council "would require any such Proposed Development to be presented in context of the joint guidance produced by CABE and English Heritage for assessing tall buildings" (p.50).

Historic England published the second edition of Historic England Advice Note 4: Tall Buildings on 4 March 2022 which takes into consideration the changes to national planning policy and guidance, as well as recent experience of planning for tall buildings in the historic environment. The guidance outlines that a high-quality scheme would have a positive relationship with the following:

- Topography;
- Character of place;
- Heritage assets and their settings;
- Height and scale of development (immediate, intermediate and town-wide);
- Urban grain and streetscape;
- Open spaces;
- Rivers and waterways;
- Important views including prospects and panoramas; and,
- The impact on the skyline.

Advice Note 4 refers to the NPPF in stating that "great weight should be given to the asset's conservation", with any harm requiring a "clear and convincing justification" (NPPF paragraph 132).

Although, it states that "in assessing this justification, and in weighing any public benefits...local planning authorities will need to pay particular regard to the policies in paragraphs 8 and 9 of the NPPF that state that economic, social and environmental gains are to be sought jointly and simultaneously...to deliver positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment".

The remainder of this Section will consider the proposal against the Historic England guidance's approach to inform the design of the proposed tall buildings:

- The response to local context;
- The impact on the local environment;
- Architectural quality;
- Functional design;
- Sustainable design and construction; and,
- A well-designed inclusive environment.

The Proposed Development is also assessed against the Core Strategy Policy EN2 on Tall Buildings. Due regard to Policy EN3 (heritage) and Policy CC9 (change and renewal) has been provided in Section 6 of this Statement and is cross-referenced where relevant. The Proposed Development is also assessed against the Core Strategy Policy EN2 (2012) on Tall Buildings. In addition, consideration has also been given to Manchester City Council's Guide to Development Supplementary Planning Document, in understanding this assessment.

The Proposed Development is tested separately against planning policy at all levels within Section 6 of this Statement.

Pre-Application Consultation.

In terms of pre-application consultation, Historic England Advice Note 4 (2022) identifies a series of steps that should be undertaken as follows:

- Understand the policy position of the LPA including which areas are suitable for tall buildings and where there are historic environment considerations;
- Agree what illustrative material and digital models are available and likely to be needed, so that the impact of a tall building on the historic environment can be fully assessed by the LPA;
- Verify the zone of visual influence of a proposal, utilising digital tools, to agree the extent and type of impact assessment required;
- Understand the local character of areas that may be affected by the proposal;
- Determine which heritage assets are likely to be impacted by development proposals;
- Gain an early understanding of the significance of these heritage assets, including the contribution made by their setting. This will mean the impact of the proposal on significance, and the ability to appreciate that significance, can be adequately assessed;
- Agree an approach for design review – a design review panel is one established tool to assess design proposals at the pre-application and application stages;
- Identify what supporting information may be required, for example, heritage impact assessment; and,
- Explore ways to positively respond to the historic environment.

A full site analysis has taken place to understand the site context and historic context, particularly given the surrounding listed buildings and Conservation Areas. Consultation with the LPA and Historic England has also taken place alongside other relevant technical consultees to ensure the optimal design solution for the Site.

Responding to Local Context

With regard to responding to the Local Context, the Historic England Guidance states the following:

“Understanding local context (including its evolution) is critical to achieving good design. This includes considering how the tall building relates to neighbouring buildings. It is important that the massing and scale of the building is appropriate in relation to its surroundings and responds to context to avoid or minimise harm to the significance of heritage assets. It is helpful to consider the relationship between the top, middle, and bottom sections of a tall building with their surroundings and the potential impact on streetscape, town/cityscape and skyline. Where tall buildings are proposed in regeneration areas, there may be opportunities to improve local character through design.”

This part of the policy also relates to Policy EN2 contained in the Core Strategy, namely that proposals for tall buildings should *“ensure that tall buildings complement the City’s key existing building assets and make a positive contribution to the evolution of a unique, attractive and distinctive Manchester, including to its skyline and approach views.”*

Townscape Context

Significant consideration has been given to the location and form of the proposed taller buildings that has resulted in a number of options being tested to ensure they sit comfortably within their surrounding context. Full details of the design options explored for the taller building are provided in the Design and Access Statement, the Consideration of Alternative Design (Chapter xxx of the EIA).

To demonstrate the success of the proposed approach, a Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (TVIA) has been submitted in the Environmental Statement which is supported by verified views of the Proposed Development based on the visibility of the scheme.

The impact of the tall buildings proposed have been considered through their positioning, which allows them to align with the surrounding context with the taller residential building fronting Bridge Street to signalise the entrance to the city. The height then steps down as part of the office building towards the Alberton House redevelopment as the Conservation Area beyond.

Overall, the Proposed Development is considered to make a positive contribution to the skyline regarding the local and wider townscape context in accordance with Historic England’s Guidance Note on Tall Buildings and Policy EN2.

Heritage viewpoints and setting

The effects of the Proposed Development have been assessed in a separate Heritage Statement and are summarised and addressed in Section 6 of this Report.

In summary, The Heritage Assessment concludes that the Proposed Development will cause less than substantial harm to the architectural or historical interest of 31 identified heritage assets, minor benefits to 5 assets and no harm to the remaining 26.

The Proposed Development is therefore compliant with regard to Policy EN3, the NPPF and the relevant elements of the Tall Building Guidance and Policy EN2.

Consideration of the Impact of the Local Environment

With regard to impact on the local environment, Advice Note 4 sets out:

“People’s experience of local character and the historic environment can be affected by factors such as wind and other microclimatic changes, overshadowing, and light pollution from the development of a tall building. In some cases, this has the potential to impact the physical fabric of heritage assets. It is important to test impacts on the local environment at design stage and present these through the application process to reduce the incidence of interventions being required to mitigate impacts post construction (which may in turn harm character and quality of a site, street or area).”

Similarly, Policy EN2 states that

“By their very size tall buildings can have a significant impact on the local environment and its micro-climate. It is therefore expected that this impact be modelled and that submissions for tall buildings also include appropriate measures to create an attractive, pedestrian friendly local environment.”

Assessment of these specific criteria is set out under the subheadings below, setting out the impact on local amenity as well as the impact on the physical fabric of heritage assets.

Local Amenity

A comprehensive suite of environmental technical studies have been undertaken to assess the potential impacts of the Proposed Development. Reports that form part of the submission clarify the overall impact of the proposals on the local environment. These are all detailed below and summarised in Section 6 of this Statement:

- Wind Microclimate ES Chapter: Chapter 9 of the ES;
- Daylight, Sunlight, Overshadowing and Solar Glare: Chapter 8 of the ES;
- Transport Assessment and Travel Plan: Standalone reports;
- Air Quality: Standalone report;
- Noise and Vibration: Chapter 6 of the ES and Standalone Environmental Noise Assessment;
- Construction Management: Chapter 4 of the ES;
- Human Health ES: Chapter 10 of the ES; and,
- Crime Impact Statement: Standalone report.

These technical reports noted previously consider the impact of the proposals on the local environment and, in line with the summary above, the impact of the Proposed Development is not considered to be significant in EIA terms and are also compliant with local relevant policies in relation to development management.

Architectural Quality

With regard to architectural quality of the Proposed Development, Historic England's Advice Note states:

"Consideration can be given to whether a distinctive landmark design or a restrained architectural response is more appropriate in terms of the likely impact on the historic environment. High-quality architecture involves designing a tall building 'in the round' so it is coherent from all directions taking account of a building's scale, form, massing, proportions, silhouette, façade materials and detailed surface design. It is important to note that not all tall buildings can be landmarks, and not all landmarks need to be tall buildings"

Similarly, Policy EN2 of the Core Strategy states that proposals for tall buildings will be supported where it can be demonstrated that they are "of excellent design quality".

The elements of the design as they relate to the visual impact on the historic environment have been discussed in detail in Section 6 of this Statement. In addition, the architectural quality of the scheme in terms of Scale, form, massing, proportions, silhouette and materiality is discussed in detail in the accompanying Design and Access Assessment, is summarised in Section 4 of this Statement and compliance with relevant development plan policies is considered in Section 6 of this Statement.

Functional Design

With regard to Historic England's Tall Building Guidance and functional design, it states:

“Façade treatment and finishes, external lighting, placement of plant, servicing and use of advertising screens are all important considerations in locations where locally distinct features are vulnerable to change in local context and character. The functional design of new buildings needs to consider and respond carefully to the historic environment. Historic environments often demonstrate strong street-based urban design qualities. Tall buildings often need to balance a range of needs, including greater servicing demands for ground floors. However, the design of tall buildings should reflect or reference local street-based qualities, such as active frontages and human scaled design at street level.”

Whilst the heritage impact associated with the Proposed Development has been described in detail, this Section sets out how the finishes, external lighting, placing of plant, servicing and other important considerations regarding a functional design have been taken into account and addressed. Similarly, Policy EN2 states that *“submissions for tall buildings should also include appropriate measures to create an attractive, pedestrian friendly local environment”* and *“contribute positively to placemaking”* and *“play a positive role to placemaking in the wider area.”*

The Design and Access Statement includes full details of the process undertaken in designing the two buildings and public realm. This is also summarised in Section 4 of this Statement. Architecturally, the design has considered the needs of all users of the Proposed Development, including commercial tenants, residents and members of the public. In addition, care has been taken to ensure high quality materials are used throughout. Plant is placed carefully within the building and screened as necessary.

An extensive area of public realm is proposed with distinct character areas to promote pedestrian movement and dwelling at the Site. Given the extensive amount of public realm proposed a Lighting Strategy has been provided as part of the planning submission in order to both improve the safety of the area as well as exemplify the qualities of the landscaping.

On this basis, the proposals accord with Advice Note 4 and will deliver a functional design and meets the requirements of Policy EN2 with regard to creating an attractive pedestrian environment.

Sustainable Design and Construction

Advice Note 4 sets out that tall buildings should “provide opportunities to enhance the appearance of an area and reduce harm to the historic environment through the re-development or retrofit of a tall building can be explored. Considerations may include different massing options; improvements to the base of the building and public realm; using durable high-quality materials; and whole life carbon costs.”

Policy EN2 also states that the proposals should “contribute positively to sustainability” and “be served by public transport nodes”.

The Design and Access Statement and Section 4 of this Statement provides a commentary on why it is not possible to retrofit the existing buildings on Site.

The Environmental Standards Statement (ESS) and Energy Statement sets out how the Proposed Development will incorporate sustainability measures, including energy efficiency and environmental design. In addition, Chapter 11 of the ES assess the impact of the Proposed Development on Climate Change.

Overall, the proposals have positively addressed the guidance set out in Historic England’s Advice Note 4 and Core Strategy Policy EN2 by incorporating a range of sustainable design measures as part of the proposals.

Provision of a well-designed and inclusive environment

Historic England’s Advice Note states that “the way tall buildings are experienced at ground level is an important consideration as tall buildings can have a significant impact on the historic streetscape and public realm. In some cases, redevelopments may create opportunities to enhance elements of the significance of heritage assets by opening lost views or revealing historic street patterns”.

The provision of a large area of public realm has been a key element of the design development of the Site opening up the Site to the public and connecting the Site with the surrounding blue and green network and the historic environment. The buildings have been designed to include flexible commercial spaces that spill out into the public realm ensure active frontages and enhancing the user experience at the ground floor level. The Design and Access Statement and Section 4 of this Statement includes full details.

Summary

All the relevant elements of the Tall Building Guidance from Historic England, in addition to the policy requirements set out in Policy EN2 of Manchester Core Strategy have been comprehensively addressed under the subheadings set out above.

The Proposed Development has been developed through a comprehensive engagement process, including an analysis of the visual impact on identified heritage assets through a series of accurate rendered key views.

In summary, the Proposed Development has carefully considered and addressed the relevant guidance and Manchester City Council's Core Strategy Policy EN2 on Tall Buildings.

8. Public Benefits of the Proposed Development

The purpose of this Section is to provide a detailed assessment of the economic, social, and environmental benefits associated with the proposals. Importantly, these benefits are explained with reference to Manchester's overall strategic policy and economic context, which has been set out in Section 3 of this Statement.

Economic Benefits

As demonstrated through the Strategic Context, there is a clear requirement for economic benefits to be maximised by the future proposals through major reinvestment into Albert Bridge House to drive forward the regeneration objectives of the St Mary's Parsonage SRF and support the wider strategic objectives of Manchester City Council and the Greater Manchester region.

Direct Investment and Benefits

Construction

The delivery of the project has an estimated construction costs of £325m across the Proposed Development's build period. It is anticipated that around 1,970 construction jobs will be supported over the construction period, with these jobs generating a total GVA of £24.5m across the period.

Much of the economic benefit associated with the direct investment will impact the local region through the supply of local labour and engagement with Manchester's Work and Skills team will help to maximise social value by ensuring contractors draw on the local labour pool. The use of local labour during the construction phase will increase local expenditure of those working onsite over the course of construction period. Where possible, local supply chains will be utilised by the appointed contractor to strengthen the commitment to local jobs and skills.

Beyond the immediate economic impact of construction activity and by taking multiplier effects into account, the number of jobs supported by the development during the construction phase is anticipated to support a further 280 FTEs and generate GVA of £24.5m per annum. This accounts for the supply chain jobs that will be supported by the Proposed Development, including the sourcing and production of all building materials for installation on Site during the construction phase. Other costs incurred during this phase of the Proposed Development would support new and existing roles across a range of grades and industries within the construction sector.

The construction activity generated by the Proposed Development will provide a significant boost to the regional economy, whilst utilising the strength and resilience of the construction industry.

Operation

To continue to grow the economic output of the Greater Manchester Region, it is considered essential for the City Centre to keep ahead of changes in demand from occupiers for new workspace and new working environments and housing. Examples of these changes include the growing demand for flexible workspaces and a range in housing-mix. The delivery of a best in class, largescale city centre office campus and a new high density residential building with a range of apartment sizes, will therefore positively contribute towards the ongoing regeneration of Manchester City Centre and the region.

The Proposed Development is delivering ground floor flexible commercial space likely to be occupied by retail / restaurant / café floorspace, which will increase the amount of active frontage, thereby making a positive contribution to public realm. The proposed food and beverage space provided will support an estimated 134 FTE jobs once operational. Local retail expenditure is also anticipated to increase due to spending by employees, residents and visitors at the Proposed Development. This benefit would be twofold, from both incomes generated by money being spent at the Proposed Development's ground floor offerings, and expenditure generated by the Proposed Development's employees.

During the operational phase, the scale of commercial space will support circa 2,983 FTE jobs. The Proposed Development would also provide a range of opportunities for local residents across a variety of skills levels and occupations, contributing to the inclusive growth ambitions in the Our Manchester Industrial Strategy, as well as potentially reducing the average distance travelled to work.

For the commercial element of the Proposed Development, the occupier target audience is to be kept open, as demand will come from a diverse range of customers from all sectors and scales of businesses. The Proposed Development is likely to accommodate high productivity businesses across a range of sectors including financial, digital, tech and professional services businesses, key growth sectors for Manchester. Businesses such as these not only help to create high value, high growth operations within the city, but also help to coordinate and radically improve the productivity across all business sectors by increasing innovation and raising levels of export and investment. In turn, the region strengthens its position as a UK leader of business growth in specific sectors to help encourage further businesses to locate here.

The employment accommodated in the office space and flexible commercial (F&B), is expected to generate a direct GVA impact of almost £139m per annum. The operational employment and GVA benefits are of a significant benefit to the economic growth of the city.

Assuming all residential units are fully occupied, and considering the unit mix, it is estimated the Proposed Development would accommodate up to approximately 895 residents. The additional households accommodated in the Proposed Development will support additional household spend, increasing local expenditure, including on retail, household goods, food and drink, local transport, recreation and leisure and other expenditure likely to be spent locally. It is estimated that an annual resident local expenditure of £9.7 is expected. This expenditure is sufficient to support approximately 85 FTEs.

The addition of new homes will also generate additional Council Tax revenue for Manchester City Council. While exact Council Tax bandings will not be determined until detailed site plans are known, making an assumption of a mix between Council Tax B and C properties, and taking into account single person discount for a proportion of the units, once fully built out and occupied the Proposed Development could generate an estimated £2.8m of annual Council Tax income which has the ability to support the delivery of services across the Local Authority and economic regeneration ambitions.

Catalytic Benefits

The SRF highlights the opportunity for future investment and development to maximise catalytic effects brought about by the Proposed Development, leading to further investment in the area and Manchester as a whole. The momentum of Parsonage Gardens becoming a mixed-use community was established by the refurbishment of Arkwright House in 2015 and further investment of a significant quantum of floorspace is needed to further the ambitions of the area and allow it to economically contribute to the city region.

The Proposed Development will support the SRF's objective to deliver a more pedestrian friendly environment that enhances connections with other regeneration areas, such as Spinningfields to the south, the Ramada Hotel Strategic Regeneration site and the wider retail core to the north, as well as linkages to Salford and Greengate.

The proposals will not only transform and enhance this Site, but they will also deliver major public realm improvements within the St Mary's Parsonage area in the City Centre, which will enhance the experience on the human-scale, creating a more active, accessible and inclusive environment for pedestrians. The scale of investment will also serve to provide wider investor confidence in the area, incentivising other investment initiatives to come forward particularly within the St Mary's Parsonage SRF area.

The quantum of proposed new Grade A commercial office floorspace will also help to bring about agglomeration benefits by proximity to other commercial areas, as well as future office developments that are brought forward within the SRF area. The Proposed Development will help to create a clustering effect in this part of the city and connect with other nearby business clusters as Spinningfields, Salford Central and the Civic Quarter.

There is a symbiotic relationship between the residential and commercial elements of the Proposed Development, as the creation of one element will intrinsically support the other. The commercial development will increase the overall footfall to the area, making the location more of a destination within the City Centre. The increased activity brought to the area through the commercial development will increase the natural surveillance in the area and make it a safer and more desirable residential location.

The Proposed Development will make best use of the locational characteristics of the Site to deliver a stylish residential building and best-in-class commercial development that will attract occupiers and drive growth in sustainable and skilled jobs. Economic productivity will be enhanced further through associated training, education and vocational opportunities that will be required through the supply chain. The number of new jobs that will be accommodated by the Proposed Development during operation will contribute to both economic growth and inclusive growth ambitions of the City.

The investment into the area will reinforce the core of the city centre as the strongest and most sustainable employment growth centre in the GM conurbation and add to the attractiveness of the area for new and existing businesses and residents, as a prime location to live and work.

Revenue Generation

The Proposed Development is symbiotic in that the creation of high-quality employment opportunities at the Site, will complement the on-going delivery of large numbers of new homes within the city centre, thereby attracting people to live and work in the City Centre and make a positive contribution to the creation of a sustainable city.

To aid the increased residential growth, the city centre requires new employment space to diversify and increase the opportunities for both city centre residents and the wider economy. The attraction of living in the city centre is also driven by the accessibility of a range of activities, shops, bars, restaurants, and cultural and tourist activities. The creation of place in the city centre that is supported by the Proposed Development helps increase time spent, known as dwell time, and helps to drive revenue generation in the city through expenditure.

Local retail expenditure is anticipated to increase due to spending by employees and residents that work and live in connection with the Proposed Development. Assuming employees and residents spend a considerable proportion of their incomes locally, this would result in an additional spending in the local area and benefit local businesses, support jobs, and bringing positive supply chain effects.

Added benefits of wages generated include: increased local expenditure; an increase in income tax revenues; an increase in council tax revenues; and an increased contribution of business rates, which will allow for more public services to be paid as a direct consequence of the regeneration of this Site. The number of office and flexible commercial (F&B) jobs will generate GVA worth over £139m per year.

Social Benefits

Connecting the City

The active ground floor use of the Proposed Development will improve legibility in the area, with the proposed ground floor food and beverage offering creating a nodal point and destination within the local area. The footfall generated by the Proposed Development from residents, office users and the ground floor active uses, will signpost routes and aid passive surveillance. The active frontage and increased footfall will bring animation to Bridge Street, St Mary's Parsonage and Trinity Bridge walkway, of which is currently lacking.

The Proposed Development will create a more attractive environment leading up to Trinity Bridge, increasing permeability between Manchester and Salford. The Proposed Development will leverage the Site's full potential in a gateway location along the River Irwell and between Central Salford and Manchester City Centre.

The environmental improvements such as improved landscaping through the delivery of 4,130 sq. m of public realm (46% of the Site area) will promote health and wellbeing of the occupants of the buildings as well as creating an attractive, sustainable place that people want to visit and spend time in. Extensive landscaping across the ground floor public realm and roof terraces of the office building will contribute to the character of the area, as well as climate change mitigation and.

The erection of two high-quality landmark buildings, will enhance the northeast-southwest movement along St Mary's Parsonage, as well as the southwest-southeast movement along Bridge Street. St Mary's Parsonage and Bridge Street provide pedestrian connections to Spinningfields, Central Salford and the Trinity Riverside, in particular the River Walkway will activate and improve enjoyment of the River and the Office building has been designed with a covered walkway specifically connecting the public realm through to St Mary's Parsonage and Trinity Bridge.

The enhanced connectivity delivered by the Proposed Development will strengthen the network of a number of important public areas that exist, including:

- **Motor Square:** directly to the east of the Site, along St Mary's Parsonage, is Motor Square. This area forms one of the gateways into the Parsonage Gardens area. The square is predominantly surrounded by roads, with only one row of commercial units facing onto the area. This area of public realm is currently recognised as disjointed and underused and is identified within the SRF as requiring a comprehensive redesign in order to enhance activity and vibrancy. The development of improved public realm delivered as a part of the scheme will have a direct positive impact on Motor Square, due to the square's adjacency to the Proposed Development. Increased footfall and vibrancy in the general area will make the square more of a destination within the City Centre;
- **Parsonage Gardens:** to the northeast of the Site, along St Mary's Parsonage, is Parsonage Gardens which acts as a relatively tranquil space within the City Centre, that was created as result of the former college land associated with Cheetham's and the former Parsonage that existed on site. This space is bordered by a number of high quality and historic buildings that add to the character of the area and comprises residential to the western edge and commercial offices like Arkwright House that borders Parsonage Gardens on the southern edge; and,
- **Hardman Square and the Avenue:** Spinningfields is located along St Mary's Parsonage to the south of the Site. Spinningfields is now considered to be Manchester's premier business hub and is the product of a 20-year masterplan being realised. Key to its success is the excellent quality of public spaces that support this economic function, including Hardman Square, the Avenue and the areas around Oast House. This part of the City Centre exists to the south of the Proposed Development and therefore the Site provides the opportunity to enhance connections between these two areas.

The Proposed Development is designed to give the area a strong sense of identity and to be accessible to all users, including those whose mobility is impaired with level and lift access to all areas and improved public realm. Sustainable forms of transport such as walking and cycling will be encouraged by creating improved routes to key areas of the City, therefore leading to potential wider health benefits.

Creation of 'Place'

The city-region seeks to take an integrated and proactive place-based approach to bringing forward strategic regeneration proposals in town centres and strategic sites, which integrate investment in development, housing, transport and other infrastructure to create sustainable employment locations. The Site is well capitalised to support this overall place-based approach to regeneration given the existing quality and opportunity presented by the Proposed Development.

Currently, the pedestrian and City Centre user experience along Bridge Street, St Mary's Parsonage and the Trinity Bridge walkway is relatively poor. The Proposed Development will improve this experience and create a unique place identity, embracing the Site's potential as a key regeneration site. The sense of place will be supported by the provision of ground floor activity and publicly accessible food and beverage spaces – activity generated through this type of development will also help to support investment made in the public spaces surrounding the area.

The delivery of 4,130 sq. m of public realm and landscaping enhancements will provide opportunities for greater natural surveillance, thereby improving local safety and security. In turn, this will create a more attractive environment for the local community and visitors with spaces to dwell, play, interact and enjoy.

The ongoing delivery and future investment of new office and residential space in the St Mary's Parsonage area provides fresh opportunities for a range of different commercial businesses that can add to the formation of the community. A critical mass of businesses, coupled with the existing business and residential community, provides opportunities for Parsonage Gardens and Motor Square to reassert themselves as vibrant centrepieces in the area.

Residential Mix

These new homes will be split into one, two- and three-bedroom apartments to support a mixture of housing types in Manchester, including families which is currently limited. The provision of new homes to cater to the different needs of Mancunians and future residents and which will support the economic growth of the City-Region.

The new homes are supported by communal amenity space, including three communal terraces, providing space for residents to interact and socialise.

Environmental Benefits

Manchester City Centre has gone through significant change over the past twenty years, as a result of transformative investment and regeneration. The need for investment to lead to the creation of a high-quality built environment and contribute to a strategic approach to place-making has been a priority throughout this period and continues to be essential for emerging development proposals.

In addition, the Council has also declared a Climate Emergency, requiring all development proposals to support the Council in achieving its 2038 Net Zero Carbon target, as well as seek to increase green and blue infrastructure where feasible. Against this context, the environmental benefits of the Proposed Development are set out below.

Architecture and High-Quality Design

There is a need for good quality modern architecture to continue to define Manchester's recent and projected progress to establish itself as a world-leading, 21st century city. This is particularly important for the development proposals, considering the heritage assets in the surrounding area - the Site is therefore extremely visually sensitive as a result of its proximity to these. As such, the architectural design of the buildings have been a priority throughout the design development and consultation stages, which has resulted in two buildings of the very highest quality of architectural design.

There is a need for schemes to contribute to their overall placemaking objectives to allow Manchester to continue to be architecturally distinctive. This is achieved through appropriately balancing its historic buildings and areas with new high-quality development and public spaces. This architectural language across the city should align with the high standards of cultural heritage that Manchester already has to offer.

The Site is currently occupied by a vacant office, which the St Mary's Parsonage SRF recognises as a site for redevelopment due to the office no longer being fit for modern use, due to its dated internal configuration. The SRF acknowledges that Albert Bridge House is in need of major reinvestment and redevelopment, with the opportunity for a landmark development.

The architects, Studio Egret West, are an esteemed and award-winning architectural practice which is extremely experienced in designing and delivering high quality buildings in City Centre locations and has a track record and capability to deliver a project of exceptional quality. The design of the Proposed Development has been interrogated through an extensive process of stakeholder engagement and consultation.

The design has also been subject to TVIA and heritage assessments. These assessments and ongoing feedback during the design development process has fed into the design of the Proposed Development in order to deliver an optimum, high quality design which respects the existing townscape and built environment, whilst balancing this with the Site's regeneration ambitions and the project brief.

The benefits of good design are evidenced in the aesthetics of the surrounding townscape and has wider environmental benefits linked to this. The overall conclusion of a RIBA report 'Good Design: It All Adds UP' (2011) is that good design generally costs more, but the implication of poor design holds a much greater cost. The report also notes that property agents find it easier to let buildings and units with a high-quality design standards. Units and buildings that remain unlet reduce the overall vibrancy and demonstrate a lack of vitality of our urban centres, which is essential to attracting new residents, employees and businesses to the City Centre.

The redevelopment of the Site will strengthen local streetscape, enhancing local character and sense of place through the delivery of two distinctive, high-quality buildings. It will generate vitality and animation making a further positive contribution to

local streetscape and aid legibility. The Proposed Development will deliver two highly sustainable, landmark buildings with unique identity, that use high quality materials.

Sustainable Construction and Operation

The Proposed Development also seeks to become an exemplar in sustainable design and construction. In doing so, the proposals will directly support the Council's 2038 Net Zero Carbon target. The Proposed Development is of the highest quality of design, which will support the creation of an adaptable, sustainable and innovative office and residential development. The Proposed Development is progressing the net zero carbon agenda through its own low carbon qualities and sustainability.

Noting that comprehensive demolition and reconstruction is required for the Proposed Development, building materials will be sourced in a manner that both reduces its embodied carbon (e.g. local sourcing, where possible) and recyclable when the building reaches its end of life. Open floorplates in the office building will allow the building to be adaptable in the future, which is critical given the constant evolution of our workplaces in terms of form, function and layout.

The operational sustainability credentials have also been central to design development of the Proposed Development, with a number of targets being set in order to allow the Proposed Development to comply with the City's ambition to achieve Net Zero Carbon status by 2038. The Proposed Development achieves a reduction, over the Part L 2021 baseline, of 19.50% and 70% for the commercial and residential building respectively. As such, the Proposed Development, far exceeding the requirements of planning policy.

The Proposed Development will adopt an all-electric approach that includes air source heat pumps as the heat source and a low carbon energy system for both buildings. PV Cells are also proposed as part of the energy strategy.

The removal of circa 72 surface car parking spaces will likely improve the air quality indicators within the surrounding area and support the use of sustainable transport modes to gain access to the well-connected Site. An extensive amount of cycle parking and changing facilities with storage is included within the Proposed Development, with 695 secure spaces provided within the basement of the buildings and a further 50 short-stay cycle spaces within the public realm; this will support travel to and from the office being made by bicycle, e-bike or similar. Improving pedestrian and cycling linkages around the Site and within the surrounding St Mary's Parsonage area will also encourage sustainable modes of travel within the City Centre.

Summary

In summary, the Proposed Development will deliver an exceptional range of short and long-term economic, environmental and social benefits that are significant at the local and regional scale, in terms of the positive contribution to surrounding streets, enhancements to the City's built environment and the strategic contribution to the objectives of the City Council, the Greater Manchester Region and the Northern Powerhouse agenda.

9. Conclusion

The Proposed Development will deliver an exemplar, highly sustainable office building providing new high quality Grade A office space, alongside flexible commercial space, a stylish new residential tall building providing homes of a range of different sizes supported by communal amenity space and ground floor flexible commercial space.

The Proposed Development delivers 4,130 sq. m of public realm – 46% of the full Site area - opening up the River Irwell with the inclusion of an elevated foot bridge. The landscape and design of the buildings, specifically the walkway through the office building, significantly improve connections through the Site to St Mary's Parsonage, the City Centre and Salford.

Oval Real Estate Ltd, is a highly skilled and experienced development, management and investment company within the UK, operating a large portfolio of building developments in across the UK. Oval's portfolio is centred around property development projects in Manchester, Birmingham and London and as such, they have a strong nationwide presence.

The Proposed Development has been created by an experienced design team translating Oval's vision for the Site as well as the guiding principles of the St Mary's Parsonage SRF. An iterative process has been undertaken, considering the post Covid market context, to ensure that the most appropriate uses are delivered on Site. Enabling the redevelopment of the Site to come forward in one phase, bringing with it comprehensive and extensive public realm enhancements and public benefits.

The Proposed Development is underpinned by ambitious sustainability targets and will create new office floorspace for existing and new businesses to relocate to the area, as well as a number of residential dwellings that will increase the overall housing stock in the City Centre. In turn, this will make a positive contribution to the local economy and vibrancy of the local area.

The Proposed Development will deliver a number of economic, social and environmental benefits as detailed throughout the Statement and specifically in Section 8, including:

- The Site is located in an area identified for additional height with the SRF, transitioning away from the Conservation Area, towards the greatest height in the southwest corner. The Proposed Development represents a design, height and quantum of development that optimises the Site's potential and enables the delivery of a contextually appropriate and high-quality architectural design, including careful consideration of the nearby Conservation Area and listed buildings.
- As outlined in Section 3 of this Statement, there continues to be a strong demand for both office and residential floorspace within Manchester City Centre. Regarding the office development, there is a particular demand for buildings which promote agility and cater to needs of hybrid occupiers. Oval Real Estate have a leading track record for office provision, delivering exceptional office spaces for which there is consistent demand from the full range of office occupiers, ranging from SMEs to large corporate organisations. In terms of residential development, due to a continual population growth within the city, demand for housing is high, with a very low vacancy rate recorded within Deloitte's Manchester 2022 Crane Survey.
- The office development will deepen the labour market pool, increase the number of higher skilled and higher paid jobs, based on high productivity employment, make a significant contribution to accelerated economic growth and the re-balancing of the national economy, increasing Greater Manchester's share of high value-added service jobs.
- The residential development will cater for the increased population of office workers in the area, by supplying high quality and sustainable housing stock.
- From an economic perspective, the Proposed Development will likely support a number of construction-based jobs during this phase of development, before having the capacity to accommodate up to 565 (FTE) workers per year, for 3.5 years.
- As companies are increasing environmental awareness and corporate social responsibility it is anticipated that the sustainability credentials of the building and flexible space provided will meet operator demand, making it an attractive

space to occupy. The Proposed Development is targeting NABERS 6* and will achieve a minimum of a 5.5*, employing an all-electric approach that includes air source heat pumps as heat source and a low carbon energy system.

- The high-quality architectural design will make a positive contribution to the appearance, vitality and vibrancy of this part of the city centre. It is in keeping with its historic surroundings but also adds to the juxtaposition of architectural styles that is typical of Manchester City Centre, composing a positive street scene whilst aligning with the improving standards of design. The proposed 45 and 19-storey massing of the developments is respectful to the adjacent Conservation Areas and nearby designated heritage assets, whilst referring to the design principles set out within the St Mary's Parsonage SRF. The unique, stepped design of the office building and tall, hexagonal-shaped residential building will also harness the Proposed Development as a key landmark building which will aid legibility within the area.
- Significant enhancements will be delivered to the public realm by opening the Site to the public and providing different spaces for people to move through or stay and enjoy. The public realm enhancements proposed within the development will create a high-quality environment on the human scale for residents, office workers and visitors. The creation of more activity in this location will bring vitality to the area and will in turn create a safer environment for people to walk around in.
- Once operational, through the implementation of a number of energy strategies in the design, the Proposed Development will deliver two highly energy efficient buildings, with sustainability at the heart of the scheme.

Closing Statement

The Proposed Development has been developed in consultation with Manchester City Council Planning Officers, Environmental Health Officers, Highways Officers and a range of technical stakeholders, as well as Local Ward councillors, surrounding residents and local businesses.

This Planning and Tall Building Statement has assessed all applicable planning policies, guidance and other material considerations and provides full and robust justification for the Proposed Development, alongside full suite of supporting technical assessments that have been prepared.

In short, it has been demonstrated that the Proposed Development complies with the Development Plan as a whole and properly addresses the relevant Material Considerations.