



No.3 Circle Square Statement of Consultation

July 2022

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Supporting Statement accompanies an application for Full Planning Permission being submitted by Bruntwood Circle Square 12 Ltd (“the Applicant”) for the redevelopment of No. 3 Circle Square, Plot 12 of the Circle Square Masterplan, Oxford Road, Manchester (the “Site”). The Applicant is seeking Planning Permission for the erection of a 15 storey office building, new public realm and a refuse store (“the Proposed Development”).
- 1.2. This Statement sets out in detail the pre-application consultation that has been undertaken, the feedback received and how that has been considered and addressed within the final proposals, where appropriate.

The Site

- 1.3. The Site is 0.96 hectares and bounded by Newman Street (formerly Brancaster Road) to the north, Princess Street to the east, Cloak Street and the Mancunian Way to the south and Manchester Technology Centre to the West.
- 1.4. The Site benefits from an Extant Consent (ref: 125451/FO/2019 (as amended), approved by Manchester City Council in February 2020 for a Ground Plus 14 storey office building with ground floor commercial units.
- 1.5. Part of the Site, where the proposed office building will sit, most recently comprised the construction compound for Sisk, the contractors developing the other plots on the Circle Square Masterplan. It is now cleared and hoarded, awaiting development.
- 1.6. Outside of the hoarding, there is an area of temporary grass adjacent to the MCSP and car parking adjacent to Manchester Technology Centre used by Bruntwood staff, in addition car parking is included under the Mancunian Way again solely used by Bruntwood staff.
- 1.7. Sorton Street and Cloak Street also served as a continuous link through the Site, however both roads have been stopped up. In addition, there is an access off Newman Street to the car parking associated with Manchester Technology Centre.
- 1.8. A substation is located to the south of the Site adjacent to the Mancunian Way. There are no trees on or adjacent to the Site.

The Proposed Development

- 1.9. The Proposed Development is set to deliver 36,448 sq m (GEA) of office development within a 15 storey development as part of Circle Square.
- 1.10. The ground floor will provide the entrance to the office uses above, as well as a number of commercial retail / leisure units totalling to 962 sq m (NIA). The ground floor layout takes advantage of the building’s location within the masterplan and the opportunity to become a gateway building to the Circle Square development. The main entrance to the building is located on Newman Street which sits proudly on the north west corner of the building. The reception space is intended to be connected with the food and beverage unit to create a flexible, integrated space throughout the ground floor, creating a more active and interesting space.
- 1.11. The first to thirteenth floors comprise conventional office accommodation capable of subdivision into a maximum of two suites. These will provide open plan shell and core layouts, which are flexible to adapt a variety of tenant layouts and structures if needed. Each floor provides a floorplate of approx. 21,603 sq.ft (2,007 sq.m) (NIA). The floorplate layout has been designed to allow subdivision of floors and levels within the building should it be required by future tenants.
- 1.12. The fourteenth floor includes a variety of amenity spaces including refreshment station/bar, lounge areas, informal meeting spaces, touch down desks, meeting rooms, an event space with dedicated re-heat kitchen as well as two outdoor terraces and plant spaces.
- 1.13. An extensive landscaping proposal is included as part of the application. It includes formal and informal planting, sitting spaces and pedestrian routes through the masterplan site.
- 1.14. The Site is located in Manchester City Centre within Circle Square and as such is close to the Oxford Road train station as well as the Oxford Road Corridor and is therefore highly accessible by a choice of sustainable transport methods, in addition cycle storage will be provided at the ground floor encouraging cycle to work.
- 1.15. The building is designed by Bridge Architects who are a highly experienced architecture practice that have delivered a wide range of high quality schemes across Manchester.

- 1.16. The design response to the site is heavily influenced by it's locale. The predominance of brick architecture in the city centre in both historic and contemporary buildings provides the city with a strong visual identity. The building is conceived as long-format brick in a red brick tone with punched openings and grand brick arches to the ground floor. To the upper floors there is a regular pattern of punched window openings set in deep reveals. A monolithic approach to use of a brick has been taken, whereby the massing has been carved out to form the entrance, arches, roof terraces and ground floor opening. Additional visual detail is provided through soldier courses, perforation to the brick ventilation recesses and sections of projected brick relief pattern.
- 1.17. The formal description of development on the planning application is:
- Erection of 15 storey building comprising office space (Use Class E(g)(i)) and ancillary flexible commercial uses (Use Class E), rooftop terrace, highway works, landscaping, refuse store and other associated works**

Pre-Application Consultation

- 1.18. A process of pre-application engagement has been implemented by the project team to ensure that the approach to the scheme's design development has been properly communicated and discussed and, where possible, points raised during these discussions have been taken into account.

Statutory and Non-Statutory Consultee Engagement

- 1.19. Pre-application consultation with Statutory Consultees has been focused upon providing an explanation of the Proposed Development and timescales for delivery, given the previous approval established for the Site. Information provided includes the previously approved permission and the way in which the revised detailed design of the Proposed Development responds to the site conditions, the surrounding area, current policy priorities (including for example sustainability requirements) and the post-Covid market context.
- 1.20. This process has sought to address specific site considerations, questions and comments that have been raised during the consultation process, with consultation activity summarised as follows:
- Regular dialogue with Senior Planning Officers at Manchester City Council (MCC), which has taken place throughout the design development process to take on board comments for developing the proposals.
 - A formal Request for an EIA Screening and Scoping request was submitted to MCC on 30 May 2022 following ongoing liaison with the Local Planning Authority regarding the Scope of the ES. We have received a number of responses and a full formal response is due to be received following submission of the planning application.
 - Greater Manchester Police (via the Design by Security team) has been consulted, and their advice in terms of security has been addressed in the application proposals. Their feedback on the proposed design is provided in the Crime Impact Statement submitted with the application.
 - Various meetings and engagement have taken place with other technical statutory consultees, including MCC Highways; MCC Flood Risk Department; MCC Waste Department, Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service.
 - Information was sent by email to Ward Councillors in Deansgate and neighbouring Piccadilly Ward and a meeting was offered.
 - Information was provided by email and by post to all surrounding landowners and commercial occupiers to detail the proposals being worked up and a meeting was offered to the following: Vita Group, and ID Manchester, Corridor Partners Manchester University and Manchester Metropolitan University Student Unions, Institute of Biotechnology, NCP and Premier Inn and commercial occupiers in Circle Square and Hatch.

- 1.21. Full details of all pre-application engagement with statutory and non-statutory consultees and the response provided by the submission are provided in Section 3 of this Statement.

Local Engagement

- 1.22. The Site is located within Circle Square and is in close proximity to the Oxford Road Corridor. The immediate surroundings are comprised of a mixture of residential, commercial and educational uses. As a result, the consultation strategy has focussed on a wide range of consultees including residents, nearby landowners and occupiers and educational institutions.
- 1.23. The details provided sought to inform them of the emerging proposals, provided visuals of the design and offered a briefing session to provide more details and receive any feedback.

Report Structure

- 1.24. This Statement of Consultation explains in detail the programme of consultation that the scheme has been through to ensure that issues could be considered and addressed as the proposals came forward. The remainder of this Statement is structured as follows:
- Section 2 – sets out the relevant planning policy and requirements for pre-application engagement.
 - Section 3 – provides details of the consultation undertaken, summarises the feedback received and provides a response where relevant.
 - Section 4 – presents the summary and conclusions of the pre-application process.

2. Policy Context

- 2.1. Guidance and policy requirements with regard to consultation and pre-application engagement is set out at both the national and local level in this section.

National

Localism Act

- 2.2. The Localism Bill was introduced to Parliament on 13 December 2010, and was given Royal Assent on 15 November 2011, becoming an Act ("the Act").
- 2.3. The main aim of the Act is to shift power from Central Government back into the hands of individuals, communities and Councils. It includes five key measures as follows:
- Community rights.
 - Neighbourhood planning.
 - Housing.
 - General power of competence.
 - Empowering cities and other local areas.
- 2.4. Part 6 of the Act specifically deals with planning and Chapter 4 sets out requirements in relation to consultation before applying for Planning Permission.
- 2.5. Section 122 of the Act amends the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to include a new section 61W that sets out a requirement to carry out pre-application consultation as follows:
- 1 Where—
- a) a person proposes to make an application for planning permission for the development of any land in England, and
 - b) the proposed development is of a description specified in a development order, the person must carry out consultation on the proposed application in accordance with subsections (2) and (3).
- 2.6. Subsections (2) and (3) state:
- 2 The person must publicise the proposed application in such manner as the person reasonably considers is likely to bring the proposed application to the attention of a majority of the persons who live at, or otherwise occupy, premises in the vicinity of the land.
- 3 The person must consult each specified person about the proposed application.
- 2.7. Subsection (4) outlines the requirements in regard to publicity of applications:
- 4 Publicity under subsection (2) must—
- a) set out how the person ("P") may be contacted by persons wishing to comment on, or collaborate with P on the design of, the proposed development, and
 - b) give such information about the proposed timetable for the consultation as is sufficient to ensure that persons wishing to comment on the proposed development may do so in good time.
- 2.8. The Act also sets out a duty to take account of the responses to consultation. Section 61X requires a developer to have regard to any comments or responses generated by the consultation undertaken in accordance with section 61W, when deciding whether to make any changes to proposals before submitting a planning application.
- 2.9. Section 61Y enables the Secretary of State to set out further provisions as to how the consultation required under new section 61W should be undertaken in practice.

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- 2.10. The Department for Communities and Local Government published the amended NPPF in July 2018, February 2019, and most recently in July 2021. The document sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are to be applied. It requires planning policies to meet objectively assessed needs, with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change.
- 2.11. Paragraphs 39 to 46 address pre-application engagement and front-loading. Paragraph 39 observes that early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. It goes on to state that good quality pre-application discussion enables better co-ordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.
- 2.12. Paragraph 40 directs local planning authorities to encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community, where they think this would be beneficial, and, where relevant with statutory and non-statutory consultees, before submitting applications.
- 2.13. Similarly, paragraphs 124 to 129 set out how Local Planning Authorities should have regard to early, proactive and positive engagement with the local community and their views, as well as addressing any comments received from design review panels.
- 2.14. The NPPF also promotes the use of the Local Planning Authority Pre-Application Service to encourage a partnership approach to applications. It is considered that early engagement with the Local Planning Authority is often conducive to the best result for the application, as it highlights where further work is required.

National Planning Practice Guidance

- 2.15. In March 2014, the Government issued the National Planning Practice Guidance as an on-line resource, which is designed to bring together planning practice guidance for England in an accessible and usable way. The Guidance was amended in line with the recent updates to the NPPF.
- 2.16. The Guidance provides further detail to assist in the understanding of planning policies set out within the NPPF, including requirements for pre-application engagement. The 'Consultation and pre-decision matters' identifies that:
- In line with the policies of the NPPF, statutory consultees have an important role to play in the pre-application stage and should be engaged early; and,
 - Pre-application consultation with the local community is encouraged where it adds value to process and outcome.

Local

Manchester City Council Statement of Community Involvement

- 2.17. MCC adopted a refreshed Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in June 2018. The SCI sets out how and when MCC will involve the community in relation to the preparation and revision of the Local Development Documents and in the process of making decisions on planning applications. Appendix 1 of the SCI provides guidance on developer-led early engagement.
- 2.18. The SCI states that early engagement has significant benefits by improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning system for all parties. Therefore, developers are encouraged to consult before submitting a planning application.
- 2.19. The SCI encourages developers to consult with the public and various parties, which could include equalities groups, as well as with specific infrastructure and service providers who can advise developers on any need for increased provision of services.
- 2.20. Consultations should be inclusive, transparent, clear and understandable. Additionally, developers are encouraged to submit a record of the consultation that took place with their planning submission, which is detailed within Section 3 of this Statement.

Summary

- 2.21. This section has set out the relevant elements of Planning Policy that relate to the formulation of development proposals during the pre-application stage. This includes the requirements to engage at a national and local level.
- 2.22. The following section of this report sets out, in detail, the pre-application and engagement that has taken place with the local community, statutory and non-statutory consultees in line with the guidance and requirements set out above.

3. Consultation Strategy and Responses

- 3.1. This section describes the consultation that has been undertaken by the Applicant and the project team. It includes an outline of the consultation strategy and the outcome of the consultation process.
- 3.2. The consultations outlined below have underpinned an iterative design process that has sought to identify the optimum viable use for the Site that responds to the site's physical and historic context, whilst delivering sustainable development that maximises the social, economic and environmental benefits of development.
- 3.3. Bruntwood acquired the Masterplan Site in March 2015 and developed, with their development partner Vita Group, a concept Masterplan to deliver on this vision. This proposed a comprehensive, employment-led mixed use redevelopment of the Site seeking to deliver some 1.2 million sq. ft commercial office space; other business/research space; a new residential neighbourhood; ground floor retail and leisure space; and a series of public realm interventions that would see the Site becoming a vibrant new district, legibly connecting in to the wider city centre fabric.
- 3.4. Extensive consultation has taken place throughout the masterplan development and subsequent planning applications across the masterplan site. An extant planning permission also exists on the Site, which was subject to its own consultation process in July 2019. Comments received at the time were supportive of the principle of development on the site.

Manchester City Council

Local Planning Authority

- 3.5. During the design development stages undertaken prior to the submission of this planning application, regular dialogue has taken place with Manchester City Council Planning Officers to present the proposals, understand and address the City's strategic objectives and have an opportunity to consider and address feedback. A series of meetings were held between December 2021 and May 2022.
- 3.6. Early meetings focused on principle of use at the Site to deliver a successful commercial offer, with an intense focus on sustainability and cohesiveness of the wider masterplan.
- 3.7. The overall feedback from pre-application discussions has been positive and supportive in principle on the basis that the proposals are well designed and will form an important part in the regeneration of the Masterplan area.
- 3.8. The following key considerations have been raised during the pre-application discussions and addressed within the planning application submission:
 - Architectural design quality
 - Relationship with the Circle Square masterplan
 - Landscaping
 - Waste
 - Façade design
 - Flood risk
- 3.9. The outcome of the pre-application discussions has been positive and supportive of the proposals in principle on the basis that they will complement wider planning and regeneration plans and economic objectives for the masterplan area and its surroundings, and on the basis that thoughtful and well considered design responses are provided for the Site.
- 3.10. Further details of how this has been achieved are provided within the accompanying application documents including the supporting Planning Statement and Design and Access Statement.
- 3.11. The Applicant will continue to work positively and pro-actively with Officers during the determination of the Application, responding to any issues that are raised during the formal consultation process.

Environmental Health

- 3.12. Hoare Lee has liaised with Environmental Health Officers in relation to the Air Quality Assessment and the methodology undertaken. A response has been received confirming the Proposed Development is acceptable.

Flood Risk Department

- 3.13. Curtins engaged with the Flood Risk Team at Manchester City Council setting out the proposed strategy for foul and surface water drainage. This considered the existing below ground drainage, setting out the works required to the existing drainage to allow the Site to come forward. The Proposed Drainage Strategy was supported by the Flood Risk Team as well as United Utilities and Environmental Agency.

Local Ward Councillors

- 3.14. Letters were sent via email to Ward Councillors in the Deansgate and Piccadilly Wards on 28 April 2022 to provide details of the proposals. The Site sits within Deansgate Ward, but on the boundary with Piccadilly Ward so it was considered most suitable to include both sets of ward councillors.
- 3.15. The letter outlined the site, the background to the project, and the development proposals. The correspondence included the offer of a briefing to Members to explain the proposals in more detail.
- 3.16. A reminder was sent to the Ward Councillors on 10 May 2022 to inform them of the public consultation event that would take place on the 11 May 2022, as well as offering a separate briefing if required. Councillor William Jeavons responded by confirming that he would not be able to attend but would however come back with any comments if they arose. No further comments or correspondence was received.

Statutory and Non-Statutory Consultees

- 3.17. The respective statutory and non-statutory consultees on the project who have been engaged prior to the application being made are set out under each subheading below. This summarises the timing and method of communication, information issued, comments received and how these comments have been incorporated into the planning application.

Adjoining Landowners and Occupiers

- 3.18. All landowners and occupiers that have been engaged during the design development are set out below, summarising the method of engagement, any responses received and how the proposals have addressed any comments made:
- **ID Manchester** – ID Manchester is a key regeneration area located adjacent to the Site to the east, across from Princess Street which aims to be a hub for innovation between multiple businesses and organisations from various sectors and industries. The Applicant has engaged with ID Manchester JV Limited on the design intent for No 3 Circle Square, given the proximity and relationship of the development to the ID Manchester site masterplan. The ID Manchester JV Limited Board has expressed support for the development plans for No 3 Circle Square.
 - **Vita Group** – The Circle Square masterplan relies on the continued successful co-operation between Vita and Bruntwood. Regular contact occurs between the two parties, including on the proposed development. The servicing route proposed has been discussed and agreed with Vita, and they support the principle of development on the Site.
 - **NCP and Premier Inn** – Received leaflets through the post, but no response has been received.
 - **Circle Square Operators** - Received leaflets through the post, but no response has been received.

Greater Manchester Police

- 3.19. A briefing meeting with Greater Manchester police meeting was held on 08 June, which follows on from engagement on the previously approved proposals for the Site. Following an initial briefing with Greater Manchester Police, they considered that an update to the previously prepared report could be undertaken.
- 3.20. Some comments were received relating to access into and through the building, landscaping and access to the car park.
- 3.21. It is considered that the comments raised by Greater Manchester Police have been adequately addressed in the final design and will be addressed completely by detailed design and operational management strategies.

Public Consultation

- 3.22. Public consultation on the Proposed Development with local residents and businesses was held between 4 May 2022 and 18 May 2022. The majority of the responses gathered by the consultations were supportive of the proposals on the next phase of development at Circle Square.
- 3.23. A consultation webpage was set up to provide respondents with the ability to view the proposals online and submit comments via the feedback form which have been collated below. Prior to the launch of the consultation webpage, a consultation postcard was distributed on 04 May to all residential and business addresses located within an agreed distribution area of approximately 3,997 addresses.
- 3.24. The A5 sized postcard introduced the proposals and directed recipients towards the consultation website to find out more and provide their feedback, via the dedicated online feedback form or by email. The consultation postcard is provided as Appendix A.
- 3.25. A more detailed letter was also delivered at the same time to Montana House and Princess House, as the closest residential properties to the site. This letter is provided at Appendix B.
- 3.26. The postcard promoted also in-person consultation event being held on 11 May at No.1 Circle Square which ran from 4pm till 7pm. A total of 12 boards were set up to outline the proposals and the project team were in attendance to answer any queries raised. A total of 12 individuals attended the public consultation event.
- 3.27. A total of two responses were collected as part of the public consultation and are set out below as written:
- *“Love the roof garden. Such a good concept to entice people to work up there. Also love the natural garden spaces – unlike anywhere else in Manchester whilst still keeping in theme of the city whilst still being modern with the big open plan office.”*
 - *“I feel that the outside space on the proposal is of a great benefit to the area. The choice of using red bricks for the construction will really fit into the area and make the car park feel connected”.*
- 3.28. As demonstrated through the responses received, the respondents were supportive of the Proposed Development and clearly showed a strong appreciation for the attention to detail paid on the proposed layout, external appearance and high quality public realm.
- 3.29. A full copy of the above responses can be found within Appendix C of this Statement.

Summary

- 3.30. The Proposed Development has evolved through a process of consultation and iterative design with the local authority. Full details of the design process undertaken the proposed development and the planning justification are provided within the submitted Planning Supporting Statement and Design and Access Statement.
- 3.31. The Applicant is also committed to ensuring the consultation process will continue as part of the formal statutory planning procedure managed by the Local Planning Authority and beyond. During this process, the Applicant and the project team will continue to listen and engage with local stakeholders and, wherever possible, accommodate their ideas and aspirations.

4. Summary and Conclusions

- 4.1. Consultation has been undertaken in accordance with the requirements of national policy (the Localism Act and the NPPF) and Manchester's Statement of Community Involvement. The Proposed Development forms one of the final plots to be delivered in Circle Square and as such presents an exciting opportunity to achieve the ambitions set out within the Circle Square Strategic Regeneration Framework. The engagement strategy has focussed on a wide range of consultees including residents, nearby landowners and occupiers and educational institutions.
- 4.2. To keep all interested parties up to date, the Proposed Development has been the subject of pre-application consultation with numerous organisations. This has involved the use of a number of consultation methods to engage effectively with the Local Planning Authority, local landowners and businesses, Ward Councillors, Greater Manchester Police, adjoining owners, other Statutory Consultees, and non-Statutory Consultees to identify and consider relevant issues prior to the submission of the application for Planning Permission.
- 4.3. The responses received have demonstrated a strong support for the Proposed Development from a number of local residents, businesses and institutions as well as support from the local planning authority and statutory bodies. The Proposed Development and will support the ongoing economic development and physical regeneration of this Site, Circle Square and the surrounding area.
- 4.4. Moving forward with the project, the Applicant is committed to ensuring the consultation process will also continue as part of the formal statutory planning procedure managed by the Local Planning Authority and beyond. During the determination process, the Applicant and the project team will continue to listen and engage with local stakeholders and, wherever possible, accommodate their ideas and aspirations for the Site.



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